

## MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

**MINUTES** of a **MEETING** of the **PLANNING COMMITTEE** held on 20 April 2022 at 2.15 pm

### **Present**

#### **Councillors**

P J Heal (Chairman)  
E J Berry, S J Clist, Mrs F J Colthorpe,  
L J Cruwys, Mrs C P Daw, C J Eginton,  
B Holdman, D J Knowles, F W Letch and  
B G J Warren

### **Also Present**

#### **Councillor(s)**

G Barnell and J Buczkowski

### **Present**

#### **Officers:**

Karen Trickey (District Solicitor and Monitoring Officer), Angharad Williams (Development Management Manager), Adrian Devereaux (Area Team Leader), Damian Hunter (Planning Solicitor), Sally Gabriel (Member Services Manager) and Carole Oliphant (Member Services Officer)

#### **184 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (0.03.09)**

There were no apologies or substitute Members.

#### **185 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (0.03.19)**

There were no questions from members of the public present.

#### **186 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT (0.03.30)**

Cllrs E J Berry, S J Clist, B Holdman and F W Letch made declarations in accordance with the Protocol of Good Practice for Councillors dealing with planning matters as they had received communications with regard to the West Efford Farm, Shobrooke application.

#### **187 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (0.03.58)**

The minutes of the meeting held on 30<sup>th</sup> March 2022 were agreed as a true record and duly **SIGNED** by the Chairman.

#### **188 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS (0.04.55)**

The Chairman had no announcements to make.

189 **DEFERRALS FROM THE PLANS LIST (0.05.07)**

The Chairman announced that application 21/00222/MFUL had been withdrawn from the agenda

190 **THE PLANS LIST (0.05.23)**

The Committee considered the applications on the \*Plans List.

Note: \*List previously circulated and attached to the minutes

**a) Application 22/00371/FULL - Erection of dwelling following demolition of Dutch barn and stable and formation of vehicular access at Land and Buildings at NGR 288969 101209 (West Efford Farm), Efford, Shobrooke**

The Area Team Leader outlined the application by way of a presentation which highlighted the site location, the site plan, the ground and first floor plans, the proposed elevations, a CGI of the proposed dwelling and photographs showing the views to and from the application site.

The officer explained that the development proposal was submitted in accordance with the special circumstances identified within Paragraph 80e of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which allowed the development of isolated homes in the countryside, subject to certain criteria, including if it was of exceptional quality in that:

- Is truly outstanding, reflecting the highest standards in architecture, and would help to raise standards of design more generally in rural areas; and
- Would significantly enhance its immediate setting and be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area.

The officer further explained that the application site was in flood zone 1 and not close to any heritage assets. The building had been designed using the principles of Passivhaus, optimizing passive solar gains and would be built with airtight fabric first principles to retain heat during the winter months allowing for significantly less energy to be used than normally required. There would be no significant increase in the built form and the structure of the service wing would be of earth walls and a green roof.

The applicants had been advised to pursue review of their schemes (pre-application) with the Design Review Panel. This was a panel of multi-disciplinary professionals (architects, urban designers, landscape architects etc) who offered design critique together with guidance and suggestions with a view to raising the standard of design in the South West. With regards to this application, the proposal had undergone pre-application discussions and had been reviewed three times by the South West Design Review Panel.

Consideration was given to:

- The green roof of the service wing would be constructed with natural species and it could be conditioned that it was maintained and kept alive

- Whether planting should include semi mature trees
- The height of the hedgerow would be conditioned by the requirement of a maintenance plan which ensured it would not exceed 1.5 metres
- The views of some Members that they would have liked the solar panels to be roof mounted rather than floor mounted
- The views of the agent who stated that they specialised in exceptional builds in the open country side specifically to comply with paragraph 80 of the NPPF. That the applicants had a strong local connection having farmed the land for a number of years and that the development set the benchmark for sustainable development
- The views of the ward member who stated that the Parish Council generally supported the application but did it meet the test of truly outstanding and what did that mean to Members
- Concerns of some Members that the green roof on the service wing could be neglected and would result in an alternative roof having to be installed in the future

It was therefore **RESOLVED** that planning permission be granted subject to conditions as recommended by the Development Management Manager with delegated authority being given to the Development Management Manager in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Planning Committee to amend conditions 4 and 6 to include specific reference to the maintenance of the green roof of the service wing.

(Proposed by E J Berry and seconded by Cllr C J Eginton)

**Reason for the decision:** As set out in the report

Notes:

- i. The agent Richard Hawkes spoke
- ii. Cllr G Barnell spoke as ward member
- iii. The following late information was received:

One additional letter of support had been received commenting that ‘It would be nice to see the replacement of this rusty old barn with a building that will use traditional Cob as part of its construction’

191 **MAJOR APPLICATIONS WITH NO DECISION (0.49.14)**

The Committee had before it, and **NOTED**, a \*list of major applications with no decision.

The Committee agreed that:

Application 22/00642/MFUL Westcott Park, Westcott would be deferred to the next Majors list due to there being some errors in consistency with the applicant’s application form and submission

Application 22/00648/MFUL Manns Newton, Zeal Monachorum would stay as a delegated decision

Application 22/00539/MOUT Sandhurst, Lapford to be determined by Committee if the officer recommendation was one of approval and that a full committee site visit take place

Application 22/000481/MARM West of Willand Road, Cullompton be determined by Committee but no site visit required

Note: \*list previously circulated and attached to the minutes.

#### 192 **APPEAL DECISIONS (0.54.04)**

The Committee had before it, and **NOTED**, a \*list of appeal decisions

Note: \*List previously circulated and attached to the minutes

#### 193 **PERFORMANCE REPORT (0.55.22)**

The Committee had before it, and **NOTED**, a \*report of the Development Management Manager which outlined the performance aspects of the planning function.

The officer explained that it was a good news story for the team and that the speed and quality of processing applications had been maintained even though there were a number of vacancies.

She advised that the reporting of enforcement visits did not necessarily reflect the true number as agency staff had not all received training on how to update the system.

Discussion took place regarding the employment of agency staff to fill the gaps left by the number of permanent vacancies currently available and the cost implications associated with this. The Development Management Manager explained the current difficulties with recruitment which was reflected throughout the sector and the steps the Council were taking to address this. Members asked for a balance sheet to be provided which detailed the costs associated with employing agency staff as opposed to permanent staff.

Members requested that future reports included fees having to be returned due to late applications and that officers investigate the low number of section 215 enforcement notices issued in the past 3 years and the reasons for this.

Members applauded the efforts of the Planning Service staff during this time and commented on the increased quality of reports brought to Committee.

Note: \*Report previously circulated and attached to the minutes

(The meeting ended at 3.26 pm)

**CHAIRMAN**