



Sevenoaks
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Despatched: 26.06.12

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE

04 July 2012 at 7.00 pm

Council Chamber, Argyle Road, Sevenoaks

AGENDA

Membership:

Chairman: Cllr. Mrs. Dawson

Vice-Chairman

Cllr. Williamson

Cllrs. Mrs. Ayres, Brookbank, Brown, Clark, Cooke, Davison, Dickins, Gaywood, Ms. Lowe, McGarvey, Orridge, Mrs. Parkin, Piper, Scholey, Miss. Thornton, Underwood and Walshe

4. Planning Applications - Group Manager - Planning's Report

(Pages 1 - 6)

To assist in the speedy and efficient despatch of business, Members wishing to obtain factual information on items included on the Agenda are asked to enquire of the appropriate Director or Contact Officer named on a report prior to the day of the meeting.

Should you require a copy of this agenda or any of the reports listed on it in another format please do not hesitate to contact the Democratic Services Team as set out below.

If you wish to speak in support or against a planning application on this agenda, please call the Council's Contact Centre on 01732 227000

For any other queries concerning this agenda or the meeting please contact:
The Democratic Services Team (01732 227241)

Any Member who wishes to request the Chairman to agree a pre-meeting site inspection is asked to email democratic.services@sevenoaks.gov.uk or speak to a member of the Democratic Services Team on 01732 227350 by 5pm on Monday, **X XXX 20XX**.

The Council's Constitution provides that a site inspection may be determined to be necessary if:

- i. Particular site factors are significant in terms of weight attached to them relative to other factors and it would be difficult to assess those factors without a Site Inspection.

- ii. The characteristics of the site need to be viewed on the ground in order to assess the broader impact of the proposal.
- iii. Objectors to and/or supporters of a proposal raise matters in respect of site characteristics, the importance of which can only reasonably be established by means of a Site Inspection.
- iv. The scale of the proposal is such that a Site Inspection is essential to enable Members to be fully familiar with all site-related matters of fact.
- v. There are very significant policy or precedent issues and where site-specific factors need to be carefully assessed.

When requesting a site inspection, the person making such a request must state under which of the above five criteria the inspection is requested and must also provide supporting justification.

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LATE OBSERVATION SHEET

Item 4.01 SE/11/02258/FUL Land SW of Forge Garage, High Street, Penshurst TN11 8BU

Further comments

The High Weald AONB Unit

The comments re the roof lines relate to the elevations showing the steep pitch of the roofs and overall impression that the roofs are larger than normally found. I recognise that this is part of the design repeating the local estate style and is in keeping. Taking your measurements, then the mass may be moderated by the siting, but this is difficult for me to assess from the drawings etc available online and as printed out at small scale.

In essence, rather than change my comments I am happy for you to take these as observations that the scale may be an issue, and may affect the visual impacts of the development on local views, and that this needs to be considered

In terms of the physical design, these comments do relate, as you say to the appearance, finish and overall style and general quality of the design. I was seeking to recognise the additional effort made in this respect notwithstanding the potential impact of the overall form of the development on the wider area.

Officer note – my comments in the main report relating to the AONB remain unchanged.

Kent Highways

Kent Highways have submitted the following revised comments on the scheme

I have no objection to the application on highway grounds, provided that:

1. The permission, if granted, is subject to a condition that at the exit from the development, 2.4 x 50 metre visibility splays are to be provided and maintained at all times; i.e. a driver waiting to enter the High Street and 2.4 metres from the stop line, should be able to see vehicles approaching at 50 metres distance to left and right, and no obstruction higher than one metre to be permitted on the highway verge within the splays. The visibility splay to the right is to be measured to the nearside kerb of the High Street, the visibility splay to the left is to be measured to the centre-line of the High Street. (Note that the one metre height is to be measured relative to a point on the centre line of the new access road and 2.4 metres from the stop line mentioned above; this point may be lower than the verge.) Reason: highway safety.
2. The permission, if granted, is subject to a condition or agreement under which the Applicant will move the telephone box in accordance with details to be agreed with the Highway Authority, unless subsequently agreed with the Highway Authority that technical difficulty or other issue raised by the owner of the phone box or other utility company makes this impractical. Reason: to improve inter-visibility between drivers of vehicles about to enter the High Street from the new development and from Forge Garage (i.e. highway safety) ;
3. The permission, if granted is subject to a condition that the pedestrian and vehicular access routes into the development are built according to details to be agreed with the Highway Authority. Reason: to ensure acceptable connections with the High Street, to agree gradients, road markings etc, and in the interests of highway safety.
4. The applicant pays a contribution of £3500 to the Highway Authority by a section 106 agreement for the provision of yellow line waiting restrictions in the vicinity of the exit of the proposed

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development. The waiting restrictions would be subject to a Traffic Regulation Order and public consultation. Reason: highway safety.

5. Standard condition to prevent mud, grit, dust etc being brought onto the highway by vehicles leaving the site during construction. Reason: highway safety.

When assessing the highway impact of non-minor planning applications we check the three-year crash record of the roads in the vicinity of the site in question. Our database shows there have been no personal-injury crashes in Penshurst High Street in the vicinity of Forge Garage / the primary school in the three years to February 2012. (Statistics for more recent months not yet received).

Informative:

Due to the proposed steep gradient, it is unlikely that the access road into the proposed development would be adopted by the Highway Authority, with the possible exception of the entrance onto the High Street;

Officer comment – these are very similar comments to those expressed originally by Kent Highways and do not alter the highways considerations set out in the main report.

Representations

The Council has received further representations stating that the two applications at Forge Field and Becketts Field should be considered together. In addition, that the parish council vote to support the application does not reflect local opinion.

