

South Somerset District Council

Minutes of a meeting of the **Area North Committee** held at the **Council Chamber B, Council Offices, Brympton Way, Yeovil BA20 2HT on Wednesday 24 January 2018.**

(2.00 pm - 4.30 pm)

Present:

Members: Councillor Derek Yeomans (Chairman)

Clare Aparicio Paul	Crispin Raikes
Neil Bloomfield	Jo Roundell Greene
Adam Dance (to 4.15pm)	Dean Ruddle
Graham Middleton	Sylvia Seal
Tiffany Osborne	Gerard Tucker (to 4.25pm)

Others:

Mike Lewis	Ric Pallister
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Officers:

Helen Rutter	Communities Lead
Chris Cooper	Environment Services Manager
John Millar	Planning Officer
Nick Head	Planning Officer
Andrew Gunn	Area Lead (West and North)
Becky Sanders	Case Services Officer (Support Services)
Simon Fox	Lead Specialist (Planning)

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

99. Minutes (Agenda Item 1)

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 December 2017 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

100. Apologies for absence (Agenda Item 2)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Stephen Page and Sue Steele.

101. Declarations of Interest (Agenda Item 3)

Councillor Gerard Tucker declared a personal and prejudicial interest for item 16 – planning application 17/03517/FUL, as he is godparent to a close relative of the applicant.

102. Date of next meeting (Agenda Item 4)

Members noted the next meeting of Area North Committee was scheduled for 2.00pm on Wednesday 28 February 2018, in the Council Chamber at the Council Offices, Brympton Way, Yeovil.

There was a brief discussion during which different opinions were voiced regarding location of venues, which were noted.

103. Public question time (Agenda Item 5)

There were no questions from members of the public.

104. Chairman's announcements (Agenda Item 6)

The Chairman made a statement apologising for some inappropriate words he had used at the previous meeting in December, regarding a planning application in Curry Rivel.

The Chairman noted he had asked Simon Fox to attend the meeting to introduce himself to members in his new role. Mr Fox explained to members that he was the new Lead Specialist for Planning, and provided an overview to his background and experience.

105. Reports from members (Agenda Item 7)

Councillor Crispin Raikes noted the apologies from Councillor Stephen Page, and briefly explained to members the reason for Councillor Page's absence. Members requested that an appropriate card be sent to Councillor Page to convey wishes for a speedy recovery.

Councillor Gerard Tucker provided a brief update regarding Huish Leisure Board. He noted the works programme for covering the pool was a little behind schedule, and explained the reasons why and the new anticipated schedule. He also noted that the Artificial Grass Pitch was now breaking even which was good news.

106. Performance of the Streetscene Service (Agenda Item 8)

The Environmental Services Manager (formerly known as Streetscene Manager) introduced the report, and highlighted key elements and achievements since the last update report. He noted fly-tipping figures were fairly static and showed a general decline since 2014. Most fly tips had been of car boot or pick-up sized quantities along, or on, public highways.

During a brief discussion, the Manager responded to points of detail, and he noted that:

- Gullies were still the responsibility of Highways, and he was assured by them that had records of the location of all gullies in the district. He noted he would attempt to get detailed records for individual parishes and circulate to ward members – these could then possibly be shared with parishes and promoted locally.

- Fly tipping figures included within the report included fly tips reported by the public and also those found by officers. Exact locations and nature of individual fly-tips could be provided to ward members and parish councils on request.
- Teams were responsible for litter picking in a set geographical area on a routine basis, but they also responded to specific requests.

At the end of discussion, members congratulated the team on the achievements and thanked the manager for his informative report.

RESOLVED: That the report on the performance of the Streetscene Service be noted.

107. Huish Episcopi Leisure Centre Board - Appointment of a Member to the Management Company (Executive Decision) (Agenda Item 9)

The Communities Lead introduced the report and explained that a replacement member needed to be appointed to the Huish Leisure Board.

There was a very brief discussion during which Councillor Crispin Raikes was nominated for the position. There being no other nominations it was unanimously agreed that Councillor Crispin Raikes be the second appointed member of SSDC to serve on the Management Company for Huish Episcopi Leisure Centre, for the remainder of the municipal year.

RESOLVED: That Councillor Crispin Raikes be the second appointed member of SSDC to serve on the Management Company for Huish Episcopi Leisure Centre, for the remainder of the municipal year 2017-2018.

Reason: To make an appointment from SSDC to the Management Company (Board) for the Huish Episcopi Leisure Centre.

(Voting: Unanimous)

108. Area North Committee Forward Plan (Agenda Item 10)

The Communities Lead introduced the report, and noted there were no updates to the Forward Plan as detailed in the agenda. Members were content to note the report.

RESOLVED: That the Area North Committee Forward Plan be noted.

109. Planning Appeals (Agenda Item 11)

Members noted the report that detailed planning appeals which had been lodged, dismissed or allowed.

