



Broadwindsor Group Parish CLT

Annual Report 2019-2020 from the Chair

Dear Members

I trust you are all well in these very difficult times. I hope I don't speak too soon in trusting that the worst may be over and the long journey to a new normal has begun.

Broadwindsor GP CLT's Planning Application for 15 affordable homes for rent to local people with a connection to our Parish area was lodged with West Dorset District Council's Planning Department (now Dorset Council) in May 2019, over a year ago. You will recall that the site location at Netherhay Lane, Drimpton was selected with the active help and support of the same Planning Department. The scheme was designed following a huge amount of research by the CLT Board and advisers, including site visits to other local CLT developments and discussions with experts in many fields, including design, energy provision and landscaping, to mention a few. Community consultation was a big part of this process, and many of the responses to the draft designs have been incorporated within the planning application documents. Along with our advisers and partner housing association, Yarlington Housing Group, BGP CLT consulted and met with the Senior Planning Officer and other officials on several occasions. We then arrived at an agreed plan, which we believe will provide 15 homes of high architectural value, faced in stone and brick, in a cottage style with well-designed interiors for convenient living.

As part of the Planning Application consultation process, a number of issues were raised. These included the safety of the crossroads at Drimpton Cross at the junction of Netherhay Lane and Chard Road (Highways Department) and the design of the scheme (Urban Design Planner). During the course of our deliberations with the Planning Department, the post holder of the Urban Design Planning Officer changed. Unknown to the CLT, this officer had a different view to her predecessor of how the scheme should look. This only came to light after the submission of the planning application. The CLT was presented with a loose pencil sketch showing a large curved terrace to contain 'flats'. In our view, this design was totally unsuitable for the Netherhay Lane location and completely out of keeping with the existing built environment. In response, the CLT submitted amended plans, re-orientating some of the houses to create a 'village road' feel.

The Drimpton Cross issues led us to commission an independent Highways consultant to look at the junction and carry out a full safety analysis. In his report, he determined that the junction is safe. This report was submitted to the Planning Department and as a result the Highways Department concerns have been lessened to the extent that they have retracted their objection. They did ask that we create a footpath from the development to join the existing right of way which leads to Chard Road. This has been now been incorporated into the drawings of our amended planning application. At the end of May 2020 the Dorset Natural Environment Team required us to submit another Habitat Survey and Biodiversity Mitigation Plan for the site - the first one we submitted last year is now out of date due to the length of the planning consultation! The CLT Board believes that the proposed planting of some 27 trees and creation of a native fruiting hedgerow around the boundary of the development will greatly increase the ecological value of the site.



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This proposed CLT development site is included within the excellent Broadwindsor Group Parish Neighbourhood Plan (2018-2031). The Neighbourhood Plan was supported and voted for by the vast majority of parishioners, approved by an independent inspector and adopted in September 2019 by Dorset Council.

As you can imagine, the BGP CLT Board and our advisors have experienced some frustrations during this last year, mainly with the delays in the planning process. The Board of the CLT has worked tirelessly to move this vital project forward. As always, Sheila Hawkins our Secretary has been an absolute stalwart in keeping everything progressing as quickly as it can. I am privileged to see all that happens with this project and I can report that Sheila's workload is constant and on-going, and to her I offer my sincere thanks. To you, the CLT Members, I thank you for taking the time, interest and effort to belong to this worthy organisation and for believing in a project that will hopefully provide desperately needed affordable homes for local people.

We hope that the next months will see some conclusion to the planning process and we will keep you informed of any developments.

With my sincere thanks

David Leader
9 June 2020