

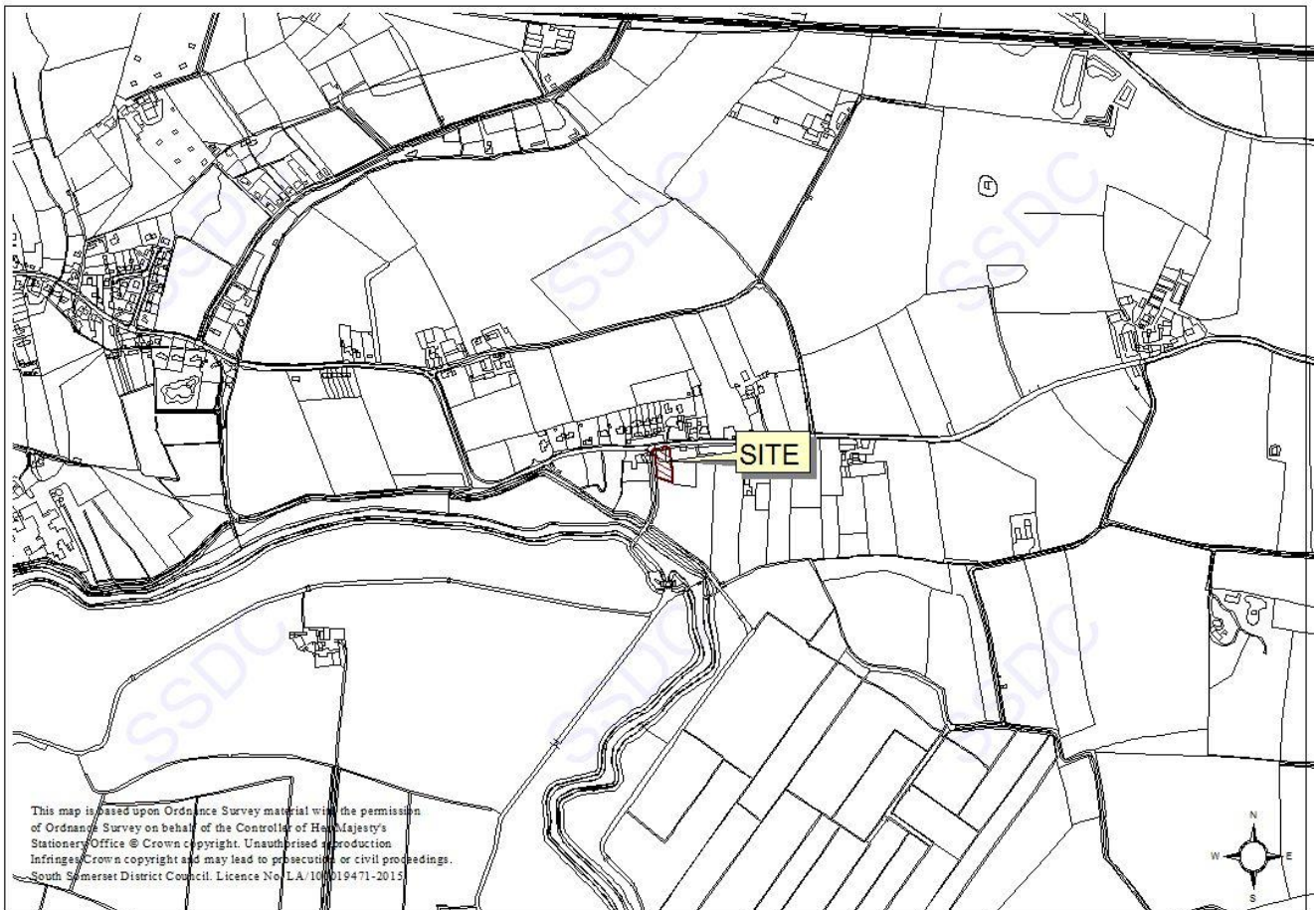
Officer Report On Planning Application: 17/01935/FUL

