

PLANNING COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 22 July 2020

Present: Councillor Noakes (Chairman)
Councillors Bland (Vice-Chairman), Atwood, Backhouse, Mrs Cobbold, Hamilton,
Poile, Pound, Mrs Thomas and Warne

Officers in Attendance: Peter Hockney (Development Manager), Jo Smith (Senior Lawyer), Kevin Hope (Principal Planning Officer), James Moysey (Senior Planning Officer), Richard Hazelgrove (Principal Planning Officer) and Emer Moran (Democratic Services Officer)

Other Members in Attendance: Councillors McDermott, March and Willis

CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION

PLA1/20 The Chairman opened the meeting, introduced Committee members and officers in attendance, and outlined procedural matters of the meeting.

APOLOGIES

PLA2/20 There were no apologies for absence.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

PLA3/20 Councillor Hamilton declared that she is a County Councillor and acts as a reserve on the County Planning Committee at times. Agenda item PLA188/19 Land At Gibbet Lane And Furnace Lane, Horsmonden, Tonbridge, Kent and PLA190/19 The Green Barn Swigs Hole Farm Yew Tree Green Road Horsmonden Tonbridge Kent are both in Councillor Hamilton's division. Councillor Hamilton advised that she was approached by 1 objector to agenda item PLA188/19 however she wanted to make it clear that she had not formed an opinion about this agenda item before Committee.

DECLARATIONS OF LOBBYING (IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROTOCOL FOR MEMBERS TAKING PART IN THE PLANNING PROCESS, PART 5, SECTION 5.11, PARAGRAPH 6.6)

PLA4/20 Councillors Atwood, Backhouse, Bland, Hamilton, Noakes, Poile, Pound and Warne declared they had been lobbied on agenda item PLA188/19 Land At Gibbet Lane And Furnace Lane, Horsmonden, Tonbridge, Kent and PLA189/19 Lower Church Farm Speldhurst Hill Speldhurst Royal Tunbridge Wells.

SITE INSPECTIONS

PLA5/20 Due to the current restrictions Members had not undertaken any site visits.

TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING DATED 10 JUNE 2020

PLA6/20 **RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the meeting dated 10 June 2020 be recorded as a correct record.

REPORTS OF HEAD OF PLANNING SERVICES (ATTACHED)

PLA7/20

APPLICATION FOR CONSIDERATION - 18/01976/FULL LAND AT GIBBET LANE AND FURNACE LANE, HORSMONDEN, TONBRIDGE, KENT

PLA8/20 **Planning Report and Presentation** – The Head of Planning Services submitted a report in respect of application PLA8/20 Land At Gibbet Lane And Furnace Lane, Horsmonden, Tonbridge, Kent and this was summarised at the meeting by Mr Hope, Principal Planning Officer and illustrated by means of a visual presentation.

Updates and additional representation – Since publication of the agenda report, the presenting officer updated as follows:

- **Condition 9 to read:** (alteration to end of part f) – Add ‘details to include provision of walling to prominent internal boundaries and hit and miss fencing to east and west facing boundaries of perimeter plots’.
- **Condition 11 to read:** (alteration to 2nd bullet point) – Add bird nesting seasons ‘(February to August inclusive)’.
- **S106 clause on Affordable Housing** – to ensure this clause incorporates eligibility of the affordable homes to those with connection to Horsmonden Parish in first instance with a cascade mechanism to then expand this to the borough housing register.

Registered Speakers – There were 6 speakers that registered in accordance with the Council’s Constitution (Planning Committee Procedure Rules)

Public Objectors

- Mel Greener – a neighbour
- Dr Ian Anderson – a neighbour
- Ms Jessica Roe – a neighbour
- Ms Tracy Belton – a neighbour

Public Supporter

- Pete Hadley Robinson Escott Planning LLP on behalf of the applicant

Borough Councillor

- Councillor Jane March also objected to the application.

