

South Somerset District Council

Notice of Meeting



Area West Committee

Making a difference where it counts

Wednesday 15th November 2017

5.30 pm

**The Guildhall, Fore Street
Chard, TA20 1PP**

(Disabled access and a hearing loop are available at this meeting venue)



The following members are requested to attend this meeting:

Jason Baker
Marcus Barrett
Mike Best
Amanda Broom
Dave Bulmer
Carol Goodall

Val Keitch
Jenny Kenton
Paul Maxwell
Sue Osborne
Ric Pallister
Garry Shortland

Angie Singleton
Andrew Turpin
Linda Vijeh
Martin Wale

Consideration of planning applications will commence no earlier than 6.45pm.

For further information on the items to be discussed, please contact the Democratic Services Officer on 01935 462055 or democracy@southsomerset.gov.uk

This Agenda was issued on Tuesday 7 November 2017.

Ian Clarke, Director (Support Services)

**This information is also available on our website
www.southsomerset.gov.uk and via the mod.gov app**



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”. The council’s Executive Forward Plan can be viewed online for details of executive/key decisions which 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 three minutes on agenda items; and
- see agenda reports

Meetings of the Area West Committee are held monthly, usually at 5.30pm, on the third Wednesday of the month (except December) in village halls throughout Area West (unless specified otherwise).

Agendas and minutes of meetings are published on the council’s website
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Agendas and minutes can also be viewed via the mod.gov app (free) available for iPads and Android devices. Search for ‘mod.gov’ in the app store for your device, install, and select ‘South Somerset’ from the list of publishers, then select the committees of interest. A wi-fi signal will be required for a very short time to download an agenda but once downloaded, documents will be viewable offline.

Public participation at committees

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

Consideration of planning applications at this meeting will commence no earlier than the time stated at the front of the agenda and on the planning applications schedule. The public and representatives of parish/town councils will be invited to speak on the individual planning applications at the time they are considered.

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 three 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 and/or 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.

Recording and photography at council meetings

Recording of council meetings is permitted, however anyone wishing to do so should let the Chairperson of the meeting know prior to the start of the meeting. The recording should be overt and clearly visible to anyone at the meeting, but non-disruptive. If someone is recording the meeting, the Chairman will make an announcement at the beginning of the meeting.

Any member of the public has the right not to be recorded. If anyone making public representation does not wish to be recorded they must let the Chairperson know.

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<http://modgov.southsomerset.gov.uk/documents/s3327/Policy%20on%20the%20recording%20of%20council%20meetings.pdf>

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Area West Committee

Wednesday 15 November 2017

Agenda

Preliminary Items

- 1. To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 18th October 2017**
- 2. Apologies for Absence**
- 3. Declarations of Interest**

In accordance with the Council's current Code of Conduct (as amended 26 February 2015), 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.

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. 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.

Planning Applications Referred to the Regulation Committee

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

Councillors Mike Best, Angie Singleton and Martin Wale.

Where planning applications are referred by this Committee to the Regulation Committee for determination, 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. Date and Venue for Next Meeting**

Councillors are requested to note that the next Area West Committee meeting is scheduled to be held on Wednesday 6th December 2017 at 5.30pm at the Henhayes Centre, Crewkerne.

- 5. Public Question Time**

This is a chance to ask questions, make comments and raise matters of concern.

Parish/Town Councils 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.

Anyone wishing to raise matters in relation to items on the agenda may do so at the time the item is considered.

6. Chairman's Announcements

Items for Discussion

- 7. County Highway Report to Area West Committee** (Pages 6 - 7)
- 8. Warmer Chard and Surrounding Villages - Post Project Report** (Pages 8 - 16)
- 9. Environmental Health Service Update Report** (Pages 17 - 19)
- 10. Ilminster Community Office** (Pages 20 - 23)
- 11. Area West - Reports from Members on Outside Bodies** (Pages 24 - 25)
- 12. Area West Committee - Forward Plan** (Pages 26 - 28)
- 13. Planning Appeals** (Pages 29 - 34)
- 14. Schedule of Planning Applications to be Determined by Committee** (Pages 35 - 36)
- 15. Planning Application: 17/02545/FUL - Land Opposite St Georges House, Merriott Road, Hinton St George** (Pages 37 - 51)

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.

Agenda Item 7

County Highway Report to Area West Committee

Lead Officer: Mike Fear, Assistant Highway Service Manager, Somerset County Council.
Contact Details: Tel: 0845 345 9155

Purpose of the Report

The report is to inform members of the work carried out by the County Highway Authority at the halfway stage through the financial year and what schemes are remaining on the work programme for the rest of the year.

Recommendation

That members note the report.

Report

Verge Cutting

Grass cutting this year has been difficult due to the rapid growth of vegetation and as you can appreciate, our works are largely governed by resource. With a highway network exceeding 3500km in length, the size of the task is significant.

The County Council therefore has a policy and procedures that are in place to ensure the work is carried out in the most safe, effective and economic way. In a world of ever increasing risk assessment and claim/liability scenarios, the policy must take into account the range of road classifications across the network and prioritises them accordingly.

We were only able to do one cut on Class C and D this year, however we were able to do two cuts to Class A and B roads. The programme was largely completed by the end of September.

Surface Dressing

Weather this year has been fairly kind to our surface dressing program. It commenced in June and was completed through various phases by the end of August. After this time the road temperature is too unpredictable to ensure there are no surface failures.

Surface Dressing is the practice of applying a bitumen tack coat to the existing road surface and rolling in stone chippings. Whilst this practice is not the most PR friendly, when carried out correctly it is highly effective and can bring significant improvements to the highway infrastructure.

Schemes proposed for 2017/2018

This year's structural maintenance budget is slightly lower than last year. The below table identifies significant schemes planned to be implemented in South Somerset and schemes proposed in Area West are highlighted;

Chard	A358 Furnham Road	Surfacing	Completed
Cudworth	Cudworth Street / Knights Lane	Surfacing	Feb. 2018
West Crewkerne	Higher Farm Lane, Woolminstone	Surfacing	Completed
West Crewkerne	Dunsham Lane	Surfacing	Completed
Broadway / Horton Crewkerne	St Peters Close Southmead Crescent	Footways Footways	Completed Feb. 2018

Tatworth	Station Road	Drainage	Completed
Chaffcombe	Kingston Well Lane	Drainage	TBC
Cudworth	Cudworth Street	Drainage	Nov. 2017

Winter maintenance

The preparation for this year’s winter maintenance programme has now started with effect from 1st October. Our salt supply for the upcoming season has been delivered to the depot. 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.

Parish Councils will soon be contacted by SCC for clarification on which grit bins to refill. If grit bins are being considered at new locations, can the members please confirm these positions and it will also help if Parishes confirm previous locations, to ensure that any bins requiring refilling are not missed. In addition, Parishes will again be invited to collect their allocation of ten 20kg git bags on 25th November 09:00-13:00.

Background papers: None

Agenda Item 8

Warmer Chard and Surrounding Villages – Post Project Report

Portfolio Holder *Cllr Val Keitch*
Assistant Director: *Helen Rutter, Communities*
Service Manager: *Tim Cook, Area West Team Leader*
Lead Officer: *Dylan Martlew, Neighbourhood Development Officer (Economy)*
Contact Details: *dylan.martlew@southsomerset.gov.uk or 01935 462695*

Purpose of the Report

To inform members about the results and outcomes of the ‘Warmer Chard and Surrounding Villages’ project as requested by Members when project funding was approved.

Public Interest

The Warmer Chard and Surrounding Villages project set out to help the people of Chard and surrounding villages to reduce their energy bills, lower Chard’s carbon footprint, and make an impact on fuel poverty. This report reviews the project and what it achieved.

Recommendations

1. That Members note the content of the report.
2. That Officers continue to work with Home Energy Centres Chard to develop and provide energy advice services.

Background

In August 2016 Area West Committee (AWC) approved a grant of up to £7,260 for the Warmer Chard & Villages project; to be delivered in partnership between the Bristol based Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE) and Home Energy Centres Chard (HEC Chard), with CSE as the lead party. AWC also asked for a report on the outcome of the project to be brought to AWC.

The project had two aspects: (i) to deliver home energy advice to residents, and (ii) to build the skills and capacity of HEC Chard so that energy advice services would continue to be delivered after the project had finished.

Project delivery

The project ran from October 2016 to February 2017. While many elements of the project were delivered CSE were not able to deliver and were not paid for some parts, due to the short duration of the project. The duration was the result of the time taken to develop the collaborative project proposal involving HEC Chard, limitations on CSE’s match funding and the reporting requirements set by Area West Development.

CSE’s final report states: “The projects activity has been condensed into a five month period (October to February) which didn’t allow time to sufficiently plan and arrange a greater depth to householder engagement. More time would have also allowed the partners to deliver more combined marketing activity. Because of these issues (particularly the limited resources and timescale) CSE felt that the focus of our support should be on building local capacity, specifically HEC Chard’s ability to deliver outreach to local households in the long-term, rather than the short term goal of in-depth support to a small number of households.”

The table below summarises the components of the project showing what was delivered and what the actual costs were. Many components were delivered for less than the budgeted amount and the final amount paid to CSE was £3,384.53 being 50% of the total eligible project expenditure of £6,769.05.

TASKS	Forecast	Delivered	Cost
Project Management			
Project Management & administration	700.00	Y	700.00
Monitoring, evaluation & reporting	630.00	Y	630.00
Promotion	420.00	Y	462.00
Training			
CSE: develop two Energy Essentials courses	700.00	Y	700.00
CSE: training HEC Chard	700.00	Y	685.00
CSE: 8 Energy Essentials training to community groups	1,400.00	N	
CSE: Energy Switching Workshop	525.00	N	
City & Guilds training for two HEC Chard volunteers	1,934.00	Y	1,396.00
Chard volunteer training expenses	685.00	Y	362.72
Advice			
CSE Home visits (minimum 15)	1,680.00	N	
CSE in-depth case work and referrals to other agencies	2,380.00	Y (part)	681.33
HEC Chard home visit expenses	450.00	Y (part)	90.50
Direct support for the Centre			
Factsheets with HEC logos + artwork	550.00	Y	228.00
Draught-busting kits + artwork	400.00	Y	273.50
Home visit kits and fuel poverty packs + artwork	440.00	Y	not charged
Equipment to support the HEC Chard centre (PC, printer, essential software & hardware, display boards)	1,000.00	Y	560.00
Total	14,594.00		6,769.05

CSE & HEC promoted the project using social media, newsletters, leaflets and events. 4,500 leaflets were delivered to households in targeted areas of fuel poverty, with 500 more distributed to libraries, medical centres and housing offices. Events included:

- Five advice events for local householders
- Four Energy Essentials training courses
- Four open afternoons at the Home Energy Centre in High St, Chard.
- Weekly drop-in sessions in Chard

The project provided support to around 45 households, with some receiving more than one service:

- Telephone support (CSE service) to 18 households
- Advice and support at events attended by 27 households
- Home visits to 13 households

A further 14 households expressed an interest but could not be supported within the timeframe of the project.

CSE reported that of the 27 households helped 16 were of pensionable age while 11 were of family age.

Surrounding Villages

Area West Committee directed the project to include the villages surrounding Chard and to include enquiries from the whole of Area West.

The project events and activities took place in Chard. To raise awareness CSE used a professional leaflet delivery service to deliver 4,500 leaflets to Chard and surrounding villages including Knowle St Giles, Chaffcombe, Tatworth, Cricket St Thomas, Wadeford, Combe St Nicholas and Buckland St Mary. Leaflets were distributed between 31st Jan and 6th Feb 2017, and produced just 6 direct responses.

Of the 27 households supported, 19 were from Chard and 8 were from the surrounding villages.

Further detail is available in Appendix A.

Lessons learned

The project has identified some learning which is summarised here:

- Effective delivery requires longer timescales.
- Householders often need multiple interactions to overcome inertia and implement changes.
- Harder to engage communities may no longer be receptive to leaflets or mail-drops.
- Working with landlords directly can achieve good outcomes for clients.
- There are challenges to installing measures directly in people's homes (insurance, training, costs, logistics) suggesting this would be more effectively delivered through other services.
- Involving the local press with local councillors or the MP can build community interest.

CSE's experience from this and other projects suggests the need for a sustained and innovative approach, which may be over multiple projects, to gain trust and engage householders.

Further detail is available in Appendix B.

Legacy

The project successfully increased the capacity of HEC Chard to continue to deliver support in Chard and surrounding villages.

- The 14 leads which could not be dealt with within the project have been followed up.
- HEC Chard volunteers received 'Energy Essentials' training from CSE and have successfully run training events for other local organisations.
- Two volunteers received City & Guilds Energy Advisor training with one qualifying.
- A computer, software & printer have been provided and are in use.
- Home visit kits and draught proofing packs have been provided.
- HEC Chard branded advice sheets and leaflets have been provided.
- Four new volunteers were attracted to join HEC Chard.

HEC Chard delivery is continuing through a weekly drop-in clinic in High St in Chard. While home visits are still available the majority of enquiries are dealt with through advice and distribution of energy saving equipment.

The project has contributed to the local economy in that funds released through energy savings can now be spent locally. For example an average saving of £10 per month, per household helped, would release £3,240 per year into the economy.

Future

HEC Chard is committed to continuing delivery and would appreciate support to do so:

- Endorsement by SSDC to increase uptake from leaflet drops and promotion.

- Partnership working, for example with SSDC, SPARK, CAB and other community organisations. (SSDC's contractual relationships can be used to put training in place and drive referrals, and if SSDC are seen to be 'embracing' HEC Chard it will make it easier for other groups to make referrals and share leads.)
- Involvement in future environmental health initiatives, for example work with landlords to new support them to meet the new April 2018 legal obligation for their rented dwellings to be energy-efficient to at least EPC band E.
- Support to handle GDPR (the new data protection regulation)
- Help to recruit volunteers.
- Help to give volunteers some recognition for their contribution. (It is getting harder to recruit and retain volunteers.)
- Support to access further funding (HEC Chard have ongoing expenses for promotion to hard-to-reach groups, volunteer expenses and running costs.)
- Support to replenish supplies of information sheets and energy saving equipment to distribute, for example draught excluders and window film.

It is also worth noting that HEC are a potential source of knowledge and training for SSDC, for example through their experience of working with hard-to-reach groups.

Financial Implications

The project has been completed and there are no future financial implications for Area West budgets. For information only: £7,260 was allocated to the project, of which £3,384.53 was paid to CSE and £3,875.47 returned to the AW Community Grants budget.

Council Plan Implications

The project delivered against the following areas of the SSDC Council Plan:

Focus 2 – Environment:

- Deliver campaigns and projects that help householders and businesses (including the Council) to cut energy use and adapt to climate change.
- Promote the Green Deal and similar schemes that enable householders and businesses to make existing buildings more energy efficient.

Focus 3 – Homes

- Work with partners to combat fuel poverty.
- Continue to work with partners to bring private sector housing up to Decent Homes Standard.

Carbon Emissions and Climate Change Implications

The project raised awareness and reduced energy consumption in Chard and surrounding villages by improving energy efficiency in resident's homes.

Equality and Diversity Implications

The Warmer Chard project was open to all and was promoted to a wide range of groups and members of the community. Home Energy Centre Chard is accessible and the project's home visits enable wide participation.

Privacy Impact Assessment

None arising from this report.

Background Papers

Report to Area West Committee 17th August 2016
Warmer Chard Interim Report 16th December 2016
Warmer Chard Final Report June 2017

Appendix A – Project Achievements

From CSE Final Report

Since the launch of the joint initiative the following achievements have been made.

HEC Chard support for local residents

Twenty seven residents of Chard and the surrounding area have received advice from HEC Chard on a variety of topics. *The following summarises the primary nature of the advice provided:*

- Using their night storage heaters (6)
- Secondary glazing for windows (4)
- Tackling mould and damp (7)
- Switching energy tariff (10)

Events and outreach:

- Five events run for local householders (including the medical centre and the library) and four open afternoons run at the HEC high street offices. In total these events have supported 21 people with energy advice
- Four energy essentials training courses have been delivered
- Home visits have been delivered to 13 households
- The leaflet drop resulted in a total of 6 enquiries. These enquiries included:
 - Three households being assisted with tariff switching
 - One household being assisted with night storage controls
 - Two households being assisted with mould and damp
- There are a further 14 households who've expressed an interest in support and would like further advice (outside of the timeframe of delivery for this project)

The following measures and low-cost interventions were given to householders:

- Draught-proofing kit, including letter box covers, door strips and tape (7)
- Window secondary glazing film (4)
- HEC Chard branded information sheets covering lighting, night storage heaters, insulation (45)

CSE support for local residents

Despite the switch of resources to building capacity and support, CSE has provided the following support to 18 local residents:

- Eighteen households have received phone based advice and support including:
 - Two with advice on use of heating controls
 - Nine referred to the Priority Service Register
 - One with advice and support to claim additional benefits
 - One with advice on Wessex Home Improvement Loans
 - One referred to social services to make necessary home adaptations
 - Seven referred for funded insulation works
 - One referred for a boiler upgrade
 - One with advice about solid wall insulation
 - Two given advice on Warm Homes Discount
 - Six with advice on energy tariffs and water discounts
 - One with advice on water efficiency

Marketing and promotion

The project carried out the following activity to raise awareness of the project locally:

- HEC Chard spoke to local food banks to make them aware of Warmer Chard, how to refer and the support available.
- HEC Chard spoke to local landlords to make them aware of the support available – this has led to positive engagement with a landlord following a home visit. Once the landlord had been made aware of the issues in the property they rectified them immediately.
- CSE and HEC Chard worked together to produce and distribute a 3-fold colour leaflet.
- Door to door distribution of 4,500 leaflets to areas of high fuel poverty and deprivation
- Distribution of further 500 leaflets to libraries, medical centres and Housing offices.
- Both CSE and HEC Chard have used Facebook and Twitter to market events and activities to householders in Chard. Sponsored posts allowed the project to target residents of Chard but this produced a minimal response. A more sustained period of Facebook engagement could have significantly improved reach i.e. promotion via other local Facebook groups and pages
- CSE used Search engine optimization (SEO) analytics to raise the profile of the Home Energy Team's website with people in Chard.
- HEC Chard e-newsletter promoted events, activities and gave out advice on energy efficiency.

Capacity building – supporting HEC Chard to provide local advice

Key achievements include:

- Two HEC Chard volunteers were funded to attend and booked on to City and Guilds energy advisor training.
- CSE delivered two 'Energy Awareness' training sessions for HEC Chard volunteers. HEC Chard has subsequently conducted 4 training sessions locally. This also created 4 more volunteers for HEC Chard.
- HEC Chard purchased a computer using the SSDC funding.
- CSE provided HEC Chard with 6 home visit kit packs.

Further information as requested by South Somerset District Council

Which villages/areas were leafletted and what languages were provided

4,500 leaflets were distributed by a specialised leaflet-distribution company, who charged based on address location. The villages to included Knowle St Giles, Chaffcombe, Tatworth, Cricket St Thomas, Wadeford, Combe St Nicholas and Buckland St Mary.

Leaflets were in English and were distributed as below between 31st Jan and 6th Feb 2017, and produced just 6 direct responses.

Postcode	# Leaflets
TA20 1	1000
TA20 1	700
TA20 3	550
TA20 4	850
TA20 5	450
TA20 6	550
TA20 7	600
TA20 8	300
Total	4500

Further 500 leaflets distributed by volunteers to foodbanks, libraries and outreach events, who contributed their travel costs at no charge as no budget had been allocated for leafletting.

Response from the areas – numbers from villages/areas of Chard

Warmer Chard support:

- 6 enquiries actioned from the leaflet drop into Chard TA20
- 21 enquiries actioned from Warmer Chard outreach events
- Responses/actions to help 27 households - Chard 19, Villages 8

Ethnicity/language of those helped

CSE telephone support: White British

Warmer Chard support: The language for the leaflet text is English. Ethnicity of those helped unknown as to original region/country but English is the language in which they were helped

Age of those helped

CSE telephone support: Fifteen of eighteen helped were over 65

Warmer Chard support: Of the 27 households helped: 16 pension age, 11 family age

Notes:

Decision to use leafletting was decided after the December report to make best use of remaining time. There was no budget allocation for marketing (e.g. leaflets, advertising) as it was understood that referrals would come in from CSE Helpline and CSE interaction with local community groups and from SSDC Decent Homes.

- Not specified by SSDC which are Chard's Villages but thought to be Knowle St Giles; Chaffcombe; Tatworth, Ckt St Thomas; Wadeford; Combe St Nicholas; Buckland St Mary
- No specification by SSDC of requirement to obtain age and ethnicity details so estimated as either pension or family age. Ethnicity anecdotally British.
- No specification/requirement for any other language.
- Volunteers are all only English-speaking and no project budget item was included for cost of translators/interpreters

Appendix B - Lessons Learned

From CSE Final Report

Chard is an area with high levels of deprivation and fuel poverty. For a project such as Warmer Chard to flourish the whole of the community needs to embrace the project. Building trust takes time and will require the participation of the full community over a sustained period of time. Further work is needed to ensure the full involvement of the GPs, health visitors, schools, community centres, local businesses etc. The project has begun to make the links necessary to engage the local community but the delayed start and subsequent end of the WISH project undermined the potential for delivery.

The project has identified some learning which should be useful for future projects:

- Effective delivery requires longer timescales. Due to the delay in the confirmation of funding the project had five months in which to operate. The planning of winter activity usually takes place in the summer months and activity was therefore compressed into a shorter period.
- Relating to the above point. Planning activity also requires networking with frontline workers and other community groups. The project did not have sufficient time for this.
- There has been an increase in awareness of HEC Chard which has led to greater engagement with volunteers.
- Working with landlords directly can achieve good outcomes for clients. HEC Chard spoke to a landlord following a home visit and once they'd been made aware of the issues in the property they rectified them immediately.
- HEC Chard has been able to use a range of engagement channels to speak to people face to face. These have been particularly effective e.g. stands at events, open afternoons.
- Tapping into support from other agencies is key to making sure that a householder gets all the support they need i.e. Citizen's Advice, local authority Decent Homes officers, Wessex Loans etc.
- Market rates for energy measures remain low but support is still available from energy efficiency installers and it's always worth making referrals.
- There are challenges to installing measures directly in people's homes. Additional insurance would be needed for advisors or volunteers to fit low cost measures i.e. light bulbs or draught proofing. Both HEC Chard and CSE would like to do this in the future.
- New approaches are needed for effective marketing in deprived communities. Householders are regularly targeted with leaflets and flyers. A future project should use new techniques to increase engagement; however, this will cost more and would require additional funding.
- A Chard specific A4 booklet featuring the SSDC logo could be created for future marketing. This may be more effective than an A5 leaflet.
- Energy savings from householders can produce a real economic benefit to the local community i.e. householders have more to spend in the local economy.
- Involving the local press can build community interest. The involvement of a local councillor or the MP can support this as the project becomes more news worthy.

