



Seaford Town Council

Minutes

Planning & Highways Committee Meeting

Thursday 11 June 2026

Held in the Council Chambers, 37 Church Street, Seaford, BN25 1HG at 7.30pm.

Present:

Councillors L Wallraven (Chair), L Boorman (Vice Chair), S Dunn (Substituting for R Buchanan), O Honeyman, R Honeyman, J Lord, S Markwell, and R Stirton

Councillors C Bristow and J Meek attended as observers

Steve Quayle, Town Clerk

Isabelle Moulard, Community Engagement and Democratic Services Manager

There were 7 members of the public attendance.

P01/06/26 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received and approved from Councillor R Buchanan (personal commitment).

P02/06/26 Disclosure of Interests

Councillor C Bristow (attending as an observer) declared the following non-pecuniary interests:

- Item 4, planning application LW/26/0244 – and confirmed they would not contribute;
- Item 4, planning application SDNP/25/04080/FUL – due to being employed by SDNP, and confirmed they would not contribute; and
- Item 4, planning applications LW/26/0186 and LW/26/0187 – as the Town Council's outside body representative for Seaford Town Football Club.

Councillor L Boorman declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 4, planning applications LW/26/0186 and LW/26/0187 – as the Town Council's outside body representative for Seaford Town Football Club.

Councillor L Wallraven declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 4, planning applications SDNP/25/04080/FUL and ESCC/2025/001/CB as a member of the National Trust, confirming that they would contribute and vote.

P03/06/26 Public Participation

There was no public participation at this stage in the meeting.

P04/06/26 Planning Applications – For Comment

LW/26/0258 – St Johns School, 64 Firle Road – Demolition of existing vacant buildings and the construction of a specialist dementia care village (Use Class C2) with associated day care centre, communal facilities, access from Firle Road, car parking, landscaping and amenity space. The Committee considered report 27/26 providing some relevant background information in relation to this application.

Speaker	Statement
<i>Resident A</i>	<i>Resident of Firle Road, accepted that the proposed use of the former St John's School site under LW/26/0258 is a good use of the land but raised concerns regarding the loss of green space, including the methodology used to calculate compensation. Also disputed the claim that there was no history of the space being publicly used, noting that during its time as Pilgrims School (1935–1997) the grounds were available for public booking. This use ceased only due to safeguarding requirements when St John's School became a special needs school.</i>
Town Council Response	Thanked the resident for their contribution.
<i>Resident B</i>	<i>LW/26/0258 – Shared evidence of public use of the green space, as was a member of an activity club which booked/used the green space at weekends when school was closed during 2010.</i>
Town Council Response	Thanked the resident for their contribution.
<i>Resident C</i>	<i>LW/26/0258 – Supported Resident A's concerns.</i>
Town Council Response	Thanked the resident for their contribution.

P04.1 It was **RESOLVED** to **NOTE** the contents of the report.

P04.2 It was **RESOLVED** to **OBJECT** to the application on the grounds of:

Scale, Density and Character

The proposed development represents an overly intensive form of development that is out of keeping with the surrounding Area of Established Character (AEC).

Seaford Town Council has previously set out, through its objection to the emerging Lewes Local Plan (Regulation 18), that development on this site must reflect the prevailing low-density pattern of the Firle Road area. Evidence demonstrates that intensification beyond this would be harmful to local character and would fail to respect the established spatial grain of development.

In addition, the Town Council has raised fundamental concerns regarding the methodology for calculating density on this site. It is the Council's clear position that density should only be calculated based on the developable (brownfield) area of the site, and not include areas of open space or land that should be retained for community or recreational use.

Including non-developable land within density calculations artificially lowers the stated density and misrepresents the true intensity of development, leading to proposals that exceed what the site can reasonably accommodate. The Town Council's evidence shows that, when calculated correctly, the site can only support a significantly reduced scale of development consistent with surrounding densities.

The proposed care village, by virtue of its scale, massing, and site coverage, therefore represents overdevelopment, resulting in a form of development that is visually and spatially incongruous within its setting and contrary to the principles of the AEC.

Unsuitable Location and Accessibility

The site is not sustainably located for the proposed use. The surrounding road network, particularly Firle Road, is constrained, lacks adequate pedestrian infrastructure in parts, and already experiences congestion associated with nearby schools.

In addition, the site is **poorly** served by public transport, with limited accessibility to bus and rail services, making it unsuitable for a development of this nature, which would generate regular staff, visitor, and service vehicle movements.

Infrastructure Capacity

Seaford is already experiencing significant infrastructure pressures, including:

- Healthcare services operating at or beyond capacity
- Drainage and sewerage systems struggling to cope with demand
- Limited emergency and community healthcare provision

There is no clear evidence that the necessary infrastructure improvements are deliverable to support this proposal. The Town Council has consistently highlighted that further development without infrastructure provision is unsustainable.

Loss of Green Space

The proposal results in the loss of a valuable area of green space, which makes an important contribution to the character and amenity of the area.

Seaford already has a well-documented deficit in recreational and open space provision, with Lewes District Council having been unable to allocate prior s106 contributions (including from the Newland's development) due to a lack of suitable sites.

The loss of this site would further exacerbate that deficit and remove one of the few remaining opportunities to provide meaningful community recreational space.

Prematurity and Conflict with Emerging Plan (SF2)

The Town Council has a live and detailed objection to the allocation of this site (SF2 – St John's School) within the emerging Lewes Local Plan Regulation 18 consultation.

That objection clearly sets out concerns regarding:

- Excessive density
- Impact on local character
- Infrastructure constraints
- Loss and safeguarding of open space

Allowing this application ahead of the resolution of the Local Plan process would be premature and could prejudice the proper plan-led consideration of the site.

Community Use and Historic Context

The suggestion that the site lacks a history of public use is disputed. Evidence shows that during its time as Pilgrims School (1935–1997), the grounds were available for community use via public booking, with access only curtailed later for safeguarding reasons when the site became a special needs school.

This reinforces the importance of the site as a community asset.

Compensation for Loss of Green Space (If Approved)

Should Lewes District Council be minded to grant permission, despite the above objections, the Town Council strongly urges that:

- The financial contribution for the loss of green space is recalculated, ensuring it accurately reflects the true value and replacement cost of equivalent provision.
- Seaford Town Council is formally involved in discussions regarding this contribution, to ensure it is appropriate and deliverable.
- Consideration is given to the unspent Newland's s106 contribution, and how any additional funding could realistically be applied to secure usable recreational land within Seaford.

Conclusion

For the reasons set out above, Seaford Town Council considers that application LW/26/0258 conflicts with both local and national planning policy and should be refused.

In particular, the proposal is contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF):

- Chapter 8 (Promoting healthy and safe communities): due to the loss of accessible green space in an area already identified as having a significant recreational deficit, undermining opportunities for healthy lifestyles.
- Chapter 9 (Promoting sustainable transport): as the site is poorly located in relation to public transport and relies heavily on car use, with inadequate pedestrian infrastructure and constrained access arrangements.
- Chapter 11 (Making effective use of land): as the proposal represents overdevelopment that fails to respond to local character or site constraints.
- Chapter 12 (Achieving well-designed places): due to the scale, density, and form of development being out of keeping with the Area of Established Character and the prevailing low-density pattern of Firle Road.
- Chapter 15 (Conserving and enhancing the natural environment): through the loss of green space and failure to protect and enhance opportunities for biodiversity and recreational land.

The proposal also conflicts with the emerging Lewes Local Plan (Regulation 18), for which Seaford Town Council has a live and unresolved objection to Site Allocation SF2 (St John's School). That objection clearly establishes that:

- Development at excessive density is not justified or effective
- The site cannot accommodate development without harm to local character and infrastructure capacity
- Open space must be protected, clearly defined, and secured for community use
- There is insufficient evidence of infrastructure provision, particularly in relation to healthcare, drainage, and transport

Allowing this application in advance of the plan-making process would be premature and prejudicial, undermining the plan-led system.

Furthermore, the proposal fails to respond appropriately to local evidence demonstrating:

- Established infrastructure constraints in Seaford
- A deficit in recreational space, compounded by the inability to allocate existing s106 funding (e.g. Newland's)
- The need to protect sites capable of delivering community green infrastructure

Taken together, the application:

- Represents overdevelopment of the site
- Is out of character with the surrounding area
- Is located in an unsustainable location
- Places unacceptable strain on local infrastructure

- Results in the unjustified loss of green space

For these reasons, the proposal is not justified, not sustainable, and not consistent with national or emerging local policy, and should therefore be refused.

(8.35pm to 8.40pm – a short break was held and 7 members of the public and Cllr C Bristow left the meeting)

LW/26/0077 (amended design) – 3 Sutton Park Road – Change of use of part ground floor from financial services Class E(c)(i) to retail Class E(a), and part ground and first floor from financial services Class E(c)(i) to dwellings Class C3 to provide 3no. self-contained flats and 2no. commercial units; rear extension to existing staircase well, alterations to the front and rear elevations including fenestration and solar panels, and provision of integrated waste storage to front.

