

PLANNING COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting held

Wednesday 7th May 2025, 11.00 am

Councillors: Ian Halsall (Chair), Lucy Hodge (Vice-Chair), Colin Blackburn, Paul Crossley, Fiona Gourley, Hal MacFie, Duncan Hounsell, Toby Simon, Shaun Hughes and Dr Eleanor Jackson

114 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Democratic Services Officer read out the emergency evacuation procedure.

115 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Cllr Duncan Hounsell was substituting for Cllr Deborah Collins who had submitted apologies for absence.

Cllr Colin Blackburn was substituting for Cllr Tim Warren who had submitted apologies for absence.

116 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

117 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

Cllr Ian Halsall announced that this would be his last meeting as Chair of the Planning Committee and thanked the Committee and officers for their support.

The Committee thanked Cllr Halsall for chairing the Planning Committee during the 2024-25 municipal year.

118 ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC

The Democratic Services Officer informed the meeting of the process for public speakers to address the Committee.

119 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 9 April 2025 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

120 SITE VISIT LIST - APPLICATIONS FOR PLANNING PERMISSION ETC FOR DETERMINATION BY THE COMMITTEE

The Case Officer introduced the report which considered an application for the reconfiguration and alteration of an existing dwelling, including a single storey

extension to the north of the property, and an additional storey of first floor bedroom accommodation to replace existing pitched roof of a chalet bungalow. The application had been deferred from the previous meeting pending a visit to the site.

The Case Officer confirmed the officers' recommendation that the application be permitted subject to the conditions set out in the report.

The following public representations were received:

1. Graeme Robinson, on behalf of local residents, objecting to the application.
2. Sasha Berezina, agent, supporting the application.

In response to Members' questions, it was confirmed:

1. There was no specific definition of over-development, but a judgement was made on the amount of space, proximity to neighbours and amenity space. It was the officer's view that this application did not constitute over-development.
2. The increase in ridge height was 0.7m and officers considered this to be acceptable.
3. The volume increase had not been calculated as the application was not in the green belt.
4. There would not be any windows on the single storey extension facing the neighbouring property, Willow House to the north of the site. There would be new dormer windows as part of the development, but it was not considered that these would result in overlooking due to the distances from other properties.
5. The application was considered to be a sensitive design and not out of keeping with the surrounding area.
6. Officers did not consider screening was necessary, but the Committee could take a different view and agree to include an additional condition.
7. There was no Neighbourhood Plan for this area.

Cllr Toby Simon opened the debate, he confirmed that the site visit had been helpful and concluded that the development would sit well in the plot. He moved the officers' recommendation to permit the application. This was seconded by Cllr Duncan Hounsell.

Following comments raised by other members, Cllr Toby Simon agreed to amend his motion to delegate officers to permit the application, subject to giving consideration to including a condition requiring the screening of the development. Cllr Duncan Hounsell confirmed that he would support this change as seconder of the motion.

Cllr Paul Crossley spoke against the motion due to the loss of green space and impact on wildlife and expressed the view that the application was an over development of the site.

Cllr Shaun Hughes concurred with these views and agreed with the concerns raised by the Parish Council.

Cllr Colin Blackburn also expressed concerns about the impact on residential amenity and increase in ridge height.

On voting for the motion, it was CARRIED (7 in favour and 3 against).

RESOLVED that officers be delegated to permit the development subject to the

conditions set out in the report and consideration of whether it would be appropriate to include an additional condition relating to screening of the site to protect residential amenity.

121 **MAIN PLANS LIST - APPLICATIONS FOR PLANNING PERMISSION ETC FOR DETERMINATION BY THE COMMITTEE**

1. 24/03831/FUL - Pines Way, Westmoreland, Bath

The Case Officer introduced the report which considered an application for the redevelopment of the site to provide residential dwellings (Class C3), shared living (Sui Generis), flexible commercial floorspace (Use Class E), amenity space, car and cycle parking provision, with pedestrian and vehicular access, servicing arrangements, public realm works, landscaping and associated works.

She confirmed the officers' recommendation that officers be delegated to permit the application subject to:

(1) Authorising the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to enter into a Section 106 Agreement to cover the following:

1. Affordable Housing/Commuted Sum of £1,000,000 commuted sum.
2. Contribution towards Fire Hydrants.
3. Contribution of £33,275 towards Targeted Training and Recruitment.
4. Travel Plan bond of £37,100 over 5 years plus the monitoring fee of £4,775.
5. Reasonable but commercially prudent endeavours to secure a cycle route access via Crest Nicholson Land to the west of the site.
6. Contribution of £897,837 towards Parks and Recreation.
7. Contribution of £367,245 towards the Council's carbon offsetting fund.
8. Monitoring fees contribution £486 per obligation.

(2) the conditions set out in the report, or such conditions as may be appropriate.

The following public representations were received:

1. Victoria Manston, applicant, speaking in support of the application.

In response to Members' questions, it was confirmed:

1. The previous planning application and subsequent appeal decision, although no longer extant, was a material consideration as the Inspector had set out parameters for developing the site including building heights, massing and materials.
2. The previous application would not be a fallback position as it was no longer extant.
3. The Committee also needed to take tilted balance into account as the Council no longer had a 5-year land supply for housing.
4. There were wheelchair accessible flats included as part of the development. In addition, the developer had consulted a charity to advise on site accessibility for visually impaired people.
5. Historic England had not formally submitted the application to UNESCO. Minor amendments had been made to the roofscape to address original comments. The latest consultation response from Historic England was that the proposed

- development would be at the lower end of the scale of less than significant harm.
6. In relation to the weight given to the comments of Bath Preservation Trust, officers had concluded that there was less than substantial heritage harm and this was outweighed by the public benefits of the scheme which would provide housing on a brownfield site allocated for housing.
 7. There were mitigations in place to prevent south facing bedrooms from getting too hot including Passivhaus design measures and solar controlled glass.
 8. It was not considered appropriate to include further safeguards to prevent students living in the accommodation. The development was not purpose-built student accommodation but students could choose to live in any build to rent scheme. Marketing would not be directed at students. If there was a high level of students living in the development, this would result in a change of use.
 9. The self-contained units for co-living would have individual kitchen and bathrooms in addition to shared areas.
 10. There had been a lot of discussions around brick colour and the Conservation Officer had agreed the red brick was acceptable as a link with the strong industrial heritage of the site.
 11. The details of the £1m commuted sum would be agreed as part of the Section 106 Agreement, but it was likely that the sum would be required at the pre-occupation stage. The sum was arrived at as part of the viability assessment which had been tested by independent assessors and discussed at length with the Council's housing team.
 12. The sizes of rooms in the build-to-rent accommodation complied with the required standards and some were larger than the standard.
 13. There was 1 car club space included as part of the development; any additional car club spaces would need to be commercially viable. It was unlikely that residents of the new development would be eligible to apply for residents parking permits for zones outside the site.

Cllr Ian Halsall opened the debate as ward Councillor. He confirmed that he had not received any representations from local residents and that there had been a good level of public engagement. He expressed the view that it was a good location in terms of sustainability, it would attract a diverse mix of residents and there had been a lot of discussions around design.

As adjacent ward Councillor, Cllr Colin Blackburn confirmed that public engagement had been good and expressed the view that the shared living option would encourage young professionals to stay in the area which would benefit local employment.

Cllr Fiona Gourley referred to the work being led by previous councillor, Neil Butters, to commemorate the railway heritage of the site and requested that the developers engage with the project to celebrate the industrial heritage of the site.

Cllr Paul Crossley stated that the scheme was well thought through and had been adapted and modified to address concerns. He moved the recommendation to give delegated authority to officers to permit the application. This was seconded by Cllr Duncan Hounsell.

Cllr Lucy Hodge referred to landscape design proposals and requested that priority be given to people over vehicles in finalising the designs.

On voting for the motion, it was CARRIED (10 in favour and 0 against - unanimous).

RESOLVED that that officers be delegated to permit the application subject to:

(1) Authorising the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to enter into a Section 106 Agreement to cover the following:

1. Affordable Housing/Commutated Sum of £1,000,000 commuted sum.
2. Contribution towards Fire Hydrants.
3. Contribution of £33,275 towards Targeted Training and Recruitment.
4. Travel Plan bond of £37,100 over 5 years plus the monitoring fee of £4,775.
5. Reasonable but commercially prudent endeavours to secure a cycle route access via Crest Nicholson Land to the west of the site.
6. Contribution of £897,837 towards Parks and Recreation.
7. Contribution of £367,245 towards the Council's carbon offsetting fund.
8. Monitoring fees contribution £486 per obligation.

(2) the conditions set out in the report, or such conditions as may be appropriate.

2. 24/03894/FUL - Parcel 2882, Water Lane, Paulton, Bristol

The Planning Officer introduced the report which considered an application for the temporary installation of a ground-mounted solar photovoltaic (PV) farm with battery storage along with continued agricultural use, ancillary infrastructure and security fencing, landscaping provision, ecological enhancements and associated works.

She confirmed the officers' recommendation that the application be permitted subject to the conditions set out in the report.

The following public representations were received:

1. Jane Lewis and Richard Slater, local resident, objecting to the application.
2. Chloe Brown, agent and Callum Wright, applicant, supporting the application.

Cllr Liz Hardman was in attendance as adjacent ward Councillor and read a statement on behalf of herself, Cllr Grant Johnson and Paulton Parish Council summarised as below:

1. Support in principle and understand the need for solar farms.
2. Welcome the mitigations particularly around impact of noise.
3. Concern in relation to the access to the site, especially during the construction period.
4. Questioned whether the money offered by the applicant to benefit the community would be enough and further information was required on how this would be split between parishes.
5. Overall, the advantages outweighed the disadvantages and with the proposed mitigations the application should be approved.

In response to Members' questions, it was confirmed:

1. The land was graded as 3a agricultural land and was not protected under policy (which protected grades 1 and 2).
2. The access to the site had been considered in detail and there would be a one-way delivery system in place during the construction phase.

3. The mitigation for Field D which was positioned next to residential development was the existing hedgerow which would provide screening. There would be a change in outlook but not significant harm.
4. The site had been assessed by an archaeological expert.
5. The land could be used for grazing and would return to agricultural land at end of the permission.
6. Avon Fire and Rescue Service had been consulted and did not raise any comments. Fire appliances could access the site and there was specific legislation and guidance from the fire service in relation to the storage of the equipment.
7. The energy could not be isolated for the use of the local community and would feed into the national grid. Significant weight was given to the production of green energy.
8. In terms of preventing vandalism, Avon and Somerset Police had given advice on designing out crime.
9. A Landscape Sensitivity Assessment had previously been carried out to provide guidance for best location for solar developments which scored areas in the district. This site had a low score due to landscaping, but this did not preclude it as a site as long as there were mitigations.
10. Consideration could be given to more mature planting so that there wasn't a 10 year wait for landscaping to screen the development.
11. In terms of construction traffic, there was a commitment in the transport statement to avoid peak hours.
12. The 45-year timeline was likely to relate to the life of the equipment.

Cllr Shaun Hughes opened the debate as ward Councillor. He stated that he did not think the site was suitable as it was grade 3a agricultural land; access was via a single-track lane; and there would be an impact on visual amenity as the site would not be screened until the landscaping matured. He recommended that the Committee undertake a site visit before making a decision. He also expressed concern about recent fires at similar sites.

Cllr Eleanor Jackson also expressed concern about the location, and particularly Field D which was sited next to residential dwellings.

Cllr Duncan Hounsell referred to the importance of this type of application and the Council's commitment to addressing the climate emergency. He stated that he was minded to support the application and also commented that regular access to the site would not be required once the site was constructed.

Cllr Lucy Hodge spoke in support of the value of solar farms but shared concerns about the screening mitigation not being effective until after 10 years. She moved that a decision be deferred pending a visit to the site. This was seconded by Cllr Fiona Gourley.

On voting for the motion, it was CARRIED (6 in favour and 2 against and 2 abstentions).

RESOLVED that a decision be deferred pending a site visit.

3. 24/02841/FUL - Little Horse Croft Farm, Ford Road, Wellow

The Case Officer introduced the report which considered an application for the retention of contractors' compound as additional agricultural hardstanding.

She confirmed the officers' recommendation that the application be permitted subject to the conditions set out in the report.

The following public representations were received:

1. Michael Clarkson, Wellow Parish Council, objecting to the application.
2. Frank Shellard, applicant, supporting the application.

In response to Members' questions, it was confirmed:

1. Officers were satisfied the use was agricultural. The barns were used for storing tractors and farm machinery.
2. Wessex Water had not removed the hardstanding pending the outcome of the planning application which had been submitted before the hardstanding needed to be removed.
3. The application would remove the need for vehicles associated with the development site to park on the verge.

Cllr Fiona Gourley opened debate as ward councillor and spoke in support of the application.

Cllr Paul Crossley moved the officer recommendation to permit the application. This was seconded by Cllr Toby Simon.

On voting for the motion, it was CARRIED (10 in favour and 0 against - unanimous).

RESOLVED that permission be granted subject to the conditions set out in the report.

4. 24/04465/FUL - The Hollies, Charlton Road, Keynsham, Bath And North East Somerset

The Case Officer introduced the report which considered an application for the subdivision of land and conversion of existing residential annexe to a dwelling.

He confirmed the officers' recommendation that the application be permitted subject to the conditions set out in the report.

There were no public speakers.

In response to Members' questions, it was confirmed:

1. There was no vehicular access, but the site was in a sustainable location. If a future occupier had a car, they would need to park off site.
2. The entrance to the site was not constrained by the location of a lamppost.
3. The dwelling was discreet in terms of character and appearance.
4. It would not be reasonable to include a condition to prevent the dwelling being used as an Air BnB as this was currently classed in the same category of use as a residential dwelling.
5. The application was policy compliant, but if not, tilted balance would be engaged in view of the Council not having a 5-year land supply for housing.

6. In relation to the condition attached to the previous consent which stated the dwelling should be restricted to ancillary use due to the impact on residential amenity, there was no longer considered to be an issue as the windows on the north of the existing annex would be removed as part of the development.
7. The site could be accessed by emergency vehicles and this would have been assessed as part of the building regulations when the annex was built.
8. The pedestrian access would be used to move bins and recycling containers to the road for collection.

Cllr Duncan Hounsell opened the debate and referred to the unique location of the site which was a short walk away from bus stops, the railway station and facilities in Keynsham High Street. He also stated the need to maximise the use of housing stock and moved the officer's recommendation to permit the application. This was seconded by Cllr Hal MacFie.

Cllr Paul Crossley expressed the view that a more robust policy was needed in relation to backland developments and the reduction of green space and subsequent impact on wildlife.

On voting for the motion, it was CARRIED (7 in favour, 3 against).

RESOLVED that permission be granted subject to the conditions set out in the report.

122 **NEW PLANNING APPEALS LODGED, DECISIONS RECEIVED AND DATES OF FORTHCOMING HEARINGS/INQUIRIES**

Cllr Toby Simon requested further information in relation to the appeal 20/00001/HHEDGE. Cllr Duncan Hounsell expressed concern about the length of time taken to make a decision due to the impact on neighbouring properties, but advised that the height of the leylandii would now be reduced at the instruction of the Inspector.

Cllr Lucy Hodge noted that the Planning Inspector had dismissed the appeal in relation to 23/03610/FUL which had been refused by Planning Committee.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

123 **QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REPORT: 1 JAN - 31 MAR 2025**

In response to questioning about up-to-date information in relation to the Council's lack of a 5-year land supply for housing, the Team Manager – Development Management confirmed that an interim statement was being prepared and would be published on the Council's website.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

The meeting ended at 4.00 pm

Chair

Date Confirmed and Signed

Prepared by Democratic Services