



EXMOOR
NATIONAL PARK

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23 March 2023

EXMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

To: All Members of the Exmoor National Park Authority

A meeting of the Exmoor National Park Authority will be held in the **Committee Room, Exmoor House, Dulverton** on **Tuesday, 4 April 2023 at 10.00am.**

Please Note: To better manage Authority business, Agenda items relating to the Authority's role as sole **local planning authority** for the National Park area, including determination of planning applications, will commence at **1.30 pm.**

The meeting will be open to the press and public subject to the passing of any resolution under s.100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972.

There is Public Speaking at this meeting, when the Chairperson will allow members of the public two minutes each to ask questions, make statements, or present a petition relating to any item relevant to the business of the Authority or relating to any item on the Agenda. Anyone wishing to ask questions should notify the Corporate Support Officer as soon as possible, or at the latest by 4pm on the working day before the meeting of the agenda item on which they wish to speak, indicating a brief summary of the matter or matters to be raised (contact Judy Coles on 01398 322250 or email jcoles@exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk).

The meeting will be **recorded**. By entering the Authority's Committee Room and speaking during Public Speaking you are consenting to being recorded. We will make the recording available via our website for members of the public to listen to and/or view, within 72 hours of the meeting taking place.

Members of the public may use Facebook and Twitter or other forms of social media to report on proceedings at this meeting. Anyone wishing to film part or all of the proceedings may do so unless the press and public are excluded for that part of the meeting or there is good reason not to do so. As a matter of courtesy, anyone wishing to film proceedings is asked to advise the Chairperson so that those present may be made aware.

(The agenda and papers for this meeting can be downloaded from the National Park Authority's website www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk).

Sarah Bryan
Chief Executive

A G E N D A

The meeting will be chaired by Mr R Milton, Chairperson of the Authority.

1. Apologies for Absence

2. Declarations of Interest/Lobbying of Members/Unaccompanied Site Visits

Members are asked to declare:-

- (1) any interests they may have in relation to items on the agenda for this meeting;
- (2) any lobbying by anyone concerned with a planning application and any unaccompanied site visits where contact has been made with any person concerned with a planning application.

(NB. When verbally making these declarations, members are also asked to complete the Disclosures at Meetings form – attached for members only).

3. Chairperson's Announcements

- 4. Minutes**
 - (1) To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meetings of the Authority held on 7 March 2023 (Item 4)
 - (2) To consider any Matters Arising from those Minutes.

- 5. Public Speaking:** The Chairperson will allow members of the public to ask questions, make statements, or present a petition. Questions of a general nature relevant to the business of the Authority can be asked under this agenda item. Any questions specific to an agenda item can be posed when that item is considered subject to the discretion of the person presiding at the meeting.

- 6. Designation of Simonsbath and Winsford as Conservation Areas:** To consider the report of the Head of Conservation and Access (Item 6)

- 7. The ENPA Estate: Current Work including the 20 Year Strategy, Car Parks and Driver Farm:** To consider the report of the Head of Conservation and Access (Item 7)

- 8. Governance Review:** To consider the report of the Chief Executive (Item 8)

9. Personnel Update

Seasonal staff – 01/04/23 to 29/10/23

- Peter Haddock – Information Advisor (Lynmouth National Park Centre)
- Shelley Trace – Information Advisor (Dulverton National Park Centre)
- Lisa Clarke – Information Advisor (Dunster National Park Centre)

10. Any Other Business of Urgency

Agenda items relating to the Authority's role as sole local planning authority for the National Park area including determination of planning applications. This section of the meeting will commence at 1.30pm and will be chaired by Mr S J Pugsley, Deputy Chairperson (Planning). If the Deputy Chairperson (Planning) is absent, the Deputy Chairperson of the Authority shall preside.

- 11. Appeal:** To note the decision of the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to allow the Appeal and grant a certificate of lawful use or development for the stationing of a mobile home within the residential garden at Ashbear House, Elworthy, Lydeard St Lawrence, Taunton, TA4 3PY

12. Development Management: To consider the report of the Head of Planning and Sustainable Development on the following:-

Agenda Item	Application No.	Description	Page Nos.
12.1	62/49/22/003	Proposed change of use of existing studio to holiday let, together with the demolition of partially built porch to be replaced with new porch, creation of a parking area, creation of a patio area and the installation of a new sewage treatment plant – Bentwitchen House, South Molton, EX36 3HA	1 – 11

13. Application Decisions Delegated to the Chief Executive: To note the applications determined by the Chief Executive under delegated powers (Item 13).

14. Site Visits: To arrange any site visits agreed by the Committee (the reserve date being Friday, 28 April 2023 (am)).

Further information on any of the reports can be obtained by contacting the National Park Authority at the address and telephone numbers at the top of the agenda. Details of the decisions taken at this meeting will be set out in the formal Minutes which the Committee will be asked to approve as a correct record at its next meeting. In the meantime, details of the decisions can be obtained from Judy Coles, Corporate Support Officer, at Exmoor House.

ITEM 4

EXMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

MINUTES of the Meeting of the Exmoor National Park Authority held on Tuesday, 7 March 2023 at 10.00am in the Committee Room, Exmoor House, Dulverton.

PRESENT

Mr R Milton (Chairperson)
Miss A V Davis (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr S J Pugsley (Deputy Chairperson Planning)

Mrs L Blanchard	Mrs F Nicholson
Mr M Ellicott	Mrs F Smith
Mr J Holtom	Miss E Stacey
Dr M Kelly	Mr N Thwaites
Mr M Kravis	Mr J Yabsley
Mrs C Lawrence	

Apologies for absence were received from Mr D Elson, Mr S Griffiths, Mr E Ley, Mr A Milne, Mr J Patrinios, Dr S Warren, Mrs P Webber and Mr V White

123. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: There were no declarations of interest

124. CHAIRPERSON'S ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Due to the formation of the Somerset Unitary Authority on 1 April, this would be the last meeting that Mr Thwaites, Mr Milne and Mr Griffiths would attend as Somerset West & Taunton appointed Members. All three Members were thanked for their contribution towards the work of the Authority.
- Confirmation had been received that, with effect from 1 April, Mr Pugsley would sit as a Somerset Council appointee to the Authority, along with Mr Kravis, Mrs Lawrence, Mrs Nicholson and Mrs Smith.
- The final three Somerset Council appointments to the Authority had been confirmed as Mr Lee Baker (Taunton North Division), Mrs Mandy Chilcott (Minehead Division) and Mr Theo Butt-Philip (Wells Division) who would take their seats at the 4 April Authority meeting.
- The meeting noted the recent passing of Robert Deane, who had worked closely with the Authority for many years. Mr Deane had been instrumental in the preparation of many key reports over the years and his great contribution to Exmoor would be sadly missed.
- Confirmation had been received of a flat cash grant allocation for 2023/24, however Defra had also announced an additional £440k supplementary funding for National Park Authority's.

125. MINUTES

- Confirmation:** The Minutes of the Authority's meeting held on 7 February 2023 were agreed and signed as a correct record.
- Matters arising:** In relation to Minute 117 – Application No. 6/25/22/104, Members noted a request from Mr Jeremy Payne to adjust the record and

attribute the statement read out on his behalf at the 7 March meeting to Mr Payne as a 'neighbour' and not in his capacity as 'Chair of Oare and Culbone Parish Meeting', seeing as no official parish meeting to discuss the issue was ever convened.

126. PUBLIC SPEAKING: There were no public speakers

127. FINAL ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE AND AUDITORS ANNUAL REPORT (VALUE FOR MONEY) 2021/22

The Authority considered the report of the Chief Finance Officer

The Authority's Consideration

Mr Gareth Mills from Grant Thornton joined the meeting remotely via Microsoft Teams to present the findings of the Auditors Annual Report (Review of Value for Money) 2021/22 to the Authority Committee.

Mr Mills confirmed that as the Value for Money work had now been concluded and the Authority was outside of the requirement for the Whole of Government Accounts process, he anticipated issuing the Audit Certificate that afternoon to formally close the 21/22 audit.

Mr Pugsley requested that a typographical error be amended in the draft minutes of the Final Accounts Committee meeting held on 1 December 2022.

RESOLVED:

- (1) To receive and note the draft minutes of the Final Accounts Committee meeting held on 1 December 2022.
- (2) To receive and note the Auditor's Annual Report (Review of Value for Money) for the year ended 31 March 2022.

128. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2023/24 TO 2027/28 AND BUDGET 2023/24

The Authority considered the report of the Chief Finance Officer

The Authority's Consideration

Members noted that the budget report contained additional statements and declarations from previous years, and also included an additional section on in-year budget monitoring, a capital budget and a formal declaration on the 'Adequacy of Estimates'. It was also noted that the report had been published before Defra had announced the £440,000 supplementary funding for National Parks.

In relation to the Capital Programme referenced in Section 5 and Appendix 4 of the report, concerns were raised that Members had not had any input in relation to the three internally funded schemes referred to in Paragraph 5.2. The Chief Finance Officer advised that most discussions with Members in advance of the budget had been focused on the bigger service type issues and confirmed that in future he would ensure more detailed information on all aspects of the budget setting process was provided.

Confirmation was provided that the capital spend in relation to Tarr Steps Bore Hole and the Water System at Pinkery were considered essential to maintain a clean and safe water supply at these locations. Last year's hot summer had resulted in the water running dry at the Tarr Steps facilities on several occasions, which obviously adversely impacted visitors and needed to be avoided in the future. The capital

spend relating to proposed Car Park improvements at Exford and Haddon Hill would come before Members for a decision at a future Authority meeting.

Concerns were also raised about the proposal to recover all reasonable charges associated with the preparation of S106 Agreements and other professional advice, for example in relation to viability, as set out in Paragraph 8.5 of the report. The Head of Planning confirmed that this had inadvertently been left out of the Charging paper brought before Members in December 2022 and was intended to bring the Authority in line with other planning services around the country.

In relation to the preparation of S106 Agreements, it was confirmed the Applicant would settle those costs directly with the solicitor involved. With respect to costs associated with professional advice, this would be dealt with on a case-by-case basis and would be on a cost recovery basis in those instances the Applicant was required to pay.

It was clear to both Members and Officers that the new format of the MTFP and Budget required a change in the way this information was brought before the Authority. A preliminary discussion regarding proposed changes to the Authority's governance structure was due to take place after the Authority meeting and formal decisions to improve the process would come before the Committee in due course

On the basis of the additional information provided during the debate, the Authority resolved to accept all of the recommendations detailed in the report.

Mrs F Nicholson left the meeting before the vote

RESOLVED:

- (1) To note the month 9 budget monitoring position for 2022/2023 in Appendix 1 to the report.
- (2) To approve the Core, Capital and Programmes, Partnerships and Contributions to Reserves Budgets for 2023/24 as summarised in Appendices 2, 3 and 4 to the report.
- (3) To note the position on Reserves as detailed in Appendix 5 to the report.
- (4) To adopt the attached Medium Term Financial Plan at Appendix 6 to the report.
- (5) To authorise the changes to charging in Planning set out in paragraph 8.5 of the report.

129. TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT 2023-24

The Authority considered the report of the Chief Finance Officer

RESOLVED:

- (1) To note the report of the Chief Finance Officer.
- (2) To approve the proposed Treasury Management Strategy for 2023-24 as set out in Sections 2 and 3 of the report.
- (3) To note the Prudential Indicators for 2023-24 to 2025-26 as set out in Section 4 of the report (Although some are currently set at zero, all Treasury Management indicators are included for completeness of information and others may well be used in the future).

7 March 2023

130. SCHEME OF MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES 2023/24

The Authority considered the [report](#) of the Head of Finance and Operations

RESOLVED: To adopt the Scheme of Members' Allowances 2023/24 as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, subject to future adjustments to Members' Allowances as linked to staff cost of living pay awards.

131. ANY OTHER BUSINESS OF URGENCY: There was none

The meeting closed at 11.19 am

(Chairperson)

EXMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

4 April 2023

DESIGNATION OF SIMONSBATH AND WINSFORD AS CONSERVATION AREAS

Report of the Head of Conservation and Access

Purpose of the report: To outline the public consultation response in relation to the proposed creation of the new Conservation Areas listed below and to secure formal adoption of the below listed settlements as Conservation Areas and their associated appraisal documents.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- (1) The Committee is asked to APPROVE the proposal to create Winsford Conservation Area and its associated Conservation Area appraisal documents so that they may be brought into formal effect and use by the Authority.
- (2) The Committee is asked to APPROVE the proposal to create Simonsbath Conservation Area and its associated Conservation Area appraisal documents so that they may be brought into formal effect and use by the Authority.

Authority Priorities: Maintaining our core services – Working with land managers, working with the community and business, working with and for users of the National Park. Supporting delivery of the Exmoor National Park Partnership Plan. This paper supports the conservation and enhancement of cultural heritage which is a key purpose of the National Park.

Legal and Equality Implications: The National Park Authority is the sole Planning Authority for the National Park area and has powers to act under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and related legislation, including the Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act (1990).

The equality impact of the recommendation of this report has been assessed as follows: There are no equality issues in relation to this report.

Consideration has been given to the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998 and an assessment of the implications of the recommendation of this report is as follows: There are no human rights issues in relation to this report.

Financial and Risk Implications: This is a statutory process and therefore can be open to legal challenge and scrutiny.

Climate Change Response: It has been assessed that this report does not have an adverse impact on our ability to respond to climate change.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to outline the public consultation response in relation to the proposed creation of the new Conservation Areas in Winsford and Simonsbath and to secure formal adoption of Winsford and Simonsbath as Conservation Areas and their associated appraisal documents.
- 1.2 The draft Conservation Area appraisal documents appear on the Authority's website.

[Exmoor - Conservation Areas \(planning\) \(exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk\)](http://exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk)

Paper copies of the appraisal documents are available to Members on request.

2. Background

- 2.1 Conservation Areas are designated as a duty under Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. They are defined as 'areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance' (69.1.a). The legislation was first introduced in the Civil Amenities Act 1967. There are approximately 10,000 Conservation Areas across England.
- 2.2 Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that: Every local planning authority shall from time to time determine which parts of their area meet the above definition and are designated as Conservation Areas.
- 2.3 Various factors contribute to the special character of a Conservation Area. These include: the quality of buildings; the historic layout of roads, paths and boundaries; boundary treatments and patterns of enclosure; characteristic building and paving materials; uses and associations; the quality of the public realm; and the contribution made by trees and green spaces. A strong 'sense of place' is often associated with Conservation Areas.
- 2.4 The designation of a Conservation Area has various consequences in terms of planning and development control. Under Section 72 of the 1990 Act it is a requirement that in determination of planning applications 'special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area' (72.2).
- 2.5 Exercise of the LPA's duty under Section 72 requires that value judgments be made as to the nature of the 'special architectural or historic interest' and the 'character and appearance' of each Conservation Area when considering development proposals. Best practice has always dictated that this is best achieved through production and adoption of a Conservation Area appraisal; an analytical document through which a map and text-based assessment is made. The advantages of an Appraisal to the Local Planning Authority are that they:
 - Provide authoritative and consistent guidance to property owners and developers in formulating development proposals. This should save considerable time within the planning process and thus improve efficiency.
 - Are an important tool for Local Authority staff in decision making. This helps the speed of turnaround for planning applications.
 - Provide a standpoint more strongly defensible at appeal than where individual judgements have been made.

- Provide a basis for the formulation of management and enhancement schemes, which are also a duty under the 1990 Act.
- Can feed into the preparation of other planning documents.
- Improve the all-round efficiency of the planning process while providing significant scope for improved outcomes in terms of design quality and amenity.

2.6 The review of Conservation Areas is a duty under Section 69 (2) of the 1990 Act and the formulation of appraisals on a rolling five-year basis is recommended in current guidance from Historic England.

2.7 Paragraph 191 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that when considering the designation of Conservation Areas, local planning authorities should ensure that an area justifies such status because of its special architectural or historic interest, and that the concept of conservation is not devalued through the designation of areas that lack special interest.

3. The Current Position

3.1 Exmoor National Park has a significant issue with under designation and formal recognition of its heritage assets. There are numerous settlements, buildings and sites which are worthy of national designation across the National Park.

3.2 Exmoor National Park has not undertaken a broader review of its settlements to identify areas which meet the criteria for Conservation Area designation since the 1990s.

3.3 Exmoor National Park currently has 16 Conservation Areas designated in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s. These are:

1973 - Dunster, Lynmouth, Porlock Weir

1984 - Allerford, Bossington, Porlock, Selworthy

1986 - Lynton

1993 - Four Exmoor Farmsteads

1994 - Dulverton, Luccombe, Wootton Courtenay

1997 - Parracombe

3.4 The review of Exmoor National Park's settlements to meet the requirements of s69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 was commenced in 2018/19 by the Historic Buildings Officer. Winsford and Simonsbath have been identified as meeting the requirements of Conservation Area designation.

4. Proposal

4.1. It is proposed to create two new Conservation Areas: Winsford and Simonsbath.

4.2. Winsford

4.2.1. Summary of significance

The character of Winsford derives from the informal layout of cottage groups along several approach roads or around such features as the village green and the River Winn with its ancient stone bridges.

Winsford contains many buildings that epitomise the local vernacular style together with the Parish Church with its impressive 15th century tower. This gives an impression of antiquity and of a settlement that has played an important part in the history of the wider locality for many centuries.

It may be that this character is partly the result of long-lasting ownership by the Acland family. Whilst being very different in character to the estate village at Selworthy on the Acland's Holnicote Estate, Winsford has similar characteristics in terms of the open spaces and the strong historic visual character of the settlement, in particular around the centre of the village.

The proposed Conservation Area boundary encompasses the historic core of the village. The village is notable for its collection of traditional Exmoor village buildings in the local vernacular style, having little architectural detail but modest and well-proportioned in scale, many of which have limewashed walls and thatched roofs, it is likely that many of these houses have much earlier origins than suspected.

There is also a good mix of later buildings dating from the 19th century that reflect detailing from earlier properties. The houses, church, bridges and open spaces all complement each other to form a traditional English village setting.

4.2.2. Built form

There is little uniformity evident in the buildings, which have evolved according to their particular purpose given at the time. The contrast between Karslake House with its uniformed façade following refacing in the early C19 and the simple form of the former Weslyn Chapel demonstrates this clearly.

There are no buildings above two stories in height in Winsford other than the Church Tower. All the early traditional cottages are modestly proportioned with little in the way of uniformity to their facades.

Later C19-early C20 buildings such as Exe Vale House and The Close are larger in scale and well-proportioned but quite in keeping.

Other late 20th-century houses are larger and do not closely follow the prevailing vernacular tradition in terms of scale, plan-form and position in the plot. The largest houses are, unsurprisingly, those with formerly the highest status, The Old Vicarage, the Royal Oak and Karslake.

4.2.3. Open Spaces and Routes

There are important green spaces throughout Winsford. The centre the village is dominated by the village green and formal gardens which contribute greatly to the character of the village. Looking out from the village from the centre there are uninterrupted views of open countryside that seems to flow seamlessly into the green spaces of the village core, such as the view west from the war memorial across the village green.

The churchyard also offers a semi-public green space. The area to the west of the village hall is also a large centrally located green space that forms a backdrop to many views from the village.

