

PLANNING COMMITTEE

18 February 2021

Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held remotely on Thursday 18 February 2021 at 9:35am.

Committee Members present: Councillors J. Vine-Hall (Chairman), S.M. Prochak MBE (Vice-Chairman), J. Barnes (Substitute), Mrs M.L. Barnes, S.J. Coleman, G.C. Curtis, B.J. Drayson (ex-officio), S.J. Errington, A.E. Ganly, K.M. Harmer, J.M. Johnson, Rev. H.J. Norton, C.A. Madeley, A.S. Mier and H.L. Timpe.

Other Members present: Councillors Mrs E.M. Kirby-Green (in part), L.M. Langlands, D.B. Oliver and R.B. Thomas.

Advisory Officers in attendance: Head of Service Strategy and Planning, Development Manager, Development Management Team Leader and Democratic Services Officer.

Also Present: 135 members of the public via the YouTube live broadcast.

PL20/79. **MINUTES**

(1)

The Chairman was authorised to sign the Minutes of the meeting held on 14 January 2021 at a later date as a correct record of the proceedings.

PL20/80. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTES**

(2)

An apology for absence was received from Councillor G.F. Stevens

It was noted that Councillor J. Barnes was present as substitute for Councillor Stevens.

PL20/81. **DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST**

(5)

There were no declarations of interest.

PART II – DECISIONS TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED POWERS

PL20/82. **PLANNING APPLICATIONS - INDEX**

(6)

Outline planning permissions are granted subject to approval by the Council of reserved matters before any development is commenced, which are layout, scale, appearance, access and landscaping. Unless

otherwise stated, every planning permission or outline planning permission is granted subject to the development beginning within three years from the date of the permission. In regard to outline permissions, reserved matters application for approval must be made within three years from the date of the grant of outline permission; and the development to which the permission relates must begin no later than whichever is the later of the following dates: the expiration of three years from the date of the grant of outline permission or, the expiration of two years from the final approval of the reserved matters, or in the case of approval on different dates, the final approval of the last such matters to be approved.

In certain circumstances the Planning Committee will indicate that it is only prepared to grant or refuse planning permission if, or unless, certain amendments to a proposal are undertaken or subject to completion of outstanding consultations. In these circumstances the Head of Service Strategy and Planning can be given delegated authority to issue the decision of the Planning Committee once the requirements of the Committee have been satisfactorily complied with. A delegated decision does not mean that planning permission or refusal will automatically be issued. If there are consultation objections, difficulties, or negotiations are not satisfactorily concluded, then the application will have to be reported back to the Planning Committee. This delegation also allows the Head of Service Strategy and Planning to negotiate and amend applications, conditions, reasons for refusal and notes commensurate with the instructions of the Committee. Any applications which are considered prior to the expiry of the consultation reply period are automatically delegated for a decision.

RESOLVED: That the Planning Applications be determined as detailed below.

PL20/83. **RR/2020/1822/P - STRAND MEADOW - LAND TO THE SOUTH WEST OF**

(7)

RM

DECISION: REFUSE (RESERVED MATTERS) including details on drainage (in part), parking, archaeology, levels and landscaping.

The site was situated in the village of Burwash and within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Except for the public amenity/recreation area, which could be utilised as allotments, the site was within the development boundary for Burwash village as defined in the Rother Local Plan 2006 with an existing field access from the southern end of Strand Meadow. The land had a significant gradient sloping downward from south-east to north-west to a ghyll on the north-west boundary. The site adjoined Strand Meadow to the north and the gardens of Beechwood Close and Rother View. The recreation ground was set at a higher level and adjoined the southern boundary. Public footpaths ran along the northern boundary between Beechwood Close and Strand Meadow with public rights of way via Ham Lane to the south-west and through the fields to the west. The

land was allocated within the Rother Local Plan 2006 for housing, landscaping and amenity purposes.

The proposal was for reserved matters regarding access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale and discharge of Conditions 7, 8, 9, 10, 13 and 19 of the outline planning permission RR/2017/582/P. It did not seek discharge of all conditions, nor any of the obligations contained within the Section 106 agreement which had different triggers. Consideration was given to all statutory, non-statutory and third-party representations. It was noted that additional information had been received from 'Burwash Save Our Fields' which was circulated to Members prior to the meeting.

Members heard from spokespersons representing those objecting to the scheme, a representative of Burwash Parish Council who also objected, written statements from the Applicant's Agent and Architect, both local Ward Members and Planning Officers. Members asked a series of questions in relation to several issues. These included: impact of the housing on the appearance and historical settlement of Burwash; unsuitable location for development; change to land form including significant removal and redistribution of earth and use of retaining structures; overdevelopment of the site; design including the tight-knit terraced layout of the houses with poor scale and massing; appearance which was considered more in keeping with the High Street, Burwash rather than the edge of village, rural location of the site; steep gardens for the proposed houses and general use of stepped accesses; sustainability; lack of detail relating to affordable housing; ecology and biodiversity issues (including Biodiversity Net Gain); footpath access and linkage to the recreational ground; internal accessibility issues for pedestrians and cyclists; layout of the car parking scheme (limited turning circle particularly for refuse vehicles, spaces separated from houses, would create an artificial hard edge to the village); and increased traffic.

The Committee expressed concern regarding the parking scheme and increased traffic that would be generated by the development in the village, although they accepted that this had been the subject of the previous outline approval. The discussion focused particularly on how the scheme had not overcome the previous reasons for refusal of planning application RR/2018/1787/P or the issues raised by the Planning Inspector in dismissing the same application at appeal, including matters related to the design of the properties, overdevelopment of the site (mass and scale), internal layout of the scheme for pedestrian and cyclist access, creation of an artificial hard edge to the village and overall harm to the AONB.

Councillor J. Barnes moved the motion to refuse APPROVAL (RESERVED MATTERS, including details on drainage (in part), parking, archaeology, levels and landscaping) and this was seconded by Councillor Ganly. The motion was declared CARRIED (13 for / 1 against).

In weighing up all the issues identified above, Members considered that the overall impact, including poor design of the scheme would

cause harm to the landscape of the High Weald AONB and would be out of character and out of context with the wider character of the historic village of Burwash contrary to Paragraphs 127 and 172 of the National Planning Policy Framework, Policies OSS4, RA1, CO1 and EN3 of the Rother Local Plan Core Strategy 2014 and DEN1 and DEN2 of the Rother Development and Site Allocations Local Plan. Therefore, the Committee considered that the application should be refused.

REASON(S) FOR REFUSAL:

1. The proposed development by reason of its close-knit layout and the height, scale and mass of the dwellinghouses has taken the wrong design cues reflecting a High Street, Burwash vernacular rather than that of an edge of village location. This design approach is inappropriate in this edge of village location and fails to respect its rural location. In addition, the development will result in a significant degree of earth movement and excavations, which would result in unnatural landforms. These issues combine to create a hard urban edge to the village that would be an intrusion into the landscape and would fail to respect its rural location, neither conserving or enhancing the landscape character and scenic beauty of the High Weald AONB. As such the proposal would be contrary to Policies RA1, EN3, OSS4 and EN1 of the Rother Local Plan Core Strategy, Policies DEN1 and DEN2 of the Rother Development and Site Allocations Local Plan and paragraphs 127 and 172 of the National Planning Policy Framework.
2. The proposed parking along the western boundary of the site by reason of its almost continuous layout, close proximity to the boundary and degree of build-up using retaining structures in order to achieve adequate levels, would result in a poor street scene, unnatural landforms and would create a visually poor edge to the development. This would not conserve or enhance the surrounding landscape character and scenic beauty of the High Weald AONB. As such the proposal conflicts with Policies RA1, EN3, OSS4 and EN1 of the Rother Local Plan Core Strategy, Policies DEN1 and DEN2 of the Rother Development and Site Allocations Local Plan and paragraphs 127 and 172 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK: In accordance with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 38) and with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015, the Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by identifying matters of concern with the proposal, clearly setting out the reason(s) for refusal, thereby allowing the Applicant the opportunity to consider the harm caused and whether or not it can be remedied as part of a revised scheme.

PL20/84. **RR/2020/1922/P - 6 MOUNTFIELD VILLAS, HOATH HILL, MOUNTFIELD**

(8)

DECISION: GRANT (FULL PLANNING)

CONDITIONS:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
Reason: In accordance with section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).
2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and details:
P-361(20)01 – Floor and Site Location Plans – As Existing, dated September 2020
P-361(20)03 – Floor and Site Block Plans – As Proposed, dated September 2020
P-361(20)04 – Proposed Elevations, dated September 2020
P-361(20)05 – Roof and Site Block Plans – As Existing and As Proposed, dated October 2020
Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.
3. The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall be as described within the application, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
Reason: To maintain the characteristics and the visual amenities of the surrounding area in accordance with Policies OSS4 (iii) of the Rother Local Plan Core Strategy (2014).

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK: In accordance with the requirements of the Framework (paragraph 38) and with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015, the Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application. As a result, the Local Planning Authority has been able to grant planning permission for an acceptable proposal, in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out within the National Planning Policy Framework.

PL20/85. **RR/2019/2618/P - GALLEY HILL - FORESHORE**

(9)

DECISION: DEFER (SITE INSPECTION)

PL20/86. **APPEALS**

(10)

Members noted the report on Appeals that had been started, allowed or dismissed since the Committee's last meeting, together with the list of forthcoming Hearings and Inquiries.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

PL20/87. **TO NOTE THE DATE AND TIME FOR FUTURE SITE INSPECTIONS**

(11)

Due to the current national pandemic situation, site inspections would only be held, if necessary. The next site inspection was scheduled to be held on Tuesday 9 March 2021 at 8:30am departing from the Town Hall, Bexhill. Members would be notified should site inspections be held.

CHAIRMAN

The meeting closed at 1.09pm.