



## **HENFIELD PARISH COUNCIL PLANS ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**Meeting of the Plans Advisory Committee held on  
Thursday 17th July 2025 at 7:00pm in the Henfield Hall.**

**Present:** Cllrs R Shaw (Chairman), D Grossmith, F Ayres and E Goodyear.

**In Attendance:** Six members of the public and Mrs B Samrah (Parish Administrator – PA).

### **MINUTES**

#### **1. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

Cllr Grossmith declared an interest in the Leisure Centre as he is on the Committee.

#### **2. APOLOGIES**

Were received from Cllr M Andrews, M Chandler and J Jones.

#### **3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 3<sup>RD</sup> AND 9<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2025**

These were approved. They were signed and dated by the Chairman.

#### **4. MATTERS ARISING**

There were none.

*The Chairman adjourned the meeting.*

#### **OPEN FORUM**

The Chairman said that members of the public could say what they wished during the open forum and then decide whether to leave after speaking or stay to hear this Committee's decision or indeed stay for the whole meeting. The first person said that he lived in a private lane and that there was no public right of way on the lane just off Small Dole Road with double yellow lines. He said that the lane was only wide enough for a single line of traffic.

*Two members of public joined the meeting at 7.10pm followed by another a minute later.*

He said that the lane was a gravel track that was 10 feet from his house. He added that the plan showed that one of the three new buildings would be a car garage and showroom and he felt that this would mean visitors to the site all day to look at the cars. He said that the buildings at the moment are little more than dilapidated polytunnels as the site had previously been a smallholding. He said that the drawings did not have accurate dimensions but thought it would be likely to be 50x50 metres. He felt it would encourage an even larger volume of traffic than was already attended to the business. Another member of the public said that the visitors already travel at speed.

The Chairman summarised the concerns expressed by the members of the public as access/frequency of traffic to this site and the industrialisation of the site that had originally been agricultural.

*Two members of public left the meeting at 7.10pm.*

The remaining members of public were concerned with the Sandgate Site.

The next person said that he was there on behalf of the Campaign to Protect Rural Henfield (CPRH) to object to the revised Sandgate Nurseries proposal for 72 extra-care units and 10 supported living units. He said that whilst they did not oppose extra-care housing in principle, they felt that this application fails on two fundamental grounds:

The location is unsuitable for extra care residents as that should prioritise accessibility, yet Sandgate Nurseries is isolated at the village edge with no regular bus service; residents face a 10-minute walk over 1 km to the nearest bus stop. He also said that the limited footpath infrastructure would create hazards, particularly for elderly residents with mobility issues and that this would force dependence on taxis or volunteer drivers, creating the very isolation that extra care schemes should prevent.

This undermines the plan-led system especially as Henfield has a Neighbourhood Plan (NHP) adopted in 2021, which was supported by over 90% of voters. He said that this plan specifically considered extra care housing needs and concluded the small local demand could be met elsewhere. He added that the plan's spatial strategy directs development north and east of the village, protecting the Conservation Area and supporting Henfield's tourism economy around the river trails. He said that Sandgate directly contradicts these carefully developed policies.

He said that there are already 141 extra care units approved at Wellcross Farm near Horsham and that there were alternative sites east of Henfield, nearer to transport and services which could provide better extra care facilities while respecting Henfield's Neighbourhood Plan.

He said that speculative applications like this weaken community confidence in planning and that Henfield's residents invested years developing a plan that allocated 270 houses to meet the allocated requirements. He also said that under the National Planning Policy Framework, a Neighbourhood Plan adopted within five years should outweigh the presumption in favour of development. He finalised by saying that he urged this committee to object to this application as the wrong location undermines the community, and approval would discredit the plan-led system that communities across the country depend upon.

The Chairman said that when looking at satisfying the required housing allocation dictated by HDC within the Parish this committee looks at the number of dwellings initially rather than type of dwelling in response to a question about whether sheltered housing was part and parcel of the allocation of housing already agreed in NHP. The Chairman added that HDC had put the Sandgate site as one of their favoured sites in the Local Plan although it was understood that the Local Plan was in the process of being withdrawn.

