

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Planning & Townscape Committee
held at the Town Hall, Rye on Monday 3 September 2007**

PRESENT Councillors John Breeds, Bernardine Fiddimore, Lorna Hall, Jo Kirkham, Paul Osborne (Mayor/**Committee Vice Chairman**), Frank Palmer (**Committee Chairman**), Shaun Rogers, Sam Souster (Deputy Mayor), Sylvia Willgoss, David Wright

IN ATTENDANCE Richard Farhall - Town Clerk; Cllrs Granville Bantick and Sonia Holmes; Andy Hemsley – *Rye Observer*, 15 members of the public

The meeting commenced at 6.30.

61 APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for absence.

The Committee Chairman advised that a number of Members had, prior to the meeting, suggested that it would be beneficial to defer consideration of planning application RR/2007/2365/P (proposed development of land north of Udimore Road) until the next meeting. There were a considerable number of supporting documents associated with the application which had been received only recently.

RESOLVED (unanimous) **To defer consideration of RR/2007/2365/P until the meeting scheduled for 17 September in order to allow Members and the public more time to study it.**
Clerk

62 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

6.37 Cllr John Breeds arrived.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting for questions from members of the public.

John Izod stated that he considered Members should, properly, be considering planning application RR/2007/2365/P that evening.

Mary Smith suggested that the Draft Rock Channel Development Brief Consultation Exhibition had not been publicised adequately. Cllr Souster observed that this had been the responsibility of Rother DC and that the document was 'signed' prominently on its web site. Andy Hemsley reported that Rother DC's press release had been issued to the Rye Observer after its deadline during the week immediately preceding the exhibition.

6.43 The meeting reconvened.

63 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Planning and Townscape meeting of 20 August 2007 (PT08) were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

64 MATTERS ARISING

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Green space mapping (seeking assistance from the Sussex Wildlife Trust and Rye Harbour Nature Reserve) Positive responses had been received.

65 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

RESOLVED That the Council's comments on the Planning Applications following be submitted to the District Planning Authority:

- | | |
|---|---|
| RR/2007/2268/T
(Del) | 8 Mermaid Street, Rye
Removal of one Virginia creeper, two holly trees and one conifer.
SUPPORT APPROVAL |
| RR/2007/2238/P
(Del)
<i>Retrospective</i> | Jempsons/Budgens Stores, Crownfields, Rye
Installation of CCTV pole in car park.
SUPPORT APPROVAL |
| RR/2007/2276/T
(Del) | 1 The Strand Rye
Crown reduction by approximately 20% and cut back straight up cliff face of one sycamore tree.
SUPPORT APPROVAL |
| RR/2007/2308/P
(Del) | Rye River Café, St Margaret's Terrace, Rye
Removal of existing garages and replace with three new garages.
SUPPORT REFUSAL Materials/Design of garages contrary to proposed supplementary planning guidance intended to enhance and upgrade the area. |

66 ROCK CHANNEL

Members were asked to agree the Council's response to the Draft Rock Channel Development Brief (*deadline: 7 September*).

Cllr Palmer (one of the three Members who had offered to study the Brief) presented his thoughts – summarised as follows: the document aims to link Rye's 'medieval core' with its maritime setting but the Strand Quay has been allowed to become a motorcycle park; the property brochure for the Rock Channel Quay residential development (1989) refers to the Strand Quay being used by a 'great variety of yachts and other boats'; the *Rye Town Initiative* (1993) states that Rye's second most important asset is the Strand [Quay]; the Brief appears to incorporate proposals from within the Initiative and a marina proposal prepared by Millwood Homes – and appears to be an attempt to facilitate the construction of up to 150 suburban dwellings, with no corresponding infrastructure improvements; Opportunity Area A (Jempsons/Bournes) could contain workshops – instead, 80 flats/houses, a car park and cafe are suggested – and the pumping station might need to be relocated at huge expense; the last building from Rye's ship building area, Rye Sea Cadets' base, was also at risk; Opportunity Area B (Allotments) suggests four options ranging from 'do nothing' to building c 32 houses and diverting a footpath over the site as part of a Strand Quay-Fish Quay walk – even though there is a considerable drop to negotiate; the proposal would increase the risk of vandalism on the site; Opportunity Area C (Fishing Peninsula) could see another café/restaurant and a further 35

dwelling; the fish processing plant might need to be relocated; a Riverside Walk is proposed, close to the existing footpath, combined with a cycle path (suggested to – but not pursued by – Sustrans by the Town Council prior to the National Cycle Network being opened at the millennium); the suggested ‘panoramic view’ is spoiled currently by the presence of dilapidated vehicles, boats and construction equipment; craft/studio workshops would be more appropriate than more cafes; as a working town, Rye does not need more suburban housing; some housing is acceptable but the foot/cycle path needs only a stretch of hedge cutting back and a better surface.

Cllr Fiddimore spoke to her (previously-circulated) report – highlighting: the unattractive appearance of the area under review – particularly Opportunity Areas A and C; the opportunity to reinstate and market Rye’s maritime history, provide some housing and also additional employment; the desirability of removing movements of heavy vehicles.

