**ASHREIGNEY PARISH COUNCIL.**

**An extraordinary meeting of Ashreigney Parish Council was held on Tuesday, 29th September.**

**The meeting was held via Zoom owing to the Covid situation.**

Ashreigney Parish Council held an extraordinary meeting on

Tuesday, 29th September to discuss planning applications submitted in, or affecting, our Parish.

1. Chairman’s welcome: The Chairman, Councillor Hellyer welcomed attendees to the meeting.

Councillors Present: Councillor Cole, Councillor Johns, Councillor Kirkup, Councillor P Middleton, Councillor Parfitt, Councillor Thorne and Councillor Tillyer.

District Councillor Newton was also present together with nine members of the community.

1. Apologies for absence: Apologies were received from Councillor S Middleton.
2. Declarations of interest:

 Councillor Johns declared an interest as a member of Eaglescott Flying Club (5.1)

Councillor Cole declared an interest as a close neighbour to Eaglescott Airfield (5.1).

1. Public Question Time:

Owing to the level of interest in the Planning Application at Eaglescott the Chairman dispensed with Standing Orders.

4.1: Chris Hoole opened the discussion - Mr. Hoole has attended Ashreigney Parish Council meetings previously regarding helicopter activity out of Eaglescott Airfield, and was at the meeting as a member of the public, and not in a formal planning capacity.

Mr. Hoole pointed out that it is important to look at the Planning Application at Eaglescott in its own right, and not allow concerns over helicopter activity to ‘bleed’ into a planning decision.

The point was made that there is limited information available in some elements of the planning application, with very little financial information declared to support the claim under section DM28.

The application also fails under section DM28 owing to the fact that it closes at 9pm and for the winter.

Mr. Hoole expressed his disappointment that neighbouring parishes were not notified of the planning application, and added that in his view the application is not consistent with the local plan.

Mr. Hoole concluded by confirming that there is a demand for the District Councillor for Burrington to ‘call’ the application in.

Other members of the public were invited to bring any further points to the discussion.

4.2: Neighbours to the airfield expressed their concerns that the planning application is ‘the thin end of the wedge’ and activity at the airfield will increase with larger planes. It was made clear the negative impact the current activity has had on their life.

4.3: Another close neighbour to the airfield confirmed that he has formally opposed the application. The parishioner confirmed that he had no choice but oppose the application as he lives on the helicopter flight path, and the noise is intense. The parishioner also pointed out that the many objections need to be recognised when making a planning decision.

4.4: Further concerns were raised relating to the safety of animals and horse riders with the current helicopter activity. A parishioner and DC of a local pony club confirmed that a competent, experienced rider has been thrown from her horse owing to helicopter activity, and small children are forced to dismount their ponies when helicopters are flying to remain safe. The resident made the point that safety and livelihoods are being adversely affected in the current situation, and nothing should be approved that could make the situation potentially worse.

4.5: Concerns were also expressed that the current permitted use at Eaglescott is for recreational flying. This seems to be disregarded, and commercial activities taking place – clearly flouting current permitted permissions.

This concluded PQT.

1. Planning:

Parish Councillors were asked to consider the following applications.

5.1: Application No: 71972 on the North Devon Council Planning portal. The construction of a manager’s dwelling at Eaglescott Airfield.

The Clerk confirmed that a great deal of concern has been expressed regarding the planning application.

Councillors discussed the application, and the following points were made:

I: Smaller airports are struggling. If permission is granted a clause should be added to the conditions preventing the creation of an airport in the future.

Ii: The construction of a manager’s dwelling could lead to the expansion of the business, and the creation of an airport which would increase air traffic, increase noise pollution and the current infrastructure would require a major upgrade to cope with potentially larger aircraft/double engine planes. (The runway would require extending – an additional area appears to be developing now).

III: It was reported that the site visit carried out by Parish Councillors did not provide a clear picture of the application, with ‘sketchy’ details. The point was made that there is a Club House on site which could provide accommodation.

Iv: Concerns were raised that local emergency services would not be able to cope with potentially an airport/larger air field.

v. Councillors were clear in their concerns that an airport could be developed at Eaglescott, and were equally clear that in the current economic climate, with many job losses in the aviation sector, there is absolutely no requirement for additional facilities. Indeed, the greatest concern is not only the impact of bricks and mortar but the impact of any further development of the business which is already operating outside of its remit.

The Chairman asked Councillors to demonstrate their approval of the application. No Councillors were in favour.

 All Councillors, with the exception of two abstentions (owing to declarations of interest) opposed the application. The Clerk to compose a letter to submit to NDC.

The Clerk also to request that the application be ‘called in’ – DC Newton also to do the same.

5.2: Application 1/0601/2020/FUL: Proposed straw bedded calf building at Furze Cottage, Ashreigney.

 A site visit had been carried out and confirmed that drainage will not be a problem, and that the applicants are committed to the project, which is a rebuild.

 Councillors all had opportunity to study the application on the TDC Planning Portal, and no other issues were reported.

 Councillors approved the application unanimously. The Clerk to notify TDC of the decision.

5.3: Application 1/0612/2020/FUL: Rear two storey extension to replace a single storey at the rear of The Nook, Ashreigney.

 A site visit had not been conducted at the time of the meeting. However, Councillors had studied the plans on line, and could see no obvious issues.

 Councillors agreed to approve the application providing the site visit is favourable. Clerk to confirm with TDC.

 5.4: Application 1/0771/2020/FUH: The erection of an oak framed garage at Zion Chapel, Riddlecombe.

 No problems were envisaged with this application after studying the plans. A site visit to be carried out, and providing favourable Councillors agreed to approve the application. The Clerk to

 respond to TDC.

 6.: Correspondence: The Clerk reported that there has been a high level of correspondence regarding the high level of helicopter activity in Ashreigney and the surrounding parishes.

 Councillors all agreed that we are fortunate that Chris Hoole has been able to manage the situation, and liase with interested parties. The massive amount of work that Mr. Hoole has committed

 was acknowledged.

 There had been some discussion regarding the helicopter activity within the planning debate, and it was agreed that owing to time restraints the subject would be discussed at the next meeting.

 7: Financials: Deferred until the October meeting.

 8: Emergency Committee: No report.

 9: Matters to be carried forward: No matters.

 10: Date of next meeting: Tuesday, 20th October 2020 via Zoom.

 The Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance, and declared the meeting closed at 9.20pm.