

Minutes of the Environment Committee on Monday 12 October 2020 held by Teams due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, commencing at 7.30 pm.

Present: Cllr B Hinder – Chair, Mr I Davies, D Hollands, L Clarke, A Brindle, P Huntingford, W Salter, C Sheppard and V Davies together with Mrs D Baylis, Clerk

1. **Apologies and absences**
Cllr J Wilmott
2. **Declaration of Interests, Dispensations, Predetermination or Lobbying**
Cllr Hinder lobbied on items 8.4 and 8.2, interest in item 12.
Cllr A Brindle lobbied on items 8.4 and 8.2
3. **Minutes of the Meeting held on 5 October 2020**
The minutes were agreed and would be signed when possible.
4. **Matters Arising from the Minutes**
None

To adjourn to allow members of the public to address the meeting.

No members of the public were present

5. **Planning Applications for Consideration – Decision**

20/504342/SUB Cobtree Manor Golf Course Chatham Road Sandling Maidstone Kent

Submission of Details to Discharge Condition 4 - Surface Water Drainage Scheme - Pollutants results, - Operational and maintenance, Condition 5 - i) Archaeological field evaluation, ii) Archaeological investigation, recording and reporting, Condition 6 - Phasing Plan, Condition 7 - Landscape scheme, Condition 9 - Arboriculture Report and Method Statement, Condition 22 - Ecological Mitigation, restoration and monitoring strategy - Botanical survey, - Aims and objectives, - Detailed methodology, - Access road, - Protect soils/turfs during construction, - Restore LWS following works, - Timings, - Details of who will be carrying out works, - Map of area, - Long term monitoring, - Details of management of the restored LWS and Condition 23 - Construction Management Plan - a) Routing of construction and delivery vehicles and b) Timing of deliveries subject to 18/504490/FULL.

Boxley Parish Council have no material planning reasons to object to this application. It has been noticed that there has been a big increase in parking on the road and this is a cause for concern.

The Clerk was asked to contact Highways about this. **Action: Clerk**

20/504307/SUB 1 Boxley Cottages Ashford Road Weaving ME14 4AA

Submission of details pursuant to conditions 2 (details of materials), 3 (details of fencing, walling and other boundary treatments), 5 (landscaping scheme), 7 (biodiversity enhancement scheme), 8 (noise level scheme), 9 (contamination risk scheme), 10 (contamination closure report), and 11 (archaeological works programme), of application 20/502242/FULL.

Boxley Parish Council have no material planning reasons to object to this application.

20/503902/LDCEX William Lillico And Sons Ltd The Forstal Beddow Way Aylesford Kent

Lawful Development Certificate (Existing) for use of building as an A1 country store/retail shop including sale of animal feed, bedding for farm animals, pets, equine, wild and domestic birds and small holders, animal supplements, mineral blocks and care products, animal accessories and equipment including rider safety equipment, land management items including grass, fertilizer and hardware, medicated wormers, pest

control and tools, outdoor and leisure clothing and footwear, human food and beverages including snacks, ice creams and locally sourced produce, giftware and seasonal items.
Boxley Parish Council have no material planning reasons to object to this application.

20/504434/TPOA Land near 87 Lombardy Drive, ME14 5TB

TPO application – T1 Holm Oak – inspect with endoscope on day of works and fell pending clear of bats. The tree has defects (cavities/decay)

Boxley Parish Council defer to the views of the Tree Officer.

20/504449/TPOA 2 Olivine Close, Walderslade, ME5 9NQ

TPO Application – Hornbeam (T1) – reduce height from 9m to 5m and a radial spread of 2m.

Hornbeam (T2) – reduce height from 7m to 5m and a radial spread of 2m.

Hornbeam (T3) – reduce height from 10m to 5m and a radial spread of 2m. Crown lift to achieve ground clearance of 4m.

Boxley Parish Council defer to the views of the Tree Officer.

