

**Minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting held on**

**Monday 1<sup>st</sup> February 2021 at 7.30 pm Conducted Online Via Zoom**

**Members Present:**

Cllr B Edwards (Chairman), Cllr A Britcher - Allan, Cllr E Ellicott, Cllr D Smith, and Cllr C Ducklin

**Officers Present:**

S Denne and K Watson

**In Attendance:**

None

**Members of the Public:**

Eight

- 1. Enquire whether anyone present intends to film, photograph and/or record the meeting**  
No-one present intended to film, photograph and/or record the meeting.

- 2. To receive and approve apologies for absence**  
None.

- 3. Declarations of Personal and Prejudicial Interests**  
None.

- 4. Declarations of Lobbying**  
None.

- 5. Minutes of the meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> January 2021**

These were agreed, and it was **RESOLVED** that the Chairman signed them as a true record

5.1 Matters outstanding from these minutes (not listed as separate agenda items)

None.

5.2 Matters outstanding from previous minutes

None.

- 6. Open session for questions from the public:**

Mr D. Rusbridge provided overview of the Planning Application 21/00068/FULL regarding the proposed change of use of land, belonging to him, to expand the existing recreational facilities at Southwood Road. His main areas of concern were the proposed development will be on Green Belt land; increased pollution and congestion caused by traffic; inaccurate statements in the Environmental and Traffic Report to support the application; no local football team has its home ground listed at the present football pitches on Southwood Road. Cllr Edwards agreed to seek advice on the proposed Compulsory Purchase Order that would

be required by engaging our two borough councillors, Cllr Podbury and Cllr Funnell. All members of the Public present supported rejection of the application.

Mr D. Osborne requested that we remained cognisant of the proposed £193,000 allocated to Rusthall under Section 106, in 2017, as part of the old cinema development in Tunbridge Wells.

## 7. Planning application for discussion and decision

### c) Reference: 21/00068/FULL

**Address:** Recreation Ground Southwood Road Rusthall Tunbridge Wells Kent

**Proposal:** Change of use of land to expand the existing recreational facilities through the provisional of additional sports pitches, together with associated additional car parking provision, 'ball stop' fencing and ground works

### **Rusthall Parish Council unanimously refused the proposal on the following grounds:**

- Ecological. Large badger set within existing Parish Council Allotment which adjoins land for development.
- Traffic - Survey did not take into account traffic movement in whole of village as this affects all users of the village and not just football. It also stated that Southwood Road is not a bus route, incorrect, the 281 travels down Southwood Road to Parsonage Road. Survey in around September 2020 during Covid epidemic - reduced traffic movement.
- Impact on Area of Natural Beauty- proposed removal of established hedge in the middle of the site. Area will be spoilt by erection of high football fences.
- Environmental Impact Assessment – Flooding in the area will be costly to manage and could result in the water being drained on to nearby land. There is a rubbish dump on the allotments adjoining the proposed field.
- Local Plan 2006 - Parish council was not formed until 2011 and was, therefore, unaware of the contents of the plan, therefore, could not comment at the time.
- Falling birth rate to be taken into consideration
- No teams are registered as having Southwood Road as their home ground and it is considered that the current stock of pitches available to TWBC is more than sufficient to cope with the diminishing demand, bearing in mind that this proposal was made fifteen years ago and is therefore woefully out of date.
- Parish Council previous objections from 2017 remain pertinent as follows

Jockey Farm is, and has been, a working farm in the same family since 1925. It currently operates a free range egg enterprise and a pedigree Sussex Beef suckler herd.

To lose the land would be catastrophic for the family as the farm's viability as a business would be seriously affected. Also the two fields in question give access to the further fields on the farm.

The fields get very wet in winter and a significant drainage system would be required if acquired for football pitches, which would be very costly.

There is great concern about the increase in the volume of traffic on Rusthall High Street and Southwood Road, causing more congestion and pollution. The proposed increase in car parking does not appear large enough to facilitate all the pitches, people using the playground and allotment holders and therefore would spill out into neighbouring streets.

The present changing rooms would not be adequate for the number of proposed pitches and does not have separate facilities for all genders.

**a) Reference: 20/03589/FULL**

**Address:** 27 Apsley Street Rusthall Kent TN4 8NU

**Proposal:** Demolition of existing shed; Single storey dwelling with a flat roof in garden

**Refused on the following:**

Not in keeping with a Conversation Area and over development. Application was also misleading.

**b) Reference: 21/00048/FULL**

**Address:** 31 Upper Street Rusthall Kent TN4 8NX

**Proposal:** New conservatory and replacement of UPVC windows to timber sash windows; Loft Conversion; Installation of roof light; Addition of new windows

**Approval - Delegated**

**The meeting closed at 8 45pm.**

..... Chairman

Dated .....