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# **Informal Discussion by Members of Area East Committee**

**Wednesday 10th November 2021**

**9.00 am**

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

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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](mailto:democracy@southsomerset.gov.uk) by 9.00am on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> November 2021.

The meeting will be viewable online at:  
<https://youtu.be/D0NwiguEuX4>

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 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2021.

**Jane Portman**, *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 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>

Further to the above, at the meeting of Full Council on 8 July 2021, it was agreed to extend the arrangements for a further 6 months to 8 January 2022.

For full details and to view the report please see -

<https://modgov.southsomerset.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=137&MId=3033&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.

Agendas and minutes of meetings are published on the council's website

[www.southsomerset.gov.uk/councillors-and-democracy/meetings-and-decisions](http://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](mailto: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](mailto:democracy@southsomerset.gov.uk) by 9.00am on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> November 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](mailto:democracy@southsomerset.gov.uk) by 9.00am Tuesday 9th November 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](mailto:democracy@southsomerset.gov.uk) by 9.00am on Tuesday 9th November 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 10 November 2021**

## **Agenda**

### *Preliminary Items*

#### **1. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

To approve as a correct record the minutes of Area East meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> October 2021.

#### **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 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.

#### **4. Date of next Meeting**

Members are asked to note that the next scheduled meeting of the committee will be held virtually using Zoom virtual software on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> December 2021.

#### **5. Public Question Time**

**6. Chairman's Announcements**

**7. Reports from Members**

*Items for Discussion*

**8. The Balsam Centre - Allocation of Healthy Living Centre Funding for 2021/22 (Executive Decision)** (Pages 7 - 14)

**9. Community Grant to Wincanton War Memorial Hall - Canopy to newly created toilet block facilities (Executive Decision)** (Pages 15 - 19)

**10. Area East Forward Plan** (Pages 20 - 21)

**11. Schedule of Planning Applications to be Considered** (Page 22)

**12. Planning Application 20/00638/FUL - Highcroft Bayford Lane Stoke Trister** (Pages 23 - 32)

**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.**

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## **The Balsam Centre – Allocation of Healthy Living Centre Funding for 2021/22 (Executive Decision)**

Director: Kirsty Larkins, Service Delivery  
Manager: Tim Cook, Locality Manager  
Lead Officer: Terena Isaacs, Locality Officer  
Contact Details: Terena.isaacs@southsomerset.gov.uk or 01935 462268

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### **Purpose of the Report**

To consider the allocation of funding to the Balsam Centre.

### **Public Interest**

Supporting and helping the Balsam Centre to improve the work of voluntary community organisations in the town and villages across Area East.

### **Recommendations**

It is recommended that members:

- 1) Award £10,000 to the Balsam Centre for the delivery of the Healthy Living Centre work programme from the Area East Discretionary/ project budget.

### **Background**

The Balsam Centre was established in 1998, with the purchase of the former memorial hospital in the centre of Wincanton. The project was established to specifically meet the needs of Wincanton and the surrounding area (this includes some 40 settlements with a population of 30,000) due to an identified gap in services in the area, particularly in mental health services. Extensive refurbishment of the building and the setting up of services was enabled through a Lottery grant and support from a range of funders, including SSDC.

The Balsam Centre delivers a range of integrated health and wellbeing projects and initiatives, most of which directly link with physical activity, healthy eating and mental health support alongside participation in community based activities, supported social engagement and learning.

SSDC has supported the Balsam Centre through both core funding and project grants, since it began. In the past, core funding has been allocated through the Healthy Living Pooled Fund; a budget set up jointly by SSDC, NHS Somerset and SCC and reported annually to the South Somerset Health and Wellbeing Partnership (SSH&WP).

Members will recall that this budget was originally established to support Healthy Living Centres across the whole of the District but, as the only eligible organisation is based in Area East, the budget was transferred and subject to local monitoring by AEC.



## South Somerset District Council

Appendix 1. Provides information on the Balsam Centre's outcomes for 2021 and details the effect Covid-19 has had on the Centre.

Since lockdown, measures have been put in place to continue supporting the community.

### Financial Implications

There is currently £10,732 available from the Area East discretionary/project revenue budget. If members agree the recommendation, £732 will remain in the revenue budget.

### Council Plan Implications

Focus: 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 to our communities
- Work with partners to keep, and help our residents feel safe in their homes and communities
- 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 physical and mental health and wellbeing
- Enable quality cultural, leisure and sport activities
- Support residents facing hardship
- Help tackle the causes of economic and social exclusion, poverty and low social mobility
- Support older people to live and age well by increasing their independence, reducing loneliness, and improving financial security

\*Social value delivers improved economic, social and environmental wellbeing from public sector contracts

### Area East Chapter Implications

Focus: Healthy, Self-reliant Communities

- Support a range of improvements to community facilities
- Continue to support the South Somerset community accessible transport scheme
- Tackle social isolation by maintaining the network of volunteer led health walks through promotion, training and support
- Deliver a programme of Play days in towns/villages in Area East.

### Carbon Emissions and Climate Change Implications

The Balsam Centre supports and provides various projects, including health walks, wellbeing/ community/partnership groups along with volunteering projects, which negates the need for travel.





### **Equality and Diversity Implications**

The loss of services designed to meet the needs of the most disadvantaged in target communities is likely to have a significant effect over time.

### **Background Papers**

- None.
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## Appendix 1 - Balsam Centre Outcomes 2021

