

FRAMFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Planning Committee Meeting held on Tuesday, 23 May 2017, at 6.15 pm in the Village Hall, Blackboys

Present: Committee Members: Keith Brandon (Chairman), Peter Friend (Vice Chairman), Jeff Goggin and Maria Naylor
In attendance: Ann Newton (Parish Clerk).
Public: Six [part].

At the meeting, the order of the items on the agenda may be varied in line with public speaking. However, the minutes are detailed in the order of the agenda.

The Parish Clerk detailed how the meeting would be run and commented that Wealden District Councillor Susan Stedman would represent residents on the application on land adjacent to the recreation ground, Blackboys (WD/2017/092/0) as she herself, in her role as District Councillor, had a pecuniary, prejudicial interest as being a near neighbour to the site.

1. Apologies.

There were none.

2. Declarations of Interest.

Councillors to give notice of declarations of personal, prejudicial and pecuniary interests in respect of items on the agenda. Keith Chairman declared a prejudicial interest in item WD/2017/0882/F as being the applicant (School Governors). He stated he would leave the meeting room during this application.

3. Minutes of the Last Meeting for Approval.

It was agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 28 March 2017 and delegated comments from April having been circulated, be approved, adopted and signed as a correct record. (PF/MN).

4. Planning applications for consideration - (comments denoted in italics)

The order of the applications may be changed in line with those with public speakers but the minutes are detailed in the order of the agenda.

- **WD/2017/0882/F – Re-roofing of existing handmade tiled pitched roof.**

Framfield CE School, The Street, Framfield TN22 5NR.

The Parish Council supports these essential works to the School roof.

(Keith Brandon left the room during the discussion on this application).

- **WD/2017/0942/O – Outline application for the erection of 5 no. dwellings, access, landscaping and other associated infrastructure.**

Land adjacent to the recreation ground, Framfield Road, Blackboys TN22 5LR.

The agent, Mark Best, from Parker Dann, gave a short presentation on the application. This was followed by objections from two households who believed the proposals are inappropriate for the setting and would be detrimental not only to the residents around the site but also to users of the recreation ground and with an impact on the views across to the AONB. They also had concerns about the speed of traffic versus the access onto the B2102. They believed that the applicant is trying to 'railroad' through the application ahead of the adoption of the Wealden Local Plan.

Following discussion the Parish Council voted unanimously to strongly object to the application for the following reasons.

- *Blackboys currently doesn't have a development boundary and hasn't done so for several years - it is deemed unsustainable in the adopted Wealden Core Strategy Local Plan. The field is also outside the proposed Core Area in the draft Wealden Local Plan and albeit it draft, the Council should take this into account.*
- *In regards to comparative sites - the development at Gun Road was inside the old development boundary, the Service Station and the housing at Pure Plants are both brownfield sites, but Mill Field (the local name for the site) is a green field site.*
- *The site was dismissed on appeal several years ago for caravans on the grounds of the access and the fact that the field is seen by far reaching views - it did have a windmill on it in the past and is the highest point in the village. It is also a strategic gap between the village centre and the outskirts.*
- *The B2102 is a very fast road, and has and still is subject to local residents requesting speed reductions even within the lowest speed limit areas. The proposed site sits on a 50 mph section of road and with a footpath of about 60 cm in the main, the Council cannot see how vehicles could safely pull out of the proposed access without endangering travelling vehicles on the main road. With little or no support from ESCC to reduce the speed limits, it is unlikely that this situation will change in the near and distant future. Part of the dismissed appeal decision noted that in order to achieve sufficient visibility splays, a great deal of the hedging would have to be removed; the Inspector deemed this in itself an unacceptable change to the street scene.*
- *The Council notes that page 15 of the Ecological Habitat report highlights a proposed outline plan layout of the site that is different to the one within the application. They would like confirmation of any impacts that this could generate. The proposed site is on the edge of the High Weald AONB and whilst not in it, it does have views that look over it.*
- *The Council notes that within the Highways report it shows a position for the data recorder attached to a traffic sign on the eastern side of John Dann Close which is substantially further in to the reduced speed limit area of 40 mph than that of the proposed site which is 50 mph, therefore they conclude that this data is not valid. The report references visibility splays based on one side being 40 mph. Again, this does not represent the proposed access which is in fact within a 50 mph area.*
- *There is mitigation that the splay is similar to John Dann Close yet the hedgerow between there and the proposed site is substantially lower and also set back by a further 3-4 metres, so a poor comparison. In line with the TRICS report it appears that the data and evidence presented has been manipulated to support the application and not representative of the actual location.*
- *The roadway proposed within the site in the Council's view would offer inconvenience to services delivering or collecting in that at every property a vehicle would have to make multiple 3 point turns to move around. An example would be a refuse collection lorry that would either have to make multiple manoeuvres or an expectation that the operatives would have to transport the bins to the lorry in a fixed position.*
- *The trip generation comparison report is somewhat incredulous. Throughout this application including the supporting letter it picks apart every aspect of the draft WDC Local Plan and policies, with a view of supporting the proposal. Yet, in the trip generation document it highlights that when looking at comparisons, the Blackboys Nursery would generate 1482 trips a day. As anybody that knows the area would, this is preposterous and the applicant seems to have some concept*

