



MINEHEAD TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Planning Meeting of Minehead Town Council
held on
Tuesday 4th March 2025 at 7.30 pm at
the Town Council Offices, 3 Summerland Road, Minehead TA24 5BP

A 15-minute open forum was held before the discussion of applications, allowing Minehead residents to speak on any agenda-related matters. The following matters were raised:

A member of the public raised concerns regarding the proposed Roadside Service Station at Ellicombe, highlighting issues related to noise and light pollution, particularly with its proximity to the nearby veterinary practice. They expressed concern over the proposed access road, stating that the lane is not wide enough to accommodate vehicles, including large delivery vehicles. Additionally, they noted that the existing roundabout is already a congestion point, especially on busy days such as Butlins changeover days, Dunster Show and rugby events.

They believed that the current road infrastructure is insufficient for the development, which would likely necessitate the removal of hedgerows and an upgrade to the roundabout. Concerns were also raised about the visual impact of the development, as the site is on the edge of Exmoor National Park and would alter the approach to Minehead. They felt that existing developments in the area are in keeping with the local character, whereas this proposal would not be.

Flooding was also highlighted as a potential issue, as the field serves as a natural alleviation point for rainwater flow from Grabbist Hill. Furthermore, they expressed concern that the proposed coffee shop would negatively impact independent coffee businesses in the town. They stressed that any development in the area should be in keeping with the local landscape and ecology.

Present: Councillors M Palmer (Chair), Hodson, Lawton, Bartlett and C Palmer

Not in Attendance: Councillor Kravis

Officers in Attendance: B Parker (Town Clerk)

Members of Public: 1 member of the Public

10. To receive apologies for absence.

No apologies were received.

11. To receive disclosures of unregistered or other interests from councillors on matters to be considered at the Meeting.

There were no disclosures.

12. To approve the Minutes of the Planning Meeting of Minehead Town Council held on Tuesday 4th February 2025 to discuss any matters arising.

Initial

RESOLVED the Minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting of Minehead Town Council held on Tuesday 4th February 2025 were approved and signed by the chair.

13. To consider the Planning Applications received.
The applications were considered and comments are at Appendix 1.

The meeting ended at 8.21 p.m.

APPENDIX 1

<u>Application</u>	<u>Recommendation</u>
<p>3/10/25/001 Erection of Roadside Service Station including EV charging hub, petrol/diesel facilities, ancillary retail store and valeting facilities, drive-through coffee shop, access/egress and landscaping Land to the north of Ellicombe lane, Minehead</p>	<p>In accordance with Standing Order 1(a), the Chair addressed this agenda item as the first order of business.</p> <p>Councillors acknowledged the potential employment benefits but determined that the negative impacts such as noise, light pollution, and harm to local businesses outweighed them. Concerns were raised regarding the necessity of the development and its adverse effects on the town It was noted that Minehead has three existing fuel stations, numerous food shops and cafes.</p> <p>The amended planning statement referenced SWT Council’s response (Section 2.9), noting that the site is located outside the development boundaries and would result in the loss of agricultural land. While acknowledging that the Local Planning Authority supports EV initiatives, councillors agreed that this proposal primarily consists of a convenience store and coffee shop, with EV charging as a minor component. Section 3.4 claims that the town has limited and inconvenient EV provision. Councillors noted that a number of existing centrally located charging points encourage footfall and benefit to the community’s economy.</p> <p>Councillors cited Local Plan policies referenced in the planning statement, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy OC1 (Section 4.7): A presumption against development in open countryside unless in exceptional circumstances. Councillors did not deem the

<u>Application</u>	<u>Recommendation</u>
	<p>circumstances of this proposal to be exceptional.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy EC1 (Section 4.8): Economic growth should strengthen the local economy. However, councillors feared job displacement would negate any economic benefits. • Policy EC3 (Section 4.9): Countryside developments must be essential. Councillors argued since there were already three fuel stations in Minehead this was a non-essential development. <p>Additional concerns included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased noise, light, and odour pollution, as well as litter and potential fuel spill risks impacting nearby watercourses. • Harm to a nearby veterinary practice due to traffic, noise, and pollution, which could negatively affect animal care. • Increased traffic volume and safety concerns on a narrow access road frequently used by cyclists and pedestrians. <p>The site lies 50 plus metres outside the Minehead development boundary and significantly further from Dunster's. Inaccurate claims that the existing veterinary development set a precedent were clarified as upgrades or rebuilding of pre-existing barns, with the business clearly offering agricultural support. Assertions regarding the rugby club's location within Exmoor National Park were found to be misleading, as the area in question consists of seldom used training pitches the club itself sits outside the ENP boundary.</p> <p>The proposal includes 10 EV charging bays, expandable to 19. However, councillors raised doubts about demand, given that several sites with little used EV chargers already exist within a minute's drive. The negative impact on fragile, isolated local economies was also raised.</p>

<u>Application</u>	<u>Recommendation</u>
	<p>RESOLVED the committee opposes the development due to multiple material planning reasons, with particular emphasis on its non-compliance with the Adopted West Somerset Local Plan to 2032 policy OC1; policy EC3; its impact on local businesses; proximity to ENP; impact on ENP’s Dark Skies designation; poor, inadequate highway access; flooding of site, and requests that Somerset Council’s planning committee review the matter.</p>
<p>3/21/25/005 Loft conversion with erection of dormer windows and a single storey side extension Landfall, Periton Road, Minehead, TA24 8DX</p>	<p>RESOLVED the committee could see no material reason to object this application.</p>
<p>3/21/25/007 Erection of bin storage units 11 - 16 Brook Close, Minehead, TA24 8BD</p>	<p>RESOLVED the committee could see no material reason to object this application.</p>
<p>3/21/25/009 Erection of a two storey side extension and a single storey front extension Roslyn, Whitegate Road, Minehead, TA24 5SS</p>	<p>RESOLVED the committee could see no material reason to object this application.</p>

<u>Application</u>	<u>Recommendation</u>
<p>3/21/25/010 Erection of porch extension Garden House, Woodcombe Lane, Minehead TA24 8SA</p>	<p>RESOLVED the committee could see no material reason to object this application.</p>
<p>3/21/24/075 Display of 1 No. externally illuminated fascia sign and 1 No. externally illuminated projecting sign to front elevation Unit 4 Floyds Corner, The Parade, Minehead, TA24 5UF</p>	<p>The committee has previously commented on this application in December 2024, Minute number 50.</p>
<p>3/21/25/012 Removal of conservatory and erection of a single storey extension to the rear and erection of detached garage Torfells, 20 Parkhouse Road, Minehead, TA24 8AD</p>	<p>RESOLVED the committee could see no material reason to object this application.</p>

Cllr M Palmer
Planning Committee Chair
March 2025