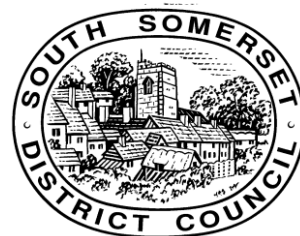


South Somerset District Council

Notice of Meeting



Area West Committee

Making a difference where it counts

Wednesday 21st November 2012

5.30 pm

**Henhayes Centre,
South Street Car Park,
Crewkerne,
Somerset. TA18 8DA**

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



The public and press are welcome to attend.

If you would like any further information on the items to be discussed, please ring the Agenda Co-ordinator, Jo Morris on Yeovil (01935) 462462
email: jo.morris@southsomerset.gov.uk

This Agenda was issued on Tuesday 13th November 2012.

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

Area West Membership

Chairman: Angie Singleton

Vice-Chairman: Paul Maxwell

Michael Best
David Bulmer
John Dyke
Carol Goodall
Brennie Halse

Jenny Kenton
Nigel Mermagen
Sue Osborne
Ric Pallister
Ros Roderigo

Kim Turner
Andrew Turpin
Linda Vijeh
Martin Wale

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:-

Councillor Cathy Bakewell and Councillor Jill Shortland.

South Somerset District Council – Corporate Aims

Our key aims are: (all equal)

- Jobs – We want a strong economy which has low unemployment and thriving businesses
- Environment – We want an attractive environment to live in with increased recycling and lower energy use
- Homes – We want decent housing for our residents that matches their income
- Health and Communities – We want communities that are healthy, self-reliant and have individuals who are willing to help each other

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

There are no planning applications for consideration at this meeting.

Highways

A representative from the Area Highways Office will attend the Committee quarterly in February, May, August and November. They will be available half an hour before the commencement of the meeting 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 3 minutes on agenda items; and
- see agenda reports.

Meetings of the Area West Committee are held monthly at 5.30 p.m. on the 3rd Wednesday of the month in venues throughout Area West.

Agendas and minutes of Area Committees are published on the Council’s website www.southsomerset.gov.uk

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 3 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 and/or Agent
District Council Ward Member
County Council Division 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 Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI) or a personal and prejudicial interest

In relation to Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, a Councillor is prohibited by law from participating in the discussion about the business on the agenda that relates to this interest and is also required to leave the room whilst the relevant agenda item is being discussed.

Under the new Code of Conduct adopted by this Council in July 2012, a Councillor with a personal and prejudicial interest (which is not also a DPI) will be afforded the same right as a

member of the public to speak in relation to the relevant business and may also answer any questions, 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.

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Area West Committee

Wednesday 17th October 2012

Agenda

Preliminary Items

1. **To approve as a correct record the minutes of the previous meeting held on 17th October 2012**
2. **Apologies for Absence**
3. **Declarations of Interest**

In accordance with the Council's current Code of Conduct (adopted July 2012), which includes all the provisions relating to Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI), personal and prejudicial interests, Members are asked to declare any DPI and also any personal interests (and whether or not such personal interests are also "prejudicial") in relation to any matter on the agenda for this meeting. A DPI is defined in The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012 (SI 2012 No. 1464) and Appendix 3 of the Council's Code of Conduct. A personal interest is defined in paragraph 2.8 of the Code and a prejudicial interest is defined in paragraph 2.9. 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 any relevant 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:

Cllr. Mike Best
Cllr. Ros Roderigo
Cllr. Angie Singleton
Cllr Linda Vijeh

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. Public Question Time

This is a chance to ask questions, make comments and raise matters of concern.

Parish/Town Councils may also wish to use this opportunity to ask for the District Council’s support on any matter of particular concern to their Parish/Town.

Anyone wishing to raise matters in relation to items on the agenda may do so at the time the item is considered.

5. Chairman’s Announcements

<i>Items for Discussion</i>	<i>Page Number</i>
6. Area West Committee - Forward Plan	1
7. Request for Community Grants	5
8. County Highway Authority Report	8
9. Area West Development Work Programme Overview 2012-13	10
10. Budget Monitoring Report for the Period Ending 30th September 2012	15
11. Area West – Reports from Members on Outside Bodies	21
12. Feedback on Planning Applications referred to the Regulation Committee	22
13. Planning Appeals	23
14. Date and Venue for Next Meeting	31

There are no planning applications for consideration at this meeting.

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.

Area West Committee – 21st November 2012

6. Area West Committee - Forward Plan

Strategic Director: Rina Singh (Place and Performance)
Assistant Director: Helen Rutter/Kim Close (Communities)
Service Manager: Andrew Gillespie, Area Development Manager (West)
Agenda Co-ordinator: Jo Morris, Committee Administrator, Legal & Democratic Services
Contact Details: jo.morris@southsomerset.gov.uk or (01935) 462055

Purpose of the Report

This report informs members of the proposed Area West Committee Forward Plan.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:-

- (1) comment upon and note the proposed Area West Committee Forward Plan as attached at pages 2 - 4;
- (2) identify priorities for further reports to be added to the Area West Committee Forward Plan.

Forward Plan

The forward plan sets out items and issues to be discussed by the Area West Committee over the coming few months.

The forward plan will be reviewed and updated each month in consultation with the Chairman. It is included each month on the Area West Committee agenda and members may endorse or request amendments.

To make the best use of the Area 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 SSDC corporate aims and objectives.

Councillors, service managers, partners and members of the public may request that an item is placed within the forward plan for a future meeting by contacting the agenda co-ordinator.

Background Papers: None.

