

**Minutes of the Environment Committee on Monday 2nd July 2012 at Weaving
Village Hall, Weaving Street commencing at 8.38 p.m.**

Councillors present – Mr K Perry (Chairman), Mrs P Brooks, Mr P Dengate, Mrs A Spain, Mr A Springate, and Mrs M Waller together with the Clerk.

1. Declaration of Interest or Lobbying.

None declared.

2. Apologies and absences

Cllr W Hinder. Cllr B Hinder, Cllr Ivor Davies (Holidays)

Not adjourned as there were no members of the public present.

3. Planning Applications and Appeals for Consideration

3.1 MA/11/1414 – Application for variation of condition 11 of MA/04/1503 (change of use from agricultural land to recreational land and erection of a timber shed for use as changing rooms) as follows – ‘the use hereby permitted shall only be carried on by Bredhurst Juniors Football Club or other football club based in the parishes of Bredhurst or Boxley’ at Bredhurst Nurseries, Dunn Street Bredhurst.

Wish to see refused and reported to the Planning Committee for the following reasons:

- **Unsustainability due to need to travel by private motor cars.**
- **Nuisance to local residents.**
- **Application did not contain a Transport Statement or Transport Assessment.**

The original change of use to allow pitches was allowed because it was considered that the facility would be a valuable resource for young members of Bredhurst Juniors Football Club, members of which would be from Bredhurst Village.

A subsequent application to allow other teams to play at the site was refused by Maidstone Borough Council as users of the site would travel from outside the village using private motor cars and this was unsustainable. This refusal was upheld by the 2009 Planning Inspectors decision as to allow other teams to use the site would a) lose the local community connection, which was the basis of the original application, and b) result in unsustainable private motorcar travel as the site is not served by public transport.

The 1st June 2010 Planning Inspectorate Appeal allowed a change to the condition regarding the name of the team but the decision also clearly required the teams to be local to Bredhurst village. The inspector’s report stated *“The proposal before me makes clear that the appellant seeks to allow the use of the pitch by teams from not only Bredhurst but also Rainham, Hempstead, Walderslade, Boxley and Maidstone; a catchment area that covers some densely populated conurbations. In my opinion this would be likely to encourage unsustainable forms of travel and conflict with the adopted policy noted above. Also I have been given no analysis of the facilities, or lack of them, in the areas listed that might justify allowing players to travel to the Bredhurst site”*.

The current application is for 4 adult teams to play at the site and players would be required to access the site by private motor car. Section 4 of the National Planning Policy Framework Promoting Sustainable Transport requires a Transport Statement or Transport Assessment and this has not been provided.

The applicant states that “I confirm that the teams that are playing this season are based in Bredhurst and Boxley parishes and that the players all live locally to the site”. In view of this statement the following comments are made.

FC Wouldham. The Chairman and Secretary live in Grove Green and this equates to a round trip, via country lanes, of approximately 11 miles. Grove Green is actually on the outskirts of Maidstone and is one of the last parished area before the town urban areas.

It is the furthest point in Boxley Parish to Bredhurst Village and therefore the site. Wouldham Village is within Tonbridge and Malling District and thus outside the parish of Boxley. A round trip to the village is approximately 13.5 miles. It is likely that the team would draw its players from this area.

Bredhurst Rovers and Bredhurst Rovers Reserves. The Parish Council has been informed that this is actually Twydal FC renamed. Twydal is in Gillingham. The Chairman gives his address as in Bredhurst Village but it is believed that this is only a 'letter drop' address as the Parish Council has been informed that he on the electoral register as living in Rainham.

Use of the pitch by teams from the above areas would encourage and result in unsustainable forms of travel.

Swallow Rise 93. This has a Chairman and Secretary from an address that is a 4.5 miles round trip to the site. It is not clear where the players for the team would be drawn from.

The applicant states that due to Data Protection it is "extremely difficult to obtain players addresses" but also confirms that all the players live locally to the site. This is a contradiction.

With a joint population of, approximately, 11,000 inhabitants in Boxley and Bredhurst parishes and 3-4 adult teams already existing in and recruiting from the immediate area it is a wonder that so many local players actually exist to support what now appears to be 8 adult teams in 2 parishes.

Previous use of the site was allowed for a junior team with a local connection. Times of use was also restricted to stop nuisance to local residents however there have been issues regarding trespass (to recover lost balls and also to try to find the parking for the adjacent site) onto a neighbouring property and also noise pollution from the use. Other nearby residents have also complained about the noise from the site. A condition placed on planning permission was clear that no adult teams or adult training could take place on the site but this condition has been ignored and adult teams have played there.

Adult teams are generally noisier than junior teams and will create additional noise pollution and nuisance for local residents.

The original change of use was allowed to provide a local facility however by advertising the pitch for adult teams and linking the site's bar, serving alcohol, the use is clearly linked to the business that is run at the site and so it is not a local facility but a business opportunity.

3.2 MA/12/0693 – Amended Plans to application to vary condition 1 (no vehicles may arrive, depart, be loaded or unloaded within the general site.....at Tesco Stores Ltd, Grovewood Drive North, Grove Green.

Comment this is the same application that members objected to recently. The amended plan is a letter with an amended site plan. The letter also states that Tesco would be prepared to negotiate on the previous application including limiting deliveries from other companies. **Noted previous objection reiterated.**

4. **Next Meeting.**

Next Environment meeting 9th July 2012 at Beechen Hall commencing at 7.30 p.m.

Meeting closed at 8.59.

Signed as a correct record of the proceedings

Chairman.....Date.....