

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 31 March 2025 17:16
To: NeighbourhoodPlanning
Cc: Simon Edmonds
Subject: Consultation Response to the Weymouth Neighbourhood Plan

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Objection Points to the Weymouth Neighbourhood Plan.

I am writing to object to the Planning Proposals concerning land at Wyke Oliver Farm in Preston which is proposed as part of the Weymouth Neighbourhood Plan, Policy W20 Land at Wyke Oliver Farm North. WNP25.

My name is Simon Edmonds of [REDACTED]

Mobile is [REDACTED]

Email is [REDACTED]

I write on behalf of myself and my wife Andrea Edmonds.
Our property borders the Wyke Oliver Farm.

Please reply that you have received this email of objection. There has been a track record of Weymouth Council ignoring objections.

Please accept this email format, as an Apple user I do not have access to Word or Adobe PDF document creation.

I have been objecting to development of this site every time this has been proposed and ever since I have lived at [REDACTED] my wife and I moved here in 2015. I submitted responses in 2018, 2021 and 2023. The reasons for the objections remain essentially the same but over the years the impact has **worsened** considerably.

In 2021 Dorset Council removed the land at Wyke Oliver Farm from development, I have this confirmed by a Council official Steve Boyt 4th Feb 2021.

Yet Weymouth Town Council (WTC) keep adding this land back into their plans presumably as the landowners continue to lobby as they need to capitalise the value before the Govt removes their tax incentives. The tenant farmers have been placed in an unsustainable position since the

land was first proposed in 2009 and one presumes developers think that this time they will be successful since we have seen considerable surveying and land clearance in Wyke Oliver Road and Emminster Close.

Our objections cover the following category of topics:

1. Governance of this process by Weymouth Town Council.
2. Flooding risk and sustainability risks
3. The case for housing demand is flawed
4. Local infrastructure is already stressed
5. Provision of public transport
6. Development proposals are flawed
7. Wildlife disruption
8. Finally, there is a better alternative

1. Governance by Weymouth Town Council (WTC)

I would draw Dorset Council's attention to the

website weymouthneighbourhoodplandemocracy.org.uk Weymouth Neighbourhood Plan Democracy, since so many of us in Preston subscribe and support this website. The Council will see from this website the appalling way that consultation has been conducted over the years;

- neighbourhood views have not actively been sought;
- views and consultation responses have been put aside and ignored which is a disgrace;
- and the Steering Group is made up of people with no idea of life in Preston and have refused repeatedly to meet with residents.

Our local Councillors Louie O'Leary, Joanna Dickenson, Peter Dickenson and Steven Dickens have been extremely supportive of local residents despite WTC refusal to engage. Point 9.62 of the Neighbourhood Plan page 94 regarding Wyke Oliver states that robust community consultation has taken place. **This is completely misleading**. No such robust conversations or consultations have been carried out.

Now we hear that the WTC meeting held in November 2024 has been declared unlawful and was re-convened in February since the information voted on in November was not up to date and had significantly changed. This is typical of the lack of professionalism from WTC which leads to local residents having no confidence at all in the capability and professionalism at the Council and in this Neighbourhood Plan.

It is difficult to know whether any of the variations of documents are indeed the final version at any point in time.

It would appear that the Strategic Environmental Assessment which was not considered last November at the Council meeting is a deeply flawed assessment since it does not consider the total number of houses proposed at Wyke Oliver but only 41% of the houses proposed from the site.

In April 2024 the boundaries of Weymouth were changed to the North and West and a very large area added to the North which brings in the development at Bincombe Park in Littlemoor. This boundary change alone means the Weymouth Neighbourhood Plan is obsolete

and should be paused. This was discussed at the Council meeting 26th Feb 2025 but Councillors voted to 'press on'. There is more suitable land adjacent to Bincombe Park that would be more appropriate than the Wyke Oliver Site for a variety of sustainability, transport etc reasons, notwithstanding of course that Bincombe Park appears to be stalled due to lack of demand for housing. Moreover policy W14 states 'Development on Brownfield Sites ...shall be prioritised' yet all brownfield sites have not been pursued and policy W19 shows that all residential development taking place on Greenfield Sites.

In a previous copy of the Plan version 2.5, page 70 under 9.51 "Sites allocated for development by policy WNP23 have emerged as those most supported by the community to achieve our housing objectives." We can see the untruth that the community supported those housing objectives, this has been dropped from the current plan, this acknowledges the failure of process by the Council.

Previous SEA reports in 2017 and 2021 were also extremely critical of the suitability for development at both Wyke Oliver and Brackenden/Budmouth area. It would appear the most recent SEA seems to have been made to fit the proposal to develop and is not independent.

The Governance situation has **significantly worsened.**

The basics of this plan is around 15 years old, it has old thinking and Dorset Council should reject this Plan and restart a new Plan process since we have a new National government with a new mandate and we have a new Dorset Council with a new mandate.

