

# **MINUTES FOR THE PLANNING COMMITTEE**

# **MONDAY 22ND JANUARY 2024 IN THE GUILDHALL**

Present: Councillors L Auletta (Chair), T Cooper, J Cummings (from 1835), J Hodgson (from 1840) and L Smallridge.

Apologies: Cllrs Allen, Bennett and Collinson.

In Attendance: Member of the public, Cllr Beavis, S Halliday (Governance and Projects Manager).

### **1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

**To receive apologies and to confirm that any absence has the approval of the Council.**

Cllr Auletta read out a statement about how the meeting would be conducted and recorded.

The apologies were accepted.

*The Committee will adjourn Standing Orders for the following items:*

### **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

The Chair of the Traffic and Transport Forum invited all Councillors to attend the AGM on 31st January in the Guildhall, and will send on information which can be emailed out.

*The Committee reconvened Standing Orders.*

### **2. CONFIRMATION OF** **MINUTES**

**To approve the minutes of 18th December 2023 and update on any matters arising.**

The minutes were approved as an accurate record of proceedings. There were no matters arising.

### **3. TREE WORKS APPLICATIONS**

**To make recommendations on the following tree works applications:**

3a. 4034/23/TCA - T1: Oak - Reduce 1x primary limb by 2 metres to appropriate subsidiary branches back to boundary, remove lower secondary limb & reduce upper secondary limb by 1-2 metres (see image) to clear from adjacent property to the West. Totnes Castle, Castle Street, Totnes, TQ9 5NU.

Support

And to note (Totnes Town Council application):

3b. 0040/24/TCA – T1: Magnolia - reduce the crown on the south side by up to 1.5m, there is evidence of previous maintenance & we will go back to this & no further, this is to remove the encroachment onto neighbouring property & T2: Sweet Bay - Prune bush on all sides by up to 1m. This bush is blocking light to a window also remove suckers coming off the bay & T3: Holly Bush - Prune bush on all sides by up to 1m - this bush is blocking light to a window & T4- T6: Buddleia - Prune bush on all sides by up to 1m & T7: Bay - Prune bush on all sides by up to 1m remove all suckers & T8: Hazel- Prune bush on all sides by up to 1m. St Mary’s Church, High Street, Totnes.

Noted.

### **4. PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

**To make recommendations on the following planning applications:**

*Note: Cllrs Allen and Hodgson observes and do not vote on any applications which would potentially be discussed at a Development Management Committee meeting at SHDC.*

4a. 4021/21/VAR - READVERTISEMENT (revised plans) Application for variation of condition 2 (approved drawings) of planning consent 4165/17/FUL. Development site at SX 809597, Steamer Quay Road, Totnes.

Object. The concerns raised by the Committee in January and May 2023 still stand, namely:

* Overmassing of the site in the revised extension plans which seem too significant a change to be a variation to an application that has expired in terms of the volume of the building (rather than footprint), and the Committee would suggest that a new application is submitted given timing and the scale of the changes applied for.
* Flood risk.
* Car Parking – there are very few spaces (19) provided for the number of staff and visitors which will exacerbate parking on neighbouring residential roads.
* Design – the building will look very monolithic from the river which is a tourist access point to the town (contrary to DEV20 Place shaping and the quality of the built environment). The previous stepping down of the top storey at the South Eastern end towards Paradise Walk was critical to ensuring that the building form responded to its landscape context, this has now been lost.

On reviewing the latest variations to revised plans, the Committee also has concerns about:

* Façade Treat – appears fussy and incoherent in appearance.
* Fencing – the Committee understands the requirement of the high fence to ensure the safety of residents but is concerned that running alongside the existing Paradise Walk footpath in its entirety is detrimental to the public realm. Could the fence return to the side of the building to enclose the resident’s garden, thereby lessening the impact?
* Lack of a revised hydrology report to address the lowering of the building and additional excavation required.
* NHS provision – how the overstretched local NHS provision in the town will bear the additional pressure brought on it by this facility.

