

Western & Southern Area Planning Committee - 9 July 20

Written Submissions

WD/D/20/000583 - 82 East Street, Beaminster, DT8 3DT

Fiona Laidlaw-Smith

Objection to the above Planning Application

Briefly, I am extremely worried about my house, No. 80 East Street, Beaminster.

The corner, nearest the entrance to No. 82, was knocked a few months ago, by a lorry driving straight down East Street trying to negotiate between my house and cars parked on the other side of the road outside their houses, quite legally.

Lorries entering or exiting No. 82 will have much more difficulty, if they head to or from Whitcombe Road (B3163) along East Street.

There is no pavement between No. 80 and the houses opposite. Pedestrians sometimes have to take refuge in the doorway of No. 80, even when cars are driving up or down East Street.

Please do not pass this planning application.

John Teasdale

I have lived on East Street for almost 40 years and seen some big changes in traffic and parking. This application will only exacerbate an already very difficult situation. The current local plan has been mindful of this and identified sites well away from the old parts of town

Applications to build new houses in East Street have been resisted on one occasion for a single dwelling next to no35 with better access than no.82. Four houses were approved on the Brit but only after part demolition of a building. The access prior to demolition was better than no82.

More recently the request to build 3 houses beyond East Street but using the Street for access would only be considered by Highways with the introduction of a traffic management scheme citing safety grounds. Matthew Piles wrote to locals saying that such a scheme would require public consultation. The opening to no 82 could not be at a more dangerous location and yet no mention of the need for traffic management. So what makes a street deemed by the Authority to be unsafe without a scheme suddenly safe?

The NPPF guidelines would appear to have been taken to relax the safety requirements. This cannot be the case and anyway the 2015 view mandating the need for traffic management must have considered the situation potentially severe.

By means of a comparison section 16.26 draws the members attention to a proposal at Portland where, and I quote “arguably the access width and visibility is worse than that proposed on East Street” unquote The highway width at no 82 is 4.97 metres and the equivalent at Portland is 19.2 metres. I am not sure what the point is meant to be.

The report does not pay enough attention to the future and in particular climate change and heavy rainfall onto a surface which is largely clay. The cottages on East Street look particularly vulnerable.

Cramming extra houses into an unsuitable site when over 100 houses are earmarked elsewhere in Beaminster makes no sense to local people, especially as they are not affordable. Please listen to the Town Council.

Chris Chaney

The Highways Authority has ignored the impact of incremental traffic generated by the proposed development elsewhere on East Street, despite many representations highlighting this issue. Their assessment and submission focus ONLY on hazards in the immediate vicinity of the site access. Further, the applicant has provided NO information on expected traffic generation and vehicle movements, let alone any plan to mitigate their impact on East Street – nor has it been requested by the Authority.

East Street is one of the oldest areas of Beaminster, a narrow residential road with many houses opening directly onto the highway and very limited off-street parking for residents. Since June 2015, the Authority has accepted that traffic movements on East Street are precarious and hazardous for residents & other road users. It has consistently recommended refusal for every application for any new dwellings in the vicinity of East Street, on each occasion (four applications for 1 to 23 units) saying: “The residential development proposal will generate further traffic and pedestrian movements along East Street, a County highway with variable and limited carriageway and footway widths.

In the absence of the construction of, or programme for, a detailed improvement scheme design to provide suitable and appropriate traffic management and safety enhancements for this street, this development would be likely to cause danger and inconvenience to all highway users.” In other words, the Authority accepts that any additional traffic on East Street will have severe residual cumulative impacts on the road network which, as they helpfully point out in their submission, is a sound reason for refusal (viz. NPPF [2019], §109).

This position was also upheld by the Planning Inspector when a refusal for one of these applications was taken to appeal and subsequently dismissed – he even cited NPPF as a reason, adding that: “I acknowledge that existing development has taken place alongside Hollymoor Lane which utilises East Street for access. However, the evidence is also clear that further development requires resolution of highway and pedestrian conditions on East Street.”

It is puzzling why such a clear and well-evidenced highways safety issue has been deliberately ignored for this particular application (Officer’s Report, §17.24). Should approval be granted, not only would it be in ignorance of the severity of its impact on the safety of road users in East Street, but it would also be in direct contradiction to the Authority’s substantiated position for the past five years. It would also challenge the soundness of previous Council decisions to refuse such applications.

This application as submitted should be refused on these grounds.

Mike and Carol Tolman

We object to this development for the following reasons:

1. Members of my family have lived in our property (54 East Street) since approximately 1960 and the field behind us has always been a field/scrub land, and never used as an extended garden. This would mean a change of use which, to my knowledge, has never been authorised.
2. This development would be outside the defined development boundary and, therefore, the field should be protected from development as it is part of the wider Green Network within Beaminster, providing varied wildlife habitat.
3. The proximity of the development to our property (54 East St) will be detrimental to us as we have windows in all rooms overlooking the proposed development; we will be severely affected due to increased noise pollution, loss of privacy, loss of light, etc.
4. East Street is a narrow street which has only limited pavements; the part from 58 East St to the turning into Woodswater Lane, (which included the reposed access to the development), has no pavement and there would, therefore, be much greater risk to pedestrians, accidents, etc. Also, East Street can get very congested due to heavy lorries and tractors from local farms, waste collection lorries, delivery vehicles, etc; this development would only exacerbate the situation and cause more problems for parking, visibility, accidents, etc
5. With reference to further information that has been sourced, it is clear that the proposed site is definitely in the conservation area, and the track along the back of the site to the East is subject to the warning status of 'EA Surface Water Risk depth 0.1%'; this means that there will be a much greater potential risk of flooding to properties surrounding the proposed development site, including ours 54 East St, (which is adjacent to the site), if this development goes ahead.

