PARISH COUNCIL OF BENENDEN

Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 17th October 2022, 7pm, Iden Green Pavilion

Present	Cllrs Beveridge, Cochrane, Cruse, Driver, Grant, Hagan, Lewis and Thomas	
In Attendance	Cllrs Dawlings and Warne; C Levett, Clerk; 4 parishioners	
Item		Action Responsibility
1. APOLOGIES	Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Presgrave.	Responsibility
2. DECLARATION	There were no declarations of interest.	
OF INTERESTS	Cllr Driver is a neighbour of Frame Farm but no interest to declare.	
3. MINUTES OF	The Parish Council minutes from the meeting held on 20th September were unanimously approved as	
PREVIOUS MEETING	a correct record of the meeting.	
4. REPORTS BY COUNTY/	Cllrs Dawlings and Warne reported :	
BOROUGH	TWBC is still awaiting recommendations from the Planning Inspectorate following the	
COUNCILLORS	examination that took place over the summer on the TW Local Plan. It is hoped that the Plan can	
	be adopted in the Spring.	
	• The new Head of Planning, Carlos Hone, is in post. A number of planning department staff have	
	recently left or retired and recruitment for new staff is underway.	
	 An extraordinary meeting was held to debate the Electoral Commission Boundary Review. 	
	Officers have made enquiries to the Electoral Commission. A further consultation is open for 6	
	weeks, although it is unlikely that the Commission will pause and review.	
	There have been no updates or news regarding Turnden.	
	 Through the Rural England Prosperity Fund TWBC has been allocated £443,604 over 3 years to 	
	fund rural capital projects and community infrastructure. Applications for grants will be invited	
	shortly, to be submitted before 30 th November.	
	The planning application for a solar development at Netters Farm has been withdrawn following	
	concerns raised by planning officers.	
	The outline permission for 8 dwellings at Culpeppers, Coldharbour Road has been refused by	
	TWBC.	
	Cllr Warne has been involved in the judging for the Love Where We Live Awards, which	
E DEDONTS DV	celebrates and recognises volunteers across the borough.	
5. REPORTS BY CHAIR AND	• Cllr Thomas is unable to attend the Newcomers Lunch at the Church on 22 nd October to welcome	
PARISH COUNCILLORS	new residents to the village. No other Parish Councillors are able to attend. Amelia Thomas has	
COONCILLORS	offered to attend and the Parish Council was agreeable to this.	
	Cllr Lewis to attend the Remembrance Day Service on 13th November and lay the Parish Council's	
6. PLANNING	wreath.	
0.1244444	a. Applications	
	• 22/02567/FULL Great Nineveh Farm, The Oast, Nineveh Lane. Conversion of redundant barn to	
	create one new dwelling with associated detached garage, terracing and swimming pool,	
	associated change of use of land including landscape and biodiversity enhancement.	
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	Cllrs Beveridge, Grant and Thomas had made a site visit.	
	SITE CONSTRAINTS: PRoW; AONB; Outside LBD1; Agricultural Land Classification Grade 3; Biodiversity	
	Opportunity Areas; Potential Archaeological Importance — various sites; Apps or Equivalent Only	
	(including Reserved Matters) — Consult KCC on major apps.	
	SITE HISTORY: 18 previous planning applications.	
	LISTED BUILDINGS IN PROXIMITY: Great Nineveh Farm is Grade II Listed.	
	APPLICATION FORM INFO: Site area 1,307 sqm; Redundant rural agricultural building; Materials: Walls	
	existing corrugated sheets — proposed natural timber cladding. Roof existing corrugated sheets —	
	proposed natural timber cladding. Windows existing none — proposed timber or powder coated	
	metal. Doors — same repeated as for windows. Boundary treatments — timber cladding; Vehicle access and hard standing — existing gravel — proposed crushed stone/similar permeable material;	
	access and hard standing — existing graver — proposed crushed stone/similar permeable material;	

 Parking 4 spaces; Foul sewage — package treatment plant; Market housing — 1 no 4+ bed house; Preapp advice 15/7/2022 on site meeting with Hayley Starkey on 4/8/22.

D&A OR PLANNING STATEMENT INFO: No D&A Statement or Planning Statement.

GENERAL COMMENTS: 4-bed with guest suite on ground floor therefore 5 beds; PRoW WC201 runs north towards barn and along western boundary, then angles sharply to east joining WC365 to east with WC309 running north to east of Great Nineveh Farm.

