

Minutes of a Meeting of the Planning Committee - West held in the John Meikle Room, The Deane House, Belvedere Road, Taunton TA1 1HE, on Monday, 19 February 2024 at 2.00 pm

**Present:**

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

Cllr Norman Cavill	Cllr Andy Hadley
Cllr Ross Henley	Cllr Steven Pugsley
Cllr Mike Rigby	Cllr Sarah Wakefield
Cllr Rosemary Woods	Cllr Gwil Wren

**Other Members present remotely:**

Cllr Tony Lock

**71 Apologies for Absence** - Agenda Item 1

Apologies were received from Councillors Habib Farbahi, Caroline Ellis and Andy Sully.

**72 Minutes from the Previous Meeting** - Agenda Item 2

Resolved that the minutes of the Planning Committee - West held on 23 January 2024 be confirmed as a correct record.

**73 Declarations of Interest** - Agenda Item 3

Councillors Mike Rigby, Derek Perry and Ross Henley all declared non-registerable interests in respect of agenda items 8 (38/22/0344) and agenda item 9 (3823/0103/LB), as the applicant was known to them.

**74 Public Question Time** - Agenda Item 4

No members of the public had registered to speak.

**75 Tree Preservation Order - 2 Jeffreys Way, Taunton - Agenda Item 5**

The Planning Officer presented the application and Members noting that the Eucalyptus tree had now been pruned successfully to the satisfaction of the objectors and without complaint from the owners believed that it was appropriate to confirm the order.

**Resolved:**

To confirm Somerset Council (Taunton No.1) Tree Preservation Order SC(West)5, 2023, 2 Jeffreys Way, Taunton.

(Voting: unanimous in favour)

**76 Planning Application 20/23/0045 - 19-20 Mill Meadow, Parsonage Lane, Kingston St Mary, TA2 8HL - Agenda Item 6**

The Planning Officer introduced the application to the Committee with the assistance of a PowerPoint presentation and highlighted that, following an appeal decision made the previous week, the first reason for refusal was no longer defensible.

The Legal Officer clarified that, on an appeal decision for an application in Creech St Michael the Inspector had concluded that the former Taunton Deane area no longer had a 5 year housing land supply. As a result, the LPA was now in the 'tilted balance' situation. NPPF Paragraph 11(d) states, that where the LPA does not have a 5 year housing land supply the Committee should only refuse a planning application if the harm significantly and demonstrably outweighs the benefits of the proposal. Consequently, as stated by the Planning Officer, the first refusal reason on policy grounds had been withdrawn from the Officer's Recommendation and the only reason for refusal now recommended was on the basis that the development did not meet the minimum space standards.

The Committee was addressed by the Parish Council, three Supporters, the Agent, and the Division Member, who all in favour of the application. One speaker, a RICS surveyor, stated that they had measured both buildings and that Plot 19 (a 2-bed house) and Plot 20 (a 3-bed house) both exceeded the minimum space requirements.

The Committee discussed the application and whilst there were some concerns the

over the conversion of holiday accommodation to domestic dwellings, it was commented that these were not isolated properties, being within the curtilage of the settled area, and that new housing, supported by the community, would make a difference to the Village.

In response to questions over the provision of affordable housing the Housing & Enabling Officer confirmed that a financial contribution was their preferred option and the amount had been generated using the Taunton Deane affordable homes housing calculator.

In response to questions the Planning Officer explained that she made the space calculations using the plan and scale provided by the Applicant and today was the first time she had been made aware of any other measurements having been made.

With the only reason for refusal being on compliance with the minimum space standards, it was proposed by Councillor Rigby and seconded by Councillor Hadley to grant delegated authority to planning officers to approve the application, subject to the properties' compliance with the minimum space standards, once they had been physically measured by a planning officer, and the prior completion of a S106 agreement to secure a financial contribution towards affordable housing. Officers were also granted delegated authority to impose appropriate planning conditions on the grant of the permission.

**Resolved:**

That delegated authority to approve planning application 20/23/0045 for the variation of wording to Condition No. 03 of application 20/06/0039 (Condition No. 01 of appeal decision - holiday occupancy) to allow full residential use of Plots 19 and 20 Mill Meadow, Parsonage Lane, Kingston St Mary be given to the Service Manager Planning West, subject to the dwellings satisfying the minimum space standards and the prior completion of a S106 agreement to secure a financial contribution towards affordable housing. That delegated authority also be given to the Service Manager Planning West to impose appropriate planning conditions on the grant of the said permission.

(voting: 6 in favour, 1 against, 2 abstentions)

Councillor Norman Cavill joined the meeting.

**77 Planning Application 20/23/0044 - 15-18 Mill Meadow, Parsonage Lane, Kingston St Mary, TA2 8HL - Agenda Item 7**

The Planning Officer presented the application and explained that, as per the previous application, as the LPA was currently in a 'tilted balance' situation the application was now recommended for approval.

The Committee was addressed by the Parish Council, two Supporters and the Agent all speaking in favour of the application. It was highlighted that it had been the Parish Council who had approached the Applicant regarding the change from holiday to domestic dwellings and that there was a suitable footpath into the village.

Members discussed the application and acknowledged that without any reasons for refusal it was appropriate to grant permission in accordance with the revised Officer Recommendation. This was proposed by Councillor Pugsley and seconded by Councillor Hadley.

