



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 and Highways Committee held on Monday 2nd June 2025 starting at 19:15hrs in The Small Hall, Fore Street, North Petherton, TA6 6QA

Present:

Chair: Councillor Herbert

Town Councillors: Baker, Bradford, Habberfield,¹ Herbert, Hyde and Spelman-Ives

In attendance

Somerset Council: Councillor Bill Revans

Miss J Norris (Town Clerk)

58 members of the public attended the meeting.

The Mayor opened the meeting and called for nominations for the Chair

PH1/2025 Election of Chair

RESOLVED that Councillor P Herbert be elected as Chairman of the Planning and Highways Committee for the civic year 2025 / 2026.

Councillor Herbert took the Chair.

PH2/2025 Appointment of Vice-Chair

RESOLVED that Councillor S Sharman be elected as Vice- Chairman of the Planning and Highways Committee for the civic year 2025 / 2026S

PH3/2025 Chair's Announcements

The Chairman's announcements included:

- **Reports of accident involving vehicle & child on crossing near Londis**, Bank holiday weekend. The police have been contacted to ask for the **facts** of the incident so that as part of the Town Council's continuing work on road safety any appropriate mitigations can be considered.

The Mayor has an update from the police on progress to start a speedwatch scheme. The next major project the Town Council will embark upon is identifying potential locations for siting a mobile speed indicator device (SID) , obtaining the necessary permissions from Somerset Council (including signage provision) and then purchase of the SID(s) and arranging the training for the person(s) who will be responsible for moving it around.

Chair's Initials

¹ Cllr Habberfield added to the list of attendees in accordance with the amendment agreed at the Planning and Highways Committee held on 14 July 2025. Minute PH15/2025 refers.

- **Agenda item - Application No 37/25/00018/EF**, Land North & South of Dawes Lane, North Petherton, TA6 6PT –an extension of time has been granted to the Town Council for submitting a response.
- **Agenda item Pre Application** JBA Consulting – information about forthcoming consultation re solar project - this has been postponed – it is regarding a site in / near North Newton. Originally public consultation was scheduled for July but this has been delayed to take into account school holidays
- **Somerset Bridge Planning Application No 37/24/00008** has been approved by Somerset Council (the Town Council had objected to the application). Cllr Revans has requested clarity on the procedure for informing local councils of items on the Somerset Council Planning Committee agenda as the Town Council were not aware that this application was listed for consideration.
- **Application 37/25/00006, East View Maunsel Road.** Is listed on the Somerset Council Planning North Agenda for June 10 and recommended for approval; the Town Council had objected to the application. The Committee Chair hopes to attend the meeting to vocalise the Town Council's objections.
- **Road closures in Wilstock and Stockmoor** - email / letter re Bloor & Persimmon to bring roads up to standard – only road in / out - private roads - responsibility of Bloor homes (not SC) – had a letter drop planned – consultation & timing is responsibility of the developer – should be better comms between developer & council – BR – problem with the system and SC don't get notification in advance, reliant on the developer to inform the Council

PH4/2025 Apologies for Absence

An apology for absence was from Councillor Spencer (he is not a Committee member).

PH5/2025 Declarations of Interest

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

PH6/2025 Minutes

Consideration was given to the draft minutes of the meeting held on 12 May 2025

RESOLVED to confirm the draft minutes of the meeting held on 12 May 2025 as a correct record.

PH7/2025 Applications For Consideration

Note: this application was moved up the agenda order due to the level of public interest.

The Town Council's response to the application listed below was considered:

A) Application No 37/25/00018/EF

Address: Land North & South of Dawes Lane, North Petherton, TA6 6PT

Application Type: Outline Planning Permission

Proposal: Application for Outline Planning with all matters reserved, except for access, for erection of up to

Chair's Initials

175 No. dwellings (including affordable housing), accessed off the A38, with provision of open space, ecological mitigation, and supporting infrastructure.

RESOLVED

- (i) To defer consideration of the application to a future meeting
- (ii) That the Town Clerk is requested to arrange a site visit for Councillors before the meeting when the application is to be considered.

PH8/2025 Community Time

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

The Chairman explained the Community Time procedure including time limits and asked speakers not to repeat what other had said.

