



Minutes of the meeting of the Plans Committee held in the Weald Hall,
Civic Centre, Uckfield on Monday 28 October 2024 at 7.00pm

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

Cllr. C. Macve (Vice Chair)
Cllr. S. Mayhew
Cllr. P. Ullmann

IN ATTENDANCE:

7 x members of the public
Cllr. D. French
Cllr. V. Frost
Cllr. B. Reed
Cllr. P. Selby – 8.11pm
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 interest that they may have in relation to any item on the agenda.

Councillor C. Macve wished to declare a prejudicial interest in agenda item 6.0 – in particular the notification of appeal for The Cedars, London Road, Uckfield.

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

P37.10.24 It was **RESOLVED** to suspend Standing Orders to enable members of the public to speak.

Resident 1, wished to speak on agenda item 5.0 – planning application
WD/2023/2939/MRM Land West of Uckfield.

The resident, who worked previously as a Landscape and Tree Officer, identified a number of issues with the site. His particular concern related to the success of the planting already in place alongside the Uckfield By-pass. This had seen only a 15-20% success rate, so the vegetation and screening proposals within the application to mitigate noise and provide adequate screening were not realistic. The land was located on heavy clay soil, so not conducive to plant growth. The screening that had been put in place off the dual roundabout would not come into effect for a number of years. They had also planted deciduous trees, which did not provide adequate screening. The site would require acoustic fencing, which was unsightly.

Boothland Wood was ancient woodland and the Forestry Commission had provided a comprehensive response which he recommended members of the Plans Committee took on board. The buffer zone proposed was the minimum required and would see conflict between the built environment and woodland – incursion being the prominent issue with ingress of people and domestic cats causing substantial impact. In summary consideration needed to be given to the type of soil onsite, noise abatement, the effectiveness of the planting scheme and conflict with the ancient woodland.

Resident 2, wished to speak on agenda item 5.0 – planning application WD/2023/2939/MRM Land West of Uckfield.

The resident raised their concern on two matters:

- (i) Residential parking provision – Phase 1 of the development was already seeing vehicles parking elsewhere as the parking bays allocated for each property were not enough. Consideration needed to be given to the standard number of vehicles per household, and larger households;
- (ii) all properties should be given south facing aspects to enable them to have PV panels installed. The properties would only need to be re-orientated by 90 degrees to enable this to happen.

Councillor D. French/Resident 3, wished to speak on agenda item 5.0 – planning application WD/2023/2939/MRM Land West of Uckfield

There had already been feedback from the householders living in the first phase of the Ridgewood Farm development to say they felt isolated. There was no community feel to the proposed layout and design of Phase 2 (this application). The reserved matters application omitted to include the community facilities first promised at the outline planning application stage, as well as initial proposals in the community engagement exercises undertaken by the applicant during the past 12-18 months. The proposed application did not provide a community hub or focal point; important for an application of this size.

Councillor B. Reed/Resident 4, wished to speak on agenda 5.0 – planning application WD/2023/2939/MRM Land West of Uckfield

Councillor Reed highlighted a number of issues:~

- she was deeply concerned about the lack of developer contributions associated with the development, to support infrastructure for the development and wider town;
- she wished to remind planners that an outline planning application was a principle of development;
- she was genuinely concerned about the loss of biodiversity. She had recently heard from residents living adjacent that surveys undertaken by the applicant's consultants were undertaken after the grass had been cut on the land. Broken tubes, and breaks in the hedges were clearly visible;
- Skylarks had been witnessed breeding there this summer;
- there was interest in having a sculpture or art installation on the site to commemorate Eugene Seghers, the late fighter pilot who deflected a doodlebug in WW2 and saved the residents of Uckfield. Streets could be named to reflect his squadron and windows could include stained glass features;
- reference was made to the Natural England's suggested Miyawaki scheme of outside woodland tree planting;
- the proposals showed that they intended for the bus route to travel under the canopy of the most important and oldest oak on the site;
- rare species of bats had been witnessed on the site;
- the car park located on Horsted Pond Lane for the SANGS was meant to be a temporary solution. What provision was being made on this site for users of the SANGS?
- members were asked to take account of the Forestry Commission's comprehensive response to this application;
- the proposed reserved matters application showed a complete lack of due regard for green corridors and functional connectivity;
- Active travel route – feedback had previously been given to request a flat route so people could walk and cycle. The verges alongside the bypass would provide adequate space. There was no clear proposal for connectivity and this could be created between the development and Meads Surgery, as well as the industrial estate, into town;
- Their proposals for affordable housing on the site only provided 15% compared with

Wealden DC's policy of 35%. This was incredibly low for 750 homes. The UK Government had recently announced the release of funding. The applicants should investigate this further.

