

EASTERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 22 JULY 2026

Present: Cllrs David Tooke (Chair), Duncan Sowry-House (Vice-Chair), Alex Brenton, Ray Bryan, Toni Coombs, Beryl Ezzard, Scott Florek, David Morgan, Julie Robinson, Andy Skeats and Gary Suttle

Apologies: Cllrs Hannah Hobbs-Chell

Also present: Cllr Spencer Flower

Also present remotely: Cllr Shane Bartlett

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

Elizabeth Adams (Development Management Team Leader), Marianne Ashworth (Lawyer - Regulatory), Kim Cowell (Development Management Area Manager (East)), Joshua Kennedy (Democratic and Governance Officer), Ellie Lee (Planning Officer), Megan Rochester (Senior Democratic & Governance Services Officer), Naomi Shinkins (Lead Project Officer) and Cari Wooldridge (Planning Officer)

19. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Morgan declared that he had an interest in application P/LBC/2026/03245 and P/ADV/2026/02975 due to his role as a trustee for the Museum of East Dorset and left the room for the deliberation of these items.

Cllr Suttle declared a pecuniary interest in application P/HOU/2026/01416 and withdrew from the meeting for the deliberation of this item.

20. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 24 June were confirmed and signed.

21. Registration for public speaking and statements

Representations by the public to the Committee on individual planning applications are detailed below. There were no questions, petitions or deputations received on other items on this occasion.

22. P/MPO/2026/00670 - Land To The South Of Howe Lane, Verwood, Dorset, BH31 6JF

The Lead Project Officer presented the application seeking modification of the Section 106 agreement to remove the affordable housing obligation associated with the development. It was noted that the application had been referred to

Committee in accordance with the Dorset Council Constitution due to the proposed reduction in community benefit.

The site location and surrounding context were shown on a map, with the application site outlined in red. Members were reminded of the planning history of the site and in particular an outline application for 29 homes (LPA reference 3/13/0674/OUT), which had been refused by East Dorset District Council in 2015 before being allowed on appeal in 2016. A reserved matters application (3/19/0019/RM) was subsequently approved by Committee in 2019.

Plans were displayed identifying the affordable housing units currently secured through the legal agreement, together with examples of the approved dwellings. Members were advised that the existing agreement required the delivery of 11 affordable housing units, but the applicant was seeking to remove this requirement in its entirety on viability grounds.

It was reported that one objection had been received from neighbouring residents. Objections had also been submitted by the Town Council and the Ward Member. Although the Housing Officer had initially objected to the proposal, they had subsequently acknowledged that the provision of affordable housing was not viable based on the evidence submitted.

The applicant had identified a number of abnormal and increased costs associated with the development, including the diversion of a water drain over a distance of approximately 50 metres, non-standard drainage requirements across the site, the construction of a sacrificial road to protect retained trees during development, the provision of heat pumps, and increases in construction and labour costs.

The key findings of the independent viability review undertaken by the District Valuer Service were outlined to members. The District Valuer had adopted a higher gross development value than that suggested by the applicant, while also applying lower construction, external works and abnormal cost assumptions. The District Valuer's assessment of policy requirements was approximately £200,000 lower than that advanced by the applicant. It was also noted that the development was not liable for Community Infrastructure Levy payments.

A viability matrix had been used to test the conclusions and was found to support the District Valuer Service assessment. The Lead Project Officer advised that viability would only improve sufficiently to support affordable housing provision if sales values increased by approximately 10 per cent and construction costs reduced by approximately 10 per cent. Reference was also made to the Planning Inspector's observations on another appeal scheme at 184 Ringwood Road, noting that the viability information supporting the Christchurch and East Dorset Local Plan was considered to be out of date.

It was further noted that the Section 106 agreement was more than five years old, meaning that the Council was obliged to consider whether the affordable housing requirement continued to serve a useful purpose. It was concluded that the viability evidence submitted and independently reviewed demonstrated that the affordable housing obligation rendered the development unviable. It was therefore

recommended that the affordable housing requirement be removed as the benefits of delivering housing in general outweighed the loss of the affordable housing.

Public representation was received from the ward member, Cllr Flower. He raised concern about the removal of affordable housing provision from the development and considered that the developer should have known about the costs involved earlier in the process.

