

**IN THE MATTER OF AN UNDER s. 78 TCPA 1990  
BY DUDSBURY HOMES (SOUTHERN) LTD  
FOR A MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT OF UP TO 1,700 DWELLINGS INCLUDING  
AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND CARE PROVISION; 10,000SQM OF  
EMPLOYMENT SPACE IN THE FORM OF A BUSINESS PARK; VILLAGE  
CENTRE WITH ASSOCIATED RETAIL, COMMERCIAL, COMMUNITY AND  
HEALTH FACILITIES; OPEN SPACE INCLUDING THE PROVISION OF  
SUITABLE ALTERNATIVE NATURAL GREEN SPACE (SANG); BIODIVERSITY  
ENHANCEMENTS; SOLAR ARRAY, AND NEW ROADS, ACCESS  
ARRANGEMENTS AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE (OUTLINE  
APPLICATION WITH ALL MATTERS RESERVED APART FROM ACCESS OFF  
HILLBURY ROAD)**

**AT: LAND TO THE SOUTH OF RINGWOOD ROAD, ALDERHOLT**

**APPEAL REF: APP/D1265/W/23/3336518**

**LPA REF: P/OUT/2023/01166**

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**PROOF OF EVIDENCE OF  
CLLR GINA LOGAN  
ON BEHALF OF ALDERHOLT PARISH COUNCIL  
A RULE 6 PARTY**

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I, Cllr Gina Logan, of Alderholt Parish Council (“APC”), 1 Station Road, Alderholt, Fordingbridge, Hants, SP6 3RB, will say as follows:

**INTRODUCTION**

1. I provide this Proof of Evidence on behalf of APC and to provide evidence in support of APC’s response to this appeal made by Dudson Homes (Southern) Ltd for a *mixed use development of up to 1,700 dwellings including affordable housing and care provision; 10,000sqm of employment space in the form of a business park; village*

*centre with associated retail, commercial, community and health facilities; open space including the provision of suitable alternative natural green space (sang); biodiversity enhancements; solar array, and new roads, access arrangements and associated infrastructure (“the Application”).*

2. The facts and matters set out in this witness statement are within my own knowledge unless otherwise stated, and I believe them to be true.
3. Where I refer to information supplied by others, the source of the information is identified; facts and matters derived from other sources are true to the best of my knowledge and belief. Included with this witness statement is a paginated bundle of exhibits marked GL1. References to documents in this bundle are by way of **[GL1.TAB]**.

## **THE PARISH COUNCIL**

4. APC elected to participate in this appeal as a Rule 6 Party in order to represent the significant numbers of residents who objected to this proposal, and who have encouraged APC to represent their interests as a Rule 6 Party.
5. APC plays a vital role in representing the interests of the community we serve and improving the quality of life and the local environment. Furthermore we seek to use our local knowledge to inform decision makers to ensure that developments and services are brought forward to meet local needs. On a day-to-day basis, we deal with enquiries from the public on issues ranging from potholes in the road to recycling queries. We work with many local community groups and organisations to provide and enhance the facilities available in Alderholt. As in past years APC is

providing funding for the Big Alderholt Fete in June 2024 and fully support the Wednesday PlusBus Shuttle<sup>1</sup> service between Alderholt and Fordingbridge.

6. APC is a consultee on new planning applications and policies affecting Alderholt and is consulted by various bodies on a wide range of issues relevant to the village such as the Hampshire County Council Minerals & Waste Plan – Partial Update (Midgham Farm site) and the Hampshire County Council Future Services Consultation in respect of Household Waste Recycling Centres (Somerley HWRC).
7. I've been a resident of Alderholt since February 2013, an Alderholt Parish Councillor since 2014 and prior to this I was both a Parish and District Councillor in East Hampshire – the Parish of Liss, from 2000 and 2005 respectively through to 2013.
8. During this time, I was involved in the creation of the South Downs National Park working with others to ensure Liss was included, and was heavily involved in and oversaw the production of the first Liss Village Design Statement which was adopted in 2000. I was the Ward member for Alderholt on East Dorset District Council from September 2015 to March 2019 when Dorset became a unitary authority, where I sat on the Planning Committee. With regard to Alderholt Parish Council I was Vice Chairman in 2015 and Chairman from 2016 to 2018 inclusive. I have been Chairman of the Planning Committee since 2020, and Chairman of the Neighbourhood Planning Committee since November 2022.
9. APC engages fully in providing comments as a Statutory Consultee on all planning applications within our area and, when applications come before the Dorset Council

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<sup>1</sup> <https://ectcharity.co.uk/news/story/introducing-the-plusbus-shuttle-between-alderholt-and-fordingbridge>

Eastern Area Planning Committee I attend as the representative for APC. Where comments are required on planning related consultations, I compile these on behalf of APC.

10. I do not however hold any professional planning qualifications and therefore I present my evidence not as an expert in planning, just as an experienced Parish Councillor and local resident. I hope to demonstrate that Alderholt Parish Council continues in its strong objection to this proposed development.

11. This proposed extensive development is in total contrast to the amount of housing required by Alderholt and the level of facilities that it can sustain. The villagers will be adversely impacted by having a new village more than twice the size of the existing Alderholt, adjoined to it which will create an “us and them” situation which will be detrimental to the wellbeing of the existing villagers and not facilitate any integration.

