



Minutes of the meeting of the Plans Committee held in the Council Chamber,
Civic Centre, Uckfield on Monday 12th June 2023 at 7.00pm

Cllr. K. Bedwell (Chair)
Cllr. D. Bennett

Cllr. C. Macve (Vice-Chair)
Cllr. S. Mayhew

Cllr. J. Love
Cllr. P. Ullman (7.02pm)

IN ATTENDANCE:

3 members of the public;
(Cllr. P. Selby, Cllr. M McClafferty who spoke as a member of the public, Cllr. B Reed)
Holly Goring – Town Clerk
Linda Lewis – Administrative Officer
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.

Cllr. Macve had in the past declared a personal interest in the appeal of application WD/2021/2198/MAO as he knows the owners of the property very well.

Cllr. Mayhew declared an interest in the applications WD/2023/0930/MRM Land Off Eastbourne Road and WD/2022/2785/MAO Land North of Eastbourne Road. From advice he received from Wealden District Council he felt unable to comment, being a District Councillor in order not to jeopardise any future involvement with the determination of the applications at District level. He would therefore not take part in the discussion or the vote for these applications

Cllr. K Bedwell wished to mention that she had worked closely with the Treasurer of the Uckfield Scouts, however felt that there would not be an interest to declare as only a very tenuous link.

Cllr. D. Bennett wished to declare his position as a member of the Uckfield AFC Club, whose site sat adjacent to application WD/2022/2785/MAO. The Town Clerk advised that on this occasion he could speak but not vote.

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

P05.06.23

It was **RESOLVED** to suspend Standing Orders to allow a member of the public to speak on item 5.0 Planning Applications.

A member of the public spoke in support of application WD/2023/1355/F Rocks Park Scout HQ.

They urged members to support the application as the current lack of lighting made the car park extremely dangerous for children when they left the Scout HQ of a winters evening. They explained that there had been near misses and asked that members support the application due to concerns for the safety of children.

One member of the public left the meeting (7.05pm).

P06.06.23

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

3.0 APOLOGIES

No apologies were received.

4.0 MINUTES

4.1 Minutes of the meeting held on 22nd May 2023

P07.06.23

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Plans Committee of the 22nd May 2023, be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4.2 Action List

No change to the Action list was noted.

5.0 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

WD/2023/0930/MRM LAND OFF EASTBOURNE ROAD, UCKFIELD

Reserved matters (appearance, landscaping, layout and scale) pursuant to Outline permission WD/2020/0410/MAO (outline planning application for up to 90 residential dwellings (including up to 35% affordable housing), introduction of structural planting and landscaping, informal public open space and children's play area, surface water flood mitigation, vehicular access point from Eastbourne Road and associated ancillary works).

Cllr. Mayhew reiterated that he would not speak or vote on this application but remained in the meeting room.

A member noted that a significant number of developments in Uckfield were delayed and that the current economic climate was not conducive to this situation. This could have a knock-on effect with nuisance, noise and infrastructure not being put in place. The negative impact of delay should be something to note.

Members discussed the application and members stated the following concerns:

Re SUDS and drainage

- The SUDS by the entrance would be a very short distance from the adjoining neighbour. There was a drop down from the SUDS site to the neighbours' garden. If there was a failure of the SUDS here, it would cause flooding.
- It was not clear in the application where the public right of way across the site from the lane would be diverted to. Would the public right of way be on the road or would there be a pavement?
- There was a history of drainage issues from run off over the clay soil which needed to be carefully managed. The run off from this site would take two directions, one to the Framfield Stream and one to the Ridgewood Stream. The hydraulic capacity of the SUDS would need to have capacity to protect not only for now but also for the future and the challenges of climate change.
- Regarding Flood Risk Assessment and drainage;- Flood Risk Assessment there is a lot more work that would need to be done on this.
- There was still an objection from the point of view of the Flood risk assessment and drainage due to insufficient evidence and lack of permission for run off onto third party land. They were satisfied with the flood risk assessment and modelling however they needed confirmation on the northern SUDS as it was proposed to feed into another pipe to connect into Southern Water's drainage system which would follow a water course through the Fernley Park Estate and ultimately go into the Framfield Stream and ancient woodlands of Nightingale woods. There appeared to be no survey regarding this connection which the council would urge both ES Highways and Wealden District Council to investigate further as this was ancient woodland. One site was already feeding into the Framfield Stream with the possibility of another going into the Framfield Stream. The water level across Framfield Road when the town last experienced flooding (winter 2022/23) was considerably higher. The pond in Fernley Park had also flooded in the winter. It had risen before the 47.7 litres per second that the water that gets released

from Mallard Drive so there would be a backlog into Fernley Park SUDS before this which would be a concern.

There was no confirmation from Southern Water that they would adopt the new pipe that was proposed to be put in to connect onto the surface water sewer on Eastbourne Road.

- Storm data regarding capacities was outstanding.
- Data for impermeable drainage areas is awaited.
- On the original outline application there were three SUDS however there was now only two SUDS. The reports advised that everything was compliant however local knowledge found that on days of heavy rain, there was a small ditch from which water overflowed over the road onto Millennium Green. A site meeting was recommended to a representative of the previous applicant 'Gladmans.' The previous applicant considered dispersing the water three ways. Why now has this been changed, is this the cheaper option?
- More sewage into the treatment works would cause the current and ongoing fly issue to worsen. We would ask Southern Water to ensure that the connection to the system would not exacerbate the fly issue which has to stop.
- WDC Drainage say exception test not needed. They need more information as they had not seen the easement agreements with the Millennium Trust and no reference was made to the legal documentation they were making with Uckfield Town Council regarding the access of the drainage ditch at the back of the allotments. Members would like reference to this in the application and consideration of this.
- Members would like for the maintenance of the surface water drainage to be the responsibility of Southern Water and not a maintenance company.
- WDC said they would prefer larger basins to smaller tanks which over time would be infiltrated with debris and will block up. It was felt that the ponds would be more easily maintainable. Also, the vertical walls/embankment were up against the housing which potentially could be dangerous. It would be considered more helpful if the bunds were on all four sides of the ponds rather than three sides and then a retaining vertical wall on the fourth side.
- ES Highways had not given permission to make a connection into the drain under Eastbourne Road. It was not known what condition the drain was in and who would be responsible for it. This needed to be thoroughly investigated.
- It was noted that the foul drainage showed the pumping system coming from the bottom and up the main road but it did not appear to connect into the gravity system that then discharged into Eastbourne Road. The pumping system needed to connect to the gravity system and it appeared on the drawings to show a break between the two. This needed to be clarified.
- Surface water drainage systems - further information was needed on this as there were no surveys included.
- WDC drainage needed to be made aware that the ditch at the back of Uckfield TC allotments - although the water level did drop, it still ran. A water spring from the industrial estate fed into this ditch and also a water spring towards a nearby residential road 'The Potteries.' It was therefore not a dry ditch.

- Wealden District Council Flood Risk Management had objected due to insufficient information and needed clarification from Southern Water regarding adoption. Uckfield Town Council would request that Southern Water adopt the whole system.

Concerns regarding social isolation:

- Social isolation accessibility and inclusivity: the application was for predominantly social and affordable housing and small family units, which may or may not have access to their own forms of transport. Members requested a further bus stop close to this location to improve inclusivity and reduce social isolation as the site was on the edge of the town and quite a walk into the centre. The pathways were always overgrown to the existing bus stop which was very narrow.

WDC Housing:

- Members were pleased to see the percentage of affordable housing; inclusion of 26 affordable rented, 6 units as shared ownership with 1 and 2-bedroom houses and also some 3-bedroom housing and also the way they were being designed and structured. However, members asked that the developer take another look at the request of WDC Housing Services who suggested that it would be better to not rely so heavily on flats and see more 1 bedroom rented flats and less 2 bedroom rented flats. The Housing Service also wished to see a maximum of 4 units per block as this would be easier to manage and for 2-bedroom flats to be on the ground floor for families with pushchairs. There was also a burn risk with open plan kitchen/living area and 2-bedroom units should have a separate kitchen.
It was good to see EV charging for 90 out of the 226 parking spaces.
References were made to mitigate the noise for adjacent properties on Eastbourne Road. Members wished to see the reports from WDC if these plans would work.

ES Highways:

- Concerns were raised about poor number of visitor spaces which would lead to parking on the verges and pavements.
- Concern raised about the risk of when full, vehicles parking Eastbourne Road. This would be particularly dangerous due to the speed of traffic on Eastbourne Road. There was also an unusual camber north to south of Teelings roundabout and an increase in traffic of 38% traffic along this road, where at the junction with New Road there was a blind spot during the autumn months with low sun. Accidents had been recorded there.
- ES Highways were still objecting to this development on grounds of lack of information. There was a request for adequate space to be given for refuse vehicles and for the existing farm track to be retained.
- ES Highways had asked for more info on the public right of way and for a car park strategy for the estate.
- ES Highways were also asking about visitor parking. If there was not enough visitor parking with the road only being 5.1m this would potentially cause access difficulties for emergency vehicles and also for the sewage vehicle should the pumping station fail.
- If the pumping station failed it could hold 24 hours of sewage which would have to be taken away by lorry. The turning splays at present touched onto private driveways and grass areas. If the pumping station were to fail then this would cause flooding with raw sewage contamination to houses, the farm and Millennium Green with its biodiversity. Confirmation was needed on how they would secure the sewage site.
- A speed reduction would be needed along the Eastbourne Road.
- UTC would support the request of ES Highways for disclosure of planned cycle parking for those without garages and for them to be reconsulted.
- Parking – UTC would not consider linear parking advisable and it was suggested that this would be reconfigured to tandem parking.
- One of the proposed footpaths was not desirable as next to a SUD and could be a health and safety issue. This should be removed.

Sussex Police:

- Concerns relating to the farm track through the proposed estate. Would there be continuing agricultural movements, whether that be vehicular or cattle?

East Sussex Fire and Rescue

- Members would like to see the applicants liaise with East Sussex Fire and Rescue as it was important to confirmation the placement of the hydrants

Arboriculture:

- There was no response as yet received from the Arboriculturists and Landscape Officers. Members were keen to check on impact of root protection areas. There were four plots that had a no dig foundation and this would need to be confirmed.
- Uckfield TC needed to ensure that the existing trees and hedge lines were protected and that TPO's were placed across the board.
- The footpath around the edge of the site – was this a redirection of footpath 38. The path that travelled around the site under the tree canopy should be removed as it could damage the tree roots. The insect hotels planned would also need protecting.
- The properties to the west by the back of the industrial estate were very close to the tree line and members were keen to see the Tree officer's report on this, which could only be controlled in the future with the placement of TPO's.

WDC Conservation and Design had not provided any observations that they have come and they did not object from a heritage perspective.

ESCC Archaeological Dept had advised that the work on the site had been completed and they were awaiting the discharge of condition 7.

WDC Waste Management wished for a check to be carried out of vehicle movements to allow for a 12m long vehicle.

The WDC Biodiversity Officer had not yet replied. It was noted that the land was ploughed in 2022. Reptiles would have been present prior to this and the developer should be required to reinstate the biodiversity.

They were making a SANGS contribution. Members were interested to understand which SANGS is this connected to. If using Millennium Green Wealden DC would need to see any report regarding increase footfall effects on their biodiversity.

Members wished to see a report from the Environment Agency. The application stated that there was a secondary aquifer which may be down the side of the industrial estate. The Environment Agency needed to check that the aquifer would be safe.

P08.06.23

It was subsequently **RESOLVED** that the above local knowledge and information be taken into account by Wealden District Council Planning department and to **OBJECT** to the application as it currently stands due to insufficient information. Members of the Plans Committee wished to be reconsulted once the following were available to members:

- Outstanding reports from consultees, and;
- Answers received to the queries raised by Uckfield Town Council.

WD/2023/1270/F 9 MOORHEN PLACE, UCKFIELD, TN22 5NF

Erect a garden cabin in the rear garden and behind the detached garage with a maximum 15 sq m area and a ridge height max. 2.5m. the finished height will be below the height of the boundary fence. the free-standing summer house dimensions: external width 4.58m. external depth 3.33m. ridge height 2.43m. eaves height 2m.

The Chair read the planning rules for sheds and outbuildings.

P09.06.23

It was **RESOLVED** to support the application as it would meet planning guidelines, was below the fence line and there were no comments from adjacent properties.

WD/2023/1159/AI SUZUKI, BELL LANE, BELLBROOK INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, UCKFIELD, TN22 1QL

Proposed Suzuki signs 1x totem sign, 3x fascia sign 1x entrance gate sign, 1x parking sign 1 x service centre sign.

P10.06.23

It was **RESOLVED** to support the application as this was merely a replacement of signage from Vauxhall to Suzuki and members were pleased to see that the business was still working in the town. The signage would not be detrimental to the street scene.

WD/2023/1326/F 31 SELBY RISE, UCKFIELD, TN22 5EE

Proposed rear extension and internal alterations.

P11.06.23

It was **RESOLVED** support the application on the following grounds:

- There would be no detrimental effect to the street scene;
- There were similar extensions in the vicinity and therefore a precedent existed;
- There were no neighbour objections.

WD/2023/1355/F ROCKS PARK SCOUT HQ, ROCKS PARK ROAD, UCKFIELD, TN22 2AY

Erection of 4 hooded safety floodlights facing away from rocks park road towards grounds: - 2 for access road/car park and 2 for field.

Members discussed concerns for the wildlife in the vicinity and that the lighting would cause disturbance to bats and other wildlife in the surrounding woodland and noted that the application had no bat or ecological survey, or lighting plan for the LUX levels at various points. Lake Wood SSI and adjacent West Park Local Nature Reserve (Local Wildlife Site) made up part of the ecological corridor near to this area and other applications in the area had been mindful of the bat population. It was stated that Wealden Saved Policy E29 – needed consideration e.g. minimised light spillage.

One member suggested bollard lighting however another pointed out that bollard lighting would not be directional. The application stated that they would be manually controlled to only be on when necessary. One member disagreed with the Scout's lighting statement that the lights would have no ecological impact.

P12.06.23

It was subsequently **RESOLVED** to support the application, with the proviso that the applicant seeks and adheres to the guidance of Wealden District Council's Biodiversity Officer for the placement of the lights and the strength of the lighting, so as not to detrimentally effect the bats, owls and other wildlife.

WD/2022/2785/MAO LAND NORTH OF EASTBOURNE ROAD, UCKFIELD (RE-SUBMISSION)

Outline application for the erection of up to 145 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.

Cllr. Mayhew reiterated that he would not speak or vote on this application but remained in the meeting room.

The Chair read aloud the points members previously provided as reasons for their objection to the application when considered by the Town Council's Plans Committee on 9 January 2023:

- *Walking times to key services were based on walking at 5km per hour which would be for a 20-29 year old not an older or younger person;*
- *Distances were inaccurate when stating distances to industrial estate, Tesco's Leisure Centre, Uckfield College;*
- *Train times were incorrect, there were not two trains per hour to London and four trains coming in as a single track at the end of the line;*
- *It listed St Philips as being the nearest primary school when in fact it would be Harlands School;*
- *No mention of new pedestrian crossings or footways or liaison with bus companies to introduce additional services. Currently there was only one bus – no 28 providing an early morning and late evening service going south and no service going into Uckfield Town until 5pm;*
- *The ESCC bus service improvement plan highlighted lost passengers since the pandemic and that bus companies were not receiving any financial support from developers to increase their services;*
- *There was no report on the Wealden Planning webpages of statutory responses from biodiversity or arboricultural specialists. The Natural England report was more of an advisory note;*
- *Breach of Policies NPPF174b, 179,180,185b,185c which included damage to ancient woodland from footpaths, human movement, lack of woodland buffer zones, poor assessment of pond data to assess impact on Great Crested newts, impact on hedgerows, dormice and Framfield Stream;*
- *Overdevelopment of a greenfield site;*
- *No reference to healthcare, education, sports and leisure. Only referenced distance to a private dentist;*
- *Impact of traffic congestion to Eastbourne Road, Mallard roundabout, pinch points in the town. East Sussex Highways had yet to submit a response and traffic surveys that were published were out of date from 2017;*
- *Drainage at the site would need to be pumped due to the topography of the site. Poor infrastructure in place for electricity at the site and if this failed the pumping system would also fail causing huge issues with surface water drainage and sewage;*
- *Southern Water had noted that they could only accommodate the beginning of the development, further through the development would require substantial improvement;*
- *Framfield Fisheries were very concerned about the drainage issues as run off could cause a devastating impact from pollutants to the site during and after construction;*
- *There had been no discussion on how to mitigate the impact of the high voltage power line running across the site.*

Members discussed the proposal and re-submission at length and stated the following reasons to object:-

East Sussex Highways advised:

- There was a significant concern that the site would generate a very high proportion of car-based journeys. In particular, a high proportion of the site's dwellings were located in the southern part of the site with an excessive walking distance to local amenities. This would have a direct impact on the traffic along Eastbourne Road, already increased by the 90 houses opposite Fernley Park, which in turn would give 38% increase in traffic along the residential small road of New Road (adding further traffic onto residential routes such as New Road would not be supported on the basis that it was not suitable in its construction and was the reason that traffic calming features were introduced in 2012, to deter cut through traffic). along with the impact of the Co-op now being built on the roundabout at Mallard Drive.

- Journeys on foot were unlikely to be enhanced through minor verge clearance in the section between the site and Teelings Roundabout where the footway was narrow and it was not proposed to be widened or lit, vehicle speeds were high and there was no street lighting; and cycle provision was stated as not being deliverable. The conditions for walking would not be conducive to supporting a development of this scale. Footway widths being less than 2m adjacent to a 40mph speed limit would result in pedestrians with small children, pets or carrying goods being close to the edge of the carriageway used by buses and HGVs. In addition, the route between the site and the committed development south of Eastbourne Rd was not overlooked and there was concern in terms of personal security which would impact on pedestrian confidence which would affect pedestrian movement. Sussex Police had been consulted and comments awaited. However, based on the other matters relating to this proposal that raise highway objection, it was unlikely that the change in the speed limit would alter the highway view, since mean speeds (based on speed survey Nov 2022 over 7 days) were contained within 42mph and the change in the speed limit was unlikely to make discernible difference as the level of infrastructure proposed is minimal.
The pavement here was narrow and unlit, and continuously overgrown. Speed limits had been unsuccessfully reduced here
- The plan had failed to acknowledge distances to the secondary school, leisure centre, town supermarkets, industrial estate (Bell Lane). Primary school destinations were also north of the railway station and not included, but even the nearest primary schools were likely to generate car borne journeys as the 20min walk indicated would be much longer for younger age groups. The NMU did not include features such as footway widths, street lighting, overlooking and personal security. The format of such an assessment should reflect the format of a PERS or WCHR [Pedestrian Environment Review System factsheet (tfl.gov.uk); GG 142 - Walking, cycling and horse-riding assessment and review (standardsforhighways.co.uk)] and have a scoring system.
- The scheme was detached from the urban fabric of the town, and this prevented any efficient connectivity to the local amenities.
- The modelling provided revealed that the town centre junctions were already operating at capacity and could not be compounded further without town wide measures to improve the junction capacity and for the highway to function safely for all users. There was a significant level of police crash data in the town centre area including motor vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians. Adding further vehicles onto these routes for essential journeys such as employment, school, leisure and shopping would exacerbate what was already severe impact with regard to junction capacity, driver patience and subsequent awareness and road user safety.
It had been stated for all major applications in Uckfield, that the impact on the town centre junctions were already experiencing severe capacity issues and to some degree some diverted trips might take place, however, when destinations were in the town centre, such as schools, employment, transport, shopping and journeys would be made by private car, notwithstanding that car parking is available at no cost, growth of traffic through these roads will have an impact that is not supported by this authority without a holistic approach to account for suitable sites for development.

It was also worth noting that the local cycling and infrastructure plan was still awaited to show how any cycling route proposals on this development could be linked up and the East Sussex Highways statement of common ground on mitigating the impact of the increased development on our road infrastructure will be mitigated.

Other matters identified by Committee members included:

1. Magic maps showed Lapwings and Turtle Doves to be present extensively across this area.
 - The Turtle Dove was the UK's fastest declining species and was on the brink of extinction
 - The Lapwing was on red list for UK birds of conservation concern

2. Framfield Place Grade 2 listed building.

- Cysleys Farmhouse was a listed a Grade 2 listed building
- Palehouse farmhouse originally Framfield Manor - listed building
- Upper Brookhouse was a grade 2 listed building

Along with 61 other listed properties in Framfield all of which would be negatively impacted by noise, light, dust, changes to hydrology and the development of this size and position would affect the appreciation of the rural and tranquil nature of the area which had a positive contribution to the listed buildings and the traditional setting.

WDC had a duty to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building, its character and the appearance of the area it sits within.

- The wider extent of the development would alter the rural setting
- The heritage statement did not consider the impact of noise, activity and visual qualities and irreversible impact to Framfield Place parkscape. The assessments were only conducted during summer months and did not show effects to seasonal or diurnal changes or the effect of the topography of the location.
- The development of the area would negatively impact the rural location of Framfield Village, High Weald National Character area and views across the low weald and beyond to the south. It would not positively contribute to the asset.
- The application had not considered the impact of noise and disturbance to the rural area around Brook House Farmhouse and Upper Brook House Farmhouse and how it would affect the appreciation of the rural and tranquil nature of the area which had a positive contribution to the listed buildings and the traditional setting.

3. NPPF 180c - development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there were wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy existed

- Deterioration of Paygate Farm Shaw = Ancient semi natural woodland designated to Natural England's Woodland Inventory
- Intensification of human activity and recreational disturbance
- Fragmentation of the ancient woodland from adjacent semi natural habitats
- Noise light and dust pollution
- Adverse hydrological impacts
- Potential introduction of invasive non-native species to the woodland
- Cumulative effects resulting in long term deterioration

4. Whilst a SANGS and Play area were once again added to the development site, no thought had been given to providing other green spaces, e.g. sports facilities which are lacking in Uckfield and surrounding villages, community provision or allotment and cemetery space. There was also the strong possibility that the leisure centre would close which would mean residents having to travel to Hailsham or Crowborough. Uckfield Town Council currently had approximately 6-7 years left of cemetery space without the population increase expected and a current waiting list for allotments of 70 which was increasing at the present time

This planning application was considered contrary to:

WCS12- Biodiversity

WCS 13 – Green Infrastructure

LP1998 4.6 (2)- conserve the important and distinctive landscape, historic, architectural and visual character and appearance of towns, villages, countryside including fauna and flora.

LP1998 4.6 (3) -to maintain the development pattern and character of settlements and their settings including open areas between and within them.

LP1998 4.6 (4) – to ensure that development and change do not detract from the valued environmental qualities locality

LP1988 9.5(1) to promote the transport pattern to compliment the settlement pattern in the district, seeks to reduce travel by car and encourages the conservation of energy and natural resources.

LP1998 9.5 (3) to support and encourage planned highways improvements to reduce impact of traffic on community and improve safety

LP1998 9.5 (5) to promote and actively support the safe and convenient movement of cyclists and pedestrians including provision for the needs of the disabled and other with special access requirements.

LP1998 9.5 (6) to encourage a comprehensive and coordinated system of public transport.

Saved policies 1998 Local Plan

EN1 – sustainable Development

EN2 – to seek to maintain the existing settlement pattern and ensure that major new developments generating significant travel movements are located efficiently in relation to existing development and public transport.

EN12 – Protection of trees and woodlands

EN13 – Ancient semi-natural woodlands

EN18 – protection of open areas within settlements

EN29 – light pollution

SP02 – highlights the need to protect the historic environment in the district .

TR3 – traffic impact new development

TR13 -Footpaths and bridleways

NPPF 206 – heritage assets – irreplaceable resource that should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance.

NPPF 199 – great weight should be given to conservation of designated heritage assets through an understanding of impact of proposed development on their significance irrespective to whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm.

NPPF 130/206 – aim that planning decisions should ensure developments are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment.

NPPF174 b) -recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland; d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;

NPPF 180 c- development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons, and a suitable compensation strategy exists

Consideration should be given to:

Section 66 (1) of the planning Act 1990 – listed building and conservation areas.

Section 72 (1) above act

P13.06.23

Members **RESOLVED** to confirm their objection to this application, and for the above additional observations to be taken into account in addition to the Town Council's response of objection on 9 January 2023.

