

9 April 2013 – At a meeting of the Committee held at County Hall, Chichester.

Present:

Mr Whittington (Chairman), Mr Blampied, Mr Cherry, Mr Coomber, Mr Doyle, Mr R B Dunn, Mr B Hall, Mrs Mills, Mrs Mockridge and Mr Quirk.

Apologies:

Mrs Coleman, Mr Hellawell, Mr Rogers and Mr Waight.

### **Declarations of Interest**

134. There were no declarations of interest.

### **Minutes**

135. An amendment was proposed to minute 124 to clarify that the acronym DEC stood for the Department for Energy and Climate Change.

136. Resolved – that, subject to the amendment above the minutes of the meeting held on 5 February 2013 be approved as a correct record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

### **Regulation 3 Application**

137. **WSCC/007/13/LU** Two storey extension to rear of school; single storey extension; enlargement of sealed play area; canopy; hall extension and disabled access ramp, with construction access from Cornwall Road (revision of WSCC/072/12/LU) at River Beach Primary School, Connaught Road, Littlehampton BN17 6ES.

138. The Committee received a report from the Strategic Planning Manager (copy appended to the signed version of the minutes). Jane Moseley, Principal Planner, introduced the report and advised the Committee of the key issues relating to the application (copy appended to signed version of the minutes). Ms Moseley advised the Committee that the applicant had submitted a revised development plan which showed the planned wheel wash being within the contractor's compound rather than at the site entrance.

139. Councillor Ian Buckland from Littlehampton Town Council spoke in opposition to the application. Councillor Buckland had no objection to the plans to extend the buildings themselves but was objecting to the proposed site access from Cornwall Road. Cllr Buckland suggested that the construction access should be taken via the Police and Ambulance Station which he believed was West Sussex land. Cornwall Road was a rat run to access Highdown Drive, Paterson Wilson Road, and Arundel Road and he felt that it was therefore unsuitable for site access. He reiterated that he had no issue with the school increasing its capacity or the construction phase itself, it was simply that the proposed access was an issue for many local residents.

140. A resident of Cornwall Road, also spoke in opposition to the application. The residents' house (and other adjoining properties) are directly adjacent to the proposed access route and he felt, following difficulties encountered during the school's enabling and construction phases in 2011-2012, that it was unacceptable for him and other residents to have the site access again located in Cornwall Road. The edge of the proposed access route is within 1m of his property boundary and its previous use during construction of the school had, in his opinion, resulted in fracture of a water main (and resultant flooding); extensive pavement and road damage; tree loss; sign and street lighting damage and damage to local property. There were significant historical issues with noise, vibration, odours and dust and the access route was felt to have presented an unacceptable risk to cyclists, pedestrians and other road users using Cornwall Road, Highdown Drive and the 'Green Lady' Public Right of Way, despite warning signs, vehicle restrictions and banksmen being used at the site entrance. During construction of the school in 2011, residents had witnessed several near-misses involving pedestrians and construction traffic and were deeply concerned that further incidents could occur given the constraints of the access route and the frequency of traffic and pedestrians using the area. To help demonstrate the weight of public opinion against the proposed access route, the resident had collected 166 objection signatures on a petition (in less than one day) and had support from local residents whom were deeply concerned about noise, traffic disruption, public safety and vandalism should the proposed access be used. Residents felt that the application with the site access from Cornwall Road did not satisfy WSCC's criteria for minimising impact on local residents and users of the Public Rights of Way and did not provide an acceptable solution for adequately maintaining highway capacity and road safety despite the proposed use of conditions. He urged the committee to investigate the alternative access via the Police and Ambulance Station (as suggested by Cllr Buckland) and reject the planning application in its current form.

141. Jo Funnell, a Governor at River Beach Primary School, spoke in support of the application. Mr Funnell lived locally, his parents lived in Highdown Drive and his children had attended the school. There were 820 pupils on the school roll and this application was to increase the capacity of the school as it had been built to accommodate 630 pupils and some were being taught in temporary classrooms. The application to extend the buildings themselves was not contentious. The school hall would be extended to allow more children to have their hot school lunches and classrooms that were currently below the legal size would be extended to bring them up to standard. There was not enough money available during construction in 2012 to extend the school further. All previous construction works, including before the schools merged to become River Beach, had used the Cornwall Road access. The previous construction works by Wilmot Dixon had taken a year longer than anticipated and had left the playing field unusable as it was heavily rutted. The school did not support the use of Cornwall Road as the site access following previous problems and wouldn't support it until the residents' issues had been resolved. River Beach is a community school and as such they wanted the residents to be satisfied and involved in the school.

142. Laura Floodgate, Solicitor, reminded the Committee that they had to consider the application before them including the site access from Cornwall Road.

143. Jane Moseley responded to the issues raised by the speakers. The key points are listed below:

- Officers had not responded to the queries raised about routing the access via the Police and Ambulance Station as the issue of land ownership had not been

resolved and this would cut straight across the Public Right of Way. Officers' view was that the proposed construction access was acceptable with the imposition of conditions. It was up to the applicant, not the Planning Department, to pursue this alternative.

- It was the contractor's responsibility to prevent fractures to water or gas mains and deal with any that did occur. The applicant had assured officers that it was highly unlikely as there would only be 15 Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) accessing the site over the eight month construction period. Further measures were imposed condition, including restricting the hours of construction and the use of a banksman. There would also be no articulated lorries accessing the site.

144. The Committee raised those points below in the discussion that followed:

- Concern that the proposal would cause distress to the local residents and what seems to be a feasible alternative access hadn't been properly explored.
- The development would benefit the school and the children.
- Concerned that on-street parking would need to be restricted to allow the deliveries to happen. Ian Gledhill, Planner County Highways, responded that it was possible to put temporary measures in place to alleviate any potential problems.
- A precedent had been set by previous construction projects with site access taken from Cornwall Road.
- The condition relating to no articulated lorries accessing the site needed to be properly enforced.
- Nobody had objected to the buildings themselves, just the construction access, so the alternative should be considered.

145. Laura Floodgate advised the Committee that officers were recommending that the construction access was considered acceptable with the imposition of conditions. However, having regard to the concern raised it is recommended to defer the matter so as to explore all site access options fully. It may be that an alternative construction access proposal is not technically possible, in which case the matter could be brought back to members for a final decision. If an alternative construction access proposal is possible, then the applicant would need to be encouraged to submit a new application to move the site access away from Cornwall Road.

146. Following the debate Mr R B Dunn, seconded by Mrs Mockridge, proposed that the application be deferred until the next meeting of the Committee on 4 June 2013 to explore all site access options, with supporting evidence. The applicant should be encouraged to submit a new application should it be possible for the site access to be moved away from Cornwall Road. The motion was voted on and carried.

147. Resolved – That planning permission be deferred for site access options to be explored by the applicant and considered by the Committee at a future meeting

### **Regulation 3 Application**

148. **WSCC/001/13/HP** Extensions and alterations to increase existing two form entry school (460 pupils) to three forms of entry (630 pupils) with the provision of 7 additional classrooms and related teaching and ancillary

accommodation, creation of a new all-weather games area, and additional staff car park at St Lawrence Church of England Primary School, Trinity Road, Hurstpierpoint, Hassocks BN6 9UY.

149. The Committee received a report from the Strategic Planning Manager (copy appended to the signed version of the minutes). Jane Moseley, Principal Planner, introduced the report and advised the Committee of the key issues relating to the application (copy appended to signed minutes). Ms Moseley informed the Committee that the development would take approximately 18 months and would commence in the next couple of months.

150. Mr Griffiths, the local member, spoke about the application. Hurstpierpoint was leafy and upwardly mobile and the school was a key part of bringing the community together. The current expansion plans set out in the application had been planned with the diocese and were a very satisfactory way of blending the old buildings with the new. The process of increasing the roll started in September 2012 with an additional form of entry being introduced. The development would be carried out incrementally to minimise disruption to the children and would be well managed as it was last time. A key feature of the expansion would be the School Travel Plan. There were a group of parents who were very articulate and had persuaded the County Council to spend money on a School Safety Zone (SSZ) and Mr Griffiths was sure that the Travel Plan would be robust and would encourage walking and cycling to school. Mr Griffiths was confident that the traffic could be managed with a robust travel plan which was supported by parents, governors and staff.

151. The Committee raised those points below in the discussion that followed:

- The development should go ahead as it was necessary to accommodate an increasing demand for places.
- Very supportive of the green roof and the solar panels.
- The school needed to be proactive and encourage staff to walk or cycle to work and not provide more than the additional 20 parking spaces set out in the application.
- Concerns were raised that there was no mention of the number of HGVs that would be visiting the site so there was no indication of the traffic impact.

152. Resolved – That Planning Permission be granted subject to the conditions and informatives, set out in appendix 1 of the report.

### **Update on Mineral, Waste and Regulation 3 Planning Applications**

153. The Committee received and noted a report by the County Planning Manager on applications awaiting determination (copy appended to the signed version of the minutes).

### **Report of Delegated Action**

154. The Committee received and noted a report by the County Planning Manager (copy appended to the signed version of the minutes) advising of the uses of delegated powers to grant permission for development proposals under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992 since the Planning Committee meeting on 5 February 2013.

**Date of next meeting**

155. The next meeting of the Committee would be held on Tuesday 4 June 2013 and the next site visits would take place on Thursday 30 May 2013. The Chairman thanked members of the Committee and officers for all their hard work throughout his time as Chairman.

156. The Committee also extended their thanks to the Chairman for all his hard work.

The meeting ended at 12.12 p.m.

Chairman