

NOTES ON A MEETING OF THE LOCAL COUNCILS ASSOCIATION AT THE BOYS' GRAMMAR SCHOOL on SATURDAY, OCTOBER 11, 1974 ADDRESSED BY MR. E.J. WILSON, SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL CHIEF PLANNING OFFICER.

Your Chairman of the Planning Sub-Committee and Clerk attended this meeting.

Mr. Wilson dealt with the new system of planning consultations with Parish Councils which had been operating from April 1. Cambridgeshire Parish Councils tended to overlook that the system of consultation they had enjoyed for the last 10 years was privileged but now it had become a statutory formality and as 'of right' for the Parish Council. The system operating since April 1 in South Cambs. District was better and more detailed than we had been having under the County and we were ahead of many other Counties and Districts who were only now starting off from scratch with rather brief consultation and sparse details such as the former Cambridgeshire County had operated.

Response from the 101 parishes of the South Cambs. District had far outlived his expectations and was nearly 100%. Comments were well reasoned and informed and he congratulated Parish Councils on the relevance of their comments. He could not emphasize enough the careful consideration necessary by a Parish Council sub-Committee or the whole Council. Careful interpretation of plans was important - remembering that the final appearance of any development, house or factory, could be very different. He quoted an example where everyone through whose hands a particular set of plans had passed, had overlooked an important visual aspect which completely spoilt the result.

Design was often controversial and was subjective - personal opinions differing. He said that where there was an appeal to the Secretary of State design was liberally interpreted and if not 100% bad was not interfered with.

Parish Councils should not fall into the error of putting forward the views of a vocal minority; nor should they overlook residents views completely. An example of this was the reply of 'no comment' from a Parish Council followed by a petition of objection signed by 200 people and the Parish Council, then changing its comments to 'refusal', gave no reasons.

The District Council were now taking measures to get villagers observations independent of Parish Council comment. These include: writing direct to any person who has shown an interest in the proposed site in the past; site notices if the character of the area is threatened and advertisement where necessary.

He commended the Cambridge Independent Press for publishing weekly a complete list of current planning applications in the area.

Other consultations are made by the District Planning Office as appropriate: Highways Dept.; Water Authority, Village Societies etc. and his Dept has ascertained that 93% of the District Planning Committee's decisions agreed with Parish Council recommendations.

Consultation was not just a charade.

R.T. Summerfield  
K.P. Humphries.

A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL'S PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE HELD AT 51, OLD SCHOOL LANE on MONDAY, OCTOBER 28, 1974 at 8 p.m.

Present: Mr. R.T. Summerfield (in the Chair), Mrs. B.C. Waterson & the Clerk.

Apologies: Mr. H.W.H. Easy; letters also received from non-Sub-Comm. members, Mr. P. Kiddle & Mrs. M.E. Jones.

2523 MINUTES OF PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE of SEPTEMBER 17, 1974 (previously circulated - were confirmed and signed.

DECISION RECEIVED

2524 S/0692/74 Rickards, 4, Willow Crescent: ext. for double gge. & entrance lobby - Granted.