

Planning Advisory Committee

6th June 2019

No	Application No	Proposal	Location
8	19/00783/Full	Erection of Conservatory	1, East Heath Cottages, Stream Lane, Hawkhurst, Kent TN18 4RE
<p>Background: <i>There is minimal information provided in the documentation. The materials for the conservatory are brick and UPVC, but no information is provided relating to the host house. Therefore, it is difficult to say whether the materials match existing in line with the NDP. The cottage already has a conservatory on the other end of the property (not shown on the planning documents). The proposed conservatory appears to use similar materials to the existing conservatory. Supported by a neighbour (not the attached house). Outside the LBD so H11 is relevant.</i></p> <p>Comments and Recommendation: The proposed conservatory seems quite large. Given that the cottage has already had a two-storey extension and a conservatory added, we feel that this further addition does not comply with H11, due to the volume of extension.</p> <p>We object to this application.</p>			
9	19/00981/full	Proposed extension (revised scheme compared to 18/02517/FULL)	1, Highgate Hill, Hawkhurst, Kent TN18 4LB
<p>Background: <i>This is a revision to an application for an extension that was approved in 2018. At that time, HPC objected to the application on the grounds that the proposed materials did not match the host house and, therefore, the application was not in line with the NDP. This revision adds 5m to the length of the original design. The materials have also been altered to use brick rather than render on the walls. This remains a single-storey extension. No comments from residents.</i></p> <p>Comments and Recommendation: Increasing the length of the extension does not appear likely to impact on neighbouring properties (the proposal appears to be of a similar length to the rear extension on the adjoining house). The use of brick for the walls means that this proposal aligns more closely with the NDP than the previous application.</p> <p>We support this application.</p>			

10	19/01204/PNR	Change of use of an agricultural building to a flexible commercial use	The Barn, Great Pix Hall, High Street Hawkhurst, Kent
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Background:

This proposal is for change of use from an agricultural barn to a commercial distribution and storage operation. There are six comments from residents - all against the application. If this was agreed, separate planning permission would be needed for the necessary building work.

Comments and Recommendation:

There are numerous reasons why this is an inappropriate location for a commercial distribution and storage operation: it falls within the Iddenden Green conservation area; it is bounded by residential properties; it lies within the AONB in an area where it will impact on wildlife amongst others.

However, we note that there are only four relevant factors in determining whether prior approval is necessary: transport & highways impacts; noise impacts; contamination; and flood risks.

Given that the barn is “currently used for the occasional storage of hay and farm machinery for a neighbouring farmer when he does not have the required space” as stated in the recent application 18/00589 for conversion to residential use, it seems highly unlikely that the “proposed use of the building would not result in any material increase in traffic numbers in this instance” with “a modest number of daily trips” as stated in paragraph 6.9 of the planning statement. Currently, there is only occasional access to the barn as noted by residents.

It is evident that there will be significantly more traffic than is currently the case if this change of use goes ahead. Consequently, there will be both transport & highways impacts and noise impacts.

It is inconceivable that proposed change of use would not result in more noise both during construction and once in operation. The barn is situated in open countryside and noise from day-to-day operations on the site itself will, of course, impact on the neighbouring properties, as will the additional noise generated by the increased traffic using this track. The suggestion that using the building for commercial storage will generate less noise than “potentially available with its agricultural use” is misleading, given that the barn is currently only used occasionally. Furthermore, one expects agricultural noise when living in a rural area, which is not the same as the noise generated by a distribution operation.

The access to The Barn is a track shared with three other properties (Great Pix Hall, which is listed, Old Batts Barn and Sawyers Oast) which joins Slip Mill Road at the junction with the A268. This is a dangerous junction and is wholly unsuitable as access for a commercial distribution and storage operation. As residents have commented there have been a number of accidents (including a fatality). Paragraphs 6.10 and 6.12 of the planning statement indicate that the access is safe and suitable - this is clearly not the case.

Traffic within Hawkhurst is already a major issue with the crossroads already being over capacity, with further development planned. An additional distribution operation will exacerbate this. With each new development, the infrastructure within Hawkhurst becomes more and more stretched. It is vital that the cumulative effects of development are considered. Hawkhurst’s roads simply cannot continue taking more and more traffic.

We **object** to this application and request that prior approval is required.

11	19/01165/FULL	Variation of condition 2 approved plans of 15/504959/FULL – alterations to previously approved design for the replacement dwelling including angle of main roof and single storey element, height and depth of porch and overall eaves height	Tubslake Farm, Water lane, Hawkhurst, TN18 5AP
<p>Background: <i>The original application was approved in 2015. It was supported by HPC. Work started in 2017. The changes requested appear minimal. No comments from neighbours.</i></p> <p>Comments and Recommendation: The requested amendments appear minor and will not have an impact on neighbouring properties.</p> <p>We support this application.</p>			
12	19/00483/FULL	Erection of side extension	12 Wellington Cottages, Hawkhurst, Kent TN18 5EL
<p>Background: <i>The proposal is for a single-storey extension that appears to be a conservatory. There is very limited information to accompany the application, which makes it hard to determine the extent to which the extension matches the host house (and consequently aligns with the NDP). The walls will be brick to match the host house, with UPVC and glass windows and roof. The property is outside the LBD and, therefore, H11 applies. There are no comments from neighbours.</i></p> <p>Comments and Recommendation: This appears to be a modest extension, with sufficient room between this and the neighbouring house for it not to impact on neighbouring properties.</p> <p>We support this application.</p>			
13	19/01271/FULL	Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of 43 retirement living apartments with associated communal facilities, access, parking and landscaping (resubmission of application 18/02767/FULL)	The White House, Highgate Hill, Hawkhurst Kent TN18 4LB
<p>Background: <i>Other than altering the access onto Highgate Hill to make it a bell mouth and adding three extra parking spaces, this seems to be essentially the same as the previous application. Along with changing the access there appear to be a some more trees along the front. There are no comments from neighbours.</i></p>			

Comments and Recommendation:

HPC objected to the previous application on numerous grounds and this resubmission does not address our concerns.

Despite making some minor amendments, the applicant has continued to ignore the local context of Hawkhurst. The documentation still refers to only part of the development being within the AONB. Yet all of Hawkhurst lies within the AONB. The latest Transport Statement still refers to the village centre being in comfortable walking distance - on paper, yes; but this is actually up a very steep hill, with pavements that are not easily negotiable, especially if one were reliant on an electric buggy. Paragraph 5.6 of the Planning Statement focuses on the economic benefits that a private retirement housing scheme can bring to a town. The Planning Statement also quotes an Inspector in relation to an application in Norwich. Hawkhurst is a village and this lack of awareness is just one more example of why this proposal is inappropriate in this location.

It is a shame that the applicant has not used the time between submitting the applications to get a better understanding of the location and to actually take into account the feedback they received from local residents at the consultation.

Furthermore, there are now inconsistencies within the documentation as only some appear to have been updated, for example the submitted travel plan refers to 30 spaces, whereas other documentation refers to 33 spaces, which we have assumed to be the number actually proposed.

The reasons for refusal of the previous application included the fact that the access was not safe and suitable. Despite the changes, the access onto Highgate Hill (a very busy and congested A-road) continues to be in very close proximity to a number of other roads. Paragraph 4.6 of the Transport Statement indicates the distance from Lorenden Park is approximately 30m, despite acknowledging that the KCC Design Guide requires junction spacing to be greater than 30m and typically 60m.

Paragraph 4.8 of the Transport Statement asserts that the 'retirement living' development type is required to be housed in one building, which limits the positioning of the access. However, McCarthy & Stone's own website lists other sites consisting of bungalows under the retirement living category. This would be much more appropriate in this location in Hawkhurst. This refusal to deviate from the initial design is indicative of the lack of consideration given to local needs.

The level of parking proposed is still completely inappropriate for a development of this size in this location. As McCarthy & Stone are no doubt aware, parking can be a significant issue at their other developments. Yet, they are refusing to accept that the parking associated with this proposal is inadequate.

Hawkhurst's location and poor local transport connections mean that the great majority of residents in the village are reliant on cars, as are their visitors. This will also apply to future residents of this site. There is no alternative parking available, therefore, the site needs to be able to comfortably accommodate the vehicles of all residents, staff, carers and other visitors - 33 spaces is quite simply inadequate for 43 apartments. Only 5 spaces have been allowed for visitors. It seems highly unlikely that there would never be more than 5 visitors (including carers, deliveries etc. etc.) at any one time for a development of 43 dwellings.

There is no disputing the Hawkhurst crossroads junction is already overcapacity. The fact that KCC Highways are not prepared to use this as grounds for refusal does not actually change the reality of the situation faced by Hawkhurst residents every day. Any additional traffic will impact negatively on this junction, so it is quite simply incorrect to state that the proposed development will not have a material impact on the junction.

This plan does not comply with Hawkhurst's NDP. HD1b states that larger developments will only be supported if there are exceptional circumstances and it can be demonstrated that their impact on the sensitive landscape setting of the AONB and considerable environmental constraints of Hawkhurst can be effectively mitigated. This proposal fails to do so.

There are no exceptional circumstances to support this large development. TWBC is continuing to get closer to being able to demonstrate a 5-year housing supply. In line with paragraph 14 of the NPPF, TWBC only needs to be able to demonstrate a 3-year housing supply as Hawkhurst has an up-to-date NDP, which contains policies to meet its identified housing requirement. The Hawkhurst NDP did not include site allocations as its identified housing requirement had already been exceeded.

It does not demonstrate how it meets the High Weald AONB Management Plan (LP2). In terms of visual impact, there still does not appear to be a detailed visual impact assessment, despite the Planning Statement asserting that Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment and Design & Access Statement demonstrate how the impact of the development will be mitigated.

NDP HD4 expects that design, form and detail should be informed by the layout, character and style of the parish's vernacular architecture. This application does not do so - something which was raised in our comments on the original application (repeated below). No attempt has been made to address this with the Planning Statement referring back to the Design & Access Statement, which has not been updated.

This proposal is three-storeys and would dominate the street scene and block views to the wider area. The applicant refers to a three-storey property in Hawkhurst, however due to topography the lower level is sunk into the ground level. A three-story development is not typical of the village, the proposed development is completely inappropriate in its setting and in Hawkhurst generally. The design is out of character and would be more appropriate to an urban setting.

Also, in HD4 there is an expectation that locally sourced timber will be used in construction, yet this appears to have been excluded from the materials that are proposed to be sourced locally. There is an expectation that properties will have working chimneys and whilst this might not be practical for each individual apartment, it could have been considered for the communal lounge.

HD4 expects that new development should reflect the rural nature of the parish and be designed to give the impression of spaciousness with the opportunity for green landscape between buildings. Despite the claim in paragraph 6.18 of the Planning Statement that the design "is not overly large or intrusive and will still allow views into the AONB beyond it," this is quite clearly untrue. The mass and scale of this proposal are inappropriate and will overshadow neighbouring properties. It blocks views out into the countryside contrary to the LP1 of the NDP, something that need not necessarily be the case if a more sympathetic design, such as bungalows, was adopted.

It would appear that the main argument in terms of impact on the AONB continues to be the incorrect assertion that not all of the site falls within the AONB and the fact that neighbouring Herschel Place has had a more detrimental impact on the AONB.

We **object** to this application.

Section 106.

If this were to be approved:

£51,768 towards community hall - can this be allocated to cost of architect/ project manager rather than the hall itself if more likely to get approved?

£6,500 towards SID - could we ask for a speed camera instead?

£8,500 towards reclassification of A229 feasibility study

£20,000 towards Hawkhurst community bus (approx. half of what KCC are asking for, which does not benefit Hawkhurst).

£268,750 contribution to affordable housing in Hawkhurst (social rent for Hawkhurst residents)

£10,000 towards outdoor gym @ KGV

14	19/00945/FULL	Demolition of existing rear extension and porch, erection of rear extension, porch front and rear roof extensions	15, Fieldways, Hawkhurst, Kent TN18 4HU
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Background:

The application provides very little information on materials, but does say that walls and windows are to match existing. The rear extension is single storey. The porch will be deeper and adding a second storey will result in dormers front and rear. It is not evident from the plans, but two of the other bungalows in this terrace also have dormers and at least one has also changed its porch. When we discussed this at the planning committee, we were unaware of this and would have recommended refusal based on the impact on the street scene. However, with more information, I'm not sure there are any grounds to recommend refusal. There are no comments from neighbours.

Comments and Recommendation:

This appears to be quite an extensive extension. However, the property is within the LBD. Two of the other properties in this terrace of bungalows have already had dormers added. The application contains limited information with regard to proposed materials, therefore, it is difficult to ascertain whether the proposal complies with HD4 of the NDP in terms of using materials to match the host house. We request that the case officer ensure that this is the case.

Assuming that this application complies with HD4, we **support** this application.

