



SANDGATE PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of a PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING
Held at 6.00pm on Tuesday 24th February 2015

At Sandgate Parish Council/Library Offices
James Morris Court, Sandgate High Street, Sandgate.

These Minutes will only be deemed to be a correct record of the meeting when approved and signed at the next meeting

The meeting opened at 6.16pm. The Chairman apologised for the late start of the meeting. There were 35 members of the public in attendance.

Present: **Chairman** **Cllr Gary Fuller**
 Councillors **Nina Bliss, Marjorie Findlay-Stone, Leo Griggs and Tim Prater**
 The Chairman of the Council arrived at 7pm
 Clerks **A Oates**

1. **Apologies for absence:** Cllrs Michael Fitch and Vanessa Reay
2. **Declarations of Interest** – there was none.
3. **Minutes of the last meeting** – the minutes of the meeting held on 10th February 2015, having been previously circulated, were approved as a correct record and signed.
 Proposed by: Cllr M Findlay-Stone
 Seconded by: Cllr N Bliss
 Agreed by all

4. Planning applications for discussion

Various members of the public spoke about several of the applications.

In respect of Y11/0137/SH, issues covered: (1) what were the details of the drainage – it was answered that this information was included in the main application; (2) technical problems with accessing the on-line application on SDC's website – apparently there were problems with the password; (3) parking on Military Road, access to and from the site, dangers for pedestrians – this was a key issue for the members of the public and it was queried if KCC had given an opinion on this; (4) would this development if it went ahead lead to further works; (5) pertinence of the 'enabling' aspect; could a legal sanction be built into this; (6) point of order: questioning the validity that the agent was present – he had been invited; (7) a year ago an addendum had been added to the TPO so that it could be overturned; (8) the applicant's expenditure and profit margin were queried; it was answered that this was in the application. Various correspondences had been received (*listed under item 10 below*).

4.1 Y11/0137/SH

Land adjoining Sir John Moore Barracks Military Road	Amended/additional plans: Outline application for the erection of 5 detached houses, including details of layout, scale and access, together with change of use and conversion of Martello Tower 6 to a residential holiday let and Martello Tower 7 and adjacent underground water tank to a dwelling, together with associated access road and engineering works, parking, landscaping and ancillary outbuilding to serve Martello Tower 6.	Received 05 Feb 2015 Comments by 26 Feb 2015 Objection (as per comments given below) For: 5; Against: 0; Abstentions: 0; Interest Declared: 0
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Members welcomed the letter from Sandgate Society objecting to this application; they felt it was a very good letter and covered all the key points. It was agreed that the contents of the letter should be copied into the parish council's response to SDC. The agreed wording for the objection was as follows:

Sandgate Parish Council objects to this application on the grounds given below, concurring with comments submitted by Sandgate Society; references pertain to the Sandgate Design Statement:

Sandgate's Natural Landscapes (pg 42): These wooded hillsides are particularly vulnerable to development pressures given their dominant low density character and their attractive location and views afforded from such coastal settings. Although the beach, and sea, is perhaps more readily visible and visited, the wooded hillsides that provide the strong backdrop for the character and appearance of Sandgate are equally significant and their preservation and enhancement is at the heart of this Design Statement. Given the problems of land instability along the escarpments the existing woodlands also have a vital role, as promoted by Defra, the Forestry Commission and the Environment Agency, in reducing surface water run-off and soil erosion.

Development in areas of increased landslip risk (pg 51- SDS 8) Development of areas of known and potential land instability in the parish will only be permitted to commence if the Local Planning Authority is satisfied that the site can be developed and used safely and that the works will not add to the instability of the site or adjoining land and that stabilisation measures required are environmentally acceptable. Development that is likely to make land elsewhere unstable will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that the concern is unfounded or environmentally acceptable remediation measures can be carried out. Applicants may be required to submit a soil stability report before applications can be determined. Stabilisation works may invoke the need for an Environmental Impact Assessment and will be secured by use of planning conditions or by legal agreement

Protection of the wooded escarpments (pg 52 – SDS 9) The low density of development on the wooded escarpments of the parish is a significant contributor to the overall character and appearance of Sandgate and the visual amenity of the wider area. Development proposals that would result in the intensification of development, the loss of existing well-established vegetation or harm to the special environmental quality of these wooded hillsides should be rejected.

