

WORTH PARISH COUNCIL
PLANNING AND HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE

6TH January 2014

Present: Mr CT Larkin (Chairman)

Mrs E Anscomb	Mr Blackmore
Mr DP Blackman	Mr A Brooks
Mr PAC Coote	Mrs LA Field
Dr IP Gibson	Mr A Lacey
Mr EM Livesey	Mr CT Phillips
Mr TW Thomas	Mrs M Stein
	Mr N Walker

Mr M Duckworth (Locum Clerk)

Public Speaking

Ms Joy Day, representative of Copthorne Village Association spoke against application WP/13/04127/OUTES and expressed concern that previous decisions may have created a precedent.

Mr Max Woodward resident of Copthorne and member of the Neighbourhood Plan Sub Committee. Mr Woodward spoke against application WP/13/04127/OUTES. Mr Woodward outlined the results from two public consultations which indicated considerable opposition to the proposal.

Mr Woodward reported that respondents to the surveys also suggested that brownfield sites should be developed before Greenfield developments as per the District plan.

Mr Woodward raised concerns in respect of a possible second runway at Gatwick which would have an adverse effect on the sound levels at the site due to the proximity of the likely landing and take-off point.

Mr Woodward emphasised the existing congestion on the M23 and A264 which would be further increase by cars and goods vehicles associated with the proposed development. Mr Woodward emphasised that the development would create an isolated community not integrated into the current village. Mr Woodward was concerned there were no proposals to encourage walking and cycling in the plan.

Mr Woodward considered the proposal for more industrial units was unnecessary as there was already a number of vacant industrial units in the area.

Mr Woodward expressed serious concerns in respect of air pollution. The close proximity of the development to the airport and existing heavily congested M23 and A264 coupled with the direction of the prevailing wind could create potential health issues for residents of the development. An additional runway at Gatwick was likely to further increase pollution levels.

Mr Woodward considered that the nature of the application was wrong as it was of strategic importance to the whole District the size and variety of the proposed development including housing, business units and warehouses should have been considered as part of the District plan, and the emerging Copthorne Neighbourhood plan. Mr Woodward concluded by urging the rejection of the application.

Mr Paul Budgen a resident of Copthorne, considered the proposed development was not required to meet the needs of Copthorne residents over the term of the emerging Neighbourhood and District plans. Mr Budgen suggested the site should only be considered as part of a strategy to meet the housing needs of the District in the context

of other potential strategic sites. Mr Budgen emphasised the proposed development had received an overwhelming negative response in the steering group poll. Mr Budgen said the application should be refused on the grounds of prematurity alone; to avoid prejudicing the outcome of the Neighbourhood and District plans. The application pre-determined decisions which should be made in the development plan context.

Mr Budgen drew attention to issues of proposed access to the development and highlighted the fact that previously advertised cycle and footpath links no longer formed part of the application. In addition Mr Budgen expressed concerns about access to the development with a proposed single main vehicle and footpath access from the A264 and a secondary bus gate from Shipley Bridge Lane. Mr Budgen considered these were insufficient for the development and would further increase the congestion on the A264 and the M23 junction. Mr Budgen was concerned that the bus gate could become subject to pressure from residents to be kept open.

Mr Budgen was concerned that the flood risk assessment were conservative and recent weather had demonstrated the vulnerability of the site to flooding. Mr Budgen explained the proposed sports pitches were remote from existing village pitches and sports pavilion. Mr Budgen raised concerns that residents living on the western side of the village would be exposed to higher noise levels from the M23 if the adjacent woodland was removed. Mr Budgen emphasised the problems of noise and air pollution by Mr Budgen concluded by requesting the application be refused on grounds of prematurity, access, scale of development and lack of integration with the existing village

91. APOLOGIES: Mrs N Raschia-Grau, Mrs J Suckling

92. DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY AND OTHER INTERESTS: Councillor Larkin declared a prejudicial interest in application **WP/13/04119/FUL** Land West of Copthorne Road Copthorne and left the meeting during discussion of the item.

93. MINUTES OF MEETINGS HELD ON 9th AND 19th DECEMBER
The minutes of the above two meetings were agreed.

94. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The chairman advised members of the public that any comments they wished to make in respect of applications on the agenda should also be copied to the District Council who are the Planning Authority. The Chairman agreed to a request to change the order of consideration of the applications to allow for application **WP/13/04/OUTES** Land west of Copthorne to be considered first. The Chairman handed over to the Vice Chairman and left the meeting for consideration of **WP/13/04127/OUTES**

Cllr Blackman emphasised the need to retain the existing built up boundary of Copthorne as per the Mid Sussex District Council Local Plan 2004, and said the proposed development would be outside this boundary. Cllr Blackman stated that it was important to prevent coalescence with Crawley as per policy C2 of the District Council's local plan and the proposed development would link Crawley and Copthorne. Cllr Blackman considered the application premature with two neighbourhood plans being developed that stipulated new developments must integrate into the character of the two main villages and that development should be sustainable within the villages. Cllr Blackman suggested the proposed development at Copthorne would be a new and separate village. Cllr Blackman emphasised that during consultation the proposed development had received very little support and considerable opposition from residents.

