

MEETING AW.10:1112
DATE 21:03:12

South Somerset District Council

Draft Minutes of a meeting of the **Area West Committee** held at the Shrubbery Hotel, Station Road, Ilminster on **Wednesday, 21st March 2012.**

(4.00 p.m. – 10.10 p.m.)

Present:

Members:	Angie Singleton	(in the Chair)
	Michael Best	Nigel Mermagen
	David Bulmer	Sue Osborne
	John Dyke	Ric Pallister
	Carol Goodall	Ros Roderigo
	Brennie Halse	Andrew Turpin
	Jenny Kenton	Linda Vijeh (from 4.25 p.m.)
	Paul Maxwell	Martin Wale

Officers:

Martin Woods	Assistant Director (Economy)
Andrew Gillespie	Area Development Manager (West)
Andy Foyne	Spatial Policy Manager
Jo Manley	Policy Planner
Jo Wilkins	Policy Planner
Nigel Collins	Transport Strategy Officer
Nick Whitsun-Jones	Principal Legal Executive
Andrew Gunn	Area Lead West – Development Management
John Millar	Planning Officer
Gerard Tucker	Economic Development Team Leader
Angela Cox	Democratic Services Manager
Andrew Blackburn	Committee Administrator

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

121. Minutes (Agenda item 1)

The minutes of the meeting held on the 15th February 2012, copies of which had been circulated, were taken as read and, having been approved as a correct record, were signed by the Chairman.

122. Apologies for Absence (Agenda item 2)

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Kim Turner.

123. Declarations of Interest (Agenda item 3)

Councillor Angie Singleton declared a personal interest in Agenda item 7, South Somerset Core Strategy, as a member of the Chard Regeneration Scheme Project Board.

Councillor Andrew Turpin declared a personal interest in Agenda item 9, Planning Applications 11/01082/FUL and 11/04589/FUL, as a member of Tatworth and Forton Parish Council who had submitted comments on the applications. He advised that he had left the room during consideration of application 11/01082/FUL at the Parish Council.

Councillor Ric Pallister advised that he was attending the meeting for Agenda Item 7 as the Chairman of the Local Development Framework Project Management Board and not as a member of the Area West Committee and therefore he would not take part in any voting on Agenda item 7, South Somerset Core Strategy.

Councillor Sue Osborne declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Agenda item 9, Planning Application 11/01082/FUL as she felt it would be unfair on the applicant to engage in the discussion due to her farming connections. She confirmed that she would leave the room during the member debate and voting on this application.

Councillor Carol Goodall asked that it be noted that she was a member of Ilminster Town Council, which had discussed Agenda item 7, South Somerset Core Strategy.

Councillor Brennie Halse declared a personal interest in Agenda item 7, South Somerset Core Strategy, as a member of Chard Town Council and also as she knew one of the landowners of a site in the Chard Eastern Development Area.

Councillor Martin Wale declared a personal interest in Agenda item 9, Planning Application 11/04589/FUL, as the applicant's wife was the daughter of a late town councillor. He also declared a personal interest in Agenda item 7, South Somerset Core Strategy, as a member of Chard Town Council and the Chard Regeneration Scheme Project Board.

Councillor Dave Bulmer declared a personal interest in Agenda item 7, South Somerset Core Strategy, as a member of Chard Town Council.

Councillor Jenny Kenton declared a personal interest in Agenda item 7, South Somerset Core Strategy, as a member of Chard Town Council and the Chard Regeneration Scheme Project Board.

County Councillor Jill Shortland asked that it be recorded that she was the County Councillor for Chard South. She had also been appointed as a consultant with the Blackburn Trust, who had engaged a developer who had an allocation of land within the Core Strategy.

124. Public Question Time (Agenda item 4)

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

125. Chairman's Announcements (Agenda item 5)

There were no announcements from the Chairman.

126. Motion Submitted by Cllr Andrew Turpin (Agenda item 6)

The following Motion was proposed by Councillor Andrew Turpin and seconded by Councillor Ric Pallister.

