

Minutes of the Environment Committee on Monday 14 March 2016 at Beechen Hall, Wildfell Close, Walderslade on commencing at 7.36 pm.

Councillors present: Mr P Dengate (Chairman), Mrs P Brooks, Ms L Clarke, Mr I Davies, Mr M Hinchliffe (left the meeting at item 9), Mrs M Waller together with the Clerk and a member of the public.

1 Apologies and absences

Cllr B Hinder (other meeting commitment), Cllr W Hinder (other meeting commitment) and Cllr Hollands (convalescing). Cllr Hinchliffe apologised that he would have to leave at 9.00pm.

2 Declaration of Interests, Dispensations, Predetermination or Lobbying

None submitted.

3 Minutes of the Meetings of 8th February 2016

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

4. Matters Arising from the Minutes

4.1 Minute 2839/5.2 HGV parking update. **Received** and **noted**, members requested a further update on the issue regarding the criminalisation of parking fines to allow collection of fees before a foreign vehicle left the country. Helen Whately MP to be contacted for an update on her work. **Action Clerk.**

4.2 Minute 2839/5.3 Installation of hard standing/apron at Boxley Road noticeboard. **Received** and **noted** KCC had raised concerns about the root damage that would be caused from digging into the bank. **Action office to continue to peruse KCC for a decision.**

4.3 Minute 2839/5.6 Inconsiderate parking Provender Way. County Councillor Carter has been approached about using his devolved highway budget to install yellow lines at the junctions on Provender Way. **Noted.**

4.4 Any other matters arising from the minutes not on the agenda. None.

The meeting was not adjourned as the member of the public did not wish to speak.

5 Planning Applications for Consideration

15/503458/TPO TPO application to crown reduce 1 Oak tree by 1-1.5m, remove two lowest limbs of 1 Hornbeam, crown reduction of 1 Pear tree by 3- 4ft. at 8 Travertine Road, Walderslade. APPEAL: Dismissed.

6 Planning Decisions, Appeals and Appeals Decisions

MC/15/3781 Construction of a proposed 4 bedroom dwelling with detached garage and associated parking. Land adjacent to 803 Lordswood Lane, Lordswood, Chatham, ME5 8JP. Revised design details and positioning of proposed development. **Ratified** the Clerk's decision, made after consulting committee. *Noted.*

16/501479/FULL Single storey rear extension at 22 Restharrow Road Weaving.
Do not wish to object.

15/510318/FULL Part Retrospective – Removal of diseased and dying hedge to side of property and erection of a fence with planting between fence and boundary line; erection of a wooden shed at 22 Gleaners Close, Weaving.
Do not wish to object but concerns as there was no substantive evidence that the hedge was diseased and dying.

16/501664/FULL Two storey extension leading into single storey extension at rear, re siting of front door and rebuilding existing lean-to at Tuddleswell, Weaving Street, Weaving. *Do not wish to object.*

16/501556/TPO TPO application to 1no Oak - crown reduction 20% and thin 10% at 5 Sylvan Glade Walderslade. *Do not wish to object defer to the views of the Landscape Officer.*

16501551/TPO TPO application to 1No Field Maple – 30% crown reductions at 7 Brownelow Copse, Walderslade. *Do not wish to object defer to the views of the Landscape Officer.*

16/501844/TPO TPO application to 1no Yew – raise canopy by 12 feet at 42 Bargrove Road, Vinters Park. *Do not wish to object defer to the views of the Landscape Officer.*

16/500960/ADV Advertisement Consent for three internally illuminated fascia signs and one internally illuminated individual letters at Performance House Forstal Road Aylesford. *Do not wish to object.*

16/500727/FULL Erection of single storey side extension with internal alterations at Cadapatra Boxley Road Walderslade.

Members requested more time to consult the plans and it was **agreed** that a decision would be made out of meeting after the Clerk had received members' views. **Action Councillors and Clerk.**

16/502069/TPO TPO application to 1no Oak - crown lift up to 6m, reduce western branches from 6m to 3m over buildings. 4no. Sweet Chestnut - crown lift to 6m, remove dead wood. 1no Sweet Chestnut - crown lift up to 6m, reduce height by 5m at 1 Feldspar Close Walderslade. *Do not wish to object defer to the views of the Landscape Officer.*

16/502063/TPO TPO application to 1no Oak and 1no unknown species - Crown reduction of 30% to both 23 Celestine Close Walderslade. *Do not wish to object defer to the views of the Landscape Officer.*

16/501991/TPO TPO application to 2no Sweet Chestnut - fell, 1no. Sycamore – fell at 1 Burleigh Drive Boxley. *Do not wish to object defer to the views of the Landscape Officer.*

16/501752/FULL Two storey side and rear extension at The Firs Boxley Road Walderslade.

