

WELLS CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE HELD THURSDAY 18TH JANUARY 2024 AT 7.00PM AT WELLS TOWN HALL

PRESENT: Cllrs: L Agabani, D Denis (Chair), D Orrett, S Powell (Vice Chair), G Robbins,
I Von Mensenkampff

IN ATTENDANCE: Town Clerk: C Woodland
WCC Staff: C Hobbs
2 members of the public

24/01/PE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Cllrs: S Cursley, G Folkard

24/02/PE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

All Councillors declared an interest in agenda item 5.6 2023/2271/FUL and 023/2272/LBC
The application will be passed for discussion by Somerset East Planning.

Cllr L Agabani declared an interest in agenda item 5.9 024/0015/LBC and 2024/0014/FUL

**24/03/PE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
ON 7TH DECEMBER 2023** Minutes were confirmed as a true record and signed by the
Chair.

24/04/PE MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

24/05/PE PLANNING APPLICATIONS RECEIVED FOR CONSIDERATION

- 1** 2023/2221/FUL
Construction of a bund and installation of boundary fencing (retrospective)
Tor Hill Works Constitution Hill Wells Somerset BA5 3NT
Cllr D Denis presented a report with photos, which had been circulated to Councillors prior
to the meeting, and drew attention to the public comments, including one from the National
Trust and from Natural England.
Recommendation: Refusal Four Cllrs voted for refusal of the application with one
abstention. Material Considerations for refusal are (1) Overlooking, loss or
privacy/overshadowing nature of proposal, (2) Design & appearance, impact on public
visual amenity (5) Loss of trees and ecological habitats
- 2** 2023/2273/HSE
Proposal to erect a fence above the wall (total height from ground level inclusive of wall
1.8m)
62 Bath Road Wells Somerset BA5 3LQ
Recommendation: Refusal. Material Considerations (2) Design & appearance, impact on
public visual amenity.
- 3** 2023/2374/LBC and 2023/2373/HSE
Removal of existing green house, toilet and section of roof of the existing outbuilding. Part
demolition of existing outbuilding wall. New single storey extension at back of house.
Creation of new opening in attic.
7 Portway Wells Somerset BA5 2BA
Recommendation: Approval. Material Considerations (4) Effect on listed buildings
and/or conservation areas (10) Other: Environmentally friendly aspects of the design
- 4** 2023/2355/HSE
Erection of new single-storey rear extension replacing existing extension, new access and
new garden room.
8 Portway Avenue Wells Somerset BA5 2QF

Recommendation: Approval. Material Considerations (2) Design & appearance, impact on public visual amenity (3) Layout & density of building, (10) Environmentally friendly aspects of the design

- 5 2023/2399/FUL
Erection of 2-bedroom detached dwelling house.
3 Balch Road Wells Somerset BA5 2BY
Recommendation: Approval with conditions for clarification on three points. Loss of light, Design and appearance of roof, boundary
- 6 2023/2271/FUL and 2023/2272/LBC
Change of use of vacant building (former post office) to restaurant, internal alterations which include removal of internal walls, installation of mezzanine floor & upper floor and minor external alterations including re-painting render, removal of security bars, new doors and restoring dressed stone panels. (kitchen extraction details received 19.12.23)
Post Office Market Place Wells Somerset BA5 2RA
Application passed by Wells City Council to be discussed by Somerset East Planning
- 7 2023/2431/VRC
Application to vary 2, 3 and 5 conditions of planning approval 2018/1895/FUL (Proposed residential redevelopment comprising demolition of 12 no. garages and the erection of 2no. two-bedroom dwellings and 4no. three-bedroom dwellings and 1 no. three bedroom bungalow in 3 blocks. (re-submission)) to amended wording and drawings.
Land to North Of 32 - 36 Balch Road Wells Somerset
Recommendation: Approval Conditioned that a drop kerb be installed by the Developer or Somerset Highways
- 8 2023/2481/HSE
Single and Double storey extension at side and back of property after demolition of existing garage and conservatory.
14 Penn Close Wells Somerset BA5 3JQ
Recommendation: Approval Material Consideration (2) Design & appearance, impact on public visual amenity
- 9 024/0015/LBC and 2024/0014/FUL
Demolition of existing commercial buildings adjacent to listed buildings no25 and no27 Broad St, and redevelopment of the site to provide 3no dwellings.
23 Broad Street Wells Somerset BA5 2DJ
Recommendation: Approval Considerations (2) Design & appearance, impact on public visual amenity, (3) Layout & density of building
- 10 2023/2351/FUL
Retention of existing public house (Sui Generis), demolition of ancillary outbuilding (Sui Generis) to erect two three-bedroom dwellings (Class C3) utilising existing access from Westfield Road, with associated landscaping and parking spaces.
Cheddar Valley Inn 22 Tucker Street Wells Somerset BA5 2DZ
Recommendation: Approval Conditioned that Environmental Officer conditions are met and that a highways report be undertaken.
- 11 2023/1081/CLP - **Notification only**
Proposed garden room with new hardstanding
105 Sheldon Drive Wells Somerset BA5 2HF
Cllr Powell wished the applicants well on their submission.

