



Informal Discussion by Members of Area West Committee

Wednesday 20th October 2021

5.30 pm

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

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

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

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

Oliver Patrick
Garry Shortland
Linda Vijeh
Martin Wale

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 19th October 2021.

The meeting will be streamed and 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 Tuesday 12th October 2021.

Jane Portman, 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 West 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 West Committee

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

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 19th October. 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 on Tuesday 19th October. 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 19th October.

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 West Committee

Wednesday 20 October 2021

Agenda

Preliminary Items

1. Minutes

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the previous meeting held on 15th September 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 Jason Baker, Sue Osborne and Linda Vijeh.

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

4. Date of Next Meeting

Councillors are requested to note that the next Area West Committee meeting is scheduled to be held at 5.30pm on Wednesday 17th November 2021, and will be a virtual meeting using Zoom.

5. Public Question Time

6. Chairman's Announcements

Items for Discussion

7. Area West Chapter Update 2021/22 (Pages 7 - 13)

8. Area West Committee Forward Plan (Pages 14 - 15)

9. Planning Appeals (for information) (Pages 16 - 19)

10. Schedule of Planning Applications to be Considered (Page 20)

11. Planning Application 20/03733/FUL - Willeys Farm, Forton, Chard

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 West Chapter Update 2021/22

Strategic Director: Kirsty Larkins, Strategic Director (Service Delivery)
Lead Officer: Tim Cook, Locality Manager
Contact Details: tim.cook@southsomerset.gov.uk

Purpose of the Report

To provide Members with an update of this year's delivery of the Area Chapter for Area West.

Public Interest

The priorities for Area West are used to influence the development of the Council Plan. Some priorities identified clearly have an area focus and are better placed in an Area Chapter. The Area Chapter presents key projects and areas of work planned for the coming year by teams from across the whole organisation.

This report provides members with an update on the 2021/22 Chapter.

Recommendation

That members note and comment on the report.

Background

Area Chapters focus on the priorities of the Area Committee. These priorities were identified by Members and SSSC Area + teams through member workshops, other service plans and data led information. The Chapter forms part of the Council Plan.

Area + teams consist of officers across the council who are best placed to provide the resources necessary (people and financial) in order to delivery each priority set out in the chapter. Each action or project identified in the plan is allocated a lead officer who collaborates with other officers across the council and/or the local community to deliver the project. The overall approach to delivery is based on the principle that we will enable others to deliver where we can, partner where it makes sense and only deliver if absolutely necessary.

Delivery of the Area Chapter

Members will appreciate the ongoing restrictions and road maps out of the pandemic have ultimately meant that some project work has been difficult to achieve, complete or has caused delays.

Appendix A sets out this year's progress and overview of the area Chapter focus priorities.

Community Grant Awards

There have been three grants awarded so far this financial year and there are two applications pending. The ability for community groups to delivery projects is likely to be hindered due to the pandemic, however hopefully we will see an increase in requests over the next 6 months.

If Members are aware of any groups who would benefit from a Community grant please ask them to check our website for further information and eligibility <https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/your-council/your-council-plan-and-strategies/communities/grants-and-other-support-for-the-voluntary-and-community-sector/> or contact Communities@southsomerset.gov.uk.

Grants are awarded to charities, non-profit organisations and Town and Parish Councils. We can award up to a maximum of 50% of the application value and request there is support from the Parish or Town Council, as well as having considered other possible funding options. Requests between £101 and £12,500 are considered under this scheme.

Grant funding is available for a range of projects, which benefit the community including:

- Covering the cost of hiring a room/pitch or equipment to help start new activities
- Booking a coach or activity leader to help increase use of local facilities
- Helping to subsidise the cost of transport to get your idea moving
- Training for volunteers to make a difference in your community
- Getting some expert help for designs or other advice and guidance
- Environmental projects and initiatives

Revenue balance remaining (minus pending applications) and to be spent by end of financial year is £8,170

Capital balance remaining, this is a rolling programme is £74,000

Financial Implications

None for this report.

Council Plan Implications

The priorities have been developed taking into account the SSDC Corporate plan and Area Chapter priorities.



Carbon Emissions & Climate Change Implications

This is considered on an individual project and programme basis as appropriate. The overall priority is to seek to create more balanced communities where people can live, work and get access to the services and facilities they need on a daily basis. Area working (Area+) helps to improve access to facilities, activities and services, reducing the need to travel.

All Community Grants applications are now assessed and scored against the environmental impact of projects.

Equality and Diversity Implications

This is considered on an individual project and programme basis as appropriate. All Area Plans will have an Equality Impact Assessment.

