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## PLANNING WORKING GROUP

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**MINUTES** of the Meeting held at the site listed below on Monday, 11 June 2018 from 10.00am - 10.35am.

**PRESENT:** Councillors Bobbin, Richard Darby, Mike Dendor, James Hall, Harrison, Mike Henderson, James Hunt, Nigel Kay, Peter Marchington, Bryan Mulhern (Chairman), Prescott and Ghlin Whelan.

**OFFICERS PRESENT:** Philippa Davies and Andrew Spiers.

**APOLOGIES:** Councillors Mike Baldock, Andy Booth and Nicholas Hampshire.

### 54 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No interests were declared.

### 55 **17/505796/FULL - CHURCH FARM, THROWLEY ROAD, THROWLEY, ME13 0PF**

The Chairman welcomed the applicants, agents, parish council representative and three members of the public to the meeting.

The Planner introduced the application and explained that it included three out of the four existing buildings on the site. A small barn would be converted to provide a two bedroom house; an adjacent agricultural building would be converted to provide a farm office and an additional bedroom for a bed and breakfast business, along with the replacement of a large Atcost barn with a smaller shed to house storage space and animal pens. The Planner added that the existing buildings were not in good repair, a public footpath ran through the site, and that the site was adjacent to the Grade I listed church, although none of the buildings within the application site were listed. The application site was in a very isolated rural location, outside the built-up area boundary, and within the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

The Planner reported that a Financial Viability Analysis report had been submitted and the site was deemed to not be commercially viable. He explained that the Duchy of Cornwall had offered the tenants the freehold of the site, which enabled them to continue to live locally.

The Planner reported that local representations and consultees had not objected to the application, as noted in the report. He outlined both positive and negative aspects of the application. He explained that removal of the barn was a positive measure as it was in disrepair, and the replacement would included timber joinery and be constructed sympathetically to the area, and the new use of the Tyler barn as a farm office was acceptable in principle. He referred to policies ST3 (development not permitted unless it would protect and enhance the countryside etc.) and DM3 (in relation to the application site being used for employment) of the Local Plan. The Planner added that the Council now had a 5.3 year housing land supply, which was in excess of the five year supply required by the Government.

As such, although there were some positive aspects, the Planner considered this did not outweigh the harm of unsustainable development outside the built-up area boundary.

The applicant drew attention to the poor condition of the farm buildings, and explained that by allowing the tenants to remain on the site, this enabled them to work and live 'on site', making it a sustainable site. She referred to the National Planning Policy Framework, and local housing for local people. The applicant considered the proposed dwelling was not lavish, and the design of the new barn was sympathetic. They wanted to maintain a small farmyard, and the scale would be reduced in size to the original buildings. The applicant added that they cherished the site and explained that it was in need of sympathetic updating for the long-term future, and they wanted to enhance and care for the site.

A representative from Throwley Parish Council spoke in support of the application and explained that the parish was beautiful and the proposed development would enhance it further.

Local residents raised the following points in support of the application: this would protect and enhance the buildings; the development was within the envelope of the historic site; there was a tradition of housing here; the development was re-using redundant buildings; the roof of one of the buildings was losing its tiles and collapsing; this was a common-sense approach; this would provide housing in an area where it was difficult to add housing; and it would be an ideal conversion.

The County Ward Member spoke in support of the application. He considered the development would improve the setting of the AONB, the church and the footpath, and that any industrial use on the site would be detrimental to the AONB and the church.

The Ward Member spoke in support of the application and considered it would not damage the environment.

In response to questions from Members, it was confirmed that the Kent peg tiles would remain; and the Atcost building would be replaced by a building approximately two thirds the height of the original building, and it would be further away from the boundary of the listed church; and that the wall between the two buildings, alongside the track, would be removed.

Members toured the application site with the Planner.

#### Chairman

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All Minutes are draft until agreed at the next meeting of the Committee/Panel