

**Minutes of the Environment & Planning Committee
held on Thursday 22 July 2021 at 6.30pm**

Present: Cllr Brake, Cllr Irven, Cllr Murphy, and Cllr Westcott (Chair)

In attendance: Jo Grellier, Clerical Officer

In the absence of the Clerk, Jo Grellier was Committee Clerk

21/147B To receive apologies for absence: (LGA 1972, section 85 (1))

Cllr Westcott proposed that ***“apologies given by Cllrs Campbell, Johnson and Terrett are accepted”***. Seconded by Cllr Murphy. Carried.

21/148B To receive any Declaration of Interests:

| Cllr | Item no. | Reason | Personal or Prejudicial | Outcome |
|-------------|-------------|--|-------------------------|---|
| Cllr Murphy | 3/37/21/023 | Recently purchased a property from the landowner | Personal & Prejudicial | Cllr left the meeting and did not take part in the discussion or voting |

21/149B Traffic evaluation in Watchet:

(i) Update from the Working group on a meeting with the appointed consultant

Cllr Irven tabled a working group progress report to update members. In the absence of the Clerk, Cllr Irven was delegated to progress matters as point of contact with Richard Fitter, contractor. A remote meeting was held by members of the working group prior to this meeting. This was followed by a remote meeting with Richard Fitter on Monday 19th July 2021. The group endorsed fully the recommendations and approach proposed, and he is proceeding with the work that the Clerk had commissioned him to undertake. The appendix records Richard Fitter's summary of what he will be undertaking over the next several weeks aiming to produce his report and a draft letter of objection for WTC to issue to SW&T planning committee in relation to the Cleeve Hill development, whilst raising concerns over their failure properly to follow required procedure for traffic evaluation.

Cllr Westcott thanked Cllr Irven for the detailed update and commented ***“we can see the matter is all in hand, well done to the working group on their progress”***.

21/150B West Street Car Park:

(i) Review of the 'Wildflower Project' – (See Appendix 1) circulated to members prior to the meeting

Members discussed the appendix in detail. Cllr Murphy proposed ***“Members approve the ‘Licence to Occupy’ document with the recommended additional clauses. Delegation is given to the Clerk to write to the Conservation Society expressing concerns of council regarding Wild Flower Project volunteers, requesting that the Conservation Society make it clear to their volunteers that the Wildflower Project contract is strictly between Watchet Town Council and The Conservation Society, and not the volunteers.*** Seconded by Cllr Irven. Carried.

(ii) Car Park Policy – to consider amendments outlined in (**Appendix 2**) – circulated to members prior to the meeting- Cllr Murphy proposed ***“the recommended amendments to the Car Park Policy are approved”***. Seconded by Cllr Westcott. Carried.

21/151B To address items received from the planning authority requiring attention prior to the next Somerset West & Taunton / Somerset County Council / planning meetings:

(i) Liddymore Farm- planning procedure and lack of consultation- *Update*

Somerset West & Taunton's response letter dated 14th July 2021, regarding the WTC complaint in connection with Somerset West & Taunton and Taunton Planning Committee on 10 June 2021 was circulated to members prior to the meeting.

JS

A long discussion ensued. Cllr Irven proposed **"an acknowledgement letter is sent expressing dissatisfaction with the response given, and an electronic copy of the meeting recording is requested. Members of the Committee are then invited to listen to the recording and collate thoughts. Cllr Murphy delegated to draft a response ready for approval at the next E&P meeting"**. Seconded by Cllr Westcott. Carried.

Plans to be discussed:

3/37/21/020 12 Lorna Doone, Watchet, TA23 0FD
Replacement of windows and doors at the back and the front of the property
The committee recommends approval

Cllr Murphy having declared a Personal & Prejudicial interest, left the meeting at 7.04pm

3/37/21/023 Land Adjacent to 1A St Decumans Road, Watchet, TA23 0AT
Variation of Condition No.2 (approved plans) of application 3/37/20/021
The WTC E&P committee cannot support a recommendation to support this application 3/37/21/023 which requests approval to raise the overall height of the building by 75 cm to accommodate a new master bedroom with the addition of roof lights, together with reconfiguration of the other bedrooms to allow a ground floor home-working office now to be accommodated.
Our concern is that there have been a series of amendments submitted after the original application for the development was approved and whilst the property has actually been under construction. It would appear that some of the amended layouts, including that requested under 3/37/21/023 for the ground floor office, have been constructed on site even before this latest amendment was submitted for approval. Originally the building appeared to start out as a two-storey dwelling, then changed to 2 1/5 now a full 3 storey design. We believe that the new configuration is not in keeping with the adjacent properties either side because it does not give an appropriate gradation of height between neighbouring properties. We suggest that if this 3 full storey design had been submitted in the first instance it may not have been granted approval, and that this piecemeal approach to gaining extra approvals could be considered as an inappropriate use of the planning process. We consider that approval should not necessarily be given just because it may already be under construction.

21/152B Matters for the next meeting
• liaise with the Clerk

Meeting closed at 7.15pm

Signed:.....


Date:.....
15/9/21