12. I have sought to address my evidence to the two issues identified by the Inspector at the CMC.

### **Issue 1 The Significance of the Proposal in Meeting Housing Need, Having Regard to the Current Supply of Housing Land and the Age of the Local Plan**

13. APC has instructed an experienced planning consultant to assist it. Her proof of evidence will address most of what APC is able to say in respect Issue 1.

14. However, I would like to raise that from the Census information (including the 2021 data) the suggestion is that the population size and number of households in Alderholt

has changed very little in the last 10 years, with building rates being typically 3 to 4 dwellings per annum. Two major sites currently being developed (Alderholt Surplus Stores and Land North of Ringwood Road (Hawthorns)) which will provide 133 new units within the next couple of years which, with the calculated windfall allowance is more than enough housing to meet the needs of Alderholt.

15. In the 10 years between 2011 and 2021 the increase in population for the built-up area of Alderholt was 1.85%. (from 2848 to 2,900). This shows a gradual increase that is readily absorbed by the village, unlike the proposed scheme where the increase in population is significant and the scale of growth rapid with new residents having no connection to the existing population and village, which would not be able to absorb this level of development, due to a lack of public transport and very few facilities. Although the housing need is for the whole LPA area, and development is a requirement, the proposed substantial development here in Alderholt on the very edge of the LPA's area is not needed in this rural location, is unsustainable and would have severe detrimental impacts on the villagers of Alderholt both during the construction phase and beyond.

16. Appendix 2 to the Alderholt Neighbourhood Plan ("ANP") [CDD.19] is the housing target paper produced by our Planning Consultant. It provides the solid basis for the ANP. The methodology and resulting statistics suggest an appropriate housing target for Alderholt of between 4 and 16 dwellings per annum over the ANP 12-year period 2022 to 2034.

17. This is a far more sustainable growth rate than that presented by the appeal proposal.

**ISSUE 2 – Whether the Development Would be Appropriate in this Location Having Regard to: its relationship to Alderholt and Other Settlements and their Facilities; its Connection to the Highways Network; its Relationship to the AONB (now Cranborne Chase National Landscape; the Local Plan Spatial Strategy; and the Emerging Neighbourhood Plan**

18. In what follows I address my evidence to Issue 2 and given the overlap of some of the “sub-issues” raised under Issue 2 I have sought to address topics, rather than the specific reasons for refusal – where APC has something for me, rather than our Planning Consultant, to say here.

19. By way of an over-riding concern, if permission is granted for this development, the inadequate infrastructure available will result in profoundly adverse impacts on the residents of Alderholt and the surrounding area. This is particularly true in respect of the volume of traffic that will be introduced to the area. There is, therefore, a considerable overlap in my view as to the traffic issue and the “sub-issues” covered by Issue 2.

20. The evidence before the Inspector (including that commission by APC from Mark Baker CEng MICE FCIT FILT EurIng of Mark Baker Consulting Ltd) will demonstrate the magnitude of the transport problems posed by a development of this scale at this location and how it will undoubtedly affect not only commuting to work and or education, but travel in general, and the impact on pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders – noting the stables in Ringwood Road.

21. In addition to the traffic impacts this development brings, APC is concerned about the effects that the increased pressures 1,700 houses will have upon Alderholt and the

surrounding villages, including the inadequate provision of education, health services, the loss of valued tranquillity in this rural landscape and its night skies.

*THE ALDERHOLT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN (“ANP”)*

22. The ANP was developed following a Regulation 18 consultation in July/Sept 2018 proposing 1000 dwellings for Alderholt. APC strongly objected to this. We also submitted a report from our Planning Consultant which strongly reinforced APC’s objection and conclusions [GL1.1]<sup>2</sup>. East Dorset District Council (EDDC) designated our Neighbourhood Planning area on 25 March 2019, and we first worked on our ANP in the summer of 2020.

23. In January 2021 Dorset Council held a Reg 18 Consultation on the new Dorset wide Local Plan following the formation of the unitary authority in April 2019. Alderholt had no allocated sites in this plan [CDD.16] (2021 to 2038) covering a 17-year period, and only two options were suggested: - 300 properties or “substantial growth” post 2038, referenced in Section 18 of the Local Plan document. APC produced a strong response objecting to both options [GL1.2]<sup>3</sup>.

24. In November 2022, in light of the apparent delay in the Dorset Council Local Plan, it was decided that the ANP should progress as quickly as possible, as Alderholt would be left vulnerable to increased housing pressures as well as ad-hoc and unplanned speculative development. The aim was to have the ANP ready in 2023. APC had undertaken surveys of all village households in 2017 and 2019, responses numbered

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<sup>2</sup> GL1.1 Alderholt and the East Dorset Local Plan Review February 2020

<sup>3</sup> GL1.2 APC response to Dorset Council Local Plan Consultation Vol2 Section 18 – January 2021

460 and 420 respectively, equating to a third of all residences. A Focus Day was held on 5<sup>th</sup> February 2022 which had between 300 and 400 attendees.

25. The village is supportive of the ANP and this is evidenced in the ANP Consultation Statement [GL1.4]<sup>4</sup> by the numbers responding to the consultations, and attending the public events.