Also included in the proposed boundary is section of river frontage to the Exe. The settlement inset maps to the Local Plan (2011-2031) p375, show those areas identified as being important open spaces or as important visual amenity spaces.

Several routes converging on the village, especially that leading south west towards Tarr Steps, are of considerable age.

4.2.4. Trees and Hedges

Trees and hedgerows make strong contribution to the character and appearance of the village and its wider landscape setting. Generally, this informal. Woodland forms an important backdrop to the village with steep wooded slopes of Berry Cleave to the east.

Trees bordering the rivers and the open spaces are an especially picturesque feature and there are a number of mature specimen trees both here and elsewhere in the village including Copper Beech trees, Oak and Ash.

4.2.5. Materials

Natural stone is a predominant building material. The local hard red sandstones and Devonian shales are most widely used as stone rubble for cottages and boundary walls. Many of the cottages have been rendered and colour-washed either over stone rubble, or in some cases, cob has been used.

Thatch was originally the predominant roofing material, with several good examples of its use surviving, especially The Royal Oak and adjoining cottages. Elsewhere clay pantiles from the Bridgwater area of Somerset or Welsh slate have replaced thatch.

4.2.6. Boundary

The proposed boundary incorporates the historic core of the village. A map is at the end of the paper. There are 13 listed buildings and 2 Scheduled Ancient Monuments inside the proposed Conservation Area. Where possible the boundary follows physical boundaries. The proposed boundary is shown at the back of the draft appraisal documents. The boundary excludes the new recent development behind Royal Oak Farm. It also does not include buildings to the west of the church along Ash Lane, more modern properties to the east of Exford Road and along Halse Lane as they lay outside the historic core and are not of historic or architectural merit. Where the line of the Conservation Area is on a physical boundary this boundary is considered to be inside the Conservation Area. A schedule of the properties within the proposed boundary can be found in Appendix 1.

Further discussion on the boundary can be found in paragraph 5.1.3.

4.3. **Simonsbath**

4.3.1. Summary of significance

Only a single building existed in Simonsbath until 1819. It lay at the heart of the Royal Forest and was at the centre of John Knight's efforts to reclaim Exmoor and transform it into an agricultural landscape. It is essentially an early to mid 19th century estate village set around the 17th century Simonsbath House, the earliest building in the village.

It has a unique history with a hidden story of designed gardens, industrial activity, an unfinished mansion and farming enterprise that reveal a long narrative from the late Georgian period until the end of the 19th century- an era of great change and development across the country. The suggested Conservation Area boundary encompasses the historic core of the village. The village is notable for its collection of mid 19th century buildings that played a role in the Knight estate and later the Fortescue estate. This group of buildings provide a unique window into the reclamation of Exmoor during the 19th century.

Simonsbath does not have the varied range of building styles and types seen in other villages on Exmoor, the overall pattern is of a style with little ornament or architectural detail. John Knight's buildings are low and have a 'Scottish' character while Frederic Knight buildings are taller with steeper pitch roofs. Stone is the dominant building material. In the Knight era building stone was left exposed while Fortescue buildings are predominantly rendered.

4.3.2. Built Form

Prior to c1819 Simonsbath House was the only structure in the Royal Forest. Between 1819 and 1833 at least 14 structures were constructed in Simonsbath including a granary, workshops, White Rock Cottage, kennels and stables. At the same time a new mansion was being constructed behind Simonsbath House

The 19th century estate village would have had a certain amount of uniformity. John Knight appears to have adopted the highland bothy style for his estate cottages planned around a great regency house. While the four listed buildings in Simonsbath are protected by their listed status, it is, in many senses, the collection of remaining buildings built for John Knight, Frederic Knight and Lord Fortescue which, together, give the village its distinctive upland-estate-village character.

John Knight's surviving buildings – White Rock Cottage, Higher Stables, and Pound Cottages – are distinguished by their low, croft-like character with dressed stone reveals and round-headed arches. Frederic Knight's taller buildings tended towards steeper roof pitches and brick reveals.

Subsequent ownership of the estate has resulted in some fragmentation with several properties becoming privately owned rather than estate housing. There has been very little modern development in the settlement but where it has occurred this has generally been infill.

4.3.3. Open spaces and routes

The main character of Simonsbath lies in its open nature, its dramatic and beautiful setting in the valley of the River Barle and the views to the surrounding landscape.

The long-distance footpath, the Two Moors Way, also runs through the village. In addition to the public rights of way, there are permitted paths through Birch Cleave and Ashcombe, and the picnic area at the southern end of Ashcombe is openly accessible.

The moorland on Halscombe and Cornham Brake to the south and southwest of the village and the meadow below Simonsbath Bridge are also open access land. The River Barle and the adjoining flood plain areas are designated as a SSSI.

Birch Cleave Woods – a beech woodland which formed part of John Knight's original planting scheme for the setting of the house are a prominent landscape feature and provide a sense of enclosure to the settlement-this woodland is protected by a Tree Preservation Order.

Ashcombe is a local wildlife site and an important late Picturesque designed landscape and flower garden formerly associated with John Knight's mansion.

As a subtle Picturesque landscape, it is easy to overlook the critical roles of gaps, open and neutral spaces in framing and composing designed views of the landscape. Not all of these views have yet been identified and plotted.

4.3.4. Trees and hedges

The landscape would have been largely treeless before the arrival of the Knight family and most of the woodlands in and around Simonsbath today are a result of the work of both John and Frederic. There is also record of tree planting by the Fortescues in the late 19th and early 20th centuries by their forester David Hoggan.

Birch Cleave Wood is a prominent landscape feature that provides a sense of enclosure to the settlement. The whole of the wood is under a Tree Preservation Order, designated for its amenity value. Oak plantation, forming part of Ashcombe Gardens is a mixed woodland and contains some fine Beech clumps.

Beech trees are the most obvious species in Simonsbath with other noteworthy examples on the roadside behind Boeveys.

The strong sense of enclosure the wider landscape provides is further enhanced, especially on the approaches to the village by hedgerow banks, sometimes in deep cuttings known locally as “holloways.”

4.3.5. Materials

Natural stone is a predominant building material. The local Morte slate is easily cleaved and worked. There are numerous disused quarries around the village from which the stone was sourced in the 19th century. Drystone walls around the village are a key characteristic that are not seen widely on Exmoor outside Simonsbath.

Slate is the dominant roofing material in Simonsbath (although there is evidence that the 1820s buildings in Ashcombe were thatched). It is likely that the slate was originally sourced from Cornwall and trade links across the Bristol Channel grew more and more Welsh slate was used. Corrugated iron also features in Simonsbath to a number of agricultural structures.

4.3.6. Boundary

The proposed boundary incorporates the historic core of the village. A map is at the end of the paper and in the appraisal document. It includes four listed buildings. Where possible the boundary follows physical boundaries. The proposed boundary is shown at the back of the draft appraisal documents. It includes Ashcombe plantation and Birchcleave Wood. It extends as far as West Gate Cottages to the west and incorporates land to the south of West Gate as this includes the water management system for the sawmill. It does not include properties to the east at Winstitchen Cross as they lay outside the historic core and are not of historic or architectural merit. Where the line of the Conservation Area boundary is on a physical boundary, this boundary is considered to be inside the Conservation Area. A schedule of the properties within the proposed boundary can be found in Appendix 1.

5. Public Consultation

5.1 Winsford

5.1.1 Consultation

Letters were sent to 57 properties in the village and to the Church Diocese of Bath and Wells. Only residents/landowners inside the proposed boundary received a letter. Posters were also put up around the village stating the proposal with details of the consultation. A six-week public consultation ran from the date of the letter (September 22nd to November 4th 2022). Two public drop-in sessions were held in this period.

5.1.2 Public meetings and Response

The first drop-in event was held at Winsford Village Hall on Monday 3rd October 4-6pm. Around 28-30 attended this event in total. Approximately 20 residents arrived together at 4pm and so the drop-in format was abandoned. Chairs were set up and ENPA Officers commenced by explaining the rationale behind the proposal and the impacts.

Other residents arrived over the next 2 hours. A small minority were very much against the proposal. Others spoke in favour and asked for a calm debate. It was explained that the Parish Council had supported the principle of the idea and wished to start a public consultation period to seek views of villagers. Members of the Parish Council arrived later in the event and answered questions directed at them.

One resident expressed frustration at the timing of the meetings making them hard to attend.

Due to the high attendance of the first session, the second session was run differently and was attended by the Historic Buildings Officer and the Head of Planning and Sustainable Development along with members of the Parish Council. This was held on October 20th between 12-2pm. Villagers were asked to queue and were admitted in 3s or 4s by a Parish Councillor. Approximately 30 residents attended. An estimate would be that around half had not attended the first meeting. The Chair of the Parish Council sat in to hear the discussions.

Comments boxes were left out during both drop-in sessions.

- 1st drop-in session - three comments in suggestions box. Two of support and one of objection.
- 2nd drop-in session - eight comments in suggestions box. One of support, four against and three with general questions.
- Throughout the public consultation numerous comments were received.
- Phone calls: Four in total-Two in support (from same individual) and a further two with questions who did not offer support or objection.
- Letters: Three expressing objections. (Two were joint signed- so five residents total). One letter in support from one resident.
- Emails: Numerous emails chains with 21 separate residents. 5 residents indicated support if boundary amendments were made. 7 emails of support (this is a total of 9 residents when counting joint signatures). 8 emails of objection (this is a total of 11 total when counting joint signatures). One indicated potential support of the scheme if it did not include their building.
- As stated above it is hard to be sure there is not double counting, however the following figures give an accurate representation of the responses received in total.
- 14 residents supported designation.
- 21 residents did not support designation.
- Approximately 5 residents indicated some support subject to changes to boundary position.
- As the letters went to 57 separate addresses in the village there is clearly a number of residents who have not provided any formal comment.

The above do not include correspondence with the Chair of the Parish Council- see below.

5.1.3 Main areas of concern

Concern	ENPA Response
<p>Location of the proposed boundary</p> <p>The location of the boundary seems to be a major issue amongst residents. A range of views on this were raised.</p> <p>These mainly focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusion of the whole village • The inclusion of the garage • The exclusion of houses at Royal Court • The inclusion of the former stables opposite Quarme Mounceaux 	<p>Conservation Areas very rarely include whole settlements and there is no justification to include all properties in the village in this instance. Whilst the properties along the east side of Exford Road and further up Ash and Halse Lane represent development of the village they are not buildings of architectural or historic interest and lie away from the historic core of the village. Such development is excluded in other existing Conservation Areas.</p> <p>The former garage was a particular area of concern and while some residents have been of the view it should be included, the garage has been removed from the proposed Conservation Area. The main reason for including it was that it is so centrally located and an important part of the social development of the village. However, it is not a building of any architectural or historic interest and can be excluded while maintaining a logical boundary.</p> <p>It is also the view of the Historic Buildings Officer that the new buildings behind Royal Oak Farm should remain outside the Conservation Area as they are an incongruous later development.</p> <p>Residents expressed confusion about how ENPA could recently grant permission to a development but then be of the view it is of poor quality. These buildings were granted permission in the 1990s under a very different planning system. The recent application (2018) for the site which led to their construction was a certificate of lawfulness that sought the lawful implementation of planning permission ref. 6/40/91/110. Whilst they are quite prominent in the village this does not justify their inclusion.</p> <p>The Historic Buildings Officer is strongly of the view that the stables should be included. Despite their poor condition they have the potential to be an attractive group of buildings. They also have a historic relationship with the village and are shown on the 1840s Tithe map</p>

	<p>and the 1880s First Edition Ordnance Survey mapping.</p> <p>Conservation Area boundaries are often altered over time and are not fixed in perpetuity. A schedule of the properties can be found in the Appendix 1</p>
Impact on property prices and young people buying houses.	<p>Affordable housing for young people in the area is currently a major issue. There is no reason to believe designation will impact this. There is evidence to suggest that property prices are higher in Conservation Areas but this is marginal and likely more than offset by other external economic factors such as wages and demand.</p> <p>ENPA is not the local housing authority, but we do have strong policies that support local housing for local people. Local needs affordable housing can be constructed in and around Conservation Areas.</p>
Impact on solar development	<p>Conservation Area designation does not impact on existing permitted development rights for solar on roofs. Planning permission would however be required if a resident wished to fit solar on any wall facing a highway</p>
Creation of a divide in the village	<p>This was a view expressed both in relation to dividing the villagers into those inside and outside the boundary and dividing those who are for or against the proposal.</p> <p>As already stated above, the boundary of a Conservation Area rarely includes a whole settlement The line of the boundary should not be seen as dividing wall around the village.</p> <p>No sense of division is expressed in the existing Conservation Areas in the National Park. It is hoped and expect that any division will be short lived regardless of whether or not designation takes place.</p>
Extra bureaucracy and works to trees	<p>See Simonsbath response 5.2.3</p>

5.1.4 Response of the Parish Council:

The Parish Council voted on the matter in a meeting on Monday 28th November 2022. The draft minutes from this meeting are as follows:

To discuss progress re the ENPA Conservation Area proposal and what further involvement the council needs to take – Following discussion it was decided that the council would not proceed with the ballot as on reflection it was not possible to

ensure it was carried out fairly within the timescale. It was recognised that people had been given the opportunity to feedback directly to the National Park at the two face to face meetings and through online feedback/letter writing. As Parish Councillors there is a responsibility to make the best judgement on behalf of the village and to agree what is in the best interest of the village going forward.

The Council has received correspondence giving support to the proposal. In the West Somerset/Exmoor area a number of other councils/villages have gone ahead with the changes. Residents have expressed a range of views on this, both those living in and outside of the proposed designated Conservation Area. It was recognised that if the Councillors could not agree on the proposal that would, in fact, be a fair representation of the village views. Voting took place on whether the Councillors agree that the proposed Conservation Area would be a good thing for the village – 3 for, 1 abstained and 2 against.

5.2 Simonsbath

5.2.1 Consultation

Letters were sent to 33 properties/landowners in the village and to the Church Diocese of Bath and Wells. Posters were also put up around the village stating the proposal with details of the consultation. A 6-week public consultation ran from the date of the letter (September 22nd to November 4th 2022). Two public drop-in sessions were held in this period.

5.2.2 Public Meetings and Response

- First drop-in event: was held at White Rock Cottage on Tuesday 4th October 4-6pm. This was attended by the Historic Buildings Officer and one of the Planning Officers.
- Five residents attended this event. There were general concerns over additional bureaucracy, impact on permitted development rights, works to trees and expressions of frustration regarding the performance of the planning service.
- No resident gave a formal indication of approval or objection to the scheme, but one expressed the view that the general feeling in the village was against the proposal.
- Second drop-in event: was held in White Rock Cottage on Friday 21st October 12-2pm. This was attended by the Historic Buildings Officer and the Head of Conservation and Access. 3 residents attended the event. There were comments about the merit of designation in Simonsbath given it is in a National Park and additional costs to residents/extra bureaucracy.
- It was clear that 2 of the 3 in attendance were not in support of the proposal. The other attendee did not give a formal view.
- Comments boxes were left out during both drop-in sessions. No comments were deposited in either session.
- Throughout the public consultation few comments were received from residents.
- Phone calls: None (other than with the Parish Council)
- Letters: One via email
- Emails: Three of objection (plus Parish Council correspondence)

5.2.3 Main areas of concern

Many similar concerns were raised by Winsford residents as Simonsbath residents. These are not repeated in the below summary unless the concern is specifically related to Simonsbath.

Concern	ENPA Response
Increase in time in determining applications/added bureaucracy	<p>Planning applications to works inside Conservation Areas are not subject to a different process to applications outside Conservation Areas. Conservation Area designation does not mean that no change or new development can occur.</p> <p>ENPA regularly receives and determines planning applications for development in the 16 Conservation Areas that currently exist in the National Park.</p>
Simonsbath is already well protected	<p>A recurring theme that came up was that due to Simonsbath having an active Parish Council and the Simonsbath and Exmoor Heritage Trust, and that ENPA have ownership of much of the surrounding land, it means that there are already good restraining factors in place to prevent undesirable change.</p> <p>Whilst it could be considered that there is currently little threat to the settlement, it does not mean this will be the case in the future. Ownerships can change quickly, and it is easier to prevent harm rather than react to harm. The loss or demolition of small but important features can result in significant harm to settlements and can occur without planning permission, as can the loss of architectural detailing and design features. Conservation Area designation can help prevent this</p>
Timing of proposal due to financial issues currently facing the National Park Authority.	<p>This work is a statutory duty of Exmoor National Park Authority and is overdue. It can be undertaken with minimal cost and is factored into the Historic Building Officer's work programme. The ongoing cost associated with the administration of Conservation Areas, such as dealing with works to trees applications is minimal and can be managed under the current staff/funding structure. There is</p>

	no reason to believe the creation of Simonsbath Conservation Area will have any noticeable impact on National Park Authority finances or operations.
Works to trees	Concerns were raised about this, in particular when hedging is required. A 6 week notice period is required for works to trees over 75mm in diameter 1.5m above the ground. This is a free and simple form. The process is in place to ensure works are necessary and will not cause harm to trees that are important to the village. If a tree is dead or dangerous then permission is not required but it is recommended that this is evidenced and that the Tree Officer is informed. The ENPA Woodland Team are on hand to provide advice.

5.2.4 Response of the Parish Council

The Parish Council are objecting to the proposal.

These objections are based around the following points:

- Unclear of benefits designation provides.
- Extra burden on residents to notify ENPA in relation to works to tree.
- Additional burden to ENPA staff and associated cost to taxpayers.
- Location of boundary not including full village.
- Existing planning regulations being adequate.

Please refer to Appendix 3 for the full Parish Council response.

6. Statute and Policy

- 6.1. The local planning authority is under a general duty to ensure the preservation and enhancement of Conservation Areas, and a particular duty to prepare proposals to that end.
- 6.2. Notice must be given to the local planning authority before works are carried out to certain trees in that area. If a tree subject to an application is considered to be of high amenity value or helps define the character of the Conservation Area, ENPA may consent to fell by placing a TPO (Tree Protection Order) on that tree.
- 6.3. Planning permission is required for the demolition of any unlisted building in a Conservation Area and the local planning authority or the Secretary of State may take enforcement action or institute criminal prosecution if permission or consent is not obtained.
- 6.4. The details as to the limits of what works may be carried out without planning permission are somewhat different and extra publicity is given to planning applications affecting Conservation Areas.

