



Local Government for Langton Green, Speldhurst, Ashurst and Old Groombridge

Minutes of a Planning Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 11th December 2018 at 7.30pm in the Palmer Room, Langton Green Village Hall

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cllrs Mrs Price (Chairman), Barrington-Johnson (ex-officio), Mrs Jeffreys, Ellery, Rowe and Round

OFFICERS PRESENT: Mrs K Harman – Assistant Clerk

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PRESENT: There were nine members of the public present.

1. **To enquire if anyone present intends to film, photograph and/or record the meeting:** No- one present intended to film, photograph and/or record the meeting.
2. **To receive and approve apologies and reasons for absence:** apologies were received from Cllrs Mrs Woodliffe and Pate – both prior engagements.
3. **Disclosure of Interests:** Cllr Round declared an interest in application no. 18/03582/FULL 21 Newlands which is in close proximity to his own property. Cllr Barrington-Johnson declared an interest in application no. 18/03430/FULL Dragonfly Farm which is owned by his son's friend.
4. **Declarations of Lobbying:** All Councillors had received a letter from the resident of 2 Knowle Close in relation to application no. 18/03458/FULL.
5. **Minutes: RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 20th November 2018 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.
6. **Matters Arising:**
 - a) The Assistant Clerk asked Councillors to hold both 31st January and 7th February 2019 from 6pm in their diaries until she had confirmed a date for the KALC Planning workshop.
 - b) Application 16/07560/SUB at Stone Ness: The Assistant Clerk said that the TWBC Planning Officer had visited site and emailed SPC to confirm that a hedge had been planted.
 - c) TWBC responses to SPC comments on planning applications – Cllr Mrs Price and the Assistant Clerk had prepared a table analysing SPC's comments and TWBC's permissions. This matter was to be discussed under item 10.
7. **Public Open Session:** there were nine members of the public present.

Application no. 18/03582/FULL – 21 Newlands, Langton Green

Mr Edward Langridge spoke first on behalf of the Village Society which objected to the application. He explained the objections in detail which covered such areas as seriously harming the character, visual quality and local amenity of the surrounding area causing loss of privacy and a disturbance to residents which the Parish Plan sought to safeguard residents against. They felt the development was totally inappropriate for the neighbourhood and would cause problems particularly resulting from the increased traffic flow in the area.

Mr James Pearce from 32 Newlands spoke next saying he objected to the development which would cause excess noise and disturbance to neighbours who would also suffer a loss of privacy and sunlight. The density and type of housing was not as existing and there would be a large amount of soft landscaping lost to hardstanding as well as a significant impact on fauna and flora. There were no disabled access to the proposed properties and the parking facilities are inadequate and do not follow KCC's guidelines which will inevitably result in cars being parked along Newlands. This would cause a hazard and could prevent emergency vehicles accessing the roads. He then went on to compare this application with other recent applications in the area which were all significantly smaller schemes and all refused by TWBC. They had received no communication from either the applicants or the developers which had made the situation worse. A meeting of local residents had been held on the evening of 9th December 2018 which had approximately 60 residents in attendance and showed the level of local concern towards this application. Mr Alan Round from 6 Mercers then gave his objections to the application. He said that all the properties in Newlands and Mercers will suffer loss to daylight and privacy and an increase in traffic volume as well as harm to the open view and the character of the street scene. He agrees with all the objections posted on the TWBC planning portal. Additionally, he went on to explain in detail that he believes all seven of the EN1 policy points have not been met and are either untrue or misleading. The proposed properties are not consistent with existing housing in the area and asked Councillors to consider objecting to this application.

Application no. 18/03458/FULL - 3 Knowle Close, Langton Green

Mr Alistair Nash of 2 Knowle Close spoke first objecting to this application saying that his family had been in the property since 1962. The proposal would drastically affect the view from his side sitting room window, meaning he would look out onto a wall, one metre from their fence boundary line. He believes the proposal is out of keeping with existing architecture in the area and will cause a loss of local amenity. The only access to the site is via Third Street which is a private, pot-holed road already liable to bad flooding. He believes the parking provision is unsuitable which will encourage residents to park in nearby roads, clogging them up and making them dangerous.

Mr Edward Langridge then spoke on behalf of the Village Society who oppose this application. They believe it is an overdevelopment of the site and the increase in hard landscaping will cause problems to an area already liable to flooding. The parking provision does not meet KCC guidelines and the building line at the front of the property will be further forward than existing. He asked the Parish Council to object.

Mr Richard Whiles of Stonewall Park spoke in opposition of the application. His property backs on to 3 Knowle Close. He said he was concerned it will set a precedent in the village and that the proposal is totally unsuitable for the local area. He asked Councillors to consider objecting.

Mr Mike Philips from Third Street said he also opposes the scheme. He agreed with all the objections raised so far and additionally voiced concern about the impact the increased hardstanding will have on the area which already suffers badly with flooding, particularly during a heavy downpour.

The Chairman suggested to Councillors that discussion of the applications be brought forward on the agenda to prevent the members of public waiting.

9. Planning applications for discussion and decision:

18/03582/FULL

Location: 21 Newlands, Langton Green, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN3 0DB

Proposal: Demolition of two existing houses and the erection of six 3-bedroom homes and four 4-bedroom homes, plus associated access, parking and landscaping.

Cllr Round took no part in the discussions or decision making regarding this application.

Decision: We object to this application on the following grounds: 1. Overdevelopment of the site which is out of character with the surrounding area by reason of density, type and height of the housing. 2. The increase in site coverage with building and hard surfacing and the loss of green space. 3. The loss of residential amenity in Bushy Gill, Mercers and Newlands, particularly in terms of loss of privacy, noise due to the proximity of the houses and visual amenity and loss of openness. 4. We are concerned whether the parking spaces on the site are genuinely accessible and there are no guest spaces so the number of spaces is insufficient which will lead to on street parking on a narrow road and potential access issues for emergency vehicles. 5. It is stated that Langton Green should only have minor in-filling and this is far from minor infill.

