

FLETCHING PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Gabriella Paterson-Griggs

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MINUTES of the Meeting of **FLETCHING PARISH COUNCIL** held on Monday 9th September 2024 in The West End, Fletching Church, Fletching (6.30 – 7.30pm).

PRESENT: Councillors R Hannay (Chair), R Borton, N Collum and S De St Croix.

Also in attendance: Gabriella Paterson-Griggs (Clerk and RFO) and Councillors C Coleman (WDC) and R Galley (ESCC)

Members of the Public in Attendance: 2

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A Abraham, W Constantinou, D Greenish and K Minch.

24/140. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made at the meeting.

24/141. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the last meeting held on 8th July 2024 were a correct record and were duly signed by the Chairman.

24/142. MATTERS ARISING

The Actions List as prepared and circulated by the Clerk was noted. The following items were discussed.

- PCSO – Concern was raised that there was still no PCSO designated for the area and Cllr Galley was asked to see whether he could investigate whether it would be possible to have one appointed to provide some continuity.
- CIL Funds – the Clerk reported at the meeting that the quotes for the replacement handrail at the village hall had just been received and it was **AGREED** that the contractor be asked whether it would be possible to have the handrail powder coated rather than a plastic coating.

24/143. REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR

Councillor Galley reported that the weight restriction had now been removed from Goldbridge but there were still some repair works to be undertaken but these were not as extensive as had been previously thought.

With regards to the Piltdown village gates he reported that, following the disappointing response from ESCC about the signage and its position in relation to the gates, he had visited the site and felt that there was not much that could be done.

Note: Councillor De St Croix arrived at the meeting at 6.42pm during this item.

24/144. REPORT FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

Councillor Coleman reported that Wealden District Council would be responding to the latest NPPF consultation. It was noted that as a result of the new government's proposals the housing targets for the District would increase by 211 per year but there would be no changes to the sustainability assessment other than a slight tweak relating to traffic.

Councillor Coleman stated that the Council had achieved a gold 'wellbeing at work' award and that the planning department was now fully staffed. She reported that a grant of £3.5m had been received for the Community Sports Hub in Hailsham which was due to be completed by 2026.

The Clerk confirmed that she had received an email in respect of the Nature Recovery Strategy which Councillor Coleman had sent and that a response would be considered.

The issue of fly tipping on private land had been raised at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (O&S) as the onus was on the owner of the land to deal with this when it was on private land not the council. However, support had been offered by the Council to track down the fly tippers in this particular case.

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In respect of the Local Plan it was noted that there had been a long debate at O&S as to the best way forward and that the Council was edging towards delaying the plan to take into account the government's changes and give consideration to the additional sites that have come forward for the SHEELA. If this were the case there would be a further Regulation 18 consultation.

24/145. PLANNING APPLICATION RECEIVED

The following application was discussed. See Minute 24/153 (iii) below for further information.

WD/2024/1950/F 6 New Cottages, Batts Bridge Road, Piltdown TN22 3XR

24/146. WORKING GROUPS / EXTERNAL GROUPS

- i. *Neighbourhood Plan*: Councillor Hannay reported that the Steering Group had taken a break over the summer but were meeting the following week to put together a plan of work for those areas that were not dependent on the Local Plan.
- ii. *Fletching Recreation Ground Committee (FRGC)*: The Clerk reported that there was a meeting of the FRGC taking place on 24 September where the budget for next year would be discussed.

24/147. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

Framfield Parish Council – Invitation to a meeting: Councillors considered the email received from Framfield Parish Council inviting representatives from the parishes to attend an informal meeting to share frustrations being experienced with ESCC Highways. It was **AGREED** that Fletching Parish be represented at the meeting if possible.

Hedgehog Highway Project: the email received from Hedgehogs R Us was discussed but it was considered that the project was for more urban settings as within a rural parish the hedgehogs had the ability to roam wherever they wished. It was **AGREED** not to participate in the project.

24/148. FINANCE AND ASSETS

- i. The invoices and payments for September 2024 were **AUTHORISED** and the Council's current financial position and bank reconciliation were noted. The payments made in August 2024 were noted.
- ii. Budget Monitoring 2024/25 – the Q1 budget monitoring report was noted.
- iii. Internal Auditor 2024/25 to 2026/27 – Councillors **RESOLVED** that Mulberry LAS be appointed as the internal auditor for the next three years.

24/149. CIL FUNDS - PROJECTS

- i. *Replacement Litter Bins – Fletching Village*: The Clerk reported that since the last meeting it had come to her attention that the agreed replacement bins would not be suitable as the refuse bags would still show. Councillors **AGREED** the alternative bin being proposed. The Clerk to contact the contractor direct and arrange installation.

24/150. GRANT APPLICATION

The Grant application from Wealden Citizens Advice for £350 for the purchase of noise cancelling headphones was considered and it was **RESOLVED** that the grant be awarded in full.

24/151. BURIAL GROUND

- i. Councillors noted the memorial applications that had been approved by the Chairman.
- ii. The Burial Ground Regulations 2024 were **APPROVED**. It was noted that there were no changes from the 2023 version.

24/152. ENFORCEMENT – PLANNING

- i. *Flitteridge Farm*: the update from Wealden District Council enforcement, circulated to councillors prior to the meeting, was noted.

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24/153. PLANNING APPLICATIONS - RECEIVED

It was **RESOLVED** to make the comments as set out after each application in respect of the following:

i. **WD/2024/1862/LB The Griffin, High Street, Fletching TN22 3SS**

Replacement of the existing dilapidated trade kitchen cookline extract flue and air intake, forming new lobby into trade kitchen, repositioning of stud walling within second floor laundry/boiler room, entrance plaque signage.

ii. **WD/2024/1864/F The Griffin, High Street, Fletching TN22 3SS**

Replacement of the existing dilapidated trade kitchen cookline extract flue and air intake, 2 no entrance plaque signs, 2 no electric charging bays and improvement to disabled customer parking.

This is a listed property in a conservation village, so the visual architectural impact is an important consideration in any planning application. The Griffin occupies a vital position in this historic village. Obviously modern facilities are necessary but do require sensitive management. As such, an effective extractor fan for the kitchen is necessary and the new version should be quieter than the existing, however the tall steel chimney is very prominent from the garden side of the inn, although it cannot be seen from the street, and some form of screening set below the top where the air comes out would be helpful.

In addition, the Parish Council is concerned that the disabled parking bays would be visually disturbing. They are to have contrasting colours, a non-slip ground surface is necessary but different colours would be inappropriate.

*The internal alterations to modern partition walls do not have an impact on the historic fabric, but the two external alterations would be detrimental. Therefore, the Parish Council **OBJETS** to these applications.*

iii. **WD/2024/1950/F 6 New Cottages, Batts Bridge Road, Piltdown TN22 3XR**

Proposed part single, part two-storey rear extensions, internal alterations and all associated works.

This property is a modest terraced house fronting the A272 on Batts Bridge Road. It is the middle house in a terrace of three cottage-style houses. Both of the adjoining houses have in the past built rear extensions. There is already an existing ground floor extension at the subject property but it is in poor condition. Also, the overall accommodation generally requires improvement. The proposal is for replacement and lengthening of the existing ground floor extension and for a part two storey rear extension above. It is not considered that the proposed works will have any material adverse impact on the adjoining properties.

*The Parish Council **SUPPORTS** the application.*

The comments previously submitted to Wealden District Council were **NOTED** in respect of:

iv. **WD/2024/1792/TD Piltdown Lodge, Lodge Lane, Piltdown TN22 3YP**

Erection of 2 no dwellings. Technical details consent to permission in principle WD/2022/2643/PIP

On 19th December 2022 planning permission in principle (PIP) was granted for a residential development of 2 x dwellings on this site. The application for that permission was accompanied by two illustrative site plans showing potential layouts for such a development; plans A and B. This technical details application is supported by a Design and Access Statement which states that: "6.3 The application proposal has been refined following the indicative proposals which were submitted under the PiP stage 1. The two plots have been further considered to make best and most efficient use of the land whilst preserving the character of the area. This application is based on Illustrative Site Plan A. In the Parish Council's view, any development of this site should be based on Illustrative Site Plan B. In any event, it is apparent that the development now being proposed is even more intensive (with the buildings being both larger, closer together and semi-

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urban in size and design) than those indicated on Illustrative Site Plan A and thus fail to preserve the character of the area.

The two appeal decisions (Appeal A and Appeal B) on Little Barkham Farm, Goldbridge Road dated 23rd August 2023 give useful background to consideration of any proposed development within the rural settlement of Piltdown.

“5. There is no defined development boundary for Piltdown, which is a rural settlement characterised by ribbon development along Goldbridge Road, the A272, between Haywards Heath and Uckfield. It is therefore in the countryside for the purposes of planning policy”.