Agenda Item 9

Environmental Health Service Update Report

Director: Martin Woods, Service Delivery
Service Manager: Alasdair Bell, Environmental Health Manager
Contact Details: alasdair.bell@southsomerset.gov.uk or 01935 462056

Purpose of the Report

To provide members with a brief update of the work of the Environmental Health Service in the last twelve months and to look forward to future challenges. Alasdair Bell, Environmental Health Manager will attend the meeting to answer any questions.

Recommendation

That Members note the report.

Public Interest

The Environmental Health Service is a frontline service committed to protecting public health and safeguarding the environment. The majority of work undertaken by the service is required by law with very little discretionary work. The Environmental Health Service Plan that outlines the work of the service along with key service standards and the service action plan can be found on the council website at: http://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/569271/service_plan_eh_15-16.pdf.

Report

The work of the service continues to go well with staff dealing with a wide variety of matters including routine inspections and enforcement activity. Discussion of the up and coming Transformation programme is dominating our thinking at the moment and staff resources are being allocated to help plan the future arrangements.

Food and Safety Team

The Food & Safety Team both enforces legislation and provides advice and assistance to food and other businesses. The main emphasis of the team is to contribute to the success of the local economy by helping food businesses avoid problems of food poisoning etc. and the severe economic consequences that can result. The team is also involved in tackling food fraud, which can be very harmful to public safety, economic development and fair business competition. The food safety element of the work of the team includes the approval and audit of food manufacturers, food sampling, premises inspections which includes local delivery of the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme, the investigation of food complaints and food poisoning as well as responding to national food safety alerts. The health and safety element includes inspection, advice, complaint and accident investigation. In Area West in the last 12 months 279 food inspections have been carried out, 70 cases of suspected food poisoning have been investigated and 7 accidents reported/investigated. Much of the work carried out is routine 'behind the scenes' and the public is generally unaware of what is going on until something significant happens such as a major food poisoning outbreak. Key achievements to note;

- All planned interventions/inspections and complaints successfully dealt with
- National food safety Week 2017 supported. The theme being Food Waste Reduction.
- Development of the Better Business for All (BBfA) project.
- Working with South West Illegal Meat Group

- Ongoing management of 'Flexible Warranting' scheme to allow cross boundary working throughout Somerset
- Food Hygiene Rating System –anticipated introduction of charges for rescoreing.
- Supporting a multi-agency investigation into wild game poaching with local Police, RSPCA and Trading Standards
- Maintaining a multi-agency Safety Advisory Group(SAG) for events being held in South Somerset
- Working with FSA on 'Regulating Our Future' programme.
- Working with Public Health England on new Gastrointestinal Disease Policy.

The Food safety Team is obliged by the FSA to produce it's own service plan that can be found following the attached link;

https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/570103/fs_service_plan_2016-17.pdf

Environmental Protection Team

The EP Team deals with pollution control and environmental monitoring as well as the enforcement of environmental legislation. The Team checks local air quality and investigates a range of complaints about nuisance, in particular noise and smoke. The Team issues permits and inspects premises under the Pollution Prevention and Control regime (PPC). The Team also undertakes private water supply sampling and risk assessments, contaminated land assessment and the investigation of rural drainage complaints as well as acting as a statutory consultee on planning and licensing applications. The delivery of the Pest Control service and public health burials are also part of the service provided. The Streetscene enforcement team is now part of the EP Team and deals with a range of issues including dog control, abandoned vehicles and fly tipping. During the past 12 months 141 noise complaints have been investigated and 382 calls were taken regarding pest control in Area West. Significant points to note;

- The Private Water supply sampling and risk assessment programme has been successfully completed although there has been a lot of work going on regarding the village supply at Allowenshay. Ombudsman complaint not substantiated.
- The Permitted installation inspection programme (PPC) has been fully completed
- New contaminated Land Inspection Strategy adopted
- New Enforcement policy adopted
- Four Public Health funerals dealt with
- Last year 89 abandoned vehicles were investigated in Area West resulting in 12 being removed and destroyed. The team have seen a marked increase in the number of abandoned vehicles across the district since the start of the year.

Housing Standards Team

The Housing Standards Team deal with private sector housing advice and enforcement. This includes investigating complaints about sub-standard rented housing, the inspection and licensing of houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) and the licensing of caravan sites. The team also provides advice/assistance/grant aid to improve energy efficiency and tackle fuel poverty. The team also processes applications for Prevention grants, Disabled Facilities Grants, HMO and Empty Property grants, and helps administer the WRT home loan scheme. The team works closely with the Housing Options Team in seeking to tackle the potential housing crisis that is developing in South Somerset. Significant points include;

- The running of two Landlord Forum events held at Holy Trinity Community Centre, Yeovil with over 70 local landlords attending.

- On-going enforcement action to do with substandard housing and HMOs including the enforced sale of an empty house.
- £850,000 of Disabled Facilities Grants paid
- Several key grant funded building projects underway including two projects on South Street, Yeovil.
- Over fifty empty properties brought back into use.
- Active participation in multi-agency Yeovil One and Chard One projects to include work on anti-social behaviour and rough sleeping.
- New grants and loans policy adopted following change in funding arrangements for DFGs via the Better Care Fund.
- New mobile home grant/loan initiative launched working with Ridgeway Energy.

Research and support

The Environmental Health service is supported by the Research and Specialist Support Team who maintain and update the Environmental Health back system Civica APP, inspection records and web pages as well as providing finance support, management performance information and produce the annual government returns.

Financial Implications

There are none attached to this report.

Corporate Priority Implications

The work of the unit helps contribute towards the delivery of a range of our Council Plan aims including the aims to:

- Protect and enhance the quality of our environment
- Enable housing to meet all needs
- Improve health and reduce health inequalities

Carbon Emissions & Climate Change Implications

The work of the unit contributes towards this NI with it's work on fuel poverty

Equality and Diversity Implications

As part of the EH service plan a full equalities and diversity assessment was undertaken.

Background Papers: *Environmental Health Service Plan 2017/18*
Food & Safety Service Plan 2017/18
Private Sector Housing Strategy 2016-21
Housing Strategy Implementation Plan 2017
Policy for Awarding Private Sector Housing Grants and Loans -January 2017

Agenda Item 10

Ilminster Community Office

Director: Alex Parmley, Chief Executive
Assistant Director: Helen Rutter, Communities Lead
Lead Officer: Lisa Davis, Community Office Support Manager
Contact Details: lisa.davis@southsomerset.gov.uk 01935 462746

Purpose of the Report

To provide further details of the amended provision of face to face contact in Ilminster.

Recommendation

To continue to provide face to face services in an alternative way to best suit customer demand including the withdrawal from Ilminster Community Office with effect from 1 February 2018.

Background

During discussion at Area West Committee in September members felt that the alternative model for Ilminster would need to be suitable to address the growing ageing population and requested that further details of the proposal be brought back to a future Area West Committee meeting.

Key facts relating to Ilminster

- Ilminster Community office is open 7.5 hours per week (9.30am – 12pm Monday, Tuesday and Thursday).
- The total footfall at Ilminster during 2016-17 was 1,046, only 3.5% of the overall footfall into the community offices. 701 of these customers accessed a core service.
- Around 10,000 (33%) customers visiting the Community Offices during 2016-17 came in for benefits help, queries, or to provide additional information/evidence in support of their benefit applications. Only 3.8% of the total benefits queries were dealt with at Ilminster.
- 266 (25%) of the enquiries dealt with at Ilminster during 2016-17 related to the receipt of benefits evidence, an additional 52 (5%) customers were assisted with benefits claims/evidence.
- The full rollout of Universal Credit in April 2017 has resulted in a reduction in receipt of benefits evidence. During the period April – July 2017 there has been a 25% reduction in the receipt of benefits evidence at Ilminster compared with the same period last year.
- It should be noted that although there was only a 1% reduction in footfall last year there are many repeat visitors to the community offices, although we do not have detailed information of these we are aware that many customers visit Ilminster to access repeat transactions ie. monthly payment of Council Tax.
- There is an average of 3.7 SSDC related visitors to the office each day

Proposal for customer service delivery in Ilminster

In the coming months the Council's Transformation programme will focus on the needs and preferences of customers that use the network of community offices. In the meantime we will continue

to work with other SSDC services to ensure that we are fully aware of any changes and that the Community Support Assistants have the knowledge and access to the systems to provide the most efficient and effective front facing service.

With an increase in digital access there is a continuing need to support customers to access services online and raise awareness of alternative methods to access information and services to ensure that service provided best meets the needs of the customer.

The continuing low footfall at Ilminster Community office means that it would seem an appropriate time to look at the face to face provision in this area. The current business model is no longer feasible and this is an opportunity to continue to provide a service by alternative methods and ascertain valuable information to inform the transformation programme going forward. It is also worth noting that Ilminster Community Office does not fully meet access requirements.

Since the last meeting we have looked at the existing community facilities in Ilminster to identify if any are suitable to hold appointments with customers.

Library

The opening hours are:

Monday 9.30am – 12pm

Tuesday 9.30am – 4.30pm

Wednesday 9.30am – 12pm

Thursday Closed

Friday 9.30am – 4.30am

Saturday 9.30am – 12pm

The library offers two computers that could be used or alternatively there is wi-fi access available. Printing and photocopying services are available but at the present time there is no scanning facility.

The library staff already assist customers to access Homefinder and a minimal number of District Council services online.

Local Information Centre (LIC)/Arts Centre

The LIC/Arts Centre does not have wi-fi or any accessible space that would be suitable to meet customers.

Somerset Skills and Learning

The Somerset Skills and Learning centre has available space that could be booked in advance and used at a cost but the rooms are a lot larger than required.

Summervale Surgery

This surgery is located outside of the town centre but situated close to an extensive residential area.

There is a meeting room with wi-fi access that could be used for appointments at no cost. It should be noted that Citizens Advice hold their weekly surgery at this location.

Once a suitable venue to hold appointments has been agreed we will commence a targeted marketing campaign to ensure that details of how to access face to face services following the withdrawal from the Ilminster office are widely available.

Recommendation:

- Over a two month lead in period withdraw from Ilminster Community Office and focus on encouraging and supporting customers to access services online and raise awareness of alternative methods to access information and services to ensure that the service provided best meets the needs of the customer.
- During the two month period liaise with other SSDC departments and the Transformation team to flag up and resolve customer issues raised and review outcomes.
- During the two month period agree alternative suitable venues to meet with customers within Ilminster, these would include the Library and Doctors surgeries. This also gives us an opportunity to forge working relationships with other authorities/organisations.
- Following the two month period we would offer appointment based visits as appropriate for those customers requiring further assistance – i.e. customers who are unable to conduct SSDC business by any other means or access another office.

