

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

SOUTHERN RURAL COMMITTEE
**(Cadwell, Codicote, Graveley & Wymondley, Hitchwood, Hoo, Kimpton,
Knebworth and Offa Wards)**

**Meeting held in the Council Offices, Gernon Road, Letchworth on
Thursday 2 June 2005 at 7.30pm**

MINUTES

PRESENT: *Councillors D.J Barnard (Chairman), Mrs C.P.A Strong (Vice
Chairman), Alan Bardett, D J Horrell, David Miller and F.R.B
Wordsworth.*

IN ATTENDANCE: *Planning Control & Conservation Manager, Area Planning Officer,
Community Development Officer, North Hertfordshire District
Manager, Hertfordshire Highways, Principal Strategy Development
Manager, Highways & Transportation Asset Management Unit, Herts
Highways, Rural Project Play Worker and Committee Administrator.*

CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- (1) The Chairman welcomed speakers on Planning Applications at Agenda Item 6;
- (2) The Chairman advised the Meeting that Agenda Item 10 'Asset Management System' presentation would be heard after Agenda Item 7 'Planning Appeals'.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Sal Jarvis and Tricia Gibbs.

2. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on the 14 April 2005 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and signed by the Chairman.

3. NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

No items were presented for consideration by the Committee.

4. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Councillor Alan Bardett declared a personal interest in Planning Application 05/00569/1 Knebworth Leisure Centre (Odyssey Health Club) as he was a member of the Odyssey Health Club. Councillor Alan Bardett declared his right to speak and vote on the matter.

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No items were presented under public participation for consideration by the Committee.

6. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The Committee heard an oral representation regarding the following item:

Knebworth Leisure Centre (Odyssey Health Club)

Dr G Fothergill speaking on behalf of Knebworth Parish Council (objector)

72 High St, Kimpton, Hitchin

Mr M Williams, speaking as the applicant's representative.

Land adj to 3 Railway Cottages, Little Wymondley

Mr Jeremy Sage, speaking as an objector

Mr Adrian Mitchell, speaking as the applicant's representative.

Gosmore Hill Wood, Preston Road, Gosmore

Mr M Yarrow and Mr Tony Harcourt, speaking as objectors on behalf of local residents.

Planning enforcement – Cottonwood Barn, Mangrove Green

Mrs Hunter speaking as the owner.

RESOLVED: To determine the applications as set out in the report of the Planning Control and Conservation Manager, as indicated in the following schedule:

The Schedule

Reference Number	Description of Development and location	Decision
05/00333/ 1	Land South of Farmhouse, Bury Farm, Bury Lane, Codicote, Hitchin, SG4 Change of use of barn from Class B8 (Storage & Distribution) to Class B1 (Offices). Provision of 13 car parking spaces and alterations to existing access.	Granted (see (a) below)
05/00305/ 1	Land at the rear of 123, London Road, Knebworth, SG3 Outline planning permission: 8 three bedroom houses with integral garages and 6 two bedroom apartments following demolition of existing vehicle repair building with access through St Martins Road Car Park. 14 parking spaces, access drive, landscaping and amenity areas (as amended by site arrangement plan received 11.04.05)	Refused (see (b) below)
05/00569/ 1	Knebworth Leisure Centre (Odyssey Health Club), Old Knebworth Lane, Stevenage, SG2 8DU Formation of new vehicular access.	Refused (see (c) below)
05/00399/ 1	72 High Street, Kimpton, Hitchin, SG4 8QW Change of use of single detached dwelling house to two and three bedroom semi-detached dwelling houses and 4 parking spaces (as amplified by plans received 12th May 2005)	Granted (see (d) below)

05/00382/ 1	Land adj to 3 Railway Cottages, Little Wymondley, Hitchin, SG4 7JP Erection of two bed dwelling and attached single garage (as amended by drawing No. 0505 P04 Revision A received 11.04.05)	Refused (see (e) below)
05/00350/ 1	Gosmore Hill Wood, Preston Road, Gosmore, Hitchin, SG4 Use of overnight sleeping accommodation for private recreational use to holiday letting purposes.	Refused (see (f) below)

(a) That with regard to Planning Application 05/00333/1, it was **RESOLVED** that permission be **GRANTED** subject to condition 5 being amended to read:

5. Prior to the commencement of the development detailed drawings showing the improvement to the vehicular access at the junction with Bury Lane to include improvements to the northern visibility splay, and the widening of the carriageway leading to the site shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in conjunction with the Highway Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the details approved.

