



Northern Area Planning Committee

Date: Tuesday, 13 June 2023
Time: 2.00 pm
Venue: Stour Hall - The Exchange, Old Market Hill, Sturminster Newton, DT10 1FH

Members (Quorum: 6)

Sherry Jespersen (Chairman), Mary Penfold (Vice-Chairman), Jon Andrews, Tim Cook, Les Fry, Brian Heatley, Carole Jones, Stella Jones, Emma Parker, Val Potheary, Belinda Ridout and David Taylor

Chief Executive: Matt Prosser, County Hall, Dorchester, Dorset DT1 1XJ

For more information about this agenda please contact Democratic Services Meeting Contact 01305 224709 - megan.r.rochester@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Members of the public are welcome to attend this meeting, apart from any items listed in the exempt part of this agenda.

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Agenda

Item	Pages
1. APOLOGIES	
To receive any apologies for absence.	
2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	
To disclose any pecuniary, other registerable or non-registerable interests as set out in the adopted Code of Conduct. In making their disclosure councillors are asked to state the agenda item, the nature of the interest and any action they propose to take as part of their declaration.	
If required, further advice should be sought from the Monitoring Officer in advance of the meeting.	

3. MINUTES 5 - 12

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 16th May.

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Members of the public wishing to speak to the Committee on a planning application should notify the Democratic Services Officer listed on the front of this agenda. This must be done no later than two clear working days before the meeting. Please refer to the Guide to Public Speaking at Planning Committee.

[GuidanceforspeakingatPlanningCommittee.doc.pdf](https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/GuidanceforspeakingatPlanningCommittee.doc.pdf)
([dorsetcouncil.gov.uk](https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk))

The deadline for notifying a request to speak is 8.30am on Friday 9th June.

5. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

To consider the applications listed below for planning permission.

6. P/FUL/2022/05022- LAND AT KINE BUSH LANE, GILLINGHAM 13 - 20

Stationing of a holiday cabin, development of a structure comprising of a cycle and refuse store, creation of an access and creation of a parking and turning area.

7. P/FUL/2022/03360- FORMER PRIORY HOSPITAL, FAIRFIELD BUNGALOWS, BLANDFORD FORUM 21 - 36

Convert former special needs residential care home into 16 No. flats and carry out associated external alterations, including construction of terraces and balconies. Erect cycle store.

8. URGENT ITEMS

To consider any items of business which the Chairman has had prior notification and considers to be urgent pursuant to section 100B (4) b) of the Local Government Act 1972.

The reason for the urgency shall be recorded in the minutes.

9. EXEMPT BUSINESS

To move the exclusion of the press and the public for the following item in view of the likely disclosure of exempt information within the meaning of paragraph 3 of schedule 12 A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

The public and the press will be asked to leave the meeting whilst the item of business is considered.

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NORTHERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 16 MAY 2023

Present: Cllrs Sherry Jespersen (Chairman), Mary Penfold (Vice-Chairman), Tim Cook, Brian Heatley, Carole Jones, Val Potheary, Belinda Ridout and David Taylor

Present remotely: Cllrs

Apologies: Cllrs Jon Andrews, Les Fry, Stella Jones, and Emma Parker

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

Jim Bennett, Joshua Kennedy (Apprentice Democratic Services Officer), Hannah Massey (Lawyer - Regulatory), Megan Rochester (Democratic Services Officer), Steve Savage (Transport Development Manager), Simon Sharp (Senior Planning Officer), Hannah Smith (Planning Area Manager) and Cass Worman (Planning Officer)

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

1. **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests were made at the meeting.

2. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 11th April were confirmed and signed.

3. **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.

4. **Planning Applications**

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

5. **P/VOC/2022/05646- Frogmore Lane, Sixpenny Handley**

It was requested that the Land at Leigh Road Colehill Wimborne application P/VOC/2022/05646 be deferred as officers needed to obtain further information. The deferral would allow time for officers to correlate all information prior to consideration by the committee.

6. **P/FUL/2022/06898- Enterprise Park, Piddlehinton**

With the aid of a visual presentation, the Case Officer explained the planning application to member. Details including photographs of site access, proposed elevation designs, layout, site location and surrounding boundaries was discussed. The Case Officer explained the use of the current existing units. He showed members different viewpoints of the site and explained the areas of concern. Members were informed that officers didn't believe it would create significant visual harm. The recommendation was to grant subject to conditions.

Public Participation

The agent spoke in support of the application. He discussed the demand for the site and the specific need for employment which had been highlighted in the Local Plan. Mr Parke reiterated to members that the proposed development was not of a huge scale and size, he explained that this was to mitigate risks on visual harm. Members were also informed that the site would have been used to accommodate small businesses. The agent also discussed highways assessments and believed that the benefits outweigh the harm. He hoped members would support the officer's recommendation.

The Parish Council spoke in objection to the planning application. They believed it would have a negative impact on the unique military camp and felt the new building was inadequate. Mr Ebdon raised his concerns regarding the photographs used in the presentation, which he did not feel were up to date. He also discussed the number of proposed parking spaces, which the Parish Council felt would generate more traffic movement. Mr Ebdon discussed the need for supporting economic developments, however, he felt that the scale of the buildings was too large and was contrary to the local plan.

Members questions and comments

- Clarification regarding sustainability of all units.
- Confirmation on the scale of the new building compared to the existing visible building above the tree line.
- Members referred to historic character and requested clarification regarding materials used.
- Clarification regarding Neighbourhood Plan approval.
- Clarification regarding whether the sites or existing huts had any designation.
- Questions regarding pollution and drainage considerations.
- Members noted that it was an employment site and the applicant had responded well to the established need for the units. They felt that it was small and sustainable with good landscaping.
- Neighbourhood Plan stated that the site was a designated employment site.
- Understands the points raised by the Parish Council.
- Clarification regarding how conclusion of small-scale units was made.
- Members commented on the scale of the proposed units and believed it was considerable smaller when compared to other commercial units.

Having had the opportunity to discuss the merits of the application and an understanding of all this entailed; having considered the officer's report and presentation; the written representatives; and what they had heard at the meeting, a motion to approve the officer's recommendation to grant planning permission as recommended, was proposed by Cllr Tim Cook and seconded by Cllr Carole Jones subject to revised conditions.

Decision: To approve the officer's recommendation to grant.

7. **P/FUL/2022/07038- Old Post Office House Church Road Bradford Abbas Dorset DT9 6RF**

With the aid of a visual presentation, the Case Officer explained the planning application to members. Details including photographs of proposed designs and the site location was discussed. Members were given a summary of the historic performance of the site and the Local Policy Plan was highlighted. The Case Officer informed members that the site was not financially or commercially viable and that the new owners had made a conscious effort to look at viability. The Officer's recommendation was to approve.

