

MINUTES of the meeting of the PLANNING COMMITTEE held at Mountfield, Bridport on Monday 4 November 2024 at 7.00pm.

PRESENT Cllr Ian Bark (in the chair)

Cllrs: Nigel Amor, Jonathan Bourbon, Sarah Carney, Kelvin Clayton, Anna Killick, Paddy Mooney, Anne Rickard and David Worthington.

ALSO PRESENT: Cllrs Dave Bolwell, Ann Langridge, and Bev Thornton (not committee members).  
39 members of the public, Sandra Goldsmith (Bradpole Ward Clerk), and Will Austin (Town Clerk).

### **PUBLIC FORUM**

Jan Parker spoke objecting to planning application P/FUL/2024/04613 for a retirement development at land off South Street, Bridport. She highlighted the size of the development, which she regarded as overdevelopment and oversupply, and raised concerns about flood risk and the risk to elderly people from the raised nature of some of the buildings. She expressed concern that an affordable housing contribution instead of inclusion of affordable housing would most likely not benefit Bridport.

Glenn Crawford also raised concerns about this application, which he considered could be opposed with the right expertise. He considered the use of a wide radius to calculate a demand for 300 retirement properties to be flawed and that the local need was just under 50. The site would be better used to cater for young people.

Jim Tigg said that his experience working on the Neighbourhood Plan had highlighted that this development would do nothing to address housing needs and catered only for the wealthy. The application's interpretation of need and demand were flawed. 20% of homes on Rightmove were retirement properties. The design was inappropriate, the flood risk had not been properly addressed, and there were issues with parking. He considered that Bridport was becoming a 'welcome hub' for the wealthy elderly. The development was unplanned and there had been pitiful consultation, and the application had prompted over 130 objections. He expressed concerns about the developer involved.

Debra Bates said that housing for the wealthy elderly was not needed, but housing for the younger less-well-off was. They had a right to safe and secure accommodation. Settled and good quality accommodation for those living in relative deprivation was required to aid healthy living, and housing was needed for people working in essential jobs in the town. Over 300 people under 55 needed rented accommodation and this need should be fulfilled, in order to achieve a balanced community.

Catherine Searle said that the rivers Brit and Asker met just above the weir to the south of the development site. It was a powerful sight and this was an opportunity to enhance it, as well as to provide for local need.

Elizabeth Harrop spoke objecting to planning application P/FUL/2024/04044 for the expansion of an abattoir site and other changes. She expressed concern that the premise of the application was that the abattoir would be the size of the existing, and comparisons were unsubstantiated. Information from former workers and other records classified the old abattoir as small, but the proposed development was not. There were no limits on the hours, traffic, or noise and the applicant had been the subject of complaints, presenting concerns about trust.

A representative of the St Andrews Residents' Association supported Ms Harrop's address, and expressed concerns about encroachment into the AONB [National Landscape], the reversal of planning conditions, and overnight working. 30 parking spaces would be in what was currently an open field. The proposed operation depended on theoretical modelling, and 95 people had objected on material grounds, including students at Colfox Academy. No decision should be made until reliable independent data was available.

A member of the public added that the development went against Dorset Council's declaration of a climate emergency, and impacted on the National Landscape. The climate was a priority, and red meat consumption needed to reduce, as it was a significant contributor to carbon emissions. The proposed development was in the opposite direction and would be bad for the planet and for people's health. The car park would be detrimental to the National Landscape.

Peter Kidney said that additional abattoirs were not needed by Dorset farmers. Pickstock was owned by a multi-national company. The current development met local need and expansion would mean environmental risks. There had been many complaints about Pickstock, all of which were detrimental to residents. Dorset Highways had accepted the proposals without independent corroboration. Other analysis suggests the highway situation would be much worse than stated.

A member of the public resident in Townsend Way since 2019 said that their solicitor had advised that the planning authority had stated further development would not be appropriate. They had monitored traffic before moving in and there were two HGVs per day. This was borne out subsequently and former staff had confirmed it. The hours had been 5:00am to 5.30pm. The highways data was based on fiction and the true facts came from residents, whose health and wellbeing should be councillors' priority.

Another member of the public could see all of the activity from Gore Terrace. The previous abattoir had been accepted, despite the odour and noise and the effect on cattle. Traffic had not been such a problem but was worse now and would be worse still. Roads and road safety would be affected, along

with walking and cycling. It was inexplicable that an application would be considered, given the known information.

Greg Pickstock, for the applicant, said that the application was to increase the welfare space for animals and for workers. He had circulated a plan to show that the production space was no larger than previously. The proposals would bring screening and improved biodiversity. The facility would open 'as is' in July 2025. Complaints against the company would all be checked.

Cllr David Worthington said that he had spoken to local farmers, who wanted a local abattoir. He asked Mr Pickstock how he could guarantee there would be no noise or odour. Mr Pickstock said the modernisation would reduce these risks and that the evidence lay in the submitted plans.

**50. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Sarah Carney.

**51. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest. Cllr Dave Bolwell advised that he was attending as an observer only and would not participate in the meeting.

**52. MINUTES**

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 23 September 2024 were confirmed as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**53. PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

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

**54. PLANNING DECISIONS**

The Town Clerk reported for information, the planning decisions received relating to applications previously considered by the Committee, ENCL: 3932.

RESOLVED: that the planning decisions be noted.

**55. HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORTATION MATTERS**

The Town Clerk reported that a request had been made via a recent West Bay ward meeting for traffic calming on West Bay Road. Cllr Ann Langridge said that the problems of antisocial driving and speeding were ongoing and there was a fear of accidents. Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED: that Dorset Council be asked to investigate traffic calming on West Bay Road, including with prior consultation with Cllr Dave Bolwell, and

that other preventative action by the Police and the Road Safety Team be supported.

**56. BRIDPORT TOWN COUNCIL FIVE YEAR PLAN 2024-29**

Members considered a draft Town Council Five Year Plan, and a request from the Town Clerk to consider any final comments within the committee's remit.

Members discussed increasing the commitment to social housing in the plan, by lowering the priority for the Access & Movement Study, Town Hall junction, the Town Guide, the Rural Market Towns Strategy, and allotment provision. This proposal was not supported. A proposal to remove an action to safeguard the National Landscape was also not supported.

Following further discussion, it was

RESOLVED: that the following be considered for incorporation into the five-year plan:

- (i) Lowering the priority for an improved website.
- (ii) Reference to all social landlords at page 15, and not only Magna.
- (iii) Change the Neighbourhood Plan priority to include meeting the housing need of the local community.
- (iv) Increase the priority of a homeless pod.

**57. ENFORCEMENT OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING AGREEMENTS**

Members considered a report of the Town Clerk, setting out concerns submitted by Cllr Anna Killick that affordable housing designation was in some cases being usurped over time. Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED: that the issue be investigated, and a further report be provided to the committee.

**58. LICENSING APPLICATIONS**

No licensing applications had been received for consideration at the meeting.

**59. COMMUNICATIONS AND ONGOING ISSUES**

The Town Clerk reported that National Highways had announced proposals to close the A35 Eype Amenity Area and to redevelop it as a maintenance base. A planning application was expected in November 2024.

**The meeting closed at 10.16pm.**

**The next meeting of the Committee will be held on 2 December 2024**