

LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Extraordinary meeting of the **Planning and Traffic Committee** held on **12 FEBRUARY 2013** at the King Edward Hall, Lindfield.

The meeting commenced at 8.00pm.

Present: Mr A Gomme (Chairman)
Mrs Margaret Hersey (Vice Chairman)
Mr W Blunden
Mr M Amor
Mr C Snowling
Mrs J Chatfield
Mrs V Upton
Mr R Plass

Also Present: Mr M Allen (Councillor), Mr C Hersey, Mr J Jesson (Lindfield Preservation Society), and 60 members of the public (for all or parts of the meeting).

In Attendance: Mr I McLean (Deputy Clerk)

Absent: Mr S Hodgson

The Chairman welcomed those present and announced the emergency procedure for the King Edward Hall.

277. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

277.1 An apology for absence was received from Councillor S Hodgson and the reason was accepted.

278. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

278.1 Councillor Hersey stated that she reserved the right to express a different opinion from that given at this meeting, when present at meetings of Mid Sussex District Council's (MSDC) North East Area Planning Committee or at any meeting which subsequently considered any matter discussed at the present meeting, having seen the Officers reports and heard representations from members of the public and fellow members.

279. PLANNING APPLICATIONS AND OTHER MATTERS REFERRED TO THE PARISH COUNCIL BY MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL FOR CONSIDERATION

279.1 For each application, the recommendations of the Planning Consultant, Richard Walker, jointly retained by both Lindfield Parish Council and Lindfield Rural Parish Council, were read out by the Deputy Clerk, before any public comments and discussion by the Committee.

279.2 12/04318/COU – LAND TO THE SOUTH OF SNOWDROP LANE, HAYWARDS HEATH CHANGE OF USE OF LAND FROM PASTURE TO INFORMAL RECREATIONAL AREA

John Jesson of the LPS spoke briefly in support of the Planning Consultant's recommendations. Other speakers referred to the lack of proper car parking facilities for this area, the loss of arable-agricultural land, access and road traffic issues, and the fact that the land was not appropriate for recreational facilities. Councillor Hersey particularly commented on the agricultural nature of the land, and said that communities simply could not afford to lose agricultural land in this day and age, as it could never be re-provided.

Judith Ashton representing the developer, referred to the legal arrangements, which anticipated the re-location of the recreational area earmarked by the adjoining Croudace development. She said that highway works would be carried out in order to address the concerns, and that the Local Planning Authority can attach other conditions to deal with any other issues. She pointed out that the area was not to be a formal recreational area (playing-fields), but an open area for e.g. dog walking, etc.

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AGREED RESPONSE: "In objecting to this application, the Committee unanimously agreed to adopt, and submit to the Planning Authority, the recommendations of the Planning Consultant - **as set out in the document appended to these minutes.**"

279.2 12/04322/COU – LAND TO THE NORTH OF LYOTH LANE, LINDFIELD
CHANGE OF USE OF LAND FROM PASTURE TO RECREATIONAL AREA.

John Jesson of the LPS spoke briefly in support of the Planning Consultant's recommendations. Other speakers referred to the existing waterlogging on the site and land drainage issues. The issue of parking and access to the site was also raised. Access through the nature reserve is not appropriate because of possible adverse effects on local wildlife.

Judith Ashton said that the area abutted existing woodland, and that access from other areas was possible, making the issue of parking and access less of a factor. She referred to the ecological appraisal made with the submission. She said that the site is currently used by horses, which is why it is currently so muddy. She said that proper land drainage measures would be taken by the developer. She referred to the fact that converting agricultural land to recreational land is supported by the Planning Acts.

AGREED RESPONSE: "In objecting to this application, the Committee unanimously agreed to adopt, and submit to the Planning Authority, the recommendations of the Planning Consultant - **as set out in the document appended to these minutes.**"

279.3 12/04316/FUL – LAND TO THE EAST OF GRAVELYE LANE AND NORTH OF LYOTH LANE, LINDFIELD
DEVELOPMENT OF THE SITE SO AS TO ACCOMMODATE 230 DWELLINGS, TOGETHER WITH ASSOCIATED AREAS OF OPEN SPACE, PLAY SPACE AND AMENITY SPACE; NEW ACCESS PARKING AND LANDSCAPING.

