



Easebourne Parish Council
Planning Committee
Minutes of meeting held at
7.30pm on Wednesday 2nd February 2022
in Easebourne CE Primary School

Present: T Baker (TB), Chairman M Noble (MN), and D Pack (DP).

In attendance: District Councillor F Hobbs (FH) and Parish Clerk S Hurr (SH).

Five members of the public were present. including, Ms Kuchard, Ms Howe and Prof Hunt.

- 1. Public Question Time:** Ms Kuchard, Prof Hunt, and Ms Howe provided their views with regards to applications SDNP/21/06433/LIS and SDNP/21/06432/FUL.
- 2. Apologies and Reasons for Absence:** Cllr A Keeling, Cllr C Sanderson and Cllr E Roberts Grimsey due to personal reasons.
- 3. Code of Conduct:**
 - a. Declarations of Interest on items included on the agenda: None
 - b. Dispensation requests: None
- 4. Minutes of the last meeting:** The minutes of the last meeting held on 5th January 2022 were agreed as a correct record and signed.
- 5 Planning Applications:** (order of applications were altered from the agenda, to allow members of the public present to hear the debate regarding the applications of specific interest to them first).

SDNP/21/06433/LIS

The Chapel, Kings Drive, Easebourne

Structural repair, refurbishment, and internal alterations to enable use for restaurant and retail (Class E).

On a proposal by the Chairman of the Committee it was RESOLVED to submit the following comments:

The Parish Council does not wish to submit specific comment regarding this application but wishes to draw attention to its submission for planning application SDNP/21/06432/FUL, in relation to those matters which have commonality between the two applications.

SDNP/21/06432/FUL

Land at Kings Green East, Land at Superintendent's Drive & The Chapel King Edward VII Estate, Easebourne

Comprehensive planning application to include a 2 No phases of Class C2 (Extra Care) development comprising of 84 units (King Green East) and 14 dwellings (Superintendent's Drive), care facilities, internal and external communal amenity areas, car parking, landscaping and planting, refuse and recycling storage, pedestrian and vehicular access and links. Structural repair, refurbishment, fit out and change of use for Restaurant and Retail (Class E) purposes the Grade II* listed former Chapel building.

On a proposal by the Chairman of the Committee it was RESOLVED to submit the following comments:

The Parish Council would like to begin by expressing its great disappointment with regards to this application considering the body of comment, and SDNPA direction given to the developer following the refusal of the previous application SDNP/19/03904.

When development of the King Edward VII hospital site was first initiated, the Parish Council believe that the current, and proposed level of density within the estate was wholly unintended. The volume of dwellings and number of residents is that of a small village but without any of the appropriate infrastructure or amenities and therefore as a site is not sustainable. The Parish Council consider that should the proposed application be approved, that the site would be significantly over-developed. What should now be permitted requires careful consideration from a practical and aesthetic viewpoint in the knowledge that the focus of the SDNPA Local Plan, is to protect and enhance the landscape.

This application is very similar to SDNP/19/03904/FUL and therefore the Parish Council consider, is not materially different. This application was refused for reasons which included that the proposal was outside of the defined built settlement, without justification, and as an enabling development provided limited benefits in excess to those previously secured. On the matter of enabling development in connection to the chapel, this was cited in the Parish Council's last submission which queried 'just how many enabling developments are required across the site to complete the promised work to the historical building', which the developers are aware are not repeatedly permitted, even once.

Water supply

South East Water have plainly stated, '...that currently there is an insufficient water supply to the site to support the proposed development and additional demand.' Therefore, the Parish Council has continuing significant concerns regarding this matter. Further to this and the information provided by Southern Water, considering the stage this application has reached, it is alarming that the developer has not secured or at least further progressed agreed connections to the water supply and the foul sewage system.

Travel and accessibility

In relation to the Framework Travel Plan, the Parish Council consider this is not realistic in its assumptions or ambitions.

The document largely focuses upon movement around the site and is very limited in terms of travel from the site to surrounding facilities. There is further emphasis on cycling and walking to external facilities which is simply not practical due to the terrain, environment, and distance.

With regards to public transport, the document quotes the following: '... obligation on the developer for the wider King Edward VII Estate through the signed S106 Agreement and Travel Plan attached to the extant 2011 planning permission (Ref: SDNP/11/03635/FUL) to deliver a mini-bus service. When implemented, there is the potential for additional patronage and revenue arising from the proposed development to support the viability of this site-wide service.' The King Edward VII development has not been served by public transport since habitation. Access to the bus service requires a mile long walk, along a busy unlit rural road (Kings Drive) without a footpath, prohibiting easy escape from passing vehicles.

The proposed minibus for external travel, when a member of staff is available to drive it, will provide only a limited service for a small number of residents. However, it is most likely residents will have their own private vehicles, but the lack of parking facilities will result in cars left wherever a space can be found on one of the estate's roads.

The Travel Plan also mentions the appointment of a Travel Plan Co-ordinator. This was similarly cited in the initial application but contact details for such a role have never been forthcoming, and the Parish Council have been unable to make any contact with anyone with this responsibility, therefore it is difficult to have any confidence in this assertion.

Commercial proposition

With regards to the restaurant and discouraging those from outside the estate from driving to it, this appears impractical to highly improbable. So due to the lack of parking, rather than safe parking, random abandonment can be expected. It should also be noted that there will be a number of larger vehicles making regular deliveries which will add to the traffic, and which are likely to experience difficulty when navigating the narrow roads and pinch points within the site.