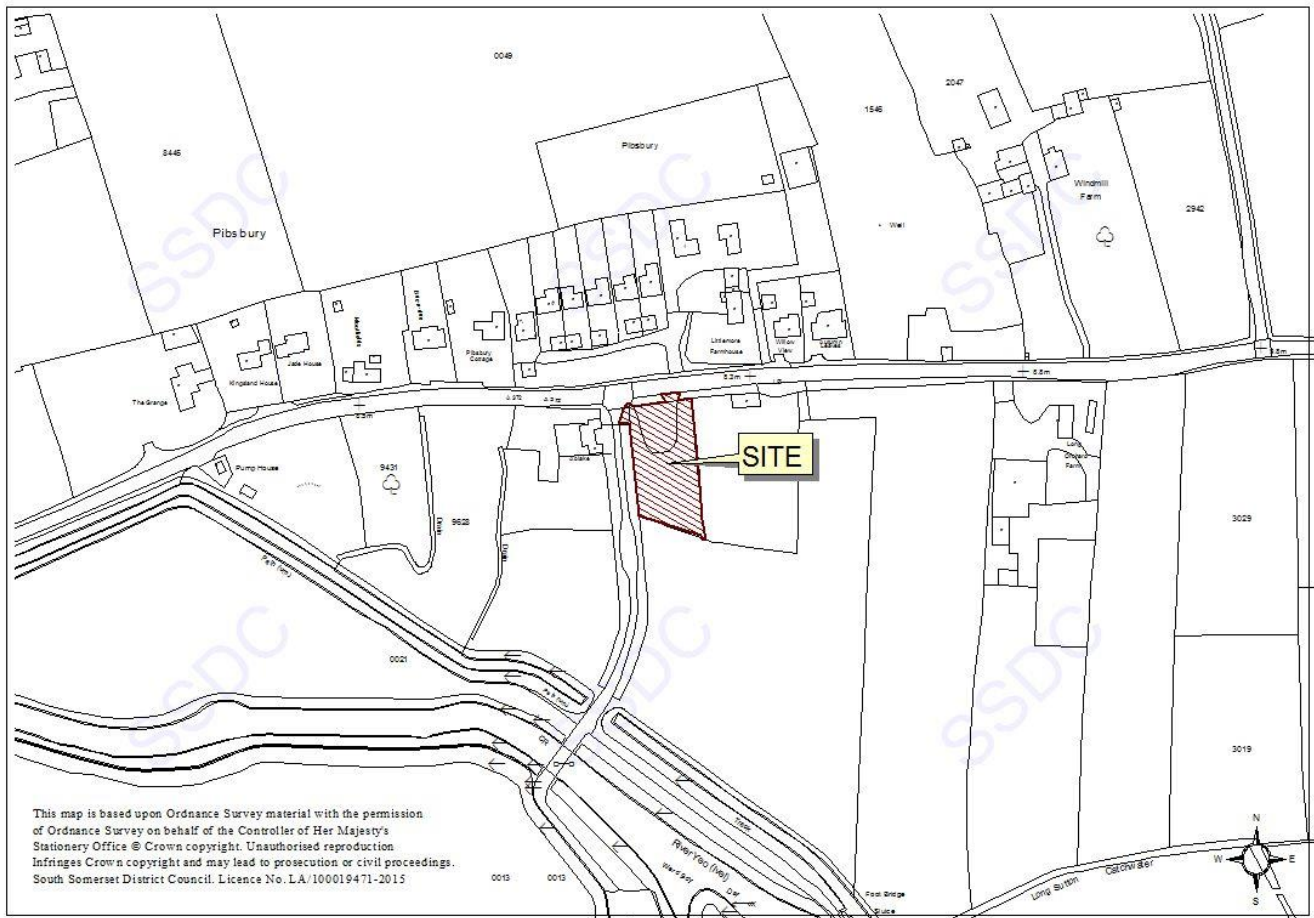
Proposal :	Erection of one dwelling and garaging (revised application)
Site Address:	Land East Of Ablake, A372, Pibsbury, Langport.
Parish:	Huish Episcopi
LANGPORT AND HUISH Ward (SSDC Member)	Cllr Clare Aparicio Paul
Recommending Case Officer:	Nicholas Head Tel: (01935) 462167 Email: nick.head@southsomerset.gov.uk
Target date :	22nd June 2017
Applicant :	Mr & Mrs Morris
Agent: (no agent if blank)	Michael Williams, Clive Miller & Associates Ltd, Sanderley Studio, Kennel Lane, Langport TA10 9SB
Application Type :	Minor Dwellings 1-9 site less than 1ha

REASON FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE

The report is referred to Committee at the request of the Ward Member to enable a full discussion of the relevant issues affecting the site.

