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## **Area West Committee**

**Wednesday 18th November 2020**

**5.30 pm**

**A virtual meeting via Zoom meeting software**

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The following members are requested to attend this virtual meeting:

Jason Baker  
Mike Best  
Dave Bulmer  
Martin Carnell  
Brian Hamilton  
Ben Hodgson

Val Keitch  
Jenny Kenton  
Paul Maxwell  
Tricia O'Brien  
Sue Osborne  
Robin Pailthorpe

Oliver Patrick  
Garry Shortland  
Linda Vijeh  
Martin Wale

There are no planning applications to consider this month.

Any members of the public wishing to address the virtual meeting during Public Question Time need to email [democracy@southsomerset.gov.uk](mailto:democracy@southsomerset.gov.uk) by 9.00am on 17 November 2020.

This meeting will be viewable online by selecting the committee meeting at:  
[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCSDst3IHGj9WoGnwJGF\\_soA](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCSDst3IHGj9WoGnwJGF_soA)

For further information on the items to be discussed, please contact:  
[democracy@southsomerset.gov.uk](mailto:democracy@southsomerset.gov.uk)

This Agenda was issued on Tuesday 10 November 2020.

*Alex Parmley, Chief Executive Officer*

**This information is also available on our website  
[www.southsomerset.gov.uk](http://www.southsomerset.gov.uk) and via the mod.gov app**

## **Information for the Public**

In light of the coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19), Area West Committee will meet virtually via video-conferencing to consider and determine reports. For more details on the regulations regarding remote / virtual meetings please refer to the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 as part of the Coronavirus Act 2020.

## **Area West Committee**

Meetings of the Area West Committee are usually held monthly, at 5.30pm, on the third Wednesday of the month (unless advised otherwise). However during the coronavirus pandemic these meetings will be held remotely via Zoom and the starting time may vary.

Agendas and minutes of meetings are published on the council's website at:  
<http://modgov.southsomerset.gov.uk/ieDocHome.aspx?bcr=1>

Agendas and minutes can also be viewed via the mod.gov app (free) available for iPads and Android devices. Search for 'mod.gov' in the app store for your device, install, and select 'South Somerset' from the list of publishers, then select the committees of interest. A wi-fi signal will be required for a very short time to download an agenda but once downloaded, documents will be viewable offline.

## **Public participation at meetings (held via Zoom)**

### **Public question time**

We recognise that these are challenging times but we still value the public's contribution to our virtual meetings.

If you would like to address the virtual meeting during Public Question Time please email [democracy@southsomerset.gov.uk](mailto:democracy@southsomerset.gov.uk) by 9.00am on 17 November 2020. When you have registered, the Chairman will invite you to speak at the appropriate time during the virtual meeting.

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

This meeting will be streamed online via YouTube at:  
[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCSDst3IHGj9WoGnwJGF\\_soA](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCSDst3IHGj9WoGnwJGF_soA)

### **Virtual meeting etiquette:**

- Consider joining the meeting early to ensure your technology is working correctly.
- Please note that we will mute all public attendees to minimise background noise. If you have registered to speak during the virtual meeting, the Chairman or Administrator will un-mute your microphone at the appropriate time. We also respectfully request that you turn off video cameras until asked to speak.
- Each individual speaker shall be restricted to a total of three minutes.
- When speaking, keep your points clear and concise.
- Please speak clearly – the Councillors are interested in your comments.

## **Planning applications**

There are no planning applications to consider this month.

## **Recording and photography at council meetings**

Recording of council meetings is permitted, however anyone wishing to do so should let the Chairperson of the meeting know prior to the start of the meeting. The recording should be overt and clearly visible to anyone at the meeting, but non-disruptive. If someone is recording the meeting, the Chairman will make an announcement at the beginning of the meeting.

Any member of the public has the right not to be recorded. If anyone making public representation does not wish to be recorded they must let the Chairperson know.

The full 'Policy on Audio/Visual Recording and Photography at Council Meetings' can be viewed online at:

<http://modgov.southsomerset.gov.uk/documents/s3327/Policy%20on%20the%20recording%20of%20council%20meetings.pdf>

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# **Area West Committee**

## **Wednesday 18 November 2020**

### **Agenda**

#### *Preliminary Items*

- 1. To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 16th September 2020**
- 2. Apologies for Absence**
- 3. Declarations of Interest**

In accordance with the Council's current Code of Conduct (as amended 26 February 2015), 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.

Members are reminded that they need to declare the fact that they are also a member of a County, Town or Parish Council as a Personal Interest. Where you are also a member of Somerset County Council and/or a Town or Parish Council within South Somerset you must declare a prejudicial interest in any business on the agenda where there is a financial benefit or gain or advantage to Somerset County Council and/or a Town or Parish Council which would be at the cost or to the financial disadvantage of South Somerset District Council.

#### **Planning Applications Referred to the Regulation Committee**

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

Councillors Jason Baker, Sue Osborne and Linda Vijeh.

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

- 4. Date and Venue for Next Meeting**

Councillors are requested to note that the next Area West Committee meeting is scheduled to be held on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> December 2020. This will be a virtual meeting using Zoom on-line meeting software.

- 5. 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.

## **6. Chairman's Announcements**

### *Items for Discussion*

- 7. County Highway Report to Area West Committee** (Pages 6 - 8)
- 8. Community Grant to Ilchester Hall, Chiselborough (Executive Decision)** (Pages 9 - 14)
- 9. Community Grant to Horton Parish Council Playing Field Project (Executive Decision)** (Pages 15 - 20)
- 10. Chard Regeneration Scheme - Gateway Scheme (Executive Decision)** (Pages 21 - 27)
- 11. Market Towns Investment Group** (Pages 28 - 33)
- 12. Reports from Members on Outside Organisations** (Page 34)
- 13. Area West Committee Forward Plan** (Pages 35 - 36)
- 14. Planning Appeals** (Pages 37 - 54)

**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.**



## County Highway Report to Area West Committee

*Lead Officer:* Lee Norman, Assistant Highway Service Manager, Somerset County Council  
*Contact Details:* Tel: 0300 123 2224

### Purpose of the Report

The report has been provided to summarise the various highway maintenance operations that have been undertaken and completed by Somerset County Council, the Highway Authority, in the last 6 months, and to inform members of the maintenance operations that are programmed for delivery to year end.

### Recommendation

Members are asked to note the report.

### Background

#### **Carriageway Surface Dressing programmes, 2020 & 2021, (May – September)**

The 2020 carriageway surface dressing programme was completed in September, with a total of 140 miles of surface dressing undertaken across the County. In South Somerset a total of 44 sites were surface dressed.

The 2021 carriageway surface dressing programme is currently being finalised. Confirmation of the indicative works programme will be available in April 2021.

If you would like to find out more regarding the process of surface dressing please use link provided, <http://www.travelsomerset.co.uk/surface-dressing> this also has a short video and a map which shows the roads that have been dressed across the County this year.

#### **Verge maintenance programme, 2020, (May – September)**

Our countywide verge maintenance programme commenced in May and was completed by September.

Highway verges are cut to a minimum of one metre in width from the road side to provide a safe area for pedestrians, preserve visibility and help the flow of surface water along road channels. Sight lines are also cut at road junctions and bends to ensure better visibility for road users and pedestrians.

A point to note is that the majority of hedges bordering the highway are privately owned. Landowners and occupiers are responsible for the maintenance of their boundary.

If you would like to find out more regarding the verge maintenance programme please use link provided, <http://www.travelsomerset.co.uk/grasscutting>.

### **Carriageway Resurfacing/Surfacing and Structural Maintenance programmes, 2020/2021, – (All year)**

The 2020 carriageway resurfacing/surfacing programme continues. In South Somerset, by year end, a total of 9 sites are programmed to be resurfaced, with 1 site in Area West.

#### **Resurfacing**

<b>Parish</b>	<b>Road Name</b>
Ilminster	B3168 Station Road

#### **Footways**

<b>Parish</b>	<b>Road Name</b>
Chard	Cerdic Close
Misterton	Middle Street

#### **Drainage.**

Wambrook	A30 Snowdon Hill to Redbarn Lane
West Crewkerne	B3165 Clapton Road
Winsham	Whatley Lane - additional works

#### **Earthworks.**

West Chinnock	Scotts Way
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### **Winter maintenance, 2020/2021, (1<sup>st</sup> October 2020 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021)**

Whilst preparations for the winter maintenance programme has been ongoing throughout the year, the start of the winter season is officially recognised on the 1<sup>st</sup> of October. In readiness of the winter season, the following operations have now commenced;

- Replenishment of salt stocks the respective depots across the county.
- Gritters undertaking test runs of the establish Precautionary Salting Network (dry runs).



## South Somerset District Council

- Automatic weather updates are now being received, which inform the decision-making process in relation to treating or not treating the network,
- The filling of grit bins. Resource has been allocated to fill bins for those parishes who have responded to our request for information in relation to their assets.

The link provided will show you the most up to date map of all the roads salted across the County, <https://www.travelsomerset.co.uk/gritting>.

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## Community Grant to Ilchester Hall, Chiselborough (Executive Decision)

Director: Netta Meadows, Director of Service Delivery  
Lead Specialist: Tim Cook, Locality Manager  
Lead Officer: Nathan Turnbull, Locality Officer  
Contact Details: nathan.turnbull@southsomerset.gov.uk or 01935 462462

### Purpose of the Report

Councillors are asked to consider the awarding of a grant of £12,500 towards the cost of an extension to create storage space at Ilchester Hall, Chiselborough.

### Public Interest

Awarding grants is a key way that SSSC supports and helps to deliver community projects sponsored by Parishes and voluntary community organisations in the towns and villages across the district.

Ilchester Hall has applied to the Area West community grants programme for financial assistance with the costs of building an extension to create storage space. The application has been assessed by the Locality Officer who is submitting this report to enable the Area West Committee to make an informed decision about the application.

### Recommendation

It is recommended that Councillors award a grant of £12,500 to Ilchester Hall, the grant to be allocated from the Area West capital programme and subject to SSSC standard conditions for community grants (appendix A)

### Application Details

Name of applicant:	Ilchester Hall
Project:	New extension to create storage space
Total project cost:	£39,426
Amount requested from SSSC:	£12,500
% amount requested	31%
Application assessed by:	Nathan Turnbull

### Community Grants Assessment

The table below shows the grant scoring for this application. Applications must meet the minimum score of 22 to be considered for SSSC funding under Community Grants policies.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Officer assessment score</b>
<b>A</b> Supports Council Plan/Area Chapter	<b>1</b>
<b>B</b> Supports Equalities & Diversity	<b>1</b>
<b>C</b> Supports Environment Strategy	<b>2</b>
<b>D</b> Need for Project	<b>8</b>
<b>E</b> Capacity of Organization	<b>12</b>
<b>F</b> Financial need	<b>3</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>

## Background

Ilchester Hall is an intrinsic part of local rural community life in Area West and is used all year round by a vibrant community made up of villagers and people from the nearby conurbations, farms and isolated houses.

The Hall offers two rooms, the first being a flexible space with tables, seating and high ceiling, suitable for a multiplicity of uses. These include; Village Fairs, St. Georges Day Supper, Film Nights, Parish Supper, Village Walks and Breakfast, Village Lunches, Village Arts Group, Talks, Spring and Autumn Markets The Book Club (The tea pot group). It is a proven venue for a wide range of social functions, including community based, church based and privately sponsored events. The hall is available for hire for wedding receptions, children's parties, workshops and charity fundraising events.

The second room is an old office, which can be used for meetings or smaller events.

The proposed extension at the side of the building is designed to increase the area of storage to easily accommodate, chairs, tables, portable staging, stage lighting, event signs and other equipment, which are currently stored across the two rooms. This clearance will result in a larger area for use in both rooms, with far less clutter, which is desirable for events to take place.

Attendees to the hall will have an improved experience, making it a more attractive venue, as there will be less items stored and less items cluttering the main hall, this will in time help the financial implications of running the hall.

## Parish Information

Parish*	Chiselborough
Parish Population	275
No. of dwellings	-

\*Taken from the 2011 census profile

## The project

The application covers one project, which will benefit users of the hall. The proposed extension is designed to add well-needed storage space.

A great deal of care and consideration has gone into planning this extension, collectively the committee decided to go for solid stone construction, cavity walled, ham stoned faced front aspect with concrete rendered blocks to the rear, they felt it would be in keeping, being in a conservation area.

Management Committee members will be involved with running the project having initially drawn up the specification. The prime contractor will be involved in the day-to-day management as part of the installation contract.

## Local support / evidence of need

Users have expressed concerns at hiring the hall due to health and safety issues and lack of space, which will affect running costs and ultimately have financial impact on the hall if the extension is not provided.

From the outset, they have been in deep discussion with the Parish Council, who use the hall for their meetings and special public events.

The Committee have consulted with the neighbours on both sides who are happy with the proposal.

The design was subsequently submitted to SSDC planning and was approved in September 2020.

## Project costs

<b>Project costs</b>	<b>Cost £</b>
Demolish existing shed, and rebuild as per plans and clear site	34,854
Rewiring and associated electrical work	2,194
Flooring boards, loft ladder plus misc. (Bradford's verbal quote)	500
5%contingency	1,878
<b>Total</b>	<b>39,426</b>

## Funding plan

<b>Funding source</b>	<b>Secured or pending</b>	<b>Amount £</b>
Parish/Town Council	Secured	*1,000
Own Funds	Secured	24,434
Other- Village benefactor	Secured	2,490
<b>Total</b>		<b>27,924</b>

\*£250 secured over the last 4 years resulting in £1,000.

## Conclusion and Recommendation

It is recommended that a grant of £12,500 is awarded.

## Financial implications

The balance in the Area West Capital programme is £117,682. If the recommended grant of £12,500 is awarded, £105,182 will remain.

Grants are awarded subject to all other funding being secured before the commencement of the project and are on a % basis of the full project costs. Payment of the grant cannot exceed the grant award and is proportionally reduced if full project costs are under budget.

## Council Plan Implications

### Council Plan Themes and Areas of focus for 20/21

Healthy, Self-reliant Communities - To enable healthy communities, which are cohesive, sustainable and enjoy a high quality of life we will:

- Embed social value into all processes and activities to ensure we maximise the support we give
- Work with partners to reduce the impact of social isolation and create a feeling of community
- Work with partners to support people in improving their own physical and mental health and wellbeing
- Enable quality cultural, leisure and sport activities

Environment - To keep South Somerset clean, green and attractive and respond to the climate emergency we will work in partnership to:

- Promote a high-quality built environment

### Key Priorities for Area West – Area West Chapter

Healthy, Self-reliant Communities

- Support a range of improvements to community buildings

## Equality and Diversity Implications

The project aims to provide for people across all age and interest groups in the local community.



None

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## **Appendix A**

### **Standard conditions applying to all SSDC Community Grants**

#### **The applicant agrees to: -**

- Notify SSDC if there is a material change to the information provided in the application.
- Start the project within six months of the grant offer and notify SSDC of any changes to the project or start date as soon as possible.
- Confirm that all other funding sources have been secured before starting the project, if these were not already in place at the time of the application. Acknowledge SSDC assistance towards the project in any relevant publicity about the project (e.g. leaflets, posters, websites, and promotional materials) and on any permanent acknowledgement (e.g. plaques, signs etc.).
- Work in conjunction with SSDC officers to monitor and share the success of the project and the benefits to the community resulting from SSDC's contribution to the project.
- Provide a project update and/or supply before and after photos if requested
- Supply receipted invoices or receipts which provide evidence of the **full** cost of the project so that the grant can be released.
- Note that they cannot apply for another community grant for the same project within a 3 year period of this award.

### **Standard conditions applying to buildings, facilities and equipment**

- Establish and maintain a “sinking fund” to support future replacement of the building / facility / equipment as grant funding is only awarded on a one-off basis.
- Use the SSDC Building Control Service when buildings regulations are required.
- Incorporate disabled access and provide an access statement where relevant.



## **Community Grant to Horton Parish Council Playing Field Project (Executive Decision)**

Director: Netta Meadows, Director of Service Delivery  
Lead Specialist: Tim Cook, Locality Manager  
Lead Officer: Adrian Moore, Locality Officer  
Contact Details: [adrian.moore@southsomerset.gov.uk](mailto:adrian.moore@southsomerset.gov.uk) or 01935 462409

### **Purpose of the Report**

Councillors are asked to consider the awarding of a grant of £12,500 towards the purchase of play equipment, safety surfacing, multi-use sports wall, paths and landscaping to Horton Parish Council for The Horton Playing Field Project.

### **Public Interest**

Awarding grants is a key way that SSDC supports and helps to deliver community projects sponsored by Parishes and voluntary community organisations in the towns and villages across the district.

Horton Parish Council has applied to the Area West Community Grants Programme for financial assistance with the purchase of play equipment, safety surfacing, multi-use sports wall, paths and landscaping at Horton Playing Field. The application has been assessed by the Locality Officer who is submitting this report to enable the Area West Committee to make an informed decision about the application.

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that Councillors award a grant of £12,500 to Horton Parish Council for The Horton Playing Field Project, the grant to be allocated from the Area West Community Grants Programme and subject to SSDC standard conditions for community grants (Appendix A).

### **Application Details**

Name of applicant:	Horton Parish Council
Project:	The Horton Playing Field Project; purchase of play equipment, safety surfacing, multi-use sports wall, paths and landscaping at Horton Playing Field.
Total project cost:	£32,258
Amount requested from SSDC:	£12,500
Application assessed by:	Adrian Moore

## Community Grants Assessment Score

The table below shows the grant scoring for this application. Applications must meet the minimum score of 22 to be considered for SSDC funding under Community Grants policies.

Category		Comments
<b>A</b> Supports Council Plan/Area Chapter	1	Yes
<b>B</b> Supports Equalities & Diversity	1	Yes
<b>C</b> Supports Environment Strategy	2	
<b>D</b> Need for Project	8	
<b>E</b> Capacity of Organisation	12	
<b>F</b> Financial need	5	
<b>Total</b>	<b>29</b>	

## Background

The project need came to light in late 2017 when a collective group of villagers approached Horton Parish Council to see what could be done about the tired, uninspiring & overgrown Village Playing Field which comprised rusted swings, a rotted out picnic bench, a broken toddler multi frame, an overgrown playing pitch with rusted goal posts & a skate park in a bad state of repair. In April 2018 with the support of the Horton Parish Council, a volunteer group set about to make the Playing Field a vibrant new space that embraces and enhances the spirit of the community - The Horton Playing Field Project (HPFP) was born.

## Parish information

Parish	Horton
Parish populations	Approximately 850

## The Project

The aim of the project is to create a well maintained playing field, outdoor play and green space to encourage all of the community to increase their participation in active recreation, improve their personal wellbeing and enjoy the outdoor environment.

The objective is to create a community resource for residents that is efficient to maintain & delivers a long lasting recreation and play area. This will include:

- Walking / cycle trail for the younger children and the elderly to use.
- Pre-school age toddler sensory area to stimulate learning and safe play.
- Climbing multi-frame for school age children to help promote play and make contact with each other.



## South Somerset District Council

- Exercise equipment for all villagers, particularly adults and the elderly to improve their health and fitness.
- Utilize the football pitch for various ball games including a multi-use sports wall to encourage football, hockey and basketball for families and small local community groups.
- Maintain the existing skate park to facilitate confidence and self-esteem.
- Provide a beautiful landscaped area with natural plantings, seating, picnic tables, BBQ's, and grassy mounds creating a natural playground for all to enjoy and appreciate.

### Local support / evidence of need

The Project committee set about consulting with the community via a number of channels, to see what the village wanted & needed. The support was over whelming - the community needed an accessible attractive playing field that facilitates & inspires play and active recreation for all generations. The initial fundraising event, a community breakfast, saw over 145 villagers attend. Feedback forms were obtained. A community survey was carried out to gain additional feedback and an Easter Egg Hunt held to engage the younger generations input. Drawings / feedback / surveys were received on what the children wanted, as well as their carers. To gain further feedback and ideas Committee members presented at various community group meetings to gain valuable insight from all sectors of the community including the Ding Gardening Club, the Horton Parish Hall Committee, The Horton Ramblers, the Horton & Broadway Toddler Group, The Horton and Broadway Parish Church Committee.

During this process more fundraising events were held to seek further consultations and feedback as to the design and needs of the community. Once the community support was realised, the Committee members and villagers met formally to propose various designs. A consultation day was held at the Post Office and four further events to refine & vote on the design. In November 2018 the proposed design was presented to a full Parish Council and open public forum with unanimous support for the inclusive design. There have been regular updates and events to promote the project and keep the village informed on progress.

The local school with has over 120 students, and the village has quite a few families that have children that attend schools in Ashill, Combe St Nicholas, Taunton and Wellington that all try to use the playing field regularly. The local Pre-schools and day care nurseries also use the playing field (they are especially keen for the bike / access track and multi-use sports wall), and a local group uses the playing field for 'After Work Fitness' classes and a local 'Walking Football' group for the over 60's is extremely keen to use the playing field. By enhancing the facilities it will further encourage others to come and enjoy the space.

The project is publicised through social networks; (Facebook, Twitter & the HPFP Website), a hand delivered Project Newsletter (500 home circulation), the Horton Gazette Newsletter and Project posters throughout the local area all allow engagement with the wider community. There are bi-monthly updates to the Parish Council &

community groups including the Village Hall Committee, the Parish Church Committee, Neroche School (via their newsletter) and the Toddler Groups. All major news items are covered by the Chard & Ilminster Press.

The Project utilises many platforms to promote and engage the community, and this will continue throughout the Project, and long after the completion of the various stages. The Project Group social pages, newsletters, posters, School & Village newsletters, regular community group meeting presentations and Parish Council reports will continue. They provide a unique platform to engage with villagers directly and those from neighbouring local villages. The Project has committed to running a minimum four events each year to help cover the costs for maintenance of the field, equipment and updating the facilities as needed.

### Project costs

<b>Project costs</b>	<b>Cost £</b>
Entrance area	1,729
Nest swing including matting	4,337
Multi-use sports wall including goal posts installation	6,644
Self-binding Gravel Path Including installation & Grass mounds	5,313
Toddler area – roundabout, seesaw and trim trail item	14,235
<b>Total</b>	<b>32,258</b>

### Funding plan

<b>Funding source</b>	<b>Secured or pending</b>	<b>Amount £</b>
Horton Parish Council	Secured	6,000
Horton Playing Field Funds	Secured	9,515
Co-op Community Grant	Secured	1,243
Clarks Foundation	Pending	2,500
Somerset County Council Improving Lives Grant	Secured	500
SSDC	Pending	12,500
<b>Total</b>		<b>32,258</b>

### Conclusion and Recommendation

It is recommended that a grant of £12,500 is awarded.

### Financial implications

If the community grant to Ilchester Hall, Chiselborough is awarded the balance in the Area West capital programme will be £105,182. If the recommended grant to Horton Playing Field project of £12,500 is awarded the balance in the Area West capital programme will be £92,682.



Grants are awarded subject to all other funding being secured before the commencement of the project and are on a % basis of the full project costs. Payment of the grant cannot exceed the grant award and is proportionally reduced if full project costs are under budget.

## Council Plan Implications

### **Focus 3: Environment**

To keep South Somerset clean, green and attractive we will work in partnership to:

- Promote recycling and minimise waste
- Promote the use of 'green' technology
- ***Maintain and promote access to our Country Parks and open spaces to promote good mental and physical health***
- ***Keep streets and neighbourhoods clean and attractive***
- Continue to support long term flood resilience
- Promote a high quality built environment in line with Local Plan policies
- Support communities to develop and implement local, parish and neighbourhood plans

### **Focus 5: Health and Communities**

To build healthy, self-reliant, active communities we will:

- ***Support communities so that they can identify their needs and develop local solutions***
- ***Target support to areas of need***
- ***Help people to live well by enabling quality cultural, leisure, play, sport & healthy lifestyle facilities & activities***
- ***Work with partners to tackle health issues such as diabetes and hypertension and mental health***
- Work with our partners to keep our communities safe

### **Key priorities for Area West - Area Chapter: Healthy, Self-reliant Communities**

- To improve pitch provision in Area West and particularly in Chard.

## Background Papers

None

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## **Appendix A**

### **Standard conditions applying to all SSDC Community Grants**

#### **The applicant agrees to: -**

- Notify SSDC if there is a material change to the information provided in the application.
- Start the project within six months of the grant offer and notify SSDC of any changes to the project or start date as soon as possible.
- Confirm that all other funding sources have been secured before starting the project, if these were not already in place at the time of the application. Acknowledge SSDC assistance towards the project in any relevant publicity about the project (e.g. leaflets, posters, websites, and promotional materials) and on any permanent acknowledgement (e.g. plaques, signs etc.).
- Work in conjunction with SSDC officers to monitor and share the success of the project and the benefits to the community resulting from SSDC's contribution to the project.
- Provide a project update and/or supply before and after photos if requested.
- Supply receipted invoices or receipts which provide evidence of the **full** cost of the project so that the grant can be released.

#### **Standard conditions applying to buildings, facilities and equipment**

- Establish and maintain a “sinking fund” to support future replacement of the building / facility / equipment as grant funding is only awarded on a one-off basis.
- Use the SSDC Building Control Service when buildings regulations are required.
- Incorporate disabled access and provide an access statement where relevant.

#### **Special conditions**



## **Chard Regeneration Scheme – Gateway Scheme (Executive Decision)**

Executive Portfolio Holder:	Cllr Jason Baker
Director:	Martin Woods, Director of Place
Programme Manager:	Natalie Fortt, Regeneration Programme Manager
Lead Officer:	Anna Matthews, Chard High Street Heritage Action Zone Project Manager
Contact Details:	anna.matthews@southsomerset.gov.uk or 01935 462958

### **Purpose of the Report**

To update members of the Area West Committee of progress on the Chard Gateway regeneration scheme, the area of public realm at the Silver Street junction with Fore Street, opposite Chard School, and provide details on the next steps and resources.

### **Public Interest**

The Chard Regeneration Programme is an important commitment by South Somerset District Council (SSDC) to invest in Chard town centre, working in close collaboration with local businesses, the Town Council, Somerset County Council and other stakeholders. Public consultation on the programme took place during 2018, 2019 and early 2020, and residents, local businesses and other stakeholders provided feedback on the various priority projects identified as part of the ambitious programme.

### **Recommendations**

1. That members note the content of this report, including progress made towards delivering the scheme and changes in project management.
2. That members agree to increase the commitment from the area capital reserve to £51,880 in order to progress to implementation of the scheme, alongside the Town Council's commitment.
3. That members agree to delegate final design development for the scheme to the project team leading Chard's public realm projects with the final sign-off by Chard Regeneration Board.

### **Background**

The Gateway project has been in existence since the 1990s and, for a number of reasons, work has been prematurely aborted either due to funding or lack of other resources such as officer time. The highways department carried out some repairs to

the area during 2018 but their work did not extend to the resurfacing of the pavement, which is currently a mismatched and ugly surface.

There have been a number of failed businesses in the area, including most recently the Italian restaurant that occupied the property adjacent to the area of public realm in question until the summer of 2018. The failure of the restaurant appears to have been due to a number of environmental factors such as high rent and no application being made by the business to the highways department for a licenced obstruction to enable them to use the paved area for outdoor seating. As the high street contracts, it is possible that this may not remain as a commercial property.

In January 2019, the Committee received a report from Jeb Farrah, Regeneration Project Manager, explaining that the project proposal is to provide better pedestrian security and a more aesthetic gateway entrance to Chard Town Centre, through interventions such as permanent seating, planting and railings. This would be made possible by securing a licensed obstruction from the county highways department. At that meeting, the Committee resolved:

- That project management responsibilities for the site be allocated to the Locality Team subject to an ongoing maintenance plan being agreed by SSDC and Chard Town Council.
- That £23,000 be provisionally allocated from the Area Capital Reserve towards jointly underwriting the scheme with Chard Town Council who had agreed the provisional allocation of £15,000.
- That any additional external grant funding received towards the project be apportioned to Chard Town Council and SSDC as a percentage of their original funding contribution (SSDC 60%, CTC 40%).
- That final agreement on the design and layout of the scheme be delegated to the Chard Ward Members in consultation with the Chard Regeneration Scheme Project Manager.

**Figure 1: Location of proposed scheme (Area 05)**

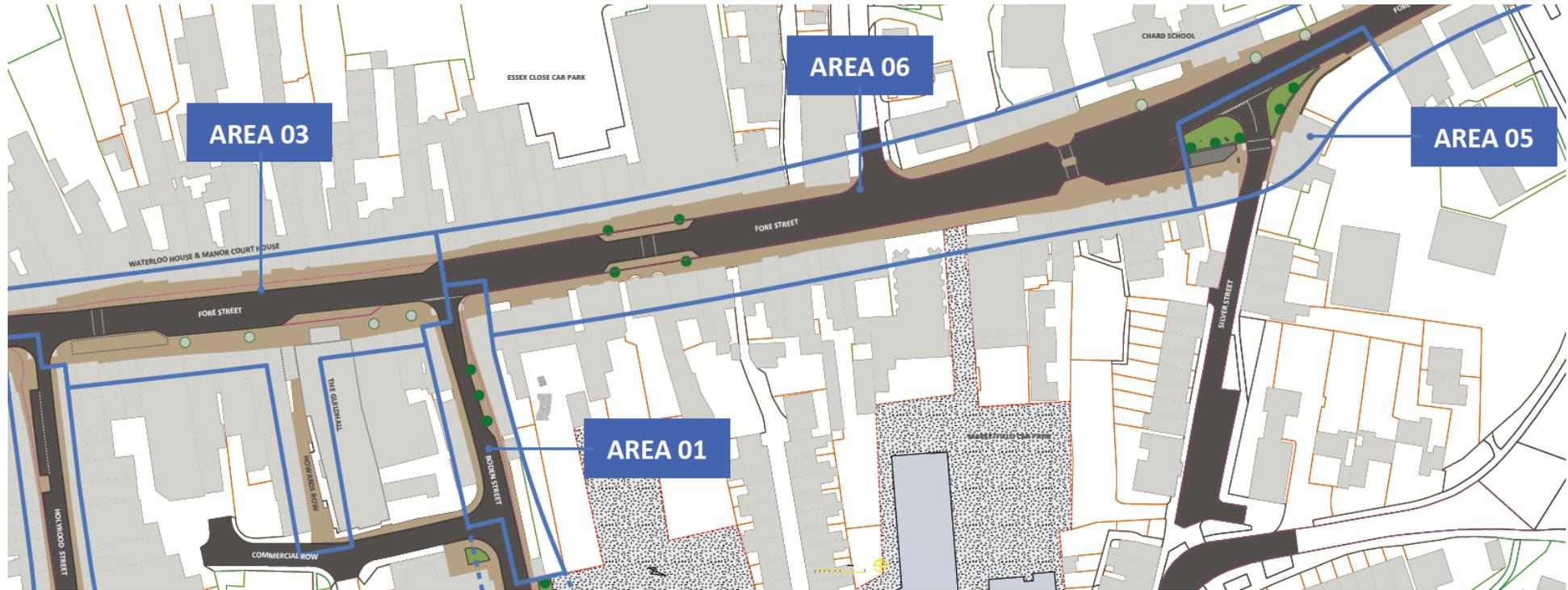


Image credit: *Chard Town Centre Public Realm Strategy, October 2019* by Element Urbanism & Hydrock

## Update to the Context of the Project

Since the previous update to Area West Committee on this project, SSDC commissioned a Public Realm Strategy for Chard Town Centre, to take account of the town centre environment in terms of its connectivity and the quality of its streetscape. At the heart of the strategy is the desire to protect, enhance and celebrate Chard's historic buildings and townscape character. It allowed priority areas for public realm improvements to be clearly identified across the town. The strategy includes the Gateway site as a priority project, putting it in the context of the ambition for wider town improvements.

This document has supported and informed the development of a successful bid to Historic England for the Chard High Street Heritage Action Zone (HSHAZ). This funding for Chard was announced earlier this year, and brings £1 million of Government high streets funding to the area. Matched by SSDC, a total of £2 million will be invested in the historic heart of Chard's shopping area over the next 3½ years.

The HSHAZ area is defined as the section of Fore Street running from Boden Street to Holyrood Street (including the Guildhall), and the northern part of Holyrood Street. Included within the HSHAZ project, therefore, are public realm improvements to Boden Street, Fore Street and Holyrood Street, to improve the quality of the environment to a standard that befits the many beautiful historic buildings in the area, as well as improve pedestrian safety and access to the shops and businesses. The ultimate aim of the HSHAZ is to reinvigorate and champion Chard's high street. This sits alongside the regeneration of the Boden Mill site, including the new leisure centre.

## Project Management Update

As a result of the successful HSHAZ bid, a dedicated project manager has been appointed. With its funding from Area West Committee and Chard Town Council, the Gateway project can be managed by the HSHAZ project manager, alongside the HSHAZ-funded schemes. This would mean that the project can benefit from consistent design practices across the town, economies of scale, and the momentum of delivery that comes from a time-limited programme.

The HSHAZ project will sit within the governance of the Chard Regeneration Programme, overseen by the Chard Regeneration Board. Final sign-off of HSHAZ public realm interventions sits with the Regeneration Board.

## Design Update

Following a tender process, a design team comprising Hydrock, LHC & Coreus has taken the concept designs for the Gateway site forward into developed designs (RIBA Stage 3), alongside the three HSHAZ sites. This process allowed more detailed consideration of the brief to create an attractive, green gateway to the town with

opportunities for sitting and a safe, comfortable pedestrian route across Silver Street. In order to provide this, the area was expanded to include both sides of Silver Street, which brings the added benefit of improving the east-bound view.

Figure 2 shows the developed design of the proposed layout, including areas of shrubbery planting, two trees, a paved area incorporating the reinstatement of the water rill that runs down the rest of Fore Street, and safe crossing area.

**Figure 2: RIBA Stage 3 drawing of proposed scheme:**

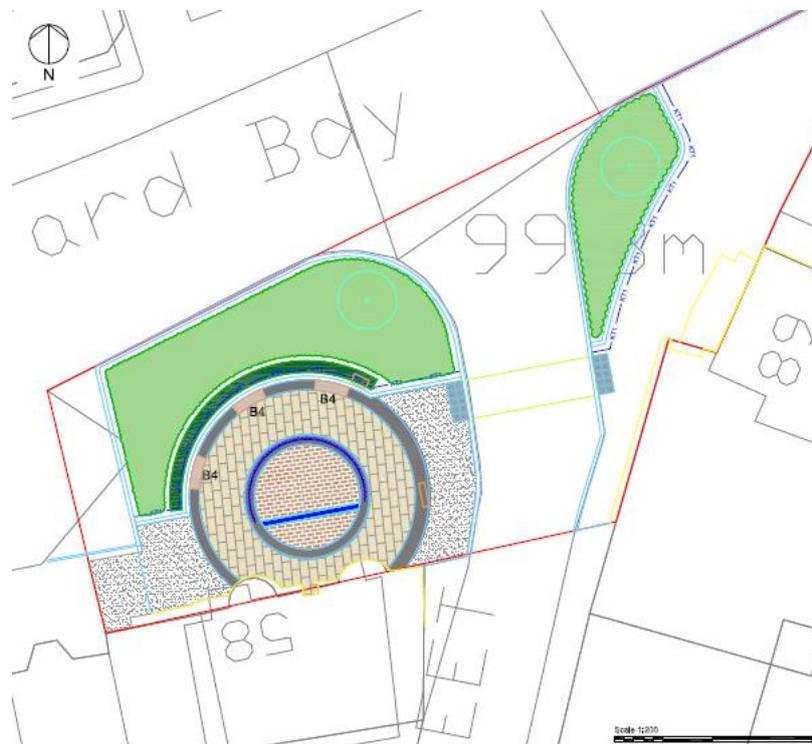


Image credit: LHC Design

## Project Budget

This stage in the design process allows for a more detailed understanding of the costs of delivering the scheme. The table below outlines the current budget, and the projected cost for the Gateway.

<b>Budget</b>	<b>Current £</b>	<b>Proposed £</b>
South Somerset District Council commitment	23,000	*67,193
Chard Town Council commitment	15,000	**30,000
<b>Total budget</b>	<b>38,000</b>	<b>97,193</b>
<b>Total Projected Cost</b>	<b>97,193</b>	<b>97,193</b>
<i>Additional Funds Required</i>	<i>59,193</i>	<i>0</i>

\*£15,313 from General Grants Reserves and £51,880 from Area West Committee Capital Programme

\*\*Chard Town Council increased their commitment to £30k at the Full Council meeting on 9 November 2020

This total projected cost includes design fees, surveys, works and materials estimates and contingency, all based on a specification. The previous project cost presented to the Committee was a generic estimate and didn't include this detail. It should also be noted that the cost of materials is escalating at the moment, due to stop-start demand and covid-19.

It is possible that the projected cost reduces as the project progresses, for example through economies of scale in tendering the construction work alongside HSHAZ works, through the process of competitive tendering, or through the reduction of risk as surveys reveal more information about the site.

It is possible to reduce the quality or scope of the scheme in order to reduce the estimated costs at this point in the process, but members should be aware that this would incur redesign fees for which additional budget would still be required.

It is therefore advised that members increase the provisional budget allocated to the scheme to meet the projected shortfall at this stage. The table above suggests the new level of funding from both South Somerset District Council and Chard Town Council. In terms of the SSSDC contribution, £15,313 has been identified from the General Grants Reserves (from a street clean-up fund). Therefore the request to Area West Committee is for an additional £28,880, to a total of £51,880.

## Timeline

Should budget be confirmed at this meeting and the Full Town Council meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> November that allows the scheme to progress, the aim would be to complete the technical design process by the end of January 2021. This would mean that works could begin in late spring of that year.

## Decision-making

In order to give the best chance of meeting the timeline above, timely and responsive decision-making will be critical. It is therefore recommended that Area West Committee delegates the final design development for the scheme to the project team leading Chard's public realm projects, with final sign off delegated to the Chard Regeneration Board.

## Financial Implications

If both Ilchester Hall, Chiselborough and Horton Playing Field Community Grants are awarded, the balance in the Area West unallocated capital programme will stand at £92,682. If the committee agrees this extra £28,880 for the Gateway, then £63,802 will remain.

## Council Plan Implications

To progress implementation of the Chard Regeneration Programme is one of the council's Priority Projects for 2020-2021.

The regeneration of Chard town centre also assists the council in meeting several of its Economy objectives including:

- Regenerate our town centres and high streets, unlocking key sites
- Enhance visitor experience and income from tourism.

## Carbon Emissions and Climate Change Implications

None directly arising from this report but the planned addition of trees and/or planting will have a positive environmental impact.

## Equality and Diversity Implications

None arising from this report.

## Background Papers

Chard Public Realm Strategy

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## Market Towns Investment Group

Director: Martin Woods, Director of Place  
Lead Specialist: Joe Walsh, Specialist – Economy / Peter Paddon, Lead Specialist Economy  
Lead Officer: Nicola Doble, Specialist - Economy  
Contact Details: nicola.doble@southsomerset.gov.uk or 01935 462462

## Purpose of the Report

To update members about the Market Towns Investment Group and its current project funding programme.

## Recommendation

That the report be noted.

## Background

The Market Towns Investment Group (MTIG) was established in June 2006 as a key element of the South Somerset Market Towns Vision. MTIG is an important partnership created to encourage better, more constructive community planning arrangements between partners at all levels and to bring forward more effective investment decisions in our market towns and the rural areas they serve.

The Market Towns Investment Group (MTIG), chaired by Councillor Jason Baker, is a partnership of SSDC, Town Councils and local regeneration groups established to promote strategic investment in South Somerset Market Towns and surrounding villages. The eleven Market Town Areas represented are Bruton, Castle Cary, Chard, Crewkerne, Ilminster, Langport, Martock, Milborne Port, Somerton, South Petherton and Wincanton.

The agreed purpose of the group is to recommend programmes for investment in Market Town areas where working together would be better than working alone. This might be because undertaking a number of projects would be more economical, or because together we can create a critical mass that would make a scheme viable.

Working together means that it becomes more feasible to deal with common issues that otherwise would not be addressed.

## Funding for Investment

All known community plan proposals are held on a shared database. Through this it was established that the estimated cost of all proposals in each Market Town

Community Plan is approximately £2 million and not all areas that need investment are covered in all community plans.

It is well understood that the resources needed to fulfil the ambitions and aspirations we have for the future of our Market Towns are substantial, and will need to be met from a number of sources. MTIG provides an innovative means of capturing the significant levels of funding required to meet well founded community aspirations efficiently and effectively.

In 2006, SSDC made an initial capital budget of £300,000 available to the Market Towns Investment Group, allowing some themes to be explored and programmes for investment to be delivered. An additional £150,000 and £300,000 has since been added to the budget and to date £457,234.35 has been spent.

### **Deciding Common Themes for Investment**

Through a joint exercise, the members of MTIG carefully considered the themes from their published and draft community plans for Market Towns.

In 2008 a clear common interest in projects that promote tourism, the local built environment, community safety and the local economy was identified and funding was allocated to the development of;

- Enhancement of CCTV
- The Creation of Improved Signage through Information Boards Or ‘Gateway’ Public Art.
- Encouraging joint and priority schemes

### **Priority Project Programme 2020**

Following consultation with representatives of the Market Towns during 2019/20 a new round of Priority Project funding was launched.

Representatives from the market towns identified a diverse range of projects which they are seeking to progress and therefore this round of Priority Project applications to the MTIG has been kept broad to give towns the choice about what they wish to prioritise. The criteria for the funding is:

1. The Town Council can apply for a financial contribution from MTIG funds towards a capital project or the capital element of a larger project based. The minimum request should be no less than £5,000 and the maximum no more than £20,000.



## South Somerset District Council

2. You can package several projects together and ask for financial support towards more than one project but all works must be completed and the grant drawn down within 12 months of the grant offer (unless by prior agreement).
3. The typical grant intervention rate is 50%, higher levels of funding will only be considered for exceptional projects. Grant requests for 100% funding are unlikely to be supported.
4. Your project should be located in the Town Centre and ideally feature in your town plan/neighbourhood plan or as a priority in the Town Council's work programme. When preparing your application please explain the reasons for requesting the funding clearly and include photos/images to support this.
5. Joint projects or collaboration with other MTIG towns is positively encouraged.

The representatives were asked to submit expressions of interest of potential projects by the 28<sup>th</sup> September 2020 and for the final applications to be received by the 31<sup>st</sup> January 2020. Some work is still required to determine exact project costs. The expressions of interest are below:

Market Town	Project	Funding
Bruton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To develop the existing Station Road car park to include car charging points and permeable surfacing</li> </ul>	£60,000
Castle Cary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purchase a lift to externally access the upper floor of the Market House and refurbish the existing kitchen</li> </ul>	£10,000
Chard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Declutter the existing town signage</li> <li>• Install signage in the car parks to direct visitors to the town centre</li> <li>• Install two shopper information boards in new locations in Bath Street car park</li> <li>• Create coaches and campervan bays in the Minnows car park with signage to direct visitors to the town centre</li> <li>• Purchase and install four new town gateway signs</li> <li>• Create a permanent display on the roundabout by Tescos (similar to Ablebox in Yeovil)</li> <li>• Install a CCTV camera on Boden Street</li> </ul>	£20,000
Crewkerne	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refurbishment of town centre public toilets</li> </ul>	£20,000
Ilminster	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change the gradient of a path into the recreation ground to allow access for wheelchairs and pushchairs</li> </ul>	£9,000
Langport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a Mini Tourist Information bureau including two defibrillators in the town centre</li> <li>• Create a website for the Langport River Project</li> <li>• Purchase Health and safety information signage for the river</li> </ul>	£20,000



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A new Bus Shelter</li> <li>• Two Donation Boxes located by Langport Toilets and Huish Bridge Car Park</li> <li>• Fencing along the cycleway</li> </ul>	
Martock	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The refurbishment and upgrade of the existing public toilets in the Market House</li> <li>• Install solar compacting litter bins</li> <li>• Install CCTV and Wi-Fi infrastructure at Martock Recreation Ground</li> <li>• An E-Notice Board for the Market House and new notice boards for the Parish Hall and Recreation Ground</li> <li>• Electric Gates for the Recreation Ground</li> <li>• Upgrading of lights to LED at the MUGA and Skate Park at the Recreation Ground</li> </ul>	£27,500
Milborne Port	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tarmacking of allotments entrance</li> <li>• Renewal of footpaths in churchyard</li> </ul>	£5,000
Somerton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Installation of solar panels for the car park to supply the electric charging points</li> <li>• The replacement of the Christmas Lights displays by changing to LED strings and message panels</li> <li>• The creation of the town centre Park of Peace which gives shoppers a place to rest and relax before and after visiting the old Somerton Town Centre. It is also an attraction for tourists and non-residents of Somerton</li> </ul>	£29,000
South Petherton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Installation of two new lighting columns and re-line the car park at the Recreation Ground</li> <li>• Fit a bike storage and rack with a shelter at St James Street Car Park</li> <li>• A water dispenser</li> <li>• Install an electric charging point</li> <li>• Memorial Garden - Stone walling, coping stones and new flooring</li> <li>• A concrete planter</li> <li>• Three new noticeboards in the car park</li> <li>• A new bus shelter</li> <li>• Architect plans and fees for a new Community Hub</li> </ul>	£20,000
Wincanton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Install recycling bins across the town instead of normal bins and run an education campaign</li> <li>• Change the lights in the outside play area to LED</li> <li>• Purchase a community fridge to support free food share and reduce food waste and run an education campaign</li> </ul>	£10,000

<b>Total requested</b>		<b>£230,000</b>
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If completed applications are received for all of the projects listed this will enable the delivery of at least £460,000 of projects in the community.

## Council Plan Implications

Council Plan themes and Areas of focus for 2020/21

### **Focus 2: Economy – To make South Somerset a great place to do business, with clean inclusive growth and thriving urban and rural businesses:**

- Regenerate our town centres and high streets, unlocking key sites
- Pilot approaches to improve rural productivity, including flexible affordable transport
- Enhance visitor experience and income from tourism

### **Focus 3: Environment – To keep South Somerset clean, green and attractive we will work in partnership to:**

- Promote recycling and minimise waste
- Promote the use of 'green' technology
- Keep streets and neighbourhoods clean and attractive
- Promote a high quality built environment in line with Local Plan policies
- Support communities to develop and implement local, parish and neighbourhood plans

### **Focus 4: Places where we live – To Enable housing and communities to meet the existing and future needs of residents and employers, we will work to:**

- Ensure development which is sustainable, where people want to live and communities can thrive

### **Focus 5: Health and Communities – To build healthy, self-reliant, active communities we will:**

- Support communities so that they can identify their needs and develop local solutions
- Target support to areas of need
- Help people to live well by enabling quality cultural, leisure, play, sport & healthy lifestyle facilities & activities
- Work with our partners to keep our communities safe

### **Key priorities for Area West – Area Chapter: Economy**



## **South Somerset District Council**

- To engage Town Councils to develop a programme of investment through the Market Town Investment Group
- Attract tourists and increase spend in and visits to the area and wider district. Engage with attractions and providers to offer a cohesive destination packages to visitors through the TICs and LICs
- Continue to support individual businesses and associations/Chambers of Trade/Town Teams
- Support community led initiatives that contribute towards combatting climate change.

### **Carbon Emissions and Climate Change Implications**

Environmental based projects are encouraged to be submitted.

### **Equality and Diversity Implications**

The projects aim to provide for people across all age and interest groups in the local community.

### **Background Papers**

None

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## **Reports from Members on Outside Organisations**

### **Purpose of the Report**

To introduce reports from members appointed to outside organisations 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.

### **Recommendations**

That the reports are noted.

### **Background**

To replace “Reports from members on outside organisations” as a generic standing agenda item it was agreed at the August 2012 meeting to include specific reports about each organisation in the Committee’s forward plan.

Members were appointed to serve on outside bodies at the June 2019 meeting.

### **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 the member reports are:

Iminster Forum – Cllr. Val Keitch  
Meeting House Arts Centre, Iminster – Cllr. Val Keitch

### **Financial Implications**

None

### **Background Papers**

None

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## Area West Committee Forward Plan

Director: Kirsty Larkins, Strategy & Commissioning  
Agenda Coordinator: Jo Morris, Case Officer (Strategy & Commissioning)  
Contact Details: jo.morris@southsomerset.gov.uk

## Purpose of the Report

This report informs Members of the agreed Area West Committee Forward Plan.

## Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- a. Comment upon and note the proposed Area West Forward Plan as attached;
- b. Identify priorities for further reports to be added to the Area West Forward Plan.

## Area West Committee 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.

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**Notes**

(1) Items marked in italics are not yet confirmed.

(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](mailto:jo.morris@southsomerset.gov.uk)

<b>Meeting Date</b>	<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Lead Officer(s) SSDC unless stated otherwise</b>
December 2020	Chard Regeneration Scheme – quarterly update report	Dan Bennett, Property and Development Project Manager
January 2021	<i>Avon &amp; Somerset Constabulary</i>	<i>Sgt Rob Jameson</i>
February 2021	Area West – Area Chapter update report	Tim Cook, Locality Team Manager Debbie Haines, Locality Team Leader
<i>TBC</i>	<i>Chard Eastern Development Master Plan</i>	<i>Barry James, Interim Planning Lead Specialist</i>
<i>TBC</i>	<i>Historic Buildings at Risk</i>	<i>Anthony Garratt, Specialist – Development Management</i>
<i>TBC</i>	<i>Update on CIL and S106 contributions</i>	<i>TBC</i>



## Planning Appeals

Director: Netta Meadows, Service Delivery  
Lead Specialist: Barry James, Interim Planning Lead,  
Contact Details: barry.james@southsomerset.gov.uk

## 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

20/00824/OUT - Outline application with all matters reserved for residential development of 9 dwellings  
Land At Pound Road, Broadway, Ilminster  
(Officer delegated decision)

18/03818/FUL - Erection of 5 No. dwellings  
Chataway House, Leach Road, Chard, TA20 1FR  
(Officer delegated decision)

19/02416/FUL – Erection of an agricultural building, for secure storage of tools, animal feed, a farm office, and also for shelter/rest and an area where we can prepare food as we work (retrospective).  
Land Adjacent To Knowle Lane, Knowle Lane, Misterton, Crewkerne  
(Officer delegated decision)

19/00698/OUT - The erection of 9 No. residential dwellings  
Land OS 0420 Part Tail Mill Lane Merriott Somerset  
(Committee decision)

### **Appeals Dismissed**

18/03939/OUT - The erection of 8 No. dwellings with all matters reserved except for access.

Land OS 8332 Pauls Lane, Broadway, Ilminster  
(Officer delegated decision)

19/01541/ADV - The display of two non-illuminated free standing directional signs.

Land Os 3963 Part (A30) West Of Snowdon Heights, Chard, TA20 1QX  
(Officer delegated decision)

19/00810/FUL - The erection of 2 No. commercial buildings with the provision for car parking, access and turning areas.

Land At Tail Mill, Tail Mill Lane, Merriott, TA16 5PF  
(Committee decision)

20/00325/PIP – Permission in principle for the erection of 9 no. dwellings

Land At Eastfield Farm, Eastfield Lane, North Perrott, Crewkerne  
(Officer delegated decision)

### **Appeals Allowed**

20/00799/FUL - Single storey extension to dwelling and change of use of land into residential curtilage.

The Cattle Barton Ludney Lane Allowenshay Hinton St George Somerset TA17 8TB  
(Officer delegated decision)

### **Background Papers**

Appeal decision notices attached.

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## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 August 2020

**by Nick Davies BSc(Hons) BTP MRTPI**

**an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State**

**Decision date: 04 September 2020**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/R3325/W/20/3248417**

**Land at Paulls Lane, Broadway TA19 9QY**

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant outline planning permission.
  - The appeal is made by Mr & Mrs P Smith against the decision of South Somerset District Council.
  - The application Ref 18/03939/OUT, dated 11 December 2018, was refused by notice dated 8 November 2019.
  - The development proposed is the erection of 8 No. dwellings.
- 

### Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

### Procedural Matter

2. The proposal has been made in outline, with all matters apart from access reserved for future consideration. Plans have been submitted showing a site layout and indicative elevations. As these are reserved matters, I have considered these plans solely on the basis that they have been submitted for illustrative purposes.

### Main Issue

3. The main issue is the impact of the development on highway safety.

### Reasons

4. The appeal site is a grass field, surrounded by mature hedgerows, which lies to the south of a row of houses that front Broadway Road. Access is currently gained via a field gate in the north-western corner of the site, off Paulls Lane, which has a junction with Broadway Road about 60 metres to the south. The proposal is to build eight dwellings on the site, with a new access off Paulls Lane, about 30 metres south of the existing field gate.
5. The junction of Paulls Lane with Broadway Road is quite narrow, so can only be used by one vehicle at a time. It is contained by stone walls, which bound the highway edge on both sides. As a result, visibility for drivers of vehicles emerging onto Broadway Road, is severely constrained in both directions. The appellants' evidence indicates that from a point 2 metres back from Broadway Road, visibility of 5.5 metres is available to the east, and 4.5 metres to the west. The Council's highway consultant contends that, based on measurements taken on site, these distances are 7.6 metres and 7.7 metres. Either way, my own experience of using the access confirmed that it provides very limited

- visibility for drivers emerging from the junction onto a road with a 30-mph speed limit.
6. The proposals include improvements to the visibility available for drivers emerging from the junction, by narrowing the carriageway in Broadway Road to 5.5 metres, allowing the Paulls Lane junction line to be advanced about 0.6 metres. The appellants' evidence indicates that this will improve visibility from a point 2 metres back from the junction, to 16 metres to the east, and 20 metres to the west. Again, this evidence is contested by the Council's highway consultant, who's measurements indicate that these distances would be 8.6 metres and 11.2 metres. To comply with the guidance on visibility in Table 7.3 of Manual for Streets (MfS), the appellant's figures would require traffic in Broadway Road to be travelling at less than 20 mph, whereas the Council's dimensions would require traffic speeds of about 10 mph.
  7. From my own observations, including driving out of the junction in an average sized car, I found the appellants' levels of improved visibility to be optimistic. I found that advancing 0.6 metres from the existing carriageway edge resulted in little improvement to the available visibility. It was necessary to advance much further to obtain sufficient visibility to safely complete the manoeuvre. I am also mindful that paragraph 7.7.6 of MfS says that an X distance of 2.4 metres should normally be used in most built-up situations. It is only in "very lightly-trafficked and slow-speed situations" that paragraph 7.7.7 indicates that a minimum figure of 2 metres may be considered. Use of a 2.4 metre X distance would reduce the level of visibility that would be available, and would, consequently, reduce the required traffic speeds in Broadway Road even further.
  8. The appellant's vehicle speed survey shows that the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile vehicle speeds in Broadway Road, between 10:40 and 11:40 on 28 November 2017, were 23.7 mph westbound and 26.5 mph eastbound. The Council's highway consultant has suggested that this data should be treated with caution, as the survey was on a single day, and only lasted for an hour, so would have included a limited number of vehicles. Reference is made to information that was recorded for an appeal in 2016 where the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speeds recorded by an Automatic Traffic Counter were 30.1 and 30.2 mph at a site 330 metres to the east. However, no recent data has been provided for traffic passing the junction to cast doubt on the appellants' data. Nevertheless, the appellants' data indicates that visibility at the junction would need to be over 30 metres to comply with MfS recommendations. What could be achieved falls well short of that.
  9. It is agreed by the parties that there is no record of any personal injury collisions on Paulls Lane, or at its junction with Broadway Road. The appellant suggests that the junction is used by the two properties either side of the junction, at least four properties in Trotts Lane, and additional through traffic. However, the main access and parking for the house to the east of the junction is off Broadway Road. There is only one other dwelling in Paulls Lane. The houses in Trotts Lane lie to the south of the ford and, due to its narrow and poorly aligned nature, drivers are unlikely to use Paulls Lane in preference to other, less tortuous routes. The appellants' morning peak hour traffic count on a weekday in November 2017 did not record any vehicles using the junction. Currently, therefore, the junction is not well-used. The lack of reported accidents in the past does not, therefore, provide a robust basis for sanctioning

- a significant increase in the use of a junction that would still be significantly below recommended standards.
10. The parties agree that the eight houses would result in about 41 traffic movements per day. It is further agreed that the nature of Paulls Lane, to the south of the site, dictates that virtually all these trips will use the Broadway Road junction. There would, therefore, be a total of ten dwellings regularly using the junction, rather than two, which represents a very significant increase. Although visibility at the junction would be improved, it would still fall well below the levels recommended in MfS. There would, therefore, be limited benefits to the small amount of traffic that currently uses the junction, but the traffic from eight additional dwellings would be added to a junction that would still fall well below recommended standards. The net result would be an increase in hazardous movements out of the junction.
  11. Research summarised in Manual for Streets 2 indicates that a reduction in visibility below recommended levels will not necessarily lead to a significant problem. Nevertheless, paragraph 10.5.9 still says that the Y distance should be based on the recommended Stopping Sight Distance values. Even using the appellants' Y distances and speed data, which are contested, the visibility that could be achieved would be significantly short of these values. Therefore, whilst accepting that MfS and MfS2 provide advice that should be used flexibly, taking account of site conditions, my own experience of using the junction does not persuade me that the proposed reduction in the recommended visibility could be safely accommodated.
  12. The new access into the site, off Paulls Lane, would comply with MfS standards for a 20-mph road. In view of the restricted width of Paulls Lane, it is unlikely that traffic passing the site will exceed that speed, so drivers would be able to safely emerge from the site. However, to reach the Broadway Road junction, and to access the services in the village and further afield, occupants of the houses would have to travel approximately 90 metres south along Paulls Lane. This stretch of road is narrow, unlit and has no footways. Pedestrians, cyclists and pedestrians would have to share the carriageway.
  13. Although it broadens close to the junction, the carriageway is about 2.5 metres in width for much of its length. Figure 7.1 of MfS indicates that a width of 4.1 metres is necessary to enable two cars to pass, or to allow a large vehicle to pass a cyclist. Reference to this diagram also shows that a car could not safely pass a pedestrian on a 2.5 metre road. As there is no intervisibility between the site access and the Broadway Road junction it is likely that, from time to time, vehicles will encounter other vehicles, cyclists or pedestrians on this stretch of road. A pedestrian or cyclist confronted by an oncoming vehicle may feel obliged to press themselves into the roadside hedge, and a driver may be tempted to squeeze past. This would be a hazardous manoeuvre, particularly where it involved a pedestrian with mobility problems, or using a pushchair.
  14. A vehicle meeting another vehicle would inevitably result in one of them having to reverse to allow the other to pass. It is unlikely that drivers will contemplate reversing back onto Broadway Road, due to the lack of visibility at the junction. The northbound driver would therefore be faced with a potentially lengthy reversing manoeuvre. At present, there are two informal passing places between the Broadway Road junction and the site access, which may shorten these manoeuvres. However, both appear to involve encroachment onto

