

Planning Committee (South)
21 SEPTEMBER 2021

Present: Councillors: Brian Donnelly (Chairman), John Blackall, Jonathan Chowen, Philip Circus, Paul Clarke, Michael Croker, Ray Dawe, Nigel Jupp, Lynn Lambert, Mike Morgan, Roger Noel, Bob Platt, Josh Potts, Kate Rowbottom, Jack Saheid, Diana van der Klugt and James Wright

Apologies: Councillors: Tim Lloyd, Chris Brown, Karen Burgess and Jim Sanson

PCS/28 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 August were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

PCS/29 **DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

DC/21/1240: Councillor Lynn Lambert declared a pecuniary interest in this item. She withdrew from the meeting and took no part in the determination of the item.

PCS/30 **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were no announcements.

PCS/31 **APPEALS**

The list of appeals lodged, appeals in progress and appeal decisions, as circulated, was noted.

PCS/32 **DC/21/0057 - ANGELL SAND PIT, WASHINGTON ROAD, STORRINGTON**

The Head of Development & Building Control reported that this application sought permission for a phased development of six detached houses (four to be self-build) with associated landscaping, drainage, and access improvements to Heather Way.

The application had been deferred by the Committee in July to allow for the scheme to be amended to include a mix of dwellings with a greater number of smaller 2- and 3-bedroom units (Minute No PCS/18 (20.07.21) refers).

The application site was located within the very eastern side of Storrington Built-up area boundary and comprised an area of sloping land, which was a former sand quarry.

Members were referred to the previous report, which contained details of the location, relevant policies, planning history, the outcome of consultations and a planning assessment of the proposal.

Since the deferment, officers have confirmed the applicant's viability report, which calculated the minimal profit that the existing scheme for larger dwellings would realise, and demonstrated that it was not viable to amend the scheme to provide a greater number of smaller units.

Members noted the comments of the Council's Landscape Architect, as set out in the report, which indicated that the site was unlikely to have the landscape capacity to accommodate an increase in quantum of development.

The agent addressed the committee in support of the proposal and then read out a statement on behalf of the applicant.

Members concluded that, given the site constraints and the detrimental impact that a higher quantum of development would have on the landscape, the scheme as submitted was acceptable.

Concerns were raised regarding the need to protect the nearby South Downs National Park from light pollution, given its status as an International Dark Skies Reserve, and it was requested that a further lighting condition be added to ensure that the Reserve status was taken into account.

RESOLVED

That planning application DC/21/0057 be granted subject to the conditions as reported, with an additional lighting condition restricting lighting to that approved as part of the application, taking into account the site's proximity to the International Dark Skies Reserve.

PCS/33 **DC/21/1240 - LAND EAST OF PEMBERLEY, MILL LANE, PARTRIDGE GREEN**

The Head of Development & Building Control reported that this application sought permission for: the conversion of a stable building to a 4-bedroom dwelling, including extensions and alterations; and the erection of two 4/5-bedroom detached dwellings. Each dwelling would have its own amenity space and areas of hardstanding, a large carport and greenhouse.

The application site was located south of Mill Lane approximately 0.6 kilometres from the built-up area of Partridge Green. The land included a paddock and parcels of land, which were overgrown. There was linear development to the north and east of the site, and two new dwellings to the south.

The Parish Council objected to the application. There had been 12 representations from nine households supporting the application (five of which raised some concerns as well), and a letter of support from the Littleworth

Residents Association. There had been one letter of comment and seven representations from five households objecting to the proposal. A representative of the Littleworth Residents Association spoke in support of the application.

Members considered the outcome of consultations and the officer's planning assessment, which indicated that the key issues for consideration in determining the proposal were: the principle of development; design and appearance; amenity impacts; highways impacts; and ecology. It was noted that no ecological documents had been submitted.

Members weighed the benefits of the scheme in providing additional homes against the harm caused by the scale, massing and bulk of the proposed dwellings, and the encroachment of development into this rural setting.

