

NORTHERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 4 FEBRUARY 2025

Present: Cllrs Richard Crabb (Chair), David Taylor (Vice-Chair), Jack Jeanes, Sherry Jespersen, Carole Jones, Rory Major, Val Potheary, Belinda Ridout, Carl Woode and Barrie Cooper.

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

Philip Crowther (Legal Business Partner - Regulatory), Steve Savage (Transport Development Liaison Manager), Hannah Smith (Development Management Area Manager (North)), Megan Rochester (Democratic Services Officer), John Miles (Democratic Services Officer), Jennie Roberts (Senior Planning Officer), Alex Skidmore, Steven Banks (Planning Officer) and Jim Bennett

32. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Les Fry and James Vitali.

33. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Jack Jeanes made a declaration to agenda item 6, it was agreed that he would not take part in the debate or vote, nor would he speak as the Local Member. He agreed to withdraw himself from the meeting.

34. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 10th December 2024 were confirmed and signed.

35. Registration for public speaking and statements

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.

36. P/OUT/2024/00603, Land At E 376630 N 130225 Chaffeymoor Farm New Road Bourton

Prior to commencing their presentation, the Case Officer sought to correct an omission in the recommendation section of their committee report and clarified that the obligations to be included within the S106 agreement should also include 40% affordable housing.

With the aid of a visual presentation including plans and aerial photographs, the Case Officer identified the site and explained the proposal and relevant planning policies to members. The case officer explained that the site was an outline application, access only, for the erection of up to 50 dwellings with new cycle/pedestrian link to West Bourton Road and the provision of public open space, LEAP and associated infrastructure. She showed the submitted red line plan and the vehicle access onto the new road, the indicative layout of the area, photographs of the site as well as planning obligations, which encompassed 40% affordable housing and £2000 would go to the provision of a new village hall or the existing village hall. Green space would form part of a management plan, and the area would be landscaped and managed for the future.

Public Participation

Mr Chapman spoke in objection to the proposal as the site was located on farmland which had been fertilised and was used until October. He addressed the argument that Dorset had less than required housing supply and that the view that you should allow development to address the issue of future land supply was problematic. There were thousands of houses within a short distance of the village, located in Gillingham, Shaftesbury and Wincanton. There was no overruling need to build on this pasture and Bourton local plan did not support this application and the community was against the proposal and there was a lot of local opposition. He added that Bourton had already grown by 15% and was not shrinking but increasing and there was no driving rationale for this development. The village had seen schemes with affordable housing eroded and reduced in quality and it would not help the least well off by building houses in the countryside with less services and education. He stated that this was not the way to support local communities and would create more isolation and deprivation, with the development adding 50 more cars. Sewage would increase by 10% with high levels of spills occurring already. There was no commitment to solar or heat pumps and 50 new Kerosine tanks and he requested that this application in this place, at this scale should be refused.

Ms Harris spoke in objection to the proposal as 50 houses was not needed as over 60 houses on 3 developments on the edge of the village in a short distance was being built. She informed that the proposed development would have a serious impact and damage the character and identity of the village. She raised concerns about a park being built at the end of the village which meant that people would have to drive there. The proposed site is on productive farmland with a variety of different species of birds. She informed that there were no employment opportunities in the immediate area so residents would have to commute, and this would impact the environment and local area. Especially as traffic and speed was already a problem. There were over 15 houses in the village still on sale and the area did not need over 50 houses.

Mr Curry a local resident of 13 years spoke in objection to the application, he informed that the latest iteration of the application had morphed from a modest enabling plan for 9 houses and a gift of land to accommodate a village hall into a

speculative plan for an estate of 50 houses reduced from 55 and a potential contribution of £100,000 to enable refurbishment of our present village hall and over £3000 for bus stop improvements for a village that has no bus service. The main motivation for this application is to make the land attractive to purchasers as it will be offered for sale as soon as permission granted. He stated that there was no need for 50 houses in Bourton as they are well served by the 60 dwellings built in the last decade and yet another 14 already approved for construction. The village cannot assimilate the addition of another 100 plus new residents and the increase in traffic in the village for daily commuting given the absence of employment in the area and this would increase pollution in contrary to the governments net zero commitments. The doctor's surgery was already at full capacity and has contracted its catchment area to reduce the number of new patients. The primary school was always full and have to accommodate two-year groups. These issues affect every family arriving in the village right now and will only get worse. The section 106 settlement arrived with no consultation with the community and no contribution to Bourton primary school.

