

## Planning Advisory Committee

4<sup>th</sup> July 2019

No	Application No	Proposal	Location
19	19/01464/FULL	Removal of condition 12 of Planning permission 86/01546/Full (conversion of oasthouse to dwelling and construction of double garage)	Gun Green Oast, Water Lane, Hawkhurst, Kent TN18 5BA
<p><b>Background:</b>  <i>Condition 12 says no further development without prior approval of planning authority. Reason is to enable planning authority to regulate and control any further development. No comments.</i></p> <p><b>Comments and Recommendation:</b>                      Whilst we appreciate the inconvenience for the applicant, we believe that it is in the public interest that planning conditions should not be weakened. We <b>object</b> to this application.</p>			
20	19/01095/FULL	Single storey flat roof extension open to eaves to rear, existing silted up duck pond dug out, track in field resurfaced gate repositioned (part retrospective)	Holly Cottage, Water Lane, Hawkhurst Kent TN18 5AP
<p><b>Background:</b>  <i>Walls, doors, windows to match existing. Existing flat felt roof to be replaced with pitched with clay tiles, with pitch to match existing pitched roof on rest of cottage. A small flat roof extension will be added to the back of the property. Surfacing materials for track same as existing. Gate repositioned into field, further away from the road. No comments from neighbours. Pre-app advice was they needed to submit an application for all the works. Outside LBD.</i></p> <p><b>Comments and Recommendation:</b>                      The proposed alterations to the cottage would improve its appearance. This is in line with HD4 of the NDP. The increase in the size of the building appears to be modest and, therefore, presumably meets H11. The alterations will involve the removal of the garage, which could be problematic in Hawkhurst. However, plenty of room for parking remains so there will be no need for on-road parking. Moving the gate further into the field will improve safety. We <b>support</b> this application.</p>			

21	19/01273/FULL	Change of use of osteopathy and garage building to form a residential dwelling, extension of building, new parking and access	St Bridget, Rye Rd, Hawkhurst, Kent TN18 5DA
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**Background:**

*Permission for the studio to be built was granted in 1999 and the planning permission was linked to the personal occupier of St Bridget. The proposal is to convert the existing studio to a two-bed bungalow by extending it. So the plot will be sub-divided between St Bridget and the new dwelling. Materials will match existing. No comments from neighbours. Outside LBD. It is beside a PROW.*

**Comments and Recommendation:**

This proposal complies with HD1a to the extent that it is on previously developed land and is for just one property. Whilst it is outside of the LBD, it is within walking distance of shops and amenities. And even more importantly, given the topography of Hawkhurst, it is a level walk which means that it is actually feasible in practice rather than just on paper.

The proposal for a 2-bed bungalow is in line with HD2 and HD3 as Hawkhurst has an identified need for smaller properties, specifically bungalows, to enable downsizing. If this were to be approved, we would expect that TWBC would add conditions to ensure that all appropriate standards are met to ensure the property is suitable for the elderly and disabled (HD3 2).

In many respects, the design complies with the guidance in HD4, for example, the use of materials to match existing. We would expect other aspects of the design guidance to be followed if permission were to be granted, for example, the inclusion of a working chimney and measures for resource efficiency.

We have some reservations as to the size of the extension to the existing studio. However, we recognise that the resulting bungalow will still be modestly sized.

We are concerned that only two parking spaces would be allocated for St Bridget in this design. However, it would appear that the St Bridget has sufficient grounds to accommodate further parking should this prove necessary. The parking arrangements will be discreet as required by HD4.

We note the proposed change in access arrangements. We are unclear from the plans as to the ownership of the land that will be used for access to St Bridget and the new property. We trust that TWBC will look into this and ensure that any future access arrangements respect the PROW which runs along this track.

Due to its location and the fact that it's an existing building, this proposal is not considered to have a detrimental impact on the AONB.

Given the need for bungalows in Hawkhurst and the need for TWBC to deliver its housing numbers, on balance we **support** this application.

22	19/01435/FULL	Erection of a two bay oak framed garage and log store	Pear Tree House, Rye Rd, Hawkhurst Kent TN18 5DA
<p><b>Background:</b>  <i>Open bay oak garage with clay tile roof. Outside LBD. It is beside a PROW. PROW officer feels no impact on PROW. No comments from residents.</i></p> <p><b>Comments and Recommendation:</b>  The garage will be made from traditional materials. It will be positioned at the rear of the garden on the drive and so there will be limited visibility from the road. It does not appear to impact on neighbouring properties and there have been no comments from residents.</p> <p>We <b>support</b> this application.</p>			
23	19/01598/FULL	Extension and conversion of existing outbuilding to annexe, plus erection of garage	Apple Tree Barn, Highgate Hill, Hawkhurst, Kent TN18 4LG
<p><b>Background:</b>  <i>The building they want to convert would have originally been the garage, but cannot be used as a garage now due to a courtyard/patio. The proposal is to extend this slightly, converting it into a spare bedroom, with space for the children to use downstairs. Materials to match existing. The new garage would be on the boundary with neighbouring properties, but is screened by a fence and trees. There have been no comments from neighbours. Pre-app was favourable in principle.</i></p> <p><b>Comments and Recommendation:</b>  The use of materials to match existing for the outbuilding and the new garage complies with HD4. The extension to the existing outbuilding is modest and would not impact negatively on the host house. Only part of the site falls within the LBD, and it has already had quite a bit of development. However, it is a big site and the proposals do not appear to result in overdevelopment. It does not appear to impact on neighbouring properties and there have been no comments from residents.</p> <p>We <b>support</b> this application. However, we would like to see a condition that ties the use of this annexe to the main house.</p>			
24	01351/FULL	Erection of a single storey rear studio extension and a new front door entrance	Middle House, Talbot Rd, Hawkhurst TN18 4NH
<p><b>Background:</b>  <i>Planning permission was granted for the conversion from the butchers in 2015. This took account of the listed status and the fact that this is right in the historic heart of the village and The Moor conversation area. Permitted development rights were restricted when the application for conversion was agreed in the interest of protecting the character and the amenities.</i></p> <p><i>One objection on the planning portal and another resident coming to speak.</i></p>			

**Comments and Recommendation:**

Within Hawkhurst, when properties have changed from commercial use to residential there has been an expectation that the appearance of the building will not be altered. The original planning application respected this.

It is not entirely clear whether Middle House is listed. Whilst the paperwork refers to the property as being Grade II listed, this does not appear to be a constraint on the TWBC website. Nevertheless, Middle House is situated in the historic heart of the village in The Moor conservation area and the conversion was sympathetic to this. The original design and access statement emphasised that "the proposal will not harm the architectural integrity not materially change its appearance as an attractive building." Further correspondence emphasised that "the design did not necessitate and change to the character of the front and therefore on the adjacent listed building and its setting." The same cannot be said for the current proposal.

We **object** to this application.

25	19/01299/FULL	Demolition of existing buildings, erection of 6no. bungalows and creation of new access to Rye Rd	Land Adjacent to Dee House, Rye Rd, Hawkhurst Kent
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**Background:**

*Proposal is for 6 x 2-bed bungalows. Largely the same as the application in January. We objected. The application was withdrawn because Highways would have objected on safety grounds. The applicant has since been working with Highways to agree a scheme that they would be happy with. They have been unable to do so. Pre-app advice was to resubmit with two options for access (Highways unhappy with both). There are two objections on the planning portal - traffic and lack of capacity in Hawkhurst's infrastructure to accommodate further housing.*

**Comments and Recommendation:**

Whilst this site is outside of the LBD, it is a small-scale development and is within walking distance of shops and amenities. Furthermore, it is a level walk which means that it is feasible in practice and not just on paper. To this extent, the proposal meets the requirements of HD1a. However, this is agricultural land, which is currently used for grazing sheep. The NDP requires that even if it has been demonstrated that the development of agricultural land for housing is necessary (which is not the case), this should only be on agricultural land graded as 4 or 5 (para 7.9). This land is grade 3.

The proposal for 6 x 2-bed bungalow is in line with HD2 and HD3 as Hawkhurst has an identified need for smaller properties, specifically bungalows, to enable downsizing.

We have reservations about the design which does not appear to be sympathetic to the vernacular of Hawkhurst as required by HD4. We also feel that there is a lack of design coherence between the detached and semi-detached bungalows. Within HD4, there is an expectation that high quality materials and styles appropriate to the place should be used. Consequently, we would prefer to see roofs with clay tiles (this has been identified as being a notable local architectural feature in paragraph 3.3 of the Design and Access statement) and not reconstituted slate. Whilst some of the designs show chimneys, these should be working chimneys (not merely cosmetic) and should be on every bungalow.

We are somewhat surprised by the assertion in the planning statement (2.2.4) that HPC did not object to the previous application, as we did. When referring to the NDP, the planning statement indicates that this is an outline application, so matters relating to HD4 will be dealt with at a later stage. However, all the other information provided indicates that this is a full application.

