

## PARISH COUNCIL OF BENENDEN

**Ordinary Meeting of the Council will be held on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> May 2020, Remote Meeting, 7pm**

Zoom Meeting <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/99978639410?pwd=NldKUXAzL3RJWmFjb0ZGOGRmY0lXUT09>

Second meeting if required : <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88999682214?pwd=TnVSYmkrMFdqR3BIZVpoeTVpQkVaUT09>

Parishioners should submit any questions to the Parish Clerk by email, [clerk@benendenparishcouncil.org](mailto:clerk@benendenparishcouncil.org), by 4pm on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> May

### AGENDA

1. Apologies
2. Declarations of Interest in items on the Agenda
3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> April 2020
4. Matters Arising and Outstanding Items
  - a. Tree Planting
5. Covid-19/Benenden Action Team
6. Reports by County/Borough Councillors
7. Reports by Chair and Parish Council Representatives
8. Neighbourhood Development Plan
9. Planning
  - a. Applications
    - 20 00762 FULL 2 Eaglesden Cottages Mill Street Iden Green Five dormer windows added to existing garage roof
    - 20 01041 FULL Land Adjacent To Springhill Oast Standen Street Demolition of one poultry unit and conversion of the remaining poultry unit into two dwellings
    - 20 01043 FULL Goddards Green House Goddards Green Road Conversion of pool house into private gymnasium, changing room and bike store; conversion of outbuilding into a two bedroom annex
    - 20 01089 OUT Outline Application (Access not reserved) Land To The North West Of Broughton House, Rolvenden Road Erection of 4 no. two storey detached dwellings with integral garaging facility, formation of new access drive and associated works
    - 20 01079 FULL Pullington Fold Farm, Rolvenden Road Proposed single storey rear extension with internal alterations; infill extension of existing front entrance; changes to fenestration, roof material alteration to slate and enlargement of existing raised platform
    - 20 01105 FULL Pippins, Cranbrook Road Proposed regularisation of workshop to annexe with erection of porch (retrospective)
    - 20 00970 FULL Havering House, Walkhurst Road Erection of greenhouse
  - b. Other Planning Matters
    - 20/00402/FULL 1 Bishopsdale Cottages Erection of a summerhouse and garage
    - 20 00708 FULL Land Adjacent To Bankside Dingledden Replacement of agricultural building for use as Storage & Workshops (Retrospective). Enforcement.
    - 19/00362/OUT Land at Standen Street application for 5 dwellings and 19/03480/OUT Land rear of Field House, Standen Street application for 7 dwellings – Officers' responses
10. Highways and Transportation
11. Resourcing/Finance
  - a. Monthly Finance
  - b. Annual Audit
  - c. Clerk's Appraisal
12. Correspondence
13. Parishioners' Questions

## 1. APOLOGIES

No apologies received.

## 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

No declarations of interest.

## 3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 20<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2020

Separate attachment.

## 4. MATTERS ARISING AND OUTSTANDING ITEMS

- a. Tree Planting : The Clerk has approached Benenden Village Trust regarding some planting at Benenden and Iden Green Recreation Grounds.

## 5. COVID-19/BENENDEN ACTION TEAM

Report from Benenden Action Team :

Benenden's community spirit during the lockdown has been amazing. Many friends, family, neighbours and Benenden Action Team (BAT) volunteers have been helping those who are shielded and isolating with prescription collections, food deliveries and telephone calls. During lockdown BAT has been working closely with the parish council to act quickly on requests from vulnerable people in the village.

Via the Parish Council we have had:

- two requests for assistance from the Town & Housing Association (who have residents in Leybourne Dell). We have given one food vouchers and delivered shopping and play items for a young child to the other (who was ill with the virus)
- Another vulnerable (underlying health issues) resident had requested/received food vouchers. This was followed by a second request made by the granddaughter to TWBC and then to BAT. More vouchers provided and shopping delivered until end May.

In addition, only two other residents are currently using the BAT food vouchers (which will be reviewed at the end of May/mid-June)

### **Harmsworth Court survey:**

We conducted a detailed survey (questionnaire and follow-up call) with all 27 residents in Harmsworth Court and offered two free frozen ready meals to try. Nine took up the offer and as a result several are ordering these from the shop. Four requested support and they are now fine. We helped one set up regular food delivery from the shop and one has regular 'check in' calls as requested. The feedback was that most are fine and were happy to have been contacted. We understand that those living in the Alms Houses are fine. Unfortunately, one person has tried twice to get dog walking support who doesn't need it. We provided details of a professional dog walker to her.

