

#### Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held at Banwell Youth & Community Centre. 7pm on Monday 3rd of February 2025.

PRESENT: Councillors Nick Manley (Chairman), Simon Arlidge, Paul Blatchford, Steve Davies, Paul Harding & Matthew Thomson.

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Liz Shayler (Clerk).

Cllr Manley welcomed everybody.

Before the meeting was convened, members of the public were invited to speak.

Members of the public.

No members of the public wished to speak.

The meeting was convened.

01/25 To receive apologies for absence (agenda item 1)

No apologies were received.

02/25 To receive declarations of interest (agenda Item 2)

A personal interest was received by Cllr Manley who had spoken numerous times to the residents of 16 High Street (applications 24/P/2610/FUH & 24/P/2611/LBC) in relation to their application.

03/25 To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of December 2024 (agenda item 3)

Resolved – That the minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of December 2024 be approved as a correct record of the meeting.

The resolution was correctly proposed and seconded (unanimous with one abstention due to absence)

The minutes of the meeting were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

#### 04/25 To discuss a response to be presented to Full Council upon planning applications (agenda item 4).

(i) 24/P/2446/OU2 Land North of Knightcott Road and West and East of Summer Lane Banwell Outline planning application with Environmental Statement for the erection of up to 755 residential dwellings, up to 6.3ha employment use, public open space and areas of play, sustainable drainage, planting, foot/cycle paths, noise bund, community infrastructure, ancillary uses and principal means of vehicular access from Knightcott Road and Summer Lane. All matters reserved except for means of access.

**Resolved:** The Planning Committee recommends that the Parish Council notes this application. While they broadly support the scheme, this is contingent on its implementation following the delivery of the Banwell Bypass.

However, there are concerns regarding the traffic assessment presented in this application, as it appears to have been conducted under the assumption that Wolvershill Bridge will be closed. Given the recent clarification from North Somerset Council confirming that the bridge will remain open, we urge an updated assessment to accurately reflect the future road network and to properly evaluate the development's impact on existing infrastructure.

Additionally, we request that a monitoring point be established on Riverside to assess the development's impact on this road and ensure that any unforeseen traffic implications can be addressed appropriately.

#### The resolution was correctly proposed and seconded (unanimous)

#### (ii) 24/P/2690/OU2 Land East of Wolvershill Road, Banwell

Outline Planning Application with Environmental Statement (main points of Access, from Banwell Bypass and Wolvershill Road not reserved) for demolition of existing buildings and phased redevelopment to provide up to 1,300 homes (Use Class C3), a mixed-use local centre including up to 5,500 sqm of community and commercial uses (Use Classes E, F1 and F2) and a Care or Extra Care facility (Use Class C2), a Primary School, green infrastructure, and associated works. Details of layout, appearance, scale and landscaping reserved for subsequent approval.

**Resolved:** The Planning Committee recommended that the Parish Council notes this application. While they largely support the scheme and welcome its proposed benefits, particularly improvements to the nature trails, they have several concerns and believe its implementation should be contingent on the completion of the Banwell bypass.

- Traffic Assessment Concerns The current traffic assessment appears outdated, as it
  assumes Wolvershill Bridge will be closed, which is no longer the case. We urge an updated
  assessment to reflect the future road network accurately and to properly evaluate the
  development's impact on existing infrastructure.
- Safeguarding the Junction 21 Relief Road Route The forthcoming North Somerset
  Local Plan 2040 includes plans for a Junction 21 bypass relief road. While we acknowledge
  that its delivery may be a long-term objective, the proposed development includes
  permanent features—such as a SuDS basin, wet woodland, community orchard, and
  housing—that would occupy the planned route. It is crucial to safeguard this corridor to
  ensure that the relief road remains a viable option to meet future infrastructure needs.