The Chairman stated that progress was being made on most of the sites in NHP but also that Central Government were indicating that every area would ultimately be required to increase housing numbers. He said that this committee had concerns about this site but in particular felt it was bizarre that these extra care units were three-bedroomed, two-bathroom homes with two car parking spaces and therefore not fitting the typical requirement of extra care housing

Cllr Goodyear said that when the NHP was considered it was suggested that an extra six extra beds might be needed and this development would provide an extra 220 beds. She said that she was aware that there were vacancies at car homes and sheltered accommodation in the village and slightly further afield at Valerie Manor. The Chairman said that there was already provision for extra care recently developed in Sayers Common. Cllr Goodyear said that the 800 homes being proposed at Horsham Golf Course had tilted the balance. She finished by saying that of the 34 considered by the NHP Committee this site was very low down the list of suitable sites.

*The Chairman reconvened the meeting.*

## **5. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were none.

## **6. CONSULTATION ON PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

DC/23/0189

Sandgate Nursery West End Lane Henfield West Sussex BN5 9RD

Outline application for erection of a extra care retirement community of up to 72 units of accommodation (Use Class C2) and up to 10 supported living units with associated community facilities including medical centre and on-site laundry and catering facilities, with access, infrastructure, open space, landscaping and associated works (all matters reserved except for access).

Sandgate Henfield Developments

**Objection – all agreed. As this Committee has already commented before and re-iterates those objections in that this planning application fails to comply with the following:-**

**Henfield Neighbourhood Plan (HNP) 2021**

**Policy 1: A Spatial Plan for the Parish**

**P1.2 The proposed development is outside the Built-Up Area Boundary (BUAB) and does not conform to HDPF policies**

**The site is outside BUAB, does not meet the criteria for development in the countryside to justify its location**

**Policy 10: Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity**

**P10.2 The proposed development does not seek to maintain or increase biodiversity,**

**P10.3 The proposed development does not enhance the amenity value of the existing landscape. It does not enhance the site and its surroundings, nor positively contribute to the landscape character of the area**

**The Parish Council would like to draw attention to Henfield Housing Needs Assessment (Reviewed October 2017) prepared for The Henfield Neighbourhood Plan 2017-2031.**

**Section 3.7.1**

**Given the significant forecast increases in people aged 75+, it is appropriate for policy to provide support for a significant quantum of sheltered 30 and extra care 31 housing as part of the delivery of new housing**

**This estimates, using LIN's housing calculator produces the following additional housing:**

**conventional sheltered housing units = 11 (rounded);**

**leasehold sheltered housing units = 22 (rounded);**

**enhanced' sheltered units, split 50:50 between those for rent and those for sale = 4**

**extra care housing units for rent = 3 (rounded);**

**extra care housing units for sale = 6(rounded);**

specialist dementia care homes = 1 (rounded)

#### **Section 3.7.2 Retirement villages**

220. It is important to note that there is no obligation for these all to be provided within the parish itself and clearly in some cases, such as providing a single specialist dementia care dwelling, it would not be economically feasible to do so. As such, these 41 specialist dwellings need not be thought of as all needing to be provided within the neighbourhood plan housing target- rather, there will be some overlap between these dwellings and the target, depending on the number that could be provided within the parish itself.

223. Given the numbers of units that result from the HLIN analysis, there is a need for appropriate housing for older residents and a careful assessment should be undertaken as to the suitability of the settlement for development of this kind. Accessibility to key services is an important consideration, as well as sustainable transport connections that enable staff to come and go. For this reason, other settlements in the area, such as Steyning, Worthing, Lancing or Shoreham may be more appropriate locations.

