

MEETING AW.05:0809
DATE 17:09:08

South Somerset District Council

Minutes of a meeting of the **Area West Committee** held in the Guildhall, Fore Street, Chard on **Wednesday, 17th September 2008**.

(5.30 p.m. – 9.10 p.m.)

Present:

Members:	Kim Turner	(In the Chair)
	Simon Bending	Ros Roderigo
	Michael Best	Angie Singleton
	David Bulmer	Andrew Turpin
	Geoff Clarke	Linda Vjeh (until 7.15 p.m.)
	Nigel Mermagen	Martin Wale (from 6.25 p.m.)
	Robin Munday	

Officers:

Andrew Gillespie	Head of Area Development (West)
Lynda Pincombe	Senior Leisure Facilities Officer
Tim Cook	Community Development Officer (East)
Chris Cooper	Head of Streetscene Services
David Julian	Head of Countryside, Heritage and Tourism
Gerard Tucker	Economic Development Team Leader
Linda Pike	Economic Development Officer
David Norris	Development Control Team Leader (North/West)
Andrew Gunn	Deputy Team Leader – Development Control
Phillip Debidin	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.)

54. Minutes (Agenda item 1)

The minutes of the meeting held on the 20th August 2008, copies of which had been circulated, were taken as read and, having been approved as a correct record, were signed by the Chairman.

55. Apologies for Absence (Agenda item 2)

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. Nicci Court, Jenny Kenton, Ric Pallister and Dan Shortland.

56. Declarations of Interest (Agenda item 3)

Cllr. Robin Munday declared a personal and prejudicial interest in agenda item 6 (Merriott Parish Council Sports Pavilion and Tennis Court Enhancement – Request for Funding Support in Principle) as Merriott Parish Council was a customer of his business.

Cllr. Dave Bulmer declared a personal but non-prejudicial interest in planning application no. 08/01329/OUT (Demolition of existing building, formation of access and erection of 2 no. two storey buildings housing 14 no. flats (Revised Application), The Flat Mill building, 22-24 East Street, Chard) as comments had been submitted by Chard Town Council on which he also served as a councillor.

Cllrs. Mike Best and Angie Singleton declared their personal and prejudicial interests in planning application no. 08/01772/LBC (The provision of double entrance doors/gates to rear garden wall, The Hermitage, Pulmans Lane, Crewkerne) as they were personal friends of the applicant.

Cllr. Geoff Clarke declared a personal and prejudicial interest in planning application no. 08/01772/LBC (The provision of double entrance doors/gates to rear garden wall, The Hermitage, Pulmans Lane, Crewkerne) as he was the applicant.

During consideration of planning application no. 08/01329/OUT (Demolition of existing building, formation of access and erection of 2 no. two storey buildings housing 14 no. flats (Revised Application), The Flat Mill building, 22-24 East Street, Chard), Cllr. Ros Roderigo declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the application as her stepson worked at the building.

57. Public Question Time (Agenda item 4)

No questions or comments were raised by members of the public, representatives of parish/town councils or county councillors.

58. Chairman's Announcements (Agenda item 5)

The Chairman reminded members that the Planning Tour for members in Area West was to take place on Monday, 13th October 2008. She hoped that members would be able to attend.

The Chairman also referred to the 3rd stage of the Tour of Britain Cycle Race, the start of which had taken place in Chard on 9th September 2008. She referred to having attended the event and to it having been a success. She was also pleased at the number of people in the town for the event.

59. Merriott Parish Council Sports Pavilion and Tennis Court Enhancement – Request for Funding Support in Principle (Agenda item 6) (Executive Decision)

Cllr. Robin Munday, having declared a personal and prejudicial interest in this item, left the meeting during its consideration and determination.

The Senior Leisure Facilities Officer summarised the agenda report, which asked the Committee to consider a request for funding support submitted by Merriott Parish Council towards the construction of a new four team changing pavilion and improvements to other ancillary facilities at Merriott Recreation Ground.

In summarising the report, she highlighted the location of the existing Bowls Club Pavilion in relation to the proposed pavilion. She mentioned that the Parish Council had looked at the potential for a combined use of the existing pavilion but it was felt difficult for the football teams and Bowling Club to use the same pavilion. She also referred to the strategic need for additional playing pitch facilities in Merriott. Reference was made to

the strength of the youth football teams, which she indicated were very successful. She referred to the Parish Council now being in a position to proceed to apply to the Football Foundation for funding and were looking to securing funding from various sources, including a formal expression of support from the District Council, in order to give them the best possible chance of success with their Football Foundation bid. She also mentioned that if they were not successful in securing funding from some of the other sources detailed in the agenda report, they would continue to fundraise locally.

The Senior Leisure Facilities Officer further reported that the recommendation to allocate £12,500 towards this project was comparable with other awards in Area West and the rest of the district.

Cllr. Simon Bending, ward member, referred to the previous pavilion on the recreation ground having been condemned and to there having been no facilities on the recreation ground for over a year. He referred to the playing pitches being used by over 200 children and to £52,000 having already been raised by the local community who were committed to the project. He indicated his full support for the allocation of funding towards this project.

Members were pleased to note the commitment of the community towards the project and indicated support for the scheme. Comments were expressed, however, on the timing of the application and on the form that any funding support may take bearing in mind the potential commitment from next year's budget, during which the Senior Leisure Facilities Officer and Head of Area Development (West) answered members' questions to assist them in their consideration of this matter.

The Committee noted the comments of Mr. I Hall, Chairman of the Project Group. He explained the reasons for the timing of the application and mentioned that if the scheme did not get support from the Council it was unlikely that the application to the Football Foundation for 75% of the cost would be successful. He referred to the local fundraising that had taken place being excellent including the contributions made by the football clubs and to the funding to be provided by the Parish Council. Reference was also made to the background of the football teams and the number of people who would benefit from the project.

Having considered the details relating to this application, the Committee indicated its support for the officer's recommendation.

RESOLVED: (1) that members allocate up to £12,500 in principle to be drawn down in 2009/10 from the unallocated capital budget for the award of a grant to Merriott Parish Council towards the construction of a new four-team changing pavilion and improvement to other ancillary facilities at Merriott Recreation Ground subject to the standard terms and conditions;

(2) that the following additional condition be applied to any support given to the project:-

“Support is given on the basis that funding is secured from the Football Foundation.”

Reason: To determine an application received by the Council from Merriott Parish Council for funding support.

(8 in favour, 1 against.)

(Lynda Pincombe, Senior Leisure Facilities Officer – (01935) 462614)
(lynda.pincombe@southsomerset.gov.uk)

60. BT's Consultation on the Proposal to Remove Payphones in Area West (Agenda Item 7)

The Community Development Officer (East) summarised the agenda report, which informed members of the continuing review of payphone provision across South Somerset that was being carried out by BT. The Committee was asked to consider the draft decision set out in the agenda report in response to BT's consultation review on the proposed removal of 15 payphones in Area West.

In updating members, the Community Development Officer (East) referred to the comment in the draft decision notice relating to the telephone box at Montague Way, Chard and reported that, although no local objection was received, the high usage of this box suggested there was need for it to be retained. Members concurred with his recommendation that the comment be added to the decision notice in respect of the objection to the removal of that telephone box.

He further informed members of two other options put forward by BT for local authorities to either adopt a traditional red telephone box or to sponsor a telephone box. He explained the details of both of the schemes. He also reported that the deadline for applications under either of those initiatives was to have been 1st October but following representations about the short timescale, BT had agreed to extend the date to 1st November 2008.