We hope you thoroughly look into our above points before making your decision.

William Dixon

The statement from Highways would suggest there is no problem with the proposal, but for the residents of East Street and surrounding area who experience using the street every day, there is. This is demonstrated by the numerous objections to both this and the withdrawn proposal.

The traffic survey carried out in 2013 showed traffic speed in the vicinity of the site was not always below the prescribed limit. Is 30mph safe in an area where there are no footpaths and front doors open directly onto the narrow carriageway?

Highways have failed to examine the effect of removing the parking that currently takes place directly in front of the proposed access, which would result in increased traffic speeds. The speeding up of the frequent HGVs that serve the 3 farms on Hollymoor Lane has not been considered. Or, is the parking to remain and inhibit the access? It cannot be argued both ways.

The alterations to the access are claimed to maximise visibility splays, but this is not true and a simple drawing would demonstrate this. No sightlines or vehicle manoeuvring drawings have been submitted. The fact they are not presented, is, I would suggest, evidence that the drawings would not support the Highways case.

Traffic has increased in recent years, so too has the damage by vehicles to front doorsteps. Recently a vehicle drove over my front doorstep, shunting the food waste bin along the street. There are numerous doorsteps already damaged by vehicles. Some doorsteps have small pedestrian bridges over traditional historic stone drainage channels, these features are specifically referred to in the conservation area appraisal as a conservation asset. These too will suffer more damage, but they are given no mention in the conservation officer's report. The development will do nothing to improve matters.

The absence of any benchmark for the site levels is a real problem. Without this, it is impossible to know at what level the buildings are in relation to everything else. The levels between the building plots as shown would indicate a difference in level between them equivalent to a 4storey building! The difference between the plot levels and the Ordnance Survey levels shown on the drawings are beyond 4 storeys! Is the Officers Report 6.7 inaccurate or misleading?

Levels are fundamental to all planning applications, their effect substantial. This application makes particular show of reducing levels as a key part of the design to attempt to mitigate its negative impact on existing properties but what are they? The old stone cottages around East Street do not all have modern dpc's and dpm's and their habitability susceptible to any increase in surface water levels.

The application should be refused.

Martin Waters

It is disappointing that the apparent numerous inaccuracies, errors, omissions and unsupported assertions in the application have not been addressed during the scrutiny process e.g. The Biodiversity Appraisal Protocol Plan Certificate has been issued based on a report that stated there were no ponds within 250 metres of site, despite my two large ponds being within 5 metres!

It appears the NPPF is being used to promote the application and ignoring the numerous sections of it that is also meant to protect the character and nature of our surroundings and the community. I trust as our elected representatives you will take a more balanced view in deciding what is acceptable.

The following I suggest are unacceptable:

The proposal is to develop an area that is mostly a field and not garden outside the defined development area and will negatively impact both the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Most houses adjoining the site sit one storey lower than the ground level of the field and will have their residential amenity adversely affected by reason of overlooking, loss of privacy, overshadowing / loss of light, noise, fumes and existing views. The amended plan does not resolve these issues as the accuracy of the drawings is being questioned when compared to Ordinance Survey which show an ever greater difference in levels. The development will be over-bearing and again drawings appear to be misleading and missing any benchmark for the site levels.

I am particularly concerned with plot 1 which would have an adverse effect on the residential amenity of our garden (92) by reason of overlooking, loss of privacy, overshadowing and loss of light. The Officer's declared orientation of Plot 1 is not totally correct in my opinion. The gable end would be facing some of our garden, but the rear would see over the ponds, wildlife sitting areas and greenhouse where we spend most of our time! In addition to the obscure glazed bathroom window there is a bedroom window within 1.2 metres of bathroom window which will have clear line of sight into the wildlife sitting area of our garden and greenhouse. We have spent years developing this wildlife sitting area and our enjoyment, mental wellbeing and the welfare of the wildlife will be detrimentally harmed by the closeness of the new houses.

Despite the many objections should you feel inclined to give approval please make it a condition that a developer financed public consultation takes place and that an appropriate traffic management and safety enhanced scheme is approved by planning and highways, together with Beaminster Town Council. Also both rear upstairs windows of Plot 1 be obscured glass.

Please refuse the application for the good of the many.

Pat Waters

The Officer in 17.17 appears to dismiss my loss of amenity by stating I have an extensive rear garden area. I presume the inference be go and use another part other than the large area that is going to be overlooked and hence loss of privacy. So I presume he would suggest I move my greenhouse, ponds, seating areas, summerhouse and planting areas. The Officer's estimate of Plot 1's orientation in my opinion is incorrect and the bedroom window will clearly see into my sitting areas.

The Officer states each application has to be considered in its own merits but then quotes the Inspector on an appeal for 35 Easton Street but does not mention that the application was refused. In my opinion that application can't be compared to this one as there are material differences such as pavement / no pavement and the two streets are different in physical nature and by types of vehicles using them.

