



Meeting by 'Zoom' video conferencing due to ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

Councillors in attendance: Chairman: Zoe Maclehose (ZM), Laura Craven (LC), Max Harwood (MH), Elena McCloskey (EM), Gerard McCloskey (GM) and Mairi Rennie (MR). Clerk: Debbie Harknett

There were no members of the public in attendance.

Meeting started at 6.30pm.

Chairman: Zoe Maclehose

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Clerk: Debbie Harknett

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- 1) **It was noted the meeting would not be recorded.**
- 2) **There were no apologies for absence as the committee were all in attendance.**
- 3) **There were no declarations of interest.**
- 4) **The minutes of the last meeting held on 11th January 2021 were approved as a true record for signing.**
- 5) **Representations from the public: none**
- 6) **Planning applications –**

Case No:	SDNP/20/05796/HOUS	Comments closing:	18 February 2021
Officer:	Jenna Shaw	Applicant:	Ms Chalmers
Location:	Watsons Lodge, Terwick Hill, Rogate GU31 5EJ		
Proposal:	Erection of side and rear extensions.		
Comments:	<i>The committee felt the plans didn't clearly show the proposed changes; Clerk to seek clarity. Re-consider at meeting on 15 February.</i>		

Case No:	SDNP/20/01796/FUL	Comments closing:	15 February 2021
Officer:	Rafa Grosso Macpherson	Applicant:	Gillie Tuite
Location:	Smugglers Copse, Borden, Milland		
Proposal:	Change of use from forestry to mixed use comprising forestry, production of forestry products, education and training courses and associated camping. Erection of barn for use for forestry, production of forestry products, education and training courses. Erection of toilet and shower building. Retention of roundhouse, framing bed, pizza oven, IBC and solar panel.		

Comments:

This application refers to land situated in Milland parish but closely bordering Rogate parish. Rogate Parish Council have noted the additional information provided by the applicant.

The Council object to this application because:

- The application plan appears to show the entire site as wooded but this is inaccurate as the copse to the south of the development has been cleared, without permission. There is a lack of full compliance with the enforcement notice to restore this woodland; therefore, we do not consider that the applicant will respect any constraints that any planning permission would include.
- The large grass area has been separated off from the dilapidated sheds and proposed area for building by a fence that encircles the whole grass area. We consider this application to be an overdevelopment of this small site and the dilapidated sheds, roundhouse and other structures should be removed.
- There are differences between the submitted application drawings and information provided by the applicant during our site visit and meeting.
- This is an area noted for its tranquillity, dark skies and wildlife and is accessed by many people using the numerous footpaths.
- Smugglers Copse is part of a wooded area that merges into Randle Wood with few houses, (all located some distant from it) and no large non-residential sites. It is at the top of the hill and opposite grazing land. This landscape should be protected as it helps to distinguish the features that create local distinctiveness and gives the landscape its unique sense of place.

- The development will affect the tranquillity and state of calm of this remote wooded area contra to SDNP Local Plan Policy SD7 Relative Tranquillity. Smugglers Copse is more tranquil than the alternative Dangstein Conservancy site that was granted permission at appeal.
 - We consider the needs of walkers and local residents outweigh those of campers or students who needs could be met elsewhere as there are alternative ecological sites within the South Downs National Park (including very locally at Dangstein Conservancy) which already offer facilities for forestry, woodworking and camping.
 - The applicant has not demonstrated the need for a small camping site or a woodworking area particularly in view of Dangstein Conservancy which is a more established and bigger site better able to carry on forestry, leisure, education, conservancy and management work on forest and heathland.
 - Concerns arise over the impact to traffic levels – access to the site is via Fyning Lane, Borden Wood or Dangstein lane all of which are narrow country roads and lanes that cannot sustain any increase in volumes of traffic.
 - As important trees on the South of the site have been illegally removed by the applicant and the remainder are immature sweet chestnut trees, it would appear the centre would need to rely in whole or in part on imported timber. Therefore, there seems to be no reason why the applicant could not set up a woodworking centre in an industrial unit or on a less sensitive site.
 - Potential loss of and damage to a wildlife habitat.
 - Coppicing is a seasonal/cyclical process, autumn/ winter every 7/10/ or 15 years. There is no requirement for a permanent site.
 - Access to water is limited to a tap with significant potential fire risk.
 - Concern over removal of rubbish and wood chippings etc . The area is already littered with thin trunks which have been cut down.
 - The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) has not been seen. This should be required to allow SDNP to properly evaluate the visual impact of the development.
- Should permission be granted against our recommendations we would like conditions:
- To ensure any camping/parking is only permitted in conjunction to woodland craft courses and can't be used independently.
 - Camping is limited to a maximum of 6 two-man tents and does not include permission for caravans, camper vans or sleeping in vehicles.
 - Number of days activity and camping per year is limited.
 - The barn cannot be used for sleeping, stables or residential purposes.

