

South Somerset District Council

Draft Minutes of a meeting of the **Area North Committee** held at the **Council Chamber, Council Offices, Brympton Way, Yeovil BA20 2HT on Wednesday 28 March 2018.**

(2.00 pm - 5.05 pm)

Present:

Members: Councillor Graham Middleton (in the Chair)

Clare Aparicio Paul	Crispin Raikes
Neil Bloomfield	Sylvia Seal
Adam Dance	Sue Steele
Tiffany Osborne	Gerard Tucker
Stephen Page	

Officers:

Alex Parmley	Chief Executive
Natalie Fortt	Area Development Lead South
Colin McDonald	Corporate Strategic Housing Manager
Jan Gamon	Lead Specialist (Strategic Planning)
Andrew Gunn	Area Lead (West and North)
Mike Hicks	Planning Officer
Angela Cox	Democratic Services Specialist
Becky Sanders	Case Services Officer (Support Services)

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

131. Minutes (Agenda Item 1)

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 February 2018 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

132. Apologies for absence (Agenda Item 2)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Jo Roundell Greene, Dean Ruddle and Derek Yeomans.

133. Declarations of Interest (Agenda Item 3)

Councillors Neil Bloomfield and Graham Middleton each declared a personal interest for planning application 17/04885/FUL, as they are also members of Martock Parish Council which had commented on the application.

Councillors Adam Dance and Crispin Raikes both declared a personal interest for planning application 17/04381/FUL**, as they are also members of South Petherton Parish Council which had commented on the application.

134. Date of next meeting (Agenda Item 4)

Members noted the next meeting of Area North Committee was scheduled for 2.00pm on Wednesday 25 April 2018, at a venue to be confirmed.

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

135. Public question time (Agenda Item 5)

There were no questions from members of the public.

136. Chairman's announcements (Agenda Item 6)

In the absence of a Vice Chairman, the Chairman asked for nominations for a Vice Chairman for the meeting. It was proposed and subsequently agreed, that Councillor Crispin Raikes be appointed to act as Vice Chairman for the meeting.

The Chairman introduced the Case Services Team Leader who needed to say a few words about Data Protection. The Case Services Team Leader provided a brief verbal update regarding GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation), noting that all councillors were now registered and explained elements in further detail. She reminded members there was online training to complete and optional workshops were also being arranged to provide extra support if needed. Support for Town and Parish Councils would also be provided in April or May.

137. Reports from members (Agenda Item 7)

Councillor Clare Aparicio Paul noted a Langport Water Forum would take place on 11 April at Great Bow Wharf, and there would be some interesting speakers from various agencies regarding flooding and water management.

Councillor Neil Bloomfield referred to the recent email circulated to members regarding major planning applications and potential referral to Regulation Committee. He hoped a senior officer would address members to explain and discuss the situation further.

Councillor Gerard Tucker, as appointed member to the Levels and Moors Action Group, reported that three local businesses in Area North had been successful in receiving grant funding.

Councillor Stephen Page noted that it had been announced that Somerton would get a new single primary school in 2020.

Councillor Adam Dance informed members that the consultation regarding SCC libraries had now been extended to 23 June 2018 and encouraged people to respond with their comments. He also referred to the recent devastating house fire in East Lambrook.

138. Citizens Advice South Somerset (CASS) (Agenda Item 8)

The Chairman welcomed Angela Kerr, Chief Executive Officer, Citizens Advice South Somerset (CASS) to the meeting. With the aid of a powerpoint presentation she informed members of the work and future development of Citizens Advice South Somerset. Information provided in the presentation included:

- Client statistics and current work.
- Client issues - majority were around benefits and tax credits, debt and housing;
- Help could be accessed through many different channels, such as Skype, e-mail or face to face.
- Across the network there had been an increase in the number of younger clients;
- Ambitions for the future included extending outreach to weekly in every town; working more closely with health & other advice centres; continuing to invest in Skype and focusing on priority groups;
- Business Plan for 2017-2020.
- New volunteering and internship opportunities;
- Working with various partners to help build confidence with Mental Health clients and Legal advice;
- Fuel Poverty advice sessions;
- Working closely with Surviving Winter Scheme and Wessex Water;
- Working with SSDC to help support the requirements of the new Homeless Reduction Act.

During a brief discussion, the Chief Executive Officer, Citizens Advice South Somerset responded to member's questions on points of detail.

The Chairman thanked the Chief Executive, Citizens Advice South Somerset for attending the meeting.

139. Affordable Housing Development Programme (Agenda Item 9)

The Corporate Strategic Housing Manager presented his report which provided an update on the outturn position of the Affordable Housing Development Programme for 2016/17 and 2017/18 in relation to Area North, and the future prospects primarily for 2018/19. He highlighted key elements in the report and also noted that although it had been a slow year, 2018/19 was looking better but would be dependent on planning permissions.

