

**DORSET COUNCIL - WESTERN AND SOUTHERN AREA PLANNING  
COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 20 FEBRUARY 2020**

**Present:** Cllrs Simon Christopher (Chairman), Pete Barrow, Kelvin Clayton, Susan Cocking, Jean Dunseith, Nick Ireland, Louie O'Leary, David Shortell, Sarah Williams and Kate Wheller

**Apologies:** Cllr David Gray

**Officers present (for all or part of the meeting):**

Lara Altree (Legal Services Manager), Steven Banks (Planning Officer), Ann Collins (Area Lead – Major Applications Western Team), Colin Graham (Engineer (Development Liaison) Highways), Hamish Laird (Senior Planning Officer), Anna Lee (Service Manager for Development Management and Enforcement), Jo Riley (Senior Planning Officer), Jennie Roberts (Senior Planning Officer), Darren Rogers (Area Planning Manager (Western)), Emma Telford (Senior Planning Officer) and Denise Hunt (Democratic Services Officer)

**79. Apologies**

An apology for absence was received from Cllr David Gray.

**80. Declarations of Interest**

Cllr Louie O'Leary declared a non-pecuniary interest in minute 85 as a member of the Big 4 Littlemoor.

Cllr Jean Dunseith declared that she had pre-determined applications in minutes 86, 87 and 88. She would speak as a ward member during public participation and leave the room during the vote.

Cllr Susan Cocking declared a non-pecuniary interest in minute 91 as she was the refurbishment project manager working in conjunction with the applicants on another project as a member of Portland Town Council. She withdrew from the meeting during consideration of this item.

Cllr Simon Christopher declared an interest in minute 94 as he knew the applicants. He withdrew from the meeting during consideration of this item.

**81. Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 January 2020 were confirmed and signed.

82. **Public Participation**

Representations by the public to the Committee on individual planning applications are detailed below. There were no questions, petitions or deputations received on other items on this occasion.

83. **Planning Applications**

Members considered written reports submitted on planning applications as set out below.

84. **WD/D/19/002723 (OBL) - Land Adjacent Oaklands Park, Warmwell Road, Crossways**

The Committee considered a report concerning the modification of the Section 106 Agreement dated 8 June 2015 to substitute the current affordable housing tenure mix of 17 units (rent and intermediate ownership) for 17 discounted market units.

The Senior Planning Officer presented the application including the approved site plan showing the affordable housing units consisting of 12 affordable rent and 5 shared ownership. The proposal was for all 17 to become discounted market homes, which was a form of affordable housing under the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) definition. This followed no expressions of interest having been received following approaches made to a range of Registered Social Landlords (RSLs), the reasons for which were outlined in the report.

Members commented that "rent to buy" should also be considered as an additional option in future.

Proposed by Cllr Louie O'Leary, seconded by David Shortell.

**Decision: That delegated authority be given to the Head of Planning to modify the S106 agreement dated 8<sup>th</sup> June 2015 on planning approval WD/D/14/002768 to:**

**Substitute the current affordable housing tenure mix of 17 units (rent and intermediate shared ownership) for 17 discounted market units.**

85. **WP/16/00253/OUT and WD/D/16/000739 - Land to the North of Littlemoor Road, Weymouth**

The Committee considered a report that addressed a discrepancy in the wording relating to employment land between the Section 106 Agreement and Parameter Plan.

The Senior Planning Officer explained that the area of employment land identified in the Section 106 Agreement of up to 8 ha did not concur with the parameter plan proposal of 7.92 ha. In addition there were variations to

Conditions 11, 14 and 20 to add words in order to secure compliance and enforceability.

Mr Richard Nicholls, of the Campaign to Protect Rural England, addressed the Committee and outlined his concerns around changing of conditions and the weight given by the Local Plan 2015 and the NPPF in conserving the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

Cllr Roland Tarr, Dorset Council Ward Member - Winterbourne and Broadmayne, highlighted the lack of consultation with Bincombe Parish Council and aspects of the development in the context of a rural area in the AONB.

Cllr Graham Brant, of Bincombe Parish Council, stated that the application did not comply with paragraph 172 of the NPPF in relation to conserving and enhancing the landscape in the AONB where planning should be refused for major development unless there were exceptional circumstances. He referred to problems with the road system in that area including Dorchester and other large developments being built in Weymouth and Chickerell.

In response to matters raised during public participation, the Senior Planning Officer advised that both applications had been agreed by Committee on 4 July 2019 and were in accordance with Policy LITT1. Concerns in relation to the AONB had been considered by the Planning Inspector as part of the Local Plan process and, although paragraph 172 of the NPPF provided protection to the AONB, it did not preclude development. He confirmed that there were no fundamental changes to the applications arising from the report. In response to a question by a member, he confirmed that the applications would be refused if the Section 106 Agreement was not agreed within 6 months and that the applicants were looking to conclude the Agreement by the end of February 2020.

Members drew attention to Dorset Council's Statement of Community Involvement in light of the lack of consultation with Bincombe Parish Council and Weymouth Town Council.

The Senior Planning Officer advised that consultation did not take place in relation to this particular report as it concerned clarification of conditions and wording of the Section 106 Agreement and that the fundamental basis of the applications had not changed.

Cllr Louie O'Leary highlighted his continuing concern regarding the lack of Section 106 contributions in Littlemoor, which was in the immediate vicinity of the proposed development. He stated that money for the estate had been overlooked and that the development would affect Littlemoor schools and health facilities.

Proposed by Cllr Susan Cocking, seconded by Cllr Peter Barrow.

### **WP/16/00253/OUT**

#### **Decision:**

- 1. That a new resolution to amend the amount of land secured by the S106 agreement to 7.92 ha to accord with the 7.92 ha 'Employment' legend on the Parameter Plan titled 'Land Use Plan' Drawing No. 0379-0060-011 be approved;**
- 2. That the revised wording of conditions 11, 14 and 20 be approved.**

Proposed by Cllr Susan Cocking, seconded by Cllr Peter Barrow.

### **WD/D/16/000739**

#### **Decision:**

- 1. That a new resolution to amend the amount of land secured by the S106 agreement to 7.92 ha to accord with the 7.92 ha 'Employment' legend on the Parameter Plan titled 'Land Use Plan' Drawing No. 0379-0060-011 be approved;**
- 2. That the revised wording of conditions 11, 14 and 20 be approved.**

86. **WP/17/00836/FUL - Land NW Side of Wessex Roundabout, Radipole Lane, Weymouth**

*Cllr Jean Dunseith moved to the public seating area of the room and did not take part in the debate. She left the room during the vote on this application.*

The Committee considered an application for the construction of a new vehicular and pedestrian access, surface water management ponds, open space and landscaping associated with the adjacent Wessex Grounds residential development.

The application was introduced by the Area Lead - Major Applications Western Team who advised that an update sheet circulated to members at the meeting included an amendment to the description of the development to omit the words "associated with the adjacent Wessex Grounds Residential Development", amendments to conditions 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 and a further representation on behalf of the owner of land to either side of the road to the north.

Members were shown a location plan, softworks plan, plans showing the existing and relocated access, aerial photo of Wessex Stadium and photos showing views of the stadium in relation to the surrounding area.

Cllr John Worth - Dorset Council Ward Member - Chickerell, addressed the Committee to say that the access would be an improvement.

Cllr Jean Dunseith, speaking as Dorset Council Ward Member for Chickerell, considered that the position of the new access was too close to the Wessex roundabout and would result in cars queuing to get onto the roundabout from the proposed development at peak times due to a single entrance / exit road.

Emma Barnett, the Agent, spoke in support of the application, stating that it was principally the same as that approved in 2014.

Members asked why the application was being considered when Weymouth Football Club had no plans to have the site developed.

