

MINUTES of the meeting of the PLANNING COMMITTEE held in Mountfield, Bridport on Monday 3 September 2018 at 7.00 p.m.

PRESENT            Cllr    Sarah Williams (in the chair)

                          Cllrs:  Geoffrey Ackerman            Barry Irvine  
    Jeremy Brodie                            Julian Jones  
    Terry Harrison                          Anne Rickard  
    Dave Rickard

### **PUBLIC FORUM**

The following people spoke in the Public Forum:

Mr James Tigg spoke in respect of application WD/D/18/001566, which he said was not lawful and required planning permission. His address is shown at Appendix 1 to these minutes.

Mr Barry Bates spoke regarding a consultation on a review of the West Dorset Local Plan, being carried out by West Dorset District Council. He urged the Town Council to take a wide view of the consultation, and to take a lead on the review. He argued that the result of relative inaction on, and slowness in responding to the last review of the Local Plan was large scale development with insufficient supporting infrastructure. He advised that changes since the last review, including the development of a Neighbourhood Plan, would give greater community influence than was previously possible. Mr Bates said he was concerned that West Dorset District Council simply wanted more houses, driven by targets and not by local need. He urged the Town Council to form a clear view of what Bridport could and would accept.

Mr Philip Carney also spoke regarding the Local Plan consultation. His address is shown at Appendix 2 to these minutes.

Mr Glenn Crawford also spoke regarding the Local Plan consultation. His address is shown at Appendix 3 to these minutes.

Mr Richard Freer also spoke regarding the Local Plan consultation. His address is shown at Appendix 4 to these minutes.

### **28. APOLOGIES**

No apologies for absence were received.

### **29. MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 30 July 2018 were confirmed as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**30. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No personal interests or disclosable pecuniary interests were declared by members present.

**31. PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

RESOLVED: that the recommendations set out in column 4 of the attached [schedule A](#) be forwarded to the District Council.

**32. PLANNING DECISIONS**

The Town Clerk reported for information, the planning decisions received relating to applications previously considered by the Committee, ENCL: 3337.

RESOLVED: that the planning decisions be noted.

**33. BRIDPORT AREA NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

The Town Clerk reported that a draft response to a consultation on the Submission Draft of the Bridport Area Neighbourhood Plan had been circulated prior to the meeting. The comments were the result of two working group meetings held to consider the document.

Members considered the draft response, and

RESOLVED: that the Council Leader and Town Clerk finalise the Town Council's submission under delegation.

RESOLVED: that Cllrs Maggie Ray and Anne Rickard be thanked for their work in proof-reading the document.

RESOLVED: that the Neighbourhood Plan Joint Council Committee and the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group be thanked for their work to date in developing the plan.

**34. WEST DORSET , WEYMOUTH & PORTLAND LOCAL PLAN REVIEW**

The Town Clerk reported that a consultation by West Dorset District Council, regarding a review of the West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan, was under way. Details of the consultation had been tabled with the agenda for the meeting. Responses were required by 8<sup>th</sup> October 2018, and the Town Clerk asked members to consider the appropriate process for agreeing the Town Council's submission.

Councillors considered possible approaches, taking account of the comments made during the Public Forum prior to the meeting, and

RESOLVED: that a working group, open to all town councillors, be established and that two meetings be scheduled for detailed consideration of the consultation.

RESOLVED: that links to online documentation relevant to the consultation be circulated to all councillors.

RESOLVED: that a familiarisation event be held in Bucky Doo Square, prior to 13<sup>th</sup> September, to encourage public participation in the consultation.

RESOLVED: that a press release be issued promoting public engagement in the consultation.

RESOLVED: that West Dorset District Council be advised of the Town Council's plans to promote community engagement with the consultation.

Cllr Dave Rickard said he refuted the suggestion made during the Public Forum that the Town Council had been too slow in reacting to the previous review of the Local Plan. He said that brownfield sites had not been put forward for housing by the County Council at that time as none was considered available, but that this was not the case now.

### **35. COMMUNICATIONS AND ONGOING ISSUES**

The Town Clerk reported that residents of cottages at East Cliff, West Bay, had been contacted by West Dorset District Council regarding proposals to merge the parking area outside the cottages with the existing pay and display car park at East Beach. The letter to residents had advised that residents' parking permits would be made available at a cost of £140 per annum. The matter had been raised with the Town Clerk at a meeting of the West Bay Community Forum. A copy of the letter sent to residents was tabled for consideration by the committee.

As this was an information item, no decision was made but members expressed concern that this proposal had been made at a time when there were existing concerns regarding West Beach Car Park, including its use overnight by caravans and motorhomes, and without prior consultation with the Town Council. Cllr Sarah Williams urged district councillors to put pressure on the District Council to retain the existing parking arrangements for residents.

The Clerk advised that he would be writing to the District Council to highlight the concerns raised during the discussion.

The meeting closed at **8.16pm**.

**The next meeting of the Planning Committee will be held on 24 September 2018**

## Public Forum Address by Mr James Tigg

Referring to the govt. website: The applicants wish to confirm that what they are proposing is lawful i.e. it would not require express planning permission.

They are trying to establish that what they propose does not constitute development, is 'permitted development', or already has planning permission.

