

EASTERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 19 NOVEMBER 2025

Present: Cllrs David Tooke (Chair), Duncan Sowry-House (Vice-Chair), Alex Brenton, Toni Coombs, Scott Florek, Spencer Flower, Barry Goringe, Hannah Hobbs-Chell, David Morgan and Andy Skeats

Apologies: Cllrs Beryl Ezzard and Julie Robinson

Also Present: Cllr Shane Bartlett

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

Elizabeth Adams (Development Management Team Leader), Kim Cowell (Development Management Area Manager (East)), Philip Crowther (Legal Business Partner - Regulatory), Victoria Chevis, Joshua Kennedy (Democratic Services Officer), Megan Rochester (Senior Democratic & Governance Services Officer) and Thomas Whild (Lead Project Officer)

54. Declarations of Interest

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

55. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 08 October were confirmed and signed.

56. 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.

57. P/FUL/2022/07955 - Land at Stepping Stones Field, Stoborough

The Lead Project Officer presented the report for the application and provided an update on the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) figures. A map was shown illustrating the application site in relation to Stoborough and Wareham. It was noted that the site was situated outside the settlement boundary of Stoborough. Notable points in the nearby area were highlighted and included a primary school, a village hall and a field north of the site, which had previously been subject to a planning application which members had agreed to approve.

Members were advised that CIL liability on the site had increased to £370k with indexation but this was not a material consideration.

Photographs of the site were displayed, showing that the application site was currently undeveloped pastureland. Existing hedgerows formed the boundaries of the site, along with several trees. A pre-commencement tree protection condition was recommended.

The proposal was for nine dwellings with access from the southern side of West Lane, comprising a mix of two, three and four-bedroom units. It was explained that the scheme had been amended to reduce the number of dwellings from twelve to nine. Plans were presented showing the size, scale, and appearance of the buildings, which would feature varied materials including red brick, render, and Purbeck stone, with roofs finished in a mix of slate and tile. Indicative street scenes were also shown.

Plans for the access from West Lane were outlined, including the extension of the pedestrian footpath. As there was currently no pavement along West Lane connecting to the village, provision would be made for connecting the path to the village, which would be secured through the legal agreement.

It was noted that the site was within walking distance of the Bog Lane Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) and was accessible via existing footpaths. It was located within Flood Zone 1 but was subject to some surface water flood risk. In response to drainage concerns, the applicant had provided a surface water drainage strategy, which included water storage beneath paving and some driveways, with water draining to an attenuation basin.

It was explained that the Council's previous five-year housing supply position had expired, and a new assessment indicated that the Council could only demonstrate 2.53 years of supply. Paragraph 11(d) of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) therefore applied, stating that applications should be granted unless there were strong reasons for refusal. Officers considered that the application was acceptable in principle and that nutrient mitigation could be achieved through credits.

There were no public speakers.

In response to members questions officers provided the following responses:

- One unit was displayed in the plans as featuring solar panels, however renewable energy systems were not required to make the application acceptable in planning terms.
- The surface water drainage scheme had been reviewed by the Lead Local Flood Authority and they were satisfied that the development would be safe for its lifetime from flooding.
- There was an existing pedestrian crossing point on West Lane and the Highways Authority were satisfied that the existing crossing point offered safe access into the development.
- There was no policy requirement that the units be accessible, although one unit was designed to be adaptable with no structural change required if future occupants needed to make alterations to the access.
- A previous application on a site nearby was granted planning permission with a condition that required the improvement of a footway on West Lane.

The application in question also had the same condition as it was necessary to make the application acceptable. It was explained that the two developers were able to decide how the improvements are carried out.

- The S106 legal agreement requires that drainage maintenance is carried out and this responsibility would pass onto the owners of the properties.
- Details about landscaping were required to be submitted and approved and maintenance would be required for 5 years.
- An informative note could be added to state that the hedgerow should be retained and maintained in perpetuity.
- There were no garages for the 2-bedroom units, however all units had off-road parking spaces.

