

**NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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

**Minutes of the meeting held in the Council Offices, Gernon Road, Letchworth  
Garden City on 13 July 2006 at 7.30 p.m.**

**MINUTES**

- PRESENT:** *Councillors Tom Brindley (Vice-Chairman), A. Bardett, J. Bishop, Tricia Gibbs, Sal Jarvis and Mrs C.P.A. Strong.*
- IN ATTENDANCE:** *John Chapman (Area Planning Officer), Tim Stephen (Community Development Manager) and Donna Levett (Committee & Member Services Officer).*
- ALSO PRESENT:** *Mr Kevin Green (SCooTS 2 Wheel Project Co-Ordinator, Community Development Agency for Hertfordshire) and 14 members of the public.*

**CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman welcomed everyone present to the meeting.

The Chairman drew the Committee's attention to the error in report circulation for Agenda Item 7 – North Hertfordshire District Council's Public Conveniences – whereby the report relating to the Baldock & District area had been circulated with the agenda instead of the Southern Rural area. Members of the Committee had since been sent the correct report, and further copies were available at the meeting for members of the public.

**15. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D.J. Barnard (Chairman), J. Gray and David Miller.

In the absence of the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman, Councillor Tom Brindley, acted as Chairman for the duration of the meeting.

**16. MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the meetings held on 16 May 2006 and 1 June 2006 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and signed by the Chairman.

**17. NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS**

No other business was submitted for consideration by the Committee.

**18. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

**a) Agenda Item 11 – Planning Applications: Planning Application Ref. 06/00538/1 – Taveta, Cowards Lane, Codicote**

Councillor A. Bardett declared a personal interest as the applicant was a member of the same Conservative group. Councillor Bardett reserved his right to speak and vote on this matter.

Councillor Tom Brindley declared a prejudicial interest as he was the applicant. Councillor Brindley withdrew from the meeting for the duration of this item.

In the absence of both the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman, Councillor Tricia Gibbs **PROPOSED** and Councillor J. Bishop **SECONDED** and, following a vote,

it was **RESOLVED** that Councillor Bardett act as Chairman for the duration of this item.

**b) Agenda Item 11 – Planning Applications: Planning Application Ref. 06/00378/1HH – 107 Codicote Road, Welwyn**

Councillor A. Bardett declared a personal interest as he and the applicant were both members of the Knebworth Probus Club. Councillor Bardett reserved his right to speak and vote on this matter.

Councillor Tom Brindley declared a personal interest as he was a member of Codicote Parish Council, who had considered the application. Councillor Brindley reserved his right to speak and vote on this matter.

**19. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Mr Gary Dinneen had given due notice that he wished to speak at the meeting regarding planning application ref. 06/00378/1HH – 107 Codicote Road, Welwyn. Mr Dinneen was the applicant. However, as there were no objectors addressing the meeting, Mr Dineen advised the Chairman that he no longer wished to speak.

Mr Anthony Mann had given due notice that he wished to speak at the meeting regarding planning application ref. 06/00665/1 – 4 The Drive, Wheathampstead. Mr Mann was speaking as an objector to the application. In support of his presentation to the Committee, Mr Mann had also provided an information pack for all members of the Committee and the Area Planning Officer.

When addressing the Committee, Mr Mann stressed the objectors' concerns about the loss of privacy and tranquillity that would result from the development, and its impact on the character of the area. He also quoted a previous, similar application at 34 Kimpton Road which had been refused on appeal on the grounds that its distance from the boundary with its neighbour would result in loss of privacy.

Mr Nick Webb had also given due notice that he wished to speak at the meeting regarding that planning application. Mr Webb was the applicant's representative, and spoke in response to the points raised by Mr Mann. He stressed that, whilst the new property would be built to the rear of the existing property, it would relate specifically to another line of existing properties and, together with the new access to it, would enhance the streetscape in the area and improve visibility. Mr Webb informed the Committee that the side of the proposed dwelling had been amended so that it was significantly further away from the boundary, as a result of concerns expressed by neighbours, and that the gardens could not in any way be considered to sub-standard as they conformed with all guidance on amenity space for dwellings.

