

## WARTLING PARISH COUNCIL

### DRAFT MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING OF

26<sup>th</sup> August 2014

Held at The Reid Hall, Boreham Street

50 Present

Cllrs K Stevens (Chairman), M Corfield, C Paterson and R Lawrence.

There were ten members of the public present.

51 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from A Holbrook and S Parker.

52 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The Minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting held on 9th July 2014 were read, confirmed as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

53 Matters' Arising from the Previous Minutes

There were no matters' arising from the previous minutes.

54 Disclosures of Interests

There were no disclosures of interests in any item at this meeting.

55 Planning Applications

WD2014/1628/F – Land adjacent to Byways – Storage barn to replace existing storage sheds. The relocation/retention of selected structures and retrospective permission for the re-surfacing of the existing access track and running area - The Parish Council sees no reason to amend the comments it made with regard to the previous application for this property under WD2014/1001/F. The Parish Council has previously reported the unauthorised work that has been carried and is of the view that this application should be REFUSED.

The reference to existing sheds and facilities in the application merely refers to structures and items which the applicants have erected and installed. The applicant has not demonstrated an agricultural need for a barn of this size which is out of proportion to the acreage of the land and the limited livestock numbers.

As mentioned before the land has been used for musical events on a number of occasions rather than agricultural purposes which have given rise to complaints to the police and to WDC. The site is highly visible from the road, the footpath and the surrounding area of natural beauty and the Council is of the view it would be detrimental to the rural setting.

WD2014/1501/F – Champneys Farm – Extension to menage and installation of horsewalker – The Parish Council does not have any objections to the extension of the ménage and the installation of a horse walker provided the usage of both is for personal rather than business purposes.

WD2014/1618/F – Land at Wartling Wood – Conversion of stable barn to residential use.

The Parish Council sees no reason to amend the comments it made in regard to the applicants previous application under reference WD2014/0947/F and considers that this latest application must be REFUSED.

This whole site is classified as "ancient woodland" and we dispute the alleged comments from planning officers that the pasture area is not "ancient woodland". Indeed pasture areas are an integral component of such woodlands. To have a house in the middle of these ancient woodlands would spoil the whole look of the area. Permission was originally granted for a stable with the strict condition that once no longer used as a stable the whole building must be dismantled and returned to its original format. We appreciate that planning laws were changed in 2012 but this is not a disused agricultural building it is a stable and we therefore consider that it should now be taken down especially as the owners now have a separate "stable area". The current encroachment of the woodlands and the pathways are causing much damage as has previously been reported to WDC.

As regard to the track to the stables we see no reason why the reasons for refusal given under application number WD2007/0322/FR should not remain. The applicants state that a condition of his purchase of the land is that he must build and maintain the track! Surely this is his problem and the terms of his purchase cannot override planning laws. It should also be noted that despite the certificate of ownership that the applicant does not own the track. And again let us be clear here the track area is a footpath and ESCC Rights of Way have stated that vehicles cannot drive on footpaths.....again a complaint that has previously been lodged with Wealden District Council.

We are also concerned that a survey of the protected and priority species and flora has not been undertaken.

Wartling like WDC is trying to attract more visitors to our district and "ancient woodlands" are an attraction that must be protected.

56 Planning Applications for noting

There were no planning applications to be noted.

57 Questions from Members

There being no other questions from members, the meeting closed at 5:10pm.