Public Participation

Members of the public and Parish Council spoke in objection to the application. They felt that there was a strong local need for the village shop and felt that the application was contrary to the NPPF. Objectors discussed the marketing of the post office and felt that the business continuity had not been encouraged. In addition to this, objectors believed that there had been numerous situations in which the village shop would have been viable, especially due to the lack of bus services in the area. They felt the shop would support the need of all residents, particularly elder residents. Local residents were not satisfied and did not see any reason as to why they shouldn't have had a village shop.

The applicant spoke in support of the officer's report. Members were informed that prior to purchasing their home, it had been marketed for 4 years. Members were informed that the retail space was not visibly separate from the living area. Mr Roach highlighted the need for local resources but felt that needs were being met in other ways, including the local market. He hoped members would accept and support the officer's recommendation.

Members questions and comments

- Clarification regarding details of the means of marketing that were used.
- Clarification around the responsibility and weight of the marketing which was carried out several years ago.
- Members felt the viability test was out of date.
- Questions regarding the original use and purpose of the building.
- Requested for the Case Officer to elaborate on the 1839 heritage significance.

- Accepts the request of the current owner but considered the views of the objectors.
- Not financially viable and hasn't been for a very long time.
- Members felt that the village did have a need, however, members felt the residents had used their resources for other solutions.

Having had the opportunity to discuss the merits of the application and an understanding of all this entailed; having considered the officer's report and presentation; the written representatives; and what they had heard at the meeting, a motion to approve the officer's recommendation to grant planning permission as recommended, was proposed by Cllr Carole Jones, and seconded by Cllr Belinda Ridout.

Decision: To approve the officer's recommendation to grant.

In accordance with Procedural Rule 8.1 the committee voted to extend the duration of the meeting.

8. **P/FUL/2022/07513- Frog Lane Farm, Motcombe**

With the aid of a visual presentation, the Case Officer explained the planning application to members. Details including aerial photographs of the site, site location and surrounding settlement boundaries was discussed. In addition to this, members were shown photographs of proposed designs and were provided with details of the existing use of the building. Photographs of street scenes, junctions, and relationship from the proposed site to public rights of way were also included. The Case Officer informed members of the assessments carried out by environmental health colleagues and discussed visual harm. The Officer's recommendation was to grant.

Steve Savage, Transport Development Manager, discussed the unclassified road which had no footways or lighting, which was well used by pedestrians. Mr Savage informed members that the applicant had provided sufficient information. He also discussed traffic generation and informed members that in terms of the NPPF, traffic movements would have been reduced due to the development.

Public Participation

The agent spoke in favour of the application. Ms Gatehouse discussed minimal traffic movements and the noise impact assessment. She also referred to several policies which supported the proposed development, including policies 11,20 and 29. The agent informed members that the applicant had worked hard to overcome concerns made by residents and had made good economic use of the existing building. She hoped members would support the officer's recommendation to grant.

Cllr Taylor spoke on behalf the Parish Council. Motcombe objected in terms of traffic safety, damage, and several other factors. He discussed unsuitability and

damage to insufficient roads. In addition to this, he also highlighted to members the lack of visibility from the school which was concerning. Cllr Taylor also raised his concerns regarding noise pollution. He also discussed environmental reasons for refusal, in particular, materials not being locally sourced. He urged the committee to reject the application.

Members questions and comments

- Clarification regarding cause of damage to verges and noise assessments.
- Members praised the officer's detailed report and presentation.
- Stone pollution and how it will be disposed and controlled.
- Monitoring of hours of work
- It was noted that the site was near but not within the AONB.
- Clarification on the enforcement of the route.
- Location of the footpath through the site and the potential to relocate.
- Mitigation to reduce noise disturbance.
- Members commented on the importance of the Neighbourhood Plan but also noted the importance supporting local businesses.
- Not a purpose-built building for stone cutting.
- Members felt further information was needed from officers to make a decision.

Having had the opportunity to discuss the merits of the application and an understanding of all this entailed; having considered the officer's report and presentation; the written representatives; and what they had heard at the meeting, a motion **to defer**, was proposed by Cllr Carole Jones and seconded by Cllr Belinda Ridout.

Decision: To defer the item to allow for further information regarding conditions to limit noise from the development, and the resultant impact on the amenity of the countryside, in this location.

9. P/2022/00536- Land at Lower Blandford Road, Shaftesbury Dorset

With the aid of a visual presentation, the Case Officer explained the planning application to members. Details including photographs of site access, proposed designs, site location and surrounding settlement boundaries was discussed. The Case Officer discussed visibility splays and provided information regarding the belt of trees adjacent to the site. Members were informed that the applicant had responded significantly to officer concerns and had reduced the number of dwellings. The Case Officer discussed the Shaftesbury Neighbourhood Plan and the protection of trees. The presentation also included details of the public right of way. The officer's recommendation was to grant.

Steve Savage, Transport Development Manager, informed members that the site was considered acceptable in terms of layout and design. Members were informed that the crossing would be subject to agreement and gave details regarding speed surveys carried out in 2019 which showed the site to be a low traffic generator.

The Transport Development Manager also discussed no segregated footways on Blandford Road. Highways supported the proposed application.

Public Participation

The agent spoke in favour of the application. He discussed the location of the site being entirely on the settlement boundary of Shaftesbury. He informed members that the applicant had responded to previous concerns and had reduced the original number of dwellings proposed. Mr Foster felt that the development supported the local need and felt the harm didn't outweigh the benefits.

Ms Hunt spoke in objection to the application. She felt that the proposal had a negative impact on the entrance to Shaftesbury and created severally high traffic movements. Ms Hunt informed members that the approval of the site would join town and countryside together. She also discussed the elevation of the site being intrusive to neighbours. In addition to this, wildlife corridor damage and environmental losses.

Both Town Councils and the Local Ward Member objected to the proposed development. They felt as though it would cause a significant amount of harm to the buffer between the town and villages. Destruction to good established trees, wildlife and impacts on biodiversity was also discussed. Members were informed that the elevation of the site would impact visual harm and would result in a loss of privacy. They felt as though Shaftesbury did not need any further developments and did not believe that the site entrance was acceptable, due to being near a busy roundabout. The Ward Member also highlighted concerns regarding refuse vehicles not being able to safely access the site. They also requested for further surveys to be carried out as they did not feel the current ones reflected the real traffic movements of the site. Cllr Somper felt as though the increased traffic and pedestrian crossings would create danger for residents when crossing an even busier road. They hoped members would reject the proposal.

Members questions and comments

- Confirmation on an uncontrolled crossing
- Clarification on the use of the public rights of way
- IOWA Policy clarification and the weight that they attach.
- Members also questioned the housing supply delivery.
- Shaftesbury has had a lot of developments already.
- Members felt that the site was sensitive and important.
- Adverse impacts on the area.
- Doesn't contribute to affordable housing.
- Members felt the site was an important buffer zone between town and village.

