

HADLOW PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Planning & Environment Committee duly convened and held on Tuesday 26 July 2022 at 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs M Harvey (Chairperson), O Baldock, E Bright, D Carey, N Collins, J Newman, S O'Shea, S Richardson.

Also in attendance: Melanie Stepkowski (Minute Taker).

3636 Apologies & reasons for absence.

J Massy (holiday)

3637 To receive declarations of interests.

None.

3638 To note Minutes of meeting held on 28 June 2022 (signed HPC 11/7/22)

Noted.

3639 To receive an update on progress of resolutions & matters from the last meeting not on current agenda.

Minute 3631 Baseball – Written confirmation that the outstanding hall hire/grounds invoice had been paid and games sheets completed and due to be returned to the Parish Office for games to date.

Minute 3635 Allotments – unused plots had been re-assigned.

3640 New applications, amended applications and plans for comment (List B's).

- **TM/22/01385/FL** - Variation of Condition 7 to change the approved single shared vehicle access off High House Lane to two separate vehicle access points (one for each plot). Orchard Dene Works Ashes Lane Hadlow Tonbridge Kent

<https://publicaccess2.tmbc.gov.uk/online-applications/PLAN/22/01385/FL>;

HPC no objection.

- **TM/22/01420/RD** - Details of condition 14 (surface water drainage system) submitted pursuant to planning permission TM/20/00597/FL (Erection of 25 dwellings comprising of 2 x one bed apartments, 8 x two bed apartment and dwellings, 11 x three bed houses and 4 x four bed houses and associated development). Land South Of Hoath Cottage Carpenters Lane Hadlow Tonbridge Kent.

<https://publicaccess2.tmbc.gov.uk/online-applications/PLAN/22/01420/RD>;

HPC no objection.

- **TM/22/01474/FL** - Full planning application for the erection of 57 residential dwellings (Use Class C3) including affordable housing provision, a new childrens day nursery and pre-school (Use Class E) alongside hard and soft landscaping including access, car parking, public open space, SuDS, and associated infrastructure. Land Formerly West Part Of Court Lane Nurseries Court Lane Hadlow Tonbridge Kent. <https://publicaccess2.tmbc.gov.uk/online-applications/PLAN/22/01474/FL>;

Hadlow Parish Council (HPC) objects to the above planning application on the grounds that the site is within the Green Belt and comprises Grade 1 agricultural land which is in short supply. As such the NPPF prohibits development unless ‘very special circumstances’ can be demonstrated by the Applicant and HPC does not believe that the Applicant has achieved this.

In addition, HPC would bring a number of concerns to the attention of TMBC, which we believe are relevant in determining this application:

Highways:

- Court Lane is a relatively narrow road which is unsuitable for HGV’s and is effectively single carriageway for most of its length from the A26 up to the site entrance due to on-street parking. Vehicles frequently have to drive on the pavement to pass through, including those of TMBC’s refuse Contractor and emergency vehicles.
- The access into and egress out of Court Lane from/onto the A26 is extremely difficult at present, there having been a number of accidents in recent years, and with vehicles, particularly larger vans and HGV’s, having to mount the kerb. This part of Court Lane is within the village Conservation Area and buildings already suffer damage from accidents and vibration from heavy traffic.
- The traffic survey undertaken by the Applicant is not relevant or representative, in our view, as this was carried out during a school holiday period and during Lockdown, when traffic flows were clearly reduced significantly.
- A development of this scale is likely to result in many more pedestrians, particularly children, having to use Court Lane, with a clear risk to their safety. The existing pavements are narrow in places making it extremely difficult for parents/carers with buggies.

Infrastructure:

- The medical centre and the dentist in Hadlow are already fully subscribed and cannot cope with the additional demand which the new Carpenters Lane development will generate. This would be further compromised by the proposed development in Court Lane.
- A £51,696 contribution from the developer, as stipulated by the NHS Strategic Planning & Estates Team in their response, is purely formulaic and in itself guarantees nothing in terms of additional services.
- HPC does not believe that either the medical centre or the dentist in Hadlow are capable of being expanded in terms of their physical building constraints, without relocating and/or requiring substantially higher capital investment.

Biodiversity:

- The Applicant's report was written after numerous trees on the site had been removed, with reference made to the historic position having been 'factored in'. HPC does not believe that this is a true or fair representation of the wildlife or biodiversity of the site and is concerned that no proper provision has been made as a result. The proposed development will impact adversely on green space in Hadlow. Such areas must be preserved as their benefit to both physical and mental health is well recognised.

Scheme Design:

- HPC is concerned about the 2½ and 3 storey elements of the scheme design, as these are not typical in Hadlow. In particular, the 2½ storeys **proposed adjoining** the Access Trail, The Forstal and Nursery Close are inappropriate and are likely to create overlooking with consequential loss of amenity and possibly infringing rights of light.
- HPC is also concerned that the Applicant has not fully taken into account the flood risks on the site and/or to neighbouring properties from surface water run-off, as we understand that the site was originally designated as the flood run-off when The Forstal was built.
- Car parking provision within the scheme may correspond to KCC minimum standards but is still unlikely to cope with the actual demand from on-site residents and their visitors. This is likely to cause overspill parking to occur in neighbouring roads (i.e. Court Lane, The Forstal and Appletons) which are already very congested. The large majority of residents in The Forstal are elderly and many are disabled to a greater or lesser extent.
- We also understand that the existing Saplings Nursery experiences significantly more demand for car parking than stated by the Applicant. As a result, the car parking provision proposed for the new Nursery building appears to be significantly underestimated, which is likely to create overspill parking to occur both within the site and also in the surrounding roads. The proposed Nursey is also likely to create light pollution to neighbouring residents.
- The Affordable Housing elements are to be welcomed in any proposed scheme, although HPC is concerned at how affordable these properties will be for local residents and workers and whether the 'affordability' will be maintained beyond the first sale.
- The Applicant has placed great weight on the use of footpath past the Churchyard as the principal pedestrian route from the site into the village centre. HPC is concerned at the safety of this route at night as it is mainly unlit.
- Evidence of sustainability is, at best, minimal.