Activity	Description	Staff	Numbers of users 2021	Outcomes
<b>Health Walks</b>	Inclusive, accessible walks designed to increase fitness, aerobic activity and access to the countryside. Long walk 3-5 miles x 1 weekly Buggy walk at Stourhead or Newt fortnightly for post natal peer support group	Volunteer co-ordinator and 14 trained volunteer walk leaders	Walks ceased during lock downs, but have now resumed with a maximum of 10 people at a time and appropriate safety measures in place.	Improves physical activity and physical health, social networks, peer support
<b>Short Health Walks</b>	Twice weekly walks for people with physical conditions that cause limited mobility; people with learning difficulties or those new to walking for health. One walk leaves from Balsam Centre, one leaves from the Health Centre.	As above.	Walks ceased during lock downs but have now resumed with a maximum of 8 people on each walk and safety measures in place.	Promoting physical activity, social benefits, and led by trained volunteers. In combination with other lifestyle changes, some walkers reduce their BMI significantly
<b>Conkers Nursery</b>	Day Care and Early Education for 0-5's providing high quality wraparound, all year round provision with Forest School ethos.	Nursery Manager and Deputy, Administrator and ten Early Years Educators	56 children registered and attending, facility is close to full operating capacity.	Children have best start in life. Working parents have childcare options. Children are ready for and are eager learners at school
<b>Employment Support</b>	Support for people experiencing difficulties gaining and maintaining employment, especially post Covid.	SSDC/Abri staff and Employment Co-ordinator	The Balsam Centre is a partner in an employment project being developed by Jo Gale/Karen Chalke SSDC and Joe Walsh (Abri) re supporting people into employment in Wincanton through the Centre's holistic offer.	Building personal confidence and skills, volunteering and work experience opportunities & improved employability. Linking with local businesses and employment opportunities and infrastructure.
<b>Volunteering Project</b>	Recruitment, placement and management of volunteers and provision of a range of volunteering roles/opportunities that support the activities of the Centre and the community.	Volunteer Co-ordinator	128 active volunteers. Volunteer numbers increased during lock down when more vols came forward to support people shielding, vulnerable and isolated in the community	Volunteers bring and/or gain skills, confidence and experience which can lead to employment. Projects increase capacity and run more effectively with volunteers. Skilled volunteers support individuals and groups through difficult times e.g. Covid.

<b>Hopscotch Family Support</b>	Support and peer support for families with children under 18, undergoing a range of difficulties that impact family life.	Senior Family Worker and Senior Youth Worker	We have worked with 32 distinct families in the last year.	Individual family members' health, wellbeing and life chances are improved. Families are able to function independently are more resilient, more engaged in their communities and are less likely to need state interventions. Children attend school and continue their education.
<b>Wincanton For the Future - Good Stuff -The Core</b>	Skills development and confidence building for young adults not in education, employment or training.	Project Worker	We have worked with 5 young people and one older person this year. It has been difficult with Covid restrictions as the activity has been designed around practical skills development e.g. cooking. There has also been a small, mainly online 'seedling' project attached to this which has involved around 18 people growing plants in their gardens with online support.	Confidence, enthusiasm, learning and relishing a new skill. One young person was supported into an apprenticeship which is going well and is likely to lead to an offer of employment.
<b>Young Carers</b>	Peer, social and practical support and activities for young carers	Senior Youth Worker	The project has been suspended temporarily, due to lack of demand, we suspect due to anxiety around Covid.	The outcomes are expected to be the development of a peer support network amongst young carers locally and some regular time away from their caring commitments.
<b>OPEN Mental Health</b>	A new collaboration between nine Voluntary Sector organisations and Somerset Foundation Trust to support people's mental health.	Four Recovery and Wellbeing Workers (2.3 FTE) a Locality Co-ordinator (0.7 FTE) and management time	The Balsam Centre is the Voluntary Sector lead for South Somerset and supports people with mental health issues directly and indirectly, across the locality. The Centre has provided 1214 individual sessions for people	People experiencing mental health problems are able to be introduced to the right service or support at the right time. All relevant services are working together. People with a range of mental health support needs have improved mental

			across South Somerset in the last year. Activities include 1:1 support, counselling, and trauma informed social, therapeutic and creative group activities, including Ecotherapy at Ham Hill in partnership with SSDC	health, reduced dependence on medication/NHS and are better able to cope with life. People have improved diet and physical health, greater confidence.
<b>Family safeguarding</b>	A new model of support for families with a Child Protection, or Child in Need order.	2 FTE Recovery & Wellbeing workers and management time.	The R & W workers are embedded in the Children's Social Care work team in Yeovil and work across South Somerset. Staff are currently operating on a full case load of 24 families.	The aim of the work is to prevent children from going into care, by ensuring that their families are able to care for them appropriately.
<b>Young People</b>	Young People's specialist counselling, Nurture Café, Life Skills and Young People's group – The Hive. Opportunities for young people, especially those who are vulnerable or experiencing difficulties in the home/school to engage in a supportive, creative and nurturing environment.	Project worker, counsellor and trained volunteers	50 + young people each week Contact has been maintained with all young people during lock down. The majority of Face to face activity has resumed, but some young people and their families are still wary of enclosed environments.	Improved personal resilience, social and life skills, social networks. Improved school attendance, exam results, better family relationships and engagement in the community.
<b>Maternal Mental Health</b>	Family support, specialist counselling and peer support for parents experiencing peri/post natal difficulties/depression.	Counsellor and Senior Family Support Worker	71 families supported in last year. Support through Covid has been virtual and face to face when guidance has allowed. Small groups are now meeting in the new Early Years space 'The Nest' at the Centre. . A closed social media group has operated 24/7 and new referrals have been taken throughout the year.	Improved family relationships and family dynamics. Parental understanding of importance of bonding, attachment and baby and child development. Mums form friendships and peer support groups. Mums have improved personal and family relationships, increased independence and hope for the future.
<b>Loose Ends Café</b>	Weekly café aimed at older and isolated people. Volunteers of all ages, some with learning difficulties prepare, cook,	Volunteer Co-ordinator and volunteers	Up to 15 people attending café each week in line with Covid restrictions.	Healthy, affordable lunch for older people. Connection with the 'outside world' during

	serve, wash up and socialise with diners.		Hot meal delivery for up to 20 people/week has been running over the last year, delivering freshly cooked two course meals to former café goers and vulnerable/isolated adults.	continuation of Covid restrictions. Volunteering opportunities.
<b>Men's Shed</b>	Creative social project for isolated and older men based on woodworking and activities using natural materials.	Volunteer Co-ordinator	Runs twice weekly with 6 + people per session. Post Covid numbers have reduced slightly, but a third and possibly fourth day of opening is planned to accommodate more men. Current plans are for the third day to be for men living with dementia	Improved mental health and wellbeing of men who are isolated or alone or who have long term limiting or degenerative condition.
<b>Wellbeing groups</b>	Social and therapeutic groups and activities including outreach to villages. Woolcraft, Dementia support, Drop-In groups, Textiles, Older people's peer support etc.	Project worker/Volunteer and/or peer led	100 + people attended groups weekly until March, most have been able to continue virtually through lock down, now all resuming face to face with limited/reduced numbers.	Improved socialisation and social networks, increased confidence, skills and resilience
<b>CAB</b>	One day a week	Reception and trained volunteers	CAB has been by phone or on line appointment throughout the year and numbers accessing are not currently available to us. CAB have rented space in the Centre and will be resuming face to face appointments.	Free advice and support from trained advisors for people needing specialist support and advice
<b>Flexercise</b>	Two groups of chair based exercise, Wincanton and Milborne Port meet each week.	Project worker	Most have been able to continue weekly sessions through Zoom through lock down. Now back to face to face sessions with slightly reduced numbers, around 18 weekly.	Increased physical activity, improved mobility, social networks

<b>Community groups</b>	Yoga, Tai Chi, Textiles, Painting and Drawing, Breastfeeding support, Games Club, talks and events, Women's Shed, Carers Support, Evening Craft group	Reception, Volunteer Co-ordinator, Volunteers	Most groups and individuals have chosen to return bringing 120 + people into the Centre weekly.	Physical activity opportunities, creative, learning, cultural, social and community activities.
<b>Partners</b>	Growing Space, Health Visitors, CAT Bus, Midwife team, CAB, Social Services, Child Contact Centre	Reception	Numbers have reduced very significantly to approx. 50 per week as most partner organisations have not yet fully returned to the Centre.	Accessible health and social services and support for the wider determinants of health.

