

## UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



### Minutes of the meeting of the Plans Committee held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Uckfield on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> November 2022 at 7.00pm

Cllr. K. Bedwell (Chair)  
Cllr. B. Cox  
Cllr. S. Mayhew

Cllr. C. Macve (Vice-Chair)  
Cllr. J. Love

Cllr. D. Bennett  
Cllr. J. Beesley

#### **IN ATTENDANCE:**

3 members of the public (including Cllr. G. Johnson)  
Linda Lewis – Administrative Assistant  
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.

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

**P66.11.22** It was **RESOLVED** to suspend Standing Orders.

Mr Steve Neilly of Clearwater Land & New Homes Ltd; the applicant and developer for the Ridgewood House site spoke regarding their application WD/2022/1302/MAJ Ridgewood House, Lewes Road, Ridgewood TN22 5SN.

Mr Neilly felt it appropriate to speak as this was the second detailed application for Ridgewood House. Being that it was a Grade II Listed building, the planning authority had requested a 'detailed' application.

He explained that in the 2009 SHELAA the land was deemed appropriate for 62 dwellings. Their previous proposal was for 46 dwellings pursuant to advice they had received from Wealden District Council. However, through the application process it became evident that the number of houses was too many for the constraints of the site, on grounds of ecology, arboricultural impact and surface water. Also, there were significant important veteran trees on the site. The previous application was therefore withdrawn.

This application for the nine houses was entirely constraint led by way of ecology and arboriculture to define the available areas effectively precluding utilising the area to the north where there were some deciduous trees abutting New Road and creating a small pocket to the south for development.

They had kept the site to 5.5 hectares as this had allowed them to create receptor sites for Slow Worms and for the Great Crested Newt.

Although the site was only for 9 dwellings, it was more than 0.5 of a hectare which by default triggered an affordable housing contribution. However, it was widely accepted that a housing association would not take on only three homes and to mitigate this they had agreed a substantial offsite community sum.

He noted that the consultation reports were now coming in rapidly and fairly.

The foul drainage would be a gravity led system, pumping into an existing public foul sewer. Southern Water have, he stated, indicated that there is capacity for the site.

With regards to surface water, he explained that it was unlikely soakaways would work for this site. There was the existing Southern Water surface water system which has been recently built as part of the entrance way to the Taylor Wimpey site and it was their intention to connect onto that system which would then go into the Ridgewood Stream. As the infrastructure belonged to Southern Water and on land that belonged to East Sussex County Council, they were awaiting written authority from the County Council that this could be done, although the drainage officer for Wealden District Council would be happy with it.

The CIL generated from this site would be in the region of £412,000. This sum would have to be paid to Wealden District Council within 30 days of the developer commencing the work, in advance, towards the infrastructure.

All the houses would be built to new Building Regulations and a full Sustainability Report was included in the application.

Although the properties were larger houses (4 x three bedroom properties, 3 x four bedroom properties and 2 x five bedrooms properties) and not the smaller houses the committee generally would prefer, he pointed out that he had been approached by aspiring residents wishing to move up the housing ladder, and this would therefore free up smaller housing lower down the chain.

He explained that the pumping system how would be maintained by a management company who would also look after the maintenance of the grounds, surface water and the actual private road. He would not know whether the pumping station would be adopted by Southern Water in the future.

**P67.11.22** It was **RESOLVED** to re-instate Standing Orders.

### **3.0 APOLOGIES**

None.

### **4.0 MINUTES**

#### **4.1 Minutes of the meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> October 2022**

**P68.11.22** It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Plans Committee of the 24<sup>th</sup> October 2022, be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

#### **4.2 Action List**

Members noted the Action List.

### **5.0 PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

#### **WD/2022/1303/MAJ RIDGEWOOD HOUSE, LEWES ROAD, RIDGEWOOD, UCKFIELD, TN22 5SN**

Phased development comprising 9 no. dwellings, access, landscaping and associated infrastructure.

