

## South Somerset District Council

**Minutes** of a meeting of the **Area East (Informal)** held by video-conference using Zoom meeting software on **Wednesday 9 March 2022**.

(9.00 - 10.35 am)

**Present:**

**Members:** Councillor Henry Hobhouse (Chairman)

Hayward Burt	Kevin Messenger
Tony Capozzoli	Paul Rowsell
Nick Colbert	Lucy Trimmell
Sarah Dyke	William Wallace
Charlie Hull	Colin Winder
Mike Lewis	



**Officers:**

Tim Cook	Locality Team Manager
Colin Begeman	Principal Planner (Development Management)
Gilpin	Planner, Service Delivery
Michelle Mainwaring	Case Officer (Strategy & Support Services)
Jo Boucher	Case Officer (Strategy & Support Services)

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

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**79. Minutes of Previous Meeting (Agenda Item 1)**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on the 9<sup>th</sup> February 2022 were approved as a correct record and would be signed by the Chairman.

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**80. Apologies for Absence (Agenda Item 2)**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Robin Bastable.

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**81. Declarations of Interest (Agenda Item 3)**

There were no declarations of interest.

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**82. Date of next Meeting (Agenda Item 4)**

Members noted the next meeting of Area East Committee was scheduled for Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> April at 9.00am and would be a virtual meeting.

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### **83. Public Question Time (Agenda Item 5)**

There were no questions from members of the public present at the meeting.

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### **84. Chairman's Announcements (Agenda Item 6)**

There were no Chairman's announcements.

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### **85. Reports from Members (Agenda Item 7)**

There were no reports from members.

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### **86. Update on Grant Budgets for 2022/23 (Agenda Item 8)**

The Locality Team Manager gave members an update on the Area East Budget for 2022/23. He showed members the budgets that were available and highlighted the following;

- Community grants budget of £10,200 to be spent on small grants.
- Capital unallocated budget of £41,805 to put toward large capital budgets.
- Discretionary project funds, £10,000 of the funds allocated to Healthy living centres.
- Area Reserves that ring-fenced some funding for the Wincanton Retail support initiative and also active travel schemes. A decision would be made later in the year on the deliverability of these schemes and that recommendations may be brought forward to spend on other priorities.

In response to questions from members, the Locality Manager advised the following;

- The budget would be used to fund new play equipment, but 106 money would be checked first to see if any were available.
- There was a long delay for play equipment and materials currently so this would be something to bear in mind.
- Community grant applications have returned to pre covid19 levels and there has been an increase in applications.
- They were waiting on an update for the active travel schemes but would be able to come to committee in July with an update on the ring-fenced money and potentially look at releasing the funds.
- Would be happy to support parish councils with their digital needs in order for them to continue to hold online and hybrid meetings.

There were no other questions and the Chairman thanked The Locality Manager for his update.

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### **87. Area East Forward Plan (Agenda Item 9)**

The Area East Forward Plan was noted with the following additions;

- Update on Area East Reserves ring-fenced funds for July
- Update on Local Community Networks date to be confirmed

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**88. Planning Appeals (For Information) (Agenda Item 10)**

Members noted the planning appeals that were received, dismissed or approved.

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**89. Schedule of Planning Applications to be determined by Committee (Agenda Item 11)**

Members noted the schedule of planning applications.

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**90. Planning Application 21/00485/FUL - The Willows , Lattiford, Holton, Wincanton, BA9 8AF (Agenda Item 12)**

**Proposal: Change of use of land to provide a commercial vehicle storage facility with revised access (Retrospective)**

The Planning Officer (Development Management) presented the application as detailed in the agenda report, and with the help of a PowerPoint presentation proceeded to show the site and proposed plans. He clarified that in the agenda report under site description and proposal, the text should have read "The height of the majority of vehicle stored at the site do not exceed **three** metres".

He highlighted the following to members;

- The proposed new access site
- The landscaping scheme along the proposed access road
- The recorded accident levels from 2000 – 2020
- Key considerations were Highways, Ecology, Public Right of Way, Environmental Health and Heritage Assets
- Additional conditions restricting the number of vehicles on site and no static caravans to be sited could be added if members were minded to approve the application.
- The recommendation was to approve the application

A number of members of the public spoke in objection to the application, and some of the following comments were made;

- The question had been raised as to why this unauthorised development had not challenged when it had started to expand.
- Tress had been cut back beyond the boundary and ground levels had been raised around some trees which was considered bad for the trees.
- The application suggested the area is flat and screening will be effective but to the South West and North the ground rises and the site will be in clear view of other properties.
- There is visible glare from the site in the summer months that can be seen from North Cheriton and Wincanton.
- Vehicle alarms were uncontrolled and lasted for days at a time.
- Highway approval was based on data that was collated during a 12 week traffic controlled water main replacement along the road. This measured data was not recorded during normal conditions and was a procedural error.

- The proximity of the distance between the listed building and the site had been ignored. There had already been a fire in the storage container on site that was attended by the fire brigade and presented a huge risk to the thatched cottage.
- The concerns that had been raised in objections to this were from local residents who were immediately affected.
- The site was not an acceptable site for storing caravans, where it was in the vicinity of listed buildings.
- The possibility of large commercial vehicle being stored was concerning.
- The entrance and caravans are highly visible from Lattiford.
- The site was not suitable for this business of size or nature. There were many more acceptable trading estate sites nearby.
- There were also local caravan and trailer storage sites already available. These sites existed on rural farms with no immediate neighbours or on trading estates.
- These existing sites were also secure with high fencing, lockable gates, security cameras and security alarms, all of which would be highly intrusive on any local area.

The Agent addressed members in support of the application and some of her comments included;

- The business at The Willows had grown organically.
- Caravanning had become increasingly popular and was likely to endure and facilities such as this were in high demand.
- The new access would be an improvement and would offer safer entry or exit.
- The topography around the site gave good enclosure and further planting was proposed to improve the screening.
- The development does not create noise or light pollution.
- The land use accorded with the NPPF and the local plan, in particular policies SD1 SS1 TA5 EQ1, 2, 3 and 4.

Ward Member Councillor William Wallace highlighted that this sight could be seen extensively when travelling from Wincanton in southerly direction and that the North Vale Parish Council had made complaints about the increasing size of the site.

Ward Member Councillor Hayward Burt confirmed the speed indicator that had been installed along the road to measure the speed of vehicles would not have been recording normal traffic speed at the time because of the road works that were ongoing immediately after the site and that data collated in the highways report was irrelevant. Travelling South, the speed changes from the national speed limit to a 30 and in normal conditions cars would be slowing down, travelling a lot faster than 30. He also noted that neither the report nor the highways report addressed how the caravans could move in and out of the access at the same time.

This was originally an enforcement issue that had been raised by the Parish Council. He felt that this application did not adhere with policy TA5 and was unsafe and did not support the application

During discussion most of the views were in objection to the application, some of which included;

- Neighbours views and concerns had to be taken into account on deciding whether to approve
- Was very concerned about this application from an environmental perspective
- Felt that this was making good alternative use of the farm land.
- Didn't agree that this was a farm diversification scheme.

- Concerned about the lack of a Chemical waste disposal on the site and felt this need was fundamental to the application.
- There were no mention of EV chargers in the application
- Agreed the road speed was abused and there were often speed cameras in the area because of the known issue of speeding.
- The environment impact and the harm related was a key impact.
- Evidence from the ward member had been heard that there were mitigating circumstances why the highways was a real issue at the location.

In response to questions from members the Planning Officer gave the following responses;

- Part of the land qualified as previously developed land and the rest was agricultural land.
- EV chargers could be conditioned
- The application needed to be considered based on what had been presented in the application in reference to the addition of a need for chemical waste disposal.
- Where an enforcement notice was served, it would ordinarily ask that the land is returned to its original form.

There was no further discussion and it was proposed and seconded to recommend that Area East refuse the application based on the following reasons;

- Policy EQ7 Pollution Control – there was no reference in the application to this.
- Policy TA5 - Road safety, items 2 and items 3
- Policy EQ2 – The impact of Visual Amenity

On being put to the vote application 21/00485/FUL was refused, with 10 votes in favour and 1 against.

## **RESOLVED**

That Area East Committee recommend the Chief Executive to:

Refuse Application **21/00485/FUL** for the following reasons

01. The introduction of a large commercial vehicle storage facility, mainly comprising a group of light and reflective caravans, into this area of open countryside would neither preserve nor enhance the appearance and character of the area, and thus would fail to meet the requirements of Policy EQ2 of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006-2028.

02. Insufficient information has been submitted in respect of the management of any effluent and other waste resulting from the operations carried out on the site. Based on the lack of information submitted, the Local Planning Authority is unable to determine whether the development will contribute to unacceptable levels of waste being generated and means and methods of disposal of such waste. Therefore it is considered appropriate to issue a holding reason for refusal on the grounds that the Local Planning Authority is not satisfied that the development accords with the requirements of Policy EQ7 of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006-2028.