Notes

- (1) Items marked in italics are not yet confirmed, due to the attendance of additional representatives.
- (2) Further details on these items, or to suggest / request an agenda item for the Area Committee, please contact the Agenda Co-ordinator; Jo Morris, 01935 462055 or e-mail jo.morris@southsomerset.gov.uk
- (3) Standing items include:
- (a) Quarterly Budget Monitoring Reports
 - (b) Reports from Members on Outside Organisations
 - (c) Feedback on Planning Applications referred to the Regulation Committee
 - (d) Chairman's announcements
 - (e) Public Question Time

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Background / Purpose	Lead Officer
19 th December 2012	TEN Performance Management System	The Performance Officer will attend the meeting to provide a refresher demonstration on the TEN performance management system.	Catherine Hodsman, Performance Officer
19 th December 2012	Chard Regeneration Scheme	Progress reports to be given when significant milestones have been reached.	Andrew Gillespie, Area Development Manager (West) David Julian, Economic Development Manager David Norris, Development Manager
19 th December 2012	Crewkerne Heritage Centre	Reports from Members on Outside Organisations	Cllr John Dyke
19 th December 2012	West One Youth and Community Centre (Crewkerne)	Reports from Members on Outside Organisations	Cllr Angie Singleton
19 th December 2012	A Better Crewkerne & District (ABCD)	Reports from Members on Outside Organisations	Cllr Mike Best
16 th January 2013	Historic Buildings at Risk (Confidential Item)	Update report.	Adron Duckworth, Conservation Manager
16 th January 2013	Section 106 Obligations	Monitoring Report	Neil Waddleton, Section 106 Monitoring Officer

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Background / Purpose	Lead Officer
16 th January 2013	Area West Community Safety Police Performance and Neighbourhood Policing	Report on activities and achievements of neighbourhood policing and partnership working to reduce crime and the fear of crime in Area West	Inspector Jackie Gold, Avon and Somerset Constabulary
16 th January 2013	Ile Youth Centre Management Committee (Ilminster)	Reports from Members on Outside Organisations	Cllr Kim Turner
20 th February 2013	Community Health and Leisure Service Update	An update on the work of the Community Health and Leisure Service in Area West.	Linda Pincombe, Community Health & Leisure Manager
20 th February 2013	Budget Monitoring Report	To update members on the current budgetary position of the Area West Committee as at the end of December 2012.	Catherine Hood, Corporate Accountant
Regular monthly reports	Community Grant Applications	To consider grant applications.	Paul Philpott, Community Development Officer Zoë Harris, Community Regeneration Officer Area Development (West)
<i>To be confirmed</i>	<i>Chard and District Museum Society</i>	<i>Reports from Members on Outside Organisations</i>	<i>Deferred</i>
<i>To be confirmed</i>	<i>Asset Management Strategy</i>	<i>To discuss with members the principles of the SSDC Asset Management Strategy including asset transfer and the checklist now available for use.</i>	<i>Donna Parham, Assistant Director (Finance and Corporate Services) Andrew Gillespie, Area Development Manager (West)</i>
<i>To be confirmed</i>	<i>Review of Area Working</i>	<i>To consider the outcome of the Area Review</i>	
<i>To be confirmed</i>	<i>Area West Community Safety Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service</i>	<i>Update on the work of the Fire and Rescue Service to promote fire safety</i>	

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Background / Purpose	Lead Officer
<i>As necessary</i>	<i>Crewkerne Community Planning Update</i>	<i>For Information</i>	<i>Zoë Harris, Community Regeneration Officer Area Development (West)</i>
<i>As necessary</i>	<i>Ilminster Community Planning Update</i>	<i>For Information</i>	<i>Zoë Harris, Community Regeneration Officer Area Development (West)</i>

Area West Committee – 21st November 2012

7. Request for Community Grants

Strategic Director: Rina Singh (Place and Performance)
Assistant Director: Helen Rutter Kim Close (Communities)
Service Manager: Andrew Gillespie, Area Development Manager (West)
Lead Officer: Paul Philpott, Community Development Officer and Zoe Harris, Community Regeneration Officer.
Contact Details: paul.philpott@southsomerset.gov.uk or (01460) 260359

Purpose of the Report

To consider one application for financial assistance from the Area West Community Grant Scheme. West and Middle Chinnock Village Hall Committee are seeking to modernise their kitchen.

Public Interest

This report considers one application made under the Area West Community Grant Scheme. This Scheme was established to assist local communities to bring forward projects that benefit their town or village.

Recommendation

That members approve the following grant.

Applicant	Project	Grant requested
West and Middle Chinnock Village Hall Committee	Replacement of outdated kitchen facilities.	£4,775

West and Middle Chinnock Village Hall.

Background

West and Middle Chinnock is a rural parish of approximately 270 houses and approximately 800 residents. The village hall was built in 1931 and provides an active hub for clubs and entertainments within the community. The hall is managed by an elected committee of trustees who are independent of the parish council.

The clubs who use the hall on a regular basis include:

- The women’s institute
- The gardening club
- School gym
- Parish Council
- Line dancers
- Tea and cake afternoons
- Children’s parties
- Band practice.

The hall is also hired by external organisations which include:

Zumba fitness classes
Appalachian dancing classes
Scout/cub weekends
Use as a polling station.

Additional events are held throughout the year including dances, wedding receptions and club suppers.

The hall management committee undertake regular fundraising to address priority projects identified by both the committee and the user groups. Examples of recent projects completed through fundraising have included replacement of the hall seating in 2008 at a cost of £2,360 and refurbishment of the main hall floor in March 2011 at a cost of £2,000. The next priority project for the committee is the hall kitchen.

Project Description

The kitchen has been modified over the years, but is now very dated. There are cupboards that do not have backs, poor sealing between work surfaces and splash backs that are too low. The kitchen floor is also partially covered with linoleum leaving an open area of wooden floorboards. All of these factors make cleaning to an adequate standard of hygiene for the preparation of food and drink extremely difficult. As a result no cooking is currently undertaken in the hall kitchen and external caterers are hired to supply pre prepared food for events.

The aim of this project is to improve and modernise the facilities. This will enable food and drink to be prepared and served on site. The hall committee intend to expand their tea and cake afternoons and to provide hot lunch events, whilst the village school are keen to provide cookery classes for the children. It is anticipated that the improved facilities will attract further new bookings to the hall.

Project costs

Quotes have been obtained and the total cost for this project is £9,550.

Table 1:

New washable non slip floor	£1,750
New kitchen units	£2,400
Plastering, fitting and tiling.	£2,700
Electrical work	£1,000
New appliances	£1,400
Meter cupboard	£300
Total Project Cost	£9,550

Funding

The village hall committee have been fundraising for 14 months towards this project and have raised a total of £4,775, which includes a grant of £2,075 from the Parish Council, and a further grant of £170 from the Waitrose Community Fund.

The committee are now seeking a match funding grant of £4,775 from SSDC to meet the total project cost.

Table 2:

Funding Source		
Own Funds	£2,530	Secured
Parish Council	£2,075	Secured
Waitrose community fund	£170	Secured
SSDC	£4,775	Pending
Total Project Cost		£9,550

Assessment

Table 3:

Category	Score	Maximum score
Eligibility	Y	
Target Groups	6	7
Project	4	5
Capacity of Organisation	12	15
Financial need	4	7
Innovation	1	3
TOTAL	27	37

The Community Development Officer has assessed the application and the project has reached an overall score of 27 as outlined in the table above. This application exceeds the minimum score required for funding to be considered.

Recommendation

The Community Development Officer recommends that the grant be awarded in full.

Council Plan Implications

Focus Four: Health and Communities – We want communities that are healthy, self reliant and have individuals who are willing to help each other.

Carbon Emissions & Adapting to Climate Change Implications (NI 188)

Increased use of the village hall may reduce car journeys to attend clubs and events elsewhere.

Equality and Diversity Implications

The hall committee have been in contact with the South Somerset Disability Forum and plan to arrange an access review of the building.

Financial Implications

The Community Grant Scheme budget is £107,000. To date £80,768 of grant funding has been approved. This leaves a remaining budget of £26,232. The grant requested in this report is for £4,775 which can be funded from this budget.

Background Papers:Community Grant Criteria

www.southsomerset.gov.uk/communities/funding-for-your-group-or-project

Grant applications on File

AW Committee March 2011 Capital Grants

Area West Committee – 21st November 2012

8. County Highway Authority Report

Lead Officer: Mike Fear, Assistant Highway Service Manager, South Somerset Highways

Contact Details: countyroads-southsom@somerset.gov.uk or 0845 345 9155

Purpose of the Report

The report is to inform members of the work carried out by the County Highway Authority at the halfway stage through the financial year and what schemes are remaining on the work programme for the rest of the year.

Recommendation

That members note the report.

Report

Surface Dressing

Weather this year has been a major factor in delivering our surface dressing program. It was delayed until August, which only gave us a one month window in which to complete the work. After this time the road temperature is too unpredictable to ensure there are no surface failures.

Surface dressing is the practice of applying a bitumen tack coat to the existing road surface and rolling in stone chippings. Whilst this practice is not the most PR friendly, when carried out correctly it is highly effective and can bring significant improvements to the highway infrastructure.

Verge Cutting

Grass cutting this year has been difficult due to the rapid growth of vegetation and as you can appreciate; our works are largely governed by resource. With a highway network exceeding 3500km in length, the size of the task is significant.

The County Council therefore has a policy and procedures that are in place to ensure the work is carried out in the most safe, effective and economic way. In a world of ever increasing risk assessment and claim/liability scenarios, the policy must take into account the range of road classifications across the network and prioritises them accordingly.

We were able to do 2 cuts on A and B roads together with one cut on the C and D class roads this year. The programme was largely completed by the end of September.

Winter maintenance

The preparation for this years winter maintenance programme has now started. Our salt supply for the upcoming season has been delivered to the depot.

Local parishes will again be invited to collect their allocation of ten 20kg grit bags.

If grit bins are being considered at new locations, can the members please confirm these positions as soon as possible as the filling of bins has now commenced. It may also be beneficial to confirm previous locations to ensure that these areas are not missed.

Structural Schemes Completed 2012/13

Many of the structural maintenance schemes for this year have been completed and are listed below:

Crewkerne	A356 Broadshard Road	Resurfacing
Crewkerne	Bushfield Road	Resurfacing
Merriott	Higher Street	Resurfacing
East Chinnock	A30, High Street	Resurfacing
Chard	Boden Street	Resurfacing
Chard	Touchstone Lane	Resurfacing
Chard	King Cuthbert Drive	Footways
Chard	Nursery Gardens	Footways
Chard	Glynswood (Phase 1)	Footways
Chard	Ash Grove	Footways
Chard	Henson Park	Footways
West Chinnock	Poop Hill	Drainage
Donyatt	Old A303 / Watery Lane	Drainage
Chard	Thorndun Park Drive	Resurfacing
Ashill	Wood Road	Drainage

Outstanding Structural Schemes to be completed in 2012/13

Chard	East Street/Crewkerne Road	Resurfacing
Donyatt	Chilworthy Lane	Drainage
Chard	East Street	Footways
Ilminster	Summerlands Park (Phase 1&2)	Footways

Deferred Schemes

Resurfacing and Footways at Coronation Street, Chard

Background Papers: None.

Area West Committee – 21st November 2012

9. Area West Development Work Programme Overview 2012-13

Strategic Director: Rina Singh - Place and Performance
Assistant Directors: Helen Rutter/Kim Close - Communities
Service Manager: Andrew Gillespie - Area Development Manager (West)
Lead Officer: Andrew Gillespie - Area Development Manager (West)
Contact Details: andrew.gillespie@southsomerset.gov.uk or (01460) 260426

Purpose of the Report

To present an overview of projects in the Area West Development Work Programme 2012-13.

Public Interest

The Area West Development Service works to address local community priorities in Chard, Ilminster and Crewkerne and the surrounding villages. The report provides outline information on some of the project work being supported in the financial year 2012-13.

Recommendation

To note and comment on the report, highlighting any areas of concern or interest for current or requested activity by the Area Development Team.

Background

The Area West Development Service supports the Area West Committee to work with communities to influence the services that are delivered in our area and to press for improvement wherever possible. Area Committees provide a key mechanism for Councillors to represent the views of their constituents and local organisations in local decisions.

The Area priorities, together with a range of powers and functions delegated to the Area Committee by SSDC form the Area West Portfolio, held by the Chairman of the Area West Committee.

Each year a brief report is made on the work of the Area West Development team, to provide an overview and indicate emerging issues that are likely to be taken up by the team in future.

- Our **targeted** approach allows us to get to the heart of local issues or problems.
- Our **partnership** approach allows us to come up with new solutions, drawing on local and professional knowledge.
- Our relative **autonomy** allows us to adapt or adjust quickly to local changes or issues.
- Our **local presence** improves access to services.

We are able to work at both very local and highly strategic levels.

Annual Report

The way we work

Last year I noted that the SSDC Area system was well placed to promote and enhance “localism” as a way of working, especially when this involves bringing together community led planning and neighbourhood (spatial) planning and delivery to achieve better, more efficient outcomes.

We continue to work closely with Parish, Town and County Councils, with partnerships, organisations and individuals to help make our communities better, safer places to live in, to encourage business and trade, to help develop skills and to improve the health of their citizens.

Our approach is rooted in the uniqueness of each town and village and the different people and organisations that make each place what it is.

Every project, programme or strategy is always in response to local priorities and needs. We take a 'place first' approach that is deeply connected to the aspirations, strengths, creativity, energy, needs and drive of local people.

From this, the roles and responsibilities of those involved can be adopted generally and adapted locally to better meet local needs and to seize opportunities.

Investing our time and effort to promote networking, relationships and joint working between service providers at a local level brings about good responses to local challenges and builds capacity in the community to do more of this over time.

Following the Portas Review, one of the most noteworthy challenges this year has been the call for Town Teams to lead the regeneration of our High Streets.

What we work on

This challenge is being taken up differently, but enthusiastically in each of our main towns. With appropriate involvement from the Area Development Team, local organisations are working together to make our town centres more lively, creative, exciting and useful places that reflect the diversity of our communities.

We support projects in towns and villages that lead to improvement in the health and wellbeing of those living and working in Area West.

This involves creating and managing projects directly or providing planning and development support through work with other SSDC specialist service teams and external partner organisations.

It is a mixed and wide ranging portfolio that reflects both established and emerging local priorities. It also supports the four key goals of the adopted Council Plan for 2012-15;

- a strong economy which has low unemployment and thriving businesses
- an attractive environment to live in with increased recycling and lower energy use
- decent housing for our residents that matches their income
- communities that are healthy, self-reliant, and have individuals who are willing to help each other

Our Resources

The work programme is resourced through the Area Development Team, and an annual revenue budget and capital programme that also includes funding granted from external sources. As with other budgets, these are subject to continual scrutiny to find efficiency measures and savings.

Area West Development Team	
Andrew Gillespie	Area Development Manager - West
Nicola Doble	PA to ADM - West
Zoe Harris	Area Community Regeneration Officer
Paul Philpott	Area Community Development Officer
Paul Brazier	Area Administration Team Leader
Cathy Gearing	Area Support Assistant
Phil Vose	Area Support Assistant
Juila Levy	Area Support Assistant
Hazel Vincent	Area Support Assistant
Cathy Denslow	Area Support Assistant

Monitoring and Evaluation

Given the range of projects included, the methods of monitoring and evaluation that we use vary. We aim to build appropriate project management methods into all of the projects we undertake, including methods of monitoring and evaluation.

The majority of projects should already be familiar to some if not all elected members. Many have been the subject of regular and/or occasional committee reports as and when issues arise requiring a committee decision or when important milestones have been achieved.

Therefore, the following tables of projects and support services is presented to give an overview rather than to go into detail. It is both snapshot and in some cases a summary of the work we are supporting.

	Project /Aim	Lead
1	Chard Regeneration Scheme – to support delivery of the agreed Masterplan	AG
2	Revitalise the SSDC Street Markets in Area West	ZH
3	Marketing Crewkerne & Ilminster - to promote to potential visitors in 2012 and beyond	ZH
4	A Better Crewkerne & District (ABCD) - to support the delivery of projects identified in the ABCD community plan.	ZH
5	Ilminster Forum - to support the delivery of projects identified in the Ilminster Community Plan	ZH
6	LARC Blackdown Hills & East Devon ‘Making it Local Funding Programme - Grants to local improvement schemes	ZH
7	South Somerset Market Towns Investment Group - to act as coordinator for Chard (PP) , Ilminster and Crewkerne (ZH) in relation to participation in activities and programmes	ZH/PP

8	Community Grant Scheme - to promote and manage the take up of grants in support of local fundraising for projects of community benefit	PP
9	Henhayes, Crewkerne – to support the regeneration of the Recreation ground	ZH
10	Chard Town Team - to support development of the newly formed Chard Town Team and a broad programme to revitalise the town centre.	
11	Swann Precinct, Ilminster - to improve appearance of derelict site in Ilminster town centre	ZH
12	Blackdown Hills AONB officers group - to oversee funding agreement	ZH
13	Rural Housing Needs research – to explore provision of affordable housing in villages of Hinton SG, N Perrott & Combe St Nicholas with Parish Councils	ZH/PP
14	Chard Traders Board (with Chard Town Team); to create a high quality quick reference guide to all town centre businesses and locate in prominent position in Chard Town Centre.	PP
15	Chard Young Peoples Centre - to address long standing tenancy issues, enable an upgrade to heating system, and fundraising for external play area.	PP
16	Parish and Town Council Workshops – to raise awareness of Neighbourhood Development Plans and alternatives.	AG
17	Boden Mill – to support management of site pending redevelopment, including liaison with tenants.	PP
18	Stop Line Way Development – through Tatworth & Forton and Chard Regeneration Scheme	AG
19	Investigate relocation options for Ilminster Community Office – a long standing ambition	AG/PB
20	Chard Working Men’s Club - to encourage the owners to address the deteriorating state of this town centre building.	PP
21	Boden Centre – Increase use by health/wellbeing promoting organisations, ensure income from lettings cover costs	PB
22	Chard Shop Front Grant scheme - to enable Town centre traders to renovate and decorate their shop fronts.	PP
23	South Somerset Community Justice Panel (CJP) – to support CJP transition to fully funded independence	AG

	Regular Support Services	Lead
1	Manage Area and Community Offices – to provide timely advice and other customer services to local residents	PB
2	Monitor and advise community groups with SSDC Service Level Agreements	ZH/PP
3	Funding advice - Signposting community groups to relevant funding.	ZH/PP
4	Community Issues/conflict resolution	Varies
5	Area West Committee - Programme development and support	AG
6	Community Safety Local Action Groups in Area West - Raising and resolution of local community safety issues as needed	ZH/PP
7	Holyrood Lace Mill Management	PB

Financial Implications

There are no specific financial implications arising from this report. However it should be noted that projects in the planning stage may not be fully funded. Ways in which funding can be secured are addressed as part of that planning process.

Carbon Emissions & Adapting to Climate Change Implications (NI188)

Appropriate mitigation or change measures are built in to projects.

Equality and Diversity Implications

Equality and Diversity implications are now considered as part of project management. Our aim is to ensure that no-one is excluded from participating in or benefiting from any of the work we undertake on grounds of race, gender, disability, faith, age or sexual orientation.

Background Papers: *Area West Development Work Programme Overview 2011-12*

Area Committee West – 21st November 2012

10. Budget Monitoring Report for the Period Ending 30th September 2012

Chief Executive: Mark Williams, Chief Executive
Assistant Director: Donna Parham, Assistant Director – Finance and Corporate Services
Service Manager: Amanda Card, Finance Manager
Lead Officer: Catherine Hood, Corporate Accountant
Contact Details: catherine.hood@southsomerset.gov.uk or (01935) 462157

Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this report is to update Members of the current budgetary position of the Area West Committee as at the end of September 2012.

Public Interest

This report gives an update on the financial position of Area West Committee after six months of the financial year 2012/13.

Recommendations

Members are recommended to:-

- (1) review and comment on the current financial position Area West Budgets;
- (2) note the position of the Area West Revenue Reserve.

REVENUE BUDGETS

Background

Full Council in February 2012 set the General Revenue Account Budgets for 2012/13 and delegated the monitoring of the budgets to the four Area Committees and District Executive. Area West now has delegated responsibility for the Area West development revenue budgets, which include revenue grants and regeneration, the Area West Capital Programme and the Area West Reserve.

Financial Position

The table below shows the position of revenue budgets as at 30th September 2012. This includes transfers to or from reserves.

	£
Approved base budget as at Feb 2012 (Original Budget)	312,470
Budget Carry forwards approved June 2012	18,080
Revised Budget as at 30th September 2012	330,550

A summary of the revenue position as at 30th September 2012 is as follows:

Element	Original Budget	Revised Budget	Year End Forecast	Favourable Variance	Adverse Variance	%
	£	£	£	£	£	
Development						
Expenditure	365,420	386,870	386,870			-
Income	(73,140)	(79,310)	(79,310)			-
Projects						
Expenditure	18,630	42,150	42,150			-
Income	(13,930)	(37,450)	(37,450)			-
Grants						
Expenditure	35,520	38,320	38,320			-
Income	(20,030)	(20,030)	(20,030)			-
Group Total						
Expenditure	419,570	467,340	467,340			-
Income	(107,100)	(136,790)	(136,790)			-
Net Expenditure	312,470	330,550	330,550			-

Area Development Manager's Comments

This report accompanies the report on the Area West Development work programme and provides further details of the budgets used.

AREA RESERVE

The position on the Area West Reserve is as follows:

		£
Position as at 1st April 2012		54,120
Less amounts transferred for use in 2012/13:	0	
Current balance in Reserve at 30th September 2012		54,120
Less amounts allocated but not yet transferred:		
Underwrite Community Grants	(40,500)	
Provision for Street Market improvements (some contribution agreed in principle – subject to detail)	(13,500)	
		(54,000)
Uncommitted balance remaining		120

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 West. Currently the estimated spend for the Area West programme is £54,304 which is all profiled for the current financial year.

In addition there are reserve schemes (approved in principle and unallocated) totalling £98,250 as detailed in the table below.

Schemes	Provision 2012/13 £	Est. Spend 2012/13 £	Future Spend £	Grand Total £
Markets Improvement Group	5,660			
Community Grants		8,196		
Ilminster Community Office			20,000	
Unallocated Capital Reserve			64,394	
TOTALS	5,660	8,196	84,394	98,250

If Members would like further details on any of the Area West 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 West budget was set any savings made included an assessment of the impact on equalities as part of that exercise.

Background Papers – Financial Services Area West budget file

AREA WEST CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2012/13 - 2015/16

	2012/13 Estimate Spend £	Actual Spend to 30/9/2012 £	Remaining spend £	Future Spend £	Responsible Officer(s)	Responsible Officers comments on action on slippage and performance against targets
Chard Football Club	1,000	1,000	0	0	A Gillespie	Granted awarded 16.3.2011 for floodlights. Scheme complete. Claim received 6.7.2012
Hinton St George Village Shop	6,000	6,000	0	0	A Gillespie	Grant awarded 18.1.2012 for infrastructure repairs to the community shop
Crowshute House, Chard	2,220	2,220	0	0	A Gillespie	Grant awarded 5.4.2012 for replacement windows and doors
Chard Cricket Club	5,610	2,463	3,147	0	A Gillespie	Grant awarded 18.4.2012 for drainage piping and mobile wicket cover.
Crewkerne Town Council	5,925	0	5,925	0	A Gillespie	Grant awarded 18.4.2012 for a bin store and cycle shelter
Ilminster Town Council	10,000	10,000	0	0	A Gillespie	Grant awarded 18.4.2012 for skate park
Forton Community Association	12,500	0	12,500	0	A Gillespie	Provisional grant awarded 15.8.2012 for a Community Centre Project.
Chaffcombe Village Hall	1,390	0	1,390	0	A Gillespie	Grant awarded 19.9.2012 for repairs and replacement windows and doors and re-pointing of two walls
Clapton and Wayford Village Hall	6,000	0	6,000	0	A Gillespie	Grant awarded 19.9.2012 for replacement of flat roof, entrance doors and upgrading of foyer and inner
Chard Methodist Church Hall	3,659	0	3,659	0	A Gillespie	Grant awarded 19.9.2012 for replacement kitchen
Total West Capital Programme Approved in Detail	54,304	21,683	32,621	0		

AREA WEST CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2012/13 - 2015/16

	2012/13 Estimate Spend £	Actual Spend to 30/9/2012 £	Remaining spend £	Future Spend £	Responsible Officer(s)	Responsible Officers comments on action on slippage and performance against targets
Approved in Principle and Unallocated						
Ilminster Community Office	0		0	20,000	A Gillespie	
Area West Markets Improvement Group (Nov 2010 committee)	5,660		5,660		A Gillespie	
Community Grants (January 2012 committee)	8,196		8,196	0	A Gillespie	£70,000 allocation to community grants budget agreed at Area West Committee January 2012. This is the balance of the funding after projects have been moved to approved programme (as detailed above).
Unallocated Programme	0		0	64,394	A Gillespie	As projects are agreed at committee funding is shown in main programme above. Additional £25,000 awarded February 2012 for 2012/13
Total Approved in Principle and Unallocated	13,856		13,856	84,394		

Summary

West Capital Programme	54,304	21,683	32,621	0
Reserve Schemes (Approved in Principle and Unallocated)	13,856		13,856	84,394
Total Programme to be Financed	68,160	21,683	46,477	84,394

AREA WEST CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2012/13 - 2015/16

	2012/13 Estimate Spend	Actual Spend to 30/9/2012	Remaining spend	Future Spend	Responsible Officer(s)	Responsible Officers comments on action on slippage and performance against targets
	£	£	£	£		

Corporate Capital Programme Schemes in Area West

Community Play Scheme 2007-03 bid	66,000	6,600	59,400	25,000	R Parr	Redstart Park Chard - plans being finalised for final spend. Blackdown View Ilminster - final designs being completed, expected to seek quotes in Q3. Furzehill Chard - Final designs being drawn. Packers Way Misterton - Profiled for 2013/14.
Youth Facilities Development 2007-10 bid	20,000	0	20,000	0	R Parr	Broadway, Combe St Nicholas, West and Middle Chinnock and Misterton projects all under review.
Multi Use Games Areas 2008-05 bid	35,000	0	35,000	0	R Parr	Ilminster - Fundraising to achieve project budget.
Grants to Parishes with Play Area	0	0	0	12,500	R Parr	Henhayes Crewkerne - Profiled for 2013/14

Corporate Capital Programme Administered by Area West

Market Town Vision - All Areas	65,000	9,700	55,300	145,000	A Gillespie	Some schemes within the programme could not go ahead as planned. The estimated spend this year can now be reduced to £65,000. Expenditure on Market Town Projects of £70,000 has been authorised, however some slippage or underspend can be anticipated as Town Councils engage 3rd party contractors and/or find alternative sources of funding
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Area West Committee - 21st November 2012

11. Area West – Reports from Members on Outside Bodies

Strategic Director: Rina Singh (Place and Performance)
Assistant Director: Helen Rutter / Kim Close (Communities)
Service Manager: Andrew Gillespie, Area Development Manager (West)
Lead Officer: Andrew Gillespie, Area Development Manager (West)
Contact Details: andrew.gillespie@southsomerset.gov.uk or (01460) 260426

Purpose of the Report

To introduce reports from members appointed to outside bodies in Area West.

Public Interest

Each year Area West Committee appoints local Councillors to serve on outside bodies (local organisations) in Area West. During the year Councillors make a report on the achievements of those organisations and other relevant issues.

Background

Members were appointed to serve on eight outside bodies at the June 2012 meeting. Although “Reports from members on outside organisations” has been a standing agenda item for some considerable time, it was agreed at the August 2012 meeting to include specific reports about each organisation in the Committee’s forward plan.

Reports

Reports can be verbal or written. There is no standard format, but if possible they include an explanation of the organisations aims, their recent activities, achievements and any issues of concern.

This month there will be member reports on:

- Stop Line Way Steering Group (Cllr. Andrew Turpin)
- Meeting House Arts Centre, Ilminster (Cllr. Sue Osborne)

Recommendation

That the reports be noted.

Financial Implications

None.

Council Plan Implications

Focus Four: Health and Communities – We want communities that are healthy, self reliant and have individuals who are willing to help each other.

Background Papers: None

Area West Committee - 21st November 2012

12. Feedback on Planning Applications referred to the Regulation Committee

There is no feedback to report on planning applications referred to the Regulation Committee.

Area West Committee - 21st November 2012

13. Planning Appeals

Strategic Director: Rina Singh (Place and Performance)
 Assistant Director: Martin Woods (Economy)
 Service Manager: David Norris, Development Manager
 Lead Officer: David Norris, Development Manager
 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.

Recommendation

That the report be noted.

Background

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.

