



Credition Town Council



Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of the Town Council held on 12 February, 2007

Councillors:

Mr R Edwards (Chairman)
Mr W Brown
Mr R Adams
Mrs E Brown
Mr J Downes
Mr C Haydon
Mrs J Pitts
Mr P Taylor

In Attendance:

Mr Jonathon Guscott
Mr Keith Garside
Mr Brian Hensley
Public (approx. 45)
Press
Assistant Town Clerk

MDDC Head of Planning
MDDC Area Planning Officer
DCC Highways Manager

Mr P Dunn

The Chairman opened the meeting by welcoming all present, and briefed those present on safety procedures.

District Planning Authority Officers, Mr Jonathon Guscott – Head of Planning, Mr Keith Garside – Area Planning Officer, and County Highways Officer Mr Brian Hensley – Devon Highways Manager were introduced by the Chairman. It was explained that officers were open to questions; however the public were requested to respect any decision to decline to answer as to do so could prejudice the on-going development of the application.

It was explained the application was likely to be heard by the April Planning Committee at the Planning Authority, and further representations could be made to that Committee and District Councillors.

179. Apologies

Apologies received from Councillors Harris, Way and Nation.

180. Declarations of Interest

Prejudicial	Councillor Adams	Minute 182 – Shopkeeper.
Prejudicial	Councillor Pitts	Minute 182 – Shopkeeper.
Code of Conduct	Councillor Haydon	As a member of more than one authority, declared that any views or opinions expressed at this meeting would be provisional and would not prejudice any views expressed at a meeting of another authority.

181. Public Question Time.

Councillors Adams and Pitts left the meeting having declared a prejudicial interest in minute 182, given that public questions were about to be put related to that item.

The Chairman requested those wishing to address the Council, give their name and address, in order to comply with Council Standing Orders which state that only those resident in the town or having a business interest are permitted to speak.

County Councillor Michael Lee unsuccessfully challenged the ruling expressing the application impacted a much wider area. He was told those who did not reside or have business interests in the Town should lobby their respective Parish Councils or the District or County Council direct.

Councillor Taylor's position on the Council was challenged as a non-resident and it was explained he had a legitimate business interest in the Town.

Mr Garside gave an outline to the application under consideration, which was followed by questions from the floor.

In summary issues raised and addressed included:-

- The Local Plan office space category B1 referred to "back office" type occupation as opposed to public office usage.
- A petition of 478 signatories against the proposal from the Town and surrounding area was submitted, and the Council implored to consider the long term impact of the proposal on the Town should it be permitted.
- Those in favour of the application queried where they could sign a petition in favour of the proposal. It was explained they would have to organise this.
- Concerns expressed at the impact on local traders and the vitality of the Town.
- Photos submitted illustrating traffic issues along Exeter Road.
- MDDC have engaged independent retail analysts to review Tesco's submission / evidence.
- The consultation process was explained, highlighting the MDDC Officer recommendation for refusal on Air Quality issues was one of many which would be weighed by the planners when making their final recommendation to the Planning Committee.
- The proposal would provide new local jobs, which although low paid, would be jobs for locals in Crediton not Exeter.
- Air Quality matters, but any final decision on the proposal should be treated even-handedly bearing in mind recent decisions on Winswood and the Copplestone development.
- It was explained that the draft section 106 provision of £600,000 by Tesco received only today towards a link road would require analysis. Current understanding was this would be paid back to Tesco if not used within 10 years.
- The store proposal was 5.5K sq metres which included office and warehousing. Actual food shop floor space was 2.5K sq metres plus a further 1.5K sq metres of comparable goods retail (the latter could be restricted by condition). For comparison, existing Somerfield shop floor space was 1.4K sq metres. Somerfields new application was for 2K sq metres.
- Shopping in town was not practical for a substantial number of town residents who work all day in Exeter; they need a convenient quality well-stocked supermarket accessible out of hours. Such people were perceived to be the silent majority with no objection to the proposal.
- What impact will an additional 60 bus journeys along Exeter Road have.
- No allocation of land exists in the local plan for housing on the opposite side of the main road to the proposal. Was proposed roundabout spur was to facilitate any future provision of a Lords Meadow link road ?

