

FOUR MARKS PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Meeting of the Planning Committee
Held on Wednesday 4th December 2024, commencing at 7.30pm
At Benians Pavilion.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cllr Paul McAllister (Chairman), Cllrs Pullen (M), Pullen (R), Smith
IN ATTENDANCE: Julie Russell (Clerk to Medstead PC), Victoria Ursulean (Assistant Clerk),
Nine members of the public.
APOLOGIES: Cllr Medhurst

24.95 PC APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr Medhurst.

24.96 PC Open Session, Public Participation

Resident one raised concerns about the Cat Hotel planning application, particularly with regard to parking, lighting, sound and smell and with regard to inadequacies in the mitigation measures intended to control light pollution.

Resident two expressed concern (with regard to 50216/002) that planning applications are looked at in isolation rather than considering the cumulative effects on infrastructure, traffic and facilities such as the pharmacy, doctors surgery etc. Other concerns included congestion on the A31, accidents at T-junctions, flooding, street lighting and protracted roadworks over many years due to construction.

Resident three raised concerns over speeding traffic on Blackberry Lane and its use as a rat run, and noted that there is a blind dip near the proposed entrance. They questioned whether there should be more than one entrance. Cllrs explained that there will be no justification for two entrances in statutory requirements.

Resident four suggested Speedwatch should check speeds on Blackberry Lane, although councillors explained it was hard to catch speeders there, despite it being a known problem.

Resident five said the developer comments on the Local Development Plan published in January indicated they have plans for 600 houses of the strip between Alton Lane and Blackberry Lane, and 50216/002 is the first tranche. He said District Councillors are aware of the problem of massing of houses in Medstead and Four Marks.

Resident six highlighted an accident on the A31 by the vets and a councillor noted it was the second accident in two weeks. Councillors noted that accidents are not logged unless they are reported to the police.

Resident six raised concerns over oak, beech and other mature trees in Four Marks, noting their importance to biodiversity, ecology and climate control. She feels they give the village character and heritage, which planners and developers fail to appreciate. She requested a sub-committee with volunteers and with the weight of the Parish Council to regularly monitor and report on mature trees that are under threat across the whole village. Resident five noted that EHDC were looking for tree wardens.

Resident seven noted that his own property is surrounded by potential development on three sides, and urged a strong focus on flooding and traffic in responding to applications.

Resident eight feels that the HCC traffic modelling work is incomplete and needs to need to include the modelling of traffic coming from Blackberry Lane onto Lymington Bottom and Telegraph Lane. He also highlighted the high risk of surface water flooding from Alton Lane/ Blackberry Lane all the way to 87 Lymington Bottom.

Resident nine raised concerns over smaller developments as well as the big development, particularly with regard to Telegraph Lane. The small developments of two and three houses generally open the door to the bigger developments. She also raised concerns over light pollution, potentially destroying the dark skies currently enjoyed in Four Marks and the impact on wildlife.

With no further items to raise, the Open Session ended at 8.00pm and Standing Orders were applied.

24.97 PC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUEST FOR DISPENSATIONS

Cllr McAllister declared an interest in a plot adjacent to the 50216/002 Blackberry Lane application, but other councillors agreed that this should not preclude his involvement in that agenda item.

24.98 PC PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES

On the proposal of Cllr R. Pullen which was seconded by Cllr Smith and with all Councillors in agreement it was **RESOLVED** to approve the Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on the 6th November 2024.

24.99 PC FOR DISCUSSION.

23/10/2024	APP/M1710/3349565 60040 60040/001	Land east of Lanark Cottage, Alton Lane, Four Marks, Alton	Construction of 10 detached dwellings with associated access and landscaping	27 th November 2024
In response to a query with the case offer as to why there was a new application as well as an appeal, the council was told that all elements of the appeal have been now been agreed with the LPA; there is no case to answer, and the applicant was asked to submit a new application. The appeal will either not go ahead, or there will be no hearing, or there will be a hearing where it is agreed that the common ground is everything.				

The deadline for comments for 60040/001 was before this meeting, so the council resubmitted its comments for the appeal, as follows:

Four Marks Parish Council strongly objects to this application for the following reasons:

Summary

1. The site is outside the settlement policy boundary and although the tilted balance is engaged the demonstrable harm far exceeds the minimal benefit.
2. This application is an urban style development completely out of character with the rural low density of Telegraph Lane and Alton Lane.
3. The development will cause unacceptable harm to the ecology at this location.

Tilted balance

Four Marks and Medstead have already over delivered against the current Local Plan need. Currently 167 houses have permission granted against a draft local plan need of 210 up to 2040 with 338 additional speculative planning applications in progress.

