

Erection of 5 No two-storey dwellings with associated access, parking and landscaping
Land at rear of Fairview House, Newington Road, Peene, Folkestone
Application Reference Number: Y18/0029/SH

Minutes of the meeting held on 12 June 2020

In attendance (Zoom Meeting):

Adrian Hammond (AHD) - Housing Manager, Folkestone and Hythe District Council

Charles Evans (CE) - The Tory Family Foundation (Applicant)

Melyvn Twycross (MT) - Newington PC (Clerk)

John Neale (JN) - Newington PC (Chair Chairman)

Kevin Golding (KG) - Newington PC (Vice Chairman)

Alister Hume (AH) - Hume Planning (Principal)

Holly Chapman (HC) - Hume Planning

Discussion

- AH of Hume Planning Consultancy introduced the meeting and explained the context in which the meeting was taking place. This concerned the PC being satisfied with the physical proposal, but having outstanding queries as to the S106 legal agreement and how this would secure the proposed 3 no. affordable units for local people. HPC had only recently received the PC's consultation response (dated February 2020) from FHDC, and it was more negative than expected.
- MT explained that he/the PC had not previously been privy to a copy of the S106 until it was recently sent by HPC, and had briefly reviewed its contents. MT then passed over the KG who had more in-depth questions relating to the S106.
- KG explained that the PC were uncertain as to how the S106 would secure local homes for local people, and that there was still ambiguity as to HOW local people could possibly be a recipient of these units.
- KG, JN and MT set out a number of the PC's concerns throughout the meeting as follows:
 - **How do local people apply for one of the affordable units? Do they have to be on the housing register?** AHD confirmed that local people would have to apply to be on the Council's housing register, which could be accessed and applied for online through a relatively simple process
 - **Is it difficult to be placed on the housing list? Will local people in the village actually be eligible (i.e. hidden households, children still living at home even if the parents were relatively financially comfortable)?** AHD confirmed that **anyone** can register on the FHDC housing list, as long as they have a local connection with the district (which would be all residents of the village). AHD also explained that there are bands in which people would be placed once on the housing register, ranging from A (most in need) to E (least in need, but still eligible). All households on the list meeting the local connection criteria set out in the S106 would be given first priority in accessing the proposed affordable units above others in greater need in the wider district.
 - **Clarification on whether local individuals would be considered a lower priority than those more in need on the register already?** AHD reiterated

that even if there were people in the wider district more in need of an affordable unit (i.e. Band A) it would only be local people considered first and prioritised because of the local village/parish connection required as part of the S106. AHD explained that whereas conventionally it can be quite hard to get access to a house when on the housing register, the S106 effectively circumvents the process and enables local people to have first pick of the units above all others. AHD did however express that of those eligible for the affordable units within the village, it would be those most in need within the village that would be given priority (i.e. if there were three Band D's and three Band E's, the Band D's would be given priority as they are more in need.)

- **Clarification on who would have final say in the people in the village who would be offered one of the units? Would it be a transparent process?** AHD confirmed that it is enshrined in legislation that elected members would not be able to influence the decision of who the units were offered to, this would likely fall to the Council and provider of the units. The exact process would be determined in due course, and could not be pin-pointed at this stage.
- **Clarification on how local people would find out about the affordable units?** AHD confirmed that, once the units were approved and a timeframe for their construction firmed up, the PC would be best placed to advertise the units to local people (i.e. Parish magazine, website, letter drop), as would the housing association who would be looking after the units (possibly FHDC but undecided at this stage). HPC agreed they would be happy to assist in preparing wording for this, and AHD was happy to provide some standard text nearer to the time. AHD also confirmed that the affordable units would be advertised on Kent Homechoice (run by FHDC) but that the local connection would be advertised as a strict and necessary eligibility criteria.
- **Clarification on tenure split?** AH confirmed that no tenure had been agreed at this point, and was subject to change, but consideration would need to be given to the viability for the client. AHD confirmed that the Housing Needs Survey (2018) should also shed some more light on tenure requirements, which should guide the final tenure. AHD also confirmed that if FHDC were to take on the units themselves, they would need to consider viability implications which they had not assessed at this stage
- **Clarification on timeframes?** CE advised that, given the current climate, there was no certainty as to timeframes for the construction of the units.
- Summary comments from AH explained that in order to move the planning process forwards, HPC would require an updated consultation response from the PC to confirm that they were happy with the proposal, subject to the S106 being agreed in due course with the PC.
- Summary comments from KG, JN and MT confirmed that the PC were generally happier following the matters discussed in the meeting, and that they would review the S106 which they were also generally happy with.
- It was left that KG, JN and MT would review the S106 and discuss the meeting separately and feedback to parishioners, before providing an updated response to FHDC.

