

FRAMFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Planning Committee **Details of Delegated Comments** **March 2025**

Decisions can be delegated to the Chairman (or Vice-Chairman) plus two other members if agreed by the Chairman.

The following decisions were made under delegated authority by Maria Naylor (Chairman), David Jenner and Keith Brandon. (The Chairman has the casting vote in any tie).

- **WD/2024/1040/F – Construction of a single storey garden gym building. Highlands, Etchingwood Lane, Framfield TN22 5SA.**
<https://planning.wealden.gov.uk/Planning/Display/WD/2024/1040/F>

The Parish Council objects to this planning application for the construction of a gym within the gardens of Highlands, Etchingwood Lane, Framfield. It is oddly situated a significant distance from the main dwelling. The Council is unsure whether this part of the garden is open to the public under the Natural Garden Scheme, but it seems peculiar to place a gym in this setting.

The ecological appraisal appears to be inadequate in scope and methodology, mainly concentrating on the Great Crested Newt, with little consideration for other ecological concerns. The proposal seeks to include air conditioning and a large skylight with no reference to the protection of the environment from noise and light pollution. The site contains features suitable for protected species such as bats, great crested newts, and badgers. However, the mitigation proposals are vague and do not outline a clear, enforceable strategy for ensuring their protection.

There appears to be no acknowledgment of the potential harm to local wildlife habitats, especially given the location within the gardens of a listed building. A robust appraisal should propose ongoing biodiversity enhancements and monitoring. No comprehensive nocturnal bat survey was conducted, despite the presence of mature trees and structures suitable for roosting bats.

Due to the lack of specific reports, it is unclear whether all relevant species-specific surveys were undertaken at the appropriate seasonal time. The proposal will result in the loss of valuable garden and green space, which serves as an essential habitat for local wildlife. There is no detailed assessment of how the proposal will affect habitat connectivity or local biodiversity networks, particularly for species reliant on continuous green corridors.

The report frequently states that ecological impacts are "unlikely" or "low risk" without substantive evidence. There is a lack of site-specific data to support these assumptions, weakening the credibility of the appraisal. The proposal

does not include a robust strategy for the ongoing ecological management and enhancement of the site. There is no clear provision for long-term biodiversity gain, which contradicts national planning policy objectives on sustainable development. The proposed gym is to be nestled within a priority habitat of deciduous woodland, which is inappropriate considering the vast grounds that would potentially be more suited.

Additionally, there is a lack of clarity regarding whether this gym is proposed to be used 24/7, if it is intended solely for the occupants of the dwelling, or if it will be operated on a commercial basis. It is located next to a track that is detached from the main dwelling access. Is this track proposed to be used by the occupants for access?

Based on the above concerns, the Parish Council cannot support this application and urge Wealden District Council to refuse planning permission.

- **WD/2025/0293/LBA – Variation of Condition 4 of WD/2024/0762/LB (remove existing 40 year old timber windows and replace with timber windows in a style more appropriate and in-keeping with the Listed Building with slimlite double glazed units). To make the bottom rails of opening casements deeper.**
High Noon Cottage, Stonebridge Lane, Blackboys TN22 5HX.
<https://planning.wealden.gov.uk/Planning/Display/WD/2025/0293/LBA>

This application has been withdrawn.

- **WD2025/0300/LB & 0301/F – The proposed demolition of a non-original freestanding chimney breast, replacement driveway finish and localized repairs to the main dwelling roof.**
Hobbs Barton, Streele Lane, Framfield TN22 5RY.
<https://planning.wealden.gov.uk/Planning/Display/WD/2025/0300/LB>

The Parish Council supports the application in principle. They have no objections to the proposed replacement of driveway materials or roof tiles, as these changes appear to be in keeping with the character of the property and are unlikely to have any adverse impact on its appearance or setting.

However, the Parish Council wishes to draw particular attention to the matter of the freestanding chimney. Given that the Parish Council does not have the means to independently verify the accuracy of the information provided in this application, specifically regarding whether the chimney was an original feature of the dwelling and its authenticity at the time of listing, this aspect should be deferred to the WDC Officer for further assessment and clarification. It is essential that any alterations to historically significant elements are carefully considered to ensure the integrity of the building is preserved in line with heritage requirements.

Circulation: Planning Committee/All other Parish Councillors. Mar 6, 25