



MINUTES of a Meeting of the PLANNING COMMITTEE held at the Village Council Meeting Room, Ashurst Wood on Tuesday, 1st May 2018 at 7.30pm.

Present: Cllrs Forbes (Chair), Samways (Vice-Chair), Bright, Bussell, Lindsay, Phillips and Wailes

In attendance: Clerk, Caroline Leet, Cllr Belsey and 7 members of the public

1. Public questions -

Peter Owen (Managing Director) and Steve Matthews (Senior Land Manager) of Ashgrove Homes attended the meeting to introduce themselves as the landowner for the Wealden House/EDF site, Lewes Road which currently had a large concrete/brick office block. Peter Owen said that he had submitted an application to Mid Sussex District Council (MSDC) for 71 dwellings, but this had been removed from MSDC's website as it is not yet valid due to a lack of public consultation. He said that Ashurst Wood Village Council (AWVC) and MSDC recognised that the site was a brownfield site and had been allocated in the Neighbourhood Plan as a site for residential development. This was before his time and involvement with the site and he had understood that there had been a pre-application meeting with MSDC in 2016. What effectively came from that meeting was that MSDC felt that a minimum of 50 high density dwellings up to four storeys would be supported and recommended a contemporary design to suit an urban area; this would include 30% affordable dwellings. The application put forward to MSDC was prepared in line with these guidelines. However, having spoken to the Cllr Forbes (Chair of the Planning Committee) just prior to this meeting, he said that he could see that he should have consulted first; one of the views was because AWVC and MSDC had identified the site already this was not necessary, but quite clearly this was not the case and why he was attending this meeting.

Peter Owen continued saying that the proposal was for 71 dwellings; 50 private and 21 affordable apartments which would be split between rental and shared ownership. The site was 1.4 hectares, about half of this is ancient woodland which was to be left alone and they would propose to set up a management plan in order to protect it - advice on how this can be best achieved was being taken. Steve Matthews mentioned the process for the telecommunications mast to be moved away from the site had already started.

Cllr Forbes said that the Neighbourhood Plan documents and comments made during the pre-submission consultation about the site were available on the Council's website. There was one from Southern Water saying that there was sewage infrastructure below the ground and they would need an easement width of six metres. Peter Owen confirmed that he would consult with all the appropriate statutory agencies. Cllr Forbes asked if Ashgrove Homes had looked at the character assessment which was part of the Neighbourhood Plan and the site assessment report. She continued, saying the Design & Access statement on the MSDC website, before it was removed, said that the current building did not register in any long views of the site, but it can be seen from public footpaths. Peter Owen said that the building on its own was within a curtilage which cannot easily be seen and this is one of the reasons the urban design officer would prefer a more contemporary design as in his view it did not relate necessarily to any particular buildings in the area. Cllr Forbes pointed out that it is not an urban area, Ashurst Wood is rural area.

Cllr Forbes said that the actual proposal could not be discussed at this meeting, but what AWVC would like is some sort of public exhibition/meeting in the Village Hall where people can look at the documents and the plans/models so that residents could have an opportunity to view and have a say about the proposals before the planning application is submitted. Peter Owen said that he would give this some consideration and would organise a public consultation.

Cllr Phillips pointed out that this would be the largest development in this village. Peter Owen said that it was a site allocated in the Neighbourhood Plan, and the type of housing needed is predominantly smaller units for single individuals, couples and older couples. He understood concerns and need for local input and they would hope that they could bring a little extra to the area. Cllr Phillips added that the Council could help to facilitate a consultation so that residents could have an opportunity to be consulted with.

District Councillor John Belsey said that there were a couple of times when Mr Owen had referred to consultation with MSDC. He said to be clear, this proposal had never gone to committee or councillors. It was not how the process worked. The previous owner of the site had had a pre-application meeting with an officer of the planning department. The site was put forward by AWVC as part of its Neighbourhood Plan which MSDC has adopted. There are 23 Neighbourhood Plans in the district which have been incorporated into the District Plan. Cllr Belsey went on to say that he had discussed this application with an MSDC planning officer. They confirmed that the only consultation that had taken place was during the Neighbourhood Plan process. That was with regard to planning policy and not with regard to anything substantive for that site. Their view was that Ashgrove Homes/or the owners of that site, had not properly engaged with the residents of Ashurst Wood. Going forward with the District Plan up to 2031, this is by far the biggest development site scheduled for Ashurst Wood for the next 15 years and in his view it would be better to be transparent and make information available to the public. This would be the best way forward and hopefully a smoother process. Peter Owen said that they would do that.

7.42pm – 1 member of the public arrived

7.50pm - 6 members of the public left

2. **Apologies for absence** – Cllrs Judge and Loveday
apologies were received and **resolved; the reason was accepted.**
3. **To receive Declaration of Interests from Members in respect of any matter on the agenda** - none
4. **The Minutes of the previous meeting of the Committee held on the 16th April 2018 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.**
5. **Recorded Meetings:** none
6. **Planning applications:**

DM/18/1447

Location: 1, Oakland Place, Beeches Lane, Ashurst Wood

Desc: Two storey rear and side extension

Recommend: No objection

DM/18/1445

Location: 6, Oakleigh Cottages, Windmill Lane, Ashurst Wood

Desc: Demolition of single rear extension and erection of two storey rear extension with balcony to North West first floor elevation.

Recommend: No objection so long as the applicant can demonstrate that they can provide 3 parking spaces, in accordance with policy 21 of the Ashurst Wood Neighbourhood Plan.

7. To receive notification of planning decisions: DM/17/4777 – discharge of planning conditions 3,4,5,7,8,11,17 and 18 relating to planning application DM/17/1377 – 89-93 Hammerwood Road, Ashurst Wood. DM/18/0668 – use of Lower Stables as a dwelling house independent of the dwelling Upper Stables – Lower Stables, Hammerwood Road, Ashurst Wood - a Certificate for Lawful Use – Issued. DM/18/0827 – Proposed single storey rear extension, replace roof over existing extension with zinc and glass roof over patio – Woodford House, Lewes Road – Permission – Granted. DM/18/0192 – discharge of conditions 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 15, 17 related to planning application DM/17/2857 – 42, Hammerwood Road – **condition 7 not discharged.**

8. Correspondence: none

9. Any items for reporting or inclusion on future agenda: none

Meeting Closed at: 7.57pm

Chairman.....

Dated: