

WEST KNOYLE PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Clerk – Mrs. L. C. Wood

Minutes of a Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday, 22nd January 2019 at 7.30 p.m. in West Knoyle Village Hall.

Present: Councillors Jinny Brockway (Chairman), Tony Davis, Andre Filleau, Cathleen Randall & Paul Yates. Also Wiltshire Councillor George Jeans & 8 members of the public

Meeting convened at 7.30 p.m. with Public Session

The Chairman will convene the Parish Council meeting after the public session (please note that members of the public are no longer permitted to speak unless invited to do so by the Chairman).

- None

Apologies for absence – none received

83. To receive declarations of interest from members and to consider requests for new DPI dispensations.

Members are invited to declare disclosable pecuniary interests and other interests in items on the agenda as required by the West Knoyle Parish Council Code of Conduct for Members and by the Localism Act 2011.

Cllr. Davis declared a pecuniary interest in Minute No. 84b) and confirmed that he would leave the room when this was discussed.

84. Planning (All applications can be viewed on Wiltshire Council's website

<http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/environmentandplanning/planninganddevelopment/planningapplicationssearchonline/planningsearch.htm> – and type in the relevant application number)

- a) To consider the following planning applications and agree a consultation response to the planning authority:

Application Ref: 18/12039/PNCOU
Application for: Prior Notifications on change of use
Proposal: Notification for Prior Approval for a proposed change of use of agricultural building to a Dwelling house (Class C3) and for associated operational development.
At: Barn 1, Oxleaze Farm, West Knoyle BA12 6AE

Application Ref: 18/12041/PNCOU
Application for: Prior Notifications on change of use
Proposal: Notification for Prior Approval for a proposed change of use of agricultural building to a Dwelling house (Class C3), and for associated operational development.
At: Barn 2, Oxleaze Farm, West Knoyle. BA12 6AE

The Clerk read out a statement to explain the PNCOU Class Q applications as follows:

Part Q planning regulations were introduced in 2014 as part of the government's drive to ease the pressure on housing in rural areas and to offer farmers the opportunity to deliver much needed rural housing on redundant or underutilised sites and encourage farmers to diversify and identify alternative income streams. The Part Q planning regulations have subsequently been amended in 2018 changing the permissible floor area and number of residential units in a single agricultural unit. Class Q regulations can be applied to buildings which have been used for agriculture on or before 20th March 2013. It doesn't apply to buildings which are in an AONB, National Parks or conservation areas or those which are listed.

The regulations state:

- You can create up to three larger homes with a combined maximum floor space of 465 sqm or up to five smaller homes, each no larger than 100 sqm or a mix of both, with a total of no more than five homes, of which no more than three units may be larger homes.
- You cannot extend the building beyond its existing external dimensions and the garden area cannot be any bigger than the footprint of the building itself.
- The building must be suitable for conversion to residential use, structurally able to take the loading of the residential conversion, and the design and external appearance of the proposed conversion must also be deemed to be appropriate.

Other stringent criteria must also be met regarding transport, highways and noise impacts, contamination and flood risks.

It would appear that each local planning authority brings its own interpretation of the Class Q rules and I have already heard it said that North Dorset's interpretation is quite different to Wiltshire. It seems that the new regulations are being tested widely at the moment – we currently have three applications in Mere and I am sure there will be many more in the pipeline so it would be helpful to have some kind of benchmark to help with decision making. There have also been a number of appeals lodged, some upheld and some dismissed and some taken for a High Court Decision. It seems to me that most of these cases rest on the interpretation of what might reasonably be described as conversion, especially in the case of steel framed barns.

The Chairman informed those present that the Parish Council had attended a site meeting on Sunday morning at Oxleaze Farm and thanked Mr. & Mrs. Coward for allowing this and said that it had been very useful for councillors. The Chairman said that she had been slightly puzzled over some plans she had seen on Sunday which showed some yellow ownership boundary lines to show that land and property had been split between Mr. & Mrs. P. Coward & Mr. & Mrs. C. Coward and said that this was not shown within the planning application. Mr. Charlie Coward explained that the ownership had been transferred so that this application was now being submitted under their ownership whereas the previous application had been submitted under Mr. & Mrs. Philip Coward's ownership. The Chairman said that she was confused as to why the stabling was included within the land owned by Mr. & Mrs. P. Coward and Mr. C. Coward explained that the planning officers had environmental concerns relating to the conversion of Barn 1 and that they had now subsequently overcome those concerns by creating a wall or fence between barn 1 and the stables. Members expressed their concern that following the conversion of these two agricultural buildings as proposed, there would then be a need for further stabling or associated equine/agricultural buildings on the site. Mr. Coward said that they had every intention in working the site as an agricultural area and keeping the land grazed with livestock to look after the land and continue its improvement and he was also proposing an extensive amount of tree planting to ensure that the proposed conversions blended in with the surrounding countryside. Mr. Coward said he appreciated this opportunity to communicate with the Parish Council and with residents and to find out their concerns because they wanted to live in this village and help out in the local community as much as possible. He noted that residents had been concerned about the level of on-road parking outside the farm in the past and he assured the Parish Council that all parking would be inside the gates. Furthermore, he pointed out that there had been some farm burglaries in the area recently and he felt that the conversion of these buildings would provide extra security for the farm, livestock and property in the area.

Wiltshire Cllr. George Jeans pointed out that the previous planning application for the 2 barns collectively was refused by Wiltshire Council in August 2018; the reasons for refusal were:

- 1 - In respect of the smaller brick and block building – conflict between agricultural, livestock activity and occupants of proposed dwelling in respect of noise, odour and pest nuisance due to close proximity to existing agricultural buildings.
- 2 - In respect of the larger steel portal framed barn – conflict between agricultural, livestock activity and occupants of proposed dwelling in respect of noise, odour and pest nuisance due to close proximity to existing agricultural buildings. Also it was considered that the extent of the works that would be necessary for the structure to function as a dwelling would go beyond that which could be reasonably described as 'conversion'.

