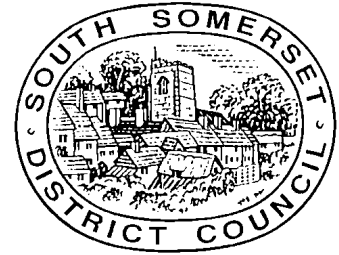


South Somerset District Council

Notice of Meeting



Area South Committee

Making a difference where it counts

Wednesday 1st July 2015

2.00 pm

**Council Chamber
Council Offices,
Brympton Way,
Yeovil
BA20 2HT**

(disabled access is available at this meeting venue)



Members listed on the following page are requested to attend the meeting.

The public and press are welcome to attend.

If you would like any further information on the items to be discussed, please ring the Agenda Co-ordinator, **Jo Boucher 01935 462011**, website: www.southsomerset.gov.uk

This Agenda was issued on Monday 22nd June 2015.

Ian Clarke, Assistant Director (Legal & Corporate Services)

This information is also available on our website
www.southsomerset.gov.uk



INVESTORS IN PEOPLE

Area South Committee Membership

Cathy Bakewell
John Clark
Gye Dibben
John Field
Nigel Gage
Peter Gubbins
Kaysar Hussain

Andy Kendall
Sarah Lindsay
Mike Lock
Tony Lock
Sam McAllister
Graham Oakes
Wes Read

David Recardo
Gina Seaton
Peter Seib
Alan Smith
Rob Stickland

South Somerset District Council – Council Plan

Our focuses are: (all equal)

- Jobs – We want a strong economy which has low unemployment and thriving businesses.
- Environment – We want an attractive environment to live in with increased recycling and lower energy use.
- Homes – We want decent housing for our residents that matches their income.
- Health & Communities – We want communities that are healthy, self-reliant, and have individuals who are willing to help each other.

Scrutiny procedure rules

Please note that decisions taken by Area Committees may be "called in" for scrutiny by the council's Scrutiny Committee prior to implementation. This does not apply to decisions taken on planning applications.

Consideration of planning applications

Members of the public are requested to note that consideration of the planning applications will commence immediately after Item 6 at approximately 2.15pm. The public and representatives of Parish/Town Councils will be invited to speak on the individual planning applications at the time they are considered. Anyone wishing to raise matters in relation to other items on the agenda may do so at the time the item is considered.

Highways

A formal written report from the Area Highways Office should be included in the Agenda in May and November. Alternatively, they can be contacted direct through Somerset County Council on 0300 123 2224.

Members questions on reports prior to the meeting

Members of the committee are requested to contact report authors on points of clarification prior to the committee meeting.

Information for the Public

The Council has a well-established area committee system and through four area committees seeks to strengthen links between the Council and its local communities, allowing planning and other local issues to be decided at a local level (planning recommendations outside council policy are referred to the district wide Regulation Committee).

Decisions made by Area Committees, which include financial or policy implications are generally classed as executive decisions. Where these financial or policy decisions have a significant impact on council budgets or the local community, agendas will record these decisions as "key decisions". Members of the public can view the council's Executive Forward Plan, either online or at any SSSC council office, to see what executive/key decisions are scheduled to be taken in the coming months. Non-executive decisions taken by area committees include planning, and other quasi-judicial decisions.

At area committee meetings members of the public are able to:

- attend and make verbal or written representations, except where, for example, personal or confidential matters are being discussed;
- at the area committee chairman's discretion, members of the public are permitted to speak for up to up to 3 minutes on agenda items; and
- see agenda reports.

Meetings of the Area South Committee are normally held monthly at 2.00pm on the first Wednesday of the month at the Council Offices, Brympton Way, Yeovil.

Agendas and minutes of Area Committees are published on the Council's website www.southsomerset.gov.uk/councillors-and-democracy/meetings-and-decisions

The Council's Constitution is also on the web site and available for inspection in council offices.

Further information about this Committee can be obtained by contacting the agenda co-ordinator named on the front page.

Public Participation at Committees

This is a summary of the Protocol adopted by the Council and set out in Part 5 of the Council's Constitution.

Public Question Time

The period allowed for participation in this session shall not exceed 15 minutes except with the consent of the chairman of the committee. Each individual speaker shall be restricted to a total of three minutes.

Planning Applications

Comments and questions about planning applications will be dealt with at the time those applications are considered, when planning officers will be in attendance, rather than during the Public Question Time session.

Comments should be confined to additional information or issues, which have not been fully covered in the officer's report. Members of the public are asked to submit any additional documents to the planning officer at least 72 hours in advance and not to present them to the Committee on the day of the meeting. This will give the planning officer the opportunity to respond appropriately. Information from the public should not be tabled at the meeting. It should also be noted that, in the interests of fairness, the use of presentational aids (e.g. PowerPoint) by the applicant/agent or those making representations will not be permitted. However, the applicant/agent or those making representations are able to ask the Planning Officer to include photographs/images within the officer's presentation subject to them being received by the officer at least 72 hours prior to the meeting. No more than 5 photographs/images either supporting or against the application to be submitted. The Planning Officer will also need to be satisfied that the photographs are appropriate in terms of planning grounds.

At the committee chairman's discretion, members of the public are permitted to speak for up to 3 minutes each and where there are a number of persons wishing to speak they should be encouraged to choose one spokesperson to speak either for the applicant or on behalf of any supporters or objectors to the application. The total period allowed for such participation on each application shall not normally exceed 15 minutes.

The order of speaking on planning items will be:

- Town or Parish Council Spokesperson
- Objectors
- Supporters
- Applicant/Agent
- District Council Ward Member

If a member of the public wishes to speak they must inform the committee administrator before the meeting begins of their name and whether they have supporting comments or objections and who they are representing. This must be done by completing one of the public participation slips available at the meeting.

In exceptional circumstances, the Chairman of the Committee shall have discretion to vary the procedure set out to ensure fairness to all sides.

The same rules in terms of public participation will apply in respect of other agenda items where people wish to speak on that particular item.

If a Councillor has declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI) or a personal and prejudicial interest

In relation to Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, a Councillor is prohibited by law from participating in the discussion about the business on the agenda that relates to this interest and is also required to leave the room whilst the relevant agenda item is being discussed.

Under the new Code of Conduct adopted by this Council in July 2012, a Councillor with a personal and prejudicial interest (which is not also a DPI) will be afforded the same right as a member of the public to speak in relation to the relevant business and may also answer any questions, except that once the Councillor has addressed the Committee the Councillor will leave the room and not return until after the decision has been made.

Area South Committee

Wednesday 1 July 2015

Agenda

Preliminary Items

1. Minutes of previous meeting

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the previous meetings held on 21st May 2015 and 3rd June 2015.

2. Apologies for absence

3. Declarations of Interest

In accordance with the Council's current Code of Conduct (adopted July 2012), which includes all the provisions relating to Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI), personal and prejudicial interests, Members are asked to declare any DPI and also any personal interests (and whether or not such personal interests are also "prejudicial") in relation to any matter on the Agenda for this meeting. A DPI is defined in The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012 (SI 2012 No. 1464) and Appendix 3 of the Council's Code of Conduct. A personal interest is defined in paragraph 2.8 of the Code and a prejudicial interest is defined in paragraph 2.9.

Members are reminded that they need to declare the fact that they are also a member of a County, Town or Parish Council as a Personal Interest. As a result of the change made to the Code of Conduct by this Council at its meeting on 15th May 2014, where you are also a member of Somerset County Council and/or a Town or Parish Council within South Somerset you must declare a prejudicial interest in any business on the agenda where there is a financial benefit or gain or advantage to Somerset County Council and/or a Town or Parish Council which would be at the cost or to the financial disadvantage of South Somerset District Council. If you have a prejudicial interest you must comply with paragraphs 2.9(b) and 2.9(c) of the Code.

In the interests of complete transparency, Members of the County Council, who are not also members of this committee, are encouraged to declare any interests they may have in any matters being discussed even though they may not be under any obligation to do so under any relevant code of conduct.

Planning Applications Referred to the District Council's Regulation Committee

The following members of this Committee are also members of the Council's Regulation Committee:

Councillors Peter Gubbins, Graham Oakes, David Recardo and Gina Seaton.

Where planning applications are referred by this Committee to the Regulation Committee for determination, in accordance with the Council's Code of Practice on Planning, Members of the Regulation Committee can participate and vote on these items at the Area Committee and at Regulation Committee. In these cases the Council's decision-making process is not complete until the application is determined by the Regulation Committee. Members of the Regulation Committee retain an open mind and will not

finalise their position until the Regulation Committee. They will also consider the matter at Regulation Committee as Members of that Committee and not as representatives of the Area Committee.

4. Public question time

This is a chance for members of the public and representatives of Parish/Town Councils to participate in the meeting by asking questions, making comments and raising matters of concern. Parish/Town Council representatives may also wish to use this opportunity to ask for the District Council's support on any matter of particular concern to their Parish/Town. The public and representatives of Parish/Town Councils will be invited to speak on individual planning applications at the time the applications are considered.

5. Chairman's announcements

6. Reports from representatives on outside organisations

This is an opportunity for Members who represent the Council on outside organisations to report items of interest to the Committee.

Items for discussion

- 7. Schedule of Planning Applications to be Determined by Committee** (Pages 1 - 2)
- 8. Planning Application 15/01630/COU - The Old Courthouse 20 Kingston Yeovil** (Pages 3 - 9)
- 9. Planning Application 13/01490/FUL - Plot 21 Artillery Road Brympton** (Pages 10 - 17)
- 10. Somerset Highways Report** (Pages 18 - 20)
- 11. Update Report from the Countryside Service** (Pages 21 - 27)
- 12. Update report on the Performance of the Streetscene Service** (Pages 28 - 31)
- 13. Our Place Westfield Project - Update Report** (Pages 32 - 34)
- 14. Westfield Academy Grant Application (Executive Decision)** (Pages 35 - 37)
- 15. Dorcas Charitable Trust - Update and Annual Report for the Year to 31st March 2015** (Pages 38 - 44)
- 16. Yeovil Western Corridor Cycle Way Improvement Scheme** (Pages 45 - 53)
- 17. Forward Plan** (Pages 54 - 56)
- 18. Appeals (For Information Only)** (Page 57)

Please note that the decisions taken by Area Committees may be called in for scrutiny by the Council's Scrutiny Committee prior to implementation.

This does not apply to decisions taken on planning applications.

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Agenda Item 7

Schedule of Planning Applications to be determined by Committee

Strategic Director: Rina Singh, Place and Performance
Assistant Director: Martin Woods, Economy
Service Manager: David Norris, Development Control Manager
Contact Details: david.norris@southsomerset.gov.uk or 01935 462382

Purpose of the Report

The schedule of planning applications sets out the applications to be determined by Area South Committee at this meeting.

Recommendation

Members are asked to note the schedule of planning applications.

Planning Applications will be considered at 2.00pm.

Members of the public who wish to speak about a particular planning item are recommended to arrive for 1.45pm.

SCHEDULE					
Agenda Number	Ward	Application	Brief Summary of Proposal	Site Address	Applicant
8	YEOVIL WEST	15/01630/COU	The change of use of premises from a dwelling/bed & breakfast to a hostel	The Old Courthouse 20 Kingston Yeovil	Mrs J Fuller
9	BRYMPTON	13/01490/FUL	The use of industrial land for a builders yard, the formation of aggregate bays, the siting of a site cabin and the erection of 2.4 metre high boundary fencing (Part Retrospective)	Plot 21 Artillery Road Brympton	Mike Lock Construction Ltd

Further information about planning applications is shown on the following page and at the beginning of the main agenda document.

The Committee will consider the applications set out in the schedule. The Planning Officer will give further information at the meeting and, where appropriate, advise members of letters received as a result of consultations since the agenda had been prepared.

Referral to the Regulation Committee

The inclusion of two stars (**) as part of the Development Manager's recommendation indicates that the application will need to be referred to the District Council's Regulation Committee if the Area Committee is unwilling to accept that recommendation.

The Lead Planning Officer, at the Committee, in consultation with the Chairman and Solicitor, will also be able to recommend that an application should be referred to District Council's Regulation Committee even if it has not been two starred on the Agenda.

Human Rights Act Statement

The Human Rights Act 1998 makes it unlawful, subject to certain expectations, for a public authority to act in a way which is incompatible with a Convention Right. However when a planning decision is to be made there is further provision that a public authority must take into account the public interest. Existing planning law has for many years demanded a balancing exercise between private rights and public interest and this authority's decision making takes into account this balance. If there are exceptional circumstances which demand more careful and sensitive consideration of Human Rights issues then these will be referred to in the relevant report.

Agenda Item 8

Officer Report On Planning Application: 15/01630/COU

Proposal :	The change of use of premises from a dwelling/bed & breakfast to a hostel (GR 355325/116417)
Site Address:	The Old Courthouse 20 Kingston Yeovil
Parish:	Yeovil
Yeovil (West) Ward (SSDC Member)	Cllr J Clark Cllr W Read Cllr A Smith
Recommending Officer:	Simon Fox Tel: (01935) 462509 Email: simon.fox@southsomerset.gov.uk
Target date :	19th June 2015
Applicant :	Mrs J Fuller
Agent: (no agent if blank)	Robin Bryer Princes Place Closworth Yeovil Somerset BA22 9RH
Application Type :	Other Change Of Use

Reason for Referral to Committee

This application is referred for Committee consideration at the request of the Development Manager in accordance with the scheme of delegation and with the agreement of the Chairman to allow the application to be debated in public given the concerns raised locally.

Site Description and Proposal





The application site comprises The Old Courthouse (circa 1830), a Grade 2 listed two-storey residential property with rooms in the roof space located off Kingston and Swallowcliffe Gardens.

The front elevation faces south/southeast towards Kingston, comprises 3-bays, having a central Roman Doric porch, and sash windows. The property is rendered under a Welsh slate roof. The property was historically extended to the west by a large single storey extension and later a second storey (first floor) was added in part. This element is unfinished.

The application states that the property offer Bed and Breakfast accommodation. Vehicular access is provided via Kingston and Swallowcliffe Gardens. The site lies between predominantly detached dwellings on Swallowcliffe Gardens, the Park School (an education establishment) and Swallowcliffe Court (also known as Rainbow Court), which shares its rear vehicular access, and comprises supported housing for people with mental health issues.

The proposal seeks to convert the building into a hostel. Additional information has been sought from the agent regarding the nature of the hostel use. The plans show 15 bedrooms would be created with several rooms used for communal purposes. The proposal includes the completion of the first floor extension.

The application states there are 12 car parking spaces on site. Both Kingston and Swallowcliffe Gardens are subject to limitations in terms of on-street parking. A store would also provide space for 15 cycles.

HISTORY

96/02756/FUL: The change of use of premises from Use Class B1 (offices) to use class A3 (residential) (to form two separate dwellinghouses): Permitted with conditions: 22/01/1997

97/00848/LBC: The conversion of former County Court into dwellinghouse, internal alterations and the demolition of extension to former County Court: Permitted with conditions: 16/05/1997

02/02887/FUL: Change of use of part of dwellinghouse into 2 No. self-contained flats and alterations and erection of first floor extension for six letting rooms: Refused: 18/11/2003

02/02889/LBC: Internal and external alterations to main building to include first floor extension, window removal and retaining boundary walls: Refused: 18/11/2003

03/01296/LBC: Erection of a stairway to the front door, gates at entrance to Swallowcliffe Gardens, a retaining wall, protective railings and the removal of an existing postbox: Permitted with conditions: 24/06/2003

04/01330/LBC: The reconstruction of collapsed/defective garden boundary wall: Permitted with conditions: 02/09/2004

06/00553/COU: Change of use from residential to children's nursery, alterations to form rooms in the roof space and the conversion of existing garage to form studio accommodation: Refused: 29/03/2006. Allowed on appeal.

08/00794/FUL: The erection of an extension: Permitted with conditions: 06/11/2009

08/00796/LBC: The erection of an extension: Permitted with conditions: 06/11/2009

09/02735/FUL: Change of use of domestic garden to mixed use as domestic garden and place for the sale of hot food and drink to be consumed on the premises: Refused: 06/11/2009. Appeal dismissed.

POLICY

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004), and Paragraphs 2, 11, 12, and 14 of the NPPF indicate it is a matter of law that applications are determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

On 5th March 2015 South Somerset District Council, as Local Planning Authority, adopted its Local Plan to cover the period 2006 to 2028.

On this basis the following policies are considered relevant:-

Policies of the South Somerset Local Plan (2006-2028):

SD1 - Sustainable Development

SS1 - Settlement Hierarchy

SS5 - Delivering New Housing Growth

YV1 - Urban Framework and Greenfield Housing for Yeovil

EQ2 - Design & General Development

EQ3 - Historic Environment

EQ7 - Pollution Control

TA5 - Transport Impact of New Development

TA6 - Parking Standards

HG5 - Achieving a Mix of Market Housing

National Guidance - National Planning Policy Framework:

Chapter 4 - Promoting Sustainable Transport

Chapter 6 - Delivering a Wide Choice of High Quality Homes

Other

Somerset County Council Parking Strategy (March 2012)

CONSULTATIONS

Yeovil Town Council:

Recommend refusal due to lack of information and clarity as to what is being applied for. Also concerns over safeguarding of children. Encouraged further negotiations with the agent before/if taken to the Area Committee.

Highways Authority (Somerset CC):

Standing Advice applies [refer to SSDC Highways Consultants comments]

SSDC Highways Consultant:

"Consider parking demand but this is a town centre, sustainable location so given the type of use and its location, parking below the SPS optimum standards could be acceptable. Waiting restrictions on Swallowcliffe Gardens should prevent/deter inappropriate on-road parking. Suggest sufficient on-site cycle and motorcycle parking should be provided in line with the SPS levels".

SSDC Conservation Unit:

"Thank you for consulting me on this application. 20 Kingston is a substantial late Georgian house of 1830, that formerly sat in large grounds and was known as Swallowcliffe. Its setting has been affected by the upgrading of the adjacent road network and the addition of a large extension on its west side, however the original building remains with apparently little alteration. The listing refers to the buildings' interior: *'The interior (not fully inspected) has the original staircase and some good plasterwork, especially cornices and a plaster vaulted ceiling to the entrance hall, as well as a number of Regency style doors and architraves at ground floor level'*

At this stage only an application for change of use has been submitted. I need to consider the proposal in light of the listed status of the building, taking into account the impact it may have on the conservation of the asset in the future and the potential for physical changes to the building. The lack of a corresponding listed building consent makes this assessment particularly difficult.

In terms of the principle of the change of use, we need to first consider the building's 'optimum viable use', as referred to in paragraph 16 of the Planning Practice Guidance. With reference to this guidance it would appear that maintaining the building as a single dwelling is the best use. This will involve no alteration, and is clearly the use that the building is best designed for. Changing from this use to something that will involve a significant level of subdivision and may affect the conservation of the asset into the future needs to be thoroughly justified. The Planning Practice Guidance refers to the necessary initial changes, and also makes reference to subsequent wear and tear and likely future changes. We don't know how sustainable the proposed use is in the long term. We may accept changes to the building now for a use that will only be viable in the short term or may not even be viable at all. As for 'wear and tear', this is much more likely on a building that is occupied as a hostel, where residents are transitory and are likely to have less interest vested in the building as a whole.

The required 'clear and convincing justification' (NPPF, para. 132) for this change of use has not been submitted.

The listing text refers to the significance of the interior, particularly at ground floor. The proposed change of use will need to adhere to the building regulations, which in this case will relate to matters such as means of escape and fire protection and sound transmission

between rooms. This usually involves the need to upgrade or replace doors, and the addition of linings to walls, floors and ceilings. This has the potential to have a big impact on the significance of the building. Although this is something we cannot assess fully at this stage as we have not been able to gain access to the building, and no details relating to the building regulations have been submitted.

In conclusion the application appears weak in so far as the change of use has not been justified. Nowhere within the submission has the 'optimum viable use' of the building been considered. The lack of detail relating to matters such as the building regulations is also a significant issue. The application therefore fails to meet the requirements of paragraph 132 of the NPPF and does not accord with advice in the Planning Practice Guidance. I therefore recommend refusal".

Environmental Protection (Air Quality):

No comments to make.

REPRESENTATIONS

Neighbouring properties/premises to the site have been notified.

Two site notices have been displayed at the site. One facing Kingston and one facing Swallowcliffe Gardens.

Several representations (7) have been received; a summary of comments:

- The application site is not suitable for the use proposed.
- The nature of the hostel use is unclear.
- "...some of these hostels suffer disproportionate amounts of anti-social behaviour both within the establishment itself as well as for occupants of properties in the surrounding areas. To be able to provide a clear view on any potential impact the proposed change of use would have on the town and local residents from any potential crime and disorder, we would require further information" [Avon and Somerset Constabulary]
- Services need to be delivered by suitably experienced people, with adequate support on site. No information regarding the client group and type, nature and frequency of support that will be delivered [Knightstone Housing Association].
- Residents at Rainbow Court are vulnerable.
- There may be safeguarding issues dependent of the nature of the use of the building [The Park School].
- There are already several multiple occupancy dwellings/hostels in the immediate area.
- The site is adjacent to a school.
- Noise and anti-social behaviour concerns.
- Cars could be stopping on the dual carriageway seeking access/dropping off to this site.
- The partially constructed extension should be completed and the year cleared prior to any change of use.
- Lack of parking provision on site.

CONSIDERATIONS

The application does not specify what type of hostel is to be provided. In planning terms there is no definition of hostel other than a type of accommodation for short term accommodation, implying a transient resident population.

The agent was asked to define his understanding of the term hostel and what type of hostel was being proposed in this case. Also, whether any staff would be present, whether the proposal was proposed in association with any charity or other organisation, how many occupants were intended and whether the two access points would continue to be used for

vehicles and pedestrians.

His response to these questions was:

Staff not proposed, though a care taker may be resident. No agency involved. One person per room anticipated; certainly no more than a couple. No need survey carried out, but self evident given proximity to Yeovil College and Yeovil Hospital -students, teachers and nurses are anticipated to form the bulk of residents. Cycle and pedestrian use of both accesses is anticipated. Four wheel access could be regulated if desired.

It is important that clarity over the intended use is given so that the impacts of the development can be assessed, as one type of hostel may have greater impacts than another in so far as it influences the character of the use of the land under consideration and how that would impact on neighbouring land.

The answers given lack precision and are open to interpretation. Terms such as 'may' and 'anticipated' with regards to the residency of a caretaker and the nature of occupants does not provide the confidence and clarity needed.

It is noted that the neighbouring premises, Swallowcliffe Court, is a block of flats owned by Knightstone Housing and operated by a charity that provides sheltered housing for individuals with mental health issues. Another property in close proximity to the application site is used to provide accommodation and 24-hr support for vulnerable young people. The provider has asked that its specific location be kept confidential. The Town Council and the neighbouring Park School has raised similar issues regarding safeguarding, due to the lack of clarity regarding the specific nature of the hostel.

The historic permission for use as a Children's Nursery is noted in terms of assessing the impact of the development on the access points and parking provision and it is unlikely that a traffic impact would result but again the lack of clarity does not allow a robust assessment of this matter.

The agent has accepted that separate Listed Building Consent would be required should this application be approved, not it is not sought at this time. The agent was asked to facilitate a site meeting to allow an assessment of the site and the interior of the building. This was declined. Instead the agent insisted that the officer's assessment be made from the public highway. The comments of the Conservation Officer are noted, in particular the impacts that may be brought about by a hostel use, including those required by Building Regulations. The LPA wishes to work in a collaborative manner to isolate issues and offer solutions to those problems. If however those efforts are frustrated and there is no reasonable way to mitigate potential impacts by conditions then permission has to be recommended to be withheld.

RECOMMENDATION:

Refuse permission for the following reason:

SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING:

01. The application lacks sufficient information regarding its use to allow the development to be robustly assessed, in particular how it would influence the character of the use of the land under consideration and how that would impact on neighbouring land and uses. In addition the LPA has been denied access to the site to properly assess the proposal. As such the proposal is contrary to policy EQ2 of the South Somerset Local Plan (March 2015).

02. The application does not provide the required 'clear and convincing justification' to allow this change of use application to be assessed with regards to its impact on the significance of a designated heritage asset, in this case a Grade 2 listed building, as such the proposal is contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (in particular para. 132) and policy EQ3 of the South Somerset Local Plan (March 2015).

Informatives:

01. In accordance with paragraphs 186 and 187 of the NPPF the council, as Local Planning Authority, takes a positive and proactive approach to development proposals focused on solutions. The council works with applicants/agents in a positive and proactive manner by;
- offering a pre-application advice service, and
 - as appropriate updating applications/agents of any issues that may arise in the processing of their application and where possible suggesting solutions.

In this case, the applicant/agent did not take the opportunity to enter into pre-application discussions. During the course of the application the agent was asked to provide more information to help justify the application but failed to do so. Access to the application site was also denied.

Agenda Item 9

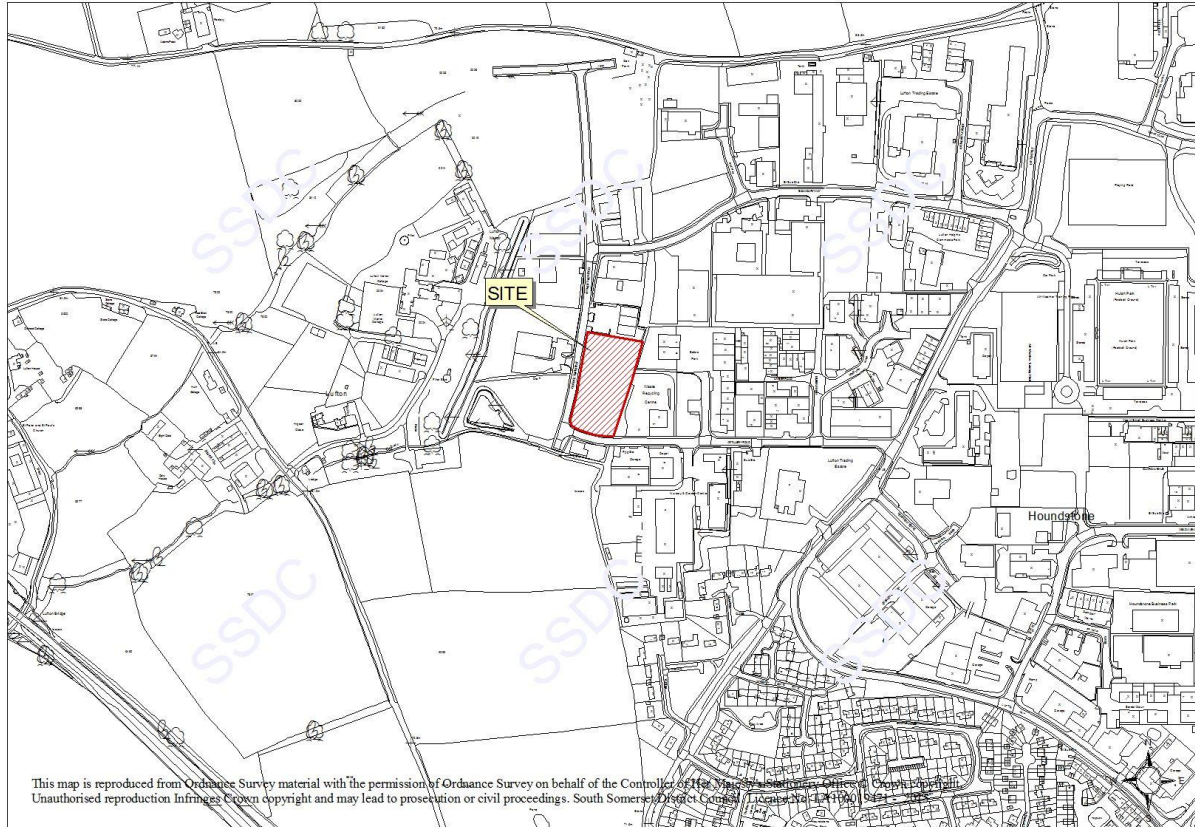
Officer Report On Planning Application: 13/01490/FUL

Proposal :	The use of industrial land for a builders yard, the formation of aggregate bays, the siting of a site cabin and the erection of 2.4 metre high boundary fencing (Part Retrospective)(GR 352162/116879)
Site Address:	Plot 21 Artillery Road Brympton
Parish:	Brympton
BRYMPTON Ward (SSDC Member)	Cllr S Lindsay Cllr P Seib
Recommending Case Officer:	Andrew Collins Tel: 01935 462276 Email: andrew.collins@southsomerset.gov.uk
Target date :	19th June 2013
Applicant :	Mike Lock Construction Ltd
Agent: (no agent if blank)	
Application Type :	Minor Other less than 1,000 sq.m or 1ha

Reason for Referral to Committee

This application is referred to the Area South Committee as the applicant is an elected member of South Somerset District Council.

Site Description and Proposal





The site is located within the development area and there is an oak tree with a TPO on it located on the site.

The site is a corner plot located at the western end of Artillery Way where it meets George Smith Way. To the East of the site is the Waste Recycling Centre and to the West is Tuscan House and a commercial/industrial plot to the north.

The site currently accommodates mounds of aggregate (approx. 1m high) and earth bunds around the highway boundaries also approx. 1.5m high. The western bund is currently overgrown with large weeds.

Planning permission is sought to use the site as a builder's yard, place a site cabin and portaloo and to erect a 2.4m high palisade fence around the site. It is also confirmed during the course of the application permission is sought for the retrospective formation of aggregate bays and the storage and provision to sell bagged / loose aggregates and sand. It has been confirmed that the existing bund / topsoil would be removed from the Western boundary.

A dropped kerb and metal gates are in place on the Southern boundary together with temporary herras style fencing.

The application is supported by a Design and Access Statement, photos of the proposed site cabin and palisade fencing.

Lengthy discussions have been held with the applicant over time in relation to protection of the existing tree and landscaping. The culmination of these proposals resulted in the submission of amended plans received on 1 May 2015 to address concerns raised about landscaping. This followed remedial tree works in December 2014.

RELEVANT HISTORY

11/02536/CPO - The temporary storage of construction waste/aggregates - SSDC no objection to County Matter - 15/09/2011. This was subsequently granted by Somerset County Council's Minerals and Waste Department for a temporary period until 31/12/12.

00/01766/S73 - development of land for employment purposes without compliance with conditions 5 and 6 of decision notice 99/02363/R3D dated 26/01/11 (ie use and operating hours of part of site) - Application permitted with conditions - 2/11/00

99/02363/R3D - The development of land for employment purposes within Use Classes B1, B2 and B8 and the provision of associated roads, services and landscaping (Outline) - Application permitted with conditions - 26/1/00

POLICY

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004), and Paragraphs 2, 11, 12, and 14 of the NPPF indicate it is a matter of law that applications are determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

On the 5th March 2015 the South Somerset Local Plan (2006 - 2028) was adopted. Therefore it is considered that the development plan comprises this plan.

Policies of the adopted South Somerset Local Plan (2006-2028)

SD1 - Sustainable Development

SS1 - Settlement Strategy

EP3 - Safeguarding Employment Land

TA5 - Transport Impact of New Development

TA6 - Parking Standards

EQ2 - General Development

EQ5 - Green Infrastructure

EQ7 - Pollution Control

National Planning Policy Framework

Chapter 1 - Building a Strong Competitive Economy

Chapter 4 - Promoting Sustainable Transport

Chapter 7 - Requiring Good Design

Other Relevant Documents

Somerset Parking Strategy

Development Brief for Land at Oak Farm, Lufton, Yeovil 1989

CONSULTATIONS

Brympton Parish Council - *"Recommends approval"*

Highway Authority - *"The proposal currently derives access onto a private road. Based on the submitted details, it is considered that the proposed development will not have any detrimental impact on the adjoining highway network to warrant an objection in this particular case."*

Area Engineer - No comment

Tree Officer - Remedial measures to the protected tree were carried out in December 2014 involving the de-compaction of the soil and feeding with a slow-release fertiliser. Protective fencing has been installed. Previously he raised objections to the proposals due to a lack of planting to soften the boundary fence and long term tree protection measures. A condition for long term tree protection measures would be required. Either the temporary fence should remain and the land can't be used or alternatively a cell web protection system is utilised in order to use this area. This aspect can be conditioned to ensure an appropriate way forward. A proposal for landscaping has now been submitted. Subject to the mulching of the tree and shrub areas with woodchip / bark to a depth of 70mm and the pavement edge is safeguarded with a small retaining structure to prevent mulch spilling has no objections subject to conditions.

Environmental Protection Officer - I have no comments.

Economic Development Manager - Due to the importance of these comments they are attached in full.

"I have no fundamental objection to this planning application because the proposed use

- a) *falls within the existing planning use categories for the site and*
- b) *will provide employment.*

However, because of its location, I do have a number of concerns that relate to the visual aspects of the proposed scheme. I would wish to make a few recommendations that may help to minimise the potential for visual intrusiveness.

The George Smith Way section of the Lufton Park is a newer and quite prestigious section of the Lufton Business Park. It is home to some key businesses who have contributed to the quality of building design that helps to maintain a strong business park environment and appearance. The proposed site is also close to the 'gateway' to the new Lufton (phase 3) extension. It is therefore important that businesses in the area strive to maintain the very positive visual impression that the Business Park currently enjoys.

Whilst I accept that this application is for a builder's yard and that it will include all the components that one would typically expect of this type of operation, we should ensure that the visual impact of Plot 21 does not detract from the overall appeal of the business park in this location.

I am sure that the applicant already appreciates this point and will concur with the following observations. I believe that in conditioning the application against adverse visual impact we particularly need to address the following areas:

- *The 'palisade fencing' referred to in the application.*

Many sites within the park do rely on fencing for security and this has to be accepted. The style, grade and obtrusiveness of the fencing should be no greater than that already used on the park for similar purposes.

- *Landscaping*

Wherever possible the applicant should use landscaping, screening and planting within the site (or to its boundaries) to minimise the visual impact of storing materials and parking large vehicles

- *The site office.*

This clearly indicates a metal 'portacabin' style as typically used on similar sites. That being

accepted, consideration needs to be given to the location of the office within the site. If necessary, screening should be considered and certainly a restriction on the height of the structure so that it does not intrude on the skyline or be unduly visible.

- *Access and road infrastructure.*

The site should be able to cope adequately with vehicular loading and unloading processes entirely within the site. This should include suitable areas of parking and turning within the site for vehicles waiting to unload or load. Parking or waiting on adjacent highways should not be permitted. The roadways of the business park already suffer from congestion at peak times - generated by traffic flows and roadside parking. The traffic on this highway will increase as the park expands and the road in question will become a more established through-route. We should be firm in imposing restrictions in this matter.

Looking beyond the life of the proposed business, the site will still offer a largely undeveloped footprint that can lend itself to a variety of uses. I feel we should ensure that any infrastructure introduced for the proposed use does not unreasonably limit the scope of the site for future development and employment use.

In summary I have no objection to this application provided we are able to condition the application reasonably against adverse visual impact."

REPRESENTATIONS

None received.

CONSIDERATIONS

Principle

The site is located within the development area as defined in the adopted Local Plan 2006 and outline permission existed for B1, B2 and B8 uses on the site. The proposed use is considered to fall within the employment definition of the above. Therefore the principle of using this site for a builder's yard is acceptable and complies with saved Policy ME3 of the South Somerset Local Plan.

Boundary Treatment / Landscaping

The development of Lufton 2000, a joint development between SSDC and a developer has been a long time in the planning process. A Development Brief was written to guide development over the site. It was an original intention that;

"6.1 Landscaping must form an integral part of this development."

It goes on to say that;

"6.4 b) Screening and Landscaping by individual occupants. Each plot should have land set aside for planting with trees, shrubs and ground cover plants as appropriate. A landscaping scheme will be required to be submitted with each site application."

Whilst it is noted that limited weight can be given to this document the Council's original intentions are clear and the sentiment is still relevant today. This stance is backed up by the Economic Development Manager's comments in relation to landscaping.

On the basis of this stance, the previous case officer outlined a proposed landscaping scheme for the site with low level shrubs and feature trees with a weldmesh fence behind. After lengthy delays the applicant responded to the District Council. Since then further discussions and negotiations have been undertaken with the applicant. This has resulted in the amended plan received in May 2015. This has confirmed that the palisade fence will be black, plane trees would be planted in the Western corners of the site and a shrub planting of suitable species along the Western boundary.

It is noted that there is a mix of fencing and planting throughout the industrial estate, but none is as harsh as the proposed details. The boundary along George Smith Way is over 100m long, but this is now proposed to be mitigated with tree and shrub planting along this elevation. In addition it has been confirmed that the fencing will be finished in black. On this basis it is considered that the proposals are acceptable and can be conditioned.

Protected Trees

The matter of the two trees subject to preservation orders within the eastern boundary-part of the larger BRYM75 Oak Farm TPO 1981 has been investigated. In 2008, an ash tree was felled and removed from the land, and the roots of an oak tree were cut by the construction of a retaining wall on the land. Both trees were the subjects of a preservation order, and a criminal offence was therefore committed by the person(s) who had carried out that work to those trees. The landowner was subsequently interviewed under caution at the Council offices in respect of the offence of unauthorised work to the protected trees. From the available evidence at that time, it was considered inappropriate to proceed with prosecution action in the courts.

Despite the damage the oak tree remains on site and aggregate bays have been erected in close proximity to the North. However in December 2014 works were undertaken to the ground near the oak and this has addressed damage previously undertaken. A temporary herras fence has enclosed this area. Subject to suitable tree protection measures that can be conditioned, the works undertaken and measures put in place have restored any damage to the tree. On this basis it is not considered that the proposal complies with Policy EQ5 of the South Somerset Local Plan.

Highways

The site is reasonably large and parking on site is possible. The amended plan has moved the proposed buildings towards the Eastern boundary on the site of the originally indicated parking area. It is not clear where parking would be located within the site. Therefore this aspect could be conditioned.

Conclusion

The principle of using the site for a builder's yard is accepted. An amended plan has now been received that has addressed the visual impact and the character of the estate with a planting scheme. In addition the de-compaction, remedial works and tree protection measures that have been undertaken ensure that, subject to conditions, the protected tree on site would be adversely impacted upon. On this basis it is considered that the application can finally be supported.

RECOMMENDATION:

That application **13/01490/FUL** be granted:

01. The use is appropriate on an industrial estate and the amended plan satisfactorily addresses impacts upon visual amenity and subject to appropriate conditions the protection of a the protected tree. As such the proposals comply with Policies EP3, TA5, EQ2 and EQ5 of the adopted South Somerset Local Plan 2006 - 2028 and the aims and objections of the NPPF.

SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING:

01. Notwithstanding the time limits given to implement planning permission as prescribed by Sections 91 and 92 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), this permission (being granted under section 73A of the Act in respect of development already carried out) shall have effect from May 2011.

Reason: To comply with Section 73A of the Act.

02. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: location plan received 9 April 2013, plans of site office and wc received 24 April 2013 and amended site plan including landscaping and tree details received in email 1 May 2015. In addition the proposal shall be carried out in accordance with the email from Mike Lock dated 9 May 2014.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

03. The landscaping/planting scheme shown on the submitted plan shall be completely carried out within the first available planting season from the date of decision notice.

The tree and shrub areas shall be mulched with a woodchip or bark to a minimum depth of 70mm. In order to prevent spillage onto the highway a retaining gravel board is required.

For a period of five years after the completion of the planting scheme, the trees and shrubs shall be protected and maintained and any trees or shrubs that cease to grow, shall be replaced by trees or shrubs of similar size and species or other appropriate trees or shrubs as may be approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the proposed development makes a satisfactory contribution to the preservation and enhancement of the local character and distinctiveness of the area in accordance with Policy EQ2 of the adopted South Somerset Local Plan 2006 - 2028.

04. Within 3 months of the date of this permission the existing bund / topsoil along the western boundary shall be removed as agreed in email form Mike Lock dated 9 May 2014.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and the character of the area in accordance with Policy EQ2 of the adopted South Somerset Local Plan 2006 - 2028.

