

Minutes of the meeting of the Planning and Consultation Response Committee held at 7.30pm on Wednesday 16th July 2025 in the Community Hall, Bruton

Present: Cllrs Bateman, Dunn, Fradley, Robinson & Taylor (from item 12)
In the Chair: Cllr Fradley
In attendance: Deputy Town Clerk
10 members of the public, including two agents for a possible housing development proposal (Agenda item 25/12, below)

P25/9 Apologies for absence (LGA 1972 s85(1)).

To receive any apologies for absence.

Apologies for unavoidable absence were received from Cllrs Baker and Jones.

P25/10 Declarations of interest

Members to declare any interests, including disclosable pecuniary interests (DPI) they may have in agenda items that accord with the requirements of the Town Council's Code of Conduct, and to consider any written requests from members for dispensations that accord with the Localism Act 2011 s33 (b-e) (This does not preclude any later declaration).

No interests were declared.

P25/11 Minutes of the meetings held on 30th April and 24th June 2025 (LGA 1972 sch 12 para 41 (1)).

That the Minutes of the Planning & Consultation Response Committee meetings held on 30th April and 24th June 2025 be approved and signed by the Chair.

It was RESOLVED 4-0-0 [For-against-abstain] that the minutes of the Planning & Consultation Response Committee meetings on 30th April and 24th June 2025 be approved and signed by the Chair.

The minutes of the Committee meetings of 30th April and 24th June 2025 were duly signed by the Chair.

At this point Cllr Taylor joined the meeting.

P25/12 Proposed housing development

To hear a presentation on proposals to submit a Planning application for the development of 9 houses on a site to the north of Tolbury Mill [the project], and to give Members an opportunity to comment and ask questions.

Before opening the discussion the Chair explained that the Committee would not be debating or deciding on the merits of the project until a Planning application was submitted, because at that point councillors would be expected to consider the application without having prejudged it. The purpose of the presentation was simply

to give the applicants and Committee members an opportunity to exchange ideas and information, anticipating and possibly mitigating foreseeable problems and concerns.

The architect co-ordinating the project drew attention to a scale model of the proposed development which had featured in a ‘pop-up’ consultation in the hall immediately before the Committee meeting. He reported that most of the questions asked and concerns expressed were about the public footpath crossing the site, the effect of the development on the town’s appearance, and the housing mix. He said that the right of way across the site would be maintained, and that the development viewed from the Dovecote would blend in with the existing townscape. The precise housing mix would be determined in discussion with Somerset Council (SC), but current indications are that two large properties would be built near the top (north) end of the site, for sale on the open market. Their sale proceeds would cross-subsidise the affordable housing, as would the sale of five two- or three- bedroomed properties lower down the site, closer to the town centre. The remaining two properties, also two- or three-bedroomed, would be available as affordable housing.

The Chair expressed the Council’s gratitude for the presentation. There were no questions or comments from members of the public, but several from councillors:

- The presentation implies that some affordable housing properties will be provided through a voluntary agreement with Somerset Council. Could this be confirmed, and if so, could such an agreement include a provision to give priority to local families?
- Has Somerset Highways been consulted about access arrangements as part of the pre-application process, and if so, could we have more details, especially in regard to construction traffic? The southern section of Coombe Street (by Library junction) is narrow and difficult to negotiate, particularly for large vehicles, and any increase in traffic would make severe congestion more likely.
- The proposed development may increase the risk of flooding in the town centre and along the River Brue. The frequency and severity of heavy rainfall is increasing because of climate change, so surface water drainage arrangements must be carefully future-proofed, with substantial spare capacity.
- The applicant should be encouraged to restore some of the trees and hedgerows which were a feature of the site in the 1920s, as this would at least do something to mitigate the inevitable harms to landscape and biodiversity consequent on green fields being turned into housing developments.
- Will the proposed application be for Outline or Full Planning permission?

The agent replied that he expects the application to be for Full Planning permission.

The Chair thanked the agent for taking the time and trouble to consult the public and tell the Committee about the project.

P25/13 New Planning applications

To consider the following application, make recommendations to the Local Planning Authority (LPA), and notify the full Town Council at its next meeting:

- i. [20/01494/HOU](#) **13 Burrowfield, Bruton, Somerset BA10 0HR** Formation of new parking area to front with requisite retaining walls, change of material from brick to render on walls of dwelling, change of material from concrete profiled tiles to natural slate to roof of dwelling. Erection of a porch to front elevation and Erection of new two storey extension to rear of dwelling **PARTIALLY RETROSPECTIVE**.

