NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

PLANNING CONTROL COMMITTEE

MEETING HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, DISTRICT COUNCIL OFFICES, GERNON ROAD, LETCHWORTH GARDEN CITY ON THURSDAY, 22ND AUGUST, 2019 AT 7.30 PM

MINUTES

- **Present:** Councillors Terry Tyler (Chairman), Ruth Brown, Morgan Derbyshire, Tony Hunter, David Levett, Ian Mantle, Sue Ngwala, Sean Prendergast, Mike Rice and Michael Weeks, David Barnard and Kay Tart.
- In Attendance: Tom Rea (Principal Planning Officer West Team), Richard Tiffin (Principal Planning Officer – East Team) Nurainatta Katevu (Legal Advisor), Hilary Dineen (Committee, Member and Scrutiny Manager), Matthew Hepburn (Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer), Tom Rea (Principal Planning Officer) and Richard Tiffin (Principal Planning Officer)
- Also Present: At the commencement of the meeting Councillor Paul Clark and approximately 16 members of the public, including registered speakers.

29 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Audio recording – Session 1 – 1 min 19 secs

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors:

Daniel Allen, Val Bryant, Ian Moody and Mike Hughson.

Having given due notice the following Councillors advised that they would be substituting:

Councillor David Barnard for Councillor Ian Moody; Councillor Kay Tart for Councillor Mike Hughson.

30 MINUTES - 18 JULY 2019

Audio recording – Session 1 – 1 min 47 secs

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 18 July 2019 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chairman.

31 NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

Audio recording – Session 1 – 2 mins 10 secs

There was no other business notified.

32 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Audio recording – Session 1 – 2 mins 15 secs

- (1) The Chairman advised that, in accordance with Council policy this meeting is being audio recorded. Members of the public and the press may use their devices to film/photograph, or do a sound recording of the meeting, but should not disturb the meeting.
- (2) Please could Members, officers and public speakers announce their names each time they speak and speak directly into the microphones to assist members of the public
- (3) To clarify matters for the registered speakers:

Members of the public have 5 minutes for each group of speakers i.e. 5 minutes for objectors and 5 minutes for supporters. This 5 minute time limit also applies to Member Advocates.

The bell will sound after $4\frac{1}{2}$ minutes as a warning and again at 5 minutes, to signify that the speaker must cease.

(5) Members were reminded that any declarations of interest in respect of any business set out in the agenda, should be declared as either a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or Declarable Interest and are required to notify the Chairman of the nature of any interest declared at the commencement of the relevant item on the agenda. Members declaring a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest must withdraw from the meeting for the duration of the item. Members declaring a Declarable Interest, wishing to exercise a 'Councillor Speaking Right', must declare this at the same time as the interest, move to the public area before speaking to the item and then must leave the room before the debate and vote.

33 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Audio recording – Session 1 – 4 mins 48 secs

The Chairman confirmed that the 8 registered speakers and two Member Advocates were present.

34 17/00110/1 - LAND SURROUNDING BURLOES COTTAGES, NEWMARK ROAD, ROYSTON

Audio Recording – Session 1 - 4 mins 56 secs

Prior to the item being considered, Councillor Tony Hunter declared a declarable interest in that he had objected to site RY10 in the Local Plan. He advised that he would listen to the presentations and address the Committee as a Member Advocate following which, he would leave the room and take no part in the debate and vote.

The Principal Planning Officer (East Team) presented the report in respect of application 17/00110/1 supported by a visual presentation consisting of photographs and plans.

The Principal Planning Officer recommended that the following amendments be made to the conditions:

Condition 5

Add the following at the end of condition 5:

"the temporary construction access off of Burloes Lane shall be closed to the satisfaction of the Highway Authority on completion of construction activity on the site."

Condition 8

The words "neutral or to be deleted from the final sentence so that it read:

"The development must demonstrate a positive ecological unit score from the pre development baseline.

The following Members asked questions of the Principal Planning Officer:

- Councillor Ian Mantle;
- Councillor Michael Weeks;
- Councillor Mike Rice;
- Councillor Terry Tyler.

