

Minutes of the Environment Committee on Monday 19 August 2019 at Beechen Hall, Wildfell Close, Walderslade commencing at 6.00 pm.

Present: Mrs W Hinder (Chairman), Mrs L Clarke, Mr I Davies, Mr B Hinder and Mr J Willmott, together with Mrs D Baylis Clerk and 12 members of the public plus 2 representatives from Offset Architects/Roadhouse Building and Civil Engineering in support of application 19/503629/FULL.

1 **Apologies and absences**

Cllrs A Brindle, D Hollands and P Huntingford

2 **Declaration of Interests, Dispensations, Predetermination or Lobbying**

Cllr B Hinder – Lobbied on application 19/503771

Cllr W Hinder - Lobbied on application 19/503771

Cllr J Wilmott - 19/503863, knows applicant, Lobbied on application 19/503771

3. **Minutes of the Meetings 8 July 2019**

The minutes were agreed and signed as a correct record.

4. **Matters Arising from the Minutes**

4.1 Minute 3268/4.2 Junction 3 M2. 10 MPs request for action on local infrastructure. Cllr B Hinder reported that there was no further information.

4.2 Minute 3268/4.3 Litter bin New Cut Road. No further information. Clerk will contact MBC again. **Action: Clerk.**

4.3 Minute 3268/4.5 Land to rear of Tesco. Cllr B Hinder had had a response from Helen Whatley MP to the effect that if Pauline Bowdery could not find out the ownership of the land then no one could.

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

5. **To ratify Planning responses made since the last meeting – DECISION**

The responses were ratified. The Cherry Tree Court Lodge Farm application 10/500162/FULL response was amended as follows and then approved for submission.

Boxley Parish Council would like to object to this appeal on the following grounds:

The development is contrary to NPPF and Local Policy as the applicants would be heavily reliant on private motor vehicles.

The design and materials are out of keeping with a rural area contrary to DM1 and DM30 of the Local Plan.

It will erode the low density scattered dwelling appearance of the east side of the village, which is an important part of its character, contrary to Policy SP17 of the Local Plan.

The previous application for the stables (MA/17/504038) had conditions regarding the storage of waste. This development would result in the waste pile being moved closer to an existing residential property.

It would be an overdevelopment of the site and would have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the area and its setting in the ANOB.

The development might adversely affect the wildlife in a nearby pond.

The landscape analysis plan underestimates the visibility of the site from the centre of the village.

The Parish Council would also like to question the designation of the land as a 'brownfield' site.

The appeal documents do not address the Planning inspectors' comments regarding regular bus service, walking distance to services, and the comment that additional screening would erode the openness and character of the area.

The appeal documents wrongly label Parsonage Farm, the Vicarage and agricultural barns with residential planning which is misleading

6. Planning Applications for Consideration

19/503629/TPOA – 5 Ploughmans Way, Boxley, ME5 9DE

Proposal to crown lift one hornbeam up to 4 meters in height above ground level. Fell two ash trees.

Do not wish to object, defer to view of the Landscape Officer

19/503863/FULL – Anvil Cottage, Forge Lane, Boxley, Maidstone, ME14 3DS

Demolition of existing conservatory and construction of single storey rear extension

Boxley Parish Council feel unable to make a decision as there is no conservation officers report on the application. If the Planning Officer is minded to approve the application then the Parish Council would like the application referred to the Planning Committee for determination..

19/503769/FULL – 18 Goldstone Walk, Boxley, ME5 9QB

Single storey side extension and garage conversion

The Parish Council has no material reasons to object

19/503870/OUT – Land West of Old Chatham Road, Sandling, Kent

Outline application with access matters reserved for up to 39 dwellings with associated infrastructure and works

There was a brief presentation from the representative from Offset Architects and Roadhouse Building and Civil engineering followed by a question and answer session in which the members of the public were invited to take part.

Following this the following response was agreed:

Boxley Parish Council wishes to object to this application for the following reasons:

1 **AONB**

It is an intrusion on the AONB and strategic gap north of Maidstone. LP Policy ENV28 seeks to prevent development in the open countryside that would harm the character and appearance of the area, and the proposal falls outside any of the exceptions listed in the policy. This policy is consistent with the NPPF insofar as it recognises the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside as one of its core principles. The proposal would lead to an unacceptable increase in the size of a small rural village with an estimated increase to the electoral roll of 13%. Maidstone Borough Council has a 5 year HLS. This site is not on the Local Plan for development.

2 **Traffic Issues.**

Pollution. The A229 already has frequent accidents leading to standing traffic which increases levels of pollution. There are many reports on the harmful effects of increased pollution from vehicles leading to health problems in nearby populations. In addition the 'Air Quality Study' commissioned by the Developers does not take into account the traffic projections from the new Lower Thames Crossing which will be completed in 2027. The projections estimate an increase of 1000 HGV movements per hour.

Old Chatham Road: The works to this road to prevent lorry parking and all the associated nuisance were only completed last year. There is nothing on the plans to show how lorry parking will be prevented if the road is converted back to two

way traffic flow. There has been no traffic assessment supplied for this proposal. The road is already used as a rat run by commuters.

Proposed crossing. The application sites this on a blind bend!

A229 – This development would prevent any future widening of the A229 should this prove necessary after the construction of the Lower Thames Crossing.

- 3 Sustainability:** the development does not meet the sustainability requirements of the NPPF. There are no local shops, schools, or GP surgeries which would make reliance on motor vehicles a necessity over more sustainable modes of transport for most journeys. There is a limited bus service that goes one way through Sandling but on the return journey the bus stop is located by the golf course on the other side of the A229 with an approximately 1.5 mile walk across the A229 footbridge and along the road to the development. This development does not meet the requirement of the NPPF, to locate new developments to give priority to pedestrian and cycle movements and to give access to high quality public transport facilities.

