



Local Government for Langton Green, Speldhurst, Ashurst and Old Groombridge

**Minutes of a Planning Committee Meeting held at 7.30pm on
Monday 15th August 2022 in the Palmer Room, Langton Green Village Hall, Langton Green**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cllrs Curry, Langridge, Norton, Rowe and Mrs Soyke.

OFFICERS PRESENT: Mrs K Harman – Assistant Clerk

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PRESENT: There were no members of the public present.

1. To enquire if anyone intends to record the meeting

The Assistant Clerk advised that she was recording the meeting on a laptop for the purpose of accuracy of the minutes and would delete the recording once the minutes had been signed at the next Planning Committee meeting.

2. To receive and approve apologies and reasons for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Barrington-Johnson who was on holiday.

3. Disclosures of Interests

There were none.

4. Declarations of Lobbying

There were none.

5. Minutes: RESOLVED That the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on the 18th July 2022 be approved as a correct record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman.

6. Public Open Session: There were no members of the public present.

7. Planning Appeals

21/02615/LAWPRO – Millford House, Penshurst Road, Speldhurst

Proposal: Lawful Development Certificate (Proposed) - Erection of garden shed

It was agreed that this application could be removed from the agenda until a decision had been made at which point the Assistant clerk would advise the committee.

8. Decision making process on planning applications

Cllr Norton had asked members to consider whether it would be useful to review the committee's policy on the stance it takes on applications in an effort to enhance their effectiveness. The matter was discussed at length and it was agreed to keep to the existing policy of a "remain neutral, leave to Planning Officer" stance on the majority of applications for the following reasons:

- To support or object to applications had to be justified using specific planning reasons (laws) and members felt that they were often not adequately qualified to demonstrate their stance whilst remaining impartial. Planning law is often changing and it is challenging to keep up to date with the latest legislation.
- It was considered important to demonstrate support for parishioners who felt strongly enough about an application to attend a planning meeting and share their views with members, particularly when several residents attend.
- To increase the amount of “support” and “object” stances would dilute the effectiveness of the few that are currently submitted.
- The parish council can often add historical and community content which the town planners may be unaware of and this is often done effectively by remaining neutral and adding a comment.

Cllr Norton was thanked for bringing the matter up for discussion.

ACTION: Cllr Langridge was asked to share the list of planning law reasons for supporting or objecting to an application he had with the Assistant Clerk who would circulate to the committee.

9. Planning applications for discussion and decision:

22/01894/FULL – 8 Ryders, Langton Green

Proposal: Removal of existing conservatory, erection of ground floor rear extension.

Decision: Remain neutral, leave to Planning Officer.

22/01790/FULL – Cedarwood, Penshurst Road, Speldhurst

Proposal: Relocation of front driveway, associated landscaping.

Decision: Remain neutral, leave to Planning Officer.

22/02106/FULL – Pokehill Farm, South Farm Lane, Langton Green

Proposal: Conversion of a redundant stable building to two holiday lets with side extension.

Decision: Remain neutral, leave to Planning Officer.

22/02194/FULL – Crabtree Cottage, Southfields, Speldhurst

Proposal: Two-storey rear extension and new garage to replace existing detached garage.

Decision: Remain neutral, leave to Planning Officer.

10. TW Local Plan

There was nothing to report.

11. Compliance Issues

- Little Mallett, Langton Green: KCC had confirmed that the remaining property had now reinstated its boundary however this was unchecked. The Assistant Clerk asked members to check if they were passing.
- Ashurst Place, Langton Green: Application 21/02886/FULL for conversion of the 23-bed former care home to 7 private apartments, 2 mews houses and associated access, parking, garages and amenity space (Part Retrospective) had been permitted. The Assistant Clerk had contacted TWBC to find out when the developer's funds could be accessed and was advised that they were waiting confirmation from the developer and would be in touch as soon as further information was known.

12. Items for information

- Date of the next meeting: Monday 12th September 2022.
- Information on a webinar by the Town and Country Planning Authority on 'An introduction to planning reform for elected councillors' had been circulated. The Assistant Clerk asked members to let her know if they wished to attend.
- Trees on The Green, Langton Green: Cllr Barrington-Johnson had written to the TWBC Conservation Officer asking for assistance in this matter. A response had not yet been received.
- The Assistant Clerk said that she would try to find out who the new Head of Planning and also Tree Officer are at TWBC and report back.

There being nothing further to discuss, the meeting finished at 8.05 pm.

Chairman