The resolution was correctly proposed and seconded (unanimous)

#### (iii) 25/P/0046/OU2 Land North of Banwell and West of Wolvershill Road Banwell

Outline planning application with Environmental Statement for residential-led mixed use development comprising: up to 600 residential dwellings including specialist later living accommodation (Classes C2 and C3), mixed-use Local Centre (non-residential uses to include Classes E, F2 and sui generis (pub/restaurant)), a Primary School (Class F1), sports and leisure provision including community park, public open space and associated access, infrastructure, landscape and ancillary works. All matters reserved except for access from Wolvershill Road and Summer Lane.

**Resolved:** The Planning Committee recommended that the Parish Council notes this application. While they broadly support the scheme, they do so on the condition that it is implemented after the delivery of the Banwell bypass. However, several concerns remain.

- Traffic Assessment Concerns The current traffic assessment is outdated, as it assumes
  Wolvershill Bridge will be closed, which is no longer the case. We urge an updated
  assessment to accurately reflect the future road network and properly evaluate the
  development's impact on existing infrastructure.
- Encroachment on the Strategic Green Gap The proposal includes a football clubhouse, parking facilities, and pitches within the strategic green gap. This green gap is vital for maintaining the distinct identity of the 'old' village of Banwell by ensuring separation from the new development. While we acknowledge North Somerset Council's requirement for additional sports pitches, we do not consider this location appropriate.

The Wolvershill development should not be used as a catch-all solution for the district's wider needs, particularly when such provisions compromise the strategic green gap's purpose.

Introducing these facilities in this location would harm the undeveloped character of the area and contradict the forthcoming Local Plan's definition of a strategic green gap.

Furthermore, this provision is unnecessary given that Banwell Football Club is already a well-established and successful club serving the community. If additional sports facilities are required, they should be incorporated within the new development itself, preventing unnecessary vehicle movements into Banwell and along Wolvershill Road.

#### The resolution was correctly proposed and seconded (unanimous)

#### 05/25 To note and comment upon planning applications (agenda item 5).

#### (i) 24/P/2551/FUL Land to the East of Banwell Road (A371)

Banwell Retention of existing access track for agricultural use and construction of new 4m wide agricultural track.

**Resolved:** To strongly recommend refusal of this application on the grounds that the retention of the existing track and construction of a new 4m-wide agricultural track would cause unacceptable harm to the scenic beauty of the Mendip National Landscape, with no clear public benefit to outweigh this impact. Additionally, we remain unconvinced that the development would not pose an increased risk to highway safety, particularly given the imminent reversion of the road's speed limit to 60mph, which may exacerbate hazards associated with additional agricultural access.

#### The resolution was correctly proposed and seconded (unanimous)

At this point in the meeting, the Chairman, Cllr Manley, handed over the chair to the Vice-Chairman, Cllr Blatchford, for the discussion of planning applications 24/P/2610/FUH & 24/P/2611/LBC.

#### (ii) 24/P/2610/FUH & 24/P/2611/LBC 16 High Street Banwell BS29 6AE

Listed building consent for extended bay window with door and steps at the rear of the property in place of the existing bay.

**Resolved:** To echo Historic England by supporting this application.

The resolution was correctly proposed and seconded (unanimous)

Following the conclusion of this item, Cllr Manley resumed the chair and continued to preside over the meeting.

#### (iii) 24/P/2636/FUL Field To the Rear of Rose Hatch Cottage Hatches Lane Banwell.

Proposed extension of existing equine menage area.

**Resolved:** To note this application.

The resolution was correctly proposed and seconded (unanimous)

#### (iv) 24/P/2692/FUL The Old Police House, 3 Towerhead Road, Banwell BS29 6PG

Proposed Change of Use from Residential to Sui Generis Temporary Wellbeing Accommodation with sleeping accommodation and communal areas.

**Resolved:** To support this application.

The resolution was correctly proposed and seconded (unanimous)

#### (v) 24/P/2704/FUL The Moor Dairy Moor Road Banwell BS29 6ET

Proposed demolition of existing barn and erection of a new barn in place.

