

MEETING AW.05:1213  
DATE 19:09:12

### **South Somerset District Council**

**Minutes** of a meeting of the **Area West Committee** held at Tatworth Memorial Hall on **Wednesday, 19th September 2012.**

(5.30 p.m. – 11.08 p.m.)

**Present:**

**Members:** Cllr. Angie Singleton (in the Chair)

Michael Best	Nigel Mermagen
Dave Bulmer (from 5.42 p.m.)	Sue Osborne
John Dyke	Ros Roderigo
Carol Goodall	Kim Turner
Brennie Halse	Andrew Turpin
Jenny Kenton (until 6.20 p.m.)	Martin Wale

**Also Present:** Cllr. Peter Seib

**Officers:**

Andrew Gillespie	Area Development Manager (West)
Paul Philpott	Community Development Officer (West)
Zoe Harris	Community Regeneration Officer
Paula Goddard	Senior Legal Executive
Adrian Noon	Area Lead North/East
Andrew Gunn	Area Lead West
Linda Hayden	Planning Officer
Jo Morris	Committee Administrator

**(Note:** Where an executive or key decision is made, a reason will be noted immediately beneath the Committee's resolution.)

---

#### **47. Minutes (Agenda Item 1)**

The minutes of the meeting held on the 15<sup>th</sup> August 2012, copies of which had been circulated, were taken as read and, having been approved as a correct record, were signed by the Chairman.

---

#### **48. Apologies for Absence (Agenda Item 2)**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. Ric Pallister and Linda Vijeh.

---

#### **49. Declarations of Interest (Agenda Item 3)**

Cllr. Jenny Kenton declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 8 – Management of Chard Market, as she was a member of Chard Town Council.

Cllrs. Martin Wale and Dave Bulmer declared personal interests in Agenda Item 8 – Management of Chard Market and planning application no. 12/02448/FUL, as members of Chard Town Council.

Cllr. Brennie Halse declared a personal interest in planning application no. 12/02448/FUL, as she was a patient at Tawstock Medical Centre, Chard.

Cllr. Carol Goodall declared a personal interest in planning application nos. 12/01946/FUL and 12/02823/FUL, as she was a member of Ilminster Town Council.

Cllr. Sue Osborne declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 7 – Request for Community Grants in relation to Chaffcombe Village Hall, as the Village Hall was located within her Ward. She also declared a personal interest in planning application no. 12/02823/FUL, as in the past she had rented a property from Dillington Estate.

Cllr. Kim Turner declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 7 – Request for Community Grants in relation to Clapton and Wayford Village Hall, as the Village Hall was located within her SCC division.

---

## **50. Public Question Time (Agenda Item 4)**

No questions or comments were raised by members of the public.

---

## **51. Chairman's Announcements (Agenda Item 5)**

The Chairman referred to an e-mail she had recently sent to members regarding the proposed Planning Tour and asked members to let Andrew Gunn, Area Lead West, know if they wanted any particular sites included in the tour.

The Chairman reported that no formal appointment had been made from Area West to the South Somerset Disability Forum. Cllr. Kim Turner indicated that she was content to be appointed as the Area West representative. The formal appointment would be confirmed at the next meeting.

All District Councillors were invited to attend the Parish Workshop regarding Neighbourhood Planning.

---

## **52. Area West Committee - Forward Plan (Agenda Item 6)**

Reference was made to the agenda report, which informed members of the proposed Area West Committee Forward Plan.

The Area Development Manager referred to the report on the Chard Regeneration Scheme, which the Area West Committee had been due to receive in August. He asked members to accept the Economic Development Manager's request to bring forward reports when significant milestones had been reached.

Some members raised a slight concern over the delay in receiving a detailed report and felt that members should be kept updated on developments. It was hoped that a report would be received by the end of the year.

**RESOLVED:** that the Area West Forward Plan be noted as attached to the agenda subject to the above amendment being taken into account.

*(Resolution passed without dissent)*

*(Andrew Gillespie, Area Development Manager (West) – 01460 260426)  
(andrew.gillespie@southsomerset.gov.uk)*

---

### **53. Request for Community Grants – (Executive Decision) (Agenda Item 7)**

The Community Development Officer introduced the report, which asked Members to consider three applications for financial assistance.

