



Seaford Town Council

To members of the Planning & Highways Committee

A meeting of the **Planning & Highways Committee** will be held **via Zoom*** on **Thursday 29th October 2020 commencing at 7.00 pm** which you are summoned to attend.

Isabelle Mouland
Assistant Town Clerk
22nd October 2020

***see overleaf for important information to join virtual meeting and accessing password**

PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS MEETING WILL BE VIDEO RECORDED

Agenda

1. Apologies for Absence and Declaration of Substitute Members

2. Disclosure of Interests

To deal with any disclosure by Members of any disclosable pecuniary interests and interests other than pecuniary interests, as defined under the Seaford Town Council Code of Conduct and the Localism Act 2011, in relation to matters on the agenda.

3. Public Participation

To deal with any questions, or brief representations, from members of the public in accordance with Standing Order 3 and Seaford Town Council Policy.

4. Planning Applications

Planning Applications received week commencing 28th September 2020

LW/20/0529 & 0669 - 3 Blatchington Road – Planning and Listed Building Consent for garage conversion and new summerhouse for Mr T Hillman

LW/20/0655 – Fieldings 18 Firle Road – Variation of Condition 1 (approved plans) to application LW/19/0451 to offset the position of the proposed bungalow for Mr C Warren

LW/20/0662 – 23 Old Nursery Close – Single storey rear extension for Mr and Mrs M Dando

Planning Applications received in week commencing 5th October

LW/20/0580 – 4 Charles Close – First floor side extension for Mr M Melville

Planning Applications received in week commencing 12th October

No applications received

Planning Applications received in week commencing 19th October

LW/20/0690 – Land at 3 & 4 Dymchurch Close – Construction of three detached three-bedroom houses with associated access and landscaping works for LH Property Investments Ltd

LW/20/0667 – 37 Chyngton Way – Erection of garden outbuilding for Mr H Anderson

LW/20/0698 – 57 Sutton Drove – Single storey flat roof extension to replace existing conservatory for Mr L Davis

Tree Works Applications

LW/20/0083/TPO - 8 May Avenue - T1 - Sycamore - rear garden - balance shape 1.5 metres on west side, 2.5 metres on east side, 2 metres on top, crown lift to 4.5 metres, lightly and then remove deadwood - to balance shape and keep at reasonable size for garden, T2 - Rowan - front garden - lightly reshape and formative prune by no more than 1 metre - formative prune for Mrs Crowther

5. [Planning for the Future – Public Consultation](#)

To receive and note Report 83/20 of the Planning Officer circulating the agreed response to the consultation on the Government’s recent Planning White Paper (Pages 4-7).

6. [Update Report](#)

To consider report 84/20 of the Planning Officer on recent decisions made by Lewes District Council on applications previously considered by the Committee (pages 8-9).

For further information about items appearing on this Agenda please contact:

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Email: admin@seafordtowncouncil.gov.uk

Telephone: 01323 894 870 (*please note that due to working from home, this phone line is not currently manned, so please leave a voice message and this will be picked up and forwarded to the relevant member of staff to deal with*)

Zoom Meetings

In line with the Coronavirus Act 2020 and subsequent regulations governing local authorities meetings, the Council will be holding this meeting via the online video conference facility, Zoom.

To join the Zoom meeting follow this link:

<https://zoom.us/j/96958406055?pwd=M3RkOUMyY2JlOU9yVmZlTndIcjlRLQT09>

Meeting ID: 969 5840 6055

Password: (to ensure online security it is recommended that meeting passwords are not publicised and are given directly to those intending to attend the meeting. Please therefore email admin@seafordtowncouncil.gov.uk for the password at least 24 hours before the scheduled meeting date)

Telephone number to join by audio only: 01314 601196 (you will be prompted to enter the meeting ID and password before joining the meeting)

Zoom Joining Instructions are available to download from
<https://www.seafordtowncouncil.gov.uk/council-meetings/>



Seaford Town Council

Report 83/20

Agenda Item No:	5
Committee:	Planning & Highways
Date:	29th October 2020
Title:	Planning for the Future Consultation – Final Response
By:	Geoff Johnson, Planning Officer
Purpose of Report:	To note the Committee’s final response to the public consultation on ‘Planning for the Future’ white paper.

