

Minute Extract of meeting held on Thursday 8 October 2020

24. **Update Report - Potential Enforcement Action, Homestead Farm, Main Street, Bothenhampton, Bridport, DT6 4BJ**

The report was presented by the Enforcement Manager who provided the same presentation that was given to the Committee at its meeting on 10 September 2020 for the benefit of newly appointed members of the committee who had joined since that time.

He referred to the update sheet containing e-mails from the applicants on 30 September and 7 October 2020 that had been circulated to members prior to the meeting. These e-mails confirmed that the site had been locked down and the keys handed back to the applicants and that the site would be available to local residents for parking during highway authority works to the high pavement. The applicants had indicated that they would submit an appeal of the committee's decision in due course.

The Enforcement Manager outlined the 3 enforcement options below in full.

Option 1 – That no enforcement action be taken at this stage.

Option 2 - That enforcement action be taken requiring demolition of the whole building - *this was not considered to be expedient as the buildings were capable of being altered to more closely match the approved building and therefore the proportionality of taking such action needed to be considered.*

Option 3 - That enforcement action be taken requiring alteration of specific elements.

The Administration Assistant read out some of the written representations in accordance with the public speaking protocol. All written representations received were circulated to the committee prior to the meeting and are attached as an appendix to these minutes.

In response to comments made during public participation, the Enforcement Manager stated that the differences of the "as built" and "as approved" schemes were marginal. However, the subjective nature of the issues had been reflected in the public comments as well as differences in views of officers and the committee. The fallback position was the original permission as granted and therefore Option 1 meant that the Planning Inspector's view could inform any enforcement action that may be appropriate and was a more defensible position for the Council going forward.

Members questioned the accuracy of the measurements provided in the report as different figures had been provided as part of the Non-Material Amendments (NMAs). They asked how the Planning Inspector would assess the accuracy of these figures when they may also be reliant on the drawings and measurements presented to them.

The Enforcement Manager confirmed that it was usual practice for planning officers to rely on measurements provided by the applicant and how this was dealt with going forward would depend on the nature of any appeal. It was not unusual for a Planning Inspector to bring measuring equipment to a site, however, if an appeal resulted in a

public inquiry then the measurements would be investigated by the Council in proofs of evidence.

Members remained concerned regarding the varying measurements and further highlighted that an appeal had not yet been submitted.

Councillor Bill Pipe proposed that in the absence of a lodged appeal, that enforcement action was not taken provided that an appeal was made by 15 November 2020. This would allow for a further report to be considered by the committee at its meeting on 3 December 2020.

Proposed by Councillor Bill Pipe, seconded by Councillor Jean Dunseith.

Decision: That the Committee agrees not to take enforcement action providing that an appeal is made against the decision to refuse planning permission by 15 November 2020. If no appeal is made by 15 November 2020 the question of enforcement action will be reported back to the Committee at the earliest opportunity.

Reason for Decision

The Inspector's view on any subsequent planning appeal will help to inform what formal enforcement action may be appropriate, if any, particularly noting that Inspectors often give a view in their formal decision letters as to which aspects of a development they consider acceptable, and which are not. By waiting for the outcome of any planning appeal, the Council will have a more defensible position as regards to any formal enforcement action it then decides to take.