

HARTING PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the **Planning Committee** held in
Harting Community Hall
at **6.30pm** on **Thursday 15 February 2024**.

Present: Mrs Bramley (Chair), Mrs Curran, Mrs Hewetson, Mrs Martin, Mr Miller, Mr Palmer and Mr Shaxson.

In attendance: Trish Walker, Parish Clerk.

94. Apologies for absence: Mr Bonner.

95. Declarations of Interest: Mr Shaxson declared a non-prejudicial public service interest as a member of the SDNPA's planning committee and, for this reason, confirmed he would not be voting on agenda item 6.1.

96. Members of the Public Present: 7.

97. Minutes of the meeting on 18 January 2024: the minutes were agreed and signed.

98. Matters of Urgent Public Importance: None.

99. Current Planning Applications:

99.1. SDNP/23/02243/FUL

Construction of one pair of two bedroom semi-detached and 3 No. three bedroom cottages and associated access, parking, cat-barn, gardens and landscaping.

Land East of South Bank Elsted Road South Harting West Sussex

The Chair introduced the application by giving some background to the site and the further amendments to the plans that had now been submitted.

Representations were made by members of the public, all in objection to the application. The issues raised were:

- Could the solar panels be placed on the roofs rather than in the gardens
 - Flooding and foul water – there have been known problems in the village for some years and this development will exacerbate the unresolved issues. The road adjacent to the site floods in heavy rainfall, as has been seen in recent weeks.
 - Concern about the creation and maintenance of the ponds.
 - Tandem parking – concerns about people reversing onto a busy road.
 - Parking – insufficient number and size of spaces. Tandem parking is not supported by the Local Plan and will mean residents have to reverse out on to a busy road.
- There is concern there will be an increase in on street parking

There were no representations made in support of the application.

The members considered the application, and the following comments were agreed:

The Council **OBJECTS** to the proposed development for the following reasons:

1. The proposed development does not “preserve and enhance the setting of South Harting Conservation Area” as required by the SDNPA Local Plan Policy Allocation SD87 and would have a significant impact on the street scape due to the following reasons:
 - a. Despite moving the proposed houses forward by about 2 metres towards the highway the ridgeline of the houses would still be at least 1.5m higher than those at Smithfield, on the other side of the Street. This is contrary to the pre-application advice given which states “buildings should be of a height that remain subservient to the surrounding dwellings, especially those on the other side of the road.” The impact is worsened by the design of the houses, which are deep from front to back. This means that the roof is commensurately wide and therefore high. Noting the importance put on appearance of the dwellings, the elevation drawings lack the necessary detail.
 - b. The houses would be set well above the height of the road, the finished ground floor levels being at least 1.5 metres above the adjacent highway.
 - c. The visual impact of the site not only from the west but also from the east would be considerable. Although the impact of views eastwards is mentioned in para 9.227 accompanying Policy SD87, the eastern impact should be closely considered as the proposed housing, opposite Smithfield, would create a ‘canyon’ effect on entrance to the village and conservation area. As a result of the amendment to the plans, the houses would now be only 15 metres apart.
 - d. The Council believe the cross-section plans in the application do not show the height differences accurately.
 - e. There is insufficient detail within the plans to indicate the visual appearance of the properties and how materials will be used and hence how these properties will link to the Conservation area. This is essential as para 9.226 of the Local Plan states that ‘as the site currently makes a positive contribution to the setting of the Conservation Area, the development must be designed to a high standard’.
2. The proposed site plan area is contrary to that published in the SDNPA Local Plan Policy SD87 for the following reasons:
 - a. The original plot allocated in the Local Plan Allocation Policy is measured as 0.1 hectares, however the plot in the revised application now measures at least 0.25 hectares, an increase of 150% on the original application. This is because the application is deeper than that allocated by the policy, being 35 metres deep at the eastern end instead of the 25 metres allocated and includes the area allocated for the attenuation and ecology ponds which were not included in the Local Plan Allocation.
 - b. The area included for the attenuation and ecology ponds was excluded from the SHLAA application as it was deemed to be of ‘medium/high sensitivity,

being classed as medieval fieldscape and associated with the adjacent watercourse'. The red line around the application site on the plans includes a large section of the highway.

