

Minutes of a meeting of the **PLANNING and DEVELOPMENT**
Committee held in the Council Offices, Pine Grove, Crowborough
on Monday 4th September 2023 at 7.30pm

Present	Councillors	Vikki Cook* Suzanne Dixon Martyn Everitt Martyn Garrett David Hedges Richard Jury Kay Moss Matthew Street* Alan Penney Simon Ryder* Natalie Whittle	Chairman Vice – Chairman
Also present		Tracie White Cllr Andrew Wilson	Minute Taking Administrator Wealden District Councillor
		Two members of the public in the chamber	
*Denotes non-attendance			

APOLOGIES

Cllr Vikki Cook
Cllr Matthew Street
Cllr Simon Ryder

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Kay Moss declared a personal interest in Item 4.5 as the applicant is known to her.
Cllr Richard Jury declared a personal interest in Item 4.5 as the applicant is known to him.
Cllr Natalie Whittle declared a pecuniary interest in Item 4.11 as she resides in a neighboring property.

MINUTES

Minutes of the meeting held on the 7th August 2023

- 10228 RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 7th August 2023 as confirmed are ratified by the Chairman.

NEW PLANNING APPLICATIONS

- 10229 RESOLVED** that the observations on planning and licencing issues below be submitted to the Planning & Licensing Authority for consideration.

The chairman moved to hear item 4.11 to the start of the meeting due to members of public present with an interest in the item. He also moved Item 4.5 to be discussed second to allow Cllr Natalie Whittle to chair the item due to the declarations of interest made by himself and the vice chairman.

Cllr Natalie Whittle left the meeting at 19:31hrs due to a pecuniary interest in the item being discussed.

A member of public spoke in opposition to Application WD/2022/2499/F. He stated that the proposed development is situated outside the development boundary and is surrounded by fields and meadows. He believes that the developer is trying to land grab and gain access to the fields behind the site. Wealden District Council (WDC) have previously stated that building will not be permitted outside of the boundary therefore he questioned why the application was even allowed to be made. He expressed concern about the erosion of green spaces and stated that WDC need to ensure the integrity of the boundary is upheld.

A second member of public spoke in opposition to Application WD/2022/2499/F. She stated that the proposed site is outside of the development boundary set-up in 1998 and upheld in 2013. The emerging plan in 2018 saw WDC move the boundary further away to exclude the Warren entirely and to safeguard its Arcadian, low-density character, stating 'further development is likely to be detrimental to the more rural character as well as existing residential amenities'.

She further stated that WDC planning officers have consistently defended the boundary by refusing all applications for new dwellings on this site and the two adjacent ones for at least the last sixty-six years, stating the following reasons: 'unwarranted intrusion of residential development in this rural area, detracts from the visual and rural amenities of the locality, constitutes an undesirable form of back land development, represents unwarranted consolidation beyond the limits of the town'. She considers that nothing has changed since then other than the need to protect the environment becoming more urgent as the AONB is being slowly eroded.

She stated that the site, defined by open fields, is within the zone of influence (700 metres) of three protected sites – SSSI, SAC, SP and within 80 meters of the Medieval Pale. It also borders the AONB on two sides as well as ancient woodland on another. It is her opinion that the application conflicts with the NPPF, section 176, as gardens and an apple orchard will be replaced with residential buildings. There will be the introduction of light and noise pollution to the AONB which will impact residents, wildlife, and habitats. Finally, she feels that the scale and density are out of keeping with the surrounding area and are overbearing which negatively impacts the street scene.

Application No. WD/2022/2499/F Application Type: Type: Full

Location: WARREN DRIVE REST HOME, FIELDEN ROAD, CROWBOROUGH, TN6 1TP

Description: REDEVELOPMENT OF EXISTING RETIREMENT HOME SITE COMPRISING PART DEMOLITION OF EXISTING BUILDING AND REINSTATEMENT OF ORIGINAL DETACHED DWELLING TOGETHER WITH THREE NEW DETACHED DWELLINGS WITHIN THE SITE BOUNDARY.

Observations: Recommends Refusal

Town Council Comments: Crowborough Town Council recommends that planning permission be refused on the following grounds.

The proposal is outside of the town's long standing development boundary, upheld from the 1998 local plan and all subsequent planning documents and is met by open countryside on the western side of the site. Additionally, it is extremely close to the boundary of the Ashdown Forest and would encroach upon the neighbouring agricultural land. The council is also very concerned that planning precedent could be set by the approval of this application which has the potential to become a gateway development in itself or provide justification for development on nearby land in the close vicinity.

The committee believes that the application is also contra to the following WDC saved planning policies: DC17, GN2, EN1, EN2 and CR2

The council believes that the site layout is contrived and illogical given the layout of the proposed small close of houses; large amounts of the site appear to be wasted whilst the houses themselves are in overly close proximity, to both each other and a neighbouring property.

The committee also considers that the traffic survey data may potentially be flawed as it appears to show the number of vehicle movements from the old care home to be far in excess of those that the council would have expected to have been generated from such an establishment. The vehicle movements are also considered to be functionally irrelevant to the proposed development as the new houses would not generate anything like that level of daily movements. In addition, the care home has also now been closed for some considerable time so gathering accurate traffic survey data would be difficult. The committee also notes that the site is entirely car dependent due to its distance from any facilities or public transport links.

The ecological appraisal report is both incomplete and out of date and needs to be redone, especially as the location of the site is likely to attract significant wildlife activity. The committee is also concerned that the claims of a net biodiversity gain are reliant upon the existing boundary hedgerows and the council cannot see how any level of gain could be achieved on this basis.

The design of the houses is out of keeping with nearby properties and they appear to be of excessive height which will also be overbearing upon the neighbouring property. The committee also has concerns over light pollution in what is a dark area of the town. Finally, whilst not out of line for the Warren area of Crowborough, the proposal for these large multi bedroom detached houses does nothing to meet the town's wider housing need in terms of types/sizes of property that is in short supply.

For all the above reasons Crowborough Town Council believes that planning permission should be refused.

The council is, however, happy to support the demolition of the existing redundant 20th Century care home extension as this is largely out of keeping with the existing building and the wider surrounding area.

Cllr Natalie Whittle returned to the meeting at 19.52hrs.

Two members of public left the chamber at 19:52hrs.

Cllr Natalie Whittle chaired the meeting for the discussion on Application WD/2023/1993/F.

Application No. WD/2023/1993/F Application Type: Full

Location: WREN'S NEST COTTAGE, WALSHES ROAD, CROWBOROUGH, TN6 23RE

Description: DEMOLITION OF CONSERVATORY, SINGLE STOREY SIDE, TWO STOREY REAR EXTENSION AND SOLAR PANELS.

Observations: Recommends Approval

Town Council Comments: The town council has no comment.

Cllr Richard Jury resumed control of the meeting from 19:54hrs.

Cllr Natalie Whittle left the meeting at 19:54hrs.

Application No. WD/2023/1798/MAJ Application Type: Type: Major Application - Full

Location: LAND EAST OF GREEN LANE/PALESGATE LANE, STEEL CROSS, CROWBOROUGH

Description: PHASED DEVELOPMENT TO PROVIDE 120 RESIDENTIAL DWELLINGS (USE CLASS C3) INCLUDING 40% AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND 5% CUSTOM BUILD HOUSING WITH ASSOCIATED PLAYSPACE, SUSTAINABLE URBAN DRAINAGE SYSTEMS, ACCESS TO GREEN LANE VIA A NEW JUNCTION, AND HARD AND SOFT LANDSCAPING INCLUDING WOODLAND AND TREE PLANTING. TOTAL UPLIFT OF 17 NO DWELLINGS TO APPROVED DEVELOPMENT WD/2022/0398/MRM.