Resolved: To note this application.

#### The resolution was correctly proposed and seconded (unanimous)

#### 06/25 To note the following planning applications (agenda item 6).

- (i) 25/P/0130/AOC Banwell Bypass Land To North And East Of Banwell Including Mitigation Highway Land In Sandford, Winscombe And Churchill.
  - Application for the discharge of details reserved by conditions 7(k), 9, 10, 11, 13 and 33 attached to planning permission 22/P/1768/R3EIA (herein referred to as 'Package D') relating to the Banwell Bypass and Highways Improvement Scheme road construction Phase 2C.
- (ii) 25/P/0151/LDP Willow Barn Silver Moor Lane Banwell BS29 6LG. Certificate of lawful development for the proposed erection of a single storey rear extension.
- (iii) 25/P/0165/TPO Avona Wood Banwell Woods Towerhead Road Banwell. 4-5 no. Hazels coppice to let in more light.

**Resolved:** The applications above were noted.

The resolution was correctly proposed and seconded (unanimous)

#### 07/25 To note planning decisions – (agenda item 7)

- (i) 20/P/2282/FUL Land at The Moor Dairy Moor Road Banwell
  - Change of use of land to use for the siting of 2no. storage containers (part retrospective). Erection of 1no. stable and retention of 1no. stable for use with the existing livery business; formation of a hardstanding and the erection of a timber fence in association with agricultural activities (retrospective). **APPROVED**
- (ii) 24/P/1749/FUL Corner Lodge Whitecross Lane Banwell BS29 6DP
  Proposed conversion of existing detached garage to 1no. dwelling. Works to include;
  Hardstanding and landscaping alterations including the infill of existing outdoor pool and creation of new vehicular access for existing dwelling. Fenestration alterations to the North and West elevations including the removal, replacement and installation of windows, doors, cladding and 1no. new rooflight. APPROVED
- (iii) 24/P/2212/MMA Elmfield Whitecross Lane Banwell BS29 6DP

  Minor material amendment to planning permission 22/P/3009/FUL (proposed demolition of existing dwelling and erection of 2 No. detached dwellings) to allow for very minor repositioning of houses and omission of lintel over window on front elevation, windows to be white and not grey and reconstructed stone to front elevation. APPROVED
- (iv) 24/P/2236/FUL Land at The Moor Dairy Moor Road Banwell
  Retrospective application for change of use from agriculture to equestrian and the erection of 2no. Stables, tack room and 2no. Hay stores. APPROVED
- (v) 24/P/2353/TRCA 60B West Street Banwell BS29 6DB
  T1 magnolia- reduce crown by up to one metre. No objection (tree/hed) unconditional

#### 08/25 Date of the next meeting (agenda item 7)

3<sup>rd</sup> of March 2025 7pm Planning Committee Meeting at the YCC.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 19:30	
G	Chairmar
	Date

# 4. To discuss North Somerset Councils consultation on 'Additional Housing Sites' and agree a recommended submission to Full Council.

#### Summary of the Consultation Paper in Relation to Banwell

The North Somerset Local Plan 2040 consultation paper outlines additional sites for development to meet the government's new mandatory housing target of 23,895 dwellings over 2025-2040. The current plan has a shortfall of at least 8,620 dwellings, requiring additional housing capacity.

#### Wider Context of North Somerset and Green Belt

40% of the area of North Somerset is designated as Green Belt.

Green Belt exists to:

- (a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.
- (b) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another.
- (c) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment.
- (d) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- (e) to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land where Green Belt policy has restricted development.

Because of this land classification, development in Green Belt areas has been very limited which has seen the remaining 60% of land in North Somerset having to accommodate the housing numbers from previous Local Plans.

However, recent changes to national planning policies have introduced the idea of "Grey Belt" land. This refers to parts of the Green Belt that have already been built on or don't strongly serve the key Green Belt purposes. These areas may now be considered for development without significantly harming the overall goals of protecting the Green Belt.

