

Minutes of a Meeting of the Planning Committee - South held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Brympton Way, Yeovil BA20 2HT, on Tuesday, 23 May 2023 at 5.30 pm

Present:

Cllr Peter Seib (Chair)
Cllr Jason Baker (Vice-Chair)

Cllr Steve Ashton
Cllr Henry Hobhouse
Cllr Sue Osborne
Cllr Evie Potts-Jones
Cllr Martin Wale

Cllr Mike Best
Cllr Andy Kendall (left 5.55pm)
Cllr Oliver Patrick
Cllr Jeny Snell

In attendance:

Cllr Tom Power
Cllr Adam Dance
Cllr Tony Lock
Cllr Andy Soughton

Cllr Lucy Trimnell
Cllr Val Keitch
Cllr Emily Pearlstone

1 Apologies for Absence - Agenda Item 1

Apologies were received from Councillors Jenny Kenton and Dean Ruddle.

2 Declarations of Interest - Agenda Item 2

Councillor Jason Baker declared a personal interest in agenda item 8 Planning Application 21/03296/OUT as he is the Division member.

Councillor Sue Osborne declared a personal interest in agenda item 6 Planning Application 20/03277/FUL as she is the Division member.

Councillor Martin Wale declared a personal interest in agenda item 5 Planning Application 20/03725/FUL as he is the Division member and is known to the applicant.

3 Public Question Time - Agenda Item 3

There were no questions from members of the public.

4 Schedule of Planning Applications to be Determined by Committee - Agenda Item 4

Members noted the Schedule of planning applications.

5 Planning Application 20/03725/FUL - Land at Frys Cottage, Cuttifords Door, Combe St Nicholas, Chard - Agenda Item 5

The Planning Officer presented the application and explained the proposal was deemed to be acceptable in all regards except the location and sustainability due to safe access for facilities and services.

He then read out a statement from the applicant as they were unable to attend the meeting which referred to the issues of location and sustainability in support of the application.

The officer responded to technical questions and specific points of detail raised by members including:

- Significance of the nearby Mount Hindrance site which had been approved but the decision notice yet to be issued.
- Phosphates mitigation.
- Policy details regarding transport and sustainability.

Division member Councillor Martin Wale raised several comments in support of the application referring to the merits of the proposal.

Initially the Chairman proposed the officer's recommendation to refuse the application which was seconded by Councillor Jeny Snell. On being put to the vote this was lost unanimously.

As members appeared minded to approve the application the Chairman asked the officer to detail the required conditions. In response the Officer explained conditions would be needed for:

- Time limit
- Approved plans

- Materials
- Dwelling not to be occupied until parking spaces provided
- Location of EV charging point
- Tree and Hedgerow protection
- Package treatment plant
- Ecology

It was then proposed by the Chairman to approve the application, contrary to the officer's recommendation, as the location is deemed to be within an acceptable distance of facilities and hence within a sustainable location. This was seconded by Councillor Henry Hobhouse and on being put to the vote was carried unanimously.

RESOLVED:

That planning application **20/03725/FUL** be approved contrary to the officer's recommendation and subject to the addition of planning conditions regarding:

- Time limit
- Approved plans
- Materials
- Dwelling not to be occupied until parking spaces provided
- Location of EV charging point
- Tree and Hedgerow protection
- Package treatment plant
- Ecology

That delegated authority be granted to officers to agree the full wording of the justification and conditions.

(voting: unanimous)

6 Planning Application 20/03277/FUL - Land North of Broadway Hill, Broadway Hill, Horton, Ilminster - Agenda Item 6

The Planning Officer presented the application and referred to the late correspondence received and highlighted the key considerations. He noted there had been a number of public comments received raising highways concerns, however the highway authority had not raised any objections. The recommendation was for approval.

Five members of the public addressed the committee in objection to the application. Some of their comments included:

- Reference to highway safety including the volume of speeding vehicles, few

pavements, lack of street lighting and impact of increased traffic on the local road network.

- Impact on the local facilities including the education, health and child services. Local play groups and schools were already oversubscribed and therefore school places would likely to be needed to be sought outside the immediate area.
- Horton is a rural settlement, but the proposal is urban in nature and the scale of the development is out of character with the village.
- There is no public transport and concern of potential conflict with events at the village hall and future residents of the site.
- Questioned the reasons for approval of the application.
- Feeling in the village is overwhelmingly anti this proposal. Not anti-housing but this is an estate.

One person then spoke in support of the application and explained he was the owner of the site. Some of his comments included that this seemed a natural site to provide good quality housing and that they had tried to address local concerns.

