

# WADHURST PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Planning Committee held remotely via Zoom on Saturday 13th February 2021 at 9.30am

Present: - Cllrs Anderson, Moore (C), Moore (P), Murphy (chair), Niell, Smith

1. To receive apologies for absence – **none received**
2. To receive declarations of interest and updates to members' register of interest – **Cllrs P Moore and C Moore declared a personal interest in application number [WD/2021/0053/F](#).**
3. To approve the minutes of the meeting of 30<sup>th</sup> January 2021 – **approved.**
4. To discuss matters arising from the minutes of the meeting of 2<sup>nd</sup> January - **none**
5. Public forum – **5 members of the public present. One spoke in favour of application no [WD/2020/2624/F](#); and one spoke regarding concerns relating to trees at Marling House.**

## 6. Licence and planning applications

### 6.1 Licencing: none

### 6.2 Planning:

#### 6.2.1 [WD/2020/2448/F](#)

Expiry date for comments: 15<sup>th</sup> February 2021

Location: BARN ADJACENT TO OAK COTTAGE, COOMBE LANE, WADHURST, TN5 6NU.

Description: Erection of dwelling to replace barn conversion approved under the terms of planning permission WD/2019/2416/F with detached garage and proposed access gates.

**COMMENT: STRONGLY OBJECT.** The parish council notes the comments in the officer report pertaining to approved application WD/2019/2416/F, which this application seeks to replace, as follows:

“The site is set within a countryside location where new residential dwellings would not normally be acceptable. A previous application was considered unacceptable...the re-use of the agricultural building proposed sits squarely with NPPF policy for dwellings in the countryside, and this national policy is more up-to-date than the current local policy. The revisions to the design and appearance of the barn conversion, with reduced glazing, is considered to maintain the utilitarian barn appearance and respect the rural landscape setting. As such the proposal represents an acceptable conversion of a rural building into a dwelling and it is recommended permission be granted.”

This new application seeks to replace rather than convert the barn, and does not maintain the utilitarian barn appearance (contrary to WDG Section 11, Para 2.1) or respect the rural landscape setting upon which the previous application was justified. It does not enhance or conserve the High Weald AONB, and has extensive glazing, including a glazed gable, which would pollute the unusually dark skies of this area, which have been identified as worthy of conservation by the International Dark Sky Association. The parish council notes that the approved conversion was on the basis of reduced glazing, and this application shows a very significant increase in glazing compared to the approved conversion. The new orientation, increased footprint and volume of the proposed dwelling significantly increase its visual impact on its surroundings. Due to its elevated position, the change in orientation means that the proposed dwelling will be visible from a long distance in this area of open countryside. The new garage structure in the proposal highlights the

inappropriate change of character as cautioned by WDG Section 11, Para 2.10, which cautions that major remodelling of the utilitarian setting is unlikely to receive planning support. The proposed design is out of keeping with the HWHDG and WDG. The overall design is urban and out of keeping in the HWAONB, having no regard to the HWHDG, local character area or surrounding properties. Amongst other issues, the roof pitch is too shallow ( HWHDG DG7) as is the choice of modern material treatments such as zinc and aluminium (HWHDG DG7), excessive glazing, and an inappropriate colour scheme.

**6.2.2 Application No: [WD/2021/0053/F](#)**

Expiry date for comments: 16<sup>th</sup> February 2021

Location: RYDAL, JONAS LANE, WADHURST, TN5 6RQ

Description: Detached three-bay garage

**COMMENTS: OBJECTION on the grounds of mass and prominence in the landscape.**

**6.2.3 Application No: [WD/2021/0092/F](#)**

Expiry date for comments: 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2021