Proposal:

Being mindful of the Earth's finite resources, this Committee requests the Local Development Framework Project Management Board to consider what additional measures could be adopted to ensure that in South Somerset we preserve and protect them for future generations.

Debate:

Councillor Turpin spoke in support of the Motion. He said that all future development should be sustainable.

Councillor Ric Pallister noted that the primary reason for the Government's delay in issuing the new National Planning Policy Framework had been delays over the interpretation of sustainable. He said the Local Development Framework Project Management Board had been mindful of this point and it was reasonable for them to work towards this end. He seconded Councillor Turpin's motion, and on being put to the vote, the Motion was carried unanimously.

RESOLVED: That being mindful of the Earth's finite resources, this Committee requests the Local Development Framework Project Management Board to consider what additional measures could be adopted to ensure that in South Somerset we preserve and protect them for future generations.

(Voting: unanimous in favour)

127. South Somerset Core Strategy – Consideration of Representations and Recommendations for the Proposed Submission Draft (Agenda item 7)

The Chairman noted that this was the opportunity for members of the Area West Committee to comment and make recommendations to District Executive on proposals and recommendations arising from consideration of the public consultation stage on the South Somerset Core Strategy. It was noted that each Area Committee was only being asked to consider the recommendations relevant to their particular Area or to all Committees.

Councillor Ric Pallister Chairman of the Project Management Board, introduced the agenda item and explained what a Core Strategy was, why it was needed and where the Council were in the process of adopting one at the current time. During his presentation he mentioned:

- The Core Strategy was about keeping or making communities sustainable and providing for people to live, work and socialise.
- The Government said Councils must allow for growth.
- Unemployment in South Somerset was approximately half the national average.
- Growing the economy would help to lift the country out of recession.
- The Population was growing due to an ageing population, natural growth, households separating and inward migration to the area.
- Much of the proposed housing for 2006-28 had already been delivered or committed.

- There was a risk of under-estimating the need for future housing.
- Without a Core Strategy document the Council would have no defence against random planning applications or Planning Inspector decisions.

The Spatial Policy Manager explained the format for the meeting to enable the Committee to consider the recommendations within the draft report to be submitted to District Executive. It was noted that the agenda report had been split into three parts and each part would be considered in turn.

Part 1

The Spatial Policy Manager gave a presentation during which he introduced the issues to be considered in Part 1 of the report.

In response to questions from Members, the Spatial Policy Manager and Chairman of the Project Management Board confirmed that:-

- The existing SSDC Local Plan had time expired but the Council had given notice in 2009 to the Government that they wished to retain all the Local Plan policies, bar 6 and these had been confirmed, including the policy to safeguard disused local railway lines to provide cycle paths.
- The economic forecasts used in the Core Strategy had been provided by Baker Associates, and they were local forecasts based upon a range of considerations including interviews with key local businesses.
- SSDC did not wish to enter into any compulsory purchase arrangements to deliver any housing sites within Chard however, it would prepare to do so, if necessary.
- It was not appropriate for growth to be solely determined by Neighbourhood Plans. The latest Government guidance required such plans to conform to the Core Strategy
- Currently 5.8% of all land in South Somerset was developed and the planned development within the Core Strategy would increase this by approximately 0.5% over the period to 2028.
- The Core Strategy could be reviewed within its lifetime so that if parts of the Localism Act 2011 became more prominent, they could be taken into account.

Members then noted the comments of 3 members of the public who addressed the Committee on Part 1 of the report. Views expressed included the following:-

- Growth was imperative for Chard as there had been limited development in the town within the past 9 years.
- A positive level of housing is now proposed for Chard.
- It appears local councillors in Ilminster have persuaded the Project Management Board to change the development area from Canal Way to Pretwood Hill.
- The new one way system in Ilminster forces an additional mile of car travel.
- The world population is growing and land is diminishing and so agricultural land should be protected in the interest of food production.
- Inward migration from abroad is diminishing
- A realistic requirement of housing could be met on windfall and existing sites.