As residents have noted, this development, whilst only small, will have an impact on the Hawkhurst crossroads junction. At some point, the cumulative impact of the development in Hawkhurst is going to have to be taken into consideration. The crossroads is already over capacity and each additional dwelling worsens the situation. Reference to the use of bicycles is irrelevant in all applications within Hawkhurst - there are no safe cycle routes around the village and even keen cyclists very rarely cycle within Hawkhurst.

We are concerned by the destruction of such a beautiful wall to provide access for this development. The Design and Access statement refers to the wall as being "the most notable site feature." Furthermore, it refers to the site as being well screened by the wall. However, it is proposed to demolish a significant part of the wall for access. This will have a negative impact on the visual amenity as one enters Hawkhurst from the east.

We share Highways' concerns about the safety of the access in such close proximity to neighbouring developments on a busy road like the Rye Road.

We **object** to this application.

26	19/01712/FULL	Replacement outbuilding to form ancillary accommodation	Martlets, North Hill Rd, Hawkhurst TN18 4XA
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**Background:**

*The proposed replacement will be of the same footprint and height as the existing building, which is in a state of disrepair. It's not visible from the road or neighbouring properties. The intention is to create a bedroom and shower room for guests, with a games room and kitchenette for the children to use. Materials have been chosen to match the house, other than the roof that will be slate. There have been no comments from neighbours.*

**Comments and Recommendation:**

Overall, the proposed materials match the host dwelling as expected by HD4. However, clay tiles for the roof would be more appropriate than the proposal to use slate. We note that there will be no change in size from the existing outbuilding. It does not appear to impact on neighbouring properties and there have been no comments from residents.

We **support** this application, although we would like to see clay tiles for the roof. We would also request a condition that ties the use of this building to the main house.

27	19/01253/FULL	Erection of 31no. residential dwellings and retention of the existing Westfield property. Provision of altered access on to Highgate Hill, associated hard and soft landscaping, retained woodland area and sustainable urban drainage system	Westfield, Highgate Hill, Hawkhurst, Kent TN18 4LS
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**Background:**

*42 objections from residents. None supporting or neutral.*

**Comments and Recommendation:**

This application does not comply with HD1 of the NDP because there are no exceptional circumstances to justify a larger development. Whilst the planning statement may question this policy (4.83), the NDP did pass examination and was subsequently adopted by TWBC. Therefore, HD1b should be accorded considerable weight. Hawkhurst is a village in the High Weald AONB, a small-scale landscape which is suited to small-scale development. There is no denying this is a major development, despite the planning statement suggesting that it should be considered a small/medium development in accordance with paragraphs 68 & 69 of the NPPF. The NPPF glossary defines major development as 10 or more homes.

It is ridiculous to suggest that TWBC can only demonstrate a 3.3-year housing supply. TWBC have made good progress towards achieving a 5-year housing supply. Our understanding is that TWBC is close to being able to demonstrate a 5-year supply, but even if this were not the case, this does not justify inappropriate development in the AONB. Paragraph 172 makes it clear that the scale and extent of development within the AONB should be limited.

This proposal does not represent sustainable development. Whilst there may conceivably be an economic advantage from additional households' expenditure in the village, this is outweighed by the negative social impact of additional housing on the already stretched infrastructure of the village. This is not just in terms of additional traffic, congestion, pollution etc, but a lack of capacity at the doctors and school, and the complete inability of the drainage system to cope with the current level of demand, which has been pushed beyond breaking point by recent housing developments. The sewage works do not have the capacity to cope at present - sewage has to be removed by lorries. Even with this arrangement in place, sewage backs up and floods the river in the valley below this proposed development. Regardless of whether or not Southern Water has a public foul sewer available on the site, there is no capacity for any further development.

Whilst affordable housing is welcome in Hawkhurst, it is extremely disappointing that all of the market housing is 3-bed plus and there are no bungalows provided. HD2 of the NDP emphasises the need for "starter homes and homes for an aging population to provide a good social mix" (7.23). This application does nothing to meet these needs. This proposed development has, therefore, ignored the opportunity to genuinely contribute to the social component of sustainable development.

Moreover, there is no environmental benefit to this development. Wildlife will be displaced. Key views will be adversely affected. Despite an evident lack of understanding of the importance of Little Switzerland (a designated local green space within the NDP), the LVA identifies the impact as being a permanent adverse effect. HD1b makes it clear that larger developments will only be considered if there are exceptional circumstances and it can

be demonstrated that the impact on the sensitive AONB landscape setting and the considerable environmental constraints of Hawkhurst can be effectively mitigated. This is not the case for this proposal.