In response to questions from members officers and the District Valuer provided the following responses:

- Building costs were increasing faster than house prices, which was contributing to the lack of viability of the scheme.
- Some foundations for the dwellings had been started, but no houses had been delivered at this point.
- A quantity surveyor had reviewed the costs for the development, using several different tools and databases to inform their conclusion.
- The details of why the development hadn't yet been built were not known.
- Members were being asked to determine whether the modification to the s106 agreement was acceptable or not and no other aspect of the development was being considered.
- There was no opportunity to apply a viability review clause.
- The NPPF set out the methodology for conducting a viability review and the benchmark land value was considered in that rather than the purchase price of the land.
- There was a 5 step process that was followed to determine the benchmark land value.
- The cost database used for determining costs was a tool regulated by the RICS and was not the only tool used by the quantity surveyors.
- Then assessment carried out by the District Valuer Service was based on 100% of homes being sold as open market housing. This returned approximately 10% profit level, which was below the target level set out on national policy.

Having had the opportunity to discuss the merits of the application and an understanding of all this entailed; having considered the officer's report and presentation; the written representatives; and what they had heard at the meeting, it was proposed by Cllr Sowry-House and seconded by Cllr Robinson that the application be refused, on the basis that provision of affordable housing would still serve a useful purpose and on balance it was not outweighed by the wider public benefit of the provision of open market housing, given the wider need of affordable housing in Dorset, as demonstrated by the waiting list for affordable housing.

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

23. P/HOU/2026/01416 - Saltwinds, Belle Vue Road, Swanage, BH19 2HP

The meeting Adjourned 11:22 – 11:36.

Cllr Suttle left the room at 11:36.

The Planning Officer presented the application for extensions and alterations to provide additional ground and first floor accommodation, a new hipped roof incorporating a second-floor loft room and covered balcony, together with the refurbishment of outbuildings. It was noted that an objection had been received from Swanage Town Council.

The site was identified on a map and was noted to lie within the Dorset National Landscape but outside the Conservation Area. Members were shown photographs of the property, which comprised a detached dwelling with partial two-storey form. A converted garage was located to the side of the dwelling. It was explained that the property had originated as a backland development and remained relatively unassuming in character, not appearing prominent within the landscape or wider views. It remained subservient to the larger neighbouring property, Craig-y-Don.

The proposed development comprised ground and first floor extensions to the south and west elevations, together with the creation of a loft room within a new pitched roof. The proposal also sought to retain the existing outbuilding and demolish the existing garage.

It was explained that an earlier application had proposed a substantially larger two-storey extension and an external staircase. That scheme had been withdrawn following officer concerns regarding its scale, massing and potential overlooking impacts on neighbouring properties. Pre-application advice had subsequently been provided, resulting in a significantly reduced scheme. Members were shown the evolution of the roof design together with the existing and proposed site plans. The revised proposal also included the installation of a heat pump and solar panels. It was noted that the site lay within the settlement boundary and that officers had worked closely with the applicant to secure a scheme of reduced size, scale and mass. The revised design retained visual openness to the side of the property.

Neighbour objections had focused principally on the height of the proposed hipped roof and the extension of the flat-roofed element. Officers considered that, following amendments to the scheme, neither the hipped roof nor the flat roof extension were overbearing within the street scene. Whilst acknowledging that the roof design was not considered exceptional, officers regarded the proposal as achieving a more cohesive overall appearance.

The site was located outside the Conservation Area and would not affect any heritage assets. The proposed materials would match the existing dwelling, and the visual impact of the extensions would remain largely read within the context of the larger Craig-y-Don building. The proposal was therefore considered to conserve and enhance the purposes of the Dorset National Landscape. No objections had been received from the Council's Tree Officer, biodiversity enhancements would be secured by condition, and no highway objections had been raised.

The impact on neighbouring amenity was assessed in detail. Objections had raised concerns regarding loss of privacy, overlooking, overbearing impacts and the proposed decking area to the rear. Plans illustrating separation distances between properties were shown. Existing trees along the site boundaries provided a degree of screening. It was noted that Longhouse was already overlooked by neighbouring properties and that there was an existing degree of mutual overlooking between surrounding dwellings. It was therefore concluded that any additional loss of privacy arising from the proposal would not be substantially worse than the existing situation.

The relationship with Peveril Court was also considered, with it noted that views from the proposed second-floor balcony would primarily be directed northwards. Plans were displayed showing the relationship with Craig-y-Don, and officers concluded that the proposal would not result in an unacceptable loss of light. A bathroom window facing eastwards was proposed, and a condition requiring obscure glazing was recommended.