- c. Plans attached to the Ecological Impact Assessment and Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment indicate that the red line round the proposed area for the attenuation ponds in the area of medium/high sensitivity is set back in the region of 50 metres from the road.
3. The proposed development does not appear to have taken sufficient “regard to localized areas of potential surface water flooding” as detailed in the SDNPA Local Plan Policy Allocation SD87. The Council has concerns that:
- a. The majority of surfaces on the plans are hard surfaces. Given the potential run off from the site the Council is not convinced the use of hard surfaces has been suitably minimized as detailed in policy SD87.
 - b. There are long-standing flooding problems that would have an unacceptable impact on this development and exacerbate an existing problem. Both as a result of gulleys not being maintained and roads swept, in wet periods large amounts of water – and debris – comes down the West Harting road west of the junction with the Rogate road by Pays Farm, down North Lane and collects in the lowest point on the Elsted road outside the proposed entrance to the parking area for the 3 houses. The gulleys by the application site habitually block, and the Council noted that in the entrance to the development is a channel drain to take water from the site. Water flooding on the road, which can be up to a foot deep, will enter this drain and will flow into, and overwhelm, the attenuation ponds. In any case channel drains are an inefficient and ineffective way to pick up surface flow as they are easily damaged and blocked.



Recent flooding alongside proposed site



Recent flooding outside Smithfield

Since the Council made its previous comments in June 2023 further flooding events have occurred with increasing frequency ([click here](#) to see a video taken from the Smithfield frontage, opposite the proposed site, on 4 January 2024,

showing flood water running towards the low point at the entrance to the proposed development). It appears that the effects of climate change are making the site increasingly less suitable for development than when it was first allocated in 2019.

4. The proposed development does not satisfy the requirement to “provide all necessary vehicular parking on-site to avoid additional on street parking in local roads” as detailed in para 1c of the SDNPA Local Plan Policy Allocation SD87 due to the following reasons:
 - a. The use of tandem parking in properties 1 and 2 is contrary to section 3.8 of the SDNPA ‘Guidance on Parking for Residential and Non- Residential Development Supplementary Planning Document’ which states that “Layouts should avoid the use of “tandem parking” in providing spaces at a development”. This is because experience has shown that it is an unsatisfactory and inefficient way to provide two parking spaces.
 - b. Tandem parking will result in vehicles reversing on to the Elsted road from two driveways. This is a busy road where visibility and traffic movements are already compromised by overflow on-street parking alongside Smithfield. This has been raised as a real and serious concern amongst local residents.
 - c. The pre-app advice suggests there is a need for 11-12 parking spaces to include visitor parking. In spite of the guidance and the specific SD87 policy requirements, the proposed development has only 11 spaces. Furthermore, the two properties using tandem parking can only be used by those properties, even if they have only one or no cars. The three spaces inside the cart barn have charging points, one for each of the allocated properties. The result is that it is only the four spaces outside the cart barn that could be used by any of the properties and/or visitors. The Council feels this is a grossly inadequate way to provide sufficient space for the residents and visitors thereby creating further on street parking and congestion, which would especially impact on large farm equipment which passes through the village on a very regular basis.
 - d. There is concern expressed by WSCC Highways that the size of parking spaces, and the limited space for movements in the area servicing the three 3-bed houses is contrary to parking guidance. The Council shares this concern.
5. The proposed development is contrary to the Local Plan Policy SD27 which states “Development proposals will be permitted for residential development that provides flexible and adaptable accommodation to meet the needs of people who are less mobile or have adult homecare requirements. Development proposals of 5 or more homes will be permitted where it is clearly demonstrated that evidence of local need for older people’s or specialist housing is reflected in the types of housing proposed”. The pre-application advice reinforces the need to comply with this requirement. The houses in the proposed application do not fulfil this requirement as the access points to two of the houses and all the garden areas have steps. The elevation plans for the

terrace of 3-bedroom properties do not show the ground area in front of the properties and how they will be accessed. It appears that, as there will still be a drop, there will be a need to have steps to access these houses.

