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CLERK
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OLD MARSTON PARISH COUNCIL

31 OXFORD ROAD
OLD MARSTON OXFORD OX3 0PQ

2 October 1995

Dear Member,

Oxfordshire Draft Structure Plan

My Chairman has asked me to circulate , to Members, a copy of the Council's comments and to express its extreme concern and disappointment that the public meetings indicated in 1.20 of the Plan have not been held. This has deprived those to whom letter writing does not come easily of the opportunity of commenting. The public at large has not been consulted.

As an additional item I enclose a copy of a letter from the States (the Jersey Parliament). Jersey as an island can be compared with Oxford as a "job island" and you will note the States' response and remedies which must be applied to ever increasing commuting to Oxford. The basic problem appears to be that the County Plan controls housing, the City Plan controls job creation in central Oxford and never shall the twain meet. As a direct result we on the fringe suffer the resulting traffic.

A better solution to housing is therefore to permit limited growth in Oxfordshires villages to avoid large scale commuting from isolated sites and in the light of recent Ministerial comment to permit limited commercial development in the villages also.

Yours sincerely



Clerk



States of Jersey

FROM: Colin Powell M.A. (Cantab.),
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Our ref: GCP/JM

24th January 1994

Mr L M Garner
31 Oxford Road
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OXFORD OX3 0PQ

Dear Mr Garner,

The Bailiff of Jersey has passed to me your letter of the 18th January with a request that I reply to your query concerning the approach adopted by the States of Jersey in seeking to restrict population growth by limiting the rate of job creation.

In the late 1980's the Island was experiencing considerable population growth and it was recognised that this growth could not be maintained without serious and adverse effects on the Island's environment and quality of life. The cause of the population growth was the rate of job creation in conditions of virtual full employment. As more jobs were created so the only way they could be filled was by "sucking in" more immigrants.

The States of Jersey sought to find a way whereby job growth could be contained while at the same time not jeopardising the overall prosperity of the Island and the continued provision of sufficient job opportunities for local young people.

Information on the background to the policy, and of its results, is included in the attached papers. In the event it has been the recession in the United Kingdom and in Europe the effects of which have been extended to the Island, mainly through the impact on the tourism industry, more than the job growth control policy that has led to a reduction in the number of persons in employment. Many of those who have lost their jobs were transient workers and they have returned to the United Kingdom. At the same time there have been other changes taking place within the finance industry and other sectors including computerisation and changes in business practices which have enabled business growth to be obtained with fewer staff.

Now that there are signs of economic recovery those who have the greatest concern for the effect of population growth on the environment and the quality of life in the Island are naturally seeking to be assured that the Island will not make the mistakes of the past and allow uncontrolled job growth to take place with a consequent effect on the rate of population growth, and on the pressure placed on the environment and the resources of the Island generally.

I hope the information that I have provided is helpful to you. If I can be of any further assistance please do not hesitate to write to me.

Yours sincerely,

Colin Powell

OXFORDSHIRE STRUCTURE PLAN.

COMMENTS BY OLD MARSTON PARISH COUNCIL.

The draft has been considered by the Parish Council and a matter of great concern is that the meetings indicated in 1.20 have not taken place so the public discussion and debate has not taken place.

The Plan appears to follow the pattern set by it's predecessor without consideration as to whether the current policies are succeeding. The Parish Council considers that in one major area it has failed- that is to relate the location of houses and jobs so that commuting is minimal. The creation of large housing estates up to twenty miles away from jobs is not sensible. To suggest that jobs would be created to serve major housing development after the houses are built does not get the residents of those houses into the jobs provided. One inescapable fact is that the purchasers of houses on these estates, who have to move to them because that is where the houses are being built, are already in work which they cannot easily change. The result is large groups of houses from which virtually everyone has to commute a long distance. The estates are usually on the fringe of an established area and so unlikely to be near a public transport route, but even if they were the chances of that transport going reasonably close to their job is remote indeed. The end result is that the car is the only alternative.

