

**SCOTTER PARISH COUNCIL**

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Planning Committee held on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2008**

**Present:** Councillor S. Rayner (Chairman), Councillors J. Allen, B. Billam, M. Brown, D. Capes and J. Fillingham, M. Brown (Clerk).

As no members of the public were present, the meeting commenced at 7.02pm.

**P62 2007/08 : To receive and approve apologies for absence**

No apologies were received, with all Councillors present.

**P63 2007/08 : To receive declarations of interest in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000**

No declarations were made at this point.

**P64 2007/08 : To approve notes of the Planning Committee Meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> February 2008 as the Minutes of that meeting**

Proposed by Councillor Brown, seconded by Councillor Billam and agreed, it was:

**RESOLVED: To approve the notes of the Planning Committee Meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> February 2008, as circulated, as the Minutes.** These were signed by the Chairman.

**P65 2007/08 : To agree a recommendation for the consideration of full Council in relation to planning application 121550 Nos. 3, 5, 7 19, 21, 23, 25, 27 & 29 Granary Fold, Scotter – a planning application to vary condition 16 of planning permission M02/P/0948 (granted 29/12/2006) and condition 11 of planning permission M04/P/0129 (granted 01/04/2004).**

The Committee considered the papers provided in support of this application, the purpose of which is to increase to 100% the equity that can be held in the shared-ownership affordable properties on The Granary development. Proposed by Councillor Fillingham, seconded by Councillor Brown and agreed, it was :

**RESOLVED : To recommend to Council that the following response should be made to the planning authority:**

“My Council objects strongly to this application on the following grounds :

1. The application states that the Acis Group was unaware of the 75% restriction on equity purchase. However, my Council has a contemporary record which shows that this statement is inaccurate. Mr Thornton of Acis attended a Council meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> October 2004 to explain the group’s approach to the affordable housing provision within Scotter. He explained the potential benefits to the initial owner/tenant of “staircasing” up to 75% equity but also stressed the importance of capping the equity purchase at this level to ensure that its affordability status would be protected for future owner/tenants. An extract from the Council’s minutes is attached which summarises his presentation, together with a copy of the ACIS brochure “A Guide to Shared Ownership with Acis Group” which was given to the Council at the meeting. This clearly states that 75% is the maximum share. It was on the basis of this information that my Council did not previously object to the affordable housing proposals in the Beal Homes’ schemes, as it was satisfied with the Acis Group’s approach.

2. Asking for the equity cap to be removed appears to my Council to be an “about-face” of Acis Group’s own policy. The purpose of shared ownership is to help people onto the property ladder “**who cannot afford to purchase a house outright**”. (Acis’ words). If a prospective purchaser is walking away because of the cap, this suggests that they can afford

**Initialed ..... Chairman**

to purchase a house in the first instance. Acis told my Council (and it is stated in their brochure) that they would be unable to assist any purchaser if they believed they had the finances available to be able to purchase outright. In consequence, the application is totally contrary to their policy and removes a vital element of affordability – that it be affordable for both initial and subsequent occupiers of the building.

3. The Scotter Housing Needs Survey (July 2004) demonstrated a clear need for affordable properties **within Scotter parish**. In this application, Acis Group comments that additional capital receipts obtained should the equity cap be removed “will be reinvested in the district in the provision of new affordable housing”. The latter is of no comfort to my Council as it does not ensure that such housing would be in Scotter parish. (Indeed, considering the current infrastructure issues and my Council’s comments on the Local Development Framework, it is highly unlikely that such housing would be in the parish). Furthermore, the application is made against the background of the “loss” to the affordability scheme within Scotter of properties in Waggoners Close and The Rookery, substantially reducing the expected number of properties available in the parish under the affordability umbrella. The properties within the Beal Homes developments must not be allowed to join them.”

Proposed by Councillor Rayner, seconded by Councillor Capes and agreed, it was further :  
**RESOLVED : To recommend to Council that a letter be sent to Acis Gorup to remind it of its promises to the Council and to ask it to withdraw the application.**

**P66 2007/08 : To consider what comments should be made to the planning authority in relation to the following application:**

The Committee discussed the application on the agenda. At the conclusion of its deliberations, proposed by Councillor Capes, seconded by Councillor Allen and agreed, it was:

**RESOLVED: That the following observation be made to the planning authority:**

**121673 Land to r/o 64 High Street, Scotter** – a planning application for the erection of one dwelling.

**Objection.** The Clerk is to submit the following in support of the Council’s decision to object :  
“Whilst my Council can see that this proposal has some real merit (although it would ask that the materials used in the construction of the property and its style be sympathetic to the listed dove-cote, due to its proximity to the latter), it must object to it at this stage as the proposed access requires a variation to an existing and approved plan. Currently, without this variation, the site is landlocked and the proposed access cannot be achieved. (The planning authority is aware that my Council already has concerns in respect of the condition of the roads and lack of pavements and street-lights in the development to the rear of the application site and an extension to such roads will further exacerbate the current situation. The developer must be encouraged to fulfil all of the conditions placed upon him in relation to these matters at the earliest opportunity.)”

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 7.35pm.

Clerk: .....

Chairman: .....

Date: .....

**Initialed ..... Chairman**