



JOINT AREA COMMITTEES IN SOUTH SOMERSET

Officer Report on Planning Application

07/03404/LBC

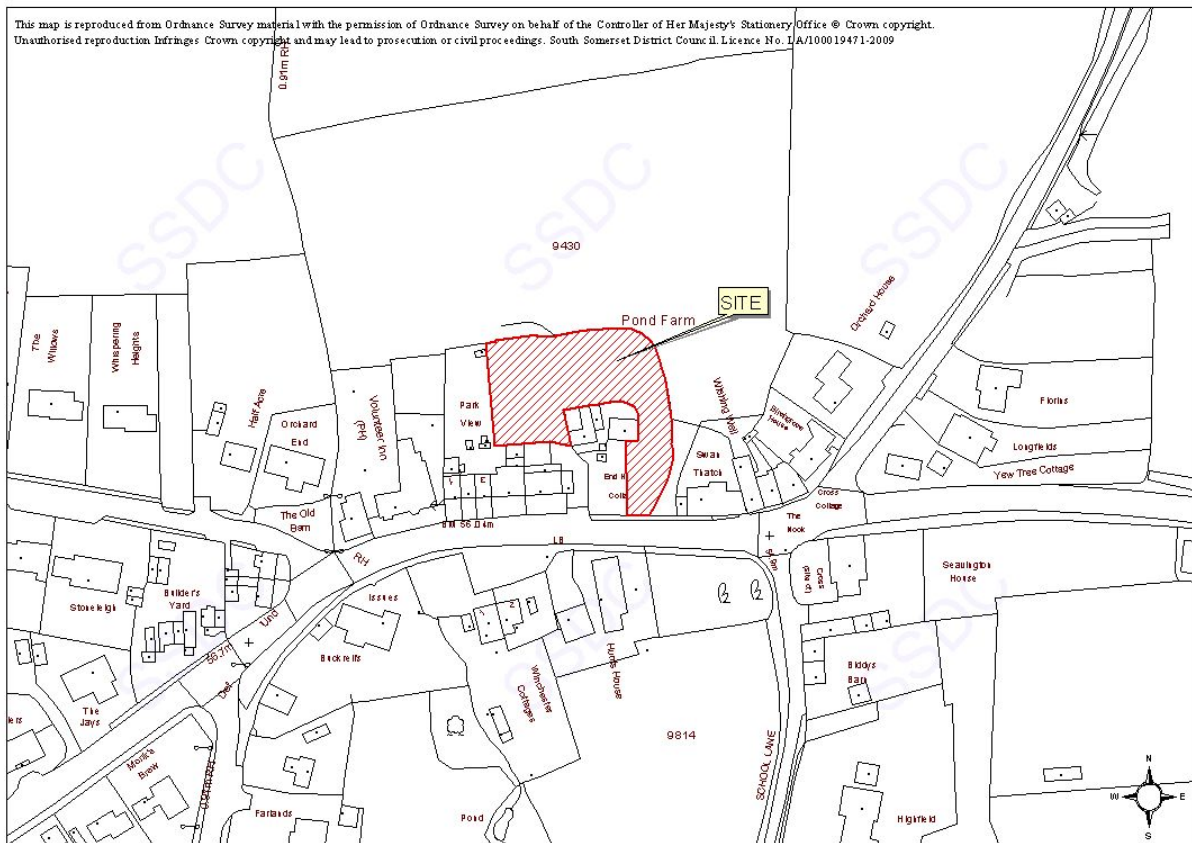


Proposal :	Conversion of redundant farm buildings (Unit A) into 2 no. residential units with associated B1 workshop (unit B) (GR 340950/115254)
Site Address:	Pond Farm Seavington St Michael Ilminster
Parish:	Seavington St Michael
SOUTH PETHERTON Ward (SSDC Member)	Paull Robathan (Cllr) Keith Ronaldson (Cllr)
Division (SCC Member)	Anne Larpent (Cllr)
Recommending Case Officer:	John Millar Tel: (01935) 462465 Email: john.millar@southsomerset.gov.uk
Target date :	26th December 2007
Applicant :	Mr & Mrs B Paull
Agent:	J D Thomas 33 Fairway Rise Chard, Somerset TA20 1NT
Application Type :	Other LBC Alteration

REASON(S) FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE

The application is to be considered by Joint Area Committee North at the request of Cllr Ronaldson and Cllr Robathan, with the agreement of the Area Chair Cllr Palmer. It is felt that the issues should be given further consideration by Members.

