



Minutes of the meeting of the Plans Committee held in the Council Chamber,
Civic Centre, Uckfield on Monday 9 January 2023 at 7.00pm

Cllr. C. Macve (Vice-Chair)
Cllr. B. Cox

Cllr. D. Bennett
Cllr. J. Love

Cllr. S. Mayhew
Cllr. J. Beesley

IN ATTENDANCE:

1 member of the public
Holly Goring – Town Clerk
Minutes taken by Holly Goring

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.

Cllr. D. Bennett declared a prejudicial interest in application WD/2022/2785/MAO Land North of Eastbourne Road, Uckfield as a result of his connections with Uckfield AFC Football Club.

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

One resident wished to speak in objection to planning application WD/2022/2785/MAO under item 5.0 Planning Applications.

P83.01.23 It was **RESOLVED** to suspend Standing Orders to allow members of the public to speak.

Resident 1 – The resident wished to speak against the planning application for Land North of Eastbourne Road, also known as Cysleys Farm. As a long-term resident of Uckfield and mother, the resident was fully aware of the impact of the town's growing population on education and the road network. She felt that the timing of this application demonstrated a lack of strategic forward thinking for the town and residents were already being adversely affected by the lack of investment in services and infrastructure.

The location of the development would set it in isolation from services and facilities, and the development would be divorced from the town of Uckfield and village of Framfield. The development would impact the rural character and appearance of the countryside and nearby market town, and this location would encourage householders to be car dependent contrary to policy. The footpaths were dangerous into town and traffic was already congested travelling through the town centre on weekdays and weekends. Careful considerate planning was required.

The resident felt that we needed to keep our sense of rural identity and this development would mean losing more of our green fields unnecessarily.

It was considered unreasonable for our town to deal with this tsunami of planning applications. The resident felt that the Rt Hon Michael Gove MP's recent letter and the proposed changes to the NPPF would be enough of a material planning consideration against this application.

The consultation on Wealden DC's Draft Local Plan was necessary before releasing development and adequate assessments needed to be undertaken on infrastructure – sewage, roads etc. Wealden DC should be using the proposed changes in the revised NPPF to review its calculations. The number of homes required for Wealden District had already been met, and this application was coming forward too early in the local plan process. There were 1246 permissions for Uckfield, and nearly 1700 in the adjacent villages. All of these would use the town's services. The resident therefore wished to strongly urge Uckfield Town Council to be minded to object to the application, and consider the cumulative impact of this application and others, on the town.

P84.01.23 It was **RESOLVED** to re-instate Standing Orders.

3.0 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from the Chair, Councillor K. Bedwell due to sickness.

4.0 MINUTES

4.1 Minutes of the meeting held on 5 December 2022

P85.01.23 It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Plans Committee of the 5 December 2022, be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Vice Chairman.

4.2 Action List

Members noted the Action List.

5.0 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

WD/2022/2785/MAO LAND NORTH OF EASTBOURNE ROAD, UCKFIELD

Outline application for the erection of up to 210 dwellings with public open space, landscaping and sustainable drainage system (SuDs), vehicular access point and provision for suitable alternative natural green space (SANG). All matters reserved except for means of access.

Councillor S. Mayhew advised that he had read the transport literature and interim travel plan in detail. The data referenced within these documents were not only confusing but also inaccurate so the basis upon which the documentation had been written, was flawed. Firstly the report referred to walking distances from the development to key services. The walking times were based on walking an average 5km per hour which would be achievable for a 20-29 year old but not for those of a younger or older age profile.

The documentation stated that the Bellbrook Industrial estate was 2km away and that Tesco was further in distance, despite Tesco roundabout being located at the start of the industrial estate. Most of the industrial estate was on the western edge of the town, near to the A22 Uckfield bypass. The report also stated that Uckfield Leisure Centre was closer in distance than Uckfield College, despite them sitting adjacent to each other. The train service times referenced within the report were incorrect. Uckfield station was at the end of the line, so it was not possible to have two trains per hour to London and four trains coming in. Most of the day, there was only one service each way. The nearest school was also Harlands Primary School, not St. Philip's Catholic School as listed.

There was no mention of new pedestrian crossings or footways within proposals for the development, and no mention of liaison with the bus companies to introduce additional bus services. The existing 28 bus service only provided a service first thing in the morning and late at night going south, and there were no services going into town, until 5pm.