RESOLVED

That planning application DC/21/1240 be refused for the following reasons:

- 01 The proposed development, due to its scale, quantum and form, would fail to reflect the landscape characteristics and intrinsic features of the landscape area, and would detract from the ambience and sense of the place of the rural countryside setting by formalising and urbanising the rural landscape character. The proposal would therefore result in significant and demonstrable harm to the countryside setting, contrary to Policies 25, 26, 32, and 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).
- 02 The proposed dwellings would be of a scale, mass and bulk that would over-dominate this backland setting and fail to reflect or reinforce the built characteristics and proportions of the locality, and specifically the immediate context to which each dwelling would sit. The development would therefore be unsympathetic to the built surroundings and would fail to respect the character of the immediate setting, contrary to Policies 25, 32, and 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).
- 03 Insufficient information has been provided to demonstrate that the proposed development would have no adverse impact on protected species and its habitat, and to establish how the development will contribute to measurable Biodiversity Net Gain, contrary to Policy 31 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015), Policy 4 of the West Grinstead Neighbourhood Plan and Paragraphs 174 and 180 of the NPPF.

PCS/34 **DC/20/2266 - RYE FARM, HOLLANDS LANE, HENFIELD**

The Head of Development & Building Control reported that this application sought permission for the demolition of two barns and the erection of three 3-bedroom dwellings. The site benefited from prior approval consent DC/20/0604 to convert one of the barns into four 3-bedroom dwellings. Shared access would be along a private track from Hollands Lane.

The application site was located outside the built-up area boundary to the south-west of Henfield in a predominantly rural area with farm buildings nearby. Rye Farm House, a Grade II Listed Building, lay to the east where there were a number of other small buildings. Another dwelling lay to the south, along with a fencing business.

The Parish Council objected to the application. There had been 74 representations from 42 households objecting to the application. Three members of the public, including a representative of the Campaign to Protect Rural Henfield, spoke in objection to the application and applicant and applicant's agent both addressed the Committee in support of the proposal.

Members considered the outcome of consultations and the officer's planning assessment, which indicated that the key issues for consideration in determining the proposal were: the principle of development; landscape and design impacts; heritage impacts; flooding; amenity and noise impacts; and ecological impacts.

Members were concerned at the suburbanising effect of the proposal, which extended the development across a wider area of the site than the fall-back position and concluded that the prior approval would have less impact on the character of the rural location than the current proposal.

Members discussed the extent to which the area flooded, including Hollands Lane, and were concerned that any mitigation measures to address flooding could not be addressed satisfactorily through conditions.

RESOLVED

That planning application DC/20/2266 be refused for the following reasons:

- 01 The proposed development would increase the extent of development and suburbanisation of the site to the detriment of the heritage and landscape setting of the site, and would not amount to a betterment on the fall-back position, contrary to policies 32, 33 and 34 of the of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).
- 02 It has not been demonstrated that a safe means of escape can be provided for in the event of a flood event, contrary to Policy 38 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

PCS/35 **DC/21/0911 - ZEPHYR, 158 SINNOCKS, WEST CHILTINGTON**

The Head of Development & Building Control reported that this application sought permission for the change of use of land to a campsite, with the formation of a new access and parking area. The proposal included four 2-person geo-domes sited along the western boundary and a stable building to the south that has been converted into a toilet /shower block. The campsite would run wellness retreats focussed on yoga and therapeutic services.

The application site was located outside the built-up area to the east of Sinnocks and was a parcel of agricultural land. The nearest dwelling was 60 metres to the west. The area was largely agricultural fields with sporadic residential development along the lanes.

The Parish Council had raised concerns, as set out in the report, and officers confirmed that they had objected to the application. As detailed in the report, there had been 23 representations from 21 households supporting the application and 13 representations from ten households in objection. Since publication of the report two further letters of support had been received, and one of objection referring to car parking and noise disturbance.

Two members of the public spoke in objection to the application and the applicant and a supporter of the applicant both addressed the Committee in support of the proposal.

Members considered the outcome of consultations and the officer's planning assessment, which indicated that the key issues for consideration in determining the proposal were: the principle of development; design and appearance; amenity impacts; highways impacts; and ecology.

The applicant had clarified that the size of the parking area was to assist vehicles to leave in forward gear, and to give sufficient parking for occasional retreat events (maximum of five a year). Members noted the small scale of the campsite, which was designed to take eight guests, and that the resulting impact on amenity and highways would not be significant enough to warrant refusal.

RESOLVED

That planning application DC/21/0911 be granted subject to the conditions as reported.

The meeting closed at 4.16 pm having commenced at 2.30 pm

CHAIRMAN