

HAMBLEDON PARISH COUNCIL

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on Tuesday 4 October at 20.00
in the Village Hall

AGENDA

QUESTION TIME

Members of the public who wish to raise any matters with the Parish Council are invited to attend between 20.00 and 20.15 when there will be an opportunity for them briefly to address the meeting.

FORMAL BUSINESS

1. MINUTES of the meeting held on 30 August 2016 – previously circulated.
2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
3. FINANCE
Financial statement
Cheque for confirmation
C J Rapley – hedge cutting, September (localism initiative) £840.00
Cheques for signature
Tim Coleman - September maintenance £180.00
Surrey Hills Garden Services – Hambledon Hurst grass cutting, August £ 72.00
Gavin Jones – cricket green cutting, July/August, September £
Workstation - ink £
BDO – audit fee £120.00
Audit for the year ending 31 March 2016
To confirm acceptance of the annual return, including the approval of the external auditor's Certificate.
Dunsfold Park
To confirm the previously agreed contribution of £104 towards costs incurred by the Joint Parishes on a review of Waverley housing figures.
To consider whether to continue contributing, from reserve funds and on a pro rata and as-needed basis, to expenses incurred on further initiatives arising from the proposed Dunsfold Park development (particularly as these relate to traffic/transport).
4. PLANNING
Planning applications
Report attached
Decisions on recent applications
WA16/1106: Peony Cottage, Woodlands Road – erection of 2-storey side extension: granted
WA16/1423: Enton End Cottage, Station Lane – certificate of lawfulness for erection of side and rear extensions: granted
WA16/1473: 1 Nutbourne Cottages, Roundals Lane - erection of dwelling with attached garage following demolition of existing dwelling and attached garage: granted
WA16/1539: Hazels, Vann Lane – certificate of lawfulness for erection of conservatory: granted
WA16/1597: 6 Nutbourne Cottages, Roundals Lane – erection of 2-storey side extension: decision pending.

Orchard Farm

Report attached.

Farm Cottage

To note that Historic England has circulated its consultation report and that the details are now being assessed as the basis for a proposed addition of the cottage to the National Heritage List for England.

5. DUNSFOLD PARK; WAVERLEY LOCAL PLAN
Report to follow.
6. VILLAGE MATTERS
Highways and footpaths
To be reported orally
Hambledon House weddings
To be reported orally
Other village matters
Oral reports as required.
7. VILLAGE ORGANISATIONS
Almshouses Nursery School Village Hall Village Shop
8. OUTSIDE MEETINGS
Waverley meeting with Town/Parish Councils, 19 September: to be reported orally.
9. CORRESPONDENCE

Date of next meeting: Tuesday 8 November 2016

1. The following comments have already been agreed by the Parish Council and submitted to Waverley:

WA16/1642 – Walnut Tree Cottage, Vann Lane: extensions and alterations including double garage

The proposals would result in a significant extension of what was possibly two attached small cottages and is currently a charming house. No calculations are provided so it is difficult to tell whether the proposal meets the 40 per cent criterion; nor is there any detailed information as regards materials. The application therefore merits close examination by Waverley as regards the size, appearance and the extent to which the extended property would be in keeping with its surroundings. Providing Waverley can satisfy itself on these grounds, the Parish Council would have no objection.

WA16/1803 – Stepside Cottage, Petworth Road: certificate of lawfulness for erection of single storey extension.

Providing Waverley is satisfied that the application meets the requirements for a certificate of lawful development, the Parish Council has no objection.

2. Comments to be agreed

WA16/1813 – 4-5 Nutbourne Cottages, Rondals Lane: alterations to two dwellings to provide one

To be considered at the meeting on 4 October.

3. Applications outstanding

WA16/0820 – Hambledon House: demolition/erection of new dwellings

This application has yet to be determined, pending the carrying out of further ecological surveys.

A response from the Parish Council to the planning application for Orchard Farm follows, for consideration and, if appropriate, approval at the meeting on 4 October 2016.

Introduction

Hambleton Parish Council supports the provision of affordable housing in the Parish and has looked at the application in this light. It believes that there is a continuing local need. But it also acknowledges the great concerns, and in particular of those who live near Orchard Farm and who will be impacted by any proposed development.