Several sites listed in the Additional Housing Sites documentation may qualify as Grey Belt land. Developing these areas would help distribute new housing more evenly while ensuring it is built in sustainable locations near Bristol, the region's main economic hub.

#### Banwell's Role in the Local Plan

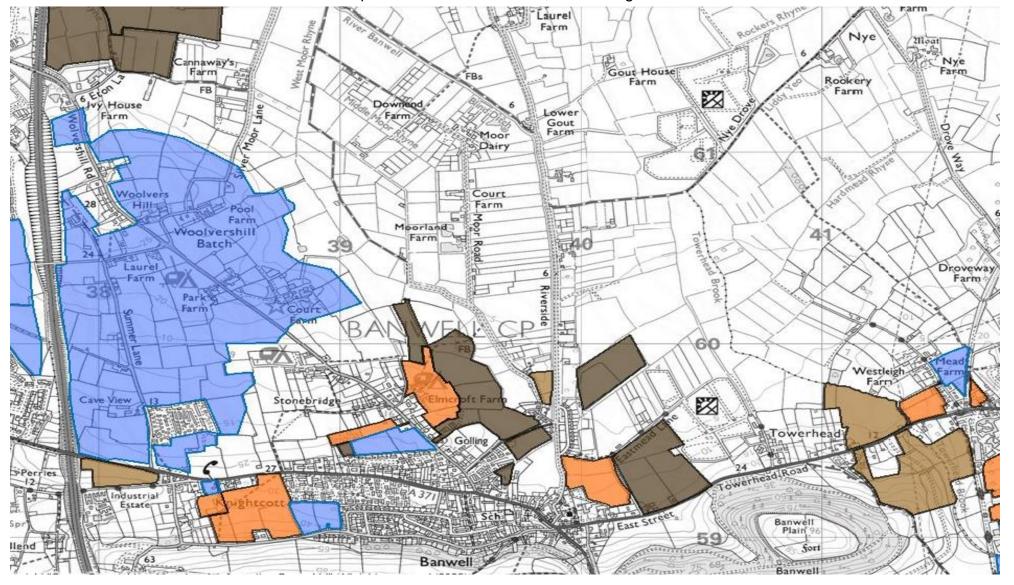
- The Wolvershill strategic growth location (north of Banwell) is a key development area.
- The Banwell Bypass is expected to impact on the strategic gap and influence site suitability.
- Banwell is classified as a Category A village, meaning it has a reasonable range of services and is considered a sustainable location for growth.

Banwell is classified as a Category A village, which NSC defines as having a reasonable range of local services, facilities, and public transport links, making it relatively sustainable for growth. Category A villages are prioritised for small-scale housing site allocations to meet local housing needs. Other Category A villages in North Somerset include Backwell, Churchill, Congresbury, Easton-in-Gordano, Pill, Long Ashton, Winscombe, and Yatton. By contrast, Category B villages, such as Bleadon, Claverham, and Wrington, have fewer services but are considered sustainable due to their proximity to larger settlements. These villages may also be considered for small-scale housing growth based on local needs.

The classification of Banwell as a Category A village is not supported by the range of services and facilities available. While Banwell provides some local amenities, it lacks the infrastructure expected of a fully sustainable settlement. A Category B classification would be more appropriate, as Banwell relies on larger settlements for essential services. Similar to other Category B villages such as Bleadon, Wrington, and Claverham, Banwell does not have the employment opportunities, retail options, healthcare facilities, or reliable public transport links required to support major growth without placing excessive strain on existing services.

