



The Counties Residents' Association

Protecting the interests of the community

Minutes of Meeting 6th March 2007

Those Present:-

<i>Allan Burgess</i>	<i>Redbridge Councillor</i>	<i>AB</i>
<i>Helen Zammett</i>	<i>Chairman CRA</i>	<i>HZ</i>
<i>Philip Carnelley</i>	<i>Treasurer CRA</i>	<i>PC</i>
<i>Malcolm Dowers</i>	<i>Membership/Webmaster CRA</i>	<i>MD</i>
<i>Apologies</i>		
<i>Kate West</i>	<i>Secretary CRA</i>	

1. *Higgins Development*

AB expressed concerns over the scale and character of the Higgins development, particularly the overhanging balconies. MD stated he thought the balconies were an amendment approved by Redbridge after the Bristol approval. AB agreed to investigate this matter and advise so that the committee could determine an appropriate course of action.

2. *Government legislation empowering planning offices to refuse consideration of an application*

Following a discussion between HZ and the planning aid organisation, the CRA were informed of a government document (http://www.communities.gov.uk/embedded_object.asp?id=1144316) in which the (then) Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (now Department of Communities and Local Government) cited various situations when a planning department can refuse to consider an application. The two main grounds were a) repeated applications to "wear down" objectees and b) re-applications of very similar schemes. AB advised that Redbridge are aware of this document and have even produced their "interpretation" on its clauses. The committee discussed using this in current and future objections.

3. *Conservation Status*

Following a keynote discussion of the subject of Conservation Status, AB recommended that the CRA, in conjunction with the Wanstead Society, prepare a brief for presentation to the Redbridge Area 1 Committee. HZ would make contact with the Wanstead Society in preparation of a round robin email to our membership seeking a new committee member to spearhead such a report. Consideration was also given to contacting Mr. Peter Lawrence following his offer during July 2006 to provide general guidance regarding conservation issues.

4. *22a Gloucester Road*

Following local committee approval and regional inspectorate denial of two recent applications, HZ proposed that the reasons cited by both parties in all prior refusal decisions remained valid for the most recent approved scheme. HZ would formulate a draft correspondence to Redbridge asking for them to justify this disparity. The committee discussed and approved the concept of "cc"ing the local newspaper on this correspondence as an added "incentive" for a response from Redbridge.

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5. *Harry Cohen MP - Follow up lobby letter*

HZ presented a preliminary draft of our second lobbying letter to Harry Cohen MP covering the subjects of:-

- a) the right to third party appeals*
- b) the right to appeal inspectorate decisions*
- c) the lack of availability of plans at the appeal stage*
- d) Section 106 formalisation recommendations - ie linking 106 to council tax rate bands.*

Some simple changes were suggested for HZ to formulate a full draft for approval.

6. *Local development framework (LDF)*

The draft replacement for the current Redbridge Unitary Development Plan (UDP) was submitted for public consultation during Q1 2007. The Committee discussed whether we should make any suggestions or recommendations, but concluded not for the following reasons:-

- a) Our current workload is already high*
- b) The LDF, like the current UDP, is a very comprehensive document containing, for want of a better term, rules and regulations about what is and what isn't permitted. Fundamentally the Committee have few issues with its content, but rather the systems and procedures for ensuring they are implemented, adhered to and/or interpreted correctly. It was concluded that our time would be better spent attempting to ensure its requirements are followed, than attempting to change its requirements in the first place.*

7. *AOB*

- a) Following an estate agent's offer for his general regarding property law, the committee agreed that as generous as the offer was, not being a CRA area resident, but rather someone with a vested interest in the housing market generally, there could possibly be a conflict of interest. His offer was therefore declined and HZ would make contact accordingly.*
- b) Issues with a CRA area resident who refuses to accept our constitution and consequently cannot be allowed to join were discussed. HZ agreed to make contact and point out that conditional membership cannot be accepted.*
- c) PC raised the issue of a lack of "active" support amongst our members and pointed out that it is difficult to ensure a minimum availability amongst committee members when there are so few. It was agreed to stress the importance to the general membership for greater involvement on their part. To that end we would seek 3-4 new committee members with non-specific roles in order that regular (say every 6 weeks) committee meetings could be undertaken and that some additional key tasks could be actioned.*