



Dear Councillor

12 March 2021

You are summoned to join a virtual Extraordinary meeting of the **TOWN COUNCIL** via video link on **FRIDAY 19 MARCH 2021 at 10.30 am**.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Lawrence Hartley'.

Town Clerk

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Members of the public are invited to submit questions to the Council in writing by **9.30 am on the day before this meeting** (i.e. Thursday, 18 March 2021) is due to be held using the following email address: office@wimborne.gov.uk or by delivering a hard copy of the question to the Town Hall, West Borough.

A G E N D A

- 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
- 2 DRAFT DORSET LOCAL PLAN**
To consider the suggested draft response compiled by the Task & Finish Group (copy herewith).
- 3 WIMBORNE FOOD BANK – REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL STORAGE**
To consider a request to site a container in the grounds of the Leigh Park Community Centre as contained in an email from the organiser (copy herewith).
- 4 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**
The meeting will be adjourned at this point and Members of the press and public will be excluded for the remainder of the meeting.
- 5 RISK MANAGEMENT REVIEW 2020/21**
To consider the risk management review prepared for the current financial year as required by the External Auditor (copy to follow).

Extraordinary Town Council – 19 March 2021

LOCALISM ACT 2011 and CODE of CONDUCT

Members are reminded to comply with those elements of the Localism Act and the Town Council's Code of Conduct in respect of disclosable pecuniary interests.

GENERAL CONDUCT

Members are reminded that the Council has a general duty to consider the following matters in the exercise of any of its functions: Equal Opportunities (race, gender, sexual orientation, marital status and any disability), Crime & Disorder, Health & Safety, Human Rights and Data Protection (General Data Protection Regulation).

PUBLIC ATTENDANCE AT VIRTUAL MEETINGS

Members of the public and press will be allowed to listen *and watch* the meeting in audio mode only using Zoom. To avoid disruption the public and press will not be displayed on video or be able to be heard by the meeting.

Please choose one of the following options to observe and / or listen to the meeting from 10.30am:

To access online via Zoom website:

1. Access the Zoom Video and Teleconferencing website by the following link: <https://zoom.us/>
2. Click to 'Join a Meeting'
3. When prompted, insert Meeting ID and Password as below:
Meeting ID: 981 5303 9485
Password: 473800

Please note, you may be asked to register and sign into your Zoom user account. This will require a personal email address and password

To access audio only by telephone:

1. Dial United Kingdom: +44 330 088 5830; or +44 131 460 1196; or +44 203 481 5237; or +44 203 481 5240; or +44 208 080 6591; or +44 208 080 6592.
2. When prompted, insert Meeting ID and Password as below:
Meeting ID: 981 5303 9485
Password: 473800

Any questions which members of the public wish to put to the Council or Committees must be in writing and received by 9.30 am on the preceding working day before the meeting using the following email address: office@wimborne.gov.uk. Alternatively, a written question can be delivered to the Town Hall by 9.30 am on the preceding working day before the meeting. Every effort will be made to answer the question at the meeting but there may be a need to obtain information from other sources and in those circumstances a written response will be provided at a subsequent time.

Wimborne Minster Town Council
Extraordinary Meeting

Subject: Item 2 – DRAFT DORSET LOCAL PLAN
Date: 19 March 2021

1. Purpose

To consider the following suggested draft response compiled by the Task & Finish Group.

WMTC Response to Dorset Council’s Draft Local Plan

1. Introductory Comments

Wimborne Minster Town Council (WMTC) is unable to support the draft Dorset Council Local Plan in its current form. These introductory comments give an overview of the reasons why and the following sections provide more detail and background to support those reasons. If required, detailed base data that links to specific wording, para/page numbers in the plan or evidence documents can be provided for Dorset Council’s reference.

The draft plan contains numerous erroneous, contradictory, and out of date material. Whilst undoubtedly a great deal of work has gone into such a large project, so long as significant errors contained within the documents still exist, the recommendations/ proposals within it are clearly unreliable and cannot be justified. An appendix of factual inaccuracies is attached to this report.

Particularly concerning and hugely significant examples are:

- the stated population for Wimborne and Colehill varies from 8,700 to 13,300 in supporting documentation, both are under assessed, and;
- that Wimborne Minster has an Upper School – it does not.

This throws doubt on the validity of all the proposals. It is with great concern that claims can be made which are clearly untrue/ unachievable such as the suggestion that if WMC6 goes ahead it will take 15 minutes by public transport from Wimborne to Dorchester!

