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Tuesday, March 11, 2014

Assistant Director
Planning Department
Arun District Council
Arun Civic Centre
Maltravers Road
Littlehampton
West Sussex BN17 5LF

Subject: Barratt David Wilson (BDW) planning application A/82/12 for 139 houses east of Roundstone Lane.

Dear Sirs,

Below I set out my observations and objections to the proposed development as submitted by BDW. Below, I attach my last letter of objection to BDW original application and these objections are still valid as far as I am concerned. However, in addition I would like to comment further on this application since other issues have come to light that require consideration by your department.

- The BDW latest plan takes no account of the Master Plan coordinated approach discussed at the recent APC meeting at the Rugby Club in mid-January, It seems that BDW are calling ADC bluff by 'going it alone' and will appeal any rejection by ADC of their application.
 - Objection: I object to this approach by BDW on the grounds that it is an application contrary to the Master Plan coordinated approach as supported by ADC and APC (Angmering Parish Council) for this area.
- It does not include much more green recreation space or recommendations on exit routes, particularly to the A280 - something which, at the Rugby Club meeting, they were asked to examine and cost.
 - Objection: BDW application is incomplete in as much as, they have failed to respond to the requests made at the Rugby Club meeting.
- In Parliament recently, Nick Boles announced a number of revised planning guidelines relating to what Planning Inspectors will be able to take into consideration including constraints such as:
 - Flooding when assessing housing targets in Local Plans



- No requirement to "agree" to co-operate with other authorities by providing housing to meet their needs, only to show that they have engaged in consultation.
- Guidance around avoiding building in flood plains.
- The need to provide infrastructure commensurate with the planned increase in population.
- The need to take into account preparation of Neighborhood Plans.
- Objection: The application cannot be considered since it does not address the latest Government guidelines.

With this in mind, I would respectfully suggest that ADC planners advise BDW to withdraw their application until all the stakeholders have had such time to take account of these issues and in particular these recently announced guidelines.



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Wednesday, September 05, 2012

Planning Department
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Littlehampton
West Sussex

Subject: Barratts' planning application A/82/12 for 150 houses east of Roundstone Lane.

Dear Sirs,

Below I set out my observations and objections to the proposed development as submitted by Barratt's.

General comment.

Having viewed the planning application on the ADC website I would like to comment as follows. The planning application tells us much about what we already know in terms of the site, the local vicinity, the flora and fauna by way of the various consultative documents that have been produced to support the creation of this application by Barrett's. The application is a contradiction to the Government's 'vision' as stated by David Cameron in January of this year when he said,

"Our vision is one where we give communities much more say, much more control. The fear people have in villages is the great big housing estate being plonked down from above. Our reforms will make it easier for communities to say 'we are not going to have big plonking housing estate landing next to the village, but we would like 10, 20, 30 extra houses and we would like them built in this way, to be built for local people'.

Whilst this 'vision' has yet to be formalised in Government, it is my hope that ADC will act in the spirit of his statement when considering this application.

Objection: It does not provide solutions to well-known documented problems regarding infrastructure, employment, education and health care to name but a few issues that have plagued the community for many years, which would support a sustainable development.

Since neither the ADC Draft local plan (which I shall be commenting on in a separate letter to the responsible body for the document) nor the Angmering Parish Council Neighborhood Plan have been discussed nor completed respectively, it is shameful that this planning application should even be considered at this time.

Whilst I appreciate that ADC has to follow procedures and process in regard to applications, might it not have been a little more cost effective and efficient (doing the right things and doing them right) if ADC had given the 'nod' to the developer not to bother submitting an application until such time as the Draft Plan and the APC Neighborhood Plan had been finalised and everybody had agreed what was acceptable and feasible?