The Spatial Policy Manager and Chairman of the Project Management Board responded to comments made, some of which included:

- The meeting of full Council on 23rd April would take account of the new National Planning Policy Framework, due to be released shortly, in its consideration of the Core Strategy documents.

- Town Councillors had no influence over the proposed change of growth site in Ilminster and it was unfair to say that they had.
- There was a Government policy on the use of grades 1,2 and 3a agricultural land for development.
- Net inward migration of people to the district had reduced recently however, over the life of the plan, it would be likely to increase again as the country moved out of recession.
- Discussion at the other Area Committees had brought forward policies to develop brownfield sites first and phase development of other sites which the Project Management Board had considered and accepted and the policy would be presented in Appendix L of the District Executive report.

During the ensuing committee discussion on Part 1 of the report, Members expressed varying views. Voting on the individual recommendations within the report are detailed in the table below.

Recommendation 2

Councillor Martin Wale proposed an amendment to the recommendation, that a household requirement of 13,050 dwellings be endorsed in line with the now published Office for National Statistics (ONS) 2011 population figures. This amendment was seconded, however, on being put to the vote the amendment was lost (voting: 5 in favour, 7 against, 0 abstentions).

The original recommendation 2 was then proposed and seconded and on being put to the vote, was carried (voting: 8 in favour, 4 against, 1 abstention).

Recommendation 6

Councillor Brennie Halse proposed an amendment to the recommendation, to remove the wording ‘at least’ and reduce the number of dwellings proposed in Table 4 in proportionality. This amendment was seconded, however, on being put to the vote the amendment was lost (voting: 3 in favour, 10 against, 0 abstentions).

The original recommendation 6 was then proposed and seconded and on being put to the vote, was carried (voting: 10 in favour, 3 against, 0 abstentions).

PMB report recommendation number (agenda page number)	Heading and brief summary of PMB recommendation (for full wording of recommendation, please refer to agenda report)	Area West Committee: Endorsed, Endorsed with minor change or Not endorsed	Voting
Part 1			
Rec 1 (p. A7)	2.1 End date of plan	Endorsed	Unanimous
Rec 2 (p. A14)	2.2 District wide scale of growth	Endorsed	8 in favour, 4 against, 1 abstention
Rec 3 (p. A14)	2.3 Review of the status of Yeovil, market towns and rural centres – terminology.	Endorsed	Unanimous
Rec 4 (p. A16)	2.3 Review of the status of Yeovil, market towns and rural centres – market town status (Chard, Crewkerne, Ilminster)	Endorsed	Unanimous

PMB report recommendation number (agenda page number)	Heading and brief summary of PMB recommendation (for full wording of recommendation, please refer to agenda report)	Area West Committee: Endorsed, Endorsed with minor change or Not endorsed	Voting
Part 1			
Rec 5 (p. A16)	2.3 Review of the status of Yeovil, market towns and rural centres – no changes apart from Langport / Huish Episcopi to market town.	Endorsed	Unanimous
Rec 6 (p. A21)	2.4 Distribution of growth between Yeovil, market towns, rural centres and rural settlements	Endorsed	10 in favour, 3 against, 0 abstentions
Rec 7 (p. A24)	2.5 Review of policy SS2 (development in rural settlements) development areas and infilling.	Endorsed	Unanimous

Part 2

The Spatial Policy Manager gave a presentation during which he introduced the issues to be considered in Part 2 of the report for the Area West Committee.

In response to questions from Members, the Spatial Policy Manager and Chairman of the Project Management Board confirmed that:-

- The new direction of growth proposed for Ilminster was more accessible and more sustainable and following a favourable transport appraisal and viability assessment, was felt on balance to be a better site.
- The proposed Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) of £100 per sq ft of property in Chard was based upon only 15% of affordable housing being achieved in the current housing market.
- The Consultant’s report identified that large Greenfield development sites would have additional infrastructure costs achieved by additional Section 106 obligations.

