SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

PLANNING COMMITTEE 11 OCTOBER 2018

Held at: The Memorial Hall, South Downs Centre, North Street, Midhurst at 10:00am.

Present: Heather Baker, David Coldwell, Neville Harrison, Barbara Holyome, Doug Jones, Tom Jones and 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 and Margaret Paren.

Officers: Katie Kam (Solicitor), Richard Sandiford (Senior Committee Officer), Gill Welsman (Committee Officer) and Tim Slaney (Director of Planning).

Also attended by: Rob Ainslie (Development Manager), Stella New (Senior Planner), Heather Lealan (Development Management Lead), Lucy Howard (Planning Policy Manager), Kevin Wright (Planning Policy Officer), Chris Paterson (Communities Lead)

OPENING REMARKS

138. The Chair informed those present that:

- SDNPA Members had a primary responsibility for ensuring that the Authority furthers the National Park Purposes and Duty. Members regarded themselves first and foremost as Members of the Authority, and acted 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: APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

139. Apologies were received from Alun Alesbury, Roger Huxstep and Robert Mocatta.

ITEM 2: DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

140. Neville Harrison declared a public service interest in agenda item 10 as a member representing the Authority on the Lewes Neighbourhood Development Plan Group.

ITEM 3: MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 13 SEPTEMBER 2018

141. The minutes of the meeting held on 13 September 2018 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

ITEM 4: MATTERS ARISING

142. There were none.

ITEM 5: UPDATES ON PREVIOUS COMMITTEE DECISIONS

143. There were none.

ITEM 6: URGENT ITEMS

144. There were none.

ITEM 7: SDNP/18/00643/FUL - LAND SOUTH OF A272, COWDRAY PARK, EASEBOURNE, GU29 0AY

145. The Case Officer presented the application and referred to the update sheet.

146. The following public speakers addressed the Committee:

- Jonathan Russell spoke in support of the application representing Cowdray Estate.
- Adam Coxen spoke in support of the application representing Treehouse Retreats.
- Andy Payne spoke in support of the application representing Blue Forest.

147. The Committee considered the report by the Director of Planning (Report PC63/18), the update sheet, the public speaker comments, and requested clarification as follows:

- That the treehouses were accessible for disabled users.
- Whether the Cowdray Estate was currently producing a Whole Estate Plan.

- If there was a boundary around the woodland to prevent visitors from dispersing across the wider estate.
- Whether there were any historical records relating to the nature of the woodland being part of the listed garden but not designed.
- If the woodland was ancient.

148. In response to questions, officers clarified:

- That several units had level access into the treehouses from the central track.
- There was currently no Whole Estate Plan being prepared by the estate.
- The area would be fenced in order to ensure dogs could be contained, this could be covered as a condition via the landscape plan.
- The woodland was not ancient.
- The Historic Buildings Officer had confirmed that the woodland was part of the overall design of the historic park.

149. The Committee discussed and debated the application, making the following comments:

- There was support, in principle, for a development of this type in this location.
- Where there was a conflict between the two purposes of the National Park, Purpose 1 took precedence.
- The proposal would benefit both the local economy and the Estate.
- Support for the principle of the proposal with regard to use and management of the woodland and the positive impact for the local economy and community.
- There were issues raised by the landscape, woodland and heritage officers which needed to be further addressed.
- The design could be further improved; less dense, more sensitive to the context of the surrounding and the immediate surroundings; increased use of local timber.
- There was a balancing issue between providing new holiday accommodation against impact of new buildings in the National Park.
- The proposal had a lack of sensitivity for the setting of a National Park.
- Technical issues had been well addressed, the treehouses would be built without harming the woodland and trees, however the overall impact of scale and associated paraphernalia needed to be further addressed.
- There was a need for the woodland to be managed. The report highlighted that management of the woodland would be led by public safety and not by the protection of species, biodiversity or in the best interests of woodland conservation.
- The proposal would improve the woodland and assist diversification for the estate.
- There was no opposition for the proposal from the Parish Council, several statutory consultees and the public.
- The proposal was not landscape led, sustainable woodland management practices were currently not present.
- Further discussion with officers could result in an outstanding scheme being proposed which could be a beacon development for National Parks.
- This was the first proposal of this kind in the National Park, it was important to ensure the best design was implemented.
- The presence of a Whole Estate Plan could have given further context to the proposal and supported a more sensitive approach which was landscape led.
- There were currently too many points of conflict with National Park policies and no demonstration of conserving and enhancing biodiversity or priority habitats.

150. It was proposed and seconded to vote on the officer's recommendation.

151. **RESOLVED**: That planning permission be refused for the reasons set out in paragraph 10.1 of the report.

ITEM 8: SJ/981471 & SJ/98/1472 - MINERAL SITE COMPLIANCE AND MONITORING – MINSTED SANDPIT

152. The Case Officer presented the application, referred to the update sheet and advised the Committee of information that had been submitted after the update sheet had been published.

153. The following public speakers addressed the Committee:

- Jane Crawford spoke against the application representing John Griffiths, a Minsted resident.
- Michael Crawford spoke against the application representing himself as a member of the Minsted Residents Group.
- Peter Earl spoke against the application representing Minsted Residents Group.

154. There was a further declaration of a public service interest from Barbara Holyome, who was acquainted with Peter Earl (former Monitoring Officer of the SDNPA).

155. The Committee considered the report by the Director of Planning (Report PC64/18), the update sheet, the public speaker comments, and requested clarification as follows:

- Further detail on the late submitted information.
- When the current operator had taken control of the site and if control had been taken before the suspension order came into force.
- Whether the issuing of a prohibition order eliminated the restoration condition on the extant approval.
- If deadlines could be imposed for the submission of information required for the ROMP.
- Whether the cost of preparing the necessary reports were a material consideration in dealing with this application.
- Speakers had highlighted that restoration proposals had been prejudiced by workings on site. Was the proposed restoration in doubt due to the current state of the site?
- If the suspension order had a timescale.

156. In response to questions, officers clarified:

- The information submitted late highlighted a change with regard to the amount of reserves within the site. The revision, which was in draft form and based on evidence from a detailed site survey, report around 170,000 tonnes of reserves left on site (approximately 2 years of reserves), a revision to the previous figure of 480,000 tonnes. A ROMP review would further assess the revised figure.
- The operator took ownership in around 2004.
- Part of the prohibition order would ensure restoration of the site.
- The costs of producing the necessary reports were not a material consideration to the ROMP application. The operator continued to pay for reports to be produced, indicating an intention to continue working the site.
- A deadline for submission of information in relation to the ROMP would be helpful. Reports produced to this point required considerable time frames to compile, the outstanding required information would have shorter deadlines to reach submission.
- The operator claimed that restoration could still be achieved. A Landscape Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) would give a renewed base line in regard to the new figures of reserves which would form part of a ROMP application.
- The Environmental Impact Assessment Regulation (2011), which applied to this suspension order, stated that the extension timescales were at the discretion of mineral planning authority. Additional time could be granted when there was a clear timescale. The Suspension Order prevented further ecological harm.

157. The Committee discussed and debated the application, making the following comments:

- This was largely a procedural matter.
- As information for the ROMP was still being submitted it was difficult to suggest that the ROMP had stalled, however a current timeframe of 6 years was not satisfactory.

- Suggested that a reasonable time limit be added to the recommendation for all information in relation to the ROMP, to be submitted for consideration by the Committee.
- The ROMP had not stalled so suspension should be maintained within the deadline.
- There was a potential conflict of information between workability and viability of the site and its restoration. Further suspension of the site could delay restoration.

158. The Director of Planning commented that the suspension order that was currently in place would remain until it was lifted. A timeframe of 9 months for submission of information in relation to the ROMP application was advised. A prohibition order could be considered by the Committee in 9 months dependent upon progress on the ROMP application, which should have been submitted to the Authority for consideration.

159. It was proposed and seconded to vote on the officer's recommendation, with the final wording to be delegated to the Director of Planning and Chair of the Planning Committee.

160. **RESOLVED**:

1. That the Suspension Order for the working of minerals at Minsted Sandpit be maintained; and
2. That the Planning Committee confirm that the Review of Mineral Planning Permission (SDNP/13/06169/ROMP), had not stalled and therefore the site should not at this time be subject to a Prohibition Order to prevent further mineral working.
3. That a report be brought back in 9 months time regarding progress on the ROMP application.

161. Margaret Paren and Norman Dingemans joined the meeting at 11:25.

ITEM 9: LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

162. The Planning Policy Manager presented an overview to the Committee.

163. The Committee considered the report by the Director of Planning (Report PC65/18) and requested clarification as follows:

- Confirmation that the dates for the Arun Local Plan listed on page 63 were correct.
- If there was an expectation on parishes to notify the National Park when they were updating their Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDPs).
- Whether the technical supporting documents were open to scrutiny or just brought in as evidence as necessary.

164. In response to questions, officers clarified:

- The reference to the saved policies of the Arun Local Plan was correct but the reference to the new plan that only relates to the District outside the National Park should be deleted.
- NDPs were not part of the Local Development Scheme. NDP's had a renewal time frame of 5 years. Any updates to Local Plan would trigger a review of an NDP.
- There was a core document library for technical documents. All appropriate supporting documents were submitted alongside the Local Plan and would also be examined.

165. It was proposed and seconded to vote on the officer's recommendation.

166. **RESOLVED**: The Committee approved the Local Development Scheme (Sixth Revision) as set out in Appendix 1.

ITEM 10: QUARTERLY NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN UPDATE

167. The Planning Policy Officer presented an overview to the Committee and referred to the update sheet.

168. The Committee considered the report by the Director of Planning (Report PC66/18), requested clarification and commented as follows:

- Whether the Twyford NDP had stalled.
- Thanks were extended to all the communities and Officers that were involved in NDPs.

- Whether there was an interactive map on the website to show the status of individual plans.
- That it was good to see that the National Park were working with communities outside the NP boundary.
- There had been very positive input from the examiner on the Lewes NDP. The examiner had set out a clear route map and all was going well.

169. In response to questions, officers clarified:

- Twyford had identified their preferred site which had both benefits and concerns. The NDP had not yet progressed to pre-submission as there were ongoing discussions in relation to flood management. Strategic and environmental assessments have slowed the process.
- The interactive map was under development which would take users direct to individual plans and show where there are reviews in progress.

170. The Director of Planning expressed his thanks to Alma Howell for all her hard work on the Lewes NDP.

171. It was proposed and seconded to vote on the Officer recommendation.

172. **RESOLVED**: The Committee noted the progress to date on the preparation of Neighbourhood Development Plans across the National Park.

ITEM 11: TO NOTE THE DATE AND VENUE OF THE NEXT MEETING

173. Thursday 8 November 2018 at 10am at the South Downs Centre, Midhurst.

CHAIR

The meeting closed at 11:50.