This proposal has been endorsed by Senior Leadership Team as a good way of testing various aspects of service delivery through transformation.

Community Support staff will continue to:

- assist and encourage customers to move over to digital services where possible
- assist and run an appointment based service for vulnerable customers who are unable to access SSDC services by any other means
- promote digital by default campaigns – ie uploading benefit/Council Tax evidence, online benefit/Council Tax applications, paying Council Tax by direct debit
- provide additional project support to the Area Development teams

To enable the appointment based surgeries to take place one off costs of up to £75 (for a wi-fi enabled tablet) or up to £500 (for a 3G enabled tablet) would be incurred. If a 3G enabled tablet was purchased there would be an additional monthly cost of up to £15.

Financial Implications

There would be no new budgetary implications. Costs will be covered within the existing budget.

Council Plan Implications

Focus on Health and Communities. Continue to provide Welfare Benefits support and advice to tackle poverty for our vulnerable residents.

Carbon Emissions & Climate Change Implications

Reduce carbon emissions by increasing awareness of local offices and use of alternative methods of contact i.e. online transactions

Equality and Diversity Implications

Ilminster Community Office is not accessible, which can only be improved if alternative suitable premises can be found.

An Equality Analysis Assessment has been completed for Ilminster Community Office

Background Papers: *Community Office Update 2017*

Agenda Item 11

Area West – Reports from Members on Outside Bodies

Communities Lead: Helen Rutter, Communities Lead
Service Manager: Tim Cook, Area Development Lead (East/West)

Purpose of the Report

To introduce reports from members appointed to outside bodies in Area West.

Public Interest

Each year Area West Committee appoints local Councillors to serve on outside bodies (local organisations) in Area West. During the year Councillors make a report on the achievements of those organisations and other relevant issues.

Background

To replace “Reports from members on outside organisations” as a generic standing agenda item it was agreed at the August 2012 meeting to include specific reports about each organisation in the Committee’s forward plan.

Members were appointed to serve on ten outside bodies at the June 2017 meeting.

Reports

Reports can be verbal or written. There is no standard format, but if possible they include an explanation of the organisations aims, their recent activities, achievements and any issues of concern.

This month the member report is :

Crewkerne Leisure Management Ltd. – The Crewkerne Aqua Centre – Cllr. Angie Singleton

Recommendation

That the report is noted.

Financial Implications

None.

Council Plan Implications

Focus Four: Health and Communities – We want communities that are healthy, self reliant and have individuals who are willing to help each other.

Background Papers: None

Annual Report to Area West Committee on the Activities of Crewkerne Leisure Management Ltd. (CLM) - The Crewkerne Aqua Centre

The Crewkerne Aqua Centre will shortly be celebrating its 20th Anniversary firmly in the black. An amazing achievement for this community run facility predicted by many to make a substantial loss.

This year has seen a focus on replacing much of the mechanical and electrical equipment, and the next big project will be to update the Centre's Air handling unit – a very expensive piece of equipment.

The wide ranging programme of activities continues to attract new customers with a noticeable increase this year in young people signing up to the B Active programme, which enables access to the gym at less popular times at a reduced rate to youngsters of a certain age.

Plans are in hand to celebrate the 20th Anniversary of the opening of the pool which will 'surprise and delight' – the byword of the Company since the beginning.

Angie Singleton
November 2017

Agenda Item 12

Area West Committee - Forward Plan

Communities Lead: Helen Rutter, Communities Lead
Service Manager: Tim Cook, Area Development Lead (East/West)
Agenda Co-ordinator: Jo Morris, Democratic Services Officer , Legal & Democratic Services
Contact Details: jo.morris@southsomerset.gov.uk or 01935 462055

Purpose of the Report

This report informs members of the proposed Area West Committee Forward Plan.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:-

- (1) comment upon and note the proposed Area West Committee Forward Plan as attached.
- (2) identify priorities for further reports to be added to the Area West Committee Forward Plan.

Forward Plan

The Forward Plan sets out items and issues to be discussed by the Area West Committee over the coming few months.

The Forward Plan will be reviewed and updated each month in consultation with the Chairman. It is included each month on the Area West Committee agenda and members may endorse or request amendments.

To make the best use of the Area Committee, the focus for topics should be on issues where local involvement and influence may be beneficial, and where local priorities and issues raised by the community are linked to SSDC corporate aims and objectives.

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

Background Papers: *None.*

Notes

- (1) Items marked in italics are not yet confirmed.
- (2) Further details on these items, or to suggest / request an agenda item for the Area Committee, please contact the Agenda Co-ordinator; Jo Morris, 01935 462055 or e-mail jo.morris@southsomerset.gov.uk
- (3) Standing items include:
 - (a) Chairman's announcements
 - (b) Public Question Time

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Background / Purpose	Lead Officer(s) SSDC unless stated otherwise
6 th December 2017	S106 Obligations	Update Report	Neil Waddleton, S106 Monitoring Officer
6 th December 2017	Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)	Progress Report	Tim Cook, Community Development Officer Cllr. Martin Wale
6 th December 2017	Half Year progress of the Area Development Programme	Progress Report	<i>Tim Cook, Community Development Officer</i>
<i>6th December 2017</i>	<i>Crewkerne & District Museum</i>	<i>Reports from members on outside organisations</i>	<i>Cllr. Marcus Barrett</i>
<i>6th December 2017</i>	<i>Grant application</i>	<i>To consider a grant application under the Town Centre Events Programme</i>	<i>Dylan Martlew, Neighbourhood Development Officer (Economy)</i>
17 th January 2018	Avon & Somerset Policing Update	Report on activities on neighbourhood policing and partnership working to reduce crime and fear of crime.	Sgt. Rob Jameson
17 th January 2018	Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Panel	Update report	Cllr. Martin Wale
<i>17th January 2018</i>	<i>Chard & District Museum</i>	<i>Reports from members on outside organisations</i>	<i>Cllr. Amanda Broom</i>
<i>21st February 2018</i>	<i>Ile Youth Centre Management Committee</i>	<i>Reports from members on outside organisations</i>	<i>Cllr. Val Keitch</i>
<i>21st February 2018</i>	<i>Making It Local Executive Group</i>	<i>Reports from members on outside organisations</i>	<i>Cllr. Martin Wale</i>
<i>21st February 2018</i>	<i>Chard Town Team</i>	<i>Update report</i>	<i>Chard Town Team</i>

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Background / Purpose	Lead Officer(s) SSDC unless stated otherwise
<i>21st February 2018</i>	<i>SSDC Welfare Advice Work in South Somerset</i>	<i>Annual report</i>	<i>Catherine Hansford, Welfare Advice Team Leader</i>
<i>21st March 2018</i>	<i>A Better Crewkerne & District (ABCD)</i>	<i>Reports from members on outside organisations</i>	<i>Cllr. Mike Best</i>
<i>21st March 2018</i>	<i>Meeting House Arts Centre, Ilminster</i>	<i>Reports from members on outside organisations</i>	<i>Cllr. Carol Goodall</i>
<i>18th April 2018</i>	<i>Town Centre Events Grants Programme</i>	<i>Report outlining the effectiveness of the programme and details of the awards made</i>	<i>Dylan Martlew, Neighbourhood Development Officer (Economy)</i>
<i>18th April 2018</i>	<i>Area Development Programme – End of Year Report</i>	<i>Progress Report</i>	<i>Tim Cook, Community Development Officer</i>
<i>TBC</i>	<i>Chard Regeneration Scheme</i>	<i>Progress Report</i>	<i>David Julian, CRS Project Manager</i>
<i>TBC</i>	<i>One Public Estate Programme</i>	<i>Progress Report</i>	<i>Nena Beric, Project Manager</i>
<i>TBC</i>	<i>Somerset County Council Review of Children's Centres and Get Set Services</i>		

Agenda Item 13

Planning Appeals

Director: Martin Woods, Service Delivery
Service Manager: David Norris, Development Manager
Lead Officer: David Norris, Development Manager
Contact Details: david.norris@southsomerset.gov.uk or 01935 462382

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.

Report Detail

Appeals Dismissed

16/03209/OUT - Land of Longstrings Lane, Broadshard Road, Crewkerne, Somerset (Officer decision)

The erection of 4 No. dwellings (outline)

Background Papers

Appeal decision notices attached



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 October 2017

by **Andy Harwood CMS MSc MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 30 October 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/R3325/W/17/3176399

**1 Brett's Field, Land off Longstrings Lane, Broadshard, Crewkerne
TA18 7NJ**

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant outline planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Brett Jacobs against the decision of South Somerset District Council.
 - The application Ref 16/03209/OUT, dated 20 July 2016, was refused by notice dated 25 November 2016.
 - The development proposed is outline application for residential development.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. I have used the address for the appeal site from the planning application form. This accurately describes the location.
3. An enforcement notice has been issued in relation to this site in the past but my understanding is that the notice has been withdrawn. I am not dealing with matters connected to the previously alleged unauthorised development in this appeal and will only deal with the development as proposed.
4. The proposal is in outline form and the Council has dealt with it on the basis that all matters are reserved for future approval. The submitted plans show 4 dwellings and the design and access statement that accompanied the planning application refers to 4 dwellings. That is the basis upon which the application has been publicised and considered by the Council. Within final comments, the appellant suggests that the proposal could be considered on the basis of 1, 2 or 3 dwellings. I will consider the proposal on the basis of 4 dwellings as shown on the submitted plans albeit that the layout is purely indicative. The submitted plans also show the site divided into 2 plots each with 2 of the dwellings. These would be served from 2 separate accesses off of Longstrings Lane which is referred to as a "private highway" although it is a public right of way. The lane is only partially surfaced. Access is also a reserved matter but vehicles related to the proposed dwellings would need to use the junction of Longstrings Lane with Broadshard Road (A356).

Background and Main Issues

5. The Council agrees that at present they cannot demonstrate a 5 year supply of

deliverable housing sites. Accordingly, paragraph 49 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) states that the relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up to date. In these circumstances, the fourth bullet point of paragraph 14 of the Framework makes clear that the presumption in favour of sustainable development means granting permission for the proposed development, unless any adverse impacts significantly and demonstrably outweigh its benefits or specific policies in the Framework indicate development should be restricted.

6. In view of this, the main issues in this appeal are whether any specific policies in the Framework indicate that the proposed development should be restricted or whether any adverse impacts of the proposal would significantly and demonstrably outweigh its benefits, having particular regard to the suitability of the site for housing with regard to:
 - The effect upon highway safety;
 - The effect on the character and appearance of the site and the surrounding countryside; and
 - The contribution of the proposal to meeting the shortfall in housing.

