

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 7th December 2004

Present:

Councillor A M Wilkinson (Chairman)
Councillor Bloomfield (Vice-Chairman)
Councillors Katy Boughey, Paul Clark, Peter Dean
Peter Fookes, Gostt, John Holbrook, Gordon Jenkins
Charles Joel, Michael, Jenny Powell, Bob Shekyls,
Peter Woods and Mrs Joan Wykes OBE

Also present:

Councillor Russell Mellor

53 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF ALTERNATE MEMBERS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Jane Connor, John Ince and Rod Reed. Councillor Mrs Joan Wykes OBE attended the meeting as the alternate for Councillor Ince.

54 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Mr Greg Ullman (Team Leader (Planning, Environment and Licensing) in the Legal and Democratic Services Department) declared a personal interest in item 7 (Ravensbourne College of Design and Communication, Walden Road, Chislehurst: Outline Planning Application for Residential Development (04/0407/OUT)).

55 MINUTES

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 26th October 2004 and of the special meeting held on 9th November 2004 be confirmed.

56 QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ATTENDING THE MEETING

Ravensbourne College of Design and Communication, Walden Road, Chislehurst

The following question was asked by Mr David Walsham of 19 Selby Close, Chislehurst:

(1) "A development of between 200-250 units would appear to yield approximately the same level of traffic as currently observed for the College (para. 6.4 Planning Brief).

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Would it not be true, however, that the nature of household traffic under the proposed development would be very different from that created by the current College traffic – leading to an unacceptable and increase of congestion in the area?”

In response the Chairman stated that, under Policy T2 of the Second Deposit Draft Unitary Development Plan (September 2002), the Council required a detailed Transport Assessment for all major planning applications. In this instance, a Transport and Accessibility Statement had been submitted and this was being given careful consideration by the officers and would be taken into account when Members considered the application in due course (which was likely to be the next Development Control Committee on 8th February 2005). On the face of it, the daily traffic flows for a residential development of about 250 dwellings might be equivalent to the traffic flows of the College, but the distribution of such flows through the day would be different; for instance, it was to be expected that the College use would show a consistent weekday morning flow into the College whilst the proposed residential development was likely to generate a peak flow out in the morning and back in the evening.

The Development Control Committee was advised on such matters by the Council's own highway engineers and their comments would be available before any decision was taken.

Having regard to the Planning Brief and to the Council's stated overall aim of seeking to reduce car use and traffic congestion, the questioner further enquired whether such a proposed development was likely to give rise to severe traffic problems. The Chairman commented that this issue would be taken into account in the light of all the relevant information received at the time the planning application was considered by the Committee.

(2) The following question was asked by Dr Robert Cannon of Orchard Cottage, Willow Vale, Chislehurst:

“The area of Walden Road, Elmstead Lane and Willow Grove is already subject to severe traffic congestion. This will be enormously increased by the proposed redevelopment of Ravensbourne College, Walden Road, Chislehurst with its application for 251 dwellings and a single vehicular access point. How will this be resolved?”

The Chairman replied in a similar manner to the first question and indicated that the information provided by the applicants, namely that the overall traffic flow for 250 dwellings was equivalent to the traffic flow generated by the College, did not support the questioner's assertion that the traffic congestion currently experienced would be “enormously increased”. However, these matters had to be looked at in detail by the Council's traffic engineers and would be the subject of a full report in due course.

In referring to the heavy amount of traffic which was borne by Elmstead Lane and Willow Grove especially during the morning peak time, the use of these roads by school children and the bad accidents which had occurred in both roads, the questioner further enquired whether the traffic impact arising from the proposed development would be considered not just in relation to these roads but on the overall effect on the whole area. The Chairman indicated that the Committee was aware of the concerns which had been expressed regarding the possible effect of traffic in Walden Road and nearby roads and that the officers would be asked to take this issue into account when preparing the report relating to the planning application.

(3) The following question was asked by Ms Sharon Cheek of 37 Yester Road, Chislehurst:

“The one proposed means of access to the redevelopment of Ravensbourne College, Walden Road, Chislehurst has raised serious pedestrian and road safety concerns. How will these issues be resolved together with emergency/service vehicle access problems currently experienced and only exacerbated with the proposed residential development?”

The Chairman indicated that, as he had explained in his answers to the earlier questions, there were some unresolved questions concerning traffic generation and associated issues. The Council would take on board local residents' concerns about this and an other proposed nearby development before coming to a conclusion. He was sure that some of these concerns would be aired by Members when considering this issue later on the agenda.

The questioner expressed the hope that the Committee would take these issues into account and physically take a look at the site to consider the safety concerns around the main entrance to the site whilst being mindful that there was also a recreation ground and playground access on to Walden Road. The Chairman indicated that the possibility of a site visit by Members would be considered by the Committee and that the review would take into account the points which she had raised.

**57 CONSERVATION AREAS: CAMDEN CLOSE, CHISLEHURST –
ARTICLE 4 DIRECTION
Report ESD04327**

Following concern about development in recent years harming the character of Camden Close, Chislehurst, a group of its residents had requested that consideration be given to making an Article 4(1) Direction on the Close.

The Chief Planner reported that Camden Close was a gated development of 16 detached, locally-listed inter-war houses built in the Olde English style situated within the Chislehurst Conservation Area. Given the high

quality, local listing and small number of properties involved, it was considered that an Article 4(1) Direction would not be a burden on resources at such a scale and would address the concerns of residents as well as complying with Council policy.

