



EXMOOR

NATIONAL PARK

EXMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY
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20th January 2026

EXMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY PLANNING COMMITTEE

To: The Members of the PLANNING COMMITTEE of the Exmoor National Park Authority

A meeting of the Planning Committee will be held in the **Committee Room, Exmoor House, Dulverton** on **Tuesday, 3rd February 2026 at 1.30pm.**

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 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 Committees@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 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

As set out above, the Authority welcomes public engagement with its work and believes that everyone attending a meeting of Exmoor National Park Authority or one of its Committees has the right to be treated with respect and to feel safe at all times, including before, during and after the meeting they attend.

The Authority understands that some situations can be difficult and lead to frustration; however, the Authority is committed to promoting an environment where everyone feels listened to and respected and is not subjected to unacceptable behaviour. Further guidance is provided in our Customer Notice, available on our [website](#).

AGENDA

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.

3. Minutes

- (1) To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 6th January 2026 (Item 3)
- (2) To consider any Matters Arising from those Minutes.

4. Business of Urgency: To introduce any business which by reason of special circumstances the Chairperson, after consultation with the Chief Executive, is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency and to resolve when such business should be ordered on the Agenda.

5. Public Speaking: The Chairperson will allow members of the public to ask questions, make statements, or present a petition on any matter on the Agenda for this meeting or in relation to any item relevant to the business of the Planning Committee. 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. Appeal Decisions

6.1 To note the decision of the Secretary of State to allow the appeal, planning permission is granted for the use of the existing outbuilding as an annexe to the main dwelling at Valley View, Parracombe, Barnstaple EX31 4RJ in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref: 62/50/25/001.

7. Development Management: To consider the report of the Head of Climate, Nature & Communities on the following:-

Agenda Item	Application No.	Description	Page Nos.
7.1	6/9/25/017	Update report: Proposed conversion of existing double garage and storage areas into 1no 1 bedroom ancillary accommodation with single Garage at Allandale, Pixton Park, Dulverton, TA22 9HW.	1 - 25

8. Application Decisions Delegated to the Chief Executive: To note the applications determined by the Chief Executive under delegated powers (Item 8).

9. Site Visits: To arrange any site visits agreed by the Committee (the reserve date being Friday, 27 February (am))

ITEM 3

EXMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY PLANNING COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the Meeting of the Planning Committee of Exmoor National Park Authority held on Tuesday, 6 January 2026 at 1.30pm in the Committee Room, Exmoor House, Dulverton.

PRESENT

Mr S J Pugsley (Chairperson)	
Mr M Kelly (Deputy Chairperson)	
Mr T Butt Phillip	Mr M Kelly
Mr A Bray	Mrs F Nicholson
Mr M Ellicott (deputising – Mr B Geen)	Mr J Patrinos
Mr D Elson	Mrs F Smith
Mr J Holtom	Miss E Stacey
Mr R Hopley	

Apologies for absence were received from Mr B Geen

55. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST / LOBBYING OF MEMBERS / UNACCOMPANIED SITE VISITS:

i. **Lobbying of Members** :1 member had received an email relating to Item 7.1. A few members had received an email from the applicant for Item 7.3.

ii. **Declaration of Interests**: Mr M Ellicott - regarding Item 7.4.

56. MINUTES:

i. **Confirmation**: The **Minutes** of the Committee's meeting held on 2nd December 2025 were agreed and signed as a correct record.

ii. **Matters arising**: There were no matters arising.

57. **BUSINESS OF URGENCY**: There was none.

58. **PUBLIC SPEAKING**: See items below.

59. **APPEAL DECISIONS**: The Committee noted the **decisions** of the Secretary of State for the following appeals:

6.1 –Appeal allowed and granted. REF:APP/F9498/X/23/3327061. Hall Farm, Brendon, Lynton, EX35 6PS

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

60. **Application No: 6/8/24/002**

Location: Land at Dunkery View Farm and North of Higher Park Lane, Wheddon Cross. Proposed erection of 9no affordable dwellings and 7no principal residence only dwellings, including access extension of footway, drainage, infrastructure, landscaping and associated works.

Public speaking:

- 1) Cutcombe Parish Council – Mr E Norman
- 2) Applicant – Mr C Winter
- 3) Neighbour and member of Cutcombe Parish Council - Hazel Crockford - Letter read out by ENPA Development Manager Mr J White

The Committee considered the **report** of the Head of Climate, Nature & Communities.

The Committee's Consideration

Members had attended a useful site visit meeting on 2nd January 2026, and acknowledged this was a significant development for Exmoor to support local and affordable needs housing. They were satisfied that concerns had been addressed via the 34 conditions of development. Officers highlighted how condition 28 - Construction Management Plan would mitigate any development issues.

Officers advised that since drafting the Committee Report late comments were received from Natural England. Whilst Natural England did not object to the proposal, provided all mitigation measures were secured, they have advised that the Authority is required to carry out a Habitat Regulation Assessment Appropriate Assessment.

Consequently, notwithstanding what was set out in the Officer Report, Officers advised that they are not ruling out that there is a risk that the proposal, pre-mitigation measures, would have a significant impact on the Habitat Site's integrity.

As an update to the report before Members, therefore, the recommendation was that planning permission be approved subject to a S106 Agreement and conditions, as outlined in the report, and subject to the favourable outcome of a HRA Appropriate Assessment, and an amendment to Condition 6 as set out on page 60 of the papers.

RESOLVED: To Approve planning permission subject to a S106 Agreement and conditions, as outlined in the report, and subject to the favourable outcome of a HRA Appropriate Assessment, and an amendment to Condition 6 so that it reads:

Prior to the first occupation of the dwellings hereby approved a 'lighting design strategy for bats' shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The strategy shall: a) identify those areas/features on site that are particularly sensitive for bats and that are likely to cause disturbance in or around their resting places, foraging habitat and commuting routes; b) show how and where external lighting, including any lighting associated with EV charging points, will be installed (for example through the provision of appropriate lighting contour plans and technical specifications) so that it can be clearly demonstrated that areas to be lit will not disturb or prevent the above species using their territory or having access to their resting places, and its potential impact on the character of the dark night sky; c) the show the effects of internal lighting from the proposed dwellings; and d) include specification of luminaries and means of operation. The lighting shall thereafter be installed in accordance with the specifications and locations set out in the strategy, and the external lighting shall be maintained thereafter in accordance with the strategy.

61. Application No: 6/42/25/002

Location: West Hollocombe, Broad Lane, Withypool, Dulverton, Somerset, TA22 9QL. Proposed siting of 2no. temporary timber cabins for use as holiday accommodation, together with, associated landscaping and installation of a shower within the existing stable building.

Public speaking:

- 1) Agent, Crown and Canopy - Mrs H Ford
- 2) Applicant – Mr T Adams

The Committee considered the **report** of the Head of Climate, Nature & Communities

The Committee's Consideration

Members discussed the proposals, however there were concerns regarding the height of the development and other design elements.

It was agreed to defer the application, allowing for an amended design and potential landscaping. Officers would seek to reach an agreement with the applicant and make a delegated decision, the application would return to the Planning Committee if required.

RESOLVED: To Defer determination of the application to allow an amended design and potential landscaping, and to delegate the decision to Officers if they are able to reach agreement, but to bring the application back to Committee if they cannot reach agreement.

62. Application No: 6/3/25/009

Location: Land South of Hownel Lane, Brompton Regis, Dulverton, TA22 9LQ Proposed demolition of ruinous structure and erection of building for mixed use agriculture and business storage.

Public speaking:

- 1) Neighbour - Mrs V Veltink
- 2) Applicant – Mr P Veale

The Committee considered the **report** of the Head of Climate, Nature & Communities

The Committee's Consideration

The applicant, Mr P Veale asked for the application to be deferred so that the design could be reviewed. Members agreed that this would be possible, Officers confirmed they would explore the nature and design of the proposals with the applicant and it would be brought back to the committee at the earliest opportunity.

RESOLVED: to Defer determination of the application to allow Officers to explore the nature and design of the proposal with the applicant, and to bring the application back to the next convenient meeting.

63. Application No: 6/13/25/007

Location: Exford Depot, Exford, Minehead, TA24 7PY. Application under Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992 for the proposed demolition and replacement of Existing Storage Shed.

The Committee considered the **report** of the Head of Climate, Nature & Communities

The Committee's Consideration

Officers outlined the proposals which Members agreed to approve subject to conditions.

RESOLVED: To Approve planning permission subject to conditions set out in the report.