Note:

- (i) *The speakers were all speaking about **Application No 37/25/00018/EF** Land North & South of Dawes Lane, North Petherton, TA6 6PT*
- (ii) *These minutes provide an overview of what each speaker said, they are not verbatim and do not include everything an individual speaker said.*
- (iii) *Where speakers provided a hard copy of what they said it has been appended to these Minutes.*

Speaker 1

The speaker said that the proposals which are being developed for the Park Lane Project include community benefits e.g. medical centre, care home and are the result of the agent and developer working in partnership with the community, the Town Council and the planning authority; the Dawes Lane project cannot demonstrate a similar level of community consultation and engagement.

Speaker 2

The application for Dawes Lane is for outline planning permission for a major development and there is strong feeling in the community against it.

The proposal is not part of any broad plan is not in the local plan and no significant community facilities are included in the proposal.

The application site is part of, or very near to, the Quantock Landscape Partnership Scheme (QLPS) area and building on it would be irreversible and change the landscape and environment forever.

The application site is not in a flood zone but the run off from such a new, large, development is bound to have a knock-on effect. Other negative impacts will include nature, transport and schools.

The proposal will damage the community and increases risk for existing properties and residents.

Speaker 3

The current Local Plan was agreed in 2019 and it does not allow for any development to the west of the town or the A38 as it was always such development would be detrimental to the town and the surrounding environment. If the application is permitted it will set a clear precedent for future residential development in the west of the Town council area.

There is still room and scope for development to the east.

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Regardless of location, before any major development is permitted, the provision of adequate infrastructure needs to be considered.
A new Local Plan is urgently needed.

Speaker 4

In addition to the comments made by previous speakers, there are serious objections to be made to the proposal on grounds of safety and transport including.

- No footpath on the north bound side of the A38
- No signalised traffic control

The speaker said that when Councillors undertake a site visit they need to see / walk the entire length of Dawes Lane and view the mixture of traffic and pedestrians that already use the road, any increase in use of the highway would be both inappropriate and dangerous.

The application does not give any detail of traffic ingress and egress to the development. Residents have suffered enough with recent developments.

Speaker 5

The speaker introduced himself and explained that he is a member of the Internal Drainage Board (IDB) and wished to raise the potential impact the proposal could have on flood risk and water management in a wider area.

The run off from the new developments overwhelms the existing water management / flood prevention system and the SUDS (sustainable drainage system) that were installed approximately 15 yrs ago do not work. SUDs, drainage ditches and similar services need to be maintained. When Stockmoor was being built the developers invested in a water storage / pumping system.

The Internal Drainage Board Chief Executive would like to meet with planners and developers to discuss the inclusion of measures that have a wider impact than just the immediate development proposal.

The speaker suggested that it may be beneficial for Councillors to have a site visit which includes seeing / understanding the route that water takes and where it ends up.

At present it seems like organisations are walking away from their responsibilities.

The Chair thanked the speaker and referred to a recent meeting that Councillors had with representatives IDB which had discussed the same matters.

Speaker 5

The speaker asked what thought has been given to managing the traffic going north and when the M5 is closed? People living in the older houses along the A38 already have problems getting out of their drives and this has been exacerbated by the new development with the associated additional traffic on that side of town.

The Chair stated that unfortunately there is not a planning policy that deals with traffic congestion.

Speaker 6

The local MP has spoken in parliament about traffic issues when the M5 is closed; the small, narrow, roads towards the Quantocks get gridlocked as drivers try to find alternative routes.

Speaker 7

On the Sterling Way development there is a notice saying “no through road” and people buying properties on the development understood

Chair's Initials

there was to be no access onto Newton Road, however it is possible to drive right through the estate from the A38 to Newton Road.

Speaker 8

The speaker had farmed at Parkbrook where it has been necessary to increase the capacity of spillways and are now running out of options. The speaker said he is not against future development but it must be done responsibly and cohesively, recognising that there will be a knock-on impact on land which is some distance from the actual development site.

Speaker 9

As a local business owner more development is not an advantage as there is no purpose in having a business if it can't be reached.

The speaker has lived in the North Petherton area for almost all his life.

Lots of people go past Somerset and do not stop.

There has to be responsibility from the community and councillors to stop the developments.. The Quantocks was the first place to be designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, do we want to destroy it?

Speaker 10

The speaker said he has been to a number of Council meetings and would like to know how much say the Town Council has over Somerset Council and Government policy etc on planning matters.

The Chairman responded that the Town Council is a consultee for planning applications. Town Councillors spend a lot of time researching which policies apply to individual applications and to identify where this is compliance or non-compliance.

The Chairman said that the Town Council's Planning Committee does listen to what the community say but the rules, whatever they are at the time, and they keep changing, still have to be met. Even if the Committee feels that a development is detrimental to an area or, not appropriate in some way, that must be backed up by saying which planning policies are not being met and then it is up to Somerset Council as the planning authority to consider all the information and make a decision as to whether or not permission is granted.

Note:

20:03hrs the Chairman checked if anyone else wished to speak and as no one responded he adjourned the meeting for 10 minutes to enable people to leave if they so wished and the presentation to be set up

PH9/2025 Pre-Application Information (on a without prejudice basis)

(i) Presentation - Park Lane Project (New Homes and Medical Centre)

The presentation made by Polden Planning is attached to the Minutes as Appendix 1

Questions and matters raised by Councillors during the presentation included:

- What guarantees are there of delivering the community benefits and social housing?–

The team giving the presentation said similar sites at Creech St Michael and Stoke St Gregory are examples of where similar community projects have been delivered; the developer has a track record of community provision and working with local councils and community groups

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- Why has a care home been included?
This is a commercial decision as the potential operator has evidence of demand in the area; they had been looking for a suitable site and approached the developer about the possibilities of working together.
- The land for medical centre will be gifted in perpetuity to the NHS; it will be up to the NHS when the new facility is built. The first business case has been approved by the NHS board. The NHS procedures require outline planning permission to be obtained before they can go any further.
- The proposed sight allocated for the new medical centre is significantly bigger than the current provision and will have scope to expand.
- The current surgery is leasehold which runs out in approx. 12 years; the Park Lane project offers significant expansion opportunities compared to what is available at present. The NHS had looked at a number of sites and discounted them for various reasons, this is the only viable site that guarantees North Petherton has a Drs surgery.
- It is difficult for Symphony (the provider of medical services / Drs surgery) to recruit staff due to the state of the current facility including the size, this means North Petherton residents have to go to other places for their medical care.
- Somerset Care leases out care homes, it doesn't run any.
- School provision - the developer cannot afford to gift land and make contributions to education as well as provide all the community benefits it has promised in the proposal.

The Chair suspended Standing Orders in order to enable the public to ask questions and raise any relevant matters.

- A person who lives opposite the proposed development access is concerned about water management; The A38 is now higher at a higher level than the house; when it rains it puddles across the road so vehicles have to drive through it resulting in pushing it over a greater distance, how can the road be relieved of such water retention – it is a frequent occurrence and a traffic danger
- A significant area has been set aside for cricket pitch – where is the parking and any associated buildings. A representative of the Cricket Club said this would be the subject of future discussion but it was hoped to work with nearby organisations such as the Scouts / Guides so that there could be some shared facilities.

There being no further questions or comments from the public the Chair brought the meeting back under Standing Orders and the usual meeting procedures.

The Committee were asked if they had any further questions or comments and the following was raised:

- A robust pedestrian crossing is needed
- (ii) JBA Consulting – information about forthcoming consultation re solar project
This presentation has been postponed to a future meeting as the public consultation is being re-scheduled to take place after the school summer holidays.

PH10/2025 Application No 37/25/00035/LE/

Address: Manor Farm, Primore Road, West Newton,
Bridgwater, Somerset, TA7 0DB

Application Type: Prior Approval Agricultural to Dwelling

Proposal: Application to determine if prior approval is
required for a proposed: Change of Use of

Chair's Initials

Agricultural Buildings to 1 No. Dwellinghouses (Class C3), and associated building operations.

The application was noted.

PH11/2025 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
Slashdotdash	24.05.2025	518	£36.00	£0.00	£36.00	Website update
Mr A Sutton	18.05.2025	223	£184.00	£0.00	£184.00	Grass cutting @ Communoity Centre
Amazon (Cllr Linda Hyde)	03.05.2025	DS-AEU-INV-GB-2025-223717613	£74.94	£15.00	£89.94	Lanterns for VE day
Slashdotdash	28.05.2025	INV-0026	£324.00	£0.00	£324.00	Base Hosting package & backup
Total			£618.94	£15.00	£633.94	

The meeting closed at 21:10hrs

Chair's Signature & Date