4b. 4115/23/FUL - Creation of a new 1 bedroom, 2 storey terraced dwelling by subdividing the existing house and garden and adding a single storey extension to the south. 29 Pathfields, Totnes TQ9 5TZ.

Comment - No objection in principle, but the Committee would like to see a condition that the new dwelling is used as long-term housing rather than as a holiday accommodation business.

4c. 4111/23/LBC & 3999/23/HHO – Listed Building Consent and Householder application for extensions, renovations and alterations including conversion of existing double garage (which historically was a cottage) into ancillary domestic accommodation with associated link extension linking the accommodation into the existing main house. New potting shed extension on the rear of the existing vinery. Other minor renovations and alterations. Wrinklehorn, Bourton Lane, Totnes, TQ9 5JF.

Support. The Committee is appreciative that its concerns have been sensitively addressed.

4d. 3987/23/HHO - Householder application for first floor extension & conversion of garage into habitable accommodation. Oak Tree Cottage, Weirfields, Totnes, TQ9 5JS.

Comment – don’t object in principle but the Committee has concerns about the flat roof over the former garage and how this fits visually with the existing pitched roof of the house.

4e. 3963/23/HHO - Householder application to convert detached garage into a home office with shower room. 10 Sparrow Road, Totnes, TQ9 5PR.

Comment – the Committee would wish the building to be ancillary to the main dwelling. As the garage structure is close to the road and to maintain the streetscape, the Committee would suggest the use of wooden shutters to conceal the glass door and window on the front elevation.

4f. 3769/23/FUL & 3770/23/LBC - Listed Building Consent for amalgamation of flat 1 & 2 into one dwelling, associated internal reconfiguration & creation of first floor garden terrace. Flat 1 & 1a Plymouth Road, Totnes, TQ9 5PH.

Comment – the Committee would ask the Heritage Officer to consider the following:

* Concerns about the removal of the chimney stack and how this will affect the visual appearance of the terrace [Totnes Neighbourhood Plan policy En3: Historic and Built Character].
* Concerns about the removal of walls on the ground and second floor which is a loss of the original plan form in a listed building [Totnes Neighbourhood Plan policy En3: Historic and Built Character].
* Loss of sunlight and privacy to the neighbouring property through the creation of a roof terrace – consider a translucent screen rather than the proposed slatted railings.
* The Committee does not object to fewer subdivisions on the rear windows.

4g. 3580/23/FUL - Change of use of former bakery to residential dwelling and associated conversion works including demolition and rebuild of existing rear extension and construction of new rear canopy. The Old Bake House, South Street, Totnes, TQ9 5DZ.

Support.

4h. 3996/23/FUL - Change of Use to 3no apartments with parking. Cocos Nursery, Station Road, Totnes, TQ9 5JR.

There was a vote to suspend Standing Orders to allow Cllr Beavis to speak. Cllr Beavis asked about the loss of potential employment space. The Committee came back into Standing Orders.

Comment – regret the loss of employment space but do not object to the proposed conversion.

It being 2010hrs, the Committee voted to extend the meeting by 20 minutes.

4i. 2689/23/LBC - Listed building consent for partial demolition of chimney stack extension & repair to remaining stack & bell tower. Bowden House, Totnes, TQ9 7W.

Support.

4j. 4131/23/FUL - Proposed installation of roof-mounted photo-voltaic panel array, repointing of existing stone wall finishes & works to existing door & window joinery. The Forge, Collins Road, Totnes, TQ9 5PJ.

Support.

4k. 3960/23/LBC - Listed Building Consent for "Phase 1" replacement of windows & façade finishes. 29 High Street, Totnes, TQ9 5NP.

Support, but not without with concern that some work appears to have begun prior to consent being received (stripping of slates and replacement windows).

4l. 4091/23/LBC - Strip and reinstate natural slate roofs to lean to, replacement of guttering and downpipes. Angel Yard Cottage, South Street, Totnes, TQ9 5DZ.

Support.

**5. CASTLE STREET RESTRICTIONS**

**To reconsider the problem of large vehicle damage to properties on Castle Street and any recommendation to Full Council on the signage proposal.**

Cllr Hodgson explained that in her County Councillor capacity she has been asked about the town’s view on additional signage for height and width restrictions on Castle Street, and the limitations of Devon Highways to replace or install bollards.

It was **AGREED** that the new signage is appropriate, but that it is needed lower down Castle Street before/on the junction with North Street which would give any oversize vehicles the facility to turn around in the car park. However, it was felt that this won’t solve the ongoing problem of drivers ignoring signs.

### **6. PENINSULA TRANSPORT STRATEGY CONSULTATION**

**To consider the Peninsula Transport draft transport strategy and make a recommendation to Full Council [consultation closes on 5th February].**

Cllr Auletta updated on a Peninsula Transport webinar that she had attended and explained the comments as drafted. To **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that the Council submits the following responses to the questionnaire:

[Note: questionnaire response options are: strongly support, support, neutral, oppose, strongly oppose]

Q1. What do you think of the Peninsula Transport Strategy? Neutral

Q2. When considering transportation needs, to what extent do you support the four priority outcomes set out in the strategy?

* Easier Journeys. Support
* Going Electric. Strongly support
* A Connected Peninsula. Support
* Completing the Transport Network. Strongly Support

Q3. When considering how Peninsula Transport delivers the strategy to 2030, to what extent do you support the proposals set out under each area of transport?

* Walking and Wheeling. Strongly support
* Bus and Coach. Strongly support
* Rail. Strongly support
* Electric Vehicle Infrastructure. Strongly support.
* Roads. Strongly support.
* Airports and Ports. Oppose
* Digital, Technology and other Enablers: EV demand forecasting, carbon quantification and other technical support to local authorities. Neutral
* Digital, Technology and other Enablers: delivery of pilot schemes in freight and rural mobility. Strongly support.

Q4. Looking at the challenges, priority outcomes and proposals, is there anything that you feel is missing from the Transport Strategy? Please let us have any comments on other areas or themes that Peninsula Transport should be focussing on (100 words)

The SRN is not extensive within the South Hams and the MRN route network, which is therefore critical in maintaining good transport links, is inconsistent in quality/capacity. Torbay has a population of approx 125,000 - links towards Exeter have been enhanced recently, those towards Plymouth have not. Improvements to the A385 through Totnes need to be prioritised. The A385 is a heavily trafficked route causing negative impacts to both users of the road and the amenity of the town. Page 22 of the Economic Connectivity Study Technical Report indicates the A385 as having only 10,000 vehicles AADF, but the DfT figures shows that the bridge in Totnes actually carries 21,000 vehicles. There is a morning rush hour of commuting traffic between Torbay and Plymouth, and in the opposite direction in the evenings. The section of A385 within Totnes needs to be improved: junctions need redesigning to smooth traffic flows (reducing congestion and pollution within the AQMA) and to lessen severance across the A385 (thus enhancing active travel options within Totnes and neighbouring villages).

Q5. Do you have any comments on the draft Peninsula Transport Strategy? (250 words)

With limited funding it is important to ensure that smaller road schemes - tweaking what is there - are considered as high a priority as large infrastructure schemes.

There is insufficient emphasis on sustainable local travel - more cycle routes could be provided adjacent to existing roads with farmers compensated for a loss of field margins and the planting of additional hedgerows through DEFRA's ELM scheme. Joined up working with landowners is needed.

The officer will discuss with the Clerk how Council consideration of this recommendation can be considered in order to meet the consultation deadline.

### **7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**To note the date of the next meeting of the Planning Committee – Monday 19th February 2024 at 6.30pm in the Guildhall.**

Noted.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm

Sara Halliday

Governance and Projects Manager

January 2024