It is therefore sensible to have more but smaller sites spread closer to major employment locations to take advantage of existing infrastructures, schools, Village halls, medical services etc. rather than duplicate them in new estates. Without a steady but limited growth in these smaller communities villages whither and die because of lack of new residents.

A major failing of the Planning arrangements is the lack of recognition that the only way to stop increases in commuting is to restrict the creation of additional jobs within the areas commuted to, in this case Oxford City but there appears to be no mechanism under which the Plans can be coordinated. Page 13 of the Plan demonstrates the need.

By housing large numbers of young couples and families into, in demographic terms, unbalanced communities they are being removed from the areas where their parents and relatives live such that when support is needed the adult children have moved so far away that real support becomes impracticable resulting in great cost to Social Services. People should have greater freedom to determine, within reason, the communities in which they wish to live rather than being zoned into heartless large estates. The Planning structure proposed does not allow this freedom.

A major component of the cost of a house is the land, land prices for housing are kept artificially high because of the lack of usable planning consents. So many consents disappear into land banks that large scale developers have a strangle hold on available land so prices are kept unnecessarily high. More planning consents equals lower land prices but this would not result in more houses being built because, at the end of the day, only the houses needed by people will be built so that Planning ceilings are meaningless, too few consents equals expensive houses and homelessness, too many means consents not being taken up equals lower prices.

The Nimbys who want no new houses in their communities, for their own selfish ends must be defeated. The houses built in the 1960's are now accepted as part of the established scene and there is no reason to demolish them on the grounds that their construction ruined the village nor are they subject to the comments that would be raised to new proposals "out of keeping with the surroundings".

Turning next to the Plan's interpretation of housing need 4.17 indicates a Policy of not allowing for inward migration. This is a matter over which the Plan has no control unless jobs are restricted. One small office suite on the Halls Brewery site resulted in the occupying firm bringing in three key workers, from outside the area, who would have the resources to buy into local housing stock, probably outside Oxford adding to commuting and housing problems. How many other jobs have been created and taken in this way in the continuing development in the centre of Oxford? Also it is necessary to consider immigration which still continues apace. Great Britain has made 50,000 entry permits available to heads of households from Hong Kong. This represents the creation of the equivalent of a new town, almost the size of Oxford. By definition these people are likely to have sufficient resources to buy a house in area of their choice. They are likely to be at the higher end of the earnings scale and will look to the more desirable and prosperous areas in which to live of which Oxfordshire is likely to be one. This again emphasises the folly of attempting to put a ceiling on the number of houses constructed because too few can only result in homelessness.

In transport the proposal to concentrate the development on the corridors is even more unlikely to succeed in getting commuters onto Public Transport because of the limited number of stations which are, or can be, established.

The inclusion of the A34/A40 link is, because of the earlier Green Road and North Oxford by-pass proposals which failed, of great interest to the Parish. It is suggested that it must be planned as part of the east west link from Aylesbury.

On the subject of out of town Superstores it must be accepted that those with cars, an ever increasing proportion of the population, will "do" a major shop, as needed, at one of these stores because of choice of product, price and convenience, particularly the ease of getting purchases to cars. Your policy of not continuing to provide these stores close to large centres of population only means that shoppers will drive further to satisfy their needs. Duplication of stores on existing sites is another matter, but it is doubtful whether two stores near each other would make any difference to a town centre which it is the Government's intention to protect. The PPG suggests that the Superstores should be provided in town centres but it is doubtful whether large enough sites could be provided with the car parking which the Government now suggests should accompany town shopping sites. If this space is not available how many shoppers would wish to push their trolley through the town to the Municipal car park?!

L M GARNER
Clerk.
16th October 1995

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE OLD MARSTON PARISH COUNCIL

HELD IN THE CHURCH HALL AT 7.30p.m.