20/504259/TPOA 10 Round Wood Close, Walderslade, ME5 9UL

Tree Preservation Order application – T1 – Oak Tree – Manage the tree under a Cyclical Pruning Programme. To crown reduce the height and width by 3m, to crown thin by 30%, remove any dead wood and all epicormic growth to manage the size and maintain a healthy growth.

Boxley Parish Council defer to the views of the Tree Officer.

20/504517/FULL 3 Franklin Drive, Weaving, ME14 5SY

Part single storey, part two storey rear extension.

Boxley Parish Council have no material planning reasons to object to this application.

20/504589/TPOA 72 Bargrove Road, ME14 5SB

TPO application to fell 1 x Holly (ilex aquifolium)

Boxley Parish Council defer to the views of the Tree Officer.

20/504548/FULL 16 Leybourne Close, Boxley ME5 9JN

Erection of a first floor side extension

Boxley Parish Council have no material planning reasons to object to this application.

20/504611/LBC Stone House, Weaving Street, Weaving, ME14 5JP

Listed Building Consent for works to basement, including emergency repair and underpinning to existing stone walls with limecrete lowered floor to replace mud floor.

Boxley Parish Council defer to the views of the Conservation Officer.

20/504070 8 Barleyfields, Weaving, ME14 5SW

Erection of single storey rear infill extension and two storey rear extension with creation of rear balcony.

Boxley Parish Council have no material planning reasons to object to this application.

6. **Ratifications**

None on this Agenda.

7. **Decisions**

The planning decisions on the Agenda were noted.

8. **Highways and Byways**

8.1 **Highways Improvement Plan**

There were no items to add to this.

8.2 **Boarley Lane**

The felled trees and hedging are now being burnt on the land which is generating a lot of complaints from residents to Cllr Brindle. She is advising them that they can call the Fire Brigade if the fires are left unattended but not much else can be done. The fields behind this land are on the call for sites in MBC's Local Plan Review. When planning permission is applied for the clearance of the land will mean an ecological survey is not required. Cllr Brindle reported that this is happening in other areas and is becoming a common approach. The stream has been dug out again but she did not know if the water flow was back to normal.

8.3 **Junction 3 of the M2**

The Consultation was now open. The following answers to the Consultation questions are proposed.

Q4 Strongly Agree

Comment: Junction 3 of the M2 is overcapacity causing congestion, noise and an increase in air pollution from standing traffic. There are frequent accidents causing more delays.

BPC has some serious concerns with the information provided so far.

1. Looking at the housing and jobs projected growth, along with the modelling carried out for the Lower Thames Crossing, Table 2 seems far too low. The maximum southbound additional traffic shows only a 5.6% increase from 2016 to when the LTC opens in 2027.
2. does this report assume Highways England are changing the way they route vehicles to Dover from the current M20 to the M2? If this is the case, the M2 will need a massive upgrade from the current two lanes motorway. The fact that HE have built two lorry holding parks at Ashford and invested in the Dover Traffic Alignment plan on the A20 after Folkestone points to the fact that HE will still want to divert traffic down the M20 from the M2 at Bluebell Hill.
3. BPC would like KCC to share their detailed analysis of the projected growth volumes and also for them to clarify the continued use of the M20 as the preferred route to Dover. The Port of Dover and Channel Tunnel should also be consulted on their projected growth figures coming into Kent from Europe. There is no mention of this in the report.

Q5 Strongly agree selected in all objectives listed.

There are no negatives listed. The questions are couched to get positive answers. BPC question who was involved in the initial ideas generation workshop held in June 2020. Did this include Local Authorities, Parish Councils, Road Hauliers Association etc. These stakeholders know more about their infrastructure, environment and growth prospects than consultants. Could we see an Agenda and minutes from this meeting?

BPC feels that this consultation is being rushed through during lockdown without adequate stakeholder engagement.

There is no mention of lost facilities in either of the 3 design options in spite of the fact that Option 3 will result in the loss of the Museum of Kent Life and Part of Cobtree Manor amongst others.

Q6 YES

All the options at the northern end are feasible and would reduce congestion. BPC like the upgrading of the current signalled junction at Taddington Roundabout which is always an accident blackspot where cars cut across lanes.

