

Minutes of a meeting of the **PLANNING and DEVELOPMENT**
Committee held in the Council Offices, Pine Grove, Crowborough
on Monday 22nd May 2023 at 7.30pm

Present	Councillors	Suzanne Dixon Martyn Everitt Martyn Garrett Richard Jury Kay Moss Matthew Street Alan Penney Natalie Whittle	Chairman Vice – Chairman
Also present		Tracie White	Minute Taking Administrator
		26 members of the public in the chamber 1 member of public online	

*Denotes non-attendance

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A member of the public spoke in reference to Item 6 – Gatwick Airport Change Proposal. He raised concern at the impact that the expansion would have on the residents of Crowborough and stated that he believed the number of flights across the skies in the area would increase sixty-five percent. He believes that Crowborough as a town is underrepresented in discussions with stakeholders for the project and requested that the Committee considers taking action to increase the Town Council's involvement.

APOLOGIES

None

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

MINUTES

Minutes of the meeting held on the 24th April 2023

10129 **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting held on 24th April 2023 as confirmed be ratified by the Chairman.

NEW PLANNING APPLICATIONS

10130 **RESOLVED** that the observations on planning and licencing issues below be submitted to the Planning & Licensing Authority for consideration.

A member of public spoke in opposition to application WD/2022/2874/F. He stated that despite the reduction in size of the proposal, it is still an overbearing property situated in a small back garden. He believes the risk of flooding remains and levels of excess run-off will increase due to the increase in non-permeable surface. He also considers the property out of keeping with the surrounding area.

He raised concerns over the lack of wildlife plan, especially as there are badgers currently present in the vicinity and advised that a development nearby was declined due to the presence of Dartford warbler in the area.

Finally, he stated that the entrance and exit to the property are opposite the junction of a busy road, which causes concern over safety to road users and pedestrians. The member of the public believes that the pillars at Fairfax House obstruct the line of site, and that this issue is already known within planning control which has stipulated that they are to be located further back. This is still outstanding as enforcement is yet to take place.

A second member of public spoke in opposition to application WD/2022/2874. He stated that the proposal is over development of the site and will be overlooked by Cherry Tree Cottage due to its elevation. He has spoken at previous meetings regarding this application and noted the planning statement contained numerous errors. These errors still exist and have not been corrected in this application.

He is concerned that the plans indicate a two-storey building as opposed to a bungalow as stated.

The proposed driveway still runs directly alongside his property which will create a noise nuisance and the elevation of said drive will allow cars to look over the fence causing privacy issues.

He raised concerns over drainage and indicated that flooding is already a significant issue since Fairfax house has been built and he considers that this development will only exacerbate these issues. He noted that the revision sites the property less than 20 metres from his own which fails to meet the planning guidelines as stated on page 7 of the 2021 report. He further voiced concerns about the loss of dark sky as Fairfax House is already heavily illuminated and requested that lighting be restricted should the proposal be allowed to go ahead.

Finally, he voiced concerns about potential noise nuisance from the building work as previous works occurring on the site had taken place outside of permitted hours.

Cllr Moss declared an interest in the Application as she had met with residents several years ago.

Application No. WD/2022/2874/F Application Type: Full

Location: FAIRFAX HOUSE, ST JOHNS ROAD, CROWBOROUGH, TN6 1RT

Description: DETACHED DWELLING IN THE BACK GARDEN OF FAIRFAX HOUSE WITH ASSOCIATED PARKING AND LANDSCAPING. Amended plans received reducing the proposal to a single storey dwelling dated 3 May 2023.

Observations: Recommend Refusal

Town Council Comments: Refusal Recommended due to the negative visual impact to the street scene; overdevelopment of the plot; the size, scale, and form of the proposal.

The modest reduction has not addressed the fundamental issues previously outlined and there is not enough of a material difference to previous plans. Additionally, the proposal does not meet the 10% net gain in biodiversity soon to be a legislative requirement.

