



<b>Application Number:</b>	<b>AWDM/1473/23</b>	<b>Recommendation - REFUSE</b>
<b>Site:</b>	<b>Land To The North Of 20 To 40 Firle Road, Lancing</b>	
<b>Proposal:</b>	<b>Demolition of a single dwelling-house, creation of new onsite access road and erection of 3 detached bungalows</b>	
<b>Applicant:</b>	Mr and Mrs Tom Middleton	Ward: Manor
<b>Agent:</b>	Mr James Breckell	
<b>Case Officer:</b>	Gary Peck	

The Planning Services Manager presented the report explaining that there had been no further additions since agenda publication and clarifying for Members the reasons for the Officers recommendation of refusing the application.

There were three registered speakers who gave representations in objection to the application. The raised concerns regarding the steep gradient of the proposed access road and the safety issues that it may cause. Also of major concern was the possible loss of biodiversity on the site.

There was a representation from the Ward Councillor in objection to the application who reiterated concerns over biodiversity.

There were three registered speakers, the applicants and the architect, who gave representations in support of the application. They clarified for the committee the history of their planning applications. They explained that, as biodiversity was a relatively new planning concern, to be sure of compliance they had to rely on experts. The expense of consulting a landscape architect before obtaining planning permission was not a feasible expense but they reassured Members that a landscape architect and an ecologist would be utilised, should the application be successful. With regards to the safety aspects of the steep access road, they stated that the gradient of the proposed access road had never previously been cited as a reason for refusal but suggested the possibility of placing bollards in front of the property opposite, at the Firle Road end, to alleviate some of the concerns.

During debate Councillors discussed their thoughts regarding the safety of the steep access road but concurred that as Highways had not raised any concerns, it would be ill-advised to reject the application due to this issue. Biodiversity was also a major concern for the committee members who, on the whole, felt that the potential benefits of the development were outweighed by the likely harm that would come with the arrival of a construction site. Members felt that this piece of land was of great biodiversity value in itself and not just because it was adjacent to a national park.

The two points that the Officer had highlighted as reasons for refusal in the report were thought to be persuasive arguments for rejection and a proposal was put forward to agree with the Officer's recommendation and reject the application for these two reasons. This was seconded and voted on with an outcome of 8 votes in favour and 1 abstention.

**Decision - REFUSE** planning permission for the following reason(s):-

1. The proposed development by virtue of its scale, siting, and necessary remodelling of the land would fail to reflect the prevailing character of the area (including the adjacent National Park) and would have therefore have an adverse impact upon the character of the area. The proposal therefore conflicts with guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework, advice within the Planning Practice Guidance and policy 15 of the Adur Local Plan 2017.
2. It has not been demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority, including via the lack of detailed landscaping proposals that the development ensures the protection, conservation, and where possible, enhancement of biodiversity and that any adverse effects of the development upon the Local Wildlife Site can be adequately mitigated. The proposal therefore fails to comply with policy 31 of the Adur Local Plan 2017.