### **Website**

Caroline has provided relevant KCC and TWBC information which has been posted regularly to the BAT website [www.benendenaction.co.uk](http://www.benendenaction.co.uk), along with other useful information, contacts and

guidance across a variety of topics. Signage around the village is publicising the site and a contact number.

On average about 15 people a day visit the website.

Once all this is over, I know that we will have a village communication and support network that will be stronger than ever and one that will hopefully continue to play an important role long into the future.

## **6. REPORTS BY COUNTY/BOROUGH COUNCILLORS**

Cllr Dawlings report :

Covid-19. TWBC is doing all it can to help the vulnerable in the Covid-19 emergency and I think there has been good liaison with the parished areas and the great work volunteers are putting in. Last week I passed round some details about free IT help for the older and vulnerable residents which had been drawn to my attention.

Refuse Collection. The garden waste collections will start again this week. So the service is not overwhelmed only the actual contents of the black bins will be collected and residents are asked to retain other garden waste for future collections. KCC have re-opened the North Farm tip but residents have to make appointments to visit (to ensure social distancing).

On my TWBC Finance & Governance Portfolio:

Government has assured local authorities it will provide finance to cover the costs incurred in the Covid-19 emergency. We shall see. From the first tranche of £1.6bn of assistance, TWBC's share was £42k. From the second tranche of £1.6bn, TWBC received £1.1m. This is rather less than the loss of fee income in April (down over £1.2m on April 2019). So the balanced budget agreed in February will need to be extensively revised and we will look at this in more detail after the first quarter.

In the last few weeks, TWBC seemed about to encounter a significant cash-flow crisis. As the billing authority, Council Tax is substantially collected on behalf of other preceptors (KCC, Kent Police Commissioner, Kent Fire & Rescue and Parish Councils - TWBC retains about 10%). Thankfully Council Tax is being collected OK (the April Direct Debits were in line with April 2019). Otherwise the commitment to pass on very significant amounts of Council Tax potentially could have been overwhelming. There are greater difficulties with Business Rates which TWBC collects but substantially (96%) pass on to Government. Collection of Business Rates this year is difficult but Government has agreed a 3 month deferral for on-payment.

The longer the lockdown, potentially the bigger TWBC's shortfall - our two main sources of income are Fees and Charges (budget £21.4m) and Council Tax (budget £8.5m). Pre-Covid 19, TWBC's finances were in a strong position with a balanced budget and reserves of about £20m - a far better position than many other local authorities. But losses of over £1m a month cannot be sustained for very long. We are lobbying hard through Kent Finance Officers, Greg Clark and Helen Grant and the Secretary of State at MHCLG. I have a continuing email dialogue with the new Governor of the Bank of England (who I used to work with) to explain about the impact of Covid-19 on local authority finance.

The major exercise for the Finance Dept (in addition to closing accounts for the year to end March 2020 and getting information to the Auditors) has been grants to small businesses with rates under

£51,000 mainly in the hospitality sector which have been unable to trade because of the Covid-19 lockdown. We received £27m from Government and so far have paid out grants of £24mn. About 190 eligible firms have yet to apply - all continue to be encouraged to apply by email and telephone. One firm applied, qualified and was paid a grant of £25,000 but returned it advising it was not needed.

Last week the Government announced that further help for small businesses is to be made available to be distributed at the discretion of councils. We have estimated that TWBC's share may be £1.36m. We know there are a number of businesses that have not qualified for other forms of grant and are quite desperate. We are actively working on plans to invite business to apply for this funding and the criteria against which to assess the applications.

## 7. REPORTS BY CHAIR AND PARISH COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES

## 8. NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN

## 9. PLANNING

### a. APPLICATIONS

- **20 00762 FULL 2 Eaglesden Cottages Mill Street Iden Green** Five dormer windows added to existing garage roof

Cllr Grant : Retrospective application for five dormer windows in an existing garage roof. The application has been made because enforcement requested a formal application. There is no justification offered as to why it is necessary to install 5 dormer windows in a garage roof, and therefore, insufficient information to be able to decide whether to support or object.