26. The aspirations of the ANP are that it can influence the future development of Alderholt and if this is done in a measured and structured way it can benefit the area in which we live, whilst retaining Alderholt's valued village and rural ambience. The ANP reflects and answers questions, thoughts, concerns and aspirations for the whole parish. Our vision is: - to ensure that Alderholt remains a village with the essential amenities and facilities that enables residents and visitors to enjoy the beautiful countryside whilst being part of an active and friendly community in a peaceful rural setting<sup>5</sup>. We make the observation that the Appellant when responding to the ANP Options Consultation made the following comment regarding the "Vision" – "*Dudsbury Homes supports the aspirations of the local community to produce a Neighbourhood Plan for Alderholt and to set out a strategy for the sustainability of the village. It is essential that this vision is deliverable and is supported by robust evidence that it can be achieved*". This can be found in Appendix A1 of the Proof of Evidence by Jo Witherden.

27. As explained above, Appendix 2 to the ANP [CDD.19] provides the solid basis for the ANP. The methodology and resulting statistics suggest an appropriate housing target

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<sup>4</sup> GL1.3 ANP Consultation Statement

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<https://www.alderholtparishcouncil.gov.uk/UserFiles/Files/Alderholt%20NP%20Options%20Display%20board%20230703%20No%201.pdf>



for Alderholt of between 4 and 16 dwellings per annum over the ANP 12-year period 2022 to 2034, not the 1700 proposed by the Appellant.

28. It is hoped that the ANP as planning guidance will be the basis for and protect the village from ad-hoc large-scale speculative development which is totally out of character, such as this application now at appeal.

#### *APC'S ENGAGEMENT WITH THE DEVELOPER AND THE APPEAL PROPOSAL*

29. The application first came to our attention with a mail shot to the villagers inviting them to an exhibition on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2023, and I believe this to be the only interaction with residents by (or on behalf of) the Applicant. The following was resolved at the Alderholt Parish Council meeting 11<sup>th</sup> July 2022:<sup>6</sup>

##### *"Minute 96/22 ALDERHOLT MEADOWS EXHIBITION*

*A report was submitted, a copy of which appears at Appendix '4' to these Minutes. In addition, an overview was submitted by Dudsbury Homes which was circulated to Members prior to the meeting and a copy of which is attached as Appendix '5' to these Minutes. A brief discussion was held between Members on the history of the Local Plan and Alderholt.*

*It was RESOLVED that:-*

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<sup>6</sup> [https://www.alderholtparishcouncil.gov.uk/UserFiles/Files/Minutes/147856-Full\\_Minutes.pdf](https://www.alderholtparishcouncil.gov.uk/UserFiles/Files/Minutes/147856-Full_Minutes.pdf)

a. *Cllr Mason proposed and Cllr Stone seconded that Alderholt Parish Council meet informally with Dudsbury Homes to discuss their vision for Alderholt. ALL IN FAVOUR; and*

b. *Cllr Logan proposed and Cllr Mason seconded that Alderholt Parish Council delegate that the Chairman of Alderholt Parish Council, the Vice-Chairman of Alderholt Parish Council, the Chairman of Planning Committee and the Chairman of the Neighbourhood Plan Committee meet informally with Officers from Dorset Council to discuss Dudsbury Homes vision for Alderholt prior to meeting informally with Dudsbury Homes. ALL IN FAVOUR”*

30. Cllrs met with representative of Dudsbury Homes on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2022 as a listening brief. Dudsbury contacted APC on 11<sup>th</sup> January 2023 asking for feedback and we made the following response via the Chairman of APC: - *“I added your request to the meeting of Alderholt Parish Council, which was held on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2023. Members agreed that at present there was no further feedback from the Parish Council or queries regarding Alderholt Meadows. However, Members have noted your invitation and would instruct me to contact you if the situation changed”*

31. This response was acknowledged by Dudsbury Homes, and no further communication or meetings occurred [GL1.4] <sup>7</sup>.

32. Once the application was lodged with Dorset Council, APC held a public meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> April 2023 to garner residents’ views, and following this I produced the parish council’s response [GL1/5] <sup>8</sup> – a strong objection to the development, for ratification at

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<sup>7</sup> GL1.4 Record of correspondence between Appellant and APC

<sup>8</sup> GL1.5 APC Final comments application 2023-01166 24.4.2023

the APC meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> April 2023, after which it was forwarded to Dorset Council for uploading on the planning portal.

33. It was noted during the late spring and summer that the developer lodged further information/documentation appertaining to the application, after the closing date on the planning portal. It appeared through the whole application process that it was an evolving situation, rather than having a finite set of documents on which to base one's objection and comments prior to the LPA holding the Eastern Area Planning Committee meeting and making its decision.

34. This is viewed as a problem as determining any application should be a definitive process, not one with endless time extensions with the application evolving through time. I attended the Dorset Eastern Area Planning Committee on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2023 and representing APC spoke against the application. The parish council's objection to the application continued to be upheld.

### ***APC'S MAIN CONCERNS ABOUT THE PROPOSAL***

*References in what follows to the Appellant's Statement of Case are by way of [ASC/Paragraph Number]*

#### *Wildlife/Ecological Impacts*

35. [ASC/2.3 – 2.7] – There are a number of protected sites – both national and international surrounding Alderholt, and undoubtedly the vast increase in population resulting from 1700 new dwellings (at the 2011 Census the built up area of Alderholt had a population of 2848) with 2.28 people residing in each dwelling (1700 x 2.28 = 3,876 additional residents) will have an adverse impact on them and the wildlife therein, in particular the Dorset Heathlands.

