



# HASLEMERE TOWN COUNCIL

Town Hall, High Street, Haslemere, Surrey GU27 2HG  
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## Planning & Highways Committee

Minutes of the meeting held at 7pm on 7 December 2023  
Town Hall, High Street, Haslemere GU27 2HG

<b>Chairman</b>	Cllr Weldon*
<b>Vice Chairman</b>	Cllr Robini*
<b>Councillors</b>	Aslam*, Bridge, Carter, Davidson, Keen & Miller*

\*Present

**Meeting clerked by:** Pippa Auger, Deputy Town Clerk.

**In attendance:** members of the public from Linkside, Beacon Hill, Ryan Snow agent for application Dene End Farm

### **144/23 Apologies for absence**

The committee accepted the absences of Cllrs Bridge (university), Carter & Davidson (prior arrangement at the Hunte Centre) & Keen (family commitment).

Cllr Aslam emailed just prior to the start of the meeting to advise that she would be late due to a delay on the trains from London.

### **145/23 Declarations of Interests**

Cllrs Robini & Weldon declared non-registrable interests as members of the WBC Area Planning Committee. They all reserve the right to change the tone or content of their opinion when presented with further advice from WBC officers or other professionals.

Cllr Robini also declared a non-registrable interest in PIP/2023/02548 as a family member works at the address.

Cllr Aslam declared a non-registrable interest in WA/2023/02521 as she lives next door to the development site. She asked (via the email referred to in minute 144/23) if this item could be held back so she could make representations as a resident and then recuse herself from discussion and voting.

### **146/23 Minutes of the last meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held 9 November 2023 were agreed and signed as a true record.

### **147/23 Representations by the public**

None.

### **148/23 Planning decisions since November 2023 meeting and submitted to WBC – list 3 November 2023**

Noted.

Reference	Location	Proposal	Comments
NMA/2023/02432	CHARLWOOD COTTAGE 38 PITFOLD AVENUE HASLEMERE GU27 1PN	Amendment to WA/2022/01658 to change materials from tile and single ply flat roof to natural	No response – for WBC officers

*Handwritten signature/initials*

Last month the applicant submitted planning for a detached dwelling and garage to provide ancillary accommodation above it, which would be built in the garden of Little Heath, and erection of extensions and alterations to the existing dwelling under WA/2023/02240.

This latest application WA/2023/02534 is to erect a new dwelling following demolition of the existing garage so effectively 2 additional dwellings on this site, akin to the 2021 application refused on appeal.

The planning statement accompanying this application states “the two applications would evidently be implemented at the same time” and the neighbours feel this is another attempt at garden infilling and an abuse of the planning system. The street scene, when both applications are overlaid, shows a development which is completely out of character with the appearance of the street scene.

The committee discussed the application and stated that garden infilling is not a material consideration and where the parish had very little available land, infill had to be considered. However, it felt that the density of the development was not consistent with the character and appearance of the locality and whilst it offered a windfall development again it did not respond positively to the character and appearance of the area. Finally, it represented overdevelopment of the site in relation to the characteristics of the neighbouring plots in respect of built form and massing. It voted to **object** to the application on the following grounds:-

- 1) the density of the development is not consistent with the character and appearance of the locality contrary to policy H2 of the Haslemere Neighbourhood Plan;
- 2) whilst it offers a windfall development it did not respond positively to the character and appearance of the area being out of keeping with the street scene contrary to policy H3 of the Haslemere Neighbourhood Plan; and
- 3) it represents overdevelopment of the site in relation to the characteristics of the neighbouring plots in respect of built form and massing contrary to policy H6 of the Haslemere Neighbourhood Plan.

Ref	Site Address	Proposal	Comments
WA/2023/02530	COACH HOUSE COTTAGE 1 COBDEN LANE HASLEMERE GU27 2HP	Erection of extension and alterations to elevations; installation of additional dormer window; alterations to attached garage to provide additional habitable accommodation and storage.	No objection
WA/2023/02529	THE WHEATSHEAF INN GRAYSWOOD ROAD HASLEMERE	Alterations to existing building including staff accommodation; erection of a single storey extension; installation of fire escape staircase and a kitchen extraction unit on flat roof; erection of a cycle/refuse store and associated works; demolition of existing conservatory.	No objection but letter to WBC commenting that the works are nearly completed
CA/2023/02528	REDWOOD MANOR TANNERS LANE HASLEMERE GU27 2PZ	HASLEMERE CONSERVATION AREA REMOVAL OF TREE	No objection but would like the tree officer to look at it before making a decision
WA/2023/02594	HARSCROSSE 48 PETWORTH ROAD HASLEMERE GU27 2HX	Erection of a two storey extension and alterations (revision of WA/2023/02114).	No objection

WA/2023/02521	DENE END FARM MIDHURST ROAD HASLEMERE GU27 3AA	Erection of 6 dwellings and a carport, alterations to existing barn to provide bin and cycle store together with associated works and the widening of an existing vehicular access; closure of two existing access points following demolition of existing dwelling, workshops and stables.	Neither but letter of comment to be sent
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**WA/2023/02521 DENE END FARM MIDHURST ROAD HASLEMERE GU27 3AA**

The Chairman stated that he could not hold discussion back on this application any longer. The clerk received the following email statement from Cllr Aslam and, with the Chairman's approval, read it out to the committee. The statement is set out below.

"As a neighbouring property I have a few concerns with the planning proposal that has been submitted.

