



## North Petherton Town Council

Town Council Office, Small Hall, North Petherton Community Centre  
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Town Clerk: Miss Joy Norris

Minutes of the Planning Committee held on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> February 2025 starting at 19:15hrs in The Small Hall, Fore Street, North Petherton, TA6 6QA

### **Present:**

**Chair:** Councillor M P Herbert

**Town Councillors:** S Habberfield, L Hyde, S Sharman and J Taylor

### **In attendance**

Miss J Norris (Town Clerk)

1 member of the public attended the meeting.

### **P16/2025 Chair's Announcements**

The Chair thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

### **P17/2025 Apologies for Absence**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Spelman-Ives.

### **P18/2025 Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were made at this stage of the meeting

### **P19/2025 Minutes**

Consideration was given to the draft minutes of the meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2025

**RESOLVED** that subject to Minute P13/2025 D) having the bullet points in the resolution changed to numbers (i) and (ii) before they are signed, the draft minutes of the meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2025 be confirmed as a correct record.

### **P20/2025 Community Time**

This agenda item provides an opportunity for members of the public to speak on matters on the Agenda.

### **Speaker 1**

The Speaker said he had previously raised concerns about applications on this site which are on record.

Everyone who lives in Chapel Road is opposed to the proposed development.

In the new application the height of the dormer window would mean it overlooks the gardens of 4 properties and it would be the highest point in the area.

It has been mentioned that the fall-back position is to use the existing permission Q, which was granted on appeal despite the application site being in flood zone 3 and the need for the development not being proven. For last 12 months the building has been used to store furniture.

Chair's Initials

This is a speculative application.

## **P21/2025 Applications For Consideration**

To consider the Town Council's response to the applications listed below:

### **A) Application No 37/24/00079**

**Address:** Land Adjacent To, Chapel Road, Fordgate, Bridgwater, Somerset, TA7 0AR

**Application Type:** Full Planning Permission

**Proposal:** Erection of 2no. dwellings, on site of existing agricultural buildings (to be demolished). – Amended Plans

The Chair said this is convoluted and the Council is obligated to be fair to all parties and recognises that local knowledge is important. The Chair reminded the meeting that this site already carries an extant permission for a class Q barn conversion.

Committee discussion on the application included:

- The Ward Councillor said he had lived in Fordgate for 38 years and only seen the barn used recently for housing sheep and that was for a short period of time. It never was an agricultural building and guidance about granting section Q on sites other than those designated as Flood Zone 1 have been ignored.
- The application makes no attempt to change the land level and this will mean water run off into other properties
- The plans provided as part of the application show no means of access to the rhyme for the Internal Drainage Board (IDB) to undertake maintenance work which is a statutory function
- Housing in the area was constructed originally for canal workers on the Bridgwater & Taunton Canal
- Bristol & Exeter Railway built a level crossing which eventually became the bridge across the railway line and is still owned by the railway and should be maintained by network rail
- The developer has not addressed access to the site in the application nor mentioned any ongoing discussions to ensure there is safe access to the completed buildings.
- The site has no mains drainage and the plans do not address the impact of the downward flow on properties below which could be at risk
- It is neither a brownfield site nor infill site

The Chair suggested that the Committee should be treated this application as a brand new application. The extant Class Q permission is for a barn conversion; this application is for a demolition of the existing building and a replacement with a new building.

- Criteria for neither Class Q nor planning policies pertinent to this planning application have been met
- There is no evidence that site specific testing / surveys have been undertaken rather than just a desk top survey
- Is there a demonstrable need for housing in the area?

All Committee members present agreed that this should be considered as a new application

Chair's Initials
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The Chair explained that he had been listening with an open mind to the points raised about the application and in his preparations for the meeting he had compiled a list of policies that he believed had relevance to the application which he was willing to circulate should members so wish.

**RESOLVED** to adjourn the meeting until 10:50 (from 10:35) so that Councillors could read the list of relevant policies compiled by the Committee Chair.

Upon resumption of the meeting the Committee discussion continued

- It is not a like for like application (when compared to either the extant q permission or previous applications for the site) so is being treated as an application in it's own right
- The concerns raised regarding previous applications have not been fully addressed and in some instances the changes that have been made give rise to further concerns.
- The application has positive and negative qualities e.g. there is no public transport and no dedicated cycle path other than along the Canal, there is planned use of solar panels
- Reference in the application is to flooding assessment and climate change from the 2018 documents which are not the latest; there are updated documents published in 2022
- There could be contaminated land due to previous use

11: 03hrs -11:05hrs The Chair briefly suspended the meeting in order to check with the member of the public (who is a local resident to the application site) and the ward member if there has been any consultation by the developer regarding the development the response from both persons was “no”.

- It was noted that there is a business using the building adjacent to the barn
- a party-wall agreement will be needed – but this is not a material planning consideration
- There does appear to have been any dialogue with planning authority officers regarding the changes required following previous applications being refused
- No evidence has been provided of interaction with the self-build team
- The main form of transport / travel for residents of the finished properties would be car
- The adjacent existing properties are at a lower ground level to the application site and their risk of flooding would be increased by the proposed higher buildings
- Overlooking of adjacent properties
- The bat and wildlife survey with the application is now over 2 years old and the site is likely to have changed in that time providing homes to a greater diversity of wildlife
- Local knowledge suggests that there are Great Crested Newt habitats in the locality
- The application states there are no trees on the site but there are numerous large trees clearly and publicly visible
- The Internal Drainage Board (IDB) is the primary agency in the area responsible for the prevention and management of flooding
- Aspects of information provided in the application are misleading and some important documents, evidence and facts are missing.
- Notwithstanding the previous comments made about this application site, there are major concerns about flooding and access /highways and there needs to be cognisance of the IDB responses i.e. the application site is not suitable for residential development

**RESOLVED**

- (i) to object to the application primarily on the basis that it fails to comply with policies D1 (Sequential test etc and water course/flood

Chair's Initials

- (ii) defence), D13 (sustainable transport) and CO3 (Brownfield sites in countryside) To draw the planning authority's attention to the following policies which it is believed are relevant to the application and should also be taken into account before the application is determined:
- S1 Presumption in favour of development
  - S2 Spatial Strategy; Refers to the reuse of existing buildings, not totally demolish and build new properties
  - S3 Infrastructure Delivery; All new development that generates a demand for infrastructure will only be permitted if the reasonable and necessary on and off-site infrastructure required to support and mitigate the impact of the development is provided.
  - S4 Sustainable Development principles
  - S5 Mitigating the causes and adapting to the effects of climate change; whilst the 2018 requirements are addressed in the application, those in the 2022 version of the National Planning Policy Framework have been overlooked.
  - T4 Tier 4 Settlements – Housing; no evidence of housing need has been provided nor has there been engagement with local stakeholders
  - CO1 Countryside
  - CO2 Infill housing into the countryside - application refers to self-build but no evidence of dialogue with Somerset Council regarding need
  - D2 Promoting high quality and inclusive design; the spirit of this policy appears to have been addressed but the 3 dormer windows will cause an issue of overlooking which would need to be mitigated
  - D3 Sustainability and Energy in Development; the spirit of the policy has been addressed but the requirements have not been met fully.
  - D9 Self-build and Custom Build Homes Provision on Allocated Sites; self build has not been justified and there is no evidence of discussion with self build / affordable homes teams
  - D11 Replacement Dwellings in the Countryside – this is not a replacement dwelling as the barn conversion permitted under Class Q has not taken place
  - D23 Bat Consultation Zones - the survey provided was undertaken in 2022 and since that time the site has been allowed to naturalise so there could be significant change.
  - Ecology & Wildlife - residents have reported sightings of Great Crested Newts
  - D14 Managing the Transport Impacts of Development; the criteria to comply with this policy have not been addressed in the application especially the safety aspects and volume of vehicle movements
  - D19 landscaping; the application states there are no trees on the site - this is not correct and the existing trees offer visual amenity, shade and some ground water dispersal mitigation.

**B) Application No 37/24/00042/LE**

**Address:** Spitgrove Barn, Spitgrove Farm, Newton Road, North Petherton, Bridgwater, Somerset, TA6 6NA

**Application Type:** Full Planning Permission

**Proposal:** Erection of a detached garage and change of use of land from agricultural to residential

Committee discussion on this application included:

- Very little information has been provided about the building materials
- There is not currently a garage associated with the property

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**Note: 11:58 hrs RESOLVED to extend the meeting until 12:15hrs**

**RESOLVED** no objection to the application as it meets policies D2 and CO1

**C) Application No 37/24/00103/LE**

**Address:** Land, Garages and Storage, Between Queen Street and, Clare Street, North Petherton, Bridgwater, Somerset, TA6

**Application Type:** Full Planning Permission

**Proposal:** Erection of 1No. detached dwelling on site of existing garages (to be demolished).

Committee discussion on this application included:

- Parking in the area is very limited
- The application would make improvements to the existing building
- Clever and thoughtful design
- There is original cob wall which should be retained if possible

**RESOLVED** to support the application as it complies with policies D1, D2 and CO3.

**D) Application No 37/24/00110/FHY**

**Address:** 7 Tundra Walk, North Petherton, Bridgwater, Somerset, TA6 6FH

**Application Type:** Full Planning Permission

**Proposal:** Installation of a heat pump to the side West elevation of the house.

Committee discussion on this application included:

- Surprised work of this type needs planning permission
- Potential for noise pollution

**RESOLVED** to support the application as it meets policies S4, S5 & D3 recognising that mitigations may be needed to manage noise levels

**E) Application No 37/24/00107/FHY**

**Address:** Shepherds Haze, Farrington Lane, North Petherton, Bridgwater, TA6 6PF

**Application Type:** Full Planning Permission

**Proposal:** Replacement of timber windows, doors and cladding.

Committee discussion on this application included:

- Sustainable materials to be used

**RESOLVED** to support the application as it meets policies D2 and D3

Chair's Initials
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**P22/2025 Invoices for Payment**

Consideration was given to invoices for payment presented for approval.

**RESOLVED** to pay the invoices as detailed in the table below:

Payee	Invoice Date	Invoice No	Net	VAT	Gross	information
Blake Signs	03.02.25	SI1173	£45.00	£9.00	£54.00	Sign for Parker's Field
<b>Total</b>			<b>£45.00</b>	<b>£9.00</b>	<b>£54.00</b>	

The meeting closed at 12:13hrs.

Chair's Signature & Date