SITE DESCRIPTION AND PROPOSAL



The site is a former farm yard to the north of the Old A303, in the centre of Seavington St Michael and comprises a large mainly open fronted barn constructed from natural stone, a concrete block building and a couple of dilapidated open agricultural buildings. The main stone built barn, backs onto and is attached to Pond Farm, a grade II listed building, and as such is considered to be listed too. The site lies to the rear of a terrace of listed cottages and the property to the east, Swan Thatch, is also listed.

The site lies partly within the local defined development area and partly outside of it and consists of land to the rear of Pond Farm and land to the east, which runs southwards to the public highway. There is a former vehicular access to the south east of the site, which is currently blocked up and overgrown.

The proposal is made to convert the main barn (shown as A1 and A2) into residential accommodation and provide the existing concrete block building (unit B) as an associated B1 industrial unit. The proposal also includes the reinstatement of the former vehicular access onto the Old A303 and removal of the two dilapidated agricultural structures. The proposal includes making use of the existing openings to the front of the building, with the provision of two doors to the rear elevations and four small roof lights, two in each of the north and west roof slopes. As the main barns are attached to the listed building, Pond Farm, listed building consent is required for the proposed works.

HISTORY

07/03402/FUL: Conversion of redundant farm buildings (Unit A) into 2 no. residential units with associated B1 workshop (unit B) - Pending consideration.

POLICY

Section 16 of the Listed Building and Conservation Areas Act is the starting point for the exercise of listed building control. This places a statutory requirement on local planning authorities to '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'

PPG 15: Planning and the Historic Environment is applicable. Applicants for listed building consent must be able to justify their proposals. They will need to show why works which would affect the character of a listed building are desirable or necessary. They should provide the local planning authority with full information, to enable them to assess the likely impact of their proposals on the special architectural or historic interest of the building and on its setting.

Whilst Section 38(6) of the 2004 Planning Act is not relevant to this listed building application, the following policies should be considered in the context of the application, as these policies are in accordance with PPG 15:

Relevant Development Plan Documents:

Regional Spatial Strategy:
EN 3: The Historic Environment

Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan:
Policy 9 - Built Historic Environment

South Somerset Local Plan 2006:
EH3 - Listed Buildings
EH5 - Development Proposals Affecting the Setting of Listed Buildings

SSDC Supplementary Planning Guidance: The Conversion of Barns and Other Historic Buildings
English Heritage Advice Note: The Conversion of Traditional Farm Buildings - A Guide to Good Practice.

CONSULTATIONS

Parish Council:

The Parish Council have made the following comments:

1. Unit A1 is outside the Development Line as is the associated Workshop. Unit 2 is partially outside the development line. The Parish Council has not supported any development that is outside the Development Line.
2. The new proposed entrance still causes the Parish Council grave concerns:-
 - The proposed entrance will be over drains that were installed to prevent flooding along the road and work well. No consideration seems to have been made as to what will happen to these drains.
 - The stream does not seem to be shown correctly on the plan submitted.
 - The height of the new wall is not given and this will have an effect on the visibility for adjoining properties
 - Swan Thatch is a listed building. Will LBC be needed for this proposed new wall?
 - It does not appear that the existing road bollards are to be removed. The Parish Council cannot see how large vehicles can possible exit the site to the West if these are left in place.
3. On the site plan comments are made about the taking down and rebuild on Unit C. The Parish Council have never seen plans for this.
4. The plans for Building A do not appear any different than those originally submitted.
5. The Parish Council feel that should this application be approved then a Section 106 should be attached to the Planning conditions ensuring that any developer would be responsible for:-
 - a. Any costs incurred in connection with the removal and/or resiting of existing road bollards and pedestrian crossing
 - b. The creation of a footpath from David's Lane to the Volunteer Inn for safety reasons for pedestrians
 - c. Any works needed to ensure that the flood prevention scheme is not compromised.

