
DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

for

SOUTH SOMERSET CARNIVAL PARK COMMITTEE



Date	Revised By:	Summary
July 2018	BC	DAS

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1: Executive Summary

Somerset Carnivals date back 400 years and are unique in this form not only in the UK but across the World.

Over the last 400 years the shape and face of carnival has changed beyond recognition but the original ethos and traditions are still followed and encouraged.

Over the last 20 years clubs entering mounted entries within the South Somerset Federation has fallen from 22 to only 7. In nearly all cases this is due to availability of build locations and storage facilities for these entries.

The continued viability, in the current format, of the remaining clubs and the South Somerset Federation itself, in the medium term, rests on the creation of a Carnival Park.

A Carnival Park is an area of land containing a terrace of self-contained industrial style sheds which can be used for the storage and building of Carnival entries.

The clubs need secure and permanent facilities so the volunteer members can grow and develop their clubs which in turn support the local community and local business alike.

Through an extensive search and consultation with the Local Planning Office and with the kind support of Dinnington Estate, Ilminster Town Council and a number of carnival clubs and carnival committees we have identified a preferred Carnival Park location at Land off Longforward Lane, Kingstone, Ilminster, and this site forms the basis of our planning application.

We envisage a facility consisting of one building sub-divided into 5 self-contained units for use by individual clubs and committees on the South Somerset Federation to store and construct their carnival entries. It is the intention that the 3 larger clubs will take one whole unit each, whilst the local Carnival Committees, smaller groups, majorettes and others will share the smaller subdivided units.

We have an opportunity to make a facility that both existing and future generations can benefit from.

2: Organisation Details

Organisation Name:

South Somerset Carnival Park

Postal Address:

SSCPC, Raymar, Long Close, Ilminster, Somerset, TA19 0EP

Telephone Number:

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Website:

www.southsomersetcarnivalpark.co.uk

Legal Status:

Currently the legal status of the organisation is that of an Unincorporated Association. The management committee recognises the future need to formalise the group and will convert the organisation into a Limited Co. prior the physical creation of a park facility.

3: What the Organisation Does

Our Vision

To create a secure, sustained and permanent facility where the South Somerset Carnival Clubs can be based, build their entries and develop their clubs for the benefit of Carnival and the community as a whole.

Our Mission

- To inspire and assist artistic expression
- To create value and make a difference
- To assist in the further development of local rural tourism, capitalising on the cultural heritage of carnival
- To assist both individuals and groups in exploring employment opportunities through carnival activities
- To support local business development
- To continue the carnival tradition

Our Values

- Leadership: The courage to shape a better future
- Collaboration: Working together for the benefit of all
- Integrity: Adherence to sound moral and ethical values
- Accountability: Openness, and honesty throughout all activities
- Passion: Committed individuals & groups to get the job done
- Diversity: Inclusivity to all
- Quality: Excellence in all endeavors

Our Activities

The groups activities are outlined as falling into five distinct areas

1. Public Awareness
2. Project Planning
3. Fund Raising
4. Project Implementation
5. Hand Over

1. Our initial activities centre on identifying and securing the support of the general public and other key people who may be able to help us.

Whilst Carnival is generally well supported with in excess of 1000 people actively involved and 54,000 people touched by Carnival on an annual basis, the vast majority have little understanding of the structure or in-depth working.

Informing individuals and groups of the loss of build locations was considered key and thankfully Dinnington Estate were prepared to work with us to look at their land holding and identify areas of surplus land, with suitable access, infrastructure and location that could suit the function of the Carnival Park.

2. A key role of the group is to plan the Carnival Park from conception to delivery through to eventual implementation.

This aspect of the groups activities is all encompassing and includes:

- Structuring the group on a business footing
 - Identification of potential sites
 - Identification and application for funding
 - Understanding design and planning limitations
 - Tender and construction management
 - Hand over for self sufficiency
3. Numerous possibilities have been identified to date and clearly a project of this magnitude is going to cost with initial estimates of between £250,000 and £450,000.

Funding sources are likely to include:

- A degree of self-funding from Clubs
 - Club fund raising activities
 - Grants from local businesses
 - Grants from Local / District / County Councils
 - National / European Grants money
4. Once the planning and funding are in place, it will be the groups role to oversee the implementation of the design, managing a tender and construction phase, balancing the finances throughout whilst balancing the needs of the clubs who will be only too eager to occupy the space.
 5. Once the park is built the South Somerset Carnival Park Committee (SSCPC) will be landlord. We shall continue to oversee the park but now in its operational stage. Ensuring rents and insurances are paid, rules and regulations are followed but importantly ensuring that the park is sustainable and managed correctly for the long term benefit of Southwest Carnivals and enjoyment of future generations.