SITE DESCRIPTION AND PROPOSAL





The site is located on the south side of the A372, within the small settlement of Pibsbury, located between Long Sutton and Huish Episcopi/Langport. Pibsbury is a linear settlement of houses along the north side of the road, with few developments on the opposite side. The site itself is located between an existing dwellinghouse to the west (Ablake) and a site which currently had a single stone workshop building, but where permission was granted for the erection of 2 double storey houses, one of which has been completed. It formerly housed a service station. To the south of the site is open agricultural land and the Environment Agency's pumping station, with access via a track running along the western boundary of the site.

Two previous applications for single dwellinghouses, and a further application for two detached dwellings have been refused on the site.

The current application is for the erection of a detached 3-bed dwellinghouse and a garage.

HISTORY

16/03605/FUL - Erection of two dwellings and garage block - refused for the following reasons:

01. *The proposal would represent new residential development in open countryside, for which an overriding essential need has not been justified. The application site is remote from local key services and as such will increase the need for journeys to be made by private vehicles. The proposal fails to enhance the sustainability of the settlement, and constitutes unsustainable development that is contrary to Policy SD1 of the South Somerset Local Plan (2006-2028) and to the aims and objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework.*

02. *The proposal, by reason of its design, scale and massing, represents a dominant and visually intrusive development on the south side of the A372, that fails to respect the established character and appearance of the locality, or to reinforce local distinctiveness of the setting, contrary to the aims of the NPPF and Policy EQ2 of the South Somerset Local Plan (2006 - 2028).*

15/05024/FUL - Construction of new dwelling house and garage. Resubmission of application

15/02517/FUL. The application was refused for the following reasons:

01. *The proposal would represent new residential development in open countryside, for which an overriding essential need has not been justified. The application site is remote from local key services and as such will increase the need for journeys to be made by private vehicles. The proposal fails to enhance the sustainability of the settlement, and constitutes unsustainable development that is contrary to Policy SD1 of the South Somerset Local Plan (2006-2028) and to the aims and objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework.*

02. *The proposal, by reason of its design, scale and massing, represents a dominant and visually intrusive development that fails to respect the established character and appearance of the locality, or to reinforce local distinctiveness of the setting, contrary to the aims of the NPPF and Policy EQ2 of the South Somerset Local Plan (2006 - 2028).*

15/02517/FUL - Erection of a dwelling house and detached garage - refused

POLICY

The South Somerset Local Plan (2006 - 2028) was adopted on the 5th March 2015. In accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) and Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), the adopted local plan now forms part of the development plan. As such, decisions on the award of planning permission should be made in accordance with this development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Legislation and national policy are clear that the starting point for decision-making is the development plan, where development that accords with an up-to-date local plan should be approved, and proposed development that conflicts should be refused, unless other material considerations indicate otherwise.

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

SD1 Sustainable Development
SS1 Settlement Strategy
SS2 Development in Rural Settlements
TA5 Transport Impact of New Development
TA6 Parking Standards
EQ1 Addressing Climate Change
EQ2 General Development

National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012)

National Planning Practice Guidance - Department of Communities and Local Government, 2014.

Policy-related Material Considerations

Somerset County Council Parking Strategy, March 2012 and September 2013.
Somerset County Council Highways Standing Advice, June 2013.

CONSULTATIONS

Parish Council: No objections.

Highways Authority: No objection, subject to conditions.

SSDC Landscape Officer: *This amended application before us now intends the construction of a single residential unit, sited between an existing modestly-scaled property to the west, and the site of two recently consented detached units (application 15/00514) to the east.*

In terms of context, Pibsbury lays in a countryside context outside the built-up areas of Langport and Huish Episcopi, and is characterised by a limited ribbon of development, which is primarily to the north side of the road (the A372) and residential in character, whilst to the south of the A372, the land is primarily a mix of small fields/paddocks, along with a couple of sporadic small building groups irregularly interspersed along the roadside amongst the field systems.

It is on this southern side of the road that the application site lays. I view this southern side of the road to be characterised less by residential form, more by the mix of fields and pastures that act as a buffer and transition from the wider open moor to the south, and as such this does not favour the prospect of further development. Conversely, the recent consent to the east now places this application site between two residential plots, to provide an immediate built context, whilst the plot in itself has no inherent landscape value, and the presence of the current hardstanding to the fore of the plot somewhat erodes its rural character. I also note the build proposal to be scaled down from earlier submissions, which is now more sympathetic in scale, hence on balance I no longer consider there to be a substantive landscape case against development of this site.