- The proposal represents a departure from the Local Plan, and in the event it is approved by the District Planning Authority, it will be advertised as a departure for 21 days and referred to the Government Office South West (GOSW) who have the option to review the application. Anyone can request that GOSW call in the application at any point.
- The current, in-force Local Plan will carry significant more weight than the emerging Local Development Framework Core Strategy which still awaits the Government Inspectors report.
- A second petrol station for Crediton would be welcome because when the existing one is closed, the nearest alternative was in Exeter.
- Many are not against the supermarket, but the impact it would have on Exeter Road.
- The proliferation of other supermarket home delivery service vans in Crediton implies a need for another supermarket.

The Chairman thanked all who had participated and the officers for their responses, and the public session was closed at approximately 8pm.

182. Chairmans Announcements.

None.

183. Planning Application 06/02670/OUT - Land To South Of Exeter Road Wellparks Crediton.

Councillor W Brown asked that if the proposal was accepted what mechanisms existed to ensure the link road was completed within the time limit of 10 years ? The County Council had apparently expressed the opinion that funding for a link road would have to be sought as part of section 106 agreements against large town developments as they came forward. It was highlighted that in the Local Plan only one such allocation of land existed at Red Cross Hill and it was unlikely that that would cover the shortfall in funding a link road.

Further, the proposed location of the bus stops for the development, were a long walk from the stores entrance.

Councillor Downes queried what additional funding for the link road would be required over and above Tesco's offer. It was stated this would not be known until the feasibility study was complete. The Chairman expressed incredulity that Highways after 20 years of local campaigning still did not have costings.

Councillor Taylor queried whether, in the event the proposed £600,000 was not to be used implementing a link road the monies could be used for other infrastructure improvements to alleviate highways problems. It was explained the section 106 would need to be specific as to the use of such monies. Developers have a right to a time limit on such works.

Councillor Haydon expressed cynicism at the timing of both the Tesco and Somerfield applications, given that to have delayed putting in their applications would have meant they would need to comply with the more onerous requirements of the Local Development Framework on developer contributions to local infrastructure requirements. It was explained the adopted Local Plan took precedence in assessing these applications.

Councillors Haydon and E Brown both cited feedback from interaction with locals that the majority seemed in favour of the proposals. Councillor Haydon was concerned the Town Council was expected to make a recommendation when there were still some significant reports outstanding. It was explained these would be made available to the Town Council for further consideration as soon as available and the Planning Authority would accept further or deferred comment from Town Council up to as late as mid March. The deadline was dictated by the lead time it would take to produce the officer report to the April Planning Committee.

Councillor Haydon restated people's priority for Crediton was road improvements.

Councillor Haydon proposed, Councillor E Brown seconded, recommending "no objection" to the Planning Authority subject to:-

- Provision of an adequate section 106 financial contribution towards improvement of traffic infrastructure, to mitigate the worsening air quality.
- The recommendation be reviewed when all outstanding reports and information is available.
- Suitable measures to minimise light pollution and visual impact of proposal on the locality.
- Suitable siting of the proposed bus stops nearer to the entrance to minimise walking distance carrying shopping.

The proposal was discussed. Councillor Edwards argued that the Council should oppose this application on a number of grounds, which included:-

- It was well outwith the current Local Plan.
- It would adversely affect the shops in the town centre.
- It would make air pollution, especially close to Exeter Road, worse unless a link road was constructed.

Councillor Edwards recommended deferral, but was not seconded.

Councillor Haydon's proposal was carried by majority of five votes to one, with the Chairman voting against.

184. BUSINESS BROUGHT FORWARD

None.

The chairman thanked the public, councillors and officers for attending.

Meeting closed at 20:40.

Signed:

(R Edwards – Chairman)

Date: