

SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

PLANNING COMMITTEE 13 August 2020

Held: online via Zoom videoconferencing, at 10am.

Present: Alun Alesbury (Chair), Heather Baker, Janet Duncton, Thérèse Evans, Barbara Holyome, Diana van der Klugt, Gary Marsh, William Meyer, Vanessa Rowlands and Andrew Shaxson

Officers: Tim Slaney (Director of Planning), Rob Ainslie (Development Manager), Mike Hughes (Major Planning Projects and Performance Manager), Lucy Howard (Planning Policy Manager), Becky Moutrey (Solicitor), Richard Sandiford (Senior Governance Officer) and Sara Osman (Governance Officer).

Also attended by: Jane Rarok (Development Management Officer), Stella New (Senior Development Management Officer), Kevin Wright (Planning Policy Officer), Mark Waller-Gutierrez (Specialist Lead).

OPENING REMARKS

53. The Chair welcomed new Members to the meeting and informed those present that:
- Due to the current Coronavirus pandemic full meetings were not able to be held at the Memorial Hall until further notice, hence the meeting of the South Downs National Park Authority was held using the Zoom Cloud Meetings software.
 - 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 purpose
54. The Senior Governance Officer confirmed the Members of the Planning Committee who were present, that the meeting was quorate and reminded Members of the protocol that would be followed during the online meeting.
55. The Chair reminded 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 would act in the best interests of the National Park as a whole, rather than as representatives of their appointing body or any interest groups.

ITEM 1: APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

56. Apologies were received from Robert Mocatta.

ITEM 2: DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

57. Diana van der Klugt raised a non-prejudicial, public service interest in item 8 as she was the Councillor for the Pulborough, Coldwaltham and Amberley ward where the site was situated. She had attended meetings of the Amberley Parish Council but had not been to any planning meetings or been privy to discussions on planning items. One of the speakers was a Councillor for Amberley Parish Council and was known to her.
58. Alun Alesbury, Barbara Holyome and Andrew Shaxson declared a non-prejudicial interest in item 10 as one of the speakers, Jane Cecil, was known to them.

ITEM 3: MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 9 JULY 2020

59. The minutes of the previous meeting held on 9 July 2020 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

ITEM 4: MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

60. There were none.



ITEM 5: UPDATES ON PREVIOUS COMMITTEE DECISIONS

61. Appeals for the following items had been submitted to Planning Inspectorate:

- SDNP/19/04720/FUL - Land rear 34 Lavant Street, Petersfield
- SDNP/19/01876/FUL - Soldiers Field House, Findon
- SDNP/18/05444/FUL - Garden Street Auction Rooms, Lewes
- SDNP/18/03162/FUL - Eastmead Industrial Estate, Lavant

ITEM 6: URGENT ITEMS

62. There were none.

ITEM 7: SDNP/19/03366/OUT - Plumpton College.

63. The Case Officer presented the application, referred to the update sheet and gave the following verbal update:

- One further letter had been received from a neighbour after the update sheet had been published, raising concerns about ecology and the impact on listed buildings. These concerns had been addressed in the Officer's report.

64. The following public speakers addressed the Committee:

- Mike Barber spoke in support of the application representing the applicant.

65. The Committee considered the report by the Director of Planning (Report PC20/21-06), the update sheet and the public speaker comments, and requested clarification as follows:

- What would be the colour scheme and nature of the roofs of the pig units? Would they be visible in the landscape and would there be any screening on the northern boundary?
- How prominent would the building on site 10 be in the landscape on the northern boundary?
- Where there were plans for extensions to buildings, could they be considered on their own merit in terms of achieving BREEAM Excellent, or would they have to be considered in the context of the whole building and therefore only achieve BREEAM Very Good, as stated in the report?
- Would the provision of staff accommodation be retained in perpetuity?
- The provision for student accommodation was considered small in relation to number of students at the college. Would more provision of accommodation be needed at a later stage?
- Clarification that the 'precedent' images in the Officer's presentation for later phases of the development were purely illustrative, and not definitive versions of what was proposed for these parts of the site?

66. In response to questions, Officers clarified:

- The pig units would be an extension of existing buildings and would square off the current site. They would be smaller than, and reflect the materials of, the current buildings on site, and conditions were in place to cover materials that could be used. They would be visible in the landscape but no more than the existing buildings currently were. Native hedges and tree planting were proposed to enclose the buildings of the pig unit.
- The buildings on site 10 would cover the same area as the existing footprint and be contained well within the northern perimeter road. Whilst it would be visible, it would not appear incongruous in its location and would be read as part of the campus development. Tree planting would be conditioned.

