

In this edition we have three planning applications for you to consider. To say that they are all 'old friends' might convey the wrong impression. So we will settle for describing them as the 'children' of previous applications of which we did not approve. But first an interesting new initiative that your Committee thinks you would possibly like us to undertake on your behalf and a 'delivery' from the Community Post Office.

### **Is this our 'Blott on the Landscape'? <sup>1</sup>**



Your committee thinks it is one of our greatest eyesores and so begs the question "What can we do about it?"

Whether you are driving into Newton Ferrers or driving out, the Water Tower at Butts Park is the most prominent structure that catches the eye. It is not a pretty sight.

The fully operational Tower belongs to South West Water (SWW) and supplies the communities of Newton Ferrers and Noss Mayo. The quality of the water inside the Tower is of a high standard and vital to the households and businesses it serves. Whilst the inside of the Tower is maintained to the standard you would expect, the same cannot be said of the outside. To improve the external appearance of the Tower, we think we should give SWW some encouragement to do so. We hope you agree.

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<sup>1</sup> With apologies to Tom Sharpe

But what? The obvious answer is to give it a scrub and a coat of paint, but should we not be more adventurous? We think we could. The final decision obviously lies with SWW but we can help by giving a local view. One suggestion we have heard is that there could be a mural using a design that will help the Tower to blend in with its background. We could envisage a design which is subtle and which would enhance the environment. The artist could be sourced from a local college.

For those of you who drive through rural France, you may well have seen what they do with their distinctive water towers. Here is an example which gives you an idea of what could be done:



We would hope that the bulk of the funding would come from SWW, if not all of it. However, we can also see advantages in helping to persuade SWW to act if some contributions came from local interested groups.

So, we would like your views:

1. Should we be encouraging South West Water to smarten up the Tower? Your Committee says Yes.
2. Should we ask them just to paint the Tower in an appropriate colour or can we be more adventurous? We say Adventurous (up to a point).
3. Should it be a bold design or something more subdued? We say Subdued (such as the French design of a blue sky with scudding cloud and a bird or two).
4. Should we leave it up to South West Water or should we try and influence the design by finding a local designer? We say Local.

We are hopeful that we can persuade South West Water to do something, but we will have just one shot at this and so we need to get it right from the start.

Please let us have your views. We could say that you agree with what we favour if we hear nothing from you, but it would be much better to get your views straight from the horse's mouth.

**WE NEED YOUR VIEWS!**

## **POST OFFICE**

(We are pleased to be able to reproduce here a message from the Directors of our Community Shop and Post Office – David Stembridge and Jenny Powlett (01752 873200))

### **Newton and Noss Post Office – Community Shop - Café - Review of trading**

“The Villages took over the Post Office/Shop in November 2016 and we have now operated the business for ten months. The Café was opened in February 2017.

At the outset we emphasised that the success of this enterprise must depend on the support from the villagers, especially in using the shop and also with the help of committed volunteers, particularly in the café.

We have a good and enthusiastic team of local people working part-time while we oversee the day to day trade entirely on a voluntary basis. The café business has built up over this period and does provide positive support to the turnover. Angie Pyman has been very helpful and supportive in overseeing the café business.

With the arrival of the holiday-makers, we have received good support and the business turnover substantially increased during August

As you know, the remuneration from Post Office Ltd. is circa £6,000 p.a. and the cost of running this side is at least £20,000 p.a., giving an annual shortfall of £14,000. We had thought that this shortfall could be covered by the shop/café business but so far this has not been the case. We do need everyone’s support in making greater use of our community shop.

The arrangement with Post Office Ltd is a rolling contract of 12 months, terminable on six months’ notice. We think it would be a great pity to lose our Post Office but its survival is in your hands. With the closure of bank branches the role of the Post Office for banking facilities is becoming increasingly important.

The level of custom/volunteer support from the villages unfortunately is not as high as we had expected. If we are to survive we do urge you to make more use of your village shop and café. Those of you who simply collect a newspaper, spare a thought for the cost of this service. Much time is spent at the start and finish of the day in sorting out the papers, and the return is modest. A purchase from the shop in addition to collecting the newspaper could make a valuable difference to the day’s takings.

