

Application Number:	P/FUL/2023/07270
Webpage:	https://planning.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/
Site address:	12 Golf Links Road Ferndown BH22 8BY
Proposal:	Erection of 8no. flats (demolition of existing dwelling)
Applicant name:	Blossom Hill Investments
Case Officer:	Emily Elgie/ Elizabeth Adams
Ward Member(s):	Cllr Hobbs-Chell and Cllr Robinson

1. Reason application is going to committee:

At the request of the Committee Chair.

2. Summary of recommendation:

To delegate authority to the Corporate Director for Planning, the Service Manager for Development Management & Enforcement or the Eastern Area Development Management Area Manager to

A) grant planning permission subject to conditions as set out at the end of this report and the completion of a Section 106 Planning Obligation under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (S106 agreement) to secure New Forest Habitat Site mitigation.

Or

B) Refuse planning permission for the reasons set out below if the S106 agreement is not completed by 20 November 2026 or such extended time as agreed by the Corporate Director for Planning, the Service Manager for Development Management and Enforcement or the Eastern Area Development Management Area Manager. The reasons for refusal for failure to secure the necessary obligations are set out in full at the end of this report.

3. Key planning issues

Issue	Conclusion
Principle of development	Acceptable: within the urban area and contributes to 5 year housing land supply
Scale, design, impact on character and appearance	Acceptable: compatible with its surroundings and no substantial harm arising from departures from the Special Character Area development criteria
Impact on the living conditions of the occupants and neighbouring properties	Acceptable: subject to conditions to secure obscure glazing
Highway impacts, safety, access and parking	Acceptable: subject to conditions
Impact on trees	Acceptable: subject to conditions

Issue	Conclusion
Flood risk and drainage	Acceptable: surface water risk to site can be managed so the development is safe. No additional flood risk on or off-site is anticipated subject to conditions so the sequential test is not required under PPG/NPPF.
Impact on Habitat Sites	Acceptable: subject to completion of a planning obligation to secure mitigation for impacts on the New Forest Habitat Sites.
Impacts on Biodiversity	Acceptable: subject to conditions
Environmental Implications	Acceptable

4. Description of site

12 Golf Links Road is bungalow on a 0.15ha slightly wedge shaped plot (wider to the rear) within the residential urban area of Ferndown. The site lies on the western side of the highway, approximately 190m from the northern junction with Ringwood Road.

The site is relatively level and is separated from the highway by a grassed verge over 8m in depth in which there is currently rhododendron and oak trees. Trees and the northern side boundary hedging at the site contribute to the verdant character of the area.

The site levels are slightly higher than those to the north where nos. 6, 8, 8a and 10 Golf Links Road are single storey. Properties to the rear on Ringwood Road are also single storey in form, although they have first floor accommodation in the roof. Number 14 to the south is a two and three quarter storey block of 6 flats on slightly higher land (approx. 0.4m). On the eastern side of Golf Links Road chalet style bungalows are the predominant dwelling form in the close vicinity.

Golf Links Road forms part of the New Road Special Character Area. This area is described in the Special Character Area Supplementary Planning Document as being 'characterised by detached two- or single storey, single family dwellings set back behind established building lines in large or very large plots. The low density of development affords a sense of spaciousness, emphasised by generous landscaping and lawns. The buildings tend to be substantial, individually designed and built, and some are of high architectural quality...Extensive treescape adds to the area a distinctive sylvan character...Boundary hedges and other understorey planting strengthens enclosure and privacy between properties...The area contains a number of flat developments that have been constructed over the last 40 years or so. These have been absorbed with varying degrees of success...'

5. Description of development

It is proposed to demolish the existing dwelling and erect a block of 8, two bedroom flats over three storeys. The building will have a two and a half storey form; the top floor within the roof will be served by rooflights and dormers.

The property is designed with reference to the Arts and Crafts style, incorporating architectural features including chimneys, gables and bay windows. The central lift shaft will be only slightly higher than the main flat roof.

A paved parking area and bin store is proposed to the front of the plot under the existing tree. To the rear a cycle store and storage sheds outbuilding is proposed together with a patio. Hedging is shown along the rear (north), eastern side and front boundaries.

6. Background and relevant planning history

12/544 - Decision: Split decision - Decision Date: 20/11/2012

Tree works

3/18/3164/TTPO - Decision: Split decision - Decision Date: 17/12/2018

T1, T2, T3, T4 & T5 Lawson Cypress - Fell.

T6 Oak - Crown reduce by up to 2.5m.

3/19/2492/FUL - Decision: Granted - Decision Date: 16/02/2021

Demolish existing dwelling and erect a 4no bedroom detached dwelling with garage, as amended by plans rec'd 10/08 to reduce height of garage roof.

7. List of constraints

TPO (EDDC/HA/17)

TPO - TPO (EDDC/HA/4)

Within New Road Special Character Area

High pressure gas pipeline 1km or less from Regional High Pressure Pipelines (>7 bar); -
Distance: 901.18

Medium pressure gas pipeline 25m or less from Medium Pressure Pipelines (75mbar - 2 bar); -
Distance: 14.94

Risk of Surface Water Flooding Extent 1 in 1000 and 1 in 100 affects rear garden area

Groundwater – Susceptibility to flooding;

Natural England Designation - RAMSAR: Dorset Heathlands (UK11021); - Distance: 4590.58
and Avon Valley (UK11005); - Distance: 4810.11

Dorset Heathlands - 5km Heathland Buffer;

New Forest Recreation- 13.8km zone

Radon: Class 1: Less than 1% (low risk, protective measures not required)

8. Consultations

All consultee responses can be viewed in full on the website.

Consultees

1. Dorset Wildlife Trust

No comments received

2. Natural England

The conclusion reached by the Local Authority that the proposal will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of the habitats and international sites comprising the Dorset Heathlands and the

New Forest is agreed and that in respect of this matter the Council can determine the application.

