



Leicester
City Council

**MINUTE
EXTRACT**

Minutes of the Meeting of the
STRATEGIC PLANNING AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Held: MONDAY, 9 MAY 2005 at 5.30pm

P R E S E N T :

Councillor Scuplak - Chair
Councillor Thomas - Labour Spokesperson
Councillor Farmer – Liberal Democrat Spokesperson

Councillor Almey

Councillor J. Blackmore for
Cllr. Shelton

Councillor Fitch

Councillor Wann

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103. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were asked to declare any interests they may have in the business to be discussed on the agenda, and/or indicate that Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 applied to them.

There were no declarations.

**106. ST GEORGE'S NORTH AND SOUTH AREA STRATEGY GUIDANCE
DRAFT SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE**

The Service Director, Environment submits a report covering the preparation of Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) to the Local Plan, for the St. Georges North and South area of the city centre.

Contained within the report were full details of the wide consultation which had been undertaken.

A Member of the Committee made a number of points on the report. Praise was given for the way in which this SPG had responded to some of the previous comments of the Committee. It was also thought, however that the SPG was conservative in what it set out to achieve, particularly in terms of environmental aims.

A further point raised by the Member related to the discussions previously held at this Committee on the Local Plan in particular with regard to the issue of affordable housing. The Member felt that to give his support to the SPG at the current time may compromise a potential cross party agreement on a local plan

policy.

The Member made a number of further comments, he suggested that the report should have been submitted to the Leisure and Environment Scrutiny Committee. He also felt that the comments of English Heritage regarding the number of housing units should be considered carefully. He thought that tall buildings could be used to good effect as they had been done in Birmingham and burdensome restrictions on this could put off developers. A query was raised over the future of the Lee Circle car park as it was felt to be an unattractive feature of the area. It was also queried what was happening to develop craft and artisan shops.

Officers made the following comments in reply to these points. With regard to the development of craft and artisan shops it was noted that there were two projects running based in St. Georges the SIBS and the CERT projects which sought to provide advice and grants to organisations trading in these industries. It was also expected that sites in the Belgrave Gate area could be used for these businesses. The urban analysis in the SPG noted that the Lee Circle Car Park prevents views through the area and interrupt the historic grid street pattern although removing it would be a long term issue. The upcoming city centre access strategy would be looking at whether the existing parking provision was sufficient and whether it was in the right place. With regard to tall buildings Officers commented that there was a tall building policy in the Local Plan already but that a new tall building SPG was being produced which the Committee would receive for comment. This would allow tall buildings in the city in certain circumstances and subject to a range of criteria. In respect of this SPG it was planned to restrict heights in the Office Core area due to anticipated demand for office accommodation. In the St. Georges North area it was planned to restrict height of buildings to enable family housing to be provided. With regard to the provision of residential properties this had been detailed in a letter to Councillor Farmer, it was requested that this letter be provided to the Triumvirate.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the document be supported;
- (2) that the Cabinet be requested to note that elements of the SPG may need to have regard to future cross party agreements on affordable housing policy and sustainable energy policies as part of the Local Plan modifications report and should avoid approving this document until discussion has taken place at full Council on 26 May 2005.