05. Within 6 months of the date of this permission a scheme of tree protection measures relating to the adjoining protected tree shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with the Council and it will include the following details:

o A specification relating to the installation of a permeable, anti-compaction cellular confinement system for the de-compaction area within the Root Protection Areas of the adjoining protected tree as detailed on drawing received 1 May 2015;

o A commitment to avoiding machinery movements, ground-works, amendments to the soil (including rotavating & additions to soil-grade), the storage of materials, the mixing and discharge of cement liquids, the lighting of fires & the installation of below-ground services (including drainage & soak-aways) within the Root Protection Areas of the adjoining protected trees;

Upon approval by the Council, the measures specified within the agreed scheme of tree protection measures, shall be implemented in their entirety.

Reason: To preserve the health, structure and amenity value of existing landscape features (trees) in accordance with the objectives within Policies EQ2 and EQ5 of the adopted South Somerset Local Plan 2006 - 2028.

06. The area allocated for parking on the submitted plan shall be properly consolidated and shall not be used other than for the parking of vehicles in connection with the development hereby permitted.

Reason: To ensure that there is adequate space within the site for the parking of vehicles clear of the highway in accordance with Policies TA5 and TA6 of the adopted South Somerset Local Plan 2006 - 2028.

Agenda Item 10

Somerset Highways Report

Lead Officer: Mike Fear, Assistant Highway Service Manager,
South Somerset Highways
Contact Details: Countyroads-southsom@somerset.gov.uk or 0845
345 9155

Purpose of the Report

Being the first report for the 2015/16 financial year, I aim to give a brief report of the highway works carried out last financial year in Area South and our proposed works programme for 2015/2016.

Surface Dressing

Surface Dressing is the practice of applying a bitumen tack coat to the existing road surface and then rolling in stone chippings. Whilst this practice is not the most PR friendly, it is highly effective in preserving the integrity of the road surface. This year we are Surface Dressing 53 sites across South Somerset, 13 of which are substantial lengths of A and B roads. The Surface Dressing within South Somerset has already commenced and is due completion by the end of June but at the time of this report there is already a weeks delay due to weather conditions.

Grass Cutting

Grass cutting is a difficult task to carry out to the satisfaction of all. The highway network exceeds 3500km in length; therefore the size of the task is significant. Verge cutting of main A and B roads commenced 5th May which will be followed by the C and D roads as below table and then a further cut of the visibility splays on A and B roads. The second cut to the A and B roads previously carried out by Somerset County Council has been removed on approval by The Council members.

Road Classification	Dates
A and B roads (including visibility splays)	5 May - 2 June
C and unclassified roads	3 June - 31 July
A and B visibility splays only	Mid to late August dependant on rate of growth
Environmentally protected sites	Usually at the end of the growing season

Schemes completed in 2014/15

Yeovil Marsh	Yeovil Marsh Road	Drainage
Yeovil	A30 Queensway	High Friction Surface
Yeovil	South Street	Resurfacing
Yeovil	Hillcrest Road	Resurfacing

Yeovil	Court Ash/ Silver Street	Resurfacing
Yeovil	Eastland Road	Resurfacing
West Chinnock	Hollowell Hill	Reconstruction
Yeovil	West Coker Road(White post)	Drainage
West Coker	Font Lane	Drainage
Stoford	Stoford Bridge Road	Drainage
Yeovil	Middle Street (block paving)	Footways
Yeovil	Sherborne Road	Footways
Barwick	Fairhouse Road	Drainage
Yeovil	St Johns Rd and Monmouth Rd.	Footways
Yeovil	West Street	Footways

Schemes proposed for 2015/2016

This year's structural maintenance budget remains similar to last year. The below table identifies significant schemes to be implemented in South Somerset and schemes proposed in Area South are highlighted;

Misterton	A356 School Hill and Mosterton Road	Resurfacing	Completed
Crewkerne	A356 North Street	Resurfacing	Completed
Charlton Mackrell	A37 Fosse Way	Resurfacing	Completed
Yeovil	A30 West Coker Road	Resurfacing	
Bruton	Plox/Silver Street	Resurfacing	
Castle Cary	Victoria Park/Greenway Road	Resurfacing	
Lopen	Lopen Head Roundabout	Resurfacing	
Merriot	Hitchen	Resurfacing	
Yeovil	Dampier Street	Resurfacing	
Yeovil	St John's Road/Northbrook Road	Resurfacing	
North Cadbury	Parish Hill	Resurfacing	
Ilminster	Ile Court	Resurfacing	
Charlton Horethorne	Clare Farm Stowell Hill	Resurfacing	
Queen Camel	Traits Lane	Resurfacing	
Somerton	Somertonfield Road	Resurfacing	
Huish Episcopi	Picts Hill	Resurfacing	
Chard	Avishayes Road	Resurfacing	
Chard	Helliars Road and Crimchard	Resurfacing	
Hinton St George	Lopen Road	Passing Bays Reconstruction	
Yeovil	Goldcroft	Resurfacing	
Yeovil	Hendford & High Street (The Borough)	Resurfacing	
Milborne Port	A30 Sherborne Road	Resurfacing (R+R)	
Charlton Mackrell	A37 Fosse Way	Resurfacing (R+R)	Completed
Henstridge	A357 High Street & Stalbridge Road	Resurfacing (R+R)	
Henstridge	A357 Templecombe Road	Resurfacing (R+R)	
Yeovil	A3088 Bunford Hollow Rbt	Resurfacing (Sections)	
Ilchester	B3151 Somerton Road	Resurfacing (R+R)	

Yeovil	Birchfield Road	Footways	
Yeovil	St Michaels Avenue	Footways	
Yeovil	Plantangenate Chase	Footways	
Yeovil	Roping Road	Footways	
Yeovil	Park Street	Footways	
Barton St David	Broadclose Way	Footways	
Bratton Seymour	Jack Whites Gibbet	Footways	
Somerton	Walnut Drive	Footways	
Castle Cary	Milbrook Gardens	Footways	
Tintinhull	St Margarets Road & Head Street	Footways	
Ilminster	Station Road	Drainage	
Closworth	Closworth Road	Drainage	
Closworth	Weston Lane	Drainage	
Bratton Seymour	A371 Cattle Hill	Drainage	
Alford	B3153 Cary Road and Church Lane	Drainage	Completed
Chard	A358 Old Town	Drainage	
Buckland St Mary	Fair End Lane	Drainage	
Muchelney	Thorney Road	Drainage	
Curry Rivel	Parsonage Place	Drainage	
Brympton	Thorne Coffin (Phase 1 & 2)	Drainage	
Pitney	Stowey Road	Drainage	
Yeovil Without	Yeovil Marsh Road	Drainage	
Fivehead	Ganges Hill	Drainage	
Yeovil Without	Yeovil Marsh Road (Eastern end)	Drainage	
Huish Episcopi	Meadow Close	Drainage	
Chilton Cantelo	Bridgehampton Road	Drainage	Completed
Maperton	Clapton Lane	Drainage	Completed
Bruton	Park Road	Drainage	
Rimpton	Pitfield Corner	Drainage	Completed
Haselbury Plucknett	Claycastle	Drainage	
Crewkerne	Cathole Bridge Road	Drainage	
Stoke Trister	Beech Lane	Drainage	Completed
Curry Rivel	St Andrews Close	Drainage	
South Beauchamp	Lambrook Road	Drainage	
Kingsbury Episcopi	East Lambrook Road (upgrade outfall)	Drainage	
Long Sutton	Shute Lane	Earthworks	
Tatworth & Forton	Bounds Lane	Earthworks	
Ansford	Ansford Hill	Earthworks	
East Coker	East Coker Road	Earthworks	

Winter Maintenance

Somerset County Council salts over 1400km (870 miles) of its roads in anticipation of frost, snow and ice. This is approximately 21% of the total road network in Somerset.

Last winter was pretty average, being slightly dryer than normal. We carried out precautionary salting on 70 occasions on primary routes and 1 on secondary routes. These secondary routes are only usually salted after 3 consecutive days of sub-zero temperatures.

Agenda Item 11

Update Report from the Countryside Service

Strategic Director: Vega Sturgess, Operations and Community Focus
Assistant Director: Steve Joel, Health and Well Being
Service Manager: Katy Menday, Countryside Manager
Lead Officer: Katy Menday, Countryside Manager
Contact Details: Katy.menday@southsomerset.gov.uk or (01935) 462522

Purpose of the Report

To update members on the work of the Countryside Service across the District over the past year and on key projects for the next 6 months.

Public Interest

This report aims to provide the highlights of the Countryside Team at South Somerset over the past year, with particular reference to the rangers based at the countryside sites. It will summarise what has been completed in terms of land management and also event delivery for the public. The countryside team manage sites and buildings at Ham Hill Country Park, Yeovil Country Park, Chard Reservoir Local Nature Reserve, Sampson's Wood, Langport cycleway, Moldrams Ground Local Nature Reserve and Eastfield Local Nature Reserve.

Recommendation

That members note the report.

Across the South Somerset Countryside Sites

- It has been a busy and successful year across the sites. Community groups have been strengthened, volunteering programmes extended and a significant amount of grant money secured by both the SSDC Ranger team and our affiliated Friends Groups. We are in a strong position going forward and look forward to further enhanced delivery from 2015 onwards.
- Ham Hill, Yeovil Country Park and Chard Reservoir all again secured their Green Flag Awards in the top 2 highest scoring brackets. We have enjoyed a mix of visiting judges over the years and continue to take away valuable suggestions from their visits.
- For 2014/15 the events programme totalled 45 public events. This was on a range of scales (large fairs and trail events, to small play schemes and storytelling) and subjects (Halloween, Dog shows, Bonfires, Wildlife and Easter) to appeal to many residents and visitors. We estimate that 5071 people (children and adults) attended these events, having direct ranger contact, and feedback is always positive. We organise events that are free, or low cost to attend, to ensure as many people and families as possible experience and enjoy the countryside and all it has to offer.
- The rangers at Ham Hill and Yeovil delivered 24 booked educational sessions to schools, having direct led contact with 971 pupils. Further schools and groups access the sites to lead their own sessions, making use of our online educational packs and group materials like orienteering.
- Volunteering continues to be the back bone of the countryside operation. In the last year volunteer numbers have increased from 1601 to 2387 donated days per annum. This is due to offering an extra practical volunteering day at Yeovil each week, and further ad hoc project days at Chard. Volunteers across the sites help with all aspects of practical site management, they open and close public facilities 7 days a week, monitor wildlife, litter pick and assist at events.

- In addition to the practical volunteering the Friends Groups at Ham Hill and Yeovil have donated many hundreds of hours of grant funding work, event support and research for the ranger teams. Meeting monthly the groups provide advice, support, ideas and a forum for the users of the parks. The drive of the groups is fabulous, and ensures that we make best use of all opportunities presented.
- The Countryside Team continue to manage the overseeing South Somerset Countryside Steering Group; a forum where stakeholders and experts can come together to ensure success against the team's overarching delivery plan. In addition to this the specialist Park Watch group (Avon and Somerset Police, plus Rangers, enforcement team and local residents) meet for Yeovil when necessary.
- This winter 1507 native trees were planted across the sites. All native species, expanding the woodland size for South Somerset. In 2014 free tree packs were secured from the Woodland Trust and the Friends group at Ham Hill secured a grant of £1,000 from the International Tree Fund towards plantings in Pit Wood.
- Practical land management is delivered by the rangers, apprentices and volunteers across the sites, all inline with their 5 year land management plans. Conservation targets are monitored in a range of ways including via the annual species surveys conducted for us by the Yeovil Branch of Somerset Wildlife Trust. The rangers continue to use a range of traditional countryside management techniques where possible including hedge laying, dry stone walling and coppicing.
- Two new apprentices started with the team in September 2014. This year for the first time we have taken on level 3 apprentices. Both Andrew and Kristy are doing incredibly well, bringing new ideas to the teams and developing and delivering their own projects on Skylarks (through Breeding Bird Surveys) and Penn Hill Park respectively.
- The team are awaiting the launch of new web pages at www.southsomersetcountryside.com where places on the events can be booked online and the variety of site literature is available to download and print.
- Our presence on social media continues to be well received with very successful Facebook feeds for Ham Hill, Yeovil Country Park, Ninesprings Cafe and Chard Reservoir LNR. The Friends groups and volunteers carry out most of the management of these pages, regularly posting pictures and site updates. The Twitter feed for the ranger team is @SSDCCountryside.
- In addition to the regular annual funding income from Agri Environment schemes, Yeovil Town Council, wood sales, events and other tenants of the sites; the countryside ranger team and Friends groups also managed to submit and secure £227,865 of external funds for current and future delivery at the South Somerset sites, the individual breakdown is shown under each site.

Challenges over the year

- As is inevitable at any popular open access site, at times, particularly in the summer months, there has been the aftermath of anti-social behavior to deal with; including small fires, littering, detritus of parties & graffiti. The rangers aim to attend to the removal of all issues within one working day.
- It has been a particularly busy year at Yeovil Country Park with a number of significant grant bids submitted and the construction of the new Ninesprings Centre. The ranger team has been heavily involved and inevitably, at times, this has affected their ability to deliver and complete the practical projects on the ground.
- Dog fouling and sheep worrying are continuing issues at Ham Hill Country Park and we are now working with the Enforcement and Legal teams to investigate the possibility of a new Public Space Protection Order to help in management of the few site users that currently abuse the site.