Having had the opportunity to discuss the merits of the application and an understanding of all this entailed; having considered the officer's report and presentation; the written representatives; and what they had heard at the meeting,

a motion to refuse the officer's recommendation to approve planning permission as recommended, was proposed by Cllr Tim Cook and seconded by Cllr Belinda Ridout.

Decision: To overturn the officer's recommendation to approve and refuse planning permission as the proposal would encroach on the green area between Shaftesbury and Cann and cause adverse visual harm to the character of the Important Treed Area, specifically the setting of the protected trees and the experience from the public rights of way network, which would be contrary to Policy SFGI1 of the Shaftesbury Neighbourhood Plan and policy 4 of the North Dorset Local Plan, First Revision. These adverse impacts significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits derived from the development.

10. **Urgent items**

There were no urgent items.

11. **Exempt Business**

There was no exempt business.

Decision Sheet

Duration of meeting: 12.00 - 4.40 pm

Chairman

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Agenda Item 6

Officer Report

Application Number:	P/FUL/2022/05022		
Webpage:	https://planning.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/		
Site address:	Land at Kine Bush Lane Kine Bush Lane Gillingham SP8 5RA		
Proposal:	Stationing of a holiday cabin, development of a structure comprising of a cycle and refuse store, creation of an access and creation of a parking and turning area.		
Applicant name:	Mr Jasper Cable-Alexander		
Case Officer:	Steven Banks		
Ward Member(s):	Cllr Val Potheary, Cllr Belinda Ridout and Cllr David Walsh		
Publicity expiry date:	2 February 2023	Officer site visit date:	
Decision due date:	17 February 2023	Ext(s) of time:	5 May 2023

1.0 Reason for Referral

This application is referred to committee under scheme of delegation process due to an objection from the Parish Council.

2.0 Summary of recommendation:

Grant permission subject to conditions.

3.0 Reason for the recommendation:

- The principle of the proposed development taking place is accepted by policy.
- The proposed development would respect the character of the area.
- The proposal would not have an unacceptable impact on highway safety or the efficiency of the transport network.
- The proposal would not result in an increase in flood risk.

4.0 Key planning issues

Issue	Conclusion
The principle of the development taking place	The proposed tourist accommodation would be in a location where local services, that tourists are likely to want to use, could be accessed by means other than the private car. The principle of the development taking place is therefore accepted by North Dorset Local Plan policy.
Character and appearance	The elements of the proposal, by reason of their design, size and positioning, would not harm the character of the area.
Highways	The proposal would not have an unacceptable impact on highway safety or the efficiency of the transport network.

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Flooding	The application site comprises of land which has been assessed as not having a high or medium probability of flooding.
Economic benefits	The proposal, by reason of its nature and scale, would make a small but still beneficial contribution to the economy.

5.0 Description of Site

The application site, which comprises of areas of grass and trees, can be found to the north of Kind Bush Lane and to the south east of the developed settlement of Gillingham. The area is characterised by fields, which are used for agricultural purposes, trees, hedges and a large brick and stone arch railway bridge.

6.0 Description of Development

It is proposed to: Station a holiday cabin on the northern part of the site; develop a parking and turning area on the southern part of the site; and to construct a structure comprising of a bin store and a cycle store on the north-western edge of the proposed parking and turning area.

7.0 Relevant Planning History

There are no historic applications which are of relevant to this application.

8.0 List of Constraints

Outside settlement boundaries

Gillingham Neighbourhood Plan - Made 27/07/2018

Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) impact risk zone - Distance: 0

9.0 Consultations

All consultee responses can be viewed in full on the website.

Consultees

1. DC - Highways

No objection subject to the imposition of conditions, relating to vehicle access construction, access closure, cycle parking, gates, visibility splays, and turning and parking area construction, on any planning permission and the attachment of an informative, relating to vehicle crossing construction, to any planning permission.

3. Gillingham Town Council

Gillingham Town Council recommend refusal of Application P/FUL/2022/05022 for the following reasons:

- *The proposed development will result in unmitigated harmful intrusion into the countryside which will be damaging to the character and beauty of the rural area.*
- *The proposal does not enhance the natural and local environment or protect and enhance the landscape.*

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- *The site is situated off of a narrow country lane and the proposal will result in an increased danger to highway users.*
- *The harm to the countryside would not be outweighed by the public benefits.*

Gillingham Town Council requests that if the case officer is mindful to approve the application, the application is considered by the Dorset Council Northern Area Planning Committee.

Representations received

No representations have been received.

10.0 Relevant Policies

Development Plan

North Dorset Local Plan Part 1 (January 2016)

Policy 1 - Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

Policy 2 – Core Spatial Strategy

Policy 3 – Climate Change

Policy 4 – The Natural Environment

Policy 11 – The Economy

Policy 20 – The Countryside

Policy 23 – Parking

Policy 24 – Design

Policy 25 – Amenity

Policy 31 – Tourist Accommodation in the Countryside

Gillingham Neighbourhood Plan 2016 – 2031 (July 2018)

Policy 24 – Plots and buildings

Policy 25 – Hard and soft landscaping

Material Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

Part 2 - Achieving sustainable development

Part 4 – Decision making

Part 6 – Building a strong competitive economy

Part 12 – Achieving well-designed places

Part 14 – Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

Part 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

11.0 Human rights

Article 6 - Right to a fair trial.

Article 8 - Right to respect for private and family life and home.

The first protocol of Article 1 Protection of property.

This recommendation is based on adopted Development Plan policies, the application of which does not prejudice the Human Rights of the applicant or any third party.

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12.0 Public Sector Equalities Duty

As set out in the Equalities Act 2010, all public bodies, in discharging their functions must have “due regard” to this duty. There are 3 main aims:-

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics
- Taking steps to meet the needs of people with certain protected characteristics where these are different from the needs of other people
- Encouraging people with certain protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where participation is disproportionately low.

Whilst there is no absolute requirement to fully remove any disadvantage the Duty is to have “regard to” and remove or minimise disadvantage and in considering the merits of this planning application the planning authority has taken into consideration the requirements of the Public Sector Equalities Duty.

The individual elements of the proposal, by reason of their design, would not conflict with protected characteristics.

13.0 Financial benefits

The proposed development, by reason of its nature and scale, would: Support and require a modest amount of labour from the construction industry during the phases of development; provide an income for the owner of the development; and house a small number of people who would make a small contribution, through expenditure, to the viability of local retailers and service providers.

14.0 Environmental Implications

The application site can be found approximately 2.2 miles, via an on-road signed cycle route, which includes a break, of approximately 117.5m, on Common Mead Lane, from the Post Office in the commercial part of Gillingham. It should be noted that other services and facilities can be found in the commercial part of Gillingham. Gillingham train station, via the on-road signed cycle route, is approximately 0.4 miles from the Post Office referred to. The station falls on the well served Exeter to London line. Bus services can also be found in Gillingham.

Route 25 of the National Cycle Network (Longleat to Bournemouth) passes the application site and joins Route 253 of the National Cycle Network (a loop which includes Blandford Forum, Shaftesbury, Sturminster Newton and Okeford Fitzpaine) in Gillingham.

It should be noted that the on road signed cycle route passes through the centre of the commercial part of Gillingham, where the Post Office can be found, and terminates at Gillingham Train Station. The National Cycle Network routes do not pass the Post Office and do not run to the train station.

The use of sustainable transport modes between the application site and the services and facilities offered by Gillingham would be a realistic option. Occupiers of

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the holiday accommodation would not have to be dependent on the private motor vehicle in order to reach services and facilities. In this respect, the proposal would allow for progress towards a low carbon economy and for the mitigation of climate change.

15.0 Planning Assessment

The principle of the development taking place

Policy 2 of the Local Plan contains the spatial strategy which directs new development towards the most sustainable locations. It is identified, in the core spatial strategy, that the four main towns, Blandford, Gillingham, Shaftesbury and Sturminster Newton, will be the main focus for growth. The southern extension to Gillingham is noted as an exception. Stalbridge and the larger villages are identified at the second tier as the focus for growth to meet the local needs outside of the four main towns. It is identified at the third tier, the Countryside, that outside the defined boundaries of the four main towns, Stalbridge and the larger villages, the remainder of the District will be subject to countryside policies where development will be strictly controlled unless it is required to enable essential rural needs to be met.

The application site falls outside of any settlement boundary and therefore forms part of the countryside. Policy 20 (The Countryside) establishes that certain types of development are appropriate in the countryside. The types of development include: Renewable energy schemes; rural exception affordable housing sites, including small numbers of market homes; essential occupational dwellings; the re-use of existing rural buildings, primarily for economic development or community uses; rural tourist accommodation; and new non-commercial community facilities.

It is identified in policy 11 that tourist accommodation in the countryside will be permitted in accordance with policy 31 – Tourist accommodation in the Countryside.

Policy 31, amongst other things, permits the siting of static caravans provided the proposal is in a suitable location where local services that tourists are likely to want to use can be accessed by means other than the private car.

As identified above: The application site can be found approximately 2.2 miles, via an on-road signed cycle route, which includes a break, of approximately 117.5m, on Common Mead Lane, from the Post Office in the commercial part of Gillingham; a well-served train station, facilities, and services can be found in Gillingham; and the use of sustainable transport modes between the application site and the services and facilities offered by Gillingham would be a realistic option.

It is therefore, considered that the proposal would meet the requirement of policy 31.

Character and appearance

Fields which are used for agricultural purposes contribute to the rural character of the area. Trees and hedges are a notable element of the area. A brick and stone arch railway bridge can be found to the south of the site. This is a prominent feature which characterises the area. A tarmac road runs along the southern boundary of the site. Brick walls under concrete caps can be found on the north and south side of the road where it passes over a ditch. A small brick tunnel leading under the

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road can also be seen from the bridge. The railway bridge, tarmac road and brick walls interrupt the rural character of the area.

The proposed structure which comprises of a bin store and cycle store, by reason of its design, size and materials, would not cause material harm to the character and appearance of the area.

The turning and parking area, by reason of its size, would not detract from the character of the area.

It is proposed to site the holiday cabin in a position which is set back from the road and partially screened by vegetation. The proposed holiday cabin, by reason of its size, positioning and design, would not detract from the character of the area which includes man made elements.

Highway safety

Development should only be refused, on highways grounds, if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety or if the residual cumulative impacts on the efficiency of the transport network would be severe. The Highway Authority did not object to the proposal, on either of these grounds, subject to the imposition of conditions on any planning permission. It is recommended that that these conditions should be imposed on any planning permission.

Flooding

The siting of the unit of holiday accommodation, vehicular access, turning and parking area, and cycle and bin store has been revised. The previously proposed bridges have been removed from proposed scheme.

It is not proposed to site the unit of holiday accommodation; vehicular access, turning and parking area; and cycle and bin store on land which has been assessed as having a high or medium probability of flooding.

The proposal would not result in an increase in flood risk.

16.0 Conclusion

For the reasons given, it is concluded that planning permission for the proposed development, which represents a sustainable form of development, should be granted subject to the conditions below.

17.0 Recommendation Grant, subject to the following conditions:

1. The development to which this permission relates must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this permission.

Reason: This condition is required to be imposed by Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

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P-102 P06 – Received 07/03/2023

004 P02 – Received 28/11/2022

P-101 P03 – Received 28/02/2023

A100 – Received 28/11/2022

A101 – Received 28/11/2022

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

3. Prior to the occupation of the development hereby approved, the first 5.0m of the vehicular access, measured from the rear edge of the highway (excluding the vehicle crossing), shall have been laid out and constructed to a specification which shall have been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter, the first 5.0m of the vehicular access must be maintained and kept free from obstruction for the life of the development hereby approved.

Reason: In the interest of highway safety.

4. Prior to the occupation of the development hereby approved the turning/manoeuvring and parking areas shown on approved plan P-102 P06 must have been constructed. Thereafter, these areas must be maintained, kept free from obstruction and made available for the turning and parking of vehicles in perpetuity.

Reason: To ensure the proper and appropriate development of the site and to ensure that highway safety is not adversely impacted upon.

5. Prior to the occupation of the development hereby approved the cycle parking facilities shown on approved plan P-102 P06 must have been constructed. Thereafter, these areas must be maintained, kept free from obstruction and made available for the parking of bicycles in perpetuity.

Reason: To ensure the proper construction of the parking facilities.

6. Any entrance gates must be set back a minimum distance of 5 metres from the edge of the carriageway and hung so that they can only open into the site.

Reason: In the interest of highway safety.

7. Prior to the use of the development hereby approved the visibility splay area as shown on drawing P-102 P06 must have been cleared/excavated to level not exceeding 0.60m above the relative level of the adjacent carriageway. Thereafter, the visibility splay area must be maintained and kept free from obstruction in perpetuity.

Reason: In the interest of highway safety.

8. The unit of accommodation hereby approved shall be occupied for holiday purposes only; shall not be occupied as a person's sole, or main place of residence; and the owners/operators must maintain an up-to-date register of the names of all

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owners/occupiers of unit of accommodation and of their main home addresses, and must make this information available at all reasonable hours at the request of a duly authorised officer of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that approved unit of accommodation is not used for unauthorised permanent residential occupation.

Reason: In the interest of sustainable development.

9. The unit of holiday accommodation shown on approved plans A100 and A101 shall be sited as shown on approved plan P-102 P06. Only one unit of holiday accommodation shall be sited within the application site identified by the red line on approved plan P-101 P03.

Reason: In the interest of minimising flood risk and to control the limit of the development.

Informative Notes:

1. In accordance with paragraph 38 of the NPPF the council, as local planning authority, takes a positive approach to development proposals and is focused on providing sustainable development.

The council works with applicants/agents in a positive and proactive manner by:

- offering a pre-application advice service, and
- as appropriate updating applicants/agents of any issues that may arise in the processing of their application and where possible suggesting solutions.

In this case:

- The applicant/agent was updated of any issues and provided with the opportunity to address issues identified by the case officer.

2. NOTE: The vehicle crossing serving this proposal (that is, the area of highway land between the nearside carriageway edge and the site's road boundary) must be constructed to the specification of the Highway Authority in order to comply with Section 184 of the Highways Act 1980. The applicant should contact Dorset Highways by telephone on 01305 221020), by email at dorsethighways@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk, or in writing at Dorset Highways, Dorset Council, County Hall, Dorchester, DT1 1XJ, before the commencement of any works on or adjacent to the public highway.

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Application Number:	P/FUL/2022/03360		
Webpage:	https://planning.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/		
Site address:	Former Priory Hospital, Fairfield Bungalows, Blandford Forum, Dorset, DT11 7HX		
Proposal:	Convert former special needs residential care home into 16 No. flats and carry out associated external alterations, including construction of terraces and balconies. Erect cycle store.		
Applicant name:	Culverdene Properties Ltd. & Crestland Homes Ltd.		
Case Officer:	R Temple		
Ward Member(s):	Cllr Lacey-Clarke & Cllr Byron Quayle		
Publicity expiry date:	23 August 2022	Officer site visit date:	21/06/2022
Decision due date:	14 September 2022	Ext(s) of time:	15/05/2023

1.0 The application is being heard at planning committee as it was sent through the scheme of delegation after an objection from a ward Councillor was retained against officer recommendation.

2.0 Summary of recommendation:

Grant permission subject to conditions.

3.0 Reason for the recommendation:

- Lack of five-year land supply in the former North Dorset District area which is also failing to meet its Housing Delivery Test
- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out that permission should be granted for sustainable development unless specific policies in the NPPF indicate otherwise.
- The location is considered to be sustainable, and the proposal is acceptable in its design and general visual impact.
- There is not considered to be any significant harm to neighbouring residential amenity.
- There are no material considerations which would warrant refusal of this application.
- Viability report submission held to be sound thus the development will provide no affordable housing or planning contributions as this would render it

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unviable. The cost of retrofitting a secure residential institution of this type to C3 use to building regulation compliance is significant.

- Sustainability benefits as development is in a highly sustainable location, re-use & adapting the site for to residential in favour of demolishing the structures & re-building, includes carbon emissions savings, electric vehicle charging points and on-site bicycle storage to encourage sustainable transport by residents and visitors.

4.0 Key planning issues

Issue	Conclusion
Principle of development	Within the settlement boundary so acceptable in principle.
Scale, design, impact on character and appearance	Very few changes externally to building so limited impact.
Impact on amenity	No change to windows facing residential properties. No change in scale so no additional impact in terms of overbearing impact, overshadowing or visual intrusion.
Economic benefits and viability	Job creation during construction, custom to local shops and facilities. Council tax income and new homes bonus. The cost of retrofitting a secure residential institution of this type to C3 use to building regulation compliance is significant. Rendering even a 100% free market residential development of 16 dwellings unviable.
Access and Parking	16 spaces and 2 disabled spaces is considered acceptable for the 16 units with cycle storage also provided. Considered to be enough parking for the development and the existing access is held to be safe. No Highways Officer objection.
Impact on Trees	The location of the cycle store has been moved to protect the root protection zone of the nearest mature tree. An acceptable tree protection and arboricultural report has been submitted and its requirements will be conditioned.
Impact on public rights of way	The development will not increase the size of the building. Thus, will have no physical impact on the public right of way to the rear of the site. Although there will be additional use of the footway by future residents.

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5.0 Description of Site

The site contains a large two-storey building with shared garden to rear (east) which back onto a public right of way. Parking is to the east of the site which includes 16 spaces plus 2 disabled spaces.

The site slopes from east to west and there are trees to the front of the building on the open green space.

The site is within an established residential area characterised mainly by houses and a day centre building; a right of way runs to the rear of the application site.

6.0 Description of Development

Conversion of a former special needs care home to 16 apartments (11 two bed and 5 one bed) with the installation of balconies to the rear. Shared garden to rear and open greenspace to front with cycle parking building to south side and waste storage building to front. 18 parking spaces to front including 2 disabled bays.

7.0 Relevant Planning History

2/2010/0586/PLNG Two storey 16 bed residential care home for people with complex needs. Granted 03/08/2010

2/2018/0153/FUL Install 3-metre-high metal security fencing with access gate. Granted 27/04/2018.

8.0 List of Constraints

Blandford St Mary and Bryanston Conservation Area

North Dorset Local Plan Part 1 (2011-2031); Adopted; Inside the Settlement Boundary; Policy 2 and 16;

Neighbourhood Plan - Made; Name: Blandford + NP; Status Adopted 22/06/2021;

Risk of Surface Water Flooding Extent 1 in 100

Risk of Surface Water Flooding Extent 1 in 1000

Areas Susceptible to Groundwater Flooding; Clearwater; $\geq 50\% < 75\%$;

Areas Susceptible to Groundwater Flooding; Clearwater; $< 25\%$;

Dorset Council Land (Freehold): Land remaining from sale of Phoenix House, Churchill Road, Blandford Forum

Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) impact risk zone;

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Within the Blandford St Mary and Bryanston Conservation Area (statutory duty to preserve or enhance the significance of heritage assets under the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990)

Right of Way located to the rear (east) of the site “Old Railway Walk”

9.0 Consultations

All consultee responses can be viewed in full on the website.

Consultees

1. Blandford Forum Town Council- objects to the application due to the lack of both affordable housing and parking allocated to the site, with concerns over the safety of that junction when entering the site with the increase in trips that the development will result in.

Upon re-consultation on 24/04/2023 the Council withdrew their objections but added an additional objection with the following:

“...object to the change of use of 16 self-contained flats (to be sold at market value) to re-enablement units as it raises questions of the possibility of increased transport in the area and the loss of section 106 money which is urgently needed to support other infrastructure facilities in Blandford.”

A further and final comment from the Town Council stated their support for the application following considerations of the amendments and additional submission from the applicant.

2. Cllr. Quayle (Ward Councillor)- objects to the application due to the lack of both affordable housing and parking for this site. Concerns over the safety with the expected number of vehicles expected to use this access at the junction.

Objection on highways safety grounds maintained at scheme of delegation consultation stage.