Members commented that the application was well designed and would be in keeping with the area.

It was proposed by Cllr Flower and seconded by Cllr Brenton that the application be granted as per the officer's recommendation and with the added informative note about the retention of the hedgerow.

Decision:

That authority be delegated to the Service Manager for Development Management and Enforcement and Development Management Area Manager East to Grant, subject to the conditions set out in the appendix to these minutes and the completion of a S106 agreement to secure a financial contribution of £297,000 towards Affordable Housing provision in lieu of on-site provision and an ongoing requirement for property owners to retain and maintain surface water drainage infrastructure in accordance with details to be agreed.

Or

That planning permission be refused for the reason set out at in the appendix to these minutes, if the S106 agreement is not completed by 19 May 2026 (6 months from the date of the committee) or such date as may be agreed with the Service Manager for Development Management and Enforcement or Development Management Area Manager East.

58. 6/2020/0013 - Land at White Lovington, Bere Regis, BH20 7NF

The Development Management Team Leader explained that the application had been brought back to committee for determination following updated advice from Natural England regarding nutrient neutrality in Poole Harbour. It was also noted that the applicant had undergone a viability assessment, following increased costs, which showed that the scheme was no longer able to support any affordable housing.

The location of the site was shown and it was explained that it was considered a sustainable location for new dwellings. The development benefited from local facilities, and the Neighbourhood Plan had allocated the land for residential development for approximately 12 dwellings on the site. Officers did not consider that the proposal conflicted with the Neighbourhood Plan and noted that the

application was being considered in light of the tilted balance, given the housing land supply position.

A location plan was shown, confirming that there was no proposed housing outside the settlement boundary and the development avoided the Dorset Heathland 400m Zone. A Heathland Infrastructure Project (HIP) was to be secured through a legal agreement, as although there was no policy requirement for open space, due to the proximity to local heathland and the lack of a local SANG, there was an identified need for the HIP until such time that alternative effective mitigation measures were demonstrated.

Photographs of the site were displayed, including an aerial image showing hedging along the boundary and trees on the southern boundary, which were protected.

The proposed site plan showed the existing road extending into the site, with three properties provided on the northern part and a further fourteen dwellings on the southern part of the site. The dwellings were mainly 2 storeys, comprising a mixture of semi-detached and detached properties.

Officers accepted that economic changes over time were a reasonable reason for a viability assessment, noting the cost of nutrient mitigation and the increase in bank interest rates. The Council's consultant Dixon Searle agreed that the scheme was not viable for the purposes of affordable housing delivery.

Street views of the existing housing development were shown and officers considered that the proposal represented a low-density development compared to other sites in the Bere Regis Neighbourhood Plan. It was considered that the proposed house types were similar to existing dwellings in the area.

In terms of neighbouring amenity, officers considered that the low density of the proposed and existing site should mitigate against any impact on neighbours, with there being generous distances between properties. Highways had reviewed the proposal and did not consider that further measures were necessary, given the modest additional traffic movements and confirmed that the existing junction layout was appropriate

An updated ecology report was provided and it was agreed that a dormouse bridge would be secured by condition. A summary of the proposed conditions was shown.

Mr Bennett spoke as the agent for the application, he highlighted that the proposal would be in keeping with the existing housing in the area, due to its low-density nature and it would provide a range of housing to suit the needs of the village. He noted that it was recognised that the development could no longer support affordable housing contribution due to rising costs, however emphasised that it would still provide an important contribution to the housing supply of the area.

The following answers were provided in response to members questions:

- As the HIP would be a material change of the use of the land, a legal agreement would require the HIP and its ongoing maintenance. As it was not known when a

SANG would be provided it would be recommended that the HIP was secured for a period of 80 years.

