

DALLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Dallington Parish Council Meeting (Planning)
held on 20th February 2018

Present
Councillors W. Miers (Chairman), N. Holyoake (Vice-Chairman),
S. Bellem, P. Ridley, P. Wilson
Mrs. I. Marchant (Parish Clerk/RFO)
Members of the public

1. DISCLOSURES OF INTERESTS

None declared.

2. DISPENSATIONS

None requested.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None

4. ADJOURNMENT

4.1 Public Question Time

The only questions/concerns raised by the public were for the amended planning application RR/2017/2493/P (Amended Plan) Rabetts Farm, proposed glamping facility.

The Chairman explained that the amended plan was now for 3 units and to cancel the entrance from The Street.

Impact on residents and livestock

- Residents noted that the amended plan still does not show adjacent land and adjoining properties
- There are serious concerns regarding security and disturbance (light and noise pollution). One resident considers his property to be at risk, to his livestock from incursions.
- There is still a concern that glamping visitors may use the Green Lane (un-made up track in the centre of The Street) with their vehicles to reach lower fields.
- Concern about glampers inviting friends down and the additional cars.
- The Applicant said that he took these matters very seriously and would be responsible for policing them. He does not see a problem with light pollution. The Applicant will have names and registration numbers of all visitors.

New access/egress on amended plan

- It was noted that on the original plan the Applicant had stated that access/egress for glampers onto the B2096 was dangerous.
- The Applicant said that he was thinking about slow moving farm vehicles when he made this statement.
- Residents made the point that the B2096 was extremely dangerous, with constant speeding and poor sightlines. There had been 3 further accidents in the last few days.
- Residents thought that glamping traffic movements would be considerable.

Electricity/water supply to glamping huts

- The Applicant confirmed that water to the glamping huts will be by from his mains supply from 3 animal troughs are already supplied in this manner, instead of a bowser as originally stated.
- Electricity is believed to be supplied by solar panels on the huts.

Environmental impact

- There was concern that spreading the waste from the composting toilets in Pig Wood would affect the ecology of this area.

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- The Applicant replied that it would have no affect whatsoever, the waste is very ecology-friendly and the composting toilets will be emptied at the end of very visit.
- Concerns were expressed about the affect on wildlife (buzzards, bats etc.) by the proposed plan.

Collection of rubbish

- The Applicant confirmed that no additional rubbish bins will be needed, the existing ones on his property will suffice.

Other comments

- A resident is concerned that this proposed glamping site will grow. Only 3 sites are considered at the moment, but no confidence that these will not increase.
- Most glamping/camping sites are seasonal only.
- The Applicant confirmed that the huts will be situated on hardstanding, this hardstanding will be covered by soil and grassed.
- Will the huts be moved during non-seasonal times? The Applicant replied that they will be in situ all year round, not stored.
- More farming will be necessary after Brexit, it seems wrong to lose farming land to glamping.

THE MEETING RECONVENED

5. PLANNING

5.1 Planning applications for consideration

RR/2017/2315/P Pankhurst Farm, Carricks Hill
Demolish garden shed.

RESOLVED – to support this application. Councillor Ridley proposed and Councillor Holyoake seconded, the voting was unanimous.

RR/2017/2630/P and RR/20172631/L The Old Rectory, The Street
Proposed first floor side extension and internal alterations.

RESOLVED – to support this application. Councillor Wilson proposed and Councillor Bellem seconded, the voting was unanimous.

RR/2018/399/P Willingford Farm, South Lane

Single storey side extension, rear extension to reduce conservatory and canopy to new front door.

RESOLVED – to support this application. Councillor Bellem proposed and Councillor Ridley seconded, the voting was unanimous.

RR/2017/2493/P (Amended Plan) Rabetts Farm, Battle Road

Proposed glamping facility site, 3 mobile shepherd huts (comprising two accommodation and one shower/toilet huts) in 3 varying locations and using existing main access.