110. Schedule of Planning Applications to be Determined By Committee (Agenda Item 12)

Members noted the schedule of planning applications to be determined at the meeting.

111. Planning Application 17/04124/FUL - Land Opposite Tinkabee Cottage, Little Norton, Norton Sub Hamdon. (Agenda Item 13)

Proposal: Change of use of land, stationing of a log cabin and two shepherds huts for holiday let.

The Planning Officer presented the application as detailed in the agenda. He noted that wording in brackets at the end of the last sentence above the Conclusion, had been included in error and was only a note for the author when writing report.

Mr C Miller, agent, noted that effectively temporary permission was controlled by condition 4. He felt there was high prospect that the proposed holiday units would succeed, and that the proposed usage would help with the security of the site and maintenance of the holding. He also highlighted that similar schemes had been granted elsewhere in the district.

Ward member, Councillor Sylvia Seal, commented that when the parish council had considered the application, many people had attended with their concerns. She noted it was a very narrow lane to the site in a very rural location, and the local community were concerned about the increase in traffic. There was plenty of other accommodation already available nearby and local knowledge was contrary to the officer report, and indicated the area did flood. She raised concern about the drainage arrangements and the report referring to measures that could be taken if the arrangements proved to be inadequate. There were local fears that the site might expand if conditions were not complied with, and the parish council had asked that if approved, that only a three or five year permission be granted. She felt the site was inappropriate for this application.

During discussion the officers responded to points of detail. Comments raised by members included:

- Could the style and type of log cabin and huts be enforced satisfactorily by condition in order to prevent a standard mobile home and two touring caravans being placed on the site.
- This is a local beauty spot and historical area.
- There needs to be a requirement to clear the site of all paraphernalia otherwise it won't be suitable for a holiday base.
- If approved, permission should be time limited.
- Query why there were no comments from Economic Development as the proposal seemed to be a diversification venture?
- Fear log cabin may become a permanent home to the site manager, as it's difficult to run a business like this without being on site.
- Feel there are issues with highways and flooding. Site will take a lot of resource to monitor.
- Concerned about drainage proposals, could be 7 or 8 people on the site and possibly only one septic tank, on what could be a waterlogged site.

At the end of discussion it was proposed and seconded to refuse the application, contrary to the officer recommendation, on the grounds of scale, layout and materials not respecting the local area. On being put to the vote, the proposal to refuse the application was carried unanimously.

RESOLVED: That planning application 17/04124/FUL be REFUSED, contrary to the officer recommendation, for the following reason:

Reason:

The proposal, by reason of its scale, layout and materials, fails to respect the rural character, appearance and general amenity of the area, and is therefore considered to be unacceptable in this location, contrary to the aims and objectives the NPPF and Policy EQ2 of the South Somerset Local Plan.

(Voting: Unanimous in favour of refusal.)

112. Planning Application 17/02694/FUL - Land OS 5949, Somerton Road, Langport. (Agenda Item 14)

Proposal: The erection of 94 No. dwellings including associated public space and all other associated external works.

Prior to presenting the application, the Planning Officer informed members that he had been recently contacted by the National Planning Casework Unit regarding a request to call in the application for determination by the Secretary of State. He noted this would only apply if the application was approved by members. He updated members that:

- some further letters of objection had been received raising concerns about the beech hedge and matters already covered in the report.
- Persimmon had confirmed they would provide a new pedestrian crossing rather than a refuge at Field Road.

The Planning Officer presented the application as detailed in the agenda, and referred briefly to the previously approved outline application. He explained the new full proposal in detail including diversion of the public footpath, and noted that highway access arrangements were as previously approved at outline.

Members were reminded that the principle of development for 80 houses and removal of the beech hedge had already been determined as acceptable. The officer also explained the affordable housing requirements (type and mix) detailed by SSSC Strategic Housing compared to the proposal that the applicant was putting forward in this application. Local concerns about sewerage were acknowledged and Wessex Water had indicated they would connect the development and advised that they would be undertaking a strategic review in the next 12 months.

Ms C Naden, Mrs R Till and Mr C Miller, each addressed members in objection to the application. Some of their points included:

- 256 people had signed a letter requesting that the beech hedge avenue be retained, and reference to biodiversity and local policies.
- Concerns about site access and impact on adjacent properties which will impact on quality of life.
- There has been no consultation about the type of pedestrian road crossing and its suitability.
- Access should be by a new access directly from the roundabout.
- Proposal is too close to, and will have an impact on, nearby listed building, and is contrary to national and local policies regarding protection of heritage assets.

Mr J Wilton, agent, read a statement and highlighted merits of the scheme including:

- 94 homes in Langport and compliance level of affordable housing.

- Local play area to be provided
- Surface water drainage will be dealt with by underground tanks
- Most consultees accept the scheme which will have significant financial contributions.

