

The Lymington Voice

The Newsletter of the Lymington Society Spring 2011

Published by the Lymington Society. Hon. Sec. Dr I Johnston, The Chantry, Hollywood Lane, SO41 9HD

Chairman's Comments

Time passes very quickly when you're having fun -- if that is what chairmanship of the Lymington Society entails. It is more than six months since the last newsletter and the AGM will soon be upon us.

This note is to highlight some of the developments since last summer. In spite of the eye-catching issues of Wetherspoon's and Redrow, probably the most significant achievement of the Lymington Society has been the support given to the NFDC in the Local



**Society Chairman
Clive Sutton**

Distinctiveness Guidance which has now been completed, and will soon be

signed off as part of the planning architecture of Lymington. Certain portions of this were incorporated into the document by the draughtsman from the document put forward by our committee members, written on the basis of how we felt our members saw the character of the town.

It is a process which developed from the Areas of Special Character initiative pursued by the Society for some years and which has

Contd. on page 7, Col. 1

Inside this issue:

Chairman's Comments	1
AGM Agenda	2
Finances	2
Your Committee	3
Local Distinctiveness	4
Ferries Update	4
Social Events	5
Planning Latest	6
Ferries Latest	6
Greenfield Sites	8

Summer Garden Party—June 14th at Eagle House

By very kind permission of Mrs Lesley Gill we are holding our Annual Garden Party in yet another of Lymington's historic houses. Eagle House is tucked away on the corner of New Street and Cannon Street. With its intimate walled garden it makes a charming venue for this popular social meeting. Don't miss this opportunity to enjoy a drink and a bite to eat



with your committee and fellow members, and get a glimpse at Eagle house. We've been lucky with the weather so far at our summer garden parties, so fingers crossed for a delightful lunch this year.

As ever, tickets are available from Solent House Dental Surgery, Cannon Street, Lymington. 01590 672986

Annual General Meeting

Notice is hereby given that the AGM of the Lymington Society will be held on *Monday, March 21st, 7.30 p.m. at The Community Centre, New Street, Lymington.*

Refreshments will be served from 7.00 pm

Members and their Guests are invited to attend

AGM Agenda

- ◆ Introduction & welcome to the Mayor, Cllr. Jan Hawker Lt. Col. Peter Chitty, President
- ◆ Apologies, Minutes of the 2010 AGM Dr. Ivor Johnston, Honorary Secretary
- ◆ Chairman's Address Clive Sutton, Chairman
- ◆ Treasurer's Report Derek Sheffer, Honorary Treasurer
- ◆ Nominations for, and Election of, Members of the Executive Committee
 - Present Committee members who are prepared to continue and are standing for re-election are:
 - * Clive Sutton, Derek Sheffer, Ivor Johnston, Nic King, Donald Mackenzie, Nigel Seth-Smith, Jonathan Hutchinson
- ◆ Address by:

Andrew Stephenson, Owner of The Master's House
See page 5 for details

Financial Report

THE LYMINGTON SOCIETY

Balance Sheet

As at 31 December 2010

ASSETS	2010	2009
Nationwide Building Society	5601	5601
Lloyds TSB Current Account	2397	835
	7998	6436
CAPITAL AND RESERVES		
General Funds as at 1 Jan 2010	6436	
General Funds as at 1 Jan 2009		4327
Add Surplus for the Year	1562	2109
	7998	6436

Derek A Sheffer FCA
Honorary Treasurer
11th January 2011

THE LYMINGTON SOCIETY

Income and Expenditure Account

For the Year Ended 31st December 2010

INCOME	2010	2009
Subscriptions	2828	2820
Interest: Nationwide	1	2
Surplus on Social Events	345	485
	3174	3307
EXPENDITURE		
Advertising	64	-
Meeting Expenses/Room Hire	37	78
Hon Sec./Treas. Expenses	86	16
Printing/ Newsletters	578	546
Subscription/Affiliation Fees	53	47
Insurance	280	240
Web Site Expenses	114	114
Donations	300	157
Total Expenditure	1612	1198
Surplus for the Year	1562	2109
	3174	3307

Auditors Report

In accordance with your instructions I have examined the Income and Expenditure Account and Balance Sheet together with the books and records submitted to me.

