

## LANREATH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of an Extraordinary Parish Council Meeting held 7<sup>th</sup> December 2021  
Commencing 19.30

### **Present:**

Cllr P Seaman – Chair, Cllr E Lee, Cllr A J Gundry, Cllr D Heard, Cllr J Tamblyn, Cllr P Bartram, Cllr S Cave, Mrs R Warren (Clerk)

The Chair welcomed everyone to the Extraordinary Parish Council Meeting and outlined the order of business according to the Agenda

1. **Apologies** – Cllr J Williams, Cllr J Tamblyn
2. **Members of the public** – none present.

Clerk read out a statement submitted by Ms S Walters of Situ8 – the planning advisor to the applicants:

'This site as you know (following your site visit) lies to the frontage of the solar farm that adjoins the application site. We are seeking permission for the residential conversion and extension of an existing former American Cookhouse to a modest one-bedroom unit of accommodation for a single person or a local couple. We can confirm that the accommodation will meet the national space standards requirements. Garden and amenity space is also included and parking provided.

The proposed development would improve upon the appearance of the existing building given that the applicants propose a slate roof and other natural finishes i.e., timber cladding in part to some of the elevations. These materials reflect those materials found in the area. Members should also note that there are very few physical alterations to the existing built form or change to the design or layout and the proposed modest addition will be read against the existing building.

In respect of planning policy, the key policy is Policy 7- Dwellings in the countryside (of the Cornwall Local Plan (CLP) 2010–2030). This policy sets out that the development of new homes in the open countryside will only be permitted where there are special circumstances. New dwellings will be restricted to (amongst other criteria): **Reuse of suitably constructed redundant, disused or historic buildings that are considered appropriate to retain and would lead to an enhancement to the immediate setting.** The building to be converted has a lawful non-residential use given that it is more than 10 years old. Further we consider we meet the other criteria of the policy i.e., the development will not harm the character of the area and will re-use a suitable redundant building worthy of retention. It is our contention that the proposed development represents a sympathetic conversion to the building, with only minor alterations that will lead to an enhancement to the immediate setting. The building, has an established presence within the landscape and is in excellent condition.

In terms of access the existing access will continue to be used to serve the site. There is ample parking off-road and vehicles can leave the site in a forward gear.

A further policy that supports this development is Policy 21 of the CLP 2010-2030. This policy supports the increase in building density to ensure an efficient use of land. This piece of land does not benefit from an important national land designation and is of a density appropriate to the location. The proposal makes excellent use of land and of an existing building that will provide a much-needed home in this current housing crisis. Ultimately the development will provide all year-round living accommodation, supporting the local economy.

We hope you will be able to support this proposal. Thank you.'

**3. Interests to disclose - none**

**4. Planning PA21/10618**

**Conversion and extension to former American Cookhouse on land at Bocaddon Farm to facilitate a single residential unit of accommodation**

Chairman confirmed that Councillors had attended the site of the proposed dwelling. He went on to outline, with reference to notes that he shared with the meeting, the criteria of Policy 7 of the Cornwall Local Plan, within which the application falls. This provides that new homes in open countryside will only be permitted where there are special circumstances, and the new dwellings will be restricted to:

- (i) Replacement dwellings broadly comparable to the size, scale and bulk of the dwelling being replaced and of appropriate scale and character to their location; or
- (ii) The subdivision of existing residential dwellings; or
- (iii) Reuse of suitably constructed redundant, disused or historic buildings that are considered appropriate to retain and would lead to an enhancement to the immediate setting. The building to be converted should have an existing lawful residential or non-residential use and be ten years old or greater; or
- (iv) Temporary accommodation for workers (including seasonal migrant workers), to support established and viable rural businesses where there is an essential need for a presence on the holding, but no other suitable accommodation is available and it would be of a construction suitable for its purpose and duration; or
- (v) Full time agricultural and forestry and other rural occupation workers where there is up to date evidence of an essential need of the business for the occupier to live in that specific location.

For the assistance of the meeting the Chairman summarised the guidance notes to Policy 7.1 which require that replacement dwellings be broadly comparable to the size, scale and bulk of the dwelling being replaced and of an appropriate scale and character to their location. Further the guidance requires that if the existing building is traditionally built and structurally sound, consideration should be given to retention or incorporation of the building, or part of it, into the scheme.

The guidance goes on to state that the term 'broadly comparable' should not be narrowly interpreted. A dwelling that is well designed and appropriate to the scale and character of its location is likely to be considered 'broadly comparable'.

The planning statement submitted with the application by Situ8 refers incorrectly in a number of places to there being no Neighbourhood Plan adopted for Lanreath – clearly an oversight on their part. With reference to the Lanreath Neighbourhood

Plan there is no specific reference to dwellings in the countryside, but Policy H1 allows for the provision of new homes and states:

‘Small-scale incremental housing development of an appropriate scale, density, character and appearance that reflects and enhances the village and Parish of Lanreath shall be permitted at a level that is commensurate with and will help support social and community facilities available in the Parish.’

