

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PLANNING PANEL
HELD ON THURSDAY, 8 APRIL 2010**

COUNCILLORS

PRESENT Alan Barker (Chairman), Dogan Delman, Toby Simon

OFFICERS: Bob Griffiths (Assistant Director – Planning & Environmental Protection), Aled Richards (Head of Development Services) and David B Taylor (Traffic and Transportation), Sandra Bertschin & Ann Redondo (Democratic Services Team)

Also Attending: Applicant / Agent Representatives:
Mark Connell – King Sturge
Paul Maddock – Architect
Mark Hanson – Origin Housing Group
Gerrard Brennan – Origin Housing Group
Kirsty Armstrong - Comminque

Councillor Matthew Laban (Ward Councillor)
Councillor Donald McGowan
and approximately 38 members of the public

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ELECTION OF PANEL CHAIRMAN

Councillor Barker was appointed Panel Chairman.

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OPENING

The Chairman welcomed all attendees to the Planning Panel. He explained that the purpose of this meeting was a fact-finding exercise for the Planning Committee.

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OFFICER'S SUMMARY OF THE PLANNING ISSUES

Aled Richards, Head of Development Services, clarified that the purpose of a Planning Panel meeting was not to determine the application. A decision on the application would be made by the full Planning Committee at a later date, probably May or June 2010. The Planning Panel would give local residents and interested parties the opportunity to raise questions directly with the applicant and agents.

The planning proposal was to redevelop the site for residential purposes, including the erection of 64 dwellings, in a mix of 2 and 3 storey blocks of flats and terraces of houses, with 54 car parking spaces, vehicular access via Gilbert Street and landscaping across the scheme.

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Site notices had been displayed and 208 letters had been sent to adjacent neighbours. Consultation was also undertaken with EDF and Thames Water who had raised no objections. The Police had raised concerns regarding the use of the alleyway as a rat-run and mis-use by mopeds.

Eleven objections had been received together with a 30 page signature petition, citing the following issues:

- Increase in traffic
- Unacceptable increase in traffic in Gilbert Street
- Increased traffic leading to further emissions from cars
- Traffic during construction
- Siting of the proposed block immediately adjacent to No. 23 Gilbert Street out of keeping and resulting in loss of privacy
- Proposed pedestrian route through will be a haven for school children and loiterers and will encourage litter, noise and potentially vandalism
- Proximity of some parking areas to existing dwellings causing noise and disturbance
- In the current economic climate building new homes is unnecessary, should focus on the re-use of empty properties
- Over development
- 3 storey flats out of keeping with surrounding properties
- Loss of privacy

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PRESENTATION BY THE APPLICANT / AGENT

Mark Connell, King Sturge, and Paul Maddock, Architect, gave a presentation on the proposal. (A copy of the presentation is available from the Committee Administrator on 020 8379 4091.)

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QUESTIONS BY PANEL MEMBERS

1. Councillor Delman raised the following concerns:
 - Density of the proposal;
 - Crime and safety;
 - Emergency vehicle access.

Mark Connell advised that:

- density was 71 dwellings per hectare which was within the London Plan standard;
 - it was intended to seek 'Secure by Design' accreditation for the proposal;
 - the Emergency Services had not raised any objections.
2. Councillor Simon made the following comments:
 - increased traffic in Gilbert Street and Unity Road should generate a Section 106 contribution to traffic calming measures;

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- consideration to be given to including funding for youth provision within the Section 106 agreement;
 - verification of the traffic analysis required;
 - car parking provision to be reviewed;
 - analysis of similar car parking provision on other sites to be provided.
3. The Chairman expressed concern about the circular movement of traffic into and out of the site.

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QUESTIONS BY WARD COUNCILLORS AND MPS

1. Councillor Laban raised the following issues:
- endorsement of residents concerns regarding vehicular access via Gilbert Street;
 - advised that the Co-op had built an access road from the Hertford Road to the site to keep commercial vehicles off of local residential streets and suggested that this road be used to access the site;
 - queried the validity of traffic movements as outlined in the traffic survey;
 - questioned the inclusion of three storey buildings when all the buildings in Gilbert Street and Unity Road were two storey or less.

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OPEN SESSION - QUESTIONS AND VIEWS FROM THE FLOOR

Car Parking

1. Mrs Kent remarked that 2 car parking spaces were required for every property and that there was already car parking problems in Gilbert Street and Unity Road. There were also problems with cars speeding in Unity Road.

Mark Connell advised that new residents would be advised about car parking provision and would not be eligible for a permit in any new Controlled Parking Zone in Gilbert Street.

2. Mr Moynihan commented that less than one car parking space per property was not enough and at least two were required. Car parking overspill would be onto Gilbert Street and Unity Road which could lead to the introduction of a Controlled Parking Zone.

Aled Richards advised that there was no statutory legislation regarding the provision of car parking spaces, only national guidance. The Mayor's London Plan and national guidance balanced all issues, such as the locality of public transport, but generally proposed a 1:1 ratio.

3. Mrs Raymond advised that currently residents of Walsham Court often could not use their allocated communal parking space and that Newlon Housing Association nor the Police would take any action to address the

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issue. She also expressed concern about increased traffic noise and two way traffic in Gilbert Street around the blind corner.