During the ensuing discussion, the Community Development Officer (East) answered members' questions on points of detail. A number of comments were also made by members including the following:-

- a member commented that he was aware of another list of telephone boxes, which were planned to be removed without consultation because they were less than 400m from another payphone. He expressed his view that the list should have been sent to local councils affected for their information. The Community Development Officer (East) commented that the Council had no influence over that list but agreed that it would have been reasonable for it to have been sent to parish councils. Members were disappointed that the list had not been sent to the appropriate parish councils, i.e. Chard and Crewkerne Town Councils, and it was agreed that a letter should be sent to them to inform them of the details contained in that list. It was felt that this would enable them to have the opportunity to consider perhaps either the adoption or sponsorship initiatives in respect of those telephone boxes;
- with reference to comments made regarding the availability of information on the number of emergency calls made, the Community Development Officer (East) commented that he believed that the number of such calls had been included within the overall usage figures supplied by BT;
- a member referred to social and financial deprivation being of serious concern and that although many people may have a mobile phone, some may not have sufficient funds to keep it operational at all times;
- it was noted that although information had been given by BT about the costs of the sponsorship initiative and adoption scheme, no details of maintenance costs had been given with regard to the adoption scheme. The Community Development Officer (East) reported that the Area East Committee had expressed concerns about the lack of information given with regard to the adoption scheme and about the timescale given for parishes to make a decision on whether they would want to take part in either scheme, which was not considered to be long enough. Members of the Area West Committee concurred with the decision of the Area East Committee that representations should be made about both those issues, disappointment being

expressed that information regarding the costs for maintenance and the supply of electricity to light the box had not been supplied.

Members noted that it was the intention to include the response/comments from all areas in one letter from the District Council.

- RESOLVED:** (1) that the draft decision notice as attached in Appendix A to the agenda report be approved for submission to BT subject to an additional comment being included in respect of the objection to the removal of the telephone box at Montague Way, Chard, i.e. that the high usage of that telephone box suggested that there was a need for its retention;
- (2) that in making the response to BT the additional comments made by members as set out above be taken into account;
- (3) that the final decision/response be delegated to the Head of Area Development (North) in consultation with the Chairman of Area West.

(Resolution passed without dissent).

(Tim Cook, Community Development Officer (East) – (01963) 435088)
(tim.cook@southsomerset.gov.uk)

61. Promoting Healthy Living in Chard (Agenda Item 8)

The Head of Area Development (West) introduced Tony Hampson, Project Manager for SHINE (Somerset) Ltd. who gave a short presentation on the progress made by the organisation in respect of developments and activities to promote healthy living in Chard.

The Project Manager gave a brief history on how SHINE had been established, during which he mentioned that it was a not for profit making organisation and had now achieved charitable status. In summarising the details contained in his progress report attached to the agenda he explained how the organisation worked in partnership with other organisations both on a strategic basis and with smaller groups to enable services and activities to be provided.

Upon conclusion of his presentation, the Project Manager responded to comments and questions during which a member referred to the cycleway between Chard and Ilminster and suggested that it could form part of a health referral scheme to promote good healthy exercise and confidence in using a bicycle for other purposes. The comments were noted and the Project Manager gave an indication of the health initiatives that SHINE were involved with including health walks within Chard.

In response to a question about keeping robust evidence of work carried out and of initiatives undertaken by SHINE in order to assist with securing funding, the Project Manager indicated that in addition to keeping records of specific activities, the impact of indirect use was also monitored. With regard to comments from members, he outlined the opportunities that were being explored to obtain future funding and commented that there was a need to be as innovative as possible in order to secure funding.

The Chairman thanked Tony Hampson for attending the meeting and wished the organisation good luck for the future.

NOTED.

(Andrew Gillespie, Head of Area Development (West) – (01460) 260426)
(andrew.gillespie@southsomerset.gov.uk)

62. Annual Review of the Economic Development Service (Agenda Item 9)

The Economic Development Team Leader referred to his agenda report, which informed members of the activities and progress of the Economic Development Service and highlighted recently introduced changes since the last presentation to members in July 2007.

