STURMINSTER NEWTON TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 16 September 2026 AT 7.15PM IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER

PRESENT:
Cllr P Batstone
Cllr L Cooper
Cllr A Donaldson (Chair)
Cllr C Fraser (Vice Chair)
Cllr H Lacey
Cllr P Marks
Cllr J Rose
Cllr S Trim

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: 0

ALSO PRESENT: K Squire (Town Clerk), J Drew (Assistant Town Clerk)

MINUTE NO	COMMENTS
26/27/149	**To receive comments and questions from members of the public** No members of public were present.
26/27/150	**Apologies for absence** Apologies were received from Cllr Jackson who was working. These apologies were accepted by members.
26/27/151	**To approve declarations of interest and written applications for dispensation** No interests were declared and no written requests for dispensation received.
26/27/152	**To approve the minutes of the previous Planning & Environment meeting held on 15 July 2026** The minutes of the Planning & Environment Committee meeting held on 15 July 2026 having been circulated and published prior to the meeting, were taken as a true and correct record and duly signed by the Chair.
26/27/153	**Planning Matters** **Planning Applications for consideration:** • P/VOC/2026/04665 Willow Cottage, Copse Hill, Broadoak **Comment: No objection** • P/NMA/2026/04663 Willow Cottage, Copse Hill, Broadoak **Comment: No objection** • P/LBC/2026/04914 Old Malt House, Bridge Street, Sturminster Newton **Comment: No objection**

Chairs Initials .....

- P/FUL/2024/04736 Land at Clarks Yard, Bath Road, Sturminster Newton
  Comment: Objection
  Sturminster Newton Town Council maintains its objection to this application on the grounds that the proposed development does not comply with Sturminster Newton Neighbourhood Plan Policy 22.
  Policy 22 identifies this site as occupying an important position at the Bath Road/Old Market Hill junction, a key arrival point into the town centre. The policy is clear that redevelopment of this site will be supported only where all of the stated criteria are met, including the provision of landmark buildings facing onto the main roads which have clear visual and functional links with the historic part of the town centre.
  The Council does not consider that the proposed elevations fulfil this requirement. The design does not sufficiently reflect the character, appearance or significance of this prominent location, nor does it provide the level of variation, interest or landmark quality expected by Policy 22. In particular, the proposed main road-facing buildings do not demonstrate clear visual or functional links with the historic town centre, despite the importance of this junction as a gateway into Sturminster Newton.
  The Council also remains concerned that the proposal does not include suitable soft landscaping along the main road frontage. Policy 22 specifically requires soft landscaping to create an attractive street scene, and the current proposal does not appear to provide an adequate or appropriate landscaped frontage to Bath Road/Old Market Hill.
  Members also raised concerns regarding the proposed access arrangements. The junction onto the main road through the town does not align with the existing traffic lights, and its proposed location is likely to cause difficulty for vehicles, particularly those turning right out of the development, due to the close proximity of the traffic-light controlled junction.
  The Council is further concerned about the impact of construction traffic. Bath Road and Old Market Hill already experience congestion, and the use of the proposed access by lorries and plant machinery during construction is likely to have a significant adverse impact on traffic flow through the town.
  For these reasons, the Council considers that the proposal fails to satisfy the requirements of Neighbourhood Plan Policy 22 and would not deliver the high-quality, context-sensitive redevelopment expected for this important gateway site.

Report on planning decisions of Dorset Council from 10 July to 7 August 2026
The committee noted the report previously circulated

Chairs Initials .....

Any other planning matters

The Chair of the Committee reported attendance at a recent Town & Parish Council Planning Forum. Accompanying slides which were provided after the event had been circulated to all Councillors for information. Particular concern was raised regarding the Governments planning committee reform. The new national scheme of delegation, sets out that certain types of application must be determined by officers under delegated powers and not planning committees

Tree Matters

- **P/TRC/2026/05079 Church Farmhouse Church Street DT10 1DB**

Cllr Cooper, as the tree officer, reported on the above application to remove a plum tree.

The committee had no objection to this proposal.

26/27/154 To receive information from members and proposals for future business

Cllr Donaldson –

- Reported damage caused to the traditional paving tiles on the corner of Church Street/Lane by large vehicles. He was concerned that repeated call outs to repair may lead to the tiles being removed in favour of tarmac as a more cost effective option.
- He had also received comments regarding the noise from piling work at Market Fields, although he noted that works are restricted to weekdays during normal working hours only.

Cllr Batstone –

Asked if enquiries could be made into replacement of the town sign on Bath Road following comments at a previous Town Council meeting that it is weather worn. The Clerk is already making enquiries.

Concerns were also raised about a possible breach of planning control at Puxey, where permission had been sought for an agricultural building, but the works appear to relate to the construction of a dwelling. The Clerk will report this to Dorset Council Planning Enforcement.

The Chair closed the meeting at 8.04pm

Chairs Signature .....Date Approved .....