

MEETING AN:03.0708  
DATE 25:07:07

### South Somerset District Council

**Minutes** of a meeting of the **Area North Committee** held in the Village Hall, Norton-sub-Hamdon on **Wednesday, 25th July 2007**.

(2.00 p.m. – 5.45 p.m.)

**Present:**

<b>Members:</b>	Patrick Palmer	(In the Chair)
Jill Beale		Derek Nelson
Ann Campbell		Paul Robathan
Tony Canvin		Keith Ronaldson
Rupert Cox (until 5.30 pm.)		Sylvia Seal
Jo Roundell Greene		Sue Steele
Roy Mills		Derek Yeomans (from 2.30 pm.)

**Officers:**

Charlotte Jones	Head of Area Development (North)
Madelaine King-Oakley	Area Support Team Leader (North)
Chris Cooper	Acting Head of Waste, Recycling & Transport/Head of Streetscene
Rob Harkness	Acting Waste Supervisor
Adrian Moore	Play & Youth Facilities Officer
Nigel Collins	Transport Strategy Officer
Jo Manley	Policy Planner
David Norris	Planning Team Leader
Andrew Gunn	Deputy Planning Team Leader
Lee Walton	Planner
Tim Bodys	Solicitor
Andrew Blackburn	Committee Administrator

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

#### 23. Minutes (Agenda Item 1)

The minutes of the meeting held on the 27th June 2007, copies of which had been circulated, were taken as read and, having been approved as a correct record, were signed by the Chairman.

#### 24. Apologies for Absence (Agenda Item 2)

There were no apologies for absence.

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

Cllr. Jill Beale declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the application for grant submitted by the Lady Smith Memorial Institute (the Parish Rooms), Somerton (Agenda item 11 – Community Grant) as she was Chairman of the managing committee.

Immediately prior to the consideration of the item, Cllr. Roy Mills declared a personal and prejudicial interest in planning application no. 07/01252/FUL (demolition of nos. 2-16 (even only) West End Close and garage blocks in West End View and the erection of 19 dwellings and associated additional car parking, land at West End Close, West End View, South Petherton) as he had been appointed by the Council to serve on the main board of South Somerset Homes, who were the applicants.

---

## 26. Date of Future Meeting (Agenda Item 4)

The Committee noted that the next scheduled meeting of the Committee would be held at the Village Hall, Chilthorne Domer on Wednesday, 22nd August 2007 at 2.00 p.m.

**NOTED.**

---

## 27. Public Question Time (Agenda Item 5)

There were no questions from representatives of Parish Councils or members of the public.

---

## 28. Chairman's Announcements (Agenda Item 6)

The Committee were pleased to hear from the Chairman that Angie Cox, Committee Administrator, had recovered well from her recent operation and was now at home. The Chairman and Head of Area Development had sent flowers on behalf of the Committee.

The Chairman referred to the announcement that had been made today by the Minister confirming that the bid for a Unitary Council for Somerset had not been successful. He mentioned that the District Council would, therefore, remain and the process of working more closely with colleagues at the County Council and other District Councils would now begin. The Chairman paid tribute to officers and senior councillors for their leadership in this matter.

---

## 29. Reports from Members (Agenda Item 7)

- (a) Cllr. Paull Robathan referred to the closing date for comments on the Council's Sustainable Strategy being 31st July 2007. He asked members to remind any Parish Council that had not responded to submit comments by that time. He also mentioned, however, that should comments be received shortly after the deadline they would still be accepted.
- (b) The Chairman referred to his attendance at a meeting of the Somerset Water Management Partnership at which there was a talk on a nature map of Somerset but there was little to report with regard to water management.
- (c) The Chairman reported on his attendance at a meeting of the Somerset Waterways Advisory Committee at which the Somerset Waterlinks Project was discussed. Members noted that Anne Fraser, Chairman of the Waterlinks

Partnership Steering Group, was doing a good job in promoting the project and in seeking the support of various businesses and organisations. He also reported that it was not yet definite whether the Waterlinks Project would be chosen to appear on the ITV public ballot. The Committee further noted that Anne Fraser would like to make a presentation to full Council regarding the project at the next available meeting.