Members then noted the comments of 3 members of the public who addressed the Committee on Part 2 of the report. Views expressed including the following:-

- Developers had real concerns as to how to achieve housing on the allocated sites within Chard due to potential land ransom strips which could affect delivery costs.
- The delayed new distributor road was critical to ensure the existing roads within Chard town centre were not affected by any development.
- Touches Lane in Chard was currently a restricted by-way and could the Committee confirm its intentions for development in that area?
- No developer would pay £3 million to build a relief road in Ilminster.
- Agricultural land in the Pretwood Hill area should be protected from development.

The Spatial Policy Manager and Chairman of the Project Management Board in responding to views expressed made several comments including the following:-

- The Consultant was aware of possible land ransom issues within Chard when presenting his feasibility report and his viability assessment reflected his view of the likelihood of ransom.
- The proposed northern distributor road for Chard currently appeared unachievable.
- The proposed relief road for the Ilminster development was desirable but not a requirement and was appropriate in traffic terms and viable in economic terms.

- A landscape appraisal conducted in Ilminster concluded that the Pretwood Hill site would be less damaging than the Canal Way site.

During the ensuing discussion, the majority of members indicated that they were content with the recommendations set out in Part 2 of the agenda report.

PMB report recommendation number (agenda page number)	Heading and brief summary of PMB recommendation (for full wording of recommendation, please refer to agenda report)	Area West Committee: Endorsed, Endorsed with minor change or Not endorsed	Voting
Part 2			
Rec 8 (p. A27)	3.1 Yeovil – direction for development – Yeovil Urban Extension	Not for consideration by Area West Committee	
Rec 9 (p. A28)			
Rec 10 (p. A29)			
Rec 11 (p. A32)			
Rec 12 (p. A33)			
Rec 13 (p. A34)			
Rec 14 (p. A35)			
Rec 15 (p. A36)			
Rec 16 (p. A36)			
Rec 17 (p. A39)	3.2a Chard – direction for development	Endorsed	11 in favour, 0 against, 2 abstentions
Rec 18 (p. A40)	3.2b Crewkerne – direction for development	Endorsed	Unanimous
Rec 19 (p. A41)	3.2c Ilminster – direction for development	Endorsed	Unanimous
Rec 20 (p. A42)	3.2d Wincanton – direction for development	Not for consideration by Area West Committee	
Rec 21 (p. A44)	3.2e Ansford / Castle Cary – direction for development	Not for consideration by Area West Committee	
Rec 22 (p. A45)	3.2f Langport / Huish Episcopi – direction for development	Not for consideration by Area West Committee	
Rec 23 (p. A46)	3.2g Somerton – direction for development	Not for consideration by Area West Committee	
Rec 24 (p. A48)	Implications of infrastructure planning	Endorsed	13 in favour 1 against 0 abstention

Part 3

The Spatial Policy Manager gave a presentation during which he introduced the issues to be considered in Part 3 of the report.

Recommendation 31

Councillor Brennie Halse proposed an amendment to the recommendation, to add the words ‘at least’ so the recommendation read ‘Retain **at least** 30% target policy for previously developed land’. The wording of this was debated and it was agreed that the Committee ‘**retain the wording of Planning Policy HG3**’ to cover this request. This amendment was proposed and seconded and on being put to the vote, was carried unanimously.

Recommendation 32

Councillor Martin Wale proposed an amendment to the recommendation, to reduce the percentage of affordable housing provision in rural settlements and rural centres from

10% to 5%. This amendment was seconded, however, on being put to the vote the amendment was lost (voting: 5 in favour, 7 against, 1 abstention).

The original recommendation 32 was then proposed and seconded and on being put to the vote, was carried (voting: 8 in favour, 4 against, 1 abstention).

Recommendation 44

Councillor Andrew Turpin proposed an amendment to the recommendation to remove the final two words of the Policy ***‘where feasible’***. This amendment was seconded and on being put to the vote, was carried unanimously.

During the ensuing discussion, members indicated that they were content with the remainder of the recommendations set out in Part 3 of the agenda report.

