



Minutes of the meeting of the Plans Committee held in the Council Chamber,  
Civic Centre, Uckfield on Monday 8 December 2025 at 7.00pm

Cllr. J. Love (Chair)  
Cllr. K. Bedwell  
Cllr. P. Selby

Cllr. C. Macve (Vice Chair)  
Cllr. K. Butler

Cllr. S. Mayhew  
Cllr. D. Bennett

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

3 members of the public (1 member of the public arrived at 7.10pm)

Cllr. D. French

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, but none were forthcoming.

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

None.

**3.0 APOLOGIES**

None.

**4.0 MINUTES**

**4.1 Minutes of the meeting held on 17 November 2025**

**P68.12.25** It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Plans Committee of the 17 November 2025, be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**4.2 Action List**

Members reviewed the Action List and noted the response from UK Power Networks to which the clerk would respond.

**P69.12.25** The Chair acknowledged a member of the public who arrived after item 2.0, and it was subsequently **RESOLVED** to suspend Standing Orders to allow them to speak on item 5.0 Planning Applications.

The resident of New Barn Lane spoke in objection to application WD/2025/2368/F. He had spoken with the Planning Officer and was yet to place his objection with Wealden District Council.

The resident explained how the application would have an enormous detrimental impact since it was directly behind and close to his home, and stated the following points:

- Complete loss of privacy; 28 windows would face his home overlooking into bedrooms and his garden. Due to the slope of the lane the car park would be either level or only just above his bedroom windows, causing;
- Light and noise disturbance;
- Overlooking and dominance; Nowhere in the plans could he see the height of the proposed building, although the same architect, specialising in care homes, had other four-storey care homes that were 70m high. As the land

sloped up 4-5m from his home, this would result in the height of the building of approximately 240ft high, and only 20ft to 30ft from his home;.

- The proposed cycle store and sub station would be 10m from his house;
- This was a massive commercial building that was not in keeping with the residential area;
- Concerns for run-off of water, which they had previously experienced and as the proposed would concrete the whole area it would only exacerbate the problem;
- As this four-storey building was to be only 20-30m from his property, he was concerned that the possible use of pile drivers would shake his property. He recalled his experience some years ago during the construction of 40 A, B, C, D New Barn Lane - the use of pile drivers caused damage to his roof and to drainage, resulting in costs of some £2,500;
- Concerns that the access road was not fit for purpose and that this was a single-track road with no passing places;
- Concerns that parking spaces were not fit for purpose and that there was no overspill parking facility;
- Loss of habitat – since Ridgewood Manor was burnt down in 2017 the land had been completely vacant and had become a habitat for wildlife and he cited the environmental survey and Nature Space;
- Neighbour Day Light and Sunlight Assessment document provided by the assessment was only a theoretical modelling and was fundamentally flawed, especially as the floor plan of his house was completely inaccurate.

The resident referred to the grounds on which an application for the erection of a 40 bedroom nursing home, plus conversion of the Ridgewood Manor House had been refused in 1993, which cited:

-that it was outside of the housing framework for Uckfield (which was since discounted);

-was visibly intrusive, overdevelopment of the site, detrimental to the character and visual amenities of the rural fringe location and detrimental to the amenities and privacies of adjoining residential properties in New Barn Lane, and the intensification of the use of a substandard access road, which had substandard visibility at its junction with C56 where hazards would be increased.

As this application was vastly larger than what was proposed in 1993, these problems would be greatly increased, and as at that time 40 A, B, C and D New Barn Lane were not yet built, this application would have a detrimental impact now to these properties also.

**P70.12.25** It was **RESOLVED** to reinstate Standing Orders.

## **5.0 PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

### **WD/2025/2368/MAJ FORMER RIDGEWOOD MANOR CARE HOME, LEWES ROAD, UCKFIELD, TN22 5SH**

Redevelopment of the site comprising the construction of a 77-bedroom care home (use Class C2) together with associated car and cycle parking and landscaping.

Members noted the letters of objection, copies of which had been circulated to them prior to the meeting and were included on the Wealden District Council web site.

Members discussed the application at length and referred to a consultation meeting they had had with the developer, where points had been discussed. It was felt that the concerns raised at that meeting had not been addressed within this application.

They felt that that the proposed care home would be an enormous over development of the site, with four floors being unnecessary, causing loss of privacy and light to neighbouring properties. The development would detrimentally impact the quality of life and wellbeing of those living within very close proximity due to its dominance on a sloped ground. They stated that it was very much out of character with other properties in the area.

Members also stated that traffic would be increased both day and night along the access road, which was not wide enough for two-way traffic and they queried the weight limit on the road for construction traffic.

One member challenged the statement of the developer who had said that the provision was necessary. The member had asked local nursing homes their availability for places and found that many had vacancies. As we were now looking more to supporting more people in their own homes, it was felt that this number of residents was unnecessary and therefore conflicted with the developer's statement. One member pointed out that the previous care home on the site was an adapted domestic dwelling which had history on the site and could not be compared to this application which was a commercial block.

**P71.12.25** It was subsequently **RESOLVED** to **strongly** object to the application on the following planning grounds:

**Overdevelopment and harm to local character (NPPF 130–134)**

- Excessive scale, bulk and massing for a residential area and was out of keeping.
- Visually intrusive on a prominent hillside location and was dominant from every vantage point from the town.
- Failed to respond to surrounding domestic scale; there was no comparison to the scale of the proposed and the existing Copper Beech Care Home opposite;

The development would be a total over development of the site with the total built form being massive. The flat roof design did not fit with the locality, although it was acknowledged that it was designed this way to reduce the bulk.

The development would be detrimental due to the above, not only to the residents of New Barn but also to those at Fairview.

**Unacceptable impact on residential amenity (NPPF 130(f))**

- Increased noise and disturbance from traffic, servicing, staff and visitors.

It was also unacceptable that the substation would be so close to the back garden of the resident of New Barn Lane, as this too would be noisy.

- Overlooking and loss of privacy due to elevated topography.
- Overbearing presence affecting neighbouring homes;
- Concerns regarding the potential damage that piling would cause to neighbouring properties;

### **Unsafe or unsuitable access and highway impacts (NPPF 110–111)**

- Steep hill gradients adversely affecting access for ambulances, staff and deliveries.
- Anticipated high traffic generation for a 77-bed facility.
- Insufficient parking leading to overspill into narrow residential streets.
- Results in unacceptable or severe impacts on highway safety;

Members felt that although the requirement for visitor's spaces were met in relation to the Wealden District Council Local Plan 1998, this document had been shown many times to not meet many requirements within planning. The developers at the consultation with Uckfield Town Council had said they would provide documentation of traffic movements at other sites, however this was not included.

As most visitors would come by car there was inadequate parking for both staff and visitors and no overspill parking. In fact, there was concern that parking spaces belonging to the nearby houses would be used by visitors to the home.

Members queried how the parking plan was based on the Local Plan which was out of date.

The access road had no pavement, nor was there room for a pavement to enable a resident in a wheelchair, for example, to go with their family to visit the Highland Inn or the Coop.

### **Harm to visual amenity and landscape (NPPF 130–131)**

- Prominent hillside siting increases visual dominance.
- Incompatible form that disrupts the established roofline and landscape character.

The development would be seen from every vantage point in the town and would be alter the character on the approach to the Highlands Inn. It was stated that the roof line of the Coop in the grounds of the Highlands Inn had to sit below the roof line of the Highlands Inn so as not to affect the character of that part of the town. The same rule needed to be applied here;

### **Surface-water run-off and drainage risks (NPPF 159–169)**

- Steeply sloping land increases run-off risk onto lower residential properties.
- Inadequate evidence that SuDS will prevent increased flood risk elsewhere.

As the development was on such a slope it was felt there was nothing that could be possibly done to stop flood risk from run off, which would not only effect New Barn Lane, but also would affect dwellings within Sandpits.

### **Poor accessibility and unsustainable location for a major care facility (NPPF 93–97, 125)**

- Limited access to public transport and services for residents, staff and visitors.

There were two bus stops nearby however, by the nature of what was being built, it was unlikely that visitors would go there by train or walk up the hill, although some may be able to get a bus.

Concerns that where people get off of the bus there would also be vehicles entering and leaving, and as the access was narrow it would be dangerous.