Reasons

Highway and pedestrian safety

7. Longstrings Lane is narrow in places and joins the busy main A356 to the north west which would be the route taken by occupants of the proposed dwellings. The lane is currently used by the appellant in connection with his agricultural use of the appeal site and there are other fields used for agriculture and equestrian uses that generate some traffic at the moment. According to the appellant, the lane is also used by the general public on foot, bicycle, motorcycle and on horseback.
8. The Council consider that the residential use for 4 dwellings would create additional vehicle movements and this is estimate to be as many as 32 per day. This is based upon TRICS¹ data which assumes that an average dwelling will generate 6 to 8 traffic movements per day. This seems a reasonable estimate to me. The appellant states that the site currently generates between 2 and 14 vehicle movements per day. It is not clear from the submitted evidence how this significant variability is distributed through a normal day or what the general pattern of movement is. Furthermore, the appeal site does not include all of the appellant's land and some agricultural use could remain as would any traffic related to that and other nearby land.
9. The restricted width of Longstrings Lane means that there is little space for walkers, cyclists or motorcyclists to find refuge if confronted by vehicles or passing places for 2 vehicles to pass by each other. The dwellings would also result in some additional pedestrian movements along the lane particularly as the site is accessible by walking to some of the services within the northern part of the town. This could include those with children in pushchairs and wheelchair users. The facilities are not sufficiently accessible in my view to assume a reduction in the number vehicle movements, particularly as pedestrians would need to cross the busy A356 or walk along the largely

¹ Trip Rate Information Computer System

unsurfaced footpath to reach the services in the settlement. Consequently, I consider that the proposal is likely to generate significantly more vehicle movements than the current agricultural use which could result in additional conflicts between those vehicles and users of Longstrings Lane.

10. The junction of Longstrings Lane onto the A356 broadens out next to the main road carriageway and has a hard-surfaced splay. This provides reasonable inter-visibility between drivers of emerging vehicles and vehicles approaching from the north. A good view along the lane is possible when approaching from the north. However, the junction has a narrow angle restricted by the adjacent hedge bank which makes it awkward to view to the south when emerging from Longstrings Lane. Vehicles emerging from the junction are also difficult to see when approaching from the south, along the A356 due to the hedge bank. Any view along the lane is tricky until directly in front of the junction.
11. A driver of a car (as opposed to a higher vehicle such as a van shown in some of the appellant's photographs) waiting to turn at a point 2.4m set-back distance ('x' distance) from the carriageway as shown in Manual for Streets (MFS) and Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB), if light use is assumed, would not have a good view of traffic approaching from the south. The obstruction presented by the hedge bank means that drivers of vehicles emerging from Longstrings Lane need to position themselves to the northern side of the splay in order to gain a sufficient view of traffic approaching from the south. This can interfere with vehicles turning into the site from both directions. Furthermore, the narrowness in parts of Longstrings Lane and potential for conflict between vehicles could result in some vehicles waiting within the carriageway. This would be an additional hazard at a point close to a bend and another junction.
12. The junction geometry does not conform to that within the MFS or DMRB for direct access due to the angled southern splay and obstruction caused by the hedge. Whilst this may not have resulted in safety concerns given the current use of Longstrings Lane, I am concerned that additional usage could cause highway safety problems. In addition increased use by vehicles would create more potential for conflict between vehicles and users of the public footpath and would not be a satisfactory shared surface as referred to within MFS.
13. A version of a gated access as set out in DMRB could in this location could result in even further disruption to traffic on the A356 due to vehicles potentially having to queue on the main road close to the bend even though it has a 30mph limit. Other examples of accesses which the appellant considers are similar have also been referred to. However, they do not change my view of the inadequacy of this access. The lack of comment by the Highway Authority upon the previous planning submissions is also not an indication of suitability of the access.
14. It would not be possible to sufficiently address transport implications from the development. No revised junction design is put forward and it is not clear that the appellant could achieve any improvements. Secure inclusive, safe and convenient access on foot and cycle would not be achieved. In relation to the first main issue, the proposal would have a harmful effect upon highway safety which would not comply with Policy TA5 of the South Somerset Local Plan² (LP) or paragraph 32 of the Framework which requires safe and suitable access for

² South Somerset Local Plan, 2006-2028, adopted March 2015

all people. This weighs substantially against the proposal.

Character and appearance

15. The appeal site is a stretch of land located on the rural outskirts of Crewkerne. It comprises an 'L' shaped part of a larger field that rises gently up from the lane and which is adjoined by other undeveloped fields. This part of the landscape is not significantly affected by existing residential development, the nearest parts of the settlement being separated by the adjoining fields, to the west and north-west and further away to the south. The proposal would intrude into this setting and even though it would be possible to retain space around the dwellings, a finger of sub-urbanised development would be created.
16. I do not have any particular designs before me. I accept that it would be possible to limit the impact of the dwellings. However, whatever design approach is taken this would change the character of the site which would be noticeable from the adjoining public right of way across the boundary hedges and surrounding fields, even if they are supplemented with additional planting.
17. A site including land off of Longstrings Lane was included for consideration during an earlier Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. This was then followed through into a draft local plan process that led to the adoption of the 2006 local plan. From the information provided to me, it is not clear whether potential allocation included the appeal site. Much of the area was to the south-west of Longstrings Lane, closer to the existing built up part of the town. The local plan Inspector at that time was considering the relative merits of various sites and considered the Longstrings Lane site was preferable to one that has since received outline planning permission. The Longstrings Lane draft allocation was not adopted in the 2006 plan. That draft allocation has no weight in this appeal.
18. The Council is of the view through the 2008 Peripheral Landscape Study for Crewkerne that the site is within an area with moderate to low capacity to accommodate built development. The visual sensitivity may not be significant from some directions but there would be some harm. The change in the landscape due to the proposal would create an intrusion of residential development within the sensitive setting of the settlement which would not conserve or enhance the landscape character of the area. In relation to this main issue, the proposal would be harmful to the character and appearance of the site and the surrounding countryside. This would not comply with LP Policy EQ2. This landscape harm is limited but weighs against the proposal.

Housing needs and supply

19. It is indicated that some of the dwellings would be 'starter homes'. There is no mechanism proposed to limit these to any particular tenure and so I have considered them as being open market dwellings. However the provision of the dwellings would contribute to the under-provision of housing in the area and to the provision of a sustainable, balanced community. This would also be assisted by the location being accessible to local services and facilities.
20. I am not provided with much information about the degree of current under-provision in the area. In relation to this issue, the provision of 4 dwellings would be a positive benefit of the proposal. I can give this a moderate degree of weight due to the social and economic advantages that the proposal would

bring. This would accord with paragraph 47 of the Framework by helping to boost the supply of housing.

Other Matters

21. The appellant has referred to a number of other planning decisions for residential development but it is not my role within this appeal to critique the merits of this scheme in comparison with those. I agree that it is important that decision making is undertaken in a consistent manner but it is not clear than any of the other cases referred to, are so similar as to warrant me making a different conclusion on the main issues in this case.
22. Neither of the prior notification applications relating to the existing buildings on site (under the provisions of part Q of the Permitted development Order and the previous part MB) has been approved. Of those, 1 was also dismissed at appeal. Whether or not there is any potential for utilising permitted development rights is not a matter for me in this appeal and consequently does not have any weight in my decision.
23. The proposed dwellings could be constructed to high environmental standards and that could be fully considered through the submission of detailed designs. This could help to reduce the impacts that the occupants of the dwellings would have upon the local and global environment. In these respects, the proposals would not be harmful. This has a neutral weighting within the overall balance.

Planning Balance and Conclusion

24. Paragraph 49 of the Framework says housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. The Council is unable to demonstrate a 5 year supply of deliverable housing sites. Therefore, relevant policies for the supply of housing are out of date and, accordingly, the fourth bullet point of paragraph 14 of Framework on the presumption in favour of sustainable development is engaged. There are two indents to consider under the fourth bullet point of paragraph 14.
25. First of all, I consider that my conclusions in relation to the first 2 main issues do not signify that a specific policy within the Framework indicate that development should be restricted (footnote 9). Secondly, under the first indent of the fourth bullet point of paragraph 14, it is necessary to consider whether any adverse impacts of allowing the appeal would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies of the Framework as a whole. I have concluded that the proposed development of 4 dwellings would cause unsafe highway conditions to which I give substantial weight. I also consider that there would be some harm to the character and appearance of the area to which I give limited weight. These adverse impacts significantly and demonstrably outweigh the moderate benefits of the proposal.

Conclusion

26. For the reasons given above and having considered all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Andy Harwood

INSPECTOR

Agenda Item 14

Schedule of Planning Applications to be Determined by Committee

Director: Martin Woods, Service Delivery
Service Manager: David Norris, Development 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 West Committee at this meeting.

Recommendation

Members are asked to note the schedule of planning applications.

Planning Applications will be considered no earlier than 6.45pm.

Members of the public who wish to speak about a particular planning item are recommended to arrive for 6.35 pm.

SCHEDULE					
Agenda Number	Ward	Application	Brief Summary of Proposal	Site Address	Applicant
15	EGGWOOD	17/02545/FUL	The erection of 10 No. dwellings with associated car parking, landscaping and drainage details	Land Opposite St Georges House Merriott Road Hinton St George	Strawberry Property

Further information about planning applications is shown below 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 15

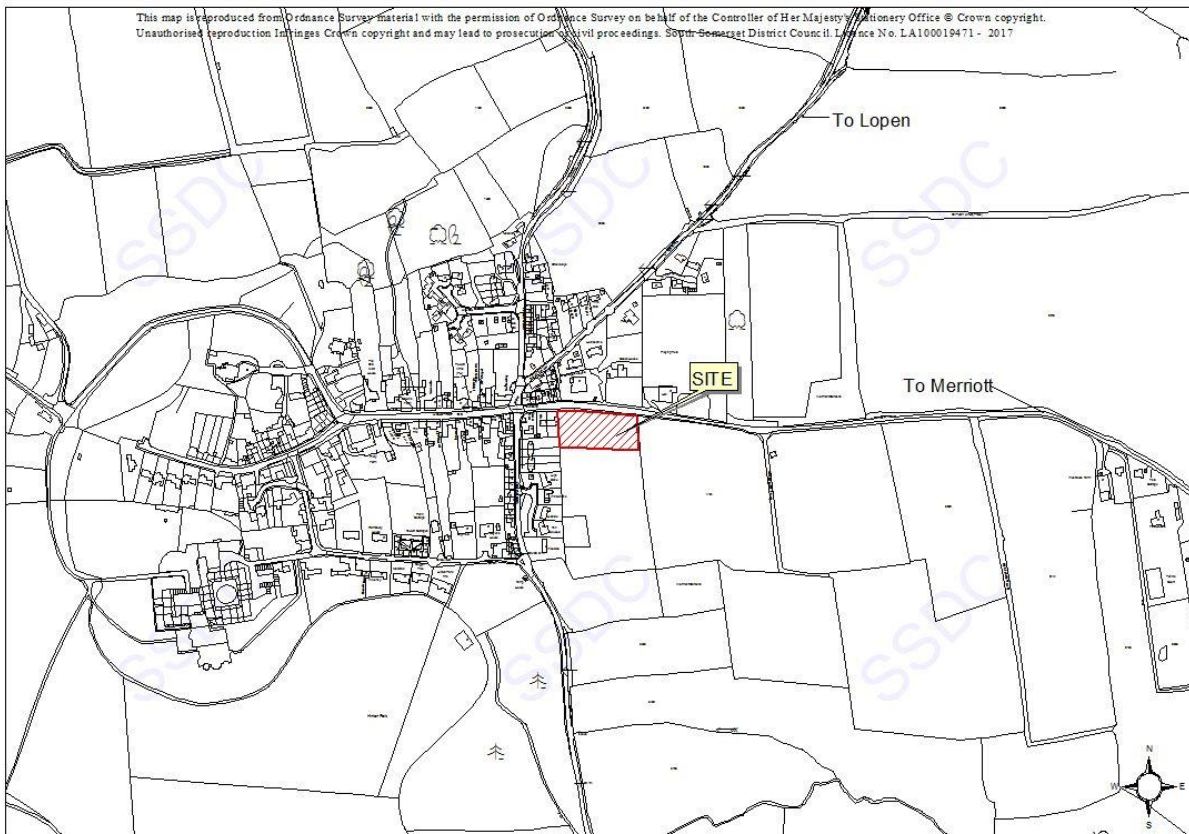
Officer Report On Planning Application: 17/02545/FUL

Proposal :	The erection of 10 No. dwellings with associated car parking, landscaping and drainage details
Site Address:	Land Opposite St Georges House Merriott Road
Parish:	Hinton St George
EGGWOOD Ward (SSDC Member)	Cllr P Maxwell
Recommending Case Officer:	Andrew Gunn Tel: (01935) 462192 Email: andrew.gunn@southsomerset.gov.uk
Target date :	12th September 2017
Applicant :	Strawberry Property
Agent: (no agent if blank)	CSJ Planning 1 Host Street Bristol BS1 5BU
Application Type :	Major Dwlg 10 or more or site 0.5ha+

REASON FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE

The application is referred to Area West Committee at the request of the Ward member and in agreement with the Chair in order for the Committee to fully discuss the key planning issues raised by local residents and the Parish Council.

