

**MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING OF ST NEOT PARISH  
COUNCIL HELD IN ST NEOT VILLAGE HALL ON WEDNESDAY, 14TH JULY 2021  
AT 7PM**

**Present:** Councillors H Bunt (Chair), C Smith, T Thrussell, T Hooper, M Rowe and G Rogers.

Catherine Evans, Nick Vivian, Valerie Bunt, Alastair Cuthbert

Sue Blaxley (Parish Clerk)

The Chair opened the meeting at 7pm.

**Public Participation**

Catherine Evans spoke in respect of planning application reference number PA21/05164 for the construction of single storey agricultural type building on a concrete base 30m x 15m to be used as a workshop, storage and equestrian use at Whitebarrow Farm, St Neot. She said that the site is currently a field and that it is proposed to erect this building as close to the existing building as possible. She said that it will be constructed on a concrete base and will comprise a steel frame which will be metal clad. She said that the building will be used for storage, stabling and a workshop.

Alastair Cuthbert spoke in respect of planning application reference number PA21/05888 for internal alterations, extensions, and conservation/restoration work to form new kitchen and garden room including new PV array at The Old Mill, St Neot. His presentation read as follows: "This application relates to a building and overall site that has been a residential property for approximately fifty years, twenty-five years of which has been in my ownership. It has not been a working mill for approximately 75 years. That said, I am committed to preserving and enhancing this important area of St Neot's Cornish historical setting, and I feel that this is strongly reflected in the designs proposed, and the inclusion of the restoration work – repointing of the public-facing walls and renovation of the waterwheel. Here, advice has been sought from the Mills Section of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, and an application for grant funding has been invited.

Consultation and neighbour engagement –

- Pre-application advice was sought in December 2020 (PA20/02948/PREAPP) and provided by Shauna Vandermeulen in January 2021. She remains the planning officer for this matter and the plans carefully reflect the advice given.
- Her suggestion to approach the then Chair of the Parish Council, Lynne Jones, and former Cornwall Councillor Martin Eddy was followed, and they gave support in principle having visited the site.

· Even if approved, building work cannot take place without the agreement for access from the owners of the two private lanes. I am grateful to Rob and Lyn Lester and Natalie and Laurence O'Neill for their helpful approach in this respect, which includes proposals for site management to reduce the impact during the building works. I have also discussed the plans with my neighbours in Tavern Terrace and the properties nearby, provided clarification, and taken note of any matters raised. One point I should clarify from your site visit on Monday is that the triangle of land in the lane from the war memorial immediately to the west of my property, and presently utilised by Mrs Bunt from Bridgend Cottage, is actually owned by Mr and Mrs O'Neill from Trelowen. In consultation, no objection has been raised with me regarding crossing that land to undertake the work, and having commissioned a detailed survey that extended beyond my property to accurately capture the wider detail of the site, all of the adjoining planting and gravel pathways can easily be reinstated.

#### Context –

· The aim is to tidy up and enhance the appearance of this part of the Conservation Area. The kitchen extension and new entrance will return a longstanding redundant area of land to its former level, provide a legitimate use for the former piggery section in our ownership, whilst enhancing its connection with the parent building. Many residents of St Neot will have no knowledge of the presence of the waterwheel. It will become a real focus and feature.

· The garden room replaces an ugly extension that is not in keeping with the parent building, not least the roof design and windows looking onto a large oil tank and facing our neighbours at Trelowen. This new extension with its significantly lower floor level will be far more subtle and unobtrusive, its largely white render in keeping with the setting, Bridgend Cottage, Tavern Terrace, and Trelowen all having that finish. Here, the gable end of parent building was

poorly renovated in the 1970s, being patched up with dense concrete blocks and bricks. A rendered finish will enhance this end of the building.

· A precedent in this specific part of the Conservation Area has been set to build on land boundaries. The O'Neill's impressive new extension to the side of Trelowen borders the lane in this way. Bridgend Cottage similarly forms the boundary along its west elevation. Indeed, the East Elevation of The Old Mill is one boundary, and our section of the former piggery presently forms the boundary with Tavern Terrace. Likewise, the remainder of the piggery buildings associated with Tavern Terrace form the boundary with the patio area beyond our house. Therefore, the garden room boundary with Mr and Mrs O'Neill's land, and the modest increase in the rebuilt piggery will be entirely in keeping with that principal and will not present a view that contrasts with the buildings nearest to mine.

· When The Old Mill was converted to a dwelling, the inside of the property was gutted. It largely remains a 1970s house within an eighteenth-century shell. The proposed

works do away with corridor that extends along the length of the property, impacting on room size and the best use of the space. The extensions allow internal redesign at ground floor level, including the provision of a toilet, disabled compliant access, additional storage space and lighter. Provision of the outside steps will link the redeveloped side garden with the land at first floor level avoiding the need to go through bedrooms. Using environmentally beneficial energy supplies that will not be visible from public areas will negate the requirement for oil to heat the property and provide hot water.