Within the transport assessment document provided in the application they had provided a 'theoretical' trip data from the nursing home and they had stated that there was no current trip data. Whilst it was noted that there was no trip data for the site, members felt this documentation should include trip data for the four bungalows to ensure all aspects were considered.

- Not located in a suitably accessible, sustainable community location.

Concerns for the emergency access to the site via a single tracked access route would not being adequate for emergency service vehicles. Should there be a fire and because of the size of the facility, it was likely that several emergency vehicles would need to attend and the access would not cope.

#### **Insufficient outdoor amenity space for vulnerable residents (NPPF 130(a–f))**

- Steep gradients which limited safe, usable external space.
- Fails to provide inclusive, accessible outdoor areas expected for elderly care.

#### **Inefficient and inappropriate use of land (NPPF 119–122)**

- Institutional scale development conflicts with the residential character and function of the area.
- This was a commercial building over the need for residents.

At the moment there were many available spaces at other care homes in the area and it was thought that a home to this scale was not necessary and was purely for commercial gain.

#### **Loss of biodiversity and habitats**

- This site was intrinsically linked with Boothland Wood and was a nature corridor for bats, other species and for flora and fauna that inhabit the space and linked with Boothland Wood, which the Town Council were very keen to protect in terms of nature recovery;
- Lights and noise would disturb habitats not only on the established woodland on site, but also within Boothland Wood.

The Day Light and Sunlight Assessment document was based on 3D drawings and a desk top survey and members agreed with the resident that it was not fit for purpose and did not take into account the size of the building compared to the existing dwellings, or the difference in the height of the land.

It was noted that there was an objection raised regarding the newts because it was a red impact zone and was insufficient information.

Members would request that the LLFA were asked to expand the requirements for a drainage system to protect the residents and Boothland Wood with its geology, hydrology and its habitats. How the drainage would affect the existing residents and how it would effect drainage to Boothland Wood and the water course there.

Members would like that ESFRS be reconsulted as any fire risk documentation would need to look at protecting the existing dwelling and also protecting Boothland Wood, as well looking at the possibility of fire spreading via Boothland Woods to the development at Seghers Place and Ridgewood Place. Members noted that there was no provision for a water hydrant on the site.

Members would also ask that Sussex Police be reconsulted due to the amount of Anti-Social Behaviour experienced at Victoria Pleasure ground and in the past when the field at the back of Boothland Wood and areas within the woods were set alight.

In the Transport document there were a number of photos within the document. Photo no 9 (page 5) showed the visibility splays from the vantage point of a person standing on the pavement curb line which was not adequate as it was not from the point of view of a driver. The telegraph pole at the access reduced visibility.

It was felt that the disability factor of those wishing to cross the road had not been taken into account for the pavement width or surface. Those wishing to cross the road from the development would likely need extra protection as they may be slower, have a frame or a mobility unit or in a wheel chair. There was not a pedestrian and vehicle separation on that track.

The proposed development also was not in accordance with the following policies of the NPPF

**Conserving and enhancing the natural environment (NPPF 15 187a)**

**Habitats and biodiversity (NPPF 15 192a 192b)**

**Contributing to sustainable development (NPPF 7)**

**Economic Social and Environment objectives (NPPF 8)**

Within the statement of Community Involvement, it did not detail sufficiently the information that the residents had raised with the developer when they met.

It was felt that the recent contact by Fairthorn Consultancy when they had requested to meet in the new year, was merely being used as a tick box for community engagement and that if nothing were to change on the application then there would be no point in having a meeting.

**P72.12.25** It was subsequently **RESOLVED** that the clerk respond to the invitation from the Fairthorn Consultancy.

The Chair thanked the three members of the public present and advised that they were free to leave should they wish, and they left the meeting at 7.55pm.

**WD/2025/2477/MFA RIDGEWOOD HOUSE, LEWES ROAD, RIDGEWOOD, TN22 5SN**

Variation of condition 31 of WD/2022/1303/MAJ (phased development comprising 9 no. dwellings, access, landscaping and associated infrastructure) to enable plots 3 & 4 to be amended from a pair of semi-detached houses to 2 no. detached houses and separation of garages serving plots 7 & 8.

Cllr. Bennett declared a personal interest in the application when he realised that the architect was a personal friend and thereafter, he took no part in the comments on this application.

