

FOUR MARKS PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Meeting of the Planning Committee
Held on Wednesday 7th May 2025, commencing at 5.00 pm at Benians Pavilion.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cllrs Paul McAllister, Medhurst, Pullen (R), and Smith
IN ATTENDANCE: Louise Steele (Locum Clerk)
26 members of the public
APOLOGIES: None

25.20 PC APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE Cllr M Pullen.

25.21 PC Open Session, Public Participation

Five members of the public made representations (three of these had supplied their comments in advance of the meeting and this are reproduced in full in an annexe to these minutes) about the unsustainable scale and scope of speculative development within Four Marks and Medstead.

25.22 PC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUEST FOR DISPENSATIONS

25.23 PC PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of 2nd April 2025 were deferred to the next meeting

25.24 PC FOR DISCUSSION.

25.24.01

05/02/2025	EHDC-25-0055-OUT	Land South Of Winchester Road , Four Marks	Outline application for of up to 115 new homes; flexible community use space; formation of means of vehicular access onto Winchester Road and pedestrian and cycle links to Barn Lane; laying out of green infrastructure comprising playspace, new landscaping and habitat creation; and drainage and other infrastructure. (With	Exp 30/06/2025
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			Some Matters Reserved) (Access to be considered)	
Upon the proposal of Cllr R Pullen, seconded by Cllr Smith, it was RESOLVED to refer this application to Full Council with a recommendation to pursue developer discussions with the applicant for EHDC- 25-0055-OUT Land South of Winchester Road, Four Marks (Barn Lane); the Council to consider the emerging Local Plan list of requirements (and any amendments) as a basis for discussion. Further to develop a view on how S106 for this development would be best used				

25.24.02

02/01/2025	EHDC-25-0033-HSE	17 Windmill Fields, Four Marks, Alton, Hampshire, GU34 5HJ	First floor side extension	Exp 17/06/2025
The Council defers to the expertise of the Planning Officer in this instance.				

25.24.03

17/12/2024	EHDC-24-0089-FUL	Land North of Gambrel, Four Marks, Alton, Hampshire,	Contemporary four- bedroom house with an integral garage and an integrated landscape design (Self build custom dwelling).	Exp 02/06/2025
Strong Objection on the grounds that the climate change checklist is blank				

25.24.04

14/11/2024	50216/002	Land West of Millfield Alton Lane, Four Marks, Alton, Hampshire	Outline application - demolition of structures and stables for the construction of up to 100 dwellings with new and improved vehicular and pedestrian access points, parking, public open space, biodiversity area, landscaping, sustainable urban drainage system (SuDS) and associated works. All matters reserved except for a means of access	Exp 13 th Feb 2025
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			(Access from Blackberry Lane).	
Repeat previous objections to this application				

25.24.05

17/02/2025	EHDC-25-0194-HSE	Beverley, 165 Winchester Road, Four Marks, Alton, Hampshire, GU34 5HY	Single storey extension to side and rear following demolition of existing conservatory and garage.	Exp 14/04/2025 Consultation end date 16/05/2025
The Council defers to the expertise of the Planning Officer in this instance.				

25.24.06

07/02/2024	29550/037	Belford House, 93 Lymington Bottom, Four Marks, Alton, GU34 5AH	Detached care home with associated landscaping and car parking (as amended by plans and additional information received 27 April 2024, 4 June 2024 and 12 July 2024).	07/02/2024 Amended docs October 2024 consultation closed 13/05/2025
Reiterate the objection from the lead flood authority with reference to winter flooding				

25.24.07

18/03/2025	EHDC-25-0356-TPO	Two Oaks The Shrave, Four Marks, Alton, Hampshire, GU34 5BJ	T1 Oak - Remove to ground level grind stump and replace with native tree in front lawn. T2 Oak - Remove to ground level grind stump and replace with native tree in front lawn.	Exp. 13/05/2025
The Council defers to the expertise of the Arboricultural Officer in this instance.				

25.25 PC TO NOTE DECISIONS NOTIFIED AND PENDING

The council received and noted a summary of notified decisions, appeals and updates on pending decisions (circulated in advance).

25.26 PC ADDITIONAL PLANNING MATTERS.

25.26.01 To receive update on Neighbourhood Plan and drop-in sessions.

The Neighbourhood Plan (NP) is in limbo at the moment but master planning is about to start

25.17.02 To receive any correspondence.

There was none.

25.18 PC Next scheduled meeting: Wednesday 4th June 2025

25.19 PC Meeting closed at 17:31 pm

DRAFT

Public Participation – Residents Comments as Notified in Advance:

Resident 1

"Tonight, I hope we will witness the Planning Committee working with our community to review and analyse the position on two big sites, the so called Cresland site (off Blackberry Lane) and the Barn Lane site. It is imperative that while we are in so-called tilted balance, which sets aside most of the EHDC and NP policies, that the three remaining factors, namely sustainability, harm vs benefit, are correctly defined and if ANY of these are found wanting, the site should not be approved under NPPF rules para 11d. We support this Committee to perform diligently this analysis on each respective site and convey its findings to EHDC Case Officer in their comments on these Applications.

Sustainability does not just mean environmental objectives (or simply transport or distances to shops etc). It encompasses social objectives and economic objectives, per para 8 of the NPPF- the latter "identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure".

