

# FRAMFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

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## **Planning Committee Details of Delegated Comments June 2022**

Decisions can be delegated to the Chairman (or Vice-Chairman) plus two other members if agreed by the Chairman.

The following decisions were made under delegated authority by Keith Brandon (Chairman), Peter Friend and Maria Naylor. (The Chairman has the casting vote in any tie).

**WD/2022/0458/F – Detached garage.  
Stoneleigh, Lewes Road, Blackboys TN22 5JL  
<https://planning.wealden.gov.uk/plandisp.aspx?recno=157031>**

Parish Council supports this proposal which will have no impact on the street scene or neighbours.

**WD/2022/0560/F – Erection of 9 no. dwellings with associated access, landscaping and associated infrastructure.  
Land opposite Old Mill House, Framfield Road, Blackboys TN22 5LR  
<https://planning.wealden.gov.uk/plandisp.aspx?recno=157151>**

The Parish Council strongly objects to this application and is disappointed that despite multiple refusals and dismissals at appeal, this applicant is determined to continue an application that is far from sustainable, in keeping, and provides no benefit to the local community whatsoever.

The applicant had previously gained outline approval for 7 houses but this appears to not be enough now. The Parish Council have seen an unacceptable increase in approved builds for such a small rural parish. Blackboys has little to no services that would be used on a daily basis and would mean residents relying on vehicles to get to any type of service, with the exception of the local primary school.

The public transport service provided by East Sussex County Council is woefully inadequate to the point that the Parish Council have opted into its own Saturday service provided by Weald link.

The rural roads are too dangerous for cyclists wishing to commute out of the village and families will not take their children on such routes. Tragically, a motorcyclist was killed this year 1 kilometre from the proposed site entrance. Whilst there are no details as to the cause, it does highlight that the roads are lethal.

Footpaths are also inadequate, with some not even 30cm wide in places. Blackboys is like an isolated island to pedestrians; footpaths that do not lead anywhere or are too overgrown to be seen or walked on. Many residents are constantly petitioning the local County Councillor because they do not feel safe walking along the High Street because of the poor footpaths and speed of traffic. Blackboys is the only village in East Sussex that has a speed limit of 40 MPH through it, but this application is within the 50 MPH section because it is not in the core

area of the village, but on the fringe of the developed areas, making public safety risks even higher.

The quality of the proposed dwellings is of a poor design and layout. With the current government emphasis on beautiful design, these fall far short, which will be at the degradation of the village and parish. They form an incongruous line of which there is nothing similar in the vicinity that projects such imposing views on the street scene. All with small gardens at conflict with the bulk and massing of the large properties, and very close to the main road, creating visible irreparable harm to such a small rural hamlet. The linear design is more in keeping to an urban terraced street, not a rural village with displaced houses throughout.

This new proposal for 9 dwellings constitutes over development of the small plot of land. Sadly, it appears that the ancient archaeological history of this site has no importance any more, despite a vast amount of evidential documentation, mainly around its use as a mill (windmill). This has a linked history with the Listed Building across the road, but again, has been deemed as immaterial to the application.

The properties themselves are of poor design. With the applicant seeking to cram each of the 9 houses into such a small footprint and plot, and the design (such as 5 bedrooms, 2 en-suite) – the sizes are more akin to what we know as cluster homes. These are designed with very small rooms, which could be seen as maximising profit over design. This cluster of houses will be at the detriment to those who already live in the parish who will pass by open sporadic housing, only to be met by this unsightly, out of keeping urban design.

The access road is quite peculiar in that it has one way in. Whilst a refuse lorry may be able to remember that it needs to pull in, do a multi-point turn and then try and reverse the windy access road to the far house (providing it can actually fit), this is only going to be possible if no vehicles are parked on the road. By the nature of how people across the country and that most houses are multi occupancy, residents (or their visitors) will have vehicles parked on this road. However, those that are not accessing this daily in large vehicles like delivery lorries, ambulances, fire engines, utility companies etc will not be aware of the quirky need to do a multi-point turn as soon as you turn in. As this 'turning area' is essentially just inside the access gate, it should be hoped that there are no collisions by other vehicles entering or egressing onto the 50 MPH road whilst vehicles are conducting their manoeuvres. This is yet another example that the site is not fit for purpose and has minimised public safety over greed for development that is dangerously inadequate.

