BRUTON TOWN COUNCIL

**Minutes of the meeting of the Planning and Consultation Response Committee held at 7.30pm on Wednesday 18th November 2026 in Bruton Community Office.**

**Present:** Cllrs Baker, Bateman, Dunn, Fradley, Jones & Taylor
**In the Chair:** Cllr Fradley
**Attending:** Deputy Town Clerk
Two members of the public

**P26/23 Apologies for absence (LGA 1972 s85(1)).**
To receive any apologies for absence.
Cllr. K.Anderton had sent apologies for being unavoidably absent.

**P26/24 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 members declared an interest.

**P26/25 Minutes of the meeting held on 7th October 2026 (LGA 1972 sch 12 para 41 (1)).**
That the Minutes of the Planning & Consultation Response Committee meeting held on 7th October 2026 be approved and signed by the Chair.
**It was RESOLVED 6-0-0** [for-against-abstain] **that the Minutes of the Planning & Consultation Response Committee meeting held on 7th October 2026 be approved and signed by the Chair.**

The minutes were signed by the Chair.

**P26/26 New Planning applications**

**To consider the following application, make recommendations to the Local Planning Authority (LPA), Somerset Council, and report on them to the full Town Council.**

**26/02408/FUL Land OS 7163 Shute Lane, Bruton, Somerset**
Erection of four dwellings and associated works including access and landscaping.

In introducing this item the Chair pointed out that, in accordance with the Committee's Terms of Reference, its recommendations would be referred to the

Full Council (meeting on 24th November) in the first instance, rather than directly to the LPA, because the application was for more than three dwellings.

The meeting was attended by two residents with interest in the application, as occupants of properties adjoining the proposed development site. Before the Committee considered the application they were given an opportunity to comment on it, and made the following points:

- Over the last 21 years there has been a substantial increase of traffic on Shute Lane. Access to the proposed development is from a narrow and particularly dangerous section of the road (the first 300 yards from Bruton's West End), and although there is a 20mph speed limit on this section it is really observed.
- As a result, speeding drivers are often forced to brake sharply to avoid colliding with vehicles emerging from properties along this section, in many cases resorting to abusive words and gestures – clear evidence that there is a real problem.
- The proposed vehicular access onto Shute Lane is close to a bend, giving vehicles approaching Bruton very little time to reduce speed or stop for emerging vehicles.
- This section of Shute Lane is particularly dangerous for pedestrians, the most vulnerable group of road users, especially those dependent on pushchairs or wheelchairs. The road is narrow and edged by banks and dense hedges, with no footway or verges, so there is little space for motor vehicles and pedestrians to avoid each other. Where the road is slightly wider, parked cars encourage impatient drivers to speed up to 'beat' oncoming traffic, increasing the danger to pedestrians caught in the middle.
- Shute Lane is also very poorly lit, greatly aggravating the dangers for comparatively inconspicuous pedestrians after dark.
- Most occupants of existing properties along this section of Shute Lane avoid walking into town if they possibly can, and the idea that the proposed dwellings are convenient for walking or cycling into town is a joke.
- One property with a comparatively low impact on the site might be considered acceptable, but four properties is too much.
- The proposed 'housing mix' is of 3no. 220m$^2$ properties and 1 no. 240m$^2$ properties. These are large, high-end houses which are very different from the affordable properties that Bruton needs most.

Committee members went on to discuss the application, supporting many of the observations above and making additional points, including the following:

- Judging by the plans submitted, the proposed dwellings are substantial and extremely well-designed family houses. Much thought has clearly gone into their layout and landscaping, maximising privacy and minimising overlooking.
- Each of the proposed dwellings is large enough to accommodate (say) two parents and two offspring in their late teens, all potentially drivers or riders, so the 4-dwelling development could well host 12 or more cars or motorbikes. The regular emergence of so many vehicles onto a dangerous section of road would incur real risks for their drivers and/ riders, and for other road users - unless the junction were controlled by traffic lights.
- Unexplained references to "the existing pedestrian connections into Bruton" and to "a new footway alongside Shute Lane that links to the existing public footpath to the north" are puzzling and unclear. The evidence provided does not support the claim that "these improvements enhance pedestrian connectivity and encourage walking as a sustainable mode of travel".
- There is a public right of way along an old drover's path atop the steep hill at the back of the site (i.e. to the south of it), and it is fine for dog walking, but it is unsurfaced, uneven and unlit, steep, and often muddy, and totally unsuitable for anyone walking to or from work, school or the shops, particularly in the dark.
- Put simply, there are no safe or practicable walking routes into town for the elderly or anyone with mobility issues, let alone for users of pushchairs and wheelchairs.
- The Bruton end of Shute Lane lies at the bottom of a valley, and after heavy rainfall it is subject to surface run-off which increases the dangers for motorists and pedestrians alike, especially when a hard frost turns the water to ice. Constructing four substantial houses with associated hard standing on a steeply sloping field so close to the road is likely to exacerbate this problem.
- The Local Education Authority (LEA) considers the bottom end of Shute Lane so dangerous that children attending Bruton Primary School and Sexey's School are offered free transport, even though both schools are barely half a mile away. (The LEA does not normally offer children free transport unless they live at least 2 miles from school [for Under-8s] or 3 miles [for older children]).
- The Town Council and concerned residents have been complaining to Somerset Highways about the dangers of Shute Lane for many years, and the Authority appears to accept that there is a problem, even if a cost-effective solution eludes them. Given this, the Authority's response to this Planning application - "*Standing advice applies*" - seems quite extraordinary: it implies that the proposal does not pose sufficient significant risks to require an onsite assessment. Tolerating an existing risk is one thing, but showing so