Highways assume that the arrangement of the access ensures slow speeds to be used when approaching the site. This is a seriously flawed theory. The majority of vehicles passing my house (92 East Street) at the start of East Street from Hollymoor Lane and in particular HGV's do so at to or exceeding the speed limit. To exit the site and see around the corner the vehicle's front end will be in the direct path of oncoming vehicles which will not have sufficient breaking distance to stop or space to avoid. This is a SEVERE safety issue.

The proposed site though only adding "4 more units" doesn't tell the true story of the danger to the inhabitants and visitors of East Street. If you survey East Street when people are at home 80% of East Street is single track due to parked cars which also overspill into Woodswater Lane and Hollymoor Lane beyond the junction of Riverside. It has been previously agreed by the experts that East Street couldn't handle any more capacity no matter how small. Also the proposed junction is potentially very dangerous as there are normally parked cars opposite. Cars leaving Woodswater Lane do so on the wrong side of the road due to parked cars. It is probably the most dangerous junction in Beaminster. In addition to occupants, visitors and deliveries people will go down the proposed new cul de sac looking for car parking spaces and if not successful will have to come back out and turn right to park in Hollymoor Lane. This could easily cause an increase of traffic movement out of the site entrance to increase by a factor of sixty times what it is now!

Please refuse the application – save lives.

Melvyn Warner

The proposed houses are to be built outside the Defined Development Area, this area was excluded from the Local Plan and its latest revision. This indicates that there is sufficient land elsewhere in Beaminster to meet the Government's requirements of the number of extra homes to be built over the coming years.

Thus, allowing these houses to be built outside a defined area may be deemed illegal. It could also set a precedence where an area outside but adjacent to the boundary of a development area could be incorporated into the neighbouring site within the area and then permission sought to develop, thus circumventing the whole of the planning process. Boundaries set legally should be respected.

An area in Hollymoor which should have been outside the development area was accidentally included within, as a result planning permission was given for a dwelling, the legal requirements having to be respected; similarly, the same applies here, the proposed houses are outside the boundary and so permission should not be given to build thus respecting the existing boundary.

The Government Inspector made comment in the Local Plan that future development in the area should be carefully considered because of the level of traffic in East Street already existing at that time. If this application is allowed, it is inevitable traffic flow will increase and so to the danger to all users of East St.

Therefore, I feel this application should be refused.

Ghislaine Warner

The level of danger to pedestrians, cyclists and others that exist in East Street at the moment will only be increased if this application is granted.

Five years ago the Highways Authority in their report on the application to build one dwelling at the end of East street in Hollymoor was that this one dwelling on its own would increase the danger to users of east Street.

It is impossible to construct a path the whole length of East Street, because the constraints of the width of the road, and the existing buildings either side. In places there is only enough for one vehicle.

The site views at the proposed entrance fall well below the Government's minimum requirements for such a junction; existing buildings would have to be demolished to achieve them.

Along with the extra traffic, and an unsatisfactory junction would only increase the danger to the public that already exists.

It is proposed that the houses are to have soakaways, rather than being connected to mains drainage. Soakaways at times fail, if this occurs and flooding of neighbouring houses occurs, who will be responsible for compensating those affected, the Council? The site lies on a clay pan and so flooding is not out of the question.

Given the above this development should not be permitted.

Rachel Bowditch

Along with other objectors I continue to object to this application, having read the Officer's Report.

PLANNING STATUS OF THE LAND

One of my objections relates to the claim in the planning application that the land is "an extended Garden" to the Bungalow. Regrettably the Officer's report does not include any information that should be in the possession of the Council to confirm this claim. From the knowledge I have the field has always been of a different planning status and is certainly not an "extended garden".

I wish to explain why I believe this claim in the application does not stand up to scrutiny of the facts. I was born on 24 March 1931. From that date I have lived at 60 East Street. I am therefore in a very good position to say what the land has been used for since that date.

History of use of the land

1. From the 1930's and until after World War 2, circa 1946 or 1947, the land was used as a scrap yard business by a Mr Green. Sometime around that time the scrap was cleared from the field.
2. Around 1950 a Mrs Maud Brinson, a local farmer who owned other land and property in the East Street area purchased the field and continued to farm it.
3. Around the mid 1960's a local builder, Mr Ron Legg, occupied the land and used it for storing building equipment and materials. At some point a planning application was put in for a house, which was refused by the planning authority.
4. Around 1970 Mr and Mrs Mist took over occupancy of the field and ran a riding stables and livery business, erecting a stable block on the land.
5. Following a fire in 1978 the stable block burnt down and the business came to an end.
6. The field has been left unused since that date, the grass only being cut once or twice a year.

Clearly the land has been used for various business activities over the time at least until 1978. Since then it has laid fallow.

Following the erection of the bungalow aerial photographs show clearly that there was a permanent fence around the garden that formed the curtilage of the bungalow. This did not extend into or enclose the field itself. Unless the Planning Department can show that a Certificate of Lawfulness for the use of land as residential land has been granted for the field, the land is not domestic land in planning terms.

Despite this specific planning objection in my letter dated 28 June 2020, this matter is glossed over in the Officers Report.

Lee and Julie Bowditch

We continue to object to this application, having read the Officer's Report. We highlight 3 issues from our letters dated 28 November 2019 and 26 June 2020

PLANNING STATUS OF THE LAND

The application states that the land on which the new houses are to built is an extended garden. In our letters of objections we stated: "Our house backs onto this field which has for many years (at least since 1931) been a field not a garden. We are not aware that a change of use from agricultural use to domestic garden has ever been authorised."

Research since 22 March 2020 indicates that the land does not benefit from being (in Planning Terms) part of the domestic garden of the bungalow. This appears to be unlawful encroachment outside the curtilage of the existing bungalow, into agricultural land – which the Local Plan states will be resisted strongly.

We can find no evidence that a Certificate of Lawfulness for the use of land as residential land has been granted for the Land. Photographic evidence provided in our submission and also with Cllr. Knox supports this. Unless the Planning Department can show that a Certificate of Lawfulness for the use of land as residential land has been granted for the Land that is the subject to the current application, the land is not domestic land in planning terms. The Officer's Report does not address this point.

The Committee may wish to question the planning officer on whether the land is truly "Extended Garden" and request written evidence of its legal status in planning terms.

DEVELOPMENT OUTSIDE THE DEFINED DEVELOPMENT BOUNDARIES

The Local Plan (Policy SUS2) states "Outside defined development boundaries, development will be strictly controlled ... and be restricted to...(amongst others) Affordable Housing. No affordable Housing is proposed in the application.

The Report states that "the location is considered sustainable despite being outside the development area". The Report Para 17.1 gives little reasoning for this compared with greater detail in the Introduction to the Local Plan Para 3.1. More consideration to the good progress made with the LP Review re Beaminster's Housing sites, where Para 17.5 of the report should be given higher weight in the Committee's deliberations.

LOSS OF AMENITY AND TRAFFIC

The report dismisses the many objections regarding loss of amenity without detailed reasons. The numerous objections regarding traffic and safety to pedestrians are also dismissed without good reason.

Invitation to visit the site

Since March 23, site visits by the Committee have not been possible. Now that the Government COVID19 restrictions are eased we request, given the contentious nature of the application, Members DEFER their decision, pending a site visit which can now safely take place.

Yvonne Dobson

I trust the elected members who are charged with the responsibility of deciding this application will pay heed to the huge strength of feeling against it which has been ably expressed in the many written objections. If Local Democracy is to mean anything, then they must decline this application for the very many good reasons already given.

For the safety and well-being of the current residents of East Street, and to avoid setting a dangerous precedent of riding roughshod over the Local Development Plan, I urge members to vote this plan down.

Christine Bright - Town Clerk, Beaminster Town Council

1. Absence of 5 year land supply

In the Joint Local Plan Review of 2017, the Government's target of 775 new dwellings per year for the WDDC /Weymouth and Portland area suggested a formula of 1 new dwelling per 220 residents be used to calculate the supply of 5 year's housing. Using this calculation, and an assessment of the town's population at 3,140, Beaminster's proportionate allocation would be equivalent to 15 dwellings per annum. Since the present Local Plan was adopted, **213 dwellings** have been completed, partially built or have been approved in Beaminster.

Therefore, by these calculations, the town already has over **14 year's** land supply. However, at the present time, we need industry more than housing.

2. Outside the Defined Development Boundary

Policy SUS.2.iii of the Local Plan states that, "*development will be strictly controlled, having particular regard to the need for the protection of the countryside and environmental constraints and be restricted to*"... and lists 12 bullet points, *none of which apply to this development.*

The Planning Officer's statement in para 3.0.2 directly contradicts or ignores the principles of SUS.2.iii. If a Planning Policy is to be of value, it must be upheld.

There are no proposals for affordable housing on this site. HOUS1.i states that the level of affordable housing required should reflect the viability of development land in the local area.

3. Highways Objections

In its response to West Dorset's Draft Local Plan of 2012, Beaminster Town Council stated, "*The 'Manual for Streets' would suggest that the narrow confines of East Street with on-street parking, two way traffic, HGV traffic (including regular farm vehicles) and a major pedestrian route is totally unsuitable for increased traffic usage. The ford in Woodswater Lane would also prevent it being considered as a suitable alternative for access or egress.*"

There have been other applications for small developments using East Street as a feeder road and all have been turned down. Comments by Dorset County Council's Highways Engineer on a previous application were that *“residential development proposals would generate further traffic and pedestrian movements along East Street, a County highway with variable and limited carriageway and footway widths. In the absence of the construction of, or programme for, a detailed improvement design to provide suitable and appropriate traffic management and safety enhancements for this street, this development would be likely to cause danger and inconvenience to all highway users. Hence the application would be contrary to Policy COM7 of the West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan 2015.”*

This was upheld in a subsequent appeal, number APP/F1230/W/16/3146827, in 2016.

WD/D/20/001014 - Creek Caravan Park, Fishers Place, Ringstead, Dorchester, DT2 8NG

Adam Armstrong

As permanent residents and lovers of Ringstead for over 30 years, we are very concerned about the proposal to alter the long-established limit of 7 months residency to as long as 11 months at the Creek Caravan Park. This decisively introduces the possibility of permanent residence at as many as thirty homes in a hitherto rare and desperately preserved site of pristine beauty...an AONB on the World Heritage Jurassic Coast!