Cllr Blackman highlighted issues with the road infrastructure in particular the feeding in of additional traffic into the already heavily congested M23 junction and the Copthorne Hotel Roundabout. Cllr Blackman emphasised that the road system was already at capacity and additional traffic could cause gridlock, in addition the developer's proposal for new business units on the site would also add further traffic pressure. Cllr Blackman highlighted concerns

that the additional traffic created by the development would also create increased pollution. Cllr Blackman advised that the proposed development was on a flood plain and that additional construction of hard surfaces would create problems both for the site and Copthorne village centre, this issue had become very apparent during recent heavy rain.

Cllr Blackman raised concerns about the general infrastructure servicing the proposed development, in particular that the existing sewage system did not have the capacity for an additional 500 homes. In addition Cllr Blackman stated that the existing schools were at capacity and any proposed new school located on the development would have to take pupils from Crawley; necessitating crossing the motorway. Cllr Blackman said if the new school was seen as a replacement for the current Copthorne School its distance from the village would cause access problems, the local doctor's practice was also oversubscribed. Cllr Blackman concluded by emphasising that local natural resources would be endangered as the area contained ancient woodland that preserved a variety of fauna and wildlife.

Cllr Livesey Agreed with all the objections previously raised and emphasised Paragraph 109 from the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which stated that "preventing both new and existing development from contributing to or being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability." Cllr Livesey considered that the noise and air pollution from the M23 and airport plus the prevailing wind would put the development site at considerable pollution risk.

Cllr Livesey also quoted from paragraph 103 of the NPPF with regard to the flood risk at the site. "When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should ensure flood risk is not increased elsewhere" Cllr Livesey was concerned that back up of flood water from the site could impact on the centre of Copthorne.

Cllr Thomas emphasised the problems of increased traffic resulting from the development, this would feed onto the A264 a road with a capacity that was already at least 60% above its correct level.

Cllr Brooks agreed with the statements already made and emphasised that the proposal was wrong on a wide range of points including the single access road leading to a road that was already gridlocked for much of the day. Cllr Brooks considered the proposed new roundabout would further increase the traffic congestion. Cllr Brooks emphasised the lack of infrastructure provision until the later stages of the development this would require 50-100 houses to be built before any new facilities would be provided. Cllr Brooks drew attention to the demise of ancient woodland as a result of the proposal, the development would effectively impact on two sides of the woodland and cause its decay. The potential impact on Crawley Down was also highlighted by Cllr Brooks with further congestion on the A22, M23 and A264. Cllr Brooks said that the development was not integrated and would effectively kill off the neighbourhood plan if it was approved. Cllr Brooks considered the development would not make any positive contribution to Copthorne and may contribute to Copthorne children not being able to attend their local school of choice. Cllr Brooks said the roads on the other side of the motorway were already over capacity and this issue was recognised by Crawley Borough Council.

Cllr Coote advised that some years ago the West Sussex traffic officer stated that the junction on to the M23 was already at capacity. Cllr Coote emphasised that journey times were constantly increasing due to congestion and an additional roundabout would cause further problems. Cllr Coote said the Parish

must put forward a measured response objecting to the proposed development to the District Council and the response needed to make sure all aspects were included. Cllr Blackmore suggested that a coordinated response covering all the points raised should be made by the Parish to the District to cover the possibility of an appeal if the application is rejected by the District Council. Cllr Gibson said he understood the developer's option agreement with the landowners committed the developer to go to appeal. The Clerk was requested to produce a document setting out the Parish Council's objections to the application, the Clerk agreed to circulate a draft for comment prior to dispatch.

RESOLVED: That the observations contained in the attached Schedule dated 26th November 2013, be conveyed to the District Council.

Chairman

The meeting started at 8.00 pm and finished at 8.50 pm

To : Head of Economic Development and Planning, Mid Sussex District Council

The Parish Council has the following comments on the Planning Applications shown. Where the word "Support" is shown this indicates that the Parish Council supports the grant of planning permission subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions.

<p>WP/13/04061/FUL Land at Majors Hill, Turners Hill Road, Turners Hill, West Sussex – New Buildings to serve the needs of a Horticultural enterprise.</p>	<p>SUPPORT subject to concerns over access</p>
<p>WP/13/04119/FUL Heathy Ridge, Copthorne Road, Copthorne, West Sussex, RH10 3PD – Two storey side extension, single storey rear extension and internal alterations to create a modern family home. Landscaping of front garden and introduction of new boundary wall along southern boundary.</p>	<p>SUPPORT</p>
<p>WP/13/04127/OUTES Land west of Copthorne, Copthorne Way, West Sussex. – Outline planning application for up to 500 homes, a primary school and doctors surgery, up to 15,500sqm employment floorspace (B1c light industry /B8 storage and distribution), public open space, allotments, associated landscaping, infrastructure (including sub stations and pumping station) and pedestrian and cycle access, with a principal vehicular access from the A264 and a secondary vehicular access from Shipley Bridge Lane with all matters reserved except for access</p>	<p>OBJECTION Please see attached document</p>
<p>WP/13/04157/TREE 15 Station Road, Crawley Down, West Sussex, RH10 4JD – Beech (T1) – fell to ground level grind stump and plant replacement Beech, Sweet Chestnut (T2) – crown lift low epicormic growth to 3.5 metres, clean through crown, Beech (T3) – clean through crown, Scots Pine (T5) – clean through crown, Sycamore (T6) – clean through crown, Oak (T7) – reduce lateral growth growing towards adjacent building and crown thin by 15-20%, Alder (T11) – clean through crown.</p>	<p>TO DISTRICT COUNCIL TREE OFFICER FOR DECISION</p>
<p>WP/13/4219/FUL Starwood, Cuttinglye Road, Crawley Down, West Sussex, RH10 4LR – Proposed flank extension incorporating leisure facilities at ground floor and Ancillary accommodation in the roof space.</p>	<p>SUPPORT</p>