6.0 DECISION NOTICES

Approved:

WD/2023/0398/F

REPLACEMENT OF EXISTING HEDGE ADJOINING BIRLING WAY/NEVILL ROAD WITH 1.8M HIGH CLOSE BOARD FENCE AND PLANTING OF NATIVE HEDGE IN FRONT.
EXTENSION OF DROP KERB TO REAR OF PROPERTY ON OAKWOOD DRIVE.
87 NEVILL ROAD, UCKFIELD, TN22 1LR

Response to Town Council:

The approved plans show the fence set back from the boundary and the footpath in order

to accommodate the new hedge in front of it. As the description includes the wording 'native hedge', it is not necessary to include this as a condition.

Refused:

WD/2021/0878/F

TO RE-SITE THE FENCE BETWEEN THE REAR GARDEN AND SIDE GARDEN
12 CALVERT CLOSE, UCKFIELD, TN22 2BZ

WD/2022/2464/F

DEMOLITION OF EXISTING CONCRETE GARAGE AND ERECTION OF A 2 BEDROOM
BUNGALOW.
TAIPANS, HIGHLANDS AVENUE, RIDGEWOOD, UCKFIELD TN22 5TD

WD/2023/0679/F

ERECTION OF PHOTOVOLTAIC PANELS ON EXISTING ROOF AREAS TO CURTILAGE
LISTED CONVERTED OFFICE BUILDING
1 CORNFORDS YARD, THE GRANARY, HIGH STREET, UCKFIELD, TN22 1RJ

WD/2023/0680/LB

ERECTION OF PHOTOVOLTAIC PANELS ON EXISTING ROOF AREAS TO CURTILAGE
LISTED CONVERTED OFFICE BUILDING
1 CORNFORDS YARD, THE GRANARY, HIGH STREET, UCKFIELD, TN22 1RJ

Members noted the decision notices.

7.0 APPEALS

Cllr. Macve reiterated his personal interest in the appeal for WD/2021/2198/MAO and sought clarification from the Town Clerk if he should leave the room. Members were to discuss whether the Town Council wished to go forward with a Rule 6 status for the appeal and the process for this, not the actual contents of the application, and it was therefore agreed that Cllr Macve could remain in the meeting room.

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.

Please see the additional statement from BR consultancy.

Application reference: WD/2021/2198/MAO

Appellant's name: Croudace Homes Ltd and Mr & Mrs Berry

Appeal reference: APP/C1435/W/22/3307820

Appeal start date: 15 May 2023

and subsequently DOWNLANDS FARM which was not listed on the agenda but the notice of appeal had been received that week.

The Chair invited the Town Clerk to speak to members regarding this.

The Town Clerk explained that two letters had been received with regard to appeals for the above sites. This correspondence provided the details and timescales for formal representation at the planning inquiries as a Rule 6 party. The advice provided by the Planning Inspectorate suggested that a Rule 6 party should have an advocate but could represent themselves, and should expect to be cross-examined on the evidence given. This of course would have implication of cost, workload and time.

Background:

Wealden District Council had requested that the above applications be considered under one appeal, as they did in 2008, but the Planning Inspectorate advised that they would be handled separately. Back in 2009 both of these applications went as far as the Secretary of State.

The more recent application for Land at Bird In Eye Farm was considered by Uckfield Town Council on the 1st November 2021 and before Wealden DC had taken a decision, the applicant applied for an appeal. The Planning Inspectorate advised that this would be going to a formal Planning Inquiry on 12 September 2023.

Land at Downland Farm was considered in the latter part of 2022 by Uckfield Town Council. Wealden DC refused the application towards the end of April 2023 and the developers of Downlands Farm submitted their appeal on 12 May 2023. This will go to formal Planning Inquiry on 24 October 2023.

P14.06.23 It was **RESOLVED** to instruct the Town Clerk to:

- (i) engage with the Planning Inspectorate to confirm the timescales for the appeals and seek confirmation of the timescales to register as a Rule 6 party for both applications;
- (ii) seek a specialist advocate for the planning appeals process;
- (iii) liaise with Wealden District Council on their proposed course of action;
- (iv) Allocate necessary funds if required.

The meeting closed at 8.58pm.