OBSERVATIONS FOLLOWING SITE VISIT AND STUDY OF THE APPLICATION DOCUMENTS:

- Historically this was a riding school building (no permissions found) which was run by the Great Nineveh Farm as an equestrian centre before it was divided and sold circa 1996.
- Accessed by a long private driveway which narrows and goes uphill between Great Nineveh Farmhouse and The Oast into a further track accessing. The Old Barn and The Cow Shed, both converted to residential use. All four properties are in separate ownership.
- > The riding school building is retained, along with a wider land ownership, by The Oast.
- The building is now dilapidated and in ruins. Constructed of steel portal-frames with asbestos/concrete corrugated sheet walls, roof and guttering, it is now screened from view by trees and undergrowth on all sides.
- The purchasers of the properties The Old Barn and The Cow Shed were advised that the riding school building was to be removed from site, but this has not happened.
- Great Nineveh is a historic farmstead setting, with the Farmhouse itself Listed Grade II set amongst its outbuildings that are now mostly residential.
- The proposal to convert the building to a 5-bed dwelling with detached garage, swimming pool and terraces does not satisfy the rural planning polices of the Local Plan 2006; EN1 and EN25, H13: Conversion of rural buildings to residential use outside the LBD, or the Core Strategy (2010) Policies CP4: Environment and CP14: Development in the Villages and Rural Areas, or the Farmsteads SPD.
- The bulk and design would result in the presence of an overly domestic building in a rural setting which would harm the character of the surrounding countryside. The former riding school building is outside and divorced from the farmstead setting of Great Nineveh, it would be incongruous with the prevailing character of the locality and would be visually intrusive from the PRoWs and wider views resulting in harming the character of the High Weald AONB.
- Thought to have been constructed in the 1950s, the riding school building is not a traditional or heritage building or indeed an agricultural building - it is a functional space with a specific purpose that became redundant many years ago, as evidenced by the amount of natural growth surrounding the building.
- 3.3 of the Farmsteads SPD: Excluded from the definition of traditional farmsteads are prefabricated and standardised industrial buildings which are often added to traditional farmsteads but do not themselves display any local variation in their architectural character or distribution. The riding school building is such an example and does not enhance the farmstead setting or the AONB.
- ➤ The proposal is contrary to BNDP Policies LE1 Protect and Enhance the Countryside, LE3 Public Rights of Way, LE4 Trees, Woodland and Hedgerow, HS3 b) Windfall Sites, BD1 General Design Policy, BE5 Reuse of Redundant Buildings.
- The Ecological Assessment at para: 0.5 The proposed development plan will result in the loss of the existing building with the entire development kept within its original footprint, and at 1.15 The development proposals comprise the demolition of the existing barn and replacement in its footprint with a residential dwelling with associated hardstanding and amenity areas including swimming pool. This statement is contradicted by the **Structural Report for the Barn** which says at para. 6. The proposals are to convert the building into residential use. The conversion will entail the construction of a two-storey habitable space, swimming pool and separate garages within the footprint of the building. The main structural frames would be retained and used to form the roof over the new spaces. The existing cross bracing will be retained although it could be moved if necessary. The first floor to the dwelling would be designed to be independent from the existing structure.
- If the entire structure is demolished then it does not amount to a conversion under H13, instead

- it is a new build in the countryside against rural planning policies.
- If the structure remains and the dwelling constructed inside it does not amount to a conversion under H13, it will be a modern new build barn-like building in the countryside unrepresentative of the existing structure containing a new build.
- > BPC does not support the pruning, lopping or other interference of mature trees, particularly if they are ancient, veteran or notable trees, as they are here, to facilitate development.
- Also of concern is the lack of detail regarding the proposed fencing of the western boundary (the building is very close to PRoW WC201) and any fencing would urbanise the surroundings bringing domesticity to an otherwise rural location.
- > The proposal will not make any meaningful contribution to the Borough's 5-year housing supply.

The Parish Council unanimously agreed to object to this application.

- **22/02931/FULL Stable Cottage, Nineveh Lane**. Conversion of former stable building for purposes incidental to the main dwelling. Reinstatement of historic mansard roof
- ➢ Previous application 22/00290/FULL proposed design with conventional pitched roof to front, lit by rooflights; but with high, raised eaves to rear, producing very shallow pitched roof on western elevation. To rear, first floor would be lit by an array of windows leading on to balcony. Large balcony was proposed, similar to previous application. Overall height of building would be approx 5.6m. External materials would involve stock bricks, clay plain tiles and natural timber weatherboarding to walls, with roof of corrugated steel and plain clay tiles.
- Building to be used for ancillary domestic purposes with floor plans showing office and silk screen printing room at ground floor level; and art/sculpting studio above.
- ➤ BPC supported this application, but TWBC refused on grounds of bulk and design, presence of overly domestic outbuilding in rural, farmstead setting which would harm character of rural countryside. Visually incongruous with prevailing character of locality. Visually jarring element in terms of views of property from private road, harmful to character of AONB.
- New application proposes reinstatement of the historic Mansard roof and no balcony to rear of building. First floor accessed via an external staircase at NE gable end. Elevation drawings show that proposal will be more akin to original stable block with hay loft above.