Background Papers

- Area Chapter Outturn report, Appendix A - Area West Committee (Informal) May 2021
 - Area West Chapter 2021/22
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Appendix A				
	Area West Chapter 2021-2022	Area + Team		
	Project description	Lead Officer	Lead Service	Half yearly update
Economy	Complete gateway highway improvement scheme - Chard Fore Street	Anna Matthews	Regen	Scheme has been fully designed. Contractor has been appointed. Public realm work in Chard will be on site from mid-September to end of March and the Eastern Gateway improvements are programmed to be delivered as part of that, as planned.
	Continue to support individual businesses and associations/Chambers of Trade/Town Teams	Joe Walsh	Economy	Attendance at local Chambers and Business Groups, including the Crewkerne Business Group and Business In Ilminster Group in addition to good connections through the Regeneration Team. Officers continue to hold positions on the Manufacturing Hub Steering Group and the South Somerset Place Leadership Group.
	To support the local food and drink sector through the Food and Drink directory	Joe Walsh	Economy	Work is ongoing with the Tourism department to upload businesses to an online map that will feature within the new tourism website. Take up of the opportunity has not been as high as expected and promotion is required to increase membership. Currently being promoted via 'Get Sussed. and business newsletters.
	To implement specific Covid-19 Economic Recovery programmes that suit the needs based on the local impact on businesses	Joe Walsh	Economy	Mandatory grant funding through the 'Restart Grant' administered and delivered to businesses. Discretionary Grant Fund administered and delivered to businesses. Various support initiatives promoted to businesses to support recovery and growth. Work underway to determine future spend of remaining Additional Restrictions Grant Funding to ensure suitable grant schemes are in place to support businesses through recovery, revitalisation and growth. WBF has been offered to eligible town councils in order to make improvements to their high street to aid recovery.
	To work with the Redundancy Task Force, as part of a wider multi-agency coordinated response to the Oscar Mayer closure situation to include a programme of support for individuals. With a view to making a Town Deals bid for recovery or similar funding programmes that arise	Joe Walsh	Economy	Work has now concluded in offering direct support to Oscar Mayer, with positive outcomes in terms of number of people moving into employment, education or training. Relatively low numbers of individuals have now become unemployed due to SSDC's involvement. Work continues with local partners to support individuals and businesses. Future Town Strategy for Chard is close to completion which will form the basis for any future funding applications.

	Project description	Lead Officer	Lead Service	Half yearly update
Environment	Support community led initiatives that contribute towards combatting climate change	Tim Cook	Locality	Support provided through MTIG funding for Electric Street Sweeper - Chard Air Quality Monitoring Unit – Crewkerne
	Support the volunteer group at Chard Reservoir to deliver a self-guided children's trail at the Local Nature Reserve	Katy Menday	Leisure & Recreation	Trail and activities planned and with designer for creation of final trail leaflet.
	Continue to support the Blackdown Hills AONB	Adrain Moore	Locality	Continued support and advice with delivery of the AONB Management Plan and support with funding through the Officer Steering Group
	To promote and support ecological improvements to Mitchell gardens and Snowdon Park, Chard	Steve Fox	Environmental Services	These are to programmed in during the winter / spring period
	Maintain pressure to deliver the 'Stop Line Way' (SLW) Cycle Path - part of the Sustrans Route 33 long Distance coast-to-coast walking and cycling route.	Adrain Moore	Locality	Research carried out with Local Authorities across the UK into the successful delivery, improvements and funding of Long Distance Multi-Use Trails. Currently working with Sustrans to identify new funding and suitable routes to make improvements to the SLW east and south of Chard.
	Campaign and engage with Town and Parish Councils and residents around local enforcement related issues	Clare Warman	Locality	Liaison with 8 Town/Parish councils with 15 patrols to date - where signing and clearing took place. 2 new DF bins installed, 1 x new litter bin and 1 x re-site suggested. Liaising with the public around responsibilities of clearing litter / dog foul occurs during patrols. Area West also hosted a PlayDay event where our "Bin-it Bug" competition was introduced - educating our little people around their responsibilities not to litter and to recycle etc. Area West received over 100 entries to the comp.
	Produce a Local cycling and walking infrastructure plan for Chard (funding dependant)	Jess Power/Charlotte Fry	Strategy & Commissioning	We will liaise with the Localities team to look to secure funding for the Chard LCWIP.
sing	To proactively intervene on the progress of targeted housing sites in the area	Peter Paddon	Place and Recovery	Focus has been on supporting Crewkerne CLR and Chard eastern development area.
	To support the communities to enable appropriate development in rural areas and support community land trust proposals	Peter Paddon	Place and Recovery	No requests for support has been made currently but we will provide support as needed when requested
	Progress delivery of CEDA in Chard. Agree an updated highway and transport proposal for the allocation and secure a planning legal financial contributions mechanism	Peter Paddon	Place and Recovery	Transport consultant commissioned to undertake eastern relief road delivery scoping exercise to report in quarter 3
	To secure necessary physical and social infrastructures to meet demands of delivery	Peter Paddon	Place and Recovery	Chard eastern development area eastern relief road, transport infrastructure work commissioned and ongoing

	Project description	Lead Officer	Lead Service	Half yearly update
Hou	To be able to commence delivery of the first reserved matters application in the CLR site in Crewkerne	Peter Paddon	Place and Recovery	Planning application for phase 1 granted.
	Support communities to identify any housing need in their parish and support them to meet this demand.	Peter Paddon	Place and Recovery	No new approaches made at present, we do publish the expressed demand for all parishes in the district every month though on the public website
	Support promote Neighbourhood planning as a tool to deliver appropriate local housing	Peter Paddon	Place and Recovery	Ilminster have had a Regulation 14 consultation between June and August 2021 (next step would be regulations 16 and referendum). Crewkerne have had a neighbourhood area designated in February 2021 and will now be able to start work on their NH plan.
Healthy, Self-reliant Communities	Support a range of improvements to community facilities through S106 and Community grants	Tim Cook	Locality	Please see S106 and Community projects below
	To improve pitch provision in Area West and particularly in Chard	Charlotte Fry/ Nathan Turnball	Strategy & Commissioning / Locality	Ground linked to Forton Football Club has now been purchased.
	To support the Football Association to deliver a centre for football development in the Area	Charlotte Fry/ Nathan Turnball	Strategy & Commissioning / Locality	Ongoing consultation with the FA and Wadham School.
	Develop options to improve community transport including links to Crewkerne Station	Jess Power/Charlotte Fry	Strategy & Commissioning	Project paused due to change in staff. Will look at progressing this in the autumn.
	Develop new initiatives to tackle longstanding issues of health inequality and social isolation	Leigh Rampton	Communities	TBC
	Maintaining the network of volunteer led health walks through promotion, training and support	Julia Guy	Locality	We have 7 walks in Area West. 750 walkers for the first quarter from April to July. All walks are going very well and well attended.
	Deliver a programme of Play days in towns/villages in Area West	Julia Guy	Locality	Usual Play day events were unable to be delivered due to uncertainty around Covid restrictions. A successful smaller Play day event was held in Chard in the summer instead. The attendance was around 1500.
	Develop and commence delivery of an intergenerational project working in partnership with Chard Museum to use their collection as inspiration for a project linking 3 care homes and 3 schools or youth groups	Katy Menday	Leisure & Recreation	Project paused due to change in staff. Will recommence once new Community Heritage Officer appointed.
Support the transition of new leisure operating contract in Chard, along with existing centre improvements and delivery of an outreach active communities programme in target areas	Jess Power	Strategy & Commissioning	A contract monitoring regime and project board has been set up for the leisure contract as a whole and the new operator will provide annual reports to members. Centre improvements will be complete by mid 2022.	
S106 funded project support	Jarman Way play area, Chard	Adrain Moore	Locality	Contract for supply and installation of play equipment and fencing successfully awarded to KOMPAN. Works to commence late September/October 2021. SSDC to undertake arboricultural work in October on the six Oak Trees that have Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs).

	Project description	Lead Officer	Lead Service	Half yearly update
Project support	Community grant - advice and support for Hinton St George pre-school building	Adrain Moore	Locality	Funding awarded. Stage payments have started as interim invoices are received. Project anticipated to be completed October 2021.
	Community grant - advice for Coombe St Nicholas School running Tracks	Nathan Turnbull	Locality	Initial meeting booked in with school to discuss project
	Community grant - advice and support to Radio Ninesprings local community radio FM transmitter	Adrain Moore	Locality	Funding awarded. Radio transmitter installed. Waiting for final invoices from Radio Ninesprings in order to release funds.



Area West Committee Forward Plan

Strategic Director: Nicola Hix, Strategy & Support Services
Agenda Coordinator: Jo Morris, Case Officer (Strategy & Support Services)
Contact Details: jo.morris@southsomerset.gov.uk

Purpose of the Report

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

Recommendations

Members are asked to:

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

Area West Committee Forward Plan

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

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

To make the best use of the Area Committee, the focus for topics should be on issues where local involvement and influence may be beneficial, and where local priorities and issues raised by the community are linked to SSDC corporate aims and objectives.

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

Background Papers

None.

Notes

- (1) Items marked in italics are not yet confirmed.
- (2) Further details on these items, or to suggest / request an agenda item for the Area Committee, please contact the Agenda Co-ordinator; Jo Morris, 01935 462055 or e-mail jo.morris@southsomerset.gov.uk

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Lead Officer(s) SSDC unless stated otherwise
<i>8th December 2021</i>	<i>Chard Regeneration Scheme / Chard High Street Heritage Action Zone (HSHAZ) project update</i>	<i>Dan Bennett, Property and Development Project Manager Anna Matthews, Chard HSHAZ Project Manager</i>
<i>19th January 2022</i>	<i>Promoting Community Safety in Area West</i>	<i>Sgt. Rob Jameson, Avon & Somerset Constabulary</i>
<i>19th January 2022</i>	<i>Update on Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Panel</i>	<i>Councillor Martin Wale</i>
<i>TBC</i>	<i>Chard Eastern Development Area Master Plan</i>	<i>Peter Paddon, Lead Specialist – Economy, Place & Recovery</i>
<i>TBC</i>	<i>Update on S106 contributions/CIL</i>	<i>TBC</i>
<i>TBC</i>	<i>Report on how SSDC engage with other authorities to deal with emergencies (report requested following the recent Chard flooding emergency) - Date to be confirmed following the publication of Somerset County Councils Section 19 Statutory Report.</i>	<i>Jessica Power, Lead Specialist – Strategic Planning</i>



Planning Appeals

Strategic Director: Kirsty Larkins, Service Delivery
Lead Specialist: John Hammond, Principal Planner
Contact Details: john.hammond@southsomerset.gov.uk

Purpose of the Report

To inform members of the appeals that have been lodged, decided upon or withdrawn.

Recommendation

That members note the report.

Background

The Area Chairmen have asked that a monthly report relating to the number of appeals received, decided upon or withdrawn be submitted to the Committee.

Appeals Received

21/01048/COL - Certificate of Lawfulness for the existing use of land as a residential garden.
Land at Foxdon Hill, Wadeford, Chard, Somerset TA20 3AN
(Officer Delegated Decision)

Appeals Dismissed

20/01086/OUT - Outline application with some matters reserved (landscaping) for a residential development of eight semi-detached two- storey houses and a single detached house with associated infrastructure
Land South Of Crewkerne Station, Station Road, Misterton, Crewkerne, Somerset, TA18 8LN
(Officer Delegated Decision)

Appeals Allowed

None

Background Papers

Appeal notice attached



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 July 2021

by Matthew Jones BA(Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 23 September 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/R3325/W/21/3271661

Site to the South of Crewkerne Station, Misterton, Crewkerne TA18 8AU

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant outline planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Robin Furby of Dunmore Developments Ltd against the decision of South Somerset District Council.
 - The application Ref 20/01086/OUT, dated 26 March 2020, was refused by notice dated 8 February 2021.
 - The development proposed is eight semi-detached two-storey houses and a single detached house with associated infrastructure on land at Station Road.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. The planning application was submitted in outline with only landscaping reserved. I have assessed the appeal as such, considering the landscaping shown on the proposed drawings on an illustrative basis.
3. Since the appeal was submitted the Government has published a new National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). The main parties have had the opportunity to provide comments on the revisions therein and I have therefore had regard to the revised Framework without prejudice to either party.
4. The appeal is accompanied by additional drawings¹. As they do not alter the proposed development but seek to provide greater detail of it, I had regard to these additional drawings without prejudice to any party.

Main Issues

5. The main issues are:
 - the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area; and,
 - whether or not adequate living conditions would be created for future occupants, with reference to outlook, light and outside space.

Reasons

Character and appearance

6. Paragraph 130 of the Framework, amongst other things, states that decisions should ensure that developments will function well and add to the overall quality of the area and be visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping.

¹ As listed in Appendix 1 of the appellant's Statement of Case

7. The site forms part of a redundant coal yard in the process of redevelopment for housing². The former yard occupies a sidehill cut alongside the railway line with which it was once associated, on the opposite side of which is the Grade II listed Crewkerne Railway Station (the Station). Access is off Station Road, which occupies higher land to the west and, running south to north, is carried by road bridge across the railway line towards Crewkerne.
8. This length of Station Road is generally formed of linear pockets of housing set amongst large, sweeping fields. The closest houses to the south are set behind modest enclosures and softly landscaped gardens. As they give way to the site, the elevation of Station Road allows for a sense of openness, with the gentle topography flowing down towards the Station as the foremost landmark of the scene, with its High Victorian Gothic roofscape set against the sky.
9. The dwelling at Plot 01 would be at the highest and most prominent point of the site, above the cutting and adjacent to Station Road. Whilst intended to provide an active site frontage, its elevated and upfront position dictates that it would fail to respect the topography and pattern of development here, leading it to have a domineering presence within the street scene. It would be joined by a large and utilitarian boundary fence. This would be an abrupt and inactive feature incomparable to the more modest enclosures already present, such as the bridge parapet. The harm caused by the fence would not be mitigated by setting it back, which would also diminish the outside space serving Plot 01.
10. The appellant considers that soft landscaping would likely obscure the legibility of the topography and the open quality around the site frontage in any event. However, this is not the case as the landscaping within the site is a reserved matter and the existing trees standing in the parcel of land between the site and Station Road offer a soft, natural and permeable visual effect.
11. Consequently, the proposal would have an unacceptable effect on the character and appearance of the area. It would conflict with the landscape and design aims of Policy EQ2 of the South Somerset Local Plan (2006-2028) (adopted 2015) (SSLP) and the Framework.

Living conditions

12. Paragraph 130 also requires decisions to ensure that the arrangement of spaces creates attractive and welcoming places to live which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for future users.
13. The windows within the ground floor south elevation of the houses in Plots 02 and 03 would look out on to an almost immediate retaining wall, with limited access to outlook and light. Whilst this is sought to be relieved through open plans and by apertures within the north elevation, these principal living areas would be effectively single aspect. The northward openings would have little access to direct sunlight and would themselves have limited outlook onto the shallow rear gardens bound by an 'unclimbable' fence. As such, these would be unacceptably confined ground floor spaces for future users in my opinion.
14. The main, usable outside spaces serving the houses at Plots 04-09 would have the same northerly aspect and enclosure. They would be excessively small given that they would serve three-bedroom family homes, with likely demands for recreation, including children's play. They would also house the bin storage

² Stemming from Appeal Ref APP/R3325/A/11/2150293

aside the openings into the respective dining spaces, creating a disagreeable relationship between waste and areas intended for habitation. The accessibility to public open space further afield owing to the proximity of the Station is unlikely to make up for these immediate shortcomings.

