

**SYMONDSBURY PARISH COUNCIL**

Phone: 07967 683897 Email: [clerk@symondsbury-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@symondsbury-pc.gov.uk)

**Symondsbury Parish Council Planning Committee**

**Tuesday 22nd March 2022, 1900 – 20:30**

**Meeting in Person**

**Held at Eype Schoolroom**

**Minutes**

**Attendees:**

**Committee Members**

**Pelham Allen PA Chairman**

**Steve Ralph SR**

**Jenifer Roddy JR**

**Paul Hartmann PH**

**In Attendance:**

**Public:** There were seven members of the public present: Anna Reeve, Mervyn Ashford, Marilyn Stevens, Tony Dix, Dave Young, Sue Boize, Val Kavanaugh. No press in attendance.

**Summary of Action Points arising**

No	Item	Action
1	6	PH to generate planning reports.

**1. Welcome and apologies:**

1.1 The Chairman opened the meeting and thanked attendees for coming. There were no apologies received.

**2. Declarations of interest:**

2.1 SR declared an interest with item 6.3, Turnpike Cottage, as his own property is in close proximity. There were no other declarations of interest.

**3. Approval of the minutes of the December Meeting:**

3.1 The minutes of the 1<sup>st</sup> March 2022 Planning Committee meeting were confirmed as accurate notes of the meeting and were approved.

**4. Correspondence List (previously circulated)**

4.1 There were no correspondence items.

**5. DEMOCRATIC HALF HOUR** during which members of the public are invited to raise general matters of interest.

5.1 Mr Tony Dix asked if the Planning Committee meeting was a sub-committee meeting of the main Parish Council and how notice of meetings was promulgated. The Chairman commented that the Planning Committee was set up and operated as part of the remit of Symondsburry Parish Council. It is organised as a separate committee and meeting so that planning matters did not overwhelm the running of the main Parish Council. The members of the Planning Committee were selected from and appointed by the Main Parish Council and include members with planning experience. The decisions of the Planning Committee were noted in the main Parish Council meetings.

5.2 Mr Dix also commented that he could not find the advertisement of the meeting and asked how and when it had been advertised. The Chairman commented that the meeting is advertised on the web page and Facebook page of the Parish Council and also on Parish notice boards in Broadoak, Symondsburry, Eype, West Bay and Pine View.

**6. Planning Applications and to consider any other planning/enforcement issues:** (public verbal comments limited to 3 minutes per representation prior to Committee consideration).

**6.1 Application No: P/FUL/2022/01179** Location: Lower Eype Farmhouse, Barton Lane, Eype, DT6 6AW Proposal: Erect Agricultural Barn.

**6.1.1** The Chairman advised the meeting that the application for the barn at Lower Eype Farmhouse had been considered at the 1<sup>st</sup> March meeting of the Planning Committee. Due to the planning application being early in its consultation period it was clear that the public would not have had an appropriate opportunity to comment on the proposals. It was agreed by the Committee that the application would be reconsidered closer to the closing date for comments so that any public comments could be reviewed and taken into account. At the 1<sup>st</sup> March planning meeting the Planning Committee agreed to support the application (No Objection) on the

information available at that time including the submissions of the statutory consultees and officers.

#### **6.1.2 Anna Reeve addressed the Committee.**

Mrs Reeve commented that she was not going to outline the proposals further. However, she added that as identified at the last meeting a simple error had been made by her in the positioning of the proposed agricultural barn too close to the boundary with the neighbouring property The Barn (the original barn serving Lower Eype Farm, now converted to residential use). She confirmed that the error had now been amended and the information resubmitted to Dorset Council which restarted the clock on the consultation period. She confirmed that the agricultural barn had been reduced in size and altered in form. She reminded the meeting that a pre-submission consultation had taken place with the Dorset Council Planning Department.

#### **6.1.3 Mervyn Ashford addressed the Committee.**

Mr Ashford reminded the meeting this was now the third planning application for the same barn on the site (this included the appeal), and all had been refused. He commented that the error on the plan was only picked up at the previous planning meeting. He added that surely the applicant, their land agent and their advisors must have studied the information for some time and it was odd that the error was only discovered at that meeting. Mrs Reeve responded that they did not have a land agent acting for them and that she had produced the drawing and it was a simple error that had now been corrected. Mr Ashford asserted that the change was advised by the Parish Council and he thought this was irregular as the Parish Council should be impartial. The Chairman stated that the Parish Council is impartial. PH commented that as stated in the minutes of the meeting of the Committee on 1<sup>st</sup> March he observed that the Barn appeared to be close to the neighbouring boundary which may create issues of loss of amenity. This then prompted the comment from Mrs Reeve that she had made an error. Mr Ashford stated that the Parish Council did not listen to the views of the residents as nobody in the village wanted the barn. The Chairman observed that the opinions of all residents and information from all sources were taken into consideration.

