

## EAST WOODHAY PARISH COUNCIL PLANNING COMMITTEE

5.30 p.m. TUESDAY, 26<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2021

Virtual Meeting held on: Tuesday, 26<sup>th</sup> January, 17:30 via Zoom.

### MINUTES

1. **Attendance:** Cllr. Susan Cooper, Cllr. Martin Hainge, Cllr. Philip Jarvis, Cllr. Karen Titcomb (Chair), Cllr. Andrew Watson.

2. **Apologies:** None.

3. **Minutes of last meeting:** Agreed.

4. **Matters arising from Minutes of last meeting:** None.

5. **20/03431/HSE - High Trees, Church Road, Woolton Hill, RG20 9XQ.** Erection of driveway gate and garden office.

No objection to or comment to make on the proposed driveway gate. However, the Committee would comment as follows on the proposed garden office building:

a) The Village Design Statement is not generally in favour of additional buildings towards the front of gardens as they often dominate the street scene in an unacceptable manner. However, in this case were the ridge height of the proposed garden office be reduced to 3.3 metres the size and height of the building would be acceptable.

b) The garden office should be entirely subordinate to the main residence.

c) The Committee is concerned regarding overlooking of the neighbouring garden. Should this problem not be satisfied by any reduction in height, the window potentially overlooking the neighbouring garden (frosted or not) should be sited on the rear elevation of the garden office and not the side of the neighbouring garden.

6. **T/00021/21/TPO - 34 Greenacres, Woolton Hill, RG20 9TA.** T1 Oak - Removal of suppressed Oak tree which is showing signs of root heave.

Leave to expertise of the Tree Officer.

7. **20/03488/FUL- Hollington House, Rose Cottage, Woolton Hill, RG20 9XR.** Erection of a treehouse, 3 no. outbuildings, 2 no. undercover shelters, tent platform with decking area and seated shelter to existing glampsite (part retrospective).

Object to any expansion of visitor accommodation. However, should it be granted the Committee would ask for certain conditions to be associated with it.

a) The original Planning permission of 2016 granted retrospective permission in relation to a one-acre site which forms part of a wood of approximately 10 acres. The site plan accompanying the current application continues to show the proposed tree house abutting the boundary of the existing one-acre site. Any planning permission which may be granted should therefore be conditional upon the applicants being prevented from encroaching beyond the area of the existing one-acre site area.

b) The current application refers to seeking planning permission for a tree house “within our 9.98 acres total of land named Hollington Park.” However, there is no permission to use 9.98 acres for ‘glamping purposes’, only 1 acre. If the applicants wish to extend the area of the glamping site within the wood they should apply for permission to do so in the proper manner – though to be clear, this would not be supported by the Planning Committee. It would be unacceptable if the applicants sought to extend the existing site by unauthorised piecemeal incursions into the adjoining area; and it should be made very clear that any further retrospective applications would only serve to unnecessarily alienate local residents and the Planning Committee, rather than to gain support.

c) In 2016 when retrospective permission was sought for the 2 pods, the Planning Committee asked that the enterprise be restricted to a maximum of 2 pods. In response, the officer’s report advised that such a condition was not necessary because, “the planning application is for description specified and must be undertaken in accordance with the approved plans. Any intensification by way of additional pods or other structures would require separate planning permission”.

This application does not seek planning permission for the tents because, as explained in the Design and Access Statement: “We have not sought planning permission for these as advised by our planning consultant as they are situated within the curtilage of land that has change of use to glampsite...”. The consequence is that the applicants have planning permission for two pods, and believe they can have further visitors in tents (if their planning consultant is correct, they could provide any number of tents) and now they are asking for permission for the treehouse.

The Planning Committee consider that the applicants’ interpretation of the 2016 permission is incorrect and the proper interpretation of that permission is as follows: *the number of units of accommodation is limited to two pods and that the reference in the permission to change of use to glamping, authorises the land within the 1 acre application site to be used for glamping purposes ancillary to the two pods. It does not authorise additional visitor accommodation.*

If the applicants’ interpretation of the permission is correct, any number of tents could be erected, enabling any number of visitors to be accommodated, which cannot have been intended. Consequently, the current retrospective application (which is intended to regularise the current situation as well as authorise the treehouse) is incomplete and incorrect. If the applicants wish to provide accommodation in tents, the application should be amended to make that clear and the decision on the application should address the issues raised, with appropriate conditions.

d) The Committee is surprised by the comments made by BDBC Landscape Team that “the site does not have any close neighbours”. This is entirely incorrect – the neighbours cannot be seen through the rest of the woodland, but they exist. Approaches have been made to the Planning Committee by neighbouring residents who find the music and other noise emanating from the site (especially in the evenings) extremely intrusive. An increase in visitor numbers would inevitably lead to more noise, which in a rural, residential area is already at an unacceptable level.

e) It is noted that the Design and Access Statement states that “all the tree work is up to date and regularly monitored.” The applicants have stated in the past that the glamping business was set up to bring in revenue to help manage the woodland. There is no evidence of any such management as the woodland appears to be in a very poor state, with trees regularly shedding branches in windy weather. Indeed, a tree was felled last year under direction of the Hampshire Tree Officer and this has been left lying on the ground, within the wood.

