

FARNHAM TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 30th NOVEMBER, 2006, AT 7.00PM IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, SOUTH STREET, FARNHAM

- * Cllr D J Attfield (Town Mayor)
 - * Cllr C G Genziani (Deputy Town Mayor)
 - o Cllr P G Burden OBE
 - o Cllr M A Clark
 - o Cllr C A Cockburn
 - * Cllr S Farrow
 - o Cllr (Mrs) P M Frost
 - o Cllr R D Frost
 - * Cllr J M Harris
 - * Cllr S A G Lang
 - * Cllr J E Maines
 - * Cllr (Mrs) A E Mansell MBE
 - * Cllr C H Mansell
 - o Cllr P G Marriott
 - o Cllr (Mrs) P M Marriott
 - * Cllr M W Norris
 - * Cllr (Mrs) S Scrivens
 - * Cllr V K Scrivens
-
- * Present
 - o Apologies for absence

Officers Present:

R. Potter (Town Clerk)
N.Goddard (Assistant Town Clerk)
W. Coulter (Member Services and Grants Officer)

C 183/06 QUESTIONS BY THE PUBLIC

Questions were received from the following member of the public.

Mr J Price

What is Farnham Town Council doing to attract some of the many car drivers to use bus services? Is it happy with present conditions in the town to make potential bus users use buses (occasionally, frequently, all the time)?

The Town Mayor confirmed that Mr Price would receive a written answer to his question.

Presentation by Mark de Quervain – Marketing Director of Vue Cinemas

Before the formal meeting of the Council a presentation was given by Mark de Quervain, Marketing Director of Vue cinemas on the proposals by Vue for the cinema in East Street.

C 184/06 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P G Burden, M A Clark, C A Cockburn, (Mrs) P M Frost, R D Frost, P G Marriott and (Mrs) P M Marriott.

C 185/06 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

Name of Councillor	Agenda/ Minute No.	Subject	Type of Interest	Reason
Cllr S Farrow	4	Planning Application WA/2006/2132	Personal/ Prejudicial	My membership of the Farnham Building Preservation Trust.
Cllr S Farrow	5	Planning Applications WA/2006/2353 and 2354	Personal/ Prejudicial	My membership of the Farnham Building Preservation Trust.
Cllr J E Maines	4	Planning Application WA/2006/2132	Personal	Chairman of Trustees of 40degrez.
Cllr (Mrs) A E Mansell	4	Planning Application WA/2006/2132	Personal/ Prejudicial	Waverley Borough Councillor, Waverley Representative to the Gostrey Centre and Wife of Waverley Borough Council Portfolio Holder.
Cllr (Mrs) A E Mansell	5	Planning Applications WA/2006/2353 and 2354	Personal/ Prejudicial	Waverley Borough Councillor, Waverley Representative to the Gostrey Centre and Wife of Waverley Borough Council Portfolio Holder.
Cllr C H Mansell	4	Planning Application WA/2006/2132	Personal/ Prejudicial	Waverley Borough Council Portfolio Holder for East Street
Cllr C H Mansell	5	Planning Applications WA/2006/2353 and 2354	Personal/ Prejudicial	Waverley Borough Council Portfolio Holder for East Street

C 186/06 STATEMENTS BY THE PUBLIC

The following statements were made by members of the public.

David Wylde

Would Councillors please, on behalf of those who voted them in, make sure the public's real views are fairly presented without distortion or misrepresentation?

Anne Cooper

Speaking about item 5.

The plans contravene local town planning policies. It should be significant for Farnham Town Council as they intend to do more for tourism and tourists. This council would be ill advised to let Crest Nicholson and Sainsbury's demolish what could be one of this town's star attractions. This is Farnham's own theatre, paid for by the people of Farnham; don't let them knock it down.

Anne Thurston

Everyone wants East Street to be redeveloped; it is the Crest Nicholson scheme that is of concern. People did not have enough notice of the meeting held on 2nd November, 2006. The Town Councillors, as our elected representatives must send a strongly worded message to Waverley on behalf of the people of Farnham opposing the Crest Nicholson plan.

Eric Boyle

With regard to the Minutes of the Meeting held on 16th November, 2006. With regard to the underground car park. It is good in principle; in this case it creates excessive cost and overdevelopment. Most of the new development will sit on the concrete roof of the car park. It will create a town centre parking shortage. It will require expensive ventilation systems to remove fumes. The parking pattern will cause more driving and waiting times with people seeking parking spaces. Lots of electricity will be needed to power the fans; this is not a green solution. There is no such thing as a silent ventilation system.

A temporary access road to the A31 would necessitate clearing of large trees and would be a selfish intrusion on a public park. That's the effect of the underground car park. I would suggest a smaller development.

Dr D Stinton

Why is East Street development so big and graceless and cause distress unless it is to maximise income beyond the needs of Farnham.

