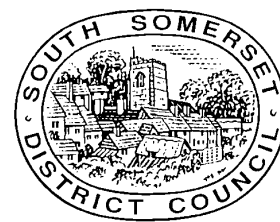


South Somerset District Council

Notice of Meeting



Area North Committee

Making a difference where it counts

Wednesday 24 August 2011

2pm

**Village Hall
Long Sutton
TA10 9NT**

(location plan overleaf - disabled access is available at this meeting venue)



The public and press are welcome to attend.

Please note: Planning applications will be considered no earlier than 3.30pm.

If you would like any further information on the items to be discussed, please ring the Agenda Co-ordinator, Becky Sanders on Yeovil (01935) 462462.

email: becky.sanders@southsomerset.gov.uk

website: www.southsomerset.gov.uk/agendas

This Agenda was issued on Tuesday 16 August 2011.

Ian Clarke, Assistant Director (Legal & Corporate Services)



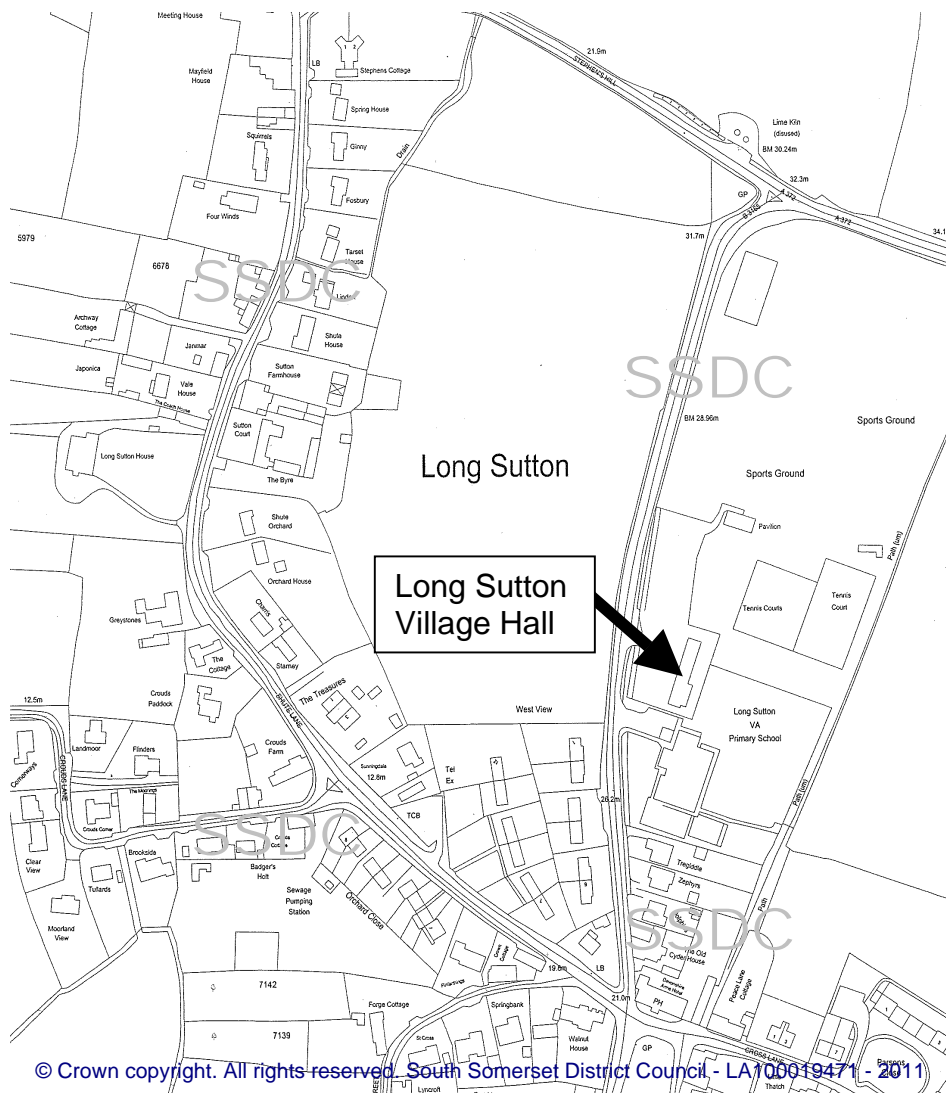
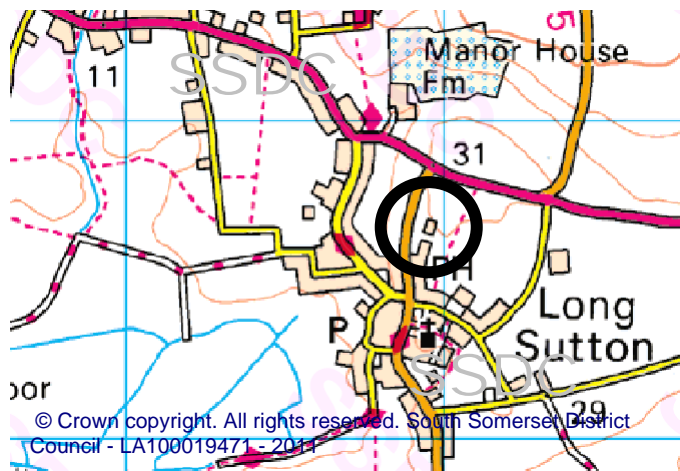
2007-2008
Neighbourhood and
Community Champions:
The Role of Elected Members
2006-2007
Improving Rural Services
Empowering Communities
2005-2006
Getting Closer to Communities

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



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Location of meeting venue



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Area North Membership

Pauline Clarke (Vice Chairman)	Patrick Palmer (Chairman)	Sue Steele
Terry Mounter	Shane Pledger	Paul Thompson
Graham Middleton	Jo Roundell Greene	Barry Walker
Roy Mills	Sylvia Seal	Derek Yeomans
David Norris		

Somerset County Council Representatives

Somerset County Councillors (who are not already elected district councillors for the area) are invited to attend area committee meetings and participate in the debate on any item on the agenda. **However, it must be noted that they are not members of the committee and cannot vote in relation to any item on the agenda.** The following County Councillors are invited to attend the meeting: Councillors John Bailey and Sam Crabb.

South Somerset District Council – Corporate Aims

Our key aims are: (all equal)

- To increase economic vitality and prosperity
- To enhance the environment, address and adapt to climate change
- To improve the housing, health and well-being of our citizens
- To ensure safe, sustainable and cohesive communities
- To deliver well managed cost effective services valued by our customers

Scrutiny procedure rules

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

Consideration of planning applications

Consideration of planning applications usually commences no earlier than 4.00pm (unless specified otherwise), following a break for refreshments, in the order shown 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. Anyone wishing to raise matters in relation to other items on the agenda may do so at the time the item is considered.

Highways

A representative from the Area Highways Office will be available from 1.30pm at the hall to answer questions and take comments from members of the Committee. Alternatively, they can be contacted through Somerset Highways direct control centre on 0845 345 9155.

Members questions on reports prior to the meeting

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

Information for the public

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

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

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

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

Meetings of the Area North Committee are held monthly at 2pm on the fourth Wednesday of the month in village halls throughout Area North.

Agendas and minutes of area committees are published on the council’s website [www.southsomerset.gov.uk /agendas](http://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/agendas)

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

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

Public participation at committees

This is a summary of the protocol adopted by the council and set out in Part 5 of the council’s Constitution.

Public question time

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

Planning applications

Comments about planning applications will be dealt with at the time those applications are considered, rather than during the public question time session.

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

At the committee chairman's discretion, members of the public are permitted to speak for up to 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/Agent
- District Council Ward Member

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

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

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

If a councillor has declared a personal and prejudicial interest

Under the new Code of Conduct, a councillor will be afforded the same right as a member of the public, except that once the councillor has addressed the committee the councillor will leave the room and not return until after the decision has been made.

Area North Committee

Wednesday 24 August 2011

Agenda

Preliminary Items

1. **To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 27 July 2011.**
2. **Apologies for absence**
3. **Declarations of interest**

In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, which includes all the provisions of the statutory Model Code of Conduct, members are asked to declare any personal interests (and whether or not such an interest is "prejudicial") in any matter on the agenda for this meeting. A personal interest is defined in paragraph 8 of the Code and a prejudicial interest is defined in paragraph 10. In the interests of complete transparency, members of the County Council, who are not also members of this committee, are encouraged to declare any interests they may have in any matters being discussed even though they may not be under any obligation to do so under the code of conduct.

Planning applications referred to the Regulation Committee

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

Councillors Patrick Palmer, Shane Pledger and Sylvia Seal.

Where planning applications are referred by this committee to the Regulation Committee for determination, in accordance with the council's Code of Practice on Planning, Members of the Regulation Committee can participate and vote on these items at the Area Committee and at Regulation Committee. In these cases the council's decision-making process is not complete until the application is determined by the Regulation Committee. Members of the Regulation Committee retain an open mind and will not finalise their position until the Regulation Committee. They will also consider the matter at Regulation Committee as members of that committee and not as representatives of the Area Committee.

4. **Date of next meeting**

Councillors are requested to note that the next Area North Committee meeting will be held on **Wednesday 28 September 2011 at the Village Hall, Chilthorne Domer.**

5. **Public question time**

- 6. Chairman’s announcements
- 7. Reports from members

Page Number

Items for Discussion

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- 12. Planning Appeals 20
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<p>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</p>
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8. Environmental Health Service Update Report

Strategic Director: Vega Sturgess, Operations and Customer Focus
Assistant Director: Laurence Willis, Environment
Service Manager: Alasdair Bell, Environmental Health Manager
Lead Officer: As above
Contact Details: alasdair.bell@southsomerset.gov.uk or 01935 462056

Purpose of the Report

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

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 only a limited amount of discretionary work. An annual Service Plan, published on the SSDC website, provides further detailed information on the costs, structure and work of the unit as well as performance information (see also background papers).

Recommendation

That members note and comment on the report.

Report

The work of the service continues to go well with staff dealing with a wide variety of matters including routine inspections, enforcement activity and project work. Pressures on the Council's budget mean that savings are having to be found. Since the last report several posts have been lost mainly due to retirements, these include the council's in-house Health and Safety Officer, the district Health & Safety Officer, two part time Food & Safety Environmental Health Officers, a part time Health & Safety Officer and an Environmental Protection Officer. As over 90% of the service costs are staffing, any cost savings inevitably will mean the loss of staff. In addition other Government cuts in capital funding outlined below are starting to feed through and will affect the work of the service. Clearly we are facing challenging times and it will be necessary to focus our resources on the highest priority work and to work as efficiently as possible.