Whilst we are prepared to continue our role, we would like to have peace of mind in knowing that we have sufficient funding to pay the wage bill and the monthly suppliers’ bills. In particular we need to raise further funding to carry us through the winter, and in addition more voluntary assistance to reduce our wage bill is vital. We will be holding a public meeting in November for review and discussion.

Those of you who did not contribute to our original funding, now you can see what has been achieved, please consider making a cash contribution to our working capital.

In the meantime, we would welcome your views as to where we go from here and how we can cover the shortfall.”

## YEALM HOTEL

We are slightly jumping the gun here as a planning application has yet to be submitted, but your Committee has been briefed by Red Earth's planning consultant on an amendment to the consented scheme that will be submitted in response to comments made by SHDC on the design of the recently approved buildings to the west of the hotel, namely the new block of 4 flats and the former annex conversion to 4 flats. Red Earth also briefed the Parish Council on 7th September.

We understand from Red Earth that SHDC would prefer to see a more contemporary design of both buildings as this would be better suited to the landscape setting and help to create a clearer visual distinction between the historically detailed hotel building and the proposed new builds and extended annex.

It is important to note that the proposed new scheme has an almost identical footprint to the consented scheme and there is no significant increase in floor areas and nor is there any change to the number of flats. Car parking and landscaping arrangements are also unaffected.

The proposed changes are best seen in the comparison elevations below.



Consented scheme as approved (with hotel building on the extreme right)



Revised proposal (with hotel building on extreme right)

What we see as the most significant advantage of the proposed scheme is the fact that the buildings will be less obvious when viewed from the water. The roof lines (RL) will be lower; slightly in the case of the converted annex but appreciably in the case of the new

build apartment block. (Note the Consented RL shown on the second plan.) Because of the flat roofs compared to the pitched slate roofs of the consented scheme, the overall mass of the proposed buildings will be reduced. This is also likely to improve the views from the public footpath which runs behind the site but probably only marginally.



Consented scheme as approved when viewed from the south west



Revised proposal when viewed from the south west.

Our position regarding the development as a whole remains that the AONB has not been protected whichever design is approved. However, your Committee's view is that the latest proposal is less damaging than the consented scheme.

There therefore remains the matter of the style of the architecture and this is largely a matter of personal judgement. On the one hand, the proposed contemporary design will help accentuate the hotel building itself and enable the overall mass of the new buildings to be reduced, whilst on the other hand, some may argue that the proposed contemporary design is entirely out of keeping with the architecture of the hotel and thus an inappropriate design solution for the site. It is on this matter of style that we would now like to hear your views. Indeed, Red Earth has invited us to canvass your opinions. Please may we ask you to email us and give us the answer to the one simple question below. We believe this to be the most important and would urge you to respond with a straight 'Old' or 'New'.

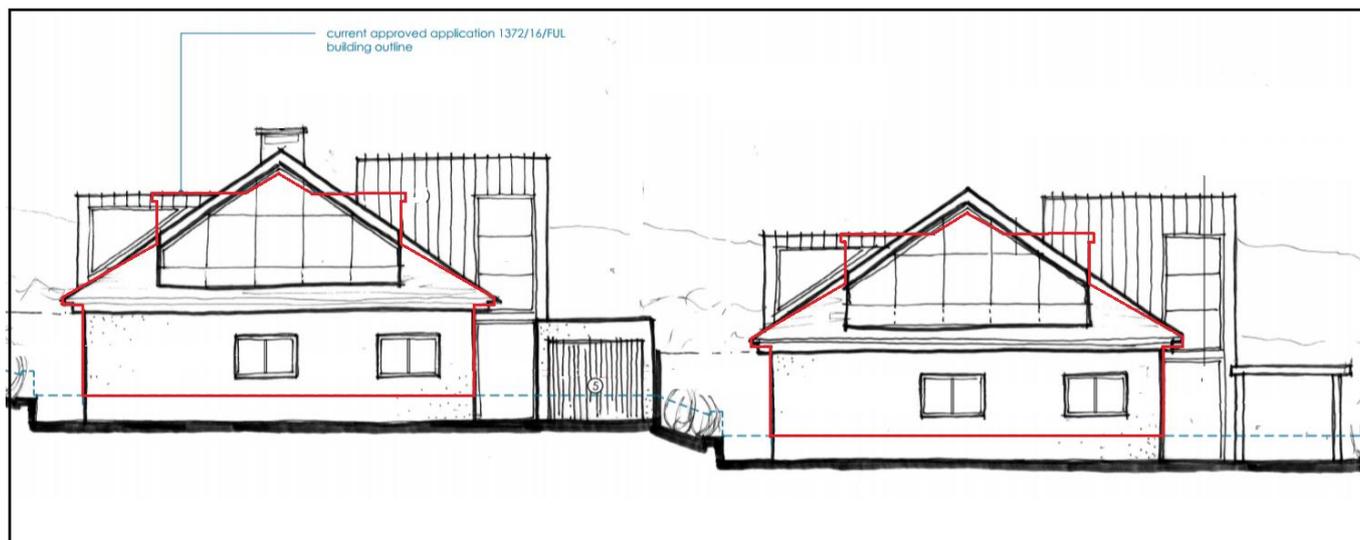
**"Given that the two buildings will be erected come what may, which of the 2 styles of architecture would you prefer?"**