**Respond to TWBC accordingly.**

- **20 01041 FULL Land Adjacent To Springhill Oast Standen Street** Demolition of one poultry unit and conversion of the remaining poultry unit into two dwellings

Cllr Grant : Consent previously granted for a conversion to a single 5 bed dwelling (ref 17/02209/FULL). BPC supported this application and requested a lighting condition which was imposed by TWBC. Then a revised application last December for conversion to two 4 bed dwellings (ref. 19/03604/FULL) which we supported and requested exterior lighting conditions. This application was withdrawn by the applicant. The current application 20/01041/FULL is basically the same with an adjustment to the interior configuration of each dwelling to incorporate an integral garage and store within each dwelling. Still has 4 beds in each dwelling. This is preferable, in my opinion, to the previous application which, without garaging or stores, would have led to additional sheds and the like being scattered around the gardens of the 2 dwellings.

**Propose to support with outdoor lighting condition.**

- **20 01043 FULL Goddards Green House Goddards Green Road** Conversion of pool house into private gymnasium, changing room and bike store; conversion of outbuilding into a two bedroom annex

Cllr Grant : Both buildings in residential class C3 use so no change. Pool House = 45 sq.m — convert to private gym with bike storage — no additional floor space. Outbuilding = 65 sq.m — convert to 2 bed annexe for use by main house — no additional floor space. External changes to both buildings will be additional roof-lights and infilling/glazing or replacement of existing door openings. Both buildings are within the residential curtilage of Goddards Green House. They are somewhat dilapidated and could do with repair and updating. The outbuilding has the appearance of an agricultural building. Both buildings are screened by trees. No impact on the PRow and KCC has raised no objection. Very straightforward repair and repurposing of the 2 buildings, retaining their existing footprint.

**Propose to support.**

- **20 01089 OUT Outline Application (Access not reserved) Land To The North West Of Broughton House, Rolvenden Road** Erection of 4 no. two storey detached dwellings with integral garaging facility, formation of new access drive and associated works

Separate attachment.

- **20 01079 FULL Pullington Fold Farm, Rolvenden Road** Proposed single storey rear extension with internal alterations; infill extension of existing front entrance; changes to fenestration, roof material alteration to slate and enlargement of existing raised platform

Cllr Grant : The address may sound familiar and that's because of the stable (in the field behind) conversion for 2 beds that the PC supported and TWBC granted under 18/03573, then the applicant came back with a variation to lower the ground levels to achieve a mezzanine level and an extra bedroom — BPC made no comment — TWBC granted. The only Listed Building nearby is Pullington Fold Farmhouse on the opposite side of the road (The barn at West Pullington to the west of this site would not be affected. I think that this proposal would not affect the setting of either of the LBs. This one is quite straightforward — modest rear extension and internal alterations. The only concern I have is the proposal to change the concrete tiled roof to slate, because it's not in keeping with the character of the area, or with the LB opposite, although the subject property is well screened from the road and the LB, and the roof would only be visible from the air.

**Propose to support with possible mention of the slate roof.**

- **20 01105 FULL Pippins, Cranbrook Road** Proposed regularisation of workshop to annexe with erection of porch (retrospective)

Cllr Grant : Built circa 2003 as domestic workshop, converted to residential annexe around 2006. Comprises living area, bedroom, bathroom, but no kitchen facilities. Subservient to main house. Very close to main house and the materials match the house. New owner uses as extra accommodation for family and is seeking to regularise the planning situation.

**Propose to support.**

- **20 00970 FULL Havering House, Walkhurst Road** Erection of greenhouse

Cllr Grant : This is for a Victorian style greenhouse to be positioned well back from Havering House in the large rear garden on the right hand 'boundary', though not a true boundary as they possibly own the land adjoining. Havering House itself is located behind Pine Cottage, which in its turn is located behind Walkhurst Lodge. (Opposite Feoffee almshouses land.) Havering House is accessed via a long

driveway passing Pine Cottage. No impact on the nearby Listed Buildings of Feoffee and Brick Kiln. No impact on neighbours. BUT, it does introduce a structure in a wooded area, in the middle of an otherwise green swathe of land stretching from 'Greenacres' along Walkhurst Road, in the AONB. It is also 'divorced' from the house itself. Had the positioning been nearer to the house, I would probably have supported it.