3. Blandford Civic Society- Good to see a potential new use for this particular white elephant, which has had a succession of uses since it was built for Dorset County Council, but when it was in use by the Priory Hospital with few patients but many staff, there were considerable issues over neighbour amenity – overlooking from windows, noise from the car park, shortage of parking spaces and highway safety of the access road junction with Heddington Drive. The lack of objection from the highway authority is noted, but can we be assured that as 16 individually occupied flats with 27 bedrooms there will not be similar problems exacerbated by the addition of balconies at the rear. Will the 20 bicycles have direct access to the Trailway to avoid having to share the narrow access road along with the inevitable

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car users, and will only 18 parking spaces really be sufficient? Many of the cheaper flats whose purchase price 12 months ago are quoted are, we think, age restricted, and so reduced the average price, but have high management fees – has this been taken into account in the viability test for affordable housing?

4. Housing Enabling Team- This application proposes the conversion of a former residential care home into one- and two-bedroom market homes. Policy seeks the provision of 30% affordable housing within Blandford Forum, on sites of ten or more dwellings. The AHVR which accompanies this application states that “in view of the low level of profit and landowner return, no affordable housing can be provided. Instead, the application proposes sixteen small, open market flats, for which there is a need in Blandford Forum.”

There is a high need for affordable housing across the Dorset Council area and the Housing Enabling Team would support this development if it were to bring forward a policy compliant level of affordable housing and therefore expect the Financial Viability Appraisal to be independently assessed.

5. Landscape- No comment

6. Rights of Way Officer- no objection to the proposed development, but would be very grateful for a financial contribution to be made for tree works adjoining the development because one of the first things new residents complain about is trees and we do not have the budget to deal with all requests.

7. Highways- no objection subject to conditions

8. Urban Design- No comment

9. Tree Officer- no objection to the proposal subject to the tree report being made a condition of any planning consent.

A domestic landscaping scheme and post planting maintenance for the period of 5 years following completion of the development should also be conditioned to further enhance the site.

10. Wessex Water- No objection subject to informatives.

Representations received

One letter of objection received objecting on the grounds of overlooking, highways safety and noise levels.

10.0 Relevant Policies

Development Plan

North Dorset Local Plan (NDLP) Part 1 (2016)

Policy 1 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

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Policy 2	Core Spatial Strategy
Policy 4	The Natural Environment
Policy 6	Housing Distribution
Policy 7	Delivering Homes
Policy 8	Affordable Housing
Policy 13	Grey Infrastructure
Policy 14	Social Infrastructure
Policy 15	Green Infrastructure
Policy 16	Blandford
Policy 23	Parking
Policy 24	Design
Policy 25	Amenity

Blandford + Neighbourhood Plan (2011-2033)

B1 Blandford Forum and Blandford St Mary Settlement Boundaries

The original version of the Blandford + Neighbourhood plan was made (adopted) on the 22 June 2021. The plan is currently being reviewed and further details regarding the review can be found below.

Material considerations

Blandford + Neighbourhood Plan Review

As the relevant local planning authority, Dorset Council is required to consult on the modified plan before the examination of the Plan review takes place. The consultation is running from Friday 14 April 2023 until the end of Friday 26 May 2023.

At this early stage in the Neighbourhood Plan process the policies upon consultation cannot be given weight.

National Planning Policy Framework

2. Achieving sustainable development
4. Decision making
5. Delivering a sufficient supply of homes
6. Building a strong, competitive economy
11. Making effective use of land
12. Achieving well-designed places
14. Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
15. Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

11.0 Human rights

Article 6 - Right to a fair trial.

Article 8 - Right to respect for private and family life and home.

The first protocol of Article 1 Protection of property.

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This recommendation is based on adopted Development Plan policies, the application of which does not prejudice the Human Rights of the applicant or any third party.

12.0 Public Sector Equalities Duty

As set out in the Equalities Act 2010, all public bodies, in discharging their functions must have “due regard” to this duty. There are 3 main aims:-

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics
- Taking steps to meet the needs of people with certain protected characteristics where these are different from the needs of other people
- Encouraging people with certain protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where participation is disproportionately low.

Whilst there is no absolute requirement to fully remove any disadvantage the Duty is to have “regard to” and remove or minimise disadvantage and in considering the merits of this planning application the planning authority has taken into consideration the requirements of the Public Sector Equalities Duty.

The access of the proposed development has been designed for buggies and wheelchairs and the building (constructed in 2012) is designed to be accessible for all users.

The Head of Commissioning (at Dorset Council) was consulted as part of this application as this application would see a loss of a facility for a group with protected characteristics, in this instance children with severe mental health issues. In terms of the loss the following is considered to allow the loss as acceptable and that due consideration has been given by the Council for this protected characteristic :-

- The Priory facility has been closed for some time
- It dealt with a wider catchment than just Dorset Council’s administrative area
- The Council cannot identify a quantifiable gap, or a like for like replacement because services and the market for services are changing frequently
- There is unlikely to be a buyer for the site that would wish to purchase it and revert it to the former use. There was an Opportunity to do this when “Caretech” were involved with the site.

There is therefore no strong case for refusing a change of use on the basis of protected characteristics as such persons would not be adversely impacted.

13.0 Financial benefits

What	Amount / value
Increase in Council tax	Council tax for 16 dwellings
New Homes Bonus	Not known

14.0 Climate Implications

A condition will be included to ensure Electric Vehicle charging points are included in the car park. The development will also be expected to meet building regulations which includes meeting sustainability targets.

The development proposes the re-use of an existing building for private market flats. This carries its own sustainability benefits by reusing an existing structure as opposed to demolition and re-building new flats.

15.0 Planning Assessment

Principle

Policy 2 (Core Spatial Strategy) of NDLP requires development to be located in accordance with the spatial strategy which directs development to the 4 main towns, which includes Blandford Forum (and larger villages). The town is recognised as one of the most sustainable locations, where homes, and facilities are easily accessible. The application is for the conversion of an existing building within the defined development boundary of Blandford Forum. As such the principle of development for housing is considered acceptable, meeting the requirements of policies 1 and 2 and the site is in a sustainable location near to facilities and amenities.

Scale, design, impact on character and appearance

The scale, design and character of the building will not change because of the conversion but appearance will vary slightly given the proposed balconies to the rear. However, these are a modest alteration and only effect on side of the building. They are considered to be in character with the existing structure and will not alter its appearance significantly. Overall, the development is considered to be acceptable visually.

Impact on amenity

The impact on residential amenity will be mostly the same as the existing. The changes to the front (east) of the building are very limited and this elevation faces the neighbouring dwelling of The Beeches.

To the rear the newly proposed balconies will look over the shared amenity space of the site, the railway and the recreation ground. It is not considered that there will be any significant change to residential amenity.

The proposed dwellings are considered to meet internal space requirements of the Government's Technical housing standards – nationally described space standard. Thus, well sized internal living accommodation will be provided.

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Economic benefits and viability

The development would result in the addition of 16 flats and make an important contribution to housing supply. It would also result in an increase in Council tax payments, custom for local shops and a new homes bonus payment for the Council.