15	19/01239/TPO	Trees Lime(T1) Lift canopy to 5 metres	Queens Head Hotel, Rye Road, Hawkhurst Kent TH18 4EY
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Background:

Lifting canopy of lime tree in rear carpark and removing self-seeded small sycamores before they do structural damage. There are no comments from neighbours.

Comments and Recommendation:

We **support** this application.

16	19/01446/FULL	Variation of condition 2 of planning permission 18/00500/Full (demolition of existing side and rear extensions and erection of 2 no2 bed dwellings with relocation of vehicular access) Condition 2 (change of design, drawing number to be changed)	Land Adjacent to Belgrave Wood bury Road Hawkhurst Kent
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Background:

The proposal is to change the rear of the building to two-storeys instead of one storey.

Comments and Recommendation:

HPC objected to the original application because of over-development of the site. This change would exacerbate this and the impact on neighbouring properties.

We **object** to this variation.

17	19/01313/OUT	Outline (appearance, landscaping and scale reserved – Creation of nine dwellings to replace existing buildings and structures associated with the former nursery and current B8 (storage and distribution) use, including the use of the existing access and provision of 15m buffer zone for the protection of adjoining ancient woodland	High Banks Nursery, Slip Mill Lane, Hawkhurst Kent TN18 5AD
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Background:

This is an outline application with only access and layout being determined at this stage. As it stands the proposal is for 2 x 3-bed bungalows, 5 x 4-bed houses and 2 x 5-bed houses. It is directly opposite one of the access points for Wellington Cottages. No comments from residents. Relatively small site on previously developed land. It is outside the LBD and not within walking distance of facilities. Adjoins ancient woodland. Doesn't mention NDP.

Comments and Recommendation:

We recognise that this application is for a small site on previously developed land and in that respect complies with HD1a (1) of Hawkhurst's NDP. However, it is outside the Limits of Built Development and is well beyond walking distance of shops and amenities. As a result, it cannot be considered a sustainable location.

It does not demonstrate effective physical integration with the settlement patterns of Hawkhurst. The depth of this development is not characteristic of residential properties in the locality, with Slip Mill Lane being characterised by ribbon development. It is misleading for the Planning Statement to

say that the site is bounded by properties, when actually it is bordered by ancient woodland and fields. A development in this location would jut out into the surrounding countryside. Paragraph 7.14 of the NDP states that “Any development around the village edges needs to be designed in a way that will provide a sense of enclosure to the village, prevent unchecked sprawl and ensure that new areas of homes can positively respond to the landscape.”

There is an expectation (paragraph 7.15) that new development will encourage access to the countryside beyond, that it integrates the used of sustainable modes of travel (7.16). This is not the case for this application. Walking distance within the NDP is defined as 800m (7.17). This site is over a mile from the shops and facilities in the village centre.

Consequently, this proposal does not comply with HD1.

The inclusion of bungalows is welcome as this would comply with the housing mix required by HD2. However, the other indicated house types are all large, which does not meet the requirements of HD2. We recognise that this is an outline application and the actual design may well be completely different. Consequently, at this stage it cannot be determined whether the application will comply with HD3 or HD4.

We appreciate that the development will not be visible from the road, although note the location of a public footpath nearby. We are concerned that there is potential for loss of privacy and overlooking of neighbouring properties.

We are also concerned that the application form indicates that there is no protected or priority species or important habitat either on the site or nearby, yet the site adjoins ancient woodland and the ecological survey identified potential for bat roosts, hedges suitable for dormice and losses of habitats suitable for nesting birds, hedgehogs and reptiles.

The access for this site would be dangerous, as it joins Slip Mill Lane opposite the road leading to Wellington Cottages.

We **object** to this application as it does not in a sustainable location and does not comply with the NDP. However, if TWBC were minded to approve this, we would request the following amendments: a bigger buffer of at least 30m to the ancient woodland, as this would not only better protect the ancient woodland, but would also limit the extent to which the development juts out and would, therefore, provide a better edge to the village.

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All Saints Church

Background:

This is an amendment to the application which was approved last year. It would see a reduction to 5 dwellings from 7 in the previous application. This would be 4 maisonettes and the tower house. The previous application also included two flats, but this has now become part of the maisonettes. There would be no external changes and minimal internal changes.

Comments and Recommendation:

We **support** this application as we believe that is essential to secure the future of All Saints Church.