Applicants/Agents

Mike Skinner spoke on behalf of Peter Hawkins (a member of SC Hannam Trust). He gave contextual insight into the land and its planning history. In 1992 the A303 Bourton Bypass was built and bisected this farm, which in combination with the site's topography and ageing farmyard infrastructure, have made these northern parcels far less viable for continuing those previous farming uses. The former dairy farm fell into difficulties, and the long-serving tenant farmer was forced to retire following concerns for animal welfare and ongoing viability. A new and viable use for this site was now needed. The trust has historic and deep-rooted ties to the Bourton area, and believes that this development, with significant amounts of funding and open space included, shall provide a long-term benefit to future generations living in Bourton. The planning application was a large the culmination of 17 years of engagement with the Parish Council, the District Council, and numerous specialist consultants. This engagement saw the site being allocated for development within the Bourton Neighbourhood Plan, which includes this site as one of two potential sites for a new village hall, car park, green space and housing. He went through what was agreed at the May 2019 Committee meeting. Since that time, the Parish Council had been reassessing its options for the village hall, and so a new approach had been required to secure a viable long-term use for the site while also aspiring to deliver community benefits in a similar vein to that previously permitted and allocated for. Our instructions to the team of architects and consultants had been to find the right balance - between making the best use of this available land, to adapt to changing local needs, and to maximise the benefits that can be unlocked for the existing local community. He believed that this proposal stroked that balance well; with a sensitively located quantity of new rural housing, supporting a significant and sizeable region of land for public community uses that we hope shall contribute positively to the SC Hannam legacy. Boundary hedgerows and mature trees are all to be retained, our local heritage assets and their settings are to be conserved and respected. In particular, the proposed fruit orchards shall reintroduce a lost historical feature to this part of the farm for the benefit of all. The Trust thereby aims to ensure that Chaffeymoor Farm remains a

valued part of Bourton and a place that honours its past while meeting contemporary needs.

Ms Brown spoke on behalf of the Applicant and added that a new and viable use for the site was needed. There had been a long process of engagement with the Parish and District Councils and planning allocation of the site for development. The site had been allocated for development within the Bourton neighbourhood plan which includes this site as 1 of 2 sites for a new village hall, car park, outdoor space and housing. A previous planning application had been approved by the Committee but a local change in priority in which a new proposal was needed. The development was limited scale and low density, and the number of dwellings had decreased. She went through the development contributions which would provide funding for local schools and the NHS. The majority of the site provided public local space. They had to find the right balance and use of sustainably located land in a time of housing need. The proposal here is at an appropriate scale and density suitable for Bourton and the quantity had been reduced following the pre-application. There would be 40% affordable housing, and she recommended that the application be approved as it applies with all planning criteria and relevant policies and would have no significant harm.

Cllr Williams (Chairman of Bourton Parish Council) addressed the Committee. He considered the strong objections of Bourton residents and section 106 contributions Bourton Parish Council objected to the application. He covered that the application site was outside Bourton settlement boundary and exceeded the area needed to deliver the aims of the policy Hive. The latter application was for 9 dwellings and a site for a village hall. It should be noted that the Parish Council was seeking to revise this as there was no longer a desire to obtain the site for a new village hall and securing funds of over £9000 to build one would not be possible. Development on the scale proposed would constitute significant harm to the setting of village and would have a negative impact on the local landscape especially the setting of the AONB to the north. The proposed development would be contrary to the local plan- Policy 2 required development to be focused requires development to be focused on the four main towns. 50 dwellings were way above the scale of development and policy 3 states that development should seek to reduce GHG emissions and given the lack of employment, amenities and services. The vehicle use of this site would increase the villages carbon footprint significantly. He went through policy 4 and the land on this site was farmland and status as agricultural land and the applicant had failed to demonstrate identified local, rural and central need in relation to the proposed number of dwellings as stipulated in policy 6. In the last 15 years, 60 dwellings had been constructed in Bourton and planning permission granted for a further 14 which had amounted to a 20% expansion and increasing the village population by another 100. Which will put strain on the local surgery and require transportation to school elsewhere since the primary school is completely full. He went through policy 20 for overriding need and stated that there was no such need for housing on the application site. The Parish Council believed that the hypothetical benefits would be outweighed by the negatives.

Members questions and comments

- Questioned about pre-application advice
- Queried how much green space would the Parish Council maintain?
- How many local people on housing register and how did officers come to the reasons for recommendation 3?
- Concern raised with the vagueness of the application and clarification regarding how the planning application proceeds.
- Asked if at least one of the dwellings could have disabled access.
- Queried if there was grid capacity in the area and clarification over what was meant by Kerosine.
- Asked about bus frequency and service in the area
- Queried how many children outside the catchment area attend the school now
- Cllr Rideout commented that on the face of it, the application looked great, but it was not suitable for the area and not in the right place. As it exceeded Bourton local plan and the open design officer, conservation officer, landscape officer did not support the application. She added that it was not a sustainable location as residents would have to use their cars to get any services.
- Cllr Potheary agreed with Cllr Rideout and seconded to refuse the application.
- Comments were made about the scale of development in relation to the size of Bourton and the need more detail on what is going to build there, and if it would be viable for the Parish Council.
- Comments that the Application flew in the face of significant number of policies and that there was no justification to build outside of development boundary.

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 **GRANT** planning permission as recommended, was proposed by Cllr Rideout, and seconded by Cllr Potheary.

