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# WEDMORE PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of a Meeting of the PLANNING COMMITTEE held at the Council Rooms, Grants Lane, Wedmore

On Thursday 25th May 2023 at 7:00pm

**Present**: Councillor Isobel Beacom\*, Councillor Farley, Councillor Tinney.

**In Attendance:** Lindsey Baker (Clerk) Pete Brown

1. apologies for absence

Councillor Loughery

1. **to confirm the minutes from the meeting of the planning committee held on 10th May 2023**
2. declarations of interest
3. public participation
4. matters arising and information for councillors
5. planning applications – considered included: -

50/20/0054/ACN

**Proposal**: Hybrid (full and outline) application. Full application for erection of 30 dwellings and formation of access, associated open space, landscaping and parking. Outline application with some matters reserved for 4 self-build plots.

**Location**: Land at Combe Batch, Wedmore. BS28

**Applicant**: C & P Developments (Wedmore) Ltd

The Clerk displayed the application and a discussion ensued.

**Resolved: The following OBJECTION was submitted to the Sedgemoor Planning Portal by The Clerk**

**OBJECTION**

Once again to the Parish Council’s consternation we must write to object to the amendments made to this application. It is with perturbation that the Parish Council have written this objection as at this stage, the Parish Council agrees the developer is consciously manipulating the material planning conditions to appear in its favour.

The very fact this application is still being considered given the length of time and the number of objections, not only from interested parties, but also consultees, does appear to smack of collusion raising further questions about the integrity of the relationship between the previous ‘Sedgemoor District Council’ and the Developer for this proposal.

Wedmore Parish Council continues to **OBJECT VEHEMENTLY** to this application for all the same reasons submitted in our last objection dated 27th March 2023. This application continues to cause a huge amount of angst amongst residents and the seemingly endless amendments and revisions to the scheme does nothing to ease these feelings for existing residents.

The anonymous document titled ‘Planning Policy (SDC), and the ‘Response to objections’ submitted by the developer demonstrate a very close parallel in content suggesting it has been written by an invested party. The Parish Council are surprised by the anonymity of the ‘Planning Policy (SDC)’ document given that all documentation should, due to the legal requirement to make comments available for public inspection have the relevant submission details otherwise they cannot be considered in the decision process.

While the supposed ‘verified’ Housing Need Survey appears to have been accepted without question by ‘Sedgemoor District Council’ despite their own department stating in November of 2021 that the affordable housing need publication which was updated in February 2021 superseded the 2018 HNA. Consent for a further 15 affordable homes at Strongvox (Phase 3) (50/20/00060) was granted, where at this time all but 3 of the additional net need was met. Since this time Cross Farm Phase 2 has also been submitted and awaits decision. This application proposes a further addition of 9 dwellings within the settlement boundary on an under used brownfield site that does not obscure views of the surrounding countryside from within the village. This proposal has 9 units of 3 or 4 bedrooms and range in size, two of the 3-bedroom units (22.2% of the units on site), are of a smaller scale and are semi-detached. Unit 6 is also a chalet-style bungalow, provided specifically for elderly residents, as most facilities (including the master bedroom and ensuite) are located on the ground floor. A further development at Paradise Barton is also waiting decision (50/22/0124) this development offers a further 3 affordable homes.

Wedmore Parish Council would like to urge Somerset Planning North to consider all applications awaiting decision before this application, as they believe that it will be proven this development is piggybacking an outdated HNS that has not been validated and is quoting data that has not been published! The council are concerned that this sets a dangerous precedent, any prospective developer would be able to conduct its own housing needs survey, to suit its agenda, irrespective of any quantified and verified requirement.

The Applicant maintains that the 4 ‘self-build’ plots are classed as an affordable housing product. However, under NPPF (footnote 26 to paragraph 61) states that the self-build properties can either be in the form of market or affordable housing. However, unless the applicants are willing to enter a S106 obligation that the 4 self-build properties will be managed by a housing association it has to be assumed that they will be privately built. In view of this the four self-build properties should be classed as part of the market housing. As consequence there will be 24 market homes and 10 affordable. The affordable percentage is therefore 29.4% which is far below the 40%minimum threshold set out in the Policy T2b. For this reason, the application fails to comply with Policy T2b and should be refused.

Utilising the population figure of 3292 provided by the applicant, there are in fact 122 separate objections equating to 3.7% of the population objecting to this application. Only 1 letter of support for the application means only 0.03% have shown support for this application since its submission in 2020.

The HNS carried out on behalf of the applicant, we understand, received approximately 100 responses equating to 3.03% of the population, of these the 14 indicating that affordable homes were required equates to a total of 0.42%. Surely the question raised here is how a development of this size can be sustainable when 99.58% of the population have either objected or shown no support.