Recommendations

The Committee is recommended:

1. To note the final response to the public consultation ‘Planning for the Future’ white paper submitted to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and circulated for information to SALC, NALC and the local MP.
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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 At the last meeting on 8th October 2020 members discussed report 73/20 on the Government’s recently published White Paper, ‘Planning for the Future’.
- 1.2 After a lengthy debate on the issues raised in the White Paper it was resolved that the Planning Officer should draft a response based on members’ concerns and circulate it for comment prior to it being submitted to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government by the deadline date, 29th October.
- 1.3 The Town Council’s final agreed response is attached to this report ([Appendix A](#)). It has been sent to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and circulated for information to the Surrey & Sussex Association of Local Councils, National Association of Local Councils and the local MP.
- 1.4 The Committee is requested to note the report.

2. FINANCIAL APPRAISAL

There are no direct financial implications as a result of this report.

3. CONTACT OFFICER

The Contact Officer for this report is Geoff Johnson, Planning Officer.

Planning Officer

REPORT 83-20 APPENDIX A

SEAFORD TOWN COUNCIL

CONSULTATION ON PLANNING WHITE PAPER – ‘PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE’

The Council’s Planning and Highways Committee at the meeting on Thursday 8th October 2020 considered a report of the recently published Government White Paper ‘Planning for the Future’. The following response was agreed for forwarding to the Ministry for Communities Housing and Local Government

LOCAL PLANS and NEW ‘ZONING’ PROCEDURES

The requirement for Local Plans to zone land into areas for Growth, Renewal and Protection will remove local public input to major planning decisions and diminish the ‘stake’ of the public in the planning system. Greater involvement in issues such as design will be no consolation.

Local Plans procedures may need to be speeded up but simply imposing a 30-month procedural cycle will not restore the public’s faith in the system. There is also a major flaw in the proposed stages of the new plan cycle. For example, how can people engage meaningfully in stage 1 of the process before there is anything tangible to comment on, and how will comments submitted in stage 3 of the process help shape the plan when it has already been submitted for examination?

There is also serious concern that the actual housing allocations, being imposed centrally through an Algorithm, will penalise Districts in the South-East and impose totally unrealistic targets for new house building taking into account the amount of ‘protected’ land in the area.

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANS

The Town Council is particularly interested in the role to be played by Towns and Parishes in the new system. The only reference to this subject in the White Paper is in relation to the current rule allowing towns and parishes with approved and adopted plans to receive 25% of CIL payments to spend on local facilities etc. The principal strengths of Neighbourhood Plans are however, the scope for public input at the key stages and consequently the influence it gives local communities over specific land allocations for housing and other development. These allocations when adopted become ‘material considerations’ on the same level as local plan policies.

In the White Paper this is overlooked in favour of the centralised zoning decisions allocations on which the new proposals are based.

Although there is some reference to occupants of individual streets having a say in their preferred form of development it is difficult to see how the current neighbourhood plan system can be accommodated within the proposed new system. The lack of detail in the White Paper does not help.

DIGITALISATION

The White Paper has multiple references to the need for standard digitalisation of the current planning system in order to bring it into the 21st Century. It proposes that everyone with a smartphone will be able to log in to all the information required on local plans and applications and criticises the current methods of publicity in planning, in particular, ‘notices on lamp posts’.

The truth is that in towns such as Seaford, restricting publicity to digital systems would marginalise a significant percentage of the population who do not have access to a smartphone or PC and would be unable to operate them if they did. With the decline in readership of the local papers that are still in business, local notices of applications are often the only effective way of notification.

Standard templates for the layout of Local Plans will be of benefit to practitioners who have dealing in several different local planning authorities but will be of little assistance to residents who are not 'tech-savvy'.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES

Staff and resources in Local Authority Development Control sections have been cut for the last few years and this, along with the Covid -19 restrictions have, admittedly, led to delays in notification of applications to the towns and parishes and in the determination of applications. Penalising these authorities by effectively fining them for late decisions and successful appeals is not the answer. This would only diminish existing resources, put already beleaguered officers under unnecessary pressure and subsequently lead to a drop in the quality of decision-making. The penalty of a 'deemed approval' would fall on the blameless local communities who would have to suffer the impact of the inappropriate development. This is the wrong way of restoring the credibility of the public in the planning system.

INFRASTRUCTURE PAYMENTS and AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The provision of local infrastructure to match the growth in local housing is probably the principal concern of residents who take an interest in local planning issues. The major objection to a recent application for a 184- dwelling scheme on a prominent site in Seaford was that the influx of new residents and associated traffic would overwhelm existing school, health services and highway networks. In the current circumstances this concern is entirely understandable. The scheme is currently under construction. Essential highway works required under a s.106 Agreement will be in place before the dwellings are occupied. This is a basic but crucial requirement.