In answer to questions, the Principal Planning Officer clarified the following:

- Bikes and pedestrians would have to use the main access point to the site.
- Although appearance was not a consideration at this meeting, It had been included in the Design Statement that any development above 2.5 storeys must be avoided unless it could be adequately justified.
- The trees that could be seen on the site plan may be retained but this was a matter for the reserved matters stage.
- In respect of the Section 106 contributions, the youth contribution of £25,478.25 would go towards the Hitchin Young People's Centre. Although this facility was located in Hitchin, it would provide a service to the Youth of the whole District.

Councillor Tony Hunter thanked the Chairman for the opportunity to address the Committee in objection to application 17/00110/1 as follows:

- There was only one point of access to the site;
- Policy stated that any development of more than 300 dwellings had to have two accesses;
- The traffic along the A505 had no way to turn right into Newmarket Road;
- County agreed to a safety audit on RY2, which resulted in a roundabout being provided;
- A great deal of trees and vegetation would be removed to make the sight lines required for the access;
- Construction traffic would need traffic lights to allow construction vehicles into the site as it was so dangerous;
- The site needed an emergency vehicle access;
- Traffic would have to come through Royston Town Centre to access the site.

The following members asked questions of Councillor Tony Hunter:

- Councillor David Barnard;
- Councillor Mike Rice;
- Councillor Sue Ngwala.

In response to questions, Councillor Tony Hunter advised:

- If there was to be one access to the development then an emergency vehicle access was required. This had been achieved in other developments;
- Although leaving the access via Burloes was an option, this was considered as dangerous by HCC;
- The road width within the estate would be something that would need to be looked at by Hertfordshire County Council Highways at the reserved matters stage;
- The main concern was the single access, which would result in the estate being cut off if there were a problem there.

The Principal Planning Officer further added that:

- The Fairview Scheme had an emergency vehicle access;
- The site only having one main access point, was considered satisfactory by the Highways Authority;
- It would be noted that there was a concern with the lack of emergency vehicle access.

Members asked that their concerns regarding the single access to the site be minuted.

Councillor Hunter left the room at 8.02pm for the rest of the item

Mr Peter Williams, Countryside Properties, thanked the Chairman for the opportunity address the Committee in support of application 17/00110/1 as follows:

- This was an allocated site in the emerging Local Plan and was outside of the Green Belt;
- The proposals had been extensively consulted on;
- £6 million would be go towards the provision of a school through Section 106 contributions;
- There would be a provision of affordable and social rented housing;
- Bus route provisions would be put in place;
- The scheme would provide open spaces including play areas;
- The site would offer 325 x 2-5 bedroom homes;
- There would be economic benefits for the area and to the Council;
- This scheme would offer quality homes that would be well-designed and sympathetic to the local area.

The following Members asked questions of Mr Williams' presentation:

- Councillor Ian Mantle;
- Councillor Ruth Brown;
- Council Michael Weeks.

In response to questions, Mr Williams advised:

- There would be a cycle route within the development;
- It was intended that there would be a contribution towards an extension of the bus service;
- The copse of trees would be retained;
- There were no details of what would be included in the open spaces as of yet, but they would engage with the Council to discuss;
- They would be happy to explore Burloes as an emergency access, but would have to consult with HCC;
- The site had significant topographical issues and another access would require significant levelling.

The Principal Planning Officer advised that:

- It may be possible to retain the construction access as an emergency vehicle access;
- The developer was keen on open spaces and allotments could be considered at the details stage of the application.

The following Members took part in the debate:

- Councillor Mike Rice
- Councillor Ian Mantle
- Councillor David Levett
- Councillor Ruth Brown
- Councillor David Barnard
- Councillor Kay Tart
- Councillor Terry Tyler
- Councillor Sean Prendergast.