Food and Safety Team

The Food & Safety Team both enforce legislation, and provide advice and assistance to food businesses. The food safety element includes the approval and audit of food manufacturers, food sampling, premises inspections, the investigation of food complaints and food poisoning as well as responding to national food alerts. The team also deals, time allowing, with issues related to wider health promotion such as 'Smokefree Somerset' and healthy eating. The health and safety element includes inspection, advice, complaint and accident investigation. In Area North in the last 12 months there

have been 236 food inspections, 69 cases of suspected food poisoning investigated, 67 health & safety visits made 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. Significant points to note;

- The roll out of the National Food Hygiene Rating scheme ('scores on the doors'). This is a national scheme whereby all food catering businesses are given points dependant on their food hygiene and management practices. The businesses are encouraged to put up their score certificates in a visible location. Their scores have been posted on a national website, linked to the SSDC website, so that consumers can make an informed decision about where to eat. Anyone can now see how their local restaurant or pub rates in terms of food hygiene. The aim is to drive up standards in food businesses.
- The undertaking of two Health & Safety inspection projects with the Health & Safety Executive concerning industrial estates. Whilst the estates so far targeted have both been in Yeovil it is hoped to do future work in Martock and Wincanton.

Environmental Protection Team

The Environmental Protection Team deal with pollution control and environmental monitoring as well as the enforcement of environmental legislation. The team check local air quality and investigate a range of complaints about nuisance, in particular noise and smoke. The team issue permits and inspect premises under the Pollution Prevention and Control regime. The team also undertake private water supply sampling, contaminated land assessment and the investigation of private 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. During the past 12 months, 51 noise complaints have been investigated and 476 pest treatments have been carried out in Area North. Significant points to note;

- The introduction of new private water supply regulations
- The introduction of charges for the pest control service as part of SSDC's on going cost savings exercise.

Housing Standards Team

The 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 and grant aid to improve energy efficiency and tackle fuel poverty. The team also process applications for home repairs assistance grants, disabled facilities, HMO and empty property grants, and helps administer the Wessex Reinvestment Trust (WRT) home loan scheme. The team work closely with the Housing Options Team in seeking to tackle the potential housing crisis that is developing in South Somerset. Significant points over the last year include;

- Increased working to deal with empty homes.
- Delivery of over 100 Warm Streets Grants to tackle fuel poverty.
- Completion of the HMO Licensing scheme.
- Running of Two Landlord Forum events
- Launch of the landlords accreditation scheme
- Future impact of Housing Benefit changes on rented accommodation
- Increased enforcement action to do with substandard housing.

As part of the latest Local Government spending settlement the funding for HMO grants/empty property grants/home repair assistance grants and loans is being cut. Last year we received £448K in Government grant to pay for this work and next financial year we are expecting no funding. This will greatly affect our ability to work with landlords to improve standards and create affordable housing. Grants to tackle fuel poverty will be cut, work on empty homes will be curtailed, home repairs assistance grants that fund essential wind and weatherproofing for vulnerable homeowners will be cut. With changes in Housing Benefit regulations it is expected that more HMOs will be created but there will be no grant funding to drive up standards. It is also expected that demand for disabled facilities grants will continue to rise without a commensurate rise in funding. As already mentioned the next few years are going to be extremely challenging.

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 Corporate Priorities but perhaps most importantly towards Aim 3 To improve the Health and Well-being of our citizens and to Aim 5 to promote a balanced natural and built environment

Carbon Emissions & Adapting to Climate Change Implications (NI188)

The work of the unit contributes towards this National Indicator (NI) with its 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 & Community Service Plan 2009-12*
 Private Sector Housing Strategy 2007-12
 Food & Safety Service Plan 2010-11
 Environmental Protection workplan 2011

9. Area North Priorities 2011-12

Strategic Director Rina Singh, Place and Performance
Assistant Director Kim Close/Helen Rutter, Communities
Service Manager: Charlotte Jones, Area Development Manager (North)
Lead Officer: As above
Contact Details: charlotte.jones@southsomerset.gov.uk or (01935) 462251

Purpose of the Report

The report provides an opportunity for a discussion by Councillors on priorities for the coming year(s), ahead of a workshop, and review of the SSDC Corporate Plan.

The presentation of the report, by the Area Development Manager (North) will include the suggestions of priority areas.

[Please note:

- o *This report should be read in conjunction with the report from Financial Services in this agenda on the use of budgets under the control of the Area Committee.*
- o *Councillors are asked to contact the Area Development Manager or other named contacts in advance of the meeting with any requests for further information]*

Public Interest

In past years, a range of priorities has been agreed, and used to inform decision making for grants and the allocation of time by the Area Development team. The priorities have also been used to influence the work of other SSDC services, and to develop the co-operation of other partners to improve local quality of life for residents, visitors and businesses, whilst protecting the local environment.

During year the committee makes financial decisions to support projects led by the local community, as well as making its own investments, which together provide long term benefits to the community.

Recommendation

Members are recommended to discuss matters of local interest and indicate priorities for the coming year(s), which would assist in promoting local quality of life.

Background

In a rural area such as Area North in South Somerset, economies of scale can be harder to achieve for public services and private sector. Building on existing partnerships, or promoting voluntary action can assist to provide greater equity of service for local people. Lack of access may bring pressure to re-design service provision.

South Somerset District Council aims to address this challenge, by promoting the local economy, by service innovation, and by building upon the local skills and knowledge found in local communities, through its nationally acclaimed arrangements for Area Working, the Council's 'enable-partner-deliver' ethos, and its mission to be 'an organisation consistently improving local quality of life for all'.

The Role of Area Committee

The SSDC Constitution outlines the role of the Area Committee as follows:

Each Area Committee shall monitor service delivery in its area, provide leadership for its communities, and take decisions on regulatory matters such as planning applications and statutory orders. They shall also take executive decisions as specifically delegated by the Executive. (SSDC Constitution, Part 3)

In addition to having the responsibility to determine planning applications (made under the Scheme of Delegation), and other regulatory matters; the Area Committee possesses a range of powers and functions as part of the council's Area Working system. These include:

- Discussion of any matter of interest to the area;
- Public consultation, participation and partnership working, including the fostering of a 'good working relationship' with parish councils;
- The management and oversight of local regeneration projects and capital schemes;
- Oversee and monitor the operation and services in the area;
- Enable opportunities, through partnership to provide services and benefits for local people;
- Assist with the development of corporate policy, including submitting ideas for improvement and service innovation which may be of benefit elsewhere.

Responsibility for the work of the committee (the 'Area Portfolio' is taken by the Chairman of the Area Committee. The Area Chairman is a member of the District Executive for SSDC, and also represents SSDC as a member of the Local Strategic Partnership board (South Somerset Together.)

The Area Development Service

The Area Development Service is within Area Portfolio, and seeks to reflect the community leadership role the Area Committee, by providing a range of services which **enable**:

- The creation, development and delivery of community led projects and initiatives;
- Local involvement in decision-making
- Local partnerships and investments between communities (including businesses) and public services.
- 'Face to face' public access to SSDC services via the 'Customers First' system, and other advice and information services helping residents, visitors and businesses.

The priorities agreed by the Area Committee, provide an important framework for its decision-making, and will direct the work programme of the Area North Development Service. This work is summarised annually into the Area Development Plan, monitored on an on-going basis and reported quarterly to the Area Committee.

To support a more *precise* understanding of the work taking place, (often undertaken directly *within* parishes), further development of the agreed priorities takes place in partnership with individual ward members. The council's commitment to being

'community based', recognises the values and principles of community development. In simple terms, this means acting to provide the skills and knowledge required for good decision making, and acting to ensure that decisions are taken as 'locally' as possible, and by the people in the best position to take them.

During the year, the Area Development (North) team works with other SSDC service teams; district, county and parish councillors; other public services; and volunteers from local communities to develop, progress and complete a variety of work which makes a difference to local quality of life.

The service also includes the provision of face to face public access to SSDC services in Langport, Somerton and Martock community offices and support to locally managed information centres in South Petherton, Martock, Somerton, Langport.

Priorities for use of the Area Committee resources, and use of influence.

In past years, a range of priorities has been agreed, and used to inform decision making for grants and the allocation of time by the Area Development team. The priorities have also been used to influence the work of other SSDC services, and to develop the co-operation of other partners to improve local quality of life for residents, visitors and businesses, whilst protecting the local environment.

The priorities for 2010-11 were as follows:
(see Appendix A for further details)

- Ensure delivery of current Area North programme and continue to develop further **affordable housing**. (This was identified as the **top** priority).
- Increase **access to services** to improve quality of life, through local and outreach services, transport and ICT.
- Promote resilience and growth for **local services and businesses**.
- Promote **community safety**- reduce crime, fear of crime and anti-social behaviour – where it occurs.
- Increase local action towards carbon descent and enhance the local **environment**.
- Increase and improve voluntary run **community facilities and activities** for all ages.

As can be seen, these priorities reflect the main aspects of a sustainable community, for which a number of models exist, embodied by the themes of the South Somerset Sustainable Community Strategy (www.southsomersettogether.org.uk). It should be assumed therefore, that all decisions to allocate time and funds would be made in the light of contributions to overall sustainability.

Whilst this ambition is unlikely to change, it is proposed to simplify the number of priorities, and to be more specific. Perhaps **three** priorities would be more succinct for both communication and evaluation. This is not to imply that nothing else matters, but is to highlight the *particular* areas for attention, which it is believed, will produce real and lasting outcomes for the community. A small number (often 3) is also easy to communicate, which is particularly relevant when the priority set is largely one of influence.

The identification of priorities can be drawn from a variety of sources gathered together, to provide good local knowledge of opportunities and problems expressed in a variety of ways by a range of 'communities' and individuals to help inform further discussion.

- Community forums or other methods to involve people in the early stages of decisions which may affect them.
- Requests for help from or action by SSDC – received from ward members, parish & town councillors; residents; businesses; other public services; and business / community groups.
- Published parish & community plans and local surveys / research available.
- Wider plans and priorities of other organisations and partnerships. For example, Somerset County Council, Avon and Somerset Police, and the NHS.
- SSDC corporate and service plans, including existing or emerging duties and powers of national legislation, notably the Localism Bill; and the Medium Term Financial Plan set by Full Council.
- Previous years' plans and work programmes that continue to benefit from local or other support.
- Other potential sources of local knowledge gleaned from 'networking', for example from meetings and events, or by reports in the local press and community newsletters.