John Jesson from the LPS said that he broadly supported the recommendations of the Planning Consultant. He expressed particular concern about the worsening effect on the traffic conditions in the area, and referred to the work of the Village Design Statement in this regard. The proposal would have an adverse effect on the setting and character of Lindfield. Other speakers asked what had changed since the previous planning applications in the 1980s, at least one of which had been turned down on appeal. The coalescence issue (strategic gap) and the loss of identity were referred to. The need for further housing had not been proven, and issues with the marketing of the Limes, and the Croudace development, were highlighted so as to demonstrate this. MSDC were urged to look at other more appropriate town developments, and implementing existing planning consents. The adverse effect on Lindfield as a tourist attraction was referred to. The lack of employment opportunities in the area was a concern, and the development would just be a "dormitory" for Brighton, Crawley and London. The flooding issue, as would affect Northlands Brook, and the nearby river network, was mentioned, and there was concern about the possible effects on people being able to obtain normal property insurance, was mentioned.

Judith Ashton responded by referring to the National Planning Policy Framework, and the lack of MSDC's 5 year land supply. There is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. She referred to the housing waiting list. She said that MSDC's 2004 Local Plan had limited weight. She referred to the positive statements about the "K4" site in MSDC's own Core Strategy (though this had now been abandoned.) She said that infrastructure needs would be met through financial obligations. The design had been carefully thought through. Planning regimes have radically changed since the 1980s. She urged the Committee to reconsider the recommendations before it.

Cllr Blunden commented on the effect of the development not just on the immediately surrounding listed buildings, but on the character of Lindfield generally. Councillor Plass referred particularly to the Conservation Area, and the historic Common of Lindfield. Councillor Gomme said that even if planning consent was granted, robust conditions should be attached, particularly as regards maintenance of the

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local road network, and the removal of spoil. The lessons of the Limes development had to be learnt. Councillor Hersey reminded the Committee that this was a full application, not an outline one, and so the ability to input the process will be limited. The Committee should look closely at the design in terms of the unneighbourly effect it would have, especially as regards the building accommodating the flats. The individuality of settlements needs to be maintained. The strategic gap is now the only one left. Councillor Gomme expressed concern at the nature of some of the frontage design of the houses. It will be visually too predominant. Councillor Hersey expressed concern at the emergency exit issue, and the bottlenecking that will inevitably occur at the entrance road. Councillor Allen said that not enough emphasis had been placed on protecting the ecology of the area. Many Councillors expressed concern at the infrastructure issues, and questioned where the new schools, medical facilities, road improvements, etc., would come from.

AGREED RESPONSE: "In objecting to this application, the Committee unanimously agreed to adopt, and submit to the Planning Authority, the recommendations of the Planning Consultant, subject to a number of proposed changes – ***as set out in the document appended to these minutes.***"

280. TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE OUTCOME OF THE MEETING HELD BY LINDFIELD RURAL PARISH COUNCIL ON 11TH FEBRUARY 2013 TO CONSIDER ITS RESPONSES TO THE ABOVE APPLICATIONS

- 280.1 The additional comments and responses of LRPC were read out by the Chairman. A specific record of the effect of the development on Neighbourhood Planning should be made. Councillor Snowling said that he would be very happy to endorse the additional responses, and that the two Parish Councils should be at one with regard to this.

It was unanimously resolved to agree and to endorse the additional comments and responses of Lindfield Rural Parish Council as shown at the end of the recommendations of the Planning Consultant - ***as set out in the document appended to these minutes.***

The Committee then considered whether it wished to make any of its own additional comments and responses. Councillor Gomme referred to the need to highlight the issue of additional traffic generation through Lindfield High Street. Councillor Blunden referred to the 2008 response on the Core Strategy (now abandoned) and the overall 23% increase in population in a matter of just 4 years. Councillor Plass indicated his concern about the lack of on street parking, and that it was likely that surrounding streets and lanes would be used for this purpose, to the detriment of those areas. Councillor Hersey drew comparisons with the Bolnore Estate development, and re-iterated the point about overdevelopment and overcrowding. Councillor Snowling reminded the Committee on the attachment of conditions issue, that it should be made clear that the Parish Council was against any development on the site, even if smaller in scale. Councillor Blunden was concerned about waste water, and run off, and queried whether the development was sustainable in that regard. Councillor Gomme said that the whole issue of sustainability had not been proven, and needed to be challenged.

AGREED RESPONSE: "The Committee unanimously agreed to include the additional comments and responses as shown at the end of the recommendations of the Planning Consultant – ***as set out in the document appended to these minutes.***"

281. TO NOTE THE REPORT FROM THE PLANNING CONSULTANT, WHICH ACCOMPANIED THE DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

- 281.1 The detailed report (previously circulated to Members), was noted.

282. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 282.1 The Chairman called for volunteers to cover an absence in the rota list of Councillors for a month or so regarding the inspection of planning applications. Councillor Val Upton volunteered for this task.

The meeting concluded at 9.25 p.m.