Points raised during the debate were as follows:

- The lack of emergency vehicle access to the development;
- More than one access to the site was needed;
- The Scheme was not encouraging the use of other forms of transport other than cars;
- Better access was needed for those who did not drive;
- Cycle and pedestrian ways through to Studlands were needed especially as there was a school near by;
- There should be cycle and mobility access into the Town;
- This development should be better integrated with the Studlands development;
- There should be better connectivity with established developments;
- Footways should be widened to include cycle ways;
- Drivers' visibility was restricted on the junction leaving the development and turning right out of the site was hazardous;
- Visibility splays were insufficient;
- Without cycle ways, it was unlikely that residents would use the amenities in Royston as it would be more convenient for them to drive out of the town to shop;
- The Section 106 youth contribution should be spent in developing youth provision in Royston rather than being spent in Hitchin;
- The National Speed Limit outside the development was a concern;
- The percentage of affordable housing on the site was not enough;

The Principal Planning Officer advised Members that:

- The proposed footpaths were to be used by cyclists;
- Hertfordshire County Council has considered bus routes into Royston Town Centre;
- The Highways Authority dictated the speed limit;
- In considering the amount of affordable housing, it was noted that £6 million would be provided for a school and the offer of 20 percent affordable housing had been supported by a viability assessment;

The Planning Lawyer confirmed that the Section 106 agreement was a legal document that meant provision of affordable housing would be guaranteed.

Members sought an amendment to condition 11 to ensure pedestrian, cycle and motor scooter access between developments.

The Planning Lawyer raised a Point of Order, advising that as Councillor Sean Prendergast had left the Chamber during the debate, he would be unable to vote on this application.

It was proposed by Councillor Barnard and seconded by Councillor Rice that application 17/00110/1 be deferred for the following reasons:

- Road safety on Newmarket road;
- Lack of an emergency access to the site;
- Only one main access point to the site.

Upon the vote and on the Chairman's casting vote the motion to defer was lost.

It was proposed by Councillor Ian Mantle and seconded by Councillor Morgan Derbyshire that the application be granted permission subject to:

- The conditions in the report;
- The revised Conditions 5 and 8, as advised by the Principal Planning Officer;
- Amended Condition 11 to take into account connectivity between estates;
- An additional Condition 17 regarding an emergency vehicle access at Burloes;
- That officers request that Section 106 contribution for youth provision be allocated in Royston rather than Hitchin.

Upon the vote it was:

RESOLVED:

(1) That application 17/00110/1 be GRANTED planning permission subject to the conditions and reasons contained in the report of the Development and Conservation Manager, the following amended and additional conditions and completion of a satisfactory Section 106 agreement.

Condition 5

That Condition 5 be amended to read:

"Construction of the approved development shall not commence until a Construction Traffic Management Plan has been submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Highway Authority. Thereafter, the construction of the development shall only be carried out in accordance with the approved Plan. The Construction Traffic Management Plan shall include construction vehicle numbers/routing such as prohibition of construction traffic being routed through Royston town centre and shall be carried out as approved. The temporary construction access off of Burloes Lane shall be closed to the satisfaction of the Highway Authority on completion of construction activity on the site."

Condition 8

That Condition 8 be amended to read:

"Prior to the determination of a reserved matters application, the applicant shall undertake an ecological assessment of the development site which utilises the DEFRA Biodiversity Impact Calculator metric or a similar assessment tool. The development must demonstrate a positive ecological unit score from the pre development baseline.

Condition 11

That Condition 11 be amended to read:

"Prior to the commencement of the development the applicant shall submit a programme for the delivery and adoption (or private management of) footpaths

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around the site, with public access secured in perpetuity including non-car access for cycles and mobility scooters to the established residential development off of Valley Rise. This programme will be agreed by the Local Planning Authority in conjunction with Herts County Council Rights of Way. The agreed programme will be implemented in accordance with any agreed phasing programme and thereafter maintained in perpetuity.

Reason: To deliver a sustainable scheme of public rights of way for the incumbent population and the wider community."

Condition 17

That a new condition 17 be added to read:

"Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved further details shall be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority, in consultation with the highway authority, concerning the provision of an emergency vehicle access along Burloes Lane following the cessation of its use for construction traffic. The approved emergency access details shall be implemented prior to first occupation.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety."

- (2) That, should, for any reason, the Section 106 agreement not be completed before the 30th Sept 2019 and the applicant does not agree to an extension of time to allow for this, officers be requested to refuse planning permission under delegated powers on the grounds of no satisfactory Section 106 agreement
- (3) That officers be requested to enquire whether Section 106 contributions for youth provision be allocated to projects in Royston and not in Hitchin.