Officer comment – The Becketts Field application has very recently been substantially amended and is still under consideration (see section below for further details). The materiality of an “alternative site” in the consideration of Forge Field is set out in the main report. The comments by the Parish Council and local objections/ representations are set out in the main report.

Further Officer Comments

The Housing Needs Survey

The Housing Needs Survey for the Parish of Penshurst was undertaken by the charity “Action with Communities in Rural Kent” and the survey identified a maximum of 11 households requiring affordable local needs housing. In order to forecast the number of affordable homes required to meet local need in perpetuity, the Housing Needs Survey states that some local authorities use a calculation that the level of need should be some two to three times the number of units eventually built. With this in mind, the survey recommended that a scheme of approximately 5 properties would meet the existing and future needs of Penshurst residents. The survey stated that a mix of 1 and 2 bed properties, predominantly 2 bed, would best meet the requirements of local people in housing need.

The application has been submitted for 6 x 2 bed units. I consider that 6 units as a figure would not conflict with the recommendations of the survey for “approximately 5 units”. The proposal does not provide any 1 bed units. Having discussed this further with the Council’s Housing Officer, I am advised that 1 bedroom accommodation on small rural schemes such as this are normally of limited value. Two bedroom units are deemed to be more preferable as they provide more flexibility, allowing households to develop (for example to have a family) without needing to move to new accommodation. The Penshurst village project Steering Group which was set up following the Housing Needs Survey also recommended that all units should be 2 bedrooms and this was further supported by the local community in consultation exercises undertaken prior to submission of the planning application.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies and replaces previous Planning Policy Statements and Guidance including the definition of previously developed land.

The NPPF states that at the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision taking (para. 14). For decision-taking this means approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay and where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies out of date, granting of permission unless:-

- any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole;
- specific policies in this framework indicate development should be restricted; or
- material considerations indicate otherwise.

In this instance, part of the requirement under SP4 of the Core Strategy is that affordable housing sites in rural areas should be within or adjoining an existing village, and close to available services and public transport. The proposal is directly next to the existing settlement at Peshurst, next to a shop and post office and opposite a school, with a bus service running through the village. In my opinion, the location of this site is sustainable in the context of the rural parish of Peshurst.

The Planning Application submitted by the Becketts Trust

I would advise Members that amended plans have been received (yesterday) in respect of the current application for development at Becketts Field. The amended application is now for 6 new 2 bed units (although an existing property will be demolished). It no longer includes land owned by the West Kent Housing Association. This application will be subject to a full reconsultation exercise and it results in a substantial change to the original submission..

The S106 Agreement

Members will note that my recommendation to approve the application is subject to completion of a S106 agreement to secure the affordable housing and highway improvements within a period of 28 days from the committee meeting, otherwise that permission should be refused.

Having taken further legal advice, it is possible that there might be a delay which could affect the timetable for completing the S106 agreement. I would recommend that a period of three months is given to allow for completion of the agreement rather than one month as recommended in the main report, to give a little more flexibility to secure completion of the agreement.

Conditions

I would recommend that the following amended conditions are substituted for those in the main report –

8) No development shall be carried out on the land until a scheme and timetable for the relocation of the telephone box has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The telephone box shall be relocated in accordance with the approved details prior to first occupation of the development, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and the retention of a community facility, in accordance with Policies EN1 of the Sevenoaks District Local Plan and SP1 of the Sevenoaks Core Strategy.

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11) Notwithstanding the submitted plans, no development shall be carried out on the land until details of the proposed boundary treatment and any means of enclosure has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Council. The development shall be carried out using the approved details.

To ensure that the appearance of the development is in harmony with the existing character of the local area as supported by Policy EN1 of the Sevenoaks District Local Plan.

13) The development shall only be undertaken in accordance with the Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) by Monson Engineering Ltd and addendums (most recent addendum dated 7 March 2012), and the following mitigation measures detailed within the FRA:

- i) The surface water drainage strategy shall be undertaken in accordance with the FRA and addendums
- ii) The access road and car parking area shall be constructed with permeable paving (with a minimum depth of porous sub base of 300mm) and a cut off trench at the western site boundary.
- iii) The surface water discharge to the adjacent ordinary watercourse shall be limited to a rate of 1.5 l/s (Appendix A, Drawing No. 5164/02 C, ' Proposed surface water flood drain').
- iv) A surface water management plan shall be implemented to ensure that the scheme is effective year round for the lifetime of the development, the details of which shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of development.
- v) The surface water drainage scheme shall take into account exceedance events to ensure that surface water runoff is safely routed away from the dwellings.

Reason: To prevent flooding by ensuring the satisfactory storage of/disposal of surface water from the site.

14) The finished floor levels of the dwellings hereby permitted shall be set no lower than 30.9 m above Ordnance Datum (AOD) as detailed in the Addendum to the Flood Risk Assessment by Monson Engineering Ltd dated 7 March 2012.

To reduce the risk of flooding to the proposed development and future occupants.

16) No development shall be carried out on the land until full details of soft landscape works have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Council. Those details shall include:

- planting plans (identifying existing planting, plants to be retained and new planting);
- written specifications (including cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment);
- schedules of new plants (noting species, size of stock at time of planting and proposed number/densities where appropriate); and
- a programme of implementation.

The landscape works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. If within a period of five years from the completion of the development, any of the trees or plants that form part of the approved details of soft landscaping die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased then they shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species.

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To protect the visual appearance of the area as supported by EN1 of the Sevenoaks District Local Plan.

Recommendation – my recommendation remain unchanged, subject to the above amendments to conditions and the timescale for completion of the S106 agreement.

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