

## HASSOCKS PARISH COUNCIL

### Minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting held on 20 November 2017 at 7.30pm in the Parish Centre, Adastra Park, Hassocks

Attendees: Parish Councillors: Jane Baker, Leslie Campbell, Bill Hatton, Nick Owens and Victoria Standfast

Deputy Clerk: Tracy Bates

In attendance: Cllr Sue Hatton

3 members of the Public

**P17/99 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.** Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Judith Foot.

**P17/100 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.** Cllr Nick Owens declared a personal interest in application DM/17/4307 Land West of London Road, Hassocks. Due to the application being an increase of dwellings on an already approved site, it was agreed by Committee that Cllr Owens should participate in the consideration of this application.

**P17/101 MINUTES.**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 30 October 2017 as confirmed, be signed by the Chair as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

**P17/102 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.** There were 3 members of the public present.  
17/102.1 Jane Farmand of Stonepound Court spoke in opposition to application DM/17/4307 Land West of London Road, Hassocks. Ms Farmand raised a number of concerns over the proposed application. The proposed development design results in Ms Farmand's property being subjected to development on two sides, this will have a significant impact on the light and privacy of this property. Ms Farmand also expressed concern over the direct impact on the value of her property and wanted to know whether MSDC or the developers would compensate her for this. In addition London Road is already very busy at certain times of the day, this will only become far worse with the construction traffic entering and exiting the site, and the subsequent increase in traffic once the development is completed. This will further increase the pollution in the locality which is already very high.

17/102.2 Cllr Sue Hatton spoke in opposition to the same application (Appendix 1), and asked the Committee to recommend to MSDC that this application is not put forward for approval for the reasons she provided in her representation.

17/102.3 In the light of the various proposed developments in Hassocks, Jennifer Upton raised the need for a by-pass between Ockley Lane and London Road. Ms Upton was informed by the Chair that unfortunately the Committee could not take comments on items which were not on the agenda.

The Chair proposed altering the order of consideration of applications and taking application DM/17/4307, Land West of London Road, Hassocks, first. The Committee unanimously agreed.

**P17/103 APPLICATIONS**

**DM/17/4307 Land West Of London Road, Hassocks** Erection of 130 dwellings (including 30% affordable housing provision), new vehicular access onto London Road (A273), associated landscaping, car parking, open space, pedestrian link to adjacent, existing recreation ground to the north and infiltration basins.

The Committee discussed this application in detail and considered all representations which had been made by members of the Public and Councillors.

It was unanimously decided to RECOMMEND REFUSAL for the following reasons:

1. Mid Sussex District Council (“MSDC”) can already in practical terms point to a five year housing supply, it has been reported in the minutes of MSDC Planning Committee B on 31st August 2017, that MSDC councillors understand that the Planning Inspector Mr Jonathan Bore has verbally confirmed this to be so; and, because since 1st April 2017, the Council estimates there have been a net 321 additions to the 5 year housing land supply and on no basis at 1st April was there a deficit greater than 208. Therefore, no deficit to the 5 year housing land supply remains. As MSDC has a 5-year housing land supply then there is no presumption in favour of development, and each application should be considered on its merits.

2. Hassocks Parish Council considers that MSDC has no legal basis for increasing the allocation of houses on this site. The Secretary of State has approved 97 houses as a resolution to a protracted wrangle between developers and the local community. MSDC’s preferred strategy in its Modification MM11 to the District Plan is to impose a site of 500 houses. MSDC has not opted to increase allocations on the edge of settlements by a maximum of 10 or even 25 homes. Therefore the applicant’s proposal for 130 homes instead of 97 is not consistent with the District plan, nor with the proposed modifications to the District Plan nor with Hassocks’ Regulation 16 Submission Draft Neighbourhood Plan – all of which individually and collectively carry some weight and must therefore be taken into account: The objectively assessed need of Hassocks as set out in the Neighbourhood Plan has been satisfied by other planning approvals and other sites allocated for housing in the Hassocks Parish, and therefore there is no need for and no justification to approve this present application.

3. The Parish Council understand that the applicants were advised to increase the number of dwellings from the permitted 97 to 130 in order to optimise the potential of this site to comply with Modification Policy DP24

Character and Design. Whilst the Parish Council accept that DP24 does contain this provision it would point out that it is just one (the last) of eleven criteria which cover all aspects of the design of new development and its relationship to adjoining development and surroundings. It is a design policy which aims to ensure that development respects and enhances its surroundings. It is not a Trojan Horse Density Policy. It would appear to the Parish Council that one criterion has been over-emphasised at the expense of all the others. This approach has produced a most unsatisfactory development proposal which, if accepted, would set a precedent for similar overdevelopments elsewhere in Hassocks and throughout Mid Sussex.