A representative of Horton Parish Council and a representative of Broadway Parish Council both addressed the committee in objection to the application. Some of their comments included:

- Highways and traffic concerns especially when there are traffic issues on the A303.
- Believed a proper speed survey should have been undertaken.
- Understand that no traffic calming measures can be put in place due to the main road being an alternative route for traffic if Southfields is blocked, however there is no mention of this in the officers report.
- Questioned local housing need with Broadway already having consent for 60 houses close to this application site.
- Both Horton and Broadway have become 'dormitories' for the wider area.

The Agent noted the site had been identified by the council and brought forward due to the current shortfall in the 5 year housing land supply. Some of his other comments referred to the scale, infrastructure and education contributions and believed it to be a sustainable development in a sustainable location.

Division member Councillor Val Keitch asked for a refusal of the application as it was out of character of the local area. Some of her other comments referred to local education being oversubscribed, pressure on health services and additional traffic due to the size of the development proposed.

The officer responded on the points raised by the public speakers and later also on points of detail and technical questions raised by members including density and scale of the scheme, traffic and highway concerns and phosphate mitigation.

During debate various opinions were raised including:

- Concerns regarding sewage
- No public transport
- Size and design of development in this location.
- Co-existence of the two villages
- Highway safety concerns on the local roads.
- Overdevelopment
- Lack of five year land supply

Councillor Sue Osborne proposed refusal of the application on the grounds of design, scale and masses of development being out of keeping with the local settlement. This was seconded by Councillor Evie Potts- Jones.

During a short discussion another member suggested another point to add to the reason for refusal for overdevelopment. The meeting was adjourned for a few minutes so that the members could agree their wording for the reason for refusal.

On reconvening the meeting Councillor Sue Osborne read out the grounds for refusal as follows:

'The scale of 49 dwellings is too high for this site and location within a rural settlement. 49 new dwellings is overdevelopment in relation to the local facilities as is per SS2 and will encourage out commuting as the number of applications that have already been consented for within Horton and Broadway who do share facilities is well in excess of over 100 with more applications still in the pipeline behind this one.

It is also felt the design particularly by the access is inappropriate for this development and out of keeping with the rest of the village design style'.

Following a short discussion and clarification from the Planning Officer and Legal representative this proposal was amended and agreed to refuse the application on the following 3 grounds:

1. Scale of development
2. Design
3. Section 106 legal agreement not in place

On being put to the vote this was carried by 7 in favour of refusal, 2 against and 1 abstention.

RESOLVED:

That application 20/03277/FUL be refused, contrary to the officer recommendation, on the grounds of Scale of development, Design and Section 106 legal agreement was not in place.

That delegated authority be granted to officers to agree the full wording of the reasons for refusal.

(voting: 7 in favour, 2 against, 1 abstention)

7 Planning Application 20/03708/OUT - Land at Gold Well Farm, Yeovil Road, Crewkerne - Agenda Item 7

The officer presented the application explaining this was an outline application and referred to the key considerations. She also updated members that the reason for approval had been omitted from the report in error and she detailed the wording to members.

The Agent addressed the committee and noted there had been a reduction in dwellings following consultation, that phosphates mitigation had been agreed and no technical objections received from consultees. The scheme would contain 35% affordable housing, contributions to strategic facilities and would help deliver the shortfall in the housing land supply.

Division member Councillor Adam Dance referred to recent appeal decisions regarding the location and believed that some issues had still not been addressed. Some other comments included:

- Referred to the traffic survey being carried out in the school holidays which was unlikely to be a true reflection as the proposed access to this site was very near to the school.
- Local health and education provision being at breaking point.
- Noted 525 houses due to be built on the opposite side of the A30.

During discussion the officers responded to questions and comments made by members including how the health contributions were calculated. Some of the points raised by members included:

- Concern regarding access to the site and available parking for school related traffic.
- Do not feel like members are in receipt of all information regarding the access.
- Concerns regarding future education and health capacity.
- Impact on proposed future traffic schemes involving one way system and traffic lights at North Street and Ashlands Road.

The Chairman proposed to support the officer recommendation to approve the application which was seconded by Councillor Oliver Patrick. On being put to the vote this was lost by 3 votes in favour of approval, 7 against and 0 abstentions.

Following a short discussion Councillor Mike Best proposed to defer the application to enable the highways authority to attend committee and answer questions relating to highway and access concerns. This was seconded by Councillor Jeny Snell and on being put to the vote this was carried by 9 in favour, 0 against and 1 abstention.

RESOLVED:

That application 20/03708/OUT be deferred to enable the Highways Authority to attend committee and answer questions.

(voting: 9 in favour, 0 against, 1 abstention)

8 Planning Application 21/03296/OUT - Land South of Southmead, Perry Street, South Chard, Chard. - Agenda Item 8

This application was not presented or discussed due to lack of time – deferred to the June meeting.

9 Planning Committee South - Future Meeting Arrangements - Agenda Item 9

This item was not presented or discussed due to lack of time – deferred to the June meeting.

(The meeting ended at 9.25 pm)

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CHAIR