

**Minutes of a meeting of Planning Committee
held on 06 July 2023
at 4.00 pm**

Present: G Marsh (Chairman)
M Kennedy (Vice-Chair)

A Bashar	J Dabell	P Kenny
P Brown	J Henwood	D Sweatman
G Casella	J Hitchcock	
C Cherry	T Hussain	

1 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

None as all Members were present.

2 TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS IN RESPECT OF ANY MATTER ON THE AGENDA.

No declarations were made.

3 TO BE AGREED BY GENERAL AFFIRMATION THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 31 MAY AND 15 JUNE 2023.

The minutes of the meetings of the committee held on 31 May and 15 June 2023 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4 TO CONSIDER ANY ITEMS THAT THE CHAIRMAN AGREES TO TAKE AS URGENT BUSINESS.

None.

5 DM/20/4692 - LAND SOUTH OF ST STEPHENS CHURCH, HAMSLAND, HORSTED KEYNES, WEST SUSSEX, RH17 7DX.

Stuart Malcom, Senior Planning Officer, introduced the application and drew Members' attention to the Agenda Update Sheet which detailed an amendment to the Recommendation B date, amendments to some of the conditions, additional representations and additional comments from Wealden District Council.

Sarah Webster, Chairman of Horsted Keynes Parish Council, spoke against the application.

Paul Fairweather, local resident, spoke against the application.

Terry Higham, local resident, spoke against the application.

Melanie A'Lee, Highways Technical Advisor to Rydon Homes, spoke in favour of the application.

Peter Rainier, agent of the applicant, spoke in favour of the application.

A Member relayed the concerns of residents in respect of the access and loss of trees on the site. He highlighted the number of representations received and felt that the application does not work.

The Senior Planning Officer drew attention to Condition 5 at Appendix A that sets out very detailed tree protection requirements aimed at minimising the impact of the development on the existing trees..

Stephen Shaw of West Sussex County Council Highways explained that Safety Audits had taken place in and around the site and a further Audit was required. He said the visibility splays had been designed in accordance with the manual for streets.

A Member expressed dismay that there was no renewable energy on the site.

The Senior Planning Officer drew the Member's attention to 12.12.5. in the sustainability assessment section and confirmed Condition 16 requires the 3 submission of a sustainability statement that will set out firm commitments on what sustainable measures will be put in place.

The Senior Planning Officer suggested an informative could be used setting out the expectation of Condition 16 will be that the use of renewable energy is fully explored.

In response to a Member, the Senior Planning Officer that the legal agreement will secure the mechanism for delivering Biodiversity Net Gain.

The Chairman asked about electric vehicle charging points with the Senior Planning Officer confirming they will be delivered through building regulations.

The Chairman noted that no Member further wished to speak and took Members to the recommendation to approve the application. This was proposed by Cllr Sweatman and seconded by Cllr Hitchcock, and was agreed with ten in favour, one against and one abstention.

RESOLVED

Recommendation A

That planning permission is granted subject to the conditions listed in Appendix A and the completion of a section 106 legal agreement to secure the required SAMM and SANG mitigation, the biodiversity net gain provisions, infrastructure contributions and the necessary affordable housing.

Recommendation B

If a satisfactory planning obligation has not been completed by 18th August 2023, that the application be refused at the discretion of the Assistant Director for Planning and Sustainable Economy for the following reasons:

1. The proposal fails to provide the required affordable housing or infrastructure contributions. The application therefore conflicts with Policies DP20 and DP31 of the Mid Sussex District Plan, Policy SA GEN of the Mid Sussex Site Allocations DPD.

2. The application fails to mitigate its impact on the Ashdown Forest SPA and SAC, contrary to Policy DP17 of the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031, Policy HK10 of the Neighbourhood Plan, Policy SA GEN of the Mid Sussex Site Allocations DPD and the provisions contained within the National Planning Policy Framework.

3. The proposal fails to make provisions for securing biodiversity net gain. The application therefore conflicts with Policy SA GEN of the Mid Sussex Site Allocations DPD and Policy HK10 of the Horsted Keynes Neighbourhood Plan.

6 DM/21/3875 - LAND AT ANSCOMBE WOODS CRESCENT, HAYWARDS HEATH, WEST SUSSEX, RH16 4UJ.

Joseph Swift, Senior Planning Officer, introduced the application and drew Members' attention to the Agenda Update Sheet which contained updated figures for the community building and amended wording in relation to the New Homes Bonus.

He then took Members through the application, highlighting the site is within the built up area boundaries, within a sustainable location and that the proposal for new houses was considered acceptable in principle in line with the Development Plan. The site is also constrained by the Ancient Woodland to the West, which is also subject to a group TPO.