There are omissions and inconsistencies within the Plan including the absence of a Council-wide spatial and transport strategy, Strategic Housing Needs Assessment, Retail Study and Town Centre Needs Assessment amongst other key documentation. It lacks credibility and up to date evidence and this needs to be addressed.

Further to this, the Plan shows little understanding of the population, the locality, the transport issues, or the topography of Wimborne Minster and appears to be merely a copy and paste exercise from the previous Christchurch and East Dorset Core Strategy which is clearly no longer relevant given it has not been updated to reflect the current situation e.g., LGR and boundary changes. It does not capitalise on opportunities within the new Council ‘geographical area’ and fails to explore more sustainable, alternative options for development.

The Plan fails to demonstrate any co-operation with neighbouring authorities in respect of the available brown field sites which could accommodate further housing before development of any Green Belt. It also disregards other potential and approved developments which will impact

Wimborne Minster e.g., Land North of Merley (650 homes proposed) and those on Magna Road, both in the BCP area.

We note that Wimborne Minster and Colehill have been combined as “one” for the purpose of this plan; this is strongly resisted by WMTC. To this end, WMTC strongly object to the removal of the Green Belt under WMC 6, 7, 8 and 9. These are the last remaining sites separating Wimborne Minster from Colehill and should be protected to prevent further urban sprawl. Wimborne Minster has more than contributed its fair share towards Dorset’s housing supply (losing approximately 70% of its Green Belt land to do so). Dorset Council’s draft Local Plan has shown no regard to, nor recognition of the local circumstances, development already delivered within Wimborne Minster or the need to protect the remaining Green Belt.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has not been adequately factored-in to the draft Local Plan, although a number of Dorset Council ‘evidence’ documents clearly demonstrate an awareness of this matter i.e., potential for lifestyle changes that could result in the longer term with regards to housing, travel and employment. It is evident that people’s working patterns have changed. All objective planners will have realised that COVID-19 has accelerated an already visible change in work patterns and business models. It is clear that increasing numbers of people work from home, and that there will be a reduction in commuting and office work for the foreseeable future. With this, there appears to have been an increase in people adopting more healthier lifestyles and opting to use more sustainable modes of transport e.g., walking and cycling. This could have a fundamental impact on overall housing (not just employment) needs, both locally and nationally and this needs to be addressed in the next iteration of the Plan.

2. Development Strategy

Reference is made to the Governments ‘standard method’ when calculating future housing needs. However, the current planning system is being reviewed and will be updated. How can there be any meaningful consideration of the Plan if the method and calculations of housing numbers is likely to be changed? Further to this, the recent Government response to the consultation on the methodology (December 2020) makes clear that the derived housing numbers are a starting point and can be varied (taking into account local circumstances and constraints as well as the strong need to protect the Green Belt).

The Local Plan target is to build 39,285 houses, (excluding possible further development in Alderholt, Gillingham and Wool), in the period to 2038, an additional 8,804 homes more than the Government’s target based on the standard methodology. WMTC would query Dorset Council’s overambitious, rigid and inflexible application of the methodology given the current Government review of the Planning System and possible changes to projected housing number calculations. It is not clear why there is a need to plan for excess housing in the Dorset area. Is the excess intended to meet a deficit from the BCP conurbation or to mitigate in the event of the failure to deliver a major allocation?

There is no evidence that the subject of new settlements has been considered on a strategic basis with the neighbouring authorities of BCP and New Forest. This is of concern, especially given BCP Council’s potential housing needs. Furthermore, there does not appear to have been any cooperation with neighbouring authorities in respect of the available brown field sites which could accommodate further housing before development of any Green Belt. It is imperative that ‘all other reasonable options’ for accommodating growth should be fully examined and exhausted before considering any changes to Green Belt boundaries. There is no clear evidence or justification of this in the Plan particularly for Wimborne/ Colehill and this failure to provide clear

and convincing justification for harm to heritage assets including conservation areas, protected landscapes and scheduled monuments is contrary to para 193 of the NPPF.

WMTC understands that the New Forest District Council has finalised its Local Plan and isn't in a position to offer to help out BCP Council by taking some of its target number. Given that Dorset Council's Local Plan is already proposing the release of Green Belt land, it would appear reasonable to state that Dorset too faces challenges in terms of meeting its own housing needs and would also not be able to accommodate the unmet need from the conurbation.

