

## LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the **Planning and Traffic Committee** held on **20 December 2011** at the King Edward Hall, Lindfield.

The meeting commenced at 8.00pm.

**Present:** Mr C Snowling (Chairman)  
Mr A Gomme (Vice Chairman)  
Mr M Amor  
Mr W Blunden  
Mrs J Chatfield  
Mr L Corp  
Mrs M Hersey  
Mr S Hodgson  
Mrs V Upton

**Also Present:** MSDC Cllr Mr C Hersey and 3 members of the public

**In Attendance:** Mr P Hemsley

### 96. WELCOME AND EMERGENCY ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

### 97. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

97.1 There were no apologies for absence.

### 98. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

98.1 Cllr Hersey stated that she reserved the right to express a different opinion from that given at this meeting, when present at meetings of the Mid Sussex District Council's (MSDC's) Central Area Planning Committee (CAPC) or at any other 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. Cllr Snowling stated that he reserved the right to express a different opinion from that given at this meeting, when present at meetings of the MSDC's CAPC or at any other 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 the views of fellow members.

Re Item 8, discussion of the joint LPC/ Lindfield Rural PC (LRPC) response to the Draft District Plan 2011, Cllrs Hersey and Snowling stated that they served as Councillors on the LRPC.

Cllr Hersey stated that she had a personal interest in Item 5ii), application 11/02413/FUL at the Scout Hut, 16A Eastern Road, as her husband was on the Scout executive.

Cllr Blunden stated that, as he and his wife owned property opposite, he had a personal interest in Item 5i), application 11/03648/FUL at 76 Meadow Lane; similarly he had a personal interest in Item 5vi), application 11/03765/TREE at King Edward Hall (KEH) as he was Vice Chairman of KEH and President of the Lindfield Club. Hence he would not participate in discussion on these two matters.

Cllr Snowling stated that he had a personal interest in Item 5vi), application 11/03765/TREE at KEH, as he was a KEH Trustee. As such he would not chair that matter nor participate in discussion thereon and asked Cllr Gomme as Vice Chairman to do so.

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### 99. QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

- 99.1 Mr John Jesson, Lindfield Preservation Society (LPS), said that re Item 8, the PC response to the Draft District Plan 2011, he was concerned about the origins of the targets for housing which could only be reliable if evidence-based. He wondered whether the PC was questioning the targets. The DC was committed under DP8 to prevent coalescence, not simply protect green spaces between settlements but also those on the periphery of settlements that were covered in the Village Design Statement (VDS). He said that the Plan made one reference only to a VDS - that for Hassocks - and he believed there should be more relating to VDS in the Plan, including reference to the Lindfield VDS. He added that the LPS would make its own response to the Plan for which it had a target date of early in the new year.

The Chairman said that there was the opportunity for towns and parishes to prepare their Neighbourhood Plans which should cover the LPS points. He said that the LPC was working closely with the Rural PC and he did not believe it was necessary at this stage to refer to VDS in the PC response.

Regarding the Neighbourhood Plan, Mr Neil Kerslake said that he believed it should examine what the community needs, including public rental (Housing Association/Council) and sheltered housing; then the PC could propose where to locate the housing within its own boundaries. The Communities Act did not make it compulsory to have a Neighbourhood Plan, but if crafted it should be pro-active, that is, identify locations for housing. Lindfield he said was already coalesced with Haywards Heath and Lindfield Rural and hence there were few sites suitable for more housing. The field beyond the Limes development and the area around Portsmouth Wood sprang to mind as two of the few. However, he believed the PC should not rush into drafting a Neighbourhood Plan, nor budget for FY 2012/13 for expert advice for such a Plan. Such an expert might feel duty-bound to offer at least a worse option for housing; hence, there was an argument to delay allocating funding until the following year, FY 2013/14.

The Chairman said that the LPC would be working with the Rural PC on the Neighbourhood Plan.

Mrs Kerslake continued by giving an assessment of the likelihood in his view of a number of sites being identified for development: eg, Portsmouth Wood <5%; north of The Welkin <5%; north of the Limes 50:50. Regarding Site K, which lay outside the LPC boundary, he believed that plans would be submitted within the first quarter of the next FY for 150 to 200 homes, a third of the original number proposed. He asked what value the village had received from the expert advice obtained for the Limes development as he felt there were councillors perfectly capable of identifying the planning issues. On the other hand, he cited the LPS traffic study as one producing value.