<b>Growing Space</b>	Independent 'sister' charity providing social and therapeutic horticulture activities	Project Manager and project worker	Face to face work has resumed with limited numbers, currently around 15 per week.	Supported mental health work, peer support, focus on additional needs and learning difficulties. Horticultural skills.
<b>Building use/hire</b>	Developing health, social and community use of the centre	Centre Admin, Receptionist, Finance Officer and Centre Manager.	The Centre has continued as a valued community hub and source of information and support for the whole community. People have been very keen to resume their former activities following Covid.	Income generation. Development of community hub. Base for multi-agency working, including both tiers of the Local Authority and the NHS.
<b>Tenants</b>	CAT Bus, Health Visitor Team.	Centre Admin, Finance Officer	10 + staff active in the Centre	Income generation for charity. Operational partners in building supports joined up, integrated and multi-agency working.

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## Community Grant to Wincanton War Memorial Hall – Canopy to newly created toilet block facilities

Director: Kirsty Larkins, Director of Service Delivery  
Manager: Tim Cook, Locality Manager  
Lead Officer: Terena Isaacs  
Contact Details: [terena.isaacs@southsomerset.gov.uk](mailto:terena.isaacs@southsomerset.gov.uk) or 01935 462462

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### Purpose of the Report

Councillors are asked to consider the awarding of a grant of £6,124.80 towards new toilet block with disabled facility – phase 2 Canopy.

### 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.

The Wincanton War Memorial Hall has applied to the Area East community grants programme for financial assistance with the costs of a weatherproof canopy to the newly created toilet facilities.

The Locality Officer is submitting this report to enable the Area East Committee to make an informed decision about the application has assessed the application.

### Recommendations

It is recommended that Councillors award The Wincanton War Memorial Hall a grant £6,124.80 (50% costs), the grant to be allocated from the Area East capital programme and subject to SSDC standard conditions for community grants (appendix A)

### Application Details

Name of applicant:	Wincanton War Memorial Hall
Project:	New toilet block with disabled facility – Phase 2 Canopy
Total project cost:	£12,249.60
Amount requested from SSDC:	£6,124.80
% amount requested	50%
Application assessed by:	Terena Isaacs

### Community Grants Assessment Score



## South Somerset District Council

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	Max available	Score	Officer assessment score
<b>A</b> Supports Council Plan/Area Chapter	1		<b>1</b>
<b>B</b> Supports Equalities & Diversity	1		<b>1</b>
<b>C</b> Supports Environment Strategy	3		<b>1</b>
<b>D</b> Need for Project	10		<b>7</b>
<b>E</b> Capacity of Organisation	15		<b>11</b>
<b>F</b> Financial need	7		<b>4</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>37</b>		<b>25</b>

### Background

It was highlighted by many users of Wincanton Memorial Hall there was a need for further toilet facilities for users of the hall. The trust identified a storeroom at the rear of the hall, which they were able to convert into a new toilet block including disabled use facilities.

The project was to be completed in 2 phases with phase 1 now complete and in use. The conversion was funded from the halls own funds along with grant support from Wincanton Town Council.

Planning permission has been granted for this project.

### Parish information

Parish*	Wincanton
Parish Population	5,272
No. of dwellings	2,478

\*Taken from the 2011 census profile

### The project

Phase 2 of the project is to erect a weather protective canopy to link the Sun Lounge area to the new toilet facilities. A canopy was decided as opposed to an enclosed corridor structure after seeking advice from SSDC planning department. An enclosed structure would have been seen to increase the size of the hall facilities whereas a canopy cover is unable to be put to another use.

### Local support / evidence of need

Users of the hall identified the need for further toilet facilities to be made available and accessible from the Sun Lounge area. These needed to include disabled facilities with today's standards and recommendations.

This would also allow the Sun Lounge area to be hired separately from the main hall. When both areas are in use the Sun Lounge users can only access the toilet facilities by walking around the outside of the building and re-entering the foyer toilets at the



front. This was unacceptable for some hirers and therefore reduced the use and hire ability of this part of the building.

### Project costs

Project costs	Cost £
Ground work for erection of canopy	£300
Canopy structure	£11,949.60
<b>Total</b>	<b>£12,249.60</b>

### Funding plan

Funding source	Secured pending	or	Amount £
Town Council	Secured		£5,000
Own Fund	Secured		£1,124.80
SSDC	Pending		6,124.80
<b>Total</b>			<b>£12,249.60</b>

### Conclusion and Recommendation

It is recommended that a grant of £6,124.80 is awarded.

### Financial Implications

The balance in the Area East Capital programme is £70,986. If the recommended grant of £6,124.80 is awarded, £64,124.20 will remain.

Grants are awarded subject to all other funding being secured before the commencement of the project and are on a 50% 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 2021/22

- work with partners to support people in improving their physical and mental wellbeing
- enable quality cultural, leisure and sport activities

### Area Chapter Implications for 2021/22

Support a range of improvements to community facilities through S106 and Community grant



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

Local contractor to complete groundworks for the new canopy.

### **Equality and Diversity Implications**

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

### **Background Papers**

- None.
-

## **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.
- Complete an evaluation survey when requested after the completion of the project.
- 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.



## 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.

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## 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](mailto:democracy@southsomerset.gov.uk)

<b>Meeting Date</b>	<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>
<i>TBC</i>	<i>Phosphate &amp; Nitrate river pollution update</i>	<i>Lead Principal Planner</i>
<i>TBC</i>	<i>Update on Wincanton Sports Ground</i>	<i>Tim Cook – Locality Team Manager</i>



## Schedule of Planning Applications to be determined by Committee

Director: Kirsty Larkins, Service Delivery  
Lead Officer: John Hammond, Principal Planner  
Contact Details: John.hammond@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](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](mailto:democracy@southsomerset.gov.uk) by 9.00am on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> November 2021.

