

**Minutes of the Okehampton Town Council Planning Committee held on
Monday 25 January 2016 at 7.00 pm. in the Council Chamber,
Town Hall, Okehampton**

Committee Members Present: Councillor A Leech (Chairman)
Councillor T Cummings (until 8.25 pm)
Councillor Mrs V Cushing
Councillor Mrs J Goffey
Councillor Dr M Ireland
Councillor R Rush
Councillor B Stephens (until 9.05 pm)
Councillor P Vachon (Town Mayor)

Other Members Present: Councillor Mrs J Carpenter
Councillor Miss C Holt
Councillor B Tolley
Councillor Mrs J Yelland

In Attendance: P R Snell (Town Clerk)

	Action
413 <u>Apologies for Absence</u> - Apologies were presented on behalf of Councillors Marsh and Weekes.	
414 <u>Deferment of Business</u> - No questions from members of the public present.	
415 <u>Members' Questions</u> - Councillor Rush enquired if a response had been received from the Leader of West Devon Borough Council regarding the questions sent on the Developers' Forum. The Clerk responded that no response had been received to date.	
416 <u>Minutes</u> - The Minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held on 23 November and 14 December 2015, and on 11 January 2016 were approved and signed on the proposition of Councillor Goffey, seconded Councillor Ireland and agreed.	
417 <u>Matters Arising</u> - The Clerk reported the response received from the Planning Officer concerning application 2859/15/PDM (agricultural building to dwelling on Courtenay Road).	
418 <u>Planning Applications:</u> 2731/15/OPA Outline Planning Application. Outline application with some matters reserved (access to be considered) for residential development for up to 400 dwellings at Parcels 3 & 4 east of	

Okehampton, Crediton Road.

Hannard Developments Ltd.

Resolved to object to the application on the proposition of Councillor Ireland, seconded Councillor Ireland on the following grounds:

- The application sought to reserve some matters and left access to be considered. The Council was of the opinion that access was critical to this application and should be included from the outset. The 'link road' as referred to between Exeter Road and Crediton Road does not – in its current design form - represent a trunk link between primary roads, but serves as the only access road to Parcel 3.
- It was considered that the Ecological Impact Assessment was insufficiently robust in protection of wildlife habitat and hedgerows during the construction phase, particularly during the bird nesting season.
- Although the Landscape and Visual Assessments Reports were noted, there appeared to be no specific Environmental Impact Assessment.
- The Transport Assessment was considered incomplete and inadequate for the following reasons:
 - Much data was drawn from a 2011 study which is now significantly out of date due to continued building along Crediton Road
 - The limit of the study to the west is Barton Road. The impact of the proposed development on the town centre traffic (Fore Street/Market Street) has not been considered even though this was identified as the key junction in the Okehampton Town Centre Access Road Report (DCC 26 August 2010). This is considered a significant omission.
 - The references to bus services are out of date and incorrect.
 - The specification for traffic flow data did not include the peak school hour movement between 3pm-4pm, which would have been informative.
- Drainage:
 - Current knowledge reflects significant water run-off down the road on the west-facing slope through Parcel 4. This will be significantly increased by additional hard surfacing in this area through development.
 - Flood alleviation appears to have been inadequately assessed - the attenuation basins referred to in the application are necessary for the existing development and are not thought to be sufficient for the proposed further development.
 - The capacity of the foul drain pipe running through Brightley is questioned – particularly in the current experience of overflow and/or leakage
 - The water run-off from the East Okehampton Business Park has

not been assessed, particularly given the gradient towards Parcel 4.

- The proposals for Parcel 3 show development outside the area of the Core Strategy to the estimated extent of some 1.3 hectares (for which no geological assessment has been included.) The Core Strategy provided for a combined total of 375 dwellings and the application has increased this up to 400, whilst assessments included have been based on the lower figure of 375. Furthermore, the maximum density as set in the Core Strategy of no more than 30 dwellings per hectare has been disregarded by proposing a density of up to 41 dwellings per hectare.
- Parcel 3 and Parcel 4 are of sufficiently diverse nature in terms of geology topography that they should be considered separately rather than in a combined application. Although the WDBC Core Strategy included provision for Parcel 4, it was subsequently withdrawn in draft versions of *Our Plan* for reason of being less suitable for development.
- Archaeology – whilst the Report focusses on the site of the Roman Fort, it is understood that the course of the Exeter-Launceston Roman Road lies under the development site and there should be a full watching – brief for a competent archaeological professional to ensure safeguarding of any finds which would add to the local heritage resources.
- The benefit assessment of 2,000 new jobs should be challenged. The documentation shows no evidence to substantiate this claim and even less to demonstrate employment sustainability other than for the presumed short-term construction trades.
- Okehampton is in a high radon density area. There appears to be no reference to radon testing or attenuation measures.

419 **Planning Decisions** - The Committee noted the decisions made by the Planning Authority. Conditional approvals had been determined for:

01054/2015

01135/2015

01141/2015

01144/2015

420 **Our Plan** - The Chairman reported the revised schedule for consultation on the Borough Council strategic 'Our Plan', and emphasised that the Plan would include new assessments on sites that had not previously been considered, where requested.

421 **Discussion Items:**

421.1 **Market Street Traffic Lights** – Councillor Ireland asked that monitoring of the Market Street junction be undertaken in order to assess the frequency of motorists 'jumping' the lights. After discussion, it was agreed that the

Cllrs
Vachon &
Goffey

subject be taken to the next meeting of Okehampton Matters, and raised with Devon Highways and the Police in parallel. Clerk

421.2 Station Road Congestion - Councillor Ireland reported that the traffic congestion associated with Polar Express during November and December had been severe and presented an obstruction to the free movement of emergency vehicles. It was agreed to ask the local General Manager of BARS to discuss traffic management for the future on the proposition of Councillor Ireland, seconded Councillor Goffey. Councillor Yelland reported that the issue was also being taken forward to the Borough Council's Safety Advisory Group. Clerk

422 Members' Reports & Reminders for Agenda Items –

- (i) Dartmoor Railway Supporters' Association: Councillor Ireland reported that DRSA had supported BARS at a recent diesel locomotive event and that work on the Okehampton to Meldon stretch was ongoing, to be carried out irrespective of any decision on the future of the Northern alternative line option.
- (ii) Ockment Centre: Councillor Leech reported that the Ockment team were focussed on the promotion of facilities and that a bid for grant funding had been submitted to address the re-roofing of part of the building.
- (iii) Devon Heartlands Community Development Trust: Councillor Cushing reported that the scheduled meeting for January had been cancelled. The February meeting was due to take place in North Tawton.

There was no current report on enforcement matters and the meeting was closed at 9.15pm.

Councillor Leech
Chairman