- In order for the extensions to the main building to respect the character of the building, and be of like material, it meant that they would not meet BREEAM Excellent rating but would achieve BREEAM Very Good status.
- The staff accommodation would be retained in perpetuity and this would be secured by the S106 legal agreement.
- There was a waiting list for student accommodation and 91 beds had been proposed based on the college's calculation of need over the 7 years of this proposal. Whilst it was not possible to say whether there would be future additional demand for accommodation, any future application would need to be judged on its merits.
- The images provided for Phases 2, 3 and 4 were illustrative only. Details would come forward at the reserved matters stage.

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

- Members welcomed that all new build would attain the BREEAM excellent standard; that there would be a 66% biodiversity net gain; that thought had been put into lighting provision on the site; and that ducting would be put in place to future-proof for electric vehicle charging provision.
- The scheme was considered to be a significant improvement on the site in general, and specifically an improvement to the existing car parking layout.
- Securing the cycle path along the east of the site was welcomed but it was noted that much work would have to be done outside of this application for this to link right through to Plumpton Railway Station.
- Members emphasised the need to ensure screening of the pig units and the use of appropriate colour schemes (with a dark coloured roof being preferred), which would be managed through the details of the conditions.
- It was noted that, as the building on site 10 would be prominent in the landscape, its design should reflect the nature and traditions of buildings in the Sussex landscape.

68. It was proposed and seconded that the application be approved.

69. **RESOLVED:**

1) That planning permission be granted subject to:

- The completion of a S106 legal agreement, the final form of which is delegated to the Director of Planning, to secure the following:
 - a) Staff accommodation occupation restrictions limiting the occupation of the dwellings to persons solely or mainly employed at the College
 - b) Provision of a Landscape & Ecological Management Plan (LEMP)
 - c) Secure the use of the existing cycle path along the eastern boundary for the future use of cyclists and equestrians
 - d) Travel plan & Travel Plan Audit Fee, and bus control measures for the Estate Road
 - e) Highways works in accordance with a Section 278 agreement (including bus stop and junction improvements)
 - f) The phasing of the development and associated studies
- The completion of further ecological surveys regarding bats on site and provision of a suitable, policy compliant, mitigation and enhancement ecological strategy to the satisfaction of the SDNPA, the consideration of which is delegated to the Director of Planning; and

- The conditions as set out in paragraph 10.2 of the Officer's report and any additional conditions, the form of which is delegated to the Director of Planning, to address any mitigation matters that arise from the completion of the further ecological surveys.
- 2) That authority be delegated to the Director of Planning to refuse the application with appropriate reasons if:
- a) The S106 Agreement is not completed or sufficient progress has not been made within 6 months of the 13 August 2020 Planning Committee meeting.
 - b) The additional ecological surveys and provision of a suitable policy compliant mitigation and enhancement strategy is not completed or sufficiently progressed within 6 months of the 13 August 2020 Planning Committee meeting.
70. The meeting adjourned for a 5-minute comfort break. On resumption of the meeting the Senior Governance Officer confirmed the Members of the Planning Committee who were present and that the meeting was quorate.

ITEM 8: SDNP/19/05270/OUT Pickwick, Amberley.

71. The Case Officer presented the application, referred to the update sheet and gave the following verbal update:
- One further request for clarification had been received from a Member asking whether the applicants were the same applicants for the approved application adjoining the site (SDNP/19/04886/FUL - Land adjacent to Strawberry Villas). The Officer confirmed that they were not the same applicant.
72. The following public speakers addressed the Committee:
- Peter Cozens spoke against the application representing Amberley Parish Council.
 - James Thorns spoke in support of the application as the applicant
 - Robert Gifford von Schiller spoke in support of the application as the agent.
73. Members were reminded that as this was an outline application, they were not considering design or layout at this stage, but were considering the principle of 7 dwellings on this site. The design and layout of the housing would come before the Committee at the reserved matters stage.
74. The Committee considered the report by the Director of Planning (Report PC20/21-07), the update sheet and the public speaker comments, and requested clarification as follows:
- What options were available for pedestrian connection from the site to the Millennium Fields and the rest of the village? Could access be provided via the as yet unbuilt Strawberry Villas development site, via the playing fields to the east of the site or to the west along the frontage onto the Turnpike Road?
 - What was the position in regard to settlement housing numbers required by the Local Plan, where these have already been met?
75. In response to questions, Officers clarified:
- The site did not have a pedestrian link to the rest of the settlement, other than via the highway verge, however access would be determined at the reserved matters stage and the applicant would need to demonstrate that they could provide access to main village, millennium green and playing grounds. Condition 29 stipulated that no works could commence until a scheme of pedestrian access had been submitted and agreed.
 - The site was within the settlement boundary. Applications should still be considered whether or not a housing target had been reached, and this was not a reason to refuse dwellings coming forward.

