

Minutes of a Meeting of the Planning Committee - South held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Brympton Way, Yeovil BA20 2HT, on Tuesday, 27 August 2024 at 2.00 pm

**Present:**

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

Cllr Henry Hobhouse

Cllr Andy Kendall

Cllr Tim Kerley

Cllr Kevin Messenger

Cllr Evie Potts-Jones

Cllr Tom Power

Cllr Martin Wale

Cllr Mike Stanton(sub)

**Other Members present remotely:**

Cllr Oliver Patrick

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

Apologies were received from Cllr Mike Best (Cllr Mike Stanton as sub), Cllr Sue Osborne and Cllr Jenny Kenton.

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

Resolved that the minutes of the Planning Committee - South held on 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2024 be confirmed as a correct record.

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

There were no declarations of interest received.

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

There were no members of the public registered to speak at Public Question Time.

**23 Planning Application 23/03085/FUL - Centaur House, Centaur Services Ltd , Torbay Road, Castle Cary, Somerset, BA7 7EU - Agenda Item 5**

The Planning Officer presented the application as detailed in the agenda report and with the aid of a Powerpoint presentation to highlight key elements of the proposal including:

- Site location.
- An indicative masterplan.
- The applicant's key business drivers for the expansion of the premises.

She referred to the sole reason for the officer's recommendation to refuse being that the proposed development scale, bulk and massing, and monolithic shape of the development resulting in harm to the rural character of the area, contrary to policy EQ2 South Somerset Local Plan and DP1 of the Castle Cary and Ansford Neighbourhood Plan.

There were no members of the public in attendance or registered to speak online. The applicant, Simon Robinson addressed the committee and asked the committee to approve the application, contrary to the officer recommendations for the following reasons:

- 11 out of the 12 statutory consultees are supportive of the application including highways and the LLFA, and the only objection being from the Councils Urban Landscape and Design officer. He referred to the comments from the Urban Landscape and Design Officer which state that the principles of a taller building on this site is not objected to, but there are design aspects that could be given further consideration.
- Centaur Services Ltd are a key contributor the local economy, employing people in Castle Cary since 1981, and further expansion of the business is now needed to meet industry needs. Centaur Services wholly owns the site and plans to invest £30million into the local area.
- If this application is refused, Centaur Services Ltd will be forced to consider relocating the business outside of Castle Cary, resulting in job losses.

The Division Member, Councillor Henry Hobhouse, spoke in support of the development, and agreed with the applicant that the development would bring huge economic benefits to the town of Castle Cary. He also felt that the officer reasons for recommending refusal of the application are not substantial enough to outweigh the benefits as stated by the applicant, and that in response to the Urban Landscape and Design Officer's concerns regarding the size and appearance of the 16m high storage facility, this was unfair given the fact that a very similar structure had been constructed at a neighbouring manufacturing business.

Following the comments made by the Applicant and Division Member, members, members sought clarity that the application could be approved, subject to conditions related to appearance which could be agreed upon by the Applicant, Planning Committee Chair and Division Member, and were then content with the proposals put before them, and largely supportive of the application.

At the conclusion of the debate, it was proposed by Councillor Henry Hobhouse and seconded by Councillor Kevin Messenger to overturn the officer's recommendation on economic grounds and approve the application. When put to the vote, the proposal was carried by 10 in favour, 0 against and 0 abstentions.

## **RESOLVED:**

That planning application 23/03085/FUL for part demolition of existing building and erection of 16m hi-bay storage facility building and formation of additional car parking area at Centaur House, Centaur Services Ltd, Torbay Road, Castle Cary, Somerset, BA7 7E, be APPROVED, contrary to the Officer recommendation, subject to a Section 106 planning obligation to include travel plan obligations and appropriate conditions (conditions to be agreed between the Planning Officer, Chair and Division members).

Voting: Unanimous in favour

### **24 Planning Application 21/00503/OUT - Land Os 3346, Thorney Road, Kingsbury Episcopi, Martock, Somerset - Agenda Item 6**

The Planning Officer presented the application as detailed in the agenda report and with the aid of a Powerpoint presentation to highlight key elements of the proposal including:

- Site location.
- An indicative masterplan.

He referred to the key considerations being:-

- Principle
- Highway Safety
- Affordable housing
- Infrastructure contributions
- Phosphate Mitigation

The application was recommended for approval subject to prior completion of a S106 agreement as set out in the agenda report.

One member of the public addressed the committee in objection to the application. Their comments included:-

- Concerns around increased traffic and pedestrian safety on The Avenue.
- Concerns regarding the failing sewage system in the village.
- Concerns regarding who will be responsible for the maintenance and management of the proposed attenuation pond and pump.

The Chair invited Jack Clarke-Williams, an external Transport Planning Consultant to speak on behalf of the applicant. Mr Clarke-Williams addressed the committee with a verbal summary of the analysis that had been undertaken and reported that they had concluded that there are no concerns with the highways aspects of the planning application.

Four members of the public addressed the committee in support of the application, their comments included: -

- The development will provide a much need injection of new housing to the village, particularly affordable housing.

- The development will bring increased trade to the village amenities.
- The proposed development will improve pedestrian safety on The Avenue.
- There have been no known flooding incidents on The Avenue in recent years.
- There are generally no problems with residents being able to park outside their homes on The Avenue.

A representative from Kingsbury Episcopi Parish Council Cllr Ian Stanton addressed the committee and spoke to object to the application. He felt that the highways assessments do not reflect the state of the roads on The Avenue. He added that the new footpath proposal was welcome, but felt that the Flood Risk Assessment does not reflect the increased flood risk that this proposed new development will bring. He added that many local people do not approve of the proposed development but have disengaged with the consultation process in frustration.

The Agent, Mark Richards Greenslade Taylor Hunt then addressed the committee. He advised that the development is fully compliant with all Local Plan Policy SS2 in its entirety and therefore urged members to approve the application.

During the discussion, members sought clarity on the following points:-

- Access into the site is 6m wide which is more than sufficient for two lorries/vehicles to pass easily.
- Condition 24 secures that the road condition of The Avenue will get no worse as result of the development.

The Division Member, Councillor Mike Stanton, spoke in support of the application. He felt that the proposed access arrangements are satisfactory, the condition regarding road maintenance are acceptable, and that the development does address a real housing need in the parish. He concluded that he felt there are no strong planning reasons for the committee to reject the application.

One member felt that pedestrian safety on the access road into the site through the construction phase is a concern, but the Council's Highways representative reassured her that a Construction Traffic Management Plan could be included as part of the conditions of the approval.

At the conclusion of the debate, the officer's recommendation to approve the application was proposed by Councillor Tim Kerley and seconded by Councillor Peter Seib. When put to the vote, the proposal was carried by 9 in favour, 1 against and 0 abstentions.

#### **RESOLVED:**

That planning application 21/00503/OUT for outline planning permission and all matters reserved except for access for the erection of up to 25 dwellings, demolition of single storey extension to no. 18 and rearrangement of estate road to facilitate access between 18 and 19 The Avenue at Os 3346, Thorney Road, Kingsbury Episcopi, Martock, Somerset, be APPROVED subject to the prior completion of a Section 106 planning obligation and the imposition of conditions as detailed in the agenda report.

Voting: 9 in favour, 1 against, no abstentions.

**25 Appeal Decisions (for information) - Agenda Item 7**

Members noted the appeal decisions.

**(The meeting ended at 3.25 pm)**

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**CHAIR**