

Agenda item 3

For ratification - To withdraw objection to the Selwood Garden Community planning application

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Summary

This report sets out the formal position of Frome Town Council (FTC), in relation to the planning application for Selwood Garden Community (SGC). In response to the call in from the Secretary of State, following discussions and negotiations with the applicants, FTC have now withdrawn their objection to the proposals.

The report below and attached letter at [Appendix 3.1](#) sets out how that decision was reached, and Cllrs are asked to ratify that decision.

Background

The Planning application for SCG was discussed at the Somerset Planning Committee East meeting on 3 December 2024. The application was recommended for approval by the planning officer, but the committee members agreed that they were “minded to refuse” the application, with the refusal reasons to be determined at a subsequent meeting.

The application was due to be discussed again by the Somerset Planning Committee East on 4 February 2025, however on the 3 February 2025, the application was called in by The Secretary of State, meaning the jurisdiction for determining the planning application no longer rests with Somerset Council and the application will be decided by the Secretary of State, who has appointed a Planning Inspector to hold a Local Inquiry.

In the light of the call-in of the application, at the meeting of the Planning Committee East on 3 February 2025 the Committee noted that the application had been called in by the Secretary of State and that a further report will be brought back to the Committee (once the Inquiry timetable is published) for Members to determine the local planning authority’s position.

As detailed in the attached letter to the Inspector, in the intervening time between the Somerset East Planning meetings, at the request of FTC, detailed discussions took place with the applicants, Selwood Parish Council and Frome Somerset Cllrs. The discussions with the applicant were constructive and enabled FTC to move towards removing its objections to the application, the reasons for this are set out in [Appendix 3.1, which can be viewed on the website here.](#)

It was important that FTC’s position was made clear to the Somerset Cllrs at the Planning Committee East meeting on 28 March, where Somerset would be determining its position. However, this meant that there was not time to formally agree FTC’s position at a council meeting due to the meeting deadlines. Agreement was sought informally with the majority of Cllrs agreeing the position before speaking at the Planning Committee East meeting.

Somerset Cllrs and the Planning Inspector have been informed that FTC's position would be ratified at the April Council meeting. Interested parties were required to submit their comments to the Inspector by 4 April 2025.

Recommendation

The decision to remove FTC's objection to the Selwood Garden Community planning application Ref: 2021/1675/EOUT, is ratified.