

## HERSTMONCEUX PARISH COUNCIL PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING 10 MARCH 2015

Minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting of Herstmonceux Parish Council held at **7.00pm on Tuesday 10 March 2015 in the hall of Herstmonceux Primary School.**

Present: Councillors J. Angear, A. Ashley, K. Game, M. Goodsell, W. Gower, D. Hockings, B. Naish, S. Nash and I. Willson.

Apologies were received from Councillors S. Charlton and K. Wheatley.

40 The members of the public attended.

### **Christopher Hough of Sigma Planning spoke on behalf of Rydon Homes Limited re application WD/2015/0136 – Proposed residential development of 40 dwellings on land South of Hailsham Road (Lime Roughs), Herstmonceux.**

This is an application for a housing development of 40 dwellings including 1 bed apartments and 2,3 and 4 bedroom houses served from a new access off Hailsham Road. 35% (14 units) of the new dwellings will be Affordable Housing and they will be managed by a Registered Social Landlord. The remainder of the housing will be available for private sale. A 0.5 hectare (1¼ acre) parcel of land adjacent to the Recreation Ground has been offered to the Parish Council. This offer would be in lieu of (or partly in lieu of) the alternative of providing financial contributions through a Section 106 agreement for open space provision, to upgrade existing facilities in the Parish. Rydon Homes are based in Forest Row and have been building high quality housing in East Sussex and the South-East for nearly 40 years

Herstmonceux is classified within the Wealden Core Strategy as a Local Service Centre with potential for some housing growth and Rydon consider that this site is the most suitable for development because:-

- it is not in the AONB and is well contained visually within the landscape
- it is well related to the existing settlement pattern and is within close walking distance of the village centre and local facilities.
- there are only a limited number of neighbouring properties that overlook the site.
- the scale of housing proposed is manageable in terms of the size of the village and the site is well-contained so that there will be no obvious precedent for further expansion.

The site has previously been promoted to the Parish Council, through the emerging Herstmonceux Neighbourhood Plan during which consultations have taken place with the local community and also with some local councillors at a Protocol meeting..

The current position with regard to housing numbers and the Neighbourhood Plan is clearly set out in an update on the Parish Council website. The Lime Roughs site is one of two sites mentioned in that update which together comprise the maximum number of dwellings that the District Council will entertain at this stage and any further development proposals thereafter would be resisted as being premature. The housing numbers will count towards those to be allocated to Herstmonceux in the review of the Wealden Core Strategy.

The other site is the Gleasons/Summertree Estates proposal for 70 dwellings at Limes Cross, which the Parish Council recently resolved to support.

This proposal has been very carefully prepared and a full range of consultant reports accompany the application. No over-riding planning issues have been identified.

Briefly addressing the main concerns voiced by local residents:-

**Drainage** – Southern Water say that there is currently inadequate capacity in the foul sewerage system to accommodate the development but solutions are available at the cost of the developer. The most likely is up-sizing the existing sewer in Hailsham Road.

**Education** – financial contributions of over £300,000 will be made to assist the Education Authority in providing additional school places at all levels.

**Front Hedge** – apart from the access the existing hedge will be retained and its future management secured.

**Access** – the new access has good sight lines and fully meets the relevant design criteria for a safe access.

**Wildlife** – the application proposes the provision of a 15 metre buffer adjacent to the ancient woodland which is located next to the site and ecological studies have been undertaken and appropriate mitigation measures incorporated within the application.

This is a high quality development proposal which will not have a major impact on its surroundings and will make a material contribution to meeting the housing numbers that the village is expected to provide in the future.

Mr M. Stockman spoke against the application WD/2015/0136/MAO - proposed residential development of 40 dwellings on land South of Hailsham Road (Lime Roughs), Herstmonceux. He expressed concern about the following issues:

- sewage.
- access.
- the fact that the site is classed as windfall.
- residents' objections to large sites.

The following applications were discussed:

Application: WD/2015/0136/MAO - Councillors J. Angear and M. Goodsell Declared Interest in this application as they have business interests with the owner of the land.

Location: Land south of Hailsham Road, Herstmonceux.

Description: Proposed development of 40 residential dwellings comprising of 4 x one bedroom apartments, 9 x two bedroom houses, 12 x three bedroom houses and 15 x four bedrooms houses together with associated access , roads, parking provision and open space.

Parish Council comments to Wealden District Council: The Council objects to this application.

There was detailed discussion on this application and the Chairman allowed a number of comments from residents.