76. The Committee discussed and debated the application, making the following comments:
- Members recognised that whilst Amberley had met its allocations for housing in the South Downs Local Plan, this did not prevent further development proposals coming forward.
 - They further recognised that, as this was an outline application, they must be satisfied as to the in-principle acceptability of the amount and type of development proposed, the ability to mitigate any ecological impacts and whether safe access was achievable in principle.
 - The site was considered a key gateway site at the entrance to Amberley approaching from the East, and that it was visible from the South Downs Way, which ran along the Downs to the south of the site.
 - Concern was raised about safe vehicular access with a higher volume of traffic turning into and out of the site from the Turnpike Road. Traffic speed was a concern and Members questioned whether the speed limit could be moved further east along Turnpike Road to ensure a lower speed at the junction to the site. However, it was recognised that this was the domain of the Highways Authority, who had not objected to the proposal, subject to conditions.
 - Whilst Members raised concerns that the Landscape Officer had objected to the application, it was generally considered that up to 7 dwellings could be accommodated. An appropriate landscape led scheme at the reserved matters stage could be an improvement and enhancement of the current site.
 - However, it was considered that with a significant number of dwellings on the site, a scheme for pedestrian access to the village, and for safe vehicular access, would be important at the reserved matters stage.
 - Members were pleased that the outline planning permission included a legal agreement to ensure compliance with policy SD28 on affordable housing provision.
 - It was proposed to amend the wording of the second recommendation to clarify ^{if} ~~that~~ the legal agreement relating to provision of affordable housing should not make sufficient progress within 6 months.
77. Gary Marsh left meeting due to technical issues and although he re-joined 5 minutes later, was unable to vote on this application.
78. It was proposed and seconded to vote on the officer's recommendations, subject to the amendment to condition 11 as set out in the Update Sheet, and subject to the following amendment to the second recommendation:
- That authority be delegated to the Director of Planning to refuse the application with appropriate reasons if the legal agreement relating to the provision of affordable housing is not completed or sufficient progress made within 6 months of the Planning Committee meeting of 13 August 2020.
79. **RESOLVED:**
- 1) That planning permission be granted subject to the conditions set out in paragraph 10.1 of the Officer's report and the Update Sheet, and a legal agreement to secure two affordable dwellings;
 - 2) That authority be delegated to the Director of Planning to refuse the application with appropriate reasons if the legal agreement relating to the provision of affordable housing is not completed or sufficient progress not made within 6 months of the Planning Committee meeting of 13 August 2020.

80. The meeting adjourned for a 5-minute comfort break. On resumption of the meeting the Senior Governance Officer confirmed the Members of the Planning Committee who were present and that the meeting was quorate.

ITEM 9: SDNP/20/01676/FUL - Ditchling Rugby Club.

