

**Northern Area Planning Committee  
Written Submissions  
30 November 2021**

**Item 4a & 4b – P/FUL/2021/00826 & P/LBC/2021/00827 – Old Military Hospital, Grove Trading Estate, Dorchester**

**Cllr Robin Potter – Dorchester Town Council**

Dorchester Town Council's Planning and Environment committee stands by its previous objections to the applications on this site. We consider that the air pollution, noise and disturbance caused by passing traffic and established businesses in the immediate vicinity would be significantly detrimental to the amenity of any future residents.

The building is in the heart of the Grove Trading estate in close proximity to many established businesses whose activities, including deliveries, are frequent and often incompatible with good living conditions. We are not convinced that the proposed amenity space within the building, even though it technically meets the 10% requirement, will be suitable for all residents. There is no provision for accessible outside amenity space for a considerable distance from the site.

We do not see sufficient change from previous applications to go against the Planning Inspector's decision to reject the relevant appeal as in the decision given at APP/D1625/W/20/3248499.

We are surprised that this recommendation is different to that for application P/OUT/2021/00467, refused on 27/09/2021, which offered to create 9 serviced accommodation units on a site at 4 Maumbury Road, Dorchester which is much closer to existing residential properties and amenity area and which we think better suited to a change of use from employment premises.

I thank you for your consideration of these matters and ask that you refuse this application.

**Richard Burgess, Richard Burgess Associates**

Madam Chair, Councillors

I act for the applicants regarding these proposals.

Basically the issue before you is a simple one:-

**-do you want to see that this Listed Building is restored and put into beneficial use or do are you content to allow it to remain vacant –as it has done for 26 years now -and ‘at risk’?**

Let us be clear: leaving the building vacant is not just a theoretical risk- during the time it has been vacant there has been

- trespass and vandalism involving the destruction of plasterwork and partitions;
- deliberate fire damage inside the building;
- external damage to the brickwork from vehicles.
- Illegal occupation of the grounds by travellers.

My clients have already spent some £440,000 to restore the external fabric of the building but need to spend considerably more (we estimate the same again) to restore the interior, fit electrics, plumbing etc. Only residential use can viably achieve this. We have the figures to prove this.

We jointly therefore need to find a beneficial use for the building.

**We have submitted evidence of marketing** by Dorchester’s premier commercial agents. Also their considered opinion regarding the lack of current or future demand for offices of this type. Thirdly the unsuitability of the building for commercial use – you cannot even get access into it using a pallet truck. We also consider the floor loadings would be an issue with commercial use.

Great weight should also be attached the following:-

- (a) There is **no objection from Historic England**
- (b) **Your Conservation Officer also supports the proposals** and considers they represent less than substantial harm to this heritage asset.
- (c) We have addressed all the points raised by the Appeal Inspector at the time of the previous non determination appeal

We would make one point about consultation responses. It is that the Environmental Health Officer appears to be unaware that at the time of the previous applications we submitted a specialist Noise Consultants report. Its conclusions were that noise levels within the building from traffic & external sources would be acceptable provided that habitable rooms facing towards the road were provided with secondary glazing. We can do this if it is acceptable on conservation grounds. Indeed noise from the external environment is probably less and of much shorter duration than in main road locations where housing has been approved eg High East St., London Rd.

I make one further point also by way of correction. There is a reference to the external amenity area being ‘smaller than a double bed’. This is factually incorrect. It is in fact 19m by 8m. An external amenity area is indeed a new feature proposed in the current applications.

We consider your officers report is well balanced and factually correct. We ask that you support its recommendations.

## **Item 4c & 4d – P/FUL/2021/03000 & P/LBC/2021/03001 – Cerne Abbas Care Centre, Cerne Abbas, DT2 7AL**

### **Cllr Jill Haynes – Ward Member**

I am very aware of the concerns raised by both the public and the parish council regarding this application at the parish meeting. I am most grateful that you agreed to bring this matter to committee as there is a clash between the neighbourhood plan priorities, local views and the planning reasons and considerations that are pertinent to officers recommendations. I understand that some of the objections from the parish council are not valid planning reasons to object and cannot be included in your considerations but by coming to committee this does give both the parish council and the general public the opportunity to have their say in the decision making process.

I feel that the officer has done a really good piece of work here to agree with the applicant alterations to the original application to alleviate many of those local concerns. This is an excellent report which weighs up the advantages and disadvantages of the application and comes down supporting the development. We don't thank our officers enough for the time and effort that they put into these planning applications. I realise I will probably not be popular locally in this but I can find no valid planning reasons to object to this application and I agree with the officers recommendation.

### **Jo Witherden, Dorset Planning Consultant Ltd**

I represent the applicant, who is responsible for the Cerne Abbas Care Home. Thank you for giving us the opportunity to speak.

Many of you will be familiar with this landmark building, which stands on the edge of Cerne Abbas, as you travel along the A352 from Dorchester to Sherborne.

It has been a care home for about 30 years now, and provides a valuable service to the local community. Under new management in 2016, it achieved a 'good' rating in its latest CQC assessment and employs more than 80 staff.

The current proposals have been put forward to help ensure that the business can continue on a sound financial basis, and is reacting to the need for more flexible extra care accommodation that works successfully alongside care home provision. It will provide a better service, more jobs and meet a clearly identified housing need for our area.

We know it is a sensitive site, a Grade II Listed Building in the AONB, which is why we took preapplication advice from your officers, the Conservation and AONB teams, and engaged with the community – with every household sent a leaflet inviting them to comment. We think we took on board all comments in coming up with the scheme in front of you.

We are pleased that the scheme is supported by both the Conservation and Landscape Officers. Whilst the Parish Council have objected to the scheme's design, the residents that did respond to our consultation were more enthusiastic. More than 90% supported the idea of expanding the facilities, 95% agreed the option we have gone for was the best of the three concepts, and there was general support for the layout, scale, roofing and landscaping components. No residents objected to the application, and there was no public (other than us) at the Parish Council meeting at which this application was discussed.

The Parish Council have suggested the scheme is major development in the context of the NPPF, but this is not the view of your advisors – to do so would mean that it would [quote] “have a significant adverse impact on the purposes for which the area has been designated or defined”. Therefore it does not need to meet the “exceptional circumstances” and “public interest” tests in the NPPF, although the acute and growing need for extra care provision would tick these boxes.

As a professional planner, I have looked at the scheme and believe that it accords with the development plan as a whole, and so does your own officer. The scheme has been sensitively designed with its context in mind, will meet a clear need, will provide social and economic benefits, and we ask that you approve the application.

## **Item 4e – P/FUL/2021/00026 – Land at E 386668 N 124209, Littledown Shaftesbury**

### **Hannah Knowles, Turley**

Written Statement on behalf of Redrow Homes.

1. We welcome the recommendation of approval of this application from your Officer's, which is testament to 18 months of engagement with the Council resulting in the high-quality scheme that is before you today.
2. The site forms part of the wider Littledown development which is currently under construction, where the principle of residential development has already been established in the Local Plan, and accepted through the grant of various planning permissions. This proposal will deliver a net increase of 2 dwellings compared to the existing consented scheme, providing 34 family homes, including 2 shared-ownership homes. The continued delivery of the Littledown development will positively contribute towards Dorset Council's 5 year supply position.
3. This application is before you due to an objection from Shaftesbury Town Council. Regrettably, whilst the Applicant has proactively endeavoured to engage

with the Town Council on numerous occasions, disappointingly no response has been received from them for some time. Officers have however been copied into all correspondence and will have noted our attempts to engage with them.

4. A robust landscape assessment including montages of key viewpoints was submitted. The assessment considered the impacts of the proposed development in comparison with the baseline of the approved scheme of 32 dwellings in line with industry standards.
5. The Site is heavily influenced by the existing and emerging settlement edge of Shaftesbury, with key landscape features limited to the periphery. The extant planning permission and adjacent construction activity has changed the character of the Site. Consequently, whilst it is within the Cranborne Chase AONB, the Site has a low to medium landscape value.
6. The layout, scale and landscape strategy retains the principles of the approved scheme, with additional tree and hedgerow planting, and enhancements to the approved woodland blocks. The proposals soften the edge to the public parkland and increase connectivity, providing a green corridor.
7. The proposals will not alter the contextual landscape character, as the change from a field laid to grass to built form has already been approved.
8. In the short term, there may be a minor impact on the Site character but this will result in a minor beneficial effect on the landscape over time, with the introduction of the proposed planting. Any impact of views are limited to local effects to the skyline, with a neutral effect on the wider landscape.
9. Given the principle of built form already established on the site, the proposal should be considered in light of the landscape enhancements proposed, the surrounding built form and the delivery of much need family housing.
10. We respectfully ask that Councillors approve this planning application in line with your Officers recommendation.

**Item 4f – P/FUL/2020/00052 – Grove Farm, Chaffeymoor Hill, Bourton, SP8 5BY**

**Application Deferred**

**Item 4g – P/OUT/2021/01737 – Land at E 377395 N 118565, Kentisworth Road, Marnhull**

**Cllr Graham Carr-Jones – Ward Member**

Good afternoon, Chairman & Members,

My apologies for not being here in person, other commitments have prevented me from attending.

The formal objections made by the Parish Council of Marnhull are as follows:

1. The development is Outside the settlement boundary.
2. The increase in the volume of traffic and the impact on the neighbouring properties.
3. Light pollution.
4. The housing does not meet the needs of the local community.
5. Concerns for access for emergency vehicles on an already congested lane.

There are non-material concerns that this is piggy backing on the existing approved application and thereby both developments would be avoiding S106 payments even though effectively the combined site would be over the threshold.

I think if I remember correctly that the development of 9 houses (2/2018/1436/OUT), or a previous one which was then withdrawn originally included the land that this new application covers and was seeking approval for 13 dwellings. It remains to be seen if a further application comes forward.

Being slightly sceptical, perhaps members can see some collusion going on here, despite these applications having different applicants and agents.

I see this as development by stealth, adding nothing to meet the needs of the parish and unwelcome. There have been 11 local responses of objection representing upwards of 30 plus residents. This expansion is very unpopular and despite the lack of a 5 year land supply, which is the basis for the recommendation to approve, as Ward Member I'd urge a refusal on the grounds set out by the Parish Council.

### **Clare Spiller, Chapman Lily Planning**

On behalf of our client, Mr John Shipton, thank you for the opportunity to address the committee.

Marnhull is one of the larger villages, where future growth is directed. This proposal would provide much needed additional dwellings, and contribute towards readdressing the 5 year housing land deficit in North Dorset.

In determining the 'built out' scheme on the neighbouring site, officers acknowledged that this an inherently sustainable location.

The site has no designations and the case officer report concludes that there would be no visual or landscape harm when viewed from the surrounding countryside. The proposal would sit next to existing residential development, and would appear integral to the village.

Your officers conclude that the area isn't sensitive in terms of light pollution, and the proposal would be viewed against a back drop of adjacent homes where there is a degree of illumination.

The illustrative site plan provides assurance that a detailed scheme would preserve the character and amenities of the area. Your officers also conclude that the additional traffic movement would be acceptable.

Your highways officer considers that utilising the recently approved access to serve this development is acceptable both in highway safety and capacity terms, and thus supports this proposal.

The facilities of Marnhull would be accessible to future occupiers of the development and would support the vitality of Marnhull through the increased footfall and patronage.

Your case officer rightly applies the 'tilted balance', as required by paragraph 11d of the NPPF, as the Council are unable to demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply. Thus, the planning balance and the economic, environmental and social benefits of this scheme weigh heavily in favour of this proposed development.

For these reasons I commend the case officers recommendation to you.

**Item 4h – P/HOU/2021/02560 – 2A Mill Lane, Charminster, DT2 9QP**

**No Representations**