PMB report recommendation number (agenda page number)	Heading and brief summary of PMB recommendation (for full wording of recommendation, please refer to agenda report)	Area West Committee: Endorsed, Endorsed with minor change or Not endorsed	Voting
Part 3			
Rec 25 (p. A50)	5. Implications of CIL and interim planning obligation policy	Endorsed	13 in favour 1 abstention
Rec 26 (p. A52)	6. Planning obligation policy post introduction of CIL	Endorsed	Unanimous
Rec 27 (p. A53)	7.1 Policy matters - employment land	Endorsed	Unanimous
Rec 28 (p. A57)	7.2 Yeovil Airfield Safeguarding	Not for consideration by Area West Committee	
Rec 29 (p. A57)	7.3 Policy CV3 Chard Obligations	Endorsed	Unanimous
Rec 30 (p. A58)	7.4 Housing density	Endorsed	Unanimous
Rec 31 (p. A59)	7.5 Use of Previously Developed Land (PDL) for new housing development Retain the wording of Planning Policy HG3	Endorsed with amendment	Unanimous
Rec 32 (p. A61)	7.6 Affordable housing	Endorsed	8 in favour, 4 against, 1 abstention
Rec 33 (p. A62)	7.7 Gypsy and Travellers and Travelling Show People	Endorsed	Unanimous
Rec 34 (p. A62)	7.8 Specialist housing provision for older people	Endorsed	Unanimous
Rec 35 (p. A63)	7.9 Henstridge Airfield	Not for consideration by Area West Committee	
Rec 36 (p. A63)	7.10 Employment Land safeguarding	Endorsed	Unanimous
Rec 37 (p. A64)	7.11 Live / Work facilities	Endorsed	Unanimous
Rec 38 (p. A64)	7.12 Major new tourist facilities	Endorsed	Unanimous
Rec 39 (p. A65)	7.13 Amend the proposals maps for Ilchester, Milborne Port and Stoke Sub Hamdon	Not for consideration by Area West Committee	
Rec 40 (p. A65)	7.14 Sequential approach policy for town centre uses	Endorsed	Unanimous
Rec 41 (p. A67)	7.15 Retail hierarchy	Endorsed	Unanimous
Rec 42 (p. A68)	7.16 Locally derived retail thresholds policy	Endorsed	Unanimous
Rec 43 (p. A68)	7.17 Presumption against major new regional shopping facilities	Endorsed	Unanimous

PMB report recommendation number (agenda page number)	Heading and brief summary of PMB recommendation (for full wording of recommendation, please refer to agenda report)	Area West Committee: Endorsed, Endorsed with minor change or Not endorsed	Voting
Rec 44 (p. A69)	7.18 Policy TA1 – to include Rail Freight Remove the final two words of the Policy ‘where feasible’	Endorsed with minor amendment	Unanimous
Rec 45 (p. A69)	7.19 Policy TA2 – travel plans	Endorsed	Unanimous
Rec 46 (p. A70)	7.20 Car parking standards	Endorsed	Unanimous
Rec 47 (p. A71)	7.21 Viability of open space standards in light of Open Space Strategy	Endorsed	Unanimous
Rec 48 (p. A71)	7.22 Climate change	Endorsed	Unanimous
Rec 49 (p. A72)	7.23 Additional policy changes – YV2	Not for consideration by Area West Committee	
Rec 50 (p. A72)	7.23 Additional policy changes – YV4 (and CV4)	Endorsed	Unanimous
Rec 51 (p. A73)	7.23 Additional policy changes – YV5	Not for consideration by Area West Committee	
Rec 52 (p. A73)	7.23 Additional policy changes – HG7	Endorsed	Unanimous
Rec 53 (p. A73)	7.23 Additional policy changes – HG8		
Rec 54 (p. A73)	7.23 Additional policy changes – EP2		
Rec 55 (p. A74)	7.23 Additional policy changes – EP4		
Rec 56 (p. A74)	7.23 Additional policy changes – EP7		
Rec 57 (p. A74)	7.23 Additional policy changes – EP9		
Rec 58 (p. A74)	7.23 Additional policy changes – EP10 -14		
Rec 59 (p. A75)	7.23 Additional policy changes – EP15		
Rec 60 (p. A75)	7.23 Additional policy changes – EP16		
Rec 61 (p. A75)	7.23 Additional policy changes – TA1		
Rec 62 (p. A75)	7.23 Additional policy changes – TA3		
Rec 63 (p. A76)	7.23 Additional policy changes – HW4		
Rec 64 (p. A76)	7.23 Additional policy changes – EQ3		
Rec 65 (p. A76)	7.23 Additional policy changes – EQ7		
Rec 66 (p. A76)	8. Drafting of the Core Strategy proposed submission document		
Rec 67 (p. A77)	9. Sustainability and appropriate assessment		
Rec 68 (p. A78)			
Rec 69 (p. A78)	10. Equalities Impact Assessment		
Rec 70 (p. A79)	11. National Planning Policy Framework		
Rec 71 (p. A79)	Next steps		