Ward member, Councillor Clare Aparicio Paul, noted the community had strong views regarding the application. She acknowledged the site did lend itself to development, but on balance any proposal needed to be right. The increased number of dwellings proposed had caused great community angst, and in her opinion she felt it was over development and a step too far. She was supportive having development on the site but not as proposed in this application.

During discussion officers responded to points of detail, and comments raised by members included:

- Concern at the increase in housing, density and 2½ storey element – feel 94 dwellings is too many.
- If housing needed, question why site has not been built out after 3 years since the previous outline application was approved.
- Feel some of hedge could be retained, but acknowledge it was discussed and agreed previously.
- Need a design with character and to fit in with local area. Don't feel this proposal is appropriate to the area.
- This is too much for this site, and there are already problems with sewerage in the area.
- Strange that there is an increase in the number of dwellings proposed but no increase in the amount of affordable housing.
- This proposal would be over development and the design is un-inspired and could be improved.

At the end of discussion it was proposed to refuse the application due to overdevelopment and unacceptable impact. On hearing comments made during discussion, the Planning Officer suggested the wording for the reason for refusal, and this was agreed by members. On being put to the vote, the proposal to refuse the application was carried unanimously.

RESOLVED: That planning application 17/02694/FUL be REFUSED, contrary to the officer recommendation, for the following reason:

Reason:

The proposed development, due to the increased number of dwellings, and the scale, design, proportions and siting of said dwellings, represents overdevelopment of the site, resulting in a cramped residential development of a level and density inappropriate to the location. The proposal therefore has an unacceptable impact on the character, appearance and rural context of the site and its surroundings. The proposal is therefore contrary to policies SD1 and EQ2 of the South Somerset Local Plan (2006-2028) and provisions of chapter 7 and the core planning principles of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Notes:

01. In accordance with paragraphs 186 and 187 of the NPPF the council,

as local planning authority, takes a positive and proactive approach to development proposals focused on solutions. The council works with applicants/agents in a positive and proactive manner by;

- offering a pre-application advice service, and
- as appropriate updating applications/agents of any issues that may arise in the processing of their application and where possible suggesting solutions

In this case the case officer was satisfied with the proposed scheme and duly recommended approval. The recommendation was overturned by committee.

(Voting: Unanimous in favour in refusal.)

113. Planning Application 17/03951/FUL - Land Adjoining The Granary, Old Stream Farm, School Street, Drayton. (Agenda Item 15)

Proposal: The erection of a new single storey dwelling and garage.

The Planning officer presented the application as detailed in the agenda report, noting that the principle of development was accepted. The main issues were regarding the visual impact of the proposal.

Ms G Farnworth-Smith, spoke on behalf of her partner who was the applicant. She noted they had lived in the village for 12 years and were well integrated into the community. They wished to remain in the community as they got older, but their current house had become too large for their needs and was becoming increasingly difficult for them to manage. The application site was adjacent to their current home, vacant, and too small to farm. The parish council supported the proposal and there had been positive encouragement from neighbours.

Ms L Dunne, agent, commented that the proposed bungalow had been designed so the applicant could downsize. No objections had been raised but the application was recommended for refusal based on certain policies. She considered that School Street was not a totally linear development and so the proposal was not at odds with the settlement character, nor would it intrude into open countryside, as only one boundary adjoined open fields.

Ward member, Councillor Tiffany Osborne, noted much had already been said by the applicant and agent, and she was slightly at a loss as to why the application was recommended for refusal. She did not feel the proposal would be an erosion of the local setting or into open countryside, but would conclude the cul-de-sac development. She proposed approving the application on the grounds that it would not have any detrimental impact or be against policy.

During a short discussion, the officer responded to points of detail about the access track and the decision of a previous appeal. He advised members, that as they appeared minded to approve the application, there would need to be conditions for time limit, approved plans, materials, access, surfacing, parking and landscaping.

On being put to the vote the proposal to approve the application, subject to the conditions as suggested by the officer, was carried unanimously.

RESOLVED: That planning application 17/03951/FUL be APPROVED, contrary to the officer recommendation, subject to the following:

Justification:

The proposal, by reason of its siting, design and appearance, represents a form of development that respects the established character and appearance of the locality, in accordance policies SD1, EQ2 and EQ3 of the South Somerset Local Plan (2006-28) and aims and objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Subject to the following conditions:

01. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To accord with the provisions of section 91(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

02. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: '6717-01' and '6717-02', received 29th September 2017.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt as to the development authorised and in the interests of proper planning.

