



Minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting

Loose Parish Pavilion

Monday 3 March 2025 at 6.45pm

Present: Jim Andrew (Chairman), Vianne Gibbons (VG) arrived 18.50, Neil Lettington (NL), Mick Westwood (MJW).

Janet Burnett Assistant Clerk (JB), who took the minutes.

Members of the Public/representatives in attendance.

There were 23 members of the public in attendance.

1. To receive and record any apologies for absence.

Previous apologies received from Cllr Oliver were AGREED. No apology received from Cllr Hill.

2. To receive and agree any decision regarding any item to be taken as confidential.

None

3. To receive any declarations of pecuniary interest on items in the agenda.

(In accordance with the NALC Model Code of Conduct for Parish Councils (pursuant to section 27 of the Localism Act 2011). In addition, any declaration of personal or prejudicial interest. (As agreed by LPC 21 Jan 13).

None

4. To receive any signed dispensation requests for any item on this agenda.

For Councillors to approve/disapprove as appropriate and to agree the reason for the dispensation if approved. (see dispensation form.) This follows the agreement made by the LPC at the meeting on the 17 July 2017.

None

5. To agree the minutes from the Planning Committee meetings of 17 February 2025 (Pages 702 - 703).

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 February were AGREED and signed by the Chairman. Cllr Gibbons arrived at this point in the meeting.

6. To receive any representations made by the public or by organisations.

5 members of the public spoke opposing the following application.

7. 25/500198/LAWPRO 22 Shernolds Maidstone Kent ME15 9QH

Lawful development Certificate for the proposed change of use from a C3 to C2 use as a children's home for up to a maximum of 3 children living at the premises with adult working a shift rota.

The Planning Committee **AGREED** to recommend that it should be **REFUSED**. If the Planning Officer is minded to approve the application, LPC requests that it be called in to be heard by MBC Planning Committee.

LPC comments specifically on the following points:

LPC considers the proposed change of use would require and deliver changes of a magnitude that necessitate a full planning application (see parallel example of application

25/500783/Full – 29 Lancet Lane). It is disappointing that the Lawful Development approach has been pursued, not least because MBC's Lawful Development Certificate processing procedure did not notify residents or LPC of this proposal. This omission in itself has generated significant discontent, given the scale of proposed change. A full planning application would have triggered not only notification but also consultation with key stakeholders (including the competent professional agencies) whose comments LPC considers to be essential for proper appraisal of the proposal.

Turning to the proposed change of use, LPC believes that it is inappropriate and specifically contrary to the SPD Loose Road Character Area Assessment (page 85, 8a) in that it does not 'respect the quiet residential character' of the area. The Assessment states of the area: 'The lower hierarchy roads and exclusively residential development has resulted in a quiet residential character. This character should not be adversely affected by new development'. If allowed, the proposed change would generate a level of activity that would clearly adversely alter the character of the small residential street and its community.

LPC finds it difficult to envisage how the property frontage will provide suitable parking for four cars. Parking provision is not simply about the space for parked cars, it is also about space to allow vehicles to manoeuvre without disruption to neighbours and other road users. It is hard to envisage how four cars could make proper use of the property frontage without alteration to it. In this respect, LPC considers that the proposed change of use does not adequately 'consider housing and locational context, including visitor parking' (North Loose Neighbourhood Development Plan, Policy HD2). A further aggravating feature is that Shernolds suffers from being used by traffic as a 'rat run'; LPC believes that movements the proposed change of use could generate from staff, visitors, deliveries etc. would exacerbate the situation.

8. Enforcement – meeting to be closed to the members of the public.

Nothing to report

9. To receive other items for discussion. Information only.

Cllr Andrew reported that a parishioner has set up a meeting with the Postley Rd developer next week. Cllr Westwood to liaise with parishioner and attend for information purposes.

10. Date of next meeting: 17 March 2025.

Meeting closed 19.44