

Minutes of a meeting of the PLANNING AND HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE held in the Beech Suite, George Reynolds Centre, Crewkerne, on Monday 13th September 2025 at 18.45.

PRESENT:

Councillors S. Ashton, M. Best, N. Draycott, D. Livesley, P. Maxwell, J. Morris, J. Nathan (Chair), C. Rawe, A. Samuel, A. Stuart and S. Woodland

In attendance: G. Hughes (Town Clerk), A. Legg (Secretary), P. Martin-Hamblin (Finance Officer) and 71 members of the public.

039 **TO NOTE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
25/26

Apologies were received from Cllrs. K. Head (unwell).

040 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
25/26

Councillors Ashton and Best declared an interest in the planning applications, as members of the Planning South Committee.

041 **TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**
25/26

It was AGREED that the minutes of the Planning and Highways Committee held on Monday 8th September 2025 be APPROVED.

042 **OPEN FORUM**
25/26

Members of the public raised the following points:

- The overall appearance of the town was considered to be good, and the streets were noted as being clear of litter. It was suggested that the vacant shop units could be made to appear more inviting.
- Questions were raised as to why the link road has not been started before further housing applications are permitted. Concerns were expressed that, without the road, traffic congestion will worsen, and existing infrastructure is already under strain. Councillor Best responded that the road is expected to be completed within the next few years and confirmed that the necessary permissions for the Station Road junction are now in place.
- Concerns were raised about the speed of traffic in the town and the impact this is having on road surfaces and drainage.

043 **TO RECEIVE THE CLERK'S UPDATE REPORT**
25/26

- Somerset Council has felled the dead tree outside Hays Travel.
- There will be a temporary road closure on the A30 (Yeovil Road) at Haselbury Plucknett, commencing on 13th October and continuing until 15th October, between the hours of 7pm and 6am.
- The footpath alongside St Bartholomew's Primary School, leading towards Happy Valley, has been closed by Somerset Council due to badger activity undermining the path.

TO CONSIDER PLANNING APPLICATIONS

25/02044/OUT

Land Off Station Road Crewkerne Somerset TA18 8AL

Outline planning application with all matters reserved save for access for the proposed development of up to 325 dwellings, a mobility hub with additional train station car parking and Class E floor space, and associated infrastructure.

The Chair opened a Public Forum at this point to allow members of the public to comment on this specific application, and the following points were made:

- The current road layout is already at capacity, with gridlock a regular occurrence. The development, alongside the train station car park, could add around 2,000 vehicle movements per day along Station Road. It was suggested that an updated traffic survey be undertaken before further development proceeds.
- Concerns were raised that the two access roads could be built without the roundabout. It was suggested that the development should be phased to ensure coordinated delivery. Green Lane, identified by the CPRE as an ancient footpath, should be protected. The main pedestrian access would exit onto Station Road, where a new junction linked to the Taylor Wimpey site is planned, but not reflected in this application. The site is not included in the Local Plan and appears disconnected from surrounding development.
- It was considered that the proposal represents overdevelopment, causing loss of privacy and harm to the character and amenity of the area. The lack of a buffer with existing gardens on Station Road would affect residents' quality of life. The development was also felt likely to increase noise and overshadow the Grade II listed railway buildings.
- It was noted that the scheme could lead to the coalescence of Crewkerne and Misterton, which should each retain their own character. It was noted that Misterton lies outside the Crewkerne plan area and that there is no identified need for further housing, as Crewkerne already exceeds its Local Plan target. Questions were asked about the need for extra car parking and whether Network Rail had been consulted. The affordable housing was considered too dense and poorly located beside the railway line, contrary to Government guidance, and the development was felt likely to harm local habitats.
- Points were made that the development would result in the loss of productive Grade 3 farmland, reducing the town's food resilience. Questions were asked whether less productive land had been considered. The development's height was noted as having a visual impact, and flooding was highlighted as a concern, with runoff already affecting Viney Bridge and Middle Street in Misterton.
- It was suggested that brownfield sites elsewhere in the county could be used instead, and that local food production should be prioritised over importing.
- Matters were drawn to attention that traffic from the Taylor Wimpey development will already increase congestion, and this proposal would worsen the issue. It was noted that no additional parking has been provided in Crewkerne, and no independent research has confirmed the need for extra parking at the station, making it difficult for councillors to make an informed decision.
- It was noted that the proposed development sits on higher ground and would be visible from Winyards Gap, within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).
- Questions were raised about whether environmental measures, such as solar panels, had been considered. Councillor Ashton advised that such details would be addressed under a Reserved Matters application at a later stage.
- Concerns were raised about the area's lack of preparedness for additional development. It was noted that the poor bus service contributes to congestion and should be improved.