Likewise, harm and benefit can be semi-quantitatively evaluated and scored. I have requested EHDC take up such a scoring system in order to drive the correct decisions by Officers and the notoriously lax Planning Committee (sorry Roland). I would hope the PC can do some of its own scoring in these two sites and offer this up to EHDC in your response.

I think it could be argued that neither of these two large sites could be approved, based on economic sustainability- there is ZERO, yes, ZERO provision for any infrastructure in either site, merely "contributions" to Parish or District. There is also certainly no spatial or village layout planning ahead of these sites where such contributions could be applied. So on sustainability alone, these sites and nearly all the other ongoing speculative applications in the village and Medstead also, amounting to some 1200 houses since 2024, do not meet this economic objective and so should not be approved. And even then, if you look at the harm vs the benefits, you really must account for the CUMULATIVE EFFECT of all these sites coming at once. This effect is a significant "harm" in itself, one that is frequently overlooked. While I have highlighted some general issues why neither of these sites should be approved in our view, there are many others, which you will hear about shortly. Meanwhile, I implore the Committee to take a full-on harm vs benefit viewpoint and to carefully evaluate sustainability. These are the only factors that count in tilted balance. Thank you."

Resident 2

"Both large sites under scrutiny this evening are of a density out of keeping in the countryside, outside of the settlement boundary and impacting rural lanes in a place with infrastructure frozen in time from decades ago. Both will be car based, satellite estates because they are too far and definitely too inconvenient a distance to walk - folk will get in their car.

We have no mainline station, only a basic level of infrastructure which the planning authority themselves have hitherto classified in their settlement hierarchy as only adequate for a village capable of taking limited housing to satisfy local need.

Neither development will contribute infrastructure funds that come anywhere near what is needed for a settlement being asked to grow at a faster rate in one meetings' worth of applications, than in whole of the previous decade.

For this reason alone, the harm will outweigh the benefits and both applications should be refused until the Planning Authority can provide a detailed infrastructure plan for Four Marks and South Medstead, as required by the NPPF, which stipulates that such infrastructure align with new development.

To address Barn Lane specifically -

- the provision of drainage channels are shown in the plans to control the considerable surface flooding and help to create some public open space and most importantly, keep the built form from intruding into the landscape. However, these areas will not magically look after themselves and an ongoing maintenance plan with a funding stream is needed for the upkeep of the water courses and natural environment.

- Parking - the site plan shows parking at the minimum for each household, no provision for on-street or visitor parking, bearing in mind that Four Marks has an average of 3 cars per household according to the 2021 census.

There must be clear design elements that prevent the grassed areas and pavements from being used in future as an informal car park.

- Vehicular access to the rest of Barn Lane, a byway open to all traffic. This status must be reviewed in light of the additional pressure from a housing estate with direct access because there is potential for greater vehicle access along the fragile paths under the hazel cover which is a designated and protected site for hazel dormice. There is very little point in promoting the environmental improvements of this development if in effect it leads to deterioration elsewhere.

The need for the Barn Lane tracks to be made safer for walkers and riders has been an issue raised with the Parish Council by HCC in April 2025 and supported by the Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre which holds a record for Hazel Dormice within 30m of Barn Lane. I would ask that this element forms part of your deliberations."

Resident 3

" Ref: the all inclusive list of objections for Cresland (50216/002) is as follows:

- Increased Flooding (building across the valley between Blackberry & Alton Lanes) and its impact of 100 house foundations on surface water drainage and diversion (impact down Alton Lane at Lymington Bottom school junction). Repeat flooding towards Lymington Bottom already an issue as documented by F4FM
- Precedent of building large site almost all the way across the shallow valley between Blackberry and Alton Lanes for land parcel that runs to south of this site. Opens route to hundreds of further speculative homes (Gleeson site is under consultation at bottom Alton Lane.) This proposed development projects almost right across to Alton Lane
- The proposed homes are not in keeping with the properties in Telegraph Lane or southern side of Blackberry Lane. Density is very different to an area of village which even the Gladman appeal Inspector acknowledged was rural/semi-rural in nature and consisted of ribbon development of substantial home in big plots
- Traffic. EHDC figures (their own survey in 2022) show that the A31 junctions in Four Marks, including the one at Telegraph Lane are getting close to capacity and will exceed capacity in just couple of years (even "without" further development). 13000 vehicle movements along A31 daily and 2500 movements at junction with Telegraph Lane. Nearly all additional traffic from this site (200-330 vehicles) will go to this closest junction.
- No infrastructure benefit to village (no consideration of cumulative effect of all the speculative applications).
- Site location is productive pasture outside of SPB
- Site location is unsustainable for walking to local centre in all but few houses at top end of proposed site. Therefore car driven movements away from level 3 settlement to Alton/Winchester etc
- Site entrance - Narrow single point of access to this 100 home development onto Blackberry Lane is both impractical and dangerous
- Site entrance - There is a TPO on large copper beech tree at the site entrance. The root system is right at the entrance to site (not set back as drawn in some documents) and will impact visibility at site entrance.
- Site boundary - The ecological buffer zone that the applicant has shown around the site (especially at rear of Telegraph Lane) is encompassing land that is owned by residents of Telegraph Lane and is even shown going through one property in Alton Lane. This is misleading and a "land grab" for property the developer doesn't own
- Impact on existing footpath between Blackberry Lane & Alton Lane (to Garthowen Garden Centre & St Swythn's Way. "