Although the applicant acknowledges in the Design and Access Statement that WDC has prepared a new draft Local Plan, it suggests that, since it has not yet been presented for Examination, it should be given no weight. The Parish Council does not accept that it should be wholly ignored although it is agreed that, at this stage, any weight to be attributed to it will be limited. However, consistent with the rural character of Piltdown, emerging policy HO4 states that smaller sites of less than 1 hectare should provide a mix of smaller homes of 1, 2 or 3 bedrooms. This is consistent with the findings of the WDC Local Housing Needs Assessment. The two houses being proposed by this application are 4-bed; the need within WDC and particularly the Parish of Fletching is for smaller houses. This development will not meet local housing needs.

In addition the design and layout of the buildings does not reflect the site constraints nor the appearance and character of the rural settlement. The buildings are not consistent with the mass, height, density or style of the adjoining houses. The parts of each of the buildings described on the floor plans/elevations as “Garden Storage” are presumably the “integral garages” referred to in the Design and Access Statement. They add (according to the floor plans/elevations) over 17% additional building m² to each house. That is excessive. It is not clear from the drawings whether these garages are intended to be in place of or in addition to the 5x parking spaces referred to in the PIP application.

It is also noted on the plans submitted that the properties will each have solar panels on the one hand but a wood burner flue on the other. It is the Parish Council’s view that, a new-build with solar panels should not provide for a wood burner.

The Parish Council OBJECTS to this application

24/154. PLANNING APPLICATIONS - DECISIONS

Planning decisions **RECEIVED** from Wealden District Council since the last meeting:

Applications Approved

i. **WD/2023/2741/F The Old Archery, North Hall Lane, Fletching TN22 3SA**

Proposed extension works to existing dwelling house including, remodelling of front elevation with small corner extension, attached garage and works to first floor accommodation including new roof structure. (APPROVED 4 July 2024)

ii. **WD/2024/0917/F + 0918/LB Moons Farm, Sharpsbridge Lane, Piltdown TN22 3XG**

Conversion of parts of outbuildings to ancillary living accommodation, installation of solar panels, replacement of oil tank and associated work. (APPROVED 12 July 2024)

iii. **WD/2024/0629/F Little Wild, Sharpsbridge Lane, Piltdown TN22 3XG**

Conversion of former pool house to dwellinghouse with associated extension and biodiversity enhancement. (APPROVED 16 July 2024)

Response to Parish Council: A condition is proposed to ensure the materials match the existing building, as this is what is proposed. The submitted block plan shows proposed landscaping, and this is a similar landscaping plan to that which was approved under the condition discharge application pertaining to the previous application, WD/2019/2439/F. Conditions would also be imposed relating to no felling of existing trees and hedgerows, and the bat mitigation measures

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as set out in the application being adhered to. The proposal is of a small scale and drainage would be covered under any subsequent Building Regulations application.

iv. **WD/2024/1266/LB Sheffield Park Garden, Sheffield Park TN22 3QX**

Removal of non historic felt flat roof covering insulation to then replace with new insulation of the same thickness and a renewed felt roof covering. (APPROVED 18 July 2024)

v. **WD/2024/0726/F Woolpack Farm Barn, Bell Lane, Fletching TN22 3YB**

Single storey extension to link existing dwelling with existing barns to increase habitable accommodation of main dwelling together with fenestration alterations and addition of 4 x rooflights. (APPROVED 31 July 2024)

Applications Refused

i. **WD/2024/1425/LB The Griffin, High Street, Fletching TN22 3SS**

Replacement of existing dilapidated trade kitchen cookline extract flue and air intake, forming new lobby into trade kitchen. Repositioning of stud walling within second floor laundry/boiler room, entrance plaque signage, 2 no electric charging bays and improvements to disabled customer parking. (REFUSED 9 August 2024)

Applications Withdrawn – none since the last meeting

24/155. ITEMS FOR THE PARISH MAGAZINE

It was noted that the deadline for the October magazine had already passed. It was agreed that the following items be included for the next edition of the Parish Magazine:

- Replacement litter bins
- Replacement Handrail

24/156. AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

It was requested that Councillors contact the Clerk with any other items they wish to be considered at the next meeting.

24/157. TIME AND DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS

The next meeting of the Parish Council is due to be held on Monday 14th October at 6.30pm in the Church.