

Minutes of the Environment Committee on Tuesday 29th January 2013 at Beechen Hall, Wildfell Close, Walderslade commencing at 7.32p.m.

Councillors present – Mrs W Hinder (Chairman), Mr P Dengate, Mr B Hinder, Mr D Holmes, Mr K Perry, and Mr A Springate, together with the Clerk and two representatives of the applicant Ms M Davidson and Mr M Hughes.

1. Apologies and absences.

Cllrs Brooks (predetermined), Ivor Davies (family commitment), Spain (convalescing) and Waller (predetermined). County Councillor Chittenden.

2. Declaration of Interest or Lobbying.

All members declared that they had been lobbied.

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

3. Planning Application MA/12/2314.

The chairman welcomed the representatives and invited them to address the meeting and then answer questions. Discussion took place concerning all aspects of the application including; traffic; alternative sites; impact on the retail in the town centre; traffic congestion; impact on local communities; design; light pollution etc.

The representatives choose to leave prior to the decision being taken and following their departure discussion covered; the local plan and core strategy, concerns, reasons for and reasons against and possible conditions that needed highlighting to the planning officer. Cllr Springate proposed that the committee did not object to the application but raised concerns and conditions; **agreed** (with one objection).

MA/12/2314 Erection of Class A1 retail development (with ancillary café) and associated servicing, car parking, landscaping and access arrangements at Plot 4, Eclipse Park, Sittingbourne Road.

Having carefully considered; the application; traffic issues; the employment that will be bought to the site which has been undeveloped for 10 years and the impact of such a prestigious development for a gateway route into the county town the parish council's response is

Do not wish to object however there are concerns about;

- The impact of traffic.
- Impact on the town centre.
- Light pollution impact on the AONB;
- Impact on the surrounding area.

If the planning officer was minded to grant permission then the following conditions/investigation should be considered;

- A robust examination of the green travel plan with a condition included in any permission granted to ensure that this plan is adhered to.
- It is requested that there is a change to the traffic layout being planned for the new junction as it is considered that the introduction of traffic lights will seriously impact on the current traffic flow adding to the considerable congestion experienced in the area. A one way flow system through Eclipse Park, possibly in from Bearsted Road out at Sittingbourne Road, would negate the need to have 'cross over traffic lights' at the proposed new junction utilise existing road infrastructure and reducing expenditure.
- Require a lighting design that compliments the area and negates light pollution.
- It is understood that there has been a change in the location of the store and that this will allow more perimeter landscaping and this is welcomed. It is requested that vertical green walls are introduced to soften the impact of the building.
- A condition should be introduced to ensure that the applicant cooperates with other local developers to look towards establishing and maintaining bus services to link said developments with the town centre and park and ride.
- A robust investigation into the Retail Impact Assessment to ensure that there is no substantial impact on the town centre retail.

- The issue of traffic and the possible development of plot 4 for retail should be referred to the Integrated Transport Strategy Consultation review.

4. Next Meeting.

Next full Environment Committee meeting 11 February 2013 at Beechen Hall commencing at 7.30 p.m.

Meeting closed at 9.20 pm.

Signed as a correct record of the proceedings

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