

24/2005/017

MR H R S ANDERSON

FORMATION OF FIELD ACCESS WITH NEW FIELD GATE AND STONE ENTRANCE AT BROAD LANE, NORTH CURRY

32790/25730

FULL PERMISSION

PROPOSAL

The proposal is for the retention of an unauthorised field access off an unclassified road, Broad Lane North Curry. The access is approximately 4 m wide with metal gateposts set back off the highway. The metal gate is approximately 1.5 m high and, as hung, open outwards over part of Broad Lane by approximately 0.5 m. The proposed access would replace the existing access that is located in the north western corner of the field and exits onto Stoke Road, the main road linking North Curry to Stoke St Gregory.

CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS

COUNTY HIGHWAY AUTHORITY no objection in principal but the ditch must be piped with an adequate diameter pipe and the access laid out to County Highway standards, including the gate being re-hung to open inwards only

LANDSCAPE OFFICER subject to filling the existing access with a 1 m high bank and hedge it should be possible to achieve the access without harm to Policy EN12.
FOOTPATHS OFFICER no objection to the proposal.

PARISH COUNCIL object, there is nowhere around this field to provide a safe access due to bad visibility; the gate opens out onto the road; the drainage is inadequate in an area prone to flooding; the hedge was removed without permission; it is considered that the existing access is in the best position.

5 LETTERS OF OBJECTION have been received raising the following issues:- Broad Lane is very narrow and serves several farms, two nurseries, a builders business and a car service and repair business any increase in traffic would be an added hazard and dangerous for highway safety; this would result in additional traffic using the Stoke Road and Broad Lane junction which has very poor visibility; the existing access onto Stoke Road is preferable as it has better visibility with a better splay and gates could be hung to open inwards; I am suspicious that this new stoned and gated entrance access is for a non-agricultural use; if allowed all other access into the field should be closed; the ditch has been removed but is required to drain the land and road, it carries a lot of water in the winter when the road floods and becomes impassable; the new access cannot be seen when travelling along Broad Lane and will be dangerous for road users.

1 LETTER RAISING NO OBJECTION has been received provided the use is purely agricultural.

POLICY CONTEXT

Somerset and Exmoor National Park Structure Plan Policy 49 (Transport Requirements of New Development) requires proposals to provide safe access to roads of adequate standard within the route hierarchy and, unless the special need for and benefit of a particular development would warrant an exception, not derive access directly from a National Primary or County Route. Taunton Deane Local Plan Policy S1 (a), (General Requirements for development), EN12 (Landscape Character Areas).

ASSESSMENT

The Landscape Officer has not objected to the removal of the roadside hedge and the formation of the access subject to the filling in of the existing access onto Stoke Road. The County Highway Officer considers that the unauthorised access is substandard but has confirmed that he considers it a safer access than the existing. The applicant has been asked to amend the application in line with County Highway Standards. The applicant has agreed to remove the existing gate and replace it with a pole that would open inwards but has declined to amend the size of the access due to the additional cost and time.

The access crosses an open ditch that the applicant has piped. In order to do this he has cleaned and widened the ditch either side of the access. The County Highway Authority has expressed some concern that this pipe is not large enough for the purposes. Additional information has been requested to assess the situation in more detail. In view of the improved access, in comparison to the existing, Proposal considered acceptable

RECOMMENDATION

Permission be GRANTED subject to conditions of new gates to be erected, visibility splay.

REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION:- The access provides a safer entrance/exit into the field than existing in accordance with the requirements of the Somerset and Exmoor National Park Structure Plan policy 49 and Taunton Deane Local Plan policy S1(A).

In preparing this report the Planning Officer has considered fully the implications and requirements of the Human Rights Act 1998.

CONTACT OFFICER: 356467 MRS J MOORE

NOTES: