

WESTERN AND SOUTHERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 11 DECEMBER 2025

Present: Cllrs Dave Bolwell (Chair), Neil Eysenck (Vice-Chair), Belinda Bawden, Matt Bell, Simon Christopher, Paul Kimber, Craig Monks, David Northam, Louie O'Leary, Pete Roper, David Shortell and Kate Wheller

Apologies: None.

Also present: Cllr Nick Ireland

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

Marianne Ashworth (Lawyer - Regulatory), Ann Collins (Area Manager – Western and Southern Team), Philip Crowther (Legal Business Partner - Regulatory), Joshua Kennedy (Democratic Services Officer), James Lytton-Trevers (Lead Project Officer), Robert Parr (Planning Officer), Robert Piggot (Planning Officer) and Louis Wicks (Democratic Services Officer Apprentice)

41. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Bawden declared that she was pre-determined on item 8 but chose to speak as the Ward Member for the application.

42. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 02 October were confirmed and signed.

43. Registration for public speaking and statements

Cllr Bawden spoke in reference to application P/FUL/2024/06334, she noted that the only reason for the recommendation for refusal were the Highway's concerns, however the location of the site was within walking distance of the town centre, so wouldn't generate a significant increase in traffic movements. In addition, the road would potentially be changed to a 20mph speed limit within the next few months which could impact the assessment from Highways.

44. P/OUT/2025/01234 - Land west of West Link Road, Crossways

The Lead Project Officer presented a hybrid application comprising of outline permission for up to 145 dwellings, open space, landscaping, and associated infrastructure, with all matters reserved except for access and a full application for a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) and associated landscaping.

The application site, located west of Crossways, was outlined on the map. The site was currently agricultural land and was surrounded by open countryside to the

north and holiday homes to the south. Lewell Road ran east along the site and a public right of way ran along the northern boundary.

Plans for the proposal were displayed. The full application related to the SANG, which comprised the eastern section of the site and included public open space. The outline application covered the residential area, a Local Area of Play, and a Local Equipped Area of Play. An indicative layout for access and road arrangements was shown, with vehicular access proposed from Lewell Road via a T-junction. The application was supported by a transport assessment.

The masterplan illustrated areas for housing, the SANG and a car park for the SANG. A Building Heights Parameters Plan indicated that building heights would be limited to two storeys where the site adjoined the new housing development to the south. Officers considered that there was adequate space to avoid impacting the amenity of neighbouring properties. A Density Parameters plan showed a proposed density of 30–40 units per hectare, which was considered appropriate for the setting of the development.

It was explained that the site lay outside the Defined Development Boundary (DDB), where development would not normally be permitted. The site had been put forward in January 2021 for proposed allocation and draft Policy CRS6 allocated the land for housing and open space.

The principle of development was discussed. Although the site was outside the DDB and therefore contrary to Policy SUS2, the Council did not have a five-year housing land supply, so the tilted balance was applied. The proposal was considered to make a positive contribution to the local economy and address the housing shortfall. It would also contribute to village facilities through the provision of the SANG, which was deemed acceptable and compliant with policy.

The means of access was considered acceptable and the transport assessment had addressed traffic volumes and safety. The illustrative proposal was considered acceptable based on the parameter plans. A flood risk assessment had been provided, detailing surface water drainage. The applicant intended to use sequential measures, including permeable paving and gardens, with the SANG area designed to contain runoff from the site. The ecological impact assessment was acceptable, subject to provision and maintenance secured by condition. There would also be affordable housing provision of 35% delivered on the site.

Although the site was outside the DDB, the proposal was considered acceptable in principle, subject to conditions. It was regarded as sustainable development in terms of social, economic, and environmental impacts. It was considered that the benefits of contributing to housing supply, affordable housing provision and the SANG outweighed the conflict with Policy SUS2.

Mr Parsons spoke as the applicant. He noted that the development would deliver up to 145 sustainable, high quality homes that would help to address the housing need in the area. He also highlighted other benefits of the scheme including, the provision of the SANG, Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) contributions and bio-diversity net gain on the site.

Mrs Connor spoke on behalf of Crossways Parish Council. She explained that the Parish Council had objected to the application due to it being outside of the DDB and the fact that there were other developments underway in Crossways and the village did not have the appropriate infrastructure to accommodate more residential dwellings.

Cllr Ireland spoke as the local Ward Member for the application. He emphasised that Crossways had limited infrastructure to support more houses and that socially rented housing would be the preferred option for any new homes in the village. He noted that public transport routes linking the village were limited and so new residents would likely require cars, putting more strain on the road network in the village.

