

South Somerset District Council

Minutes of a meeting of the **Area North Committee** held at the **Edgar Hall, Somerton** on **Wednesday 26 October 2016**.

(2.05 pm - 3.30 pm)

Present:

Members: Councillor Clare Aparicio Paul (Chairman)

Neil Bloomfield	Jo Roundell Greene
Adam Dance	Dean Ruddle
Graham Middleton	Sylvia Seal
Tiffany Osborne	Sue Steele
Crispin Raikes	Derek Yeomans

Officers:

Helen Rutter	Assistant Director (Communities)
Nigel Marston	Licensing Manager
Adrian Noon	Area Lead (North/East)
Nick Head	Planning Officer
John Millar	Planning Officer
Angela Watson	Legal Services Manager
Sarah Hickey	Locum Planning Solicitor
Becky Sanders	Democratic Services Officer

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

82. Minutes (Agenda Item 1)

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 September 2016 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

83. Apologies for absence (Agenda Item 2)

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Stephen Page.

84. Declarations of Interest (Agenda Item 3)

There were no declarations of interest.

85. Date of next meeting (Agenda Item 4)

Members noted the next meeting of Area North Committee was scheduled for 2.00pm on Wednesday 23 November, at a venue to be confirmed.

86. Public question time (Agenda Item 5)

There were no questions from members of the public.

87. Chairman's announcements (Agenda Item 6)

The Chairman reminded members of an email which had been circulated regarding the retention of telephone boxes. She suggested that any interested parishes or communities should make contact with the Area Development Team.

The Chairman informed members that a date had been set for the Area North Annual Parish Meeting - 9 February 2017, in the evening, with a venue to be confirmed.

88. Reports from members (Agenda Item 7)

Councillor Sylvia Seal reported on the success of the Gold Star Awards held at the Octagon Theatre the previous evening. In particular, she informed members about the lifetime achievement award which had been made to an 89 year old for over 70 years of service as a volunteer.

Councillor Jo Roundell Greene also reported that the Cartgate Tourist Information Centre (TIC) had been recognised with a Silver award for Tourist Information Centre of the Year at the Somerset Tourism Awards.

The Chairman noted that Shakspeare Glass in Langport had made the awards for the Somerset Tourism Awards. She also informed members that Langport was a finalist in one of the categories for the Great British High Street Awards and encouraged everyone to vote on the Awards website.

89. Annual Licensing Report to Area North Committee (Agenda Item 8)

The Licensing Manager presented his report, as detailed in the agenda, highlighting key facts and statistics of interest, particularly those specific to Area North. He explained briefly the work of the team including the types of applications, inspections and enforcement action.

In response to comments made by members during a short discussion, the Licensing Manager briefly provided further information about:

- Scrap metal – the legislation and requirements for scrap metal dealers
- The process regarding informing members about Temporary Event Notices
- Temporary Event Notices with sale of alcohol and the requirements when alcohol is purchased or donated and then sold, or alcohol being sold on a sale and return basis.

Members complimented the Licensing Manager for the work of the team, which had a heavy workload, and noted that team members were always very helpful.

RESOLVED: That the Annual Licensing Report be noted.

90. Area North Committee Forward Plan (Agenda Item 9)

The Assistant Director (Communities) informed members of some changes to the reports detailed in the Forward Plan as follows:

- Rural Transport - to be rescheduled due to officer absence.
- Rural Housing Needs – will be re-scheduled for the new year as the report will be made alongside an Affordable Housing report.
- Citizens Advice South Somerset – the organisation wished to make a presentation to members and this would be scheduled for January or February.

During a brief discussion it was queried where the venue was likely to be for the Area North Annual Parish Meeting. It was suggested that Long Sutton Golf Club had been a good location in the past as it was centrally located within Area North.

RESOLVED: That the Area North Forward Plan be noted.

91. Planning Appeals (Agenda Item 10)

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

RESOLVED: That the planning appeals be noted.

92. Schedule of Planning Applications to be Determined By Committee (Agenda Item 11)

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

93. Planning Application 16/03605/FUL - Land East of Ablake. A372, Pibsbury, Langport (Agenda Item 12)

Proposal: Erection of two dwellings and garage block.

The Planning Officer presented the application as detailed in the agenda, commenting that many members would be familiar with the adjacent site which had been previously been discussed and approved by committee for houses. He noted that two previous applications on this application site had been refused due to access to services and local facilities. It was noted another key consideration was the impact on setting, character and appearance.

Mr G Richmond spoke in objection to the application, and on behalf of other local residents. He supported the officer's reasons for refusal and felt that two dwellings would be squashed on the site. Of more concern was the garage block along the roadside which would have poor visual appearance to properties across the road. They were not against development of the site but they felt a proposal needed to be more in keeping with the area.

Mr M Williams, agent, noted this was the first time development of this site had been discussed by committee. He noted the adjacent site had been deemed by members to be a sustainable location for development and so it would be difficult to argue this site was not. This proposal was effectively infill development along that side of the road. The proposed dwellings were in scale, and although of a different design to others locally it did not mean they would not fit in. Based on other committee decisions he considered this site must be in a sustainable location and asked members to approve the principle of the development and that points of detail could be negotiated with the applicants.

Ward member, Councillor Clare Aparicio Paul, explained to members why the application was before the committee. She noted the site location was a redundant plot between other residential properties.

