

Minutes of the Full Council Meeting of Hartley Wintney Parish Council held at 7.30pm on Thursday 18th June 2020 to which Councillors are summoned to attend by video conferencing via Microsoft Teams.

Present: Cllr Chris Farrance (Chair), Cllr Fiona Sutton, Cllr Diana Harvey, Cllr Steve Airton, Cllr Ian Wilson, Cllr Sarah Craig, Cllr Stuart Elborn, Cllr Dorothy Harvey and Cllr Roger Robertson.

In attendance: Karyn Reid (Executive Clerk) and Sarah Daly (Deputy Clerk), plus 12 members of the public

Public Speakers: Rob Aiers, Chris Brown, David Turver and Andrew O'Kelly.

19/20PC 196. OPEN FORUM

The meeting started at 7.30pm. Cllr Farrance proposed that item 19/20PC 196 be discussed after item 19/20PC 199.

Rob Aiers thanked Councillors for their decision and felt that the views of those immediately affected by the development had been considered.

Chris Brown felt the draft report was very thorough and thanked HWPC for this. Comments on traffic impact were noted. Chris Brown offered help if needed and was happy to be approached outside of the meeting. In the draft report, the planning advice regarding Conservation Area management proposals and the National Planning Policy Framework, reads that the building should be treated as listed and demolition should only be possible if there is no viable alternative and if the site prevented any further development from keeping the building.

David Turver thanked HWPC for making a good decision and hoped that residents and HWPC will work with the developer going forward. The reference to generous parking in the draft report was challenged. David Turver also felt that provision should be made for emergency vehicles.

Andrew O'Kelly thanked HWPC for the attention to care and detail that had gone into the report. He felt that HWPC had carefully considered the points raised. The proximity of a potential care home to neighbouring properties was still of concern. An increase in recommendation to state that walls should be 15-20 metres away from any existing properties would be better. Andrew O'Kelly queried whether Hartley Wintney needed to provide 85% of the proposed housing requirement for Surrey Heath, Rushmoor and Hart between 2014 and 2032 as the area has a smaller population than the others. If the existing Grey House building can be repurposed then it should be done. Support was given to redevelopment of the site but in a more modest and sympathetic scale.

A written statement from Phil Turner was circulated prior to the meeting. The comments were noted.

Item 19/20PC 200 was discussed next.

19/20PC 197. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from District Councillors Anne Crampton, Tim Southern and Spencer Farmer.

19/20PC 198. DISPENSATIONS UNDER S33 OF THE LOCALISM ACT (2011)

To consider the granting of a dispensation to enable members to participate in and vote on an item of business on the agenda where they would otherwise have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest and to confirm how long this dispensation may have effect.

No dispensations were made.

19/20PC 199. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Declarations made by members of any personal, prejudicial or non-prejudicial interests of any agenda item. Members with a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, unless a dispensation has been granted, will be required to withdraw when Council discusses & votes on the matter.

No interests were declared.

Item 19/20PC 196 was discussed next.

19/20PC 200. PLANNING APPLICATION

20/00330/FUL - Demolition of the existing Grey House School and ancillary buildings and erection of 22 new extra care apartments and a 25 bed care home with associated landscaping and parking

Grey House, Mount Pleasant, Hartley Wintney, Hook, RG27 8PW

This was discussed after item 19/20PC 196.

i) To review and discuss the Planning Committee's recommended response to the above application, to be tabled at the meeting

There was a unanimous recommendation circulate prior to the meeting by the Planning Committee. Cllr Diana Harvey explained that Planning Committee is usually the delegated authority to make decisions on planning applications and submit them to HDC. However, the Grey House application is a very significant development, hence it was decided that the submitted response should be approved by the Full Council. Three online meetings have been held to discuss the principle of development (cross referencing the Local Plan and the HW Neighbourhood Plan) and the detail of the application.

Cllr Diana Harvey explained that a late amendment had been made to the draft recommendation after the meeting documents had been circulated and this had also been submitted onto the HWPC website. The Council had received many comments from the community and they had all been considered very carefully by the Planning Committee. Cllr Diana Harvey read out the final statement in the recommendation;

Case: 20/00330/FUL

Proposal: Demolition of the existing Grey House School and ancillary buildings and erection of 22 new extra care apartments and a 25 bed care home with associated landscaping and parking

Location: Grey House, Mount Pleasant, Hartley Wintney, Hook, RG27 8PW

As a statutory consultee, when examining any planning application, the Parish Council's remit is to

a) support current planning legislation and local government plans, and

b) to reflect the opinions of the community,

and thus to find a balance between the two on which to base our opinion.

The documents examined included the Hart District Council Local Plan, the Hartley Wintney Neighbourhood Plan and its associated Design Guide, the Conservation Area Appraisal and evidenced associated local needs, at the same time ensuring that material planning concerns of the community were also addressed.

