

MINUTES of the meeting of the PLANNING COMMITTEE held at Mountfield, Bridport on Monday 6 January 2025 at 7.00pm.

PRESENT Cllr Ian Bark (in the chair)

Cllrs: Nigel Amor, Sarah Carney, Kelvin Clayton, Anna Killick, Paddy Mooney and Anne Rickard.

ALSO PRESENT: Three members of the public, and Will Austin (Town Clerk).

PUBLIC FORUM

David Mitchell, a resident of Gordon Court on Flood Lane, addressed councillors regarding housing and other development matters in the vicinity of his home. He was aware of plans for Sidney Gale House and considered them to be excellent. On Flood Lane, he had previously been advised by Dorset Council that the development would be complete by now, but this had not happened. The site needed clearing, and rats and other wildlife were present. This may have been exacerbated by rough sleepers at the site, and he would like to see the former Connect building on the site demolished as soon as possible. He asked that the Town Council make representations to this effect. He noted that the proposals for the Fisherman's Arms site included some social housing but was disappointed not to see more.

John Gordon, also a resident of Gordon Court, advised of his concerns about the potential adverse impact of construction traffic access via Flood Lane, for the Flood Land and Sidney Gale House developments. There was a need for a separate entrance, for Sidney Gale House in particular.

Members discussed:

- The Town Council's concern to see delivery of social housing as a priority, and the inclusion of this priority in the council's draft five-year plan;
- An opportunity to raise residents' concerns with Dorset Council at a meeting scheduled for 29 January 2025, and beforehand;
- Scaled down plans for the Flood Lane and Fisherman's Arms sites;
- The Town Council's previous support for plans to demolish the former Connect building;
- The extent of rough sleeping at Flood Lane. Mr Mitchell advised there were now two tents, but there had previously been up to 11; and
- Whether there was currently a lot of parking at Sidney Gale House.

The Town Clerk advised he would raise the concerns expressed, with Dorset Council.

Cllr Paul Hartmann spoke on behalf of Symondsburry Parish Council, whom he represented on property, planning, and construction matters. He noted the Town Council's conditional support for proposals by National Highways to

repurpose the Eype Picnic Area as a maintenance depot, and advised that Symondsburry Parish Council had also commented. He expressed the Parish Council's disappointment at the Town Council's response, including the suggestion of funding for car park improvements in Bridport. He considered this to be both a local and national facility issue, which should be dealt with as a Section 43 matter. It was not, and this indicated that it was not considered important by National Highways. Symondsburry Parish Council had commented on biodiversity and landscaping issues, and had questioned where current users, including commercial vehicles, would go if the site was closed to the public. He also considered that local employment would be adversely impacted, including through the impact on Dorset Council Highways. The planning statement was lengthy but weak, and Symondsburry Parish Council had objected because there was no 'plan B'. Alternative sites were available.

The Chairman commented that the matters raised by Cllr Hartmann had all been discussed with National Highways when they attended the previous meeting of the committee. Cllr Nigel Amor reinforced this comment, whilst complimenting Cllr Hartmann on his report.

The Chairman thanked members of the public for their input.

70. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Jonathan Bourbon and David Worthington.

71. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

72. MINUTES

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 2 December 2024 be confirmed as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

73. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

RESOLVED: that the recommendations set out in column 4 of the attached [Schedule A](#) be forwarded to Dorset Council.

74. PLANNING DECISIONS

The Town Clerk reported for information, the planning decisions received relating to applications previously considered by the Committee, ENCL: 3953.

RESOLVED: that the planning decisions be noted.

75. BRIDPORT AREA NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Bridport Area Neighbourhood Plan Joint Councils Committee held on 28 November 2024 be received and adopted.

Cllr Sarah Carney asked for further information about proposals to identify housing sites.

Cllr Anna Killick asked what progress had been made towards a primary residence policy.

The Town Clerk advised he would ask the Project Manager to provide updates on the issues raised by Cllrs Carney and Killick.

76. HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORTATION MATTERS

Cllr Nigel Amor reported that there were ongoing problems with street lighting on Victoria Grove. The Town Clerk advised he would pursue this with Enerveo.

The Town Clerk reported on discussions with Dorset Council about market parking. Proposals to remove a restriction on parking in town centre laybys on wet market days, when these were not occupied by stalls, were being pursued, along with further changes to parking arrangements on South Street, to accommodate both traders and residents.

77. LICENSING APPLICATIONS

No licensing applications had been received for consideration at the meeting.

The Town Clerk advised he would pursue training on licensing matters for the committee, but that the training budget for the current year had been exhausted.

78. COMMUNICATIONS AND ONGOING ISSUES

Cllr Sarah Carney asked whether any further information had been provided on the likely date for Dorset Council's consideration of a retirement living application off of South Street. The Town Clerk advised that the last information he had received, in December 2024, was that the application would not be considered before February 2025, but said that he would seek a further update.

The meeting closed at 8.20pm.

The next meeting of the Committee will be held on 27 January 2025