



Cowden Parish Council

MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING OF COWDEN PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON 2 OCTOBER 2019 AT COWDEN MEMORIAL HALL

PRESENT: Councillors: Lorraine Millgate, Stephen Boakes, Andrew Saunders, Glyn Henley and Valerie Bishop.

Also present: Caroline Bizios (Parish Clerk) and Dan Taylor (Client's representative in respect of Planning Application reference numbers: SE/19/02474/FUL and SE/19/02899/HOUSE).

Public Questions:

There were no public questions.

MINUTES:

1. Apologies for Absence:

Apologies for absence received from Councillor Berry.

2. Declarations of Interest:

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of Previous Planning Committee Meeting:

Resolved: The Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 20 August 2019 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

4. Planning Applications Received:

(i) SE/19/02474/FUL – Claydene Farm, Hartfield Road, Cowden

Conversion of redundant agricultural buildings to form nine new residential units.
Demolition of outbuildings. Landscaping works with new access and access alterations.

Members raised concerns in respect of the proposals contained within this application and resolved not to support the application. The reasoning behind this resolution will be set out in Annex 1 to the Minutes which will be provided to Sevenoaks District Council as the Parish Council's response to the planning consultation.

Resolved: Members resolved not to support the application.

(ii) SE/19/02626/MMA - 1 Priors Way, Cowden

Amendment to SE/19/01528/HOUSE

Members raised no objections to the proposals and resolved to support the application.

Resolved: Members resolved to support the application.

(iii) SE/19/92637/FUL – The Bungalow, Sandfields Farm, Moat Lane, Cowden

Proposed demolition of existing bungalow and construction of replacement chalet bungalow.

Members questioned the provenance of the existing garage in terms of whether it was constructed at the same time as the original dwelling and whether or not it should be included in any floor space calculations.

Members also raised questions in respect of the ridge height of the proposed development. Whilst Members noted that the proposed development is being lowered to accommodate the increase in ridge height, there were no measurements available to determine whether the height is appropriate.

Members have assumed that the construction and use of the proposed basement complies with planning policy GB2.

Resolved: Members resolved to support the application subject to assurance that the points raised above comply with the relevant planning policies and requirements.

(iv) SE/19/02664/HOUSE – Woodstock Lodge, Moat Lane, Cowden

Proposed single storey extension.

Members are aware of the planning history in respect of this site and the previous 'after-the-event' planning permissions granted in respect of the retention and conversion to residential use of an original lean-to building. Whilst, it was noted that this current planning application contains proposals for a reduction in the size of the proposed extension when compared with planning application 19/01175 (from 39 square metres to 31 square metres), Members considered that the proposed extension was still of excessive scale and bulk which would be detrimental to the openness of the Green Belt in contravention of Planning Policy GB1.

Resolved: Members resolved not to support the application.

(v) SE/19/02699/HOUSE – Saxbys Lodge, Station Road, Cowden

Proposed demolition of outbuildings and erection of orangery extension.

Members understand that the garage was built during the 1980's and, therefore, does not form part of the original dwelling. The garage is positioned more than five metres away from any habitable portion of the existing dwelling. Therefore, its floor space should be not included in any floor area calculations.

Both sheds on the site are temporary wooden structures without substantial foundations and should not be regarded as "outbuildings" within the meaning of EN1/H14A/GB1. Both of these structures are situated more than five metres from the existing dwelling and are not habitable spaces. Notwithstanding the fact that their erection has been deemed lawful under planning application SE/19/00925, Cowden Parish Council does not believe that this confers any special status such that their floor space should be included in any calculations regarding the size of limited extension to dwellings in the Green Belt.

Members believe that the architect's calculations that less than four square metres of the "extension allowance" to the original dwelling is probably correct and that any future extension proposals should be limited to this.

Members consider that the proposals do not comply with planning policy GB1 and consider this to be a prime example of "creeping" development within the Green Belt.

Resolved: Members resolved not to support the application based on concerns in respect of the allowable percentage increase in footprint and how the application tries to justify the increase based on the temporary structures and the garage.

5. Correspondence Received:

Nothing to report.

6. Planning Decisions Received:

SE/19/02252/HOUSE – Claydene Farm, Hartfield Road – GRANTED

SE/19/01970/HOUSE & SE/19/01971/LBCALT – Glovers Hawes, Butterwell Hill – GRANTED

SE/19/01750/HOUSE – Lorraine Cottage, Stick Hill – GRANTED

SE/19/02212/AGRNOT – Moat Farm, Moat Lane – REFUSED

SE/19/00756/MMA – Land South East of Station Road, Cowden - GRANTED

Meeting closed at 8.35pm

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

Attached: Annex 1 - SE/19/02474/FUL – Claydene Farm, Hartfield Road

ANNEX 1

Planning Application Ref: SE/19/02474/FUL
Claydene Farm, Hartfield Road, Cowden

Comments from Cowden Parish Council

Members of the Planning Committee of Cowden Parish Council have recently considered the planning application referenced above and have raised several concerns in respect of the proposed development.

Members expressed concerns in respect of the significant detrimental impact that the proposed development would have upon the openness of the Green Belt as a result of its design, scale and volume.

Design

Sevenoaks District Council issues guidance on the re-use of buildings in the Green Belt. Section 4 of SDC's Development in the Green Belt SPD, for example, seeks to achieve the sympathetic conversion of traditionally-built farm buildings in order to retain, as far as possible, their original character. Whilst the plans as proposed strive to achieve the retention of the original buildings' character, because the existing buildings are characterless, Members considered that in this instance the result was similarly without character and totally unsympathetic to the local area. It was suggested, for instance, that in this specific case a small residential development of well-designed houses with less overall bulk and dominance might be a more preferable route.

Access

Safe vehicle access to and from the proposed development onto the busy B2028 Hartfield Road was also raised by Members. However, Members noted that Kent Highways have overall responsibility for this aspect.

Openness of the Greenbelt

This proposal represents a significant new development within both the Parish and the Ward. Over recent years, other development has been undertaken within the vicinity of this site and Members are concerned that the development's size and significance will compound infilling and the associated impact that this would bring to the openness of the Green Belt. One of the larger conversion plans applying to the Dutch barn, currently an open structure, would result in a closed structure if the plans were approved. In recent years there have been large and incremental developments in close proximity to this proposal that have changed the character of this area. It is considered that this proposal will exacerbate that and there were concerns that future development may result in further infilling.

Decision

As submitted, Members of Cowden Parish Council would not support this application based upon its detrimental impact upon the openness of the Green Belt as a result of its bulk and scale which Members believe are in contravention of planning policies GB7 and GB4.

However, Members, would consider another application for development at this site which provided for a smaller, more aesthetically pleasing development with a clear reduction in bulk and scale.

The Parish Council has reviewed responses submitted to Sevenoaks District Council from Cowden residents in respect of the proposed development and their comments are noted.

Members resolved not to support this application