

WESTERN AND SOUTHERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 2 APRIL 2026

Present: Cllrs Neil Eysenck (Vice-Chair), Belinda Bawden, Simon Christopher, David Northam, Louie O'Leary, Pete Roper, David Shortell and Kate Wheller

Apologies: Cllrs Matt Bell, Paul Kimber and Craig Monks

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

Philip Crowther (Legal Business Partner - Regulatory), Joshua Kennedy (Democratic Services Officer), Anna Lee (Service Manager for Development Management and Enforcement), Robert Piggot (Planning Officer) and Katrina Trevett (Development Management Team Leader)

73. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Matt Bell, Paul Kimber and Craig Monks.

74. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Bawden declared that she had been involved in discussions with South West Water and Lyme Regis Town Council about alternative storage options, however was not predetermined on application P/FUL/2025/07525.

75. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 February were confirmed and signed.

76. Registration for public speaking and statements

Details of public representation are provided below, on this occasion there were no public speakers.

77. P/FUL/2025/07525 - Holmbush Car Park, Pound Street, Lyme Regis, DT7 3HX

The Planning Officer presented the application for the erection of a temporary site compound for South West Water to facilitate works to the sewage network. The application had been brought before the committee as the site was within Dorset Council owned land.

The application site was shown on a map in relation to Lyme Regis, the site consisted of a triangular parcel of land together with a narrow strip providing

vehicular access. The key site constraints were outlined and it was noted that a public right of way ran through the site. Photographs from a range of viewpoints were displayed to illustrate the current appearance of the land.

The proposed development comprised a temporary compound for a period of twelve months, measuring approximately 45.5 metres by 62 metres by 81 metres. The compound would include a mobile welfare unit, storage areas and parking bays. A plan was shown setting out the layout of the proposed compound.

It was explained that the site lay within Lyme Regis town centre and that the compound was intended to reduce the frequency of vehicles passing through the town during essential works. Owing to the temporary and relatively small-scale nature of the proposal, no objections had been raised by the Highways Authority. Although the scheme would result in a temporary reduction in parking provision, this loss was considered minor and not sufficient to justify refusal.

A parking assessment was presented, showing other car parks within Lyme Regis and detailing the number of spaces available in each. It was advised that the level of displacement caused by the proposal would equate to approximately five per cent of available parking. Members were informed that a related application on Charmouth Road had since been withdrawn.

It was stated that the development was not considered likely to result in any harmful impact on visual amenity. Residential amenity was also judged acceptable, subject to conditions restricting working hours. While trees were present around the site, no excavation was proposed, and therefore no harm was identified.

In response to questions from members, officers provided the following responses:

- The proposed compound would not impact on the existing right of way through the car park and an added informative was included in the update sheet that would ensure there was no obstruction of the foot path.
- A condition was included in the recommendation that required the work to be completed within a 12-month period, should the work not be completed in that time frame then a new application would be required.

Although several members expressed concern about the loss of parking within Lyme Regis, particularly during the busier summer months, it was expressed that the clear benefits of improving the sewage network outweighed any concerns.

It was proposed by Cllr Bawden and seconded by Cllr O'Leary that the application be granted.

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

78. **P/FUL/2025/06651 - Pavement opposite 66-67, The Esplanade, Weymouth, DT4 8DE**

Applications P/FUL/2025/06651 and P/ADV/2025/06384 were presented in a single presentation due to relating to the same site.

The Planning Officer presented the application for the removal of an existing phone box and the installation of a BT Street Hub in the same location. The site was shown on a map and within an aerial photograph, identifying its position along the Esplanade. Photographs were displayed to provide context, including views of the site from various points.

Members were advised that the site lay on Dorset Council owned land, within the Weymouth Town Centre Conservation Area and in close proximity to the King George III statue and several Grade II listed buildings. The proposed development involved replacing the existing phone box with a BT Street Hub incorporating an LED advertising panel and providing public Wi-Fi and enhanced 5G connectivity. Elevations of the existing phone box and the proposed street hub were shown, illustrating that the new structure would be taller than the existing unit, along with a visualisation of how it would appear in the street scene.

It was explained that the proposal was acceptable in principle and supported by policies in the Local Plan. The public benefits were identified as the provision of Wi-Fi and improved 5G coverage to support both personal and business use. Residential amenity was not considered to be adversely affected. Highway impacts were judged acceptable, with no objections from the Highways Authority, subject to conditions to ensure the LED display was not distracting to road users. Crime and policing matters were also considered acceptable, provided an Anti-Social Behaviour Management Plan was secured by condition and it was noted that other LED panels were already present along the Esplanade without recorded issues of anti-social behaviour.