Other members commented on the Waterlinks Project when it was noted that it had also been discussed by Somerset Strategic Partnership. It was commented that the various schemes within the County led main project were all worthwhile and that the Head of Area Development had been diligent in progressing the project on behalf of South Somerset.

The Head of Area Development reported that she would be following up the request to make a presentation on the Somerset Waterlinks Project to the next available Council meeting.

- (d) Cllr. Ann Campbell referred to the presentation made at a previous meeting of the Committee by Martin Eibl from National Energy Action on affordable warmth and fuel poverty. She informed members that the Affordable Warmth Partnership would be sending information to Parish Councils on this topic, which it was hoped would be heeded by them.
- (e) Cllr. Jo Roundell Greene, Portfolio Holder for Environment and Property, referred to the special Executive Meetings of all Councils in Somerset that were held last week when it was agreed to set up the Somerset Waste Board to be responsible for recycling and refuse collection throughout Somerset. She also reported that the contract for the service had been awarded to ECT commencing on 14th October 2007. She hoped that there would be a seamless transition for the service.

**NOTED.**

---

### **30. Report for Area North Committee on the Performance of the Waste, Recycling and Transport Services (Agenda Item 8)**

The Head of Waste, Recycling and Transport introduced Rob Harkness, Acting Waste Supervisor, who summarised the agenda report informing the Committee of the performance of the Waste, Recycling and Transport Service for the period from January until June 2007.

He also referred to the decision of all the Councils in Somerset, as mentioned by the Portfolio Holder under the previous item, to set up the Somerset Waste Board who would take on the responsibility for recycling and refuse collection throughout Somerset.

During the ensuing discussion, a number of comments were made including the following:-

- the Chairman wished to thank Terry Richards, Waste Co-ordinator, for his part in the assessment of the tender documents submitted by bidders in respect of the award of the contract for recycling and refuse collection for the Somerset Waste Board;
- members were pleased that the formal establishment of the Somerset Waste Board had now been agreed by the constituent authorities. Comment was expressed by a member that it must now be ensured that the high standards in the provision of the recycling and refuse service by this Council were maintained;

- in response to a question, the Acting Head of Waste, Recycling and Transport informed the Committee that the waste inspection role would transfer to the Somerset Waste Board. He indicated that further details of that aspect were still needed;
- reference was made to waste collection that took place in narrow roads and in response to a question, the Acting Head of Waste, Recycling and Transport indicated that the issue of narrow access was identified in the tender documents and all contractors offered a similar solution to that which was currently operated by this authority. He commented that the new Waste Board and the appointed contractors would be aware of the issues that they would have to deal with;
- the Acting Head of Waste, Recycling and Transport noted the comments of a member who referred to references in the agenda report (page 4) to the percentage of waste “diverted to landfill”, which should have read “diverted from landfill”. He also noted an error in the data relating to indicator 82a in the table on page 5 of the agenda;
- the officers also responded to members’ questions relating to the regularity of emptying recycling bins at supermarkets and the possibility of village halls having brown food bins. The Portfolio Holder indicated that household type waste would continue to be collected free from village halls but not food waste.

The Chairman thanked the officers for the report, which was noted by the Committee.

**NOTED.**

*(Chris Cooper, Acting Head of Waste, Recycling and Transport – (01935) 462840)  
(chris.cooper@southsomerset.gov.uk)*

---

## **31. Report for Area North Committee on the Performance of the Streetscene Service (Agenda Item 9)**

The Head of Streetscene summarised the agenda report informing members on the performance of the Streetscene Service in the area for the period September 2006 to March 2007.

