

These are the unadopted Minutes of Crookham Village Parish Council Planning Committee, held in the WI Hall on Tuesday, 6 March 2018 at 7.30pm. Please refer to the Minutes of the next meeting for any alterations.

Present: Cllr. Peter Kenaghan
Cllr. Julia Ambler
Cllr. Daniel Bunter
Cllr. Nick Hall
Cllr Dr. Indra Sinka

Ward Cllrs. Simon Ambler and Jenny Radley were present. There were 70 plus residents of the Parish present. In the absence of the Chairman, Cllr. Peter Kenaghan was proposed by Cllr. Julia Ambler and seconded by Cllr. Dr. Indra Sinka and took the Chair for this meeting only.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr. David Jackson and Cllr. Clive Eastwood.

2. Chairman's announcements

The Chairman asked if anyone present intended to record the meeting and no one declared such an intention.

3. Minutes of the meeting of 19 February 2018

These were agreed and signed.

4. Declarations of Interest

Members were invited to declare any interests either at this point or at the relevant agenda item. Cllr. Simon Ambler declared a personal interest in that he is a member of the HDC Planning Committee and whilst he is also a Parish Councillor he is not here in that capacity and will assist in the presentation but will take no part in the meeting.

5. Consider crime and disorder implications

Members were asked to take into consideration any possible crime and disorder implications.

6. Public Participation

The Chairman invited comments from the floor after he had given the overview from the Parish Council. Comments would be limited to 3 minutes per speaker.

7. Planning application 18/00045/OUT – Cross Farm House, Crondall Road, Crookham Village, Fleet, Hampshire GU51 5SS

Outline planning application (access only) for the construction of a 160-unit care village with 64 bed care home (class C2) and central facilities building; as well as associated vehicular and pedestrian accesses; junction improvement; estate roads; parking areas and garages; footpaths/cycleways and the change of use of agricultural land and woods to public open space (for SANG) and landscaping.

• **Overview**

The Chairman stressed that the Parish Council is only a consultee for planning applications Hart District Council is the decision maker. 13 March is the deadline for people to make comments.

Ward Cllr. Simon Ambler referred to the application and said it could be found by either the planning application or in the search function "Cross Farm" would bring it up. This particular application is for access and change of use of agricultural land to SANG. There are some indicative layouts, but he advised that these are indicative, and the actual firm plans would come forward as Reserved Matters. The indicative layouts have an opportunity to change slightly at the RM stage. The SANG requirement is because the application is within 5km of the TVB SPA which is a protected area.

A slide was presented which gave an indicative layout of the village, below which the black line is for the SANG area. There was a previous similar application which was looked at by HDC, the applicant went to appeal on it for non-determination – this is all in the applicants description. Hart is in an interim position at the moment as currently there is a consultation for the new Local Plan and some of the policies are in the new Local Plan but others have been saved from the old Local Plan and are given new designations. The land North of Netherhouse Moor gap was lost when a recent planning application was granted at Appeal.

There is now a slightly wider buffer strip between the site and the dwellings on the Street and a revised access. The affordable element in the Hart Plan for 40% but the applicant is not proposing that percentage. The SANG has been reduced in size and it is now proposed will remain in private ownership. He then explained the changes in site layout and said if residents wished to see the differences they could access both the old application and this new application. He then explained the buffer strip which varies in width behind the dwellings on The Street. The 3 story apartment blocks are between 5 metres and 10 metres above the elevation of The Street. He explained the colour coding of the various elements. The new SANG area was shown in its reduced size from the previous application. There was view of where the access would be from Crossways which would require removal of an Oak tree and changes to the highway layout. Residents were shown the artists impressions of what would be built on the site. As well as Grade Listed buildings there are a lot of “Locally Listed Buildings” within the Conservation which would be impacted upon by the application. Walking times to Fleet or the nearest bus stop were noted. There is no parking for visitors nor for SANG parking.