SITE DESCRIPTION





The application site is currently a vacant field totalling 0.41 hectares located on the southern side of Merriott Road, on the eastern side of Hinton St George. An agricultural access towards the north western corner of the site serves the site from Merriott Road. A grass track leads from this access to the rear of the site providing access into an adjacent field. The boundaries of the site are defined by hedgerows with a few small trees located within the site. Residential dwellings are located to the north and west of the site, with agricultural land to the south and Jubilee Wood to the east.

PROPOSAL

The application seeks consent for the erection of 10 dwellings, associated access, parking, and landscaping. The scheme will provide a range of dwellings sizes with 3 no. 2 beds, 3 no. 3 beds and 4 no.4 beds with a mix of 4 detached dwellings and 2 blocks of terraced dwellings comprising 3 dwellings in each block.

The dwellings will be laid out with a central terrace in the centre of the site adjacent to Merriott Road. A further single detached dwelling will be located along the site frontage in the north east corner. Three further detached dwellings will be located along the rear of the site with the second terraced block running at right angles to Merriott Road located along the north western boundary. These will be offered as affordable housing. Each of the units will have their own garden areas with a mix of railings, ham stone walls and planting along the individual boundaries with boarded and field gates at the vehicular entrances. A green area will be provided at the front of the site adjacent to the terraced block.

Two vehicular access points will be provided from Merriott Road along with retention of and access to the existing agricultural access at the rear of the site. The internal road will be 6 metres in width designed as a shared surface. Visibility splays of 2.4 metres x 43 metres shall be provided at the 2 access points. 34 parking spaces are being provided, 6 of which will be provided in the form of car ports.

The majority of the dwellings will be constructed using hamstone with the terrace of 3 in the north-west

part of the site in horizontal timber boarding. Roofs will largely be double roman clay tiles with some natural slate. Ridge tiles will be in clay with red brick chimneys with watertabling in hamstone. Windows and doors will be in painted timber. Street lighting will be provided in the form of traditional black cast metal, with 2 replacements lights on Merriott Road and 2 within the site. Low level timber bollard lighting would be provided within the site around the southern and eastern perimeter.

The application was supported by a Design and Access Statement, a Planning Supporting Statement, a Planning Obligations Statement, Ecological Appraisal, and a Highway technical Note on Access. The agent also submitted a number of computer generated images showing the dwellings and street scenes and a response to the comments received from local residents.

HISTORY

821798 - Outline application for residential development (withdrawn).
Advised that it was outside of development limit and adjacent to the Conservation Area. Also in a Special Landscape Area.

830020 - Outline application for the erection of 10 houses and garages (refused).
Refused due to harm to the rural character of the designated Special Landscape Area, harm to the setting of the adjoining Conservation Area, contrary to the policies in the adopted Structure plan for the control of development (outside of the development area) and design and layout of the scheme is not appropriate for the site.

841910 - The construction of a vehicular access to land (OS plot no 2854) (refused)
This was refused because it was close to the recreation ground and there was an inadequate visibility splay being provided.

871048 - Relocation of vehicular access and right of way to field (refused).
Reason as per 1984 scheme.

POLICY

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 repeats the duty imposed under S54A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and requires that decision must be made in accordance with relevant Development Plan Documents unless material considerations indicate otherwise,

Relevant Development Plan Documents

South Somerset Local Plan (Adopted 2015)
SD1 - Sustainable Development
SS1 - Settlement Strategy
SS2 - Development in Rural Settlements
SS4 - District Wide Housing Provision
SS5 - Delivering New Housing Growth
SS6 - Infrastructure Delivery
HG3 - Provision of affordable Housing
TA5 - Transport Impact of New Development
TA6 - Parking Standards
EQ1 - Addressing Climate Change in South Somerset
EQ2 - General Development
EQ4 - Biodiversity

Other Relevant Documents/ Material Considerations

National Planning policy Framework
Achieving Sustainable Development
Core Planning Principles
Chapter 6 Delivering a Wide Choice of High Quality Homes
Chapter 7 - Requiring Good Design
Chapter 8 - Promoting Healthy Communities
Chapter 11 - Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment
Chapter 12 - Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

Somerset County Council Parking Strategy

Hinton St George Village Design Statement

CONSULTATIONS

Hinton St George Parish Council:

At Hinton St. George Parish Council meeting held on July 17th the following determination was unanimously voted upon for the stated reasons below. Application refused.

Relevant Planning Policies: SS2, HG8, EC3/4, NPPF, SSSDC Housing Needs Survey 2012, Rural Action Housing Plan 2013/14.

Reasons: Application contrary to policies listed above, namely,

Adversely affects the setting of rural landscape and character, abutting Conservation Area of village having a negative impact.

Extension of the confines of Hinton St. George has an undesirable impact on surrounding open countryside.

Will not enhance the landscape or visual amenity of the Conservation Area and falls short of conforming to the HSG Village Design Statement.

Local Community best placed to determine local housing need. There is none.

Scale and design of development unacceptable and inappropriate for such a strategic and visible site at entrance of village.

Traffic generated will impact on all single track roads in and out of village, and pose extra danger to a specified cycle route, pedestrians, charity runs and horse riders.

Conservation Officer:

The village of Hinton St George is a historic planned village, and is one with a high density of heritage assets, many of which are highly graded. Notably the Church, Hinton House with its park and garden, Manor House, Church and village cross. The village has suffered little 20th development which has surrounded many of our historic villages and fundamentally altered the setting of many heritage assets.

We have a statutory duty to pay special attention in the exercise of planning functions to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area. We must also 'have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. There does not have to be inter-visibility between an asset and the land for this to affect the setting.

Applicants for consent that affects a heritage asset must be able to justify their proposals. The NPPF

says that the LPA should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage asset affected including any contribution made to their setting. This should be sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on its significance. As a minimum the Heritage Environment Record should be consulted and the building assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. When considering the impact of development, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. Any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification from the applicant. Any harm should be judged against the public benefit, including securing the optimum viable use. (The optimum use is the one that causes the least harm to the significance of the asset).

The site is not on land with any heritage category, but it is immediately opposite part of the conservation area, is on the approach to the village alongside the road, is visible from the west along the road from the conservation area and listed buildings, and has distant views from the south. The road which it is beside is an eighteenth century turnpike.

The site is on the south side of the road as the village is approached and is the last open field before the built development. This development on the south side is mid to late 20th Century, and there is no evidence that this land was previously developed. There is no discussion of the significance of this land as it relates to the conservation area or any of the other heritage assets.

On the basis of the information we have the primary significance of this land is aesthetic, in how the open area contributes to and leads into the tightly defined village core. It also would appear to have an aspect of a planned view from St Georges House (in the conservation area) to the south and fortuitous views back from the east end of High Street.

This planned view and fortuitous views would be interrupted and there would an effect on the setting of the conservation area by reasons of the loss of open space, and the introduction of noise, movement and lighting into the views. In my view the setting of the conservation area would be noticeably changed when approaching the site from the east and west, and there would be a slight to locally moderate adverse impact on the setting of the conservation area to be weighed in the balance as outlined in the NPPF and case law.

What I consider that this proposal has in its favour is the clear effort that has gone into the design to fully integrate the housing, in terms of materials, form, massing, position* and detail. Three matters concern me on top of the normal need for attention to detail:

- The access must try to avoid the standard use of kerbs and road markings;
- I note the use of clay tiles, but these must be dark in tone bright terracotta tiles will stand out from the south and are to be avoided;
- the gable end of plot one is onto the street. I can find no other example of this form in Hinton, and am feel that the design should look to turn the corner in a softer way, the gable will be clearly visible looking east from High Street, and is too assertive.

Landscape Officer:

I recollect the pre-app and my initial response follows, which sets out site context. Subsequent to the pre-app, the layout has been amended, and now includes further terraced properties fronting onto the Merriott road, which better relates the proposal to the character of Townsend/High Street.

I have expressed a concern that the application site provides an immediate open setting to the village conservation area east edge, and has value in enabling mid- and long views south toward the Windwhistle skyline. I view development on open farmland that has historically assisted in the definition of the village's residential area as eroding local character. However, I do not consider the potential impact of development to be substantially adverse, and I acknowledge the revised design, with its reference to local vernacular, and its improved street form, to be appropriate to Hinton. Consequently, whilst I have reservations over the proposal, I do not raise landscape grounds for refusal.

Regarding landscape treatment, the D&A statement suggests both hard and soft treatments for the development. Whilst I have no issues with the hard landscape/boundary treatments that are put forward, there are a number of changes I would advise for the planting strategy;

(a) avoid too many thorny species in the native hedgerow (east and south boundary) which are not maintenance friendly, additionally blackthorn will create a suckering problem. Many of the local hedges have a hawthorn base, along with a high proportion of field maple; hazel and common dogwood, and I would advise these 4 species are utilised outside the residential areas. Also avoid cherry laurel, which is non-native, and does not lend itself to close-management.

(b) re; tree selection, I note reference to oaks and limes, these species ultimately make big trees, unless they can be located at least 15 metres from housing, I would advise against their use. Whilst not specified, I would also advise against use of betula or sorbus: Given the allergenic effects of birch pollen, SSDC now discourages the planting of birch within residential areas. There are cultivated forms of Malus, Pyrus, Prunus or Crataegus that can be utilised instead within residential areas, and corresponding native forms for the rural interface, though we do not encourage planting of Rowan (Sorbus) as it doesn't fulfill its growth potential in local soils.

If you are minded to approve, please condition a detailed landscape proposal.

Officer comment: The applicant has been advised of the above comments and will have regard to those when submitting specific landscape details.

Highway Authority: (summary)

No objection to the application in regard to the expected traffic impact of the proposal. Car parking provision is also acceptable. Some technical layout issues were raised that would need to be agreed with the Highway Authority for necessary works within the existing highway boundary. The internal road will remain private and thus will be subject to the Advance Payments Code. This requires the road to be built and maintained to an adoptable/appropriate standard.

