



Agenda

Meeting: **Planning and Licensing Committee**
Date: **29 May 2018**
Time: **7.00 pm**
Place: **Council Chamber - Civic Centre, Folkestone**

To: **All members of the Planning and Licensing Committee**

The committee will consider the matters, listed below, at the date, time and place shown above. The meeting will be open to the press and public.

Members of the committee, who wish to have information on any matter arising on the agenda, which is not fully covered in these papers, are requested to give notice, prior to the meeting, to the Chairman or appropriate officer.

This meeting will be webcast live to the council's website at <https://shepway.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>.

8. Report of the Head of Planning - Supplementary Item

*Explanations as to different levels of interest

(a) A member with a disclosable pecuniary interest (DPI) must declare the nature as well as the existence of any such interest and the agenda item(s) to which it relates must be stated. A member who declares a DPI in relation to any item must leave the meeting for that item (unless a relevant dispensation has been granted).

(b) A member with an other significant interest (OSI) under the local code of conduct relating to items on this agenda must declare the nature as well as the existence of any such interest and the agenda item(s) to which it relates must be stated. A member who declares an OSI in relation to any item will need to remove him/herself to the public gallery before the debate and not vote on that item (unless a relevant dispensation has been granted). However, prior to leaving, the member may address the meeting in the same way that a member of the public may do so.

(c) Members may make voluntary announcements of other interests which are not required to be disclosed under (a) and (b). These are announcements made for transparency reasons alone, such as:

- membership of outside bodies that have made representations on agenda items, or
- where a member knows a person involved, but does not have a close association with that person, or
- where an item would affect the well-being of a member, relative, close associate, employer, etc. but not his/her financial position.

Voluntary announcements do not prevent the member from participating or voting on the relevant item

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PLANNING AND LICENSING COMMITTEE

29th May 2018

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION TO SCHEDULE OF APPLICATIONS

1. Y16/0623/SH LITTLE DENSOLE FARM CANTERBURY ROAD DENSOLE
(Page 17)

Siting of 12 holiday lodges, and erection of a reception building and a store building, together with formation of a fishing lake, a car park area, tennis courts, a children's play area, and a putting green, to create a tourism site.

Tim Steer, local resident, to speak against the application
Cllr S Peall, ward member, to speak on application

2. Y17/1637/SH VARNE BOAT CLUB, COAST DRIVE, GREATSTONE
(Page 101)

Change of use of the land to a boat storage area to enlarge the existing boat storage compound (moving boundaries 14m north into the current public car park).

Mark Rose, local resident, to speak in support of application
Zalan Paksy, applicant, to speak on application

3. Y18/0139/SH 15 HIGHRIDGE HYTHE
(Page 111)

Erection of single storey rear extension and two storey rear/side extension following demolition of garage, together with erection of a single storey outbuilding with raised deck

Paul & Helene Fleury-Watts, applicants, to speak on application

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The applicant has submitted additional letters which have been placed on the file. These submissions are available in full on the planning file, and are summarised below.

- The applicant has provided an additional letter from Hoseasons stating that they support the proposed development and that their data indicated there would be demand for this type of lodge accommodation, which leads them to believe would result in a healthy return, and bring spend into the local economy.
- A letter has been re-sent to draw our attention to a representation from DisabledHolidays.com dated 1st August 2016 stating they fully support the scheme.
- Furthermore, they have re-sent a response from the planning consultant dated 12th September 2016 to the objection from the Kent Downs AONB unit. The consultant sets out a counter argument to the comments provided in the AONB consultation response, concluding that a full and fair assessment has not been made, and that the response is unbalanced, unfair, and has been heavily influenced by those opposing the application.
 - The letter makes the assertion that an assessment must have been made from the public footpath which is not an adequate viewpoint to make a fair assessment.
 - The planning consultant considers the assessment of the impact on the open countryside should take account of the close proximity of the adjacent settlement, disagreeing about the harm to the open rural landscape.
 - The letter refutes the AONB comments that the scheme would not be satisfactorily mitigated by the proposed landscaping, in the context it is a low impact Eco Holiday Park of 12 units in a low density layout, heavily landscaped and against the backdrop of mature woodland. With the existing screening and additional planting, the letter states there would be no detrimental impact on visual amenity or the AONB. The landscaping can be secured by planning condition.
 - The letter rejects the relevance of the reference to an application at Densole Farm in 2009 referred to by the AONB Unit, as it was for domestic dwellings, so is not a like for like comparison.
 - The planning consultant refutes the AONB criticism of the proposed design, and states that they would accept further sustainable design features to be incorporated into the scheme by planning condition.
 - In conclusion the planning consultant states that the proposal would not have a detrimental effect upon the AONB contrary to the views of the AONB Unit, due to the screening and the nature of the proposal.
 - They also refer to a scheme permitted at Old Kent Barn (Y13/0817/SH) for 31 holiday units, which is in a more remote location.