The Chairman thanked Mr Mann and Mr Webb for addressing the Committee and informed them that the points they had raised would be considered when determining the application.

Miss Jackie Ranson (the applicant) had given due notice that she wished to speak at the meeting regarding planning application reference 06/00564/1HH – 2 Raymond Cottages, Upper Green, Ickleford. However, Miss Ranson was not present at the meeting, so no representation was made.

**20. REFERRAL FROM NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE HIGHWAYS PARTNERSHIP JOINT MEMBER PANEL – 24 APRIL 2006 – NHHP DISCRETIONARY BUDGET PROJECTS 2007/2008**

The Committee considered a referral from the North Hertfordshire Highways Partnership Joint Member Panel, which invited the Area Committees to submit projects for consideration of funding from the Panel's Discretionary Budget for the financial year 2007/2008.

**RESOLVED:**

- (1) That the following schemes be put forward for consideration of funding from the North Hertfordshire Highways Partnership Joint Member Panel's Discretionary Budget:
  - Works to repair Rabley Heath Road to be advanced;
  - Repairs to Grimstone Road, Little Wymondley;
  - Repairs to Bedford Road, between Ickleford and Holwell
  - Extension of repair works to Old Hale Way, with particular reference to the section along past schools towards Ickleford
  - Bury Lane, Codicote – explore and identify simple measures that can be taken to address problems with frequent accidents and cars leaving the roads (signage etc)
  - Transitional speed limit on the B656 into Codicote to mirror the other end of the road as it enters St Ippolyts
- (2) That any further suggestions that Members may have for inclusion on the list to be put forward for consideration of funding be submitted in writing to the Committee & Member Services Officer by Friday 21 July 2006.

**REASON FOR DECISION:** To ensure that the Joint Member Panel allocated funding from the Discretionary Budget for agreed themes.

**21. NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL'S PUBLIC CONVENIENCES**

The Community Development Manager presented a report of the Head of Leisure and Environmental Services to the Committee which informed them of the Cabinet's strategic decision for the Council's public conveniences and sought their input on the proposed refurbishment project, with particular reference to the Southern Rural area.

The Committee supported the project and the urgent need for work to be undertaken to improve public conveniences in the District. However, some concern was expressed about the level of funding required to undertake the project, and the key requirement of an affordable project to provide quality facilities that were available for use when the public needed them was stressed.

**RESOLVED:** That the strategic decision from Cabinet for the North Hertfordshire District Council's Public Conveniences, as stated in paragraph 3.1 of the report of the Head of Leisure and Environmental Services, be noted.

**REASON FOR DECISION:** To ensure the delivery of project objectives.

**22. CHAMPION NEWS**

The Community Development Manager presented a report of the Head of Community Development & Cultural Services to the Committee, which advised them of the activities undertaken by the Community Development Officer for the Southern Rural Area since the meeting of the Committee held on 1 June 2006, and brought to their attention some important community based activities that would be taking place during the next few months.

Councillor Tricia Gibbs informed the Committee that Ickleford had won the Hertfordshire Village of the Year 2006 competition. Part of the requirement for that award was the production of a Village Plan, which the Community Development Officer for the Southern Rural Area had also helped to produce, so Councillor Gibbs also expressed her thanks for this assistance.

**RESOLVED:**

- (1) That the report of the Head of Community Development & Cultural Services be noted;

- (2) That the actions taken by the Community Development Officer for the Southern Rural Area to promote greater community capacity and well-being for the Southern Rural area communities be endorsed;
- (3) That the thanks of the Committee for the work undertaken by the Community Development Officer for the Southern Rural Area on behalf of the Committee and the communities in the area be noted.