Cllr. Jeans said that he was satisfied that Mr. & Mrs. Coward had taken steps to overcome the reasons for refusal relating to conflict between agricultural activity and residential occupancy although he still had doubts as to whether the reasons for refusal relating to the extent of the works necessary for the second barn to function as a dwelling could be reasonably described as a 'conversion' but he said that the application now came with an accompanied structural survey and that there had obviously been some investigations carried out to try and convince the planners that this reason was not valid.

The Parish Council discussed whether or not the conversion of Barn 2 would result in the requirement to move the ménage in the future thereby eating further into the agricultural land. However, it was explained that, if this was a requirement, it would need to be the subject of a planning application. There were also discussions about the adequacy of on-site parking provision for the dwellings and visitors and whether this would result in the loss of further buildings or space that would thus have to be compensated for in the future resulting in the loss of agricultural land. Members of the Parish Council felt that they were not qualified to comment on whether or not Barn 2 could be 'reasonably converted' and Cllr. Filleau & Cllr. Yates said that they did not feel that a residential dwelling of this size with the existing cladding and roof materials retained would be in keeping with the local character and rural nature of the area. Both councillors expressed the view that they would prefer to see a planning application to rebuild the barn with wood and stone or more natural materials. However, they understood that this was not within the remit of a Class Q Prior Notification application.

The following proposals were made by Cllr. Yates, seconded by Cllr. Filleau and carried with a unanimous vote:

Application Ref: 18/12039/PNCOU - Barn 1 – The Parish Council RESOLVED that this building can be reasonably 'converted', using natural materials, so that it will look sympathetic and in character with the surrounding rural area. Members felt, however, that residential occupation of this barn should be tied/connected to Oxleaze Farm and to any residential occupation that may be granted for Barn 2. In other words, it should not be possible to separate the buildings/units and sell them off separately in the future.

Application Ref: 18/12041/PNCOU - Barn 2 – The Parish Council RESOLVED that they were not qualified to comment on the structural integrity of the building for conversion although they were happy with the principle of conversion to residential purposes. However, members were not happy with the design of the barn conversion which would be out of keeping with the rural countryside and local character.

- b) Pre-application consultation - Consultation on the principal only on the proposed development of a single residential dwelling house to be situated on land to the south of Rectory Cottage, West Knoyle BA12 6AF (between Rectory Cottage & Stoney Bridge). As the Parish Council has no formal planning application to consider it can only consider the principal of development and provide the applicant, at this early stage, with information on any issues that members feel would be appropriate.

Having declared a pecuniary interest in the above matter, Cllr. Davis left the meeting and took no part in discussion and/or voting.

Mrs. Louise Davis, being the potential applicant, explained where the house was likely to be situated which was next to the barns and that the barns would remain in situ. Members of the public were given the opportunity to ask questions and members of the Parish Council asked questions too. In summary, the proposal was to use the same vehicular access as is used for the barns. It was proposed that the building would be of traditional style, two-storey with four bedrooms and off-road parking either in front or behind the house. No garage was proposed. Care would be taken to ensure privacy of neighbours in relation to overlooking windows. Septic soakaway would be required.

Cllr. Jeans explained that as West Knoyle has no defined Housing Policy Boundary and is not considered sustainable and therefore it is likely that he would have to ask for any such planning application to be determined by Committee which he would be prepared to do, with the Parish Council's support, because he feels strongly that housing should be permitted for local people and people with a local connection which is

quite apparent in this case. However, he also pointed out that it may be difficult to get the planning committee on board unless there was some kind of community benefit. Cllr. Jeans mentioned that parking in and around Stoney Bridge is absolutely diabolical and something which he has had cause to meet with nearby residents about recently and wondered if this planning application could encompass some off-road parking provision – even if it was just a lay-by making provision for 2 cars to park off-road. Mrs. Davis said that there is nothing negative about this suggestion but previous informal meetings with residents of Stoney Bridge relating to car parking provision had not met approval. Cllr. Jeans said that he was not suggesting the provision of extra parking for the residents of Stoney Bridge but just general public parking and he felt that if it was possible to provide two off-road parking spaces on private land, possibly in the form of a layby, then he would stand a greater chance of receiving support from committee members.

Cllr. Filleau said that he wondered whether a chalet type house might be preferable as opposed to a full-height two-storey house which he felt may be too tall. Mrs. Davis thanked the Parish Council for this opportunity which would provide feedback that she could use with architects and planning officers in preparation for a formal planning application.

85. General Items

b) Date of next meeting – 12th March 2019 – Cllr. Filleau offered his apologies and said that he would be away for this meeting.

86. Forthcoming meetings/events

- South West Wiltshire Area Board Meeting – Wednesday, 30th January 2019 at 6.30 p.m. -Nadder Centre, Weaveland Road, Tisbury, SP3 6HJ – The Chairman was urged to attend this meeting as the Parish Council had submitted an Area Board Grant application for a solar powered Speed Indicator Device and this would be considered at the meeting. Also that this would be the last meeting for the current Area Board Manager, Stephen Harris.
- South West Wiltshire Community Safety Group Meeting – Wednesday, 13th February at 6.00 p.m. – Nadder Centre, Weaveland Road, Tisbury, SP3 6HJ

Members are reminded that the Parish Council has a general duty to consider the following matters in the exercise of any of its functions: Equal Opportunities (race, gender, sexual orientation, marital status and any disability), Crime and Disorder, Health & Safety and Human Rights.