A tree survey seems to have been undertaken on the area of the glamping site but this fails to address the safety of the area beyond the site, where visitors to the glamping site may be at risk, should they inadvertently roam there. Whilst that is a matter for the applicants, the safety of trees along the highway is a matter which the Committee has raised with Hampshire Highways, as clearly public safety cannot be compromised. There are a number of horse chestnut trees (and others) along the highway (Church Road) which regularly drop branches in poor weather and would benefit from some attention from a professional tree surgeon.

f) Of further concern is the size and scale of this proposal. When retrospective planning permission was granted in 2016 for two “pods”, a toilet and a shower block on a one-acre site, the enterprise was presented as small and low key. Indeed, this is not an appropriate site for anything larger or more commercial.

Yet the applicants’ latest Design and Access Statement says: “.....*an increase in units will allow us*” (emphasis added) – the use of the plural is concerning. This application is for only one new unit and to formalise other units (shower sheds) which have been placed on the site without planning permission. The applicants also state: “*therefore protecting the woodland from further development.*” Indeed, the Committee is in agreement on that point – any planning permission granted this time round should make it perfectly clear that there will be no further expansion of the site and to try to get things through retrospectively will not be acceptable.

g) The Committee is also concerned that the previous application sought permission for an additional parking area, and it appears the applicants have already cleared an area for this purpose. Accordingly, any planning permission which may be granted in relation to the current application should be conditional on the applicants being prevented from adding another parking area to the site, whether now or retrospectively.

In summary, the Planning Committee is extremely concerned at the continuing piecemeal approach to this development which does not encourage a supportive and open discussion. As has been said before, to present local residents and the

planning authority with a “done deal” in the hope that this means it is more likely to be granted is an unacceptable way forward, and engenders no goodwill.

Further, the Committee do not feel that the site should be extended beyond the two pods which were granted in 2016. That said there is no objection to the two sheds adjacent to the two pods (marked blue on the plan) which provide showers for the pods. The Committee suggest that for clarity, the addition of the two bell tents be regularised as explained in c) above, and noting no further tents to be added on this site.

Committee do not support the application for a tree house and further expansion of this site.

Should permission be granted, the Committee expressly request that the permission granted makes it very clear the number of pods, tents and other structures allowed and that the following conditions are added:

- That there will be no further expansion to the site, either by seeking to extend the glamping site beyond the existing one-acre site or by seeking to install more pods, tents, treehouses or other structures.
- There will be no additional driveways, access ways or parking places created – all access to the site to be via the existing driveway at Rose Cottage, where the applicants have already confirmed there is ample parking.
- That there is no loud music within the site.

**8. T/00031/21/TPO - 17 Woolton Lodge Gardens, Woolton Hill, RG20 9SU.** T1 Oak: prune.

Leave to expertise of the Tree Officer.

**9. T/00024/21/TPO – Woodgate, Tile Barn, Woolton Hill, RG20 9UZ.** Scotch pine (T80): fell. Holly: fell to standing monolith.

Leave to expertise of the Tree Officer.

**10. 21/00047/HSE - 64 Greenacres, Woolton Hill, RG20 9TA.** Erection of two storey side extension.

No comments or objections.

**11. 20/03604/LDPO - North Cottage, Burlyns Lane, Ball Hill, RG20 0NU.** Certificate of Lawfulness for the proposed erection of a single storey rear extension.

No comments or objections.

**12. Planning Committee Terms of Reference:** Included in error.

**13. Items for next Agenda:**

a) **21/00079/LDEU - North End Farm, North End Road, North End, RG20 0BE.** Certificate of lawfulness for the existing continued use of building as ancillary residential accommodation to North End Farm.

**b) 21/00061/FUL- Whispering Oak, 1 Gravelly Close, North End, RG20 0BG.**  
Erection of dwelling with parking and soft landscaping.

**14. Date of next meeting:** Monday, 8<sup>th</sup> February, 5.30 p.m. via Zoom.