



Hetton Town Council



Minutes of the meeting of the Planning & Development Committee of Hetton Town Council held at The Hetton Centre, DH5 9NE on Tuesday 7 July 2026

Present

Cllr K Angus, Cllr L Gibson, Cllr B Little, Cllr K Rowham and Cllr S Waterston

In attendance

Cllr P Dowell, Cllr J Bonsal, Cllr A Davies (SSC)

Lisa Hall, Town Clerk

19 MoP

In the absence of Cllr D Geddis, Cllr B Little Chaired the meeting.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr D Brennan (prior commitment).

Committee **resolved** to approve absences.

There were no apologies from Cllr D Geddis or Cllr J Defty.

Committee **resolved** to note the absences as unapproved.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Public participation

Members of the public attended the meeting to make representations in relation to planning applications 25/01432/OUT and 26/01310/FUL. Their comments are summarised below.

4. Planning application(s) notified by Sunderland City Council

Planning Application: 25/01432/OUT

Appeal reference: 6008403

Outline planning application (with all matters reserved except for means of access) for the erection of up to 255 dwellings, with public open space, landscaping, sustainable drainage system (SuDs) and associated infrastructure.

The Planning Committee has considered this application on numerous occasions and continues to object to the proposal.

Members expressed their dismay that Sunderland City Council had decided not to defend the appeal before the Planning Inspectorate. It was noted that the decision was based on changes to national housing requirements, advice that the appeal was unlikely to be successfully defended and the potential legal costs of more than £100,000.

However, the Town Council maintains that the reasons for refusal remain valid and questioned how the decision not to defend the appeal could be justified given that Sunderland's planning policies have not changed.

Members and the public expressed their anger that Sunderland City Council appeared to be placing financial considerations ahead of the needs and wishes of the people of Hetton.

Members also questioned why Sunderland City Council had prepared draft planning conditions and a draft Section 106 Agreement before the appeal had been determined. They considered that this gave the impression that an agreement had effectively already been reached between Sunderland City Council and Gladman Homes, making the appeal process appear to be little more than a tick-box exercise.

Cllr A. Davies noted that, if Sunderland City Council were to lose the appeal, it would count against the authority's planning performance. He further stated that an accumulation of unsuccessful appeal decisions could ultimately result in planning powers being removed from the authority and transferred to central government, as has occurred in some local authorities.

Cllr P. Dowell read his objection to the application, highlighting the importance of protecting green spaces for both current and future generations.

The Town Council advised that it had been gathering evidence and engaging with relevant organisations in support of its objection.

Members noted that it was now largely down to the Town Council and residents to oppose the appeal and encouraged the public to submit objections to the Planning Inspectorate.

Planning Application: 26/01310/FUL

*Land South of Glebeside Church Road Hetton-le-Hole Houghton-le Spring
Erection of 4no bed dormer bungalow with attached garage*

Members of the public attended the meeting to request that Hetton Town Council object to the application. Concerns were raised that the proposed dwelling would be out of keeping with the surrounding properties, result in loss of light and outlook to neighbouring residents and create access issues. It was also noted that Sunderland City Council had previously refused the application on several occasions, with only minor amendments made to the plans. Committee **resolved** to object to the application.

Planning Application: 26/01325/FUL

*3 Willington Close Hetton-le-Hole Houghton-le-Spring DH5 9GG
Proposed bay window to front elevation*

Committee made **no objections**.

Planning Application: 26/00985/FUL

*Land At Cygnet Way Rainton Bridge South Houghton-le-Spring DH4 5QZ
Construction of 6no. padel courts including 4no covered courts beneath lightweight canopies and 2no outdoor courts, and a single storey structure with pergola, which will provide a changing facility, shop and bar/seating area*

Committee made **no objections**.

Durham Road, Sunderland

Installation of pedestrian crossings

Committee made **no objections**.

Bexhill Road, Sunderland

No waiting

Committee made **no objections**.

5. Update on outstanding planning matters:

Sunderland City Council advised that there is no statutory requirement to consult third parties on Screening Opinions and confirmed it had not organised the meeting in Easington Lane.

The Committee **requested** that Sunderland City Council notify Hetton Town Council when a Screening Opinion is due to be considered, as this would provide additional time to review the proposal and assess its potential impact.

The Town Clerk advised that planning permission had now been granted for the demolition of the former Bog Row School.

Meeting closed at 6.30pm