

**Minutes of a Meeting of Staploe Parish Council on Wednesday 20th December 2017 at
33, Staploe, St. Neots PE19 5JA at 9.15am**

Present: Cllr. R. Squire (Chairman), Cllr. V. Zwetsloot, Cllr. G. Meola, Cllr. D. Smith, Lucy Crawford (Clerk) and one member of the public.

Apologies for absence: J. Ibbetts, J. Thomson, E. Meola

425. Declarations of Interest

Councillor G. Meola declared an interest in the planning application at Maye Cottage as she shares a boundary with Maye Cottage.

Councillor R. Squire declared an interest in the application to vary the conditions of the planning application for the solar farm as he is one of the applicants.

426. Public Open Forum

A member of the public addressed the Council regarding the reasons why an extension was required at Maye Cottage, Duloe.

Richard Squire addressed the Council regarding the solar farm to explain that there are no panels actually in Staploe parish; only the access track. The substation and any panels would be on Hail Weston parish land and he hoped that, due to increased efficiency, there may be no panels on the Hail Weston parish area, just a substation and part of the access track.

427. Minutes of the meeting held on 21st November 2017

Approval of the minutes was postponed until January 2018.

428. Planning. To determine a Parish Council response to:

- the appeal to the Secretary of State regarding the refusal of planning application 17/00653/FUL. Inspectorate number APP/K0235/D/17/3180401 for a single storey rear extension and replacement outbuilding at **Maye Cottage**, 53, Woodhouse Lane, Duloe PE19 5HR. Deadline 29th December 2017.

Cllr. R. Squire proposed a motion that the Council should respond with the following comments in support of this appeal:

“Councillors believe that the extension and replacement outbuilding should be permitted as proposed in planning applications 17/00653/FUL and 17/00654/LBC. We are disappointed that these planning applications were refused on the grounds of the asymmetric roof, the scale and the gable width and there does not appear to be any reason given regarding the refusal for the replacement outbuilding.

The Thompson family have lived in Maye Cottage for 12 years. We believe that the proposals will enable this family to continue to live in our village as valued members of our community. Maye Cottage is currently too small for a family (and particularly unsuitable to this family due to Helen’s health problems), too expensive for first time buyers and impractical for the elderly due to its steep staircase. The Thompson family

have cared for this listed cottage very well for many years and we believe that their proposals are reasonable and proportionate.

The proposals would enhance the listed part of the cottage since the kitchen would be removed to expose the historic features and the main living quarters would be in the new extension. This would help preserve the listed part of the building.

Neighbours on all sides have no objections and the line of sight from the road and neighbours would make the extension almost invisible. It is single storey and would therefore always be subordinate to the cottage. The dominant view from the road would be of the cottage. We do not believe that this extension would dominate the cottage.

The outbuilding has previously been described by the planners as having no historical merit and we believe that the proposed new outbuilding would be a significant improvement and would improve the area surrounding the Dovecote.

We understand that, while national planning policy attaches great importance to matters of design, planning policies and decisions should not attempt to impose architectural styles or particular tastes and they should not stifle innovation, originality or initiative through unsubstantiated requirements to conform to certain development forms or styles – i.e. planning officers should not attempt to impose their own taste on schemes (NPPF paragraph 60). Some of the comments by the conservation officer refer to the roof looking “incongruous and awkward” which could be considered matters of taste. We fully support the proposed design.

We also do not agree that the gable width is too wide. Extensions to small vernacular listed buildings are quite commonplace and a set of simple and clear norms has emerged over many years via the national amenity societies and local planning authorities to form the basis on which to evaluate such proposals.

Where extensions are considered to be acceptable in principle they should:

- show an understanding of the heritage significance of the listed building and its setting*
- seek to minimise any harm to the listed building’s heritage value or special interest*
- normally play a subordinate role and not dominate the listed building as a result of its scale, mass, form, siting or materials*
- fulfill a function that is in the listed building’s long-term interest*
- sustain and add value to the listed building’s significance by being of high quality design, craftsmanship and materials."*

In our view the proposal did all of these things and we therefore believe that planning permission should be granted."

Cllr. D. Smith seconded the motion. Councillors voted unanimously in favour and the motion was passed.

- 17/02538/S73 (please note this is a Huntingdonshire District Council reference number not a Bedford Borough Council reference)- proposal to vary condition 3 & 4 of application 15/00940/FUL. No. 3 to extend the period of the life of the **solar farm** from 25yrs to 40 yrs, no. 3 and 4 – to remove the word “substations” as the electrical infrastructure installed within the substation compound will be in part retained by the DNO (UKPN) as part of their electrical distribution infrastructure once the solar farm has been decommissioned. Location: Land at Top Farm and Little Staughton Airfield, Little Staughton. Deadline 1st Jan 2018.

Cllr. V. Zwetsloot proposed that the Council respond with no objection. Cllr. J. Thomson seconded the motion. Councillors voted unanimously in favour and the motion was passed.

- 17/03371/FUL – proposal for external alterations associated with conversion to dwellings at **Tythe Farm**, Staploe Road, Wyboston MK44 3AT. Deadline 9th January 2018. Pre-application advice has been sought for conversion of agricultural / office buildings into 8 dwellings and then a second pre-application was sought for conversion of agricultural / office buildings into 3 dwellings in 2014. A planning application is not required for conversion of agricultural / office buildings but it is required for some of the proposed external alterations – hence this application.

Cllr. R. Squire proposed that the Council respond in support of the application. Cllr. D. Smith seconded the motion. Councillors voted unanimously in favour and the motion was passed.

429. Next meeting

- Parish Council: Tuesday 16th January 2018 at 7.45pm.

The meeting closed at 10am