- 6.5. The planning authority is to take account of the desirability of preserving and enhancing the character of the area when determining such applications.
- 6.6. The making of Article 4 directions, limiting permitted development rights is more straightforward.
- 6.7. The local planning authority or Secretary of State may be able to take steps to ensure that a building in a Conservation Area is kept in good repair.
- 6.8. The display of advertisements may be somewhat more restricted than elsewhere.
- 6.9. Further relevant duties are contained in other legislation including the Housing Act 1985, the Electricity Act 1989, the Water Industry Act 1991, the Land Drainage Acts 1991 and 1994, and the Environment Act 1995. These are expressed in general terms, and do not specifically refer to Conservation Areas, but the bodies to which these Acts relate should take account of Conservation Area designation when undertaking works.
- 6.10. Policy CE-D3, Conserving Heritage Assets, states that: Development proposals affecting Conservation Areas should ensure that: a) the character or appearance of the area is preserved or enhanced; b) they deliver high quality design and incorporate materials that reflect the scale, architectural quality and detailing of the area.
- 6.11. Policy CE-S4, Cultural Heritage and Historic Environment, states that: Development proposals affecting heritage assets (identified on the Exmoor National Park Historic Environment Record) and their settings, will be considered in a manner appropriate to their significance including: a) designated Conservation Areas, scheduled monuments, listed buildings and registered historic parks and gardens.
- 6.12. Other Local Plan policies such as CE-D5 Advertisements and Private Road Signs, CE-S5 Principles for the Conversion or Structural Alteration of Existing Buildings, CE-S1 Landscape and Seascape Character and CC-S5 Low Carbon and Renewable Energy Development, also make reference to policies CE-D3 and CE-S4.

7. Grant Aid and Funding for Conservation Areas

- 7.1 Future funding/grant provision for improvement works is not guaranteed but designation does provide more opportunity for grant funded works. Historic England are currently running a Conservation Area partnership grant programme. This is a grant scheme that is run in partnership with Local Authorities.
- 7.2 There is a statutory duty for ENPA to formulate enhancement proposals to its Conservation Areas. Any enhancement proposals will involve village consultation.

8. Next Steps

- 8.1. Should the proposal be approved by members the Conservation Area designation will be in place from the time and date of the vote.
- 8.2. An advert must be placed in a local newspaper and the London Gazette. Historic England and the Secretary of State will be informed of the decision.

Thomas Thurlow
Historic Buildings Officer
March 2023

Property Schedule - Winsford:

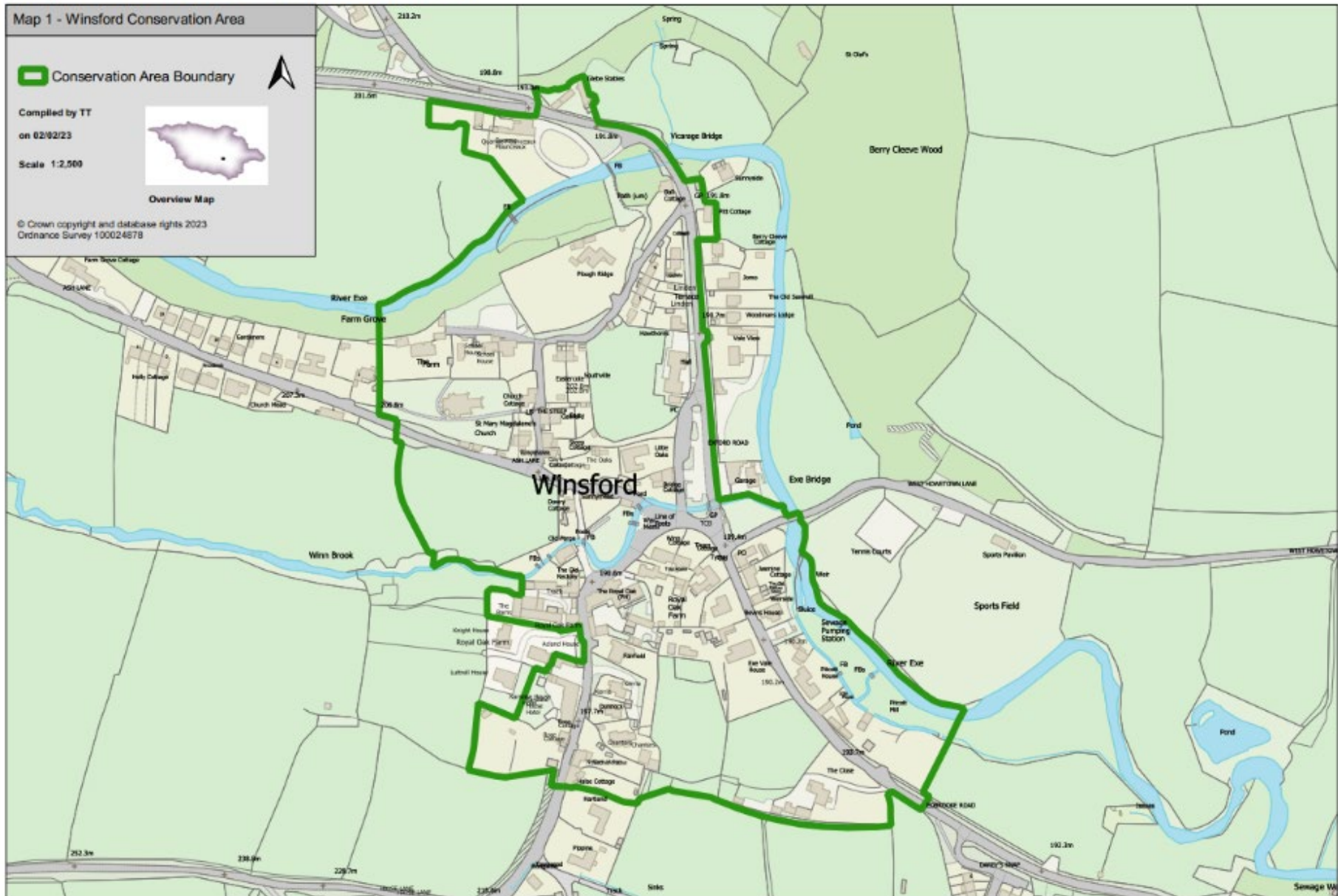
FIRST LINE ADDRESS	VILLAGE	POSTCODE
1 Linden Terrace	Winsford	TA24 7JG
2, Linden Terrace	Winsford	TA24 7JG
3, Linden Terrace	Winsford	TA24 7JG
4, Linden Terrace	Winsford	TA24 7JG
Ball Cottage	Winsford	TA24 7JE
Beech Cottage	Winsford	TA24 7JE
Bevins Cottage	Winsford	TA24 7JE
Bridge Cottage	Winsford	TA24 7JE
Brookwood	Winsford	TA24 7JE
Chanters	Winsford	TA24 7JE
Church Cottage	Winsford	TA24 7JQ
Dowry Cottage	Winsford	TA24 7JE
Dunnock	Winsford	TA24 7JE
East Galliford	Winsford	TA24 7JQ
Eastercott	Winsford	TA24 7JQ
Exe House	Winsford	TA24 7JE
Fairfield	Winsford	TA24 7JE
Genista	Winsford	TA24 7JF
Greystones	Winsford	TA24 7JQ
Halse Cottage	Winsford	TA24 7JE
Hawthorns	Winsford	TA24 7JE
Honeysuckle Cottage	Winsford	TA24 7JQ
Jasmine Cottage	Winsford	TA24 7JE
Karslake Cottage	Winsford	TA24 7JE
Karslake House	Winsford	TA24 7JE
Kerria	Winsford	TA24 7JE
Little Oaks	Winsford	TA24 7JE
Little Pitcott	Winsford	TA24 7JE
Netherhalse	Winsford	TA24 7JE
Oaks Cottage	Winsford	TA24 7JQ
Old Forge	Winsford	TA24 7JE
Old Tythe	Winsford	TA24 7JE
Pitcott House	Winsford	TA24 7JE
Pitcott Mill	Winsford	TA24 7JE
Pitt Cottage	Winsford	TA24 7JF
Plough Ridge	Winsford	TA24 7JQ
Post Office	Winsford	TA24 7JE
Quarme Mounceaux House	Winsford	TA24 7JF
Rose Cottage	Winsford	TA24 7JE
Royal Oak Farm	Winsford	TA24 7JE
Royal Oak Inn	Winsford	TA24 7JE
School House	Winsford	TA24 7JQ
Steep Cottage	Winsford	TA24 7JQ
Sunnymead	Winsford	TA24 7JE

The Barns	Winsford	TA24 7JE
The Close	Winsford	TA24 7JE
The Coach House	Winsford	TA24 7JF
The Farm	Winsford	TA24 7JQ
The Old Rectory	Winsford	TA24 7JE
The Old School	Winsford	TA24 7JQ
The Old Timber Store	Winsford	TA24 7JE
The Trap House	Winsford	TA24 7JE
Thorne Cottage	Winsford	TA24 7JE
Weirside	Winsford	TA24 7JE
West Galliford	Winsford	TA24 7JQ
Winn Cottage	Winsford	TA24 7JE

Property Schedule - Simonsbath:

FIRST LINE ADDRESS	VILLAGE	POSTCODE
1 Jubilee Villas	Simonsbath	TA24 7SH
1 Knights Barn	Simonsbath	TA24 7SH
1 West Cottage	Simonsbath	TA24 7SL
1 Westgate Cottages	Simonsbath	TA24 7SN
2 Jubilee Villas	Simonsbath	TA24 7SH
2 Knights Barn	Simonsbath	TA24 7SH
2 West Cottages	Simonsbath	TA24 7SL
2 Westgate Cottages	Simonsbath	TA24 7SN
3 Knights Barn	Simonsbath	TA24 7SH
3 West Cottages	Simonsbath	TA24 7SL
4 West Cottages	Simonsbath	TA24 7SL
5 West Cottages	Simonsbath	TA24 7SL
6 West Cottages	Simonsbath	TA24 7SL
Ashcombe Cottage	Simonsbath	TA24 7SH
Birch View	Simonsbath	TA24 7JS
Boeveys Restaurant & Tea Rooms	Simonsbath	TA24 7SH
Diana Lodge	Simonsbath	TA24 7SH
Hawkridge	Simonsbath	TA24 7SH
Hillcrest House	Simonsbath	TA24 7SJ
Knights Barn	Simonsbath	TA24 7SH
Pound Cottage	Simonsbath	TA24 7SH
Rose Cottage	Simonsbath	TA24 7SH
Simonsbath Barton	Simonsbath	TA24 7SJ
Simonsbath House Hotel	Simonsbath	TA24 7SH
Simonsbath Sawmills	Simonsbath	TA24 7SL
Stable Flat	Simonsbath	TA24 7SH
Teasel Cottage	Simonsbath	TA24 7SH
The Cottage. Birch Cleave Barns	Simonsbath	TA24 7SH
The Exmoor Forest Inn	Simonsbath	TA24 7SH
The Old Vicarage	Simonsbath	TA24 7SH
The Old Pottery	Simonsbath	TA24 7SH

Map 1 - Winsford Conservation Area



Map 1 - Simonsbath Conservation Area



Proposal for Simonsbath to become a Conservation Area ...

As custodians of the Exmoor Parish, the Parish Council would firstly like to place on record that it is unequivocally behind the proposal of conserving everything that is good, attractive and old (where fit for purpose) in the village of Simonsbath. This includes preserving the charm and character of the village. The PC takes its responsibilities very seriously when it comes to avoiding any unsuitable development.

From the outset, it has been unclear to the Parish Council what real benefits or extra protections the proposed designation brings over and above the National Park status. The PC also prides itself on having an excellent working relationship with the ENPA when it comes to matters concerning the Parish of Exmoor.

Having examined all available facts, it appears that the only apparent change is the requirement to notify the ENPA of any tree works and or apply for permission to demolish certain buildings/boundary walls.

The restriction to notify tree works, which includes any pruning of non-fruit trees, extends to any tree with a trunk diameter of over 3 inches (75mm). The Parish Council feels that such burdensome regulations are not necessary in Simonsbath, especially since all members of the PC and parishioners already place a high value on any trees in the village.

In recent years any trees which have been lost to the village have either come about as a result of extreme weather conditions or obvious disease, in which case they have been removed because they pose a danger to the public (or highway).

As a footnote, the majority of trees in the designated Conservation Area are ENPA-owned and in the opinion of the Parish Council, this will just introduce a waste of taxpayers' money, where the ENPA has to notify its own already over-stretched Planning Department of proposed tree works and obtain the necessary permissions. We are aware that within the ENPA this work will be carried out involving salaried officers, nevertheless a value has to be placed on their time and the PC feel this could profitably be spent on other priorities.

Therefore, as far as this aspect is concerned, the Exmoor Parish Council feels that Conservation Area status is likely to introduce an additional layer of bureaucracy without providing any clear benefits to its parishioners.

The Parish Council also feels that the proposed boundaries seem somewhat arbitrary and only include some of the properties, which are generally considered to be within the village. As an example, Winstitchen Farm and those around Winstitchen Lane are not included.

After seeking further clarification from the ENPA, Conservation Area status would not prevent, for example, UPVC windows or artificial slates being used in the village, unless that is with more direction (such as an Article IV notice) and as such none are planned. Therefore, as far as the Parish Council is concerned, what benefit is there?

Conservation Area status for the village of Simonsbath could give rise to such unintended consequences as becoming a material planning consideration for applications OUTSIDE the proposed Conservation Area - i.e. the Planning Department would have to consider what the consequences are of a proposed application on the neighbouring Conservation Area.

As far as planning applications go within the proposed Conservation Area of Simonsbath, the Parish Council has real concerns that Conservation Area status could be used as yet another 'stick' with which to beat any planning applicants. As such, the existing ENPA planning regulations are perfectly adequate to serve the needs of the community and village of Simonsbath.

Further to that point, the Parish Council believes that the current National Park designation (& stewardship of the PC) is perfectly adequate to preserve the character and charm of the village of Simonsbath.

In response to the '**Summary of the Public Consultation for the Proposed Creation of Simonsbath as a Conservation Area**' document, **circulated on 24th November 2022**. This was after the two drop-in opportunities for parishioners to attend in order to air their views. The underlying opinion created by the **Summary** was that both days in question were poorly attended with minimal follow-up.

It should be noted that **NO** Parish Councillors attended either of the 2 hour drop-in sessions (since they had already had several Q&A sessions with the Historic Buildings Officer), preferring to allow available, interested parishioners the chance to air their views without any interference.

The figure of 8 residents attending these drop-ins might be construed as the Parish being disinterested in the entire proposal. **Members can be assured that this is definitely NOT the case.**

There are (or were) two holiday cottages, empty properties at the time, plus the sale of a property going through during this period. Councillors canvassed especially elderly parishioners, who were unlikely to attend any consultation and once again the reports which came back were against the proposal.

When you also consider that there are 5 Parish Councillors, who are unanimously opposed to Simonsbath becoming a Conservation Area, along with their partners and any extended family. Their individual opinions have not been included in this **Summary** document because they did not attend either day, feeling that their opinions would be registered in this Parish Council formal response. **This means you can safely swell the number of opponents to the proposal by at least a further 15 residents (& list a further five properties opposed to it).**

The **Summary** also states that no 'phone calls had been received. Yet the Chair of the Parish Council had quite a lengthy call with the Historic Buildings Officer, to inform him of the unanimous opposition to the proposal by the Parish Council, along with the concerns of a number of parishioners. Indeed many of the issues raised in that discussion have been mentioned in the **Summary** document.

As far as the possibility of improved future funding, as a consequence of being in an Exmoor Conservation Area is concerned (something of obvious interest to the Parish Council and the Simonsbath and Exmoor Heritage Trust), the Parish Council in its investigation of this claim heard decidedly mixed opinions. However, none which categorically suggested any funding was greatly enhanced through being in a Conservation Area.

A point of further clarification, **'The Simonsbath Steering Group'** as mentioned in the **Conclusion** of the **Summary** document is no longer in existence. It has been incorporated into **'The Simonsbath & Exmoor Heritage Trust'**. The Trust and the Parish Council have very strong links.

The Parish Council will obviously continue to work constructively with the ENPA when it comes to considering planning applications within the Parish and will, when providing feedback, bear in mind the sensitive need to conserve all the positive elements of the village of Simonsbath. As mentioned above, the PC takes very seriously the importance of maintaining an excellent working relationship with the ENPA when it comes to matters concerning the Parish of Exmoor.

In conclusion though, the Parish Council are **not** persuaded of the merits of Conservation Area status for Simonsbath and do **NOT** support the proposed designation of the ENPA. We believe the existing collaboration between the Parish Council, the Simonsbath & Exmoor Heritage Trust and the ENPA is perfectly fit for purpose and certainly more than adequate to meet the challenges of taking Simonsbath forward into 21st Century.

We would like to thank you for reading our objections. We hope you will acknowledge our reasons for leaving the village Simonsbath under the stewardship of the people who love it as it is and have its very best interests at heart.

Exmoor Parish Council (January 2023).

EXMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

4 April 2023

THE ENPA ESTATE: CURRENT WORK INCLUDING THE 20 YEAR STRATEGY, CAR PARKS AND DRIVER FARM

Report of the Head of Conservation and Access

Purpose of the report: To provide an update on various workstreams on the Estate in respect of the 20 Year Strategy, Car Parks and Driver Farm.

RECOMMENDATIONS: The Authority is recommended to:

- (1) APPROVE the ENPA Estate Strategy 2023-2043
- (2) APPROVE in principle schemes for Haddon and Exford car parks
- (3) NOTE progress at Driver Farm

Authority Priority: Support delivery of the Exmoor National Park Partnership Plan – These proposals will ensure the more effective management of ENPA assets and the overall operation of the Estate.

Legal and Equality Implications: It is considered there will be no adverse impacts on any protected groups.

Consideration has been given to the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998 and an assessment of the implications of the recommendation(s) of this report is as follows: There are considered to be no human rights issues in relation to this report.

Financial and Risk Implications: The financial and risk implications of the recommendations of this report have been assessed as follows: schemes for the two car parks will cost c. £30,000 depending on our approach (see below).

Climate Change Response: There are considered to be positive impacts of these proposals in terms of climate change mitigation in that the Estate Strategy explicitly endorses climate change mitigation as a function of the Estate and secondly that the proposals for Exford car park include two electric vehicle charging points.

1. Introduction / Background

1.1 This paper presents various pieces of work that have been carried out in respect of ENPA's Estate recently. These are:

- The Estate Strategy 2023-2043
- Proposals to improve ENPA car parks at Haddon and Exford (following on from the 'Charging for Exmoor National Park Authority Services' paper in December 2022).
- Driver Farm

2. The Estate Strategy 2023-2043 (see Annex 1)

- 2.1 The Land Visioning exercise carried out during 2020/21 recommended that a high-level strategy was produced for ENPA's Estate. It will ensure long term direction of the Estate and provide explicit priorities.
- 2.2 A draft 20-year strategy entitled 'Making a Difference' is appended to this paper (Annex 1).
- 2.3 The strategy comprises a Mission Statement showing how the strategy will enable positive change across the Estate over 20 years.
- 2.4 The strategy lays out 10 underlying principles for the operation of our Estate. These are:

- to **deliver National Park purposes**, which are 'to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park' and 'to promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the National Park by the public'.

In carrying out these purposes the Authority also has a **duty** to seek to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities within the national park and the ENPA Estate should play its part in this duty.

In particular, as part of delivering the purposes, we see **Nature Recovery** as a key ambition for our land and expect this to be a focus of our energy for decades to come.

