

PLANNING DEVELOPMENT CONTROL (VIEWING) SUB-COMMITTEE**8 January 2013**Attendance:

Councillors :

Jeffs (Chairman) (P)

E Berry (P)
 Clear (P)
 Evans (P)
 Izard (P)
 Johnston (P)
 Lipscomb (P)

McLean (P)
 Pearce (P)
 Read (P)
 Ruffell (P)
 Scott

Others in Attendance:

Councillor Coates (Ward Member for Droxford, Soberton & Hambledon)

Officers in Attendance:

Mr I Elvin – Highways Officer
 Mrs J Pinnock – Development Management Manager
 Mrs J Rarok – Senior Planning Officer
 Mrs T Wilson – Principal Legal Officer

1. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENT

The Sub-Committee met at Droxford Village Hall where the Chairman welcomed to the meeting approximately 20 members of the public.

**2. 3 NO. TWO BEDROOM DWELLINGS – LAND TO REAR OF CLEMATIS,
HIGH STREET, DROXFORD – 11/02509/SFUL**

(Report PDC952, Item SDNP2 refers)

Councillor Lipscomb declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in respect of this item, because of his position as the Council's representative on the South Downs National Park Authority. He remained in the room and spoke and voted thereon under the dispensation granted by the Monitoring Officer.

Councillor Ruffell declared a personal (but not prejudicial) interest in respect of this item, as the applicant was a friend of his wife. Councillor Ruffell spoke and voted thereon.

The above application had been referred by the Planning Development Control Committee at its meeting held on 13 December 2012 to the Sub-Committee for determination. The Committee had agreed that it was unable to determine the application without first visiting the site, to assess the levels on

site, the effect of the development on neighbouring properties, the character of the Conservation Area and also drainage of the site. The Sub-Committee would also refer to the impact of the proposals on parking and highway safety matters in the vicinity.

Therefore, prior to this meeting, the Sub-Committee had visited the site in the company of officers. The site was located on the west side of High Street, Droxford, within the village Conservation Area, which itself was located within area of the South Downs National Park. The applicant's agent and the landowner were also available to facilitate access to the site..

At the site visit, the Sub-Committee had observed the following to assist in its consideration of the application:

- The position within the site of the front elevations of the new dwellings.
- The location and proportions of the properties at the adjacent St Mary's Close, including comparisons to the height to their eaves.
- The changes in levels through the site.
- The proposed inclusion of chimneys to the ridges of the new dwellings, which was in character with the adjacent conservation area.
- The size and position within the site of amenity space for the new dwellings.
- Trees within the site, including those proposed to be retained at the boundary, albeit lopped and maintained as a hedgerow.
- Permeable surfacing of the access driveway and parking areas etc, which would assist with drainage of surface water into the chalk ground. A small foul water treatment plant was to be located underground on site.
- The location of bin storage within the site.
- An explanation of how visibility would be improved when entering High Street from the new access driveway.

A full presentation had been given at the Planning Development Control Committee meeting on 13 December 2012, where the Committee had also heard public participation. Therefore, in accordance with procedure, the presentation at the Sub-Committee was limited to a summary of the key issues and there was no repeat of the public participation period.

Mrs Rarok reminded the Sub-Committee of the proposal as outlined in the Report. This was for a terrace of three 2 bedroom dwellings with courtyard parking to the front and associated works to the existing adjacent lay-by to the A32. The Sub-Committee was also reminded of the main objections to the application which they had duly noted during the site visit. These had particularly included the impact of the development on the character of the conservation area, highway safety concerns and loss of parking resultant from proposed changes to the lay-by.

During further discussion, there was some concern that the proposed redevelopment of the site was too intensive and may create an unwelcome precedent for similar development in the vicinity. However, Members agreed that there were no policy reasons to substantiate these concerns as reasons

for objections. Mrs Rarok also clarified that although there were some historic examples of ‘infilling’ within the village (including St Mary’s Close), she was not aware of any more recent examples in the immediate area. She also drew attention to a previous withdrawn scheme for the site which had also been for three dwellings, albeit the bulk and massing of the built form had been unacceptable. Members noted that views from the dwellings were mainly of rooftops from within the conservation area and Mrs Rarok explained that existing homes to the south would not be directly overlooked.

The Sub-Committee noted the proximity of St Mary’s Close to the north of the site and it was explained that the nearest dwelling would be approximately 3 metres away from the closest part of the new terrace. The height to the eaves of the new houses would be approximately the same as for those existing houses at St Mary’s Close. It was also confirmed that the finishing of the new dwellings would be in facing brick and plain tiles to the roof, and conditioned to be approved by the City Council.

With regard to bin storage, this was indicated on the plans presented to the Sub-Committee and this included a collection point located closer to the highway. Also in response to a question, Mrs Rarok also clarified that there were to be no gates installed at the entrance to the site.

During further discussion, Members noted that a landscape assessment undertaken by the applicant (and assessed by the Council’s aboricultural officer) had concluded that there were no trees worthy of retention within the site. However, the applicant proposed that those at the boundary were to be retained, albeit lopped and maintained as a hedgerow. Some existing trees would be retained at the western boundary and attention was drawn to Condition 13 which sought to protect them during construction. The Sub-Committee noted that any planning permission for the proposals would be subject to conditions requiring the hedgerow to be maintained for a period of 5 years. In response to some concern as to the protection of the hedgerow beyond this time, Mrs Pinnock suggested that the Council could require the removal of Permitted Development Rights with regard to means of enclosure / boundary treatment to enable the Council to assess any proposals for replacement boundary treatments in the future. This was supported by Members. It was also explained that the plans presented to the Sub-Committee were indicative and that some of the trees shown were perhaps not accurately represented.

Having regard to their earlier site visit, Members discussed highway safety concerns raised by objectors. Mr Elvin described how realignment of the lay-by adjacent to the site entrance would improve visibility when exiting onto the A32. The pavement at this location would continue to be the standard width required. Mr Elvin emphasised that the anticipated increase in traffic resulting from the new development was approximately 18 over a day, entering/exiting the site. In addition, the road at this location was not currently at capacity. Therefore, he concluded that as traffic would be able to emerge from the site safely with caution, there was unlikely to be any demonstrable harm from the proposals in terms of highway safety along this part of the A32.

Mr Elvin also reported that refuse vehicles would not need to enter the site, as operatives would locate bins from the collection point located closer to the main highway. Parking provision, including for visitors, complied with the Council's standards and the lay-by would continue to contain a disabled space, albeit this was not enforceable.

Mrs Rarok also recommended an additional condition, to ensure that none of the new dwellings would be occupied until the highway improvements were completed. This was supported by the Sub-Committee.

The Sub-Committee referred to the entrance driveway and other communal areas and as these were relatively small, Mrs Pinnock advised that their future maintenance was likely to be secured by the applicant, probably via a covenant.

At the conclusion of debate, the Sub-Committee agreed to grant planning permission for the reasons (and subject to the conditions) as set out in the Report, with additional conditions with regard to there being no occupation of the new dwellings until the highway improvements were completed and also the removal of Permitted Development Rights with regard to means of enclosure / boundary treatment, with the exact wording delegated to the Head of Planning Management.

RESOLVED:

That planning permission be granted, subject to the Conditions as set out in the Report, with new Conditions (with the exact wording delegated to the Head of Planning Management) as summarised out below:

- (i) That none of the new dwellings could be occupied until the proposed highway improvements were completed.
- (ii) That Permitted Development Rights with regard to means of enclosure / boundary treatment be removed.

The meeting commenced at 12.15pm and concluded at 1.15pm.

Chairman