



Ashington Parish Council Planning Committee Meeting

Minutes of Ashington Parish Council Planning Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 18th August 2021 at 7.30pm in Committee Room 2, Ashington Community Centre.

Present: Councillors T. Kearney & J. Morris

Parish Clerk: K. Dare

Apologies: M. Woolley & N. Spiers (both sent comments to the Clerk by email), J. Stillwell

Members of the public: 2

Declarations of Interest: Cllr Woolley had declared a personal, prejudicial interest in planning application DC/21/1592 as the Planning Agent is known to him. He sent no written comments on this application.

Public Adjournment

Two members of the public spoke about DC/21/1592 and raised the following concerns (summary):

1. The field was intended to be a vineyard and have a metal agricultural barn to serve the vineyard but now it seems to want to change to a 'Flower Farm' with glamping pods. The only evidence of a Flower Farm is a small, narrow trench at the bottom of the field.
2. Given that the proposed glamping pods would occupy a relatively small space in the field then the rest of the field is presumably still agricultural land needing machinery, labour etc.
3. The glamping aspect will generate additional vehicle movements into and out of site above that of the continuing agricultural use. The adjacent road network comprises narrow country lane and many damage-only accidents have occurred due to poor visibility, blind summits & bends. Road edges are falling away, very muddy in places and the road is generally unsuitable for additional traffic.
4. These are not glamping pods but built holiday homes. They are permanent structures. This is development in the countryside.
5. Documents refer to cars being parked on the main hardstanding and holidaymakers walking to their homes but also state that there are parking spaces next to the homes. This will encourage driving along the track and parking next to the homes and will result in an unacceptable use of the field and view.
6. The homes are very large. A height of 6m is the size of a normal house. These will not blend well into the landscape. They are not moveable so should not be referred to as glamping pods.
7. How will the homes connect to mains drainage? There is no mains drainage anywhere nearby. If septic tanks/Klargesters are to be installed, then where will run-off go and how will lorries access the site to empty them? No details are provided.

Councillors thanked the members of the public for attending the meeting and closed the Public Adjournment.

Planning applications

DC/21/1592 Change of use of agricultural land for the siting of 3 No. glamping pod holiday lets. Land Parcel at 512008 115712 Park Lane

The Clerk read out the comments from Cllr Spiers and the Councillors present discussed the application.

Councillors agreed to Object to the application on the grounds of:

1. Size and Scale – these are not small glamping pods. They are the size of houses and are fixed in location. This is a countryside location, outside of the BUAB.
2. Landscape – due to the scale (particularly height) and location on almost the highest point in the field they will dominate the landscape. The applicant claims that they will not be visible from the road (no drawings are supplied to support this) but they will probably be visible from the nearby PROW and possibly other nearby locations. Planting a small area of woodland in the north-east corner of the field will not hide the view from the PROW. Growing flowers in the field to the south of the homes will not hide the view. Further consideration as to their appearance in the landscape and effective landscaping mitigation is needed.
3. Ecology – no reports have been submitted that consider the effect on the Ecology of the area. Will the homes generate light pollution (consideration of the South Downs Dark Skies designation)? Fire pits are to be provided that will generate light and smoke. What about protected animal species eg bats?
4. The Planning, Design & Access Statement paragraph 3.3 states that the access track is to be used by people on foot only but paragraph 5.14 states that there are informal parking spaces next to each pod. Therefore, people can drive down the access track if they choose. This is inconsistent. Parking of cars next to the pods will result in an urban appearance in what is a countryside location. A behaviour contract will not stop this, and no manager is on site to prevent it.
5. No details are provided regarding the disposal of wastewater. There are no mains sewers near the site. Will there be Klargesters/Septic tanks? These would need to be dug into the field and provision made for their emptying by lorry. Where will the run-off go? More details should be supplied.
6. Traffic – most of the field will remain agricultural and will need to be accessed by farm machinery. The addition of cars visiting the homes is an intensification of use of the site all year round. Plus, there may be wastewater lorries and bin lorries to service the homes. Park Lane is a very narrow country road. The access to the site has reduced visibility and is close to a blind summit. Cars must ‘nose out’ slowly from the site entrance due to poor visibility. There have been many ‘damage only’ accidents along the road.
7. Location – the application states that ‘the site has excellent connections to PROW and opportunities to walk/cycle to services & facilities in Ashington, Storrington & Thakeham.’ Park Lane is not particularly safe for pedestrians or cyclists. There is a nearby Bridleway but to cycle to Ashington you must follow the bridleway down Malthouse Lane to the A24 and cycle along the pavement beside the A24 dual carriageway. This is highly dangerous and very unpleasant. There is no bridleway (cycle) link directly into Ashington village. All Public Footpaths are accessed from Park Lane and all are difficult to walk in the winter months and none are lit at night. It is difficult to see how any holidaymakers would use these on foot/bike to access services & facilities. Holidaymakers would be reliant upon private cars to access services & facilities. PROW use would be restricted to leisure walks. Similar access issues apply to Thakeham & Storrington.
8. A behaviour contract is laudable but there will be no-one on site to monitor or deal with any issues. It is difficult to see how any breaches would be dealt with promptly.

DC/21/1706 Erection of 3no detached garage/carports to serve previously approved dwellings on site. Lodge Farm Malthouse Lane
The Council Object to the application on the grounds of overdevelopment. These are not simply carports but include storerooms. The original permitted development was granted to put buildings on the footprint of existing structures. The redevelopment of the site has gradually crept significantly beyond this.

DC/21/1711 Removal of existing conservatory and erection of a single storey rear extension.
21 The Sands
The Council has no Objections.

DC/21/1613 Creation of field access, track and hardstanding.
Land at Grid Ref 513020 117407 Billingshurst Road
The Council has no Objections subject to the hardstanding not being used for the permanent storage/stationing of farm machinery/vehicles.

DC/21/1491 Erection of a detached agricultural building. Broadbridge Farm Hole Street
The Council has no Objections in principle but is concerned at the size of the proposed barn, being somewhat disproportionate/dominant compared to the size of nearby homes.

The Planning Committee meeting closed at 8.10pm

Signed..... Date.....