Biodiversity mitigation should be secured by condition or other mechanism.

3. Dorset Fire and Rescue

The development would need to conform to recommendations identified under B5 of Approved Document B (Building Regs) and for the improvement of safety and reduction of property loss through fire

4. Dorset Council (DC) Highways- no objection

Parking on public highway is not a highway safety issue, in many cases it acts as natural traffic calming; inappropriate parking of vehicles is a police matter. The amount of unallocated parking available is acceptable.

The proposal does not present a material harm to the transport network or to highway safety so there is no objection subject to conditions.

5. DC Flood Risk Management team

Surface water flood risk appears to be associated with topography so additional flood risk as a result of the development is not anticipated provided submitted surface water management proposals are secured by condition. Finished floor levels should be 300m above predicted flood risk levels.

6. DC - Building Control East Team

The area is subject to flooding – would need to address how rainwater is dispersed from the roof

7. DC - Trees (East & Purbeck)

Submitted information broadly acceptable. Will require conditions

8. DC- Highway Trees

T003 and T004 are confirmed highway trees. The developer will not be required to carry out any works to these highway trees.

To ensure compliance with statutory protections, the developer must not store materials, plant, or park vehicles on the highway verge during construction or during any consented tree works, as this could result in damage to the root protection areas of both highway trees and protected trees.

9. DC- Waste Team

Confirmed that the bin store is appropriately located for collection.

10. Ferndown Town Council- objection

Overdevelopment of the site

Excessive in respect of bulk, mass and height

Increased traffic and road parking on an already dangerously busy 'cut through' road.

Would have an adverse effect on the residential amenity of neighbouring properties including over-shadowing, overlooking and loss of privacy

Disturbance and potential damage from contractor's vehicles.

Does not reflect the rhythm and spacing of existing dwellings.

Negative impact on street view.

Potential for flooding.

Concern about risk of fire to abutting properties

10. Ferndown Ward Members

No comments received

Representations received

Total - objections	Total - No objections	Total - comments
11	0	0

Summary of comments of objections:

Impact on the character of the area: Fails to meet special character area criteria; not reflective of rhythm and spacing/character of the area; adverse impact on street scene; mass, scale, height and form inappropriate as neighbouring properties are single dwellings and bungalows; unappealing design

Harm to neighbour amenity: noise including from traffic, overlooking and loss of privacy, and overshadowing and loss of light

Highway and pedestrian safety: insufficient parking increasing pressure on street, dangerous stretch of road, traffic and congestion caused during construction and increased number of dwellings

Disruption during construction works

Biodiversity: Adverse impact on wildlife, changes to ecosystem from development at no. 14 and now no.12, loss of oak tree in suspicious circumstances

Plots too small: overdevelopment

Flood risk: Lack of drainage detail, plot suffers from surface water flooding and high water table; road floods regularly; development would increase risk of neighbours flooding.

Potential ownership (red line boundary) issue with 10 Golf Links Road

Already lots of flats in the road, including next door

Lack of need: Similar property types on road not selling

Impact on disabled neighbour: parking on the highway could prevent access for carers

Site notice not erected (officer note: this was displayed in May)

9. Duties

s38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that the determination of planning applications must be in accordance with the development plan unless material circumstances indicate otherwise.

10. Relevant policies

Development plan

In this case the development plan comprises:

Adopted Christchurch and East Dorset Local Plan:

The following policies are considered to be relevant to this proposal:

KS1 - Presumption in favour of sustainable development
KS2- Settlement hierarchy
KS11 - Transport and Development
KS12- Parking Provision
LN1- Size and Types of New Dwellings
LN2- Design, Layout and Density of New Housing Development
HE2 - Design of new development
ME1- Safeguarding biodiversity and geodiversity
ME2- Dorset Heathlands
ME6- Flood Management, Mitigation and Defence

Material considerations

Emerging local plans:

Paragraph 49 of the NPPF provides that local planning authorities may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to:

- the stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced its preparation, the greater the weight that may be given);
- the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant plan policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and
- the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the NPPF (the closer the policies in the emerging plan are to the policies of the NPPF, the greater the weight that may be given).

The Dorset Council Local Plan

The Dorset Council Local Plan Options consultation took place between January and March 2021, with further consultation between 18 Aug – 31 October 2025. Being at a very early stage of preparation, the relevant policies in the draft plan should be accorded very limited weight in decision making.

Local Nature Recovery Strategy

The Dorset Local Nature Recovery Strategy identifies local priorities for nature recovery and maps areas where action would be most beneficial. In planning decisions it is a material consideration, helping to ensure that development supports biodiversity enhancement and aligns with Dorset's agreed priorities for nature recovery.

National Planning Policy Framework 2024 (as amended 2025)

Paragraph 11 sets out the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Proposals that accord with the development plan should be approved without delay. Where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date then permission should be granted unless specific NPPF policies protecting areas or assets provide a strong reason for refusal and/or any adverse impacts of approval would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the NPPF as a whole, with particular regard to key policies for directing

development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well designed places and providing affordable homes.

Other relevant NPPF sections include:

- Section 4 'Decision making': Para 39 - Local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. They should use the full range of planning tools available...and work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.
- Section 5 'Delivering a sufficient supply of homes' This outlines the government's objective in respect of land supply with subsection 'Rural housing' at paragraphs 82-84 reflecting the requirement for development in rural areas.
- Section 11 'Making effective use of land'
- Section 12 'Achieving well designed places' This indicates that all development to be of a high quality in design, and the relationship and visual impact of it to be compatible with the surroundings. In particular, and amongst other things, Paragraphs 131 – 141 advise that:

The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development.

