



MINUTES FOR THE PLANNING COMMITTEE MONDAY 27TH APRIL 2026 IN THE GUILDHALL

Present: Councillors L Auletta (Chair), T Bennett, S Collinson, T Cooper, J Cummings, J Hodgson (from 18.37) and M Trant.

Apologies: Cllr Smallridge.

In Attendance: Members of the public, Cllr Beavis 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 Auletta read out a statement about how the meeting would be conducted and recorded. The apologies from Cllr Smallridge (holiday) were accepted.

The Committee adjourned for the following item:

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Members of the public made representations in relation to item 5b, planning application 0611/26/FUL, change of use at 4 Birdwood Court ('Centre'). As residents in neighbouring properties and in South Street, whilst they are supportive of having an arts centre as described, they raised the following concerns about the application:

- Noise insulation/sound proofing of the building – current levels are insufficient as it is on the walls only and no measures taken on the large windows or in the roof space. This afternoon an event with amplified music was audible (the bass and song) inside a neighbouring property. Windows need to be closed during performances and the air conditioning system fully utilised to provide ventilation.
- Inconsistencies in the application about the use of the roof terrace. Any use is a loss of privacy to neighbouring properties where windows and gardens can be looked into/onto.
- Waste management – the number of bins has grown from two to five and these are overflowing with the current hours of operation.
- Hours of operation – 10.30pm is too late for a music curfew based on sound levels experienced during the day. A more robust noise management plan is required.
- Windows and Doors – do not believe that what has been installed has permission.

The Committee reconvened.

It was **AGREED** to bring forward discussion of item 5b.

5b. 0611/26/FUL - Change of use of existing first floor building from cafe/restaurant (A3 now E) to a Cafe and Performing Arts Venue (Sui Generis). 4 Birdwood Court, High Street, Totnes, TQ9 5SG.

CLlr Trant declared a personal interest.

Comment – The Planning Committee is supportive of the change of use to sui generis to reflect the arts centre space; however, this support is subject to the following points being addressed:

- Change of Use - that the change of use solely as an arts centre, noting that a drinking venue would not be supported in this location.
- Noise (ref. "Acoustic Visit" Report and Birdwood Management Plan) – the Committee has concerns that the mitigation measures described do not sufficiently address impacts on residential amenity. It is noted that the nearest affected dwelling has been incorrectly identified in the Acoustic Visit report and there is a closer and less well screened property. Details should be provided of: mitigation employed to prevent transmission of low frequency vibration through the concrete framed building; confirmation of the glazing specification (air gap and whether acoustic glass has been used) and sealing of the windows and entrance doors to prevent noise leakage; sound insulation under the roof (as solid walls constitute minimal surface area within the interior). It has been noted that background noise levels in the interior are high and a recent concert has caused further concern in this regard.
- Ventilation System – confirmation that the extract/intake fresh air ventilation system is operational, appropriate for the venue capacity and properly baffled for external sound. The system that was described on a previous site visit is not visible.
- Air Conditioning - confirmation that the existing internally fitted units are sufficient to keep the interior environment acceptably cool for the venue's capacity with the windows completely closed (we note the likelihood of considerable solar gain causing excessive internal temperature during the day also).
- Accessibility – no accessibility report has been provided to accompany the proposed change of use. The Committee would expect to see proposals to achieve compliance with Building Regulations Part M and the Equality Act 2010.
- Use of Roof Terrace – there are inconsistencies in the application stating that it isn't being pursued as a viable option, but also mentioning that it will only be accessed until 5pm. For clarity the use of the terrace beyond 5pm is not supported as it would cause significant detriment to residential amenity and the Committee would ask that any approval should include this as a Condition.
- Waste Management – the Committee requests that a comprehensive waste management plan is produced for the proposed extended operating hours and the type and volume of waste stored. Despite additional bins being added to the bin location these are often overflowing, exacerbating the existing seagull problem around Civic Square car park. The Committee also requests some form of visual screening as the bins are seen from a busy public footway and negatively impacts on visual amenity within the Conservation Area.
- SHDC Environmental Health – the Committee welcomes and supports the Environmental Health Officer's comments and proposed Conditions, and requests that a site visit is made by an Environmental Health Officer to ensure that the sound proofing and noise mitigation measures mentioned in the application are in situ and operating effectively; and to confirm waste management arrangements are sufficient for the proposed extension in operating hours.

2. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

To approve the minutes of 16th March 2026 and update on any matters arising.

The minutes were approved as an accurate record of proceedings.

3. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND DEPUTY

To:

a. Make a recommendation to Full Council for the Chair of Planning Committee for 2026/27 (effective May 2026); and

To **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that Cllr Auletta is the Chair of the Planning Committee for 2026/27.

b. Elect a deputy chair for the Committee (from May 2026).

Cllr Trant was elected as Deputy Chair of the Planning Committee for 2026/27.

4. TREE WORKS APPLICATIONS

To make recommendations on the following tree works applications:

4a. 0963/26/TCA – T1: Magnolia - Crown height reduction by up to 3m T2: Beech - Crown height reduction by up to 3m. Glebe Coach House, Manor Way, Totnes, TQ9 5HP.

Object. Without the inclusion of an arboricultural report, there is insufficient information about the requirement for the works or the most appropriate pruning method for tree health. If the Tree Officer is content with the works once a report is submitted, the Committee would not wish to see the application again.

4b. 0913/26/TCA – T1: Yew – removal of overhanging branches, overgrown environment. Bogan Cottage, North Street, Totnes, TQ9 5NZ.

Object. Without the inclusion of an arboricultural report, there is insufficient information about the requirement for the works or the most appropriate pruning method for tree health. If the Tree Officer is content with the works once a report is submitted, the Committee would not wish to see the application again.

4c. 1021/26/TCA - T1 Maple – Crown height reduction by up to 1.5 metres in branch length vertically and approximately 0.5-1m in branch length laterally, in order to reduce the overall crown size and reshape the canopy, leaving a balanced and natural form appropriate to the species. Pruning cuts to be made to suitable growth points in accordance with BS3998:2010. Remove no more than is necessary to achieve the specified reduction, while retaining a flowing branch structure and a well-furnished canopy, 10 Warland, Totnes, TQ9 5EL.
Support.

4d. 1033/26/TCA – T1 Laurel – removal of hedge and replacement with either Hornbeam or Beech as a hedge or a crab apple tree to allow for continued privacy between properties to be maintained to a height of 3 - 3.5m. 49A High Street, Totnes, TQ9 5NP.
Support.

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 South Hams District Council (SHDC).

5a. 2051/25/OPA - Application for Outline Planning Permission with some matters reserved, access & layout, for commercial units (Use Classes E(g)(iii)). Land at Ngr Sx 797 614, Nellies Wood View, Dartington [consulted as a neighbouring parish].

Cllr Bennett updated that there had been a number of representations by the public at the Dartington Parish Council meeting and that the Council had objected to the plans.

Comment – The Committee is supportive of the employment space designation in principle, however, there should be strict controls on the types of business and hours of operation at this site. The Committee has the following concerns about the application:

- Footprint - The height of the building is acceptable. However, the footprint is too large and the Committee is concerned about its encroachment into a wildlife corridor at the rear of the site and associated removal of trees and vegetation. The Committee welcomes the landscaping at the front of the site to screen from the residential area and road and would not wish to see this reduced should the footprint be moved/amended.
- Material Palette/Design – a more sympathetic palette, for example timber cladding, would be welcomed to improve the visual amenity from the residential area and from the A385, the main road into Totnes. Designs that come forward under a detailed application must be of high quality with a considered roofscape and should avoid dark grey/black which results in an over-dominant appearance.
- Flooding – the Committee would wish to see the Devon County Council Flood and Coastal Risk objections addressed in relation to providing additional evidence of mitigation measures for the site to be policy compliant.
- Biodiversity Net Gain – the Committee does not support Biodiversity Net Gain off site and wish to see this addressed through the reduced footprint of the buildings.

