

HAYWARDS HEATH TOWN COUNCIL

PLANNING COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday, 27 July 2020

C N Laband (*Chairman*)
M J Pulfer (*Vice Chairman*)
Mrs C Cheney
C C J Evans **
Mrs S J Inglesfield
A C McPherson
H A Munding
R A Nicholson *

* Absent

** Apologies

Also present: Councillor R S Bates

25. Apologies

The following apology was received:

Member	Reason for Absence
Cllr C C J Evans	Long-standing personal engagement

26. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on Monday, 6 July 2020 were taken as read, confirmed as a true record and duly signed by the Chairman.

27. Substitutes

There were none.

28. Members' Declarations of Interest

Councillor Clive Laband made the following declaration:

"I declare a personal interest in all planning applications under agenda item 6 as an elected Member of Mid Sussex District Council (MSDC) and as an appointed Member of the (MSDC) District Planning Committee. I further reserve the right to alter my views should the applications come before the District Planning Committee, based on contributions from the public, other Members or reports from MSDC Officers."

cont.

28. Members' Declarations of Interest (cont.)

Councillor Mike Pulfer made the following declaration:

"I declare a personal interest in all planning applications under agenda item 6 as an elected Member of Mid Sussex District Council (MSDC) and as an appointed Member of the (MSDC) Planning Committee. I further reserve the right to alter my views should the applications come before the Planning Committee, based on contributions from the public, other Members or reports from MSDC Officers."

29. Planning Appeals

Members noted that the following appeal had been **lodged** in respect of MSDC's decision to refuse planning permission:

Date Lodged & References	Site	Description
21/07/2020 AP/20/0027 APP/D3830/W/20/3252027 (DM/19/5227 refers)	3 Bruce Close HAYWARDS HEATH	Demolition of garage/shed to allow for a new detached 3 bed dwelling. Removal of ground floor extension and construction of 2 storey side extension to host dwelling. Amended plans received 24.01.2020 showing revised design of new house.

30. Licensing Applications

There were none.

31. Comments and Observations on Planning Applications

Members made comments and observations on 17 planning applications as per Appendix 1 attached.

32. Items Agreed as Urgent by the Chairman

There were none.

The meeting closed at 8:16pm.

This meeting was conducted and recorded using the Zoom video conferencing application.

APPENDIX 1

Week 1

DM/20/0883 – Tennis Courts Club House, Victoria Park, South Road

Ashenground

Demolition of existing timber-framed tennis clubhouse. Reconstruct in brickwork with pitched roof. (Revised plans received 01/07/2020.)

The Town Council notes the submission of revised plans (received by Mid Sussex District Council on 01/07/2020). Members note the resident concerns regarding the siting of this new clubhouse and suggest that consideration be given to using obscure glass in the four high level windows on the rear (south) elevation to let light in. They would also like to see the installation of signage asking users of the clubhouse to leave quietly and to be mindful of neighbouring residents.

The Town Council supports this application and apposite comments/observations made previously still apply. For the avoidance of doubt, the Town Council reiterates its original representation, which was submitted on 31/03/2020:

'Notes comments from Messrs Hall & Kenward relating to the aspect/orientation of the proposed building, however HHTC welcomes the application to provide improved accommodation and sporting facilities, supporting health and wellbeing policy objectives for the town.

Consideration for nets to screen the courts could be put up on the court fence to the south of the courts as this would screen 75% of the houses and the small parcel of land to the south of the clubhouse should have trees planted, under the guidance of MSDC tree officers.

Construction hours restrictions M-F 08:00 to 18:00 Sat 09:00-13:00 no work Sunday or Public holidays.

HHTC supports this application, subject to its comments outlined above.'

DM/20/1103 – 34 Lucastes Lane

Lucastes

(Amended plans received 30/06/2020.) Loft conversion, front extension, first floor side extension and external alterations.

The Town Council notes the submission of amended plans (received by Mid Sussex District Council on 30/06/2020) but understands that the applicants are currently in the process of having further amended plans drawn up for submission. Members therefore agreed to defer making any comments on the proposal until the next meeting of the Planning Committee, scheduled for Monday, 17 August 2020.

DM/20/1881 - 14–16 Sussex Road

Ashenground

Change of use from an office (Class B1a use) to residential (Class C3 use) and extension of premises to the rear at ground, first and second floor, in order to form 8 no. 1 bedroom flats with associated secure cycle storage.

