

HERTSMERE BOROUGH COUNCIL

PLANNING REFERRALS COMMITTEE

**Minutes of the meeting held in Committee Rooms A and B, Civic Offices,
Elstree Way, Borehamwood**

15 July 2009

Present:

Councillors Legate (Chairman), Colne, Harrison, Morris, Patnick and Quilty

Also Present:

Councillor O'Brien

Officers:

P Chacon
M Silverman
P Simons
J Blank
G Paddan

Development Control Manager
Policy and Transport Manager
Senior Transport and Projects Officer
Solicitor
Democratic Services Officer

232. **MEMBERSHIP**

Noted that there had been no changes in membership of the Committee since publication of the agenda.

233. **COMMUNICATIONS AND APOLOGIES**

The Chairman welcomed all those present to the meeting.

At the request of a Member, the Chairman gave a brief report on the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee in January 2008.

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Gunasekera and Solomons.

234. **DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

For clarification purposes, Councillor Quilty, declared that he was a County Councillor but emphasised that he had not been involved in any discussion regarding the site.

No other Member had an interest to declare in any of the items of business on the agenda.

235. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meetings held on 17 January 2008, 21 May 2008 and 13 May 2009 be approved and signed as a true record.

236. **PLANNING APPLICATION REFERRED FOR DETERMINATION AT THE MEETING - RADLETT AERODROME RAIL FREIGHT INTERCHANGE PROPOSAL**

A new application for a Strategic Rail Freight Interchange, accompanying infrastructure and a country park had been submitted to St Albans City and District Council. As neighbouring authority, Hertsmere Borough Council was being consulted on the application.

The application related to an area of land in the district of St Albans close to the Hertsmere boundary. In 2006, a similar application had been refused, and the present proposal was materially the same as the first application, except for the revised Alternative Sites Assessment, which differed in the number of sites assessed and in the methodology used to assess them.

Mrs Jill Rodgers, from Stop The Rail Freight Exchange (STRIFE), spoke against the proposed application. Mr Neil Findlay, the agent for the applicant, spoke in favour.

During discussion, concerns were raised by the Committee relating to the additional housing that would be required for the employees of the Rail Freight Interchange. It was noted that housing policies would need to be considered and that an increase in jobs in the area would require an increase in housing.

Discussions arose regarding parking and the need for 1665 car parking spaces on site. The Committee was of the opinion that the need for this amount of parking would have an adverse effect on noise and traffic congestion in the area. Members emphasised that 24-hour floodlights were also likely to cause light intrusion on neighbouring properties, and considered that the level of light intensity would be damaging to local wildlife as well as residents. A Member also commented on the design of the site and discussions followed on the one line for incoming trains and the consultation with local residents and interested parties.

It was noted that the successful legal challenge against the East of England Plan by St Albans City and District Councils and Hertfordshire County Council should be emphasised in the letter to the St Albans City and District Council as it reinforced the need for alternative options to

be more robustly considered before significant and unprecedented Green Belt development could be contemplated. It was added that in the light of the successful legal challenge against the East of England Plan and the quashing of Policies LA3 and LA4, there were now major uncertainties as to how housing and corresponding jobs growth should be accommodated in this part of the County. Officers were requested to advise St Albans to give this matter significant weight in their consideration of the planning application, given the impact on local housing demand from a proposal creating 3,300 jobs.

RESOLVED that Officers' recommendations be supported and that the Interim Head of Planning and Building Control be given delegated authority to finalise the letter in consultation with the Chairman of the Committee to take on board the comments expressed by the Committee.

(Action: Interim Head of Planning and Building Control / Senior Transport and Projects Officer)

CLOSURE: 9.14 pm

CHAIRMAN