



To: Members of Planning Committee

Councillors S J Pugsley (Chair), B Maitland-Walker (Vice Chair), I Aldridge, D Archer, G S Dowding, S Y Goss, A P Hadley, T Hall, B Heywood, I Jones, C Morgan, P H Murphy, J Parbrook, K H Turner, R Woods

Our Ref TB/TM

Your Ref

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Extension 01823 356573

Date 18 August 2015

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Dear Councillor

I hereby give you notice to attend the following meeting:

PLANNING COMMITTEE

Date: Thursday 27 August 2015

Time: 4.30 pm

Venue: Council Chamber, Council Offices, Williton

Please note that this meeting may be recorded. At the start of the meeting the Chairman will confirm if all or part of the meeting is being recorded.

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Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Bruce Lang".

BRUCE LANG
Proper Officer

PLANNING COMMITTEE

THURSDAY 27 August 2015 at 4.30pm
COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNCIL OFFICES, WILLITON

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence

2. Minutes

Draft Minutes of the Meeting of the 30 July 2015 - **To follow**

3. Declarations of Interest or Lobbying

To receive and record any declarations of interest or lobbying in respect of any matters included on the agenda for consideration at this meeting.

4. Public Participation

The Chairman/Administrator to advise the Committee of any items on which members of the public have requested to speak and advise those members of the public present of the details of the Council's public participation scheme.

For those members of the public wishing to speak at this meeting there are a few points you might like to note.

A three minute time limit applies to each speaker and you will be asked to speak after the officer has presented the report but before Councillors debate the issue. There will be no further opportunity for comment at a later stage. Where an application is involved it has been agreed that the applicant will be the last member of the public to be invited to speak. Your comments should be addressed to the Chairman and any ruling made by the Chair is not open to discussion. If a response is needed it will be given either orally at the meeting or a written reply made within five working days of the meeting.

5. Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Other Matters (Enforcement)

To consider the reports of the Planning Team on the plans deposited in accordance with the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and other matters - **COPY ATTACHED** (separate report). All recommendations take account of existing legislation (including the Human Rights Act) Government Circulars, Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Review, The West Somerset Local Plan, all current planning policy documents and Sustainability and Crime and Disorder issues.

Report No: Thirteen

Date: 18 August 2015

<u>Ref No.</u>	<u>Application/Report</u>
3/02/15/002	Construction of timber loading bay, new forestry tracks and the upgrading of existing forestry tracks at Land at Cording's Cleeve, Brompton Ralph.
3/37/15/006	Refurbishment of Watchet's Boat Museum, demolition of current wooden 'portacabin' cab office and a proposed extension creating a Visitors Centre and offices for Watchet Town Council, a new cab office and location of rope-making machine at Watchet Boat Museum, Harbour Roar, Watchet.

6. Exmoor National Park Matters - **Councillor to report**

7. **Delegated Decision List** - Please see attached

8. **Appeals Lodged**

Appeal against Hedgerow Retention Notice for 125m of hedgerow on land at Perry Farm, East Quantoxhead, TA4 4DZ

9. **Appeals Decided**

Proposed residential development of eight semi-detached dwellings (plots 23, 23A, 24, 24A, 25, 25A, 26 & 26A) in place of four approved detached dwellings and a block of nine flats rather than an approved block of eight flats (plots 5 to 12A) together with vehicular parking, access and associated infrastructure (amended scheme to planning permission 3/21/13/084) on land at Ellicombe Meadow, Minehead – Planning Appeal is dismissed.

Erection of external masonry staircase and two balconies at first floor level at Abbey Barn, Washford, TA23 ONS – Planning and Listed Building Appeals are dismissed.

RISK SCORING MATRIX

Report writers score risks in reports uses the scoring matrix below

Likelihood (Probability)	5	Almost Certain	Low (5)	Medium (10)	High (15)	Very High (20)	Very High (25)
	4	Likely	Low (4)	Medium (8)	Medium (12)	High (16)	Very High (20)
	3	Possible	Low (3)	Low (6)	Medium (9)	Medium (12)	High (15)
	2	Unlikely	Low (2)	Low (4)	Low (6)	Medium (8)	Medium (10)
	1	Rare	Low (1)	Low (2)	Low (3)	Low (4)	Low (5)
			1	2	3	4	5
			Negligible	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic
Impact (Consequences)							

Application No:	3/02/15/002
Parish	Brompton Ralph
Application Type	Full Planning Permission
Case Officer:	Russell Williams
Grid Ref	
Applicant	Mr W A C Theed
Proposal	Construction of timber loading bay, new forestry tracks and the upgrading of existing forestry tracks
Location	Land at Cording's Cleeve, Brompton Ralph
Reason for referral to Committee	Called in and agreed by the Chairman and Vice Chairman.

Risk Assessment

Description	Likelihood	Impact	Overall
Risk: Planning permission is refused for reason which could not be reasonable substantiated at appeal or approved for reasons which are not reasonable	2	3	6
Mitigation: Clear advice from Planning Officers and Legal advisor during the Committee meeting	1	3	3

The scoring of the risks identified in the above table has been based on the scoring matrix. Each risk has been assessed and scored both before the mitigation measures have been actioned and after they have.

Site Location:

Land at Cording's Cleeve, Brompton Ralph

Description of development:

Construction of timber loading bay, new forestry tracks and the upgrading of existing forestry tracks

Consultations and Representations:

The Local Planning Authority has received the following representations:

Brompton Ralph Parish Council

A special Parish Council meeting was called to discuss the planning application on Friday 10th July 2015.

5 parish councillors and 8 villagers reviewed the planning details supplied by the Parish Clerk.

It was clear in the attached letter from Mr Theed's agent that had it not been for the location of Cording's Cleeve being adjacent to a classified road, a General Permitted Development Order would only have been necessary. Everybody present at the meeting understood that suitable access had to be made to enable clearance of

trees within Ashland Brake. However, the Parish Councillors and local villagers felt that a number material considerations should be made to ensure that the quiet and very small village of Brompton Ralph and its associated narrow single track lanes are not overloaded with large and very heavy vehicles during the time when hundreds of Tonnes of aggregate are delivered to the site to add new and upgrade existing forest tracks and to construct a large area loading bay, together with the issue of large timber vehicles removing cut down trees.

Access through the village to Cording's Cleeve and from the site to Forche's Cross is exceedingly narrow and has sharp bends and in many cases no passing-places. The Parish Council would like the Planning Department to offer the application for consideration to the Planning Committee and not to leave the decision solely to a delegated planning officer. The Parish Council feel that the Planning Committee should make a site visit, to understand how the issues the heavy haulage traffic would impact on the local community.

The planning application does not provide details of proposed timescales for this project to be completed upon approval of the application. Clearly, if heavy haulage vehicles were to be moving to and from the site for 3-4 months up to 24 hours a day, then the proposal would have even greater impact to the local community than if it was limited to 5 days a week and between 0800 and 1600 hrs.

The local parish council have only just got Highways to repair large potholes and to resurface the classified road from Forche's Cross to Brompton Ralph and fear that all that good work will be undone by damage from 30 tonne trucks moving across this area. Will Highways conduct a full photographic survey of the local classified road, before work begins to ensure that if damage is made from these vehicles, the contractor will be made liable for any repairs to restore the condition of the roads to an as found condition.

And finally, local villagers felt that the current access points to the site do not seem wide enough for the large haulage trucks, yet the planning application indicates that changes will not be needed to any hedgerow banks at all. It is felt that this matter would require review and assessment, again through assessment by way of a site visit. The two access points identified on the plans indicate that they are directly opposite access points to residential properties, Leigh's Cottages and Westcott Farm.

Highways Development Control

Observation to initial consultation 07 July 2015:

The application proposes to use/provide two accesses to the site one at the North East corner of the copse/site onto a private access track, the other to the South-East corner of the copse/site onto the road that links Brompton Ralph with Clatworthy. Both roads are very narrow lanes, generally around 2.5metres wide. Both are unrestricted speed limit but due to environment these have very limited traffic volumes with approximate speed of around 30mph.

A site visit showed that vegetation and hedgerows to either side of the access can easily restrict and hamper the required visibility splays. It will have to be conditioned that suitable visibility splays must be demonstrated, achieved and maintained. Due to the limited lane widths and speeds this could be reduced to 2.4m x 43m to each side of the access.

In addition, as the planning application includes access, even if this is by an existing access road, the applicant needs to ensure that the width of the drive is sufficient at the entrance points to allow for two vehicles to pass each other and eliminate any potential of vehicles stopped or queueing in the highway. In line with SCC Standing Advice the access must be consolidated or surfaced for at least the first 5m of its length, as measured by from the edge of the adjoining carriage way with suitable drainage to prevent the discharge of water from private land onto the adopted highway.

Further investigation and clarification is needed to show that the local highways, the proposed site accesses, and the timber loading area can accommodate the required HGV movements and suitable turning facilities.

As these are very minor road heavy traffic does not use these roads and concern is expressed about the amount of damage this may cause to the highway.

There are no passing places over a significant length which could be a considerable problem on this steep road for both parties. Consideration should be given to the provision of passing places as the owner appears to have a very long highway frontage.

A traffic management plan for the removal of the timber would also help to ensure that the best route is taken to and from the site.

Observation to re-consultation following receipt of additional information, 10th August 2015:

The applicant has provided additional information and correspondence on the above application in order to address earlier concerns raised by the highways team and some local residents.

To clarify some points;

- The application is only looking to use one access to the site in the south west of the site (following some clumsy typos in past comments). This access is an existing opening in the current bank and dense hedgerow directly onto the road that links Brompton Ralph with Forche's Cross. The proposals will see this opening widened in order to ensure appropriate vehicle access into the site.
- This road is a very narrow single lane road with no real passing facilities, and whilst this is a derestricted road the nature and environment sees realistic speeds of around 30-40mph. Due to the limited lane widths and speeds the visibility requirements for this site can be reduced to 2.4m x 43m to each side of the access (demonstrated in Drawing 3. Proposed Sight Line Improvements).
- As stated this access road and some of the surrounding highways are quite

narrow restricted lanes with some signposted as being unsuitable for HGV use. It should be highlighted that where HGV restrictions apply these would not include HGV's with a legitimate reason to access within a restricted area. As the only route to and from the site HGV access is both recognized and legal.

- This current application is not proposing any new use for the site. The submitted documentation specifies that the site has been a managed forestry area for the past 30-40 years with ongoing felling and removal of the trees in the area. The application only proposes improved access to and within the site in order to ease and mitigate the impact onto the local highway adjacent the site.

It has been stated in current and ongoing correspondence that the application does not currently provide a Construction Management Plan (this will detail the vehicle impact of the required track maintenance and/or construction, the site access proposals, and detailed information of the proposed trip generations once operational). It is recommended that this be conditioned as part of any planning permission in order for the Local Planning Authority, County Council Highways Team, and Local Residents to be fully informed of any potential impacts and their levels and timings, along with any proposed mitigation measures in order to try and limit these as much as possible.

Due to the nature of the road outside the site there has been discussion of passing place provision across the frontage of the site in order to attempt to help mitigate any issues of blockages of HGVs approaching or leaving the site. This is quite a small frontage so mitigation could be quite minimal and as vehicles will be approaching from the west.

I have no other objections to the proposed works which would not be considered to pose any highway safety concerns as either overly distracting or obstructive to pedestrian or vehicle movements.

No objection and conditions recommended for access, gates, gradient, surface water drainage, provision of parking and turning, visibility splay

Public Consultation

11 letters of OBJECTION received from 6 households raising the following planning related comments:

- Access to B3224 and B3227 would be via Battins Knapp; The road is an average of 12ft wide with narrow flat grass verges along both sides for most of its length allowing local traffic to pass safely but slowly; there are also frequent passing places. The road is clearly signed not suitable for heavy goods vehicles;
- Road from Brompton Ralph to Cording's Cleeve is 10ft wide which prohibits cars to pass without someone reversing to a field gate; there are no passing places from Cording's Cleeve to Forches Cross; any vehicle approaching that meets a large lorry will need to reverse for possibly long distances around quite sharp, blind bends; this is a major road safety issue;
- Presume a warning sign is in place for good reason;

- I object to this application on the grounds that the lane leading from Forches Cross to the proposed loading bay at Cording's Cleeve in Brompton Ralph is far too narrow, has high banks either side and is therefore without proper passing places;
- The lane also has a very sharp blind bend - and all told, should the application go ahead, it would prove to be very dangerous and is without doubt an accident waiting to happen to some unsuspected person, who will be forced to reverse back down the lane towards Forches Cross negotiating the said sharp blind bend;
- The waste collection vehicles would also have a problem and " traffic management" would make a bad situation much worse! There is a notice into Battins Knap from the 3224 {the road leading towards Forches Cross} which states that the road is not suitable for HGV's. It must therefore be even more unsuitable for the lane in question;
- The lane is in constant use by local people, not only from the village of Brompton Ralph, but also by people from the neighbouring village of Clatworthy who frequent Brompton Ralph village shop and post office. It is used on a daily basis by delivery vans, the postman etc, school bus and no doubt many others. IF there were a life threatening situation, say an ambulance was needed, or there was a fire, and the lane was busy with aggregate or timber lorries; how would the emergency services get by? Who would have to reverse?? It's bad enough as it is with the lane being that narrow, let alone with aggregate or timber lorries blocking it;
- The lane has recently been resurfaced and if this application were to go ahead, this would end up having been a total waste of council tax payer's money, as if this application were to go ahead, the lane would soon be carved up again and dangerous potholes created;
- The amount of time aggregate lorries would have to access the lane in order to deliver endless amounts of crushed concrete, stone and hardcore in order for the resurfacing and the making of new tracks coupled with the levelling of very steep land to create a hardstanding for the loading bay, would be immense and unimaginable. Just to create a hardstanding would take many tons of hardcore and we haven't yet taken the timber lorries into consideration;
- The application does not go into detail as to the sizes and weights of the aggregate and timber lorries, and when this question was asked, the gentleman at Acorn didn't know.
- One would have a thought that the agent at least would have the answer, or better still, that it had been properly researched and mentioned in the application they put forward on behalf of their client Mr Theed;
- Can this work not be undertaken via entrance at the NE corner of the forest where there is a hardstanding already and which is closer to the main B3224 main road. I agree with everyone else who has objected;
- The proposal is therefore very likely to have many unacceptable impacts on the local highway network and will give rise to adverse highway and visual impacts;
- Having read the application, I acknowledge that the contractor vehicles need a route in/ out. My concern centres on the size of road from Forches Cross to the loading bay, along a narrow country lane which has already been subject to severe road damage at Forches Cross previously by logging vehicles using the cross roads as a turn around point;
- The road has been repaired several times and is an indicator of more potential

damage if used as the main route for heavy and regular traffic. How will the vehicles turn into the loading bay? Assuming they will exit towards Forches Cross then either they reverse in to the bay or will they be able to turn in and reverse out. Either way, the turning action will cause road damage to the verges, already evidenced at Forches Cross, and disrupt traffic flow accessing the village and surrounding farms/fields;

- The lane is how wide? Has it been measured? Is there room for HGVs to manoeuvre from a narrow lane into the proposed bay? Without a major widening and upgrade of the lane the access route will create considerable damage and delay for all local users wishing to use shop and Post Office facilities in Brompton Ralph;
- The weight of these lorries damages the lane surface. This year we have seen many logging lorries turning at the crossroads where they have broken large sections of the road margins. The rear wheels on the lorry trailers appear to have no independent steering which means the tyres drag the road surface as they turn to drive up the hill away from Forches Cross. The highway authorities made three repairs in two months to the crossroads, each time the repair was seriously damaged by the action of the lorry tyres. The damage made it difficult for driving, cycling and walking. To what specifications does the applicant propose to use?
- The lane from Forches Cross, where I live, is narrow without vehicular passing places except for farm entrances. Large lorries turning in and out of the proposed site will block the road preventing access by local cars driving to or from the only local shop for miles. Also there will be a danger to the many horse riders that use the lane. What does the applicant propose to do to minimise damage to the lane and obstruction to local vehicles?
- During winter the lane to the proposed site is already subject to heavy wear and tear from farm and agricultural vehicles. Logging lorries will exacerbate the damage to surface and road edges alike. Following heavy rain there is huge runoff from fields along the route and the lorries will add to the organic matter that litters the road. What does the applicant propose to do to minimise this problem? These are my objections to the application in its current form;
- As the entrance to the proposed site is almost directly opposite our driveway entrance, we will probably be most affected by the logging activities. I have measured the present forest opening to be approx. 10 metres from bank to bank. I do not know whether this is large enough to allow the lorries to manoeuvre in and out - I guess it will depend on the size of lorry.
- We assume the proposal to not widen the entrance and or damage the banks will be strictly adhered to by the contractors. I have taken advice on my position should the lorries encroach or damage our drive entrance and am advised it would be actionable;
- I would ask that your Planning Dept keep the contractors to their word that no widening of the entrance will be made;
- I will also be asking the contractors for their assurance that our driveway entrance will not be damaged or used for turning in any way whatsoever;
- My main objection is that the lane the contractors propose to use is not suitable for such heavy traffic. It has high sided hedges, sharpish corners and is VERY narrow with few passing places. It is in frequent use by local traffic;
- I would like to mirror the opinions already listed and object on the grounds that the road is unsuitable for large numbers of heavy goods vehicles;
- I would like to know the estimated number of vehicle movements projected for

the project? There are no passing places at present and if vehicles meet then there will be highly likely that there will be vehicles (including agricultural traffic) reversing around blind corners causing great safety risks to all road users;

- The road has also very recently been resurfaced and with no fixed curb stones installed the damage caused by the HGV's will cause irreversible damage to the road that will in time require its complete reconstruction at great expense;
- This application lacks detail in terms of vehicle sizes and weights, working hours and estimates of the quantity of timber to be removed and over what period of time.
- Using what detail there is and Forestry Commission specifications for tracks I estimate that it will take at least two hundred 20 ton loads of aggregate to construct the loading area and tracks. This assumes relatively level land and the woods in question have steep slopes especially just off the proposed loading area and so the load count is likely to be considerably more. These loads added to the logging lorries will cause huge damage to the road surface which has only recently been laid;
- When I spoke to the contractors laying the new surface before this application appeared he estimated it would last about six months with the currently expected traffic loads;
- Our property which is situated on a sharp bend on the lane in question takes the water from the road drainage system and in the past we have had considerable damage caused by surface water run off;
- We have recently spent a lot of money having new drainage pipes installed to safely route the road drainage water clear of our property but with the number of lorries involved, the verges will get damaged and the drains will get blocked with debris; Once the drains are blocked the water will again run off onto our property and I want to know who will pay for the damage caused;
- I feel that this application should go to Committee and that they should do a site visit in conjunction with a full Highways survey before they decide on it;
- I have long experience of using this narrow lane both as a driver and on horseback. There are very few places where even small vehicles can pass and nowhere where two lorries can pass, this will cause major problems and delays for local residents, visitors and delivery vehicles which are increasing in numbers as more and more local residents shop online;
- I would like to object on the grounds of road safety and share the views of my neighbours that the road is unsuitable for large trucks. I feel that it poses a great risk to all road users with the lack of passing places and the size of vehicle that will be needed to carry out the construction works;
- I object on the basis that the lane to be used is too narrow and fragile for the type of heavy lorries that logging contractors usually use. Such lorries could be a danger as the lane is in frequent use by local residents, can be dangerously icy in the winter when much care is needed, and probably most importantly is used daily by the school bus;
- As this forest is already being logged from a site further north without too many problems, why can't that be continued to be used?

Planning Policy Context

Section 38(6) of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that all development proposals are determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan for West Somerset consists of the Somerset Minerals Local Plan (adopted April 2004), Somerset Waste Core Strategy (adopted February 2013) and the West Somerset District Local Plan (adopted April 2006). West Somerset is in the process of developing the emerging Local Plan to 2032, which will replace the strategy and some of the policies within the adopted Local Plan. The emerging Local Plan has been submitted for examination and therefore the policies should be given weight as a material consideration

The following Policies are considered relevant to this application:

- BD/1 Local Distinctiveness
- BD/2 Design of New Development
- NH2 Landscape Character Protection
- OC1 Open Countryside development
- TW/1 Trees and Woodland Protection
- TW/2 Hedgerows
- W/5 Surface Water Run-Off
- T/3 Transport Requirements of New Development

National Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012) is a material planning consideration.

Local Policy

[West Somerset Local Plan \(2006\)](#) -

[West Somerset Local Plan to 2032 Published Draft Preferred Strategy \(June 2015\)](#)

Planning History

There is no relevant history for this site.

Proposal

The application seeks planning permission for the construction of a timber loading bay, widening of existing site forestry access, resurfacing of existing forestry tracks and laying of new, all on land at Cording's Cleeve, Brompton Ralph.

The proposed loading bay will require the raising and levelling of land adjacent to the highway and the laying of crushed stone hardstanding over an area measuring 105m x 15m. This area will be used for the temporary parking of lorries for the loading of felled timber for transportation. The area will sit behind an existing bank

and hedgerow that abuts the highway to the South.

The existing access into the wood, which enters onto a small clearing, will be widened to a 25m opening along the roadside frontage. Visibility splays of 2.4m x 43m will be provided across the site frontage.

With regard to forestry tracks, approximately 1,450 metres of existing track will be resurfaced and 835m of new track created within the confines of the forest. These tracks will be finished with crushed stone and hardcore as per the proposed loading bay.

Site Description

The application site is located within forest at Cording's Cleeve, which together with Egypt Copse and Ashland Brake, extends to 42 hectares of coniferous plantation. The forest is set on rolling hillside which contains a number of steep sided valleys.

The site is located approximately 400 metres West of Brompton Ralph; it is bound to the South and East/Northeast by public highways, which are generally of a single carriageway in width and bound by native species hedgerows, banks and trees. There are two vehicle access points into the forest, one to the Northeast boundary and one to the South. To the south, a cutting within the roadside hedge bank leads onto a small clearing laid with crushed stone; the area is generally level, with a sharp fall in the topography of the forest immediately to the North.

Planning Analysis

The application site is a mature coniferous forest located within a rural area, remote from large settlements within the District and some 400 metres outside the small rural village of Brompton Ralph. There has been a modest level of objection to the proposals by members of the public and the Parish Council also raised similar concerns.

As set out within the application, the undertaking of forestry operations, in terms of felling trees and transporting the timber off site, has been ongoing for a number of years as part of the applicants wider woodland management scheme.

Elements of the proposed development would usually be permitted development under Part 6 Class E of the GPDO 2015. The resurfacing of existing tracks and laying of new, is permitted development where the works are in excess of 25 metres from the adopted highway. Notwithstanding, planning permission is required for the proposed loading bay, alterations to the access and the laying of some tracks as proposed.

With the above in mind, the pertinent issues to consider are the impact of the proposed development upon the character and appearance of the landscape and surrounding area together with accessibility of the site and highway safety.

Character and Appearance of the Area

Retained Local Plan Policy LC/3 states that development outside settlement limits will need to pay particular attention to the protection of the scenic quality and distinctive local character of the landscape. If development does not do this then it will not be permitted. Similarly, Policy TW/1 seeks to protect woodland areas of significant landscape, wildlife or amenity value.

The main visual impact of the proposed development will arise from the proposed timber storage and loading bay, together with the widening of the existing access. The proposed access tracks and resurfacing work will all be sited well within the forest, out of public view and the impact upon the character of the area is considered to be very limited as a result.

The proposed loading area will be large and partially visible from the public highway through the access. It will also require the felling of trees to create the clearing and this will open the area up visually. It is important to note that the affected trees can be felled as part of the wider forestry operation and therefore the impact of clearing work needs to be carefully considered and in reality can carry only limited weight. Notwithstanding the impact of clearance works, the roadside bank and hedgerow will provide some screening for the loading area. Within the street scene, the loading area will have an adverse impact upon the character of the rural street scene, however its wider visual impact will be much more limited by the topography of the landscape and wider screening provided by the forest.

With regard to the site access, it is now proposed to widen the existing opening within the bank and hedgerow by approximately ten metres, providing a 25 metre wide splayed entrance at the roadside edge with an access radius of 12 metres (approx). The bank and hedgerow to be removed is less significant than other, more established and better maintained sections along the highway, being low in level, presumably in order to provide suitable visibility across the access. The increased width of the access will increase the visual impact of the loading area along a short stretch of the highway but in itself the widened access is not considered to significantly harm the character or appearance of the area.

Accessibility and Highway Safety

Retained Local Plan Policy T/3 sets out the transport requirements of new development within the District. This is backed up by guidance contained within Section 4 of the National Planning Policy Framework. Retained Policy T/3 requires design to minimise environmental impacts whilst reducing the risk of accidents. Para 32 of the NPPF makes it clear that development should only be refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe.

The Highway Authority have been consulted on the proposed development and originally raised an objection, due to a lack of information and perceived impact upon the highway network and its users. The majority if not all objections received from the local community have raised highway safety implications of the development as reasons to refused planning permission. These concerns have also been backed up by the response of the Parish Council.

It is accepted that the road between Brompton Ralph and Forches Cross is limited in width, poorly aligned in places, has limited passing points and is subject to the national speed limit.

Notwithstanding, it is important to accept that logging vehicle movements already occur along this route and irrespective of the outcome of this application, they could be intensified through further logging activities within the forest; this intensification would be uncontrolled and outside the remit of planning. The forest has been managed for a number of decades and the proposed development should benefit the free flow of vehicles along the highway, by provided parking and loading bays clear of the highway; such a facility is not available at present

The proposed development will not intensify the number or frequency of vehicle movements to and from the site. Extraction will continue to take place over two to three month periods every three to five years as required.

This is a matter acknowledged by the Highway Authority who, following the submission of further details and a revised access to the site, removed their original objection to the proposals, subject to a number of conditions being applied to the granted of planning permission, should it be forthcoming.

Taking the above matters into consideration, it would be unreasonable to resist the proposed development on highway safety and transport grounds, especially given the lack of an objection from the Highway Authority. The proposed development will provide space clear of the highway for the loading of felled timber and is best located across the forest to provide an access route that will, at most times, avoid the movement of large vehicles through the village of Brompton Ralph.

Conclusions

The proposals will provide significant benefit to the ongoing forestry operations and woodland management scheme at Cording's Cleeve, providing safe and convenient space clear of the highway for the stacking and loading of felled timber for off-site distribution. The widened access and loading area will be screened within the wider landscape and the only impact will be locally along a short stretch of highway, where existing bank and hedgerow will provide some screening. Overall the impact of the proposals upon visual amenity and the character and appearance of the area are acceptable.

The proposals will remove any necessity for the loading of logging trucks that may otherwise park along the public highway thereby reducing potential conflict in movements. A transport management plan has been suggested, albeit not by the Highway Authority, however given the existence of vehicle movements and loading already and the view that there will be no significant intensification in operations, such is not considered to be necessary in this instance. It is unlikely that the proposals will result in a significant intensification in vehicle movements associated with the forestry operation and, therefore, the impact of the development upon highway safety is considered to be acceptable.

Overall, the benefits of the scheme are considered to outweigh the limited harm identified above and it is therefore recommended that planning permission be granted, subject to conditions.

Environmental Impact Assessment

This development does not fall within the scope of the Town & Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2015 and so Environmental Impact Assessment is not required.

Conclusion and Recommendation

It is considered that the proposal, is acceptable and it is recommended that planning permission be granted.

Planning Permission is subject to the following conditions:

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: As required by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

- 2 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved drawings: Drawing Numbers:

(A2) DrNo 1r1 Location Plan, Layout Plan and Cross Section

(A3) DrNo 3 Proposed Sightline Improvements

(A1) DrNo 1 Existing and Proposed Tracks

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

- 3 A recessed entrance 12 metres wide shall be constructed 5 metres back from the carriageway edge and its sides shall be splayed at an angle of 45 degrees towards the carriageway edge. The area between the entrance and the edge of carriageway shall be properly consolidated and surfaced (not loose stone or gravel) and drained so not to discharge surface water onto the highway. Once constructed the access shall thereafter be maintained in that condition at all times.

Reason: To ensure suitable access to the site is provided and retained, in the interests of highway safety, having regard to the provisions of Policy T/3 of the West Somerset District Local Plan (2006).

- 4 There shall be no obstruction to visibility greater than 900mm mm above the adjoining carriageway level within the visibility splays shown on approved DrNo 1r1. Such visibility shall be provided prior to the loading bay hereby permitted is

first brought into use and shall thereafter be retained in the approved form at all times.

Reason: To ensure suitable visibility is provided and retained at the site access, in the interests of highway safety, having regard to the provisions of Policy T/3 of the West Somerset District Local Plan (2006).

- 5 The access, timber storage and loading areas shall be hard surfaced before being brought into use. They shall be made of porous material, in accordance with the approved details or alternatively provision shall be made to direct run-off water from the hard surface to a permeable or porous area or surface clear of the highway.

Reason: To prevent the discharge of additional surface water onto the highway, in the interests of highway safety having regard to the provisions of Saved Policy T/3 of the West Somerset District Local Plan (2006).

- 6 Any gates erected at the access to the site shall be erected so that they only open into the site and shall be set back a minimum of 5 metres from the edge of the adjacent carriageway.

Reason: To ensure vehicles entering the site can fully clear the highway to ensure that the free flow of traffic is retained, in the interests of highway safety, having regard to the provisions of Policy T/3 of the West Somerset District Local Plan (2006).

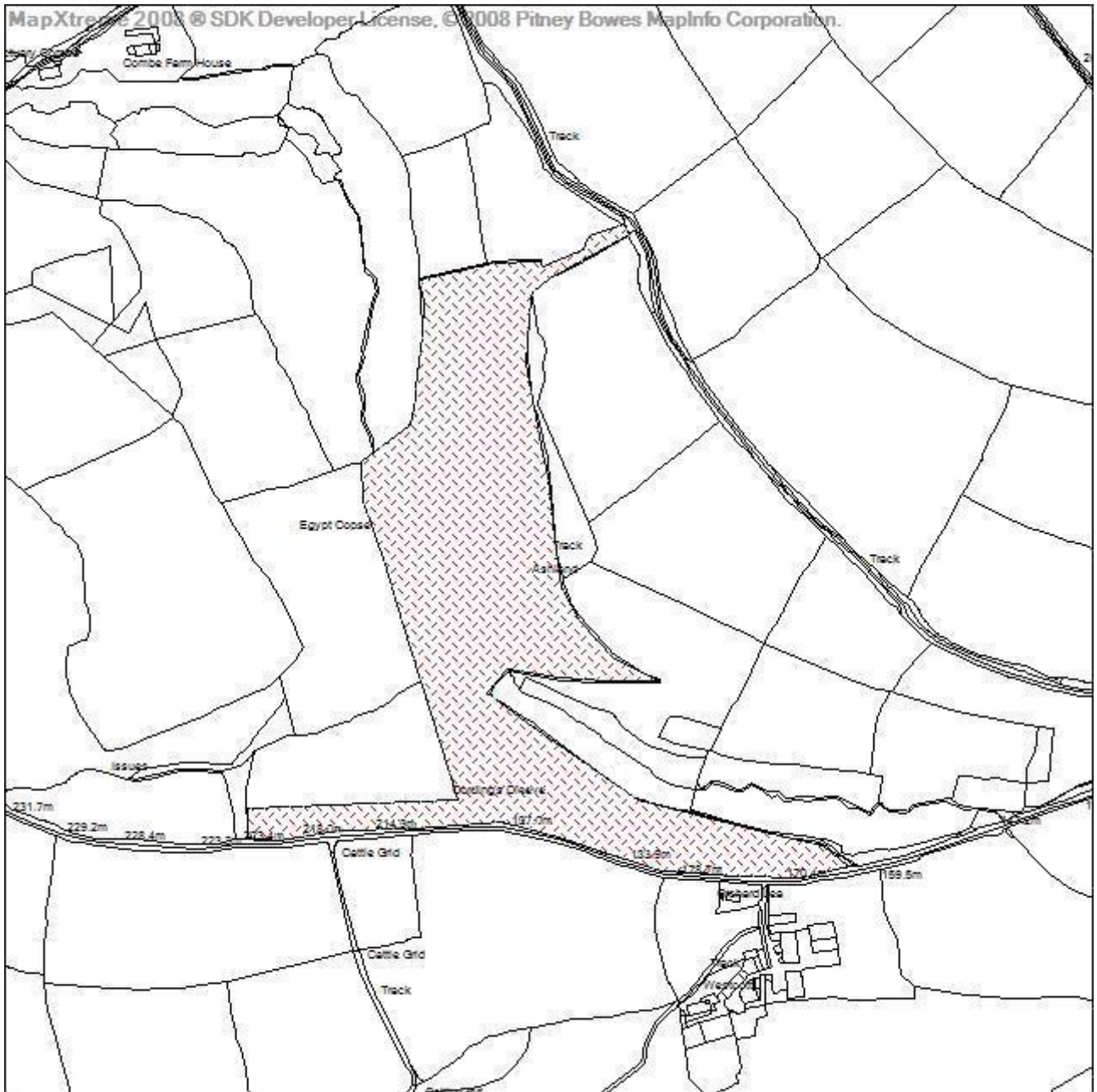
- 7 The gradient of the proposed access shall not be steeper than 1 in 10 and once constructed shall be maintained in that condition at all times

Reason: In the interests of highway safety having regard to the provisions of Saved Policy T/3 of the West Somerset District Local Plan (2006).

Notes

1 STATEMENT OF POSITIVE WORKING

In determining this application the Local Planning Authority considers it has complied with the requirements of paragraphs 186 and 187 of the National Planning Policy Framework. Although the applicant did not seek to enter into pre-application discussions/correspondence with the Local Planning Authority, during the consideration of the application concerns were raised by a statutory consultee / neighbour in respect of highway safety. The Local Planning Authority contacted the applicant and sought amendments to the scheme to address this issue/concern and amended plans were submitted. For the reasons given above and expanded upon in the planning officer's report, the application, in its revised form, was considered acceptable and planning permission was granted.



Application No 3/02/15/002
 Construction of timber loading
 bay, new forestry tracks and the
 upgrading of existing forestry
 tracks
 Land at Cording's Cleeve,
 Brompton Ralph
 1 July 2015
 Planning Manager
 West Somerset Council
 West Somerset House
 Killick Way
 Williton TA4 4QA
 West Somerset Council
 Licence Number: 100023932



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 Easting: 307725 Northing: 131968 Scale: 1:5000

Application No:	3/37/15/006
Parish	Watchet
Application Type	Full Planning Permission
Case Officer:	Bryn Kitching
Grid Ref	Easting: 307146 Northing: 143224
Applicant	Ms Kelly Onion Collective and Watchet Town Council
Proposal	Refurbishment of Watchet's Boat Museum, demolition of current wooden 'portacabin' cab office and a proposed extension creating a Visitors Centre and offices for Watchet Town Council, a new cab office and location of rope-making machine.
Location	Watchet Boat Museum, Harbour Road, Watchet, TA23 0AQ
Reason for referral to Committee	The application is on Council Owned Land

Risk Assessment

Description	Likelihood	Impact	Overall
Risk: Planning permission is refused for reason which could not be reasonable substantiated at appeal or approved for reasons which are not reasonable	2	3	6
Mitigation: Clear advice from Planning Officers and Legal advisor during the Committee meeting	1	3	3

The scoring of the risks identified in the above table has been based on the scoring matrix. Each risk has been assessed and scored both before the mitigation measurers have been actioned and after they have.

Site Location:

Watchet Boat Museum, Harbour Road, Watchet, TA23 0AQ

Description of development:

Refurbishment of Watchet's Boat Museum, demolition of current wooden 'portacabin' cab office and a proposed extension creating a Visitors Centre and offices for Watchet Town Council, a new cab office and location of rope-making machine.

Consultations and Representations:

The Local Planning Authority has received the following representations:

Watchet Town Council

no comments received

Highways Development Control

I refer to the above mentioned planning application received on 31st March 2015 and the subsequent amended plans received on the 14th July 2015 the Highway Authority has the following observations on the highway and transportation aspects of this proposal.

The proposal relates to the renovation of the existing boat museum.

There is no objection in principle to this proposal however the Highway Authority has the following comments to make in terms of the detail.

Having reviewed the initial submission the Highway Authority had some concerns over the lack of information relating to the proposed works to the front of the museum. As a consequence the Highway Authority met with the applicant to discuss the information that we would require. This has culminated in the submission of the revised layout plans.

These have been submitted for Safety and Technical Audit this process has now been completed and the comments are set out below.

In terms of visibility the applicant must make sure that visibility is obtainable from the driver's eye height of between 1.05m and 2m to an object height of 600mm. In terms of the 'Y' axis the applicant must make sure that any proposed splays are not compromised. As such any planting would need to be below 600mm and any splays needs to be within land in the control of the Highway Authority or the applicant.

As part of the revised submission swept path drawings have been provided and from reviewing them it appears that there are no conflicts. Although the applicant should be aware that the swept path for a vehicle turning left out onto Swain Road does not extend far enough south as it doesn't show the end of the proposed footway works. Therefore a revised drawing would need to be submitted so that the highway Authority can see how the works affect the channel line of Swain Street and the swept path of the vehicles joining the major road at this location. Whilst no dimensions are shown at this time, the slack exit radius from Harbour Road and Swain Street would appear to be acceptable.

The scheme proposes a 5.0m carriageway width on Harbour Road. This is narrow than what is currently available but is considered to be acceptable. The scheme indicates that a 1300mm wide footway will be provided between the boat museum and Harbour Road. This would be considered to be acceptable given the land constraints in this location. However a full kerb upstand of 125mm should be provided to offer protection from passing vehicles. It should also be kept clear of obstructions such as street furniture and advertising signs.

The applicant should note that any further submission for technical approval should include carriageway cross sections for each 5m chainage at the detailed design stage so that all aspects can be fully determined. Please note that a minimum crossfall of 2.5% will be required to shed water from the footway out to the

carriageway although care should be taken regarding any existing thresholds at the back of the footway.

The applicant should note that any landscaping which is proposed to be located in the highway would have maintenance implications for the Highway Authority. We could also need to assess the implications if the management is passed to a third party as the standards would need to be agreed. The enhancement of the standard planting through the use of floral displays and shrubbery must be through agreement with the Highway Authority and must not compromise visibility or safety.

No surfacing details have been provided at this stage as a consequence any further technical submission would need to include details on the extent of resurfacing or the type of construction. In addition drainage details would also need to be provided with information on full construction details including spot levels and locations of gully pots. No kerbing details have been provided as such care should be taken prior to any further submissions to provide a suitable upstand to prevent a vehicle overrunning onto the footway. The Highway Authority would require a minimum kerb height of 80mm although our preferred option would be 125mm. Where vehicular access is required to the boat museum a kerb height of 25mm should be provided in the form of a vehicle crossover whilst pedestrian crossing points should have a kerb up stand of 0-6mm.

The proposed design shall be in accordance with TSR&GD 2002 and the Highway Authority's requirements. As review of the proposed road markings shall be undertaken at the detailed design stage. It is envisaged that new signs and variations to the existing signage will be required at the detailed stage, alongside a full detailed sign schedule.

In terms of highway safety comments the proposed surfacing materials should be fit for purpose for the use by mobility and visually impaired pedestrians and especially not to introduce any form of trip or slip hazards. The scheme has also included dropped kerbs at the south-western end of the proposed hard standing area. The introduction of dropped kerbs at the proposed location is a highway safety concern as pedestrians would be deposited onto Swain Street and exposed to the risks of conflicts occurring with motor vehicles. Furthermore pedestrians would be directed towards the railway bridge near the Swain Street/Brendon Road junction where there is no footway provision. There is also the additional issue of where the dropped kerbs are going to be positioned there is an existing gully and a utilities cover.