SSDC Environmental Protection: No comment received.

SSDC Ecologist: No objection.

County Minerals & Waste: No comment received.

Somerset Drainage Board: No comment received.

REPRESENTATIONS

Three letters supporting the proposal have been received. One correspondent raises concerns about overlooking from a bathroom window, suggesting that this should be required to be obscure glazed.

CONSIDERATIONS

Principle of Development

The site is effectively in open countryside, being on land peripheral to a small settlement with no services or facilities (Policy SS2 of the Local Plan is not applicable). The principle of development is therefore to be determined on the basis of whether the proposal represents sustainable development.

Three previous applications on the site have recently been refused (two for a single dwellinghouse, the third for a pair of detached houses) on the basis that the site is unsustainably located, and the development would foster growth in the need to travel by private vehicular transport.

In this respect, the principle of development for a single dwelling on the site has been clearly established. No appeal has been made to appeal to challenge this reason for refusal.

Five-year Supply of Housing Land

The Council cannot currently demonstrate an adequate 5-year housing land supply. In such cases, the NPPF advises that relevant policies for the supply of housing should be regarded as out-of-date. The NPPF notes (paragraph 49): Housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

As with the three previous applications on the site, the application falls to be determined on the basis of its sustainability, which, as noted has been clearly established.

Sustainability

The application site is located in a rural settlement with no local services. The nearest key services available are those in Huish Episcopi/ Langport, the developed edge of which is approximately 1km to the west. The nearest service, the public house at Huish Episcopi, is approximately 1.4km away, with Huish Episcopi Academy and the centre of Langport further away. In a recent appeal decision relating to Long Orchard Farm, 140m to the east of the site, the Inspector noted:

The appeal site is poorly related to services/facilities and the proposal would increase the need to travel by car. The development is at odds with the LPA's adopted settlement strategy.

It is not considered that there has been any change in policy since the determination of the previous applications. The proposal is considered to represent unsustainable development, notwithstanding the contribution of a single dwellinghouse to the overall supply of housing.

Visual and Landscape Impact

The current proposal is for the most modest scale of single dwelling thus far considered. As noted by the Landscape Officer, there is no landscape objection that could be sustained, although the site does offer an contribution towards the openness of the south side of the A372 leading towards to moors. The design of the house is not traditional in detail, but is of a scale and materials that would broadly complement local character. It is not considered that any visual of landscape objection to the proposal could be sustained.

Impact on Residential Amenity

The proposed dwelling falls within the building line established by the adjacent new house, and is positioned to avoid overlooking or overshadowing. The neighbour concern about the upper-storey bathroom window is noted, and a condition could ensure that the window is permanently obscure glazed.

It is not considered that the proposal would result in any harm to residential amenity.

Previously Developed Land

The applicant is of the view that this is a 'brownfield' site. This is not clearly established. The service

station which operated on the site appears, from the planning history, to have been abandoned as far back as 1994, when permission was granted (940912) to use the major portion of the site for domestic stabling and a paddock. The land under consideration is clearly described in an application in 2000 (00/00832/FUL) as a 'field'. The use at the time is described as 'Field vacant; previous let as grass keep 1999'.

It is not considered that the site has been demonstrated to represent anything other than agricultural land.

Highway Safety

The Highway Authority, raises no objections. It is considered that safe access can be provided, and adequate on-site parking can be provided.

Conclusion

The unsustainability of the site has been clearly established in three previous refusals of planning permission. The site is remote from services and facilities, in a rural settlement with no key services. Occupants of the proposed development would rely for day-to-day needs on private motor vehicle transport, and the dwelling would make no direct contribution to enhancement of the sustainability of the village.

This harmful impact of the development has been weighed against the benefits of contributing a new dwelling towards the overall supply of housing in the district, and the small economic benefit of some local construction work resulting from the development. It is not considered that these benefits demonstrably outweigh the harm. The proposal is considered, on weighing this balance, to represent unsustainable development, and is recommended for refusal.

RECOMMENDATION

Refuse.

FOR THE FOLLOWING REASON

01. The proposal would represent new residential development in open countryside, for which an overriding essential need has not been justified. The application site is remote from local key services and as such will increase the need for journeys to be made by private vehicles. The proposal fails to enhance the sustainability of the settlement, and constitutes unsustainable development that is contrary to Policy SD1 of the South Somerset Local Plan (2006-2028) and to the aims and objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework.
-