Clerk

Worth Parish Council 7th January 2014

COMMENTS FROM WORTH PARISH COUNCIL FOLLOWING CONSIDERATION OF PLANNING APPLICATION WP/13/04127/OUTES LAND WEST OF COPTHORNE, COPTHORNE WAY.

The Parish Council considered the above application at a meeting of the Planning and Highways Committee on 6th January 2014. The Parish Council raised the following issues in support of its rejection of the application

Overview

The Council considered the application should be rejected on the grounds of pre-maturity, as both the Copthorne and Crawley Down Neighbourhood plans are currently being developed, these stipulate that new developments must integrate into the characters of the two villages. The proposed development is not integrated into the village and would create a new separate settlement. This lack of integration will create sustainability and transport issues for the residents of the proposed development and existing residents of Copthorne. The proposed development does not have a sense of place within the existing landscape but is remote and detached from established settlements. The proposal creates coalescence between the Crawley conurbation and the rural village of Copthorne which is currently surrounded by green space on all sides. The development would remove the strategic gap between the village of Copthorne and Crawley and is contrary to the District Plan policy C2

Transport

The Parish Council has major concerns in respect of the proposed development on the road infrastructure. The introduction of a further 1000 cars from the development onto an already heavily congested road network (a conservative assumption of 2 cars per property) plus additional heavy goods vehicles serving the proposed business units and bus traffic. In addition there will be traffic associated with the new school site and residents of the development using services in the village. The single entrance onto the A264 plus a locked bus gate are considered unacceptable. The bus gate leads onto a rural narrow winding road – Shipley Bridge Lane with no suitable stopping places. It is possible that this access gate may be removed at some future date due to pressure from residents (as has happened at developments using a similar system) and unrestricted vehicle access created onto a narrow rural road. The proposed single access onto the A264 between the Copthorne Roundabout and the M23 junction will further increase the congestion on a road that is already at least 60% above capacity and has frequent delays and backlogs at all times of the day. The installation of a new roundabout or traffic signals to filter traffic from the development will further contribute to disrupting already congested traffic flow along the A264 and increase the grid lock at the M23 junction and the Copthorne roundabout. There are no cyclist or pedestrian links to the development other than those used by vehicles. Pedestrians and cyclists are at risk if they have to rely on a path along Copthorne Way or Shipley Bridge Lane. Potential transport issues and pressures in respect of a new school on the development are highlighted below.

Flooding

The proposed development is situated on a flood plain. Installing impermeable surfacing on this flood plain will cause problems for the residents of the development and create additional run off into Copthorne Village. Flooding is already an issue in the village as has been demonstrated during recent bad weather. This development would appear to be contrary to National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) para 103 – planning authorities should ensure flood risk is not increased elsewhere.

Infrastructure

The Sewage disposal facility is already at capacity for the area and would not be able to support a further 500 homes. The local school is already at capacity as are the local health facilities, any new Doctors surgery in the development will further increase travel and be too far from the main centre of population in the village. The new school proposed would not be viable if only available for children from the development. If it replaced the existing Copthorne School the site is too remote from the centre of the village to allow easy access for children. In addition the location of the new school may attract pupils from the Crawley side of the motorway which further coalesces the proposed development with Crawley. The new school would be sited in an area of increasing noise and air pollution.

The proposed sports pitches are seen as too remote from the village and existing sports facilities this will further increase traffic flow.

Environment

The proposal will destroy an area of ancient woodland and the associated wildlife and flora habitat. Residents of the development will be exposed to air and noise pollution from the motorway airport and A264. There is a potential further pollution threat from a second runway at Gatwick. Paragraph 109 from the NPPF preventing new and existing developments being put at unacceptable risk from soil, air, water or noise pollution. The proposal will destroy an area of ancient woodland and the associated wildlife and flora habitat. Existing residents of Copthorne will lose this buffer and be exposed to greater levels of air and noise pollution from the motorway. Residents of the development will be exposed to air and noise pollution from the motorway and A264. There is potential further pollution threat from a second runway at Gatwick. Paragraph 109 of the National Planning Policy Framework preventing new and existing developments being put at unacceptable risk from soil, air water or noise pollution.

The Parish Council therefore recommends that the application is refused