36. The 2021 Census<sup>9</sup> shows a population of 2,900 for the built-up area of Alderholt which shows little change from 2011, so using the same calculation, the increase from the proposed development equates to a population rise of more than 130%, more than doubling the existing population of built-up Alderholt. Thus, the increased usage of the bridleway E34/10 Alderholt to Verwood as promulgated by the appellant must not be allowed. This population increase will of itself result in increased pressures on the surrounding countryside and protected sites, with more visits – traffic and cyclists, but will also bring about increased tourism to the local area – family and friends visiting new Alderholt residents thus putting more pressure on the local area as well as the New Forest National Park. Bridleway E34/10 is particularly well used by horse riders, whom I can hear from my property. It is an easy walk for dogwalkers with good views from Telegraph Hill and access to Verwood. Generally, it is considered to be “more interesting” than the proposed SANG and for the reasons set out in this paragraph, APC does not consider that the SANG provisions proposed by the developer will be appealing. The significant increase in housing will result in more pressure on area, with more residents resulting in more visitors and more users of what is (currently) a more appealing area to walk, cycle, ride in. This increased pressure will, in APC’s view be detrimental to the area’s beauty and appeal.

37. In addition, there will be a loss of wildlife at and around the site - with particular reference to the land along Ringwood Road (where the proposed development is sited) one resident has recorded over the last 14 months all the birds listed according to the British Trust for Ornithology and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 [GL1.6]<sup>10</sup> with

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<sup>9</sup> [https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/customprofiles/draw/Build a custom area profile - Census 2021,](https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/customprofiles/draw/Build%20a%20custom%20area%20profile%20-%20Census%202021)  
[ONS](#)

<sup>10</sup>GL1.6 Protected and Conservation status bird species recorded along Ringwood Road

Protected or Conservation status. The high level of proposed development will undoubtedly be detrimental to the ongoing existence of all these species, thereby impacting heavily on the biodiversity of the area thereby reducing its environmental intrinsic value.

38. The anticipated increase in car usage will exacerbate the levels of air pollution in the immediate and surrounding areas – as far as the New Forest National Park, Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONBs (now National Landscapes).

39. The owner of one of the livery businesses in Ringwood Road made a comment to the planning application as the development would have an adverse impact on the business as result of increased traffic and the ensuing difficulty (decreased safety) in accessing the bridleways for recreation [GL1/7]<sup>11</sup>. As explained above, bridleway E34/10 is well used by horse riders, but to access it from the stables in Ringwood Road requires negotiating both Ringwood Road and Station Road and the junction. Increased traffic from the large development will undoubtedly make this access less safe and as such, appealing.

### *Sustainability*

40. [ASC/2.8] – This scale of development in Alderholt was not envisaged in the adopted Local Plan for the area, which local residents rely on to explain what and where development will be coming forward. With a population of c.2,900 for the built-up area of Alderholt - the increase from the proposed development equates to a population rise

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<sup>11</sup> GL1.7 Objection from resident - stables

of more than 130%. This more than doubles the existing population of Alderholt, and increases its physical size by about 60%.

41. The proposed development is unsustainable as the infrastructure of the village is comparatively poor, and such a large development on the edge of Alderholt is unlikely to attract and support the range of facilities suggested by the Appellant.
42. For example, a doctor's surgery is proposed by either providing the building or monies for such provision, and although the building may be available, and could be managed by either the Cranborne or Fordingbridge surgeries, both of these have difficulty in getting Doctors and they have not made provision for this, and given the planned growth in Fordingbridge this would further disrupt services over a significant period of time.
43. The provision of an additional pub, café/restaurant, and supermarket would be in direct competition with the existing Alderholt facilities – the Churchill Arms Public House (“the PH”), the Reading Room Forest Edge Café and the Co-op store with Post Office, thereby jeopardising the continuance and success of these by sucking the heart out of the traditional core of the village.
44. The data from our 2019 survey of residents shown in Figure 1<sup>12</sup> gives an understanding of the usage of the village's facilities. It should be noted that the Co-op is currently well used but should another larger store be provided it is likely that it will adversely impact on our existing store's footfall by being in direct competition and for existing residents possibly wanting more choice, and preferring a short drive to the “new store” as opposed to walking to the Co-Op, will also add to the traffic journeys and air pollution – ensuring that the “15 minute sustainability” claim is untenable.

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<sup>12</sup> Appendix A5 – Proof of Evidence of Jo Witherden

45. Alternatively, if a new supermarket cannot be attracted to the new “local centre”, or the existing shop becomes more attractive to the new population resulting in the current car park becoming overly congested, with more traffic using Ringwood Road and parking on the street – impacting the junction with Station Road, again not sustainable and being detrimental to the existing villagers.
46. The PH underwent a complete refurbishment in November 2020 improving not only the fabric of the building but also the ambience and range of activities and events held over any year, resulting in an increased usage. The provision of another establishment in close proximity to the successful Sports & Social Club as well as competing directly with the PH, may well reduce footfall to both establishments impacting on their viability as well as generating car trips from the northern side of the village.
47. By proposing a village centre in the new village abutting Alderholt, undoubtedly an “us and them” situation will develop as the distance for existing villagers to travel will be far greater than the usual 400m or so that is generally liked to be walked. The distance between the eastern edge of the site and both St James Church and the pre-school Kingswood is over 1.6 miles so journeys to these facilities will inevitably be by car given the distance and nature of the roads and lack of pavements. It should also be noted that the pre-school covers childcare during the school holidays which St James’ Nursery as part of the First School doesn’t.
48. In any event, what is being proposed by the developer doesn’t add substantially to the services already provided in the village by the existing facilities (with the exception of healthcare), and may well impact negatively on the existing provision of services and facilities. The proposed new local centre is unlikely to be a step change that would create the range of facilities found in the likes of Fordingbridge and Ringwood. Why

would people set up a shop here when there are a number of vacant premises in both of these much larger settlements with greater footfall? Also, Alderholt cannot be considered a “route through” so is very unlikely to bring in more people from the surrounding areas.