Resident 5 - wished to speak on agenda 5.0 – planning application WD/2023/2939/MRM Land West of Uckfield and WD/2024/2226/RM Springfield, Lewes Road, Ridgewood
The resident wished to comment on both sites. They questioned what education and early childcare provision was being provided to accommodate new families. The nursery in the centre of town was due to close at the end of December and at present there was no additional or alternative provision. With the 250 new homes in Phase 1, 119 homes on Mallard Drive, and proposals for these 750 homes, there didn't appear to be any early childcare provision. They had to apply for the nursery when their child was 3 months old. Now 14 months old, their child had nowhere to go. The local GP Surgery had a lack of appointments, and didn't meet the needs of the existing population, let alone a further 750-1000 homes.

Resident 6 – wished to speak on agenda 5.0 – planning application WD/2023/2939/MRM Land West of Uckfield.

They echoed the concerns with early years and education provision. Their grandchild would also be affected by the forthcoming closure of the nursery in Uckfield. 72 families would be looking for places as a result of the planned closure on 31 December 2024. Service users had only just been notified (25 October 2024).

Resident 1 - wished to reiterate his first points, and further add that there was also no evidence of reptile fencing on the site. It took 12-18 months to undertake an accurate survey, as the survey couldn't be undertaken until the area of study had been fenced off for 12-18 months. He also raised his concerns with the impact of lighting on the bat species present on the site.

P38.10.24 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 16 September 2024

P39.10.24 It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Plans Committee of the 16 September 2024, be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4.2 Action List

Members noted that no changes needed to be made to the action list.

5.0 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

WD/2023/2939/MRM LAND WEST OF UCKFIELD (SITE SD1), INCLUDING LAND BOUNDED BY LEWES ROAD, NEW TOWN, A22, UCKFIELD SEWAGE TREATMENT WORKS AND LAND TO THE WEST OF A22 NORTH OF HORSTED POND GATE.

Reserved Matters application (layout, scale, appearance and landscaping) pursuant to condition 2 of outline planning permission reference no. WD/2015/0209/MEA for Land To The West Of Uckfield, comprising the erection of 750 no. dwellings, local Neighbourhood Centre, strategic open space, child play provision and residential parking facilities, together with 10,627 sq.m. of business floorspace, parking facilities and associated infrastructure, and fully serviced school site, including access arrangements.

On reviewing the documentation associated with the application, and the responses received to date, members of the Plans Committee raised a number of points:

Affordable housing ratio and mix of units

Cllr. Bennett explained that he was on the Plans Committee of the Town Council when the application was initiated. At that time members were promised there would be at least 35% affordable housing, although it was argued by developers that to build 35% would not make the development viable.

The focus of this application seemed to be on larger homes rather than units for first time buyers, which needed to be rectified. This had been raised previously in the Town Council's initial meeting with the applicant, and subsequent responses. It was asked that more 1 bedroom properties be provided, either maisonette or flat, in order to meet local housing need and the affordability of householders in the area.

Layout and design of application

Cllr Love requested that the style and design of the affordable properties be inclusive with the overall character of the properties on the site, rather than being noticeably different.

Cllr Bedwell wished to ask Redrow Homes whether the garages had been increased to 3m from 2.4m to accommodate a more modern vehicle.

Concerns were also raised that some properties had no pavement outside. Pavements were needed on both sides of the road for these family properties.

Section 106 (S106) agreement

Cllr. Bedwell explained her disappointment that the Uckfield Town Council Plans Committee of 2008 did not raise the relevant points to protect the impact of such a large site coming into Uckfield. The original S106 agreement did not provide the infrastructure required for this development, nor the wider town.

There had recently been a couple of amendments to the S106 regarding affordable housing. The Town Council would need to review the agreement in detail and have a discussion with Wealden DC and the developer to clarify the proposed work at Victoria Pleasure Ground, the protection of Boothland Wood, maintenance costs associated with the access points and any financial implications to the Town Council.

Flood risk and drainage

Cllr. Ullmann felt that the development was a greedy example of building the wrong houses in the wrong place. It was in conflict with national policies that were yet to come out which emphasised the use of grey and brownfield sites, rather than greenfield such as this farmland.

He commented on a letter from East Sussex County Council dated 1 Feb 2024 from the Planning and Environmental Service giving their position of the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA). They objected on the grounds of insufficient information and that the applicant failed to meet its requirements to assess its acceptability in flood risk terms. It was stated that the LLFA would respond in 28 days however no response had been documented. Further, for the record a statement by the LLFA said that the drainage calculations submitted in support of the Reserved Matters Application indicated that there would be considerable areas of run off; exceeding the capacity of the drainage network during the 1 in 100-year flood event plus climate change. The applicant should provide evidence that these volumes would be safely stored on site. Cllr. Ullmann could find no response to that.

Horsted Green SANG

Cllr. Bedwell agreed with the objection raised by Little Horsted Parish regarding the SANGS Car Park, which was not fit for purpose as the cars now blocked Horsted Pond Lane. More car parking space was needed. The existing car park in Horsted Pond Lane

was meant to be temporary, and in 2016/18 there was confusion as to whether potential spaces would be provided on this site (Phase 2), for users to park and access the SANG via the underpass.

Arboriculture and landscaping

Members noted that the report of the Forestry Commission stated that Boothland Wood was an ancient woodland with veteran trees, and was an irreplaceable habitat, protected by the 186C NPPF. The Forestry Commission had highlighted issues in their response of February 2024, which had not been addressed. They raised their concerns with the proposal and its further deterioration of Boothland Wood. The root and woodland protection buffer was not adequate to protect further detrimental impact. Some houses were actually on the border of the ancient woodland. A 15m buffer was the minimum required and not sufficient in this situation. The buffer needed to be greater to reduce the impact of machinery, workforce movement and recreational use by residents.

Boothland Wood had already visibly deteriorated since the Ridgewood Farm site entered the planning process; soil impaction, impact to flora and fauna, impact of light, tree root damage. They believed the development would sever the habitat connectivity and continuity between the woodland and surrounding ecological network of habitats and would cause the wood to become isolated and decline rapidly. Uckfield Town Council had previously raised concerns in relation to the footpaths in and around Boothland Wood.

There was no control within the application to limit further damage to the wood through recreation uses. There was already damage to the woodland edge and habitats due to people making new pathways through the existing wood from the site. Cllr. Bedwell stated that discussions would need to take place between Uckfield Town Council, Wealden District Council Officers and the applicant regarding Boothland wood in relation to fencing, hedging, access, establishing formal paths, restoration of degraded areas and the need to increase the buffer zones. Cllr. Love added that there was no updated response from the Environment Agency and reiterated that the applicant's Wildlife Management Plan was still using the 15m buffer instead of a 20m buffer to the ancient woodland.

Uckfield Town Council considered that the two mature oaks; T14 and T41 were an integral part of the landscape and formed a key part of the biodiversity corridor to Boothland Wood. The application proposed to place properties very close to trees adjacent to Forge Rise, The Smithy and Anvil Close which would cause problems of shading and debris. The buffer zones needed to be greater to reduce future complaints and concerns being raised by residents, in relation to the safety of the trees. It could also result in damage to the trees, should residents undertake their own pruning, not in line with the British Standard 3998. Tree T14 did have potential to become a veteran tree and was also close to the existing farm house oast building, which had bat roosts. It was important that their habits were protected.

Cllr. Love requested that Town Council staff reviewed the tree preservation orders in existence in Boothland Wood.

In summary, there was no overarching arboricultural impact assessment report to evaluate the direct and indirect impact of the proposed design and their intended mitigation.

Wildlife and wildlife monitoring

The proposal would impact protected species. The bat survey of 2023, although not complete picked up on six bat species. Changes to this corridor between woodland blocks, the light overspill and forced changes to the foraging habits of the bats would see

this protected species die out.

The connectivity of the ecological habitats in Boothland Wood and across the site had been broken up due to the impact of prior site works and pedestrians. This was likely to affect the survival of a number of species, and it was important that mitigation for light pollution on this wildlife was factored into the design. At present, the application was contrary to the Conservation of Habitat and Species Regulation (2019).

Dormice were found onsite in studies of 2016 and 2021. There was insufficient mitigation or consideration of the presence of dormice in the design and the ongoing Dormice Survey was not complete, and had to be extended beyond May 2024. It was mentioned that the survey equipment on site appeared to be broken. There was various documentation regarding these surveys, however the site had been previously walked by councillors and evidence was seen of dormouse boxes having been crushed and of waste dumped in the hedgerow.

