

## South Somerset District Council

**Minutes** of a meeting of the **Area South Committee** held at the **Council Chamber, Council Offices, Brympton Way** on **Wednesday 2 July 2014**.

(2.00 - 4.50 pm)

**Present:**

**Members:** Councillor Peter Gubbins (Chairman)

Cathy Bakewell	Andy Kendall
Tim Carroll	Tony Lock
JV Chainey (left 2.10pm)	Wes Read
Tony Fife	David Recardo
Marcus Fysh	Gina Seaton
Nigel Gage	Peter Seib
Dave Greene(arrive 2.15pm)	

**Officers:**

Jo Boucher	Democratic Services Officer
Kim Close	Area Development Manager (South)
Andrew Collins	Planning Officer
Simon Fox	Area Lead (South)
Steve Brewer	Community Safety & Projects Co-ordinator
Tim Coombe	Inspector, Avon & Somerset Constabulary

*NB: Where an executive or key decision is made, a reason will be noted immediately beneath the Committee's resolution.*

---

### 16. Minutes of previous meeting (Agenda Item 1)

The minutes of the Area South meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> June 2014 copies of which had been circulated, were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

---

### 17. Apologies for absence (Agenda Item 2)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Graham Oakes, John Richardson, Jon Gleeson and Ian Martin who was representing SSDC at an Armed Forces Community Covenant Event.

---

### 18. Declarations of Interest (Agenda Item 3)

Cllr Peter Gubbins declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Agenda Item 7- Planning Application 14/01266/OUT as his son lives in close proximity of the proposed site. He would leave the meeting during consideration of that item.

Cllr Nigel Gage declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 7 – Planning Application 14/01266/OUT as a family member lives close to the site in question.

---

#### **19. Public question time (Agenda Item 4)**

Viv Cornelius addressed the committee stating that following the withdrawal of the Yeovil Town Football Club Planning Application last month, Cllr Jon Gleeson requested that a report from Community Health & Leisure be brought to committee detailing monies collected for Strategic Leisure purposes, giving totals and amounts of each element.

She questioned whether the Football Club is being considered as the site or zone of sports facilities for Yeovil? If it is not are there any current discussions or proposals for where and when the accumulated 106 monies for an eight court sports hall, swimming pool, Sports Hall etc. will be spent?

In response Cllr Peter Seib advised that the Strategic Sport and Leisure Contributions collected through our Section 106 Agreements are not associated with any specific site. As part of the development of the Local Plan the council identified two potential sites; one at Brimsmore and one at Bunford. During that sequential search the Yeovil Town Football Club site was not found to be as favourable for delivering the adopted 'Built Facilities Strategy'.

The Chairman advised that a written response would also be sent.

---

#### **20. Chairman's announcements (Agenda Item 5)**

The Chairman announced that the Westfield Bid for "Our Place" funding had been successful and this will result in a further £17k of investment in the Westfield area.

---

#### **21. Reports from representatives on outside organisations (Agenda Item 6)**

There were no reports from Councillors on outside organisations.

---

#### **22. Planning Applications (Agenda Item 7)**

14/01266/OUT – Residential development, new vehicular access and associated works  
Land Adjacent Broadacres East Coker – Avalon Estates Ltd

*(Having earlier declared a Personal & Prejudicial Interest Councillor Peter Gubbins left the room during consideration of this item. Councillor Tim Carroll deputised as Vice-Chairman for this item).*

The Planning Officer presented the application as detailed in the agenda and with the aid of a power point presentation showed the site and proposed plans. He reported that at the Area South Committee on 4<sup>th</sup> June 2014 members resolved to defer the application for a members site visit. This took place on 19<sup>th</sup> June 2014.

He explained that further representation had now been received from a number of residents within the area also raising their concerns, these included the following:

- Loss of Grade 1 Agricultural Land
- Previous applications have already been refused on site
- Highway safety issues along Long Furlong Lane and with the access and egress to the site

He also updated members that comments had been received from the Somerset Waste Partnership who were satisfied overall with the proposal and accepted that the access would accommodate the standard collection vehicles, although they raised slight concern regarding the overhanging of the proposed walkways.

The Planning Officer concluded that as this application had been deferred from last month's committee and as he had no further updates, his recommendation was to approve the application subject to the conditions as set out in the agenda report.

In response to questions, members were informed that:

- Past applications on this site were determined by previous planning policy and that for the purpose of determining this application the current planning policies should therefore be considered.
- An application of this size did not warrant consultation from the Environment Agency (EA) and referred to the detailed comments made by the council's Engineer as set out on page 10 of the agenda report
- Surface water run-off will be discharged to either a soakaway or a local watercourse. No reason to believe that either of these options would be problematic.
- Overhangs of the margins and walkways are an accepted facet of swept path analysis when considering large vehicles who use an estate road infrequently
- The accompanying Transport Statement has been fully considered and its conclusions are acceptable to the Highway Authority.

