

## **Executive – 18 March 2013**

### **Recommendation to Executive from the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 6 March 2013**

#### **SCOSC/12/98 Land Rear of Central Garage (Cranfield) Development Brief**

The Chairman invited three public speakers to address the Committee in relation to this item. The speakers raised several issues, which in summary included:-

- The difficulty that residents of Flitt Leys Close currently experienced in relation to parking as a result of several existing businesses. Despite previous efforts to resolve these issues in conversation with the Council and the Police the issues had not been resolved.
- The amount of litter that was often present on Flitt Leys Close.
- Children currently played in the road on Flitt Leys Close, the additional traffic would create significant problems regarding safety without significant remodelling to the roads.
- Narrow access to Flitt Leys Close already created a hazard and prevented access to emergency vehicles.
- There was an inadequate level of off-road parking in the area.
- The delivery of a lower school on the proposed site was unsustainable and would lead to significant traffic congestion. It was suggested that there was under-capacity in other schools in the area, which could be used to accommodate need rather than providing another lower school as part of this development.
- It was not clear why the proposed site for the lower school had changed from that on which it was proposed originally.
- Traffic Management solutions would not address the concerns relating to access.

In response to these issues Cllr Young stated that he was conscious of the parking concerns in the area and that these needed to be mitigated. A new development provided the opportunity to address some of these concerns. Cllr Young also stated that neither of the options presented to the Committee could be implemented without a detailed transport plan that would be provided alongside a planning application. Members needed to remember that the area had been allocated for housing in the adopted Development Strategy. If the Development Brief were not adopted the Council would have less control over the development of the site.

Cllr McVicar commented that whatever the recommendation agreed by the Committee the access to this area may need to be considered. Cllr McVicar also reminded the Committee of their recommendations to Executive on this Development Brief at their previous meeting. In response to a question from a Member it was also clarified by the Chairman that the site had been allocated in the Development Strategy for housing and a school "if required".

In response to the issues raised by the public speakers and the submissions provided by residents and Cllr S Clark the Committee discussed the following issues in summary:-

- Concerns that the entrance through Flitt Leys Close was considered to be unsuitable and a traffic management scheme was unlikely to mitigate concerns relating to congestion. In response Cllr Young stated that the Development Management Committee would make a decision as to the suitability of the access once a planning application had been submitted. The site was considered suitable by Full Council to be allocated for development. It was important that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee did not seek to act as the Development Management Committee in relation to this matter.
- Whether the developer could be asked to reconsider the proposed access and exit to the site and present a revised Development Brief. In response Cllr Young stated that this was not possible. Mr R Fox also stated that the Council's Highways Officers had advised that the "access was acceptable" to serve the additional housing, a lower school and a primary care facility. If the Council chose not to adopt the Development Brief it would have less control over the development of the site.
- Concerns that the two options presented to the Committee were the same as they both referred to the provision of a new Lower School. In response Mr R Fox stated this was a typo and if the Committee agreed the option that did not include a lower school all references would be removed.
- Concerns that the Council might agree a Development Brief that it knew would lead to problems of accessibility.
- Concerns regarding the high proportion of negative responses that had been received in relation to the proposed Development Brief.
- A decision had not been taken by developers in relation to the provision of a lower school as part of the development. Costings had been requested in relation to several options relating to the development.
- Concerns that the proposed site of the Lower School had been altered since the development was agreed to be included in the Local Development Framework, subsequently making the development unsuitable. The proposed site for a lower school was considered to be particularly unsuitable and would result in serious traffic concerns.
- Concerns regarding the location of the school playing field.

In response to the issues raised by Members Cllr Young commented that this Development Brief adhered to the Council's adopted policies in relation to not providing parking at schools and encouraging people to walk to school. The Council should not seek to contradict its adopted policies. If the Council chose not to adopt the Development Brief then the Council would be obliged to grant a planning application when it was submitted. Cllr McVicar further reminded the Committee of their previous recommendation in relation to this Development Brief and the impact that not adopting the Brief would have on any subsequent planning application and potential traffic management schemes.

Cllr Bastable proposed (seconded by Cllr Graham) that both Development Brief options be rejected and that the Executive be informed it was the view of the Committee that they could not support either option. The Committee voted on this proposals and voted five in favour and four against.

**RECOMMENDED TO EXECUTIVE**

**That the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee does not support the adoption of the Development Brief for Land Rear of Central Garage (Cranfield) as technical guidance.**