Since this development was proposed nearly two years ago by English Rural Housing Association (ERHA), the Parish Council has consulted with and listened to villagers to ascertain their concerns (and particularly those expressed by residents adjacent to Orchard Farm) and sought to get these concerns addressed where possible by ERHA. The Parish Council does, however, have a duty to scrutinise the application with the needs of the whole village in mind and to ensure, insofar as it is able, that its comments reflect the views, the concerns and the aspirations of all Hambleton residents.

Public meetings were organised by the Parish Council specifically to receive the opinions of villagers so that it could form a view based upon the feedback it received. These views therefore form the basis of this response. In addition, the Parish Council has had cognisance of the weight of objections and concerns expressed in the responses to Waverley – though it notes that almost half of these are from outside the Parish.

Main Concerns

The main concerns of the Parish Council and which have been expressed by villagers are set out in the numbered paragraphs of this section (in some cases these are supported by the *notes* at the end of this submission).

As a result of these concerns, the Parish Council considers that the application, as submitted, should be refused.

1. Rural Exceptions Scheme

The Parish Council does not believe that the application complies with all the exceptional circumstances requirements to make this an allowable Rural Exceptions Scheme under the Waverley Local Plan 2002, (saved) Policy H6, an extract from which is set out in Appendix 1. Ultimately Waverley must be satisfied that the development meets required criteria for a Rural Exceptions Scheme. However, the Parish Council considers this application falls short in relation to the two following requirements of this Policy:

1.1 that the application is for a scheme which is not small in scale in the context of the village of Hambleton and so is likely to cause harm to the character of the village and countryside in the Green Belt and an AONB;

1.2 that there is insufficient certainty (in a draft of the Section 106 Agreement which accompanies the application) that, if a development were to be allowed on this site, there would be sufficient priority given to residents of Hambleton or those with a connection to Hambleton (*see Note A*).

2. Drainage

The ground/surface water discharge from the site and how to deal with water from the A283 has not been properly resolved. There appears to be no full commitment from Surrey County Council (SCC) to ensure that the outflow from the site and surplus water from the A283 is removed from the vicinity without causing problems to residents on the both sides of the A283 and in New Road (*see Note B*). A fully detailed scheme of robust design and agreed with Surrey County Council is required.

3. Traffic on the A283

Insufficient planning and priority has been given to the dangers posed by the speed and volume of traffic on the A283. This relates to the safety of (i) vehicles entering and exiting the site via the new entrance on the A283 and Wormley Lane and (ii) pedestrians crossing the A283. As a development which has to be sustainable in terms of transport links, the safety of pedestrians is an essential consideration. Regard should also be had to the safety of the ever-increasing number of cyclists.

4. Design and location of the houses

Although the development would replace existing unsightly buildings, the Parish Council takes heed of the objections that have been voiced and written, in particular by some villagers, regarding the appropriateness or otherwise of locating the development, and this style of development, on a site within the Green Belt/AONB and located between Lutyens properties. The Parish Council acknowledges that ultimately Waverley must be satisfied that ERHA has demonstrated that, so far as the Green Belt and AONB are concerned, the proposed development would not be inappropriate and that it has also taken steps to minimise the impact of the development on the built heritage. These, and the relevance or otherwise of all or part of the site being classified as brownfield, are matters for determination by the local planning authority. In the light of the opposition within parts of the village, the Parish Council asks that Waverley gives particularly careful consideration to these aspects of the application.

The Parish Council also notes that, as presently proposed, some of the houses have more, or better, design features than others. The same quality of design should be applied across the entire development, regardless of whether a dwelling is market or affordable.

5. Management of the Open Space

Whilst the Parish Council welcomes the intention to create an area of Open Space, the freehold of which is to be gifted to the Parish Council, it does not consider that sufficient clarity has been given as to responsibility for the Open Space following the transfer of the freehold. After any such transfer, responsibility for drainage and liability for drainage-related claims or problems must remain with ERHA and must be supported by a suitable indemnity, in favour of the Parish Council or whichever other body were to assume ownership, against any claims.

Many of the above concerns can be ameliorated by a smaller development on this land, more in keeping with its surroundings. Many comments by villagers have supported the view of affordable housing but of a smaller number. The Parish Council notes that ERHA has stated that it needs these numbers to make the scheme viable but it cannot express a view on this point as these commercial proposals are confidential to Waverley and Waverley will need to comment on this aspect.

Other Concerns

There are other concerns which have been cited by many opposing the application but which the Parish Council has not included in the list of main concerns above and which it does not consider are sufficient to prevent the development if the main concerns can be remedied. These are set out below. The first two bullet points concern the two additional elements which must be satisfied for an affordable development site to be a Rural Exception Site within saved Local Plan Policy H6.