15. The appellant has submitted photographs of a recent housing development in Cullompton. However, whilst aspects of the designs appear similar, the full details surrounding the granting of that scheme are not before me. Assessments of a scheme's standard of living accommodation are highly fact sensitive and dependent upon site specific circumstances in any event. The housing in Cullompton is therefore of limited weight in my reasoning here.
16. Accordingly, I conclude on this issue that the proposal would fail to create adequate living conditions for future occupiers, with reference to outlook, light and outside space. It would conflict with the residential amenity aims of Policy EQ2 of the SSLP and the Framework.

Other Matters

17. With its linear form and greater respect for the topography, the extant permission would have a more sensitive and compatible effect on the character and appearance of the area than the appeal proposal. As such, it is a fallback position which does not weigh in favour of the scheme before me.
18. The Council has referred to the effect of the scheme on the Somerset Moors and Levels Ramsar site, a site protected by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 as amended due to the rare aquatic invertebrates it supports. These animals are susceptible to the effects of phosphate levels from foul water, which can be increased by residential development. Had I been minded to allow the appeal, it would have been necessary for me to consider this matter within an Appropriate Assessment. However, as I am dismissing the appeal for other reasons, I have not taken it further.

Planning Balance and Conclusion

19. The harmful effect of the scheme on the character and appearance of the area and its failure to create adequate living conditions for future users are matters to which I attribute significant weight. They draw the proposal into conflict with the development plan when read as a whole.
20. The government is seeking to significantly boost the supply of housing and the scheme would contribute nine homes to local supply in a location with adequate access to services. Whilst this would be a more effective use of the land in terms of the amount of housing delivered, the Framework also requires the reuse of land to safeguard the environment and ensure safe and healthy living conditions. Consequently, given the circumstances before me, the social and economic benefits of the scheme attract limited weight in the balance. It follows that there are no other considerations, including the Framework, which outweigh the conflict with the development plan in this case.
21. For the reasons outlined above, and taking all other matters raised into account, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Matthew Jones
INSPECTOR

Schedule of Planning Applications to be determined by Committee

Director: Kirsty Larkins (Service Delivery)
Lead Specialist: 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 West Committee at this meeting.

Recommendations

Members are asked to note the schedule of planning applications.

Planning Applications will be considered no earlier than 5.30pm

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 9.00 am on Tuesday 19th October 2021.

SCHEDULE					
Agenda Number	Ward	Application	Brief Summary of Proposal	Site Address	Applicant
11	BLACKDOWN, TATWORTH & FORTON	20/03733/FUL	The conversion and extension of an existing agricultural shed into 2 semi-detached dwellings.	Willeys Farm, Forton, Chard	Lisa and Adam; Karen and Michael Smith

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 11

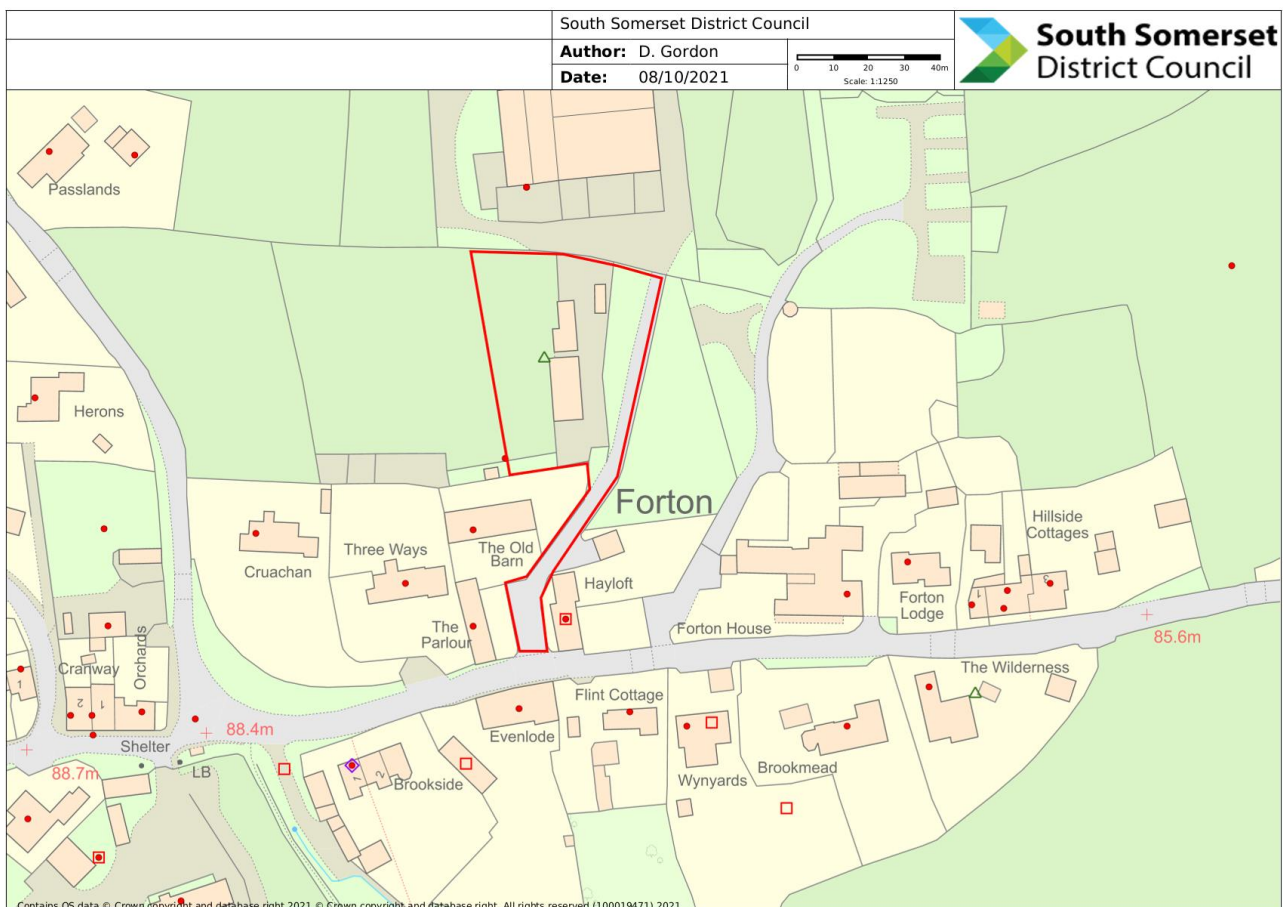
Officer Report On Planning Application: 20/03733/FUL

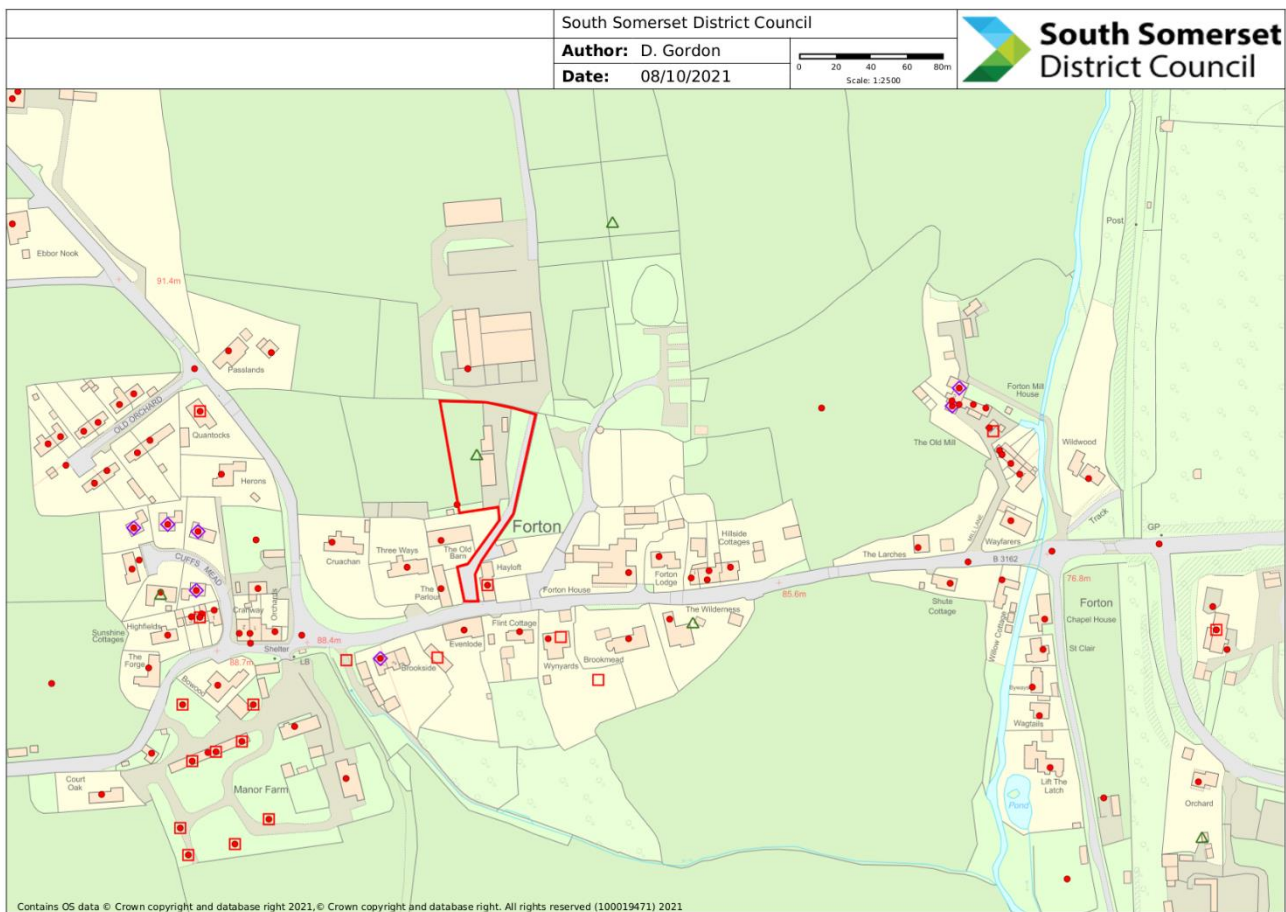
Proposal CIL Liabe = YES	The conversion and extension of an existing agricultural shed into 2 semi-detached dwellings.
Site Address:	Willeys Farm Forton Chard
Parish:	Tatworth and Forton
BLACKDOWN, TATWORTH & FORTON Ward (SSDC Member)	Cllr M Wale Cllr Jenny Kenton
Recommending Case Officer:	David Alabi (Specialist)
Target date/Ext of time	24th May 2021
Applicant :	Mrs & Mr; Mrs & Mr Lisa and Adam; Karen and Michael Smith
Application Type : 06	Minor Dwellings 1-9 site less than 1ha

