

Planning Committee (South)
18 OCTOBER 2022

Present: Councillors: Tim Lloyd (Chairman), Paul Clarke (Vice-Chairman), John Blackall, Jonathan Chowen, Philip Circus, Michael Croker, Joan Grech, Lynn Lambert, John Milne, Roger Noel, Bob Platt, Josh Potts, Jack Saheid and James Wright

Apologies: Councillors: Ray Dawe, Nigel Jupp, Mike Morgan, Kate Rowbottom and Diana van der Klugt

Absent: Councillors: Chris Brown

PCS/11 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 June 22 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

PCS/12 **DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

DC/22/0100 Councillor James Wright declared a personal interest in this item as he knew the applicant, he left the meeting and did not take part in the discussion or the vote.

DC/22/0100 Councillor Michael Croker declared a pecuniary interest, he left the meeting and did not take part in the discussion or the vote.

DC/22/0100 Councillor Bob Platt declared a personal interest as he was part of Greening Steyning group however he had no involvement in this application.

DC/22/0695 Councillor James Wright declared a personal interest in this item as he was a resident of the rural community.

DC/22/0695 Councillor Jonathan Chowen declared a personal interest in this item, he left the meeting and did not take part in the discussion or the vote.

PCS/13 **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were no announcements.

PCS/14 **APPEALS**

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

Councillor Philip Circus mentioned the back log of appeals and asked if Officers were able to provide clearer guidelines on time frames in dealing with appeals.

The Head of Development and Building Control reported that there were some inconsistencies in time frames however some appeals were taking significant time dependent on their type and complexity.

PCS/15 **DC/22/0100 LAND NORTH OF HUDDLESTONE FARM, HORSHAM ROAD, STEYNING**

The Head of Development & Building Control reported that this application sought permission for the installation of a solar farm with associated infrastructure.

The overall site area comprises 42.2 hectares of agricultural land and the proposed solar farm would be installed across two fields aligning the east-west of around 27.25 hectares.

The proposal had been amended during the course of consideration with two parcels of panels now omitted to address landscape impacts. The site had been selected owing to having a short cable route resulting in reduced energy losses during connection and following refinement and reduction following public consultation.

The site lies to the eastern side of the B2135/Horsham Road, approx. 2km north of Steyning, 2.5km west of Small Dole and a similar distance south west of Henfield. It lies on a sloping site in a rural area with residential and farm properties around the site including a number of grade 11 listed buildings.

Members noted the planning history of the application.

Steyning Parish Council raised no objection to the proposal. 107 letters of support had been received in response to the application and 21 letters of objection. At the time of issuing the report six additional comments had been received in support of the application.

Two speakers objected to the proposal and the Agent and two further speakers spoke in support.

Members were concerned about the impact on the landscape however acknowledged a balance was required to find ways of finding renewable and sustainable energy.

RESOLVED

That planning application DC/22/0100 be approved subject to the conditions set out in the report.

PCS/16 **DC/22/0773 ABINGWORTH NURSERIES, STORRINGTON ROAD, THAKEHAM**

The Head of Development and Building Control reported that planning permission was sought to make minor material amendments to previously approved application DC/19/1707.

This application would provide 75 dwellings including 26 affordable dwellings and community studio workshops within Phase 3 of the Abingworth Meadows development with an amendment to design and layout of houses at plots 42-75. The dwellings would all be in the same position as approved but would be altered in terms of their design and size.

The site is on the southern side of the Abingworth Development Site and Phase 3 is to the south of the site's central greenspace and attenuation bound by established mature trees to the eastern boundary and open fields to the south. Abingworth Hall Hotel is located to the West. The site has two vehicle accesses from Storrington Road.

The surrounding area is semi-rural in character, formed of small hamlets of residential development to the west and north of the site and sporadic residential farmsteads located within the surrounding countryside.

Phase 3 to the southern section of the site is the last remaining residential part of the site to be constructed.

Since the publication of the report there had been an amendment to Condition 16 to Class E (g) relating to the business units.

The Parish Council objected to the proposal and 12 letters of objection had been received, one objection letter was also withdrawn during the application process.

The Applicant spoke in support of the application and the Parish Council spoke in objection.

There was discussion and concern regarding water neutrality and the housing mix.

Members were advised by Planning Officers that bedroom units and occupancy remained the same as the approved proposal with some increase and decrease in size of rooms. If approved the application would be built in accordance with appropriate conditions and subdivision of rooms in larger houses would not be permitted.

RESOLVED

That planning application DC/22/0773 be approved subject to conditions set out in the report with an amendment to Condition 16 to state 'Class E (g)'.

PCS/17 **DC/22/0695 WOODMANS FARM, LONDON ROAD, ASHINGTON**

The Head of Development and Building Control reported that this application sought full planning permission for the change of use of 2 buildings to provide for the processing, packaging and distribution of game meat (a sui generis use) and associated office accommodation.

Application DC/21/1756 had been refused in February 2022 for the same development of the site with a requirement to address a Transport Note, proposed relocation of the access track between the site and nearest residential properties and additional information to address water neutrality issues. An appeal had been lodged with the planning inspectorate.

Horsham District Council had been made aware that work had been undertaken in the buildings without planning consent and the business was operating unlawfully from the site. Retrospective permission was therefore required.

The site comprised a number of agricultural buildings no longer in use, previously used as part of a dairy farm. Some residential dwellings are located to the south-west of the application building and Woodmans House located to the West. The dwellings are located 30 metres from the western elevation of the building with an off-road parking area and small amenity space.

The wider area is characterised by open countryside and woodland and the A24 located to the far west of the site.

The Parish Council objected to the proposal. 66 letters of support had been received from 58 households and 24 letters of objection from 17 separate households.

Since the report had been published an additional letter of support had been received.

The Parish Council spoke in objection to the proposal and 3 further speakers objected. Three speakers spoke in support of the application.

Members were concerned that since the refusal of previous application DC/21/1756 identified issues had not been satisfactorily addressed. It was felt that insufficient information had been provided to prove that neighbouring properties would not be disturbed with noise from the plant associated with the operation of the business. Members also felt that further information needed to be provided regarding water neutrality.

It was generally felt that even though the application raised some concerns, the business was extremely important for the local rural community and controlling of deer.

It was proposed and seconded to defer the decision to reconsidered at a future committee.

RESOLVED

That application DC/22/0695 be deferred for the applicants to address reasons for refusal to include noise assessment and water neutrality information.
Item to be re-considered at Planning Committee South in December 2022.

The meeting closed at 4.48 pm having commenced at 2.30 pm

CHAIRMAN