Review and agreement of priorities for 2011-12 and future years.

As previously discussed, the start of a new four-year term of office (2011-2015) provides an opportunity to review and re-consider the Area Committees main areas of interest and ambition.

All councillors are asked to consider current work and past achievements for SSDC to be '*an organisation **consistently** delivering an improving quality of life for all*', and take account of possible future changes for this to be realised in future.

This is easily said!

Ways to form agreement will include: -

- A councillors workshop session in September,
- A short written questionnaire
- Further discussions between councillors, the Area Chairman and the Area Development Manager as needed.
- A further report to the Area Committee (November)

As a starting point, for discussion the Area Development Manager proposes THREE priorities for the coming year. This will both direct the time and allocation of funds held by the Area Development service, and act as a basis for influence with others.

- 1) Delivery of the Area North Affordable Housing Programme
- 2) Adding value to the economy in Area North, including small business development and the visitor offer
- 3) Enabling local access to services and promoting self-help in order to address disadvantage in Area North, where it exists.

The Area Committee is *well-placed* to address these priorities for a number of reasons:

- It has powers of public decision making delegated from Full Council.
- SSDC is the Local Planning Authority, Strategic Housing Authority, and the statutory provider of Licensing, Billing, Rate Relief and Streetscene services.

- The Area Committee's membership includes all elected SSDC councillors for the area, and holds regular meetings, held in public. (SCC councillors are also invited to take part if they choose).
- The Area North Portfolio has control of (limited) resources – staff, investment budgets and access to premises.
- The committee, councillors and staff may form agreements, within certain limits to help promote collaboration and for the provision of services.

To provide transparency, and a further formal public opportunity to comment, it is proposed to bring a further report later in the year, however in the meantime, the work of the Area Development service will continue to progress work already in hand, based on the current Area Development Plan, working in close consultation with ward members.

Current Area North Development Plan.

The summary of projects and issues currently supported by the Area Committee's investment into grants, partnerships or through the Area Development team's work programme, known as the Area Development Plan will be circulated separately, however a public copy can be provided on request.

Financial implications

None from this report. The current financial position of the Area North budget is included in the next report.

Corporate Priority Implications

The allocation of resources by the Area Committee, including the Area Development Service work programme, has been fully informed by the SSDC Corporate Plan (2009-12), including priority outcomes and key targets.

Carbon Emissions and Adapting to Climate Change Implications (NI188)

None directly from this report. There are a number of local initiatives designed to promote carbon reduction including support to 'Transition' volunteers.

Equality and Diversity Implications

None directly from this report. The Area Development Plan includes a number of projects and initiatives, which actively promote equalities and aim to remove barriers to discrimination.

Background Papers: *Community Priorities for SSDC Services and investment in Area North – May 2010. Area Development Plan Progress report Feb 11.*

Reports of surveys and consultation activity are available, in addition to published town and parish plans.

SSDC Corporate Plan and South Somerset Sustainable Community Strategy

Appendix A – Area North priorities – 2010-11 – areas of investment and corporate plan links.

The column on the right refers to the SSDC Corporate Plan, a copy can be provided on request.

Area Priority	Special area(s) of focus	Key SSDC services to address this priority	SSDC Corporate plan outcome and Key Target Areas.
TOP PRIORITY			
1. Ensure delivery of current Area North programme and continue to develop further affordable housing .	Delivery of small-scale schemes in villages for local people.	Spatial Policy - Strategic Housing Development Management Area Development	3.0 A district where housing options are maximised Key target areas: 3.1, 3.2, 3.4.
ALL EQUAL			
2. Increase access to services to improve quality of life, through local and outreach services, transport and ICT.	Target lower income and vulnerable households; Build capacity of local community offices and information points; Community and public transport – including walking, riding, cycling, boating	Housing & Welfare; Partnerships & Third Sector; Customer Services; ICT & Communications; Area Development	1.18 A district tackling economic disadvantage 3.11 Increased choice and quality of life for older and vulnerable people. 5.0 A successful council delivering services valued by residents Key target areas: 1.21, 1.22, 3.12, 3.13, 3.14, 3.15, 3.17, 3.26-3.28, 5.1, 5.5,
3. Promote resilience and growth for local services and businesses .	Access to business support & networking; Local infrastructure; Rural broadband; Key village services; Sustainable tourism; Local supply / produce	Economic Development, Heritage & Tourism Development Management; Streetscene Business Rates; Engineering & Property; Area Development	1.0 A well-supported business community 1.11 A vibrant and sustainable Yeovil, Market Towns and Rural Economy Key target areas: 1.6-1.9, 1.12, 1.14, 1.15,
4. Promote community safety - reduce crime, fear of crime and anti-social behaviour - where it occurs.	Diversionary activities for young people; Local Action Groups / PACT; Partnership with Neighbourhood Policing team & Restorative Justice Programme; Community 'watches' – Speed, Farm, Pub, Neighbourhood.	Partnerships and Third Sector; Community Health & Leisure; Streetscene; Area Development	4.0 A community that feels safe Key target areas: 4.1, 4.2, 4.4, 4.5, 4.8, 4.9, 4.13
5. Increase local action towards carbon reduction and enhanced local environment .	Flood risk mitigation; Quality of natural and built environment; Local enforcement priorities; Transition Town / Village action	Streetscene (and Waste); Civil Contingencies Spatial Planning; Countryside; Development Management; Area Development	2.13 A low-carbon council adapting to climate change 2.6 An enhanced built environment Key target areas: 1.14, 2.7, 2.8, 2.9, 2.18, 2.23, 2.25, 3.12
6. Increase and improve community facilities and activities for all ages	Community centres / village halls Recreation trusts and sports clubs; Community groups for sport, leisure and arts. Volunteering; Developer Obligations for facilities (s106).	Community Health and Leisure Sports Development Development Management Area Development	3.18 – Individuals and communities enjoying healthier and more active lifestyles 4.22 Sustainable local communities Key target areas: 3.20, 3.31, 3.12, 4.17, 4.19

10. Area North 2011/12 Budget Monitoring Report for the Period Ending 30 June 2011 (Executive Decision)

Strategic Director: Mark Williams, Chief Executive
Assistant Director: Donna Parham, Finance and Corporate Services
Service Manager: Amanda Card, Finance Manager
Lead Officer: Nazir Mehrali, Management Accountant
Contact Details: Nazir.mehrali@southsomerset.gov.uk or 01935 462205

Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this report is to update Members on the current financial position of the Area North Committee as at the end of June 2011.

Public Interest

This report gives an update on the financial position of Area North Committee after three months of the financial year 2011/12.

Recommendations:

Members are recommended to:

- (1) Review and comment on the current financial position on Area North budgets
- (2) Note the position of the Area North Reserve as at 30th June 2011 and approve to add back to the Reserve Fund previous allocations of £18,500 no longer required in respect of building enforcement notices.
- (3) Agree the revised Reserve Schemes and the profiling of the Capital Programme for 2011/12 to 2015/16 (appendix A)
- (4) Members to note the position of the Play & Youth capital investment programme in Area North (Appendix B)
- (5) Note the position of the Area North Community Grants budget, including details of grants authorised under the Scheme of Delegation by the Area Development Manager (North) in consultation with the ward member(s)

REVENUE BUDGETS

Background

Full Council in February 2011 set the General Revenue Account Budgets for 2011/12 and delegated the monitoring of the budgets to the four Area Committees and District Executive. Area North now has delegated responsibility for the Area North Development revenue budgets (which include revenue grants and regeneration), the Area North Capital Programme and the Area North Reserve.

Financial Position

The table below shows the position of revenue budgets as at 30th June 2011. This includes transfers to or from reserves.

	£
Approved base budget as at Feb 2011	263,480
Carry forwards approved June 2011	50,050
Transfer of salary savings	(1,370)
Revised Budget as at 30th June 2011	312,160

A summary of the revenue position as at 30th June 2011 is as follows:

Element	Original Budget £	Revised Budget £	Y/E Forecast £	Variance £	Fav / Adv	%
Development	248,120	284,750	284,750	-	-	-
Grants	15,360	27,410	27,410	-	-	-
Group Total	263,480	312,160	312,160	-	-	-

Area Development Manager (North) Comments

The overall net expenditure for Area North is expected to be within budget for the year. This includes planned savings of at least 4% on the 2010-11 budget.

Service Enhancement 'carry forwards' of £38,000 from 2010/11 are as below:

- Housing and access to services £10,000
- Community Safety Projects £ 3,000
- Rural Transport development £ 5,000
- Unallocated £20,000*

*£2500 allocated to the Community Justice Panel at the July meeting.

As discussed previously, there is an opportunity to review the current capital programme and look ahead to next 3-4 years. The total value of the Area North capital programme is **£397,565**. Of this, £140,667 is firmly committed for existing schemes. This leaves **£256,898 for further investment**.

There is £11,000 still available in this years revenue budget to support local projects through the SSDC Community Grants programme, and the unallocated capital programme can be used for this purpose also.

Budget Virements

Under the financial procedure rules the Strategic/Assistant Directors and Managers can authorise virements within each individual service of their responsibility (as defined by Appendix B of the Annual Budget Report) and up to a maximum of £25,000 between services within their responsibility providing that the Assistant Director Finance & Corporate Services has been notified in advance. All virements exceeding these limits need the approval of District Executive. All virements between different Services,

irrespective of value, need approving by District Executive. Area Committees can approve virements between their reserves and budgets up to a maximum of £25,000 per virement and £50,000 in any one financial year, provided that all such approvals are reported to the District Executive for noting. (In accordance with the constitution)

The following virements have taken place since the last report:

Amount £	From	To	Details
1,370	Area North Development & Administration	Finance & Corporate Services	Salary savings from reduced hours and unpaid annual leave

AREA RESERVE

The position on the Area North Reserve as at 30th June 2011 is as follows:

	£	£	Comments
Position as at 1st April 2011		43,920	
<u>Less remaining allocations:</u>			
Completion of feasibility study for the Langport – Cartgate Cycleway	(1,000)		£500 spent to date from the original allocation of £1,500. Retain balance as a fund for further costs as opportunities arises.
Promoting local access to services – Area North Community Offices	(2,000)		Expenditure so far has been contained within operational budgets. Retain allocation to provide for costs of innovation as part of Community Office service development.
Support towards progressing affordable rural housing schemes within the Area North	(15,000)		Provision for fees or supplies to support progress. Work to date covered from existing budgets.
* Provision for planning enforcement (Langport and Huish ward)	(17,500)		The owner has carried out the remedial works; Enforcement process is complete with no requirement for funding.
* Provision for planning enforcement (Curry Rival ward).	(1,000)		Work carried out by owner; no funding requirement.
Total Committed		(36,500)	
Uncommitted balance remaining		7,420	

* Members are requested to approve a transfer back to the Reserve Fund of £18,500 in respect of previous allocations no longer required. This will **increase** the **uncommitted** balance remaining to **£25,920**.

CAPITAL PROGRAMME

The revised capital programme for this financial year and beyond is attached following this report together with a progress report on each scheme either Area or District Wide that are current within Area North (Appendices A & B).

The estimated spend on the North Capital programme in 2011/12 is £110,667, with a further £45,000 allocated for future years.

There is £66,898 in the reserve schemes for 2011/12 and a further £175,000 for future years.

The details of the Reserve Schemes for future years are as follows:

Schemes	Estimated Spend 2011/12 £	Future Spend £
Unallocated Capital Reserve	36,240	75,000
Langport Vision – river and countryside access to promote sustainable tourism in Cocklemoor / Upper Parrett area		20,000
Local priority projects – enhancing facilities and services	30,658	80,000
TOTALS	66,898	175,000

COMMUNITY GRANTS

During the quarter to June, grants of £3,826 were awarded under the delegated grants below £750. There remains an uncommitted balance of £11,034 out of a total grants budget of £27,410.

Community Grants Update

Original budget 2011/12	£15,360
Carry forward from 2010/11	£12,050
Total revised budget	£27,410
Offered, committed or paid	£16,376
Balance as at 30th June 2011	£11,034

Grants carried forward from 2010/11

<i>Group</i>	<i>Award</i>	<i>Comment</i>	<i>Paid</i>
Somerton Allotments – Allotments improvements	£750	Change in project – revised details to be submitted	No
Tintinhull Parish Plan Steering Group – support with community engagement	£750	Project completed.	Yes
M3CP – Martock Community Plan	£550	Project underway, draft plan in place. Good progress.	Yes
Kingsbury Episcopi Amenities Committee – MUGA	£10,000	Lottery grant of £50,000 successful. Order of MUGA imminent.	No
Total Committed	£12,050		

Quarter 1 (April – June) Grants awarded.

(NB: grants of **up to** £750 are agreed by the Area Development Manager in consultation with the Ward Member or Chairman – for ‘area-wide’ grants).

<i>Group & project</i>	<i>Award</i>	<i>Comment</i>	<i>Paid</i>
High Ham Village Hall – Refurbishment of toilets	£750	Refurbishment complete	Yes
Langport Town Trust - Support towards Langport Information Centre Service Level Agreement (SLA)	£500	1227 visitors accessed the information centre between April & June	Yes
Pitney Village Hall - Replacement of chairs for village hall	£576	Chairs delivered and project complete	Yes
Pitney Playing Field Trust - Extension to Marquee	£750	Marquee ordered and used recently at local event	Yes
South Petherton Parish Council – Support towards the Community Information Centre (SLA)	£750	Annual Service Level Agreement	No
Martock Parish Council – Support towards the Local Information Centre (SLA)	£500	Annual Service Level Agreement	No
Somerton Tourism & Heritage Partnership – Support towards the Local Information Centre (SLA)	£500	Annual Service Level Agreement	No
Total Committed	£3,826		

If Members would like further details on any of the Area North budgets or services they should contact the relevant budget holder or responsible officer.

Corporate Priority Implications

The budget is closely linked to the Corporate Plan.

Carbon Emissions & Adapting to Climate Change Implications (NI188)

There are no implications currently in approving this report.

Equality and Diversity Implications




When the Area North budget was set any savings made included an assessment of the impact on equalities as part of that exercise.

Background Papers – Financial Services Area North budget file

	2011/12 Estimated Spend £	Actual Spend to 30/06/2011 £	2011/12 Remaining Budget £	Future Spend Excluding Slippage £	Responsible Officer (s)	Responsible Officers Comments	
						Action Taken to Control Slippage	Performance Against Targets
Health and Well-Being							
Improvement to District owned Play Areas January 2001 Play Audit.	32,381	13,577	18,804		R Parr		Curry Rival Stanchester Way Phase 2 (£16,531) expected to be completed in 2011/12. Bracey Road Martock - Phase 1 completed, Phase 2 for completion this financial year.
Bracey road Martock - Play area improvements (in addition to above)	10,000	139	9,861		R Parr		see above
Chilthorne Domer Pavilion refurbishment	12,500	0	12,500		L Collett	Project regularly monitored by the lead officer	Grant awarded to Chilthorne Domer Recreation Trust, work underway, grant paid once work completed.
Curry Rival refurbishment of Old School Room	1,500	0	1,500		L Collett	Project regularly monitored by the lead officer	Grant awarded to Curry Rival Old School Room. Work underway. Grant paid once work completed.
Total Health and Well-Being	56,381	13,716	42,665	0			
Environment							
Cocklemoor Bridge	28,452	0	28,452		C Jones	Payment is dependent upon final completion of wayleaves which is in hand.	Works completed. Payment to be made to SCC once easement across SSDC land approved.
Feasibility Fees - West Street, Somerton (Traffic survey)	10,000		10,000		C Jones	This is an allocation only, the business case to be reviewed.	Survey work postponed pending further discussion with STC / SCC. Project needs to be re-defined to consider review of current parking strategy. Allocation to be reviewed as part of overall capital programme.
Langport Vision - improvements to Langport and River Parrett Visitor Centre and car parking at Westover	6,196	1,125	5,071		K Menday		Work to complete early in 2011-12.
Langport Vision - preparation of Upper Parrett Waterway Plan and progress of recreational access to and near River Parrett at Langport	5,000		5,000		C Jones	This will be reviewed in 2011-12 with local councils and EA.	Match funded project in association with the Langport River Group and the Environmental Agency. Allocation to be reviewed as part of overall capital programme.
Total Environment	49,648	1,125	48,523	0			
Economic Vitality							
Planning Enforcement	0	0	0	45,000	I Clarke		Provision for compensation due to enforcement action (Discontinuance Order)
Martock, town centre improvements - Phase 2 (YD979(YC233) A140 AN08)	2,638	0	2,638		G Green		Scheme is largely complete except final completion to lighting.
Martock Town centre Improvements - Phase 3	2,000		2,000		C Jones		Grant to Martock Parish Council. Improvements to Martock Precinct in hand.
Total Economic Vitality	4,638	0	4,638	45,000			
Total North Capital Programme	110,667	14,841	95,826	45,000			
Reserve Schemes Awaiting Allocation But Approved in Principle							
Unallocated Capital Reserve	36,240	0	36,240	75,000	C Jones		Provision for investment not otherwise covered in reserve programme.
Langport Vision - river and countryside access to promote sustainable tourism in Cocklemoor / Upper Parrett area		0	0	20,000	C Jones / P Burr		Provision only. Plan for additional access pathway on Cocklemoor. Subject to partnership with EA and Langport River Group. Linked to development of Waterway Access Plan and access for visitors.
Local priority projects - enhancing facilities and services	30,658		30,658	80,000	C Jones		Detailed allocations through grants or capital appraisal. Support for partnership investment into local infrastructure and facilities.
Total Reserve Schemes	66,898	0	66,898	175,000			
Summary							
North Capital Programme	110,667	14,841	95,826	45,000			
Reserve Schemes (Unallocated)	66,898	0	66,898	175,000			Councillors to review capital programme priorities - Autumn 2011
Total Programme to be Financed	177,565	14,841	162,724	220,000			

Corporate Capital Programme within Area North							
Martock Parish Hall	50,000		50,000		C Jones		Project removed from capital programme and funds returned to capital reserves (DX 4.8.11)
Community Play Schemes	42,000	0	42,000	23,000	R Parr		Projects profiled 2011/12 are moving forward and being closely monitored
Youth Facilities Development	15,000		15,000		R Parr		Projects profiled 2011/12 are moving forward and being closely monitored
Multi Use Games Area	70,000		70,000	35,000	R Parr		On Target. Officers are assisting parishes where possible.
Grants for Parishes with Play Area	25,000		25,000		R Parr		Projects profiled 2011/12 are moving forward and being closely monitored

Gypsy & Traveller Sites programme:							
Health & Well-Being							
Infrastructure & Park Homes, Tintinhull Gypsy Site	44	14	30	0	S Joel		
Infrastructure & Park Homes, Tintinhull Gypsy Site -Inc	(44)	(44)	0	0	S Joel		
Infrastructure & Park Homes, Ilton Gypsy Site	59	17	42	0	S Joel		
Infrastructure & Park Homes, Ilton Gypsy Site -Inc	(59)	(59)	0	0	S Joel		
Infrastructure & Park Homes, Twisted Willows, Ilton	168	138	30	0	S Joel		
Infrastructure & Park Homes, Twisted Willows, Ilton -Inc	(168)	(168)	0	0	S Joel		
Infrastructure & Park Homes, Ilton - Grant for MUGA	50	0	50	0	S Joel		
Infrastructure & Park Homes, Ilton - Grant for MUGA - Inc	(50)	(50)	0	0	S Joel		
Infrastructure & Park Homes Contingency	75	0	75	0	S Joel		
Infrastructure & Park Homes Contingency - Inc	(19)	(19)	0	0	S Joel		
Pitney Hill Gypsy Site Langport	5	2	3	0	S Joel		
Pitney Hill Gypsy Site Langport	(5)	(5)	0	0	S Joel		
Economic Development - Spatial Policy							
Gypsy & Traveller Acquisition Fund	133	0	133	0	C McDonald		
Gypsy & Traveller Acquisition Fund - Income	(83)	(83)	0	0	C McDonald		
	106	(257)	363	0			

Key
 Delayed Projects 
 Projects in progress/likely to span further than current financial year 
 Projects Completed/ On course to be completed in current financial year 

	Committee Date	Original Profile Year	Original Budget £	Paid prior April 11 £	Balance 2011-12 £	Paid 2011-12 £	Remaining Budget 2011-12 £	Estimate 2012-13 £	Estimate 2013-14 £	Estimate 2014-15 £	Estimate 2015-16 £	Comment
CURRENT SCHEMES APPROVED												
SSDC owned Play Areas												
Work approved following the 2001 Play audit.												
Bracey Rd Martock			20,666	7,089	13,577	13,577	0					Bracey Road Martock - first stage of construction work completed and retention sum withheld. Final phase being completed this year.
Curry Rival - Stanchester Way phase2			28,000	11,469	16,531		16,531					Expect works to be completed in 2011/12.
South Petherton -West End View			10,000	9,727	273		273					Work completed.
Tintinhull - Thurlocks			2,000	0	2,000		2,000					Expect works to be completed in 2011/12
SSDC play	TOTAL		60,666	28,285	32,381	13,577	18,804	0	0	0	0	
Other Approvals												
Bracey Rd Martock	June 02		10,000	0	10,000	139	9,861	0	0	0	0	see Bracey Road above.
SCHEMES FROM THE CORPORATE PROGRAMME IN AREA NORTH												
Community Play Schemes 2006 approved Feb 07 Council												
Bracey Rd Martock	Feb 07		30,000	30,000	0		0					see above
Hills Lane Martock	Feb 07		20,000	18,000	2,000		2,000					Project complete.
Thurlocks Tintinhull	Feb 07		20,000	0	20,000		20,000					On Target
Stanchester Way Curry Rivel	Feb 07		10,000	0	10,000		10,000					On Target
Lavers Oak Martock	Feb 07		15,000	0	0		0	13,000				Future years
Abbey Close Curry Rivel	Feb 07		10,000	0	0		0	10,000				Future years
Barrymore Close Huish Episcopi	Feb 07		10,000	0	10,000		10,000					On Target
	TOTAL		115,000	48,000	42,000	0	42,000	23,000	0	0	0	
Grants for Parishes with Play areas 2008 approved Feb 08												
Ilton	feb 08		12,500	0	12,500		12,500					On Target
Shepton Beauchamps	feb 08		12,500	0	12,500		12,500					On Target
	TOTAL		25,000	0	25,000	0	25,000	0	0	0	0	
Youth Facilities 2006 approved Feb 07 Council												
Chilthorne Domer	Feb 07		5,000	0	5,000		5,000					On Target
Huish Episcopi	Feb 07		5,000	0	5,000		5,000					On Target
Compton Dundon	Feb 07		5,000	0	5,000		5,000					Grant application submitted
	TOTAL		15,000	0	15,000	0	15,000	0	0	0	0	
Multi Use Games Areas 2008 approved Feb 08												
Martock	feb 08		35,000	0	35,000	0	35,000					On Target - Parish expecting to place order in the near future
Langport	feb 08		35,000	0	35,000		35,000		0			On Target - Parish expecting to place order in the near future
South Petherton	feb 08		35,000	0	0		0	35,000				Future years
	TOTAL		105,000	0	70,000	0	70,000	35,000	0	0	0	

11. Area North Committee - Forward Plan

Strategic Director: Rina Singh, Place and Performance
Assistant Directors: Helen Rutter & Kim Close, Communities
Service Manager: Charlotte Jones, Area Development (North)
Lead Officer: Becky Sanders, Committee Administrator
Contact Details: becky.sanders@southsomerset.gov.uk or (01458) 257437

Purpose of the Report

This report informs Members of the Area North Committee Forward Plan.

Public Interest

The forward plan sets out items and issues to be discussed over the coming few months. It is reviewed and updated each month, and included within the Area North Committee agenda, where members of the committee may endorse or request amendments.

Recommendations

Members are asked to: -

- (1) Note and comment upon the proposed Area North Committee Forward Plan as attached at Appendix A and Identify priorities for further reports to be added to the Area North Committee Forward Plan.

Area North Committee Forward Plan

Members of the public, councillors, service managers, and partners may also request an item be placed within the forward plan for a future meeting, by contacting the Agenda Co-ordinator.

Items marked *in italics* are not yet confirmed, due to the attendance of additional representatives.

To make the best use of the 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 SSSDC and SCC corporate aims and objectives.

Further details on these items, or to suggest / request an agenda item for the Area North Committee, please contact the Agenda Co-ordinator; Becky Sanders.

Background Papers: None

Appendix A – Area North Committee Forward Plan

Further details on these items, or to suggest / request an agenda item for the Area North Committee, please contact the Agenda Co-ordinator; Becky Sanders, becky.sanders@southsomerset.gov.uk

Items marked in italics are not yet confirmed, due to the attendance of additional representatives. Key: SCC = Somerset County Council

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Background / Purpose	Lead Officer(s) SSDC unless stated otherwise
Sept	No additional agenda items are scheduled. A revised start time will be issued.		Adrian Noon, Area Lead, Development Management Service
26 Oct '11	Huish Episcopi Sports Centre Management Agreement	Report on the Huish Episcopi Sports Centre Management Agreement – a revised agreement is required due to recent changes – approved by the ANC, on behalf of SSDC who grant aided the centre, under a 30-year agreement.	Steve Joel, Assistant Director (Heath and Wellbeing)
26 Oct 11	South Somerset Core Strategy	To provide an opportunity for the Area Committee to consider the draft Core Strategy, with specific implications for Area North, prior to decisions for its adoption by District Executive and Full Council.	Andy Foyne – Spatial Planning Manager
<i>TBC</i>	<i>Historic Buildings At Risk Register</i>	<i>Report on the work of the Conservation Team with a special focus on the historic Buildings at Risk Register for Area North.</i>	<i>Adron Duckworth, Conservation Manager</i>
<i>TBC</i>	<i>Section 106 Monitoring Report</i>	<i>To provide an update report on the collection and allocation of funds secured through s106 agreements from development in Area North.</i>	<i>Neil Waddleton, S. 106 Monitoring Officer</i>
<i>TBC</i>	<i>SSDC Asset Strategy – Area North</i>	<i>Draft Asset Management Strategy – the plan that sets out the council's future approach to retaining or disposing of assets.</i>	<i>Donna Parham, Assistant Director (Finance)</i>
<i>TBC</i>	<i>Community Safety in Area North</i>		

12. Planning Appeals

Assistant Director: Martin Woods, Economy
Service Manager: David Norris, Development Manager
Lead Officer: As above
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.

Public Interest

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.

Recommendation

That members comment upon and note the report.

Appeals Lodged

None

Appeals Dismissed

11/00316/FUL – 29 St Marys Park, Huish Episcopi, Langport TA10 9HD
The erection of two single storey extensions.

Appeals Withdrawn

None

Appeals Allowed

None

The Inspector's decision letter is shown on the following pages.



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 July 2011

by Mike Robins MSc BSc(Hons) MRTPI

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

Decision date: 20 July 2011

Appeal Ref: APP/R3325/D/11/2154255

29 St Marys Park, Huish Episcopi, Langport, Somerset TA10 9HD

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr C Jones against the decision of South Somerset District Council.
 - The application Ref 11/00316/FUL, dated 16 January 2011, was refused by notice dated 14 March 2011.
 - The development proposed is two extensions.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. I consider the main issue in this case is the effect of the proposed extensions on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. This appeal relates to extensions to the front and rear of a small bungalow on a relatively modern housing estate. The estate offers a variety of bungalows and two-storey houses, with most properties having generous plots. The open and spacious character is reinforced by well established hedges and shrub boundaries. The two-storey properties tend to have greater articulation with most showing some form of gable element to the front, for example those opposite the site, or the properties further along St Marys Park to the west and into The Firs.
4. The bungalows on the estate, however, tend to have a very simple, symmetrical and consistent form, and this is clearly evident along this side of St Marys Park between Nos 24 and 31.
5. The proposal would introduce an extension of approximately 4m to the rear. Although there is a public footpath to one side and a rear access road serving detached garages, this rear garden area is relatively well screened, and an electricity substation separates it from the road. I concur with the Council that this part of the scheme would present no significant harm to the overall character of the estate.
6. To the front, an extension of approximately 5m is proposed. This would be slightly offset to allow access through to the original hall and retention of a window to the front of the existing bedroom. This would, however, be a large extension in relation to the modest scale of the bungalow. Its length would

exceed any retained width to the front of the original property, and it would appear as a prominent and disproportionate addition, significantly altering the form of the dwelling.

7. Estates of this type often lack some of the traditional architectural features that establish character, and instead derive it from their consistent forms and spacing. I note the set back of this property from No 30 and the presence of a modest front gable feature to the bungalow opposite, No 36, as well as those in Parsonage Close, which integrate reasonably successfully into the streetscene. While this would suggest that a modest front extension may be acceptable here, the one that is proposed would be too large and would establish an incongruous form within the estate that would detract from its character.
8. The proposal overall would, therefore, conflict with the South Somerset Local Plan, adopted 2006, and Policies ST5 and ST6. These policies state that the scale and proportion of new development should relate to the character of the area, and respect the form, character and setting of the locality.
9. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Mike Robins

INSPECTOR

13. Planning Applications

The schedule of planning applications is attached.

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 1998 Issues

The determination of the applications which are the subject of reports in this plans list are considered to involve the following human rights issues: -

1. Articles 8: Right to respect for private and family life.
 - i) Everyone has the right to respect for his/her private and family life, his/her home and his/her correspondence.
 - ii) There shall be no interference by a public authority with the exercise of this right except such as in accordance with the law and is necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security, public safety or the economic well being of the country, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals, or for the protection of the rights and freedom of others.
2. The First Protocol

Every natural or legal person is entitled to the peaceful enjoyment of his/her possessions. No one shall be deprived of his possessions except in the public interests and subject to the conditions provided for by law and by the general principles of international law. The preceding provisions shall not, however, in any way impair the right of a State to enforce such laws as it deems necessary to control the use of property in accordance with the general interest or to secure the payment of taxes or other contributions or penalties.

Each report considers in detail the competing rights and interests involved in the application. Having had regard to those matters in the light of the convention rights referred to above, it is considered that the recommendation is in accordance with the law, proportionate and both necessary to protect the rights and freedoms of others and in the public interest.

*David Norris, Development Manager
david.norris@southsomerset.gov.uk or (01935) 462382*

Background Papers: *Individual planning application files referred to in this document are held in the Planning Department, Brympton Way, Yeovil, BA20 2HT*

Planning Applications – 24 August 2011

Planning Applications will be considered no earlier than 3.30 pm for this meeting

Members of the public who wish to speak about a particular planning item are recommended to arrive at 3.15 p.m.

The inclusion of two stars (**) as part of the Development Manager's recommendation indicates that the application will need to be referred to the 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 Regulation Committee even if it has not been two starred on the Agenda.

Item	Page	Ward	Application	Proposal	Address	Applicant
1	25	TURN HILL	09/04320/ FUL	Change of use of existing agricultural building and premises to light industrial use, extension to parking/turning area, mixers and associated works (Retrospective)	Land adj Belmont House, High Street, Aller	Mr N Robertson
2	34	BURROW HILL	11/02119/ FUL	Application to convert existing barn into 2 No. dwellings (Revised Application 08/00568/FUL)	Bridge Farm, Stembridge, Martock	Mrs C Paul

Officer Report On Planning Application: 09/04320/FUL

Proposal :	Change of use of existing agricultural building and premises to light industrial use, extension to parking/turning area, mixers and associated works (Retrospective)(GR 340390/128995)
Site Address:	Land Adj Belmont House, High Street, Aller
Parish:	Aller
TURN HILL Ward (SSDC Member)	Mr S Pledger (Cllr)
Recommending Case Officer:	Claire Alers-Hankey Tel: 01935 462295 Email: claire.alers-hankey@southsomerset.gov.uk
Target date :	14th January 2010
Applicant :	Mr Nathan Robertson
Agent: (no agent if blank)	
Application Type :	Minor Other less than 1,000 sq.m or 1ha

REASON FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE

This planning application was originally brought to the Area North Committee for determination in March 2010 at the request of the then Ward Member and Chair. At the March 2010 meeting, the majority of Members expressed their support for the application and it was proposed and seconded to grant permission. The justification was that the proposal would not be visually intrusive or prejudicial to residential amenity or highways safety, subject to the Section 106 agreement to tie the ownership of the property, Belmont House, to the business use of the land and safeguarding conditions. Members considered it necessary to tie Belmont House to the application site in the interests of residential amenity.

Regrettably the applicant has been unable to find a mortgage company that is willing to accept the terms of the S.106 agreement, which would tie the business to Belmont House. As such the application has now been brought back to the Area North Committee

The justification for the S.106 was due to the noise the business creates having an unacceptable relationship with Belmont House, unless it is being occupied by persons involved in the business running on the application site. The Council's solicitor has confirmed that the two properties cannot be tied together through a condition.

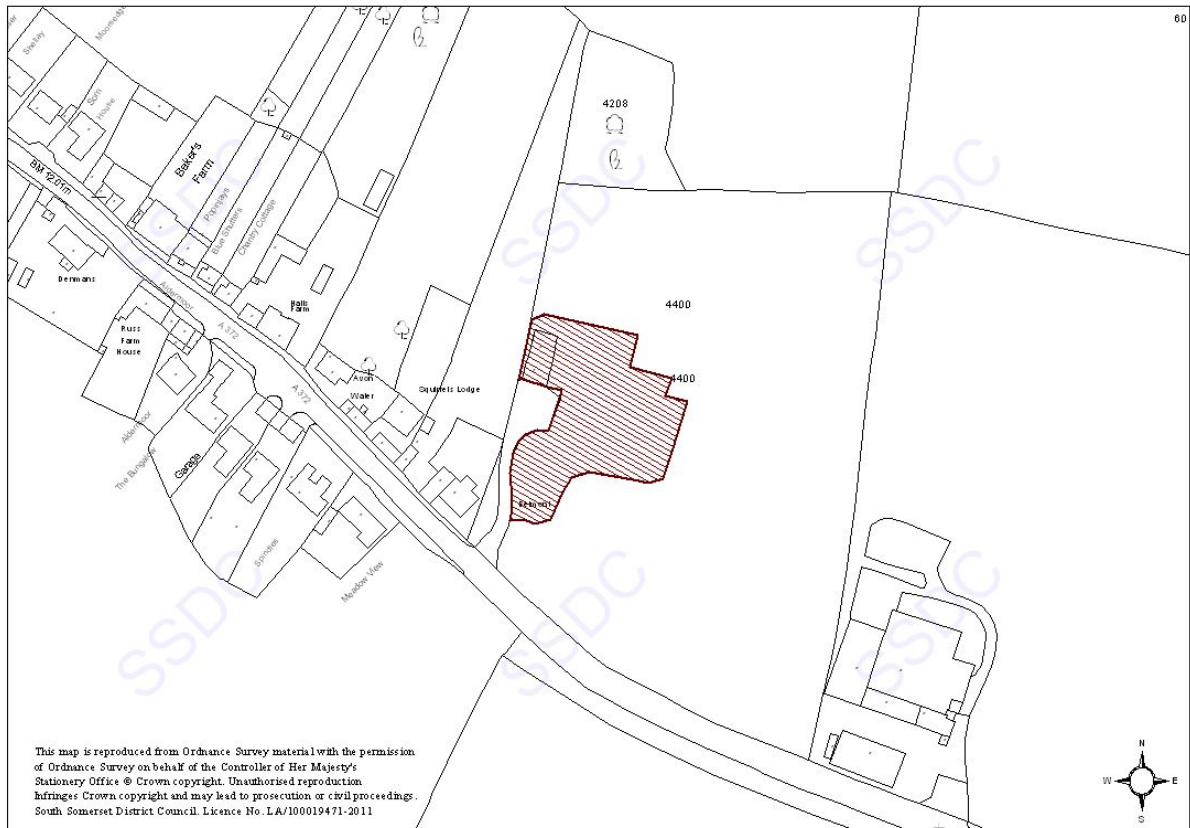
The applicant has submitted a further noise assessment report, which examines the relationship between Belmont House and the application site. This report has been forwarded to the Environmental Protection Officer, who has confirmed that he wishes to maintain his original objection as it is believed that the activities on the application site have the potential to cause loss of amenity to Belmont House.

As the S.106 agreement has not been agreed the case officer recommendation for refusal still stands, although in light of the committee's resolution it is recommended that the application be refused solely on the grounds of an adverse impact on residential amenity as follows:

The proposal would detract from the amenities of the occupiers of adjoining residential properties by reason of noise resulting from the business running on the site, which is contrary to Policy EP2 of the South Somerset Local Plan.

The previous report to committee is reproduced below.

SITE DESCRIPTION AND PROPOSAL



The site is located alongside Aller Road directly adjacent to the village of Aller, which is a settlement that does not have a defined development area. The site was previously an agricultural field with an agricultural shed on the western boundary, and a vehicular access in the southwest corner of the field.

This application seeks retrospective planning permission for the change of use of the land and building from agricultural to light industrial use, the siting of three storage containers, the siting of two mixers, and an extension to a turning and storage area. There is currently a business running from the site; the business produces and distributes a rubber based safety surface used on surfaces such as children's play areas. The business employs six full-time employees and two part time employees. Of these employees, four of the full-time workers live at Belmont House, Aller.

An acoustic report has been submitted by the applicant following the initial recommendation made by the Environmental Health Officer.

HISTORY

04/01067/FUL: Site for a security caravan. Application withdrawn on 30/06/2004.

94/00008/FUL: The erection of an agricultural building for the storage of hay and agricultural equipment. Granted conditional approval on 19/08/1994.

94/00007/AGN: Notification of intent to erect a building for the storage of animal feed and agricultural equipment. Planning permission required on 08/04/1994.

930671: The closure of existing access and the construction of a new vehicular access. Granted conditional approval on 10/09/1993.

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.

Regional Spatial Strategy:

Policy VIS 1 - Expressing the Vision

Policy VIS 2 - Principles for Future Development

Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan Review 1991-2011:

Policy STR1 - Sustainable Development

Policy STR6 - Development Outside Towns, Rural Centre and Villages

Policy 5 - Landscape Character

Policy 18 - Location of Land for Industrial, Warehousing and Business Development

Policy 19 - Employment and Community Provision in Rural Areas

Policy 49 - Transport Requirements of New Development

South Somerset Local Plan (Adopted April 2006):

Policy ST3 - Development Areas

Policy ST5 - General Principles of Development

Policy ST6 - The Quality of Development

Policy EC3 - Landscape Character

Policy EP2 - Pollution and Noise

Policy EP9 - Control of Other Potentially Polluting Uses

Policy TP6 - Non-Residential Parking Provision

Policy ME7 - Retention of Land and Premises in Rural Areas

CONSULTATIONS

AREA ENGINEER - No comment

COUNTY ARCHAEOLOGIST - No objection

PARISH COUNCIL - Unfortunately there was a split vote and the Parish Council could not make a recommendation on whether to grant or refuse permission for this planning application. Among the concerns expressed were:

- This application is outside the scope of the previous structure plan development boundary for Aller (therefore this development is going against the structure plan

and is within open land.

- Pollution both noise and odour, in this rural location
- The quantity of tyre crumb stored at this location within reasonable proximity of a residential area (one member seemed to think this contravened Home Office advice)
- If approved, the premises would have a permanent B2 class use which may cause concerns over future alternative businesses operating from the site
- Among the positives were:
- This site provides employment opportunities for the applicant and staff
- The applicant has taken steps to improve the situation, reduce visual impact and noise generated from the site.

If Development Control planners are mindful to approve this application, Aller Parish Council requests that consideration be applied to a condition restricting the hours of operation. The Parish Council would also want to see more detailed information regarding the planting plan and would like a condition that the planting would include mature specimens (with any specimens that fail to take being replaced within a reasonable timeframe).

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT - I note that the site was previously characterised by a single agricultural building, with site access and hardstanding to its south. This application has extended that hardstanding 2 x over the existing area, and adds mixers and containers to the east of the building, thus obtruding east into the adjoining field. This obtrusion is heightened by the construction of the 1.8m high close-board fence along the north boundaries. I am uncomfortable with the resultant footprint, which gives the development a much higher public profile, in a location that is not well related to the characteristic settlement form, which is tighter grained: closer to, and directly addressing the road. The extent to which the proposal obtrudes into the adjoining field - even with the well-intentioned planting scheme submitted - is also at variance with the landscape pattern, and thus exacerbates the adverse landscape character impact. In that respect, this application has no landscape support, as I view it to be contrary to local character, and at variance with the objectives of Policy EC3. However, should there be an over-riding case for approval then I would advise that appropriate mitigation would be a revision and supplementation of the landscape proposal, to ensure that planting lays on the external side of any timber fencing, and that the planting edge 'squares off' along its outer edge, to provide an authentic tie with the local hedgerow pattern - such would include further planting to the NE of the containers, and an enlarged area of planting to the SE of the bunding, to give a wooded effect.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MANAGER - Historically the village of Aller has always enjoyed and supported a small number of light industries and small businesses. These offered local employment opportunities that were lost over the years as employment sites gained change of use and local businesses were closed. This application does offer an opportunity to support a business in the locality and to secure a number of local jobs in otherwise challenging economic conditions. That said, my observations are made from an economic perspective and I do recognise that there are a number of policy issues relating to the application that may draw comments from planning colleagues.