Members noted that several members of the public had submitted objections to the proposed development, both on Somerset Council's Planning Portal, and in person at the meeting of the Planning and Consultation Committee. Among the objection made by members of the public were the following:

- construction work on the development started in December 2024, over 6 months before the application for Planning consent was submitted;
- the neighbours who would be most affected by the development were not consulted, and their efforts to find out about what was proposed were rebuffed;
- the proposed large front porch and two-storey rear extension would overshadow neighbouring properties, resulting in a significant loss of light ;
- the proposed large front porch and two-storey rear extension would overlook the outdoor and indoor space of neighbouring properties (including a bedroom window), leading to a significant loss of privacy;
- construction noise associated with this (currently) unauthorised development sometimes starts early in the morning, even on a Sunday, and continues late at night, and this together with the burning of waste and the dumping of construction rubble causes disturbance and distress to neighbours;
- It appears that a recently erected outbuilding at the property is being used as a professional music studio, without benefit of Planning consent. It does not have sufficient acoustic insulation, and the loud music coming from it can be very upsetting to families living in neighbouring properties;

Members accepted the force of these arguments and noted that:

- starting work on a development of this scale without first obtaining Planning consent shows a regrettable lack of respect for the Planning process, undermining its credibility in the eyes of those who follow due process, and possibly encouraging others to flout the law in a similar way;
- the proposed front porch and two-storey rear extension look likely to impinge on the privacy of neighbouring properties and reduce their natural light;
- anyone suffering from excessive noise or other kinds of nuisance should report it to the appropriate authorities, namely the Police in cases of antisocial behaviour, and the Environmental Health Department of Somerset Council in cases of excessive noise;

- it is without the scope of this Planning consultation to consider whether an outbuilding at the same property constitutes permitted development, and whether its possible use as a music studio would require a Change of Use certificate, but the Committee has an obligation to uphold the integrity of the Planning system and expects the LPA to ensure that any breaches of Planning Law are challenged.

It was RESOLVED 5-0-0:

- 1) that the application be REFUSED on the grounds that the proposed development overlooks and overshadows neighbouring properties, compromising their privacy and natural light, and is therefore detrimental to their residential amenity;**
- 2) that before determining the application the Planning case officer undertake a site visit in order to gain a better understanding of the nature and likely impact of the proposed development on neighbouring properties, and also to check on any development that has been carried out without Planning permission;**
- 3) that should the Planning case officer be inclined to approve the proposed development, the application be referred to Somerset Council's Planning South Committee for determination.**

At this point (8.07pm) all but two members of the public left the meeting.

- ii. [25/01490/HOU](#) 12 Burrowfield, Bruton, Somerset BA10 0HR**
Reduction of levels at front of dwelling and formation of new driveway/parking area (Partially Retrospective).

Members regretted that the development had been started before seeking Planning approval, but they welcomed the provision of off-road parking in an area of Bruton where the problems caused by on-road parking are particularly acute. No objections have been raised to the proposed development, and it seems unlikely to have any deleterious effect on neighbouring properties or the surrounding area. Members noted that Somerset Highways do not appear to have any reservations about the proposals so long as measures are taken to prevent the discharge of surface water and debris onto the highway.

It was RESOLVED 5-0-0 to recommend APPROVAL of this application.

- iii. [25/01578/LBC](#) Glen House, 19 Quaperlake Street, Bruton BA10 0H**
Removing the suspended wood floor in the kitchen to expose the stone slabs below. Re-altering the opening between the kitchen and dining room to form a wider flat arch. Block a recently added external door to the utility room and replace it with a window. Add a partition in the family room. Alter the gas supply meter box location. Alter the shape of the modern bathroom in the southeast extension at first floor level. Reinstate the access to the cellar from the garden terrace.
Members noted that many of the proposed repairs and alterations would either enhance the property's heritage by reversing recent additions, or else have a neutral

impact. It is clear from details in the Heritage Asset Statement that much thought and careful consideration has gone into the planning of the proposed development, and that the overall effect would be to preserve the character of this historic property while adapting it to the needs and standards of modern living.

It was RESOLVED 5-0-0 to recommend APPROVAL of this application, provided that SC's professional Conservation Officer agrees with the Committee that the proposed development will not prejudice the historic character of the property.

iv. [25/01581/HOU](#) 9 Westfield, Bruton, Somerset BA10 0BT

Formation of vehicular access; and parking for 1 car.

Members noted that the proposed development involves little more than the removal of a roadside fence and the installation of permeable hard standing at the side of the property. Several neighbouring properties have similar arrangements, the proposed development would not alter the area's character or affect residential amenity, and no objections had been received. The Committee welcomes the provision of additional off-road parking in a residential area where there is limited on-street parking.

It was RESOLVED 5-0-0 to recommend APPROVAL of this application.

P25/14 Update on previous planning decisions - for information

To note decisions relating to applications previously referred to the Committee.

- i. 24/01651/FUL Land OS 9578, Cuckoo Hill, Bruton BA10 0AF**
Full planning application for the erection of 49 homes (including affordable homes) and associated works, including vehicular access, pedestrian links, garaging, parking, public open space and landscaping and associated environmental mitigation. **APPROVED**
- ii. 22/03565/COL Coombe Rise, Higher Tolbury, Bruton BA10 0DJ**
Application for a Lawful Development Certificate for the existing use of land for purposes ancillary to and in association with the use of Coombe Rise as a residential dwelling, along with the construction of a shed, the erection of a yurt and the siting of a lorry body, all of which are used for private and domestic purposes ancillary to and in association with the use of Coombe Rise as a residential dwelling. **REFUSED**
- iii. 24/01229/COU Mill Forge, 7 Mill Lane, Bruton, Somerset BA10 0AT**
Proposed use of existing ancillary accommodation to include holiday and short term letting. **APPROVED**
- iv. 25/00680/LBC 13 High Street Bruton Somerset BA10 0AB** Repairs to chimney, ground floor structure, rainwater goods, pointing. **APPROVED**

The meeting concluded at 8.21pm

Patrick Pender-Cudlip,
Deputy Town Clerk