- private land, so they cannot be relied upon to be permanently available. Whilst these reversing manoeuvres would not be particularly dangerous to the drivers, they would increase the hazard for any pedestrians or cyclists using the carriageway.
15. Delivery vans, refuse carts and emergency vehicles would need to gain access to the houses. Figure 7.1 of MfS shows that a large vehicle would take up the whole of a 2.75 metre carriageway. Paulls Lane is narrower than that for much of its length, and it has not been demonstrated that such vehicles could negotiate the lane and its junctions. If they could, they would be tight to the walls/hedges on both sides of the carriageway. This would be intimidating for any pedestrians or cyclists using the carriageway, who would have to retreat to a place of safety.
  16. MfS2 says streets without conventional footways may be appropriate where traffic speeds are low, and the area operates on 'shared space' principles such as in town or village centres. Paragraph 7.2.8 of MfS identifies that the key aims of shared surface schemes include encouraging low vehicle speeds; making it easier for people to move around; and creating an environment in which pedestrians do not feel intimidated by motor traffic. Whilst the characteristics of Paulls Lane encourage low traffic speeds, the restricted width of the carriageway would mean pedestrians and cyclists would not always be able to move freely along the road, and would, from time to time, come into conflict with vehicles. As a result, Paulls Lane would not operate successfully as a shared surface.
  17. Occupants of the development may be discouraged from making sustainable transport options to access local services, or onward public transport, due to the inherent inconvenience and dangers of walking or cycling in Paulls Lane. The development does not provide any alternative routes, so does not comply with the advice at paragraph 110 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) to give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements.
  18. My attention has been drawn to an access near the appeal site, at Olivers Lane, which demonstrates the MfS2 comment that historic villages may have street patterns that are "unlikely to conform to a standardised highway layout but which it is desirable to conserve in the interests of maintaining the character of the area". I saw that this access had stone walls with curved splays to either side of the drive, and no separate footways. However, the junction was considerably wider, with greater visibility, allowing two cars to pass. The driveway was also wide enough to allow vehicles to safely pass pedestrians and cyclists, so can operate safely and conveniently as a shared surface.
  19. The appellants' evidence that the traffic generated by the development could be accommodated on the wider highway network, without any significant impacts on capacity and congestion, is not contested by the Council. I have been referred to recent appeal decisions that support this contention, and I have no reason to take a contrary view.
  20. However, I have found that there would be a substantial increase in traffic emerging from Paulls Lane onto Broadway Road, through a junction that would be well short of MfS recommendations for visibility, resulting in an unacceptable impact on highway safety. I have also found that there would be conflict between pedestrians/cyclists and motor vehicles due to the restricted width of Paulls Lane. The development would not, therefore, provide safe and

suitable access to the site for all users in accordance with paragraph 108 of the Framework. I therefore conclude that the proposal would be contrary to Policy TA5 of the South Somerset Local Plan (2006 - 2028), which seeks to secure inclusive, safe and convenient access on foot, cycle, and by public and private transport in all new development. It would also fail to meet the Framework's aim of promoting sustainable transport, as set out in Section 9.

### **Planning Balance**

21. The Council accepts that it cannot currently demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites. Paragraph 11 of the Framework therefore applies, and permission should be granted, unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole.
22. In terms of social benefits, the development would deliver eight additional dwellings, which would make a moderate contribution towards addressing the shortfall in housing sites. It would also support the Framework's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes. There would be economic benefits through employment during the construction phase, and through the future occupants' support for local services and businesses. In view of the scale of the proposal, these benefits would be moderate.
23. However, the harm that I have identified to highway safety would be significant. The proposal would also fail to meet the Framework's aim of promoting sustainable transport. As a result, the environmental role of sustainable development would not be achieved. When assessed against the policies in the Framework, taken as a whole, the adverse impacts would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.

### **Conclusion**

24. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

*Nick Davies*

INSPECTOR



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## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 28 July 2020 by Alex O'Doherty LLB(Hons) MSc

### Decision by K Taylor BSc (Hons) PGDip MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 7 September 2020

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### Appeal Ref: APP/R3325/Z/20/3247327

### Land Os 3963 Part (A30), West of Snowdon Heights, Chard, Somerset TA20 1QX

- The appeal is made under Regulation 17 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 against a refusal to grant express consent.
  - The appeal is made by Mr Ben Porter (The Cotley Inn) against the decision of South Somerset District Council.
  - The application Ref 19/01541/ADV, dated 9 September 2019, was refused by notice dated 17 December 2019.
  - The development proposed is described as, "sign w/ company logo, small block of info about pub – directional arrow. 1400mm x 1500mm."
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### Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

### Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by an Appeal Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

### Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed advertisements on amenity.

### Reasons for the Recommendation

4. The appeal site is an open field, set within a rural area consisting of gently rolling fields, which are clearly visible above the relatively insubstantial soft landscaping adjacent to the road. I observed two small signs adjacent to and opposite Touchstone Lane, but due to their location they appear as a natural part of the nearby settlement. In contrast, the proposed structure would be situated in the middle of the field. It would be approximately 2m in total height, with two large signs positioned on cylindrical supports. Due to their size and proposed location, the signs would undermine views across the open fields, and would appear overly prominent in this countryside setting, thereby harming amenity.
5. The field signs and brown highway signs referred to by the appellant all appear to be materially different in terms of their design, and therefore they are not sufficiently comparable with the appeal proposal. The appellant has stated that the signs would benefit their business and that not having these is affecting business levels. However, I have not been provided with sufficient evidence to

convincingly demonstrate this, therefore this matter has been given limited weight and it does not outweigh the harm identified.

6. I therefore conclude that the proposal would have an unacceptable and harmful effect on amenity. In accordance with Regulation 3(1) of The Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended), material to my findings is Policy EQ2 of the South Somerset Local Plan (2006 – 2028) (adopted March 2015). This provides that development will be designed to achieve a high quality, which promotes South Somerset’s local distinctiveness and preserves or enhances the character and appearance of the district. The advertisements would conflict with this Policy. In accordance with paragraph 132 of the National Planning Policy Framework, it is appropriate for express consent to be withheld for the advertisements, in the interests of amenity.

#### **Other Matter**

7. I note the advice provided by the Somerset County Council Traffic Officer with respect to brown highway signs. However, this would not diminish the harm that would arise, and it does not outweigh my finding on the main issue.

#### **Conclusion and Recommendation**

8. Based on the above, and having regard to all matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

*Alex O’Doherty*

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

#### **Inspector’s Decision**

9. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer’s report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

*K Taylor*

INSPECTOR



## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 August 2020

**by Rachael Pipkin, BA (Hons), MPhil, MRTPI**

**an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State**

**Decision date: 17<sup>th</sup> September 2020**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/R3325/W/20/3253867**

**Land at Tail Mill, Tail Mill Lane, Merriott, TA16 5PF**

- 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 Patrick Quinn against the decision of South Somerset District Council.
  - The application Ref: 19/00810/FUL dated 21 February 2019, was refused by notice dated 4 May 2020.
  - The development proposed is described as '2 no. commercial steel portal frame buildings with the provision for car parking, access and turning areas. The proposed buildings are to provide employment opportunity for SME businesses and to the local residents of Merriott'.
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### Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

### Application for costs

2. An application for costs was made by Mr Patrick Quinn against South Somerset District Council. This application is the subject of a separate Decision.

### Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

### Reasons

4. The appeal site is located outside the village of Merriott adjacent to a cluster of development including both housing and commercial uses around Tail Mill. The main part of the appeal site is directly adjacent to an existing large commercial building. It is positioned away from Tail Mill Lane but linked to it by a strip of land through an adjacent open field. Tail Mill Lane links the A356 to the east to the existing development around Tail Mill. It is a country lane, enclosed by low hedgerows and fences broken up by a couple of gated accesses to the surrounding fields and paddocks which contribute to the rural character of the surrounding area.
5. The proposed development would be accessed via a new road off Tail Mill Lane utilising an existing opening within the boundary hedgerow. This would bisect two existing fields to form four irregular parcels of land as the road curves to join the main part of the appeal site. The proposed road would be bunded and

planted to give the road the appearance of a country lane and to provide some screening.

6. The formation of the access road would introduce an urban feature which would appear incongruous cutting across open and undeveloped fields, even if these are of limited quality for agricultural or other purposes. It would be quite separate from the existing development around Tail Mill and the main part of the appeal site which sits comfortably adjacent to an existing commercial building. As such, the proposed road would visually expand the urban form beyond the established developed area.
7. Whilst screened, it would nevertheless be evident from public viewpoints that this is an access road as traffic passes along it, particularly higher sided commercial vehicles that would be associated with the commercial use of the appeal site. This would be harmful to the rural character of the area.
8. I conclude that the proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the surrounding area. It would therefore conflict with Policy EQ2 of the South Somerset Local Plan 2015 which requires development to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the area.

### **Other Matters**

9. The existing access to the site is through the cluster of residential development and is considered unsuitable due to a blind corner as well as the heavy goods vehicles associated with the site passing in close proximity to the residential uses which may cause conflicts between road users. The appeal scheme proposes that this existing route is stopped up and that all heavy goods vehicles will utilise the new access instead. This would improve highway safety and would be a significant benefit of the scheme.
10. Whilst the highways authority has found the scheme acceptable, the location of the proposed road is however harmful to the character and appearance of the area. Furthermore, I have been provided with no evidence that this is the only way to provide access to the proposed commercial buildings whilst realising the benefit of the scheme as I note the wider area of land is in the ownership of the appellant. The public benefits arising from the closure of the existing access do not outweigh the harm I have identified.
11. I have been made aware of the appellant's frustrations with the Council in the handling of his planning application. However, this is essentially a procedural matter that does not relate to the planning merits of the appeal proposal.

### **Conclusion**

12. For the reasons set out above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude the appeal should be dismissed.

*Rachael Pipkin*

INSPECTOR



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## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 August 2020

**by Rachael Pipkin, BA (Hons), MPhil, MRTPI**

**an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State**

**Decision date: 18<sup>th</sup> September 2020**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/R3325/W/20/3251580**

**Land at Eastfield Farm, Eastfield Lane, Somerset, TA18 7SW**

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission in principle.
  - The appeal is made by Geoff Sayers against the decision of South Somerset District Council.
  - The application Ref: 20/00325/PIP dated 14 January 2020, was refused by notice dated 28 February 2020.
  - The development proposed is the erection of 9 no. dwellings.
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### Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

### Procedural Matters

2. The appeal application is for permission in principle, as provided for in the Town and Country Planning (Permission in Principle) Order 2017. The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)<sup>1</sup> states that the scope of permission in principle is limited to location, land use and amount of development. Other matters should be considered at the technical details consent stage. Accordingly, I have considered only the issues relevant to those 'in principle' matters in my determination of the appeal.
3. The PPG<sup>2</sup> sets out that where permission in principle is granted the amount of residential development must be expressed as a range, indicating the minimum and maximum number of dwellings which are, in principle, permitted. The planning application sought permission in principle for a minimum and maximum of nine dwellings. In making the appeal, the appellant has sought to change the description of the development to be for 'up to 9 no. dwellings'. However, as this provides no indication of the minimum number of dwellings for which permission is being sought, I cannot accept this change. I am therefore proceeding to deal with the appeal on the basis of what was originally proposed.