An added concern reported to us recently has been the current distressing conflict within the site ownership: 49% of share-holders /lease-holders wish the site to remain as it is BUT 51%, comprising the Fishers' share-ownership, would like to convert caravans to chalets. Indeed long-standing lease-holders (30 years +) have been told simply that their lease may be terminated with no reason given or response to emails.

Possibly the Planning Committee are unaware of this situation? It certainly throws the application into a different light.

Is this sudden desire for a time extension (and a short extension to 9 months is surely enough?) truly to enhance the current conditions or, which we greatly fear, is it a step to further far more invasive development?

Moreover, this disturbing planning permission was sought during the Covid crisis when few if any people were permitted to read the displayed application. This is surely not right?

This is a valuable site potentially of great Private profit. It also directly adjoins National Trust Land. The preservation of Ringstead - a place of such joy to all people especially from Dorset but also from as far as the US or Australia, is surely, in the Committee's opinion far more valuable?

Nicholas and Virginia Hemery

We wish to add our voice to the already existing objections, which set out admirably the reasons why this proposal is unnecessary and detrimental to the fabric of Ringstead.

Ringstead provides a rare place of sanctuary and quiet in Southern England. The current occupancy of the caravans allows for affordable holidays for families, 11 months occupancy allows for permanent dwelling for those who can afford such luxury...especially in the light of the proposed plans to place chalets on the site.

There has been, to our intimate knowledge of Ringstead, no application notice in a visible public site, and we have not heard these plans from the caravan site owners. Therefore no application can surely be granted until an application notice is placed in clear vision for the public.

There is certainly no parking for 30 cars 'to the north of the caravan site'.

There is, to repeat the major objections to this plan, insufficient infrastructure in Ringstead to accommodate this plan.

We have lived in close proximity to Ringstead village for 30+ years, and wish to see it remain as a refuge for people who seek an escape from the commercialization of other seaside destinations in Dorset, England, the UK, and indeed the world.

Tim Wallis

I am concerned that this important application has not received the appropriate time for public scrutiny. I am disappointed that the recommendation to approve this application has been made without the opposing arguments having sufficient time to be heard. The Parish council did not oppose this on 8/6/20 because they had not received any comments simply because no one knew about it. They have informed me that they now oppose it.

The application has been carefully crafted to appear that nothing will change on the site. As a result few of the statutory bodies have commented.

I do not see how any reasonable assessment can be made on such questions as the effects on infrastructure, roads and highways, residential amenities, ecosystems and the local environment, without knowing where this site is going with its further 4 months.

A quiet summer only seasonal caravan site, with lettings currently restricted to 4 out of the 30 caravans is a very different prospect to a site of 30 luxury all year round lodges being heavily marketed and let throughout the year. Surely such intense operations are best suited to less obtrusive sites, that can be properly screened, and do not dominate the local community as this no doubt will.

This is a perfectly profitable business that has served shareholders and leaseholders well for many years that now wishes to maximise its profitability at the expense of residents, infrastructure and the environment. In my opinion the economic benefits to the local community from this will be overshadowed by the damage it will cause to our small hamlet.

Sarah Wallis

A recommendation summary by the council recommending approval to the application contains an amendment to the planning statement from occupancy 9th February to 10th January the following year.

Section 73 of the Town and Country planning Act 1990 would indicate to me that in changing the conditions under which the 1962 permission was approved, it is enabling approval of future planning application.

Jane Birchett

There are some inaccuracies in the planning application in that the applicant states that the site cannot be seen from a public road, footpath, bridleway or other public land. The site is not only starkly visible from the beach but is seen along the SW coastal path when walking in an easterly direction from the Ringstead car park. It remains visible as the path rises towards White Nothe.

On the site plan from the applicant the public footpath S34/19 that crosses the site to a stile in the eastern hedge boundary is not drawn.

There has been a failure of communication as regards the application. We were only notified via an article in the Dorset Echo on 16 June. The public notification went up in the Caravan site's own notice board during 'lockdown' and was not seen by any of the Ringstead residents due to the position of the notice board on private land and in that it was placed amongst other posters. An important neighbour is the NT and they were not alerted. It seems that there is a deliberate attempt to minimise scrutiny of the proposed changes. It is also noteworthy that many caravan owners do not know of these proposals.

A misapprehension has been made that no one was concerned because there were no prior comments until after Trevor Bevan's article in the Echo. On the contrary there are many people worried about the implications of this proposal and there has been consternation at the lack of time for a fuller response.

The directors of the caravan park are less than transparent about their intentions for the caravan site. They seem to want to drop conditions that give the LPA an oversight, they want to extend the occupancy to 48 weeks of the year, 36% more time than previously and all present

caravan owners lose their leases from October 2020 and have to remove their vans. While on the face of it these are regarded as minor conditions in the proposal for residents the clearing of the site of caravans and felling trees indicates to us that this is paving the way for substantial commercialisation with scant regard to the unique nature of Ringstead.

In my estimation 48 weeks of occupancy of a caravan site directly positioned on the Dorset coast with no respite for the residents, no dormancy for the natural environment, light intrusion into dark skies as well as traffic disturbance is too long and risks changing Ringstead's rural identity as a secluded, tranquil hamlet loved by residents and walkers of the SW coast path.