The Southern end of Bluebell Hill, enlarging the Running Horse roundabout with the addition of traffic signals will certainly reduce congestion and improve safety. Widening the carriageway to 3 lanes southbound on the A229 will improve congestion and safety and support growth.

Q7 YES

All the options at the northern end are feasible and would reduce congestion. Adding a separate left turn lane at Taddington Roundabout from the M2 London bound onto the A229 (cars running freely and avoiding traffic lights) is the same as Option 2 and better than Option 1.

The southern end of Blue Bell Hill creating a new grade separated junction is the best engineering solution but expensive in cost and impact to the local area. It will certainly have an affect local stakeholders such as Kent Life, the Malta Inn, The Village Hotel and Cobtree Manor Country Park. It will also solve the build-up of traffic coming along the A229 northwards from Maidstone.

Widening the carriageway to three lanes southbound on the A229 will certainly improve congestion and safety and support the growth. It is the same as Option 1.

Q8 YES

All the options at the northern end are feasible and would reduce congestion. Adding a separate left turn lane at Taddington Roundabout from the M2 London bound onto the A229 (cars running freely and avoiding traffic lights) is the same as Option 2 and better than Option 1.

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Widening the carriageway to three lanes southbound on the A229 will certainly improve congestion and safety and support the growth. It is the same as Option 1.

Q9 OPTION 3

This is the only option that provides a longer term solution to the problem. It will, however, have the greatest impact on stakeholders. We do not want to see a short term solution that will need another upgrade in 10 years' time. The last time the Cobtree and Running Horse roundabouts were upgraded was 2004 and these upgrades became obsolete in a very short period of time.

Q10 Potential Environmental Impacts

Standard comments made by KCC. We would expect a far greater assessment on such topics as Cistercian Abbey at Boxley, air quality and drainage. No mention of Kent Life, the Malta Inn, The Village Hotel and Cobtree Manor Country Park.

Q11

All three options meet the needs of reducing congestion, road safety, improving the air quality and supporting local growth.

The best engineering solution is Option 3.

At the northern end adding a separate left turn lane at Taddington Roundabout from the M2 London bound onto the A229 (cars running freely and avoiding traffic lights) is better than Option 1.

The major grade separated junction works will remove the issues created by traffic entering and leaving the M20 at both the Cobtree and Running Horse Roundabouts.

This scheme will be expensive, involve a lot of congestion during construction (no mention in the Brochure how this will work or possible diversion routes) and have a major impact on local stakeholders.

If funding is limited, Option 2 is the best option, but I question the long-term effect of this solution at the M20 end of Bluebell Hill. The current solution at the Cobtree and Running Horse Roundabouts was only built in 2004 and within a short period of time became obsolete.

The predicted traffic numbers need challenging as they are grossly underestimated..

8.4 **MBC Local Plan Review**

There are 4 sites in Boxley being considered by MBC as viable.

1. Rochester Meadows, Sandling – 20-25 houses
Members could see why this would be a good site for building but the infrastructure is very poor and any additional traffic would cause problems and make the narrow roads more dangerous.
2. Willow Farm, Sandling – 60-70 houses
Members could see why this would be a good site for building but the infrastructure is very poor and any additional traffic would cause problems and make the narrow roads more dangerous.
3. Lidsing – 1,000 Houses (new garden settlement)
All members were against this proposal. There is no infrastructure for this number of houses. Access would be from Lidsing Road which is very narrow and in poor condition.
Cllr Hinder has put in a formal objection to Lidsing as a Borough Councillor.
4. Seaburg – 10 houses
Members had no objections to this site as the impact on traffic onto Forge Lane would be minimal.

Some proposed sites in Boxley had been rejected, particularly those in the ANOB.

8.5 **Network Rail - Verbal report from Meeting held on 6/10/2020**

A meeting was held on Tuesday 6th October with the Clerk, Cllr Sheppard, Cllr V Davies and representative from Network Rail and the Contractor BAM.

