



PLUMPTON PARISH COUNCIL

Planning Committee

Minutes of the Planning Committee held at Plumpton Sports Pavilion on 13th October 2021 at 19.00.

Present: Cllr N Beaumont – Chair (Cllr NB), Cllr Jim Brown (Cllr JB), Cllr P Burford (Cllr PB), Cllr A Gardiner (Cllr AG), Cllr R Jury (Cllr RJ), Cllr P Stevens (Cllr PS). District Cllr Rob Banks

Present on behalf of the developer (Millwood Designer Homes) : Peter Bland (PB) and Tim Daniels (TD).

Members of public: 9

Absent: 2

Signed *Anita Emery*

Anita Emery (Clerk to Plumpton Parish Council)

1. Apologies for absence
 - Cllr Nick Satchell and Cllr Niki Shefras tendered their apologies and reasons were accepted.
2. Declarations of pecuniary interest
 - None.
3. To discuss the following planning application;

LW21/0697 : Land adjacent to All Saints Church, Station Road, Plumpton E Sussex BN7 3DE

Erection of 20 new dwellings including 8 affordable house and flats with associated access and parking, including a new garage for the former Rectory

Introduction

Cllr NB opened the meeting by reminding those present that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the planning application submitted as LW21/0697. This was included in the Plumpton Parish Neighbourhood Plan (PPNP) that was supported by the significant majority of those who voted in the referendum and duly adopted by Lewes District Council (LDC). Discussion would be limited to the detail of this specific planning application, and there would no discussion on the Neighbourhood Plan itself.

Cllr NB invited the representative of the developer (Millwood) to introduce themselves.

Cllr NB then invited Cllr PS to introduce the result of the PPC review of the application relative to the PPNP.

Cllr PS stated that the application was broadly in line with the indicative plans proposed during the PPNP process, and noted positively that the scheme brought forward included more 'affordable' units than originally proposed (8 versus 6) which was welcomed though PPC would like to see the Diocese be even more focused on providing affordable units in its development.



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The development now had 3 5-bed properties which were not originally proposed, and ran contrary to the PPNP objective of favouring 'starter' properties. It was noted though that LDC had made it clear that the PPNP could not mandate this, and families with 3 or more children would require larger properties.

Landscaping was regarded as sensitive but would need further review by wildlife groups.

The main topics of discussion were summarized as:

- The proposed road access as it was not shared with the adjoining developing as preferred in the PPNP
- Sewage handling given the lack of trust in the Southern Water methodology for supporting the development
- Rainwater management and flooding
- Environmental concerns around the number of electric vehicle charging points and the use of fossil fuel heating systems

Review of application

With regard to the shared access point, TD stated that they had received an absolute refusal from Sigma (the developer of the adjacent site), and did not know if the underlying landowner would even support such a scheme and whether their contract with Sigma would allow it.

Cllr PS said that this did not accord with the informal discussions PPC had had with the developer and landowner, both of which supported the concept, and in fact Sigma had made provision in its design so the shared access was readily available. PPC suspected that a commercial issue was the reason for Sigmas 'refusal'.

Whilst PPC recognised that the proposed access scheme was safe and had the support of East Sussex Highways Authority it was nevertheless a significant issue for a number of reasons, including the loss of on-street parking in the immediate vicinity of the church and church hall, and the impact on the setting of the lych gate which was an important and much loved village asset that had recently been renovated.

Cllr PS noted that many of the landscaping proposals regarding this setting could be delivered even with a shared access, and this remained the preference of PPC.

PPC would broker a meeting between Sigma and Millwood to understand why Sigma had refused. District Councillor Rob Banks would be included in the invitees.

On the topic of sewage, TD made it clear that this was not an issue for Millwood as Southern Water had the statutory duty to provide infrastructure and had stated that sufficient capacity existed for this development.

Cllr PS acknowledged this but pointed out that the Southern Water methodology was based on capacity when the system was operating normally, but in reality there were frequent occasions when this not the case and the matter would not be taken lightly when residents were subject to foul flooding.



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PB clarified that the on site sewage holding facility served only 50% of the dwellings and was there as a function of the topology of the site as some units could not feed the main sewer by gravity alone. This tank did give the capability to regulate the discharge from the site.

PB queried whether the Sigma development had similar issues. Cllr PS pointed out that Sigma had appeared to recognize the deficiencies in the current system and were discharging downstream of the current pinch point.

Cllr PS re-stated that PPC accepts that it is a Southern Water responsibility but wanted Millwood to be aware and sensitive to the potential impact on villagers.

With regard to the environmental concerns, Cllr PS noted that LDC had adopted a resolution declaring a climate emergency, but this development appeared to meet only the minimum number of electric vehicle charging points, and PPC would prefer to see provision of one per parking space. PPC accepts it cannot mandate this, but would be raising the point in its response as a statutory consultee.

Similarly it seemed odd that the development would be served by fossil fuel heating in the form of LPG, when there were more environmentally sound solutions, especially air source heat pumps. This again would be raised in the PPC response to LDC.

PB responded that these required electricity and that may require services to be upgraded.

Cllr NB then invited questions from the members of public present.

Neighbours (both Station Road and Wells Close) to the site raised detailed concerns over the landscape buffering to existing properties, as this was not as evident as in the original indicative plans that had been the subject of much discussion in the making of the PPNP, and especially in relation to the fact that it appeared largely to be within the curtilage of the new units and therefore any planting and screen could not be guaranteed over time. The design also could be better in respect of existing landscape features.

TD stated that they would expect matters of landscaping to be a function of LDC applying conditions to the development of the site. Cllr PS requested that Millwood re-visit this area as they had submitted a detailed application and could include a landscaping plan.

It was then questioned as to whether the tree plan was indeed accurate. TD requested that any specific concerns regarding the tree plan were raised with Millwood so they could be addressed.

The use of LPG was questioned, and it was suggested that ground source heat pumps could be used. PB responded that ground source was not viable for a development of this size.

The issue of Plot 20 was raised, as this was originally indicated as being the new rectory. However it was now a bigger unit and closer to existing housing than in the indicative plans. TD responded that it was a matter for the Diocese to decide if it would be the new rectory, but the design and separation for existing houses would be reviewed as part of the overall landscape question.

Queries on the operation of the groundwater run off solution were raised given the propensity of the site to flood. PB noted that an extensive hydrology model had been developed and that the design met statutory requirements. Also, the development involved re-profiling the ground thus raising some of the site, and re-developing the current bottleneck in the existing waterways to better aid runoff. By design the



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drainage solution would offer an increase in the attenuation of run off compared to the current situation, but ultimately it was accepted that the solution required the Environment Agency to maintain waterways to the required standard for the design to work long term.

It was questioned how the site would be accessed during construction. TD responded that it was intended to use the proposed access point, but in view of earlier discussions this would be covered in a Construction Management Plan.

Working hours for the development were raised. TD stated that standard '5 and a half' day working would be the norm, again with any specific conditions being applied by LDC. Millwood is a member of the Considerate Builders Scheme which sets out 8am-6pm on weekdays, and 8am-1pm on Saturdays. Ultimate it was for LDC to enforce any breaches.

- It was unanimously agreed to support planning application LW/21/0697

Meeting Closed:

Dates of Next Meetings:

9th November 2021 – Parish Council Finance Committee meeting 19.00

9th November 2021 – Parish Council – 19.45

Anita Emery | Parish Clerk | 19/10/2021