He further reported that Linda Pike, the Economic Development Officer located in Chard, would be leaving the Council to take up a post with another authority. He informed members, however, that the importance of this post was recognised and arrangements were being made for the post to be filled.

During the ensuing discussion, a member referred to the Stop Line Way between Seaton and Bridgwater Bay and to a jointly funded Project Manager being recruited to complete the project, which was due by 2010. He referred to this being an important route for sustainable development and asked whether this should be picked up by the Economic Development Team. The Economic Development Team Leader reported that he was not familiar with the detail of the project but would speak to the member concerned with regard to the potential for pursuing initiatives in connection with that route.

A member also mentioned the importance of the Economic Development post in Area West, especially bearing in mind the recent job losses locally. The Economic Development Team Leader commented that he would inform members separately of any update regarding the employment situation as information became available. The Committee concurred with the comments of the Chairman who congratulated him on the work carried out to provide advice and support in this situation.

In response to a comment from a member, the Economic Development Team Leader confirmed that so far only 4 organisations had expressed interest in the commercial wireless broadband service as part of the "Connecting Chard" initiative to the point that they were prepared to pay for the service. The opportunity, however, was still available to participate in the scheme.

A member queried when an update would be available on progress with the Chard Town Centre Redevelopment Project. Another member requested that an update be also given on the Crewkerne Key Site. The Head of Area Development (West) reported that negotiations were nearing completion with regard to the Chard Town Centre Redevelopment Scheme and that it was intended to give members an informal briefing immediately before the October meeting of the Area West Committee. Bearing in mind the commercial sensitivity of the information, the briefing would be confidential. The Committee concurred with the suggestion that a briefing could be given on progress with the Crewkerne Key Site at the same time.

The Committee thanked the Economic Development Team Leader for his report, which was noted by the Committee.

NOTED.

*(Gerard Tucker, Economic Development Team Leader – (01935) 462527)
(gerard.tucker@southsomerset.gov.uk)*

63. Annual Report Outlining the Past Year's Work of the Countryside, Heritage and Tourism Service August 2007 - August 2008 (Agenda Item 10)

The Head of Countryside, Heritage and Tourism referred to the agenda report, which informed members on the past and forthcoming year's work of the Countryside, Tourism and Heritage Service.

He further reported that although he had referred last year to having been seconded to the post for a 12 month period, his secondment was continuing for the time being. He also mentioned that Countryside, Heritage and Tourism services were well advanced in terms of partnership working. He further informed members that the feasibility of charitable trusts being formed for museums was being looked at. Reference was made to the forthcoming South Somerset Food Festival, which would be held between 27th September and 5th October 2008, and to the leaflet that had been produced to promote the event.

During the ensuing discussion, the Head of Countryside, Heritage and Tourism responded to members' questions and comments. Points addressed included the following:-

- a member referred to the Stop Line Way and commented that partnership working played a crucial part in the project. He also indicated that the project addressed aspects of countryside, heritage and tourism. In referring to various aspects of the route he mentioned that cycling and horse riding were up and coming tourist activities;
- reference was made to Chard Countryside Day, which was held on 13th September 2008 and a member congratulated everyone involved with the event, which despite having to be held in the Guildhall, Chard because of inclement weather, had been a good positive day;
- a member commented that she was pleased at the increase in the numbers of rights of way parish liaison officers. The Head of Countryside, Heritage and Tourism asked members if they could encourage any parishes in their wards who did not have liaison officers to consider the possibility of having them.

The Chairman thanked the Head of Countryside, Heritage and Tourism for his report, the details of which were noted.

NOTED.

*(David Julian, Head of Countryside, Heritage and Tourism – (01935) 462279)
(david.julian@southsomerset.gov.uk)*

64. Report for Area West Committee on the Performance of the Streetscene Service (Agenda Item 11)

The Head of Streetscene Services summarised the agenda report, which informed members of the performance of the Streetscene Service in the area for the period October 2007 to September 2008. He indicated that the focus was on the performance of the service, which was continuing to improve, including making the street cleaning function more effective.

