
Area West Committee

Wednesday 16th September 2020

5.30 pm

A virtual meeting via Zoom meeting software

The following members are requested to attend this virtual meeting:

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

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

Oliver Patrick
Garry Shortland
Linda Vijeh
Martin Wale

There are no planning applications to consider this month.

Any members of the public wishing to address the virtual meeting during Public Question Time need to email democracy@southsomerset.gov.uk by 9.00am on 15 September 2020.

This meeting will be viewable online by selecting the committee meeting 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 Monday 7 September 2020.

Alex Parmley, *Chief Executive Officer*

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

Information for the Public

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

Area West Committee

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

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

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Public participation at meetings (held via Zoom)

Public question time

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

If you would like to address the virtual meeting during Public Question Time, please email democracy@southsomerset.gov.uk by 9.00am on 15 September 2020. When you have registered, the Chairman will invite you to speak at the appropriate time during the virtual meeting.

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

This meeting will be streamed online via YouTube at:
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCSDst3IHGj9WoGnwJGF_soA

Virtual meeting etiquette:

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

Planning applications

There are no planning applications to consider this month.

Recording and photography at council meetings

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

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

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

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

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Area West Committee

Wednesday 16 September 2020

Agenda

Preliminary Items

1. To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Previous Meeting

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the previous meeting held on 12th August 2020.

2. Apologies for Absence

3. Declarations of Interest

In accordance with the Council's current Code of Conduct (as amended 26 February 2015), which includes all the provisions relating to Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI), personal and prejudicial interests, Members are asked to declare any DPI and also any personal interests (and whether or not such personal interests are also "prejudicial") in relation to any matter on the agenda for this meeting.

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

Planning Applications Referred to the Regulation Committee

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

Councillors Jason Baker, Sue Osborne and Linda Vijeh.

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

4. Date and Venue for Next Meeting

Councillors are requested to note that the next Area West Committee meeting is scheduled to be held on Wednesday 21st October 2020. This will be a virtual meeting using Zoom on-line meeting software.

5. Public Question Time

This is a chance to ask questions, make comments and raise matters of concern.

Parish/Town Councils may also wish to use this opportunity to ask for the District Council's support on any matter of particular concern to their Parish/Town.

Anyone wishing to raise matters in relation to items on the agenda may do so at the time the item is considered.

6. Chairman's Announcements

Items for Discussion

- 7. Community Grant to Broadway and Horton Cricket Club (Executive Decision)**
(Pages 6 - 10)
- 8. Community Grant to Ilminster Tennis and Bowling Club (Executive Decision)**
(Pages 11 - 14)
- 9. Area West - Area Chapter 20/21 Update & Finance report (Executive Decision)**
(Pages 15 - 24)
- 10. Chard Regeneration Scheme Update** (Pages 25 - 28)
- 11. Area West Committee Forward Plan** (Pages 29 - 30)
- 12. Planning Appeals** (Pages 31 - 37)

Please note that the decisions taken by Area Committees may be called in for scrutiny by the Council's Scrutiny Committee prior to implementation.

This does not apply to decisions taken on planning applications.

Community Grant to Broadway and Horton Cricket Club (Executive Decision)

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

Purpose of the Report

Councillors are asked to consider the awarding of a grant of £4,567 towards the purchase of twin cricket nets at Broadway and Horton Cricket Club.

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.

Broadway and Horton Cricket Club has applied to the Area West Community Grants Programme for financial assistance with the purchase of new twin cricket nets. The application has been assessed by the Locality Officer who is submitting this report to enable the Area West Committee to make an informed decision about the application.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Councillors award a grant of £4,567 to Broadway and Horton Cricket Club, the grant to be allocated from the Area West Community Grants Programme and subject to SSDC standard conditions for community grants (Appendix A)

Application Details

Name of applicant:	Broadway and Horton Cricket Club
Project:	Purchase of new twin cricket nets
Total project cost:	£35,578
Amount requested from SSDC:	£4,567
Application assessed by:	Adrian Moore

Community Grants Assessment Score

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

Category		Comments
A Supports Council Plan/Area Chapter	Y/N	Yes
B Supports Equalities & Diversity	Y/N	Yes
C Supports Environment Strategy	1	
D Need for Project	6	
E Capacity of Organisation	15	
F Financial need	6	
Total	28	

Background

Broadway and Horton Cricket Club play at Pound Road, Broadway, near Ilminster. The club has modern facilities, and play their cricket amongst some of the most beautiful countryside in Somerset. They run 2 Saturday sides who both play in the Somerset Cricket League. The league has 12 divisions, of which the 1st XI are now in division 4 (3 promotions in the last 5 years) and the 2nd XI play in division 9SE. Recently, the 2nd XI won the prestigious 'Don Crouch Fair Play Award' for the whole league. Both sides are selected from local men, women, girls and boys of all different ages and abilities. On Sundays, they run a Mid Wessex Sunday 40-over league team and also run some youth coaching for younger members on Thursday evenings.

Currently their pre-season net practice takes place at Heathfield School in Taunton. It is the ambition of this project to have twin nets at their own ground for all members to be able to use for practice.

The Club has had many achievements recently; 'All Stars' cricket coaching, for 5-8 year olds. Delivered 'Chance to Shine' cricket coaching for primary school children in four local primary schools. Created an under 13s cricket team, and an under 11 girls team (who came second in the county championships). Increased club membership from 70 to 130. Their 2nd XI earned promotion in the Somerset league, and their indoor cricket team won the league. The Club is involved in the new 'Dynamos' cricket for under 11s, organised by the England Cricket Board (ECB), and have started a women's cricket team preparing to play next season.

Parish information

Parish	Broadway and Horton
Parish populations	Approx 1,500

The Project

The project is to install new twin lane cricket nets at Broadway and Horton Cricket Club. This will allow the club to provide cricket training and coaching for all ages in a safe environment, and allow it to accommodate the growing number of cricketers living in and around Broadway and Horton. The membership of their youth teams has risen dramatically in the last few years. From their initial intake of 12 under 8s three years ago, they have grown rapidly and now have up to 50 under 8s at Sunday morning sessions, with under 11s and under 13 matches running at the same time. In total,



South Somerset District Council

they have 3 youth teams, compared to 4 years ago they when they had none. As well as their youth teams, their adult teams are also expanding.

The new nets will allow for ad-hoc net sessions organised by individual groups of people outside of club sessions. Two nets will allow the club to differentiate between players of different abilities and reduce competition for net time. Increased capacity will allow adult and junior teams to practice at similar times, allowing older youth members to stay-on and practice with adults if desired, and for adults to engage with the youth training. Properly installed, high quality nets will also provide safe and secure facilities for local schools to use.

Local support / evidence of need

The club's focus is on improving the playing equipment and facilities. They have arranged questionnaires through their social media site, asking members, young and old, for their opinions on how to improve the club. New cricket nets was overwhelmingly the most popular response. It will enable the club to run more training events, run more teams, and promote even greater participation through having better cricket facilities. The current single net is very old. New nets will improve the quality of training and provide a better degree of safety, particularly when younger players are using them.

Increased use of the new nets will come about as part of the ECB drive to increase cricket participation through its 'Chance to Shine, All Stars and Dynamos Schemes'. Newsletters and flyers will promote the new facilities as well as the use of social media. The club's website will publicise the new facilities.

Project costs

Project costs	Cost £
Exclusive Leisure 34M twin nets	31,860
Remove excavated aggregates/spoil removing from site	1,250
five 3.65 metre long x 2 metre high protective sheets	300
50mm wide x 150mm high concrete kerb edgings	1,900
Planning Permission	268
Total	35,578

Funding plan

Funding source	Secured or pending	Amount £
Broadway Parish Council	Secured	1,000
Own Funds (virtual cycling fundraiser)	Secured	865
Sports England	Secured	15,000
Somerset Community Fund	Secured	2,000
Section 106 6/03261/REM	Pending	12,146
SSDC	Pending	4,567
Total		35,578

Conclusion and Recommendation

It is recommended that a grant of £4,567 is awarded

Financial implications

The balance in the Area West Capital programme is £132,329. If the recommended grant of £4,567 is awarded, £127,762 will remain.

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

Council Plan Implications

Focus 3: Environment

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

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

Focus 5: Health and Communities

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

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

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

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

Background Papers

None

Appendix A

Standard conditions applying to all SSDC Community Grants

The applicant agrees to: -

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

Standard conditions applying to buildings, facilities and equipment

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

Special conditions

None

Agenda Item 8

Community Grant to Iminster Tennis and Bowling Club (Executive Decision)

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

Purpose of the Report

Councillors are asked to consider the awarding of a grant of £12,500 to Iminster Tennis and Bowling Club towards resurfacing three Tennis Courts.

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.

Iminster Tennis & Bowling Club has applied to the Area West community grants programme for financial assistance with the costs of resurfacing three tennis Courts, the application has been assessed by the Locality Officer who is submitting this report to enable the Area West Committee to make an informed decision about the application.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Councillors award a grant of £12,500 to Iminster Tennis and Bowling Club, the grant to be allocated from the Area West capital programme and subject to SSDC standard conditions for community grants (appendix A).

Application Details

Name of applicant:	Iminster Tennis and Bowling Club (Matt Hamilton)
Project:	Resurfacing of three outdoor Tennis Courts
Total project cost:	£26,209
Amount requested from SSDC:	£12,500
% funding requested	48%
Application assessed by:	Nathan Turnbull

Community Grants Assessment Score

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

Category	Actual score	Comments
A Supports Council Plan/Area Chapter	Y/N	Y
B Supports Equalities & Diversity	Y/N	Y
C Supports Environment Strategy	3	1
D Need for Project	10	8
E Capacity of Organization	17	12
F Financial need	7	4
Total	37	27

Background

Ilminster Tennis Club joined forces with the bowling club in 1957. The tennis club has been moving from strength to strength over the years with well over 100 tennis members in 2019. The club was able to move from 2 courts in 2007 with the new club development to 3 floodlight courts which offer an excellent surface. The tennis club run 9 league teams during the summer and 2 in the winter. The club has also a strong foundation of youth tennis players who have progressed into league players and on wards to a county level and the club has dedicated professional coach.

Parish information

Parish*	Ilminster
Parish Population	5,808
No. of dwellings	2716

*Taken from the 2011 census profile

The project

The current courts are coming towards the end of their normal life span, they were laid in 2006 and have been painted and cleaned twice in this period to keep them at higher level as possible until needing to be resurfaced.

They are not accessible for wheelchair or people with limited mobility due to the surface quality. Ilminster Tennis and Bowling Club have looked at multiple options for resurfacing and spent much time visiting and talking to other clubs. The Club have opted for a 'Macadam replacement', which is a direct ('like for like') replacement known for its longevity.

The club has investigated options and has identified 'Macadam' as the preferred solution.

It can be cleaned and repainted after a period of around 5 years and this means the courts are kept well-maintained using club funds to extend the life of the court.

The Tennis club intend to work with the local doctor's surgeries and supporting services to provide structured taster sessions in sporting activity, inclusive sessions that are adapted for physical and mental needs, social events, discrete exercise programs and many more activities that are focussed on addressing the obvious need identified above.

One of the projects main goals is to provide disabled people with access to tennis; this project will enable community access to coaching inclusively with people of different abilities, making sure the surface for all players is safe and inclusive.

The Club recognises the need to offer a greater range of activities that extends the reach to the younger and older members of our community including the most vulnerable, they aim to explore providing opportunities for disability tennis including; learning disability tennis, deaf tennis, visually impaired (VI) tennis and physically impaired tennis – the latter includes ambulatory tennis and wheelchair tennis.

