



Informal Discussion by Members of Area East Committee

Wednesday 9th June 2021

9.00 am

**A virtual consultative meeting via
Zoom meeting software**

The following members are requested to attend this virtual consultation meeting:

Robin Bastable
Hayward Burt
Tony Capozzoli
Nick Colbert
Sarah Dyke

Henry Hobhouse
Charlie Hull
Mike Lewis
Kevin Messenger
Paul Rowsell

Lucy Trimnell
William Wallace
Colin Winder

Any members of the public wishing to address the virtual consultative meeting during either Public Question Time or regarding a Planning Application, need to email democracy@southsomerset.gov.uk by 9.00am on Tuesday 8th June 2021.

The meeting will be viewable online at:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCSDst3IHGj9WoGnwJGF_soA

For further information on the items to be discussed, please contact:
democracy@southsomerset.gov.uk

This Agenda was issued on Friday 28th May 2021.

Alex Parmley, Chief Executive Officer

**This information is also available on our website
www.southsomerset.gov.uk and via the mod.gov app**

Information for the Public

In light of the coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19), Area East Committee will meet virtually via video-conferencing to consider reports. As of 7 May 2021 some interim arrangements are in place for committee meetings.

At the meeting of Full Council on 15 April 2021 it was agreed to make the following changes to the Council's Constitution:

- a) To continue to enable members to hold remote, virtual meetings using available technology;
- b) To amend Part 3 (Responsibility for Functions) of the Council's Constitution to allow those remote meetings to function as consultative bodies and delegate decisions, including Executive and Quasi-Judicial decisions, that would have been taken by those meetings if the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 had continued in force to the Chief Executive (or the relevant Director in the Chief Executive's absence) in consultation with those meetings and those members to whom the decision would otherwise have been delegated under Part 3 of the Constitution;
- c) The delegated authority given under (b) will expire on 31 July 2021 unless continued by a future decision of this Council; For full details and to view the report please see: <https://modgov.southsomerset.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=137&MId=2981&Ver=4>

Area East Committee

Meetings of the Area East Committee are usually held monthly, at 9.00am, on the second Wednesday of the month (unless advised otherwise). However during the coronavirus pandemic these meetings will be held remotely via Zoom, as consultative meetings only, whilst we implement the Local Authorities and Police and Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 as part of the Coronavirus Act 2020.

Agendas and minutes of meetings are published on the council's website www.southsomerset.gov.uk/councillors-and-democracy/meetings-and-decisions

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 consultative meetings. If you would like to participate and contribute in the meeting, please join on-line through Zoom at: <https://zoom.us/join> You will need an internet connection to do this.

Please email democracy@southsomerset.gov.uk for the details to join the 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.

If you would like to address the virtual consultative meeting during either Public Question Time or regarding a Planning Application, please email democracy@southsomerset.gov.uk by 9.00am on Tuesday 8th June 2021. When you have registered, the Chairman will invite you to speak at the appropriate time during the virtual meeting.

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 will un-mute your microphone at the appropriate time.
- 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

It is important that you register your request to speak at the virtual meeting by emailing democracy@southsomerset.gov.uk by 9.00am Tuesday 8th June 2021. When you have registered, the Chairman will invite you to speak at the appropriate time during the virtual meeting.

Consideration of planning applications at this meeting will commence no earlier than the time stated at the front of the agenda and on the planning applications schedule. The public and representatives of parish/town councils will be invited to speak on the individual planning applications at the time they are considered.

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

At the committee chairman's discretion, members of the public are permitted to speak for up to three minutes each and where there are a number of persons wishing to speak they should be encouraged to choose one spokesperson to speak either for the applicant or on behalf of any supporters or objectors to the application. The total period allowed for such participation on each application shall not normally exceed 15 minutes.

The order of speaking on planning items will be:

- Town or Parish Council Spokesperson
- Objectors
- Supporters
- Applicant and/or Agent
- District Council Ward Member

If a member of the public wishes to speak at the virtual meeting they must email democracy@southsomerset.gov.uk by 9.00am on Tuesday 8th June 2021.

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

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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Informal Discussion by Members of Area East Committee

Wednesday 9 June 2021

Agenda

Preliminary Items

1. Apologies for Absence

2. 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 Sarah Dyke, Paul Rowsell and William Wallace.

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.

3. Public Question Time

4. Chairman's Announcements

Items for Discussion

5. Area East Committee Working Groups and Outside organisations - Appointment of members 2021/22 (Executive Decision) (Pages 7 - 9)

6. Development control Scheme of Delegation - Nomination of Substitutes for Area East Chairman and Vice Chairman 2021/22 (Executive Decision) (Pages 10 - 11)

7. **Area East Committee Forward Plan** (Pages 12 - 13)
8. **Schedule of Planning Applications to be Determined by Committee** (Page 14)
9. **Planning Application 21/00008/FUL - Land West Of 18 Compton Pauncefoot Yeovil Somerset BA22 7JE** (Pages 15 - 21)

Please note that members of the Area Committee will make a recommendation on the above reports. The decision will be taken by the Chief Executive.



Area East Committee Working Groups and Outside organisations – Appointment of members 2021/22 (Executive Decision)

Strategic Director: Nicola Hix, Strategy & Support Services
Specialist: Angela Cox, Specialist - Democratic Services
Lead Officer: Michelle Mainwaring, Democratic Services Case Officer
Contact Details: Michelle.mainwaring@southsomerset.gov.uk

Purpose of the Report

As the Council has entered a new municipal year, the Committee is asked to review its appointments to outside organisations and working groups within Area East, having regard to the policy on the Roles and Responsibilities of Councillors appointed to Outside Bodies, which was adopted by District Executive on 1st May 2014.

Recommendations

The Committee is asked to:

1. Review and appoint members to serve on the groups and panels for the municipal year 2021/22.
2. Review and appoint members to the outside organisations as set out in the report.

Area East Panels and Working Groups

The following table shows the internal working groups, and their memberships, appointed by this Committee for the municipal year 2019/20. The Committee is asked to review and agree the memberships of each of the groups for 2021/22.

Working Group	Number of Councillors to be appointed and frequency of meetings	Representation 2019/20
None		

Outside Organisations

Members are now asked to review and appoint members to the outside organisations for 2021/22, having regard to the adopted policy

Organisation	Number of Councillors to be appointed and frequency of meetings	Representation 2019/20 (continued 2020/21 due to pandemic)
Dimmer Liaison Group	1 - twice a year	Mike Lewis
Henstridge Consultative Committee	2 - twice a year.	William Wallace Hayward Burt
Heart of Wessex Local Action Group	1 – executive meets bi-monthly	Mike Lewis

Financial Implications

None for the Area East Committee as a direct result of this report.

Council Plan Implications

Council Plan 2020 – 2024 – Council Values:

Getting things done - Empowering dedicated and flexible employees and elected members focussed on delivery.

Working collaboratively - Working with partners to enhance outcomes for our communities.

Carbon Emissions and Climate Change Implications

None.

Equality and Diversity Implications

Full consideration to equalities was given in producing the Policy on the Roles and Responsibilities of Councillors appointed to Outside Bodies.

Background Papers

Minute 16, Area East Committee, 12 June 2013

Minute 10, Area East Committee, June 2014

Minute 184, District Executive, 1 May 2014

SSDC Policy on Roles & Responsibilities of Councillors appointed to Outside Bodies.

Minute 15, Area East Committee, 14 June 2017

Minute 14, Area East Committee, 13 June 2018

Minute 10, Area East Committee, 12th June 2019

Area East Outside Bodies Information

Name of Organisation	Number of Council Nominees	Period of Appointment	Aims & Objectives	Legal Status	Status of Councillor	Frequency of Meetings	Venue of Meetings
Viridor Waste Somerset Ltd - Dimmer Liaison Group	1	1 Year	To discuss issues with local people and representatives of the local authorities		Member	Twice a year but more frequently if necessary	
Henstridge Airfield Consultative Committee	2	3 years	To act as a means of consultation in relation to Henstridge Aerodrome.	No legal status	Member	When necessary	
Heart of Wessex Local Action Group	1	5 years	To further sustainable rural development within the Heart of Wessex LAG Programme area through rural economic development	No legal status	Voting member	Bi monthly	



Development control Scheme of Delegation – Nomination of Substitutes for Area East Chairman and Vice Chairman 2021/22 (Executive Decision)

Strategic Director: Kirsty Larkins, Service Delivery
Lead Officer: Lesley Barakchizadeh, Planning Consultant
Contact Details: Lesley.barakchizadeh@southsomerset.gov.uk

Purpose of the Report

As the Council has entered a new municipal year, the Committee is asked to review the appointment of two members to act as substitutes for the Chairman and Vice Chairman in the exercising of the Scheme of Delegation for planning and related applications. The previous member substitutes were Councillors Hayward Burt (first substitute) and Sarah Dyke (second substitute).