County Archaeology:

No objections on archaeological grounds.

SSDC Conservation Officer:

27th December 2007: The first point I would like to bring to your attention is that the visibility splays shown on the block plan are not indicated on the location plan.

Moving on to other matters: you will be aware of the close proximity of listed buildings to the application site and the fact that buildings A1 and A2 are attached to the listed building and are therefore listed. I also consider unit C to be listed in association with the house. Unit B will be listed in association with the house, provided it was built prior to the date of listing.

With regard to the conversions of units A1 and A2, I think that these can be converted in such a way that they do not damage the character of the building. As such, the proposed scheme does go a long way towards fulfilling this, although it is unclear to me from the drawings submitted whether the floor will remain in as a large attic space. If it is to be removed, I would like to consider this further. I would also say that whilst I feel the elevational treatments of A1 and A2 have been well thought out in general, I think that there is a prospect that more of the concrete block could be removed from the front of A1 and treated similarly to that of A2.

I am also unclear at this time how the rear gardens would be sub-divided, if at all. This is important to the setting of the listed buildings.

As I have already said, Unit C is, in my view, listed in association with the listed buildings and will require listed building consent to be demolished or altered. On the basis on the information that was submitted and my brief walk around the outside of the building, I would object to its demolition.

The access to the site does cause me concern. The roadside wall is currently in poor condition, but is clearly of high quality. I am concerned that if it is demolished and rebuilt, any builder will struggle to rebuild it to the same quality and to this end, if consent is granted, I would require a sample panel of this roadside wall to be built, which would seek to mimic the existing high quality wall.

I find the provision of the splays in themselves a somewhat balanced issue and do have concerns that if the wall is demolished and rebuilt on the line shown for the splays along with this 4 1/2 metre, presumably tarmac, road running from it, that it will be damaging to the setting of the listed buildings and the street scene in general. At present the walls on this side of the road have a very linear flow and have very little punctuation in them, except at the public house. I am concerned that this combination of splay and wide access would be damaging to the area in general and the setting of the listed buildings. There may be some room for improvement by the provision of gate pillars and the immediate reduction in width of the roadway to a single track once within the site, but these matters in themselves do not reduce my concerns. I am also concerned that this access way through the site is inappropriate development.

In summary, I am very concerned about the access in terms of the visibility splays and the roadway into the site, and whilst I consider that these are a good starting point for the conversion of the buildings, there is additional information that I would need in order to understand the proposal prior to being able to recommend the grant of consent.

4th March 2009: The proposal goes a little way to addressing my concerns, but I still remain concerned about the need for a 4 1/2 metre access both on to the road and through the site and the fact that the wall to the east is set back from the road.

I cannot comment on the elevation, as there is no elevation submitted.

If you are minded to agree an access at this point, I would seek at the very least to see that the access is narrowed and that the wall on the west side mirrors that on the east side. The access through the site should also be minimum width if possible perhaps with the odd passing place.

I would also like to know what the proposals are in relation to the Unit C within the middle of the site, which I have previously indicated is listed in association and should not be demolished. There are also other issues raised within my memo which need to be addressed.

3rd November 2009: I am happy with the proposals as revised.

I would ask you to ensure that we are clear that the building that was shown to be demolished is not part of this application, and we don't approve demolition by default.

REPRESENTATIONS

The application has been advertised by press and site notice for the requisite period. Letters of objection have been raised from four neighbours. The main points of concern are listed below:

- The proposal will generate significantly more traffic, despite the comments of the Highways Officer.
- The provision of a B1 workshop could lead to more intensive uses. The site has not been used as a working farmyard for more than twenty years so additional noise and activity could have an adverse affect on those living nearby.
- There is no mention of the boundary treatment, these should be of the highest quality to be in keeping with the listed building. Maximum height ham stone walls would be appropriate.
- The plans are minimal and don't show specific parking or garden areas. The area to be developed covers a large area with only part of the existing buildings being within the village line. There will be room for further development and this potential for proliferation is a major cause of concern.
- Matching walls either side of the new access are likely to restrict views from the car port of Swan Thatch and create a hazardous access.
- There is a right of way across the existing access for the owners of End Cottage so this should not be blocked up. Also there are concerns that any damage to the existing driveway or the water and sewage services along and across it, caused by construction vehicles should be paid for by the contractors, in the event of planning permission being granted.
- The new access is unlikely to have adequate visibility and will be very close to the existing road bollards and illuminated pedestrian access, creating additional hazards and restrict access to the site.
- There is concern regarding the existing road drains and an existing watercourse adjacent to the proposed access. Care should be taken to avoid blockage or any works that will cause flooding. If these are removed, this could impact on the village flood prevention scheme, making it ineffective.
- Bats have been seen around the site, these should be protected.

CONSIDERATIONS

Units A1 and A2 are attached to Pond Farm, one of the grade II listed building to the south and as such are considered to be listed. Likewise, Unit B is listed in association with the house, if it was built prior to the date of listing.

Local Plan policy EH3 states that planning permission will only be granted for development that does not adversely affect the character of a listed building, its setting, or any features of

special architectural or historic interest it possesses. Similarly, Local Plan policy EH5 states that planning permission will not be permitted for development that would have an adverse affect on the setting of a listed building or its contribution to the local scene.

In assessing this application, consideration should also be given to guidance contained in SSDC supplementary planning guidance, 'The Conversion of Barns and Other Historic Buildings' and English Heritage's advice note 'The Conversion of Traditional Farm Buildings'.

The main barn, which will contain Units A1 and A2 is poorly maintained but is generally structurally sound. The north and west elevations are ham stone and with the east and south elevations being the open fronted element. Some of these openings are still open while some have been filled in with a mix of timber, blockwork and brick. It is proposed to fill in the open sections with glazing and timber and make new openings in the non-historic blockwork. The only new openings proposed are four small roof lights, two each in the north and west elevations and two doors into the west elevation to access a small area of amenity space, laid to lawn. The roof materials will be put to the side during works to strengthen the roof and these will be re-used.

Overall, the scheme is considered to be sensitive with minimal impact on the parts of historic quality. The alterations to the south and east elevations make use of existing and former openings and the additional openings to the other elevations are small in scale and are not considered to detrimentally impact on the character of the traditional building.

The main concerns raised by the Council's Conservation Officer related to the works to create the new access i.e. impact on the stone wall on the road frontage, the width of the access and the width of the drive through the site. These concerns were in relation to the potential impact of these works on the setting of the listed buildings and the street scene. During the course of the application process, considerable negotiations have been carried out between the applicant, planning officers, the Conservation Officer and the County Highway Authority. After several amended plans, the most recent scheme (received 22nd June 2009), was considered to be a compromise that satisfied both the requirements of the Highway Officer and the concerns of the Conservation Officer. The proposal includes rebuilding part of the boundary wall and building an identical section to the opposite side of the access. The main concern is the quality of the build, as such a condition will be imposed to provide a sample panel to be agreed prior to commencement of works. In regard to the width of the access and drive, this is proposed to be 4.5m for the first 10 m, then narrowing to 2.5m throughout the rest of the site, to reduce the impact. Overall, the Conservation Officer is satisfied with the proposed alterations to the roadside boundary road and does not consider that the proposal will have any adverse impact on the setting of the listed buildings and the overall street scene.

One other concern related to the other barn, shown as Unit C, which lies to the south of the site, outside the red line site. This building is a natural stone barn, which has partially collapsed. The site plan refers to demolition of this unit and erection of a new dwelling. An application was to be made for these works but none has been forthcoming. This has been discussed with the applicant's agent and it is confirmed that this is not part of the proposal being considered under this application. Furthermore, this is outside of the red line site and as such, an informative is proposed to be added to advise the applicant that any permission does not include the demolition of Unit C or erection of a new dwelling. It is also noted that the demolition of Unit C is likely to require Listed Building Consent, as it is considered to be listed in association with the main listed dwellings.