There should be no expectation for Dorset Council to exceed its housing target, and further consideration should be given as to whether the housing needs can be met in full given the environmental constraints. Sites that would not contribute towards sustainable development should be removed from the plan. Furthermore, WMTC requests that Dorset Council carries out additional research on local housing needs to establish the type and amount of housing that is needed in each area, to accurately determine housing figures and how this might differ from the standard methodology.

WMTC would concur that to reflect national policy, neighbourhood plans should be prepared to positively contribute to the local plan's Vision and Strategic Priorities.

On balance, WMTC would be minded to support the establishment of a new settlement. However, it is important that proper infrastructure is put in place to ensure it can cope with future expansion. WMTC acknowledges that the details of new settlements are beyond the scope of the current plan, but a strategic assessment of the most appropriate locations should form part of the overall spatial and transport strategy. WMTC raises concern that the current Plan simply invites landowners and developers to put forward their proposals for consideration at some future date rather than determining the siting of possible new settlements within a strategic context.

Dorset Council's draft Local Plan has shown no regard to, nor recognition of local circumstances, development already delivered within Wimborne Minster or the need to protect the remaining Green Belt. This must be reviewed.

3. Environment and Climate Change

The loss of mature natural Green Belt land rich with biodiversity will have a detrimental impact on both the local and wider natural environment. Up to 150 species of animal and plant life are lost every day. WMTC does not consider SANGS to be an adequate or suitable replacement. Walking in a urbanised area with limited wildlife is not comparable to open countryside. Furthermore, the development of Green Belt land is in direct contradiction to many statements made about a desire to protect rich, biodiverse, heritage green spaces, and positive impact to wellbeing. WMTC does not support the statement that developing on Green Belt and building green infrastructure/spaces will result in "net gains to biodiversity".

WMTC strongly believes that the wellbeing of residents will be dramatically disadvantaged should the developments as detailed in the Local Plan proceed in addition to the existing housing developments that are underway, and yet to be completed, in and around Wimborne Minster.

An extensive site investigation is required in Wimborne Minster, particularly for the sites identified for housing (WMC 6, 7, 8 and 9). This includes the need for up-to-date information on flooding, protection of ground water sources, sewage disposal capacity and other essential services which are not currently publicly available.

It would be inappropriate to use 'Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDs)' at the sites proposed in Wimborne and Colehill due to the "insufficiently permeable soil" which is already causing nearby residents' gardens and driveways to flood. An inability to make use of SuDs would mean the proposed development, "particularly on greenfield sites" would increase water flow rates and the probability of flooding. As fields, driveways, gardens, are already flooding, and the underground springs are already flooding fields, releasing Wimborne's Green Belt land for development would magnify existing flooding and increase the impact to existing residents. Several residents have contacted the Town Council to provide visual evidence of the existing flooding that occurs within their property and to confer the negative impact this has on their general wellbeing. Further development will exacerbate these issues.

As of 15 January 2021, the boundaries of the Flood Plains have recently been extended. While it is appreciated this was only a short time before the release of this Consultation, the updated Zones need to be included and taken into strong consideration before release of the next Consultation. In 2021, the River Stour has been level with the banks and has overflowed onto the land in some areas. Whilst it is recognised that this is not significant flooding, localised water ingress is a concern and often renders public footpaths impassable for weeks on end. It is not known how this issue will be affected by developments currently under construction, let alone the impact from the new housing developments proposed for Wimborne Minster and Colehill.

Dorset Council needs to provide clear evidence that building at sites WMC 6, 7, 8 and 9 would not increase flooding elsewhere or further exacerbate the flooding experienced in the neighbouring areas and properties.

Furthermore, Dorset Council must provide the criteria and reports to:

- justify the decision to declare "exceptional circumstances" to change the Green Belt boundaries. Work undertaken by the former District Council stated that "Wimborne has seen a number of recent developments and so it was felt inappropriate to major on the area for the next phase" (Planning Policy Officer presentation, 2/3/2018) and that only as a last resort should Green Belt land be released.
- prove the exhaustive search for alternative areas to develop that are not Green Belt should include up to date brownfield site acreage, to include e.g., Pippins, up to date number of empty dwellings suitable for retrofit, information on how office buildings are being converted into homes, e.g., above Barclays and the Wimborne Market development.
- show consideration has been given to the impact of the housing developments currently underway in and around Wimborne Minster. It will not be possible to achieve an accurate impact assessment of how another proposed development (WMC 6) will impact traffic congestion, air quality, demand for schools and doctors until at least one year after all the approved homes have been built and occupied. Further to this, the 2011 Saturn Transport Survey detailed a tolerance threshold of 1300 new homes for the area (existing infrastructure would be at 95% capacity at this level). Dorset Council has underestimated the current number of dwellings proposed in the area, which is now circa 1500 new homes. This figure exceeds the tolerance level identified in the Saturn Survey and it must now be reassessed and no further developments approved.