Ecology: (summary)

Broadly agrees with the ecology report but has sought a condition in respect of reptiles (slow worms). This requires the submission of a reptile survey. Slow worms are protected but not specifically their habitat. Provided they can be accommodated within areas free from harm either within or adjacent to the site, and or a suitable location elsewhere, this isn't a constraint to development.

Lead Flood Authority: (Somerset County Council):

No objection to the scheme subject to a condition seeking details of a surface water drainage scheme and a programme of implementation and maintenance for the lifetime of the development.

Wessex Water: (summary)

No objection. Advise regarding connection to their water supply and waste water connections. Also provide a plan/map showing approximate location of their apparatus within the vicinity of the site.

Housing Development Officer: (rural)

Accept that it is under the threshold for affordable housing i.e. 10 and under or greater than 1000sqm. Acknowledge that they have considered the local needs as per the Housing Needs Survey. Would seek a local connection criteria in regard to the affordable housing in perpetuity. Asked how the dwellings would be managed - assume this would be clarified through a legal agreement. Welcome the proposal to introduce more affordable housing to the village.

Housing Development Officer: (rural) (additional information)

The current need in Hinton St George is 1 household expressing Hinton St George as a first choice parish. Often the number of households expressing a need in a particular rural location is

under-representative of the actual need and the best way to identify the (otherwise) hidden need is through a local survey supported by the relevant Parish Council. A housing need survey was conducted in March 2013, this identified a need for 3 affordable dwellings and up to 5 bungalows for downsizing owners.

Climate Change Officer: (summary)

Welcomes general design and layout of the scheme to provide opportunities for solar gain etc. Advises on some modifications to enable south facing gardens and installation of roof integrated PV arrays.

County Archaeologist:

No objection on archaeological grounds.

Campaign for the protection of Rural England (CPRE): (summary).

The CPRE have submitted observations on the application, commenting that the application broadly meets the requirements of Policy SS2. The village does have community facilities and will provide affordable housing. It is a sensitive site on the edge of the village and details in respect of materials and landscaping will need to be carefully controlled. The CPRE accordingly seek the imposition of the conditions as recommended by consultees.

REPRESENTATIONS

55 letters/emails have been submitted objecting to the proposal with 3 letters/emails of support.

A summary of the objections are as follows:

- The village is not suitable for any significant development
- An unsustainable community -will not increase sustainability of the village
- Scheme does not have local support
- Not compliant with Policy SS2
- Local road infrastructure is not adequate to accommodate the development - single track approach roads.
- Highway safety issues due to proximity of site accesses to parked cars along this section of Merriott Road.
- Too many vehicles in the village
- Harm to the setting of the adjacent Conservation Area
- Visual harm to an important entrance to the village.
- Harm to the historic core of the village
- Loss of views across to Hinton Park and Castle Hill.
- Development only to make profit
- Need affordable housing for local families not more second homes pushing out local people.
- Where would bins be located?
- Who will maintain the green area?
- Design not in keeping with Somerset vernacular
- Would set a precedent for future development in the village
- No proven housing need. Housing survey from 2012 identified 5 residents wishing to downsize and 3 requiring affordable accommodation.
- The Council's lack of a 5 year housing supply does not mean that housing should be supported.
- Timber cladding not appropriate.
- Housing Survey from 2012 not sound.
- Previous housing development refused on this site.
- Insufficient parking provision.
- Will not create employment opportunities

A summary of the supporting comments are as follows:

- This is much needed development in the village which would enhance the approach to the village.
- Additional trade/business for the shop, pub and school
- Increase number of people in village activities and help keep village alive.
- Housing in keeping with the character of the village
- Would help meet an urgent housing need in South Somerset
- Aware of demographic change in the village
- Much of the housing stock purchased as second homes resulting in a decrease in the number of full time residents in the village.
- Viability of village facilities at risk if number of residents declines.
- Villages should be allowed to have controlled growth.
- There was reasonable support in principle for development on this site at the public consultation meeting
- Street lighting could be of heritage design
- Suggests 3 bed rather than 2 bed dwellings for the affordable units
- Support but marginally too dense
- Good use could be made of the CIL payment within the village.

CONSIDERATIONS

Principle of development

The starting point for decision-making is the statutory development plan, which is the South Somerset Local Plan (2006 - 2028). This plan was adopted in March 2015 and provides the policy framework to make the decision as to whether or not to grant planning permission for development in the district.

Hinton St George is classified as a Rural Settlement in the adopted local plan. Accordingly, Policy SS2 is relevant and seeks to strictly control development and limit development to that which provides employment opportunities; creates or enhances community facilities and services to serve the settlement; and/or meets identified housing need, particularly for affordable housing. The development must be of an appropriate scale, have at least 2 of the listed facilities/services i.e. local shop, pub, village hall, church and primary school; and have the general support of the local community following engagement and consultation.

However, the above policy position has to be set against the requirement of central government for Council's to be able to demonstrate a 5 year supply of deliverable housing land. In September 2017, the Council reported a supply position of 4.2 years. Given this position, i.e. the lack of a five-year housing land supply, means that policies relating to the supply of housing, including Policy SS2, should not be considered up-to-date. As such, proposals for residential development fall to be determined under Paragraph 14 of the National Planning Policy Framework which states that where development plan policies are out-of-date planning permission should be granted unless:

- any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole; or
- specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted.

According to the Woodcock Holdings Ltd High Court decision, in reaching a conclusion on an application, the appropriate weight to be attached to 'out-of-date' housing supply policies needs to be considered in the 'planning balance' of whether the adverse impacts of granting planning permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. It falls to the local planning authority to strike the appropriate balance between the very clear benefits stemming from the delivery of houses to

meet the Council's shortfall and any harmful impacts arising from this proposal.

It is also important to note that it is clear from reading a number of appeal decisions that given the lack of a 5 year housing supply, Inspectors are only attaching limited weight to Policy SS2 in the overall balancing exercise that has to be undertaken when assessing the merits of a particular application.

The NPPF is very clear that, without a 5 year housing land supply, housing applications should be considered "in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development" (para. 49) and that any adverse impacts would need to significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the framework taken as whole; or specific policies in the Framework indicate development should be restricted (para.14).

Having regard to the above, the planning merits of the proposal are considered against the aims of the NPPF and these considerations are set out below:

Sustainability of the settlement

It is considered that Hinton St George is a sustainable location for some housing development given the facilities that the village provides. It is considered that the development would be acceptably located in relation to facilities. In addition, it would be likely to provide additional support for facilities such as the village shop and public house through increased patronage.

Having regard to the above it is considered that the development would comply with the relevant sections of the NPPF in respect to locating housing within existing communities where existing services and facilities would be maintained and enhanced. It is important to note that a number of appeal decisions made over the last couple of years have concluded that villages such as Hinton St George are sustainable and appropriate for some housing development.

Housing Need

Much correspondence and concern has been expressed on the topic of housing need in the village. Comment has been made that there is no need for housing in the village, with properties currently being available for sale. Moreover, that the housing needs survey undertaken a few years ago is not fit for purpose and does not justify approval of this development. As outlined earlier in this report, a housing needs survey from 2013 identified a need for 3 affordable dwellings and up to 5 bungalows for those wishing to downsize. Currently, 1 household has expressed Hinton St George a first choice parish on the Council's register. However, as advised by the Rural Housing officer, it should be borne in mind that it is often the case that the number of households expressing a need in a particular rural location is under-representative of the actual need. This is largely due to the fact that those asked do not realistically expect houses to be built in those locations.

However, notwithstanding the status or perceived relevance of housing needs surveys/registers, it is clear that as previously outlined in this report, the Council cannot currently demonstrate a 5 year supply of housing land and accordingly is not meeting its housing targets. Thus, it is clear that there is housing need in the district. The 5 year supply shortfall applies to the whole Council area and not just in particular towns where delivery of housing has been below expected rates. Accordingly, there is a housing need and given the policy context as outlined before, applications such as this should be granted unless there are demonstrable adverse impacts that would warrant refusal.

Impact on the setting of the Conservation Area/ Listed buildings

Some of the biggest concerns raised by local residents and the PC about the scheme are in regard to the impact of the development on the setting of the adjacent Conservation Area. Whilst there are no listed buildings adjacent to the site, listed buildings can be viewed in the wider setting along the street with the site, as with the setting of the Conservation Area. The boundary of the designated Conservation Area runs to the north of the site along Merriott Road stopping at the western boundary of the village hall. To the west, it runs to the western side of South Street, excluding the post war housing to the west of the

site.

The Conservation Officer has assessed the impact of the scheme and outlines the clear legal and policy context for the assessment of development proposals affecting the setting of a Conservation Area and listed buildings. The key point is that when considering the impact of development, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. Any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification from the applicant and, the harm should be judged against the public benefit, including securing the optimum viable use.

The Conservation Officer has described the setting of the site and how it contributes to its wider setting and its role at the entrance to this part of the village. Development of the site along with domestic activities would clearly erode the open character and peaceful nature of the site. Accordingly, the setting of the Conservation Area would be changed when approaching the site from either the west or east. The Conservation officer concludes that there would be a slight to moderate impact on the setting of the Conservation Area. Accordingly, as per the guidance in the NPPF, on the basis that the harm would be 'less than substantial' rather than 'substantial harm or total loss' to the heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefit of the proposal. In this regard, whilst some detailed matters were raised in respect of access details, appropriate colour clay tiles and the layout of plot 1, the Conservation Officer has noted the 'clear effort that has gone into the design to fully integrate the housing in terms of massing, materials, form, position and detail'

In terms of the 3 points of concern, a condition shall be attached to any consent to agree the range of materials to be used within the scheme. These can be discussed and agreed with the Conservation officer. As the internal road is not proposed to be adopted, the applicant is keen to ensure that the access details do not harm the character of the site frontage. Kerbs and road markings will be kept to an absolute minimum. In terms of the layout of plot 1, it is not considered that the design and layout of this plot is too assertive when read against the whole new street frontage that would be created by the development.

As outlined above, an assessment of the wider setting of the site places it within views to and from the Conservation Area / listed buildings. However, whilst this association with heritage assets is clearly very important, it is also important to note that part of that assessment includes its close relationship with non heritage assets ie the village hall and the post war housing to the west, part facing Merriott Road and mostly along South Street. These existing developments are more modern additions to the village and are very visible when approaching the entrance to the village. These were identified as such by the appeal Inspector when making his assessment of the gypsy site off Merriott Road. Thus, whilst the degree of harm attributed by the Conservation Officer to the setting of heritage assets is accepted, it is important to acknowledge that part of the development's setting includes more modern, non-heritage assets.

In regard to the assessment that has to be made in regard to the public benefits of the scheme, in this case, it is considered that the development of 10 houses, including 3 affordable units, would make a valuable contribution to the Council's identified housing needs. Moreover, great care and detail has been put into the design and layout of the scheme, particularly the use of natural stone and consideration to the form/massing and layout. It is considered that the design and quality of the scheme is significantly above that of the norm which is offered by many schemes. On this basis, it is considered that the public benefit of a high quality scheme outweighs the identified harm to the setting of the Conservation Area.

