

SOUTH EAST AREA COMMITTEE

Monday 10th October 2005

COUNCILLORS PRESENT: The Chair (Gill Sanders), the Vice-Chair (Ed Turner), Bill Buckingham, Lee Cole, Rae Humberstone, Carole Roberts and John Tanner.

CO-OPTED MEMBERS PRESENT: County Councillors Olive McIntosh-Stedman, John Sanders and Val Smith, and Mr. Fred Mogridge (Littlemore Parish Council). Brian Avery (Blackbird Leys Parish Council.)

OFFICERS PRESENT FOR THE WHOLE OF THE MEETING: Fergus Lapage (Area Co-ordinator), William Reed and Lois Stock (Legal and Democratic Services)

OFFICERS PRESENT FOR PART OF THE MEETING: Andrew Lewis (Area Planning Officer), Mike Gass (on behalf of the Parks Operational Manager,) Shaun Hatton (Area Street Scene Manager)

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Inspector Andy Talbot (Thames Valley Police)

At the start of the meeting, the Chair asked all present to remember those people who have suffered during the recent earthquake in Pakistan.

76. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Stuart Craft.

77. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following Declarations of Interest were made:

- Councillor Turner - declared an interest in item 4(1) - Planning Application for a mobile phone mast, 72 Rose Hill - since he has spoken with local residents about this planning application, but he stated that he has been careful not to prejudice any later decision that he might make.
- Councillor Val Smith – also declared an interest in item 4(2) – Planning Application for 2 pylon signs, Humphris Garage.

78. URGENT BUSINESS

The Chair agreed to certify the following items: as urgent business, so that the most up to date information could be considered;

- (1) Summary of Comments on the proposed Telecommunications mast, 72 Rose Hill, item 4 (1) - tabled and now appended
- (2) Area Co-ordinators Update – item 19 – tabled and now appended.
- (3) Oxford City PCT Bulletin – item 9 – tabled and now appended
- (4) Street Wardens Report – item 9 – tabled and now appended.

79. 72 ROSE HILL, OXFORD – ERECTION OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS MONOPOLE AND EQUIPMENT CABINET

The Planning Services Business Manager submitted a report (previously circulated and now appended).

Mrs Tucker spoke against the application and Anne Hurrell and Clive Snelling, representing the applicant, spoke in favour of it.

Resolved to refuse planning consent in respect of planning application number 05/01787/T56 for the following reasons:

- (1) The proposed mast by virtue of its siting, design, height and absence of landscaping would be unduly prominent, visually intrusive, add to the cluttered appearance of this locale and therefore be detrimental to the appearance of the verge and the character and appearance of the area as a whole and detrimental to the visual amenities of occupiers of the residential properties on Rose Hill. As such the proposal is contrary to policy EN90 of the Oxford Local Plan 1991-2001 and policies CP2 and CP24 of the Second Draft Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016.
- (2) The Local Planning Authority is of the opinion that insufficient consideration has been given to alternative sites and/or sharing existing masts, or potential masts, with other Code System Operators, in the surrounding area. As such, the proposal is contrary to policy EN90 of the Oxford Local Plan 1991-2001, policy CP24 of the Second Draft Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016 and advice in Planning Policy Guidance Note 8: Telecommunications.
- (3) The proposed development by virtue of its location adjacent the public footway may create unnecessary obstruction to pedestrians and is likely to result in maintenance vehicles parking and manoeuvring on Rose Hill (A4158) to the detriment of highway safety. As such, the proposal is contrary to Policy CP2 of the Second Draft Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016 and Policy T18 of the Oxfordshire Structure Plan 2011.

80. 72 ROSE HILL, OXFORD – ERECTION OF TWO PYLON SIGNS

The Planning Services Business Manager submitted a report (previously circulated and now appended).

Mike Knibbs and Michael Goldacre spoke against the application.

Resolved to refuse planning consent in respect of planning application number 05/01464/ADV for the following reasons:

- (1) The proposed totem signs, by virtue of their size, location, materials and overall appearance would form prominent and obtrusive features in the street scene and add to the cluttered appearance of the premises to the detriment of the visual amenity of the locality and the character and appearance of this primarily residential area. As such they would be contrary to Policy RC13 of the Second Draft Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016 and Policy EN84 of the Oxford Local Plan 1991-2001.
- (2) The proposed totem signs, by virtue of their size, bulk, position in relation to the dwelling houses on Rose Hill, in particular 79-85 Rose Hill, and in the case of the 'Seat' advertisement by virtue of illumination, would have an unacceptable impact on the amenities of the occupiers of those residential properties looking onto the site, contrary to Policy RC13 of the Second Draft Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016 and Policy EN84 of the Oxford Local Plan 1991-2001.

