Minutes of the **PLANNING COMMITTEE** meeting held at Groombridge Village Hall on **Monday 10th January** at 6.00pm

PRESENT: Cllrs Alan Gaukroger, Robert Gordon-James, Diana Kelly, Jill Pardey, Chris Pope, Jennie Paulson Ellis, Marcus Tarling (Chair)

In attendance: Natalie Brett – Assistant Clerk (Minutes)

Members of the public are encouraged to attend the meetings and there is a 10-minute opportunity at the start of the meeting for them to address the Planning Committee. There were no members of the public in attendance.

1. **ENQUIRE WHETHER ANYONE PRESENT INTENDS TO FILM, PHOTOGRAPH AND/OR RECORD THE MEETING** - No

2. **APOLOGIES** – Cllrs Andrew Fane and Jill Pardey

3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** – None

4. **MINUTES**

4.1 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 20th DECEMBER 2021

002177 RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 20th December 2021 be taken as read and signed by the Chairman.

4.2 MATTERS OUTSTANDING FROM THESE MINUTES.

No matters outstanding

5. **ENFORCEMENT**.

The Assistant Clerk to request an update from Enforcement on land adjacent to Upper Tanyard.

Cllrs Tarling and Pope to bring a letter to the next meeting for agreement regarding the LDE at Upper Tanyard for submission to Wealden District Council under their complaints procedure.

6. **PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

COMMENTS TO BE RETURNED TO WEALDEN DISTRICT COUNCIL

6.1 **WD/2021/2200/F** - LAND ADJACENT TO COOKS CORNER DAY CENTRE, LONDON ROAD, CROWBOROUGH, TN6 1TQ Description: PHASED CONSTRUCTION OF 3 NO. DWELLINGS WITH ACCESS ONTO LONDON ROAD. (Expiry date for comments 11th January 2022)

Link to documents on web:

http://planning.wealden.gov.uk/plandisp.aspx?recno=155236

It was noted that the description of the application is incorrect as the Day Care Centre has planning permission but is not yet built.

Whilst East Sussex Highways have advised they are willing to alter their requirements by 10% this would still mean it does not comply with the actual requirements leaving East Sussex Highways open to prosecution should there be an accident.

The committee did not agree that bending the legal requirement by any amount is acceptable and felt that access would be dangerous. The previous application at this site was refused due to dangerous access and this has, in the committee's view, not changed.
The application sits outside of the development boundary and would not enhance the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in which it also sits. It is also covered by the Habitats regulations and great weight must be given to these matters. Protection of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the Habitat Regulations should carry significantly more weight than the five year land supply as they are protected in law.
The committee supported the comments from Crowborough Town Council regarding flood risk.
The environmental study was unclean and contained no definitive response regarding protected species. The Great Crested Newt and Doormice, both of which would be significantly affected by this development, are present at this location. The information regarding ponds is inaccurate, there are 5 ponds within 500 meters which would require an appropriate assessment. It was advised that the pond that is noted as drying up yearly has not dried up in at least 30 years making this statement incorrect. It was questioned why this document was redacted other than to prevent pertinent information being presented and obstruct the committee in making an informed decision.
It was agreed that this application would be an overdevelopment of a small area of land. The local plan has not identified a need for 4-bedroom houses, and this must be given weight.

Withyham Parish Council Objects to the Application

The Assistant Clerk was asked to write to Wealden District Council regarding the redaction of documents.

6.2 **WD/2021/2902/F** - 2 THE GABLES, CORSELEY ROAD, GROOMBRIDGE, TN3 9SG Description: DEMOLITION OF CONSERVATORY AT REAR AND NEW SINGLE STOREY EXTENSION. EXTENSION OF EXISTING ATTACHED GARAGE/ENTRANCE/WC TO CREATE ANNEXE, GARDEN STORE AND UTILITY SPACE. RELOCATION OF FRONT ENTRANCE TO EXISTING WINDOW OPENING. NEW ROOFLIGHT AT SECOND FLOOR ON REAR ROOF FOR NEW SHOWER ROOM IN ROOF VOID. (Expiry date for comments 11th January 2022)
Link to documents on web:
http://planning.wealden.gov.uk/plandisp.aspx?recno=156121
The committee would be interested in the view of neighbours due to the proximity of the boundary and door on this application. It was noted that there would be no effect on the street scene.

Withyham Parish Council Supports this application subject to no neighbour objections and would wish to see a section 106 tying the annex.

6.3 **WD/2021/2846/F** - HEATH PLACE, EAST GRINSTEAD ROAD, BLACKHAM, WITHYHAM, TN3 9TY Description: CONVERSION OF STABLES TO RESIDENTIAL DWELLING; REMOVAL OF EXISTING RIDING ARENA; ASSOCIATED HARD AND SOFT LANDSCAPING (Expiry date for comments 11th January 2022)
Link to documents on web:
http://planning.wealden.gov.uk/plandisp.aspx?recno=156046

The structural report is incorrect in its statement that this would be an easy building to convert to a dwelling. The buildings would not be easily converted and is not suitable for conversion.
The condition tying the buildings to the dwelling has not been removed and this must be given great weight.
The statement that the flooring is believed to be reinforced presents no evidence and must be disregarded.
The application states this is not greenbelt, however it is greenfield. It sits in the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and would add nothing to this. It is also within the Habitat regulations and is outside of the development boundary. Protection of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the Habitat Regulations should carry significantly more weight than the five-year land supply as they are protected in law
The application claims this is an agricultural building, this is not the case as it is an equestrian building.
Information on the disposal of sewage has not been given and this is unacceptable.
There is no evidence supplied on the viability of the equestrian centre and so the claim that it is not viable must be disregarded as baseless.

Withyham Parish Council Objects to the Application

6.4 **WD/2021/2437/F** - BEECH GREEN PARK, BEECH GREEN LANE, WITHYHAM, TN7 4DB Description: CONVERSION OF EXISTING FARM BUILDINGS INTO 4 NO. DWELLINGS (Expiry date for comments 11th January 2022)
Link to documents on web:
http://planning.wealden.gov.uk/plandisp.aspx?recno=155526
The application sits within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and would alter its character. It sits outside the development boundary which must be protected. The buildings would not be easily converted as stated. There is no infrastructure to support the development. No streetlights, footpaths, or public transport.

Withyham Parish Council Objects to the Application

7. **APPLICATIONS RECEIVED AFTER AGENDA** - None

002178 **RESOLVED** that the observations on the planning issues detailed in these minutes be submitted to the Planning Authority.

8. **DECISIONS** – All Noted

APPROVED

WD/2021/2727/F - ROSELEA, BOARS HEAD ROAD, BOARS HEAD, TN6 3GR. ROOF ALTERATION AND LOFT CONVERSION

WD/2021/2751/F - 5 BIRCHDEN COTTAGE, ERIDGE ROAD, GROOMBRIDGE, TN3 9NJ. DEMOLITION OF EXISTING PRE-FABRICATED GARAGE AND CONSTRUCTION OF NEW GARAGE / GARDEN ROOM.

WD/2021/2648/F - CRANFIELD, SCHOOL LANE, ST JOHNS, CROWBOROUGH, TN6 1SB. SINGLE STOREY SIDE EXTENSION INTERNAL ALTERATIONS

9. MATTERS OF URGENT IMPORTANCE FOR NOTING OR INCLUSION ON A FUTURE AGENDA

Withyham Parish Council had been contacted by a journalist regarding application WD/2021/2568/MAJ. The Assistant Clerk provided a copy of the minutes as a representation of the Councils view in conjunction with the Council Chairman as per the Councils Policy.

Following a virtual meeting with Ashdown Forest Conservators it was agreed that the Assistant Clerk will facilitate a zoom meeting with members of the Planning Committee and the Conservators.

The Clerk for Hartfield enquired via email if the Chairs of Planning for the North Wealden Parish Councils would like to meet via zoom to discuss over-development in North Wealden and consider writing a letter in a similar way to the seven councils from Central East Wealden who wrote to the Minister. Cllr Tarling advise he would be happy to attend.

10. DATE OF MEETING – It was noted that the date of the next meeting is on **Monday 24th January 2022 at 7.00pm** to be held at The Parish Office unless otherwise notified by the agenda**.**

The meeting closed at 6.50pm