Residents had also commented that all vegetation had been cut back in the summer of 2023 and it was in that year that the locked piece of land owned by Taylor Wimpey had been sprayed and everything decimated. It was thought that this should be a consideration in all of the ecological survey reports.

The developer had included a green corridor. It was stressed that no public footpaths or rights of way should be allowed through this corridor to protect the wildlife and should not be used as another access point into Boothland Wood.

From the Environment Agency report of the 10.01.24, members noted that there was no wetland habitat construction report.

There was currently no update on the newt officers report and it was questioned whether a license had been applied for or granted for the Great Crested Newts.

There were two areas which were marked as areas of ecological enhancement zones and Cllr. Mayhew was interested to know what these were.

On the Development Plan there was a stream that ran through Boothland wood and down the side of the Taylor Wimpey site - this was not showing on the plans. Clarity was sought on where the stream was going?

The plan highlighted a huge pond which was shown in green – there was no mention of this within the application.

Active Travel

Members expressed that there was not enough information to comment. The current layout continued to be fragmented and created an isolated development which forced the use of cars. They also felt the design provided poor connectivity.

The site favoured straight lines which was of concern as vehicles could reach speeds in excess of 20mph and this would discourage cycling. There were similar concerns by residents of Ridgewood Place on Red Clover Road (Phase 1 - Taylor Wimpey site), with the recent high-speed collision with a cat, which could have easily been a child.

Access and facilities along the A22 would only be conducive to car users and there were no facilities to enable safe cycling to and from the site. There were no proposals for a foot/cycle bridge across the river to Uckfield Town Council land (industrial estate) which could have linked to the town and future proofed the access for the proposed river walk; thus encouraging non-motorised use;

At Forge Rise there was a path which the developers were intending to use opposite the play area. It was believed that this path was unadopted. The only way this could be accessed was via Uckfield Town Council land and the Town Council had yet to be contacted.

Cllr. Bedwell raised concerns regarding the proposed exit point for bus services onto Lewes Road from a narrow lane. Lewes Road was extremely busy in that area with existing safety concerns relating to the new traffic calming measure near Red Clover Road and the junction of New Road, where due to the parked vehicles along Lewes Road, and bus stops, visibility was extremely poor. The further addition of 9 houses at Ridgewood House, new homes at Siggs Yard, and Springfield would create a number of access points all in close proximity, thus posing a risk to road users and pedestrians. She voiced concerns that the bus would have to navigate all the above when pulling out onto Lewes Road and stated that Lewes Road was never supposed to support this amount of traffic or size of vehicles.

At present, this exit point appeared to be shared with pedestrians, cyclists and bus services. Due to the holding response from East Sussex Highways, members were keen to understand how this would be made safe for shared use. At present, two dwellings also had access onto the farm track (lane), so a further update was required from East Sussex Highways, further to their response in March 2024.

Members wished to see the results of the report of the practical bus route test in May 2024 which suggested that a double decker had been driven under the canopy of tree T14. In the documentation it suggested that as a last resort the tree would need to be removed, if there was an outweighing benefit to do so. Tree T14 did not have a TPO on it and one member asked whether it was too late to apply for a TPO on the tree.

Members had previously raised concerns with the developer regarding the route that the bus would take. The proposed route did not appear to service the homes in Phase 1A and 1B of the site, nor the lower end of Lewes Road. It would make more sense if the whole bus route was redesigned to pick up the residents in Phase 1 and then go out through the by-pass, come up New Town and retain the New Town bus route. Clarification was also needed on which company would intend to run the route. Cllr Mayhew felt that the bus service would only feasibly be able to turn right due to the traffic along the road and he felt there was a risk that the service would come from Brighton and go back to Brighton and would not serve the town.

Highway access and traffic movement

Only a holding response was visible on the planning portal from East Sussex Highways with comments from March 2024 unaddressed by the developer.

There were still no details in the transport assessments regarding the parking provision, service, house tenure and size. Active Travel infrastructure details, road widths, surface treatments, lighting, traffic calming, swept path analysis and gradients were yet to be addressed. There was no Transport Master Plan to be able to see defined zones, link through transit areas and no dedicated car club spaces evident which was required.

It was noted that in Section 112 of the Plan (units 624 to 632) and in other Sections of the plan there was no road showing how to access the front of the houses. Would these be made of a semi-permeable surface?

