

**UNADOPTED
POLEGATE TOWN COUNCIL**

PLANNING MEETING

Minutes of the meeting held on 18 November 2008 in St. John's Church Hall, Polegate at 7.00 p.m.

Present: Cllrs. T. Voyce (Chair), Mrs C. Berry, G. Carter, J. Harmer, Mrs M. Piper, J. Rogers and A. Watkins
65 members of the public
1 member of the press

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and opened proceedings.

8301 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs. Barber and Wright.

8302 Declarations of interest in any items on the agenda

Cllr. Rogers declared a personal and prejudicial interest in application no. WD/12/TC – Installation of a 15m wooden pole supporting two flat panel antennae at Polegate CP School.

8303 Minutes of the meeting held on 14 October 2008

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 October 2008 were adopted as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

8304 Matters arising from the meeting held on 14 October 2008

There were none.

8305 Planning applications:

WD/2008/2180/MEA Honey Farm, Eastbourne Road, Polegate.

Up to 520 dwellings together with a one form entry primary school incorporating community uses, a convenience store and doctors surgery.

The Chair addressed the meeting as follows:

We are here to make our recommendations on an outline planning application on behalf of Pelham Holdings Limited for up to 520 dwellings (comprising 416 houses and 104 flats over 13 hectares), a one form entry primary school incorporating a community centre, provision for a health centre and convenience store at Honey Farm, Eastbourne Road, Polegate. As this is an outline application, details of design, layout, landscaping etc. will be submitted at a later stage in the decision process. It will be for Wealden District Council to make the decision.

In September 2006, Wealden District Council refused to grant planning permission for two outline applications on behalf of the then Pelham Homes for 1000 and 2000 homes respectively, including employment development, schools and open space.

The application before us tonight is a new submission, the principle differences being:

1. the reduction in number of proposed dwellings to 520
 2. the omission of employment development
 3. the omission of a Parkway station
 4. amendments to the link road
 5. a reduction in size of the development to within criteria set out in the Wealden District Council non-statutory local plan.
- Polegate has been identified as the favoured core focus for major development.

in the Local Development Framework, South East Plan, Wealden District Council non-statutory local plan and also within the consultation document recently commissioned on behalf of the Eastbourne Hailsham Triangle. The primary benefits are stated to be its direct rail connection to London and the intersection of the A22 and A27.

However, this application acknowledges a Parkway station is undeliverable, previously suggested to be the answer to Polegate's commuter parking problems and the vital link road will now probably take the form of a wide single carriageway, routed westward from the Cophall roundabout without grade separation, which the Highways Agency cannot deliver until 2016 at the earliest. A transport assessment carried out by the developers states that it can be demonstrated that 400 dwellings can come forward in advance of the west of Polegate highway improvements. In the interim, these would be accessed off the Cophall roundabout. On completion of the improvements the A27 would be de-trunked and all vehicular access would be from it, subject to the Highways Agency delivering the new road.

Polegate Town Council has formulated its own Masterplan for Polegate in which this Council has opted for imposed development to be located on land south of the bypass, in order that it would be sustainable and would integrate with the existing settlement. Contrary to the Masterplan this application is at risk of creating an independent settlement due to its positioning on the opposite side of a busy major road.

There has been much interest in this application. Particular thanks to members of Long Man Parish Council, the Campaign to Protect Rural England and residents who have petitioned against the pedestrian/cycle links that would create access from the proposed site into Brookside Avenue. The committee will endeavour to take all public comments into account.

It was noted that 23 letters of objection had been received and 1 petition containing 55 signatures from the residents of Guardian Court. The main objections from residents being:

- The proposed cycle and pedestrian links from the proposed development to the town centre via Brookside Avenue. Submission of an alternative route.
- Increase in commuter parking
- Traffic flow on the A22
- Impact of increased footfall to houses fronting Brook Street
- Proposed development would conflict with the countryside and AONB
- Concerns re noise pollution
- Lack of infrastructure
- Lack of A27 link road

The Chair then reminded members of the public that Polegate Town Council will give recommendations on this application only. It is for Wealden District Council to make a decision.

The Chair then asked for a proposal to suspend Standing Orders to allow members of the public to speak and, due to the numbers in attendance, it will be necessary to keep strictly to two minutes per person.

It was proposed, seconded and agreed by all to suspend Standing Orders.

STANDING ORDERS SUSPENDED

The following comments, concerns and objections were raised by members of the public.

1. Particular concerns regarding traffic issues as the Highways Agency had indicated that the link road could not be delivered until 2016 and should any development be permitted before the west of Polegate highway improvements were in place, the entire road network around Polegate and beyond would be grid locked.
2. The proposed pedestrian and cycle accesses via Brookside Avenue were considered to be unnecessary and would cause unacceptable loss of amenity and disturbance to nearby residents.
3. Police design recommendations are against the provision of alleyways which compromise the security of homes and create potential corridors of anti social behaviour.
4. Loss of trees, bushes and fencing which currently provide relief from traffic noise.
5. There are already two existing and perfectly satisfactory routes into the town centre for both pedestrians and cyclists via the Hailsham Road at the north end of the town and via Eastbourne Road/High Street at the south end of the town. There would be no advantage in creating additional routes via quiet residential streets either in terms of saving time or convenience.
6. The proposed crossings over the A2270 are considered to be hazardous and would cause unnecessary traffic congestion.
7. Concerns regarding the possibility of flooding particularly as the land at the proposed site rises to the rear and there are no proposals for the additional water run off and sewage containment.
8. The proposed development would be detrimental to the countryside which is in an AONB and clearly visible from the Downs.
9. There is no local employment for a large influx of people and the trains to London are already standing room only with no plans in sight to increase the number of trains.

