

Dorchester Town Council
Planning and Environment Committee

7 January 2019

Present: Councillors C. Biggs, R. Biggs, A. Canning, T. Harries, J. Hewitt, S. Jones, R. Potter (Chairman), M. Rennie and D. Taylor

Apologies: Councillors F. Kent-Ledger and S. Hosford

Also Present: Councillors A. Chisholm and G. Duke

55. Petition – Licensed Premises in the Town Centre

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced the members of the Committee.

Mr Levin, Chairman of the Heritage Quarter Residents' Association presented the petition calling for pub and bar licensing hours in Dorchester to be restricted to a closing time of 11pm. He explained how the centre of Dorchester had changed, particularly with an increase in residential dwellings, and he detailed the problems being experienced by residents. Complaints had been made to WDDC and Dorset Police but no action had been taken and residents were now requesting licensing changes from WDDC to reflect the reality of the current situation.

A large number of local people, both residents and business owners, attended the meeting and many spoke both in support of and against the petition. The Chairman also read out several email comments received. The main points raised included:

In Support

- Problems weren't always experienced immediately outside licensed premises, it was more widespread
- Many old licensed premises did not have adequate soundproofing
- Problems had been experienced with anti-social behaviour, noise, sleep deprivation, smashed windows, vomit, urination, human excrement, sexual activity, obscene acts, supply and use of drugs
- Residents did have human rights and these should be protected by the licensing objectives
- Despite the many complaints to WDDC, little action appeared to be taken and a licensing review was needed
- An increased Police presence was required
- Smoking restrictions had increased outside noise
- Lengthening licensing hours had lengthened the period problems were experienced
- The number of people reporting problems at this meeting provided the evidence of the problems
- A balanced compromise to the problems needed to be found

Against

- Not all residents in the area had experienced problems
- It was unfair to tar all licensees with the same brush
- Most licensees managed their premises well, had a zero tolerance to drugs and adhered to their alcohol licences, working directly with the Licencing Authority but they could not be responsible for those who were refused admission through being drunk and who then caused problems elsewhere
- Better policing was needed beyond licenced premises
- If the change requested was imposed it would impact on many people and their livelihoods not just licensees

- The town centre needed life

A claim was made that Councillor Harries had a direct personal interest in this item but he advised that the Town Clerk had confirmed that this was not the case and he could take part in the debate and decision making.

Committee members had a great deal of understanding for the residents and the problems they were experiencing but they also noted the efforts of licensees in managing their premises to minimise these problems. All agreed that the anti-social behaviour described was unacceptable and created a serious public nuisance.

As a member of WDDC's Licensing Committee, Councillor Rennie gave a summary of the principles and operation of licensing legislation and the role and responsibilities of the licensing authority.

The Committee considered that a proactive police response was needed but due to budgetary cuts this was unlikely to happen and the best way forward was for a collaborative approach using the proper procedures. Particular problems would need to be addressed on an individual basis rather than through a blanket approach. Many of the problems identified were national issues and would need a change at that level rather than being dealt with locally. Lack of police officers was seen to be a key element in dealing with and resolving many of the problems described and Members considered that this needed addressing. It was noted that a group, involving the Police, had already been set up to seek to resolve the problems.

The following resolution, in response to the petition, was then proposed, seconded and unanimously agreed:

'The Planning and Environment Committee recognises the concerns of town centre residents at the growing number of late night incidents of anti-social behaviour and agrees that there needs to be a balance between the requirements of the night-time economy and the safety and quality of life of local residents.

The Town Council calls on WDDC's Environmental Health and Licensing officers to work with Dorset Police and local licensees to develop a co-ordinated strategy, based on Pubwatch, to address residents' concerns. The Town Council also calls on Dorset Police to give a higher priority to providing officers to visit the town centre on Friday and Saturday nights.

The Town Council recognises that there are limits to what can be done due to the cuts in Dorset Police's funding and the way that the current licensing arrangements operate and will therefore write to the local M.P. asking him to lobby Government for greater funding for Dorset Police and for a review of the effectiveness of licensing arrangements in market towns.'

Resolved

That the Committee Clerk advises all of the relevant people of the Town Council's response to the petition and asks for their feedback on this.

