

BLANDFORD FORUM TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of Town Council Planning Meeting
Held on Monday 15th January 2024 at 7pm in the Corn Exchange



PRESENT

Cllr A Cross – Chairman	Cllr H Miéville – Chairman of Council
Cllr R Carter – Vice Chairman	Cllr N Lacey-Clarke – Vice Chairman of Council
Cllr P Osborne	Cllr K Herbert
Cllr R Holmes	Cllr S Chapman
Cllr P Clarke	Cllr B Quayle
Cllr S Hitchings	Cllr H White
Cllr C Stevens	

IN ATTENDANCE

Operations Manager	Committee Clerk
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54. PUBLIC SESSION

Cllr Holmes advised the Committee that today (16th January) is National Pothole Day.

Cllr Holmes asked if the Town Council could respond to a letter written by a member of public in Wincanton who said that Blandford Forum Town Council is a 'woke' council as they held a 'Yuletide' festival. Cllr Carter and Cllr Mieville both felt that a response is not necessary, and it was agreed not to respond.

It was PROPOSED by Cllr White, SECONDED by Cllr Chapman but NOT AGREED (4 in favour, 9 against) that the Town Council moves to next business.

Cllr Miéville invited everyone to the Mayor's Charity Dinner - a 70's dinner and dance on the 9th March. He hopes to raise significant funds for charity and everyone will have the opportunity to see him dancing in his flares!

55. APOLOGIES

Cllr L Lindsay	Cllr L Hitchings	Cllr C Jacques
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56. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION

None

57. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 4th DECEMBER 2023

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Chapman, SECONDED by Cllr Lacey-Clarke and AGREED (7 in favour and 6 abstentions) that the Minutes be APPROVED and SIGNED.

58. APPENDIX A – NEW PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The paper was noted (see Appendix A).

58.1 [P/HOU/2023/07199](#) - 4 Salisbury Road Blandford Forum Dorset DT11 7QH

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Carter, SECONDED by Cllr Lacey-Clarke and AGREED (12 in favour, 1 abstention) that

**The Town Council has no objection to the planning application.
(Blandford + NP policy B10. Design Codes: CA. CA4, SL. Design Code: 1, 2
B. Design Code: 10-12 apply)**

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

58. APPENDIX A – NEW PLANNING APPLICATIONS CONT...

58.2 [P/OUT/2023/07266](#) - Land North Off Ward's Drove, Bournemouth Road, Blandford St Mary

Cllr White queried why the Council is considering this planning application as it has no jurisdiction to comment as it's not within the parish boundary. Cllr Lacey-Clarke advised that anyone could comment on any planning application, whether or not it is their area.

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Lacey-Clarke, SECONDED by Cllr Miéville and AGREED unanimously that

The Town Council objects to this application as it believes that the allocation exceeds the number agreed to in the B+NP. The 350 houses that are designated for the St Mary's Hill site were included in the B+NP as part of the original allocation by NDDC. The Ward's Drove allocation was not. The 135 houses planned will have a significant effect on the infrastructure of Blandford Forum. If this site is completed, there will be very little green buffer between Blandford St Mary and Charlton Marshall. Moreover, the site would form an extension of the ribbon development along the A350 and increase the difficulty of communication back to the principal settlement (Blandford Forum).

The B+NP, which has significant weight, cannot simply be ignored or overridden in this. The B+NP submission plan, Part 1 (page 9) Paragraphs 1.2 and 1.3 clearly states the purpose of the NP as 'being used to' 'determine planning applications in the area' and to 'shape the future' of the area.' To this end, the B+NP incorporated the growth figures from the ND local plan of 2016, for 'at least' 1200 houses to be provided. This was also Dorset Council's policy after reunification. The Ward's Drove application exceeds this, if built out, along with other allocations which are already being built, or have planning permission extant or pending.

Access to goods and facilities

There are no facilities present anywhere near the proposed development and occupants would need to travel in order to meet the majority of their day-to-day needs. The nearest shop is approximately a km away and access to a wider range of goods and services would require a 2km journey into Blandford. We agree with the analysis of the inspector of Appeal Decision APP / D1265 / W / 20 / 3254594 that footpath links are unattractive for access purposes to Blandford or Charlton Marshall, to access goods and services, including schools and medical facilities and the bus services, (which are, in the inspector's determination, infrequent and inadequate. This would lead to car journeys being essential to access the goods and services.