Local support / evidence of need

The Lawn Tennis Association view* is that community courts need protection (and in some cases improvement) and are a priority in order to increase levels of tennis participation in South Somerset.

*Source: South Somerset Leisure Facilities Strategy

Consultation with the Lawn Tennis Association, other local clubs and club members supports the project and the surface proposed.

Project costs

Project costs	Cost £
Resurfacing of Three Outdoor Tennis Courts ex VAT	£26,209.00
Total	£26,209.00

Funding plan

Funding source	Secured or pending	Amount £
Parish/Town Council	Secured	£2,000.00
Own Funds	Secured	£10,000.00
Fundraising /Donation	Secured	£1,709.00
SSDC Community Grant	Pending	£12,500.00
Total		£26,209.00

Conclusion and Recommendation

It is recommended that a grant of £12,500 is awarded to Ilminster Bowling and Tennis Club.

Financial implications

The balance in the Area West Capital programme is £132,329. If the recommended grant of £12,500 is awarded, £119,829 will remain

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

Council Plan Implications

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

- Support communities so that they can identify their needs and develop local solutions
- Help people to live well by enabling quality cultural, leisure, play, sport & healthy lifestyle facilities & activities

Carbon Emissions and Climate Change Implications

None

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.
- 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.

Special conditions

Agenda Item 9

Area West – Area Chapter 20/21 Update & Finance report (Executive Decision)

Director: Kirsty Larkins, Strategy and Commissioning
Manager: Tim Cook, Locality Manager
Lead Officer: Tim Cook, Locality Manager
Contact Details: tim.cook@southsomerset.gov.uk

Purpose of the Report

To provide Members with an overview of this year's delivery of the Area Chapter and finance budgets for Area West.

Public Interest

The priorities for Area West have been used to influence the development of the Council Plan for 2019/20. 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 20/21 Chapter.

Recommendations

- (1) That members note and comment on the report.
- (2) Endorse and agree allocation of spend on the following projects:
 - £2,000 from the Area Discretionary/Project revenue budget to support the development of a food and drink directory.
 - £4,000 from the Area Discretionary/Project revenue budget to support a new children's nature trail leaflet.
 - £6,000 from the Area reserves budget to support Blackdown Hills AONB Somerset Connections project.

Background

Area Chapters focus on the priorities of the Area Committee. These priorities were identified by Members and SSDC Area + teams through member workshops, other service plans and data led information. The 2020/2021 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.

Budget Information

Area West has the following funding for allocation (not including carry forwards as these will already have been previously allocated to projects)

	Budget
20/21 Community Grant revenue budget – Yearly starting allocation for applications within the Community Grant programme	£11,180
20/21 Discretionary & Project revenue budget – Yearly starting allocation for local support / community start up projects and chapter projects	£15,060
Capital Programme – rolling programme for allocation within the Community Grant programme or other agreed capital project funding	£134,749
Reserves – all reserve funding is currently unallocated	£46,220

Spend to date on Discretionary & Project revenue budget

Partnership funding to support Blackdown Hills AONB (agreed at committee and paid)	£6,000
Remaining balance	£9,060

Delivery of the Area Chapter

Members will appreciate this first quarter has been overtaken by the recent pandemic and the requirement for SSDC to quickly respond to critical areas of need. Some staff were diverted to help other services within the Council, this along with an enforced lockdown, the slow re-opening of services and trades has meant that some project work will have been possibly delayed or the original project changed.

Appendix A sets out this year's progress and overview of the area Chapter focus priorities for 20/21. You will note that clear outcomes, milestones, key activities and resources have been added to the delivery plan to enable recording and monitoring of projects.

Funding requests

Project Lead Officers are requesting the following Area resources to help assist delivery of elements or completion of projects in this year's chapter:

Chapter priority	Project	Funding	Suggested budget
Continue to support key businesses including work with the Chamber of	Develop a Food and Drink Directory. Please see Appendix B	£2,000	Discretionary / Project budget

Commerce and other partners			
Preserve the biodiversity and develop Chard Reservoir as a green tourism destination; investigate opportunities to improve the visitor infrastructure and information.	New children's nature trail leaflet proposed to enable self-guided activities around the site (providing activity outside even in the absence of a site events programme).	£4,000	Discretionary / project budget
Continue to support the Blackdown Hills AONB	To support Somerset Nature Connections which is a partnership project between Somerset Wildlife Trust, Blackdown Hills, Quantock Hills and Mendip Hills Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs). The project will work closely with Mind in Somerset and 'Chard Working All Together In Chard' (WATCH) and share learning through the recently formed Somerset Nature and Wellbeing Network to support Somerset's communities to connect with the natural environment to improve mental health.	£6,000	Reserves

Community Grant Awards

1 revenue grant has been awarded for £989.00 to Dragons of Chard. There are currently 3 applications waiting for more information or to be assessed, plus provisional allocation for Local Information Centre in Chard, Crewkerne and Ilminster leaving a current revenue balance of £7,391.00

There are also 4 applications likely to come forward to Committee. These are currently being assessed by officers.

Financial Implications

A balance of £3,060 will remain in the discretionary/project budget if £2,000 is endorsed for the Food and Drink directory, £4,000 for a new children's nature trail leaflet. A balance of £40,220 will remain if £6,000 is agreed for Blackdown Hills AONB Somerset Nature Connections project.

Corporate Priority 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.