4. The addition of 33 properties on this site, represents overdevelopment and the creation of a high density hard urban estate, which is completely unsuitable for the area. The site is an edge of settlement location for which a lesser housing density is suitable, as set out in the Regulation 16, Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan. The application is particularly unneighbourly to 1, Stonepound Court and totally dominates both sides of this property. On both of these points the application is contrary to Policy DP24, Character and Design, of the draft District Plan and Policy 8, Character and Design, of the Regulation 16, Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan.

5. Traffic is a very real problem on London Road. Despite the submitted traffic surveys, it is known that the increase in vehicles entering and exiting the site will have a negative impact on the volume and movement of traffic on London Road. Air Quality also continues to be a problem on London Road. The developer notes that the proposal would increase the number of vehicles flowing through Stonepound Crossroad, thereby adding to air pollution in this AQMA. The fact that the increase may be small, does not itself mean that MSDC has a right to approve the application, when its legal duty is to decrease air pollution in any AQMA in the District. As MSDC is in control of the source of further pollution it has a duty to act so as not to increase that pollution, by refusing this application.

6. The proposed development fails to respect and protect the Ancient Hedgerow on the site (see Mr Ian Tovey's representation letter received by MSDC on 10/11/2017, pdf ref 00543462):

- A footpath is proposed through a protected Ancient Hedgerow, recorded in the Domesday Book. The footpath should not be allowed as it will damage the hedgerow.
- Oak tree T28 in the same Ancient Hedgerow, is subject to a tree preservation order. The applicant's proposals under-report the size of the tree so that an access road can be driven around this tree. This will significantly damage the tree roots and could cause the tree to die. Accordingly the access road should not be allowed. This does mean that the applicant has no access to the northern end of the proposed site because there is insufficient space for it.
- The access road along the hedgerow generally encroaches to a greater extent than was allowed under the original approved plan for 97

houses. The access should encroach on the trees no more than did the original 97-houses application.

7. The access road on the site appears on the developer's own plans to be too narrow for two cars to pass.

8. Several of the properties on London Road have rights of way (easements) across the fields west of London Road, as noted in Mr Ian Credland's response to this application dated 28 October 2017. Because of these easements the previous application for 97 houses left an access road along the eastern site of the fields. This has not been done in this new application for 130 houses, which means that the access rights of the existing London Road residents are failing to be respected and upheld and the present application cannot proceed as it stands. It is also further evidence of the overbearing impact of the proposed development on these existing London Road properties.

9. Drainage: The plans do not indicate the French ditches which the Drainage Officer has previously indicated are necessary to the rear of the properties on London Road. Accordingly the plan would increase flooding to the houses on London Road and is not acceptable.

The three Members of the Public and Cllr Sue Hatton left the meeting.

**DM/17/4062 54A Keymer Road, Hassocks, BN6 8AR** Replace existing panel sign with new hanging panel sign. Response: RECOMMEND APPROVAL.

**DM/17/2611 Mama Ghanoushe, 31 Keymer Road, Hassocks, BN6 8AG** Extension to infill "dog-leg" of existing rear extension (to create new pedestrian entrance to proposed flat above) and two storey extension above to create one 2-bedroom duplex flat. New windows at ground floor level for the toilets that serve the cafe, and new window to serve existing playroom at rear of cafe. Amended plans received: 25/10/2017. Response: RECOMMEND APPROVAL

**DM/17/1493 1 Willowbrook Way, Hassocks, BN6 8LB** Retrospective application for a timber framed garden shed and adjacent decking, with post and rail fence screening to a height of 1.8m. Response: RECOMMEND APPROVAL

**DM/17/4357 31 Grand Avenue, Hassocks, BN6 8DE** New porch; replacement rear extension with first floor rear and side extension over garage. (Resubmission of planning application reference DM/16/3621). Response: RECOMMEND APPROVAL

**DM/17/4228 31 Fir Tree Way, Hassocks, BN6 8BU** Proposed two storey rear extension. Response: RECOMMEND APPROVAL.

**DM/17/4453 11 Flowers Close, Hassocks, BN6 8FF** T1 Sycamore - reduce crown by up to 2m. Response: RECOMMEND REFUSAL. The Application is deficient in information and does not clearly explain the reasons for the proposed work, as requested in paragraph 7 of the application form. This is a fine tree and any work on the crown will impair its community value. The

tree is not on any individual property, and it is understood that the applicant himself is acting on behalf of another resident. The Parish Council would like to see a re-application with reasons for any proposed work clearly specified accompanied by a full arborological report to support the application.

**DM/17/4444 4 Little Copse Road, Hassocks, BN6 8PG** Proposed single storey rear extension, side extension above garage and a front porch. Response: RECOMMEND APPROVAL

**DM/17/4450 50 Shepherds Walk, Hassocks, BN6 8EE** Removal of existing conservatory, the erection of a ground floor rear extension to the rear of the existing garage and the erection of a first floor side extension above the existing single storey ground floor office and garage all to an existing 2 storey semi-detached dwelling. Response: RECOMMEND APPROVAL

**DM/17/4430 18 Hurst Road, Hassocks, BN6 9NJ** Proposed single storey rear extension with internal alterations. Response: RECOMMEND APPROVAL

**DM/17/4505 56 Church Mead, Hassocks, BN6 8BW T1 Oak** - Reduce the upper limb back to 1st main fork (approximately 0.75m on from the failed limb). Remove the lowest central secondary branch overhanging the shed back to source. Reduce the remaining crown by up to 3m (to suitable growth points). Response: RECOMMEND APPROVAL

**DM/17/4494 4 The Bourne, Hassocks, BN6 8EF** Proposed one/two storey side extension (north) to create master bedroom suite and enlarged study/dining room. Response: RECOMMEND APPROVAL

**LI/17/1932 Orion News, Orion Parade, Hassocks, BN6 8QA.** New Premises Licence. Response: RECOMMEND APPROVAL

**P17/104** **RESOLVED** that the observations on the planning issues as agreed above be submitted to the relevant Planning Authority for consideration.

#### **P17/105** **DECISION NOTICES**

The following APPROVALS were noted:

DM/17/4026	15 Kymer Gardens, Hassocks BN6 8QZ
DM/17/4192	Land Adjacent to 2 Hurst Road, Hassocks BN6 9NJ
DM/17/3757	49 Stonepound Road, Hassocks BN6 8PR
DM/17/4056	Trees Fronting Brighton Road on the corner of Pound gate (land parcel at 529908 115424) Hassocks
DM/17/3896	2 Dale Avenue, Hassocks BN6 8LW
DM/17/3428	9 Ockenden Way, Hassocks BN6 8HS
DM/17/3820	32 Manor Avenue, Hassocks BN6 8NQ
SDNP/17/04364/FUL	1 & 2 Lodge Farm Cottages, Lodge Lane, Hassocks BN6 8XP

The following GRANT OF APPEAL was noted:

AP/17/0046	The Old Coach House, 6 Woodland Road, Hassocks BN6 8HE
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The grants of the following CERTIFICATE OF LAWFUL USE OR DEVELOPMENT was noted:

DM/17/3982

27 Adastra Avenue, Hassocks BN6 8DP

**P17/106 URGENT MATTERS** at the discretion of the Chairman for noting and/or inclusion on a future agenda. There were no urgent matters.

**P17/107 DATE OF NEXT MEETING:** Monday 11 December 2017 at 7.30 pm

There being no other business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.17pm

Chairman..... Date.....

## Appendix 1

Minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting held on 20 November 2017

Representation by Cllr Sue Hatton to the Planning Committee regarding application DM/17/4307 Land West Of London Road, Hassocks.

In the accompanying documents that have been submitted by Barratt Homes for 130 dwellings at Ham Field their design and Access Statement (which is online) states:

“through feedback it was deemed that, although the principle was good, a 97 dwelling scheme had too few smaller dwellings and was thought of as inefficient use of this land”.

Constituents have contacted me regarding this statement and are concerned about the rationale behind ‘the feedback’, which we presume could only have been from MSDC.

I note from the Consultation Document on the Main Modifications to the District Plan that we have all been concerned with recently, that Policy DP24 (a) Density – has been deleted, and that changes have therefore been made to Policy DP24 to take account of this.

DP24 includes the following statement that “All applicants will be required to demonstrate that the proposal ....”optimises the potential of the site to accommodate development”

This statement is suitably ambiguous enough to allow the word ‘potential’ to be interpreted as ‘capacity’. As the suggested modifications are yet to be agreed by the Inspector Mr Bore, then this interpretation has been applied prematurely by MSDC and the developer.

I did draw the Inspector’s attention to this change to DP24, and how this could lead to higher densities at whim, particularly as he himself had written to MSDC in September 2016 saying that, and I quote;

“The Plan sets surprisingly high densities given the character of the area and I should like to see any analysis that the Council may have carried out that considers the likely effect of these densities on the character of the relevant settlements, the implications for place-making and the protection and enhancement of local character”.

I have had a good look at the site layout, and think this higher density scheme is unsympathetic and inappropriate in this edge of village setting. It is exactly the sort of site where I think Mr Bore indicated we should take careful account of the countryside location. Furthermore, I think account should be taken of the character and density of the adjoining development along London Road.

I would therefore ask the Committee to recommend to MSDC that they do not put this application forward for approval.