

SWT Planning Committee - 26 May 2022

Present: Councillor Simon Coles (Chair)

Councillors Ian Aldridge, Mark Blaker, Ed Firmin, Steve Griffiths, Roger Habgood, John Hassall, Marcia Hill, Mark Lithgow, Craig Palmer, Vivienne Stock-Williams, Ray Tully, Keith Wheatley, Loretta Whetlor and Gwil Wren

Officers: Sarah Stevens, Sarah Stevens, Martin Evans (Shape Legal Partnership), Sarah Leete-Groves, Briony Waterman and Tracey Meadows

Also Present: Councillors Kravis and Rigby

(The meeting commenced at 1.00 pm)

1. **Appointment of Chair**

Resolved that Councillor Simon Coles be appointed Chair of the Planning Committee for the remainder of the Municipal Year.

2. **Appointment of Vice-Chair**

Resolved that Councillor Marcia Hill be appointed Vice-Chair of the Planning Committee for the remainder of the Municipal Year.

(Councillor Firmin arrived at the meeting after voting commenced so could not take part)

3. **Apologies**

No apologies were received.

4. **Minutes of the previous meeting of the Planning Committee**

(Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 28 April 22, circulated with the agenda)

Resolved that the minutes of the Planning Committee held on 28 April 22 be confirmed as a correct record.

Proposed by Councillor Hill seconded by Councillor Lithgow

The **Motion** was carried.

5. **Declarations of Interest or Lobbying**

Members present at the meeting declared the following personal interests in their capacity as a Councillor or Clerk of a County, Town or Parish Council or any other Local Authority:-

Name	Minute No.	Description of Interest	Reason	Action Taken
Cllr I Aldridge	All Items	Williton	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr S Coles	All Items	SCC & Taunton Charter Trustee	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr Mrs Hill	All Items	Taunton Charter Trustee	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr M Lithgow	All Items	Wellington	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr C Palmer	3/26/21/022	Applicant also on Minehead Town Council.	Personal	Withdrew from the meeting whilst debating and voting.
Cllr R Tully	All Items	West Monkton	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr B Weston	All Items	Taunton Charter Trustee	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr K Wheatley	All Items	Wellington	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr L Whetlor	3/26/21/022	Applicant's partner known to Cllr. Not 'fettered'	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr G Wren	All Items	SCC & Clerk to Milverton PC	Personal	Spoke and Voted

6. Public Participation

Application No.	Name	Position	Stance
14/21/0024	Mr C Moor	Local Resident	Objecting
	Ms C Sampson	Local Resident	Objecting
	Mr J Creighton	Local Resident	Objecting
	Ms M Stone	Local Resident	Objecting
	Ms R Randall	Polden Planning	In favour
	Mr R White	Miles White Transport	In favour
	Mr A Lehner	West of England Developments	In favour
3/26/21/022	Mr M Kravis	Applicant	In favour
	Mr I Duncan	Old Cleeve PC	Objecting

7. **14/21/0024 - Application for Outline Planning with all matters reserved, except for access and landscaping, for the erection of up to 28 No. dwellings with associated works, formation of access, landscaping, ground engineering and drainage works on land to the west of Derham Close, Creech St Michael**

Councillor Firmin left the meeting at 1.32pm

Comments from members of the public included;
(summarised)

- Concerns that the access to the site through the small gap in the hedge was not suitable for the construction of 28 houses;
- An alternative access route was needed onto the site for construction vehicles and maintenance of the commercial orchard;
- This was a family friendly estate for children who cycle and walk up and down the roads every day for school and to go to the park or play and we get many dog walkers if you allow the construction traffic to come through the estate damage will occur to vehicles and you could be responsible for someone getting hurt or injured from the construction traffic;
- Concerns for pedestrian with disabilities using the narrow footways;
- Environmental waste and emergency vehicle concerns;
- Concerns with increased traffic through the village;
- The proposed site was too close to the other houses;
- The access to the development was outside of the development boundary;
- Concerns with the effect on wildlife as this development cut across an existing wildlife corridor;
- Environmental concerns due to the canal being a haven for wildlife and supported so many species of birds and mammals;
- Concerns with light pollution;
- Concerns that the proposed Orchard was not wildlife friendly due to it being commercial not organic;
- Concerns with the proposal to dig through the children's play area for drainage;
- Concerns with the negative effect on the appearance of the existing estate;
- The local school was close to capacity and the local surgery oversubscribed;
- Concerns that this was a creeping development;
- Concerns with the loss of greenspace;
- The Parish Council and residents opposed to the application;
- There was no policy in the neighbourhood plan to state that you cannot develop outside of the settlement boundary;
- The development would not be more than two stories in height and would include some bungalows;
- This development would extend the existing green wedge and offer more green space than housing;
- The development was in a sustainable location with a mix of affordable housing;
- The site would be protected from further development due to the proposed planting to the west which would add all of the remaining land right up to the motorway with commercial apple orchards and a large screening natural tree belt along the motorway;

- No concerns with flooding as the development was 30m from the canal so not in the flood plane;
- The revised access arrangement was an appropriate and acceptable design given the location of the access on the level of the development proposed on the site this arrangement would enable vehicles pedestrians and cyclists to safely access the site and will assist in reducing vehicle speeds on Dereham Close;
- The mitigation strategy had been scrutinised by Natural England and Somerset Ecology Services which had their full support and approval;
- The development gives huge carbon gain biodiversity and a natural habitat for wildlife along with ground or air source heating;