Benefits

House construction labour would be external to village and materials would be purchased outside the area. **Negligible benefit.**

CIL payments for infra structure are very limited on this size therefore **minimal benefit.**

Off-site affordable housing included in the development is not of benefit to Four Marks. **Minimal benefit.**

Market housing on the development is in an unsustainable location and not needed. **Minimal benefit.**

Harm

This development would be 100% car dependant to grocery stores, Doctors, Dentist, school and recreation facilities adding to pollution, congestion and negative to climate change objectives. Manual for Streets states that local services need to be no more than a 10-minute walk to minimise car journeys. Local services are 20 mins walk. **Significant Harm**

The junction of Telegraph Lane with the A31 is already overloaded with more than a 10-minute wait to exit onto A31 a regular occurrence. **Significant Harm**

It is proposed to use deep bore holes for drainage. This is a source protection zone area, boreholes require additional filtering for road run off which has high maintenance and high risk of poisoning drinking water by heavy metals.

It will increase surface water run-off into Alton Lane which already floods on a regular basis. **Significant Harm**

The site has a roadside verge of ecological importance (RVEI) and a site important for nature conservancy (SINC) on its boundary with Alton Lane. This will be damaged by this development access and boundary management. **Significant Harm**

Tilted Balance Conclusion

This development is not sustainable, and the harm significantly outweighs the benefits if any.

Character

The character of the dwellings within Telegraph Lane immediately opposite the site are predominantly detached single storey dwellings or dwellings with first floor accommodation contained within their roof space. The lower profiles of these dwellings reflects that the linear pattern of dwellings in Telegraph Lane at this point which is transitioning into the countryside. Each dwelling within the immediate area of Telegraph Lane is individual in appearance which also contributes to the rural character of the area.

Telegraph Lane until the point of the application site which sits on the junction of Alton Lane, is formed by continuous linear development on both sides. Whilst the application site is enclosed by hedgerows and trees it still presents itself as undeveloped rural land which plays an important role by puncturing the continuous linear development on both sides of Telegraph Lane. From the application site the character of Telegraph Lane changes from a linear development on both sides, to a less dense clusters of linear development switching from side to side of Telegraph Lane, with intervening undeveloped rural land as it transitions into the countryside. Consequently, the loss of this important visual rural break in the development would significantly detract from the character and appearance of Telegraph Lane.

Ecology

The Alton Lane side of the development has both a SINC and RVEI which the access roads and garden boundaries will damage. The ecological surveys indicate that section 41 priority species is present with no mitigation plan. Dormice are present in the hedgerows. Previous developments’ dormice schemes have been shown not to work resulting in large impact or total loss.

Conclusion

This application/appeal should be refused as the harm demonstrably exceeds the benefit.

15/11/2024	50216/003	Land west of Millfield, Alton Lane, Four Marks, Alton	Request for a Screening Opinion for residential development for up to 100 dwellings (Access via Blackberry Lane)	14/11/2024
------------	---------------------------	---	--	------------

The council has requested an extension to 20th December to respond to this, in line with its extension for 50216/002. Should this be granted, the response to this may be discussed again at the next Full Council meeting on 18th December. Should this not be granted the agreed response is as follows:

The Parish Council supports a screening for an EIA for the following reasons.

1. Massive Impact on character change from grade 3A farmland outside SPB to high density urban development of 100 houses
2. Out of Character in Blackberry Lane
3. Massive impact on A31 junctions at telegraph lane and Lymington bottom which are already at capacity
4. Massive impact on Blackberry Lane Lymington bottom junction.
5. Traffic impact of a 100 house development along with the cumulative effect of 167 houses with permission and 338 speculative applications. The TRICS database comparison site selection is unrealistic as Four Marks has a much higher (84%) car commute rate.
6. This site is subject to high risk of surface water flooding.
7. Shallow infiltration drainage is accepted not to work without additional deep boreholes which endanger the drinking water supply. The proposed surface water control scheme is likely to simply move the problem from the site to areas already subject to flooding. If this area is developed a much wider area surface water flood scheme assessment is required before any developments.
8. High Ecology impact of loss of open grassland and particular impact on Bat flight corridors.

15/11/2024	50216/002	Land west of Millfield, Alton Lane, Four Marks, Alton	Outline application - demolition of structures and stables for the construction of up to 100 dwellings with new and improved vehicular and pedestrian access points, parking, public open space, biodiversity area, landscaping, sustainable urban drainage system (SuDS) and associated works. All matters reserved except for a means of access (Access from Blackberry Lane).'	14/11/2024
------------	---------------------------	---	---	------------

The Council has an extension to 20th December to respond to this planning application and agreed to reconsider it at the Full Council meeting on 18th December before finalizing the Council's submission. Cllr McAllister will circulate a document capturing thoughts ahead of that meeting.

