

REPORT FOR DECISION

MEETING: PLANNING CONTROL COMMITTEE
DATE: 17 NOVEMBER 2009
SUBJECT: OUTCOMES TOUR
REPORT FROM: CHIEF PLANNING OFFICER
CONTACT OFFICER: TOM MITCHELL

TYPE OF DECISION: COUNCIL

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION/STATUS: This paper is within the public domain

SUMMARY: The report comments on the recent outcomes tour undertaken by Members of the Planning Committee.

OPTIONS & RECOMMENDED OPTION The Committee is recommended to note the report.

IMPLICATIONS:

Corporate Aims/Policy Framework: Do the proposals accord with the Policy Framework? N/A

Financial Implications and Risk Considerations: Director of Finance and E-Government to advise regarding risk management N/A

Statement by Director of Finance and E-Government: N/A

Equality/Diversity implications: N/A

Considered by Monitoring Officer: N/A

Are there any legal implications? No

Staffing/ICT/Property: N/A

Wards Affected: All

Scrutiny Interest: N/A

TRACKING/PROCESS

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

Chief Executive/ Management Board	Executive Member/Chair	Ward Members	Partners
Scrutiny Commission	Executive	Committee	Council

Introduction

The Local Government Association recommends that Planning Committees review a selection of outcomes from Planning Permissions that having been granted, at least annually. The purpose of the review is to not only assess the outcomes but also to be used as a training event on a range of issues when Planning Officers can meet members of the Committee and exchange views and opinions on Planning issues.

The Tour

7 sites had been selected by asking for nominations from the Committee or which had been controversial at the time of the decision, were visited on a day long tour on the 30th September 2009. The sites were:-

1. Land adj. 9 Beech Grove, Greenmount (ref:47479) - new house
2. Bury Boot and Shoe, Brandlesholme Road (ref: 44581) – mill conversion to residential
3. St Paul’s Church, St Paul’s Street, Bury (ref: 43630) – church conversion to residential.
4. Heaton Park Cong. Church, Newtown Street, Prestwich (ref: 43014) – Church conversion to residential and new church.
5. Heaton Lodge, Bury Old Road (Ref: 42687) – modern apartment scheme.
6. Morrisons/Site of Church Inn, Whitefield (Ref: 42914) – new retail store and restaurant.
7. PCT, Church Street West, Radcliffe (Ref:47034) – new health facility.

The tour also included a short stop at the Burrs Country Park caravan site. Most Members (8) of the Committee were able to attend, along with individual Planning case officers and Ian Lord from Engineering.

Each site was toured and in some cases access was afforded by the developer for internal inspections of the properties.

Outcomes

All Members and officers were requested to complete an evaluation sheet for each site and asked to "score" the development under several headings: - design, highways, impact on area and neighbours, Planning Policy and Regeneration benefits.

The top scoring site for both Members and officers was the Morrisons development, primarily because of the significance of this development for Whitefield but also because the scheme has been successful on several fronts including its design and associated highway issues.

Members also considered that 2 other developments scored particularly well:-

- The Bury Boot and Shoe conversion which was considered to have successfully retained the character of the former industrial units with a high quality of accommodation.
- The residential conversion and new church at Heaton Park Congregational Church. Although including some dramatic design features this scheme was considered to be of a high quality and had made a significant contribution to the local community.

Some of the issues where members expressed concern included:-

- The scale of development in relation to the site and surroundings:-
 - Beech Grove and the impact of the new dwelling on neighbours even though minimum space standards were met.
 - PCT Radcliffe comprised a very large building 4 storey building in close proximity to terraced dwellings, although there had been successful mitigation measures and the impact had been minimised.
- The height of development:-
 - Heaton Lodge was considered by some as too high, particularly in relation to the adjoining old school building. The design was however generally considered to be "striking" and contemporary.
 - There does appear to be a concern about the height of development and a general preference from members for more low rise development but there are arguments that in some situations development could improve the streetscape with a more significant presence e.g. Morrisons could perhaps have introduced amore significant façade at it's entrance? This is an issue that does provoke some discussion.

- The difficulties of combining modern design features with more traditional design:-
 - St. Paul's Church, here a dark grey cladding material had been used on the dormer type extensions and some Members felt that this jarred with the original building.
 - Heaton Park Congregational Church included a dramatic external lift shaft which was in total contrast to the original design features – this provoked a mixed reaction.
 - Heaton Lodge and its modern design juxtaposed to the adjoining school building.
 - There does seem to be some reluctance to accept modern designs and a preference for more traditional architecture.

The brief stop at the Burrs Country Park resulted in generally favourable comments on the success of the caravan site and the general quality of the development, but also vibrant nature of the country park and the activities being undertaken.

Conclusion

The tour was considered to be successful by all who attended and did provide a valuable opportunity to discuss a range of planning issues on completed developments.

The intention is to ensure that the Outcomes Tour is made a regular annual event.

List of Background Papers:- None

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