One of the existing tenants who runs a successful and sustainable business on the ground floor of this building has raised some concerns regarding the effect of certain aspects of this proposal on the viability of his business and thus the sustainability of the town centre. The Town Council understands that Mid Sussex District Council's Planning Officer for the application is liaising with the freeholder and the landlord in order to get more detail on how the business might be affected. On the basis of this, Members agreed to defer making any comments on the proposal until the next meeting of the Planning Committee, scheduled for Monday, 17 August 2020.

DM/20/2246 – 20 Balcombe Road

Heath

Proposed single storey rear extension, loggia and new porch. New double garage.

No comment.

DM/20/2288 – 11 Sunnywood Drive

Ashenground

Single storey rear extension and front porch.

No comment.

DM/20/2304 – 55 Lucastes Avenue

Lucastes

T1 – clear branches from telephone line, 1 metre above and 1 metre below. Branches are no more than 1 inch in diameter.

The Town Council defers this decision to Mid Sussex District Council's Tree Officer.

DM/20/2348 – Keere Cottage, 124 Lewes Road

Franklands

(T1) Tree of Heaven – fell to ground level.

There is no information on Mid Sussex District Council's Online Public Register that explains the reason for wanting to fell this tree. Members feel that in the interests of transparency and safeguarding the town's trees in general, there should be some supporting documentation/explanation for this proposal. Nevertheless, they are aware that the tree is a non-native and invasive species and they therefore defer this decision to Mid Sussex District Council's Tree Officer.

Week 2

DM/20/2315 – 62 Turners Mill Road

Heath

Alterations to a recently constructed single storey rear extension which does not comply with permitted development.

No comment.

DM/20/2413 – 84 Turners Mill Road

Heath

T1 Oak – reduce lower limb on the northern side back to the fork.

The Town Council defers this decision to Mid Sussex District Council's Tree Officer.

DM/20/2416 – 37 Greenhill Way

Franklands

T1 – fell. T2 – crown lift by 1.5m.

The Town Council defers this decision to Mid Sussex District Council's Tree Officer.

DM/20/2455 – Birch House, Lewes Road

Franklands

Leylandii Cypressus x 2 on front lawn – fell. Leylandii Cypressus x 2 on back lawn – reduce crown by 4 metres.

The Town Council defers this decision to Mid Sussex District Council's Tree Officer.

DM/20/2492 – 45 and 47 Lucastes Avenue**Lucastes**

1 x Purple Plum – remove lowest branch over pavement and reduce overall crown by up to 1.5m; 2 x Sycamores – reduce back from boundary by up to 3m; line of Conifers and 1 x Ash – reduce back to boundary by approximately 0.7m; Thuja – remove 2 lowest stems and reduce by up to 0.7m; 3 x Thuja – reduce back to boundary; Cupressus – reduce by up to 0.7m.

The Town Council defers this decision to Mid Sussex District Council's Tree Officer.

Week 3**DM/20/1137 – Central House, 25–27 Perrymount Road****Heath**

Outline application to demolish the existing office building and erection of a new office building and a mixed use building comprising of up to 42 new 1 and 2 bedroom flats together with the formation of a new access and associated car parking. All matters to be reserved except for access. REVISED PLANS received 17/7/2020 showing reduction of scheme to 38 flats and 3,419 sqm of commercial floorspace.

The Town Council notes the submission of revised plans (received by Mid Sussex District Council on 17/07/2020) showing a reduction of the scheme to 38 flats and 3,419m² of commercial floorspace. However, this latest proposal does nothing to alter the Town Council's **objection** to the application and, as well as reiterating the response submitted previously (on 12/05/2020), it is requested that the following additional comments and observations are given due consideration:

Extract from agent's rebuttal to Urban Designer's comments, as published on Mid Sussex District Council's Online Public Register (27/05/2020): 'A request has also been made to see the proposed residential units in relation to the consented office on the adjoining site. Whilst this is an extant Consent we are loathe to show such a relationship as the Approval has been granted on land not owned or controlled by the applicant. As the rear element of the adjoining office at ground and lower ground floor will need to be eased to the south by some 3 metres or more, with the resultant impact on the upper floors, to show an unrepresentative relationship would, we feel, be misleading.'

Following the Town Council's previous comments as a statutory consultee, the allergic reaction displayed by the agent's refusal to share site modelling relative to the neighbouring extant permission is frankly incredible. The Urban Designer noted: 'The approach to the residential block is poor and appears to be an afterthought. The only step-free access requires an inauspicious entrance via the undercroft parking. The stepped side alley access also does not announce itself and may suffer from a lack of natural surveillance outside working hours.' Further justifying the need to see greater transparency for this application.

The Town Council further notes the Urban Designer's comments: 'The front threshold also risks being dominated by hard surfacing and it is unfortunate that front parking is included given the undercroft capacity.' This negative aspect of the application should be strongly resisted as it is contrary to Policy DP26 (Character and Design) of the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014–2031. It also undermines the emerging Mid Sussex Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document objectives, providing further reason for refusal.

Moreover, the Case Officer has confirmed that the original application 'indicates that the proposal would result in an overdevelopment of the site.' The Officer advice relating to the commercial need for increased parking to attract tenants should be afforded considerable weight as a relevant planning consideration. It is not surprising that the interim report based on the original submission was to recommend refusal. Arguing over the quantum of parking provision is a race to the bottom, encouraging under-occupation of a prime site, with a concomitant reduction in sustainable employment for the town on this site.

cont.

DM/20/1137 – Central House, 25–27 Perrymount Road (cont.)

Heath

The neighbouring John Baker Group objection (published on Mid Sussex District Council's Online Public Register on 02/06/2020) to various aspects also has considerable merit. In particular, the access and Perrymount Road comments in Sections 1.1 and 1.2 are noted and should be given considerable weight. They have highlighted their dismay that the inclusion of another accessway to this site would greatly increase risk to the public in this busy vehicle and pedestrian location. Likewise, their observations relating to parking coefficients are noteworthy and apposite. The Town Council further notes their criticism of the poor public engagement this proposal offers to relevant stakeholders which again is echoed.

The proposal is a tepid attempt to improve the previous unacceptable application which, even though the revised proposal offers improved employment accommodation, this is critically undermined by a paucity of parking provision. If permitted, this would undermine nearby residential amenity.

Regarding the amenity space on offer for the flats, the provision of circa 5m² balconies and a communal courtyard area which would be overlooked, lacking in privacy and devoid of any pockets of quiet, is wholly inadequate and unacceptable and would not be conducive to the well-being of residents.

The Town Council maintains its OBJECTION to this current application.

Original consultation response submitted on 12/05/2020:

Issues

Parking/ relevance to the Haywards Heath Neighbourhood Plan (HHNP)/Destination Haywards Heath (DHH) and Mid Sussex District Plan 2014–2031 (MSDP), together with any relevant considerations pertaining to the Haywards Heath Masterplan (HHMP) (not issued).

The application, if approved, would facilitate demolition of the existing commercial/office building, replaced by slightly larger (319m²) office accommodation together with a change of use for the site to include 42 units of residential accommodation.

Resident Comments

Haywards Heath Town Council (HHTC) notes comments made to date by residents, which provide real and relevant feedback to some of the challenges this application presents.

Community Involvement

The Statement of Community Involvement does not include direct pre-application consultation with HHTC and thus fails to deliver the aspirations or indeed requirements outlined in the localism legislation. For the absence of doubt, any significant potential development within the town should include pre-application discussions with HHTC before detailed discussions with the local planning authority. A file note lodged in the planning application file, directing applicants to engage with HHTC, should ideally be recorded in the application records. We are disappointed that this did not occur.

Haywards Heath Masterplan (HHMP)

Notwithstanding the lack of consultation, the application for this site potentially delivers many of the aspirations and requirements embedded in the development of a sustainable and growing urban town centre. The strategy to develop a town centre Masterplan for Haywards Heath, which HHTC aims to support, must include opportunities to create, develop and promote economic vitality, including provision of housing, business accommodation and sustainable transport, including adequate parking provision.

cont.

DM/20/1137 – Central House, 25–27 Perrymount Road (cont.)

Heath

Any forthcoming HHMP must provide for increasing urbanisation in our town centre areas, to promote and support more high-density mixed-use development. This may include retail, commercial office space, home working, high-tech enterprise, artist/artisan professional activity, all alongside recreation/leisure facilities and critically residential homes to complete the urban cocktail required to deliver an aspirational town fit for the 21st century.

Design

Design offers congruity with the extant permission granted for 21–23 Perrymount Road (DM/18/2581 refers) and is therefore welcomed.

Landscaping

If the application is approved, to deliver the requirements in the Mid Sussex Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document, active measures should be installed to physically prevent pavement parking to protect resident amenity and deliver public road safety responsibilities. **This should be a planning condition.**

Housing

The application delivers accommodation which complies with some of the HHMP and MSDP requirements, including 30% affordable housing.

