

**At a meeting of the LEISTON-cum-SIZEWELL TOWN COUNCIL  
held in the COMMUNITY CENTRE, King Georges Avenue, Leiston, on TUESDAY,  
25<sup>th</sup> JULY 2006, at 7:30p.m.**

**PRESENT**

**Councillor Mrs A. V. Nunn (in the chair)**  
**Councillor D. E. Bailey**  
**Councillor B. A. Barnes**  
**Councillor C.S. Ginger**  
**Councillor Mrs J. I. Girling**  
**Councillor T. J. Hawkins**  
**Councillor T. E. Hodgson (until 9:00pm)**  
**Councillor F. R. Huxley**  
**Councillor Mrs D. Y. May**  
**Councillor A. J. Nunn**

**53. Minutes.** It was proposed by Cllr Huxley, seconded by Cllr May and agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> July 2006 be signed as a true record noting the mistake in minute 49c whereby the “Escape” card should have been the “Explore” card.

**54. Apologies.** Apologies were received on behalf of Cllr Blowers, Cllr Cooper, Cllr Geater, Cllr Mrs Geater and Cllr Howard.

**55. Chairman’s Communications.** The Chairman explained to the meeting that, contrary to what had been published in the local newspapers, this was a Council meeting open to the public rather than a public meeting. Cllr Mrs Nunn went on to reassure those members of the public attending however that, if time allowed everyone would get a chance to ask any questions they might have of the invited speaker for the evening once members had finished their own questions.

7:39pm – The meeting was closed to hear a presentation from....

**56. Presentation by Mr Mike Robbins of the Health and Safety Executive.** Mr Robbins gave a power point presentation and talk on the various criteria and statistics that are taken in to account when delineating the nuclear safeguarding zones currently in place around Nuclear Power Stations. He made particular and detailed reference to the situation at Sizewell. A printout of the slides used during the talk are attached to these minutes as the maps may be helpful.

Mr Robbins began by giving a brief personal history of his own career in the power industry up to the time, 16½ years ago, when he began working in the Nuclear Installation Inspectorate. Most recently however, in April, he had been appointed as the Land Use Planning Inspector and it was from that perspective he presented his talk.

The first point of interest was the Governments definition of a “remote site”. Due to the potential risk involved with the generation of power through nuclear fission it was determined at the beginning of the nuclear programme that stations would be built at remote sites to keep to the minimum the number of people who could be affected in the worst case scenarios. This is still true with new “types” of reactor although once a technology has become more established, with proven reliability and safety records, reactors have been allowed into semi-urban areas. All this is determined by the siting policy objectives which, quite simply, aim to protect the public & the environment from radioactive release accidents. The meeting was informed that more detail could be found on the International Atomic Energy Agency website [see <http://www-ns.iaea.org/standards/documents/default.asp?sub=210> and see Site Evaluation for Nuclear Installations/Safety Requirements/Safety Standards Series No. NS-R-3]. Potential sites are evaluated for nearby population, any local aspects that relate to emergency planning issues, environmental conditions and the risk to people. The sites are evaluated for their suitability to have the nearby population evacuated within 2 hours in the event of an emergency. Once the site is established then development around the site is carefully monitored to ensure that the population does not increase beyond that which can continue to be safely evacuated. Mr Robbins confirmed that this restriction and monitoring would remain in force for Sizewell A until it was de-licensed (rather than when it ceased generating). Sizewell B was also a “new technology” when it was built and, therefore, it too would retain its safeguarding criteria potentially (if nothing changes) until it is de-licensed as well. Many, many years hence.

Members were then shown typically how development was monitored around sites. In the inner zone all planning applications for residential accommodation or non-residential population is referred to HSE. In the middle zone residential accommodation or non-residential population exceeding 50 people is referred and in the outer zone (over 5 miles) only developments exceeding 500 people anywhere in that zone are referred. These were the established trigger points for the local Planning Authority (in our case Suffolk Coastal District Council) to refer planning applications to the HSE for advice. Mr Robbins informed the meeting that the HSE would consider the applications and give an opinion as to whether there was a concern or not vis-à-vis the need to evacuate within 2 hours. In many cases they advise that the developments would be acceptable as long as the Planning Authority is happy that they have a robust evacuation plan in place that can absorb the increase in population that the applications detail. Where there is concern then they would advise that the application be refused. It was pointed out however that it was entirely up to the Planning Authority whether they took this advice or not. If they did go against advise that the HSE felt was valid however then the HSE had the potential of instigating an enquiry through the offices of the Department for Communities and Local Government. This would be a last resort as the HSE's approach was deliberately pragmatic. Members were then shown a map and information about the local population statistics. Mr Robbins wanted to draw attention to the situation in Leiston and to put down a marker really so that everyone was aware of the criteria as they proceeded forward in drafting the new Local Development Framework. There was some concern that the number of residents in some sectors around Sizewell were well over the recommended numbers laid down in the original remote siting figures. Mr Robbins explained that the HSE were aware of this and re-iterated that this was acceptable as long as the evacuation plan allowed for the extra numbers and that the Planning Authority was confident that it did so. The planners would have to be particularly careful now though in how they continued to expand Leiston. The numbers produced by Mr Robbins took into account all aspects of society including schools, industrial sites, care homes, farms, commercial properties as well as making allowances for residents who may not have easy access to transport and those with mobility problems.

