

**Sidmouth Town Council's Planning Working Group
held on Wednesday 27 March 2024
(The Working Group met virtually)**

Councillors present: Kelvin Dent (Chair)
Chris Lockyear
John Loudoun
John Nicholson
Rachel Perram

Apologies: Cllr Bernie Davis

Also present: Cllr Ian Barlow

The meeting started at 10.00am and finished at 11.50am

820 Declarations of Interest

Cllr Kelvin Dent	24/0263/MFUL Former Council Offices Knowle, Sidmouth	Personal	Left the meeting and did not vote.	Resident of Knowle Drive
Cllr Chris Lockyear	24/0256/FUL Greenway, Cotmaton Road, Sidmouth	Personal	Remained in the meeting but did not vote.	Acquainted with the applicant
All Members	24/0454/FUL Avoca Manor Road, Sidmouth	Personal	Remained in the meeting and did vote.	Acquainted with an objector
Cllr Chris Lockyear	24/0035/LBC The Richmond Hotel, Elysian Fields, Sidmouth	Personal	Remained in the meeting and did vote.	Acquainted with the applicant

821 District Council Members

It was formally noted that the participation of those Councillors who are also members of the East Devon District Council in both the debate and subsequent vote is on the basis that the views expressed are preliminary views taking account of the information presently made available to the Town/Parish Council. The District Councillors reserve their final views on the application until they are in full possession of all the relevant arguments for and against.

822 Minutes

Members agreed that delegated authority be given to the Chair of the Planning Working Group to sign as a true and accurate record the Minutes of the Planning Working Group meetings of 13 March 24.

823 Urgent Items

None received

824 Applications for consideration

RECOMMENDED: That in respect of the Planning Applications set out below, representations to the manner in which they should be determined, be made known to the East Devon District Council in accordance minute 230 of Council, 19 April 2021 and with schedule 16 of the Local Government Act 1972.

825 24/0457/LBC Mr J 122 Woolbrook Road, Sidmouth, EX10 9EA.
North Ward Roberts Replacement of 11 windows in south west elevation.

NO OBJECTIONS

Note: Members wanted to ensure the windows would be manufactured in wood.

826 24/0295/FUL Mr David 25 Ashley Crescent, Sidmouth, EX10 9UF.
North Ward Fergie Waterproof cement render to be applied to front and side of porch.

NO OBJECTIONS

827 24/0558/FUL Johanna 7 Tyrrell Mead, Sidmouth, Devon, EX10 9TW.
Primley Ward Morris Single storey rear extension, and side facing new entrance door & window.

NO OBJECTIONS

828 24/0298/FUL Mr Donkey Sanctuary, Mire Lane, Salcombe Regis, Devon, EX10 0NU.
Salcombe Regis Matthew Demolition of existing stables 1-4, The Ressies, Stallion Boxes & staff/office. Proposal to erect 5no. donkey shelters/stables, and a staff accommodation building.
Ward Maslen

NO OBJECTIONS.

NOTE: Members would like to see the addition of solar panels on the staff accommodation building.

829 24/0531/AGR Mr William Mortice Farm, Salcombe Regis, Sidmouth, EX10 0JH.
Salcombe Regis Spiller General agricultural building for storage of machinery and fodder, steel portal frame building with Yorkshire boarding and concrete panels.

NO OBJECTIONS

830 24/0498/HRN Miss Lucy Combe Wood Farm, Salcombe Regis, Sidmouth, EX10 0JN.
Salcombe Regis Buckingham Removal of 5m of hedgerow.

NO OBJECTIONS

Note: Members would like to express regret that hedgerow should need to be removed.

831 23/2603/FUL Sue Byes Lodge, Drakes Avenue, Sidford, EX10 9QY.
Sidford Village Wiltshire
Ward Proposed loft conversion with construction of second floor rear dormer with cladding.

NO OBJECTIONS

832 24/0263/MFUL Mr Paull Former Council Offices Knowle, Sidmouth, Devon, EX10 8HL.
South Ward
Redevelopment of site to provide: (a) Care home building (Class C2) with associated parking, landscaping, staff and resident facilities and associated works, (b) Extra care apartment building (53 units) with associated communal lounge, wellbeing suite, restaurant and care provision (class C2) (c) Retirement living apartment building (33 units) with associated communal lounge (Sheltered housing) and (d) Erection of 4 houses and 3 townhouses (Class C3). Along with accesses, internal car parking, roads, paths, retaining walls, refuse and landscaping associated with development; retention/refurbishment of building B, erection of habitat building and sub-stations. (Demolition of buildings other than building B) (Variation to previous application (23/0571/MFUL) showing removal of balconies and elevational changes to west elevation of Retirement Living block). (Amendment).

OBJECT:

Members had, at previous meetings, expressed significant concerns and made objections regarding proposals, citing various issues that required urgent attention and revision. These have not been addressed by the applicant in the latest application. Members reiterated that the proposed development's nonalignment with Policy 1 Sid Valley Development Principles was a primary concern. The policy emphasised the importance of avoiding adverse impacts on the environmental and aesthetic quality of the Sidmouth area and aims to protect or enhance the Sid Valley. However, as outlined in previous communications, there were several key areas where the proposed development fell short:

- 1) Population Impact: The anticipated increase in elderly residents without a corresponding plan to address healthcare and support services challenges the existing infrastructure's capacity and raised major concerns about meeting the needs of both current and future residents. This issue was also raised in an objection by Dr Joe Stych of Sid Valley Medical Practice.
- 2) Environmental Concerns: The scale, design, and impact on the surrounding landscape, including overlooking adjacent properties, remained significant issues that needed to be addressed to ensure the development respected the character and scale of the existing neighbourhood. The increase in the number of units proposed would mean the removal of a number of mature trees which would have acted to screen any development from lines of sight from all angles around the valley. This development is therefore contrary to Strategies 6 and 26 and Policy D1 of the East Devon Local Plan 2013-2031, Policy 7 of the Sid Valley Neighbourhood Plan, 2018-2032 and National Planning Policy Framework, 2023 in particular paragraphs 131, 135 and 139.

3) Design and Aesthetics: Despite minimal efforts to revise the proposals, concerns persisted regarding the attractiveness, design quality, and compatibility with the surrounding area, including the impact on a listed 'Folly' and overall visual harmony. Furthermore, the presence of an additional 18 balconies overlooking the park raised privacy and aesthetic concerns, impacting both residents and park users negatively. The development proposals are contrary to Policy D1 of the East Devon Local Plan 2013-2031, Policy 6 of the Sid Valley Neighbourhood Plan, 2018-2032 and National Planning Policy Framework in particular paragraph 135.

4) Housing Market Considerations: Given the over-supply for retirement living accommodation that already exists within the valley, and the national trend for older residents to shun such purpose built properties, questions about the demand for such units and the balance of priorities in addressing housing needs, particularly regarding age-restricted units, required careful consideration and justification. These concerns have been raised on many occasions and by many residents of the Sid Valley. 51% of residents in the valley are over the age of 65. The Sid Valley no longer needs or can manage this type of accommodation. Members did not agree that with the assertion that local residents would downsize. Historic sales of such flats revealed that they were mainly sold to incoming residents. McCarthy and Stone will be aware of the poor sales performance of a recent Churchill Development in Sidford, as it is part of the same group of companies.

5) Parking and Traffic Management: Insufficient parking is provided within the complex, both for residents and the large number of accompanying care staff and visitors. This would lead to over-spill parking on surrounding streets, causing congestion, safety risks, and inconvenience for residents, visitors, and staff.

6) The site does not conform with the current Local Plan 2013-2031. This proposed an allocation of just 50 new homes on this site. Sidmouth's need is for housing for families, at the affordable end of the market. In addition, this application does nothing to address the need for low cost accommodation for support staff.

Recent objections and negative feedback from the community highlighted additional concerns that should be addressed. Residents were in fear that the proposed development's scale and size would be detrimental to Sidmouth, leading to increased demands on essential services such as healthcare, emergency services, and carers. Suggestions, such as reserving a portion of the flats for carers/workers should be given serious consideration to ensure the development's sustainability and positive impact on the community.

Other objections noted a potential lack of light between the tall apartment blocks. This would reduce quality of life for its future residents. Environmental concerns included an apparent lack of provision for renewable energy and a proposal to include astroturf at the care home. The latter is unacceptable, leads to greater water run off, break down into microplastics and is likely to be banned in the forthcoming revision of the NPPF. Considering these collective concerns and objections, Members requested that the applicants reconsider and collaborate closely with the community to develop a revised proposal that addressed the issues comprehensively which would help to contribute to its long-term success and positive integration into the Sidmouth area.

- 833** 24/0256/FUL Mr Mark Greenway, Cotmaton Road, Sidmouth, EX10 8SW.
 South Ward Agnew & Dr
 Mary
 Hobley
 Proposed new roof dormer to East (front) elevation, proposed new side facing first floor window, and new roof-light on North elevation, new side facing rooflight on south elevation (roof).

NO OBJECTIONS.

- 834** 24/0454/FUL Mr & Mrs Avoca Manor Road, Sidmouth, Devon, EX10 8RR.
 South Ward Murray
 Cowen
 Proposed new dwelling with parking and garden.

OBJECT:

Members considered that the proposal constituted overdevelopment of the site and the design did not reflect the character of the immediate locality contrary to Policy 7 of the Sid Valley Neighbourhood Plan - Local Distinctiveness.

- 835** 24/0035/LBC Mrs The Richmond Hotel, Elysian Fields, Sidmouth, Devon, EX10 8UJ.
 South Ward Melanye
 Luscombe
 To remove flat roofed extension to the curtilage cottage, to remove laundry building and refurbish the roof of the curtilage cottage all within the grounds of Grade II* listed building.

SUPPORT

- 836** 24/0462/FUL Mr Roger Unit 4, Alexandria Industrial Estate,
 West Ward Taylor
 Extension to vehicle repair and MOT workshop.

NO OBJECTIONS.

837 Trees in Conservation Areas

None received.

838 Trees with preservation order

Applications relating to Trees protected by a Tree Preservation Order.

- a)** 24/0277/TRE Sherwood, Salcombe Hill Road, Sidmouth, Devon, EX10 8JS.
 Salcombe Regis T1, Lime: re-pollard to previous reduction points. (DR)
 Ward

APPROVED: subject to the conditions recommended by the Arboricultural Officer.

- b)** 24/0472/TRE Mrs Enid Tudor House, Connaught Close, Sidmouth, EX10 8TU.
 South Ward Holden
 Holm oak : crown reduction of 3m, reducing canopy lateral spread from 11m to 8m; crown lift to 3.5m above ground level above road access.

DEFERRED: AWAITING OFFICERS REPORT

839 Exemption to a Tree Preservation Order

None received.

840 Appeals

None received.

841 Unsupported decisions

None received.

842 Enforcement Letters

None received.

843 Urgent Items

None received.

844 New Draft Local Plan Update

The District Council will shortly undertake formal consultation on the provision of Employment Land and the Town Council may well wish to comment.

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CHAIR OF THE PLANNING WORKING GROUP