

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council of Farningham, held at Shand Hall, High Street, Farningham on Wednesday 24th May 2023 at 7pm.

Present: Cllrs Daryl Burns (Chairman), Mike Cook (Vice Chair), Philip McGarvey, Carol Salmon, Laurence Ball (Sevenoaks District Council and Alan White (Sevenoaks District Council)

In attendance: Helen Penney (Clerk)

1. Apologies and reasons for absence.

Apologies were received and accepted for Cllr Krishna Shanmuganathan.

2. Declarations of personal, prejudicial and disclosable pecuniary interests on items on the agenda and updates to members' register of interests.

Cllr McGarvey advised that he is no longer a member of the Parochial church council

3. To consider, and approve if appropriate, which agenda items are sufficiently confidential as to warrant exclusion of members of the press and public under the provisions of The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960

None

4. A Public Open Session. Members of the public will be welcome to address the Parish Council with any local concerns they have. Please note this item will be limited in time at the discretion of the Chairman.

No members of the public were in attendance

5. Planning – including consideration of the following planning applications requiring comments

5.1 Reference: 23/01239/ADV

Site: Pied Bull High Street Farningham Dartford Kent DA4 0DG

Proposal: Erection of 10 illuminated and 4 non-illuminated signs to the exterior of the building.

Comments by: 31st May 2023

No objection providing the light intensity from the new lights and illuminations are not more than the current light output

5.2 Reference: 23/01283/LBCALT

Site: Pied Bull High Street Farningham Dartford Kent DA4 0DG

Proposal: Erection of 10 illuminated and 4 non-illuminated signs to the exterior of the building. Repainting of building.

Comments by: 31st May 2023

No objection providing the light intensity from the new lights and illuminations are not more than the current light output

5.3 Reference: 22/03191/FUL

Site: Land East Of Farningham Hill Stables Farningham Hill Road Farningham Kent

Proposal: Material Change of use of Land for the creation of 8 Gypsy/Traveller Pitches comprising 1 mobile home, 1 touring caravan, 1 dayroom and 2 parking spaces per pitch (net increase of 7 Static Caravans). Erection of gate.

Further information received including access arrangements

Further comments, if required, by: 2nd June 2023

Objection

Farningham Parish Council has further objections to this application for the following reasons:

Following the approval of 22/02802/FUL, there are 22 traveller pitches recorded in Farningham which equates to 12% of the total number of pitches in Sevenoaks and 6% of the population of Farningham, which is the highest percentage in the district. This application further increases the density of traveller pitches in an area that is already oversubscribed.

Farningham Parish Council further objects to the application because it is in contravention of the Department for Communities and Local Government Planning Policy for Traveller Sites, Policy E, which states:

'Traveller sites in Green Belt. 16. Inappropriate development is harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved, except in very special circumstances. Traveller sites (temporary or permanent) in the Green Belt are inappropriate development. Subject to the best interests of the child, personal circumstances and unmet needs are unlikely to clearly outweigh harm to the Green Belt and any other harm so as to establish very special circumstances.'

The site in question is indeed within the Green Belt and there are no 'very special circumstances' which apply to this case or have been claimed to try and outweigh the harm to the Green Belt. Consequently, the application should therefore be denied.

The site is adjacent to and visible from Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Vehicles are still regularly witnessed sitting in the outside/overtaking lane of the A20 going uphill (towards Swanley), waiting to turn right over the central double white lines to enter the site. The A20 at this point is NSL (60 mph), just before the 40mph zone. The road markings at the bottom of the drive to indicate how to enter/exit site are regularly ignored.

The entrance/exit to site is directly opposite the already dangerous exit from London Road onto the A20 which is notoriously dangerous and the location for several accidents and fatalities. The retrospective approval for the development at Farningham Hill Stables will add further hazards to an already high-risk and perilous stretch of road.

In the application letter, and in answer to the question "Does your proposal include the gain, loss or change of use of residential units?" the applicant has answered "no", but this is untrue if they seek to create "8 Gypsy/Traveller Pitches comprising 1 mobile home, 1 touring caravan, 1 dayroom and 2 parking spaces per pitch (net increase of 7 Static Caravans)"

A wooden fence with gravel boards and concrete posts has been installed along the South side of the site and visible from the roundabout next to WJ King Group. An acoustic fence has been mentioned in the application but it is this application that still hasn't been determined. The fence has been omitted from the drawing of the Proposed Site Plan.

Over recent months some units have been advertised as for rent and therefore a commercial enterprise

The policy of build first (December 2022) and request permission 6 months later (May 2023) does not validate a wrong.

5.4 Reference: 23/01299/HOUSE

Site: Little Hatch 1 Hillside Farningham Dartford Kent DA4 0DD

Proposal: Construction of rear dormer to form additional rooms in loft space. Internal and fenestration alterations. Solar panel, Juliet balcony and rooflights.

Comments by: 6th June 2023

No objection although it has been noted that the orange sign has been displayed on Hillside so neighbouring properties along the High Street might not be aware of the application and that they have the option to make comments

5.5 Notification of proposed Chimmens Solar Farm between Horton Kirby and Fawkham

Members agreed that as the land falls within Horton Kirby they can attend meetings arranged between Horton Kirby and South Darent Parish Council and the developer and asked the Clerk to inform both parties. **Action: Clerk**

Applications for noting but not needing any comment or further action

5.6 Reference: 23/01250/WTCA

Site: 40 London Road Farningham Dartford Kent DA4 0JP

Proposal: Reduce height of two trees by 2.5m and remove any branches overgrowing property.

5.7 Reference 23/01271/WTPO

Site: 44 London Road Farningham Dartford Kent DA4 0JP

Proposal: Cut back branches on Horse Chestnut tree.

Granted: 15th May 2023

6. Clerk: Decisions under delegated powers for planning

Members asked the Clerk to verify delegated powers, how many Councillors need to be consulted and if the Parish Council has to give the public the opportunity to attend meetings to listen to discussions and make their own comments. **Action: Clerk**

7. Urgent Business that occurs and requires attention before the next meeting may be reported at the Chairman's discretion.

None

8. Date of next meeting Wednesday 14th June 2023