4. Mr Read suggested that the developers give consideration to underground car parking or stacking car parking. He also expressed concern about emergency vehicle access via Gilbert Street as this was commonly parked along both sides.

Mark Connell advised that there no constraints, other than financial, to underground or stacking car parking.

5. Mr Hasan commented that car parking provision was insufficient which would lead to crime. He suggested that landscaping be reduced to increase parking provision.

Mark Connell advised that the original proposal included 64 car parking spaces and that car parking provision could be reconsidered.

6. A resident remarked that due to inadequate car parking provision on the site it was likely that a Controlled Parking Zone would be required in Gilbert Street.

Mark Connell advised that residents of the proposed development would not be eligible for a permit in such a Controlled Parking Zone.

Road access

7. Mrs Mitchell advised that there was a blind bend in front of her house in Gilbert Street and expressed concern about a trebling of traffic using the road and consequent increase in road accidents. She also expressed concern about construction vehicles access to the site. She invited the developers to visit her residence to properly assess the issues raised.

Mark Connell advised that a Construction Management Plan would be agreed with the Council. He also advised that the traffic assessment had shown that the proposal would generate less traffic movement than if the site retained its lawful industrial usage. The proposed access was also suitable for emergency and refuse collection vehicles.

8. Mr Mitchell welcomed the redevelopment of the site but requested that access be provided from Hertford Road.

Mark Connell advised that the developers did not control the land and could not force the Co-op to handover the land on which the access road was located. However the Co-op would be contacted again to review this issue.

9. Ms Freeman expressed concern about noise pollution from access to the site which would affect her young daughter's bedroom outside of the working day and the further light restriction to her residence.

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Mark Connell advised that shadowing and light had been considered with regard to her specific property and that no further light restriction would be created. If the site were to be retained for its lawful industrial use the noise level would be greater than for the proposed residential use. However he agreed to visit Ms Freeman's property to discuss her specific concerns.

10. Mr Steven commented that the proposed entrance to the site was opposite Turkey Brook and that cars were parked along this area reducing the turning point and narrowing the road into one way. He expressed concern that emergency vehicle access to the site could be blocked by parked cars and that tailbacks would be created on a regular basis by refuse vehicles.

Mark Connell advised that the proposed entrance was 6m wide and that the emergency services had not expressed any concerns regarding access to the site. The traffic assessment survey had shown the proposed access route to be adequate.

11. Mr Howson detailed the vehicular patterns when the site was in use as a dairy. He remarked that with the saturation of proposed buildings and lack of car parking the quality of life for local residents would be impacted which was of no interest to the developers. It was probable that the number of road accidents in Gilbert Street would increase leading to double yellow lines or a controlled parking zone. He requested that an alternative entrance to the site be found.

Mark Connell advised that the Origin Housing Group would be responsible for the ongoing management of the site and therefore were interested in the quality of life in the local area.

Design issues

12. Mrs Page expressed concern about the footprint of the proposed building next to her house as this would obliterate light from four rooms out of six in her house. She also expressed concerns about a lack of privacy due to overlooking.

Mark Connell agreed to visit Mrs Page's residence to discuss her specific concerns regarding the proposed building next to her house.

13. Mrs Torun expressed concern regarding overlooking and the blocking of light to her house together with concerns regarding access to the site being directly outside her property. She suggested that the proposed block of flats be replaced with increased car parking provision for residents of the new site.

Paul Maddock advised that refinement of the proposal could be considered.

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14. Ms Naidu expressed concerns about increased crime and safety as her property would be overlooked and her privacy invaded.

Mark Connell advised that the Police Safer Neighbourhood Officer had welcomed the regeneration of the site to reduce crime as a vacant site lends itself to crime.

15. Councillor McGowan remarked that the proposal was too dense and had not considered the effect on the street scene. Cars would end up being parked in local roads which could lead to more use of front gardens for car parking. Also the Council's Place Shaping project should have been considered within the proposal.

Mark Connell advised that individuals now wanting to convert their front gardens to car parking provision required planning permission. The proposal for the site had been commended by the Place Shaping Committee.

16. Mr Rocco requested that another proposal with fewer buildings be developed.

17. Several residents expressed concern about the boundaries between their properties and proposed buildings. They would be overlooked, there would be a loss of light to their residences and a lack of privacy.

Mark Connell advised that all proposed building boundaries were in excess of the Council's standards and that consideration could be given to tree planting or fencing to establish boundaries.

18. Ms Spong and Ms Marshall commented on the infrastructure, such as local schools, doctors and youth provision, which would be needed to support the development.

Mark Connell advised that the developers, through a Section 106 agreement, would be making monies available to the Council, this included £144K educational support, £32K for local play areas and a contribution towards the traffic analysis study.

Aled Richards advised that Section 106 financial contributions were to support various aspects of community life and were an obligation on all developers. All such payments were site specific and had to be invested in the local area. Levels of financial contributions were based on formula calculations.

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CLOSE OF MEETING

The Chairman thanked everyone for their comments and questions; these would be fed back into the application process. The application would be determined at a forthcoming Planning Committee meeting to which residents were welcome to attend.