Matters of Clarification by Officers and Committee Members’ Questions to Officers – Members raised a number of questions and officers confirmed the following:

- i. Off road parking for Contractors during the construction phase is secured on site as part of recommendation 6.
- ii. The topography of the land which gently sloped toward the North, Northwest offered a suitable drainage point for surface water toward the attenuation pond located at the lowest level of the site.
- iii. KCC Highways considered the level of parking facilities sufficient

- varying from 1 to 2 spaces depending on property size and 19 visitor spaces within the site.
- iv. An explanation of the measures put in place which ensured the protection of the landscape character of the site and the preservation and enhancement of its habitats and ecological and biodiversity value was given.
 - v. A translocation site had been identified as an already suitable location for the reptiles and a sum of six thousand pounds had been allocated to the management and enhancement of the area.
 - vi. Details of enhancements to footways/footpaths and roads were explained including the introduction of a footway going South down Furnace Lane and a widening of Gibbet Lane to aid access.
 - vii. Throughout the course of the application there had been ongoing discussions with KCC Highways and the possibility of a crossing at Maidstone Road was investigated however, it was deemed to be unsuitable for a formal crossing in that area due to the number of positions of junctions.
 - viii. That with regard to the school and doctors surgery in the area having the capacity to deal with more residents it was advised that the figures quoted in the application are given by the KCC Education Team and the NHS who were consulted throughout the application.
 - ix. That if Members were minded to, they could add as part of the recommendation for the Section 106 legal agreement a requirement for a Cascade with regard to affordable housing at the site.
 - x. The double yellow lines located from the bell mouth of Gibbet Lane up toward site access and covers 1 plot width are there to ensure access for development is not prohibited and KCC Highways reviewed and agreed with this recommendation.
 - xi. The attenuation pond would be secured by fencing.
 - xii. Specifics on the affordable/social housing breakdown would be dealt with as part of the Section 106 agreement.
 - xiii. Condition 11 could be altered to show specific months of the year relating to bird nesting season.
 - xiv. It was confirmed that the Parish were consulted regarding the development and that application must be considered under current adopted policy and guidance.
 - xv. It was confirmed that the net gain contribution secured as part of the recommendation would be paid to the Council and used to enhance habitats on other council owned and managed land within the Borough for biodiversity, open spaces and recreation purposes.
 - xvi. The inclusion of bungalows on the site was from a design perspective as well as to address the need for housing for elderly residents in the area.
 - xvii. Clarification was given regarding the EV Charging points and whether restrictions could be placed to avoid residents using the publicly accessible charging points elsewhere within the development.

Committee Member Debate – Members of the Committee took account of the presentations made and raised a number of questions and issues within their discussions. These included:

- i. Concerns were raised regarding the design however it was acknowledged that this was to retain as much of the ancient

- hedgerow as possible.
- ii. An acknowledgement was given to the creditable work done by Officers to securing Section 106 contributions for this development.
- iii. The inclusion of EV charging points in the development were welcomed.
- iv. The capacity issues for the surgery and school were raised as a concern.
- v. Concerns about whether the local Parish concerns had been addressed were raised.
- vi. Concerns were highlighted regarding the intensity and scale of the development and the impact on local and surrounding roads.

Decision/voting – On the basis that members were satisfied that all relevant planning considerations had been covered within the report, a motion was proposed by Councillor Pound, seconded by Councillor Poile and a vote was taken to approve the application in line with the officer recommendation.

RESOLVED – That application PLA8/20 be granted subject to the plans, conditions and informatives as set out in the agenda report (with updated conditions 9 and 11 the clause on affordable housing under Section 106).

APPLICATION FOR CONSIDERATION - 20/01115/FULL LOWER CHURCH FARM SPELDHURST HILL SPELDHURST ROYAL TUNBRIDGE WELLS

PLA9/20 **Planning Report and Presentation** – The Head of Planning Services submitted a report in respect of application PLA9/20 Lower Church Farm Speldhurst Hill Speldhurst Royal Tunbridge Wells and this was summarised at the meeting by Mr James Moysey, Senior Planning Officer and illustrated by means of a visual presentation.

Updates and additional representation – None.

Registered Speakers – There were 5 speakers that registered in accordance with the Council's Constitution (Planning Committee Procedure Rules)

Public Objectors

- Roger Johnson – a neighbour
- Philip Simpson – a neighbour
- Ken Gornall – a neighbour
- Patrick Griffin - Rural Planning Group on behalf of Speldhurst Residents Group

Borough Councillor

- Councillor Lucy Willis also objected.