#### **Chaffcombe Village Hall**

The Community Development Officer explained that Chaffcombe Village Hall had requested funding towards repairs and replacement of windows and door, and re-pointing of two walls to the rear storage shed. He reported that the hall was well used and that funding of £150 had been secured from the Parish Council towards the project. As outlined in the report, he was recommending that the grant be awarded in full.

Mr Mike Miles, representing Chaffcombe Village Hall addressed the Committee. He explained that Chaffcombe Village Hall had become a Charitable Trust and was required to comply with rules and regulations imposed by the Charity Commission. The village hall was a well run organisation and had applied for funding on this occasion due to the large expenditure of the project. The village hall was located in the centre of the village and served approximately 200 residents, as well as the surrounding areas. He referred to there being no other community facilities within the area and that the village hall was a very important facility, which offered a wide range of events including art classes, yoga class, a singing group and regular social mornings. He informed Members about the types of fundraising events held to raise money towards the project. He referred to the proposed work required to the hall including repairs to three wooden windows in the main hall, replacement of windows in the kitchen and bathroom extension and re-pointing of the storage shed. In summary, he stated that the village hall was a well run organisation serving a wide geographical area, the building was well used and the work proposed was necessary to maintain continuation of the hall.

The Ward Member commented that there was no other community facility within the area and fully supported the application.

Members unanimously supported the Officer's recommendation to award the grant in full.

#### **Chard Methodist Church Hall**

The Community Development Officer explained that Chard Methodist Church Hall had requested a grant towards replacement of an outdated kitchen. He referred to the report, which recommended that the grant be awarded in full subject to the approval of a grant from Chard Town Council. He was pleased to report that since writing the report, Chard Town Council had awarded a grant of £1,000 towards the project.

Mollie Blowers, representing Chard Methodist Church Hall addressed the Committee. She explained that the current kitchen facilities were inadequate and new equipment and

refurbishment was desperately needed. She further explained that funds of £3,750 had been raised through fundraising such as community lunches, donations and sales towards the project. She informed Members that the grant funding would be used towards the replacement of flooring and a new dishwasher. In conclusion, she commended the help received from the Community Development Officer.

The Ward Members commented that the hall kitchen was in desperate need of an overhaul and commended the fundraising undertaken towards the project. The Hall was very well used by a number of local groups and greatly benefited the local community.

Members unanimously supported the Officer's recommendation to award the grant in full.

### **Clapton and Wayford Village Hall**

The Community Regeneration Officer explained that the village hall was the only community facility left in the village. With the aid of photographs, the Community Regeneration Officer summarised the proposed works, which included replacing the old flat roof with a pitch roof, replacing the entrance doors and frames, upgrading the foyer and replacing inner doors. The hall was built a long time ago and the proposed works were much needed. The hall was well used with various weekly and monthly events being held.

Reg Mussett, representing Clapton and Wayford Village Hall addressed the Committee. He explained that the hall was built in 1961, was a major feature in the area and over the years had gone into disrepair. The hall was the only local amenity left in the village and also served the surrounding areas including Hewish and the edges of Crewkerne. He referred to the current problems experienced in the hall including a leaking roof over the ladies toilets which meant one of the cubicles was often out of action due to flooding and that the roof could no longer be repaired. The entrance doors were in desperate need of being replaced as the hall was losing heat particularly in the cold weather. The hall was well used and regular activities included an arts club and knit & natter; it was also well supported by the Parish Council. In conclusion, he stated that the improvements would make a great difference to the long term viability of the hall.

The Community Regeneration Officer explained that the Awards for All bid was a strong robust bid, which she hoped would be successful. The District Council's grant would only be paid out upon receipt of an invoice and if the bid to Awards for All was unsuccessful, she would work with Clapton and Wayford Village Hall to obtain funding for the project elsewhere.

In response to a member question, it was noted that there tended to be a fairly quick turn around for bids submitted to Awards for All.

During discussion, Members were assured that the Community Regeneration Officer would use her best endeavours to ensure that the work goes ahead.

In response to a question regarding fundraising, members were informed that a lot of the work associated with the project such as painting and decorating of the hall was 'in kind' work and would be undertaken by volunteers.

The Ward Member expressed her support for the application. The hall was very well supported with events being well attended by the local community and was a much needed focal point in the village.

Members unanimously supported the Officer's recommendation to award the grant in full.

- RESOLVED:**
- (1) That a grant of £1,390 be awarded to Chaffcombe Village Hall towards repairs and replacement of windows and door and re-pointing of two walls to rear storage shed.
  - (2) That a grant of £6,000 be awarded to Clapton and Wayford Village Hall towards the replacement of leaking flat roof and entrance doors and the upgrading of the foyer and inner doors.
  - (3) That a grant of £3,659 be awarded to Chard Methodist Church Hall towards replacement of an outdated kitchen.

*(Voting: unanimous)*

**Reason:** To consider three applications for financial assistance.

*(Paul Philpott, Community Development Officer (West) – 01460 260359)*

*([paul.philpott@southsomerset.gov.uk](mailto:paul.philpott@southsomerset.gov.uk))*

*(Zoe Harris, Community Regeneration Officer – 01460 260423)*

*([zoe.harris@southsomerset.gov.uk](mailto:zoe.harris@southsomerset.gov.uk))*

---

#### **54. Management of Chard Market (Agenda Item 8)**

The Community Regeneration Officer summarised the agenda report, which set out new arrangements for the management of Chard Market.

During discussion, Members supported the new arrangements for the management of Chard Market including the Market Charter being transferred back to Chard Town Council in the future. Members hoped that there would be scope within the future regeneration of Chard to look at increasing and relocating the market.

Members were content to approve the Officer's recommendation as outlined in the report and thanked the Community Regeneration Officer for her work.

**RESOLVED:** That Chard Town Council be granted a licence to operate Chard Market from Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> September 2012.

*(Resolution passed without dissent)*

**Reason:** To approve new arrangements for the management of Chard Market.

*(Zoe Harris, Community Regeneration Officer – 01460 260423)*

*([zoe.harris@southsomerset.gov.uk](mailto:zoe.harris@southsomerset.gov.uk))*

---

#### **55. Reports from Members on Outside Organisations (Agenda Item 9)**

No reports were made at the meeting by members who represented the Council on outside applications.

---

## 56. Feedback on Planning Applications Referred to the Regulation Committee (Agenda Item 10)

There was no feedback to report as there were no planning applications that had been referred recently by the Committee to the Regulation Committee.

**NOTED.**

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

---

## 57. Planning Appeals (Agenda Item 11)

The Committee noted the details contained in the agenda report, which informed members of planning appeals lodged, dismissed and allowed.

**NOTED.**

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

---

## 58. Date and Venue for Next Meeting (Agenda Item 13)

Members noted that the next scheduled meeting of the Committee would be held on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> October 2012 at 5.30pm at Merriott Village Hall.

**NOTED.**

*(Jo Morris, Committee Administrator – 01935 462055)  
(jo.morris@southsomerset.gov.uk)*

---

## 59. Planning Applications (Agenda Item 12)

The Committee considered the applications set out in the schedule attached to the agenda and the planning officers gave further information at the meeting and, where appropriate, advised members of letters received as a result of consultations since the agenda had been prepared.

### **12/01946/FUL – Formation of new access and parking, 17 The Beacon, Ilminster – Mr T Broom**

The application had been deferred at the last Area West Committee meeting in order to invite the Highways Officer to attend the meeting. The Planning Officer, with the aid of slides and photographs, summarised the details of the application as set out in the report. He updated members that an e-mail had been received from a nearby neighbour raising objections to the number of entrances and suggested a number of conditions. The Officer's recommendation was for approval.

Members raised several queries to which the Highway Officer's response included:

- There was adequate room for two cars to pass each other;
- It was unreasonable to insist upon a turning area;
- It was difficult to refuse the application on the grounds of highway safety as there was no record of accidents reported to the Police;
- It was considered that the proposal allowed for considerable better lines of sight than cars reversing out of garages, which currently took place along The Beacon;

- The existing accesses operated safely at the present time and there was no evidence of any accesses causing a problem;
- The Highway Authority could not make the judgement that the proposal would be more dangerous than the current situation.

The Applicant, Mr Trevor Broom, clarified that he was requesting a two vehicle access way and that the application was misleading. He referred to the proposal creating off road parking for vehicles, which he considered to be a better option than the current situation.

The Area Lead North/East asked the Highways Officer to comment on the reduction from 3 off street parking spaces, as referred to in the officer's report, to 2 spaces as stated by the applicant. The Highway Officer confirmed that the Highway Authority recommendation of approval still stood.

Ward Member, Cllr. Kim Turner commented that her main concern related to cars reversing onto the highway and there already being a speed problem along the stretch of road. She was unable to support the current application and would be more content if there was a turning point.

Ward Member, Cllr. Carol Goodall raised concerns over highway safety and referred to the speed of cars travelling along the stretch of road. Due to safety concerns, she was unable to support the application.

During discussion, members raised several concerns over vehicles having to reverse onto the highway and felt that the proposal would increase the potential for accidents. Concerns were also expressed over the lack of visibility due to parked cars along the road and the speed of traffic.

The Senior Legal Executive reminded members that the Highway Authority had no objections to the proposals and that if members were minded to go against the Officer's recommendation the applicant could lodge an appeal against the decision and that full precise planning reasons for refusal would need to be agreed.

It was proposed and seconded to refuse the application contrary to the officer's recommendation on the grounds of safety concerns, lack of turning, alignment of the road would be detrimental to highway safety and contrary to Policy ST5. On being put to the vote the proposal was carried 9 in favour and 3 against.

**RESOLVED:** That planning application no. 12/01946/FUL be REFUSED contrary to the officer's recommendation for the following reason:

The proposed creation of an off-street parking area, by reason of the lack of turning area, would result in vehicles either reversing into the site or onto the public highway. Such manoeuvring, by reason of the lack of visibility due to parked cars and the alignment of the road and the speed of traffic, would detrimental to highways safety. As such the proposal is contrary to saved policy ST5 of the South Somerset Local Plan (2006), saved policy 49 of the Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan (2000) and the policies contained within the National Planning policy Framework.

*(Voting: 9 in favour, 3 against)*

**12/02823/FUL – The installation of an extended 10MW photovoltaic array, Parsonage Barn, Stocklinch Road, Whitelackington – Solar Century**

The Planning Officer updated members that an additional 8 letters of objection had been received raising objections similar to those outlined in the report regarding noise nuisance and visual amenity. A letter in support of the application had been received; the CPRE (Campaign to Protect Rural England) had submitted further comments and the County Archaeologist had raised no objections to the application. The Planning Officer, with the aid of slides and photographs, summarised the details of the application as set out in the report. It was noted that the application was seeking permission for 41,000 additional panels located in single rows with an additional 5 inverter buildings. The main considerations related to landscape character and visual amenity, residential amenity, ecology, impact upon setting of Listed Building, Highway Safety and Flooding. The Officer recommendation was for approval.

In response to questions, the Planning Officer clarified points of detail raised by members, which included the following:

- The planting would alleviate the affect on the landscape and all hedgerow flail would be lifted to ensure that the height of the hedge increased;
- It was clarified that the panels would be removed after 25 years;
- The height of the panels would allow grazing of sheep to take place;
- The fencing would be deer proof;
- It was difficult to attribute community benefit to a scheme such as this and there was no planning justification to make this acceptable;
- The Landscape Architect was content that the shrubs would grow up over time;
- The panels would be anchored into the ground;
- The Planning Officer had contacted Cornwall Council who had approved 40 applications with no issues of noise being reported;
- One of the suggested conditions would ensure that planting would take place within the planting season;
- Clarification over the grading of the land;
- If the applicant was in agreement, flailing of the hedge beyond the application site could be achieved by an additional condition.

The Committee noted the comments of Claire Hart of Stocklinch Parish Council. She felt that the photos displayed did not show the extent of the area that the proposal would cover. She referred to Stocklinch being a picturesque village with beautiful houses and that the proposed development would be a blot on the landscape and not in keeping with the scenic surroundings. She commented that the screening would never improve the site and would take years to grow.

The Committee then noted the comments of Belinda Elks, Wendy Lutley, H N Best and David Tucker, in objection to the application. Points raised included the following:

- The proposed planting was grossly inadequate;
- The proposal would be visible from a wide area and would be a blot on the landscape;
- Concerns about the proposal causing a glare;
- Concerns over lack of screening and the size of the proposal;
- Inadequate consultation on the screening, glare and noise;
- The scale of the current application was out of keeping with the wider historic landscape;
- Clarification required regarding the grade of the land at the site;



- No consideration had been given to the sound generated by the traffic on the A303. Concerns that that there would be increased noise transmitted back to Stocklinch;
- The Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment was considered to be inaccurate;
- Objections to the use of good farming land which can be used to grow food becoming unproductive;
- Lack of evidence regarding the quality of the land.

The Applicant's Agent, Mr Andrew Troop clarified that the inverter buildings would be made of timber and that he would be content to extend the hedgerow beyond the red line. He referred to the issues raised concerning noise and pointed out that the land was below the height of the road and therefore the noise would not be any worse. He confirmed that consultation had taken place with the Chairman of Stocklinch Parish Council. With reference to the grading of the land, he explained that the full assessment was available upon request and that it was a mix of 3a and 3b, part of it was in a flood plain and would be able to support crops.

Landscape Architect, Philip Hanson, representing the Applicant referred to the key issues outlined in the submitted Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment some of which included proposals to strengthen the existing hedgerows on the western, northern and southern boundaries. It was anticipated that the hedgerow would grow 1-2 metres in height in two years.

Ward Member, Cllr. Kim Turner expressed concerns over inadequate landscaping and that the proposal needed to be screened from the A303. She also felt that further information should have been included in the report relating to the quality and previous usage of the land.

Ward Member, Cllr. Carol Goodall commented that her biggest concern related to the lack of landscaping and commented on the need for additional planting and that some of the trees should be evergreen.

During discussion, Members raised a number of issues, which included the following:

- The site would need to be well screened to avoid visual impact;
- Concerns over the removal of a food source;
- Concerns over setting a precedent for further larger sites;
- A request for written agreement that a greater length of the hedgerow would be flailed;
- Request for a management plan;
- The conditions of shielding were insufficient and it was felt that bunding would be more appropriate on the site;
- It was felt that the views of the Stocklinch Ward Member should have been included in the report as this was a 'major major' application.

The Area Lead North/East referred to the issue of land classification set out on page 44 of the agenda report and commented that the application brought into balance the benefits from renewable energy versus visual impact. He confirmed that the land would not be developed in the sense of built development and could still be brought back into food production in the future. Reference was also made to whether the visual impact could be made acceptable.

During consideration of the item, advice was sought from the Senior Legal Executive as to whether the application could be referred to the Regulation Committee for determination. Following a short discussion, Members decided against referring the application to the Regulation Committee and felt that further consideration should be

given to the landscaping issues and also requested the attendance of Principal Landscape Officer at the next meeting.

If was proposed and seconded to defer consideration of the application to the next meeting of the Area West Committee meeting. On being put to the vote the proposal was carried unanimously.

- RESOLVED:**
- (1) That planning application no. 12/02823/FUL be DEFERRED to the next Area West Committee meeting to reconsider landscaping strategy, particularly:-
    - The need for additional supplementary planting
    - The possibility of bunding
    - To agree management strategy, especially to hedge along A303, including land outside site.
  - (2) That the Principal Landscape Officer attends the next Area West Committee meeting.

*(Voting: unanimous)*

**12/02448/FUL – Erection of a new single story medical centre with associated external works and car parking (revised application), Land part of Playing Field, St Marys Crescent, Chard – Haven Health Properties Ltd**

The Planning Officer updated Members with an additional letter. With the aid of slides and photographs, he summarised the details of the application as set out in the report. The key issues related to the loss of part of the school playing field and highway issues. The Planning Officer's recommendation was for refusal.

In response to questions, the Planning Officer clarified points of detail raised by members, which included the following:

- The playing field was unmarked but still in a useable condition;
- The playing field was still owned by Somerset County Council and was on part of the school playing field;
- The amount of land loss would be approximately a third;
- That if members were minded to approve the application, it would need to be referred to the National Planning Casework Unit;
- It was confirmed that a representative from Sport England had visited the site.

The Committee noted the comments of Helen Hamble, District Nurse on behalf of Chard Community Nursing Team and Linda Bickerton, Practice Manager at Tawstock Medical Centre in support of the application. Points raised included the following:

- The changes taking place to District Nursing. The proposed application would offer the opportunity to house the whole District Nursing Team in one place offering an efficient service reducing hospital admissions;
- The proposed site was located in the centre of the town which would allow the majority of patients to walk to the surgery helping to reduce the need to travel and congestion in Chard;
- Reference was to new housing developments in Chard and the need for Health Services to expand;
- The current site was unsuitable and new facilities was very much needed;

- Refusal of the application would mean loss of funding for expanding services in Chard as funding was only guaranteed until the end of the year;
- The current premises were not adequate for the services provided and did not allow for expansion.

