

Draft Minutes

of the Meeting of the

Planning Committee

Monday 24th April 2023

Held at Hangstones Pavilion, Stowey Road, Yatton, BS49 4HS.

Meeting Commenced: 7.30 p.m.

Meeting Concluded: 8.50 p.m.

Present: Councillors Jonathan Edwards, Graham Humphreys, Chris Jackson, Steve Lister, Peter Lomas, Steve Humphrey, Robert Jenner and Roger Wood.

Also in attendance: Clerk, District Councillor Steve Bridger, District Councillor/Parish Councillor Wendy Griggs and in excess of 150 members of the public.

**** Committee Chairman Chris Jackson welcomed everyone to the meeting and gave an overview of the evening's proceedings including how Public Participation would be managed for the high volume of public attendance. He also advised of the role of the Parish Council had within the planning process.**

FOR DECISION

PLN Apologies for Absence.

107/23

Apologies were received from Parish Councillors David Crossman and Bryan Thomas.

PLN Declarations of Interest and to consider any written applications for 108/23 dispensations (Agenda Item 2).

NONE.

PLN Public Participation

109/23

A member of the public who had been designated to speak on behalf of the Save Yatton Batch Group gave an eloquent account of the objections to application 23/P/0664/OUT Land to the north of Rectory Farm, Chescombe Road, Yatton known locally as The Batch. The objections highlighted were flood risk from sea, river and rainfall and the impact on the safety of residents and their property.

The water course damage, traffic impact and site access along residential roads and the wider parish network including the High Street during and after construction. This included pollution from soil and hardcore dust and vehicle emissions.

The harm to ecology and biodiversity at the Biddle Street SSSI, the Strawberry Line Nature Reserve and the Bat SAC.

The overbearing impact of multi storey development on top of a 3 meters raised area of land and the loss of privacy and light this would cause.

The stress impact on mental health and constant worry about the flood risk and other huge impacts on the lives of residents close to the proposed site.

There were examples of errors given within the planning application i.e. the SSSI actually had a 6m strip within the development site boundary and the reference to there being no planning applications on the site previously was false as there had been at least one.

Concerns were also raised about insurance provision of dwellings in the flood zone, lack of sustainability, loss of green fields and the impact on CO₂ absorption. The negative impact on the village character of a development with a design life of 100 years on land that would

be lost forever as green fields, the very poor consultation process and SUDS mitigation was deemed completely inadequate.

Chairman Chris Jackson thanked the resident for the comprehensive comments and invited other attendees to add any other comments that had not already been raised.

Many residents present agreed with the spokesperson's comments and wished to add the following points:

- The approved application at Rectory Farm would be increasing traffic on the roads around the vicinity of this new proposed development. Further traffic from it would be intolerable along these residential roads.
- Impact of large number of additional vehicles on the safety of walking to school which was already very busy along the High Street.
- Emphasise the existing erosion along the watercourses prior to this development and this added to the flood risk.
- Impact of dust from construction on health, children playing outside in it and would make private gardens 'no go zones'.
- Access roads single track due to parking, the land and access to it was not fit for purpose and would be a terrible impact on residential areas along these routes.
- An HGV driver who was a resident highlighted that he was very familiar with driving lorries to development sites and it was a common occurrence to have to queue to access sites and he feared for gridlock on the roads that approached the site and the queues could easily back up to the High Street.
- The access to essential services could be made more difficult by influx of new residents but no increase in capacity of those services i.e. doctors, dentists, secondary schools in particular.
- Open ponds and rhynes unsafe for children.
- Impact on water pressure.

***** Committee Chairman Chris Jackson gave an overview using graphs on power point that demonstrated the recommendation decisions the Parish Council makes on planning applications and how they correspond to the final decisions made by North Somerset Council. The two Councils were in agreement on 98% of the planning applications received during the last year and it has been very similar in previous years.**

PLN To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on the 3rd April 2023. 110/23 (Agenda item 4).

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 3rd April 2023 were confirmed as a correct record and were signed by the Chairman.

PLN Notification of Appeals (Agenda Item 5).

111/23

NONE.

PLN District Councillors' Reports. (Agenda Item 6).

112/23

District Councillors Steve Bridger and Wendy Griggs both agreed with the comments that had been made by residents about The Batch planning application. If successful in the forthcoming elections they both confirmed they will definitely call the application to Planning & Regulatory Committee for decision.

PLN Planning Applications (Agenda Item 7).

113/23

i) 23/P/0664/OUT – Land to the North of Rectory Farm, Chescombe Road, Yatton.

Outline planning application for the development of up to 190 no. homes (including 50% affordable homes), 0.13ha of land reserved for Class E uses, allotments, car parking, earthworks to facilitate sustainable drainage systems, open space and all other ancillary infrastructure and enabling works with means of access from Shiners Elms for consideration. All other matters (means of access from Chescombe Road, internal access, scale, layout, appearance and landscaping) reserved for subsequent approval.

RESOLVED: that councillors unanimously recommended **refusal** of application **23/P/0664/OUT**.

