

# WEMBDON PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of a meeting of the Wembdon Parish Council Planning Committee held at Wembdon Village Hall on 11<sup>th</sup> September 2023 that commenced at 7.00 pm when the following business was transacted.

Present: Councillors P Major (Chairman), C Chalk, D Claydon, D Gliddon, L Edwards and A Reed.

36/23 To receive any apologies for absence.

Apologies were received from Councillor M Phillips.

37/23 To receive declarations of any pecuniary interests on items relating to this agenda, which have not been previously declared in the Councillors register of interests.

There were no declarations of interest.

38/23 To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 10<sup>th</sup> July 2023.(5 in favour, 1 abstention as not present at the meeting).

It was resolved to approve the minutes as being a correct record of the meeting.

The Chairman signed the minutes.

39/23 To invite public speaking.

No member of the public had requested to speak.

40/23 To consider the Parish Council's response to the following planning applications.

23/19/00002/DD. Land to the south of Quantock Road, Bridgwater. Hybrid (full and outline) application. Full application for the erection of 114 dwellings, formation of signal controlled access off Quantock Road with associated infrastructure, landscaping and open space (phase 1). Outline application with all matters reserved for the erection of up to 240 residential dwellings with associated infrastructure, landscaping and open space (phase 2).

It was unanimously resolved to reiterate the Parish Council's previous objections to the application as follows:

## TRAFFIC GENERATION AND ROAD SAFETY

With the increase of traffic on Quantock Road as a result of the West Bridgwater development, and queues backing-up from the proposed traffic lights, there is likely to be an increase in rat-running through Skimmerton Lane. In the interests of road safety, both halves of Skimmerton Lane should be made one-way towards the A39, i.e. no entry from the A39. This should

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be considered experimental during the construction phase, with a view to making it permanent in the long term.

## SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

Other than the junction with the A39, there are no connections between the proposed development and the existing traffic-free cycling network in Bridgwater. Equally, there is no provision for off-road cycling within the development. There should be a safe cycling route along the south side of Quantock Road to the Whitegates roundabout, and the existing PROW to the south should be upgraded to a pedestrian / cycle way. Both of these should be secured by a s106 agreement. All the off-road paths within the development should be for shared use.

## SAFE WALKING AND CYCLING ROUTES

Particularly in the light of the COVID-19 outbreak and the subsequent increase in walking and cycling, WPC reiterates its previous comments, in particular its contention that insufficient consideration has been given in this application to providing, by means of a section 106 agreement, sustainable and safe walking and cycling connections between the site and the local facilities to the east, despite the implication in the Travel Plan that the primary route from the site to local facilities would be along the A39 Quantock Road for both pedestrians and cyclists. WPC considers that insufficient weight has been given to:

Somerset Future Transport Plan 2011-2026:

SUS 4 Cycling: ... We will support the provision of appropriate and well connected cycle facilities.

SUS 5 Walking: We will help people make more trips on foot and help people see the benefits of walking.

Sedgemoor Core Strategy (September 2011):

Policy D9: Proposals will ... Enhance the facilities for pedestrians, cyclists, those with reduced mobility and other users;

Policy D10: Development proposals that will have a significant transport impact should: ... Ensure provision is made for inclusive, safe and convenient access for pedestrians, people with disabilities, cyclists and users of public transport that address the needs of all;

Sedgemoor Local Plan 2011-2032:

Policy B16: Proposals that provide opportunities for cycling, walking and enhanced public transport both within the town [Bridgwater] and between key destinations including ... Minehead (A39 corridor) and the town's surrounding rural areas will be supported.

Likewise, although the Travel Plan mentions the existing public transport within the area, and the proposed bus route through the Cokerhurst Farm development (which is unlikely to be operating for several years), there has

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been no suggestion in the proposal that this development might finance any improvement to that provision.

At the meeting of the Wembdon Parish Council Planning Committee on 11 September 2023 it was unanimously resolved to make further objections as follows:

## PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY

PROW BW34/19 enters the site at its southern edge. No provision has been made for the PROW to link to footpaths within the development. A surfaced and lit route should be provided for PROW BW34/19, in the interest of pedestrian safety (Local Plan Policy D13).

To the south of the site, BW34/19 forms an important route to and from the site, including access to bus stops and the nearest local shop. It should be surfaced and lit, in the interest of pedestrian safety (Local Plan Policy D13).

## PLAY FACILITIES

As far as we can ascertain from the Applicant's drawings, only a single LAP is planned in the revised layout. Its location places it more than 100m from the majority of the dwellings in phase 1. We consider this provision insufficient.

41/23

To note planning decisions made by Somerset Council.

51/19/00003. Land at Cokerhurst Farm South of Wembdon Hill & North of, Quantock Road, Bridgwater. Hybrid (full and outline) application. Full application for the erection of 238 dwellings, formation of two new means of access onto A39, pedestrian/cycle link onto Wembdon Hill, public open space, parking and landscaping. Outline application with all matters reserved, for up to 437 dwellings, 500sqm (A1-A5) and/or community uses (D1)), 2.2ha site for up to 2 Form Entry Primary School and bus gate/emergency access via Inwood Road with associated infrastructure, landscaping and works. Granted.

The planning decision was noted.

End of minutes.