During the ensuing discussion, a number of comments were made including the following:-

- reference was made by a member to the low number of litter picking events that had taken place. It was considered that such events were worthwhile and it was suggested that members promote litter picking days to their parishes;
- a member requested that consideration be given to planting spring flowering bulbs at the Hayes End roundabout on the A303 at South Petherton. The Head of Streetscene asked the ward members to contact him to enable that matter to be discussed with them;
- in response to a question from a member, the Head of Streetscene commented that his team held a map that showed the responsibility for weed spraying between the County and District Councils. He also reported that it had been a poor year for weed spraying given the weather conditions. It was hoped that the first spray would be completed within two weeks within Area North before commencing the second spray. He noted the comments of a member about there being a lot of greenery at the side of roads where they abutted kerbing in some parishes in his ward.

The Chairman thanked the Head of Streetscene for his report and referred to the improvements in the service that had been made. He also felt that liaison with parish councils was good.

**NOTED.**

*(Chris Cooper, Head of Streetscene – (01935) 462840)  
(chris.cooper@southsomerset.gov.uk)*

---

### **32. Play Areas and Youth Facilities (Agenda Item 10)**

The Play and Youth Facilities Officer summarised his report on the agenda updating the Committee on the progress made with play area refurbishment and youth facility provision.

He further commented that allocating funding to these projects did not just mean that play facilities and equipment were provided in parishes. It also had a knock on effect in bringing local people and committees together. It also gave them the opportunity of working with the District Council, enabling them to deliver and run these projects.

During the ensuing discussion, a number of comments were made by members including the following:-

- Cllr. Sylvia Seal referred to the project for a multi-use games area in Norton-sub-Hamdon. She referred to this being a County Council managed project that still had not been completed satisfactorily. The Committee noted her comments that floodlights had been installed, which the Parish Council had been unaware of and were to be removed. The floodlights, however, were still currently on the site;
- Cllr. Sylvia Seal also referred to a play area at Stonehill, Stoke-sub-Hamdon where a site meeting had been held with regard to its future but no residents from the estate had attended. She informed members that the Parish Council would like to clear the site of old play equipment and leave it as a green open space area for the time being. The Committee and Play and Youth Facilities Officer noted her request that this site be kept on the list of potential schemes;
- in response to comments from members, the Play and Youth Facilities Officer reported that there was a programme of replacing damaged fencing with durable steel fencing on District Council sites. With regard to play equipment he mentioned that good quality durable equipment to British Standards was used to ensure longevity. He also mentioned that in designing play areas it was now tried to include more loose material to allow for more informal recreational play;
- a member referred to planning regulations that did not necessarily allow for reasonably sized gardens where children could play informally. He expressed his view that where developments did not have reasonable gardens there was a need to seek funding from the developers to provide facilities for play within their developments.

In response to a comment, the Head of Area Development reported that the agenda report should have included a request that members let the officers know of any general comments or issues they had about the provision of play facilities or of any facilities they would like to see provided in their wards for discussion at the next meeting of the Play and Youth Facilities Steering Group.

The Committee thanked the Play and Youth Facilities Officer for his report and congratulated him on what had been achieved. Comment was also expressed about the amount of money drawn in from other sources through the District Council grant funding play and youth facilities projects.

Members noted the report and the request for them to let officers know of any issues they would like discussed by the Play and Youth Facilities Steering Group.

**NOTED.**

*(Adrian Moore, Play and Youth Facilities Officer – (01935) 462409)  
(adrian.moore@southsomerset.gov.uk)*

---

### **33. Community Grant (Agenda item 11) (Executive Decision)**

Cllr. Jill Beale, having declared her personal and prejudicial interest in this grant application, left the meeting during its consideration.

Reference was made to the agenda report and the Committee considered an application received by the Council for financial assistance from the Lady Smith Memorial Institute (the Parish Rooms), Somerton.

The Area Support Team Leader summarised the agenda report, which outlined the details of this grant application. The Head of Area Development further reported that the Council's Building Control and Property Services Unit had been consulted about the one estimate that had been received by the applicant, despite three tenders having been sought. It was commented that although a cheaper price may have been achieved, it was recognised that given the circumstances, it would have been difficult for the applicant to bring in further quotes. The estimate was considered to be acceptable and the builder was recognised to be a good one.

