



Ashington Parish Council

Planning Committee Meeting

Minutes of Ashington Parish Council Planning Committee Meeting held at 7.00pm on Wednesday 15th August 2012

Present: Councillors B Norton, M Woolley, D. Harbour, N Carver, T Kearney & K Wood

Parish Clerk K Dare

Members of the public: 2

Matt Waterhouse – Arundel Equine Hospital

Malcolm Simmonds plus colleague – representing the owners of Thistledown, Billingshurst Road.

Declarations of Interest: None

Apologies received from: Councillors J Stillwell,

Public Adjournment

A member of the public stated that she had studied the planning application for the Equine Hospital and was in favour of the development, this is a good business and would be beneficial to the area. She has concerns about highways safety as many vehicles along Billingshurst Road are speeding and WSCC seems to do nothing about this, she hoped that this application may mean that some safety issues can now be addressed.

Another member of the public also supported the proposals and agreed that something needs to be done about road safety.

Planning applications

DC/12/1276 Demolition of existing buildings, provision of second access and formation of an equine hospital and associated facilities - Westlands Farm, Billingshurst Road

The Chairman reported that recent correspondence with WSCC had revealed that they plan to undertake a local route safety survey along Billingshurst Road in 2013. WSCC has already approved installation of a VAS sign at the Spear Hill bend and this will be installed in 2013 although this would not benefit this planning application.

The applicant has been asked by WSCC to provide more highways information before the application can be fully assessed. This includes visibility splays, traffic movements etc. HDC will need to assess the application based on the information provided and the comments of all parties including WSCC Highways. It is important that the applicant discuss this application with WSCC Highways and try to address their concerns.

Cllr Carver pointed out that there is a spring on site meaning that there is some porous material underground as well as impervious clay. The applicant needs to be aware of this when planning their drainage.

External lighting and drainage still need to be addressed by the applicant.

Matt Waterhouse, representing Arundel Equine Hospital, stated that they recognise the issues raised and will be addressing them shortly. They were keen to take appropriate action to deal with all of the concerns raised.

It was proposed that until the additional Highways information is received it is premature to make official Parish Council representation on this application. Agreed by all.

Amendments

None

Correspondence

Thistledown, Billingshurst Road – Malcolm Simmonds explained that the owner was recently deceased and the new owners were keen to investigate possible uses of the site with the Parish Council. They had looked the recent Housing Needs Survey which identified a need for affordable homes plus some market homes of small size for single people or couples with no children. They recognised that the site is outside the BUAB, 1km north of the village, in the countryside and has no satisfactory link (footpath) to the village. Billingshurst Road is busy and fast and access would need to be addressed.

He presented two possible plans for the site:

1. Knock down the existing chalet bungalow and build a new, larger home in the centre of the site.
2. Knock down the existing chalet bungalow and build a number of small affordable and open market homes (@9 units).

They had not discussed these preliminary plans with HDC as they wished to get the Parish Council's opinion first. Any scheme for affordable/low cost homes would need Parish support as this site would not normally be eligible for development under HDC planning rules.

The Chairman explained that the results of the Housing Needs Survey were very fresh and the Council would be meeting with HDC in September to go through the Survey. The Parish Council would want to understand how much of the identified need is genuine given that people would need to qualify for HDC's Housing register, have the appropriate local connections etc. The Parish Council is keen to discuss a 'housing strategy' with HDC so that the need can be met whilst avoiding inappropriate development in the village. The Parish Council would not want to set a precedent after which it would be impossible to prevent further development. This 'strategy' may take the form of a Neighbourhood Plan (although these are time consuming and costly) or a less formal 'local strategy' – HDC would need to advise on this.

The Parish Council was awaiting the outcome of discussions with HDC regarding low cost/affordable homes at Penn Retreat and HDC's decision on this would shape the way future housing developments are planned.

It was proposed that the Parish Council could not give any guidance on this issue until after its meeting with HDC. It was premature to be making judgements at this stage. Agreed by all.

It was agreed that Malcolm Simmonds keep in touch with the Parish Clerk.

Meeting finished at 7.35pm

Signed.....

Date.....