- Concerns were raised about the lack of parking in the town, and it was suggested that more low-cost housing should be provided for local residents.

Following public comments, Councillors considered the application and raised the following points:

- Councillors agreed with many of the comments made by members of the public. They considered that the proposal would cause harm to the landscape and views from the AONB, result in the loss of agricultural land, habitat and biodiversity, and lead to a significant increase in traffic which the town cannot accommodate.
- It was noted that several housing developments are already in process, and that supporting infrastructure such as schools and healthcare services is insufficient to meet further demand.
- Concerns were raised that existing flooding issues in the town would be worsened by the proposed development.
- Councillor Ashton reminded members of the public that Crewkerne Town Council is a statutory consultee and submits recommendations to the Local Planning Authority, Somerset Council. He advised that a Town Council recommendation for refusal would trigger a planning meeting at Somerset Council and encouraged residents to attend. The Clerk will seek to publicise the meeting to inform residents.
- Councillors noted that the plans are not representative of the future road layout. Once the Taylor Wimpey junction is constructed, Station Road will have a revised configuration.

Councillors recommended REFUSAL.

25/01470/FUL

Former Miller's Garage And Field To Rear (south) Of Nos. 20-42A East Street Crewkerne Somerset TA18 7AG

Revised Plans - Demolition of existing showroom building at Miller's Garage, formation of a 69 space public car park, erection of 44 No. dwellings, associated vehicular and pedestrian accesses (from East Street), parking for the dwellings, manoeuvring areas, drainage and landscaping, changes to and extension of Wyvern Court's parking areas plus provision of mobility scooter store

The Chair opened a Public Forum at this point to allow members of the public to comment on this specific application, and the following points were made:

- It was noted that the revised habitat planting scheme proposes the removal of three mature trees at the boundary of Henhayes, on Town Council land. Residents requested that this be raised with the Planning Department and the applicant. Questions were also raised as to why the proposal is being considered as a single application rather than two, as recommended by the Executive and Scrutiny Committee, as two applications would allow more timely delivery of the car park.
- It was noted that the land is part of the five-year land supply. The land swap initiative was introduced in 2014 to maximise development potential while minimising public cost. A single point of access, including Wyvern Court, was advised by the District Valuer, but in 2018 Wyvern Court did not wish to participate. This led Somerset Council to consider the entrance at the top of the site and the exit at the bottom, but this was rejected. Some land will be gifted to provide an additional 25% car park spaces. The development is expected to improve connectivity for cyclists and pedestrians, relieve parking pressures for residents and visitors, extend the 20mph limit for safety, and improve vehicular access for Wyvern Court residents and those at 20 and 21 East Street, with no cost to the public.
- A member of the public suggested that a car park could be provided on the site while retaining the remainder as public open space. It was also requested that the trees alongside Henhayes be protected and that the root protection zone be kept clear.

- It was noted that there is demand for a car park in the town. The proposal meets sustainability criteria, delivers a minimum of 15 affordable homes, provides contributions to infrastructure, and the design has been carefully considered, and the number of houses reduced. It was confirmed that the trees are protected and outside the applicant's control. An independent Highways audit has been commissioned. As this is a single application, a condition would be imposed requiring the car park to be completed before any dwelling is occupied.
- Concerns were raised that this is the last remaining greenfield site in the area. Questions were asked whether housing is the only way to fund the car park, with it considered unacceptable to develop housing on greenfield land and lose this valuable town asset.