Recommendations

That, in line with the Development Control Revised Scheme of Delegation, two members be nominated to act as substitutes for the Chairman and Vice Chairman to make decisions in the Chairman's and Vice Chairman's absence on whether an application should be considered by the Area Committee as requested by the Ward Member(s).

Background

The Council's scheme of delegation for Development Control delegates the determination of all applications for planning permission, the approval of reserved matters, the display of advertisements, works to trees with Tree Preservation Orders, listed building and conservation area consents, to the Development Manager except in certain cases, one of which being the following: -

“A ward member makes a specific request for the application to be considered by the Area Committee and the request is agreed by the Area Chairman or, in their absence, the Vice Chairman in consultation with the Development Manager. (This request must be in writing and deal with the planning issues to ensure that the audit trail for making that decision is clear and unambiguous). In the absence of the Chairman and Vice Chairman there should be nominated substitutes to ensure that two other members would be available to make decisions. All assessments and decisions to be in writing.”

Financial Implications

None as a direct result of this report.



Council Plan Implications

None as a direct result of this report.

Carbon Emissions and Climate Change Implications

None as a direct result of this report.

Equality and Diversity Implications

None as a direct result of this report.

Background Papers

Minute 36, Council meeting of 21st July 2005

Minute 11, Area East Committee 12th June 2019



Area East Forward Plan

Director: Nicola Hix, Strategy and Support Services
Agenda Coordinator: Michelle Mainwaring, Case Officer (Strategy & Commissioning)
Contact Details: Michelle.mainwaring@southsomerset.gov.uk

Purpose of the Report

This report informs Members of the agreed Area East Forward Plan.

Recommendations

Members are asked to note and comment upon the proposed Area East Forward Plan as attached, and to identify priorities for any further reports

Area East Committee Forward Plan

The forward plan sets out items and issues to be discussed over the coming few months. It is reviewed and updated each month, and included within the Area Committee agenda, where members of the Area Committee may endorse or request amendments. Members of the public, councillors, service managers, and partners may also request an item be placed within the forward plan for a future meeting, by contacting the agenda co-ordinator.

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

To make the best use of the 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.

Further details on these items, or to suggest / request an agenda item for the Area East Committee, please contact one of the officer's names above.

Background Papers

None.

Area East Committee Forward Plan

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

Further details on these items, or to suggest / request an agenda item for the Area East Committee, please contact the agenda coordinator at democracy@southsomerset.gov.uk

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Lead Officer
July 2021	Presentation on Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Governance	Peter Paddon, Lead Specialist Strategic Planning
TBC	Update on Wincanton Sports Ground	<i>Tim Cook – Locality team Manager</i>

Schedule of Planning Applications to be determined by Committee

Director: Kirsty Larkins, Service Delivery
Lead Officer: Lesley Barakchizadeh, Planning Consultant
Contact Details: Lesley.barakchizadeh@southsomerset.gov.uk

Purpose of the Report

The schedule of planning applications sets out the applications to be determined by Area East Committee at this meeting.

Recommendations

Members are asked to note the schedule of planning applications.

Planning Applications will be considered no earlier than 9.00am.

The meeting will be viewable online by selecting the committee at:
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCSDst3IHGj9WoGnwJGF_soA

Any member of the public wishing to address the virtual meeting regarding a Planning Application need to email democracy@southsomerset.gov.uk by 9.00am on Tuesday 8th June 2021.

SCHEDULE					
Agenda Number	Ward	Application	Brief Summary of Proposal	Site Address	Applicant
9	BLACKMORE VALE	21/00008/FUL	Change of use of land and application for provision of new access, proposed garage & workshop and ancillary works.	Land West Of 18 Compton Pauncefoot Yeovil Somerset BA22 7JE	Hopkins Estates Ltd

Further information about planning applications is shown on the following page and at the beginning of the main agenda document.