Parking

One of the primary obstacles undermining support for this application is the significant underprovision of parking and any credible detail as to how it will be delivered.

HHTC notes that section 8. of the application refers to parking spaces which are allocated solely for staff parking and therefore the quantum used in the application is misleading.

Even though there is a paucity of commitment in the combined parking plans, the current provisions of 77 = 38 + 39 spaces would undermine and directly conflict with Policy T3 of the HHNP, as evidenced by existing behaviour and underlined by resident comments. It is abundantly clear that parking provision is insufficient and even though the West Sussex County Council (WSCC) Highways response unfortunately omits quantifying a requirement, it confirms that 'this is lower than the WSCC guidance level.' Aiming for a quantum that we already know is too low to be sustainable is not an acceptable option. The current building of 3,250m² with 69 spaces generates parking excesses which already blight the surrounding residential developments in the neighbourhood. An increase in office accommodation from 3,250m² to 3,569m² proposes a reduction to just 39 spaces which, even if the present imbalance were maintained, would predicate 76 spaces versus the 39 offered.

Framework Residential Travel Plan and Framework Staff Travel Plan

Section 1.3.2 of *both* Travel Plans states that 'Parking for some 77 vehicles is proposed at the ground/lower basement level of the development which will be accessed by one single access point from Perrymount Road.'

Section 2.1.2 of *both* Travel Plans states that 'The plan **will have** the following additional objectives:

- (i) To manage car parking demand across the development;

For the absence of doubt, '**will have**' does **not** deliver the policy integrity or sufficient detail to enable intelligent consideration of the proposal, as it is totally absent from the application.

cont.

DM/20/1137 – Central House, 25–27 Perrymount Road (cont.)**Heath**

Section 5.4.1 of the Framework Residential Travel Plan states 'The development provides just 38 spaces for a residential development of 42 units. Not all units will be entitled to a car parking space. This physical restriction on parking and the comprehensive parking controls in the local area encourages a no car lifestyle.' It is therefore implicit that the remaining 39 spaces will be allocated for the 297 employees in the 3,569m² office accommodation. The current 3,250m² for 271 staff provides 69 spaces. We are also cognisant that extant permission for 21–23 Perrymount Road has not been delivered and critically the current provision is deemed to be commercially unviable.

Further Engagement

We note the adequacy of the 5 year land supply in Mid Sussex and thus would prefer to see employment opportunities maximised for this site, excluding the provision of residential accommodation. Moreover, the initiative should be undertaken to have meaningful dialogue with the owner/developer of 21–23 Perrymount Road to explore the economic and environmental benefits of combining the site to deliver a single larger building, sufficient to provide a headquarters-style building suitable for large corporate occupation.

HHTC Response

In light of the comments above, HHTC **OBJECTS** to this application on the grounds of:

1. the significant underprovision of on-site parking facilities and the detrimental knock-on effect this would undoubtedly have on Perrymount Road, neighbouring roads and existing residential developments in the locality. Parking provision must be increased to deliver 1 space per 2.5 staff, i.e. 119 spaces *in addition* to the 38 spaces designated solely for resident use. So, 157 spaces are needed in total;
2. the proposed commercial/residential mixed use of the site. HHTC feels that the introduction of a residential element on to the site would dilute the commercial offer of this particular section of Perrymount Road.

Section 106 Contributions

If the application is approved, Section 106 funding should be allocated to the provision and installation of a new cycleway through Clair Park to join with the existing cycleway between Heath/Church Road towards The Orchards/town centre, together with extensive eco-friendly LED lighting to protect resident safety and amenity.

Relevant HHNP Polices include:

E6, E8, E9, E10/E11, B2/B3 T1, T2 (see S106 note above) T3 (compromised).

DM/20/1894 – Downlands Cottage, Bolnore Farm Lane**Lucastes**

Retrospective application for a wooden garden summer house/cabin.

No comment.

DM/20/2167 – 56 Sergison Close**Lucastes**

Altering lower garden land level and decking extension to existing top terrace path area adjacent to rear of house.

No comment.

DM/20/2490 – 9 Summerhill Close**Heath**

Replacement garage with landscaping works.

No comment.

DM/20/2547 – Westcombe, Birch Avenue

Franklands

See Landscape Vision Doc Ref LV351TW1 Rev A for a written description of the proposed tree works.

The Town Council defers this decision to Mid Sussex District Council's Tree Officer.