- To provide a warm welcome for all, especially for those groups that are currently underrepresented.
 - To provide exemplars from which others might learn.
 - To be financially sustainable in its overall operation (and evidenced) and generate income for reinvestment.
 - Focus on partnership working.
 - To mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change
 - To deliver public goods and integrated benefits.
 - To support the development of local skills and enterprises.
 - To provide space for innovation.
 - To continue to be safe, compliant and legal,
- 2.5 The strategy will be driven by clear outcomes and a suite of targets/milestones to achieve progress. Many of these will be developed in the coming year in step with the emerging new Partnership Plan.

3. Proposals for the ENPA Car Parks at Haddon

- 3.1 The ENPA car park at Haddon is an isolated, rural site on the southern side of Exmoor (with a single neighbouring house). It lies on high ground adjacent to the ENPA-owned block of moorland called Haddon Hill. The land overlooks Wimbleball Reservoir.
- 3.2 The car park has an informal layout, with direct access to moorland. It provides visitor information and public toilets, and there is currently no formal charging

mechanism there. The site is well used by local people, hunt meetings and also by visitors to Exmoor as it links well to the South West Lakes Trust's facilities at Wimbleball Reservoir.

- 3.3 The current proposal is to broadly retain the overall layout of the site and to introduce pay machines with a view to covering the costs of maintaining the public toilets and other costs arising from the site. We also propose to improve the signage and interpretation, provide some picnic benches and enhance the wildlife value through additional tree planting and changing the grass cutting regime.
- 3.4 The cost to implement this scheme will be around £15,000, but we will allow some contingency, so that recommended costings are £18,000. There is some uncertainty about whether the future 4G mobile signal can accommodate contactless payment. We consider contactless payment as an essential requirement and if the 4G signal is not adequate we will need to bring power and a phone line onto site which will add an additional one-off cost.
- 3.5 It is important that local communities and regular visitors are consulted and informed about this proposal before any plans are implemented and we will carry that out if approval is given in principle for the scheme.
- 3.6 A plan showing the proposed layout can be found at Annex 2.

4. Proposals for the ENPA Car Park at Exford

- 4.1 The ENPA car park at Exford is very different to Haddon. It lies close to the centre of the village and was created from empty land at the same time as the ENPA Depot was built; the Depot lies beyond the car park and is immediately adjacent to it. The car park is well used by the local community, the primary school and visitors to Exmoor and is an important facility within the village. The car park is well placed for local facilities and access to the public rights of way network. Within the car park is a public toilet that is maintained by Exford Parish Council.
- 4.2 The car park is approached by a side road from the village, which in effect passes through the car park and provides access to the village sewage treatment works beyond. This is a factor in the development of any scheme for the car park, because access must be maintained for lorries at all times.
- 4.3 The car park has a hard surface and on the south side there is a small grass area beside the bank of the River Exe. This is notionally a picnic area but has no benches or other facilities and is fenced off from the river.
- 4.4 The Head of Conservation and Access attended a meeting of Exford Parish Council on 27th September 2022 to listen to the views of Parish Councillors and so that those views could inform the development of the scheme for the car park. ENPA Officers also met on site to discuss how the facility could be improved. The present proposal is based on the findings of both of these meetings. Some of the key principles established are:
 - i. the car park is not large enough and yet is constrained by the River Exe SSSI nearby and any development in that direction is undesirable on nature conservation grounds.
 - ii. there is scope for electric vehicle charging points.
 - iii. there is scope for pay machines, so long as there is provision for free short stay to provide for school drop-offs/pick-ups and use of the village facilities;

free parking for the school bus(es). Provision for a season ticket/permit scheme.

- iv. a basic assumption by ENPA Officers is that any charging mechanism introduced at Exford must reimburse the Parish for the cost of the toilet facility (the PC have informed us that this is in the order of £1,200 pa).

4.5 The Parish Council expressed the following specific points:

- i. that charging would displace parking into the village,
- ii. some vehicles are left in the car park for long periods or are dumped there and seem to take a long time to remove,
- iii. the car park is often full,
- iv. ENPA vehicles use the car park frequently and it was asked if they could use space at the Depot instead,
- v. schoolteachers use the car park,
- vi. we should avoid charging for those dropping off/picking up from school,
- vii. we should avoid charging for short stay in order to support local businesses,
- viii. the car park is not big enough and it might be possible to incorporate a bank of spaces down the middle of the car park,
- ix. the village green is very popular so can this be signed from the car park in order to link the car park to the village,
- x. EV charging points would be welcomed,
- xi. overnight motor homes need managing,
- xii. consider parking permits,
- xiii. consider transferable tickets between ENPA car parks,
- xiv. the car park looks tired, cluttered at the entrance and needs a refresh.

4.6 Based on the comments in 4.5, there is considerable scope at Exford to improve the current facilities. A scheme has been drawn up for Members' consideration which seeks to incorporate as many of these comments and principles as possible. Specifically, the new scheme will include two EV charging points (with the possibility to add more in subsequently), six additional parking spaces (by providing a central bank of spaces as suggested by the PC), a characteristic Exmoor routed sign at the centre of the car park (signposting the village green, local services, the tree nursery and valley walks), two spaces for school minibuses and 30 minutes free parking. We have also developed a permit scheme for regular users of ENPA car parks. We will ensure ENPA vehicles make use of allocated spaces outside the Depot as much as possible. We will also refresh and simplify the entrance signage, fencing and bollards. Lastly, we will include a small tree planting scheme within the grass area and provide several accessible benches/ picnic tables. Separately we are currently reviewing the overall management of our car parks, and this will address some of the concerns expressed in the village around inappropriate use of the car park.

4.7 An indicative cost for the scheme is £22,700 if carried out solely by external contractors or £11,990 if ENPA's Field Services (FST) undertake the elements of the scheme which they are competent to complete. We intend to use this latter route as it is more efficient, though FST time is not cost-free.

4.8 It is important that local communities and regular visitors are consulted and informed about this proposal before a planning application is submitted (if required) and we will carry that out if approval in principle is given for the scheme.

4.9 A plan showing the proposed layout can be found at Annex 3.

5. Update on Work at Driver Farm

5.1 The tenant at Driver Farm has decided to relinquish his tenancy and the farm will come back in hand in May 2023.

5.2 Over the last eight months ENPA staff activity has been directed towards the smooth transfer of the property since the tenant's family have been in place there since 1969.

5.3 The Conservation team have prepared a Farm Environment Survey and, as part of that assessment, FWAG (the Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group) have carried out an assessment of the soils on the land. Further survey work is also planned.

5.4 The results of the Farm Environment Survey – which will be finalised by the end of April - will be an important tool in the decision-making process on future options for Driver, as will other arising costs on the buildings and some recent clarity about future environmental support schemes.

5.5 A paper setting out costed options will be brought to Authority in the next few months.

6. Recommendations

6.1 It is recommended that the Estate Strategy is approved.

6.2. It is recommended that the schemes for Haddon and Exford car parks are approved, subject to minor changes being incorporated which may result from the public consultations or the planning process.

Rob Wilson North
Head of Conservation and Access

Dan Barnett
Access and Recreation Manager

Andrew Lawes
Rural Surveyor

March 2023

MAKING A DIFFERENCE



A STRATEGY

FOR EXMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY'S ESTATE

2023-2043

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A STRATEGY FOR EXMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY'S ESTATE 2023-2043

PART 1 - CONTEXT

Introduction

Exmoor National Park Authority (ENPA) currently owns just under 7% of the surface area of the National Park. This comprises mostly open moorland, along with nearly 600 hectares of woodland. The total area of the estate is 4,586 hectares. As well as this large land holding the estate also includes a complex collection of buildings, comprising its head office – Exmoor House – National Park Centres, a Depot at Exford, an outdoor education centre at Pinkery, an historic farmstead, public toilets (set within public car parks), other historic assets and ruined buildings as well as a number of ancillary properties. Such a large estate is unusual amongst National Park Authorities within the UK, but for a small National Park Authority, it is unique.

Alongside the responsibility (and the liabilities) that such a large and complex estate brings, it is important to lay out the current context of this land ownership as this will bear on the 20-year strategy. The focus on the nature and climate crises have become enormous factors in land management and will remain so for the foreseeable future. However, there are other important policy and social factors that are relevant, especially in terms of how they relate to the purposes given to National Parks when they were designated, along with its socio-economic duty. These factors are: firstly, the national public health crisis and the increased focus on health & wellbeing (especially during, and as a result of, the Covid-19 pandemic); secondly, public sector budget pressures; thirdly changes to environmental land management schemes following Brexit with changing policy and funding priorities, including green finance; fourthly the Landscapes Review (2019) and the changing context of what the nation wants from Protected Landscapes (eg greater access to the countryside).

This document lays out a strategy for the estate to provide overall direction for 20 years (2023-2043) and in response to the factors laid out above. For the purposes of this strategy the estate is defined as all land and buildings owned by ENPA, including leased-in assets.

How the ENPA estate was acquired

Most of the estate was transferred from Somerset County Council (SCC) to Exmoor National Park Authority when it became a freestanding Authority in 1997. The initial reasons for SCC acquiring land lies in their policy frameworks over several decades which saw land acquired through, amongst other factors, purchase for strategic reasons (eg to create an outdoor education facility at Pinkery Farm) or through compulsory purchase orders (eg Culbone Woods) in order to prevent detrimental development, such as commercial forestry. ENPA also directly acquired large areas of moorland on

the former royal forest of Exmoor from the Fortescue Estate at South Molton at a time when it was considered vulnerable. Also amongst the land holdings are nearly 600 hectares of predominantly broadleaved woodlands acquired by both public bodies at different dates and for different reasons. A number of assets were subsequently acquired specifically in pursuance of National Park purposes (eg Simonsbath sawmill, the Incline, Tarr Steps woodlands and Timberscombe Woods). Notably there are hardly any assets in Devon the most recent acquisition there being the Lynmouth Pavilion which is now a large National Park Centre incorporating a café franchise.

Taken together the various elements that comprise ENPA's estate do not form a logic or coherent whole because they represent the responses of both SCC and ENPA over nearly six decades. Neither do they have a visible single character as many historic estates do. In these ways they are highly unusual and perhaps this is one reason why there has not previously been a single strategy which all the holdings relate to.

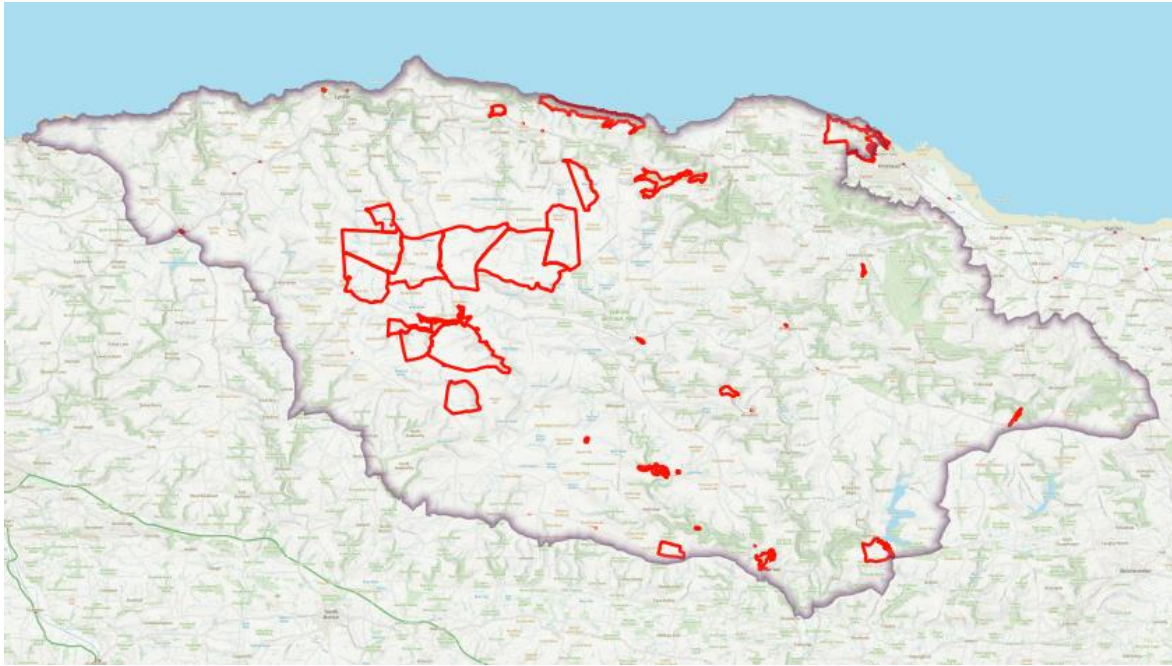
Why do we own land?

It is worth reflecting that a long-term view of protected landscapes should lead us to the conclusion that our most iconic places are now within a system of protections and designations to ensure that conservation objectives are achieved; but alongside this is the reality of an ever-evolving landscape which will always face challenges in the form of novel threats, whether perceived as such or real. During such circumstances policy levers and statutory protections can lag behind evolving threats. In this context, history should teach us that complacency is dangerous and that ultimately land ownership is one of the effective tools for exercising protection and for achieving National Park purposes. Land ownership also provides an effective means of delivering corporate objectives, and in current times these will include sustainable land management in the face of climate change and the decline in nature.

This does not necessarily equate to the permanent retention of land and an ever-growing ENPA estate, rather it should lead to a dynamic estate where land acquisition and disposal is a routine (but probably not frequent) part of the overall management of the estate and is a response to how we seek to protect the special qualities of the National Park against specific threats as well as delivering National Park purposes most effectively over time.

In 2019 ENPA began a Land Visioning exercise which was intended to refocus attention on the estate, both to identify a series of priority projects and also to scrutinize the operation of the estate. The Land Visioning process happened to follow several setbacks for ENPA's estate in terms of addressing significant liabilities.

An underpinning principle of Land Visioning was to explore how the estate could better deliver our priorities in the first half of the 21st century (given that much of it was acquired as far back as the 1970s and 1980s). Land Visioning led to five major projects or workstreams being identified as well as several more fundamental recommendations included a review of the way we monitor progress across the estate and also the production of an Estate Strategy.



ENPA holdings (as of December 2022).

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What is the purpose of the Estate Strategy?

ENPA produces an annual Corporate Plan which sets out the organisation's priorities for the coming year and it is also currently producing a three-year vision and strategy. A statutory requirement for ENPA is to produce a Management Plan on five yearly cycles. This document, called the Partnership Plan, is the main mechanism by which the activities of the organization and partners are coordinated – it is a Plan for Exmoor - and includes a longer-term vision.

Up until this time ENPA has had no overall mechanism for identifying and setting out its long-term objectives specifically for its own estate. Neither had it any consistent way of measuring its performance across the estate. Activity has been framed in the following ways: i. the woodlands, which are mainly in hand, are subject to a Woodland Strategy for Estate and a 10 year Woodland Plan with Forestry Commission as well as individual management agreements with Natural England/Forestry Commission, ii. the moorland and farmland are mainly tenanted (although some is in hand) and activity tends to be led by specific environmental schemes, iii. Some assets (like Pinkery outdoor education centre) have bespoke arrangements, iv. The car parks are managed internally by various ENPA teams (rangers, facilities etc) as appropriate.

In the absence of an overall strategy, although there have been some remarkable initiatives over the years, more generally there has been a tendency to accept the status quo or to be reactive to third party proposals on specific areas of the estate. A strategy is therefore needed to provide continued focus and to drive forward our aspirations. It should have two goals:

- to underpin the long-term direction of the estate
- to set out what ENPA assets collectively are required to achieve in the future.

Without such a strategy, it is impossible to plan for the long term in a way that meets our aspirations and objectives. It is envisaged that the Strategy is progressed through a suite of supporting documents which will be developed and refreshed over time (see Part 3).

PART 2 – THE STRATEGY

MISSION STATEMENT

ENPA ESTATE

Our estate, consisting of tracts of moorland and woodland, supports what we do and helps to deliver the purposes for which Exmoor National Park was designated. Much of the land we own, we hold in trust for the nation. Our estate also comprises buildings and other assets; these also provide public benefit as well as providing income and supporting the local economy.

Our strategy ensures that:

ENPA's estate will continue to provide public benefits for all. We will be both ambitious and aspirational in what our estate can achieve in the future. It will be an exemplar and a leader in the countryside. It will continue to be well managed, but in the years to come will be economically sustainable and more innovative. It will always be a place of inspiration, with a warm welcome for everyone.

Through ENPA's ownership we will work harder to protect and nurture the environment, making it much more resilient in the future. We will care for the social, cultural, historical and economic attributes of the land and properties we own.

Through the estate we will continually provide inspiration, re-creation, wellbeing and understanding for generations now and into the future.

A STRATEGY

FOR EXMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY'S ESTATE

2023-2043

This document is intended to provide long term strategic direction for Exmoor National Park Authority's estate. It will be supported by a series of plans and policies to help achieve those long-term objectives.

Ten principles for the ENPA Estate

A series of key principles are set out below (in no particular order). It is inevitable that some assets will deliver specific objectives (eg landscape quality) whilst others might focus on income generation. An important concept is that the overall estate is required to deliver across the principles below, rather than individual assets being asked to do so on all of them. The title of this strategy, 'Making a Difference' signals that through its ownership ENPA intends to effect positive change in achieving its purposes and over the next twenty years can be seen to make a difference.

1.

The main reason for ENPA owning land and other assets is to **deliver National Park purposes** (but see 4 below). The purposes provide an integrated, and at its best, a holistic bedrock on which to build: 'to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park' and 'to promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the National Park by the public'. In carrying out these purposes the Authority also has a duty to seek to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities within the national park and the ENPA estate should play its part in this duty.

As the purposes can be broadly interpreted, we should be clear and specific – set out within individual management plans - how each asset delivers National Park purposes in particular ways. We should critically assess whether individual assets can do more, and this will be reflected in the management plans for assets (see part 3 below). We must be clear about how others – our partners - can enable us to achieve our objectives for the estate. These will include tenants, graziers, funders, third sector bodies, government agencies, private institutions etc.

In particular, as part of delivering the purposes, we see **Nature Recovery** as a key ambition for our land and expect this to be a focus of our energy for decades to come. We envisage exemplar projects delivering nature recovery in terms of increased coverage of suitable habitats and better habitat connectivity within our estate and beyond its boundaries. These concepts will be developed in conjunction with other factors such as landscape character and the historic environment, so that our approach is holistic at its heart.

Examples of supporting documents: Natural Capital Assessments; Management Plans for key sites/groups of sites.

2.

Provide a warm welcome for all, especially for those groups that are currently underrepresented.

The estate should provide a warm welcome and ensure that it helps connect people to the National Park, the locality and to Exmoor. We should be innovative in how visitors are welcomed and what is on offer for them.

Examples of supporting documents: Communications Plan; Branding templates.

3.

Provide exemplars from which others might learn. It is an important principle that assets owned by ENPA can be exemplars for how to achieve National Park purposes, address the nature and climate crises, innovating and trialling new approaches and sharing the learning with other land managers and partners. Examples of good practice include: woodland management techniques, nature recovery, climate adaptation and mitigation, high quality and innovative heritage conservation and interpretation, as well as engagement and education. This needs to be an energized process that is dynamic, shared and well communicated.

Examples of supporting documents: Communications Plan; Baseline evidence; Research and Monitoring Plan.

4.

Be financially sustainable in its overall operation (and evidenced) and generate income for reinvestment. We should seek to ensure that the estate is financially viable through a strong focus on income generation as well as the pursuit of external funding. As the Defra grant, which is the basis of NPA funding, has been diminishing in real terms (see the period 2012-2022), we need to build-in increased and diverse income generation as a fundamental priority of land ownership and also to carefully manage costs associated with land ownership.

Examples of supporting documents: Business Plan; KPIs.

5.

Partnership working. We need to build on our existing partnerships and develop new ones in order to maximise the potential of the estate. Our partners will include tenants, graziers, landowning neighbours, academic institutions, other Defra (and other governmental) bodies, third sector organisations, community groups, volunteers etc. Partnership provides exciting opportunities to achieve landscape scale change in respect of nature recovery and climate change resilience.

Examples of supporting documents: KPIs; Communications Plan; Partnership Plan

6.

The estate needs to strongly play its part in **mitigating and adapting to the impacts of climate change**. This may be in the form of carbon sequestration, drought resilience, alleviating downstream flooding, sustainable land management practices etc. We must be continually alive to innovation in this area and exploring how the ENPA estate can play its part in tackling the climate crisis.

Examples of supporting documents: Carbon assessments.

7.

Deliver public goods and integrated benefits. Wherever possible the estate should seek to deliver public goods. At present there is a lack of sound information about the public goods that the estate delivers and about its capacity to deliver more. A strand within this strategy is to improve our understanding of what ENPA owns by adopting a natural capital approach. Through this we will deliver across a wide range of public goods such as nature recovery, natural beauty and heritage, health and wellbeing. This should be achieved by developing wider partnerships with academic institutions and others in order to do so.

Examples of supporting documents: Natural Capital Assessments.

8.

Support the development of local skills and enterprises . The estate should provide opportunities for local employment, especially in terms of ‘green skills’ and the skills necessary to sustain the landscape and roles that support it; other skills relating to land management may include the issuing of appropriate tenancies, grazing licenses and the use of contractors etc. There may be opportunities for licensing certain businesses to use the estate for a range of activities.

Examples of supporting documents: Skills Plan.

9.

Provide space for innovation. Given much of the land owned by ENPA is of high landscape value and interest it should be a place where research is encouraged to drive forward our understanding of the National Park and of protected landscapes in general. As part of this it should also be a place where innovation is encouraged in terms of sustainable land uses. We envisage this including SSSI monitoring, condition work on heritage assets and factors affecting landscape quality. There will be opportunities to work with academic institutions, third sector bodies and for citizen science.

Examples of supporting documents: Research and Monitoring Plan; Management Plans.

10.

Underpinning all of the above principles is that the size and complexity of the estate, along with the fact that many assets are public-facing, makes the over-riding priority that all of the estate must be primarily managed to be **safe, compliant and legal**, with supporting systems, resources and mechanisms to, as a minimum, ensure compliance with all regulations. As well as this there must be clear lines of accountability and responsibility within ENPA.

Examples of supporting documents: Compliance Document; Asset Register; Asset Maintenance Plans.

Targets and Outcomes

To progress the strategy, we need to ensure solid baseline survey data for our estate. A key focus will be to achieve:

1. Baseline surveys of 100% of the estate by 2026 with priority areas completed by 2024.
2. Headline Management Plans supported by detailed targets (by property or grouped assets).
3. Carbon audits and climate adaptation strategies; a carbon calculator by end of March 2024.

In the first year we will develop a series of targets. These will relate to our purposes, the Nature Recovery Vision (eg hectares of habitat created), income generation on the estate, access and engagement, timber production, new audiences, other public goods etc.

Targets from the strategy will feed into the Partnership Plan and annual Corporate Plan and embed the delivery of the strategy in our core work.

Accountability

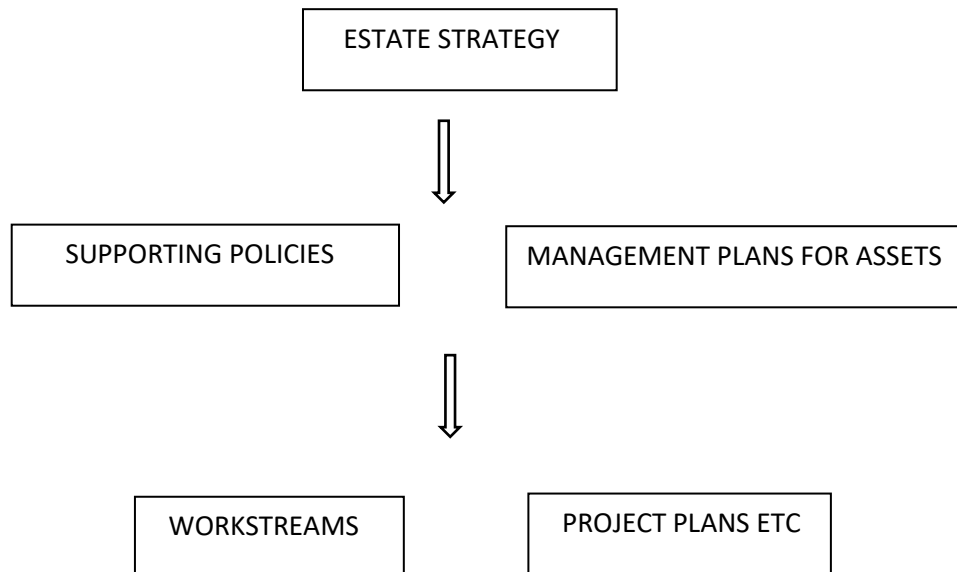
In pursuance of the Strategy there will be an annual paper to the Authority. This will report on the achievements made on the estate and will also set out priorities for the coming year. The paper will also provide reference to the Strategy's longer-term objectives and show how activities are working towards them. It will do this by reference to key performance indicators for the estate.

Relevant objectives in the 5-year Partnership Plan will be aligned on the Strategy's long term objectives and seek to further them.

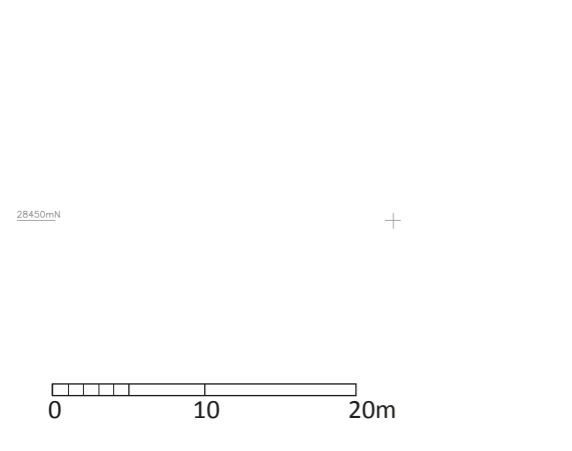
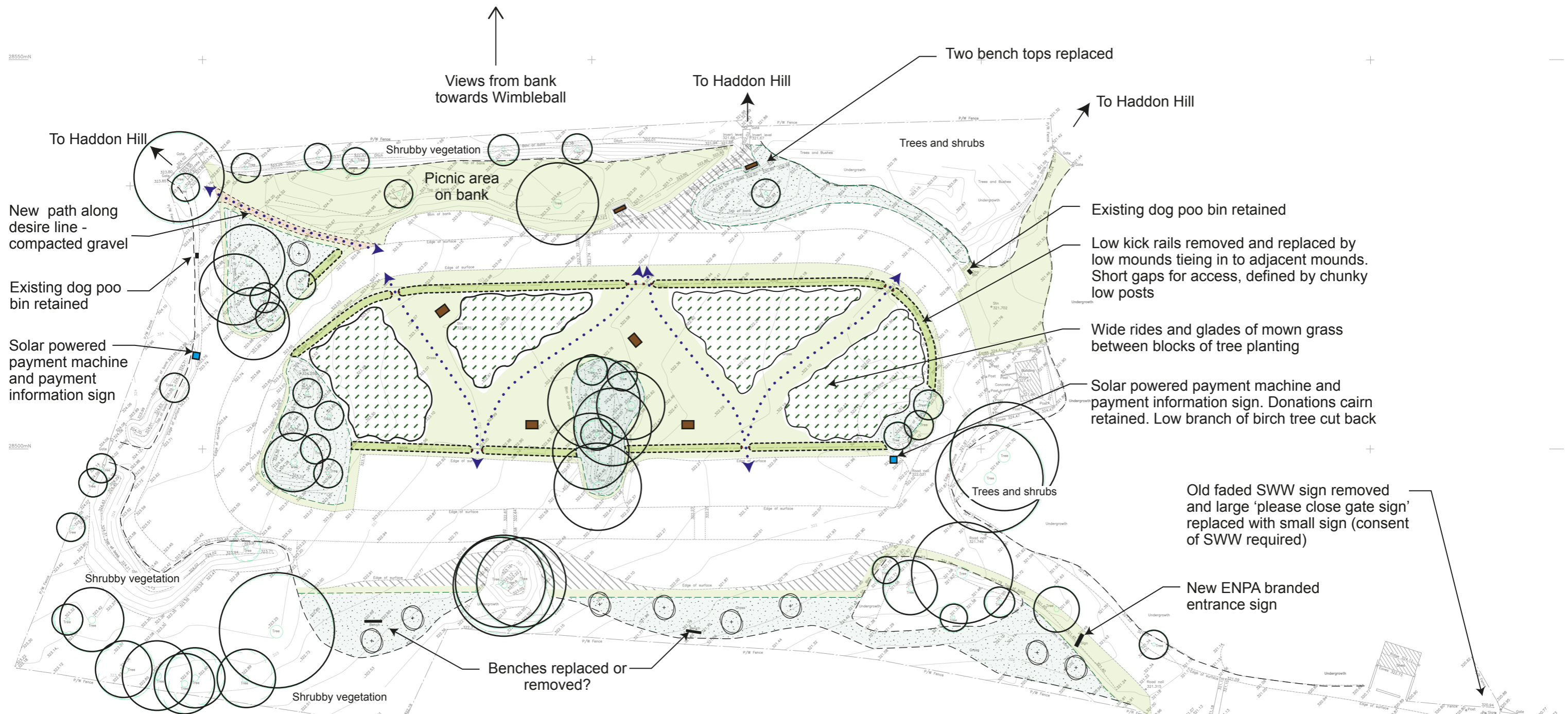
Short term actions and activity relevant to the estate will be built into the Corporate Plan (Business Plan) and reflected in annual reporting mechanisms across ENPA through line management reports and individual work plans.

PART 3 – SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Whilst the **Strategy** provides the overarching document setting out longer term ambitions and principles across the estate, beneath it will be various **policy documents** as well as **management plans** for assets (or groups of assets). The management plans will still be at a high level and will set out more specific objectives but will of course relate back to the Strategy. Delivery will be through a wide range of project plans and work streams of differing scale and complexity with different funding/resourcing mechanisms:



Examples of the kinds of documents required to drive forward the Strategy are: a definitive list of assets, a monitoring and evidence baseline, natural capital assessments, a communications plan, a business plan, asset management and maintenance plans, a research and monitoring plan, outline management plans, a lettings policy, an interpretation strategy etc. These will be a dynamic suite of documents refreshed as appropriate.



DRAFT

Haddon Hill Car Park
 Proposed Layout 02
 Scale 1:500@A3

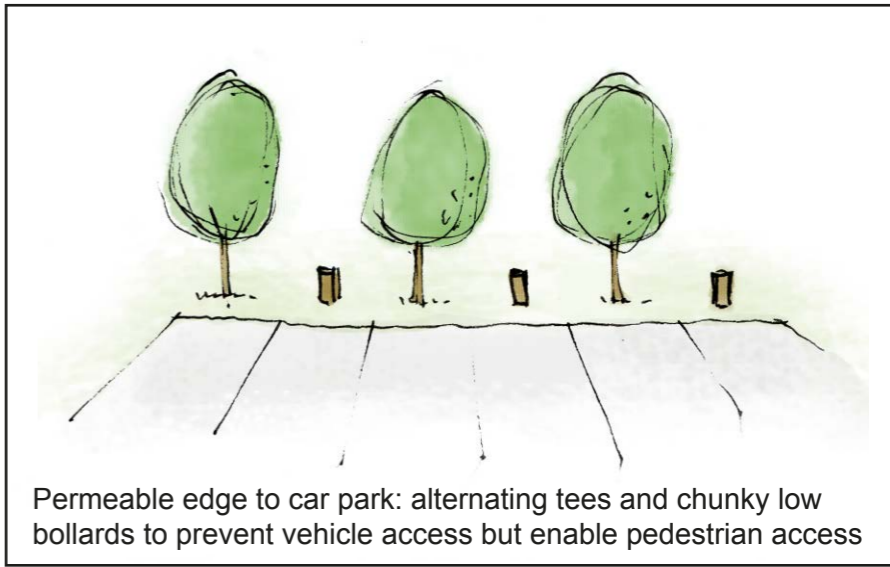
OBJECTIVES

- Install two solar powered payment machines at either end of car park.
- Install new branded ENPA entrance sign.
- Remove / reduce clutter of signage at SWW gate.
- Scrape back grass where encroaching on paths and parking areas
- Replace kick rail with low mound with small gaps for foot access. Width of gaps to be determined with mound ends at gaps protected and defined by timber posts.
- Allow for a single wider maintenance access gap in mound (TBA), with other vehicular access prevented by posts or tree trunk.
- Create mown grass rides to central area, between blocks of new tree planting - to include Scots pine, birch and rowan.
- Retain mown edges to road and paths.
- Other grass mown less frequently (potential enhancement with wildflower seed via Sowing the Seeds).
- Plant individual trees in perimeter areas.
- Install picnic tables in central space, suitable for wheelchair access.
- Consider whether to remove or replace existing benches.

KEY

- Desire line
- New path
- New mound with timber posts at gaps
- New payment machine
- New picnic table (including wheelchair accessible tables)
- Grass scraped off gavel surface
- Existing tree
- New blocks of tree planting
- New individual tree
- Mown grass
- Areas managed as longer grass





Extend existing pavement to toilet block, remove kerb on opposite side, curve path to narrow entrance and minimise impact on tree

Remove rails and excess bollards at entrance.

New chunky bollards on edge of grass to prevent vehicular access onto grass

Edge to car park: Remove all rails and fences Form permeable barrier with mix of trees and bollards.

Grass area retained as existing with seats and wheelchair accessible picnic tables on grass and new tree planting

Scrape back grass from 2no. bays

EV charging point for 2 vehicles with 1.2m gap between

Leave bank as sunny sitting area - either as grass or with seats backed with a few shrubs

Total spaces if line painted
 Parking bays shown at standard size of 2.4 x 4.8m with 6m between rows for turning

29 standard sized bays
 2 disabled only bays (D)
 2 EV charging only bays (EV)

Exford Car Park

Using existing hard surfaced area only

Scale 1:250@A3
 Revision F

EXMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

4 April 2023

GOVERNANCE REVIEW

Report of the Chief Executive

Purpose of the report: To set out proposals for changes to Exmoor National Park Authority meeting structures and governance.

RECOMMENDATIONS: The Authority is recommended to:

- (1) APPROVE the creation of a Planning Committee to come into effect in July 2023 for a trial period of 9 months.
- (2) APPROVE the move to bi-monthly Authority and Planning meetings
- (3) APPROVE an Officer led review of the Consultative and Parish Forum
- (4) AUTHORISE an independent review of Members' allowances

Authority Priorities: Develop and maintain effective and efficient services; Manage corporate finances and diversify income streams

Legal and Equality Implications:

Section 13 of the Environment Act 1995 sets out how National Parks deal with committees and sub committees. It states that the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 apply to National Park Authorities.

The Local Government Act 1972 states that functions of an Authority can be discharged through a committee or subcommittee (s101), therefore ENPA's planning functions can be discharged through a committee as envisaged.

Schedule 2 – National Park Authorities (England) Order 2015 states that an Authority must hold 4 meetings a year (including the AGM) – there is no such provision regarding committee meetings – they can be as frequent as needs be.

The equality impact of the recommendations of this report has been assessed as “no foreseen adverse impact on a protected group(s)”.

Financial and Risk Implications: The proposed revisions are intended to make best use of member time and resources whilst still ensuring that there is opportunity for public scrutiny of Authority business. Based on the current member budget, the revised meeting arrangements could reduce costs, mainly in staff time, by approximately £20,000 per annum. The review of expenses creates a further potential saving.

Climate Change Response: Reducing the frequency of face-to-face meetings will have a positive impact on the need to reduce travel with a potential carbon saving.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This paper sets out proposed changes to governance including the creation of a Planning Committee, a reduction in the number of Authority meetings, a review of the Exmoor Consultative and Parish Forum and a review of the Scheme of Members' Allowances.
- 1.2 Members have discussed the current financial pressures facing the Authority and are aware of the projected savings gap of £200k - £300k in 2024/25 and beyond. The Authority is also mindful of criticisms in the 2019 Landscapes Review which suggested that National Park boards were too large, inefficient and did not reflect the diversity of modern Britain. This paper aims to address some of these concerns.

2. Background

The number and make up of National Park Authority Boards is set out in the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (which amends the Environment Act 1995) and more specifically in the Statutory Instrument (National Parks Order 2015) [The National Park Authorities \(England\) Order 2015 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk)

- 2.1 Schedule 1 sets out that Exmoor should have 22 Members, made up as follows:

PART 1 Membership of National Park Authorities

Name of National Park	Total membership	Local Authority members*	Total members appointed by the Secretary of State	Members appointed by the Secretary of State as parish members
Exmoor	22	12	10	5

*Local Authority Members are made up as follows:

Somerset Unitary Authority	8
Devon County Council	2
North Devon District Council	2

- 2.2 Exmoor NPA has 22 Members and conducts its business through meetings of the Authority, Standards Committee and Final Accounts Committee.
- 2.3 Authority meetings include all 22 Members who meet monthly on the first Tuesday of the month, although with a presumption that January and August are only used if needed. Planning items are dealt with by the full Authority, on the same day, in the afternoon.
- 2.4 Standards Committee comprises five Members and oversees the Authority Code of Conduct and considers any allegations of non-compliance with the code that are referred by the Authority solicitor. It also oversees complaints, reviews Standing Orders and the Annual Governance Statement. It meets three times a year, twice to deal with Standards and once at the July meeting to appoint the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson.
- 2.5 Final Accounts Committee comprises 5 Members and meets at the end of September each year with the sole purpose of receiving and approving the statement of accounts. The Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson of the Authority automatically sit on the Final Accounts Committee.

- 2.6 In total, five Members are eligible to receive a special responsibility allowance in recognition of the additional work involved in preparing for and conducting the meetings. These are the Authority Chairperson, the Deputy Chairperson, the Deputy Chairperson (Planning), the Chairperson of the Exmoor Consultative and Parish Forum and the Chairperson of the Standards Committee.
- 2.7 Based on the current arrangements and rates of Member Allowances, the annual budget for Member support is:

Basic allowances to all Members at £2,979 per annum	£ 65,538
Special responsibility allowances to Committee Chairs etc.	£ 17,133
Travel, training and other expenses	<u>£ 18,065</u>
TOTAL	<u>£100,736</u>

The above costs do not include staff costs in providing support, managing meetings, etc estimated at around £70k.