COUNTY HIGHWAY AUTHORITY - It appears from the SSDC Local Plan that the settlement of Aller does not have any development boundaries and as a consequence under normal circumstances development is not permitted in this location. From a highway point of view, whilst it is noted that bus services (Nos 16, 903 and 905) pass the site these services are infrequent. As a consequence, staff/visitors of the new development are likely to be dependent on private vehicles in order to access the site. Such fostering of growth in the need to travel would be contrary to government advice

given in PPG13 and RPG10, and to the provisions of policies STR1 and STR6 of the Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan Review. In detail, the proposal is seeking to utilise the existing access directly off the A372, which is designated as a County Route. According to the Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan Review, unless the special need for and benefit of a particular development would warrant an exception, developments should not derive access directly from a County Route. The access itself emerges on to the A372 at a point where the speed of passing traffic is restricted to 30mph. As a consequence, the Highway Authority would wish to see visibility splays based on the minimum coordinates of 2.4m x 90.0m to the nearside carriageway edge in both directions. It is clear that at present this required level cannot be achieved to the southeast due to the presence of vegetation that fronts the highway. However, it is noted that the applicant has ownership of the adjoining land and as such the necessary improvements could be made although it should be noted that this is likely to result in a significant section of vegetation being altered. The Highway Authority has concerns regarding the level of visibility achieved to the northwest. At present given the presence of the porch of the adjoining property known as Belmont House, part of the nearside carriageway is concealed from view and as such approaching vehicles, especially motorbikes, are temporarily hidden from view of the driver of vehicles emerging from the site. Given the limitations of the access the Highway Authority would not wish to see a proposal that is likely to result in an increase in its use. Whilst it is acknowledged that the site was formerly used for agricultural purposes and as such would have generated a level of traffic movement, this proposal (given the number of proposed employees and deliveries associated with the use) is likely to result in an increase in traffic movements at this point. As a result of the above I would recommend that the application be refused on highway grounds (refusal reasons included).

FURTHER COMMENTS are as follows:

As you are aware the Highway Authority in its formal response to the Local Planning Authority recommended that the application be refused on the basis that the proposal was likely to result in an increase in the number of vehicular movements making use of the existing access. The Highway Authority have concerns regarding the standard of the existing access and in particular the level of visibility achieved by emerging vehicles on to the A372. Since that response I have met with the applicant and a number of other issues have been raised. It appears that this existing access had previously been approved by the Highway Authority in a previous application (93/00007/FUL). Having dug up the history and the Highway Authority's comments relating to this application it appears that this access was permitted on the basis that on balance this new arrangement was considered to have resulted in an improvement when compared to the previous access located further to the southeast. The second point raised by the applicant was that previously, in 2008, no objection was raised for an application seeking permission for a Vehicle Operating License at this site. As a consequence permission was granted enabling two vehicles and two trailers to operate from the site and therefore making use of the existing access. The Highway Authority acknowledges that as a result of this license being permitted a level of movement can take place at this point including those by larger, slower moving vehicles. However, the proposal submitted by the applicant indicates that 6 full time and 2 part time members of staff will be required as part of this development, and that occasional deliveries will also take place. Whilst the applicant has stressed that this development will be small scale the Highway Authority still have concerns that once established the business could expand and that it will be difficult for the Highway Authority to restrict the level of movement at this point. As a result, the Highway Authority are still of the opinion that the proposal if permitted is likely to result in an increase in the level of traffic making use of the access and as such the application should be refused.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH OFFICER - The noise report that has been submitted has indicated that noise from the site may cause problems to neighbouring properties, but

does not provide any recommendations as how to reduce the noise levels. Having visited a neighbouring property whilst the tumblers were in operation, I can confirm that noise from operations is audible in neighbouring gardens. I am sure with additional works the noise could be suppressed to a level that it will not in my opinion cause annoyance. But based on the current information before me I have to recommend refusal.

ENVIRONMENT AGENCY - No objection

REPRESENTATIONS

SIX LETTERS OF OBJECTION - Have been received, raising concerns over the following:

- Inappropriate and unjustified type of development for Aller
- The site has been operating for a lot longer than what is stated on the application form
- Potential for expansion of the business which will create a larger industrial site
- Noise impact on neighbours from machinery for several hours at a time
- Landscaping scheme will not reduce the impact on the landscape as it will take several years for planting to mature
- Smell of rubber spreads across village
- The application asks for additional car parking spaces which means the business is not for local employees
- Soakaways will not be able to cope with the amount of surface water runoff
- Application form states the operations take place within the workshops, but the majority of work occurs outside
- Concern over chemicals stored on site
- Works have been carried out on site without planning permission
- Fosters growth in the need to travel
- Harmful to rural quality of landscape
- Impact on residential amenity due to close proximity to residential properties
- Harmful to highway safety due to location of access close to bend
- No assessment of need has been carried out
- The proposal makes no provision for the removal of waste, and the proposal has not been subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment
- Proposal is contrary to various planning policies
- It contravenes Home Office and HSE advice on the location of sites processing tyre crumb
- Not sustainable
- Site is outside the defined development area
- Fire risk

THIRTEEN LETTERS OF SUPPORT - Have been received, raising the following points:

- Rural parishes desperately need the employment small businesses such as this provide
- The applicant has worked tirelessly to reduce the level of inconvenience to neighbours by erecting a solid timber fence to soften any noise generated, reduced working hours so as not to disturb neighbours, soundproofed the barn, proposed landscaping bunds to reduce the noise travel and visual impact of the machinery
- The application should be permitted with conditions to ensure neighbours and residents remain unaffected by this business
- A commercial use has existed on the site for in excess of 15 years

CONSIDERATIONS

Principle

Broadly speaking planning policy is very supportive of small-scale businesses in rural areas, because they can create local employment opportunities and benefit the local economy. Proposals that do not foster growth in the need to travel are also supported by various planning policies. The Parish Council and Economic Development Officer in their consultation responses have both recognised the benefits that the proposed business would provide to the local economy and local employment opportunities. The applicant has confirmed that the business employs four people who live in the property immediately adjacent to the site, which demonstrates that the proposal does not foster growth in the need to travel for over 50% of the employees.

However this proposal cannot be assessed purely on the economic and employment benefits offered. Other planning considerations such as highway safety, visual amenity and residential amenity need to be assessed against the relevant policies.

Highways

The County Highway Authority has raised a strong objection to the proposal on the basis that the existing access arrangement has restricted visibility splays. The Highways Authority consider the potential increase of traffic movements using the access, in addition to the restricted visibility, would be prejudicial to highway safety.

The applicant has submitted additional information, which shows evidence that a Vehicle Operating License has been permitted at the site. This license allows two vehicles and two trailers to use the site access. The Highway Authority acknowledge that as a result of this license being permitted a level of movement can take place at the point of access, including those by larger slower moving vehicles. However, the Highway Authority feels that once the business is established it could expand and then it would be difficult for the Highway Authority to restrict the level of movement at this point, from staff and deliveries.

In relation to the number of staff accessing the site, the applicant has clarified that the business has seven full time employees, four of which live at Belmont House adjacent to the site, and three of which travel from outside of Aller.

Landscape

The Landscape Architect has raised an objection to the proposal. This objection focuses on the increased footprint of development within what was previously an agricultural field, and the resulting impact on the landscape character of the area. The footprint has been significantly increased by increased hardstanding to provide turning and storage areas, and the siting of two mixers and three storage containers to the east of the existing building, meaning the development protrudes much further into the field. The obstruction in this location has been heightened by the construction of the 1.8m high close-board fence along the north boundaries. The resultant footprint makes the development much more visible from public vantage points, and the development does not relate well to the character of the adjacent settlement or the surrounding countryside.

The County Highway Authority have also indicated that the visibility to the southeast would need to be improved, which would result in a large proportion of the hedge on the road boundary being removed. This again would have a detrimental impact on the visual amenity of the area, as the hedge currently partially screens the site from the road.

Amenity

The impact on visual amenity has already been discussed above. Turning to residential amenity, the Environmental Health Officer has recommended refusal of the application

on the basis that the noise from the site causes an annoyance to nearby residents. An initial response from the Environmental Health Officer seemingly did not object to the proposal, however following the submission of an acoustic report that measured noise levels at the site, along with complaints from local residents to the Environmental Health department regarding noise, an objection was raised. Letters of objection have also been received objecting to the noise levels coming from the site.

Other objections raised

Five letters of objection have been received, and several valid points have been raised which have been discussed above. However there are other objections that have been made that are not valid planning considerations. For example, the fact that works were started prior to planning permission was applied for does not warrant a refusal reason in itself.

The Area Engineer has not raised an objection to the proposal and therefore it is considered the proposed soakaways can adequately cope with the amount of surface water run-off.

The application form does not state that chemicals are being stored on site, and therefore concerns over this are unfounded.

The fact that the proposal is seeking additional car parking spaces does not imply the employees are not local.

The proposal does not fall under Schedule 1 or Schedule 2 development under the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 1999, and therefore an Environmental Impact Assessment is not required.

Potential fire risk is also not considered to be a material planning consideration in this circumstance.

Conclusion

While the principle of a small-scale business in a rural area is viewed as being favourable, unfortunately the other planning considerations that are associated with the proposal are not satisfied. The County Highway Authority, Landscape Architect and Environmental Health Officer have all raised strong objections to the proposal. In addition to this, letters of objection have been received, and the Parish Council while recognising the merits of the application were unable to offer their full support to the proposal. Therefore on balance the proposal is considered unacceptable.

RECOMMENDATION

Permission be refused

SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING:

01. The proposed development constitutes an undesirable intrusion into an attractive area of open countryside to the detriment of the visual amenity of the locality and the landscape character of the area, contrary to Policy EC3 of the South Somerset Local Plan.
02. The proposal would detract from the amenities of the occupiers of adjoining residential properties by reason of noise resulting from the business running on the site, which is contrary to Policy EP2 of the South Somerset Local Plan.