Report Detail

Appeals Received

Haselbury Plucknett – The change of use of land for 2 No. private gypsy/traveller pitches to include 2 No. mobile homes, 2 No. touring caravans, 2 No. day rooms and associated hardstanding, refuse storage, resiting of access and closure of existing access (GR 347413/110447), Land OS4443 Part Stonage Lane, Haselbury Plucknett, Crewkerne, Somerset – Mr & Mrs Billy & Emma Hughes – 11/02044/FUL.

Appeals Allowed

Ilminster – The erection of a detached dwellinghouse and alterations to access (GR336377/114492), Brightstone, Love Lane, Ilminster, Somerset, TA19 0AR – Mr & Mrs B Grinter – 11/04459/FUL.

The Inspector's decision letter is attached at pages 24 -27.

Merriott – The formation of a new access (GR344949/113272), Land to the North of Half Moon, Boozer Pit, Merriott, Somerset – Mr Roger Clemas – 11/03775/FUL

The Inspector's decision letter is attached at pages 28 – 30.

Background Papers: None



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 October 2012

by Gareth Symons BSc(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 22 October 2012

Appeal Ref: APP/R3325/A/12/2177738

Brightstone, Love Lane, Ilminster, Somerset, TA19 0AR

- 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 & Mrs B Grinter against the decision of South Somerset District Council.
 - The application Ref: 11/04459/FUL, dated 7 November 2011, was refused by notice dated 29 December 2011.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a detached dwelling house and alterations to the access.
-

Procedural Matter

1. Instead of using the description of the proposed development given on the application form, I have used the one that appears on the Council's decision notice which is the same as the appeal form. It is a neater description. This minor matter does not affect consideration of the appeal in any way.

Decision

2. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the erection of a detached dwelling house and alterations to the access at Brightstone, Love Lane, Ilminster, Somerset, TA19 0AR, in accordance with the application Ref: 11/04459/FUL, dated 7 November 2011, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin within three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out otherwise than in complete accordance with the following approved drawings: 3278/01 Proposed Site Plan; 3278/02 Proposed Plans & Elevations & Location Plans; 3278/03 Existing Site Plan.
 - 3) No development shall take place until details of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the building hereby permitted (including walls, roofs, windows, doors, eaves/fascias and rainwater goods) have been submitted to an approved in writing by the local planning authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and kept as such thereafter.
 - 4) The dwelling hereby permitted shall not be occupied until the parking and turning areas shown on drawing no. 3278/01 have been provided in accordance with details that have been previously submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The parking and turning

areas shall be kept clear from obstruction and available for their intended purposes thereafter.

- 5) No development shall take place until details of surface water drainage have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The approved drainage details shall be provided before the dwelling hereby permitted is first occupied and they shall be kept operational thereafter.
- 6) Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (or any order revoking and re-enacting that Order) (with or without modification) no new windows (including dormer windows) or doors, other than those shown on the approved drawings, shall be formed at first floor/roof level in the north, south and east elevations of the dwelling hereby permitted.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effects of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area and on highway safety.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

4. The layout of dwellings off Love Lane is very mixed. Development on the hillside is arranged over different levels and there are significant variations in plot sizes, density and the way that properties are arranged. Some are next to the lane, some are set back and others are side on to the lane. There is also an eclectic mix of modern and traditional styles of properties that includes bungalows, semi-detached, detached and terraced houses. There is no uniformity to the pattern of development or architecture that the appeal dwelling would necessarily have to conform.
5. Furthermore, due to the back garden position of the proposed single storey property, and the restricted lines of view from the lane, it would not be in a prominent position. It would be seen from neighbouring properties and from further way, such as the car park to the youth centre and the houses and the footpath at the rear. However, with its simple design seen against the variable backdrop of development, it would not look out of place. It also would not extend any further back from the lane than no 16 Lovè Lane and thus it would not be out of character in this regard either.
6. As for the hard surface areas for car parking and turning, the majority of the area proposed in front of the existing garages is already there and the proposed areas at the front of Brightstone would be tucked behind the front boundary wall. These areas would not harm the visual amenities of the lane. Car parking areas and driveways are not unusual features in the area anyway.
7. The appeal proposal would not harm the character and appearance of the area. As such it would accord with the design aims of policy STR1 from the Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan Review (SP) and policies ST5 and ST6 from the South Somerset Local Plan. The aims of these policies are consistent with the requirement for good design in the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) and so they have significant weight.

Highway Safety

8. The relatively small size of the bungalow with only two bedrooms would be unlikely to attract occupation by a family who could have several cars. Also, the site is in a sustainable location with an easy walk into the town centre where there is a wide range of services. Via nearby Frog Lane there is also a good footpath link to the local supermarket and facilities such as the tennis and bowls clubs. Given these factors, the estimated increase in traffic using Frog Lane would probably be less than the 6 to 8 extra vehicular movements per day associated with an average dwelling suggested by the local highway authority. In the context that Frog Lane already serves 32 dwellings and the traffic associated with those, the new dwelling would not materially increase vehicle movements along the lane or at the junction with East Street.
9. Consequently, despite the misgivings expressed about the narrowness of the lane and the limitations of the junction, including substandard visibility for emerging drivers, the appeal proposal would not have an undue adverse affect on highway safety. There is also no evidence that the current road circumstances are dangerous in terms of accidents or injuries to road users.
10. Some local residents have referred to highway difficulties that may occur during construction of the house when building materials are delivered. It is accepted that some traffic disruption may arise during such times. However, the inconvenience caused would be brief and intermittent and limited to the building phase. This is not a reason to withhold planning permission.
11. I have taken account of all other highway related matters, but none outweigh the findings above. The appeal scheme would accord with the highway safety aims of policy 49 from the SP and policy ST5 from the LP. The local highway authority has referred to the third bullet point of paragraph 32 from the Framework. However, that comes from the sentence that starts "all developments that generate significant amounts of movement". For the reasons given that is not the case here and so this reference to the Framework is not relevant. Nevertheless, the SP and the LP policies are consistent with the aims of the Framework as they relate to developments creating safe layouts. As such the policies should be accorded significant weight.