Developments of over 9 units are required to contribute towards affordable housing either through onsite contributions by providing units or via financial contributions. As the former North Dorset Local Plan area does not have a CIL charging scheme, development over 9 units are also required to make contributions in the form of financial planning obligations towards community infrastructure.

Paragraph 58 of the NPPF states that *'Where up-to-date policies have set out the contributions expected from development, planning applications that comply with them should be assumed to be viable. It is up to the applicant to demonstrate whether particular circumstances justify the need for a viability assessment at the application stage. The weight to be given to a viability assessment is a matter for the decision maker, having regard to all the circumstances in the case, including whether the plan and the viability evidence underpinning it is up to date, and any change in site circumstances since the plan was brought into force. All viability assessments, including any undertaken at the plan-making stage, should reflect the recommended approach in national planning guidance, including standardised inputs, and should be made publicly available.'*

National Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) Paragraph: 007 Reference ID: 10-007-20190509 explains with regard to changes in site circumstances that *'Such circumstances could include, for example where development is proposed on unallocated sites of a wholly different type to those used in viability assessment that informed the plan; where further information on infrastructure or site costs is required; where particular types of development are proposed which may significantly vary from standard models of development for sale (for example build to rent or housing for older people); or where a recession or similar significant economic changes have occurred since the plan was brought into force.'*

NPPF para 58 refers to up-to-date policies – now that the North Dorset Local Plan is more than 5-years old it is considered it's policies are not up-to-date in terms of viability. In addition, the "Whole Plan Viability Study" is 8 years old, thus the economic circumstances have changed.

In this instance the scheme would have to have provided 30% affordable housing, 4.8 dwellings, and £172,637 of planning contributions (when all are totalled).

A viability assessment was submitted as the applicant recognised that there has been events that have altered the costs in the construction market since the adopted of the NDLP in 2016. These events are the economic recession during the COVID 19 pandemic and the impacts of the UK leaving the European Union (in terms of the single market. And resultant inflation. These have led to an increase in building materials, services and labour for construction.

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A significant factor in the development being unviable is the cost to convert the existing secure residential institution to residential dwellings is over £1million. This was owing to the building being built to specific standards to qualify as a secure residential institution. These standards are then resource intense to physically revert to C3 dwelling use as has been demonstrated in the viability statement and analysis by the District Valuer. See table below from the District Valuer Viability Review Report:

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Non-Technical Summary of Inputs for 100% open market scheme

100% market scheme Inputs	Agent	DVS Viability Review	Agreed (Y/N)
Assessment Date	17 May 2022	20 September 2022	-
Site Area:	3,600m ² , 0.36 Ha	3,600m ² , 0.36 Ha	Y
Gross Internal Area:	1,107m ² , 0.11 Ha	1,107m ² , 0.11 Ha	
Development Period	24 months	17 months	N
Gross Development Value	£2,690,000	£3,475,000	N
Comprising:			
Market Housing GDV blended value rate	£2,690,000	£3,475,000	N
Affordable Housing GDV	n/a	n/a	
Other GDV	n/a	n/a	
S.106 Total	-	£172,637	N
Total Development Cost (excludes policy; land and fees; profit)	£1,648,323	£1,653,504	N
Comprising:			
Construction Cost Total and £/m²	£1,648,323 £1,419/m ²	£1,653,504 £1,494/m ²	N
Externals Total	£0	£0	Y
Abnormal Cost Total	£0	£0	Y
Professional Fees %	7%	7%	Y
Contingency %	-	3%	N
Finance Interest and Sum	5% debit: 1.5% credit	6% debit: 2% credit	N
Other Fees			
Marketing Fees	-	0.5%	N
Sales / Agency Fees	1.25%	1.5%	N
Legal Fees	0.5%	£650/unit	N
Land Acquiring Costs	SDLT + 1.93%	SDLT +1.75%	N
Profit Target %	15%	17.50%	N
Benchmark Land Value	£384,336	£990,000	N
EUV	Not provided	£900,000	N
Premium	n/a	£90,000 (10% of EUV)	N
Purchase Price	Not stated	£1,050,000	-

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Alternative Use Value	n/a	n/a	-
Residual Land Value	£384,336	£657,324	N
Viability Conclusion Full Policy Scheme	Not viable	Not viable	Y
Deliverable Scheme	100% open market scheme	No	N

A viability assessment was submitted with the application which has been reviewed and agreed by the District Valuer (DV). The development would not be viable were it subject to any affordable housing requirements and/or planning contributions. As such the officer accepts the findings of the viability assessment and DV's report and no affordable housing or contributions could be provided by the proposal.

Access and Parking

The access to the site will not change from existing, 18 parking spaces are proposed including 2 disabled spaces and a cycle store. There has been no objection from the Council's Transport Development Liaison Manager (Highways) subject to conditions covering completion of the cycle parking store prior to occupation and a pre-commencement condition for a construction method statement.

There has been public objection on the grounds of lack of parking and highway safety from the access junction where the access meets Fairfield Bungalows. 18 spaces and cycle parking are considered to be sufficient for the 16 unit development and should conditions be complied with there is not considered to be a highways danger in terms of use of the access from Fairfield Bungalows turning in to the site.

Impact on trees

There are 7no mature trees to the front of the building covered by Tree Preservation Orders. Only one tree (to the very south of the site) will be affected by the development as this will be near to the location of the cycle shed. Following the submission of a tree report the location of the cycle shed was moved westward to remove it from the root protection area (RPA) of the tree. The tree officer has no objections to the development subject to a condition ensuring the recommendations for tree protection in the tree report are followed.

Impact on public rights of way

There will be no impact on the trial way to the rear (west) of the site as the building will not be increasing in size.

The impacts from the increased use of the public right of way and other highways is considered to be acceptable from the future residents of the proposed residential units.

Ecology

The application is complemented with a signed certificate of approval from the

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Council's Natural Environment Team (NET). The requirements and enhancement requirements for biodiversity contained in this approved Biodiversity plan (BP) will be conditioned to ensure their implementation. It is expected that should the BP be fully complied with then the development will lead to a biodiversity net gain.

Matters Raised in Representation

With regards to Cllr concerns/objections, they are considered to be the following:-

- Lack of on-site affordable housing provision or equivalent affordable housing contribution
- On-site parking provision
- Highways safety with regards to the junction of the access to the site, in relation to increased trips to and from the site from the proposed use as 16 residential units.

With regards to bullet point one, the applicant has provided an Affordable Housing Viability Review (AVHR) to evidence that the proposed development would not be financially viable to carry out, should affordable housing provision on-site or as contributions be required for the development to be granted permission. As this is the case, we consulted the District Valuer (DV) (a qualified third party) to analyse the review and robustly assess the evidence submitted. The DV's conclusion was that the proposed development would not be viable should it be subject to policy compliant levels of affordable housing and contributions. The planning officer has assessed the findings of the DV and agrees with them. In brief, the costs to convert the current building (Class C2 residential institution) into residential units are high given the specification the structure was built to originally. This included a requirement for it to be a secure residential institution.