Ham Hill Country Park

- The ranger team are working with the Friends group to submit a £20,000 Heritage Lottery grant to progress a project to re-surface a piped stream in Witcombe Valley bottom. The project would see the valley returned to its natural state and have positive outcomes for wildlife and landscape, whilst also providing new heritage interpretation for the site.
- Project income for the year through the Friends Group included:

International Tree Fund	£1,000	Pit Wood tree planting
Waitrose Community Fund	£750	Witcombe Project funding
Local Ham Hill Parish Council's Norton and Odcombe, plus Sports and Rec Trust in Stoke	£700	Event delivery

- Events in the past year included a heritage trail, community bonfire and Easter egg hunt. Current apprentice Andrew and some volunteers are delivering wildlife themed events and walks throughout the summer.
- The rangers have been pleased to work with a range of new groups, from 50 serving Yeovilton personnel on a team building exercise for Commonwealth Day, to 25 children on series of home education group visits to understand all about the various facets of Ham Hill.
- 2015 looks set to be interesting with a new dog show organised by volunteers in July and a wood fair in September.

Chard Reservoir Local Nature Reserve

- Habitat management projects for the reed beds and native woodlands continue to progress well in the winter months. Currently work on site focuses on the replacement of old wooden boardwalks with new stone built causeways to retain an access route around the site for the future.
- Volunteers are heavily involved in the management of the site for around 3 days per week. They assist a range of tasks and accompany the ranger to avoid lone working. Lufton College are regular attendees and have helped across a range of practical projects.
- Chard countryside day continues to be well received when it is delivered in July each year.

Eastfield Local Nature Reserve, High Ham

- The rangers and volunteers organise practical working party days to manage the grassland habitats on site. Contact is maintained between the ranger team and Butterfly Conservation with reference habitat quality as a prospective large blue butterfly release site.

Moldram's Ground Local Nature Reserve, Pen Selwood

- Great crested newt numbers continue to grow on site, with the greatest success being their range expansion into the new pond that was dug in 2013. Good relations have been built with adjoining residents and advice given to them on managing their land and gardens for wildlife.
- A small team of local residents visit the site regularly to report any issues to the ranger team so we can ensure that the site is well managed despite working so remotely from it.

Sampson's Wood

- The Yeovil rangers continue to monitor the tree stock and manage any issues as they arise. Recently an illegal bike track was established and had to be taken down by the ranger team and notices erected.

Yeovil Country Park

- It has been an exceptionally busy year at Yeovil Country Park. At the end of October 2014 the ranger team took occupation of the newly constructed Ninesprings Centre. The building was completed on time and budget, at a final construction cost of £280,876. External funding included grants from the organisations listed below. Subject to final contract closure in October 2015, £172, 597 was raised externally, 61% of costs and 39% was funding provided by SSDC (£108,279).
- £50,000 was pledged early in the projects development by the Yeovil Vision. This first tranche of secured funding enabled the countryside team to go out and secure the external grant monies.

Veolia Environmental Trust	£90,000	Yeovil Centre Construction
EDF Green Energy Fund	8,245	Yeovil Centre Construction
Wellbeing of Yeovil	8,000	Yeovil Centre Construction
Old Mill Accountancy	250	Yeovil Centre Construction
BuildBase & Screwfix	Cost & free materials and products for build	Yeovil Centre Construction
AgustaWestland	£5,000	Yeovil Centre Construction
Yeovil Town Council	£5,000	Yeovil Centre Construction
Unilateral agreement	£39,229	Yeovil Centre Construction
Friends of YCP	£4,000	Yeovil Centre Construction
J H Meech and Son	£25	Yeovil Centre Construction
Abbey Manor Charitable trust	£500	Yeovil Centre Construction
Countryside staff fundraising	£236	Yeovil Centre Construction
Waitrose Community Fund	£102	Yeovil Centre Construction
Individual Public donations	£510	Yeovil Centre Construction
Clarks Trust	£10,000	Yeovil Centre Construction
Wessex Watermark	£1,500	Yeovil Centre Construction

- The Ninesprings Café has been established as part of the Centre and continues to perform well against its business plan. In the current financial year we are budgeted to offer £10,000 of savings against the Café income and we hope to be able to offer more in the coming years. A full review will be completed in November 2015 after a year of trading.
- Despite an incredibly swift set up, and business opening, the café team are performing well under the management of Samantha Lane. The customer service is excellent and provides a welcoming and positive visitor experience at Yeovil Country Park.
- The Café and Centre as a whole have been received incredibly well on site. Already there is a noticeable difference in the visitors coming to site. The provision of public toilets and an indoor space has made a significant difference to the range of individuals and groups that can make use of the wider country park. Local schools, play groups, pre-schools and groups are asking for led sessions and there is an increased demand for more and better literature in the park.
- In the last year the rangers and Friends continued to deliver their very successful trail events focused around Halloween (and in 2014 this was the opening week of the centre),

Easter and a fairy tale trail in May. Many hundreds of children completed these trails and the feedback, lots of it via Facebook, is fabulous. The trail events aim to encourage visitors out into the country park, helping them discover the green space for future visits.

- A range of grants have been secured by the countryside rangers and the Friends Group to enable the delivery of a variety of public and group sessions, events and projects. This coming summer, and for the next two to three years, the event and activity programme will be diverse and offer a range of events free of charge to attract new users to site. Key calendar events this year included Sat 27th June, Armed Forces Day, where large flags were erected along the cycleway in Ninesprings celebrating the work of the Armed Forces and their associated communities in our local area. The flags have been designed in community workshops locally. On Friday 21st August the Flight and Float day will be a family focused day of hands of activities all linked to the air and water; model helicopters, creating rafts and local demonstrations should help capture young imaginations.

Ernest Cook Fund	£5,580	Educational activities and training sessions for pupils and teachers.
Awards for All	£9,900	Mini play events, orienteering mapping and courses, forest school training and sessions.
Grants for the Arts	£13,450 + £9,590	Art workshops for groups on three annual themes, photography courses and wood carvings for across the site.
Armed Forces Community Fund	£14,298	A range of events and activity sessions with a military theme, engaging forces families and the park community locally.

- At the beginning of June we had confirmation from the Heritage Lottery Fund that our bid had been successful and from later this summer we will embark upon a £421,000, 3 year project, which will improve the natural heritage and visitor offer at Yeovil Country Park. The key delivery elements of the project include:
 - Employment of a 3 year Community Ranger, to deliver and coordinate new activities and work programmes.
 - Enhanced volunteering opportunities for a greater diversity of individuals and groups.
 - New and better interpretation, and educational, materials, in the Centre and across the site.
 - Built repairs to Ninesprings, where the ageing infrastructure of the waterfalls and grottos needs specialist attention.
 - Habitat improvement works across the park for meadows, wetlands and woodlands.
 - A huge variety of events based in the country park but of interest to a great array of people including art sessions, adventurous activities and performances.
- During the development phase of the lottery grant the ranger team enjoyed delivering trial events and consultation with a range of groups including the WI, U3A, local schools, Phoenix language school, Milford Youth Group, Scouts and Guides, Deaf Club, Shopmobility and NHS STEP team. With the Lottery funding now confirmed we look forward to offering further sessions and projects so these groups can build an ongoing relationship with the site.

Headlines for the next 6 months

- The Heritage Lottery Project in Yeovil will progress with the recruitment of a Community Ranger to start the activity programmes.
- Event delivery peaks during the school summer holidays with a range of innovative themed events taking place this summer.
- A further heritage grant will be submitted for Ham Hill for the Witcombe Project.
- The Apprentices will swap sites as they reach the half-way point of their 18 months with us, enabling them to see management at two very different country parks.
- The Ninesprings Café will have its first annual review.

Financial Implications

In 2015/16 the Countryside Service manages 650 acres of public access land comprising land designated mainly as Country Parks and Local Nature Reserves, with two Country Park Centre's and the new Ninesprings Cafe. A team of 5.8 Full Time Equivalent countryside staff and 1 Full Time Equivalent Café manager plus a casual café workforce manage the service to a net expenditure budget of £253,720. The overall budget includes target annual income generation of £213,970.

Corporate Priority Implications

The work of the countryside service delivers for the following targets.

CORPORATE PLAN – Focus 2: Environment

- Maintain our Country Parks, optimising the use of external funding
- Continue to deliver schemes with local communities that enhance the appearance of their local areas.

CORPORATE PLAN – Focus 4: Health and Communities

- Maintain and enhance the South Somerset network of leisure and cultural facilities, optimising opportunities for external funding to promote healthy living.
- Ensure, with partners, that we respond effectively to community safety concerns raised by local people and that the strategic priorities for Policing and crime reduction in South Somerset reflects local needs.

Carbon Emissions & Adapting to Climate Change Implications (NI188)

The Countryside Team are aware of the challenges faced in mitigating climate change and as a team work hard to ensure that their operations have a minimal carbon footprint. We ensure that by approaching the management of the countryside sites in a traditional manner they offer the largest carbon sink for other operations.

Annually the team plants a minimum of 500 trees and these are always native, ensuring they are best suited to our current climate; providing habitats with the best chance of adaptation to future climate change.

By having site based rangers travel is kept to a minimum and carbon emissions kept low. Instead of heavy power tool use the nature of the work means that a significant volunteer work force is mobilised keeping fuel consumption low.

Annually thousands of members of the public of all ages have contact with the ranger team through organised educational events; promoting wildlife, green spaces, green living, traditional countryside management and minimising your carbon footprint.

Equality and Diversity Implications

The countryside team work hard to ensure that the countryside sites are as accessible as possible. Stiles are removed in favour of gates. An audio trail and free mobility vehicle are for

hire at Ham Hill Country Park. Easy access trails are promoted at the largest sites. The website contains relevant information and assistance for planning visits and the South Somerset Disability Forum continues to advise the rangers on proposed works and projects, they also have a place on the South Somerset Countryside Steering Group.

Agenda Item 12

Update Report on the Performance of the Streetscene Service

Strategic Director: Vega Sturgess – Operations and Customer Focus
Assistant Director: Laurence Willis - Environment
Lead Officer: Chris Cooper Streetscene Manager
Contact Details: chris.cooper@southsomerset.gov.uk or (01935) 462840

Purpose of the Report

To update and inform the Area South Committee on the performance of the Streetscene Service in the Area for the period November 2014 –June 2015

Recommendation

Members are invited to comment on the report

Report

The major focus of the service so far for this period that affect Area South, are listed below.

- Routine cleansing and grounds maintenance
- Gold in South West in Bloom & 11 neighbourhood awards
- Highway weed control
- Main Road litter picking
- Working on specific projects

Operational Works

As usual the main focus of the service has been the delivery of routine street cleansing and grounds maintenance across the Area. Our teams have settled following some changes to personnel and the staff have performed consistently well over the last few months. Unfortunately we have recently experienced some staff sickness which has brought with it some operational challenges, however we are working with these members of staff to get them back into action as soon as possible.

One area of work that has received on-going focus has been the highway weed killing operation. The services' quad bikes are now operating and making good progress, to date all of the main towns across the district have been sprayed, and approx. 75% of Yeovil has been sprayed at the time of writing this report. This puts us well on course to deliver two full applications of herbicide across the district as previously planned. The service uses 'Glyphosate Probiactive' herbicide to control the weed-growth. This product has no hazard classification at all, making it, as far as we know, the safest herbicide available to us on the market at this time.

This year we also worked with the community payback groups and we have worked to develop good working arrangements with them. The teams work has focussed on the Hillcrest road / St Michaels Avenue area of the town, which are notoriously difficult to access for our machinery due to traffic congestion.

One area of work that we have recently focussed on has been the litter picking on the A303; as usual, our teams have recently completed the winter clearance of the verges. However, in order to improve the cleanliness of this important route we have reorganised one of our

teams so they will spend two days a week throughout the year, cleaning this and other major roads through the district. One aspect of cleaning the A303 that has always presented a problem, is the central reservation area. This part of the dual carriageway in particular accumulates litter which is very noticeable. In order to safely access and clean this part of the road, we have met with Skanska who are the contractors appointed by the Highways Agency to carry out maintenance of Motorways and major trunk roads throughout this area. We discussed the issue that we are trying to deal with and how best to safely carry out the work. It was agreed that by working together we will be able to deal with the problem and arrangements were made to coordinate our operations with Skanska's maintenance works. This way, our staff can work safely within the traffic controlled areas set up by the Skanska operatives and we can clean sections of the central reservation.

This cooperative approach to the work has already started, with a section around South Petherton being the first area to be cleaned. We are very grateful to the help we are receiving from the team at Skanska and look forwards to continuing to work with them.

In the previous financial year, the service was awarded capital funding to replace the aging pavement sweepers used by the street cleaning team. We are currently testing demonstrators in order to select the best option for us. We will also be reviewing the current pavement sweeping arrangements that we have in place in order to maximise the impact we gain from this equipment.

My thanks to all those involved in making this a success.

As always, we continue to focus on managing the number of flytips found in the district. The chart below shows the numbers of fly tips collected from Area South over the past financial year.

Area South	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan 15	Feb	Mar	TOTAL
Barwick	1	3	1			1				1	1	1	9
Closworth										1		1	2
East Coker	1		2	1	2		1	1	5	2			15
Hardington				1		2	1				1	1	6
Odcombe		3	1			1	2						7
Stoford													0
West Coker			1			2	2						5
Yeovil by Ward:													
Brympton	2	7	5	5	8	4	3		2	5	1	1	43
Central	5	4	4	9	8	6	4	2	1	5	4	10	62
East	4	7	4	5	6	11	5	8	2	5	14	6	77
South	1		7	6	3	5	3		2	1	1	1	30
West	3	3	5	3	4	1	1		2	3	3	4	32
Yeo W/out	5	11	3	3	2	5	2			1	2	2	36
TOTAL AREA	22	38	33	33	33	38	24	11	14	24	27	27	324

In Area South we see that the levels of tipping are lower than during the previous 12 months, when 407 flytips were cleared for the same period. We have reviewed the records of what has been deposited and where it has been left.

