



Committee Members present:

Councillor Chris Millar - Vice
Chair

John Weir (JW)

David Dickinson (DD)

Councillor Sadik Chaudhury
(SC)

Councillor Jean Hawkins
(Cllr. JH)

In attendance:

Adrian Arnold (AA) - Interim
Director for Planning and
Development

John Hill (JH) - Development
Control Manager

Rhoda Quaye (RQ) – Board
Secretary

Michelle Vas (MV) - DWS

Northampton UDA Planning Committee Minutes

This Public meeting was held on

26th May 2009

At

The Heroes Lounge

Saints Rugby Club

Northampton

Reference	Minutes	Action
	<p>The Chair opened the meeting at 6pm. He welcomed members of the public and requested that the sign in book be completed by all present to aid evacuation in case of a fire.</p> <p>About 60 members of the public were present.</p>	
Item 1	<p>Item 1: Apologies</p> <p>Ann Tate, Nick Thompson and Cllr Penny Flavell</p>	
Item 2	<p>Item2: Declaration of interests</p> <p>JH declared an interest Heritage Champion and member of Delapre Building Trust.</p>	
Item 3	<p>Item 3: Minutes of the meeting held on 24thFebruary 2009</p> <p>3.1 IT WAS AGREED: That the minutes of the meeting held in public on 27th January 2009 were a true and accurate record.</p>	
Item 4	<p>Item 4: Construction Criminal Justice Centre.</p> <p>Applicants: Northamptonshire Police Authority</p> <p>Application No: 08/0283/FULWNN</p> <p>Description: Criminal Justice Centre (Use Class C2a) with associated parking, landscaping and access (Full Application).</p> <p>Address: Land at Pavilion Drive, Northampton, NN4 7YL</p> <p>Ward: Nene Valley</p> <p>4.1 The committee undertaking a site inspection prior to the consideration of the application at the meeting itinerary.</p> <p>4.2 The committee had received the report and were given an update (Appendix 1 attached) on the application.</p> <p>The following speakers spoke against the application.</p> <p>4.3 Tim North made the following points</p> <p>a. The proposal does not adequately justify the departure from the Development Plan.</p> <p>b. Regional spatial strategy was not given consideration by the officer's report.</p> <p>c. Recent studies show a shortfall of employment land in</p>	

Northampton. The proposal does not take account of this qualitative deficit.

d. Other more suitable sites could be considered.

4.4 The committee asked if the speaker had done any research on the alternative sites purported by the previous speaker.

4.5 Mr North responded in the affirmative and added that there was no evidence that the site in question was more suitable than the other sites that could be used. He said recent research indicated there was as a deficiency in class B1(a) in Northampton.

4.6 Linda Amos stated that she lived very close to the proposed sight and made the following points

- a. Concern about safety on the foot path link to Hardingstone.
- b. Safety concerns with regards to released detainees.
- c. Lack of frequent public transport to and from the area.
- d. It should be nearer to the Town Centre or built away from residential areas.

4.7 Councillor Kevin Barton made the following points

- a. He informed the committee that the foot path was approx 400 metres distance between the proposal and Hardingstone.
- b. There was a threat posed to residents' safety and widespread fear among residents and businesses.
- c. Information with regards to detainee numbers did not take into account the growth of Northampton.
- d. Public parking spaces and transport were lacking in the plans
- e. Relevant case law shows that fear of crime was could influence planning decisions.

4.8 Mr Brian Binley (MP) made the following points

- a. Considerable fear expressed by residents; a high percentage of staff on the business park where female safety was of high concern.
- b. The planning category for the proposed site should not be changed to suit the applicants.
- c. There was no public parking.

d. The site of the proposed development was a prestigious business park; the status will be affected adversely by the development.

e. The committee should take into account peoples fears and jobs.

4.9 Mr Jeremy Pyatt, planning consultant for the Police Authority speaking in favour of the application made the following points.

a. The proposal adhered to policy requirements.

b. Highway issues were nearly resolved and it was expected the Highways Agency objection would be removed shortly.

c. Policy B14 allows for flexibility of uses on site.

d. There was a perceived risk of crime but re-offence rates were very low, 4 in 1000 re-offended within a 24 hour period hence released offenders should not be a cause for concern.

e. Detainees will be offered transport off site and out of the area. This will be secured via S106.

4.10 The committee requested information with regards to how many new jobs would be created by the proposal.

Mr Pyatt stated a total of 200 jobs were to be created.

4.11 The committee also asked if released detainees could refuse the transport offered by the authority.

Mr Pyatt responded in the affirmative.

4.12 The committee asked if other sites had been considered by the applicants and how many.

My Pyatt stated that other sites had been considered; he said size, location, accessibility amongst other things had been considered. The site of the proposal was considered the most appropriate.

4.13 DD declared an interest as a director of NEL in response to a letter from NEL opposing the application, he stood down from the committee for the rest of the deliberation on the application.

4.14 Mr Peter Mandelson (Chief Constable of Police Northampton) speaking in favour of the application made the

following points.

a. There are currently three facilities in use which fall below required safety, home office standards and allowance for growth and safe working environments.

b. Four possible sites had been considered and re offence rates of released persons were low.

c. Growth had been factored in to the size and number of cells.

d. Robust risk assessments will be carried out prior to detainee release and also the increased police presence should deter crime.

e. The authority could not force released detainees to use offered transport however, research showed that there was high uptake for such transport.

4.15 The committee requested information on how many sites had been considered and how the sites where rated.

Mr Mandelson informed the committee that 4 sites where looked at. He said size, location, accessibility amongst other things was considered and the proposed site came out on top of the rest.