Policy –

In terms of the Cornwall Local Plan, I believe that the design reflects a respect for the overall setting, including the historic landscape and enhancing the quality of this area of St Neot thereby complying with Policy 2. It improves the natural lighting and enhances the use of space within the property in compliance with Policy 13. The use of renewable and low carbon energy complies with Policy 14. I believe that the lowering of the side garden to use with the parent building and incorporating the enhanced section of piggery in this development is its best use and fits with Policy 21. Finally, the design respects, and is in keeping with, the AONB, Conservation Area and Historic Environment of St Neot, and complies with Policies 23 and 24.

I mentioned earlier that we have lived at The Old Mill for 25 years and our plans are to significantly invest in this property with no intention to move. Indeed, the impact of Covid and working from home for over a year reinforces a need to concentrate on making the most of your home and local community as opposed to seeking opportunities elsewhere. I hope that our designs meet with your approval and thank you for taking the time to visit my home earlier this week, and to now consider this proposal”.

Valerie Bunt said that she would like to see access to the site for building materials via the front of The Old Mill.

Councillor G Rogers asked Alastair Cuthbert to clarify the amendments which had been submitted to Cornwall Council in respect of the application. Alastair Cuthbert said that it had been clarified that the new entrance to the side will be a pedestrian access only, the piggery is in the Applicant’s ownership, the wall round to 1 Tavern Terrace will be retained, the roofing material on the lower part of the piggery will be slate which will be different to the roofing materials which will be used on the higher part of the piggery. Councillor G Rogers asked if the building materials could be brought through the gap in the hedge. Alastair Cuthbert said that they could and that they could also be stored inside the garden when the ground level has been raised. Councillor T Thrussell asked how long the top lane would be used to access the site. Alastair Cuthbert said that it would depend how long the builders take to do the works.

## **1. Apologies**

None

## **2. Declaration of interest in items on the agenda**

None

## **3. To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> June 2021**

The minutes of the meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> June 2021, having been previously circulated, were agreed as an accurate record.

## **4. Applications and appeals received from Cornwall Council**

### **To receive and consider the following planning applications:**

#### **PA21/05164 – Construction of single storey agricultural type building on a concrete base 30m x 15m to be used as a workshop, storage and equestrian use at Whitebarrow Farm, St Neot**

Councillor C Smith said that he can see no reason to object to this application although it would be preferable if the building was dug further into the ground so that it is not so visible on the skyline. In addition, he said that the roofing materials should be an appropriate colour to blend into the environment. Councillor T Hooper said that the proposal complies with Policies 16, 22 and 23 of the CLP. She said that lowering the building further into the ground and a suitable colour for the roofing materials would benefit the proposal in terms of its impact on the landscape. Councillor T Thrussell said that he considers that the proposal complies with Policies 12a and 23 of the CLP. He said that some planting on the lower side of the building would soften its impact on the landscape. The Chair said that the neighbour does not object to the proposal. It was proposed by Councillor C Smith and seconded by Councillor T Hooper that the application be supported. However, the impact of the building would be reduced if it was lowered into the ground, the roofing materials are of an appropriate colour and some planting takes place on the lower side of the building. All Councillors voted in favour of this proposal.

#### **PA21/03867 – Conversion of existing stable block into additional family accommodation at Manor Farm Stables Bolventor Launceston**

Councillor T Hooper said that the proposal complies with Policies 7(3), 12(b) and 24 of the CLP as it would be a good use of a redundant building and the proposed development is of a sympathetic design. Councillor G Rogers said that the existing building will be slightly reduced in size and there is a need for this additional accommodation. Councillor C Smith said that the proposal also complies with Policy 21(a) of the CLP. Councillor T Thrussell said that Policies 23.2 and 12(a) are also relevant. He said that he thinks that the design is relatively poor in that it does not reflect the character of the area. Councillor M Rowe said that it will tidy up the existing building. The Chair said that the additional accommodation is for the Applicant's mother who will move there and be able to have care. It was proposed by Councillor M Rowe

and seconded by Councillor T Thrussell that the application be supported. All Councillors voted in favour of this proposal.

**PA21/05888 - Proposed internal alterations, extensions, and conservation/restoration work to form new kitchen and garden room including new PV array at The Old Mill, St Neot**

Councillor M Rowe said that he fully supports the proposed development for a family who are committed to living in the parish. He said that clarification as to how access to the site will be gained during the construction phase should be sought in order to maintain neighbourly relationships. Councillor T Hooper said there are a number of policies in the CLP against which this proposal should be judged but the main policies are Policies 12 and 24 in that the proposed development will be in character with the existing building and that the proposal will conserve, maintain and reveal the historic water wheel. Councillor G Rogers said that it is proposed that a window will replace the front door and questioned whether the door is of historic value. Councillor C Smith said that the opening will be retained and will comprise a false bottom with a window above. Councillor M Rowe said that the window will provide great benefit in terms of light. Councillor T Thrussell said that the site lies within Flood Zones 2 and 3 and that the doorway is an entry point for water. The Chair said that it is good to hear that there is some grant funding available for the restoration of the building. It was proposed by Councillor C Smith and seconded by Councillor T Hooper that the application be supported subject to a condition attached to the planning permission asking the Applicant to submit proposals for access to the site during the construction phase prior to the commencement of works. All Councillors voted in favour of this proposal.

**5. Date of Next Meeting**

To be arranged.

There was no further business and the meeting was closed at 7:40 pm.