

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE HELD ON 12 JULY 2011 AT THE OFFICES OF BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL, THE OLD COURT HOUSE, SAFFRON ROAD, BIGGLESWADE**

**Present:** Cllr T Woodward (Chair), Cllr Mrs J Lawrence, Cllr D Lawrence, Cllr P Woodward, Cllr S Watkins  
Cllr Mrs H Ramsay, Cllr Ms S Mulchrone, Cllr Mrs M Russell, Cllr D Albone, Cllr R Skinner,  
Cllr Mrs W Smith, Cllr I Bond, Cllr B Briars  
Rob McGregor – Town Clerk  
Sue Crowther – Administrative Assistant  
Carl Barnard – LXB Properties  
Nicholas Alford – LXB – Properties  
Mary Davidson – WYG Planning & Design  
Members of the Public - 5

**1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Cllr P Vickers and Cllr G Wilson

**2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

**(a) Prejudicial interests in any agenda item** – there were no prejudicial interests declared

**(b) Personal interests in any agenda item** – Cllr D Lawrence declared an interest in item 6g as listed on the agenda.

**3. Presentation by LXB Properties, Planning Consultants, regarding the proposed redevelopment of London Road Retail Park, followed by questions and answers.**

Nicholas Alford told Members that LXB Properties is a Property Development and Investment Company who create retail land developments.

The existing site at London Road was owned by 7 different owners until 18 months ago and is part vacant. The existing retailers at the London Road site would like to stay trading and keep trading while the work is carried out. There are 3 or 4 accesses at present, some being restricted. They are hoping to attract jobs and investment into the area. There will be road improvements, including a dual carriageway to Pegasus Drive, with trees either side, to improve the look of Biggleswade as a whole.

Marks and Spencer plan to sell a whole range of goods and should be signing at the end of August.

Carl Barrant said that they have steered away from food outlets apart from Marks and Spencer who will see a small amount of food only, receiving 3 lorries a day.

Nicholas Alford said that Homebase are staying where they are, and Argos will move in with them. Their premises need refurbishing.

On the ariel view, you can see the trees, storm water tanks and grey water recycling.

There are strict guidance on building, and Marks and Spencer will support renewable energy, which they call Plan A. Their store will be taller than other units and will include a Café, they want a larger store to hold all types of goods.

There will be improvements of A1 roundabout by the developers. LXB looked at, and came up with a scheme that highways are happy with.

Mary Davidson, WYG, said that the public exhibition was very well attended, of 121 responses, 111 supported the scheme.

Key points were that people liked the layout, redevelopment is long overdue and a coffee shop is a must.

Holme Court Avenue residents are concerned about traffic noise, traffic management and cycle lane. Smaller pods will break up the car park.

Cllr Mrs H Ramsay asked if there would be a pedestrian crossing on both carriageways, as the present pavement ends.

Nicholas Alford replied that footpaths and walkways would be away from the roads.

Cllr Mrs H Ramsay asked if the cycle route would remain the same.

Nicholas Alford replied that it would be extended.

Mary Davidson said that this has been discussed with Highways.

Cllr D Lawrence said that the A1 South included an area for a sinking pond, it is all tied in with the roundabout.

Nicholas Alford said that the implementation of the relocation of the pond will not be fully finished until funds are available.

Cllr B Briars asked if there would be a slip road for traffic to join the A1 at the south roundabout.

Nicholas Alford said that this had been looked at and a wider approach would be better for the traffic.

Cllr B Briars said that this would increase flow of traffic onto the A1.

Cllr D Albone asked about a pedestrian crossing to the extra part of the retail park as plan seems to be designed around vehicle access, if people want to go to the other part, they will need a pedestrian access.

Cllr Mrs M Russell asked if there are trees on the plan in the car park, as far as she is concerned, the more the better and would make the entrance to Biggleswade more attractive.

Cllr Mrs M Russell also asked if there would be restrictions on delivery times for the lorries for Marks and Spencers and others.

Nicholas Alford replied that M & S would need early deliveries, possibly 6am for chilled and fresh food. Most of the stores would close around 7- 8pm in the evening.

Carl Barrant said that M& S has a high level of social responsibility.

Cllr Mrs M Russell said that 7am would be acceptable. What catchment area is the development aimed at?

Carl Barrant replied the A1 corridor is where M & S wants to be.

Mary Davidson said that part of the retail study showed that apart from the immediate catchment area, people seemed to travel about ½ hour.

Cllr D Lawrence said that CBC is in the process of enforcing delivery conditions at ASDA, and there must be rules for M & S.