Cllr Wright (whose report had also been distributed) suggested incorporating proposals for the area within the proposed Town Plan. What could be provided in the area would be determined largely by market forces; consequently, the Brief cannot be too prescriptive. The pumping station could be hidden underground. It was desirable for movements of heavy vehicles to be eliminated from Area A. The community would not tolerate encroachment on the allotment site and he was sure there was enough space to widen the existing footpath to create a foot/cyclepath. Area C currently exudes an air of ‘desolation’ and needs to be ‘tidied up’.

RESOLVED To suspend Standing Order 28j) (not speaking more than once).

Cllr Souster suggested that no-one would object to a riverside walk, provided it was signed. Furthermore, the introduction of some housing on a brown field site was not unreasonable – especially as 40% of developments of 15 units+ would have to be ‘affordable’.

Cllr Osborne observed that there was a waiting list for allotment plots and relocating Jempsons and Bournes to Rye Harbour Road had been raised intermittently over the last 20 years. New housing would make a ‘mixed use’ package affordable

7.26 The Committee Chairman adjourned the meeting to allow members of the public to contribute to the debate.

Referring to his advisory paper tabled that evening concerning the need to take account of the setting and Listed status of Ferry Cottage (Area C), John Houselander highlighted the inadequacy of the A259-Rock Channel East junction. The suggested number of new homes could result in c70 additional vehicles using the junction. John Royle agreed: the close proximity of a blind bend presented a hazard for pedestrians and vulnerable road users, particularly those seeking to cross from the bottom of the Ypres steps. He raised the possibility of a pedestrian bridge from the Gungarden.

Mary Smith observed that it was not possible to ring fence affordable homes solely for the use of Rye residents and that, despite a range of affordable home purchase/acquisition schemes, such properties were still out of reach of many. She was encouraged by the number of contributors emphasising the need to protect the allotment site.

7.37 The meeting was reconvened.

RESOLVED To submit (to Rother DC) the response following:

Generally **The Council welcomes any sustainable and appropriate measures to emphasise and promote Rye's maritime past (and present).**

Opportunity Area A **The Council is broadly supportive of the proposals, subject to no jobs being lost within the locality (the relocation of major employers to, for example, the Rye Harbour Industrial Area would be acceptable). However, the Council is concerned that, at 80, the indicative number of dwellings for this area is not sustainable.**

Opportunity Area B **The Council opposes any encroachment on the allotments site and considers that the existing (elevated) footpath could be upgraded without the need for a diversion.**

Opportunity Area C **The Council is broadly supportive of the proposals, especially the proposed riverside walk. However, the junction of the A259 and Rock Channel East must be improved before any significant development takes place. This is particularly important in order to protect vulnerable road users.**

Clerk

7.45 *Cllr John Breeds left the meeting.*

67 GIBBET MARSH CAR PARK

Councillor Rogers observed that there was now no furniture at the Gibbet Marsh picnic area and invited Members to agree a course of action.

The Clerk advised that the facility had been created by the Partnership but it was unclear whether responsibility for maintenance, insurance etc had been addressed. He had emailed the appropriate Rother DC officer, who was making enquiries.

Cllr Souster advised that this matter had been raised at the surgery run by him and Cllr Willgoss and that a number of related issues had been put to them – including: the condition of the 1066 Information Panel and a broken railway crossing gate.

RESOLVED To consider this matter further upon receipt of the information requested.

Clerk

68 CAMBER CASTLE CAR PARK

Cllr Rogers highlighted the fact that the car park serving Camber Castle in Harbour Road continued to be occupied by an individual, a number of vehicles and other objects which restricted access to the Castle.

The Clerk advised that, although it had been resurfaced in recent years, the land appeared to be unregistered and no relevant organisation/agency would accept responsibility for it.

RESOLVED To consider the Town Council taking responsibility for the land at the next meeting.

69 A259 MONKBRETTON BRIDGE

A meeting of key stakeholders had been held at the Town Hall that morning. The Mayor, Clerk and Cllr Wright had attended.

The County's Passenger Transport Manager had drafted an information sheet summarising the bus services that would be available during the period the Bridge would be closed (October). A number of amendments were made.

The Highways Agency had used the Post Office to deliver a newsletter (August 2007) to households in Rye and Camber – although some properties had been overlooked.

It was frustrating that InterRoute had not actioned (or actioned only partly) suggestions agreed at previous meetings.

A temporary raised footpath had now been installed.

At that afternoon's Cabinet meeting, Members had agreed that Lucknow Place and Bedford Place could be used for (free) residents' parking (New Road, Kings Avenue, East Guldeford) and for dropping off/collecting Freda Gardham pupils – who would be escorted over the bridge by teachers/PCSOs. A joint RDC-RTC letter would accompany the permits and Cllrs Osborne and Wright would arrange their delivery.

Police 'no parking' cones would be placed from the junction of Rye Hill-Military Road as far as The Globe to aide large south-bound vehicles turning into Military Road.

InterRoute had been asked to ensure that more publicity appears in the *Rye Observer* and to provide sufficient – and influential – staff on the ground at the start of the closure at likely trouble spots.

The next meeting would be held a few days after the work had commenced.

The meeting closed at 8.00.

Date.....

Chairman.....