



HERNHILL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held in the Village Hall on Monday 16th July 2019 from 6:00pm to 8:20pm.

Present: Cllr J. Geliot (Chairman of meeting)
Cllr S. Edgington Cllr S. Castle Cllr B. Heller
Cllr C. Page Cllr A. Rumble Cllr A. Gould

Also Present: Mrs R. Parr (Clerk), Alison Thompson (English Rural), Tessa O’Sullivan (Action with Communities in Rural Kent), Andrew Cruttenden (Martello Architecture), Dave Brenchley and Duncan Miles (Hernhill Village Conservation Society) and 1 member of the public.

33 APOLOGIES

Cllr P. Couzens

34 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

None

35 BARBARA TAYLOR

- A. The Chairman had received the sad news that Barbara Taylor had died on Saturday 13th July. Barbara Taylor had for many years served on the Parish Council and the Chairman expressed her thanks. The Chairman would also arrange to send a card to Alan Taylor on behalf of the Parish Council.

36 LOCAL NEEDS HOUSING

A. GENERAL

- (i) Level of Need/ Revision of Accommodation There were concerns raised by the councillors and Mr Brenchley that the 2019 survey had indicated a different level of need from the 2015 survey both in accommodation required and the age profile of people interested. The Chairman mentioned that the second survey had shown a different level of need. Ms O’Sullivan explained that this was usual with a four-year gap between surveys. The surveys were undertaken as per national standards and planning criteria. In addition, the original 2015 survey was for general views whereas the 2019 survey was more tightly focused. Ms O’Sullivan explained the 2019 survey suggested a need for 11 homes, with the current design for 6 homes, meaning supply does not outweigh demand. Only one individual can afford shared ownership. Ms Thompson stated with her experience of other projects that the current mix of accommodation was appropriate to meet the current and future needs. Mr Brenchley raised concerns that the local needs housing project was initially started by the Parish Council for young people and families in the village and that the survey did not suggest that there was a need. Mr Brenchley was under the impression was purely for young people, which was not the case and older people wishing to downside would be eligible. Mr Brenchley commented that the location was away from services and amenities and the possible senior age of residents meant that there was not a justification for the project.
- (ii) Eligibility / Selection Ms O’Sullivan explained that applicants’ individual

situations are assessed for eligibility. Due to the priority of local connections applicants on SBC Housing Register would be eligible for Local Housing Needs housing where they might not be eligible for SBC Affordable Homes. English Rural would also assist applicants to enable them to get on the Local Housing Register. The priority is given to those with local connections. English Rural's accommodation policy is different to that of Swale Borough Council (SBC) in that they can allocate a two-bedroom home to a couple whereas SBC would only allocate a one bed home. Once applications were received, English Rural would approach the Parish Council to confirm the applicant's local connections. The final allocation is decided by English Rural.

(iii) Site Maintenance - English Rural would manage the properties and communal areas and hedgerows. The tenants would manage all internal aspects of the property and their own garden. The tenants would also pay a service charge towards the communal maintenance which are included within the rent.

B. Building Materials / Design

(i) The Chairman expressed an interest in ensuring that the housing would be flexible to accommodate disabilities such as Lifetime Homes design criteria. Mr Cruttenden explained that the current building regulations incorporate the majority of Lifetime Homes criteria. If disability requirements for individual applicants were identified grants can be sought for individual needs such as wet-rooms etc.

(ii) Cllr Edgington raised concerns regarding the access and that following the change to move it further west this encroached more into the existing hedgerow and that the location of the access should be revisited so that as much as possible of the existing hedgerow could be retained.

(iii) Parking spaces were considered and the design is for 2 cars per household plus visitor parking. It was requested that a sufficiently large parking area was allocated to those houses suitable for wheelchair users. Charging points for electric cars should also be included.

(iv) Mr Brenchley highlighted that the development faces properties in a conservation area and that the design should be in keeping particular as it is on one of the main routes into the village. Concern was expressed that materials that were potentially suitable for cheaper maintenance were not necessarily in keeping with that area. Examples of some of the materials to be used were shown. The aim of English Rural is to use quality materials. Mr Brenchley was not supportive of the composite cladding and that timber cladding should be used. Discussions were also had regarding windows and the suitability of uPVC. Mr Cruttenden explained that there was a trade-off between energy efficiency and traditional materials and that a balance was required.