It goes on to provide that this can include conversion of suitable disused buildings within the Parish.

Policy H2 of Lanreath Neighbourhood Plan details the considerations to be taken into account in the Parish Council supporting an application.

The Chairman referred the Councillors to the only broadly similar application that had been considered recently – PA20/10282 which had been supported with conditions. But this provided a single unit of holiday accommodation, and had been decided with reference to Policy 5 – Business and Tourism – of the Cornwall Local Plan.

Following the Chairman’s summary of the main points of the applicable Policies, the meeting considered the planning documentation – some of which was projected on screen.

The bat and nesting bird survey found that one lesser horseshoe bat uses the building as a day time roost, and therefore a European Protected Species Licence will be required. A standalone bat roost 4m by 2.5m (a substantial building) will have to be provided in a dark location, close to trees, within 50m of the property. There is no indication on the plans where this is likely to be erected, and it seems that a number of trees on the site have been felled in recent times.

There are no mains utilities at the site, and it is proposed that there be a septic tank for foul drainage – but no percolation test has been submitted with the application – despite there being a requirement for such. In the Structural Report, provided to Councillors by the Applicants during the site visit, the existing building is thought to be bearing on virgin bedrock which would indicate that percolation of foul waste may be problematic. The Councillors who attended the site agreed that the area was extremely boggy, and appeared to be a permanent wet area, with marsh grass growing over part of the proposed development area. It was therefore considered to be a matter of concern as to how foul waste would be disposed of. The Environment Agency will introduce new rules in 2022 to prohibit the use of septic tanks, and a development such as is proposed would instead be required to have a sewage treatment plant.

The plans of the existing building submitted with the application are incorrect, in that they show an interior partition wall, which is not there. The building is described as a former American Cookhouse, but the Councillors noted that there being no services to the site, it would have been extremely unlikely that this use would have been possible, particularly when troops were stationed at Boconnoc in WW2, where there were ample facilities for preparation of food. It seems more likely that it has no specific planning use – being unsuitable for storage of machinery, or housing animals.

The Councillors agreed that the description of the property was not a planning issue, and they went on to consider whether the proposed development would lead to an enhancement to the immediate setting, and its sustainability.

The existing property is a single storey, single skin, construction with a cementitious corrugated roof. The proposed new property would be extended by roughly 50% to create a larger internal floor space of some 47.5m<sup>2</sup> – slightly smaller than the nationally described living space standard of 50m<sup>2</sup>. It would have parking area, and access to the lane via the existing field gate – which would necessitate a new field entrance to be created on the existing hedgerow – with resultant loss of vegetation and habitat. The lane that the property abuts is extremely narrow and steep, making vehicular and foot access difficult. There is no specific detail in the application as to how mains services will be connected, save that there will be a bore hole for water, and the septic tank for foul waste. Nor is there any detail regarding use of “environmentally friendly” materials, or re-useable energy sources. The finished property would be roughly the size of a small park home, suitable for one or two adults, and certainly insufficient for a family. It would not appear to be a development that would enhance the immediate setting, nor did it appear to be sustainable.

In the planning documentation submitted with the application in several places the development is described as being a minimal change to the existing building, but the Councillors felt that this was an understatement.

Proposed by Chairman that consultees comments be submitted to Cornwall Council planning as follows:

‘Lanreath Parish Council does not support the application because:

1. It does not consider that the proposed extended building comprises a modest extension with minimal changes
2. In respect of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 the development would not enhance the natural and historic environment
3. The development as proposed does not comply with Policy 7.3 of the Cornwall Local Plan or Policy H1(ii) of the Lanreath Neighbourhood Plan in that this is not a suitable building for conversion’

Cllr Bartram seconded, and unanimously agreed by all Councillors. Clerk to submit comments online.

## **5. Budget 2022/23**

Chairman informed the meeting that although the general feeling in Local Government and NALC is that there will be no referendum limit imposed on 2022/23 precepts for Town and Parish Councils, the Government have, as yet, not issued the Local Council Finance Settlement for next year. It may be issued next week but could be delayed as public sector pay negotiations for the current year have yet to be concluded. Meeting resolved that if no settlement is published before the end of this calendar year, or a referendum limit is imposed in the settlement, then Budget B (agreed at the November meeting) will be utilised by the Clerk in the Precept application for the next year – which must be submitted by 31<sup>st</sup> December at the latest.

## **6. Public Participation – none**

## **7. Date and time of next meeting – 18<sup>th</sup> January 2022, 7.30pm**

Chairman thanked everyone for attending.  
The meeting closed at 20.50