

Planning Committee

7 July 2020

Authorisation for Horsham District Council to discharge functions on behalf of West Sussex County Council

Land West of Ravenscroft, Storrington, West Sussex, RH20 4EH

Report by Head of Planning Services

Local Member: Paul Marshall

District: Horsham

Executive Summary

Residential development of up to 80 dwelling houses, community parkland, allotments and associated development is proposed on land west of Ravenscroft, Storrington. The site is partially within Horsham District and partially within the South Downs National Park (SDNP). A request for a screening opinion under the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations has been made in advance of the submission of an outline planning application.

Under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, the County Council is the determining authority for planning applications on land outside the boundary of a national park.

However, it is considered that it would be beneficial for Horsham District Council to be authorised to undertake EIA screening and scoping, and to determine any future planning application/s related to the same development. This is because they have knowledge of the site, relevant expertise in residential development, and an existing agency arrangement with the South Downs National Park Authority.

Therefore, it is recommended an agency agreement with Horsham District Council under Section 101 of the Local Government Act is approved to allow that authority to discharge the County Council's functions in relation to the part of the site that lies outside of the South Downs National Park.

Recommendation

That West Sussex County Council enters into an agency agreement with Horsham District Council to allow that authority to discharge the County Council's planning functions in relation to the part of the proposed development site on land west of Ravenscroft, Storrington that lies outside of the South Downs National Park.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Residential development and other uses are proposed on land west of Ravenscroft, Storrington. The site lies partially within Horsham District and partially within the South Downs National Park (SDNP).
- 1.2 The South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) can determine any application for the part of the site within its boundary. For the area outside its

jurisdiction, the determining authority is the County Council under Schedule 1(i) to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

- 1.3 However, Section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972 allows for the discharge of functions by local authorities, either by delegation within the authority, or to another local authority.

2. The Site and Proposal

- 2.1 The proposed development site is on land totalling 11.56 hectare to the west of Ravenscroft in Storrington. The site, which lies, to the south of the village, comprises two linked parcels of land (see **Appendix 1 – Site Plan**).
- 2.2 The land in the north is currently used as allotments and is bound by established trees and hedgerows. The land to the south of the allotments is unused scrub land, which was previously in agricultural use.
- 2.3 A request for a screening opinion has been made under Regulation 6 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (the 'EIA Regulations'). This is related to, and in advance of, the submission of an outline planning application on the site for:

The erection of up to 80 residential dwellings, including access (but not internal roads) with all other matters reserved, and the relocation, enhancement and enlargement of Ravenscroft Allotment site and the delivery of a community parkland.
- 2.4 The part of the site within Horsham District is proposed for the residential development, with the replacement allotments and park being located on the larger part of the site that is within the SDNP.

3. Considerations and Recommendation

- 3.1 The County Council could deal with planning matters for the part of the site outside of the SDNP. However, it is considered that it would be beneficial for HDC to undertake screening and scoping under the EIA Regulations and to determine any future planning application/s. This is because HDC has background knowledge of the proposals and relevant expertise in residential development.
- 3.2 Furthermore, HDC has a working relationship with the SDNPA because of the current agency arrangement that means that they can determine applications on the SDNPA's behalf. It will be crucial to ensure there is consistency in the management of the proposed development, given that any future planning applications would, in combination, bring forward a single scheme.
- 3.3 It is considered that the preferred way forward is for the County Council to grant authority to HDC to undertake its planning functions in relation to the above proposed development of land west of Ravenscroft, Storrington. Specifically, this is to undertake EIA screening and scoping, and to determine any future planning application/s related to the same development.
- 3.4 Therefore, it is recommended that the County Council enters into an agency agreement with HDC to allow that authority to discharge the County Council's

planning functions in relation to the part of the site that lies outside of the SDNP.

4. Resource Implications and Value for Money

- 4.1 There are no financial implications because the County Council would not be determining any future planning application. The planning fee would be received by the SDNPA, which is responsible for the largest part of the site.

5. Equality Duty

Not applicable.

6. Risk Management Implications

- 6.1 There are no identified risks to the County Council in taking the recommended approach. It would result in the consideration of planning matters and determination of any future planning application/s sitting with another planning authority, which would take on associated risks.

7. Legal Implications

- 7.1 The agreement for HDC to act as agent for this application would, under Section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972, discharge the County Council's responsibilities for the determination of the applications, and would remove any involvement in them. It would not set any precedent for the determination of future cross-boundary applications as this will be decided on a case-by-case basis.

8. Crime and Disorder Act implications

Not applicable.

9. Human Rights Act Implications

Not applicable.

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Background Papers

None

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Site Plan