

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

LETCHWORTH COMMITTEE

**Meeting held at Council Offices, Gernon Road, Letchworth Garden City
on 11 January 2007 at 7.30p.m.**

MINUTES

PRESENT: *Councillors M. Paterson (Chairman), J.M. Cunningham, Melissa Davey, Gary Grindal, T.W. Hone, David Kearns, David Levett, Lawrence McNamara, Elliot Needham, Mrs Lynda Needham and Diane Proudlove.*

IN ATTENDANCE: *David Scholes (Head of Planning & Building Control), Louise Symes (Planning Projects Manager), Ian Gourlay (Senior Committee & Member Services Officer) and Tim Hobman (Committee & Member Services Officer).*

ALSO PRESENT: The Chairman and Manager of the Letchworth Garden City Town Centre Partnership, the Clerk and 5 Members of the Letchworth Garden City Town Council, 1 Member of the public and 1 reporter from the Comet Newspaper.

The Chairman welcomed all those present to the meeting.

79. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Simon Bloxham (Vice-Chairman), Monica Bloxham and Lorna Kercher

Councillor Gary Grindal arrived at the meeting at 8.30pm.

80. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 13 December 2006 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and signed by the Chairman.

81. NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was submitted for consideration by the Committee.

82. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Councillor M. Paterson declared a personal interest in respect of Item 6: Letchworth Garden City Town Centre Strategy – Revised Supplementary Planning Document (Minute 84 below), in view of his role as a member of the Letchworth Garden City Town Centre Partnership.

83. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation at this meeting.

84. LETCHWORTH GARDEN CITY TOWN CENTRE STRATEGY: REVISED SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT

The Head of Planning and Building Control and Planning Projects Manager presented a report seeking consideration of the Letchworth Garden City Town Centre Strategy: Revised Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), subsequent to comments made on the document as part of the public consultation process. The following appendices were submitted with the report:

Appendix 1 – Letchworth Garden City Town Centre Strategy: Revised SPD (January 2007), incorporating proposed amendments;

Appendix 2 – Figures/plans relating to the Letchworth Garden City Town Centre Strategy Revised SPD (January 2007);
Appendix 3 – Representations to the Letchworth Garden City Town Centre Strategy draft SPD (October 2006);
Appendix 4 – Representations to SA/SEA Final Report on the Letchworth Garden City Town Centre Strategy draft SPD (October 2006)

The Committee was advised that its comments on the revised Strategy would be referred to the 16 January 2007 Cabinet meeting, and that Cabinet would, in turn, refer it to the 18 January 2007 Council meeting for adoption.

The Planning Projects Manager outlined the major changes which had been made to the document following representations received during the public consultation process, as contained in Section 4 of the report.

The Committee considered the Strategy, and agreed the following amendments:

- General – the references throughout the document to the “Health Centre” in relation to opportunity site LTC5 be amended to “Social Services Centre”;
- General – the references throughout the document to the “Old Grammar School” in Broadway Gardens be amended to “Former Grammar School site”;
- Paragraph 6.14: Urban Design Principles - the first sentence to be re-worded to ensure that new buildings did not conflict with the architectural development and quality of the Garden City, by including the words “...not conflict with the.” before the words ‘quality of the Garden City’;
- Paragraph 8.13: Cycle Network – the 3rd sentence of this paragraph to be deleted and reworded as follows: “There will be a need to consider appropriate and safe cycle routes along Broadway, Broadway Walk, and around Broadway Gardens in the future”; and delete the remainder of the paragraph;
- Reference to be made under the section on Public Transport & Interchange to mention the desire to retain the status of existing taxi ranks within the town centre. Mention also to be made of the rank on Eastcheap, adjacent to the Broadway Cinema in relation to any development on opportunity site LTC1.

The following new paragraph is to be inserted after paragraph 8.18:

“A number of private taxi services operate in the town, serving a demand for journeys both within the town and to surrounding areas. The town centre provides a focus for taxi activity and provides a service to those who choose not to use the bus or for whom suitable bus services are unavailable. Taxi services and ranks are to be retained and located in appropriate locations to service the day and evening economy in the town centre.”;

To include the following sentence at the end of Opportunity site LTC1 Arena Parade, Eastcheap/Broadway, town Hall and the Post Office:

“ Alternative arrangements to be made for the relocation of the existing taxi rank on Eastcheap adjacent to the Broadway Cinema should development impact on the highway.”;

- Section 9: Opportunity Site LTC2: The Wynd, Openshaw Way and adjoining lands, including St. Michael’s House, Norton Way South – the Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation’s suggestion to add the word “significant” into the reworded first sentence of the fourth paragraph was not supported. Instead, this sentence to be re-worded as follows: “Any vehicular access off Station Road and Norton Way South should be subject to an overall traffic modelling assessment on surrounding streets, as agreed with Hertfordshire County Council”;
- Plan 3: Urban Design Assessment: Strongly Defined Street Frontages – the Library/Museum site on Gernon Road/Broadway should be added to this plan;
- Plan 10a: Cycle Routes – The proposed route shown along the centre of Broadway Walk between Station Place and the Broadway Gardens to be deleted to reflect the comment relating to paragraph 8.13 above.

RESOLVED: That officers in the Planning Policy Team be congratulated on the production of an excellent document, and that all consultees that responded during the public consultation exercise be thanked for their contributions.

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET: That Council be recommended:

- (1) To adopt the Letchworth Garden City Town Centre Strategy Revised Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), as set out in Appendices 1 and 2 of the report, incorporating the major amendments referred to in paragraphs 4.2 to 4.19 of the report, and as amended by the Letchworth Committee;
- (2) To authorise the Head of Planning and Building Control, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport, to agree any further typographical and textual amendments which are needed that do not alter the policy intent of the SPD prior to its finalisation and publication.