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

- a member commented that he was pleased to see that weed control was one of the issues to be tackled. The Head of Streetscene Services commented that weed spraying needed to take place in dry weather conditions and the recent wet summer had meant that delays had occurred;
- reference was made to the table of statistics in the agenda relating to the local area quality inspections, which involved monitoring of the overall standards of street cleaning and grounds maintenance by way of site inspections, which where possible were carried out in conjunction with local ward members. A member referred to Crewkerne not being mentioned and enquired when the town would be included in the statistics. The Head of Streetscene reported that an inspection would take place in Crewkerne in the near future and that ward members would be notified so that they could join the inspection team if they so wished;
- a member praised the Streetscene Service and the way it operated. It was felt that the service did a tremendous job with the resources it had;
- in response to the comments of a member regarding aspects of the service in Chard, the Head of Streetscene did not feel that the standard in Chard was falling but if there were any identified problems the team would do their best to deal with them. He also explained the practice adopted by the service in respect of the provision of litter bins;
- reference was made to recent flash flooding incidents in Crewkerne and a member queried what could be done in the short, medium and long term. The Head of Streetscene Services commented that he would update the member concerned separately on progress. He also indicated that the maintenance of blocked drains was the responsibility of the Highway Authority;
- with reference to a comment regarding problems caused by people putting out black refuse sacks in Ilminster Town Centre after the day of collection, the Head of Streetscene Services indicated that he would be meeting with representatives of the Somerset Waste Partnership when this and other issues could be discussed.

The Chairman thanked the Head of Streetscene Services for his report, which was noted by the Committee.

NOTED.

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

65. Reports from Members on Outside Organisations (Agenda Item 12)

No reports were made by members who represented the Council on outside organisations.

66. Feedback on Planning Applications Referred to the Regulation Committee (Agenda item 13)

There was no feedback to report as there were no planning applications that had been referred recently to the Regulation Committee.

NOTED.

*(David Norris, Development Control Team Leader (North/West) – (01935) 462382)
(david.norris@southsomerset.gov.uk)*

67. Planning Appeals (Agenda item 14)

The Committee noted the details contained in the agenda report, which informed members of planning appeals lodged.

NOTED.

*(David Norris, Development Control Team Leader (North/West) – (01935) 462382)
(david.norris@southsomerset.gov.uk)*

68. Venue for Next Meeting (Agenda item 16)

The Committee noted that the next scheduled meeting of the Committee would be held at the Henhayes Centre, South Street, Crewkerne on Wednesday, 15th October 2008 at 5.30 p.m.

NOTED.

*(Andrew Blackburn, Committee Administrator – (01460) 260441)
(andrew.blackburn@southsomerset.gov.uk)*

69. Planning Applications (Agenda item 15)

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).

07/05331/LBC (Pages 33-37) – Re-positioning of staircase, internal alterations to bathroom, re-open window and reinstate mullions (GR 341961/112596), Tetts Farm, West Street, Hinton St. George – Mr. S. Grant.

The Committee was informed that this application was being withdrawn from the agenda for this meeting to enable a fuller report on the proposals to be presented to the October meeting of the Committee. The Committee also noted that the applicant had been informed and was content with this course of action.

NOTED.

08/01329/OUT (Pages 1-25) – Demolition of existing building, formation of access and erection of 2 no. two storey buildings housing 14 no. flats (Revised Application) (GR 332718/108739), The Flat Mill Building, 22-24 East Street, Chard – Messrs. Brinkman and Lampey.

The Deputy Team Leader – Development Control summarised the details of the application as set out in the agenda report.

