

Axecliff Farms & Estates Limited Partnership - Transport Note Proposed Redevelopment of Golf Clubhouse

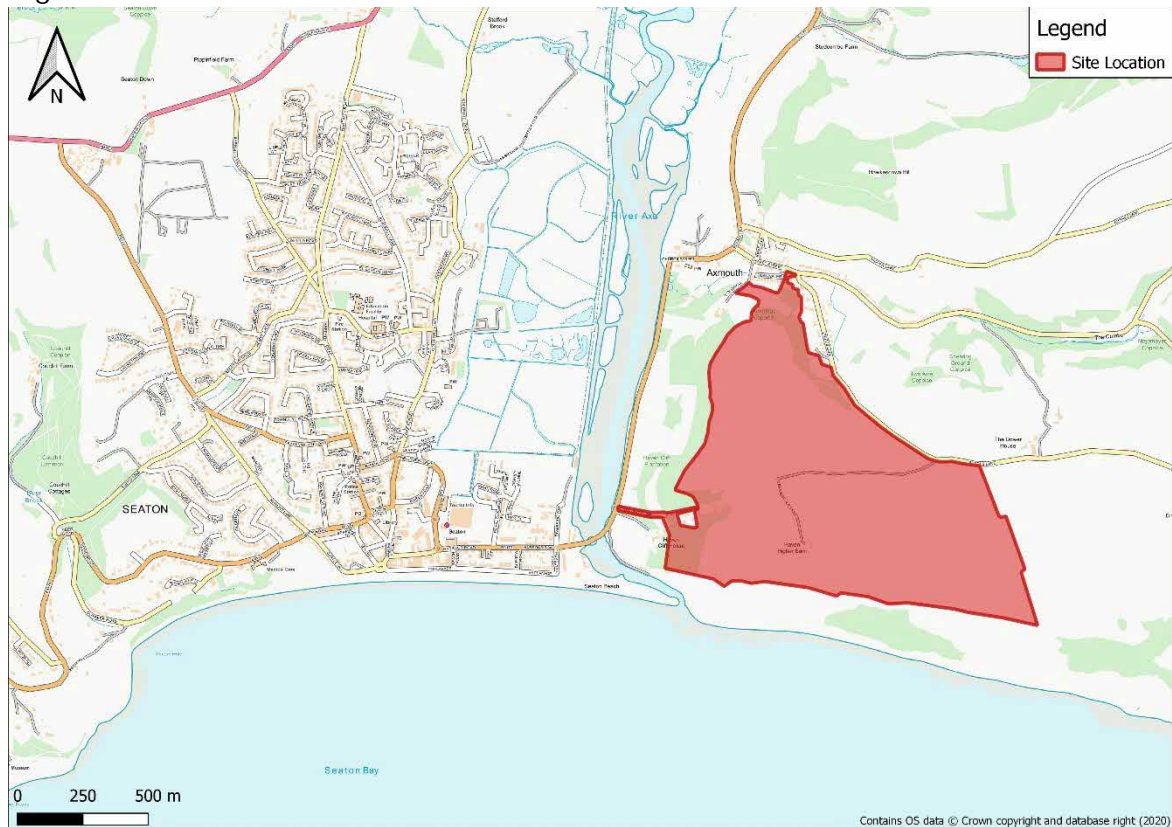
194784/N05

05 April 2022

Introduction

1. Vectos has prepared this Transport Note on behalf of Axecliff Farms & Estates Limited Partnership to support the redevelopment of the clubhouse at Axecliff Golf Club.
2. The site location is shown below in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Site Location



3. The precise location of the redeveloped clubhouse is shown on drawing 1915_A3C_002 included with the planning application.
4. The site has seen a decline in popularity with a drop in club membership over the years. The aim of the development is to maximise the site potential, increasing access around the site to those passing along the south west coast path and providing a golf club that has long term viability potential and opens up closer access to passing visitors and the public.

5. The transport context of the development proposals should be considered against the declining membership of the golf club and the associated resulting reduction in travel demand. The golf club has seen a reduction in membership from approximately 500 members to just 135 members, a decline of 73%.