## **The Fairway**

Members will recall the planning application (1372/16/FUL) successfully submitted for 5 dwellings at the end of the Fairway in spite of 51 letters of objection from the community and just 10 in support. We were assured in the planning application that all but one of the dwellings were "for occupation by immediately local family members". So some will now no doubt be disappointed to learn that not one but two of the plots were immediately sold on to a Plymouth development company who have submitted a fresh planning application.

The design of the 2 replacement houses is shown in the artist's impression below. It should be noted that the building on the right of the picture is a proposed garage.





In the drawing above shown in red is the outline of the buildings for which planning permission has already been obtained. It can be seen that the silhouette of the new buildings is significantly larger than that of their predecessors. We estimate that the south facing vertical built area is 76% larger. This is therefore another example of 'creeping colonisation' and is, in our view, an abuse of the planning system. From a practical point of view this is the elevation that will be seen from public view points on the south side of Newton Creek. We therefore take the view (as we did last time) that the application should be refused on the grounds that it will cause damage to the AONB.

In addition we think that there are grounds for objecting to the garage<sup>2</sup> on the right as it breaks the previously agreed building line and will lead to an unsightly street scene as a result. We also believe that these dwellings, which are 3 bedrooms, 2/3 bathrooms meet no identified requirement in the Housing Needs Survey. Since they lie outside the Community Development Boundary they therefore contravene the Neighbourhood Plan which we understand has now become a planning consideration.

We would encourage you to let us know what you think and, if necessary consult the full details at:

<http://apps.southhams.gov.uk/PlanningSearchMVC/Home/Details/172929>

Should you wish to comment yourself, you have until 27<sup>th</sup> September to do so.

## Tea House

Members may recall 2 previous attempts to gain planning permission to restore the tea house located at the eastern end of the carriageway on the Coastal Path (formerly known as 'The Membland Pleasure House'). A third application has now been lodged and, like its predecessors it involves the use of the restored building as holiday accommodation. This application is very similar to the last in that it involves the provision of an underground bedroom and kitchen with a ramp on the eastern side running down to the entrance. A glass 'box' placed inside the walls of the ruin would provide 'reception room' accommodation and this would be accessed from the space below via a ladder. Natural light to the underground rooms would be provided by 2 small slit windows in the bank to the east of the ruin and a skylight to its north west. Strict restrictions on access and service provision would be applied and all decking and 'outdoor furniture' banned.

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<sup>2</sup> Although shown in the artist's impression, no other drawings have been submitted for the garage. We will be pointing this out to SHDC.

## **Tea House, Carswell Estate**



This matter always involves considerable controversy but it seems to us that the controversy revolves around one simple issue. That is: whether creation of holiday accommodation on such a sensitive site is a price worth paying in order to avoid the further deterioration and eventual destruction of this historic ruin which is believed to pre-date the carriageway by some considerable time (1765 is the first reference known). Whilst not a listed building, it does have the local classification of Undesignated Heritage Asset.

If you wish to see further details of the application, you should go to the following web page:

<http://apps.southhams.gov.uk/PlanningSearchMVC/Home/Details/172224>

Comments on the application are due by 13<sup>th</sup> September.