- The viability assessment was done through a criteria set by the government and so was considered policy compliant from a planning perspective.
- The dormouse bridge was proposed to be situated on land owned by the developer and wouldn't impact the use of the land as a HIP and maintenance of the bridge would be required in perpetuity.
- The HIP was required to be completed before any occupation of the dwellings.
- None of the units were identified as being accessible, however building regulations required general accessibility of new dwellings.
- There had been a recent appeal in the Purbeck area where the Inspector judged that a s106 viability review requirement was not justified as there was no specific policy outlining the parameters of when a viability review was appropriate. Therefore, it was recommended that a viability review could not reasonably be required.
- Only the larger properties on the development had outbuildings.
- The build costs used in the viability assessment were based on BCIS figures and were standardised costs used in the viability report.
- The cost of land in the viability report is based on the benchmark land value so officers couldn't comment on whether the land value had changed.
- Officers could not say whether a different mix of housing type and density would have resulted in a scheme which could deliver affordable housing and had to consider the application as presented.

Members expressed concerns about the lack of affordable housing provided through the scheme and the timeline for the provision of the HIP in comparison to the development, however did not conclude that these were sufficient reasons for refusal.

It was proposed by Cllr Sowry-House and seconded by Cllr Coombs that the application be granted, subject to a S106 legal agreement that secured the provision of the HIP prior to any commencement works for the construction of the dwellings.

Decision: That the application be granted subject to the conditions set out in the appendix to these minutes and the completion of a satisfactory planning obligation.

59. P/FUL/2024/06961 - Langton House, Durnford Drove, Langton Matravers, BH19 3HG

The meeting adjourned at 11:59 – 12:10.

The Lead Project Officer introduced the application for the erection of two semi-detached properties. The site location was outlined on a map of the area and photographs of Langton House were shown to members. It was noted that a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) covered the entire site.

The proposed site plan was provided and reference was made to Policy EE4, which supported the visitor economy and it was explained that the proposal fell within the relevant criteria of supporting tourism.

Photographs of the proposed site were shown and the proposed site for the holiday cottages was identified, along with the proposed floorplans and elevations

for the cottages. Proposed elevations for the shepherd's hut were also presented and it was confirmed that a condition would control the external appearance of these units.

Plans showing trees and landscaping were provided and it was confirmed that the biodiversity net gain could be delivered on site. The Lead Project Officer outlined the drainage scheme and reported that concerns had been raised by the Parish Council regarding increased flood risk in the local area. Following site investigations, the scheme proposed rain downpipes on the holiday cottages discharging to a soakaway. Arrows on the plan illustrated the direction of water flow, and a shallow swale was proposed along the north-eastern boundary. The Parish Council had requested that the swale be made wider and deeper but officers considered that a further condition to require it to be increased in size if needed, did not meet the planning tests.

It was noted that the holiday cottages would not contribute to the housing land supply position. The Lead Project Officer explained that a condition would ensure that the cottages and shepherds' huts remained tied to the wider holiday estate. Impacts on neighbouring amenity were considered acceptable, subject to the inclusion of obscure glazing in certain areas.

Mr Moir spoke as the agent for the application. He noted that the properties would be holiday accommodation only and would support the local economy by bringing more tourists to the area and by supporting a local rural business.

In response to members questions the following responses were provided by officers:

- National flood risk modelling had been provided by the Environment Agency and further information had been gained from public consultation which fed into the detailed drainage strategy.
- The foul water drain was highlighted on the plans and it was explained that the full details were to be submitted.
- The application included permission for two shepherds huts and if the applicant wanted to develop them beyond the scope of the submitted plans in the future then a new application would be required.
- The shepherd huts were defined as caravans in planning terms and a condition was included to ensure the appearance of the shepherd huts would be as submitted.
- The ownership of the holiday accommodation would be tied to the wider estate and this would be secured via condition.

Members were in agreement that the application was acceptable.

It was proposed by Cllr Brenton and seconded by Cllr Sowry-House, that the application be granted as per the officer's recommendation.

Decision:

That authority be delegated to the Service Manager for Development Management and Enforcement and/or the Development Management Area Manager East to issue planning permission following completion of a S106 Planning Obligation.