**Propose to object.** Incursion into the AONB and the green landscape of the location.

b. Other Planning Matters

- **20/00402/FULL 1 Bishopsdale Cottages** Erection of a summerhouse and garage

Email communication :

Dear Lisa

I am writing to you on behalf of Benenden Parish Council, as we are surprised and disappointed with the recent decision to grant permission for the above application, and we would like clarification as to how you arrived at this decision, given the similarities with the previously refused application 19/01481/FULL at this site.

In the delegated report for the previous application, you state that *"Cumulatively, with the previous extension this would exceed the criteria to be classified as 'modest' in terms of this policy"....."It is considered that given the proposals large footprint, its close proximity to the main dwellinghouse, and visibility from the highway, that it would dominate the modest sized dwelling house. Also, as per point 3 of policy H11 it could potentially 'lend itself to sub-division to form a separate dwelling'.*

The proposed building for the recently approved application is less than ½ metre shorter than the refused application with a slightly reduced roof height, but also includes a proposed garage.

Therefore the cumulative footprint (235m<sup>3</sup>) will actually be larger than the refused application (192m<sup>3</sup>), as well as being even more visible from the highway with the inclusion of the separate garage.

The approved application is therefore contrary to Policy H11, and should not be acceptable.

For the approved application - *Policy EN25* – you accept that *"in terms of Policy EN25 the proposal would alter the character and setting of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty"* and yet you then go on to state that *"...in the summary of policy EN25 of the local plan, the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty would not be harmed"*. Surely the latter statement contradicts the former?

Finally, given that our comments on this application were carefully considered and policy-led, we are disappointed that these comments were not taken into consideration, and although the Delegated Report states that our comments are discussed in the appraisal section of the report, we see no evidence of this. To the contrary, we believe our comments have been wholly ignored.

We would be grateful for your clarification on the above points,

Nicola Thomas, Chair, Benenden Parish Council

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Dear Ms Thomas,

Thanks you for your email.

Firstly, I would like to assure you that all parish comments are considered and appreciated. However, as a planning officer my role is to consider all comments and, consultations and, consider where they fit with the planning policy.

This instance, the proposed development was not considered significantly harmful and, did not warrant a refusal.

The applicant in this instance worked with us prior to the submission of this application following the refusal to make amendments which would lessen the impact of the development whilst also providing them with the additional space that they require.

In terms of policy H11, the cumulative calculation applies only to attached extensions. Although the previous refused proposal would've been detached, I thought it important to include the calculation due to the close proximity to the dwellinghouse. But the amended plans with the most current application shows distinct spacing from the house and, therefore, the volumetric calculations are not a defining factor. The assessment would be considered more in relation to the visual aspects of the development. Although the alterations in overall scale were minor, the positioning of the building and, the existing screening were considered to sufficiently limit the impact on the character of the area. Although a rural Lane, there is visibility of buildings along this highway and, it would not be uncharacteristic for the building to be partially visible. Whilst, we did request a reduction in the width of the building as, it would have been preferable in terms of limiting this impact, it was not considered to be significantly harmful in terms of scale and character and, so refusal was not warranted for these reasons. The proposed garage is on a separate piece of plot on the highway and, so I considered it in a separate manner, instead considering the context of the highway and, the existing garage features along this highway which are already prominent.

In terms of my discussion on policy EN25, I did say that there would be alterations the character and, setting of the AONB. However, that is not to suggest that alteration would equate to harm.

My discussion under policy EN25 is as follows:

'The proposal is reasonable in terms of its overall scale. Most materials would reflect the main dwellinghouse and, residential but rural features of the area. It would use similar timber framed openings that are present on the existing dwellinghouse. Its timber elevations would not match the existing dwellinghouse but, would be typical for an outbuilding in a rural area and therefore in terms of materials it would not be out of character for the rural area.'

There were no factors in this assessment which highlighted harm to the AONB or the character of this area. For reasons discussed throughout the delegated report and mentioned above. It is not considered that the proposed development would be harmful.

I can confirm that although your concerns were not specifically mentioned in the appraisal, as they were highly policy led, I considered the comments in line with the policies mentioned in your comments.

I hope this clarifies the reasons behind the decision.

Kind regards,

Lisa Williams (Case Officer)

- **20 00708 FULL Land Adjacent To Bankside Dingle** Replacement of agricultural building for

use as Storage & Workshops (Retrospective). Enforcement.