The inspector's paragraphs 27 and 28 also apply – (modified in italics to reflect the Ward's Drove application):

27. The ...village(s) (Blandford St Mary and Charlton Marshall) do not have day-to-day facilities (*and there are*) no strong functional relationship (to) overcome that deficiency. Paragraph 78 of the Framework (NPPF) also states that to promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby.

28. However, the site's location adjacent to (*two*) villages with only a very small number of facilities of (*their*) own, limits the potential for the proposed housing to carry any particular health, social benefits, or convenience for future occupants. Residents are therefore likely to be car dependant to meet their needs; a factor which (*must*) weigh heavily against the scheme. In this regard the proposed development would have insufficient accessibility by sustainable modes to be considered a sustainable location for development.

58. **APPENDIX A – NEW PLANNING APPLICATIONS CONT...**

Other infrastructure implications

Such development would also inevitably place great burden on the already strained primary school system in this area with little or no room to expand in the two existing Primary schools closest to the proposed development. Cumulatively, with the St Mary's Hill development the remoteness of Ward's Drove from the principal settlement, along with the other proposed developments will cause a sizeable increase in the amount of traffic driving back into Blandford to access the primary shopping centre, medical and dental facilities, and primary and secondary schooling. This would be unsustainable ribbon development of the worst possible kind.

Landscape and heritage

The following is taken from The North Dorset Strategic Landscape and Heritage Study: Stage 2 (October 2019) is used for reference for this site in Blandford St. Mary (BFTC comments in italics)

- 'Although there are no designated cultural heritage features within the assessment area, the area contributes to the wider rural setting for the grade II listed buildings located in Lower Blandford St Mary.' *There has been a significant erosion of this rural setting by the allocation of 350 Houses in the St Mary's Hill development. Further development towards Ward's Drove will almost eliminate the rural setting referred to.*
- 'The area provides a rural setting to parts of the Blandford Forum, Blandford St Mary and Bryanston Conservation Area.' *This will no longer be the case if the planning application succeeds.*
- 'The area is largely undeveloped, with settlement limited' *'Further development would render this statement obsolete.*
- 'The area is largely undeveloped, with settlement limited to several properties along Ward's Drove.' *Further development would render this statement obsolete.*
- 'The area is separated from the adjacent existing settlement in Blandford St Mary by the A354.'
- 'The assessment area provides a rural setting to existing settlement and contributes to the sense of separation between Blandford St Mary and Lower Blandford St Mary (with a M-H sensitivity rating). *The rural setting and sense of separation would no longer be the case if the planning application succeeds.*

For this, and the other reasons stated, it should be removed as a site for development. **(Blandford + NP policy B1 and B10 Design Codes: CA. CA7, CA9 SL. 1-8 B. 10-13 apply)**

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

58.3 [P/HOU/2023/05409](#) - 32 Bryanston Street Blandford Forum Dorset DT11 7AZ

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Mieville, SECONDED by Cllr Osborne and AGREED unanimously that

**The Town Council has no objection to this planning application.
(Blandford + NP policy B10, CA. CA4, B. Design Code: 15 apply)**

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

58. APPENDIX A – NEW PLANNING APPLICATIONS CONT...

58.4 [P/ADV/2023/07273](#) & [P/LBC/2023/07282](#) - 5 Market Place Blandford Forum Dorset DT11 7AH

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Chapman, SECONDED by Cllr Carter and AGREED unanimously that

**The Town Council has no objection to this application.
(Blandford + NP policy B7, CA. CA4, Shopfronts - Design Code: 9 apply)**

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

58.5 [P/TRC/2023/07485](#) - Lanrick House White Cliff Mill Street Blandford Forum Dorset DT11 7BN

This paper was noted, for information only.

59. APPENDIX B – DORSET COUNCIL DECISIONS ON PLANNING APPLICATIONS AND APPLICATIONS AWAITING DECISIONS

The paper was emailed to Councillors prior to the meeting (Appendix B) and was noted.

60. SITE VISITS/DORSET COUNCIL PLANNING MEETINGS

None

61. CLERKS REPORT

Nothing to report.

The meeting closed at 7.34pm

SIGNED: DATED: