

# **MINUTES FOR THE PLANNING COMMITTEE**

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

Present: Councillors T Bennett (Chair), L Auletta, J Cummings, J Hodgson.

Apologies: Cllrs S Collinson, T Cooper and L Smallridge.

In Attendance: 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 Bennett 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**

There were no members of the public.

*The Committee reconvened Standing Orders.*

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

**To approve the minutes of 18th March 2024 and update on any matters arising.**

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

### **3. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND DEPUTY**

### **To:**

### **a. Make a recommendation to Full Council for the Chair of the Planning Committee for 2024/25 (effective May 2024); and**

To **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that Cllr Bennett is appointed Chair of the Planning Committee.

### **b. Elect a deputy chair for the Committee (from May 2024).**

It was **AGREED** to appoint Cllr Auletta as Deputy Chair from May 2024.

### **4. TREE WORKS APPLICATIONS**

4a. 0859/24/TCA – T1: Common Holly - remove. 26 Fore Street, Totnes, TQ9 5DX.

A decision notice was received on 22nd April for this application. However, the Committee would request that a replacement tree is planted in a suitable location.

### 4b. 1241/24/TPO - T1: Monterey Cypress - remove, limb failure onto road. Totnes Magistrates Court, Ashburton Road, Totnes, TQ9 5JY.

Comment – the Committee would welcome the Tree Officer’s comments on this application and would suggest that the limbs at risk are removed and that the condition of the tree is assessed on an annual basis.

### **5. PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

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

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

5a. 0974/24/FUL - Proposed construction of a single dwelling & associated parking (resubmission of 3417/23/FUL). Land at SX 796 606, Collapark, Totnes.

Support. However, the Committee has concerns about the design not including any guttering and the impact of rainwater runoff on the property and the neighbouring properties.

5b. 0621/24/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 (re-submission of 4115/23/FUL). 29 Pathfields, Totnes, TQ9 5TZ.

Comment – the Committee has concerns that the first floor space is included in the habitable space calculation but that the head height makes its function uninhabitable. The Committee would repeat the comment that it made in January 2024 on application 4115/23/FUL that it would like to see a condition that the new dwelling is used as long-term housing rather than as a holiday accommodation business.

5c. 0645/24/OPA – Outline Planning application with some matters reserved for a single two storey dwelling within curtilage of Spring House. Spring House, Dartington, TQ9 6EU. Consulted as neighbouring parish.

Cllr Hodgson declared a personal interest.

Comment – in principle the Committee does not object to the site being developed for an additional dwelling but it has concerns about the quantum size of the dwelling proposed.

5d. 4268/23/FUL – Erection of prefabricated ‘pop-up’ takeaway café. Car Park Longmarsh, Steamer Quay Road, Totnes, TQ9 5AL. Consulted as neighbouring parish.

Object. Inadequate information is provided in the application with regards to the following:

* Waste Management – no plan provided detailing the disposal of packaging/cup[ generated through sales and in food/drink preparation, localised litter picking and or how waste water will be appropriately disposed.
* Water Provision – where will this come from and how will it be stored?
* Power Generation – the Council objects to any noise or fumes generated from a generator adjacent to a natural space.
* Design Quality of the building – this is inadequate given the location as the river gateway to the town and adjacent to a green space.
* Pedestrian Safety – no mention of measures to ensure that vehicles manoeuvring in the car park will not hit queuing customers or the opening flap of the building.
* Sanitary Provision – the lack of toilet facilities at Longmarsh already causes problems in the vicinity. Portaloos should be considered.

5e. 1004/24/HHO – Householder application for a first floor extension & conversion of garage into habitable accommodation (resubmission of 3987/23/HHO). Oak Tree Cottage, Weirfields, Totnes, TQ9 5JS.

Comment – the Committee’s comment on application 3987/23/HHO from January 2024 still stand, namely that it doesn’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.

5f. 0736/24/HHO - Householder Application for extensions & alterations to existing dwelling. Windrush, Kingsbridge Hill, Totnes, TQ9 5TA.

Cllr Bennett declared a personal interest. Object - It was **AGREED** to circulate the final text to all Cllrs for additional comments before submitting a response.:

Object.

Site Context - Windrush is located at the edge of the designated NP Settlement Boundary, being the final house at the top of Kingsbridge Hill lane. It provides a visual foreground to the well-utilised adjacent accessible public viewing point from where Dartmoor can be seen on the horizon, with Totnes' historic town centre in the valley below.

The existing house is tucked into the hillside, appearing as a modest bungalow from the road, with a roof ridge height which is slightly lower than its immediate neighbour. Its form is therefore recessive in both near and far views, with its shallow gable ended roof blending into its context. Whilst shapes of roofs along Kingsbridge Hill differ, a shared characteristic to all is a shallow pitch, responding contextually to the Grade II Listed early 19C villa Highfield (Summercourt) half way up the lane.

The site is also visible from various points along Fishchowter's Lane, an important ancient greenway (designated PRoW) on the other side of the undeveloped valley to Kingsbridge Hill. The views from Fishchowter's Lane are characterised by natural landscape features, with built forms being recessive and not breaking the brow of the hill visually. This path provides walks for residents in a town which is acknowledged to be deficient in public open space.

It is critical that any proposal for the site occupied by Windrush respects this highly sensitive context.

The Committee has the following comments:

• The proposed additional upper floor is not sympathetic to, or in keeping with, the natural landscape and neighbouring properties (which have shallow pitched roofs) in such a prominent and visible location. It will be seen driving into Totnes from the Dartmouth direction, and from local green spaces and footpaths, for example the adjacent public viewing point and Fishchowters Lane. The DAS notes that the design is 'defensive' to the North and West, resulting in elevations which provide nothing positive to the street scene, thus detracting further from the views.

• A flat roof design is not appropriate for the location, and is not a characteristic building form seen in this area of Totnes. The Committee supports the planning officer’s pre-application advice.

• Size of the windows and the impact on light pollution and solar glare in the undeveloped natural valley.

We consider that the proposal is not in conformity with the following TNP policies:

* V1a. Local Identity - respecting local distinctiveness and historic character in land use.
* EN1c. Scale and character to be in keeping with the site and surroundings.
* EN1d. Maintaining or enhancing local identity and distinctiveness.
* EN2c. Development and Design: be in scale and keeping with its site and setting, protecting the local landscape and important views.

4.4.1 Landscape Setting of Totnes: "The high quality undeveloped landscape around Totnes frames the town as it nestles in the surrounding hills... This is particularly important at key 'gateway' site to the town - for example views descending Kingsbridge Hill."

EN4. 2. New building should not be of a height or mass to obscure important views... nor of a height to break the historic skyline

(the height and volumetric mass of the upper floor will result in its profile breaking the top of the hill when observed from various angles – photographs provided).

We noted that EN3.2. Historic and Built Character the NP states that "good innovative design offering a fresh interpretation of local distinctiveness will be welcomed". This Policy provides the opportunity for a revised design to be submitted with a diminished volume visible from the road, and utilising a shallow roof pitch to create a different form that is both contextual and less prominent.

5g. 0730/24/HHO and 0731/24/LBC – Householder application and Listed Building Consent for internal reconfigurations, new access from side path, thermal upgrade to rear elevation with changes to fenestration and replacement windows to principal elevation. 8 Bridgetown, Totnes, TQ9 5AB.

Comment - the Committee supports the creating of an entrance in the external wall. However, the Committee has concerns on the proposed removal of internal walls which could be original and would welcome the Conservation Officer’s views.

### **6. CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN CONSULTATION**

**consider the Totnes Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan ahead of an upcoming South Hams District Council consultation and make a recommendation to Full Council [consultation date to be confirmed].**

Cllr Hodgson gave an update that the planned consultation. The Committee **AGREED** that collating more detailed information for the proposed conservation area extensions to strengthen the case for inclusion would be useful.

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

**To note the date of the next meeting of the Planning Committee – Wednesday 22nd May 2024 at 6.30pm in the Guildhall.**

Noted. The Committee noted the change of day due to lack of non-Bank Holiday Mondays in May.

The meeting closed at 8.15pm.

Sara Halliday

Governance and Projects Manager

April 2024