There continues to be a loss of privacy to neighbouring properties and unresolved drainage and flooding issues, particularly as the increase of impermeable surfaces will not improve the situation. In addition, the ecological report is flawed, with no new surveys having been completed and substantial amounts of redacting being present in the report. Overall, the report is unsuitable for use. Also, the transport report is missing which leads to the assumption that the property will only be accessible using private cars. The town council also believes that the proposal is within one kilometre of Ashdown Forest and is currently part of a green corridor linking woodland between Innhams Wood, The Ghyll and Ashdown Forest and there appear to have been no mitigation measures put in place.

Additionally, the recent introduction of car parking charges on the Ashdown Forest has led to an increase in on-street parking in the St John's area. This has resulted in an increase in the number of children being walked to the school as parents are unable to find parking during peak times.

The original application WD/2021/2466/F was refused approximately eighteen months ago, and this subsequent proposal is not an improvement. Should the proposal be approved the town council requests that conditions are imposed so that no external illuminations be allowed on the property due to light pollution and that restrictions be placed on the permissible working hours for contractors within the site so as not to affect the neighbours in an adverse matter.

Two members of public left the chamber at 19:57 hrs.

The Chairman moved to hear Items 4.4, 4.12, 4.7 and 4.2 first due to members of public present with an interest in the items.

A member of public spoke in opposition to Application WD/2023/1008/F. He stated that restrictive covenants are in place on the Southridge Rise estate to ensure the look and feel remain open plan. He believes the proposal is out of keeping with the area, causes a negative impact to the street scene, and is overbearing as it is close to the boundary and footpath in a cul-de-sac location. He further stated that the estate is typical of a 1970s development, defined by large, open gardens, delineated with planting, with large spacious driveways. The addition of a substantial shed will undermine the appearance of the area. He raised concerns that the building could lead to a permanent structure at a future date.

A second member of public spoke in opposition to Application WD/2023/1008/F. He stated that the restricted covenant specifies that fences and walls are not permitted to preserve the estate. He believes WDC is aware of this as an application in another site on the estate has been dismissed. He also raised a concern that the hedge could be removed in future which will leave the proposal looking even more out of keeping and he feels that there will be a detrimental effect on the neighbouring properties.

Application No. WD/2023/1008/F Application Type: Full**Location:** 103 SOUTHRIDGE RISE, CROWBOROUGH, TN6 1LL**Description** ERECTION OF WOODEN SHED AT BOTTOM OF FRONT GARDEN BEHIND EXISTING HEDGE.**Observations: Recommend Refusal**

Town Council Comments: The town council recommends refusal on the basis that there will be a domineering impact to surrounding properties given that the proposed shed is 5m by 6m and 2.6m tall. The proposal is out of keeping with the open spaces of the estate and will have a negative visual impact to the street scene. There is a covenant in place to protect the nature of the estate and the erection of a shed would breach this.

Three members of public left the chamber at 20:09 hrs.

A member of public spoke in opposition to Application WD/2023/1185/F. He believes the application may have been designed to ease the way into developing the land at a future date. The proposal is for a facility that measures 131 m² which is the same footprint as a four-bed house and includes a toilet, shower, kitchenette, internet access and the member of public questions why this level of provision is required for two ponies. He stated that the proposal will be situated five metres from the boundary of his property and ten metres from the house which will cause odour and noise nuisance. He feels that the proposal is an unsustainable development in an unsustainable location, less than one hundred and sixty metres from the AONB, in undeveloped ancient woodland, unsuitable for anything other than agricultural use. Finally, he referred to the Article 4 directive placed on the land by WDC.

The owner of the land spoke in support of Application WD/2023/1185/F. He refuted the belief that the land is to be used for residential purposes and asserted that the proposal is to stable his own ponies, those of friends and to store equipment to be used for maintenance of the land and surrounding trees, his ambition is to enhance the plot not degrade it. He believes that the stable is a sensible size and stated that he has spoken to residents to allay their concerns and is abiding by the regulations with regards to studies and surveys required. He informed members that he has to date cleared fallen trees and replanted hedging and new trees and is looking to increase the number of trees within the plot.

