

Foreword

Sarah Stevens and Andrew Warner*

The Joint Planning Law Conference, “Oxford” as many refer to it, had its 40th birthday this year. Whilst it has been updated in many ways since the greats, Frank Layfield, Roger Suddards, Michael FitzGerald, Gordon Hyde, Frank Knowles and Peter Boydell first came up with the idea, it nonetheless retains, along with tradition, the ability to provide speakers whose knowledge of their subject is at the forefront of their profession, and whose papers are such that they provide the practitioner with a guide to what is current and what is likely to happen.

The Conference started with Alison Nimmo describing how to gainsay all those sceptics who said that the 2012 Olympics would never be ready on time. Planning and development is a very different animal when you have someone like Alison behind the wheel. Amongst a considerable number of insights were two to ponder; first, that in the Olympic planning process time was a material consideration; and second, that she felt that even if the planning system was not broken by the last two Governments, it probably was now.

Saturday started with Bridget Rosewell explaining economics without any jargon in terms that described exactly what was wrong and what was needed.

A double act, or tandem, then followed with Greg Jones and Stephen Tromans giving a definitive exposition of planning and environmental law, with the day’s papers being concluded with Tom Dobson explaining the intricacies and problems of what was described as a very big elephant in the room which developers seemed to be hoping would go away: CIL.

Sunday’s papers started with Gavin Parker on neighbourhood plans; how to achieve one and alternative routes to the same end; with the final traditional paper by Peter Harrison on a legal update.

Tradition has been maintained, the speakers were all in the forefront of their profession, and their papers which follow are cutting edge and can be used as reference documents in their own right.

We commend them to you.

As a postscript the Committee would like to thank Andrew Warner and Kelvin MacDonald both of whom stepped down this year to let others more younger and able to continue the aims and traditions of the Conference.

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