To this latter end we facilitated a public meeting for the developer and subsequently held our own well-attended public meeting online to provide a clear hearing for members of the public and we now feel informed and able to speak on behalf of the community.

Our first consideration must be to support the Hart District Council Local Plan. In the detail of Policy H4 – Specialist and Supported Accommodation, para.151 states that:

'The 2016 SHMA estimates potential requirements for sheltered, extra care and residential care housing for the period 2014-2035. Most of the requirement is for sheltered (52 units per

annum), enhanced sheltered (14 units per annum) and extra care housing (8 units per annum). This provision can be considered to be part of the mainstream requirement for housing. The need for residential care (33 units per annum) and nursing care (22 units per annum) is additional to the housing requirement set out in Policy SS1 and is typically Use Class C2 (Residential Institutional Uses) in planning terms.'

This clearly indicates a need for around 55 residential/nursing care accommodation units per annum during the term of the Plan. Sites with the necessary suitability are rare and therefore should be studied carefully if a proposal such as this one presents itself. The advantages of such a development are clear. It will assist Hart in achieving its target number of care units in the period of the Local Plan and in addition, at a local level, it will present residents from HW with the possibility of remaining in their own area with the benefit of friends and family close by.

Our next point of reference comes from the **Hartley Wintney Neighbourhood Plan** which was adopted in October 2019.

Section 5, Policy 5.1 Hartley Wintney Housing Needs, Context and Evidence states that:

'5.1.13 There are very limited places in the community for older residents to live locally and independently in smaller, adapted and easier to maintain homes. These factors create "stickiness" in the local housing market as residents tend not to want to move away as their families leave home.

5.1.14 In addition, with the older population increasing and with the expressed wishes during the engagement process of this group of residents to remain within their own community, there is also a recognised need to provide extra care housing as well as life time homes.'

Section 14 of the **HDC SHMA** states that;

'the tenure profile of older households shows a high level of owner-occupation, 86%.'

'In total 62% of older person households have an occupancy rating of +2 or more (meaning there are at least two more bedrooms than are technically required by the household).

There is the potential opportunity therefore to reduce under-occupation and free up family sized dwellings for overcrowded households; although to achieve this it would be necessary to provide attractive options in areas where households currently live and where they have social and community ties.'

These references indicate a clear mandate from the community that this type of development is supported.

To reinforce this mandate, figures from the Office for National Statistics indicate that the number of over 85s is set to increase nationally to just under 3m, or 4.46% of the population by the year 2035.

HWPC therefore supports the principle of a C2 later life accommodation facility on the site currently known as The Grey House. There is an evidenced need in the Hart housing area and a community aspiration in Hartley Wintney in particular.

We next looked at the detail of this particular application. The site lies within the settlement boundary of Hartley Wintney, is within the HW Conservation Area and is a brownfield site which supports the Neighbourhood Plan (Section 5.1.18) The principle building on the site is identified as a 'positive' building in the Conservation Area Appraisal and the first proposal of the planning application is the demolition of this building. To demolish such a building it is necessary to demonstrate that the positive effect on the community from its future use would outweigh the negative impact of losing this particular heritage asset.

A report from Heritage England describes the building as having little architectural or historical significance and Wessex Archaeology describes its loss as equating to less than substantial harm. The building does not represent a prominent feature within the conservation area and the harm would be highly localised. This should be balanced against the evidenced need and benefit to the community, the suitability of the site and the use of brownfield land, and the advantage that new employment would bring to the area (Neighbourhood Plan – Economy point 17).

Councillors believe that, based on evidence cited above, the benefit to the community and the need for a later life facility to support the local ageing population outweighs the negative impact caused through the loss of a building that has been described as unremarkable in the

true sense of the word, and it is difficult to make a case for its preservation. This is a decision that Hart District Council will have to make.

Turning to the technical detail of the proposal. HDC Local Plan saved policy GEN1 states that proposals will be permitted where they

- (i) 'Are in keeping with the local character by virtue of their scale, design, massing, height, prominence, materials, layout, landscaping, siting and density;
- (ii) Avoid any material loss of amenity to existing and adjoining residential, commercial, recreational, agricultural or forestry uses, by virtue of noise, disturbance, noxious fumes, dust, pollution or traffic generation.'

The proposed apartment block fails to satisfy this policy. It is excessive in massing, height, prominence, siting and density. It detracts from the character of the area by the use of inappropriate materials (eg the balconies and rendering). Scant consideration has been shown regarding the impact on adjacent properties in terms of proximity, amenity and screening and there is no detail of how the pollution in terms of 24 hour lighting, smells and noise, is to be mitigated. This constitutes an over-development of the site and has a negative impact on the street scene and character of the area as described in the Conservation Area Appraisal.