Or

That permission be refused for the reasons set out in the appendix to these minutes if the s106 agreement is not completed by 20th May 2026 or such extended time as agreed by the Service Manager for Development Management and Enforcement and/or the Development Management Area Manager East.

60. **P/VOC/2025/05153 - Moone House, Valley Road, Harmans Cross, Swanage, BH19 3DZ**

The committee agreed to extend the meeting beyond three hours.

The Development Management Team Leader presented the application for retrospective permission, as the development had not been carried out in accordance with previously approved plans. The site location plan was displayed, and it was noted that the site lay within the Dorset National Landscape. It was explained that only the effects of the changes were being considered, with the main concern being whether the amendments were acceptable in terms of the character and appearance of the area.

The proposed alterations and elevations were shown, along with photographs comparing the extensions to the approved plans. The changes included a dormers that were higher than previously approved, exceeding the ridge height of the dwelling.

It was reported that objections had been received from the Ward Member, the Parish Council, and a neighbouring resident. Officers considered that the harm to the visual appearance of the area was very localised and limited by mature protected trees. Consultation responses had raised concerns about the impact on appearance; however, the issue was considered to be confined to the immediate locality.

It was explained that Harmans Cross contained a mixture of dwelling types and that, while the proposal did not enhance the surroundings, its dark colour was recessive against the backdrop of trees. Officers considered that the level of harm to the area was limited and did not warrant refusal. Photographs of the wider landscape were shown, illustrating the housing against the countryside backdrop, and the Development Management Team Leader confirmed dwelling was not visible from these views.

Mr Hicks spoke in opposition to the application as a neighbouring resident. He explained that the extension had been built over the ridge height of the property which considerably increased the bulk and scale of the dwelling compared to the approved plans and impacted on the outlook from his property.

Mr Cooper spoke as the applicant for the application. He explained that the change in design had occurred due to structural reasons that required the height of the extension to be higher than planned.

A statement from the Ward Member Cllr Ben Wilson was read out on his behalf by the Vice-Chair. He stated that he did not agree that with assertion that the harm was localised and believed that a site visit was necessary so that members could see the impact of the works in person.

It was proposed by Cllr Brenton to defer the application to allow the committee to conduct a site visit, the proposal failed to be seconded and so the motion fell.

Members had the opportunity to debate the merits of the application, during which several members stated that they disagreed with the officer's conclusion regarding the harm to the character of the area and that on balance, due to the scale of the carried out works and the fact that it was not subservient to the ridge height of the dwelling it was unacceptable.

Other members expressed their view that the changes from the original approved plans were fairly minimal and they did not believe that the works as carried out caused more harm to the area, supported by the limited visual impact of the property from the wider area.

It was proposed by Cllr Sowry-House and seconded by Cllr Flower, that the application be granted as per the officer's recommendation.

Decision: That the application be granted subject to the conditions set out in the appendix to these minutes.

61. P/FUL/2025/05198 - The Focus Centre 107 High Street Swanage BH19 2NB

The Planning Officer presented the application for alterations to windows and doors on the front elevation of a building situated on land owned by Dorset Council. The location of the site was identified, and it was noted that permission had previously been granted for works to improve the thermal efficiency of the building.

It was explained that the proposal involved converting two windows into doors, changing one door into a window, and enlarging two existing windows. These alterations were intended to increase access, improve the usability and accessibility of the building and allow more natural light into the interior.

Elevations illustrating the proposed changes were displayed, and it was confirmed that the application accorded with relevant planning policy.

It was proposed by Cllr Coombs and seconded by Cllr Flower to grant the application.

Decision: That the application be granted subject to the conditions set out in the appendix to these minutes.

62. Urgent items

There were no urgent items.

63. **Exempt Business**

There was no exempt business.

20251119 Decision List

Duration of meeting: 10.00 am - 1.33 pm

Chairman

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