Councillor C. Mavce advised that he had too walked the distances referenced from the site entrance, and walking at speed, it took him 25 minutes to walk into town.

Councillor J. Love advised that it might be beneficial for the applicants to read the ESCC Bus Service Improvement Plan. This highlighted that local bus services had lost 22,000 passengers in East Sussex since the pandemic and the bus services were not receiving any financial contributions from developers.

At present there was no report on the Wealden Planning webpages to provide information on the formal statutory responses of the biodiversity specialist or aboricultural specialist. The Natural England report also appeared to be more of an advisory note.

Councillor Love raised her concerns with regards to the ancient woodland recorded onsite, which would have taken hundreds of years to establish. The proposals suggested placing a footpath directly through the ancient woodland (marked as woodland 2) which would lead to damage by human movements and domesticated animals. The applicant had not incorporated any mention of trees with preservation orders or veteran trees, so the information provided was limited. The site plan did not illustrate any buffer zones being placed around the ancient woodland, with the preference being at least 50metres. Councillor Love also referred to the response of the Great Crested Newt officer and poor assessment of the pond data. Taking into account the impact on the Framfield Stream, ancient woodlands, great crested newts, hedgerow dormice and local ecology of this greenfield site, Councillor Love felt this application breached NPPF policies 179, 180, 185b, 185c and 174b.

Councillor B. Cox supported Councillor Love's view on the detrimental impact this application would have on the local ecology, along with the wider area as a result of pollutants entering the stream. It was overdevelopment of this greenfield site.

Councillor B. Cox added that the isolated placement of this development could result in an increase in crime and anti-social behaviour, as it would put properties at risk.

Councillor J. Beesley, reminded the Plans Committee that without a Local Plan for Wealden, it was difficult to view the application alongside the strategic view for the town. In the application documentation, there was very little reference to healthcare, education and sports/leisure. It would be a 45minute to one hour walk for a resident on the site to reach Uckfield College. The impact of creating up to 210 homes off Eastbourne Road, in addition to the 119 off Mallards Drive, 90 off Eastbourne Road, 250 off Lewes Road as part of the 1,000 home development, and a further 400 at Horsted Pond Farm, would bring the already congested roads in Uckfield to a standstill.

This was also another application which sought to provide a SANGs (suitable alternative natural green space) when the town didn't need to alter existing green open space, it needed sports, leisure and community facilities.

Councillor Mayhew noted that he also picked up that the report referred to the distance to the nearest dentist, but this dentist was a private dentist.

Councillor Cox felt the lack of reference to a buffer zone around the areas of ancient woodland and path were not conducive.

Councillor Macve noted that drainage onsite was discussed at great length within the application, but it would need to be a pumped system due to the topography of the ground. The infrastructure for electricity in the local area was suspect to say the least and if the power were to fail, this could result in problems with drainage. Southern

Water noted that they could accommodate the beginning of the development but there would need to be substantial improvement to the system. Framfield Fisheries were seriously concerned about the potential runoff from the site, and the devastating impact it could have if pollutants from the site during and after construction entered their fisheries.

In position of Chair at the meeting, Councillor C. Macve advised that Uckfield Town Council had been given this application to respond to, but were unable to make a fully informed decision due to the large gaps and inaccuracies in the information being presented. ES Highways had yet to submit their consultation response and Uckfield Town Council had already delayed their response by a few weeks due to the festive break. In the correspondence referenced by the applicant with East Sussex Highways, they had on a number of occasions noted the cumulative effect of all developments being put forward in Uckfield, and advised that this placed them in a very difficult position to advise. The traffic surveys in the application were undertaken in 2017 and 2018, so were very out of date, and they referred mainly to speed of traffic rather than traffic flows.

Councillor C. Macve also advised that there was a high voltage power line running across the site, so he was keen to understand how the applicant would address and work around this.

