

Fairlight Parish Council Planning Committee – 6th May 2014
Notes of Meeting

Present: Councillors S. Leadbetter (Chairman), A. Mier, Rev V.Gibbs, Mrs J. Annetts.

Public: Roger Greer, Mr & Mrs Batchelor from The Avenue.

1) Apologies for Absence : Councillor Mrs C. Gallagher

2) Code of Conduct and Disclosure of Interests: None.

3) Planning

(a) Planning Application – RR/2014/963/P
The Anchorage, The Avenue, Fairlight, TN35 4DE
Demolition of existing dwelling, erection of two dwellings

The Chairman advised that this was a third application. The applicant was not present. Neighbours, Roger Greer and Mr & Mrs Batchelor were present. The Chairman allowed each neighbour to express their views about the proposed development. Mr Greer expressed concerns that this application was little different from the earlier one other than a slight adjustment to the position of the properties.

In addition to previously expressed matters he is concerned about:

- 1) Bulk and proximity of the dwellings are harmful to his living conditions and which are over development i.e. two dwellings replacing one.
- 2) Japanese Knotweed removal. The chosen method of dig and dump will mean some digging will have to be undertaken on his property which he will not allow.
- 3) With the properties moved forward there will be no capacity on site for construction vehicles which will congest The Avenue.

Mr and Mrs Batchelor felt the properties were still dominant and would overlook their rear garden. Trees had already been removed which would increase surface water. Foundations for two properties rather than one would add to ground water problems. They had contacted their MP for support in opposing the development.

Councillors then expressed their views.

Councillor Rev Gibbs stated that the application was similar to the previous one. Access to the site would be a problem and the site owner having already removed trees would exacerbate the surface water problem. She had also heard there may be a large tank under the existing property which could leak when disturbed.

Councillor Mier was concerned that bringing the properties forward on the site made the front areas very cramped. Parking on the front was very limited and there is no on street parking available. The statutory services should be asked to look at this. Landscaping details for the front were required.

Councillor Mrs Annetts felt that the properties were dominant and overbearing and would impact on available light.

Councillor Leadbetter felt that these points should all be made together with previous comments, even though they did not form part of the reasons for the previous refusal.

Comments to Rother Planning will be:

1. Fairlight Parish Council notes the changes in the new application. However, while the proposed position of the new properties has slightly reduced the problem of overlooking, it has not eliminated it. The proposed properties are still dominant and overbearing and reduce natural light.
2. The proposed repositioning of the properties further forward on the site than previously, reduces the amount of land between the Avenue and the houses and increases the problem of congestion in The Avenue. Two parking places per property are not sufficient at this location, especially noting the non-availability of on-street parking in The Avenue and Lower Waites Lane.

3. Access for emergency vehicles is paramount and the statutory services should be consulted to ask whether they are satisfied with access to The Avenue both during construction and afterwards.
4. We are aware that there is a major problem with Japanese knotweed in the grounds of this property which are so overgrown as to be impenetrable at the rear. We also understand that the suggested removal method is "dig and dump" which in order to be successful will involve access to neighbouring properties and may involve structures on those properties. This should be investigated by referral to neighbouring residents to see whether they will be prepared to give access, which we understand they may not be. Rother need to assess whether the proposed method of dealing with the knotweed is acceptable and in line with current best practice.
5. Any redevelopment proposal other than one to one replacement within 100m of the cliff is of concern to the Parish Council due to the effect the development might have on cliff stability and the long-term risk to the new properties.
6. The site of the Anchorage is within 100m of the cliff edge and directly in line with the Rockmead Road landslip / coastal erosion area. While the 2007 engineering scheme which includes a ground water pumping system has reduced the rate of erosion, the works are a temporary measure expected to last for only a further 43 years, after which time erosion and slippage will increase. The cost of maintaining the pumping system falls on Rother (with a contribution from Fairlight Parish Council) and in the event of a major failure there is at present no guarantee of funding to maintain the scheme. The winter storms and very wet weather have taken their toll on the works and on the unprotected area between the two berms.
7. The replacement of one dwelling with two will increase surface water run-off. The Parish Council considers it essential that surface water be piped away as proposed by the applicant and this should be a requirement of any consent. The possibility of a tank under the existing building and damage during demolition needs to be considered.
8. The Avenue is a narrow cul-de-sac, and an unadopted road, it should be a condition of any consent that the developer commission a condition survey before work commences, keeps the roadway in good repair during work, and returns it to its original condition before completion.
9. For the same reason it should be a condition that any site traffic , delivery vehicles and site workers vehicles must not be parked on The Avenue or Lower Waites Lane but be kept within the site or on the public highway.
10. While the applicant proposes to retain mature trees at the rear the Planning Authority should check to see whether there are trees on the site that merit Tree Preservation Orders and request the planting of new trees where others are removed, in particular to provide screening to Sea Holly. Unfortunately trees to the front of the existing properties have been removed since the recent refusal of the previous planning application.
11. Any comments made by residents in neighbouring properties should be considered.

(b) Planning Application - RR/2014/913/P
Mallydams, Martineau Lane, Fairlight
 Proposed double garage and studio

Councillors felt that little detail had been submitted in support of this application. No information was submitted about the existing building, Mallydams Farm or its location in relation to other properties.

However further research showed it to be a remote property and the location and style of the consent applied for would have no adverse impact on others.

It was noted that although there was no plan for a first floor, there were Velux windows and a window at first floor level in a gable end. This might suggest the intention that the first floor as habitable accommodation, which should not be allowed unless a further application for this is made.

Comments to Rother Planning will be:

- a) Very little detail has been provided to support this application, specifically no plan to show its location in relation to other properties and nothing which would allow the Parish Council to judge whether it is in character with nearby property.
- b) There is no first floor plan although the elevations indicate a loft as there are velux windows and a first floor window on the gable end.
- c) There should be a condition to prohibit residential use unless a specific approval for such use is agreed in future.
- d) Despite these concerns The Parish Council has no objection to this proposal, subject to the restriction on use as habitable accommodation.
- e) Any comments from residents in nearby properties should be considered.

4) Any Other Business

The Chairman advised the committee that following the decision by the Parish Council to investigate whether a Neighbourhood Plan is appropriate for Fairlight, he had identified a potential consultant.

Action in Rural Sussex assists communities in such matters and have presented information on Neighbourhood Plans at RALC events and are working on a number of Neighbourhood Plans in Sussex.

It was agreed that the Chairman would draft a briefing note to allow AirS to understand the issues for Fairlight with a view to seeking initial advice.

Councillor Rev. Gibbs expressed further concern about the number of cars and condition of a property in Lower Waites Lane. Cllr Mier will investigate what powers may exist to deal with this.

Meeting closed 3.45 pm

5) Date and Venue of Next Meeting

Tuesday 20th May 2014 at 2.30pm. in Fairlight Village Hall unless otherwise notified.