Development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design.
- Section 14 'Meeting the challenges of climate change, flooding and coastal change'
- Section 15 'Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment'- Paragraphs 192-195 set out how biodiversity is to be protected and encourage net gains for biodiversity.

Other material considerations

National Planning Practice Guidance

Including: Determining Planning Applications; Flood risk and coastal change

Supplementary Planning Document/Guidance

Dorset Heathlands Planning Framework 2020-2025 Supplementary Planning Document

Dorset Heathlands Interim Air Quality Strategy 2020-2025

Dorset Council Interim Guidance and Position Statement Appendix B: Adopted Local Plan policies and objectives relating to climate change, renewable energy, and sustainable design and construction. December 2023.

Special Character Areas Supplementary Planning Guidance

New Forest SAMM Strategy 2025

Housing land supply

Dorset Council is currently unable to demonstrate a 5-year housing supply of deliverable housing sites as required by National Policy. In addition, the strategies for meeting housing needs in the adopted local plans are not designed to deliver the housing need under the Government's standard method and therefore, in accordance with NPPF footnote 8, the housing policies within the adopted

Development Plan(s) are out of date and the presumption in favour of sustainable development applies.

This does not result in automatic approval of residential development. Paragraph 11(d) requires that permission should be granted unless the application of policies in the NPPF that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusal, or unless the adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the NPPF as a whole.

Notwithstanding the absence of a five-year housing land supply, policies relating to design, character, residential amenity, flood risk, biodiversity and highway safety continue to attract significant weight in decision-making. The proposal must therefore be assessed against these policies and the overall planning balance.

The emerging Dorset Local Plan is not sufficiently progressed and can be afforded very limited weight in decision making.

Housing Delivery Test (HDT)

The latest HDT results (2023 measurement) show that enough homes have been delivered within the local plan area to demonstrate 106% of the target.

11. Human rights

Article 6 - right to a fair trial.

Article 8 - right to respect for private and family life and home.

The first protocol of Article 1 protection of property.

This recommendation is based on adopted development plan policies, the application of which does not prejudice the human rights of the applicant or any third party.

12. Public Sector Equalities Duty

As set out in the Equalities Act 2010, all public bodies, in discharging their functions must have “due regard” to this duty. There are 3 main aims: -

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics
- Taking steps to meet the needs of people with certain protected characteristics where these are different from the needs of other people
- Encouraging people with certain protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where participation is disproportionately low.

Whilst there is no absolute requirement to fully remove any disadvantage the Duty is to have “regard to” and remove or minimise disadvantage and in considering the merits of this planning application the planning authority has taken into consideration the requirements of the Public Sector Equalities Duty.

The protected characteristics potentially relevant to this proposal are age, disability and pregnancy and maternity.

Although the existing dwelling is currently empty, the proposal will result in the loss of a bungalow from local housing stock which could be more attractive to those who are elderly or physically disabled. However, the proposed development would provide eight two-bedroom flats all with a single managed building. This form of accommodation may be suitable for older persons seeking to downsize, as well as households at different life stages.

The scheme includes a passenger lift serving all floors and level access arrangements which can assist residents with mobility impairments, wheelchair users, those with sensory or cognitive

disabilities and mothers with babies and young children in pushchairs. These features advance equality of opportunity. For such persons when compared to traditional stair only flatted accommodation.

The site is in a sustainable location within the settlement, within walking distance of services and with nearby public transport connections which would reduce barriers faced by individuals with disabilities and impaired mobility, particularly those who cannot drive. By providing residential accommodation in a location where daily needs can be met without reliance on private vehicles, the proposal aligns with the objective of advancing equality of opportunity for persons who share relevant protected characteristics.

Having regard to the above, the Local Planning Authority is satisfied that the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty have been met.

Construction impacts such as noise, dust and temporary disruption have been considered. Objectors have mentioned access issues arising during the redevelopment of no.14 affecting a disabled neighbour reliant on care visits. Conditions requiring a construction method statement including controls on working practices will help limit adverse effects on nearby residents, including those who may be more sensitive to disturbance due to age or disability.

There is no identified evidence that the proposal would result in unlawful discrimination or a disproportionate adverse impact on persons with protected characteristics that cannot be appropriately mitigated. Conversely, elements of the scheme, including accessibility features and its sustainable location contribute positively to advancing equality of opportunity.

13. Public Benefits

The proposals would provide a number of financial and non-financial benefits, including public benefits. These are summarised in the table below:

What	Amount / value
Material considerations	
Contribution to housing land supply in a sustainable location	8 x two bedroom dwellings (loss of 1 house)
New Forest Habitat Mitigation contribution	£2,800
Non material considerations	
Council tax	£14,384- Based on 8 band B flats minus one band D house
CIL	c. £168,776.22

14. Planning Assessment

Principle of development

- 14.1 The application site is within the urban area of Ferndown where the principle of residential development is acceptable under Policy KS2 of the Local Plan.