RESOLVED that

(1) approval be given to the serving of an Article 4(1) Direction in this case and a full public consultation exercise be carried out prior to final ratification being sought from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister; and

(2) in the event that an Article 4(1) Direction is not ratified by the ODPM, approval be also given for the serving of an Article 4(2) Direction in this case.

**58 CONSERVATION AREAS: KELSEY SQUARE, BECKENHAM –
BOUNDARY REALIGNMENT
Report ESD04326**

Beckenham Kelsey Square Conservation Area was a small enclave of mostly 19th Century properties at the junction of High Street, Kelsey Square and Burnhill Road. A recent housing development (Coopers Close) on the car park of the former public house at 157 High Street had resulted in the existing conservation area boundary no longer being relevant to the buildings on the ground. Since the boundary currently covered half of the road surface on the street, it was considered that the new boundary should be drawn back to the pavement kerb. The Chief Planner reported that the development had been designed to reflect the character and detailing of the houses to Kelsey Square, was well integrated into the existing street scene and was worthy of inclusion within a Conservation Area. Subject to the outcome of public consultation and to the agreement of the Executive, the proposed newly defined area would be designated a Conservation Area under the Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

RESOLVED that

(1) approval be given in principle to the realignment of the Beckenham Kelsey Square Conservation Area boundary to include the new housing development to the rear of 157 High Street and to omit the road surface to the High Street; and

(2) the results of the public consultation be reported directly to the Executive.

**59 RAVENSBOURNE COLLEGE OF DESIGN AND COMMUNICATION,
WALDEN ROAD, CHISLEHURST: OUTLINE PLANNING
APPLICATION FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT (04/0407/OUT)
Report ES04328**

Ravensbourne College had made a strategic decision to expand which would result in moving from its present 7.4 hectare site accessed from Walden Road, Chislehurst. The Committee had previously approved a Development Brief for the site and had also sought to designate the land as a "Major Developed Site" (MDS) within Metropolitan Open Land as a means of controlling future development. However, the Inspector who had conducted the Inquiry into the proposals for the revised Unitary Development Plan had subsequently concluded that the site did not fulfil a strategic MOL role and had recommended that the site could be released from MOL designation, and thus also the proposed MDS designation, for residential development. The Chief Planner reported that an outline planning application had been received at the end of October for the redevelopment of the College site for residential purposes comprising approximately 251 dwellings. An illustrative layout plan had also been received. The application had been advertised as a "departure" from the provisions of the development plan and had been formally referred to the GLA/Mayor of London as a Stage 1 Consultation. Both the Mayor and the First Secretary of State had the power of Direction in the determination of the application. At present, statutory and internal consultations were taking place and the views of local residents had been sought. The application was likely to be formally submitted to the next meeting of this Committee (8th February 2005) for consideration and, at this stage, Members' initial comments on the scheme were invited.

A full discussion was held by the Committee in which a number of concerns were raised by Members, in particular by the local Ward Members, in the light of issues which had been raised by local residents. The principal concerns were:

- possible increase in traffic and access arrangements;
- effect on local infrastructure: electricity, gas and water provision, community services, available accommodation in local schools, particularly primary schools and sufficient medical facilities;
- the need for a reduced density on the site to be negotiated;
- the cumulative effect on the local area both of this proposal and the recent application for 75 units on the Sira site in close proximity in South Hill;
- the need for an external traffic assessment of both development sites.

The Committee felt that these issues could best be addressed by a Member site visit and by a public meeting held locally. In addition, the Chief Planner suggested that, following the public meeting, a meeting could be held locally between officers, the local Ward Members and representatives of the local

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residents at which specific areas of concern could be discussed in detail. A suggestion that the traffic issues relating to this proposal be referred to the Environment Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee was not pursued.

RESOLVED

- (1) the report of the Chief Planner be noted;
- (2) arrangements be made for a Member site visit on a date to be agreed in early January 2005; and
- (3) the Chief Planner be requested, in conjunction with the local Ward Members, to make arrangements for the holding of a public meeting together with, subsequently, a meeting with representatives of local residents at which issues of concern could be considered in detail.

(Mr Greg Ullman (Team Leader (Planning, Environment and Licensing) in the Legal and Democratic Services Department) declared a personal interest in this item and left the room for the discussion and voting thereon.)

**60 DELIVERING DELEGATION: ODPM/LGA GUIDANCE
Report ESD04317**

The Chief Planner reported that the publication “Delivering Delegation” had been published in March 2004 and offered guidance from the LGA and ODPM on good practice for schemes for delegation of planning decisions to officers.

The Chief Planner pointed out that much of the advice contained in the document referred to practices which were already features of the operation of the scheme in Bromley. The exception to this was the suggestion that a “Planning Scrutiny Committee” should be set up to review the working of the delegation scheme by monitoring retrospectively a sample of delegated decisions. This suggestion was not supported by Members as it was felt that it would largely be unworkable and would give rise to more complications, problems and delays. It was noted that further consideration would be given by officers to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act in relation to public access to documents on delegated decisions.

Members expressed the view that the availability of further information in relation to enforcement action taken under delegated powers would be beneficial. In response, the Chief Planner pointed out that such information should be available on the Council’s website and would look into the submission of either quarterly or half yearly reports relating to enforcement action.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the report be noted; and
- (2) the Chief Planner be requested to investigate the reporting of enforcement cases to Members and to increase updates to Members on the progress of enforcement action.

A M WILKINSON

Chairman

The meeting ended at 8.55 pm