4: Background & Support

The idea of a Carnival Park for South Somerset Federation Clubs was originally discussed by Steve Dawe and Kym Toms in late March of 2015. This was initially presented to Ilminster Carnival Committee in order to gauge the possible support we may receive from likeminded individuals and South Somerset Carnival Park Committee was setup.

The committee is jointly chaired by Steve Dawe and Kym Toms as they represent the interests of both local Clubs and Carnival Committees. We have a secretary (Tracey Norman) and Treasurer (Gemma Champion). Numerous meetings have been called and held to date with support from all key local clubs and carnival committees alike.



Photo – SSCPC members raising awareness

The planning application is part funded by the money raised by SSCPC and local clubs and committees which include Harlequin, Gemini, Eclipse, 1+1 and Eclipse Carnival Club plus Ilminster Carnival Committee. The other carnival committees on the South Somerset Federation of Carnivals (Wellington, Chard and Taunton) are also supportive of the application.

Ilminster Town Council are supportive of the Carnival Park idea as they recognise the value and financial contribution the carnival clubs bring to the town, not only on carnival night but throughout the year with various fund raising activities supporting local businesses and traders.

The group has presented their case to Ilminster and Chard Town Councillors, as well as the South Somerset District Councillors (Area West). On all occasions the Councillors have given their unanimous support for the projects intentions.

5: The Benefits

Circa 54,000 individuals are touched annually by Carnival with in the local area and an associated annual revenue shared between the four South Somerset Federation Towns typically equates to £265,000.

Carnivalites locally donate 400 volunteer hours per annum into their pastime equating to a gross of £2.6 million based on national minimum wage rates. This previously unquantified value, is to the direct benefit of the local community.

There are few other activities where 4 generations of one family volunteer their free time with friends to achieve a common goal. Social relationships developed through carnival can last a life time and can unite communities, something that is witnessed each and every year at local carnivals; the one time of the year where the whole town comes together to celebrate and rejoice and appreciate the efforts.

In addition the hand skills and life skills that Carnival bestows on many a younger member are rarely repeated in any other organisation. Often giving the young person an insight into the world of work; certainly teaching them the value of money, dedication and teamwork. Many young carnivalites go on to gain apprenticeships and employment in local businesses, gaining the post as a direct result of the experiences gained through Carnival.

Comparable Facilities

Whilst similar facilities exist, the best of which is shown below (Butler Carnival Park, Glastonbury), none are in the local area where clubs from the South Somerset Federation could take advantage of the facilities offered.



Photo – Butler Carnival Park in Glastonbury

Without such a facility, in the medium term clubs will fold, skills will be lost, the social, economic and business development benefits of Carnival will be lost forever.

6: Site Selection

The following assessment criteria has been considered in the creation of this feasibility study.

- Location
- Access
- Services

Location

The South Somerset Carnival Park is intended to serve the South Somerset Federation of Carnivals (Clubs and Towns). This covers Wellington, Ilminster, Chard and Taunton.

The vast majority of clubs are centred in and around the Ilminster and Chard area and as central a location to these towns as possible is deemed appropriate, within a radius of 10 miles.

Access

Access to a proposed Carnival Park location needs to allow for a number of modes of transport in order to make the site as accessible and as inclusive to all as possible.

Clearly there is a need for the Carnival entries to access the site with relative ease where possible. Carnival 'Carts' (decorated entries) are similar in size to heavy goods vehicles although carnival cart movements are limited to a handful of times per year during the parade season (typical October & November).

The majority of vehicular movements will be by light goods vehicles, cars and similar. This is estimated to average approximately 15 movements per build session for each of the largest 3 clubs significantly reducing for the smaller clubs and committees. Car sharing and other similar schemes already exist for many clubs at their existing locations and this practice is to be encouraged.

Cycle and pedestrian access to the Carnival Park is also encouraged as is access from local bus routes (where possible), although it is generally accepted that these forms of transport will be in the minority due to the need for individuals to carry equipment and materials.

Availability of services has been considered including water and electricity.

