

Minutes of a meeting of Planning Committee B held on 5 July 2018 from 7:00 p.m. to 7:41 p.m.

Present: Chris Hersey (Chairman)
Anthony Watts Williams (Vice-Chairman)

Phillip Coote
Sue Hatton*
Colin Holden

Andrew MacNaughton
Norman Mockford*
Pru Moore

Robert Salisbury*
Rex Whittaker

* Absent

1. SUBSTITUTES

Councillor Margaret Hersey substituted for Councillor Salisbury.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Salisbury, Councillor Mockford and Councillor Hatton.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

4. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 7 June 2018 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

5. APPLICATIONS AND OTHER MATTERS CONSIDERED

DM/18/1012 - The Orchards Public Toilets, St Josephs Way, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH16 3QY

The Chairman noted that the application is before the Committee as it concerns Council owned land.

Andrew Horrell, Trainee Planning Officer introduced the application for the reconfiguration of the existing toilet block consisting of a separate male and female toilet with an accessible toilet in the middle, to include a new Changing Places toilet, a family toilet and three for separate gender neutral toilet cubicles. He noted that in order provide for the larger Changing Places facility, the unisex toilets proposed would ensure that there were equal facilities for everyone in the space provided, similar to the toilets currently at St John's Park, Burgess Hill.

A number of Members expressed disappointment that consideration had not been given to completely rebuilding the block; as such an extensive refurbishment is needed. Privacy issues were also discussed. Some Members felt that although unisex toilets are often provided, people usually also have the option of a separate male or female toilet as well. It was therefore a missed opportunity to rebuild a larger block that could accommodate everyone.

Nick Rogers, Business Unit Leader for Development Management noted the Members dissatisfaction with the current design but advised that there were no planning reasons to refuse the application. He proposed that should the application be approved, a note could be sent to the Estates and Facilities team to advise of the committee's dissatisfaction with the refurbishment scheme and suggest they look to demolishing the existing building and design a new block.

Councillor Coote moved that the application be approved on the basis of the additional informative. This was seconded by Councillor Holden and approved unanimously.

RESOLVED

That planning permission be approved subject to the conditions outlined at Appendix A and an additional note to the Estates and Facilities team to propose demolition and redesign.

West Hoathly Garage, West Hoathly Garage, Selsfield Road, West Hoathly, East Grinstead, RH19 4QL

Joanne Fisher, Senior Planning Officer introduced the application for a proposed three bedroom dwelling and garage. She drew Members attention to the Agenda Update Sheet regarding additional comments from the Tree Officer. The site lies in the countryside, outside the built up area of West Hoathly and by virtue of its backland position would fail to preserve or enhance the character of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It is also in contradiction to policies DP12, 15,16,17 and 35 of the District Plan, policy WHP9 of the Neighbourhood Plan and the provision of the NPPF. She noted that in March 2018 an application for a single dwelling was refused, and the only change to the new application is the site of the building, 6m closer to the Garage from where it was previously proposed and so it is the Officers recommendation that the application be refused.

Parish Councillor Ken Allfree spoke on behalf of West Hoathly Parish Council in favour of the application, as the Parish Council welcomes proposals for two and three bedroom properties as there is a need for them in the area. Rupert Denne also spoke in support as the Director of West Hoathly Garage, noting that the house would go towards ensuring the business continuity of the garage and provide additional security having someone live on that part of the site.

Two Members discussed the positive benefits of the application, noting that it was of good design, in a sustainable location adjacent to the conservation area and is supported by the Parish Council who have specific knowledge and appreciation of their local area. They felt that it would provide appropriate security and would support an established local business.

A number of Members expressed sympathy with the applicant but noted that it contravenes a number of policies and as a sizable building, it does not sit well on the site. Should the application be approved despite being contrary to so many policies of a recently adopted District Plan, it was felt this would send out a catastrophic message that future applicants can disregard the District Plan.

A Member noted that although the Parish supported the application, it was unfortunate that they did not include the site in the Neighbourhood Plan, which would have allowed for further consideration.

The Chairman confirmed that he had called in the application, in order for the Parish Council to express their opinion to the Committee. However, he noted that the new application only differs to the previously refused application by the 6m location of the house, and therefore the original reasons for refusal on conservation issues still stand. This was reinforced by the Business Unit Leader for Development Management who confirmed that it was a question of consistency of decision making for the Council.

Councillor Moore moved that the application be refused, which was seconded by Councillor MacNaughton. This was agreed, with 5 Members in favour of refusal, and 3 against.

RESOLVED

That permission is refused for the reasons set out in appendix A.

6. URGENT BUSINESS.

None.

7. QUESTIONS PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 10.2 DUE NOTICE OF WHICH HAS BEEN GIVEN.

None.

Meeting closed at 7:41

Chairman.