

PATCHING PARISH COUNCIL

Elstow Cottage,
The Street
Patching
West Sussex
BN13 3XF
15 November 2008

Dear Sir,

Application PA/25/08 The Wood Yard France Lane Patching

I write on behalf of the Patching Parish Council to **object** to the above planning application. This site has a long and unfortunate history of which planning committee should be aware. It has been part of the Patching Woodyard for many years, but the Applicant's former husband moved a caravan onto the site. Arun DC obtained an eviction order against him, and he moved. The order, however, did not encompass the Applicant. Despite there being no planning permission in place for the site the Applicant has continued to use the site for her caravan, and other buildings/caravans. She has also constructed an unauthorised access to the highway.

In considering its response to this application, the Parish Council has taken into account both national and local guidance. The Parish believes that the application should be considered in the light of this guidance.

Objections based on PPS 7

1. Accessibility should be a key consideration in all development decisions. Most developments which are likely to generate large numbers of trips should be located in or next to towns or other service centres that are accessible by public transport, walking and cycling, in line with the policies set out in PPG13, Transport. Decisions on the location of other developments in rural areas should, where possible, give people the greatest opportunity to access them by public transport, walking and cycling, consistent with achieving the primary purpose of the development.(para 1 (iii) page 7)

Patching is not well served by public transport. A bus passes through the village twice per day, and the nearest railway station is about four miles away, south of Angmering. Cycling to any other centre of population is not an easy option.

2. All development in rural areas should be well designed and inclusive, in keeping and scale with its location, and sensitive to the character of the countryside and local distinctiveness. (para 1 (vi) page 8)

Residential caravans and a large timber storage building fail to meet this objective. It would be completely out of character with the local countryside, and with other buildings in the vicinity.

3. Away from larger urban areas, planning authorities should focus most new development in or near to local service centres where employment, housing (including affordable housing), services and other facilities can be provided close together. This should help to ensure these facilities are served by public transport and provide improved opportunities for access by walking and cycling. These centres (which might be a country town, a single large village or a group of villages) should be identified in the development plan as the preferred location for such development.(para 3 page 8)

The same comments apply here as to 1 above. There are no local services in Patching, the village shop and post office at nearby Clapham closed some time ago.

4. Nationally designated areas comprising National Parks, the Broads, the New Forest Heritage Area and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), have been confirmed by the Government as having the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. The conservation of the natural beauty of the landscape and countryside should therefore be given great weight in planning policies and development control decisions in these areas. (para 21 page 13)

This guidance clearly militates against this proposal. Further, it is submitted that if this application were to be granted, it would set such a precedent that it would be difficult to refuse further applications for residential use on adjacent plots.

Objections based on Arun DC's planning policies.

*5. All development must reflect the need to safeguard and improve the quality of life of residents, conserve energy resources and protect and, where possible, enhance the Plan area's essential character and environmental assets such as the Sussex Downs AONB (**Gen 1**).*

It is submitted that this application, if granted, would not reflect this need. Further, the extension of residential use into this area would encourage other applications in respect of other nearby plots of land. It is submitted that the precedent which would be set by approving this application would be disastrous for the essential character of the Sussex Downs AONB (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty).

*6. Outside the built-up area boundaries, development or redevelopment will not be permitted unless it is consistent with other Local Plan policies (**Gen2**).*

It is understood from a conversation with the Council Planning Department that this location is outside the built-up area boundary. It is difficult to see how development is consistent with other local plan policies, and therefore should be refused.

7. Outside the Built-Up Area, as defined on the Proposals Map, the countryside will be safeguarded for its own sake. Development will not be permitted unless:

- (i) it meets the operational needs of agriculture, forestry, the extraction of minerals or the deposit of waste; or*
- (ii) for quiet, informal recreation; or*
- (iii) for the diversification of the rural economy; or*

(iv) *for essential road schemes; or*

(v) *it is in accordance with a policy in Sections 2 and 3 of the plan referring to a specific use or type of development.*

*Permission will not be given for the extension of isolated groups of buildings or the consolidation of linear or sporadic development unless the proposal accords with criteria (i) to (iii) or (v) **(Gen 3)**.*

Again, this proposal cannot be said to fall within the above policy.

8. When considering proposals for new development, consideration will be given to the effect the proposals will have on demand for transport. Planning permission will be granted for new development, provided that:-

(i) *it is located so as to minimise the demand for travel;*

(ii) *it does not materially add to existing road congestion and air pollution; and*

(iii) *appropriate provision is made for safe and convenient access by public transport, cyclists and pedestrians.*

*Before granting planning permission, the Local Planning Authority will need to be satisfied that any identified potential travel problems arising from a proposal will be resolved. **(Gen 4)***

As stated above, this site is not in such allocation as to minimise the demand for travel. Further, the access way which has already been installed adds to difficulties for other road users. Any reasonably sized vehicle cannot be parked at this location without obstructing part of the carriageway. France Lane is narrow at this point, and will not permit two vehicles to pass in such circumstances (see attached photo). This is especially dangerous at night time, as there is no street lighting on France Lane.

*9. Development which would have an unacceptable adverse impact on individual features or the character of the landscape will not be permitted **(Gen 27)***

Again, this site falls within the AONB. Any adverse impact upon an AONB is unacceptable.

*10. Development will only be permitted on sites which contain semi-natural habitats, features of nature conservation interest, or within wildlife corridors, where these can be largely retained and sympathetically incorporated into the scheme. Legal agreements may be used to offset the loss of, or impact on, any nature conservation resource present on the site prior to development **(Gen 29)**.*

The road verge to the north and south of this site is a wildlife corridor, containing a ditch with water – loving plants. This has now been interrupted by the tarmac and concrete access. The habitat value of the site has been damaged by this, as species habitat has been destroyed, and species migration prevented.

*11. Development on or in close proximity to hazardous sites or contaminated land will be permitted provided the Council is satisfied that appropriate remedial measures can be or have been undertaken **(Gen 31)**.*

The site has previously been used as a woodyard, including for timber treatment. The ground has been contaminated with creosote. This renders it unsuitable for residential use.

Other objections

12. This is an application for residential accommodation on land previously not used for this purpose. To grant this application would be to extend residential land use in Patching. The site is within the South Downs AONB, and is close to the Patching Conservation Area.

13. The unsuitability of this site for residential accommodation is demonstrated by the efforts of Arun District Council to evict the occupants, having successfully obtained a possession order in Worthing Magistrates' Court. To grant the application would be inconsistent with the Council's previous stance.

14. An application for residential use has previously been made, and refused in relation to the remainder of the woodyard. To grant residential use in relation to this site would be inconsistent and irrational.

15. The comment from the Highway Authority, includes the requirement that "the gates must open inwards of the property and be set back a minimum of five metres from the highway." This is impossible at this location. The gates can only be set back three metres, and there is insufficient room for the gates to fully open inwards.

16. The above requirement is in order to ensure that "vehicles can be driven off the highway before the gates are opened in the interests of road safety." This will not be possible at this location, and the Council must therefore refuse the application.

17. The access to this site from France Lane poses problems for other road users. The road is narrow here, and barely allows two vehicles to cross. The presence of a vehicle in front of the new gates makes it impossible for two other vehicles to pass on the road. The attached photograph shows that the vehicle could not park without jutting out into the street, even when parked at an angle.

18. Suitable alternative gypsy accommodation is available near Findon. An enhancement of this site was recently granted planning permission as FN/17/08/.

For all of the above reasons it is clear that this application is ill founded and entirely inappropriate. It must be refused.

Yours faithfully,

For Patching Parish Council