

**HASSOCKS PARISH COUNCIL****Minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting held on 16 May 2016 at 7.30pm in the Parish Centre, Adastra Park, Hassocks**

Present: Cllrs Leslie Campbell (Chair)  
Jane Baker  
Judith Foot  
Bill Hatton  
Sue Hatton  
Nick Owen  
Victoria Standfast  
Carol Wise

In Attendance: Tracy Bates – Acting Assistant Clerk  
23 Members of the Public

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN FOR 2016/17**

**16/329**      **RESOLVED** to elect Cllr Leslie Campbell as Chairman for 2016/17.

**16/330**      **RESOLVED** to elect Cllr Nick Owens as Vice Chair for 2016/17.

**MINUTES**

**16/331**      **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 25 April 2016 as confirmed be signed by the Chairman.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Claire Tindall of 14 The Spinney, Hassocks, spoke on behalf of the Friars Oak Fields Residents Association (FOFRA) against application DM/15/0626 Land to the Rear of Friars Oak, London Road, Hassocks BN6 9NA (Comments attached – Appendix 1).



## APPLICATIONS

**DM/15/0626 Land To The Rear of Friars Oak, London Road, Hassocks, BN6 9NA. Hybrid planning application comprising outline application for access only for residential development of 130 dwellings consisting of 12 no. 2 bed houses, 47no. 3 bed houses and 44no. 4 bed houses and associated access, together with change of use of part of land to form country open space. (Description amended 15/4/16) (Revised plans received 18/4/16 showing a reduction in the number of proposed dwellings, an amended access plan, a revised Flood Risk Assessment and a Revised Flood Modelling report).(Previous HPC comments attached for information)**  
**Response: Recommend Refusal.**

**The following statement sets out the reasons why the Parish Council recommends that this application be refused.**

**Consideration of the application against the Policies of the Regulation 14 Neighbourhood Plan for Hassocks.**

1 The Planning Statement submitted with the application is dated February 2015. It has not been amended in the intervening period. It is now completely out of date. Having said this it does contain some merit as it recognises that neighbourhood plans gain weight as material planning considerations as they progress down the path laid down in the Regulations.

2 In para 23 it is stated that:-

" the NP is currently not at an advanced stage. National Guidance in the PPG states that prior to the local authority publicity period of the NP process NPs will not carry substantive weight in development management decisions. In the present case some weight can be attributed to the evidence base but the Plan – which is not yet published in draft form – must command no weight. This situation will change as progressive stages of the NP preparation are reached.

3 The situation has now changed completely. On the 8<sup>th</sup> December 2015 the Parish Council resolved to adopt the Regulation 14 Draft Plan. This Plan contains a full range of policies formulated after very intensive public involvement. Since September 2014 three separate consultation events have been held including public meetings attended by several hundred people.



**4 The Regulation 14 Plan must therefore carry a great deal of weight in the assessment of applications for housing development**

5 The community was asked to express an order of preference for the 15 potential development sites (with the most preferred as 1 and the least 15). The site of this application was ranked 13 out of 15 by 1,045 respondents. **The essence of localism is that communities should have the power to choose housing sites which they consider suitable. The site of this application was among the least preferred of all the consultation sites.**

6 The Regulation 14 Plan has now been subjected to the prescribed consultation period and the Parish Council intends to submit the Regulation 16 N Plan to MSDC in June. The District Council is requested to pay special notice to Policy 13 of the Reg 14 Plan which sets out the sites which have been allocated in order to meet the objectively assessed housing need, these are:-

Hassocks Golf Club – up to 130 dwellings

Land to the North of Clayton Mill – up to 140 dwellings

National Tyre Centre - 20 dwellings.

These sites, together with unidentified 'windfall sites', which have equated to an average of 10 dwellings p.a. over the last 5 years, will deliver the assessed need for housing in Hassocks over the Plan Period.

**7 There is no need to release the application site for housing. The proposal is contrary to Policy 13 of the Regulation 14 Draft Neighbourhood Plan.**

#### **Local Gap Policy**

8 The Pre- Submission Draft of the District Plan rescinds the Countryside and Gap Policies of the 2004 Local Plan. Policy DP11 – Preventing Coalescence states, inter alia:-

“ Local Gaps can be identified in Neighbourhood Plans ..... , where there is robust evidence that development within the Gap would individually or cumulatively result in coalescence and the loss of the separate identity and amenity of nearby settlements. Evidence must demonstrate that existing national and local policies cannot provide the necessary protection.”

9 The Parish Council considers that there is a wealth of evidence to support the inclusion of Local Gap Policies in the Neighbourhood Plan. Policies 1 and 2 of the Plan propose the definition of Local Gaps between Hassocks and Burgess Hill and between Hassocks and Hurstpierpoint and Hassocks and Ditchling.



Policy 1 states that a Gap has been defined and will be safeguarded between Burgess Hill and Keymer/Hassocks. This Policy stipulates that development will be supported in the Gap if it is required for agriculture or other use which has to be located in the countryside or will make a valuable contribution to the landscape and amenity of the Gap and would not compromise the integrity of the Gap.

The evidence gathered during the consultation exercise clearly demonstrates that this site is vulnerable and that housing development on it would erode the Gap.

**10 The proposal is therefore contrary to Policy 1 of the Regulation 14 Draft Neighbourhood Plan.**

**Local Green Space Policy**

11 The Parish Council also resolved that a substantial proportion of the application site should be allocated as Local Green Space. Policy 3 of the Plan designates the majority of this site as LGS1. The site is also rich in flora and fauna and much of it is a beautiful water meadow much appreciated locally.

**12 This proposal which would destroy this habitat is contrary to Policy 3 of the Regulation 14 Draft Neighbourhood Plan.**

**The Stonepound Crossroads Air Quality Management Area (AQMA)**

13 All potential housing sites were subject to sustainability appraisals and the impact of the developments on the Stonepound AQMA was a key component of this exercise. The appraisal for this site noted that the southeast of the site would be some 1km from the AQMA. Development would be likely to increase queuing at the Stonepound Crossroads and so worsen air quality relative to the position if the site were to remain undeveloped.

**14 Since this site is not required to meet local housing need the proposal is contrary to Policy 7 of the Regulation 14 Draft Neighbourhood Plan.**

**Unsuitability for development due to flooding.**

15 The Herring Stream flows along the western boundary and regularly floods a substantial part of the site. This provides a valuable flood plain and protects areas downstream. It is completely unsuitable for housing development. Also, in the view of the Parish Council the highway works proposed for the access to the site from the A273 would act as a dam and increase the risk of flooding to the north of the site. The Parish Council



notes that the Environment Agency continue to oppose development on the site.

**16 The proposal would increase the risk of flooding in the vicinity and further downstream . It is also contrary to local and national policy which is to protect flood plains.**

#### **Proximity to dangerous railway crossing**

17 The site adjoins the main London Brighton Railway and there is an un-controlled railway crossing directly to the east of the site. Trains travelling at very high speeds go over this crossing every few minutes throughout the day. The sustainability appraisal noted that this site is relatively remote from village services and facilities and that the most direct pedestrian access to village facilities would be via this crossing. There are clearly the most serious health and safety issues here with the strong possibility that children would use this crossing to get to school and visit friends in the main part of the village. In the view of the Parish Council this would lead to serious accidents and, almost certainly, fatalities.

**18 The proposal would create an increase in the number of people, mainly children, using the uncontrolled crossing over the London to Brighton Railway. This would create a high risk of injury or death to those using the crossing and permission should be refused for this reason.**

#### **Consideration of the application against the National Planning Policy Framework**

19 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was adopted in March 2012 and sets out the Government's planning policies. The NPPF must be taken into account in the preparation of local and neighbourhood plans and is a material consideration in planning decisions. At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

20 Paragraph 6 of the NPPF states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to sustainable development. Para 14 states that the achievement of sustainable development is a "golden thread" running through the decision making process. It identifies, Para 7, that there are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental and that the planning system must therefore perform a number of roles:

An economic role – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy;

A social role – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities.



An environmental role – protecting and enhancing the environment.

21 Another paragraph upon which the applicants place great reliance is Para 47 which requires Local Planning Authorities to identify a five year supply of deliverable sites against their housing requirements. MSDC cannot demonstrate this supply although revisions to the Pre- Submission Draft District Plan aim to achieve this.

In any event the Parish Council have ensured that careful account has been taken of the NPPF throughout the preparation of the Regulation 14 Neighbourhood Plan and that this Plan provides sufficient housing to meet local need and achieve sustainable development.

22 This site is not required to meet local housing need. It has not been selected for development after extensive consultation in accordance with paragraphs 183 – 185 of the NPPF. It would involve the unnecessary destruction of countryside in the Local Gap between Hassocks and Burgess Hill. The proposal therefore fails the test set by the NPPF in that the adverse impacts outweigh the benefits provided by new housing. It does not constitute sustainable development and is therefore contrary to Paragraph 14 of the NPPF.

**DM/16/1616 37 Fir Tree Way, Hassocks, BN6 8BU. Proposed first floor extension. Response: Recommend Approval.**

**DM/16/1686 17 The Crescent, Hassocks, BN6 8RB. Oak (T1) crown reduction 3.5-4m. False Acacia (T2) crown lift to 4m. Group of Sycamores (G3) crown reduction 4m. Two sycamores (T4 and T5) sectional fell. Three Conifers (T6, T7 and T8) sectional fell. Two Sycamores (T9 and T10) fell. Fig Tree (T11) reduce by 1.5m.**

**Response: Recommend Approval.**

**DM/16/1690 75 Dale Avenue, Hassocks, BN6 8LR. Pitched roof rear extension with rooms in roof space and front and side facing roof dormers. To include side entrance porch.**

**Response: Recommend Approval**

**DM/16/1705 21 Silverdale, Hassocks, BN6 8RD. Replace existing attached garage with new attached garage and single storey rear/side extension.**

**Response: Recommend Approval**

**DM/16/1754 19 North Court, Hassocks, BN6 8JS. Single storey rear extension**

**Response: Support Approval**

**DM/16/1758 14 Orchard Lane, Hassocks, BN6 8QF. Horse Chestnut (T3) pollard to suitable growth points above main fork.**

**Response: Recommend Approval**

**DM/16/1794 31 Fir Tree Way, Hassocks, BN6 8BU. Two Storey Rear Extension.**

**Response: Recommend Approval**





- 16/332**      **RESOLVED** that the observations on the planning issues above be submitted to the relevant Planning Authority for consideration.

#### **DECISION NOTICES**

The following APPROVALS were noted:

DM/16/1074 The Oaks, Southdown Farm, Lodge Lane, Hassocks

DM/16/0909 41 Woodsland Road, Hassocks BN6 8HG

DM/16/0912 Rear of, 51-58 Keymer Road, Hassocks

DM/16/1056 7 The Close, Hassocks BN6 8DW

DM/15/4354 42 Hurst Road, Hassocks BN6 9NL

The following APPEAL decisions were noted:

APP/D3830/D/16/3143641 2 Brambles, Hassocks BN6 8EQ – Granted.

APP/D3838/W/15/3138871 Garage adjoining Hassocks Lodge, Keymer Road, Hassocks BN6 8AT – Dismissed.

**APPEAL NOTIFICATION.** AP/16/0027 6 Adastra Avenue, Hassocks BN6 8DL. Noted.


**LETTER FROM TOM CLARK.** A letter from Tom Clark, Solicitor to MSDC regarding 'Determining housing planning application when the District Council cannot demonstrate a 5 year land supply' was noted.

**DRAFT WEST SUSSEX JOINT MINERALS LOCAL PLAN.** Following a discussion of the Draft Plan, and of comments for consideration in a full response by Hassocks Parish Council, it was AGREED that the Planning Committee broadly supported the Draft West Sussex Joint Minerals Local Plan.

**Date of Next Meeting.** Monday 6 June 2016 at 7.30pm

There being no other business the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.55pm.

Chairman..





My name is Claire Tindall


I am here as a representative of FOFRA to object to the revised planning application DM/15/0626 relating to the development of Friars Oak Fields. The change in the number of proposed dwellings from 137 to 130 does not affect our previous objections.

As you are aware the neighbourhood plan has passed the regulation 14 consultation and is now a material planning consideration to which weight must be given in the determination of planning applications.

Furthermore, there is every likelihood that it will be converted to a Regulation 16 Plan.

The Regulation 14 Plan allocates sufficient housing land to meet the objectively assessed need for new homes in Hassocks. Friars Oak Fields are the first choice for local green space designation and this proposed development would undermine not only the credibility of the Plan in terms of housing need but would also be contrary to the wishes of the community.

In March 2015, Hassocks Parish Council declined the original planning application and sent a letter of objection to MSDC. I'd like to refresh your memories on FOFRA's reasons for objection:





- **The Strategic Gap:** The proposed development is within what has been historically recognised as a Strategic Gap between Hassocks and Burgess Hill. We understand that Dale Mayhew is working on behalf of the parish council in respect of ham fields local gap and we feel our gap is equally important. It is outside the natural envelope of the village and any development North of this natural boundary would set a precedent for future development. It would adversely affect our community and destroy our village identity.
- **Access:** London Road is very busy and there are a number of junctions in close proximity to the proposed access road to the development. We know this is already a dangerous stretch of road and there would be an increased risk for drivers and pedestrians.
- **Railway:** The main London to Brighton railtrack is adjacent to the proposed development. At peak times there are approximately 3 trains per minute which coincides with school times. There is an



unmanned pedestrian level crossing and the route over the open electrified track represents the quickest route into the village. There is a very real danger that school children will use this route.

- **Flooding:** Friars Oak fields have a long history of flooding. They are adjacent to the Herring Stream, on a flood plain and have poor drainage due to the low lying location and the soil composition.
- **Pollution and traffic congestion:** The proposed development is in very close proximity to a European AQMA and it currently exceeds the legal limits. This proposed development would only add to pollution.
- **Infrastructure:** As you know, all the public services are already overwhelmed in Hassocks, these include schools, health centres and parking.

FOFRA ask you to continue to object to this inappropriate development of Friars Oak Fields.