Members requested more time to consult the plans and asked that the immediate neighbours be contacted to give them an opportunity to supply their views to members before a decision is taken. It was **agreed** that a decision would be made out of meeting after the Clerk had received members views. **Action Councillors and Clerk.**

Street Trading License Mrs Lynn Kehily to sell hot and cold food/drinks from her catering trailer in St Michaels Close, Aylesford. *Do not wish to object.*

7 Highways and Byways

7.1 Bollards on verge adjacent to Boxley Rd/Travertine Rd junction. A site meeting was requested and a response is awaited. **Noted. Action Clerk.**

7.2 Yelsted Lane traffic movements and signage, returned to agenda as requested. After a brief discussion members decided **no further action.**

7.3 Highways and planning clarification on when KCC might consider objecting to planning applications. **Received and noted.**

7.4 Street lights. Update on the schedule for replacing units with LED street lights **received and noted.**

7.5 Nuisance vehicles log. The PCSO's report on the number of calls logged by the Police was **received and noted.** Members requested an item be placed in the Downs Mail encouraging the public to ring 101 when they saw or heard quad bikes in areas where they should not be. **Action office.**

8 **Maidstone Borough Local Plan Publication (Reg. 19) February 2016 and Maidstone Integrated Transport Strategy 2011-2031.**

The Clerk was thanked for her work on the two briefing notes that members had **received** and **noted**. After careful consideration and discussion members **agreed** that the parish council's response to the consultation on the draft Local Plan will include requests that it be changed to include:

- Protection for the Medway Strategic Gap, currently the gap at Lidsing, Bredhurst and Capstone Park is deemed as countryside but no additional protection to stop Lordswood and Walderslade joining up with Hempstead.
- More protection for the countryside.
- The addition as Landscapes of Local Value of Beechen Bank, Walderslade Woodlands, Cowbeck and Reeds Croft woods.
- The reference to new bus services at the proposed development at junction 7 to include the bus service serving Bearsted village and Bearsted train station.

Members raised concern that the Integrated Transport Strategy was very aspirational and appeared to ignore the likelihood that people will continue to prefer to use their cars in preference to other modes of transport. It was recognised that the position would only worsen with the proposed increase in housing. After consideration members **agreed** the parish council's response as

Boxley Parish Council welcomes the document and aspirations to encourage people to get out of their private vehicles in favour of walking, cycling or using public transport however this document fails to address the issue that many residents face:

- *They have large distances to travel.*
- *The infrastructure, especially footways in rural areas and bus services, do not exist.*
- *The closure of local facilities means that they have to use their vehicles to access shops, GPs etc.*

With increased residential development and the number of commuter type car journeys within the Borough it is suggested that there is a need to consider creating 'highway corridors' for vehicles to quickly access motorway so as to free up local routes and make them more attractive for the sustainable traffic uses.

MBC'S Local Plan prioritises the allocation of s106 funding and Highways is second to affordable housing. As MBC is proposing a trigger threshold, for affordable housing provision, at 5 or above dwellings this will adversely impact on the ability for this strategy to be delivered.

It is noted that the KCC policies, Growth without Gridlock: a Transport Delivery Plan for Kent and Local Transport Plan (LTP) for Kent 2011-2016, are woefully out of date and were completed before the growth of residential development was identified.

The parish council will be attending the public inquiry (date as yet unknown) to ensure that its views are presented in person to the planning inspector.

9 **Lower Thames Crossing Route Consultation 2016 – Have Your Say.**

The Clerk was thanked for her work on the briefing note that members had **received** and **noted**. Members were sympathetic to the residents and communities that would be directly affected by the proposed crossing and link and after careful consideration **agreed** the response

It is anticipated that a significant percentage of the vehicles using the proposed crossing will use junction 3 of the M2 to access the M20 via the A229 and this will an adverse and severe impact on the highway infrastructure but more importantly on the local communities which will suffer from additional noise and air pollution.

Junction 3 of the M2 is already overloaded at peak times and it is unacceptable that this consultation has ignored this issue and in fact absolves itself from making a decision on Blue Bell Hill. An informal study of the congestion problem at the M2 junction road network is attached for your information. For the Lower Thames Crossing to work effectively and for all the improvement aims to be reached the adjacent supporting infrastructure needs to be updated at the same time. With

additional traffic at junction 3 the situation will surely worsen so why defer the inevitable?

Boxley Parish Council recognises that there is a need for a lower Thames crossing however whilst the congested Dartford Crossing issue will be addressed congestion is being created further down the infrastructure e.g. Blue Bell Hill.

Safety may be improved at locations close to the current crossing but the issues experience there will be transported to this area.

Additional traffic movements and queues at junction 3 and on the A2045 and A229 will have an adverse impact on local community health and the local environment.

10 **Volunteer Groups**

- 10.1 WWG February task report. **Noted.**
- 10.2 Friends of Boxley Warren report. **Noted.**
- 10.3 WWG March Task report. **Noted.**

11 **Policy and Procedures.**

Inconsiderate parking advice notes (review). After careful consideration members' **agreed** an advice notice that parish councillors could place on windscreen of vehicles that they identify as parking inconsiderately. **Action councillors.** When possible an item is to be placed in the Downs Mail. **Action office.**

12 **Matters for Information**

- 12.1 Old Chalk New Downs Project. Cllr Bob Hinder attended the consultation on 8th March. **Noted.**
- 12.2 Online petition to Parliament calling on government to give parish and town councils the right to appeal planning decisions to the Planning Inspectorate. The deadline for the petition is 19 April. **Noted.** Members requested that the link be circulated to them. **Action office.**
- 12.3 Saturday Freighter Service is coming to an end. MBC news release. **Noted.**

13 **Next Meeting**

Next Environment Committee meeting 11th April 2016.

In view of the confidential nature (personal details and data) on the Enforcement item the chairman proposed a motion that the public and press will be excluded from the meeting.

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

Members received a verbal update on the two outstanding issues.

Cllr Dengate asked that when possible could briefing notes be sent out prior to the agenda being issued. **Action Clerk and parish office.**

Meeting closed at 9.23 pm.

Signed as a correct record of the proceedings.

Chairman Date