

Isle of Wight AONB Partnership - Development Control & Planning Work Group
Minutes of Meeting held on Monday 11 April 2005
2.00 p.m. Meeting Room, Innovation Centre

In Attendance

Richard Grogan	IW AONB Steering Committee Nature Conservation Portfolio (Chair)
Denis Russell	IW AONB Steering Committee Vice-Chairman/Community & Parish Portfolio
Tony Tutton	IW AONB Steering Committee Chairman
Dennis Russell	Chairman CPRE
John Brownscombe	AONB Officer
Marijke Ransom	AONB Planning & Information Officer
Carrie McDowell	AONB Administration Assistant
David Court	IW AONB Steering Committee Coastal Portfolio

Remote Member

Nicola Davies Countryside Agency

1) Apologies

Vicky Basford IW AONB Steering Committee Historic Environment Portfolio

2) Minutes of previous meeting & Matters Arising

The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as a true copy of the proceedings.

Matters Arising-

Undercliff Drive - Regarding the Project Group being set up to monitor all the conditions attached to the application, MR has requested an updated from Nick Gallen to find out if such a group will be set up, that we support the principle, and would like to be represented. JB advised that Highways have scheduled works to commence in September, but is unsure exactly in what form. It was pointed out that although the project will be going ahead, details are still required about felling of trees etc.

Hedge removal at Sandford - Contact has been made with Countryside, who advised that a hedge notice was not required.

Motocross at Gore Basin - Regarding the meeting's request for clarification, Planning have advised that this went to appeal at the beginning of March, and any enforcement action will be suspended until the appeal has been determined. This takes 33 weeks to process even if the appeal is dismissed, and a further six months before remedial work is required. The Planning Committee have decided that one off weekend events can take place, without specific enforcement action taking place. The next event will be in August, and on this occasion will not be sponsored by the Isle of Wight Council.

Solent Protection Society - The Steering Committee will be asked to endorse that a request be made to this organization to see if they wish to join the Partnership.

Gladices Barn – This application has now been withdrawn following the change of decision from support to refusal, which was based on the Highway Authority's comments about hedgerow removal and access. The applicant intends to consider how to deal with the concerns raised about the application.

Fort Redoubt - MR distributed photographs to the meeting showing proposals changing less visible areas to more traditional roofing materials. The original suggestions proved impractical due to weight, maintenance and cost. JB has been involved in two discussions and if they adhere to their suggestions, these will not have a negative impact.

Wight Leisure Advertising Boards - This application is due to go before the Development Control Committee on 12 April, and JB advised that AP's report suggested an overall reduction from 494 boards to 309. The boards adjacent to Wootton Bridge, which are in the AONB, have been withdrawn, and those in Yarmouth halved in number. An opinion was expressed that it was unfortunate that the Isle of Wight Council were giving permission for something they want to take place. DR also pointed out that under the Development Control Committee process, elected members cannot vote on applications which affect their own ward. As these boards are being proposed across the Island, who will be able to vote?

3) **Planning Policy**

JB distributed a paper to the meeting regarding the hoardings for the Junior Driver track at the Needles Pleasure Park for emergency discussion. JB went through the background of this case, and the subject for discussion is the decision to allow the hoardings to be erected, although these were not included in the current application, and the AONB Unit believes the Council's Development Control Committee may have acted ultra vires. Previous discussions with the Park by the AONB Unit and the Planning Officer had resulted in agreement these hoardings would be excluded from the latest application.

At this point of the meeting DR felt he should withdraw, as he is a member of the Standards Committee, and felt there was a conflict of interest.

DC asked how this situation had occurred, and JB advised that as the local member was against the proposal it had gone to Committee, but the relevant minutes did not provide sufficient details as to why the Committee came to their decision. It was pointed out that if the Committee had acted ultra vires, the application would be quashed, and would have to be re-submitted. RG asked why a condition would be added, which had already been determined. If the application had included the hoardings, the AONB would have put in a strong objection instead of their supportive stance for the current application. This would have resulted in the Officer recommending refusal, a view that would have been endorsed by the local member, and the subject would not have gone to committee. The Officer present at the Development Control Committee meeting should have highlighted that the hoardings were outside the scope of their remit. It was felt that such a decision undermines the AONB Unit and the Planning Authority's professional Planning Officer.