- prove that adding to existing settlements increases the use of sustainable public transport and reduces the number of car journeys, through uptake of public transport, cycling and walking.
- provide actual evidence for claiming ‘sustainable development’ (including an explanation of the economic, social, and environmental objectives - as the three spheres are currently detailed, they do not support one another in “mutually supportive ways” instead they are mutually exclusive and therefore cannot be deemed sustainable). Claiming “sustainable development” under this definition and with conventional methods of construction is, in the opinion of WMTC, “greenwashing”.

The Plan identifies that Dorset is a desirable tourist destination due to coast, countryside, and rural villages. However, there is no acknowledgement of how the natural environments surrounding historic towns and communities contributes to the “character” and “setting” of Dorset’s idyllic destinations that will significantly contribute to the draw of tourists to the area and therefore £1.8bn per annum to the economy.

WMTC believes that a major contradiction within the Plan is that it highlights the resonance between climate change and “degradation of the natural environment” yet proposes to build on the Green Belt – land specifically designated to prevent land degradation/loss of diversity with green corridors and preventing urban sprawl.

4. Housing

Wimborne Minster is an historic town dating back to Saxon times accessed by three ancient bridges with a narrow network of 13th and 14th Century streets in the Town Centre. The Town has already sacrificed approximately 70% of its Green Belt areas for new housing development. Three major developments have been underway since 2015: Cranborne Road (approx. 630 homes), Cuthbury (220 homes) and Land South of Leigh Road/Parmiter Drive (350 homes). Housing developments are also planned at the nearby Furzehill site and the Wimborne Market site. Many of these homes are still to be built. Already roads are congested, and local services appear to be stretched. We are yet to understand the full impact until the remaining developments are completed.

WMTC would want to see an updated realistic traffic flow and modelling project undertaken after the existing developments are complete and before any additional homes are proposed. The 2011 Saturn Transport Survey covers up to the year 2026 but WMTC believes this is now outdated due to the fact it was based on a maximum capacity of approximately 1300 new dwellings in the area. WMTC requests that the new Local Plan document details up to date and accurate figures of the number of dwellings currently proposed for Wimborne Minster. WMTC believes this is now in the region of 1500 new dwellings. WMTC is not aware of any recent traffic flow modelling data conducted by Dorset Council nor knowledge of it being used to inform this Local Plan.

Many of the recent new builds around Wimborne Minster are unaffordable to local people and therefore likely to be purchased and occupied by people from outside of Dorset. There is no criteria to provide the proposed new houses for people of Dorset which contradicts *Figure 6.1. The role of the local plan* “The Local Plan can help to deliver Economic Growth by enabling sustainable economic development in the right locations and providing homes for those who work in the area.” And the CPRE “The plan should offer local homes for local people, including truly affordable homes. And it should respect and protect Dorset’s environment, our greatest economic asset. The future health of everyone as well as our economy depends on this.”

WMTC would like to see agreed criteria to ensure that the houses still to be built in the ongoing developments in Wimborne, and any future developments will have a proportion of homes that can be allocated to local people in Dorset only - to address the housing needs of Dorset. Such 'local connection' schemes exist elsewhere in the South and specifically Toller Porcorum near Dorchester.

Prior to this Local Plan consultation, Wimborne Minster had been responsible for 55% of all approved development across the whole SE Dorset area with 45% being spread around the remaining county (see Chapter 7: South Eastern Dorset Functional Area, pages 9-11, Figure 7.3). There needs to be recognition of this in the Local Plan and evidence to warrant further development and the removal of the remaining largest Green Belt area (WMC6) within the town boundaries.

5. Economy

The Plan is lacking an up-to-date retail study and town centre needs assessment. At present, there is no up-to-date 'vision' for the town of Wimborne Minster, no up-to-date town centre proposals, nor the basis for a town centre masterplan reflecting current thinking.

The overarching policy on housing and employment does not appear to recognise the need for housing and employment (and infrastructure) to be delivered in a timely, coordinated manner. There is concern that the delivery of one (more housing) without the other (employment and infrastructure) would contribute to an unbalanced, unsustainable outcome.