Following public comments, Councillors considered the application and raised the following points:

- Councillor Ashton noted that Tree Preservation Orders have been confirmed for 14 trees, and that the Town Council is responsible for ensuring the root protection zones are observed.
- Although the speed limit will be reduced to 20mph, it was suggested that this limit should be extended further into town.
- Concerns were raised about traffic in and out of East Street, with limited visibility and gridlock occurring when two lorries meet.
- It was noted that the car park would be beneficial; however, the reduction in the number of houses was considered insufficient. Concerns were raised that the proposal would cause traffic issues and result in the loss of a greenfield site.
- It was suggested that the town should be considered as a whole, with the land retained as open space for the future. The National Planning Policy Framework encourages good-quality open space, which benefits health and wellbeing, and there is currently no town park in the area, only recreation grounds.
- While a car park at no cost to the public was welcomed, concerns were raised that additional housing would create further traffic issues, and that the reduction in housing numbers was insufficient.

Councillors recommended REFUSAL.

Councillor Ashton left the meeting and did not return.

25/02240/HOU

89 Hermitage Street Crewkerne Somerset TA18 8EX

Conversion and extension to existing garage and addition of a rooflight to utility

25/02241/LBC

89 Hermitage Street Crewkerne Somerset TA18 8EX

Conversion and extension to existing garage and addition of a rooflight to utility

Councillors raised concerns over the size and that the interior appeared cramped, but overall, it was considered acceptable, and recommended APPROVAL.

25/02401/TPO

Merefield House 17 East Street Crewkerne Somerset TA18 7AG

Notification only - Application to carry out Tree Surgery Works to No. 1 Tree as shown within the South Somerset District Council (CREW 1) 1993 Tree Preservation Order. T1 - Yew - Reduce in garden side to allow more light into garden.

- 25/02195/DOC1 **Crewkerne Key Site 1 Land East Of Crewkerne Between A30 And A356 Yeovil Road Crewkerne Somerset TA18 7HE**
Notification only - Discharge of Condition No. 5 (Nutrient Neutrality) of Planning Application 23/00006/REM.
- 25/02397/DOC1 **Land South Of Crewkerne Key Site Off Station Road Crewkerne Somerset TA18 8AE**
Notification only - Discharge of Conditions No. 3 (Materials), No. 9 (CMP), No. 10 (SUDS), No. 13 (Allocation Certificate), No. 14 (Biodiversity Gain Plan), No. 15 (LEMP), No. 17 (Vegetation Clearance) and No. 18 (BEMP) of Planning Application 24/02059/FUL.

Planning Appeal – Somerset Council

- APP/E3335/W/
25/3373197 **Land Off Longstrings Lane Broadshard Road Crewkerne Somerset**
Appeal in Respect of Application Decision Reference 24/00735/OUT
Outline application with some matters reserved for the erection of 2 No. dwellings with access and landscaping.
APPEAL TYPE: Written Representation

045 **TO RECEIVE PLANNING DECISION NOTICES FROM SOMERSET COUNCIL**

25/26

- 25/01453/S73 **Land Adjacent Cloudshill Hewish Lane Crewkerne Somerset**
S73 Application to vary Condition 2 (approved plans) to allow enlargement and repositioning of garage further from dwelling; to remove Condition 16 (copper beech tree); and to vary Condition 17 to remove the reference to Beech Tree T001 (tree protection measures), of planning consent 24/01412/FUL - Erection of a single two storey detached dwelling.

APPROVED
- 25/01371/COU **32 Barn Close Crewkerne Somerset TA18 8BL**
Change of use of a dwelling providing care for 4 adults under Class C3 (b) to a residential care home for 4 children/young people (Use Class C2).