**Henfield currently has 5 retirement/sheltered housing locations, 2 nursing homes and a day centre giving dementia care.**

**The application is contrary to the Horsham District Planning Framework, Specifically HDPF policies:-**

- **Policy 1 as it is not an identified site in the current Local Plan or Neighbourhood Plan**
- **Policy 2 as it does not maintain the districts rural character; as not a strategic development; and does not focus development around Horsham**
- **Policy 4 as it is not allocated in the Local or Neighbourhood Plan and would be the expansion of an existing settlement**
- **Policy 18 'Retirement Housing and Specialist Care' as it will not cater to those on lower incomes. It does not accommodate a range of needs, include some affordable provision or an appropriate financial contribution, and contribute "appropriate services and facilities". Also there is no evidence of how an exclusively over 65 age policy will be administered or enforced (unlike other retirement premises)**
- **Policy 25 as it does not protect, conserve enhance the natural environment and landscape character; nor does it conserve or enhance the setting from the South Downs National Park to the south.**
- **Policy 26 as it is outside the BUAB; does not support the needs of agriculture or forestry or extraction of minerals or disposal of waste**
- **Policy 30 as there will be adverse impacts on the views from the South Downs National Park to the south**
- **Policy 32 as it does not complement locally distinctive character and heritage of the district; or integrate with the historic surroundings of Dears Farmhouse and Camelia Cottage**
- **Policy 34 as it does not make a positive contribution to the historic setting of Dears Farmhouse and Camelia Cottage**
- **Policy 40 - Sustainable Transport. There has no access to public transport**

**The proposed development of a "retirement community of up to 72 units" has marked differences from that which is currently the standard for other retirement locations in Sussex**

**In the main retirement locations will be**

- **Predominately apartments – the few cottages or bungalows have – 1½ floors and a ground floor bedroom (or study which could become a ground floor bedroom) or lift**
- **Adapted for changing needs e.g. wider doors to be wheel chair accessible if required**
- **Provide Communal gardens as opposed to private front and rear gardens**
- **Exclusively leasehold**
- **Provide one car park space per unit not two**
- **Have Age exclusive conditions**
- **Have access to public transport– as opposed to the one bus at start of day from the depot and one bus back to the depot at night as claimed by the applicant to be a bus service**
- **Provide onsite communal recreational facilities**

**The Parish Council also questions the on-site "medical centre" which is a support building as the real Medical Centre for appropriate NHS Health care is a mile away.**

**In a previous planning application DC/21/0908 for 51 dwellings, states that 25 two-way trips in the morning and 23 in the afternoon. In the transport statement, 22/070/31A, Table 6C for 72 + 10 units gives 19 two way trips in the morning and 17 in the afternoon.**

**We note on the plan SNH/P23/02 that every property has parking provision for two cars with 5 spaces at the medical centre. With 72 CCRC units, 10 starter homes and the medical centre that gives the total number of proposed parking space of 87.**

**The plans and transport statement dramatically underestimates the ownership, movements and impact of cars to an already congested road that leads to the main village centre. This has already been proven with the construction of Bishops Park where cars overspill onto West End Lane causing**

**traffic and congestion issues. With the infrequent public transport links to the village car use will be the primary mode of transport for most residents.**

**This Committee notes that there are already 164 local resident objections to this planning application.**

*The remaining four members of public left the meeting at 7.40pm.*

DC/25/0893

Brookside Cottage Dagbrook Lane Henfield West Sussex BN5 9SH

Demolition of utility room lean-to. Construction of single storey rear extension with flat roof and roof lantern.

Construction of timber framed car shelter.

Mrs Carol Vaughan

**No Objection – all agreed.**

DC/25/0964

Henfield Sports Centre Northcroft Henfield West Sussex BN5 9QB

Installation of DIY Dog washing facility and construction of associated protective structure.

Pristine Paws Ltd.

**Because Henfield Parish Council is an interested party in that it owns the land, this committee declines to either support or object to this planning application.**

DC/25/0984

Greenacres New Barn Lane Henfield West Sussex BN5 9SJ

Demolition of 2no. existing storage buildings and erection of 3no. replacement single storage barns arranged in a courtyard. Construction of access track and balancing pond. Provision of 2no. parking spaces.