Stan Shayler from East Coker Parish Council then addressed the committee. He explained to members that the Parish Council was now in the process of producing a Neighbourhood Plan and that the proposed development did not fit the housing requirement. He said the district council were now satisfied that they had a 5 year land supply and that this was an inappropriate site for development which was outside the development limit and may enable further development to the south.

He said the entrance and egress was a danger point with traffic emerging onto a single lane track and this would only exacerbate the existing traffic flow problems. He concluded that a section of Long Furlong Lane was closed to traffic for several weeks due to flooding and that the proposed development would further exacerbate the flooding issues in the area.

Members of the public then addressed the committee. Several comments were made in objection to the application, which included the following:

- Proposal was outside the development area and East Coker Parish is already proposed to take a large amount of development.
- Why more development especially as the Council are satisfied they have a 5 year land supply.
- Referred to Paragraph 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) where application must be in accordance with development plan unless key considerations are satisfied.
- Concerns over the safety issues along Long Furlong Lane and proposed access to the site including safety hazard for pedestrians and horse riders.
- Although only an outline application concerns raised over the house design and high density of the site.
- Loss of Grade 1 agricultural land where this land is invaluable for the agricultural rural economy.
- Significant impact on the traffic flow of the area with only a small section of the road to be improved.
- Set precedent for future developments in the area.
- Need to safeguard the rural surrounding of the village.

Matt Frost, the Agent also addressed the committee. He said a thorough assessment was undertaken on the site and that a modest proposal of up to 20 dwellings was sufficient including 7 affordable new homes which would go toward the desired requirement of 11. He reported no objections had been received from the council's Engineers and that the Traffic Assessment had been fully considered and its conclusions acceptable to the Highways Authority. The area of land was 2 acres in size and therefore did not have a huge impact on the loss of Grade 1 land. He reported the proposal passes the significant test in the NPPF where presumption is in favour of sustainable development.

Councillor Cathy Bakewell, Ward member appreciated the need for housing in the village which also provided good local facilities. However, she raised concern regarding the loss of Grade 1 Agricultural land which was currently in production and that the site was outside the development limit. She understood that previous applications had been refused nevertheless planning policy had since moved on and that this application should be determined under new policies. She also raised her concerns regarding flooding in the area which she believed would continue year on year and the highway safety issues along Long Furlong Lane together with the access and egress of the proposed site. She was unconvinced the widening of the road was sufficient and recognised the need to protect children walking to and from the local school. She also noted the Section 106 contributions were quite high and believed they could be unviable and therefore due to these reasons would not support the application.

Councillor Gina Seaton, Ward member agreed with the comments already made by the other Ward member and raised her concern regarding the Highway safety issues of the proposed access and egress to the site. She reported that the roads around the area were only 'lanes' and that any increase in traffic would cause potential danger to local residents. She referred to the 'Peripheral Landscape Study' which classed the site as having a 'moderate capacity to accommodate built development' and consideration should be given to the historic assets of the area where the key views of the countryside should be taken into account. She concluded that she would not support the application.

In response the Area Lead Officer (South) referred to the council's Landscape Architect comments as set out in the agenda report and that these took account of the specific site and proposal in question rather than the wider landscape issues that accommodating a strategic site would raise.

He also pointed out the comments received from the Highway Authority and advised that whilst no objection was raised members would need to consider and make up their own minds regarding the highway safety issues of the proposal.

Members then discussed the application at length and comments in support of the application were expressed including:

- Appreciate the principles for sustainable development are defined by the NPPF and therefore this site can be considered acceptable.
- SSDC Engineers consider the Surface water run-off will be discharged to either a soakaway or a local watercourse to be acceptable.
- Landscape Architect considered the proposal would not create a significant landscape impact.
- 7 dwellings would be affordable housing which would go toward the desired requirement of 11.
- Previous applications had been refused however planning policy had since moved on.

Members' comments in objection to the application were also expressed including the following:

- Concerns regarding the Highways Authority's comments by taking the information at face value without local consideration.
- Concerns over the safety issues along Long Furlong Lane and proposed access and egress to the site due to the width of the proposed highway.
- Outside of development limit.
- Loss of Grade 1 agricultural land which is invaluable for the agricultural rural economy.
- Impact of the local landscape and loss of key historic views.
- Increased flooding in Broadacres and Long Furlong Lane.
- Traffic concerns regarding the proposed increase of traffic from the development.
- ST3 overridden by paragraphs 54 and 55 of the NPPF whereby the Local Planning Authority should be responsive to local circumstances including the emerging Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan.

During a short debate, members, led by Councillor Tim Carroll discussed and suggested four reasons for refusal:

- Highway safety concerns.
- Visual impact detrimental to the area.
- No consideration of emerging Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan and the proposal does not consider local circumstances.
- Incremental loss of grade 1 agricultural land.

In response to a member to include a fifth reason for refusal, the Area Lead Officer (South) explained that an application of this size did not warrant consultation from the EA and that this area was not considered an area of flooding risk.

