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**Minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting of the Parish Council of Ashburnham with Penhurst held on Wednesday 4th November 2020 at 7.30pm as an online virtual meeting**

**Parish Councillors present:** Cllrs Tina French, Ron King, Zoe O’Sullivan, Chris Sinden and Richard White (Chairman of the meeting).

**Parish Councillors absent:** Cllrs Andrew Hoad, Paul Spicer

**In attendance:** Brian Holdstock, Clerk to the Council  
Mr Giles Braxton and Mr Jeremy Tucker-Wall

**1) Apologies for absence**

- a) Cllrs Andrew Hoad, Paul Spicer

**2) Disclosures of interest**

Cllr Chris Sinden excused himself from discussion of RR/2020/1570/P as he has a conflict of interest being an owner of a holiday let cottage himself.

**3) Open Forum**

- a) Mr Jeremy Tucker-Wall addressed the meeting. He has applied for planning permission for alterations to his property, but there has been some delay in the application being validated and published by Rother District Council. The Chairman agreed that it was sensible to consider the plans this evening in the Open Forum and form a view in readiness for the formal consultation.
- b) After viewing the existing and proposed floor plans and elevations members took the view that the alterations are modest and in keeping with the property and its surroundings. They are minded to support it when the formal consultation is launched.

**4) Planning applications**

- a) RR//2020/1742/P – Court Lodge Farm, The Forge, Ashburnham, TN33 9PJ - Proposed flat roofed link between farmhouse and Oast and conversion to provide further accommodation.  
RR/2020/1743/L – Court Lodge Farm, The Forge, Ashburnham, TN33 9PJ - Proposed flat roofed link
- i) Mr Giles Braxton addressed the meeting and read a prepared statement outlining his family’s concern to protect heritage buildings and confirmed that he had followed guidance from English Heritage Buildings.
- ii) Members discussed the merits of the proposal and Cllr French thanked Mr Braxton for the invitation to visit the site which she has done. She believed that the proposed link could only be seen at certain seasons of the year and only from Peens Farm.
- iii) Cllr King asked Mr Braxton to elaborate on the difficulty with the RDC Conservation Officer to which he had alluded. Mr Braxton said that she had refused to engage with the consultation process, refused to read the report from English Heritage and expressed opposition to the proposal on ideological grounds and even expressed a non-material consideration that his accommodation is large enough already.
- iv) Some members wished the council to support the application while others wished it to simply comment saying that it has no objection but wishes the RDC planning process to be followed to a determination. After a vote, members voted by 3 to 2 to make a

comment rather than to support. The Clerk will draft some wording and circulate for comment.

- b) RR/2020/1721/P - New Buildings Farm, Church Road, Ashburnham, TN33 9NU - Change of use of buildings from agricultural to bespoke Class B8 storage of light equipment and timber materials.
  - i) Members viewed the plans and the supporting statements.
  - ii) Cllr King expressed concern that Class B8 designation is sufficiently vague as to permit a very different level of activity from that proposed if a future tenant so wished.
  - iii) Cllr White noted that the assertion that there is no agricultural demand for the premises is doubtless because the rent is too high for any agricultural business.
  - iv) A number of members expressed concern over the nuisance to neighbours from vehicles, many of whom are required by law to have audible alarms when they are reversing during manoeuvring.
  - v) Members were concerned that large vehicles exiting on to Church Road was hazardous and hoped that East Sussex Highways would be consulted.
  - vi) Members regretted that neither the applicant nor the agent had accepted the invitation to address the meeting and resolved by majority to withhold support and to comment that more data is needed with greater assurances about safeguarding neighbours and highways safety before they could support it.
- c) RR/2020/1570/P - The Stables, Brays Hill, Ashburnham, TN33 9NZ - Change of use of land from agricultural to residential and proposed construction of one bedroom holiday let.
  - i) Cllr Chris Sinden recused himself and took no part in the discussion having already declared a perceived bias from a conflict of interest.
  - ii) Members viewed the documents posted at the planning portal plus the additional comments and sketch sent to them by the applicant.
  - iii) Members recalled the planning history of the site and that the current residence was itself first built as a holiday let in 2003 with a Section 106 restriction (RR/2002/1141/P). In 2016 there was an application to lift the S.106 agreement and allow it to become residential (RR/201/1766). This was refused but won on appeal.
  - iv) Members noted that an unsightly building was proposed for demolition as a quid pro quo for a new build, but this was not on the same footprint but rather in another location, currently a green field agricultural site and in the AONB. This is quite contrary to planning policy. The fact that the proposed site appears to be aesthetically ideal is not felt to be a material planning consideration of sufficient weight as to form grounds to ignore established AONB policy.
  - v) Members resolved unanimously to object to the application on the grounds that it represents creeping development.

**5) Dates of Next Meeting**

- a) Planning committee meetings are scheduled for the last Wednesday of the alternate months in which there is no council meeting at 7.30pm in the Sports Pavilion.  
If there are no planning matters to consider the meeting will not be called.

..... Date .....

Signed (Chair)