Officers confirmed that a condition requiring a replacement stadium was included when outline planning permission for a residential scheme was granted in 2014 and it also formed part of a Section106 Agreement. Therefore a developer could not implement the scheme until such time as a replacement stadium was built and ready for use elsewhere. There was a period of 2 years to implement the residential scheme and provide a replacement stadium if the reserved matters application was granted.

Despite the lack of objection on highways grounds, members who knew the area well considered the new access to be too close to the roundabout, given the volume of traffic at peak times, traffic speeds onto the roundabout, school routes and additional parking on match days. Concern was also expressed regarding access for cyclists and pedestrians given the narrow footpath. They considered the application to be precipitous in that it relied on other applications that had not yet been considered.

The Committee was informed that the Highways Authority owned a limited section of the verge and therefore the proposed access would provide improved visibility splays within land owned by the Highways Authority.

Cllr Nick Ireland proposed refusal of the application as it was against paragraph 91(a) of the NPPF. He further stated that a condition to ensure that the cycle path continued into the site should be considered. The proposal was seconded by Cllr David Shortell.

The Highways Officer advised that alterations to the roundabout to reduce the number of lanes onto the roundabout from 3 to 2 lanes had been implemented in 2019 and there would be funding to provide a Toucan crossing off of Wessex roundabout to connect Radipole Lane to the site.

The Chairman proposed that the application be deferred to allow better understanding of the proposed crossing, cycleways and pavements and wider issues of safety. This was seconded by Cllr Peter Barrow. Cllr Nick Ireland and Cllr David Shortell agreed to withdraw the proposal to refuse the application. Cllr O'Leary and Cllr Barrow were concerned about wider safety issues of access and parking and sought for them to be addressed not just cycle paths.

**Decision: That the application be deferred for the reasons outlined in the appendix to these minutes.**

87. **WD/D/17/002597 - Wessex Stadium, Radipole Lane, Chickerell, Weymouth, DT4 9XJ**

*Cllr Jean Dunseith moved to the public seating area of the room and did not take part in the debate. She left the room during the vote on this application.*

The Committee considered an application for approval of reserved matters for access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale in relation to outline approval WD/D/14/001938.

The Area Lead - Major Applications Western Team advised members that it was a condition of the application that it could not be implemented until an access was provided.

Members were shown the site layout, softworks plan, floor plans, elevations, materials, cross section and street elevation, materials palette, aerial photo and photos of the application site in relation to the surrounding area.

An update sheet circulated to the Committee at the meeting included an additional plan to be added to the condition 1 plans list and a summary of 2 additional representations which were read out at the meeting.

Cllr John Worth, Dorset Council Ward Member - Chickerell stated that a shop should be considered for this isolated site as well as improvements to public transport.

Cllr Jean Dunseith, speaking as Dorset Council Ward Member - Chickerell, stated that Chickerell Town Council and the Civic Society were against the proposal. She had spoken against it in 2014 when outline permission for 150 - 170 homes was granted and this scheme was at the top end of that number. Condition 16 specified that development should not commence until a facility to replace Wessex Stadium was constructed and made available for use and yet no application for a stadium had been forthcoming. She was also concerned that there would be no affordable housing and no Section 106 funding other than £200k for the access road and footpath.

Emma Barnett, the Agent, stated that the principle of development had already been established and either met or exceeded space standards. There had been no objections expressed by the Urban Design or Highways officers and £200k would be made available for cycle and pedestrian improvements.

Members debated the lack of progress in building a new stadium, the lack of affordable housing, the positive prospect of a new bus route incorporating Southill and the confusing nature of 3 different applications in respect of the same site.

Legal advice was given that the planning authority could not compel an applicant to make one application and that the 3 applications were closely linked.

After some discussion the Committee agreed to defer the decision on this application until such time as the report on viability had been considered.