**Resolved:**

That planning application 20/23/0044 for the Removal of Condition No. 05 (holiday occupancy) of application 20/05/0005 on Plots 15 to 18 Mill Meadow, Parsonage Lane, Kingston St Mary be APPROVED subject to and the prior completion of a S106 agreement to secure a financial contribution towards affordable housing and that delegated authority be given to the Service Manager Planning West to impose appropriate planning conditions on the grant of the said permission .

(voting: 5 in favour, 1 against, 4 abstentions)

The Committee adjourned at 3.15pm for a comfort break and Councillors Mike Rigby, Derek Perry and Ross Henley, having declared a non-registerable interest on the following two agenda items, left the room.

**78 Planning Application 38/22/0344 - Weir Lodge, 83 Staplegrove Road, Taunton, TA1 1DN - Agenda Item 8**

The Planning Officer presented the application and explained that at their 17 October 2023 meeting the Committee had resolved to defer the application with delegated authority being given to officers to grant permission subject to a suitable phosphate solution being found. The application was now back before the Committee because, although the Applicant was arranging phosphate credits through a third party, an agreement to secure the same had not yet been completed.

The Legal Advisor confirmed that an overarching legal was in the process of being finalised with the phosphate credit provider.

Two people including the agent spoke in support of the application commenting that there had been no changes to the application's planning merit and that a certificate for phosphate credits should be obtained within the next few weeks.

Members noting that they had previously granted permission subject to a phosphate solution being found, which was now imminent, felt that it was appropriate delegate approval to officers to grant permission subject to a phosphate solution being secured and the imposition of appropriate planning conditions. It was proposed by Councillor Coles and seconded by Councillor Pugsley.

**Resolved:**

That delegated authority be given to the Service Manager Planning West to APPROVE planning application 38/22/0344 for the demolition of outbuilding and erection of a 1 No. detached dwelling at Weir Lodge, Staplegrove Road, Taunton subject to the resolution of the phosphate issue and the imposition of appropriate planning conditions.

(voting: 6 in favour, 1 abstention)

**79 Planning Application 38/23/0103/LB - Weir Lodge, 83 Staplegrove Road, Taunton, TA1 1DN - Agenda Item 9**

The Planning Officer presented the application and the Committee heard from one speaker in support of the application.

Members discussed the application and felt that the replacement of the existing outbuilding with the proposed dwelling would be an improvement and that the application caused less than substantial harm. Consequently, it was proposed by Councillor Hadley and seconded by Councillor Pugsley to grant listed building consent once that the parallel application for planning permission had been granted.

**Resolved:**

That application 38/23/0103/LB for listed building consent for the Demolition of outbuilding and erection of a 1 No. detached dwelling at Weir Lodge, Staplegrove Road, Taunton (resubmission of 38/22/0345LB) be APPROVED once application 38/22/0344 has been granted permission.

(voting: unanimous in favour)

Councillors Mike Rigby, Derek Perry and Ross Henley re-joined the meeting.

**80 Planning Application 24/22/0053 - Land to the northwest of 32 Greenway, North Curry - Agenda Item 10**

The Planning Officer presented the application with the use of a PowerPoint presentation.

The Parish Council addressed the Committee highlighting their concerns that on an adjacent plot there had been an unauthorised Gypsy encampment and that the granting of this application may set a precedent.

The Applicant explained that the proposal was for the siting of two glamping pods and for grazing for horses. They had relocated the access onto Greenway rather than Oxen, to allay some of concerns raised.

Members, whilst acknowledging the concerns of the Parish Council, felt that there were no particular grounds for refusal and it was proposed by Councillor Pugsley and seconded by Councillor Cavill to grant permission in accordance with Officers' Recommendation.

**Resolved:**

That planning application 24/22/0053 for the change of use of equestrian land to tourism with siting of 2 No. glamping pods with amenity space, parking and EV points on land to the northwest of 32 Greenway, North Curry (resubmission of 24/22/0014) be APPROVED subject to the conditions listed in the Agenda report.

(voting: 8 in favour, 2 abstentions)

**81 Planning Application 38/23/0409 - 10 Greenway Road, Taunton, TA2 6LB - Agenda Item 11**

The Planning Officer presented the application with the use of a presentation and highlighted that this application was before the committee because the Applicant was married to a member of Council staff.

In response to questions it was confirmed that:

- The hours of operation for the dog grooming business would be conditioned to 8.30am to 5.30pm Monday to Saturday and at no time on Sundays, Bank Holidays or other Public Holidays.
- Whilst dog noise could not be conditioned it was considered that the bricks and mortar construction would provide reasonable sound buffering.

Consequently, it was proposed by Councillor Rigby and seconded by Councillor Pugsley to grant permission in accordance with Officers' Recommendation.

**Resolved:**

That planning application 38/23/0409 for the change of use of residential garage into dog grooming salon at 10 Greenway Road, Taunton be APPROVED subject to the conditions listed in the Agenda report.

(voting: unanimous in favour)

**82 Appeal Decisions (for information) - Agenda Item 12**

The Committee noted the appeal decision.

In respect of the 'tilted balance' position in the former Taunton Deane area, it was explained that each year the Council's housing land supply was reviewed. This was due to be done shortly, but given the Creech St Michael appeal decision, the review would now be expedited. As there were now more phosphate solutions available, Officers believed that when the review was re-done the Council would be able to demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply in the former Taunton Deane area.

**(The meeting ended at 4.33 pm)**

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**CHAIR**