Councillor Tony Hunter returned to the room

There was a 5 minute comfort break at 21:17.

35 19/00386/RM LAND ADJACENT AND TO THE EAST OF McDONALDS RESTAURANT, BALDOCK ROAD, ROYSTON, HERTFORDSHIRE SG8 9NT

Audio recording – Session 2 – 0.00 secs

The Principal Planning Officer advised that the following amendments to the report were required:

- Paragraph 3.2 Delete "The Parish Council understand the Natural England will also oppose this development along with the Conservators"
- Paragraph 4.3.16 the first sentence should read: "Other than the traditional two storey houses, this scheme specifies three 3 storey apartment block at the western end of the site near the McDonalds restaurant."
- Paragraph 4.4.1 Insert "as well as a site for a" before 'new first school' in first sentence.

The Principal Planning Officer (East Team) presented the report in respect of application 19/00386/RM supported by a visual presentation consisting of photographs and plans.

Mr Wallace Young, DCa architects, thanked the Chairman for the opportunity to address the Committee in support of application19/00386/RM as follows:

- This development provided 98 affordable homes and 108 private homes for the local area;
- There was a detailed landscape scheme that included open spaces and pedestrian routes for dog walking and cycling;
- Access points to the school site had been considered.

The following Members asked questions of Mr Young's presentation:

- Councillor David Levett;
- Councillor Mike Rice;
- Councillor Michael Weeks;
- Councillor Ruth Brown;
- Councillor Kay Tart.

In response to questions, Mr Young advised:

- At present, there was not a registered social housing landlord.
- Most of the houses were set back from the railway line.
- Fencing was to be put in place in order to prevent access to the balancing ponds and railway line.
- Access to other developments was not confirmed.
- Foul water details had been submitted with the application;
- There would not be access directly into the next development site.

The Principal Planning Officer advised that:

- A condition regarding the foul water drainage had been imposed on the outline permission that a foul water scheme was to be submitted, which had not yet been discharged;
- The scheme could only proceed with the agreement of Anglian Water.

The following Members took part in the debate:

- Councillor Mike Rice;
- Councillor David Levett;
- Councillor Ruth Brown;
- Councillor Terry Tyler;
- Councillor Michael Weeks;
- Councillor Tony Hunter.

Members raised the following points during the debate:

- The report contained no detail about electric vehicle charging points;
- The design of the large building was not in keeping with the local area, particularly as they would form the gateway to Royston and opposite the Heath;
- There was concern that the social housing would not be spread throughout the development, but be concentrated in one area;
- There was no access to the Kier Home Development for pedestrians and cycles;
- Upkeep and maintenance of the play area was to be done by someone other than NHDC;
- The proposed building was an eye sore;
- The report did not contain any details about the prospect of the speed limit being decreased.

The Principal Planning Officer informed Members that:

- Although he shared concerns regarding the design of the large buildings, he thought that the developer had considered the style of local buildings by using gault bricks and red roofs;
- Maintenance of play areas relied on private management companies;
- Redrow were responsible for the play areas in the Phase 1 development and these were well managed;

Councillor David Levett proposed that application 19/00386/RM be refused on the grounds that it was not in keeping with the local area.

Following advise from the Principal Planning Officer that the application could be deferred, Councillor David Levett withdraw his motion to refuse.

It was proposed by Councillor David Levett and seconded by Councillor Ian Mantle that application 19/00386/RM be deferred for the following reasons:

- to enable further consideration regarding scale and design, particularly of the large buildings that would form a gateway to Royston
- The inclusion of electric vehicle charging points;
- Exploration of pedestrian and cycle access into the adjoining site
- Concern regarding the speed limit and other highways issues: and

That if the developers reject the recommendation to redesign, the application be refused on the grounds of scale and design, particularly of the large building that would form a gateway to Royston.

Upon the vote it was:

RESOLVED:

- (1) That application 19/00386/RM be **DEFERRED** for the following reasons:
- The inclusion of an electric vehicle charging condition
- Exploration of access through to the Ivy Farm phase 2 (Kier scheme) behind the school site
- Re design of the 3 storey block at the McDonalds end of the site
- Resolution of highway concerns regarding the layout
- (2) That, in the event that the applicant decline the invitation to revisit the design of the three storey block or would nor extend the time limit in order for the above issues to be explored, prior to reporting back to the Committee at the earliest available opportunity, officers be authorised to refuse planning permission, under delegated authority.

