

Officer Report On Planning Application: 16/02976/OUT

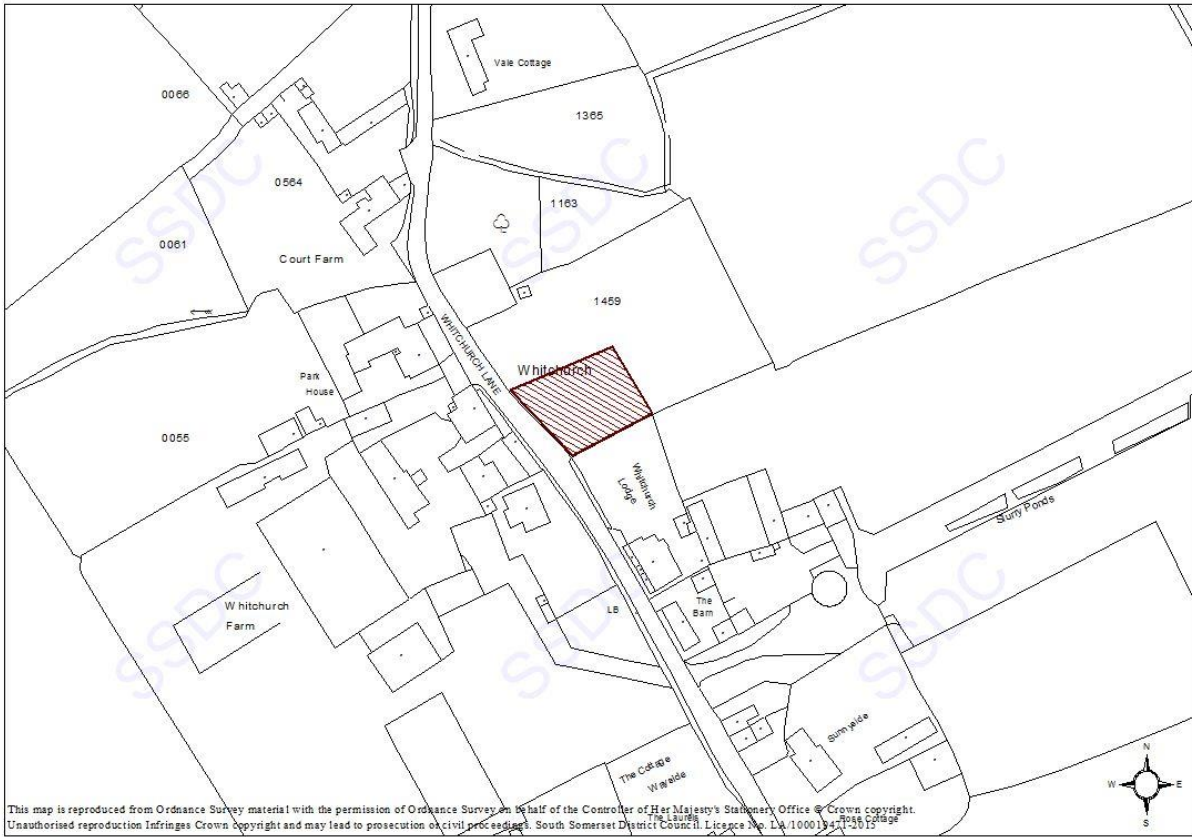
Proposal :	Outline application for the erection of a retirement bungalow with a new vehicular access onto Whitechurch Lane.
Site Address:	Land At Park House Whitechurch Lane Henstridge
Parish:	Henstridge
BLACKMOOR VALE Ward (SSDC Member)	Cllr Tim Inglefield Cllr William Wallace
Recommending Case Officer:	Lee Walton Tel: (01935) 462324 Email: lee.walton@southsomerset.gov.uk
Target date :	26th August 2016
Applicant :	Mrs E.D.G Heath
Agent: (no agent if blank)	Mr Matt Williams Brimble Lea & Partners Wessex House High Street Gillingham SP8 4AG
Application Type :	Minor Dwellings 1-9 site less than 1ha

REASON FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE

This application is referred to the committee at the request of the Ward Member(s) with the agreement of the Area Chairman to enable the comments of the Parish Council to be fully debated.

SITE DESCRIPTION AND PROPOSAL





The application site is located in the countryside beyond development limits, north of Henstridge within the hamlet of Whitechurch, a settlement of some 20 plus dwellings and farms. The roadside is broken by gaps including the current application site that is taken from the adjacent agricultural field. From the roadside there are extensive views out over the countryside to the east and in a northerly direction.

The proposal seeks a retirement bungalow with a new vehicular access. The application is made in outline with all matters reserved, although submitted with an 'illustrative' layout drawing.

The application is supported by a Planning Statement.

RELEVANT HISTORY

None

POLICY

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

For the purposes of determining current applications the local planning authority considers that the adopted development plan comprises the policies of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006 2028 (adopted March 2015).

Policies of the South Somerset Local Plan (2006-2028)
SD1 - Sustainable Development

SS1 - Settlement Strategy
SS2 - Development in Rural Settlements
SS5 - Delivering New Housing Growth
TA5 - Transport Impact of New Development
TA6 - Parking Standards
EQ2 - General development
EQ4 - Biodiversity

Regard shall also be had to:

National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012):

Chapter 4 - Promoting sustainable transport

Chapter 7 - Requiring Good Design

Chapter 11 - Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment

National Planning Policy Guidance

Other Relevant Documents

Somerset County Council Parking Strategy, adopted March 2012 and re-adopted September 2012 following corrections made.

Somerset Highways Standing Advice - June 2015.

