

Minutes of the Environment Committee on Monday 14 November 2016 at European School of Osteopathy, Styles Lane, Boxley on commencing at 7.30 pm.

Councillors present: Mrs Wendy Hinder (Chairman), Ms L Clarke, Mr Ivor Davies, Mr P Dengate, Mr Bob Hinder, Mr D Hollands together with the Clerk, Assistant Clerk, Mrs P Brooks and Mrs Maureen Waller (visiting councillors) 40 members of the public and 3 representatives from Savills.

1. **Apologies and absences**
Cllrs Rob Martins (unwell) and Radcliffe-Godfrey (family commitments).
2. **Declaration of Interests, Dispensations, Predetermination or Lobbying**
All Councillors had been lobbied on planning application 16/507776/OUT. Cllr Clarke declared she had been lobbied on the development on land at Forge Lane.
3. **Minutes of the Meetings of 4th and 10th October 2016**
The minutes were **agreed** and **signed** as a correct record.
4. **Pre Application presentation** by Savills on behalf of Rochester Bridge Trust on development proposed for land at Forge Lane.

The meeting was adjourned at 7.35 pm to allow members of the public to make comments on the proposed plans. Many questions were raised by residents and the following points were recorded as major concerns.

- Access via Forge Lane unable to cope with additional traffic and construction traffic.
- Loss of privacy
- Loss of view
- Outside the conservation area but within the AONB.
- Excessive height of proposed dwelling.
- A Resident at Street Farm indicated that the access road to the rear of Street Farm is unsuitable for the proposed traffic.

The meeting was reconvened at 7.55 to allow Councillors to ask questions. Concerns raised by Councillors included:

- Difficulty with parking
- Light Pollution
- Increase in traffic and construction traffic.
- Impact on AONB.
- Health & Safety issue at junction of Forge Lane and the Street.

The agent was asked to take back to his client the comments made and that if they revise the plans to come back for a further pre-app presentation.

The Parish Council also identified for following:

- If there is legal access over Forge Lane by the developer that a before and after survey is undertaken so that any damage can be repaired.
- Ideally no construction to use Forge Lane.
- Should the Planning Officer be minded to approve then a condition is placed on this application that no permitted development rights to expand into the roof space.

5. **Matters Arising from the Minutes**

- 5.1 Minute 2919/4.2 Inconsiderate parking Provender Way. The parish office is in contact with residents to gain evidence however, with County Cllr Paul Carter away for several weeks it is not possible to establish the progress.
- 5.2 Minute 2919/4.3 Grovewood Drive South yellow lines. MBC Parking was contacted about possible yellow lines and will be undertaking a survey/investigation. **Noted.**
- 5.3 Minute 2919/4.4. Land to the rear of Tesco Grove Green. Work will be undertaken, when time allows, to contact the owners concerning maintenance. **Noted.**

- 5.4 Minute 2919/4.5 Litter/flytipping signs. MBC has taken delivery of the signs which will be placed by the Impton Lane junctions this area is currently most affected by litter. **Noted.**
- 5.5 Minute 2919/4.6 Flooding Boxley Road (near Longwood) and Brownlowe Copse. Response from KCC awaited. A complaint has been made to the Maidstone Area Manager who is undertaking an investigation. The Street drains due to be cleared on 8 November, had not been cleared. **Action Clerk to chase Area Manager for an update.**
- 5.6 Minute 2919/4.7 Development Wildfell Close. The planning application will be reported to MBC Planning in either November or December. **Noted.**
- 5.7 Minute 2920/7 Litter picking and flytipping. Members received the Clerk's update report detailing the work and areas the Community Payback Service could possibly undertake subject to a H&S assessment. Cllrs asked for a couple of additions to the specification and a further area was put forward for consideration. **Action Clerk to liaise with CPS to confirm the maintenance and areas the CPS will cover.**
- 5.8 Grovewood Drive North Crossing facility. Contact has been made with Tesco about applying for a grant towards the cost. The office is waiting to hear from the resident with regards to the petition. **Noted.**
- 5.9 Minute 2922/13.2 Gibraltar Farm Public Inquiry. MBC responded to the question as to why no MBC officer had attended. MBC were not asked to do so by Medway and as it has no Section 106 requests it was felt that there was no need. Cllr Dengate voiced his concern and dissatisfaction that MBC appears not to be interested in the impact on the Maidstone residents who live locally and will be affected by this development.

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

6. **Planning Applications for Consideration**

16/507460/FULL. Erection of a two storey side extension at Melverley The Street Boxley Kent ME14 3DX. *Do not wish to object.*

16/507776/OUT Outline application for demolition of existing commercial structures and erection of 2 no. 3 bedroom bungalows (All Matters Reserved). Willow Farm Tyland Lane Sandling Kent ME14 3BL. Wished to see refused and reported to the Planning Committee for the reasons set out below.