- “Genuine local need”. For the reasons given below the Parish Council considers this is an aspect upon which Waverley should be satisfied. Ever since 1990, when it commissioned its first survey of all Hambledon residents to determine housing needs, the Parish Council has recognised the requirement for and been proactive in seeking to obtain modest quotas of affordable housing for local people, either as part of commercial developments or on rural exceptions sites. It unsuccessfully sought their inclusion in the developments which became The Hydons (1990 – 16 executive homes), Hambledon Park (1999 – 10 executive homes, 3 smaller homes, 13 flats) and Nutbourne Park (2010 - a single development of approximately 50,000 sq.ft plus staff accommodation). However, it did secure a scheme on a rural exceptions site, Duncombs Cottages (5 small homes), which was completed in 2002. In 2002-3, when the Parish Plan was being prepared, over half the village thought that Hambledon needed more affordable housing for locals.

Subsequent surveys commissioned in 2003 and 2010 both demonstrated the need for a further scheme should an appropriate venue become available. A further survey, again of all Hambledon residents, was carried out in January 2015 and there was an 83.12 per cent return rate. Question 5 asked whether “anyone in your [immediate] family has moved away from the parish in the last five years due to difficulty in finding a home locally”; question 6 asked whether “you or anyone living with you needs to move to alternative accommodation in the next five years”; and those answering yes to either question and who were looking to remain within the Parish were asked to complete Part 2 of the survey. Responses to Part 2 indicated a need for 15 affordable and four market houses. The Parish Council is aware that there have been some suggestions that the findings from the most recent survey should be interpreted differently to arrive at a conclusion that the level of demand from those with a Hambledon connection is much lower.

The Parish Council understands from ERHA that, as at 22 September, it had received 28 expressions of interest for the 12 affordable houses at Orchard Farm and one for one of the private dwellings (which in the first instance are also to be offered to people with a local connection). Eleven “applicants” have returned forms and 10 of these indicate a clear connection with Hambledon, primarily through existing residence. On the assumption that the number of people interested in and fulfilling eligibility criteria for the scheme remains at this level, this suggests that there is a genuine need from within Hambledon.

The Parish Council is also aware that the existing stock of small houses in Hambledon is rapidly dwindling, given the tendency for them to be enlarged. What is proposed at Orchard Farm will at least ensure a modest, on-going supply of small properties.

- Adequate access to services and amenities – the Parish Council acknowledges that there are concerns over sustainability and proper access to services and amenities. It considers that, whilst the site does not tick all the boxes for access to all amenities, including schools, its location and access to good transport links, in particular Witley Station, is such that Waverley must decide on balance whether this requirement for a Rural Exception Scheme is satisfied.

School availability is already a severe problem for Hambledon – this year the closest primary school places that were offered to seven families in the village were at Beacon Hill (Haslemere). Whilst the existing range of infrastructure provision may just be sufficient to accommodate the proposed development at Orchard Farm, it falls far short of what will be needed for the totality of development that is expected to come on stream in several of the adjacent Parishes within the next few years. This is a general problem and reference should be made to the steps that are to be taken, by Waverley, Surrey and the relevant utility companies, to ensure that the right community facilities and other local services are being planned to enhance the sustainability of communities and meet local needs, whether or not there is development at Orchard Farm.

In this connection, concerns have been raised that the site is not served by public transport and is therefore unsuitable for an affordable housing development. However, the Parish Council notes that the hourly 71 bus service runs mostly along the A283, close to the proposed development and connecting it to Milford, Godalming and Guildford, as well as Chiddingfold and Haslemere in the opposite direction. In addition the 503 bus service operates twice daily, three days a week to Godalming and Guildford, beginning at Lane End which is practically outside the proposed development. Enhanced bus use could well result from the development but, whether or not it is permitted, the Parish Council hopes that SCC and others will continue to maintain these routes for the benefit of Hambledon residents.

The proposed development is a short walk from Witley station, on the London/Portsmouth main line with easy connections to Godalming, Guildford and Haslemere. Pedestrian access would be facilitated if footpath FP144, running from the west side of the A283 to the station, were upgraded to make it usable by those wearing normal footwear (as opposed to boots – which are almost always needed given the present wet and muddy state of the path). If the application were to be granted a requirement to this effect should be included in the S106 agreement.