Reason for Recommendation: The Parish Council has consistently recommended refusal of speculative larger scale developments like this that Yatton has experienced since 2014 and throughout that time almost no other application has generated such strong feelings of objection as this one. This was clearly demonstrated by at least one hundred and fifty residents who came to give their comments at the Planning Committee meeting. Councillors fully supported the residents' views, in particular those who reside closest to the proposed site and along its access routes but also because the impacts of this development would be felt across the whole wider community of Yatton. The changes to legislation that are currently going through the legal process regarding changes to the need for Councils to demonstrate five year housing supply requirement cannot come soon enough!! This application is an example of exactly the type of inappropriate developments that have been finding a way through the planning system as a result of the five year supply requirement.

The Parish Council has very serious concerns regarding a broad base of issues and constraints with development on this poorly selected site.

Flood Risk

This site is located in Flood Zone 3, the zones are nature's way of providing flood protection for surrounding areas by absorbing flood water from the sea, river or rainfall, all of which are applicable to this site. The raising of the land by three/four metres and sealing of it with built environment can only result in seriously increasing the flood risk and potential threat to safety for existing residents, their homes and infrastructure in the surrounding area.

It must be highlighted that at the Rectory Farm Appeal (this site is on adjacent land) Ref: APP/D0121/W/21/3286677 the Planning Inspector Decision Report pg 34 states - *Condition 31 is necessary to ensure that dwellings are sited outside Flood Zones 2 and 3. Report pg 43 Condition of Approval 31 stipulates - The area of the site within which dwellings are to be developed, that is dwelling houses, private gardens, and residential outbuildings, shall fall wholly on land that is within Flood Zone 1 of the Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.*

The Flood Risk Sequential and Exception Test Document assesses the suitability of the site against other potential development land across North Somerset. It concluded that this site could accommodate this size of development within the sequential flood risk test process. The designation of being the 'least bad' site does not make it a good site for development!

In addition there was considerable concern regarding the impact on the existing watercourses in terms of erosion and harm resulting from vast quantities of hardcore

required to raise the land and the resulting runoff from this into the rhynes over the very lengthy construction time.

Ecological and Biodiversity Impact

The Parish Council fully endorse the detailed comments that have been made by Yatton & Congresbury Wildlife Action Group (YACWAG) regarding the serious negative impact on the Strawberry Line Nature Reserve, the Biddle Street SSSI and Bats SAC. Councillors cannot conceive why an Environmental Impact Assessment was not required for this green field site located alongside these crucially important areas of nature preservation. The cumulative impact on the ecology and biodiversity of this site and the approved Rectory Farm site should be considered when assessing the impact of developing this large swathe of land running alongside these critical areas of nature.

Access

The access to the site from Shiners Elms via the narrow residential roads of Grassmere, Heathgate and Mendip Road which are congested with parked vehicles is unacceptable and unsuitable for this purpose. The long construction phase requiring mass movement of soil and aggregates onto the site and the consequential impact on the local community of pollution by dust, noise and emissions generated by a huge number of vehicle movements will cause a significant detrimental impact on the living conditions and health of residents. This applies to anywhere along the access routes within the Parish but especially along the roads highlighted above.

The HGVs will experience great difficulty passing along these roads as they are congested with residents parking, creating single track one way along extended lengths of the roads. This could also impact the access of emergency vehicles and waste collections. It is very likely there will be queues of lorries backing up to the High Street as they struggle to gain access to the site.

The above points highlight serious issues during the construction phase but even after completion the significant increase in traffic generated by the development will continue to jeopardise the safety of these residential roads and the health, safety and wellbeing of residents on the overstretched local network in Yatton and beyond. Councillors expressed concern that if approved, the level of construction vehicles may jeopardise the re-instatement of the X5 bus service after the completion of the High Street Safety Improvements Scheme.

Affordable Homes

The Parish Council note the provision of 50% affordable homes with this application and seriously question the definition of 'affordable' as it very often is found not to be the case for many people. It is yet to be seen, should this application unfortunately proceed, if the 50% affordable is retained as it seems a very high proportion of the dwellings of this type and value given the enormous costs involved in constructing a site on land that has to be raised by three metres in a flood zone.

Impact on Village Character and Landscape

The proposed site will have a negative visual and intrusive impact on this open landscape creating an obtrusive urban 'lump' along the linear aspect of the village contributing to a further loss of character in this part of the parish.

Other Impacts and Comments

- This site is not in the Yatton Neighbourhood Plan and is contrary to Policy CS32.
- The loss of privacy for existing residents living on the boundary to the site once the land has been raised by three metres will be immense. It will be exacerbated

further if the adjacent new dwellings are multi storey. The overbearing impact and loss of privacy this would cause is intolerable.

- The application does not make any reference to the land on the site that is currently designated for a school within North Somerset Council's Core Strategy and the Draft Local Plan 2038.
- The Community Consultation was a very poor process as the developer failed to engage with crucial areas of the village deeply affected by the proposed site.
- The large amount of development in general across North Somerset has seen extensive pressure on key areas of infrastructure e.g. secondary school education, health services and even water pressure.