REASON FOR DECISION: To enable the Council to produce a Strategy that provides an overall framework for guiding development and enhancement opportunities within the town centre over the next 15 years and, in doing so, contribute towards achieving the Council's strategic objectives.

85. REPORT ON HIGHWAY VERGE ASSESSMENT FOR NORTH HERTS HIGHWAYS PARTNERSHIP – JOINT MEMBER PANEL

The Planning Projects Manager presented a Joint report of the Head of Leisure and Environmental Services, Head of Planning and Building Control and Head of Housing and Environmental Health, seeking the Committee's views on the physical damage to highway verges within Letchworth Garden City, and to report back its preferred schemes to the North Hertfordshire Highways Partnership Joint Member Panel meeting on 29 January 2007. The following appendix was submitted with the report:

Appendix A – Damage Highway Verge Assessments.

The Committee debated some general issues in respect of damage to highway verges, enforcement measures, and possible solutions to alleviate this problem.

The Committee made the following comments in respect of Appendix A of the report:

Baldock Road by roundabout	It was understood that Hertfordshire County Council would be responsible for this scheme, as part of the post-Baldock Bypass works, and that the priority should be changed to HIGH
Bedford Road by bus stop junction with Bursland	That a TRO be considered to extend the yellow lines in order to reduce bad parking and should remain as a medium priority
Common View, f/o No.4	No change
Cashio Lane, f/o 41-43	Investigation be undertaken as to the nature of the comment 'NHDC to reinstate'
Eastern Way, junction of Northfields	No change
Archers Way both sides of road	That the priority be changed to LOW
Glebe Road, f/o 53, 64-58 opp	It was suggested that North Hertfordshire Homes contribute to this scheme and should remain as a medium priority
Orchard Way at junction with the Grange	No change
Pixmore Way, f/o church, f/o 109	That the priority be changed to HIGH

Radburn Way, entrance to BP Garage	That the priority be changed to LOW
Sollershot West, along length to l/h side	No change
Woodhurst, at junction with Orchard Way	Investigation be undertaken as to the nature of the comment 'NHDC to reinstate'
Norton Way South/Openshaw Way	
Norton Way South/Birds Hill	That all of the schemes involving Norton Way South be considered in the Letchworth Garden City Town Centre Strategy
Norton Way South by phone box/shops	
Norton Way South by post box	
Wilbury Road 27 - 29	Investigation be undertaken as to the nature of the comment 'NHDC to reinstate'
Elderfields 2 - 4	No change
Mullway No.4, 24, 44 – 50, 79 – 83, 105 – 109, 144, 175, 183	No change
Monklands No. 44 – 46, 90 - 91	No change
Runnalow 29 & 34	Investigation be undertaken as to the nature of the comment 'NHDC to reinstate'
Southfields / Grange Rd. Junction	That the priority be changed to HIGH for both of the Southfields schemes. It should also be noted that the Grange Improvement Forum may have no funds available to carry out this work.
Southfields opposite Shops	
Northfields, corner of Western Way	It was suggested that North Hertfordshire Homes contribute to this scheme and should remain as a medium priority
Western Way junction Gaunts Way	No change
Western Way, No.180 – 182	
Western Way, No.20 – 24	That the priority be changed to LOW for all of the remaining Western Way schemes.
Western Way, No. 64 – 86	
Western Way/ Kimberley junction	
Gaunts Way, No. 114 - 126	No change
Orchard Way, No. 1 - 11	No change
Bursland / Bedford Road junction	No change
Icknield Way, No. 55b – 69b	It was suggested that North Hertfordshire Homes contribute to this scheme
Icknield Way, No. 67 – 75 & 76 - 88	No change
Highfield	It was reported by Members that this scheme of works had been completed

Works Road to AM Motorcycles & Renault Garage It was suggested that greater enforcement of vehicle owners be undertaken in connection with this site

In addition, Members identified the end of Monklands nearest its junction with Icknield Way as being in need of attention for verge damage repairs.

RESOLVED: That the Head of Planning and Building Control, Head of Leisure and Environmental Services and the Head of Housing and Environmental Health investigate and report back to a future meeting of the Committee on the following;

- The potential use of the existing Bye-laws when enforcing vehicular damage to grass verges, particularly with regard to penalties and costs of using Bye-laws;
- The ability for the Council to write its own Byelaws, as mentioned in the Local Government White Paper on Strong and Prosperous Communities;
- The costs involved in the enforcement of vehicle owners parking on grass verges as well as the costs of publicising any successful prosecution;
- The potential use of planning conditions associated with development to uphold the integrity of grass verges and to condition their reinstatement should any damage occur;
- Other sources of funding to contribute towards verge damage works, such as Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation, Letchworth Garden City Town Council and Social Landlords.

RECOMMENDED TO NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE HIGHWAYS PARTNERSHIP JOINT MEMBER PANEL:

That the following schemes be put forward as high priority to the North Hertfordshire Highways Partnership Joint Member Panel at the next meeting on the 29 January 2007:

- Baldock Road by roundabout
- Pixmore Way, f/o church, f/o 109
- Southfields/Grange Road junction
- Southfields opposite shops
- Bursland/ Bedford Road junction
- Icknield Way, No. 55b – 69b
- Icknield Way, No. 67 – 75 & 76 – 88

REASON FOR DECISION: To ensure that the highway verge problem schemes identified by the Area Committee are considered for inclusion in the JMP Work Programme for reinstatement in 2007/08.

The meeting closed at 10.17p.m.

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Chairman