

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



Minutes of a meeting of the Plans Committee held in the Weald Hall,
Civic Centre, Uckfield
on Monday 1 November 2021 at 7.00pm

Councillor. K. Bedwell (Chair)
Councillor. J. Beesley
Councillor. B. Cox

Councillor D. Bennett (Vice-Chair)
Councillor J. Love
Councillor. C. Macve
Councillor. S. Mayhew

IN ATTENDANCE: -

45 members of the public
1 member of the press (recording)
Councillor D. French (attending in public audience)
Councillor P. Sparks (attending in public audience)
Linda Lewis – Administrative Officer
Holly Goring – Town Clerk
Minutes taken by Linda Lewis

1.0 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members and officers were reminded to make any declarations of personal and/or prejudicial interests that they may have in relation to any item on the agenda, but none were forthcoming.

Councillor C. Macve declared a personal interest in WD/2021/2198/MAO Land at Bird in Eye Farm, South of Bird in Eye Hill, Framfield, TN22 5HA.

The Town Clerk confirmed that she had given dispensation to Councillor C. Macve to speak on the application but due to his personal interest he would not be able to vote.

Later in the meeting under agenda item WD/2021/2198/MAO, Councillor D. Bennett declared that he lived in Framfield Road and could therefore be impacted by in general any flood risk or highway proposals as a result of the development. The development itself however would not personally or prejudicially impact Councillor Bennett's household.

2.0 STATEMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ON MATTERS ON THE AGENDA AT THE CHAIRMAN'S DISCRETION

P49.11.21 It was **RESOLVED** suspend Standing Orders to allow members of the public to speak.

Resident 1 - Mrs Harriet Paul spoke on two points relating to agenda item 5.0 - WD/2021/2198/MAO Land at Bird in Eye Farm.

Firstly Mrs Paul advised that she had undertaken a survey on Facebook under a campaign group called "Framfield Road Says No", to which there had been 77 responses. In order to get an un-biased view she advertised the survey across a number of neutral Facebook groups. The results were as follows:

- 77% were most concerned about the capacity of Uckfield's schools, nurseries and doctors surgeries;
- 69% were concerned about the level of traffic and congestion;

- 35% were concerned about there not being enough parking in the area;
- 34.6% were concerned about the detrimental impact on our countryside.
- 87% strongly disagreed that enough was being done to support the local infrastructure as Uckfield developed;
- This was compared with 1.3% who agreed that enough was being done;
- 84% strongly disagreed with the addition of double yellow lines along Framfield Road;
- 81% strongly felt that the B2102 could not cope with the additional traffic it would cause;
- Almost 66% strongly disagreed that Wealden District Council took the views of residents into consideration when looking at planning applications;
- This compared to 6.7% that either agreed or strongly agreed that Wealden District Council did take residents views into consideration;
- 68% disagreed that access to the countryside had improved in the last five years.
- This compared to 1.3% who strongly agreed that their access to the countryside had improved in the last five years.
- 79% felt very strongly that the development would have a negative impact on the local countryside.

Secondly Mrs Paul illustrated the parking 'nightmare' on Framfield Road. Using an average of the South East for the number of cars per household as being 1.41 and measuring from google maps the north side from 61A to 181 Framfield Road (end of the terraces) that had no parking to the front and then deducting the area of yellow lines she was able to work out the available space left. She found that currently there were 32 spaces for 37.55 cars on the north side of Framfield Road. This meant that 5.5 cars would have to find somewhere else to park.

Residents in Framfield Road were currently fortunate that business premises such as Mitchell & Cooper allowed the use of their car park outside of business hours (after 6pm) and her figures assumed that the houses without parking made use of the business spaces. Therefore by removing eight bays as the application documentation suggested, it would leave 27 spaces for 37.55 cars, which would mean 13 vehicles would be without parking. The displacement of 13 parking spaces would affect those without on street parking the most. The planning application considers this acceptable, but she would ask who is that acceptable to!

Resident 2 - Mr Keith-Lucas spoke in relation to agenda item 5.0 - WD/2021/2198/MAO Land at Bird in Eye Farm.