Policy Context

6. The proposals have been considered against the core planning policy tests set out within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2021) and are considered to be consistent with the objectives of achieving sustainable development as set out in paragraph 8 of the NPPF. The three overarching objectives of the planning system needed to achieve sustainable development are set out as:
 - “a) an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;
 - b) a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being; and
 - c) an environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.”
7. The development proposals encapsulate the core principles of the NPPF in all these three areas. The site operates on the margins of viability and currently offers limited benefit to the wider local community and economy.
8. The proposals seek to open up the site to a wider audience, providing benefit to golfers, to visitors to the area and the wider local population. The development opens up wider access to the site, it seeks to provide better access to the landscape and offers significant opportunity to use greater revenue to better manage and enhance the landscape.
9. The proposals also recognise the transport requirements of the NPPF in relation to paragraph 110, the proposals ensure appropriate opportunities for sustainable modes can be taken up; that safe and suitable access can be achieved; and the significant impacts of development on the transport network can be accommodated.

Existing Transport Conditions

10. Axe Cliff Golf Club is accessed from Squire's Lane (a public bridleway) from the B3172 Axmouth Road. In addition to the golf club, Squire's Lane also provides access to a handful of residential dwellings.
11. Squire's Lane is a narrow rural bridleway and local access road with opportunities for two vehicles to pass one another and adequate passing space for vehicles and pedestrians. The narrow width of Squire's Lane encourages slow vehicle speeds, aiding pedestrian safety.
12. Extract 1 below shows Squire's Lane from its junction with Axmouth Road. There is good visibility along Squire's Lane at this location with some opportunities for two vehicles to pass one another. This also shows Squire's Lane approximately half way between Axmouth Road and the golf club. Squire's Lane is shown to be narrower in this location but some passing places are provided.

