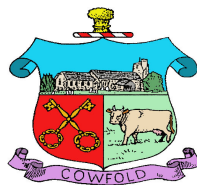


Cowfold Parish Council

Planning Report – January 2019

1. Received plans:

Application Number	Location	Description	Comments by Parish Council
DC/18/2556	Oak Cottage, Moatfield Lane	Minor alterations to existing planning approval DC/09/1428	Nil comment or objection.
DC/18/2598	12 Thornden	Engineering operations comprising (retrospective) levelling land with soil brought onto the site, including filling in a pond, laying land drains and installing soakaways and (proposed) removing of soil brought onto the site, removing land drains, laying new land drains, creating a soakaway and laying approximately 100mm of top soil brought onto the site and turf.	The consensus of the committee was to object to this application. Points raised were: this is a historic natural pond (preceding the existing housing) in the centre of our village conservation area; as historically we have had issues with surface water flooding within 50m of this pond, we question if its removal will cause greater issues in future; we ask that the effectiveness of the proposed soakaway drainage is expertly investigated by HDC; we know other village ponds have crested newts and other forms of ecology; we believe the pond should be returned to its previous form, please.
DC/18/2689	Ridgeland, Kent Street	Proposed removal of agricultural occupancy condition two associated with planning permission CF/3/91	The committee questioned the reason for this request, as not clear from application paperwork received.
DC/18/2745	Land off Bolney Road	Outline Planning Application for up to 110 dwellings, including 35% affordable housing and new public open space.	See Appendix 1.
DC/18/2732	Former Coach House, Horsham Road	Amendment to approved windows in roof of plots 4, 5, 6 & 7.	Nil comment or objection.

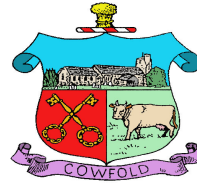


2. Results:

Application Number	Location	Description	Decision
DC/18/1114	Clark Lifting Solutions UK Lts, Bridge Garage, Henfield Road	Variation to Condition 15 of DC/17/1279 to include permissible hours for trading and deliveries	Permitted

Appendix 1

We were VERY disappointed to see this application again. When last submitted (DC/16/2952) in January 2017, 171 letters were submitted to HDC by our fellow villagers in opposition to this plan. Whilst Cowfold Parish Council (CPC) acknowledges the need for some additional housing in the village(we are in the final stages of completing our neighbourhood plan), the scale of this application on the very edge of our village causes great concern. We have encouraged the 3 housing developments recently constructed in the village but this application will further increase the housing provision in the village by nearly 19% (110/560 - although 560 is the 2011 census number to which we can probably add 30 houses recently completed) and we believe this will cause a major strain on village services, infrastructure and resulting in greater pollution. Points that were raised at committee are:



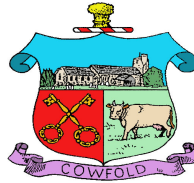
1 - This constitutes a Major Urban Development in a Countryside Location Outside the Natural Settlement Boundary. The Boundary to the West and North separating this site from the village consist of Semi Ancient Woodland which provides a wildlife corridor the Ancient Woodland adjoining the North East of the site and therefore is in contravention of HDPF Policy 26.

2 - Places at the village primary school are already limited; even before the current approved developments have been fully occupied. The housing stock in the village is mainly family sized dwellings and this causes a constant demand for primary school places. The addition of 1 pupil per school year would take the school past the level at which it would be deemed to be full. The secondary effect is that this would lead to an increase in vehicular traffic carry pupils to other schools in the cluster and therefore exacerbating the Air Quality issues. Any additional vehicle would pass through the monitored area which already breaches National Maximum levels.

3 - In a letter to the CPC relating to the previous application (DC/16/2952), the village GP surgery has expressed great concern at firstly not being consulted on capacity by the applicant, and also the reference made in their literature to spare capacity. The surgery covers both Cowfold and Partridge Green, and with housing construction under way, or planned, in both villages, capacity will be reached before this site would be built. There is no scope for the physical expansion of the Surgery building on its present site and we believe a new facility for the village would be required.

4 - We are very concerned about the site access onto the A272. Whilst we have read the traffic consultant's report, we cannot stress enough the volume of traffic using this major arterial route. The proposed access from this trunk road is on a bend. Even with the proposed slight widening, we believe this is a potential site for accidents, especially for right turning vehicles into and out of the site. The minimum requirement would be a roundabout.

5 - Cowfold is presently one of two sites in the district with dangerous levels of Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) pollution caused by vehicles at the crossing of the A272 & A281 in the centre of the village. With little local employment opportunities in the village, the proposed development will be used by commuters travelling to other towns. Increased traffic through the village is a certainty. The development's easterly location



will result in resident access to the village store and school (on the western village boundary) via car. As queues in the centre of the village are a main cause of the NO₂, the extra traffic from this development (plus additional traffic using the roads from the other major development sites in the Horsham District) will lead to major changes in the traffic flow, congestion and increased pollutants.

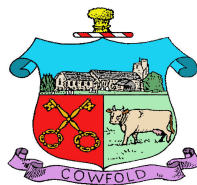
HDC have reported on all available options and discounted them all. The net result is that HDC are already in breach of National Legislation, as confirmed by the High Court Hearing on 21st Feb 2018 and any approval of any housing which knowingly leads to increased traffic would be a breach of the Environment Act 1995 as clarified by that High Court ruling.

6 - Parking in the village, especially around the school, GP surgery & village CO-OP store is very limited and cannot meet the present demand from villagers. A 20% increase in housing would logically lead to a 20% increase in cars using the village facilities. Vehicles waiting for spaces already cause blockages on the two main 'A- road' routes, and we believe the additional vehicles from this development will cause more problems.

7 - The committee was very concerned that the only paved footpath access to the village centre, school, bus stops, etc. from the site is via an 'uncontrolled' crossing on the A272. This is not suitable as present traffic volumes are too high to cross safely, and the existing footpath along the south side of the A272 is dangerously too narrow (acknowledged by WSCC and on the long waiting list to be widened). A controlled crossing & new paved path on the southern side (from crossing to the village hall) of the A272 would be a minimum requirement.

8 - Ancient Woods adjoin the site, as well as a diverse mix of flora and fauna. We believe any development on this site would cause damage to the balance of this wildlife habitat.

9 - This site was mentioned on the HDC SHELAA (SA-366) as a site that is "not currently developable". We agree with this conclusion, and would ask why it is now being reconsidered.



10 - We note this field does flood at times of heavy rain and holds standing water. The drainage plan submitted would need to be studied in great detail and further research undertaken.

In conclusion, we believe his application is essentially a repeat of DC/16/2952, which was rejected by HDC on the basis that it contravened Policy 3 and Policy 4 of the HDPF. We believe that nothing has changed to make this less true today and in fact there is sufficient land available, via proposals to the Cowfold Neighbourhood Plan, to meet the Housing Needs of the Community without the requirement to consider non-compliant sites such as this.