The Applicant, Mr Michael Luckley referred to the extensive process undertaken to bring the application forward and that the proposed design and site was appropriate for Chard. Reference was made to the Sport England objections and comment was expressed that the land was not used or needed and that football/rugby etc. was capable of being accommodated on the remainder of land. In conclusion, he commented that there was a desperate need for proper medical facilities in Chard.

Ward Member, Brennie Halse commented that she supported the Officer's recommendation to refuse the application. Although Tawstock Medical Centre was desperate for new premises she felt that the proposed location was not suitable. She felt that a contribution of £50,000 was not an acceptable replacement for the loss of the playing field. She also referred to concerns of highway safety and commented that the proposed entrance to the Medical Centre was very narrow and would be unable to cope with extra traffic flow and there was no clear visibility.

During discussion, some Members in support of the application commented that the surgery was desperately needed and the location was ideal and would mean that a large number of patients would be able to walk to the surgery. Members noted that the Highway Authority had no objections to the application. It was felt that the playing field was of no particular benefit to the community of Chard. Those members speaking against the application were concerned about the proposal leaving a significantly smaller school playing field and felt that that £50,000 was not adequate to provide for new provision.

The Officer's recommendation to refuse the application was proposed and seconded. On being put to the vote, members voted 4 in favour and 8 against. Members subsequently proposed and seconded to approve the application contrary to the officer's recommendation, subject to the conditions and justification as recommended by the Area Lead. On being put to the vote, members voted 8 in favour and 4 against.

Cllr. Paul Maxwell requested his vote against the application be recorded in the minutes.

**RESOLVED:** That planning application no. 12/02448/FUL be APPROVED contrary to the officer's recommendation for the following reason:-

That provision of a new medical centre would provide significant community benefits that would outweigh the loss of this part of the playing field. The proposed building and site layout are of an acceptable design and detailing that would have no adverse impact on visual amenity or the character of the locality. Adequate provision has been made for parking and the access arrangements would not be prejudicial to highways safety. As such the proposal complies with saved policies ST5, ST6, EH10 and CR1 of the South Somerset Local Plan (2006), saved policy 49 of the Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan (2000) and the policies contained within the National Planning Policy Framework.

Subject to:-

- a) Referral to the National Planning Casework Unit;

- b) The prior completion of a section 106 agreement (in a form acceptable to the Council's solicitor(s)) before the decision notice granting planning permission is issued to provide for a contribution of £50,000 to mitigate the loss of this part of the playing to the satisfaction of the Assistant Director (Wellbeing);
- c) The following conditions:-
  1. Time Limit
  2. Plans list
  3. Agreement of external materials
  4. Agreement of landscaping
  5. Agreement of boundary treatments and hard surfacing
  6. Agreement of surface water drainage
  - 7-10. The 4 highways conditions as set out on page 54 of the officer report
  11. Agreement of roof lights and solar panels
  12. Agreement of any external lighting
  13. Approved access to be implemented prior to commencement

*(Voting: 8 in favour, 4 against)*

**12/01733/FUL – Erection of an agricultural building, Land at Beetham, Higher Beetham, Whitestaunton – Mr K Parris**

The Planning Officer updated Members that a local resident had submitted a water analysis report together with some suggested clauses. Members were informed that a letter had been received from the Applicant's Agent outlining concerns relating to Condition 6 and commented that the barn would need to be used outside of the times outlined in the planning report. The Planning Officer, with the aid of slides and photographs, summarised the details of the application as set out in the report. The key considerations related to local/residential amenity, landscape character, drainage and highway safety. She reported an amendment to Condition 6 to allow the barn to be used in emergencies for animal health reasons between 1<sup>st</sup> October in any one year and 30<sup>th</sup> April in the succeeding year. The Planning Officer's recommendation was for approval.

In response to questions, the Planning Officer clarified points of detail raised by members, which included the following:

- The Blackdown Hills AONB was typically consulted on larger schemes but not consulted on all planning applications. Reference to the AONB had been made by the SSDC Landscape Architect as outlined in the report;
- The Environment Agency would be the body responsible for maintaining the suggested informatives relating to drainage and manure;
- A previous application had been refused on the grounds that the proposal was too close to a caravan site.