The Committee then proceeded to consider the responses made to the public consultation as set out in the Matrix of Responses (Appendix A (recommendation 2) of the draft report to the District Executive). It was noted that Councillor Andrew Turpin wished to propose a Motion relating to the recommendation on the Chard Railway Junction on pages 50 and 346 of Appendix A.

The Spatial Policy Manager particularly noted that it was proposed to remove an existing policy which sought to retain Chard Junction for future freight use, as there was now a potential blight issue if this was continued.

The Transport Strategy Officer outlined discussions he had had with both South West Trains and Network Rail on the possibilities of reopening Chard Junction to either freight or passenger travel which had not been encouraging and he said that a robust business case would need to be made for either proposal.

Members then noted the comments of two members of the public who addressed the Committee regarding issues contained in Appendix A. Views expressed included the following:-

- There had been a huge increase in the number of passengers using the railway station in Crewkerne.
- A report was to be presented to the Local Government Association the next day on rail structures and SSSC could bid for funding resulting from that report to commission a feasibility study on re-opening of the Chard Junction.
- It had been proper to protect Chard Junction in the past by policy and it was correct to do so for future generations.
- Robust evidence of need should be sought through feasibility and business studies.

Councillor Andrew Turpin advised that there were 17,000 people within a 3½ mile radius of the Chard Railway Junction and this would increase to 20,000 with the planned housing developments for Chard. He felt that many people used the railway station in Axminster as there was no station in Chard and the Council should plan to meet the future local need for rail travel.

The Spatial Policy Manager responded that the Chard Junction site was not necessarily suitable for passenger rail travel due to an existing business operation on site and questioned operational reasons suggested by the rail operator. He suggested that an alternative site nearby be sought for a passenger facility.

During discussion of this item, Members were supportive of the desire to re-open or protect Chard Junction and the following Motion was agreed to be presented to full Council:-

To request that South Somerset District Council actively seek a business partner to develop a business case to promote a passenger facility on the stretch of line around Chard Junction.

The Committee then indicated that it was content to endorse the recommendations in Appendix A subject to the following:-

'To retain the recommendation to remove the protection for rail freight and to propose a motion to full Council to request that South Somerset District Council actively seek a business partner to develop a business case to promote a passenger facility on the stretch of line around Chard Junction'.

The Spatial Policy Manager reminded Members that they were also asked to endorse the content of Appendices A and B (recommendations 2 and 3 of the report to District Executive) and Members were unanimously in favour of this.

RESOLVED: that the draft report on the Core Strategy to the District Executive be endorsed subject to the comments and recommendations mentioned above.

(Voting: Unanimous in favour)

128. Planning Appeals (Agenda item 8)

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

NOTED.

*(David Norris, Development Manager – 01935 462382)
(david.norris@southsomerset.gov.uk)*

129. Date and Venue for Next Meeting (Agenda item 10)

Members noted that the next scheduled meeting of the Committee would be held on Wednesday, 18th April 2012 at 5.30 p.m. at Tatworth Memorial Hall, Kents Road, South Chard.

NOTED.

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

130. Planning Applications (Agenda item 9)

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).

