



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 21st August 2018

Present: Cllr T Bryant (Chair), Cllr P Seeley (Acting Chair, Item P.932), Cllr L d'Urso, Cllr K Godden, Cllr B Greenwell, and Cllr M Keller

In attendance: K Larkin (Parish Clerk)

There were seventeen members of the public present

P.930 Apologies for absence: - Cllr N Day, Cllr P Hill

P.931 Declarations of Interest: - Cllr T Bryant – Crowlink Place (neighbour)

The Chair having declared an interest in the Crowlink Place application moved to the public gallery, and Cllr Seeley took the Chair for this item

PUBLIC SESSION ON CROWLINK PLACE

The applicant stated that the application had been fully discussed with the planning authority. It was intended to carry out the work using local materials and employing local contractors.

Cllr Bryant stated that the project had been submitted for pre-application advice from the SDNPA and had been opposed in its original form by the parish council. It had since been amended to include the demolition of an old rear extension. A sequence of expert reports had also been provided as required by the SDNPA. However, the description of the project still did not make clear that the finished extension would be two storeys high fronting Crowlink Lane.

The Heritage Statement referred to an earlier application for a two storey extension (WD/2009/0103/F) submitted to Wealden District Council in 2009. That application had been refused on the grounds that 'the siting, scale, bulk, mass, design and appearance of the proposed extensions would detract from the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and would be detrimental to the street scene and visual amenities of the rural location'. Nothing had really changed.

A number of other points also gave cause for concern, as follows:

- Landscaping – it was proposed to form a mound to the rear of the property for privacy and as a weathershield, but no measurements or levels had been specified. If

a mound were formed from the excavations elsewhere it could be very high and change the downland aspect of the property

- Change of use – the proposed screening and retention of the old garage suggested an intention to convert it to a residential annex
- Loss of trees – existing trees on the Crowlink Lane boundary (outside the boundary wall) were said to need cutting back rather than felling to accommodate the proposed extension, but this was unrealistic given their very close proximity to a proposed two storey extension.
- Disproportionate scale – the Design and Access statement claimed that the project complied with the Village Design Statement, by proposing a 35% increase in the size of the dwelling (the normal guideline being 30%), but the calculation was based on the area of the building as already extended. The proposed extension would make it 290% larger than the original pair of very small cottages.
- Preservation of long views – the VDS sought to preserve long views, but the proposed extension would close the gap between the main house and garage which presently gave a view towards the coast from Crowlink Lane and neighbouring properties.
- Incomplete information – the plans did not include control measurements or critical measurements, which should be mandatory in a full application for planning permission.

The Committee was therefore requested to object to the application

The Acting Chair closed the Public Session on Crowlink Place and re-opened the meeting

P.932 NEW APPLICATION - SDNP/18/03799/HOUS – Crowlink Place, Crowlink Lane, Friston, BN20 0AU

Extension to the front elevation to form a new west wing with single storey additions to the front elevation at ground floor. Demolition of the existing UPVC conservatory and existing rear (north side) single storey extension. New single storey orangery to east elevation. Replacement of all the existing UPVC windows with timber framed double glazed casements for paint finish. Alterations to the landscape to provide revised parking arrangement and pedestrian access to the house.

The committee noted the points raised in the Public Session. It was agreed that the scale of the project was a key issue, exceeding 35% even of the extended dwelling. In addition, the VDS opposed the loss of small dwellings, and the original dwelling here had been much smaller. It would in theory be permissible to demolish and rebuild on a bigger scale, which could be an alternative option for the applicant. The intention to use local materials and local contractors etc, was appreciated, but the prominent location of the property and the impact of any substantial enlargement on amenities and neighbours, including the alteration of sightlines from Friston Pond, Friston Church and Crowlink Lane, would still be a key issue.

It was noted that the proposed extension would have a first floor as well as a ground floor (a fact not made clear from the description), and did include two new first floor windows fronting Crowlink Lane and overlooking Vicarage Cottage. This was directly comparable to the two storey extension refused by the planning authority in 2009. There was also concern that

because the extension would come so close to the trees immediately outside the boundary wall in the Lane, the root systems of those trees could be irrevocably damaged, and very extensive cutting back would be required at first floor level; therefore the trees could not realistically be saved.

Members did not oppose the extension of the property in principle, but agreed that this particular proposal should be resisted. It had attracted an unusually high number of objections, and the only representation in favour (from a former owner) related to the dwelling as it was prior to existing extensions being built.

RESOLVED – To recommend that the application be refused

Cllr Bryant resumed the Chair

P.933 Minutes of the previous meeting: the Minutes of the meeting held on 17th July 2018 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair

The Chair re-opened the Public Session for comment on other items on the agenda

PUBLIC SESSION (2)

Crowlink Corner

The applicant stated that this application to provide an improved access to Crowlink Corner was required for safety reasons, including access by the emergency services if necessary. The proposal had been under discussion with the National Trust for 10 years, and was the only option available. The SDNPA had guided the appearance of the track and materials to be used. The applicant supported the aim of conserving and enhancing the landscape of the National Park. The applicant complained that someone had posted up an unofficial notice, in effect inviting objections to the application, which had been reported to the SDNPA. A copy was shown to the Committee, who took note that it was in effect inviting representations. A member of the public stated that the official planning notice was still in place.

In discussion, the National Trust (the landowner of the field through which the track would run) was criticized for having made no comment on the application at all, notwithstanding that the access was said to have been under discussion for 10 years. This tract of downland had been saved from development by public subscription in the 1920s and later gifted to the Trust by the Society of Sussex Downsmen, with three protective covenants: first, that the property accessed across the field should not be used for business; second that there should be no excavation of the field (hence no laid track); and third that no nuisance should be caused to the users of the field (i.e. the public). The Trust would therefore be failing in its duty if it did not object to the proposed development. In that event, the Charity Commission should be notified. The SDNPA would also be wrong to countenance the development, because of its twin duties to 'conserve and enhance' the land and to 'promote enjoyment' of it. The downland was extremely popular, access was good, and the intrusion of a paved track where such tracks did not normally exist would degrade the landscape values.

It was also stated that Crowlink Corner itself, the property to be accessed by the track, was

not residential but was being used for business: weddings, parties, and holiday lets. All the expert reports accompanying the application assumed that it was residential and were therefore based on a false premise.

The Chairman of the Crowlink Road Fund asked whether there would be more traffic if the track were laid. Crowlink Lane itself could not be 'improved'. The National Trust had previously taken a percentage of a perceived uplift in value when access to another adjoining property had been upgraded: would a payment be required in this case?

The applicant in response stated that she had wanted to have the track in a different location (using some of her own land) but that the National Trust would only agree to the current proposal. There would be no payment to the Trust. It was acknowledged that the property had been used for business and that this had been improper; however, all advertising had ceased and the applicant would be moving into the property herself on 1st September.

The Chair closed the Public Session and re-opened formal business

P.934 NEW APPLICATIONS

SDNP/18/03970/FUL – Land adjacent to Crowlink Corner, Crowlink Lane, Friston BN20 0AX

Introduction of two wheel access track retaining a central strip of grass running from Crowlink Lane to Crowlink Corner to provide safer access to serve Crowlink Corner

The Committee took note of the points raised in the Public Session, and of the considerable number of comments made to the SDNPA (all objections so far). Commercial use of the property, particularly at night, could contravene the SDNPA's Dark Skies policy. However, it was accepted that if the use were about to become properly residential, some of the objections would no longer apply. The restrictive covenants would still apply.

Members queried whether the current access was really a problem. The property had been in use with permission for access by vehicles for nearly 100 years with no formal track. There was no statement from the emergency services. Tracks of the grasscrete type were normally only installed for heavy goods vehicles. It would be undesirable to encourage vehicles to travel faster in this vicinity. Safety notices would then be needed in Crowlink Lane.

Members also queried the location of the proposed track. The route over which users of Crowlink Corner (not the general public) had the right to pass followed the north eastern boundary of the field. A more direct route was actually being taken by vehicles going to the property. The route proposed in the application ran parallel to the private right of way but a little further into the field. [Note: None of these routes should be confused with the public Footpath 12a crossing the field from a similar starting point in Crowlink Lane, but proceeding in a more southerly direction]. No right of way could be abandoned or altered without completing a formal procedure.

A further concern was the proposed construction method and materials. It had been

assumed that the underlying material was all chalk, but a clay cap might be found (this was known to be present in the Friston Pond area). Considerable amounts of spoil would be generated and no provision had been specified for its disposal.

In general, the committee opposed the application and encouraged the applicant and the National Trust to engage with the parish council, particularly if there were scope to discuss the provision of a different access route. It was agreed that the council should write to the National Trust. **ACTION: TB/KL.**

RESOLVED - To recommend that the application be refused

SDNP/18/03820/HOUS – 26 Hillside, Friston, BN20 0HE

General remodelling of an existing dwelling including a double storey side extension replacing an existing garage

The committee noted that the remodelling of this property had previously been discussed, most recently in April 2018 under reference SDNP/18/01572. The committee had not objected to those proposals, and no new reason to object had arisen subsequently.

RESOLVED - Not to object to the application

SDNP/18/03703/HOUS – 5 The Outlook, Friston, BN20 0AR

Rear extension

RESOLVED - Not to object to the application

SDNP/18/03761/TCA – Little Lane Cottage, Upper Street, East Dean BN20 0BU

Notification of intention to Beech (T1)-Reduce crown by approximately 3m, raise crown by approximately 2m and ensure a 2-3m clearance from property's roof

RESOLVED - Not to object to the application

P.935 DECISION NOTICES

- a) The committee took note of the following applications approved by the SDNPA, all in accordance with the recommendations of the parish:

SDNP/18/02486/HOUS – Downs House, 1 Mill Close, Friston, BN20 0EF

Proposed re-positioning of double garage (approved under ref. SDNP/17/05385/HOUS but not built), incorporating accommodation over for a carer

SDNP/18/02764/HOUS – 8 Waterworks Cottages, Old Willingdon Road, Friston, BN20 0AS

Proposed two storey extensions at front and side together with a replacement, enlarged detached garage

SDNP/18/02699/HOUS – 11 Peak Dean Lane, East Dean BN20 0JD

Shrub clearance, laying of concrete base and erection of a wooden summerhouse in

rear garden

SDNP/18/03037 – 23 The Brow, East Dean, BN20 0ES

Proposed first floor extension above existing living room to form new master bedroom suite

SDNP/18/02364/FUL – 13 Deneside, East Dean, BN20 0HX

The works at the property are confined to the rear garden and include the following: digging out side of property and building a 1m retaining wall on boundary; installing a circular garden deck 1m above ground level; installing a garden deck set into the hillside with an elevated section 504mm above the existing ground level and installing timber raised planting beds 600mm high

- b) The committee took note of the following application withdrawn:

SDNP/18/03073/HOUS – 13 Deneside, East Dean, BN20 0HX

Single storey side extension with rooms in the roof replacing earlier extension and incorporating part of an existing garage

P.936 SDNPA LIAISON MEETINGS

The committee agreed to request a date for a liaison meeting with a senior planning officer.

ACTION: TB/KL

P.937 CORRESPONDENCE

The following were discussed:

- a) 21 The Brow – there was no update on enforcement. The SDNPA should be asked to expedite this case, as it had been referred to in justification of another application
ACTION: KL
- b) TV mast – the erection of a new TV mast at The Link was approved in 2015 under reference SDNP/15/04599/FUL. It was a condition of the permission that the old mast be removed within six months of the new one being installed.
- c) 10 Dene Close – the committee noted correspondence regarding the 30% limitation on extensions

P.938 URGENT ITEMS

The Chair reported that 5 Elven Lane was being taken to appeal. The applicant had complained that due procedure had not been followed by the planning authority. The Chair would take advice and report to the next meeting.

P.939 DATE OF NEXT MEETING: - Tuesday 18th September 2018 in the Small Hall of the Village Hall, East Dean, starting at 6.30 pm

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 7.59 pm.

Signed..... (Chair)

Date.....