49. Our ANP emphasises the desire to retain and if possible, strengthen the existing village centre which is along the B3078 and encourage new facilities there (ANP Policy 8) **[CDD.19]**.

50. The village has NO public transport, other than that provided by APC. Direct access to railways being Salisbury or Bournemouth and both are at least a 30 minute drive away. Following the cessation of the 97 bus service in December 2023, there is no “regular” bus service. When this service was withdrawn, the residents of Alderholt asked that APC look into options of providing at least some way they could access Fordingbridge – our nearest town/hub for the facilities and services not available in Alderholt (medical (including dental), legal etc). By liaising with Dorset Community Transport, the best option was to provide a Shuttle Bus service on the Wednesday, which enables our older and more vulnerable residents to get out and about, so reducing/removing the feeling of isolation, which in itself has an adverse impact on residents’ wellbeing and welfare.

51. APC therefore agreed to fund a Shuttle Bus (16 seater minibus) running 8 services between Alderholt and Fordingbridge on a Wednesday from 09.15 to 13.55 **[GL1.8]**.<sup>13</sup>

52. In addition, Dorset Community Transport provides the PlusBus services for registered members, who have to pre-book. These weekly return services go to Salisbury

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<sup>13</sup> GL1.8 Dorset Community Transport Shuttle Bus (route & timetable)



(Tuesday), Ringwood (Wednesday), Blandford (Thursday) and Wimborne (Friday), but are of no use to workers commuting or children accessing educational establishments<sup>14</sup>.

53. There is no guarantee that the bus service proposed by the Appellant will become commercially viable once the subsidies are finished, and there are real concerns that we may be left high and dry again, having to fund a limited service from the Parish precept. If the bus isn't running at the right time to and from the right locations (bearing in mind people's dispersed travel patterns and needs), taxis are the only other option if one doesn't have a personal vehicle, and prices are currently more than £10 to Fordingbridge and £20 plus to Ringwood. By way of example, I telephoned Red Express Taxis of 1a Kingsbury Lane, Ringwood BH24 1EL at 15.30 (Saturday 25.5.2025) to ask for a taxi at 18.30 from Alderholt to either Fordingbridge or Ringwood – none were available. The prices quoted were £10 or £11 for Fordingbridge and around £22 for Ringwood (note this is for a one-way journey). Such prices are not realistic for any regular journeys that have to be made, and even more unrealistic for those qualifying for social benefits and affordable housing. I understand the nearest taxi firm is based in Ringwood so any journeys to or from Alderholt may well incur an additional sum to cover the petrol costs of getting to Alderholt initially.

54. It is unlikely that the development will lead to increased employment in Alderholt that will improve its sustainability; increased development does not necessarily lead to increased infrastructure in APC's experience.

55. 35 years ago, Alderholt had a wide range of facilities including a large surplus store, a second public house, post office, petrol station, 2 part time doctors' surgeries, a vet,

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<sup>14</sup> [ECT Charity - Welcome to Dorset Community Transport](#)

restaurant, 4 independent village shops plus hairdresser shop, butcher shop, estate agent shop, volunteer car service and much more.

56. Housing has increased in Alderholt but these facilities have reduced, we now only have the local pub, a Co-op store with post office facilities, a small second-hand baby shop, garage, vet and garden centre. Shopping habits have changed, with much more now being bought online and delivered to home addresses. This in itself has resulted in many more delivery vehicles (vans) being on our rural network, and the development of 1700 dwellings will increase and exacerbate this further. More pollution and a greater carbon footprint!

### *Employment*

57. With regard to employment, although land is set aside for this - 1.6Ha (only 1Ha building provision), there is no certainty that businesses will be attracted to the area as it is rural in nature, with a very poor local road network of B, C and D class rural lanes, no easy access to the A338 and A31, no suitable public transport and no railway links. If businesses are established here, this will undoubtedly necessitate more daily traffic flow out of the village and then back again, including large delivery vehicles.

58. The following paragraph is taken from “Alderholt and the East Dorset Local Plan Review 20 February 2020<sup>15</sup> and highlights the dispersed nature of work-related journeys:

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<https://www.alderholtparishcouncil.gov.uk/UserFiles/Files/Your%20Council/Local%20Plan/Alderholt%20report%20-%20Overview%20and%20main%20findings%20v3%20issue%20200224%20final.pdf>

**1.10.** The 2019 household survey received responses from 197 households with at least 1 working adult (with a total of 356 adults in work). Of these, less than 1 in 5 (17%) worked in Alderholt, of which just under half worked from home – slightly less than the 2011 Census results. The commuting workforce is split between a wide number of different destinations, the most common being Fordingbridge (10% of the workforce), Bournemouth (9%), Ringwood (8%), Salisbury (8%) and Southampton (6%). By far the main mode of transport was the car, with more than 4 out of 5 workers (82%) driving to their workplace, with very few lift-sharing or using public transport.

### *Access to Education and Facilities for Children and Younger Residents*

59. There remains much uncertainty regarding the Appellant’s proposals regarding education provision. The DAS on page 50 assumes that there will be adequate provision at Burgate School in Fordingbridge (the nearest) for secondary age children. At present children from Alderholt are bused not only to Burgate but also Wimborne and Cranborne.
60. In respect of the St James First School (which the developer focusses on), the DAS on page 50 assumes that there will be adequate provision at Burgate School in Fordingbridge (the nearest) for secondary age children. Alderholt residents are concerned about the provisions for the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> tiers of education ie the “bussing” of pupils to Burgate school & Sixth Form in Fordingbridge, or to Cranborne (middle school) and then onto Queen Elizabeth’s school in Wimborne to complete their education.
61. In all these cases, the bussing of pupils adds pressure to the local road network, and additional pollution, not a sustainable solution and, indeed, the village has had tragic experience of the risks faced by school buses using the local road network. There was

a traffic accident involving the school bus to Wimborne at around 8.00am on 11 June 2013 where a woman driver died<sup>16</sup>.

62. With the expansion of Wimborne (1036 completions plus 829 estimates which equates to 1865 new properties), the significant growth in Fordingbridge (more than 1,100 dwellings) and Ringwood – both in Hampshire, this is likely to impact significantly upon the catchment areas of both the QE school and Burgate school, and thus markedly diminish the chances of Alderholt children being able to obtain a place at either establishment. Where are they to go? No provision is made in the appeal proposal to address this situation.
63. With regard to nursery schooling, it should be noted only Kingswood provides for childcare during the school holidays. At the present time, a neighbour in order to secure a place for autumn 2024 had to register the child immediately upon its birth – December 2023.
64. The appeal of the Hampshire schools is that it is a 2 tier system – so fewer changes of establishment for each pupil – the Burgate (Hampshire) school is the nearest to Alderholt – less travelling for children by bus and much easier for parents to acting as “taxi” for ferrying children to and from after-school activities.
65. With high levels of development occurring at Wimborne (1036 completions in the last 5 years, and an estimated 829 from 2023/24 through to 2027/28 [GL1.9]<sup>17</sup> and in Hampshire at both Fordingbridge applications for 1124 dwellings since 2020 [GL1.10]<sup>18</sup> and Ringwood, it is highly likely that these Hampshire schools will preclude

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<sup>16</sup> <https://www.bournemouthcho.co.uk>

<sup>17</sup> GL1.9 E-mail of number from Planning Policy Officer Dorset Council

<sup>18</sup> GL1.10 List of applications provided by Fordingbridge Town Council

Alderholt pupils unless additional capacity is created, and it is not clear that this has been resolved to the satisfaction of Hampshire County Council based on their letter dated 9 May 2023. The Wimborne school is also anticipated to be oversubscribed due to continuing development in Verwood. No provision is made in the application regarding this situation, the application only being concerned about primary school provision at St James CofE school in the village

66. However, even if the school places issues are resolved, there are consequences for this being achieved outside of the area in terms of the sustainability of the village; and wider issues for young people growing up local. The issues are: -

67. Unable to attend after school clubs as no transport to bring the pupils back to Alderholt. This means either relying on Mum/Dad taxi with the resultant increased traffic, pollution and carbon foot print, or that the children do not benefit from these clubs. Residents with teenage children have been known to move in order to reduce “taxi burden” on parents.

68. No evening or weekend public transport that is likely to be attractive to teenagers, so no independent access to towns further afield for example such activities as swimming – Ringwood, entertainment – Verwood Hub, Cinema – Bournemouth or Poole, youth clubs etc – Ferndown.

69. No suitable footpaths or cycleways from the village to Fordingbridge – road walking is totally unsafe along our rural country lanes so this prevents easy access to Fordingbridge. The Appellant’s suggestion that Ashford Road is used as a cycle way is simply unrealistic. A resident who lives on this “lane” has commented on the poor state it is in (Hampshire’s responsibility) how unsafe it is as it is used as a rat-run by

motorists, and how very few cyclists have been seen using the route. Less than 10 in 10 years [GL1.11].<sup>19</sup>

70. Whilst we value the fact that Alderholt has existing Scouts, Boys Brigade and Guides clubs, we know that these are not necessarily attractive to all youngsters, so cannot be seen as meeting the needs of our children.

71. This may well lead to an increase in antisocial behaviour promulgated through boredom – difficult to police, and any solutions will be costly as it is already difficult to find volunteers for any existing community groups within the village. With the anticipated “500 affordable homes” new residents may well not be able to afford a car for necessary day to day use, will be severely restricted in choice through reliance on the limited bus service, and without local family or employment (as most placed here will not have a local connection to the area), are more likely to suffer from the impacts of isolation on resident’s well-being and general health.

72. The Appellant’s claim of sustainability is difficult reconcile with all of these shortcomings.

#### *Healthcare Provision*

73. With regard to the provision of health facilities, the adverse impacts go far beyond a doctor’s surgery and dental practice. Residents are caught between three commissioning bodies – Dorset, Hampshire and Wiltshire where each is reluctant to accept responsibility as residents live in a different area to that where provision is

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<sup>19</sup> GL1.11 e-mail from resident re Ashford Road

provided. This is shown by the evidence produced by a resident with regard to a lack of dementia support in Alderholt [GL1.12]<sup>20</sup>.