Joan Cassingnon

Would the elected Councillors not think of something more imaginative for Brightwells than yet another restaurant to add to the other 29 eateries in Farnham already?

Farnham Resident

Councillors, please listen to the residents of Farnham, we do know our town well and we want a more imaginative, better, more scaled approach to the Farnham Development. The traffic is terrible in Farnham at the moment. The current proposal reduces the number of overall car parking spaces. People coming in to Farnham will park in spaces reserved for residents. Please think about that, we do have a level crossing and we have restricted space, traffic is becoming a problem.

Part 1 – ITEMS FOR DECISION

It was proposed by Councillor V K Scrivens and seconded by Councillor J E Maines and agreed that Council dissolve into Committee to allow debate on the following items.

Councillors Farrow, (Mrs) Mansell and C H Mansell left the meeting having declared Prejudicial interests in the following items.

C 187/06 PLANNING APPLICATION WA/2006/2132

Members received a report on Planning application WA/2006/2132 which detailed the background and context of the East Street redevelopment scheme, Farnham.

Members also noted the comments and questions from speakers arising from the Mayor's Consultation meeting held in Church House, Farnham on Thursday 2nd November, 2006.

The report also identified possible Farnham Town Council comments in relation to planning applications WA/2006/2132, WA/2006/2353 and WA/2006/2354 for members' approval and submission to Waverley Borough Council.

The members discussed the proposed comments and agreed the following comments.

WA/2006/2132 Outline Planning Application for a phased, mixed use redevelopment scheme comprising 10,197 sq m of retail, restaurant and café – bar accommodation (Classes A1/A3/A4); 294 residential units (Class C3); An 8 – screen cinema (Class D2); basement car park for 694 cars; together with associated highway and access works; provision of infrastructure and landscaping; works to the Gostrey Centre and replacement facility for existing Brightwell Bowls Club (Class D2); following demolition and clearance of site.

General Statement – Farnham Town Council continues to object to the Master Plan since the proposals put before it do not in its view meet the design principles set out in Section 10.11 Design and Access Statement of the Framework Document which states "architecturally, the character of the buildings will complement the town of Farnham."

The proposals in relation to the architectural character, scale and mass and appropriateness to the quality of Farnham town centre amounts to, in Farnham Town Council's view, overdevelopment.

Farnham Town Council therefore believes that the overall scale of the whole development proposals in comparison the existing Farnham town centre is overdevelopment.

General Design: Mass – Farnham Town Council continues to object to the amount of three and four storey accommodation and flat roofed buildings within the scheme and every effort should be made to ensure the scheme is more in keeping with the inherent character of the town.

Frontages and Pedestrian Access

- (a) South Street – The retention and proposed architectural improvements to the Sainsbury’s store in its current location and the attempt to make the South Street frontage of the development more active is welcome. However, Farnham Town Council strongly believes that the permeability of the scheme in terms of improving pedestrian access to and from the scheme and the rest of the town centre still requires very careful consideration; it is imperative that all pedestrian routes are inviting and attractive. Failure to address this will result in the scheme not being properly integrated with the existing town centre to the detriment of the overall vitality and viability of the town.**

- (b) East Street – The proposed improvements to the frontage of East Street are welcomed. However, Farnham Town Council believes that further improvements could be made to the proposals to ensure that they are in keeping with the architectural character of Farnham.**

Access by Public Transport – Farnham Town Council strongly believes that access to and from the scheme by bus should be made as easy as possible and supports the proposed ‘bus only’ use for the designated part of East Street.

Number and Type of Residential Units – Farnham Town Council remains concerned about the number of residential units; whilst recognising the need for smaller and affordable accommodation Farnham Town Council would prefer an increase in the number of two or three bed roomed accommodation and that the inclusion of a high number of one bed roomed apartments may not be appropriate. Farnham Town Council notes the intention to apportion the affordable housing between buildings and strongly believes that the affordable housing should be both affordable to rent and to buy and should be distributed throughout the development to ensure a proper mixture of tenure types within the scheme.

Farnham Town Council urges Waverley Borough Council to take account of the key principles identified in the recently published Planning Policy Statement 3 (Delivering the Family and Affordable Homes Communities Need); in particular , the objectives of achieving:

- ***“A mix of housing , both market and affordable, particularly in terms of tenure and price, to support a wide variety of households in all areas, both urban and rural***
- ***Housing developments in suitable locations, which offer a good range of community facilities [including more play spaces, parks and gardens for children.].....”***

Therefore, Farnham Town Council strongly believes that play facilities for children should also be considered as part of the scheme especially in the Brightwell Garden areas and the open spaces leading down to the river.