I have checked the figures to the underlying information supplied and found them in accordance herewith.

Dr W F Madden Ph D, Deer Lane Cottage, Boldre Lane, Boldre. 11th January 2011

Your Committee Members

In the finest journalistic tradition, page 3 of your Newsletter has intimate insights into the lives of your Committee Members. In this edition: Nic King and Jonathan Hutchinson, your planning experts and the teeth in the “independent conservation watchdog”, as the Lymington Times like to call the Society.

Nic King



Nic knows and loves Lymington from family holidays and day trips to the New Forest - he grew up in Portsmouth where his parents ran a pub. Fortunately, Alycen found she didn't miss London too much or Toronto, where she grew up, when they set up home here twelve years ago.

They both travel up and down to London a lot, Nic for his work as a business consultant and Alycen for her PhD at Queen Mary, London University – her thesis is on the growth of the art auction business in the second half of the 20th century.

It always feels good to arrive back through the forest to the fresh air and friendly faces of Lymington. It may take a couple of hours but it still feels like a privilege to live in a charming town by the sea that's known internationally for its sailing and as a centre of excellence for marine engineering and technology.

Nic first made contact with the Lymington Society when he heard about the sale of the Webbs chicken factory and realised that the future of this site had the capacity to shift the centre of gravity of the town and change its character completely. What he didn't realise was that more than five years later we would still be battling to see that this outstanding riverside site is developed in a way we can be proud of locally and that enhances the town's attraction to visitors.

Jonathan Hutchinson



Jonathan was born in India in 1934 but moved to England three years later, growing up on the banks of Poole Harbour during the war (literally - there was a jetty at the bottom of the garden). Watching the battle overhead in 1940 gave him an early ambition to fly. Educated at Marlborough, he won an Air Ministry Flying Scholarship while in the Combined Cadet Force there, reporting to the Hampshire Aeroplane Club at Eastleigh the day after his 17th birthday and returning to school a month later at the start of the autumn term having qualified for a Private Pilot's Licence.

He entered the RAF College at Cranwell the following year and spent 33 years in the Service, flying every British fighter type from Vampire to Lightning in Europe and the Far East before for serving for seven years behind several Whitehall desks, one of them in the Cabinet Secretariat. He retired from the RAF in 1985 to become Secretary of the Royal Lymington Yacht Club, which he served for 12½ years before retiring for the second time in 1998.

A lifelong sailing enthusiast, Jonathan first went to sea in a small boat in Poole Harbour in 1940 and has owned a yacht for more than 30 years, during which he has sailed through Holland, Belgium and France to and around most of the north shore of the Mediterranean, circumnavigated Great Britain and Ireland and made numerous shorter voyages covering the length and breadth of the Channel from the IJsselmeer to the Scillies and the Thames estuary to Brittany.

Jonathan and Mary have been married for 52 years and have two sons, a grandson and three granddaughters.

Local Distinctiveness - an Update - Including Redrow

By Nic King

Gp. Capt. Hutchinson and Mr King attended a meeting of the Planning and Transportation Review Panel on 19 Jan 2011, which recommended that the NFDC Cabinet adopts the Lymington Local Distinctiveness SPD (see the draft SPD at: <http://www.newforest.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=10953>).

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) are part of the Local Development Framework and form part of the planning framework for the area. The guidance they give is a material consideration which will be taken into account in determining planning applications and appeals.

Until recently, planners had no guidance as to the nature of an area, unless it had status as a *Conservation Area*, or an *Area of Special Character*. The Lymington Society has tried several times to have parts of Lymington and Pennington designated as Areas of Special Character, but the process is complex, and we always seemed to miss the right part of the process cycle.

Now, though, this new initiative means that the planners will have this definition before them when they rule on planning applications, with the objective of ensuring that new development is in keeping.