This document will include points that have already been discussed under 50216/003 and in the Public Participation session. Further discussion for this agenda item covered the following:

- High volumes of traffic from Blackberry Lane onto Telegraph Lane / A31 at certain times of day
- The Transport Assessment is incorrect.
- The density of the site is heavy and greater than it should be.
- Flooding potential must be addressed.
- There should be a sequential assessment on neighboring sites.
- A dark sky policy has been adopted by the council and information is needed on whether street lights are planned.
- There will be an impact on dentists and doctors (although not supported by the NHS response).

19/11/2024	38536	25 Fairfield Green, Four Marks, Alton, GU34 5BL	Single storey side and rear extension with cladding to the front, rear and side of the dwelling	19/11/2024
------------	-----------------------	---	---	------------

The proposed work is not out of character with the road. The council questions whether some of this work has already been started, which would be a matter for planning enforcement if applicable.

The council defers this decision to the planning officer

25/11/2024	34149/014	Oaklands, The Shrave, Four Marks, Alton, GU34 5BH	Ash tree. A 20% thin of 1 Ash tree of branches no more than 100mm, and no removal of any structural branches at all. Also a reduction of one branch (as shown in picture) to allow a 4 metre clearance from the roof of the house	
<p>In line with the Parish Council's Tree Management policy, recognising the importance and amenity value of trees (and hedgerows) within the environment, would only support work to, and removal of, trees (or hedgerows) that would not be detrimental to the health and stability of any remaining trees, and necessary for reasons of essential maintenance, or health and safety of persons and property.</p> <p>With respect to this application, the Council defer to the planning officer's decision in this regard.</p>				
18/11/2024	39323/011	Location: Melrose, Alton Lane, Four Marks, Alton, GU34 5AJ	Proposal: Prior notification for enlargement of a dwellinghouse by construction of additional storey(s) incorporating a maximum height of 4.67 metres	
<p>The council strongly objects to a second floor being placed on this caravan which was recently granted a lawful use certificate as a separate dwelling. The planning statement quotes the bungalow's planning history as justification which seems inconsistent to a separate dwelling of the caravan. If the officer is minded to allow it under permitted rights then we would ask that as a condition all permitted rights should be revoked to prevent future unsuitable development using permitted rights.</p>				
08/11/2024	60084/001	3 Brambles Close, Four Marks, Alton, GU34 5DR	Single storey front extension	
<p>The council notes that the front driveway is not very big and the proposed front porch takes up some of the available parking space there, but this is not felt a grounds for objection.</p> <p>The council defers this decision to the planning officer.</p>				
07/11/2024	59097/004	12 Fairfield Green, Four Marks, Alton, GU34 5BL	Permanent permission for cat hotel following temporary permission	

The council strongly objects to this application for a permanent permission of the Cat Hotel. The owners have demonstrated a total disregard for the conditions placed on the temporary permission and are still creating a significant loss of amenity to the neighbours in terms of noise and light pollution. If the officer is minded to give full permission we would ask that all conditions of the temporary permission are incorporated into the permanent permission.

20/11/2024	60425/001	Land to the southeast of Semaphore Farm, Telegraph Lane, Four Marks, Alton	Proposal: Two detached houses and improvements to existing access	
------------	---------------------------	--	---	--

This development is bounded by the South Downs National Park on two sides and adjacent to a Grade II listed building and is out of character with its surroundings. It is outside of the Settlement Policy Boundary and not within acceptable walking distance to any village facilities, and hence not in a sustainable location. The solar panels and heat pump specified are inadequate. On these grounds, the council objects to this planning application.

20.99.1 PC Late applications

There were no late applications.

24.100 PC TO NOTE DECISIONS NOTIFIED AND PENDING

The council received and noted a summary of notified decisions, appeals and updates on pending decisions (circulated in advance).

24.101 PC ADDITIONAL PLANNING MATTERS.

24.101.1 PC

The drop-in session on the neighbourhood plan and community building has been moved to the 26th January.

For the neighbourhood plan, consultants were appointed last week. Frank Malloney (NPSG) is applying for the grant up to April 2025. Medstead Parish Council is fully on board with funding agreed. The plan will not be completed until the end of 2026 following the referendum, but it carries some weight once it reaches the examination stage in 2026.

24.101.2 PC

There was no correspondence.

24.102 PC Next scheduled meeting: Wednesday 5th February 2025

24.103 PC Meeting closed at 8.55pm