The proposal is seeking to provide 13 car parking spaces, although below WSCC Parking Standards, it is within a sustainable location, comprehensive parking restrictions are in place and WSCC Highways have raised no objection to the proposal. The proposed access would encroach into the Ancient Woodland buffer zone, nonetheless, it will result in a reduction in hard standing in the Ancient Woodland buffer, the proposal includes a woodland management plan.

Due to distances and relationship to neighbouring dwellings it is not considered to cause significant harm to neighbouring amenities. The proposal has adopted a design approach to match in with the design, styles and materials of the Bowden Way development which is considered acceptable.

On balance the benefits of the proposal are considered to outweigh the impact on the trees and the lower parking provision and is therefore recommended for approval.

The Chairman noted the history of the site.

Nigel Baxter, Chairman of Anscombe Wood Residents Association, spoke against the application.

Klaire Lander, agent of the applicant, spoke in favour of the application.

Cllr Rod Clarke, Ward Member, spoke against the applicant. He replayed the concerns of the objectors and the Town Council. He highlighted the parking constraints around the site, the size of the site around the adjoining properties and the loss of the green corridor to the other section of Anscombe Wood.

The Chairman noted the few available parking spaces and the loss of a green space.

A Member believed the scale of the development would result in overlooking, looked out of balance with the surrounding area and take not take care of the amenity of the neighbours. Fellow Members agreed.

A Member stated the site consisted 50% of ancient woodland and that space was limited.

The Vice-Chairman sought further clarification on the wildlife corridor.

The Senior Planning Officer clarified that plan was extensively consulted on with an Ecology Consultant and in their opinion, subject to a number of conditions, they raised no objections.

The Chairman explained that he was not against development on the site however felt that the application before the Committee was not right.

Steve King, Planning Applications Team Leader, addressed the comments made by Members. He outlined that Members needed to take account of the positive aspects of the development, such as the provision of new smaller units of accommodation in a sustainable location and weigh those against any adverse impacts. In respect of parking, the Team Leader advised that it was not enough to simply say there was insufficient car parking. To resist an application based on car parking, it needed to be shown that the level of car parking resulted in some identified harm. In this case, vehicle speeds around the site are low and there are parking restrictions in place and as such the level of car parking would not result in a highway safety issue or cause significant harm on neighbourhood amenity.

A Member enquired whether the cycle parking is secure. The Senior Planning Officer showed Members a plan of the cycle store and also highlighted that Condition 16 requires details of the cycle parking to be submitted.

A Member expressed a different judgement to the officers on policies DP.26, E9 and H8.

A Member noted no references to renewable energy policies.

The Chairman directed the Member to P.137; DP26, Bullet Point 6 to reference and reiterated his comments about overdevelopment of the site.

The Planning Applications Team Leader responded that the assessment of harm to residents is a matter of judgement for the Committee and enquired which properties will be harmed. The Team Leader also advised that the test in the development plan was whether there was significant harm which was a high threshold.

The Chairman outlined the areas that would be harmed.

A Member highlighted that Policy E9 references scale and felt the height makes the key difference.

The Chairman agreed and believed that two stories would be acceptable three is not. He also stated that the application is contrary to DP.26 as the size and bulk of the proposal is out of keeping with the area.

A Member felt that the size of the proposal was significant.

The Chairman noted that no Member further wished to speak and took Members to the recommendation to refuse the application, due to the height and scale of the building being out of character and resulting in an un-neighbourly form of development. This was proposed by Cllr Kenney and seconded by Cllr Hitchcock, and was agreed with eight in favour, three against and one abstention.

RESOLVED

Recommendation

The application was refused due to the height and scale of the building being out of character and resulting in an un-neighbourly form of development.

7 DM/23/0796 - ANNANDALE, BROAD STREET, CUCKFIELD, HAYWARDS HEATH, WEST SUSSEX, RH17 5DW.

The Chairman noted that the application was before the committee as the applicant is Mid Sussex District Council.

Susan Dubberley, Senior Planning Officer, introduced the report.

Simon Jones, Assistant Director for Digital & People Services, spoke in favour of the application.

Rebecca Hoad, Associate Planner at ECE Planning, spoke in favour of the application.

The Chairman believed the application to be one of the Council's success stories where people are kept in the district and confirmed that the Ward Member is fully supportive of the scheme.

A Member enquired about the occupants of the flat. The Senior Planning Officer explained who the occupants would be and that there would be total of 5 residents.

A Member expressed full support for the Housing Team at the Council.

The Chairman noted that no Member further wished to speak and took Members to the recommendation to approved the application, proposed by Cllr Hitchcock and seconded by Cllr Sweatman, and was agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED

That planning permission be approved subject to the conditions set in Appendix A.

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

None.

The meeting finished at 6.12 pm

Chairman