Scale, design, impact on character and appearance

- 14.2 The Town Council has raised concerns about harm from increased development density and that the design is uncharacteristic. Policy LN2 and the NPPF require the efficient use of land and proposals should maximise the density of development to a level which is acceptable for the locality.
- 14.3 Policy HE2 requires that development should ‘respect the identified features and characteristics of Special Character Areas’. The New Road Special Character Area (SAC) SPD identifies that the area is characterised by large, detached dwellings situated within large plots affording a sense of spaciousness, with extensive landscaping and boundary hedging providing a soft, informal character to the road frontage. The SPD identifies that there are a number of flat developments that have been constructed over the last 40 years or so with varying degrees of success. The proposal has been assessed against the development criteria:
- 1. New development must reflect the rhythm and spacing of existing dwellings. It is important that the feeling of space and the quality of landscape of that space –all of which characterises the area- should be maintained. Generally, the aim should be to improve spatial relationships with neighbouring dwellings.*
- 14.4 The existing property at 12 Golf Links Road comprises a pitched roof bungalow with flat roofed attached garaging which together extend across the majority of the width of the plot. Views of the dwelling and its parking area in front of the garaging are currently limited by screening vegetation. The proposed block of flats will have a narrower frontage than the existing dwelling, expanding in width further into the plot but maintaining the rhythm of the built form in the street scene. The increased height and depth of development will be evident in the street scene and will reduce separation from properties to the west (rear), but its set back from the highway will remain similar to the existing built form. It is recognised that the landscape quality to the front of the site will be somewhat diminished by the expansion of hard surfacing to provide off-street parking and the introduction of a bin store, but the retention of some of the frontage trees and new hedge planting would provide softening in an appropriate manner.
- 2. There should be no sub-division of gardens if this adversely affects the pattern of development, loss of amenity space and/or the loss of trees and/or boundary hedges.*
- 14.5 The site plan proposes that the rear garden would be sub-divided to provide amenity space for the two rear ground floor units. This would secure privacy for future occupants but to avoid harm to the character of the area it is important to ensure that planting is the main form of screening. This can be secured by condition.
- 3. The amalgamation of plots will not be discouraged provided that the pattern of development of the area is maintained and/or this allows more space for significant additional tree-planting and/or boundary planting.*
- 14.6 This criterion is not applicable.
- 4. New development must not adversely affect the character of the street scene, as a result of being sited too close to the road, of inappropriate massing and form, of excessive height,*

or causing the loss of soft landscape features or other factors contained in these design criteria.

5. The scale, massing and height of proposed development must be generally consistent with neighbouring dwellings.

- 14.7 The proposed building would not extend forward of the existing building line of the bungalow. It would be $2\frac{3}{4}$ storeys (with apartments in the roof) equating to an increase in height of approximately 4m to approx. 9.3m. This is a significant increase in height, however it is equivalent to the height of the block of 6 flats at 14 Golf Links Road immediately to the south. It is considered that the additional height can be accommodated on the plot without detriment to the character of the area in which there is a variety of bungalows and taller dwellings.
- 14.8 The building is of substantial bulk which is greater than neighbouring dwellings- nos. 10 Golf Links Road to the north and properties to the west are bungalows/chalet bungalows- but it has been designed so that it would generally appear as a single dwelling retaining a domestic character despite the additional storeys and significant depth. The architectural features include appropriate articulation of the elevations to reduce the visual impact of the mass of the property to an acceptable degree so that it will avoid an overbearing impact within the streetscene.
- 14.9 The landscaped area to the rear would generally be retained. Although opportunities for planting in front of the building would be reduced and a 2m high bin store will be created at the front of the site, the existing verge planting and new boundary planting would assist in maintaining a verdant frontage. Although Cypress and Cedar hedging along the eastern boundary is to be removed to facilitate the development, replacement hedging would be secured by condition to help reinforce the sense of enclosure characteristic of the SCA.

6. In order to promote and reinforce local distinctiveness, any redevelopment proposal must demonstrate that it has taken cognisance of the scale, form, proportions and materials of the original dwellings.

The existing dwelling on the site is a bungalow of little architectural merit. The dwellings identified by the SCA planning guidance that contribute to the character of the area are large, detached dwellings situated within large plots which the design seeks to reflect. The use of render is appropriate within the SCA.

7. New developments must sit comfortably in relation to neighbouring dwellings. The depth of proposed buildings must relate with adjacent buildings. Cognisance must also be made to the amenities of neighbouring gardens in respect to potential overlooking and any possible reduction in sunlight.

- 14.10 The proposed block of flats has a similar depth to the block of flats to the south, although that includes a single storey element to the rear, whereas the current design is $2\frac{3}{4}$ storeys tall for the whole footprint. The block is significantly deeper than the no. 10 to the north but it is judged that the articulated design can be accommodated without harm arising from loss of sunlight and overlooking; the impacts on neighbouring amenity can be controlled by condition. These matters are considered in more detail below.

8. Three-storey development will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that there is no adverse impact on adjacent dwellings or on the street scene, and where its bulk is sufficiently articulated in order to allow views into the site and backdrop tree-scape. Massing and floors-space must diminish at second floor level, as should the number of window openings.

- 14.11 Three storeys are proposed but the two top floor flats are contained within the roof space in a similar manner to other blocks of flats on Golf Links Road. The dormers on the southwest side and rear elevations are appropriately sized within the roof and the number of windows at second floor level are reduced. The main trees are to the front of the site.

9. New developments should contribute to the public realm by facing onto it behind landscaped amenity space, rather than being separated from it by utility buildings. Single or multiple garages, and associated hard-standings, should be discreetly sited at the side and/or rear.

- 14.12 The parking area in front of the block of flats and the position of the bin store close to the front boundary are contrary to this criterion, however it is noted that other properties in the vicinity are similarly served by frontage parking and the proposed hedge planting will achieve an appropriately softened appearance.

10. Access and hard-standings must not dominate the site or adversely affect existing amenity vegetation. It is important that the majority of the site (net of the building/s) remains as amenity space.

- 14.13 The existing hard-standing area in front of the property will be expanded to serve the additional units on the site, but the Council's tree officer is satisfied that the trees on the site can be appropriately protected and the majority of the site (net of the block of flats) will provide amenity space.

11. Existing narrow entrances and driveways should remain, as these maintain the street scene as well as reinforcing enclosure and privacy.

- 14.14 The proposal maintains a 2.5m (approx.) wide access.

12. Existing boundary vegetation must not be adversely affected by new development. Hedging must not be replaced with fences or walls. However, where hedging is absent a combination of hedging and walls or fencing may East Dorset District Council Policy Planning Division Supplementary Planning Guidance No. 27 (October 2005) be considered provided the hedging predominates. Evergreen hedging species should be used.

- 14.15 It is proposed that the front boundary will remain predominantly hedging except for a 3.6m (approx.) wide 2m high bin store to the south of the entrance which is anticipated to be screened by vegetation within the verge. Landscaping will be secured by condition.

13. A comprehensive landscape plan must accompany any application for redevelopment that follows the advice contained in SPG 20, 'Design Requirements for Landscaping Residential Areas'. In order to sustain the special character of the area it is vital that sufficient space is allocated for high quality amenity landscaping. This may include substantial

additional tree and under-storey plantings to reinforce the landscape around and within the site. This will be in addition to high quality landscape design around the new buildings, access and other hardstandings.

- 14.16 The application is accompanied by a plan identifying landscaping for ecology which shows the retention of the rear and northern hedging and trees on the site and the establishment of native species rich hedging at the front of the site. The scheme offers limited space at the front of the site for any additional planting, but a soft landscaping plan will be secured by condition to include new tree planting to the rear of the site to replace garden trees that are to be removed.

14. The initial site planning must include a detailed tree survey that identifies their exact location, species, height, spread and condition. An assessment of their age, amenity value and longevity should also be made and this information will help determine the location of new development. It is important that sufficient space is reserved for all trees to develop without causing problems for residents.

- 14.17 A detailed tree survey has been provided. The five Oak trees to the front of the site contribute to the character of the area but oak tree 001 identified for felling is category U with a life span of less than 10 years. To the rear seven category C trees- mostly silver birch are to be removed, with two silver birch retained. The submitted tree information has been considered by the Council's tree officer and highway tree officer who have raised no objection to the proposal subject to conditions relating to the protection of trees during the build.

15. Opportunities for the regeneration of similar major amenity trees must be identified on each development site. These may include planting groups of Scots and Monterey Pine and/or deciduous species such as oak, sweet chestnut and birch.

- 14.18 The ecology report identifies the planting of 6 new trees with a girth of 16-18cm to the rear of the site. A landscaping condition is proposed to secure appropriate species. The tree officer has suggested that Whitebeam be incorporated so an informative note is added.

16. It is important to preserve the soft landscape adjacent to the highway and avoid a 'fortress' appearance caused by high walls, entrance pillars and gates. Site entrances should remain low-key, retaining or restoring period features such as old gates if possible. Additional security measures should be discreet.

- 14.19 No gates are proposed as part of the application.

Summary

- 14.20 It is recognised that the depth and the bulk of the proposed development is greater than neighbouring properties so will not achieve an improved spatial relationship with neighbouring dwellings which is an aim of the New Road Special Character Area development criteria. Nevertheless, officers consider that the building scale is not inappropriate; the proposal will make efficient use of land in a manner which is sympathetic to the Special Character Area as the design will reference a substantial dwelling set back from the highway within a sylvan setting. It is recognised that the scale of the proposal reduces opportunities for high quality landscaping and replacement tree planting but, on

balance, taking into account the immediate context and proposed boundary and garden planting to be secured by condition, the scheme is judged to appropriately respect the identified features and characteristics of Special Character Area so complies with Policy HE2 of the Local Plan in this regard.

Impact on neighbour amenity

- 14.21 Policy HE2 requires that development should minimise general disturbance to amenity and NPPF paragraph 135 requires development to promote well-being and provide a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.
- 14.22 No. 10 Golf Links Road, to the north is a bungalow and to the west (482, 484 Ringwood Road) properties are single storey in height with first floor accommodation, while to the south, no. 14 has been developed with six flats in a similar 2³/₄ storey property. As noted above, the proposal would have an increase in height by approximately 4m and result in an additional 2 storeys of accommodation (one in the roof). The proposal would reduce the vegetation screening and introduce a development with significantly increased bulk so is likely to be perceived negatively by neighbours.
- 14.23 The proposed block of flats will extend across the site close to the northern boundary. At its closest it will be located approximately 2.5m from the garage of no. 10, but the depth of this closest element mirrors the depth of the garage and comprises a sloping roof which pulls the bulk away from the shared boundary. The building will have a substantial bulk and associated presence in views from number 10, especially at the front of the plot where the development extends approximately 10m forward of number 10 and lies approximately 4m from the boundary; at this point the plot is narrower, but with eaves and ridge heights equivalent to a two storey house the impact is not judged harmful.
- 14.24 A minimum separation distance of 4.5m is retained between the flank wall with no. 14 to the south and approximately 23.5m to the dwelling 484 Ringwood Road to the rear (west). Overall, the articulation and 5.6m high main eaves height and part pitched roof will help to avoid an overbearing impact and harmful overshadowing.
- 14.25 The proposal introduces windows on the first and second floors together with an increased intensity of use, but with a minimum distance of over 15.5m to the rear boundary and intervening boundary treatment, albeit reduced from the existing tree screening, it is not considered that the proposal would be demonstrably harmful in terms of overlooking and loss of privacy to the properties to the rear.
- 14.26 Some overlooking into the front garden of no. 10 is anticipated, but this area offers parking space and, adjoining the highway, it already has limited privacy. Although no. 10 has an attached garage on its southern side closest to the proposal this has a flat roof so it will not provide effective screening of the windows in the front and side elevations and it is considered necessary that the windows serving the en-suite in flat 6 and bedroom 2 in flat 5 should be obscured up to a height of 1.7m; the bedroom window wraps around so the part on the front elevation could provide outlook.
- 14.27 Rooflights will face onto the side of no. 10 which limit opportunities for harmful overlooking. To the rear, the flank wall is set in from the northern boundary approximately 13m which is

sufficient distance to avoid demonstrable harm to amenity for the occupants of no. 10 from views into their private garden space. A privacy screen on the balcony serving flat 5 positioned approximately 6.5m from the shared boundary is judged necessary to avoid direct overlooking of no. 10.

- 14.28 No. 14 to the south has first floor windows facing the application site serving living areas. Three of these are obscure glazed but the rear window is not obscured. As the flank walls will be less than 5m apart with opportunities for overlooking into ground floor windows and rear garden, it is necessary for the windows at first floor level to be obscured up to a height of 1.7m. Due to the angles involved, at second floor level obscuring the windows to 1.5m from finished floor level is judged sufficient to avoid harmful overlooking. The windows serve living and non-living spaces, and it is considered that this partial obscuring arrangement will provide the necessary balance between securing privacy and providing reasonable outlook for future occupiers. The ground floor window serving the communal access also needs to be obscured to prevent intervisibility with the first floor window serving no. 14.
- 14.29 Given that the site is located within the urban area, the increase in the number of residential units is not considered to result in demonstrable harm through disturbance and noise.
- 14.30 Subject to conditions the proposal is considered to comply with Policy HE2 in terms of the impact on neighbour amenity.

Parking and impact on highway safety

- 14.31 The Town Council and neighbours have objected on the grounds of road safety and insufficient parking. It is proposed that the parking to the flats would be to the front of the building. Objectors are concerned that the 10 spaces provided for the 8 flats is insufficient and will result in more on-street parking increasing danger for highway users. The provision of 8 unallocated parking spaces accords with the Council's residential parking standards so there is no conflict with policy KS12. A condition is proposed to require the provision of both vehicle and cycle parking and that the car parking shall remain unallocated. If parking does occur on the street, then it is reasonable to assume that it was be undertaken lawfully and although it is recognised that this can impact on visibility for vehicles entering the highway from private drives, on street parking can also act as traffic calming, reducing speeds. No demonstrable reduction in highway safety is anticipated from the proposal. If changes to the highway layout such as traffic calming is required, then this is a matter separate to this planning application.
- 14.32 Officers recognise that the replacement of single dwellings in the street with multi-occupancy units has increased traffic levels over the years, but the additional traffic from the proposed dwellings is not considered to have a significant adverse impact on the highway network. The road is served by a pavement for pedestrians, albeit only along its eastern extent north of the junction with Pringles Drive. The highways officer has raised no objection to the proposal subject to conditions which would be imposed.
- 14.33 It is understood that issues have arisen with parking and deliveries during development at number 14 Golf Links Road. A condition securing details of proposed construction method

statement is considered reasonable requiring the developer to identify details relating to site operative parking and deliveries.

- 14.34 The proposal accords with paragraph 115 of the NPPF and Policy KS11 of the Local Plan and is acceptable in highway safety terms.

Flood risk and drainage

- 14.35 Objectors have raised concern that the site suffers from surface water flooding. Dorset Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment suggests that the site is at risk of groundwater flooding while during the course of the application the Environment Agency's mapping was updated and shows potential surface water flood risk to the rear of the site in a 1 in 100 year event.
- 14.36 Trial pit testing has been undertaken on the site and this evidence supplemented by borehole testing on the adjacent site has demonstrated that the site itself is at a low risk of flooding from this source. A conceptual drainage scheme has been provided demonstrating that surface water can be appropriately managed using permeable paving and routing run off to a combined public sewer, thereby avoiding any increase in flood risk. Wessex Water has confirmed that they could accommodate the proposed run-off. Surface water management would be conditioned on a grant of permission.
- 14.37 The NPPF states that the sequential approach should be taken, with development located in areas with the lowest risk of flooding and the sequential test used where built development is located on an area that would be at risk of flooding. Officers requested further information about the risk of surface water flooding to the rear part of the site and were provided with supplementary details which confirmed that the surface water flooding could be up to 10cm deep in affected areas.
- 14.38 Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) expands on NPPF paragraph 175 explaining that a proportionate approach should be taken. *'Where a site-specific flood risk assessment demonstrates clearly that the proposed layout, design, and mitigation measures would ensure that occupiers and users would remain safe from current and future surface water flood risk for the lifetime of the development (therefore addressing the risks identified e.g. by Environment Agency flood risk mapping), without increasing flood risk elsewhere, then the sequential test need not be applied.'*
- 14.39 The Council's flood risk management engineer has confirmed that subject to conditions securing the proposed surface water management scheme and finished floor and ground levels, they do not envisage any flood risk on the site, nor is the development anticipated to increase flood risk elsewhere. A conceptual drainage scheme has been provided, and the submission of and adherence to a detailed drainage scheme would be conditioned on a grant of permission. The proposal is therefore considered acceptable in terms of flood risk and drainage as it accords with the aims of policy ME6 of the Core Strategy and the more recent flood risk policy contained in the NPPF and PPG.

Impact on Habitat Sites

- 14.40 The site lies beyond 400m but within 5km of heathland which forms part of the internationally protected Dorset Heaths Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Dorset Heathlands Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar site. The proposal would represent a net increase in dwellings, associated with significant effects on the heathland as set out in the Dorset Heathlands Planning Framework Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and the Dorset Heathlands Interim Air Quality Strategy.
- 14.41 Additionally, the site lies within 13.8km of sites which make up the New Forest SAC and SPA. Within this proximity a net increase in residential units is anticipated to result in harm from recreational impacts as set out in the New Forest Strategic Access Management & Monitoring (SAMM) Strategy 2023 report.
- 14.42 An appropriate assessment has concluded that mitigation can be secured in accordance with the Dorset Heathlands SPD and the Interim Air Quality Strategy via the Community Infrastructure Levy. A planning obligation will be required to secure the New Forest SAMM mitigation identified by the draft New Forest SAMM strategy. Mitigation for impacts on Dorset Heathlands will be taken from CIL. Subject to securing this mitigation the application accords with policies ME1, ME2, and NPPF paragraph 193.