The Parish Council unanimously agreed to support this application.

- **22/02853/FULL Frame Farm, Iden Green Road**. Proposal to erect a retractable swimming pool enclosure over an existing swimming pool.
- ➤ Previous approved application 20/02103/FULL telescopic pool enclosure over existing swimming pool valid until 2/10/23. The company to carry out these works went into liquidation.
- New application is for enclosure designed by different company and very similar to previously approved. Main difference direction of retraction will now be from north to south rather than east to west. New structure is 1.3m narrower but of similar width and height.
- BPC supported the previous application, and it was approved by TWBC.

The Parish Council unanimously agreed to support this application.

- 22/02963/FULL The Bothy, The Street. Erection of two storey extension to existing bungalow with internal alterations and dormer windows; erection of loft conversion into dormer with windows; alteration of existing barn to games room and artist's studio with new fenestration.
- ➢ Previous app 21/01892/FULL Alterations and extensions to convert existing bungalow to a two-storey dwellinghouse, creation of outdoor pool, conversion of existing barn to games room and artist studio, erection of 3 bay garage. BPC supported. TWBC refused on grounds of proposed large scale, bulky extensions to dwelling, combined with proposed garage, would not be modest in context set by Policy H11 and would overwhelm existing form of house, detrimental to

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	charac	cter and setting and, at a wid	er scale, harmful to character of AO	NB.	
			se from TWBC was 'Due to the site b		
			the proposed redevelopment of a tv		
			te scale and design and likely to be a	•	
			nents - timber post and wire fences,	hedges and trees, vehicle	
		s and hardstanding - permeal			
			vith 2-storey extension and loft conv		
	no 3-t	bay garage, and the conversion	on of the existing garage/barn is as p	reviously proposed.	
	The Davish	Council unanimously agree	d to support this application althou	ah considers that the	
		refused application was a be	d to support this application althou	gn considers that the	
	previously	refused application was a be	etter design.		
	b. Other	Planning Matters			
			oourhood Development Plan Regula	tion 16 Consultation :	
			ber. Cllr Thomas reviewed no speci-		
			on their efforts at bringing their NDP	•	
		arne will pass on.			
	 High \ 	Weald AONB Management Pl	an Consultation 2024-2029 & Bienni	al Review : Cllr Grant	
	looked	d at the review which sets ou	t what the AONB Unit has been doir	ng between 2020 and 2022,	
		esponded to the very brief su	•		
7. HIGHWAYS, FOOTPATHS &		•	ving the lack of communication from		
TRANSPORT			email was received from the Highw	-	
			the lack of any communication and		
			wed by an email advising that there	_	
	_		s awaited. The Clerk had previously	written to Clir Holden and	CL
	will write	again.			
	h Tho Cro	on . The Clark had been in a	ontact with the Bull to agree the no p	parking signs. The Bull had	
			at suggested by the Parish Council, w		
			o costly. The Bull had also raised cor		
			all area of verge in front of the fence		
		at the signs could be placed o	G	and the ransh council	
8. RESOURCING/	a. Monthly		,		
FINANCE		t forward		78252.87	
	Income			7 0 2 0 2 1 0 7	
	Income	Payee	Reference	Amount	
		KCC Grant	Wildflower Meadow	1000.00	
		AXA Insurance	Wells	50.00	
		Donations	Wells	250.00	
		TWBC	Precept	20465.00	
		B&IG WI	Copying	3.30	
	TOTAL			21768.30	
	Expend	iture			
		Supplier	Reference	Amount	
	DD	NEST	Pension	71.17	
	FEE	Unity Trust Bank	Service Charge	18.00	
	BACS	C Levett	Clerk's Salary	972.33	
	BACS	Edf	Public Toilets	112.38	
	BACS	Tenterden Twilight	Public Toilets	570.67	
		-			
	BACS	Tompsett Landscaping	Grounds Maintenance	164.40	
	BACS	HMRC	Employer Contributions Q2	127.36	
	BACS	Business Stream	Public Toilets	73.04	
	BACS	C Levett	Telephone	74.05	<u> </u>
Clasiana			Data	Da 4	