81. 28 FAIRLIE ROAD, OXFORD – CONVERSION OF HOUSE TO TWO FLATS

This item was considered with the following agenda item.

82. 26 FAIRLIE ROAD, OXFORD – CONVERSION OF HOUSE TO TWO FLATS

The Planning Services Business Manager submitted a report (previously circulated and now appended) concerning both 28 and 26 Fairlie Road.

Robert Pope, the architect, spoke in favour of the application.

Resolved to grant planning consent in respect of planning applications number 05/01756/FUL and 05/01757/FUL, upon the conditions set out in the report and that the Planning Services Business Manager be authorised to issue the notice of permission.

The Committee asked that members' regret at the loss of two units of family housing be noted.

83. KASSAM STADIUM, BLACKBIRD LEYS – PROPOSED RESTAURANT WITH TAKEAWAY

Noted that application number 05/01446/FUL had been withdrawn by the Applicant.

84. SPEEDWELL FIRST SCHOOL, 17 SANDFORD ROAD – RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

The Planning Services Business Manager submitted a report (previously circulated and now appended).

The Chair asked members to note that a previous application for the same site was currently going through the appeal process, and sought the advice of the Area Planning Officer, Andrew Lewis, concerning the consideration of the application that was before members. Andrew Lewis advised the Committee that it should consider the application that was before it; notwithstanding the appeal that was being heard.

Mr Silk, on behalf of the applicant, offered to answer any questions. Dr Pipkin spoke against the application.

Resolved to refuse planning consent for planning application number 05/01398/RES for the following reason:

- (1) The design, bulk, scale and mass of the flats, in particular those buildings at the rear in which the development is still predominantly 3 storied, is incompatible with the essential character of the surrounding area. It will therefore be contrary to policies EN45, EN46, EN50, EN52, EN68 and EN76 of the Oxford Local Plan 1991-2001 and CP2, CP7a, CP8, CP9, CP10, CP11 and HE11 of the Second Draft Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016.

Resolved also to thank Councillor Tanner for his attendance at the appeal hearing for a previous application on this site.

85. CITY FARM, DUNNOCK WAY, BLACKBIRD LEYS – ERECTION OF PHARMACY/PLANT ROOM (AMENDED APPLICATION)

The Planning Services Business Manager submitted a report (previously circulated and now appended).

Resolved to defer determination of application number 05/01718/RES until the next meeting of the Area Committee, whilst a local meeting is convened of all interested parties, including Area Committee Ward Councillors, the Police (both local and the Crime Prevention Design Officer,) the applicants and their representatives, Parish Councillors and the Planning Officer; in order to address some areas of concern particularly with regard to security that have been identified as causing concern to local people.

86. PLOT 11, EDMUND HALLEY ROAD – DEMOLITION OF EXISTING BUILDING AND ERECTION OF REPLACEMENT

The Planning Services Business Manager submitted a report (previously circulated and now appended).

Resolved to recommend approval of application number 05/01722/FUL to the Strategic Developmental Control Committee, subject to the conditions laid out in the Planning Officer's report.

87. FORTHCOMING APPLICATIONS FOR NOTE

Resolved to note that application number 05/01551/FUL - Demolition of the existing building and erection of a two storey building for use as a discount food store and offices, at the former Hartwell's site in Watlington Road; would be presented at the next Area Committee meeting.

88. PLANNING APPEALS

The Planning Services Manager submitted a report (previously circulated and now appended,) giving details of planning appeals received during August 2005; one of which related to the Committee's area.

Resolved to note the report; and in particular the two decisions within the Committee's area at Kelburne Road and Henley Avenue

89. POLICE/STREET WARDEN/COMMUNITY SAFETY/HEALTH ISSUES

(a) Police Matters

The Committee welcomed Inspector Andy Talbot who had recently transferred to Oxford and had been asked to look at neighbourhood policing within the Blackbird Leys area.

Inspector Talbot explained that neighbourhood policing principles had been in use in this area for some time, thanks to the Neighbourhood Action Team (NAT). This sought to engage local people, to discover what the areas of concern were, to prioritise them and then seek a solution to the problem. Inspector Talbot asked for any issues reported at the Area Committee to be passed on, through the Chair, to the Neighbourhood Action Team. He stressed that it was important to establish a good working link between the two bodies, as the Police wished to make progress on prioritising and resolving issues of concern at Blackbird Leys.