HPC believes the above objections clearly show that the Applicant has not demonstrated 'very special circumstances' why this proposed development should be approved. If, however, TMBC is minded to grant consent in whole or in part for residential development on the site, HPC believes that the following Conditions or Restrictions should be imposed. In no particular order these are:

- Traffic calming measures should be introduced in Court Lane to reduce the speed of vehicles. This should certainly include relocating the existing 60mph speed limit to the east and might also include the introduction of speed humps between the site entrance and the A26 and a chicane (possibly with Hadlow Village gates) to the east of the site entrance.

- Ways in which Court Lane can be widened should be investigated, possibly including converting the northern pavement to roadway, although we fully accept that this would be controversial and problematic for the residents directly affected.
- It would also be advisable to improve the safety of the junction of Court Lane with The Forstal by introducing double yellow lines in Court Lane either side of The Forstal for a short distance.
- Overspill parking from residents of the site and their visitors into Court Lane, The Forstal and Appletons must be avoided, for the safety of existing residents and to avoid nuisance. This should be fully investigated and might be achieved by way of highly localised restricted parking and/or permits, although the practicalities, affordability and enforceability of such a scheme are unclear.

TMBC should satisfy itself independently regarding the traffic implications of any scheme and, if appropriate, seek a new traffic survey to be undertaken at peak/normal traffic flow times.

- TMBC should also satisfy itself independently that the flood risks from surface water run-off for the site and neighbouring properties are within acceptable limits.
 - A Construction Traffic Management Plan should be agreed and enforced to ensure that HGV movements during the development are carefully controlled and, in particular, that left turns from the A26 into Court Lane and the use of alternative routes (e.g. Cemetery Lane and via Golden Green) are prohibited.
 - The car parking demand for the proposed new Nursery should be re-examined and, if necessary, the capacity of the Nursery reduced accordingly.
 - HPC would like to see a scheme put in place to preserve and guarantee the discounted Affordable Housing element in perpetuity and to ensure that local residents and workers (i.e. from Hadlow) have first refusal wherever possible.
 - All existing mature trees and shrubs etc along the boundaries of the site should be retained, in order to maintain maximum screening for neighbouring properties particularly in The Forstal, Court Lane and Nursery Close. Replacement trees will take many years to reach maturity.
 - Lighting of the pedestrian footpath along the Churchyard should be improved.
 - If the 2½ and/or 3 storeys elements of the scheme are to remain, adequate screening from exiting neighbouring properties should be imposed, including the use of restricted openings and opaque glazing of windows to prevent over-looking and loss of amenity.
 - All permitted development rights for the scheme should be removed including a restriction on the future conversion of garages and car ports to habitable accommodation – in order to retain as much formal parking on the site as possible.
 - Some of the above concerns would be ameliorated if the scheme were to be reduced significantly in size.
- **TM/22/01507/FL** - Retention of temporary land-based facilities at Hadlow Rural Community School required for educational use until 31st August 2024. Hadlow Rural Community School Tonbridge Road Hadlow Tonbridge Kent TN11 0AU
<https://publicaccess2.tmbc.gov.uk/online-applications/PLAN/22/01507/FL>;

HPC No objection.

3642 Planning applications: results (List D's), out of area/comment & planning enforcements.
Noted.

3643 TMBC & KCC matters:

TMBC: Street Trading Review (<https://www.tmbc.gov.uk/licensing/street-trading-consultation>);

This had been considered by Councillors and it was deemed too ambiguous in its current draft form and required additional clarity in relation to local annual events being exempted from the regulations (e.g. St Mary's Christmas Fair, Community Fairs etc.)

3644 Non-planning issues:

- **Allotments** – Amended Terms & Conditions – no sprinklers

Notices placed on allotment noticeboard providing tenants with updated Terms and Conditions in which “no use of sprinklers” had been added.

- **South East Water** – Update on water shortage issues within the Parish & Precautionary Action Plan .

The Parish Office working alongside the Borough Council and Southeast Water had prepared emergency volunteer programme in the event of a long term water shortage within the Parish; however no further action had been required to date.

- **New Fencing:**

Village Hall Fencing – Amendments to the Council fencing behind the Village Hall were required to allow for two fire exit gates. Updated cost and works still awaited.

Dog Walking Fence - Quote approved and date of works awaited.

Both projects were part of the Parish Council Infrastructure Plan and S106 funds applied for via the Borough Council.

- **CCTV** – additional camera and repairs

Williams Field: Vandalised camera replaced at a cost of £518 net and additional camera installed as a result of criminal damage to the fence by the children's playground and container costing £624 net.

- **Inspection Reports** – Update on general inspections for buildings and open spaces

The matter was deferred however Clerk confirmed that Legionnaires Inspection and Risk Assessment for Hy-Arts, Medical Centre and Old School Hall had been completed and any remedial works noted will be actioned as soon as possible.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 20.57

Date of next meeting Tuesday 23/08/22 2022 at 7.30pm, location Parish Office

Signed

Dated