With regards to points two and three; the officer consulted the Transport Development Liaison Manager (TDLM) (Dorset Council Highways) who cover both these issues. They concluded no objection to either the amount of on-site car and cycle parking. In this instance 16 regular car parking spaces are proposed and 2 disabled spaces, 18 overall. This is for 16 residential units (5 one bed and 11 two bed). In addition, 20 cycle spaces are proposed in a building to the south of the site. Given the site is in a sustainable location in terms of distance to local amenities and ease of access to the local pedestrian highway network (assisted by the North Dorset railway to the rear of the site), the level of parking provided on site is considered to be acceptable. How the on-site parking is allocated to residents has not been made clear by the applicant but is likely to be non-allocated.

The TDLM also considered highway safety and concluded that the access arrangements meet highway safety standards. However, conditions were recommended to ensure highway safety during construction phase and the use phase of the development. In addition to a condition to ensure the cycle parking is

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constructed and made available for use prior to the occupation of the dwellings and maintained thereafter. These conditions are recommended to be included if this permission is granted.

The parking/highway concerns raised have already been assessed in the Access and Parking section above.

Public representation

The officer notes the concerns raised by residents to the north-east of the application site. They raised the concerns below:-

“I am concerned about the traffic due to the junction from Holland way.

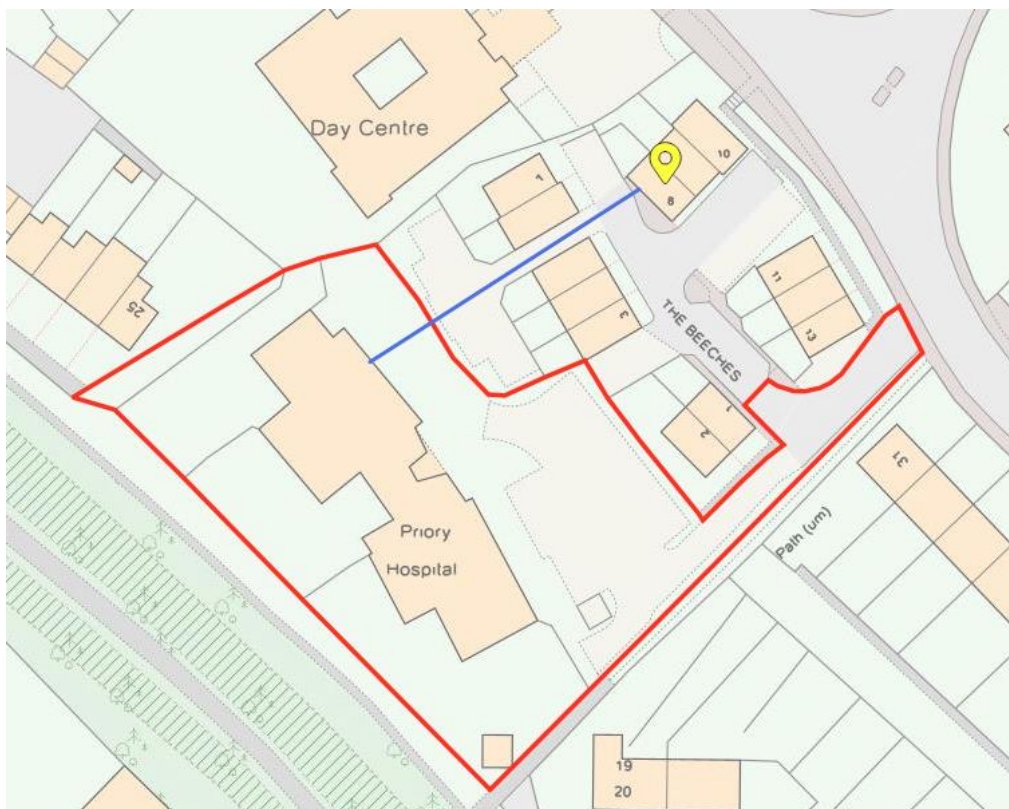
I am also concerned about the flat windows over looking my property. Currently all the window are tinted out the side of the beeches which gives privacy to the residents. I am concerned about it over looking due to my children's bedrooms.

I am also concerned about the noise level this will create. The car park is very echoey and would request some trees be planted to create a sound barrier and privacy”

Whilst taking into account their comments;

- the first point has been addressed above and the access and traffic level created by the development is considered acceptable,
- the windows for the proposed flats will be the same as the existing windows. These are approx. 45m away from the side windows of 8 The Beeches and set down at a lower level. The Council can't control if they (Residents of the Beeches) retain the tint on their windows or not through this planning application, that is up to the occupiers of The Beeches. As such, it is not considered the development would give rise to an increase in overlooking to neighbouring dwellings or gardens compared to the existing use (when occupied). (included below is a map showing the relationship of the application building and the side elevation of 8 The Beeches. The blue line indicates the potential view of the side of 8 the Beeches from upper floor windows of Priory Hospital)

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- with regards to the third point, the use of the car park is not considered to be significantly higher than when this property was occupied under its existing use as a residential institution so would not lead to a significant increase in noise and disturbance. A landscaping condition will be included to encourage additional planting on the site, but this is not specifically required to make the application acceptable.

Planning Balance

The development will create 16 open market dwellings, counting towards the Council's housing land supply, with no significant impact on neighbouring amenity, an acceptable impact visually and sufficient cycle & car parking. It will bring an unused site back into use providing 16 housing units towards the Council's 5 year housing land supply. Whilst regrettable that no affordable housing or planning contributions can be paid this is considered reasonable in these circumstances. The legitimacy of this is proven by the submission of a viability assessment, independently reviewed and verified by the District Valuer. Should the development have been liable to affordable housing or planning contributions (community infrastructure payments it would not be viable for the conversion to go ahead.

Therefore, whilst the proposal doesn't comply with the development plan as a whole, in terms of planning balance it is considered that a development which provides a:

- net gain of 16 dwellings, 11 of them two-bedroom which could support small families,

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- with sustainable on-site cycle storage and electric car changing points,
- and the reuse of a redundant building and site,
- thus, there are sustainability benefits by for re-use and adapting the site for to residential in favour of demolishing the structures and re-building,
- saving in terms of carbon-emissions which would be low via this proposal compared to demolishing the building and constructing new dwellings.

As such, on balance, the application is considered to meet policy requirements and is recommended for approval.

16.0 Conclusion

The development would result in a net gain of 16 open market residential units, contributing a modest but important addition towards the Council's housing land supply. The development would have an acceptable impact on residential amenity, visual amenity and result in the reuse of a vacant building whilst providing sufficient car and cycle parking. The application is recommended for approval.