Case No:	SDNP/20/05627/FUL	Comments closing:	22 February 2021
Officer:	Rafa Grosso Macperson	Applicant:	Mr A Sprackling
Location:	Land & Building South of Clarefield Copse, Dumpford Lane, Nyewood GU31 5JL		
Proposal:	Change of use of 11 hectares of agricultural land to use as campsite, for seasonal camping use with 25 pitches between May and October only. Landscape character and biodiversity enhancements for a further 4 hectares.		

Comments:

This is a significant application for a change of use to agricultural land situated in Harting parish but closely bordering Rogate parish.

Rogate Parish Council objects to the application as they consider:

- This is an area noted for its peace, tranquillity, dark skies and wildlife and accessed by many people using the numerous footpaths and bridleways.
- The wild camping site is likely to create unacceptable levels of noise and light pollution contrary to SDNP Local Plan Policies SD7 Relative Tranquillity and SD8 Dark Night Skies.
- Noise from vehicles, people and music, can not be controlled and sound travels, especially in a quiet rural area.
- Light pollution is created by large camp fires and headlights from campers vehicles.

- The impact on air quality resulting from camp fires and barbecues, will contravene SDNP Local Plan Policy SD54 Pollution and Air Quality.
- Serious concerns arise over the impact to traffic levels – access to the site is via Rogate, South Harting, or Trotton all of which are along narrow country roads and lanes that cannot sustain the increased volumes of traffic. Dumford Lane (which links Trotton with Nyewood) is a single track sunken lane (with few passing places and suffers greatly from erosion) forms part of the Serpent Trail which is used by walkers, horse riders and cyclists.
- There are no public houses within walking distance as both the pubs at Rogate and Trotton have been closed for some years. Therefore, campers would need to travel to Elsted or South Harting by car to access a pub. It is suggested a proper traffic survey is required to comply with SDNP Local Plan SD21.
- The site is visible from nearby footpaths and from the top of the Downs; the addition of multi-coloured tents and vehicles will have a negative effect on key views contrary to SDNP Local Plan SD6.
- The comments of Ecology Officer in relation to the impact on the adjacent woodland and protection of wildlife are shared by the Council.
- The landscape would be adversely affected by this development and it should be protected as it helps to distinguish the features that create local distinctiveness and gives the landscape its unique sense of place.
- The proposed amenity hut is a new permanent structure.
- The proposed provision of 4 WC's and 4 showers for 25 pitches (potential 100+ campers) seems inadequate and therefore the Council is concerned further development of the site will follow.
- We note the expanded campsite is already being advertised on www.pitchup.com even though planning permission has not been approved which appears to show a disregard for planning disciplines and formalities of authorisation.
- The design and access statement appears to promote the Rother Valley Farm Gate Farmers' Market that is currently operating every weekend from the farm courtyard of Sandilands Farm for the provision of supplies. As far as we are aware there is no planning permission in place for this activity and we understand it is being investigated by planning enforcement.
- At 27 acres plus 4 hectares this is a significant application site that is unlikely to be viable in the proposed form. Any wider development would cause a further intrusion to the landscape and tranquillity of the area.

Should permission be granted against our recommendations we would like conditions:

- To require an on-site manager to ensure the proposed visitor code of conduct is adhered to.
- Limit to the number of pitches and months of operation.
- Camping is limited to tents and does not include permission for caravans, camper vans or sleeping in vehicles.

7) The next **Planning Committee Meeting** is scheduled to be held at **6.30pm on Monday 15th February 2021** via 'Zoom' video conferencing.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 7.40pm.

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Chairman

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Date