REASON FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE

The application requires consideration by Ward members as comments have been received that are contrary to the officer's recommendation.

SITE DESCRIPTION AND PROPOSAL





The application site is located at the end of a private access that meets the northern side of Forton Road between two frontage residential units. There is a single storey residential unit on the western side fronting the track (The Parlour) with a larger two storey unit to the north (The Old Barn). All these buildings are of rubble stone under a slate roof with timber joinery and form a courtyard.

Planning permission is sought for the conversion and extension of an existing Agricultural shed into 2 semi- detached dwellings.

HISTORY

15/02842/FUL: the erection of extensions to existing agricultural building and erection of silage clamp - Approved
 15/03296/FUL: Erection of agricultural building for the storage of hay and straw - Approved

19/02407/FUL: Erection of cattle shed and lean-to machinery store - Approved

POLICY

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

The South Somerset Local Plan (2006 - 2028) was adopted on the 5th March 2015. In

accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) and Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), the adopted local plan now forms part of the development plan. As such, decisions on the award of planning permission should be made in accordance with this development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Legislation and national policy are clear that the starting point for decision-making is the development plan, where development that accords with an up-to-date local plan should be approved, and proposed development that conflicts should be refused, unless other material considerations indicate otherwise.

The relevant Policies in the Local Plan are: SS1 - Settlement Strategy
SD1 - Sustainable Development
SS2 - Development in Rural Settlements EQ2 - General Development
EQ4 - Biodiversity
TA5 - Transport Impact of New Development TA6 - Parking Standards

The relevant sections of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (NPPF) are:

Chapter 2 - Achieving sustainable development Chapter 5 - Delivering a sufficient supply of homes Chapter 12 - Achieving well-designed places

CONSULTATIONS

A site notice has been displayed

Parish Council - No response received within the timetable.

SCC Highways - Standing advice applies.

SDDC Highways Consultant have commented as follows:

The highway impact of the scheme on the local highway network is unlikely to be significant or severe especially when considering that traffic that has or could be generated by the extant agricultural use of the sheds.

It would be useful to know the exact width of the access, the applicant should confirm the extent of visibility splays. Four parking spaces are required for each dwelling.

Electric charging points should be included.

REPRESENTATIONS

Surrounding occupiers have been consulted: Two letters of support have been received for the following reasons:

- The overall scale is modest
- The proposal makes use of an un-utilized farm building and will have a minimal impact on traffic flow
- It would also free up accommodation in the village for other families
- The proposal is in-keeping with local vernacular

CONSIDERATIONS

Principle of the development

The site is located outside the main settlements where restraint policies apply to new housing development. Due to this location it will have an impact upon the openness of the surrounding countryside over and above that of the existing agricultural buildings.

National and local planning policies aim to direct new development towards existing settlements thereby encouraging sustainable patterns of development and to protect the amenity and attractions of the countryside. SSSC recognize that a degree of flexibility may be afforded where a 5 year housing supply cannot be demonstrated. That said, even where the planning authority cannot demonstrate a 5 year housing supply, this does not of itself result in the provision of new housing in locations away from services and infrastructure comprising "sustainable development".

Policy SD1 of the Local Plan also recognizes that, when considering development proposals, the Council will take a proactive approach to reflect the presumption in favor 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.

Policy SS1 highlights the areas where new development is expected to be focused, grouping certain towns and villages into a hierarchy, of settlements including the Strategically Significant Town (Yeovil), Primary Market Towns, Local Market Towns and Rural Centers. All other settlements are 'Rural Settlements', which Policy SS1 states "will be considered as part of the countryside to which national countryside protection policies apply (subject to the exceptions identified in Policy SS2)".

Policy SS2 states:

"Development in Rural Settlements (not Market Towns or Rural Centers) will be strictly controlled and limited to that which:

- Provides employment opportunities appropriate to the scale of the settlement; and/or
- Creates or enhances community facilities and services to serve the settlement; and/or
- Meets identified housing need, particularly for affordable housing."

Development will be permitted where it is commensurate with the scale and character of the settlement, provides for one or more of the types of development above, and increases the sustainability of a settlement in general.

Proposals should be consistent with relevant community led plans, and should generally have the support of the local community following robust engagement and consultation.

Proposals for housing development should only be permitted in Rural Settlements that have access to two or more key services listed at paragraph 5.41" Those key services referred to in

paragraph 5.41 of the Local Plan are local convenience shop, post office, pub, children's play area/sports pitch, village hall/community center, health center, faith facility and primary school.