With regards to the proposal, Mr Ashford suggested that he was not objecting to a building in principle however the sheer size and form of the building was unacceptable. He commented that the footprint was as large as St Peter's Church. He further argued that the siting of the barn so close to the village, so prominent in the landscape, spoiled the character of the listed farmhouse as well as the views from the New Inn public house and surrounding houses. He stated that it also had an unacceptable effect on the Conservation Area and AONB. He stated that the barn could be seen from the coastal path and referred to photo montages submitted to Dorset Council. He suggested that the barn was too big for the acreage of land, being only 10 acres.

Other members of the public were asked if they had any further comments. Marilyn Stevens, Tony Dix, Dave Young and Sue Boize spoke briefly. The main issues that were mentioned were:

- The barn was too large for the acreage of the landholding.
- The proposal was not in keeping with the unique and special nature of the area.
- The barn appeared to have a utilitarian look with the use of steel frame and timber cladding design.
- The area flooded in heavy rain as part of the village was in a natural bowl and the proposals would make this worse.
- Could the barn be converted into something else in the future such as a house?
- How could the applicant harvest hay for the equestrian market and graze sheep at the same time? Mrs Reeve answered that the sheep would be there to graze the orchard which had just been planted, not the hay field.
- It was felt strongly that the Parish Council was not listening to local residents and representing them. As such democracy was not being demonstrated.
- Did the Parish Council believe it was fit for purpose?

The Chairman responded that the Parish Council did listen to all parishioners, was acting democratically and was fit for purpose. He pointed out that if any parishioners felt otherwise they could apply to be a Parish Councillor and if appointed would be welcomed to contribute to the Parish in all aspects of the Council's work.

#### **6.1.4** The Chairman asked PH to outline the proposal.

PH commented that all the documentary information submitted on the proposal has been reviewed. Many of the written objections have similar basic concerns, and he suggested that some of the information in the written objections is misleading. Anyone who thinks they will be affected should have the opportunity of making a statement, however their factual comments have to be correct.

The issues from public consultation were summarised as below:

- Visual Intrusion
- Size/bulk (too big for the landholding)
- Detrimental effect on the AONB and Conservation Area
- Loss of/effect on views
- Detrimental effect on traffic
- Possible flooding issues
- Potential contamination of the Winterbourne stream
- Potential noise issues
- Not a sustainable business
- Fire risk assessment not provided/application is unlawful.

To ensure a thorough review of the application a site visit was undertaken. The Chairman and PH visited the site visit on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2022 at 09:30. They viewed the site initially from the gate and field opposite the entrance to the Church. They then walked down the road towards the Village and took opportunities to see whether the site was visible on their route past the public house, down Mount Lane and Barton Lane and round into Lower Eype Farmhouse. Separately PH reviewed the site from more distant locations including Public Footpath routes. Once on site it was noted the building position was approximately marked out so that a correct analysis of the site detail could be understood, including levels.

PH confirmed that, as noted in the previous planning meeting, a pre-application consultation had taken place with Dorset Council planning officers and the key outcomes of that consultation were summarised as follow:

- Notwithstanding earlier significant local concerns and the result of the appeal the reasons for previous refusal relating to the principle of development cannot be sustained with regards to the new proposal. Thus, the remaining issues largely relate to Heritage, Conservation and the AONB.
- The Dorset Landscape team confirm that a siting closer to the farmhouse group of buildings is more likely to be acceptable subject to the agreement of the AONB team.
- The preferred format of the built form is one of a single building in a small L shape with the larger part to the West and with a differential roof height between the two parts.
- Access to the barn from the South would be preferable.
- The siting of the building close to the existing building group (previously a working farm group) would not lead to an in principle concern.
- The detailed design of the building is an in principle concern and there is a recommendation to use sympathetic materials that assist in accommodating the building into the rural setting.
- It is considered a significant change in the building form from the previous application would be required.

PH commented that the applicant, in addressing the issues of the previous applications and undertaking the pre application advice, had submitted a change in the proposals from previous schemes as below:

- The proposed barn is situated in the lowest part of the holding and a similar distance from the farmhouse as the original barn. The position of the barn on the site allows for it to be dug into the natural slope of the land to the North. The hardstanding area is shielded from neighbouring buildings by the barn itself.