### 100. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PLANNING AND TRAFFIC COMMITTEE HELD ON 29 NOVEMBER 2011

- 100.1 The Chairman called for approval of the Minutes of the Planning and Traffic Committee meeting held on 29 November 2011. It was **AGREED** to **APPROVE** the Minutes and the Chairman **SIGNED** the Minutes as a true record of that meeting.

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

- 101.1 For each application, the observations of the members who had specifically studied the plans were read out before any public comments and discussion by the Committee.

- 101.2 11/ 03648/FUL – 76 MEADOW LANE  
PROPOSED SINGLE STOREY REAR EXTENSION AND INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL  
MODIFICATIONS. LOFT CONVERSION INDICATED IN PLANS IS TO BE DONE UNDER PERMITTED  
DEVELOPMENT.

Cllr Blunden sat back from the discussion.

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**AGREED RESPONSE:** "No objection."

- 101.3 11/03640/FUL – 12 DENMANS CLOSE  
TWO STOREY SIDE AND REAR EXTENSIONS AND ALTERATIONS TO ADD A FOURTH BEDROOM WITH BATHROOM IMPROVEMENTS AT FIRST FLOOR AND NEW KITCHEN/DINING ROOM WITH UTILITY SPACE AT GROUND FLOOR (AMENDED PLANS RECEIVED ON 6 DECEMBER 2011).

**AGREED RESPONSE:** "The scale of the south side extension at first floor level and the roof shape have been reduced from the previous application. These changes will reduce the harmful effect on the street scene although, as previously, we note that similar large extensions already exist in the Close. Overall we consider this is an improved application and have no objection."

- 101.4 11/03766/TREE – 12 DENMANS CLOSE  
BEECH (T5) – REDUCE OVERALL CANOPY BY 10% AND LIFT BY 3 METRES.

**AGREED RESPONSE:** "No objection."

- 101.5 11/02413/FUL – SCOUT HUT, 16A EASTERN ROAD  
METAL SHED (3 METRES DEEP x 2.4 METRES HIGH AT APEX), ON A CONCRETE BASE, FOR STORAGE OF SCOUT EQUIPMENT, TO BE SITUATED ON THE SCOUT HUT SITE.

Cllr Hersey did not participate in the discussion.

**AGREED RESPONSE:** "No objection."

- 101.6 11/03744/FUL - 2 MEADOW DRIVE  
CONSTRUCTION OF NEW CONSERVATORY.

**AGREED RESPONSE:** "No objection."

- 101.7 Cllr Gomme took the chair.

- 101.8 11/03765/TREE - KING EDWARD HALL, 24 HIGH STREET  
LIME (T1) – POLLARD TO HEIGHT OF BUILDING.

Cllrs Blunden and Snowling did not participate in the discussion.

Mr Jesson, LPS, said that he supported the application.

Cllr Gomme asked Members for their views. Cllr Corp felt that the tree would be decimated if reduced to roof level. Cllr Gomme said that the tree should not have been planted there at all. Cllr Corp added that he would accept a compromise appropriate for the species. Cllr Amor felt that the proposal would leave just a stump and he believed selective pruning to be a more subtle option. Cllr Hersey reminded Members that it was not the Committee's place to make such suggestions: they had to comment 'yea or 'nay' on the application before them. It was the same species as the trees in the High Street which had been pollarded and grown again successfully. In summing up, Cllr Gomme said that he was uncertain whether the response was in the best interests of the tree; however, the Committee would offer the response as drafted, although he asked the Deputy Clerk to abbreviate the text.

**AGREED RESPONSE:** "We cannot support this application because we believe it would lead to too drastic action. We suggest that the DC Tree Officer consider alternative pruning to the crown of the tree on the east and south faces, so as to improve the light in the Hall and the Club."

- 101.9 Cllr Snowling reassumed the chair.

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101.10 11/03820/FUL – 30 CHESTNUTS CLOSE  
NEW TILED ROOF PAGODA.

**AGREED RESPONSE:** “No objection.”

101.11 11/03832/TCA - ST JOHN'S LODGE, 151 HIGH STREET  
FELL ONE CONIFER.

**AGREED RESPONSE:** “No objection.”

101.12 11/03859/TREE – LAND AT FINCHES GARDENS  
OAK – REDUCE OVERALL CANOPY BY UP TO 2 METRES.

**AGREED RESPONSE:** “No objection.”

101.13 11/03901/TREE - EDGE LEA, 2A BACKWOODS LANE  
SYCAMORE (T1) – FELL AND REPLACE.

**AGREED RESPONSE:** “No objection.”

**102. TO RECEIVE REPORTS ON ANY SIGNIFICANT PLANNING DECISIONS MADE BY MSDC AND THE PLANNING INSPECTORATE AND TO AGREE ANY FURTHER ACTION WHICH MAY NEED TO BE TAKEN BEFORE THE NEXT MEETING**

102.1 The Deputy Clerk reported that:

- APPEAL by applicant, Mrs S Brewer, against REFUSAL by MSDC of planning application 11/00164/FUL at 9 Finches Park Road - for the redevelopment of one detached house to provide 2 x three-bedroomed detached houses with attached garage and on plot parking - was DISMISSED by the Planning Inspectorate on 6 December 2011.
- APPEAL by applicant, Ms Jenny Adam, against REFUSAL by MSDC of planning application 11/01848/FUL at Annexe White Gates, Black Hill – for demolition of existing roof and vertical extension to form two bedrooms – was begun on 8 November 2011.
- 11/02587/COU, application for Repositioning garden fence and paving area to create two parking spaces at 102 The Welkin - to which the LPC had had ‘no objection’ - had been REFUSED by the DC on 6 December 2011 as “The proposed hardstanding would not relate sympathetically to the surrounding environment and would form an incongruous feature to the detriment of the visual amenity of the locality. It would therefore conflict with policy B1 of the Local Plan.” The Chairman said that it was valuable to get such DC comments for future reference for the Committee.

**103. TO CONSIDER ACTIVITY ON THE LIMES DEVELOPMENT, ANY DOCUMENTS RELATING THERETO AND AGREE ANY ACTION WHICH MAY NEED TO BE TAKEN BEFORE THE NEXT MEETING**

The Deputy Clerk had the following matters to report:

- Parking by Barratts’ contractors’ vehicles in Eastern Road and in the LNR car park and adjacent private road was continuing despite previous complaints and the matter of litter had again been raised by residents. The Deputy Clerk had reported the matter to Mr Steve Ashdown, DC Planning Officer responsible, and copied in Mr Gerry Rice, the Limes Site Manager.
- Cllr Upton had advised that pot holes had appeared in the section of Newton Road between Dukes Road and the site entrance; the Deputy Clerk had also reported the issue to Messrs Ashdown and Rice.
- A resident of The Wilderness had raised the matter of the security of the Wilderness Field which he felt was open to access from Barncroft Drive in the Limes and hence offered an

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invitation to intruders/squatters. In an email dated 15 December 2011, Mr Ashdown had said that he would provide the resident a full response shortly.

- Finally, residents had questioned the height of the earth mound at the northern edge of the site, believing it to be higher than authorised. Mr Ashdown had repeated an earlier view that it remained a work in progress as the site was not finished and the mound – which in due course would be planted with trees and shrubs - had yet to be transferred to the DC.

### 104. TO AGREE THE LPC RESPONSE TO THE DRAFT DISTRICT PLAN 2011 TO MEET THE DC DEADLINE OF 13 JANUARY 2012

For the benefit of the public, the Chairman asked the Deputy Clerk to read out the LPC draft response to the Draft District Plan 2011. Copy is at Enclosure 1. The Chairman thanked Cllr Gomme for his contributions to the draft. As there were no proposals from Members for amendments, he advised that the document would go to the Rural PC for final agreement before being forwarded to the DC as a joint response under the signatures of both Clerks. He suggested that it be copied to local town and parish councils.

### 105. TO CONSIDER ANY ONGOING IMPACT FROM THE RE-ORGANISATION OF THE DC PLANNING STAFFS MADE WITH EFFECT FROM 1 AUGUST 2011

- 105.1 The Deputy Clerk said that he had nothing adverse to report. The Chairman asked that the matter be placed again on the Agenda for the first Full P&TC meeting planned for 2012, viz. 28 February.

