

**APP REF:** P/FUL/2024/04613

**ADDRESS:** Land to Rear of 156-172, South Street, Bridport. DT6 3NP

**APPLICANT:**

**DESCRIPTION:** Redevelopment for erection of retirement living accommodation comprising 48 apartments, 25 cottages, communal facilities, access, car parking and landscaping to create an integrated retirement community.

**CASE OFFICER:** Penny Canning

**URBAN DESIGN OFFICER COMMENTS**

|  |   |
|--|---|
| SUPPORT  |   |
| SUPPORT SUBJECT TO CONDITION(S)                      |   |
| UNABLE TO SUPPORT                                    | x |
| REQUEST FOR FURTHER INFORMATION                      |   |
| OTHER / PRE-APP                                      |   |
| NO COMMENT TO MAKE                                   |   |
| HAS PRE-APPLICATION DISCUSSION TAKEN PLACE WITH YOU? |   |

**Site description:** The site is situated to the south of Bridport town centre and is currently used predominately for aggregate storage. South Street runs to the east of the site connecting the town centre with the main A35. The River Brit bounds the site on its western side with residential to the north. On the other side of the river, there is a large open area with sports pitches that serve Bridport Football Club, Rugby Club and Leisure Centre. The site is in a highly sustainable location; it is well served by the local bus network which includes the Jurassic Coaster linking Weymouth with Axminster. There is a large supermarket on the opposite side of South Street and Bridport town centre is a short walk with footpaths and lighting on both sides of the road.

**Comments on proposal:**

**Existing Context and Identity/Character:** Although South Street has a very strong character with tightly knit housing sitting on the back edge of the pavement, this ends abruptly and the context changes to more of a fringe/ edge of town character where the site is located. In this area there is a lack of cohesive built form with greater variety in building heights, scale, architecture and materials.

The proposed buildings range from 1 ½ to 3 storey, however buildings closest to the river are also elevated to account for flood risk so their true height will be greater.

**Movement and Connections:** The site is in a highly sustainable location and adequate provision for pedestrians (whether residents or employees) should be made in the layout and design of the internal streets. This should include pavements and level access to enable easy and safe movement both within the site and to enable access to it.

Due to the elevated ground floor level some cottages and the apartment building only have stepped access, given the demographic of the residents it would seem imperative to have an alternative means of accessing these properties that is sloped at a gradient appropriate for a range of mobility aids. **National Design Guide para 8:** *'The underlying purpose for design quality and the quality of new development at all scales is to create well-designed and well-built places that benefit people and communities. ...It also includes people at different stages of life and with different abilities – children, young people, adults, families and older people, both able-bodied and disabled.'*

**Parking:** Parking is located in the vicinity of each development parcel however, it is unevenly distributed – for example cottages 07 and 08 have 6 parking spaces, cottages 17-25 (9 units) have 12 parking spaces but cottages 09 -16 (8 units) only have 6 spaces and 10 spaces for 48 apartments. Although car ownership may be lower in the older demographic there also needs to be provision for visitors, employees, carers etc; it is not clear where this has been accommodated. Due to the distribution and low number of spaces there is the potential for indiscriminate parking – particularly cars parking over curbs, this should be designed out of the scheme – for example tree planting along side the main road will help deter cars from being parked over the curb here.



There is no reference to EV charge points being provided.

**Homes:** A range of small cottages and apartments have been provided all catering for an older demographic. Due to the flood risk of the site, the ground floor has been elevated and includes stepped entrances. This limits the accessibility of the units which is curious

given the intended occupiers and the increased likelihood of residents having reduced mobility.

Also due to the elevated nature of some units residents only have access to small balcony areas, there are other areas of open space within the development.

There is a variety of rooflines which adds interest to the roofline, the design of cottages in block 2 and 4, 5 and 6 would be improved if the ridgeline was reduced to be in line with the apex of the gable ridge. Block 5 would also benefit with a more symmetrical approach to the side roof profile – both hipped or gable end but one of each unbalances the building.

The north elevation of the apartment building lacks coherence in design, there are too many different elements in terms of design, materials, window sizes and position, brick banding etc. While it is appreciated that the variation has been in an attempt to break up the bulk of the building it would benefit from some refinement to bring the elements together.



Overall the proposed materials and the dominant use of slate roofs is supported and are in keeping with the surroundings.

#### **Conclusions and policy consideration:**

The scheme would benefit from changes to the detailed design of buildings, overall the use of proposed materials is acceptable.

Access to some of the units is poor and is contrary to guidance provided in the **National Design Guide para 120** '*Well-designed homes and buildings are functional, accessible and sustainable. They provide internal environments and associated external spaces that support the health and well-being of their users and all who experience them. 121 They meet the needs of a diverse range of users, taking into account factors such as the ageing population and cultural differences...*', and guidance in **BS8300 - Design of an accessible and inclusive built environment Ch 4 Integrating inclusive design principles**

**into the development process and Weymouth and West Dorset Local Plan ENV 12: Design and Positioning of Buildings** ii *'The council will work with stakeholders and the local community to develop an approach for adaptable and accessible homes in accordance with the latest government guidance'*

**OFFICER:** Sophie Duke

**TITLE:** Senior Urban Designer

**DATE:** 19/11/2024

It should be noted that comments provided here are to be viewed as initial guidance based on the information at hand. Comments are subject to change if and when further details are provided in respect of development proposals.

All advice is given in good faith, without prejudice and cannot guarantee the outcome of any subsequent application which will be subject to a period of consultation and public notification and may be decided at a Planning Committee. The local planning authority will only be bound where a formal application is submitted, and a formal decision is issued in writing.

This advice is based on the planning policies and circumstances that apply at the time of writing this response. There is no guarantee that the advice will be relevant if there have been significant changes in either planning policy or the site and its surroundings by the time a formal application is received. Circumstances and policies can change in very short periods of time, and it is therefore not possible to give an indication of how long the advice will remain relevant. Furthermore, the accuracy of this advice is dependent on the quality and completeness of the pre-application submission and the questions asked.

Where pre-application advice is not followed, subsequent planning applications are likely to be determined without further negotiations.

**Confidentiality** - We are subject to requirements under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI) and Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR). If we receive a request to disclose any information in relation to a pre-application discussion prior to the submission of a related planning application, we will make reasonable efforts to notify and consult with you concerning its possible release. However, the final decision on whether the information should be withheld rests with the Council. The Council maintains compliance to the Data Protection Act. We will not release any personal information to third parties.

Please be aware that any pre-application advice given is likely to be made publicly available as part of the online documents once we receive a related application, subject to commercial confidentiality rules.