

**Draft Minutes**  
of the Meeting of the  
**Planning Committee**  
**Wednesday 12th February 2014**

Held at Horsecastle Chapel, Horsecastle Farm Road, Yatton.

Meeting Commenced: 7.00 p.m.

Meeting Concluded: 9.00 p.m.

**Present:** Councillors Maurice Blunsdon, Sally Brock, David Crossman, Jonathan Edwards, Wendy Griggs, Robert Jenner, Ian Payne, Caroline Sheard, Theresa Williams and Viv Wathen.

**Also Present:** Aleana Baird (assistant).

**A presentation by Bloor Homes on the outline application  
14/P/0191/O for up to 150 residential dwellings on land off Arnolds  
Way, Yatton.**

**FOR DECISION**

**PLN Apologies for Absence.**

**94/14**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor's Jean Watson, Rhiannon Prys Owen and Roger Wood.

**PLN Declarations of Interest and to consider any written applications for  
96/14 dispensations (Agenda Item 2)**

NONE

**PLN Public Participation**

**97/14**

Question and answer session followed on from the presentation by Bloor Homes which allowed all members of the public to share their views.

**PLN To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 3rd February  
98/14 2014.** The minutes from the last meeting were not available due to time constraints.

**PLN Notification of Appeals (Agenda Item 5)**

**99/14**

NONE

**PLN Planning Applications (Agenda Item 6)**

**99/14**

The Clerk had made all planning application history available for additional information to all committee members.

**i) 14/P/0191/O – Bloor Homes, Land off Arnolds Way, Yatton.**

Outline application for a residential development of up to 150 dwellings, 0.46 HA of employment land (use class B1), pedestrian/cycle path, new accesses, landscaping, open space and all associated infrastructure with appearance, landscaping, layout and scale reserved for subsequent approval.

**RESOLVED:** that councillors unanimously and strongly recommend **not** supporting application 14/P/0191/O for the following reasons.

**Reasons for Recommendation** The Parish Council are objecting to this proposal principally because it is a large scale unsustainable development outside the settlement boundary on prime agricultural land, demonstrating no exceptional circumstances.

It is not community lead which is evident from the large number of objections on North Somerset Council website, the attendance at our planning meeting and concerns raised through our office. There has not been an up to date Housing Needs Survey carried out and therefore no evidence base to support a locally identifiable need.

It is contrary to Policy CS32 and the guidance figures for development density in a service village in the Sustainability Assessment Supplementary Report for CS13 January 2014 (6.18) pg. 20 *“SHLAA figures assume some greenfield extensions to service villages and, in this context, because of the large sites coming forward and the very high dwelling figures being calculated, a nominal cut-off of 30 dwellings has been applied to each of these sites”*.

Whilst it is appreciated that this document is under consultation the underlying figure if 30 dwellings is unlikely to be altered to 150 post consultation.

The Parish Council are aware that some Policies quoted are remitted pending the outcome of Inspector’s hearing into Policy CS13 in March. It notes that in the North Somerset Council’s proposed position in respect of the examination of remitted policies Statement for consultation November 2013 it states No 58

*“The Judge was clear that while it is only CS13 which was found to be unlawful, because the re-examination of the total housing figure may result in consequential alterations for other policies, then these policies are also remitted. However, “the policies can still be accorded appropriate weight in any decision making and housing can be brought forward through the development control process” (paragraph 20)”*.

And in No 60 of the statement it is noted that *“The new Inspector has indicated that the examination of remitted policies will commence with the re-examination of Policy CS13 which will be subject to a report in respect of this policy alone. It is only if the conclusions from this exercise have a bearing on one or more of the other remitted policies that there will be a need to re-examine the other policies”*.

In light of this and that by the time this application has followed due process there will hopefully be full clarity regarding the Core Strategy remitted policies that we are taking the Judge’s comments and using them to support our recommendation for refusal of this application.

The reasons for why the site is unsustainable are as follows:

## **Travel and Infrastructure**

- The B3133 is already suffering under high volumes of traffic with 800 vehicles recently recorded by Speedwatch between 8.00 a.m. & 9.00 a.m. and in the event of the M5 being shut the road becomes gridlocked. The increased volume of traffic a new large estate would bring in addition to the existing number of vehicles using the route was an unacceptable and unsustainable.
- The proposed development being sited over 1 km from village amenities will lead in reality to most residents using cars to access the facilities putting additional pressure on the road itself and exacerbating the existing parking problems around the schools, surgery and shops.
- There were concerns raised regarding road safety and the difficulties residents will have crossing both Arnolds Way and North End Road from the proposed site.
- The proposed housing was to be located adjacent to the access road and bordering the Arnolds Way roundabout currently used by many heavy goods vehicles allied to adjacent local businesses. The use by this type of transport was due to increase with the building of Smart Systems Phase 3. Properties this close to heavy goods vehicle movements was likely to result in unsatisfactory living conditions and complaints to the businesses themselves.
- The impact of providing of additional transport to secondary schools was also a consideration.