### 106. TO CONSIDER THE P&TC BUDGET FOR FY2012/13

- 106.1 In response to a note provided to the Committee by the Clerk, Cllr Corp said that the Members could have been led to the conclusion that the Council had as much as £30K set aside in reserve for paying professional fees in connection with planning applications. That would be a perfectly reasonable conclusion initially. However, the monies in earlier years had been allocated in the draft budget for the next FY for other matters and so in reality he believed they had only the in-year monies available. He said the Committee needed to ask what events it was likely they would face in the next FY and what sort of contingency should be put aside for them. He identified a number of potential sites including an extension of the Limes and Sites I, J and K. Past expenditure of £5250 provided a guide. For the Neighbourhood Plan (NP), he understood that Cuckfield had obtained a Government Grant of £20K. However, he felt that the Government did not expect such monies for writing an NP but rather for data gathering for the NP. The Committee needed to be pro-active as it may conclude that the village needed no more housing. His estimate for consultancy fees was 7 days equal to £20K or 5 days at £13K total for data gathering.

In sum, therefore, he said the Council should provide: £5250 for Site I; £13K for the Neighbourhood Plan; and £2600 for Site K for a total of £20850. As the Committee had already put aside £10K, in his opinion it needed a further £10850.

The Chairman asked Members for comments, saying that Site K was as much a problem for Lindfield as for that of the rural community as it would impact on the village. Cllr Blunden endorsed that view. He said that the LPS had been good in providing a Limes development 'fighting fund' but that they were not in a similar position to do so now.

The Chairman asked what views they should pass to the F&GP Committee. He felt that they could not anticipate heavy costs in the next FY and it would be unlikely that a referendum would be held in that year. In any event costs would fall to all council tax payers and the Committee might be budgeting unnecessarily. Cllr Gomme said he saw a danger with the NP: if the Council had a budget it could be that its hands were tied and he urged caution. The Committee needed to have monies put aside so that they had the assurance if it were needed and could keep their options open.

Cllr Corp said that any professional fees in connection with any large site such as Site K likely to be identified for development in the next FY would be well covered by the in-year £10K already identified for

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transfer to a designated fund for this purpose. He proposed a figure of £13K be requested for the preparation of the NP in FY2012/13. Cllr Gomme seconded that proposal.

The Chairman added that the LRPC would not leave it to the LPC to fight Site K alone as it was a joint problem to be addressed jointly. Cllr Blunden suggested the figure be reduced to £10K to account for an input of monies from LRPC. The Chairman seconded that amendment.

In summing up, the Chairman said that the proposition was for the committee to advise the F&GP that an additional £10K were needed for the preparation of the NP in the next FY. The proposal was agreed unanimously.

Cllr Amor said that the Committee ought to be concerned with inflation as money would diminish by some 4 to 5% per annum and investments were getting no interest. The Chairman acknowledged the validity of his point but said that was a matter for the F&GP and Full Council rather than for the P&T Committee.

### 107. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

#### 107.1 There were no items of AOB.

On conclusion of this part of the meeting, a further 15 minutes was set aside to allow members of the public to ask questions/make comments.

Mr Jesson said that:

- The spoil heap at the Limes was in his view well within the height limits of the Condition.
- With respect to funding consultants, for the Limes the LPS had engaged two planning consultants and a planning barrister, but did not incur full fees because the matter did not proceed to full appeal. In short, he said that there were now monies available for similar events.
- Re the District Plan, he inquired whether the comments were in the public domain. The Chairman advised that they were not yet as the draft had to be shared with LRPC before being despatched to the DC. When the letter had been agreed, it would be copied to the LPS.
- Re Site K, he was glad to recall how the LPS had played a major role in opposition; the Planning Inspector had based the Refusal on the impact on the Common.

Mr Kerslake, in talking to the budget, said that what Cllr Corp had said had been helpful. The PC could check with the Cuckfield PC what problems they had had getting data. For the moment, it was a matter of best guessing. There should be time to validate Cllr Corp's figures before the F&GP. Re Cllr Amor's point about monies, he felt that both the LPC and LRPC Cllrs were quite able to examine planning applications. He believed that Wates would put in a planning application for Site K and, if it were ever to get to Appeal, the consultant engaged by the PC would be outclassed by the barristers employed by the developer. Costs would be of the order of £50K for a two-day hearing.

The Chairman said that it would be quite inappropriate for the Committee to be drawn into discussion on any sites at this point.

The meeting concluded at 9.02pm.

Enclosure:

1. LPC/LRPC Draft Response on Draft District Plan 2011.