Double yellow lines currently exist along the south-east side of Harbour Road. The yellow lining restrictions will require being repositioned post implementation of the proposed hard standing area. Please note that any future submission will need to provide an uncontrolled pedestrian crossing point across the Harbour Road junction as this is the desire line that pedestrian currently take.

The applicant may also want to consider the inclusion of bollards along the south-east site of Harbour Road. This would provide additional protection to pedestrians who are utilising the footway along Harbour Road. Finally it is noted that there are no highway lighting units along Harbour Road as such the applicant may

wish to investigate the need to provide street lighting along the proposed highway works.

To conclude the proposed highway works shown on the submitted drawing are considered to be acceptable in principle and as a consequence the Highway Authority has no objection to this proposal. Although the applicant should take account of the points raised prior to any further submissions.

Therefore if the local planning authority were minded to grant permission the following condition will need to be attached.

- No work shall commence on the development hereby permitted until the proposed highway works shown on the submitted drawing has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Application.

The highway works shall then be fully constructed in accordance with the approved plan to an agreed specification before the development is first brought into use.

NOTE:

The developer should note that the works on or adjacent to the existing highway will need to be undertaken as part of a formal legal agreement with Somerset County Council. This should be commenced as soon as practicably possible and the developer should contact Somerset County Council for information 0300 123 2224.

The developer in delivering the necessary highway works associated with the developer hereby permitted is required to consult with all frontagers affected by said highway works as part of the delivery process. This should be undertaken as soon as reasonably practicable after the grant of planning consent and prior to the commencement of said highway works, especially if the design has evolved through the technical approval process. This is not the responsibility of the Highway Authority.

SCC - Archaeology

no comments received

Environmental Health Team

no comments received

Economic Regeneration and Tourism

I am writing in support of the above application from an Economic Development and Tourism perspective.

The proposals for the main building bring light to the existing property and modernise it potentially turning the Boat Museum into a major visitor attraction for both the town and the area. Tourism is a key economic driver for West Somerset, however there are relatively few indoor attractions in comparison to the volume of tourism in the area. It is therefore part of the West Somerset Economic Development and Tourism Strategy to support the creation/sustainability of indoor

attractions.

The site is an important gateway into Watchet and the proposals to demolish the portacabin and modernise the existing building will provide a more attractive frontage for visitors arriving in the town.

The extension on the north eastern side of the existing building will provide a much needed accessible space for Watchet. It is well located at the gateway of the town for the proposed use as a visitor centre as it captures visitors upon their arrival whether arriving by bus, West Somerset Railway or by private car.

The accessible space which the building will provide is much needed within Watchet and will allow the Town Council as well as other community and business groups improved space to hold meetings in an easy to access building.

This development clearly has the potential to increase the visitor economy in the town and create a more sustainable future for both the Boat Museum and the Tourist Information Centre.

Watchet Conservation Society

The Onion Collective have consulted the Watchet Conservation Society since the inception of the idea to refurbish the Boat Museum. Members of the Committee have attended their consultation meetings and assisted in the background research for the project.

We have been very impressed by the process that has been followed, consulting the wishes of local residents and organisations, and formulating practical and achievable plans.

The building which houses the the Boat Museum is an important part of Watchet's built heritage. It is in the Conservation Area and it stands in a prominent position, being one of the first significant buildings seen as one enters the old part of the town. As a railway goods shed, it is part of Watchet's industrial history and as a Boat Museum it forms an important tourist attraction and record of Watchet's maritime history.

At present the building looks untidy and unattractive. For some time, the Committee has been concerned that the Lime Cross area does not present those entering the town with an attractive and welcoming streetscape. For this reason we hoped that the extension to the Boat Museum would be on the southern end of the building and that the area to the south would be made more attractive and more visible from Swain Street, encouraging pedestrians to venture in that direction. We accept that for pragmatic reasons this has not been possible, and that the simply designed window to the south end of the building together with the demolition of the taxi shed will improve the appearance of the building. We note that the application makes reference to the improvement of the hard landscaping of this area and look forward to more detailed plans.

We are pleased that the integrity of the Goods Shed has been preserved by making the extension clearly subservient and separate. We approve of the modern design

and the contrast in materials, making it clearly a contemporary building with no attempt at pastiche references to the original.

However, we do feel that visitor's understanding of the original building's use should not be obscured and if possible should be enhanced by this project. We note that the plans for the hard landscaping are to follow. We trust that the design of these and information/interpretation panels will indicate the building's relationship to the railway, the station and earlier tracks and buildings.

The use of grey stained timber cladding, engineering bricks and dark grey framing will make for a dour appearance. This may be seen to be appropriate for its context on a site where industrial activity took place. We have some concerns with the use of timber cladding in that, whilst it looks smart when new, it suffers from differential weathering depending on exposure and this can make it look less attractive with time. The colour of the engineering bricks has not been specified in the planning application. Grey would chime with the grey cladding and the framing, be less obtrusive than red and would subscribe to the industrial feel of the building.

In conclusion, the Conservation Society Committee broadly approves of this proposal, and looks forward to seeing more detail of the landscaping around the building and towards the East Quay. When this is submitted we may make further comment.

Public Consultation

The Local Planning Authority has received 4 letters of SUPPORT/ COMMENT making the following comments (summarised):

Letter of Support from the Chairman of West Somerset Railway who are in complete support of the proposal and urge that planning permission is granted.

Letter of support from The Friends of Watchet Station who note that the building as it currently stands does not create a good first impression to Watchet. They feel that this will be a substantial improvement.

The application will enable the Boat Museum to flourish, but suggest that the removal of the garden area at the front of the building is relocated to the rear.

Letter from the General Manger of West Somerset Railway who raises the following concerns:

- The extension would extend the length of limited clearance for staff at the West Somerset Railway. To allow sufficient space for a member of staff to get into a place of safety requires at least 2.7 metres from the nearest rail.
- From a public perspective the railway must also allow four metres between public fencing and the nearest rail for any new developments. There are exceptions where three metres are permitted, but this is the absolute maximum and it will be heavily scrutinised.
- Given the issues with vandalism, theft and trespass in this area, and also since the current fence is on a raised level, we would want to be confident that the new fencings is as good a deterrent. New fencing will need to be tight weldmesh or period spearhead, minimum 1.4m height (if cycles are expected) with adequate support; post and wire will not be acceptable.

- Any proposed increase to people using the level crossing by the East Quay must also be scrutinised. This is one of the most dangerous crossing on the railway with various accidents and deaths recorded. The application claims it will be 'the main thoroughfare'. If any increase is expected at this location then previous proposals to install a subway at this location should be revisited

Planning Policy Context

Section 38(6) of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that all development proposals are determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan for West Somerset consists of the Somerset Minerals Local Plan (adopted April 2004), Somerset Waste Core Strategy (adopted February 2013) and the West Somerset District Local Plan (adopted April 2006). West Somerset is in the process of developing the emerging Local Plan to 2032, which will replace the strategy and some of the policies within the adopted Local Plan. The emerging Local Plan has been submitted for examination and therefore the policies should be given weight as a material consideration

The following Policies are considered relevant to this application:

- SC1 Hierarchy of settlements
- WA1 Watchet Development
- EC8 Tourism in settlements
- EC10 Gateway Settlements
- EC12 Minehead primary retail area and central areas for all walkways
- CF1 Maximising access to recreational facilities
- NH1 Historic Environment
- NH1A Areas of high Archaeological potential
- NH10 Securing high standards of design
- SP/2 Development in Minehead and Rural Centres
- CA/1 New Development and Conservation Areas
- AH/3 Areas of High Archaeological Potential
- BD/1 Local Distinctiveness
- BD/2 Design of New Development

National Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012) is a material planning consideration.

[National Planning Policy Framework \(the NPPF\)](#) _

[Technical Guidance to the National Planning Policy Framework \(the NPPG\)](#)

Local Policy

[West Somerset Local Plan \(2006\)](#) _

[West Somerset Local Plan to 2032 Published Draft Preferred Strategy \(June 2015\)](#)

[West Somerset Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document \(2009\)](#)

[West Somerset Supplementary Planning Guidance: Design Guidance for House Extensions \(2003\)](#)

[Somerset County Council Parking Strategy \(2013\)](#)

[Somerset County Council Highways Development Control Standing Advice \(2013\)](#)

Planning History

The following planning history is relevant to this application:

Case Ref	Address	Proposal	Decision	Decision Date
3/37/92/012	THE BOX, SWAIN STREET, WATCHET	CHANGE OF USE TO TAXI OFFICE	Grant	16 March 1992
3/37/94/021	LAND OFF HARBOUR ROAD, WATCHET FORMERLY USED AS LORRY PARK TO WATCHET HARBOUR	CHANGE OF USE TO PUBLIC CAR PARK	Grant	26 May 1994
3/37/96/055	LAND ADJACENT TO WEST SOM RAILWAY HARBOUR ROAD WATCHET	TEMPORARY USE OF LAND AS CAR PARK	Grant	21 November 1996
3/37/99/057	LORRY PARK/STORAGE AREA, HARBOUR ROAD, WATCHET,	USE OF BUILDING AS BOAT MUSEUM INCLUDING THE DISPLAY AND CONSTRUCTION OF REPLICA CRAFT	Grant	24 June 1999
3/37/03/014	CAR PARK, HARBOUR ROAD, WATCHET	RE DESIGN/NEW LAYOUT, SURFACING AND CONTINUED USE AS A CAR PARK TO INCLUDE LANDSCAPING, COACH PARKING IN CONJUNCTION WITH PROPOSED RURAL BUS INTER CHANGE	Grant	27 March 2003
3/37/04/051	LAND TO THE SOUTH OF HARBOUR ROAD CAR PARK WATCHET,	CONTINUED USE, SURFACING AND LANDSCAPING OF CAR PARK AND PROVISION OF COACH PARKING BAYS	Grant	23 December 2004
3/37/06/005	HARBOUR ROAD CAR PARK, HARBOUR ROAD, WATCHET,	VARIATION OF CONDITIONS 2 & 3 OF PERMISSION (REF 3/37/04/051) TO ALLOW A 2 YEAR PERIOD TO MARK OUT CAR PARK & COMPLETE APPROVED LANDSCAPING SCHEME.	Grant	23 February 2006

3/37/11/023	BRENDON ROAD, WATCHET,	REINSTATEMENT OF PEDESTRIAN FOOTBRIDGE OVER WSR RAILWAY LINE AT WATCHET STATION, FOLLOWING REMOVAL OF PREVIOUS FOOTBRIDGE FOR SAFETY REASONS	Grant	02 September 2011
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Proposal

The application seeks permission for the erection of an extension to the Boat Museum, public realm works (including removal of wooden lean-to taxi office), relocation of rope making machine and provision of a new pedestrian footpath between the existing public car park and West Somerset Railway. It is proposed that the extension to the building will provide a new visitor centre, enable the relocation of the Town Council office, and provide a kitchen, toilet and store room for use by the boat museum.

Alterations to the existing boat museum would include the removal of the lean-to taxi office structure on the south western elevation and the insertion of glazing so that people arriving in Watchet can see into the building. The sliding doors on the north west elevation – facing onto Harbour Road - will be refurbished and have glass doors opening inwards. The extension will be located on the north east elevation where the existing entrance to the Boat Museum is located. The extension would be on the parcel of land between the existing building and the existing coach parking bays.

Site Description

The Boat Museum is between Harbour Road and West Somerset Railway, next to the Harbour Road Public Car Park. The gable end of the building is a prominent feature for vehicles entering into Watchet Town Centre from Swain Street and at present has a slightly tired appearance with a timber taxi office fronting onto a large area of tarmac and concrete.

The site is within the conservation area but the building is not listed.

Planning Analysis

Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places a general duty as respects conservation areas in exercise of planning functions:

(1) In the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area

Principle of Development

The site is within the defined development limits of Watchet and within the proposed retail area identified in the emerging local plan. The site is therefore considered to

be appropriate for town centre, tourism and cultural development subject to the detail design of the proposal.

The existing building is at one of the gateway points to the town which is dominated by the highway junction and there is a poor 'sense of arrival' for the visitor whether by car or by foot (over the pedestrian railway bridge). Improvement could be made to this area and this planning application seeks to address some of these issues to enhance the tourism offering of the town. This is supported by emerging planning policies EC8 and EC10.

Character and Appearance of the Area

It is considered that there are two main aspects to consider with regard the character and appearance of the area – which is a conservation area. Firstly the design and appearance of the extension and alterations to the building; and secondly, the public realm works around the existing building.

The extension is a contemporary projection from the existing boat museum which was formerly a goods shed. The projection is at the former opening to the goods shed and is set in from the gable so that it is clearly viewed a later and separate addition to the building. The main building would retain its industrial scale and appearance as a former goods shed and the extension is clearly subservient and separate. A contemporary approach to design is considered to be the most appropriate design response and avoids trying to recreate the original through pastiche design. The form and scale of the extension are therefore considered to be appropriate and would preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area.

With regard to the proposed materials, timber cladding has been proposed to emulate the existing cladding on the boat museum. However, it is proposed to be stained dark grey which would help the extension as being viewed as separate from the original goods shed. It is considered that the materials are appropriate and sample panels should be submitted for approval before the development takes place.

The public realm works would also improve the character and appearance of the area, especially at the southern end of the building. Currently the back of the building faces onto a tarmac and concrete area that has the appearance of highway and was formerly a bus stop. This does not present a very inviting appeared to the town and the proposal to delineate the road from a pedestrian area (with a clear route defined to the front of the building) would be of great benefit to pedestrians using the railway footbridge. The works proposed at the front of the building include the siting of a rope making machine along the historic rope walk and footpath along the edge of the car park and rail line. These features would also improve the appearance of the area and improve access to and from the enhanced tourist facility.

Highway Safety

Initially the Highways Authority had some concerns regarding the proposed works to the highway at the rear of the building where the footbridge lands. Amended plans have been submitted which show more detail of this area which the County Highways Authority have no objection in principle. It is proposed to slightly narrow the width of Harbour Road to 5 metres so as to provide a pedestrian footway along the side of the building. This is considered to be an improvement to the current situation where there is clear potential for conflict between pedestrians and vehicles. The Highways Authority have made further suggestions regarding the detailed design to the changes to the highway and have suggested a planning condition to secure those works.

Impact on The West Somerset Railway.

Amended plans have been submitted in response to the comments from the General Manager of the West Somerset Railway. The extension is shown to be 2.7 metres from the nearest rail and the footpath that would run along the car park and railway is shown to be 3 metres from the nearest rail.

Environmental Impact Assessment

This development does not fall within the scope of the Town & Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2015 and so Environmental Impact Assessment is not required.

Conclusion and Recommendation

It is considered that the proposal, is acceptable and it is recommended that planning permission be granted.

Planning Permission is subject to the following conditions:

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: As required by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

- 2 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved drawings:

Site Location Plan - 1814/100C
Proposed Plans - 1410 AL(0)01
Proposed Foundation - 1410 AL(0)02
Proposed Roof Plans - 1410 AL(0)03
Proposed Elevation - 1410 AL(0)04

Proposed Elevation - 1410 AL(0)05
Proposed Elevation - 1410 AL(0)06
Proposed Section - 1410 AL(0)07
Landscape General Arrangement - LTS_061(96)101 Rev A
Landscape General Arrangement - LTS_061(96)102 Rev A

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

- 3 No works shall be undertaken on the construction of the extension unless a sample panel of all external walling materials has been erected on site, approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, and kept on site for reference until the development is completed. The works shall thereafter be carried out only in accordance with the details so approved.

Reason: To safeguard the character and appearance of the building.

- 4 No work shall commence on the highway works until full details of those works have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The highway works shall then be fully constructed in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety.

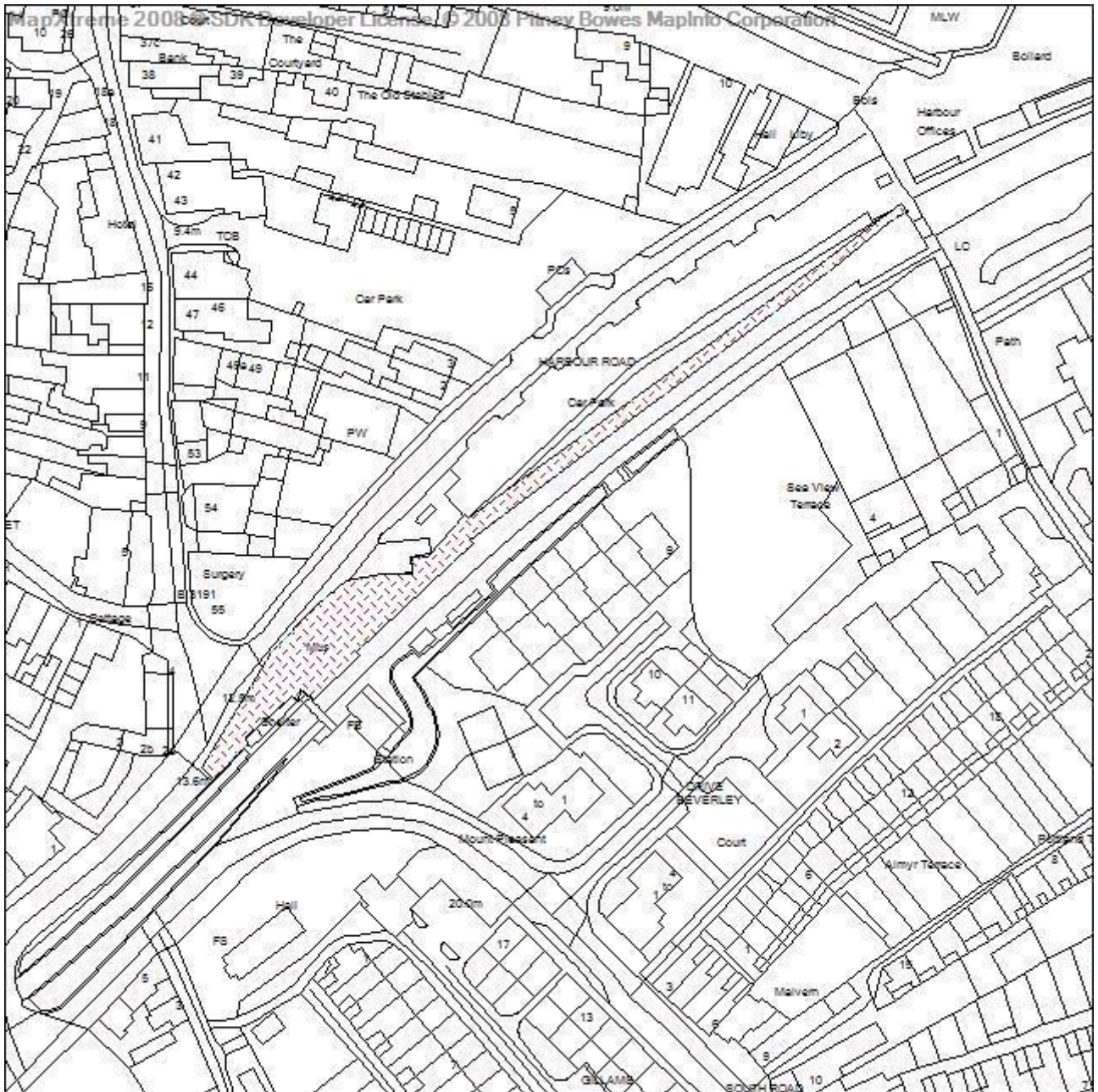
- 5 No work shall commence on the footpath adjacent to the railway line until full details of those works have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The path shall then be fully constructed in accordance with the approved details before it is brought into use.

Reason: In the interests of public safety.

Notes

STATEMENT OF POSITIVE WORKING

In determining this application the Local Planning Authority considers it has complied with the requirements of paragraphs 186 and 187 of the National Planning Policy Framework. Pre-application discussion and correspondence took place between the applicant and the Local Planning Authority, which positively informed the design/nature of the submitted scheme. During the consideration of the application [issues/concerns were raised by a statutory consultee / neighbour in respect of xxx]. The Local Planning Authority contacted the applicant and sought amendments to the scheme to address this issue/concern and amended plans were submitted. For the reasons given above and expanded upon in the planning officer's report, the application was considered acceptable and planning permission was granted.



Application No 3/37/15/006
 Refurbishment of Watchet's Boat
 Museum, demolition of current
 wooden 'portacabin' cab office and a
 proposed extension creating a
 Visitors Centre and offices for
 Watchet Town Council, a new cab
 office and location of rope-making
 machine. Watchet Boat Museum,
 Harbour Road, Watchet, TA23 0AQ
 8 July 2015

Planning Manager
 West Somerset Council
 West Somerset House
 Killick Way
 Williton TA4 4QA



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Scale: 1:1250

Delegated Decision List

Ref No.	Application	Proposal	Date	Decision	Officer
3/01/15/005	18 Trendle Lane, Bicknoller, TA4 4EG	Erection of two storey extension and car port	31 July 2015	Grant	BM
3/04/15/005	Land adjacent to Furze Grove, Brushford,	Erection of an agricultural barn	03 August 2015	Grant	SK
3/04/15/008	Riphay Farm Cottage, Brushford, Dulverton, TA22 9AX	Erection of agricultural building for the housing of livestock	11 August 2015	Grant	RW
3/04/15/009	Riphay Farm Cottage, Brushford, Dulverton, TA22 9AX	Erection of agricultural building for the storage of hay	11 August 2015	Grant	RW
3/07/15/005	Denzel Cottage, Crowcombe Heathfield, Crowcombe, Taunton, TA4 4BS	Erection of a new replacment dwelling to replace extant replacement dwelling 3/07/13/002	17 July 2015	Grant	SK
3/18/15/005	Land adjacent to Thatchings, Hilltop Lane, Kilve, Bridgewater, TA5 1SR	Erection of dwelling	06 August 2015	Grant	JB
3/21/15/029	Masonic Hall, Bancks Street, Minehead, TA24 5DJ	Proposed entrance ramp and replacement windows to the west elevation	11 August 2015	Grant	RW
3/21/15/038	Land at Woodcombe Lane,	Variation of conditions 2 and 8 in order to allow a change to the surfacing of the car	17 July 2015	Grant	SK

Woodcombe,
Minehead

parking spaces and a strip of adjacent land to a Chardstock gravel surface, in relation to planning permission
3/21/12/127

Ref No.	Application	Proposal	Date	Decision	Officer
3/21/15/045	Land to the rear of 32 The Avenue, Minehead, TA24 5AZ	Erection of one 2-bedroom dwelling	12 August 2015	Withdrawn	SK by Applicant
3/21/15/051	Garden House, Woodcombe Lane, Minehead, TA24 8SA	Erect a sunroom on the principal elevation and convert the existing loft into habitable accommodation.	03 August 2015	Grant	BM
3/21/15/052	Rusalka, 71 Marshfield Road, Alcombe, Minehead, TA24 6AJ	Erect a single storey lean-to extension to the south west elevation. It is also proposed to replace the existing garage roof and enlarge the vehicle access.	06 August 2015	Grant	BM
3/21/15/054	Natwest, 9 The Parade, Minehead, TA24 5NL	Installation of replacement signage	12 August 2015	Grant	EP
3/21/15/055	Natwest, 9 The Parade, Minehead, TA24 5NL	Display of non-illuminated signage to front and side elevations	12 August 2015	Grant	EP
3/21/15/056	11 Ballfield Road, Minehead, TA24 5JL	Provision of replacement garage and minor alterations to kitchen	12 August 2015	Grant	BM
3/21/15/057	1 Holloway Street, Minehead, TA24 5NP	Install three recessed gas meter boxes on the street frontage of 1 Holloway Street (King	07 August 2015	Grant	SK

Kebab Takeaway).

Ref No.	Application	Proposal	Date	Decision	Officer
3/26/15/011	55 Cleeve Park, Chapel Cleeve. Minehead, TA24 6JF	Extension to enlarge bedroom, lounge and provide bathroom and study (resubmission of 3/26/15/010)	07 August 2015	Refuse	BM
3/31/15/006	Higher Kingswood, Stogumber, Taunton, TA4 3TN	Change of use of 0.043 hectares of agricultural land to domestic vegetable/fruit garden (retrospective)	20 July 2015	Grant	SK
3/31/15/008	Higher Vexford House, Higher Vexford, Lydeard St Lawrence, Taunton, TA4 3QF	Erection of a horse arena for domestic use	27 July 2015	Grant	SK
3/36/15/003	Bittescombe Manor, Upton, Somerset, TA4 2QL	Replace existing wooden entrance gates with stone and iron gates	14 August 2015	Grant	BM
3/37/15/013	10 Causeway Terrace, Watchet, TA23 0HP	Demolition of lobby area on the south elevation and erection of garden room, formation of new bedroom at first floor level and formation of sitting room in existing bedroom area at second floor level with dormer on the north elevation. Also, demolition of existing store and erection of new garage/store in the garden area.	13 August 2015	Grant	BM
3/39/15/003	Bridge Farm, Bridge Street,	Conversion of existing barns to form two	12 August 2015	Grant	EP

Williton, Taunton, offices and nine TA4 4NR dwellings together with the provision of a new dwelling, two car ports and associated siteworks and flood alleviation/mitigation works.

Ref No.	Application	Proposal	Date	Decision	Officer
3/39/15/008	94 Long Street, Williton, Taunton, TA4 4RD	Erection of a rear kitchen extension and conversion of the existing loft into habitable accommodation	04 August 2015	Grant	SW

Ref No.	Application	Proposal	Date	Decision	Officer
3/41/15/002	Sandhill Farm, Sandhill Lane, Withycombe, Somerset, TA24 6HA	Construction of new entrance canopy to Listed farmhouse.	05 August 2015	Grant	EP

Ref No.	Application	Proposal	Date	Decision	Officer
C/02/15/002	Middle Stone Farm, Brompton Ralph, Taunton, TA4 2RT	Approval of details reserved by condition 3 (relating to the flysheet), condition 4 (relating to a landscaping scheme), condition 6 (relating to parking and turning area(s)) and condition 7 (relating to toilets and sewage disposal works) in relation to planning permission 3/02/15/001	05 August 2015	Split Decision	RW

Ref No.	Application	Proposal	Date	Decision	Officer
C/21/15/006	Land to the rear of 27 Blenheim Road, Minehead, TA24 5PZ	Approval of details reserved by condition 4 (relating to materials for the external surfaces of the buildings and new means of enclosure) in relation to planning permission 3/21/11/141	12 August 2015	Grant	SK

Ref No.	Application	Proposal	Date	Decision	Officer
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CA/31/15/002	Cridlands Steep, Vellow Road, Stogumber, Somerset, TA4 3TL	Nine Leyland Cypress to be felled and one Sycamore to have lower branches trimmed	14 August 2015	Raise No Objection	DG
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Ref No.	Application	Proposal	Date	Decision	Officer
CA/37/15/001	Esplanade House, The Esplanade, Watchet, TA23 0AJ	To fell two Robinia trees	11 August 2015	Raise No Objection	DG

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 July 2015

by **B J Sims BSc(Hons) CEng MICE MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 24 July 2015

Appeal Ref: APP/H3320/W/15/3005652

Land at Ellicombe Meadow, Minehead, Somerset, TA24 6LH

- 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 Paul Hollyman, Strongvox Homes against the decision of West Somerset Council.
 - The application Ref 3/21/14/086, dated 16 September 2014 was refused by notice dated 6 February 2015.
 - The development proposed is residential development of 8 No semi-detached dwellings (plots 23, 23A, 24, 24A, 25, 25A, 26 and 26A) and 9 No affordable flats (plots 5 to 12A) together with vehicular parking, access and associated infrastructure.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. The site address is omitted from the application form and is taken from the decision notice and the appeal form.
3. The development proposed is a variation of a scheme for 29 dwellings and 8 apartments under Ref 3/21/13/084. This permission is a consideration material to the present appeal.
4. Since the appeal was made, the Council has granted permission under Ref 3/4/15/034 for a proposal similar to the appeal scheme, save that the roof height of the 8 semi-detached dwellings is lowered by approximately 1 metre, along with certain detailed changes to the elevations.

Main Issue

5. The appeal turns on whether the increased roof height of the 8 semi-detached dwellings in the appeal proposal would give rise to unacceptable visual impact, in particular when viewed from within the Exmoor National Park, taking into account the details of the schemes already permitted in the two extant permissions quoted above.
6. Whilst the foregoing main issue reflects the concerns of the Council as expressed in the written representations, it is also appropriate to give consideration to the detailed elevational design of the 8 semi-detached dwellings that remain in dispute.

Reasons

7. Following the recent grant of permission Ref 3/4/15/034, the originally approved 4 detached dwellings on plots 23-26 and the originally approved block of 8 flats adjacent can be replaced by 4 pairs of semi-detached houses and 9 flats, for which legal agreements are in place to secure agreed planning obligations, including a contribution toward affordable housing. Based on the evidence provided, the principal material difference between the appeal proposal and the approved scheme, and the only remaining area of dispute between the Appellants and the Council, is that the ridge line of the pitched roofs of the 8 semi-detached houses in the appeal scheme would be approximately 1 metre higher than those now approved.
8. When initially compared with the 4 detached dwellings in the original scheme, the 8 semi-detached dwellings proposed in the appeal would be some 2 metres higher to the ridge, with added basements giving the effect of a three-storey north eastern elevation facing into the site. Even though the outward-facing, south-western elevations would be of two-storeys due to the sloping ground, the overall increase in bulk and development density would create a harsher and more abrupt, urban settlement edge to the development along its boundary with Combeland Road.
9. Notwithstanding the intervening mature hedge and the potential for it to be strengthened and maintained, the excessive bulk of the built development over plots 23-26A would be perceived and seen in both near and distant viewpoints as creating unacceptable visual impact. This would be harmful to the appearance and character of the surrounding rural area, including in partial views from high ground within the nearby Exmoor National Park to the west and south. The extra height and bulk of the proposed dwellings would also be visible from within the development, as well as from other points to the east and north east, including from the Rugby Club adjacent to the site.
10. Crucially, the appeal must be decided in the light of current circumstances and the proposal must now be compared with the further revised scheme recently permitted by the Council. This, in effect, reduces the roof heights of the semi-detached dwellings by about a metre and thereby lessens the bulk of this part of the development at the settlement edge, lessening the harm to the adjacent countryside landscape. As a matter of judgment, this difference is substantial and the objection that the excessive bulk of the appeal scheme is harmful to the area remains.
11. The appeal proposal is thus in conflict with the aims of Policies BD1-2 and LC/1 and 3 of the adopted West Somerset District Local Plan of 2006 which, together, require the design of development to be sympathetic in scale with the countryside bordering the National Park. In these respects, these policies remain consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework. For the reason of excessive height alone, rejection of the design in the present appeal is warranted.
12. Moreover, although neither the Appellant nor the Council in their representations compare the design of the recently approved semi-detached houses in detail with that of the dwellings proposed in the appeal, there are significant contrasts worthy of consideration. The appeal design includes relatively wide, central dormers as a feature of the three-storey north eastern fronts and all the windows to both main elevations are set below the eaves line.

In the approved scheme, consistent with the lowering of the roof line, the front dormers are narrowed whilst the windows to the upper storey are also set above the eaves as dormers. This creates a greater intrinsic visual harmony which complements the overall reduction in bulk, compared with the appeal scheme. The elevational treatment in the recently approved design is therefore to be preferred and this consideration adds weight to the case against the design proposed in the appeal.

13. For the reasons explained above, the appeal is dismissed.

B J Sims

Inspector

Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 22 April 2015

by Jennifer Tempest BA(Hons) MA PGDip PGCert Cert HE MRTPI IHBC

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 3 August 2015

Appeal Ref: APP/H3320/W/14/3001684
Abbey Barn, A39, Washford, Somerset TA23 0NS

- 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 Suzanne Lansdell against the decision of West Somerset Council.
 - The application Ref 3/39/14/027, dated 20 September 2014, was refused by notice dated 13 November 2015.
 - The development proposed is external masonry staircase and 2 no. balconies at first floor level.
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Appeal Ref: APP/H3320/Y/14/3001681
Abbey Barn, A39, Washford, Somerset TA23 0NS

- The appeal is made under section 20 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 against a refusal to grant listed building consent.
 - The appeal is made by Suzanne Lansdell against the decision of West Somerset Council.
 - The application Ref 3/39/14/028, dated 20 September 2014, was refused by notice dated 13 November 2014.
 - The works proposed are external masonry staircase and 2 no. balconies at first floor level.
-

Decision

1. The appeals are dismissed.

Main Issues

2. These are:
 - (i) whether the proposal would preserve the listed building known as Abbey Barn, listed as 'barn over shelter shed on East side of foldyard at Washford Farm', and any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses ; and whether the proposals would preserve the setting of adjacent listed buildings; and
 - (ii) in respect of the application for planning permission the effect of the proposal on the living conditions of occupiers of neighbouring property with particular regard to privacy.

Reasons

Whether the proposal would preserve the listed building and the setting of adjacent listed buildings.

3. The appeal site is a former agricultural building which has been converted to a dwelling. The building is listed, Grade II. The building was listed in 1984 and the listing description refers to the building as a barn over shelter sheds, dating from the mid 19C, constructed from red sandstone random rubble, with a hipped asbestos slate roof. The description states that the first floor barn has central segmental headed double doors flanked by 2 tier ventilation or pigeon holes, a 3 bay segmental headed arcade of shelter sheds below and double doors only on the rear elevation. The building is identified as forming part of a good group of 19C farm buildings around a foldyard in a prominent position at the entrance to Washford.
4. Two other buildings within the same group are also listed Grade II. These are Washford Farm (listed as range of farmbuildings on South side of foldyard at Washford Farm) and Monkscider House (listed as stables and granary on West side of foldyard at Washford Farm). The listing of the three buildings as a group adds to their individual significance. A further converted agricultural building now known as Higher Washford Farm, which is not a listed building, is sited to the east of Abbey Barn. The appellant's Heritage Statement explains that the farmhouse which was on the opposite side of what is now the A39, was separated from the ownership of the working farm buildings many years ago.
5. The evidence includes a copy of the listing sourced from the Somerset Historic Environment Record which shows a photograph of the appeal building prior to its conversion. The planning history indicates that the initial permission to convert the appeal property and three other farm buildings dates back to 1990. What is now Abbey Barn was first converted to a workshop and studio but without consents. The appellant advises the residential conversion including an extension to the southern end of the building was completed in 2009. This followed a permission which included works already carried out.
6. The former foldyard now serves as a vehicular access and the gardens to Abbey Barn and Monkscider House. The appeal building, although converted to a dwelling, retains its strong and simple lines in the form of its external walls and hipped roof. The building's form, including the openings at each side of the building at first floor level and three arched openings at ground floor level remain as evidence of the building's former agricultural role.
7. The proposals seek to add an external stair to the east elevation of the building leading up to the existing, large first floor window set within the opening previously filled by double doors to the barn. The proposed stone stairs would stop short of the window opening and would lead to a balcony outside the window. The existing window, which is divided vertically into three sections, would be altered to include a door. A balcony is proposed outside the west facing first floor window. This would be of narrower depth than that proposed on the east elevation. Both balconies and the stairs would have metal railings
8. The addition of an external stair to this historic former farm building in a position where there was no previous stair would be a significant alteration to the form of the building. The written evidence indicates that access to the first floor barn was historically achieved from the southern end of the building, now the site of the extension. Consequently, the location of the proposed external stair would be historically inaccurate. The incorporation of the timber hardwood deck and railings to create a balcony would further add to the lack of

authenticity of the proposed changes. The additions would appear as incongruous domestic features on a building which currently retains strong evidence of its agricultural origins. The proposals, including the balcony on the west side of the building, would detract from the simple rectangular form of the main element of the former barn and shelter sheds. The proposals would diminish the building's special architectural and historic interest and would thus harm the significance of the listed building.

9. Whilst external stairs are a feature of some traditional farm buildings, such stairs relate to the function and historic access route into upper floors. The appellant's evidence indicates there was formerly a stair to the first floor of Monkscider House and that there is an extant stair at Higher Washford Farm. However, this does not justify the proposed external stair to the appeal building.
10. Whilst the appellant points to the proposals adding interest to the east elevation, the simplicity of this elevation relates to the building's historic purpose. I acknowledge that the buildings were listed prior to being converted to residential use and that the conversions have resulted in some changes to the appearance of the buildings and to the character of their immediate surroundings. However, Abbey Barn retains the essential elements of its external form which continue to identify it as a former shelter shed and barn.
11. I have taken into account that first floor windows in Monkscider House have metal railings outside them. These first floor openings are of different proportions and style to the openings in the appeal building. Although the appellant provides an outline of the planning history, these features in Monkscider House do not create a precedent for the alterations now proposed to the appeal property. Whilst the appellant has referred to chimneys on other buildings in the group, these also do not justify the appeal proposal.
12. The materials proposed for the staircase would be appropriate to the building and the design incorporates storage for bins and recycling. The details of the railings could have been addressed by suitably worded conditions had the proposal been acceptable in other respects. However, even though the listed building is now a dwelling, this does not justify the addition of features which would harm the significance of the listed building by diminishing the evidence of its former use.
13. Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that in considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works, special regard shall be had to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest it possesses. Section 66 of the Act imposes a similar duty in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting. I have found that the works and development would fail to preserve the appeal building.
14. As the proposed alterations would harm the special interest of Abbey Barn they would also detract from the setting of the other listed former agricultural buildings with which they form a group. Consequently, the proposals would fail to preserve the setting of the two listed buildings adjacent to the appeal building and with which the appeal building has a historic relationship.

15. When considered in the context of paragraphs 133 and 134 of the National Planning Policy Framework (Framework), the proposals would amount to less than substantial harm to the significance of the designated heritage assets. However, this harm is not outweighed by any public benefits and the Framework requires that great weight is given to the conservation of heritage assets and any harm to such assets requires clear and convincing justification.
16. The proposals conflict with 'saved' Policy LB/1 of the Local Plan¹ as the essential form and appearance of the listed building would be adversely affected and the details would fail to respect the character and appearance of the building. The appeal against the refusal of planning permission would also conflict with Local Plan Policy BD/3 which requires extensions and alterations to be in character with the building to which they relate.

Living Conditions

17. The balcony proposed outside the west facing first floor window would provide views of the front garden and principal elevation of Monkscider House. In addition, the balcony would provide a sideways view towards Washford Farm. The existing window, which serves the main living area of Abbey Barn, already looks towards Monkscider House and windows in that property look out on Abbey Barn. Given the existing level of overlooking, I am not persuaded that the proposed balcony would increase the level of overlooking of Monkscider House to an unacceptable extent. Washford Farm has a large first floor window facing towards the garden of Abbey Barn. The limited depth of the proposed balcony would restrict its use and as such I anticipate it would not result in an unacceptable loss of privacy to the occupiers of Washford Farm. However these findings do not alter my conclusions on the first main issue.

Other matters

18. The grounds of appeal set out evidence relating to the conversion works carried out prior to the appellant's purchase of the property, including issues relating to compliance with Building Regulations, means of access and of escape. They also refer to issues regarding the Council's duty of care. However, I have determined that the proposals are unacceptable in relation to their impact on the significance of the listed building. Whilst these other issues may remain to be resolved, they are not matters for me to consider in determining these appeals. I appreciate that the proposals are designed to accommodate an external stair which would provide direct access to the first floor. However I am not convinced that the proposals before me represent the only possible design solution to secure the appellant's requirements.

Conclusions

19. For the reasons given above, and having taken all matters raised into account, I conclude that the appeals should be dismissed.

Jennifer Tempest

INSPECTOR

¹ West Somerset District Local Plan adopted April 2006