Draft minutes of the Parish Council Planning Meeting held on Tuesday 2nd March at 7.00pm, held virtually using Microsoft Teams.

Present: Cllrs Gemmell, Harrison, Hartas, Lavis and Mangan(Chair)

In attendance: Councillor Heron , Steve Avery (Executive Director (Strategy and Planning) New Forest National Park Authority), Amanda Johnson (Parish Clerk) and 29 members of the public.

The meeting was recorded by the clerk and by 2 members of the public.

21.32 TO RECEIVE ANY APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Cllr Delves - illness

21.33 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS - To receive declarations of interest in respect of matters contained in this agenda in accordance with the Localism Act 2011 and to agree any dispensation requests

Cllr Gemmell declared an interest in relation to 21.35 and had previously applied for a dispensation in relation to the Folly Hill paddock. The dispensation granted includes :
Remaining in the room (or virtual room) during discussions on the Folly Hill Paddock.
Discussing and voting on matters relating to affordable housing, the CLT and proposed site excluding Folly Hill Paddock.

21.34 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - Members of the public are invited to address the council on agenda matters.

Cllr Mangan opened the meeting to members of the public.

Comments and questions from members of the public -

- A parishioner asked to confirm that his letter had been circulated to all councillors and included in the correspondence. *This was confirmed*.
  He added that HPC should refuse the application based on survey results and their own policies, adding that the HVCLT allocation policy has not been approved by the HVCLT and therefore is not valid.
- The affordable housing provider conditions document on the website which was ratified by the council on Sept 2019 requires 19 conditions of support from HPC. Will this document be referred to?
- This is a rare opportunity to start to address the need for affordable housing in Hale which has been on the Parish Council agenda for 13 years. Folly Hill is the only site available at present and the community needs affordable housing. The planning authority has confirmed that approval for a Rural Exception Site will not set a precedent.
- This application has no part in future planning under the current local plan and does not enjoy the support of the majority of parishioners.
- Ian Gemmell spoke as a parishioner (not as a Councillor) stating that his opposition to the project was not based on opposition to affordable housing but to the proposal to build on a Greenfield site adjacent to an SSSI and RAMSAR site. The proposed development is out of context with neighbouring properties, it is far from the school, public transport and the nearest shop. This site does not have public support and therefore cannot meet the requirements for rural exception status. He urged the Council to vote accordingly.
- The site is joined by habitats to Franchises Wood which is a very important Nature Reserve and therefore all planning in this area should be carefully considered.
- Is this really the only site available? It is in the wrong place and out of character. HPC have a responsibility to protect the designated conservation sites in the village. 135 voted against development at Folly Hill, it cannot be developed simply just because it is there. A precedent will be created.
- Two main polices need to be taken into account SP19 and SP28 and councillors will make decision based on these. It is irrelevant that it is next to SSSI and may be of benefit. The size of the property is not out of line with others and this is not relevant. It is well designed and much needed.

- The need for affordable housing has been established. This housing is well thought out and a good design and therefore the project is supported.

Cllr Mangan closed the meeting to members of the public.

Cllr Mangan addressed the questions raised and asked Steve Avery to respond to the planning matters

Steve Avery said:
A precedent is only set when planning permission is granted without sound planning reason. A policy is in place which permits small scale schemes as Rural Exception Sites and therefore does not set a precedent.

Irrespective of the Parish Councils comments this application will go to a Planning Committee, the first available one being the 20th April 2021.

The proximity of designated sites will be considered in consultation with Natural England and a National Park Authority ecologist. A Mitigation scheme would required to ensure sites are not damaged.

The Chairman responded to other questions raised:
Referring to the conditions document Cllr Mangan said that some of the conditions were ultra vires and legal advice sought advising against some of the conditions in the policy was not accepted by Councillors.

Cllr Mangan outlined the results of the 2020 survey, stating that 108 people agreed with the building of affordable housing, 98 did not and 15 were unsure. 135 of those surveyed said no to Folly Hill site, 103 said no to Tethering Drove (North) , 110 said no to Tethering Drove (South) and 121 said no to Moot Lane. These figures include 98 respondents who indicated that the number of affordable houses should be zero.
Cllr Lavis disagreed with the interpretation of the survey results and felt that the conditions document, still in place on the website, should be used to assess affordable housing.

Cllr Heron spoke;
SP28 (Rural Exception Sites) policy is different from others in that it states "may be permitted" rather than "will", therefore rather than local authorities being expected to approve sites if policies are met SP28 allows the exercise of discretion. Cllr Heron is an avid supporter of affordable housing but will only support a scheme if it has the support of the community and in this instance he feels it does not. Cllr Heron will submit comments to the planning authority closer to the closing date.

21.35 PLANNING APPLICATION- To **consider** responses to the following applications and produce a report of recommendation.
APPLICATION NUMBER: 21/00105/FULL

ADDRESS: Land Of Folly Hill, Hale Purlieu, Hale, Fordingbridge, SP6 2NN

PROPOSAL: 2no. Affordable dwellings; parking; associated landscaping

CASE OFFICER: Clare Ings

Councillors discussed the application:

Cllr Harrison stated the following :
He agreed that the conditions document is still council policy and therefore the document should be followed. Condition 12 states that "The provider must demonstrate to HPC that it has majority support of Hale Parishioners"

Cllr Hartas stated the following :-

She is in favour of affordable housing, if the community is behind it and the site is suitable.
SP19 – Commoners are invited to apply for the proposed houses which is positive but Folly Hill paddock is grazing land for the commoning rights attached to Folly Hill which will be lost.
SP28- Do not accept that need cannot be met another way and other sites should be considered.
SP21 – The design is good but properties are too big.
SP6 –Do not believe the benefits of two families outweigh the effect to SSSI's.
Questions the democratic decision making of the CLT and whether they can continue in perpetuity.
The allocations policy mentions part purchase which would not be acceptable.
Areas 4.5 and 9 on the landscape plan are outlined as decorative aggregate which increases runoff and results in a significant lack of grassland.
DP2 – Neighbouring houses are detached and set on large plots, this is cramped in comparison. The impact on other properties includes traffic and light pollution.

Cllr Lavis stated the following:
This is a highly protected area,
SP28 – Does not meet the criteria. A local need has to be demonstrated and not confused with desire. These requirements can be met within a 5 mile radius within the surrounding villages.
Dwellings must be in perpetuity and not sold to a willing purchaser.
HVCLT have failed to demonstrate it is financially viable.
The site is not located near appropriate local services and is on a busy single track lane with no lighting.
SP19 – Hale is not a Defined Village for development in the Local Plan and therefore identified local need is required for any Rural Exception Site which has not been demonstrated.
CP1 – This is a highly protected area of nature conservation and special protected areas therefore development should not be allowed unless there is overriding public interest.
The development is not in keeping with neighbouring properties.
Traffic will be increased during construction and after.
This application does not meeting the criteria of the conditions document.
The parish council has only received one letter of support and as elected to represent the parishioners should reflect these views. Parishioners voted 135 to 75 against the Folly Hill site.

Clr Mangan stated the following:
Three surveys have produced the same answer, to provide a small number of affordable houses, which cannot be ignored.
In the most recent survey the figures for and against are similar for all sites, save for the Moot Lane site.
The provision of affordable housing has been discussed at HPC for 13 years and no other sites have been made available.
The village is very spread out therefore all sites are equally within proximity of the village centre.
All possible locations for affordable housing in Hale are close to a designated site.
The community of Hale is ageing and therefore would benefit from younger families.
The proposed houses are well-designed.
There are issues with the allocation policy in perpetuity which need to be addressed.
Many comments received and submitted to the planning authority are not relevant in planning terms.
The CLT are made up of many people who have lived in the village for a very long time and their contribution must be respected.
The need for affordable housing has been declared by people in meetings.

Cllr Mangan asked councillors for an indication of which recommendation they would support:

Cllr Hartas advised delay but for reasons stated would recommend refusal.
Cllr Lavis for reasons stated would recommend refusal.
Cllr Harrison for reasons stated would recommend refusal.
Cllr Mangan would recommend permission subject to some conditions attached to the allocation policy to ensure houses remain available in the village in perpetuity.

21.31. DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING – March 16th, held remotely using Microsoft teams.

The meeting ended at 8.35pm.