SCHEDULE					
Agenda Number	Ward	Application	Brief Summary of Proposal	Site Address	Applicant
12	TOWER	20/00638/FUL	Erection of a dwelling (resubmission)	Highcroft Bayford Lane Stoke Trister	Mr & Mrs Garrett

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 12

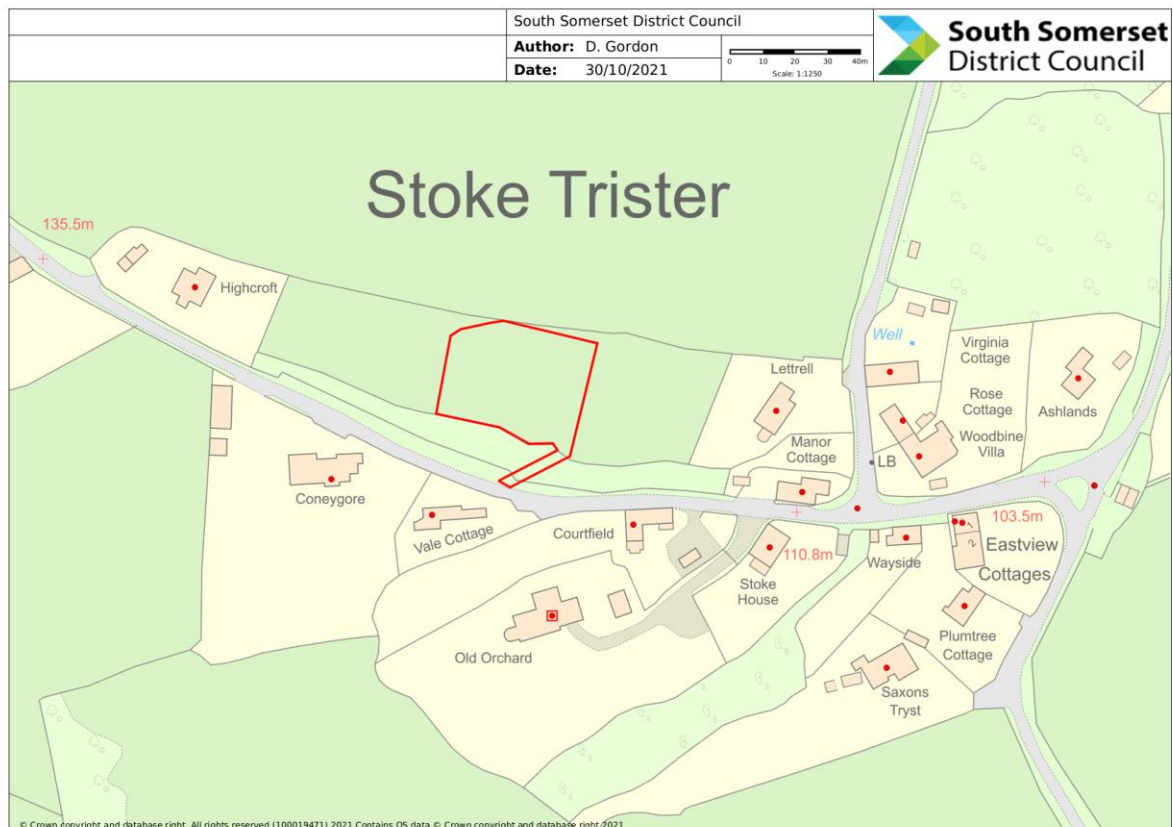
## AREA EAST COMMITTEE

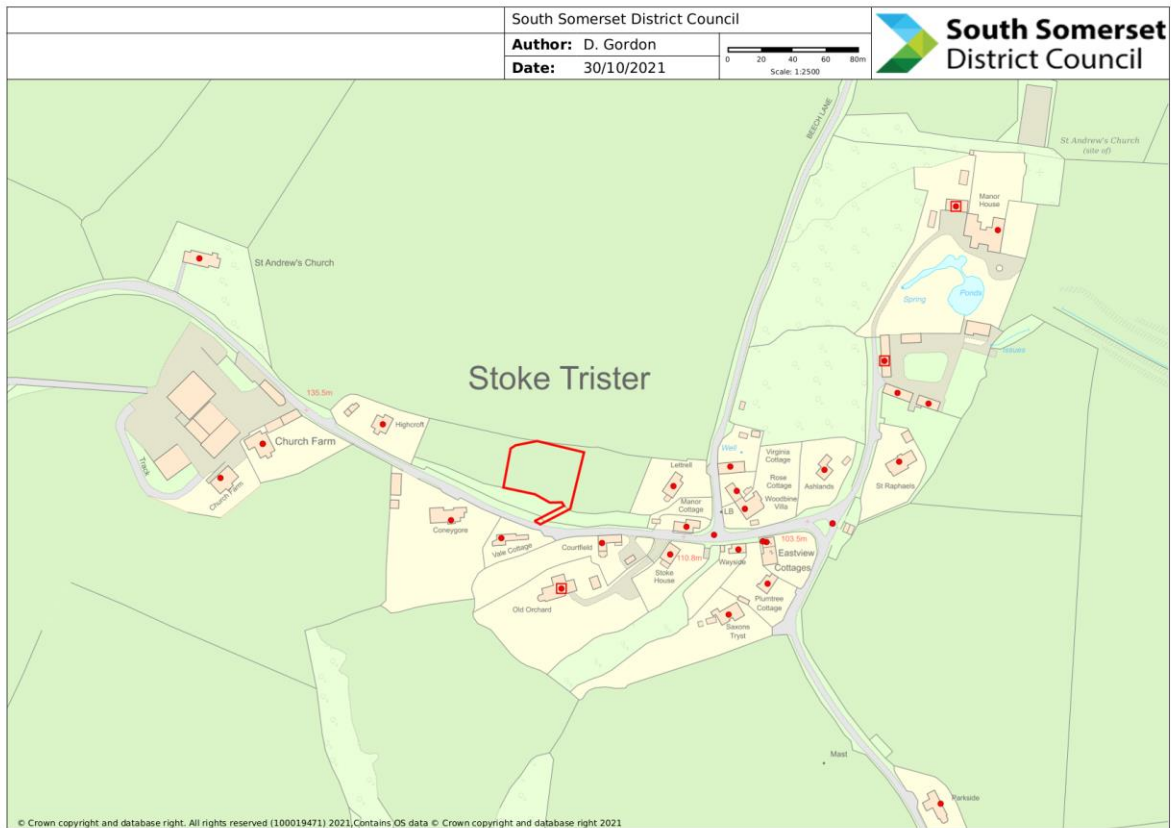
### Officer Report On Planning Application: 20/00638/FUL

<b>Proposal :</b>	Erection of a dwelling (resubmission)
<b>Site Address:</b>	Highcroft Bayford Lane Stoke Trister
<b>Parish:</b>	Stoke Trister
<b>TOWER Ward (SSDC Member)</b>	Cllr R Bastable
<b>Recommending Case Officer:</b>	David Kenyon (Specialist) Tel: 01935 462091 Email: david.kenyon@southsomerset.gov.uk
<b>Target date :</b>	28th April 2020
<b>Applicant :</b>	Mr & Mrs Garrett
<b>Agent: (no agent if blank)</b>	Mrs Lydia Dunne c/o Clive Miller Planning Ltd Sanderley Studio Kennel Lane Langport TA10 9SB United Kingdom
<b>Application Type :</b>	Minor Dwellings 1-9 site less than 1ha

#### REASON FOR COMMITTEE REFERRAL

This application is referred to Area East Committee for determination at the request of the Ward Member, and with the subsequent agreement of the Chair, on grounds that this is an application that has the unanimous support from the Parish Council and the applicants are active members of the local community.





### SITE DESCRIPTION AND PROPOSAL

This application seeks full planning permission for the erection of a dwelling on land to the east of the dwelling known as 'Highcroft', and is a re-submission of a previous application ref, 19/00373/FUL for the erection of a dwelling on the site which was refused permission on 29th January 2020.

Stoke Trister comprises a scattering of detached dwellings in the open countryside around a three legged crossroad. The only community facility is St Andrew's Church to the west of the settlement, which is separated from Wincanton by the A303.

The application site sits within a linear parcel of land in the open countryside on the northern side of Bayford Lane, Stoke Trister. There is a detached single storey dwelling on the western end while the remainder of the parcel extends to the east and comprises an area of rough paddock with mixed tree boundary planting and a dense hedge on the southern highway boundary. The highway rises to the west as does the adjacent land which is higher than the highway with a significant bank. The application site itself comprises a rectilinear area of approximately 0.15 ha within the larger land ownership. At the south eastern end of the application site, an unmade access angles north east from the highway up the bank to join the south eastern corner of the site.

This detailed application proposes the creation of a level house plot within the application site with an associated parking/turning area and a three bay detached garage, all accessed from the existing unmade access. The 2 storey, four bedroom dwelling would be cruciform in planform with a ridged roof; the roof design would be full gable on the north western and south eastern elevations and hipped on the south western and north eastern elevations. First floor rooms would be in the roof construction. An orangery would infill the south western angle. External finishing materials would be plain clay tiles on the roof, natural stone walls and timber framed windows and doors. The gabled triple garage would be set against the northern boundary with a southern front gable and stairs in the western end accessing the attic area above to be used as a study/home office. External finishing materials would be plain tiles on the roof, natural stone walls with some timber cladding on the gable walls and oak framing.

This application has been resubmitted with additional supporting information, including a Planning Statement which makes reference to various other documents for consideration, including a separate statement regarding Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding, a draft Unilateral Undertaking and various appeals elsewhere in the country.



## **HISTORY**

17/01556/PREAPP. Pre application enquiry for the erection of new dwelling.

Pre application "without prejudice" opinion from case officer on 4th April 2017 concluding that the consolidation of built form would erode the dispersed nature of built form in this location that both creates a visual impact, and erodes the historic separation of the church/Church farm from the main hamlet, thereby impacting on local distinctiveness. Consequently there would be a landscape case against development. This aside, the starting point would be a new dwelling in the countryside unrelated to an SS2 settlement location and on this basis no support was offered for the proposed residential development.

19/00373/FUL. Erection of a new dwelling.

Refused 29.01.2020 for the following reason:

*The proposal represents sporadic residential development in the open countryside beyond an established settlement boundary and not within a built envelope of a defined settlement. The location of the proposed development is remote from local services, facilities and public transport and, as a consequence, occupiers of the new development are likely to be dependent on private vehicles for most of their daily needs. The proposal is not sought to meet an identified local need and so will not contribute to increasing the sustainability of this settlement and, whilst mindful of the self-build nature of the proposal, the Council is of the opinion that it is meeting the current demand and need for custom and self-build housing in the District. It is considered that such fostering of growth in the need to travel is contrary to the aims and objectives of sustainable development as set out within Policies SD1 and SS2 of the South Somerset Local Plan and the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework.*

## **POLICY**

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) and paragraphs 2, 11, 12 and 47 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.

Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires authorities considering applications for planning permission for works that affect a listed building to have special regard to certain matters, including the desirability of preserving the setting of the building.

For the purposes of determining current applications the Local Planning Authority considers that the adopted development plan comprises the policies of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006-2028 (adopted March 2015).

### **Policies of the South Somerset Local Plan (2006-2028)**

Policy SD1 - Sustainable Development

Policy SS1 - Settlement Strategy

Policy SS2 - Development in Rural Settlements

Policy EQ1 - Addressing Climate Change in South Somerset

Policy EQ2 - General Development

Policy EQ3 - Historic Environment

Policy EQ4 - Biodiversity

Policy TA1 - Low Carbon Travel

Policy TA5 - Transport Impact of New Development

Policy TA6 - Parking Standards

Policy HG4 - Provision of Affordable Housing: Sites of 1-5 Dwellings

Policy HG5 - Achieving a Mix of Market Housing

### **National Planning Policy Framework - July 2021**

Chapter 2 - Achieving sustainable development

Chapter 4 - Decision-making

Chapter 5 - Delivering a sufficient supply of homes

Chapter 9 - Promoting sustainable transport

Chapter 12 - Achieving well-designed places

Chapter 14 - Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

Chapter 15 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Chapter 16 - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

### **National Planning Practice Guidance, including National Design Guide - September 2019**

### **Other material considerations**

Somerset County Council Parking Strategy (SPS) (September 2013) and Standing Advice (June 2017)  
The Stoke Trister with Bayford Parish Plan. May 2014.

### **CONSULTATIONS**

#### **Stoke Trister with Bayford Parish Council**

No objections and unanimously in support.