RESOLVED – to object to this application, the grounds for objection are attached at the end of these minutes. The Chairman proposed and Councillor Holyoake seconded, the voting was unanimous.

5.2 No other planning matters for discussion.

6. DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

27th March 2018 – Dallington Recreation Ground Meeting, start 7pm in the Village Hall.

27th March 2018 – Full Council Meeting, start 7.30pm in the Village Hall.

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APPLICATION RR/2017/2493/P RABETTS FARM, DALLINGTON (AMENDED PLAN)

DALLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL OBJECTS TO THIS APPLICATION ON THE FOLLOWING GROUNDS

SETTING

- The site of the application lies totally within the designated area of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- Dallington is a Wealden hilltop village of approximately 200 parishioners sited on the Battle to Heathfield Ridge and mentioned in the Domesday Book.
- It is thought most relevant to understand the physical position of the Village of Dallington.
 - The Village is bounded to the NE by Ancient Woodland and by the SW the land drops away to the sea and the distant Downs.
 - The soil is Wealden clay.
 - The majority of homes are Grade II listed.
 - The highest (TRIG) point in the area is approximately 200 yards from the proposed application.
- The B2096 runs along The Ridge.
- The highest density of housing sites between the Swan Inn, Woods Corner and St. Giles Church, The Street, including the listed Village Hall and the CofE Primary School.
- The proposed glamping site is in this very centre, surrounded on 3 sites by houses and cottages on The Street, South Lane and the Battle Road (B2096) all looking into this farmland site.
- There are 2 public footpaths crossing the proposed glamping area, much used by parishioners, walkers and visitors.
- *EN 5.7 Access to the Countryside from Urban Areas*
"Ensuring that development retains, protects and enhances habitat of ecological interest."
- *LP 10.2*
"Heavy clay soils have reduced the impact of agricultural change in the area and it is still in the main a quiet pastoral landscape with mixed farming predominating."
The residents wish to see it remain a "quiet pastoral landscape," with the feeling of a "sense of tranquillity" as stated in CSP EN1 Core Strategy Policy. Residents will inevitably be disturbed glampers with music, barbeques etc. The Parish Council and objecting residents have absolutely no confidence in the applicant's ability to police this.
- *DEN 6/7*
We value "dark skies" in accordance with this policy and do not wish to see headlights/torches in the fields when glampers are going to and from the huts at night – where now there is darkness.

AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY (AONB)

- **Thus, affording the highest protection.**
- NPPF Para.115
"Great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in an AONB."
- The protection and care of an AONB is the highest status (in relation to landscape and scenic beauty) that Rother District Council has to take and they must consider that development will **enhance** as well as conserve its natural beauty.
- This application does not in any way "enhance the natural beauty of the area," but is detrimental to the quiet enjoyment of our countryside.
- We consider this application is contrary to the Adopted Local Plan (ALP), National Planning Framework (NPF 115/116) and Policy DEN2 in the High Weald Area of Natural Beauty.
"Development within or affecting the setting...having particular regard to the impact on its character components", as set out in the High Weald Management Plan.
- The Local Plan Core Strategy states "its landscape stewardship identifies the principal landscape assets and provides an overarching framework to ensure that any new development makes a **positive** contribution to the landscape character area in which it is to be located."

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- National Planning Policy Framework para 3/4
“Identify and protect areas of tranquillity which have remained undisturbed by noise and are prized for recreational (footpaths) and amenity value for this reason”.
- Dallington Parish Council feel the evidence against this development application is overwhelming in so many National and Local Policies and would have a significant adverse impact on the character of the AONB if planning permission was granted.