64. APPLICATION DECISIONS DELEGATED TO THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

The Committee noted the **decisions of the Chief Executive determined under delegated powers.**

65. SITE VISITS: If there were any site visits to arrange, these would take place on the morning of Friday 30th January 2026.

The meeting closed at 3.15 pm

(Chairperson)



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 and 7 January 2026

by **Lewis Condé BSc, MSc, MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 09 January 2026

Appeal Ref: 6000477

Valley View, Parracombe, Barnstaple EX31 4RJ

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission under section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) for the development of land without complying with conditions subject to which a previous planning permission was granted.
 - The appeal is made by Mr T Manfield against the decision of Exmoor National Park Authority.
 - The application Ref is 62/50/25/001.
 - The application sought planning permission for the 'proposed use of existing outbuilding as annexe to main dwelling. Retrospective'. without complying with a condition attached to planning permission Ref 62/50/24/008, dated 9 August 2024.
 - The condition in dispute is No. 2 which states that: "Prior to 9th February 2025, the windows and doors currently in the annexe hereby approved shall all be replaced with replacement windows and doors that are only constructed from natural timber. The replacement windows and doors shall be retained as such thereafter, and any subsequent windows and doors shall only be constructed from natural timber".
 - The reason given for the condition is: "To ensure compliance with Policy CE-S6 of the Exmoor National Park Local Plan 2011 - 2031 by replacing the incongruent windows and doors in the application building with replacement units that are constructed from traditional and naturally sustainable construction materials".
-

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the use of the existing outbuilding as an annexe to the main dwelling at Valley View, Parracombe, Barnstaple EX31 4RJ in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref: 62/50/25/001, subject to the conditions in the attached schedule.

Preliminary Matters

2. The description of development and site address in the banner heading above have been taken from the original planning permission (ref: 62/50/24/008). I have though removed the reference to 'Retrospective' in the description of development as this is not an act of development.

Background and Main Issue

3. The Local Planning Authority granted planning permission (ref: 62/50/24/008) in August 2024 for an annexe building at the appeal site. The development was already in place at the time of the permission, with the annexe having already been constructed with UPVC windows and doors. Condition 2 of the permission required that these be replaced with windows and doors of natural timber construction within a set timeframe.
4. The current appeal seeks to remove the relevant planning condition in order that the existing UPVC windows and doors can be retained within the annexe.

5. The main issue is whether the condition is reasonable or necessary in the interests of the character and appearance of the Parracombe Conservation Area.

Reasons

6. The appeal building is a detached single storey residential annex set within the rear garden of Valley View, a semi-detached dwelling. Valley View is served by a substantial plot, with the appeal building set a significant distance from the host dwelling near its rear boundary.
7. The building is located within the Parracombe Conservation Area (the CA). The CA comprises four dispersed hamlets, with the appeal site located within the Churchdown hamlet. The significance of the CA is largely derived from its historic settlement pattern that sits within an open pastoral landscape within the valley of the River Heddon. Its tranquil, verdant, rural character and collection of historic buildings in the local vernacular style also importantly contribute to the significance of the CA.
8. Although neither listed nor locally listed, Valley View is identified as a positive building within the Parracombe Conservation Area Appraisal Document (adopted 2019) (the Appraisal). From my observations, the host dwelling aligns with the Appraisal's description that it is part of a pair of semi-detached former farm workers' cottages, constructed in an early 20th-century style, and generally is a positive feature within the CA. Nonetheless, the dwelling has been significantly extended and altered in the past, including through the introduction of UPVC windows and doors.
9. Additionally, the use of UPVC windows and doors is not an attribute that is unique to Valley View, with several other properties within the CA, including neighbouring the appeal site, also displaying these window and door types. Some of the nearby examples are unsympathetic additions having been complete in a manner that does not reflect the traditional form or proportions of fenestration that would have previously existed at the relevant host properties.
10. Indeed, the Appraisal, notes that modern replacement windows and doors have made serious inroads within the CA, to its detriment. The Appraisal therefore promotes the retention or reinstatement of period windows. This is also reflected within Policy CE-S6 of the Exmoor National Park Local Plan 2011 – 2031 (adopted 2017) (the Local Plan) and its support text that promote the use of traditional and natural sustainable building materials that reflect local context.
11. Nevertheless, the appeal annexe is a rather simple, unremarkable, building of modern construction and appearance. It is also small in scale and inconspicuous in nature due to its size and siting. The use of UPVC elements within the appeal building does not appear untoward given its age and style, nor does it appear at odds with the host dwelling or detract from the character or appearance of the CA.
12. Given the specific context of the appeal development, I therefore do not consider the condition to be reasonable or necessary in the interests of the character and appearance of the Parracombe Conservation Area. Whilst the development plan policy and related adopted guidance encourage the use of traditional timber windows, in this instance, I also do not find there to be any conflict with Local Plan Policies GP1, CE-S4, CE-D3, or CE-S6. Together these policies seek to ensure the delivery of high quality design that is reflective of its surroundings, including

preserving or enhancing the special interest, integrity, and significance of heritage assets.

Other Matters

13. There are several listed buildings located nearby to the appeal site, namely Court Place Farm (Grade II Listed), Church Cottage (Grade II Listed), St Petroc's Church (Grade I Listed) and a collection of 18th and early 19th Century monuments within the grounds of the Church (all Grade II Listed).
14. From the evidence before me and my observations, the significance of Court Place Farm and Church Cottage lies in their age, architectural qualities and historic associations with the area.
15. St Petroc's Church is of medieval origin, with the earliest datable elements of the current structure deriving from the 13th Century. The Church is now redundant, while its primary interest lies in the completeness of its early eighteenth century interior fittings. The Appraisal also notes its storied history that culminated in it becoming the first church in the country to be vested in the Churches Conservation Trust. The significance of the heritage asset therefore stems largely from its age, stature, architectural quality notably its interior, and historic associations with the area. Meanwhile, the listed monuments within the grounds of the Church are significant due to their age, craftsmanship and again their historic association with both the former Church and the hamlet.
16. The rural character and setting of the Churchdown hamlet, including views to the surrounding extensive countryside, also positively contribute to the significance of each of the above identified listed buildings.
17. Due to the limited scale and nature of the annexe, as well as the prevalence of UPVC windows on other nearby buildings, I consider that the appeal development preserves the setting, as it relates to the special interest of each of the listed buildings.
18. Despite being identified as a positive building within the CA, no robust reasons have been presented by the local planning authority to support a view that the host dwelling is a non-designated heritage asset (NDHA). Particularly, in light of the advice of the Planning Practice Guidance in respect of the heritage significance of NDHAs and their identification. Even if I were to find Valley View to be a NDHA, it remains that the dwelling (and the adjoining semi-detached property) already contain UPVC windows and doors, while for reasons identified above, the appeal development does not detract from the setting of host property or heritage significance it may hold.
19. The appeal site lies within Exmoor National Park, a protected landscape. The Levelling-Up and Regenerations Act 2023 amended the duty on relevant authorities in respect of their functions to "seek to further" the statutory purposes of Protected Landscapes.
20. Amongst other matters, the statutory purposes of the National Park is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife, and cultural heritage of the area. These duties are reflected in the Framework, which establishes that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty as well as wildlife and cultural heritage in the National Parks.

21. Given that the appeal building sits suitably within its surrounding context, the retention of UPVC windows would not have any discernible impact upon the special qualities of the Exmoor National Park. Meanwhile, the appeal scheme would include measures to promote biodiversity (which can be secured via condition). I am therefore satisfied that the landscape and scenic beauty of Exmoor National Park, as well as its wildlife and cultural heritage, would be conserved.
22. The production of timber windows and doors may be more environmentally sustainable than UPVC counterparts. Still, I am not convinced that replacing the already installed components at the appeal property with timber alternatives would result in any meaningful sustainability benefits in this instance.

Conditions

23. By allowing this appeal a new planning permission is created. The PPG advises that, for clarity, decision notices for the grant of planning permission under Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) should restate the conditions on earlier permissions that continue to have effect, unless they have been discharged.
24. I have made some minor amendments and omissions to the Council's original conditions in the interests of clarity and to ensure compliance with the Framework and the PPG.
25. As the development has already been constructed it is unnecessary for me to attach a condition limiting the commencement of development. A condition specifying the approved plans remains reasonable and necessary in the interests of clarity and certainty.
26. A condition confirming that the annexe shall not be used other than as part of the host dwelling is reasonable and necessary for clarity and certainty of its use.
27. Conditions in respect of the provision of bird and bat boxes and a restriction on the installation of external lighting are each reasonable and necessary in the interests of biodiversity.

