

# THE EDGE ASSOCIATION

*Of Residents of Alderley Edge, Cheshire*

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## **Notes of Meeting with Macclesfield Borough Planning Department on 19<sup>th</sup> October 2007**

### Present: -

Macclesfield Council John Knight (JK), Chief Planning Officer, Peter Hooley (PH), North Area Planner, Michael Scammell (MSc), Enforcement Officer  
Edge Association Martin Steiger (MSt), Chairman, Philip Forshaw (PF), Vice-Chairman, Martin Sinker (MSi), Plans Secretary, Sarah Shorland (SS), Committee Member and Ian Standen (IS), Administration Secretary

### 1. Planning Approvals (MSi)

- (a) The high level of construction activity in Alderley has resulted in contractors parking a large number of vehicles illegally. JK pointed out that is a matter for the police. Where parking within the site is possible, MBC will make this a planning condition. Where there is a site safety matter, concerned neighbours should contact the H & SE.
- (b) Wheel washing will be stipulated for all major developments.
- (c) There have been a number of cases of working well outside normal working hours. Cases should be reported to Gemma Birtwistle (MBC Enforcement Officer). She is unlikely to follow-up an isolated case, so neighbours should keep a log (including vehicle registration numbers) and keep MBC informed.
- (d) MBC accepted that the level of detail supporting applications for Listed Buildings has, in a number of recent cases, been inadequate. A national scheme (1APP) for all planning related applications was being introduced by the Government from 1 April 2008.
- (e) MBC are producing a Local List of Important Buildings and would welcome input from the Association. Although not having statutory force, it would make obtaining approval for demolition more difficult. The Sorting Office would appear to be a good candidate for inclusion.
- (f) The arrangement whereby modifications made during construction can be approved informally as 'Working Amendments' has been abolished. The Association strongly supports this change. However, HMG seem to be in favour of the abolished system and legislation is proposed to allow it.
- (g) Enforcement of planning conditions is a difficult process because in high profile cases, costs can be incurred by MBC, which may be impossible to recover.

### 2. Knock-down and Rebuild (MSt)

JK confirmed that MBC do not have a formal energy policy on knock-down and rebuild but they agree with the Association that there have been some recent examples where this was contrary to good practice and, indeed, inappropriate. Other Councils (e.g. Merton) have done work in controlling the amount of energy going into a site and MBC will be reviewing their position.

### 3. Gated Communities (IS)

MBC, like the Association, are aware of a number of proposals for gated communities that are currently being developed. MBC, the Highways Authority and the Association all have serious reservations and MBC will assess any applications critically.

### 4. Questionnaires and Plans (MSi)

(a) JK confirmed that nothing should be read into the omission of Conservation Areas from the latest Borough Plan questionnaire. MSc confirmed that the Alderley Edge Conservation Area Appraisal will be completely revised over the next couple of years and will then form part of the Borough Plan. The Association confirmed their willingness to contribute to this revision.

(b) The Association also confirmed that they are very supportive of the initiatives for the Parish Plan and have two representatives on the Committee. JK advised that a small amount of money has been set aside for Village Plans and expressed the expectation that it will be put to good use.

### 5. MBC Website (PF)

(a) The new arrangements are generally very welcome but those with limited IT access or skills regret the loss of the availability of hard copies at Wilmslow. JK made it clear that the viewing of hard copies at the MBC Macclesfield office is also being phased out. This is particularly unfortunate in view of (b) below.

(b) The Association's major concern is the difficulty of reading drawings that are often without either dimensions or a scale and especially when they contain detailed information. The Association feels strongly that because the motive for omitting this information may be to deliberately mislead or withhold information, all applications should be reviewed at the time of receipt and where appropriate a request for clarification or elaboration made. If appropriate, applications should be rejected before acceptance.

(c) The proposal to require Visual Impact Statements should go some way to resolve this problem.

### 6. Alderley Edge Village (MSt)

(a) Because the Westbrook site has been undeveloped for so long, it has, in the view of many villagers, become something of a blot on the planning process. MBC seem to be unable to move things forward.

(b) New owners have now acquired the Somerfield site. They are developing plans that are basically similar to the previous proposal – i.e. apartments, parking and a supermarket/small shops.

(c) Current expectations are that work on the By-Pass could start early in 2008.

(d) Plans for the Car Park in the public park would be reconsidered and the option of a second level on the South Street car park reconsidered if the approval for the Somerfield site does not happen.