## **Local Services and Amenities**

- The local infant and junior schools are at full capacity NOW, with overcrowded classes (36 pupils per class) and no buildings onsite adaptable for use as classrooms. They have been told categorically that North Somerset Council have no available funds now or in the foreseeable future to provide any new classrooms to accommodate additional pupil numbers.
- The doctor's surgery is currently stretched, with long appointment waiting times and no scope to extend their building within the current location. It also serves the neighbouring village of Congresbury (also a service village), should there be any additional large scale development in either one or potentially even both villages the surgery would find maintaining a satisfactory level of service for residents impossible.
- It was questioned who would be responsible for maintaining the recreation field outlined in the application, it was also the decision to put it or the allotments on a part of the site that is within the flood zone.

## **Employment**

- The vision of an employment lead development sited close to local employment was unfortunately a myth as the successful businesses in Yatton that employ a higher numbers mentioned in their publicity require very highly skilled employees, Oxford Instruments, Smart System and their employees largely constitute the in-commuters. The other less skilled businesses do not have a high turnover of staff to an extent where prospective purchases of property would not be making the choice to live in the proposed development based on a job within the village. The reality is that the development would lead to high levels of out-commuting; in essence the creation of a large dormitory estate and therefore contrary to Policy CS20.

## Environmental

- The monitoring of a development site in close proximity (Smart Systems) has identified a bat hot spot of over 8 species all foraging including Nathusius pipistrelle and nocturnal species.
- The actual (not predicted!) impact on surrounding housing both in terms of noise and property value of the wind turbines to be installed at Smart Systems was not yet known.
- The environmental impact of increased traffic and the pollution it brings was further cause for concern.

## Further considerations

- The Parish Council consider that the proposal is contrary to the principal of Policy CS19 Strategic Gaps, the overriding outline for the policy being that *“The council (NSC) will protect strategic gaps to help retain the separate identity, character and/or landscape of settlements and distinct parts of settlements”*.

Whilst it is realised that a strategic gap has currently only been outlined for between Yatton and Congresbury, the Parish Council has made its' views very clear in its comments submitted both on the Core Strategy and Sites and Policies DPD consultations that it's is very important that the same gap is applied to the North End of the village as well. If this proposal was to go ahead it would create a “linear” form of development along the B3133 with the majority of the housing in the village at one end furthest from the amenities, losing the character and identity of the village and its surrounding landscape.

If this resulted in the settlement boundary being moved to incorporate this proposal it could set a precedent for further sites to be built adjacent to the new boundary and the sprawling effect this creates would be detrimental both to Yatton and the villages of Kingston Seymour and Kenn.

- The Parish already has 154 houses on sites that have either been approved, have had applications refused or are yet to have applications submitted as follows;  
Oxford Instruments – 66 approved at reserved matters.  
Wemberham Brewery site – 18 units – refused.  
Bridge Works – 10 refused.  
Wemberham Lane – 24 yet to be applied for.  
Jewson's –25 currently seeking developers.  
Former KPR Engineering site Claverham Road – 5 approved  
Pullin's Bakery - will be vacating their current site to move to newly purchased site in the village possible site for 6 houses.

This is without considering the sites on the new SHLAA.

- The huge impact of all these sites and the addition of proposed Bloor homes site on the schools and doctors surgery, increased traffic due to it being located so far from any amenities was unacceptable and would provide no advantages to the community whatever the 106 agreement had to offer.
- Policy CS17 3.228 states that only rural exception sites for affordable housing will be acceptable adjacent to settlement boundaries of service villages. To then allow a site of open market housing of a far larger scale than any

exception site of affordable housing with all its impact would be a contradiction to that principal.

**The Parish Council concluded by saying should North Somerset Council be minded to approve this application that the following suggestions could form part of any subsequent 106 agreement.**

- Additional classrooms at both infant and junior schools.
- The provision of additional doctors facilities and staff i.e. relocating to a facility able to accommodate the increase in additional patients.
- Traffic management provision especially at peak times to include measures such as zebra crossings, lollipop person, or a footbridge (for pedestrians, cyclists and mobility scooters) and improvements to the Kingston Bridge footway/cycleway.
- Improvements to the Strawberry Line which do not form part of the proposed development site.
- A new play area away from development houses.
- Contribution to the reinstatement of the lift in the library.
- Assistance to complete the circular path around Hangstones recreation fields.
- Provision of public toilets.

#### **PLN Clerk's Report (Agenda Item 8) 100/14**

##### **Notification of Planning Applications Approved by North Somerset Council.**

i) 13/P/2372/F – Porthurst Ltd, Land to the rear of 1, Elm Close, Yatton, BS49 4EL. Erection of dwelling and detached garage with new access off Elm Close.

##### **General Items of Information.**

i) The papers for Central Area Committee 13<sup>th</sup> February had been received and details of the Smart Systems appeal (2<sup>nd</sup> wind turbine) were on included. The appeal was not to be contested by NSC as the 1<sup>st</sup> turbine had now been approved.

ii) The Clerk had written to Backwell School thanking them for the Councillor recent visit with particular thanks to the young people who were the guides.

##### **PLN Future Agenda Items for Consideration. 101/14**

The former Jewson's Site  
Strategic Gap at North End.  
Affordable Housing updates.  
Empty Property update

Chairman