- **Affordability** - A further concern that has been expressed is that the affordable houses will not be “affordable”. “Affordable” has to be interpreted by reference to what is set out in relevant legislation as to what is in law deemed to be “affordable housing”. This is not a subjective test as to what a private individual considers will be affordable by potential residents. It is true that the rents will be set at 80 per cent of market value but the Parish Council has ascertained that they will not be higher than the Local Housing Allowance and that housing benefit will cover any shortfall in the rent according to the tenant’s ability to pay. The Parish Council is therefore satisfied that the rented houses will be “affordable” for all those who are eligible and it notes that the ratio of rented and shared ownership units is not set in stone and that the final ratio will be determined and reflected in the S.106 agreement in the light of actual applications.

Conclusion

If the existing application could be amended to address the above concerns, the Parish Council would be pleased to carry out a further review.

Notes to support the Main Concerns set out above

(A) Section 106 Agreement: Nomination principles. If any development is permitted the draft S.106 Deed is deficient for the reasons set out below. It includes a definition: “Parishes” which covers whatever parishes Waverley decides. This should read “ ‘Parish’ means the Parish of Hambledon.”

The Nomination Agreement refers throughout to those eligible for the affordable housing that forms part of the scheme being persons resident in or having connections with “the parishes”. This term should be replaced with “the Parish of Hambledon” in the definitions of “local affiliation” and “local connection” to ensure that first priority is given to people from Hambledon or with Hambledon connections. In line with the S.106 agreement for Duncombs Cottages (the existing affordable housing development in Hambledon), a further definition should be added to establish geographical priority criteria: “the alternative Villages or Parishes: in order of priority the following Villages or Parishes – Wormley, Chiddingfold, Hydestile, Witley, Hascombe, Dunsfold, Busbridge”.

Given the concerns within the village that affordable housing at Orchard Farm should be restricted to those with Hambledon connections, the Nomination Agreement should also stipulate that, in all cases, the Registered Provider of the housing – currently ERHA - must seek the necessary assurances from Hambledon Parish Council that any prospective tenant matches or, on securing a tenancy, will (eg by being able to take up employment in the Parish as a result of being granted a tenancy) match priority criteria. (In this connection it is worth noting that St Dominic’s School, within the parish, employs over 100 people and that staff recruitment is hampered by the high cost of housing in the area.)

(B) Drainage. Occupants of properties adjoining the site have already complained about flooding from the A283 and run-off from Orchard Farm. The Parish Council, ERHA and the County Highways department have discussed this with the owners of these properties and there have also been discussions between the Parish Council, ERHA and some of the residents in Hambledon Park and along the A283 about current flooding issues.

Ground water drainage from the site must be catered for properly. However, a major contribution to the present flooding problems is the amount of water coming off the A283. The full surface area flows down the hill, mainly into the ditch on the east side of the road from which it overflows into the adjoining properties. There has been no full commitment from SCC concerning the outflow down both sides of the A283 and its piping across New Road close to its intersection with the Petworth Road into the ditch on the south side of New Road. In this application SCC’s involvement is dealt with merely by means of a plan annexed as the last document in the Flood Risk Assessment.

The current drainage proposals, both on- and off-site, for solving flooding issues do not command the confidence of the Parish Council or the occupants of neighbouring properties; but they will be fundamental to the success of any development at Orchard Farm. The Parish Council understands that all the proposed off-site work is to be carried out by Surrey County Council. A written undertaking to this effect, accompanied by full details, is required. The proposed maintenance regime that is to be put in place should cover all on- and off-site drainage works.

Appendix 1

Waverley Borough Local Plan 2002: extract from Policy H6 – Subsidised Affordable Housing in the Green Belt and Countryside beyond the Green Belt

In exceptional circumstances, where the Council is satisfied that there is a genuine local need for subsidised affordable housing as defined in paragraph 6.30 of this Plan and which cannot be met in some other way, some small scale housing development may be permitted on sites which are within or adjoin the rural settlements listed in Policy RD1. Very exceptionally, sites which are very closely related to those settlements in character, appearance and location, but outside their developed limits (where defined on the Proposals Map), may also be acceptable for such a form of development. This exception is subject to the provisions that:

- a) the site has adequate access to services and amenities, including shops and public transport;
- b) the development is small scale and respects the form and character of the village and would not materially harm the character of the countryside; and
- c) all of the dwellings are subsidised affordable housing and management arrangements exist to ensure the dwellings remain available on this basis to local people in perpetuity.