



WEST HOATHLY PARISH COUNCIL

representing Highbrook, Selsfield, Sharpthorne, Tyes Cross and West Hoathly

Document Reference 2407

Minutes of the Meeting of West Hoathly Parish Council held on Monday 25th March 2024 at 7:30pm in West Hoathly Village Hall

Members

Ken Allfree

Will Buckley

Martin Robinson (Vice
Chairman)

Bob Darvill*

Peter Browne*

Paul Brown

Claire Hilton*

Douglas Denham St Pinnock (Chairman)

Amy Marshall*

Manfred Lindfield

* denotes absence

Also present:

Leanne Andrews (clerk)

Anita Emery (RFO)

County Cllr Garry Wall

Cllr Lorraine Carvalho

326) To receive apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Claire Hilton, Cllr Amy Marshall, Cllr Bob Darvill and Cllr Peter Browne

327) To receive declarations of interest from Parish Councillors in respect of any matter on the agenda

There were none

328) To approve minutes of the Meeting of West Hoathly Parish Council held on 26th February 2024 (Document Reference 2404)

The minutes were approved as a true record and signed by the chairman

329) To receive the clerk's report

The clerk's report was received.

330) To receive Councillor reports

a) West Sussex County Councillor Report – Cllr Garry Wall

Cllr Garry Wall voiced his disappointment in the decision to grant permission to application DM/23/0827 West Hoathly Brickworks.

West Sussex County Council have appointed a new Chief Executive, Leigh Whitehouse. Leigh will be joining from Surrey County Council where he is currently the interim Chief Executive.

The County Council are investing more time on road issues, and work is being done to address the quality of repairs.

b) Mid Sussex District Councillor Report – Cllr Lorraine Carvalho

Cllr Lorraine Carvalho apologised for being unable to attend the District Planning Committee on the 21st March, she voiced her disappointment in the decision to grant permission to application DM/23/0827.

Cllr Carvalho attended a Housing Process training session and explained there is a desperate need for 1 bedroom accommodation.

As part of her work to support Veterans, Cllr Carvalho is working to find out what support is needed.

Mid Sussex District Councillor Report- Cllr Paul Brown

District Cllr. Report by Paul Brown to WHPC 25th March 2024

The agenda for the DPC on 21st March was published on 12th March and included DM/23/0827 with officer recommendation for approval. On 15th March I sent an email to all DPC Members requesting that they visit and examine offsite when they visit the site. This was accompanied with pictorial evidence of matters that had been ignored in the officer's report. I now understand that they did not look at the AONB and drainage off site.

Later on Friday 15th March Deputy Chief Executive emailed Cabinet members, Members of District Planning Committee and Members of Planning Committee. Subject: 'Just FYI Lewes in trouble. Chichester close as well' Attached to this email was an article referring to Dept for Levelling Up Housing and Communities citing Authorities at risk of special measures designation. Authorities cited as being at risk. s.62A T&C Planning Act 1990 allows applications for planning permission and reserved matters consent to be made directly to the Secretary of State where the Local Planning Authority for the area has been designated. MSDC have had no overturned major decisions so are in no danger of being designated.

Planning Officer's report gave "great weight" that the development will enhance the AONB. MSDC policy had changed from refusing the SHLAA applications to giving great weight to AONB enhancement citing English Landscape officer's response, prepared by a Planning & Design Advisor on behalf of High Weald AONB (now English Landscape) dated 26th October 2023. This does not even consider drainage policy. Referring to High Weald AONB Management Plan 2019-2024 Geology, landform, water systems and climate. Objective G1 'To restore the **natural** function of rivers, water courses and water bodies.', there is also no comment or advice forthcoming on the ancient Coombe Lane trackway (now within the SANG). See also HW AONB MP Routeways Objective R1 Maintain the historic pattern and features of routeways.

DRAINAGE design does not comply with LLFA policy and poses serious ongoing problems for Bluebell Railway due to flash flood pouring across the swales and exceeding the capacity of the pipe under the railway.

I suggest that this Council formally request MSDC planning officers to inform and consult WHPC on the application by a developer to discharge Condition 8 Construction and Environmental Management Plan.