Mr Keith-Lucas stated that he believed that this was a wider issue of not just the 290 houses being proposed for development at Bird in Eye Farm but that there was other land identified opposite known as Bird in Eye North which would also have capacity for another 200 houses. This would lead to the addition of possibly 500 houses and 800 additional cars in the Framfield Road/Bird in Eye Hill area.

Mr Keith-Lucas' first point related to concerns with parking and traffic congestion in the New Town area; roads such as Keld Drive and Harcourt Road already suffered from considerable displacement parking from Framfield Road and this would be further amplified by this development.

Parking on one side was not enough, and because of the anticipated extra traffic there would be areas that would not be wide enough for a bus or lorry. Because of this there would be sections of the road that would need to see the removal of yellow lines on both sides of the road and it was not just Framfield Road that would be affected, Harcourt Road and New Place were already rat runs that people drove through to avoid the four way traffic lights at the Framfield Road junction.

Mr Keith-Lucas' second point related to drainage. Concerns were raised with regard to the Framfield Stream. The stream rose faster than the river and so this must be dealt with so that there would be no acceleration in run off from the site. Permeable surfaces did not work on Wealden clay which did not absorb run off.

As a retired local authority planning highways solicitor he was also very aware of how SCOOT worked and stated it was a good method for allocating spare capacity to maximise the dominant flow of traffic, giving a green way to scoot traffic through in the dominant direction and a red way to those in opposite direction. Unfortunately Uckfield did not present a simple straight road with a dominant flow, but a seven point junction (including the entrance into Waitrose). There was no spare capacity especially in the peak period, which could be reallocated to a quiet road.

Resident 3 - Councillor Donna French – speaking as an Uckfield resident of over 50 years and not a Councillor, spoke in relation to agenda item 5.0 - WD/2021/2198/MAO Land at Bird in Eye Farm.

Mrs French thanked the committee for their background research report. This, she stated, was unlike the reports that accompanied the application as it was accurate and up to date. She felt the inaccuracies of the documentation presented by Croudace were insulting; to think they thought Uckfield wouldn't notice. She questioned whether this was plain lazy or deceitful.

She thought it was apt that on the first day of COP26 the speakers there were discussing global climate change at their meeting in Glasgow and spoke words that resonated with her which were, greed, selfishness, and the treating of nature like a toilet. These words could also be applied to the situation Uckfield and Framfield found themselves in and were true of this application. It was about protection of our heritage, our market town and the future of our area which once gone would be gone forever. The Town Climate Change Working Group had adopted the proverb "the journey of a thousand miles begins with one step"

This one step of rejecting a single application, although may be large to Uckfield would be a small step in respect of the global climate change, but, all these steps would add up. It was hoped that the Wealden District Councillors would have the courage to support the local residents that would be adversely affected if this development were to go ahead and Mrs French implored Uckfield Town Council to object and Wealden District Councillors to refuse this application.

Resident 4 - Bernadette, who had been an Uckfield resident since 1993 spoke in relation to agenda item WD/2021/2198/MAO Land at Bird in Eye Farm

Bernadette started by referencing a number of housing figures. She stated that in Uckfield there was a stock total of 4500, with an additional 1300 to date not yet built. This would be a 28% increase in housing stock.

She praised Uckfield Town Council for putting together a research report and noted that she had seen an immense change to the area since becoming a resident.

She argued that in fact we did have an adopted local plan/core strategy which was adopted in 2013 and ran to 2027 and urged the Town Council to remind Wealden District Council of this.

She referenced a housing market report of August 2021 based on ONS data and stated that buried within that report it said that there were more deaths than births, so it

was questioned that if that was reflective of the district, why did we need more housing?

She stated there was also another test called a Housing Delivery Test, which if Wealden District Council actually delivered 85% of what they had approved (8,300) across this district we would be meeting our supply needs. They had approved 8300 but only delivered 83% last year. Uckfield was taking more than its fair share with around 28% of the housing stock. Bird in Eye South, Bird in Eye North, Horsted Pond and Downlands Farm, if they came, were all outside of the development boundary and we needed to keep at least 30% of our parish green for nature.