03. Insufficient information has been submitted in respect of the extent of access / egress movements to and from the site and the wider resultant highway safety implications of the development. Based on the lack of information submitted, the Local Planning Authority is unable to determine whether the development will cause unacceptable detriment to public safety and convenience along the local highway network. Therefore it is considered appropriate to issue a holding reason for refusal on

the grounds that the Local Planning Authority is not satisfied that the development accords with the requirements of Policies TA5 and EQ2 of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006-2028.

(Voting: 10 in Favour, 1 against)

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**91. Planning Application 21/03171/FUL - Rachels Stables, Temple Lane, Templecombe, Somerset, BA8 0JW (Agenda Item 13)**

***Proposal: Erection of a timber cabin as a self-build First Home with associated landscape works (re-submission of 20/02873/FUL)***

The Planning Officer (Development Management) presented the application as detailed in the agenda report, and with the help of a PowerPoint presentation proceeded to show the site and proposed plans. He noted that in the report the text referring to 5 year housing supply should not be considered as there was not currently a 5 year housing land supply in place.

He highlighted his key considerations;

- This was a residential dwelling in the open countryside
- The proposal did not seek a rural workers tie to the land
- The current application was comparable to the scheme that was dismissed at appeal in 2016 and the local plan that was adopted prior to the 2016 scheme was still in place and applicable to this application.
- The proposal was in the open countryside and as the site could not be tied to the land, was considered an unsustainable location and contrary to policy and the NPPF.
- Recommendation was for refusal.

The applicant and agent addressed the committee in support of the application and gave some of the following comments;

- The applicant lived and worked in Templecombe
- They could walk, cycle and ride from the site to the village and all its local facilities
- Living on site meant the applicant would have less journeys to and from the stables where she kept her horses and therefore reduce her carbon footprint.
- The properties in the village were not affordable for a single person on an average wage.
- Would be happy to have a Section 106 to keep the property as an affordable home.
- The site was not remote or far away from local facilities including bus and rail services
- The site was well screened by vegetation and further landscaping could be provided if necessary
- This was a modest single storey timber cabin, in keeping with the adjacent stables
- First home scheme to enable people to get onto the property ladder with a section 106 clause to ensure it remains an affordable dwelling.
- There would not be any adverse impacts that outweigh the benefits of the application.

Ward Member Councillor Hayward Burt noted that in the NPPF it said in rural areas planning policies should be responsive to local circumstances and local needs. This application had the support of the parish council. This was close to the village and many

services. This was a self-build for a local person and he had brought this to committee as felt this was an acceptable application.

Ward member Councillor William Wallace concurred with Councillor Burt's comments and was also supportive of the application.

There was a short discussion and member's comments were support of the application with some comments including;

- Affordable housing in the area was a big issue and felt that self builds are the way forward, this application was fully supported.
- Wanted some more details on the energy efficiency of the details of the application and would want an EV charger on site.
- Felt the self-build was in an acceptable location where the applicant would be able to walk to and from the village and their place of work.

The agent clarified that the building would be built to housing standards and that every practical measure to conserve resources would be taken. They would be happy to accept a condition to provide a scheme of measures to ensure that it was an energy efficient development.

It was proposed and seconded to approve the application and the Specialist Principal Planner (Development Management) read out the following conditions that members could agree to;

Time

Approved plans

Ecology

Highways

Drainage

EV charging point

Energy efficiency Plan

Further clarity was sought by the Lead Specialist Planning around the section 106 details.

The agent explained that the Section 106 agreement would be to ensure that the build was a first home as defined by the government. The occupancy would also have a local connection. The first home product that was introduced by the government enabled private ownership rather than the traditional method of transferring houses to housing associations.

It was agreed that the applicant and officer would update the committee members with the details of the section 106 agreement and how the nomination process would work.

On being put to the vote the application 21/03171/FUL was approved unanimously, subject to the conditions agreed and to a section 106 agreement regarding first homes, rural nomination and local agreement.

## **RESOLVED**

That Area East committee recommend to the Chief Executive that Planning Application **21/03171/FUL** be approved, subject to a section 106 regarding a first home (as defined by the government) and subject to conditions for the following;

- Time
- Approved plans
- Ecology
- Highways
- Drainage
- EV charging point
- Energy efficiency Plan

Justification:

01. Although in open countryside, the scheme as detailed is deemed acceptable on the basis that the site is sufficiently close to services, and that subject to securing of a legal agreement and accordance with planning conditions, would deliver a 'First Home' (as defined by Central Government) and would accord with Policies SS2, TA5, TA6 and EQ4 of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006-2028.

*(Voting: Unanimous)*

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Chairman