Location: HURSTWOOD, DURGATES, WADHURST, TN5 6RS

Description: PROPOSED REAR CONSERVATORY

**COMMENTS: NO OBJECTION**

**6.2.4 Application No: [WD/2020/0200/MAJ](#)**

Expiry date for comments: 15<sup>th</sup> February 2021

Location: SKINNERS FARM, BEST BEECH HILL, WADHURST, TN5 6JT

Description: Proposed conversion of former granary to provide a three-bedroom dwelling, Sussex Barn (Colyers Barn) to provide a four-bedroom dwelling and dairy to provide a four-bedroom dwelling; conversion of former Oast as ancillary accommodation to Skinners Farmhouse to provide two-bedroom first floor apartment with games room and home office below; separation of former annexe from Skinners Farmhouse and extension to provide separate two-bedroom dwelling; and two new four-bedroom detached houses as 'enabling' development under Para 202 of NPPF with associated landscaping and external works. Retrospective listed building consent for works to Skinners Farmhouse, Granary, Sussex Barn (Colyers Barn) and Oast. Replacement septic tank for Skinners Farmhouse and Oast and the construction of a new shared sewerage treatment tank. Amended Plans received 18 and 21 January 2021. The amendments concern additional Highway information, amended designs to plots 6 and 7 (the enabling development), revised layout/landscaping and further viability information regarding the project.

**COMMENTS: STRONGLY OBJECT. WPC has previously objected to this planning application, and notes the large number of objections from neighbours both to the original and amended application. The WPC agrees with objectors that the amended plans do not ameliorate the concerns raised. In particular, WPC notes the letter, dated 1<sup>st</sup> February 2021, from Strutt & Parker and fully agrees with objection, and reasons for it, set out in this letter. Of particular note is the following passage:**

**“the applicants’ confirmation that rectifying the unauthorised works already undertaken to the heritage assets will be fully funded by the applicant constitutes a reasonable alternative to secure the future of the Listed and Curtilage Listed Buildings in accordance with Paragraph 13 GPA4. It is difficult to understand therefore the need and necessity for the use of enabling development in this case....the amended application therefore fails to justify the requirement of enabling development element to facilitate the conversion of the heritage assets to provide a total of 4no. dwellings, the provision of ancillary residential accommodation, and the 2no. new-build dwellings.”**

**6.2.5 Application No: [WD/2020/2623/F](#)**

Expiry date for comments: 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2021

Location: COUSLEY PLACE, COUSLEY WOOD ROAD, WADHURST, TN5 6HF

## WADHURST PARISH COUNCIL

Description: Proposed replacement heritage out-building in the existing walled garden, photovoltaic panels and a new private sewer treatment tank.

**COMMENT: NO OBJECTION**

### **6.2.6 Application No: [WD/2020/2624/F](#)**

Expiry date for comments: 17<sup>th</sup> February 2021

Location: CHERRY HINTON, OLD STATION ROAD, WADHURST, TN5 6TZ

Description: Replacement of the existing rear glazed conservatory, roof conversion, internal alterations, redesign of existing access to garden and demolition of existing garage. Amended Plans received 01 February 2021 to show the reduction of dormer and removal of Juliette balcony.

**COMMENT: NO OBJECTION**

### **6.2.7 Application No: [WD/2021/0151/F](#)**

Expiry date for comments: 25<sup>th</sup> February 2021

Location: BUTTONS BARN, BUTTONS LANE, WADHURST, TN5 6NW

Description: A 3 metre by 6 metre shed to the side of the barn.

**COMMENT: NO OBJECTION**

### **6.2.8 Application No: [WD/2021/0019/F](#)**

Expiry date for comments: 25<sup>th</sup> February 2021

Location: GREAT BUTTS FARM, THE GRANARY, COUSLEY WOOD ROAD, WADHURST, TN5 6EP

Description: Erection of a two bay garage and shed together with ancillary works.

**COMMENT: NO OBJECTION**

### **6.2.9 Application No: [WD/2020/2453/F](#)**

Expiry date for comments: 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021

Location: CHANCES, NEWBURY LANE, WADHURST, TN5 6HD

Description: single storey rear extension to existing house

**COMMENT: OBJECTION. The proposed design is unsympathetic to the High Weald AONB Design Guide. The existing dwelling has sympathy to its surroundings; with features including a half-hipped roof, catslide roof and pitched dormers. The proposed flat roof to the extension detracts from the design and character of the existing dwelling. WPC would be sympathetic to a revised application with a re-designed roof.**

**To consider notices of decisions received:**

### **Application No. [WD/2020/2396/F](#)**

Location: BALACLAVA COACH HOUSE, PELL GREEN, WADHURST, TN5 6EE

Description: PROPOSED 2-STOREY EXTENSION AND ALTERATIONS TO REAR OF DWELLING

Decision: approved

### **Application No. [WD/2020/1944/F](#)**

Location: DEVONHURST, MAYFIELD LANE, WADHURST, TN5 6JE

Description: Extension of existing garage to provide additional ancillary living accommodation to the main house.

Decision: approved

### **Application No. [WD/2020/2370/F](#)**

Location: ROSEMARY COTTAGE, STATION ROAD, WADHURST, TN5 6RS

Description: PROPOSED SIDE AND REAR EXTENSION

Decision: approved

**Certificate of Lawful Development:** *None*  
**Raise no Objections:** *None*  
**Prior Approval Required:** *None*  
**Not Issued:** *None*  
**Issued:** *None*  
**Refusals:** *None*  
**Withdrawn:** *None*  
**Permits the Modification:** *None*  
**Appeals:** *None*  
**Enforcement Notice:** *None*

**Breach of Conditions Notice:** *None*

**7. Planning Control**

**8. To discuss Tree Preservation Orders:**

**9. Conservation areas**

**10. Community Infrastructure Levy**

**11. Urgent issues –**

**planning application WD/2020/2426/MRM**

Location: Land east of Old Station Road, Wadhurst, TN5 6TZ

Description: Reserved matters pursuant to outline planning permission WD/2016/0402/MAO (revised illustrative layout for 21 dwellings, scheme now excludes footway and road improvement and includes provisional drainage measures).

**COMMENT: STRONGLY OBJECT on the following grounds:**

The following documents were used by the WPC when considering this development:

- Wealden Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document – Part 1 Nov 2008
- Designing the Public Realm
- High Weald Housing Design Guide, Nov 2019 (HWHDG)

On site mature trees have already been removed from the site. The plans do not show the existing large oaks at the entrance to the site. These trees should be retained and no further mature trees should be removed. Based on evidence from the Wealden Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document – Part 1 Nov 2008 (WDG-Part 1).

WDG-Part 1 - Section	Description	Objection
Para 4.13 Principle 3 - Retaining existing natural features:	<i>Existing natural features within or adjacent to a site, can help shape a development and should, therefore, be integrated into</i>	A number of mature trees have been removed in the process of building the proposed site

## WADHURST PARISH COUNCIL

	<i>the layout, thus contributing to a sense of place. Retaining existing features on a site is often more effective in maintaining - or creating - a tangible character than is likely to be affected by imposed change</i>	Letter dated 16 January 2021 (appendix 1) from Ian Noel , Wadhurst Parish Council Tree Warden, supports the WPC's objection to the felling of two large mature oak trees at the entrance to the site.
Para 4.14	<i>Knowing what elements to retain and how best to incorporate them will be informed by the appraisal and assessment of the site and its context. Such features can include the natural topography, rivers, streams, ponds, trees, woodlands, hedgerows, rocky outcrops and wildlife habitats.</i>	

Walking Cycling and Active Lifestyles.

### DESIGNING FOR WALKING, CYCLING & ACTIVE LIFESTYLES

Based on evidence from the Wealden Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document – Part 1 Nov 2008 (WDG-Part 1)

<b>WDG-Part 1 - Section 7</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Objection</b>
Para 8.9 Principle 1– Establishing a movement strategy:	<i>By putting the pedestrian and cyclist at the forefront of the movement requirements within the street, this makes a positive contribution to the overall character of a place which is no longer subservient to vehicular movement.</i>	This layout is not designed for walking and cycling but is instead designed around the car.