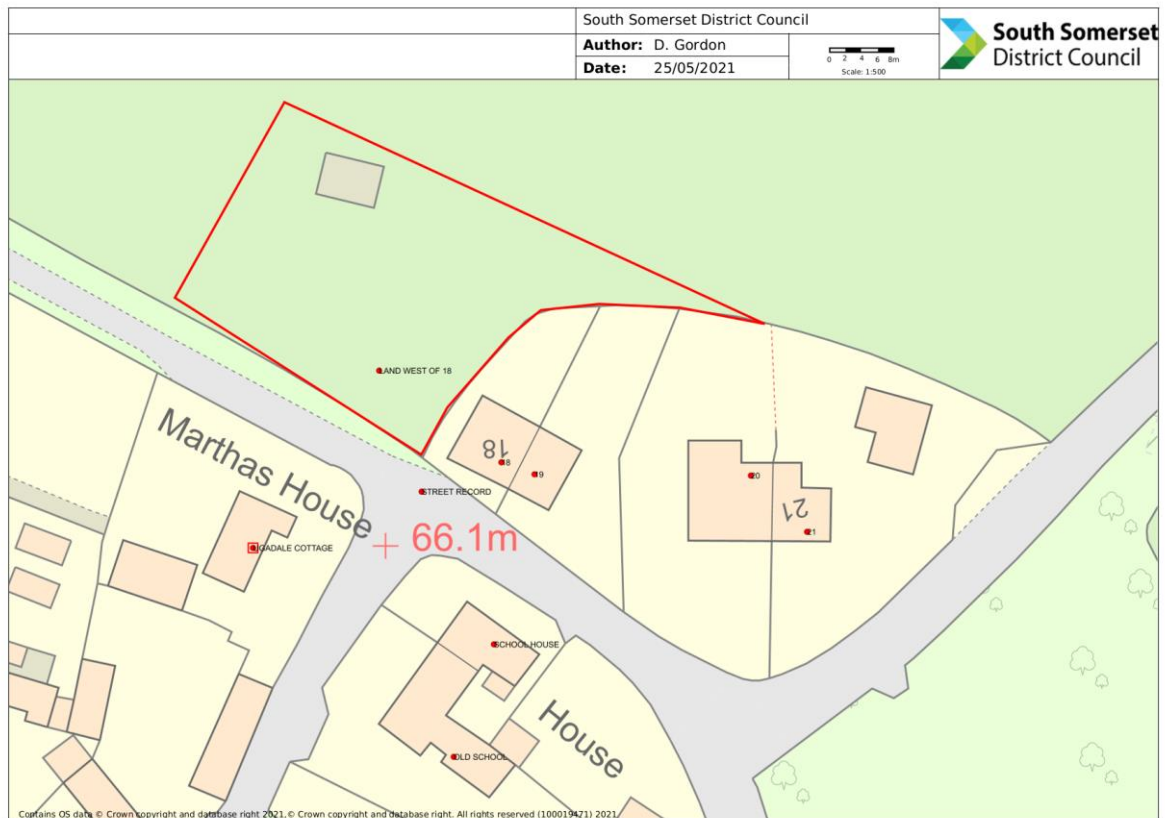
The Committee will consider the applications set out in the schedule. The Planning Officer will give further information at the meeting and, where appropriate, advise members of letters received as a result of consultations since the agenda has been prepared.