Officers provided the following responses to members questions:

- The application was liable for CIL, which would allow Dorset Council and other bodies to take money to fund infrastructure.
- Two other developments in Crossways that had been granted permission were also outside of the DDB.
- The application was compliant with the current policy requiring 35% affordable homes contribution.
- If members wished they could require that 35% of any homes built before 2030 were affordable.
- It was not considered necessary to include phasing for the homes due to the size of the development.
- A scheme of this size was not considered large enough to warrant an additional crossing point and the Highways team had been consulted on the application and were satisfied in terms of highway safety.
- Members were shown on a map the current road layout and where the new development would be linked to the existing pavement.
- The draft policy and proposed allocation for housing was just for information and no weight had been given to those in the officer's recommendation.
- Maintenance of the SANG would be dealt with via a management company.
- Of the two other developments completed in Crossways, one did provide CIL contributions and the other predated CIL contributions, however, it would have contributed via a section 106 agreement.
- A condition required the construction of the SANG within 3 years of the date of the permission and it would need to be delivered prior to the occupation of the first dwelling.

The meeting adjourned 11:14 – 11:22 to allow officers to provide more information for members questions.

Having had the opportunity to debate the merits of the application and an understanding of all this entailed; having considered the officer's report and presentation; the written representations; and what they had heard at the meeting, it was proposed by Cllr Christopher and seconded by Cllr Bolwell, to grant the application, due to the social, economic and environmental benefits outlined, including the provision of approximately 50 affordable homes and in light of the Council's lack of a 5-year housing land supply.

The meeting adjourned at 11:41 – 11:45.

A motion to amend the proposal was proposed by Cllr Christopher and seconded by Cllr Bell, to require that if any units were completed before 2030, then 35% of them should be affordable homes. Upon being put to a vote the committee agreed to add the wording to the proposal.

Decision:

That authority be delegated to the Service Manager for Development Management and Enforcement and the Area Manager Southern and Western Team to grant, subject to the completion of a legal agreement under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) and the conditions set out in the appendix to these minutes.

45. P/RES/2025/02807 - Land At Newton's Road, Weymouth, DT4 8UR

The Lead Project Officer presented the reserved matters application to determine appearance and landscaping for 141 dwellings, a 60-bed care home, leisure, office and light industrial floor space. The site location was outlined on the map, adjoining the seafront and was the former QinetiQ factory site. The Grade II listed breakwater was identified, as well as the open space above the cliffs to the west and Nothe Fort and gardens to the north. The cliffs formed part of the Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The site fell within flood zones 2 and 3 and group flood defences would reduce flood risk.

Photographs of the site were shown, including views from the coastal path, the entrance to the site, and the former QinetiQ building. It was noted that the site had been granted outline permission and the parameter plan showing pedestrian and vehicle routes was shown.

Details of the reserved matters application were provided, including the housing mix, non-residential uses and the landscaping scheme. The designs of the flats and townhouses were shown, along with the design of the employment building and care home. It was explained that the proposed design was contemporary and incorporated modern materials. Landscaping details were presented, including a gateway feature and a CGI render of the entrance.

The key planning issues were highlighted. The appearance was considered acceptable and compliant with policy. The landscaping was also considered acceptable, causing no harm to heritage assets and delivering biodiversity enhancements, while flood risk had been addressed at the outline stage.

Cllr Wheller spoke as the Ward Member for the application. She noted that the public areas were a welcome benefit of the application, however expressed concern that the materials used in the buildings would not hold up to adverse weather conditions.

Cllr Wheller left the meeting at 12:07

Mrs McFadyean spoke as the planning agent for the application. She explained that the applicant had worked closely with officers to develop an appropriate scheme that was well designed. She noted that the applicant had also worked with Highways Officer's to ensure that parking and access was acceptable. There would also be biodiversity benefits of the scheme, with 60 new trees to be planted.

Officers provided the following responses to members questions:

- Officers considered that the current landscaping scheme was more than adequate and that it would not be appropriate to require further additions.
- Important seagrasses in Weymouth required that the development be located further back from the shoreline.
- Flooding issues had been dealt with at the outline application stage.
- The height of the development was agreed in the outline application.

Several members expressed concerns with the design of the development and stated that they did not believe it to be in keeping with the character of Weymouth. Other members acknowledged the contemporary design of the buildings, however stated that Weymouth already included a mix of different designs and that the development would add to that mix.

It was proposed by Cllr Bell and seconded by Cllr Bawden, that the application be granted.

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

46. P/FUL/2025/04364 - Boat Park, Boat Shed George Street, West Bay, DT6 4EY

The Planning Officer presented the application and showed the site location using an aerial photograph and site plan. The key constraint of the site was identified as being within flood zones 2, 3, and 3a. The site was also located within the DDB and the West Bay Conservation Area. A photograph of the building on the site was displayed along with views around the site and nearby heritage assets were identified on the site plan.

