

Minutes of a Meeting of the Planning Committee - North held in the Sedgemoor Room, Bridgwater House, King Square, Bridgwater, TA6 3AR, on Tuesday, 14 January 2025 at 2.00 pm

Present:

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

Cllr Brian Bolt
Cllr Ben Ferguson
Cllr Tony Grimes
Cllr Alistair Hendry
Cllr Brian Smedley

Cllr Hilary Bruce
Cllr Bob Filmer
Cllr Pauline Ham
Cllr Mike Murphy

9 Apologies for Absence - Agenda Item 1

Apologies were received from:

Councillor Gill Slocombe
Councillor Alan Bradford

10 Minutes from the Previous Meeting (To follow) - Agenda Item 2

The minutes from the two meetings held on 10 December 2024 would be approved at the meeting to be held on 11 February 2025.

11 Declarations of Interest - Agenda Item 3

Councillor Bob Filmer declared an Other Registrable interest as a member of Axe Brue Internal Drainage Board but had not taken part in any discussions.

Councillor Alistair Hendry declared an Other Registrable interest as a member of Axe Brue Internal Drainage Board but had not taken part in any discussions.

Councillor Matthew Martin declared an Other Registrable interest in Planning Application 33/24/00010 Rookery Retreat, Northwick Road, Mark, Highbridge, TA9 4PG as it was in his Division. Whilst he was aware of the application, he had taken no part in any conversations and remained open minded.

12 Public Question Time - Agenda Item 4

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

National Planning Policy Framework

Before the first Planning Application was discussed there was a short PowerPoint slide presentation from the Development Management Officer to update Members on the Revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

13 Planning Application 33/24/00010 Rookery Retreat, Northwick Road, Mark, Highbridge, TA9 4PG - Agenda Item 5

The Committee were presented with the application by way of a PowerPoint presentation. The Planning Officer updated the committee explaining that the application was for the variation of Conditions 2 & 3 of Planning Permission 33/18/00028 (Variation of Condition 2 of Planning Permission 33/17/00004 (Provision of new farm-stay tourist development consisting of the erection of 9 holiday cottages, associated landscaping, parking, access & ancillary agricultural buildings) to revise layouts of plots 2, 5, 8 & 9 to provide 3 bedrooms instead of 2) to amend the approved plans listed in Schedule A and to revise "farm stay" elements with change of use of consented calf building to ancillary store/rest area.

A Parish Councillor for Mark, Councillor Will Human, spoke in objection to the application highlighting:

- That the development consisted of significant dwellings, not just small holiday cottages, which could become upmarket housing.
- The Parish Council saw the minor changes as part of a plan to change the status of the properties to residential, which they viewed as an erosion of the original permissions.
- The original permissions included a farm stay link to protect the Greenfield site from becoming just another residential development.
- The Parish Council opposed replacing wood cladding with other materials, as it would not look as good.

Next to speak was Alex Sebbinger from Westward Planning Ltd, representing the applicant, TDI Properties, who highlighted:

- The proposal sought to amend farm stay elements, including a welfare facility for site maintenance and replacing the approved pig enclosure with a revised calf shelter and enclosure. All other farm stay elements would be retained which would be managed by Rookery Farm Creamery.
- The Parish Council's concerns were addressed by retaining all but one farm stay element. The loss of one element (pig enclosure) is not seen as significant enough to undermine the original business plan.
- The accommodation must be used for holiday and tourism purposes, which would remain unchanged by the application.
- The design and layout of the revisions were acceptable to the officers.
- The Drainage Board's condition regarding the emergency service road would be addressed.

After deliberations surrounding the provision of the farm stay elements, the conditions attached to that (condition 2 requiring provision of this) and the use of the holiday accommodation (secured by condition 3), Councillor Alastair Hendry proposed to grant permission, subject to conditions detailed in the Officer's Report,

which was seconded by Councillor Brian Bolt.

(Vote: For: 10, Against: 1, Abstain: 0)

Resolved:

To grant planning permission subject to conditions detailed in the Officer's Report.

14 Appeal Reports - Agenda Item 6

The Committee noted the reports as detailed within the agenda for the Appeals Received and the Appeal Decisions for December 2024.

(The meeting ended at 14:54)

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CHAIR