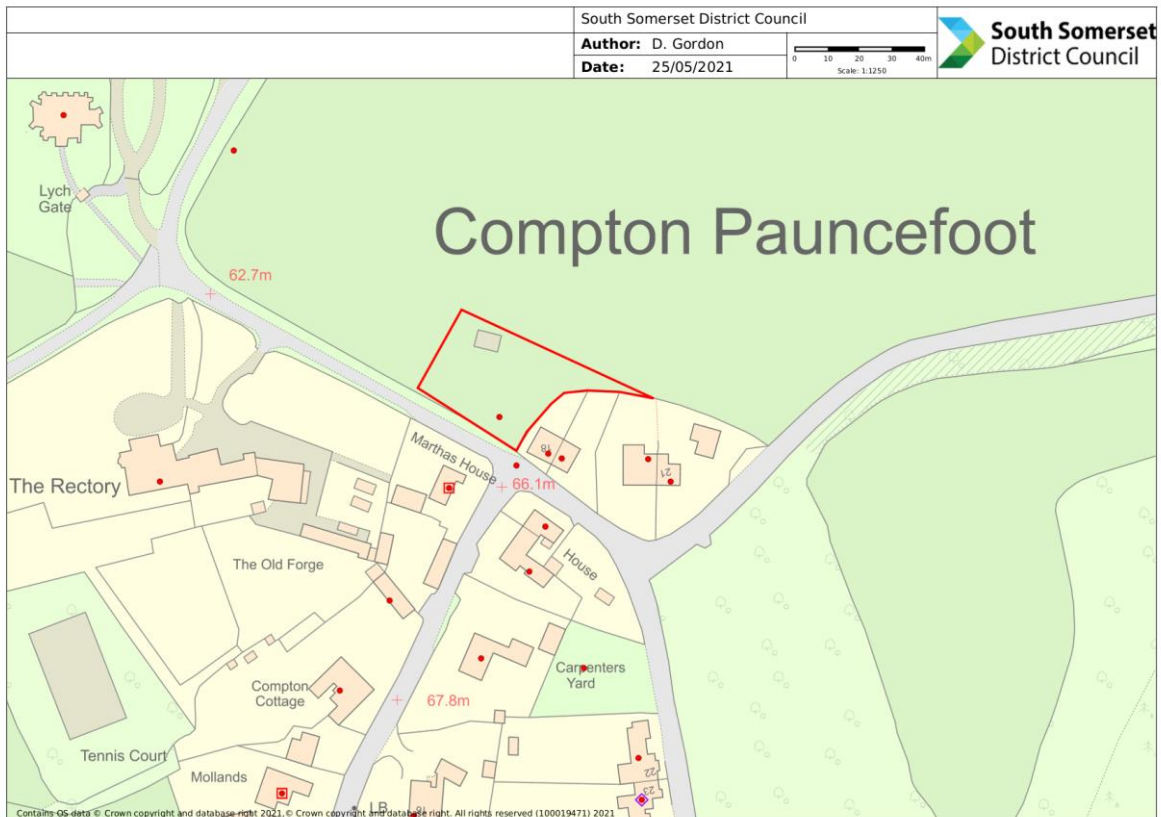
Agenda Item 9

Officer Report On Planning Application: 21/00008/FUL

Proposal :	Change of use of land and application for provision of new access, proposed garage & workshop and ancillary works.
Site Address:	Land West Of 18 Compton Pauncefoot Yeovil
Parish:	Compton Pauncefoot
BLACKMOOR VALE Ward (SSDC Member)	Cllr W Wallace Cllr H Burt
Recommending Case Officer:	Peter Thomas (Specialist) Tel: 01935 462350 Email: Peter.Thomas@SouthSomerset.Gov.Uk
Target date :	2nd March 2021
Applicant :	Hopkins Estates Ltd
Agent: (no agent if blank)	Miss Coral Curtis Grass Roots Planning Ltd 86-88 Colston Street City Centre Bristol BS1 5BB
Application Type :	Minor Other less than 1,000 sq.m or 1ha

This application is referred to Committee after referral from the Chairman following one Ward Member request for committee, and another in support of the officer recommendation.





SITE DESCRIPTION AND PROPOSAL

The application site comprises a parcel of land which forms part of an agricultural field which is bounded by Compton Road to the south-west and the rear of No. 18 & 19 New Road to the south-east. A septic tank serving six properties from the village is located at the north boundary of the site. The site rises in an easterly direction and forms part of the Compton Pauncefoot Conservation Area. It is within proximity of several listed buildings and non designated heritage assets, including the Grade II* listed church of St Mary and grade II buildings including the Old Rectory and Stable wing.

The site also contains a non-designated heritage asset, in the form of earthworks identified in the Somerset Historic Environment Record.

The proposal is for a new field access into the field, provision of a new access track with ground source heat pump below, a new car port with overhead workspace and a new hedgerow around the site to separate it from the rest of the agricultural field.

Amended plans were submitted through the application which reduced the overall site area, and repositioned the proposed carport.

