

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 16 March 2006 at 7.30pm**

MINUTES

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

IN ATTENDANCE: *Principal Planning Officer, Area Planning Officer, Community
Development Officer for Southern Rural Area and Committee
and Member Services Officer.*

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE *County Councillor Tony Hunter, Councillor R.A.C. Thake and
eleven members of the public.*

The Chairman welcomed County Councillor Tony Hunter and members of the public to the meeting.

The Chairman announced that Alan Breckon (Principal Area Planning Officer) was about to retire from local government after thirty two years of service at the Council and was attending his last committee meeting. The Chairman thanked him for all his hard work and wished him well in his retirement.

134. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Karry Omer.

135. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on the 2 February 2006 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and signed by the Chairman.

136. NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

No items were presented for consideration by the Committee.

137. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Councillor David Miller declared a personal interest in planning application 05/01768/1 Shangri-la Farm, Todds Green as the applicant was known to him. Councillor David Miller reserved his right to speak and vote on the matter.

Councillor David Miller also declared a personal interest in planning application 05/01879/1 land at the side (north west) of garage (Graham Hilton Car Sales), Little Wymondley as the applicant was known to him. Councillor David Miller reserved his right to speak and vote on the matter.

Councillor D.J. Barnard declared a personal interest in planning application 05/01340/1 The Old Bakery, Bendish as the applicant was known to him. Councillor D.J. Barnard reserved his right to speak and vote on the matter.

138. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

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

139. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The Committee heard oral representations regarding the following items:

The Old Bakery, Bendish, SG4

Mr M Easton spoke as the applicant's representative.

Shangri-la Farm, Todds Green, Stevenage, SG1

Mr Colin Bayles spoke as the applicant's representative.

Land at the side (north west) of garage (Graham Hilton Car Sales), 1 Stevenage Road, Little Wymondley, SG4

Mr M Easton spoke as the applicant's representative.

The Principal Planning Officer updated the Committee regarding the Great Ashby Neighbourhood Centre. He said that it was with regret that he had to advise the Committee that despite the very strenuous efforts made over many months by the Committee, Developer and the Great Ashby Community Group (GACG) to secure a doctor's surgery on this site, these efforts had failed and it was no longer reasonable to impose the Section 106 Agreement on the developer.

The Chairman invited County Councillor Tony Hunter to address the Committee regarding a meeting that he had attended of the Primary Care Trust (PCT) held on 16 February 2006 where the subject of the Great Ashby Neighbourhood Centre had been discussed.

County Councillor Tony Hunter advised the Committee that despite forceful presentations by both Barbara Follett M.P. Oliver Heald M.P. and the GACG in support of a doctor's surgery at the Great Ashby Neighbourhood Centre, the PCT reiterated that there would not be one on this site. They advised the meeting that there were plans for a super surgery 'somewhere' in Great Ashby but would not confirm either the site or a date for the commencement of its construction.

Members of the Committee thanked County Councillor Tony Hunter for his efforts and comments and expressed their dismay at the decision of the PCT.

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
05/01783/ 1	<p>South of Neighbourhood Centre, Land off Great Ashby Way, Stevenage, SG1</p> <p>Application under the provisions of Section 106A(3) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 for the discharge of the obligation imposed by clause 5.3.2 of the Section 106 Agreement dated 23 March 1993 to procure premises for a doctors surgery on land within the neighbourhood Centre at Great Ashby, Stevenage.</p>	<p>Granted (as per report)</p>
05/01929/ 1	<p>Land at The Neighbourhood Centre, Great Ashby Way, Stevenage</p> <p>Erection of 3 storey building to provide a veterinary hospital and shop unit (including use Class D1) on ground floor; 3 x 2 bedroom and 5 x 1 bedroom flats on first and second floors, associated car parking spaces and ancillary works.</p>	<p>Granted (as per report)</p>
05/01932/ 1	<p>Park Wood, Park Lane, Old Knebworth, SG3</p> <p>Front porch with canopy. Single storey and first floor side extensions. Rear balcony.</p>	<p>Granted (as per report)</p>
05/01340/ 1	<p>The Old Bakery, Bendish, SG4 SECTION 73 APPLICATION</p> <p>Replacement single storey building for use as an ancillary residential annexe (without compliance with Condition 4 of planning permission 05/00431/1 granted 06.05.05.</p>	<p>Granted (see (a) below)</p>
05/01768/ 1	<p>Shangri-la Farm, Todds Green, Stevenage, SG1</p> <p>Retention of Building for B8 purposes (as amended by location and site plans received 23.1.06)</p>	<p>Granted (see (b) below)</p>
05/01879/ 1	<p>Land at the side (north west) of garage (Graham Hilton Car Sales), 1 Stevenage Road, Little Wymondley, SG4</p> <p>Retention of use of agricultural land for parking of staff, part exchange and repair/service customer cars (maximum of 50 vehicles). (As amended by site plan received 03.03.06)</p>	<p>REFERRED TO LICENSING & APPEALS COMMITTEE (See (c) below)</p>

