

Statement of community engagement 'Tess Square'



and Butts Close



November 2023

	Name	Date
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1. Introduction

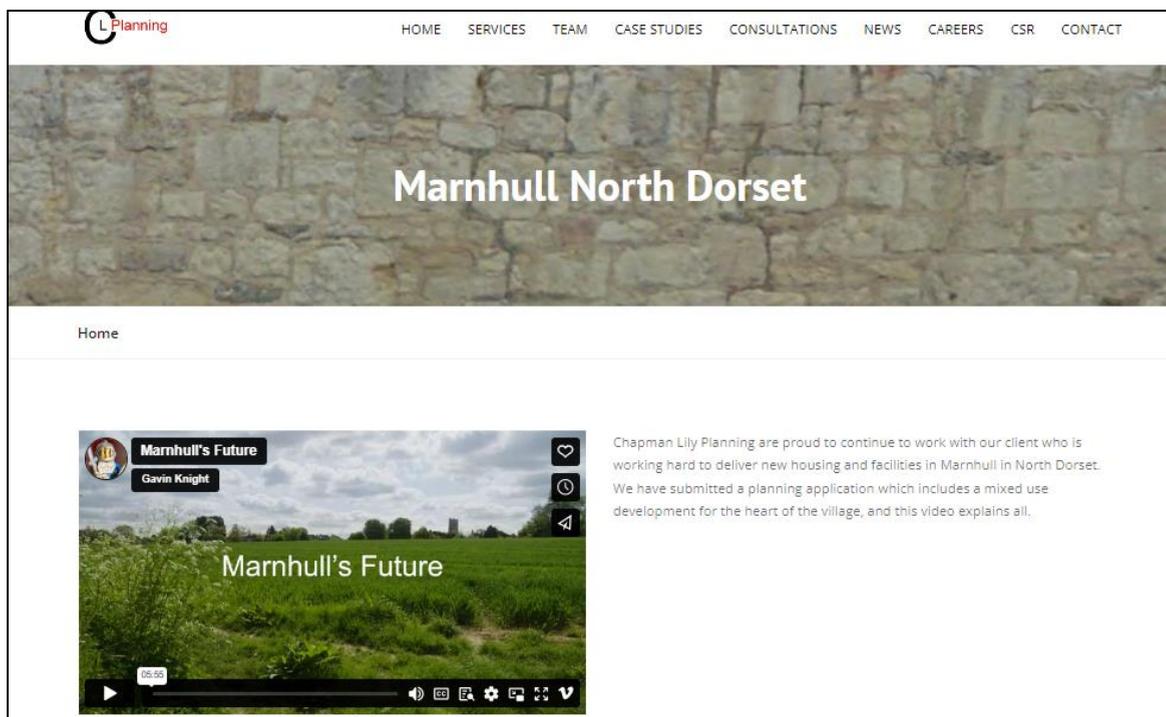
- 1.1 This Statement has been prepared by Chapman Lily Planning Limited in support of a hybrid planning application consisting of:
- a full planning application for a mixed-use development comprising a food store, office space, café, and mixed-use space for E class uses (e.g. estate agents, hairdresser, funeral care, dentist, vet), and 2x 2-bed flats. Demolition of redundant agricultural sheds. Plus, a new parking area with 30 parking spaces for St. Gregory's Church and St Gregory's Primary School. Associated landscaping and engineering operations, access arrangements, on land west of church hill, Marnhull, and
 - an outline planning application with all matters reserved except for access for up to 120 dwellings on land off Butts Close and Schoolhouse Lane, Marnhull.
- 1.2 To be referred to in this application respectively and colloquially in part as 'Tess Square' invoking the Thomas Hardy novel Tess of the D'Urbervilles, set in the fictional village of Marlott (based on the village of Marnhull), and 'Butts Close'.
- 1.3 The applicant acknowledges that early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties.

2. National and local planning policy

- 2.1 Paragraph 39 of the National Planning Policy Framework encourages early community engagement, stating:
- '...early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties. Good quality pre-application discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community.'*
- 2.2 The Local Planning Authority published a Statement of Community Involvement in 2020. It sets out a number of general principles for planning application public consultation stating that *'anyone seeking planning permission is encouraged to talk to those likely to be affected by the proposal and consider their views before submitting an application'*.
- 2.3 The 'Butts Close' part of this application site already benefits from outline planning permission (planning reference P/OUT/2021/03030) for up to 39 dwellings across part of this site (western part of the site). This has helped to inform part of the proposed scheme, together with an appraisal of opportunities and constraints, operation requirements, together with the findings of technical assessments.

