

**Meopham Parish Council**  
**Minutes of a Planning Committee**  
**held on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2021 at 7.39pm**  
**Virtual Meeting via Zoom**

**Committee Members present:** Cllrs Buchanan, M Bramer, D Bramer, Luxford, Dalby, McTavish, Green (Chairman), Ogden and Wade

**In attendance:** J Barker, Clerical Assistant, 3 members of public

**Item 1**            **To receive and accept apologies for Absence**

**P.67**            Apologies accepted from Cllr Bourke (family commitment), Cllr Rose (family matter), Cllr Gofton

Cllr Green asked if the office could send the Councils best wishes to Tony Bourke's wife.

**Item 2**            **To receive Declarations of Interests**

**P.68**            None

**Item 3**            **To approve the minutes from the previous meeting (23.03.21)**

**P.69**            The minutes from the meeting of 23.03.21 were approved on a proposal by Cllr Buchanan and seconded by Cllr Luxford. 8 voted in favour. 1 Member abstained due to not being present at the previous meeting.

**Item 4**            **To consider matters arising from the above minutes**

**P.70**            There were no matters arising.

**Item 5**            **To Ratify The Letter sent Jointly with Vigo Parish Council to Gravesham Borough Council for the planning application below**

**20200149 – Land North Of, Harvel Road, Meopham, Gravesend Kent:** application for change of use of land for the siting of one mobile home, toilet and one touring Caravan and creation of vehicle access off of a classified highway.

It was proposed by Cllr Wade that the terms of the letter sent to Gravesham Borough Council be ratified and approved. This was seconded by Cllr McTavish and all voted in favour.

**Item 6**            **Planning Applications**

**6.1 To consider and make recommendations on Planning Applications:**

**P.71**            **KCC/GR/0041/2021 - Meopham School, Wrotham Road, Meopham, Gravesend Kent DA13 0AH**

Proposed 2 form of entry expansion, involving the erection of a new freestanding 2 storey school building, together with associated parking and landscaping works

It was proposed by Cllr Green, and seconded by Cllr Ogden that the wording of the objection to the application in respect of Meopham School to be submitted to KCC shall take the form set out in the draft prepared by Cllr. Max Bramer amended so as to read as follows:

“Meopham Parish Council has resolved to object to this proposal on the grounds

(i) That the site is not large enough to handle the additional volume of traffic from outside the area that the proposed expansion would generate. It is proposed that there will be 60 extra pupils in the first year (year 7) each year, which implies an additional  $60 \times 5 = 300$  pupils in the school at the start of the fifth year of the expansion. With sixth form expansion also, the eventual total increase is predicted to be 358 children.

The reason for the proposal is to deal with a lack of secondary school places in the Gravesend urban area (there is no need for any expansion to accommodate pupils transferring from the four primary schools in the Meopham area) so it is very likely that most or possibly all the additional pupils will be travelling in by road from the Gravesend area. The figures quoted in the application are 331 extra return car journeys in the afternoon and 267 in the mornings for pupils, not including journeys by 40 extra staff expected mainly to live out of the area. At the end of the school day all the extra vehicles will be going to the same place and aiming to arrive at the same time. There is no possibility that such a large number of additional cars could be managed on the site. The amount of additional parking that would be required is far more than could conceivably be created and there is no large 'holding area' for cars to wait in. The additional cars will not be able to park on the A227 or in the side roads as they are already saturated with cars parking at that time.

The answer to this 'end of school' traffic problem given by the proposer in a public consultation meeting was that excess cars will simply be turned round and sent back out by staff at the small roundabout on site. This suggestion is absurd. Assuming that parents want to collect their children, rather than go home without them, they will simply go out of the site, turn round and drive back in again.

(ii) It is obvious from even a casual glance at the long queues of stationary vehicles in both directions waiting to enter the School grounds that are a daily occurrence at the start and end of a normal school day that the main road running through the village and serving the school lacks sufficient capacity to accommodate the extra traffic the development would generate. Whilst we cannot expect KCC to solve pre-existing problems of traffic congestion, we do expect them to avoid taking action that would make an existing problem significantly worse.