Cllr. Tony Carvin, one of the ward members, expressed his support for this project and highlighted the need for the kitchen facilities to be refurbished. He also expressed his view that the quote received was not out of place.

The Committee expressed its support for the application.

**RESOLVED:** that a grant of £3,000 be awarded from the Area North Capital Programme (community facilities) to the Lady Smith Memorial Institute towards the refurbishment of the kitchen facilities at the Parish Rooms, Somerton subject to the standard conditions for community grants.

**Reason:** To determine an application received by the Council for financial assistance submitted by the Lady Smith Memorial Institute.

(Resolution passed without dissent).

*(Madeleine King-Oakley, Area Support Team Leader (North) – (01458) 257468)  
(madeleine.king-oakley@southsomerset.gov.uk)*

---

### 34. Area North Development Plan – Quarterly Monitoring Report (Agenda Item 12)

The Head of Area Development referred to the agenda report, which updated members on progress in delivering the actions in the Area North Development Plan 2007/08 during the first quarter. She referred to the current Development Plan being adopted in April 2007, a copy of which was circulated to members at the meeting for their retention.

The Head of Area Development further reported that Les Collett had been appointed as the new Community Development Officer. She indicated that he would be getting in touch with members to discuss work in hand and any aspirations they may have.

The new Community Development Officer would also be looking at parish plans, working together with the Community Council for Somerset. The Head of Area Development referred to South Somerset being a part of national work on parish plans, which involved working with DEFRA and the Commission for Rural Communities.

The Head of Area Development also reported that, in response to a query from a member, one of her team would be attending a meeting of the Parish Plan Committee in South Petherton where discussion of business associations would be on the agenda.

In referring to the Market Towns Investment Group, the Head of Area Development mentioned that South Petherton was now included in the group. Priorities for South Petherton would be coming forward.

In referring to the Somerset Waterlinks Project she confirmed that she would be looking to arrange for a brief presentation on the project to be made at full Council in September and that another public meeting would be hosted in Area North to maintain local interest in the project.

In referring to staffing matters, she mentioned that because of not having a Community Development Officer for three months there had been some delay with projects. She thanked the Area Support Team Leader for her work. In response to a question from a member, who referred to the forthcoming temporary absence of the Community Regeneration Officer, the Head of Area Development commented that the Business Support Officer in the central Economic Development Team would be able to cover the business support side whilst the Area Support Team Leader would be able to cover much of the work on business grants. She did not, therefore, anticipate that the absence would cause a problem during that period.

The Head of Area Development informed members that the Localities Team of Somerset County Council would be moving into the offices at Old Kelways, Langport in due course.

The Committee thanked the Head of Area Development for her report and noted the progress made with the projects and activities contained in the Area North Development Plan.

**NOTED.**

*(Charlotte Jones, Head of Area Development (North) – (01458) 257401)  
(charlotte.jones@southsomerset.gov.uk)*

---

## 35. Consultation Report for Off-Street Parking Provision for Recent Town Centre Developments (Agenda item 13) (Executive Decision)

The Transport Strategy Officer summarised the agenda report and members considered the monitoring exercise that had been conducted relating to off-street parking provision in recent new residential developments in town centre locations in all the district market towns, and the impact of this provision on both nearby car parks and on-street parking. Suggestions for the future interpretation of Local Plan Policy TP7: Parking Provision in Residential Areas, were also considered.

During the ensuing discussion, a member commented that developers needed to be aware of the reasons for the Council seeking to achieve the maximum parking standards for developments in town centres, but even so, he felt that some developers may challenge the Council's initiative perhaps by way of an appeal. The Transport Strategy Officer and Policy Planner reported that the Council had, at least, some evidence of problems that existed in respect of cars being parked elsewhere than on a particular development, which was a material consideration in the determination of a planning application. However, how robust the recommended approach would be would not be clear until the result of any relevant planning appeals were known, if such an appeal were to be lodged. The Policy Planner confirmed that as the Core Strategy Development Plan Document developed, the situation would be strengthened.