- **Public Participation (3 mins max per speaker)**

The Chairman then invited comments from the public. A lady living near the proposed development was concerned at the increase of traffic – she walks her children to the local school and walks into Fleet. Concern about increased traffic on the junction and the services to serve the development. Dismay at the site being the start of more and more development. Ref Crondall Road, resident said speeds are still high and he has a 10 year old daughter who will soon be walking to school. The road is broken up, there is no footway and there have been many accidents. Question ref the SANG and the SUDs – she is concerned about the flooding and the run off would come off the hill into the SUDs and affect houses on Crondall Road which are already prone to flooding. Argument seems to be there is to be a lot of demand for retirement sites for over 65’s and he feels that Fleet is already overprovisioned for such need. How does it compare elsewhere in the country? Concern about Crondall Road again and volume of traffic. The 3 storey buildings do not fit into the village – they are hideous. Again, concern about the size of the vehicles which would serve the site. Who owns the oak tree?? Question asked about figures against the last application stating that Fleet already had sufficient (or more than needed) of this type of accommodation. Lady living in Pinetops – was concerned that the rubbish collection area was against her property. Was concerned about the affordable housing being shoved into one corner. Heavy traffic – will they be working anti-social hours. Whilst delivering leaflets along the pavement from Pinetops, they observed how their condition is poor and cars are parked which will obstruct users of “buggies”. Query about C2 designation – C2 is to do with someone needs a care package. The Care Village requires residents to be over 60 and to take a care package. He picked up on this and said obviously this meant that you would need help. A question about cycle spaces was raised – do people needing care use bicycles. Better to use the space for car parking. Question that there were no fundamental differences between this application and the previous one. He believed a lot of good points including lack of parking for visitors. Transport links will only get worse. Saturation – there could be 2 people per unit. Under provision of the affordable units and the SANG being private. Belief that this will be

hugely damaging to the village, the conservation area, increased traffic. Query if sufficient thought has been given to doctors' surgeries, dentists not only the residents but amenities for the staff. Another raised laughter with concerns about the capacity of the Crematorium. Lighting was a concern with the proposed development. A FACE-IT campaigner said a core team had gone over this and it was important that we pushed the objections. There were eight reasons given in the FACEIT brochure they had delivered to every property and the gentlemen urged residents to respond along those lines. He also said that traffic was not mentioned as traffic assessments are written by Hans Christen Anderson and believed by an Inspector. Question asked will we retain our status as a village in the event that this goes through. Resident said the conservation officer did not know about this proposal nor was she aware of the earlier application. Question reference about the timeline for the Local Plan and whether this would be dealt with before it is submitted to an Inspector. The Pale Lane application had significant weight given to the Draft Local Plan and Planning Officers considered it and took expert Legal Advice from Planning Experts. However, these are subject to the decision of the Planning Inspector. The Pre-submission Local Plan does carry some weight at this stage. Resident had met the planning officer because some documents mentioned were not up on the Web and she was given to believe that a good number of comments must be received from residents. Currently there are only 76 on the web and there were over 300 to the previous application. Crossing at Village Cars – what is the purpose of this as the pavement runs out further along by the Black Horse. The Local Speedwatch Co-ordinator made a plea to those present to give him some support – he needs 3 people to set up a speedwatch unit and no one ever offers to help. He asked those present to email the Clerk if they were willing to assist and she would advise him accordingly.

- **Councillor Debate**

Cllr. Julia Ambler advised she had gone through the Local Plan Draft Submission and had drawn out Policies which make a point about this or it is in contravention of that. Her full report is detailed below:

“Sustainable development

Policy SS1 Spatial Strategy and Distribution of Growth (draft submission version of HDC LP) states: “Development will be focused within defined settlements, on previously developed land in sustainable locations, and on allocated sites as shown on the Policies Map.”

I have examined the policies map for Crookham Village and this site is not included as an allocated site. This is a change from the previous version of the plan.

