

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

BALDOCK & DISTRICT COMMITTEE
(Baldock, Arbury and Weston and Sandon Wards)

**Meeting held at The Community Centre, Simpson Drive, Baldock
on 10 April 2006 at 7.30 p.m.**

PRESENT: *Councillors I.J. Knighton (Chairman), M.E. Weeks (Vice-Chairman), S.K. Jarvis and M.R.M. Muir.*

IN ATTENDANCE: *Area Planning Officer, Community Development Officer (Baldock Area & Youth) and Committee & Member Services Officer.*

ALSO PRESENT: *Six members of the public.*

115. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Marilyn Kirkland and A.D. Young.

116. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 6 March 2006 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and signed by the Chairman, subject to the amendment of Minute 105 to indicate that the £1,000 was to be allocated as £240 from the Baldock East Ward Development Budget and £760 from the Baldock Town Ward Development Budget.

117. NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was submitted for consideration by the Committee.

118. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

No declarations of interests were made during the meeting.

119. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mr Christopher Maddren had given due notice that he wished to speak at the meeting regarding Green Space in Baldock.

Key points raised by Mr Maddren in his presentation included:

- There had been a lot of erosion of open space in Baldock town centre, as acknowledged in the Baldock Town Centre Strategy, which should be avoided elsewhere in the town
- The Save Our Green Spaces Association (S.O.G.S.) intended to be vigilant in protecting open space in the town
- The field at the rear of Hartsfield School was the current priority for S.O.G.S. In 2003 local people felt that they had wasted their time preparing a petition as NHDC officers who were unaware of local feeling or the petition had entered into a binding contract with developers.
- The field was seen as a particular open space chosen by the people for the people and they expected Councillors, as their representatives, to protect it for them.

Mr Maddren also presented a petition to the Committee which comprised signatures collected in Baldock town and on the Clothall Common estate, together with a list of some examples of developments which have taken place on green spaces in Baldock.

Mr Maddren requested that the subject of the petition be considered at the next meeting of the Baldock & District Committee. This was:

We the undersigned call upon North Hertfordshire District Council to reconsider development plans and leave the land off Yeomanry Drive behind Hartsfield School as open space for the enjoyment of Baldock residents.

The Chairman thanked Mr Maddren for his presentation and accepted the petition on behalf of the Committee, which he stated would be passed to the Strategic Director of Customer Services and the Strategic Director of Financial & Regulatory Services for consideration. The Chairman stressed that all Councillors, including those not present at the meeting, felt that they did their utmost to represent the people of Baldock and wanted to their utmost to preserve green spaces within Baldock and the rest of the District as well. He stated that, whilst the Committee could form a view on the petition where the Council was the landowner, it was best to do so with full information. He therefore informed Mr Maddren that the petition would be passed to the Strategic Directors with a request for the appropriate information, so that a full report could be brought back to the Committee at its meeting on 22 May 2006 or 3 July 2006.

120. CHAMPION NEWS

The Community Development Officer for Baldock presented a report of the Head of Community Development & Cultural Services to the Committee, which advised them of the activities undertaken by the Community Development Officer for Baldock since the meeting of the Committee held on 6 March 2006, and brought to their attention some important community based activities that would be taking place during the next few months.

The Community Development Officer for Baldock informed the Committee that, since writing the report, the Baldock Festival had secured the Road Closure Order required for the Street Fair on Saturday 20 May 2006, which meant that preparations for the Festival were now well on course.

The Committee noted that the most recent edition of the Baldock Mail mentioned the Community Development Officer for Baldock and all the work he had done towards the Baldock Festival, both in 2006 and in previous years. The Committee added their own thanks to this, for his work in ensuring that both the Baldock Festival and the Baldock Street Fair run smoothly.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the report of the Head of Community Development be noted;
- (2) That the actions taken by the Community Development Officer for Baldock to promote greater community capacity and well-being for Baldock communities be endorsed.

REASON FOR DECISION: To keep members of the Committee apprised of the latest developments in community activities in Baldock.

121. BALDOCK & DISTRICT AREA COMMITTEE DEVELOPMENT & AREA VISIONING BUDGETS 2006/2007

The Community Development Officer for Baldock presented a report of the Head of Community Development & Cultural Services to the Committee, which set out the budgetary situation for the Committee, together with 3 Annual Small Area Grants.

In response to questions from the Committee, the Community Development Officer for Baldock informed the Committee that the cost of hanging baskets for the town would be £125 each. This cost included the provision and planting of the baskets and then the maintenance and watering of them during the summer, and was the cost as quoted by the Council's existing contractor. The Committee expressed their support for continuing provision of hanging baskets in the town centre, but felt that the cost quoted was not the best value for money. They therefore requested that the

Community Development Officer for Baldock investigate potential other providers, such as the local garden centre, to see a more cost-effective provider could be found before committing to the Council's existing contractor.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the current expenditure and balance of the Development Budget be noted;
- (2) That the Annual Small Area Grant of £1,060 to the Baldock Festival be approved;
- (3) That the Annual Small Area Grant of £420 to Baldock Retirement Sewing Club be approved;
- (4) That the Annual Small Area Grant of £340 to Ashwell Museum be approved;
- (5) That carry forward delegated budgets from the financial year 2005/2006 be allocated to community projects in the appropriate Wards;
- (6) That the sum of £2,000 be allocated for the provision of hanging baskets on Baldock High Street, subject to investigations to establish whether a more cost-effective provider could be found, such monies to be allocated as follows:
 - £480 from Baldock East Ward Development Budget
 - £1,520 from Baldock Town Ward Development Budget

REASONS FOR DECISION:

- (1) The report was intended to apprise Members of the financial resources available to this Committee. It drew attention to the current budgetary situation, assisted in the effective financial management of the Committee's budget and ensured actions were performed within the Authority's Financial Regulations and the guidance contained in the Grants procedure;
- (2) The awarding of financial assistance to voluntary organisations and the use of discretionary spending allows the Committee to further the aims and strategic priorities of the Council.

122. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The Chairman informed the Committee that planning application reference 06/00238/1 – 42-44 High Street, Ashwell - was withdrawn from the agenda as amended plans had been submitted which had resulted in the Parish Council withdrawing their objection, which meant that the application could be determined under delegated authority.

RESOLVED: To determine the applications as set out in the report of the Head of Planning and Building Control as submitted to the Committee in the following schedule:

SCHEDULE

Reference Number	Description of Development and location	Decision
06/00213/1	Manor Farm, Chapel Street, Hinxworth Erection of replacement workshop and farm office (following the demolition of 1628m ² of existing farm buildings). The conversion of present vehicle workshop to additional grain store. The use of existing outbuilding as shooting lodge and the erection of a summer house. The enlargement of the existing lake and the creation of a new lake in a landscaped setting and ancillary works (as amplified by drawing MF-SS03B received on 20 March 2006).	GRANTED (See (a) below)

06/00186/1	Fontley, Halls Green, Weston Replacement 5 bedroom dwelling with attached double garage, 6 car parking spaces and ancillary works following demolition of existing dwelling, garages, stables, stores and outbuildings.	GRANTED (See (b) below)
06/00238/1	42-44 High Street, Ashwell Change of use from Class A2 offices to Class D1 dental surgery, incorporating internal alterations and external alterations to rear and side elevations following removal of existing external rear spiral staircase.	WITHDRAWN FROM AGENDA

(a) **RESOLVED:** That, with regard to planning application 06/00213/1, planning permission be **GRANTED** subject to the conditions set out in the report of the Head of Planning & Building Control, with the removal of condition 3 and the following additional conditions:

3. No development shall take place until full details of both hard and soft landscape works have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and these works shall be carried out as approved. These details shall include vegetation to be removed; proposed finished levels or contours; means of enclosure; vehicular and pedestrian access and circulation areas; hard surfacing materials; minor artefacts and structures (e.g. furniture, play equipment, refuse or other storage units, signs lighting etc); retained historic landscape features and proposals for restoration where relevant; details of any earthworks proposed and the location and type of any new walls, fences or other means of enclosure.

Reason: To ensure the submitted details are sufficiently comprehensive to enable proper consideration to be given to the appearance of the completed development.

4. Soft landscaping works shall include planting plans; written specifications (including cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment); schedules of plants (with species) plant sizes and proposed numbers/densities where appropriate.

Reason: To ensure the submitted details are sufficiently comprehensive to enable proper consideration to be given to the appearance of the completed development.

- 5 All hard and soft landscape works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. The works shall be carried out prior to the occupation of any part of the development or in accordance with a programme agreed with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To safeguard and enhance the appearance of the completed development and the visual amenity of the locality.

- 6 The approved details of landscaping shall be carried out before the end of the first planting season following either the first occupation of any of the the buildings or the completion of the development, whichever is the sooner. Any trees which, within a period of 5 years from the completion of the development, die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased, shall be replaced during the next planting season with others of similar size and species, unless the Local Planning Authority agrees in writing to vary or dispense with this requirement.

Reason: To safeguard and enhance the appearance of the completed development and the visual amenity of the locality.

7. Before the development is commenced a detailed site investigation shall be carried out to establish if the site is contaminated, to assess the degree and nature of the contamination present, and to determine its potential for the pollution of the water environment. The method and extent of this site investigation shall be agreed with the Planning Authority prior to commencement of the work. Details of appropriate measures to prevent pollution of groundwater and surface water, including provisions for monitoring, shall then be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority before development commences. The development shall then proceed in strict accordance with the measures approved.

Reason: To prevent pollution of the water environment.

8. No soakaways shall be constructed in contaminated ground.

Reason: To prevent pollution of groundwater.

9. No soakaways shall be constructed such that they penetrate the water table, and they shall not in any event exceed 2 metres in depth below existing ground level.

Reason: To prevent pollution of groundwater.

10. The construction of the surface and foul water drainage system shall be carried out in accordance with details submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority before the development commences.

Reason: To prevent pollution of groundwater.

11. The construction of storage facilities for oils, fuels or chemicals shall be carried out in accordance with details submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before development is commenced.

Reason: To prevent pollution of the water environment.

- (b) **RESOLVED:** That, with regard to planning application 06/00186/1, planning permission be **GRANTED** subject to the conditions set out in the report of the Head of Planning & Building Control, with the following additional condition:

4. If the development subject of this approval is commenced, the scheme approved under LA ref 01/01522/1 shall not be implemented.

Reason: To safeguard the character and amenities of the rural area in accordance with Policy 6 of the District Local Plan No 2 with Alterations.

123. PLANNING APPEALS

The Area Planning Officer informed the Committee that the following planning appeal had been lodged since the meeting of the Committee held on 6 March 2006:

Appellant	Mr & Mrs Parker
Reference number	05/01125/1
Address	2 Jeve Close, Baldock
Proposal	Two storey side extension. Single storey rear garage extension.
Method	Written representations

The Area Planning Officer informed the Committee that the following appeal had been determined since the meeting of the Committee held on 6 March 2006:

Appellant	Mr A. Rukun
Reference number	05/00589/1
Address	68 High Street, Ashwell
Proposal	Operation of extended takeaway opening and Sunday trading.
Decision	Appeal DISMISSED.

The meeting closed at 8.27 p.m.

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Chairman