There are no new key employment sites and no plans to increase local employment therefore there is no correlation between employment and housing. The implications of this imbalance are of concern to the Town Council. Bearing in mind the substantial increase in housing and overburdened travel routes, new employment sites would be welcomed. Furthermore, new businesses, employment openings and training facilities maintain a working age population as well as provide opportunities for young people. This is an important consideration for Wimborne Minster as it would help workforce retention rates and start to rebalance the current bias in the local demographic (Wimborne has a higher population of retirees and elderly persons). The Town Council would want to see the creation of sustainable jobs for local people not just short-term employment openings from construction work.

There is an absence of information about the future use of vacant buildings in and around the town centre which until recently provided significant local employment. Consideration must be given to the future use of the Police Station, Magistrates Court, Pippins and Wimborne First School. Dorset Council also owns the Furzehill site in a neighbouring parish. Could they be redeveloped as key employment sites, training facilities or provide housing?

Paragraph 123 of the NPPF refers to the importance of achieving a significant uplift in the average density of residential development in city and town centres and other locations that are well served by public transport, particularly where there is an existing or anticipated shortage of land for meeting identified housing needs. Page 20 of the draft Local Plan refers to the scope for higher densities in town centres and at other locations well served by public transport – but again there is little evidence on what has been researched and the conclusions reached.

Reference to these vacant sites and their future use must be included in the revised plan and preferably in consultation with the Town Council. The Town Council also wishes to preserve the playing field at the former Wimborne First School and ensure public access and proposals have been made for this (Section 17, page 103, para 17.5.22).

There is a high number of workers commuting out of Wimborne (the Plan states the former East Dorset District has the highest number of workers that commute by car or van in England and Wales at 79.5%) Wimborne has become a housing satellite for other areas, not only for BCP but also Southampton, Dorchester and further afield. If further housing is proposed, then corresponding additional employment opportunities also need to be included. If this is not possible then there should be no further housing developments.

The key employment sites in Wimborne Minster are Riverside Park and Brook Road and it is welcomed that these are shown as being retained. Stone Lane Industrial Estate is actually in the parish of Pamphill. Clarification is sought on whether this is a proposal to amend this boundary so that it falls within the Wimborne Minster area or an error?

Wentworths Yard to the north of Leigh Road has 7 companies operating from it and is another key employment site. WMTC requests that this is included as a Key employment site.

The parking sites within Wimborne Minster are limited within the Town Centre boundary and many businesses report that customers struggle to find a space. Residents and commuters may buy parking permits which restricts the number of space available even further. The Allendale/Allenview Car Park is a large site and is marked on the Local Plan map at page 105 as part of the Allendale redevelopment. Not only is this car park vital for the town but it is also part of the flood defence system as operated by the Environment Agency.

The lack of parking and high rate of congestion is already a factor for people considering visiting Wimborne Minster and any reduction in parking and further congestion could deter visitors, shoppers, employees, and business owners from coming to the Town and this could have a serious impact on the local economy. The Town Council does not support any developments which would require the removal of existing car parks.

The Town Council recommends consideration of a vehicular bridge from the Co-Op Car Park in the town centre to access the High Street Short Stay Car Park (both of which are privately owned). Current access into this car park from the town centre is very awkward and dangerous.

The Town Council would support some options for pedestrianisation through the town centre and improvements to Crown Mead shopping precinct which is totally out of keeping with the rest of the Town. Wimborne Minster has many independent shops and businesses with a growing cafe culture and a nice place to live and visit. It is imperative that the vitality in the Town is retained and encouraged to grow.

Further to this, the Town Council would like to see proposals for provision of a street market in the town centre. As a historic market town which is about to have its current market site redeveloped for housing, alternative provision must be found.

In the Local Plan at 5.6.2 there is reference to Impact Assessments relating to gross floorspace for an out-of-town store. Dorchester, Weymouth, Bridport and other much larger towns have an impact assessment size of 300m² but Wimborne Minster has 1,000m². What is the rationale behind this figure bearing in mind Dorset Council's aim to standardise policies across the county? The Town Council strongly objects to this proposal.

6. Community Infrastructure

The transport and road network in and around Wimborne and Colehill is insufficient. There are frequent traffic problems particularly on the A31 and at Canford Bottom which impacts on access into Wimborne Minster causing gridlock in the Town.