He added that neighbourhood policing is a Government driven initiative; and that every force must be committed to it by 2008.

Resolved:

- (1) To thank Inspector Talbot for his report.
- (2) To welcome the neighbourhood policing initiative.
- (3) To note that a public meeting on the issue would be held at the Blackbird Leys Community Centre on 15th November.

Councillor Olive McIntosh-Stedman spoke briefly about the problems with gangs of young people in St Nicholas Road and on the footpath between College Lane and Giles Road.

Resolved: to ask the Police to carry out surveillance of this area from time to time.

The Chair asked the Committee to note that Inspector Richard Brown had sent his apologies to the meeting; He had informed her that the anti-social behaviour in Littlemore was being dealt with through CANAcT.

(b) Street Warden matters

Resolved to note the report from the Street Wardens (tabled and now appended).

(c) Health matters

Resolved to note the Oxford City PCT Bulletin (tabled and now appended.)

90. OPEN SESSION

The Committee welcomed Susan Goldacre, who had submitted a report concerning neighbourhood regeneration in Rose Hill (previously circulated and now appended.)

Susan Goldacre introduced her report and provided the Committee with some background information. She expressed the wish that Oxford City Council, Oxfordshire County Council and Thames Valley Police could work together to create a better environment for everyone in Rose Hill. The Chair thanked her for her informative report, and added that there was a Regeneration Group in Rose Hill of which Councillor Roberts is a member, which may be of interest to her.

Gavin Brackett spoke concerning the issue of a rent increase on the premises used by the Communities Against Drugs project (CAD); and also about funding for this group.

Resolved:

- (1) To ask the Area Co-ordinator to investigate both issues.
- (2) To suggest that the issue of funding is taken to the Cowley Area Committee for consideration.

Bob Avery updated members on the progress of the Black Bird Leys Parish Council Allotment Project. He informed members that eleven pupils from the Peers School were now involved in growing produce on the Parish Council allotment; some of which he had brought to the meeting to show the Committee. The Pegasus School has now acquired an allotment at Windale Road for their use.

Resolved to congratulate Bob Avery, Reg Curnock and Cyril Martin, along with the young people concerned, for their hard work on this project.

Brian Lester suggested that the new Health Centre should be named after a well-known and highly regarded General Practitioner, Dr William Laurie; and he asked the Committee to endorse this. Whilst the Committee agreed that Dr Laurie had served the local community well, it was felt that the decision regarding the name should be left in the hands of the local people who would be using the Health Centre. The Chair advised Mr Lester (and indeed any other interested person,) to make suggestions regarding the name of the new Health Centre to the Oxford City PCT, as this body has the final say.

Mr Lester requested that consideration was given to returning determination of planning applications to the City Council at the Town Hall, since planning dominated so much time at the Area Committee meeting. The Chair replied that the Council had made the decision to devolve planning determination to the Area Committees, and that was where the matter must rest for the present.

John Green expressed serious concern at the planned closure of the Rose Hill Co-operative store. This had caused a great deal of unhappiness in the local community, as people valued this facility very much, and were saddened to see the loss of another community service. He asked the Committee to write a letter of protest to the Co-op, with a request to reconsider this decision. Councillor Turner pointed out that the building is owned by the City Council, and should any local shopkeepers wish to take it over, they should contact the Council.

Resolved: to ask the Area Co-ordinator to write a letter of protest to the Co-op, and request that the decision to close the Rose Hill store is reconsidered.

(Councillors Val Smith, Carole Roberts and Gill Sanders declared an interest in this item as members of the Co-op.)

Mr Rodrigo drew the Committee's attention to the recent proposal by central Government to provide free bus fares for all pensioners and disabled persons. He asked what the South East Area Committee would be recommending as a response to this. Councillor Ed Turner replied that a number of different Councils had responded to Government consultation; and the concern at Oxford City Council was

to ensure that the city did not lose out, as a good bus service is already provided. The response from the Government was therefore awaited.

Mr Rodrigo asked about the traffic control on Heyford Hill, and the Chair replied that this was an agenda item for later in the meeting. Mr Rodrigo then asked about the provision of individual water meters at blocks of flats, and also why he had not been notified of the date and time of the last Strategic Development Control Committee, at which he understood the planning application for the St Augustine's School site was considered.

Resolved:

- (1) To ask the Area Co-ordinator to investigate the matter related to the Strategic Development control committee.
- (2) To note that Councillor Ed Turner volunteered to take up the water meter issue.