The Parish Council will once again reiterate that both the Wedmore Neighbourhood Plan and the Sedgemoor Local Plan are valid from 2019 until 2032, currently in 2023 with 9 years of validity remaining, all allocations have been satisfied and, in some cases, surpassed!

The Parish Council believes that by creating a Neighbourhood plan supported by 85.5% of the 3292 residents of Wedmore, Blackford and Theale, subsequently adopted by Sedgemoor District Council the community were given the opportunity to guide development within our neighbourhood. Anything other than refusal of this application makes the adoption of a Neighbourhood Plan and the Local Plan a mockery. Ridiculing not only National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Government Legislation but the communities and the places they live!

50/23/00043

**Proposal**: Erection of first floor extension (roof raised).

**Location**: Stoneybridge View, Guildhall Lane, Wedmore, Somerset, BS28 4AL

**Applicant**: Mrs N Hutchinson

The Clerk displayed the application and a discussion ensued.

**Resolved: A ‘No Observation’ Comment was submitted to the Portal for Somerset Planning North by The Clerk**

50/23/00044

**Proposal**: Loft Conversion & installation of dormers on North & South elevations.

**Location**: Highfield Farm, Mudgley Road, Wedmore, Somerset, BS28 4DH

**Applicant**: Mr and Mrs Goldstraw

The Clerk displayed the application and a discussion ensued.

**Resolved: A ‘No Observation’ Comment was submitted to the Portal for Somerset Planning North by The Clerk**

50/23/00045/AGE

**Proposal**: Erection of 1no. dwelling on site of existing (to be demolished) with garden store & greenhouse to serve new dwelling and to house a new bat roost.

**Location**: Land to the West Of, Long Hill, Long Hill, Clewer, Wedmore, Somerset, BS28

**Applicant**: Mr Tucker

The Clerk displayed the application and Mr Brown presented the plans. Following some questions from Councillors which were subsequently answered by Mr Brown, Councillor Beacom thanks Mr Brown for his time.

**Mr Brown left the meeting at 19:35 PM**

A discussion ensued whilst the Councillors discussed the application.

**Resolved: The following comment was submitted to the Portal for Somerset Planning North by The Clerk**

**COMMENT**

Wedmore Parish Council would like to make a comment on this application.

In line with Policy D24 of the Sedgemoor Local Plan – Pollution Impacts of Development, the Parish Council would suggest a sensitive lighting plan is sought to mitigate the impact on wildlife, but especially the bats, given the proximity of the bat roost.

# (a). It was noted that the following applications had been granted permission: -

*50/22/00105/DT*

***Proposal:*** *Temporary siting of a mobile home for an agricultural worker.*

***Location****: Land to The North Of, Teal Farm, Sand, Wedmore*

***Applicant****: Caseley Farm Dairy Ltd*

*50/23/00012/CM*

***Proposal****: Erection of a two-storey extension to the West Elevation.*

***Location****: 6 Mudgley Cross Roads, Mudgley Lane, Mudgley, Wedmore, BS28 4TW*

***Applicant****: Mr & Mrs Edgecombe*

*50/23/00031/AGE*

***Proposal****: Application for the Prior Approval of the proposed change of use of Agricultural Building to 1no, Dwelling and associated operational development.*

***Location****: Barn North of, Wells Way, Heath House, Wedmore*

***Applicant****: Mr Bennett*

*50/23/00035/CM*

***Proposal****: Erection of single storey rear extension partially on site of existing (to be demolished).*

***Location****: Orchards, Sand Road, Wedmore, Somerset, BS28 4BY*

***Applicant****: Perriam*

*50/23/00036/CM*

***Proposal****: Alterations to site entrance including realignment of the North boundary wall, removal of a multi-bole Yew tree and the widening of the driveway.*

***Location****: Uplands, Grants Lane, Wedmore, Somerset, BS28 4EA*

***Applicant****: Mr Faithful*

*50/23/00038/CM*

***Proposal****: Erection of single storey extension to the NE elevation (revised scheme).*

***Location****: Mount House Farm, Westham, Wedmore, BS28 4UY*

***Applicant****: Mr and Mrs M Trego*

*50/23/0040/CM*

***Proposal****:  Erection of two storey two-bay garage with home office/storage above.*

***Location****: Box Cottage, Middle Stoughton, Wedmore, BS28 4PT*

***Applicant****: Mr Penberthy*

**(b). It was noted that the following applications had been withdrawn: -**

**NONE**

**(c). It was noted that the following applications had been refused: -**

**NONE**

**Date of next meeting** **– TBC**

**There being no further business the meeting was declared closed at 8:53 pm.**