Resident 5 - Mr Whittaker of Etchingwood Lane, Framfield spoke in relation to agenda item 5.0 -WD/2021/2198/MAO Land at Bird in Eye Farm.

Mr Whittaker wished to focus on the complete inadequacies of the developer's analysis and documentation with regard to access and some of the previous comments.

He gathered that through a sensible intervention from the Town Council that there were actually other developers working together to review the whole of the Uckfield area and the needs and the constraints of the traffic flows, and that this particular developer was not wishing to be part of that. He felt it was a cynical approach from this developer to try and move ahead, and get under the radar.

He would encourage the Town Council to be vocal and to think about the whole of Uckfield and the need to build the right type of houses in the right place and he would argue that the process that this developer had gone through would not give us these things.

Mr Whittaker referred to a leaflet that he had produced with others and offered to share this with the committee or others for their deliberations.

The Chair thanked all those who had stood up and spoken on this evening's agenda items. The public were then reminded that there would be no further opportunity to speak at the meeting and that if anyone did wish to speak, that would need to do so at this stage. No further statements were forthcoming.

P50.11.21 It was **RESOLVED** to reinstate Standing Orders.

3.0 APOLOGIES

None received.

4.0 MINUTES

4.1 Minutes of the meeting held on 11th October 2021

P51.11.21 It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Plans Committee meeting of the 11th October 2021, be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4.2 Action List

Members noted the Action List.

See overleaf...

5.0 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

WD/2021/2198/MAO LAND AT BIRD IN EYE FARM, SOUTH OF BIRD IN EYE HILL, FRAMFIELD, TN22 5HA

Outline planning application for the erection of up to 290 dwellings, associated landscaping, informal open space and strategic SANG, with access from the B2102.

The Chair invited members of the Plans Committee in turn to give their individual comments on this major application.

The Vice-Chair (Councillor D. Bennett) was first to speak and thanked members of the public for their high turnout. He explained that the Town Council were consultees in the planning application process. He therefore encouraged the public to make their own representations to Wealden District Council on their web site portal by the 5 November 2021.

The Vice-Chair stated that he had submitted his own report to Wealden District Council as a local resident and presented some of the points which he read from this; offering residents a copy if they wished to review the full response.

Councillor D. Bennett spoke of:

The impact of over development and destruction of the central character of Uckfield town which was a beautiful place to live, quintessentially a rural market town. The site was on a dominant hillside to the east that faced the town centre, and would change the character; the greatest of all the applications that were currently proposed.

The demand for property in Uckfield was not for large multi-estate houses but for small starter homes by converting existing properties or brown field sites, but these did not make a profit for developers. He thought there was little to no demand for the type of housing proposed and supported this by application, referencing Ridgewood where out of the 250 homes built from 1000 by Taylor Wimpey, only 75 had been sold. The demand for more similar housing was therefore questionable.

The sewage network would only be as good as the infrastructure that feeds into it. Engineers often had to work at the pumping station adjacent to the Framfield Stream on Bird in Eye Hill, as it was frequently breaking down due to being overworked. Southern Water shared his concern on the application's likelihood to cause foul flooding.

The lowest part of Framfield Road was already highly susceptible to flooding and surface water run-off. The ESCC Surface Water Management Project in 2016, identified Framfield Road as a flood hot spot because of run off and the topography and geography of the site, on which any permeable surface construction does not work because of the underlying clay.

Framfield stream contributed to 28% of the water that runs into the River Uck and through the town centre.

Parking in Framfield Road was a problem for the Edwardian houses that did not have parking provision when built. A local Public Transport Forum found that Uckfield had the highest number of households that had 2,3,4 car households, which people needed in the area because current public transport provision was inadequate.

It was ludicrous that planners would think that it was acceptable for them to remove parking for the residents in Framfield Road, in order to enable the flow of traffic for residents of the new build development that would have driveways.

Infrastructure, traffic, healthcare, education was all lacking. Developers had to put on a Community Infrastructure Levy charge but he believed, that this would only be triggered in terms of the next level of Infrastructure Levy over 300 homes, so he felt it was convenient of the developer to only apply to build up to 290 houses.

