

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the Development Control Committee held on 25 August 2011 commencing at 7.00 pm

Present: Cllr. Mrs A Dawson (Chairman)

Cllr. G Williamson, Cllr. Mrs B Ayres, Cllr. R Brookbank, Cllr. C Brown, Cllr. C Clark, Cllr. M Dickins, Cllr J Gaywood, Cllr. P McGarvey, Cllr. Mrs F Parkin, Cllr. R Piper, Cllr. J Scholey, Cllr. J Thornton and Cllr. R Walshe

Apologies for absence were received from. Cllr. P Cooke, Cllr. R J Davison, Cllr Ms M Lowe, Cllr. G Ryan and Cllr. J Underwood

Cllr. L Abraham, Cllr. J Grint and Cllr. B Ramsey were also present.

23. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE HELD ON 28 JULY 2011

Cllr. Walshe clarified that he had given his apologies for the meeting held on 28 July 2011.

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting of the Development Control Committee held on 28 July 2011, as amended, be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

24. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST OR PREDETERMINATION

Cllrs. Abraham and Ramsay declared personal and prejudicial interests in item 5.01 SE/11/01112/FUL: Meopham Cricket Club, Manor Road, Longfield as dual hatted members of both the District Council and Hartley Parish Council. Hartley Parish Council had a financial interest in the land because Meopham Cricket Club paid rent to the Parish Council for it. Both Members withdrew from the room after they had spoken to the item.

Cllr. Mrs. Parkin declared that, because of comments made before the meeting, a Member was concerned that she had predetermined item 5.01 SE/11/01112/FUL: Meopham Cricket Club, Manor Road, Longfield. Therefore she abstained from talking or voting on the item.

Cllr. Williamson declared a personal interest in item 5.02 – SE/11/01282/FUL: 1 The Stables, Halstead Place, Halstead because he used to live next to Halstead Place.

25. DECLARATIONS OF LOBBYING

None

26. **LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985**

The Chairman ruled that additional information received since the despatch of the agenda be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency by reason of the special circumstances that decisions were required to be made without undue delay and on the basis of the most up-to-date information available.

27. **PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

The Committee considered the following planning applications:

5.01 - SE/11/01112/FUL: Meopham Cricket Club, Manor Road, LONGFIELD DA3 8LD

The report advised that the proposal was for the siting of two storage containers on and within an existing recreation ground in the Parish of Hartley. The containers were to be sited adjacent two existing shipping containers near to the southern boundary of the site to form a linear row of containers.

It was noted that the report had been referred to Committee at the request of Cllr. Abraham on the grounds that there was an overriding need for the containers on the site.

Officers stated that the proposal would be inappropriate development, harmful to the maintenance of the character of the Green belt and to its openness. The recommendation was for rejection on two grounds. The proposal by virtue of the number of containers, their size and bulk would detract from the character and appearance of the area. There were also no overriding material considerations to overcome the Green Belt Policy objection as no very special circumstances existed.

The Committee was addressed by the following speakers:

Against the Application: -

For the Application: Tony Wade

Parish Representative: Anne Oxtoby

Local Member: Cllrs. Ramsay and Abraham

Members noted the concerns of the Chairman of Meopham Cricket Club and of the Local Members. Several Members considered that the containers were essential facilities for outdoor sport and recreation. They felt that sufficient changing rooms and a food preparation area were requirements for a cricket ground.

Other Members considered that few of the activities which took part at the cricket ground required any additional facilities, particularly given the proximity to the ground and facilities at Longfield. Members were also concerned that the need for materials and landscaping to be of a high standard had not been met.

Please see minutes of the Committee (22.09.11) for amendments to the above section.

Officers clarified that the containers could not inherit the planning of the pavilion which burnt down in 2001 because the structures were materially different. In response to a question they stated that the total floor area, if additional containers were added, would be larger than the floor space of the pavilion, if the pavilion's veranda were excluded.

It was MOVED by the Vice-Chairman and was duly seconded that the recommendation in the report be adopted. The motion was put to the vote and there voted –

6 votes in favour of the motion

6 votes against the motion

In accordance with paragraph 24.2 of Part 2 in the Council's Constitution, the Chairman used her casting vote in favour of the motion.

Resolved: That planning permission be REFUSED for the following reasons:-

The land lies within the Green Belt where strict policies of restraint apply. The proposal would be inappropriate development harmful to the maintenance of the character of the Green belt and to its openness. This conflicts with policy LO8 of the Sevenoaks Core Strategy and the aims and objectives of national guidance contained within PPG2: Green Belts.

The proposal by virtue of the number of containers, their size and bulk would detract from the character and appearance of the area. This conflicts with policies EN1 and EN8 of the Sevenoaks District Local Plan and policies SP1 and LO8 of the Sevenoaks Core Strategy.

It was noted that Cllr. Brown had entered the meeting while the item was being considered. He did not vote on the application.

5.02 – SE/11/01282/FUL: 1 The Stables, Halstead Place, HALSTEAD TN14 7BJ

The report advised that the proposal was for retrospective approval for erection of a garden shed. The shed was located adjacent to the property's detached garage.

It was noted that the report had been referred to Committee at the request of Cllr. Grint, because the proposal would not have an adverse impact on the listed building, Conservation Area or the Green Belt.

Officers stated that the proposal was considered not to have a detrimental impact upon local amenities, the Conservation Area, protected trees or the listed building. However the shed represented inappropriate development that would be harmful to the openness of the Green Belt. The very special circumstances advanced were not considered to outweigh the harm identified in principle or the additional harm to the openness of the Green Belt.

Officers informed Members that “very special circumstances” were not defined. However an application was unlikely to fall under this category if it was easily repeatable.

The Committee was addressed by the following speakers:

Against the Application: -
For the Application: -
Parish Representative: Terry Brooker
Local Member: Cllr. Grint

Some Members noted the speakers’ comments for residents to have access to outside storage and commented that the shed did not seem to be a large structure.

Officers reminded Members that the housing development had been approved because of the very special circumstances that the proposal would lead to an overall reduction in development on the site and would possess a less intensive use. Condition 14 of the permission stated that no building, enclosure or swimming pool, other than those shown on the plans was to be erected within the curtilage of the dwellings.

It was MOVED by the Vice-Chairman and was duly seconded that the recommendation in the report be adopted. The motion was put to the vote and there voted –

6 votes in favour of the motion

6 votes against the motion

In accordance with paragraph 24.2 of Part 2 in the Council’s Constitution, the Chairman used her casting vote in favour of the motion.

Resolved: That planning permission be REFUSED for the following reasons:-

The land lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt where strict policies of restraint apply. The proposal would be inappropriate development harmful to the maintenance of the character of the Green Belt and to its openness. The Council does not consider that the special circumstances put forward in this case are sufficient to justify overriding policy SP5 of the SE Plan and PPG2.

Development Control Committee - 25 August 2011

At the end of the meeting the Chairman asked that Members be thoughtful if they overhear comments before the meeting by others. They should not presume that these reflect a predetermination. Some Members believed there were too many people in the Members' Room before the meeting who did not sit on the Committee.

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 8.22 PM

CHAIRMAN