

**WEYMOUTH CIVIC SOCIETY  
PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT  
COMMITTEE NEWS  
May/June 2021**



**BUILDINGS AT RISK**

In the last Planning News we flagged up the problem of the deteriorating condition of some of our most important historic buildings, and our approaches to the Council about them. We have now made further contact with the owners of the Old Assembly Rooms, Greene King, in the hope that they will take some action to bring this special little building to a good condition with a suitable use, rather than the shabby and down-at-heel appearance with plants growing out of its gutters. We have had a reply saying they cannot do anything at the moment because of the cost of Covid, but they 'are



exploring the possibility of bringing the property back into occupation', though not for some time.

As for Brewers Quay, readers will have seen the news of its purchase by

Blakesley Estates, following developers Versant going into administration. We have been broadly supportive of previous

owners' aspirations to restore and bring this extremely important but problematic building back into life - but all have failed to come to fruition. We can but hope that some good will come of this new purchase, and encourage the developers to carry out urgently needed repairs and then a full restoration with uses to benefit the local area and the community in general.

### **COUNCIL OFFICES, NORTH QUAY**

While the Council is forging ahead with its preparation of a planning application based on the Pentreath design inspired by



the ancient High Street and North Quay, a totally different proposal has been aired, retaining the Council Offices building, though much altered, with large additions at either side. As this scheme is only at the stage of being an 'alternative vision', and in view of the Council's forthcoming planning application, we have so far refrained from leaping into the fray.

### **CUSTOM HOUSE QUAY - RAILINGS**

The metal barrier railings that have been placed along the harbour side continue to be a source of controversy. We are very unhappy at their appearance, but at the time of writing have not yet contacted the Council, as the barriers have been



declared to be only temporary for the present circumstances. We understand they are to be removed and the situation fully reviewed after the summer season, and will respond when the public consultation takes place.

## **PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

### **Waterside Holiday Park – Proposed Extension.**

The application to extend the holiday park eastwards into a pleasant grassy valley received a huge public response, with numerous objections to the encroachment into the open countryside, designated as Land of Local Landscape Importance. Following that, the company put forward a reduced plan, removing the proposed ‘pods’ from the eastern half of the site. While an improvement, this still leaves a whole field to be covered in ‘lodges’, projecting out from the existing site and highly visible from the Coast Path. We have welcomed the reduction in size but have maintained our strong concerns about this proposed incursion into such a sensitive area.



We have also looked at and commented on some lesser proposals which would nevertheless affect their local environment, including small but obtrusive additions or extension to property, new buildings in what we believe to be unsuitable locations, and general overdevelopment.

### **Signs.**

Occasionally we make comments on applications for excessively large signs, one of which is proposed on a Sunseeker building, measuring 9.4m x 6.2 m – over three times a standard advertising hoarding of 6m x3m. We fear that if permitted, it could be difficult to refuse others elsewhere, resulting in a proliferation of ever larger signs and more clutter.

Elsewhere, a proposed illuminated hoarding at 237 Portland Road, to which we had objected (see our March/April News), is now the subject of an appeal against the condition which prohibits its illumination at night.



## UPDATES

### Portland Incinerator.



While the planning application continues undetermined, a further, unusual step has been taken, with the Environment Agency launching a consultation, open until 3<sup>rd</sup>

September, as a result of the high level of public interest. This appears to indicate the seriousness with which they view its potential environmental effect.

They are, however, not going to consider aspects such as the environment impact of vehicles transporting the waste, which would seem to eliminate the polluting effects on Weymouth caused by the heavy traffic generated, at an estimate of around 80 heavy vehicles a day passing through. We hope to respond to this latest consultation, and reinforce our strong objections already lodged with the Council.

## Quayside Bar & Kitchen - 7 Custom House Quay – Replacement Windows and Doors.



As we reported in our last 'News', we wrote to the Council regretting that the new windows and doors had been installed without planning permission, resulting in a significant alteration to the character and appearance of this building, which is important in the harbourside scene. Now the Council has refused the retrospective application for planning permission, concluding that *'the design, style, colouring and detailing would neither preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Weymouth Conservation Area'*

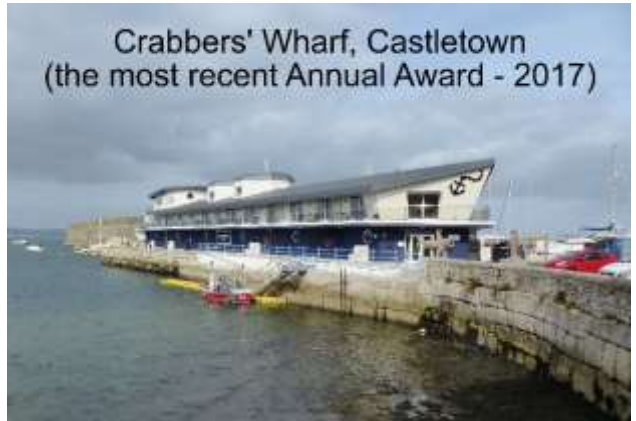
### **DORSET ECHO'S 100th BIRTHDAY**

We have written to congratulate the Dorset Echo on the occasion of its centenary celebrations. We are fortunate to have a newspaper reporting on a daily basis, with a wide range of local news. Our own Committee appreciates the regular publication of information and opinion on environmental and planning matters, including the lists of planning applications affecting our area, all providing a valued

service to the community. We wish the Echo every success in the future.

### **ANNUAL AWARDS**

A reminder that suggestions for the Society's Annual Awards are invited for the 'best contribution to the built environment'. Please see the March/April edition of Planning News for details.



Projects should have been completed from October 2019 onwards. They should be in places visible to a wide range of the public, and should be located within the

broad area of Weymouth, Portland and Chickerell, south of the Ridgeway.

To send in your suggestions, please email [planning@weymouthcivicsociety.org](mailto:planning@weymouthcivicsociety.org), or write to 71 Roman Road, Weymouth, DT3 5JH. Projects can be nominated by anyone, including the owners themselves. We don't need a formal submission, but any information you may like to provide would be helpful.

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