The Vice Chair gave the above comments, as both an Uckfield Town Councillor and as a resident. In conclusion he stated he must object most strongly to the application and hoped that sense would prevail, in that this unsustainable application be rejected by Wealden District Council.

Councillor J. Love followed noting that a lot of important points had already been covered by residents or Councillor Bennett:

Councillor J. Love stated she had read nearly every page of the documentation, and so much of the data was incorrect. The first part of a letter referenced within the transport report between East Sussex Highways and Croudace only detailed 175 houses; this was a substantial difference from 290 homes.

There was an assumption that everyone from the new development would turn left into Uckfield. There was no information incorporated within the report to look at traffic travelling towards Framfield, Blackboys and Heathfield, and no data on protecting the rights of rural lanes such as Sandy Lane, that is used as a cut through to Buxted and Crowborough.

The plans proposed regarding the entrance were totally impractical because half the information was not there and it would all need to be reassessed.

There was a blackspot on the road going out to Heathfield and the other main road which had been previously raised in meetings between Framfield Parish Council and Sussex Police.

Within the first transport document there was a letter sent by the Head of Planning at Wealden District Council to Croudace which in the last paragraph stated that “the site was outside of the development boundary, and it needed to be pushed that this was ‘outside of the development boundary’ and that of Framfield parish. He also noted that the site was contrary to the development plan and should be resisted unless there were persuasive considerations that justified taking a different view. There were no persuasive reasons to support the application, the developers wanted to take too much away from Uckfield, therefore Councillor Love wished to strongly object.

Councillor B. Cox introduced himself next as an Uckfield Newtown Councillor who had lived in Uckfield Newtown for 31 years.

He commented that because of the extensive development in the south of Uckfield, roads were already overly subscribed not only by cars but also by vans, a number of which parked in Framfield Road and Selby Road. Councillor Cox had carried out a survey in lockdown whilst canvassing, and there were 250 vehicles in peak time in lockdown, with 8.30am to 9.00am being the most acute time for traffic movement.

Councillor B. Cox was concerned about the cumulative effect of all the developments in the south of Uckfield on flooding. 115 litres per second were due to enter into the Framfield Stream, which posed a great flood risk in the New Town area. He also referenced the motion that had been put forward to Full Council in the summer which questioned why there had not been a review of the Flood Risk Plan for Uckfield, which should have been reviewed in 2019. At present there was no full Local Plan, no updated flood review and no traffic modelling proposals or network for the whole of Uckfield. With 5,000 extra cars on the road (if all identified sites for development go

forward on the periphery of Uckfield) the lack of forward planning and infrastructure was poor. Councillor B. Cox would vote against the application and hoped all other councillors did as well.

Councillor J. Beesley noted that a lot had already been covered, so it was difficult to bring anything different to the table but wished to praise those who had been involved in putting the background research report together. It was great to see such support at the meeting, and advised the public that they would continue to battle for Uckfield to ensure that the right thing be done and he thanked the public for attending.

Councillor C. Macve firstly commended members for their fantastic piece of work in putting together the report. He reiterated that he would not be allowed to vote on the application but the Town Clerk had advised him that in his circumstances he could speak, if looking to add anything to the debate.

His concerns were for the health infrastructure in the town which were at breaking point, as it was already impossible to get appointments for doctors, dentist and Uckfield Hospital. Education too was at breaking point with the rebuilt community college being far too small, and only being built to the existing footprint of the previous site with no consideration for the expansion of the town.

He had noted that ES Highways had not responded as a consultee to this application, which could be because they were involved in a wider plan for the whole of the area but it was worrying not to see a response.

Utilities; gas, water, sewage were all stretched. He would hate to see the river being destroyed by the out-pour of sewage with the system already overstretched, as it becomes incapable of the demands being placed upon it.

There had also been a lot of talk recently about car parking charges being introduced in the Ashdown Forest and it was likely this would go ahead. If this did happen then it would be likely to force local residents to use the local SANGS, and cause more vehicle movements to the proposed SANGS at Bird in Eye Farm.

Councillor S. Mayhew commented that the attendance was one of the best he had seen at a Town Council meeting and it was wonderful to see that the public cared for the town.