56. Declaration of Interest

Councillors Jones and Potter stated that as members of WDDC's Planning Committee, they would keep an open mind on the planning applications and consider all information available at each stage of the decision process. They would take part in the debate but not vote on planning applications at this meeting.

When the Committee considered the planning applications (see Minute 60), Councillor Rennie declared a personal interest in planning application WD/D/18/002835 as a trustee of Whetstones.

57. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 3 December 2018 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

58. **Minute Update Report**

Lubbecke Way

The Committee Clerk provided an update on Lubbecke Way issues and advised that DCC were making arrangements for consideration of the petition submitted to them.

Information had been provided by DCC about the costs and practical arrangements for the installation of a traffic tube in Lubbecke Way and the Town Clerk considered that there was adequate budget provision for this. The Committee agreed that DCC should be requested to install a tube, in the most appropriate place, as soon as possible.

Information was provided about the timetable for progressing the TROs approved for the area and Members were again very concerned at the length of time this was taking when it had been indicated that this could be implemented very quickly.

An east ward member pointed out that a motorhome was parked in the 'stopped up' area of St Georges Road and the Committee Clerk was asked to report this to the appropriate DCC officer.

Resolved

- i) That DCC be commissioned to install a traffic tube in Lubbecke Way as soon as possible.
- ii) That DCC be advised of the Town Council's ongoing concerns at the length of time it was taking to process and implement the two approved TRO's for the Lubbecke Way area.
- iii) That DCC be advised of the motorhome parked in the 'stopped up' area of St Georges Road.
- iv) That the Minute Update report be noted.

59. **Princes Street and Top O' Town Cycleway Improvements**

The Committee considered DCC's proposal for a highway improvement scheme for Princes Street and Top O'Town Cycleway.

Members supported this proposal and requested that if possible an appropriate tree be planted in the extended pavement fronting the entrance to the Borough Gardens.

Resolved

That DCC be advised that the Town Council supports the proposal for a highway improvement scheme for Princes Street and Top O'Town Cycleway and that it requests that an appropriate tree be planted in the extended pavement fronting the entrance to the Borough Gardens.

Councillor Canning left the meeting at this point.

60. **Planning Applications**

The Committee considered the planning applications referred to the Council for comment by West Dorset District Council.

Resolved

That West Dorset District Council be notified of the comments agreed on the various planning applications as set out in Appendix 1 to these minutes.

61. **Planning Issues to Note**

Resolved

That the Planning Issues to Note report be noted.

62. **Urgent Item**

The Chairman was aware that DCC would be considering a petition from residents of the Park District, Weymouth asking for a review of the residents' parking permit scheme for the area as it was considered to no longer fit for purpose.

He considered this would be an opportune time to raise the issue of the additional residents' permit parking scheme areas in Dorchester that had been requested some time ago by the Town Council. Committee members agreed with this and also asked that DCC be requested to give some definitive timescales for consideration of the Dorchester Parking Review.

As this was the first Council meeting of the year, Members wholeheartedly congratulated Councillor Rennie on the award of her M.B.E.

Resolved

That DCC be reminded of the request from the Town Council for additional residents' permit scheme areas in Dorchester and that a definite timetable be given for consideration of these and the Dorchester Parking Review.

Chairman

Dorchester Town Council
Planning and Environment Committee – 7 January 2019

1. **WD/D/18/001153 - FORMER SITE OF WATSON PETROLEUM LTD & DORCHESTER COLLECTION SHOWROOM, LONDON ROAD, DORCHESTER, DT1 1NE**

Erection of 44 retirement living apartments (category II sheltered) with communal facilities, car parking & access from London Road

Recommend refusal.

The Committee noted the amended plans and while agreeing that the design changes were, to some extent, an improvement, the changes and revisions went no way to satisfy their previous concerns and therefore the Committee agreed that their previous objection still stood – as follows:

The Committee had serious concerns about many aspects of the development.