Concerns had also been raised by residents of Craig-y-Don regarding the proposed decking. It was explained that an area of raised decking had previously existed on the site but had since been removed. The proposal sought to reinstate decking at a slightly higher level, although it would not be taller than the previous structure. An obscure glazed privacy screen was proposed to prevent direct views into the garden of Craig-y-Don. A condition would require the screen to be installed and retained, which was considered to represent an improvement over the existing situation.

It was concluded that the revised, smaller-scale scheme better integrated the different roof forms and represented an acceptable design. It was considered that the impacts on neighbouring amenity had been appropriately addressed and that the proposal was considered acceptable.

Public representation was received in objection to the application from, Dr Gavin Rider, on behalf of the residents of Craig-y-Don and Amy Blout. The concerns raised about the application included; the use of the flat roof area as a terrace by future occupants of the dwelling; the lawfulness of the previous decking and the impact of the new decking area and screen, which would sit above the height of the boundary wall to Craig-y-Don; the large dormer window and the overall height and scale of the development.

Michele Coral also spoke, as the applicant. She noted that the first application had been withdrawn following concerns from neighbours and the new application had significantly reduced the scale of the proposal. There was also no intention of using the roof area as a terrace and solar panels would be installed on the flat roof area, preventing any recreational use.

In response to the public speakers the Planning Officer clarified that the original application was more substantial and had been scaled back following pre-application advice. Conditions recommended in the report prevented additional windows and also prevented use of the flat roof for recreational purposes. An obscure screen was proposed to prevent overlooking from the decking, this was in

preference to planting which would be difficult to control through planning conditions.

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

- The dwelling in its current condition was a two-bedroom property and it would be extended to a three-bedroom property, but outbuildings would be removed
- The roof height was 8m above finished floor level although land levels varied.
- Planning permission was required for the decking as it was over 0.3m in height.
- The loft room would provide access to the covered balcony, but there would not be direct access onto the flat roof.
- There would be a distance of 23m from the balcony to the nearest neighbouring property.
- An obscure glazed screen would provide a reliable screen whereas there was insufficient room for planting and it could not be relied upon; it would need to be managed.

It was proposed by Cllr Ezzard and seconded by Cllr Coombs that the application be granted.

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

24. P/LBC/2026/03245 - Museum of East Dorset High Street, Wimborne Minster, Dorset, BH21 1HR

Cllr Suttle returned to the meeting at 12:29.

Cllr Morgan left the meeting at 12:28.

The committee agreed to extend the meeting beyond three hours.

The Planning Officer presented both the Listed Building Consent and Advertisement Consent applications together. The proposals sought alterations to the existing fascia signage and the addition of a new painted fascia sign. It was noted that both applications had been brought before the Committee as the site was located on Dorset Council-owned land.

The site location was shown, identifying the museum within Wimborne. Members were advised that the property was situated within the main urban area, within the primary shopping area and within the Wimborne Minster Conservation Area. Reference was made to the Historic England listing description of the building, and it was noted that another listed building was located immediately to the north of the application site.

Existing elevations were displayed, showing the current signage arrangements, which comprised green fascia signage and two hanging signs. Proposed elevations were then presented, illustrating signage painted directly onto the fascia panels. The proposed signage would be painted in a sympathetic green colour and would include revised wording. The existing hanging signs would be retained.

It was advised that the proposed works would not result in harm to the Grade II listed building or the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The

impact on amenity was considered acceptable and compliant with local and national planning policies. It was further noted that the proposals would not give rise to any public safety concerns. Photographs were shown demonstrating the museum within the context of the High Street and its surrounding townscape.

In response to a question from one member, the Planning Officer confirmed that the signs would be painted onto the fascia, which were attached to the buildings.

It was proposed by Cllr Skeats and seconded by Cllr Coombs that the application be granted.

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

25. **P/ADV/2026/02975 - Museum of East Dorset High Street, Wimborne Minster, Dorset, BH21 1HR**

It was proposed by Cllr Skeats and seconded by Cllr Coombs that the application be granted.

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

26. **Urgent items**

There were no urgent items.

27. **Exempt Business**

There was no exempt business.

Decision List

Duration of meeting: 10.00 am - 12.39 pm

Chairman

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