Decision: To refuse planning permission for reasons:

1. The Development is outside Bourton settlement development boundary in contrary to the spatial strategy policies 2, 6 and 20 and Bourton neighbourhood plan policies. Policy 5 which seeks a smaller level of development on the village hall site.
2. Character of the area which should be a gradual transition, and this does not reflect the character and appearance of the area.
3. The less than substantial harm of the Setting of Farmhouse is not outweighed by the public benefits of the scheme.

37. **P/FUL/2021/05709, The Long House, Land at Salisbury Road Pimperne DT11 8XF**

The application was deferred as the report did not reflect the affordable housing requirement in the neighbourhood plan.

38. **P/FUL/2024/03602, Hazelbury Bryan Primary School**

With the aid of a visual presentation including plans and aerial photographs, the Case Officer identified the site and explained the proposal and relevant planning policies to members. The application was for a new car park to serve Hazelbury Bryan Primary School. The village is quite spread out and not very well connected and there were difficult walking routes to school and most of the parents drop off their children by car. The site location and proposed layout was shown. There had been no objections from sports England. The school's entrance was right on the road and there was no safe area to wait, and the nearby church parking was limited and used by the school at times. The new car park would go on land at the back and there would be some removal of trees and a hedge row. The hedge would be relocated back on the site and replanting. The school only currently has 6 spaces, and the proposal would increase parking for staff, and the parish council was supportive. There had been no objection from highway authority.

Public Participation

No public participation.

Members questions and comments

- **Comments that it was a good application and to make sure the area was safeguarded for parents and children.**

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 Taylor, and seconded by Cllr Jones.

Decision: To grant planning permission for the reasons set out in the officer's report.

39. **P/FUL/2024/04028, Plot 3 North Dorset Business Park Rolls Mill Way Sturminster Newton DT10 2GA**

With the aid of a visual presentation including plans and aerial photographs, the Case Officer identified the site and explained the proposal and relevant planning policies to members. He showed site boundaries, site location and the proposed

block plan and access. The application was for the Erection of industrial building, north Dorset business park.

Public Participation

No public participation.

Members questions and comments

- **Queried the noise of planning tools and noise control**
- **The business park was welcome as need for more jobs.**
- **Maintaining the footpath adjacent to the development**
- **There were no solar panels on these roofs.**
- **Look to improve biodiversity and have bats and bird boxes on tall buildings.**

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 Jones, and seconded by Cllr Jeanes.

Decision: To grant planning permission for the reasons set out in the officer's report.

40. P/VOC/2024/05673, Cerne Abbas Church of England First School Duck Street Cerne Abbas DT2 7LA

With the aid of a visual presentation including plans and aerial photographs, the Case Officer identified the site and explained the proposal and relevant planning policies to members. The application was to erect a building for use as a learning resource centre (with variation of conditions 2 and 3 of planning permission P/FUL/2022/02607 to amend plans and materials.

Public Participation

Catherine Cresswell Headteacher Cerne Abbas CE VC First School spoke in support of the application. She informed that the Cerne Abbas village was a remarkably 'together' community and equally remarkable was the close relationship that exists between our school and that community. The school was housed in a very old building, in fact, it is the oldest working school building in Dorset. The building was not listed and though attractive, it was designed for a very different and much earlier generation of school children so over time has had to undergo a number of adaptations. The teaching and staff areas were very cramped and finding sufficient space for the many needs of modern children was problematic. The funding formula for schools was heavily dependent on pupil numbers and even small changes can make the difference between budget balance and budget deficit. The school was in the fortunate position of being the only small school in the Salisbury Diocese with growing pupil numbers but as a result, there is currently a class of 29

children in a room that is far too small for them. The tables needed to be arranged in rows and the teacher was unable to reach all the children without moving furniture out of the way. The original plan, to relocate the school on the Simsay site, was abandoned some years ago by the Local Authority. However, they have recognised our increasingly desperate need for more space and is funding the proposed Learning Resource Centre.

The school wants to continue the success but can only do this if there are adequate facilities for the children and maintain the pupil numbers which, in turn, bring in sufficient resources to fund these facilities.

This is the second time that the plans for the Learning Resource Centre had been brought to the Planning Committee as the architects have been required to respond to various concerns about its environmental impact in an area of outstanding natural beauty. She accepted that any addition to the school buildings should be pleasing to the eye and not at odds with the local building style and earnestly believe that the updated proposals for the Learning Resource Centre have managed to fulfil this requirement whilst also delivering a building with a very specific function which will satisfy a desperate need.

She asked for help in enabling construction of the Learning Resource Centre for the School - this was the final window of opportunity to have the new teaching area expansion completed in time for it to be up and running for the new intake of pupils in September.

No Member questions and comments.

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 Major, and seconded by Cllr Taylor.

Decision: To grant planning permission for the reasons set out in the officer's report.

41. **Urgent items**

There were no urgent items.

42. **Exempt Business**

There was no exempt business.

Duration of meeting: 10.00 am - 12.24 pm

Chairman

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