

SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

PLANNING COMMITTEE 16 February 2012

Held at Cowdray Hall, Easebourne, Midhurst at 10:30am

Present:

Andrew Shaxson - Chair	Barbara Holyome	Ken Bodfish	Alun Alesbury
Neville Harrison - Deputy Chair	Jennifer Gray	Tom Jones	David Jenkins
Margaret Paren (ex officio)			

SDNPA Officers: Pat Aird (Major Applications and Enforcement Lead), Mike Bleakley (Planning Service Development Lead), Michael Scammell (Historic Building Officer), Lewes Oliver (Development Management Officer), Lara Southam (LDF Policy Officer), Katie Kam (Solicitor) & Rebecca Haynes (Member Services Officer).

APOLOGIES

307. Apologies for absence were received from Charles Peck.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

308. David Jenkins declared a personal non prejudicial interest in item 9 as a member of Horsham District Council Planning Committee.

309. Neville Harrison declared a personal non prejudicial interest in items 5 & 9 as a member of the South Downs Society.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 12 December 2011

310. The minutes of the meeting held on 19 January 2012 were agreed as a correct record.

URGENT ITEMS

311. There were no urgent items.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

312. The Chair informed the Committee and members of the public that as there were 3 applications on the agenda for St Margaret's which were all associated, they would hear from the case officer before the public speakers for all 3 applications. The Committee would then discuss and debate the applications together before considering each application for decision separately.

CHICHESTER DISTRICT COUNCIL

Application No: 11/03310/FULNP
Proposal: Comprehensive C3 residential development of a former DI Convent School site to provide 89 new dwellings. The proposals include the provision of 25 private homes, 25 affordable homes and 39 sheltered apartments, car parking, associated open space and landscaping.

Address: St Margaret's Petersfield Road, Midhurst GU29 9JN

Application No: 11/03311/LBCNP
Proposal: Refurbishment and reuse of the Grade II Listed Regency Villa building at St Margaret's, Midhurst. The proposals include the removal of adjacent additions and extensions and minor alterations to provide 4 new apartments.

Address: St Margaret's Petersfield Road, Midhurst GU29 9JN

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Application No: 11/03312/CACNP
Proposal: Demolition of a number of buildings within the Midhurst Conservation Area to enable the comprehensive redevelopment of St Margaret's, Midhurst.
Address: St Margaret's Petersfield Road, Midhurst GU29 9JN

313. The Committee considered the reports by the Director of Planning (Reports PC06/12, PC07/12 & PC08/12)
314. The case officer highlighted items on the update sheet which was available on the Authority website on Wednesday 15 February.
315. Joyce Ferguson spoke in support of the application, representing Affinity Sutton the applicant. She explained:-
- The background of the company Affinity Sutton in providing good quality affordable housing
 - Revenue from the development would support affordable housing elsewhere
 - Affinity Sutton competed on the open market to secure St Margaret's to provide affordable housing with schemes for renting and part ownership
 - Extensive work had gone into the architectural design and landscaping and they had worked with design and heritage officers on the application
 - The development would have a positive impact on the local community and economy
316. The Committee discussed the application, their concerns included;
- Consideration should be given regarding materials to be used for window frames, with a white/cream finish, consistent with characteristics of Midhurst, preferable to a dark surround
 - The hope that the development would not become 'exclusive' and that homeowners would integrate within the community
 - Possible hazards for cyclists and pedestrians with cars reversing out of parking spaces by June Lane
 - The percentage of affordable housing was too low
 - The reduction in the height of the boundary wall
317. The Committee commented that:
- The application was a good scheme
 - The site was in need of redevelopment
 - The split between the market and affordable housing was good if the sheltered accommodation was not included in the calculations
 - The sub division of the Regency Villa was good
 - Noise impact should not be an issue with efficient double glazing
 - It was acknowledged that a great deal of work had been carried out behind the scenes to bring the application to the Committee
318. In response to the Committee's questions; the case officer advised that;
- Warning signs could be positioned in parking areas by June Lane
 - Care had been taken to avoid any adverse impact on the conservation area from the positioning of solar panels
 - The process for calculating affordable housing was complex and following a viability study it was concluded that it would not be viable to incorporate more than was included in the application

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319. It was proposed and seconded to vote on the officer's recommendation for application 11/03310/FULNP. Following a vote the proposal was carried.
320. **RESOLVED:** that planning permission be granted for the reasons set out in paragraph 10.1 of report PC06/12 and subject to:
- (i) completion of a S106 agreement with obligations relating to:
 - travel plan implementation;
 - public access;
 - contributions towards community infrastructure; and
 - affordable housing provision; and
 - (ii) the conditions set out in the revised Appendix 2
321. It was proposed and seconded to vote on the officer's recommendation for application 11/03311/LBCNP. Following a vote the proposal was carried.
322. **RESOLVED:** That Listed Building Consent be granted for the reasons set out in paragraph 8 of report PC07/12, subject to the conditions set out in Appendix 2
323. It was proposed and seconded to vote on the officer's recommendation for application 11/03312/CACNP. Following a vote the proposal was carried.
324. **RESOLVED:** That Conservation Area Consent be granted for the reasons set out in paragraph 7 & subject to the conditions set out in paragraph 8 of report PC08/12.

WINCHESTER CITY COUNCIL

Application No: 11/02492/FUL
Proposal: Change of use application for the regarding of land to the north of the school buildings to create level areas for grass sports fields and permanent permission for existing temporary car park
Address: St Swithuns School

325. The Committee considered the report by the Director of Planning (Report PC09/12).
326. The case officer highlighted the item on the update sheet which was available on the Authority website on Wednesday 15 February. It was clarified that the Landscaping scheme referred to in Paragraph 3.3 of report PC09/12 was within the red line.
327. The Committee discussed the application, their concern was:
- Whether the bund could remain until the landscaping had matured
328. The Committee commented:
- The application sat neatly within the countryside and would not impact on the scene
 - The importance of condition 7 regarding external lighting to protect against light pollution
 - Additional sport facilities were welcomed
 - Visually the levelling of the field was less than depicted in the diagrams
329. In response to the Committee's questions; the case officer and the Planning Service Development Lead clarified that;
- Chippings were appropriate as a surface for the car park although discussions could be had with the applicant to investigate other surface materials including the use of grass Crete; an additional condition could be added to delegate surface details to be agreed with SDNPA officers
330. It was proposed and seconded to grant permission for application PC09/12, subject to an additional condition to be delegated to the Director of Planning, in consultation with the

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Planning Committee Chair, for surface details to be agreed prior to commencement of works. Following a vote the proposal was carried.

331. **RESOLVED:** That planning permission be granted subject to the conditions set out in paragraph 10.1 of report PC09/12 & subject to an additional condition:
- a. No development shall commence until surface details of the car park have been submitted to and approved in writing by the South Downs National Park Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
Reason: To ensure the development conserves the character and setting of the South Downs National Park in accordance with policies DP.3, DP.4 and CE.13 of the Winchester District Local Plan Review 2006

HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL

Application No: DC/11/1300
Proposal: 8 Residential units
Address: Gerston Farm, Greyfriars Storrington

332. The Committee considered the report by the Director of Planning (Report PC 10/12)
333. The case officer highlighted the item on the update sheet which was available on the Authority website on Wednesday 15 February.
334. Mrs Frances Sedgwick spoke against the application; representing herself, as a resident of Greyfriars Lane, as a member of the South Downs Land Management Group, who farms the adjoining land and as a representative of the Storrington Downs Residents Association; her comments included:
- Agreeing with the officers recommendation
 - Retention of the site would accord with the National Park's statutory duty to foster the social – economic well being of the local communities
 - The site was occupied by several diverse businesses providing valuable employment and resources for the local community
 - Businesses should be encouraged and supported in the current economic climate
 - The visual impact of the existing farm buildings was minimal and the site was included within the National Park boundary
 - Traffic movements would significantly increase outside the current business hours, destroying the tranquillity of the lane during the evenings and weekends
 - The residents association were firmly against the development
335. Mr David Coster spoke against the application representing himself, his business and other business units at Gerston Farm. He referred to:
- He was the Managing Director of Roadmark Travel, one of the small businesses currently occupying Gerston Farm
 - All businesses on the site were opposed to the application with businesses providing specialist services to the local community
 - Over 20 people in total, were employed by the businesses, with many employees walking to work, they may become out of work if business were forced to move
 - Other sites suggested by the developer were not appropriate
 - With the estimated costs associated with re location, some businesses may not be able to continue trading if forced to move.
336. Mr Neil Burns spoke against the application, representing himself and other business units at Gerston Farm; his comments included:
- Agreeing with the officers recommendation

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- Alternative sites were either not suitable or did not have appropriate planning permission for usage
 - The demand for this type of business land/space
337. Mr John Escott of Robson Escott Planning, spoke in support of the application on behalf of the agent; he made reference to:
- The history of the application from 2010 when the original application was submitted to Horsham District Council and was withdrawn following concerns before amending and submitting to the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA)
 - The site was not a Greenfield site
 - Significant tree planting and landscaping would be completed and would enhance the area
 - Horsham DC did not have a 5 year housing plan
 - The site was in a sustainable location
 - The report confirmed no loss of employment, and evidence states no conflict with CP11.
 - The applicant was willing to complete a Section 106 legal agreement towards education provision.
338. Mr David Williams of David Williams Landscape Consultancy, spoke in support of the application on behalf of the applicant as the Landscape Consultant; he made reference to:
- His 25 years' experience and having previously advised Horsham District Council on landscaping issues within the South Downs
 - In 2012 he held pre application meetings with officers of Horsham DC agreeing a way to draft his report; the application was submitted to Horsham DC. the resultant application was being dealt with by the SDNPA
 - The letter sent to Members of the Planning Committee critical of the report by Alison Farmer
 - The site being on the edge of the National Park boundary
339. The Committee discussed the application; their concerns included;
- No contributions had been offered
 - Loss of employment
 - No viability assessment
 - Possible contamination on the site and possible open sewer
 - Conflicting data regarding employment
340. The Committee commented:
- The importance of the National Park Duty to seek to foster the economic and social well-being of the local communities within the National Park
 - Their support of small local businesses and should be encouraged to thrive
 - The site was highly visible from the Downs, and therefore the proposal would have an adverse intrusion into the countryside. The site was seen in a different context to the built up area of Storrington from the Downs, by virtue of the mature tree line to the north of the site, this gave the feeling the site was within the countryside and not part of the built up area.
 - The National Park boundary was confirmed with the site included
 - The present site was not attractive and untidy, although was confirmed within the boundary of the National Park

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- Inappropriate site for redevelopment for housing
 - Disappointment that National Park Duty was not a reason for refusal within the report (PC10/12)
 - The need to protect local employment sites such as this, should be looked at in the emerging Local Development Framework
 - Many urban fringe developments can improve sites and landscaping
 - Their support for the officers recommendation
 - The application was caught in the transfer of the Planning Authority from Local Authority to the SDNPA
 - The proposed development was not appropriate although the site may be suitable for development but that this had to be sensitive to the surrounding landscape character
341. In response to questions; the case officer and the Planning Service Development Lead clarified that;
- Contributions were referred to in paragraphs 10.1 of the report (PC10/12)
 - With regard to affordable housing, the application fell below the threshold
 - In respect of the Horsham District council planning policy relating to employment the 1st part of the policy was not relevant to this application and the 2nd part did not relate to employment protection. The applicant had carried out a robust study and the response from Horsham District Council was included in paragraph 4.5 of the report (PC10/12). Therefore whilst Members concerns were noted the proposal was acceptable in terms of policy CP11
342. It was proposed and seconded to vote on the officer's recommendation. Following a vote the proposal was carried.
343. **RESOLVED:** That planning permission be refused for the reasons set out in paragraph 10.1 of report PC10/12
344. The Chair adjourned the meeting for a comfort break at 12:20pm
345. The meeting re convened at 12:30pm

STRATEGY & POLICY

Statement of Community Involvement

346. The Committee considered a report by the Director of Planning (Report PC11/12).
347. The case officer referred to the update sheet which was available on the Authority website on Wednesday 15 February, which set out an amended recommendation. It was also highlighted that the document would be kept under review and could be added to, and amended at any time.
348. In response to a question; the lead officer clarified that:
- The recommendation had been revised to ensure that the document could be amended for formatting and minor changes to ensure that it complied with the SDNPA corporate identity guidelines.
349. It was proposed and seconded to vote on the revised officer's recommendation. Following a vote the proposal was carried.
350. **RESOLVED:** That the Planning Committee recommends to the National Park Authority, subject to any minor changes made by the Director of Planning in consultation with the Chair of Planning Committee, that they adopt the Statement of Community Involvement.

Recovery of the Development Management Service by the South Downs National Park Authority

351. The Committee considered a report by the Director of Planning (Report PC11/12).

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352. The case officer updated the committee as follows:
- there was an amended recommendation which was set out on the update sheet which was available on the Authority website on Wednesday 15 February
 - paragraph 2.7 of the report (PC12/12) under Brighton & Hove, the following Wards and Parish Councils should be removed;
 - East Saltdean and Telscombe Cliffs Ward
 - Peacehaven and East Ward
 - Telscombe Parish Council
 - Peacehaven Parish Council
 - The costs associated with the recovery of the service from 1 April 2012, mentioned in paragraph 5.3 of the report (PC12/12) was not expected to exceed £150,000
353. The case officer suggested that the working group to be set up could consist of the following:
- Proposed SDNPA Membership
 - Chair of the SDNPA Planning Committee
 - Deputy Chair of the SDNPA Planning Committee
 - SDNPA Member appointed from Wealden DC
 - SDNPA Member appointed from Eastbourne BC
 - SDNPA Member appointed from Arun DC
 - SDNPA Member appointed from Brighton & Hove CC
 - External Membership
 - Wealden District – Up to 2 Parish Council representatives
 - Arun District – Up to 2 Parish Council representatives
 - Eastbourne and Brighton and Hove - 1 Ward Member each
 - Officer Support
 - To be provided by the SDNPA. There would also be officer liaison with the LPAs throughout the process.
354. The Committee commented:
- It was unfortunate that some Local Authority's did not wish to continue with delegation and that 'significant' / 'major' applications across the park would be mixed at Committee meetings with 'minor' applications from these Local Authority's therefore it was important that the delegation scheme to officers was appropriate
 - Expectations had been set high and it may be a challenge to meet them
 - Partnership arrangements were key to the SDNPA. Close co-operation with Local Authorities was critical to the foundation of the SDNPA
355. In response to questions; the lead officer clarified that:
- Many of the applications would be dealt with by officer delegation
 - If the Parish Council disagreed with the officer recommendation, the application would be brought to the Committee
 - No pressure had been put on any of the local authorities to return the service
 - Confidence was high that delegation would continue with the remaining authorities
356. It was proposed and seconded to vote on the revised officers recommendation. Following a vote the proposal was carried.
357. **RESOLVED:** That the Planning Committee:
- 1). note the issues and actions that have or are being taken as a result of the decisions of Arun District and Wealden District, Brighton and Hove City and Eastbourne Borough

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Councils not to continue with providing a delegated development management service, so as to help ensure that the SDNPA is able to provide a robust and effective service for these areas from 1 April 2012;

- 2). support the intention to enter appropriate co-operation arrangements with the four LPAs not continuing with delegation, in order to ensure that effective on-going working relationships are maintained;
- 3). agree a date for and the composition of a joint LPA and SDNPA Officer and Member Working Group, which will include relevant Parish Council and Ward Member representation, to consider the need and potential for holding Planning Committee meetings in those areas not continuing with delegation and the options for providing SDNPA officer presence within them from 1 April 2012;
- 4). recommend that the full National Park Authority on 13 March 2012 authorises officers to enter appropriate co-operation arrangements with the four LPAs not continuing with delegation, as set out in the recommendation 2) above and considers the recommendations from the joint Officer and Member Working Group referred to in recommendation 3) above.

CHAIR

Meeting closed at 12:55pm