For example, the Local Distinctiveness SPD introduces new tests against which to decide the suitability of the new planning application for development of the Webbs former chicken factory site at Bridge Road by Redrow Homes.

Extracts from the Lymington Local Distinctiveness SPD:

4.1.3 More generally, glimpses and views beyond the immediate surroundings are important for two reasons: views from the town outwards towards its surroundings provide a sense of where one is in the landscape and in relation to the coast, and views back towards the town provide important impressions of the character of the place

and contribute to the sense of approach and arrival.

4.1.13 The architectural character of Lymington town centre, especially the High Street, is influenced by both formal Classical proportions and more informal 18th and 19th century building styles.

4.1.27 The visitor arriving from the eastern Forest emerges to a view of the town in which the importance of the landscape character of the river is immediately obvious. A wide space of calm water with green tree-lined banks is the foreground for the setting of the town as it rises above the river, its varied roof shapes interspersed with tree canopies up to the brow of the hill just before New Street. The low rise industrial sheds and buildings on the west side of the river recede below the general small unit roofscape and provided that they retain and add to the tree cover, such employment uses do not detract from the wider townscape. From the West, views down from Cannon Street, East Hill and the spaces and buildings in between are available across the water to the National Park - green fields and wooded sides of the east bank and the Walhampton monument which surmounts them.

4.1.28 There is a meander in the river cut off by the railway that encloses a wide plateau of the flood plain jutting out into the river (the former Webbs chicken factory site). This headland defines the last section of river valley where riparian character dominates that of coastal activity and bank vegetation. Even though this section of the river is tidal, it isn't until one passes the headland to the south, that the river valley takes on a far more maritime estuary-like character as denoted by the many masts visible alongside the town quay and beyond the railway bridge.

4.1.29 This D-shaped plateau, formerly Mill and pond, and latterly a factory, has been cleared in preparation for development. Any new development will need to ensure that the character of

the river edges is retained and that their view of the town rising behind the river is respected. It will need to be sympathetic to the 'grain' of the existing town, its rooftops and building forms as seen from the Walhampton bank. Finally, it will need to recognise and respond to the great importance of the quality of connection to the town centre.

We are very interested to see how the local distinctiveness test works in practice, in relation to this and other proposed developments.

Ferries Update

Wightlink has now belatedly carried out the necessary Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and other Assessments, which they legally should have carried out before starting the service with the new ferries.

They have reapplied to the necessary authorities (the NFDC, the Environment Agency and the Marine Management Organisation (part of Defra)) for permission to alter their terminal to allow three crossings an hour.

Don Mackenzie has attended meetings with the Defra Minister of State, Richard Benyon, and NFDC and the National Park, to express our concerns over the effect of these new ferries on the natural beauty of the Lymington River, as well as the significant potential increase in HGV and car traffic.

Wightlink have offered a "mitigation" scheme involving dumping mud for several years on to a part of the outer saltmarshes at Pylewell called Boiler Point as "mitigation" for the loss of 11.5 acres of saltmarsh in the Lymington River (Natural England's estimate).

This "mud-dumping" scheme, for which Wightlink also have to apply for permission from the National Park Authority, also requires an EIA and other assessments

The Society is not convinced that this scheme comes anywhere near compensating for the loss of 11.5 acres of riverside, and will continue to see that the concerns of members and local residents is fully taken into account by all of the relevant authorities.

Lymington Society Social Programme 2010 - 2011

Last year saw a very active and well attended Social Programme stretching back to the AGM.

The highlight of the year was the very popular Hog Roast and Summer Garden Party which took place in the beautiful gardens of Moore Blatch in Lymington High Street in June.

Summer Garden Party



Moore Blatch Garden

Thanks to the generosity of Moore Blatch, who kindly sponsored the Hog Roast, the Society was able to keep the tickets to a reasonable price and tuck away a small sum for Society funds.

Almost 80 members and guests attended the event and enjoyed a delicious hog roast meal provided by a local company "The Hog and Lamb Spit Roast Company".