The Committee indicated its support for the officer's recommendation.

- RESOLVED:** (1) that the Committee note the report and endorse its suggestion that car parking and transport issues be considered as part of the Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD) in February/March 2008;
- (2) that, until addressed through the core strategy, officers use this survey work and the inbuilt flexibility in the adopted Local Plan Policy TP7 to negotiate with developers to seek to achieve the maximum parking standards (1 parking space per dwelling) for town centres.

**Reason:** To address the impact of additional parking from recent town centre residential development on nearby car parks and adjacent streets.

(Resolution passed without dissent).

*(Jo Manley, Policy Planner – (01935) 462588)  
(jo.manley@southsomerset.gov.uk)  
(Nigel Collins, Transport Strategy Officer – (01935) 462591)  
(nigel.collins@southsomerset.gov.uk)*

---

## 36. Forward Plan (Agenda Item 14)

Reference was made to the agenda report and the Committee noted the details contained in the Committee's Forward Plan.

**NOTED.**

*(Angela Cox, Committee Administrator – (01458) 257437)  
(angela.cox@southsomerset.gov.uk)*

---



### 37. Planning Appeals (Agenda Item 15)

The Committee noted the details contained in the agenda report, which informed members of planning appeals that were lodged, allowed or dismissed.

**NOTED.**

*(Simon Gale, Head of Development and Building Control – (01935) 462071)  
(simon.gale@southsomerset.gov.uk)*

---

### 38. Planning Applications (Agenda Item 16)

The Committee considered the applications set out in the schedule attached to the agenda and the planning officers gave further information at the meeting and, where appropriate, advised members of letters received as a result of consultations since the agenda had been prepared.

(Copies of all letters reported may be inspected in the planning applications files, which constitute the background papers for this item).

#### **07/01276/FUL (Pages 1-6) – Erection of a single storey community village shop and café (GR 340682/114643), land adjacent Millennium Hall, Water Street, Seavington St. Mary – Seavington Community Shop and Services Association.**

The Deputy Planning Team Leader referred to the agenda report and reported that, in accordance with the request of the Committee at the June meeting, further negotiations and a site meeting had been held between representatives of the applicants, Head of Development and Building Control and ward members.

In updating members, the Deputy Planning Team Leader reported that a letter had now been received from the applicants in which they addressed the possibility of extending the village hall to accommodate the shop, as suggested by members at the last meeting of the Committee. The applicants explained the reasons why the extension of the hall to create a shop would not be feasible, including the affect it would have on charitable status making the hall liable to VAT. The applicants had also addressed issues regarding parking and mentioned that bearing in mind that there were footpaths close to the site, access by foot was available.

The Deputy Planning Team Leader further reported receipt of a letter from the Chairman of the Seavington Playing Fields Association who confirmed the position with regard to the charitable status of the hall. Reference was also made to problems regarding certain facilities and access if the hall were extended to accommodate the shop. It was further mentioned that the siting of the shop had been discussed thoroughly and the site proposed was considered the best for both villages.

The Head of Area Development confirmed that the extension of the hall to include a shop, which would be a business, would mean that the village hall would become liable to VAT regulations. She also commented that she had spoken to the Somerset Community Council about the proposals. The Head of Area Development indicated that she was satisfied that the applicants had prepared a properly thought out proposal, sought advice and got community backing.

The Deputy Planning Team Leader indicated that the recommendation was one of refusal on policy grounds. If, however, members were minded to approve the application, he

advised that it should be subject to a legal agreement to ensure that the building was kept for community use if, for any reason in the future, the community shop became no longer viable.