(iii) The Parish Council is already concerned by the current inadequacy of parking on the site which impacts adversely on staff and users of the other important facilities located there, in particular the Medical Centre, the Nursery and Library. The huge additional demand for parking at the start and end of the school day can only heighten that adverse impact. There are particular concerns for the disabled and elderly who use the Medical Centre and Library.

(iv) Another occupant of the site is Meopham Leisure Centre, which is used by the public throughout every day. Members of the public wishing to access the Centre, which is at the rear of the school, already find it difficult at the beginning and end of the school day. The proposal refers to offering community facilities in the school extension and although in theory that may benefit the community, in practice it might harm the Leisure Centre's income and potentially threaten its existence. The loss of the Leisure Centre would do significant harm to the community for which the new facilities at the school would only partially compensate.

(v) The extra traffic will add to the difficulties at the junction of the A227 and the access road into the site. It is difficult for traffic to enter the main road currently. The additional traffic generated by the proposal will exacerbate the situation with resultant heightened road safety issues.

(vi) The development will adversely affect the amenity of local residents because of the additional off-site parking which would inevitably be generated, even though as stated above the roads are already 'saturated' with vehicles. There is already excessive on-street parking at both the beginning and end of the school day and the development will add significantly to it and may cause additional issues, including road safety issues in the residential roads in close proximity to the site and increased air pollution.

(vii) The development is inappropriate for the rural locality and is not required to meet the needs of the population of Meopham and other neighbouring rural parishes. The population of secondary school-age children in these areas is actually declining. The aim is to solve a problem of inadequate secondary school provision in the Gravesend area at the expense of creating a daily transport crisis in Meopham.”

The proposal was approved unanimously.

**20210227 – Poplars, 99 Rhododendron Avenue, Meopham, Gravesend Kent DA13 0TU**

Erection of a single storey rear extension, front porch and window in the front roof slope.

Cllr Luxford proposed objection due to overdevelopment in the Green Belt. Cllr Wade seconded. The proposal was approved with 7 voting in favour. There were 2 abstentions.

**20210231 – Foxdene, Wrotham Road, Meopham, Gravesend Kent DA13 0QG**

Erection of a rear conservatory including doors and dining area.

Cllr Wade proposed objection due to overdevelopment in the Green Belt. Cllr M Bramer seconded. The proposal was approved with 7 voting in favour, 1 objection and 1 abstention.

**20210292 - Oakley, Norwood Lane, Meopham, Gravesend Kent DA13 0YE**

Demolition of existing garage and conservatory. Erection of a single storey rear extension and a two storey side extension.

Cllr Green proposed no objection, this was seconded by Cllr Buchanan and all voted in favour.

**20210300 – 40 Ediva Road, Meopham, Gravesend Kent DA13 0ND**

Installation of two rooflights in the front elevation, erection of a rear dormer with conversion of the roof space into habitable rooms and construction of rear balcony.

Cllr Dalby proposed no objection, this was seconded by Cllr Luxford and all voted in favour.

**20210313 - 11 Poplar Walk, Meopham, Gravesend Kent DA13 0EB**

Erection of a single storey side extension.

Cllr Ogden proposed no objection, this was seconded by Cllr Luxford and all voted in favour.

**20210348 – The Haven, Wrotham Road, Meopham, Gravesend Kent DA13 0HX**

Application for approval of condition 4 attached to planning permission reference number 20170732 relating to landscaping scheme.

Cllr McTavish proposed no objection, this was seconded by Cllr Buchanan and all voted in favour.

**20210169 – 5 Cricketers Drive, Meopham, Gravesend Kent DA13 0AX**

Erection of a first floor side extension over garage and alterations to front elevations.

Cllr Wade proposed no objection, this was seconded by Cllr Buchanan and all voted in favour.