Observations: Recommends Refusal

Town Council Comments: The town council recommend refusal on the following basis:

The location of the application is within the AONB, and the extra houses proposed seem to be situated in the most rural part of the site which leads to overdevelopment of the area due to the density of properties. The new proposal is an increase of more than 10% of the current, agreed housing and there are still areas of land owned by the developer that could.

be earmarked for yet further properties should this be agreed. The council believe the original conditions should stand.

Tandem parking spaces are proposed yet the council believe these to be undesirable and likely to increase on-street parking. There are no pavements within the development which is a significant safety risk for pedestrians. There appear to be no ecological measures proposed other than the possibility of air source heat pumps.

The surveys are out of date as the Quality Emissions document took place in January 2022 and the Dormouse Survey in May 2022. The Natural England habitation assessment is missing information relating to the biodiversity net gain figures.

The South East Water report states there are no issues in the area, however, the committee note that this location had had two incidents where residents have been without water for several days in the last six-month period.

Reference is made to the water being discharged to the water course to the west of Palesgate Lane. This will affect both the Ghyll and the splash at the end of Palesgate Lane which already experiences issues with localised flooding. Additionally, drainage issues in Palesgate Lane do not seem to have been addressed as the ditch has been dug out at least twice in the last year. This proposal will add pressure on the land drainage which is likely to

affect neighbouring properties opposite which are all downhill from the development. The fresh water system in this part of town is already under duress as outlined above.

Application No. WD/2023/2004/F Application Type: Full

Location: 9 CORNFORD CLOSE, CROWBOROUGH, TN6 1EZ

Description: PROPOSED FIRST FLOOR SIDE EXTENSION TO REMOVE CATSLIDE ROOF. PROPOSED SINGLE STOREY EXTENSION TO FRONT OF EXISTING GARGE TO ENABLE GARAGE TO BE CONVERTED TO RESIDENTIAL ANNEXE, INCORPORATING A SMALL SUN DECK TO REAR OF ANNEXE.

Observations: Recommend Approval

Town Council Comments: Approval recommended on the basis that the annexe not be divisible from the main property in the future.

Application No. WD/2023/1295/F Application Type: Full

Location: LAND BETWEEN 18 & 20 LINCOLN WAY CROWBOROUGH, TN6 3AQ

Description: ERECTION OF A NEW DWELLING WITH PARKING BELOW.

Observations: Recommend Refusal

Town Council Comments: Refusal recommended on the basis that the application is overdevelopment of the site, and the unusual and contrived design is out of keeping with and detrimental to the street scene There is lack of provision for amenity space, the loss of parking will impact residents, and the height of the proposal is both imposing and overbearing.

Application No. WD/2023/1721/FA Application Type: Full - Retrospective

Location: 4 MUSGROVE PLACE, CROWBOROUGH, TN6 2TZ

Description: RETROSPECTIVE APPLICATION FOR GARDEN ROOM AND DECKING.

Observations: Recommend Refusal

Town Council Comments: Refusal recommended due to overdevelopment of an already crowded site. The proposal has a domineering impact on the neighbouring property due to its proximity to the boundary. There are potential access issues for the maintenance of the fencing and the proposal uses low quality construction materials. Finally, the water run-off will likely increase due to the increase in impermeable surface.

Application No. WD/2023/1953/F Application Type: Type: Full

Location: BIRCHLANDS, BLACKNESS ROAD,CROWBOROUGH, TN6 2NB

Description: PROPOSED FIRST FLOOR SIDE EXTENSION. SINGLE STOREY REAR EXTENSION. GARAGE CONVERSION TO FORM HABITBALE ACCOMMODATION.

Observations: Recommend Approval

Town Council Comments: The town council had no comment.

Application No. WD/2022/2507/F Application Type: Full

Location: CONCEPT HOUSE, 20 BOOKER CLOSE, CROWBOROUGH, TN6 2XT

Description: ERECTION OF A FRONT EXTENSION TO EXTEND THE ENTRANCE WAY AND LENGTHEN CURRENT OFFICE SPACE. REMOVAL OF EXISTING GARGE DOOR TO BE REPLACED WITH WINDOW IN KEEPING WITH CURRENT APPEARANCE.