He referred to one of the key issues to be taken into account being economic viability. He mentioned that an earlier identical application submitted in 2007 had been refused because of the loss of employment land and buildings and insufficient information was submitted with the application to justify that loss. This new application, however, included additional information in the form of a Commercial Use and Development Viability Assessment and Commercial Availability Study. He further reported that bearing in mind the concerns raised by the Council's Economic Development Officer that an employment

site would be lost, the District Valuer was asked to look at the application and the submitted reports. The Committee was informed that the District Valuer had subsequently indicated that he was in agreement with the conclusions reached in the reports submitted with the application and that use for sole employment redevelopment or for a mixed use scheme would not be economically viable. The Deputy Team Leader also mentioned that he did not consider that this development would result in future occupants being subject to unacceptable noise levels from the activities of the adjacent business, as had been suggested by the Environmental Health Officer, the reasons for which were set out in the agenda report. He also mentioned that the use of appropriate boundary treatment etc. could be conditioned to help reduce the impact of activity from, and secure the boundary and safety of, the adjacent commercial business. It was also mentioned that the Highway Authority was satisfied with the access arrangements and the parking provision of one space per dwelling. It was noted that the recommendation was one of approval subject to conditions.

The officers answered members' questions on points of detail. Points addressed included the replacement of an existing street light on the building, maintenance of the garden area, the need to consider the merits of the application as submitted, confirmation that the Economic Development Officer still maintained an objection to the application and the extent of the footway along the frontage. Reference was also made to the location of windows in relation to the adjacent commercial yard and to the provision of secure accommodation for bicycles, which were both matters for the detailed application. Clarification was also given of matters regarding the party wall between the building and an adjoining residential dwelling.

The Committee then noted the comments of Mr. J. Sage in objection to the application. He expressed concerns that the access would not be satisfactory for use by fire engines in an emergency and about the adequacy of the car parking space.

The applicant, Mr. G. Lampey, referred to having run a business from the building for some years. He referred to the building being in poor condition and explained the reasons why it was not conducive to modern day employment use. He also mentioned that although small lorries could access the premises, those of a medium size caused mud to be deposited on the road whilst large vehicles could not access the premises at all. He referred to not being able to continue running a business from a sub-standard building and indicated that if he moved out the building would become derelict. He commented that the application would provide low cost homes and also remove an eyesore from one of the entrances to Chard.

The applicant's agent, Mr. A. Preston, referred to the applicant having outlined the problems associated with using these premises for employment purposes and to both an independent surveyor and a report from the District Valuer asked for by the Council having indicated that the premises were not suitable for use for sole employment or a mixed use scheme. In mentioning the adjacent yard he referred to it having little use and to Environmental Health having no record of complaints. He also commented that should there be an increase in noise there were laws that would protect future residents. He referred to there being secure boundary treatment and sound protection within the dwellings and to the materials to be used being sympathetic to those existing. He indicated that the planning officer had found the proposed building at the rear of the site to be acceptable. Reference was made to the application giving the opportunity to tidy the site and to provide accommodation at a lower value.

In response to a comment made about access for fire engines, the Deputy Team Leader clarified that the requirement was for a fire engine to be able to get within 45 metres of the site and that the vehicle did not need to access the site itself.

At this point in the meeting, Cllr. Ros Roderigo indicated that she had realised that she needed to declare a personal and prejudicial interest in the application as her stepson worked at the building. She left the meeting during the remaining consideration of this item including the members' debate.

Cllr. David Bulmer, ward member, commented that he had requested this application to come to Committee especially given the general condition of the building and that it may not be able to be brought to employment use. Although agreeing with the principle of developing this site he had concerns about the impact on the adjoining business and, although this was an outline application, he felt that details of the frontage and the garden area needed to be considered. There was also a need to ensure that the streetlight mounted on the building was replaced. He also expressed concern about the impact of the development on an adjoining property, no. 20 East Street. He welcomed the contribution to play areas and playing pitches, which he felt would benefit Chard in general. He also welcomed the way in which the proposed building would be set back as the pavement was narrow in this location at present and this would, therefore, be an improvement. He referred to the Highway Authority having no objections to the scheme and to the parking provision being within the guidelines. He referred to his main concern being the relationship of the proposed residential development with the adjoining industrial site and immediately adjacent business.

