

Matter 8
ID: 578
Betterment Properties (Weymouth) Ltd

**West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan
Examination in Public Statement
in Relation To Matters Under Examination**

MATTER 8

Statement by M D Brown FRICS MRTPI

On Behalf Of

Betterment Properties (Weymouth) Limited

WEST DORSET, WEYMOUTH AND PORTLAND LOCAL PLAN EXAMINATION IN PUBLIC

MATTER 8

QUESTION 8.1

1. **Are the objectives for improving the range of housing comprehensive and appropriate to the needs of the Borough?**
2. No. The proposals are not adequate to meet the full objective assessment of the need for market and affordable housing. (see Matter 3).
3. Betterment Properties (Weymouth) Limited commissioned a number of studies in the promotion of their site (WEY 10) for housing development. These included Flood Risk Assessment, Transport Impact Assessment, Landscape Visual Impact Assessment, Biodiversity. Studies also looked at sustainable location of development and a sequential test was also carried out. Representatives of the Company recently met with Officers of Weymouth and Portland Borough Council for pre-application discussions over an outline planning application for Phases 2-4 of the site which the Company has named as Curtis Fields, known in the Local Plan as land at Markham and Little Francis. In the preparation of a master plan the architects have taken into account the need to make provision for an extension to St Augustine's School, thus reducing the developable area of the site. The strategy for dealing with surface water runoff and to enhance flood relief efforts off site has also identified the need for surface water runoff areas, which have also reduced the developable area of the site.
4. The Landscape Visual Impact has established that the developable area can, with mitigation, extend further south than shown on Inset Map WEY10 in the Local Plan.

5. The Local Planning Authority has not produced any significant evidence to support the provision of a Country Park, as identified on that proposals map, but in the context of a current outline planning application have asked for:-

A neighbourhood equipped area for play. Approx 0.1 of a hectare including a multi use games area (MUGA) and a contribution towards the provision of additional recreation facilities at The Marsh. The latter is within walking distance of the site at Markham and Little Francis and its further development would benefit the wider community.

6. A master plan has been developed to demonstrate:-

- (a) The area of land which is developable for housing and community purposes. This includes open space in which to accommodate balancing ponds.

- (b) An extension to St Augustine's First School.

- (c) A buffer zone round the Site of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI) and management proposals to enhance biodiversity.

- (d) Establishment of a green network of open space.

- (e) Highway works including a second access from Lane House Rocks Road, an access from Markham Avenue to serve a limited number of dwellings, pedestrian and cycle links through the development of the site to improve connectivity in the west and south to the town centre.

6. The proposal envisages approximately 500 dwellings, of which 35% (175) are intended to be affordable. A ratio of 70% rented to 30% intermediate. This is in addition to the 180 market and affordable dwellings for which planning permission has been obtained.

7. Local Plan Inset Map WEY10 proposes a lesser developable area, which has implications for viability.

8. The Local Planning Authority proposal would reduce the capacity of the area without planning permission to 320 dwellings. That would reduce the affordable provision to 112 dwellings.
9. In view of the shortfall in housing supply, 180 additional market dwellings, including 63 affordable dwellings, would make a substantial beneficial contribution to boost the supply of housing, particularly affordable housing, in the town.
10. The Respondents' Transport Consultants are of the opinion that 680 dwellings (180 permitted, plus 500 dwellings allocated) could be served off the approved access. However a second access off Lanehouse Rocks Road would allow traffic travelling south/south west to disperse via an alternative route. It also provides for an additional/alternative bus route through the site
11. It has been established that with computer aided signals, the Five-Ways junction can operate satisfactorily. The Respondents proposal would however offer the above benefits.
12. With only 325 market dwellings (65% of 180+320), the development costs of the infrastructure are spread over fewer dwellings and therefore result in a higher cost per dwelling, which is impacting upon development viability. It is likely that with the contributions to education, recreation, as well as the physical infrastructure, a smaller proportion of affordable housing will be viable. I would illustrate this by way of an example as follows:-

Assume the infrastructure costs are £10M. The cost per dwelling spread over 180 plus 320 (500) dwellings, is £20,000 per dwelling. If the same cost is spread over 500, plus 180 (680) dwellings, the cost is £14,705 per dwelling. It is likely that the additional costs could only be borne only by the market housing. The Local Plan proposals would amount to a cost of £30,770 per market dwelling and in the Respondents' proposal would amount to £22,625 per market dwelling. Put another way the respondents proposal would result in over £3million available for other purposes.

13. There are therefore very strong economic reasons why the developable area needs to be more than shown in the Inset Map WEY10.

