



Planning Committee Report 2025/2026

Prepared by: Cllr June Williams

It has once again been my honour to chair this committee, which I often describe as “small but beautifully formed.”

As members are aware, we act in a consultative capacity; however, I believe that the Planning Department at North Devon District Council values our input, and from my experience as a member of this committee I feel that this is certainly the case.

2025 has been a busy year for the committee, with a significant number of applications brought forward for consideration at our monthly meetings. I am pleased to say that members consistently take the time to review applications in advance, attending meetings well-informed and ready to engage in constructive discussion. This ensures that any concerns are thoroughly explored before comments are submitted or support is given.

As in previous years, we have considered a number of applications relating to Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs). Members are generally confident that these are handled appropriately by officers, with due regard given to the condition and long-term management of the trees in question.

We have also seen a high volume of applications concerning listed buildings, which is not surprising given the number of such properties within our town. During the year, we welcomed a presentation from the Heritage Officer at North Devon District Council, who provided valuable insight into regulations surrounding internal alterations and, in particular, the replacement of windows in listed properties. This was both informative and beneficial to the committee’s understanding.

The committee has again reviewed several applications involving changes of use from commercial or retail premises to residential properties. While it is always regrettable to see businesses close, we



recognise the economic challenges currently faced and the ongoing need for good-quality housing. As such, these applications are considered with an open and balanced perspective.

We have also continued to monitor developments in Lee, including the progress of the former Lee Bay Hotel site, which now appears to be advancing at a steady pace.

I am sure my fellow members would join me in thanking our officers for their continued support throughout the year. I would also like to personally thank each member of the committee for their time, dedication, and thoughtful contributions.

Finally, I would like to extend thanks to our Lee and Lincombe Champion, Cllr Pat Coates, whose insight—gained through regular engagement with local residents—has, as always, proved invaluable.