

Minutes of a Meeting of the Planning Committee - West held in the John Meikle Room, The Deane House, Belvedere Road, Taunton TA1 1HE, on Tuesday, 19 September 2023 at 2.00 pm

Present:

Cllr Simon Coles (Chair)
Cllr Derek Perry (Vice-Chair)

Cllr Norman Cavill
Cllr Caroline Ellis
Cllr Andy Hadley
Cllr Steven Pugsley
Cllr Sarah Wakefield

Cllr Mandy Chilcott
Cllr Habib Farbahi
Cllr Ross Henley
Cllr Andy Sully

39 Apologies for Absence - Agenda Item 1

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Dixie Darch, Gwil Wren and Rosemary Woods.

It was noted that Councillor Mandy Chilcott was attending as substitute for Councillor Rosemary Woods.

40 Minutes from the Previous Meeting - Agenda Item 2

Resolved that the minutes of the Planning Committee - West held on 15 August 2023 be confirmed as a correct record.

41 Declarations of Interest - Agenda Item 3

There were no declarations of interest made by Members.

42 Public Question Time - Agenda Item 4

There were no questions from members of the public.

43 Planning Application 3/26/21/002 - Land North of Huish Lane, Washford -

Agenda Item 5

The Planning Officer introduced the application to the Committee with the assistance of a power point presentation. He provided the following comments including:

- Explained the reason as to why the original application was deferred was to assess the sustainability of Washford village and whether it met policy requirement.
- Confirmed that members should now consider this application afresh.
- Revision of initial site with omission of two units, application now proposed for 8 dwellings.
- History of refused application in 2019 for 14 dwellings.
- Highlighted the proposed access of the site.

He also referred to the key considerations and explained that Washford has been identified in local plan for future limited development and that the site was within walkable distance of local facilities. He also explained the proposal was deemed acceptable regarding impact on the setting of listed building, character and appearance of the area, the proposed access and associated movements on nearby highways and impact upon residential amenity. The recommendation was therefore for approval subject to conditions and a Section 106 agreement to provide affordable housing.

The agent then addressed the committee. Some of his comments included:

- Proposal would provide a sustainable development and in accordance with policy for sustainability housing.
- Referred to the deferred application and the reason to review Washford as a primary settlement that can now be demonstrated.
- This proposal has addressed concerns raised from the previous 2019 refused application.
- Noted no objections from technical consultees.
- Proposal will provide affordable housing.
- Help support the local facilities.

Cllr Mandy Chilcott addressed the committee to raise comments and concerns regarding the application on behalf of Old Cleeve Parish Council who were unable to attend the meeting. Some of these comments included:

- Disappointed that no further contact had been made with the parish council to seek further local views which would help to assist and demonstrate the sustainability of Washford village.
- Referred to a local survey undertaken which they believe demonstrates the

lack of local services available with high reliance on the car for travel with limited bus services.

- Did not consider Washford to be a sustainable location given the evidence gathered and that the Parish Council objection remained.

The Planning Officer responded to technical questions and specific points of detail raised by Members including:

- Confirmed that the Highways Authority had raised no objection to the proposed access of the site and explained the process of adoption of roads or future management. The internal road layout would be considered at the reserve matters stage.
- Explained how the local plan seeks to control primary and secondary settlement boundaries and whether the land is suitable and supportive of housing development subject to criteria being met.
- Confirmed the Section 106 agreement would look to secure three affordable units or significant financial contribution to deliver within the same catchment area.
- Clarified the width of the proposed access which is sufficient for passing vehicles and pedestrian access.
- Currently cannot impose or control zero carbon build, only to ensure buildings meet current building control requirements.
- Ultimately the developer would decide the most viable option whether to deliver affordable housing units or a financial contribution. In his opinion he felt it was more likely to be delivered onsite although this cannot be guaranteed.
- Policy does require sites to have safe and easy access and believe site is accessible and walkable to local services.
- Believe small controlled incremental growth will help sustain and benefit existing local village facilities.

During members discussion, comments raised included:

- Felt 8 dwellings to be an acceptable number on the site.
- Would prefer the delivery of affordable housing units onsite rather than a financial contribution which could be used elsewhere and not benefit the local area.
- Raised concern regarding the safe and easy access of the site.
- Acknowledged the concerns regarding sustainability but that there were no planning policy reasons to refuse the application.
- Believe the development would help and contribute to the future sustainability of the village.