The only other matter to be controlled relates to the landscaping of the site and any boundary treatments. A condition will be imposed to provide details of hard and soft landscaping within the site.

In addition to the main area within the site, there is a small strip of land approximately 4 metres wide, to the west of the barns. It is proposed to provide a small area of amenity space on this land, which will be accessed through the new doors to the rear of the barns. One neighbour feels that any boundary here should in keeping with the listed building, preferably a new stone wall at the maximum height. The proposed boundary treatment will be a simple post and rail fence to delineate the boundary along an existing path.

Overall the proposed barn conversion scheme and associated works, including provision of a new access and alterations to the roadside boundary wall are acceptable and are considered to have no adverse impact on the traditional character or setting of the barns and no adverse affect on the character of the listed buildings, their setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest.

Therefore, the recommendation to members is to grant listed building consent for the proposed development.

RECOMMENDATION

Grant consent with conditions

01. The proposed development and associated works to the boundary wall and creation of a new vehicular access, is considered to be acceptable and does not adversely affect the character and setting or the historic and architectural interests of the Listed Building, in accordance with the aims and objectives of PPG15, policy EN 3 of the Regional Spatial Strategy, policy 9 of the Somerset and Exmoor National Joint Structure Plan Review and policies EH3 and EH5 of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006.

SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING:

01. The works hereby granted consent shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this consent.

Reason: As required by Section 16(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

02. The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out otherwise than in complete accordance with the submitted plans and specifications as amended by drawings '733/A1', '733/02A' and '733/11A', received 22nd June 2009'.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt as to the development authorised as the submitted proposal has been amended.

03. The works hereby granted consent shall be completed in all respects within 12 months of the commencement of the works hereby approved, unless otherwise agreed in writing. Written notice of the date of the commencement of the approved works shall be given to the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the works hereby approved are completed and/or not left in a partially completed state for a protracted period detracting from the character and appearance of the listed building in accordance with PPG15 and policies EH3 and EH5 of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006.

04. No work shall be carried out on site unless particulars of the materials (including the provision of samples to be used for all external walls, roofs and new boundary walls) have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such particulars will include the detailed finish (rough sawn, hand tooled, roughcast, etc). Slate hooks shall not be used.

Reason: To safeguard the character and appearance and in the interests of the special architectural and historic interests of the listed buildings, in accordance with PPG15 and policies EH3 and EH5 of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006.

05. No work shall be carried out on site unless full details the new natural stonework walls (for the buildings and the roadside boundary wall), including the materials (including coping details and treatment to both sides of the new boundary wall), coursing, bonding, mortar profile, colour, and texture along with a written detail of the mortar mix, have been provided in writing; this shall be supported with a sample panel to be made available on site and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The work shall be carried out in accordance with the agreed details, and the sample panel shall remain available for inspection throughout the duration of the work.

Reason: To safeguard the character and appearance and in the interests of the special architectural and historic interests of the listed buildings, in accordance with PPG15 and policies EH3 and EH5 of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006.

06. No works shall be undertaken on site unless the following details have been submitted and a sample panel provided on site for inspection and written approval of the Local Planning Authority:
- a) Full details, including elevational drawings, to indicate the areas to be repointed.
 - b) Details of the method of removal of existing pointing. In this regard mechanical tools shall not be used,
 - c) Details of the mortar mix, and
 - d) A sample panel of new pointing that shall be carried out in the agreed mortar.

Reason: To safeguard the character and appearance and in the interests of the special architectural and historic interests of the listed buildings, in accordance with PPG15 and policies EH3 and EH5 of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006.

07. No work shall be carried out on site unless details of the design, materials and external finish for all new doors, windows, boarding and openings have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This will include detailed drawings including sections of at least 1:5. Such approved details, once carried out shall not be altered without the prior written consent of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To safeguard the character and appearance and in the interests of the special architectural and historic interests of the listed buildings, in accordance with PPG15 and policies EH3 and EH5 of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006.

08. The windows comprised in the development hereby permitted shall be recessed in accordance with details to be submitted to and approved in writing with the Local Planning Authority before any work on the development hereby permitted is commenced.