Parking – Whilst welcoming the principle of underground car parking, Farnham Town Council strongly believes that the technical design of the underground car park must ensure that the facility can be operated, maintained and managed to a high standard without nuisance to residents or risk of closure throughout its design life. The adoption of a ‘Secured by Design’ approach is vital to secure public confidence when using the car park and addresses legitimate community safety issues. The ongoing management of the car park must be sufficiently robust to ensure all users behave responsibly and with due thought and consideration to other users and residents at all times.

Town Square – Farnham Town Council reiterates its strong belief that the Town Square should be sufficiently large to accommodate a diversity of public uses (including public events such as the Christmas Switch On, markets and displays of arts and crafts) and designed with appropriate infrastructure (such as electrical power points, space for portable seating/stages etc). It is vital that the Town Square and the surrounding open space are designed to allow all generations of the community to enjoy and benefit from the facility.

Construction Issues – Any construction works that take place at East Street must not impact on the rest of the town in terms of trade and travel to and from the centre of Farnham. Farnham Town Council welcomes the proposals for a temporary access road/bridge from the A31 Bypass to transport the materials to and from the site because Farnham Town Council believes that failure to adopt this strategy will cause intolerable conditions on the already overstrained highways network in Farnham town centre.

Traffic Impact

- a) Farnham Town Council seeks assurance that the development will take full account of the Sustainable Town Urban Safety Management Study and take into consideration some of the basic principles espoused by that study. Proper account should also be taken of the Surrey County Council's Local Transport Plan;
- b) Farnham Town Council reiterates its very considerable concerns about traffic impact of this major proposal; it is evident that any permission relies upon the satisfactory submission of a full and proper Traffic Impact assessment to the satisfaction of the Highways Authority;
- c) The traffic generated by the cinema users and other traffic movements generated by the scheme require full and proper analysis to the satisfaction of the Highways Authority.

Other comments

Green space down to the river should be encouraged and is welcomed.

Farnham Town Council welcomes the proposals from Crest Nicholson in terms of sustainable energy and particularly the inclusion of a combined heat and power system, and would urge the adoption of comprehensive district combined heat and power system for the overall scheme. Although the combined heat and power system currently identified as gas powered, Farnham Town Council welcomes the possible future conversion to biomass fuel generation of energy.

Farnham Town Council welcomes the proposals to recycle and reduce the amount of water that the site uses.

Crest Nicholson should work with Waverley Borough Council to provide adequate facilities to encourage recycling.

Farnham Town Council welcomes that fact that Crest Nicholson are working towards the WWF scheme of 'One Planet Living' for this development.

In the Sustainability Statement, Crest Nicholson ought to include how the scheme will be able to adapt to climate change which will also impact on the 'heat island' assessment. In their proposals, Crest Nicholson should consider what the climate will be like in 50 years time and how the development can be adapted by making sure that those elements that reduce heat from reflected buildings is included.

C 188/06 PLANNING APPLICATIONS WA/2006/2353 & WA/2006/2354

Members considered two planning applications in relation to Brightwell House and agreed the following comments to be forwarded to Waverley Borough Council.

WA/2006/2353 Brightwell House, East Street, Farnham. Change of use of Brightwell House from Theatre (Sui-Generis) to Class A3/A4 café-bar/restaurant; removal of existing extensions, erection of replacement extensions and alterations.

**WA/2006/2354 Brightwell House, East Street, Farnham.
Application for Listed Building Consent for the demolition of the
attached Redgrave Theatre, conversion of Brightwell House to form
2 no. restaurant units. Works to include a single storey
restaurant/café-bar, toilet and staircase extension to the north and
west. New staircase and 2 no. new first floor windows in north
elevation. Reinstatement of 3 no. original hipped roofs to the north
and hipped roofs over the existing bay windows in the southern
elevation. Reinstatement of original chimneys, staircase and
existing first floor window on the west elevation. Removal of later
partition walls and formation of new staff toilets at first floor.
Demolition of boundary walls, toilet block, bowling pavilion and
cottage.**

Although Farnham Town council welcomes the general concept of restoring Brightwell House, which currently stands in a very forlorn condition Farnham Town Council regrets that the Redgrave Theatre will have to be demolished.

Farnham Town Council strongly believes that provision for theatre facilities elsewhere in the town should be made because the people of Farnham deserve theatre.

The Council reverted from Committee back to Council and

RESOLVED:

That the Farnham Town Council comments in relation to planning Applications WA/2006/2132, WA/2006/2353 and WA/2006/2354 as identified above, be approved with amendments and submitted to Waverley Borough Council together with a full transcript of the Mayor's Consultation meeting held at Church house, Farnham on Thursday 2nd November, 2006.

Part 2 – ITEMS TO NOTE

C 189/06 PUBLICITY

It was agreed by Council that a summary of the comments agreed would be sent to the press.

The Town Mayor closed the meeting at 9.25pm.

Date

Chairman