Impacts on Biodiversity

- 14.43 The application is supported by an Ecology assessment certified by the Council's Natural Environment Team. This identifies that the demolition of the dwelling will result in the loss of three day roosts for individual brown long-eared, common pipistrelle and soprano pipistrelle bats. The work will take place under a European Protected Species licence. Temporary bat boxes will be required to be erected on site prior to works commencing and a replacement bat loft will be provided within the cycle store roof space together with new bat tubes in the block of flats. External lighting will be controlled to mitigate impacts on bats.
- 14.44 Other species with the potential to be affected are nesting birds, reptiles and common amphibians and hedgehogs. Mitigation to be provide will include native trees, hedgehog holes in fences, nest boxes and a reptile hibernacula in the grassland area near the cycle store. Additional enhancement includes bee bricks and sparrow terraces.
- 14.45 As the application was received valid prior to the requirement to provide Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) it is exempt from the need to provide BNG.

Other matters

- 14.46 Disruption for neighbours during construction would be for a temporary period and therefore is not a material planning consideration that can be given any weight in the assessment.
- 14.47 It has been claimed that there is no need for the development as other flats in the area are not selling. The financial viability of the development is not a material planning consideration and therefore would not constitute a reason for refusal.
- 14.48 Officers have checked the submitted site plan against the Land Registry polygons and have not identified any discrepancy. Boundary disputes are not a material planning consideration.

- 14.49 Concerns have been raised by the town council about fire risk. Dorset and Wiltshire Fire and Rescue were consulted on the application and have identified that the development will be required to meet Building Regulations which is a matter separate to planning.

Environmental implications

- 14.50 The application is accompanied by a sustainability assessment which confirms the applicant's intentions to exceed the building regulations in relation to energy efficiency. Allowances have been made for the installation of air source, ground source and photovoltaic renewable energy provision but none are currently shown on the plans; a more detailed energy report is proposed to be commissioned prior to construction.

15. Summary of issues and the planning balance

The proposed development would deliver a net increase of seven residential units within an established and sustainable urban location. In the context of the Council's housing supply position, this carries moderate weight as a public benefit. The proposal also makes efficient use of previously developed residential land and would contribute to the maintenance of housing delivery within the settlement.

When applying the tilted balance required by paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF, it is necessary to weigh these benefits against the adverse impacts identified. While the proposal gives rise to some harm in respect of character and intensity of development within the Special Character Area, that harm has been assessed as limited and does not engage policies in the Framework that indicate development should be refused.

Taken as a whole, the adverse impacts of the proposal do not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies of the Framework. Accordingly, having regard to the presumption in favour of sustainable development, it is concluded that planning permission should be granted subject to conditions and the completion of the required legal agreement to secure New Forest Habitat Site mitigation.

16. Recommendation

To delegate authority to the Corporate Director for Planning, the Service Manager for Development Management & Enforcement or the Eastern Team Development Management Area Manager to:

A) Grant, subject to the completion of a legal agreement under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) in a form to be agreed by the Legal Services manager to secure the following:

- New Forest SAMM Mitigation in the form of £400 per unit

And the following conditions.

1. The development to which this permission relates must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this permission.

Reason: This condition is required to be imposed by Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

1877R1/100 I Proposed site plan

1877R1/101 Location plan & block plan

1877R1/104 F Proposed floor plans

1877R1/106C C Proposed cycle store floor plans & elevations

1877R1/107a P Proposed bin store floor plans & elevations

1877R1/108b P Proposed outbuilding floor plans & elevations

1877R1/105 F Proposed Elevations

1877R1/109 P Site Sections

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

3. Prior to the commencement of development, a detailed surface water management scheme for the site shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall
 - (a) be based upon the site specific hydrological and hydrogeological context of the development
 - (b) incorporate sustainable drainage principles in accordance with the current DEFRA non-statutory technical standards for Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)
 - (c) demonstrate that surface water will be managed during construction and for the lifetime of the development without increasing flood risk on or offsite and
 - (d) include details of future maintenance and management arrangements.

The approved scheme shall be implemented in full prior to first occupation and thereafter maintained in accordance with the approved details. Reason: To prevent the increased risk of flooding and to protect water quality and to take into account current national standards for SuDS.

4. Prior to the commencement of development, a Construction Method Statement (CMS) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The CMS must include:
 - the parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors
 - loading and unloading of plant and materials
 - storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development
 - Routing of construction and delivery vehicles.
 - Measures to control dust, noise and vibration; and
 - Hours of demolition and construction work.

The approved Construction Method Statement shall be adhered to throughout the construction period for the development.

Reason: To minimise the likely impact of construction traffic on the surrounding highway network.

5. Prior to development above damp course level, a soft landscaping and planting scheme including trees shall be submitted to, and approved in writing, by the Local Planning Authority. The approved scheme shall be implemented in full during the planting season November - March following commencement of the development or within a timescale to be agreed in

writing with the Local Planning Authority. If any plants are found to be damaged, dead or dying within the first 5 years then these shall be replaced in the next planning season.

Reason: In the interest of visual amenity and the character of the area.

6. Before any equipment, materials or machinery are brought onto the site for the purposes of development, a pre-commencement site meeting between the Tree Officer, Arboricultural Consultant and Site Manager shall take place to:

a) confirm the protection of trees on and adjacent to the site in accordance with the Arboricultural Impact Appraisal and Method Statement prepared by Hayden's Arboricultural Consultants ref: 10597 dated 20.12.2023, and

b) agree the contents of an arboricultural supervision statement including notification requirements.

The tree protection shall be positioned as shown on the Tree Protection Plan, ref: 10597-D-AIA dated 15.12.2023 before any equipment, materials or machinery are brought onto the site for the purposes of the development

Reason: This meeting is required prior to commencement of development in the interests of tree protection.