- The barn is situated close to the mature tree and hedge line of the southern boundary of the field, which is also the boundary to the residential barn, so as to maximise the grouping of the buildings and the use of the mature vegetation and trees to minimise any visual intrusion.
- The barn is one building but an L shape with a smaller machine store and larger hay store. There is the ability for temporary animal holding areas within the built form should these be required.
- The dimensions of the barn are 24.8 metres long with the hay barn at a depth of 12 metres and the machine store 9 metres. There is a differential ridge height between the two parts of the building with the hay barn at 3.65 metres and the machine store at 2.99 metres.
- The barn will be accessed by the existing track within the boundary of Lower Eype Farmhouse which progresses into the field via an existing field gate.
- The building structure is of a steel frame and the cladding materials are vertical Yorkshire boarding for the hay barn and waney edged timber boarding for the machine store. The difference in materials is designed to break up the massing of the building and with the waney edge timber finish, relate to the existing listed farmhouse. The roof finish will be grey fibre cement sheets and the hardstanding will be free draining scalplings.
- Additional planting to supplement and improve the existing hedgerows is planned.

PH then outlined the relevant planning position and responses from the statutory consultees and officers in relation to the issues and comments raised in the written objections and support letters, for the benefit of the meeting.

- Visual Intrusion: The current proposals and the position of the barn do not produce an excessive visual intrusion. It must be remembered that this is a rural setting with fields and farmland surrounding the village. A barn of this type within a rural area should not be considered unusual or out of keeping. Notwithstanding this the form of the building, the sensitive use of materials, the setting of the building into the slope and the use of the mature landscape to filter the views substantially reduces any perceived visual intrusion.
- Size/bulk (too big for the landholding): The form of the building, the sensitive use of materials, the setting of the building into the slope breaks up the mass of the building.
- Detrimental effect on the AONB and Conservation Area: Notes from the AONB team state that the design changes from previous submissions positively address the visual and landscape concerns previously held. They have no objection. With reference to the Conservation Area the Conservation Officer has stated that the site is outside of the Conservation Area and the barn has no effect on its character or setting. Further the listed farmhouse and its setting is not adversely

affected by the development. The use of differential materials and the adjusted built form is accepted and is considered to have no harm on the surrounding heritage assets. The submission is supported. The Natural Environment team signed off the biodiversity plan issuing a certificate of approval.

- Loss of/effect on views: It must be remembered that no one has a right to a view. It appears that the proposed barn and its position may not be as highly visible as claimed by some objectors. This is supported by the owner of two properties in Mount Lane. It is obviously visible from the neighbouring property and the matter here is the potential loss of amenity or privacy. As the proposed barn is to the north there is no loss of light.
- Detrimental effect on traffic: As the access is from the south and existing the Highway Department have confirmed there is no objection.
- The development could add to flooding issues: It is understood that flooding occurs due to the tremendous amount of rainwater that pours down through the village then down Barton Lane. This would suggest any water from Lower Eype Farm would not be the main contributor to flooding issues.
- Potential contamination of the Winterbourne stream: The term Winterbourne refers to a seasonal spring. The outfall from the spring and field appears to be to the east of the proposed barn position. The Environmental Team had no comment to make.
- Potential noise issues: There will be very little difference in noise after the initial construction. Noise should be no worse than normal rural activities.
- Not a sustainable business: There is a professional report available that demonstrates the need for the barn on this small farm and the potential viability of the small business.
- Fire risk assessment not provided/application is unlawful: – The current requirements for fire risk assessment at the planning stage sits with what is known as Gateway One legislation. It is understood the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 does not apply to planning applications. This is confirmed by Dorset Council. The current fire risk assessment legislation only applies to relevant buildings which generally are certain high rise residential buildings (those above 18 metres). Under building regulations an assessment for compliance with a Fire Safety Order may be required, but this is not a planning matter.

It was noted that that based on letters submitted and website listings, it appears that at present The Barn is a holiday let, run as a business and not the permanent home of Mr Ashford. Mr. Ashford stated that he and his family had previously resided in the building and would be moving back into The Barn as their permanent home in September of 2022.

In summary, PH informed the meeting that the application for the barn was the third application, with the two earlier applications having been refused, one at appeal. It was noted that the position of the barn was in the lower area of the site and would be dug into the slope and be well screened by established hedgerow and trees with supplementary planting. Further, the barn size had been reduced from the previous applications, by creating an “L” shape form as suggested in the pre-application advice. The reduction in size and bulk together with the alteration of the massing, with differential roof heights, substantially assists in the visual acceptance of the barn in the landscape. The pre-application advice also confirmed that the positioning of the proposed functional barn closer to the listed farmhouse would not be an unexpected feature, given the historic use of the farmhouse. In addition, the advice from officers also indicated that the proposed siting of the barn would not have an effect on the siting of the listed farmhouse, the setting of the conservation area, the longer views of the church and would have a negligible effect on the immediate landscape and AONB longer views. The applicant takes the stewardship of the farmhouse and land extremely seriously. The small business of which the barn will be part of will provide funds towards the upkeep and improvement of this unique rural area for the benefit of local residents and visitors alike. The many valid comments from local residents and objectors have been listened to and noted, as well as those from the statutory consultees and professional officers.

#### **Conclusion:**

The Chairman stated that he understands the difficulty this proposal presents in obtaining an outcome satisfactory to all parties. He and the Parish Council do realise the strength of feeling from local residents who do not support the barn proposal. However, the Planning Committee and the main Parish Council recognise the long term benefits of the proposal linked to the upkeep of land to the north of the village and the contribution this could make to maintaining this special area. As such they appreciate the changes made by the applicants in trying to accommodate the concerns of the local residents and the Planning Committee’s support for the application has not changed. The Committee decided unanimously to support the application.

#### **Decision: Approve**

**6.2 Application No: P/HOU/2022/01591** Location: North Barn, New Street Lane, Bridport, DT6 6AD Proposal: Erect Single storey extension:

**6.2.1** The Chairman asked PH to outline the proposal. PH commented that the proposal was a single story extension to the existing single storey barn development. SR commented that the Parish Council considered and approved the original conversion approximately 4 years ago. PH commented that the extension was in keeping with the original design and created a simple courtyard format. The materials proposed were as used on the existing building and were appropriate in the context of design of the extension. PH commented that the extension could be seen from the A35 however the road is at a lower level with no footpath either side. There is road-



side hedgerow screening and being a trunk road the traffic will be passing at speed. From New Street Lane the view of the extension would be minimal and the small extension design did not detract from the character or setting of the immediate area. It was clear the additional space in the building was required to support the successful farrier business operating from the site.

**Conclusion:** The Planning Committee was unanimous in approving the proposals.

**Decision: Approve.**

**6.3 Application No: P/HOU/2022/00749** Location: Turnpike Cottage, West Road, Bridport, Dorset DT6 6AG Proposal: Demolition of lean-to extension and summer house and erection of two-storey side extension, including raised decking area and external steps.

**6.3.1** The Chairman asked PH to outline the application. PH commented that the existing property was a very small single bedroom dwelling with a number of external outbuildings to the west, very close to the A35 and was understood to be the original toll house. The owners were local and work at a local business in Chideock. The proposals include the demolition of the outbuildings and the construction of a substantial extension offset from the original building. The overall layout of the building provides for 2 bedrooms and an open plan living dining area bringing the accommodation up to a good standard. The design is very sympathetic to the location and deals with the negative aspects of the A35 trunk road very well. The material used gives a traditional feel and helps the building sit comfortably in the landscape. It is recognised the building is in the AONB and can be viewed from a distance. However, as it is part of a small group of buildings the proposals do not damage the character or setting of the area.

**Conclusion:** The Committee unanimously supported the proposals.

**Decision: Approve.**

**7. Projects: All reports to be submitted to the Clerk in writing at least 48 hours prior to the meeting.**

7.1 There were no Projects reported.

**8. Vearse Farm:**

8.1 With regards to Vearse Farm PH commented that he had spoken with James Lytton-Trevers, the planning officer at Dorset Council, and with the officer at National Highways responsible for this area. Mr Lytton-Trevers had not received any further information on Miles Cross roundabout and confirmed he was waiting on a response from National Highways on the detailed design and safety audit. National Highways confirmed that they were still awaiting the final detail design for the roundabout and associated works. In addition, they were expecting the developer to apply for a

derogation on some of the design aspects. PH also contacted Will Austin, Town Clerk of Bridport who confirmed he had received no further information and had tried contacting the developers without success. Mr Austin confirmed he would try and contact the developers again to see if an update meeting can be arranged.

**9. Items for inclusion at the next meeting.**

9.1 No items noted.

**10. AOB**

10.1 Nothing to report.

**11. Next Meeting**

11.1 The next scheduled Planning Committee meeting will be at 7 pm on 5<sup>th</sup> April 2022. The venue will be Eype Church.