LP1 requires applications to demonstrate that the proposals will not have an adverse visual impact on the landscape setting of the village or views of key landmarks - view 6 of the LVA shows that this is not the case. This lack of awareness of local context is highlighted by the fact that the elements of the built form of Hawkhurst are listed as detractors. Yet the NDP emphasises the value placed on the views from the countryside towards the village (8.2). As noted, it is this that provides a sense of identity and a particular character to Hawkhurst (8.3).

We fail to understand how the proposal could have been considered to secure environmental enhancements as suggested in the Planning Statement. There will be an impact on dormice, reptiles, birds, hedgehogs, trees and hedgerows. How anyone could claim a proposal that requires up to 60 trapping visits to clear the site of reptiles can be considered to enhance biodiversity is beyond belief.

This proposal will encroach on the open space between Highgate and The Moor. Again, the absence of awareness of local context is evident by the fact that the applicant repeatedly refers to the Highgate area of Hawkhurst as the town of Hawkhurst, and considers The Moor and Gills Green etc. to be separate villages. Hawkhurst is a village which is situated on three ridges. The village has evolved in this way due to the character of its Wealden landscape, which is protected by the AONB.

It is disappointing to see the argument in the Transport Assessment that the lack of identified measures to improve the Hawkhurst crossroads junction means that KCC would be unlikely to establish an objection on capacity grounds. The fact that there is no obvious solution to this issue is no reason why the daily suffering of Hawkhurst residents should be dismissed out of hand. The road network in Hawkhurst is becoming increasingly congested with every additional house that is built and occupied. This threatens the vitality of our village. As should be evident from the numerous comments from residents, this has a detrimental impact on the health and wellbeing of everyone in Hawkhurst.

The suggestion that the site is positioned within a reasonable travel distance on foot or by bicycle to public amenities ignores not only the topography of Hawkhurst, but the dire state of the pavements and the complete absence of any safe cycling routes. How many future residents will actually choose to walk up a steep hill on narrow pavements alongside congested traffic? It is not a 4-5 minute walk to reach the main facilities. In practice, the actual time to walk to the main facilities is double this. Even an online search, which ignores topography, indicates that it is over 10 minutes to Waitrose, the closest of the mini-supermarkets. The suggestion that the footpaths up both sides of Highgate Hill to the village centre are "wide and well-lit" (paragraph 5.4.1) is quite frankly ridiculous and bears no relation to reality.

The Transport Assessment also shows a lack of local awareness by referring to The Moor as a small village south of Hawkhurst. The Moor is the historical heart of the village of Hawkhurst. Further evidence of the lack of understanding of the locality is demonstrated by the suggestion that the vast proportion of traffic through the crossroads is through traffic due to locals using alternative routes (paragraph 4.3.7). This is based on a flawed traffic survey undertaken by Dandara, which effectively limited residents to those who lived in the Highgate area of the village.

KCC Highways and TWBC are well aware that Hawkhurst is poorly served by public transport and residents are reliant on their cars. It defies belief that the conclusion that the local area encourages the use of sustainable travel modes can be drawn from Figure 5.6 because only 66% of residents

travel in a private car. It can be seen that 80% of those that work outside the home travel to work by private car. This rises to 87% if one includes all those who travel by train or underground - a reasonable interpretation given that the buses do not tie in with the times of the trains. Furthermore, the cost of new housing in Hawkhurst is well beyond the means of many of those working in the jobs available locally. Therefore, this development will only exacerbate this, resulting in further congestion in the village.

The planning statement minimises the impact on nearby listed buildings, yet residents have significant concerns, not least on the very fabric of their homes.

We **object** to this application.

Section 106 requests in the event that planning application is permitted.

MUGA - £46,000 (assuming we have £6000 worth of grants) - to be triggered when planning permission is granted.  
Outdoor gym @ KGV - £10,000.

VAS at Highgate Hill as proposed by developer.  
£8500 contribution towards reclassification of A229.

Community Hall- £67,586 towards new community hall.

The provision of affordable housing should be allocated in such a way as to provide for a minimum of 3 x 3-bed, 3 x 2-bed and 1 x 1-bed social housing for Hawkhurst residents. The remaining affordable housing should also be reserved for Hawkhurst residents.

28	19/01374/FULL	Replacement window to rear elevation (works commenced)	2 Seacox Cottages
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**Background:**

*Replaced broken window in listed building, using materials matched existing. No comments from residents.*

**Comments and Recommendation:**

Given that there have been no change in materials, we **support** this application.