Given this fact none of these reasons apply here, the logic of this request is totally baffling and I suspect is a try-on.

Further, the view of Jean Marshall in her letter giving pre-advice to the applicant was that this is likely to need to be a Planning **not** Lawfulness application.

In fact the request for approval of toilets was withdrawn from WD/D/17/002091 which was a Full Planning Application so why is it now a Lawfulness application?

Key points of note are:

- The application text claims this is a 'Railway Hut' – it is a towable Shepherds Hut recently moved to the site. It has no 'Railway History' whatsoever!
- The use of a Shepherd's Hut converted to a toilet in the location proposed is not in keeping with Conservation Area policies.
- The location plan does not show the distance from the Station building, any steps or access platform, and the bin area. It does not show how the sewerage will be tied in.
- Based on their **so-called** 'Location Plan' the toilets could be put wherever they want.
- The proposed location is crossed by a Public Right of Way. This Right of Way is invariably crowded with their bins and cars; toilets here would exacerbate these obstructions.
- It is noted that the 3 Photomontages could not be viewed on the WDDC website so this lawfulness application cannot, anyway, be properly scrutinised.

Finally – I am concerned that the approach to the development of this area is intentionally piecemeal, evidenced by the fact that the toilets and other items were originally included then withdrawn from a formal planning application.

I, and I also speak on behalf of Ann and Matthew Lunn and Mr. Harley, conclude that this proposal must be submitted as a formal Full Planning Application complete with detailed design.

Thank you

### **Public Forum Address by Mr Philip Carney**

The Local Plan review gives an opportunity to correct the mistake of including Vearse Farm as a site for development. It should never have been included because it fails the 'exceptional circumstances' and 'public interest' tests in the NPPF.

At 930 houses it will be by far the biggest housing estate built on AONB land, which is supposed to be given the highest level of protection.

The updated NPPF and housing white paper emphasise that AONB can only be built on when all other reasonable options have been fully examined. But the council didn't even have a brownfield site register when Vearse Farm was included in the plan.

In 2013 the High Court overturned the planning permission granted in an AONB at Mevaggissey. The judge stated that housing need - even exceptional need, which has not been proven here - does not necessarily equate to 'exceptional circumstances', especially when there are alternatives that would cause less damage.

A 2017 Supreme Court ruling also confirmed that the AONB protections cannot be overruled by the need for housing.

The NPPF states that the exceptional circumstances have to be fully evidenced and justified. The district council and the government inspector failed to do this. The only reason given was "the need for growth from both a national and local perspective".

From the two judgments I've referred to 'exceptional' has to mean 'exceptional' and not the government's general desire for growth. It is clear from those rulings that building 600 open market houses on AONB - simply for profit - can never be justified and would be unlawful.

Part of this review is to "consider whether any policy in the local plan is out of date having regard to national policy". Current national policies and legal precedent give you the means to prevent this disastrous development.

## **Public Forum Address by Mr Glenn Crawford**

1. The Local Plan is a very long document, its contents and language will be unfamiliar to most residents. To comment usefully therefore, people need to know what lies behind the simple choices which the Review offers. For instance, there is a Sustainability Review which underpins things like growth rates, and an update to the Objectivity Assessed Need for housing numbers, both of which strongly influence the Review.

The Town Council has the capacity to understand all this and to explain it in layman's terms without bias.

2. The West Dorset District Council roadshow should be an opportunity for people to ask probing questions – it shouldn't be the first contact people have with the Local Plan and its multiple choice questions
3. Too few people feel a sense of involvement, that it's worth turning out or sending in a comment. The Town Council can foster an understanding that decisions made by the Review will affect their daily lives for years to come, and if they don't take part, those decisions will be made for them by people they don't know.

## Public Forum Address by Mr Richard Freer

Could I ask the planning committee to seriously consider the extra 170 houses referred to on page 250 of the proposed Local Plan revision ! How can this increase be justified by WDDC ?

At a previous WDDC roadshow in March 2017, I asked of the WDDC representative, how are the housing need figures generated? *Purely on the expected ingress of economic migrants to the area, I was told !*

Surely this is a tenuous reply ?

Furthermore, I believe a paradox has recently been demonstrated by WDDC. If one compares the revised Local Plan with WDDC's recently published August 2018 Local Plan Sustainability Review, the table on pages 123 and 124 commonly cites...."*potentially unacceptable impacts upon the Dorset AONB and heritage assets.*"

This refers to sites BR 1 to BR 10. BR 2 being Vearse Farm and BR 10 being the recently proposed Eco Village at Watton Hill. The authors add, referring to Vearse Farm, that...*Development at this site will result in the loss of Grade II ('very good') agricultural land !*"

Have Council considered this dilemma ?

Finally, the revised Local Plan cites...

3.3.11

On page 81, policy SUS1 establishes a requirement for 15,880 new (net additional) homes during the period 2016 to 2036. The local plan review provides land for around 19,016 new homes during this period, which is significantly above this objectively assessed need. Why I ask ?

Thank you

It is anticipated that the allocations north of Dorchester and west of Sherborne will provide a further 1,525 new homes after 2036 in addition to the 2,460 new homes indicated previously. The sources of the overall housing supply for the period from 2016 to 2036.