

# **MINUTES FOR THE PLANNING COMMITTEE**

# **MONDAY 19TH AUGUST 2024 IN THE GUILDHALL**

Present: Councillors T Bennett (Chair), L Auletta, T Cooper J Cummings, J Hodgson (left at 19.25) and L Smallridge.

Apologies: Cllr Collinson.

In Attendance: Member of the public, District Cllr Allen, Cllrs Beavis and Trant, and 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**

In relation to item 3a: Cllr Hodgson had received representations requesting that the current temporary buildings for workers on the South West Water site are removed once works are complete; and Cllr Auletta had received apologies from a Dartington Trust representative who confirmed that the revised plans for the solar farm caused less concern than those submitted previously.

*The Committee reconvened Standing Orders.*

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

**To approve the minutes of 15th July 2024 and update on any matters arising.**

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

### **3. 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.*

3a. 2929/23/FUL - READVERTISEMENT (revised plans and documents) Installation of photovoltaic solar arrays together with transformer stations, site accesses, internal access tracks, security measures, access gates, other ancillary infrastructure and landscaping and biodiversity enhancements. Land at Littlehempston Water Treatment Works, Hampstead Farm Lane, Littlehempston.

The Committee voted to suspend Standing Orders to allow District Cllr Allen to speak about bat numbers in Buckfastleigh which have significantly decreased this year. The Committee voted to return to Standing Orders.

Object. The Committee supports the concerns raised by Staverton Parish Council about transport routes to the site and has the following additional concerns:

* Temporary compound for works buildings and tarmacked area is shown on the plans - concerns that this could lead to longer-term, permanent retention of these buildings and the tarmacked surface if the plans for the wider scheme are approved. It is noted that some of these buildings already appear to be in place.
* Impact on biodiversity - the flood plain and grazing marsh habitat would be lost and it is the only example on the River Dart. This point hasn’t been identified in officer comments from the South Hams District Council or Devon County Council.
* Footpath/cycle path – the plans do not show the proposed footpath and cycle path link from Littlehempston to Totnes. South West Water has a statutory commitment to increase access across its land.
* Impact on Bats - effect of the solar array on the behaviour of greater horseshoe bats which use the river corridor from Brixham to feed and reach the roost in Buckfastleigh; and the loss of animal grazing on the grazing marsh will be detrimental to dung beetle numbers which the greater horseshoe bats feed on.
* The Historic England comment is useful. However, it hasn’t assessed the impact of the solar farm on views from the riverside path.

If the District Council is minded to support this application, the Planning Committee of the Town Council would want it conditioned that:

1. The works compound area of buildings and tarmac area are returned to grass/farmland once construction is complete; and
2. Cycle and footpath is shown/included in the planned development area drawings as part of South West Water’s statutory commitment to increase access to its land and prove a much needed off-road route between Littlehempston and Totnes.

3b. 2125/24/FUL – Erection of a dwelling. 2 Dorsley Cottages, Harberton, TQ9 6DL.

Object. The design of the dwelling is acceptable but the Committee has the following concerns:

* Insufficient soakaway for the size of the dwelling.
* Overmassing of the site which is impacting on the area available to provide a soakaway and biodiversity net gain on site.
* Biodiversity Net Gain deficit and the removal of the holm oak – a report suggests that the location of the building within the site could be moved which would mean that the tree could be retained. The Committee is disappointed to see the majority of biodiversity net gain is proposed to be met off site from an application purporting to be a low-carbon development/ecohouse.
* Safety of access – the route into the new dwelling would appear to be conflicted and across private land (a concern raised by a neighbour); and the lack of pavement along the Plymouth Road to this junction is not conducive to active travel.

### **4. LICENSING APPLICATION**

**To consider the following application to vary the current Premises Licence at Morrisons Daily Totnes Service Station (formerly known as Morrisons Service Station) at Station Road, Totnes, TQ9 5JR.**

**The application is to extend the:**

* **Supply of alcohol off the premises to 24hours daily Monday to Sunday.**
* **Remove the conditions listed in the Annex 2 & 3 of the current premises licence and add in Annex 2 the conditions listed in Section M of the variation application.**

The Committee voted to suspend Standing Orders to allow: Cllr Beavis to speak about the impact of this proposal on the residents, some of whom are vulnerable, in Priory Drive; and Cllr Trant to express concerns that any anti-social behaviour spilling into Borough Park could have a negative impact on future funding for facilities in the park. The Committee voted to return to Standing Orders.

Cllr Bennett shared representations that he had received from residents in Station Road about existing anti-social behaviour around the Petrol Station, and Cllrs shared concerns about the impact on Rushbrook, lack of security, proximity of the skate park and Borough Park, and that the points made by the Council to a previous application for a 24 hour licence for this business still apply. It was **AGREED** that the officer would find the previous response, update and circulate to Committee members for comment.

Totnes Town Council’s position is that it objects to the variation for the following reasons:

•             Public Safety – concern that the location could attract those driving under the influence of alcohol. Protection of the staff working in the store between 0000-0600.

•             Prevention of Public Nuisance – the service station sits in a residential area and noise will adversely affect the residents of Priory Drive and Station Road. Concerns that the proximity of Borough Park could see those purchasing alcohol using the park for consumption and creating anti-social behaviour problems in this locality.

•             Prevention of Crime and Disorder – 24 hour sale of alcohol could see this location become a magnet for the homeless, drug and alcohol addicts.

•             Protection of Children from Harm – impact on young people given the close proximity to KEVICC, Rushbrook, the Skate Park and Vire Island.

Cllr Hodgson left the meeting at 19.25hrs.

### **5. NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK**

**To consider to Government’s consultation on ‘proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework and other changes to the planning system’ and make any recommendation to Full Council (deadline for responses 23rd September 2024).**

It was **AGREED** to circulate the text of the recommendation to Committee members for comment:

To **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that it replies to the consultation with the following comments:

* Housing Numbers – there is not enough evidence on the topography and landscape of an area to be able to support the new-build numbers required in the proposed changes.
* Community Infrastructure Levy should be included for all new builds.
* No mention of the proportion of social housing to affordable housing that should be attained.
* No mention of the environmental standards required of the new buildings.
* Insufficient detail about, and no commitment to provide, the infrastructure required (roads, schools, health) to support the year-on-year house building targets.

The Committee voted to suspend Standing Orders to allow District Cllr Allen to request that the Committee forwards any draft response to her to feed into the South Hams District Council’s consultation response. The Committee voted to return to Standing Orders.

### **6. TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT FORUM**

**To note the minutes from the Traffic and Transport Forum and Steering Group held on 31st July, including the recommendation from the Steering Group under item 2 (Peninsula Transport Implementation Plan) and make a recommendation to Full Council.**

Noted. To **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that it supports the intension of being an official stakeholder with Peninsula Transport but that engaging solely at Town Council Level has previously met with limited response, and therefore the Town Council should also seek District and County Councillor representation with Peninsula Transport.

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

**To note the date of the next meeting of the Planning Committee – Monday 16th September 2024 at 6.30pm in the Guildhall.**

Noted. Cllr Smallridge sent her apologies for the September meeting as she will be away.

The meeting closed at 7.55pm.

Sara Halliday

Governance and Projects Manager

August 2024