Conclusion

28. For the reasons outlined above the appeal is allowed.

Lewis Condé

INSPECTOR

Schedule of Conditions

- 1) The development hereby permitted relates to the following approved plans: 'OS and Block Plan' (drawing no. 401/100) and 'Existing Plans' (drawing no. 401/101).
- 2) The development hereby permitted shall not be used other than as part of the dwelling known as Valley View, Parracombe, Barnstaple, EX31 4RJ.
- 3) Within 3 months of the date of this permission, one woodstone or woodcrete bat box (Schwegler 1FF or Schwegler 2F type or equivalent) shall be affixed to the annexe at the underside of its eaves level on its southeastern elevation and shall thereafter be retained/maintained for the lifetime of the development hereby approved.
- 4) Within 3 months of the date of this permission, one bird box shall be affixed to the annexe at the underside of its eaves level on the northwestern elevation and shall thereafter be retained/maintained for the lifetime of the development hereby approved.
- 5) No external lighting shall be installed on the annexe hereby approved except in accordance with details that have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

EXMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY
3 February 2026

Application 6/9/25/017– Proposed conversion of existing double garage and storage areas into 1no 1 bedroom ancillary accommodation with single garage.

Allandale, Pixton Park, Dulverton, TA22 9HW.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This update report relates to the above-referenced planning application, which was previously reported to the Authority Committee on 2 December 2025. The original Committee Report is appended for Members' information. At that meeting, the application was deferred, with Members resolving to allow officers to seek improvements to the design and materials, and to bring the application back to the next available committee meeting. Amended plans have since been received and the authority has re-consulted on them.

2.0 Updated Comments:

2.1 Since going out to re-consultation following the December committee no new objections have been received by the authority, although the following updated comments have been received:

2.2 Wessex Water – Standing Advice:

Thank you for your planning application enquiry. Please find attached a map showing the approximate location of our services near the site.

Wessex Water can advise the following.

Existing assets:

- *3 inch Public Water Distribution Main – minimum 3m standoff either side from the outer edge of the pipe.*

Measurements are given for a pipeline depth of between 0.9 metres and 2 metres. The stand-off distance may increase for a strategic water main due to material, size depth and pressure.
Guidance for stand-off distances for strategic water mains should be sought from the network distribution manager.

Standoff Around Water Mains:

Wessex Water requires access to undertake our statutory duties as set out in the Water Industry Act 1991 to maintain and repair our assets. Therefore,

- there must be no buildings within a minimum of 3m either side of the outer edge of the 3inch diameter water supply main*

and no tree planting within a minimum of 6m. This includes no surface water attenuation features and associated earthworks in the standoff strip, changes in ground levels resulting in additional loading or excavation can lead to instability in the pressurised pipe which is carrying large volumes of water. The water main must not run through enclosed private rear gardens; it must be within a 6m (3m either side) open access strip or roads. Wessex Water require unrestricted access to maintain and repair our apparatus.

Protection Measures:

Developer will need to agree protection arrangements for the existing apparatus which cross the site (standoff details as given above). Any damage to our apparatus by third parties will result in a compensation claim. All existing apparatus must be accurately located on site and marked on deposited drawings. A map showing all known Wessex Water Assets within the area of the proposed site is attached Additional maps can be obtained

Surface water drainage:

Surface water must be disposed of via the SuDS Hierarchy which is subject to Building Regulations and NPPF.

No surface water runoff, land drainage or ground water will be accepted into a public sewer that carries sewerage, either directly or indirectly. Our rainwater drainage policy can be found on our website.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) mandates that Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) must be incorporated into new developments to manage surface water runoff, mitigate flood risks, and provide additional benefits, including enhanced water quality and green spaces.

In line with the drainage hierarchy outlined in Approved Document H of the Building Regulations, Planning Practice Guidance, and the necessity to address water scarcity, all surface water runoff should

aim to be discharged as high up the surface water discharge hierarchy as feasible.

Defra have announced new national standards for SuDS. The national surface water hierarchy has been updated and runoff from the development shall be discharged to the following final destinations, to the maximum extent practicable, in accordance with the below hierarchy:

- *collected for non-potable use (water re-use)*
- *infiltrated to ground*
- *discharged to an above ground surface water body*
- *discharged to a surface water sewer, or another piped surface water drainage system*

Note: To utilise a lesser priority final destination, appropriate evidence shall be provided that demonstrates all higher priority final destinations have been utilised to the maximum extent practicable. Higher cost alone shall not be a reason to utilise lower priority final destinations.

Surface Water drainage strategy to be agreed with the LFFA.

If you are offering the shared drainage for Section 104 adoption please refer to the Sewerage Sector Guidance Sector guidance on sewerage and water adoption agreements

Foul drainage:

Review of the proposal notes that you are not connecting to a public foul sewer – all private treatment needs to be approved by the EA.

Water supply:

There is 3” Water distribution main located in the road that runs through the site from which a suitable point of connection could be made to serve the new dwelling.

For more details and guidance for applying to connect to our networks please see our website and our standing advice:

Building a single new house

Planning liaison standing Planning liaison standing advice and frequently asked questions and frequently asked questions

For further assistance please contact Planning Liaison via planning.liaison@wessexwater.co.uk

Note: These comments are based upon known circumstances prevailing at the time of writing. A review of the contents of this email is required where 18 months or more have elapsed since issue or in the light of significant changes likely to impact upon the response (e.g. changes in development numbers or phasing). Please email review requests to planning.liaison@wessexwater.co.uk

2.3 South West Water – No Objection:

With reference to the planning application at the above address, the applicant/agent is advised to contact South West Water if they are unable to comply with our requirements as detailed below.

Surface Water Services The applicant should demonstrate to your LPA that its prospective surface run-off will discharge as high up the hierarchy of drainage options as is reasonably practicable (with evidence that the Run-off Destination Hierarchy has been addressed, and reasoning as to why any preferred disposal route is not reasonably practicable):

- 1. Water re-use (smart water butts, rainwater harvesting, grey flushing toilets)*
- 2. Discharge into the ground (infiltration); or where not reasonably practicable,*
- 3. Discharge to a surface waterbody; or where not reasonably practicable,*
- 4. Discharge to a surface water sewer, highway drain, or another drainage system; or where not reasonably practicable,*
- 5. Discharge to a combined sewer. (Subject to Sewerage Undertaker carrying out capacity evaluation)*

Having reviewed the applicant's current information as to proposed surface water disposal for its development, please note that method proposed to discharge into a surface water body is acceptable and meets with the Run-off Destination Hierarchy.

I trust this provides confirmation of our requirements, however should you have any questions or queries, please contact the Planning Team on 01392 442836 or via email: DeveloperServicesPlanning@southwestwater.co.uk.

2.4 Somerset Highways Development Control – Standing Advice:

Standing Advice.

2.5 Somerset Rural Housing Enabler – No Objection:

Thank you for alerting me to the amendments submitted by the applicant. Once again, these do not appear to change the basic nature of the proposal nor in any way affect the issues that I raised in my original consultee response. My original comments are germane.

2.6 Dulverton Town Council - Support:

Members of the Planning Committee support this amended Planning Application.

3.0 Additional observations

- 3.1 Since the meeting held on 2 December, the applicant subsequently submitted revised drawings on 12 December 2025, which sought to address the principal concerns raised by officers, particularly in relation to the building's overall massing, its lack of subservience to the host dwelling, and the resultant harm to landscape character arising from these issues. Notwithstanding these revisions, officers noted that the proposed eaves height to the north and south elevations would remain higher than existing by approximately 0.5metres.
- 3.2 Officers considered that the inconsistency in eaves height around the building detracted from a cohesive reading of the building as a whole and would despite its improvements continue to contribute to concerns regarding massing and the perceived lack of subservience to the main dwelling.
- 3.3 Following officers' discussions with the applicant and their architect, it was suggested that the eaves heights to the north and south elevations be reduced to align with those on the east and west elevations, thereby retaining a consistent eaves height around the building. This approach would avoid any additional increase in height and massing of the existing building and as such maintain a neutral relationship with the host dwelling in terms of subservience. The applicant agreed to this approach, and further revised drawings were subsequently submitted on 7 January 2026.
- 3.4 Upon receipt of the further revised drawings submitted on 7 January 2026, officers consider that the proposals are now capable of being supported. Officers acknowledge that shallow mono-pitched roofs are not generally characteristic of traditional building forms within the National Park, and that the earlier iteration of the scheme proposed the

introduction of a pitched roof. However, officers considered previously that the introduction of a pitched roof in this instance would materially increase the building's overall height and perceived massing, particularly when read alongside its existing floorspace. This would result in the structure appearing visually competitive with the host dwelling, giving rise to concerns that it would appear as more of an independent residential building rather than a clearly subordinate ancillary structure. Such an increase in massing and height would, in officers' view, give rise to harm to the character and appearance of the site and the wider landscape, particularly given the site's location outside the main built-up residential area of Dulverton, within Pixton Park.