BACS	Anthony Hicks	Well Damage	1224.00
TOTAL			3407.40
Reconc	iled with bank statement 06	9 30th September 2022	96613.77
Approv	ed October 2022 Payments	:	
DD	NEST	Pension	71.17
BACS	Commercial Services	Grounds Maintenance Green	553.10
BACS	C Levett	Clerk's Salary	972.53
BACS	Edf	Public Toilets	97.51
BACS	Edf	Defibrillator	189.39
BACS	Tenterden Twilight	Public Toilets	695.40
BACS	Tompsett Landscaping	Grounds Maintenance	164.40
BACS	Memorial Hall	Meeting Hire	17.00
BACS	Castle Water	Public Toilets	113.85
BACS	C Levett	Telephone	31.56
BACS	C Levett	Emorsgate - Seeds	102.40
BACS	C Levett	Postage	5.44
BACS	TP Jones	Payroll Q2	57.60
BACS	PKF Littlejohn	Audit	288.00
BACS	Anthony Hicks	Well Damage	5760.00
BACS	Arthur J Gallagher	Annual Insurance	739.50
TOTAL			9858.85

b. Telephone

- As previously agreed, the contract with BT for the office phone has been cancelled.
- The current cost of the office phone is about £49 per month.
- The new mobile phone contract is for 36 months at £31.56 per month, with an upfront payment of £42.49.
- The new contact number is in the village magazine and on the website.

c. Audit: The external auditor report for 2021/22 has been received and confirms that the Annual Governance and Accountability Return is in accordance with Proper Practices and with no matters giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met, except that one box had not been ticked.

d. Payroll Costs: TP Jones, payroll provided, has advised that fees will be increasing from £57.60 to £63.40 per quarter. This is the first increase in 5 years.

9 ENVIRONMENT & MAINTENANCE

a. Beacon Field Wildflower Meadow

- 1600g of mixed meadow seeds have been purchased.
- The Parish Council thanks Tim Duncan for topping the field.
- An invoice from John Kingsnorth is still awaited.
- Volunteer morning, organised by Cllr Driver, to take place on Saturday 22nd October, 09:30-12:00. Tasks to include: raking up and removing some of the recently cut grass from the area we worked last year; sowing wildflower meadow mix seed; pulling up thistle roots.
- Cllrs Driver, Grant and Thomas had a productive meeting with Alan Hardy, KCC Estates Surveyor, on 14th October to discuss and progress a proposed lease of the field.
 - BPC to provide KCC with an estimate of costs and brief management plan for bringing the field up to a functioning wildflower meadow. Cllr Driver to draft.

PD

	KCC may give £5,000.		
0	KCC will draft a standard lease for BPC to sign, probably a recurring of a peppercorn rent of no more than £1 a year.	one for every 5 years for	
0	KCC would reserve the right to take back the field.		
0	KCC has requested sight of the beacon lighting risk assessments, so	exemption of	
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responsibility for these can be included. The Clerk to provide.

Quote to be obtained from Tompsett's for an annual cut and collect to take place in late September/October with two options: a) Remove all of the arisings from the site b) Stack all of the arisings in one or more corners of the field (this was a KCC condition from previous discussions, and to be confirmed that this is still relevant). The Clerk to request.

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Ollr Driver has contacted Bumblebee Conservation Trust seeking a view on how many years it would take before the field could be grazed over winter rather than cutting.

Cllr Thomas thanked Cllr Dawlings for instigating the meeting with KCC. Cllr Dawlings is pleased with the progress being made and hopes for a successful outcome.

b. Parish Wells

- The insurers will not discuss or indicate any claim settlement until full quotes have been received from Anthony Hicks. Anthony Hicks have not been able to provide any sort of timescale for this but advised that they are in the process of completing the repair schedule. Once this has been done the structural engineer and conservation officer will look at the schedule and add their comments and approve and/or add to the repair schedule. Once all agreed an update on costs can be given.
- Donations towards the restoration of the Wells currently stands at £550.00.

c. Village Asset/Maintenance Report

- Cllr Hagan has updated the report and forwarded to Chaz Stapley, and has discussed other works with another parishioner.
- Cllr Thomas requested that the BPC noticeboard at the Village Hall is better used. The Clerk to action.

d. Iden Green Defibrillator:

Two electricians have looked at moving the defibrillator from the telephone kiosk to the Congregational Church and quotes are awaited.

e. Village Tidy:

- This took place on 15th October. Volunteer numbers were less than previous, with 14 people taking part. BPC thanks those who took part. A lot was achieved, with 18 sacks of rubbish collected, although it was not possible to cover all areas.
- Cllr Hagan commented again that there is a lot of flytipping but TWBC is acting very quickly to remove this.

f. War Memorial:

➤ Cllr Thomas collected the crocus bulbs donated by Tenterden Rotary Club, the Parish Council thanks them for this donation. Alex Durtnell will plant the bulbs around the war memorial and will also plant new plants for Remembrance weekend. The Parish Council thanks Alex for his ongoing attention to the War Memorial Garden.