**REASON FOR DECISION:** To keep members of the Committee apprised of the latest developments in community activities in the Southern Rural area.

**23. SCOOTER AND CYCLE TRANSPORT SOLUTIONS (SCooTS) 2 WHEELS PROJECT FOR CAPITAL PLANT AND EQUIPMENT VISIONING FUND**

The Community Development Manager presented a report of the Head of Community Development & Cultural Services to the Committee which sought the Committee's determination of a funding application from the SCooTS 2 Wheels Project for £30,000 from the Area Capital Visioning Fund. This report had been produced subsequent to the presentation made to Committee at its meeting on 1 June 2006, to address the concerns expressed by Members at that meeting and make a formal recommendation for funding.

The Committee expressed their support for the project in principle, but were also concerned about committing such a large sum of money to one project, which could be used for other projects. They also expressed their support for an approach to be made to the Baldock & District and Royston & District Committees, as clients would also be drawn from within the rural areas covered by those Committees.

**RESOLVED:**

- (1) That the report of the Head of Community Development & Cultural Services be noted;
- (2) That the sum of £15,000 be allocated from the Committee's Capital Visioning budget to the Community Development Agency for Hertfordshire for the SCooTS 2 Wheels Project, subject to the project gaining support (financial or otherwise) from other partner agencies, such monies to be awarded as follows:
  - April 2007 - £5,000
  - April 2008 - £5,000
  - April 2009 - £5,000
- (3) That a report be brought back to this Committee each March to provide an update to the Committee of progress made in the project;
- (4) That the Head of Community Development and Cultural Services be requested to explore alternative sources of funding for the project, including making capital visioning funding bids from the Baldock & District and Royston & District Committees.

**REASON FOR DECISIONS:** This project, if successful, will overcome transport obstacles faced by young people living in rural areas and enable NHDC to achieve goals as laid out in the Corporate Plan 1005-1015 and the Rural Strategy 2005-2010.

**24. ANNUAL GRANTS AND DEVELOPMENT DISCRETIONARY BUDGET 2005/2006**

The Community Development Manager presented a report of the Head of Community Development & Cultural Services to the Committee, which set out the budgetary situation for the Committee.

**RESOLVED:**

- (1) That the budgetary expenditure, balances and carry forwards from the Ward Development Budgets and the allocated and unallocated Visioning Budgets be noted;

- (2) That the *de minimis* level for Capital Plant and Equipment Visioning funding support from the Committee's budget of £15,000 be noted.

**REASONS FOR DECISION:**

- (1) The report was intended to apprise Members of the financial resources available to this Committee. It drew attention to the current budgetary situation, assisted in the effective financial management of the Committee's budget and ensured actions were performed within the Authority's Financial Regulations and the guidance contained in the Grants procedure;
- (2) The awarding of financial assistance to voluntary organisations and the use of discretionary spending allows the Committee to further the aims and strategic priorities of the Council.

**25. PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

The Committee heard oral representations from Mr Mann (objector) and Mr Webb (applicant's representative) in relation to planning application reference 06/0065/1 – 4 The Drive, Wheathampstead Details of these representations can be found at Minute 19 above.

**RESOLVED:** To determine the applications as set out in the report of the Planning & Building Control as submitted to the Committee in the following schedule:

**SCHEDULE**

<b>Reference Number</b>	<b>Description of Development and location</b>	<b>Decision</b>
<b>06/00538/1</b>	<b>Taveta, Cowards Lane, Codicote</b> Erection of two 4-bedroom detached dwellings with garage provision for both dwellings attached to Plot 1 following demolition of existing dwelling.	<b>GRANTED</b> (See (a) below)
<b>06/00378/1HH</b>	<b>107 Codicote Road, Welwyn</b> Raising of roof of bungalow to facilitate creation of a first floor including 3 front dormers and 2 dormer windows to each side and a part single part two storey rear extension.	<b>GRANTED</b> (As per report)
<b>06/00506/1HH</b>	<b>3 Oakfields Avenue, Knebworth</b> Extension of roof to form half hipped end on west elevation; replacement dormer windows; replacement single garage following demolition of existing.	<b>GRANTED</b> (As per report)
<b>06/00697/1</b>	<b>Land West of The Old Coach House, Maydencroft Lane, Gosmore</b> Replacement stable blocks following demolition of existing stable building.	<b>GRANTED</b> (As per report)
<b>06/00735/1HH</b>	<b>Chapelfoot Farm, Whitwell Road, Langley</b> Alterations to existing vehicular access including the erection of 1.5m boundary walls and 1.8m gates. Provision of new driveway. (As amplified by plans received 16 <sup>th</sup> June 2006).	<b>GRANTED</b> (As per report)
<b>06/00466/1HH</b>	<b>Chequers House, Chequers Lane, Preston</b>	<b>GRANTED</b>

Detached garage with games room in attic. (See (b) below)  
Addition of garden room to rear elevation. Front  
entrance porch.

**06/00564/1HH**     **2 Raymond Cottages, Upper Green, Ickleford**     **GRANTED**  
Single storey rear extension. (As per report)

**06/00665/1**     **4 The Drive, Wheathampstead, St. Albans**     **REFUSED**  
Detached dwelling (design, external appearance (See (c) below)  
and landscaping reserved) as amended by plan  
no's 133-PL-01 Rev C and 133-PL-02 Rev C  
received on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2006.

(a) **RESOLVED:** That, with regard to planning application reference 06/00538/1, planning permission be **GRANTED** subject to the conditions set out in the report of the Head of Planning and Building Control and the following two additional conditions:

7. *Prior to the occupation of the dwellings the proposed 6 parking spaces (3 per dwelling), shall be provided in accordance with the approved plans and thereafter shall be kept available solely and permanently for the parking of motor vehicles.*

*Reason: In the interests of highway safety and amenity.*

8. *Prior to the occupation of the dwellings the proposed accesses shall be constructed in a hard surfacing material for the first 6 metres from the edge of the carriageway.*

*Reason: To prevent loose material from passing onto the public highway which may be detrimental to highway safety.*

(b) **RESOLVED:** That, with regard to planning application reference 06/00466/1HH, planning permission be **GRANTED** subject to the conditions set out in the report of the Head of Planning and Building Control and the following additional condition:

5. *Before the commencement of any other works on the site, the Ash tree to be retained shall be protected by the erection of chestnut paling or chain link fencing of a minimum height of 1.2 metres above existing ground level on a scaffolding framework, located 1 metre from the proposed north east and north west walls of the proposed garage, unless in any particular case the Local Planning Authority agrees to dispense with this requirement. The fencing shall thereafter be maintained for the duration of all engineering and building works. No building materials shall be stacked or mixed within 10 metres of the tree. No fires shall be lit where flames could extend to within 5 metres of the foliage, and no notices shall be attached to trees.*

*Reason:*

(c) The Area Planning Officer informed the Committee that, should the application be granted, condition 3 should be amended to read "The ridge height of the dwelling hereby approved shall not exceed 7.6 metres above ground level".

However, following discussion by the Committee, Councillor Bardett **PROPOSED**, Councillor Gibbs **SECONDED** and following a Committee vote it was:

**RESOLVED:** That, with regard to planning application reference 06/00665/1, planning permission be **REFUSED** for the following reasons:

- 1. The application site is within an area designated in the North Hertfordshire District Local Plan No. 2 with Alterations as Rural Area beyond the Green Belt within which additional residential development for a single dwelling will only be granted subject to inter alia the development not having any adverse impact on the local environment. In the view of the Local Planning Authority the proposed development involving the sub-division of the applicant's garden would result in an unsatisfactory form of backland development which, together with the siting of the dwelling and the length of the access road, would lead to the undesirable intensification and consolidation of this part of the settlement to the detriment of its overall character and appearance. In addition, the access road would give rise to noise, disturbance and exhaust fumes which would harm the residential amenity of numbers 2,4 and 6 The Drive. Accordingly, the proposal does not comply with the requirements of Policy 6 of the North Hertfordshire District Local Plan No. 2 with Alterations.*
- 2. The occupiers of the proposed dwelling would be heavily dependent on services provided outside of the settlement, giving rise to a significant reliance on trips by car, contrary to the sustainability criteria embodied in Policy 1 of the Hertfordshire County Structure Plan Review 1991-2011.*

## 26. PLANNING APPEALS

The Area Planning Officer informed the Committee that the following planning appeals had been lodged since the meeting of the Committee held on 1 June 2006:

Appellant	Mr N. Thomson
Reference number	05/01418/1
Address	Land Adjacent Hunters Gate Farm, Preston Road, Gosmore
Proposal	Outline application: one detached dwelling (design, external appearance and landscaping reserved).
Method	Written representations

Appellant	Mr & Mrs Perry
Reference number	05/01633/1HH
Address	The Paddocks, 46 Salusbury Lane, Offley
Proposal	Single storey front extension and porch.
Method	Written representations

Appellant	Michael Lewis & Renee Lewis
Reference number	05/01779/1HH
Address	7A Westbury Farm Close, Offley
Proposal	Retention of shed in rear garden without compliance with condition relating to staining of shed.
Method	Written Representations

Appellant	F.J. Moore
Reference number	05/01911/1EUD
Address	Land at and to the North East of Gosmore End House, Hitchin Road, Gosmore
Proposal	Lawful Development Certificate Existing: Use of land for

residential purposes and forming cartilage of Gosmore End House.  
Method Public Inquiry

The Area Planning Officer informed the Committee that the following appeals had been determined since the meeting of the Committee held on 1 June 2006:

Appellant Mr P. Gallagher  
Reference number 05/01453/1  
Address Land at Meadowcroft, Mangrove Road, Cockernhoe  
Proposal Outline Planning Permission: One dwelling with detached double garage (design, external appearance and landscaping reserved).  
Decision Appeal DISMISSED (05.07.2006)

Appellant Gold Care Homes  
Reference number 05/01326/1  
Address The Old Rectory, Graveley  
Proposal Part two, part three-storey extension to Nursing Home following demolition of existing barn; enlargement of parking area and ancillary works (as variation to planning permission ref 05/00358/1 dated 29.04.2005)  
Decision Appeal ALLOWED (11.07.2006)

**RESOLVED:** That the planning appeals that had been lodged or determined since the meeting of the Committee held on 1 June 2006, as identified by the Area Planning Officer, be noted.

**REASON FOR DECISION:** To ensure the Committee were kept informed of the current situation with regard to planning appeals.

**27. PLANNING ENFORCEMENT**

The Area Planning Officer confirmed that there had been no change in status of Planning Enforcement matters since the update provided at the meeting of the Committee held on 1 June 2006 (Minute 14 refers).

However, in response to a question from Councillor Jarvis, the Area Planning Officer advised that a site at High Street, Graveley, was not included in the list as, so far as he was aware, an Enforcement Notice had been served and complied with. Councillor Jarvis advised that the breach had reoccurred, and in light of this information, the Committee requested that a report be presented to the next meeting of the Committee to confirm the status of all instances where planning enforcement had been authorised.

**RESOLVED:** That the Area Planning Officer be requested to bring to the meeting of the Committee to be held on 24 August 2006 a report detailing the status of all planning enforcement matters authorised by this Committee.

**REASON FOR DECISIONS:** To ensure the Committee were kept informed of the current situation with regard to planning enforcement matters.

The meeting closed at 9.34 p.m.

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Chairman