The draft local plan aimed for smaller properties which met the local need and at the local wage. It was felt that this variation to the plan would take the opportunity away from local people that might have been able to afford the original smaller properties. Members recalled that the agent had said that this development would be affordable houses, including smaller semi-detached properties and were disappointed with the scale, the design and the street scene which they felt was poor.

**P73.12.25** It was **RESOLVED** to object to the application as it would remove a level of affordability of housing in this area and was not in accordance with NPPF 2 and NPPF8a and 8B. It had been our understanding from the developer that this site would provide a range of mixed housing.

## **6.0 DECISION NOTICES**

### **Approved:**

WD/2025/0736/MRM

RESERVED MATTERS (APPEARANCE, LANDSCAPING, LAYOUT & SCALE) PURSUANT TO OUTLINE PERMISSION WD/2022/0648/MAO (OUTLINE APPLICATION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF 60 NO. DWELLINGS, ACCESS AND INTERNAL ROADS, PARKING, ANCILLARY STRUCTURES, LANDSCAPING AND OPEN SPACE, DRAINAGE AND OTHER ASSOCIATED WORKS. ALL MATTERS RESERVED APART FROM ACCESS).  
MOCKBEGGAR FARM, LONDON ROAD, BUDLETTS COMMON, UCKFIELD, TN22 2EA

WD/2025/2013/AI

INDIVIDUAL LETTERS ON TIMBER FASCIA SIGN AND PROJECTING SIGN.  
122 HIGH STREET, UCKFIELD, TN22 1PX

WD/2025/1926/FA

VARIATION OF CONDITIONS 2, 3, 9 AND 12 OF WD/2023/1499/F (DEMOLITION OF EXISTING DWELLING AND ERECTION OF 7 NO. DWELLINGS, TOGETHER WITH ASSOCIATED ACCESS, CAR PARKING AND LANDSCAPING) TO ENABLE MINOR CHANGES TO THE LAYOUT AND FINISHED FLOOR LEVELS TOGETHER WITH UPDATED DRAINAGE STRATEGY, FOR EASE OF CONSTRUCTION AND TO CONFORM TO THE EXISTING LANDFORMS/TOPOGRAPHY.  
WHITE GATES, REGENCY CLOSE, UCKFIELD, TN22 1DS

WD/2025/2295/F

INTERNAL ALTERATIONS AND ERECTION OF REAR DORMER.  
7 CASTLE WAY, RIDGEWOOD, UCKFIELD, TN22 5UW

WD/2025/1459/F

ERECTION OF GROUND AND FIRST FLOOR EXTENSIONS INCLUDING CONVERSION OF ATTACHED GARAGE TO HABITABLE ACCOMMODATION.  
MARTINS HILL, LEWES ROAD, RIDGEWOOD, UCKFIELD, TN22 5SJ

WD/2025/1425/F

TWO STOREY SIDE EXTENSION AND SINGLE STOREY SIDE AND REAR EXTENSION  
14 CUCKMERE PATH, UCKFIELD, TN22 1LY

Member noted the decision notices.

## **7.0 CORRESPONDENCE TO BE AGREED WITH APPLICANTS**

### **(i) Letter to Redrow Homes Plc re: Seghers Place (WD/2023/2939/MRM)**

The letter would invite them to a meeting to discuss how the developer could support the Town Council, physically and financially to protect Boothland Wood. Also, regarding the footway and cycleway by Victoria Pleasure Ground play area, the safety of the children on the playpark needed to be taken into consideration. It was not just about removing the hedge and putting in a link. The extra work to our Estates team also needed to be considered. Since the Section 106 stated that Redrow Homes needed to contact the Town Council within a year and the fact that nobody had made any contact it was felt that the Town Council needed to contact them. There was also a concern raised with the lease for Victoria Pleasure Ground.

### **(ii) Letter to Fairfax Acquisitions re: Owlsbury Farm (WD/2025/0922/MEA)**

Uckfield Town Council would request the need for some financial help, as although Uckfield was not included in the Section 106 regarding provision of services, some financial help would be necessary ie. for community facilities, sports facilities, parking etc.

**P74.12.25** It was **RESOLVED** that the Chair should send letters.

The meeting closed at 8.22pm.