

Boughton Monchelsea Parish Council

Minutes of the Boughton Monchelsea Parish Council Planning & Licensing Committee meeting held on 16th February 2021 at 7.00pm via Zoom

Present: Cllrs D. Smith (Chair)
A. Humphries
L. Date
R. Edmans
Clerk

1. Apologies : Cllrs Jessel, Redfearn, Gershon and Whybrow
2. Notification of late items for the agenda : revised details relating to 21/500106 Land to rear of 70 Church Street, Boughton Monchelsea
3. Declaration of Interests : None
4. Applications considered :

20/504699 Fairwinds, River Farm, Chart Hill Road, Staplehurst Change of use from 5 person HMO to 10 person HMO

The Parish Council wish to see the application refused for the following planning reasons. If MBC are minded to approve the application then we would like it reported to planning committee for decision.

- We are advised that this property floods repeatedly during the winter months, due to its location next to a flood plain and run off from the hardstanding and roofs at River Farm. There are typically 4 to 5 flood occurrences each year. On each occasion, water has been pumped out of the property and an adjacent house onto Chart Hill Road, creating a hazard for traffic
- We understand that if a property suffers from flooding then a dry egress must be available. Due to the regular ground floor flooding of Fairwinds this criteria is never met and therefore the property is unsuitable for habitation as things stand
- Fairwinds is not connected to mains drainage and no details have been provided regarding sewage disposal. We are advised that a portaloos has recently been positioned in the garden. This gives further cause for concern regarding the property's ineffective sewerage system
- The curtilage of the house is drawn incorrectly on the site location plan. We are advised that the garden has been reduced in size to provide space for bulk bin storage at the packhouse. The remainder has been turned into a rough parking area, with insufficient space for 10 cars. If this was hard surfaced it would obviously add to the flooding problems
- We assume the proposal is for internal modifications only, otherwise a full planning application for extending the property would be required. The proposed alterations would make the property cramped
- Prior to deciding this application, MBC should seek assurances that the property already has the relevant HMO licence for 5 people and that the conditions of this licence are being fully met
- We are advised that there has been a noticeable increase in noise at the property since 2019 when it was first used to house River Farm workers. The noise is caused by the comings and goings of vehicles and by people gathering and playing music in the garden. If the number of people housed at the property doubles so will the noise disturbance
- We are advised that the occupants of the house have created a hole in the hedge as a short cut to the packhouse, meaning that they come out without any warning on Chart Hill Road, putting both themselves and oncoming motorists at risk of an accident

21/500451 5 Cock Cottages, Green Lane, Boughton Monchelsea Erection of an outbuilding to form workshop and garden room

No objection / comment

21/500322 Robins Rest, Park Lane, Boughton Monchelsea
Part retrospective application for a material change of use of land to mixed use for a single pitch gypsy site and keeping of a horse, with associated development including stationing of 1 no. mobile home, 2 no. tourers, erection of a utility block, shed, hard standing, septic tank and a stable shelter

The Parish Council wish to see the application refused for the following planning reasons. If MBC are minded to approve the application then we would like it reported to planning committee for decision.

- The proposal represents unacceptable intensification of these sites in the open countryside. The existing sites already compromise the rural environment in which they sit. Any additional intensification would cause further unacceptable damage
- The proposal would harmfully consolidate sporadic and urbanising development in the countryside, causing unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the area hereabouts. This inappropriate development would therefore be contrary to policies SS1, SP17, DM1 and DM30 of Maidstone Local Plan (2017); the National Planning Policy Framework (2019); and the Maidstone Landscape Character Assessment (2013) and Supplement (2012)
- The Parish Council has agreed to make the following comments on all relevant planning applications and these must be considered just as applicable to gypsy sites as for applications relating to the settled population
If the application was about to be approved then the Parish Council would ask that conditions are included to cover the provision of renewable energy sources, EV charging points, exclusively native planting within any landscape plan, provision of swift and bee bricks, bat and bird boxes and wildlife friendly boundaries

20/501296 The former Mulberry Tree, Hermitage Lane, Boughton Monchelsea
Erection of a detached dwelling and associated parking, access and turning
Appeal no APP/U2235/W/20/3264265

The Parish Council would like to see the planning appeal refused for the following reasons :

- The proposal represents over development and intensification of the site
- The plots of the consented five dwellings are disproportionately small with respect to their private amenity space therefore we believe it would be wholly inappropriate for the remainder of the site to be developed. The space should instead be formally allocated as communal amenity space for the consented dwellings and development rights removed. This should also apply to the site beyond plot 5
- This is unquestionably a rural location, unsustainable in transport terms other than by private vehicle therefore further intensification of the site would be wholly inappropriate
- We feel that the proposed building materials are inappropriate to such a setting in the heart of rural Kent
- The proposal would be contrary to policy SS1 of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan and paragraphs 78 and 79 of the NPPF by introducing a new dwelling into an unsustainable location which is poorly served by basic services and public transport
- The proposal would be contrary to policy SS1 and Policy SP17 of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan and paragraph 170 of the NPPF as it will result in harm to the character and appearance of the rural area by virtue of adding significant built form in this countryside location and because it would be highly visible in the landscape and would lead to increased domestication within the countryside
- The proposed design and materials are poor and contrary to policies DM1 and DM30 of the MBLP and paragraph 83 of the NPPF neither respecting the local vernacular nor indeed the immediate locality and there would be no mitigation of the landscape impact due to the very open nature of the site frontage and local topography.

**21/500106 Land to rear of 70 Church Street, Boughton Monchelsea
Submission of details to discharge condition 15 (Landscape and Ecological
Design and Management Plan) of planning permission 20/503109 (24 Extra care
units and clubhouse)**

The Parish Council wish to see the application (in its current format) refused for the following reasons. If MBC are minded to approve the application as it is then we wish to see it reported to planning committee for decision.

- The drawings show a section of hedge to be removed in the south east corner of the site, described as 'removed to facilitate new access road'. There is nothing shown to replace this. The site boundary is shown in red on the drawing and clearly indicates that the hedge is under the ownership of Boughton Monchelsea recreation ground, not the Clarendon Homes site. We appreciate land ownership is not a planning matter however we are extremely concerned that the scheme appears to have been designed with no thought for an existing, established hedge which forms a green boundary to our recreation ground and also provides an important wildlife habitat. It appears that the hedge may slightly encroach on the new path, but not the access road.
- We feel that the scheme design could easily be altered to prevent the need for any hedge removal. In fact, as part of earlier comments on the main application we suggested the whole development be moved several metres to the west to allow a green buffer between the new homes and existing Church Street properties. If this was accommodated then the access road could be moved slightly further away from the hedge in question
- The drawings show 9 no. single stem birch trees and a yew hedge to be planted on the north side of the new access road. The access road has already been constructed and there is a gap of approximately 300mm between the back of the new kerbline and the boundary fencing to 70 Church Street. We fail to see how trees and hedging can be planted and expected to thrive in such a narrow strip of land. It is vital that planting is provided along the access road so it will not be acceptable for the applicant to simply remove the trees and hedging from this area. We also feel that the planting on the south side of the access road should be increased to provide more of a green buffer to existing homes and gardens. There is plenty of verge width to do this

5. Any other Business:

Cllr Smith noted that the Neighbourhood Plan (NHP) now represents a significant material consideration and asked members to refresh themselves on its contents. It was agreed that a checklist of both NHP and environmental issues should be produced, for reference at future planning meetings.

6. Date of Next Meeting: To be advised

Meeting closed at 7.40pm