



Town Hall | 61 Newland Street | Witham | CM8 2FE  
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## MINUTES

### PLANNING AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

Date: **Monday, 7<sup>th</sup> October 2024**

Place: **Council Chamber, Town Hall, 61 Newland Street, Witham, CM8 2FE**

Present: Councillors

P.	Barlow	(Chairman)
J.C.	Coleman	(Vice Chairman)
E.	Adelaja	
L.	Headley	(arrived 6.35 p.m.)
J.	Martin	
R.	Ramage	
N.	Smith	(Town Clerk)
G.	Kennedy	(Planning Officer)

#### 121. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor J.M. Coleman and Councillor Headley who would be late. Councillor Williams was absent.

**RESOLVED** That the apologies be received and approved.

#### 122. **MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Planning and Transport Committee held 16<sup>th</sup> September 2024 be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

#### 123. **INTERESTS**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### 124. **QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC**

There were no members of the press or public present.

#### 125. **PLANNING OFFICER'S REPORT**

She explained that Braintree District Council had made the decision to name the new road off Eastways, Albert Way after the developer's father. Members were disappointed with the

decision and considered that the Town Council should have the final say regarding the naming of roads however it was remembered that there is already an Albert Road in Witham and the Royal Mail would be unlikely to agree to this name. The Planning Officer would inform Braintree District Council accordingly.

**RESOLVED** That the information be received and noted.

**126. PART 1 APPLICATIONS**

There were no Part 1 Applications.

**127. PART 2 APPLICATIONS**

**24/02033/HH**

**36 Avenue Road, Witham**

Erection of front porch

**NO OBJECTION**

Members noted that due to time constraints the following applications had been dealt with under delegated decisions -

**24/01887/FUL**

**3 Taber Place, Witham**

Proposed internal wall and alterations to fenestration to include external roller door to form an additional unit. New retaining wall and ramp.

**Recommended no objection**

**24/01959/ADV**

**Colemans Bridge Industrial Estate, Colemans Bridge, Witham**

Replacement of an existing 48 sheet advertisement display with LED internally illuminated 48 sheet advertisement display.

**Recommended refusal on the grounds of highways safety as the digital display would distract motorists at this busy light controlled junction**

**128. REVISED PLANS**

There were no revised plans.

**129. DECISIONS**

The decisions on Planning Applications pertaining to Witham were received.

**RESOLVED** That the decisions be received and noted.

**130. TACKLING SPEEDING IN WITHAM/20s PLENTY**

An update on 20s Plenty was received.

Members discussed the 20s Plenty concept and how it could be applied to residential estates but not on the major routes through Witham. It had been previously agreed that all the schools in Witham should be checked to see whether there was already a 20s Plenty sign in place.

It was agreed that a full report should be taken to the next Planning Meeting and if a formal resolution had not been taken to request 20mph speed limit on residential estates this could be done and a request made to Essex County Councillor Tom Cunningham.

**RESOLVED** That the update be received and a full report taken to the next Meeting.

**131. NATIONAL GRID UPDATE – NORWICH TO TILBURY**

An update was received.

Comment was made that the proposals fit in with the Government's net zero energy commitment.

**RESOLVED** That the update be received and noted.

**132. LOCAL PLAN REVIEW – REVISED TIMETABLE**

The revised timetable for the Local Plan Review was received.

**RESOLVED** That the revised timetable be received and noted.

**133. STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

The District Council's draft Statement of Community Involvement was received.

**RESOLVED** That the Statement of Community Involvement be received and noted.

**134. SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL OF BRAINTREE LOCAL PLAN**

An email was received from the District Council.

Members considered the Sustainability Appraisal and after discussion agreed that the following comments should be made.

Paragraph 1.6 – Members were concerned that the emphasis in this paragraph related to Braintree town with no mention of Witham which is on the main railway line and directly on the A12.

Paragraph 2.12 – should include sustainable development under the environmental objective.

Paragraph 2.15 – Members commented about wastewater at point (b). When sewage works were built they were on the edge of towns, but as the towns increased in size they were surrounded by housing. Now the treatment of wastewater is a problem and the sewage works cannot be expanded.

Paragraph 2.18 – Members considered that there should be regulations to ensure that developers achieve at least 31% less carbon emissions and there should be a strong statement contained in the Local Plan insisting that this is achieved. Members also believed that existing homes should be retrofitted. The suggestion was made that if a planning application were made for an

extension then the house itself should be made energy efficient with for example sufficient loft insulation. Grants should be made more widely available to achieve this.

Paragraph 2.20 – Members considered that mixed use space should be integrated in the development, Poundbury in Dorset was cited as an example. Members gave support that policies should be put in place to optimise land usage.