I copied my verbal representation, as ward member, to the District Planning Cttee to all WHP Cllrs and clerk on Friday 22nd March

The next MSDC Council meeting is on Wednesday 27th March

Appendix

PEB_Rep_MSDC_DPCTteeD.docx – attached

331) Planning applications

a) To note decisions from the Local Authority

The following applications have been granted permission

DM/24/0296 - 7 Hamsey Road
DM/23/2491 - Duckyls Farm Centre
DM/23/3093 - 2 The Dunnings
DM/24/0199 - Vine Yard Cottage

b) To consider planning applications received from the Local Authority

DM/24/0358/0359 - Old Coombe House, Station Road, West Hoathly

Repair to cracked boundary wall. Take down damaged section of wall and pier and rebuild wall and pier with original bricks using lime mortar

Listed Building Consent

The Parish Council has **no objections**.

DM/24/0573 - The Cat Inn, North Lane, West Hoathly

Replace existing window with new to match existing. Replace existing timber store doors with timber doors and replace existing small roof portion over store doors with lead roof to match existing

The Parish Council has **no objections**.

332) To review the Financial Statements

a) To approve the **Parish Council** bank reconciliations against corresponding bank statements
b) To note the **Parish Council** combined bank rec and year to date accounts
The Parish Council Financial Statements were noted.

- c) To approve the **Trustees of West Hoathly Village Hall** bank reconciliations against corresponding bank statements
- d) To note the **Trustees of West Hoathly Village Hall** combined bank rec and year to date accounts

The Trustees of West Hoathly Village Hall Financial Statements were noted

333) To ratify and approve the payments for March 2024

a) To approve the **Parish Council** expenditure as itemised on the schedule
The payments of £4,800.64 for March were unanimously ratified and approved.

b) To approve the **Trustees of West Hoathly Village Hall** expenditure as itemised on the schedule

One additional payment was presented

1. £138.16

The payments of £414.16 for March were unanimously ratified and approved

334) To agree a deposit amount to Cambridge Building Society in order to keep WHPC's banking arrangements within FSCS limits

A recommendation from the RFO was circulated via email. The recommendation to transfer £72,900 into the Cambridge Building Society account was agreed.

335) To receive Committee Reports

a) To note Minutes of Meetings taken place

i) Asset & Highways 18th March 2024 (document reference 2406)

It was noted that the minutes have not yet been circulated, it was agreed to defer until the next meeting.

336) To receive reports from external meetings attended by councillors

- CAGNE Forum – 20th March (Cllr Martin Robinson) – minutes circulated via email
- MSDC Applauds event – 24th March (Cllr Martin Robinson and Cllr Douglas Denham St Pinnock) It was noted that both nominations won awards, Derek & Lindsay Shurvell won the Community for All award in recognition of their hard work running the Emmaus Youth Club. Helen Scholfield won the Highly Commended Lifetime Achievement Award in recognition of her service to the community as Parish Clerk & Governor at West Hoathly Primary School.
- Step by Step event- 23rd March (cllr Douglas Denham St Pinnock, Cllr Amy Marshall)

337) To receive correspondence

An item of correspondence from CAGNE was circulated via email.

An email from Hedgehogs R Us was shared with the Council. It was agreed to support their Highway Project initiative and purchase a box of 50 Hedgehog Highway surrounds. These will be gifted to West Hoathly Primary School to circulate.

338) To note items of interest or items for inclusion at next meeting of the Parish Council

The Chairman and all members expressed their disappointment in the decision to grant permission to the Brickworks Planning Application. It was noted that there had been an enormous effort all round and it was an extremely disappointing outcome.

It was agreed to set up a follow up meeting. Clerk, Cllr Douglas Denham St Pinnock, Cllr Paul Brown and Cllr Martin Robinson to attend.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 20:19

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Chairman-----

High Weald Joint Advisory Committee

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Hastings Road
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East Sussex TN5 7PR

Tel: 01424 723011
Email: info@highweald.org



www.highweald.org

Working together to care for one of England's finest landscapes

Mid-Sussex District Council
Emailed to Stuart.Malcolm@midsussex.gov.uk

26th October 2023

Dear Mr Malcolm,

DM/23/0827- West Hoathly Brickworks, Hamsey Road, Sharpthorne, East Grinstead: Full planning application for the demolition of existing structures and redevelopment of the Site to provide 108 residential dwellings (Class C3) and associated works, including the provision of an onsite SANG, access, landscaping, parking and associated works.

Thank you for consulting us on the above application.

In summary, the High Weald AONB Unit does not object to this proposal subject to the inclusion of suitable conditions to control details.

It is the responsibility of the Local Planning Authority to decide whether the application meets legislative and policy requirements in respect of AONBs. Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 requires local authorities to have regard to 'the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of AONBs' in making decisions that affect the designated area. A summary of the national planning policy for AONBs is appended to this letter.

