



DRAFT MINUTES OF THE MEETING of Hadlow Down Parish Council
held in Hadlow Down Village Hall, Hadlow Down
at 7pm on Monday, 18th November 2019.

Present: Councillors Sandra Richards (SR) Chair, Julian Michaelson-Yeates (JMY), Peter Weston (PW), Ben Floyd (BF), Rachel Lewis (RL), Sally Blyfield (SB)

Clerk: None

219. PUBLIC QUESTIONS – there were no public questions at this time.

220. APOLOGIES AND REASON FOR ABSENCE – None

221. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST PW declared a pecuniary interest in item 222 i a.

222. PLANNING

i. PLANNING APPLICATIONS:

PW left the meeting at 7.02 pm

SB arrived at the meeting at 7.03 pm

- a. WD/2019/2103/F – 3 SOUTH BEACON, MAIN ROAD, HADLOW DOWN, TN22 4ES** – Amended plans received altering the roof design to the elevation parallel to the boundary fencing. The PC object to this application (2/3). Although the PC appreciate that the applicant tried to take into account the previous comments, we note that the lantern window in front of the neighbour's kitchen is now traversing, rather than end on, and is therefore more obtrusive to the adjoining property.

PW returned to the meeting at 7.25 pm

- b. WD/2019/2021/FR WILDERNESS WOOD, MAIN ROAD, HADLOW DOWN TN22 4HJ** – Retrospective application for extensions to existing carparks. The Chair allowed members of the public to speak. A member of the public raised issues including the fact that the re-development of the car parks was not part of the original major planning application in 2015. He continued that at that time it had been the intention to reduce the overall parking and to have reduced visitor numbers and that at a recent event more than 100 cars had been parked. If the proposal went ahead he requested that the top car parks should be closed after hours to lessen the impact of noise on the village. Another member of the public endorsed the comments made and added that he had counted 31 cars in the space supposedly for 18 cars. He was also concerned that by extending the car parks, this would become a brownfield site in future. The applicant explained that as well as looking at the detail relating to the parking, it had to be understood their overall vision for the whole site and what they were trying to achieve. He explained that they were not making substantial profits from the site. The objective of the new parking plans were to enhance the experience of the woodland for visitors but also for safety reasons due to the close proximity of traffic to the facilities. He had estimated the number of parking spaces as best as possible but acknowledged that if more cars tried to squeeze in then it was difficult to stop.

The Council discussed the proposals in depth. The Council understood the requirement to move the car parking from the lower car park to the top car parks. The Council recognised that the extension to the top car parks was shown on the plan for the major application but was not included in application boundaries. It was also understood that the closure of the lower car park was linked to a later phase of the development. The transport report for the major application states an overall

reduction of 75 to 70 car parking places. This retrospective application seeks to reduce parking spaces to 50 cars and 3 coaches.

The PC voted to object to this retrospective application (0/6) for the following reasons: The Council were concerned about the mechanism used to calculate the actual number of spaces required as the retrospective application stated that the number of car parking spaces were being reduced from 68 car spaces + 3 coach spaces to 50 car spaces + 3 coach spaces. It was acknowledged that whilst the 3 coach spaces were required during the week for group visits, at the weekends these spaces were used for car parking. In addition, there is now a staff car park sited to the east of the site which has an additional 7-8 car parking spaces. This car park is not present on the original master plan nor is it specifically referred to as being an addition in this retrospective application. Taking account of the staff car park and the use of the coach car park being used for car parking at the weekends, it was felt that the actual requirement for car spaces might be closer to the original number as submitted in the major application and that this retrospective application needed to re-calculate the car spaces required so as to avoid the potential for confusion in the future. It was also felt that the top car parks and staff car park should be included inside the marked application boundary recorded in the master plan of the major planning application.

Finally, JMY suggested that it would be a good idea to have regular annual meetings between the Council and Wilderness Wood so that there was a better understanding of how the development of the wood was progressing. The Chair said that this was up to the applicants if they wished to do this.

Meeting closed at 8.22 pm