Area West Chapter 2020-2021

Area + Team

	Project description	Lead Officer	Lead Service	Outcomes	Key activities/ Milestones	Qtr 1 Overview
Economy	Attract tourists and increase spend in and visits to the area and wider district. Engage with attractions and providers to offer a cohesive destination packages to visitors through the TICs and LICs.	Katy Menday	Leisure & Recreation	The high quality tourism offer is well promoted and attracts more visitors to support the local economy. Attractions are able to re-open safely as the visitor economy restarts.	New service website is designed and launched by the end of 2020, including comprehensive attractions and accommodation listings and a what's on guide. Re-opening guidance shared with tourism businesses.	Chard LIC visited and feedback from visit informing future tourism plans to support the LIC network. Tourism businesses supported through lock down with extra tourism newsletters with up to date industry news including grants and Public Health guidance. New service website commissioned and underway as a high quality platform for tourism in the area. Free Visit Somerset bronze memberships available to businesses / attractions. LIC staff and volunteers invited to training session that had to be moved to a digital platform due to Covid19.
	Continue to support individual businesses and associations/Chambers of Trade/Town Teams	Joe Walsh	Economy	Stronger connections with local businesses within the area. Ability to disseminate information to key networks quicker – vital during the Covid 19 period. Intelligence around business requirements / needs.	Attendance at events. SSDC being embedded into the business community. To continue to build the reputation that South Somerset is a great place to do business.	Conversations progressed with key individuals in Crewkerne to set up a Crewkerne Chamber. Interactions with businesses throughout the Covid period in the form of business support and grant provision.
	Supporting rural diversification	Joe Walsh	Economy	A stronger rural economy with a range of businesses who have the opportunity to diversify into additional sectors should they wish.	Food and Drink Directory Produced to support the sector and communities during the Covid 19 period.	Fully engaged with Ruritage - a regeneration programme that is funded by EU monies to combine food and drink providers with creatives to increase social inclusion. Meetings scheduled to explore Circular Economy initiatives with the Ellen Macarthur Foundation and exploring the possibility of being involved in a University of Exeter project which focuses on the Circular Economy in the food and drink sector.
	Engage Town Councils to develop programme of investment through the Market Town Investment Group	Joe Walsh	Economy	Regeneration projects in Market Towns through an existing capital fund.	To be listed when funding is spent.	Meetings postponed due to Covid 19 however a newsletter was produced and distributed to all towns involved within the MTIG which incorporated updates from all of the towns as well as a specific focus on how they have 'coped' during Covid 19. Additionally, we have requested that each town provide a list of possible projects by September – to act as an EOI stage. Can be distributed to Members upon request.

Environment	Complete gateway highway improvement scheme - Chard Fore Street	Rebecca Mc Elliot	Commercial Services & Income Generation	Delivery of public realm scheme, creation of new public space for Chard residents	RIBA4 design work complete, procurement of contractor, scheme works delivered	Provisional Allocation - may reduce. RIBA 3 design and costings completed, ITT out at the moment for RIBA 4 detailed design and costings. Team to be appointed by August 2020, work during September – December and works to begin in 2021. Likely to be second half of 2021
	Support community led initiatives that contribute towards combatting climate change.	Tim Cook	Locality	Engagement with Environment Strategy Delivery of projects which help to protect the environment	Promote Community grant process through the Environment Champions, social media channels etc Adapt Community grant form/process to incorporate and score against climate change initiatives	Form/process updated. Promotion through press release and new SSDC Environment news letter. Survey sent and completed by Environment Champions on how we can best help parishes.
	Preserve the biodiversity and develop Chard Reservoir as a green tourism destination; investigate opportunities to improve the visitor infrastructure and information.	Katy Munday	Leisure & Recreation	The Local Nature Reserve is protected and enjoyed by residents and visitors. The space has a sustainable future where footfall does not exceed space available. All obligations with regards the Reservoir operation and management are complied with.	Chard Reservoir Land Management Plan is updated for the next period. Nature corridors and links to the wider countryside are considered to improve connectivity for both wildlife and people. Improved visitor facilities are considered for site including toilets.	Volunteer group for site secured funding and free trees to enhance planting on site through the winter season. Volunteering since suspended due to Covid19. Wildlife monitoring ongoing to ensure data on protected species up to date.
	Continue to support the Blackdown Hills AONB	Adrian Moore	Locality	Meet statutory duties within South Somerset under the 'The Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000 - Sections 85 & 89 for local residents.	Have regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing natural beauty when exercising or performing any function affecting land in the AONB in South Somerset and prepare and review a Management Plan for the Blackdown Hills AONB	Support AONB Officer Group. Liaised with SSDC Planning regarding Memorandum of Agreement. Support for Saving Devon's Treescapes- Neroche Area project. Support for funding request to support Somerset Nature Connections project

	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.	Adrian Moore	Locality	Progress the off road extension of the 'Stop Line Way' Cycle Path southeast of Chard. Seek Section 106 Planning Contributions from Developers to extend this section of the SLW.	Research SSDC's previous involvement in the SLW Cycle Path. Work with SSDC Planning to liaise with relevant landowning Developers. Form new partnerships to support the development of the SLW project.	Partnerships formed with SSDC Planning & Developers, Chard Regeneration Programme, Blackdown Hills AONB and Royal Agricultural University Cirencester. Progress report to Area West Committee.
Housing	Promote and support any emerging Community Land Trusts	Anna-Maria Lenz	Housing	Support Parish to achieve local led housing	Liaise with Parishes Compile and collate results where applicable	Nothing new to report on this item
	Complete Housing Needs Surveys when requested	Anna-Maria Lenz/ Tim Cook / Marie Collins	Locality / Case Services	Support Parish consultation to assist local led housing options	Liaise with Parishes Compile and collate results where applicable	Nothing new to report on this item
Communities	To improve pitch provision in Area West and particularly in Chard	Lynda Pincombe / Nathan Turnbull	Strategy & Commissioning / Locality	Increase playing pitch provision in line with adopted PPS	Agree conveyance conditions (Property team and Strategy and Commissioning).	Purchase of land at Forton to create additional pitches almost completed after a lengthy conveyance process
	To support the Football Association to deliver a centre for football development in the Area	Nathan Turnbull	Locality	Increase playing pitch provision in line with adopted PPS	Liaise with Football Association Agree S106 funding if applicable	It has been difficult to get an update due to Covid 19 and staff changes within the FA
	Support a range of improvements to community facilities. - Programme of live schemes to be set out in Appendix A	Tim Cook	Locality	See Appendix A	See Appendix A	See Appendix A
	Develop a programme of public events at Chard Reservoir and deliver in partnership with the volunteer group.	Rachael Whaites	Leisure & Recreation	Residents are engaged with the site and learn about the heritage and natural history of the area. Residents are knowledgably about the site and report improved wellbeing from visiting. High quality public events attract visitors to the site.	Events programme planned. Events marketed and bookings taken where applicable. Events shared with other local attractions and accommodation.	Countryside Event programmes for spring and summer 2020 has been cancelled due to Covid19. There is some limited potential for autumn 2020 and planning will resume in September if practicable.