### *Masterplanning*

74. With reference to the Masterplan, promulgating a vision of self-containment – the “15-minute neighbourhood principal” Page 59 of the DAS, and TA 5.12 aspire to ensure Alderholt including the proposed new development meets this target. However, much of the “vision” facilities are not achievable nor sustainable without a far greater population and financial commitment from hard pressed Local Authorities.
75. Fordingbridge is expanding (estimates to date since 2020 of more than 1,100 dwellings – see planning applications footnote 18) but has seen a steady decline in retail and other services epitomised by the difficulty in getting an NHS dentist, closure of shoe repairers and after 30 years the “Miles of Value” store which sold everything from toys & stationery to cookware & gardening necessities.
76. In the light of this evidence, APC believe that the self-containment of Alderholt is unrealistic, as the anticipated population will not create an adequate footfall to support the “village centre” and the distance for the existing Alderholt residents to travel (car journey or walk & cycling) is more than the 15minutes walking envisaged. There will be a greater number of car journeys not only within the expanded Alderholt where people use the car for trips greater than 400m, but with the level of employment only being in the range of 10% to 20% of the increased population, the result will be many more outward commuting journeys. This does not reflect a “15-minute neighbourhood”.

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<sup>20</sup> GL1.12 Correspondence regarding lack of dementia support in Alderholt

77. Other issues raised are the ability to satisfactorily police such a large development, and in view of the rural road network and increased traffic, how are the emergency vehicles ie more call outs with a more than doubling of the village size, be able to access Alderholt in a timely manner?
78. Work entailed on producing the ANP included a great deal of consideration in developing the design guidance for the village which is not reflected in the Masterplan proposals. The proposed development will increase the built up area significantly to an area approximately 60% greater than the existing village. The range of building types is likely to be homogenous in style, and is proposed to be at a density above 30dph. These 3 observations don't reflect the village's existing rural character, low density development (15 to 25 dph) and intrinsic varied building designs accrued through its historical stages of development. The residents' primary concerns were for Alderholt to retain its village feel and rural setting epitomised by the tree lined entry routes. The massive development envisaged by the Appellant will totally alter the character of Alderholt by abutting a "separate entity larger than the existing village" to it which will adversely impact Alderholt.

#### *Traffic and Transport*

79. I refer the Inspector to Mark Baker's evidence here. However, I would like to draw the Inspector's attention to the issues raised by APC in our objection of 24<sup>th</sup> April 2023 (exhibited as [GL1.5]) under the heading "*Traffic Assessment (TA), Travel Plan (TP) and Planning Statement (PS) documents*". I do not consider I need to restate this position within this Proof of evidence.



80. With reference to the latest May 2024 ESA Document from Rapleys, we note the following in chronological order :-

- a. [7.11] The Appellant has omitted the Sandleheath Road and the pinch point at Alderholt Mill bridge – only single file traffic and weight limits, as well as the height restriction on the old railway bridge 14ft 6inches! Both of these limits the types of vehicles that can safely use this road. This route is used as a rat-run to Salisbury and due the restrictions on the bridges it will be unable to accommodate more traffic. Added to which the leafy village of Rockbourne in Wiltshire can only accommodate single file traffic along most of its length, resulting in extended travel times for all.
- b. The Appellant has omitted any mention/impact re Cranborne on B3078 going west – Castle Street with on street parking gets gridlocked especially at school pick up and drop offs and during the rush hours. Any increase in volume of traffic is untenable for the residents of Cranborne. There will be unacceptable additional time delays for all users. No mitigation has been mentioned for Cranborne. Photographs of the types of issues encountered here can be found in the A4A's PoE of Colin English at Appendix 1.
- c. [7.20] There is no reference to the stables on Ringwood Road – just south west of the development site. Here increased traffic from the proposed site travelling along Ringwood Road towards Station Road will have a detrimental impact on the existing Alderholt residents accessing the Co-op store & post office, the village hall and the Parish Council office, as well as horse riders wanting to reach bridleway E34/10.
- d. [7.22] No mention of Hillbury Park (residential static mobile homes – number more than 78). There is a lot of traffic that comes in and out as many of the residents have one or two cars. The increased traffic of all kinds – cars, delivery vehicles, commercial vehicles from the proposed site accessing Hillbury Road will impact heavily on those trying to make ingress or exit the park home site.

- e. [7.25] There is no mention of Bower Road which is the road into Fordingbridge which is very narrow – two large vehicles cannot pass – thus lots of reversing and pulling into driveways! This section is 40mph. This main route B3078 will have to take the majority of the increased traffic from the proposed site and will impact all users with increased delays, be much more dangerous for cyclists and continue to prevent any pedestrians from using the route – as there are no safe pavements!
- f. [7.27] Doesn't mention the village of Cranborne that all traffic accessing Wimborne, Blandford and Shaftesbury has to pass through. There will undoubtedly be extra and prolonged delays for all road users trying to negotiate this historic village, particularly at rush hours and when the school busses are on their runs from Wimborne and Cranborne.
- g. [7.30] There was a fatal accident on Alderholt Road close to Somerley south of the Gravel site entrance around 8.50am 26<sup>th</sup> February 2024<sup>21</sup>. It should be noted that the Coroner's Inquest will not be held until May 2025.
- h. [7.31] We no longer have the 3 morning 97 bus, only a Shuttlebus service on a Wednesday morning (8 services between Fordingbridge and Alderholt). This very limited service is of no use to those commuting for employment or education.
- i. [7.34] The bridleway E34/10 – the increased usage of this route will impact heavily on the Cranborne Common SPA, SAC, Ramsar & SSSI sites containing heathland and acidic grasslands, thereby adversely impacting the biodiversity of fauna and flora. This will be detrimental to the rural ambience and tranquillity of the area that is highly valued by Alderholt residents
- j. [7.47] 280 vehicle movements per day in construction will have an enormous detrimental impact on residents of Alderholt and the surrounding areas where