of this although by using another comparison which they state is not in line with the prescribed method and has come up with a revised figure of 720 trips per day. The Council cannot recall, but it has been some years since this site, even when open would have seen 10% of this figure!

- A justification is that a Garden Centre in Kingston, Lewes is of a similar comparison to Blackboys. The Council quotes from that Garden Centre's own website, "We are the biggest garden centre retailer in the UK, with over 150 garden centres nationwide". To use this as a comparison to Blackboys Nursery is ludicrous.
- The Council is curious as to the methodology of the trip data for the new houses. The document states that the 3 approved 'medium' sized house would generate 5.7 trips per day. The outline plan clearly shows 5 very large 4 and 5 bedroomed houses. To only have 5 trips per day would be more indicative of someone living in an apartment in the middle of a city not a rural unsustainable village.
- As per the Design & Access statement quotes – the 231 bus runs regularly and the timetable is included in the appendices. The bus timetable is incorrect and the Council wishes to add that for many years this service has been in the clutches of being withdrawn, most recently in the past few months where the Saturday service was stopped by the current provider. It is a limited service, not consummate to a commuter, so far from sustainable in itself.
- The other comparison used in a similar fashion to the Nursery is the Blackboys garage site. Highlighting it is a 4 bay garage in the calculations would probably be in the region of a 50% increase alone of trip generation in reality. This is a local garage catching the odd commuter passing by. The two double sided pumps are about 3 metres apart and therefore at any one time you will only get one vehicle per side when filling although generally there would only be 1 car both sides, but to indicate there would be 4 is equally laughable as the first example given.
- The TRICS data provided supports a daily count of 428 trips to this location. The Council wonders if that site would be in the position it is if it had such a substantial customer turnaround.
- So, looking at these examples and manipulation of the data to support trip credits or viability of the proposed application is certainly not offering a true life and accurate picture of the current trips made within the area.
- Once the Blackboys Garage and Nursery sites are developed, the local area will be under more considerable pressure than it is currently notwithstanding the cumulative extra traffic from the site at Gun Road (7 houses) which will also put added strains on the road in what is deemed a non-sustainable area.
- The Council believes the houses are not in-keeping with the local area. The houses in John Dann Close and the adjacent area are of terraced or semi-detached small cottage style, not 5 bedroomed detached, with double garages that are bigger than some of the aforementioned houses in itself.
- The Council thinks the development if approved would be of a negative detriment to the users of the recreation and sports field which is itself small. To be surrounded on multiple sides by houses does have a bearing on the mind of a sportsman or woman. To be concerned about whether hitting a ball and it smashing a window would impede the natural ability to be 100% focused on the activity. It could also lead to conflict between users of the sports field and local residents, which has been the case in the past.
- There is some merit in the designs proposed, albeit not suitable for this village location. The Council would finally like to highlight on page 4 of the Blackboys CGI's the representative view of the plot. It is noted that this is only an indicative

image but it is not too far from the actual geographical layout as it would be. The Council is therefore mindful of the impact that this development will have on a beautiful part of the countryside and object to the proposal for outline planning for this application based on the comments made above.

5. Any Other Planning matters for reporting at the Discretion of the Chair.

To include any other planning applications which may arrive after the agenda has been published at the discretion of the Chairman in line with the terms of reference of the Committee. There were none.

7. Next Planning Committee Meeting – 25 July 2017.

Additional meetings will be called during the intervening period if the Chairman believes they are required otherwise comments are passed to the Planning Authority under the Parish Council's delegated procedure policy – available on the website, noticeboards and Parish Magazine.

AEN/30.05.2017

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