3. Proposal to Create a Planning Committee

- 3.1 The number of Members on the Planning Committee is decided by the Authority. Section 13 of the Environment Act 1995 sets out how National Parks deal with committees and sub committees. It states that the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 apply to National Park Authorities. The Environment Act goes on to state that committees must include Local Authority members and one Secretary of State Member on them. Committees must also be proportionate to the numbers of each type of Member on the Authority (i.e. Local Authority and Secretary of State members). In this process, Parish Members are considered to be Local Authority Members.
- 3.2 On Exmoor, all 22 Members currently sit on the Planning Committee. Most of the other National Park Authorities have smaller Planning Committees in line with guidance on Committee size. The Local Government Association for example advises that the appropriate size of the Planning Committee will reflect the size of the Council and that “best practice would err on the side of small rather than large”.

National Park Authority	No. of Members			
	Authority	Planning Committee	Resources Committee	Standards Committee
Peak District	30	15	16	
South Downs	27	17	12	3
Yorkshire Dales	25	17	13	5
Exmoor	22	22	N/A	5
New Forest	22	13	9	5
Broads	21	11	6	
North York Moors	20	20	9	
Lake District	20	10	10	8
Dartmoor	19	19	8	6
Northumberland	18	9	7	7

3.3 It is proposed that ENPA now establishes a Planning Committee of 12 Members with delegated responsibility to carry out the planning functions of the Authority. To represent local and national interests it is recommended that the Planning Committee should be made up as follows.

Somerset Unitary	4
Devon County Council	1
North Devon Council	1
Secretary of State	3
Parish	3

3.4 This ensures appropriate representation in line with the Local Government Act 1972. A smaller Committee should lead to more efficient discussion and an appropriate level of scrutiny. It is proposed to appoint the new Committee at the July Annual Meeting.

4. Reduction in Numbers of Formal Meetings

- 4.1 The Authority meetings are currently held on the first Tuesday of each month, although August and January are not always used.
- 4.2 In a typical year Members determine around 30 – 40 planning applications (over 90% are delegated to Officers). Member scrutiny is for those of a more sensitive nature, those where the Parish Council or statutory consultee holds a view that is contrary to the Planning Officer, or where the NPA or a member of its staff is the applicant.
- 4.3 In 2022 there were a total of 350 planning applications of which 34 were determined by the Authority. Of these, 12 were ENPA's own applications. Officers are confident that the case load can be managed with 6 meetings a year, rather than 10, ie every other month. This will mean that each meeting will determine around 6 applications.
- 4.4 Authority meetings include discussions on policy, land management, estate matters, budget and governance. These will continue to be dealt with by the full Authority on alternative months and on the same day as the new Planning Committee meets. It is not considered that there is a clear benefit in (re) creating an additional Resources Committee at this time. It is proposed that the Authority meeting continues to take place in the morning and the Planning Committee meets at 1:30pm - on the first Tuesday of alternate months. Other briefings and discussions will be held as required with a presumption that the "alternate" Tuesday is kept free by Members for such briefings, ideally on-line, but face to face if required.
- 4.5 The annual cost of running 10 "Exmoor Tuesdays" is around £50k, mainly in staff time, and it is estimated that there could be a saving of around £20k in reduced Officer time and Member expenses if these changes are implemented.

5. Review of the Exmoor Consultative and Parish Forum

- 5.1 The Exmoor Consultative and Parish Forum currently meets 5 times a year across the National Park with a mix of evening and daytime meetings.
- 5.2 The new Somerset Unitary Authority will be developing Local Community Networks to provide a strong link between the communities of Somerset and the new Council, one of which will cover the Exmoor area. This presents an opportunity for ENPA to work

closely with the new Council to combine services and potentially reduce the number of ECPF meetings. It is recognised that the Devon part of the National Park is not covered and that ENPA will need to continue to reach out to the North Devon Parishes.

- 5.3 It is proposed that Officers work with Members, partners, Parishes and the Local Authorities to review how best to use resources for the benefit of the communities in the National Park. It is proposed to bring options to Members in the autumn of 2023.

6. Review of Members' Allowances

- 6.1 The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 sets out that an Authority shall make a scheme of allowances payable for each Member of the Authority. As set out in 2.6, Special Responsibility Allowances are paid for increased workloads covered by Chairs and Deputy Chairs.
- 6.2 The overall costs of Members' allowances is around £80k per year. Benchmarking against other National Park Authorities shows that this is higher than several other National Park Authorities of a similar size.
- 6.3 It is proposed to seek an independent review of expenses to ensure that the costs incurred are appropriate and in line with similar Authorities. Outcome of the review will be presented to Members in due course.

22/23 Figures *	Allowances						
National Park Authority	Basic Allowance	Authority Chair	Deputy Chair	Planning Chair	No of Members	Basic Allowance	Basic + SR Allowance
South Downs	3,748	6,778	5,060	4,048	27	101,196	117,082
Yorkshire Dales	3,325	6,650	1,663	2,494	25	83,125	93,932
Lake District	3,000	6,000	4,500	2,000	20	60,000	72,500
Exmoor	2,979	5,959	4,469	4,469	22	65,538	80,435*
North York Moors	2,612	5,225	1,959	2,612	20	52,240	62,036
Peak District	2,568	6,676	3,338	3,338	30	77,040	90,392
New Forest	2,132	4,264	2,132	2,132	22	46,904	55,432
Northumberland	1,962	5,886	1,962	981	18	35,316	44,145
Dartmoor	1,860	5,547	1,860	1,860	19	35,340	44,607
Broads	1,046	3,925	1,963	1,963	21	21,966	29,817

This table excludes any SR Allowances which may apply to Chairs of other Committees not shown

7. Timetable and Next Steps

- 7.1 Should Members approve this paper, Officers will work with our solicitor to make any necessary amendments to Standing Orders. These changes will be brought back to Authority for approval in May 2023. The review of the Exmoor Consultative and Parish Forum will take place over the summer of 2023 with a report to Members in the autumn. With regard to Members' allowances, an independent specialist will be commissioned and the outcome reported to Members by year end with any changes being implemented from April 2024.



Appeal Decision

by **P N Jarratt BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 2 March 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/F9498/X/22/3299260

Ashbear House, Elworthy, Lydeard St. Lawrence, TAUNTON, TA4 3PY

- The appeal is made under section 195 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended against a refusal to grant a certificate of lawful use or development (LDC).
 - The appeal is made by Mrs Gill Hicks and Ms Elizabeth Hicks against the decision of Exmoor National Park Authority.
 - The application ref 6/31/21/102, dated 21 September 2021, was refused by notice dated 25 February 2022.
 - The application was made under section 192(1)(a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended.
 - The use for which a certificate of lawful use or development is sought is for the stationing of a mobile home within a residential garden to provide ancillary accommodation.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and attached to this decision is a certificate of lawful use or development describing the extent of the proposed operation which is found to be lawful.

Applications for costs

2. An application for costs has been made by the appellants against the Authority. This is the subject of a separate decision.

Preliminary Matters

3. As this appeal is determined on the basis the interpretation of legal matters relating to planning and case law, it was not necessary to carry out a site inspection.
4. For the avoidance of doubt, I should explain that the planning merits of any use or operations are not relevant, and they are not therefore an issue for me to consider, in the context of an appeal under section 195 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended, which relates to an application for a lawful development certificate. My decision rests on the facts of the case, and on relevant planning law and judicial authority.
5. The onus of proof rests with the appellants and the level of proof is on the balance of probabilities.

Main Issue

6. The main issue is whether the Authority's decision to refuse an LDC was well-founded. This centres on whether the proposed domestic use of the mobile home would be ancillary to the main dwelling on the site.

The site and relevant planning history

7. The site is located in open countryside and comprises Ashbear House and its garden within which it is proposed to station a twin unit mobile home towards its southern end about 30m distant from the host dwelling and without any boundary separation between the two.
8. Permission 6/31/19/001 was for the proposed change of use of land to equestrian together with demolition of existing buildings and erection of stable block and storage outbuildings.

Reasons

9. The appellants, who are mother and daughter, live together as a family unit in Ashbear House, which because of its age and design does not provide for an accessible downstairs bedroom and bathroom to be created. The appellants want to provide a mobile home for Mrs Gill Hicks who has restrictions on her mobility, as set out in her statement of personal need. The mobile home would comply with the legal definition of a caravan, as set out in the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960, as amended, which is not disputed by the authority. It would provide two bedrooms, bathroom, sitting area and kitchenette. Mrs Hicks would sleep and bathe in the mobile home but spend most of her time in the main house with her daughter as she does now. Meals will be cooked in the main house and eaten together at least once a day. Laundry facilities would be in the main house. All services would be provided via connections to the host property, there would be no separate Council Tax, refuse/recycling would be shared, there would be a single postal address and letterbox, there will remain a single parking area, and outside amenity space would be shared. There will be a line of sight between the house and mobile home and no sub-division of external areas.
10. Reliance is placed in the officer's report on extensive quotes in the withdrawn Circular 10/97 relating to the identification of what may or may not be regarded as a dwellinghouse and conclude that the proposed mobile home would not be ancillary to the host dwelling.
11. The Authority considers that the mobile home is capable of being occupied independently, which no doubt it has the potential to so do, and that it would constitute a new dwelling in the countryside. However, this is not conclusive as it is necessary to understand how the property would be occupied. The appellants clearly state that it would be occupied ancillary to the main dwellinghouse. The Authority provide no evidence to support their conclusion other than to suggest that the appellants would be able to lead largely independent lives and they do not have the same degree of dependency upon each other to the levels of the Epping Forest and Barnet¹ appeals they say are referred to by the appellants.
12. The Authority also considers that the proposed structure would be physically and functionally separate from the main dwelling. In reaching this view, reliance has been placed on there being sheds/outbuildings between the dwelling and the application site (sic), an off-road parking and vehicular access to the site would be shared, and, there would be a separate pedestrian access from the main dwelling on site (presumably to the proposed mobile home

¹ The appellant referred to three appeals in Blewbury, Dartford and Brighton and to one at para 10.10 which appears to be incorrectly referenced.

although this is not clear from the report). The appellants point out that the former unauthorised structures have been removed and that the small garden shed and summer house are on the western boundary would not create any physical or visual barrier between the mobile home and house.

13. Section 55 (2) (d) states that the use of any buildings or other land within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse for any purpose incidental to the enjoyment of the dwellinghouse as such, shall not be taken as development. It is well established in case law that ancillary accommodation is an extension of the residential accommodation of the main dwelling. Uttlesford² related to an application for a change of use of a building detached from the main house to private living accommodation to be used in conjunction with existing dwelling, where it was held that the basic question to be answered was whether there was a material change of use that created a separate planning unit. In the current appeal, there would be no physical and functional separate areas created which would amount to two separate planning units. On the basis of the facts before me, the appeal site represents a single planning unit and would remain so following introduction of a mobile home to be used in the manner indicated.
14. I am satisfied that the additional living accommodation proposed in this case can be incidental to the dwellinghouse even if it is capable of semi-independent occupation. As found in APP/Q1455/X/16/3162334 (Brighton), the test of independence is how it is used, which in that case there would be a strong functional relationship between the main dwelling and the mobile home, which I consider applies to the current appeal.
15. The appellants have provided precise and unambiguous information and no evidence has been submitted by the authority to contradict or otherwise make the appellants' version of events less than probable.
16. The appellants have suggested that a condition or conditions could be imposed to ensure that the mobile home remains ancillary to the main dwelling, that it only be occupied by Mrs Hicks, and that it should not be used as holiday accommodation. However, conditions cannot be applied to LDCs. The Appellant and any prospective occupier must be clear in their understanding that the use of the mobile home in circumstances where they are not dependent on the main dwellinghouse would be in breach of the requirements of the LDC, and make the siting of the mobile unlawful and liable to enforcement action.

Conclusion

17. For the reasons given above I conclude, on the evidence now available, that the Council's refusal to grant a certificate of lawful use or development in respect of stationing of a mobile home within a residential garden to provide ancillary accommodation was not well-founded and that the appeal should succeed. I will exercise the powers transferred to me under section 195(2) of the 1990 Act as amended.

P N Jarratt

INSPECTOR

² Uttlesford DC v SSE & White [1992] JPL 171

Lawful Development Certificate

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990: SECTION 192
(as amended by Section 10 of the Planning and Compensation Act 1991)

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE) (ENGLAND)
ORDER 2015: ARTICLE 39

IT IS HEREBY CERTIFIED that on 21 September 2021 the use described in the First Schedule hereto in respect of the land specified in the Second Schedule hereto and edged and cross-hatched in black on the plan attached to this certificate, would have been lawful within the meaning of section 191 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), for the following reason:

It has been shown on the balance of probabilities that the stationing of a mobile home for occupation by Mrs Gill Hicks would not be development by virtue of section 55 (2) (d) of the Act.

Signed

P N Jarratt

Inspector

Date: 2 March 2023

Reference: APP/F9498/X/22/3299260

First Schedule

The stationing of a mobile home within a residential garden to provide ancillary accommodation.

Second Schedule

Land at Ashbear House, Elworthy, Lydeard St. Lawrence, TAUNTON, TA4 3PY

IMPORTANT NOTES – SEE OVER

NOTES

This certificate is issued solely for the purpose of Section 192 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

It certifies that the use /operations described in the First Schedule taking place on the land specified in the Second Schedule would have been lawful, on the certified date and, thus, was /were not liable to enforcement action, under section 172 of the 1990 Act, on that date.

This certificate applies only to the extent of the use /operations described in the First Schedule and to the land specified in the Second Schedule and identified on the attached plan. Any use /operation which is materially different from that described, or which relates to any other land, may result in a breach of planning control which is liable to enforcement action by the local planning authority.

The effect of the certificate is subject to the provisions in section 192(4) of the 1990 Act, as amended, which state that the lawfulness of a specified use or operation is only conclusively presumed where there has been no material change, before the use is instituted or the operations begun, in any of the matters which were relevant to the decision about lawfulness.

Plan

This is the plan referred to in the Lawful Development Certificate dated: 2 March 2023

by P N Jarratt BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

Land at: Ashbear House, Elworthy, Lydeard St. Lawrence, TAUNTON, TA4 3PY

Reference: APP/F9498/X/22/3299260

Scale: Not to Scale



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Committee Report

Application Number:	62/49/22/003
Registration Date:	18 Aug 2022
Determination Date:	20 Mar 2023
Applicant	Ms R Campbell-Johnston
Agent:	Mr S Bryant, SAB Drawing & Design
Case Officer:	Charlotte Spiers
Site Address:	BENTWITCHEN HOUSE, SOUTH MOLTON, EX36 3HA
Proposal:	Proposed change of use of existing studio to holiday let, together with the demolition of partially built porch to be replaced with new porch, creation of a parking area, creation of a patio area and the installation of a new sewage treatment plant.
Recommendation:	Refusal
Reason for bringing before Authority Committee:	The application has been referred to committee as the officers recommendation of refusal is contrary to the North Molton Parish Council views to approve the application.

Relevant History

62/49/87/002 Approved	Conversion of barns to 3 holiday cottages. 02/06/1987
62/49/95/002 Approved	Proposed conversion of redundant outbuildings to residential unit. 07/11/1995
62/49/99/001 Approved	Conversion of barn to holiday cottage. 22/04/1999
ENF/130/20	Conversion of outbuilding.

Site Description & Proposal

Bentwischen House is a detached dwelling located in the small settlement of Bentwischen. The application site itself is a roundhouse attached to a large L-shaped detached barn to the west of the dwelling house. Planning permission was previously granted in 1987 for the conversion of the barn and roundhouse into three units of holiday accommodation but this was not enacted. Permission was subsequently granted in 1995 for the conversion of a detached barn, which had previously formed part of the same farm complex as the L-shaped barn and roundhouse, further to the

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west of the application site into a residential dwelling. This dwelling, now known as Bentwitchen Barn, along with another adjacent dwelling, utilises a shared entrance onto the road immediately to the west of the application site.

This application for planning permission seeks permission for a change of use of the roundhouse, currently said to have been previously converted into a studio, to a single unit of holiday accommodation, together with the demolition of partially built porch to be replaced with new porch, creation of a parking area, creation of a patio area and the installation of a new sewage treatment plant.

Consultee Representations

North Molton Parish Council

North Molton Parish Council support this application on planning grounds. Parish Council meeting 23rd September 2022.

Exmoor National Park Wildlife Conservation Officer (16th November 2022)

Thank you for consulting me on this application for change of use of a studio to holiday let which will also include the demolition of a partially built porch and construction of a new porch which will tie into the existing roof, together with creation of parking area, patio and the installation of a new sewage treatment plant. The photographs provided show several lifted slates on the existing roof which could provide roosting opportunities for bats. Please request an ecology survey is completed by a professional ecologist to assess the potential impacts from the proposals. Please note, we are coming towards the end of the bat survey season (the optimal season for bat emergence surveys is May to August, April and September can be suitable in favourable weather conditions), so I recommend the applicant/agent contact their ecologist as soon as possible.

NDC Environmental Health and Housing

No objections but suggest the following advisory notes:

1 Advisory Note: Holiday Accommodation Health and Safety

Fire Safety and Health and Safety Law place certain duties on holiday accommodation providers. Duties include carrying out fire risk assessments and installing safety measures such as smoke alarms. Operators must also ensure that any electrical installations and appliances are safe for guests. General guidance is available from the gov.uk website and elsewhere online. Further advice should be obtained from a competent professional if there are any doubts about what is required.

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2 Advisory Note: Private Water Supplies (Holiday Lets)

The proposed use of a private bore hole potable water supply to serve this additional holiday let at the site is subject to control and regulation under the Private Water Supplies (England) Regulations. Use in connection with holiday lets may trigger specific risk assessment and monitoring requirements. The applicant should contact North Devon Council's Environmental Protection team if they are in any doubt as to ensuring a safe drinking water supply or compliance with regulatory requirements

3 Advisory Note: Foul Drainage

The proposed use of a private system for treatment and disposal of foul drainage will need to comply with Building Regulations and the Environment Agency's General Binding Rules for small sewage disposal systems.

4 Advisory Note: Asbestos

The existing building is of an age where asbestos containing materials (ACMs) may have been used in its construction or subsequent modification. A check for ACMs should be carried out by a competent person prior to commencing any works that might disturb ACMs, Where found, ACMs must be dealt with in accordance with asbestos regulations and health and safety guidance.

North Devon District Council

No Observations

South West Water

No comment or concern.

Representations

One letter of representation has been received in relation to this application raising the following concerns:

- The inclusion of a porch would ruin the character and appearance of the round house.
- There are already three other holiday lets out of seven properties here at Bentwicken allowing this planning would mean four holiday lets out of seven properties way too many for the location.
- Concerns raised as to the assertion that the roundhouse is in current use as a studio.

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- The potential detrimental impact upon the Dark Sky Environment.
- There is no mains water to the roundhouse, it would have to come from the well shared with three other properties, the well regularly runs out mid spring time to autumn and with this holiday let it will run out sooner and for longer causing costly problems for everyone else.
- Concerns raised regarding privacy for neighbouring properties due to the difference in land levels.
- Access to the site is queried as to the ownership of land included within the red and blue line boundaries on the application.
- The potential use of the site as a permanent residence.