Another member of public spoke in opposition to Application WD/2023/1185/F. She stated that the proposal is out of character with the surrounding area and will be visible from the road. She believes it will have a detrimental effect on neighbouring properties due to noise and odour, is too close to the AONB and will adversely affect the natural habitats of native species.

Application No. WD/2023/1185/F Application Type: Full**Location:** LAND TO THE EAST OF ALICE BRIGHT LANE, CROWBOROUGH, TN6 3SQ**Description:** NEW EQUINE STABLE, STORAGE AND WELFARE FACILITIES.**Observations: Recommend Refusal**

Town Council Comments: Refusal recommended due to overdevelopment of the greenfield site and the excessive size, scale, and form of the proposed structure in what is a rural and ecologically sensitive location. There are potential access issues including the narrowness of Alice Bright Lane along with parking and number of visitors. Usage levels

are unclear, given the inconsistency between the size of the building compared with the stated level of horse/pony occupancy. The committee is also concerned about the building's proximity to the boundary of the plot and its potential to cause a noise and odour nuisance to the neighbouring residential property. There was no ecology report available at the time that the committee considered the application, so it was not possible to assess the proposals impact upon local wildlife and on-site biodiversity.

Should the proposal be approved, the committee would like to see restrictions placed on the levels of external lighting permitted and that the building be restricted to equine use.

Ten members of the public left the chamber at 20:26 hrs.

A member of public spoke in opposition to Application WD/2023/1018/F. He stated that the creation of the proposed garages would remove four parking spaces currently utilised by residents which will increase the level of parking on the already busy Whitehill Road. Each of the houses in Sandridge already have their own garages which means that the new ones will be used by unknown users, and he believes that this will create a security and noise issue for residents as the new garages may be accessed twenty-four hours a day.

He stated that the land currently consists of a nice green space including a tree which is used frequently by the neighbouring children to play. Additionally he said that he has lived in his home for over forty years, during which time the owner of the land had never maintained it, instead leaving it for residents to do, himself having done so for over twenty years. Finally, he noted that there is a main sewer and manhole directly where the garages are proposed and raised concerns that adequate attention has not been paid to this.

A second member of public spoke in opposition to Application WD/2023/1018/F. She stated that the proposal will have a negative impact on the neighbouring properties, harm the amenity space, be out of keeping with the visual look of the close, impact the safety of pedestrians due to the removal of pathways, negatively affect the security of the close due to users having access 24/7 and will cause drainage issues due to the increase in hard standing. Additionally, residents will lose access to parking which increases traffic issues on nearby roads. Finally, she raised concerns over who will maintain the garages as the land owner to date had failed to maintain the land itself.

A third member of public spoke in opposition to Application WD/2023/1018/F. He echoed the sentiments of the previous speakers. He stated that the plan does not outline the size of the garages but is concerned that they would not fit modern size cars anyway which essentially makes them storage units at the cost of four existing parking spaces. He feels that the loss of this space will impact the parking on Whitehill Road, which at peak times is already heavily utilised by people visiting and using the Scout Hut and he is concerned about the increased danger this may cause to children accessing this service.

A fourth member of public spoke in opposition to Application WD/2023/1018/F. She raised concerns at the loss of four parking spaces and the increase in parking on Whitehill Road which is already congested. She believes the green aspect of the close is important and beneficial for residents. Finally, she is concerned about building works over a sewer.

Cllrs Whittle and Everitt declared a personal interest as members of First Crowborough Scouts.

Application No. WD/2023/1018/F Application Type: Full

Location: LAND AT SANDRIDGE, CROWBOROUGH, TN6 1JE

Description: ERECTION OF A BLOCK OF 3 NO. SINGLE GARAGES.

