

ANNEX TO MINUTES

STRETTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING – 17 SEPTEMBER 2020 STATEMENT IN ABSENTIA BY COUNCILLOR RICHARD FOSTER CONCERNING THE FOLLOWING AGENDA ITEM:

Removal of Condition 4 (Annexe shall not be occupied at any time other than for purposes ancillary to the residential use of the dwellinghouse known as Rectory Farm, Rookery Lane, Stretton) of Planning Application 2016/0445/FUL - Proposed single storey extension to include 'granny annexe', orangery and internal alterations. Demolition and replacement of detached vehicular garage.

Annexe Highfield Farm Rookery Lane Stretton Rutland LE15 7RA

Ref. No: 2020/0975/FUL | Received: Mon 17 Aug 2020 | Validated: Mon 17 Aug 2020 | Status: Registered

Being obliged to attend a family funeral in the Lake District at the time of the meeting to discuss the above item and being therefore unable to attend in person, I wish to make my views known by means of the following statement. I do so, having read three representations by neighbours on the RCC planning website and having interviewed the applicants, Mr and Mrs Hall; after all of which I have realised that the matter in hand is not just a family's application for an planning adjustment but a matter which has much wider implications for all those who live in an attractive area and wish to use their properties for the benefit of paying guests; a long established and mutually beneficial aspect of British society over the centuries.

For their part, the Halls tell me that, since Mrs Hall's mother died, they have occasionally provided welcome self-catering accommodation for the parents/carers of the troubled young residents of The Shires, as well as enabling enjoyable holiday breaks in Rutland for other paying guests. Such establishments as theirs, and there are four more self-catering establishments in the village, as one the neighbours' representations points out, are a welcome addition to our local facilities and provide support for local businesses throughout the county, which is welcome in normal times but is particularly so during the current COVID-19 pandemic. The neighbour also notes that they do so without any deleterious effect on the village and, whilst two other correspondents disagree, my own observations concur with the first, well-observed, verdict. Importantly, and more specifically, the guests of all our self-catering premises also enhance the profits of our local village pub, The Jackson Stops Country Inn, an asset which I believe strongly that we must all strive to keep.

Additionally, as Heritage Warden for the Parish of Stretton, I welcomed the Halls' initiative when, on one occasion, they allowed two visitors with metal detectors to search for historical artefacts in one of their fields. Although one correspondent found fault and regarded the two detectorists in the field as invading his privacy, the discovery, by them, of 3 medieval bronze clasps and a King Charles I silver coin emphasises, yet again, the historical significance of Stretton and its siting close to one of the most important thoroughfares in the land, the Great North Road, formerly the Romans' Ermine Street.

In sum, were I to have been present at tonight's meeting, I would have raised no objection to the proposal, seeing it as a sound adjustment to formalise use of the Highfield Farm annexe for self-catering accommodation, now that the lady for whom it was built as a "granny annexe" is, sadly, no longer with us. The circumstances having changed, it seems to me that the quoted Condition 4 should now be seen as no longer relevant and should be removed.

I close by emphasising that I have no pecuniary interest whatsoever to declare as regards the application and all parties contributing thus far to the debate are well known to me.

Richard Foster