#### The following sites have been identified for possible development (orange on the map).

- 1. East of Riverside (adjacent to the cemetery) 4.8 ha, 30 dwellings.
- 2. Elmcroft Farm (behind Wolvershill Road Properties) 5 ha, 100 dwellings.
- 3. Land north of Banwell (adjacent to Jubilee Gardens) 1.6 ha, 58 dwellings.
- 4. South of Knightcott Road (current planning application in) 8.76 ha, 95 dwellings (currently 27 dwellings)
- 5. Western Trade Centre behind new development at Boulters 1.2 ha, 30 dwellings.



4 consultation discussion and response

6

#### Concerns from the Parish Council previously about the identified sites.

#### 1. East of Riverside (adjacent to the cemetery) - 4.8 ha, 30 dwellings.

- Flood Risk: The northern part of the site is prone to flooding, which contradicts National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) guidance on avoiding flood-prone areas. There is always an issue with flooding on Riverside during episodes of heavy rain
- High Water Table: we know there is an issue with the water table in this location as
  topographical studies undertaken by the PC meant we were unable to extend the
  cemetery due to the height of the water table.
- Heritage Impact: The site is close to several listed buildings which would affect their setting.
- **Infrastructure Strain:** The local road network could struggle to accommodate additional development given access is Riverside.
- Environmental Concerns: Development could affect local wildlife habitats along the River Banwell

#### 2. Elmcroft Farm (behind Wolvershill Road Properties) - 5 ha, 100 dwellings.

- Traffic & Access Issues: additional housing would increase traffic and put pressure on the Banwell Bypass which would either empty onto Wolvershill Road or onto the new bypass.
- **Settlement Creep:** This site extends the village boundary unnecessarily, increasing urban sprawl and affect the green gap between the Bypass and Banwell Village.
- **Impact on Rural Character:** Development would erode Banwell's rural setting by taking development up to the bypass.
- Drainage Issues: Potential for water runoff affecting nearby properties and infrastructure.

#### 3. Land north of Banwell (adjacent to Jubilee Gardens) - 1.6 ha, 58 dwellings.

- Strategic Gap Conflict: The site reduces the gap between Banwell village, the Banwell Bypass, and the Wolvershill strategic growth area. This contradicts the Local Plan's goal of preserving village identity.
- The proposal has double the density of the nearby Jubilee Gardens development (54 dwellings), which is spread over a much larger area. This would overwhelm the local landscape, create a cramped urban feel, and fail to integrate with Banwell's existing layout.

# 4. South of Knightcott Road (current planning application in) - 8.76 ha, 95 dwellings (currently 27 dwellings)

This site in the local plan is being proposed at nearly four times the existing planning application.

- Contravention of NSC Policy CS32: The proposed development fails to "respect and enhance local character," contribute to "place-making," reinforce "local distinctiveness," and integrate well into the existing village, as required by North Somerset Council (NSC) Policy CS32. It does not make a positive contribution to the local environment or landscape setting.
- Contradiction with Landscape Quality Assessment: The appellant has previously claimed the landscape's quality is "medium to poor," which contradicts North Somerset Council's Landscape Character Assessment SPD (2018). This assessment classifies the area (J2: River Yeo Rolling Valley Farmland and E1: Mendips Ridges and Combes) as 'Good'—the highest category. A 2016 planning appeal (APP/D0121/W/15/3138816) also highlighted the significant visual qualities of the area, describing it as an area of "visual tranquillity."
- Harm to Green Gateway and Village Character: The development would eliminate
  the open green fields between Banwell and Knightcott, leading to ribbon

- development and merging these settlements. This would erode Knightcott's identity as a hamlet, making it appear as an extension of Banwell. The loss of this green gateway would have severe visual and landscape impacts, particularly for users of Knightcott Road and surrounding public rights of way.
- Elevation Concerns & Visual Impact: A previous 2016 appeal decision highlighted concerns about building above the 30m contour line, noting that development at this height would cause prominent visibility issues and harm scenic views of the Mendips National Landscape. The current proposal places 19 of 27 houses above the 30m contour, making it highly intrusive in the landscape.
- Loss of Public Footpath: The development requires the realignment of a well-used public footpath, replacing it with a permissive path, which raises concerns about long-term maintenance and access rights. This would negatively impact local recreational use.
- Inadequate Bat Conservation Measures: The site is within the North Somerset and Mendip Bat Special Area of Conservation (SAC). The impact on the bat population and proposed mitigation measures have not been adequately addressed, raising concerns about compliance with ecological protection policies. The site also has a high potential to jeopardise the planned dark corridors designed for bat foraging in the nearby new Strategic Wolvershill site. Horseshoe bats are highly sensitive to artificial lighting, and increased illumination from housing in this location would create a barrier to movement, leading to habitat fragmentation and reduced biodiversity.

#### 5. Western Trade Centre behind new development at Boulters - 1.2 ha, 30 dwellings.

- 1. **Dependent on Adjacent Site:** The suitability of this site depends on adjacent land ( which there are significant concerns with).
- 2. **Impact on Village Entrance:** This would contribute to the gradual urbanisation of Banwell's western approach, altering the rural feel of the area.
- 3. Inadequate Bat Conservation Measures: The site has a high potential to jeopardise the planned dark corridors designed for bat foraging in the nearby new Strategic Wolvershill site. Horseshoe bats are highly sensitive to artificial lighting, and increased illumination from housing in this location would create a barrier to movement, leading to habitat fragmentation and reduced biodiversity.

#### **General Objections for All Sites in Banwell**

- Housing Target & Overdevelopment: While the Parish Council acknowledge that North Somerset has not yet met its revised housing targets, Banwell is already accommodating 2,800 homes as part of the Wolvershill strategic development. This is a significant contribution to the district's housing supply, and further development within or near the bypass area is excessive and unjustified.
- Impact on Local Services: While the new Wolvershill development promises improved local services and amenities, experience from developments like Meadfields shows that these facilities often take years to materialise. In the meantime, existing GP surgeries, infrastructure, employment opportunities, retail facilities, and public transport are already overstretched, leaving residents with inadequate provisions for an extended period. With the increase in proposed development this creates a prolonged period where demand significantly outweighs supply, negatively impacting both new and existing residents.
- Traffic & Highway Safety: The construction of the Banwell Bypass is already causing
  major disruption in the center of Banwell. The village is experiencing severe congestion,
  which will only be exacerbated when building begins on the new Wolvershill development.
  Further development will only worsen the situation, creating gridlock and significant safety
  risks for pedestrians and road users alike.
- Flood Risk & Drainage Issues: Several sites have flood risks or drainage concerns that make development unsuitable.
- **Environmental & Landscape Harm:** The sites erode the rural character of Banwell, with some affecting the Mendip Hills National Landscape.

- Contradiction with Local Plan Aims: Many of these sites conflict with the strategic objectives of maintaining Banwell's village identity and avoiding urban sprawl.
- Excessive Housing Density: Some of the proposed developments in Banwell are
  significantly denser than existing housing, leading to an overcrowded expansion that does
  not respect the village's rural setting. These densities are inconsistent with existing
  developments and contravene North Somerset Council's policy on rural settlement density.
  This over-intensification will exacerbate infrastructure pressures, strain local services, and
  reduce the quality of life for both new and existing residents.
- Designated Conservation Areas: Sites 1, 2, 3, and 4 are all designated BRERC bat roost locations, underscoring their significance for protected bat species. Additionally, Sites 1 and 4 fall within Zone B of the North Somerset and Mendip Bat SAC consultation area, while Sites 2 and 3 are within Zone C. These designations place legal and ecological constraints on development, as the sites provide essential foraging and commuting routes for bats. Any disturbance to these areas risks disrupting habitat connectivity and negatively impacting protected species. Given their close proximity to existing development, these sites serve as critical ecological support networks within an already built-up area, helping to sustain biodiversity and mitigate the effects of urban expansion.
- Biodiversity and Protected Species: All these sites support a significant number of legally protected species within a 1km radius, as shown in the chart below. Any development would require mitigation measures, which would be difficult or even impossible to implement effectively, primarily due to space constraints. Additionally, their proximity to the centre of Banwell makes them vital stepping stones for wildlife, enabling nature to coexist with human communities. Preserving these green spaces is crucial for maintaining ecological balance, preventing habitat fragmentation, and ensuring long-term biodiversity resilience. Any off-site mitigation would not be a viable solution to safeguard Banwell's wildlife and ecological integrity. Across the five sites, recorded sightings within a 1km radius include: Hazel Dormouse, Otter, Slow Worm, Adder, Grass Snake, Badgers, Hedgehogs, Greater and Lesser Horseshoe Bats.