The Moore Blatch head gardener Ian gave an excellent short talk on the history of and maintenance of the garden, and then conducted several groups around the garden showing off his handiwork in producing such beautiful surroundings.

Fortunately the threatened rain held off until just after the end of the event.

To Purchase Tickets for Social Events, Please Contact:

**Solent House Dental Surgery,
Cannon Street, Lymington.**

01590 672986

Hampshire Treasures

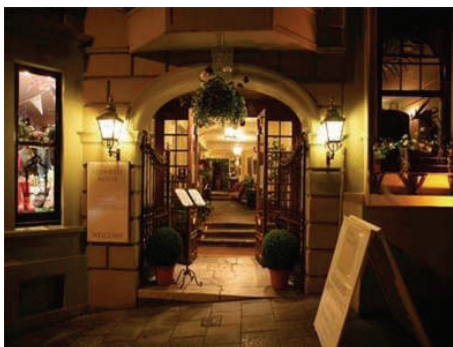


Hampshire Treasures

In September we enjoyed a "Private View" at the St Barbe Museum of the touring exhibition prepared by the Hampshire County Museum service entitled "Hampshire Treasures"

This exhibition featured fascinating items from the collections held within the Hampshire Museum Service including a beautifully decorated wedding cake from a bakery in Basingstoke over one hundred years old as well as a glorious, hand-sewn, 18th century late rococo gown in the form of a sack-back dress, with its own original matching outer petticoat c1770-75.

Christmas Drinks



Stanwell House Hotel

The Christmas Party as usual was held at Stanwell House where we were able to entertain about 70 members, guests and local dignitaries from organisations which the Lymington Society deals with on a regular basis such as the NFDC, The Town Council etc.

Next Year

We will soon be organising the program for next year and would welcome suggestions for speakers or events

Lymington in Old Photographs



In 2011 we were again entertained at the St Barbe Museum where Museum Director Steve Marshall gave a fascinating talk entitled "Lymington in Old Photographs".

This featured amazing old photographs of Lymington, including the great snowstorm from the 1880s showing snow the height of some two-story shops in the High Street.

AGM



Looking forward to the rest of the year, at the AGM in March we are pleased to welcome Andrew Stephenson who will describe his renovation of the Master's House on the site of the Lymington Infirmary which as members may remember was rescued by the society when we obtained a Grade 2 listing for the building.

Summer Garden Party 2011

Finally in June this year we will be organizing the Annual Summer Garden Party which this year will take place in the garden of Eagle House, another of Lymington's most historic buildings. Full details can be found on the Lymington Society web site:

www.lymsoc.co.uk/Events.htm

And on page 1 of this newsletter

Planning in 2010

By Jonathan Hutchinson

We have reviewed as they appeared all the 224 planning applications entered on the NFDC website during the 12 months to November 2010. The great majority (129) were classed as Householder Developments – conservatories, small extensions and so on – to which we object only in exceptional circumstances. (There were none such in the year). The next most numerous, in which we take the greatest interest, were those classed as Minor Dwellings and Small Scale Development, which embraces demolition and construction, usually by developers. Activity in these categories was comparatively light, with 54 applications. The remainder were spread across a range of classifications from advertisements (8) through Listed Building alterations (16) to Change of Use (4) and Conservation Area Consents (3)

We made no comments on any of the Householder Developments applications. 92 of them were granted, 18 refused, four withdrawn and the rest are in consultation or await a decision.

Of the 54 potential development applications, we supported one, commented on two and objected to eight. All our comments and objections were presented verbally to the Town Council Planning sub-committee at its three-weekly meetings. In addition, we attended Development Control Committee meetings in Lyndhurst to present the Society's objections verbally to the two applications decided at that level. Two of the applications to which we objected have yet to be decided. Of the other six, five have been refused and one withdrawn.

Our most high-profile objection during the year was not to a development application but to the proposed Change of Use of the Ford's

furniture shop to a drinking establishment. The Society was heard on local radio, TV and in the local and national newspapers, most of which set aside the facts and did their best to present the matter in the language of class warfare. We made a third visit to Lyndhurst to present our objection verbally to the Development Control Committee. The application was refused, but it seems unlikely that the major pub chain behind it will let the matter rest there.