Observations: Recommend Refusal

Town Council Comments: Refusal recommended as the proposal is for a commercial venture which is out of keeping with the residential nature of the road. There are concerns about the potential impact to the sewer which has not been marked on the plans and the fire hydrant located at the rear needs to remain accessible. The proposal is contra to paragraph 2 of Wealden's EN27 policy due to the adverse impact on privacy, scale, height form and traffic movement. The application is misleading as it states that three extra spaces are being created yet omits that four on-street parking spaces are being lost leading to a net parking loss even if the proposed garages were to be let to residents of the street. There is a negative impact on the street scene and a loss of green space and mature trees. Finally, no provision has been made for electric vehicle charging points, which if the proposal is to be used for car parking as advertised, is a sustainability prerequisite.

Six members of public left the chamber at 20:48 hrs.

One member of online public left the meeting at 20:48 hrs.

Application No. WD/2023/1196/F Application Type: Major Application - Full

Location: FLOWER PATCH, SWEETHAWS LANE, CROWBOROUGH, TN6 3SS

Description: ERECTION OF SINGLE STOREY EXTENSION TO CREATE A BEDROOM AND ENTRANCE HALL.

Observations: Recommend Approval

Town Council Comments: The town council has no comment.

A member of public left the chamber at 20:50 hrs.

Application No. WD/2023/1175/F Application Type: Type: Full

Location: HADLOW, WESTERN ROAD, CROWBOROUGH, TN6 3EY.

Description: SINGLE-STOREY REAR (INFILL) EXTENSION TO DETACHED DWELLING.

Observations: Recommend Approval

Town Council Comments: The town council has no comment.

Application No. WD/2023/1085/F Application Type: Full

Location: UNIT 12, APRIL COURT, SYBRON WAY, CROWBOROUGH, TN6 3DZ

Description: CHANGE OF USE FROM CLASS E(G) (LIGHT INDUSTRIAL) TO A FLEXIBLE USE CLASS E (G) AND CLASS F1 (A) (LEARNING AND NON-RESIDENTIAL INSTITUTION FOR THE PROVISION OF EDUCATION).

Observations: Recommend Approval

Town Council Comments: The town council note that parking is limited at this site.

Application No. WD/2023/1078/F Application Type: Full

Location: 6A HIGH STREET, CROWBOROUGH, TN6 2QA

Description: REPLACEMENT OF WINDOWS AND EXTERNAL DOORS, RESTORATION OF THE MAIN PITCHED ROOF AND INSULATE THE REAR FLAT ROOF, REPAINTING OF THE HIGH STREET FACADE.

Observations: Recommend Approval

Town Council Comments: The town council has no comment.

Application No. WD/2023/0099/O Application Type: Full

Location: HIDEAWAY, TUBWELL LANE, CROWBOROUGH, TN6 3RJ

Description: REDEVELOPMENT OF THE SITE TO PROVIDE 6 NO. DETACHED DWELLINGS AND THE RETENTION AND CONVERSION OF THE EXISTING PROPERTY TO PROVIDE 3 NO. DWELLINGS, INCLUDING ALTERATIONS TO THE EXISTING VEHICULAR ACCESS AND CLOSURE OF THE SECOND ACCESS ONTO TUBWELL LANE.

Observations: Recommend Refusal

Town Council Comments: Refusal recommended on the basis that the proposal is outside of the development boundary, the ecology report is flawed, the loss of mature trees and hedgerow will impact the biodiversity of the site. Additionally, there is no biodiversity net gain which will be a requirement from November 2023. In addition, the public transport report is wholly inaccurate using out of date transport information as there has been a substantial reduction in bus service provision in the area since this information was collated. The topography of the site and location within Crowborough means that cycling is highly unlikely and there are no pavements in the vicinity making the development car dependent. The site is greenfield in nature and the proposal represents a high density given its rural location. The council is concerned about drainage issues and believe the ground water attenuation tanks are insufficient.

