



HAWKHURST PARISH COUNCIL

PLANNING COMMITTEE



Copt Hall and Zoom meeting

Thursday 21st April 2022, 7:45PM

Minutes

Committee Members present;

Cllr Pyne (Vice Chairman) Cllr Hunt and Cllr Blake

Cllr Escombe and Cllr Faulkner (attended by zoom)

Staff present; Deputy Clerk

1. **Welcome**
2. **APOLOGIES AND REASON FOR ABSENCE** given from Cllr Cory
3. **NO DECLARATION OF INTERESTS.**
4. **MINUTES OF LAST MEETING**

It resolved unanimously to agree the minutes of the meeting of 31.03.22

5. Matters arising from last meeting

- i) TWBC Local Plan examination – it was explained that a modification to the plan may be seen but unlikely it would start again as the inspector considers it a lawful plan.

6. Planning applications to be considered -

<https://twbcpa.midkent.gov.uk/online-applications/>

A resident spoke regarding the Victoria House planning application to convert offices into four flats. Currently as offices arrangement works quite well as residents leave in the morning so employees can park. Concerns were raised that the property next door garden would be directly overlooked by this development, parking is already packed around the Moor when residents return from work. These additional residential units would increase parking in the streets, cars are regularly being parked in the bus stop, around the Church, up and down both sides of the road. Two crashes have been seen recently and there is no provision for bins/waste storage for the flats.

No	Application No	Proposal	Location
137	22/00758/FULL	Change of use from commercial to 4No. flats	Victoria House Rural Business Centre The Moor Hawkhurst. Kent TN18 4NR

HPC has significant concerns about this application for several reasons.

Firstly, Victoria House is currently used as offices. There is limited office space available in the village and very limited employment opportunities in The Moor area of the village. Indeed, this is one of the few remaining commercial premises in this part of the village. One advantage of the availability of office space in this location is that it does not place additional demands on the extremely limited parking available in the Highgate area of the village.

Policy CM4 of Hawkhurst's NDP states that existing employment, retail and ancillary facilities in the parish will be protected and enhanced. This application is clearly contrary to this policy. The application states that this proposal will not reduce employment. However, it is hard to see how this can be the case when there are currently businesses operating in Victoria House. Moreover, the statement that parking can be required for 20+ cars suggests that there is a need for these commercial premises in this area of the village.

We do not feel that sufficient evidence has been provided to justify the change of use, especially considering it is contrary to policy CM4. The planning statement refers to intensive marketing. However, this has been far less visible than that for other commercial premises within the village over recent years. Of the 13 available offices, it would appear that just 3 are currently being marketed. Therefore, whilst the premises might just have two tenants, most of the available space is actually occupied.

The applicant indicates that change of use to residential would be beneficial due to the reduced demand for parking. However, this ignores the fact this area of the village is predominantly residential other than the church, the local pub and the recreational facilities at the KGV. The offices require parking on weekdays during the day. This is the time when demand is lowest from nearby residents, the church, the pub and the sports facilities at KGV. This arrangement works well. In contrast, converting these premises into flats will increase the parking demands at the times when parking is already most problematic.

Whilst we acknowledge that smaller properties are required in Hawkhurst, we are extremely concerned about the proposed plans. The flats appear very cramped and poorly designed. Surely, it is not appropriate to have the only toilet and shower facilities for the top floor flat on a different floor accessed by a shared stairwell. This application does not comply with HD3 of the NDP which requires that new housing should create homes suitable for modern living. Paragraph 7.26 refers to aspects such as encouraging working from home, storage of bicycles and effective storage of waste and recycling bins amongst other matters.

The need for storage of waste and recycling has not been given sufficient consideration. There is quite simply not adequate internal space. This is not only evident from the plans, but has also been demonstrated by the prior conversions of Dwelling A and Dwelling B - both of which keep their bins in the street, which detracts from the conservation setting.

Moreover, it does not appear that any consideration has been given to the efficient use of water, energy and other resources as required by HD3 and HD4 of the NDP. HD4 also sets expectations in terms of design quality, including appropriate parking provision. As discussed above, we do not feel that this application achieves this.

HPC **objects** to this application.