10. VILLAGE ORGANISATIONS/ COMMUNITY

a. Bequest/Allotments

- The solicitor has confirmed receipt of the signed Land Registry Form and has sent this to the three executors for signature.
- Cllr Grant has drafted a number of documents but needs a devolved management document to enable a way forward.
- Application for membership has been made to join the National Allotment Society which will be able to give help and advice.
- Cllrs Beveridge and Grant surveyed the site and Cllr Beveridge visited Rolvenden allotments.
- A draft layout was circulated main track down the middle of the site with a car parking halfway down. This gives 7 full size plots (250 sqm), 1 half size (125 sqm) and 10 smaller plots ranging from 34 to 89 sqm. Note that the full-size plots of 250 sqm can be shared as half size.
- There is funding available through a number of grants, but these are not available to Parish
 Councils, and can only be applied for by an association. It would therefore be most beneficial to
 work towards devolving the management of the allotments and creating a Benenden allotment

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- association.
- Some offers of help and interest in registering for a plot have already been received, and Cllrs
 Beveridge and Grant are organising a meeting for those interested in helping to set up an
 association
- A piece will be included in the magazine asking people to register their interest in a plot, stating that registration does not guarantee a plot, and/or interest in helping.

b. Public Toilets

- Following recent vandalism and antisocial behaviour BPC unanimously agreed to close the toilets until quotes have been received for the installation of CCTV.
- Cllr Dawlings to follow up with TWBC any funding available for CCTV.
- It was also noted that the toilets are in a poor state of repair and will need quite a bit of expenditure to make repairs.
- Cllr Thomas to include in the magazine article.

c. Benenden Pre-School

- Cllrs Beveridge, Grant and Thomas met with representatives of Pre-School to look at options to move to the primary school grounds. 2 sites were not considered suitable.
- An area at the top of the Village Hall car park was suggested.
- Pre-School will arrange a meeting with BVT to discuss other options.

11. PARISH COUNCILLOR ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The existing structure of Parish Councillor responsibilities is out of date and not been revised for some time. More recently individual parish councillors have been leading on specific tasks and projects, and this works effectively, with the lead parish councillor supported by others who want to be involved, and Cllr Thomas and the Clerk.

The following new structure was agreed:

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AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY	LEAD/MEMBERSHIP
Resourcing and Finance	Cllr Cochrane
	Cllrs Beveridge, Hagan, Thomas
Bank Account Signatories	Cllrs Beveridge, Lewis, Thomas
	Cllr Cochrane to be added
Planning and Dark Skies	Cllr Grant
	Cllrs Beveridge, Thomas
Hospital Lighting	Cllr Cruse
Highways	Cllr Driver
Highways Improvement Plan	Cllr Driver
Footpaths and Parking	Cllr Cruse
Communications	Cllr Presgrave
Village Organisations/Community	Cllr Thomas
BAT	Cllr Hagan
BVT	Cllr Lewis
Environment and Maintenance	
Wildflower Meadow	Cllr Driver
• Wells	Cllr Grant and Cllr Beveridge
Allotments	Cllr Grant and Cllr Beveridge
Assets	Cllr Hagan and Cllr Cochrane
Village Tidy	Cllr Cochrane
Defibrillator	Cllr Lewis
- Delibrinator	
War Memorial	Alex Durtnell
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12. OTHER MATTERS ARISING	Cllr Dawlings advised that he had discussed with Planning Officers the possibility of the company developing the sites at Benenden Hospital being able to provide the affordable housing requirement away from the hospital sites, and this could include Benenden School and the land next to Vyvyan Cottages, which are managed by English Rural.	
	The Parish Council is very concerned about this approach and remains firm that NDP Site Specific Policies must be upheld.	
DATE OF NEXT MEETING	Date of Next Meeting: Monday 21 st November, 7pm, Memorial Hall	
	The meeting closed at 8.45 pm.	

C Levett, Clerk to the Parish Council, 17th October 2022

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