Policy Context

Exmoor National Park Local Plan 2011 – 2031 (including minerals and waste policies)

GP1 – General Policy

CE-S1 - Landscape and Seascape Character

CE-D1 – Protecting Exmoor’s landscapes and seascapes

CE-S3 – Biodiversity and green infrastructure

CE-S4 – Cultural Heritage and Historic Environment

CE-S5 – Principles for the conversion or structural alteration of existing buildings

CE-S6 – Design and sustainable construction principles

RT-S1 – Recreation and tourism

RT-D4 – Non-serviced accommodation

CC-S1 - Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation

AC-D3 - Parking Provision and Standards

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is also a material planning consideration.

Planning Considerations

The main material planning considerations in this case are considered to be the principle of development, the manner of conversion, and impacts upon neighbouring amenity.

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Principle of Development

The proposed conversion would be for a self-catering holiday let and would therefore be primarily considered under Policy RT-D4 of the Exmoor National Park Local Plan 2011 – 2031. This policy states that proposals for the change of use and conversion of buildings to non-serviced accommodation will be permitted where they:

- a) create additional unit(s) on an existing self-catering complex;
- b) accord with Clause 3(a) of Policy RT-D3 (Safeguarding Serviced Accommodation);
- c) reuse a redundant building associated with a hotel/guesthouse premises; or
- d) relate to the diversification of a rural land-based business, where the building is well-related to an existing grouping of buildings.

Bentwitchen House is a residential property. There is also no existing self-catering complex at the property. Whilst it is acknowledged that permission was previously granted for the conversion of the L-shaped barn including the attached roundhouse into three units of holiday accommodation (62/49/87/002), this permission was never implemented. In addition, it is noted that this permission was granted 36 years ago and under previous planning legislation. Significant weight cannot, therefore, be attached to this previous permission.

In addition, the submitted red and blue line location plan does not indicate the presence of any farmland associated with the property, and neither the submitted Design and Access Statement nor the proposed business plan make reference to any farming activity on the site. It is noted that no evidence of farming activity was seen during a site visit in February 2023. In answer to an email of 15 November 2022, the agent for the application indicated that the roundhouse has been in use as an art/hobby room incidental to the main dwelling with the barn used for storage of agricultural equipment. No further information has been provided indicating that the conversion of the roundhouse to a holiday let relates to the diversification of a rural land-based business. As such, it is considered that the application does not comply with any of the scenarios where self-catering holiday lets are compliant in principle with Policy RT-D4. The application is therefore not compliant in principle with Policy RT-D4 and it is contrary to the adopted development plan.

Manner of Conversion

The proposed development would not result in a significant change to the massing or bulk of the building. It is noted that the proposed porch on the north-western elevation would have a footprint of approximately 2.27m². This is indicated on the proposal to be a replacement for a partially built porch on the south-western elevation which was erected without the benefit of planning permission and forms part of an ongoing investigation. In terms of design, however, the roundhouse as existing is a traditional building with a distinctive form which would be diluted through the inclusion of the intrusive and incongruous porch which, while being small in scale, would break up the line of the existing built form. Whilst it is noted that the roundhouse is not a designated heritage asset, it does have historic value and does positively contribute

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to the historic built form of the settlement of Bentwitchen. It could therefore be argued that the harm caused to the existing built form by inclusion of the intrusive porch would be in opposition to Policy CE-S4 3 which states that:

“Development proposals should make a positive contribution to the local distinctiveness of the historic environment and ensure that the character, special interest, integrity, and significance of any affected heritage asset and its setting is conserved or enhanced.”

In addition, Policy CE-S5 2 states that:

“In addition to clause 1, proposals for the conversion or structural alteration of traditional buildings, should also:

a) ensure the historic fabric, and architectural interest of the building and its setting including the retention of existing traditional and historic features are conserved and enhanced; and

b) reflect the character and significance of the building and conserve its traditional appearance through sensitive design and the use of traditional materials, detailing and construction principles.”

It is considered that the proposed porch would harm the architectural interest of the building and its setting and would neither reflect the character and significance of the building nor conserve its traditional appearance. As such, the design cannot be said to be sensitive to the traditional appearance of the building and is not in accordance with Policy CE-S5.

It is noted that the fenestration details are poor. At present, the roundhouse has UPVC windows installed, without the benefit of planning permission. The current proposal indicates that these will be replaced with timber framed windows and doors, although no timescale for this replacement has been forthcoming beyond the assertion that this will be undertaken as part of the present scheme. It is therefore considered that the proposed materials will represent an improvement and would be in accordance with policies CE-S5 & CE-S6 subject to a planning condition to ensure the details are acceptable.

For the reasons noted above, it is considered that, whilst the proposal is not unacceptable in terms of scale and massing, the inclusion of the proposed porch represents unacceptable harm to the form of the existing traditional structure which is not in accordance with Policies CE-S4 and CE-S5. As such, the design is considered to be unacceptable and Officers cannot support the proposal on these grounds.

Impact upon neighbouring amenity

The concerns raised by the occupant of a neighbouring property set earlier in the report are noted. Having viewed the site it was recognised that the application site lies at a higher elevation than the nearest neighbouring properties to the west,

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Bentwitchen Barn which lies approximately 22m to the north-west of the roundhouse, and Shirley Cottage which lies approximately 24m to the south-west.

It is further noted that there are two existing buildings lying between the application site and the neighbouring dwellings and a boundary wall and that the site looks out over a yard rather than a private amenity space.

In terms of noise intrusion, the existing use of the building is indicated to be a studio that is ancillary to the main house. The proposed use would see people who are not associated with the occupier of the main house staying within the application building. It is considered that the relationship between the site and the neighbouring properties does not give rise to concerns over loss of privacy or any noise impact. In fact, the greatest impact would be on the applicants themselves and therefore it would be in their own interest to ensure the building is used in a manner which respects the amenity of neighbouring properties.

Officers conclude that the proposed development would not lead to material harm to neighbouring amenity.

Ecology

Policy CE-S3 seeks to protect, conserve and enhance biodiversity within Exmoor National Park. In particular CE-S3 3(b) states that:

“Development likely to cause harm to legally protected species, or lead to the loss of or damage to their habitats, will not be permitted unless this can be mitigated or then offset so that local populations are at least maintained.”

The comments of the Wildlife Conservation Officer with regards to the potential for roosting opportunities for bats and the need for an ecology survey completed by a qualified ecologist are noted. Officers have contacted the agent on numerous occasions and while some assurances have been received that an ecologist had been instructed to undertake the required survey work, no ecology report has not been forthcoming. Given the time that has passed officers will now determine the application as submitted. As such, given the comments raised by the ecologist officers are not satisfied that the proposed development will not result in harm to protected species.

It is therefore considered that the application has provided insufficient information and cannot be considered to have met the requirements of Policy CE-S3.

Other Matters

Concerns have been raised as to the ownership of a piece of land lying to the north of the roundhouse and adjacent to the shared access entrance for Bentwitchen Barn and Shirley Cottage which have been indicated on the site location plan as lying

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within the ownership of the applicant and are marked as being in the red and blue line boundaries. Whilst matters of land ownership are a civil and not a planning matter, Officers have repeatedly requested confirmation from the agent that the disputed area is within the ownership of the applicant or that Certificate B has been served upon the owner. To date no information regarding this disputed ownership has been forthcoming.

In May 2019 the UK government declared a climate emergency, Exmoor National Park followed this by declaring a Climate Emergency in October 2019. To help meet this challenge the Local plan includes policies which seek to influence, contribute and challenge development to help meet the Climate Emergency.

Policy GP1 of the Local Plan sets out that the need to consider future generations, through sustainability and resilience to climate change and adapting to and mitigating the impacts of climate change. Policy CC-S1 states that climate change mitigation will be encouraged, development which reduces demand for energy, using small scale low carbon and renewable energy, looks to situate development which avoids sites that would put wildlife at risk together with measures which avoids the risk of flooding. Policy CC-S5 seeks to support small scale renewable energy schemes that assist in contributing towards reducing greenhouse gas emissions and moving towards a carbon neutral National Park and Policy CE-S6 seeks to incorporate sustainable construction methods which future proof against climate change impacts, including flood risk.

Paragraph 148 of the National Planning Policy Framework prescribes that the planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate taking full account of flood risk and coastal change. It should help to: shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience; encourage the reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings; and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure.

There is considered to be a low impact on the climate resulting from the proposed changes to the property.

Human Rights

The provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998 and Equality Act 2010 have been taken into account in reaching the recommendation contained in this report.

Conclusion

The proposal outlined in this present application is contrary in principle to Policy RT-D4 of the Local Plan. In terms of design, the proposed porch would cause harm to the form of the traditional building and would therefore be contrary to Policies CE-S4 and CE-S5 of the Local Plan. In terms of impact on neighbouring amenity, the proposal is considered to be acceptable and policy compliant. In addition, Officers cannot be

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assured that harm will not occur to protected species due to the lack of submitted ecology survey contrary to Policy CE-S3 of the Local Plan.

The proposed development is contrary to the adopted development plan and no material planning considerations have been presented that indicate that the development plan should be deviated from. The application is therefore recommended for refusal for the reasons set out below.

Recommendation

Refuse for the following reason:

1. The proposed use of the application building as a holiday letting unit does not form a diversification proposal for a rural land based business, a guesthouse/hotel or a camping and/or caravanning site. Neither would it provide an additional self-catering unit on an existing complex of self-catering units. Given this, the proposed development is not considered to comply in principle with Policy RT-D4 of the Exmoor National Park Local Plan 2011 – 2031 and the National Planning Policy Framework.
2. Insufficient information has been provided to provide assurance that protected species will not be harmed through the proposed development. Given this, the proposed development is not considered to comply with Policy CE-S3 of the Exmoor National Park Local Plan 2011-2031.
3. The proposed porch as designed would be visually intrusive and harmful to the form of the traditional roundhouse. Given this, the proposed development is not considered to comply with Policies CE-S4 and CE-S5 of the Exmoor National Park Local Plan 2011-2031.

Informatives

This Authority has a pro-active approach to the delivery of development. Early pre-application engagement is always encouraged and was sought in this case contrary to the indication as included within the application form. Whilst not prejudicing the outcome of this application it is noted that the Exmoor National Park Authority has endeavoured to work positively and proactively with the agent/applicant. This is in accordance with the requirements of Article 35 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 and in line with the National Planning Policy Framework, which seeks to ensure that all relevant planning considerations have been appropriately addressed to achieve a positive outcome. In this case, the planning objections to the proposal could not be overcome.

Appeal to the Secretary of State

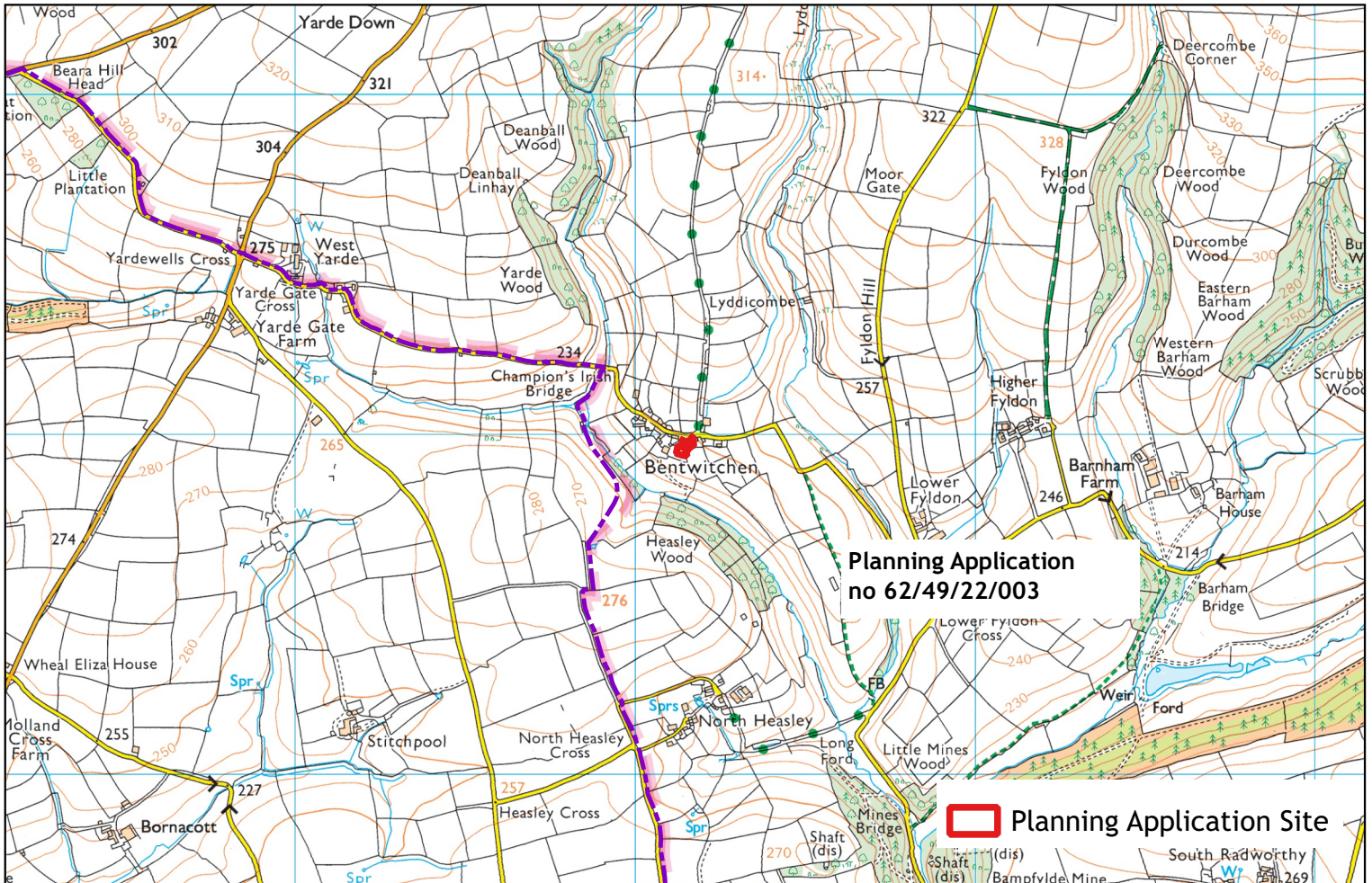
12.1

If you want to appeal against your Local Planning Authority's decision then you must do so within 6 months of the date of this notice.



Site Map
Scale 1:2,500

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Overview Map
Scale 1:20,000

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Application decisions delegated to the Chief Executive

Application Ref	Applicant & Location	Decision and Date
62/19/23/001	Mr. A Wyer, Combe Martin Parish Council - Proposed replacement of existing access steps onto Combe Martin Beach (Full) - Combe Martin Beach, Cross Street, Combe Martin, Devon, EX34 0DJ	23-Feb-2023 Not Required
WTCA 23/04	Mr A Russell - Works to Trees in Conservation Area: To reduce Alder by 10% and crown Beech. (WTCA) - Stable Cottage, TOWNMILL STABLE, HIGH STREET, Dulverton, TA22 9HB	03-Mar-2023 Approved
6/10/23/005DC	Ms. J Copeland Sloan, Bona Lattie - Discharge of Condition 3 (Methodology Report) of approved application 6/10/22/108LB (Discharge of Condition) - Bona Lattie, 6, High Street, Dunster, Minehead, TA24 6SG	07-Feb-2023 Approved
62/11/23/001DC	Mr T Ridd - Discharge of condition 4 (walls & roof materials) of approved application 62/11/22/006 (Discharge of Condition) - LAND NORTH EAST OF HIGHER TIPPACOTT FARM, BRENDON, LYNTON, EX35 6PU	09-Feb-2023 Approved
6/10/23/004DC	James Percival, National Trust - Discharge of condition 3 (Written scheme of investigation) of approved application 6/10/22/115LB (Discharge of Condition) - DUNSTER CASTLE, DUNSTER, MINEHEAD, TA24 6SL	30-Jan-2023 Approved
6/9/23/001	Ms J Sims - Non-Material Amendment - Householder - of approved application 6/9/22/109 to remove two windows and change patio door to bi-fold on the west elevation, remove two windows and change a window to a door on the North elevation and block up existing rear door. (NMA - Householder) - WILTON HEIGHTS, 37, JURY ROAD, DULVERTON, TA22 9EJ	03-Feb-2023 Approved
6/27/23/003	Mr P Johnson - Proposed demolition of existing flat roof lean to and timber garage, together with, erection of pitched lean to side extension. (Householder) - MOUNT BALLAN, THE RIDGE, PORLOCK, MINEHEAD, TA24 8HA	21-Feb-2023 Approved with Conditions
6/8/23/001	Mr J Newsum - Proposed demolition of existing extensions to the West and East Elevations and erection of two storey and single storey extensions,	03-Mar-2023 Approved with Conditions

Application decisions delegated to the Chief Executive

Application Ref Applicant & Location Decision and Date

	together with, replacement of existing outbuilding including Solar Panels and works to the rear retaining wall. (Householder) - Ford Farm, Drapers Way, Timberscombe, Somerset, TA24 7EE	
6/27/23/001	Ms C Britton - Proposed replacement of single glazed timber windows with double glazed timber windows. (Full) - FLAT, WHEELHOUSE GALLERY, HIGH STREET, PORLOCK, MINEHEAD, TA24 8PY	23-Feb-2023 Approved with Conditions
6/10/23/002	Mr S Harris - Proposed demolition of existing single garage and alterations to part of courtyard wall, together with, the erection of double garage with workshop. (Householder) - GRABIST HOUSE, WEST STREET, DUNSTER, MINEHEAD, TA24 6SN	27-Feb-2023 Approved with Conditions
6/10/23/001	Mrs. S Towells, Dunster Parish Councils - Proposed change of use from Agricultural land to use as Cemetery together with replacement of hedgerow and creation of new gateway. (Full) - Dunster Allotments, Dunster, Minehead, TA24 6RT	23-Feb-2023 Approved with Conditions
WTCA 23/02	Ms. M Rose, Dulverton Town Council - Works to trees in conservation area: crown lift 3no. Norway Maples and reduction of height of Mature Beech by 5-6m. (WTCA) - Exmoor Lawns, Kemps Way, Dulverton, Somerset, TA22 9HL	03-Mar-2023 Approved
6/29/23/001	W Virgo - Proposed single storey rear lean-to extension together with rooflights and associated works (Householder) - THE PACK HORSE, ALLERFORD, MINEHEAD, TA24 8HW	17-Feb-2023 Approved with Conditions
62/41/23/003DC	Mr. S Glover, Tors Park Estate Ltd - Discharge of conditions 9 (sewage and/or water system connection details), 10(slate and tile samples), 11(access bridge drawings), 12(drawings of the architectural detailing on the apartment building) and 19(lighting design for bats) of approved application 62/41/20/021. (Discharge of Condition) - The Tors Hotel, Tors Park, Lynmouth, Devon, EX35 6NA	21-Feb-2023 Approved
62/41/23/002DC	Graham - Discharge of Condition 4 (roof & ridge tiles) of approved application 62/41/21/001	09-Feb-2023 Approved