Reason: In the interests of highway and pedestrian safety.

and the following additional condition:

8. Any gates provided shall be set back a minimum of 10 metres from the highway boundary and shall open inwards into the site.

Reason: To allow a vehicular to wait clear of the carriageway or footway while the gates are being opened or closed.

(b) That with regard to Planning Application reference 05/00305/1, it was **RESOLVED** that the application be **REFUSED** for the following reason:

The proposed dwellings due to their height, bulk, insufficient amenity space and the close proximity of the proposed flats and terraced properties (identified as House type A) to the northern boundary of the site represents an overdevelopment of the site, thereby creating a development which is incompatible with the maintenance and enhancement of village character. In addition, the proposed limited parking provision may lead to parking occurring outside of the application site thereby exacerbating the existing parking problems in the vicinity of the site. As a result the proposal is contrary to Policies 5, 55 and 57 of the North Hertfordshire District Local Plan No 2 with alterations.

- (c) That with regard to Planning Application reference 05/00569/1, it was **RESOLVED** that permission be **REFUSED** for the following reason:

1. By reason of the significant earth works required to construct the new vehicular access, together with the loss of mature landscaping along the Stevenage Road frontage, the proposed development would harm the visual amenities of the locality and the openness of the Green Belt. As a result it is contrary to Policy 5 of the Hertfordshire County Structure Plan Review 1991 – 2011 and Policy 2 of the North Hertfordshire District Local Plan No 2 with Alterations.

and that, following the outcome of further consultation with Hertfordshire Highways, the decision be delegated to the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Southern Rural Area Committee in consultation with the Planning Control and Conservation Officer.

- (d) That with regard to Planning Application reference 05/00399/1, it was **RESOLVED** that permission be **GRANTED** subject to condition 6 being amended to read as follows:

6. Within 56 days of the permission hereby permitted, details of the proposed fencing and frontage boundary treatment should be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the details shall be carried out within 56 days of the date upon which they are agreed and then maintained in accordance with these approved details.

Reason: to ensure that the amenity space is suitably enclosed and that the fences would not adversely affect pedestrian or vehicular visibility.

- (e) That with regard to Planning Application reference 05/00382/1, it was **RESOLVED** that the application be **REFUSED** for the following reason:

Due to its edge of village location, the open character of the site and its appearance in relation to Railway Cottages the proposed development would be incompatible with the maintenance and enhancement of village character and is therefore contrary to Policy 5 of the North Hertfordshire District Local Plan No 2 with Alterations.

- (f) That with regard to Planning Application reference 05/00350/1, it was **RESOLVED** that the application be **REFUSED** for the following reason:

By reason of the likely increased activities and other paraphernalia resulting from the use of the building for commercial holiday letting purposes, in comparison with its lawful use for overnight sleeping accommodation associated with its private recreational use, the proposal would have a materially greater impact upon the openness of the Green Belt. As a result no very special circumstances exist to allow a relaxation of Green Belt policy and the proposal is contrary to the Hertfordshire County Structure Plan Review 1991-2011, Policy 5 – Green Belt and the North Hertfordshire District Local Plan No 2 with alterations, Policy 2 – Green Belt, Policy 12 – Landscape conservation, Improvement and Creation and Policy 25 – Re-use of rural Buildings.

ENFORCEMENT NOTICE COTTON WOOD BARN, PADDOCK VIEW, MANGROVE GREEN, COCKERHOE

RESOLVED: That the Committee authorised the Planning Control and Conservation Manager, subject to the Head of Legal and Democratic Services being satisfied with the evidence, to take whatever enforcement action was necessary to bring about the cessation in the unauthorised change of use with a time for compliance of 56 days.