Observations: Recommend Approval

Town Council Comments: The town council had no comment.

Application No. WD/2023/1867/F Application Type: Full

Location: LOCKINGTON, AVIEMORE ROAD, CROWBOROUGH, TN6 1QU

Description: INSTALLATION OF FIFTEEN (15) SOLAR PANELS ON THE FLAT ROOF.

Observations: Recommend Approval

Town Council Comments: The town council had no comment.

Application No. WD/2023/1873/FA Application Type: Type: Full – Non-compliance of Condition

Location: THE OLD HOPGARDEN, WALSHES ROAD, CROWBOROUGH, TN6 3RE

Description: VARIATION OF CONDITIONS 4,5,9,11 & 12 OF WD/2020/1916/F (RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT FOR ONE ADDITIONAL DWELLING) TO AMEND TRIGGER POINTS FOR THE CONDITIONS.

Observations: Recommend Refusal

Town Council Comments: The town council can see no justification for changes and believe the original conditions should be upheld.

Application No. WD/2023/1763/F Application Type: Type: Full

Location: GREEN HEDGES, BLACKNESS ROAD, CROWBOROUGH, TN6 2LZ

Description: DEMOLISH THE EXISTING BUNGALOW AND ERECT A PAIR OF SEMI-DETACHED TWO-STORY, THREE-BEDROOMED HOUSES TOGETHER WITH CAR PARKING, CYCLE STORES, VEHICULAR ACCESS, AND CHARGING POINTS.

Observations: Recommend Approval

Town Council Comments: The town council had no comment.

Application No. WD/2023/2043/F Application Type: Type: Full

Location: ADAMS FARM, SWEETHAWS LANE, CROWBOROUGH, TN6 3SS

Description: REPLACEMENT OF EXISTING WINDOWS AND ALUMINIUM DOOR TO LEFT FLANK ELEVATION.

Observations: Recommend Approval

Town Council Comments: The town council are pleased to note that the applicant is seeking to implement restorative measures that are more in keeping with the original style of the property.

Application No. WD/2023/2044/LB Application Type: Type: listed building consent

Location: ADAMS FARM, SWEETHAWS LANE, CROWBOROUGH, TN6 3SS

Description: REPLACEMENT OF EXISTING WINDOWS AND ALUMINIUM DOOR TO LEFT FLANK ELEVATION.

Observations: Recommend Approval

Town Council Comments: The town council are pleased to note that the applicant is seeking to implement restorative measures that are more in keeping with the original style of the property.

DECISION NOTICES (attached to agenda)

The decision notices were acknowledged.

Members were surprised to note that the decision regarding Application WD/2023/0205/F had been determined at officer level as a member had requested it be called in for discussion at Planning North. Cllr Wilson spoke to confirm that a consultant officer on secondment had made the decision.

MILLWOOD HOMES REQUEST

To consider the request from Millwood Homes to erect temporary directional signs.

It was agreed that this item be discussed at the Environment meeting of 12th September 2023 as lampposts fall under the remit of that committee.

STREET NAMING CONSULTATION

To consider street name for the development at Springfield, Green Lane

Members noted the report and considered the Council's list of approved street names. It was proposed that Brookbank be put forward to the developer as this has a more direct connection to Crowborough.

- 10230 RESOLVED** that Brookbank be submitted to the contractor for consideration for the development of land at Springfield, Green Lane.

ESCC PLANNING CONSULTATION ON LOWER ASHWOOD FARM, ERIDGE ROAD.

To consider the retrospective application and agree further action.

Members agreed to defer the decision on this application to determine whether Go Green Waste have a commercial connection to the Council.

PREMISES LICENCE. CARSONS TEA HOUSE 12 CROFT ROAD CROWBOROUGH

To note the application and agree any action.

Members have no objection to the application.

URGENT MATTERS AT THE DISCRETION OF THE CHAIRMAN FOR NOTING.

None

DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING.

The date of the next meeting is Monday 25th September 2023 at 19:30hrs.

The meeting closed at 20: 47 hrs.