

THE PURBECK SOCIETY

www.purbeckociety.co.uk

Affiliated to the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE)

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FAO Anthony Bird Esq
Planning & Community Services
Westport House, Worgret Road
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By e-mail to planning@purbeck-dc.gov.uk

Dear Sir

Re 2 Drummond Road Swanage PA 6/2012/0568

Firstly we note that the Appeal to the previous scheme (APP/B1225/A/12/2170054) has been withdrawn and the informal hearing planned for 27th September has been cancelled. We only received the advice yesterday (25th September) by two identical letters addressed to the Society and dated 17th September (why the delay and why two?).

The Purbeck Society remains utterly opposed to this application as well as the previous proposals to demolish the property known as Drummond Lodge, No.2 Drummond Road, Swanage. If there were to be a local list of significant buildings, something for which the Society is campaigning, we would wish this building to be included. Therefore we are fundamentally opposed to any proposal that requires the demolition of this interesting building which is full of character.

We wish to take this opportunity to re-state our opposition to these new proposals and our reasons for doing so, which are basically those recently stated in connection with our opposition to the previous scheme, the subject of the recently withdrawn appeal.

1. Drummond Road is in an area described in the Purbeck Townscape Character Appraisal (the Appraisal) for Swanage as the Lanes (section 04.14). The Appraisal accords sufficient differentiation and importance to this area to ascribe a separate section to it. In this document the roads are described as "...predominantly characterised by informal single track lanes with surfaces of compacted aggregate and grass verges rather than pavements." Strengths are described as "...Attractive informal lane quality and character, particularly where streets are unsurfaced" (our italics), also "A good quality Edwardian character with attractive Arts & Crafts influences".
2. In the Appraisal, some plots are described as "...relatively large, resulting (in) a looser knit urban grain in these locations." The only such plot in the upper part of Drummond Road is no.2. Therefore its retention is essential to the character of the road.
3. In the Appraisal the streetscape is "...generally defined by Purbeck stone or brick walls with hedges or shrubs behind and mature trees provide visual punctuation." [It is

unfortunate that the applicants had already removed some mature trees within the gardens prior to their first planning application.]

4. Amongst the threats to the character of the area noted in the Appraisal are :
- “ Highway ‘improvements’ resulting in tarmac surfaces, kerbs and pavements, resulting in the loss of grass verges etc.”
 - “ Insensitive redevelopment and/or resulting in the loss of mature trees or vegetation”.
 - “ Redevelopment of plots at higher densities resulting in the removal of boundary walls to provide vehicle access and/or increased areas of hard standing for parking (loss of enclosure and vegetation)”.

It is the Society’s contention that the development proposed would:

- destroy all the positive attributes of the character of the area of the Lanes noted in the Appraisal. Furthermore, the proposed development exemplifies all the threats listed by destroying the walls, hedges and vegetation fronting Drummond Road. The construction of five, rather than the present one, access ways to the new dwellings would destroy the verges.
- Also lost would be the important remnant of industrial archaeology of the stone way in the verge to the west side of the road, which was used when stone from the quarries at the top of the ridge was taken to the bay for transhipment.
- The intensification of housing density and resulting traffic would inevitably lead to highway ‘improvements’ with tarmac surfaces, kerbs and pavements destroying the character of the road and leading to a suburban quality, totally alien to the character of the Lanes.

The house itself can be seen from the many parts of the town and is a prominent landmark, appearing on the skyline and seen from the seafront right through to the northern areas of Swanage.

It is a particularly interesting house of the Edwardian period, being very individualistic in character with its battlemented corner bays, balconies and chimneys. Elsewhere in the Appraisal (section 04.11) one of the threats noted is “...the continued loss of quality Edwardian buildings in totality and through the progress loss of details. Loss of front gardens to off street parking...” This is true of many areas of Swanage and these proposals would provide a particular threat to the character of this particular area. For the town to retain its character, properties such as Drummond Lodge must be retained and, where necessary, adapted to modern requirements. They *must not be demolished* to be lost forever in favour of featureless creeping suburbanisation.

Drummond Road, being a narrow unmade lane, is unsuitable for the heavy lorries which would be using it if the extensive redevelopment proposed takes place, involving as it would demolition of the existing house and the construction of the proposed houses together with excavations for foundations as well as installation of all the additional drainage, water, gas and electrical services. It is not wide enough for the weight and width of construction plant that would be required and, if the development is allowed, all the features described would be destroyed by this traffic.

We would submit that the Townscape Character Appraisals were undertaken with the purpose of providing guidance on what should be retained and enhanced, while pointing out clearly the threats which are posed by inappropriate development. The Society is quite clear that the development proposed is unwarranted, inappropriate and in clear contravention of the intentions of the Appraisal, going against the character of this attractive, quiet, residential part of the town. We further suggest that it would be folly to ignore the Appraisal – to do so would render such exercises merely to be a waste of scarce resources and cost.

How is it, therefore, that the applicant can state in the Design & Access Statement that

“This arrangement is in accordance with the local authority guidelines. ” ?
What guidelines are these?

In fact, we would submit that the Applicant’s D & A Statement is seriously flawed and should be discounted when considering this application. For example :

- (1) “The intended development form of five, 2 storey dwellings of a traditional design with a contemporary influence is considered appropriate in this location given recent modern developments constructed in the locality. ”

We submit this is not so. Five houses of a more or less identical size, design and form in a line fronting Drummond Road *would be completely at odds* with the variety of design, types, forms and periods of the neighbouring properties,

- (2) “ These design factors contribute to the creation of a sympathetic development which has been designed to complement the style and finish of the neighbouring properties.”

Reference to the drawings shows that the proposed development is *not at all sympathetic or complementary in style or finish* to the neighbouring properties,

- (3) “It has been demonstrated that the proposal is in compliance with all relevant Development Plan policies, in particular enhancing the character and appearance of the area, respecting the amenities of neighbouring residents and avoiding harm to highway safety or convenience. There are no material considerations which suggest that the application should be determined otherwise.”

The applicant has manifestly *not demonstrated* that the proposal is in compliance with Development Plan policies, *quite the opposite*, as :

1. he has not respected the character and appearance of the area and certainly does nothing to enhance it – in fact quite the reverse,
2. by proposing such a comprehensive development, he has not respected the amenities of neighbouring residents at all,
3. the proposed development would cause grievous permanent harm to the unmade road and its grass verges,
4. if the development were to go ahead, great inconvenience would be caused in perpetuity to neighbours by the increased numbers of accesses (five instead of one) and the noise, obstruction and general nuisance that would be caused by plant and machinery during the demolition and construction phases of the project.

Once again, we would refer you to the Townscape Character Appraisal and its description of the character of the Lanes area, so important if the unique character of Swanage is not to be lost.

We trust that these comments will be included in full in the officer’s report so that Planning Board members are fully aware of the depth of opposition to these plans.

We urge you in the strongest terms, therefore, to totally reject this application.

Yours faithfully

Mike Stollery

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PS I attach the photographs depicting some of the particular features, including Drummond Lodge itself which would be lost if this application succeeded.



The historic stone way in the verge alongside no2 Drummond Road which would be destroyed by five separate accesses



Gate post, part of wall and hedge at the entrance to Drummond Lodge



Drummond Lodge - note the battlemented bays, balcony, chimneys etc.