Members were concerned about the lack of parking provision for use of the adjacent open spaces such as Victoria Pleasure Ground. Parking was already at capacity at Victoria Pleasure Ground. More consideration was required for non-motorised access to these areas of recreation.

Cllr Macve noted that the site showed a road coming off the A22 Uckfield By-Pass to

serve the industrial complex, and there was a spur which stopped on the boundary of the site. Cllr. Macve wished to receive confirmation that this spur would be carried on into the sewage works to enable them to have direct access from the A22. The current plans did not appear to provide any obligation to Southern Water for this.

Odour control

Southern Water were not happy with the planned mitigation for odour which had not yet been addressed. Also, Rother & Wealden DC's Environmental Health Pollution Control were still waiting for Southern Water to carry out a feasibility study for pollution control in this area.

The Town Council requested that all attenuation ponds had petrol acceptors to stop them silting up and polluting the Ridgewood stream. Cllr Bedwell mentioned concerns that the back flow would also cause flooding onto the Uckfield By-pass.

Noise abatement and light pollution

There needed to be a Construction Management Plan to protect residents from noise and light pollution, with development likely to take 5-10 years.

Concerns surrounding light pollution had not been addressed. There was insufficient information on the lighting proposals within the application. Lighting specifications and a Lux lighting plan were yet to be identified, and it was important that low ecological sensitive lighting was provided for protected species, such as the Barbastelle and Myotis Bats.

Cllr Macve agreed with a member of the public that noise from the bypass would be a problem as the site was elevated, rising away from the bypass, up the side of the valley. The houses on the whole of the site would be subjected to noise and there should be some way to circumvent it and reduce the noise, by using a form of sound barrier.

Contamination of land

Additional information was required about the contamination to ground and surface water from asbestos fibres, lead and dissolved phase contaminants. Soil samples still needed to be taken over all areas and the Environmental Health Consultation stated that soil samples were needed.

Marking the history of the site

Cllr. Bennett welcomed the renaming of the development to 'Seghers Place' in honour of Eugene Seghers and the 91 Squadron. He read a proposal from The Founder and Creative Director of The Formation Creative Consultants Intl Ltd and would support their request for street names, sculptures and stained-glass installations in commemoration.

Infrastructure, community facilities and recreation

A number of members raised their concern for the lack of infrastructure incorporated in the application.

Councillor Bedwell explained that committee members had met with the developers on a couple of occasions to discuss the infrastructure and what was needed. This included: sports facilities, community buildings, cemetery space and allotments. Only five allotments were proposed within this application, for 750 houses and Cllr. Macve felt the new allotments were impractical to walk to with the applicant proposing to include only three car parking spaces.

Members stressed the importance of sport and leisure facilities and their disappointment that there was no provision for sports pitches, as the Town Council's facilities were oversubscribed. There was an important piece of land which sat between the site of the application and Victoria Pleasure Ground, which would be suitable to extend the existing football facilities at Victoria Pleasure Ground, and meet the current levels of demand. It

was suggested that the landowner may wish to donate a piece of this or the applicant's land to fulfil these important infrastructure requirements.

The application appeared to remove the original intention to provide community space which would put further pressure on Ridgewood Village Hall, which was the only community space in the south of Uckfield, where there was minimal parking provision. It was noted that the developer had not held any discussions with the Trustees of the hall.

Cllr. Bedwell asked 'Why had the original space for a public house and community building been removed from item 15 of the original Master Plan?' The farmhouse had now fallen into neglect. This was not the only development that resulted in a loss of community space, but the town was running out of community space and a discussion was necessary as to how to bring more community space to the town.

Cllr. Mayhew was concerned that the application only allowed for 'provision' for a 2-form primary school and nursery, which would mean they did not have to build this, but merely provide the facilities. He wanted to see commitment from the developer and East Sussex County Council that these facilities would be built, and a time frame for its build.

Cllr Macve supported the views of members of the public in regards to utilities and stated that all of the utilities and infrastructure in the Uckfield area were at breaking point and there was no provision in the application to improve these facilities.

There were also general concerns for lack of doctors surgeries and dental care.

Flies

As a resident of Forge Rise, Cllr Mayhew was extremely worried that an attenuation pond would be placed very close to the sewage works, which would exacerbate the swarms of flies. The issue of flies had not been addressed in any of the reports. The odour mitigation proposed the placement of hoods over the Archimedes Screw, but this was not where the fly issue came from. The open beds that required the flies to breakdown the fecal matter was where the flies germinated from. The attenuation pond placed on the other side of the sewage farm boundary would attract the flies to collect at this point and cause further issues to both existing and new homes.