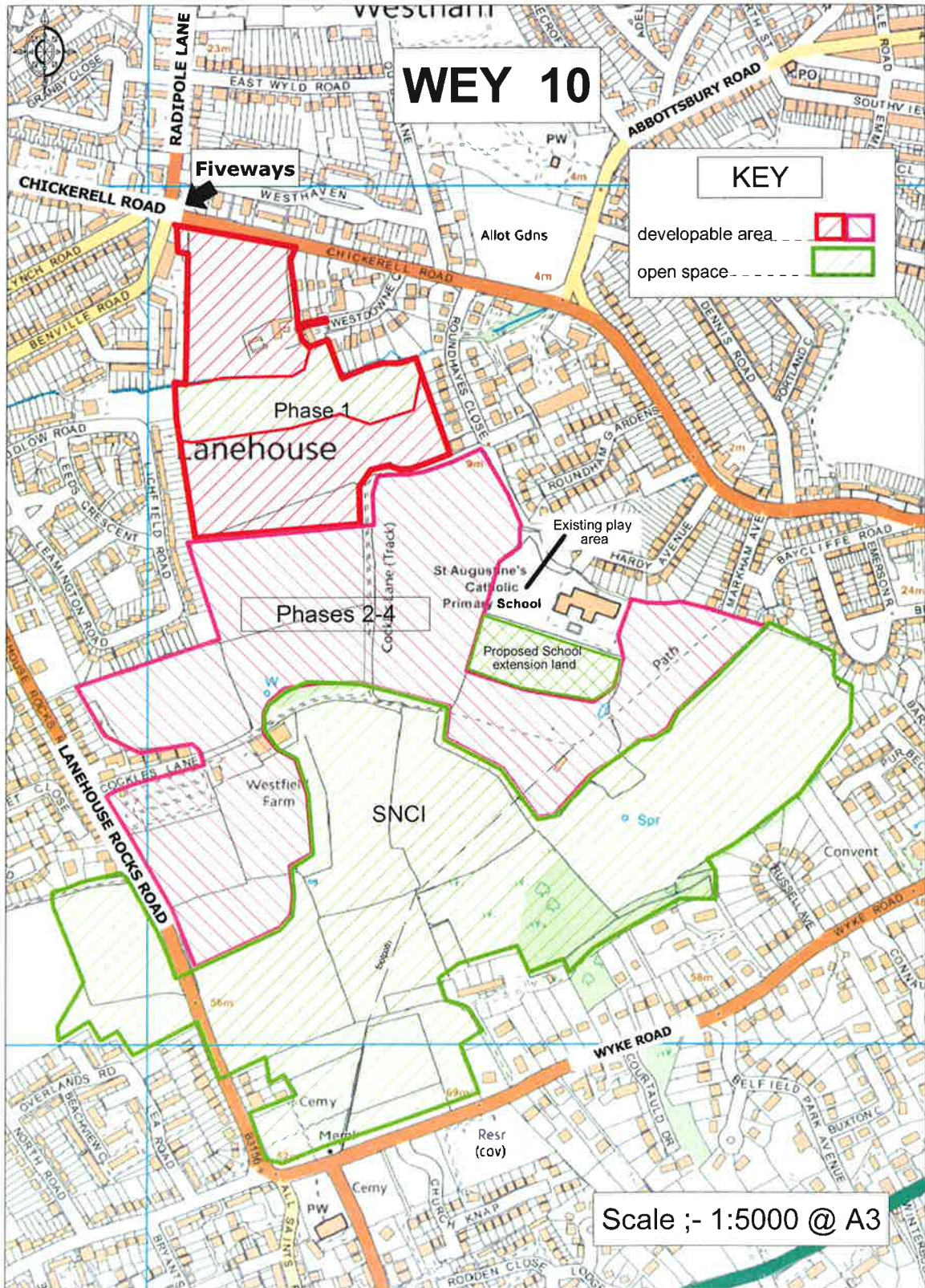
14. It also seems irrational for Plan WEY10 to show only land in the ownership of Betterment Properties as part of the open space allocation. The Respondents' master plan suggests that the whole of the ridge would be excluded from the developable area. **As currently illustrated in the Local Plan Inset Map, the land on the ridge would be "white land" and at risk from speculative development proposals, with access from the south.**
15. In response to the comments of Natural England with regard to the Respondents' current planning application, the master plan will be revised to indicate the landscape buffer between the developable area and the site of Nature Conservation interest. Subject to a satisfactory engineering design, a balancing pond can be relocated into the buffer, minimising the impact upon the developable area.
16. The attached map shows the Respondents' proposed alternative Inset Map WEY10.

Matter 8

ID: 578

Appendix Betterment 8.1

ID: 578 Matter 8 App. Betterment 8.1 Land at Markham and Little Francis, Weymouth



Matter 8

ID: 578

Betterment Properties

Appendix Betterment 8.1

ID: 578 Matter 8 App. Betterment 8.1 Land at Markham and Little Francis, Weymouth