C. Environmental Issues -

(i) Discussion was had around the use of solar panels. Given the location of the properties, these would need to be sited on the roof pitch at the front of the house, which would not be in keeping with the area.

(ii) English Rural expressed a preference for gas, with the use of A rated boilers over heat pumps. The Council requested English Rural to consider heat pumps in their design.

(iii) It was requested that the maintenance of indigenous wildlife was given high priority with the use of ranch fencing would be used. English Rural confirmed that there would be an ecological survey and that bat and bird boxes would also be considered as well as tree planting and the use of environmentally friendly groundwork materials.

(iv) Cllr Edgington raised concerns regarding surface water run-off. English Rural confirmed that this is investigated as part of the engineering design process and reassured that the design would not increase over that of present levels.

(v) English Rural confirmed that the current mains drainage runs in the back gardens of the current houses in Staplestreet. If it was not possible to connect to this then the development may also require its own sewage plants, which would also have an impact upon budget.

(vi) Cllr Castle raised the question as to who would name the road. English Rural confirmed that they would approach the Parish Council for a name for which the Local Authority would then need to approve.

It was agreed by the Parish Council and Cllr Gould, that as much emphasis as possible be put on the high specification for materials and a green development as budget would allow, with a focus on the use of traditional materials and renewable energy sources. English Rural will give serious consideration to the comments received and agree that the projects should be of a high standard as possible within budgetary constraints. English Rural will come back to the Parish Council when detailed drawings are completed. It is expected that a planning application would be made in late Autumn which the Parish Council will consider through the normal planning application process.

At the end of the meeting there was further discussion between the Councillors over the configuration of the houses in the current development in relation to potential demand. It was decided that if one of the two-bedroom houses was amended to be a bungalow this would mitigate some of these concerns. This would involve alteration to the layout of the houses and parking but it was felt that if the bungalow was long front to back with a narrow frontage this could be minimised. It was felt that this would provide more flexibility providing a home suitable for an older or young couple and a further house that could be converted for a wheelchair user if necessary. The chairman is to email English Rural with the above suggested changes.

37 DEFIBRILLATOR

- A. Cllr A. Gould in recent correspondence encouraged applications for grants. The Chairman provided an update on the position where the parish were seeking to provide a second defibrillator at Dargate given the distance from the original defibrillator at the Village Hall. £600 had been received so far in grants towards the costs. Cllr A. Gould asked for the Council to send an email to him outlining the project, which the Parish Clerk would undertake. Cllr Gould then explained all the applications will be collated and reviewed in due course, with grants allocated accordingly.

38 PLANNING

- A. **19/503326/FULL** - Conversion of two dwellings into one dwelling and associated alterations including new glazed doors to North-West elevation, new rooflights and flue. *Black Barn Farm, Crockham Lane, Hernhill, Faversham, Kent*. The Parish Council had no adverse comments.
- B. **19/503416/FULL** - Change of use of existing perimeter strip of redundant farm land to a vehicular entrance from Crockham Lane to provide access for 4 dwellings. *Black Barn Farm, Crockham Lane, Hernhill, Faversham, Kent*. The Parish Council had no adverse comments.
- C. **19/503204/FULL** - Erection of a rear extension to workshop to create a loading/unloading bay. *Uplands, Highstreet Road, Hernhill, Faversham, Kent*. The Parish Clerk had received an email from the applicant Steve Hitch, Managing Director of Uplands Engineering to explain the purpose behind the application as he was unable to attend the Extraordinary Meeting. The Parish Council supported the application on grounds of health and safety.

39 CHAIRMAN'S SUNDRY REPORTS

- A. The Chairman had received an email from a parishioner regarding the recent Wheelie Bin Race at the Three Horseshoes when even after the road was re-opened, customers of the pub were still standing in the road, preventing traffic passing as well as allegedly being drunk and abusive to passers-by. The situation was also exacerbated by the closure of the M2. The Parish Council was keen to support the local tradition and street party atmosphere of the annual event especially as the occasion was for charity. However, there was a safety issue. A possible solution would be to close the road for longer and provide better signage for the road closure. The Chairman would contact the landlord regarding the issue.

The next scheduled meeting of the Parish Council is to be on Wednesday 31st July 2019. There being no further business, the Chairman declared the Meeting closed.

CHAIRMAN