In agreement with the Chair, the agent then raised two points of clarification being:

- That shared access was permitted under the Highway Authority guidance that can be adopted.
- Another nearby application at Williton would provide extra funding to help secure future bus services in the area.

At the conclusion of the debate, it was proposed by Councillor Steven Pugsley and seconded by Councillor Sarah Wakefield to approve the application as per the Planning Officer's recommendation.

On being put to the vote the proposal was carried by 8 votes in favour, 0 against and 1 abstention.

RESOLVED:

That planning application 3/26/21/002 for outline approval with all matters reserved except for access for the erection of 8 No. dwellings (amended scheme to 3/26/19/024) on Land north of Huish Lane, Washford be APPROVED subject to conditions as detailed in the Agenda report, and a Section 106 agreement for affordable housing to provide either a financial contribution of £487,038 in lieu of affordable housing on site or provide 3 discounted open market properties at 40% discount from open market value in perpetuity.

(Voting; 8 in favour, 0 against, 1 abstentions)

44 Planning Application 48/21/0042 - Hyde Lane Business Park, Hyde Lane, Bathpool, Taunton TA2 8BU - Agenda Item 6

The Planning Officer introduced the application to the Committee with the assistance of a power point presentation. He provided the following comments including:

- The site was a former chicken farm and was now used by a number of commercial businesses.
- It was proposed to demolish the old chicken sheds and replace them with one new L shaped building providing 5 new commercial units with a reduction in floor space and an overall height of 4.5m.
- On the advice of the Solicitor, an additional condition was proposed to control the future use of the new units

He confirmed that the recommendation was to approve the application with

conditions.

The Agent for the Planning Officer advised that the demolition of the old buildings and the replacement new building would visually improve the site. Both office and storage uses were allowed at the site and the applicant had accepted all the proposed conditions including a landscape strategy condition.

The Committee were addressed by the Division Member for the application. He said the site had been granted permission in 2006 for a chicken farm but had been used as industrial units for the last 16 years. He welcomed the reduction in height of the proposed building and said the removal of vehicles parked on the roadside would be a great improvement to the area.

He proposed that the application be approved including the additional condition to control the future use of the new units. This was seconded by Councillor Steven Pugsley.

The Committee were addressed by a local resident who welcomed the proposed reduction in height of the building but expressed his concerns about the operating hours, increased traffic with the additional units and suggested there should be a timeframe for the landscaping scheme to be completed.

The Planning Officer advised that as the site currently had no operating hours, it would be unreasonable to impose them now. The use of the units reflected the existing lawful use at the site of office and light industrial. He confirmed that an advisory note regarding screening the road frontage could be added.

During discussion, the following points were made by Members including:

- The hours of operation at the site were restricted to weekdays but the vehicle movements were not restricted.
- The planting scheme should be enhanced and strengthened as it would shield both sound and movement for local residents.
- The proposed modern building would reduce noise from the site and would be an improvement to the area.

The Solicitor confirmed that the proposal was an improvement to the site and it would be inconsistent to impose conditions where there were previously none when the proposal was a change to a recently approved regime and it would achieve other improvements in how the site operated.

On being put to the vote including the additional condition to control the future use of the new units with an advisory note regarding screening the road frontage was put to the vote the proposal was and carried unanimously

RESOLVED:

That planning application 48/21/0042 for the replacement of buildings at Hyde Lane Business Park, Hyde Lane, Bathpool, Taunton be APPROVED with an advisory note regarding screening the road frontage and an additional condition No. 20 to control the future use of the new units:

20. To control the future use of the new units the premises shall be used for Use Classes E(g)(i), E(g)(iii) and B8 only and for no other purpose (including any other purpose in Class E of the Schedule to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987, or in any provision equivalent to that Class in any statutory instrument revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification)

Reason:

In the interest of highway safety and to protect the amenities of nearby residential properties.

(Voting: unanimous in favour)

45 Appeal Decisions (for information) - Agenda Item 7

The Service Manager for Development Control introduced the report and drew Members' attention to the appeal and request for costs on land at Sweethay, Trull which had been dismissed by the Planning Inspectorate. She said it would have been an unusual development in a rural location and the scale of planting to screen it would have been unnatural and incongruous.

Councillor Sarah Wakefield noted that it had been a particularly difficult application and the proposed car parking at the site would have been inadequate.

At the conclusion of the debate, Members were content to note the report.

NOTED

(The meeting ended at 3.35 pm)

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CHAIR