There was a 5 minute comfort break at 22:17.

36 18/01814/FP BAILEYS CLOSE FARM, PASTURE LANE, BREACHWOOD GREEN, HERTFORDSHIRE SG4 8NY

Audio recording – Session 3 - 0.00 secs

The Principal Planning Officer advised that the following amendment to the report was required:

• Paragraph 4.3.59 of the report in the second last line of the paragraph. The sentence should read:

'the harmful effects of the development by far outweigh the limited benefit of delivering new homes etc (removing the words 'are far outweighed by')

The Principal Planning Officer presented the report in respect of application 18/01814/FP supported by a visual presentation consisting of photographs and plans.

Councillor David Barnard, Member Advocate, thanked the Chairman for the opportunity to address the Committee in support of application 18/01814/FP as follows:

- The Parish Council and village community were in support of this application;
- The site was not green belt;
- The scheme offered small properties, which responded to the need for smaller, more affordable homes;
- The Paddocks development was granted planning permission last year by NHDC and was located towards the right of this site.
- There was an acceptable entrance to the site;
- There were acceptable footpaths into the village;
- Luton Airport estimated that there would be 32 million passengers per year over the next few years. However, there were many reasons as to why this may not happen;
- It was a planning gain.

Mr Ed Norris, DLP Planning and Mr Tom Brindley, Kings Walden Parish Council, thanked the Chairman for the opportunity to address the Committee in support of application18/01814/FP.

Mr Norris informed Members that:

- This was a previously developed brownfield site;
- The scheme was revised following a refusal in 2018;
- The applicant had sought to address the concerns previously made;
- There had been a reduction in the number of dwellings;
- An enhancement of the design was made;
- There were changes made to the access to the development, including the implementation of a footpath into the village;
- The site was currently vacant, in a dilapidated state and detracted from the appearance of the local area;
- The development proposal provided a lesser footprint than the existing buildings;
- Noise levels had been assessed and complied with the relevant British Standard for Noise.

Mr Brindley advised that:

- He was Clerk to Kings Walden Parish Council;
- The site was crying out for redevelopment;
- Local residents believed that the site should be developed for housing;
- The current site was an eyesore and dangerous;
- The Local Plan allowed for windfall developments;
- The site was previously developed land.

Councillor Sue Ngwala asked for clarification regarding Green Belt legislation.

Mr Norris referred to National Planning Policy Framework Paragraph 135G and advised that the Green Belt was not at risk of harm and this was an opportunity to redevelop the land for much needed housing.

The Principal Planning Officer clarified that he agreed that this was previously developed land, however the number and height of the proposed dwellings would cause harm to the Green Belt. There was an allowance in the Local Plan for windfall sites but not in the Green Belt.

The following Members took part in the debate:

- Councillor David Levett;
- Councillor Michael Weeks;
- Councillor Sue Ngwala;
- Councillor Ruth Brown;
- Councillor Kay Tart;
- Councillor Tony Hunter;
- Councillor Ian Mantle
- Councillor Terry Tyler.

Points raised during the debate were as follows:

- This development could be considered infill as there were developments either side of the site;
- Noise from Luton Airport flight path and its effect on residents' health;
- The site would need to meet green belt legislation;
- Whether or not the area was suitable for homes and whether the site could be suitable for something else;
- There were too many homes proposed;
- The current site was a blot on the landscape and it would remain that way unless something was done about it;
- Living under a flight path would not be a problem for some people although would be difficult for others;
- Developing an area because it was a blot on the landscape was not a reason to grant planning permission;
- It was noted that there were objections from highways, landscape and environmental health.

The Principal Planning Officer advised:

- That Environmental Health had raised the issue about noise from aircraft flying over. Fewer dwellings would help the noise concern but this would make it a completely different scheme;
- The only options were to either approve or refuse this application;
- There were mitigating factors that could help the noise issue but these were not future proof as noise levels were likely to increase in years to come.

