

## PLANNING COMMITTEE

### Minutes of the Meeting held

Wednesday, 8th March, 2023, 11.00 am

**Councillors:** Sue Craig (Chair), Sally Davis (Vice-Chair), Shelley Bromley, Paul Crossley, Lucy Hodge, Duncan Hounsell, Shaun Hughes, Dr Eleanor Jackson, Hal MacFie and Brian Simmons

#### 86 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Democratic Services Officer read out the emergency evacuation procedure.

#### 87 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

There were no apologies for absence or substitutions.

#### 88 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Brian Simmons declared a non-registerable interest in item 2 on the main application list 22/04670/REG03 – 20-30 Temple Street, Keynsham as a board member of Keynsham Heritage Action Zone (HAZ).

#### 89 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

There was no urgent business.

#### 90 ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC - TO RECEIVE STATEMENTS, PETITIONS OR QUESTIONS

The Democratic Services Officer informed the meeting that there were a number of people wishing to make statements on planning applications and that they would be able to do so when these items were discussed.

#### 91 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

It was moved by Cllr Sally Davis, seconded by Cllr Shelley Bromley and:

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 8 February 2023 be confirmed as a correct record for signing by the Chair.

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

The Committee considered:

A report by the Head of Planning and an update report in relation under the site visit applications list.

Oral statements by members of the public and representatives. A copy of the speakers' list is attached as Appendix 1 to these minutes.

**RESOLVED** that in accordance with the delegated powers, the applications be determined as set out in the site visit decisions list attached as Appendix 2 to these minutes.

(1) 22/02863/FUL - Mill Barn, Millards Hill, Welton, Midsomer Norton

The Case Officer introduced the report which considered an application for the erection of an external classroom, consisting of natural rendered clay bricks to form landscaping wall, pizza oven & rainwater collection with arrayed valleyed roof. She confirmed the officer recommendation was to permit the application.

The following public representations were received:

1. Charlotte Lucas, applicant, in support of the application.

In response to Members' questions, it was confirmed.

1. Parents/carers could drive into the school site to drop off/pick up students and did not need to wait on the highway.
2. The current vehicle movements peaked at 8am with 83 movements and officers would expect the increase of 8 pupils and 2 full time members of staff to result in a corresponding increase.
3. The proposals for a staggered drop/off pick up time would be included in the details of the travel plan which was a condition of the consent. The details of the travel plan would be assessed by officers.
4. The parking provision was considered to be acceptable to meet the additional demand relating to this application for an increase of 8 pupils and 2 full time members of staff.
5. The local bus services had been considered by officers and found to have marginal impact in relation to the development.
6. Although there was mention in the report that the application was the first stage of a masterplan for the site, a decision could only be made in relation to the current application and future applications would be considered on their merits.
7. The design of the roof was considered to be appropriate; the form was open rather than fully enclosed.
8. There would be some harm to the listed building, but this was considered to be less than substantial and would be outweighed by the public benefit.

Cllr Shaun Hughes opened the debate as ward member. He stated that he had no concerns about the proposed structure, but that there was a need to manage the transport issues and maintain a balance between the needs of the business and local residents. He welcomed the travel plan and proposals to stagger drop off and pick up times and hoped that the use of the nearby cycle track would also be encouraged. He also encouraged the applicant to have more dialogue with local residents, especially regarding transport. He concluded that, on balance, the benefits outweighed the harm.

Cllr Duncan Hounsell proposed the officer recommendation that permission be

granted subject to the conditions set out in the report. This was seconded by Cllr Shelley Bromley who agreed that the public benefits of the application outweighed any harm.

On being put to the vote the motion was CARRIED (10 in favour, 0 against UNANIMOUS)

**RESOLVED** that the application be permitted subject to the conditions set out in the report.

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

The Committee considered:

A report by the Head of Planning on various planning applications under the main applications list.

Oral statements by members of the public and representatives. A copy of the speakers' list is attached as Appendix 1 to these minutes.

**RESOLVED** that in accordance with the delegated powers, the applications be determined as set out in the main decisions list attached as Appendix 3 to these minutes.

(1) 22/03288/FUL – St Julian's Church, Wellow

The Case Officer introduced the report which considered an application for the erection of a single storey extension to the church to provide WC and kitchen facilities.

She gave an update as follows:

1. Historic England had submitted a final response following a site visit to the church expressing concern that the application would cause some harm to the visual harmony of the exterior of the church and in views of it.
2. The Council's Ecology Officer had submitted a response to state that applicants had proposed the installation of a blackout blind for the rooflight triggered by light levels and provided details to show the stonework was in good condition and there was low risk of roosting bats being directly impacted. However, ecology concerns remained about how far light spill would project from the skylight if the blinds failed, and it was recommended that there should either be a report by a lighting engineer or a bat survey

She confirmed the officer recommendation that the application be refused as set out in the report with the removal of refusal reason 2 relating to biodiversity.

The following public representations were received:

1. Cllr Pat Caudle, Wellow Parish Council, spoke in support of the application.
2. Jonathan Hetreed, architect, and Jane Rees, St Julian's PCC, spoke in support of the application.

