



**SIMON HOARE MP**  
NORTH DORSET

HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON, SW1A 0AA

8<sup>th</sup> May 2024

By Email and eletter:

Dear Sir/ Madam,

I wish to make representations for your consideration with regard to the appeal referenced above which will commence on 21st May. I wish to make clear that I make these representations as the local Member of Parliament and NOT as the Local Government Minister. I will take no Ministerial role in the determination of the case.

It was right that the application was refused. The Appeal should be dismissed. I set out my reasoning:

1. Stalbridge is a small rural settlement. It has absorbed a considerable amount, as a proportion of its existing scale, of new residential development in recent years . It has played an engaged part in meeting Dorset's housing needs. The Appeal site would be an overdevelopment of Stalbridge, changing its character and scale beyond recognition or acceptability;
2. I am convinced that there would be negative highways impacts. I met the Appellant to discuss what if any improvements could be made to the operation of the junction at the top of Station Road. They undertook to revert in due course. Months later I have heard nothing. The junction was simply not designed to accommodate the level of traffic proposed by this development. What capacity may have existed has been utilised by the southern development;
3. Likewise, when I met Gladman to discuss water management and flood attenuation they were confused between field boundaries, existing water flow and site boundaries. Not a position that filled me with confidence. They said they would revert with clarification. Again nothing. I make the points at 2&3 to underscore the lack of thought and understanding towards key local issues;
4. I share Dorset Council's view that the development is outside the settlement boundary, contrary to the Local Plan and is an overdevelopment with poor layout and suboptimal design opportunities thereby undermining the recent revisions to the NPPF with regard to delivering beautiful developments;
5. The proposal for a new local school is specious. Given the age profile of my constituency and the falling birth rate locally there is and will be no need for a new school. In point of fact a review of rural school provision, given falling rolls, looms on the horizon. Both schools in nearby Marnhull (part of the same electoral ward) have significant headroom capacity. Even if this were not the case the siting of a school at this dislocated site, disconnected from the larger part of Stalbridge makes this site unsustainable for school purposes. Given its dislocation and separation from the largest percentage of the community car travel to school would increase thereby making a difficult and suboptimal road still worse. I also believe the school is a Trojan Horse for further residential development when the Appellant's case for a new school implodes. This would make the design/layout issues even worse;

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6. The development of the site also has a negative visual impact on the Blackmore Vale changing its character and appearance. Given the importance of the Vale to our local tourism economy this would be a retrograde step;

Even if none of the above holds water (and I believe the points made to be watertight) then Dorset Council's meeting of its 5 years land supply, the fact that there are consented schemes representing circa 11.7 years of need and the recent changes to the NPPF, blow an irreparable hole in the Appellant's case. The meeting of the 5YLS coupled to the NPPF changes means that that all of the issues I raise above can and should be taken into full account and given full weight because the meeting of a 5YLS removes the Appellant's trump card. There may have been a case (massively doubtful in my assessment) to allow the Appeal but the meeting of policy requirements contained within the NPPF by Dorset Council removes that case entirely. Dorset has a 5YLS, the Appeal site fails to meet any planning test successfully. It should not proceed on policy grounds.

In summary the proposal is contrary to local and national planning. It is an over intensification of Stalbridge. The need for a new school does not exist. The harms this proposal generates are so great to the natural, built and community environment that the Appeal should be dismissed.

I would also urge the awarding of costs in favour of Dorset Council.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Simon Hoare'.

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