The site is in a key, prominent position on the eastern entrance to the town, very close to the Dorchester Conservation Area. As such Members were very disappointed with the design, materials and scale of the building, considering that it would be unduly dominant and prominent in the street scene, detracting from the visual amenity and character of this gateway location to Dorchester. There is a wide mix of design styles along London Road but this building would do nothing to enhance or improve the area and was completely out of character with the established pattern and density of development within the locality. The building was seen to be of poor design and limited architectural merit and fails to meet the core planning principle in the NPPF to always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all.

The height and mass of the building were considered to be excessive and the size and positioning of the building, by virtue of overshadowing and its oppressive impact, would have a detrimental impact on the residential amenity of immediate and other neighbouring properties.

The Committee considered that the density of the development was too high for the area and the resulting demand for car parking spaces could not be met on site. Due to the nature of the development it was likely that there would be high demand for parking for visitors and carers. Demand for on street car parking spaces in the immediate area was already at capacity and the overspill demand for car parking created by the development would make this considerably worse and would be unacceptable. The size of the individual parking spaces proposed were considered to be too small for the intended users and the provision of only one disabled parking space on site was considered to be totally inadequate.

The Committee considers that WDDC, as the planning authority, should insist on adherence to policy HOUS1. of the adopted Local Plan for the provision of 35% affordable housing on this site. It did not consider that an off-site contribution for affordable housing was appropriate as there were few, if not no, suitable sites in the town for such housing to be provided. Members appreciated that there was a need for **affordable** general and extra care housing for over 55's in the town and there could be an opportunity to provide some of this specific type of accommodation on this site although affordable family housing should be the priority.

Further concerns were raised about the limitations of the tree survey provided and the fact that the architectural survey was only desk based.

The Committee requested that this application is considered by WDDC's Planning Committee for decision. Overall the Committee considered that this proposal is contrary to Policies ENV10., ENV12., ENV15., ENV 16., HOUS1. and COM9. of the adopted Local Plan and the core planning

principles and Section 7 of the NPPF.

2. **WD/D/18/001671 + WD/D/18/001618 - 19 HIGH WEST STREET, DORCHESTER, DT1 1UW**
Conversion of first and second floor HMO to 3 self-contained flats + Internal and external alterations to convert first and second floor HMO to 3 self-contained flats
No comment
3. **WD/D/18/002835 - 1-4 WHETSTONES, WEST WALKS, DORCHESTER**
Proposed to replace rotting wooden fascia boards with black upvc woodgrain fascia.
This is an application for a Certificate of Lawfulness for a proposed use, it is not a planning application and WDDC cannot consider the planning merits of the development. The application will be determined solely on the question of whether the use proposed would have been lawful on the date the application was made.
No comment
4. **WD/D/18/002712 - 21 GLYDE PATH ROAD, DORCHESTER, DT1 1XE**
Replace the front door and door frame
No comment
5. **WD/D/18/002756 - 89 SOUTH COURT AVENUE, DORCHESTER, DT1 2DA**
Change of use from C2 (residential institution) to C3 (residential dwelling)
No comment
6. **WD/D/18/002755 - YMCA, 4 SAWMILLS SITE, SAWMILLS LANE, DORCHESTER, DT1 2RZ**
Single storey extension to the entrance of existing building & the construction of a covered buggy & cycle store
No comment
7. **WD/D/18/002778 - 31 GREAT WESTERN ROAD, DORCHESTER, DT1 1UF**
Display illuminated front, side and rear fascia signs (retrospective)
Recommend refusal.
The Committee considered that the signage, by virtue of its size, design, materials and type of illumination results in inappropriate signage that is obtrusive and fails to respect the character and setting of the Conservation Area and the adjoining Scheduled Ancient Monument. Much of the signage appeared to be unnecessary even if it was not illuminated. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policies ENV 4. And ENV. 14 of the Adopted Local Plan.
8. **UNIT 350 SECTOR 3.49 NORTH EAST QUADRANT, PEVERELL AVENUE EAST, POUNDBURY - WD/D/18/002717**
Application for approval of reserved matters of appearance of outline approval 1/D/09/001363 - to revise the external appearance including omission of ground floor colonnade to the front (south) elevation of building
No comment
9. **LAND EAST OF, 10 WHITFIELD ROAD, DORCHESTER - WD/D/18/002795**
Erect 1 No. two storey dwelling with detached garage and associated access and parking
No comment