Extract 1: Squire's Lane

Squire's Lane from Axmouth Road



Squire's Lane between Axmouth Road and Golf Club



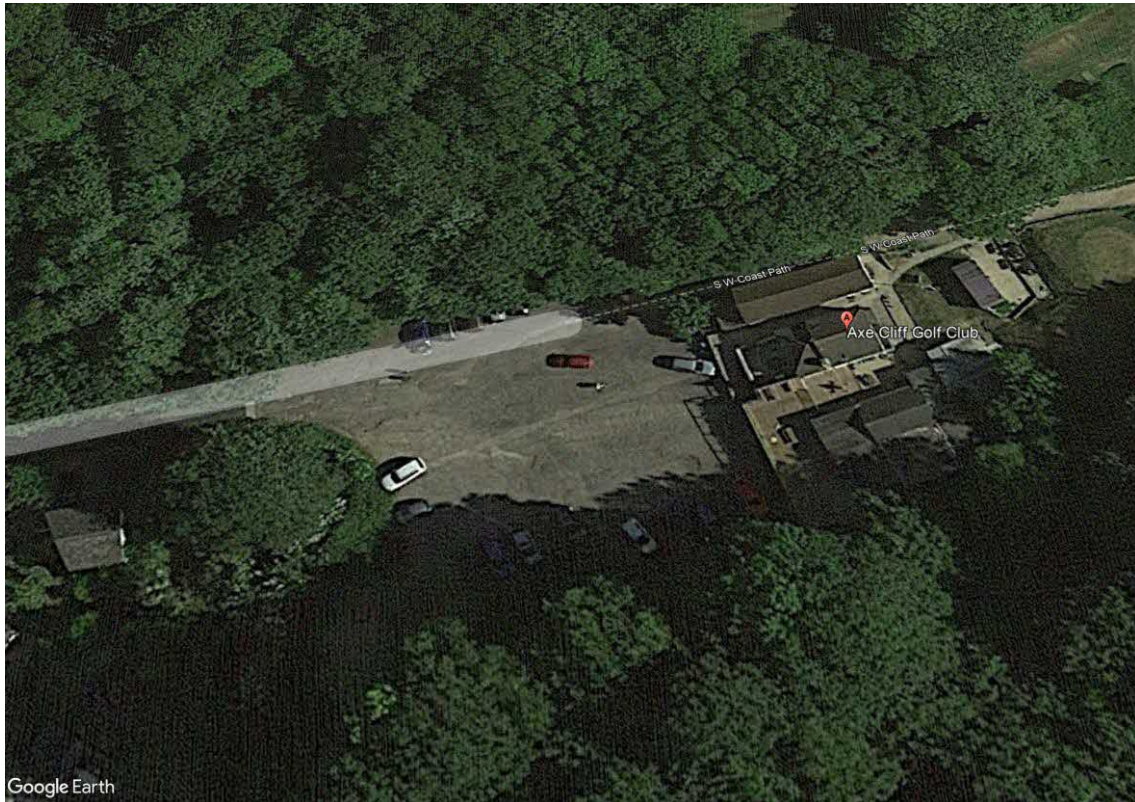
Source: Google

13. The South West Coast Path routes through the golf course and along Squire's Lane. The South West Coastal Path is one of the region's principal tourist attractions and leisure facilities and there are approximately 3.2 million south west coastal path users in Devon every year¹. The section of coastal path through the golf course provides a link between Seaton and Lyme Regis.
14. There are no specific figures for the use of the South West Coast Path through the development along Squires lane and through the development, but it is known to be a popular route with regular visitors passing along and through the site.
15. The existing clubhouse/proposed 'Golf House' site is a 750m walking distance from Seaton Esplanade and within a 1km walking distance of Seaton town centre.
16. The site also benefits from a rural access from Stepps Lane, which is a rural lane linking Axmouth village with the rural hinterland.

¹ South West Coast Path Monitoring & Evaluation Framework, Year 5 (2015) Key Findings Summary, October 2016

17. The existing golf club car park has capacity for approximately 55 spaces. However, this assumption is made utilising a topographical survey, and organising vehicles across the site in formal rows. There are no line markings, and therefore the efficiency of parking is low, as shown in Extract 2. Therefore, in reality the actual capacity of the car park is between 40-50 spaces.

Extract 2: Existing Golf Club Car Park



18. A review of the available personal injury collision data at Crashmap.co.uk indicates there have been no recorded collisions along Squire's Lane and its junction with Axmouth Road in the previous 5 years. In addition, there have been no recorded collisions along Squire's Lane in the previous 22 years (the longest range available), and only one slight collision recorded on Axmouth Road in the vicinity of its junction with Squire's Lane. This is shown in Extract 3, and demonstrates there is no historic road safety concern related to the more intensified historic usage of the site.

Extract 3: Personal Injury Collision Data
2016 - 2020



Taken from Crasmap.co.uk

1999-2020



Future Transport Accessibility

19. It would be expected that the development proposals would increase usage along this section of the south west coastal path with associated lifestyle benefits in terms of promoting healthy travel and increasing levels of outdoor activity.
20. The National Travel Survey 2019 identifies the mode share journeys of different journey lengths. The survey establishes that circa 80% of trips are undertaken on foot for journeys up to one mile (1600m). For journeys up to 2 miles, 59% of journeys are undertaken on foot.
21. On this basis the following walking distances are appropriate:
 - Up to 1 mile (1.6km) is a comfortable walking distance where circa 81% of journeys are likely to be made on foot; and
 - Up to 2 miles (3.2km) is a realistic walking distance where 59% of journeys are likely to be on foot).
22. Therefore, in addition to being accessible to walkers using the South West Coast Path, the development proposals are highly accessible by walking from Seaton town centre including the majority of residential areas and car parking areas provided along the Esplanade.

Development Proposals

23. The development proposals will demolish the existing clubhouse building and replace it with a new low building on a similar footprint..
24. The redeveloped clubhouse will replace the existing golf club facilities. The following facilities will be provided:
 - Lower ground floor: golf clubhouse reception;
 - Ground floor: Lounge bar and restaurant; and

- First floor: four guest rooms.