*Note: the debate and decision below was taken after conclusion of the debate and vote on the viability report had concluded.*

Following consideration of the report regarding viability of the Section 106 Agreement associated with outline planning permission WD/D/14/001938, members noted the lack of reference to a cycleway or number of charging points for electric vehicles, poor design and appearance, lack of affordable housing, overdevelopment of the site and concerns regarding the access.

The Committee was adjourned for 5 minutes for officers to discuss the reasons for refusal, following which the Legal Officer asked members to provide specific reasons for refusal.

Members advised that refusal should be on the grounds of design and appearance and access.

A further short adjournment took place for officers to form the reasons for refusal based on the comments made by members. The Committee reconvened at 12:50pm

Proposed by Cllr Kate Wheller, seconded by Cllr Louie O'Leary.

**Decision: That the application be refused for the reasons outlined below and in the appendix to these minutes.**

1. The proposed development by reason of its design and materials is not in keeping with nearby development. It is considered to be poor quality design with an urban character in a rural setting and is bland and lacking in distinctive character. Hence the proposed development is contrary to Policies ENV10 and ENV12 of the West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan (2015) and paragraphs 127 and 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2019).
2. The proposed development having only one access point lacks permeability and constitutes poor urban design with a lack of choice of routes into, out of and through the site contrary to Policy ENV11 of the West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan (2015) and paragraph 127 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2019).

88. **Report regarding viability in respect of the S106 agreement dated 27 October 2014 associated with outline planning permission WD/D/14/001938 - Weymouth Football Club, Wessex Stadium, Radipole Lane, Chickerell, Weymouth, DT4 9XJ**

*Cllr Jean Dunseith moved to the public seating area of the room and did not take part in the debate. She left the room during the vote on this application.*

The Committee considered a report in respect of the Section 106 Agreement dated 27 October 2014 for outline planning permission WD/D/14/001938.

Following presentation of the report, Cllr Kate Wheller conveyed comments made by Cllr Lucy Hamilton, Chairman of the Weymouth Town Council Planning Committee, stating that residents had strong concerns about large developments that did not include affordable housing and did not allow for additional burden to GP surgeries and schools.

Cllr Jean Dunseith addressed the Committee as Dorset Council Ward Member - Chickerell, stating that the developers knew about the provision of an alternative sports stadium and affordable housing when the scheme was approved in 2014 and the proposal was detrimental to Chickerell and disrespectful.

Cllr John Worth, Dorset Council Ward Member - Chickerell, stated that the proposal represented the loss of 60 affordable dwellings in an town which had areas of deprivation with a need for more social housing, including residents of Chickerell. The developer knew what was required in 2014, including the need for contributions for facilities such as schools and health services in the area and the arguments regarding viability should have been heard at that time.

Emma Barnett, the Agent, stated that the Section 106 Agreement allowed viability to be reviewed. A viability study to assess whether the development could support affordable housing alongside a replacement sports facility was prohibitive, a view that had been supported by the DVS. There remained a £200k pedestrian and cycle contribution. She further explained that the applications had not been joined together due to boundary changes and differing local authorities prior to the formation of Dorset Council.

Some Members were sceptical regarding the provision of a new stadium and the viability arguments. They were mindful that no meaningful discussions had taken place with Weymouth Football Club and concluded that an alternative stadium may never be realised meaning that the scheme may not be implemented. It was questioned whether the scheme would have been approved in 2014 if the Section 106 Agreement accurately reflected the current position.

Cllr Nick Ireland stated that affordable housing should be the primary focus and proposed that re-provision of the stadium be deleted from the Section 106 Agreement in favour of retaining 35% affordable housing.

Legal advice was given that the Section 106 Agreement allowed the applicant to come back to committee to make a representation in respect of viability and the DVS was in agreement with this assessment. It was not possible to change any other aspect of the Section 106 Agreement, including the provision of a stadium.

Cllr Louie O'Leary proposed that the application be refused on the basis that the Committee did not accept that the development was unviable. This was seconded by Cllr Nick Ireland.

**Decision: That the application be refused for the reason outlined in the appendix to these minutes.**

89. **Duration of Meeting - Time Limit**

A vote to continue the meeting was taken in accordance with Part 2, Paragraph 8.1 of the Council's Constitution as the meeting had been ongoing for a period of 3 hours.

Proposed by Cllr Peter Barrow, seconded by Cllr Nick Ireland.

**Decision: That the meeting be extended for a further period commencing at 2.00pm, following a lunch break, to allow the business of the meeting to be concluded.**

90. **Election of Vice-Chairman**

**Decision: That Cllr David Shortell be elected as Vice-Chairman for the remainder of the meeting.**

91. **WP/18/00662/FUL - Land Off of Verne Common Road & Ventnor Road, Portland**

*Cllr Susan Cocking left the room and did not take part in the debate or vote on this application.*

The Committee considered an application to develop vacant land by the demolition of a garage, formation of vehicular access, erection of 25 dwellings and associated landscaping.

The Senior Planning Officer referred to the update sheet circulated to the Committee at the meeting that included a correction to the applicant's name and a response received from Historic England. She advised that the Portland Neighbourhood Plan could not be given full weight in considering this application as it had not yet gone to a referendum.

Members were shown a location plan, aerial photo, elevations and photos taken from Verne Common Road, showing that the site was currently used to graze horses.

Simon Gledhill addressed the Committee in objection to the application as it was outside the DDB and would impact on trees in the northern part of his garden which were subject to Tree Preservation Orders and in a Conservation Area. He stated that plot 18 would be a metre from his fence line and dominate his property. There was an active badger sett opposite plots 19 and 20 that had previously been reported by a consultant in an earlier application

but was absent in this application. He also drew attention to the Biodiversity Plan published in January 2020.

Cllr Paul Kimber, Dorset Council Ward Member - Portland, expressed concern about the increasing density and loss of small green spaces on Portland. He considered the scheme was over development in an area outside the DDB that was precious to the life of the area and used as a play area for children on the estate. It was clear that the nearby badger sett would be disturbed as a result of this development. There were also difficulties in parking during the evening and problems with access experienced by the fire service which were not mentioned in the report.

In response to the comments made during public participation, officers advised that the Biodiversity Plan had been agreed by the Natural Environment Team and was concerned with the relationship with existing neighbouring properties which had long gardens. The site was in private ownership and not designated as a recreation area. The Highways Officer stated that the road system was constantly being checked for accessibility due to the presence of a large prison at the top of Verne Common Road and that obstruction was covered by highways law.

Members' debated overdevelopment in the context of Portland being the 4th highest area of deprivation in the country, the site being outside the DDB, the absence of badger sett exclusion areas in the report, no allocation for electric vehicle charging points and the need to protect green spaces in densely populated areas. Some members considered the development to be acceptable given that the site was adjacent to a densely populated area, despite being outside the DDB.

Cllr Nick Ireland proposed approval of the application subject to a condition requiring charging points for electric vehicles. This was seconded by Cllr Kelvin Clayton.

Advice was given that the applicant had the right to appeal against the additional condition.

**Decision:**

**(A) That authority be delegated to the Head of Planning to grant, subject to the completion of a Legal Agreement under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) in a form to be agreed by the Legal Services Manager to secure the elements outlined in the appendix to these minutes.**

**(B) Refuse permission for the reasons outlined in the appendix to these minutes if the agreement is not completed within 6 months of the committee resolution or such extended time as agreed by the Head of Planning.**

92. **WP/19/00699/FUL- 53 Rodwell, Weymouth, DT4 8QX - Demolition of existing dwelling and erect 6no. apartments with associated landscaping works and parking**

The Committee considered an application for the demolition of an existing dwelling and the erection of 6 apartments with associated landscaping works and parking.

The Area Manager (Western) presented the application and the two appeal decisions appended to the report that were pertinent to the application.