Matters of Clarification by Officers and Committee Members' Questions to Officers – Members raised a number of questions and officers confirmed the following:

- i. Due to the buildings being existing structures it was not considered that there would be an impact on the outlook of neighbouring properties as there is no increase in footprint or built

- form proposed at the site.
- ii. The Council's Landscape and Biodiversity Officer was satisfied with the methodology used in the surveys regarding the relocating of wildlife.
- iii. That Officers were satisfied that even with the lost of Barn C there would be sufficient storage space within the retained section of Barn A to support the livery business as it presently operates and future agricultural use.
- iv. Kent County Council Highways have acknowledged that the junction point is not ideal but did not feel that the proposed development would result in intensified use of the access point.
- v. Kent Fire and Rescue have not objected to the application.
- vi. The housing five year supply figure taken from April 2019 which was at 4.69 years was being urgently reviewed and Mr Hockney explained the delays in this associated with house builders having many staff on furlough as a result of the pandemic.
- vii. There was allocated parking for Barn A located opposite in the existing stables.
- viii. It was not considered the loss of Barn C would result in a significant level of unemployment.
- ix. The Council's Conservation officer was consulted with regard to the historic farmstead and advised that the proposed alterations to the three modern buildings would maintain the rural character of this part of the setting of the Conservation Area, as the proposed materials and facade treatments are not domestic (page 84 paragraph 7.06).
- x. Access to the AOC would remain unaffected and would retain it's access through the site as present.
- xi. That the Officers were content with how the new application has overcome the previous reasons of the previous refusal in 2002 and went through these in detail.

Committee Member Debate – Members of the Committee took account of the presentations made and raised a number of questions and issues within their discussions. These included:

- i. Notwithstanding the concerns raised by speakers Councillor Pound raised the point that he was confused as to the strength of the objections to the application.
- ii. Concerns were raised regarding the impact of the historic farmstead.

Decision/voting – On the basis that members were satisfied that all relevant planning considerations had been covered within the report, a motion was proposed by Councillor Pound, seconded by Councillor Atwood and a vote was taken to approve the application in line with the officer recommendation.

Councillor Warne requested that the vote for the motion to approve the application in line with the officer recommendation be recorded.

Councillors Atwood, Backhouse, Hamilton, Poile, Pound, Mrs Thomas, Bland and Noakes voted for the motion to approve the application in line with the officer recommendation.

Councillor Warne voted against the motion to approve the application in line with the officer recommendation.

RESOLVED – That application PLA9/20 be granted subject to the plans, conditions and informatives as set out in the agenda report.

**APPLICATION FOR CONSIDERATION - 20/01070/FULL THE GREEN BARN SWIGS
HOLE FARM YEW TREE GREEN ROAD HORSMONDEN TONBRIDGE KENT**

PLA10/20 **Planning Report and Presentation** – The Head of Planning Services submitted a report in respect of application PLA10/20 The Green Barn Swigs Hole Farm Yew Tree Green Road Horsmonden Tonbridge Kent and this was summarised at the meeting by Mr Hazelgrove, Principal Planning Officer, and illustrated by means of a visual presentation.

Updates and additional representation – None.

Registered Speakers – There were no members of the public who had registered to speak in accordance with the Constitution rules.

Committee Member Discussion – There were no matters of significance raised.

Decision/voting – On the basis that members were satisfied that all relevant planning considerations had been covered within the report, a motion was proposed by Councillor Backhouse, seconded by Councillor Poile and a vote was taken to approve the application in line with the officer recommendation.

RESOLVED – That application PLA10/20 be granted subject to the conditions as set out in the agenda report.

APPEAL DECISIONS FOR NOTING 15/05/2020 TO 09/07/2020

PLA11/20 **RESOLVED** – That the list of appeal decisions provided for information, be noted.

URGENT BUSINESS

PLA12/20 **RESOLVED** – There was no urgent business for consideration.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

PLA13/20 **RESOLVED** – That the next Planning Committee meeting take place on Wednesday 12 August 2020, at 10.30am.

NOTE: The meeting concluded at 1.53 pm.