The Parish Council would also like to highlight at this stage that no access gates will be permitted on to the recreation ground. Whether it is an anomaly on the Block Plan Site Layout, but there does appear to be something that could be representing a gate at the rear of Plot 4. For clarity, this will not be allowed.

The Parish Council would also like to highlight that John Dann Close is a private road and should not be used as additional car parking for this proposal, should it be approved.

The Parish Council are concerned about the surface water drainage mitigations. In recent years it has been called to residents of Terminus Road (directly north of the proposed site) where water run off had reached a height of about 3ft up their house following rainfall. After extensive investigation during a particular wet period, the water flow was traced back to water run off from the B2102 directly in front of this proposed site. What guarantees are there that this proposal if approved, will not exacerbate the issue?

The recreation ground during autumn and winter months is extremely boggy so much so that utility and service vehicles are not allowed to drive onto it during this period. Water run off is north and south the proposed site, irrespective to whatever desktop survey has been done to support this application.

Mitigations to meet standards and criteria for approvals are flawed as they demonstrate that 'something' could work if 'things' are put in place. However, there is nothing to stop a new resident digging up their back garden to lay decking, Astro turf, flower beds etc. Instantly the mitigations put in at planning stages are gone. As this site needs so many mitigations to simply cater for surface water, it is vital that something permanent and 'undoable' is designed and built to prevent the problems that we know would occur over time.

The Parish Council challenge that the visibility splays are appropriate. During the height of summer months when the County Council, and in some cases – residents have not cut back hedges enough, the visibility onto a 50 MPH road will be impaired. Google maps and images taken during the autumn and winter months will not emphasise the overgrowth that appears in this area. With a current approved application for 50 houses less than 50 metres away, the intensity and frequency of traffic is already going to be harmful to residents. The Parish Council agree that hedge cutting must be done in line with regulations, and that the County Council can enforce action. However, 'If' this is done, it often takes several months for any tangible action to be taken by a landowner. As the Parish Council have highlighted on other matters within this application – this is yet another example of why this site is not fit for purpose.

**For the attention of ESCC Highways** previous comments as per the Transport Statement in this application: Should a similar approach be taken in the form of 'conditional support', it should be noted that there is reference to heavily cutting back the hedging to gain the visibility splays required. It should also be noted that the land either side of the application AND within the required distance of 125 metres is not owned by the applicant. Therefore, how can a condition be placed to form something that the applicant has no control over? From the proposed access, the applicant only has control over approx. 80 metres to the west and 25 metres to the east. As previous highlighted in this objection, google maps, images etc taken during autumn and winter months, or even in summer months shortly after a cut, may show visibility to be good. However, this is not the case all of the time, and visibility (mainly) to the east will be reduced significantly if the land directly past the 40 MPH speed change area were to bring their hedges forward, similar to what the application site is like now.

It should also be highlighted that it is not possible to get 125m visibility to the east, even if standing in the road. This is due to the slight bend and rising levels in that direction. Even standing on the road adjacent to the proposed access, you can only just see past John Dann Close which is 75m. This will be reduced significantly with the access splay being set back into the site. These points need clarification as the Parish Council have concerns as to the accuracy of the information provided.

The application document - Ecological Report is titled and referenced as 'draft'. Until this document is submitted as a Final Document it is not fit for purpose.

In conclusion, the applicant is determined to maximise profit over quality on this plot of land at severe detriment to the local community to whom they have not involved at all. The mass and bulking for such a small footprint is unacceptable and inappropriate. Clearly this design has been rushed to make a submission as we have highlighted multiple issues that will either impact the local community at the time of build, or in the future years ahead if it is approved. Adding these 9 dwellings with access road is simply destroying the rural qualities that make this village what it is.

*Circulation: Planning Committee/All other Parish Councillors.*

10.06.2022