- 3.5 Whilst officers recognise that the revised design is not an ideal or particularly positive architectural response, it is nonetheless noted that the existing building will now largely remain as built, with no increase in footprint or overall height. As such, the proposal would result in a neutral impact when compared to the existing situation, both in terms of its relationship with the host dwelling and its wider landscape setting. On this basis, officers consider that there would be no reasonable grounds to resist the proposal regarding its scale, massing and subservience, as there was previously.
- 3.6 Aside from the matters set out above, officers had previously expressed concerns in relation to the proposed use of man-made slate roofing and aluminium-framed windows and doors. It was considered that these elements would conflict with Policy CE-S6 (Design and Sustainable Construction Principles) of the Exmoor National Park Local Plan, which requires that the materials and design elements of new development, or the conversion of existing buildings, should complement the local context through the use of traditional and natural, sustainable building materials.
- 3.7 The scheme now proposed retains the building's rendered appearance and includes the use of timber windows and doors to all elevations, thereby addressing officers' earlier concerns in respect of fenestration. The proposed use of timber represents an appropriate and policy-compliant response, particularly as the existing windows and doors are timber and their replacement with aluminium alternatives would have introduced a degree of visual harm and conflict with Policy CE-S6.
- 3.8 In respect of the roof, the revised scheme proposes the use of a Sika Sarnafil roofing system. Officers acknowledge that PVC-based and synthetic roofing materials are not generally supported by Policy CE-S6. However, it is considered that, in this specific instance, their use is justified and acceptable for a number of reasons. Firstly, the roof is proposed at a very shallow pitch of approximately 3 degrees. Officers

consider that the use of traditional slate or roof tiles would not be technically practical or visually appropriate at such a shallow pitch. Secondly, it has already been established that the introduction of a pitched roof form over the whole footprint of the existing building would result in an unacceptable increase in height and massing, causing the building to visually compete with the host dwelling and resulting in harm to landscape character. As such, retaining a low-profile roof form is a key component of ensuring the development remains subordinate and neutral in terms of its landscape impact.

- 3.9 Officers consider that the proposed roofing system, together with its low-profile appearance, would visually resemble a standing seam metal roof and would be consistent with the utilitarian character of the existing structure, which currently incorporates corrugated metal roofing.
- 3.10 In assessing this matter, officers also give significant weight to the site context. The building lies outside a Conservation Area, is not listed, and does not comprise a traditional or historic structure. Furthermore, paragraph 4.158 of the Local Plan, which forms part of the supporting text to Policy CE-S6, explicitly recognises that alternative, non-traditional materials may be appropriate in certain circumstances, particularly for non-traditional buildings located outside Conservation Areas, where the age, form and setting of the building justify such an approach. Officers consider this to be such a case.
- 3.11 Officers also find it prudent to note that in assessing the roofs acceptability, officers consider that it will be only very limitedly visible in public views, owing to its shallow pitch, its falling height towards the rear of the site, and the presence of dense boundary vegetation which provides effective screening to the rear of the building. Subject to the roofing material being finished in a dark anthracite grey colour, officers are satisfied that the proposal would not result in any material harm to the character or appearance of the site or the wider landscape when compared to the existing situation. Furthermore, officers consider that, notwithstanding the use of non-traditional materials, the revised low-profile roof would have limited visual prominence and would therefore not result in material harm. By contrast, the previously proposed pitched roof would have been significantly more visible, thereby emphasising the use of unacceptable materials and resulting in a greater degree of visual and landscape harm.
- 3.12 On balance and having regard to the specific physical and design constraints of the building, officers consider that the now proposed use of materials represents on balance an acceptable solution that accords with the underlying objectives of Policy CE-S6, CE-S1 and CE-D1 of the Local Plan and would not justify refusal of the application.

3.13 Officers note the additional consultation responses received, as provided above. Importantly, no objections have been raised. The comments received from Wessex Water can be appropriately addressed through the inclusion of a standard informative to any permission granted. South West Water has confirmed that they raise no objection to the proposal, advising that the proposed method of surface water disposal is acceptable. Somerset Highways has again referred the Authority to its standing advice, and the Somerset Rural Housing Enabler has confirmed that their previous comments remain applicable, with no further observations to add.

4.0 Recommendation

The Officer recommendation is now that planning permission should be approved for the reasons set out above, and in accordance with the conditions provided below:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
Reason: In accordance with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, (as amended by the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).
2. The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out except in complete accordance with the submitted site and location plan and drawings numbered and date stamped by the Local Planning Authority as: 6/9/25/017FileNo.3, 6/9/25/017FileNo.4, 6/9/25/017FileNo.5 & 6/9/25/017FileNo.8 (1st September 2025) and 6/9/25/017FileNo.12 (8th January 2026) unless otherwise stated by another condition attached to this permission.
Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure the development accords with the approved details.
3. Notwithstanding the details submitted, the proposed Sika Sarnafil (or equivalent) roofing shall be dark anthracite grey in colour.
Reason: In the interests of safeguarding the character and appearance of the site and the wider landscape to ensure compliance with the aims of Policy CE-S6 (Design and Sustainable Construction Principles) of the Exmoor National Park Local Plan 2011–2031.
4. The external lighting hereby approved shall meet the following specification: downlights with no lightspill above the horizontal, warm light (2700K or less),

500 lumens or less and sensor controlled with a timer set to one minute or less.

Reason: In the interests of safeguarding protected light-sensitive species, in accordance with Policy CE-S3 of the Exmoor National Park Local Plan 2011–2031 and Regulation 9(3) of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, and to protect Exmoor’s designated Dark Sky Reserve status in accordance with Policy CE-S2 of the Exmoor National Park Local Plan 2011–2031.

5. The development hereby approved shall be carried out in strict accordance with all ecological measures as set out in Section 5 of the Preliminary Roost Assessment (Acer Ecology, August 2025).

Reason: To ensure the works are carried out in accordance with the submitted details and in accordance with policy CE-S3 of the Exmoor National Park Local Plan 2011-2031 and to accord with Regulation 9(3) of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

6. Prior to the installation of any additional external lighting (not included in the plans) on site, a “lighting design strategy for bats” shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The strategy shall:

- a) identify those areas/features on site that are particularly sensitive for bats and that are likely to cause disturbance in or around their resting places, foraging habitat and commuting routes; and
- b) show how and where external lighting will be installed (for example through the provision of appropriate lighting contour plans and technical specifications) so that it can be clearly demonstrated that areas to be lit will not disturb or prevent the above species using their territory or having access to their resting places.

All external lighting shall be installed in accordance with the specifications and locations set out in the strategy. Under no circumstances should any other external lighting be installed without prior consent from the local planning authority.

Reason: In the interests of safeguarding protected light-sensitive species, in accordance with Policy CE-S3 of the Exmoor National Park Local Plan 2011–2031 and Regulation 9(3) of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

7. Prior to the installation of any new service runs or any vegetation clearance on site, a tree protective fencing plan, conforming to specifications in BS5837:2012 ‘Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations’, shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. Once agreed, such fencing/ground protection shall be erected before any equipment, machinery or materials are brought on to the site and before any ground clearance, tree works, demolition or construction work, including the erection of site huts, is commenced. Such fencing/ground protection shall not be removed or breached during

construction operations without prior written approval by the Local Planning Authority, but shall remain in place for the entire development phase and until all equipment, machinery and surplus materials have been removed from the site. Within the areas so fenced, the existing ground levels shall not be altered and there shall be no development or development-related activity of any description, including trenches or pipe runs for services or drains, the depositing of spoil or the storage of materials.

Reason: To ensure the protection of adjacent trees and their root protection areas during all phases of the development, in the interests of the character and appearance of the landscape, in accordance with Policies CE-S1 and CE-D1 of the Exmoor National Park Local Plan 2011–2031, and with the guidance contained within BS5837:2012 'Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations'.

