

Minutes of a Meeting of the Planning Committee - North held in the Sedgemoor Room, Bridgwater House, King Square, Bridgwater, TA6 3AR, on Tuesday, 10 October 2023 at 2.00 pm

Present:

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

Cllr Brian Bolt	Cllr Hilary Bruce
Cllr Bob Filmer	Cllr Tony Grimes
Cllr Alistair Hendry	Cllr Gill Slocombe
Cllr Brian Smedley	

In attendance:

Other Members present remotely:

Cllr Simon Coles

36 Apologies for Absence - Agenda Item 1

Apologies were received from Councillors Alan Bradford, Ben Ferguson, Pauline Ham and Harry Munt.

37 Declarations of Interest - Agenda Item 2

Councillors Hilary Bruce, Kathy Pearce, Gill Slocombe and Brian Smedley declared an Other Registrable Interest as members of Bridgwater Town Council but took no part in any discussions on applications 08/22/00194 & 08/23/00307.

Councillor Matt Martin declared an Other Registrable Interest as application 38/22/00011 was in his division but he took no part in discussions on these applications.

Councillors Bob Filmer and Tony Grimes declared an Other Registrable Interest in application 24/23/00020 as the application was within their division but have taken no part in any discussions.

Councillor Bob Filmer declared a Non Registerable Interest in application 33/23/00021 as applicant was known.

Councillor Filmer also wished to clarify that in respect of 33/23/00021, he was not pre-determined as he had not made comment on the application as stated within the report.

Councillor Gill Slocombe declared a Non Registrable Interest in respect of the following applications:

08/23/00307 as agent was known and that she was a member of the Somerset Nuclear Engagement Group

38/22/00011 as agent was known.

Councillors Bob Filmer and Alistair Hendry declared an Other Registrable Interest as they were members of the Internal Drainage Boards but took no part in any discussions in these applications.

38 Public Question Time - Agenda Item 3

There were no requests to speak on this item, but speakers registered to speak on each application are detailed on the Speakers List.

39 Planning Application 01/22/00037 20 Bath Road, Ashcott, Bridgwater, Somerset, TA7 9QT - Agenda Item 4

The application 01/22/00037 20 Bath Road, Ashcott for the erection of a warehouse, change of access and parking was not considered as the application had been withdrawn by the agent and closed down as a result.

40 Planning Application 08/22/00194 Land to the East of 6, Ashleigh Mews, Ashleigh Terrace, Bridgwater, Somerset, TA6 - Agenda Item 5

The Planning Officer introduced the application to the Committee with the assistance of a presentation.

The committee were address by the Agent who confirmed that the vehicular access was a civil matter but that there was legal access. The application sought to create a natural extension to the current terrace of houses and there was no adverse impact

on neighbours or amenity.

During discussion, it was clarified that the County Highways officer had recommended standing advice, which stated that one parking space should be provided. There was no space to provide such provision given the limitations of the site and so it was a judgement to be made by the planning officer, taking into account the benefits of the proposal and the shortfall of parking provision. It was considered that the site was near to the town centre and close to amenities and that the parking standard are only optimal.

There were further concerns raised by the local councillors due to the traffic and parking in the area.

Councillor Filmer requested that if the application was granted, an additional condition should be added in respect to biodiversity enhancements i.e. bird and bat boxes.

Councillor Smedley proposed that the application be refused on the grounds of lack of parking and over development and this proposal was seconded by Councillor Bruce.

Councillor Grimes then proposed that the application be granted with the additional condition relating to ecological matters and this proposal was seconded by Councillor Hendry as it was considered that although the parking was an issue, on balance there were no adverse impacts on the neighbours or amenity.

The proposal for refusal was then taken to the vote but fell as follows: For 3, Against 6.

The committee then voted on the proposal for Approval: For 6, Against 3.

RESOLVED:

That application 08/22/00194 for the erection of a dwelling at land to the east of 6 Ashleigh Mews, Ashleigh Terrace, Bridgwater be approved subject to the conditions detailed within the report and an additional condition for biodiversity.

41 Planning application 08/23/00307 52 North Street, Bridgwater, Somerset, TA6 3PN - Agenda Item 6

The committee were introduced to the application by the Planning Officer with the aid of a presentation.

He updated the committee as the description of the application, as within the report there was reference to 7 person HMO, this was incorrect and it was clarified that it should be 8 person HMO and Condition 3 would be amended to make this

clarification.

The agent spoke on the application stating that there was a known lack of single person accommodation due to EDF and although the Town Council objected to the proposal, the location was in a sustainable location and that the rooms were larger than the housing standards and had large communal rooms with gardens front and rear of the property.

Councillor Smedley expressed his frustration due to the number of Homes of Multiple Occupation within the town and the resultant lack of parking and overdevelopment of some areas; he therefore proposed refusal of the application on these grounds however this proposal was not seconded.

The committee then agreed that as there would be no change to the footprint of the property and that there was a need for 1 bed homes, this application should be approved subject to the change to Condition 3 to clarify number of occupiers of the dwelling.

Councillor Hendry proposed the granting of the application subject to amendment of Condition 3 and Councillor Bolt seconded the proposal (For 8, Against 1).

RESOLVED:

That application 08/23/00307 52 North Street, Bridgwater to change the use of the dwelling to an 8 person HMO be APPROVED as detailed within the agenda report with the amendment to Condition 3 stating that the property shall not be occupied by more than 8 persons and that there should be no further subdivision of the property other than that shown on the approved plan.

42 Planning application 24/23/00020 Rookery Manor, Edingworth Road, Edingworth, Weston-super-mare, Somerset, BS24 0JB - Agenda Item 7

The committee were updated on this application by the Planning Officer with the aid of a presentation. The Planning Officer confirmed that the report was incorrect as it had reported Councillor Filmer had commented on the application, however his comments related to the referral process and not the actual application and he apologised for this error.

The Parish Council spoke against the proposal as they considered that they had concerns regarding occupation of these properties, the flood issues and the use of a privately owned first floor in an adjacent property and no designated parking; they also requested clarification on the use of these units i.e. holiday lets or residential dwellings?

The Planning Officer in response to questions from the committee members and the Parish council confirmed that previous planning applications had removed Permitted Development Rights, holiday use conditions had been removed and the red line of the planning permission showed allocated parking spaces for these units.

Although the committee understood some of the issues raised by the Parish Council and local Ward Members, it was agreed that they could only consider the application as presented.

Councillor Hendry proposed the Approval of the application and this was seconded by Councillor Bolt (For 6, Abstention 3).

RESOLVED:

The application 24/23/00020 at Rookery Manor, Edington for the retention of a single storey side extension was APPROVED subject to the conditions detailed within the agenda report.

43 Planning application 33/23/00021 Orchard Cottage, The Causeway, Mark, Highbridge, Somerset, TA9 4QD - Agenda Item 8

The Planning Officer introduced the application to the committee with the assistance of a presentation and updated the committee on a late representation received from a neighbour who was objecting to the proposal as they state that their disabled daughter needed the use of their garden for her well being but limited information had been received. The Planning Officer in his presentation noted the Public Sector Equality Duty and the duty for Members to have 'due regard' to consider these issues in the planning balance. The Planning Officer confirmed that there would be a large gap between the proposed properties and the neighbouring dwelling and garden. This was an Outline application with all matters reserved and the principal of the scheme was the issue before members.

It was noted that an additional condition would be needed for an additional level for the properties for flood protection measures.

The applicant then spoke on their application stating that there was existing development around the site, that the proposal was for small scale development and for self-build dwellings, meeting Policy D9. She could not comment on the late representation as this had not been raised previously.

The committee debated the issues together with the Public Sector Equality Duty and were satisfied with the proposals and agreed that this would be ideal for self-build

dwellings.

Councillor Hendry proposed the approval of the application and was seconded by Councillor Filmer (For 8, Abstention 1).

RESOLVED:

That application 33/23/00021 for the outline permission for the erection of 2 dwellings at Orchard Cottage, The Causeway, Mark was APPROVED subject to the conditions detailed on the agenda report and also subject to an additional condition relating to flood refuge space to be included within the reserved matters application.

44 Planning Application 37/23/00054 Land North of, 2 Manor Cottage, West Newton Road, West Newton, Bridgwater, Somerset, TA7 - Agenda Item 9

The committee were introduced to the application by the Planning Officer with the aid of a presentation.

The Agent spoke on the application providing an overview of the application and mitigation measures

Overall the Committee supported the scheme.

An additional condition was proposed in respect to biodiversity enhancements i.e. bird and bat boxes. However, due to the erection of additional landscaping in the form of native hedgerows along the boundaries, this was not felt necessary.

Councillor Slocombe proposed the approval of the application and this was seconded by Councillor Hendry (For 8, Against 1).

RESOLVED:

That the application 37/23/00054 for the change of use of land to residential garden area and the erection of a detached garage at land north of 2 Manor Cottages, West Newton Road, West Newton, Bridgwater was APPROVED subject to the conditions detailed in the agenda report.

45 Planning application 38/22/00011 Land to the West of, Townsend, Othery, Bridgwater - Agenda Item 10

The Planning Officer introduced the application with the assistance of a presentation.

The committee were addressed by a local resident, the Parish Council and the Agent

in support of the application; comments that were made included:

- Houses proposed would be integrated with the adjacent dwellings but it was acknowledged that the site was just outside of the settlement boundary,
- The proposed footpath would assist local residents
- The village was linear along the A361 and it was considered that the proposal was a natural extension to the village, especially as there was another self-build dwelling being erected adjacent to this plot
- The Agent confirmed that the access would be via a current agricultural access and could easily accommodate the visual access needed.

During discussion, Councillor Slocombe proposed that the application be granted as it was considered that the proposal was well related to the settlement boundary, would be self build properties and therefore met Policy and would also have a benefit to the village with the new footpath proposed. This was seconded by Councillor Filmer and for conditions to be agreed with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the committee (Unanimous).

RESOLVED:

That the application 38/22/00011 for outline permission for 2 self-build dwellings at land to the west of Townsend, Othery, Bridgwater subject to any comments received from Natural England to delegate authority to APPROVE with appropriate conditions to be agreed with the Service Manager, Chair and Vice-Chair of the committee.

(The meeting ended at 4.45 pm)

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CHAIR