REASON FOR DECISION: It was considered expedient to take enforcement action as the dog training classes and mail order distribution has a detrimental effect on the residential amenity of nearby dwellings and is contrary to Green Belt policy objectives.

7. PLANNING APPEALS

The Area Planning Officer reported that the following Planning Appeal had been lodged since the meeting of the Committee on 14 April 2005.

Appellant: Mr & Mrs Huggins
Reference Number: 04/01582/1HH
Address: 58 Pondcroft Road, Knebworth
Description: Single storey rear extension rear conservatory
Procedure: Written representations.

The Area Planning Officer reported that the following decisions had been determined since the last meeting of the Committee on 14 April 2005.

Appellant: Mr D O'Brien
Reference Number: 04/01258/1
Address: 7 Station Road, Knebworth
Description: Extension of trading hours
Decision: Dismissed (15.04.05)

Appellant: Robin Smith Ltd
Reference Number: 04/01294/1
Address: 1 Station Road, Knebworth
Description: Change of use from Class A1 (Retail) to Class A3 (Food and Drink)
Decision: Dismissed (20.04.05)

Appellant: Miss A Ryder
Reference Number: 04/01163/1HH
Address: 9 Gun Lane, Knebworth
Description: Conversion of bungalow to chalet bungalow by raising roof 1.5 metres and insertion of the pitched roof dormer windows and rooflight to front and rear roof slopes
Decision: Allowed (20.04.05)

Appellant: Mr & Mrs Corrie
Reference Number: 04/01813/1HH
Address: 17 Stockens Green, Knebworth
Description: Two storey side extension following demolition of existing single storey side extension
Decision: Dismissed (27.05.05)

Appellant: Mr Voisey
Reference Number: 04/01636/1HH
Address: 16 Mill Lane, Gosmore
Description: Two storey and single storey side extension, single storey front extension, double hipped roof single storey rear extension and rear conservatory
Decision: Dismissed (27.05.05)

Appellant: Mr Craft
Reference Number: 04/01815/1
Address: Land r/o 2A – 2B Gun Lane
Description: Conversion of two bedroom flat into 2 x one bedroom flats to include new rooflights to both roof slopes; single storey rear

extension to create one bedroom flat; creation of three parking spaces and garden area following demolition of four existing garages.

Decision: Dismissed (27.05.05)

8. CHAMPION NEWS

The Committee considered a report of the Strategic Director of Customer Services which advised the Committee of the activities and schemes with which the CDO had been involved since the last meeting of the Committee on 14 April 2005.

RESOLVED That the report of the Strategic Director of Customer Services be noted.

REASON FOR DECISION: To ensure that the Committee was kept informed about the work of the Community Development Officer in this area.

9. DEVELOPMENT AND VISIONING BUDGETS 2005 / 2006

The Committee considered a report of the Strategic Director of Customer Services that advised the Committee of the current expenditure and balances of the Area Committee's Development Budget. The CDO explained that the format of the report had been changed in line with the other area committees for a more consistent approach.

RESOLVED: That the current expenditure and balance of the Development and Visioning Budget be noted.

REASONS FOR DECISION: To ensure that the Committee was aware of the current financial situation of their Development Budget and that the strategic priorities of the Council in relation to the Southern Rural Area of North Hertfordshire could be met.

10. ASSET MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

The Chairman introduced the North Hertfordshire District Manager, Hertfordshire Highways, and the Principal Strategy Development Manager, Highways and Transportation Unit, Hertfordshire Highways, who made an oral presentation to the Committee that outlined how the asset management system employed by Hertfordshire Highways operated.

The Principal Strategy Development Manager, Highways and Transportation Unit, Hertfordshire Highways particularly mentioned the following:

- The asset management system covered A, B and country roads but did not include motorways and trunk roads ;
- Footpaths needed spraying;
- There was a backlog of roads to repair;
- Alternative methods of repairing roads were being investigated;
- Increased funding was required.

The Chairman thanked the North Hertfordshire District Manager and the Principal Strategy Development Manager for their presentation.

The meeting closed at 11.12pm

Chairman

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