91. HIGHWAYS ISSUES

(a) Cowley Safer Streets Campaign

Richard Mohun and Martin Cattermole addressed the Committee on this issue. They focussed on three items in particular, for which they were campaigning:

- A reduction in the amount of through traffic in residential roads.
- Pedestrian crossings to provide a safer access to schools, especially across the Littlemore Road.
- The present lack of safe places to play, which are safely accessible by children.

So far fifty people have indicated support for the campaign, and the group has presented a case to Oxfordshire County Council. They were disappointed that Oxfordshire County Council had twice examined the request for a crossing on Littlemore Road, and twice rejected it, on the grounds of there being too few pedestrians in the area. They were also disappointed to be told that there were too few serious accidents to allow action to be taken on traffic along Church Hill Road; and they asked for support to prevent this from being constantly used as a "rat run".

Councillor John Sanders informed the Committee that he had arranged a meeting at the John Bunyan Church Hall at 6.30 pm on 8th November, at which County Council officers would be present, in order to discuss these traffic related issues. Councillors Ed Turner and John Tanner welcomed the meeting, and Councillor Turner emphasised his support for additional 20 mph limits within the city. Members agreed that the outcome of this meeting should be awaited before any action was taken.

Resolved to ask the Area Co-ordinator to liaise with the appropriate officer from the Leisure and Parks Business Unit concerning safe play areas.

(b) Windale Avenue Alleyway

The Area Co-ordinator submitted a letter from Oxfordshire County Council concerning the proposed gating of the alleyway at Windale Avenue (previously circulated and now appended).

Councillor Carole Roberts expressed grave displeasure that this alleyway cannot be closed, pointing out that she understands this to have been done in other areas. Councillor Val Smith concurred; adding that she understood that part of the Clean Neighbourhood and Environment Act would deal with the gating and closure of alleyways when it came into force; and the Committee noted this. Bob Avery added that Blackbird Leys Parish Council had campaigned for this alleyway to be closed for at least two years.

Resolved to ask the Area Co-ordinator to contact Manchester City Council to discover how it has managed to close alleyways in similar circumstances.

(c) Alleyway from College Lane to Giles Road

Councillor Olive McIntosh-Stedman informed the Committee that the Countryside Agency is presently researching who owns the land on which this alleyway stands.

Resolved to note the position.

(d) Assessment Request, A4142 Heyford Hill

The Area Co-ordinator submitted copies of letters from Oxfordshire County Council concerning this subject (previously circulated and now appended.)

Resolved to ask the Area Co-ordinator to write to Oxfordshire County Council welcoming the proposed traffic survey, and to request that consideration is given to improving the pedestrian and cycle crossing via the bridge.

92. REVIEW OF COUNTY COUNCIL SUPPORTED BUS SERVICES (OXFORD CITY JUNE 2006)

John Wood, Assistant Public Transport Officer at Oxfordshire County Council submitted a report concerning the proposed review of subsidised bus services within Oxford (previously circulated and now appended.). He attended the meeting with his colleague, Alan Field, to present this issue to the Committee.

He explained that the bus services were last reviewed in 2002 to expire in 2006; and the County Council was presently reviewing services for the period 2006 to 2010. The County Council supports those services that are socially necessary; as many services are provided by bus companies as commercial ventures. He would be attending every Area Committee within Oxford to gather views, and the County council would write to the City Council for a formal response early in 2006. In the meantime, he would be grateful if the Area Committees could feed back any views and comments via the Area Co-ordinators. He highlighted four main routes as being of particular interest to the South East Area Committee:

- Routes 5A and 5B – do these routes require further changes, as 60% of passengers only go as far as The Cowley Centre.
- Route 5C – this ran during the evenings from 8 pm to 11 pm but was not well used, should it continue?
- Route 16 – this was well used but still needed support, as it was a struggle to maintain the frequency of this bus service.
- Route 17 – this ran from The Oval to The Cowley Centre on a twice-weekly basis and was a well used shopping bus; but should some other body provide this service?

Fred Mogridge observed that the views of the relevant Parish Councils should also be sought.

Resolved to ask all members of the South East Area Committee to pass any views and comments to the Area Co-ordinator in good time, so that this item could be placed on the agenda of the next Area Committee for full discussion.

93. LEISURE AND PARKS

Mike Gass, (representing the Leisure and Parks Business Manager,) was in attendance in order to respond to questions raised by members of the Committee or members of the public.