03. The proposal is contrary to Policy 49 of the Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan Review since the increased use of the existing access together with the generation of additional conflicting traffic movements, such as would result from the proposed development, would be prejudicial to highway safety.
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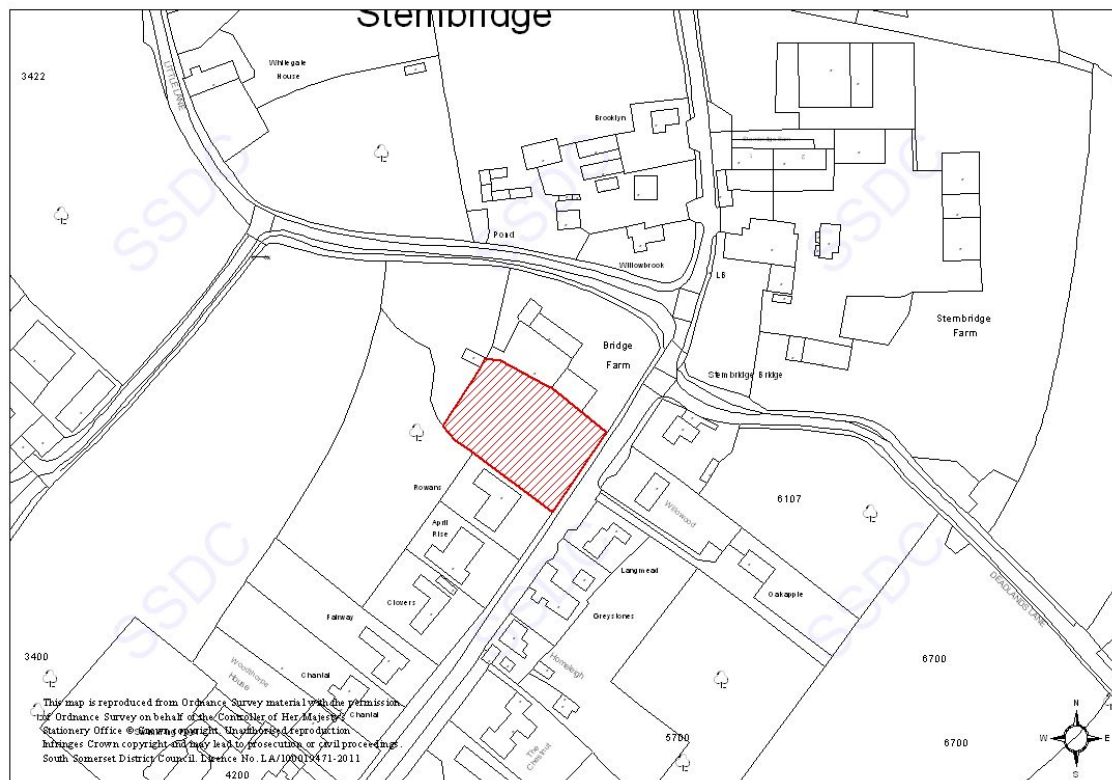
Officer Report On Planning Application: 11/02119/FUL

Proposal :	Application to convert existing barn into 2 No. dwellings (Revised Application 08/00568/FUL) (GR 342549/120122)
Site Address:	Bridge Farm, Stembridge, Martock
Parish:	Kingsbury Episcopi
BURROW HILL Ward (SSDC Member)	Mr Derek Yeomans (Cllr)
Recommending Case Officer:	Claire Alers-Hankey Tel: 01935 462295 Email: claire.alers-hankey@southsomerset.gov.uk
Target date :	18th August 2011
Applicant :	Mrs Clare Paul
Agent: (no agent if blank)	02i Design Consultants Bank Chambers Cheapside, Langport, Somerset TA10 9PD
Application Type :	Minor Dwellings 1-9 site less than 1ha

REASON FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE

This application is referred to the Area North Committee at the request of the Ward Member and with the agreement of the Chair, as the comments of the Parish Council are contrary to the officer's recommendation. The Ward Member has drawn attention to the fact that the site already has an extant permission for conversion and that the site needs to be made an attractive place, not like to present eyesore.

SITE DESCRIPTION AND PROPOSAL



The site is located within Stembridge, outside of any defined development area. The site comprises a very dilapidated stone barn, with a number of other agricultural buildings.

This application seeks permission for the part conversion and part re-build of the dilapidated stone barn into two dwellings and the demolition of most of the surrounding outbuildings on site. A stone barn to the north of the site is to be retained for parking, storage and a workshop.

The existing access is proposed to be utilised, with various improvements in terms of visibility and width of the access into the site.

This application differs from the previously approved scheme on site by including a small single storey extension to the southwest elevation, revising the internal layout and introducing several rooflights, openings and solar panels that were not on the previously approved scheme.

HISTORY

There is a lengthy planning history for the site, of particular relevance are:-

08/00568/FUL - Formation of access, rebuilding of barn (with some conversion) to form two dwellings and the erection of a garage block. Approved 05/08/2008.

04/02814/FUL - Retention of existing three-sided concrete and asbestos barn for dry storage purposes (variation of condition no.2 of 00/01856/FUL). Approved 17/11/2004.

02/02917/OUT - Redevelopment of existing agricultural units for residential use. Refused 03/12/2002 and subsequent appeal dismissed 15/08/2003.

00/01856/FUL - Formation of access, conversion of barn into two dwellings and the erection of a garage block (renewal of 94/02120/FUL). Approved 27/10/2000.

94/02120/FUL - Formation of access, conversion of barn into two dwellings and the erection of a garage block (renewal) Approved 21/12/95.

902165 - Outline application for the demolition of barns and the erection of two dwellings. Refused 14/12/90, subsequent appeal dismissed 11/09/91.

89/01817/FUL - Conversion of barn into two dwellings and erection of garage block. Approved 03/04/90.

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.

Saved policies of the Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan Review 1991-2011:

Policy STR1 - Sustainable Development

Policy STR6 - Development Outside Towns, Rural Centres and Villages

Saved policies of the South Somerset Local Plan:
Policy ST3 - Development Areas
Policy ST5 - General Principles of Development
Policy ST6 - The Quality of Development
Policy EH7 - The Conversion of Buildings in the Countryside

National Guidance:
PPS1 - Sustainable Development
PPS7 - Sustainable Development in Rural Areas

South Somerset Sustainable Community Strategy:
Goal 7 - Distinctiveness
Goal 8 - Quality Development
Goal 9 - Homes

CONSULTATIONS

PARISH COUNCIL - No objection, but states that the original plan for the new access approved under 08/00568/FUL, which has better visibility splays would be more acceptable for highway safety.

COUNTY HIGHWAY AUTHORITY - Puts forward a standard sustainability argument. In detail states the parking, turning area and visibility splays are all considered to be acceptable. No objection raised subject to recommended conditions.

AREA ENGINEER - No comment

ECOLOGIST - Is satisfied with the submitted bat survey report and recent update, which concludes that there is no significant likelihood of bats or birds being present and impacted.

NATURAL ENGLAND - No objection

REPRESENTATIONS

TWO LETTERS OF REPRESENTATION - Have been received, raising the following observations:

1. Why was the bat survey only carried out on the main barn and not the other buildings to be demolished?
2. Roof tiles should either be reclaimed or a similar approved alternative
3. If approved, condition 17 on the previous application should be applied as the site plan shows less space provided from what was previously approved
4. Condition 12 on the extant permission is for no working on site on Saturdays and Sunday - neighbour does not object to working at weekends, provided works are not excessively noisy
5. Adjacent site on the plan does not have access to the road, unlike the previously approved plans, and neighbour would not wish to see another access required off the highway into the adjacent site
6. The barns to be demolished should be removed as soon as possible, and the asbestos disposed of properly
7. A height restriction for the roadside hedge should be considered

CONSIDERATIONS

The relevant planning policy, EH7, requires that:-

1. The building has been marketed for one year to assess the potential for a commercial re-use of the building.

In this case, no evidence of marketing has been supplied with the application. However, the planning history shows that the residential conversion of the barns has been previously accepted.

2. The buildings are of a permanent and substantial construction, and are capable of conversion without major reconstruction.

The barn is in a very poor state and from the evidence of the structural survey submitted, as part of the application would need considerable work in the form of rebuilding to make it into a habitable property. To quote from the conclusions of the structural report:-

'the original roof timbers are on site and can be reused. The timber beams used to support the loft are on site, so basically the materials used to construct the original building are still available on site. This being so, the building could be rebuilt to follow the original pattern'

Therefore the building would have to be rebuilt to implement this permission, the supporting paragraphs to the policy clearly state that 'Buildings which are not of substantial construction and require major works and/or extension will not be considered suitable for conversion.'

The works now required clearly represent a rebuilding project which amounts to a new dwelling within the countryside outside of a defined development boundary

3. Their form, bulk and general design are in keeping with their surroundings.

It is considered that what is left of the barn is of an acceptable design that sits appropriately within the agricultural landscape. However, it is considered that the formalisation of the access and the removal of the existing outbuildings and the introduction of a garden, access and parking area along with related domestic paraphernalia would domesticate this piece of land and result in a foreign form of development that would have an adverse impact upon the landscape.

In the circumstances, it is not considered that this proposal represents conversion but amounts to a new dwelling within the countryside and should also be judged against policy ST3, this states that outside the defined development areas of towns, rural centres and villages, development will be strictly controlled and restricted to that which benefits economic activity, maintains or enhances the environment and does not foster growth in the need to travel. The only exceptions to this restrictive policy in terms of housing are if the proposal is for affordable or agricultural workers dwellings, this not being the case the proposal does not accord with this policy.

While an extant permission for a conversion scheme exists on the site, this revised proposal introduces a proliferation of openings in the form of windows, doors, and rooflights, which give the overall appearance of an untidy, and cluttered building which does not represent a sympathetically designed barn conversion scheme.

In conclusion, it is not considered that the building is capable of conversion without major

rebuilding works this would represent the building of a new dwelling within the countryside contrary to Policies STR1 and STR6 of the Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan Review 1991-2011 and ST3, ST6 and EH7 of the South Somerset Local Plan.

RECOMMENDATION

Permission be refused

SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING:

01. The building is incapable of conversion without major re-building works and is therefore tantamount to the building of a new dwelling in an unsustainable countryside location, for which no acceptable justification has been made. This is contrary to Policies STR1 and STR6 of the Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan Review and ST3, ST6 and EH7 of the South Somerset Local Plan.
-