The site is located outside of any development areas or directions of growth as defined by the local plan. As such, policy SS2 of the South Somerset Local Plan is of most relevance. However, elements of policy SS2 must be considered out of date, as SSDC cannot currently demonstrate a five year supply of housing land. It is not considered that Forton would be considered as a sustainable location under policy SS2, as the relevant services and facilities - in this case a village hall, church and pub lie just outside the area.

In regard to local services while the onus is firmly placed on the applicant to demonstrate how their proposals would comply with Council policy, Forton has 1-2 community facilities, the football club and hall combined at the same location which are outside the village. In addition, concern remains regarding housing development in isolated locations such as this.

It is noted that there is a 2019 permission relatively close reference - 18/00493/FUL for the erection of 6 new dwellings, conversion of existing barns to form 3 dwelling and a holiday let and the carrying out of internal and external alterations and the erection of a two storey side extension to the existing farmhouse at Manor Farm Two Ash Lane Tatworth And Forton Chard. This is relatively close however that scheme was supported on the basis of the heritage assets it secured and therefore it is not directly relevant to the current application.

In support of the application the applicant refers to a fallback position as the existing barn could be converted to residential accommodation by way of Class Q of the Permitted Development Order 2015 as amended, should the existing building comply with the relevant criteria. However, it is considered that the extensions facilitating a second dwelling undermine the character of the barn and provide an additional dwelling to that which could be secured by way of the Class Q in a location would not be supported. The subsequent increase in useable floor space when compared with the existing barn would be significant and akin to a completely new development and not simply the conversion of a barn.

It is added further that the proposed residential curtilage around the dwellings would be far greater than that which could be achieved utilizing permitted development rights. It is considered that this further adds to the unacceptable nature of the development in this location.

The applicant also argues that personal circumstances should be taken into account. In this case the applicant's family would like to stay in the area in which they have lived for a considerable period of time and that the proposal would allow them to do so.

This has been taken into account but it is not considered that these circumstances would outweigh the harm resulting from the proposed development as outlined in this report. It is rare that a personal planning permission can be justified for new build development, therefore the decision should reflect the simple principle of allowing new dwellings regardless of the current owners intentions.

Visual Impact and Effect on the Landscape

Chapter 12 of the NPPF requires a high standard of design in new development. The emphasis on design and its appropriateness is echoed by policy EQ2 which requires that development,

among other things, reinforcing local distinctiveness and respect local context.

While the barn is not readily visible in the public realm & does relate to the village edge, the size and scale of the development as proposed may result in increased pressure for similar forms of development which would not be acceptable as it would result in the erosion of rural character.

The development consists of a large U shaped two-storey building that would include a substantial residential curtilage serving the proposed dwellings. The extended building would be positioned to the east of the site over the footprint of and encompassing the existing barn although it would be substantially larger and significantly more prominent.

The main elevations to the east and west would appear cluttered and in-coherent with its mix of vertical and horizontal shaped windows and off centered gabled sections. Facing materials include natural stone and timber, with roofing including natural slates, concrete ridge tiles and aluminum skylights.

It is not considered that the overly dominant size, scale and design of the building would represent a high standard. The proposal would therefore fail to comply with chapter 12 of the NPPF or Policy EQ2 of the South Somerset Local Plan.

Ecology

There are no nature conservation or habitat designations in the immediate area or the wider context that would be impacted by the development. Moreover, if the proposal were deemed acceptable a condition could be attached to any approval which sought the safeguarding of nature conservation or habitat interests.

The site is just outside the Phosphates zone and therefore there is no requirement for any mitigation measures in this case.

Residential Amenity

The site is well separated from neighboring residential dwellings and the development would not affect the amenities of occupiers of dwellings to the south and east of the site. It is therefore considered that the proposal would comply with Policy EQ2 of the South Somerset Local Plan.

Highway Safety

There have been no highway objections in principle subject to details regarding the access and in light of the existing use of the barns for agricultural purposes, it is not considered that the two dwellings would give rise to an expansion of traffic movements to and from the site. Two dwellings would not cause an increase in vehicular movements over and above that for the use as agricultural barns and as such highway safety would not be compromised. The proposal would therefore comply with Policies TA5 and TA6 of the South Somerset Local Plan.

RECOMMENDATION

For the above reasons it is considered the principle of development of two houses in the form

proposed is of an inappropriate size and scale and would adversely affect the open countryside and immediate landscape. For these reasons the proposal would not accord with Policies SS1, SD1 and EQ2 of the Local Plan and the guidance contained in the National Planning Policy Framework.

01. The proposed development by reason of its design, cluttered appearance, size and layout would fail to reinforce local distinctiveness or respect local context contrary to paragraphs 126 and 130 of the NPPF 2021 and Policy EQ2 of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006-2028.
02. The proposal would create two market led dwellings on a site which is considered to be outside of the limits of the main settlement of Chard and therefore in the open countryside. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policy SD1, SS1 and SS2 of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006 - 2028 and para 80 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (NPPF) which seeks to restrain housing in the open countryside.

Informative:

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;
 - 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 applicant/agent did not take the opportunity to enter into pre-application discussions.
