

Minutes of a Meeting of the Planning Committee - North held in the Sedgemoor Room, Bridgwater House, King Square, Bridgwater, TA6 3AR, on Tuesday, 13 August 2024 at 2.00 pm

Present:

Cllr Kathy Pearce (Chair)
Cllr Matthew Martin (Vice-Chair)

Cllr Brian Bolt
Cllr Hilary Bruce
Cllr Tony Grimes
Cllr Mike Murphy
Cllr Pauline Ham

Cllr Alan Bradford
Cllr Bob Filmer
Cllr Alistair Hendry
Cllr Brian Smedley

13 Apologies for Absence - Agenda Item 1
9

Apologies were received from Councillor Gill Slocombe who was substituted by Councillor Lance Duddridge.

Councillor Ben Ferguson gave his apologies.

14 Minutes from previous meetings - Agenda Item 2
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It was resolved that the minutes of the Planning Committee – North held on 14 May 2024, 11 June 2024 and 9 July 2024, being proposed by Councillor Matt Martin, and seconded by Councillor Tony Grimes, to be a true record of the meetings.

14 Declarations of Interest - Agenda Item 3
1

The following Councillors declared an interest in applications on the agenda:

Councillor Alistair Hendry declared an Other Registrable Interest in application 21/23/00023 as he was a Division Member for that application but had taken no part in any discussions and application 38/24/00001 as he was a Division Member for that application and also a member of the Axe Brue/Parrett Drainage Board but had taken no part in any discussions.

Councillor Tony Grimes declared an Other Registrable Interest in application 17/23/00064 as he was a Division Member for that application and had commented online regarding the application but he was not predetermined and was willing to listen to all sides of the argument and debate.

Councillor Bob Filmer declared an Other Registrable Interest in applications 21/23/00023 and 24/23/00018 as he was a member of the Parrett Drainage Board

but had taken no part in any discussions.

Councillor Pauline Ham declared an Other Registrable Interest in application 21/23/00023 as she was a Division Member for that application and had commented online but she was not predetermined and was willing to listen to all sides of the argument and debate.

Councillor Hilary Bruce declared an Other Registrable Interest in applications 41/23/00010 and 38/24/00001 as she was a member of the Axe Brue/Parrett Drainage Board but had taken no part in any discussions.

Councillor Matt Martin declared an Other Registrable Interest in application in 38/24/00001 but was not predetermined.

14 Public Question Time - Agenda Item 4

2

Details of public speaking are captured under the minutes of the appropriate application.

**14 Habitat Regulations Assessment for Planning Application 41/23/00010 Land at
3 Bristol Road, Pawlett, Bridgwater, Somerset, TA6 - Agenda Item 5**

The committee were presented with the Habitats Regulation Assessment for the planning application Land at Bristol Road, Pawlett, Bridgwater.

Members of the committee agreed that having considered the measures proposed to mitigate for any adverse effects, the proposed development would not result in adverse effects on the integrity of a European site. Councillor Tony Grimes proposed that the assessment be endorsed and this was seconded by Councillor Alan Bradford.

Resolved:

That the Habitats Regulation Assessment Report dated January 2024 and associated provision be endorsed by the Planning North Committee, as the competent authority. In reaching the decision to accept the Habitats Regulation Assessment, the Council considers that the proposed development, if approved subject to appropriate conditions and mitigation, would not have an adverse impact on the integrity of a European site.

(Unanimous)

**14 Planning Application 41/23/00010 Land at Bristol Road, Pawlett, Bridgwater,
4 Somerset TA6 - Agenda Item 6**

The Planning Officer introduced the application to the committee with the aid of a power point presentation. She updated the committee explaining that the Parish Council were adverse to the application but related that Pawlett was a Tier 3 village defined by Policy S2 of the local plan and was expected to provide adequate but basic level as a key service and facilities. They further explained that policy D35, of

the local plan is supportive of the proposals which provide or enhance community facilities identified in rural settlements, where there is a need. There is no longer a convenience shop in Pawlett following the closure of the post office stores.

The committee heard from 2 local residents who supported the application. Their comments included:

- Local residents wanted a convenience store on their doorstep as well as some other services such as hairdressing.
- Pawlett has no local shops and no premises suitable for local businesses within easy walking distance from the centre of the village and at least, 64% of local residents were in favour of this.

The Parish Council then spoke to the committee confirming their objection to the application.

The Planning Officer confirmed that the site is not within a protected landscape as set out in the definitions in the MPPF and it is in open countryside.

They further confirmed that Councillor Healey as well as Somerset Waste Services were consulted but they did not comment.

The Committee were addressed by the agent for the application who confirmed that the application was policy compliant providing local employment and benefits to the local smaller businessmen. She further pointed out that it would reduce the use of cars as the development provided residents with safe pedestrian access and a cycle path along the front of the site. It had been carefully designed and landscaped.

During debate, the Members commented about the access into the site being dangerous in terms of highway safety.

Following the debate, Councillor Matt Martin proposed to defer the application pending a site visit and receipt of further advice from the Highway Authority, which was duly seconded by Councillor Bob Filmer.

Resolved:

To defer the application pending a site visit and receipt of further advice from the Highway Authority.

