

SWT Planning Committee - 2 February 2023

Present: Councillor Simon Coles (Chair)

Councillors Marcia Hill, Ian Aldridge, Roger Habgood, John Hassall, Mark Lithgow, Craig Palmer, Vivienne Stock-Williams, Ray Tully, Brenda Weston, Loretta Whetlor and Gwil Wren

Officers: Alison Blom-Cooper, Sarah Stevens, Martin Evans (Shape Legal Partnership), Kieran Reeves, Gareth Clifford, and Tracey Meadows

Also Present: Councillor Rigby

(The meeting commenced at 1.00 pm)

100. Apologies

No apologies were received from Councillors. Councillor Habgood arrived at 13:15.

101. Minutes of the previous meeting of the Planning Committee - to follow

Minutes of the previous meetings to follow.

102. Declarations of Interest or Lobbying

Members present at the meeting declared the following personal interests in their capacity as a Councillor or Clerk of a County, Town or Parish Council or any other Local Authority:-

Name	Minute No.	Description of Interest	Reason	Action Taken
Cllr I Aldridge	All Items	Williton	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr S Coles	All Items	SCC, Taunton Charter Trustee & Shadow Taunton Town	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr Mrs Hill	All Items	Taunton Charter Trustee & Shadow Taunton Town	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr M Lithgow	All Items	Wellington	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr C Palmer	All Items	Minehead.	Personal	Spoke and Voted
	3/21/22/119	Further declaration added. Chair of		

		Minehead TC's Planning Committee. Did not speak or vote on the application.		
Cllr R Tully	All Items	West Monkton	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr B Weston	All Items	Taunton Charter Trustee & Shadow Taunton Town	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr L Whetlor	All Items	Watchet. Further declaration added. Correspondence received from a member of the public regarding application 3/21/22/119	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr G Wren	All Items	SCC & Clerk to Milverton PC	Personal	Spoke and Voted

103. **Public Participation**

Application	Name	Position	Stance
3/39/22/007	Mr N Leaney	Agent	In favour
19/22/0021	P Fowler R Fowler J Marks	Local Resident Local Resident Applicant	Against Against In favour

104. **3/39/22/007 Installation of a battery energy storage facility, substation, underground cabling, access, landscaping, biodiversity enhancements and ancillary infrastructure and equipment to include acoustic fence, security fence, CCTV and gates. Land adjacent to Gas Substation, Smithyard Lane, Williton**

Comments from members of the public included;
(summarised)

- Previous highway concerns had been identified and discussed with the highways department and therefore within the construction traffic management plan it is proposed that traffic exiting the site would be routed north to the B3190 and then back to the roundabout at the A39 by the junction by Tropiquaria Wildlife Park;
- All points raised at the meeting where the application was deferred had been addressed;

Comments from Members included;
(summarised)

- Concerns with the proximity of the gas substation to this proposal;
- Safety concerns with the storage of the batteries;

Councillor Hill proposed and Councillor Aldridge seconded a motion for permission to be GRANTED subject to conditions.

The motion was carried.

105. **19/22/0021 Erection of 1 No. self build, sustainable, carbon neutral dwelling with associated works on land adjacent to The Meadows, Hatch Green, Hatch Beauchamp**

Comments from members of the public included;
(summarised)

- There was a brownfield site within the settlement boundary for residential development that the applicant could use;
- Concerns that the development would be built on productive agricultural land outside of the settlement boundary which last summer was growing wheat;
- The village was small with no infrastructure and was reliant on the private car;
- The development would not benefit the overall housing needs of the community;
- The development did not meet the affordable housing criteria;
- Visual amenity concerns;
- This development would set a precedent, building on agricultural land outside the village envelope;
- The term 'affordable' was to demonstrate the commitment that this dwelling would be lived in by the applicant in perpetuity and the dwelling would not be able to be sold for anywhere near the market value, removing any concerns that we would sell at a later date.
- The development would make the most of the natural resources for energy preservation and consumption, as well as utilising waste timber from my business to provide a clean and efficient method of heating, the dwelling;
- An Orchard has been included to provide landscape screening but also has the benefits of removing phosphates from the decades of fertiliser which had been applied to the ground;
- Concerns that there were no self-build policy for the area;
- Concerns that self-build policies were not understood by the District Council as CIL was exempt from this type of development;

Comments from Members included;
(summarised)

- Concerns that the development was outside of the village envelope and against numerous Local Plan Policies;
- Concerns on the statement that this development would be affordable or protected in some sort of perpetuity;
- Concerns that this was not a sustainable location for this development;
- An interesting design, just in the wrong place;
- Clarification sought on what constituted a 'self-build';
- What other features does this home have to make it sustainable/carbon neutral;

Councillor Hill proposed and Councillor Weston seconded a motion for the application to be REFUSED as per Officer recommendation.

The motion was carried.

106. **3/21/22/119 Erection of a detached garage, widening of vehicle access and repairs to boundary wall (retention of part works already undertaken) Barn Cottage, Combeland Road, Alcombe, Minehead, TA24 6BS**

Comments from Members included;
(summarised)

- The development was in a Conservation area and seemed very tall;
- Further hedging needed to soften the impact;
- Concerns that this was a retrospective planning application in a Conservation area;
- Flooding concerns;
- Drainage issues;

Councillor Hill proposed and Councillor Whetlor seconded a motion for permission to be GRANTED subject to conditions.

The motion was carried.

At this point in the meeting a 10-minute break was proposed.

107. **Report on Somerset Council Statement of Community Involvement**

The report was introduced by Alison Blom-Cooper, Assistant Director, Strategy, Place and Planning, supported by Laura Higgins, Principal Planning Policy Officer.

The Planning Committee was asked to note the content of the report and feedback any comments on the draft SCI.

On the 18 January 2023, Somerset County Council Executive Committee approved a draft Statement of Community Involvement for public consultation. The draft SCI was produced collaboratively by all five Somerset authorities. The Consultation will take place between 1 February and 16 March 2023.

Following consultation, the intention is to then finalise the document to be formally adopted by Somerset Council as soon as possible following Vesting day.

Comments from the Committee included:-

- Stated that a list of development plan documents should be in appendix order so that you could reference it;
- Concerns were raised over the proposed public speaker arrangements proposed;
- Unitary concerns with planning applications not being heard by Councillors from the proposed area;
- What involvement will be there from Stakeholders. Will there be any involvement for them to have their say?;
- Pleased that acronyms in the document would be written clearly and concisely;
- Concerns that the current adopted plans would not remain adopted;

Resolved that the report be noted.

108. **Appeals Decided** – noted.

(The Meeting ended at 2.59 pm)