The main considerations were visual amenity and heritage impact. The key qualities of the Esplanade were described as its long-range views, blue railings and sense of openness and expansiveness, which had already been gradually eroded by the introduction of additional street furniture. A photograph was shown to illustrate this. It was concluded that the additional street hub would further detract from these qualities and would be harmful to the setting and character of the Conservation Area. Members were shown a map demonstrating the number of existing LED advertising panels along the Esplanade, and it was considered that the proposal would contribute to their further proliferation.

The Planning Officer considered that the proposal would result in less than substantial harm to the Conservation Area under the National Planning Policy Framework, but that this harm would sit toward the higher end of that scale given the historic and architectural significance of the Esplanade. It had also not been demonstrated that the identified public benefits could not be delivered through alternative means or locations.

In concluding, the Planning Officer explained that a fine planning balance had been undertaken between the public benefits and the identified heritage harm. Given the degree of harm, it was not considered that the public benefits outweighed the negative impacts on the Conservation Area.

The following responses to members questions were provided by officers:

- The Street Hub unit would be limited to non-animated, static advertisements only and the Highways Authority had requested that a condition be included to prevent video or animated advertising being used.
- It was considered that policy W13 in the Weymouth Neighbourhood Plan sought to protect long ranging views of the Esplanade and that whilst the proposal would introduce new elements to the Esplanade, they would not be significant in scale and size to be detrimental to those long range, wide views.
- In addition to the physical presence of the Street Hub, the addition of LED advertising panels would also contribute to the visual clutter along the Esplanade.
- The other LED panels in the area were of a similar size.

Having had the opportunity to debate the merits of the application several members expressed that although they recognised the benefits of the application, it did not outweigh the harm caused to the setting of the Conservation Area.

It was proposed by Cllr Northam and seconded by Cllr Wheller, that the application be refused.

Decision: That the application be refused for the reasons set out in the appendix to these minutes.

79. P/ADV/2025/06384 - Pavement opposite 66-67, The Esplanade, Weymouth, DT4 8DE

It was proposed by Cllr Northam and seconded by Cllr Wheller, to refuse the application.

Decision: That the application be refused for the reasons set out in the appendix to these minutes.

80. P/FUL/2025/06224 - Pavement outside 104E St Mary Street, Weymouth, DT4 8NY

Applications P/FUL/2025/06224 and P/ADV/2025/06226 were presented in a single presentation as both applications related to the same site.

The Planning Officer presented the application for the removal of an existing BT payphone and the installation of a BT Street Hub. The application had been referred to the committee because the site was located on Dorset Council owned land.

The site location was shown on a map and within an aerial photograph and photographs of the existing phone kiosk were displayed from a range of viewpoints. Members were advised that the site lay within the Conservation Area and within Flood Zones 3 and 3a.

The proposed development was described as the replacement of the existing phone box with a BT Street Hub, which would provide public Wi-Fi and enhanced 5G coverage within an approximate range of 150 to 200 metres. The existing kiosk to be removed was slightly smaller than the proposed structure. Elevations of the

existing phone box and the proposed Street Hub were shown, along with a visualisation illustrating how the new unit would appear once installed.

The principle of development was considered acceptable and supported by Policy SUS2. The economic and public benefits arising from the provision of Wi-Fi and improved 5G connectivity were highlighted. Residential amenity was assessed as acceptable, subject to conditions to limit noise and lighting to protect nearby occupiers. In highway terms, the area was used by maintenance vehicles and pedestrians, and Highways officers had recommended conditions to ensure that the unit would not be distracting to users of St Mary's Street.

Crime and policing matters were considered acceptable, subject to a condition requiring an Anti-Social Behaviour Management Plan. It was explained that the context of St Mary's Street differed from that of the esplanade, being a more enclosed and active retail environment. Although the Street Hub would be taller than the existing phone kiosk, it was considered appropriate in a well-lit retail setting. The proposal was assessed as resulting in less than substantial harm to the setting of the Black Dog public house, but this harm was considered to fall at the lower end of the scale due to the active nature of the street and the building's offset position relative to the pub.

In setting out the planning balance, the Planning Officer advised that the decision was finely balanced, but concluded that the public benefits of the scheme were clear and outweighed the limited harm identified. The recommendation was to grant planning permission, subject to conditions shown to members, including restrictions on noise and lighting during certain hours.

In response to members questions officers provided the following responses:

- The suggested conditions from Highways had been included in the recommended list of conditions.
- The distance between the proposed Street Hub and Black Dog pub was approximately 8.96m.
- The Street Hub would not display video advertisements.

It was proposed by Cllr Northam and seconded by Cllr Wheller that the application be granted.

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

81. P/ADV/2025/06226 - Pavement outside 104E St Mary Street, Weymouth, DT4 8NY

It was proposed by Cllr Northam and seconded by Cllr Shortell that the application be granted.

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

82. Urgent items

There were no urgent items.

83. **Exempt Business**

There was no exempt business.

84. **Update Sheet**

Decision List

Duration of meeting: 10.00 - 11.13 am

Chairman

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