ON TUESDAY 3RD OCTOBER 1995

Present were: Mr A T Jones (Chairman)
Mr C W Haynes (Vice-chairman)
Mesdames Cox, Deam, Nurse and Stone
Messrs Bartleet, Devonport, Drinkwater and Phipps

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs Sanders & Mrs Tiwari
The Clerk Mr L M Garner was in attendance.

Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the 5th September were confirmed and signed.

Correspondence

The following were noted:

N H S Executive, Anglia and Oxford- Details of new area boundaries.

Oxford City Council- Members Information Nos. 29 & 30
Old Marston Residents' Association- Minutes and letter suggesting that The Best Kept Village Prize should be spent on a survey of requirements for Youth Club. It was unlikely that the sponsors would agree

Oxford City Council- Circular on availability of grants to voluntary organisations. Copies had been circulated

Oxford City Council- Consultation meeting date 21st November

Planning

Applications

61 Cherwell Drive- Extension - No comment
9 Salford Road - Extension - No comment

The Clerk had obtained a copy of the site plan of the proposed A40 filling station which was shown to be opposite Ward's Mobile Home site.

Decisions

The following were reported:

39 Salford Road - Extension - Approved
Land at Marston Ferry Road - Use for horticulture - Refused

Other matters

The Marston Area Committee of the Oxford Preservation Trust had considered the Council's proposals to apply for outline planning permission for the Mill Lane site and did not favour its use entirely for housing. This was not envisaged. The Clerk would write suitably to the Trust,

A copy of the parking proposals for the Oxford Radcliffe Hospital was received. The only item which did not entirely affect the interior of the site being a proposal to open an entrance to Saxon Way, for buses only to enable them to go via Northway Estate direct to Headley Way via the Hospital site. A reply was received from the Chairman of the Hospital Trust expressing surprise that the Parish Council's suggestions for an A40 link to the hospital could not be found. The Clerk said that he would provide the necessary details. The proposed Saxon Way entrance would dove-tail nicely with the Parish Council's proposal for a pedestrian tunnel under the A40

to a Park & Ride site which the Clerk would describe to the Trust.

County Structure Plan

The Chairman presented a resume of the parts of the Plan which affected Marston making particular comment that the Public meeting outlined as part of the discussion of the Plan had not been called.

It was noted that the provision in the current Plan for the planning of dwellings in the County towns had done nothing to reduce commuting which had in fact got worse. The current proposal followed the same theme with housing development concentrated either along the rail corridors, in the major towns or in the smaller towns. The Council felt that it would be better for the housing requirements to be satisfied by using many more locations, the smaller towns and communities where the infrastructure of shops, schools, church etc. already existed which were dying for want of new population. It was believed that the better way to control commuting would be by restricting the intensification of commercial use within the Oxford ring-road but the Oxford City Council's Local Plan did not allow for this and there was nothing that the County could do to amend it.

Generally young couples and families had to take housing where new housing was being provided with the result that the communities were, demographically, unbalanced and required new schools etc. on a limited life basis. A more adverse effect is the removal of young people from their family background mostly by long distances which resulted in them being unable to give the support required to their families which would result in increasing pressure on Social Services.

It was also noted that the A34/M40 link was still envisaged but the Parish Council had always taken the view that this should be planned from Aylesbury as part of the East West link.

Accounts

The following accounts were passed for payment:

| | |
|--|--------|
| Oxford City Council - Burial ground rates | £32.40 |
| Marston Church Properties-Use of hall July- October | £36.00 |
| Oxford Field Paths Society-Subscription (S.137) | £2.00 |

Clerks Salary

The Clerk left the meeting for this item. It was decided that the Clerks salary should be increased to £3528 per annum from the 5th September 1995.

Grants to Local Organisations

Two applications were received and deferred to the next meeting.