4.16 The committee asked for some clarity around the number of cells and detainee and release numbers at peak times.

Mr Mandelson stated that 40 detainee releases occurred at peak times and 20 on average. He said high risk detainees would not be released.

4.17 The opinion was expressed that there was little evidence of community benefit as the proposal was a departure from the local plan as required by planning policy.

In response Mr Mandelson stated that there would add to essential infrastructure and provide safe working environment for staff and detainees. It would enable the County's police force to serve the community properly.

4.18 The committee also requested clarity on the number of new jobs to be created and car parking.

Mr Mandelson stated that he did not have exact numbers to

hand however both new and existing jobs were included in the 200 jobs quoted. He said car parking was available for staff and released detainees returning to answer bail.

4.19 In response to the effect of the look on the area Mr Mandelson stated that the design of the building was of high quality and would fit in with the area. 60% of it would provide office accommodation.

4.20 AA made following comments;

a) Planning policy should not be misinterpreted. The proposal would lead to substantial employment whether new or old jobs. The Policy requirement would be met.

b) The detainee release policy can be enforced in perpetuity to address any problems that may occur as a result of changes in staff by the s106 agreement

c) The risk assessment policy should be taken into account when considering increase in crime levels.

4.21 In response to a query about the possibility of the outstanding HA directive being resolved. AA informed the committee that based on the current communication with the HA would more likely than not resolve outstanding issues.

4.22 The committee was of the view that it was clear that the CJC would be beneficial to the wider community however the benefit to the local community was not clear.

4.23 The Chair asked for comments from the committee.

4.24 JW stated that more information was required to make a decision either way. He added that the "significant benefit to the local community" as per planning policy guidance had not been made clear and wanted further information on this. JW also stated that the appropriateness of the site compared to the other considered sites had not been clearly established and hence he considered the application should be deferred.

4.25 Cllr JH stated that she was not sure the location was appropriate for the proposal in question and more information

	<p>was needed about what informed the choice of the site. She said travel concerns to and from the area needed to be addressed. Cllr CM was unclear how the proposal was creating new jobs and required further clarification on the policy position and clearer details of the Travel Plan proposed.</p> <p>4.26 SC stated that the fear of crime expressed by the residents needed to be addressed. He stated that more information was needed on whether there was increase or decrease in crime in areas where such facilities had been situated. SC also stated that assurance was needed from the Police Authority on the safety of residents.</p> <p>4.27 The chair stated in addition to the concerns raised above the clarity was also need on the new job opportunities to be created. He was minded to defer the application.</p> <p>IT WAS RESOLVED: That the application be deferred to enable the applicant to submit further information to address the comments and concerns of the committee.</p>	
	<p><u>5. Use of Shoe factory as Community Centre</u></p> <p>Application number: 09/0029/COWNN</p> <p>Applicant: Al-Iman</p> <p>Address: 74-76 Cowper Street, Northampton, NN1 3QR</p> <p>Description: Application for change of use from Shoe Factory to a Community Centre, including Offices, Community Hall and meeting Rooms.</p> <p>5.1 The committee undertook a site inspection and had received the report; there were no updates on the application.</p> <p>5.2 Miss Lane Holland of the Council for Ethnic Minority Communities speaking in favor of the application made the following points;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Parking issues can be addressed by a travel plan for the area. b) Ethnic minority groups like the applicant contribute to the 	

development of their areas.

c) The facility would foster building a strong and cohesive community.

d) There was no objection from Northampton Borough Council on health grounds..

e) The occasions when "100" people would use the site will only be 3-4 time a year and other public car parks will be sourced.

d) The applicants will be happy to adhere to any conditions set in the s106 agreement.

5.3 The committee asked about the issue of noise and how it would be resolved.

In response Miss Holland said the hours of use would not be restricted to 10pm this was capable of negotiation. Classes usually took place between 4-7pm..

5.4 In response **to** the problem of parking, Miss Holland said most of the users of the site lived in the same area and hence would not need parking, also there was a car park in walking distance from the area and public transport could be used.

5.5 Mr Mike Adams a resident of the area, speaking against the application made the following points;

a) Concerned about noise and timing of events

b) Safety for children and parents at peak hour due to high level of traffic activity.

c) Parking problems were inevitable, most residents return between 5-7pm.

d) Traffic risks for emergency vehicles.

e) No obvious fire escape available.

5.6 The committee asked if the community had been consulted on the proposal. Mr Adams responded in the negative.

5.7 In response to the Chair's invitation for comments from the committee, JH stated that she was supportive of the activities planned by the applicant however she had concerns about parking and access for emergency vehicular access. She

	<p>supported the officer's recommendation.</p> <p>5.8 DD also expressed support for the applicant's plans for the centre but expressed concerns about parking and hence could not go against the officer's recommendation.</p> <p>5.9 JW stated the he was supportive of Northampton being a vibrant city of diversity. He supported the idea of having busy streets in communities; he also expressed concern about the problems of parking in the vicinity. JW stated that he would be pleased if facilities such parking permits etc where in place to enable such applications to supported to improve the community cohesion. He supported the officer's recommendation.</p> <p>5.10 SC stated it was minority groups such as the applicant should be supported and was in favour of approving the application.</p> <p>It was resolved: The application be refused as per the officers recommendation.</p>	
	<p>6. Future meeting dates were agreed to be</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30th June • 28th July 	
	<p>AOB</p> <p>There being no further business the meeting closed at 7:30pm</p> <p>Rhodaine Quaye</p> <p>Board Secretary</p> <p>Signed by the Chairman</p> <p>.....</p>	