Mr & Mrs Harris

**Objection – All agreed. This committee deems that this application is contrary to HDPF policies:-**

- **1 as it is not a strategic site in the Local Plan**
- **2 as it is not a nominated site in the Neighbourhood Plan**
- **3 as it is not within an existing built-up area**
- **4 as the site is not allocated in the Local Plan or Neighbourhood Plan, and does not adjoin and existing settlement edge**
- **10 as it does not maintain the quality and character of the area; does not contribute to diverse and sustainable farming enterprises; or promote recreation; and**
- **23 as the site cannot be served by safe and convenient vehicular and pedestrian access; or cannot be supplied with essential services, such as water, power, sewage and drainage, and waste disposal; or provide adequate vehicle parking; or would have an unacceptable impact on the landscape**
- **24 as it does not protect the high quality of the district's environment; and in particular**
- **25 as does not protect, conserve or enhance the landscape or townscape character of the District; or as does not protect, conserve or enhance the setting of the South Downs National Park**
- **26 as the site lies outside built-up area boundaries and does not support the needs of agriculture or forestry; does not enable the extraction of minerals or disposal of waste; or provide for quiet informal recreational use or enable the sustainable development of a rural area**
- **27 as the site will generate urbanising effects within the settlement gap, including artificial lighting, and traffic movements.**
- **31 as the application does not conserve or enhance the natural environment**
- **32 as it does not complement the distinctive characters and heritage of the area**
- **33 as there is loss of amenity to the neighbouring property; or the design is not sensitive to surrounding buildings, as the proposal is out of keeping and unsympathetic with the built surroundings and in that it does not respect the character of the surrounding area.**
- **33.2 as there is loss of amenity to the neighbouring property; or the design is not sensitive to surrounding buildings**
- **33.3 as the scale and massing and appearance of the proposal is out of keeping and unsympathetic with the built surroundings.**
- **33.4 in that it does not respect the character of the surrounding area and buildings.**
- **35 as the industrial use of concrete will be contrary to meeting the district's carbon reduction targets as set out in the Council's Acting Together on Climate Change Strategy, 2009 and will not mitigate the effects of climate change**

**This Committee also notes that there was no Water Neutrality Statement.**

DC/25/0991

Durris Martyn Close Henfield West Sussex BN5 9QH

Demolition of existing conservatory and erection of a single storey rear extension, conversion of one half of the existing double garage into habitable space and extend existing garage to provide a new second parking space to maintain a double garage provision.

Gates

**No Objection – all agreed.**

CA/25/0069

The Twittens Nep Town Road Henfield West Sussex BN5 9DY

Surgery to 1x Beech (Works to Trees in a Conservation Area)

Mr Richard Martin

**No Objection – all agreed. Subject to the work being carried out by a qualified and experienced tree surgeon and that the reduction would be more effective if undertaken when the tree was no longer in leaf.**

## **7. APPEALS**

There were none.

## **8. CORRESPONDENCE**

- 1 HDC - Monthly Planning Compliance Team statistics for June 2025 – This was noted
- 2 Southwater - Appeal allows 800 homes at Horsham Golf Club – This was noted.
- 3 HDC Planning Committee – DC/21/2013 Parsonage Farm – 22.7.25 at 5.30pm – The Chairman confirmed that he would be attending and checked that everyone was happy with the comments he had prepared and circulated earlier in the week. It was also requested that the Speedwatch Co-ordinator be asked if Speedwatch had any indications of speeding at the entry to this new development.

**ACTION POINT: PA would liaise with Speedwatch Co-ordinator about the suggested location of the entry to this development.**

- 4 HDC and HALC meeting – Minutes and Reform of Planning Committees – This was noted.

## **9. ANY OTHER URGENT MATTERS TO BE RAISED BY COUNCILLORS**

There were none.

## **10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> August 2025.

The Meeting closed at 8.00pm.