Our enforcement officers are now focussing their efforts on the locations where most dumping has occurred and signage has been erected and cameras have been deployed in an effort to deter the depositing of the rubbish. A review of the fly tipping records show that the vast majority of these tips are the size of a small van load or less, indicating that most cases are domestic rather than commercial in their source

In addition to the physical removal of the waste, enforcement officers currently we have some cases being pursued through the courts and we expect to hear the outcomes of these very soon.

The Parish Ranger Scheme has continued to develop and the service now employs three Rangers across the district. In Area South we have schemes working in Brympton, Yeovil Without, Barwick & Stoford, Odcombe, East and West Coker, with our newest scheme covering the town centre. All of the schemes are receiving positive comments and we aim to continue to develop the program with more parishes over the coming year.

Our horticultural teams completed last years work schedule and are now well underway with this seasons work.

In our annual work program we aim to deliver:

16 grass cuts on most grassland and 11 cuts of highway verges.

5 applications of herbicide on planted areas

2 applications of herbicide on designated hard surfaced areas

1 or 2 hedge cuts (depending upon plant species)

3 pruning operations throughout the year (depending upon plant species)

Annual maintenance of small trees

Weekly clearance of flood screens

Annual ditch maintenance operations on SSDC controlled flood alleviation schemes

Plus

Other non-routine works and arboricultural works that are carried out as required.

This year the town was awarded a Gold award in the South West in Bloom competition.

In addition to this, both Milford and St Marks Church allotments won gold awards; the Country park won a Silver Gilt award and 11 Your Neighbourhood awards were received.

This was a fantastic result that reflects the commitment and hard work of everyone who took part.

During the winter period the team delivered a number of initiatives in the area with tree planting schemes being delivered at Yew Tree Park, Turners Barn Lane, Howard Road Recreation Ground and in Milford Valley Open Space, where sections of fencing were also renewed.

Arboricultural works were carried out along Preston Road where the existing trees were pollarded & along Lyde Road where diseased Horse Chestnut trees were removed and replanting was carried out.

The team also focussed on improving the condition of the banks alongside the college and into Hollands Walk, linking this work through the hospital underpass, which will be planted later in the year; and through the shrub bed linking Reckleford to Court Ash removing old tired planting, while pruning and cleaning the areas.

We also continued the development work on the tree beds along Bluebell Road and will continue to develop these in years to come.

Not all of our work is high profile, one example of which has been the dredging of the Lufton pond, not a glamorous job, but essential to the smooth upkeep of the location while another would be the erection and clearing of the vintage market in the town centre. These jobs, although low key, are essential in ensuring that problems simply don't arise and residents can enjoy what the town has to offer.

Other work such as supporting the Yeovil half marathon is much higher profile, but again these works contribute to enabling residents and visitors alike to enjoy what the area has to offer.

In 2014 the service was successful in tendering for the maintenance of Public Rights of Way in South Somerset, and we delivered the service as specified by the County Councils Officers, in line with the designated work program. We are delighted to announce that we have again been awarded two of the contracted areas, one of which contains parts of Area South. The first maintenance visit of the selected pathways has recently been completed by our teams.

As well as delivering our operational works, a major focus for the horticultural service will be to improve signage and accessibility on and around our open spaces. These developments will enable greater use to be made of our green spaces for everyone, while making the visiting experience more enjoyable.

What's coming next?

- Summer work programs shrub bed maintenance, hedge cutting, spraying and mowing
- Ongoing development of pathways through Milford Park
- Delivering the maintenance of the recently adopted open space at Wyndham park
- Ongoing developments to the cleaning systems along the main roads and A303 in particular
- Delivery of the Rights of Way contracted works
- Delivering the years highway weed control program
- Development of signage and accessibility in open spaces

The service would like to thank members for their ongoing support and encouragement as it is greatly appreciated by the team.

Financial Implications

All of the matters highlighted in the report have been achieved within service budgets.

Implications for Corporate Priorities

- *Continue to deliver schemes with local communities that enhance the appearance of their local areas.
- *Continue to support communities to minimise floodwater risks.
- *Maintain street cleaning high performance across the district.

Background Papers

Progress report to Area Committees on the Performance of the Streetscene service

Agenda Item 13

Our Place Westfield Project – Update Report

Strategic Director: Rina Singh, Place & Performance
Assistant Director: Kim Close / Helen Rutter, Communities
Service Manager: Kim Close, Area South Development Manager (South)
Lead Officer: James Divall, Neighbourhood Development Officer (South)
Contact Details: James.divall@southsomerset.gov.uk or 01935 462261

Purpose of the Report

To update members on the progress of the 'Our Place' Westfield project.

Public Interest

'Our Place' is a national initiative led by Locality in partnership with the Local Government Association. 'Our Place' aims to support communities and public service organisations to develop an operational plan and take control in their area to make sure that things work in the way for local people.

Recommendation

That members note the progress made.

Background

During 2007 South Somerset Together, the Local Strategic Partnership for South Somerset commissioned work to assess the health and social inequalities experienced by the residents of Yeovil. Evidence from a number of sources, as well as the commissioned report which was published in 2008, showed significant health and social inequalities in the wards Yeovil Central, Yeovil East and Yeovil West.

In particular these wards showed higher than average levels of income support claimants, crime and antisocial behaviour, lone parents, low access to cars, exclusion from school, levels of long term limiting illness and teenage pregnancies.

In addition, evidence in the Livequal Milford pilot indicated:

- A lack of co-ordination amongst agencies trying to tackle health inequalities
- A lack of community and health facilities at a neighbourhood level

This pilot was so successful that SSDC agreed to expand the **Livequal** project to include the Westfield area of Yeovil. SSDC is also exploring opportunities for rolling out the approach in other areas of the district.

Westfield was highlighted by the District Council Area South Committee as a priority area for support and focus with regards to the work programme with Livequal. The area comes with new challenges and problems for the programme but due to its adaptive, responsive and pro-active nature of operations, it was felt that Livequal could take the lessons learnt from Milford and implement the same methodology into this neighbourhood.

During the initial engagement phase of the Livequal programme establishing itself within the Westfield neighbourhood, news of a new national scheme called 'Our Place' was highlighted

as a possible new vehicle to support the Livequal's programme of operations within the Westfield area.

Through 'Our Place' the Livequal programme could heighten the profile of need for community support in the neighbourhood, engage further local partners, use new methods of community engagement and need identification/evidencing. Through further discussions it was identified and agreed that to integrate the new 'Our Place' programme into the Livequal scheme of operations would help the community with extra resources and tools to identify and target the health inequality needs within the Westfield neighbourhood.

After a successful 'Our Place' application to Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) in February 2014, The 'Livequal' programme evolved into a Westfield 'Our neighbourhood' project building on the foundations set from the community consultation whilst integrating 'Our Place' programme methodology and tools. The new 'Our Place' pilot in Westfield focused on a community centred/led 'grass roots' approach to local programmes and initiatives designed and delivered where possible by the community themselves.

The development of community led services within Westfield delivered locally with co-operation between both the community and agencies will have some benefit to all parties. These services will provide better outcomes, better quality services, signposting opportunities, reduce costs and will avoid duplication delivery and expenditure whilst operating from a local community 'branded' service establishing local ownership and promoting community engagement.

The aim is for the newly co-designed services to reduce the reliance on the state through harnessing the enthusiasm, skills and knowledge within the community.

Update Report – Westfield Our Place Project.

As a result of the successful 'Our Place' application in February 2014, an 'Our Place' partnership steering group was formed to look at the Westfield Community Consultation document (2013 document completed as part of the Livequal project in Westfield).

Westfield Community Association sits within the heart of the programme closely supported by local community organisations, groups and venues such as the local Academy, primary school, churches, community shops, sports/social and well-being groups and the residents themselves operating within the community. The consultation led by the community association and supported by the wider community, has provided the evidence of need and provided the programme with the knowledge of what the aspirations are for the neighbourhood.

The community themselves have highlighted three key focus areas for the 'Our Place' programme:

1. Access to community services and community facilities
2. Digital Inclusion
3. Community Safety (especially road safety)

From these themes a large comprehensive operational plan has been developed working with the Westfield Community Association and partners. The operational plan document template from Locality is designed with the aim of building a business plan document for the project, to help local communities showcase how they can effectively implement a

'community led' approach to delivering services and tackling health inequalities within their community.

The document has provided new evidence tools such as Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA) tools, logic models and case study templates that have now been mainstreamed into both community and local authority work as common practice.

Since the completion and submission of the final 'Our Place' report, the Project Manager and Westfield Community Association have refined the document to be more user friendly, simplifying it to a small manageable action plan for local residents to see and understand. This document has been labelled 'Our Neighbourhood – Westfield' to encourage engagement from local residents and to move it away from the 'Our Place' programme to a more local orientated ownership and approach. The document is still being developed, with the Project Manager, who is working with both the community and visiting local partners to establish support with the overall programme and the individual projects within the action plan. The final action plan will be completed by a partnership meeting led by the Project Manager and Westfield Community Association programmed within the next few months.

Financial Implications

None

Council Plan Implications

Focus two: environment

Focus four: Health & Communities

Carbon Emissions & Climate Change Implications

Elements of the community led action plan is targeting localised fuel poverty in Westfield as well as researching the possible use of more cleaner sustainable energy usage such as solar energy systems within the community.

Equality and Diversity Implications

The community led plan is actively working towards better access to support, signposting and physical community venues for residents of all abilities, ethnicity, sex, age and cultures within the Westfield Community.

South Somerset Disability Forum will be actively used with regards to their expertise and knowledge in the development of physical venues.

New signage, information boards, digital media and training are included within the report to access, support and inform more residents in Westfield.

A new bus and mini bus parking bay is planned as part of the project to not only to meet community safety concerns but also to support and enhance accessibility on our pavements for less able users, push chairs and wheel chair users.

Background Papers

- 'Our Place' Westfield Operation Plan 2014
- Area South Committee Report (Health Inequalities update report) Wed 6th November 2013

Agenda Item 14

Westfield Academy Grant Application (Executive Decision)

Strategic Director: Rina Singh, Place & Performance
Assistant Director: Kim Close / Helen Rutter, Communities
Service Manager: Kim Close, Area South Development Manager (South)
Lead Officer: James Divall, Neighbourhood Development Officer (South)
Contact Details: James.divall@southsomerset.gov.uk or 01935 462261

Purpose of the Report

For members to consider requests for capital grants from Westfield Academy.

Public Interest

Awarding grants is a key way that SSDC supports and helps to deliver community projects sponsored by parishes and voluntary community organisations in the Yeovil and villages across Area South.

Background

Area South Capital Grant applications are considered throughout the year. In recent years the Westfield neighbourhood (Yeovil West Ward) has been selected as a priority location for the Liveequal programme (South Somerset's Health Inequalities Project) and more recently the 'Our Place' national programme managed by Locality & DCLG (Department of Communities & Local Government). In both programmes road safety has ranked highly as a concern for residents and an area for improvement.

Recommendation

Members to agree a contribution of £12,500 (28% of the total project costs) from the Area South Capital Budget to Westfield Academy towards a new bus parking bay in Westfield.

Westfield Academy – New bus & mini bus parking bays

Westfield Academy has applied for a grant towards building a new bus and mini bus parking bay inside the grounds of the Academy in the lower school entrance. This development will take the bus bay away from the top entrance to the school and help improve both the accessibility in the area as well as community and road safety.

The Project

Over a number of years Stiby Road has been highlighted by local residents as a community and road safety concern. This has been evidenced in the recent 'Our Place' report in 2014, in the community consultation in 2013 and ten years prior in the Westfield Planning for Real© documentation.

Like all major road works, a number of different agencies need to be involved. Westfield Academy have taken this action upon themselves following the concerns highlighted within the 'Our Place' operational plan to develop plans to move the bus bays inside the Academy grounds at the lower school entrance as a priority project.

Westfield Academy have highlighted the same safety concerns as the residents, reporting near misses, highlighting safety concerns around road safety and even adding

additional staffing to the area at the start and end of the school day (adding additional cost to Academy's operational budget).

By moving the bus bays to the lower school area, this will not only provide the students with a safe location to use the bus but improve the accessibility, visibility and human traffic at the top entrance on Stiby Road.

Better visibility will be possible for cars coming out of the school gates on to Stiby Road. More room on the pavements for pedestrians will also be available as a result of no waiting areas for students. The empty bus lanes may even provide a much needed drop off zone for parents who are currently parking in dangerous locations around the main Stiby Road entrance.

Westfield Academy do not need planning permission for the development but it will need to receive advice from the Disability Forum for an access audit. The Neighbourhood Development Officer has highlighted this requirement. This will be an action for the Academy within the next few months.

Works are planned to take place after the October half term holidays leading up to the Christmas break.

	Score	Maximum score
A Eligibility	Y	
B Target Groups	2	7
C Project	5	5
D Capacity of Organisation	12	15
E Financial need	4	7
F Innovation	3	3
Grand Total	26	37

Projects scoring above 26 points are eligible for SSDC support under the current policies.