However, it appears that this is a spectacular example of the tail wagging the dog and the ADC should show some professional leadership, put Barrett's in their place and dismiss this application in its entirety. It is premature in that until the issue of the Draft Plan and the Neighborhood Plans have gone through due process, applications of this type are inappropriate. To quote Ricky Bower, Cabinet Member for Planning in relation to the Draft he said:

"Getting the Local Plan right is so important because it is the basis upon which Councilors will make decisions about planning applications and developments across the district."

"This consultation is an important opportunity for communities and local businesses, and anyone else that has an interest in Arun, to influence how their community will develop over the next 14 years."

"I would strongly encourage everyone to have a look at the proposals and submit their comments and ideas to the Council."

His statement is congruent with the Government's vision and can be seen at the following link:

<http://www.spiritfm.net/news/sussex-news/722981/grun-residents-asked-to-shape-development/>

I hope therefore that any decision made by the planning committee in regard to this planning application will take note of Mr Bower's statement and will be "influence-led" rather than "policy-led" as is so often the case in the planning process.

However, since the local plan is still in the consultation stages and local folk have not yet had the opportunity '*to influence how their community will develop*', acquiescing to this application would be very much an ADC own goal. If this does turn out to be the case may I suggest that Mr. Bower should try and be considerably more transparent in his dealings with the public when he wishes to speak to them, otherwise resign from his position (again - he resigned as Chairman of the LDF sub-committee as was reported in the Bognor Observer on December 18th 2008) or better still be sacked as incompetent and not fit for purpose.

I was appalled at the attitude of some of the ADC representatives who were at the Angmering Village Hall for the drop in sessions when the ADC Draft Plan was presented. Parishioners were given short shrift if their questions to the representatives were slightly awkward and in one case the representative lost their patience over a particular issue. It was almost as if the whole plan was a done deal and ADC were simply paying lip service to the community. Very unprofessional altogether and should be reviewed and lessons learnt from the exercise.

Access

Roundstone Lane. It is a busy thoroughfare catering for private vehicles, buses, heavy and light commercial vehicles as well as handling pedestrian traffic. An additional access to Roundstone Lane from the proposed development would exacerbate and already overburdened road, not to mention making the junction onto the A259 an even worse bottleneck than it already is.

There is no realistic way to widen the road to take the additional traffic the proposed development would create. This would lead to a dangerous thoroughfare for both traffic and pedestrian's particularly since it is a school route. Add to this the heavy construction traffic that would use the road to

access the building site, it is not difficult to understand that there is an accident waiting to happen.

Roundstone Lane is the only access to Bramley Green development. The number of allocated parking spaces in the application is noted as 395. Assuming that only 50% of those spaces would be taken this is still a substantial increase in traffic also obliged to use Roundstone Lane since there is no other access (at this time) to the proposed development.

New retail outlets (ASDA / Morison's and the rebuilding of Sainsbury's) will increase the burden on the A259, thereby exacerbating the issue with regard to access from Roundstone Lane.

Objection: The application does not provide any solution to deal with the increased traffic load and it would appear the Angmering bypass becomes redundant. At an Angmering Parish Council Meeting, during a Public discussion on traffic congestion through the village, at which Barratt's attended, Barratt's traffic expert agreed that the pinch points and traffic calming measures that had been implemented in the village appeared to be ineffective. However, he also agreed that removing them would not work either, and that there did not appear to be a solution to Angmering's traffic problems.

Housing mix

The development is clearly family orientated with the number of market houses totaling 105 of which 96 are made up of 3, 4 and 5 bedroomed units. A visit to any of the two Angmering estate agents will show that there is already a dearth of unsold properties which would negate the need for this development.

Objection: The mix of housing types runs counter to the current NSO figures which indicate that household sizes are decreasing. The justification for this development is undermined by the existing unsold housing stock available in the village and immediate surrounding area.

Schools

I don't believe that the WSCC rules about the trigger point to build new schools or allocate additional places in schools would be met with this proposed

development. As far as I am aware there are no plans to increase the capacity of the local schools to cater for the increased population.