Prior to consideration of the planning applications, at the request of the Chairman, those members who had declared interests at the beginning of the meeting in respect of the planning applications (details of which are set out in minute 123 above) did so again bearing in mind that those members of the public who had attended the meeting for the planning applications may not have been present at the beginning of the meeting.

11/01082/FUL (pages 1-13) – The erection of an agricultural worker’s dwelling (GR 332965/106878), land at Barleclose Farm, Two Ash Hill, Tatworth – Mr. Keith Robbins.

Prior to summarising the details of the application, the Planning Officer, in updating members, referred to several points in the agenda report that the applicant had requested to be clarified. The Planning Officer mentioned that the Parish Council’s comments referred to no consultation having been carried out by the applicant. The applicant felt, however, that both the Parish Council and the adjacent property owner were aware that an application would be made for the submitted scheme. The Planning Officer further reported that the applicant had felt that the wording of the report and the comments of the Economic Development Officer implied that additional information and supporting evidence were not provided until recently. The Planning Officer confirmed that additional information had been forthcoming at various times throughout the course of the application, as requested by officers. The Planning Officer further reported that a number of objections received related to ownership of the sheep included within the agricultural appraisal and he clarified that, as referenced by the Economic Development Officer, the matter of ownership should not be considered a reason for refusal.

Nonetheless, the applicant had provided some additional documentation in the form of invoices and sales orders, which he was advised would be made available to the Economic Development Officer.

The Planning Officer, with the aid of slides and photographs, then summarised the details of the application as set out in the agenda report. He further referred to the key considerations to be taken into account including the functional and financial tests as required under Annexe A of PPS7, which it was considered had been met. Reference was also made to the impact on landscape character and the Planning Officer indicated that the proposals would not have a detrimental impact on local landscape character, residential amenity or highway safety. He indicated that the recommendation was one of approval subject to conditions.

The Planning Officer and Economic Development Team Leader then responded to members' questions on points of detail. Points referred to included clarification of the area of land comprising the farm holding subject of the application; clarification of the details regarding the sale and purchase of the land and buildings; the livestock kept on the holding; the distance away from the holding of other dwellings owned by the applicant; there being no need for an informative note to be included on any permission with regard to there being no extensions to the dwelling in the future, bearing in mind that permitted development rights could be withdrawn by condition; confirmation that there were no landscape objections and the reason for using an in-house team rather than Exeter University to carry out the agricultural appraisal.

Cllr. Sue Osborne, having declared her interest in respect of the application then withdrew from the meeting prior to the member debate and voting.

The Committee noted the comments of Mr. B. Morgan in objection to the application. He expressed his view that there was no evidence relating to the existing business that would justify the need for an agricultural worker's dwelling.

The applicant's agent, Mr. R. Rhys, gave details of the type and numbers of livestock being kept on the holding, which he indicated belonged to the applicant. He also referred to the distance from the holding and the current situation in respect of existing farm dwellings, which were not considered suitable to meet the required need. He also mentioned that there had been no intention to withhold information and questions had been answered when asked. He wished to record his thanks to the Planning Officer for the time spent on the application and commented that the Council's Economic Development Team Leader had not found the application wanting. In referring to the objections, he felt that there were a number of inaccuracies in the comments made. He referred to the officer's recommendation of approval and indicated that the conditions were acceptable to the applicant.

Cllr. Andrew Turpin, ward member, referred to the conflicting information that had been received in respect of this application and questioned the position with regard to the livestock on the holding. He expressed concerns about whether the business would remain ongoing and suggested that a three year temporary permission be granted to enable the justification for the proposals to be assessed.

The Principal Legal Executive referred to the suggestion that a three year temporary permission be granted and commented that the application was for an agricultural worker's dwelling for which it would be unreasonable to grant temporary permission and that a mobile home with a temporary permission was not before the Committee for consideration. The options before the Committee were, therefore, to grant or refuse the application before them.

During the ensuing discussion, other members also referred to the differing information that had been received in respect of the application. The majority of members felt, however, that it would be difficult not to accept the officer's recommendation bearing in mind that overall it was considered that the application had satisfied the relevant criteria.