Funding Sources	% Funding of Scheme Total Cost	Amount of Funding	Status
Town Council		£2,000	Applied for
Own Funds	66%	£28,000	Secured
Our Place Operational funds	6%	£2,500	Applied for
SSDC (Area South)	28%	£12,500	Applied for
Total Scheme Cost	100%	£45,000	

The majority of the funds (66%) is secured already from the Academy's own funds. Due to its strategic importance in the Westfield area, £2,500 has been offered from the 'Our Place' operational funds.

Financial Implications

If members agree the recommendations set out in the previous item there is currently £163,715 unallocated within the Area South Capital Budget. If Members agree the above recommendations, this will leave a balance of £151,215.

Corporate Priority Implications

(Focus Four: Health & Communities)

Priority Project for the Westfield 'Our Place' Programme.

Carbon Emissions & Adapting to Climate Change Implications

None

Equality and Diversity Implications

The Neighbourhood Development Officer has highlighted the need for an Access Audit for the new bus bays.

The new bus bays will provide a safe location to board and disembark the transportation in a new internal controlled area.

The movement of the bus bays will improve accessibility within the community especially around the pavements along Stiby Road.

Background Papers

* Westfield 'Our Place' Operation Plan 2014

* Our Neighbourhood – Westfield Consultation report 2014

Agenda Item 15

Dorcas Charitable Trust – Update and Annual Report for the Year to 31st March 2015

Strategic Director: Rina Singh, Director Place and Performance
Assistant Director: Kim Close, Assistant Director Communities
Service Manager: Kim Close, Area Development Manager South
Lead Officer: Kim Close, Area Development Manager South
Contact Details: Kim.Close@southsomerset.gov.uk or 01935 462708

Purpose of the Report

To update members of the Area South Committee who collectively act as trustees for the Dorcas House Trust and to approve the 2014/15 Statement of Accounts.

Public Interest

Dorcas House Trust (otherwise known as Portreeves or Corporation Almshouses) is a registered Charity, No. 235337 and is regulated under Charity Commission Schemes dated 3rd September 1973 and 1st February 1978. The Area South Committee act as Trustees of the trust.

Recommendation

- (1) To approve the Annual Accounts for the Dorcas House Trust
- (2) To note the update in the annual report
- (3) To delegate to the Chair of Area South the ability to negotiate the purchase of the proposed new dwellings on behalf of the Trust, taking advice from The Area Development Manager – South subject to final approval from the Trustees.
- (4) To delegate to the Chair of Area South the ability to negotiate an agreement to appoint a Housing Association as managing agent on behalf of and in accordance with the terms of the Trust subject to final approval from the Trustees.

Background

Dorcas House Trust (otherwise known as Portreeves or Corporation Almshouses) is a registered Charity, No. 235337 and is regulated under Charity Commission Schemes dated 3rd September 1973 and 1st February 1978.

As a local authority SSDC is required to demonstrate compliance with the underlying principles of good governance and that a framework exists to demonstrate this. One of the principles is accountability and by preparing and publishing the annual Statement of Accounts the Council achieves this objective.

The Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011 came into force on 31 March 2011. The Dorcas House Statement of Accounts needs to be evidenced by the Chair of Joint Area Committee South signing and dating the balance sheet and the annual report.

Dorcas House was located in Preston Grove, Yeovil. The land on which it sat was conveyed to the Borough of Yeovil by means of a Deed of Gift on 30th May 1910 as a site for an Almshouse. The trusteeship is vested in South Somerset District Council and delegated to the Area South Committee.

The Council was under obligation to erect an Almshouse. Once built, Dorcas House was only to be used for poor women inhabitants of the Parish of Yeovil. In more recent years SSDC applied to the Charities Commission to have the covenants changed to allow women and their children to reside in the property.

Concerns regarding the ongoing cost of maintaining and managing the building in future years, together with the unsuitability and inflexibility of the accommodation prompted the trustees to consider alternative options to meet the objectives of the trust.

In February 2012 the Area South Committee, acting in their capacity as trustees considered a confidential report, which set out the possible options available for the Trust and agreed the following actions:

- Members, acting as trustees to the Charitable Trust, delegated power to Cllr Tony Fife to act as the nominated Member on the working group and to make decisions on behalf of the Charitable Trust without referral back to Committee.
- Members gave approval for Cllr Tony Fife and the Working Group to work with the Charities Commission to develop an acceptable scheme for the disposal of Dorcas House and the re-provision of more suitable accommodation.
- Members gave approval to market Dorcas House with Connells Estate Agents, subject to agreement of an acceptable scheme by the Charities Commission.

In addition to the property known as Dorcas House the trust also included managed investment funds. The trustees delegated authority to the Council's finance officer to liquidate these shares as and when this was appropriate and this was done in October 2013 as share prices were strong at that time.

Following advice from the Charities Commission that the Trustee's were permitted to sell and re-provide without the need for formal permission, the property was placed on the open market. The sale was completed in October 2013 producing a net capital receipt of £371,572 and in addition investments were realised for a sum of £52,032. Together with the cash balance held there is a capital fund of £439,182 for replacement properties.

It was proposed to seek replacement properties for the charitable foundation as opportunities arise within the settlement of Yeovil – for example as part of the obligated affordable housing on a qualifying site or as an adjunct to traditional housing association homes on an infill site.

It was proposed that the properties procured are two-bedroomed self-contained houses or flats, possibly in pairs rather than a block of dwellings in a single building as was previously the case.

However very few such sites had come forward in Yeovil. In fact all three key sites have been subject to some renegotiation of the level of obligated affordable housing due to viability and in any event fall largely outside of the formal boundary of Yeovil and inside adjacent parishes.

One possible Housing Association led infill site fell through before reaching planning application stage. However a site has emerged, within the traditional boundaries of Yeovil and with an existing planning permission, which is within the control of one of the Councils main partner Housing Associations. Agreement is in place in principle for the Association to sell a small number of dwellings to the Trust at cost. This means the Housing Association will lose the opportunity to produce the original number of dwellings for its own provision but also, in turn, will require a slightly lower level of public subsidy (in the form of grant either from the Council or from the HCA) for the site as a whole. In turn it is their expectation that the Trust will enter into a managing agent arrangement allowing the Association to retain control over housing management for the entire site.

Once alternative provision has been completed, the original terms of the Dorcas House trust will continue to apply to the new accommodation.

Financial Implications

Dorcas House draft statement of accounts details the financial position of the charity as at 31st March 2015 and is submitted at Appendix A for approval by Area South Committee at this July 2015 meeting. Grant Thornton, the District Auditors, will not review separately the annual Statement of Accounts and supporting working papers as the turnover is below £25k.

Corporate Priority Implications

This work supports the following corporate aims:

- Improve the Housing, Health and well being of our citizens

Carbon Emissions & Adapting to Climate Change Implications (NI188)

Energy leakage from the existing building will be decreased when the new owner redevelops the property. Re-investment of the proceeds of sale will be used for property that will be built to modern standards, which will be more energy efficient.

Equality and Diversity Implication

The nature of the Charitable Trust dictates the client group whose needs are met by this provision. We are in discussion with the Charities Commission about amendment of allowed usage that would broaden the nature of the client group.

Dorcas House Trust

*(otherwise known as Portreeves or Corporation
Almshouses)*

**ANNUAL REPORT
and
STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS
2014/15**

Registered Charity Number: 235337

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
For the Year Ended 31st March 2015

	Notes	2014/15 Income Fund		2013/14 Income Fund	
		£	£	£	£
Incoming Resources					
Activities for generating funds					
Rental Income	2		(3,425.23)		7,543.98
Investment Income					
Interest on Investments			2,270.65		2,260.20
			(1,154.58)		9,804.18
Total incoming resources					
Resources Expended					
Costs of generating funds					
Repairs & Maintenance to Hostel		0.00		4,110.78	
Health & Safety at Work		0.00		32.06	
Utilities		0.00		1,633.31	
Council Tax		0.00		1,582.55	
Contract Cleaners		0.00		185.40	
Equipment, Tools and Skip Hire		0.00		0.00	
Bad & Doubtful Debt provision for rent		(1,367.57)		(1,681.64)	
			(1,367.57)		5,862.46
Other Expenditure					
Property management charges		0.00		2,540.10	
Professional fees		0.00		1,276.31	
			0.00		3,816.41
			(1,367.57)		9,678.87
Total resources expended					
Net (outgoing) resources					
			212.99		125.31
Other recognised gains / (losses)					
Gains / (Losses) on revaluation of investments	3		248.45		889.21
Redeemed War Stock			399.20		
Proceeds from sale of Dorcas House					371,572.50
			860.64		372,587.02
Net movement in funds					
Reconciliation of funds					
Fund balances brought forward at 1 April 2014			439,182.05		66,595.03
			440,042.69		439,182.05
Fund balances carried forward at 31 March 2015					

DORCAS HOUSE TRUST

BALANCE SHEET
As at 31st March 2015

	Notes	2014/15		2013/14	
		£	£	£	£
Current Assets					
Investments	3	1,456.15		1,207.70	
Debtors		4,575.36		681.60	
Cash	4	434,011.18		437,292.75	
		440,042.69		439,182.05	
Net Current Assets			440,042.69		439,182.05
Represented by:					
Endowment Fund	5		1,456.15		1,207.70
Capital/Unrestricted Funds	5		438,586.54		437,974.35
Total Funds			440,042.69		439,182.05

These accounts were approved by the Trustees on _____ and signed on their behalf by:

Peter Gubbins
(Chairman of Joint Area Committee South)

DORCAS HOUSE TRUST

Notes to Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2015

1 Accounting Policies

Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, with the exception that investments are included at market value.

2 Rental Income

Rental income ceased when the property was sold and the £3,425.23 relates to the write off of unrecoverable rent arrears.

3 Investments

	Market Value
Government Stocks (Nominal Value £1,849.34)	£
Brought forward on 1 April 2014	1,207.70
Gain on revaluation at year end	248.45
Carried forward on 31 March 2015	<u>1,456.15</u>

4 Cash

In October 2013 Dorcas House was sold, liquid funds are being held so that as soon as more suitable accommodation becomes available a cash purchase can be made.

	£	£
Brought forward on 1 April 2014		437,292.75
Cash Adjustment for 2014/15		<u>(3,281.57)</u>
		434,011.18

5 Analysis of funds

	2014/15	2013/14
	£	£
Endowment fund	1,456.15	1,207.70
Unrestricted funds	438,586.54	437,974.35
	<u>440,042.69</u>	<u>439,182.05</u>

Agenda Item 16

Yeovil Western Corridor Cycle Way Improvement Scheme

Strategic Director: Mark Williams, Chief Executive Officer
Assistant Director: Donna Parham, Assistant Director – Corporate and Financial Services
Lead Officers: Diane Layzell, Senior Land & Property Officer
Contact Details: diane.layzell@southsomerset.gov.uk, 01935 462058

Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this report is to recommend that District Executive agree to the transfer of a number of small sections of the Councils land from Thorne Lane to Preston Road as part of the Yeovil Western Corridor footpath, cycleway and roadway improvements for £1.

Public Interest

As part of the development of land to the north of Thorne Lane, and on-going travel congestion through the western corridor of Yeovil, Highways improvements are needed for Pedestrians Cyclists and Traffic. In order to facilitate this some land within this Council's ownership is needed.

Recommendations

That Area South recommends District Executive approve:

1. The freehold transfer of the areas identified on the plan coloured salmon and a licence to occupy the areas coloured green on the same plan to Somerset County Council Highways for £1;
2. To approve that the land coloured purple on the attached plans is transferred to SSDC;
3. That the legal costs are borne by Somerset County Council.

Background

For many years Somerset County Highways have been looking for ways of improving the route from Watercombe Lane/Bunford Hollow roundabout through to Thorne Lane. Highways now have a scheme, and funding, to address this but do not own all the land needed to facilitate it. As a result they are entering into discussions with various landowners to acquire the sections of land needed, of which SSDC and the Joint Burial Committee are affected landowners.

The majority of South Somerset District Council's land is within the extended Abbey Manor Park development.

WESTERN CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENTS AND THE SSDC LAND NEEDED

As part of the Yeovil Western Corridor improvements some SSDC land is needed to facilitate the scheme. Most of the SSDC land will be used for cycleway and footpath improvements creating a safe cycle route for residents which will mean a route that spans Lyde Road to Thorne Lane safely via the Country Park and Lysander Road. There are small sections of land at junction of Copse Road and the pedestrian crossing into the Football club which are

needed to facilitate the road improvement scheme of which we do not yet have final plans for.

The land need for the scheme is shown on the attached plans and has been coloured salmon, these would need to be transferred into the ownership of Somerset County Highways. There are then sections of land coloured green which are the work areas needed by the Contractor during construction. These would be a temporary licensed occupation while the works were being undertaken and would be “made good” on completion of the works. The purple colouring on the plan relates to current highways land which will be returned to grass and SCC has requested they are transferred to SSDC.

Financial Implications

Discussions have taken place between SSDC’s Internal Valuer and the District Valuer regarding the value of the land to be transferred. It has been confirmed and agreed that the land in question has only nominal value (£1) with no betterment potential; and arguably is currently a liability as SSDC maintains it at their expense.

Corporate Priority Implications:-

Delivering Well-Managed Cost Effective Services.

- Provide even better value for money from our services

Carbon Emissions & Adapting to Climate Change Implications (NI188)

Equality and Diversity Implications

The proposal would not only benefit residents of Yeovil in the creation of safe cycleway and footpath but also to those Drivers visiting Yeovil by creating better road infrastructure.

***Background
Papers:***

District Valuers report



ASSET SALE APPRAISAL FORM - ONE

Section 1

Name of Asset to be Sold	Project No.
<p>Asset to be disposed of:-</p> <p>Various sections of land within the Parish of Brympton</p> <p>Lead Officer:</p> <p>Diane Layzell, Senior Land and Property Officer</p>	

Section 2

Reason for Sale
<p>Whilst there are strategic reasons for SSDC to retain certain sections of the public open space, the improvements will only benefit residents and their well-being in the future.</p> <p>Meets Corporate Priority:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver well managed cost effective services valued by our customers

Section 3

Income From Sale	
Gross Income from Sale	£ 1.00
Less Cost of Sale e.g. valuation fee	£ 0
Net Income (cost)	£ 1.00

Section 4

Loss of Rental or Other Income						
	Mgmt Code	2015/16 £	2016/17 £	2017/18 £	2018/19 £	2019/20 £
Rental Income		0	0	0	0	0
Other Income		Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	

Section 5

Savings in Costs (annual)
No works or repairs needed

Section 6	
Savings in Costs - one off (i.e. urgent major repairs required)	
	None

Section 7

Financial Analysis – Revenue						
	2015/16 £	2016/17 £	2017/18 £	2018/19 £	2019/20 £	
Interest from receipt	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)	
Loss of Income	0	0	0	0	0	
Savings in Expenses						
- Salaries						
- Repairs & Maintenance	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	
- Other						
Total Revenue Cost / (Net saving)	0	0	0	0	0	

Section 8

Scheme Evaluation by Management Team	

Section 9

Stage of Project (i.e. Feasibility)	
	N/A

Section 10

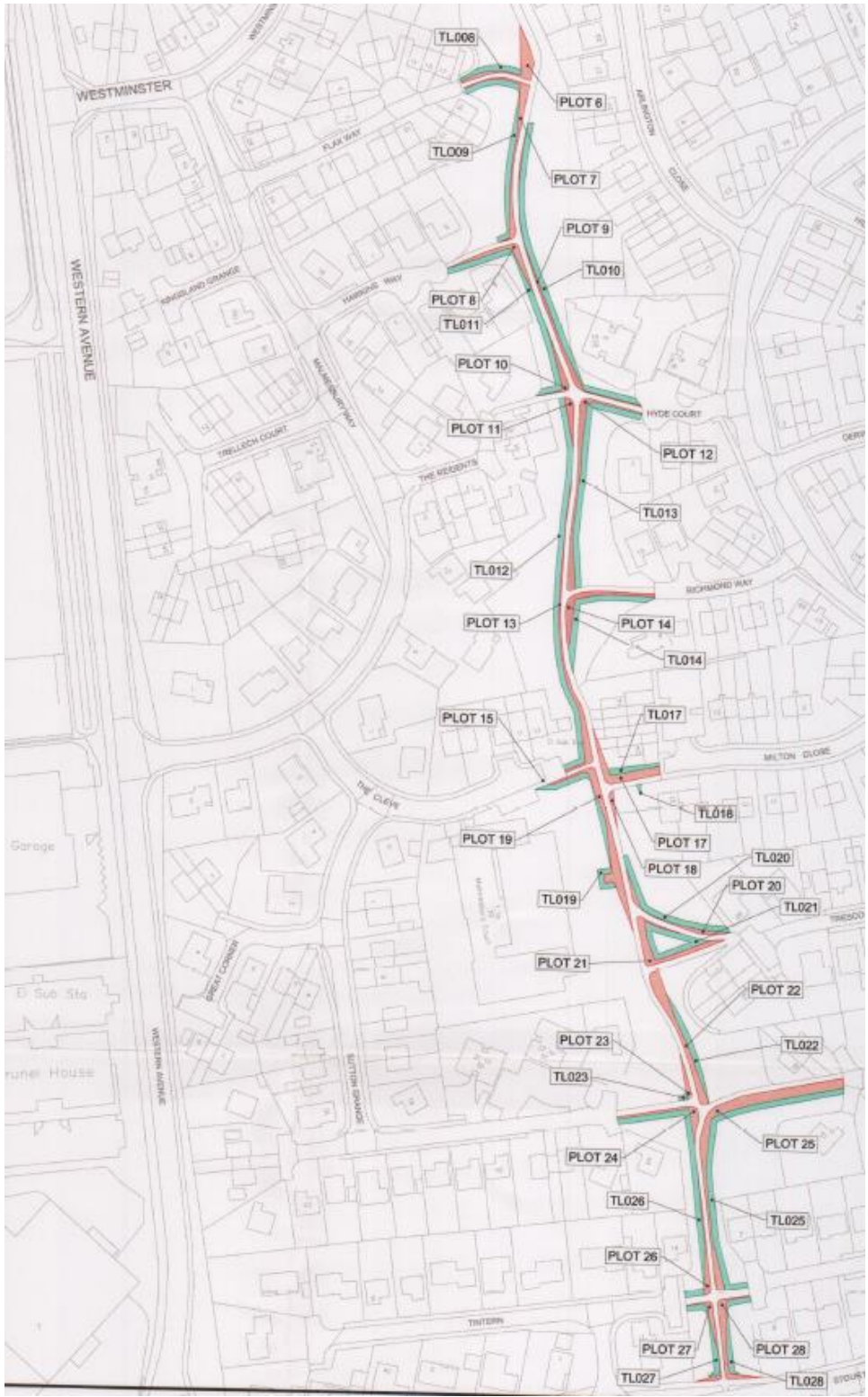
Expected Completion Date	
	It is hoped that the disposal will complete by the end of the current financial year



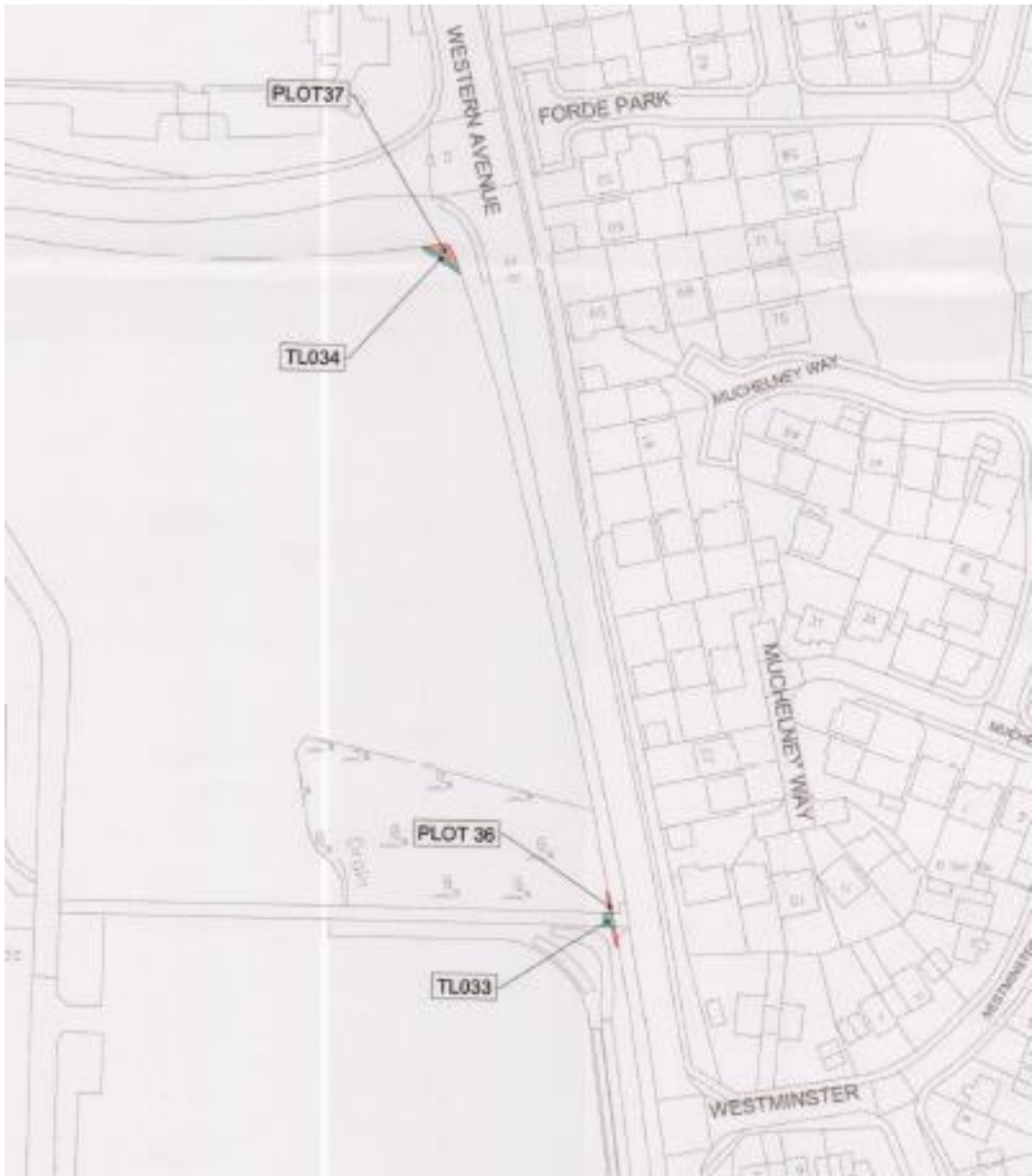
- Salmon – transfer to SCC
- Green – licenced to SCC for works
- Purple – Suggested transfer from SCC to SSDC



Land at the Crematorium



- Salmon – transfer to SCC
- Green – licenced to SCC for works
- Purple – Suggested transfer from SCC to SSDC



Salmon – transfer to SCC
Green – licenced to SCC for works
Purple – Suggested transfer from SCC to SSDC



Agenda Item 17

Area South Committee Forward Plan

Strategic Director: Rina Singh, Strategic Director (Place & Performance)
Assistant Director: Helen Rutter/Kim Close, (Communities)
Service Manager: Kim Close, Area Development Manager - South
Agenda Jo Boucher, Committee Administrator, Legal and
Co-ordinator: Democratic Services SSDC
Contact Details: jo.boucher@southsomerset.gov.uk or (01935) 462011

Purpose of the Report

This report informs Members of the agreed Area South Forward Plan.

Recommendations

Members are asked to:-

1. Comment upon and note the proposed Area South Forward Plan as attached at Appendix A.
2. Identify priorities for further reports to be added to the Area South Forward Plan, developed by the SSDC lead officers

Area South Committee Forward Plan

The forward plan sets out items and issues to be discussed by the Area Committee over the coming few months.

The forward plan will be reviewed and updated each month, by the joint lead officers from SSDC, in consultation with the Area Committee Chairman. It is included each month with the Area Committee agenda, where members of the Area Committee may endorse or request amendments.

Members of the public, councillors, service managers, and partners may request an item is placed within the forward plan for a future meeting, by contacting the agenda co-ordinator.

Background Papers: None

Appendix A

Notes

- (1) Items marked in *italics* are not yet confirmed, due to the attendance of additional representatives.
- (2) For further details on these items, or to suggest / request an agenda item for the Area South Committee, please contact the Agenda Co-ordinator; Jo Boucher.

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Background/ Purpose	Lead Officer
August 2015		<i>Please note this meeting will only be held if there are planning applications to be determined</i>	
September 2015	Affordable Housing Development Programme	The purpose of this report is to update members on the likely outturn position of the Affordable Housing Development Programme in relation to Area South	Colin McDonald, Corporate Strategic Housing Manager
	Economic Development Update Report	Annual Update Report	David Julian, Economic Development Manager
	Birchfield Park Update Report		Ian Case, Principal Engineer
	Yeovil Vision Update Report	Update Report	Kim Close, Area Development Manager, South
	Arts & Entertainment Service Update Report	Annual Update Report	Adam Burgan, Arts & Entertainments Manager
	Area South Meeting Times Review	The purpose of this report is for members to consider the suitability of the current start time for Area South Committee	Kim Close, Area Development Manager, South
October 2015	Heart of Wessex Rail Partnership	Update report	Helen Rutter, Assistant Director Communities/Area East Development Manager
	Markets	Update Report	Kim Close, Area Development Manager, South

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Background/ Purpose	Lead Officer
	Area South Development Team	Update on the work carried out by the Area South Development Team	Kim Close, Area Development Manager, South
November 2015	Local Housing Needs in Area South	Annual Update on the Local Housing Needs in Area South	Kirsty Larkins, Housing & Welfare Manager
	Flooding, Drainage and Civil Contingencies	Update Report	Pam Harvey, Civil Contingencies & Business Continuity Manager
December 2015	Somerset Highways – maintenance programme	A six monthly update report on the current and expected highways maintenance programme in Area South	Mike Fear, Assistant Highway Service Manager, South Somerset Highways
	SSDC Welfare Benefit Work in South Somerset	Annual Update on the Welfare Benefit Work in South Somerset	Catherine Hansford, Welfare Benefits Team Leader
January 2016		<i>Please note this meeting will only be held if there are planning applications to be determined</i>	

Agenda Item 18

Planning Appeals (For information)

Assistant Director: Martin Woods, Assistant Director (Economy)
Lead Officer: Martin Woods, Assistant Director (Economy)
Contact Details: martin.woods@southsomerset.gov.uk or (01935) 462071

Purpose of the Report

To inform members of the appeals that have been lodged, decided upon or withdrawn.

Recommendation

That the report be noted.

Background

The Area Chairmen have asked that a monthly report relating to the number of appeals received, decided upon or withdrawn be submitted to the committee.

There have been no appeals received, decided upon or withdrawn this month within Area South.

Financial Implications

None

Implications for Corporate Priorities

None

Other Implications

None

Background Papers: Planning application file