

**Minutes of a meeting of Planning Committee A
held on Thursday, 16 August 2018
from 7.00 p.m. to 7.35 p.m.**

Present: Edward Matthews (Chairman)
Dick Sweatman (Vice-Chairman)

Jonathan Ash-Edwards
Colin Trumble

Margaret Hersey
Gary Marsh
Howard Muddin

Neville Walker
John Wilkinson*
Peter Wyan

* Absent

Also Present: Councillor Chris Hersey

1. SUBSTITUTES

None.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Wilkinson.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Muddin declared a non- predetermination interest in Item DM/18/0616 – 1B - 1C Bridge Road, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH16 1UA as he is a Member of the Haywards Heath Town Council Planning Committee who has already reviewed the application. He stated that he comes to this meeting with an open mind to consider the representations of the public speakers, Officers and Members of the Committee.

Councillor Ash-Edwards declared a predetermination interest in Item DM/18/0616 – 1B - 1C Bridge Road, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH16 1UA as he is the Ward Member that jointly called-in the application. He confirmed that he will speak as Ward Member on the application and will remove himself from the meeting for the duration of discussion and voting on the item.

4. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 19 July 2018 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

5. APPLICATIONS AND OTHER MATTERS CONSIDERED

DM/18/1076 – Ashton House Residential and Nursing Home, Bolnore Road, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH16 4BX

Nick Rogers, Business Unit Leader for Development Management, drew Member's attention to the Agenda Update Sheet and confirmed that the Item DM/18/1076 be withdrawn from the meeting by officers to provide time to clarify the correct ownership

certification which accompanies the application.

DM/18/0616 – 1B - 1C Bridge Road, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH16 1UA

Susan Dubberley, Senior Planning Officer, introduced the report for the application that seeks planning permission for the demolition of the existing single storey commercial building and the construction of 9 flats conversion. She added that the Ward Members called-in the application due to concern about the loss of employment space on the Bridge Road Industrial Estate.

David Thomas, applicant, spoke in favour of the application.

Councillor Ash-Edwards, Ward Member for Heath, spoke against the application. He explained that the decision to call-in the application was due to a point of principle as it would result in an unrecoverable loss of industrial space. It was noted that Policy DP1 provides to protect existing land and premises for employment and that there should be encouragement for owners to invest in their employment space.

[Councillor Ash-Edwards withdrew himself from the debate]

A Member enquired whether the status of the road would be affected if residential properties are built there and would the Council charge for an easement.

Tom Clark, Solicitor to the Council, stated that the businesses are leaseholders therefore their rights are tied there however it is not a relevant matter for a planning committee to discuss. A Member raised the loss of industrial space in East Grinstead, highlighting how areas that are used for residential development cannot be converted into industrial development even if it was previously an industrial site. He proposed that the loss of employment space be added to the reasons for refusal.

A Member noted that confusion would be caused if residential development was built on an industrial estate.

A Member enquired why the reason for refusal due to the loss of employment space was not included originally in the reasons for refusal contained in the report.

Nick Rogers, Business Unit Leader for Development Management, explained that Policy DP1 does provide for the protection of employment space however it can be outweighed by other material considerations. In the officer's view, the provision of residential development would outweigh the loss of the employment space on the site as, given the small size of the building; the loss of the site would not undermine the sector.

A Member expressed sympathy with the applicants as he believed the building was of poor construction but said colleagues would come to regret the loss if the site was turned into residential development. He supported the inclusion of the loss of employment space in the reasons for refusing the application.

Councillor Marsh proposed that the loss of strategic employment space be included as an additional reason for refusal. This was seconded by Councillor Mrs Hersey.

The Chairman moved to the recommendation to refuse which was agreed unanimously with the additional refusal reason added by officers in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman.

RESOLVED

That planning permission be refused.

Meeting closed at 7:36pm.

Chairman.