The Parish Council do not support the development of this site but have to suggest that should this application unfortunately be granted approval consideration be given to the following green measures within the Reserved Matters application:

- For any new roof or roof refurbishment that will face between south-west and south-east, consider installing photovoltaic panels or using photovoltaic tiles in construction.
- For any alteration to gutters and downpipes, consider installing a rainwater butt.
- For any construction of new walls, try to include the highest practicable grade of thermal insulation.
- For any construction try to use materials that are sustainable, made with recycled content, easily reused or recycled, and that save energy.
- For any project involving alteration or installation of a toilet, consider using a dual-flush model.
- For any project involving paving, patios and/or driveways, consider using water-permeable materials.
For any project, consider the feasibility of installing one or more electric vehicle charging points.

***** Committee Chairman Chris Jackson stated that he lived near to the property in the following application but was not a direct neighbour and he did not know the applicant.**

ii) 23/P/0685/FUH – 83, Wemberham Crescent, Yatton BS49 4BD.

Proposed erection of a single storey front extension and internal alterations. Removal of trees around the front/rear boundary and erection of a 2m boundary fence.

RESOLVED: that councillors recommended **approval** of application **23/P/0685/FUH**.

Reason for Recommendation: The proposed extension and internal alterations were considered to be an improvement to the property that had no detrimental impact on neighbouring residents or the street scene. The removal of the hedge and replacement with fencing was acceptable.

The Parish Council also wished to suggest that the following green measures were considered as part of the project:

- For any new roof or roof refurbishment that will face between south-west and south-east, consider installing photovoltaic panels or using photovoltaic tiles in construction.
- For any alteration to gutters and downpipes, consider installing a rainwater butt.

- For any construction of new walls, try to include the highest practicable grade of thermal insulation.
- For any construction try to use materials that are sustainable, made with recycled content, easily reused or recycled, and that save energy.
- For any project involving alteration or installation of a toilet, consider using a dual-flush model.
- For any project involving paving, patios and/or driveways, consider using water-permeable materials.
- For any project, consider the feasibility of installing one or more electric vehicle charging points.

iii) 23/P/0734/FUH – 5, Shiners Elms, Yatton BS49 4BY.

Proposed erection of a single storey rear extension.

RESOLVED: that councillors recommended **approval** of application **23/P/0734/FUH**.

Reason for Recommendation: The proposed extension was an improvement to the property and located to the rear of the existing dwelling had no negative impact on neighbouring residents or the street scene.

The Parish Council also wished to suggest that the following green measures were considered as part of the project:

- For any new roof or roof refurbishment that will face between south-west and south-east, consider installing photovoltaic panels or using photovoltaic tiles in construction.
- For any alteration to gutters and downpipes, consider installing a rainwater butt.
- For any construction of new walls, try to include the highest practicable grade of thermal insulation.
- For any construction try to use materials that are sustainable, made with recycled content, easily reused or recycled, and that save energy.
- For any project involving alteration or installation of a toilet, consider using a dual-flush model.
- For any project involving paving, patios and/or driveways, consider using water-permeable materials.

MATTERS FOR INFORMATION

PLN Connected Yatton Report. (Agenda Item 8).

114/23

No meeting had taken place since the last meeting 3rd April. There had been an offer to meet with a senior officer in due course but no dates had been confirmed.

Committee Chairman Chris Jackson asked members if anyone knew who had placed 30mph stickers on many lampposts in the Parish. Stowells Concrete had provided the stickers in the first instance to reduce speed on Arnolds Way. They would need to be removed in due course when the limit changes to 20mph.

The Avenue access was briefly discussed but it was highlighted that North Somerset Council were satisfied with the measures in place.

PLN Clerk's Report. (Agenda Item 9).

115/23

- A definitive answer to the re-marking of Keep Clear lines or double yellow lines at the bottom of Chescombe Road had been received from North Somerset Council Highways and they will not do either option.
- The Clerk had actioned gaining permission about placing two posts on verge near Arnolds Way roundabout to put banners on promoting village events and facilities e.g. village market. This had resulted in very mixed responses ranging from no it was illegal to providing an application form to fill out to erect banners on the Highway (the form was very detailed and would require the work to be at the point of instruction in order to complete the questions. All this work before actually knowing if it was possible in principle). The Clerk had pursued this asking for clarity about the disparity in the responses from officers. No reply had been received to date.

PLN Future Agenda Items for Consideration. (Agenda Item 10).

116/23

20mph speed limit within Chestnut Park estate – Full Council

Invitation to YACWAG, Yatton Horticultural Society, YCCCART and Yatton Local History Society to discuss the North End gateway and roundabout.

Presentation by NSC on CIL, S106 and Regulations 278 & 123.

Flood defences in Yatton and the surrounding area.

Cycle Ramp on the footbridge at the station.

Reviewing Yatton and Claverham Neighbourhood Plans.

Chairman

___/___/2023