JB felt the first step was to request a response from the relevant Planning Officer, and if this response is insufficient, we should then make contact with the Head of Planning. We should try to discover the justification for amending the condition, before we write a strong letter. It was agreed that both RG and TT would sign any letter, but they would like to see a draft first.

Action: *JB to make initial approach to Planning for further information*

Brading Roman Villa - A Civic Trust Design Award has been given to Brading Roman Villa, for Development in a National Park or AONB. MR advised that the Isle of Wight Council are having Design awards for the Island, with a category for development in the AONB.

3.1 South East Plan – Isle of Wight Special Policy Area

MR said this paper had been re-drafted following the previous meeting, and hoped that members felt it encompassed all the requested amendments. DC expressed concern about the word “sustainable” and what it actually means. He felt that developments that were regarded as sustainable were actually detrimental to the Island. RG said sustainable meant different things to different organisations, and the AONB Unit should continue to use its influence to best advantage. Also where there is development in the AONB, we need to be in a position to influence proposals as they come forward, or at pre-applications discussions. DR felt there should be more emphasis on housing for local people, and MR said more work is required on final housing provisions.

DC felt we were fast approaching the position where we should say any development that does not contribute to the footprint of the Island should be seriously considered. The meeting felt that items 15.4 and 15.5 should be added to the Isle of Wight policy.

MR distributed an additional new policy in the Cross Cutting section of the SE Plan. There was much discussion about this policy, and the meeting felt that the wording should be changed to provide a different emphasis.

The meeting agreed that the revised draft included all the relevant amendments.

3.2 AONB Guidance Notes

The equestrian sketches from Alan Rowe should be completed shortly, and a document will be brought to the meeting. DR commented that equine use was a big threat to the landscape, and MR advised if an owner changes his land use from agricultural to equestrian then planning permissions is required, even if horses are only being grazed on the land. The meeting requested MR to produce a paper at the next Steering Committee on the instances where this had occurred within the AONB.

MR is working on a paper for Whole Farm Plans, and had obtained guidance from both CPRE and the National Trust. It was hoped this would fit with the entry level scheme, financial planning etc. MR asked if any members had examples of whole farm plans, she would be grateful to receive a copy. The meeting felt it was a good idea for the AONB Unit to produce a guidance note on whole farm plans. MR said there would be a template for completion, and also it links with AONB Management Plan objectives.

Action: *MR to produce paper on changes from agricultural to equestrian use with the AONB*

4) Development Control

4.1 Summary of recent DC responses

Mersley Farm - An application has been received for alterations to the Garlic Farm and Molly Attrills pottery, where the current pottery is converted to two permanent residences; the garlic shop to holiday accommodation and the existing barn into a pottery, garlic shop and coffee shop. The meeting expressed concern about the application, especially regarding road access and parking facilities – is this the right place for enabling development? MR will be meeting with Dave Booth to look at the economic justification, but the Unit intends to register an objection.

Whitcombe Farm - an application has been received to convert a barn to tourist accommodation. MR to discuss with Dave Booth, but there are problems regarding water and sewage pollution. The opinion was expressed that this was similar to Gladices Barn.

Chilton Farm - application for an ice-cream dairy, AONB Unit felt this was acceptable. A request has been made for a green travel plan.

Scout Hall Brighstone - inclusion of Youth Hostel. Permission is being applied for retrospectively, and the AONB Unit does not intend to object.

Gurnard - decision to change the restriction from 6 weeks a year to holiday use. Now this has been allowed, Thorness Bay has similarly applied for the 6 week restriction to be removed. Local residents have expressed serious concerns about the lifting of this restriction, and the Council may cross reference electoral roll or council tax listing for evidence to enforce the condition.

5) **Any Other Business**

TT asked if anything was known about the Methodist Chapel, New Road, Brighstone being used for other purposes. MR will endeavour to obtain more information, and will provide TT with a copy of the AONB Unit's response.

Action: MR to investigate Methodist Chapel, New Road, Brighstone and copy letter to TT

DR advised that under the new Environment Bill, which has just received Royal Assent, light pollution will now be classified as a statutory nuisance, controlled by the Environment Health Officer. It is not yet known when the Act will be put into force. This will be relevant to certain applications e.g. Wight Mouse Inn, who have a retrospective application for tall pole lights. The CPRE intend to lodge an objection against this application.

MR mentioned the Pearl Centre, and whether there had been any improvements to the lighting. DR pointed out that under the new Act, even if planning permission had previously been granted in respect of lighting, it could now be classified as a nuisance.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 4.13 pm