The representative of the Seavington St. Mary Parish Council and Chairman of the Seavington Playing Fields Association, Mr. P. Ashley, spoke in support of the application. He referred to practical difficulties, including access, if the hall was extended to include the shop. He also mentioned that parking issues were being addressed. He commented that he would not like to see anything detract from the use of the hall, which he felt would be the case if the shop were joined to it. He also felt that the proposed shop would be a community asset to the hall.

The representative of the applicants, Mr. D. Froome, thanked the Committee for deferring consideration of the application at the last meeting. He mentioned that discussions had taken place with Council officials and that the proposals had the support of the Parish Council and Seavington Playing Fields Association. He commented that the proposals had been properly thought out and that they had consulted widely on the application. He commended the project and hoped that the Committee would give it favourable consideration. He indicated that the applicants were content to enter into any agreements that were felt to be appropriate.

Cllr. Keith Ronaldson, one of the ward members, commented that negotiations had taken place. He referred to the problems that would be caused with regard to the charitable status and VAT liability of the hall if it were extended to include a shop. He commented that there was a car parking area that could be controlled so there should be no spillage onto the road. He also felt that an appropriate Section 106 Agreement would ensure that the building was not sold should the community shop become no longer viable. With those issues having been resolved he was of the view that the application was acceptable and proposed that it be approved.

Cllr. Paull Robathan, the other ward member, concurred with the comments of Cllr. Ronaldson. He commented that he was satisfied that this site was the most sensible place to locate the shop, being between the two villages. He felt that it would limit travelling and commented that people could walk to the shop. He did not feel that the proposals were imprudent in respect of the planning issues. He further commented that the playing field agreement meant that the whole village had control of the land and that the project could go ahead when funding was in place. He also commented that the matters regarding charitable status and VAT would not be an issue if the hall and proposed shop were separate. He indicated his support for the proposals.

During the ensuing discussion, other members expressed their view that the proposals were acceptable and that the application should be granted. Reference was made to good reasons having been put forward for not extending the village hall to incorporate the shop and the comments of the ward members in favour of granting the application were supported.

**RESOLVED:** that planning permission be granted subject to:-

- (1) the applicant entering into an agreement under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) to ensure that the building is kept for community use if, for any reason in the future, the community shop became no longer viable;

- (2) the inclusion of appropriate conditions, which shall be delegated to the Head of Development and Building Control in consultation with the ward members.

(Resolution passed without dissent, 1 abstention)

**07/01252/FUL (Pages 7-15) – Demolition of nos. 2-16 (evens only) West End Close and garage blocks in West End View and the erection 19 dwellings and associated additional car parking (GR 342775/116846), land at West End Close, West End View, South Petherton – South Somerset Homes.**

Cllr. Roy Mills, having declared a personal and prejudicial interest in this application, left the meeting during its consideration.

The Deputy Planning Team Leader summarised the details of the proposals as set out in the agenda report and indicated that the application was recommended for approval subject to conditions. In updating members, he reported that South Petherton Parish Council had indicated its objection to the application. The Parish Council felt that the proposals constituted overdevelopment and were concerned about parking that already occurred in the narrow road adjacent to the site. The Deputy Planning Team Leader also confirmed that the Highway Authority had no objections to the application. The Committee noted that the officer's recommendation was one of approval subject to conditions.

The applicant's representative, Mr. J. Shaw, commended the planning officer's report to the Committee. In referring to the comments about overdevelopment he explained that when replacing social housing there was a need for an increase in the numbers in order to qualify for the necessary subsidy. Government guidelines also required a higher density. He also referred to the numbers of affordable housing units that would be provided by the development.

Cllr. Keith Ronaldson, one of the ward members, commented that he understood the Parish Council's objections. He felt that the proposals constituted overdevelopment and also referred to the narrow road where parking was a problem and the difficulties that could cause for farm vehicles using the road to access farmland.

Cllr. Paull Robathan, also a ward member, although agreeing with issues raised by the Parish Council, he hoped that they could be dealt with by conditions. He referred to the proposed homes being needed and to people having been moved out of the existing dwellings already. He also referred to other houses at Stoodham being excellent and to this development meeting the requirement for more homes. Although supporting the application, he referred to the need to resolve the issues regarding parking and access to farmland along the adjacent road.