**County Highway Authority** - Refer to Standing Advice.

**SSDC Environmental Health** - No comments to make.

**County Ecologist** - No objections subject to conditions.

**Natural England** - No comments to make.

#### **South West Heritage Trust**

There are limited or no archaeological implications to this proposal and therefore no objections are raised on archaeological grounds.

### **REPRESENTATIONS**

There have been some 18 representations in support of the application and 4 raising objections. These are set out in full on the website but can be summarised as follows, in no particular order:

In support of the application, comments have been made about the need for additional housing for local people and for young families; that the proposed design is sympathetic to its surrounds; and one dwelling would not cause traffic problems.

Objections make reference to there being no change in circumstances since the previous refusal of planning permission of a dwelling on the site and reiteration of the various objections previously raised by third parties.

### **CONSIDERATIONS**

#### **Principle of Development**

In policy context, national guidance contained within the NPPF sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 79 of the NPPF states that in order to promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Furthermore, paragraph 80 advises that planning decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside unless one or more of a certain set of circumstances are met. Such circumstances include (i) there being an essential need for rural workers; (ii) enabling development to secure the future of heritage assets; (iii) re-using redundant or disused buildings; (iv) subdivision of an existing dwelling; or (v) the design of the new dwelling is of exceptional quality. None of those five circumstances apply in this instance.

Policy SD1 of the Local Plan also recognises that, when considering development proposals, the Council will take a proactive approach to reflect the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the NPPF and seek to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions within the District. Planning applications that accord with the policies in the Local Plan will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The site is located on the edge of the settlement of Stoke Trister, which contains no services and facilities other than a parish church. As such, the settlement is at the bottom of the settlement hierarchy in the Local Plan and is essentially considered to be open countryside, where new residential development should be avoided.

It has been assessed that Stoke Trister is not closely related to other settlements in the area and, in this regard, it is not considered appropriate to 'cluster' it with other surrounding towns and villages from the point of view of services and contributing towards the sustainability of these neighbouring communities. Given this, it is considered that the village does not meet the criteria of being a Rural Settlement as set

out within Local Plan Policy SS2 and, due to its lack of day to day services and facilities, must be considered to be an unsustainable and therefore inappropriate location for new build residential development as prescribed by both the Local Plan and the NPPF.

Notwithstanding the above, the Council accepts that it cannot currently demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites and that, pursuant to paragraph 11 of the Framework, the weighted presumption in favour of sustainable development is engaged. The proposed development would make a contribution towards meeting the housing shortfall within South Somerset. This would be a social and economic benefit. There would also be a limited and temporary economic benefit during the construction phase. However, due to the small scale of the development, such benefits would be moderate. The principle of the proposed development is therefore considered to be unacceptable.

In support of the application, the agent has made reference to self-build and custom housebuilding being an important part of the Government's strategy to boost housing supply. The applicants are on the SSDC Self-build and Custom Build Register. The significance of self-build is emerging as a key planning issue and is being tested in a number of local and national appeals. The agent has made reference to various appeal decisions in Cambridgeshire, North Dorset, North West Leicestershire and the Forest of Dean which confirm that self-build is a material consideration to be afforded considerable weight.

In addition the agent highlights the following points:

- o The Council does not have a 5 year supply of housing land. Therefore the tilted balance should be applied.
- o A Unilateral Undertaking has been prepared to guarantee the non-fragmentation of the site and to ensure that the proposed dwelling is a self-build dwelling.
- o There is a genuine local need for this dwelling. The applicants wish to build their own home in order to stay in the village. There is strong support for this application from the Parish Council and other local people.
- o The NPPF has recently been updated in 2021 which means that the adopted Local Plan is now 6 years out of date. Moreover, the LPA has yet to substantially address the need for self-build plots in the District particularly in policy. Other councils in Somerset are now fulfilling their duties in relation to the Government's Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 (as amended by the Housing and Planning Act 2016) and have self-build policies. Mendip has one at an advanced stage and Sedgemoor District Council have a fully adopted self-build policy, which many are now looking to as a model policy.
- o Planning permission was granted in 2020 for a dwelling at Lemons Ground, Yenston. The reason for approval on this application is as follows: 'The application site is within the village of Yenston which forms a cluster of settlements with nearby Henstridge and Templecombe where local services are available and reasonably accessible. The proposed dwelling would be located between existing buildings and is intended to enable local residents to remain in the village; as such the proposal is considered to be acceptable as an exception to the settlement strategy of the South Somerset local plan and policies SS1 and SS2.' This reason clearly shows that permission was granted as an exception for an infill site that would allow local residents to remain in the village. The applicants are also local residents proposing a new dwelling on an infill site which would allow them to remain in the village.

SSDC's Strategic Planning team made the following comments in response to the previous application submission ref 19/00373/FUL:

*The demand for custom and self-build homes is determined by the number of entries on the Council's Custom and Self-build Register. The Council has three years from the end of each base period to grant planning permission for enough serviced plots to meet the demand in that base period. Each base period runs from 31st Oct until 30th Oct the following year (the first base period is from the date the register was set up until 30th Oct). There is no link between the people on the register and the plots granted planning permission.*

*The table attached to this report provides the analysis of SSDC's custom and self-build demand and CIL monitoring data. The Council is more than meeting the demand on the Register and is only required by law to grant planning permission for enough serviced plots to meet the demand on the Register. There is no requirement for the names on the Register and to be linked to the planning permissions.*

*MHCLG has yet to publish its guidance on how LPAs should demonstrate that the demand is being met, but even if it determines that they can only use the data relating to a CIL exemption being issued the Council is still meeting its need.*

Those comments are reiterated in response to this current resubmission. The table referred to previously

by the Strategic Planning team (and which was attached to the previous officer report in respect of application ref 19/00373/FUL) has been updated and is attached to this current report. From the Council's perspective, there is no shortfall of self-build registered plots and this should not be considered as a reason to approve the application should there be other material planning considerations which are considered to justify withholding permission.