Objection: Currently all the schools in Angmering are oversubscribed so it is therefore unclear where the additional children would be educated. Even if these schools could take the additional pupils this would cause additional congestion in Station Road, the High Street and Arundel Road, highway safety would be compromised. Non-denominational village children would be obliged to go to school elsewhere outside the village which would mean more cars taking pupils to school.

Employment

The introduction to the ADC Local Plan states *"Arun has determined that economic growth for job creation is its number one priority."*

Objection: Whilst the ADC priority is for economic growth, it is difficult to see where employment opportunities exist for an increased population the development would create. The area does not attract the type of 'higher level businesses', (to use a term Mr Bower uses when categorising the types of business' ADC needs to attract to the area) that would be prepared to invest in Angmering since there are no suitable sites on which it is viable to build industrial premises and neither is the infrastructure in place to support any industrial area that maybe built. Employment opportunities would be limited to 'cottage industries'.

Therefore employment would be sought outside the Angmering area which would mean either commuting by train or car to Gatwick, Brighton, London. This is hardly a recipe for economic growth in the area.

Furthermore the plot plan is quite clear in that it allows for further expansion of the development to the south side of the proposed plan, i.e. where plot borders the Rugby club (road 6). This also will be seen as the thin edge of the wedge since to the South of the Rugby Club is VHB West End nursery whose site has recently been the subject of housing development. If this were allowed to happen then jobs would be lost at VHB and this would be counter to ADC priority of creating jobs.

Utilities

The proposal states that foul water drainage would be connected to the existing sewage system "of adequate capacity as confirmed by Southern Water".

Objection: This may well be the case as that particular point in the network, but overall the district's capacity is already creaking under the strain of Bramley Green development and in certain areas of the village is in urgent need of rehabilitation. The developer offers no solution as to mitigate this risk. Water supplies in the area are limited and Southern Water has earlier in the year confessed that it cannot cope with the targets set for leakage control and has adjusted it's target accordingly.

Healthcare

The village has one Surgery which is already at it's capacity. Typically arranging appointments can range anywhere between one to two weeks and if you want a particular Dr. then you can expect many weeks wait. As far as I know dental care fares no better and there is no NHS dental surgery in the village.

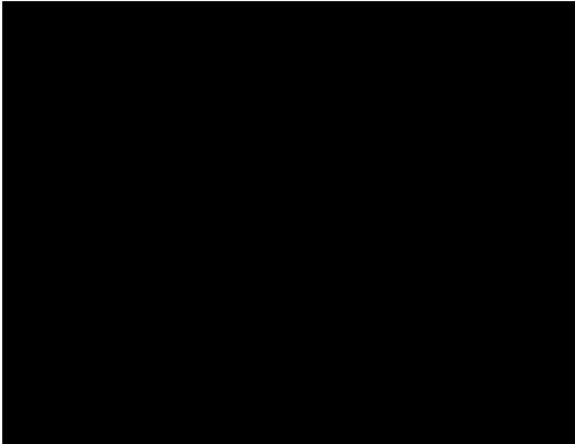
Social Rented Housing.

The number of proposed social rented housing (30%) appears twice what would normally be expected in such an application. Presumably this figure has been negotiated between the applicant and ADC.

Objection: It is unclear whether or not the local Parish Council has been consulted on this issue and if they were, what was the outcome? Therefore ADC cannot decide on this proposal until such time as APC Neighborhood Plan, which is currently under development, has been considered.

Social housing attracts low income earners so presumably the 30% figure is to encourage this wage group to the village in the hope that they can find work. Where will this work be found?

To summarise, this application is inappropriate at this time, ill considered, it provides no solutions to Angmering's many infrastructure issues, will increase pressure on local services and facilities, has the potential to increase flood risk, and to my mind the thin end of the wedge in destroying the village atmosphere and open the flood gates to other developers who will see ADC as a 'soft touch' when it comes to planning applications for large scale developments despite the fact that the current application is clearly and undeniably, unsustainable,



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