Members were shown a location plan, aerial view, site location plan, existing and proposed elevations, proposed floor plans, roof floor plan and cross sections. The proposal included 1 car parking space per dwelling. Enclosed balconies of 1.4m and 1.6m at the rear protected the amenity of neighbouring properties.

A key issue was the 2 appeal decisions that had been dismissed, the most recent of which related only to the impact on the amenity of neighbours and not the design and external appearance of the scheme. The amenity concerns had now been satisfied and were considered to be acceptable.

The Democratic Services Officer read out comments from Cllr Lucy Hamilton, Chairman of the Weymouth Town Council Planning Committee which made reference to ENV12, the impact on nearby historic buildings and comments made by the Conservation Officer in the report.

Members were generally supportive of the scheme and noted that it would be an improvement as the existing building was deteriorating.

Cllr Kate Wheller proposed that the application be approved, subject to a condition in relation to electric charging points for vehicles. This was seconded by Cllr Nick Ireland.

**Decision: That the application be approved subject to the conditions outlined in the appendix to these minutes.**

93. **WP/19/00611/FU - Martleaves House, 41 South Road, Weymouth, DT4 9NR**

The Committee considered an application for the removal of stables and a redundant barn / store and the erection of 4 detached houses and two double car ports.

The Senior Planning Officer showed a site plan and location plan of the existing buildings. Outline permission had been established for a similar scheme, however, the homes were now divided into 4 detached houses that had previously been semi-detached. The site was outside of but close to the DDB and would add to housing supply. The design was considered acceptable with adequate parking and biodiversity mitigation.

The Democratic Services Officer read comments from Cllr Lucy Hamilton, Chairman of the Weymouth Town Council Planning Committee, who objected on the grounds that the site was outside the development boundary and adjoined the Heritage Coast. The Local Plan monitoring report for 2018-19 confirmed that the area had met the target to build 775 dwellings per annum and that new figures from the Local Government Association showed that the number of permissions in existence outstripped the numbers of homes built. It was a dangerous precedent to build outside the DBB on a sensitive site of national importance.

Malcolm Brown, the Agent, addressed the Committee, stating that the site was in a sustainable location with outline permission for 4 dwellings and was not within the AONB or Heritage Coast. The policy was out of date with regard to housing supply, however, this proposal would contribute to that supply. The car ports would contain swallows nests to replace those lost in the stables.

Cllr Kate Wheller described relevant planning history in that area that had altered the site from a farm to a tourist industry and former objection of tents as being detrimental to views of the Heritage Coast. She was concerned with traffic in that area, in particular serving Swallow's Rest with huge motor homes and caravans seen on a regular basis as well as people who were lost getting to the guest house.

The Area Manager (Western) advised that the principle of development had already been established as a result of the outline application.

Proposed by Cllr Nick Ireland, seconded by Kelvin Clayton.

**Decision: That the application be approved subject to the conditions outlined in the appendix to these minutes.**

94. **WD/D/19/002295 & WD/D/19/002296 - The Barn House, Main Street, Loders, Bridport, DT6 3SA**

*Cllr Simon Christopher left the room and did not take part in the debate or vote on this application. The Vice-Chairman was in the Chair for this item.*

The Committee considered dual applications for the demolition of an outbuilding and the conversion and extension of an outbuilding to create a dwelling.

The Senior Planning Officer presented the applications and members were shown an aerial view of Loders, the application site being in the garden area of the Barn House; a map of the site in the context of other backland developments alongside the river; the Loders Neighbourhood Plan DDB and various site, block, elevation and floor plans. Photographs were also shown of the Barn House and surrounding area.

The key planning points were outlined including the principle of development, scale and design, impact on character and appearance, impact on amenity, impact on landscape and heritage assets, access and parking.

Diane May, a resident of Loders, addressed the Committee, commenting on the status of the Loders Neighbourhood Plan alongside the Local Plan, Policy SUS3 in relation to the adaptation and reuse of existing buildings and the 5 year housing supply.

