

St John Parish Council

Minutes of the extraordinary meeting of the St John Parish Council will be held at St John village hall on Wednesday 18th January 2023 at 7.30pm.

Those present : Cllr Richards (Chairman), Cllr Tanner, Cllr Hirst, Cllr Hoskins, Cllr Everard, Mrs Allen Clerk to St John Parish Council (PC) and 6 members of the public.

66.22 Apologies for absence. Cllr Crane due to annual leave, Cllr Ewert due to a prior engagement.

67.22 Declarations of interest relating to items on the agenda. None.

68.22 Public forum.

Members of the public were asked if they would like to speak. No comments.

69.22 Planning Application PA22/10077 St John Inn, St.John Torpoint. The demolition of the concrete double garage and construction of a new garage with holiday accommodation above.

Cllr Richards read out a statement which would form the Parish Council submission relating to the application (see Appendix 1).

Cllr Richards proposed that members agreed that the Parish Council should make a neutral submission onto the Cornwall Council planning portal and include this statement.

Cllr Hirst seconded this resolution.

Unanimously supported by the full Parish Council.

Action: Clerk to upload the comments asap.

70.22 Meeting closed 7.45pm.

Appendix 1

St John Parish Council approved comments:

St John Inn PA22/10077

Use

The Applicant has stated that it will be used as a holiday let. To comply with Policy 1 of the Rame Peninsula NDP, the building should be considered as a business annexe to the Inn, with an appropriate Condition such that it cannot become a new open market home.

Visual Impact

Although set back from the road, the visual impact will be high as the mass of the new building will be considerably larger than the small garage. The application drawing does not show the scale of the proposed building in relation to the existing Inn. Furthermore, the application drawing does not indicate a maximum roof height or level, this detail needs to be stipulated.

The Planning Officer should carefully consider the visual impact on the St John Conservation Area, especially in the light of the Refusal given for a housing unit in the same car park (PA/15/09139) where the decision stated *"The proposal would sub-divide the St John Inn plot to its detriment by introducing unjustified and inappropriate holiday accommodation and a separate gable fronted residential unit that would fail to make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area"*.

The planning approval given for the lodge (PA19/03005) was given on the basis that

"In terms of impacts on the surroundings, the proposed annexe would be sited to the rear of an existing garage, obscured from view from the main road, and there are limited public views from surroundings due to topography, existing tree cover and built form. Whilst the site is within a Conservation Area and an Area of Great Landscape Value given its siting, design and scale and its lack of visibility within the public realm, it is considered that the impact to the Conservation Area would be negligible and its character would be preserved".

The current proposal is much larger than the lodge and will be more visible from the public realm. In particular, it will not be obscured from view from the main road.

Foul Drainage

The Parish Council views this proposal for further development of the site with concern in the light of reported pollution of a neighbouring property.

For this application for an additional one-bedroom accommodation, we note that the applicant intends to provide a new package treatment plant, and has stated that this will be an entirely *separate* system to the existing system, discharging into a new field drainage system. However, the application lacks detail on the proposed system. The level of treatment from the proposed package treatment plant is not stated and the new drainage field is not indicated on the drawing. We feel that the site requires a detailed drainage assessment and not just completion of the 'Foul Drainage Assessment Form'; particularly relating to the need for a new drainage field.

Examination of the site plans indicate that a new drainage field cannot be sited with the necessary offset distances (from a building, watercourse, boundary and sufficiently far from any other drainage field or soakaway such that overall treatment capacity is not exceeded). The Foul Drainage Assessment Form suggests that the new drainage field will be more than 50m from any existing drainage field, but this appears unachievable and needs to be checked in detail.

The infiltration test supplied appears to be the same as was used for the lodge (PA19/03005) and is unlikely to be in the location of the new drainage field location, which would make it unreliable. It is also likely to be at an inappropriate depth if it was excavated for a deep surface water soakaway, as opposed to a shallow drainage field in aerated soils.

Due to the likely proximity of the proposed drainage field to the watercourse, variance of groundwater throughout the year should be ascertained to ensure that the groundwater level will not undermine the performance of the new system.

If the Planning Officer is minded to give approval, then the PC recommends Conditions that full design details of the new system should be submitted and approved by the Local Planning Authority prior to commencement of any construction. This should include an assessment of possible adverse effects on the operation of the existing drainage field system, including infiltration tests if deemed necessary.

Details of surface water (roof water) disposal are not provided within the application. If by soakaway, then this should be sufficiently distant from other features of the site (including foul water drainage field(s)). The PC recommends that full design details of the new surface water disposal system should be submitted and approved by the Local Planning Authority prior to commencement of any construction.

If a new separate system goes ahead then flows from the Lodge could be connected to this new system in order to reduce the loading on the existing drainage field, this would demonstrate a positive move by the Applicant to reduce further risk of pollution to neighbours.

Footnote

In 2019 the PC *supported* the planning application for the two-bedroom lodge (PA19/03005). This was on the basis of assurance that the existing septic tank was being properly managed with sufficient emptying, and that an EA Permit should be a Condition of approval, as the loading on the septic tank and field drainage system already exceeded 2000 litres/day. The planning officer

referred to the EA Permit but only as "advice". No permit has been obtained and further development including a new toilet/shower has been added. Further pollution has been reported this year by a neighbour.

Peak flows to the existing septic tank are estimated to be over 4000 litres/day (Flow and Loads 4 British Water), from the Inn/Kitchen/Campsite/Lodge, Bramble Cottage and Church Cottage: this is over twice the maximum flow that requires an EA permit.

A vote was held to gauge the opinion of the 15 members of the public that were present at a Parish Council planning meeting held on 3rd Jan 2023.
2 supported the application. 8 objected to the application. 5 neutral voters.