



Minutes of a Meeting of the Planning Committee held in the Small Hall of the Village Hall, East Dean at 6.30 pm on Tuesday 16th May 2017

Present: Cllr M Keller (Chair), Cllr S Fuller, Cllr I Haydock, Cllr P Hill, Cllr A Hookham, Cllr J Sargent and Cllr P Seeley

In attendance: District Cllr J Wilton; K Larkin (Parish Clerk).

There were twenty four members of the public present.

PUBLIC SESSION

In the Public Session the Chair permitted a presentation by Ben Ellis, the prospective developer of land east of Gilberts Drive, accompanied by the landowner Ted Denyer and architect Lap Chan (Morgan Carn Partnership). Paper copies of the current revision of the development proposals were circulated at the meeting.

Land east of Gilberts Drive - Mr Ellis stated that the proposed development site was in two parts lying to the west side and the rear of the Old Parsonage. The original intention had been to build nine units, but following consultation with residents in neighbouring properties and with Cllr Wilton, the plans had been revised several times to reduce the proposed density and make the development more sensitive to its location. The current proposal was for two x two bedroom cottages on each part of the site, each with one dormer bedroom. The cottages would be built of traditional materials: brick and flint, with clay tiled roofs. Access to the site at the side of the Old Parsonage would be through the existing (disused) gate from the A259. The historic brick and flint wall to one side of that access would be refurbished and retained, and a similar wall would be built on the other side (replacing one that had previously existed). Access to the second portion of the site would follow the existing track from Gilberts Drive, where a rural appearance would be maintained through the use of permeable block paving and a central grass strip. Both portions of the site would be landscaped with additional trees to minimize overlooking. There were currently disused outbuildings on both parts of the site, and a disused swimming pool in the rear portion, and it was hoped that by removing these and improving boundary treatments the development would enhance the site rather than detract from it. The landowner, Mr Denyer, stated that visitors would be welcome to visit the site by appointment, and that he would leave contact details with the parish clerk.

In open session, the following questions were raised:

- Would there be any way through between the two parts of the site? – No, there would not

- Had the developer taken into account the housing numbers allocated to the parish in the Local Plan? – Yes, the developer was aware that The Fridays would use up the allocation for the foreseeable future. However, he claimed that the lack of a 5 year housing land supply within the Wealden District could also have repercussions within the South Downs National Park, such that windfall sites would be welcomed.
- Was the site a greenfield site? – Technically no: it lay within the curtilage of the Old Parsonage and a number of redundant outbuildings would be replaced. If planning permission were granted, the developer would be willing to accept the removal of future Permitted Development rights as a condition of the permission
- Was the developer aware that the site lay outside the Development Boundary (both existing and as proposed in the draft SDNPA Local Plan)? – Yes, but the site could be regarded as brownfield and would be well screened and tucked away. It would not noticeably extend the village centre, and would be both accessible and sustainable.
- What would the pedestrian access be like? – From the Eastbourne Road the site would be accessed from the existing pavement and two new off-street parking spaces would be provided for the Old Parsonage. Similarly in Gilberts Drive the proposed access track with green appearance would lead directly onto the existing pavement.
- Would the development protect listed features including all walls? – Yes, care would be taken and the proceeds of the development would enable the Old Parsonage (Grade II listed) to be refurbished
- Was the developer aware that the Village Design Statement was opposed to backland development? – Yes, but in this particular setting and with the particular design proposed it was considered that development was defensible
- The proposals seemed designed to facilitate downsizing within the parish, but how could it be ensured that the cottages would be bought by residents? – The developer agreed that it was important to have smaller units for downsizing or for first time buyers, and would be prepared to target the initial marketing to the village.
- How would construction traffic be managed? – The developer would sign up to a ‘Considerate Contractors’ document, whereby deliveries would be timed to avoid peak periods; small vehicles would be used so far as possible; and deliveries would be made to the Gilberts Drive entrance with materials being stored on site. There would be no vehicular access between the two portions of the site. Essential disruption due to installation of utilities would be kept to a minimum.
- What was the area of the site? – This information was not immediately available

- Consultation with neighbouring landowners – Mrs D Shephard on behalf of the four landowners directly affected in Gilberts Drive, confirmed that they had all been engaged in the design process and now did not expect to object to the development, on the basis that the type of development proposed would safeguard their peace and privacy.
- How suitable would the cottages be for retirement living? – The design allowed for the master bedroom to be on the ground floor as an adaptation for lifetime use, and for bathrooms etc. to be fully accessible
- Had the developer considered building for specialized independent or assisted living? – No, the footprint of such developments would be too large for the site. However, the design did offer a 'lifetime' element.
- The local sewage disposal facility was working at or near full capacity. Would this affect the development? – No, preliminary enquires indicated that the development was small enough not to cause any problem
- What was the projected timescale? – A planning application would be submitted in about one month's time, and if successful work would begin without delay, and was projected to take between six and nine months.
- Could the current plans be put on the council's website? – Yes, Mr Ellis would email a copy to the clerk.

The Chair thanked Mr Ellis for his presentation, and closed the Public Session. A number of members of the public left the meeting. Formal business then commenced.

P.783 Apologies for absence: - Cllr R Maxwell

P.784 Declarations of Interest: - Cllr Hookahm – Birling Gap Cliff Staircase (National Trust employee).

P.785 Minutes of the previous meeting: - the Minutes of the meeting held on 18th April 2017 were confirmed as a correct record, and signed by the Chair

P.786 CORRESPONDENCE

The committee took note of the following:

- a) Underhill House** – pre-application advice had been sought on a small extension

b) **32 Hillside** – a minor amendment had been made to the siting of the proposed summer house (SDNP/17/01371/HOUS)

c) **20 The Brow** – two recent applications had both been withdrawn

P.787 NEW APPLICATIONS

SDNP/17/01894/FUL – Hotel Car Park, Birling Gap Road, Birling Gap, East Dean BN20

0AB - *Relocation of the existing staircase at Birling Gap. Bridge, tower and staircase to be removed. New piles are to be installed close to the cliff face. A new tower and staircase is to be fabricated off site and craned onto the new piles and the existing bridge section reinstalled. This application follows SDNP/16/02479 which was granted conditional approval and the reasons for the new application are: 1) Previously the tower and staircase were to be refurbished and re-installed. The proposal now is that they are replaced with a like for like new installation. 2) Natural England requested a condition requiring the tower to be reset so that the new front feet of the tower were located onto the existing rear feet of the tower. This would be impractical as it would only extend the life of the staircase by 2 -3 years. The intention is to relocate the tower as close to the cliff face as practical to maximise the useful life.*

The committee noted with approval that the new proposal would not disrupt use of the visitor car park or access to the beach during the summer season.

RESOLVED – To recommend that the application be approved

SDNP/17/01534/FUL – Friston Place, Jevington Road, Friston BN20 0AH

Reinstatement of a former wall opening and creation of new steps

It was noted that this application was simply a partner to a previous application for listed building consent, which had been approved.

RESOLVED - To recommend that the application be approved

SDNP/17/02240/HOUS – 26 Wenthill Close, East Dean BN20 0HT

Proposed rooms in the roof with front dormer

The committee noted that there had probably been an older loft conversion at this property, which would be further extended to provide two bedrooms with a full shared bathroom to replace the old shower room. There would be no new overlooking of neighbouring properties. The architect's notes did not refer to the Village Design Statement, nor specify the choice of materials to be used. However, the design of the dormer would be in keeping with the VDS guidelines.

RESOLVED - Not to object to the application, provided that the choice of materials conformed to the guidelines in the Village Design Statement (Materials Guidelines, p25)

P.788 DECISION NOTICES

The committee took note of the following applications approved by the SDNPA in accordance with the recommendations of the parish council:

SDNP/17/00656/LIS – Friston Place, Jevington Road, Friston BN20 0AH

Reinstatement of a former wall opening and creation of new steps

SDNP/17/00472/HOUS – Went Acre, Went Way, East Dean BN20 0DB

Renovation of stable and piggery for ancillary use to Main dwelling (Retrospective)

SDNP/17/01371/HOUS – 32 Hillside, Friston BN20 0HE

Proposed summer house

P.789 URGENT ITEMS

- a) **Phone kiosk at Birling Gap** - The Chair reported that the SDNPA had refused to give Prior Approval to the application by BT to replace the K6 telephone box at Birling Gap with a modern K100 kiosk. The reason given was that the appearance, design and prominent location of the proposed new kiosk would be out of keeping with the rural setting and heritage of the area. The parish council had reluctantly supported the application on grounds of public safety. BT had been advised that full planning permission would be required for the proposed development, though in the circumstances it seemed unlikely that this would be granted either. It was agreed that the council should write to BT and to the SDNPA to urge that a phone kiosk be maintained in this location, as a matter of public safety. **ACTION: KL**
- b) **Blockage at Windmill Lane** - access problems had recently arisen, partially due to development taking place at 6 Windmill Lane, though work on the gas mains had also been a contributing factor. **ACTION: KL to check Decision Notice regarding contractors' vehicles.**

P.790 DATE OF NEXT MEETING: - Tuesday 20th June 2017 in the Small Hall of the Village Hall, East Dean, starting at 6.30 pm

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 7.41 pm.

Signed..... (Chair)

Date.....