There being no further comments the Standing Orders were reinstated.

The Chair then made his recommendation comment to members as follows:

My primary concern is that the A27 link is outside of the applicants' control and finance and is therefore not viable.

Furthermore, PW1 states that if there is any development west of the A27, no part of the development should be occupied until the completion of the A27 trunk road, together with other improvements.

There is no approved timetable within which the Highways Agency must deliver this and, as it is not included in the application, it must be considered that the application is unsustainable.

Pelham Holdings make no offer of developers' contributions and have said in the past that they have no funds available for major road improvements with an application of this size.

For reasons of road access and infrastructure improvement issues alone, I would recommend refusal of outline planning permission for this application.

We must be especially mindful that the application is in outline leaving much of the contentious detail, such as the vehicular and pedestrian access routes, to be decided later if it is approved.

I now open up the discussion to other members for comment, whether in agreement or to the contrary.

Member discussion then ensued and the following comments and objections were agreed for submission to Wealden District Council.

OBJECTIONS:

1. The A27 link is outside of the applicants' control and finance and is therefore not viable.
2. Traffic in the area is already grid locked at peak times and therefore no development should be allowed until Cophall roundabout achieves graded separation and a proper bypass.
3. PW1 states that if there is any development west of the A27, no part of the development should be occupied until the completion of the A27 trunk road, together with other improvements.
4. There is no approved timetable within which the Highways Agency must deliver this and, as it is not included in the application, it must be considered that the application is unsustainable.
5. The proposed crossings on the A2270 would cause unacceptable traffic congestion; the area around Polegate and beyond is already grid locked at peak times and any further congestion would encourage additional traffic to rat run through quiet residential streets.
6. Pelham Holdings make no offer of developers' contributions and have said in the past that they have no funds available for major road improvements with an application of this size.
7. The proposed pedestrian/cycle accesses via Brookside Avenue are contrary to secure design as recommended by the police and would create potential corridors of anti social behaviour and compromise the security of nearby houses. There are already two adequate routes into the town centre along the Hailsham Road in the north and Eastbourne Road/High Street in the south.
8. The application is outline only and the majority of important issues would become reserved matters which would achieve limited input from this Council and local residents.
9. The high density of housing is unacceptable.
10. The development would have a detrimental effect on the countryside and be clearly visible in an AONB with the additional problems of light pollution.
11. There is insufficient infrastructure to support this development and no proposals are in place to provide supporting infrastructure in the foreseeable future.
12. The Department of Transport have directed that this application may not be granted until this time next year "to permit further consideration of the deliverability and timing of the proposed west of Polegate trunk road improvement scheme, taking into account the Regional Funding Allocation refresh currently being carried out by the Regional Transport Board."

Cllr. Berry left the meeting at this point.

WD/12/TC Consultation under Article 13 of the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995 – installation of a 15m wooden pole supporting two flat panel antennae. Polegate CP School, Oakleaf Drive, Polegate.

Cllr. Rogers having declared an interest in this application, left the meeting and took no part in the discussions.

OBJECTIONS:

1. It has not been demonstrated that the School could not mast share.
2. Broadband is obtainable by other means and there are aerial masts that can be shared locally.

Cllr. Rogers returned to the meeting.

8306 Planning Decisions**Permissions:**

WD/2008/2265/F Proposed extension at side and rear including replacing existing conservatory. 7 Shepham Lane, Polegate.

WD/2008/2157/AI 5 x s/s fascia signs. 3 x s/s wall mounted signs. 2 x s/s menu boards. 7 The Centre, Polegate.

WD/2008/2018/F Proposed open sided lean-to shelter for smokers. Polegate Community Centre, 54 Windsor Way, Polegate.

WD/2008/2235/F Erect porch at front. 67 Station Road, Polegate.

WD/2008/2478/F New roof with dormers, extension of first floor accommodation and dependant alterations. 96 Eastbourne Road, Polegate.

WD/2008/2287/F Two-storey side extension and front parking area. 9 Walnut Walk, Polegate.

WD/2008/2416/F Single-storey extension to rear. 44 Windmill Road, Polegate.

WD/2008/2327/F Single-storey side and rear extension. 48 Gosford Way, Polegate.

Refusals:

WD/2008/2060/FR Retrospective permission for storage of building material and use of yard for hardstanding. 1 Dittons Yard, Dittons Road, Polegate.

WD/2008/2168/LDP Rooms in roof with rear dormer. 1 Willow Drive, Polegate.

8307 Planning Updates and General Information

There were no relevant items.