Affordable housing

Much has changed in the approach to housing provision since work began to develop the site, and the Parish Council considers that the inclusion of affordable housing would be of significant public benefit and should form part of this application and is saddened by this omission. To quote Policy SD29, 'Rural Exception Sites sets a requirement that residential housing sites outside of settlement boundaries should provide 100% affordable housing. The precise mix of homes and tenures should be based on the local needs of the community and provide specifically for local housing needs.' Included within the reasons for refusal of the previous application as noted above, was that the proposal was outside of the defined built settlement.

Classification

This proposal is for planning use class C2 (residential accommodation with elements of care) which has previously allowed no requirement for affordable housing. This has been overruled subsequently in more recent case law. The 2017 SDNPA Housing and Economic Needs Assessment, also focuses upon the necessity to prioritise affordable homes and not extra care accommodation. This application would overwhelmingly exceed the current needs as assessed and sit on a single location.

The Parish Council would also suggest that application of this use class cannot be robustly upheld, due to the self-contained nature of the dwellings with full domestic facilities, and the difficulties which would be associated with navigating the routes to the communal facilities. Should the use class in actuality be C3, as the previous application? Are the developers just flying a hopeful C2 kite that could potentially lead to the proposals appearing more favourable?

However, should this development truly be use class C2, that presents other almost more worrying concerns, as if this results in residents who due to the impact of aging are unable to drive, this location will effectively maroon them in a luxury confinement, with very limited opportunity to escape even for everyday essentials (see further comment regarding travel opportunities).

Ecology

The Parish Council also wishes to fully support the evidence and concerns included within the ecology report provided by Hampshire County Council in relation to wildlife and habitat. To focus on just a few of the many issues cited; the report states that surveys have not been completed in accordance with best practice guidelines, there is the intention to remove mature trees which has not been acknowledged and ‘...no meaningful mitigation, compensation or enhancement measures have been detailed within the ecology report.’ The Parish Council seeks to ensure that habitats are retained and maintained and does not endorse the felling of trees within the Parish unless they are diseased or at end of life. The impact of the proposed development on habitat and without any appropriate mitigation measures is considered by the Parish Council to be wholly unacceptable and particularly, within a National Park.

Design

The aesthetics of the proposed buildings were cited previously by the Parish Council as not in keeping with the historic buildings or even many of the more recent builds, due to being very block-like and urban in appearance. The proposed designs in this application seemingly have only minor differences, with changes to some roof corners, leaving towering dormer windows which are both stark and out of proportion with the rest of the design, with the lower parts of the buildings remaining virtually identical, with vast expanses of blank brick walls.

The Parish Council also wishes to draw attention to a quotation from the near to adoption Parish Design Statement, ‘Residents are not averse to appropriate contemporary architecture respectful of its immediate and wider context as regards neighbouring properties...’. It is very difficult to equate the design of the proposed buildings as being respectful of the historic buildings or even the more recent buildings.

Community Engagement and Consultation

It has been reported to the Parish Council again that ‘Community Engagement’ with the residents has been extremely limited, and more of a tick-box exercise than a genuine desire to gain valuable information and understanding which may have led the developer to submitting a welcomed application, which would surely be of greater benefit in terms of time and expenditure. It is accepted that the land will be developed, but with an appropriate design which will enhance the estate, and not destroy a significant proportion of it.

The Parish Council has again received significant representations from the King Edward VII Planning Response group, a collection of residents which the Parish Council considers, have clearly done their homework and based their submissions upon planning policy, expert advice, and first-hand knowledge of life on the estate. The Parish Council, therefore, endorse the representations from this group.

Conclusion

In conclusion the application is little changed from the 2019/20 application and therefore the grounds for strong objection cited by the Parish Council at that time, without the introduction of any positive additions or alterations within the current application, still stand. It is indeed astonishing that very little appears to have been learnt from the previous refusal in that we are again faced with what the Parish Council consider to be a wholly inappropriate development on this historic site within a National Park.

The opportunity to present a plan which provides a carefully considered mix of housing at an acceptable density and which settles into the landscape and current built environment appears to once again have been missed.

SDNP/21/05214/HOUS

1 Canada Grove, Easebourne

Single storey rear extension with revised access to garden.

On a proposal by the Chairman of the Committee it was RESOLVED to make no objection but to note that the Parish Council is pleased that there is now a reduction of Velux windows, in relation to the Dark Skies policy.

SDNP/21/06111/HOUS

Lamorna, 6 Dodsley Grove, Easebourne

Rear single storey extension.

On a proposal by the Chairman of the Committee it was RESOLVED to make no objection, but to draw attention to the Dark Skies policy in relation to the two roof windows and request that night-time blinds are fitted and directions for their use included within the conditions.

SDNP/21/06260/FUL

Old Henley, The Lodge, Henley Old Road, Henley, Easebourne

Demolition and replacement dwelling.

On a proposal by the Chairman of the Committee it was RESOLVED to make no objection, but to draw attention to the Dark Skies policy in relation to the Velux/roof windows and request that night-time blinds are fitted and directions for their use included within the conditions.

6 Date of Next Meeting: 7.30pm, Wednesday 2nd March 2022

Meeting closed at 8.15pm

Signed: _____ Date: _____
Chairman