(8.42pm – Cllr C Bristow rejoined the meeting)

It was **RESOLVED** to **SUPPORT** the application, noting the mitigations altered to accommodate waste provision to the site.

LW/26/0186 – Seaford Football Club, Bramber Road – Erection of football stand and covered standing area, installation of advertisement boards to picket fence immediately adjacent to the clubhouse and fascia signage to the clubhouse/football stand.

It was **RESOLVED** to **SUPPORT** the application.

LW/26/0187 – Seaford Football Club, Bramber Road – Various business advertisement boards fixed to the pitch side barriers, fascia signs to the football stand.

It was **RESOLVED** to **DEFER** the consultation response to this application due to discrepancies between the application notice issued by the Planning Authority and the details published on the Planning Portal. The Planning Portal lists the proposal as per application LW/26/0186, whereas the parish consultation letter received is titled as set out on the meeting agenda. Officers will liaise with the Planning Authority and report back to the Committee.

LW/26/0211 – Bus Shelter Station Approach – Installation of internally illuminated double-sided digital panels as part of the bus stop advertisement.

It was **RESOLVED** to **SUPPORT** the application, with a request that a condition be included requiring the panels to be installed with CCTV, as set out in the proposals, in order to deter vandalism.

LW/26/0210 – Bus Shelter Opposite Micklefield Cottage, Eastbourne Road – Installation of internally illuminated double-sided digital panels as part of the bus stop advertisement.

It was **RESOLVED** to **SUPPORT** the application, with a request that a condition be included requiring the panels to be installed with CCTV, as set out in the proposals, in order to deter vandalism.

LW/26/0205 – Advertising Right 2405 0008 On Bus Shelter Buckle Bypass – Installation of internally illuminated double-sided digital panels as part of the bus stop advertisement.

It was **RESOLVED** to **SUPPORT** the application, with a request that the shelter be installed in the reverse orientation to provide more appropriate weather protection, and that a condition be included requiring the panels to be installed with CCTV, as set out in the proposals, in order to deter vandalism.

LW/26/0204 – Advertising Right 2405 0005 Opposite 4 Sutton Park Road – Installation of internally illuminated double-sided digital panels as part of the bus stop advertisement.

It was **RESOLVED** to **SUPPORT** the application, with a request that a condition be included requiring the panels to be installed with CCTV, as set out in the proposals, in order to deter vandalism.

LW/26/0203 – Advertising Right 2405 0004 Opposite 13 Sutton Park Road – Installation of internally illuminated double-sided digital panels as part of the bus stop advertisement.

It was **RESOLVED** to **SUPPORT** the application, with a request that a condition be included requiring the panels to be installed with CCTV, as set out in the proposals, in order to deter vandalism.

LW/26/0228 – Little Chyngton, Chyngton Lane – Erection of single storey front and rear extensions, garage conversion, demolition and replacement of existing outbuilding.

It was **RESOLVED** to **SUPPORT** the application, subject to conditions that the outbuilding remains ancillary to the main dwelling and not be used as a separate unit of accommodation, and that it remains single storey.

LW/26/0233 – 43 Southdown Road – Alterations to first floor side windows.

It was **RESOLVED** to **SUPPORT** the application.

LW/26/0244 – Sutton Corner Garage, Eastbourne Road – Variation of Condition 1 (Approved Plans) in relation to approval LW/23/0677 to amend the roof design, and alterations to fenestration and external materials.

It was **RESOLVED** to **SUPPORT** the application.

SDNP/25/04080/FUL & ESCC/2025/001/CB – Chyngton Brooks, Eastbourne Road – The restoration of intertidal habitat at Chyngton Brooks through the managed breaching of the tidal flood embankment and associated minor earthworks to improve hydraulic functioning and biodiversity.

It was **RESOLVED** to **SUPPORT** the application, noting that members of the public have a significant interest in the paths associated with this application.

Tree Works Applications

None Received

P05/06/26 South Downs National Park Local Plan Regulation 19 Consultation

The committee considered report 19/26 noting that the South Downs National Park Local Plan is at regulation 19 stage.

It was **RESOLVED** to **NOTE** the South Downs National Park Local Plan Regulation 19 Consultation.

P06/06/26 Update Report

The committee considered report 20/26 reporting on decisions taken by Lewes District Council since the last meeting on applications previously considered by the Committee.

It was **RESOLVED** to **NOTE** the report, decisions on planning applications, and updates on highway matters.

The meeting closed at 9.38pm.

Councillor L Wallraven

Chair of Planning & Highways Committee