The decline in activity by major developers is no doubt due in part to economic circumstance, but with the Old Orchards developments nearing completion there are no more large open spaces left in the town – except for the former industrial salient between the river and the railway usually known as the Former Webbs Chicken Factory. The Society has been privileged to be invited to several meetings with the NFDC planning staff and the developer, to find a better solution to the question of what to build there than that approved in 2005. We also took part in the public hearing at which the Inspector dismissed the developer's appeal for a mini-roundabout at the site entrance. The over-riding consideration for the developer is that they bought the site at the top of the market and so must seek to cram the maximum number of dwellings into it. They have spent much time and money seeking a solution more acceptable to the town, but the result will inevitably be a dense, high-rise development and our aim has been to seek to limit the visual damage, for example by the use of pitched rather than flat roofs. A new application is expected early in 2010.

With a change of Government have come some welcome changes in the planning laws which should give us a better defence against predatory developers seeking to build on large gardens. Nevertheless, as economic

activity recovers we may expect to see the threat return to some of our most attractive spaces. Our best defence lies in the concept of Local Distinctiveness. During 2010 the NFDC planning staff have been drafting a document defining Lymington's distinctive nature, neighbourhood by neighbourhood. We made a substantial contribution to the drafting and are participating in the consultation stage which will close at the end of November 2010. The final document will have the status of a Supplementary Planning Document, subordinate to the Core Strategy which sets out the District Council's planning policies, and should help to shape the evolution of the town for many years.

STOP PRESS—Wetherspoons

As we came to press, we had an invitation to meet a representative from Wetherspoons to discuss and comment on their proposals for overcoming the reasons for the rejection of their application

Membership Details

New Members are always welcome to join the Lymington Society and existing Members are urged to encourage friends to join.

As well as receiving the Newsletter, Members will be welcome to attend regular social events arranged by the Social Committee.

Membership costs £10.00 per member. Application forms (available to print from our Web Site www.lymsoc.co.uk) or from Derek Sheffer at the address below.

Please send Completed Membership to:

Derek Sheffer

**Lymington Soc. Membership Sec.
Lorne Cottage,**

Navarino Court,

Lymington, SO41 9AE

Chairman's Note (contd from page 1)

now come to fruition. It is already being referred to in planning issues and the new Redrow plans will be looked at in the light of it.

When I last wrote in this newsletter we were in high hopes of Redrow's new planning proposals for the site. We had been shown the concept of the layout designed by Sir Richard McCormac, which concentrated the site on the pedestrian footbridge leading to Lymington and radiated out from it towards the river frontage.

Unfortunately the design developed for the residential accommodation turned out to be square block pavilions with flat roofs which, whilst an innovative design surrounding Oxford colleges, did not commend themselves to Lymington and this particular site.

This, with all credit to Redrow, led to a public consultation in which the public made it clear that they wanted something more conventional with pitched roofs.

That led to a design, converting some of the features of the first Redrow design, into coastal architecture somewhat resembling the black tarred fishermen's architecture of Hastings.

Unfortunately this design, however much effort has been put into it by Redrow, has come out looking as it has been designed by committee which of course to a certain extent it has.

With regret the Society has to say that it is not right in the context of Lymington to the west and the new Forest National Park across the water to the east. An appropriate objection to the application has now been lodged, and this can be seen on our website.

The developers maintain that they have the option of the original Paxton's approval, which they have protected by carrying out some enabling works in the form of small "access" road, which some of us look at with bemusement as we cross the bridge by the level crossing. However, because of the tightening of the regulations relating to the siting of new developments due to increased sea levels, the development as a whole will need to be another metre or so higher which will have a significant effect, and require further planning permission for which there is no guarantee of approval.

It seems the only way this site is going to be properly developed is by going "back to the drawing board" both in density and design.