Cllr Peter Woodward said that the catchment area for M & S London Colney is tremendous, not restricted to the local area.

Cllr T Woodward asked if LXB and WYG we aware of the Green Infrastructure plan.

Mary Davidson said they were in contact.

**a. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

Sheila Grayston, a member of the public, said that the Biggleswade Town Plan Steering Group had discussed these proposals and agreed that buses are needed to take people from Town Centre and Railway Station as well as the villages, up to the retail parks.

Nicholas Alford said that there would be bus stops nearby.

Mary Davidson said that she would speak to the bus company.

Andy Buckley, a member of the public, said that he supports the development but is concerned about the entrance to Holme Court School on the A1, as this needs improving. The retail in the Town Centre shouldn't be forgotten. Units 1 & 2 are the other side of London Road, he thought that this was going to be for businesses only.

Cllr Mrs W Smith said that Holme Court School is leaving Biggleswade, sadly, but there would still be residents living at the site.

Nicholas Alford said that there would be proper information links to let people know what goods can be purchased in the Town. Town Centre improvement scheme will contribute towards this.

Carl Barrand said that feedback shows that people wouldn't need to go to Stevenage or Milton Keynes and would buy more locally.

Cllr D Lawrence asked what parking policy would there be at the new development that stops commuters using the car park.

Nicholas Alford said that a 3 hour time limit would be imposed.

#### **4. PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

##### **a. CB/11/02176/FULL – 21 Cedar Avenue, Biggleswade.**

Proposed single storey rear & side extension, following demolition of existing garage. Proposed second storey extension & new pitched roof.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council raise no objection to this application provided the neighbours are consulted and that any comments they may make are considered by CBC in their deliberations. In addition, the Council is to ensure that their guidelines on the size of the proposed extension to the principle dwelling are complied with in order to eliminate detriment in respect of light and privacy of adjacent residents.

##### **b. CB/11/02229/REN – Land West of Beauford Farm (London Rd), Biggleswade**

Construction of surface water balancing pond & associated works for flood attenuation approved planning permission BC/CC/2008/33 dated 21 Nov. 2008

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council raise no objection to this application

##### **c. CB/11/02107/RM – Land South of Potton Road, Biggleswade**

Reserved Matters: Appearance, landscaping, layout and scale of blocks 27,28 and 30 for residential development of 87 dwellings and associated areas (pursuant to outline planning permission MB/03/01205/OUT dated 13 November 2006)

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council **OBJECT** to this application and raised concerns at the lack of public open spaces in this development.

##### **d. CB/11/02310/FULL – Land adjacent Road 10, Land South of Potton Road, Biggleswade.**

Erection of sub-station together with driveway access onto road 10.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council raise no objection to this application but **REQUEST** that the landscaping around the sub-station is of a nature that survives longer than previously planted shrubs at other sub-stations.

##### **e. CB/11/01924/FULL – 93-95 Hitchin Street, Biggleswade.**

Retention of existing security hoarding to front of existing building site. (Retrospective application)

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council raise no objection to this application **SUBJECT** to a 2 year limit when the application will need to be re-submitted.

5. **ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

a. **Repollard trees T1 to T5 Lime. Reduce height by 1m and trim sides to trees T6 to T11 Cypress – 7a Station Road, Biggleswade**

CBC received the above application which is within the Biggleswade Conservation Area.

Members were asked to comment on this application.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council raise no objection to this application

b. **Request to carry out tree work in Biggleswade Conservation Area – CB/TCA/11/00163 Telephone Exchange, 33-37 Hitchin Street, Biggleswade**

Central Bedfordshire Council wrote to Town Council informing that they have received an application to carry out work to tree(s) at a property in Hitchin Street which is within the Biggleswade Conservation Area, the details of which are attached.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council raise no objection to this application

c. **Authorised Signatories**

For newly elected Councillors to sign the Authorise Signatory form from Natwest Bank (form to be handed out at the meeting). This form can then be submitted to Natwest Bank. Each new signatory would then be required to attend Natwest Bank, High Street, Biggleswade, with 2 forms of identification. 1 form to be photo ID and other name/address ID.

**Cllr Mr I Bond, Cllr Mrs M Russell, Cllr Mrs H Ramsay, Cllr B Briars and Cllr Ms S Mulchrone signed the appropriate form during the meeting and were asked to visit the above branch with the relevant forms of identification.**

d. **Accounts Training**

As per Council meeting 21<sup>st</sup> June 2011 requesting Derek Kemp from RBS to attend a meeting to go through all relevant Accounts paperwork, the following dates were given.

Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> July 2011 @ 2pm  
Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2011 @ 2pm  
Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> August 2011 @ 2pm  
Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> August 2011 @ 2pm

None of these dates were convenient for Members so it was **RESOLVED** to ask Derek Kemp for some alternative dates.

e. **Invitation from the Chairman of Central Bedfordshire Council**

The Chairman of Central Bedfordshire Council, Cllr Peter Hollick, has invited all Members to attend a fundraising event on 31 July 2011 – a picnic at the Marston Vale Forest Centre.

Details and the booking form were attached to the agenda for Members to consider.

It was **RESOLVED** that any Members wishing to attend would contact the Chairman's secretary direct.

f. **Local Authority Publishing**

Local Authority Publishing has asked if Town Council would like to take a page or a half page in the new Town Guide, in addition to the Biggleswade Bulletin.

The cost would be: Full Page - £695.00

Half Page - £495.00

It was **RESOLVED** not to advertise with Local Authority Publishing as Members felt that Town Council has sufficient coverage in the Biggleswade Bulletin

g. **Holme Mills Heritage Project – Greensand Ridge Development Fund Application**

Correspondence was received from The Jordan Trust regarding the above project.

They are asking Council to send a letter of support for their funding application, which if successful, will ensure a sustainable future for Holme Mills, conserving its heritage and environmental values.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council send a letter of support for this funding application.

6. **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

a. **Street naming and numbering – Land adjacent Fairlands, Chapel Fields, Biggleswade**

Following the demolition of the property known as Fairlands, CBC has confirmed the addresses of the dwellings being constructed at the site as **Bensons Court**.

It was **RESOLVED** that this be noted.

b. **Confirmation of Modified Order – Manor Court, Dunton Lane, Biggleswade Tree Preservation order No 1/201**

In January 2011 CBC made the above order and sent Town Council a copy. CBC then considered whether this should be made permanent and on 15 June decided **to modify the Order**.

A copy of the details were attached to the agenda.

It was **RESOLVED** that this be noted, and also to ask CBC why Town Council wasn't notified before they decided to modify the order.

c. **Thank you letter received from RNLI**

The RNLI have written to Town Council to send thanks for permission granted for them to carry out a Charity collection on 18 June, £531.19 was raised, which will go towards supporting the Volunteer Lifeboat crews to save lives at sea.

It was **RESOLVED** that this be noted.

d. **Town Council Annual Bowls match**

The Annual Bowls has been arranged for Thursday 18 August commencing at 6pm. All those wishing to play should inform Town Council staff as soon as possible.

It was **RESOLVED** that this be noted.

e. **Appeal by The Co-Operative Group – Site at Land to the North of Edworth Road, Langford**

Correspondence was received from CBC to inform Town Council that the Public Inquiry into the above appeal will place on **1 November 2011 for 6 days** at the Council Offices at Priory House, Monks Walk, Chicksands, Shefford SG17 5TQ starting at 10.00am.

Members are invited to attend the Public Inquiry and as a person who may be interested in or affected by the appeal you may, at the Secretary of State's Inspector's discretion, make your views known.

It was **RESOLVED** that this be noted.

f. **Biggleswade History Society Newsletter**

Town Council has received a copy of Biggleswade History Society Newsletter and a copy was attached to the agenda.

It was **RESOLVED** that this be noted.

g. **Bedfordshire & River Ivel IDB Maintenance Plan 2011-2012**

Correspondence was received from the Bedfordshire and River Ivel Internal Drainage Board to inform Council that they have finalised the maintenance programme for the year coming 2011/2012. They have identified watercourses in Biggleswade Parish where it is proposed to carry out maintenance works so that they are kept in serviceable condition to manage surface water and help reduce flood risk.

The proposed works will be similar to that of previous years consisting of; flailing, clearing, weed cutting, pollarding and dredging, as necessary. These works will improve flow in the watercourse by removing obstructions and hence reduce flood risk

A map showing the area of the proposed works was on display in the Chamber for members to view.

It was **RESOLVED** that this be noted.

h. **A1 between Buckden and Biggleswade; Carriageway Repair Works**

CarillionWSP, on behalf of Highways Agency, have written to Town Council to inform of repair work to the A1 between the Buckden roundabout and Biggleswade South roundabout. The works are to repair various sections of the worn out road surface and will be carried out in 5 phases, scheduled to start on the evening of Monday 25 July to be completed by 13 August.

Details were attached to the agenda.

It was **RESOLVED** that this be noted.

7. **PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

There were no items discussed during the public open session,