The Canford Bottom roundabout was redesigned and completed in 2012 prior to the Olympics with a view to improving traffic flow along the A31 towards the West and Weymouth. This design has not been a success and has not only failed to increase traffic flow but has caused additional congestion on local feeder roads. Such is the local and national reputation and disdain for this specific junction, many road users attempt to avoid the chaos and drive through the Town instead of remaining on the A31 in traffic. WMTC feels strongly that this design needs to be reviewed and revised after nearly 10 years in use. Such large-scale road improvements are clearly considered as part of this plan given the significant changes being proposed North of Dorchester to ensure smooth road networks combined with increased Housing.

There are no meaningful infrastructure proposals for the Wimborne area despite the additional housing already planned and the further housing proposed. If no robust solutions are available for traffic flow because of the age of the town and limitations imposed by our 3 ancient bridges then this should be acknowledged, and further housing plans abolished.

Transport sustainability for Wimborne is absent in the plan, given the scale of the increase in households that will access Wimborne Minster's infrastructure from both Wimborne and surrounding villages/towns, such as Merley, Corfe Mullen, Colehill and Sturminster Marshall as well as rural communities. It is considered that this increase will require the infrastructure to be upgraded as follows:

- Transport Hub (proposed site available 'Pippins')
- Three bridges that are now significant arterial routes for foot, cycle and vehicular transport to be upgraded (specifically WMTC would like to see sensitive provision for pedestrians and cyclists into and out of the Cuthbury housing development to cross the river rather than use the dangerous crossing of the bridge itself.)
- A traffic survey, post Covid, is carried out to ensure the most up to date data feeds direction. WMTC does not believe that the plan is evidence based and would want to see an updated and realistic traffic flow and modelling project undertaken once the existing developments at Cuthbury, Cranborne Road and Leigh Road/ Parmiter Drive are complete with a full consultation undertaken **before** any new housing contributions are forced upon the Town. Equally we would expect to see a full review of the adequacy and provision of services such as Schools and Doctors.
- Supermarket provision is a key, not only to satisfy the growth of the Town but also to reduce shop commuting. Many residents will commute to cheaper, more diverse supermarkets, than are currently available in the Town.
- What marketing will be done to stimulate the return of eroded services such as Banks Building societies?
- Hot food takeaways section be upgraded to cover all social well-being facilities, not all hot food is unhealthy, and alcohol is missing from this plan
- Community infrastructure and access to facilities should be additional to the town of Wimborne. A survey of Wimborne households should be carried out to ensure that utilisation and adoption of these facilities satisfies the demand of the current residents and precept payer. This should include sports, community centre proposals and schools. Key areas of focus should be to balance the young people's needs with the increase in retirement provision to ensure the plan includes all needs across the demographic and is

therefore fully inclusive. Benefits of this would be to reduce the potential for ill-discipline in the town.

- School provision should be reviewed as there is currently no Secondary or Upper School in Wimborne and the current system is already at saturation point producing a future 'known issue' of a lack of school places for the increased children that will be inevitable with the take up from the new developments.
- It is vital that demographic take up of the new developments be tracked to ensure no 'knee jerk reacting' is required for school provision.

Overall, the Community Infrastructure needs to grow with and address the current issues that are being experienced to prevent them from exacerbation as well as build for a flexible new vibrancy that is required for the future. This must take into account the increase in traffic and the resulting increase in CO2. Greenspace between towns must be preserved as a core principle and should carry the same weight as flood plain and toxic ground. This aspect would remove the 'easy picking' of land by developers, whether real or perceived.

The Town Council would also welcome and support the inclusion of more environmentally friendly schemes such as renewable energy technologies in new developments, to include solar panels, ground and air source heat pumps and lithium battery storage. The Town Council would like to see the provision of more rapid charging points for electric vehicles in and around car parks and new developments.

The Town Council would also welcome the inclusion in the local plan of a policy that requires developers to respect and retain existing rights of way and TPOs in the layouts for their developments.

The Town Council is already seeing degradation to road surfaces due to heavy construction traffic and increased traffic flow. The infrastructure is suffering and not sustainable for the future. Solutions must be found before further development is considered.

The Town Council does not support the installation of traffic lights on Julian's Bridge.

7. SE Dorset Proposals: Wimborne and Colehill

WMTC strongly resists and disagrees that the Land at Leigh Farm (WMC6) should go forward for development. This is the last remaining piece of open Green Belt land within Wimborne separating from Colehill. Furthermore, the Town Council most strongly objects to the removal of Green Belt under WMC 6, 7, 8 and 9 and considers the proposals to breach paragraphs 134 and 135 of the NPPF. There are numerous reports and actions yet to be undertaken and which we consider should have been completed before including the 4 proposed sites for Wimborne and Colehill.

