
Planning Working Group

MINUTES of the Meeting held at the site listed below on Thursday, 31 October 2024 from 10.12 am - 10.46 am.

PRESENT: Councillors Mike Baldock (Chair), Peter Marchington (present for part of the meeting), Terry Thompson and Tony Winckless.

OFFICERS PRESENT: Philippa Davies, Paul Gregory and Ian Harrison.

APOLOGIES: Councillors Hayden Brawn, Simon Clark, Kieran Golding, Elliott Jayes, Richard Palmer, Julien Speed, Paul Stephen and Karen Watson.

370 **Declarations of Interest**

No interests were declared.

371 **22/502692/FULL, Land North of Perry Leigh, Grove Road, Selling, ME13 9RN**

The Chair welcomed representatives from Selling Parish Council, members of the public and members of the Planning Committee to the meeting.

The Team Leader (Planning Applications) introduced the application as set out in the report which was reported to the Planning Committee on 10 October 2024. The application was for a variation to condition (2) of application 19/500224/FULL, to increase the approved building by four metres in length, one metre in depth and 1.1 metres in height; increase the number of doors from four to 10; and the removal of bunding around the proposed building.

Local residents and representatives from Selling Parish Council raised the following points:

- The applicant had ignored Enforcement Notices, not told the truth and had wasted officers time;
- the amendment would result in the building being doubled in size to that permitted in the original application;
- there were too many wooden pallets on the site and this presented a potential fire risk;
- enforcement measures were needed;
- considered this was not a 'minor' amendment, but a major change and it would look like a commercial development;
- had the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty unit (AONB), now Kent Downs National Landscape, been consulted on the application?;
- there appeared to be no correlation between the use of the site and the 'need' for more development on it;
- had a reason been given as to why the size of the building had increased?;
- considered the containers on the site would fit into the smaller original barn, could not understand why it now needed to be larger;
- the applicant appeared to be 'playing' the system;
- considered the applicant would ignore the conditions on the application; and
- the larger unit meant more could be stored and this could potentially increase traffic on the country lanes.

In response, the Team Leader explained that the AONB Unit had been consulted and a response from them had recently been received. They had acknowledged that the building would be bigger, but with the inclusion of conditions and landscaping, they had raised no objection to the application. A copy of their response was available on the Council's Planning Portal. The Team Leader explained that no reasons were needed as to why the dimensions of the application were now larger than the original application.

Everyone then walked along the road and along a public footpath to view the site from an adjoining field and Members were shown the position of the proposed building in relation to what was there on the site and the overall landscape.

Further comments included:

- The applicant had extended outside the area permitted for storage of pallets;
- there were various permissions on the site which had not been implemented by the applicant;
- residents had complained for years about the site which had grown in size over the years;
- considered more enforcement measures were needed;
- the site was an eyesore, and this fact had been ignored; and
- not confident that the applicant would construct the building and put the pallets inside it.

In response to some comments, the Team Leader said the building would not be doubled in size; it was for the use of the land, not for commercial use, so would not impact traffic in the area; and that there were conditions attached to the application. He added that Members needed to consider whether the amendments were acceptable or not, and look at the original permission as a baseline. The Team Leader said that enforcement action had been taken on the land, but this had been quashed by the Planning Inspectorate.

Members then toured the site with officers.

Chair

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All minutes are draft until agreed at the next meeting of the Committee/Panel