- The proposal would amount to unacceptable development in the open countryside and would therefore be contrary to the provisions set out in the Maidstone Borough Wide Local Plan Saved Policy ENV28. It would amount to unsustainable development in terms of the environmental harm and the lack of local services available to future occupiers and would therefore be contrary to the requirements set out in the NPPF.
- The development would amount to the urbanisation of this protected area north of Maidstone, and would therefore be contrary to the Maidstone Borough Wide Local Plan Saved Policy ENV31 and the sustainability requirements of the NPPF.

If the planning officer is minded to approve members requested a condition is placed on the development for a vehicular passing place on the narrow access road is constructed before occupancy of the dwellings.

16/507144/TPO – TPO Application – overgrown hornbeam to be pruned back by 40% at 34 Spenlow Drive, Boxley, Kent, ME5 9JT. *Do not wish to object, defer to the views of the Landscape Officer.*

16/507566/TPO – TPO application to fell 1No Multistem Hornbeam and 1 No Elder to near ground level at 8 Aston Close, Boxley, Kent, ME5 9JW. *Do not wish to object, defer to the views of the Landscape Officer.*

The Clerk informed members that the Waitrose Development at Eclipse Park was being

considered by the Planning Committee at MBC on Thursday 17 November. The planning officer is recommending approval subject to a legal agreement concerning contributions and as the parish council had not objected there was no requirement for representation.

7. **Planning Decisions, Appeals and Appeals Decisions**

There were none.

8. **Highways and Byways**

- 8.1 Flooding and the raised cushion outside of Kings Arms, Boxley Village. It was agreed that this item is deferred to the December meeting.
- 8.2 MBC dog bin removal programme. The Clerk informed members that 19 dog waste bins were being removed across the parish and what appeared to be only 1 co-mingle bin being installed. She informed members that both herself and the Assistant Clerk would be investigating all locations being proposed to make sure there is a litterbin/co-mingle bin within a reasonable distance of the proposed removal. **Action Office.**
- 8.3 TPO Cowbeck Wood Gleaming Wood Drive. MBC has still not progressed this work and have again confirmed that it will only escalate the work if the trees come under imminent threat. Cllr Dengate asked for this to be returned to the agenda in January. **Action Office.**
- 8.4 Westfield Sole Road and Yelsted Lane one way system. Members **received** the Clerk's report and Cllr Wendy Hinder reiterated the problems with the volume of traffic both roads are having to cope with. It was agreed that the Clerk would contact KCC to ask for an investigation into the problem and to advise what steps could be taken. **Action Clerk/KCC.**
- 8.5 Averenches Road. Members **received** and **noted** the Clerk's report that Thurnham Parish Council had no wish to see the road opened.
- 8.6 HGV parking. MP Helen Whately's report was **received** highlighting her efforts to gain the Government's commitment to tackle fly parking which has become a blight on parts of Kent. Members **agreed** that a letter of thanks and she is invited to a site visit at Old Chatham Road. **Action Office.**

9. **Grounds Maintenance**

After considering the information in front of them members **agreed** in principal to look to employ a contractor on an ad hoc basis. To apply for a budget which is to be agreed and to pay for the work. Members requested draft policy and procedures for identifying and approving maintenance around the parish. **Action office.**

As the time was approaching 9.30pm the Chairman used her prerogative to extend the meeting by 30 minutes.

10. **Budget 2017/2018**

- 10.1 Members received and agreed the draft budget however they requested more time to consider the reasons for increasing the budget by including £40,000.00 from earmarked reserves and requested this was deferred until the December meeting. **Action Office.**
- 10.2 Timber Tops Play area seat and bin. Members were given the choice of wooden and metal seats and agreed a budget of £3,000.00 for 2 x metal benches + installation costs. **Action Office.**

11. **Members Reports**

- 11.1 KCC Parish Highways Seminar. A representative was unable to attend.

12. **Volunteer Groups**

- 12.1 FoBW – Report **received** and **noted**.
- 12.2 Walderslade Woodlands Group - Cllr Ivor Davies notified members that the Walderslade Woodlands Group had made good progress on the ponds at Round Wood.

13. **Matters for Information**

There were none.

14. **Next Meeting**

Next Environment Committee meeting Tuesday 13 December 2016 at Beechen Hall commencing at 7:30pm.

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

Members **received** and **noted** the updates

Meeting closed at 9.58pm.

Signed as a correct record of the proceedings.

Chairman Date