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<sup>21</sup> <https://www.advertiserandtimes.co.uk/news/teen-dies-after-car-ploughs-into-tree-off-main-road-9354704/>

the transport is routed particularly the HGVs. I don't consider 26% as quoted as being negligible or minor regarding all aspects of impact. We are currently receiving complaints from residents regarding the HGV movements associated with the 44-house development site on land north of Ringwood Road. The APC clerk is taking these matters up with the developer – Pennyfarthing Homes. So if we have problems with this scale of development you can imagine the impact with 280 movements per day and this will be over an anticipated minimum 14-yr development phase. The adverse impact on resident's wellbeing over such a long period when combined with the adverse impacts of noise, dust and vehicle movements from the anticipated Midgham Farm quarry site is totally unacceptable

- k. [7.52] Regarding the figures here – they expect 1,805 extra journeys per day for the development. Our calculation put forward in our initial objection focussing on employment commuting, is that 1700 residences assuming 1.3 workers per dwelling of which 80.4% commute to work will result in 1,777 journeys generated at peak am and pm times in relation to employment. This additional volume of traffic when added to other domestic travel (shopping, taking children to school, attending appointments) and the ever-increasing home delivery traffic, cannot be accommodated on the existing local rural road network. The resulting delays to motorists and impact on pedestrians and cyclists and other road users is unacceptable.
- l. [7.55] & [7.95] A proposed one-way system in Fordingbridge. How can the appellant take such an event into account? Fordingbridge Town Council, New Forest District Council and Hampshire County Council will need to deal with this and in the face of objections from any landowners affected by potential land purchase. Even if a one-way system did come forwards, both Fordingbridge motorists and pedestrians as well as the through route traffic will be severely impacted with delays.
- m. Again, there has been no inclusion of Castle Street in Cranborne, nor of Sandleheath Road going north from Alderholt as an alternative route into Fordingbridge and rat-run to Salisbury (bearing in mind the Alderholt Mill

bridge and the old railway line bridge and their respective width, weight and height restrictions.

- n. [7.62] The additional traffic impact in Fordingbridge will be immense – the nature/state of the old bridge over the river Avon has not been acknowledged – as traffic joining the A338 travelling south has to go over it. As set out above, both Fordingbridge motorists and pedestrians as well as the through route traffic will be severely impacted with delays.
- o. [7.63] There may be a reduction in delays at High St/Provost St – but what about the subsequent impact of diverted traffic trying to turn out of West St.? How can there be a benefit when an additional 1,700 dwellings will increase the number of vehicles travelling? Again, both Fordingbridge motorists and pedestrians as well as the through route traffic will be severely impacted with delays.
- p. [7.64], [7.66] & 7.96 How can they ensure any mitigation – there appear to be far too many imponderables that they have no control over.
- q. [7.88] & [7.94] Bakers Junction (where Alderholt Road joins Verwood Road) is already at capacity before the implementation of the proposed quarry site at Midgham Farm which will be accessed off Hillbury Road – opposite the applicant’s site in Alderholt. Again this will result in long delays for all motorists – in particular those travelling to and from Alderholt, including delivery vans, gravel lorries etc, as well as reduced safety for cyclists.
- r. No mention is made of the “Rat Run” going north from Sandleheath through Rockbourne (Wiltshire) to Salisbury – used by commuters on a daily basis wishing to avoid potential delays on the A31 and A338. This route is a C road, not able to take any more traffic – resulting in long delays and extended travel times. Added to which the leafy village of Rockbourne in Wiltshire can only accommodate single file traffic along most of its length.

81. The Appellant's proposed mitigation, if and where it deals with the issues posed by the development, cannot be guaranteed (even through conditions, in APC's view). No cogent deliverable solution has been proposed to overcome the obvious and varied shortcomings of the very poor road infrastructure within Alderholt, its immediate and further afield vicinity. This is not acceptable. Existing and new residents will be adversely impacted by delays especially at commuting times. This will also increase pollution and carbon footprint and is incompatible with the Climate Emergency that Dorset Council has signed up to.
82. Other issues relating to transport include the increased flooding of Kent Lane across the Avon River flood plain – this was impassable for much of the autumn, late winter and early spring. Photographs showing this this can be found in the PoE of Colin English at Appendix 1.
83. I am aware that Simon Hoare MP has written directly to the Planning Inspector about this Appeal. APC have been provided with a copy of that letter which I exhibit as [GL1.13]<sup>22</sup>.

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<sup>22</sup> GL1.13 Copy of MP's letter

## CONCLUSION

83. The Inspector's Decision is this Appeal will have a significant impact on the community in respect of the character and rural ambiance of the existing village of Alderholt, by creating a settlement abutting the existing village of 130% greater in size, disconnected to the current centre of Alderholt, resulting in an "us and them situation" which is detrimental to the wellbeing of all. This development is at total odds to the emerging Alderholt Neighbourhood Plan which after a great deal of work, effort and consultation explicitly shows that Alderholt's housing needs are well met by the 50 or so dwellings over the 12 year period 2022 to 2034. We consider this development if allowed in such an unsuitable location, to be wholly detrimental to the Planning Rules/Laws of this country.

### Statement of Truth

I believe that the facts stated in this proof of evidence are true.

Signed: *Gina K Logan*

Print name: *GINA LOGAN*

Date: *27 MAY 2024*