

SWT Planning Committee - 19 January 2023

Present: Councillor Simon Coles (Chair)

Councillors Marcia Hill, Ian Aldridge, Norman Cavill, Steve Griffiths, John Hassall, Mark Lithgow, Craig Palmer, Ray Tully, Brenda Weston, Loretta Whetlor and Gwil Wren

Officers: Alison Blom-Cooper, Martin Evans (Shape Legal Partnership), Sarah Stevens, Darren Roberts, Jo Humble (Lead Specialist - Affordable Housing), Briony Waterman, Simon Fox, and Tracey Meadows

(The meeting commenced at 10.00 am)

93. Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors Habgood, Stock-Williams and Wheatley.

Alison Blom-Cooper also sent apologies for the first half of the meeting. Councillor Cavill arrived at 12:23.

94. 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 N Cavill | All Items | SCC, West Monkton & Shadow Taunton Town | 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 |
| Cllr R Tully | All Items | West Monkton | Personal | Spoke and Voted |

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|----------------|-----------|---|----------|-----------------|
| Cllr B Weston | All Items | Taunton Charter Trustee & Shadow Taunton Town | Personal | Spoke and Voted |
| Cllr L Whetlor | All Items | Watchet | Personal | Spoke and Voted |
| Cllr G Wren | All Items | SCC & Clerk to Milverton PC. | Personal | Spoke and Voted |
| | | Additional declaration. Cllr Wren declared that he knew The Chair of Hatch Beauchamp PC | Personal | Spoke and Voted |

95. **Public Participation**

| Application No. | Name | Position | Stance |
|-----------------|------------------|--------------------|-----------|
| 42/22/0054 | Charlotte Brewin | Envison (via zoom) | In favour |
| | Olivia Davis | Boyer Homes | In favour |
| 01/22/0013 | Hannah Cameron | Agent (via Zoom) | In favour |
| 19/22/0022 | G Knight | Local resident | Against |
| | P Fowler | Local resident | Against |
| | J Fosssberg | Local resident | Against |
| | R Halliday | Local resident | Against |
| | S Comer-Jones | Local resident | Against |
| | A Cox | Local resident | Against |
| | S O'Dell | Local resident | Against |
| | R Fowler | Local resident | Against |
| | K Comer | Local resident | Against |
| | D Graham | Local resident | Against |
| | K Piper | Local resident | Against |
| | A Lehner | Applicant | In favour |
| R Randall | Agent | In favour | |

96. **42/22/0054 - Erection of a care home (Use Class C2) comprising of 68 No. bedrooms with associated staff facilities, access, landscaping, parking and associated works on land at Comeytrowe, Taunton**

Comments from members of the public included:
(summarised)

- This was a sustainable development to reflect climate change and to adopt a best practice approach to sustainable design and construction;
- The site offers benefits of being located in an area of low flood risk with good cycle and pedestrian access routes and public transport nearby;
- The development included a biodiversity strategy to enhance the existing ecological features a sustainable drainage scheme and a sustainable transport strategy including cycle parking and electric vehicle charging points and pedestrian and cycle links into the wider transport network;
- The scheme also incorporates measures to reduce water consumption, including specification of water efficient sanitation;
- The development will help to meet the local nursing and dementia care needs of the local community;
- The design of the care home has evolved to ensure integration with the wider development, helping to create a sense of place;
- The care home would create 100 new skilled and unskilled care jobs;

Comments from Members included:
(summarised)

- Pleased that the care home was near an open park area for the residents;
- Delighted that the orientation was in the correct place at the commencement of this development;
- The development would create a lot of employment in the area;
- Concerns with the lack of imagination for the overall appearance of the building;
- Concerns that the staff parking area seemed small for the area and that staff would park on the nearby employment road;

Councillor Hill proposed and Councillor Aldridge seconded a motion that planning permission be GRANTED subject to condition.

The motion was carried.