It appears that the turning splays for plots 2 and 7 are too small for refuse vehicles to access which will mean that residents will have to walk their refuse the entire length of the plot. Parking spaces for the houses are limited which means that visitor spaces will in fact be used by residents.

The council has concerns that the visibility splays are not clear enough and that more hedging and trees could end up being removed during construction. It would like to see East Sussex Council define the requirements more specifically in their commentary as part of the outline proposal.

The housing mix is poor as the proposal only contains large houses. There are no zero carbon measures in the planning, instead Section 106 monies have been proposed as recompense. The council would also like clarification with regards to the responsibility for the suds maintenance schedule.

A member of public left the chamber at 21:10 hrs.

Application No. WD/2023/0991/F Application Type: Full

Location: 7 SOUTHRIDGE RISE, CROWBOROUGH, TN6 1LG

Description: SINGLE STOREY SIDE EXTENSION INCORPORATING INTEGRAL DOUBLE GARAGE & REMODELLING OF EXISTING PORCH. ENLARGEMENT OF EXISTING DRIVEWAY.

Observations: Recommend Approval

Town Council Comments: The town council has no comment.

Application No. WD/2023/1045/F Application Type: Full

Location: PINE GROVE HOUSE, 11A KINGS CHASE, CROWBOROUGH, TN6 1RQ

Description: PROPOSED SINGLE STOREY SIDE EXTENSION.

Observations: Recommend Approval

Town Council Comments: The town council has no comment.

Application No. WD/2023/1090/F Application Type: Full

Location: LAND ADJACENT TO WALSHES MANOR FARM, WALSHES ROAD, TN6 3RB

Description: PROVISION OF AN ELECTRICITY SUB STATION.

Observations: Recommend Approval

Town Council Comments: The town council has no comment.

Application No. WD/2023/1199/F Application Type: Full

Location: 27 OLIVER CLOSE, CROWBOROUGH, TN6 1JZ

Description: FIRST FLOOR FLANK EXTENSION.

Observations: Recommend Approval

Town Council Comments: The town council has no comment.

Application No. WD/2023/1124/F Application Type: Full

Location: 2 WHITE COTTAGE, SLAUGHAMS GHYLL, SHEEP PLAIN, CROWBOROUGH, TN6 3ST.

Description: PROPOSED REAR EXTENSION WITH BALCONY OVER, RAISED PATIO AND SHADE CANOPY.

Observations: Recommend Refusal

Town Council Comments: Refusal recommended as it is the town councils believe that this is a listed property and as such listed building consent is also required.

DECISION NOTICES (attached to agenda)

Noted.

GATWICK AIRPORT FASI SOUTH AIRSPACE CHANGE PROPOSAL

To note the stakeholder presentation and Q&A record and agree any action.

Members discussed the reports to determine the most appropriate way to respond. It was agreed that any decision making was outside the remit of the Planning & Development Committee. It was agreed that the topic be raised at the next Full Council meeting for further discussion.

10131 RESOLVED to discuss the Airspace Change Proposal at a future Full Council meeting to agree any action.

URGENT MATTERS AT THE DISCRETION OF THE CHAIRMAN FOR NOTING.

A member raised the topic of conservation area restrictions following a response received from WDC regarding the replacement door at Mansell McTaggart on Eridge Road. WDC has stated that it believes the door poses no material alteration to the overall conservation area given that other properties in the area have similar doors.

Members queried why there is a conservation area in place if issues raised are ignored. It was agreed that an agenda item be added as a discussion point for the next meeting.

A member noted that a Lawful Development Application had been withdrawn and queried why it had not made it to planning for comment when others previously had. Members asked the officer to ascertain why selected ones are sent by planning when others are not.

DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING.

The date of the next meeting is Monday 5th June 2023 at 19:30hrs.

The meeting closed at 21:36 hrs.