### Main Issue

4. The main issue is whether the location of the proposed development is suitable having regard to the effect of the proposed development on the character and

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<sup>1</sup> Paragraph: 012 Reference ID: 58-012-20180615

<sup>2</sup> Paragraph: 052 Reference ID: 58-052-20180615

appearance of the area including whether it would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the North Perrott Conservation Area.

## Reasons

5. The appeal site forms part of an agricultural field, located on the edge of the village of North Perrott, a small settlement within a rural setting. A substantial part of the village comprising the historic village centre and a number of traditional buildings fall within the North Perrott Conservation Area (NPCA). These buildings, many of which would have been associated with the Grade II\* listed building North Perrott Manor to the west of the village, together with the rural landscape surrounding the village contribute to the significance of the conservation area. The A3066 runs through the village, whilst the appeal site is positioned away from this at the end of East Street on the more tranquil eastern edge of the village.
6. The appeal site is located at the junction of Back Lane, East Street and Eastfield Lane where it occupies a slightly elevated position. It is just outside the NPCA, the boundary of which extends to the boundaries of houses on the corner of East Street and Back Lane opposite the entrance to the appeal site. The agricultural and rural character of the appeal site, form part of the setting of the NPCA and contribute to its significance.
7. Residential development within the village is mainly laid out in a linear form, with traditional rural housing extending along East Street and more recent, post-war development of detached houses extending along Back Lane. Eastfield Lane is undeveloped. The western corner of the appeal site is adjacent to a rural track separating it from development on Back Lane. The remainder of the site is surrounded by fields enclosed by hedgerows.
8. The proposed development of this site with nine dwellings would extend rearwards beyond the natural boundary to the village formed by the rear gardens of properties fronting Back Lane. It would also extend significantly further along Eastfield Lane than existing development within the village. As such, it would extend the village boundary, rather than round it off.
9. Whilst the submitted drawings are indicative and all details would be determined at the technical details consent stage, due to the single access into the appeal site, it appears to me that the layout of the proposed development would have to take the form of a cul-de-sac development whether clustered or in a more linear form. This would be uncharacteristic of the existing pattern of development within the village. Furthermore, with the proposed quantum of development and the size of the site, it seems to me that the layout would necessarily be less spacious than that of surrounding development. As such the proposal would appear out of keeping in this location and would not reinforce local distinctiveness.
10. The proposed development, due to its position within a field and enclosed by hedges may not be prominent within the wider landscape. However, it would introduce a more cramped form of development which would be out of keeping with the linear and spacious pattern of development characteristic of this part of the village. Furthermore, due to its enclosure by the existing hedgerows around the field, it would appear separate and disconnected from the wider village.

11. The addition of housing in this location would also reduce the connectivity of the NPCA with the rural landscape on its east side, which forms part of its setting. The contribution that the appeal site would make to the NPCA as part of its rural setting would be diminished as a result. This would be harmful to both the character and the appearance of the village and the NPCA.
12. Government policy in respect of the historic environment is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). Paragraph 184 advises that historic assets are an irreplaceable resource that local authorities should conserve in a manner appropriate to their significance. The proposed development would lead to less than substantial harm to the setting of the designated heritage asset, namely the NPCA, because it would only be visible within the setting of the eastern part of the NPCA. I have attached considerable importance and weight to the desirability of avoiding any such harmful effect on the listed building in accordance with section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Paragraph 196 of the Framework states that such harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
13. The scheme would deliver some public benefits in that it would contribute to the area's housing supply and need by providing nine dwellings in a location accessible to the services and facilities available within the village. It would contribute to the social role of village as a service centre within its rural hinterland. There would also be some economic benefits resulting from this, including the creation of jobs and new residents supporting local services and businesses as well as financial benefits from increased New Homes Bonus, Council tax receipts and Community Infrastructure Levy, part of which would be spent within the village. However, whilst this amount of housing and its associated benefits would be positive aspects of the scheme, they would not be a substantial benefit, and would not outweigh the harm caused to the heritage asset to which I give considerable weight.
14. I have been referred to a number of recently approved schemes within the village. This includes planning permission for a bungalow adjacent to Eastfield House<sup>3</sup> which is set back from East Street behind a long drive. In this case, it appears the new bungalow sits within a spacious plot similar to Eastfield House which it also aligns with. It also utilises an existing driveway with direct access onto East Street between existing development. This is unlike the appeal proposal which would require the formation of an entirely new access road and a denser form of development.
15. I have also been referred to a development of three bungalows at Old Buildings, Back Lane<sup>4</sup> which makes use of land previously used for commercial and storage purposes. This would be for significantly less houses than the scheme before me. Furthermore, the appeal site, being an undeveloped agricultural field, is not comparable to this site either in terms of its use or its contribution to the character and appearance of the village and the NPCA.
16. My attention has also been drawn to other developments which do not follow the linear pattern of development within the village, including Symes Close and developments on New Street. From the limited details provided to me, I note that these are either conversion schemes or occupy back land positions within

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<sup>3</sup> Council Ref 16/02692/OUT & 17/03597/REM

<sup>4</sup> Council Ref 19/01164/FUL

the village between existing development and therefore I do not find them directly comparable to the appeal proposal before me, which is an undeveloped field, predominantly surrounded by fields. For these reasons, I do not find these developments justify the scheme before me.

17. Taking the above matters into consideration, I conclude that the location of the proposed development would be unsuitable. It would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area and would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the NPCA. It would therefore conflict with Policies EQ2 and EQ3 of the South Somerset Local Plan 2015 which together seek development that reinforces local distinctiveness, respects local context and character and safeguards heritage assets and their settings.

### **Planning Balance and Conclusion**

18. The Council cannot demonstrate a deliverable five year housing land supply (5YHLS) and has accepted that it has around 4.5 years supply. This constitutes a modest shortfall. The appellant considers that since the Council cannot demonstrate a 5YHLS, the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out in paragraph 11 of the Framework should apply
19. However, paragraph 11d) makes it clear that the presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply if the application of policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed. Footnote 6 sets out that this includes, amongst others, designated heritage assets. Given that I have found that there would be harm caused to the significance of a designated heritage asset that is not outweighed by the public benefits of the scheme, I consider that this is a clear reason to refuse the development proposed in accordance with the Framework.
20. The location of the proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the surrounding area and in this regard would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area contrary to the development plan and the Framework. For these reasons, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude the appeal should be dismissed.

*Rachael Pipkin*

INSPECTOR



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## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 September 2020

**by David Wyborn BSc(Hons) MPhil MRTPI**

**an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State**

**Decision date: 5 October 2020**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/R3325/W/20/3254173**

**The Cattle Barton, Allowenshay, Hinton St George, Somerset TA17 8TB**

- 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 Nick Rutter against the decision of South Somerset District Council.
  - The application Ref 20/00799/FUL, dated 20 February 2020, was refused by notice dated 21 May 2020.
  - The development proposed is the extension to house and change of use of land into residential curtilage.
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### Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the extension to house and change of use of land to residential purposes at The Cattle Barton, Allowenshay, Hinton St George, Somerset TA17 8TB in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 20/00799/FUL, dated 20 February 2020, subject to the following conditions:
  - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
  - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Location Plan 1:1250, Block Plan 1/500 @A4 Block Plan dated 30/3/20 and Drawing no 3897/02B.
  - 3) No building operations above the damp proof course level of the extension shall take place until details of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the extension hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall include how the external timber cladding shall be retained. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

### Procedural Matters

2. The description of the development in the heading above is taken from the application form. Part of the proposal is described as change of use of land into residential curtilage. However, curtilage is a legal concept and not a use of land and therefore I have considered the proposal as the change of use of land to "residential purposes" in the decision. It is clear what is envisaged by this element of the proposal and therefore no party has been prejudiced by this clarification.

3. The Council do not raise objection to the change of use of the land to residential purposes. As this is a reasonably small section of land close to the existing residential dwelling I have found no reason to disagree.

### **Main Issue**

4. Accordingly, the main issue is the effect of the extension on the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and the area.

### **Reasons**

5. The Cattle Barton is a former barn now converted to a dwelling. The building consists of a two storey, mainly stone clad, section with a rear single storey projection. It is an attractive building located at the edge of the hamlet in proximity to other traditional and vernacular buildings. The main two storey elevation faces towards open fields and the building is set on a lower level than the adjoining countryside.
6. The proposed extension would replicate much of the general bulk and appearance of the single storey rear projection. The flat roofed, narrow section of the extension would help provide a visual separation between the existing rear projection and the new addition. This would allow the layout and built form of the original building to still be generally appreciated and understood. The extension would not project to a material extent in front of the two storey gable of the main part of the dwelling and thereby this positioning would help to retain the visual dominance of this attractive feature of the building.
7. The proposed palette of external materials would be sympathetic and harmonise with the existing elevations and the scale and mass of the addition would appear as generally subservient to the dwelling. The proposed fenestration would not be at odds with the character and range of openings which have already been incorporated into this converted barn. Overall the design, massing and position of the extension would be appropriate in relation to the character of the original building.
8. In terms of the wider setting, the single storey addition would be seen in the context of the main house and the adjoining dwellings. The width of the extension and the pitched roof would have similar proportions to some other single storey buildings in the surrounding area. Together with the general mix of locally used materials, the proposal would be sympathetic to the identity of the built surroundings.
9. The extension would be set down in the site in the same way as the main building when viewed from the open countryside. Accordingly, the acceptable design, size and bulk of the extension would not harm the agricultural and countryside setting to the hamlet.
10. In the light of the above analysis, I conclude that the extension would have an acceptable effect on the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and the area. Consequently, the proposal would comply with Policy EQ2 of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006-2028 and the National Planning Policy Framework which seek, amongst other things, to ensure that development is designed to achieve high quality and which promotes the local distinctiveness of the area.

### **Conditions**

11. I have had regard to the conditions suggested by the Council and the advice in the Planning Practice Guidance. The statutory time limit is required and a condition specifying the approved plans is necessary in the interests of certainty.
12. A condition requiring the submission and approval of the external materials is necessary in the interests of the character and appearance of the area. The three conditions suggested by the Council duplicate each other to some extent so I have combined the essential requirements in a single condition.

### **Conclusion**

13. Having regard to the above, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

*David Wyborn*

INSPECTOR