7. The tree protection shall be retained on site until the development is completed. Nothing shall be placed within the fencing, nor shall any ground levels be altered or excavations made without the written consent of the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be undertaken in accordance with the arboricultural supervision statement approved at the pre-commencement meeting which shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority on completion of development.

Reason: In the interests of tree protection.

8. The development hereby permitted shall be implemented strictly in accordance with the recommendations and requirements in the ecology report titled Ecology & Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment by ABR Ecology dated 8 October 2024, and certified by the Dorset Council Natural Environment Team on 10 June 2025.

The development hereby approved must not be first brought into use unless and until:

i) the recommendations detailed in section 5 of the approved ecology report have been completed in full, in accordance with any specified timetable, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority (LPA), and

ii) written evidence demonstrating compliance has been submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA.

The development shall subsequently be implemented entirely in accordance with the approved ecology report and thereafter the approved mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures must be permanently maintained and retained in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To mitigate and compensate for impacts on ecological receptors, and to provide biodiversity gains.

9. Before the development is occupied or utilised the first 5.00 metres of the vehicle access, measured from the rear edge of the highway (excluding the vehicle crossing - see the Informative Note below), must be laid out and constructed to a specification submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that a suitably surfaced and constructed access to the site is provided that prevents loose material being dragged and/or deposited onto the adjacent carriageway causing a safety hazard.

10. Before the development hereby approved is occupied or utilised the turning/manoeuvring and parking shown on Drawing Number 1877R1/100 rev I must have been constructed. Thereafter, these areas must be permanently maintained, kept free from obstruction and available for the purposes specified. Parking spaces must remain unallocated.

Reason: To ensure the proper and appropriate development of the site and to ensure that highway safety is not adversely impacted upon.

11. Before the development is occupied or utilised the cycle parking facilities shown on Drawing Number 1877R1/100 rev I must have been constructed. Thereafter, these must be maintained, kept free from obstruction and available for the purposes specified.

Reason: To ensure the proper construction of the parking facilities and to encourage the use of sustainable transport modes.

12. Notwithstanding the notation on the approved elevation plans, prior to first occupation the glass in the following windows shall be obscured to a minimum equivalent of industry standard level 3 up to 1.7m in height from the finished floor level of the room the window serves:

- i) the ground floor window on the southwest side elevation serving communal space
- ii) all first floor windows in the southwest side elevation
- iii) the first floor window on the northeast side elevation serving bedroom 2 of flat 5
- iv) the first floor window on the northeast side elevation serving the ensuite of flat 6

And glass in the following windows shall be obscured to a minimum equivalent of industry standard level 3 up to 1.5m in height from the finished floor level of the room the window serves:

- v) the second floor dormer windows in the southwest side elevation

All the windows listed above shall be fixed shut or hung so that they open in accordance with details that have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The windows shall be retained to accord with this condition thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of neighbouring amenity

13. Prior to the first occupation of the balcony serving flat 5, a 1.8m high obscure glazed privacy screen shall be installed along the depth of the northeast side elevation of the balcony. The screen shall thereafter be retained.

Reason: To limit the impact of overlooking on neighbouring amenity

14. There shall be no external lighting of the site unless a lighting scheme that accords with details set out at 4.30 of the ecology report titled Ecology & Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment by ABR Ecology dated 8 October 2024 has first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of protected species

Informative notes

To include:

1. Biodiversity Net Gain

The effect of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that planning permission granted for development of land in England is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition (biodiversity gain condition) that development may not begin unless:

- (a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and
- (b) the planning authority has approved the plan.

The planning authority, for the purposes of determining whether to approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan, if one is required in respect of this permission would be Dorset Council.

There are statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not always apply. These are listed in full in a subsequent informative below.

Based on the information available this permission is considered to be one which will not require the approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development is begun because one or more of the statutory exemptions or transitional arrangements are considered to apply.

- The permission which has been granted is for development which is exempt being:
- Development which is not 'major development' (within the meaning of article 2(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015) where:
 - i) the application for planning permission was made before 2 April 2024;

Read more about Biodiversity Net Gain at <https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/w/biodiversity-net-gain>

2. The applicant is advised that trees T003 and T004 are confirmed highway trees. Management of the trees has already been identified and no works will be required by the developer.

To ensure compliance with statutory protections, the developer must not store materials, plant, or park vehicles on the highway verge during construction or during any consented tree works, as this could result in damage to the root protection areas of both highway trees and protected trees, contrary to:

- Regulation 5 of the Town and Country Planning (Tree Preservation) (England) Regulations 2012, which prohibits damage to protected trees, and
- Section 148 of the Highways Act 1980, which protects highway land from obstruction and damage.

Any access required from the public highway, specifically if needed for the removal of T001, would require the developer to obtain the appropriate Road Space Licence from the Dorset Council Traffic Team, in accordance with the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991.

For avoidance of doubt, all works must also adhere to the principles of BS 5837:2012, Trees in relation to design, demolition, and construction, particularly in respect of root protection areas and construction impacts.

3. In relation to condition 5, it is anticipated that the trees to be planted will include a Whitebeam.

OR

B) Refuse permission for the reasons set out below if the agreement is not completed by 20 November 2026 or such extended time as agreed by the Corporate Director for Planning, the Service Manager for Development Management & Enforcement or the Eastern Area Development Management Area Manager.

1. The site is within the recreational impact zone for the New Forest Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Area (SPA), and Ramsar where the proposed additional residential accommodation, in combination with other development, is likely to have a significant effect on the integrity of the protected sites. A commuted sum secured via a s106 legal agreement is required to accord with the New Forest SAMM Strategy 2025. No legal agreement has been signed and in the absence of mitigation, the Council cannot be satisfied that there would be no harm to the New Forest SAC, SPA, and Ramsar so the proposal is contrary to policy ME1 of the Christchurch and East Dorset Local Plan and paragraph 193 of the National Planning Policy Framework.