Recreation Ground

The Clerk reported that his attempts to locate the probable missing manhole were not conclusive and that he had therefore asked the City Council to use its equipment to conclude the investigation.

It was decided not to proceed with the quotation of £195 to repair the existing seat.

The Clerk was asked to write to Marston Church Properties suggesting that the Mortimer Hall notice board should be refixed.

It was noted that a pot-hole had developed in the tarmac path near the Boults Lane pumping station.

The Oxford City Highways Committee was being recommended at its meeting on 12th October 1995 to take over the two Parish concrete shelters and to replace the wooden structure opposite the Church. The Clerk was asked to obtain details of the design of this. He was asked to remind the City Council that no reply had been received to the comments about the unsuitability of the bus-stop.

near 75, Cherwell Drive.

Some estates in Oxford had now been provided with the ducting for cable T.V. etc. The company involved was ComTel Ltd. at Headington and he suggested that the company should be invited to discuss the arrangements in Old Marston with the Parish Council. This was accepted.

Munt. Jones

7 November 1995

MINUTES OF A MEETING BETWEEN THE PARISH COUNCIL AND MARSTON SAINTS F.C.

9th OCTOBER 1995

Present were; Mr A Jones (chairman)
Mr C Haynes (Vice-chairman)

Mr M Buckland (Chairman Marston Saints F C)

In attendance Mr L M Garner, Clerk

The meeting was called to discuss matters of mutual concern.

Mr Buckland described the circumstances under which he had terminated the arrangements with the Old Marston Football Club and entered into similar arrangements with the Bricklayers team. It was accepted that this change should have been made through the Parish Council but the Chairman expected that, subject to appropriate insurance cover being proved the Parish Council would be likely to approve the change.

The outstanding debt of £200 for earlier seasons was acknowledged which meant that a total of £350 was outstanding. The offer of payment of £40 per month from October to March was accepted subject to payment of the remainder to be arranged later.

The Clerk confirmed the 50/50 share of the maintenance costs of the alarm system and, as the Club had paid the full amount due in 1994 the Parish Council would accept payment of the 1995 account.

Mr Buckland requested that the external decoration of the Club-house was necessary. It was agreed that the Parish Council should consider this further.

M. A. Jones

7 November 1995

Development of Mill Lane Allotments

Progress Report

The Chairman, Vice-chairman and Clerk met Mrs. S. Spencer and Mr. M. Moss, City Councillors for Old Marston on Saturday 14 October, 1995 and showed them the site and the surrounding area. From subsequent discussions with the Clerk it appears that there is sufficient optimism to make it worthwhile considering further steps to be taken.

It has come to light that the City Council, in considering developments exceeding 20 units, has guidelines which require some social benefit in exchange for planning permission. This can be in the form of a gift of land to a Housing Association for rented housing, for a social purpose e.g. provision for youth, or infrastructure improvements e.g. road calming like the Oxford Road humps. Provision for existing allottees would probably be required, but not necessarily on present plots.

As the Parish Council has already decided to support youth provision this is the most likely requirement, perhaps with a road scheme. The youth provision would require a site, Mill Lane would be a poor location because of its remoteness from the main areas of housing and from passing observers. The purchase of an alternative site, should one be available, would reduce the money available from any development and therefore self-defeating. A site on existing Council owned land is the best alternative, the Elsfeld Road land is remote, leaving Boults Lane and the Mortimer Hall sites available.

Boults Lane would have the advantage of the opportunity of demolishing the existing sub-standard building and replacing it with a new dual purpose building. The Mortimer Hall site being the most observed site where the building could be separate or adjacent to the existing. Before submitting a formal outline or full application for the allotment land the youth site must be selected as a parallel application would be required. The Chairman has therefore placed the subject on the November Agenda.

The decision should be followed at the December meeting with a full discussion with the Youth Services et al. to discuss contributions to capital and running costs and how responsibilities should be distributed.

L.M. Garner.

Clerk.

27 October, 1995.