Comments from Members included:

(summarised)

- Concerns with the lack of a 5-year strategic land supply and the Strategic Housing need in Creech St Michael;
- Concerns that we were giving access to 28 houses through a road that was only three metres wide;
- Concerns with the access routes for the farm vehicles when removing the apples from the orchard;
- Concerns with spray drift at certain times of the year. Commercial companies operating orchards put down a lot of spray several times a year and this was going to be very close to the houses;
- Concerns that any development on any land which is Greenfield was not going to improve things for the balanced ecological wildlife that existed there at present;
- An alternative access was needed for construction traffic;
- Concerns that this development was out of the development limits;
- Concerns with the affordable housing element to make the site viable;
- Concerns that an agricultural field was been removed from the food supply and the grade of the arable land;
- A proper bat survey was needed on the potential impact on the Horseshoe bats before permission was granted;
- Concerns that the mitigation proposal was consistent with SWT climate positive planning interim guidance statement on planning for climate emergency;
- A site visit was needed to see the traffic concerns for residents;
- Concerns that there were transport and accessibility issues along with cycle network problems;
- Concerns that the development was in the vicinity of rivers and canals and the need to protect trees, woodland, orchards, and hedgerows;
- There were 57 letters of objection from residents;
- The developer should be applauded for his initiative measures to the phosphate issues;

Councillor Hill proposed and Councillor Wren seconded a motion that planning permission be GRANTED. That authority be delegated to the Chair and Vice-Chair to grant permission, subject to a S106 Obligation to be completed within 6 months of the date of the Committee and an amendment to Condition 21 to require the construction traffic access for the development to come from the agricultural accesses that are identified within the land outlined in blue.

The motion was carried.

After this application a 10-minute break was proposed and seconded.

8. **3/07/22/004 - Listed Building Consent. Raising of rear chimney by 250mm, Lawford Farm, Stickle Hill, Crowcombe TA4 4AL**

Comments from Members included;
(summarised)

- The increased height would spoil the eyeline of the Grade II Listed Building;

Councillor Wren proposed and Councillor Weston seconded a motion that Listed Building consent be GRANTED subject to conditions.

The motion was carried.

9. **3/26/21/022 - Change of use of land with siting of 6 No. static caravans for holiday let use (retentions of works already undertaken) Caravan, The Blue Anchor, Cleeve Hill, Watchet, TA24 6JP**

Councillor Palmer left the meeting before the application was presented by the Officer.

Comments from members of the public included;
(summarised)

- The site was in a highly prominent location between the cliff edge and the B3191 with the cliff being unstable and gradually being lost to the sea;
- Temporary Rock Armour had been used to help the situation, but it had not solved the problem;
- Concerns with the works undertaken to site the caravans. This would add to the coastal erosion;
- No development should be permitted between the road and the cliff edge;
- The caravans spoil the visual amenity of the area;
- The site should be reinstated to its previous condition;
- The application was policy compliant;

- Concerns with the limiting conditions for occupation of the caravans;
- The previous site was just scrub land so now improved it looked better than it did 30 years ago;

Question raised by Cllr Wren

Cllr Wren stated that when he brought a planning application before the Committee of Taunton Deane as a Councillor, he was required to leave the room during the debate. Cllr Wren declared that the applicant who was until two days ago a member of the Executive was remaining in the room. He asked if he could he have a ruling on this from the Solicitor.

Response from Shape Legal, Martin Evans

On checking with the SWT Deputy Monitoring Officer and the rules around having a disclosable pecuniary interest and having taken no part in the decision relates to members on the committee so if you were a committee member bringing the application here then you play no part at all, however that is not the case for members who were not on the committee.

Comments from Members included; (summarised)

- Happy that this application was Policy compliant;
- Concerns with land sustainability;
- Concerns with the Landscape comments (in the update sheet);
- Concerns that the hardstanding for this site was probably aiding percolation which may assist with the instability of the land;
- Concerns that this application was between the road and the cliff edge;
- Concerns that the caravans would be permanently occupied;
- The caravans were not sustainable from a heating and Carbon Footprint opinion;
- No public transport available to the site;
- This application had a negative impact on the coast and landscape character and not suitable for the area;

Councillor Lithgow proposed and Councillor Hill seconded a motion that planning permission be GRANTED subject to conditions as per update sheet to read;

Amended Conditions

3. Remove the time scale from the 1st April-31st October so the condition would now read;

“The caravans shall be occupied as holiday accommodation only for 10 months in each calendar year.

The caravans shall not be occupied as a person’s sole or main place of residence.

The site operator or owner shall maintain an up to date register of the names of all occupiers of individual caravans on the site and their main home addresses, and the duration of their stay and shall make this information available at all reasonable times to the Local Planning Authority.

Reason to prevent permanent occupation of residential units within the open countryside”

The motion was carried.

At this point in the meeting a 30-minute extension was approved.

10. **Latest appeals and decisions received**

Latest appeals and decisions noted.

(The Meeting ended at 4.20 pm)