In summary, members established that although there were more people living in the Leiston sector than was considered the optimum for safe evacuation, the HSE were content at present that the Emergency Planners had a workable and robust plan for dealing with an emergency that covered this overfill. If it could be further demonstrated that the plan could cover the safe and timely evacuation of even more residents in the future then members would feel a lot more comfortable making positive comments when they are consulted on future planning applications. As Mr Robbins was not in a position to comment on the efficacy of the current evacuation plan members noted the need to make further investigations with the relevant and responsible authorities. They also noted that the ultimate responsibility of allowing the population to increase to an unmanageable figure should an emergency arise in the future rested entirely with Suffolk Coastal District Council but that this would only be the case if they chose to disregard HSE advice who, although respecting and encouraging local autonomy, were obliged to monitor and comment on significant changes in the more vulnerable sectors of their clearly defined and published guidelines.

This resume has been sighted by Mr Robbins who has agreed that it is a fair representation of his talk.

9:00pm – Meeting resumed with further apologies from Cllr Hodgson

#### 47. Planning Matters

- a) **C06/1236/FUL – Erection of extension to replace existing lean to structure at Swiss Lodge, 46 Haylings Road, Leiston.** Members felt that the proposals detracted too much from the nature and proportion of the dwelling and would be detrimental to the street scene. The garage that would be demolished currently shields the property from a busy highway and the decking area would look incongruous in that setting. The neighbours' comments on noise and light pollution were considered valid and members also hoped that the wall between the property and its neighbour would be retained. It was hoped that this wall would not be part of the extension either although members found the coloured pictorial representations unhelpful and misleading in trying to interpret this.
- RECOMMEND REFUSAL**
- b) **C06/1299/FUL – Erection of new UPVC conservatory on 110 Haylings Road, Leiston.**
- RECOMMEND APPROVAL**
- c) **C06/1300/FUL – Two new terraced houses and three new terraced bungalows. Conversion of one large house to two smaller units at 13 Station Road, Leiston.** Members felt that the design was getting more sympathetic to the area but the following points were deemed to be material and warranted its refusal.
- It was still considered to be an inappropriate backland development with unacceptable impact on the adjacent conservation area. It was a straightforward overdevelopment in an area that did not lend itself to that sort of "cramming in".
  - The amenity of all the neighbours would be affected.

- Parking is an absolute nightmare in that area and there is not enough parking allocated for the units proposed (see separate letter vis-à-vis parking allocation at new Colonial house development etc. sent to Mr Ridley my ref : 23 140606 of 14 June)
- Members felt very strongly about impinging on to the railway line and felt that the flint wall should be retained and made good rather than knocked down – it is an important feature and the railway line should be protected too.
- The terraced housing would have to be very carefully matched to existing.
- With ever increasing numbers of tiny flats creeping into the town members felt that the splitting of number 13 should be discouraged if possible to retain suitable spacious accommodation in the areas of the town where they still remained. There needs to be a mix.
- Once the approved road from Colonial House was in full use it would make the proposed highway entrance worthy of a comment from Highways to ensure they would be happy with the layout.

**RECOMMEND REFUSAL**

**d) C06/1324/FUL – Erection of garden shed at 2 Church View, Leiston.**

**RECOMMEND APPROVAL**

During the above item Cllr Mrs Girling declared an interest, remained in the room but took no part in the discussion or vote.

**e) C06/1317/FUL – Erection of two storey side extension and rear conservatory on 41 Crown Street, Leiston.**

**RECOMMEND APPROVAL**

**f) C06/1326/FUL – Erection of one pair of chalet bungalows in part rear garden of 49 Waterloo Avenue, Leiston.**

**RECOMMEND APPROVAL**

**g) C06/0661/FUL – Improvements to existing vehicular access at 49 Waterloo Avenue, Leiston.**

**RECOMMEND APPROVAL**

**52. Questions to the Chairman.**

- Cllr Girling confirmed that signage in Suffolk Coastal managed car parks did indeed make reference to the fact that the increased revenue from the new parking charges may be used to fund the new recycling initiative about which she had enquired at the previous meeting. Cllr Hawkins was unable yet to confirm what the figures involved were but was still investigating.
- Cllr Ginger asked whether the Chairman could help ensure, in view of what had been heard earlier, that there was transparency in future as to whether the HSE was consulted on each planning application or not.
- Members felt that Mr Robbins presentation left a lot of unanswered questions – particularly with regard to accountability and responsibility with regard to developments in the town which, potentially, exacerbated the current situation of apparently having more residents in the town than was optimum for effective evacuation. It was agreed that an urgent meeting with the Emergency Plans team should be arranged if at all possible to get a feel for the whole situation and to assure everyone that plans were in place to ensure our residents safety.

There being no more business the Meeting closed at 9.31 pm.

----- Chair

----- Dated