

**Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of Brightling Parish Council held on
Thursday February 15th at 7.00 p.m. at Brightling Village Hall**

Parish Councillors present: Cllrs. Joanna Coleman (Chairman), Judy Petty (Vice-Chair), Jane Oxenford, Andrew Wedmore, Katrina Blench & Philip Garbutt.

District/County Councillors: Cllr. Eleanor Kirby-Green

In attendance: Sam Dugan, Clerk to the Council

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies received and accepted from Cllr. Caroline Croft and Cllr. Barnes.

2. Disclosures of interest

None.

3. Planning Applications:

3.1 RR/2022/840/P Land at Beech Farm, Hawkhurst Road, Sedlescombe TN33 0QS

Councillors unanimously **RESOLVED** to confirm the following objection in the minutes, originally submitted by the Clerk via delegated authority on 2.2.24:

Brightling Parish Council remains resolute in its objection to RR/2022/840/P. Approval of this application appears to fly in the face of the intention behind Paragraph 84 of the NPPF - an instrument designed to protect the countryside from inappropriate development. Whilst the enhanced environmental credentials of the proposed building are acknowledged, advances in energy saving technology are being made throughout the housing design industry. As such, the environmental claims of this application do not, in themselves, qualify the design as 'exceptional'.

Furthermore, Brightling PC considers protection of the character of the High Weald AONB to be of great importance. It is possible to build ecologically-friendly, sustainable homes using natural, locally-sourced materials that sit well in the landscape - as this plan clearly does not. With a potential increase in 'eco-friendly' building firms, and pressure resulting from poor build-out rates locally, the approval of this application will encourage a proliferation of replicable applications. Brightling PC shares the concerns raised by Etchingam Parish Council and echoes their request that, should the Committee be minded to approve the application under Paragraph 11d of the NPPF, it should be clear that approval is not granted in relation to 84e. Approval under reference to 84e in this instance would establish a worrying precedent for future development, leading to the gradual erosion in the quality of the unique landscape within the High Weald AONB. This proposed building is not the answer to the problem of affordable housing in rural areas, nor the long-term protection of the High Weald.

3.2 RR/2023/2077/P Lake Cottage, Manor Farm, Brightling Road, Brightling TN32 5HB

Councillors noted the differences between the original application, which details concrete Cotswold style tiles, and the amended drawings submitted 18.1.24 (7707 / 1 / B) that specify clay tiles. Councillors expressed strong feeling that the materials should be in keeping with HWAONB design guide, and should be unambiguously specified as a condition if planning permission is granted.

Councillors unanimously **RESOLVED** to continue to object to the application and delegated to the Clerk to submit the following objection:

Brightling Parish Council continues to strongly object to this application on the basis of appearance, sighting, size, and materials not being in keeping with the HWAONB. There is a concern that mature trees will need to be felled, and that the size of the proposed building continues to be too large in relation to the plot. If Rother are minded granting permission, then we would like the following conditions included:

1. No, or limited external lighting, in order to protect dark skies.
2. Any new hard standing is of a porous or semi-porous material to reduce water run-off.
3. The roof should be constructed of small module clay tiles, with natural camber (High Weald Housing Design Guide p.34),
4. The walls should be constructed from full dressed local stone, not imported from outside the HWAONB (High Weald Housing Design Guide p.34) and laid in level courses.
5. All materials used should be in keeping with HWAONB design guide and should be unambiguously specified as a condition if planning permission is granted.

Meeting closed at 19:50

..... Signed (Chairman)

Date