<p>Para 8.13</p>	<div data-bbox="507 123 906 515" data-label="Diagram"> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>User Hierarchy</b></p> <p>Consider first Pedestrians</p> <p style="text-align: center;"> </p> <p style="text-align: center;">- - -</p> <p style="text-align: center;">  Cyclists</p> <p style="text-align: center;">- - -</p> <p style="text-align: center;">  Public Transport Users</p> <p style="text-align: center;">- - -</p> <p style="text-align: center;">  Specialist Service Vehicles (e.g. emergency Services, Waste etc)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p>Consider last Other motor traffic</p> </div> <p>If this hierarchy is applied, it should lead to a design that increases the attractiveness and practicality of walking, cycling and the use of public transport. Cars may be of secondary importance but delays arising in their use are unlikely to be significant in residential areas.</p>	
<p>Para 8.16</p>	<p>Although pedestrians should be placed first, a ‘layered’ approach is needed to ensure that all of the various principal modes of travel are considered. This starts with walking, then cycling, direct pedestrian routes with open and active frontages addressing the street. Such designs will automatically result in welcoming and secure spaces, providing conditions under which sustainable forms of transport can be better integrated. Walking and cycling can also make a positive impact on the character of a place as well as, public health and climate change through the reduction of carbon emissions.</p>	
<p>Para 8.19</p>	<p>The design of new developments should seek to bring residents together, thereby establishing and reinforcing the sense of</p>	

## WADHURST PARISH COUNCIL

	community and neighbourhood, and to ensure local facilities are within walking distance.	
Para 8.22	<i>However, these are not upper limits. Current guidance in Planning Policy Guidance (PPG)13 'Transport' states that walking offers the greatest potential to replace short car trips, particularly those under 2 kilometres. The walkable catchment needs to be defined to establish the distance from the new residential environment (nearest, centre and most distant) to such facilities or the requirement to include local facilities within a new residential development or contribution toward improved provision.</i>	
Para 8.36	<i>For cycleway design, the basic requirements for safe, convenient cycling are similar to those for walking, namely that they should : n Provide clear, direct routes, without breaks or complicated diversions.</i>	

**CONNECTING BEYOND THE SITE (DG2):** High Weald Housing Design Guide, Nov 2019 (HWHHDG) Permeability states, *To maintain this characteristic, it is important for new development to sit successfully as an integrated piece of the village that people can walk and travel through, rather than a separate 'estate' that they travel into.*

Based on evidence from the Wealden Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document – Part 1 Nov 2008 (WDG-Part 1)

<b>WDG-Part 1 Section 7</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Objection</b>
8 Facilitating ease of movement  Para 8.6	<i>Permeability has fundamental layout implications and must be considered early in the design process. The degree to which people find using and passing through buildings, places and</i>	The site is formed of two dead ends leading onto a minor connecting road. The entrance to the neighbouring allotments included in previous

## WADHURST PARISH COUNCIL

	<p><i>spaces comfortable, safe and convenient, plays a large part in determining how successful the place will be. Streets are more than just conduits for vehicles and should offer an attractive environment for all. They are where people meet, thereby defining neighbourhoods, and can have individual characters and qualities (Paving the Way – Cobe/ODPM 2002).</i></p>	<p>iterations of the design in previous planning applications has been removed. Such an entrance would bring permeability to this site.</p>
<p>Para 8.10</p>	<p><i>A movement strategy will, therefore, form the basis for improving connections to the existing network and/or creating a new street pattern. Some of the factors to consider in relation to the various modes of transport (walking, cycling, bus, car) have been identified in the Urban Design Compendium (English Partnerships, Llewelyn-Davies 1999)</i></p>	
<p>Para 8.23</p>	<p><i>A development with small blocks and a finer urban grain gives more choice amongst a network of routes – direct and connected – within and beyond the site, and increased visual permeability. A finer urban grain also instills a sense of security which can be improved through incorporation of the following :</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Pedestrian routes as part of shared corridors and road space Building frontages (front doors and windows to habitable rooms) should be along the streets;</i></li> <li>● <i>Street lighting carefully sited to provide for night-time safety but avoiding street clutter and light pollution</i></li> <li>● <i>Car access not totally removed but controlled</i></li> </ul>	



## WADHURST PARISH COUNCIL

	<p><i>to maintain activity and provide natural surveillance</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Ensuring all routes are accessible to all users of all abilities</i></li> </ul>	
<p>Para 8.26</p>	<p><i>There are few new residential sites within Wealden that are 'stand-alone'. Most new residential development tends to be within, or on the edge of, existing settlements. In this context, the degree of connection in a new development is often the key to success. New routes should connect into existing routes and movement patterns. The creation of connected or 'permeable' networks also lead to a more even spread of traffic throughout the area and avoids the need for a distributor road with no frontage development.</i></p>	
<p>Para 8.27</p>	<p><i>External connectivity may often be lacking, even where there is generally good internal permeability. The number of external connections provided for the development depends on the nature of the surroundings and the potential implications for highway safety. Residential areas adjacent to each other should be well connected. This assists in reducing isolated development patterns and neighbourhoods, creating connections and inclusiveness but should not create rat-run.</i></p>	
<p>Para 8.28</p>	<p><i>To create a permeable network, it is generally recommended that streets with a one-way operation are avoided as these require additional signing and often result in longer vehicle</i></p>	

# WADHURST PARISH COUNCIL

	<i>journeys (Manual for Streets – DCLG, DoT 2007).</i>	
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<p><b>LAYOUT AND STRUCTURING THE SITE (DG3):</b> High Weald Housing Design Guide, Nov 2019 (HWHDG) Street Hierarchies states,</p>	<p><b>Objection:</b></p>
<p><i>New streets should be arranged to form a clear hierarchy. hierarchy of streets should follow the historic tradition of being determined by their movement function, to create integrity in the development and so that people can understand the role of the street they are on.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Streets that connect beyond the site, i.e. main access routes, have the highest movement function.</b> This function should be expressed at all scales; they should feel public in character, with the longest sight lines, and whilst they should be the widest in the scheme, they should not be too wide in relation to the existing street network. They may include street trees where appropriate</li> <li>● <b>Side streets are next in the hierarchy.</b> These should have a noticeable reduction in scale, and may often not contain separate pavements</li> </ul>	<p>The site has no street hierarchy with the main access route being junior with no housing frontages on to it and being a junior link road to two cul-de-sacs. The view from the main access route is of high boarded fencing; side house walls and garden walls.</p>

<p><b>LAYOUT AND STRUCTURING THE SITE (DG3)</b> High Weald Housing Design Guide, Nov 2019 (HWHDG)</p>	<p><b>Objection:</b></p>
<p><b>Accessing Gardens</b> states, <i>Accessing back gardens particularly for terrace properties can be problematic, and requires consideration at the early stages of site</i></p>	<p>Plots 17 &amp; 18) Long narrow alleys between high back and side close-board fences are unpleasant to use, and should be avoided.</p>

## WADHURST PARISH COUNCIL

<p><i>layout, plot configuration and building placement.</i></p> <p><i>If garden access for terraced dwellings is required, then this should be via cut-throughs or 'twitchen' style lanes between the buildings, characteristic in the High Weald, or by generous pathways off parking courts.</i></p>	<p>Likewise, making people access gardens through their homes is undesirable.</p>
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<p><b>LAYOUT AND STRUCTURING THE SITE (DG3)</b> High Weald Housing Design Guide, Nov 2019 (HWHHDG)</p>	<p>Objection:</p>
<p><b>Locating Meaningful Public Realm</b> states, <i>Well-designed public spaces add value to new housing, offer a valuable amenity to the community and help to encourage active and healthy lifestyles, supporting people's health and wellbeing. The land-take for artificial surfaces should be minimised enabling significant areas of natural surface and avoiding the sterilising of soil, a fundamental component of the High Weald landscape.</i></p>	<p>There is a lack of public space. There is no public green space. Every available area has been hard landscaped for car access, parking /building</p> <p>The plot has left over space around the edge of the close board fencing which is not meaningful public space and will be difficult to manage</p>
<p><b>ACCESSING GARDENS</b> Accessing back gardens particularly for terrace properties can be problematic, and requires consideration at the early stages of site layout, plot configuration and building placement. If garden access for terraced dwellings is required, then this should be via cut-throughs or 'twitchen' style lanes between the buildings, characteristic in the High Weald, or by generous pathways off parking courts. Long narrow alleys between high back and side close-board fences are unpleasant to use, and should be avoided. Likewise, making people access gardens through their homes is undesirable.</p>	<p>Two of the properties can only access their back gardens through their homes</p>

# WADHURST PARISH COUNCIL

<p><b>USING BUILDING TO DEFINE STREETS AND SPACES (DG4)</b> High Weald Housing Design Guide, Nov 2019 (HWHDG)</p>	<p>Objection:</p>
<p><b>Left Over Spaces</b> states <i>Such small 'left-over' spaces should be avoided in plot shape, disposition and layout and in building placement. They are ill-defined as neither private curtilage nor meaningful public realm, they serve no visual, amenity or ecological purpose, and are difficult to manage.</i></p>	<p>The plot has left over space around the edge of the close board fencing which is not meaningful public space and will be difficult to manage.</p>
<p><b>THE RIGHT BUILD FORM (DG5)</b> High Weald Housing Design Guide, Nov 2019 (HWHDG)</p>	<p>Objections:</p>
<p>Clusters of large, detached buildings of similar scale, massing, footprint and spacing are uncharacteristic of the High Weald and should be avoided in new developments. Semi-detached buildings are usually associated with the Victorian period and later, and should be used sparingly, interspersed with the more prevalent built forms.</p>	<p>Plot 12 &amp; 13 and Plot 14&amp; 15 are similar buildings with different brick and roof tiles this is not typical of the HWAONB.</p>
<p><b>ANCILLARY &amp; STORAGE (DG8)</b> High Weald Housing Design Guide, Nov 2019</p>	<p>The site design lacks proper consideration for bin storage in that it has not created space to store waste and recycling containers in a way that does not detract from the street scene</p> <p>The current proposal indicates that bins will be stored in back gardens.</p> <p>The back gardens on this development are not large and in two of the plots back gardens are accessed through the house contrary to HWH DG 3 (as noted above).</p>

# WADHURST PARISH COUNCIL

	<p>For all but one of the other plots there are long passageways to have to transport bins along between the front and back.</p> <p>The proposal for storage of bins in the back gardens is therefore impractical unlikely to be used, resulting in an unsightly street scene.</p>
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The WPC has concerns over certain aspects of the surface water drainage, in particular the drain which runs alongside the main access road. There are no pipe sizes shown on the drawings but this drain runs down quite steeply (close to 1/10 fall) into an interceptor chamber (IC ) adjacent to the detention pond where it turns through 90 degrees into the detention pond with only a very shallow fall in the section of pipe from the IC to the detention pond.

The last inspection chamber referred to above is connected to the linear drainage across the entrance to the site. THE WPC is concerned that in storm conditions, this chamber could easily be overwhelmed and water that was supposed to be discharged to the detention pond will divert to the linear drainage and then onto the public highway.

WPC notes the submitted objection (1/2/21) of East Sussex County Council, the lead local flood authority, on the grounds that the applicant has failed to meet the requirements to assess its acceptability in flood risk terms. WPC also notes the concerns of neighbours on Old Station Road submitted in respect of this and other previous planning applications on this site with regard to the flooding they now experience, and which they fear will be considerably exacerbated by this development.

## Appendix 1:

Ian Noel,  
Wadhurst Tree Warden,  
XXXXXXXX

16th January 2021

Dear Sir/ Madam

I write with concern over the application at Old Station Road Wadhurst WD/2020-2426.

Firstly, there is no compensation for the loss of two large mature oak trees which were felled due to this development, at the entrance to the site. this really needs to be rectified. It was unnecessary felling of two mature Landmark trees and it was against policies Wealden District Council, and the NPPF landscape sections, as well as the High Weald Management Plan (2019-2024).