Cllr Matt McCabe, in attendance as local Member, raised the following points:

1. This was a difficult application as the church was a historic building, but there was a need to balance this with the community gain. The population had changed since the church was built in the 1400s and an ageing population needed access to toilet facilities.
2. The applicant had considered different options and the one put forward in the application caused the least harm.
3. A precedent had been set on the East Side when the Victorian Vestry was built.
4. The development was subservient to the original structure.
5. The church was a source of pride for local residents and the addition of kitchen and toilet facilities would allow the church to be used more by the local community.

In response to Members' questions, it was confirmed:

1. The Ecologist was concerned about the automated blackout blind in the event of the mechanism failing and the potential impact of light spill on bats. Although a high resolution photographic survey had shown there were no cracks or holes with bats, there were partially open louvres which had the potential for housing bats. Without a bat survey or lighting engineer report there was not sufficient information to satisfy concerns.
2. The proposed aluminium was unlikely to be seen but if Members were minded to permit the application, the materials could be the subject of a condition.
3. The 5 options considered with the Diocesan Advisory Committee were set out in the report. For both liturgy and physical reasons, the other options were not progressed. There was an option of locating the kitchenette in the tower and the toilet in the outside grounds which had not been fully explored but the PCC did not want the toilets to be located outside the church.
4. The proposal had been designed so that the main impact would be on the parapet well. There would not be an impact on the stained-glass window as the height would be below the window.
5. The issue as to whether or not it was appropriate for a toilet to open out onto a kitchenette was not a planning consideration.

Cllr Duncan Hounsell opened the debate and stated that although the proposal would cause harm to the fabric of the grade I listed church, this needed to be weighed against the public benefits and, in his view, the balance lay in favour of the public benefits, and he was minded to permit the application.

Cllr Shaun Hughes concurred with this view stating that the church was a community hub and permitting the application for a kitchenette/toilet area would allow the church to organise events to help secure its financial viability. He stated that, while he did not accept the Ecologist's conclusion about the blind mechanism, he was disappointed that there was not a bat survey.

Cllr Eleanor Jackson also spoke in support of the application for the reasons already cited and she also stated that she was mindful of equalities considerations as the plans for an accessible toilet would benefit groups with protected characteristics. She proposed that officers be delegated to permit the application subject to suitable conditions, including an archaeological condition. This was seconded by Cllr Sally

Davis.

There was a discussion as to whether permission should be subject to a bat survey, but it was agreed that although this would be part of the negotiations between the Planning Officer and applicant, the granting of permission should not hinge on this issue.

On being put to the vote the motion was CARRIED (10 in favour, 0 against UNANIMOUS)

**RESOLVED** that officer be delegated to permit the application subject to suitable conditions including archaeology and wildlife enhancement for the following reason:

1. Although there would be the upper end of less than substantial harm to the Grade I church caused by the development with great weight given to its conservation and intrinsic significance, this was outweighed by the stronger public benefit.

[Cllr Paul Crossley withdrew from the meeting at this point.]

(2) 22/04670/REG03 – 20-30 Temple Street, Keynsham

The Case Officer introduced the report which considered an application for the refurbishment and repairs of shop fronts, windows and downpipes. She confirmed that the application had been referred to Committee under the scheme of delegation as it was a Council led application involving more than 2 properties. She confirmed the officer recommendation to permit the application.

Cllr Brian Simmons opened the debate as Local Member and advised that the Keynsham Heritage Action Zone was created 3 years ago with government funding to upgrade Temple Street and High Street. He confirmed that Keynsham Town Council supported the application.

In response to a Member's question, it was confirmed that the buildings were not listed but the existing signs would be altered to look more appropriate in the setting.

Cllr Duncan Hounsell moved the officer's recommendation to permit the application, and this was seconded by Cllr Eleanor Jackson.

On being put to the vote the motion was CARRIED (9 in favour, 0 against UNANIMOUS)

**RESOLVED** that the application be permitted subject to the conditions set out in the report.

(3) 22/02604/FUL – New Leaf Barn, Bathampton

The Case Officer introduced the report which considered an application for the change of use of an agricultural barn into a single dwelling with associated facilities for existing holiday lets which had been referred to the Planning Committee under the scheme of delegation due to the applicant's relationship to a Member of Council. He confirmed the officer recommendation to permit the application.

The following public representations were received:

1. Ben Smith, agent, speaking in support of the application.

In response to Member's questions, it was confirmed that the extension was within the acceptable volume increase recommended within a greenbelt location.

Cllr Sally Davis proposed the officer's recommendation that the application be permitted. This was seconded by Cllr Eleanor Jackson who stated that the development would not infringe on the greenbelt.

On being put to the vote the motion was CARRIED (9 in favour 0 against UNANIMOUS)

**RESOLVED** that the application be permitted subject to the conditions set out in the report.

94 **APPLICATION TO DIVERT PUBLIC FOOTPATH BC62/3, CHURCH LANE, COMBE DOWN, BATH UNDER SECTION 119 HIGHWAYS ACT 1980**

This application was withdrawn by the applicant in advance of the meeting.

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

In response to question about enforcement action in relation to the alterations on the façade of a building in High Street, Keynsham, the Team Manager (Development Management) undertook to bring a report back to the next committee.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

The meeting ended at 1.11 pm

Chair .....

Date Confirmed and Signed .....

Prepared by Democratic Services