Paragraph 2.27 – Members considered that ‘heritage assets, both physical and natural’ should be included.

Paragraph 2.28 – the word ‘avoided’ should be strengthened as all development should be prevented in such areas.

Paragraph 2.36 – Members commented that this needs to happen. Witham has had no major road building despite new developments and a relief road was required to ease the bottleneck by the station.

Paragraph 2.41 – the word ‘can’ should be strengthened and replaced with ‘should’ be best achieved, was suggested. New transport links should be integrated into existing networks to achieve sustainable transport patterns.

Paragraph 2.46 – Members agreed with the comment regarding new housing should be considerate of local needs with regards to housing size. Witham’s residents need smaller homes and flats rather than executive style homes.

Paragraph 3.7 – Members considered that as the district has an aging population, suitable homes such as small bungalows, need to be in an ‘urban’ setting with facilities close at hand.

Paragraph 3.18 – Members considered that ‘affordable’ homes need to be within the financial reach of those on a single income with an occupation such as a nurse.

Paragraph 3.25 – Members were concerned about green spaces that were not adopted by the District Council and that residents would need to pay a service charge.

Paragraph 3.28 – There are three towns in the district, why is Braintree town the only one cited? Rural crime should also be mentioned.

Paragraph 3.32 – no mention was made of secondary education, are there sufficient places available?

Paragraph 3.48 – Members commented that no mention was made of the significant investment in Witham which has the largest industrial estate in the district. Comment was also made as to why these new innovative assets were either in Braintree or nearby. They would press for similar new investment in Witham particularly if the A12 receives the promised funding for triple laning.

Paragraph 3.59 – Members queried the evidence base for this paragraph. Bus services in Witham, as a major town, are inadequate with residents in parts of the town unable to access the town centre on a Saturday by public transport. Public transport to either Broomfield or Braintree Hospitals requires at least two buses and can take hours. DigiGo or Community 360 transport is not available in Witham. Mention was made that having e-scooters in Witham could connect people in the town particularly in the evenings and at weekends.

Paragraph 3.61 - Why is Braintree town the only town mentioned? Witham has a direct line to Liverpool Street so does not suffer the infrequent services suffered by Braintree. Hatfield Peverel and Kelvedon also benefit from being on the main line.

Paragraph 3.65 – Members asked where the data had been obtained. With a majority of people over 60 years old, it would take them longer to reach their GP surgery. There was not a consistency in provision of health services in the District and Witham was not benefiting from hospital facilities or diagnostic centres unlike Braintree.

Councillor Adelaja left the Meeting at this point.

Paragraph 4.6 – Members agreed with the point made about the difficulties in accessing services.

Paragraph 4.7 – Members supported this paragraph.

Members considered that the appraisal overall seemed to confuse or conflate Braintree as a district and as a town. References often suggest that what applies within the town was applicable across the district failing to recognise that the district was comprised of three large urban settlements within a rural hinterland and that some statements cannot be so simply attributed.

**RESOLVED** That the Sustainability Appraisal be received and the comments made above fed into the consultation.

#### 135. **STREET NAMING**

Notification was received from Braintree District Council that the developer wished to name the road on the corner development off Conrad Road, adjacent to Southview School, Kestrel Close.

It was suggested that as the roads off Conrad Road were named after authors this should apply for this road. Members commented that a children's author should be used and suggested names such as Roald Dahl, Jaqueline Wilson, C.S. Lewis or Tolkien.

**RESOLVED** That the Town Council would not support the name Kestrel as all the roads leading from Conrad Road are named after authors. Members would wish to see the name of a children's author such as Roald Dahl, Jaqueline Wilson, C.S. Lewis or Tolkien.

#### 136. **MANAGEMENT SERVICE FEES**

An email was received from a resident of the Mulberries who is concerned about the high cost of management service fees along with Chris Paggi, Planning Development Manager's reply.

Comment was made that residents might reasonably feel that the service arrangements result in them being discriminated against, in that other residents receive service paid for by the Council Tax, while they are denied such services even though they are taxed at a similar rate. Might they not think they are entitled to a discount?

Members were informed that the residents of the Mulberries were proposing to set up a management company to ensure that they received a good service from their management fees.

The Town Clerk suggested that the residents should contact the MP for assistance. Councillor J.C. Coleman undertook to speak to the residents.

**RESOLVED** That the information be received and Councillor J.C. Coleman contact the residents to advise that they speak to the MP for assistance.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the Meeting at 8.14 p.m.

Councillor P. Barlow  
Chairman

GK/8.10.2024