Sandling already has problems with **services provision** with poor broadband delivery and frequent power cuts and this development will put further strain on an already overstretched system.

- 4 Environmental Concerns;** There are roosting bats, slow worms and common lizards on the site all of which are protected priority species. The provisions made by the developers for their protection are inadequate. The proposal is contrary to paragraphs 117 and 118 of the NPPF, which require local authorities to promote the preservation, restoration and re-creation of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species

If the officer is minded to approve the Parish Council request the application be referred to the Planning Committee for determination.

9/503818/TCA – The Vicarage, The Street, Boxley, ME14 3DX

Trees in a Conservation Area notification: - T1, Semi mature multi stemmed Sycamore growing in the scrub land next to the access road. Reduce the height to approximately 10 meters and the lateral spread on all sides to 3 meters. G1, Various trees along the access road verge. Species including Portuguese Laurel, Hazel and Ash saplings. Cut back the foliage to the curb line where practically possible. And up to a height of 6.5 metres

Do not wish to object, defer to view of the Landscape Officer

19/503778/TPOA – 18 Spenlow Drive, Boxley, ME5 9JT

A Tree Preservation Order application - One Hornbeam - fell because of excessive shading, gigantic size and low amenity value. Replant with one standard hornbeam in same position.

Do not wish to object, defer to view of the Landscape Officer

19/503782/SUB – Popesfield, Bearsted Road, Weaving, Kent

Submission of details to Discharge Condition 26 (Surface Water Management) Subject to 18/506656/FULL.

The Committee declined to comment on this application so no response will be sent.

19/503513/FULL – 5 Aston Close, Boxley, ME5 9JW

Erection of a front porch and a single Storey rear extension with a garage conversion to a habitable space. Installation of a window to front elevation.

Response already submitted**19/503943/FULL - Downs View Farm Pilgrims Way Boxley Maidstone Kent ME14 3EB**

Demolition of 2no. existing commercial portal-framed buildings, removal of existing hardstanding across the site and construction of a replacement building for office use, with associated parking and landscaping

Boxley Parish Council would like to object to this application for the following reasons:

There is no good access to this site. Access is via two small lanes, which have no passing spaces. There are no traffic mitigating measures in this application. The neighbouring property 'Hatchetts' is not named on the plans. This property is Grade 2 listed with a front door that exits directly onto Styles Lane. What plans are there to protect it from potential damage from site traffic?

If the Planning Officer is minded to approve this development the Parish Council would like to request that the following conditions are attached to the approval:

The building is designated as office use only.

No windows should be put into the building on the side facing the residential dwelling 'Hatchetts'.

19/503771/FULL The Haven, Forge Lane, Boxley, ME14 3DU

Demolition of existing two storey garage/workshop building and erection of new single storey 2 no. bed house with associated parking and landscaping.

After discussion a vote was taken with 3 members in favour of objecting and 2 abstentions.

Boxley Parish Council objects to this development for the following reasons:

The description of the development is misleading as the demolished garage and proposed new build house are not on the same footprint.

The proposal by reason of its design would result in an incongruous and discordant feature detrimental to the Boxley village street scene and conservation area within an AONB.

If permitted, the scheme would expand the built area of Boxley into a largely undeveloped area behind the built frontages of The Street and Forge Lane to the detriment of the character and appearance of the Kent Downs AONB and North Downs Special Landscape Area. The development would represent an undesirable extension of the built up area of Boxley contrary to the aims of the Strategic Gap policy.

Access is via Forge Lane which is very narrow.

The proposal is not sustainable as it would encourage the use of the private motor vehicle to access services.

If the officer is minded to approve the Parish Council request the application be referred to the Planning Committee for determination.

19/503859/FULL Units 30 & 32 Newnham Court Shopping Village, Bearsted Road, Weaving, Kent, ME14 5LH

Creation of an outdoor children's play area, plant compound and bin store to rear of existing children's gymnastic centre.

The Parish Council has no material reasons to object**19/503460/FULL – 36 Crownfields, Weaving, ME14 5TH**

Erection of a part single storey and first floor side extension with conversion of the garage to a habitable space.

The Parish Council has no material reasons to object

7. Planning Decisions, Appeals and Appeals Decisions

The Planning decisions on the Agenda were noted.

8. Highways and Byways

8.1 Lower Thames Crossing latest information.
Noted

8.2 To consider any issues raised at the meeting
None raised

9. Policy and Procedures

None scheduled for review. **Noted.**

10. Members and Officer's Reports

10.1 Maidstone Local Plan Review
Report noted. Copies of the Local Plan review would be sent out to members upon receipt from Maidstone Borough Council.

10.2 To receive and reports or notifications of issues from members.
None received.

11. Sale of Land at Wildfell Close

The update report was noted.

12. Volunteer Groups

No reports submitted.

13. Items for Next Agenda

Requests for items to be included on the agenda to be submitted no later than 5 September 2019.

Noted.

Daffodils/Wildflowers – requested by Cllr B Hinder

KCC and MBC schedules for clearance and cutting – requested by Cllr Hinder – **Action Clerk**

14. Next Meeting

Next Environment Committee meeting 2nd September 2019 to follow the Main Council meeting at the European School of Osteopathy commencing at 7:30pm.

15. Enforcement and CIL/Section 106 updates from MBC

There were none.

Meeting closed 8.30pm.

Signed as a correct record of the proceedings.

Chairman Date