



Staplehurst Parish Council

Planning Committee

Minutes

14th October 2024

PUBLIC FORUM

Several residents spoke about 24/502235;

- now acknowledge that the area is in the High Weald – Area of Outstanding Natural beauty (AONB) therefore the setting is an important and believe it breaks National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- This then breaks MBC local Plan policy
- Acknowledges in high Weald AONB – but offers no mitigation
- Access / egress arrangements in practical for a solar farm. Solar farms in neighbouring areas off a main road and “dual head turnings” Goudhurst road is a single track road.

Present Cllrs Sharp, Ash, Farragher, Pett and Wakeford

APOLOGIES: Cllr Mclaughlin and Cllr Arger

APPROVAL OF PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES: Minute Pages 1772P-1775P of 23rd September 2024 available at: <http://www.staplehurst-pc.uk/community/staplehurst-parish-council-13607/planning-committee/>

Cllr Pett proposed and Cllr Sharp seconded to adopt the minutes of the meeting of the 23rd September 2024, agreed by Majority for 2 , against 0, abstained 3

COUNCILLOR DECLARATIONS regarding items on the Agenda: -

1. Declarations of Lobbying - NA
2. Declarations of Changes to the Register of Interests - NA
3. Declarations of Interest in Items on the Agenda - NA
4. Requests for Dispensation - NA

CLERK'S PLANNING REPORT:

Recently circulated training presentations – will look out for other planning training opportunities

FULL PLANNING APPLICATIONS: (for comment/recommendation)

Signed.....Date.....

24/502235 **Mathurst Farm, Land West of Goudhurst Road** - Amendments and Additional Information: The construction and operation of an 18MW solar photovoltaic (PV) farm and widened access to Goudhurst Road with associated infrastructure, including inverters, transformers, substations, security cameras, fencing, access tracks and landscaping. Amendments: Biodiversity Net Gain Metric; Landscape and Visual Appraisal Part 1, 2 and 3; Revised Ecological Impact Assessment. Addition Information: Transport Technical Note. (SPC had recommended Refusal Min 1762P).

We reiterate our comments that the application is contrary to MBC Local Plan LPR1INF 3 and LPRSP14 a) and b) plus standby our comments of the 3rd September 2024, in addition, following a debate on the Biodiversity Net Gain Metric; Landscape and Visual Appraisal Part 1, 2 and 3; Revised Ecological Impact Assessment.

Welcome that the applicant acknowledges the site is within the High Weald AONB, therefore the application is contrary to:

National Planning Policy Framework – Section 15. Conserving and enhancing the natural environment – Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues.

MBC Local Plan

- Spatial objectives 3,
- Policy LPRSP9 – development in the Countryside (6.145) and point 5 “Proposals should not have a significant adverse impact on the settings of the Kent Downs National Landscape or the High Weald National Landscape.” (This application has an adverse impact on the setting)

Staplehurst Neighbourhood Development plan

- Policy PW3 point 1 and 2

Following a debate on the addition Information: Transport Technical Note

Noted the desire of the applicant to remove established hedgerows in the countryside to improve visual displays, which while understood, is destroying hedgerow and against NPPF section 15. We also raise concerns that the single track rural road is not capable of accommodating the transport required for the site such as articulated lorries turning

Cllr Sharp proposed and Cllr Farragher seconded to forward the above comments – agreed unanimously

24/502793 **Knoxbridge Farm, Knoxbridge, Frittenden TN17 2BT** – Additional Information: Change of use of egg production buildings to commercial uses within Classes B2 and B8, part demolition of building, removal of links between buildings, alterations to fenestration, installation of sustainable drainage systems, and landscaping. Addition of a Transport Technical Note. (SPC had Recommended Refusal Min 1763P and had Noted the previous amendment 1772P).

Following a debate on the Transport Technical Note concluded that if planning permission is given and then depending upon which type of business occupies the site, the Transport Technical note is merely speculative, but we are concerned about the unrealistic comments on local transport.

LISTED BUILDING CONSENT: (for comment/noting)

Signed.....Date.....

24/504116 **5 Church Hill Cottages, First Floor, High Street TN12 0AX** - for external gas pipe installation.

No objections refer to Conservation officer.

DECISIONS: (for noting)

24/502164 **Brattle Farm, Five Oak Lane TN12 0HE** - Proposed change of use of existing agricultural store to flexible business use, including relocation of the building, replacement roof with raised ridge and eaves height, and alterations to fenestration. MBC GRANTED with 1 condition. SPC had recommended Refusal (Min 1752P).

The MBC planning permission decision letter stated a number of reasons **not to approve the application**, but the decision was an approval with some a condition on Biodiversity.

Clerk asked to clarify with MBC.

Meeting closed...8.15pm.....

Signed.....Date.....