All members confirmed that the SUDS Pond along the entrance to the driveway would cause a conflict with flies and this has not been considered.

In one of the documents regarding Southern Water it stated that Southern Water were unable to find the records of past discussions with the landowner (Welbeck Strategic Land). It was important that these were found. Notes from recent meetings onsite with Southern Water had been sent to the applicant by Uckfield Town Council.

In conclusion:

It was felt that there was a complete lack of information within the application.

Cllr. Bedwell stated that this application was rushed through in January 2024 and not a lot had altered with little change to reflect the feedback from statutory consultees.

Town Council members were not specialists. The only way members were able to comment was by providing local knowledge and reading information provided by the experts in their consultation responses. Cllr. Bedwell expressed her continued frustration that Uckfield Town Council were asked to comment on applications when so many reports were missing. She would therefore not be able to support the application.

Cllr. Bennett was disgusted that the comments the Town Council had submitted back in January 2024 had been ignored and lacked acknowledgement within this application.

Members had suggested the offer of a link through to Town Council land to provide important links to the town centre. This would reduce the social isolation of these homes. He felt that the applicant had not read the Town Council's response. Cllr. Bedwell asked that when sending this response, that the Town Council's original response from January 2024 be included as an appendix (Appendix A).

Cllr. Bedwell put forward two proposals, both of which were seconded:

(i) she proposed that members **object** to the application until all the relevant information from the statutory consultee reports had been received and been discussed. Members were appalled that there had been no acknowledgement of the detailed points made by Uckfield Town Council to the previous application, in January 2024. They also noted the lack of communication on the proposed connections through Town Council land.

P40.10.24 Members **RESOLVED** to agree to the above proposal which covered the following matters:

- The minimal buffer to Boothland Wood was inadequate to protect this ancient woodland;
- Due to trees being in close proximity to houses, there were concerns that authorities would be under pressure to excessively prune or remove them and could make the council liable for damage to properties, as well as see trees damaged by inexact works by residents;
- Boothland Woodland was already showing signs of deterioration due to soil impaction, new footways being created, and further impact would be seen by adjacent properties and domestic cats;
- Substantial concerns had been raised in relation to tree T14 as this formed an important part of the biodiversity corridor to Boothland Wood, and met the criteria for a Tree Preservation Order;
- Concerns for the habitats of bats, dormice and reptiles, due to the severed connectivity and lack of wildlife monitoring to fully understand the site. Members felt the dormouse surveys had not been carried out adequately seeing the evidence of broken boxes etc;
- The proposed placement of the attenuation pond right next to the sewage works would exacerbate the swarms of flies (this had been documented in a site meeting with Southern Water, the notes of which were sent to the applicant);
- Concerns raised in relation to the contamination of the soil;
- Members requested further information on the ecological enhancement zone(s);
- The pond showing as a green area on the plans – further information was requested;
- Concerns that planting was not conducive to the soil type;
- Concerns that the proposed bus route did not include New Town or Phase 1 of the Ridgewood Place development, as the bus could only turn right;
- The impact of the bus route on tree T14 caused apprehension as the was not protected by a TPO, and although a very old tree it was not yet considered veteran;
- Safety issues had been highlighted by members, with preferences for a flat route for pedestrians and cyclist into town along the by-pass. The sharing of a narrow lane with bus services and exit onto Lewes Road, where visibility was impaired was difficult;
- The site appeared to create a sense of isolation - with poor connectivity to Uckfield Town Centre;
- There was insufficient evidence within the application for mitigation of any odour control;
- The straight road design would lead to speeding vehicles which were extreme concern for safety;
- The number of allotment plots and associated parking was incredibly limited (5 plots for 750 homes, and 3 car parking bays);
- The original Section 106 Agreement did not provide the infrastructure required for the development;
- There continued to be a lack of commitment for the provision of a 2-form entry primary school, and early years;
- Sports and recreation had been omitted from the application despite the size of the site;

- Detailed discussions were necessary with the local planning authority (Wealden DC) and applicant to discuss the contents of the S106 agreement;
- The applicant had yet to approach the Town Council about the proposed access point through a hedgerow onto Town Council land;
- Noise levels were of concern for householders from the A22 Uckfield By-pass - this needed screening;
- Members wanted to see smaller units and consideration for a range of needs - disabled, starter homes etc;
- The design of the affordable homes needed to be inclusive with the broader design of the development rather than being noticeably different;
- Concern that the original intention to provide a community space/hun had been removed and that the farm building had now fallen into disrepair;
- Members sought confirmation that the spur road off the road off the A22 By-pass would be extended to the sewage works, so that this could be serviced from the A22.;
- The development was in conflict with national policies to use brown/grey field sites;
- The lack of a flood risk assessment and calculations on surface water run off;
- No overarching impact assessment report, which was necessary;
- No transport Master Plan and the need for a detailed and considered response from East Sussex Highways – at present only a holding response was available.

