

MINUTES

OF THE MEETING OF

HYTHE TOWN COUNCIL

HELD ON THURSDAY 9<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2009

- Present:** The Right Worshipful Mayor of Hythe  
Councillor Mrs K T Belcourt (In the Chair)
- Councillors R Belcourt, D Briddock, R H Carroll, M J Dearden,  
A J Ewart-James, Mrs Z Harris S W Hayward, S Matthews,  
D Owen, and R Watson
- Also Present:** Mr R Goodall and Mr D Healey, GSE Group and the Deputy  
Town Clerk
- Apologies:** Councillors M J Lyons, A Mayne, Mrs A Mayne, J A Schoner,  
A Smith and Mr T Ellames - SDC Major Applications &  
Project Manager

The Mayor invited Reverend Tony Windross to open the meeting with prayers.

**152/09 REGISTRATION OF DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

Councillors Mrs K T Belcourt, A J Ewart-James and D Owen declared personal interests in Min No 153/09 ó Hotel Imperial Planning Application ó Shepway District Councillors.

Councillor Mrs Z Harris declared a personal interest in Min No 153/09 ó Hotel Imperial Planning Application ó Member of the Hotel Imperial Gym.

**153/09 PLANNING APPLICATION Y08/1036SH – HOTEL IMPERIAL.**

Alterations and improvements to the hotel including new clubhouse, residential development of 75 units, with new access, parking, open space and landscaping.

It was

**PROPOSED BY:** Councillor A J Ewart-James

**SECONDED BY:** Councillor R H Carroll and

**RESOLVED – That Standing Orders be suspended to allow unfettered comment by both the Public and Councillors in accordance with Standing Order No 79.**

The Mayor invited the representatives of the GSE Group to give a presentation on the alterations and improvements to the above planning application.

**Mr John Davis, Mr David Plumstead, Mr Tim Lawrence, Mrs Denise Maskell, Mr Geoff Burnell, Sue Bill, Mr Simon Cole, Mr Derek Phillips, Mr Nigel Spencer and Mr David Thompson addressed the Meeting. \***

**Please see attachment for public comments which are attached but do not constitute part of the Minutes.**

It was then

**PROPOSED BY:** Councillor R Belcourt  
**SECONDED BY:** Councillor D Owen and

**RESOLVED – That Standing Orders be re-instated.**

Members put questions to Mr Goodall and Mr Healey and then debated the Hotel Imperial application. After lengthy discussions it was

**PROPOSED BY:** Councillor A J Ewart-James  
**SECONDED BY:** Councillor R Belcourt

That this Council accept and approve this application on the proviso that the mechanism for ensuring that the Hotel's improvements are put in place before any potential development of the site takes place, in the form of a Section 106 agreement.

**A recorded vote was called for in accordance with Standing Order No 10A:**

**The motion was then put.**

<b>Councillor R Watson</b>	<b>Against</b>
<b>Councillor R H Carroll</b>	<b>Against</b>
<b>Councillor S W Hayward</b>	<b>Against</b>
<b>Councillor D Briddock</b>	<b>Against</b>
<b>Councillor S Matthews</b>	<b>Against</b>
<b>Councillor D Owen</b>	<b>For</b>
<b>Councillor R Belcourt</b>	<b>For</b>
<b>Councillor Mrs Z Harris</b>	<b>Against</b>
<b>Councillor A J Ewart-James</b>	<b>For</b>
<b>Councillor M J Dearden</b>	<b>For</b>
<b>Councillor Mrs K T Belcourt</b>	<b>For</b>

**The motion was lost.**

It was then

**PROPOSED BY:** Councillor R H Carroll  
**SECONDED BY:** Councillor S Matthews

That Hythe Town Council do not support this planning application on the grounds of:

- 1 Over intensive development that will have a major and detrimental impact on traffic and drainage.
- 2 That it goes against the advice of English Heritage, the Hythe Civic Society and the Campaign to Protect Rural England.
- 3 It will be a blot on the landscape of what is a delightful place of tranquillity and natural beauty.
- 4 Its failure to comply with the Local Planning Authority.

**A recorded vote was called for in accordance with Standing Order No 10A:**

**The motion was then put.**

<b>Councillor R Watson</b>	<b>For</b>
<b>Councillor R H Carroll</b>	<b>For</b>
<b>Councillor S W Hayward</b>	<b>For</b>
<b>Councillor D Briddock</b>	<b>For</b>
<b>Councillor S Matthews</b>	<b>For</b>
<b>Councillor D Owen</b>	<b>Against</b>
<b>Councillor R Belcourt</b>	<b>Against</b>
<b>Councillor Mrs Z Harris</b>	<b>For</b>
<b>Councillor A J Ewart-James</b>	<b>Against</b>
<b>Councillor M J Dearden</b>	<b>Against</b>
<b>Councillor Mrs K T Belcourt</b>	<b>Against</b>

**The motion was carried.**

Meeting closed at 8.30 p.m.

