

**MINUTES of the Meeting of the PLANNING COMMITTEE, held via ZOOM on Thursday 12 November 2020 at 7.11 pm**

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Present: Cllrs J Aldridge, A Baker, A Damodaran, A Layland, N Lloyd, M McArthur, S McGregor, V Jennings, A Read, J Scholey, S Sumner, B Todd (Chairman).

In attendance: Town Clerk, Administration and Planning Assistant, 7 members of the public, and no members of the press.

**1. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

None.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS OR PREDETERMINATION**

Cllr N Lloyd declared a personal interest (non-pecuniary), as treasurer of the Bonfire Society for agenda item 6.1.

*19:14 Meeting was adjourned for agenda item 3.*

**3. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS**

Cllr Sadler (Hever Parish Council) made representation on planning application (20/02988/OUT), agenda item 6.1. He said that the offsite infrastructure had not properly been considered in the Planning Statement and did not consider the wider issues from a development of this size. Kent County Council (KCC) Highways pre-application Transport Assessment had only looked at particularised inner parts. Four Elms village is 2.5 km from the site entrance, the Four Elms Cross Road was already dangerous and would get more so with the increased traffic from this site. Cllr Sadler asked for a further Transport Assessment to cover the outer area of Edenbridge.

A resident and representative for residents from Swan Lane and Ridgeway spoke about agenda item 6.2 (planning application 20/3102/HOUSE). He said that nothing much had changed from the previous application which had been withdrawn (20/01803/HOUSE). The house described as Plot 3 in the rear garden, was now much bigger on plan and taller than the previous application and more invasive. All of the previous points raised about biodiversity, traffic and ecology still stand. Drainage had still not been considered. In the previous application Southern Water had confirmed that insufficient space to relocate the drain - the foul drains are shown as running under plot 1, but this was not possible as the drain is only 300mm deep at this point. The drawing fails to indicate that Three Gables is connected to this foul sewer. The drain is also not deep enough to allow a road to be constructed over it. The foul sewer was already cleared regularly by residents in Swan Lane and it was not capable of accepting any further effluent. Surface water drainage was also inadequately described as being treated with soakaways.

*19:22 Member of the public left the meeting.*

Hever Parish Clerk spoke about the increased traffic from this site, and disputed the figure in the application of 11.7% of traffic predicted to travel along towards Four Elms village and toward Leigh and the A21; she argued that it would be higher. She asked who the provider for the affordable housing would be, the sizes and split with rental and shared ownership.

A representative from Campaign for Protection of Rural England (CPRE) raised the question about the Secondary School securing exceptional circumstances for development in the Green Belt and if no school was built before 2035, then the land would revert to the ownership of Cooper Estates. How can the Town Council and Sevenoaks District Council (SDC) ensure that should planning permission be given for houses, the land set aside for the school site will be used for educational or alternative community use and not more houses.

19:27 Meeting was reconvened.  
19:27 Cllr Damodaran joined the meeting.

**4. TO RECEIVE, ADOPT AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 28 September 2020**

**Resolved:** that the minutes of the Planning and Transportation Committee held on 02 November 2020 be duly signed by the Committee Chairman as a true and accurate record of the meeting; pages 9423 to 9425.

**5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES NOT COVERED ELSEWHERE, FOR REPORT ONLY**

None.

The Chairman, Cllr Todd, proposed to bring forward agenda items 6.2-6.4 Planning applications, 20/03102 Rough Close; 20/03105/HOUSE 36 Stangrove Road and 20/02292/CAN Phone Box Outside Royal Mail Delivery Office. Members,

**Resolved:** to bring forward agenda 6.2-6.4, and to discuss before proceeding with other items on the agenda.

**6. PLANNING APPLICATIONS TO BE CONSIDERED**

**6.2 Ref. No: [20/03102/FUL](#)**

**Site:** **Rough Close Swan Lane Edenbridge KENT TN8 6AJ**

**Description:** Demolition of existing dwelling and construction of three new detached houses, including construction of new access road and extended vehicular access.

**Recommendation:** *Members strongly objected to this application.*

*All the reasons stated in the response to the application 20/01803/HOUSE remained (submitted 29/07/20). There has been little change to the initial application. It was noted that the house on plot 3 had removed some of the large, glassed areas, but that the property had increased in size and was overbearing.*

Summary of previous reasons which still stand:

- 1) The houses on plots 1 and 2 will not be compatible with nor respond sympathetically to local character of the area. This is in breach of policies SP1 and SC(a)
- 2) The house size on plot 3 is large and overbearing to the neighbours property
- 3) The scale and site coverage of the entire proposal are not compatible with local area. This is in breach of policy EN1(a)
- 4) The part of Swan Lane meanders, has no public footpaths and has substantial hedges close to the carriageway. The application has no proposals to improve safe pedestrian access in breach of NPPF 102 and SP2.
- 5) Due to the absence of public footpaths and the hedges either side of the proposed driveway there will be inadequate visibility for vehicles joining Swan Lane, contrary to the requirements of Kent Highways.
- 6) The planning application includes the demolition of the existing house and garage which was built in 1950's. It is suspected that there may be asbestos; the garage probably does. The application does not include any proposal how contamination can be controlled in breach of policy EN2

- 7) The planning application does not give any information concerning the proposed materials to be used in breach of EN1(a)
- 8) The proposal involves a substantial increase of the proportion of the site covered by water impervious materials. The planning application does not include adequate proposals for the disposal of surface water other than the single word “soakaway”. The site is on relatively impervious marl clay and standing water is frequently present in the lower parts of gardens during wet winters and detailed SuDS proposals in line with NPPF 163© and SP(2) are needed.
- 9) The proposal appears to leave an area of land between the site and Ridgeway gardens remaining in the ownership of the current owner. There was no apparent access to this land for maintenance etc. in order to prevent it becoming harmful to the amenity of Plot 3 and Ridgeway gardens. This is in breach of policy EN2.
- 10) The properties along this part of Swan Lane have large gardens which attract a wide range of wildlife and encourage biodiversity. The proposal involves the loss of a substantial area of garden with mature plants and trees and this is likely to harm biodiversity. The application does not include any information on the potential impact on local biodiversity nor steps to ameliorate this damage in breach of policy SP11.
- 11) Although not a strict planning issue, the applicant will need to receive permission from SES and Southern Water to access water and sewerage services. Anecdotal evidence suggests there may be capacity issues if two more homes are added.
- 12) The plans provided with this application are misleading. It includes trees which have already been removed. It is also noted that the site does have a TPO on at least one of the trees. The officer should review this site.
- 13) There is no design statement or evidence of support for the proposal

**6.3 Ref. No:** [20/03105/HOUSE](#)

**Site:** 36 Stangrove Road Edenbridge KENT TN8 5HT

**Description:** Attached garage to side of property.

**Recommendation:** *Members supported this application.*

**6.4 Ref. No:** [20/02292/CAN](#)

**Site:** Phone Box Outside Royal Mail Delivery Office High Street Edenbridge  
KENT TN8 5AA

**Description:** Removal of payphone.

**Recommendation:** *Members supported the removal of the Payphone, but would like the phone box to remain and to utilise this for a defibrillator (via the Community First Responders).*

*Could the applicant (BT) liaise with the Town Council regarding this.*

**6.1 Ref. No:** [20/02988/OUT](#)

**Site:** Land North Of Town Station Cottages Forge Croft Edenbridge KENT  
TN8 5LR

**Description:** Outline application for the erection of 340 dwellings, including affordable housing, land for a 4FE secondary school including playing fields, land for a new twin hall venue for Edenbridge Scout Group, creation of a new car park for Edenbridge Town Station and associated infrastructure improvements, allotments, associated access from Four Elms Road, emergency access, open space, attenuation areas and landscaping and some matters reserved save for means of access.

Members noted that there are two aspects to this application for consideration, hence why there are two responses (above):

- The principle to develop this site
- The access on point at Four Elms Road

Members have noted that the details of the application will be consulted on under reserve matters.

**Recommendation:** *Members supported the outline application for the proposed development; but noting that the detail would be consulted on under reserved matters.*

Whilst the Town Council is keen to protect the Green Belt, it acknowledges the exceptional circumstances on this lower performing Green Belt site. To ensure security for 'exceptional circumstances', it asks that the time constraint for the secondary school be extended considerably past 2035 (as suggested in the S106 agreement) to allow for this to be realised.

This applies also to the Scout Hut, to extend the 5-offer as this does not provide sufficient time for the Scouts to design, cost and fundraise for the difference in cost.

In the meantime, both sites could be transformed into a Wildflower area.

**Recommendation:** *Members objected to the proposed access point for this development.*

- It is unacceptable as it is too close to the junction into Skinners Lane.
- The ghost island and pedestrian refuge will make it impossible for eastbound traffic to turn right into Skinners Lane.
- A traffic light pedestrian crossing would be better, at some point on that road.
- The low railway bridge to the east of Skinners Lane junction restricts access for HGVS. Therefore, all lorries approach Skinners lane will do so from the west and unable to make the righthand tuned to Skinners Farm and Southern Water Sewerage Farm.

Members also noted the that the increased traffic would have an impact on the main crossroads junction in Four Elms Village and improved safety measures for this area should be included, both traffic and pedestrian safety.

**7. SDC PLANNING DECISIONS**

None.

**8. PRESS RELEASE**

None.

**9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING 23 NOVEMBER 2020**