(ii) Cllr. Bedwell referred to the S106 agreement. As it stood, it was not fit for purpose. Members requested a meeting with Wealden DC and the applicant to discuss the contents of the agreement and obtain some financial recompense to support the impact on the Town Council's land and the growth of the town.

P41.10.24 Members **RESOLVED** to agree to the above proposal and to re-iterate the Town Council's previous comments submitted in January 2024.

P42.10.24 It was **RESOLVED** to suspend standing orders for a short interval.

P43.10.24 After a short 5minute break it was **RESOLVED** to reinstate standing orders

WD/2024/2145/F 14 ROCKS PARK ROAD, UCKFIELD, TN22 2AS

First floor extension above existing ground floor extension at rear. demolition of side conservatory and replacement with single storey side extension. replacement of front porch. Fenestration changes to existing property and installation of solar panels.

Members noted that a similar application for this property had been presented to members previously, and on that occasion, they supported the application.

P44.10.24 Members **RESOLVED** to support the application on the following grounds and on the proviso that the modifications aligned with the pre-application discussions held with the Wealden Planning Officer:-

- A precedent exists as other properties in the area have made similar additions;
- The proposed additions would be in keeping with the street scene.

WD/2024/2226/RM SPRINGFIELD, LEWES ROAD, RIDGEWOOD, TN22 5SL

Reserved Matters pursuant to Outline application WD/2023/2193/O (outline application for the demolition of existing structures and the erection of up to 9 dwellings (with all matters reserved except access). Access to be achieved from Lewes Road.)

Members stated that many issues had still not been addressed on this resubmitted application. There were no updated reports with regards to drainage, or the protection of wildlife, protected species and reptiles. The housing style was unsuitable; there was no provision for smaller or accessible units to support the elderly, those who required support with accessibility and/or starter homes.

Without updated reports from all the relevant consultees members felt unable to give an updated response.

- P45.10.24** It was subsequently **RESOLVED** to object to the application in line with the Town Council's previous response, since there were no updated consultee reports:-
- (i) Members would support ES Highways' objections on the grounds of substandard visibility splays and substandard implications;
 - (ii) Members were concerned about the safety aspect of having a traffic calming island, entrance into Red Clover Road, Ridgewood House, Siggs Yard (9 houses), the New Road junction, two bus stops, post office parking, and the an exit for a bus route serving 750 houses on Ridgewood Place all within a few hundred yards with a narrow pavement one side, no pavement the other and a proposed pedestrian crossing;
 - (iii) Members would consider the development of this narrow road to be overdevelopment within a very short stretch which would also suffer from increased traffic accumulating from developments nearby;
 - (iv) Members would support the comments about pollution control concerning noise which would especially be detrimental to the houses opposite.
 - (v) Members noted that Waste Management had no objection, although there were concerns that the access for refuse vehicles would be inadequate.
 - (vi) Members also noted that the issues between the applicant and Wealden DC Drainage regarding the storage tank and the pump were yet to be resolved.

WD/2024/2243/F 130 HIGH STREET, UCKFIELD, EAST SUSSEX, TN22 1QR

New folding arm awning to provide protection & comfort from direct sunlight into the shop front.

Members welcomed awnings and canopies in the High Street, as it reflected Uckfield's High Street setting in past years. The Chair, Councillor Love, noted that it was a pity that the historic canopy rings had not been reinstalled in the right places, as they could have been used again by businesses.

- P46.10.24** It was **RESOLVED** to support the application.

WD/2024/2069/F 24 NEVILL ROAD, UCKFIELD, TN22 1PF

Proposed end of terrace two storey family house.

One member reiterated the importance of the open plan design of the Manor Park residential housing estate, and that infill applications such as this would be seen as an intrusion on the open plan nature of this award-winning development. This was supported by two further members.

