

SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

PLANNING COMMITTEE 13 JULY 2017

Held at: The Memorial Hall, South Downs Centre, North Street, Midhurst at 10:01am.

Present: Alun Alesbury, Heather Baker, David Coldwell, Neville Harrison, Barbara Holyome, Doug Jones, Tom Jones, Robert Mocatta, Ian Phillips

Ex Officio Members for Planning Policy items only (may participate on Policy Items but not vote, no participation on Development Management Items):

Norman Dingemans, Margaret Paren

Officers: Becky Moutrey (Senior Solicitor), Robin Parr (Head of Governance), Tim Slaney (Director of Planning), Stella New (Committee Officer)

Also attended by: Rob Ainslie (Development Manager), Dan Ashe (Planning Policy Officer), Ruth Childs (Landscape Officer), Richard Ferguson (Development Management Lead), Michael Scammell (Historic Buildings Officer), Tim Slaney (Director of Planning)

541. The Director of Planning opened and chaired the meeting for Item 1.

OPENING REMARKS

542. The Director of Planning informed those present that:

- SDNPA Members have a primary responsibility for ensuring that the Authority furthers the National Park Purposes and Duty. Members regard themselves first and foremost as Members of the Authority, and will act in the best interests of the Authority and of the Park, rather than as representatives of their appointing authority or any interest groups.
- The meeting was being webcast by the Authority and would be available for subsequent on-line viewing. Anyone entering the meeting was considered to have given consent to be filmed or recorded, and for the possible use of images and sound recordings for webcasting and/or training purposes.

ITEM 1: ELECTION OF CHAIR

543. The Head of Governance informed those present that due to the proximity of this meeting to the 10 July 2017 NPA Annual General Meeting, and the lack of available time to follow the full process for the election of Chair and Deputy Chair as outlined in the SDNPA's Standing Orders (2015), members had agreed at the 10 July 2017 AGM that:

- The Planning Committee could choose whether to elect a Chair & Deputy Chair until the first meeting following the AGM in 2018, or until the next meeting of the committee (10 August 2017).
- Standing Order 8.2 would be suspended for the 13 July 2017 Planning Committee meeting to enable Planning Committee members to nominate themselves for the position of Chair and/or Deputy Chair at the meeting.

544. It was proposed and seconded to move to elect a Chair and Deputy Chair until the next Planning Committee meeting on 10 August 2017. Following a vote the proposal was carried.

545. **RESOLVED:** that the Planning Committee agreed to elect a Chair and Deputy Chair until the next Planning Committee meeting on 10 August 2017.

546. It was proposed and seconded to nominate Neville Harrison as Chair of the Planning Committee until the next meeting on 10 August 2017. As no other nominations were received Neville Harrison was duly elected as Chair of the Planning Committee until the next meeting on 10 August 2017, and presided over the rest of the meeting.

ITEM 2: ELECTION OF DEPUTY CHAIR

547. It was proposed and seconded to nominate Alan Alesbury as Deputy Chair of the Planning Committee until the next meeting on 10 August 2017. As no other nominations were received Alan Alesbury was duly elected as Deputy Chair of the Planning Committee until the next meeting on 10 August 2017.

ITEM 3: APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

548. Apologies were received from Gary Marsh and Amber Thacker.

ITEM 4: DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

549. Neville Harrison declared a public service interest in Items 9 & 10 as a member of the South Downs Society which had commented on the applications.
550. Barbara Holyome declared that she personally knew one of the public speakers for Item 10.

ITEM 5: MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 15 JUNE 2017

551. With the correction of Minute 493 to include a full stop in the penultimate bullet point between 'parish' and 'Inclusion', the minutes of the meeting held on 15 June 2017 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

ITEM 6: MATTERS ARISING

552. There were none.

ITEM 7: UPDATES ON PREVIOUS COMMITTEE DECISIONS

553. There were none.

ITEM 8: URGENT ITEMS

554. There were none.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

ITEM 9: SDNP/17/00522/FUL CHALKY LANE (LAND AT BUTTS FARM, BUTTS FARM LANE) BISHOPS WALTHAM

555. The Case Officer presented the application and referred to the update sheet, noting that.
- Following the objection from the County Ecologist, there was a further reason for refusal due to insufficient information being provided in regard to the proposal's impact on ecological receptors.
 - The applicant had not been able to supply this information within the short timescale and was willing to do so.
 - As the application was recommended for refusal principally on landscape grounds the applicant would have the opportunity to address the ecological concerns at a later stage.
556. The following public speakers addressed the Committee:
- Robert Tutton against the proposal on behalf of residents of Butts Farm Lane and Colville Drive.
 - Frederik Dikenson against the proposal on behalf of himself.
 - Roger Belton against the proposal as a resident of Butts Farm Lane.
 - Laura Cox in support of the proposal on behalf of the applicant.
 - Dominic Plumpton in support of the proposal on behalf of the applicant.
 - Sally Taylor in support of the proposal on behalf of herself as the applicant.
557. The Committee considered the report by the Director of Planning (Report PC43/17), the update sheet, the public speaker comments, and commented:
- The site was at the boundary of the National Park in a sensitive location where the character of the landscape became more rural, and the standards of development need to be much higher. It was incumbent on SDNPA to consider the edges of the National Park to avoid inappropriate development creeping in.
 - The importance of the policies of the Winchester District Local Plan (2013), and guidance within the South Downs Integrated Landscape Character Assessment and the Winchester City Council (WCC) Landscape Character Assessment when assessing sites on or close to the National Park's boundary.
 - Public representations had raised concerns that this could become a commercial enterprise, however the development was clearly for private family use.
 - A concern that the change of use to equestrian could result in the need for further additional development such as field shelters.

- The change of use of the land to equestrian use was generally acceptable, and arguably less impactful to residential amenity than a more typical agricultural use.
 - The applicant had worked hard to conceal the building, and the siting of the stable block within a land depression helped to mitigate its visual impact.
 - Their sympathy for the applicant, who had attempted to cooperate, however the current scheme did not meet National Park standards.
 - There could be an opportunity for a better scheme, with a smaller building that was closer in appearance to a more typical stable block.
558. Their concerns regarding:
- The size, scale and mass of the proposed development, which was larger than a typical private stable block, and the impact this could have on the landscape and public right of way.
 - The siting of the building in ‘the Dell’ which had ecological implications, and the use of the chalk pit to mitigate the visual impact of the development was a utilitarian approach.
 - The poor quality of the design and layout, which lacked sensitivity to the landscape character and historical and ecological qualities of the site.
 - The regular planting of the proposed tree screen would be an invasive urban feature and its appearance out of keeping.
 - Cumulative impact of all the combined aspects of the application.
559. In response to questions, officers clarified:
- The bridleways were sited to the North and East of the site and could be accessed via the permissive path through Beechen Copse, which was within the ownership of the applicant.
 - Officers considered that the field shelters would require planning permission, however these did not form part of the current application.
 - The existing fencing was installed prior to the Article 4 Direction, and was therefore permitted development.
 - Details of the proposed access track.
 - The proposed additional enclosures were small and irregular, at odds with the large and regular historical field pattern that was typical for the area. As the hedgerow planting would permanently formalise the enclosures, this was considered to be inappropriate ecological mitigation.
 - The change of use had already taken place, however formed part of the current proposal and could not be considered as a separate decision.
 - The Swanmore appeal decision related to an application further away from the National Park’s boundary, within a different context and landscape character.
560. The Director of Planning highlighted the importance of considering the cumulative impact of development, including that already carried out under permitted development rights and Confirmed that it was correct to include policy RT11 in the reason for refusal.
561. It was proposed and seconded to vote on the officer’s recommendation, and to include within the first reason for refusal additional wording relating to the inappropriateness of the proposed landscape proposals, the final wording of which to be delegated to the Director of Planning in consultation with the Planning Committee Chair. Following a vote, the proposal was carried.
562. **RESOLVED:** SDNP/17/00522/FUL That planning permission be refused for the reason set out in paragraph 10.1 of Report PC43/17 and the 13 July 2017 Update Sheet, and for additional wording to be included in Reason 1 relating to the inappropriateness of the proposed landscape proposals, the final wording of which is delegated to the Director of Planning in consultation with the Planning Committee Chair.

ITEM 10: SDNP/I 6/05360/FUL MANOR FARM, ALRESFORD ROAD, ITCHEN STOKE, SO24 0QT

563. The Case Officer presented the application and referred to the update sheet.
564. The following public speakers addressed the Committee:
- Cllr Jackie Porter against the proposal as the Chair of the Trustees of The Watercress Way.
 - Alex Munday against the proposal on behalf of Mr and Mrs Prior of Itchen Stoke Manor, Itchen Stoke.
 - Rebecca Prior against the proposal on behalf of herself and her family.
 - Jeremy Higgins in support of the proposal as the agent.
 - Francesca Baring in support of the proposal as the operator of the site.
565. The Committee considered the report by the Director of Planning (Report PC44/17), the update sheet, the public speaker comments, and commented:
- Whilst the reason for deferral of the decision had centred on the clarification of three matters, determination of the overall merits of the application remained open to consideration.
 - Paragraph 115 of the NPPF gave great weight to conserving landscape, and National Parks were the highest level of landscape designation.
 - The size of the dressage arena could be commensurate with minimum size standards of such an arena.
 - Their sympathy for the applicant, who appeared to have sound business reasons for the development.
 - There did not appear to be any benefit to the wider local economy.
 - A view that if the Committee were minded to approve the application, a SuDS scheme, a site management plan and landscape design should be secured through condition.
 - Whether the proposal could be considered major development, especially given the local context of the protected landscape, proximity to the National Park boundary, and the Conservation Area.
 - The proposal was harmful regardless of whether it could be considered major development.
 - Contrasting considerations of supporting rural businesses but National Park Purposes are paramount.
566. Their concerns regarding:
- The site's proximity to the National Park boundary, which had been considered with great care by the Inspector.
 - The site was within a Conservation Area, and close to a Listed Building and non-designated heritage asset, where any development should preserve and enhance its setting.
 - Although close to existing buildings and industries, this was a new building in a sensitive location which must be protected.
 - The height, size and scale of the proposed building was excessive, particularly where the land dropped away, and its harmful impact on the landscape character and setting of the Conservation Area.
 - The quality of design should be exemplary given the scale and size of the proposal.
 - Arena building was of an unacceptable utilitarian design.
 - The lack of evidence relating to the alternative sites considered.
 - Regardless of whether the proposals were considered as major development, the scale of the indoor arena was unacceptable on its own merits.
567. In response to questions, officers clarified:

- Following the deferral of the Committee's decision, a revised scheme had come forward reducing the building's height by 0.9m, the width by 3m, and relocating the isolation unit, however officers considered that the amendments represented a negligible improvement in terms of the overall impact of the scheme and in any case would require re-consultation.
 - If the Committee was minded to approve the application, safeguarding of public access to the Watercress Way could be secured through a S106 agreement.
 - The adjoining application for change of use from agricultural to the keeping of horses recently approved by WCC was related to the current application, and applied to land outside the National Park boundary.
568. The Director of Planning stated that:
- The National Park's Duty, and the direction of its own Planning Policy, meant the consideration of the rural economy was a material consideration in planning decisions, however National Park Policies, and in particular Purpose 1 relating to protection of the landscape, were of primary importance.
 - The Conservation Area was a statutory designation, and due weight must be given to it when determining the application.
 - The Committee could only consider the submitted plans, however if minded to approve the application subject to any amendments the decision could be delegated to the Director of Planning in consultation with the Planning Committee Chair.
 - If minded to refuse the application, the need for the Committee to decide whether the proposal was major development, and if so, to clarify the reasons.
569. It was proposed and seconded to refuse the application for reasons relating to the harmful impact to the landscape due to the scale, bulk, size and design of the proposal, the failure of the proposal to preserve or enhance the Conservation Area, and the failure to safeguard public access to the Watercress Line, through a S106 Legal Agreement, in line with emerging South Downs Local Plan policy, the final wording of which to be delegated to the Director of Planning in consultation with the Planning Committee Chair. Following a vote, the proposal was carried.
570. **RESOLVED:** SDNP/16/05360/FUL: That the application be refused for the following reasons:
1. The harmful impact to the landscape which has the highest level of protection due to the scale, bulk, size and design of the proposal
 2. The failure of the proposal to preserve or enhance the Conservation Area or its setting, and
 3. The failure to safeguard public access to the Watercress Line in line with emerging South Downs Local Plan policy.
- The final form of wording for the reasons for refusal to be delegated to the Director of Planning in consultation with the Planning Committee Chair.
571. Planning Committee member Tom Jones left the meeting at 11.17am.

STRATEGY & POLICY

ITEM 11: QUARTERLY UPDATE ON THE PROGRESS OF NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING

572. The Planning Policy Officer presented an overview to the Committee.
573. The Committee considered the report by the Director of Planning (Report PC45/17) and commented:
- It was pleasing to see the progress being made by so many of the National Park's communities.
 - It was heartening to see that some Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDPs) were seeking to allocate additional housing sites than the number required, indicating in-depth consideration of sites and local housing need.

- The Lewes Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group had thanked and congratulated officers for their pre-submission consultation response, and the work done leading up to this.
574. In response to questions, the Director of Planning clarified:
- Neighbourhood Planning groups wishing to review NDPs that had been made would need to go through the full process again.
 - Clarification would be sought in regard to whether NDPs that failed at examination could address issues raised instead of starting the process again.
 - NDPs were required to be in broad conformity with adopted Local Plans, which have primacy within the Development Plan, including in regard to housing site allocations.
 - Where proposed NDP housing allocations were in conflict with those of the adopted Local Plan, the Local Plan allocations took precedence, however if they were in addition to Local Plan allocations they could be allowed.
 - SDNPA Officers were also assisting other communities in protected landscapes outside the National Park on a commercial basis to progress their NDPs.
575. **RESOLVED:** That the Committee noted the progress to date on the preparation of Neighbourhood Development Plans across the National Park.

ITEM 12: WEST MEON CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

576. The Historic Buildings Officer presented an overview of the West Meon Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan to the Committee.
577. The Committee considered the report by the Director of Planning (Report PC46/17) and commented:
- The significant cumulative effect that minor development or other interventions could have on a Conservation Area.
 - The positive contribution that the Ben Hamilton-Baillie highways scheme had made to the village's continuity and sense of place.
 - Further work to road surfaces should only be carried out if there was sufficient evidence to require it.
 - In regard to Action 3 p131-2:
 - It should not be incumbent on, or at cost to, the SDNPA to carry out any proposed works.
 - The SDNPA may have powers under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act (1990) to require the repair of the church railings, however its listing likely post-dated the damage.
578. **RESOLVED:** That the Committee approved the West Meon Conservation Area and Management Plan attached at Appendix I to Report PC46/17 for the purposes of development management and to inform the wider activities of the South Downs National Park Authority and its partner organisations, subject to the minor amendments to Action 3 as agreed at the meeting, the wording of which is delegated to the Director of Planning.

ITEM 13: TO NOTE THE DATE AND VENUE OF THE NEXT MEETING

579. Thursday 10 August 2017 at 10am at the South Downs Centre, Midhurst.

CHAIR

The meeting closed at 1:05pm.