The size of the building is out of proportion to the neighbourhood; it is longer, higher and overwhelms the street scene. There is considerable, and justified, concern about the height, having as it does a third floor. None of the other houses in Mount Pleasant have a full third storey, nor did The Grey House itself. The siting has been brought in line with the street scene at the expense of the surrounding neighbours at both the side and the back suggesting that the scale of this building is not commensurate with the site.

In a road of large detached houses, there has been no attempt to create anything other than a block of apartments which is unsympathetic to the surrounding buildings. The Hartley Wintney Conservation Area Appraisal describes this area as 'peaceful and very rural' and recommends that 'the present harmonious relationship of buildings and setting should be protected.' We would also refer planners to page 24 of the HWNP Design Guide where many considerations are outlined such as appropriateness, materials, design, style and character, none of which are to be found in the current proposal.

The technical documents accompanying this proposal are woefully inadequate. Plans and visual images have the appearance of a formulaic representation with very little detail in terms of scale and measurement. There is no water treatment management scheme either for surface water or for waste water infrastructure requirements. There has been no noise impact assessment and no scheme has been forthcoming for the extraction of fumes and odours.

HW Neighbourhood Plan Policy 6 – Control of Artificial Light. Paragraph 125 of National Planning Policy Framework 2019, seeks to limit light pollution in "intrinsically dark" landscapes. HW's rural location means that the area benefits from such "dark skies" i.e. "Skies that allow, on clear nights, good views of the stars". Mount Pleasant is an unlit road and the proposed building will be lit 24/7 both externally and internally. We would wish to know what form the lighting will take and what mitigation will be in place to minimise the light pollution in this otherwise unlit environment.

There is no information as to the level of care to be offered in this development. Is this to be independent living, assisted living, dementia care, all of which will have their own specific impact on the surroundings? No clear indication is given as to whether the accommodation will be classed as C2 or C3 or a split between the two. C3 is subject to financial obligations and affordable housing commitments. More information on this topic is requested. Further Consultees including the Environmental Health Officer, the Tree Protection Officer, and the Waste Management Team have expressed misgivings and it would seem that there is a way to go before a satisfactory full planning application can come forward for approval.

On a general note, Councillors were disappointed that scant attention was paid to the advice given by HDC in its PreApp report to the developers.

In conclusion Councillors have examined this application in detail and listened to the concerns of the residents both neighbours and the wider Hartley Wintney community. Our submission to Hart District Council is that Hartley Wintney Parish Council supports the principle of suitable redevelopment of the site and the construction of later life apartments and a care home. However Councillors robustly and unanimously object to the application in its detail and lack thereof and we ask that the developer is requested to submit a more appropriate design in terms of size, height and density, having no third floor and complementing the character of the area.

Addendum:

While not specifically material planning considerations HWPC feels that the following points should be included in this submission.

Healthcare Provision - It is relevant to include at this point that Hartley Wintney Parish Council recently met with Dr Tim Cooper, Clinical Director, Whitewater Loddon PCN. He was asked specifically whether a care facility at The Grey House would challenge the provision of healthcare in Hartley Wintney. His reply was interesting. There is now a strategic and funded, overall plan for care homes in the area and the possibility of The Grey House is already factored in. New funding is available for this and is available proactively rather than reactively. He pointed out also that any newcomers to the area would bring their own funding from their previous healthcare provider just as any leaving the area take theirs with them. Therefore he was unequivocal that he foresaw no problems.

Flooding – Based on local knowledge and experience, we know that the water table in the area of the site is high and while not actually in a flood zone, nevertheless is subject to localised flooding. There is concern that excavating for the underground car park will seriously alter the underground aqua routes which enable the water to drain away.

Pavements – In order to safeguard pedestrians, Councillors would draw attention to the condition of the pavements in Mount Pleasant. Accepting that the pavements will be used by both elderly pedestrians and users of mobility scooters, they are neither wide enough due to mature trees, nor level enough and as Mount Pleasant exits onto the area of the greens, non-existent. In the past at various development sites, such considerations have been disregarded at the planning stage and HWPC is left to 'pick up the pieces' as the problem subsequently becomes an issue. We ask that this problem is dealt with before it is a serious problem putting the public in danger. A potential solution would be an alternative exit from the site onto the Fleet Road where the pavements have recently been modified to account for wheelchairs, pushchairs and mobility scooters. HWPC requests that this is investigated.

Traffic – Hampshire Highways have confirmed, using the TRICS database, that there would be no serious impact on the operation of the highways network. HWPC would question whether the figures reflect the societal shift in the use of home deliveries. However Councillors are pleased to see the developers' intention to make the exit from the site a Right Turn Only by the use of Rad ii high kerbs and signage. This will be of benefit to the traffic flow down Mount Pleasant towards the greens which has to pass through a single width section of road with no pavements. We would ask that this intention is conditioned, should planning permission be granted.