RESOLVED: that planning permission be granted subject to conditions 1-13 as set out in the agenda report.

(9 in favour, 4 against)

11/04589/FUL (pages 14-20) – The change of use of land for the keeping of horses and the erection of stables, store and associated yard works (GR 332385/105607), land O.S. 4050, Pop Lane, Tatworth – Mr. M. Perham.

The Area Lead West, with the aid of slides and photographs, summarised the details of the application as set out in the agenda report. He referred to the Highway Authority having no objections to the application bearing in mind that the proposed stables would be for private use only. He referred to the key considerations to be taken into account including the visual impact on the landscape, with which the Landscape Architect had expressed concern, and the possibility of a precedent for further similar development being set. The Area Lead West also indicated that issues similar to those raised by this application had been assessed as part of applications elsewhere in the district where planning inspectors had dismissed appeals against the refusal of planning permission. The Committee noted that the recommendation was one of refusal for the reasons set out in the agenda report.

The Area Lead West then responded to members' questions on points of detail. Points addressed included the design of the stabling; confirmation that the keeping of horses was not an agricultural use and therefore needed planning permission; clarification that the proposal related to land around which there was no development, confirmation that the site was not in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty; that it was for members to decide whether they agreed with the Landscape Architect's recommendation; clarification that there was no highway requirement to establish a new access and that, if members wished to approve the application, conditions could be included regarding lighting and materials.

The Committee then noted the comments of Ms. J. Wood in support of the application. She referred to the improvements and maintenance of the land that had been carried out by the applicant. She mentioned that the stables would be of natural materials and located in the corner of the field behind the hedge and could not be seen except from the main road. She expressed her view that seeing horses grazing alongside arable land and fields of livestock was the view that people would expect to see. She felt that the application should be supported.

The applicant's partner, Ms. L. Hill, commented that she respected the Council's view with regard to the impact on landscape character but felt that such matters were subjective. She referred to equine activities being a popular pastime and that, in this case, it was on a small scale basis. Reference was made to the proposed stables being screened well behind a hedge and to the nearest buildings being around 150m away. She further mentioned that there were no proposals for external lighting and that rustic materials would be used. She indicated that they just wished to keep the horses on the land and ride from the site and not on it. Reference was made to the proposals having the Parish Council's support and to local people who had commented being supportive.

The Committee noted the comments of County Councillor Jill Shortland in support of the application. She referred to having walked around the site and mentioned that the proposed stables would be located behind a thick hedge and expressed her view that

they would not be seen. She also felt that there would be an improvement for highway safety as the access to the land was being taken back a little, thereby creating a passing place. She urged the Committee to allow the application.

Cllr. Andrew Turpin, ward member, questioned why the recommendation was one of refusal when the Parish Council, ward member and community were supporting it. He felt that the proposals blended in well with the local surroundings, were non-intrusive and non-invasive and that the site was as good a place as any to locate the stables.

During the ensuing discussion, other members also indicated their support for the application to be granted. The view was expressed that the site was reasonably well located to the existing settlement and that the use was not incompatible with the character of the area.

In conclusion, members felt that the proposal, due to its form, scale and location would not adversely affect the character and appearance of the surrounding rural landscape and would safeguard highway safety and residential amenity in accordance with policies ST3 (Development Areas), ST5 (General Principles of Development), ST6 (Quality of Development), CR6 (Horses and Development) and EC3 (Landscape Character) of the South Somerset Local Plan (Adopted April 2006), policies STR1 (Sustainable Development), STR6 (Development outside towns, rural centres and villages), and 5 (Landscape Character) of the Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan (Adopted April 2000).

RESOLVED: that planning permission be granted subject to conditions which shall include:

- standard time limit – three years;
- development to be carried out in accordance with the approved plans;
- scheme of landscaping to be submitted for approval;
- no external lighting;
- details of materials to be used for the roof and boarding of the stables to be submitted for approval;
- the equestrian use being for private domestic purposes only.

(Resolution passed without dissent).

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Chairman