The proposed parking arrangements were considered to be highly dangerous – driving across a footpath, parking to the side of the footpath and then driving back across it. The location of the application was on a very dangerous corner, and Nevill Road was a busy road. Members agreed with these points, with one experiencing a near miss when visiting the site. Members questioned why there wasn't a consultation response from East Sussex Highways on this application.

In contrast, two members felt that there was a need for housing, and this was on a brownfield/greyfield site rather than a greenfield site.

Members discussed the size of the three-bed property, as the design of the property appeared fairly small; particularly the third bedroom. This led to discussions on whether the site had been overdeveloped.

- P47.10.24** With three votes in favour, and one member abstaining, members **RESOLVED** to object to the application on the grounds that East Sussex Highways had not provided a safety report on the access and parking arrangements. Members were unable to make a decision until this information was made available.

6.0 DECISION NOTICES

Approved:

WD/2024/0162/F

THE CHANGE OF USE FROM A DWELLING OCCUPIED INCIDENTAL TO THE OCCUPATION AND ENJOYMENT OF CHINTHURST COTTAGE (REF: APPLICATION WD/2008/1166/F) TO A DWELLING THAT MAY BE OCCUPIED INDEPENDENT OF CHINTHURST COTTAGE.

CHINTHURST COTTAGE, PUDDING CAKE LANE, UCKFIELD, TN22 1BU

Response to Town Council: *The Town Council's concerns are acknowledged. Nevertheless, ESCC Highways has stated that an objection on highway grounds would not be sustainable. Although ESCC has consistently raised concerns regarding the development it recognises that the accommodation has been in use since 2011 and there is a level of trip generation associated with this building. The site is well related to the town's services and facilities and these can be accessed easily by foot. There is a level of traffic generation that has been operating from the site for several years. There would be adequate parking and turning within the site to serve the existing and proposed dwelling. In the planning balance, it is considered that the benefits of reusing this currently empty building for residential use outweighs amenity and highway concerns. The site is well related to the town's services and facilities and these can be accessed easily by foot. There is a level of traffic generation that has been operating from the site for several years. There would be adequate parking and turning within the site to serve the existing and proposed dwelling. In the planning balance, it is considered that the benefits of reusing this currently empty building for residential use outweighs amenity and highway concerns.*

WD/2023/0145/F

THE RATIONALISATION OF A COMPLEX OF FARM BUILDINGS, INCLUDING THE DEMOLITION OF UTILITARIAN STRUCTURES AND CONVERSION OF EXISTING BARNs TO CREATE FOUR RESIDENTIAL DWELLINGS.

HEMPSTEAD FARM, HEMPSTEAD LANE, UCKFIELD, TN22 3DL

WD/2024/1699/LBR

RETROSPECTIVE APPLICATION FOR INTERNAL ALTERATIONS AND CAR TURNTABLE WITH FRENCH DRAIN. MILTON COTTAGE, PUDDING CAKE LANE, UCKFIELD, TN22 1BU

Response to Town Council: *While the LPA acknowledge the point about retrospective applications, the assessment is made on the details as submitted, and if the works which have taken place are acceptable or not. It is not within the remit of the LPA to concern themselves with why the works had already taken place, more so whether the works were considered to be acceptable. In this instance, the proposal has verbally been discussed with the Conservation Officer and the works are considered to be acceptable, with conditions imposed.*

WD/2024/1831/AI

REMOVE EXISTING SIGNAGE AND INSTALLATION OF NEW ILLUMINATED AND NON-ILLUMINATED TOYOTA BRAND SIGNAGE

SIMPSONS TOYOTA, BOLTON CLOSE, BELLBROOK INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, UCKFIELD, TN22 1PH

WD/2024/1941/F

FACE BRICKWORK INFILL TO EXISTING PORCH AREA AND NEW MONO PITCHED ROOF OVER. 10 LASHBROOKS ROAD, UCKFIELD, TN22 2AY

Refused:

WD/2024/1712/F

2 REPLACEMENT WINDOWS TO FRONT OF PROPERTY
FLAT 1, 130 HIGH STREET, UCKFIELD, TN22 1QR

Notification of Appeal:

Town and Country Planning Act 1990

Appeal by Mr C Macve (the Appellant)

Site: THE CEDARS, LONDON ROAD, UCKFIELD, TN22 1HY

Proposal: ERECTION OF DWELLING.

Planning Inspectorate Ref: APP/C1435/W/24/3350445

Members noted the decision notices.

The meeting closed 8.52pm.