During the ensuing discussion, members indicated that they considered the proposals to be acceptable, especially having now received reports including one from the District Valuer indicating that the building was not suitable for employment use. In referring to the relationship between the proposed new dwellings and the adjoining commercial business it was felt that any impact for future occupants could be dealt with by conditions. A member expressed his concerns that one parking space per unit may not be enough but acknowledged that the Highway Authority found the provisions to be acceptable. He otherwise indicated support for the application. Reference was also made by a member to there being bus services and a cycleway nearby.

In response to a comment from a member with regard to condition 18, the Deputy Team Leader clarified that it related to the submission of a scheme for approval in respect of the provision of equipped play, playing pitches, youth and strategic facilities before development commenced and not, at this stage, the provision of the facilities themselves. He commented that he could amend the wording of that condition to make it clearer.

The Committee indicated its support for the granting of the application as recommended by the officers subject to the inclusion of additional conditions regarding the maintenance of the garden area, replacement of the street light and any other relevant conditions recommended by the Environmental Health Officer.

The Solicitor then advised that the justification for the granting of the application as set out in the agenda report should be amended to also indicate that it would be uneconomical at present to retain the premises for employment uses having regard to this particular site and property.

- RESOLVED:** (1) that planning permission be granted subject to:-
- (i) the amendment of the justification of the granting of the application to also indicate that it would be uneconomical at present to retain the premises for employment uses having regard to this particular site and property;
 - (ii) conditions 1-19 and note 1 as set out in the agenda report but with the amendment of condition 18 to clarify its

meaning and inclusion of additional conditions regarding the maintenance of the garden area, replacement of the street light and any other relevant conditions recommended by the Environmental Health Officer;

- (2) that the wording of the conditions be delegated to the Head of Development and Building Control in consultation with the Area Chairman and ward member.

(Resolution passed without dissent).

08/02735/OUT (Pages 26-32) – Demolition of existing church and the erection of 8 no. dwellinghouses (GR 344402/109425), Church of St. Peter, South Street, Crewkerne – Clifton Catholic Diocesan Trustees.

The Deputy Team Leader summarised the details of the application as set out in the agenda report. He referred to this being a revised application following refusal of a previous scheme submitted in 2007. This earlier scheme, which was also for 8 dwellings, was refused because of poor layout and the relationship with its surroundings and would create an incongruous development on the edge of the Conservation Area. The Deputy Team Leader further mentioned that in considering this current application there was a need to consider whether it was acceptable in planning terms. He showed plans of the refused scheme layout and of the layout of the current scheme for members' information. He also explained the nature of the surrounding street scene and commented that given the reasons for refusal of the earlier application as a starting point he was of the view that the current proposals were acceptable. It was noted that the recommendation was one of approval subject to conditions.

In response to a comment from a member who questioned why matters regarding the density of the development were based on terracing, the Deputy Team Leader reported that his impression was that terracing was the dominant effect in this location. He also indicated that the development was adjacent to the Conservation Area. Although he accepted that there were larger dwellings in the area he felt that this application would preserve the character of terracing and of the Conservation Area. In response to a further comment questioning the difference between this application and the previous one, he mentioned that the arrangement and layout of the current proposals overcame issues that had been raised previously. Also, it was not felt that the previous layout showed how 8 dwellings could best be accommodated on the site. He also responded to comments about the height of the dwellings in comparison with adjoining properties.

The representative of Crewkerne Town Council, Mrs. V. Chard, commented that the Town Council were content to agree to development of this site but felt that 8 dwellings constituted overdevelopment. Also, it was not felt that the parking provision for the proposed development was adequate. She referred to the layout of the roads in this location, which were busy with cars and delivery vehicles and to few properties having off-street parking facilities. Consequently any on-street parking was already over-subscribed. She also referred to the properties in the locality, many of which were houses of red brick or pebbledash and commented that if this application had been for four or five detached houses it would have found more favour with the Town Council. She indicated that the Town Council was of the view that the application should be refused. If a decision was taken to approve the application, she expressed the view that the parking of caravans on the area allocated for the parking of vehicles should not be permitted.

