

Minutes of the Environment Committee on Monday 10 June 2013 at Beechen Hall, Wildfell Close, Walderslade commencing at 7.30 p.m.

Councillors present: Mrs W Hinder (Chairman), Mr I Davies, Mr P Dengate, Mr B Hinder, Mr A Springate and Mrs M Waller together with the Clerk.

1. Apologies and absences

Cllr Brooks (holiday), Cllr Holmes (work) and Cllr Spain (unwell).

2. Declaration of Interest or Lobbying.

None.

3. Minutes of the Meeting of 20 May 2013.

The minutes were **agreed** and **signed** as a correct record.

4. Matters Arising From Minutes.

4.1 Minute 2525/4.1 Maidstone Studios traffic disruption warning on signs: A response to the request to use the interactive highway signs was awaited from KCCH&T. It was **noted** that the request for Maidstone Studios to place a notice warning local residents of upcoming events was outstanding. **Action: Office.**

4.2 Minute 2525/4.2 Quad bikes: Confirmation of cost was awaited from MBC. If the cost was within the agreed budget the work would be authorised at three locations at the open space. **Action: Office.**

4.3 Minute 2520/12 Community Infrastructure Levy: **Noted** Cllr Wendy Hinder to request that Maidstone Area KALC take the issue up with MBC. Members **received** a summary of CIL. **Action: Cllr Wendy Hinder.**

4.4 Minute 2526/6.1 MBC Planning Committee: Members **received** the response to the Freedom of Information request and after discussion it was agreed that Cllr Ivor Davies would write to Cllr Lusty, Chairman of MBC Planning Committee to inform him of the correct average cost of a parish council referral to his committee. **Action: Cllr Ivor Davies.**

The meeting was not adjourned as no members of the public were present.

5. Planning Applications and Appeals for Consideration.

5.1 (a) MA/13/0509 Erection of a detached garage/garden shed storage building at The Oaks, Westfield Sole Road. After lengthy discussion it was **agreed** *The parish council does not have valid planning reasons to object but has the following concerns:*

- *An extensive 8 vehicle garage with storage already exists on the site and combined with the proposed development there would be parking for 13 vehicles.*
- *Two toilets are shown in the proposed development and it was considered that this was excessive for a residential garage. This combined with the already existing garage may indicate that this unit is not for residential use.*
- *There is some concern that either the existing unit or the proposed unit will be used for business and that this will attract additional traffic movements on to Westfield Sole Road which is in effect a country lane with limited passing places and no footways.*
- *The application form indicates that there is a planned change to the access for vehicles but this is not shown in any of the plans.*

In view of the concerns the parish council requests, should the application be permitted, the inclusion of a condition restricting use for residential purposes only.

(b) MA/12/1631 Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of replacement four bedroom detached chalet bungalow with car parking and basement (amendments to MA/12/1631) at Hillview, Old Lidsing Road, Lidsing, Gillingham, Kent.

It was not clear what the amended details were and further investigation was requested. **Action: Office.**

(c) MA/13/0872 retrospective application for retention of fencing and gates at The Three Ashes, Boxley Road, Walderslade. After lengthy discussion it was **agreed** (with one abstention). *Wish to see refused but not reported to the planning committee; reason for refusal - the design and style would be out of keeping with the character of the area and the street scene. The application form also stated that there were no trees or hedges on the site and this is incorrect.*

(d) KCC/MA/0132/2013 – Proposed construction of 6 classroom extensions, hall extension, internal alterations and the provision of 16 additional car parking spaces, a grass-crete access road to the side and rear of the school and additional hard play space at St Johns C of E Primary School, Provender Way, Weaving, Maidstone, Kent. *Wish to be approved.*

5.2 **Received** MBC Planning Committee attendance rota: **Agreed** members unable to attend a date allocated to them would arrange a swop with a colleague and notify the office of the change. **Action: Councillors.**

5.3 MA/12/2314 NEXT application: Cllr Wendy Hinder notified the meeting that the MBC Planning Committee debated the application for two and a half hours and voted to permit the development subject to section 106 payments being approved. MBC would be reporting the decision to the Secretary of State as it deviated from the local plan.

6. **Planning Applications and Appeals Decisions**

None submitted.

7. **Neighbourhood Development Plans.**

7.1 Neighbourhood Area: **Noted** the consultation period closes on 23 July.

7.2 Parish Audit: **Noted** the consultation period closes on 2 July.

8. **Maidstone Borough Local Plan.**

8.1 **Received** explanation on how information will be collated and supplied to meetings.

8.2 Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) and Strategic Economic Development Land Availability Assessment (SEDLAA). **Noted**, at the MBC meeting on 21 May two extra development sites were identified and after consultation with members the draft Parish Audit was amended and supplied, with the parish council's preliminary views, to MBC. Formal consultation on the SHLAA and SEDLAA was expected later in the year.

9. **Volunteer Groups.**

The Status Report for WWG June 2013 was **received**. Cllr Springate gave a verbal report on the recent task day. It was **noted** that the group had, for ease of reference, named the plateaux and these would be entered onto a plan and supplied to the parish office.

Cllr Bob Hinder gave a report on the Friends of Boxley Warren. Equipment had been purchased but there was now a need to provide a secure storage area. He would be approaching Paul Carter for a grant and also the Estates Committee about the possibility of installing a unit at the hall. An inventory of the equipment will be provided to the parish office. **Action: Cllr Bob Hinder.**

10. **Highways and Byways.**

10.1 The KCC explanation on the 2013 vegetation clearance on public rights of way in the parish was **noted**; concern was raised about the lack of planned maintenance. Cllr Brooks had requested that PRoW KB8 be identified for reactive maintenance. **Action: Office.**

10.2 It was **noted** that the verge maintenance had uncovered litter and rubbish and a litter pick could be arranged via the MBC website. The Clerk had already reported Walderslade Woods Road.

11. **Policy and procedures review.**

11.1 The new format BPC Planning information leaflet was, with some minor adjustments, **agreed**.

11.2 Laminated planning information: after discussion it was agreed to add a possible parish council response of *"The parish council does not have valid planning reasons to object but has the following concerns..."* Members recognised that this was not a response that was included on the MBC letter of consultation.

12. **Matters for information.**

12.1 Overhead Tower Line Refurbishment. The chairman notified members that such work had devastated an area at Bredhurst resulting in damage to birds' nests and ground habitats. As the planned work covered Pilgrims Way Cllr Bob Hinder took note and details would be forwarded to Mike Phillips. **Action: office.**

12.2 Changes to permitted development legislation. The KALC summary on the effect on residential properties was **noted**. An item notifying residents of the changes would be included in the Downs Mail. The Clerk would supply a summary on the changes for industrial and commercial units. **Action: Clerk.**

13. **Next Meeting.**

Next full environment meeting 8 July 2013 at Beechen Hall commencing at 7.30 p.m.

As no members of the public and press were present there was no resolution to exclude them however it was recognised that a report to be given in the next item was confidential due to personal details and data.

14. **Enforcement and Section 106 updates from MBC.**

An update on unauthorised business activities on land in the north ward was **received**.

Meeting closed at 9.10 pm.

Signed as a correct record of the proceedings.

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