During a short discussion, the Corporate Strategic Housing Manager responded to points of detail including more information about:

- why developers may not be bringing forward some homes
- the reasons why some sites may be deemed unviable

Members were content to note the report, and thanked the officer for attending the meeting.

RESOLVED: That the report on the outturn position of the Affordable Housing Development Programme 2016/17 & 2017/18 and prospects for the future be noted.

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

The Area Development Lead advised members that the annual report for 'Making the Most of Martock' would come forward to the next meeting in April.

Members were content to note the Area North Committee Forward Plan.

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

141. Planning Appeals (Agenda Item 11)

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

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

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

143. Planning Application 17/04381/FUL - Land Rear of Beaufort Gardens, West End Close, South Petherton. (Agenda Item 13)**

Proposal: The erection of 34 No. dwellings and associated works including access, parking and landscaping.

Prior to the officer's presentation, Members discussed the proposal that the application would be referred to Regulation Committee if members were minded to refuse permission. It was agreed that information on the date of the Regulation Committee meeting would be circulated to members.

The Area Lead Planner advised that a report on the number of failed planning appeals was currently being compiled by the Lead Specialist – Planning to be presented to the four Area Committee meetings and also further information would be added to the monthly Planning Appeals reports to Committee.

The planning officer presented the application and advised that since writing his report, the Police Crime Prevention Design Adviser had confirmed that the amended plans met their safety requirements, and, one further letter of objection had been received from the resident of 24 West End Close. The applicant was a housing association who had indicated that all the proposed dwellings would be affordable, however, 35% affordable housing would be secured through a Section 106 legal agreement. He noted that the Local Plan identified South Petherton as a rural centre and as such development was expected. Although the Local Plan anticipated 229 houses to be constructed in the village during the plan period, including this development, there would be 309 dwellings with permission which was a 35% increase over the Local Plan target, although, the Local Plan target was not to be considered a maximum number of dwellings. He also drew attention to the proposed ecological planting strip around the site, the Wessex Water main drain down the south east boundary, the need for a construction plan during development and the need to remove a small section of garden fence at 24 West End Close where it crossed the pavement.

Ms D Hodson Wright spoke on behalf of South Petherton Parish Council, and said that the village had already taken their fair share of houses. A Community Land Trust had identified a need for 10 or 11 low cost houses which should be available for local people. She advised the local schools were full, there was currently only one doctor at the local surgery and there was consultation on the closure of the library which would be a further loss of facilities.

The Committee were then addressed by Ms L Hanslip and Mr B Apps in opposition to the proposed development. Their comments included:-

- Loss of light by overshadowing trees and 3 visitor spaces proposed alongside the boundary to their property.
- Reduction in scope for safer parking as parking is not permitted within 10 metres of a junction.
- This could be a possible exception site for the Community Land Trust.
- This site was never part of the Strategic Housing Land Assessment or in the issues and options of the Local Plan.
- We are already 35% over the Local Plan target for housing in the village and there is still 10 years left of the current Local Plan.

Mr J Layzell, Executive Director for Stonewater, said access to good quality, affordable housing was important and they had no intention to delay the build. Although they were bound to provide 12 affordable units, all 34 would be affordable with a mix of affordable rented, home ownership and housing for older tenants.

Mr M Frost, Agent, said the site would provide a valuable contribution to local housing need and planning policy SS5 allowed a permissive approach to modest development. He said the development would not affect the village hierarchy in the Local Plan and there would be no impact on neighbourhood amenity. He concluded there were no objections from the statutory consultees and there had been a number of letters of support as well as objection.

One of the Ward Members, Councillor Crispin Raikes, noted that the Parish Council did not support the proposal, citing parking and access as their concerns. He also expressed concern whether the schools could accommodate any further students and the disruption to residents during construction. He concluded that any future appeal was likely to be successful but he did have concerns at the proposed access.

The other Ward Member, Councillor Adam Dance, said that although he wanted affordable homes in the village, he had checked the Homefinder Somerset register and there were only 17 people or families seeking accommodation in the South Petherton area. He said that as a school governor he was aware there were no further school places and there was already difficulty in obtaining an appointment at the local doctors surgery. He felt the plot of land was too small for the proposed number of properties and the access roads were too narrow as cars were usually parked either side.

During discussion, varying views were expressed. Some Members felt there was a need for affordable houses and pointed out that the education authority said there was some capacity locally for students, whilst others expressed concern at the narrow access, parking and construction traffic as well as the additional pressure on the schools and doctors surgery.

It was proposed and seconded to refer the application to the Regulation Committee with a recommendation to refuse for the following reasons:

1. Skewing of Local Plan settlement hierarchy
2. Detrimental to residential amenity
3. Harmful to highway safety due to overdevelopment on site
4. Unsustainable location due to gradient up to the site from the village centre

On being put to the vote, this proposal was carried (voting: 5 in favour, 4 against, 1 abstention).