Meeting need:

The application is based on there being a definable need in the area for extra care accommodation. This is covered by policy H4 (Specialist and Supported Housing) in the draft submission version of the Local Plan. According to the draft LP, the need for specialist housing for older people will be accommodated as follows: *“On larger sites new residential developments will be expected to incorporate housing/supported accommodation to meet the needs of older people and people with support needs, for example sheltered and extra care housing that falls within Use Class C3 (Residential), or residential care/nursing care which falls within Use Class C2 (Institutional Uses).”*

“Policy H4 Specialist and supported accommodation

Proposals for specialist and supported accommodation that meets the needs of older persons or others requiring specialist care will be permitted:

**a) on sites within settlement boundaries and within the new community at Hartland Village; and
b) on sites in the countryside provided:**

i. there is a demonstrated need for the development and there are no available or viable alternatives within settlement boundaries; and

ii. the site is well related to an existing settlement with access to appropriate services and facilities either on or off site.”

The 2016 SHMA estimates potential requirements for sheltered, extra care and residential care housing for the period 2014-2035. Most of the requirement is for sheltered (52 units per annum), enhanced sheltered (14 units per annum) and extra care housing (8 units per annum – total in plan period **128**).

Several extra care facilities have either been built within the plan period or have obtained planning permission for development in the near future. These include 45 properties at Hampshire Lakes in Yateley and 14 properties at King Place. I also note that Renaissance Retirement has already acquired a site on Branksomewood Road where there are plans in train to build a further 14 properties. This leaves a total requirement for the remainder of the plan period of 55 properties, not counting the 35+ unsold properties at Keble Court at Redfields. Given that the new settlement at Hartland Park as well as the new settlement at Winchfield / Murrell Green are also planned to contain a provision for a retirement properties / village close to facilities and shops, I believe that any remaining need will be satisfied without the need for this development. This application does not meet a defined local need but seeks to create a need that doesn't exist and then seeks to satisfy it.

As a point of interest, a brief estimate of the specialist accommodation for older residents currently for sale conducted yesterday reveals that in the local area, there are currently 45 properties for sale in Fleet, 94 properties within a 3 mile radius of Fleet, 181 properties within a 5 mile radius of Fleet and 343 properties within a 10 mile radius of Fleet. It is very debateable as to whether one could say that this development is urgently needed!

Damage to conservation area

Policy NBE9 Historic Environment

“Development proposals should protect, conserve and where possible enhance heritage assets and their settings, taking account of their significance, as well as the distinctive character of the District’s townscapes and landscapes.”

This planning application does irreparable harm to the setting of the conservation area of Crookham Village for the following reasons:

- The topography of the site is a gentle rise to the south culminating in a ridge which rises 5 metres above the level of properties along The Street. This means that even the lower 1.5 storey cottages will dominate the historic properties on the south side of The Street and the presence of 2 and 3 storey landmark buildings which are arranged along the highest point on the site to benefit from the ridge along the south side of Cross Farm will present a dominating presence both to the north and south of the ridge. This impact will affect the properties along the majority of the length of The Street which contains some 23 properties of either national or local heritage importance.
- An important element of the conservation area is the rural setting of the listed properties which will be irretrievably lost.
- The important views from the highest point on FP1 and FP will also be lost.
- While the buffer strip has been increased in places to between 15.5m and 18.5m, this is totally insufficient to negate the potential damage to the conservation area. In addition, two large apartment blocks have been placed immediately to the rear of Veronica Drive with a buffer strip of 9.5m. The proximity of these is likely to have a damaging impact on the setting of Grove View and West View Cottage both of which are Grade II listed.
- The presence of several blocks of two and one half and three storey landmark buildings, all of which are sited on ground of greater height than those in The Street will create a very dominant effect on the 8 Grade II listed properties that are immediately adjacent to the development.

Design

Policy NBE10 Design (BE02 of Neighbourhood Plan)

All developments should seek to achieve a high quality design and positively contribute to the overall appearance of the local area.

Development will be supported where it would meet the following relevant criteria:

- a) it promotes, reflects and incorporates the distinctive qualities of its surroundings in terms of the proposed scale, density, mass and height of development and choice of building materials. Innovative building designs will be supported provided that they are sensitive to their surroundings and help to improve the quality of the townscape or landscape;
- b) the layout of new buildings reinforces any locally distinctive street patterns, responds to climate change, and enhances permeability by facilitating access by walking or cycling modes;
- c) it respects local landscape character and sympathetically incorporates any on-site or adjoining landscape features such as trees and hedgerows, and respects or enhances views into and out of the site;
- d) e) it protects or enhances surrounding heritage assets, including their settings;

This development fails to meet any or all of these criteria in that:

- It is grossly disproportionate in terms of size, adding a total of 160 dwellings (flats and cottages) to the 50 dwellings currently in The Street.
- The buildings on The Street are a mix of styles and materials with no one style dominating the street scene. Far from improving the setting of the conservation area as stated in the proposal, the development of in excess of 160 brick built, tile hung properties similar in style to the vast majority of recent developments in Hampshire, will be 'out of keeping with the local character by virtue of the scale, design, height, prominence, materials, layout, landscaping, siting and density' (counter to policies NB10 of Local Plan and BE02 of the Neighbourhood Plan).
- The development is of a nuclear style which fails to respect the linear nature of the Village
- The height and size of the proposed apartment blocks and facilities buildings on raised ground would be totally out of character and will have a dominant effect on the generally 1.5 or 2 storey properties along The Street
- Views into and out of the site will be totally lost.

Pollution

Policy NBE12 Pollution

Development will be supported provided:

- a) it does not give rise to, or would be subject to, unacceptable levels of pollution; and
- b) it is satisfactorily demonstrated that any adverse impacts of pollution, either arising from the proposed development or impacting on proposed sensitive development or the natural environment will be adequately mitigated or otherwise minimised to an acceptable level.

The development will give rise to light pollution which given the age and general health and welfare of the proposed residents, will prove difficult, if not impossible to mitigate as would be required by this policy. The level of artificial lighting that would be required to keep elderly and infirm residents of this proposed development in a safe environment will lead to glare, light spillage and sky glow. It would also affect adversely the quality of life of neighbouring residents and be damaging to wildlife. The Street area has had special low impact street lighting installed at great cost to preserve and enhance the setting of the Conservation Area and this proposed development would negate the benefits of this investment.

Gaps between settlements

This development lies in the local gap between settlements as indicated in the draft submission version of the Local Plan. **Policy NBE2 Gaps between Settlements states:**

“Development in Gaps will only be permitted where it does not lead to the physical or visual coalescence of settlements, or damage their separate identity, either individually or cumulatively with other existing or proposed developments.”

This proposal makes much of the development being a self-contained village which will lie immediately adjacent to the established linear settlement of Crookham Village with its conservation area and historic properties. The proposed village is very different in character (more urban) and therefore there is an immediate perception of it being a separate settlement and not part of Crookham Village. While the proposal makes much of the small diminution of the size of the local gap to the south of Crookham Village, in fact, the gap would be reduced to the buffer strip which we have already seen is a maximum of between 18.5m and very much smaller in other places along its length (9.5m at the Veronica Close end).

Affordable Housing

Policy H2 Affordable Housing

On developments of 11 or more dwellings (gross), or of greater than 1,000 square metres gross residential floorspace irrespective of the number of dwellings, the Council will require no less than 40% of the new homes to be affordable housing, to be provided in accordance with the following criteria:

a) the affordable housing will be provided on site, and interspersed and distributed throughout the development mixed with the market housing;

This development seeks to offer 12 affordable homes which represents 7.5% of the properties. In addition, these homes would appear to be of a different style to the market housing on the same development and are segregated in one corner of the proposed development. This is blatantly not in accordance with HDC policy.

Travel Plan

Definition of Extra Care provision: *“Extra Care Housing is housing designed with the needs of frailer older people in mind and with varying levels of care and support available on site. People who live in Extra Care Housing have their own self-contained homes, their own front doors and a legal right to occupy the property.”* – Independent Age

Given this definition, together with the statement in the development proposal that “only residents over a certain age [suggested as 60+] and with a need to take a care package are allowed to occupy the care village”, it is interesting to note that the travel plan for this development depends heavily on the residents being “active elderly” capable of cycling or walking a couple of miles into Fleet to access shops and other facilities. Despite the references in the travel plan to public transport, this represents the Fleet Link service which is a circular demand led service operating four times a day on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays only. There is also a taxi-share service available 5 days during the week which has to be booked in advance. Both of these services are community funded to which the parish council provides the requisite funding to ensure that the parish continues to be served. Given the very limited level of local use (a couple of people in the parish), it is possible that these services may be withdrawn as they may not be funded by CVPC in the future.

There are also two school bus services which are designed to transport children to education facilities in Fleet or Farnborough. As would be expected, the timings of these services are outside the normal travelling times for residents which are stated as being between 10am and 3pm. The travel plan proposes to supplement these services with a Cross Farm bus for use by residents and employees. There are limited details available about this service but it would be difficult to see how this service would obviate the need for residents to use their own vehicles for many of their trips – such as to hospital appointments etc. Additionally, the number of planned trips would appear to be limited to a small number per day and would only be available to 14 residents at one time.

Given the paucity of access to reliable public transport in the vicinity of this development on which residents incapable of cycling or walking such distances could place reliance, it is difficult to reconcile the need to reduce the dependence of residents on their cars with the need to find alternative ways of travelling and this represents a major disparity in the logic of the travel plan. This, together with the very limited recreational, leisure and commercial facilities available within Crookham Village

would suggest that the site selected is not appropriate for older residents with additional needs due to dementia or mobility issues.

Cllr. Dr. Sinka commented that it was interesting to note that while bat, badger, great crested newt and reptile surveys have been undertaken for this site, no surveys have been undertaken for breeding or over-wintering birds for either the development area or proposed SANG due to the limited extent and common and widespread nature of the habitats within the development area, and the low likelihood of the ornithological interest of the wider site being significantly affected by use as informal open space. (The woodland and rough grassland habitats of the management area and Basingstoke Canal are of higher ornithological interest. Notable species recorded in association with woodland habitats in the management area and along the Basingstoke Canal corridor during site surveys included Marsh Tit and Siskin.)

Cllr. Dr. Sinka also said Footpath 1 is not now to be changed – it is the one in the centre – this runs past The Forge. They say it will now be in a green corridor but part of it will be running through the development. There is no parking provision for the SANG but there are 12 spaces for visitors/SANG. The remaining 160 spaces are one per unit. This new area does not fit into the linear design of The Street.

Cllr. Bunter feels very strongly about the about the failure to meet the 40% requirement for affordable housing provision. He totally supports all that has been said.

Cllr. Hill feels there is discrimination against affordable by putting them into a corner. There is a lack of pavements for walking into Fleet – road is narrow. Having to cross The Street, at least once, to get into Fleet is of concern as the reaction time of the proposed residents is slower as they age. Damage to existing dwellings. He too supports all that has been said.

The Chairman gave his thoughts as to how to respond – lead with the planning aspects that most relate to the initial decision, and follow with the points that would perhaps be more relevant to reserved matters.

Cllr. JA said she was concerned the application is a Full Application for Access and the SANG. She was referred to the FACEIT responses. Question as to the Balancing Pond. Section 1.4.2 reference the SANG that it is acceptable to Hart and Natural England – apparently this is not correct in that neither Hart nor Natural England have responded in regard to the SANG. FACEIT advised that the Grove Farm and Albany Park Appeals the QCs hammered home “NEED, NEED, NEED” and this would override policies.

- **Conclusions and Decisions**

The Chairman asked the other Members of the Committee if they wished to support or object to the application on the grounds of the arguments put forward at this meeting. All Councillors stated they objected to the application and it should be recommended for refusal on the basis of the points raised.

RESOLVED: Crookham Village Parish Council recommends refusal of this application for the following reasons:

The reasons to be drawn from the comments and reports presented to the Crookham Village Parish Council at this meeting.

The meeting closed at 21.02hrs.