Healthy, Self-reliant C	Develop options to improve community transport, including links to Crewkerne Station	David Crisfield	Strategy & Commissioning	Report on options to address gaps with high level costs including recommendations on how to: • Improve transport access to essential services such as health-care, education, employment and recreation • Improved transport access to opportunities for social interaction • Improved ease of travel across the district.	1. Audit Current Provision 2. Assess Need 3. Review learning and identify gaps and issues 4. Agree which gaps are a strategic priority to fill 5. Outline options for addressing strategy priorities	Due to Covid19 and the redeployment of key staff to other priorities work on this project has been temporarily suspended.
	Support social inclusion by maintaining the network of volunteer led health walks through promotion, training and support	Julia Booth	Locality	Encourage health, fitness and social activity	An annual training event Collection of data of attendees on walks	Health Walks some starting after lockdown, Gov guidelines being followed.
	Deliver a programme of Play days in towns/villages in Area West	Julia Booth/Terena Isaacs	Locality	Encouragement of free and activity play with families within local communities	Delivery of 8 play days during the summer holidays	Summer play days have been cancelled this summer due to Covid -19. This year we are delivering 2000 free Activity boxes and Activity booklet to encourage fun and safe activities at home.
	Provide support to local community safety groups within Area West	Tim Cook	Locality	Help to provide safer communities		Nothing new to report on this item
Appendix A - Delivery Plan						
S106 funded project support	Advice and support to Chard Town Council to help deliver play area project at Upper Henson	Adrian Moore	Locality	Delivery of new Play Area	Provide advice and support to group in relation to all aspects of project delivery Support with applications for funding and transfer of S106 funding Hold consultation event	Consultation material prepared. Meaningful and inclusive consultation with local residents and councillors currently on hold until restrictions on social distancing are relaxed.
	Advice and support to group and facilitate S106 funding and possible community grant to deliver the project to Broadway play area improvements	Adrian Moore	Locality	Successful transfer of S106 funding Delivery of new Play area improvements	Provide advice and support to group in relation to all aspects of project delivery Support with applications for funding and transfer of S106 funding	Advice and support given to Parish Council. Recent thorough review of S106 contributions available. Continued support with the development of the play area project. A number of options still open to the Parish.
	New Pavilion project at Ilminster Cricket Club	Rob Parr/ Nathan Turnbull	Locality	Successful transfer of S106 funding Delivery of new Pavilion	Provide advice and support to group in relation to all aspects of project delivery Support with applications for funding and transfer of S106 funding	The S106 funding for professional fees has been paid in full to Ilminster Cricket Club (ICC). Architects drawings have been produced and are being professionally costed so a viability assessment can be carried on the designs.

	Project management and completion of final phase at Snowdon Park, Chard Play Area completion - installation of climbing frame	Rob Parr	Locality	Delivery of new climbing frame	Complete final phase	Climbing frame has now been installed and is in use. Project complete.
	Carry forward from 19-20 Chapter - Advice and support to Chard Town Council to help deliver play area project at Jarmin Way	Adrian Moore	Locality	Delivery of new Play Area	Provide advice and support to group in relation to all aspects of project delivery Support with applications for funding and transfer of S106 funding	Completing documents ready for tendering stage
Project support	Advice and support to Knowle St Giles re improved access to the Stop Line Way	Adrian Moore	Locality	All Ability Access route to SLW installed	Lease agreement secured on parcel of land. Support with applications for funding.	Support and advice to Parish Committee and support through change of Landlord regarding parcel of land required for location of project.
	Advice and support to group and facilitate funding and possible community grant to deliver the project to Horton play area improvements	Adrian Moore	Locality	Delivery of new Play Area improvements	Provide advice and support to group in relation to all aspects of project delivery Support with applications for funding and transfer of SSDC funding	Continued support to committee.

Appendix B

Food and Drink directory

In April this year the Council facilitated the creation of a Food and Drink directory to promote businesses / organisations that were operating during the Covid 19 lockdown period. The directory was successful with over 100 businesses being included and fulfilled 3 key short term aspirations:

1. To serve our local communities by providing local alternatives to acquiring essential items
2. To support local businesses during a difficult period
3. To alleviate pressures from supermarkets and to minimise the risk of not being able to social distance when shopping

We are aware of the strengths that the food and drink sector provides to the South Somerset economy, not just in the case of employment but in contributing to our visitor economy through providing local attractions with local food and drink and by creating a unique selling point for the area.

Upon producing the Food and Drink directory the Economic Development Team agreed to lead a further piece of work to seek additional benefits including:

- A strengthened food and drink sector within South Somerset
- The creation of new supply chain opportunities for local producers
- A reduction in food miles, leading to environmental benefits
- A reduction in the use of supermarket visits, leading to a reduction in travel and environmental benefits
- Some research states that local food is of a better quality and holds higher nutritional values which will lead to health benefits for local residents

We are requesting £2,000 of funding from each Area to continue this piece of work to a greater extent. It should be noted that we hope each Area will contribute to establish better value for money and a combined offer for South Somerset however for this reason we do require approval from each Area. Activity is likely to include:

- Re-visiting the directory and using a proportion of the funding to enhance it, promote it further and develop a more robust communication strategy
- To target certain sectors to seek additional businesses to include within the directory – these will be based on recommendations from the tourism team so it aligns with enhancing our visitor economy
- To establish a web presence and to make the directory more interactive (for example an online map)

Supporting the food and drink sector features in the Council's Economic Development Strategy as an 'Elected Member Priority' as well as being a key element of the Economy Covid 19 Recovery Strategy. In terms of an Area Priority, this will contribute to the Economy Priority of *"to continue to support key businesses including work with the Chamber of Commerce and other partners"*.

Joe Walsh, Specialist Economic Development will attend committee to answer any questions you may have.

Chard Regeneration Scheme Update

Project Sponsor: Martin Woods, Director of Place
Lead Officer: Dan Bennett, Property and Development Project Manager
Contact Details: dan.bennett@southsomerset.gov.uk or 07971 111889

Purpose of the Report

1. The report provides a general progress update on the Chard Regeneration Scheme, specifically:
 - i) An overview of the impact of Covid-19 on the project
 - ii) A progress update on the construction works
 - iii) An update on the HAZ (High Streets) project

Recommendation

That Members note the contents of the report.

Background

2. Following detailed design, SSDC applied in May 2019 for Planning Consent and Listed Building Consent to build a new Leisure Centre, Library & Community Hub and public realm improvements at the Boden Mill (ACI site) in Chard. The proposal requires the removal of buildings associated with the factory site but the retention of the Mill, Building 11, the listed arch and some adjoining buildings to the south of the arch. The planning application was heard by both SSDC's Area West Committee and then Regulation Committee on 3 September 2019 where it received approval.

Covid-19 Overview

3. The site operations are continuing with Covid precautions in place, and productivity levels are at around 95% of pre Covid expectations.
4. The nature of the works on site are such that there are relatively few operatives in close proximity and extensive use of mechanised equipment for erecting the steel frame and floor planks.
5. As the building work progresses there will be a greater requirement for close proximity working and this may lead to certain operations taking longer than expected, giving a drop in productivity.

6. Supply chain delays are being well managed by the main contractor and currently there are no significant delays on essential supplies.
7. There are however national shortages of some essential supplies, caused by the industry shutdown period earlier this year. Base coat plaster is in short supply nationally and many builder's merchants are quoting October deliveries for orders placed in August. The main contractor will provide updates on this situation as the project progresses.
8. Overall, the works are progressing well, but they remain behind schedule due to the Covid shutdown. The effect of the winter period and a potential resurgence of Covid-19 with the cold weather could have further implications for the construction works. Members will be kept updated on the situation as the works progress.

Progress Update

9. Following the completion of foundation piling in late July the steel frame followed on immediately. The majority of the steel frame is now in place to the pool hall and gym areas.
10. Concrete first floors were installed in the gym areas in early August. Local residents were kept informed of the works as the concrete topping works extended into the evenings. No complaints were received and the floors and stairs are now in place.
11. The timber beams supporting the roof are now in place over the pool hall. The roof deck and covering will be installed over the pool area in the next couple of weeks.
12. The excavation of the swimming pool is now underway and will be completed at the same time as the roof. The roof over this area is critical as it allows the pool specialists to get the shell of the pool underway without exposure to the weather.
13. The frame of the building is now visible on the local skyline and local people can see that works are progressing. This sets a positive note on the Covid recovery front as local people are now working on the site and the contractors are spending money within the local economy.

Local Impact

14. The frame of the building is now visible on the local skyline and local people can see that works are progressing.
15. This sets a positive note on the Covid recovery front as a number of local people are now working on the site.
16. The contractors are keeping a log of local expenditure so that the value of the benefit to the local economy can be measured. This will include the following:

- Sub-contractors staying in local accommodation
- Meals and food taken locally
- Materials sourced from local suppliers
- Local labour employed on the site

Members will be provided with an update on local expenditure in due course.

Update photo – taken just before the pool hall roof beams were installed, but showing the concrete first floor and stairs.



HAZ Project

17. The Chard High Street Heritage Action Zone project is part of a nationwide initiative designed to secure lasting improvements to our historic high streets for the communities who use them. It is funded by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and run by Historic England.
18. South Somerset District Council applied for a grant of £1m for the project of which they are expected to match fund. The programme will deliver improvements to the high street through three complementary strands: (a) undertaking physical improvement works to town centre buildings and within the public realm; (b) facilitating cultural activities and events celebrating the history of the high street and its importance to local communities over the generations and, crucially, (c) giving

local communities a key role in deciding what works they want to see happening on their high street and what sort of place they want it to be.

19. Historic England recently confirmed that SSDC would receive the full £1m applied for. Following a successful recruitment process, Anna Matthews will be taking the role of project manager and joins SSDC on the 5th October 2020. The regeneration team are continuing to progress the programme and are engaging with building owners eligible for a grant in preparation for the grant scheme opening.
20. The public realm projects are now at RIBA3 stage designs. The ITT for RIBA4 detailed designs was published in June 2020. Eight bids were received and the contract has been awarded to a design team consisting of Hydrock, LHC and Coreus. RIBA4 designs are expected to be completed by early 2021 with construction commencing in summer 2021.
21. Due to Covid-19, the cultural programme strand of the HAZ project has been put on hold.

Next Steps

22. Whilst phase one construction is ongoing, the project team will be preparing a planning application for phase 2 and implementing some of the softer interventions as part of the wider Chard Regeneration Scheme programme. This includes support to attract artisan / independent retailers to the town, support to develop the growth of local food producers and food businesses, and undertaking a market health check in partnership with the Town Council.

Council Plan Implications

23. The Chard Regeneration Scheme is a specific objective of the Council Plan and a priority project for 2019/20.

Carbon Emissions and Climate Change Implications

24. None arising from this report

Equality and Diversity Implications

25. None arising from this report

Agenda Item 11

Area West Committee Forward Plan

Director: Kirsty Larkins, Strategy and Commissioning
Agenda Co-ordinator: Jo Morris, Case Officer (Strategy and Commissioning)
Contact Details: jo.morris@southsomerset.gov.uk or 01935 462055

Purpose of the Report

This report informs members of the proposed Area West Committee Forward Plan.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:-

- (1) comment upon and note the proposed Area West Committee Forward Plan as attached.
- (2) identify priorities for further reports to be added to the Area West Committee Forward Plan.