CONSULTATIONS

Henstridge Parish Council - The application should be approved only if it is subject to a S106 restriction requiring the owner of the property to be of retirement age, that the building is constructed of local materials and that the roofline is single storey.

County Highway Authority - Standing advice applies.

SSDC Highway Consultant - Consider sustainability issues (transport). The traffic impact on Whitchurch Lane may not be significant. However, an assessment of the junction of Whitchurch Lane with the A30 should be undertaken in respect of the extent of visibility splays available at the junction, and the current number of dwellings located on Whitchurch Lane needs to be identified (OFFICER Note: Applicant's email of 27 July 2016 seeks to respond to this). The proposed means of access appears reasonable and I support the provision of the visibility splays of 2.4m x 43m as shown although the southerly splay should be taken to a point 1.0m off the carriageway edge rather than the centreline. The access should be properly consolidated/surfaced for the first 6.0m, and surface water drainage measures should be proposed. On-site parking needs to be in line with SPS optimum standards.

SSDC Environmental Health - No comments in respect of this application.

SSDC Landscape Architect - the proposal site lays within a small paddock within the hamlet of Whitechurch, which lays to the north of Henstridge. The hamlet is characterised by a loose cluster of farm buildings and individual dwellings, interspersed in places by agricultural land in the form of small paddocks and meadowland, and it is within a small paddock to the east side of the lane that this proposal for a bungalow is intended. The wider context of both the site and the hamlet is countryside.

There are few residences in the hamlet, and most of those present assume traditional form. As noted, in places small paddocks and garden spaces, along with farm buildings intersperse the house forms, to contribute to local distinctiveness. The application site has a stone wall frontage, and its pasture directly links with the wider landscape of the Blackmore Vale. I view

the introduction of a bungalow into this paddock to adversely impact upon local character, in that it erodes the main open space abutting the street; it introduces a locally uncharacteristic house form to the street; and will necessitate the traditional wall being breached. In failing to conserve and enhance local character & distinctiveness, I do not see this application as meeting the objectives of LP policy EQ2.

County Archaeologist - No objection

REPRESENTATIONS

There have been four householder responses following neighbour consultations that object to the proposed development. Their concerns include:

- A great shame to lose yet another 'Green Field' site
- The proposed dwelling would seriously impede upon visual amenity of the lane, looking out over the Blackmore Vale.
- Precedent
- Hazardous onto A30

CONSIDERATIONS

Principle of development

Paragraph 55 of the NPPF requires that housing should be located, for example, where development in one village supports services in a village nearby. The location is clearly not part of such a relationship. Whitechurch is a small hamlet lying 500 metres north of, and separated from, the settlement of Henstridge. Policy SS2 considers rural settlements in the countryside although the location is well away from such recognised settlements. We are dealing with a proposal whose countryside setting is distinct. There is a long stretch of lane towards Henstridge without pavement or street lighting that enters the A30, having a poor access width. The applicant must have special circumstances to justify a single dwelling in this location, which appears lacking in this case. While the council's current lack of a five year housing land supply is acknowledged the location of development is considered removed from an SS2 settlement location. On this basis it is considered that there is no 'in principle' support.

Character and Appearance

The landscape Architect's response is given in full above. This notes the location and the concerns of developing in this locality. On the basis of the Landscape Architect's advice that attracts significant weight it is considered that the proposal brings about an adverse impact in terms of character and appearance in this locality that is removed from a SS2 settlement location.

Highway Safety

This is an outline application with All Matters Reserved although an illustrative drawing is submitted indicating the access point and location of parking and turning on site. It is considered that an acceptable layout is capable of being brought forward pending any necessary alterations to the roadside frontage that currently forms a length of continuous roadside stone boundary wall.

Reference is also made by the council's highway consultant to the off-site highway concerns where Whitechurch Lane enters onto the main (A30) road. The visibility at this point is restricted as is the width of the lane. The applicant argues that one additional dwelling is not going to result in any significant increased use made of the junction.

Neighbour Amenity

It is considered that the proposal would not unacceptably harm the residential amenity of occupiers of adjacent properties by disturbing, interfering with or overlooking such properties.

Parish Council Response

This requires that any permission is conditioned to restrict its occupancy. This can be done subject to the application being supported.

Other Matters

The application seeks a retirement bungalow and this is explained in the supporting Planning Statement. Its proposed use and type of occupancy is considered inappropriate in this rural location without there being a specific supporting justification. An unrestricted open market dwelling would not be supported in this location. The services and facilities increasingly dependent upon with age are not generally located locally with resultant pressures and stresses for society in specifically restricting occupancy of the proposed dwelling in this rural location.

RECOMMENDATION

Refuse

FOR THE FOLLOWING REASON:

01. The erection of a new dwelling in this rural location, remote from adequate services and facilities has not been justified on the basis of any exceptional circumstance or community benefit that would outweigh the longstanding policy presumption to protect the countryside from unwarranted and unsustainable development. As such the proposal is contrary to the aims and objectives of the NPPF (in particular paragraphs 14 and 55), and policies SS1 and SS2 of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006- 2028.
02. The proposed development by virtue of the introduction of a bungalow into part of the roadside agricultural field would have an adverse impact upon local character, in that it erodes the main open space abutting the street; it introduces a locally uncharacteristic house form to the street; and necessitates the traditional roadside stone boundary wall being breached. As such the proposal in fails to conserve and enhance local character and distinctiveness and is contrary to Policy EQ2 of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006- 2028.

Informatives:

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

In this case, the applicant/agent did not take the opportunity to enter into pre-application discussions.