The applicant's agent, Mr. N. Jones, highlighted the lack of objections from neighbours. He referred to the recommendation of the Planning Officer being one of approval and to there being no objections to the proposals from the Conservation Officer, Economic

Development Officer or the Highway Authority. He commented that the application complied with the Local Plan and that there needed to be robust reasons to go against it. He referred to the only objection to the application being from Crewkerne Town Council and to the car parking provision being at the policy maximum of 1.5 spaces per dwelling. He also mentioned that the proposals would provide housing at a density of 43 dwellings per hectare, which was in line with policy. He asked that the application be considered in terms of the Local Plan and that it be approved.

Cllr Angie Singleton, one of the ward members, commented that the Council had considered the policy on parking provision carefully given the rural nature of the district and having regard to Government guidelines on what could and could not be done and it had been concluded that 1.5 spaces per dwelling was as far as the Council could go. She referred to developers not necessarily providing more car parking if the development was within walking distance of a town centre, however, the maximum was being provided in this case. She felt that the issue with this application was about the quality of the development and how it related to this important area of Crewkerne. She did not feel that enough emphasis had been placed on the relationship of the site to Furland Road and mentioned that the access to it would be off Furland Road and not South Street. She felt strongly that the proposal should relate to that area and made reference to houses in Furland Road being detached, of good quality design and with gardens. She felt, therefore, that the proposed development would look out of place and have an impact on the character of the Conservation Area. She also felt that it constituted overdevelopment.

Cllr. Mike Best, also a ward member, referred to the need to retain the character of the town. He referred to the site being on a raised plot with much larger houses with gardens in the vicinity. He felt that the proposed development would break up the character of this area.

Cllr. Geoff Clarke, also a ward member, expressed his view that the type of terraced development proposed was not consistent with the larger houses in the streetscene. He also felt that the parking provision was inadequate and that the application constituted overdevelopment in that context.

A member questioned what the position would be with regard to the award of costs against the Council should the applicant win any appeal against a refusal of the application. The Solicitor indicated that the possibility of a challenge should not fetter the decision of the Committee. He explained, however, that weight should be attached to the officer's recommendation in this case and that the Committee should have robust and sound reasons in respect of how the application would not comply with policy if members wished to go against the recommendation of approval.

During the ensuing discussion, the majority of members indicated that they found the proposals to be acceptable and supported the officer's recommendation of approval. Reference was made to there being terraces and larger houses in the vicinity of the site and to the proposals being an acceptable compromise.

RESOLVED: that planning permission be granted subject to conditions 1-18 as set out in the agenda report.

(7 in favour, 3 against)

08/01772/LBC (Pages 38-41) – The provision of double entrance doors/gates to rear garden wall (GR 344114/109498), The Hermitage, Pulmans Lane, Crewkerne – G.S. Clarke.

Cllrs. Mike Best and Angie Singleton, having declared their personal and prejudicial interests in this application, left the meeting during its consideration and determination.

The Deputy Team Leader summarised the details of the application as set out in the agenda report. He further indicated that there were no objections from any source and the Committee noted that the recommendation was one of approval subject to conditions.

The Committee then noted the comments of Cllr. Geoff Clarke who, although having declared a personal and prejudicial interest in this item as he was the applicant, exercised his right to make representations as a member of the public. He clarified the history of the site and explained the reasons for and details of the application. Cllr. Clarke then withdrew from the meeting during the consideration and determination of the application.

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

RESOLVED: that listed building consent be granted subject to conditions 1-5 as set out in the agenda report.

(Resolution passed without dissent).

(David Norris, Development Control Team Leader (North/West) – (01935) 462382)
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Chairman