

DC/25/1727 Long Wells Vineyard, Marches Road, Warnham

Statement from Itchingfield, Slinfold and Warnham Ward Member Cllr Tricia Youtan

This application is being recommended for approval by officers and I feel this is done with a certain air of resignation due to the inevitability of circumstances surrounding this application, as with all district wide applications of this nature. The reasons for approval are most often cited as a lack of suitable sites for Gypsy and Travellers across our entire district, a state of affairs which is not particular to Horsham but indeed is normal throughout the UK. Thus a feeling of relief is met when a few more sites are approved and help to lessen the number lacking from the overall amount, irrespective that this number has steadily increased to my certain knowledge over the last almost twenty years. HDC are in the same situation as the boy in Holland who tried to stem a dyke from overflowing by putting his finger in the hole!!

As far as this specific application is concerned it can be regarded as mainly retrospective and is making a mockery of our planning legitimacy and system. There have been many attempts by vigilant neighbours to inform HDC when yet again covert work has been carried out, bank holidays used to remove ancient hedgerows, entrances created and a general lack of compliance with all but very little within the legal system. There are still outstanding issues which have not been resolved including water utilities, and if this is approved then these issues have to be part of the approval by various conditions which quite possibly will not be met before building work continues and eventually will also be watered down and given a nod because basically compliance find their hands are tied and any worthwhile outcome would fall by the wayside and it would not be within the best interest of HDC to pursue it. This type of application and the background to it are part of a well tried, tested method of achieving successful applications and non compliance and retrospective applications form a large part of it.

It would be gratifying if committee refused to grant permission as it would demonstrate that resident and parish council had been listened to and that their concerns were valid. West Sussex Highways have chosen to ignore the implications of heavy duty traffic on a small rural road as with Marches Road and the disruption for many days caused by this can have far reaching problems. There is a problem with unresolved issues and it is entirely probable that these will continue to cause concern as mentioned previously. Surely it is reasonable to demonstrate that honesty and integrity have a valuable place in our determinations and that making a complete mockery of our planning system will no longer be accepted.