03. No work shall commence in respect to the construction of the external walls and roof unless particulars of materials (including the provision of samples) to be used for these external surfaces of the development hereby approved have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity, in accordance with policies EQ2 and EQ3 of the South Somerset Local Plan (2006-2028) and the provisions of chapters 7 and 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

04. The areas allocated for parking and turning on the approved plans (including the spaces indicated within the garage hereby approved), shall be kept clear of obstruction at all times and shall not be used other than for the parking and turning of vehicles in connection with the development hereby permitted.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety, in accordance with policies TA5 and TA6 of the South Somerset Local Plan (2006-2028) and the provisions of chapter 4 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

05. The proposed access over the first 6.0m of its length, as measured from the edge of the adjoining carriageway at the end of Old Stream Farm, shall be properly consolidated and surfaced in accordance with details that shall be submitted to and approved by the Local

Planning Authority. Such approved details shall be carried out prior to the dwelling hereby approved being first occupied and maintained thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety, in accordance with policy TA5 of the South Somerset Local Plan (2006-2028) and the provisions of chapter 4 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

06. A scheme of landscaping shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The landscaping scheme shall include indications of all existing trees and hedgerows on the land, and details of any to be retained, together with measures for their protection in the course of the development, as well as details of any changes proposed in existing ground levels. All planting, seeding, turfing or earth moulding comprised in the approved details of landscaping shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding season after the development hereby permitted is first brought into use; and any trees or plants which within a period of five years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species, unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity, in accordance with policy EQ2 of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006 and the provisions of chapters 7 and 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Informatives:

01. Please be advised that approval of this application by South Somerset District Council will attract a liability payment under the Community Infrastructure Levy. CIL is a mandatory financial charge on development and you will be notified of the amount of CIL being charged on this development in a CIL Liability Notice.

(Voting: Unanimous in favour of approval)

**114. Planning Application 17/03517/FUL - Torwood, High Ham, Langport.
(Agenda Item 16)**

Proposal: Demolition of cottage and the erection of 2 No. dwellings.

The Planning Officer presented the application and noted the existing dwelling was in a poor state of preservation. He explained that the issue was regarding highway safety, and both the Highway Authority and the SSDC Highways Consultant had recommended refusal due to highway safety concerns.

Mr D Vigar, on behalf of High Ham Parish Council, commented that three versions of the application had been considered by the Parish Council, and he explained briefly why they had supported or rejected each option. The Council had concluded that the current application before members was the best of the three options, and they supported the current proposal.

Mr W Barbour spoke in objection to the application. He noted whilst he had no objection to the principle of two houses being built, he did have huge concerns about the parking arrangements, visibility and width of the road. Traffic exiting the main street, into the lane, barely slowed down and hence he was concerned about safety.

Ms H Lazenby, agent, noted that during the course of the application two similar applications had been put forward. The original application was now before members as the preferred option of the applicants, however the community had highway concerns. The alternative scheme would mitigate these concerns but was not supported locally due to amenity impact on a neighbouring property. The lane had very light traffic, and the proposed development would provide a pavement along the front of the dwellings. She asked that if members felt that highway safety was an issue that application be deferred so that revised proposals could come forward.

Ward member, Councillor Gerard Tucker, commented that the parish supported two applications coming forward, and the varying options had been subject to much deliberation by the Parish Council. The alternative option raised concerns about the proximity to a neighbouring property for maintenance and drainage. He asked members to carefully consider the comments of the Parish Council.

(Having earlier declared a prejudicial interest, Councillor Gerard Tucker left the meeting for the consideration and voting of this application).

During a short discussion, several members commented that highway safety was a concern, there would be very poor visibility when exiting the properties, and felt there could be a better solution regarding parking for the proposed dwellings.

In response to a question about the possibility of deferring the application, the Area Lead advised that a decision should be made on the application as currently before members. The applicant would be able to submit a fresh application for a revised scheme.

At the end of debate, it was proposed to refuse the application, as per the officer recommendation. On being put to the vote the proposal was carried 6 in favour of refusal, 1 against and 2 abstentions.

RESOLVED: That planning application 17/03517/FUL be REFUSED, as per the officer recommendation.

Reason:

The proposal, by reason of the design and layout of the parking and access arrangements, would be prejudicial to highway safety. In particular, the vehicular access and parking for Plot 2, by reason of the severely restricted visibility in a southerly direction, are considered unsuitable for use in connection with the development proposed, contrary to the aims of the NPPF and Policy TA5 of the South Somerset Local Plan.

Notes:

In accordance with paragraphs 186 and 187 of the NPPF the council, as local planning authority, takes a positive and proactive approach to development proposals focused on solutions. The council works with

applicants/agents in a positive and proactive manner by;

- offering a pre-application advice service, and
- as appropriate updating applications/agents of any issues that may arise in the processing of their application and where possible suggesting solutions

In this case, the applicant/agent did not take the pre-application advice offered, and has proceeded with a proposal contrary to Highways Standing Advice that would result in highway safety harm.

(Voting: 6 in favour of refusal, 1 against, 2 abstentions)

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Chairman