little interest in a development that is likely to increase the risk seems unconscionable.

- The Town Council has formally identified Planning Priorities for Bruton, in line with the Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework, and the proposed development is at odds with at least three of these:
    i. It does not appear to respond to the local housing needs of those who live and work in Bruton.
    ii. It does not provide safe and convenient walking routes into town.
    iii. It does not avoid car-dependent layouts.

**It was RESOLVED 6-0-0 to recommend REFUSAL of this application on the grounds that the proposed development:**

1) **would exacerbate the existing dangers of this section of Shute Lane, namely speeding traffic on a narrow, bendy, poorly lit highway with no pavements or verges;**
2) **would access Shute Lane via a junction with limited visibility, being close to a dangerously blind bend, thereby creating an additional road safety risk;**
3) **would be likely to increase the discharge of surface water onto Shute Lane, further compromising road safety;**
4) **would be car-dependent since there is no safe and convenient pedestrian route into town;**
5) **would not respond to local housing needs.**

**P26/27 Recommendations made under delegated powers – for information**

To note recommendations to the Local Planning Authority from the Deputy Clerk, acting under delegated powers in accordance with the Council's Business Continuity Resolution 19/71 of 21st March 2021.

i. **26/02368/FUL Land adjacent to Coombe Hill North of Overdale, Bruton BA10 0QA** The erection of a two storey dwelling with associated access, landscaping & outbuildings.
**Bruton Town Council has a possible interest in land which is adjacent to the site of the proposed development, and which might be affected by it, and therefore it chooses not to comment on the application.**

ii. **26/01655/FUL Land adjoining Coombe Hill Farm, Coombe Hill, Bruton BA10 0QA** The erection of a two storey dwelling with associated access, landscaping & outbuildings.

**Bruton Town Council has a possible interest in land which is adjacent to the site of the proposed development, and which might be affected by it, and therefore it chooses not to comment on the application.**

**P26/28 Update on previous planning decisions - for information**

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

i. **26/02202/HOU 38 Brue Avenue, Bruton, Somerset BA10 0HL** Proposed single storey extension to replace existing extension and conservatory. **APPROVED**

ii. **26/01731/HOU** & **01732/LBC Suthfield House, 11 Quaperlake Street, Bruton, Somerset BA10 0HF** Removal of a part-modern stone wall to create new vehicular access from Patwell Lane to the lower rear garden, together with the regrading of levels and the formation of a new driveway and parking area capable of accommodating three vehicles, including provision for an electric vehicle charging point. **APPROVED**

iii. **26/01543/FUL** & **26/01544/LBC 5 Redlynch Park, Redlynch Road, Bruton Somerset, BA10 0NH** Replacement of loose and damaged fireplace surround in drawing room. It is proposed to replace with a more appropriate design such as a Lutyens design in limestone (implemented). **WITHDRAWN**

iv. **26/02281/TCA Flat 41, High Street, Bruton, Somerset BA10 0AW** Notice of intent to fell two trees within conservation area, T1 (Sycamore) and T2 (bay). **PERMITTED**

v. **26/01306/FUL Coombe Farm, Coombe Street, Bruton BA10 0QP** Demolition of existing Atcost barn and development of new Studio building for the storage and display of art. **APPROVED**

**P26/29 To note other applications or notifications referred to the Town Council as a courtesy.**

**26/02626/TPO Burrowfield House Burrowfield Bruton Somerset BA10 0HJ** Application to carry out tree works to No. 1 Beech tree (T1) as shown within the South Somerset District Council (BRUT 4) 1990 Tree Preservation Order. Beech tree T1- Reduction of branches over hanging neighbouring drive up to 25ft by 6ft at a maximum.

The meeting finished at 7.45pm