8. The accommodation hereby approved shall not be used other than ancillary to the dwelling located within the application red-line boundary on the submitted plans. The accommodation shall remain part of the application property, and it shall not be sold off, let out or otherwise disposed of from the host dwelling.

Reason: To ensure that the accommodation remains ancillary to the application property in the interests of protecting local amenity and highway safety, and to allow the Local Planning Authority to formally consider other uses, such as separate independent dwellings to assess whether such uses would be compliant with the adopted development plan.



Committee Report

Application Number:	6/9/25/017
Registration Date:	01-Sep-2025
Target Determination Date:	22-Oct-2025
Extension of Time:	09-Dec-2025
Applicant	Ms. D Morrison
Agent:	N/A
Case Officer:	Joseph Rose
Site Address:	Allandale, Pixton Park, Dulverton, TA22 9HW
Proposal:	Proposed conversion of existing double garage and storage areas into 1no 1 bedroom ancillary accommodation with single garage.
Recommendation:	Refusal
Reason for bringing before Authority Committee:	This application is brought before Committee in accordance with the Approved Scheme of Delegation because the recommendation of the Officer is contrary to the views of Dulverton Parish Council who support the application.

Relevant History

None relevant.

Site Description & Proposal

Allandale is a sizable two-storey, four-bedroom detached dwelling located within the parish of Dulverton. The property occupies a relatively isolated position approximately 200 metres to the east edge of the main built-up area of Dulverton, surrounded by open countryside and with Pixton Park lying immediately to the east and south.

The proposal seeks planning permission for the conversion of the existing double garage and adjoining storage areas to create a one-bedroom unit of ancillary accommodation, while retaining a single garage space within the existing building.

Although the application is described as a conversion of the existing outbuilding, officers consider it important to note that the extent of the proposed works is substantial. The scheme would involve a complete replacement of the existing roof structure with a higher pitched roof, new domestic fenestration and internal reconfiguration to create a fully self-contained unit of accommodation. These changes go significantly beyond

minor alteration and would materially alter both the form and function of the current building.

Consultee Representations

ENPA Ecology – No Objection:

Based on the proposal it is good to have received a Preliminary Roost Assessment: Acer Ecology, dated August 2025. The reports detail the findings of a preliminary roost assessment survey (carried out 15/08/2025). The methods, presentation of results and recommendations within the reports are satisfactory.

The survey concluded that the buildings provide negligible suitability for roosting bats and therefore no further surveys are required. However, due to the opportunistic behavior of bats, along with the site's location close to habitats that will support bats. Please attach the following informative to any planning permission granted: The applicant and their contractors are reminded of the legal protection afforded to bats and bat roosts under legislation including the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. In the unlikely event that bats are encountered during works it is recommended that works stop and advice is sought from a suitably qualified, licensed and experienced ecologist at the earliest possible opportunity. Please add an informative note to any permission granted.

No evidence of breeding birds was recorded during the survey. However, the applicant and their contractors are reminded of the legal protection afforded to nesting birds under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). In the unlikely event that nesting birds are encountered during works it is recommended that works stop until the young have fledged and advice is sought from a suitably qualified and experienced ecologist at the earliest possible opportunity. Please add an informative note to any permission granted.

I would like to see enhancements in line with Local Plan Policy CE-S3 and Appendix 1 of the Exmoor Biodiversity Net Gain Technical Guidance Note. Appendix 1 provides some suggestions for the applicant to consider those appropriate for their site. I am happy to advise on the suitability and siting of these, if required. For a development of this size we would expect to see 5 enhancements, these could include bat and bird boxes, a rainwater butt and tree planting. Please secure by condition once agreed.

The proposal includes two external lights, either side of the door. To be more dark sky friendly I would suggest reducing the number of lights to one, which should be sufficient, this could go over the door to aid illumination. In accordance with our dark sky friendly lighting guidance any external lighting should:

- Be downlights with no lightspill above the horizontal plane
- Warm light (2700K or less)
- 500 lumens or less

-
- PIR sensor controlled

Also, please remind the owner of the importance of the use of blackout blinds/curtains on windows and glass doors to prevent light spill.

Please apply conditions to any permission granted to secure enhancements as detailed above and for the following for which I have provided some suggested wording below:

- The development hereby approved shall be carried out in strict accordance with all ecological measures as set out in Section 5 of the Preliminary Roost Assessment (Acer Ecology, August 2025).
- The development hereby approved shall only install external lighting which meets the following specification: downlights with no lightspill above the horizontal, warm light (2700K or less), 500 lumens or less and sensor controlled with a timer set to one minute or less.
- Prior to the installation of any additional external lighting (not included in the plans) on site, a “lighting design strategy for bats” shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The strategy shall: a) identify those areas/features on site that are particularly sensitive for bats and that are likely to cause disturbance in or around their resting places, foraging habitat and commuting routes; and b) show how and where external lighting will be installed (for example through the provision of appropriate lighting contour plans and technical specifications) so that it can be clearly demonstrated that areas to be lit will not disturb or prevent the above species using their territory or having access to their resting places. all external lighting shall be installed in accordance with the specifications and locations set out in the strategy, and these shall be maintained thereafter in accordance with the strategy. Under no circumstances should any other external lighting be installed without prior consent from the local planning authority.

ENPA Woodlands Officer – Objection:

I have reviewed all the submitted information and set out my comments below. The application is to convert an existing double garage and storage area into 1 no. 1 bedroom ancillary accommodation and single garage. The existing structure is set to the Southwest of the main dwelling and is tucked up against a dense area of semi-mature trees and shrubs to its immediate South and West sides. The photographs provided show this vegetation to be overhanging the roofline of the existing single storey buildings. No tree related information has been provided, other than a sentence within the planning statement saying that ‘all surrounding trees and landscape will remain in-situ’. While I have no objection to the building being used as ancillary accommodation, I do have concerns on how the conversion could be achieved without damaging any of the surrounding trees, and have set these concerns out below. 1) The proposed floorplan layout shows the bathroom and kitchen to the South corner and West side of the building respectively. Both of these will require new service runs for water, drainage and foul sewage, most likely requiring excavation works around the outside of the building, which in turn would damage any tree roots in that area. 2) The

existing building has a low single pitch corrugated metal roof, and it is proposed to have a double pitch slate roof. Construction of the new roof will require scaffolding to be erected around the outside of the building, which requires approx. 1.5m of clearance to be erected. This will require any existing vegetation to be cut back / down to provide the necessary working space. Based upon the very limited tree related information that has been provided, I object to the proposals and ask that the applicant provides further information as follows: A plan showing where the new service runs for water, drainage and foul sewage will be in relation to the new bathroom and kitchen, and how connecting this to the existing drainage layout will not damage any roots of adjacent trees. An Arboricultural method statement in accordance with BS5837: 2012 clearly setting out how the proposed works in 1 and 2 above can be achieved without significant vegetation loss or damage to roots of adjacent trees.

Somerset Council – Rural Housing Enabler – No Objection:

Updated Comments:

Having had a quick look through the documents listed on the planning portal it seems that there are amended plans, but I cannot see that the issue I raised in my original consultee response has been affected by these. Unless I have missed something, it would seem that my original comments are germane.

Original Comments:

The applicant seeks permission to create a 'ancillary accommodation' intended for a family member by converting a double garage and storage areas. My understanding is that this is not an 'annex' as it is not part of a building which is connected to the main. As illustrated by the photograph supplied by the applicant, the double garage and storage in question is not connected in any way to the existing dwelling so the proposed conversion would create a new detached bungalow within the curtilage of the 'host'. Whilst the intention may be to house an extended family member, I cannot see how this could be easily monitored in the short term and in the longer term it would inevitably lead to use by a different household

In the event that permission is granted, I would strongly recommend restrictions on future use if/when no longer needed by an extended family member. An entirely new dwelling would not normally be approved except to meet identified local affordable housing need and an appropriately worded s106 Agreement would restrict occupancy to those with a suitable local connection, let at a rent that they can afford with long term security of tenure or sold at a significant discount from the market rate for a principal occupancy dwelling.

As at 15th July 2025 there were 66 households registered on Homefinder Somerset citing a local connection to the parish of Dulverton, of whom 39 required a single dwelling. I am unable to cite how many of the 39 might require a bungalow due to limited mobility but I can say that 6 were above the current state pension age. I would therefore

suggest that any s106 Agreement refers, in the first instance, to the parish of Dulverton and all immediately adjacent parishes when defining 'local connection'.

There are no other material observations.

South West Water – No Objection:

South West Water has no comment.

Somerset Highways – Standing Advice:

Updated Comments:

Standing Advice – The issue of the red line has not be addressed.

