

WELLS CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE HELD THURSDAY 20TH MARCH 2025 AT 7.00PM AT WELLS TOWN HALL

PRESENT: Cllrs: L Agabani, D Denis (Chair), D Orrett, S Powell

IN ATTENDANCE: Town Clerk/Devolution Officer: H Wilkins
Facilities/Projects Manager: L Wassell
Wells City Council Staff – C Hobbs
S Sharpe (Representative of Stonewater Group and Wells Rugby Club)
7 Members of the public

20/20/PE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Cllrs S Cursley, G Folkard, G Robbins (Vice - chair)

20/21/PE NON ATTENDANCE: Cllr I Von Mensenkampff

20/22/PE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr D Denis declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 6.4

**20/23/PE MINUTES OF THE PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON
20th FEBRUARY 2025**

The Minutes of meetings were approved and signed by Cllr D Denis (Chair)

20/24/PE MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Mrs S Garner (Wells Resident) spoke to the meeting about the issue of residents parking on St Andrews Street, a subject discussed at a WCC meeting 6 months ago. Mrs S Garner would like information regarding a time restriction that is understood to have been applied. The Town Clerk promised to contact S Garner with the information she has requested.

C Charles (Civic Society) spoke about the Rugby Ground development. He spoke of his wishes that the housing be in a traditional historic style as per the masterplan for Wells and that the houses reach a passive house standard.

L Wright, applicant for agenda item 6.8 explained that the address of the property had been changed from 11 Wood Close, due to difficulties in being found by deliveries. L Wright explained the design aspects and environmental aspects of the proposed build and his wishes for obtaining as close as possible to Passivhaus status.

T Hathaway (Strawberry Line and Cllr on St Cuthbert Out PC) spoke of his wishes that the Strawberry Line multi user path, eventually link up with Wookey and Haybridge and that he hoped that the rugby ground development considers enabling the extension of the Strawberry line by allowing a strip of land on the edge of the development for future use for the Strawberry Line. T Hathaway stressed that the Strawberry line's completion could bring a lot of revenue to Wells.

Cllr D Denis received a statement by post from Dr C Weston expressing concerns about the potential loss of accessible green space for public use and the loss of mature Beech trees which are habitats for wildlife. M Weston asked that the developers carry out a comprehensive biodiversity and ecological survey.

PRESENTATION BY SIMON SHARPE (Architect with Boon Brown)

S Sharpe gave an outline of the proposed development by Stonewater Group Housing Association. He explained that trees on the eastern boundary were proposed to be felled and did not have TPOs on them currently. The site for development is just over two hectares with a public right of way just inside the northern boundary and inside the eastern

boundary. The latter he reported is not very well used, unlike the right of way on the northern boundary which is the location of the Strawberry line.

The proposal is for 106 homes. 76 of these are houses and 30 are flats. 40% of the homes are legally secured as affordable through Section 106 agreement. All homes meeting National Planning policy funding framework's definition of affordable homes at first occupancy. The plans have been submitted to Somerset Council as well as plans for the New Rugby Club at Haybridge.

The land at Charter Way falls into area of land on the Neighbourhood plan (Site WL2) The Haybridge site falls into Wookey Parish as well as St Cuthbert Out PC is allocated for the New Rugby Club. The developments are inextricably linked. There is an expectation that the delivery of the Rugby Club will be ahead of the development of Charter Way.

S Sharpe acknowledged that the developers were aware of the Local Plan, the Wells Neighbourhood plan and its appendices and Wells design guide and master plan designs for the Charter Way site.

S Sharpe is happy to share the following documents for Ecological surveys, Nutrient neutrality assessments, Strategy for delivering the mandatory 10% biodiversity net gain, Transport assessment, Flood risk assessment, Drain strategy and Sports provision assessment.

106 homes are required at this site or the development will not be deliverable. S Sharpe informed the committee that there were consequences for each home to have garden, electric charging points and for the inclusion of photovoltaic cells and air source heat pumps and that was that the northern right of way be preserved and not the eastern boundary right of way and that the trees are felled to maximise the land.

S Sharpe said that he is very receptive to feedback from Councillors and attempt would be made to accommodate any suggestions made.

Cllr L Agabani asked S Sharp to clarify what he meant by his comment "If the development does not go ahead, the rugby club will go bust"

Cllr L Agabani asked S Sharp to clarify what he meant when he suggested that if the trees were not felled and if provision has to be made for the Strawberry line, that the development would not become viable. Cllr L Agabani asked why developers are not making up the numbers with flats? S Sharpe did not respond that this was an option that could be considered.

S Sharpe responded that the new Haybridge site will have better facilities in the New Club house which will provide an income stream for the Rugby club.

Cllr D Orrett asked about parking on the development.

S Sharpe responded that although he didn't have the numbers of parking spaces, he drew the meetings attention to the plan and explained that every house/flat would have at least one or two spaces in line with government guidelines and that there was also visitor parking provided.

There was a brief discussion regarding the inclusion of rear access from gardens for the purpose of residents using bicycles. It was confirmed that every property would have a rear access point.

