

DOCUMENT A

Minutes of a meeting of the District Planning Committee held on 7 December 2017 from 2.00 p.m. to 3.18 p.m.

Present: Robert Salisbury (Chairman)
John Wilkinson (Vice-Chairman)

Ginny Heard
Christopher Hersey
Colin Holden
* Absent

Norman Mockford
Edward Matthews
Colin Trumble

Anthony Watts Williams
Peter Wyan

Also Present: Councillors Margaret Hersey, Andrew MacNaughton and Andrew Lea.

1. SUBSTITUTES AT MEETINGS OF COMMITTEE – COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 4

None.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

4. MINUTES

A Member queried the Minutes of application DM/17/2570 and asked the Chairman to allow an amendment to add the reasons he gave for proposing refusal. He sought confirmation of which Council Jeremy Clarke was from and queried the legality of Officers questioning Committees decisions after the decision has been made. As he believed that any issues that Officers wanted to raise should have been raised at the Committee and not subsequently. Tom Clark, Solicitor to the Council pointed out that a decision is not taken until the decision notice is issued. The matter had been brought back to ensure Members had full information about the Neighbourhood Plan policies and advice on those policies from planning Officers.

The Minutes of 9 November 2017, with the addition of the Members reasons for refusal and confirmation that Jeremy Clarke was Parish Councillor for Felbridge Parish Council were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

5. APPLICATIONS AND OTHER MATTERS CONSIDERED

DM/17/3311 – Land To The East Of Gravelye Lane, Gravelye Lane, Lindfield, West Sussex, RH16 2RX

Steven King, the Planning Applications Team Leader, drew Member's attention to the Agenda Update Sheet with the additional representations from the Lindfield

Preservation Society and the additional conditions. The Officer then introduced the Report for the approval of the appearance, landscaping, layout and scale pursuant to outline permission DM/16/5648 which provides for the development of the site for up to 130 dwellings with new access, landscaping and open space.

Gil Kennedy and John Jesson from the Lindfield Preservation Society spoke in objection to the application.

The planning agent Steven Brown spoke in support of the application.

Councillor Andrew Lea and Councillor Margaret Hersey as Lindfield Members spoke in objection to the application. They cited the Lindfield Village Design Statement, the Lindfield Local Plan policies B12 and B15, the emerging District Plan policy DP33 and the NPPF clause 126 for refusal. Particular concerns were raised regarding the effect of the development in views from Lindfield Common.

Several Members believed that the design of the development was unacceptable and a missed opportunity. The design was suited to a more urbanised area rather than a village such as Lindfield.

Members commented that there would be significant harm done to the existing conservation area and that the development site would be seen from Lindfield Common spoiling the view.

A Member noted that there had been no Officer analysis done on the Lindfield Preservation Society report.

A Member considered that the Committee had received two conflicting reports in respect of the view of the development from Lindfield Common. One from developers, which demonstrated a very limited impact and another report from the Lindfield Preservation Society which highlighted that the dwellings could be viewed from the Common.

A Member reminded the Committee of an old application on a comparable site that was similar to this application and it was refused because of the impact of the development of the setting on a conservation area. The Planning Applications Team Leader, explained that on that site the planning permission had not been granted whereas this application already had outline planning permission. He also reminded Members that they had to consider the merits of the particular application in front of them. He informed Members that it was Officers opinion that the development did not cause any adverse effects to the settings of the Common and the conservation area.

A Member warned that this development could increase the coalescence in the area.

The Chairman reminded Members that there were conditions in place to control the materials used in the development, especially regarding the material used for the roofs.

Members queried what policies would be strong enough to hold up at appeal in refusing this development.

Following the Members query the Chairman asked how much weight should be given to the Lindfield Village Design Statement and the Planning Applications Team Leader said limited weight, as there had been more recent documents published. In response to a question Tom Clark, Solicitor to the Council informed Members that the

Lindfield Neighbourhood Plan could also be given weight but Members should remember it did not include any housing allocations.

A Member inquired whether the application was within Lindfield Rural Parish Council or Lindfield Parish Council boundary as Lindfield Rural Parish Council had not raised an objection to the application. The Planning Applications Team Leader confirmed it was in Lindfield Rural Parish Council boundary.

Members discussed whether it would be possible to have a Tree Preservation Order assessment done on the site so that the necessary screening of the site would be preserved. It was decided that the Councils Tree Officer would be asked to carry out an assessment on the trees on the application site with a view to imposing a TPO as necessary.

A Member asked for clarification on how many roofs would be visible from Lindfield Common as the report stated some and not a specific amount. The Planning Applications Team Leader explained that he could not give an exact number of dwellings because at the distances involved it was not possible to count individual dwellings from the photo montage. The Team Leader advised that the evidence from the photo montage showed the development would not have an adverse impact on the setting of Lindfield Common.

The Chairman explained to Members that the Council does have a traffic management Condition in place on the outline planning permission however the enforcement of this can be difficult and any complaints about routing should be made to the Police.

The Chairman then moved to the recommendation to approve which was agreed with 8 votes in favour and 2 against.

RESOLVED

That reserved matters consent be granted, subject to the conditions listed at Appendix A, the additional conditions in the Agenda Update Sheet and that a Tree Officer conducts a Tree Preservation Order assessment out on the Trees around and within the development area.

6. ITEMS CONSIDERED URGENT BUSINESS

None.

Chairman.