

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL
PLANNING COMMITTEE
held at Staplehurst Village Centre on
Monday 18th August 2014 at 7.00 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillors Ashby, Buller, Green, Kemp and Spearink. Ex Officio: Vice Chairmen Kelly and Burnham who was in the chair.

Parish Clerk: Mr. M J Westwood

APOLOGIES: Councillors Butcher and Gosling whose reasons for apology were accepted.

APPROVAL OF PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES: Minute Pages 1171P-1172P of 4th August 2014 were approved nem con, signed by Councillor Burnham and made available at http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/minutes_of_the_last_meetings.aspx.

URGENT ITEMS: None requested.

MEMBERSHIP OF PLANNING COMMITTEE:

Notification from Parish Council Chairman John Perry – Councillor Burnham advised that Parish Council Chairman John Perry had stood down from the Planning Committee in the light of his position as ward borough councillor.

COUNCILLOR DECLARATIONS:

1. Declarations of Lobbying – Councillors Ashby, Buller & Burnham declared they had been lobbied about 14/501185.
2. Declarations of Changes to the Register of Interests – none declared.
3. Declarations of Interest in Items on the Agenda – none declared.
4. Requests for Dispensation – none requested.

FULL PLANNING APPLICATION: (for comment)

- 14/500822 **Tumblers Couchman Green Lane TN12 ORT** – Single storey extension
14/500826 **Tumblers Couchman Green Lane TN12 ORT** – Listed building consent for a single storey extension.
Councillors discussed 500822 and 500826 as a single item. By majority they voted to recommend REFUSAL to the MBC Planning Officer because they felt the design of the proposed extension was inappropriate for a listed building, the proposal was out of keeping with the scale and character of the existing building and they were against the loss of a large part of the outside wall and fireplace structure. They indicated they would look more favourably on a new application that addressed these points to their satisfaction. Councillor Spearink recorded his support for the application. Councillor Kelly abstained.
- 14/501049 **37 Church Green TN12 OBG** – Replacement detached garage. Councillor Burnham reported that the applicant had advised that a new application was to be submitted but no advice had yet been received from MBC. Councillors agreed to discuss the current proposal and all agreed to recommend APPROVAL to the MBC Planning Officer, noting the possibility of a new or revised application in due course.

OUTLINE PLANNING APPLICATION: (for comment)

- 14/501185 **Land at George Street, Staplehurst** – Outline application with all matters reserved for a scheme of 22 dwellings comprising 16 houses and 6 flats.

Councillors voted nem con to recommend REFUSAL and asked that the application be reported to MBC Planning Committee. They maintained their objections against the previous application MA/13/1513 and their backing for the reasons for refusal given by MBC at the time. They felt the proposal fell outside the village envelope, some distance from amenities, and was contrary to Borough policy ENV28; it conflicted with the emerging Staplehurst Neighbourhood Plan and particularly would obstruct a possible link road between Marden Road and Maidstone Road; George Street lacked a footpath and the application encouraged the use of the pedestrian rail-crossing, which gave rise to safety concerns; the proposed affordable housing provision brought no benefit when viewed in the context of the local affordable housing need, previously identified in the Staplehurst Housing Survey, which could be met from other agreed or proposed developments more consistent with the emerging Neighbourhood Plan; no details of amphibian and reptile translocation were advanced; the proposed development was over-intensive and out of keeping with housing in the area; Councillors foresaw drainage problems; development would create significant traffic difficulties in George Street.

REPORTED DECISIONS (for noting):

- 14/0656 **Land Rear of the Pride of Kent, High Street** – An application for the conversion of a vacant outbuilding to provide a single dwelling MBC GRANTED with 8 conditions. SPC had recommended Refusal (Min 1161P). Noted by councillors.
- 14/0732 **R S Sales, Honeycrest Industrial Park, Lodge Road TN12 0RQ** – Extension to existing warehouse building and additional lorry parking/unloading area with access. MBC GRANTED with 5 conditions. SPC had recommended Approval (Min 1164P). Noted by councillors.
- 14/500741 **1 Snapgate Cottages Five Oak Lane** - Erection of single storey side extension. MBC GRANTED with 5 conditions. SPC had recommended Approval (Min 1169P). Noted by councillors.
- 14/501834 **Fishers Oast, Fishers Road** - Non material Amendment for slight adjustments in the positioning of external windows and doors, and additional opening of a roof light on the rear of the properties for MA/13/1580 MBC GRANTED. SPC had Noted (Min 1171P). Noted by councillors.

Chairman.....

PUBLIC FORUM – Before the meeting four speakers voiced concerns about application 14/501185, particularly relating to intrusion into the countryside; being out of keeping with the surrounding area; safety issues connected to the foot crossing and railway; incompatibility with the emerging Staplehurst Neighbourhood Plan. Reference was made to Network Rail having a programme to close foot crossings; Cllr Burnham reported the company had advised it had no current plan to close the George Street crossing. A speaker voiced the Rural Settlement Group's concern about a previous recommendation of the Parish Council Planning Committee in respect of outline application 14/500363 Fishers Oast (Min 1168P), citing perceived inconsistency with the emerging Staplehurst Neighbourhood Plan and the absence of specific councillor voting information from the minutes. The Clerk advised legislation provided that any councillor could ask for a named vote to be recorded whenever a vote was taken, but no such request had been made for this application. Councillor Green asked for it to be noted that he had voted against the application. Further discussion of this subject was deferred for Full Council.