First, this portion of land ('B') was originally owned as part of a larger piece of land which included the old farmhouse at Dene End Farm. Both plots of land were sold by the one owner to the same developer. This developer has successfully applied for planning permission for an extension of the old farmhouse and the construction of 4 new dwellings on the first portion of land ('A'). I made no objection to that request as I felt that it was a good use of a brownfield site and the number of dwellings was appropriate for the location. I was assured by the agent, Ryan Snow, who paid me a visit prior to the planning application for site 'A' that the out-buildings on site 'B' would be converted to bike sheds and storage facilities for the owners of the properties that were to be built on plot 'A'. When demolition of the old barn and building works on the old farmhouse commenced, I spoke with the builders who literally laughed at me when I mentioned that there would be only 4 new dwellings. They told me that the planning permission requested for plot A was only part of a larger plan to build out on both plots incrementally, to achieve a total of a minimum of 10 dwellings, and then once the infrastructure had been built, they hoped to encroach further onto the green site depending upon the result of other applications of a similar nature in the area.

The current planning application is for 6 dwellings, although it is positioned as 5 'new dwellings'. In fact, in the past 5 years that I have lived in my property nobody has occupied any 'dwelling' in the portion of land now under review. An application for a change of use for one of the outbuildings to be a residential dwelling was made during this 5-year period by the then owner to enhance the saleable value of the land. I did not object to this application. However, there has not been a habitable dwelling on this piece of land since my occupation of the neighbouring property, i.e. for the past 5 years.

My immediate concern is that these piecemeal applications by the same developer to develop plots A and B have been staged deliberately to circumvent the rules relating to the requirement for affordable housing. Each planning application has been very careful to fall under the requisite number of 6 'new' dwellings that trigger this requirement. Such a blatant abuse of the planning system should not be allowed.

Secondly, the property developer that purchased plots 'A' and 'B' has gone into receivership. The current application is therefore speculative in the sense that there is no intent or ability on the part of the applicant (the receivers) to develop either plots 'A' or 'B'. Building works on Plot 'A' came to an abrupt end approximately 9 months ago and the site has remained locked, with the half completed extension works to the farmhouse open to the elements and in a state of increasing dilapidation. This planning application is intended only to increase the sale price of the plot. Again, this is an abuse of the planning system which should not be encouraged.

Thirdly, the planning application for plot 'B' which is under current consideration overstates or misrepresents an important factor that I would like to correct, namely the traffic pathways into Haslemere – it is a nonsense to suggest that there is a clear and safe footpath from this location into Haslemere. My children are aged 12 and 15 – I do not allow them to walk (and definitely would NEVER allow them to cycle) into Haslemere High

The committee agreed the application had both merits and problems associated with it. On the positive side, it was recognised there is a need to make use of brownfield sites. The Surrey Hills AONB Planning Adviser, commented that the proposed development would not harm the character of the AONB and may actually inject some vitality to the local built environment, and a property constructed stone wall could be an attractive feature in itself. The committee liked the improved access from the site but noted Surrey Highways had not lodged its comments yet, and the proposal offered the required number of parking spaces conforming to WBC parking standards.

Each application had to be looked at on its own merit and whilst it is frustrating that developers are able to make multiple applications for each site, incremental development is not a material planning consideration, neither is the fact the developer has gone into administration.

However, the development is promoted as a number of family dwellings but there is little external amenity space with garden sizes appearing to be very small. The committee also questioned the sustainability of the location, the Midhurst Road pavement being an unpleasant route to walk into Haslemere and the suggestion that Wey Hill was 1km away and Haslemere Town was 1.5km were felt to be as the crow flies, when in reality the paved routes were much longer.

On this basis, the committee voted to **neither object or support the application**.

Cllr Aslam returned to the room 7.59pm and Cllr Robini left the room so that the committee could discuss the Dominion House application and vote.

Ref	Site Address	Proposal	Comments
PIP/2023/02548	DOMINION HOUSE 69 LION LANE HASLEMERE	Application for Permission in Principle for the erection of a pair of semi-detached dwellings with associated car parking and cycle/bin store following demolition of existing office building.	No objection but letter of comment to be sent

**PIP/2023/02548 DOMINION HOUSE, 69 LION LANE, HASLEMERE**

After a short discussion the committee voted that it had **no objection** in principle to the application but this was not to imply it automatically supports a change of use.

Cllr Robini returned to the room at 8.04pm.

**150/23 HTC representation at Waverley Planning Committee**

None.

**151/23 Decisions and Appeals**

The list was noted.

**152/23 Terms of reference**

Noted as per the amendment in appendix 5 and agreed.

**153/23 Local Plan update and review of Neighbourhood Plan**

Cllr Weldon updated the committee advising the following:

- 1) Waverley Borough Council will be commencing the Call for Sites consultation prior to Christmas. To that end if there are any comments on the questionnaire they sent round to Towns & Parishes to let the clerk have them by 9am on Friday 15 December.
- 2) There is no need for Haslemere Neighbourhood Plan to be reviewed until the Local Plan is much further advanced.

*AW* 4/10/24

**154/23 Highways Update**


CLlr Robini advised that he had a meeting with the Highways Office the next day and they would be discussing the water coming down Weydown Road.

CLlr Weldon asked that it be recorded that the quote for the footpath by the Health Centre from Surrey Highways had now been received.

**155/23 Next meeting**

4 January 2024.

Meeting closed at 8.25pm

Signed:  \_\_\_\_\_ Date: 4/01/2024

**Chairman of Planning**