At the conclusion of the debate, Councillor Neil Bloomfield asked that the following appeal decisions be referenced in the officer's report to the Regulation Committee as he felt they were pertinent:

- a. Lavers Oak, Martock- 15/00446/OUT 91 dwellings - refused on appeal (Harm to landscape character, 50% over Local Plan housing number)
- b. Ringwell Hill, Bower Hinton- 14/04723/FUL 49 dwellings - refused on appeal (Unsustainable location - more than 2000 metres from village centre, 32 or 40% over Local Plan housing number)

RESOLVED: That planning application 17/04381/FUL** be referred to the Regulation Committee with a recommendation from the Area North Committee that the application be refused, for the following reasons:-

1. Skewing of Local Plan settlement hierarchy
2. Detrimental to residential amenity
3. Harmful to highway safety due to overdevelopment on site
4. Unsustainable location due to gradient up to the site from the village

(Voting: 5 in favour, 4 against, 1 abstention)

144. Planning Application 17/04885/FUL - Badgers Holt, Coat, Martock. (Agenda Item 14)

Proposal: The demolition of the existing link attached double garage, rear kitchen, living room extension and conservatory. Erection of a new timber clad one and a half storey side extension. Alterations to fenestration, construction of a new bin/oil tank store and external landscaping.

The Planning Officer introduced the report and advised that the proposal was for a 1 ½ storey side extension on an existing single storey dwelling converted from a stable building. He noted that the property was surrounded by listed buildings. The extension was proposed in a dark larch finish with tall glazed sections looking into the courtyard and onto the road. The Conservation Officer had listed a number of concerns which were detailed in the report and which linked to the recommendation to refuse the application. In response to a question, he clarified that planning policy EQ2 covered several elements relating to visual amenity, overshadowing and impact on a listed building and so was quoted as being in accord with some elements and contrary to others.

Mrs J Elwood, applicant, said they had purchased the property 3 years ago and had always intended to improve it. She said the property currently was cold and damp and the extension would provide a spacious and healthy living environment. Because of the size and scale of the plot, this was a modest extension which they hoped would enhance the village.

Mr V Allington, Agent, said they had offered to construct a mock of the extension for the Conservation Officer but he had not thought it necessary and whilst he did not like the proposed cladding he had said it was acceptable. He referred to the 1841 tythe map which showed additional buildings to the front of the stables and he said they had submitted a heritage assessment as part of the application. This was a complete refurbishment of the property and was a high quality design in a courtyard development.

Ward Member, Councillor Neil Bloomfield expressed his surprise at the recommendation of refusal when only 50 yards away a Grade II listed building had been converted to a holiday-let property. He felt the charred larch finish would maintain the barn look of the extension and he confirmed that he had no objections.

Ward Member, Councillor Graham Middleton said if it was proposed to be constructed in hamstone then he would have no objections but the glass and black wood should be set further back. He said he was not against the application but did not like the proposed materials.

During discussion, Members questioned whether the charred larch finish would soften with age and the Agent clarified that this would be the case. Several members expressed their support for the proposal although some felt it would be more in keeping with the area if it was constructed in hamstone. It was proposed and seconded to approve the application, contrary to the officer's recommendation, as it would cause no significant harm to the visual amenity of the area and on being put to the vote this was carried (voting: 7 in favour, 1 against, 1 abstention).

RESOLVED: That planning application 17/04885/FUL be APPROVED, contrary to the officer recommendation, subject to the following:

Justification:

01. The proposed extension would by reason of its scale, materials and design cause no harm to the character of the Conservation Area or the setting of the listed building. It would cause no harm to residential amenity. The proposal would therefore accord with Policies EQ2 and EQ3 of the South Somerset Local Plan (2006-2028).

Subject to the following conditions:

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

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

02. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 1-1000; 2-0001 Rev. A; 1-0002; 2-0002 Rev. A; 2-0003 Rev. A; 1-0003 Rev. A only

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

03. The development hereby permitted shall not be commenced until particulars of the materials (including the provision of samples where appropriate) to be used for external walls and roofs have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area in accordance with Policy EQ3 of the South Somerset Local Plan (2006-2028).

04. Prior to their installation, details of all windows and doors including

materials and external finish have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This will include detailed drawings including sections of at least 1:5. Such approved details, once carried out shall not be altered without the prior written consent of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area in accordance with Policy EQ3 of the South Somerset Local Plan (2006-2028).

05. Prior to the commencement of construction of the roof, details of the design all roof eaves and verges including detail drawings at a scale of 1:5, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such details once carried out shall not be altered without the prior written consent of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area in

(Voting: 7 in favour, 1 against, 1 abstention)

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Chairman