We urge you to decline this proposal.

Debbie Redding (on behalf of applicant)

The Creek Caravan Site is a long established business that currently operates under an out-dated planning permission granted in 1962. Ringstead Caravan Company Ltd was established in 1978 and the site was family owned and run since the 1920's. The family and company have always supported local residents, landowners, businesses, visitors and the Council.

This application made under Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act seeks to update the 1962 permission with the removal and variation of conditions, but as is a requirement of section 73, does not fundamentally change the extant permission.

The extended season requested would not allow permanent residence of the caravans. The site would continue to operate under site licence requirements and all caravans would be within the legal definition. No physical changes or building operations are proposed and therefore there will be no change to the visual impact on the surrounding area. No change is proposed to the access and parking arrangements for the site.

In reality the site may not be fully occupied during these additional months and the impact of some additional traffic and visitors would not be seriously detrimental. The longer season would cater for short breaks which are popular at these times and although other facilities at Ringstead may not be open, additional visitors would provide some economic benefit to the wider area. This is a reflection of modern patterns of tourism. Other sites in the area have increased the length of season over recent years and in some cases no seasonal limit at all is imposed.

The influx of visitors to Ringstead in the summer undoubtedly puts pressure on the area, but this application will not change the situation at peak holiday times. Existing infrastructure and services provide adequately for the area. The proposed longer season for occupation of the existing caravans would be when visitor numbers are lower and therefore would not put unacceptable pressure on services and facilities.

No objection is raised by the Parish Council, Natural England or Highways Authority. The Jurassic Coast Trust has understandable concerns regarding coastal erosion and protection, which will need to be considered in any future coastal management proposals. With no

physical change and only amendments to conditions being considered this application does not affect coastal erosion.

The variation and removal of conditions will not make any physical change to the site and will not allow permanent residence. The extended season would provide added security for the future of the business and support the local economy. This would not have a significant adverse effect on local residents and would be in accordance with planning policy. Committee members are asked to support the proposal and grant permission as recommended.

**WP/19/01016/FUL - St Nicholas Church, Buxton Road,
Weymouth DT4 9PJ**

Paul Gardner

I have no objection to the proposed development in principle however there are two points which I would ask the committee to consider.

Firstly the overall design is completely unsympathetic with the surrounding area. Surely a design that blends with the surroundings is all part of the conservation requirements in a conservation area?

Secondly the size is much too large and will dominate the area and be an eye sore if allowed as proposed.

Peter and Elizabeth Hillary

We reside directly to the rear of St Nicholas Church, our garden area is to the front and sides of our property, we have no rear garden. The proposed new build will be directly in front of our property and directly in front of our garden. The height and extent of the proposed new build will therefore create a loss of privacy, a loss of light and a serious loss of value to our property.

Kate Inkster

Further to my letter of objection already submitted when the proposal was first revealed I wish to underline my concerns.

The site is going to be overdeveloped - 18 two-bedroom units is too much for this area, look at the density of existing housing nearby.

There are no gardens or shared outdoor space or nearby parks or playgrounds which makes these units quite unsuitable for families with children.

The facade of the block of flats looks like an office block and not a residential unit. It needs to blend in with the existing houses and premises within the street line & area.

The building is too high, four storeys, it will not blend in with the height of the surrounding buildings despite clever drawings to mitigate this within the plans, it will greatly overlook and overshadow a number of houses around the perimeter of the site.

Not enough provision has been made for car parking of potential residents. It would be prudent to anticipate 2 cars per unit and also visitors. The local roads around the site cannot cope with yet more people looking to park here.

It sits near a busy pedestrian thoroughfare and on a busy road. Access into the site would be across the pavement very near to a pedestrian crossing which is again another potential danger to pedestrians.

Why can the plan not be for several modest and affordable houses (2/3 bedroomed) in a line with the road frontage providing adequate parking and small gardens?

Mark Packer

St Nicholas Church is situated in the Connaught Conservation Area - designated in 2001 as an area of architectural and historical interest because of the Victorian buildings within it.

The adjacent buildings to the church are both mentioned in the designation - the villas to the west and Elsadene to the east.

The proposed development will change a site with no housing and limited traffic to an excessively large 4 storey block of 18 flats with limited architectural merit and no attempt to integrate into the aesthetics of the adjacent buildings.

There will be a marked increase in traffic entering on to a busy A road, both during potential construction and afterwards - not just residents but visitors, delivery and taxi drivers and tradespeople. The entrance is flanked by a bus stop and a pedestrian crossing and the road is especially busy at school drop off and collection times.

Parking is limited and there will be over spill on to adjacent roads, already full of parked cars as these houses do not have garages.

The building line has been drawn as a diagonal from the Victorian Villas to The Bath Store - this is erroneous, The Bath Store should not be considered in the building line as this is for commercial use and lies on the opposite side across Verne Road. The building line should be parallel to the villas to the east.

The green space will be covered in concrete and there will be water run off down the steep slopes of Khartoum Road and Sudan Road.

It seems that the magical words 'affordable housing' are used to shoehorn development approval. These flats will not remain affordable for long. They will be sold at a premium as soon as it is feasible as they are highly desirable with their commanding views of Portland Harbour and close proximity to Castle Cove and Sandsfoot Beach. They will be second homes in next to no time.

If the council really wanted some affordable housing then they could convert a lot of existing larger properties or office blocks in the town into flats without removing green spaces.

I have no objection to development on the site, but this should be a sympathetic design, something along the lines of the old fire station site at the bottom of Boot Hill, or the 2 storey terrace houses built at Prospect Place in Chapelhay.

Properties could be built to mirror the red brick properties on the opposite side of the road. A development of say, 8 terraced houses will still be profitable - just not profitable enough - the motivation appears to be greed.

Julie Price

I would like to register my objection to the plans to redevelop St Nicholas Church, Weymouth which is situated in the Connaught Conservation Area. Whilst I understand the current pressures to build housing, the plan for 18 flats on this plot does not have any architectural merit and will simply create traffic pressures and other problems for those living in the area. The plans do not seem to fit with the architecture of the area and will inevitably increase people and traffic movements in an already busy location. Additionally, the loss of green space to be replaced by concrete and paving will be detrimental to the environment.

The plan squeezes in as many flats as possible into a small area without wider consideration of the impact to those living alongside it or to those who will be living in the new flats. Other plans for development in Weymouth (plans for less residences in a larger area) have been turned down and hence I hope that the council will, in similar fashion, turn down the planned redevelopment of St Nicholas Church.

Mr Chris Peploe

First a personal comment: Although my home is, (and was) shown to be affected by the proposed development, I was surprised and disappointed not to have heard from Dorset Council in the first place. News of the planning application came from neighbours. I had no contact from Dorset Council until I contacted them. I can only guess at the reasons for this. In any case, this has left me with very little confidence in the new unitary authority.

Regarding the development, this will affect my outlook and I will be overlooked by the proposed property. I find it hard to believe that mitigation for this is the provision of frosted glass.

The latest documentation mentions the 'Bath Store'. Are the committee aware that this shop has been closed for around six months and we can assume that it will not reopen as commercial property. Will this site become another block of flats in short time? Is this the thin end of the wedge? Has local planning come to allowing piecemeal and willy-nilly development?

I have an interest in clean and public transport in Weymouth. I work on the Granby Industrial Estate, which is the largest industrial zone in Weymouth, and (pre-coronavirus) I walked to work. This is a forty-minute walk across town. There are no bus routes from the vicinity of the proposed development to the Granby. The only way to take public transport to the Granby would be a bus into the Town centre, then another bus out again. This would be both time consuming (approximately one hour) and expensive. There are no cycle routes to the Granby - the nearest cycle route is the Rodwell Trail, which can only be reached by travelling along one or two main roads. It is unbelievable to think that residents of the proposed development will be able or willing to spend nearly two hours a day getting to work across town! They will have no option but to drive.

This brings me to parking. Congestion due to cars parked in the local roads is already a problem in the area, particularly at school times. The authorities know of local problems of both traffic congestion and lack of access for emergency vehicles (this is a main route to Portland for the emergency services). There is a new housing development being undertaken along the road. This will not help the parking situation and the situation will be exacerbated if another 18 flats are built with inadequate parking.

Furthermore – Buxton road is a known road pollution blackspot – What is the reason for allowing balconies close to and facing the busy road in front of a bus stop?

Louise Peploe

We live directly behind this proposed development. We did not and have not received any direct consultation or notification.

Whilst the site does need development, the height and scale is too big for such a small site. Despite the 'sight lines' detailed on the plans; the 45-degree angles are taken from our rooftop. As a bungalow, our main living areas and bedrooms are downstairs which will mean the building will loom over us and the rear elevation will directly overlook our bedroom windows causing a loss of privacy, overshadowing, a loss of amenity together with noise pollution. We believe it will devalue our property and make it difficult to sell. This has and continues to cause us significant distress.

The Weymouth Town Council objected to a development further down Buxton Road (WP/19/01013/FUL) on the grounds of density of the development, overshadowing and loss of privacy, loss of amenity, the development not being in keeping with the character of local buildings, traffic safety, ability to exit on to the highway

Surely for the same reasons this development should also be scaled back. These same concerns are raised here and cannot be dismissed purely on the basis that the housing is to be affordable. It cannot be democratic for there to be one rule for private developments and one rule for affordable housing if the same effects apply.

Despite the Conservation Officer's comments regarding the balconies, this proposed building is completely out of keeping with the surrounding area. It is simply an attempt to fit more dwellings into the site than would normally be allowed on the basis they are to be affordable. The same planning rules should apply whether private or affordable.

On reading the Agenda, this smacks of the decision already having been made and the replies by the Consultees to the objections and Conservation Area concerns have been dismissed as 'not a problem' and overridden simply because it is deemed 'affordable'. We all know that it will not remain as affordable housing on a prime site with sea views. A development such as a row of small terraced villas similar to that on Boot Hill would be far more aesthetically pleasing and in keeping.

Developments are being shoehorned into inadequate sites and legitimate concerns of both residents and the wider community who have to live with the consequences are being overridden, the motivation being purely financial.

I would respectfully ask that this committee put a brake on speculators, reject this plan as it stands and request that they think again, re-design it in keeping with the Conservation Area and lower the density to take into account the damaging effect on neighbouring properties.

Ken Packer

I object most strongly to the application to build a large block of 18 flats on the site of Saint Nicholas church in Buxton Road Weymouth. This site is within a Conservation Area where there are strict constraints on the size and design new buildings which the developer has not adhered to.

The application also gives an artists impression of the proposed new building as one would approach from the East along Buxton Road. It would be a shock to see the extreme clash in style with the more 1880s Victorian building beyond. A modern building with a predominance of large windows against the modest sash windows of the Victorian building.

Also the Victorian buildings cover less than 30% of their site whilst the proposal for the block of flats on this site covers up to 70% of its site. This is because the development site is a half-site, because to the rear around 70 years ago a modern bungalow was built. This illustrates clearly that the proposed development is far too big for its site.

Most people have commented on the dreadful problems that will almost certainly occur with vehicle access to and from the site, especially as there is only one common Exit/access point. I agree with all comments and all the worries expressed, as this in/out point is only 2 metres from a pedestrian crossing and 6 metres from a busy bus stop. I cannot believe that the Traffic Advisor has not high-lighted a major problem here; it is after all the main A road to Portland. Of course it is very quiet just now as all schools are closed, the sailing centre also and all visitor attractions on Portland, as well as no cruise ships at Portland Port.

Kay Packer

You will have received my objections to the above Planning Application but I would like briefly, to reiterate my concerns. Please note I am NOT against development of the site nor against affordable housing but would like to see it done in a sympathetic manner, in keeping with the area.

- 1 The site is in a Conservation Area and the modern design of this application is totally out of keeping with surrounding houses. The Conservation Officer would appear to be happy with the small concessions the developer has put in place.
- 2 The density of the plan for 18 flats is a gross overdevelopment of this small site. A building half the size would be more appropriate and would not impact on the area as much. Most of the site will be concreted over.
- 3 The flats will totally overshadow two thirds of the garden at 16 Buxton Road which will be dwarfed by this huge 4 storey building.
- 4 The single entrance/exit to the flats is between a traffic controlled crossing and a bus stop on the extremely busy A354 main road to Portland and cars will have to cross a very well used pavement to access this road. I totally disagree with the Highways officer who says that 18 vehicles plus service vehicles would not cause a problem on this busy road and even busier pavement at school times.
- 5 Parking is at a premium in this area and where will any overspill from this application park? Please note there has been no provision for visitors' cars in the plan. Parking in Khartoum Road and Verne Road is already congested as most of the houses there don't have a garage.

Finally, I would like to ask that this application be turned down for all of the above reasons with a recommendation that a smaller building would be more appropriate for this site.

Debbie Moore

This proposal will change a site with no housing and limited traffic to a large 4 storey block of 18 flats which neither fits in nor compliments the adjacent buildings, both of which are mentioned in the designation of this area - the Connaught Conservation area- in 2001 as of architectural and historical interest because of the Victorian buildings within it.

Because of the number of dwellings proposed there will be a considerable increase in the amount of traffic on this busy A road. A bus stop and pedestrian crossing are next to the site, both open to increased danger with the increase in traffic. Parking is also potentially a problem as there is very limited parking available on site.

The building line has been drawn as a diagonal from the Victorian Villas to The Bath Store - but The Bath Store should not be considered in the building line as this is for commercial use and lies on the opposite side across Verne Road The building line should be parallel to the villas to the east.

There are potential drainage problems that have not been addressed. The grassed area on the site will disappear so water will instead run off down the steep slopes of Khartoum Road and Sudan Road.

The proposal is for 'affordable housing'. Realistically they will be sold at a premium as soon as it is feasible as they are highly desirable with their commanding views of Portland Harbour and close proximity to Castle Cove and Sandsfoot Beach They will be second homes in next to no time.

I am not objecting to the site being appropriately developed, rather to the unsuitability of the current proposal in terms of fitting in with building regulations as to height, the density of the housing and that the plans are not suitable for this conservation area.

Cllr Brian Heatley - Dorset Council -Rodwell and Wyke

I'm Brian Heatley, one of the local Ward Dorset Councillors.

First of all can I say thank you for taking this in Committee. It's a difficult and important case, and I know that a lot of residents from the ward I represent wanted to make their case directly to the Committee itself. I really appreciate this decision.

There is an inevitable conflict here between two very desirable objectives

- Providing much needed affordable housing
- Protecting the nature of the surrounding area.

I've looked carefully at the application, and the comments and representations made on it. In the end I have to come down to the judgement that the prospect of creating 18 new affordable dwellings is an opportunity that is too good to miss.

I say that in spite of rather disagreeing with the statement in the report that 'the siting, design and materials of the proposed building- with its contemporary approach- would enhance the character of the conservation area.' While it's true that the existing church building adds little to the area, I'm sure a different and more sensitive development could enhance the conservation area.

Indeed I feel that local residents have made many excellent points against this development, and I know that Committee members will consider them carefully when weighing this difficult balance.

But the need for affordable housing, particularly in smaller units, is especially acute in Weymouth, and this will make a real contribution; 18 units would be an important contribution to the estimated 104 such units needed in Weymouth each year.

In the end the needs of people desperately in need of this type of housing outweigh the important desire of local residents to protect the conservation area and only build in a way that thoroughly respects the look of the area as it is now.

We simply don't get opportunities like this very often, and so I support this application