

CRANBROOK & SISSINGHURST PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PLANNING & PRESERVATION COMMITTEE
HELD ON THE 26TH APRIL 2016

Declaration of Interests, Dispensations, Predetermination or Lobbying:

Members are required to declare any interests, dispensations, predetermination or lobbying on items on this agenda. Members are reminded that changes to the Register of Interests should be notified to the Clerk.

Present: Cllr. Bunyan (in the Chair), Cllrs. Cook, Fermor, Kemp, Rook & Smith

Cllr. Bunyan declared an interest in 16/502251 & 16/502252 as she was a near neighbour.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS:

16/502251/FULL & 16/502252/LBC

Hayselden Cottage, The Common, Sissinghurst

Single storey side extension and internal alterations.

The Parish Council recommend APPROVAL.

Proposed by Cllr. Fermor, seconded by Cllr. Rook and agreed.

16/503363/FULL

1 Wheatfield Drive, Cranbrook

Two storey rear extension.

The Parish Council recommend APPROVAL.

Proposed by Cllr. Fermor, seconded by Cllr. Rook and agreed.

16/503211/FULL

3 Hartleylands, Swattenden Lane, Cranbrook

Variation of condition 3 of 12/03241/FUL (Use of the land for the stationing of caravans for residential purposes for 1 No. gypsy pitch) – to allow for an additional 4 no. mobile homes and 4 no. touring caravans for residential purposes.

The Parish Council recommend REFUSAL. There is no justification, the site is in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, it will impact on the countryside, and the access is unsuitable to serve any further units on which was a small family owned site originally given consent under reference TW/93/0065 where the total number of mobile homes/caravans sited on the land at any one time shall not exceed two and was only for two members of that family together with wives and children. The reason was “the permission has only been granted because of the personal circumstances of the applicant’s family”. It appears that the site has now been split into different plots under different ownerships and the number of pitches has escalated. It is questioned whether the infrastructure in place is capable of serving these units.

Proposed by Cllr. Cook, seconded by Cllr. Rook and agreed.

16/502860/OUT

Land At Brick Kiln Farm, Cranbrook

Outline planning permission for the erection of up to 180 dwellings (including up to 35% affordable housing) with means of access to be determined at this stage together with structural woodland planting and landscaping, informal public open space, community orchard, children's play area, attenuation basin, vehicular access point from Hartley Road and associated ancillary development.

Cllr. Bunyan reminded Members that the ultimate recommendation will be made by Full Council at the Meeting to be held on the 12th May as it was a major application. A full discussion took place and two residents were made welcome and invited to take part in the discussions. Members had been allocated documents to read and bring forward to the Committee with their comments.

Cllr. Smith – discrepancy in the numbers of houses – 1 document stating 190 and another 180. Referenced to Highgate Hill Appeal. Documents contained desk top surveys. NPPF was referenced but could be interpreted in many ways. With regard to land supply – In the Planning Statement 5.14 is incorrect – the Borough at the moment does not have a five year supply of deliverable land. We know that the numbers are compatible with those identified and that it fits within the scope of the allocation.

Cllr. Kemp – Statement of Community Involvement – 2.4 Policy AL/CR4 – The site is allocated – housing will happen. This is a generic scheme – we deserve better. There is DNA in master planning - there is no analysis, no concept, no quality – they are Lego houses. Resident agreed – not alluded in any way to the historic fabric of Cranbrook. Both sites in allocation need to be looked at together – one is linked to another.

Cllr. Cook – Transport Assessment – unhelpful. Morning peak for cars is given but that was during a time when there is no bus service. He read out figures from the Assessment. The developer does not think that 200 + vehicles accessing onto the A229 will have an impact. Cllr. Bunyan asked whether he had found any information on “bespoke bus routes” which had been mentioned. Cllr. Cook had not found any information. A resident asked whether any independent assessment would be undertaken by the Borough Planning Dept. The Clerk confirmed that they would undertake consultations with various agencies including Kent Highways. Cllr. Cook tabled a generic roundabout drawing. Cllr. Bunyan mentioned the track next to West Terrace which was shown as emergency access only, however owners of the properties are saying that they had been told that their covenants which allowed them access could be removed.

The mix of the development was discussed and it was agreed that this needed to be addressed to ensure some smaller units including some terraces, bungalows, 1 bed dwellings and some affordable units. With reference to affordability Cllr. Kemp suggested homes which could be extended in the future. Maintenance costs should also be a consideration. Passivhaus low energy starter homes. Cllr. Rook suggested that the plans do not reflect the comments in the Community Statement. A parishioner agreed with the comments on the mix – Cranbrook is unique – it has all sorts of houses and a mix of small and large which is much better for social cohesion.

Cllr. Kemp stated that we had to take the numbers set down by Central Government – but not at any cost. He stated that we should consider Land Trusts – we should buy land ourselves. We could do this in association with housing associations. This should be the first priority for this Council. We need to look at the bigger picture. The Chairman suggested that this was not the place for this discussion, we are looking specifically at the application for Brick Kiln Farm. The Clerk invited Cllr. Kemp to write formally with his agenda item for a future Parish Council Meeting as set out in the Standing Orders. He would need to provide information to put out with the agenda.

Cllr. Fermor queried how you can replicate ancient woodland. She thought the housing over intensive. Cllr. Rook reminded Members that if we discount this application out of hand, and it subsequently gains approval at Appeal – we lose all rights for conditions to be added. His view was to not oppose outright but go back to the design. He felt strongly that both sites should be looked at together. Cllr. Smith read out the Draft Heads or Terms which mentioned transport, schools, libraries, recycling and community. Cllr. Kemp felt that this was a financial trap – if money was spent elsewhere the quality of the build would suffer. Cllr. Cook disagreed, there would be a burden on the existing/improved infrastructure and there should be a contribution to the community as a whole. There should be a good quality in the build and a contribution to the community. He agreed that it would be better to approve in principle but raise all our concerns.

All Members agreed that the both sites need to be considered together. Cllr. Bunyan suggested that one owner was awaiting the decision on the Land Allocation Document and that the Developer on the current application has an option which may have deadlines.

A discussion took place on the access point and a resident was asked what he thought would be preferable. He stated that there were concerns that the hedge between Hartley Road and Orchard Way would be taken out.

The Committee suggests to Full Council that the recommendation should be to APPROVE in principle but subject to the following conditions:-

- That there should be a joint application between both sites Brick Kiln and Corn Hall which are identified as Policy AL/CR4 – Land adjacent to the Crane Valley in the Site Allocations DPD
- The mix of development should include smaller units and homes for life (suitable for the elderly and disabled), self-build/custom build and key workers affordable dwellings.
- To justify the harm of the “concessionary” development, the dwellings should be of high quality, energy efficient and built to passivhaus standard.
- A rural roundabout would be preferable with any ancillary street lighting being as low key as possible.
- With regard to the open space this should be assessed to make sure that there are no “hidden” areas.
- The design should reflect the sensitive local vernacular and setting.

The scheme should be designed by a quality team of architects, the highest standard procurement team to reflect the highly sensitive landscape.