3. Publicity and means of communication

3.1 A public information event was arranged for the 25th July 2023 to provide local residents the opportunity to view the plans, and ask questions prior to making comments to the Parish Council, and /or Dorset Councils public consultation. Flyers were distributed across the neighbouring area of Marnhull advertising the event and inviting residents to visit. We wrote to local ward councillors and invited the parish council to meet prior to this information event. Chapman Lily Planning Ltd also hosted a short video through a dedicated microsite: <https://clplanning.co.uk/marnhull-north-dorset/> Details of advanced publicity and the microsite itself are set out below.



- 3.2 As well as directing residents towards the microsite, the flyers also contained headline information about the proposals as we appreciate that not everyone has access to the internet. A copy of the flyer can be found in Appendix A.
- 3.3 The dedicated micro-site: <https://parkhill.clplanning.co.uk/> went live prior to the information event and contained the 'video' which was also available at the information event.
- 3.4 The microsite was available 24/7 enabling interested parties to watch the video at a convenient time. In our experience, online engagement attracts a broader demographic than public exhibitions.

4. Response Analysis

Public Information event

- 4.1 The public information event was held at the Marnhull Village Hall on the 25th July 2023 from 16:00 until 20:00. Throughout the event, 194 residents agreed to sign our registration form, however we were unfortunate that there was another entrance that we were unaware of and as such our attendee information isn't as accurate as we would like.
- 4.2 A comments box was placed in the local (Robin Hill) post office in Marnhull predating this event on the 12th June 2023 and was kept in situ until 22nd September. This box was opened by staff and Directors of MB Crocker, Councillor Graham Carr-Jones and 2 members of the Marnhull Parish Council.
- 4.3 Twenty comment sheets were completed.
- 4.4 Of those comments 16 were 'positive' and thus in favour, and 4 were 'negative' and thus appear to be against the proposal.
- 4.5 Positive comments are summarised by the applicant as:
 - Great meeting place
 - New people in the village – More chance for elderly to meet new people and not be lonely.
 - Great potential for youngsters re work opportunities especially for those that don't/aren't old enough to drive, meeting places for youngsters and the community as a whole. Places to go spending time with the family.
 - Bring Marnhull into the 21st Century
 - Better post office facilities
 - Bigger support of local business.
 - Better range of shopping facilities, with a lot more variety
 - Easier access to shops and post office
 - Improves the area, New houses, New shops
 - Encouraging physical activities – using the footpaths and parks
 - 1 Particular quote 'creates a safe, welcoming aspect to the village'
- 4.6 Negative comments are summarised by the applicant as:
 - Increased Traffic
 - Post office should stay where it is
 - Too many houses in the area – worry of turning into a town.
 - Affordable shops and housing.
- 4.7 Suggestions from the public comments as summarised by the applicant include:
 - Bridal Way to be implemented
 - Take away shops to be considered

- To Provide scooters for all the none drivers to be able to get to the shops.

4.8 Suggestions which need to be considered by the Council as summarised by the applicant include:

- 20MPH Speed limit
- Road Markings for Walkers through the village
- Affordable housing (N.B Already considered in the Application)

5. Conclusion

5.1 In the spirit of national and local planning policy, the applicant has adopted a proactive approach to community engagement. It is evident from the number of people that there was a high level of interest to 'find out more' ahead of being formally consulted on the application by Dorset Council.

Appendix A- A5 Flyer distributed to all households in Marnhull



Marnhull's Future

You are invited to an Information Event on 25th July about the planning application for 'Tess Square'
and the residential development at Butts Close

(watch the video first: www.ciplanning.co.uk/marnhull-north-dorset/)

As you may have heard, a planning application has been submitted to Dorset Council for a mixed-use development (food store, office space, café, and mixed-use space for estate agent, hairdresser, funeral care, dentist and vet), new parking area for St. Gregory's Church and St Gregory's Primary School on land west of Church Hill, Marnhull, to be known as Tess Square. Alongside this, a proposal to expand the recently granted planning permission for new homes on land off Butts Close.

Proponents of the proposed 'Tess Square' and Butts Close developments are hosting an information event between **4pm and 8pm on Tuesday 25th July 2023 at the Marnhull Village Hall** to display their plans ahead of Dorset Council's formal public consultation. This event gives you an opportunity to view the plans and ask any questions you may have, before making comments to the Parish Council and/or Dorset Council's public consultation.

We look forward to seeing you there. In the meantime, please find a short video here:

www.clplanning.co.uk/marnhull-north-dorset/.