97. **45/21/0002 - Change of use and conversion of part of stable building into 2 No. units of holiday accommodation at Triscombe Vale Farm, Triscombe**

Comments from Members included;
(summarised)

Minimal debate was had on this application. Members were happy to support;

Councillor Aldridge proposed and Councillor Hassall seconded a motion for the application to be APPROVED subject to the signing of the S106 for phosphate mitigation and with the amendment to Condition 6 as per update sheet;

Condition 6 currently reads: A landscaping scheme shall be carried out in accordance with the submitted plans;

(i) The scheme shall be completely carried out within the first available planting season (1 October to 31 March) from the date of commencement of the development. Written confirmation of the completion of the landscaping scheme shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority;

(ii) For the period of five years after the completing of each landscaping scheme, the trees and shrubs shall be protected and maintained in a healthy, weed free condition and any trees or shrubs that cease to grow or are uprooted shall be replaced by trees or shrubs of similar size and species.

Reason: To ensure that the proposed development does not harm the character and appearance of the area;

Response received from Natural England: Natural England notes that your authority, as competent authority, has undertaken an appropriate assessment of the proposal in accordance with regulation 63 of the Conservation of Species and Habitats Regulations 2017 (as amended). Natural England is a statutory consultee on the appropriate assessment stage of the Habitats Regulations Assessment process.

Your appropriate assessment concludes that your authority is able to ascertain that the proposal will not result in adverse effects on the integrity of any of the sites in question. Having considered the assessment, and the measures proposed to mitigate for all identified adverse effects that could potentially occur as a result of the proposal, Natural England advises that we concur with the assessment conclusions, providing that all mitigation measures are appropriately secured in any planning permission given;

The motion was carried.

98. **01/22/0013 - Removal of Condition No. 07 (agricultural occupancy condition) of application 01/89/0006 t Burrow View, Ashbrittle**

comments from members of the public included:
(summarised)

- The previous building was sold off in multiple lots in 2017, since then the bungalow has been extended;
- The property has been on the market since 2021, priced at 20% the market value with no offers. This property would not be affordable for a farm worker even with the substantial reduction in the market price;
- There was no requirement on the unit for an agricultural workers unit as the previous building has been subdivided;
- The dwelling was no longer associated with an operational or viable agricultural unit;
- There was no demand for agricultural or other rural based industries in the locality;
- Concerns of the Parish Council had been noted;
- All policy criteria's had been met;

Comments from Members included:
(summarised)

- Concerns that the building had been moved out of the agricultural sphere by dint of its size;
- The unit had been used for an agricultural worker in the past;
- Concerns that the system had been exploited. Farm workers on low incomes would struggle to afford housing;
- The fact that the new owner of the sites does not require an agricultural tie to live on site did not alter the fact that we would be removing this property from the stock of housing in our area for agricultural or forestry worker covered by the Act;
- Sustainability concerns in an isolated area;
- Not convinced Policy H1a has been fulfilled;
- There was a need to prove that this type of dwelling was not needed for agricultural purposes in the area;

Councillor Wren proposed and Councillor Weston seconded a motion for the Application to be REFUSED against Officer recommendation.

Reasons: - The Local Planning Authority is not satisfied that there is no current demand for dwellings for agricultural or other rural based industries in the locality as no sufficient evidence has been submitted to demonstrate that the dwelling cannot be sold or let at a price which reflects the occupancy condition as set out in H1A;

The Local Planning Authority therefore considers that the removal of the agricultural occupancy condition would result in an open market dwelling, located in the open countryside which would be contrary to both national and local planning policy (National Planning Policy Framework, Rural Housing and Policy H1a of the Taunton Deane Site Allocations and Development Management Plan.
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The motion was carried.

99. **19/22/0022 - Erection of 8 No. dwellings (4 No. affordable), a local shop (Class E), public open space, landscaping, drainage, access and associated works on land west of Station Road, Hatch Beauchamp**

Comments from members of the public included;
(summarised)

- Concerns with sustainability from a transport view of the site;
- Concerns with Highway safety and parking issues;
- The development was outside of the village envelope;
- The development was not supported by the residents or the Parish Council;
- There was no leisure, employment or public transport in the village;
- Concerns with building on green spaces and agricultural land;

- Concerns with who will maintain the new Orchard;
- This development would set a dangerous precedent for farmers to sell fields for further development in the village;
- Flooding concerns;
- There was no support for the offer of the shop in the village;
- No facilities or infrastructure to support extra residents in the village;
- The development would fracture the community;
- No consideration for the noise pollution of the area;
- The development did not comply with Somerset's climate objectives and did not maintain the character of the village and would set a dangerous precedent;
- The recent neighbourhood plan indicated that there was support for a small increase in housing in the parish and wanted a shop in the village;
- Pleased that affordable homes were in the mix for this development;
- There was now a regular weekday bus service in the village, not constrained by school term times;
- The shop would also provide a café with outside seating as the nearby village;
- The community shop would not only provide everyday goods for local consumers but also provide a social hub for the village;
- This development provided the only prospect of affordable housing which the current neighbourhood plan did not provide;
- The new foot paths and orchard would improve the village;
- The site was fully phosphate neutral;
- The shop would be within easy walking distance of most of the village;
- The properties would all be carbon neutral with solar panels if planning permitted;
- No other SHLAA sites have come forward for this development despite the preference for brown field land;

Comments from Members included:

(summarised)

- Villages like this need to regenerate to keep themselves alive;
- Concerns that it was a good scheme but the scale was too big to deliver;
- Concerns with the 'gifting of the shop';
- Concerns that this development was outside of the village envelope;
- Concerns that no viability has been supplied or requested;
- Viability concerns for the shop to run appropriately;
- Drainage and run off concerns on the site;
- Clarification needed on the footpath being registered as a public right of way;
- Concerns that this was not the best location for a village shop;
- Concerns with the maintenance of the orchard;
- What other proposals were there for on-site power generation and vehicle charging points;
- How would the play equipment be accessed by the young children from this site and elsewhere;

- Clarification needed on the suggested £100 monitoring fee, what will be monitored and by who;
- The village needs to be allowed to expand naturally to survive;
- This development was in the open countryside and should not come at a cost of an up-to-date settlement strategy or the character and appearance of the area;
- The development should be 100% affordable housing;

Councillor Tully proposed and Councillor Hill seconded a motion for the application to be GRANTED. That motion was lost.

Councillor Wren proposed and Councillor Lithgow seconded a motion for the application to be REFUSED against Officer recommendation.

Reasons –

Refused as per reasons 1 and 2 from the Planning meeting on the 10 December 2019.

- 1. The proposal would result in the provision of 8 dwellings, in open countryside beyond the settlement boundary of Hatch Beauchamp. Hatch Beauchamp is classified as a village within the adopted Taunton Deane Core Strategy development hierarchy. This designation reflects the limited range of services available within the village, its poor public transport connectivity, the inevitable reliance upon the private motor vehicle that would result and its general unsustainability as a location for significant new residential development. As a result, the proposal is contrary to policies SP1 (Sustainable Development Locations) and CP6 (Transport Accessibility) of the adopted Taunton Deane, 2011 – 2028. It is also contrary to the provisions of section 5 ('Delivering a sufficient supply of homes'), particularly the section on 'rural housing' and paragraph 78, of the National Planning Policy Framework, as revised in February 2019.

- 2. The level of open market housing required to cross subsidise the delivery of 4 affordable dwellings on this rural exception site has not been demonstrated to the satisfaction of the authority and is therefore contrary to Core Strategy Policy DM2; the provisions of the Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (Section 1.10 Exception sites) and para. 77 of the National Planning Policy Framework. It would result in the provision of 4 open market dwellings, in addition to the 4 affordable dwellings, in open countryside beyond the settlement boundary of Hatch Beauchamp. Hatch Beauchamp is classified as a village within the adopted Taunton Deane Core Strategy development hierarchy. This designation reflects the limited range of services available within the village, its poor public transport connectivity and general unsustainability as a location for significant new residential development.

Additional reason regarding drainage will be supplied by the Officer.

The motion was carried.

(The Meeting ended at 1.08 pm)