During a short discussion several members expressed their support for the officer recommendation to refuse the application. Comments raised included:

- Feel it's over development
- Garage block along the road is inappropriate
- Disappointed that applicant has not heeded the advice of officers
- Accept principle of development on this site but what is proposed will be cramped

At the conclusion of debate it was proposed to refuse the application as per the officer recommendation, and on being put to the vote, was varied unanimously.

RESOLVED: That planning application 16/03605/FUL be REFUSED, as per the officer recommendation, for the following reasons:

Reasons:

01. The proposal would represent new residential development in open countryside, for which an overriding essential need has not been justified. The application site is remote from local key services and as such will increase the need for journeys to be made by private vehicles. The proposal fails to enhance the sustainability of the settlement, and constitutes unsustainable development that is contrary to Policy SD1 of the South Somerset Local Plan (2006-2028) and to the aims and objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework.
02. The proposal, by reason of its design, scale and massing, represents a dominant and visually intrusive development on the south side of the A372, that fails to respect the established character and appearance of the locality, or to reinforce local distinctiveness of the setting, contrary to the aims of the NPPF and Policy EQ2 of the South Somerset Local Plan (2006 - 2028).

Informatives:

01. In accordance with paragraphs 186 and 187 of the NPPF the council, as local planning authority, takes a positive and proactive approach to development proposals focused on solutions. The council works with applicants/agents in a positive and proactive manner by;

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

In this case, the applicant was advised that the proposal did not accord with the development plan in important respects. There are not considered to be any material planning considerations to outweigh these problems.

(Voting: 10 in favour of refusal, 0 against, 0 abstentions)

94. Planning Application 16/03175/FUL - Highfield Farm, Windmill Lane, Pibsbury, Langport (Agenda Item 13)

Proposal: Redevelopment of existing agricultural building to provide two 1.5 storey semi-detached dwellings.

The Planning Officer presented the application as detailed in the agenda, noting this was the first of two application on adjoining sites. During the presentation he highlighted previously applications nearby. He explained that this application proposed to replace an existing agricultural building with two semi detached dwellings with access by the existing adjacent dwellings. He explained the main reasons for refusal were due to the development pattern and landscape character, more than whether it was considered to be a sustainable location.

Mr C Miller, agent, commented the application proposed the demolition of a barn in poor condition and to replace with a barn conversion type development. He noted that no objections had been raised by Highways, neighbours or the Parish Council. There would be substantial landscape screening and the proposal would be a visual enhancement to what is currently there. There would be no encroachment into open countryside beyond that which is already developed, and he felt there would be no adverse impact from the proposal.

Ward member, Councillor Clare Aparicio Paul, noted that various development had taken place adjacent to the site already. She believed it was a small pocket where housing could be approved and the proposal would be an improvement to redundant farm buildings.

During a short discussion mixed views were raised including:

- Unlikely to see from road and will be screened by planting
- Not extending into open land
- A previous application conditioned that the orchard should be retained
- Concern at style and layout of this application and feel could be a precursor for further development
- Feel it's over development
- Seems like development is being done piecemeal and so doesn't require any contribution towards affordable housing

In response to questions raised by members, the Area Lead clarified that:

- The proposal was not going into open countryside and was within the existing developed area

- The agricultural barn seems to be used primarily for storage related to agriculture

At the conclusion of debate it was proposed to refuse the application as per the officer recommendation. On being put to the vote, the proposal was carried 7 in favour of refusal, 3 against and 1 abstention.

RESOLVED: That planning application 16/03175/FUL be REFUSED, as per the officer recommendation, for the following reason:

Reason:

01. The proposed development, as a result of its form, scale and siting, introduces an uncharacteristic concentration of residential development at variance with the local pattern of development and thereby fails to preserve or enhance local character. As such, it has an unacceptable impact on the character, appearance and the rural context of the locality. The proposal is therefore contrary to policy EQ2 of the South Somerset Local Plan (2006-28) and provisions of chapters 7, 11 and the core planning principles of the National Planning Policy Framework.

(Voting: 7 in favour of refusal, 3 against, 1 abstention)

95. Planning Application 16/03176/OUT - Highfield Farm, Windmill Lane, Pibsbury, Langport (Agenda Item 14)

Proposal: Outline application for the erection of two detached bungalows.

The Planning Officer briefly presented the application as detailed in the agenda, noting that many of the slides in his presentation and the key considerations were the same as for the previous application (16/03176/FUL).

Mr C Miller, agent, commented there was deliberate ploy to the way the applicants had approached development of the site. He explained that since the original applications had been made on the adjacent site the applicants situation had changed. He reminded members of the reasons why the original applications had been approved.

Ward member, Councillor Clare Aparicio Paul, explained to members why she had brought the application to committee, and noted her comments had been made at the previous application.

There was a very brief discussion, during which one member reiterated his comments from the previous application, but another felt that as the previous application had been refused there was little option but to the same with this one.

It was proposed to refuse the application as per the officer recommendation. On being put to the vote the proposal was carried 7 in favour of refusal, 3 against with 1 abstention.

RESOLVED: That planning application 16/03176/OUT be REFUSED, as per the officer recommendation, for the following reason:

Reason:

01. The proposed development, as a result of its form, scale and siting, introduces an uncharacteristic concentration of residential development at variance with the local pattern of development and thereby fails to preserve or enhance local character. As such, it has an unacceptable impact on the character, appearance and the rural context of the locality. The proposal is therefore contrary to policy EQ2 of the South Somerset Local Plan (2006-28) and provisions of chapters 7, 11 and the core planning principles of the National Planning Policy Framework.

(Voting: 7 in favour of refusal, 3 against, 1 abstention)

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Chairman