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
October 2020	Ilminster Forum	Cllr. Val Keitch
October 2020	Meeting House Arts Centre, Ilminster	Cllr. Val Keitch
December 2020	Chard Regeneration Scheme – quarterly update reports	Dan Bennett, Property and Development Project Manager
Quarterly	Area Chapter Update	Tim Cook, Locality Team Manager
<i>TBC</i>	<i>Highways Update</i>	<i>Highway Authority</i>
<i>TBC</i>	<i>Historic Buildings at Risk</i>	<i>TBC</i>
<i>TBC</i>	<i>Update on CIL contributions</i>	<i>TBC</i>

Agenda Item 12

Planning Appeals

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

Purpose of the Report

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

Recommendation

That the report be noted.

Background

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

Report Detail

Appeals Allowed

19/02023/FUL - Erection of a new three bedroom detached bungalow and double garage
Hillside, Tower Lane, Buckland St Mary, Chard, TA20 3TQ
(Officer delegated decision)

Background Papers – Appeal decision notice attached.

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 August 2020

by Nick Davies BSc(Hons) BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 02 September 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/R3325/W/20/3250918

Hillside, Tower Lane, Buckland St Mary, Chard TA20 3TQ

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr & Mrs R Harkness against the decision of South Somerset District Council.
 - The application Ref 19/02023/FUL, dated 18 July 2019, was refused by notice dated 6 November 2019.
 - The development proposed is erection of a new three bedroom detached bungalow and double garage.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for erection of a new three bedroom detached bungalow and double garage at Hillside, Tower Lane, Buckland St Mary, Chard TA20 3TQ in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 19/02023/FUL, dated 18 July 2019, and the plans submitted with it, subject to the conditions in the attached schedule.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are:
 - a) Whether the site is suitable for a dwelling, bearing in mind the settlement policies of the development plan and the accessibility of the site to local services; and,
 - b) The effect of the development on the landscape character of the area, including the Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (the AONB)

Reasons

Settlement policies and accessibility of services

3. The Council's settlement strategy is set out in Policy SS1 of the South Somerset Local Plan (2006 – 2028) (the Local Plan), which was adopted in 2015. It is based on a hierarchy of settlements, identified because of their current and potential role and function. At the top of the hierarchy, Yeovil is a Strategically Significant Town, and the prime focus for development. In Market Towns, provision will be made for housing, employment, shopping and other services that increase their self-containment and enhance their roles as service centres. Lower in the hierarchy, Rural Centres provide for development that meets local housing need, extends local services, and supports economic

activity of an appropriate scale. All other settlements are considered to be within open countryside and are identified as Rural Settlements, where national countryside protection policies apply. Buckland St Mary falls within this category, at the bottom of the hierarchy.

4. Policy SS2 of the Local Plan places strict control over development in Rural Settlements. Residential proposals are limited to those that meet identified housing need, particularly for affordable housing. The policy also requires development to be commensurate with the scale and character of the settlement, increase its sustainability, and have the support of the local community. Furthermore, proposals for housing development should only be permitted in Rural Settlements that have access to two or more of the key services that are listed at Paragraph 5.39 of the supporting text. Buckland St Mary meets this requirement, as it has a primary school and church in the village centre, and a village hall and public house within its dispersed hinterland. Consequently, new housing in the village, of an appropriate type, scale and character, would accord with the overall settlement strategy.
5. The proposal is for a single dwelling, built of natural stone and render, with a slate roof. The scale, design and materials would be appropriate for this rural setting, and would be in keeping with the existing houses on either side. Although the house would not be affordable, it would allow the appellants to downsize to a smaller property, more suitable to their age and disabilities. Paragraph 5.44 of the Local Plan identifies the provision of small bungalows to allow elderly local householders to move to, and remain in the village, as a particular type of housing that would be acceptable in Rural Settlements. Whilst the proposal is not for a small bungalow, it would have a self-contained ground floor, so would allow the existing residents the opportunity to remain in the locality. The house would, therefore, be of an appropriate type, scale and character.
6. To comply with Policy SS2, however, the development should be in the Rural Settlement. The main built-up part of Buckland St Mary is centred around the church, with linear development extending on either side of the lane to the south. The appeal site lies some 300 metres to the east of The Old Rectory, which marks the edge of the main village core. Apart from the adjacent dwelling, Hill Cottage, there is no other residential development along the road between The Old Rectory and the public house to the east; a distance of almost a kilometre. There is open agricultural land and woodland to either side of the road. Consequently, the two houses appear as an isolated pair of dwellings in the open countryside, rather than as part of the village. Visually, therefore, they do not lie within the settlement.
7. However, Buckland St Mary is a dispersed settlement, with small clusters of buildings in the surrounding area. The village hall and public house also lie outside the historic core. As Rural Settlements are considered to be part of the open countryside, there is no defined settlement boundary. Therefore, it is a matter of judgement whether the appeal site lies within the village. This judgement should include a consideration of the accessibility of the site to the key services that form part of the community.
8. The site lies approximately 560 metres, by road, from the church, school and bus stops in the core of the village. The village hall is within 300 metres, and the pub is about 700 metres, by road, to the east. All of these services are

within the 10 minutes' (up to about 800 metres) walking distance referred to in Manual for Streets¹, that typically characterises a walkable neighbourhood. The site is as close to the church, school and bus stops as some of the dwellings at the southern end of the linear extension of the village, and is closer to the village hall than any dwelling in the main settlement. The development would not, therefore, comprise an isolated home in the countryside, as referred to by paragraph 79 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework).

9. Occupants of the house would have to walk on roads without lighting and footways to access these services. However, the roads are wide enough to allow cars to safely pass pedestrians, and traffic is infrequent and slow-moving, so is unlikely to deter the use of sustainable transport options for these short journeys. As there are no footways and cycleways in the village, all residents must walk on roads to access the services, and there is no evidence to suggest that this is inherently hazardous. Occupants of the dwelling would, therefore, have reasonable access to key services, and would form part of the community that uses and supports those services. In this regard the dwelling could be considered to be part of the Rural Settlement.
10. To conclude on this issue, Buckland St Mary is a Rural Settlement which has sufficient key services to allow for housing development as part of the overall settlement strategy. The house would meet an identified need, and would be of an appropriate scale and character to meet these specific criteria of Policy SS2. Therefore, the development would broadly accord with the settlement policies of the development plan. Furthermore, occupants of the house would have reasonable access to the services in the settlement, so, in these respects, the site is suitable for a dwelling. However, its physical detachment from the main built-up part of the village, and its open countryside surroundings, leads me to conclude that the house could not reasonably be described as being within the Rural Settlement. There would, therefore, be conflict with Policies SS1 and SS2, insofar as they place a strict control over development in the countryside.

Landscape character

11. The appeal site lies in attractive open countryside, and within the AONB. Paragraph 170 of the Framework advises that planning decisions should contribute to, and enhance, the natural and local environment by recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside. Paragraph 172 says great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in AONBs, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues.
12. The landscape surrounding the site comprises rolling agricultural fields, with areas of woodland, interspersed with traditional villages and small clusters of buildings. Its openness and topography give it high scenic value. The appeal site, however, is a domesticated garden containing a greenhouse and fruit cages. It is substantially enclosed from the surrounding countryside by a hedgebank and trees to the south; woodland to the north; and the high fences that separate it from the two substantial houses and their gardens to either side. It therefore does not make a particularly positive contribution to the natural local environment, or the scenic beauty of the AONB.

¹

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/341513/pdfmanforstreets.pdf

13. In view of the site's largely enclosed nature, the visual impact of the dwelling would only be readily experienced from a relatively short stretch of the road passing the site. When approaching, from the east or west, it would be seen in the context of the two houses to either side. Both are larger, and closer to the road, and therefore more visually dominant, so it would have little additional impact on the rural character of the area. From the road frontage, there would be a minor loss of views through the site, to the open countryside beyond. However, this view is already experienced across a residential garden, framed by two houses, and limited by the bank on the southern side of the appeal site. Therefore, even from these localised viewpoints there would be little harm to the rural character of the area.
14. The development would consolidate this small cluster of buildings in the AONB. However, significant levels of landscaping would remain between the dwellings, so the group would not appear as a significant block of built development in the landscape. In any event, the group can only be seen together in their wider countryside setting from very distant viewpoints to the south, so there would be no material harm to the scenic beauty of the AONB. The proposal would therefore accord with Policy EQ2 of the Local Plan, which seeks, amongst other things, to conserve and enhance the landscape character of the area.

Planning Balance

15. The Council accepts that it cannot currently demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites. Paragraph 11 of the Framework states that, where the policies that are most important for determining the application are out of date, permission should be granted, unless:
- i. the application of policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development; or
 - ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole.
16. I have concluded that there would be no harm to the scenic beauty of the AONB. No other areas or assets of particular importance would be affected by the development. It is therefore necessary to assess whether the adverse impacts of the development would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.
17. I have found some conflict with Policies SS1 and SS2 of the Local Plan, but only insofar as they act to restrict housing development. I have not found any conflict with the aims of the Framework to recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside; to avoid isolated homes in the countryside; or to promote sustainable transport.
18. In terms of benefits, the development would deliver social benefit through the provision of an additional dwelling to address the shortfall in housing supply. The bungalow would also allow the existing occupants to remain in the locality. There would be economic benefits through employment during the construction phase, and through the future occupants' support for local services and businesses. In view of the small scale of the proposal, these benefits would be modest. Nevertheless, the adverse impacts, when assessed against the policies

in the Framework taken as a whole, would not significantly and demonstrably outweigh them. Therefore, the presumption in favour of sustainable development applies, and planning permission should be granted.

Conditions

19. In accordance with the legislation, I have imposed a condition limiting the period within which the development must commence. I have also included a condition specifying the relevant plans, as this provides certainty. The Council has submitted a schedule of suggested conditions to cover other matters. I have considered all the suggested conditions against the advice in the Planning Practice Guidance (the PPG). Where I have agreed that the conditions are necessary, I have altered some of them, in the interests of clarity and precision, to better reflect the guidance.
20. A condition requiring approval of external materials is necessary to ensure that the dwelling is sympathetic to its rural setting. I have imposed a condition to ensure that satisfactory off-street parking and turning is provided before occupation of the bungalow. A condition requiring provision of a charging point for electric vehicles is necessary to comply with Policy TA1 of the Local Plan.

Conclusion

21. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

Nick Davies

INSPECTOR

Schedule of Conditions

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
- 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: PLA01 – Site Location Plan; PLA02 – Site Survey; PLA03 – Proposed Site Plan; PLA04 – Proposed Floor Plans; PLA05 – Proposed Elevations; PLA06 – Garage Elevations; PLA08 – General Cross Sections.
- 3) Development shall not proceed above damp-proof course level, until details of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the buildings hereby permitted have been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
- 4) The bungalow hereby permitted shall not be occupied, until the parking and turning area shown on plan number PLA03 has been drained and surfaced, in accordance with details that shall first have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. This area shall thereafter be kept clear of obstruction at all times, and shall not be used other than for the parking and manoeuvring of vehicles in connection with the development hereby permitted.

- 5) The bungalow hereby permitted shall not be occupied, until an electric charging point (of a minimum 16 amps) for electric vehicles, has been provided adjacent to the parking area shown on plan number PLA03. The charging point shall thereafter be retained in working order.