- They have also re-sent a further letter dated 12th September 2016 confirming the two storey lodge is to be removed from the scheme, and clarification regarding the landscaping and ecological features.
 - It confirms a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment was undertaken to inform the proposal. The scheme incorporates the creation of lakes and planting of thousands of trees and shrubs creating woodland tree belts and wildlife corridors. The details of the landscaping can be secured by condition.
 - It also draws to our attention that the scheme will incorporate the latest ecological standards including; sustainable drainage, solar panels, grey water harvesting, log burning stoves, ground air source heat pumps, high levels of insulation and under floor heating. The details can be secured by condition.
 - Furthermore, lighting would be low level ambient bollard lighting, with emphasis on background lighting as opposed to full illumination. As above the applicants have no objection to the details being secured by planning condition.
- The Economic Development Team have also provided further information relating to the demand for tourism facilities within the area to supplement their comment in the report, with the following information provided:

Overnight Trips	2013	2015	% change
No. Trips	440,000	472,700	7.4
No. of nights	1,341,000	1,398,100	4.3
Trip Value £s	75,550,000	81,714,000	8.2

- Re the overall impact of tourism to the local economy it is estimated that in F&HDC tourism provides
 - ☐ 12.7% of all employment
 - ☐ 4,800 actual jobs
 - ☐ 3, 388 fte
- This is an increase of 4.6% on actual jobs between 2013 and 2015 and reflects the growing importance of tourism locally.
- They also state that the Kent Downs Management Plan http://www.kentdowns.org.uk/uploads/documents/KD_AONB_final_plan_09.09.14.compressed.pdf says:
- “The secondary purposes of AONB designation are to take account of the needs of land-based and rural industries and of the economic and social needs of local communities. The demand for recreation should be met in a way that is consistent with the conservation of natural beauty and the needs of agriculture, forestry and other uses.”
- It goes on to say:
“Sustainable rural leisure and tourism has been identified as a key way to supporting the socio-economic well-being of rural areas. Providing jobs and supporting

community services, sustainable rural tourism of itself can be a catalyst for community development.”

And;

“Making tourism and recreation more sustainable is not just about controlling and managing the negative impacts. Tourism and recreation are in a special position to benefit local communities economically and socially, and to raise awareness and support for environmental conservation.”

- A letter has been received from Cllr David Godfrey in support of the application dated 25th May 2017.
 - As a Ward member I spoke in favour of the application on 18th May 2017 at which Members approved the plans by a majority of 8 to 2. Unfortunately, a Judicial Review brought by a local objector over turned this decision but on only one of six counts the others being rejected by the Judge. The one count was that insufficient reasons were given by the committee for their decision and not that scheme was inappropriate.
 - The applicant has re-submitted plans and I remain firmly of the belief that this wheelchair friendly and carefully designed Eco Village would enhance the low quality AONB in which it will be sited both from a visual and biodiversity aspect, opening up a hitherto inaccessible part of the country side to its visitors. I further believe that the business case demonstrates that the business would be sustainable and provide considerable benefits to the area as well as modest employment opportunities.
 - This conflicts with the officer’s assessment however I believe that the basis of their assessment is flawed as much of it is based on Kent AONB and CPRE objection. I find it unacceptable that these objections appear to be based on desktop analyses as I am given to understand that although our Officers have visited the site no one from these organisations has visited the site proper.
 - I suggest that it is difficult to provide an informed opinion without visiting the location.
 - Turning to the report itself the following may assist Members in their deliberations
- 2.4 *Clearly states that the site is undeveloped agricultural land of low grade 3 quality. In fact, it was a poor quality meadow which has not been farmed for over 10 years.*
- 3.2 *Upon receiving planning permission in May 2017 the applicant began an extensive tree planting programme “many of the Trees are semi -mature and offer a level off effective screening”. which is at odds with 5.18 Kent AONB suggesting that tree screening would take years to be effective. Having walked past the site through Reinden woods I would contend that the Kent AONB statement is flawed.*

Continuing on the subject of trees the comments in sections 9.13 and 9.14 seems to both support and at the same time raise objections to the panting of

trees. Quite frankly I find these paragraphs a nonsense and only serve to cloud the issue. . We should be encouraging the planting of trees which I believe to be part of a national policy. (and one day be classified as ancient woodland)

5.0 Statutory Consultees

No objections but some simple advisories from Natural England and Environment Agency.

Non Statutory Consultees

5.1 to 5.15 *No objections or conflicts*

5.16 and 5.18 *CPRE and Kent AONB base objections on NPPF guidelines but appears not to be supported by a site visit.*

5.19 *Kent Wildlife Trust do not believe they case has been made but points out the desire to “conserve and enhance biodiversity” “opportunities to encourage biodiversity should be encouraged” Elsewhere in the report it can be seen that there are no claims that there would be loss of habitat or harm to ancient woodland.*

5.21 *Visit England support accessible visitor accommodation.*

5.22, 5.23 *no objections*

Policy

9.5 *NPPF the last two bullet points are very relevant as I believe this application supports both of the NPPF objectives of promoting tourism and leisure as well as serving to maintain and support local businesses.*

9.7 and 9.10 *it is important to note that Officers do not consider to be a major development as defined in paragraph 116 of the NPPF furthermore the final sentence of 9.10 states that is important to note that though the size of the site is large only a small part will be taken up by the ecovillage with the remaining large areas out to landscaping”*

9.12 *States clearly that the development would not be visually prominent which conflicts with the opposite statement in 9.17 - this does not assist Members*

- *In addition to the report it is important to note that FHDC Planning Authority concluded that the site did not require an Environmental Impact Study.*
- *To sum up Members are asked to consider whether the benefits of having a high quality eco village attracting visitors and supporting the local economy outweigh the perceived harm to his particular corner of the AONB. I am clearly supportive and sincerely hope that Members are once again able to support this opportunity to enhance the facilities of my Ward and bring benefits of attracting visitors to the wider District.*

- One final note, I read in the Press that the person who bought the JR is threatening the planning dept and Members with a further JR. I trust that Members will not allow this threat to impair their judgement.