Resolved:

- (1) To ask the Area Co-ordinator to try to discover when the developer contribution from the Kassam Stadium will be received
- (2) To note that fencing around the Barn, Blackbird Leys was on the Blackbird Leys Parish Council Walkabout list, and to ask the Area Co-ordinator to find out when the work will be completed.

94. ALLOTMENTS CONDITION SURVEY

The Leisure and Parks Business Manager submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended,) concerning the Allotments Condition Survey.

Resolved:

- (1) To note and approve the report.
- (2) To agree the priority of work according to risk as requested in the report.
- (3) To consider funding the work, and the inclusion in the Area Plan as requested in the report.
- (4) To support the presentation of the report to Executive Board.

95. STREETSCENE ISSUES

The Area Streetscene Manager was in attendance in order to respond to questions raised by members of the Committee or members of the public.

Resolved:

- (1) To note that the paving work at the Balfour Road shops has been completed, and that the resurfacing work at Ashhurst way has been done.
- (2) To note that seven abandoned trolleys have been collected from the underpass off Long Lane; and that the problem with flooding in the underpass to Tesco's appears to be caused by a problem with the gullies inability to collect surface water.
- (3) To ask the Area Streetscene Manager to take up the following issues of concern:
 - a. Desborough Crescent to Knowle Road - the footway needs cleaning.
 - b. Re-marking of the disabled parking bay at the Balfour Road shops.
 - c. Insufficient supplies of the free green rubbish bags in the local area.
- (4) To note thanks were offered to Shaun Hatton and his team for their efforts in keeping the local area clean and tidy.
- (5) To ask the Area Parks Manager to take up the issue of overhanging branches on the corner of Desborough Crescent and Ashhurst way.

96. PARISH COUNCIL ISSUES

Resolved:

- (1) To note that the Parish Council Walkabout had taken place (report previously circulated by the Area Co-ordinator, and now appended.)

- (2) To ask the Area Co-ordinator to prepare a report concerning the demolition of the Windrush and Crowberry Road garages for consideration at the next Area Committee meeting.

97. BLACKBIRD LEYS YOUTH AND COMMUNITY CENTRE

The Neighbourhood Renewal Business Manager had submitted a briefing note (previously circulated, now appended,) updating the Committee on the public consultation that had taken place concerning the Main Hall at the Blackbird Leys Youth and Community Centre.

Chuma Nwokkolo attended the meeting to present this update to the Committee. He explained that the use of the building as a multi-purpose adaptable centre had been identified as the best way forwards, and the proposal now was to carry out a more detailed consultation involving more user groups. Most of the equipment in the hall was in a poor state and there was a good deal of work needing doing. It was hoped to generate more community involvement.

Resolved to note the current position.

98. PATHWAYS WORKSHOP

Resolved:

- (1) To note that the Executive Board recently agreed to set aside the sum of £30,000 in the Neighbourhood Renewal "Closing the Gap" budget which can be drawn upon by the Pathways Project if required; subject to their submitting a business plan;
- (2) To nominate Councillor Carole Roberts as a Board Member of the Pathways Project, as requested by the Executive Board on 12th September 2005.

99. COMMUNITIES AGAINST DRUGS

The current position was noted.

100. UPDATE BY THE AREA CO-ORDINATOR ON MATTERS RAISED AT PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Resolved

- (1) To note the report from the Area Co-ordinator (tabled and now appended)
- (2) To await the results of public consultation on the proposed Youth Shelter in Nightingale Avenue (closing date 28th October), before considering this issue.

- (3) To note the minutes of the Aisled Barn Working Group meeting on 15th September, and to endorse the two recommendations made to the South East Area Committee:
 - (a) To ask for a breakdown of revenue costs for the Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre when refurbishment has been completed.
 - (b) To ask for a report from the Business Managers for Leisure and Parks, and Neighbourhood Renewal, explaining the benefits to local groups that will flow from this.

101. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Resolved:

- (1) To note the list of future agenda items (previously circulated and now appended.)
- (2) To ask the Area Co-ordinator to add the Blackbird Leys Boys' Football Club to the list of items for further consideration; and to further request that he ensures that the club is able to submit a grant application in a timely manner.

102. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

Resolved:-

- (1) To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 5th September 2005 (circulated previously,) as a correct record;
- (2) To note that Councillor Ed Turner has taken up the item raised in the public session by Sir John Michael Harris concerning service charges in Council flats.

The meeting started at 6 pm and ended at 9.45 pm.

The number of members of the public present fluctuated between 6 and 50 during the evening.