

UNADOPTED

POLEGATE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Town Council held on Wednesday 21st July 2010 at St Johns Church Hall High Street Polegate at 7.30 p.m.

Present: Cllrs T Voyce (Chair), J Rogers (Chair of Planning), G Carter, T Wright, Mrs M Piper, J Harmer, Mrs J Voyce, Mrs C Berry, A Watkins and R Martin.

40 members of the public, members of CPRE and Cranedown Society

9318 Apologies for absence

The following Apologies had been received and accepted –
Cllrs S Barber and M Cunningham and S Shing – Work Commitments
Cllr Mrs J Bigsby and Mrs D Joy – Family Commitments

9319 Declarations of interest

None

9320 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 doctor's surgery.

The Mayor gave a brief history of the planning application.

- On the 19th November 2008 Polegate Town Council recommended refusal of the outline planning application of behalf of Pelham Holdings Ltd for up to 520 dwellings, comprising of 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.
- On 29th September 2009, Polegate Town Council recommended refusal of the amended outline planning application. Please remember that Polegate Town Council are only consultees on all planning applications, however the Council still recommended refusal of the outline planning application.
- On 17th December 2009, the Planning Committee members at Wealden District Council refused the planning application.
- On the 15th June 2010 Pelham Holdings Ltd lodged an appeal against the Wealden District Councils decision with the Planning Inspectorate.
- On the 14th July 2010 Polegate Town Council was granted Rule 6 status from the Planning Inspectorate. This will enable the Council to receive copies of all documents relied on at the Public Inquiry first hand and for Polegate Town Council to participate in its own right.
- All representations to the Planning Inspectorate must be received by the 20th August 2010 or they will not be considered.
- If members of the public wish any details of who to send comments to please ring the Council office on 01323 488114. That is for everyone if you have any further comments on the planning application it must be received by the Planning Inspectorate by the 20th August 2010.
- What does Rule 6 mean? Rule 6 parties will be called to a pre-inquiry meeting in October in order to set out the timetable of the hearing.

- Provisional dates as far as we are aware for the Public Inquiry are that it will be held at the Boship Farm Hotel from Tuesday 11th to 14th January and from Tuesday 14th to 21st January 2011.
- Following the Queens Speech the Government announced it was scrapping Regional Housing Targets and Wealden District Council Planning Policy Team are working to revise its core strategy to reflect this. Producing a draft document in October and hopefully finalising it in time for adoption at the Wealden District Council Meeting in December.

We must now consider our arguments and evidence in order to strengthen our Case against this development.

Standing Orders Suspended

The Mayor invited Mr Stuart Meier from CPRE to give a brief power point Presentation.

Mr Meier highlighted how this development would effect Polegate Town including Footbridge/cycle bridge. Mr Meier showed where the road would join Cophall Roundabout and the increase in the traffic that it would create. Mr Meier stated That the site would be completely unsustainable resulting in everyone driving Wherever they had to go rather than being able to walk. It site would not be part Of Polegate at all.

In summary –

- CPRE believe that the site would be unacceptable because of its access whether by foot or bike or even car because you would have to drive a long Way round.
- It is unsustainable as it is an island marooned on the wrong side of the A27.
- There is a risk to the recently established South Downs National Park.
- Wootten Manor is also protected and has listed buildings
- CPRE want to avoid unsustainable developments.

CPRE are setting up a sub group and its objectives are to Stop Polegate Expanding Westward (SPEW). Members of the public are welcome to join either SPEW or CPRE.

What can members of the public do –

- Support your Town Council and Town Councillors
- Write to the Planning Inspectorate – address can be found by calling the Town Council Office (488114) or on the CPRE website (www.cpresussex.org.uk)
- Join SPEW and/or CPRE

The Mayor thanked Mr Stuart Meier and asked if there were any questions to Mr Meier.

Various questions were asked including access points, cycle and foot bridge and The Folkington Link Road

Members of the public were then asked for their comments. Nine members of the Public wished to comment and the comments included –

- Must see plans for the proposed bridge and time to inspect them.
- Talk of a bus gate – this is a health and safety issue especially in light of recent news items
- The development will be cut off from Polegate

- Contradictory information that appears to be coming out
- Sussex Police are against the proposed bridge into Brookside Avenue
- Residents to be kept informed by the Council
- The development will create Polegate New Town
- The development will be on a flood plain
- The green field must be retained for our future children
- The wildlife must be protected
- The area must be protected for the future generation
- Residents of Polegate must write to the Planning Inspectorate expressing their objections and concerns to this proposed development
- Pelham Holdings have options on the land. This is dependant on the land owners.
- This proposed development of 520 dwellings will lead to more dwellings being built and this would only be Phase 1.
- The proposed venue for the Public Inquiry is unsuitable
- Grounds of appeal are not valid

Re-instate Standing Orders

The Mayor asked for Comments from the Members of the Council and they were As follows –

- South East Plan no exists. The development would be physically and visually severed from the existing town of Polegate and cannot be read as an urban extension, but as an unsatisfactory separate satellite form of residential environment, separated from its surroundings and from the existing local communities.
- Scar on the landscape especially as it on the boundary of the South Downs National Park
- It was not on the Polegate Town Master plan
- Create huge traffic problems
- Individual letters of objection need to be sent to the Planning Inspectorate
- There is a risk of costs being awarded
- Meetings will be called and members of the public will be asked to volunteer to deliver the publicity for the meetings or even newsletters explaining to residents the news regarding the appeal with any updates
- This is Phase 1 of the development
- Cophall Roundabout is the major problem with any development in Polegate
- Traffic jams happen every day at the Roundabout and one more road would have a devastating effect
- The development would have visual impact on the South Downs National Park
- There would be an impact on the wildlife in the area
- New legislation on tranquil nights and light pollution
- Valuable farming land being destroyed
- There is no funding available for the new school and medical centre
- It will create two separate communities
- Every effort must be made by everyone
- The Countryside is more precious than any housing

The Mayor asked for the way forward.

It was resolved and voted by 9 in favour and 1 abstention that a Planning Appeal Advisory Committee would be set up with both Councillors and residents.

It was resolved that the following Councillors would be members on the Advisory Committee – Cllrs T Voyce, Mrs J Voyce, J Rogers Mrs M Piper and R Martin

The Mayor asked if any member of the public wished to be included in the Advisory Committee then they should let the Clerk know as soon as possible and they would be considered. The Mayor asked if there were any volunteers to deliver newsletters regarding this application if they could make themselves known to the Town Clerk.

It was resolved that the limited number of members of the Planning Appeal Advisory Committee would be the nominated Councillors to attend the Pre-Inquiry meeting and the Public Inquiry

The Mayor asked if there were any further comments from members of the public.

Suspend Standing Orders

Further comments included the following –

- There is planning permission already agreed for a new doctors surgery in Park Croft and therefore another doctors surgery would create more traffic. Also where would the funding come from with all the Government cutbacks.
- Petitions and individual letters are needed
- All letters of objections from the original planning application will be forwarded to the Planning Inspectorate
- The Planning Appeal is large enough not to be determined by an Inspector but recovered by the Secretary of State of Housing
- The Wealden Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) analysed the site and found against it
- The development will up to the Boundary of the South Downs National Park.

The Mayor thanked everyone for attending.