

**Minutes of a meeting of Planning Committee
held on Thursday, 27th February, 2020
from 7.00 - 7.52 pm**

Present: G Marsh (Chairman)
P Coote (Vice-Chair)

G Allen	R Eggleston	D Sweatman
R Cartwright	A MacNaughton	N Walker
E Coe-Gunnell White	C Phillips	
J Dabell	M Pulfer	

Also Present: Councillor I Gibson.

1 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

No apologies were received.

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

No declarations were received.

3 TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE HELD ON 6 FEBRUARY 2020.

The Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 6 February 2020 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.

The Chairman had no urgent business.

5 DM/19/5100 - LAND AT TURNERS HILL BURIAL GROUND, TURNERS HILL ROAD, TURNERS HILL, RH10 4PE.

Steven King, Planning Applications Team Leader, introduced the application which sought outline planning permission for the construction of a barn/workshop for the storage and maintenance of operational vehicles. The application seeks approval for the access, appearance, layout and scale however landscaping would be reserved for future consideration. He drew Member's attention to the Agenda Update Sheet which detailed additional comments from the MSDC Consultant Ecologist.

Ian Gibson, Ward Member, spoke against the application. He highlighted the need for burial grounds and the projected increase of the need for these such facilities in future. He believed that the application conflicted with Policies DP12: Protection and Enhancement of Countryside and DP26: Character and Design as the proposed

building would be visible from the North Downs as well as the design being out of character to other similar buildings in the area. He drew attention to the scale of the proposed building and stated that it would be large enough to house a JCB digger however a Burial Ground would not require machinery that large. He highlighted that the site had previously been identified through the SHELAA (Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment) process for 175 dwellings but was not brought to the next round of selection and expressed concern that the site may be brought forward for 175 dwellings again in future.

The Vice Chairman asked what the red screening on the site was for and whether it required planning permission. He also made the comment that the proposal seems large compared to the type of equipment required for a natural burial ground. The Planning Applications Team Leader explained that the red hoarding does not appear to enclose anything and explained that if the hoarding is less than 2 metres in height then it would not require permission.

The Chairman asked for the Officer's clarification with respect to the determination of matters on the application by the Committee.

The Planning Applications Team Leader confirmed that only the landscaping around the proposed dwelling is reserved and all other matters are for the Committee to determine.

The Chairman noted that he lives in a rural part of the District, representing a rural ward and highlighted that a barn with concrete blockwork, timber cladding and metal dual pitched roof are not often seen in the countryside.

A Member compared the scale of the proposed building to that of the Council Chamber and felt it was questionable to have a barn of that size to serve a purpose that does not require something so big.

The Chairman drew attention to the Parish Council comments. He noted that there is also a natural burial ground in Hassocks and compared the size of the barn that they use to store their equipment.

A Member believed that the appearance of the barn is an essential part of the application. He highlighted that the chapel and barn is located in a rural setting however the concrete block construction is not what you would expect to be built in the countryside. He drew the Committee's attention to Paragraph 2.5 on P.31 in Appendix B as it outlined the specific details of the design. He believed that the Barn seemed to be a grand building with a poor design and expressed a preference for much more traditional construction.

The Planning Applications Team Leader explained that the applicant seeks to store and maintain two or three operational vehicles and ancillary equipment within the barn. He noted the reduction in size from the previous application which is much more in scale with the size of the chapel. In terms of the overall scale, Officers expressed that they are satisfied that the footprint is acceptable. In terms of the materials proposed for the barn, Officers agree that the block work is not satisfactory when compared to looking at an attractive chapel building. He highlighted that the details for the external materials is reserved through a condition.

The Member noted that an ecological assessment will be required and queried whether this would apply to the whole site or just the application site.

The Planning Applications Team Leader confirmed that the planning conditions proposed for this application relate just to this application.

A Member expressed concern that the chapel is yet to be built and that construction has not even started even though the application was approved in 2015.

A Member enquired whether the Committee could impose a pre-occupation condition for the chapel to be built for the barn. He also enquired whether a condition could be imposed over the materials to ensure that only natural materials are used for the natural burial ground.

The Planning Applications Team Leader explained that the Committee can add an informative about what type of materials that they would like to see however he did not recommend imposing a condition for it as this could be seen as being too prescriptive. He also noted that, with regard to imposing a condition on the construction of the chapel being carried out before the construction of the barn, the barn may need to be used to store items required to construct the chapel.

The Chairman expressed his understanding of the local community's frustration with the supported burial ground not being brought forward after a significant time. He believed that it would be likely that the construction of the barn would come before the construction of the chapel.

A Member sought guidance as to the size of the chapel compared with the proposed barn.

The Planning Applications Team Leader outlined the dimensions of the barn and compared it to the chapel. He noted that the barn is clearly subordinate to the chapel.

The Chairman highlighted the locality of the site as it is located close to Tulley's Farm which also has large barns but noted that these are of a more traditional design. He questioned if the Committee were to agree the site, would they be content if the Chairman and Vice Chairman were consulted regarding the materials/appearance of the barn.

The Planning Applications Team Leader confirmed that consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman can be made on the wording of condition 3 and that guidance can be provided over the materials by way on an informative but not in relation to the size or siting of the building.

The Committee were agreeable.

The Vice-Chairman stated that the barn is considerably different to barns he has seen at burial grounds in both Hassocks and Surrey and enquired whether the application could be deferred so as to allow the applicant to reply to the concerns of the Committee.

The Chairman expressed that he does not like deferring an application unless there is an actual need and asked the Committee to consider whether the reduction in scale following the Inspector's decision was acceptable.

The Planning Applications Team Leader highlighted that in terms of the size, the Committee must also look at how the building will fit in with the surrounding landscape and identify where harm could occur. If the Committee were to refuse the application, then it would need to be stated how the application results in harm to the

landscape or the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. He highlighted that the Planning Inspector found the chapel to be acceptable in terms of its impact on the landscape and that the chapel is a larger building than the proposed barn. He also highlighted that the Landscape Officer also finds the application acceptable depending on the materials which are covered by conditions. On this basis the Team Leader advised that a refusal based on the size of the building and its impact on the character of the landscape would be difficult to substantiate at an appeal.

The Chairman took Members to the recommendation to approve the application with the addition of an informative regarding the use of natural materials and to consult with the Chairman and Vice Chairman regarding the wording of condition 3 in relation to materials which was agreed with eleven Members in favour and one abstention.

RESOLVED

That the application be approved subject to the conditions set out in Appendix A and additional informative relating to the use of natural materials and the wording of condition 3.

6 DM/19/0260 - TAVISTOCK AND SUMMERHILL SCHOOL, SUMMERHILL LANE, LINDFIELD, RH16 1RP.

The Chairman introduced the application and explained that this had been withdrawn by the Officers as since the agenda was published, the applicants had made a new offer of a payment of £700,000 to go towards off site affordable housing, in addition to the other section 106 payments towards County Council and District Council infrastructure. The material change in circumstances is likely to alter the recommendation that is made to the planning committee and therefore it was decided that the application should be withdrawn from the agenda. The application will be re-considered by Officers, and the report will be rewritten to reflect the new offer that has been put forward by the applicants.

RESOLVED

That the application is withdrawn as an Agenda Item for consideration by the Committee.

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

None.

The meeting finished at 7.52 pm

Chairman