- (a) The Area Planning Officer updated the report to advise members that the address should be amended to read "The Old Bakery, Bendish" and that the recommendation should read "That subject to no new material planning issues being raised by 23 March 2006, permission be **GRANTED** subject to the conditions set out in the report.
- (b) That Area Planning Officer updated the report to advise members that the recommendation should read "That subject to no new material planning issues being raised by 13 April 2006, permission be **GRANTED**". It was resolved that permission be **GRANTED** as per the Planning Control and Conservation Manager's recommendation and

the following additional condition:

“2) No goods, waste or other materials shall be stored outside of the building.

Reason: To safeguard the openness of the site in accordance with Green Belt policy objectives”.

- (c) **RESOLVED:** That in relation to Planning Application reference 05/01879/1, the planning application be **REFERRED TO THE LICENSING AND APPEALS COMMITTEE** for determination as the Committee were minded to grant planning permission contrary to Green Belt provisions in the Hertfordshire County Structure Plan Review 1991 – 2011 and the North Hertfordshire District Local Plan No. 2 with Alterations because of the following very special circumstances:
- 1) Does not harm the openness of the countryside;
 - 2) Lawful use of adjoining site;
 - 3) Loss of employment;
 - 4) Site would be screened in long term by existing fencing and landscaping
 - 5) Size of land, its appearance and the site’s relationship to the railway and road means the use causes less harm to the visual amenity of the locality and therefore is of less importance in Green Belt policy terms.

140. ENFORCEMENT ACTION

That in respect of Land at the side of garage 1, Stevenage Road, Little Wymondley, it was **RESOLVED** to defer a decision regarding enforcement action pending the outcome of a Licensing and Appeals Committee hearing to determine planning application reference 05/01879/1.

141. PLANNING APPEALS

The Area Planning Officer reported that one Planning Appeal had been lodged since the meeting of the Committee on 2 February 2006.

Appellant:	Gold Care Homes
Reference Number:	05/01326/1
Address:	The Old Rectory, Graveley
Description:	Part Two, part three storey extension to nursing home following demolition of existing barn; enlargement of existing parking area and ancillary works.
Procedure:	Written representations.

The Area Planning Officer reported that one appeal had been determined since the last meeting of the Committee on 2 February 2006.

Appellant:	Mr A Geddes
Reference Number:	05/00831/1
Address:	72 A, High Street, Kimpton
Description:	Erection of two 3 bedroomed semi-detached dwellings with integral single garages and two associated car parking spaces with turning space following demolition of existing bungalow.
Appeal Decision:	Dismissed (17.02.06)
Committee/Delegated	Delegated.

142. CHAMPION NEWS

The Community Development Officer for Southern Rural Area (CDO) presented a report of the Head of Community Development and Cultural Services that advised the Committee of the activities and schemes with which the CDO had been involved since the previous Committee meeting.

The report also brought to the Committee's attention some important community based activities that would be taking place during the next few months.

At paragraph 2.1 of the report, the CDO advised the Committee that the Quest accreditation that had been awarded to the Sports Development Team made North Hertfordshire the only local authority in the county to have won this award.

At 2.4 of the report, the Committee enquired about how the maintenance and associated costs of Vehicle Activated Signs was managed and it was agreed that these questions be referred back to the Joint Member Panel for an answer.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the report of the Community Development Officer for the Southern Rural Area be noted;
- (2) That the Sports Development Team be congratulated on being awarded Quest accreditation;
- (3) That the actions taken by the Community Development Officer for the Southern Rural area be endorsed;
- (4) That the question of how the maintenance and associated costs of Vehicle Activated Signs was managed be referred back to the Joint Member Panel for an answer;
- (5) That the following suggested locations for Vehicle activated signs be forwarded to the North Herts District Manager – Hertfordshire Highways for consideration at the next meeting of the Joint Member Panel to be held on 24 April 2006;
 - Kimpton High Street;
 - Offley High Street;
 - B656 - St Ippolyts/Codicote Road;
 - Church Lane, Preston.