THE WILD LIFE

- Huts on this farmland could impact on populations of owls, other birds and bats. In particular, by direct loss of habitat, but also through increased recreational disturbance. Thought must be given to the impact of light/torches emitting from the huts/toilet blocks, which will disturb bat foraging routes and owl hunting operations.
- There are 2 pairs of hunting buzzards in this area, together with long-eared and pipistrelle bats, badgers and fallow deer (including an albino). Visiting Canada Geese and Mallard Ducks have recently arrived. The siting of huts close to hedgerows will deter nesting birds, eggs could be left, no hatching and eventually we shall lose our birds to another area.
- The bird diversity within the AONB must be protected and this is not a suitable site.

ACCESS/EGRESS B2096

- On the amended plan the access to/from the proposed glamping site has been changed to directly from the B2096, just past the Woods Corner crossroads.
- On the original application the applicant stated that “this entrance is considered unsafe due to increasing heavy traffic flow on the B2096, with poor obstructed visibility in both directions.”
- Even the recent removal by the application of trees/bushes from this entrance it remains very dangerous.
- The Parish Council considers the B2096 is a very dangerous road, we are extremely concerned about the number of accidents on this particular stretch of road. There is a 40mph speed limit which is totally ignored. Dallington Parish Council are in negotiations with ESCC Highways to see what improvements can be made – reconstruction, signage etc., before another fatality occurs.
- The Police accident record for this stretch of road is 12 accidents between 28.11.14-17.07.17, and there have been 6 more accidents since July 2017. These include 1 very serious accident and 1 fatality.
- In March, before the snow, there have been 3 further accidents. When the B2096 is shut, traffic is diverted by the Police down The Street and past the primary school.
- The Parish Council is so concerned that 2 Councillors have just completed training to join a Neighbourhood Speed Watch Scheme.
- The occupants of Rabetts Farmhouse, a Grade II listed property, will be impacted by this amended access/egress, as this is a shared drive.
- There should be no signage for this glamping site, it would be a distraction on a very dangerous road and is unsuitable for an AONB.

ACCESS ON SITE

- As stated, our soil is heavy Wealden clay and drains very poorly. Therefore, within a short time it will be necessary to provide solid hardcore surfacing to the huts/services. Even if soil and weeds grow over, this is not acceptable.
- We have been told that hardstanding will be placed under each hut, but we cannot understand how this ensures huts are completely mobile as the applicant states.
- We consider this may well lead to the deterioration of the rural landscape and the possibility of joined-up pathways. We consider this to be in total disregard of Rother’s Local Plan.

GLAMPING HUTS

- These are certainly not as one would picture a traditional wooden shepherd’s hut. They appear in the application to be dark green, corrugated steel, plastic coated steel sheeting. They have very small windows, yellow doors – there are no signs of wheels, steps or solar panels in the application. They generally give the observer the look of a shipping container – 3 of these make 1 pod.

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- There are no definite details about disposal of sewage on the application. How will human waste be broken down, with chemical/dry granular compounds? There are concerns that this will affect the local soil ecology.
- Rubbish bin collection – there are no details on the application as to where rubbish bins will be stores and collected from.
- We originally understood that the huts would moved to storage off-season, but we have now been told by the applicant that the huts will be in position all year round.

CARAVAN AND CAMPING LICENCING

- This is normally 1st March to 31st October.
- The applicant is insisting that he must be able to operate the glamping site at Easter and Christmas. Our understanding is that he would intend to keep it open 365 days a year.
- Presumably this will come under the control of the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 (CSCDA).
- The local authority (Rother District Council) does have discretion over the conditions that apply, bearing in mind Model 1989 Standards issue.
- Checking conditions will be the responsibility of Rother District Council and “sites will be periodically inspected by the Council to see conditions are being adhered to by the Environmental Heath and Safety Team.”

Dallington Parish Council wish to express that they are not against “glamping” in principle and visits have been made to local glamping sites at Mountfield, Brightling and Netherfield. These are all seasonal, are sited along long tracks, over hills, in woodland and are very hidden.

This is **NOT** the case with the Rabetts Farm application.

We ask that Rother District Council refuse this application

12.03.18