He praised again the background research report and did not wish to repeat points already made.

Residents had been suffering in the town from the works being undertaken by UK Power Networks for the past 11 months causing local traffic disruption and if this development were to be approved, further road works would be likely to make another connection east and he could not imagine the disruption this would cause to the already narrow Framfield Road.

He also commented that the road access plan did not make any reference for provision for anybody turning east towards Blackboys and Framfield. The proposal to introduce a 30mph speed limit and then straight from this to a 60mph area would be extremely risky.

Again, parking concerns were mentioned and he mentioned the fact that a recent planning application for the conversion of the Methodist Church had been approved with permission granted for flats. This would further exacerbate the parking situation.

Traffic surveys had been done during lock down and were therefore irrelevant. And the SANGS would only increase traffic movements as driving was the only convenient method for people to travel to it.

He referred to a presentation the committee had received online from the developers last year and he stated that receiving this application now was an insult to the Town Council as so many issues were highlighted that needed consideration and that an application should not be submitted at this time, but still they proceeded. The application was therefore an insult to the people of Uckfield and Uckfield Town Council.

The Chair, Councillor K. Bedwell then spoke stating that it was ironic that people were sat here discussing these planning applications, one of many large scale applications, when the UK Prime Minister at the current COP26 said only that day how important it was for everyone to consider their green spaces, agriculture and what we were doing to the natural world.

The Chair referred to the following statement made by a senior planning officer of Wealden District Council, which she absolutely refuted.

'That the proposed development will have no significant impact upon relevant natural resources and any waste, pollution or hazard associated with the development scheme can be effectively controlled by conditions and/or s106 Legal Agreement. The Council is satisfied that the development of this site will not cause any significant loss of valuable agricultural land, will not impact upon any area of flood protection and will not compromise or undermine any acknowledged asset of natural, ecological heritage, landscape or cultural value within the site vicinity'.

She stated that this and every single large planning application in Uckfield and Wealden as a whole actually went against that statement made by the senior planning officer at Wealden District Council.

The Chair stated that they had been told that it was not the fault of the District Council and that they were being led by Central Government, although when approaching the local MP, the MP said that it was not to do with her but down to the District Council. The Chair felt that it had to do with somebody and it was down to every single person, not only in Uckfield or Wealden, but referencing COP26 again, every single person in the world. Unless everyone fought the loss of our green land, and loss of agricultural space and tried to stop large scale developments we could find ourselves with serious consequences, greater than the ones we had now. The Chair felt we must all collectively take responsibility for this.

The Chair referred to the detailed background research report which had been circulated at the meeting (and would form appendix A of these minutes) and the high level of flood risk in this area with proposed sea level rises as a result of climate change.

Uckfield was unusual in that it was divided by a river and surrounded by streams that fed into that river. Just one development 'Mallard Drive' would be releasing 57.7 litres of water into a tiny stream, feeding into the River Uck, and then to the River Ouse, which local households already knew, flooded. This was because the Environment Agency and Wealden District Council, only looked at each planning application individually on their own merits and did not look at the impact of all the developments flooding into the same stream, and then the same rivers.

Having heard the discussion this evening the Chair wished to summarise the key points made in order to lead Uckfield Town Council's committee to a proposal.

As noted by the Head of Planning & Environmental Services in a letter sent to the applicants on 20 February 2020:

"This site is outside the Uckfield development boundary in the 1998 Wealden Local Plan. It is also outside any development boundary accepted (that is retained or expanded etc.) within the Wealden Core Strategy 2013. As a starting point therefore, the site is contrary to the development plan and should be resisted, unless there were persuasive considerations that justified taking a different view"

P52.11.21 In summary, Uckfield Town Council found no persuasive consideration to justify support for this application and **RESOLVED** to **STRONGLY OBJECT** to this application for outline planning permission for up to 290 homes, and the overall principles of development and highway/pedestrian access for the following reasons:

(i) Lack of true consultation and consideration of key stakeholders

- Pre-consultation with the public was poor—vast areas affected by the development were missed and Framfield residents were avoided altogether. Those consulted were given in the region of seven days in which to feed in their views. This was not a consultation merely a press opportunity to highlight an application was forthcoming;
- Numerous references were made to face to face meetings with Wealden DC and ES Highways/East Sussex County Council in the transport report. 'Extensive' was the term used. This is a complete fabrication of truth, when any correspondence with the local authorities had been in 2019 and early 2020 for a much lesser 175 properties, and no detailed engagement had taken place between ES Highways and Croudace with regards to traffic modelling by early summer 2021 for the proposed 290 homes as confirmed by ESCC themselves;
- The informal presentations to both Framfield PC and Uckfield TC were not a means by which to engage key stakeholders but instead came across as patronising, and unfortunately resulted in agitating local expertise rather than seeing this as an opportunity to engage and learn;

(ii) Negative impact on local character and appearance

- Croudace stated how their developments become part of the existing community but this proposal is purely an add on to the existing urban centre of Uckfield. There is no evidence to suggest it will integrate or enhance the existing community other than sticking on a SANGS and play area. All Framfield Parish will benefit from is a muddy footpath towards the village;
- The proposed location of the development is in breach of the parish boundaries (naturally formed by the Framfield Stream) and this development will mean that the distinct character of each settlement is lost;
- One resident noted that Wealden DC only stated in 2017, "*land within the floodplain of the River Uck and Framfield, wider areas of farmland and woodland to the east, and small ribbon of properties along Bird in Eye Hill have been excluded from development to prevent an outward encroachment of development into the rural landscape.*"

(iii) Use of out of date information and weak evidence base

- It's a case of rip it up and start again. One of the most critical reports for the application for outline planning permission relates to highway access and safety and most of the referenced information, traffic surveys and correspondence are not only out of date, but relate to modelling for 175 properties rather than 290;

- Extensive discussions have not happened with ES Highways;
- Traffic surveys were undertaken in national lockdowns or school holidays/quiet times;
- Junction baseline modelling is from 2020 when the country was in a national lockdown for five out of 12 months;
- Accident data has inaccuracies;
- Evidence with regard to vehicle use and use of public transport are from before the pandemic and do not reflect current work/school travel patterns;

(iv) Negative impact on highway safety and traffic pressures

- The SCOOT system would be ineffective to Uckfield's traffic flows as there is no single dominant flow but numerous points upon which traffic enters onto New Town/High Street;
- The introduction of widened pavements, and more double yellow lines in Framfield Road will exacerbate the already difficult parking shortages in the New Town area in Framfield Road, Alexandra Road, Keld Avenue, and Harcourt Road/Vernon Road; displacing more vehicles into these roads and thus displacing more parked vehicles further into town; clashing with existing commuter parking issues and retailer issues;
- No detailed consideration for public transport issues;
- Limited improvements proposed for pedestrian safety on Bird in Eye Hill/Framfield Road;
- And we question whether a speed limit change to 30mph would receive approval from Sussex Police and ES Highways if speeds of up to 45/50mph are currently recorded near to the junction of Bird in Eye Farm;

(v) Negative impact on biodiversity and SSSI of Buxted Park and Framfield Stream

- Bird In Eye Farm is mentioned as far back as 1841 in the 6 June Census and before that as part of the Buxted Park Estate. The characteristics, archaeology and biodiversity will have intrinsic links to the Buxted Park SSSI (registered in 1989);
- The impact of further development along the streams/rivers and waterways and ancient woodland surrounding BIES, Framfield Road, Mallard Drive will have a profound effect on the eco system that has for thousands of years successfully been sustained in this area;
- A local ecologist has confirmed that the terrain on this site has the characteristics of the high value High Weald landscape;
- There is also a post-glacial ghyll on the site along the shaw between the proposed siting of the houses and the ancient woodland. These ghylls take hundreds and thousands of years to produce and any such location of development will have a substantially detrimental impact on the ecology of this site
- It will fill in the green corridor between the two settlements (Uckfield and Framfield) which is contrary to planning policy;
- Framfield Stream floods much more frequently and rapidly than the River Uck;
- Framfield Stream will carry the run-off from this site into the River Uck, and is species rich including salmonids and other scarce species such as Lamprey;
- The proposals for this development therefore conflict with Wealden DC's Core Strategy 2013 spatial planning objectives SPO1 and SPO10:

SPO1 We will help manage countryside resources and assist in the development of the rural economy whilst protecting and enhancing recognised biodiversity and geodiversity attributes, in particular we will protect the internationally important sites of the Pevensy Levels and Ashdown Forest and other designated areas of bio and geodiversity. We will also protect, and will work with others to enhance and manage, the distinct landscapes of the District, particularly, but not exclusively, those nationally designated

SPO10 We will seek to ensure the safety of residents and reduce the economic impact of flooding events by avoiding the allocation of land for employment and housing growth in areas subject to medium and high flood risk, taking into account the predicted impact of climate change

(vi) Utilising existing amenities of Uckfield to argue a case for development, when infrastructure and utility frameworks are already overstretched

- GP surgeries are already stretched in the local area;
- Only one primary school has some capacity within the town (located right in the centre of Uckfield) which would encourage vehicle use to drop off and collect;
- Uckfield has limited supermarket provision and capacity to support such an increase in population;
- Southern Water have highlighted that there is the “increased risk of foul flooding, due to the impact of the development on the existing public sewer network.” They have suggested that any development would need to be carefully phased to enable Southern Water to increase capacity and ensure adequate wastewater network capacity is available. They also highlighted that “construction of the development shall not commence until details of the proposed means of foul sewerage and surface water disposal be submitted.”
- We believe further connections by UKPN would be required to meet capacity;
- This application therefore contradicts the spatial planning objective of Wealden DC’s Core Strategy 2013:

WCS7 Effective Provision of Infrastructure

The release of land for development will be conditional upon there being sufficient capacity in the existing local infrastructure to meet the requirements generated by the proposed development. Where development would create the need to provide additional or improved community facilities, services and infrastructure to mitigate its impact, a programme of delivery must be agreed with the relevant infrastructure providers which will ensure that these improvements are provided at the time they are needed. These may involve coordinating contributions from the development with other investment streams. This approach will ensure that the necessary improvements can be completed in a timely manner to support growth.

Uckfield Town Council’s detailed review of the site and Croudace’s documentation in the background research report will be appended to the minutes of this meeting (see Appendix A).

The Vice-Chair further added after the resolution had been carried that if this application were to be approved by the District Council, he would be prepared to put through a vote of no confidence.

The Chair continued the meeting by advising the public that the Plans Committee would now move onto the other planning applications listed on the agenda. Those who

had attended only for the purpose of Bird in Eye Farm could now leave the meeting if they wished.

WD/2021/1911/F THREEWAYS, LEWES ROAD, RIDGEWOOD, UCKFIELD, TN22 5SN

Two storey rear addition.

P53.11.21 It was **RESOLVED** to support the application as there were similar additions in the vicinity.

WD/2021/2317/F 11 WILSON GROVE, UCKFIELD, TN22 2BU

The enlargement of rear conservatory, the creation of front porch and provision of new window to right hand elevation.

P54.11.21 It was **RESOLVED** to support the application and it was noted that the window did not overlook the neighbour property.

WD/2021/2455/F 63 THE DRIVE, UCKFIELD, TN22 1DB

New build, end of terrace 2 bedroom house and proposed porch to main dwelling.

P55.11.21 With one member abstaining and five members voting, it was **RESOLVED** to object to the application on the following grounds:

- Over development of the site;
- Detrimental to the green open space nature of the estate;
- Concerns regarding parking, as although the new build will have parking provision the original dwelling will not;
- Due to parking issues would potentially be detrimental to traffic flow in the area;

WD/2021/2405/LBR MILTON COTTAGE, PUDDING CAKE LANE, UCKFIELD, TN22 1BU

Retrospective application for internal alterations, external repainting of the building, and car turntable with French drain.

Members were of doubt that the applicant would not be aware of the need to apply for planning permission and as with all retrospective permissions the committee were opposed to it. The works had gone ahead without having sought planning approval for the Condition to be removed. One member stated it was difficult to consider the works carried out as the application lacked both Conservation Officer or archeological reports.