6. The current sewage system in South Harting is already insufficient for the current number of houses. In 2022 untreated sewage was discharged into the River Rother for a total of 3154.83 hours. This is the highest level in the whole Southern Water area and is not acceptable. There is no guarantee that the work currently under way to expand the local sewage treatment works will alleviate this long-standing problem. The Council urges the planning authority to allow no further development until this work has been satisfactorily completed and the problem resolved.
7. The Council feels further information is required about the management of the attenuation and ecology ponds and the area they are shown to be in. There are various plans regarding the ponds but nowhere is there a clear and consistent plan of what is proposed or how the system will work. In particular there is no clear indication how the secondary pond will operate and overflow arrangements, and no detailed plans to show cross sections of the ponds that might assist with demonstrating their likely efficiency.
Management of the ponds would be required to be monitored and maintained in perpetuity. This area is already supporting wildlife and the hedgerow between the site and the stream is noted to be an area of high ecological importance, it is important this is not undermined. Concerns have been expressed in comments by Maral Miri, HCC Ecology Team, that the proposed planting would be swamped by the existing vegetation. Is there the requirement to provide a Habitats Regulation Assessment? This is especially important as para 2 of Policy SD87 indicates that the development must have an 'overall positive impact on the ability of the natural environment to contribute to the ecosystems services'.
8. The Council questions the Water Neutrality Statement especially in relation to the spreading of the impact across 11 other properties owned by the applicant. There is a need to understand how this can be monitored and assessed in agreeing to the application and in the long term to ensure compliance. The Council supports the 'proposed' rainwater harvesting but feels more information is required to support the Water Neutrality Statement.
9. There is concern locally that this section of land is the current access point for agricultural vehicles servicing the rest of the field. The proposed development would not allow access for agricultural vehicles and being displaced they would need to access the field via another entrance to the north of South Harting through Bohemia Hollow by travelling along North Lane. Access to it would require the transit of extremely narrow points where cars are habitually parked, and especially at harvest time could present a real inconvenience, if not danger, to all road users. This is in

conflict with policy SD27, para 2. The Council urges the planning officers to look at and investigate this impact closely.

10. Listening to the comments made by the members of public who attended the planning committee meeting, the committee noted that the site is allocated in the Local Plan Allocation Policy SD87 for 5-6 residential dwellings, subject to the policy criteria being satisfied. Such dwellings could be smaller, and noting the concerns raised about impact and cramming on the site, which is in any case larger than the allocation, it feels the proposed development is not suitable because its bulk and mass has a negative impact on the South Harting Conservation Area and street scene. Less obstructive dwellings could be more acceptable.
In December 2023 the Council prepared a Parish Priority Statement to feed into the SDNPA Local Plan Review. Over 150 residents responded to a questionnaire, and this highlighted the local desire for affordable, smaller homes and retirement apartments to enable the younger and more elderly generation to remain living in the community. It is suggested that a single modest block of small apartments could be a more suitable proposal for this site.
11. The Council urges the planning officers to ensure swift and other bird and bat boxes are included within the criteria, which would support the local initiative 'Operation Nest Box' by the Harting CAN group. The Council believes the development could be much more sustainable. In the light of rapidly developing climate change more measures could be incorporated to ensure this.
12. Finally, the Council understands there is a requirement for the pre-app documents to be included with the application documents. It should not be necessary to have to search for them, and further they should include all relevant paperwork in order that consultees can properly consider whether the applicant has addressed all issues arising.

99.2. SDNP/24/00219/CND

[Creation of rear vehicular access with access gates and car turntable to provide parking for 2 no. cars and erection of a detached outbuilding for use as home office/gym with various alterations including proposed new terrace, re-siting of oil tank and new brick paths \(Variation of condition 2 from planning permission SDNP/23/01403/HOUS - Replace Oil tank and boiler system with air source heat pumps\).](#)

The Cottage Elsted Road South Harting West Sussex GU31 5LD

No objection.

99.3. SDNP/24/00314/LIS

Repoint all elevations with flush pointing.

Kent House Kent House Lane East Harting West Sussex GU31 5LS

No objection

99.4. SDNP/24/00292/TPO

Reduce 1 no. lower lateral branch on east sector by up to 2m (back to upright growth point) and crown reduce by approx. 1m on 1 no. Oak tree (T1). Remove 1 no. central multi stemmed leader and crown reduce by up to 2.5m on 1 no. Lime tree (quoted as T3, TPO'd as T5). Crown reduce by up to 2.5m on 1 no. Lime tree (quoted as T4, TPO'd as T6). All 3 no. trees subject to HT/ 93/00571/TPO.

Sky Park House Durford Lane West Harting West Sussex GU31 5PF

No objection.

99.5. SDNP/24/00180/LIS

Replacement of rear and side windows with slim line double glazed windows.

Ffowlers Bucke The Street South Harting West Sussex GU31 5QB

The Council strongly supports this application in line with its commitment to the reduction in use of fossil fuels in the parish wherever possible and with reference to the use of double glazing detailed in SDNPA Design Guide, c13.3.9:

‘When dealing with listed buildings and some other important traditional buildings, it is likely that windows which are very faithful to traditional forms will be required unless the case can be made that well designed alternatives including the use of double or triple glazing, are appropriate and do not have an adverse impact on either the appearance or fabric of the building’.

100. To note any planning appeals: None.

101. To note any planning appeal decisions: None

102. Date of next meeting: To be confirmed.

The Chair closed the meeting at 7.20pm.