



**Minutes of a meeting of the Planning Committee held in the East Dean and Friston Village (Small) Hall, Village Green Lane, East Dean, BN20 0DR on Tuesday 15 August 2023 commencing at 6.30 pm.**

**Present:** Cllr G Fowler (Chairman), Cllr T Bryant, Cllr P Hill, Cllr P Seeley, and Cllr D White

**In attendance:** K Larkin (Deputy Clerk)

*There were four members of the public present*

### **Public Session**

Foxfields, Old Willingdon Road – four members of the public present had submitted objections to the South Downs National Park Authority and to the parish council in respect of this proposal to demolish and rebuild a property in a different style. In summary, it was stated that the proposed new build paid no attention to its setting, contrary to what should be normal procedure. The site was more visible than the applicants claimed, being located on a high ridge clearly visible several miles away. Residents contended that the statement in the Baseline Assessment Checklist that there was ‘no real awareness of the village’ when approaching the site was mistaken, and was fundamentally not a fact but a choice.

The Chair gave assurance that the committee would fully consider all the documentation in its consideration of this application.

*The Chair closed the Public Session and opened the meeting.*

**P.528 Apologies for absence** – Cllr Bustard, Cllr Lees, Cllr Milligan and Cllr Street

**P.529 Declarations of Interest** – None

**P.530 Minutes of previous meeting** - The Minutes of the planning committee meeting held on 18 July 2023 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman

### **P.531 NEW APPLICATIONS**

**SDNP/23/02877/FUL – Foxfields, Old Willingdon Road, Friston, East Sussex BN20 0AT**

*Demolition of existing dwelling, garages & outbuildings, erection of replacement dwelling, pool room and garden store, hard and soft landscaping, parking and new access*

The committee noted the objection raised in the Public Session that the proposed rebuild would be inappropriate and unsympathetic in its surroundings; and the criticism that the site was not in fact secluded, as the application claimed, but was highly visible in long views. It was further noted that the South Downs National Park Authority's Design Officer had made a number of adverse comments on the application, concluding with an objection to the proposed development. No pre-application advice had been sought.

Members endorsed the criticisms: the complete replacement of a property should not be objectionable in principle, but in this instance the proposed rebuild would be incongruous and unsympathetic to its surroundings, a problem exacerbated by its exceptional 11 metre height and closeness to the road. The proposal to create a second access to the site, wider than the existing road, had rightly been criticised by the Design Officer for eroding the rural character of the Old Willington Road, and would allow the property to loom even larger in its surroundings. The better feature of the proposals was the sustainability statement, but it was thought likely that the choice of materials would make full sustainability difficult to achieve. The proposed metal seamed roof would be particularly incongruous and would not only oxidise unattractively but could also become too reflective, especially in winter. In conclusion, members agreed that the proposed rebuild would be fundamentally out of place in this location, and the committee's recommendation would be that planning permission be refused.

RESOLVED – To recommend that the application be refused

**SDNP/23/02882/HOUS - The Granary Crowlink Lane Friston East Sussex BN20 0AY**  
*Construction of a semi-sunken swimming pool in rear garden*

**SDNP/23/02883/LIS - The Granary Crowlink Lane Friston East Sussex BN20 0AY**  
*Construction of a semi-sunken swimming pool in rear garden*

The committee considered these two linked applications together, noting that the second was for listed building consent, The Granary being listed Grade II. Pre-application advice had been sought from the planning authority; the advice had been taken and was reflected in the application. The Conservation Officer had recommended that the air source heat pump associated with the new lap-pool should be screened from view, and the Tree Officer had recommended that trees on the site be protected by fencing during the construction phase. The County Archaeologist had confirmed that there were no significant archaeological remains on the site. There were no known objections to the application. The committee agreed to support the application, subject to the conditions recommended by the Conservation Officer and the Tree Officer.

RESOLVED - To recommend that the application be approved

### P.532 DECISION NOTICES

The committee took note of the following application recommended by the parish council and approved by the SDNPA:

**SDNP/23/02335/HOUS – Highwood, 5 Windmill Lane, Friston BN20 0EE**

*Proposed single and two storey rear extension and first floor extension to front*

The committee took note of the following application for which the SDNPA required 'Prior Notification', no objection having been made by the parish council:

**SDNP/23/02668/APNDEM - Birling Gap Hotel, Birling Gap Road, East Dean, East Sussex BN20 0AB** *Birling Gap hotel will be partially demolished as set out in the supporting documentation*

### P.533 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The Deputy Clerk reported that the publication of the questionnaire on Parish Priorities had begun with its circulation to all the village organisations, and that it would be published to every household as in insert in the September parish magazine. A call for volunteers would also go out in the September issue. There would be a drop-in session at the Village Hall on 12<sup>th</sup> September to provide more information on the background to the consultation and the plans for using the responses not only to respond to the SDNPA about parish priorities but also to inform a Neighbourhood Plan which would include an update of the current Village Design Statement. The Residents' Association would offer further publicity at the Village Fete on 16<sup>th</sup> September. It was hoped that a preliminary report on the responses could be ready for the next Steering Group meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> September, which could report to the parish council on 5<sup>th</sup> October. Further research and analysis could be undertaken in October, as the parish had been granted an extension of time in which to respond to the SDNPA, the deadline now being the second week of November.

The government grant funding stream available from Locality had now re-opened and an Expression of Interest submitted on behalf of the parish had been accepted. The full application was now being drafted. The planning consultant had supplied a detailed Project Plan, and arrangements were being made to access the Ordnance Survey's Data Hub. Finally, an approach had been made to the SDNPA to make contact with the planning officers who would oversee the process, with a view to discussing the project plan and its timing. The Steering Group was satisfied that progress was now being made.

### P.534 ENFORCEMENT

The Tree Warden reported that he had received complaints regarding alleged unauthorised felling of mature trees on the site of the proposed development at Land behind the Old Parsonage. The affected area was the proposed access to the site from Gilberts Drive. A complaint had been submitted by a resident independently to the South Downs National Park Authority, and an Enforcement Officer had visited the site. A report

was awaited. The work had temporarily halted and the Tree Warden had requested that a revised landscape plan and specification be provided before any further felling took place, as the felling of the trees and their replacement by a close boarded fence had not been part of the original planning permission. The trees had been deliberately retained to screen the new development from existing properties. He had also requested Climpsons to report on the state of the trees, which allegedly had ash dieback, though some were in fact beech trees, not ash trees. The committee fully endorsed the actions taken by the Tree Warden.

**P.535 CORRESPONDENCE**

The committee formally took note of the objections to the Foxfields planning application, sent to the SDNPA by neighbours and copied to the parish council.

**P.536 DATE OF NEXT MEETING: - Tuesday 19 September 2023 in the Small Hall of the Village Hall, East Dean, starting at 6.30 pm**

*There being no further business, the meeting closed at 7.06 pm*

Signed..... (Chairman)

Date.....