Network Rail need to do urgent embankment stabilisation works on the Bearsted Cutting as it is in a dangerous condition.

They plan to use Franklin Drive Play area as a staging point as it has an access gate to the Railway line.

They will need to remove the newly installed play equipment to set up an operating area and close the play area from November to March 2021.

Issues raised:

1. They will get the installer (Playdale) to remove the play equipment, store it safely and then reinstall it at their own expense. They will pay for another post installation inspection once this is done.
2. They will reinstate the play area to its current state on completion of their works.
3. We have asked for the entrance gate that disappeared during their last period of work, to be reinstated.
4. We have asked if the ivy could be removed and the fence repaired as part of this reinstatement.
5. Their land agent will be getting in touch to talk about compensation etc. Cllr Sheppard proposed that they be asked to pay for one of the memorial benches for Cllr Wendy Hinder and that a 'grand reopening' could be held in March.
6. Network Rail will be utilising their current welfare facilities based at the Eastern end of Grovewood Drive South so this will not be replicated at Franklin Drive.

7. The contractor's staff will park at the above and not on the roads close to the playground. They will walk from the welfare area to the playground. No parking will take place on the western end of Grovewood Drive South where it is already dangerous with commuter parking and parents collecting children from the new school.
8. There will be limited plant movement and this will take place outside of the peak school travel time.
9. Network Rail will inform the local community about why the playground needs to close after the new equipment has just been installed.
10. Network Rail confirmed they will engage regularly with the local community and Boxley Parish Council.

The Clerk will chase up the contact from the Land Agent. The Clerk was asked to look into getting a TPO on the 3 trees in the play area. **Action: Clerk**

8.6 **To consider any issues raised at the meeting**
None raised.

9. **Policy and Procedures – Review**

None on this agenda.

10. **Members and Officers Reports**

Cllrs Hinder and Brindle reported that they were mainly dealing with the Local Plan Review.

11. **Residents' Concerns**

11.1 **Speeding in Sandling Lane**

Sandling Lane is on the Parish Boundary and only part of it is in the Parish. The Clerk was asked to pass the residents concerns onto KCC Highways. **Action: Clerk**

11.2 **Dog Fouling – Weaving Heath**

Cllr Sheppard reported that there were a lot of Facebook comments on this issue and he had noticed a definite increase in the problem. There is currently only one dual purpose waste bin on the heath. The Clerk was asked to contact MBC to see if more bins could be installed, the cost of the bins and whether MBC would empty them if BPC paid for them. **Action: Clerk**

11.3 **Walderslade Issues**

Members were happy with the Clerk's response and felt that no further reply was necessary. It was felt that the comments regarding 'lack of promotion of the woodland and general lack of respect for the environment' were unfounded. The Environment Committee work hard on protecting the natural environment of the Parish and this is reflected in their planning comments and the minutes of meetings.

12. **Memorial Bench for Parish Councillor Wendy Hinder**

Due to Cllr Hinder's personal involvement, Cllr Brindle as Vice-chairman of the Committee took this item. The choice of bench with the photograph was approved. The wording was agreed with the addition of Cllr Wendy Hinder's dates of service to be added to the lower inscription. It was proposed to by Cllr Hollands, seconded by Cllr Salter and all agreed that 2 benches would be purchased from the EMR for Franklin Drive with one to be placed in the play area and one to be placed at Beechen Hall. The Clerk was asked to order them and check how best to vandal proof the etched photograph. **Action: Clerk.**

13. **Consultations**

All current consultations had been circulated to members.

14. **Volunteer Groups**

No reports received

15. **Items for Next Agenda**

Requests for items to be included on the next Agenda.

16. **Next Meeting**

Next Environment Committee meeting 2 November 2020, venue to be confirmed, to follow on from the Parish Council meeting starting at 7.30pm.

17. **Enforcement and CIL/Section 106 updates from MBC**

A payment of £1,527.27 had been received for CIL.
A verbal report on recent enforcement activity was given.

Meeting closed 9.20 pm.

Signed as a correct record of the proceedings.

Chairman Date