

**Submission on 7 November 2016 by Keith Baker, then secretary of FRA,  
to EDDC for its local plan review**

The Furzehill Resident's Association was created in early 2015 following the adoption on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2014 of Part 1 – "Core Strategy" of the current Christchurch and East Dorset Local Plan; and the Community Governance Review of East Dorset, which started in 2014.

At present the Hamlets covered by the Furzehill Resident's Association (Furzehill, Dogdean, Grange and Bothenwood) include at least the 99 dwellings of the 5 Colehill West electoral areas of:

Cranborne Road	6	Dogdean	17	Furzehill	64
Grange	11	High Hall	1		

as well as the 50 dwellings of the 4 Holt electoral areas of:

Bothenwood	7	Grange	18	Furzehill	21
Long Lane	4				

All the dwellings are within a 1Km radius circle centred on the Crossroads next to the Stock's Inn and the Village shop. The dwellings in Smuggler's Lane are all divided between the two "Furzehill, Wimborne" electoral areas.

For convenience, the term Furzehill Area will be used to include all the 149 dwellings listed above. An important reason for the creation of the Furzehill Resident's Association was to try to maintain the rural nature of the Furzehill Area for the benefit of all its residents.

The Furzehill Village Envelope includes some, but not all of the dwellings in the two "Furzehill, Wimborne" electoral areas listed above. The total is approximately 71 dwellings. Map 12.2 Furzehill Village Envelope "Core Strategy".

The current "Core Strategy" was approved less than 30 months ago and permits radical changes both within the enlarged Furzehill Village Envelope and nearby to the Furzehill Area.

The "Core Strategy" states: *The Council Offices, Furzehill*

*12.4 This policy amends the village envelope for Furzehill to reflect its built form and allow for a change of circumstances in relation to the Council and its use of the Offices. During the lifetime of the Core Strategy there is potential for the Council to relocate its offices as it now works in partnership with Christchurch Borough Council. This could involve relocation of services to the Allendale area in Wimborne, set out in Policy WMC4. It is therefore important that the future use of the existing Offices is clarified. The nature of any redevelopment must reflect the site's location within the Green Belt. It should also respect and retain the attractive wooded areas, ensuring that they remain publicly accessible. Redevelopment of the site should also provide for a community hall as the relocation of the Council Offices will remove the opportunity for public meeting. Finally, Furzehill suffers from road safety problems as a result of heavy goods vehicles and speeding traffic along the village road where there are no pavements. Redevelopment of the site should help to fund traffic calming measures to alleviate this problem.*

The closing of the Council Offices at Furzehill and the redevelopment of the enlarged Village Envelope could radically increase the number of dwellings within the Furzehill Village Envelope and the Furzehill Area.

However Furzehill is classified as a village with a village envelope. It is one of 15 villages in East Dorset defined on page 26 of the "Core Strategy" as: *settlements where only very limited development will be allowed that supports the role of the settlement as a provider of services to its home community.*

Furzehill only has a village shop (including a Post Office) and the Stock's Inn, which does not have any private meeting rooms. As noted in 12.4 "Core Strategy", there may be no meeting place at all in Furzehill Area once the Council Offices close.

Unfortunately the aspiration contained in 12.4 "Core Strategy" for a community hall to be provided as part of the redevelopment of the site has not been included in the requirements being imposed on bidders for the site.

Consequently as Furzehill does not have a Church, nor a Church Hall, nor a village Hall, nor a Parish Hall, nor even a School with a School Hall, within the Furzehill Area, assimilating any further dwellings into Furzehill will make it harder for Furzehill to provide services to its home community, if a community hall is neither available within the Furzehill Village Envelope, nor the Furzehill Area.

A significant concern to Furzehill Residents is the quantity of traffic that passes through the Furzehill Area. The roads in the Furzehill Area have very few pavements. The turning, which leads up to the council offices, has a pavement on one side and the B3078 has a pavement on one side coming up from Wimborne.) Many of the roads have hedges and bends and none of the roads leading to the crossroads, by the Stock's Inn, have enough width for two lorries (or tractors with trailers) to pass easily. There is considerable traffic, passing through the Stock's Inn crossroads, because it lies on recognized 'rat-runs'. Much of the traffic coming to and from Holt/Gaunt's Common is local, but in addition some A31 traffic will avoid the Canford Bottom Roundabout and the Wimborne Bypass, by using the Cannon Hill exit to pass via Broomhill, Pig Oak, Furzehill and then the B3078 to rejoin the A31 to the west of Wimborne. Considerable traffic on the Grange and Smuggler's Lane route through the Stock's Inn Crossroads is the same traffic that is carried along Middlehill Road in Colehill. Much through traffic from the north exits the B3078 at Grange and heads for the Canford Bottom roundabout via Grange, Smuggler's Lane and Middlehill Road; this is a single direct road with three different names. Middlehill Road has pavements on both sides of the road for nearly all the way through Colehill, and major traffic calming work has been undertaken to try and reduce the speed of the traffic. Yet in the Furzehill Area, where neither side of the same road has pavements, no traffic calming measures have been implemented. Much of Smuggler's Lane is de-restricted. So when the current "Core Strategy" states: *Redevelopment of the site should help to fund traffic calming measures to alleviate this problem-* it should refer to the Furzehill Area as a whole and not just: *along the village road where there are no pavements.*

The Woodlease Copse is within the Furzehill Village Envelope and is likely to be sold to a developer. It is important that its status, as a public open green space, is guaranteed by legal means.

The Furzehill Resident's Association suggests that all the aspirations included 12.4 and R. A. 2 "Core Strategy" should be adhered to and:

- *reflect the site's location within the Green Belt;*
- *respect and retain the wooded areas, with public access;*
- *provide for a community hall within the Furzehill Area;*
- *implement traffic calming measures throughout the Furzehill Area;*
- *new buildings will not exceed the current floor space, nor height of existing ones;*
- *have a landscape screen, on the western edge of the site, to protect the views from the wider countryside, including the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.*

The Furzehill Resident's Association is not just concerned about the redevelopment within the Council Office's Site, but the whole of the Furzehill area and the surrounding greenbelt. The "Core Strategy" has already very dramatically reduced the width of the greenbelt between the Furzehill Area (which includes Dogdean) and Wimborne.

The Furzehill Resident's Association suggests that no further reductions in the greenbelt within and around the Furzehill Area are allowed.

Noting the statements on Hamlets on Page 26 "Core Strategy", the Furzehill Resident's Association suggests that as the Furzehill Area consists of several Hamlets, that no other developments would be allowed within the Furzehill Area unless it was functionally required to be in the rural area.

The infrastructure in and around Wimborne is in the opinion of the Furzehill Resident's Association not sufficient for the current situation and this will be made worse by the developments already permitted in the "Core Strategy". The Furzehill Resident's Association suggests that the Wimborne area is excluded from any further significant developments in the revision of the Local Plan.

Keith Baker  
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