Application decisions delegated to the Chief Executive**Application Ref Applicant & Location Decision and Date**

Application Ref	Applicant & Location	Decision and Date
	(Discharge of Condition) - BAY VIEW HOUSE, CLOONEAVIN PATH, LYNMOUTH, EX35 6EE	
6/9/22/122	Mr B McHenry - Proposed front and rear extensions. (Householder) - 14, BATH MEADOW DRIVE, DULVERTON, TA22 9EH	27-Jan-2023 Approved with Conditions
WTCA 22/25	Mrs A Rowland - Works to tree in conservation area: Fell 1 no. Acer tree (WTCA) - 9 THE PADDOCK, LADY STREET, DULVERTON, TA22 9BY	03-Mar-2023 Approved
62/50/22/042DC	Mr. J Barton, Lynton & Barnstaple Railway Trust - Partial discharge of conditions 7 (Construction Surface Water Management Plan), 11 (Construction Traffic Management Plan) and 17 (Construction Environmental Management Plan) of approved application 62/50/16/003. (Discharge of Condition) - Site of the former Blackmoor Gate Hotel, Blackmoor Gate, Barnstaple, Devon	02-Feb-2023 Approved
62/50/22/041DC	Mr. J Barton, Lynton & Barnstaple Railway Trust - Partial discharge of conditions 7 (Construction Surface Water Management Plan), 11 (Construction Traffic Management Plan) and 17 (Construction Environmental Management Plan) of approved application 62/50/16/002. (Discharge of Condition) - Rowley Moor Farm, Kentisbury, Barnstaple, Devon	24-Feb-2023 Approved
62/50/22/040DC	Mr. J Barton, Lynton & Barnstaple Railway Trust - Partial discharge of condition 22 (Ecology) of approved application 62/50/16/001. (Discharge of Condition) - Land between Killington Lane and Blackmoor Gate, Parracombe, Barnstaple, Devon	01-Feb-2023 Approved
62/50/22/039DC	Mr. J Barton, Lynton & Barnstaple Railway Trust - Partial discharge of condition 9 (Construction Surface Water Management Plan) of approved application 62/50/16/001. (Discharge of Condition) - Land between Killington Lane and Blackmoor Gate, Parracombe, Barnstaple, Devon	24-Feb-2023 Approved
6/9/22/119	Mr M Brindle - Non-Material Amendment - Householder - to approved application 6/9/20/113 for the replacement of gallows brackets with posts. (NMA - Householder) - 26, LADY STREET, DULVERTON, TA22 9DA	03-Feb-2023 Approved

Application decisions delegated to the Chief Executive

Application Ref	Applicant & Location	Decision and Date
6/15/22/105	Mr R Norman - Non-material amendment – full– of approved application 6/15/21/102 to allow alteration of size and position of doors on SW elevation, reduction of cladding on NE elevation and installation of timber cladding on the south east elevation instead of fibre cement sheeting, and installation of fibre cement cladding instead of timber cladding in the apexes on the south west and north east elevations. (NMA - Full) - MARSHWOOD, EXTON, DULVERTON, TA22 9LD	27-Jan-2023 Approved
62/50/22/038DC	Mr. J Barton, Lynton & Barnstaple Railway Trust - Discharge of condition 3 (signage) of approved application 62/50/17/002 (Discharge of Condition) - Beacon Down Depot, Parracombe	27-Jan-2023 Approved
62/50/22/037DC	Mr. J Barton, Lynton & Barnstaple Railway Trust - Partial discharge of conditions 19 and 20 (ecology) of approved application 62/50/16/003. (Discharge of Condition) - Site of the former Blackmoor Gate Hotel, Blackmoor Gate, Barnstaple, Devon	24-Feb-2023 Approved
62/50/22/035DC	Mr. J Barton, Lynton & Barnstaple Railway Trust - Discharge of Condition 13 (Construction Traffic Management Plan) of approved application 62/50/16/001 (Discharge of Condition) - Land between Killington Lane and Blackmoor Gate, Parracombe, Barnstaple, Devon	01-Feb-2023 Approved
62/50/22/034DC	Mr. J Barton, Lynton & Barnstaple Railway Trust - Proposed Partial Discharge of Condition 12 (Highway details - Access road and visibility sightlines at existing Exmoor Farmers market entrance from A399) of approved application 62/50/16/003. (Discharge of Condition) - Site of the former Blackmoor Gate Hotel, Blackmoor Gate, Barnstaple, Devon	27-Jan-2023 Approved
62/50/22/033DC	Mr. J Barton, Lynton & Barnstaple Railway Trust - Proposed Partial Discharge of condition 12 (Highway details - Access road and visibility sightlines at Rowley Moor Farm entrance) of approved application 62/50/16/002. (Discharge of Condition) - Rowley Moor Farm, Kentisbury, Barnstaple, Devon	27-Jan-2023 Approved

Application decisions delegated to the Chief Executive

Application Ref	Applicant & Location	Decision and Date
62/50/22/032DC	Mr. J Barton, Lynton & Barnstaple Railway Trust - Proposed Partial Discharge of condition 12 (Highway details - Temporary access road and visibility sight lines from A39) of approved application 62/50/16/004. (Discharge of Condition) - Site of current public car park, Blackmoor Gate, Barnstaple, Devon	27-Jan-2023 Approved
62/50/22/031	Mr R Adamson - Proposed replacement of Conservatory windows, door and roof. (Householder) - 3 PRESTONFORD COTTAGES, PARRACOMBE, BARNSTAPLE, EX31 4QJ	23-Feb-2023 Approved with Conditions
6/29/22/123	Mr & Mrs C Williams, Orchard Escapes Exmoor - Proposed siting of Yurt with adjoining timber lean-to for 6 months per annum for use as holiday let accommodation in addition to existing glamping site. (Full) - Brandish Street Farm, Brandish Street, ALLERFORD, MINEHEAD, TA24 8HR	02-Mar-2023 Approved with Conditions
6/3/22/109DC	Mr J Andrews - Discharge of conditions 3 (ecology licence), 4 (ecology - bats), 5 (bat mitigation strategy), 6 (removal of plants), 7 (scheme for the recording of existing architectural and historic features), 13 (Soil pipe locations), 14 (treatment plant) and 23 (lighting scheme) of approved application 6/3/19/123. (Discharge of Condition) - LOWER WOOLCOTTS FARM, BROMPTON REGIS, DULVERTON, TA22 9NX	24-Feb-2023 Approved
6/42/22/106	Mr A Parry - Proposed creation of decking area and associated balustrading, together with, installation of bi-folding doors and external spiral staircase and reinstatement of entrance gates. (Householder) - RAYMOND COTTAGE, WITHYPOOL, MINEHEAD, TA24 7QP	07-Feb-2023 Approved with Conditions
6/3/22/106DC	Ms. A Haslam Hopwood, South West Lakes Trust - Discharge of conditions 3 (Construction Environmental Plan CEMP) and 4 (Ecological Enhancement Plan (EEP) of approved application 6/3/21/120. (Discharge of Condition) - Wimbleball Lake, Hill Lane, Brompton Regis, Somerset, TA22 9NU	24-Feb-2023 Approved

Application decisions delegated to the Chief Executive

Application Ref	Applicant & Location	Decision and Date
6/13/22/106	Mr North - Proposed erection of single storey extension to north elevation, raising of ridge and replacement of timber cladding with painted render. (Householder) - Forrard On, Exford To Simonsbath Road, Exford, Somerset, TA24 7PX	09-Feb-2023 Withdrawn
62/50/22/016LB	Mr S Upstone - Listed building consent for the proposed replacement of windows, reinstatement of pre-existing window, removal of render on exterior walls, installation of rooflights, replacement of roof tiles, proposed replacement conservatory. new external openings together with internal changes including a new staircase, replacement doors, new partition walls and reinstatement of fireplace. (Listed Building Consent) - WALNER FARM, PARRACOMBE, BARNSTAPLE, EX31 4PG	27-Jan-2023 Approved with Conditions
62/50/22/015	Mr S Upstone - Proposed replacement of windows, reinstatement of pre-existing window, replacement of external doors, removal of render on exterior walls, installation of rooflights, replacement of roof tiles together with a replacement conservatory and new external openings. (Householder) - WALNER FARM, PARRACOMBE, BARNSTAPLE, EX31 4PG	27-Jan-2023 Approved with Conditions
62/50/22/011	Mr. J Barton, Lynton & Barnstaple Railway Trust - Variation of conditions 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 16, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 29, 30, 36, 37, 39 & 41 for approved application 62/50/16/001 (Proposed re-instatement of railway line and ancillary development. As per amended plans 11.05.16 and amended plans and details submitted 30.01.17 and amended plans, additional plans and information dated 01.11.17 including further information in respect of Environmental Statement. As per additional information 02.03.17 and 29.11.17. As per amended plans and additional information dated 16.01.18.) to enable the staged approach to construction and operation of the project. (Alteration/Lift Condition - EIA) - Land between Killington Lane and Blackmoor Gate, Parracombe, Barnstaple, Devon	06-Mar-2023 Withdrawn
62/50/22/010	Mr. J Barton, Lynton & Barnstaple Railway Trust - Variation of conditions 3, 4, 5 for approved	06-Mar-2023 Withdrawn

Application decisions delegated to the Chief Executive

Application Ref	Applicant & Location	Decision and Date
	application 62/50/17/002 (Proposed temporary use of part of existing highways depot as Materials Recycling Centre in connection with reinstatement of phase IIA of the Lynton and Barnstaple Railway.) to enable the staged approach to construction and operation of the project. (Alteration/Lift Condition) - Beacon Down Depot, Parracombe, Devon	
62/50/22/009	Mr. J Barton, Lynton & Barnstaple Railway Trust - Variation of conditions 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 16, 17 & 20 for approved application 62/50/16/004 (Proposed demolition of public toilets and shelter, relocation of public car park, erection of new toilets and interpretation building together with provision of temporary public car park. As per additional information and plan dated 09.03.16 and amended plans and details submitted 30.01.17 including further information in respect of Environmental Statement. As per additional information 02.03.17 and 17.01.18. (amended description)) to enable the staged approach to construction and operation of the project. (Alteration/Lift Condition - EIA) - Site of current public car park, Blackmoor Gate, Barnstaple, Devon	06-Mar-2023 Withdrawn
62/50/22/008	Mr. J Barton, Lynton & Barnstaple Railway Trust - Variation of conditions 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 13, 16, 17, 18, 19 & 20 for approved application 62/50/16/003 (Proposed change of use of site of former hotel to railway car park with 162 car parking spaces and pedestrian underpass to station. As per amended plan 11.05.16 and amended plans and details submitted 30.01.17 including further information in respect of Environmental Statement. As per additional information 02.03.17 and 17.01.18.) to enable the staged approach to construction and operation of the project. (Alteration/Lift Condition - EIA) - Site of the former Blackmoor Gate Hotel	06-Mar-2023 Withdrawn
62/50/22/007	Mr. J Barton, Lynton & Barnstaple Railway Trust - Variation of conditions 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 16, 17, 18 for approved application 62/50/16/002 (Proposed erection of engine shed (1749Sqm), formation of railway sidings and change of use of	06-Mar-2023 Withdrawn

Application decisions delegated to the Chief Executive

Application Ref	Applicant & Location	Decision and Date
	agricultural barn to railway workshop) to enable the staged approach to construction and operation of the project. (Alteration/Lift Condition - EIA) - Rowley Moor Farm, Kentisbury, Barnstaple	
6/13/21/109	c/o Agent - Proposed formation of 2 no. affordable rental homes for local people including conversion of existing buildings. (Full) - Exmoor Stores, Exford, Minehead, Somerset, TA24 7QG	01-Feb-2023 Withdrawn
62/41/21/024	Mr. S Hillier, Royanne Ltd - Proposed demolition of existing former care home and erection of 9 no. dwellinghouses. (Full) - Lydiate Lodge, Rock Lodge Park, Lynton, EX35 6DN	06-Feb-2023 Approved with Conditions
6/9/19/111	Mr R Caring - Proposed conversion of part of ground floor of the Haddeo Shooting Lodge to a single dwellinghouse and change of use of the adjoining land. As per amended plans and information. (Full) - Haddeo Shooting Lodge, Pixton Weir, Pixton Park Estate, Dulverton, Somerset	27-Feb-2023 Refused

Application decisions delegated to the Chief Executive

Application Ref	Applicant & Location	Decision and Date
62/50/23/001DC	Mr S Upstone - Discharge of condition 4 (re-roofing works) of approved application 62/50/22/016LB (Discharge of Condition) - WALNER FARM, PARRACOMBE, BARNSTAPLE, EX31 4PG	07-Mar-2023 Approved
6/34/23/002	Mr O Rush - Proposed replacement of flat roof with dual pitched slate roof together with 2 no. roof lights and replacement of tin wall cladding with timber cladding. (Full) - Hillview (Cowbridge Sawmill), Timberscombe, Somerset, TA24 7TD	20-Mar-2023 Approved with Conditions
6/34/23/001	Mrs L Webb - Proposed erection of new UPVC conservatory onto existing brickwork wall to replace old wooden conservatory. (Householder) - APPLECOMBE, GREAT HOUSE STREET, TIMBERSCOMBE, MINEHEAD, TA24 7TQ	20-Mar-2023 Approved with Conditions
6/24/23/002LB	Mr Stephen White - Listed Building Consent for proposed internal refurbishment and reconfiguration of ground and first floor, including new downstairs cloakroom. (Listed Building Consent) - 3 WOODFORD COTTAGES, WOODFORD, WILLITON, TAUNTON, TA4 4HR	16-Mar-2023 Approved with Conditions
GDO 23/02	Hutchison 3G UK Ltd - Prior notification for proposed 20m high Swann Lattice Tower and associated ancillary works. (GDO - Telecomms) - Land at Winstitchen Cross, Simonsbath, TA24 7JX	16-Mar-2023 Withdrawn
6/40/23/001	Mr J Keen - Proposed two storey side extension (Householder) - Nethercote Cottage, Exford Road, Winsford, Somerset, TA24 7HZ	07-Mar-2023 Approved with Conditions
WTPO 23/02	Mr. K Harris, Lynton & Lynmouth Town Council - Works to trees subject to Tree Preservation Order F14/5/61. Carry out high pollard by removal of main limbs at an approx. height of 3m – 4m above ground on 1 no. Ash Tree (T5), carry out crown lifting work to 1 no. Sycamore tree (T6) by removal of minor secondary and tertiary branches and twigs. (WTPO) - Land West of Holman Park, Lynton	09-Mar-2023 Approved
WTCA 23/03	Mrs C - Works to tree in conservation area: Proposed felling of 1 no Salix Alba (white willow) in front garden. (WTCA) - SEAVIEW VILLA, 6, SUMMERHOUSE PATH, LYNMOUTH, EX35 6ES	09-Mar-2023 Approved

Application decisions delegated to the Chief Executive

Application Ref	Applicant & Location	Decision and Date
WTPO 23/01	Shaun Rigby - Works to trees subject to Tree Preservation Order F14/3/34. Proposed removal of 1 no. Sycamore T1 and removal of single stem of 1 no. Holm Oak T2 (WTPO) - STABLE COTTAGE, BOSSINGTON STABLES, PORLOCK, MINEHEAD, TA24 8HB	09-Mar-2023 Approved
62/49/22/005LB	Jonathan Evans - Listed Building Consent for the proposed installation of 1 no. air source heat pump and timber screening (Listed Building Consent) - YENCOTT, HEASLEY MILL, SOUTH MOLTON, EX36 3LE	15-Mar-2023 Approved with Conditions
62/49/22/004	Mr J Evans - Proposed installation of 1 no. air source heat pump and timber screening. (Householder) - YENCOTT, HEASLEY MILL, SOUTH MOLTON, EX36 3LE	15-Mar-2023 Approved with Conditions
62/50/22/044DC	Mr. J Barton, Lynton & Barnstaple Railway Trust - Discharge of condition 8 (Permanent Surface Water Drainage Management Plan) of approved application 62/50/16/003. (Discharge of Condition) - Site of the former Blackmoor Gate Hotel, Blackmoor Gate, Barnstaple, Devon	07-Mar-2023 Approved
6/9/22/121	Ms. W Beech, Old Quarry - Proposed alterations to existing roof to include natural slate, rooflights and lantern light, rendering of external walls and external cladding of dormer, together with, associated works. - Amended description. (Householder) - 47, NORTHMOOR ROAD, DULVERTON, TA22 9PW	20-Mar-2023 Approved with Conditions
62/50/22/043DC	Mr. J Barton, Lynton & Barnstaple Railway Trust - Partial discharge of conditions 7 (Construction Surface Water Management Plan), 11 (Construction Traffic Management Plan) & 17 (Construction Environmental Management Plan) of approved application 62/50/16/004. (Discharge of Condition) - Site of current public car park, Blackmoor Gate, Barnstaple, Devon	07-Mar-2023 Approved
6/34/22/112DC	Messrs Lamacraft - Discharge of conditions 5 (landscaping scheme), 6 (slate sample), 7 (render details), 8 (access track, driveway and turning area surface details), 9 (access surface details), 10 (entrance gate details), 11 (details for the disposal of	09-Mar-2023 Approved

Application decisions delegated to the Chief Executive

Application Ref	Applicant & Location	Decision and Date
	surface water) and 17 (lighting plan) of approved application 6/34/19/104. (Discharge of Condition) - KNOWLE FARM, DUNSTER, MINEHEAD, TA24 6TZ	
62/50/22/030DC	Mr. J Barton, Lynton & Barnstaple Railway Trust - Discharge of condition 5 (Restoration of demolition sites) of approved application 62/50/16/001 (Discharge of Condition) - Land between Killington Lane and Blackmoor Gate, Parracombe, Barnstaple, Devon	09-Mar-2023 Approved
62/50/22/029DC	Mr. J Barton, Lynton & Barnstaple Railway Trust - Discharge of condition 5 (Restoration of demolition sites) of approved application 62/50/16/002. (Discharge of Condition) - Rowley Moor Farm, Kentisbury, Barnstaple, Devon	09-Mar-2023 Approved
62/50/22/028DC	Mr. J Barton, Lynton & Barnstaple Railway Trust - Discharge of condition 5 (Restoration of demolition sites) of approved application 62/50/16/003. (Discharge of Condition) - Site of the former Blackmoor Gate Hotel, Blackmoor Gate, Barnstaple, Devon	09-Mar-2023 Approved
62/50/22/027DC	Mr. J Barton, Lynton & Barnstaple Railway Trust - Discharge of condition 5 (Restoration of demolition sites) of approved application 62/50/16/004. (Discharge of Condition) - Site of current public car park, Blackmoor Gate, Barnstaple, Devon	09-Mar-2023 Approved
6/42/22/108	Mr & Mrs Fleming - Proposed conversion of 3no redundant barns to form residential accommodation (C2 use) to be used by participants of educational field trips and associated works. (Amended description) (Full) - EAST HOLLOWCOMBE, HAWKRIDGE, DULVERTON, TA22 9QL	07-Mar-2023 Approved with Conditions