5c. 0136/26/HHO - Householder application for gabled extension to the north elevation and other alterations. Causen Cottage, The Grove, Totnes, TQ9 5ED.

Comment – the Committee supports the volume and scale of the extension in principle. However, the Committee has concerns about:

- Inconsistencies in materials to be used – the application form states standing seam metal, the plans show natural timber and slate.
- Windows – no details have been provided about the sight lines/pattern of the windows on the front elevation, and no south elevation plan has been provided. It is unclear if the windows will be installed in the extension, or if all windows in the dwelling will be replaced.

The Committee objects to the installation of an illuminated EV charger set into the front elevation stone wall which emits a blue light/glow 24hrs a day, making it highly visible at night. NB this is not included in the Climate Emergency Form despite already being fitted.

The Committee voted to extend the meeting by 30 minutes.

5d. 0722/26/FUL - Planning application for change of use of internal and external areas to a Class E use ancillary to the existing Class B2 use. Unit 6, Burke Road, Totnes, TQ9 5XL.

Cllr Trant declared a personal interest.

Support, subject to the change of use to Class E being linked to the current occupier of the building.

5e. 0845/26/HHO - Householder application for conversion of garage to kitchen with single story rear extension & raised terrace & provision of additional parking space. 17 Courtfield, Totnes, TQ9 5RQ. [Consulted as a neighbouring parish].

Comment – the Committee is concerned about the loss of vegetation in the front garden; and would request that the proposed large flat roof of the extension is a green roof.

5f. 0618/26/HHO - Householder application for like for like replacement of a fire damaged roof. Heversham, Rhine Villas, Bridgetown, Totnes, TQ9 5BD.
Cllr Bennett declared a personal interest.
Support.

5g. 0666/26/VAR - Variation of condition 4 (self-build) of planning consent 3048/24/OPA. Land at Sx 787 607, Wall Park, Totnes.
Support, subject to Biodiversity Net Gain mitigation.

5h. 0867/26/ARC - Application for approval of details reserved by conditions 4 (Slates), 5 (Eaves/Verges), 6 (Render) & 7 (Ducts/Flues/Vents) of planning consent 3356/25/LBC. Fernleigh Cottage, Pomeroy Villas, Bridgetown, Totnes, TQ9 5BE.
Support, subject to the Heritage Officer's comments.

And to note:

5i. 0678/26/LBC - Listed Building Consent for rebuilding a structurally unsafe section of walling to the same width, height and style. The Guildhall Officer, 5 Ramparts Walk, Totnes, TQ9 5QH.
Noted.

6. LICENSING APPLICATION

To consider the following application: Premises Licence (live music, late night refreshment and supply of alcohol) on 3 Fore Street, Totnes, TQ9 5DA.

Object – there is insufficient information provided to make a decision.

7. DISABLED PARKING AND CONTROL OF WAITING AMENDMENT ORDER

To consider a disabled parking and control of waiting amendment order proposed for Lower Collapark.

There is no objection to the proposed disabled parking and control of waiting order for Lower Collapark.

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING AND MAY MEETING

To note the date of the next meeting of the Planning Committee – Wednesday 20th May 2026 at 6.30pm in the Guildhall.

Noted. Cllrs Cooper and Collinson gave apologies for this meeting.

*The Committee **RESOLVED** to exclude the press and public “by reason of the confidential nature of the business” to be discussed and in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960. (CONFIDENTIAL by virtue of relating to legal and/or commercial matters, staffing and/or the financial or business affairs of a person or persons other than the Council)*

9. TOTNES NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REVIEW

To consider the outcome of the health check meeting for the Totnes Neighbourhood Plan and the requirement for any future work (commercial).

It was **AGREED** to defer discussion until a note from the meeting discussing the health check with the consultant has been produced.

The meeting closed at 8.25pm.

Sara Halliday
Governance and Projects Manager
April 2026