

**Minutes of the Environment Committee on Monday 4 March 2019 at Weaving  
Village Hall, Weaving Street, ME14 5JP commencing at 8.45 pm.**

Councillors present: Mrs W Hinder (Chair), Mrs A Brindle (arrived at 9.05pm), Ms L Clarke, Mr J Constable, Mr I Davies, Mr B Hinder, Mr D Hollands, Mrs Pat Huntingford, Mr J Willmott and Mrs M Fooks (Assistant Clerk).

The Chairman informed members that Cllr Huntingford, after expressing an interest, had been co-opted onto the environment committee.

1. **Apologies and absences**

All present

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

None declared.

As no members of the public were present the meeting was not adjourned.

3. **Planning Applications for Consideration**

19/500415/FULL Proposed single storey rear extension with internal alterations, raised patio and new front porch. 59 Bargrove Road Maidstone Kent ME14 5RT. **Ratified** the Clerk's decision, after consulting members, the Parish Council has no material planning reason to object. However, it has concerns about the bulk size and design which may constitute over development of the site.

19/500701/TPOA Application to reduce 1 x oak by 50% in height and crown diameter from approx. 20 meters and crown diameter c.10 meters. Due to excessive growth and shading. 11 Sylvan Glade Walderslade.

*Do not wish to object – Defer to the views of the landscape officer.*

19/500765/OUT Outline Application for proposed development (with all matters reserved except access) for the erection of up to 450 market and affordable dwellings, nursery and

supporting retail space up to 150sqm, with provision of access; estate roads; cycle and pedestrian routes; off-site highway improvements; residential and community open space and landscaping. Gibraltar Farm Ham Lane Hempsted Gillingham ME7 3JJ.

MC/19/0336 Outline application with some matters reserved (appearance, landscaping, layout, scale) for construction of up to 450 market and affordable dwellings; nursery and supporting retail space up to 150sqm, with provision of access; estate roads; cycle and pedestrian routes; off site highway improvements; residential and community open space and landscaping. Gibraltar Farm, Ham Lane, Hempstead, Gillingham, Kent , ME7 3JJ.

Boxley Parish Council wishes to reiterate its original reasons for refusal of the original application immediately below:

- The development would result in the loss of a substantial area of greenfield land which extends as a green wedge from the North Downs into the urban area. The site forms part of the setting to the Kent Downs Area of Natural Beauty and Capstone Country Park and contributes to the area's informal open space needs.
- The site's inclusion in an area of Local Landscape Importance helps prevent coalescence of Lords Wood/Princes Park/Walderslade with Hempstead. This development will therefore detract from the countryside's appearance. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policies BNE25 and BN34 of the Medway Local Plan.

- The development will impact upon the flora and fauna in the area and is contrary to paragraph 118 of the NPPF and Local Plan Policy BNE37.
- Additional demand will be placed on overstretched education, health and recreational and community facilities in the area, to the detriment of existing users of those services.
- Additional pressure will be placed upon the supply of water in the area.

It also wishes to bring additional reasons for refusal with regard to the traffic assessments which it finds deeply flawed as outlined below:

Traffic introduced into the adjacent residential area will have an adverse effect on the existing infrastructure and will likely result in Gleamingwood Drive becoming a rat-run. Princes Avenue, Lordswood Lane and Walderslade Woods Road will be used to access the M2 and the Parish is of the opinion that the infrastructure will not cope.

In the Statement of Community Involvement under the section of Representations the Highways England agency raised "a holding objection in relation to the application being concerned about the developments implication for the operation of Junction 3 (Bridgewood) of the M2". If one factors in the predicted increases to this junction from the proposed Lower Thames Crossing then clearly this Junction, which is already acknowledged as being over capacity by Highways England, will be further compromised.

In the Transport Assessment 3.3.2 they propose residents could access the M2 via Lidsing Road, Westfield Sole Road and Walderslade Woods Road and state minor improvements to Westfield Sole Road - these would do little to improve traffic flows on an already very narrow country lane which already frequently comes to a standstill because traffic cannot pass.

To encourage traffic to use unlit very narrow country lanes to access Walderslade Woods Road, and this could include Yelsted Lane where no improvements have been proposed, would severely increase congestion which can be from Roundwood roundabout through to the M2 Junction 3. Queues on the A2045 frequently mean that traffic coming out from peripheral roads is unable to do so.

At 3.2.1 in the Traffic Assessment they state that there have been no significant changes to the surrounding highways network - we maintain that for a considerable period of time there has been **NO** change in the local network to cope with the heavy increase in traffic over the past few years.

Paragraph 3.2.3 does not state that Shawstead Road running from Ham Lane is very narrow with few passing places. Traffic will try and use this road from the proposed development to get to North Dane Way to access the Medway towns. It should be noted that the Waste Disposal site is also situated on Shawstead Road which, as previously stated, is a very narrow single track with limited passing places. We note that Medway Council stated that improvement to Shawstead Road would severely alter the nature of the countryside to its detriment.

3.2.5 we wish to draw attention to the current situation regarding the Lidsing Road travelling South in the direction of Maidstone. This is already an extremely busy rat-run for traffic going to Maidstone hoping to avoid the severe congestion at Junction 3 of the M 2. It is an everyday occurrence for traffic to queue before the entrance to Boxley Village, sometimes from the top of Lidsing Hill, and to find a continuous queue

from the village through to Penenden Heath at am peak times and the reverse back to Boxley and beyond at pm peak.

19/500728/FULL. Erection of single storey rear extension, new side door opening (replacement for side window) and internal alterations. Caerglow Tyland Lane Sandling Maidstone Kent.

*The parish council has no material planning reason to object.*

19/500740/TPOA - TPO Application to coppice 2 x oak Tree trunks to ground level (see application form section 5 for more information) at 5 Sylvan Glade, Walderslade ME5 9PW.

*Do not wish to object – Defer to the views of the landscape officer.*

4. **Next Meeting**

Next Environment Committee meeting 18 March at Beechen Hall, Wildfell Close, ME5 9RU commencing at 7.30pm.

Meeting closed at 9.24 pm.

Signed as a correct record of the proceedings.

Chairman ..... Date .....