Dated the: Day of: 2009

í í í í í í í í í í í í í í í CHAIRMAN

Mr John Davis

Mr Davis used both National, Kent and Shepway Core Strategy Plans to arrive at the following:

- If we translate the deficit into actual homes, then this approximates to a lack of 19 affordable homes.
- The average cost of affordable housing provision in Kent is 150k per home.
- This multiplies up to 2.85m
- GSE have offered 1m.
- So, if our planners are to consider this responsibility then far more money has to be offered.
- One has to ask the question just why GSE are not providing the affordable housing, easy:
- Profit, Profit and more profit.

All through this application GSE have removed facilities and ignored local and national plans:

- Nowhere near enough affordable housing.
- The end of Tennis.
- The Golf Course club house removed to the Hotel Basement, no one caring about a golf course would do this, and with no consultation.
- And now the much hyped 5 star Sky Bar has gone from the proposals.
- Five Stars, all of this is not, and all by a firm builders, not hoteliers.
- Totally out of keeping with the area, the Imperial itself is 5 Storeys.

Are the public aware that English Heritage have recommended refusal no less than twice so far, they are joined by both The Campaign to Protect Rural England and our own Hythe Civic Society.

Twiss Road was already congested, often double parked and this would lead to double yellows for safety reasons and mean an area already short on parking would become untenable and force those wishing to enjoy Hythe seafront areas to go elsewhere.

Why do such professional people object: well easy, it is a flawed application and will ruin the setting of an Ancient Monument and in doing so, ruin our lovely amenity and the open spaces that people flock to in increasing numbers, they enjoy it.

David Plumstead

Mr Plumstead considered the development to be an absolute disaster. He felt that the nature and the quality of the Town would be lost if this development were to go ahead. Mr Plumstead urged the Councillors to serve the wishes of the people in the Chamber and vote against this application.

Mr Tim Lawrence

Mr Lawrence was concerned that the hotel and grounds would be sold on if the unthinkable happened whereby the GSE Group were forced to sell to another developer, either together or separately, as so often happens. He further stated that instead of this dense development depriving the hotel of its amenity land, what we be wrong with 14 upmarket detached houses along the Twiss Road frontage. There would be fewer people, fewer cars, fewer doctor's appointments and school places and no disturbance to the hotel or golf club and no requirement to donate £1m for affordable housing and if necessary, the improvements to the hotel itself could be less ambitious.

Mr Peter Hobbs

Mr Hobbs spoke in favour of the Hythe Imperial application. He felt that it would be the best possible chance to enhance a strong and vibrant economy and would add quality to visitors to Hythe and the local people.

Mrs Denise Maskell

Mrs Maskell supported Mr Davis and Mr Plumstead's comments. She felt that the development was totally out of keeping with the area and wished Hythe's heritage to be kept intact.

Dr Geoff Burrell

Dr Burrell expressed his concerns in relation to Hythe's attractive environment and felt that the hotel gardens were not only an essential feature of the hotel that enticed tourists to stay, but they also enhanced the overall appearance of this key part of Hythe. Dr Burrell was also concerned about the inevitable impact on traffic, pedestrians and cyclists' safety when crossing Twiss Road at the Canal. He felt the development had no merits for the Town, but did very much welcome any improvements being made to the hotel.

Sue Bill

Ms Bill was totally against the development as it robbed Hythe of its green land and was providing housing that in her opinion Hythe did not need. She felt the development was too close to the Royal Military Canal and would ruin the unspoilt view across to the sea that was currently enjoyed by local people and visitors alike.

Mr Simon Cole

Mr Cole felt that the only people to benefit from this development would be the GSE Group and not the people of the Town. He felt the development was over-sized and disproportionate to an area of natural beauty and stated that the buildings were too high and that as the GSE Group were developers and not hoteliers, the Hythe Imperial would not benefit this by this application.

Mr Derek Phillips

Mr Phillips expressed his concerns over the environmental impact that would arise from the development and in particular to the carbon emissions and water supply problems that would arise if the application were to go ahead.

Mr Nigel Spencer

Mr Spencer's view on the development was that a much smaller application would be acceptable with 20 to 30 units being erected, but he felt the current application was far too large and would do harm to the environment. He urged Councillors to show wisdom and reject this application.

Mr David Thompson

Mr Thompson was concerned about local residents' exposure to airborne contamination and flood risk contamination that could occur with seepage into the Royal Military Canal. He was also concerned about the safety issues on and off site and urged Councillors to reject this application.