

HEYSHOTT PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman: Jane Constanduros
Clerk: Jane Crawford
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MINUTES: Meeting of Heyshott Parish Council No 8/ Year 4/19-23
Held on: Thursday 19 January 2023 beginning at 18.30
At: Cobden Hall

Present: Jane Constanduros, Chairman
Anthea Philip
Christopher Weeks

In attendance: 16 parishioners and the applicant

The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations are in force, giving a right to members of the public to record (film, photograph and audio-record) and report on proceedings at meeting of the Council and its Committees.

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Bridget Adler, Christopher Cummins, Robert Harris and Fiona Mackay

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS:** None

3. **PLANNING**

3.1. **New applications:**

SDNP/22/05477/FUL and SDNP/22/05478/LIS Dunford House - Change of use of conference and training centre (C2 Use Class) to conference and training centre (C2 Use Class), events venue (Sui Generis) and heritage information area (F1(c) Use Class) with public access (number of days tbc) and replacement manager's accommodation.

The Chairman welcomed everyone and said all the previous applications for Dunford House had been withdrawn. The original application had been refused on appeal, the Planning Inspector citing "that developments would only be permitted when they conserve and enhance the historic environment including heritage assets. A use linked to the values and legacy of Cobden which allows public access is going to be the optimum viable use Dunford House. The current dormant use as a conference and training facility is near to an optimal viable use rather than a private dwelling."

She noted that the current application was different to the others as it did not mention the "hotel". She welcomed and thanked BC, the applicant, for coming and was sure he would be happy to answer questions. After this HPC would decide how to respond so parishioners' views were important.

BC felt the Inspector should have taken the fact that the YMCA had sold off the access to Bex Lane and thought it doubtful that they would have got permission for their use of Dunford House today because of lack of access.

He had spent 2 years trying to get a single house which the vast majority of people had not wanted. Now the Inspector had agreed with SDNPA that there could not be a single dwelling, it would be almost impossible to change the decision. This had been a blow to him. He knew he would have to mitigate the access situation before starting a business. He spent 9 months trying to buy the field for a new entrance road, but SDNPA did not like it, despite it being the best solution.

His Barrister's opinion was that the YMCA could have 365 events a year and this was the fall-back position which could not be overturned.

He wanted to create something very interesting with mental wellness and obesity being huge problems. He would get planning permission and everyone would get behind there being a new road. The passing bays could be improved and he had spoken to the landowners. There were 28 rooms in the house and he needed it to be a viable business.

Comments made by parishioners were:

- There should be no noise at night and the place should be heavily sound-proofed.
- Concern that noise was heard when in a garden one mile away.

BC: There was one wellness event for 100 people when they had drums.

- There were two events and there were tepees in the grounds which did cause noise nuisance for neighbours.
- BC appeared to think he was going to get his way, but there was confidence he would not.
- Service vehicles to the site would destroy everything the SDNP stands for.

BC: It would be bringing in people from outside to enjoy the park.

- Is it possible to say the Inspector made a mistake and that we would now support a single dwelling? If it is not viable commercially as a conference and training centre, it should have a change of use for a single dwelling.

BC: 18 months had been effectively wasted.

- There was discussion of a possible offer to BC from a benefactor who would use the site as a non-profit-making enterprise where there would be no traffic problems. They want to talk to BC about it.
- How could it be used for weddings with over 100 cars – it would not be tenable.
- Everyone was for a single dwelling at the last HPC meeting.

BC: The planners would decide. It had been a hotel and educational establishment since 1947 so he could already run a hotel without permission. He asked people to start to work with him.

- With 200 people at a wedding being locked in a windowless room (no noise) was not educational and not in the spirit of the current permission.
- What will happen at a summer wedding?
- BC had not appealed for the hotel accommodation, although it was refused.

BC: The wellness centre was on the wellness website and would eventually provide yoga, guided walks, forest bathing which would allow people to to enjoy and appreciate the SDNP. He could not afford to do that without the hotel.

- At the last wellness event, people had left behind plastic mats and bottles which were cleared by the locals. A wooden structure got washed down to the river. Nor was the event licenced.
- Dunford House was currently being advertised online as a wedding venue. It was possible to send a booking via Hitch.

BC had not dealt with any wedding enquiries and had no knowledge of Hitch, but would make sure to take Dunford House off it.

- Concern was expressed about wild camping in the woods.

BC: Any camping would take place in the gardens as no permission was required for it. If the application failed with the SDNPA, he would appeal and if that failed, he would go back to single house application.

The Chairman thanked everyone for their views and hoped a solution could be found.

HPC: Ojected to the application. JCD would draft a letter for the Clerk to send to the SDNPA.

3.2. **Withdrawn**

SDNP/21/ 05949/FUL & 05950/LIS – Dunford House - Listed Building Consent/change of use

DRAFT

SDNP/22/02151/FUL & SDNP/22/02152/LIS – Dunford House - Change of use of conference and training centre, associated works and formation of new vehicular access and driveway (alternative proposal application SDNP/21/05949/FUL).

4. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING: HPC Meeting Tuesday 14 March 2023 at 7.30 pm at the Cobden Hall.**

CONCLUSION: 20.45

CHAIRMAN..... DATE.....