The applicants state that the works are required to provide formal access to a septic tank for the dwellings. Additionally, No. 18 New Road currently has no formal residential parking, requiring that the residents park on the road adjacent to the property

HISTORY

None relevant to this site

POLICY

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004), and Paragraphs 2, 11, and 12 of the NPPF indicate it is a matter of law that applications are determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

South Somerset Local Plan (2006 - 2028)

The most relevant policies are:-
SD1 - Sustainable Development
SS2 - Development in Rural Settlements
TA6 - Parking Standards
TA5 Transport impact of New Development
EQ1 - Addressing Climate Change in South Somerset
EQ2 - General Development
EQ3 - Historic Environment
National Planning Policy Framework
Achieving sustainable development
Promoting healthy and safe communities
Promoting sustainable transport
Achieving well-designed places
Conserving and enhancing the historic environment
Other Relevant Considerations

Somerset County Council Parking Strategy (September 2013)
Somerset County Council Highways Development Control - Standing Advice (June 2017)

CONSULTATIONS

Parish Council

I am writing to you in my role as Chair of Compton Pouncefoot and Blackford Parish Meeting. Normally I would ask our Parish Meeting for their views, but as we are unable to have any meetings due to COVID that hasn't been possible. All Parishioners have been notified of the application and have had the opportunity to comment.

I note that not all the comments of agreement completely support the entire plan, and some of the supporters are also well out of area.

There also seems to be a lack of consultation and engagement on planning matters between the applicant and the Parishioners.

In view of the balance of responses I forward a summary of the Parish view as an objection.

Response to amended plans

Comment from Chair of Compton Pouncefoot and Blackford Parish Meeting: As the Covid restrictions have prevented the holding of normal parish meetings to gather resident views, I have analysed the comments of support and objection submitted on this application following submission of the revised plans. A total of 49 comments are now recorded on the SSDC consultation site, 32 Objecting and 17 supporting. Of the Supporting comments 14 have been submitted by individuals not residents of the village, (with addresses ranging from London to Launceston), only 3 messages of support have been submitted by village residents (with only 2 fully supporting the detailed plans), whilst 25 resident inputs of objection have been made. In the light of this imbalance, which I find odd and very untypical of applications in this area, I reiterate my summary of the Parish Meeting view as one of Objection to the application. I continue to be disappointed that the applicant has not seen fit to engage the community as the plans have been drawn up and then revised.

Conservation Specialist

I previously stated that I considered that the harm was in the medium to high area of the spectrum of less than substantial harm. With the benefit of the report and the redesign I am happy to reduce my assessment of less than substantial harm. I now place it in the medium range of this category. I am not aware of any public benefit which is required to offset this harm, but that is ultimately for the Planning Specialist to determine. Accordingly I maintain my formally OBJECTION to this application.

County Highway Authority:

Standing advice applies.

SSDC Highway Consultant:

I am supportive of the proposal as it would allow service vehicles requiring access to the septic tank to park off the public highway, and similarly provide off-road parking for an existing residential dwelling. The proposed visibility splays (to be formed by relocating/setting back the frontage hedgerow) would be commensurate with vehicle speeds of 15mph. Given the close proximity of the junction to the south-east of the proposed entrance, I consider such a splay in the south-easterly direction to be acceptable. Vehicles approaching the proposed access from the north-west may be travelling faster than 15mph but they would be decelerating and given the width of the road, they would be visibility from a further distance than 17m (potentially 25m). The gradient of the access should be no steeper than 1:10 which may require a cut into the field. At least the first 5m of the access from the carriageway edge must be properly consolidated and surfaced (not loose stone or gravel). Drainage measures would be required across the entrance to prevent surface water from discharging onto the highway. The plans do not show any entrance gates so it is assumed none are proposed. In summary, in the event that planning permission is granted, I recommend conditions are imposed securing the visibility splays as shown (maximum height of 600mm within the splays), the proper consolidation and surfacing of the first 5m of the access, the provision of surface water drainage measures and a maximum gradient of 1:10. It may also be necessary to obtain a S.184 license from SCC prior to the commencement of the works - this can be secured via a Note to Applicant.

Ecology:

No objection subject to conditions

Amended Plans

It would appear that there is no change to the location of the access point nor the details of the means of access. Therefore, I refer the planning officer to my previous comments and recommended conditions.

Historic England

We do not wish to offer any comments

South West Heritage Trust

As far as we are aware there are limited or no archaeological implications to this proposal and we therefore have no objections on archaeological grounds.

CPRE Somerset:

Object: (full letter online)
Intrusive into open countryside
Incongruous design
Works to the hedge will urbanise the lane
Interdiversibility with heritage assets

REPRESENTATIONS

53 letters of representation have been received overall. 19 are of support and 34 are of objection.

Object
Within the conservation area
Open space which contributes to the character
Car port on raised open ground
Adjacent to buildings of historic significance
Field has archaeological significance
Parking space has always been close to the property
Lacks any community support
No community consultation has been carried out
Other applications aren't comparable to this site.

Wessex water have smaller vehicles for sites which are harder to reach
Sewerage plant is in good order
Supporting information states that the septic tank is working well
Overdevelopment in the countryside
Why need a workshop with its own road
Managed before without off road parking
Workshop would be better as a subservient addition to the house
Heart of the village with a footpath nearby
Bends are sharp and people proceed with caution anyway
Cleaning the tank takes once a year and around 30 mins
Overlooking and loss of privacy
Applicant purchased the property in full knowledge of parking situation#
Parts of original fence removed

Support

Would help the traffic safety on this corner
Car does not have its own garage
Would allow for better access for pedestrians horses, children and bikes
Only house in the village that doesn't benefit from parking
Hazardous for traffic
Seems like a sensible idea
It's dangerous for horse riders and horses
Current area is unkempt and in need of management
Would become accepted part of the landscape
Dangers to tourists
Good use of materials

CONSIDERATIONS

The main consideration relates to the impact of the proposal on the appearance of the site and surrounding area, the conservation area and highway safety.

Visual Amenity / Character of the Area/Conservation Area

The site currently forms part of an agricultural field, which rises in an easterly direction. To the east and south east are residential dwellings. The road running past the site is linear in nature and is boarded by hedging on its northern side and a brick wall on the south. It is considered that this site is very much associated with a rural character and the current boundaries which surround the residential boundaries form a natural demarcation of the built form and the countryside. Whilst the proposal has been scaled back from its original form, it is still considered that the change of use of part of this field with views out to the north and available from the public footpath to the west, that the provision of any new form of domestication of the site with the provision of the access track and the car port would be a harmful incursion into the rural appearance of this part of the area. The proposal is located at the eastern point of the field which rises in an uphill direction. It is considered that the provision of the carport given its size and scale would be read as an intrusive and prominent feature within the landscape. The road leading down past the site is considered to be linear in form with strong boundaries without openings, save for to the very west of this part of the road. It is considered that the breach within the hedge boundary and creation of visibility splays would erode this character to the detriment of its appearance. Even with landscaping around the site, this would not prevent views into the site and views of the car port and access into the site. Historical photos show this to be an unbroken hedgerow. Policy EQ2 of the local Plan requires that development will be designed to be of a high quality which promotes south Somerset's local distinctiveness and preserves or enhances the character and appearance of the district. It is considered that the proposal would fail to do this and is unacceptable in this regard.

Conservation Area

The site is within the Compton Pauncefoot conservation area, and a very detailed statement of significance has been submitted with the application which in summary concludes that:

The new development will be within an area of agricultural land, and the addition of a building and access will therefore slightly change the rural character of the Conservation Area, albeit on a very limited

scale, with a discrete non-residential building within a small site. This is further tempered by the small-scale and ultimately reversible nature of the proposed development, the visual impacts of which will be softened by green landscaping. The associated benefits of the work would be to remove residents' cars from the narrow lanes, resulting in improved road safety. The reduction in on-road parking will also arguably be an improvement to the experience of the Conservation Area, removing a very modern element (motor vehicles) from the typical rural village lanes.

The key change, will be the loss of a small part of a larger field through the addition of access tracks and a small-scale non-residential building, thereby eroding the rural and agricultural character of the village to a negligible extent, and on a very limited scale. In all cases, the scale and nature of this change is not considered to impact on the key heritage significance of these assets, while the overall open character of most of the field will be retained.

This statement has been assessed by the Conservation Specialist who has given the view that:

They have taken the opportunity to amend the scheme which has helped. However this is an open field and that is very important to the character of the Compton Pauncefoot Conservation Area. They have moved the red line and excluded the undesignated heritage asset (earthwork) which is welcomed. The impact on this is reduced but not removed.

The development has been moved closer to the road. This has helped with the undesignated heritage asset but not with the setting of the conservation area. Having read the AB Heritage report that identifies this scheme as causing less than substantial harm as described in paragraph 196 I am happy to concur. I previously stated that I considered that the harm was in the medium to high area of the spectrum of less than substantial harm. With the benefit of the report and the redesign I am happy to reduce my assessment of less than substantial harm. I now place it in the medium range of this category. I am not aware of any public benefit which is required to offset this harm, but that is ultimately for the Planning Specialist to determine. Accordingly I maintain my formally OBJECTION to this application.

