Stourpaine Parish Council opposes this application. The Parish Council has in its reply to the recent planning white paper questioned the target for housing in Dorset. The Parish Council has read the report (CPRE Dorset Housing Needs Evidence) prepared by the Campaign to Protect Rural England and notes that this report suggests that the figure used as the basis for the number of houses needed in Dorset is based on figures that are no longer correct. The Parish Council believes that at present Blandford has twice the amount of land required for housing over the next 5 years.

Dorset County Council and now Dorset Council have promoted Neighbourhood Plans, many villages have taken years to produce these. Volunteers have given up their time to produce these on the understanding that what is produced would mean something and be of value to their communities. This development is not in line with the made Pimperne Neighbourhood Plan. Pimperne spent 6 years producing its Neighbourhood Plan all of which would be pointless if this development is permitted.

The road network in Dorset is poor. The A350 has already been identified as not fit for purpose. During the summer months the Blandford by-pass is solid from the Sunrise roundabout all the way through to the Tesco roundabout. The proposed development of 600 houses would impact on the traffic congestion, noise and pollution. It is estimated that the traffic volume would increase by over 1000 cars twice per day and there would be a significant increase in the number of delivery and other service vehicles using the by-pass. The A350 Community Group has identified that the majority of private cars and vans on the road between 7.00am and 8.15am are travelling towards Poole, Bournemouth and beyond. They are travelling to work outside of North Dorset. There are no employment opportunities in the immediate area. Accordingly, the development of 600 houses would increase the flow of traffic by people commuting to work which does not fit in with the declared climate emergency and will have a detrimental impact on the environment.

Infrastructure changes would appear to be a secondary and retrospective consideration. There is already a shortage of school places in Blandford. Phase 1 of this development will see 167 houses built with no increase in school places. The increased school places will not materialize until phase 2.

It is noted that Pimperne is largely in the Cranborne Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. This development would clearly have a significant detrimental impact on the AONB. Unless it can be demonstrated that this development is clearly in the public interest, it contradicts the restrictive policies set out in paragraph 172 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Stourpaine itself will be impacted by the development in that whilst it is anticipated that the majority of the traffic will be commuting towards the coast there will undoubtedly be an increased volume in the traffic travelling north through the centre of Stourpaine. The A350 goes through the middle of the village and will mean that crossing from one side of the village to the other will become more dangerous. The traffic noise and pollution will also increase. There is already a bottle neck at the traffic lights by Durweston Bridge and this will undoubtedly become worse leading to more congestion noise and pollution. Notwithstanding the potential impact on Stourpaine and the other villages along the A350 it is noted that the Stourpaine Parish Council has not been consulted on this development.

Stourpaine Parish Council acknowledges the need for some housing but how much and at what cost to the environment? In this regard there is already a development of 350 houses by the Tesco roundabout on the Blandford by-pass. For the reasons stated above Stourpaine Parish Council strongly opposes this application and invites Dorset Council to refuse this application on the basis of the fact that there is no need for this volume of housing in Blandford and that this development would be incompatible with its own policies with regard to the climate emergency.