Parking – The allocation of parking spaces is generous if based on the HDC Parking Provision Guidance 2008 - Older Person's Accommodation. However, Councillors would draw attention to a number of issues. Such accommodation focuses on the over 55s/65s (unspecified) cohort. In 2020 the majority of this age group in all likelihood are still working, driving, and are probably a 'more than one car' household. Given the nature of the current application the allocation of disabled parking spaces should be more than four. Going forward and reflecting Hart's own policy of greener living there should be required electric charging points for both cars and mobility scooters. On the current plans none are indicated.

The Period of Construction – Mount Pleasant is a quiet, residential road. Residents at other construction sites in Hartley Wintney have recently contacted HW Parish Council to say that the working hours 'suggestion' included when planning permission is granted was not being adhered to. In a close residential area such as Mount Pleasant we would therefore ask that officers make this a condition rather than a suggestion.

Cllr Farrance thanked Planning Committee and the Executive Clerk for all their work on this.

ii) To approve and ratify the final response by way of vote

Parish Councillors were asked individually if they supported the recommendation and **ALL MEMBERS AGREED**. The following concerns were noted:

- Apartments will go on the open market and there is no preference for HW residents despite there being a clear desire to stay in the village
- A potential asset to the village could be lost if the developer walks away

No measures can be put in place to prioritise residents. Cllr Farrance added that the HW Neighbourhood Plan 2032 states that only a care home will be permitted on the site.

County Cllr Simpson supported the view of HWPC and offered to write separately if needed. District Cllr Farmer and Crampton support the objection. Cllr Farrance read out a statement from District Cllr Southern;

Cllr Southern is pleased that the Parish Council recognises that this type of facility is very much needed in the village but comments that the care facility is quite small and will only be viable from a financial point of view if the residential old people's apartments are there too. He is not particularly concerned about the size of the building as he believes it will fit in with the buildings in Mount Pleasant when it is built and thinks it is quite an attractive building. He is concerned about the matter of surface drainage and lighting and before any permission is given would want much further detail about these two matters.'

Cllr Diana Harvey confirmed that Parish Councillors were happy with the late amendment which was added after Planning Committee had agreed the wording. A vote was taken on the recommended objection to the planning application and all **AGREED**.

It was confirmed that the tabled objection was formally accepted and this would be submitted to HDC from HWPC as a statutory consultee. The next step is to clarify the planning approval process.

19/20PC 201. PARISH COUNCIL FINANCE – review & approval of following:

i) Payments listings

An interim payment for volunteer expenses for the card reader will be issued to Mat Ray. He will continue providing the service until lockdown ends. Cllr Dorothy Harvey has written to all volunteers, including Mat, to thank them for their support of the Covid Initiative.

Cllr Diana Harvey proposed approval of the payments listing; seconded by Cllr Dorothy Harvey and **AGREED** by all.

19/20PC 202. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS & PARISH COUNCILLOR MATTERS & TRAINING FEEDBACK

To receive update on any reports made to Executive Clerk by Parish Councillors since last meetings and an opportunity to briefly bring matters to the attention of the meeting but upon which no substantive decision may be made

County Cllr Simpson reported on the following issues:

Hartley Wintney Tip

There have been lots of problems and queries regarding the online booking system. A traffic light system will be implemented to show whether there is a space (green), a space will become available (amber) or the slots are fully booked (red).

Motorbikes

These have been reported as scrambling from the opposite side of Star Hill (where the transportation belt goes over the A30) up to Blackbushe. HCC are working with HDC Enforcement to see if any action can be taken.

Fire Service

Wifi has been installed in all fire stations so on call fire fighters can now work from the premises.

Grass verges

Only sight lines will be cut on grass verges to allow flower species to thrive.

Cllr Diana Harvey – the hedge needs cutting back in the car park where people exit onto the A30. Visibility is poor, particularly when there is a Tesco delivery.

ACTION: Executive Clerk to report overgrown hedges in the car park.

Groups of children have been gathering on the heath lighting fires, drinking and having picnics. Social distancing measures are also not being followed. A resident has reported the issues to 101 and has been advised to keep a diary.

ACTION: Executive Clerk to contact the local PCSO.

19/20PC 203. CORRESPONDENCE

None.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.13pm

.....Chairman

.....Date

Appendices

- Payments Listing

*Abbreviations used in these minutes: Cllr ~ Councillor HCC ~Hampshire County Council
HDC ~ Hart District Council HWPC ~ Hartley Wintney Parish Council NHP ~ Neighbourhood
Plan HAO ~ Horticulture and Amenities Officer*