Contrary to the Conservation Specialist statement, this harm must be balanced against the public benefits of the scheme. The benefits of this proposal is that it would prevent vehicles from parking on the junction and allow a prospective resident to rent the property and be closer to their work. A number of letters of support have expressed this view in that it would lead to road safety improvements and has received support from the highway consultant. Other residents state that the speeds are relatively low and know to proceed with caution around these residential roads. It is however recognised that people try to park as close to their own dwelling as possible and therefore parking in this position is therefore unlikely to change.

It is also questioned just how reversible the proposed works are. It would seem unlikely that a car port with room in the roof space would be removed, or that the landscaping works and access tracks would be removed and are likely to be permanent features of this part of the conservation area. However, a car is more likely not to be parked outside of a property all day and therefore the benefits of the removal of a car which would be read in the context of the existing dwelling are considered to be very balanced. It is noted that the applicant states that they need a space outside of their property, and that it is the only property that does not have parking. However, local residents have stated that this has been the case for many years with this property and it has never been an issue.

There is also the benefit of the proposal being able to enable vehicles to access the septic tank. Wessex Waste state that the facility must be emptied as this could lead to raw sewerage overflowing towards the stream causing issues for the environment agency. However supporting information states that the tank needs to be emptied at least once a year, with periodical maintenance taking place. Another letter shows that there was some concern regarding discharge from the tank, but that was in 2012. Given the frequency of visits required to the tank, it is considered that this low usage would not entail that the benefits of the track would outweigh the harm in terms of appearance of the conservation area.

This proposal is considered to be very finely balanced taking the impact on the conservation area of Compton Pauncefoot and weighing it up against the public benefits. On balance it is considered whilst the benefits of the parking are noted, this does not outweigh the harm to the openness of this part of the conservation area which would be a permanent feature. as such the proposal is considered to be unacceptable and contrary to policy EQ3 of the Local Plan which requires all new development proposals relating to the historic environment will be expected to: Safeguard or where appropriate enhance the significance, character, setting and local distinctiveness of heritage assets; and make a positive contribution to its character through high standards of design which reflect and complement it

and through the use of appropriate materials and techniques.

Neighbour amenity

Given the separation distance between properties it is not considered the proposal would result in any harmful overbearing. No windows are proposed to face south west, but there is a stairwell that could give rise to some overlooking in this direction. However given the separation with the road in between and that it would not form a balcony, it is not considered an objection is raised.

Archaeology

A number of concerns have been raised regarding the archaeological value of the site given the location within the conservation area and the presence of the earthworks to the north. However no objections have been received from the county archaeology team.

Summary

When considering any planning application that affects a conservation area a local planning authority must pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area. The House of Lords in the South Lakeland case decided that the "statutorily desirable object of preserving the character of appearance of an area is achieved either by a positive contribution to preservation or by development which leaves character or appearance unharmed, that is to say preserved." Policies in the NPPF seek positive improvement in conservation areas. Most explicitly paragraphs 185 and 192 require that local planning authorities should take into account "the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness". The design policies further reinforce the objective of enhancement of an area's character and local distinctiveness, concluding that "Permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area..." (paragraph 130).

On balance, it is considered that the harm does not outweigh the benefits and as such is recommended for refusal.

RECOMMENDATION

Refuse

01. The proposal by virtue of its prominent and open location within the Compton Pauncefoot Conservation Area would be a harmful intrusion into the landscape where the current boundaries form the separation between the built form and the rural edge, open to countryside beyond. The proposal would not preserve or enhance the appearance of the Conservation Area in which it is set, and the public benefits are not considered to outweigh the harm. The proposal is therefore contrary to South Somerset Local Plan policies EQ2 and EQ3 of the South Somerset Local Plan and the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework.

SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING:

Informatives:

01. In accordance with paragraph 38 of the NPPF the council, as local planning authority, takes a positive and proactive approach to development proposals focused on solutions. The council works with applicants/agents in a positive and proactive manner by;
- o offering a pre-application advice service, and
 - o as appropriate updating applications/agents of any issues that may arise in the processing of their application and where possible suggesting solutions

In this case, the applicant/agent did not take the opportunity to enter into pre-application discussions.

The applicant/agent was advised that the proposal did not accord with the development plan and that there were no material planning considerations to outweigh these problems.