25. The car park will remain as existing. As stated, the golf club has seen a reduction in membership from approximately 500 members to just 135 members, a decline of 73%. Therefore, it is considered that the existing car park provision has catered for a significantly higher membership than currently exists, and will again accommodate the uplift in demand as a result of the proposals without an unacceptable impact on safety or a significant impact upon highway operation.

Access

26. The development is to be accessed via Squire's Lane, the existing access road. This existing road has been confirmed to be suitable for access by fire vehicles, further to consultation with Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service for the proposed redevelopment of golf workshop building for café and golf function space (LPA Ref: 21/2105/FUL). The response is attached at Appendix A.
27. The level of usage would be within historic levels of use, and therefore Squire's Lane will continue to provide safe and suitable access, as evidenced by the excellent safety record shown in Extract 3.

Traffic Impact

28. As described above, the golf club has seen a reduction in membership from approximately 500 to 135 members, a decrease of 73%. The site could therefore experience an increase in traffic of 270% if the golf club were to reach its maximum potential under its extant planning consent. The site will therefore not result in a material impact in traffic above historic levels, and indeed its existing consented use. Extract 3 identifies that there are no historic road safety concerns related to the historic use of the site, when the number of members has been much higher.
29. The provision of lounge bar/restaurant facilities would primarily be expected to be used by golfers and visitors to the south west coastal path or attract local residents and visitors to Seaton, who would be expected to visit mostly by foot.
30. The improved facilities are anticipated to increase dwell time of golf club members, as there is more attraction to stay after a round of golf, as opposed to significantly increasing visitors to the site above the level which has been previously experienced. In any case the demand is capped by the capacity of the course, and there would likely be more regular use by members, rather than a significant increase above historic levels of use.
31. The car park will be open only to those using the facilities, and therefore the golf club can manage the number of users on site. This includes tee times being booked in advance. Whilst it is anticipated that the car park will continue to meet demand, the business will be able to control the available parking during peak times (e.g. events).

Conclusions

32. The development proposals seek to maximise the potential for the site, which has seen a decline in golf members in recent years. It is the intention to create a golf club with long term viability potential

by enhancing the on-site facilities and making best use of its proximity to passing trade along the South West Coast Path by opening up these facilities to the public, be they golfers, visitors or local residents.

33. The development proposals would be highly accessible by foot from Seaton town centre, therefore any additional travel demand generated by the redevelopment proposals are likely to be by foot.
34. Principally though, the proposals are not expected to generate any greater traffic than the maximum potential under its extant planning consent. Any additional demand beyond this is expected to be by foot, either attracting further use of the south west coast path or by local residents and visitors to Seaton. This should be considered to be a significant benefit of the site and development proposals, with associated and significant social, economic and environmental benefits. Therefore, the development proposals are considered acceptable in transport terms, and accord with paragraphs 110 and 111 of the NPPF (2021).

Appendix A



**DEVON &
SOMERSET**
FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE

**Mr J Clarke-Williams
Vectos
6 Victory House
Dean Clarke Gardens
Exeter
EX2 4AA**

**Protection Delivery
Middlemoor Fire Station
Sidmouth Road
Exeter
EX2 7AP**

Your Ref:
Our Ref: 00134251/643738/MD
Website: www.dsfire.gov.uk

Date: 20 August 2021
Please ask for: Andy Aggett
Email: aaggett@dsfire.gov.uk

Telephone: 01392 357209

Dear Mr Clarke-Williams

**Re: Axeclyff Golf Club, Squire's Lane, Seaton, EX12 4AB
Proposed Redevelopment of Golf Workshop Building for Café and Golf
Function Space.**

Thank you for pre-consulting Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service regarding the proposed development with regards to B5 access.

I have studied the drawings and information provided and it would appear (without prejudice) to satisfy the criteria we would require for B5 access under Building Regulations.

The Fire and Rescue Authority is a statutory consultee under the current Building Regulations and will make detailed comments at that time when consulted by building control (or approved inspector).

Yours sincerely



**Andy Aggett
Business Safety Officer**