In response to questions from members, the Deputy Planning Team Leader reported that the Highway Authority was satisfied with the proposed development and that the road would not be any narrower as a result of this development. He also indicated that parking provision was at the maximum standards and would be sufficient for the proposed development. He indicated that ensuring access was maintained to farmland could be looked at. He also mentioned that parking on the road was a general problem and, as there were no highway objections, it would be difficult to refuse the application on those grounds. He further reported that the submission of drainage details would need to be agreed and the applicants would need to ensure that demolition was carried out safely.

During the ensuing discussion, the majority of members indicated their support for the application and reference was made to the need for the proposed homes. It was felt,

however, that the issues raised regarding access being maintained for farm and other large vehicles should be subject to a condition.

**RESOLVED:** that planning permission be granted subject to:-

- (1) conditions 1-18 as set out in the agenda report;
- (2) an appropriate additional condition regarding access being maintained for farm and other large vehicles along the adjacent road, the inclusion of such condition to be delegated to the Head of Development and Building Control in consultation with the ward members.

(10 in favour, 2 against).

**06/01495/OUT (Pages 16-23) – Erection of 7 private dwellings with garaging and alterations to access (GR 343344/121198), land at Cox’s Farm, Silver Street, Kingsbury Episcopi – Mr. P. Lock.**

The Planner summarised the details of the application as set out in the agenda report. In updating members, he reported that an additional letter of objection had been received, details of which he reported to the Committee. The Planner also highlighted that an extant permission for a barn conversion on this site included a highway “build out” as part of those proposals and therefore the principle of that aspect in relation to the development of the site had been established. The recommendation in respect of this application was one of approval subject to conditions.

The representative of Kingsbury Episcopi Parish Council, Mrs. S. Potepa, commented that the Parish Council accepted that the site would be developed but it was considered that the proposals subject of this application were excessive. Concern was also expressed about the access, which they did not feel was adequate and about the proposed dwellings overlooking existing neighbouring properties.

A petition was presented by Ms. J. Gray containing 38 signatures objecting to the application, details of which were noted by the Committee.

The Committee noted the comments of Ms. J. Gray, Ms. V. Dunnett and Mr. Marshall in objecting to the application. Views expressed included the following:-

- narrowing of the road would increase congestion;
- concerns relating to visibility into Silver Street. Vehicle activity would also increase and difficulties in manoeuvring vehicles from garages was mentioned;
- the access from the development would be into the Conservation Area;
- the accuracy of the plans in respect of the width of the road was questioned as was the accuracy of information from the Highway Authority;
- the visibility splay shown on plans not acceptable;
- the development would have a detrimental impact on the amenity and setting of the Conservation Area;

- reference was made to the possibility of creating an alternative access to the development via Knightstone Close;
- local stone or thatch would be more in keeping.

The applicant's agent, Mr. A. Preston, commented that the site was within the development area and satisfied Local Plan policies. He indicated that he had worked closely with officers to achieve a traditional courtyard development in keeping with the Conservation Area with a density in accordance with the minimum permitted by Policy HG4 of the Local Plan. He referred to the applicant wishing to safeguard adjoining residents as much as possible and the proposals were within planning guidance on privacy and amenity aspects. He also referred to having worked with the Highway Authority to achieve a suitable design, details of which he referred to. He felt that it would be unreasonable to object to the application on highway grounds. He further highlighted that the highway "build outs" had already been approved. In referring to a neighbour's claims about the ownership of a strip of land at the entrance to the site, he commented that that was a civil issue and should not have a bearing on the decision. He referred to the site being unsuitable for continued agricultural use.

Cllr. Derek Yeomans, ward member, referred to the submitted plans being an illustrative design. Although recognising that the claimed ownership of the strip of land was a civil matter he commented that it looked as though that was probably the case. He referred to the potentially large number of vehicles that would be using the access if this development went ahead. He also referred to the restricted width of the access road and to the Triangle and the difficulties that may be caused to refuse vehicles and fire engines particularly as other vehicles parked on the road. He felt that the highway arrangements would be intrusive into the Conservation Area and would narrow the road. Although he agreed that the site could not remain as it was, he felt that the volume of traffic would be extensive. Reference was also made to the possibility that an access could be made into Knightstone Close. He indicated that he could not support the application.

During the ensuing discussion, comment was expressed by members that the access was not satisfactory for the amount of development proposed for this site. It was also felt that the use of the access would have a major effect on local people. Comment was expressed that there should be fewer dwellings on the site as it was considered that the current proposals constituted overdevelopment and were of an inappropriate form near the Conservation Area. Further comment was expressed that the change in the highway arrangements and the increased traffic movements would have a detrimental impact on the Conservation Area. Reference was also made to comments about the accuracy of the plans in respect of the width of the access road and it was felt that the issue should be checked with the Highway Authority. The Committee was of the view that the proposals were not acceptable and that the application should be refused.

The Committee noted the comments of the Solicitor who indicated that, bearing in mind that there were no Highway Authority or Conservation Officer objections, if the Committee were to refuse the application it would be helpful if a member could represent the Committee in the event of any appeal. Cllrs. Rupert Cox and Derek Yeomans indicated their willingness to take on that role.

**RESOLVED:** (1) that planning permission be refused for the following reasons:-

- the proposals constitute overdevelopment and are of an inappropriate form in close proximity to the Conservation Area;
- the alterations in the highway arrangements and the increased traffic movements will have a detrimental impact on the character or appearance of the Conservation Area;

(2) that the accuracy of the plans with regard to the width of the access road be checked with the Highway Authority and if the plans are found to be inaccurate and the road to be of insufficient width, the application be also refused on that basis.

(12 in favour, 1 abstention)

**07/02326/FUL (Pages 24-27) – The erection of a detached house with integral garage (GR 337501/117995), land and buildings at Puckington Road, Puckington – Mr. J. Raw.**

The Planner summarised the details of the application as set out in the agenda report. The Planner further reported that the Conservation Officer had asked that particular attention be drawn to the proposals for a basement garage, which it was felt were a fundamental issue in the development failing to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. The recommendation was one of refusal for the reason set out in the agenda report.

The representative of the applicant, Ms. P. Cameron, commented that the applicant was not a speculative builder and had lived in the village for 15 years. She referred to climate change and to the proposed dwelling being designed to be as eco-friendly as possible, details of which she outlined to the Committee. It was felt that the development was conducive to the street scene and reference was made to a significant gap having been maintained to the neighbouring house. In referring to the position of the proposed house, she mentioned that it was set back from the road and argued that although there was a basement garage and room in the loft, the appearance from the street was of a two-storey house. Reference was made to the materials to be used. Comparisons were also made to how the proposed dwelling would look in relation to other properties in the locality. She mentioned that the application had the support of Puckington Parish Council and local residents.

Cllr. Derek Yeomans, ward member, expressed his view that this was a two-storey dwelling. He referred to other houses having a room in the roof and to the garage in this application being hidden from view from the street. He mentioned that the proposed dwelling was environmentally friendly in every regard and was of the view that it was well designed and fitted in with the Conservation Area. He felt that the only issue that had been highlighted was the proposed basement garage, which could not be seen from the street. He indicated his support for the proposals.

During the ensuing discussion, the majority of members were of the view that the proposals were acceptable. Reference was made to this being an innovative dwelling and it was not felt that the basement garage, which could not be seen from the street, would detract from the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. The Committee indicated its support for the proposals.

**RESOLVED:** that planning permission be granted and the inclusion of appropriate conditions be delegated to the Head of Development and Building Control.

(10 in favour, 1 abstention)

*(Simon Gale, Head of Development and Building Control – (01935) 462071)*  
*(simon.gale@southsomerset.gov.uk)*

---

.....  
Chairman