The Committee noted the comments of Mrs Hilary Cumming, Andrew Warren, David London and Marion Edwards in objection to the application. Views expressed included the following:

- The nearest properties to the site did not have mains water supply and all their water was provided from local springs;

- The proposed development had the potential to greatly affect the quality of the ground water;
- The proposal was located on a site of historical interest and was not supportive of the AONB location;
- The proposed location and access would mean an increase in traffic;
- There were other sites that could serve the purpose without interfering with existing residents;
- There was a lack of facilities for leaking slurry.

The Ward Member commented that the siting of the proposal development was detrimental to local residents. She did not believe that the proposed development would only result in one extra traffic movement per day and that this would not be good husbandry. She referred to the potential issues of odour affecting neighbouring properties, pollution from livestock slurry to the water supply and blocked drains. She supported the proposal for a large agricultural holding but felt that the location was unsuitable due to the adverse impact on the ground water.

In response to a member comment, the Area Lead confirmed that there were no Sites of Site of Special Scientific Interest within 1km of the proposed site.

During the ensuing discussion, Members raised concerns over the location of the proposed site and the potential contamination of local groundwater on the spring water supply.

It was proposed and seconded to refuse the application contrary to the Officer's recommendation as it was felt that the proposed building was not justified in the location, it would have an adverse impact on the ground water; and the impact on the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty was not justified. On being put to the vote the proposal was unanimously supported.

**RESOLVED:** That planning application no. 12/01733/FUL be REFUSED contrary to the officer's recommendation for the following reason:

It has not been satisfactorily demonstrated that the proposed building is justified in this location and that it would have an adverse impact on ground water. As such its impact on the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty has not been justified and the proposal is contrary to policies EU7, EC2, EC3, ST5 and ST6 of the South Somerset Local Plan (2006).

*(Voting: unanimous)*

### **12/02390/ADV – Display on 2 No. non illuminated directional signs, Land at Ham Farm Lane, Combe St Nicholas – Mr Ivor Hutchings**

The Planning Officer, with the aid of slides and photographs, summarised the details of the application as set out in the report. It was noted that the Highway Authority had raised objections to the application and that 4 accidents had been recorded along the road. The main considerations related to amenity and public safety. The Council's Landscape Architect had raised concerns relating to cumulative impact and cluttering in the countryside. The Planning Officer's recommendation was for refusal.

In response to a member question, the Planning Officer confirmed that the County Highway Authority still maintained concerns over the related signage causing distraction to drivers on the A303. It was clarified that the Highway Agency had raised no objections.

The Area Lead North/East reminded Members that if they were minded to go against the Officer's recommendation and approve the application they could set a precedent for future signage along the A303 and that there should be clear justification for doing so.

The Applicant, Mr Ivor Hutchings informed Members that he had diversified into the Bed and Breakfast business just over a year ago and that the business was proving quite successful. He explained that most of his business was from passing trade and previously he had erected signage, but due to issues with planning permission, the signs had to be removed. He stated that the proposed signs were essential for his business and the position of the signs would give motorists plenty of time before needing to turn off. The location of the proposed signs was on a steep road and cars did not tend to move fast. He referred to the accident black spot being located further up the road.

Ward Member, Cllr. Ros Roderigo commented that the proposed signs were small, the application had received support from the Parish Council and no objections had been received from the Highway Agency. She had consulted with the local PCSO, the Parish Council, two local Police Officers and the near neighbours, and there appeared to be no recollection of any accidents along the stretch of road where the proposed signed would be located. The signs would be located on the applicant's land and would not been seen unless specifically looking at them and would therefore not cause any distraction. She expressed her support for the application and felt that the tourism industry should be supported.

It was proposed and seconded to approve the application contrary to the officer's recommendation, subject to the conditions and justification as recommended by the Area Lead. On being put to the vote the proposal was carried unanimously.

**RESOLVED:** That planning application no. 12/02390/ADV be APPROVED contrary to the officer's recommendation for the following reason:

The proposed signs are justified to support this local business, which forms part of a scheme of farm diversification. There would be no adverse impact, cumulative or otherwise, on the character and appearance of the locality. Notwithstanding the views of the highways authority, the signs would not be prejudicial to highways safety. As such the proposal complies with policies ST5, ST6, EC3 and MS7 of the South Somerset Local Plan (2006) and the policies contained within the National Planning Policy Framework.

Subject to the standard advert conditions.

*(Voting: unanimous)*

---

.....  
Chairman