2. Flooding and sustainability risks - Strategic Environmental Assessment

Since this area of land was proposed for development in 2009, it is unquestionable that the impacts of climate change have significantly worsened over these last 16 years. Recent articles by Dorset Echo have reported that Lodmoor Marshes will be permanently flooded by 2030, adding more development only increased the risk of flooding. Current frequency of storms and rainfall now results in flooding and the land is very quickly saturated. The proposed Wyke Oliver development will void into a Flood Zone 3 Area, that is the highest level of danger. Wyke Oliver Road houses have been flooded in the past as well as houses in Melstock Avenue. There is just nowhere for the water to go.

This flooding risk is a present danger and has not been properly considered and mitigated which taken with the flaws in the SEA reports, should be enough evidence and concern for Dorset Council to reject development on the Wyke Oliver Farm site. The SEA is a deeply flawed analysis since it only considers the risks using half the number of houses, this is skewed in order to create the impression there is no flooding risk. This is a flood 3 area that voids into a Flood 3 area. I quote below from the SEA:

At page 75 of the SEA. https://www.weymouthtowncouncil.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/Weymouth-NP-SEA_Environmental-Report-November-2024.pdf it says: "Land at Wyke Oliver Farm North – A small strip of land in the middle of the site, to the west of Wyke Oliver Farm, is within Flood Zone 2 / 3 and at medium / high risk of surface

water flooding. In addition, the site borders an area of land within Flood Zone 2 / 3 and at medium / high risk of surface water flooding to the north.” This report is completely flawed because it repeatedly refers to W20 on pages 52, 54 as having a capacity of 112-135 homes whereas the Plan calls for 250 homes and the developer (now quit) wanted 270 homes (Reg14 Morrish Homes). W20 used to be called WNP25 and before that WEY14. It was one and part of WNP24 (since dropped, citing the SEA as its reason) which was for 240 homes. Therefore, the SEA has wrongly cited all its criteria on one half of the proposal and its weighting, therefore, is deeply flawed. WNP24 (as the same field) has 4 red flags out of 8 (see page xiii) (A) based on 240 homes and W20 (page xiii) (E) has 6 “uncertains” or not knowns out of 8 criteria, 1 red flag and 1 “no effect”. It has no “positive effect” on environment at all. Clearly, had the consultant based the findings on 250/270 homes the findings would have been different. This conflicts with page 77 of WNP at para 9.14 which states: “Affordable Homes (at 50% for 400 homes) outweighs the adverse impacts identified in the SEA”. This figure of 400 is false if one adds the consultant’s 112-135 together with Policy W21 Redlands at 150 homes, gives 262 to 285, not 400.

The same consultant AECOM in its Final Assessment Report

<https://www.weymouthtowncouncil.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Weymouth-Neighbourhood-Plan-Site-Assessment-Final-Report.pdf> at page 165 and 166 discounts the W20 site in its Conclusions: “The site is located outside the development boundary and within land of local landscape importance and an important open gap. Unacceptable landscape impacts. An unsuitable site. Suitability: The site is located outside the development boundary and within land of local landscape importance and an important open gap. Existing development is already intrusive; particularly areas on upper slopes. Unacceptable landscape impacts. Farm buildings could be converted, development unacceptable in undulating and elevated open landscape.”

The march of climate change, the increasing storm frequency and higher rainfall levels means the flooding risk has **worsened**.

The site at Wyke Oliver Farm should therefore not be developed.

3. The case for housing demand is flawed

Weymouth is not suffering from a shortage of social housing as proposed in this site. If anything there is demand for some key worker single accommodations but they would be needed closer to Weymouth. Weymouth has an employment problem and needs some form of economic / industrial strategy to move beyond the holiday economy that dominates Weymouth. There is no employment for the younger generation which is why they all leave. It is also the reason the relief road is congested in the morning since people cannot find jobs within Weymouth. Unless meaningful employment is created there isn’t any need for more housing beyond that already approved.

Currently the development at Littlemoor which was previously approved has stalled and we believe that there isn't the demand for housing that was predicted for this site, so it is indeed doubtful there is demand at the Wyke Oliver site which has far worse transport links than Littlemoor.

4. Local infrastructure and services are already stressed and overloaded.

All the development areas proposed in various iterations of the WNP have all proposed small pockets of developments and number of houses such that there is never any provision of health care, doctors, dentists, schooling all of which are very stretched particularly doctors and dentists. The development at Littlemoor and Louviers Road has made an already bad situation much **worse**. The waiting times for appointments is already very challenging for existing residents and patients, so adding up to 750 or 1000 adults and children will definitely make the situation worse.

5. Provision of public transport

There is no provision of public transport beyond the limited service along the Preston Road into Weymouth. If we are to believe that half of the Wyke Oliver development is social housing than one assumes that it would not be responsible to make either young or elderly to have to walk to Chalbury Corner to connect with transport. The roads are currently congested with a lot of on street parking so having buses divert to Wyke Oliver would be a danger.

Equally, since we doubt the level of 50% social housing will be maintained since there will not be a housing need demand, it is reasonable to assume that another 250-500 cars to Wyke Oliver Road as the access point would be also be extremely dangerous. The AECOM report agrees, on page 56 “This reflects issues with access as well as the likelihood of (sic) bring forward high private vehicle use”.