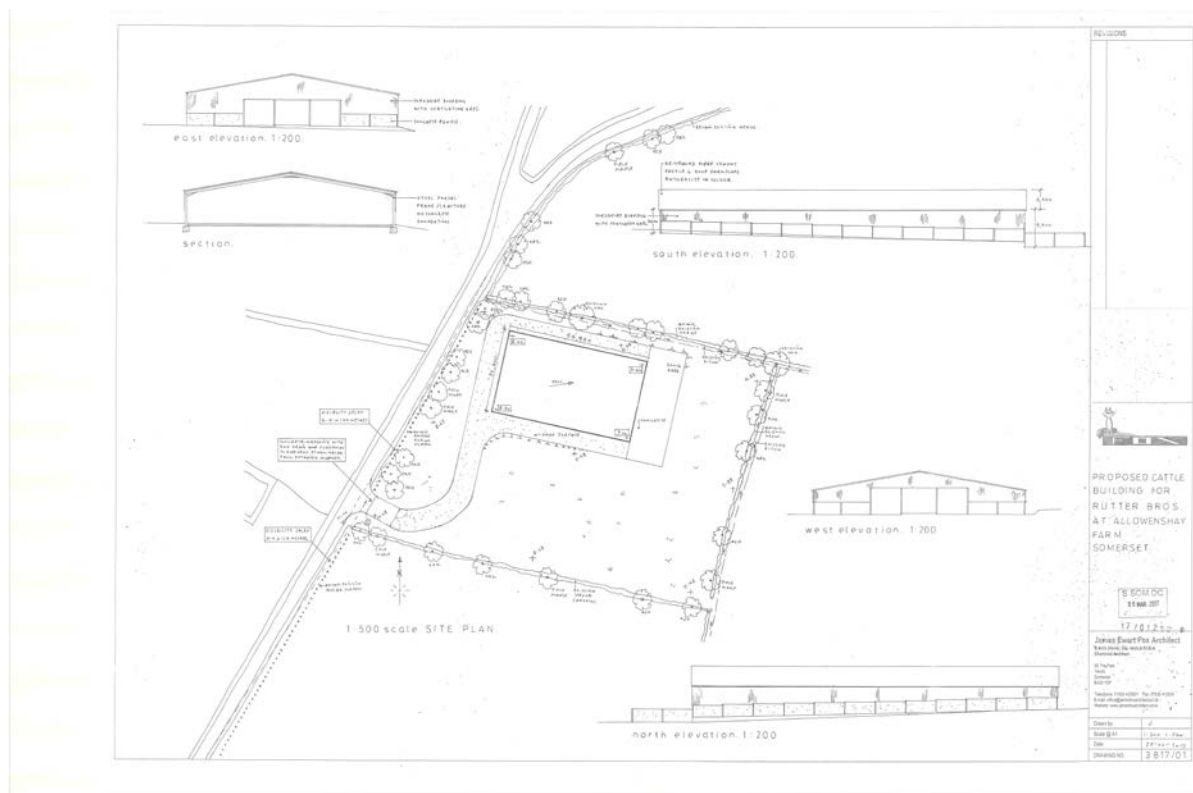
7: The Site – Land Off Longforward Lane

The whole field consists of circa 1.3h of land – although the carnival park will not require this whole site with just over two thirds being used for the buildings, circulation and parking.

The field is owned by Dinnington Estate and was offered up as a potential build site along with five others locations. The land off Longforward Lane was considered to be a good option and was ranked second out of the all the sites. Following detail due diligence and studies the top ranked site was discounted due to flood risk concerns and more in depth study began on this site.

A positive onsite meeting has been held with the Local Planning Officer to review the development potential of the site.

The adjoining field (immediately to the south) has recently obtained detail planning consent 17/01268 for a cattle barn and new highways entrance off Longforward Lane. This barn construction will help conceal the proposed carnival park building.



Above – Plan attached to planning consent 17/01268.

Opposite the proposed development is a single barn structure currently used for the storage and construction of a carnival entry and is the build base of Gemini Carnival Club. This use was consented in 2008 under planning application 08/00478/ful.

Gemini are in their 10th year building from this location without complaint etc proving that this location works well for this type of activity.



Above – proposed location of Carnival Park

Proposal

The proposed development consists of one building sub-divided into 5 number self-contained units. Each unit has 2no. roller shutter doors on the front to provide access for the carnival entries and the eastern most unit has an additional roller shutter door to allow the unit to be further sub-divided.

In front of the building will be an area for circulation, turning and parking. All vehicles including carnival entries will enter and leave the site in a forward gear with turning etc accommodated on the site.

The existing field entrance will be upgraded and modified to provide a safe means of accessing / egressing the site with vision splays etc designed to the appropriate standard as shown on the supporting plans.

Landscaping and planting could be introduced to the western and northern areas to help mitigate and screen the visual impact of the building, whilst all existing trees and hedges on the site will be retained.

Apart from the consented cattle barn and Gemini's current shed there are no other buildings or residential neighbours close to the site so nuisance or complaint from residential neighbours is not a concern associated with this site.

The site is wholly within Flood zone 1 and therefore the development does not increase the flood risk of this site or any other land.

Opposite the site is an electricity substation and budget quotes have been obtained to supply the new development with electricity.