

Minutes of An Extraordinary Meeting of Staploe Parish Council held at 7.45pm on Tuesday 19th February 2019 in the Village Hall at Wyboston

Present:

J. Ibbett (Chairman)	G. Meola
V. Zwetsloot (Vice Chairman)	D. Smith
J. Thomson	L. Crawford (Clerk)
E. Meola	Two members of the public

Apologies for absence: Cllr. R. Squire

2019/016. Declarations of Interest

None

2019/017. Public Open Forum

Two members of the public (from different properties near the site) expressed concern about the size of the footprint of the proposed development, the proposal to include a garage which is contrary to the provisions of Class Q, the high, close boarded PVC fence which has already been erected around agricultural land and the removal of vegetation and tree canopy which they did not believe are in keeping with the rural nature of the area. They both proposed that the Council request a site visit with Bedford Borough Council to discuss the application.

2019/018. Minutes of the meeting held on 15th January 2019

Having been previously circulated these were approved as an accurate record of the meeting. Proposed by Cllr. V. Zwetsloot and seconded by Cllr. J. Ibbett.

2019/019 Planning

Application number	Type	Description	Location	Deadline	Link
19/00067/FUL	Full Planning Application	Demolition of barn and erection of new dwelling and detached garage/workshop/store and change of use of agricultural land to garden land	Honeydon Barn Honeydon Road Colmworth Bedford Bedfordshire MK44 2LY	19/02/2019	19/00067/FUL

The Clerk explained that she had arranged an extension to the deadline with Bedford Borough Council until 28th February 2019.

She had received a letter from the agents acting on behalf of the developer Fisher German.

This outlined that the size of the development and the scope of the residential curtilage had been reduced relative to the previous application.

The footprint of the current proposal were shown to be 28% smaller than the previous application and there would be 29% less hard standing with the current application than is current present.

They also drew the Parish Council's attention to a planning application at Topham End Farm Barn, also in Honeydon Road which was also developed using Class Q and then an extension amounting to a 40% increase was added subsequently along with an increase in the curtilage. They pointed out that the Parish Council had not objected to this in 2015.

It was resolved to request a site visit with the planners. Proposed by Cllr. J. Thomson and seconded by Cllr. J. Ibbett.

It was resolved to send the following response to this application following the proposed site visit (if the visit is granted). Proposed by Cllr. G. Meola and seconded by Cllr. D. Smith. Councillors voted unanimously in favour and the motion was passed.

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Staploe Parish Council discussed this application in their meeting on 19th February. We would like to object to this development for the following reasons:

1. *This development is outside the Settlement Policy Area for Colmworth and there is no Settlement Policy Area for Staploe Parish. Therefore, it is development in open countryside. Saved policy H26 of Bedford Borough Local Plan 2002 states that planning permission will not be granted for housing in open countryside except as provided for under policies H27 (agricultural workers), H28 (replacement dwellings), or H30 (affordable housing to meet local needs) which has been replaced by Policy CP17 of the Core Strategy and Rural Issues Plan 2008. None of these policies are relevant in this case so we believe it should be regarded as development in open countryside.*
2. *We accept that the applicant already has permitted development rights under Class Q regulations to replace the barn with a dwelling, but this assumes that the dimensions will remain the same and the garden / curtilage is limited to an area equivalent to the footprint of the existing building and there are no ancillary buildings.*
 - a. *In this case the proposed dwelling has been reduced by a tiny amount and is still almost double the size (190% at 171m²) vs the original barn which was 90m². The size of the garage has been significantly reduced to approximately 56m². However, no ancillary buildings are permitted so this is not relevant. The built footprint is still 253% of the size of the original barn at 227.48 m²*
 - b. *The garden has now been reduced but is still much larger than the footprint of the building and requires change of use of a large part of an agricultural field*

to garden. Class Q permits a garden the size of the footprint of the original building i.e. 90m². The proposed garden is approximately 1200m² including the footprint of the house. We believe it is important to maintain the character and appearance of the countryside and safeguard it from unsuitable development. By enlarging the residential curtilage and introducing domestic uses to land which was previously agricultural, the garden extension could have a significant visual impact and gradually lead to urban characteristics (for example, sheds, fences and hardstandings, etc.) being introduced to an area whose open and attractive landscape qualities are highly valued. Concerns about the urbanisation of this rural area have been exacerbated by the fact that a very high close boarded PVC fence has been erected by the owner of the property along the eastern boundary of the property and to the rear of Woodfield on what is still classified as agricultural land. The Parish Council would suggest that this fence is completely out of place in this rural environment and is not an appropriate boundary for an agricultural field. Even as a boundary for a garden it is not in keeping with the rural nature of the area.

- c. The applicant has applied to build a 2-bay garage. Whilst this is considerably smaller than the previous proposal Class Q provisions do not provide for any ancillary structures.
3. Martin Tidy referred to Traylesfield Farm, Ravensden 17/02140/FUL in his policy comments. In that appeal decision point 10 states:
- “Given that permission already exists for a dwelling on the appeal site, given that dwelling is substantively the same as that proposed in the appeal scheme, and given preparations have been made to relocate the storage functions of the existing barn, I consider there is a greater than theoretical possibility that the development already approved might take place. Given the similarity of the two schemes,I consider the fallback position in this case a significant material consideration to justify a departure from the development plan policies identified above.”*
- The fact that the Class Q scheme was substantively the same as that proposed in the appeal scheme made the fallback position a material consideration. In this case the proposed development is 253% of the footprint of the Class Q scheme so we do not believe that the fallback position is a material consideration.
4. Therefore, we do not believe that the proposed dwelling is an improvement on the development proposed under Class Q and it is much more extensive than the Class Q proposals at 253% of the size so it should be assessed as a new dwelling in Open Countryside which we would oppose on the grounds of policy H26 referred to above.

We accept that we did not oppose the extension of Topham End Farm Barn which is also in Honeydon Road and which was also developed using Class Q. However, the extension amounted to a 40% increase in the size of the property, there were no outbuildings and the site has been developed in a manner which is more in keeping with a rural area (ie. no high PVC fences).

The meeting closed at 9.53pm