VOTE: 3 Against

138	22/01017/REM	Approval of Reserved Matters (Appearance, Landscaping, Layout, Scale) - Erection of 25 apartments including details of the layout, scale, appearance, internal access roads and landscaping of the development and associated infrastructure and earthworks	Brook House Cranbrook Road Hawkhurst Cranbrook Kent TN18 5EE
<p>Whilst we are mindful that the principle of this development has been established through the appeal process, we do have significant concerns about this reserved matters application. First and foremost is the absence of detailed information. It would appear that the applicant is intending to provide most of the relevant information through conditions rather than this reserved matters application. For instance, at this stage, there is no information on materials, drainage, landscaping etc. We do not feel that this is appropriate for such a significant development in a sensitive AONB location - the Parish Council is not invited to comment on applications for conditions. Therefore, we request that all of the outstanding matters should be dealt with through this application.</p> <p>We appreciate that the designs in the outline application were only indicative. However, we feel that the increased size and bulk proposed at this stage has resulted in a poor design, which, as it stands, is contrary to HD4. We are also concerned that 30 parking spaces are insufficient for 25 apartments in this location.</p> <p>We note that whilst landscaping is not addressed in detail, there are references to the site being screened by mature trees. However, a number of these trees are in poor condition with some being lost during the recent storms. Therefore, we would appreciate a condition that the trees being relied on as part of this scheme are assessed and any dead or diseased ones are replaced.</p> <p>The access arrangements were agreed at the appeal. However, at that time the AQMA on Cranbrook Road had not been declared. HPC is of the opinion that the introduction of a signalised junction will impact negatively on not only traffic flows but also the AQMA. Therefore, we feel that it is vital that full consideration is given to how this can be addressed as part of this application.</p> <p>Traffic heading south towards the crossroads is already queuing at this point on Cranbrook Road, but the traffic heading north away from the crossroads is generally moving freely. The introduction of the signalised junction will result in queuing traffic heading north in addition to that heading south, which will exacerbate the congestion, especially given the parked cars on the Cranbrook Road. This increase in congestion will no doubt have a detrimental impact on air quality. Any assessment of this impact will also need to take into account that there are no pavements on the west side of Cranbrook Road, meaning that all pedestrians will have to use the signalised crossing point.</p> <p>HPC objects to this application in its current form and would like to be kept fully involved as this application progresses. We request that this is considered a Category Y application, assuming it is actually going to be a delegated decision rather than considered at committee.</p> <p>VOTE; 2 against and 1 abstain</p>			
139	22/00753/LBC	To install a sump pump, chamber and drainage gullies to the existing cellar floor	2 Jasmine Cottages Talbot Road Hawkhurst Cranbrook Kent TN18 4LY
<p>HPC supports this application assuming that the conservation officer is supportive.</p> <p>VOTE: 3 in Favour</p>			

140	22/00275/FULL	Change of use of Office Building (Class E) to residential Floor Space (Class C3)	Woodsden Water Lane Hawkhurst Cranbrook Kent TN18 5AP
<p>We have reservations about the change of use from office to residential in this location. It conflicts with policy CM4 of the NDP, which requires that existing employment, retail and ancillary facilities will be protected and enhanced. Moreover, it does not accord with policy HD1 of the NDP which requires that development should be within the LBD and within walking distance of shops and facilities.</p> <p>However, we have also taken into consideration the fact that the change of use would be to provide accommodation for a carer. Moreover, the application indicates that there will be no external changes to the studio and that it will not, therefore, adversely impact on the AONB. Given these restrictions, HPC would be willing to support the principle of conversion to residential in this location. However, we request that a condition is applied to tie the conversion to the host house.</p> <p>VOTE: 3 in Favour</p>			
141	22/00754/FULL	Demolition of existing garage and erection of detached dwelling following grant of outline permission 20/02168/OUT	Hawthorn Cottage, Ockley Lane Hawkhurst Cranbrook Kent TN18 4DW
<p>We are aware that this application has been granted outline permission. However, we do have reservations over the size of the proposed dwelling, especially in light of the recently granted permission for the extension of Hawthorn Cottage (21/03019/FULL). Therefore, HPC objects to this application.</p> <p>We note that KCC PROW requested that details should be provided at full planning stage to ensure that that surface water from the site is adequately dealt with to ensure it is not discharged along the byway surface of Ockley Lane. We cannot see that this has been addressed in this application.</p> <p>VOTE: 2 against ,1 favour</p>			
142	22/00818/FULL	Removal of Condition 5 (Age-related restriction) of 98/02112/FUL	Camerons Hearten oak Road Hawkhurst Cranbrook Kent TN18 4EP
<p>HPC supports this application.</p> <p>VOTE: 3 in Favour</p>			

6. Matters for discussion

- i) **Solar Panels initiative** – update received from Cllr Faulkner. There had been a KCC flyer to encourage this initiative with an opportunity to receive a battery for storage, with people able to sign up to a reverse auction by a certain date that has now past.
- ii) **Review of Hawkhurst Neighbourhood Plan** – Cllr Escombe reported the steering group had had its first meeting. They are looking at first steps, what worked well in the NDP, what didn't and what policies we do or do not want. Early days but quite a bit of work to be done.

iii) TWBC decisions since the last meeting – were discussed as below;

- 22/00481/FULL - Norfricot, High Street - permitted
- 22/00380/FULL - Ingleden Farm - permitted
- 22/00409/FULL - 1 Hillside Court - permitted
- 22/00039/FULL - Hurstwood Cottage - permitted
- 22/00226/LBC - 4 Iddenden Cottages - permitted
- 22/00225/FULL - 4 Iddenden Cottages - permitted
- 22/00217/FULL - Little Mercers - permitted
- 22/00355/FULL - Little Conghurst - refused
- 20/02788/FULL - Land To East Of Highgate Hill And South Of Copt Hall – approved on appeal

A resident complained about having no post box in the residential area of Iden Cottages any more. Cllr Escombe to investigate.

6. QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS FROM COUNCILLORS:

A Councillor stated that it was totally unacceptable that the speaker/microphone had not been brought to meeting. Therefore, making it impossible for some committee members to hear the people who had joined by zoom.

Deputy Clerk apologised for the situation.

CLOSURE: meeting closed at 8:24pm

Signed.....

Date.....