Members spoke extensively regarding the application and raised the following concerns and queries, requesting that further clarification was needed:

- Concerned that in the future further development would come to the site and that this was merely the beginning of a bigger project. This was supported by

the query that the position of the entrance point would facilitate an extension to the development;

- Concerned how this site would fit in with other proposed sites for the area;
- Concerned that no Highways report had been received. Would like to have seen a report from East Sussex Highways as the council was aware of a statement of common ground being drawn up for all sites being considered within the area;
- Concern of the cumulative impact of traffic from the proposed developments, plus from Taylor Wimpey, Eastbourne Road and Mallard Drive would cause congestion onto Mallard Farm roundabout and backlog causing congestion at Little Horsted roundabout and the bypass;
- Concern that there was estimated to be a 38% increase in traffic coming through New Road from the 90 houses on Eastbourne Road. This would cause extra traffic at the New Road junction adjacent to the entrance to Ridgewood House;
- Highways concerns for how this proposal would fit with the traffic calming for Lewes Road that had been proposed for Ridgewood Place, and how it would fit in with the Horsted Pond Farm development;
- Queried whether the monetary contribution being made by the developer to Wealden District Council equated to the loss of three affordable units and noted that there was no guarantee that the monies would provide affordable homes for Uckfield residents;
- Concerned regarding protection of the green infrastructure belt around the site as it backed onto Millennium Green (the houses were very close to the boundary line) and was part of a green corridor next to a water course and Horsted Pond Farm, which was historically important;
- Would like to have seen more information regarding the endangered 'Greater crested Newts' as it was noted that the whole of the site was in a 'red-zone' for this species and that the report was carried out at the wrong time of year;
- Would like to have seen a report from the Environment Agency regarding the Ridgewood Stream where more information was needed;
- Concerns that the flood report had considered this site in isolation as it concluded the site was at 'low risk'. This application cannot be considered in isolation for flood risk and without account of all the other developments coming to the area, Ridgewood Place, Bird In Eye, Horsted Pond Farm and Downlands Farm;
- Concerns that the traffic survey was completed in April 2021 when still in partial lockdown for Covid 19 (until 17<sup>th</sup> May 2021) and therefore not an accurate survey;
- Concerned of the cumulative impact of surface water into all the streams and release into the River Uck all at the same time;
- Concerns for light pollution to neighbouring Millennium Green, Horsted Pond Farm, Ridgewood Recreation ground;
- Concerned whether the application would cause harm to the endangered Common Eel and Swan Mussels in the Ridgewood Stream;
- Members noted the developers point that these larger style housing would free up smaller houses down the housing chain, however, they questioned where the CIL monies contribution would go as only 15% would go to Uckfield. Residents would rather have affordable housing for their young people and families.

It was noted the plots 3,4,5,8 and 9 were quite close the green infrastructure around the site and that in the future may cause issues of vegetation overhang, loss of light etc for residents. It was suggested that perhaps there should be a buffer zone.

Members noted that it was good to see that tree protection details and ecology reports were within the application. They were also pleased to see bungalows were included and would further like to see a clause that the bungalows and barn style parking could not be adapted in the future.

Member noted the points made by Sussex Police.

One member again called for an up-to-date flood review for the whole town.

**P69.11.22** It was subsequently **RESOLVED** that whilst the Town Council appreciate the changes made and consultation from the developer, at the present time the development proposal was contrary to the NPPF; NPPF 2 - 8 abc, NPF 15, NPF 174 a, NPPF 174 d, NPPF 177 a, NPPF 180 a c, NPPF 185 b c, and the Wealden Local Plan 1998 4.6(2) 4.7, 6.7 (2)(5). Until all consultation documents including, highways, drainage connectivity and flooding were available Uckfield Town Council could not support the application.

Two members of the public left the meeting at this point.

**WD/2022/0606/F 13 ROCKS PARK ROAD, UCKFIELD, TN22 2AT**

First floor side addition and single storey rear addition to include relocation of retaining wall.

Members noted that from the application documents it appeared that there were no changes to the first floor side and single storey rear addition, and that the update was just to include the relocation of a retaining wall.

**P70.11.22** It was subsequently **RESOLVED** as previous to support the application as a precedent existed for similar extensions in the vicinity and there had been no objections from neighbours.

**WD/2022/2714/F 49 HIGH STREET, UCKFIELD, TN22 1AN**

Closure of retail bank, removal of existing signage, external ATM'S, night-safe and making good where removals affect the building. Removal of non-original internal signage, fixtures, fittings, furniture, and equipment relating to the operation of this retail bank.

Members felt that these works needed to be carried out in order that the building could be used for other purposes and there was little choice but to accept this application, although they expressed sadness in the general demise of the high street bank. They queried the need for this application to be made at all and asked the Clerk to find the reason why this required planning permission. A member also noted that the Conservation Officer was a consultee, although the building was not old, and questioned 'was this regarding affects to the street seen or internal works?'

**P71.11.22** It was **RESOLVED** to support the application and the Clerk to report back to the committee the above queries.

**WD/2022/2405/F MULBERRY HOUSE, LEWES ROAD, RIDGEWOOD, UCKFIELD, TN22 5SH**

Erection of boundary fence.

Members noted that there were no neighbour concerns, however a member raised concerns that the back fill to the ditch may cause water drainage issues to the other houses already experiencing water flow issues. A member pointed out that the use of large hardcore in the backfill would theoretically allow any water course to drain

through and noted that extensive discussions had taken place between the applicant and Wealden District Council on this matter.

**P72.11.22** It was **RESOLVED** to support this application in principal but the council would like clarification that the back fill to the ditch would not cause any flooding to the Mulberry House property or properties behind it.

## **6.0 DECISION NOTICES**

### **Approved:**

WD/2022/2289/F

VEHICLE CROSSOVER AND OFF-ROAD PARKING AREA.

52 MANOR WAY, UCKFIELD, TN22 1DG

WD/2022/2061/FR

REMOVAL OF EXISTING CONSERVATORY AND CONSTRUCTION OF NEW SINGLE STOREY EXTENSION TO INCLUDE RETROSPECTIVE DECKING TO REAR.

35 KELD AVENUE, UCKFIELD, TN22 5BW

WD/2022/2032/F

PROPOSED WORKS TO BEER GARDEN COMPRISING EXTENSION TO DECKING AREA WITH PERGOLA OVER, LANDSCAPING AND FENCING.

HIGHLANDS INN, EASTBOURNE ROAD, RIDGEWOOD, UCKFIELD, TN22 5SP

WD/2022/2238/F

REPAIRS TO ROOF AND FASCIAS OF TIMBER GARDEN CHALET WITHIN REAR GARDEN

48 CHURCH STREET, UCKFIELD, TN22 1BT

### **Refused:**

WD/2022/1808/F

PROPOSED EXTENSION AND CONVERSION OF A REDUNDANT TWO-STOREY OFFICE BUILDING INTO THREE SELF-CONTAINED STUDIO APARTMENTS.

33 FRAMFIELD ROAD, UCKFIELD, TN22 5AH

WD/2022/2071/LBR

RETENTION OF INTERNAL ALTERATIONS AND REPAINTING OF THE BUILDING MILTON COTTAGE, PUDDING CAKE LANE, UCKFIELD, TN22 1BU

### **Withdrawn:**

WD/2022/2339/F

GARDEN SHED

PLOT 111, HARLANDS PARK (LAND NORTH OF MALLARD DRIVE), UCKFIELD, TN22 5NF

### **Response to Town Council:**

WD/2022/1808/F

PROPOSED EXTENSION AND CONVERSION OF A REDUNDANT TWO-STOREY OFFICE BUILDING INTO THREE SELF-CONTAINED STUDIO APARTMENTS.

33 FRAMFIELD ROAD, UCKFIELD, TN22 5AH

*Officer Response to Town Council: The proposed units are small residential units, they are not, as set out in the report, being put forward as "affordable" residential units in the true sense in planning terms, although it is acknowledged these provide accommodation at the lower end of the housing market.*

WD/2022/2032/F

PROPOSED WORKS TO BEER GARDEN COMPRISING EXTENSION TO DECKING AREA WITH PERGOLA OVER, LANDSCAPING AND FENCING.

HIGHLANDS INN, EASTBOURNE ROAD, RIDGEWOOD, UCKFIELD, TN22 5SP

*The tree report submitted with the application is clear in advising how the trees on the site will be dealt with. Some are scheduled for removal, whilst other are to be pruned. The tree report was submitted and accepted in a previous application ref.*

*WD/2021/2663/F of the site such that is not necessary to seek the advice of the Tree Officer on this occasion as to the acceptability of the contents of the report. The concerns related to the war memorial have also been dealt with via condition under WD/2021/2663/F. Indeed, the war memorial is outside the red line site area for this application and has not been assessed as part of, nor forms part of, this application.*

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/2022/1913/F WESTMINSTER HOUSE, BOLTON CLOSE, BELLBROOK INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, UCKFIELD, TN22 1PH

Extension of existing warehouse.

A Swept Path Analysis has been provided. New parking spaces will be provided to the larger dimensions (2.5m x 5m) with all other spaces remaining as existing.

*The developer has provided an updated Swept drawing in line with East Sussex Highway's requirements, but until the report from East Sussex Highways has been received, Uckfield Town Council is unable to comment further. For that reason, the Town Council's previous response submitted on the 26<sup>th</sup> September still stands.*

Members noted the report.

The meeting closed at 8.01pm.