Paragraph 176 of the NPPF requires that: "Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues."

The [High Weald AONB Management Plan](#) has been adopted by all the relevant local authorities with land in the AONB as their policy for the management of the area and for the carrying out of their functions in relation to it, and is a material consideration for planning applications.

Analysis of the Proposal Against the High Weald AONB Management Plan

The Management Plan Statement of Significance defines what makes the High Weald special and identifies the qualities that justify its designation as

Anglesey
Arnside and Silverdale
Blackdown Hills
Cannock Chase
Chichester Harbour
Chilterns
Clwydian Range
Cornwall
Cotswolds
Gower
Cranbourne Chase and Dee Valley
West Wiltshire Downs
Dedham Vale
Dorset
East Devon
Forest of Bowland
Howardian Hills
High Weald
Isle of Wight
Isles of Scilly
Kent Downs
Lincolnshire Wolds
Llyn
Malvern Hills
Mendip Hills
Nidderdale
Norfolk Coast
North Devon
North Pennines
North Wessex Downs
Northumberland Coast
Quantock Hills
Shropshire Hills
Solway Coast
South Devon
Suffolk Coast and Heaths
Surrey Hills
Tamar Valley
Wye Valley

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One of the
AONB Family

a nationally important landscape. The High Weald's natural beauty is described by five key components of character around which the Management Plan is structured, including objectives for each component.

Of particular relevance to this proposal are Management Plan Objectives:

- *S2: To protect the historic pattern and character of settlement,*
- *S3: To enhance the architectural quality of the High Weald and ensure development reflects the character of the High Weald in its scale, layout and design.*
- *W1: To maintain the existing extent of woodland and particularly ancient woodland.*
- *W2: To enhance the ecological quality and functioning of woodland at a landscape scale.*
- *OQ4: To protect and promote the perceptual qualities that people value.*

The High Weald AONB Housing Design Guide (2019) seeks to support the High Weald AONB Management Plan, and particularly objectives S2 and S3 of the Settlement Character Component of the Management Plan. The Guide aims to give succinct, practical and consistent advice to set clear design expectations for new housing development within the High Weald AONB, to help to ensure higher quality and landscape-led design that reflects intrinsic High Weald character, and is embedded with a true sense of place, without stifling innovation and creativity.

The proposal relates to a former brickworks site, and comprises the construction of 108 dwellings and associated public realm and green space on the previously developed part of the site, along with a SANG to be located on the eastern and southern part of the site which was previously used for mineral extraction, and which contains an area of ancient woodland. The quantum of existing industrial buildings on the previously developed part of the site, their scale, footprint and poor quality visual appearance, the extent of existing hardstanding on the site, along with the impacts on the perceptual qualities of the AONB of the previous use in terms of noise and activity, could cumulatively be considered to have a negative impact on the landscape and scenic beauty of the High Weald AONB.

The layout and design of the proposed development has progressed through a series of amendments, and is now considered to be an acceptable response to the High Weald Housing Design Guide. While the proposed development grain, streetscene rhythm and architecture is somewhat more formal in character than would usually be appropriate in housing developments in and around villages in the High Weald AONB, it is noted that the settlement of Sharpthorne is atypical of settlements in the High Weald, being almost entirely twentieth century in origin.

The proposed layout and design follows the design themes of the HW Housing Design Guide; the street layout and disposition of buildings within the site successfully creates a positive place and street character, with buildings positioned so as to define the street in a strong and successful manner. Public and private realm is well-defined; private curtilages are clearly defined and enclosed with front plot boundary treatments - a key feature of High Weald streetscenes as set out in the Guidance – described in submitted Boundary Treatment Plan 3141-C-1014-PL-B – however, that drawing appears to omit front boundary treatments to plots 47-51; this should be addressed in an amended boundary treatment plan. Meanwhile the green space public realm within the site is successfully lined with buildings and addressed with building fronts, as per the Guidance.

It is understood that soft landscaping details, though included in the submission, would be the subject of a planning condition, therefore we request to be consulted on the proposed planting

details at that time. As a general principle, soft landscaping both within the residential development and the SANG should comprise native, locally sourced plants and seeds, to support local wildlife and avoid contamination by invasive non-native species or plant diseases in the High Weald, and to ensure appropriate habitat is created adjacent to the Ancient Woodland in the SANG.