The White Paper proposes the abolition of s.106 Agreements and putting back the trigger for infrastructure payments to the completion rather than commencement or first occupation of the development. This is intended by the Government as a means of assisting the cash flow of developers but is it suggested that the need for the necessary infrastructure to be put in place at the earliest possible stage in the process should be the priority.

There is little detail as to exactly what payment system will replace the current Community Infrastructure Levy and S.106s. The CIL has been a great benefit to Local Councils such as Seaford and has 'sweetened the pill' of having to accommodate the kind of residential scheme already referred to. With District Councils no longer in a position to subsidise capital spending in the Parishes, CIL is a lifeline. There is no assurance that the same or an increased level of payment will be available especially if, as suggested in the White Paper, developers will be allowed to offset payments against the provision of affordable housing.

There should be no overlap between the infrastructure payments and affordable housing. Affordable housing is not mere 'infrastructure'. In order to provide clarity and maintain a sufficient level of infrastructure the onus on the provision of affordable housing should be placed on the developer through the Local Plan as it is now.

There is an acute shortage of affordable housing in the local area. The current local plan requires 40% provision but invariably the government's viability test as laid down in the National Policy Guidance enables developers to reduce this percentage to zero or single figures. In the recent process locally for the 184 dwelling scheme already referred to, the local plan requirement for a 40% provision in the outline consent was reduced to 8% in the reserved matters application and it took some flexibility on both sides for the approved scheme to be revised to release sufficient resources to provide a more worthwhile 25% provision. The provision should not rely however on 'trade-offs'.

The recent exemption for smaller development sites of less than 40 dwellings from the requirement to provide affordable housing has been introduced to ease the Covid burden on small and medium sized developers but it will exacerbate the current housing problems.

In these circumstances, It is extremely difficult to see how the Government can achieve its commitment to the same level /increase in affordable housing provision at least in the short term. This vital area needs to be given more thought and not left to the goodwill of developers.

ENFORCEMENT

The important issue of effective enforcement of planning powers has often been described as the 'Cinderella' issue in planning. It is described in this way in the White Paper where, ironically, it is covered by the final three short paragraphs of the 84-page document.

It is admittedly a difficult issue but is vitally important for maintaining public credibility in the planning system. Residents suffering adverse impact, noise and disturbance from a development which they know is unauthorised have a right to expect prompt and effective action from the local authority especially when they have themselves complied with all the rules. Town Councils being in the front line are often closely involved with these time-consuming problems.

Residents who have seen an unscrupulous landowner profiting from flouting the normal rules will be unlikely to bother engaging with the planning system in the future. If more rather than less public engagement is the aim of the proposals in the White Paper the Government must therefore ensure that local authorities are properly resourced and have the right legislative tools to deal with enforcement.

12th October 2020



Seaford Town Council

Report 84/20

Agenda Item No: 6
Committee: Planning & Highways
Date: 29th October 2020
Title: Update Report
By: Geoff Johnson, Planning Officer
Purpose of Report: To inform the Committee of Lewes District Council decisions

Recommendations

The Committee is recommended:

1. To note the contents of the report.
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4. Information

The Town Council (STC) has been notified of the following decisions made by Lewes District Council:

APPROVALS (no objection from STC)

LW/20/0479 – 17 ROOKERY WAY – Single storey extension

LW/20/0535 - 4 DYMCHURCH CLOSE – Demolition of lean-to extension and erection of replacement single storey rear extension.

LW/20/0318 – 13 FITZGERALD AVENUE – Conversion of integral garage into a study/storage area by removing existing garage doors and replacing with UPVC windows and doors.

LW/20/0533 – 155 CHYNGTON COTTAGES – Installation of gas central heating and external meter.

REFUSALS (no objection from STC)

LW/20/0145 – 14 BRAMBER ROAD - Part retrospective application to retain safety rails to flat roof and reconfigure roof construction, to create gable ends in lieu of hips.

Reasons for refusal: Detrimental impact on the appearance and character of the property and adverse impact on privacy of neighbours through overlooking.

5. Financial Appraisal

There are no financial implications to the Council as a result of this report.

6. Contact Officer

The Contact Officer for this report is Geoff Johnson, Planning Officer.

Planning Officer

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'G Johnson', is written over a horizontal line. The signature is cursive and somewhat stylized.