**20210346 – Pine Glen, David Street, Meopham, Gravesend Kent DA13 0BT**

Erection of a roof extension involving the raising of the existing roof, the construction of 3 front and 3 rear dormer windows, installation of solar panels to front roof slope and a two storey glazed front porch extension.

Cllr Luxford proposed no objection, this was seconded by Cllr Buchanan and all voted in favour.

**20201139 – Nurstead Hill Farm, Nurstead Lane, Longfield Hill, Longfield, Gravesend Kent DA3 7AN**

Application for the removal of conditions 3, 4 6 and 10 attached to planning permission reference number 20200052 for the change of use from agricultural land to provide a touring caravan site for 10 pitches

Cllr Green proposed no objection subject to KCC Highways not objecting. This was s Cllr Buchanan seconded the proposal and all voted in favour of it.

1 Member of public left the meeting at 08.09pm

**20210326 – Bluebell Wood, Rhododendron Avenue, Meopham, Gravesend Kent DA13 0TU**

Demolition of existing pool and cover, demolition of existing lean to and erection of a two storey side extension

Cllr D Bramer proposed no objection providing there is no contravention of Green Belt Policies. This was seconded by Cllr Wade and all voted in favour.

**20210301 – 7 St Francis Road, Harvel, Gravesend Kent DA13 0DD**

Conversion of loft to habitable rooms with front dormer and rear dormer with Juliette balcony

Cllr Luxford proposed no objection, this was seconded by Cllr D Bramer and all voted in favour.

**20210253 – The White Lodge, Wrotham Road, Meopham, Gravesend Kent DA13 0QA**

Application for a dropped kerb and creation of vehicle access.

Cllr Buchanan proposed no objection subject to KCC Highways not objecting. This was seconded by Cllr Wade and all voted in favour.

**20210385 – Land At, Wilsons Way, Meopham, Gravesend Kent**

Erection of a dwelling

Cllr D Bramer proposed objection due to inappropriate development in the Green Belt. The proposal was seconded by Cllr Wade and approved with 8 voting for it and 1 abstention.

**20210386 – Firle, Longfield Road, Longfield, Kent DA3 7AP**

Erection of a single storey rear and side extension

Cllr Wade proposed objection due to overdevelopment in the Green Belt. This proposal was seconded by Cllr Luxford and approved with 6 voting in favour, 2 against and 1 abstention.

**20210388 – 1 Kent Terrace, Wrotham Road, Meopham, Gravesend Kent DA13 0AW**

Demolition of rear shed and erection of rear ground floor extension to incorporate a new bedroom with an en-suite

Cllr Wade proposed no objection subject to Conservation Officers approval. This was seconded by Cllr M Bramer and all voted in favour.

**20210384 – 7 Tradescant Drive, Meopham, Gravesend Kent DA13 0EL**

Erection of a side extension above existing garage and single storey rear extension

Cllr Green proposed no objection, this was seconded by Cllr M Bramer and all voted in favour.

**20210402 – Downsview, Meopham Green, Meopham, Gravesend Kent DA13 0QU**

Application for approval of condition 3 attached to planning permission reference number 20210090 relating to external facing materials

Cllr Buchanan proposed that as this was a matter for the Planning Department, the parish council would not comment on the application. Cllr Luxford seconded the proposal and all voted in favour of it.

**20210392 – Greenfields, Wrotham Road, Meopham, Gravesend Kent DA13 0QB**  
REVISED Application for replacement uPVC windows to the front (west) elevation and part side (north) elevation, installation of timber framed window to bay in side elevation to replace door and retention of uPVC windows to rear and side elevations.

Cllr Buchanan proposed no objection subject to Conservation Officers approval. This was seconded by Cllr D Bramer, 8 voted for and there was 1 abstention.

**Item 7**                    **Planning Enforcement Issues Update – to note**

**P.72**                      An updated planning enforcement list will be reissued with the next week.

**Item 8**                    **To note the Chairman for the next Planning Committee Meeting on 25.05.21**

**P.73**                      It was noted that Cllr Bourke would be Chairman for the next planning committee meeting to be held on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2021.

Meeting closed at 8.28pm