Original Comments:

Standing Advice – The red line of the site does not extend to any public highway, therefore it is unknow if there is a right of access in perpetuity.

Dulverton Town Council – Support:

Updated Comments:

Members support this Planning Application.

Original Comments:

Members of the Planning Committee support this application.

Representations

None received.

Policy Context

Exmoor National Park Local Plan 2011- 2031 (inclusive of minerals and waste policies):

- GP1 - Achieving National Park Purposes and Sustainable Development
- GP4 - The Efficient Use of Land and Buildings
- CE-S1 - Landscape and Seascape Character
- CE-D1 - Protecting Exmoor's Landscapes and Seascapes
- CE-S2 Protecting Exmoor's Dark Night Sky
- CE-S3 - Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure
- CE-S5 - Principles for the Conversion or Structural Alteration of Existing Buildings
- CE-S6 - Design and Sustainable Construction Principles

- CC-S1 - Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation
- HC-D15 - Residential Extensions
- HC-D16 – Outbuildings

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

Planning Considerations

The primary planning considerations in this particular case are the principle of development (ancillary accommodation to the main dwelling), the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area, neighbouring amenity and ecology and biodiversity.

Policy GP1 of the Exmoor National Park Local Plan 2011-2031 outlines how the development plan seeks to achieve and adhere to the National Park Purposes and states that Sustainable development for Exmoor National Park will conserve and enhance the National Park, its natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage and its special qualities; promote opportunities for their understanding and enjoyment by the public, and in so doing, foster the social and economic wellbeing of local communities.

Policy GP4, then goes on to set the principles on the National Park for achieving the efficient use of land and buildings and states that development proposals will be encouraged which demonstrate the efficient use of land and buildings including through: the redevelopment of brownfield land located within the built extent of the named settlements that does not have a high ecological value; or the re-use of existing buildings within the built extent of the named settlements, or within or well related to hamlets and farmsteads. The policy then goes on to outline that development within or adjoining the named settlements should reflect the historic form and pattern of the settlement and make best use of land on the site in terms of the density of buildings and green infrastructure provision.

Policy HC-D16 establishes the principles for outbuildings within the National Park. Although the outbuilding in question already exists, the extent of the proposed alterations is such that the policy remains applicable in assessing the modifications. The policy states that proposals for ancillary outbuildings within the domestic curtilage of a dwelling will be permitted where: in terms of scale and massing they are proportionate to the dwelling they are to serve; there is no unacceptable adverse impact on the character, appearance or setting of the existing dwelling, the surrounding landscape, or the amenity of neighbouring occupiers by reason of their siting and design in accordance with policy CE-S6 Design and Sustainable Construction Principles; in the case of the conversion of an existing building, the character and appearance of the building is conserved in accordance with policy CE-S5 Principles for the Conversion or Structural Alteration of Existing Buildings; and private amenity space around the dwelling will not be reduced to an unacceptable level.

The policy also crucially states that any element of the proposal that pertains to primary living accommodation should accord with the requirements of policy HC-D15 Residential Extensions.

Further to this, Policy HC-D15 of the Local Plan outlines the requirements for residential extensions specifically within the National Park. As such, it is important to emphasise that whilst the principle of residential extensions is supported, this is subject to set criteria. Officers also note that, while Somerset's Rural Housing Enabler has questioned whether the proposed development can be considered ancillary, the authority is required to determine the application on the basis of the proposal as submitted.

Clause 1 of the Policy states that proposals for residential extensions will be permitted where, they firstly accord with the design principles set out in Policy CE-S6 (of which are considered further into the report), where they ensure that there is sufficient space within the existing curtilage to accommodate the extension without resulting in the overdevelopment of the site or adversely impacting on residential amenity space. Clause 1 also requires residential extensions to be proportionate to the original dwelling and specifies that in any case, any proposed extension will not exceed 35% of the original dwelling (considering any previous extensions including those carried out under permitted development rights).

It is important to note as per paragraph 6.173 of the Local Plan, for the purposes of implementing the Policy, floorspace shall be measured externally and shall include enclosed porches and conservatories. The 'original dwelling' is the dwelling as it existed on 1 April 1974 or as constructed if this was a date after 1 April 1974 (this being the date when the discharge of planning responsibilities was transferred to the National Park Committee of Somerset County Council).

Officers are persuaded that the existing garages form part and parcel of the established residential planning unit of Allendale and therefore serve an ancillary function to the main dwelling.

Officers have not been furnished with any existing floor plans of the main dwelling and are therefore unable to confirm whether the proposal would comply with the 35% floorspace limit set out in Policy HC-D15 of the Exmoor National Park Local Plan (2011–2031). However, based on the floor area stated in the estate agent's particulars and acknowledging what is detailed within the applicant's planning statement whilst having undertaken a detailed review of the four-bedroom dwelling, officers are satisfied that the proposal would not likely exceed a 35% increase in floor space of the existing dwelling.

With regard to design and visual impacts, policies CE-S5 and CE-S6 would also be applicable.

Policy CE-S5 of the local plan sets out the principles for the conversion or structural alteration of existing buildings and states that, the conversion or structural alteration of

any existing building will be permitted where the proposal; accords with the relevant policies in this Plan in terms of the intended use; clearly demonstrates that the building is capable of conversion without substantial reconstruction and is suitable for the existing building in terms of the intended use and the intensity of that use, in relation to its capacity, structure and character without substantial alteration. Clause 4 of the policy then states that; In addition to clause 1, proposals for the conversion or structural alteration of non-traditional buildings, will only be permitted if traditional buildings are demonstrated to be incompatible with the intended use or no such buildings are present, and where: the building is of permanent and substantial construction; and environmental and visual enhancement to the building and/or its setting are incorporated into the proposals where necessary to deliver an overall acceptable scheme.

Furthermore, Policy CE-S6 of the Local Plan outlines the requirements for design and sustainable construction principles for all development within the National Park. The Policy states under clause 1 that development proposals should deliver high quality sustainable designs that conserve and enhance the local identity and distinctiveness of Exmoor's built and historic environment. In doing so, applicants will be expected to demonstrate several design principles.

Clause 1(a) of Policy CE-S6, requires all new development to positively contribute to its setting in terms of siting, massing, scale, height, orientation, density and layout whilst clause 1(b) of the Policy requires that the materials and design of new buildings or conversions complement the local context, with a focus on traditional, natural, and sustainable building materials.

Furthermore, with regard to wider landscape impacts, policy CE-S1 outlines that the high quality, diverse and distinct landscapes and seascapes of Exmoor National Park will be conserved and enhanced whilst policy CE-D1 states that development will be permitted where it can be demonstrated that it is compatible with the conservation and enhancement of Exmoor's landscapes and seascapes through ensuring that: the visual impact of the development in its immediate and wider setting is minimised through high quality design that reflects local landscape character with particular regard to scale, siting, materials, and colour; and the cumulative and/or sequential landscape and visual effects of development do not detract from the natural beauty of the National Park and the experience of tranquillity.

Officers consider that, although the existing outbuilding is not of a traditional design, it remains a plain and unassuming structure that is clearly subservient to the host dwelling in both form and function, currently serving as a garage. Its visual presence is modest, aided by its low roofline and simple construction. However, the proposed alterations — including the introduction of a new pitched roof, domestic-style fenestration, increase in height, and external lighting — would materially alter its character. These changes would result in a structure that visually competes with the host dwelling, giving the impression of a second, independent residential unit rather than ancillary accommodation.

This concern is reinforced by the scale of the internal floorspace, which at approximately 68 sqm, would meet the nationally described space standards for a two-bedroom, three-person single-storey dwelling. In this context, the proposal would have the appearance and functionality of an independent unit of accommodation, rather than accommodation incidental to the enjoyment of the main dwelling.

To achieve the proposed form, the building would also require substantial reconstruction, including the replacement of the entire roof structure and the insertion of multiple new openings. Taken together, these factors demonstrate that the proposal goes beyond what could reasonably be regarded as an alteration to an existing outbuilding.

Additionally, officers consider that while the use of materials such as painted render, exposed brick and timber would, in principle, be acceptable in accordance with Policy CE-S6 (Design and Sustainable Construction Principles), the inclusion of man-made slate roofing and aluminium-framed windows and doors would not accord with the policy's requirement for the use of high-quality, natural and locally characteristic materials.

Due to a combination of its height, scale and design, including the extensive fenestration, the whole effect is a scheme which would lack a sense of subtleness, and it would overpower the existing dwelling causing harm to its character and appearance, with consequent harm to the surrounding area.