P86.01.23 Members subsequently **RESOLVED** to object to the application on the grounds given below:

- (i) overdevelopment of a greenfield site;
- (ii) isolation of a development in terms of distance from the nearby settlements of Uckfield and village of Framfield;
- (iii) the application being located within the parish of Framfield but set on the outside boundary of the parish, and away from the village settlement;
- (iv) the main highway access point onto a road of national speed limit, with no supporting information to demonstrate discussions on traffic calming measures;
- (v) flaws and inaccuracies within the data presented in the interim travel plan in particular relating to walking distances, key facilities and services, and train and bus service information;
- (vi) the lack of proposals or information to demonstrate the provision of sustainable transport options to support the development;
- (vii) detrimental impact on the designated areas of ancient woodland, and lack of consideration or reference to the provision of an appropriate buffer zone and protection of this important and historic habitat, thus breaching NPPF 179, 180, 185b and 174;
- (viii) the increased risk of flooding and pollutants to Framfield Stream, and adjacent business - Framfield Fisheries. Framfield Stream badly flooded Bird in Eye Hill for the first time since 2000 this winter, and concerns have been raised as a result;
- (ix) the risks involved in using a pumped system for drainage;
- (x) no approved or draft Local Plan to determine infrastructure and highway capacity or network changes to support the application;
- (xi) the setting of a high voltage power line across the site and lack of information or reference to this within the application.

WD/2022/3015/AI 100 HIGH STREET, UCKFIELD, TN22 1PX

Internally illuminated fascia sign and internally illuminated projection sign.

P87.01.23 It was **RESOLVED** to support the application.

WD/2022/3275/F 7 THE POTTERIES, RIDGEWOOD, UCKFIELD, TN22 5TQ

Extension of garage to front and replacement porch

P88.01.23 It was **RESOLVED** to support the application as similar works had been undertaken to properties in the vicinity of this application.

WD/2022/3086/F TESCO STORES LTD, BELL FARM ROAD, UCKFIELD, TN22 1BA
Proposal to install Timpson's Pod and 5 x Ramraid bollards

Members raised their concerns with this application, having previously responded in 2019.

Councillor B. Cox wished to object to the application on the multiple grounds raised previously by the committee in 2019, the impact it would place on other similar independent businesses in the town, the impact on Tesco's car park which was already full most days of the week, and its close proximity to the sub-station.

Councillor J. Beesley also questioned the detail within the application which stated that the Tesco roundabout junction was one of the only junctions in the town that was under capacity. The applicant had obviously not visited Uckfield as Tesco roundabout was one of the busiest junctions in the town, for the majority of the day.

Councillor D. Bennett, also added that if they were intending to lose any parking spaces or drop off points to build the pod, it would result in the migration of parking elsewhere in the town.

- P89.01.23** Members **RESOLVED** to object to the application on the grounds of:
- (i) impact on traffic flows at Tesco roundabout and the main access point in Tesco car park;
 - (ii) impact on parking provision as this car park was often at capacity weekdays and weekends;
 - (iii) concern on the close proximity of the proposed pod to the electrical sub-station and concern for staff being exposed to the EMF radiation over prolonged periods. This sub-station was an intermediate sub-station producing electrical fields similar to National Grid sub-stations, although emitting lower voltages;
 - (iv) concerns that the close location of the pod to the fencing around the substation could lead to anti-social behaviour and access into the substation site, from the roof of the pod;
 - (v) the corner being frequently used by users of the supermarket for drop off and collection. The placement of the pod in this location could result in further congestion and difficulties for vehicles, taxis and overall traffic flow, thus increasing risk to pedestrians;
 - (vi) the increase in additional vehicular visits to the site;
 - (vii) no prior public consultation;
 - (viii) support to the town's thriving High Street and independent retailers, to which this application and proposal would pose competition and risk their livelihood.

6.0 DECISION NOTICES

Approved:

Application No. WD/2022/2714/F

CLOSURE OF RETAIL BANK, REMOVAL OF EXISTING SIGNAGE, EXTERNAL ATMS, NIGHTSAFE 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.

49 HIGH STREET, UCKFIELD, TN22 1AN

Application No. WD/2022/1663/F

FULL PLANNING PERMISSION WITH LISTED BUILDING CONSENT FOR A NEW DWELLING IN THE GARDEN OF A GRADE 2 LISTED FARMHOUSE THE FARMHOUSE, 26 HARLANDS MEWS, UCKFIELD, TN22 5JQ

Response to the Town Council: The Council have worked with the applicant to resolve a number of issues, as set out in the report which follows. This includes the retention of the

garden wall in terms of extent as was previously approved by the Council through the omission of the larger vehicular access opening to be created and the pedestrian access proposed. The Conservation Officer is content with the revised scheme. No increase in traffic would be in conflict with policy given the scale of the development proposed being a modest single dwelling. The footprint of the development is only marginally increasing versus that which was previously approved.

Application No. WD/2022/1664/LB

A NEW DWELLING IN THE GARDEN OF A GRADE 2 LISTED FARMHOUSE
THE FARMHOUSE, 26 HARLANDS MEWS, UCKFIELD, TN22 5JQ

Refused:

Application No. WD/2022/2639/F

ERECTION OF CLOSE BOARDED FENCE AT PERIMETER OF FRONT GARDEN
ADJOINING EASTBOURNE ROAD
PICKLES, EASTBOURNE ROAD, RIDGEWOOD, UCKFIELD, TN22 5ST

Withdrawn:

Application No. WD/2022/2297/F

EXTENSIONS AND ASSOCIATED ALTERATIONS
JACARANDA, HIGHVIEW LANE, RIDGEWOOD, UCKFIELD, TN22 5SY

Application No. WD/2021/1588/F

CONVERSION AND EXTENSION OF EXISTING GRADE II LISTED BUILDING TO
PROVIDE 3 NO. THREE-STOREY DWELLINGS, AND CONSTRUCTION OF 2 NO. NEW
CONTEMPORARY TWO-STOREY DETACHED DWELLINGS WITH ASSOCIATED HARD
AND SOFT LANDSCAPING WORKS. 18-20 LEWES ROAD, UCKFIELD, TN22 5SN

Application No. WD/2021/1589/LB

CONVERSION AND EXTENSION OF EXISTING GRADE II LISTED BUILDING TO
PROVIDE 3 NO. THREE-STOREY DWELLINGS, AND CONSTRUCTION OF 2 NO. NEW
CONTEMPORARY TWO-STOREY DETACHED DWELLINGS WITH ASSOCIATED HARD
AND SOFT LANDSCAPING WORKS. 18-20 LEWES ROAD, UCKFIELD, TN22 5SN

Appealed

Appeal Ref: APP/C1435/D/22/3293538

104 & 106 Framfield Road and 1C Selby Road, Uckfield TN22 5AT

Planning Inspector decision: While I have not found direct harm to the living conditions of the occupiers of No.102, the proposal would fail to protect the character and appearance of the area and for the reasons set out the appeal is dismissed.

Appeal to Enforcement notice issued by Wealden District Council:

APP/C1435/C/22/3310518

Old Tiles East, Hempstead Lane, Uckfield

Representations must be received by 6 January 2023.

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/2022/2979/F 34 SCARLETTS CLOSE, UCKFIELD, TN22 2BA**

Erection of single storey front extension, porch and change of cladding.

Uckfield Town Council support the application.

WD/2022/3179/F CHERRYWOOD, 26 CAMBRIDGE WAY, UCKFIELD, TN22 2AD

Two storey side and rear extension following demolition of existing single storey side and rear garage. Replacement front porch.

Uckfield Town Council support the application subject to the proviso that the exterior of the building matches the two neighbouring properties to remain in keeping with the street scene.

WD/2022/3225/F 54 SELBY RISE, UCKFIELD, TN22 5EE

Proposed single storey front extension to enlarge shower room.

Uckfield Town Council support the application.

WD/2022/2549/F 45 HART CLOSE, UCKFIELD, TN22 2DA

Single storey extension to domestic dwelling house.

Uckfield Town Council support the application as a precedent exists for similar extensions in the vicinity.

WD/2022/3085/AI TESCO SUPERSTORE, BELL FARM ROAD, UCKFIELD, TN22 1BA

Installation of 3 x fascia and 4 x graphic signs (illuminated).

Uckfield Town Council objects to the application as there was a lack of information to ascertain where the signage/fascia was to be attached. Uckfield Town Council was consulted upon application WD/2019/0790/AI TESCO STORES LTD, BELL FARM ROAD, TN22 1BA, in May 2019 when we strongly objected to the installation of a kiosk and it was believed that this application was signage for the kiosk.

Members noted the report.

The meeting closed at 8.16pm.