

Planning Inspectorate Appeal ref. APP/D1265/W/25/3372602

Site address: Land to rear of 156 - 172 South Street, BRIDPORT DT6 3NP

Dear Planning Inspector,

I am against the appeal proposals and fully support the decision made and reasons given by Dorset Council.

I have included below new evidence and further comments to support this.

Lack of affordable housing

Since the submission of the planning application two documents relating to housing needs have been published by Bridport Town Council relevant to this case. Bridport Area Housing Needs by AECOM [March 2025] and Bridport Housing Needs - supplement [approved August 2025].

Key points

- Demographic imbalance of the Bridport community is of significant concern.
- The high cost of housing being experienced by young people and families leaving the town is clearly an issue.
- Between 2011 census and 2021 census, Bridport has seen a 29.6% increase in residents aged 65-84 years and a 29.1% decrease in residents aged 15-44 years. It is recognised that nationally there is an ageing population but what Bridport is witnessing is an abnormally aged community.
- AECOM stated it may not be considered prudent to prioritise the potential demand from older people to the exclusion of other groups in order to maintain a balanced and vibrant community.
- To meet the more urgent and acute need for affordable and socially rented homes, these homes should take priority over open market retirement accommodation.

To support further the need for affordable housing in Bridport, following a FOI request Dorset Council stated [dated 27 October 2025] there are currently 187 active Housing Register applications where the primary applicant is over 60 years and have stated Bridport as their preferred area or one of their preferred areas. This supports the need for affordable housing.

Impact on Bridport health and care services

There is currently significant concern about the future of health and care provision within Bridport this is before considering the Churchill retirement development.

At a Bridport Town Council meeting held on 25 March 2025 focusing on the impact of the Foundry Lea development, [760 new homes being built on the western area of Bridport]. A statement made by Dr Andy Finucane of Ammonite Health Partnership (Senior GP working at Bridport Medical Centre which covers whole of town)

Some of the issues stated:

‘An expected 10% increase in demand for services’.

‘Concerns about Medical Centre’s ability to recruit into reception, phlebotomy, Health Care Assistants and administrative roles due to high housing costs’.

Older residents will place a greater demand on local health and care services which is already under pressure. It cannot be assumed that all the new occupants would be current Bridport residents wishing to downsize.

Within Bridport there is a high demand for domiciliary care services to support older people to live independently in their homes. Churchill do not provide care services. Four locally based care agencies all have vacancies for care staff. Recruiting staff, high housing costs is a factor, reflecting what was reported by local GP.

Appeal Sequential Assessment submitted by Churchill Living

Ref.page 12 Land to East of Bredy Veterinary Centre

Churchill state that ‘there is significant level changes that would not be appropriate for an older person’ and therefore dismiss the site.

Comment: Walking the footway, the route from this site via East Street is relatively level until you reach the incline from Bridge House Hotel to opposite the entrance to East Street car park. Taking regular gradient measurements, steepest is 1:18 [short distance outside 99 East Street] to 1:72. Predominantly, gradients were greater than 1:20 and slightly better on south side footway.

Walking the footway from South Street site to the town centre along South Street towards Quaker meeting house there are similar gradients. On both east and west footways, steeper gradients were found by South Mill Lane [1:14] and outside 150B [1:15]. Range from 1:14 to 1:72.

In conclusion both routes into town have inclines which older people may find challenging. It is accepted that the travel distance to town is slightly further from the site at Bredy Veterinary Centre. A consistent approach is required for both sites.

Changes to proposed development

On Churchill Living website [<https://www.churchill-living.co.uk/retirement-apartments-for-sale/dorset/bridport>], Churchill are advertising the site and asking to register interest.

The ‘cottages’ are being advertised as ‘freehold’ alongside the benefit of dedicated parking. This differs to what was included in the Officer’s report ref. 12.1.14 ‘applicant proposes to sell the units with a lease containing an age restriction....’.

Parking - with the amended site plan submitted as an Appeal document, there is a significant increase in number of parking spaces throughout the site, a total of 53 spaces reducing space for vegetation and landscaping. From site plan 25 parking spaces are now allocated to each cottage. Not one of the spaces is allocated as an accessible parking space, which would require additional space.

Use of cases to support statement of case

As part of Churchills's Statement of Case they have included a number of Appeal examples to support their argument.

To support the refusal of this case I have included the following Appeal for consideration
APP/R0660/W/23/3317173
17 - 19 Holly Road South
Wilmslow

The Planning Inspector in conclusion stated that 'The proposal would be acceptable in terms of drainage and flood risk and the living conditions of nearby occupiers. However neither these matters, nor the benefits of the proposal set out above, would out weigh the harm I have found in relation to affordable housing provision and local health services, to parking provision, highway capacity and safety and to the character and appearance of the area'.

It is accepted that these cases are from different Local Authority areas where different policies apply and therefore not directly comparable to the appeal but it raises a number of similar issues pertaining to this case.

I hope this appeal decision will reflect Bridport's true housing needs.

Yours faithfully,

Janet Parker
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