20/25/PE PLANNING APPLICATIONS RECEIVED FOR CONSIDERATION

- 1** 2025/0192/FUL
Deferred decision from previous committee. See photo appendix.
Wells Health Centre, Glastonbury Road, Wells BA5 1XJ
Recommendation – Refusal
Material consideration: (5) Loss of habitats, (9) Flood risk
- 2** 2025/0214/HSE
Erection of single-storey rear extension.
64 Jocelyn Drive Wells Somerset BA5 2HA
Recommendation – Approval
Material consideration: (2) Design and appearance
- 3** 2025/0218/HSE

Erection of 2 single-storey rear extensions.

37 Ash Lane Wells Somerset BA5 2LR

Recommendation – Approval

Material consideration: (2) Design and appearance

- 4 2025/0176/FUL and 2025/0177/LBC
Proposed construction of new educational play equipment, installation of water tank, pump and pipework to draw water from the moat
The Bishops Palace Market Place Wells Somerset BA5 2PD
Recommendation – Approval
Conditioned that a child friendly surface be included in the place of cobbles.
- 5 2023/2221/FUL
Construction of a bund and installation of boundary fencing (retrospective) [amended Location Plan and Site Plan received 17.01.2025, and amended ownership certificate received 24.01.2025]
Tor Hill Works Constitution Hill Wells Somerset BA5 3NT
Recommendation – Deferral of decision until full environmental impact assessment has been received by Natural England.
- 6 2025/0271/VRC
Variation of condition 2 - Plans List (Compliance) and removal of condition 8 (Biodiversity Net Gain) of Planning Consent
2024/0490/FUL (Erection of a single dwelling, including associated parking and landscaping) (Decided)
Land At 356033 146235 Churchill Avenue Wells Somerset
Recommendation – Approval
Material consideration: (2) Design and appearance (5) Positive environmental gains
- 7 2025/0191/FUL
Replacement roof. Removal of existing roof covering, before reinstating with breathable membrane & replacement 400 x 200 Brazilian Grey/Green nail fixed slates (revised application form & reference 27.02.25).
School House North Grove Wells Somerset BA5 2TD
Recommendation – Approval
Material consideration: (2) Design and appearance
- 8 2025/0342/HSE
Alterations & extensions, to include single storey side extensions to north and south, and creation of off street parking area.
Atelier 33 Charter Way Wells Somerset BA5 2GJ
Recommendation – Approval
Material consideration: (2) Design and appearance
- 9 2025/0402/FUL
Change of use of proposed ground floor storage unit within a 22- unit apartment block, into a 1-bed apartment. Work has started on the main build, but currently being built as a storage unit.
Park Wood House Glastonbury Road Wells Somerset
Recommendation – Refusal
Material consideration: (6) Loss of areas for recycling bin storage

20/26/PE APPEAL DECISIONS

- 1 APP/E3335/W/24/3349133
Plot 1, The Old Chapel Bakery, Union Street, Wells, Somerset BA5 2PU
• The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.

- The appeal is made by Mr Gabriela Roberts of Gabriela Roberts Architecture against the decision of Somerset Council.
 - The application Ref is 2024/0695/FUL.
 - The development proposed is described on the planning application form as 'This application proposes an amendment to permission 2023/0096/FUL to change from 2 large units to 4 smaller units while retaining the original building fabric'.
- Decision: The appeal is dismissed.

- 2** Appeal Ref: APP/Q3305/W/24/3348485
Cheddar Valley Inn, 22 Tucker Street, Wells, Somerset BA5 2DZ
- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Red Oak Taverns Limited against the decision of Mendip District Council.
- Page 3 of 4
- The application Ref 2023/2351/FUL, dated 1 December 2023, was refused by notice dated 18 March 2024.
 - The development proposed is 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.
- Decision: The appeal is dismissed.

20/27/PE NOTIFICATION ONLY

- 1** 2025/0227/TPO – Notification only
T1 - Ash - Crown reduction and prune by 1/3
37 Wheeler Grove Wells Somerset BA5 2GB
- 2** 2025/0233/TPO - Notification only
Willow group - Pollarding of trees to the crown (to approx. 3.5m) (M1064).
Land At 354259 145304 Strawberry Way South Wells Somerset
- 3** 2025/0336/PAH - Notification only
Erection of a single storey rear infill extension, which would extend beyond the rear wall of the original house by 3.95 metres, with a maximum height of 3.30 metres and an eaves height of 2.10 metres.
36 Burcott Road Wells Somerset BA5 2EQ

20/28/PE LOCAL PLAN CONSULTATION

No updates received.

20/29/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.

20/30/PE ANY OTHER MATTERS OF URGENT REPORT

The Town Clerk has contacted the Church Commissioner regarding Palace Woods. There have been promises of a planting program in November. The Church Commission will be invited to a Planning and environment meeting in the near future.

Cllr D Orrett reported that there were many incidents of flyposting around the city at the moment. The Town Clerk reiterated that fly posting is an offence and historically has been difficult to manage. It is a Somerset role to remove offending posters, but the Outside Spaces Team will be asked if it's possible to fit a brief sweep of the city to remove as many as possible.

20/31/PE DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 7pm, Thursday 17th April 2025

Minutes Signed by the Chair Date