# 25/P/0238/RM Land at Parklands, Meadfields Phase 6, Churchland Way.

Reserved Matters application for area Phase 6, with access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale for approval, for the erection of 68no. dwellings and associated works pursuant to Outline Permission 16/P/2744/OT2 (Outline planning application with Environmental Statement with all matters reserved for subsequent approval for a residential development of up to 250 dwellings and associated infrastructure).











#### SITE SECTION A - A



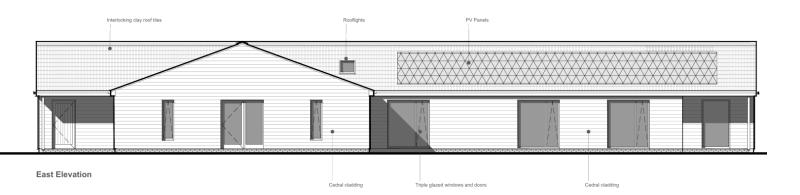
SITE SECTION B - B

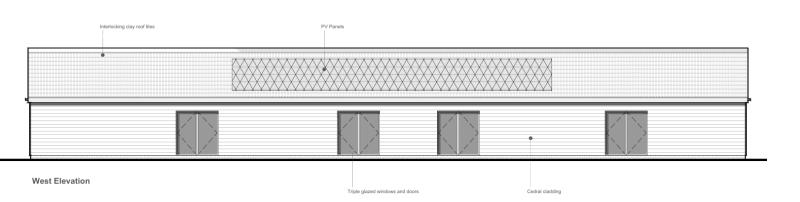
# 24/P/0325/FUL Land South of Lower Laurel Farm, Summer Lane, Banwell.

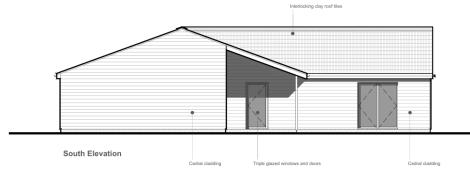
Proposed erection of 6 bed-bungalow for use as an accessible holiday let.