In addition, the existing mature wooded skyline of the Shorncliffe and Radnor Cliff escarpments is a particularly distinct and well-established landscape characteristic and should be preserved and enhanced with additional appropriate planting where possible to protect the positive and distinctive contribution that the wooded skyline makes to the environmental character and appearance of Sandgate.

The value of these wooded escarpment areas was also recognized in the Sandgate Study conducted by Shepway District Council in 1975: 'This area is comparatively steep and was not developed by the military authorities. Being in its natural state and overgrown with shrubs and bushes, it contributes strongly to the amenity of the high slopes and should remain free of development'.

The proposed development clearly meets all of the criteria for rejecting an application -

- intensification of development
- loss of existing well-established vegetation (some 40+ trees)
- harm to the special environmental quality of the wooded hillsides

Neither does the development contribute to the preservation nor the enhancement of landscape characteristic of the wooded skyline escarpment. To the contrary the development reduces the size of wooded escarpment.

The following factors are also material to rejecting the application -

a) **Traffic management**

Military Road, from which cars would access and exit the site, is a busy road with the access road located on a 'blind' bend. This is already a dangerous section of road because of the recent increase in parking by local residents using the newly constructed recreation area and boule pitch. The extra traffic poses an unacceptable risk to car drivers and pedestrians.

b) **Public footpaths**

The site is crossed by well-used footpaths. The proposed diversion of footpaths designated under the Highways Act 1980 and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 is an unacceptable diminution of access to the whole of the wooded escarpment and to the immediate surroundings of the Martello Towers.

c) **Access road to Martello Tower # 7**

The vehicle access road runs across most of the site. This road is intrusive and prejudicial to the special character of the site and especially for walkers and the local Boy Scouts who use it, and also the wide variety of flora and fauna to be found there.

In summary, Sandgate Parish Council is strongly opposed to the proposed development which fatally undermines the special protection that the community wants and the statutory authorities have endorsed for the wooded escarpments at Sandgate village. The enabling development is not a site which previously had housing and also seriously diminishes the visual amenity of the green corridor which runs along this length of Military Road with the recreation ground on the other side of the road.

4.2 Y14/0300/SH

Shorncliffe Garrison	Amended plans: Hybrid application for the redevelopment of land – full details on SDC's website	Received 15 Feb 2015 Comments by 27 Feb 2015 <i>Comment not authorised</i>
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The Chairman pointed out that, as it was less than six months since this application was discussed and commented upon, it could not be discussed at the meeting. Under the council's standing orders, it would require six councillors to put in writing that they wish to review its decision. However, the chairman asked if anyone in the public gallery wished to speak. One person asked whether SPC's comment on its objection included a reference to delaying demolition of buildings – it was answered that this had been included. Members noted the amended plans but agreed that the amendments were not significant and didn't address the concerns stated in the previous objection. There was nothing to warrant a new look at the application.

4.3 Y15/0112/SH

The Chairman changed the order of the agenda as there were members of the public who wished to speak about Y15/0112/SH. Correspondence had been received (*noted under Correspondence below*) and was previously circulated.

Land adjoining West Wedge	Section 73 application to vary condition 2 of planning permission Y11/0537/SH for the erection of two, four storey blocks comprising ten flats in total, following excavation of the site together with parking below and associated engineering works, in order to allow an increase in the overall height of the building by 750mm, reduce the lower ground floor area of the building, and omit the tandem parking layout, provide increased refuse storage and secure cycle provision	Received 11 Feb 2015 Comments by 04 March 2015 Objection For: 6; Against: 0; Abstentions: 0; Interests Declared: 0
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We object on the basis that the parish council's original comments made in 2011 still stand and on the grounds that the height has increased, the parking has reduced and the plans are unclear.

We believe that there is a covenant on the land restricting the height to no more than a single storey and we understand that the people living at Hawkhurst, adjacent to the land, have not been notified of the new planning application.

4.4 Y15/0080/SH

Cirilla Radnor Cliff Crescent	Erection of a single storey side extension, formation of a balcony, and other external alterations, together with extension of existing garage to create a linked garden workshop	Received 05 Feb 2015 Comments by 26 Feb 2015 No Objection For: 6; Against: 0; Abstentions: 0; Interests Declared: 0
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4.5 Y15/0119/SH

Land opposite Lisheen The Undercliff	Felling of a holm oak subject of Tree Preservation Order No. 3 of 1973	Received 10 Feb 2015 Comments by 03 Mar 2015 Objection For: 6; Against: 0; Abstentions: 0; Interests Declared: 0
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We object on the grounds that there is insufficient justification that the tree needs to be felled. We would understand an application for tree management.

4.6 Y15/0131/SH

Land opposite 21 Encombe	Felling of a sycamore (T1) and crown reduce back to previous reduction points of two sycamores (T2 and T3) all subject of Tree Preservation Order No. 8 of 2002	Received 11 Feb 2015 Comments by 04 March 2015 No Objection For: 6; Against: 0; Abstentions: 0; Interests Declared: 0
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4.7 Y15/0118/SH

4 Undercliff Cottages North Lane	Alterations to external finishes of a dwelling house in a conservation area	Received 13 Feb 2015 Comments by 06 March 2015 Deferred to next meeting
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4.8 Y15/0114/SH

Copthorne The Undercliff	Works to trees situated within a conservation area comprising: crown reduction of a copper beech (B) by reducing the height by a maximum of 3.5 metres and laterals by a maximum of 5 metres; reduction of selected lateral limbs by approximately 2 metres of a eucalyptus (A) and crown reduction of three sycamores (C) by reducing the height by a maximum of 6.5 metres and laterals on southern side of canopy by a maximum of 5 metres	Received 18 Feb 2015 Comments by 11 March 2015 No Objection For: 6; Against: 0; Abstentions: 0; Interests Declared: 0
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5. **Land adjoining Radnor Cliff** – nothing to report.
6. **Shorncliffe Development** – this was covered under 4.2 above.
7. **SDC's Consultation on draft Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule** – this was noted.
8. **SDC's Places and Policies Local Plan Consultation** – Cllr Marjorie Findlay-Stone was nominated to put the council's response together and she accepted. The deadline for responses to the consultation is 11th March; she would liaise with the parish clerk.
9. **Update on previous planning applications**
Y14/1260/SH - 7 Marine Point, Radnor Cliff - Approved with Conditions

10. Correspondence

- 10.1 Copy of email, dated 11th February, from Graham Adams to Mr Geering at SDC – re Y11/0137/SH Land adjoining Sir John Moore Barracks. Noted.
- 10.2 Copy of letter, dated 13th February, from Philippa Baker to Mr Geering – re Y11/0137/SH Land adjoining Sir John Moore Barracks. Noted.
- 10.3 Letter dated 14th February, received 23rd February, from Linda Rene-Martin to SPC – re Y11/0137/SH Land adjoining Sir John Moore Barracks. Noted.
- 10.4 Letter from Sandgate Society, dated 24th February to SPC – re Y11/0137/SH Land adjoining Sir John Moore Barracks. Covered under item 4 above.
- 10.5 Copy of letter from Euan Williamson to Head of Planning at SDC, dated 24th February – re Y15/0112/SH Land adjoining West Wedge. Noted.
- 10.6 Copy of letter from the Sandgate Society to Head of Planning at SDC, dated 24th February – re Y15/0112/SH Land adjoining West Wedge. Noted.
- 10.7 Email from Alison Cummings, dated 20th February, re Y14/0979/SH 42 Sandgate High Street – advising the parish council of three points. The committee noted her explanations but did not withdraw its objection to the application.
- 10.8 Response from SDC, dated 24th February, to query from the parish clerk re Y15/0028/SH Greenway, Sunnyside Road – the parish council was not asked to comment on this application as it is a Lawful Development Certificate.

- 11. Information** - Cllr G Fuller was reminded that he had been asked to complete SDC's survey via Survey Monkey on the matter of the parish council accessing planning applications on-line. The deadline for responses was 27th February.

- 12. Date of the next Planning Meeting** – 3rd March 2015 at 6.30pm

The meeting ended at 7.55pm

Signed by the Planning Committee Chairman.....Date.....