Landscape impact

Concern has been raised that the scheme would be detrimental to local landscape character and result in loss of views across to Hinton Park and Castle Hill. The Council's Landscape officer has fully assessed the landscape impact of the scheme. He acknowledges that the site 'provides an immediate open setting to the village conservation area east edge, and has value in enabling mid- and long views

south toward the Windwhistle skyline' . Moreover, residential development on an open site on the edge of the village, would erode local character. However, the landscape officers' conclusion is that the potential impact of development is not substantially adverse. The revised design, with its reference to local vernacular, and its improved street form, is considered to be appropriate to Hinton. On this basis, it is not considered that there are landscape grounds for refusal.

Highways/parking

A number of concerns have been raised about the highway impact of the proposal. In particular, concern that the local road infrastructure is not adequate to accommodate the development with a number of single track approach roads and the conflict caused by vehicles parked along Merriott Road.

The Highway Authority have assessed the application and do not raise an objection to the proposal. Whilst the scheme would generate additional vehicular use of the local road network, it is considered that the local highway can satisfactorily accommodate the additional traffic. Appropriate visibility would be provided at the site entrances. Some technical layout issues were raised that would need to be agreed with the Highway Authority for necessary works within the existing highway boundary. These can be agreed at the technical approval stage before the development begins. The Highway Authority are satisfied with the level of parking spaces being provided within the scheme. On the basis of the above, it is not considered that there are any demonstrable adverse highway impacts that warrant refusal of the scheme.

Residential amenity

It is considered that due to the layout, orientation, siting, existing and proposed boundary treatments, it is not considered that the scheme would give rise to any adverse harm to neighbouring amenity that would warrant refusal. The rear of the 3 terraced dwellings located on the western side of the site would face towards Honeymead House. There is one ground floor window that faces towards the application site within a single storey attached garage/outbuilding. Given the erection of a 1.8metre high wooden fence and the insertion of obscured glazed windows in the first floor window of plot 3 and the bathroom window of plot 2, it is not considered that this would give rise to any adverse overlooking warranting refusal.

Previous planning applications

A number of local residents have drawn attention to the number of previously refused applications on this site, particularly those for housing. The details of the applications and dates are listed in the history section of this report. The planning history of the site and the reasons for refusal have been checked and assessed in the context of the current proposal.

The important points to note in regard to the previous housing proposals are that they were submitted a significant period of time ago ie early 1980's. Much of the policy planning context has also changed quite significantly since that time. The Special Landscape designation no longer exists nor does the Development Area as defined in previous local plans. However, impact on the setting of the adjacent Conservation Area and local landscape remain very important considerations. These issues have been assessed by the Council's Conservation and Landscape officers and taken into account as part of the overall assessment of the application.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

The scheme would be liable for CIL at a rate of £40 per square metres. The applicant has submitted Form Zero and confirmed an internal floorspace of 998.6 square metres.

CONCLUSION

Whilst the proposal has attracted a large number of objections, it is considered that the scheme will provide a high quality development that would make a contribution towards meeting the Council's housing needs. Whilst the scheme does not meet the threshold for affordable housing, 3 affordable units

would be provided as part of the development. Whilst 'less than substantial harm' has been identified to the setting of the Conservation Area, it is considered that the public benefit outweighs the identified harm. The scheme would provide a safe means of access and would not adversely harm neighbouring amenity. Accordingly, the scheme is recommended for approval.

SECTION 106 PLANNING OBLIGATION

As outlined above in this report, whilst there is no requirement for the applicant to provide affordable homes as part of this scheme, the applicant has chosen to make 3 of the homes available as affordable housing. A draft legal agreement is being prepared accordingly.

RECOMMENDATION

Grant permission.

01. The proposed development by reason of its design, siting, scale, massing and materials would make a contribution towards meeting the Council's housing needs, including the provision of affordable housing. It is considered that the identified 'less than substantial harm' to the setting of the Conservation Area and listed buildings would be outweighed by the public benefit of the scheme. A safe means of vehicular and pedestrian access would be provided and no adverse harm would be caused to neighbouring amenity. The scheme is in accord with Policies SD1, SS1, SS2, SS4, SS5, SS6, HG3, TA5, TA6, EQ2, and EQ4 of the South Somerset Local Plan, the Core Planning Principles and Chapters 6, 7, 8, 11 and 12 of the NPPF and the Somerset County Council Parking Strategy

SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING:

01. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To accord with the provisions of section 91(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

02. The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

Drawing numbers: PL-01, HSG PL 01-6, 7A, 8, 9, 10A and 11.

Reason: To avoid doubt as to the scheme approved and in the interests of proper planning.

03. The development hereby permitted shall not be commenced (including any ground works or site clearance) until a survey to determine presence/absence of slow worms, plus if present, a mitigation plan or method statement detailing measures to avoid harm to slow worms, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The works shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details and timing of the mitigation plan / method statement, unless otherwise approved in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: For the protection and conservation of a priority species in accordance with policy EQ4 of the South Somerset Local Plan, NPPF and to ensure compliance with the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

04. The development hereby permitted shall not be commenced until there has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority a scheme of hard and soft landscaping, which shall include indications of all existing trees and hedgerows on the land, and details of any to be retained, together with measures for their protection in the course of the development, as well as

details of any changes proposed in existing ground levels; all planting, seeding, turfing or earth moulding comprised in the approved details of landscaping shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding season following the occupation of the building or the completion of the development, whichever is the sooner; and any trees or plants which within a period of five years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species, unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation.

Reason: To protect the amenity of the area to accord with Policy EQ2 of the South Somerset Local Plan.

05. The proposed estate roads, footways, footpaths, tactile paving, cycleways, bus stops/bus lay-bys, verges, junctions, street lighting, sewers, drains, retaining walls, service routes, surface water outfall, vehicle overhang margins, embankments, visibility splays, accesses, carriageway gradients, drive gradients, car, motorcycle and cycle parking, and street furniture shall be constructed and laid out in accordance with details to be approved by the Local Planning Authority in writing before their construction begins. For this purpose, plans and sections, indicating as appropriate, the design, layout, levels, gradients, materials and method of construction shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority

Reason: In the interests of highway safety to accord with Policy TA5 of the South Somerset Local Plan.

06. There shall be no obstruction to visibility greater than 600 millimetres above adjoining road level in advance of lines drawn 2.4 metres back from the carriageway edge on the centre line of the access and extending to points on the nearside carriageway edge 43 metres either side of the accesses. Such visibility shall be fully provided before the development hereby permitted is commenced and shall thereafter be maintained at all times.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety to accord with Policy TA5 of the South Somerset Local Plan.

07. There shall be no obstruction to visibility greater than 600 millimetres above adjoining road level in advance of lines drawn 1.5 metres back from the carriageway edge at the uncontrolled pedestrian crossing and extending to points on the nearside carriageway edge 43 metres either side of the uncontrolled pedestrian crossing. Such visibility shall be fully provided before the development hereby permitted is occupied and shall thereafter be maintained at all times.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety to accord with Policy TA5 of the South Somerset Local Plan.

08. The proposed roads, including footpaths and turning spaces where applicable, shall be constructed in such a manner as to ensure that each dwelling before it is occupied shall be served by a properly consolidated and surfaced footpath/ carriageway to at least base course level between the dwelling and existing highway.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety to accord with Policy TA5 of the South Somerset Local Plan.

09. A Condition Survey of the existing public highway will need to be carried out and agreed with the Highway Authority prior to any works commencing on site, and any damage to the highway occurring as a result of this development is to be remedied by the developer to the satisfaction of the Highway Authority once all works have been completed on site.

Reason: in the interests of highway safety to accord with Policy TA5 of the South Somerset Local Plan.

10. No work shall commence on the development site until an appropriate right of discharge for surface water has been obtained. A drainage scheme for the site showing details of gullies, connections, soakaways and means of attenuation on site shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The drainage works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. The areas allocated for parking and turning on the submitted plan, drawing number HSG PL-03 05.06.17, shall be kept clear of obstruction and shall not be used other than for parking and turning of vehicles in connection with the development hereby permitted.

Reason: in the interests of highway safety to accord with Policy TA5 of the South Somerset Local Plan.

11. The new development shall not be commenced until a detailed Travel Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. No part of the new development shall be occupied prior to implementation of those parts identified in the Approved Travel Plan as capable of being implemented prior to occupation. Those parts of the Approved Travel Plan that are identified therein as capable of implementation after occupation shall be implemented in accordance with the timetable contained therein and shall continue to be implemented as long as any part of the development is occupied.

Reason: In the interest of highway safety to accord with Policy TA5 of the South Somerset Local Plan.

12. No development shall commence unless a Construction Traffic and Management Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The works shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the approved plan. The plan shall include:
 - Construction vehicle movements;
 - Construction operation hours;
 - Construction vehicular routes to and from site;
 - Construction delivery hours;
 - Expected number of construction vehicles per day;
 - Car parking for contractors;
 - Specific measures to be adopted to mitigate construction impacts in pursuance of the Environmental Code of Construction Practice;
 - A scheme to encourage the use of Public Transport amongst contractors; and
 - Measures to avoid traffic congestion impacting upon the Strategic Road Network.Wheel washing facilities and measures to ensure that the public highway is kept clean.

13. The development hereby permitted shall not be commenced until particulars of the materials (including the provision of samples where appropriate) to be used for external walls, roofs, windows, external doors and rainwater goods have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To protect the amenity of the area and Conservation Area to accord with Policy EQ2 and EQ3 of the South Somerset Local Plan.

14. Before the development hereby permitted is commenced, foul water drainage details to serve the development, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and such approved drainage details shall be completed and become fully operational before the

development hereby permitted is first brought into use. Following its installation such approved scheme shall be permanently retained and maintained thereafter.

Reason: To ensure that the development is satisfactorily drained in accord with the NPPF.

15. No development shall be commenced until details of the surface water drainage scheme based on sustainable drainage principles together with a programme of implementation and maintenance for the lifetime of the development have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The drainage strategy shall ensure that surface water runoff post development is attenuated on site and discharged at a rate and volume no greater than greenfield runoff rates and volumes. Such works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

These details shall include: -

- Details of phasing (where appropriate) and information of maintenance of drainage systems during construction of this and any other subsequent phases.
- Information about the design storm period and intensity, discharge rates and volumes (both pre and post development), temporary storage facilities, means of access for maintenance (6 metres minimum), the methods employed to delay and control surface water discharged from the site, and the measures taken to prevent flooding and pollution of the receiving groundwater and/or surface waters.
- Any works required off site to ensure adequate discharge of surface water without causing flooding or pollution (which should include refurbishment of existing culverts and headwalls or removal of unused culverts where relevant).
- Flood water exceedance routes both on and off site, note, no part of the site must be allowed to flood during any storm up to and including the 1 in 30 event, flooding during storm events in excess of this including the 1 in 100yr (plus 40% allowance for climate change) must be controlled within the designed exceedance routes demonstrated to prevent flooding or damage to properties.
- A management and maintenance plan for the lifetime of the development which shall include the arrangements for adoption by an appropriate public body or statutory undertaker, management company or maintenance by a Residents' Management Company and / or any other arrangements to secure the operation and maintenance to an approved standard and working condition throughout the lifetime of the development

Reason: To ensure that the development is served by a satisfactory system of surface water drainage and that the approved system is retained, managed and maintained in accordance with the approved details throughout the lifetime of the development, in accordance with paragraph 17 and sections 10 and 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework, Paragraph 103 of the National Planning Policy Framework and the Technical Guidance to the National Planning Policy Framework (March 2015).