18/03458/FULL

Location: 3 Knowle Close, Langton Green, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN3 OEP

Proposal: Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of 3 dwellings, access and parking.

Decision: We object to this application on the following grounds:- 1. It is over development of the site and out of character with the cul-de-sac. 2. No. 2 Knowle Close will suffer loss of light to the sitting room window due to the height and proximity of the new building. 3. Also, loss of visual amenity for No. 2 Knowle Close who will have an outlook directly onto the side wall. 4. We are concerned about the access via Third Street an unmade, private road which is the only access to the property and is already susceptible to flooding. 5. The indicated parking appears inadequate and includes no visitor parking and will therefore inevitably lead to parking on the road, potentially eliminating or restricting the turning circle. 6. We are concerned about the potential impact of the loss of mature trees on the boundaries on the outlook for neighbouring properties.

18/01098/FULL

Location: Speeds Farm, Farnham Lane, Langton Green, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN3 OJT

Proposal: Redevelopment of site to provide 8 dwellings including alterations to site access and realignment of access road.

Decision: Remain neutral – we remain concerned.

18/03375/TPO

Location: 20 Roopers, Speldhurst, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN3 OQL

Proposal: Trees: CEDAR (T1) Fell.

Decision: Remain neutral – leave to Tree Officer. If permitted we require a replacement tree to be planted.

18/03174/FULL

Location: 3 Forstall, Langton Green, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN3 OAP

Proposal: Erection of single storey, rear and side extension.

Decision: Remain neutral – leave to Planning Officer.

18/03275/FULL

Location: Saxons, St Marys Lane, Speldhurst, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN3 OPP

Proposal: Variation of Condition 4 of 14/504489 (Demolition of 2 storey existing house and 1.5 storey outbuilding and construction of new 2 storey house and outbuilding) – Retrospective alterations to fenestration, addition of windows and removal of approved roof lights.

Decision: Remain neutral – leave to Planning Officer.

18/03430/FULL

Location: Dragonfly Farm, Langton Road, Speldhurst, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN3 0NR
Proposal: Removal of Condition 7 (Agricultural Occupancy Condition) of 97/01462/OUT Outline (means of access not reserved) – Proprietor’s dwelling).
Decision: We object on the grounds that there has not been sufficient market testing for rural enterprise on this site.

18/03450/TPO

Location: Corbae, Langholm Road, Langton Green, Royal Tunbridge Wells Kent TN3 0EX
Proposal: Trees: Large hornbeam (T1) – reduce and reshape by 30% thin by 10% remove deadwood. Severely overgrown over neighbouring properties.
Decision: Remain neutral – leave to Tree Officer.

18/03478/FULL

Location: Smallbrook Farm, Etherington Hill, Speldhurst, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN3 0ND
Proposal: Replacement garage with storage space above.
Decision: Remain neutral – leave to Planning Officer.

18/03482/FULL

Location: Cedar House, Monteith Close, Langton Green, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN3 0AD
Proposal: Variation of Condition 3 (External Materials) of 18/00847/FULL (Face brickwork using Ashdown seconds bricks to the lower elevation, Cedar shingles to the upper elevations and Cembrit Jutland Blue/Black slates to the pitched roofs).
Decision: We object on the basis that the new materials are not in keeping with the main property. Any variants in an application should be submitted in advance.

The Chairman confirmed with Councillors that they were willing to continue with the meeting as it was past the 9.30pm threshold.

18/03629/TPO

Location: Belsay House, 4 Holmewood Ridge, Langton Green, Tunbridge Wells, TN3 0BG
Proposal: Trees: CEDAR (T1) – Reduce side and top by approx. 3 metres.
Decision: Remain neutral – leave to Tree Officer.

Planning Appeals

18/00002/FULL

Location: The Barn, Pokehill Farm, South Farm Lane
Proposal: Part Retrospective – Replacement dwelling
(Amendment to Planning Consent 13/00485/FUL including alterations to elevations and footprint).

17/02743/FULL

Location: Farm Buildings Near Scriventon House, Stockland Green
Proposal: Conversion of redundant farm buildings to 8 no. new residential units with associated parking and landscaping and relocated access onto Barden Road.
Decision: Councillors agreed to delegate to a small group of Councillors to put together a response based on previous submissions on behalf of SPC. Cllrs Mrs Price, Mrs Jeffreys, Row and Ellery agreed organise a meeting to compose a response.

10. **To consider SPC’s comments on planning applications and the extent to which they are reflected in TWBC decisions:** Councillors discussed this matter and in particular an automatic call-in which would apply when the Borough Council’s decision differs from that of the Parish Council. It was agreed that Cllr Barrington-Johnson would canvass opinions from other parish councils.

11. **To consider a response to Speldhurst Church of England Primary School Education Consultation:**
Councils agreed the following response:- We support this application but would like a transport plan to be prepared as quickly as possible.
12. **Items of Information:**
 - An email from George Mercieca regarding Abingdon, Monteith Close, Langton Green was discussed and it was agreed this matter should be passed to TWBC to deal with. The Assistant Clerk was asked to prepare an email outlining the issues raised in Mr Mercieca's email and requesting an Enforcement Officer visit site to establish the situation.
 - Date of next meeting: Wednesday 9th January 2019 at 7.30pm in the Council Offices, Langton Green. Cllr Mrs Jeffreys gave her apologies.

There being nothing further to discuss, the meeting closed at 10.10pm.

Chairman