- 19/00362/OUT Land at Standen Street application for 5 dwellings and 19/03480/OUT Land rear of Field House, Standen Street application for 7 dwellings

Officers' responses to Cllr Warne's request for an explanation of the different decisions to planning applications

Richard Hazelgrove, Principal Planning Officer : "From what I know of James' site, in comparison my Field House application was much more harmful to the setting of the CA and listed buildings around the main junction in the village. It also included a very awkward-looking (but safe in highways terms) access planted through the garden of an existing house (Field House) as the site was effectively land-locked by the surrounding housing. James' site on the other hand can be accessed directly on to the highway. Mine also was more steeply sloping and is quite exposed to the landscape to the NE, whereas I don't think James' has quite the same impact – whilst there are views from the south they are more localised and there is housing /gardens on three sides. Ultimately his site is much more enclosed by the surrounding development. Probably of more relevance to James' site (and closer) is the Land Adjacent Columbanus site to the SW that I have been dealing with for the last few years (3 dwellings) which is currently being built out."

James Moysey, Senior Planning Officer : "Just to add on what Richard has said, the application at Standen Street the Council's Landscape and Biodiversity Officer considered that the harm would be limited and very localised given that the proposal, to some extent, would amount to an infill development where there is built form surrounding the site. The Council's Conservation Officer considered that a small housing scheme would be as part of the 20th century development here, fitting into a pocket of open land bounded by development on three sides and that the provision of additional housing of this type outweighs the small amount of harm caused to the setting, and the significance, of the Iden Green Conservation Area. To my mind the two sites are very different in context."

## 10. HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION

Nothing to report.

## 11. RESOURCING/FINANCE

### a. Monthly Finance

Brought forward 68250.61

#### Income

| Payee | Reference           | Amount   |
|-------|---------------------|----------|
| TWBC  | Precept             | 20175.00 |
| TWBC  | Parish Reserve Fund | 1227.00  |

**TOTAL 21402.00**

#### Expenditure

| Supplier      | Reference      | Amount |
|---------------|----------------|--------|
| DD John Lewis | Broadband      | 9.75   |
| BACS C Levett | Clerk's Salary | 888.60 |

|              |                    |                      |                |
|--------------|--------------------|----------------------|----------------|
| BACS         | Tenterden Twilight | Public Toilets       | 430.13         |
| BACS         | Groundwork UK      | NDP Grant Underspend | 3201.52        |
| BACS         | Castle Water       | Public Toilets       | 114.58         |
| BACS         | KALC               | Annual Subscription  | 843.07         |
| BACS         | TP Jones & Co      | Payroll Q4           | 57.60          |
| BACS         | ACRK               | Annual Subscription  | 80.00          |
| BACS         | C Levett           | Clerk's Salary       | 8.96           |
| <b>TOTAL</b> |                    |                      | <b>5634.21</b> |

Reconciled with bank statement 029 30th April 2020 **84018.40**

#### May 2020 Payments

|              |                       |                     |                |
|--------------|-----------------------|---------------------|----------------|
| DD           | John Lewis            | Broadband           | 9.75           |
| BACS         | C Levett              | Clerk's Salary      | 897.56         |
| BACS         | M Patrick             | War Memorial        | 17.50          |
| BACS         | Thompsett Landscaping | Grounds Maintenance | 129.00         |
| BACS         | edf Energy            | Public Toilets      | 42.63          |
| BACS         | BT                    | Office Telephone    | 112.07         |
| BACS         | Tenterden Twilight    | Public Toilets      | 328.00         |
| <b>TOTAL</b> |                       |                     | <b>1536.51</b> |

#### b. Annual Audit

The Clerk has completed and reconciled finances to year-end 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 as much as possible, and subject to internal audit.

The internal audit has been rescheduled for 8<sup>th</sup> June. External audit timeframes have been extended until 31<sup>st</sup> August but aim to sign off at the Parish Council meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> June or 20<sup>th</sup> July.

Attached are the full accounts and the unaudited statement of accounts for year 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020.

#### c. Clerk's Appraisal

## 12. CORRESPONDENCE

No items of correspondence.

## 13. PARISHIONERS' QUESTIONS

No questions received.

## 14. ITEMS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION

**Date of Next Meeting: 15<sup>th</sup> June 2020 tbc**