For the reasons set out above, the proposal as a whole does not represent a subservient or ancillary form of development and would harm the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area. Therefore, it fails to comply with Policies CE-S1 (Landscape and Seascape Character), CE-D1 (Protecting Exmoor's Landscapes and Seascapes), CE-S2 (Protecting Exmoor's Dark Night Sky), HC-D15 (Residential Extensions), HC-D16 (Outbuildings), CE-S5 (Principles for the Conversion or Structural Alteration of Existing Buildings) and CE-S6 (Design and Sustainable Construction Principles) of the Exmoor Local Plan.

With regards to impacts on neighbouring amenity, the site is not directly adjacent to any neighbouring residential properties, and as such the proposal would not give rise to overlooking, loss of privacy, overbearing impact, or loss of light to any adjoining occupier. Furthermore, no local residents have raised any objections to the scheme. Therefore, in this regard, the development would not conflict with Clause 1(g) of Policy CE-S6.

With regard to ecology and biodiversity, Regulation 9(3) of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 states that: "Without prejudice to the preceding provisions, a competent authority, in exercising any of its functions, must have regard to the requirements of the Directives so far as they may be affected by the exercise of those functions."

As such, the Local Planning Authority consults its internal ecologist where appropriate to ensure that any implications under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 are properly assessed and addressed as part of the decision-making process.

Furthermore, Policy CE-S3 of the Local Plan states that the conservation and enhancement of wildlife, habitats and sites of geological interest within the National Park will be given great weight and also 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.

Officers note that the Exmoor National Park Authority's Ecologist has reviewed the proposals and raised no objections to the scheme stating that the submitted preliminary roost assessment prepared by Acer Ecology, dated August 2025 was satisfactory including the methods, presentation of results and recommendations.

The submitted ecological survey concluded that the building offers negligible potential for roosting bats and that no further survey effort is therefore required. Furthermore, no evidence of breeding birds was recorded during the site assessment. The Authority's ecologist has, however, recommended a number of conditions aimed at securing biodiversity enhancement measures, in accordance with Local Plan Policy CE-S3 (Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure) and Appendix 1 of the Exmoor Biodiversity Net Gain Technical Guidance Note. The full list of recommended conditions is set out within the consultation response from the ecologist above.

Officers concur with the recommendations of the Authority's ecologist, particularly given the site's location within a relatively open expanse of countryside where the restriction of external lighting is important to avoid harm to Exmoor's internationally recognised Dark Sky Reserve. Limiting light spill would also ensure compliance with Policy CE-S2 (Protecting Exmoor's Dark Night Sky), which seeks to maintain and enhance the tranquillity and dark sky experience of the National Park, and requires that development proposals minimise and, where possible, eliminate unnecessary external lighting.

However, as officers are recommending refusal of the scheme for the reasons set out above, such conditions are not proposed to be attached to any decision in this instance.

Other Matters:

Officers have given due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty contained in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, which sets out the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

However, in weighing the personal circumstances in the balance, this has to be considered against the unacceptable effect the development has on the character and appearance of the area. No evidence has been put before officers to conclude that the proposed development is the only option for providing accommodation and care for an elderly family member, or that the protection of the public interest cannot be achieved by means that are less interfering of the applicant and their family member's human rights. Therefore, only moderate weight is afforded to the personal circumstances put forward. However, as identified above, the development causes significant harm to the character and appearance of the area and, as such, these personal circumstances do not outweigh the unacceptable effect of the development. In this regard, a refusal of planning permission is a proportionate and necessary approach to the legitimate aim of ensuring that developments are visually attractive and respond positively to local character. Therefore, while these are material considerations that weigh in favour of the scheme, they do not outweigh the harm identified previously.

Officers note that the internal conversion of the garage could, in principle, be undertaken without the need for express planning permission, as it already serves an ancillary function to the main dwelling and would not introduce a new material change of use. However, the external alterations necessary to make the building suitable for habitable accommodation would constitute development under Section 55 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and therefore require planning permission.

In line with the Court of Appeal judgment in *Mansell v Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council* [2017], a fallback position will only carry material weight where there is a real prospect—as opposed to a merely theoretical possibility—of it being implemented. In this instance, the fallback is not regarded as a realistic or deliverable prospect due to the external works required and therefore attracts little weight in the determination of this application.

Accordingly, in accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and Paragraph 2 of the National Planning Policy Framework, there are no material considerations, individually or cumulatively, indicating otherwise that would justify a departure from the development plan and must therefore be determined in accordance with it.

Officers also note that Somerset Highways, while raising no objection to the proposal, have commented that the red line boundary does not extend to the public highway, and therefore it is unclear whether a right of access exists in perpetuity. However, as the proposal is for accommodation ancillary to the existing dwelling and would form part and parcel of the same planning unit, officers consider this matter to be of negligible relevance in this case.

With regards to nearby trees, the Authority's Woodland Officer has reviewed the submitted information and raised concerns regarding the potential impact of the proposed works on surrounding trees and vegetation, which are situated immediately to the south and west of the outbuilding and overhang the existing roofline. The proposal would include the installation of new service runs for water, foul drainage and

sewage, as well as the likely erection of scaffolding to facilitate the construction of a new pitched roof. These works are likely to necessitate excavation and vegetation clearance within the root protection areas of nearby trees.

No arboricultural information has been submitted to demonstrate how such works could be undertaken without resulting in harm to the retained trees and their roots. In the absence of an Arboricultural Method Statement and plans showing the location of new service runs, the Authority is unable to conclude that the development could be carried out without significant vegetation loss or damage to the roots of adjacent trees, which could, in turn, adversely affect the character and appearance of the site and the wider landscape, noting that the existing trees and vegetation contribute to this character. In the absence of arboricultural information, officers cannot be satisfied that no likely significant effects on landscape character would arise, as required under Policies CE-S1 and CE-D1.

Officers in this case, have not considered it necessary or appropriate to pursue the additional arboricultural information requested by the Woodland Officer, given that the application is already recommended for refusal on other substantive policy grounds. However, if the proposal were supportable officers consider that this information would be necessary prior to the determination of the application, and as such it would still constitute a valid reason for refusal in this case.

Human Rights

The provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Equality Act 2010 have been taken into account in reaching the recommendation contained in this report. In particular, the Authority has had due regard to the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, including the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Conclusion

Taking into account the issues noted above and all other relevant material considerations, it is considered that the proposed development, by virtue of its overall design, scale and appearance, would result in a building that competes visually with the host dwelling and would fail to continue to be read as a subservient outbuilding. The proposal would introduce domestic features, such as fenestration and a pitched roof, that would fundamentally alter its current subdued and subservient character and create the impression of an independent dwelling rather than ancillary accommodation. While the proposal would not give rise to unacceptable impacts on neighbouring amenity, and the personal circumstances and protected characteristics of the applicants have been carefully considered in the assessment of the application, these matters do not outweigh the identified harm or justify a departure from established policy. The development would also necessitate substantial reconstruction of the existing building to enable it to provide the proposed accommodation.

Furthermore, insufficient arboricultural information has been submitted to demonstrate that the development could be implemented without resulting in harm to nearby trees and vegetation situated immediately to the south and west of the building. The Authority's Woodland Officer has raised concerns that the works, including new service runs and the erection of scaffolding, would likely result in excavation and vegetation clearance within the root protection areas of adjacent trees. Officers have not considered it necessary or appropriate in this case to pursue the additional arboricultural information requested, given that the application is already recommended for refusal on other substantive policy grounds.

Taking these factors into account, officers consider that the proposed development is contrary to Policies CE-S1, CE-D1, CE-S2, HC-D15, HC-D16, CE-S5 and CE-S6 of the Exmoor National Park Local Plan 2011–2031. Consequently, the case officer recommends that planning permission be refused for the following reason(s).

Recommendation

Refusal for the following reasons:

1. Design, Scale, Massing, Subservience and Landscape Character

The proposed development, by reason of its design, increased height, scale, massing and appearance, would result in a building that no longer reads as a simple, subservient outbuilding ancillary to the host dwelling. The introduction of a new pitched roof, domestic-style fenestration and associated alterations would fundamentally change the plain and understated character of the existing structure, giving rise to a form and appearance that fails to conserve or enhance the character and appearance of the site and its surroundings.

In addition, insufficient arboricultural information has been submitted to demonstrate that the works, including new service runs and the construction of the pitched roof, could be undertaken without resulting in harm to nearby trees and vegetation, which may contribute to the character of the site and wider landscape. As such, the Local Planning Authority cannot be satisfied that no adverse landscape impacts would arise.

Accordingly, the proposal conflicts with Policies CE-S1, CE-D1, CE-S5, CE-S6, HC-D15 and HC-D16 of the Exmoor National Park Local Plan 2011–2031.

Informatives

Appeals to the Secretary of State:

If you are aggrieved by the decision of your local planning authority to refuse permission for the proposed development or to grant it subject to conditions, then you can appeal to the Secretary of State under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

If you want to appeal against your Local Planning Authority's decision, then you must do so within 12 weeks of the date of the decision notice.

Positive and Proactive Statement:

This Authority has a pro-active approach to the delivery of development. Early pre-application engagement is always encouraged. In accordance with the requirements of Article 35 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015, in determining this application, Exmoor National Park Authority has endeavoured to work positively and proactively with the agent/applicant, in line with the National Planning Policy Framework, to ensure that all relevant planning considerations have been appropriately addressed to achieve a positive outcome. However, in this instance the relevant planning considerations have not been addressed and the application has therefore been refused.

BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN:

The effect of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that planning permission granted for development of land in England is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition (biodiversity gain condition) that development may not begin unless: (a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and (b) the planning authority has approved the plan.

The planning authority, for the purposes of determining whether to approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan, if one is required in respect of this permission would be Exmoor National Park Authority. There are statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not always apply. Based on the information available this permission is considered to be one which will not require the approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development is begun because one or more of the statutory exemptions or transitional arrangements in the list below is/are considered to apply.

Statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements in respect of the biodiversity gain condition.

BNG is not required for planning permissions granted retrospectively under section 73A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. This means that developments that have already been completed or are in the process of being modified do not need to meet BNG requirements at this time.

Regulation 4 – De minimis exemption.

4.3 Self and Custom Build Development, meaning development which:

- i) consists of no more than 9 dwellings;
- ii) is carried out on a site which has an area no larger than 0.5 hectares; and
- iii) consists exclusively of dwellings which are self-build or custom housebuilding (as defined in section 1(A1) of the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015).

* "original planning permission means the permission to which the section 73 planning permission relates" means a planning permission which is the first in a sequence of two or more planning permissions, where the second and any subsequent planning permissions are section 73 planning permission.

Application decisions delegated to the Chief Executive

Application Ref	Applicant & Location	Decision and Date
6/24/25/005DC	Mr N Griffiths & Ms P Sullivan - Discharge of condition 3 (Roofing) of approved application 6/24/25/001 (Discharge of Condition) - Garages adjacent to Brook Lea & Hillside, Woodford, Williton, Taunton, TA4 4HR	07-Jan-2026 Approved
GDO 25/16	Mr K Branfield - Prior notification for general purpose agricultural building 18.28m x 13.71m (Prior Notification - Agricultural/Forestry (GDO)) - Westwater Farm, Worth Lane, Withypool, Dulverton, Somerset, TA24 7RQ	09-Jan-2026 Prior Approval Required
62/11/25/015DC	Mr. P Perriam, Exmoor Design - Discharge of condition 3 (arboricultural impact assessment) of approved application 62/11/25/011LB (Discharge of Condition) - GLENTHORNE LODGE, COUNTISBURY, LYNTON, EX35 6NQ	23-Dec-2025 Approved
62/43/25/011DC	Mr N Swift - Discharge of condition 3 (Bat licence) of approved application 62/43/25/001 (Discharge of Condition) - IVY COTTAGE, MARTINHOE, PARRACOMBE, BARNSTAPLE, EX31 4QT	23-Dec-2025 Approved
6/10/25/023DC	Mrs K Lee - Discharge of condition 6 (Slate sample) of approved application 6/10/25/016LB (Discharge of Condition) - High House, 1, CASTLE HILL, DUNSTER, MINEHEAD, TA24 6SQ	16-Dec-2025 Approved
GDO 25/15	MBNL (EE UK Ltd and H3G UK Ltd) - Prior approval for the upgrade of the existing telecommunications site, comprising the installation of a generator, the internal upgrades of the existing equipment cabinet within the existing fenced compound, and ancillary development thereto. (Prior Approval - Part 16 - Class A) - 57993, Existing Base Station at Warren F, Existing Base Station, Warren Farm, Simonsbath, Minehead, Somerset, TA24 7LN	08-Jan-2026 Prior Approval Required-Prior Approval Approved
62/50/25/011	Mr G Nicholls - Proposed roofing over existing agricultural yard area (Full) - Lower East Middleton, Road From Cowley Ford Bridge To Minniemoor Cross, Parracombe, Devon, EX31 4PF	09-Jan-2026 Approved with Conditions
62/49/25/010LB	Ms A Creed - Listed building consent for the proposed alterations to openings in existing single storey outbuilding. Removal of existing structurally	09-Jan-2026 Approved with Conditions

Application decisions delegated to the Chief Executive

Application Ref	Applicant & Location	Decision and Date
	unstable rubble stone pier, infill opening with new painted timber door and timber framed sidelight window. Retrospective. (Listed Building Consent) - HEASLEY HOUSE, HEASLEY MILL, SOUTH MOLTON, EX36 3LE	
62/49/25/009	Ms A Creed - Proposed alterations to openings in existing single storey outbuilding. Retrospective. (Householder) - HEASLEY HOUSE, HEASLEY MILL, SOUTH MOLTON, EX36 3LE	09-Jan-2026 Approved with Conditions
6/15/25/005	Mr & Mrs R & C Norman - Proposed Construction of Agricultural Building and associated works (Part Retrospective) (Full) - MARSHWOOD, EXTON, DULVERTON, TA22 9LD	22-Dec-2025 Approved with Conditions
6/29/25/007LB	Mrs Z Clarke - Listed building consent for proposed replacement window and door (Listed Building Consent) - WEST LYNCH, ALLERFORD, MINEHEAD, TA24 8HJ	18-Dec-2025 Approved with Conditions
62/11/25/013	St Austell Brewery Company Limited - Lawful development certificate for an existing commencement of the development of the extension to provide staff accommodation, together with, the creation of window and door to the west elevation and installation of photovoltaic array set out in Planning Permission 62/11/22/020 and Listed Building Consent 62/11/22/021LB, work has been undertaken on the site in the form of digging a trench and excavation works. (CLEUD) - THE BLUE BALL INN, COUNTISBURY, LYNTON, EX35 6NE	23-Dec-2025 Approved
6/10/25/022LB	Mr. J Percival, National Trust - Listed Building Consent for internal works within the basement boiler room of Dunster Castle, a Grade I listed building. The proposed works involve the removal of a redundant oil tank and a section of non-significant brick infill within an earlier brick arch, and the casting of a new concrete pad to facilitate future boiler installation. (Listed Building Consent) - DUNSTER CASTLE, DUNSTER, MINEHEAD, TA24 6SL	19-Dec-2025 Approved with Conditions
6/27/25/013	Mr & Mrs Steele - Proposed erection of two replacement retaining walls (retrospective).	17-Dec-2025 Approved with Conditions

Application decisions delegated to the Chief Executive

Application Ref	Applicant & Location	Decision and Date
	(Householder) - The Cleeve, Mill Lane, Porlock, Minehead, Somerset, TA24 8QW	
6/29/25/006LB	Dr S Webb - Listed building consent for the proposed replacement of 1no. timber window. (Listed Building Consent) - GATE COTTAGE, Bossington Road, Selworthy, MINEHEAD, TA24 8HJ	16-Dec-2025 Approved with Conditions
6/27/25/012	Mr & Mrs M Limb - Proposed replacement of existing front porch roof with natural slate, removal of side elevation chimney, raise rear lean-to roof and replace windows on the south and east elevations. (Householder) - FRASERS, HIGH STREET, PORLOCK, MINEHEAD, TA24 8PU	18-Dec-2025 Approved with Conditions
6/34/25/003	Mr & Mrs Smith - Proposed demolition of front porch and single storey side store and erection of two storey side extension and front porch (amended plans). (Householder) - PERO COTTAGE, TIMBERSCOMBE, MINEHEAD, TA24 7UE	09-Jan-2026 Approved with Conditions
6/42/25/001	Ms C Luhr - Proposed conversion of existing outbuilding to provide extension for additional accommodation to the existing dwelling along with the erection of a barn for equipment storage and formation of parking spaces. (Full) - LINHAY COTTAGE, WITHYPOOL, MINEHEAD, TA24 7RD	19-Dec-2025 Approved with Conditions