

COMMITTEE DATE: 23 March 2023

APPLICATION NO: RR/2021/2545/P

ADDRESS: Watermill Lane – land off, Bexhill

PROPOSAL: Outline: Erection of up to 80 residential dwellings (including 30% affordable housing), introduction of structural planting and landscaping, informal public open space and children's play area, surface water flood mitigation, vehicular access point and associated ancillary works. All matters to be reserved with the exception of the main site access.

CONSULTATIONS

Highway Authority – **NO OBJECTION**

The consultation response can be read in full on the website. The executive summary is as follows:

The information provided in the Transport Assessment submitted in support of this planning application failed to demonstrate that a suitable scheme could be put in place to facilitate suitable access to the site for vehicular traffic on Watermill Lane or to provide a safe and convenient pedestrian route for residents.

Without adequate measures put in place to improve travel options and provide residents with a viable alternative to travel by private car the site was considered to be poorly located from an accessibility perspective and a highway objection was raised.

The applicant has sought to address these concerns by putting forward the following measures:

- *A revised improvement scheme for Watermill Lane between the site access and the Mayo Lane junction to the south.*
- *The provision of a pedestrian link through the neighbouring BEX3b site to abut Mayo Rise (this would only be available for use by residents following the construction of the allocated site).*
- *Confirmation through agreement with SeaChange that two new bus stops can be provided on Haven Brook Avenue.*
- *The upgrading of bus stops on Ninfield Road close to the Mayo Lane junction.*
- *A comprehensive travel plan which includes a car share club which will be for the use of the development site, the neighbouring development sites and the wider area of north Bexhill.*
- *Agreement to pay a financial contribution towards a new bus service on Haven Brook Avenue.*
- *Agreement to fund a Car Share Club within the site for a period of 3 years.*

My comments below cover each of the above points in detail but to summarise, the measures proposed are accepted and my highway objection is withdrawn. However, it should be noted that this acceptance is subject to final agreement on the Watermill Lane improvement scheme at detailed design stage and the provision of appropriate traffic calming measures on Mayo Lane. Also, further investigation and agreement is required on the location of new bus stops on Haven Brook Avenue along with the provision of accessible pedestrian links.

Any grant of consent will also need to include a s106 Legal Agreement to secure the proposed access into the site and associated works, the Watermill Lane improvement scheme, off-site works including new bus stops on Haven Brook Avenue, upgraded bus stops on Ninfield Road and the Travel Plan. The internal layout of the site (carriageway construction, parking and turning facilities etc) will be secured via highway conditions.

Appropriate financial contributions will also be sought towards an improved bus service on Haven Brook Avenue.

Off-site works:

- The provision of a new access onto Watermill Lane
- The provision of an improvement scheme on Watermill Lane to provide appropriate footway and carriageway widths between the site access and the Mayo Lane junction to the south.
- The provision of a suitable pedestrian link with appropriate width footways on Watermill Lane to the north of the site and through to Haven Brook Avenue.
- The provision of a pair of new bus stops on Haven Brooke Avenue (one in each direction) each requiring a raised kerb, bus shelter, lighting, seating and real time information display. The bus stop on the north side of the road will need an accessible pedestrian route from the crossing. The bus stop on the south side may need to be accommodated within a new bus stop layby, with the pedestrian/cycle route adjusted accordingly to allow for this.
- The provision of suitable measures to discourage the use of Mayo Lane by vehicular traffic and to improve pedestrian safety. This could include new gateway features either end of the lane and possibly traffic calming measures (to be agreed).
- The upgrading of bus stops on Ninfield Road close to the Mayo Lane junction (2 in total) along with a suitable pedestrian crossing point.

Financial contributions:

- A bus funding contribution of £1,100 per dwelling towards establishing the new bus service along Haven Brooke Avenue.
- Travel Plan auditing fee of £6000.

Suggested conditions include:

- Provision and construction of the vehicular access.
- Provision of 2.4m x 43m visibility splays.
- Provision of parking.
- Size of parking spaces.
- Provision of cycle parking.
- Design and construction of estate roads.
- Levels, sections and construction of roads.

- Construction management plan.
- Production of a travel plan.

Planning Notice

Three additional objections received (summarised):

- Highway and pedestrian safety concerns.
- Over-development.
- Infrastructure needs to be in place to cope with more development.
- Doctors, dentists and hospitals already struggling.
- Additional school places needed.
- Concerned about health implications.

RECOMMENDATION: It be **RESOLVED** to **GRANT (OUTLINE PLANNING) WITH DELEGATED AUTHORITY TO THE DELEGATED OFFICER TO CONFIRM THE SATISFACTORY RESOLUTION OF CONDITIONS AND THE COMPLETION OF A SECTION 106 AGREEMENT** (with the authority to finalise any matter including conditions, legal agreement terms, or any later variations) subject to the conditions and the informatives contained in the Council's report)