There should replacement planting of two large replacement Oaks at minimum. (Current guidance is for at least 3 replacement trees per each mature tree lost.)

T1 and T2 Quercus robur species were both are large Oaks. When I measured them back in 2016, I found that T2 had a diameter at breast height of 910 mm. I find it hard to find a reason why this tree T2 has shrunk over the past 4 years to 890 mm. At that time, I commented on the planning application noting that the tree survey was incorrect. This letter will be in Wealden District Council's records. The applicant produced a new tree survey with updated measurements of the trees, but are all the trees accurately measured as it would seem not?

Both these T1 and T2 are mature Oaks, and they are large important Landmark trees. They are both on the verge of becoming Veteran trees due to their size. In fact, I would class T2 as a Veteran tree and that it will be in need of enhanced protection. PJC's current description of the tree is that it is overmature in fair physiological condition

## WADHURST PARISH COUNCIL

and fair structural condition with ecological potential. The report says that this tree needs remedial works. I think that is misleading. It is a veteran tree and hence has high value, and it is not near any houses, therefore there are few targets it could hit.

If it is a veteran tree which I believe it is, then these works will need to be carried out in light of its Veteran status and high ecological status. I would expect a Veteran tree management plan to be part of the landscape management plan for this site. PJC do mention in their report in their category grading that it is a B1 plus B2 plus B3. This helps substantiate my claim that this is a Veteran status tree and should be treated as such.

I also note that some of the trees are going to be affected by the proposed Swale to engineer's design/pond on site in the south-west corner. This swale/pond cannot be built without severe disruption to the RPAs of the mature trees nearby. These trees are boundary trees and are visible in the wider landscape. They should also be part of a TPO group and hence protected.

One of the underlying principles of Biodiversity Net Gain is that replacement of one type of habitat by another habitat is not net gain and hence cannot be justified. So, in this area I would argue that there is no justifiable reason for the mature trees to be lost, due to excavation in their RPA to make way for a swale/ pond. Though I do concede that some of the trees are ash trees which are showing signs of ash dieback disease, others are important mature trees such as Scots Pine. I would not like to see this mature tree belt lost. I would instead rather see these trees replaced, to keep the sylvan nature of the green edges of the site.

I am very disappointed by the fact that the eastern edge of the site which has an old hedge line and associated hedge bank, is to be completely destroyed by hard landscaping and fences, if I interpret the landscape plan correctly. I believe this is not in line with Wealden Planning policy on hedges and trees and should be resisted. It is not in line with the High Weald Management Plan/ Design Guide, and should be strongly resisted.

There is little planting on the edges of site on the Landscape plan. On the western boundary they refer to a "new hedge" whereas there is an existing hedge there. Clearly it would be better to keep it, protect and retain it and introduce new native species in the gaps.

It is essential that a robust tree planting and hedge planting of the edges of the site is undertaken as this would be more in line with the High Weald Management Plan, and the High Weald Design Guide.

At the entrance in bed A1 instead of using native species as recommended in the High Weald design guide it is proposed to use ornamental species. That is poor in view of the current need to enhance.

There appears to be very dense housing and car parking, with an internal landscape where there seems to be little planting in the public areas. Instead of softer hedge planting fencing is proposed. The result will be quite grim in my view.

At present the site has had fencing put around it. This is very visually intrusive and demonstrates a lack of care on the part of the developer in terms of ecology, trees and hedges. Why haven't they planted a native hedgerow with tree all the way round, instead of using a fence?

I cannot see how this landscape scheme will produce a Biodiversity Net Gain, with this amount of hard landscaping and housing on such a small site. Wealden Councillors need to be better informed about Biodiversity net Gain so they don't allow poor design in schemes like this one in the future.

Yours sincerely,

Ian Noel

Wadhurst Tree Warden.

**Meeting closed 10.36**

The next planning committee meeting is scheduled for 27th February 2021.

DRAFT