TREES:

- 12** 2023/2455/TPO - **Notification only**
TPO (M1105)
T1 - Lime Tree - Crown raise low branches overhanging road to height of 5m.
T2 - Oak Tree - Pruning of branch growing in close proximity of house/roof back x 2m.
1 Ash Close Wells Somerset BA5 2QR

- 24/06/PE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**
The Neighbourhood Plan referendum vote will take place Thursday 25th January.
A l'Anson has confirmed that he received a query regarding a listed building and that this amendment will be on the 5-year plan. Sustainable Wells have requested a summary, which will be provided (see attached below).
A steering group meeting is planned for Wednesday 31st January 2024 at 7pm

- 24/07/PE DELEGATED RESPONSIBILITIES**
To delegate authority to the Town Clerk in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair, to decide any urgent matters arising before the next meeting.

- 24/08/PE ANY OTHER MATTERS OF URGENT REPORT**
None arising

- 24/09/PE DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 7pm, Thursday 15th February 2024**

Minutes signed by The Chair: **Date:**

1. This short note is to alert members and supporters of Sustainable Wells to the key elements of Wells Neighbourhood Plan which is the subject of a Referendum on the 25th of January 2024 with the question being:

Do you want Somerset Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Wells to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?

2. The concept of “sustainable development” runs as a thread throughout the Plan and it is difficult to entangle it in a short note. This note is simply intended to focus on key elements of the Plan.
3. The Plan sets out **policies** which will be used by Somerset Council when they determine planning applications before them. It also includes **projects** which indicate ways in which Wells City Council can work with other bodies (mainly Somerset Council) to activate the aspirations set out in the Plan.
4. The Housing section of the Plan is based on a Housing Needs Assessment for Wells. It includes policies which ensure housing is provided to
 - meet the diverse needs of the population across age-groups and their ability to afford somewhere to live
 - is attractive in terms of design of good quality and appropriate to its setting

- is limited in terms of energy use and carbon dioxide emissions in its construction and future living.

5. The Transport section of the Plan (Moving Around) includes a Transport Plan which identifies junctions in Wells which could be improved to provide better access for cyclists and pedestrians. Projects highlight the need for traffic calming on the High Street (Project 5), better sign posting and car parking (Project 6) and an improved bus service (Project 7).

6. The aims, objectives, policies and projects in the Environmental section are set out below.

Aim	Objective	Policy	Community Action or Project
To develop, protect and enhance a green infrastructure network, which provides woodland, riparian (streams and brooks), grassland and hedgerow habitats and corridors for wildlife thus enhancing the linkages of the City to the surrounding countryside, and provides accessible open green space for people in the City and on its rural fringe.	To ensure that planned development respects the landscape of Wells including, in particular, views of its heritage assets and rural context. In addition, to ensure that development on the edge of Wells is sensitive to its impact on both the rural landscape and the character of the historic settlement.	Policy ENV1: Protecting the Character of the Landscape, Views and Setting	Project 9: The City Council will work with neighbouring parish councils to consider developments that may impact the environment beyond their respective boundaries
	Environment policies will protect and enhance existing natural space and create new wild spaces for the benefit of wildlife and people.	Policy ENV2: Nature Recovery Network (including protected areas of biodiversity, geodiversity and habitat)	Project 10: The city council will develop projects to enhance biodiversity
	Preserving the green spaces within the city is important, whether informal or designated play areas. There is national recognition that green spaces enhance well-being and are beneficial to health.	Policy ENV3: Local Green Spaces Policy ENV3a: Open & Recreation Spaces	

The Plan was assessed by an Independent Examiner who investigated the list of 41 Local Green Spaces which were given an element of protection in the Plan. As a result, 5 LGSs were excluded and 9 were re-designated as Open and Recreation Spaces. The Assessments with photos of the Spaces are now set out in Appendix 4 with the plans in Appendix 5 and can be found in the Wells City Council’s website www.wells.gov.uk/neighbourhood-plan. The protection of these Spaces is incorporated in policy ENV3.

Policy ENV1 sets out 4 “View Cones” within which development proposals will only be supported where they do not compromise the areas which exemplify their special landscape character.

Policy ENV2 includes detailed protection for biodiversity, geodiversity and habitat as defined in the Wells Nature Recovery Network.

The associated Projects (9 and 10) set out expectations that Wells City Council will

- work with neighbouring parish councils as regards developments that may impact the environment beyond their respective boundaries and
 - develop projects to restore wildlife in the streams and waterways in the city, enhance biodiversity in parks, allotments, cemeteries, school grounds, public spaces and verges.
7. This note, as stated above, simply highlights some of the areas of interest to Sustainable Wells within the Plan – which you can, of course read in full on the WCC website – just under 100 pages excluding the appendices! It goes without saying that the production of the Plan is thanks to a number of individuals. I am happy to include mention of Simon Nash who takes the credit for the majority of the Environment section.
 8. The City Council is not allowed to campaign for “yes” vote and so I would ask those who read this note to ensure that they cast a vote at the referendum and take the issues referred to above in deciding which way to vote.
 9. I am happy to discuss any issues about the Plan.

Adrian I’Anson
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