In the same way as the Webb/Redrow Site comes back to haunt us time and time again, the same could start to be said of Wetherspoon's. Their application for a destination pub next to the parish church was turned down by a unanimous vote of all councillors, which is almost unprecedented. That decision received, to my mind unfortunate, round of applause, which I can see Wetherspoon's taking as a provocation or a challenge.

Unfortunately the original application degenerated into the question of posh versus non-posh, which is not at all what the issue was. It is a straight question of planning considerations for a public house, which will attract a large number of people because of its marketing, being located absolutely next door to a parish church and graveyard.

The application is now being resubmitted on the basis of "popular demand" for reasonably priced alcohol. I suspect many of my committee would be guilty of a "popular demand" for reasonably priced alcohol, but in a place where the particular sensibilities of the location are not going to be damaged by a popular drinking establishment. There are many such other locations in the Lymington area.

The application will go to the Planning Committee and I would be surprised if a majority of the members changed their voting position to allow it. The real challenge will be on appeal when the application is looked at in the national context by an Inspector. Your committee will continue to put their objections forward if the application goes that far.

Other planning issues of note are the development site on the corner of Avenue Road and Lower Buckland Road where, effectively on the representations of the Lymington Society, the roof has been lowered nearer to the height of the original approved application. I have to say that I think it has made a significant difference to a building which was far too high in the first place, and which, whilst one is getting used to it, is still "out of place".

The McCarthy and Stone Faringford Court has now been completed. It has merged reasonably well into the existing houses in Southampton Road in such a way that I hope there will not be any further pressure for development of those houses. I have to say that the physical continuity of the building is well disguised by the effect of creating individual houses.

What does jar with me personally is the square corner piece of the development, which seems to say neither one thing nor another and should either have consisted of a continuation of the traditional architecture round the corner or a significant architectural statement. The developers seem to have taken a safe way out, whilst losing the opportunity to either retain traditional residential character or make a substantial architectural statement.

Just as we thought it was safe to go out in the countryside we now find proposals for greenbelt development to relieve development within the towns. This proposal is in its early days and the Society has yet to formulate its position.

Have your say on where new development sites in Lymington & Pennington should be located.

Between 2006 - 2026, the overall South East Plan requires 3,920 additional dwellings. The Council is looking at sites that could provide up to around 150 of these dwellings in Lymington & Pennington. Deadline for comments: 11 March 2011. You can download a response form at the LymSoc website. See: <http://www.lymsoc.co.uk/>. Click on [NFDC Sites and Development Management Development Plan Document](#). You can post comments to:

NFDC Policy and Plans Team,
Appletree Court,
Beaulieu Road,
Lyndhurst,
SO40 7PA.

See page 8 for more on the greenbelt

Greenfield Sites Considered for Development

By Don Mackenzie and Nic King

On February 16th there was a public consultation at the Lymington Community Centre about where future development in Lymington and Pennington should best be undertaken.

Clearly a lot of thought and planning has gone into this exercise.

As it was explained to us, it is not definite that an extension into the greenbelt will be considered for Lymington. They are preparing the options in case it is decided because of the overriding housing need that they need to take this option.

Any development going forward in the green belt will have 70% affordable homes, with the rest being inexpensive "starter homes". In other words the whole of the site will be effectively affordable housing of some sort

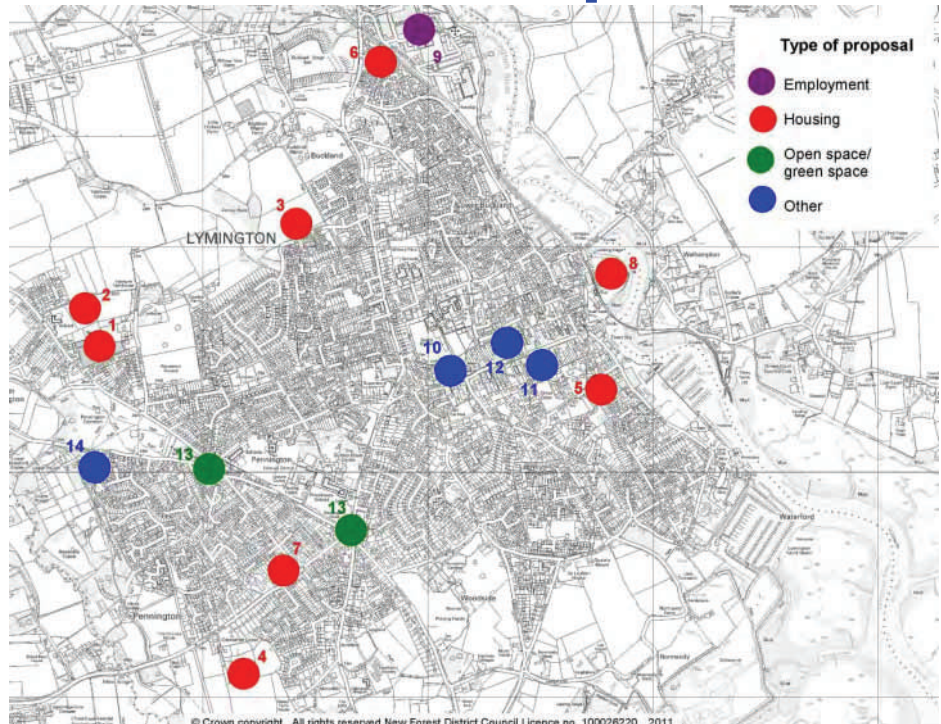
The 'greenfield' proposals are justified in terms of the high affordable content and the growing numbers on the waiting list. There is a clear need for affordable housing locally but this seems to clash with the recently adopted core strategy policy to make affordable development 'indistinguishable' from 'market driven' development.

The Core Strategy demands that they identify sites for up to 150 new dwellings through this process. This is in addition to the 'market driven' opportunistic development that takes place. In the past any development greater than 14 dwellings had to contain an affordable quota, which is why developments like Old Orchards proceeded piecemeal; now any development is subject to a contribution to affordable housing.

The Council has identified four sites for consideration:

- Land at Pinetops Nurseries; around 50 dwellings.
- Land adjoining Pinetops Nurseries; around 45 dwellings.
- Land north of Alexandra Road; around 85-100 dwellings
- Land south of Milford Road; around 90 - 100 dwellings.

Their 'preferred' site is Pinetops Nursery, which is seen as "not really green-belt".



In addition they have identified 'opportunities' e.g. for 'retail/office' development at the Town Hall Avenue Road and 'bus station/retail' at the Bus Station in the High Street. These will only happen if the opportunity materialises but obviously will put these sites in play.

If there is an extension into the green belt it will be at a much lower level of density than previously considered. For instance on the Pinetops site they will be considering 50 dwellings against the 130 being considered by Mr Paton. This is supposedly to reflect the much lower density of housing currently in that area and the loosening of the John Prescott density dictates.

Clearly this is an important subject that needs our attention and consideration. The uncertainty as to whether or not the NFDC is going to include all or any of these sites in the Sites and Development Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is disturbing. We may be looking at anything from no new social housing in the green belt, to upwards of 300 houses if all the new green belt sites are included.

The results of the "consultation", and our response to it, surely hinges on the decision as to which if any of the sites will be included in the SPD.

Some may feel that the site at Pinetops is acceptable, in view of its current usage state and the local housing need, but does that open the gates to more sites on the same basis?

Finally I think we should question the assumption, inherent in this consultation, that at least 70% of the housing must be social and that the rest must be low cost starter homes, effectively making the sites almost completely social housing. National recommendations for housing are that no site should have more than 50 % social and that they should be pepper-potted into normal housing.

There are big issues at stake here about the nature of these new estates, and whether they will be socially cohesive, or at risk of becoming "sink estates". Finally there is the whole question of the impact on normal commercial housing of having to bear the cost of subsidising so much social housing, thereby making normal housing even more unaffordable. A really vicious circle which could potentially result in no sites being developed and therefore no social housing contribution!

And we need to make our position clear on this by March 11th

HAVE YOUR SAY—See page 7