P56.11.21 It was **RESOLVED** to object to this retrospective planning application and further request that the Conservation Officer of Wealden District Council investigate with a view to reinstating what was in place previously.

6.0 DECISION NOTICES

Approved:

WD/2021/2130/F PROPOSED SINGLE STOREY REAR EXTENSION
9 SAUNDERS CLOSE, UCKFIELD, TN22 2BX

WD/2021/1834/AI ILLUMINATED FASCIA SIGN ABOVE SHOP WINDOW/DOOR 93
HIGH STREET, UCKFIELD, TN22 1RJ

WD/2021/2242/LB ILLUMINATED FASCIA SIGN ABOVE SHOP WINDOW/DOOR 93
HIGH STREET, UCKFIELD, TN22 1RJ

WD/2021/2133/F SINGLE STOREY EXTENSION TO REAR & PROPOSED FIRST
FLOOR EXTENSION OVER GARAGE
1 HART CLOSE, UCKFIELD, TN22 2DA

WD/2020/1054/O OUTLINE APPLICATION FOR THE DEMOLITION OF THE EXISTING DWELLING AND GARAGE AND ERECTION OF UP TO 9 NO. DWELLINGS AND ASSOCIATED WORKS
WHITE GATES, REGENCY CLOSE, UCKFIELD, TN22 1DS

WD/2021/2162/F CONSTRUCTION OF A TWO STOREY REAR EXTENSION AND SINGLE STOREY ENTRANCE PORCH AT FRONT WITH ASSOCIATED WORKS
16 HEMPSTEAD GARDENS, UCKFIELD, TN22 1ED

WD/2021/1955/F SINGLE STOREY ADDITION, REPLACEMENT PORCH WITH NEW STEPPED ACCESS AND 1.5M HIGH CLOSE BOARDED BOUNDARY FENCE
13 BROWNS LANE, UCKFIELD, TN22 1RX

WD/2021/2255/F PROPOSED GARAGE CONVERSION TO PROVIDE ANCILLARY ACCOMODATION TO THE EXISTING DWELLING
64 NEW BARN LANE, RIDGEWOOD, UCKFIELD, TN22 5EL

WD/2021/2285/F FIRST FLOOR TERRACE ABOVE EXISTING GROUND FLOOR REAR OUTSTAND.
36 SELBY RISE, UCKFIELD, TN22 5EE

Response to Town Council:

WD/2020/1054/O OUTLINE APPLICATION FOR THE DEMOLITION OF THE EXISTING DWELLING AND GARAGE AND ERECTION OF UP TO 9 NO. DWELLINGS AND ASSOCIATED WORKS
WHITE GATES, REGENCY CLOSE, UCKFIELD, TN22 1DS

While the traffic increase and parking comments are noted, ESC Highways have commented they are satisfied with the access and parking layout shown. Any Reserved Matters application would need to show that the final layout still accommodates the required parking. A well worded note on any decision notice issued can make clear the 'Parking Court' is private property only. Regarding construction traffic, a Construction Management Plan condition could be imposed to ensure construction traffic is managed on this constrained site. Issues such as overlooking, overbearing and dominant impact upon neighbouring dwellings can be discussed further at the Reserved Matters stage. It is noted that due to the amount of dwellings on the relatively constrained site, there may be an element of impact on neighbouring dwellings, although this can be managed at the Reserved Matters stage. Members noted the decision notices.

7.0 TO ADVISE ON THE TOWN COUNCIL'S OBSERVATIONS AND COMMENTS ON PLANNING APPLICATIONS OUTSIDE THE USUAL CYCLE OF MEETINGS

WD/2021/2255/F 64 NEW BARN LANE, RIDGEWOOD, TN22 5EL.

Uckfield Town Council object to the application on the following grounds:

- *The proposed conversion would alter the street scene, having a detrimental effect.*
- *There are no other dwellings in the vicinity that had similar alterations and therefore no precedent.*
- *No information within the application of the reason for the proposed use of the conversion.*

Members noted the report.

Close of meeting: The meeting closed at 8.22pm.

Appendices: Appendix A: Background research report by Uckfield Town Council relating to WD/2021/2198/MAO Land at Bird in Eye Farm