Conditions

12. The proposed conditions have been considered against Circular 11/95 *The Use of Conditions in Planning Permissions*. They have been modified or amalgamated accordingly. Condition 2 is needed for the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning. Condition 3 is necessary to safeguard the character and appearance of the area. Conditions 4 and 5 are appropriate for highway safety reasons. Condition 6 protects the privacy of neighbours.

Other Matters

13. I am aware from the representations made that there have been several recent developments in the immediate area. I saw those referred to and I have taken them into account in reaching my decision. None persuade me from finding that the appeal proposal would be acceptable. I have also considered some other amenity concerns such as privacy. However, due to the single storey height, position, orientation and arrangement of ground floor windows of the appeal property, I am satisfied that it would not unacceptably invade the privacy of neighbours. No other matters raised outweigh the previous findings.

Conclusion

14. The appeal should be allowed.

Gareth Symons

INSPECTOR



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 October 2012

by **Michael J Muston BA(Hons) MPhil MRTPI**

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

Decision date: 2 November 2012

Appeal Ref: APP/R3325/A/12/2180139

Field between Greenways and Farmhouse Cottage, Boozer Pit, Merriott, Somerset

- 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 Roger Clemas against the decision of South Somerset District Council.
 - The application Ref 11/03775/FUL, dated 12 September 2011, was refused by notice dated 15 March 2012.
 - The development proposed is the provision of an access from the highway for use by agricultural machinery.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the provision of an access from the highway for use by agricultural machinery at the field between Greenways and Farmhouse Cottage, Boozer Pit, Merriott, Somerset, in accordance with the terms of the application, 11/03775/FUL, dated 12 September 2011, and the plans submitted with it, as amended by further submissions in January and June 2012, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) All planting, seeding or turfing comprised in the approved details of landscaping (Drawing 1583/P01, dated June 2012) shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding seasons following the completion of the development; and any trees or plants which within a period of 5 years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species, unless the local planning authority gives written approval to any variation.
 - 3) There shall be no obstruction to visibility greater than 900 mm above the adjoining road level forward of lines drawn 2.4 metres back from the carriageway edge on the centre line of the access and extending to points on the nearside carriageway edge 28 metres either side of the access. Such visibility shall be fully provided before the access hereby permitted is brought into use and shall thereafter be maintained at all times.
 - 4) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: MS P-01 (Location Plan), MS P-01 (Vision Splay) and 1583/P01 (Schematic Landscape Proposal).

Main issues

2. I consider the main issues in this case to be the effect of the proposal on:-
- the rural character and appearance of the area,
 - highway safety.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The appeal site is located on Boozer Pit, a lane heading north-east out of Merriott into the countryside. This has a semi-rural character, with historic field hedges close to the road interspersed with lower, pruned hedges and low stone walls, many of which are set back behind narrow grass verges.
4. The hedge along the frontage of the appeal site appears to be of some age and is immediately adjacent to the highway on the inside of a shallow bend. Opposite the site, on the outside of the bend, is a lower, clipped hedge and a low wall in front of Charing, set behind a narrow grass verge. To the south-west, towards the village, Greenways and 41 Boozer Pit face each other across the lane and are both fronted by low stone walls set back to some extent from the lane. To the north-east, away from the village, a similar mixture of original field hedges, lower, pruned hedges and low stone walls in front of properties predominates.
5. I agree with the Council that the existing hedge adds to the rural character of this part of Merriott. The proposal would involve a significant section of this hedge being translocated, supplemented by new planting, behind an area to be planted with a wildflower seed mix. Maintained hedgerows set behind grass verges are an established element of the character of this part of the village. However, the appeal proposal, governed as it is by the need to provide adequate visibility from the new access, would involve a substantial section of the translocated hedge being set further back from the lane than is common along Boozer Pit.
6. I do not believe that the revised proposal represents an over-engineered or over-scaled proposal. I agree with the highway authority that it is the minimum required to achieve acceptable visibility from the new access. However, by involving the loss of the existing historic hedge line and by setting the new hedge back to the extent that is required, the proposal would in my opinion cause some harm to the rural character of this part of Boozer Pit. I conclude that the proposal would have a limited adverse impact on the rural character and appearance of the area, contrary to saved Policies ST5, ST6 and EC3 of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006.

Highway safety

7. The agricultural holding served by the proposed new access is currently reached via a right of way to the north-east of The Farmhouse. I saw on my site visit that visibility from that access is very constrained, particularly to the south-west, where an adjacent building, not in the appellant's control, restricts visibility to a few metres. The use of this access by potentially large and/or slow-moving farm equipment must give rise to the risk of collisions on Boozer Pit.

8. The new access has been designed to have visibility splays of 2.4 metres by 28 metres in each direction. The highway authority has confirmed that this is acceptable. In my opinion, the proposed new access would represent a significant improvement over the existing one in terms of visibility and would result in an overall improvement in highway safety along this part of Boozer Pit. I conclude that the proposal would have a beneficial effect on highway safety, and would comply with saved Policy ST5 of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006 in this respect.

Conclusions

9. I have concluded that the proposal would have a limited adverse impact on the rural character and appearance of the area. However, I have also concluded that the proposal would have a beneficial effect on highway safety. I consider this benefit to outweigh the limited harm to the landscape and have accordingly allowed the appeal.

Conditions

10. In the event that I allow this appeal, the Council has suggested, in addition to the standard time condition and plans conditions, a condition requiring the implementation of the landscape plan and another ensuring visibility splays are provided and maintained. I agree that the former is needed in the interests of the character and appearance of the area and the latter in the interests of highway safety.

Michael J Muston

INSPECTOR

Area West Committee – 21st November 2012

14. Date and Venue for Next Meeting

The next scheduled meeting of the Committee will be held on Wednesday, 19th December 2012 at 5.30 p.m. at the Shrubbery Hotel, Station Road, Ilminster.