It was explained that the proposal was to replace the existing shed and make it slightly longer to accommodate toilet facilities. The design was noted to be similar in appearance to the current structure and plans of both the existing and proposed building were shown.

It was considered that the proposal would not cause harm to the wider Conservation Area or to residential amenity. The flood risk was assessed as having a limited impact, given the minimal changes proposed.

There were no public speakers.

It was proposed by Cllr Monks and seconded by Cllr Christopher that the application be granted.

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

47. P/FUL/2024/06334 - Abbotswell, Lyme Road, Uplyme, DT7 3TJ

The application for a shepherd's hut on a site partly owned by Dorset Council was presented by the Planning Officer. The application site was highlighted in relation to Lyme Regis and views from the access point were shown, including photographs of the access steps and an image of the existing shepherd's hut.

A site plan was displayed along with elevations and a floor plan of the proposed hut, which was described as a modest structure comprising a sleeping area, shower room, and kitchenette. A section of timber fencing was proposed for removal and replacement with a chain-link fence. Additional photographs were shown from the road, including views looking southeast from the access point and images illustrating the hedge in place and after removal by the applicant.

The site was located within the DDB and would provide new-build tourist accommodation, making it compliant with policy. The location was considered discreet and the use of traditional materials meant the design was regarded as acceptable. In terms of flood risk, the site was identified as being at risk of flooding in 1-in-30 and 1-in-50-year events. However, a Flood Risk Assessment outlined mitigation measures including the raised ground level and elevated level of the shepherd's hut itself. On this basis, the flood risk was considered acceptable. The proposal was noted to provide modest economic benefits by contributing to the local economy and there were no environmental implications.

Concerns had been raised by the highway's authority regarding the lack of visibility onto the B3165, with the view that the scheme would cause additional danger to road users and have a severe impact on road safety. A proposed change to a 20-mph speed limit was mentioned, but it was noted that a decision had not yet been made on this and even if imposed, it was unclear whether it would overcome the visibility splay issues. It was considered that the application was unacceptable on highways grounds.

The applicant Ms Weldin, spoke in support of the application. She noted that many of the guests who use the shepherd's hut often didn't use their cars due to the close proximity to the town centre. In addition, there was no case of a recorded accident in the location of the junction and the potential impending 20 mph speed limit will only serve to make the road safer.

In response to comments made by the public speaker the Engineer clarified the highway's position that the application in its current form was unacceptable due to the visibility splays.

Officers provided the following responses to questions from members:

- Officers were unable to speculate on whether the access would be safe if the speed limit was reduced to 20mph as the calculations would need to be redone.

- Accident statistics are considered when assessing applications, however in this case the access was deemed unsafe based on visibility splays.
- Officers did not consider that it would be appropriate to grant a time limited permission.

The committee agreed to extend the meeting beyond 3 hours.

Having had the opportunity to debate the merits of the application, it was proposed by Cllr Monks and seconded by Cllr Christopher that the application be deferred to allow for more information to be provided regarding the impending decision on the speed limit and how this would impact the safety of the access.

Decision: That the application be deferred.

48. P/FUL/2025/02951 - 2-4 Custom House Quay, Weymouth, DT4 8BE

The Planning Officer presented the application to retain canopies and associated works to the frontage for use within the business premises. The application site was highlighted in Weymouth and included part of the adopted highway. It was located in Weymouth Harbour on Custom House Quay.

An external floor plan was shown, illustrating wooden posts and planters forming a physical separation between the seating area and the road. Elevations of the premises were displayed, showing the planters and posts along with the access point into the establishment. Photographs of the site were presented, showing the canopy in place with planters on the outside.

The principle of development was considered acceptable. The overall appearance of the structures was regarded as appropriate and in keeping with the building. Amenity impacts were addressed, with a condition proposed to restrict hours of use and it was noted that there were no residential properties in the immediate vicinity that would be affected. The site was within the setting of listed buildings and within the Weymouth Town Conservation Area; however, the proposal was not considered to cause harm to designated or non-designated heritage assets. The site was located within a high-risk flood zone, but the Environment Agency had been consulted and raised no objection and the proposal was assessed as very low risk.

The application was noted to make a small contribution to the local economy and would maintain a pedestrian route along the pavement. Highways raised no objection, and as the site was located on hard standing, there were no environmental issues.

There were no public speakers.

In response to a question from one member officers confirmed that condition 3 would restrict the hours of use of the outside space to between 08:00 and 23:00.

It was proposed by Cllr Bell and seconded by Cllr Kimber that the application be granted.

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

49. **Urgent items**

There were no urgent items.

50. **Exempt Business**

There was no exempt business.

Decision Sheet

Duration of meeting: 10.00 am - 1.26 pm

Chairman

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