Reason: To safeguard the character and appearance and in the interests of the special architectural and historic interests of the listed buildings, in accordance with PPG15 and policies EH3 and EH5 of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006.

09. No work shall be carried out on site unless design details of all roof eaves, verges and abutments, including detail drawings at a scale of 1:5, and details of all new cast metal guttering, down pipes, other rainwater goods, and external plumbing have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such details once carried out shall not be altered without the prior written consent of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To safeguard the character and appearance and in the interests of the special architectural and historic interests of the listed buildings, in accordance with PPG15 and policies EH3 and EH5 of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006.

10. The area(s) of rebuilding shall be restricted to that defined on the approved plan(s) and shall not be enlarged without the prior express grant of listed building consent. In the event that completion strictly in accordance with such approved plans shall become impracticable for whatever reason, work shall thereupon cease and only be recommenced if and when consent has been obtained in regard to an amended scheme of works which renders completion of the scheme practicable.

Reason: To safeguard the character and appearance and in the interests of the special architectural and historic interests of the listed buildings, in accordance with PPG15 and policies EH3 and EH5 of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006.

11. No work shall be carried out on site unless details of the roof lights have been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Unless otherwise agreed in writing, the roof lights shall be top hung and flush with the roof covering. Such approved details once carried out shall not be altered without the prior written consent of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To safeguard the character and appearance and in the interests of the special architectural and historic interests of the listed buildings, in accordance with PPG15 and policies EH3 and EH5 of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006.

12. No works are to be undertaken to any structural timbers until details of any alteration have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The works will only be undertaken in accordance with the agreed details, and if found to be impracticable will cease until an alternative has been agreed. Any intervention into historic fabric will be minimal with the introduction of additional timber or steel to the structure always being preferred to the replacement of timber.

Reason: In the interests of the special architectural and historic interests of the listed building, in accordance with PPG15 and policies EH3 and EH5 of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006.

13. No work shall be carried out on site unless details of all new services to all bathrooms, kitchens etc, including details of routes of foul water and any ventilation or extraction have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such approved details, once carried out shall not be altered without the prior written consent of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of the special architectural and historic interests of the listed building, in accordance with PPG15 and policies EH3 and EH5 of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006.

14. No work shall be carried out on site unless details of all new and replacement plasters, renders, floor surfaces, ceilings etc, including any making good of any existing

structure abutting any of those to be demolished, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such approved details, once carried out shall not be altered without the prior written consent of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of the special architectural and historic interests of the listed building, in accordance with PPG15 and policies EH3 and EH5 of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006.

15. No work shall be carried out on site unless full construction details of the new partitions and finishes have been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such details shall show new partitions scribed around, not cut into the existing cornices, skirting or other features.

Reason: In the interests of the special architectural and historic interests of the listed building, in accordance with PPG15 and policies EH3 and EH5 of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006.

16. All electrical and telephone services to the development shall be run underground. All service intakes to the dwelling(s) shall be run internally and not visible on the exterior. All meter cupboards and gas boxes shall be positioned on the dwelling(s) in accordance with details, which shall have been previously submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority and thereafter retained in such form. All soil and waste plumbing shall be run internally and shall not be visible on the exterior unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To safeguard the character and appearance and in the interests of the special architectural and historic interests of the listed buildings, in accordance with PPG15 and policies EH3 and EH5 of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006.

17. In as much as any boundary and external surface treatments may need listed building consent, no work shall be carried out until details of boundary treatments and subdivision of the curtilage of the listed building have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such approved details, once carried out shall not be altered without the prior written consent of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To safeguard the character and appearance and in the interests of the special architectural and historic interests of the listed buildings, in accordance with PPG15 and policies EH3 and EH5 of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006.

Informatives:

01. The applicant is advised that the building shown as 'Unit C' on plan '733/A1' is outside of the red line of the application site and as such, the planning permission hereby granted infers no approval for demolition or any other works to this building. Furthermore, the building is likely to be listed in association with the main listed building so listed building consent is required for its demolition or alteration.