In the event that the Local Planning Authority considers that the development is acceptable in principle, it is recommended that the following detailed requirements are met by the imposition of planning conditions (in addition to conditions regarding planting specifications for soft landscaping described above):

- External materials of structures and hard surfacing should reflect those used in the local area to support local distinctiveness; (Management Plan objective S3);
- Details of front/side plot boundary treatments (with reference to comments made above) (Management Plan objective S3);
- Controls over lighting should be imposed to ensure that any external lighting (including any street lighting and amenity lighting) is designed to Institute of Lighting Professionals light control zone E1 standards (with regard to skyglow/ULR, light temperature, and heights/design of light fixtures) to protect the intrinsically dark night skies of the High Weald AONB (Management Plan objective OQ4);
- Local habitats and species should be protected and enhanced as appropriate and conditions applied to prevent loss of existing habitats including hedgerows (Management Plan objectives G3, R2, W1, W2, FH2, and FH3);
- Within the proposed SANG, conditions should be applied to control the movement of soil and its treatment to ensure that soil disturbance and changes to landform are minimised; (Management Plan objective G2)

The above comments are advisory and are the professional views of the AONB Planning & Design Advisor on the potential impacts on the High Weald landscape. They are not necessarily the views of the High Weald AONB Joint Advisory Committee.

Yours sincerely,

Diane Russell BSc Hons Dip Arch PgDip Arch Cons

Planning & Design Advisor, High Weald AONB Unit

Advising on an outstanding medieval landscape; connecting people, protecting beauty, restoring soils and nature.

Appendix 1: National Planning Policy for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021 paragraph 176 requires **great weight** to be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage are important considerations in all these areas. **The scale and extent of development within these designated areas should be limited**, while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas.

Paragraph 177 says “When considering applications for development within National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, permission should be refused for major development⁶⁰ other than in exceptional circumstances, and where it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest. Consideration of such applications should include an assessment of:

- a) the need for the development, including in terms of any national considerations, and the impact of permitting it, or refusing it, upon the local economy;
- b) the cost of, and scope for, developing outside the designated area, or meeting the need for it in some other way; and
- c) any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated”.

Footnote 60 says: “whether a proposal is ‘major development’ is a matter for the decision maker, taking into account its nature, scale and setting, and whether it could have a significant adverse impact on the purposes for which the area has been designated or defined”. **It is recommended that the case officer undertakes a clear and transparent assessment of whether the proposal is major development, using the key characteristics and landscape components of the AONB as set out in the Management Plan.**

NPPF paragraph 11 explains the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Part d says that where there are no relevant development plan policies or the relevant ones are out of date (for instance in applications involving new housing where there are housing supply or delivery deficits) then permission should be granted unless:

- i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed⁷; or
- ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole”.

Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty are listed in footnote 7 and the most relevant policies in the Framework are paragraphs 176 and 177. A recent court of appeal case¹ confirms that, if a proposal’s impact on an AONB is sufficient to provide a clear reason for refusal under NPPF 176 or 177, then the presumption in favour (or ‘tilted balance’ expressed in ii) above) should be disengaged. The decision-maker should therefore conduct a normal planning balancing exercise, applying appropriate weight to each consideration, to come to a decision. This will of course include giving great weight to the AONB as required by NPPF 176.

¹ Monkhill Limited vs Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government and Waverley Borough Council Case No: C1/2019/1955/QBACF

Background Information about the High Weald AONB



The High Weald was designated in 1983 as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It is an exceptionally beautiful medieval landscape covering 564 square miles across the counties of East and West Sussex, Kent and Surrey.

The High Weald AONB Joint Advisory Committee is a partnership established in 1989 of 15 local authorities, Defra, Natural England and organisations representing farming, woodland, access and community interests. The JAC is responsible for publishing and monitoring the statutory AONB Management Plan. The JAC is supported by a small, dedicated staff team, the High Weald AONB Unit, which provides advice on how to conserve and enhance the AONB. The advice provided by the AONB Unit assists public bodies and statutory undertakers to meet their duty as set out in Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 to have regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of AONBs in making decisions that affect it.

Unlike National Park authorities, the High Weald AONB Unit is not a statutory body but an advisory one. It is not a local planning authority and the responsibility for determining planning applications remains with the 15 local authorities. The AONB Unit is not a statutory consultee on planning matters and it remains each local planning authority's decision whether or not they seek its advice on a particular planning application.

The scope of the advice in this letter is set by the statutory High Weald [AONB Management Plan](#), which has been adopted by all partner authorities, as 'their policy for the management of the area and for the carrying out of their functions in relation to it'.