(Unanimous)

14 **Planning Application 17/23/00064 Lloyds Bank Plc, Bath Street, Cheddar,**
5 **Somerset, BS27 3AB - Agenda Item 7**

The Planning Officer introduced the application to the committee with the aid of a power point presentation. She updated the committee explaining that site related to an existing private car park, located at the rear of the former Lloyds bank building. The car park was accessed via Lower North Street. The proposal sought to extend the car park, by changing the use of a former garden. The extended area was to be accessed by the removal of a 3.0m section of wall. The wall was not a listed

structure, however it was a historical structure.

The Planning Officer further confirmed that:

- The proposal did not seek to create a vehicular access onto Bath Street.
- The proposal would not result in a detrimental impact on the visual amenity, historic environment, highways safety and ecology.
- The proposal complied with the policies of the Sedgemoor Local Plan and policies of the Cheddar Neighbourhood Plan.

Somerset Council Conservation was not in support of the application because they confirmed that the wall was a historical wall within the conservation area of Cheddar. The wall appeared on the 840 tithe map. The wall defined a historic separation of properties.

The Committee heard from one local resident who objected to the proposal and commented that:

- There was a comprehensive school a few metres down from the proposed access point which was contrary to pedestrian safety.
- There was a very well used public footpath which began where there was an existing gap in the wall and went through to Punnett Close.

The Parish Council then spoke to the committee confirming that they were opposed to the proposal for two main reasons:

- The entrance to the car park was extremely narrow and there was a blind spot when exiting.
- There was a high concern for pedestrian safety.

During discussion, varying views were made by Members about the historic wall, pedestrian safety and access points. Councillor Alastair Hendry proposed that the application be granted based on the assurance that there would only be one access point and Councillor Matt Martin seconded the proposal. Further debate followed with Officers assurance that the access opening had been reduced from the original suggested 6 metre opening to 3 metres in order to minimise the impact on the wall. Councillor Matt Martin withdrew his proposal.

After further discussion by the committee it was proposed by Councillor Alastair Hendry to grant permission and this was seconded by Councillor Brian Bolt.

Resolved:

To grant permission subject to the conditions detailed within the officer`s report.

(For: 8, Abstain: 4)

The Planning Officer introduced the application to the committee with the aid of a power point presentation. There was an update to the report, published as a supplement, explaining that the red line was corrected.

During discussion the committee heard from the agent who explained that as there were no buildings on the 231 acres of land, the owner required winter housing suitable for modern day farming. The owner had also put a track in place to prevent the land from becoming rutted which was also beneficial to the walkers who tended to use the track rather than the footpath

The owner further required storage for hay, straw and provision for covered dung storage to prevent dirty water entering the water courses.

During debate, the Members commented on drainage, rights of way and the colours of the buildings blending into the landscape.

Following the debate, Councillor Alan Bradford proposed to grant permission, this was seconded by Councillor Alastair Hendry subject to conditions detailed within the officers report and with the additional condition that the colour of the materials should be agreed with officers to ensure that it blends in with the countryside.

Resolved:

To grant permission subject to conditions detailed within the officers report and with the additional condition that the colour of the materials has to be agreed with officers to ensure that it blends in with the countryside.

(Unanimous)

14 **Planning Application 24/23/00018 Land to the South of Brent Road, East Brent,**
7 **Highbridge, Somerset, TA9 - Agenda Item 9**

The Planning Officer introduced the application to the committee with the aid of a power point presentation. He confirmed that there were no updates to the report and explained that the Parish Council objected to the proposal.

During discussion, the committee heard from the agent who explained that his client wanted to live in a more permanent structure by erecting a bungalow in place of the existing static home. They had recently bought the land surrounding the site. They wished to replace the aesthetic home with a more robust energy efficient home.

After discussions by the committee regarding the flood risk assessment, septic tank and for the area to remain a gypsy and traveller site, Councillor Bob Filmer proposed to grant permission which was seconded by Councillor Alistair Hendry subject to conditions detailed within the officer's report.

Resolved:

To grant permission subject to the conditions detailed within the Officer's report.

(Unanimous)

14 **Planning Application 38/24/00001 Land (2) to the North of Load Pool, Othery,**
8 **Bridgwater, Somerset, TA7 - Agenda Item 10**

The Planning Officer introduced the application to the committee with the aid of a power point presentation. He explained that the Parish Council objected to the proposal.

During discussion, the committee heard from the agent who explained that the highway officers were satisfied with the proposed access arrangements. He further pointed out that there were no objections from the local flood authority in terms of flood risk as well as the no objections from the ecology officer regarding the proposed drainage strategy. Moreover, there were no objections from the Council's policy team, Natural England or the Environment Agency.

After discussions by the committee regarding the housing needs assessment report and sizes of the units Councillor Alan Bradford proposed to grant permission which was seconded by Councillor Alistair Hendry subject to the conditions detailed within the officer's report with the additional condition of plots 1 – 5, the units being self/custom build.

Resolved:

To grant permission subject to the conditions detailed within the Officer's report with the additional condition of plots 1 – 5, the units being self/custom build.

(For:11, Against 1)

14 **Appeal Reports - Agenda Item 11**
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That the committee noted the reports as detailed within the agenda for the Appeals Received and Appeal Decisions for July 2024.

(The meeting ended at 4.42 pm)

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CHAIR