In terms of clusters of villages, whilst development in one village may indeed support services in another village this must be balanced also against sustainable transport objectives. The proposed development would not be in an appropriate location with regard to access to services and facilities that is safe and addresses the needs of all users. In this particular respect there is a conflict with Local Plan Policy TA5. Amongst other aspects, this requires development to be designed to maximise the potential for sustainable transport through, amongst other aspects, securing inclusive, safe and convenient access on foot, cycle, and by public and private transport that addresses the needs of all. This policy is broadly consistent with the provisions in the NPPF in relation to promoting sustainable transport, including pursuing opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport and achieving safe and suitable access to the site for all users. The approach roads to and from Stoke

Trister are narrow, winding, steep gradients in places, with no footways and no street lighting and do not lend themselves readily for the safe movement of pedestrian or cycle traffic. There is no public transport linking the various villages, thus occupiers of the proposed dwelling would be very much reliant on the use of the private car. This would not meet the aims of the Framework's guidance in relation to sustainable travel and thus the proposal to permit additional residential development in Stoke Trister to support services elsewhere would not be appropriate in this particular instance.

Mindful of this, it is considered that the proposed development of the site as a self-build unit is not such an overriding consideration as to justify overriding the policy objection to the principle of development on this site.

#### **Impact on Designated Heritage Asset and Visual Amenity**

To the south east of the site lies a Grade II Listed Building, 'Courtfield'. When considering the previous application submission ref 19/00373/FUL, the Council's Conservation Officer commented that the plot is well shielded by mature foliage which, even in the winter months, means that views into the application site would be limited. As such the impact the proposed dwelling would have on the nearby listed building would be negligible. Details of the finish have been provided in the Design and Access Statement, and materials and design would be of a high quality and for those reasons the Conservation Officer raised no objections to this proposal.

Such comments remain equally applicable to this current resubmission. The proposed development would not cause harm to the significance and setting of the nearby Listed Building and thus would not be contrary to Local Plan Policy EQ3 and relevant heritage guidance in the NPPF.

The proposed dwelling is considered to be at an appropriate scale for the site and, once constructed, would not appear as an incongruous form of development. Furthermore, the proposed materials are considered to reflect those used in the locality which would further assist in the integration of the new dwelling into the overall landscape.

Having regard to this, and the fact that the dwelling would be set back from the highway and largely screened by existing and new landscaping, it is considered that there would be no demonstrable and significant harm to visual amenity as to justify a refusal of permission, and thus would not be contrary to Local Plan Policy EQ2 and relevant guidance within the NPPF.

#### **Impact on Residential Amenity**

New development will usually have some effect on the amenity of neighbours. These effects include impacts from loss of light, overshadowing, loss of privacy and overbearing impacts. In relation to privacy, the design and layout of new development should ensure that reasonable privacy and light is provided for surrounding residents and occupiers, particularly in relation to residential use and enjoyment of dwellings and private gardens. Spacing between the windows of dwellings should achieve suitable distances for privacy and light, whilst also preventing cramped and congested layouts.

Whilst there is no adopted policy within the Local Plan relating to separation distances, it is generally accepted that, where properties of up to 2 storeys in height directly face one another (except where overlooking a street or public space), a distance of at least 21 metres between facing habitable room windows (living rooms, dining rooms, kitchens, studies and bedrooms) is desirable. The distance of properties facing each other's front elevations should aim to be at least 13 metres - these distances are

lower because house fronts normally face onto public routes so there is less need to protect privacy.

In overall terms, it is considered that the proposed dwelling, in terms of its size, design and positioning, would result in no significant impact on, nor demonstrable harm caused to, the residential amenities of occupiers of any nearby properties by way of overshadowing, overbearing/dominant impact, overlooking and loss of privacy which would justify a refusal of planning permission.

As such, the proposal would meet the relevant aims and objectives of Policy EQ2 of the South Somerset Local Plan and relevant guidance in the NPPF.

### **Highway Safety**

Local Plan Policy TA5 requires all new development to securing inclusive, safe and convenient access on foot, cycle, and by public and private transport that addresses the needs of all, and to ensure that the expected nature and volume of traffic and parked vehicles generated by the development would not have a detrimental impact on the character or amenity of the area and would not compromise the safety and/or function of the local or strategic road networks in terms of both volume and type of traffic generated.

Policy TA6 states that parking provision in new development should be design-led and based upon site characteristic, location and accessibility. The parking arrangements within SCC's parking Strategy will be applied within the District.

Paragraph 111 of the NPPF states that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.

Paragraph 108 of the NPPF advises that maximum parking standards for residential and non-residential development should only be set where there is clear and compelling justification that they are necessary for managing the local road network.

The County Highway Authority has raised no objections to the proposal. There is satisfactory provision of on-site parking and turning spaces. The proposed traffic generated by one dwelling at this location would not cause severe impact on the local road network and would not give rise to a significant detrimental impact to the safety or operation of the highway in this vicinity. Therefore, from a highways perspective, the impact on the reliance on transport by private car for the new dwelling would not represent a severe detriment to the highway in view of the guidance presented in the NPPF, and therefore not grounds on which to form a robust objection in term of the impact on the safety or operation of the highway.

### **Biodiversity**

Local Planning Authorities have a statutory duty to ensure that the impact of development on wildlife is fully considered during the determination of a planning application under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (Habitats Regulations 2017). Policy EQ4 of the Local Plan also require proposals to pay consideration to the impact of development on wildlife and to provide mitigation measures where appropriate.

The County Ecologist has been consulted and notes that, in January 2019, Abbas Ecology carried out a preliminary ecological appraisal followed by reptile and grassland surveys in July 2019 of an area of land at Highcroft. The site comprises roughly 0.4ha of overgrown semi-improved recovering grassland. There are three hedgerows on site, with the northern hedgerow offering a good range of native species including hazel, field maple and sycamore. The eastern hedgerow is dominated by hawthorn and blackthorn, and the southern hedgerow is comprised of large standard sycamore and areas of coppiced hazel with some non-native shrub planting around the site access entrance. The western boundary is comprised of a post and rail fence.

The new dwelling would be built within the central area of the grassland. A new driveway is to be created from the existing access point, this would require a number of hazel trees to be removed along with a scrub patch to allow for splay visibility. An open front garage is also planned. To the east of the site an orchard is planned and to the west of the site, a wildflower meadow is planned.

The findings of the preliminary ecological appraisal are as follows:

- o The site offers moderate potential for foraging bats as well as opportunities for commuting and foraging

along the boundary hedgerows.

- o The site in its entirety provides good foraging and nesting opportunities for birds. The hedgerows will maintain their current ecological function; however, a small section is due to be removed to widen the existing access point and provide appropriate splay lines.
- o The fringes of the site offer good foraging and basking opportunities for reptiles and a small population of slow worms, with a peak count of four individuals, was found during reptile surveys.
- o Despite a thorough search of the sites no footprints or latrines were found around either the fringes or interior of the site.
- o The northern hedgerow offers opportunities for dormice as it is connected to the wider countryside and offers varied foraging possibilities. The northern hedgerow will remain on site, but it will have some management to encourage a better width and height as the hedgerow has bolted and is very tall at the top with less understorey present.

The Ecologist concurs with these findings and recommends no objections subject to the imposition of conditions and informatives relating to bats, birds, badgers, reptiles and dormice together with obtaining measures for biodiversity enhancement should planning permission be granted.

As such, the proposal does not conflict with Policy EQ4 or relevant guidance within the NPPF.

### **Flooding and Drainage**

The site lies within Flood Zone 1 and it is considered that the current proposal does not conflict with Policy EQ1 and relevant guidance within the NPPF.

### **Somerset Levels and Moors - Phosphates**

The Somerset Levels and Moors are designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) under the Habitats Regulations 2017 and listed as a Ramsar Site under the Ramsar Convention. The Ramsar Site consists of a number of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) within what is the largest area of lowland wet grassland and wetland habitat remaining in Britain, within the flood plains of the Rivers Axe, Brue, Parrett, Tone and their tributaries. The site attracts internationally important numbers of wildlife, including wildfowl, aquatic invertebrates, and is an important site for breeding waders.

Natural England has written to various Councils in Somerset (including SSDC) advising about the high levels of phosphates in the Somerset Levels and Moors that are causing the interest features of the Ramsar Site to be unfavourable, or at risk, from the effects of these high levels. This is as a result of a Court Judgement known as the Dutch N case, which has seen a greater scrutiny of plans or projects by Natural England, regarding increased nutrient loads that may have a significant effect on sites designated under the Habitats Regulations 2017 (including Ramsar Sites).

A significant area of South Somerset falls within the catchment. However, the application site lies outside this catchment area. Thus the proposed development would have no adverse impact on the Somerset Levels and Moors.

### **Planning obligations and CIL**

As this proposal is for less than 10 units the LPA will not be seeking any contributions towards leisure and recreational facilities or other local or district wide obligations, in accordance with the High Court of Appeal decision (SoS CLG vs West Berks/Reading) made in May 2016, which clarifies that Local Authorities should not be seeking contributions from schemes of 10 units or less. For the same reason the LPA does not seek any affordable housing obligation.

The scheme will be liable for the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) at £40 per m<sup>2</sup> and it is noted that the applicant has submitted a completed Form. It must be for the developer to establish, at the appropriate juncture, whether any exemptions or relief applies.

### **Conclusion**

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 provides that where regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the Planning Acts, the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The proposed development, subject to the imposition of conditions, is considered to not raise any issues of concern with regards to impact on a nearby designated heritage asset, visual amenity, highway safety, biodiversity and flood risk and would not have an unacceptable detrimental impact on the residential amenities of both future occupiers of the new dwelling and adjacent property.

However, the proposal represents sporadic residential development in the open countryside beyond an established settlement boundary and not within a built envelope of a defined settlement. The proposed development would:

- o not represent sustainable development having regard to the location of the site;
- o fail to promote sustainable communities;
- o not be readily accessible to local shops, primary schools, employment or community facilities;
- o not have good connections to public transport and would be primarily reliant on the use of private motor vehicles.

As such, the proposed development is considered to represent an unsustainable form of development contrary to the provisions of Policies SD1 and SS1 of the South Somerset Local Plan and relevant guidance within the NPPF.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Planning permission is REFUSED for the following reason:

### **SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING:**

01. The proposal represents sporadic residential development in the open countryside beyond an established settlement boundary and not within a built envelope of a defined settlement. The location of the proposed development is remote from local services, facilities and public transport and, as a consequence, occupiers of the new development are likely to be dependent on private vehicles for most of their daily needs. The proposal is not sought to meet an identified local need and so will not contribute to increasing the sustainability of this settlement and, whilst mindful of the self-build nature of the proposal, the Council is of the opinion that it is meeting the current demand and need for custom and self-build housing in the District. It is considered that such fostering of growth in the need to travel is contrary to the aims and objectives of sustainable development as set out within Policies SD1 and SS1 of the South Somerset Local Plan and the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework.

### **Informatives:**

01. This decision relates to the following plans and documents:

Drawing no. 255-SLP: Site Location Plan

Drawing no. 255-SP: Site Plan/Block Plan

Drawing no. 170606/2 (untitled)

Drawing no. HST/01 (untitled)

Drawing no. HST/03: Landscape Section and Garage Details

Drawing no. HST/04: Landscape

Drawing no. HST/10: Plans

Drawing no. HST/11: Elevations

Drawing no. HST/12: Elevations

Drawing no. HST/13: Sections

Drawing no. BTC18062 P\_01 Rev P1: Proposed Access, General Arrangement & Visibility Splays  
Arboricultural Report (Ref. ATC/2018/472), dated 13th December 2018, prepared by Astill Treecare Ltd, and various appendices

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report, dated January 2019, prepared by Abbas Ecology

Phase Two Survey Works (Reptile and Grassland), dated July 2019, prepared by Abbas Ecology

Access Statement (ref. BTC18062/R/01), dated February 2019, prepared by Bellamy Transport Consultancy

02. In accordance with 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 offering a pre-application advice service, and 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 applicants entered into pre-application discussions and were advised that the proposal did not accord with the development plan and that there were no material planning considerations to outweigh these problems. In this case there were no minor or obvious solutions to overcome the significant concerns caused by the proposals.

Number	Base period	Number of plots required on the Self and Custom Build Register	Number of single dwelling plots granted planning permission during base period	Period by which need should be met (3 years from the end of each base period)	CIL monitoring - number of plots (net) approved indicating custom / self-build. <b>CIL took effect April 2017</b>	CIL monitoring - number of plots (net) indicated custom / self-build - exemption issued	Total CIL - approved plots (net) plus exemptions (net plots) issued (any duplicates removed)
1	06/08/2015 to 30/10/2016	31	36	30/10/2019	No CIL	No CIL	No CIL
2	31/10/2016 to 30/10/2017	44	139	30/10/2020	15	17	32
3	31/10/17 to 30/10/2018	29	119	30/10/2021	31	46	77
4	31/10/2018 to 30/10/2019	21	94	30/10/2022	29	43	72
5	31/10/2019 to 30/10/2020	21	65	30/10/2023	37	41	78
<b>Total</b>		<b>146</b>	<b>453</b>		<b>112</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>259</b>

TABLE: Analysis of SSDC's custom and Self-build demand and CIL monitoring data.