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

143. SOUTHERN RURAL AREA DEVELOPMENT & AREA VISIONING BUDGETS 2005/2006

The Community Development Officer for Southern Rural Area (CDO) presented a report of the Head of Community Development and Cultural Services that advised the Committee about the current expenditure and balances of the Area Committee delegated budgets.

The report also brought to the Committee's attention details of recent requests received for Area Committee Development Discretionary Grant Funding made by community groups and local organisations.

The CDO advised the Committee that the deadline to allocate funds was 31 March 2006 and that any money unallocated after this date would be lost. The CDO provided the following summary of unallocated funds from ward budgets to the Committee:

- Knebworth: £11.00;
- Hitchwood: £29.00;
- Offa: £350.00;
- Kimpton: £51.00;
- Graveley & Wymondley: £700.00
- Codicote: £201.00;
- Hoo: £0;
- Cadwell: £0.

At paragraph 4.1 of the report, the Committee discussed considering grant applications on a more frequent basis and agreed that these be considered twice a year on a one year trial basis for the financial year 2006/2007.

At paragraph 6.6 of the report, the Committee agreed with the suggestion to install additional signage and other enforcement action to deter offenders from Fly-tipping and the CDO agreed to investigate the possibility of placing appropriate advertisements on NHDC vehicles.

The following documents were appended to the report;
Appendix 1 – Grant request from Offley & Cockernhoe Parish Council;
Appendix 2 – Grant request from Holwell Parish Council;
Appendix 3 – Spreadsheet of Committee Delegated Budgets 2005/06.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the budgetary expenditure, balances and carry forwards from the Ward Development Budgets and the allocated Visioning Budgets be noted;
- (2) That a sum of £396.00 be awarded to Offley & Cockernhoe Parish Council to support costs of emergency repairs to Cockernhoe Village Hall;
- (3) That a sum of £341.00 be awarded to Holwell Parish Council to support enhancement cleansing costs for Holwell Parish Council;
- (4) That a sum of £6,925 towards the costs of further enforcement methods and additional signage to deter offenders from Fly-tipping be agreed;
- (5) That any remaining unallocated underspend from the Southern Rural Area Discretionary budget as at 31 March 2006 be added to the £6,925 agreed at (4) above;
- (6) That consideration be given to Discretionary grant applications every six months for a one year trial period for the financial year 2006/07.

REASON FOR DECISIONS: To ensure that the Committee were aware of the awarding of financial assistance to voluntary and community organisations, schemes and initiatives.

144. VISIONING UPDATE REPORT 2005/2006

The Community Development Officer for Southern Rural Area (CDO) presented a report of the Head of Community Development and Cultural Services to the Committee that outlined current progress with visioning and invited suggestions for revenue spend for the year 2005/06.

The report also requested that the Committee consider appropriate projects for funding from the Committee's Area Visioning capital allocation and that notice of any schemes be made before 1 June 2006.

At section LCD4 of Appendix 1 to the report, the Committee expressed the view that whilst this was a very worthwhile project, which should be encouraged, North Herts College was running a similar award scheme. It was suggested that North Herts District Council should not duplicate this award but work in conjunction with other agencies to produce an integrated scheme.

The following document was appended to the report:
Appendix 1 – Updated Action Plan February 2006.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the progress on Area Visioning made to date be noted;
- (2) That at section LCD4 of Appendix 1, the CDO investigate the possibility of working in conjunction with partners/agencies to produce an integrated Volunteer of the Year award and report progress back to a future meeting of the committee;
- (3) That the priority for implementation and spend as located in the Action Plan for the year 2006/07 be agreed.

REASONS FOR DECISIONS

- (1) The report was part of the implementation and review process for Area Visioning in which Area Committees were advised to progress and were asked for their comments;
- (2) To enable the Committee to commit resources from its Development Budget and its allocation of Area Visioning funds to implement its priorities for action.

At the close of the meeting, the Chairman asked that a vote of thanks be given to Councillor F.R.B. Wordsworth who was retiring as a Councillor after many years of hard work and service to the Council. The Committee endorsed the comments of the Chairman and wished Councillor Wordsworth well in the future.

The meeting closed at 10.20 p.m.

Chairman

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