It was proposed by Councillor Michael Weeks and seconded by Councillor Mike Rice that application 18/01814/FP be approved planning permission.

Councillor Weeks discussed the option of deferral, but there was no seconder for this proposal

Upon the motion to approve being put to the vote, the proposal to approve was lost.

It was proposed by Councillor Sue Ngwala and seconded by Councillor Ruth Brown that application 18/01814/FP be refused planning permission.

Upon the motion being put to the vote, it was:

RESOLVED: that application 18/01814/FP be **REFUSED** planning permission for the reasons set out in the report of the Development and Conservation Manager.

37 18/02684/FPH 4 STANDHILL CLOSE, HITCHIN, HERTFORDSHIRE SG4 9BW

Audio recording – Session 3 - 53 mins

- The Principal Planning Officer advised that the following amendment to the report was required:
- Paragraph 4.3.7

The word "not" should be inserted between 'do' and 'consider' so that the sentence reads:

'Given the relatively modest height of the first floor element, the distance to the boundary and orientation of the site I do not consider that the proposed extension would cause a material loss of daylightetc.

The Principal Planning Officer (West Team) presented the report in respect of application 18/02684/FPH supported by a visual presentation consisting of photographs and plans.

Mrs Victoria Roberts, thanked the Chairman for the opportunity to address the Committee in objection to application 18/02684/FPH as follows:

- She was speaking on behalf of numbers 1 and 2 Standhill Close and number 3 Taylors Hill;
- The application was disproportionate and overbearing;
- Due to the topography, the extension would dominate the views from other properties;
- Number 2 Standhill Close would suffer a significant loss of privacy;
- The Applicant had suggested privacy piers, but this would increase the mass of the development;
- The application should be considered on its own merit and not as an amended one;
- The permission granted 20 years ago for an extension was before 1 and 2 Standhill were built.

Councillor Sue Ngwala sought clarification from the Principal Planning Officer regarding the location of the extension and its impact.

Mr Grant and Mrs Liz Bannister, Applicants, thanked the Chairman for the opportunity to address the Committee in support of application 18/02684/FPH as follows:

- In 1988, planning application was approved for an expansion to the house;
- This time, the initial application was refused in December 2018;
- The size of the extension and the roof height were reduced;
- Boundary requirements were met and privacy piers introduced;
- The materials will be much the same as the house;
- Other houses had been extended in much the same way

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Kay Tart;
- David Barnard.

Mr and Mrs Bannister advised:

- That privacy piers reduced the views into the property;
- That there were no windows to the side of the extension.

It was moved by Councillor David Levett, seconded by Councillor Tony Hunter and:

RESOLVED: That application 18/02684/FPH be **GRANTED** planning permission subject to the conditions and reasons as set out in the report of the Development and Conservation Manager.

38 19/01059/FPH 68 HIGHFIELD, LETCHWORTH GARDEN CITY, HERTFORDSHIRE SG6 3PZ

Audio recording – Session 3 - 1hr 13mins, 50 secs

The Principal Planning Officer (East Team) presented the report in respect of application 19/01059/FPH supported by a visual presentation consisting of photographs and plans.

The Principal Planning Officer advised that the following amendment to the report was required:

The reason for referral to Committee should be amended to read:

"The applicant is the spouse of a North Hertfordshire District Council Councillor in Hitchin. Therefore, due to 8.4.5 part (g) of the Council's Constitution, the application has to be presented to Planning Committee for determination. "

It was moved by Councillor Tony Hunter, seconded by Councillor Morgan Derbyshire and:

RESOLVED: That application 19/01059/FPH be **GRANTED** planning permission subject to the conditions and reasons as set out in report of the Development and Conservation Manager.

39 PLANNING APPEALS

Audio recording – Session 3 - 1hr 16mins, 5 secs

The Principal Planning Officer (West Team) updated Members regarding Planning Appeals as follows:

- The Planning Appeal for 18/01916/OP was dismissed on the 17 July 2019;
- The Council won the Planning Appeal regarding 68 Linden Road, Baldock; and
- The hearing regarding the Appeal for LS1 would commence on 15 October 2019.

RESOLVED: That the report entitled Planning Appeals be noted.

The meeting closed at 11.40 pm

Chairman