Following a short discussion, it was then proposed and subsequently seconded that planning permission be refused, contrary to the officer's recommendation for the following reasons as read out by the Planning Officer:

The principle of development in this location is unacceptable because:

- The access arrangements to and from Skinners Hill Farm due to carriageway width, alignment and forward visibility would be detrimental to highway safety.
- The proposal is beyond the established built limits of North Coker which would be detrimental to the open countryside.
- The proposal is not responsive to the emerging Local Plan and emerging neighbourhood plan in particular to this locality and does not consider local circumstances.
- It leads to the incremental loss of Grade I (the best and most versatile) agricultural land.

As such the proposal is contrary to the NPPF in particular Paragraphs 54 and 112 and Policies ST3, ST5 and EC3 of the South Somerset Local Plan.

RESOLVED:

That application 14/01266/OUT be refused for the following reasons:

- The access arrangements to and from Skinners Hill Farm due to carriageway width, alignment and forward visibility would be detrimental to highway safety.
- The proposal is beyond the established built limits of North Coker which would be detrimental to the open countryside.
- The proposal is not responsive to the emerging Local Plan and emerging neighbourhood plan in particular to this locality and does not consider local circumstances.

- It leads to the incremental loss of Grade I (the best and most versatile) agricultural land.

As such the proposal is contrary to the NPPF in particular Paragraphs 54 and 112 and Policies ST3, ST5 and EC3 of the South Somerset Local Plan.

*(Voting: 7 votes in favour, 4 against, 0 abstentions)*

---

### **23. 2013/14 Dorcas House Statement of Accounts (Agenda Item 8)**

Members agreed to approve the accounts and the Chairman signed the Annual Report and Statement of Accounts for 2013/14.

**RESOLVED:** That members approved the 2013/14 draft Statement of Accounts.

---

### **24. Avon and Somerset Policing Update (Agenda Item 9)**

Police Inspector Tim Coombe addressed the committee and with the aid of a powerpoint presentation updated members on the review of the policing structures across their operations and geographical area.

For members information a copy of his powerpoint presentation is attached as Appendix A to these minutes.

In response to questions, Police Inspector Tim Coombe informed members that:

- Police presence would be retained in areas where there is police presence at this time.
- A neighbourhood base will remain in Yeovil although it is not known yet where this will be located.
- Having conducted a comprehensive review of accommodation it was considered that the best cost effective approach was to locate a custodial suite along the area of the A303. This custodial suite would deliver a number of custody suites to include additional staff resources enabling officer's quicker turnaround times when dealing with offenders.
- Continue to liaise and work with the Mental Health Trust to ensure patients are not put at unnecessary risk.

The Chairman thanked Police Inspector Tim Coombe for his informative presentation.

**NOTED**

---

## 25. Enhancement of Yeovil CCTV (Agenda Item 10)

The Community Safety Co-ordinator presented the agenda report and with the aid of a powerpoint presentation explained to members the objective to obtain funding and the installation of monitored CCTV covering the two underpasses serving the Hospital Roundabout and the immediate surrounding area.

In response to questions, he informed members that:

- Somerset County Council was to contribute up to £10,000 which would be part of the Eastern Corridor improvement works. It is understood they would fit trunking and hardwire the cameras.
- The fixed cameras will be mounted at both ends of the subway and positioned to ensure the whole of the subway would be monitored and capable of viewing the whole of the underpass.
- The bid from the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) allowed the enhancement of recordings which were now available to view at Petters House instead of Bridgewater.
- An additional PTZ unit would be installed to supplement the unit already in Princes Street. This would not only cover the entrances and walk ways but be able to see across the dual carriageway to the path on the other side that leads to the Kinston entrance.

Following a short debate, members voiced their full support for further work to be undertaken to seek the funding anticipated to complete and install the CCTV cameras. They voiced their concern regarding the timescale of the project and wished that work begin as soon as possible. They asked that officers explore the possibility of starting these works notwithstanding the £10,000 contribution from Somerset County Council and a bid be made to the SSDC Capital fund.

It was therefore proposed and seconded that recommendation 1 be amended to read;

‘Authorise the further development of this project by allowing officers to seek the level of funding anticipated to complete and run the project and that capital funding is explored as a matter of urgency’.

On being put to the vote this was carried unanimously.

**RESOLVED:** that members:

- (1) Authorise the further development of this project by allowing officers to seek the level of funding anticipated to complete and run the project and that capital funding is explored as a matter of urgency
- (2) Agreed that the installation and monitoring of the five cameras are installed when the funding is identified.

*(Voting: unanimous)*



**26. Area South Committee Forward Plan (Agenda Item 11)**

No requests or comments were made by members.

- RESOLVED:**
- (1) that the Area South Forward Plan and the comments of Members be noted.
  - (2) that the reports identified by Members be added to the Area South Forward Plan.
- (Voting: Without dissent)*
- 

.....  
Chairman

.....  
Date