The Town Council objects to the proposals at WMC9. The boundary of this Green Belt site separates the three distinct neighbouring areas of Ferndown, Colehill and Longham. The site must be retained to prevent urban sprawl.

As mentioned earlier, the two Parishes of Wimborne Minster and Colehill are separate and whilst this remains the case, their separate identities should be protected and the land on which it is proposed to develop (WMC6) preserves the setting and special character of the Town and restricts urban sprawl.

Indeed, there cannot be any exceptional circumstances to justify the development of this land when there are so many errors in base data as referenced in the section 1.

WMTC raises the following concerns with the WMC6 proposal:

- With regards to the SANG. Access has been assumed via the disused railway line. However, the Town Council is aware that the owner of the railway line (from Northleigh Lane to Greenclose Lane) refuses permission for this land to be included in the plan and wants it removed. We are also aware that other areas of the proposed SANG are forms part of private ownership and are not to be included in the Plan.
- WMTC considers that WMC6 should be considered for 'Site of Nature Conservation Interest' status. It is a unique piece of land, it has no public access and is home to many different protected species, animals, birds of prey and reptiles. It is a nature corridor linking Wesley Woods to Leigh Farm to Bytheway. The site undulates from a low-lying swamp area, the natural land drain for this area, to higher levels of heath land. This is possibly the only such site in this area. For these reasons, it is a wildlife sanctuary. The area is a lifeline for the adders, grass snakes and lizards that live here. Any development of this area would involve loss of such important natural flora, and habitat for many species of invertebrates. Historically, there has been no attempt to improve the grass sward by re-seeding, with the result that only natural grass species existed. The field is therefore believed to comprise of unimproved natural grassland and contains an abundance of bracken which should be preserved. WMTC believes that the site should be protected until suitable surveys have been conducted by the relevant bodies.
- The proposed access to the site via Birchdale Road is unsuitable, it is too narrow and joins Cranfield Avenue on a dangerous bend. Cranfield Avenue/Wesley Road have experienced increased traffic over and above the original intended purpose. This road is now a rat run used at speed to avoid the already congested roads in the area. Further development will exacerbate the problem, causing additional risk and harmful impact on current residents.
- Dorset Council must provide up-to-date information on flooding, protection of ground water sources, sewage disposal capacity and other essential services for this site. Drainage of North Leigh Farm is poor and referred to in the Dorset Council's Flood Risk Management Team and Environment Agency map. It is of concern that the proposed development will alter the natural drainage and watercourse adversely affecting the area, surrounding properties and roads.

Reference is made in the Local Plan under Policy WMC10 to the possible opportunity for change at Leigh Park Playing Field if the Rugby Club moves to new premises. This land is owned by the Town Council and two thirds of the Field is protected from development as a QEII Field in Trust. No consultation between Dorset Council and the Town Council has taken place before this policy was proposed.

As detailed previously, there is a need to provide an up to date 'vision' for Wimborne and renewed town centre proposals to reflect current thinking. Reference to vacant sites and their future use must be included in the revised Plan and preferably in consultation with the Town Council (this includes the Police Station, Magistrates Court, Pippins, Wimborne First School, Wimborne Market development and the neighbouring Furzehill site). The Town Council also wishes to preserve the playing field at the former Wimborne First School and ensure public access and proposals have been made for this (Section 17, page 103, para 17.5.22).

Comments from Wimborne Cemetery

Wimborne Cemetery is jointly owned by Wimborne Minster Town Council, Colehill Parish Council and Pamphill and Shapwick Parish Council.

The Cemetery (actually in Pamphill) has about 25 years of new internments left. Internments are cremated remains and burials. The current site has capacity until 2046 (only 8 years after the period of this Local Plan). At the point the Cemetery reaches capacity, the next stage is reopenings.

The Wimborne Cemetery takes requests for internments from outside the 3 parishes, including Corfe Mullen and Poole. At present, there is approximately a 50:50 split between residents and non-residents. Despite the new Woodland burial area at Colehill and the new site at Lytchett demand has remained constant at the Wimborne Cemetery site.

Cemetery Boards operate individually, and it is not thought that anyone has data on overall capacity. At the start of the pandemic the Death Management Advisory Group contacted authorities for some capacity figures. It is the view of Wimborne Cemetery that Dorset Council should be collating data on land availability and capacity in order to inform more cohesive and evidence based future planning.