There is no way that the Wyke Oliver site could ever be described as a 'walkable' site, it is three times the height of the Charlbury Corner so definitely a climb especially for the elderly and very young.

Already the Wyke Oliver junction with the main Preston Road is dangerous and the junction of Wyke Oliver and Oakbury Drive is also dangerous, added levels of traffic just adds to the risk. All the roads in the Preston area have on street parking since the majority of housing was developed and built with limited garage/driveway parking. This means the roads are currently congested and just about wide enough.

6. Development proposals are flawed

In the neighbourhood plan document page 94 there are a number of development proposals under section 4:

- i. Retention of hedgerows is important but this statement is meaningless since the current hedgerows are not maintained and it is not clear how any developer or house owner would comply with this policy?
- ii. As it currently stands the development at Wyke Oliver North is directly against Emminster Close and since this land is higher than the bungalows along Emminster Close, we will be overseen and there will be a direct flooding risk to the bungalows all along Emminster Close.

iii. The land is on the top and side of a hill, of course stability will be impacted and difficult to mitigate

iv. I think I have explained that counter to this policy there will be a flood risk that cannot be mitigated as was stated in previous SEA reports

v. Unquestionably Wyke Oliver Road will be more dangerous as quoted by AECOM since the volume of cars and associated vehicles, delivery etc will provide a traffic accident risk.

vi. Provision of a Community focus - no idea what this means and nowhere as far as I can see is this explained in the WNP as relates to this site.

vii. Lorton Valley - the better solution is to transfer all the Wyke Oliver Farm to the Wildlife Trust either alone or in conjunction with RSPB at Lodmoor. This also maintains the Green Gap.

viii. Difficult to see how this development meets any environmental objectives particularly regarding the flooding risk

ix. With the current levels of on street parking it is undeniably a fact that Wyke Oliver Road and its junctions will become more dangerous.

7. Wildlife disruption

With the Wyke Oliver Farm being obviously agricultural and so close to the Lodmoor and Lorton reserves we see almost every evening an array of wildlife, currently most prevalent being deer, foxes, badgers, a whole variety of birdlife including owls and bats. Any development would drive wildlife away from this area permanently and damage the green space that currently separates and forms a green gap between Littlemoor and Preston. On page 31 Policy W02 states that "Any development brought forward must ensure that it can be implemented with adverse effect upon the integrity of the Habitat sites. Proposals that will adversely affect the integrity of Habitats will not be supported". Development site W20 conflicts with this through water discharges in Flood 3 of uncleaned water. Sewerage is avoided in the WNP as being outside its remit. W20 will discharge sewage into an overloaded system which has increased its untreated "emergency" discharges by 100% at Bowleaze Cove (Environment Agency site WSX0770 from 20.3 to 39.9 between 2021 and 2023) and Melcombe avenue (EA site WSX0989 from 3.07 to 6.57 between 2021 and 2023). Wessex Water has said that improvements are unlikely until into the 2040's so the entire life of this Plan is blighted."

There is a clear and increasing threat to wildlife and their habitats.

8. The better solution - Dorset Wildlife Trust and RSPB

Because of the threat to wildlife and habitat combined with the fact that over the last 15 years, the ability to invest and make a success of any farming/agricultural business has been disgracefully undermined and damaged by Weymouth Town Council and the landowners

continually trying to force the Wyke Oliver Farm into being developed, a far better solution would be to turn the whole site over to the Dorset Wildlife Trust and RSPB Lodmoor.

Nobody could build a sustainable business being constantly undermined by Weymouth Council in this way. It stresses how poorly the Council have governed this planning process.

Now that farming has been destroyed on the site the far better solution should be for the entire site to be permanently handed to Dorset Wildlife Trust who would be extremely responsible owners of this area, and not just be given a token part of the site. The Trust could then create a lasting wildlife area connecting Wyke Oliver to the Lorton Reserve to the West and the RSPB Lodmoor site to the South. The Trust could as part of its ownership encourage sustainable agriculture on this area of land.

There could also be scope for solar energy to be explored and to provide renewable energy to the Weymouth area. This area of Preston needs some creative thinking not outdated 2009 thinking by the Weymouth Town Council.

Climate change adds huge pressure on wildlife and their habitats as does proposed property development in this Wyke Oliver case. Enhancing and joining this land to Lorton Meadows will provide an essential space for wildlife to thrive and contribute to sustainable ecological recovery.

This would permanently protect an important area of wildlife on the Eastern boundary of Weymouth and I am sure it would be welcomed as a large site providing people in Dorset and Weymouth to enjoy the benefits of contact with nature.

This would be a long lasting legacy from Dorset Council to the Weymouth area.

I look forward to Dorset Council doing the responsible thing and avoid development on the Wyke Oliver Farm site but this time ensuring that a permanent solution is facilitated for this land to avoid Weymouth Council continuing to propose this unsuitable plot of land for development.

With best regards,

Simon Edmonds

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