81. The Case Officer presented the application, referred to the update sheet and gave the following verbal update:
- One further point of clarification had been received regarding access via the Drove. The Officer responded that access via the Drove had been addressed in the previous application and no further objections had been received.
82. The following public speakers addressed the Committee:
- Donald McBeth spoke against the application representing Ditchling Parish Council.
83. The Committee considered the report by the Director of Planning (Report PC20/21-08), the update sheet and the public speaker comments, and requested clarification as follows:
- That the Member debate should focus on the reason for temporary permission and whether it could be made permanent and not on any conditions that may have led to permission being sought previously.
 - As there was a known archaeological monument on the site was the sustainable drainage solutions listed in condition 9iii sufficient or was there a need for an archaeological condition should more engineered draining works be required?
84. In response to questions, Officers clarified:
- Temporary permission had been granted, and the Application before Members was to discuss whether the temporary permission could be made permanent. If there were substantial issues of concern regarding the temporary permission, or any new issues that need to be addressed, Members could overturn a temporary permission but should have good reasons to do so.
 - Condition 9iii was considered appropriate in this case. Any sustainable drainage scheme that came forward should not require substantial excavation works and therefore an archaeological condition was not needed. However, archaeology could be addressed by an informative stating that, should physical works be required, a) it would need planning permission and b) given the archaeology on the site, archaeological mitigation measures would be required.
85. The Committee discussed and debated the application, making the following comments:
- Members discussed the suggestion from the Parish Council that the previous decision had been reached improperly. They concluded that the decision to grant temporary permission had been fairly reached and based on sound advice. It had not been taken to a Judicial Review and there had not been any contraventions of the conditions which could prevent the temporary condition being continued.
 - Members noted the concerns from the local Parish Council and Landscape Officer regarding the impact on the landscape and preserving the strategic gap between Ditchling and Keymer villages. However, whilst the Members had a duty to preserve and enhance the landscape, they also had a duty to promote understanding and enjoyment of the Park. It was agreed that, on-balance, there would not be significant harm to the area and there would be many benefits to the community.
 - It was commented that improvements could be made to the visual impact of the entrance and signage to car park from the main road.
86. It was proposed and seconded that the application be approved.

87. **RESOLVED:** That permission be granted, subject to the conditions set out at paragraph 10.1 of the Officer's report.
88. The meeting adjourned for a 5-minute comfort break. On resumption of the meeting the Senior Governance Officer confirmed the Members of the Planning Committee who were present and that the meeting was quorate.

ITEM 10: SDNP/19/06071/FUL - The Old Pub Car Park, Slindon.

89. The Case Officer presented the application and referred to the update sheet.
90. The following public speakers addressed the Committee:
- Jane Cecil spoke against the application representing The National Trust.
 - Mr Charles Fuente spoke in support of the application as the applicant.
91. The Committee considered the report by the Director of Planning (Report PC20/21-09), the update sheet and the public speaker comments, and requested clarification as follows:
- Should this application be considered alongside the approved and built out scheme for Leigh Cottage and the Old Stables? The Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) stated that should two or more separate planning applications come forward within 5 years for adjacent sites within the same ownership and/or which have a clear functional link, the SDNPA may conclude that the developments should be considered as a single scheme.
 - Were any of the properties in the vicinity of this scheme owned by the National Trust?
 - Were the objections from the Historic Buildings and Landscape Officer as a result of the scheme not being demonstratively informed by a landscape led approach?
92. In response to questions, Officers clarified:
- The application for Leigh Cottage and the Old Stables was approved over 5 years previously and so did not need to be considered as a single scheme.
 - The National Trust owned Vine Cottage and 32 & 33 Lodge Road.
 - Insufficient landscape evidence and analysis had led to the concerns raised by the Historic Buildings and Landscape Officers. However, whilst the scheme did not demonstrate a landscape-led approach, the scheme had been assessed by the Case Officer on its own merits, and the proposal was considered, on balance, to be acceptable from design, landscape and heritage perspectives.
93. The Committee discussed and debated the application, making the following comments:
- Members acknowledged that there was a need for 2-bedroom houses across the country, and that 2-bedroom cottages would be an asset to the village.
 - There was concern that both the Historic Buildings and Landscape Officers had objected to the application, and specifically the Landscape Officer's comments that the building bore no relationship to the access route. Some Members felt that the scheme could be improved with a different layout.
 - However, it was noted that, on balance, officers had discussed the layout and orientation with developers, and were satisfied that this scheme put forward the best placement for the dwellings in facing them out onto the Recreation Ground and was in accordance with the development plan.
 - The proposal was considered an improvement to the carpark that currently existed.
94. It was proposed and seconded that the application be approved.

95. **RESOLVED:** That planning permission be granted subject to the conditions set out in paragraph 10.1 of the officer's report.
96. The meeting adjourned for a 5-minute comfort break. On resumption of the meeting the Senior Governance Officer confirmed the Members of the Planning Committee who were present and that the meeting was quorate.
97. Ian Phillips joined the meeting and William Meyer left the meeting.

ITEM 11: Parking Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) consultation

98. The Planning Policy Officer reminded Members of the report content and referred to the update sheet.
99. The Committee considered the report by the Director of Planning (Report PC20/21-10) and requested clarification as follows:
- Would a 12-week consultation be more acceptable, in light of covid-19 emergency?
 - Could a garage in a proposed dwelling be considered a habitable room and be counted in the parking calculator?
 - Using the parking calculator, would a development in a town not be allowed as many parking spaces as a similar, rural development?
 - Could the Parking SPD be considered in conflict with Policy SD22 in the South Downs Local Plan, which covered Parking Provision?
 - Whilst the Parking SPD made it clear that all parking must be landscape led, could wording to be added to ensure that parking should also enhance and make a positive contribution to the wider landscape?
100. In response to questions, Officers clarified:
- Officers had considered extending the length of the consultation but had not been convinced that any benefit would be gained by extending it to 12 weeks.
 - A garage would be counted as a habitable area as it could be converted to a room without further planning permission. A small garage was not included as an allocated parking space. Parking provision should always be considered in the context of the wider landscape.
 - The parking calculator made an allowance for the type of area the development was situated because research showed that parking need was different depending on where people lived. Therefore, it was possible that a development in a town did not need as many parking spaces as a similar, rural development.
 - The South Downs Local Plan provided a policy hook for the SPD by referring to parking standards for the locality. The number of spaces required for a development was calculated when an application was being decided. The Parking SPD would make it easier to work out how many spaces were needed.
 - The design of parking provision, and whether it would make a positive contribution to the wider landscape, was to be covered in a 'Design SPD' which would come before the Committee at a later date.
101. The Committee discussed and debated the SPD, making the following comments:
- Members welcomed this document and noted that the Parking Calculator would be a useful tool.
102. It was proposed to extend the consultation from 8 to 12 weeks, but Members agreed it should remain an 8-week consultation.
103. It was proposed and seconded to vote on the Officer's recommendation.

104. **RESOLVED:** The Committee:

- 1) Approved the draft Guidance on Parking for Residential and Non-Residential Development Supplementary Planning Document for public consultation
- 2) Delegated to the Director of Planning, in consultation with the Planning Committee Chair, authority to make further minor changes to the SPD prior to public consultation.

105. Gary Marsh left the meeting.

ITEM 12: Adoption of the Sustainable Construction Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

106. The Specialist Lead reminded Members of the report content.

107. The Committee considered the report by the Director of Planning (Report PC20/21-11) and requested clarification as follows:

- That Members were voting to adopt the Sustainable Construction SPD as it was without proposing further amendments?
- Did the SPD set the highest standards, as far as it was able to within constraints set by the Government?
- Would this document be reviewed and updated at regular intervals?
- How many Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points were required per dwelling?

108. In response to questions, Officers clarified:

- Members could either adopt or reject the SPD before them, or suggest amendments. Any consequential amendments to the SPD would mean that it would need to go out for further consultation.
- Whilst certain targets were constricted by Government Guidance, where there was flexibility the highest possible, evidence-based standards had been set.
- The SPD could be reviewed at any point to enable it to reflect any subsequent Government changes. Additionally, the South Downs Local Plan and its policies would be reviewed within 5 years from adoption
- All new residential dwellings, where feasible, should have 1 electric vehicle charging point.

109. Ian Phillips left the meeting due to technical difficulties and re-joined 5 minutes later.

110. The Committee discussed and debated the SPD, making the following comments:

- Members welcomed this document and congratulated the team on producing a well presented and accessible document.
- Members asked for more clarity and consistency on the number of Electric Vehicle charging points needed per development type listed on the Summary of Requirements table.
- The following typographical errors were noted:
 - Page 288-289 (Single Dwelling Sustainability Chart): Errors were noted in the numbering of the footnotes (1-4);
 - Page 306 (Glossary): in the listing for 'BRE' the word 'with' should state 'which' to read "The Building Research Establishment (BRE) is a multi-disciplinary, building science centre **which** is focussed on how to improve buildings and infrastructure..."

111. It was proposed and seconded to note the content of the Consultation Statement and adopt the Sustainable Construction SPD, subject to the typographical amendments noted above.

112. **RESOLVED:** The Committee:

- 1) Noted the content of the Consultation Statement (Appendix 1 of the Officer's report);
and
- 2) Adopted the revised Sustainable Construction SPD (Appendix 2 of the Officer's report).

113: The Chair closed the meeting at 4.30pm.

CHAIR

Signed:

