



FERNHURST PARISH COUNCIL

Planning Committee Meeting Minutes Tuesday 5 November 2019

Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held at The Fernhurst Centre

Tuesday 5 November 2019 at 6.00pm

Councillors Present: Mr J Buchanan, (Chairman), Mrs H Bicknell, Mr G Inns, Mrs M Jenkins, Mr J Smith, Mrs M Timms.

P/103/19 Apologies For Absence: Mr W Black, Mrs S Bloomfield, Mr G Williamson.

In Attendance: Kelly Porter – South Downs National Park Authority – Major Projects Lead
In the absence of the clerk Cllr Jenkins acted in that capacity pro-tem.

P/104/19 Declaration of Interests: None.

P/105/19 Public Representations: Were received from: Iain Brown, John Hargreaves, Brenda Newman, Judith Turner and Bob Smalley.

Kelly Porter was asked why she had not re-advertised the application in the press. She felt this was not necessary as all people who had commented on the first application had been notified of the revised plan. The Parish Council had advertised the meeting to allow interested parties to attend the planning meeting.

Comments were made regarding the development at Syngenta/Fernhurst Park not permitted to be concurrent with that at the King Edward VII site. Kelly Porter advised she was unaware of this condition.

Air quality on the site was a major concern with the topography of the site being wholly unsuitable for dispersal of the pollution created by wood burning stoves.

Dissatisfaction and dismay was expressed that the number of affordable houses was below the 50% guideline even with now applied Vacant Building Credit and it was suggested that South Downs should be challenging its application to the Highland building.

A suggestion was made that whole or part Community Infrastructure Levy money, which would amount to a seven figure sum, could be used to enable more of the dwellings to be affordable.

P/106/19 Syngenta/Fernhurst Park Presentation by Kelly Porter – Major Projects Lead – South Downs National Park Authority

Kelly Porter presented the changes to the original application regarding the block of flats at the entrance to the site. The blocks of flats were sub-divided to partially comply with the comments made regarding the building mass however they were still 3 – 4 storeys tall. The positioning of the blocks of flats on the site had been moved from the entrance area which now had two Gatehouses of 3/4 bedroom houses.

Some of the housing blocks had been changed from 5 houses to 4 which would enable the roads to be made wider. There were still 210 dwellings on the application with a total of 418 parking spaces, some in underground parking areas; the remainder being with the houses.

The revised application had increased the number of affordable dwellings to 43, which constituted 40% of the total when the Vacant Building Credit rule was applied. 20% of the houses were for rental at 80% of market value rent. Some of the dwellings were for shared ownership. This revision was still below the South Downs Local Plan policy of 50%.

Changes were proposed to the drainage of the site in the open space area making it less susceptible to flooding during wet conditions.

Delivery vans would be expected to use drop off areas in central places.

The developer had made provision for footpaths from the site including one to the village.

P/107/19

Resolved:

Fernhurst Parish Council (FPC) stands by the previous comments dated 9 May 2019.

Resulting from the revised proposals submitted since the summer of 2019, FPC wishes to update and add to its comments as follows:

Dark Skies – FPC welcomes inclusion of the proposed lighting strategy document. This document alone does not fully protect the surrounding area from light pollution. A proliferation of roof-lights, whether retro-fitted via permitted development rights, or included in permitted designs, is creating a significant increase in the vertical projection of artificial light into the night sky locally; for example at the nearby KEVII site. FPC would wish to see no roof-lights included in this proposed scheme, and permitted development rights constrained to control possible retro-fitting in future. FPC would also wish to see conditions imposed to strictly control any retro-fitting of external lighting, which is becoming an increasing local pollution problem.

Also, using the previous headings, as follows:

A) **Design, Density and Layout of Dwellings** - FPC's previous comments stand.

B) **Building Heights** – FPC welcomes the reduction in bulk and massing of the larger buildings near the entrance, and the overall reduction in proposed building heights – all to be lower than the top of the existing Pagoda building.

C) **Parking Provision and Internal Road Layout** – FPC continues to argue strongly that the proposed parking provision is inadequate and that, when combined with the inherent shortcomings of the proposed road layout, insufficient parking provision will cause significant inconvenience - or worse - to residents and visitors alike. FPC considers that the 'Parking Calculator' uses reference data which are not representative of the type of high density housing proposed in this scheme, leading to a systematic underestimation of future parking needs.

D) **Affordable Housing** – FPC continues to object most strongly to the proposal for only 20 (less than 10%) affordable homes (AH). If it were not for the application of Vacant Building Credit (VBC), it would appear that the Local Planning Authority and the Applicant have established ‘common ground’ – based on valuation/viability criteria alone - that there should be a minimum provision of 39 affordable dwellings on the site (still less than 20%). **FPC strongly urges the LPA to seek external legal opinion as to the applicability of VBC** (added to the National Planning Policy Guidelines late 2014 and then May 2016 and also the National Planning Policy Framework) **in this particular case** and the weight that it should be given versus the weight that should be accorded to the SDNPA Local Plan (2014-2033) and the Fernhurst Neighbourhood Plan (made April 2016). FPC considers that the Local Planning Authority should be entitled to weigh the government’s policy against its own plan policies, noting that VBC was introduced as a measure to encourage development of brownfield – in preference to green-field – sites. In this case, no encouragement was required, as the site had already been designated for this kind of development in the Fernhurst Neighbourhood Plan and the Applicant had been party to the discussions leading to a figure of 50% AH, subject to viability, in the Fernhurst Neighbourhood Plan.

E) **Accessibility and Lifetime Homes Standard (FNP Policy H1)** – FPC acknowledges the commitment, in the addendum to the revised Design and Access Statement, to provide these in line with FPCs previous comments.

F) **Links to the adjoining area** – FPC’s previous comments stand.

G) **Air Quality - Wood Burning Stoves** – FPC’s previous comments stand.

H) **Mitigation of Ecological impacts** – FPC’s previous comments stand.

I) **Employment (FNP Policy SA1)** – FPC’s previous comments stand.

J) **Leisure and Tourism (FNP Policy SA1)** – FPC’s previous comments stand.

K) **Sustainability – PV Solar Panels** – FPC’s previous comments stand.

L) **Public Consultation** – FPC’s previous comments stand.

M) **Transport** – FPC’s previous comments stand.

N) **Archaeology** – FPC’s previous comments stand.

Proposed: Cllr Buchanan, seconded, Cllr Jenkins

Date of Next Meeting: TBC

Signed..... Date:

Meeting closed at 7.30pm