KevinButler addressed the Committee in support of the application and drew attention to the potential to reuse the building offered by the Neighbourhood Plan, reduction in scale of the proposal and no concerns arising following the commission of an ecology report.

Mrs Michelle Warrington, Chairman of Loders Parish Council, spoke in objection of the application that was outside the DDB and against Local Plan Policy SUS 3. The proposal involved a substantial rebuild and extension of the existing building and she provided measurements to support this view. She acknowledged that this application had a smaller footprint, however, the proposed roof height was only 6 cm lower and would be a substantial rebuild.

Simon Ludgate, the Agent, addressed the Committee in support of the application, saying that the scheme was in line with policy and that the principle of residential use had been established. The design of the pitch roof would not impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties and the site was not in a flood zone. The scheme was much smaller and would provide an additional dwelling and contribute to the 5 year housing land supply.

The Senior Planning Officer advised that Local Plan Policy SUS 3 did not hold as much weight due to the lack of a 5 year housing land supply and that the Loders Neighbourhood Plan was out of date with regard to housing. The application was for a modest extension very close to the DDB and therefore considered a sustainable location. The benefits of the scheme outweighed the very small amount of harm due to the site being outside the DDB.

Members considered the new scheme to be acceptable.

Proposed by Cllr Louie O'Leary, seconded by Cllr Susan Cocking.

#### **WD/D/19/00295**

**Decision: That the application be approved subject to the conditions outlined in the appendix to these minutes.**

Proposed by Cllr Louie O'Leary, seconded by Cllr Susan Cocking.

#### **WD/D/19/002296/LBC**

**Decision: That the application be approved subject to the conditions outlined in the appendix to these minutes.**

95. **WP/19/00501/FUL - 73-75 Portland Road, Weymouth, DT4 9BE**

The Committee considered an application for the conversion of a shop and residential accommodation into 2 dwellings and the construction of 3 dwellings to the rear fronting Williams Avenue.

Members were shown a site plan, aerial view, existing and proposed elevations and floor plans and photos of the site and surrounding area.

Following closure of the shop which included a Post Office, the Planning Officer advised of the nearest post offices in St Thomas Street, Abbotsbury Road and Charlestown in Weymouth.

The Democratic Services Officer read out comments from Cllr Lucy Hamilton, Chairman of the Weymouth Town Council Planning Committee, stating that the committee welcomed the provision of new housing on a brownfield site, however, concerns had been raised regarding the size of the accommodation. Councillors were also unaware of the intention to remove the post box and telephone box which represented a loss of amenity to residents and she was in contact with Royal Mail about the replacement of the post box.

David Nightingale, the applicant, advised that McColls had initiated a break clause in the 10 year lease and vacated the property. The application sought to maintain the existing character of the building. He advised that the post box and telephone box were on the forecourt of the property rather than the pavement.

The Highways Officer explained that there was no objection on highways grounds and that the site was along a sustainable bus route that operated every 10 minutes and was also within walking distance of a doctor's surgery and nearby schools.

Members raised concerns in relation to overdevelopment, lack of amenity space for the new dwellings, parking difficulty, fire safety access and traffic safety in the extended area given the proximity of 3 local schools and the Tesco Express. They noted that highways officers were currently considering reconfiguration of the road system on road safety grounds.

The Committee was informed that the design continued the general terraced theme of Williams Avenue, albeit that these were 3 storey homes. However, members considered that the gardens of other homes in Williams Avenue were a reasonable size and that the living experience in the proposed homes would be significantly different.

Cllr Kate Wheller proposed that the application be refused due to overdevelopment and lack of amenity on the site. The Area Manager (Western) suggested a reason for refusal that was agreed by Cllr Kate Wheller. This was seconded by Cllr Louie O'Leary.

**Decision: That the application be refused subject for the reason outlined in the appendix to these minutes.**

96. **Urgent items**

There were no urgent items.

**Appendix**

**Duration of meeting:** 10.00 am - 4.15 pm

**Chairman**

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