APPROVED
- 25/02195/DOC1 **Crewkerne Key Site 1 Land East Of Crewkerne Between A30 And A356 Yeovil Road Crewkerne Somerset TA18 7HE**
Notification only - Discharge of Condition No. 5 (Nutrient Neutrality) of Planning Application 23/00006/REM.

UNKNOWN
- 25/01971/TCA **23 East Street Crewkerne Somerset TA18 7AG**
Notification of intent to Fell No 2 Trees and Carry Out Tree Surgery Works to No. 2 Trees within a Conservation Area. T1 - Leyland Cypress - Fell to ground level and remove all arisings T2 & T3 - Ash - Crown Reduction - Reducing the height and spread of the tree by up to 4 metres T4 - Scotts pine - Fell to ground level and remove all arisings Amended Specification Received

07.08.25 - Fell No. 3 Trees and carry out tree surgery works to No. 2 Trees within a Conservation Area. T5 - Scotts Pine Fell to ground level.

DECIDED

25/02256/NMA **Crewkerne Key Site 1 Land East Of Crewkerne Between A30 And A356 Yeovil Road Crewkerne Somerset TA18 7HE**
Non Material Amendment to approved application 23/00006/REM to simply rotate Plot 125 so that it fronts onto the highway
APPLICATION PERMITTED

25/02131/P3MA **27 South Street Crewkerne Somerset TA18 8DA**
Prior approval for the change of use and conversion from commercial, business and service use (Class E) into 1 No. dwelling (Class C3)
APPLICATION PERMITTED WITH CONDITIONS

25/02078/TCA **Old Bincombe Poples Well Crewkerne Somerset TA18 7ES**
Notification of intent to carry out Tree Surgery Works to No. 1 Tree within a Conservation Area. T1 Western Red Cedar - Shorten large side stem on West side at 6m above ground level to leave at 1.5m from main stem Reason - Tree leaning over neighbours drive/house stem showing signs of stress cracking close to main stem union.
APPLICATION PERMITTED

046 **PARKING CONSULTATION**
25/26 **To consider a response to Somerset Council's consultation on Sunday parking charges**

Councillors discussed the following points:

- Concerns were raised that many town centre houses in Crewkerne lack off-street parking.
- It was noted that recent increases in parking charges could discourage visitors, particularly as Crewkerne has more lower-income working families compared with tourist towns that charge on Sundays.
- While raising revenue has benefits, Crewkerne was considered not comparable to towns/cities such as Wells. Local businesses could be disadvantaged compared with towns like Chard, where parking is free.
- Questions were raised about whether free parking in other towns applies across all car parks, and it was noted that free car parking at Christmas in the past was funded by Somerset Council.

Councillors AGREED that they opposed the proposal and delegated the submission of the response to the Town Clerk.

047 **TO CONSIDER THE VISUAL APPEARANCE OF THE TOWN**
25/26 **To discuss ways to improve the visual appearance of the town**

It was suggested that the Clerk formulate a list of items to be circulated to Councillors. Suggestions included:

- Awards for the shop with the best appearance
- Removal of redundant signs following completion of roadworks

- Reducing the number of wheelie bins left out after rubbish collection
- Weeding, potentially utilising the authorised volunteer scheme from Somerset Council
- Consideration of vinyl window wraps, which can be applied internally or externally

Councillor Best will discuss the use of vinyl wraps with Taunton Town Council. The work of Crewkerne in Bloom in improving the town's appearance was noted and appreciated.

048
25/26 **TO RECEIVE THE UPDATED ACTION STATUS REPORT**

The following matters were noted:

- Miller's Garage – ongoing, with revised plans submitted.
- Rose Lane wall – the top section is very unstable and considered dangerous. The Clerk and Councillor Best have been unable to progress this matter.

049
25/26 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Monday 10th November 2025, 18.45 in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Market Square

The meeting closed at 20.21

Signed:

Dated:

PL13OCTOBER25