The Policy WMC3 for new neighbourhoods including land east of St Margaret's Hill. This land adjoins Wimborne Cemetery and is not suitable for development.

The Cemetery had hoped to acquire this land one day in order to expand due to the increasing demand for burial plots. Development will make this impossible. West Moors Cemetery appears to only be taking parish residents, Ferndown does not have a facility for burial and Wimborne Cemetery is therefore the next closest option. However, the Cemetery has a finite amount of space, and the proposed new developments as well as the projected population increases will mean it will struggle to accommodate the current, let alone future demand.

Further to this there is a designated fire pit and recycle area on the cemetery site located next to the border of the St Margaret's Hill proposed development site, which has been unoccupied to date. These are in daily use by the Cemetery Grounds Staff. The potential nuisance of these facilities should be borne in mind before including it as a possible development site.

Finally, there are active badger setts along the NNE border of the proposed land where it adjoins the cemetery. They are a protected species. We are concerned that badgers like peace and quiet away from humans. If dwellings are built they can only migrate into the cemetery. The cemetery has already experienced problems in 2018 as badgers have unearthed human remains. This problem would be exacerbated.

Conclusions

Dorset Council has failed to communicate with local Towns and Parishes to identify suitable areas for development and has produced a draft Plan which relies on very little factual evidence, breaches the NPPF in numerous ways and has not followed statutory requirements to co-operate with its neighbouring Local Authorities.

Where a Local Plan does identify development within a parish, the Town Council concerned should be part of the early discussions before a plan is drafted and consulted upon, in order that it

may help identify areas which would be better utilised for meeting any housing need. WMTC considers that this would save both time, public money and irreversible damage to wildlife if local involvement was introduced in at the very beginning of any planning process.

WMTC strongly objects to any further major housing developments and what appears to be a significantly unjustified and unfair distribution of proposed development in the Wimborne area. WMTC believes that the listed historic, severely restrained streets and unique infrastructure of the Town has failed to be acknowledged in this Local Plan. The additional development through the continuing proposed revision (removal) of the small areas of remaining Green Belt further burdens the historic town. This is contrary to the NPPF.

WMTC remains concerned that the reluctance to delay the consultation allied to the extensive documentation that is presented is disenfranchising a significant part of the community who have not had been able to access the information or respond to the consultation during the pandemic.

Wimborne Minster Town Council reserves the right to include additional comments to this response when further evidence is forthcoming.

Item 3

From: Wimborne Food Bank <wimbornefoodbank@gmail.com>

Sent: 11 March 2021 12:09

To: Jam Wright <Jam.Wright@wimborne.gov.uk>

Subject: Wimborne Foodbank Additional Storage

Good Afternoon Jam,

As per our discussion earlier I am seeking council permission to place a 20ft container or portable cabin in the garden of Leigh Park Community Centre to provide us with much needed additional storage.

Since lockdown we have had sole use of the Community Centre room which has been a real blessing as we have been able to leave the room set up which means we do not have to get everything out & pack everything away for each session & due to the big increase in demand we have moved to pre packed parcels which take up much more space. This has helped reduce potential waiting time / queues which has been vital during the pandemic.

We were also very kindly given temporary use of a storage area in the rugby club as this was not being used during lockdown, this has also been a real benefit as it is so near to the foodbank, is on ground level & we need so much more space to house food stock / children's Christmas gifts / clothing donations / nappies / sanitary goods / pet food & toiletries.

We have been given notice on both the community centre main room & the rugby club store in early April & we desperately need more onsite storage as we do not have sufficient space.

If possible could we be given permission to have additional temporary onsite storage in the garden of LPCC (the Centre Mgmt have agreed this with your consent) for us to use while we continue to search for new premises that will give us the additional space we really need & allow us to develop our services even further. We are expanding our CMA (Community Money Advice) Team as the need for this service is growing & will be even more in demand after the governments support is withdrawn in September.

We have increased the services we provide last year to include - Delivering food parcels, Money Advice, Cook Bags, Emergency Heating Payments, Fresh Food Vouchers & working alongside the Wardrobe Foundation to give women in need clothes. This Easter we will be giving out a Easter Sunday dinner cook bag, Easter Eggs per person & Easter activity packs to children. All of this takes up a lot of space but is really appreciated by our clients.

Any help you could give us would be very much appreciated. If you need any further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Many Thanks for your continued support

Kind Regards
Sharon

Sharon Keenan
Wimborne Food Bank Manager