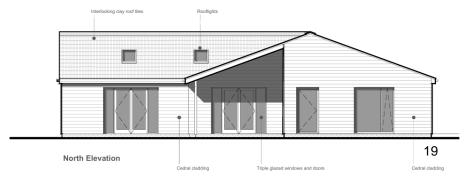


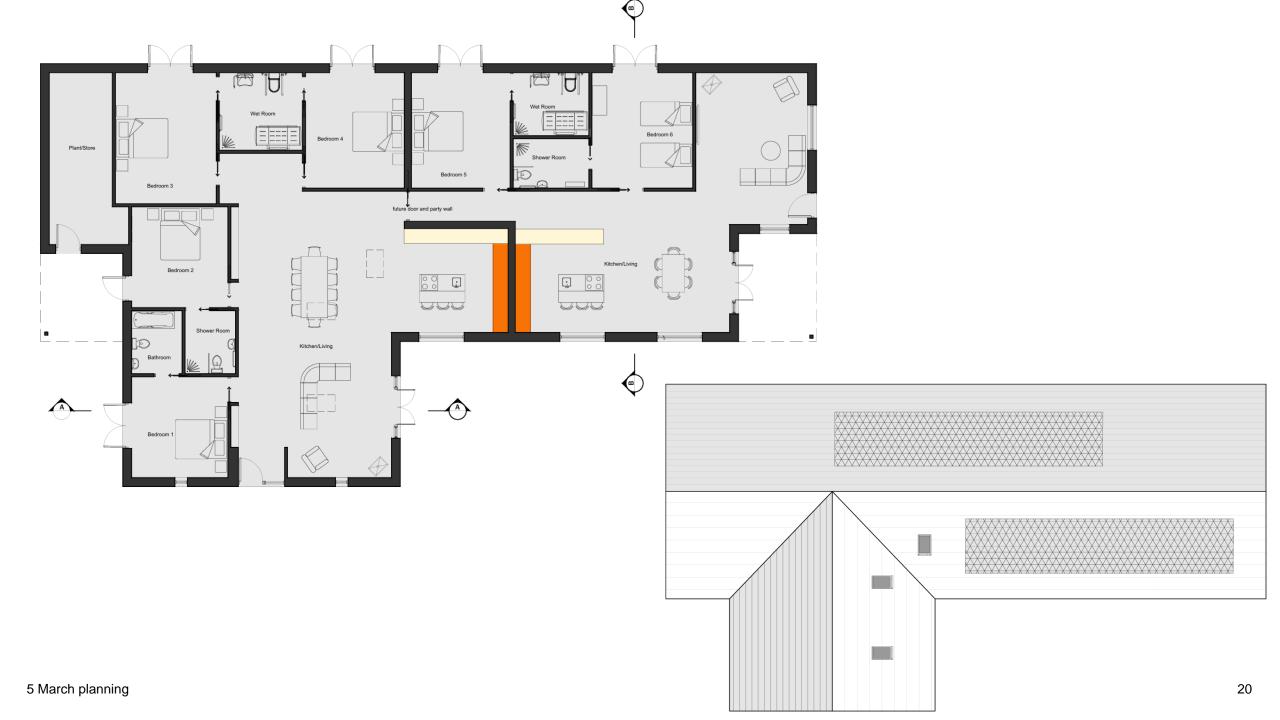












# To note the following applications

# 25/P/0239/NMA Land at Parklands (Phase 4a) Churchland Way.

Non-material amendment to permission 23/P/1376/RM (Reserved Matters application for area Phase 4a for the erection of 95no. dwellings and associated works pursuant to Outline Permission 12/P/1266/OT2) to allow for substitution of house types and some surfacing and boundary amendments.

# 25/P/0258/LDE Withyhurst Riverside Banwell BS29 6EH.

Certificate of lawfulness for confirmation that the use of an existing outbuilding used as a two storey annexed habitable space used incidentally to the occupation of the main dwellinghouse (Withyhurst) is lawful.

# To note North Somerset Council's planning decisions

# 24/P/2588/FUH 87 Knightcott Road Banwell BS29 6HR

Proposed demolition and rebuilding of the existing single storey outbuilding on the same footprint to provide a new garage/workshop and home office and solar panels to the West elevation roof. **APPROVE** 

# 24/P/2636/FUL Field to the Rear of Rose Hatch Cottage Hatches Lane Banwell

Proposed extension of existing equine menage area. APPROVE

#### 24/P/2695/AGA Banwell Woods Towerhead Road Banwell

Application to determine if prior approval is required for the placement of a shipping container clad in timber, to be used for storage of tools/equipment and shelter during adverse weather conditions. **WITHDRAWN** 

### 24/P/2704/FUL The Moor Dairy Moor Road Banwell BS29 6ET

Proposed demolition of existing barn and erection of a new barn. APPROVE

## 24/P/2739/TPO Banwell Woods, Towerhead Road, Banwell.

Coppice approx. 12 no. Hazel stools within Fyrd Wood (Banwell Woods). APPROVE