1. The Council noted the comment from a resident that the application for this site was premature - a councillor proposed that the site should be classified as premature but there was no support for this proposal.
2. Access - there was discussion on the access as a separate issue but the Council agreed to discuss the application as a whole proposal. The A271 slopes towards the access, the speed limit changes from 30mph to 40 mph at the entrance, the busy access to the village hall, health centre and pharmacy is within metres of the proposed new access, the speed of traffic along this stretch of road is noted and there are frequent speed detector cameras used to catch offenders. Councillors noted that there may be solutions to any access issues including traffic management to slow traffic approaching the site, the introduction of a traffic filter system for vehicles accessing and exiting the proposed site.
3. Sewage and drainage - Herstmonceux Parish Council has been working with Southern Water since early 2014 to try and resolve the problems with the capacity of the sewage pipes in Victoria Road, Windmill Hill. The Parish Council received confirmation from Southern Water in January 2015 that a scheme has been identified to resolve the flooding in Victoria Road and this scheme is progressing through the design stage prior to a decision on construction. The Parish Council has been advised that there is sufficient capacity at the Treatment Works but all sewage from the parish is pumped or gravity fed along the pipe in Victoria Road.
4. The proposed site has a spring line across it and the lower sections of the site are waterlogged in wet periods. Is possible to address this issue by engineering solutions but councillors discussed whether the high costs to the developers would mean that the provision of affordable housing could be affected.
5. The adjoining houses at Ferndale are not connected to the main drainage system; connection to the system is offered by the developers although it is not known whether all householders will take up this offer. One resident of the houses noted that although he is happy with his existing septic tank, there are occasional times when the outfall causes drainages problems. Mr Hough from Sigma Planning, informed the meeting that septic tanks which are correctly fitted and maintained will only result in clear water discharge.
6. Herstmonceux Village Hall which is located near to the proposed site has a pump system which is costly and unreliable.
7. The Parish Council queried whether it was correct that the gardens at North Lodge adjacent to Herstmonceux Parish Council have suffered some slippage problems.
8. The Parish Council has previously been informed by Wealden District Council that there would be no further development after the Village Hall. The Parish Council supports this statement. The provision of a Health Centre was considered essential for the community and the location was approved after the investigation of a large number of locations

proved unsuccessful. The approval of an innovative designer building was to provide the entrance to Herstmonceux.

9. Residents comments indicate that some residents are opposed to large sites. A resident commented that a previous application for a large site was approved. However, this application is for a different site and a different location.
10. The Chairman stated that the Parish Council is a statutory consultee in the planning process but the final decision on the application will be made in due course by Wealden District Council.

Following the discussion, the Council resolved to object to the application. All councillors were in favour, proposed by Councillor K. Game, seconded by Councillor S. Nash.

Application: WD/2015/0218/O - Councillor A. Ashley Declared an Interest as a friend of the applicant.

Location: Garage, Cowbeech Road, Cowbeech.

Description: Outline planning consent for change of use of site to residential.

Parish Council comments to Wealden District Council: The Council objects to this application:

- The existing site is connected to the adjacent business and the development of the existing Garage site for residential dwellings could impact on the remaining business.
- The Council notes that the applicant states that the business expects to remain in the area but there are no details of this proposal and so the Council is concerned about the loss of a business which employs a significant number of local people.
- Cowbeech is proposed as an area for consideration under the WDC a Conservation Area consultations.
- The site could be adapted for small start up business units and retain the business opportunities in Cowbeech.
- The only facility in Cowbeech is a local pub.

Application: WD/2015/0266/O Location: West Terrace, West End, Herstmonceux.

Description: Proposal for six new dwellings and access.

Parish Council comments to Wealden District Council:

**This application was registered incomplete by Wealden District Council and was not discussed.**

Application: WD/2015/0179/F

Location: Lower Chilsham Chilsham Lane, Herstmonceux.

Description: Proposed demolition of existing farm building and replacement with three bedroom dwelling.

Parish Council comments to Wealden District Council: The Council objects to this application:

- It is development in the countryside.
- The proposed development is in the AONB.
- The Parish Council considers that the existing building does not comply with the new rules for changing an agricultural building into a dwelling. There is no information about the Agricultural Holding number which indicates that it was registered as an Agricultural Holding.
- The Council does not consider that this small building can provide a dwelling of the same height, same footprint same height as required under the new guidance.

Application: WD/2015/0294/F

Location: 5 Blanshard Close, Herstmonceux.

Description: Single storey flat roof rear addition.

Parish Council comments to Wealden District Council: The Council supports this application which addresses the size complaints about the previous application.

Application: WD/2015/02663/LB

Location: Elmtree House, Gardner Street, Herstmonceux.

Description: Install secondary double glazing to the existing windows.

Parish Council comments to Wealden District Council: The Council supports the application which will be a benefit to the heat efficiency of this Listed Building property.

#### Correspondence

1. WDC - informing the Parish Council that application WD/2015/0266/O was registered incomplete by Wealden District Council and was not discussed.

2. Mr Cornwall - comments on his planning application WD/2015/0266/O. This correspondence will be put on the file until WDC inform the Parish Council that the application is complete. (See point 1 above)