

Sherborne and District Society ([Campaign to Protect Rural England](#))
A Synopsis of Responses to *A Sherborne CPRE Critical Review*

The Review was circulated to all Members of the Sherborne and District (CPRE), to other local residents largely within the centre of town, to Members of the Town Council and other interested bodies. It was originally intended to be the focus of the CPRE stand at the Sherborne Fair but COVID-19 prevented this. In all 1,200 copies were circulated and 30 responses were received of which the overwhelming majority welcomed the publication. Many provided useful background information and highlighted further areas of concern. The intention of the publication was, and is, to inform, interest and engage with local residents to bring about some positive outcomes, whilst recognising the limited powers and funding available to a voluntary body such as the local group of CPRE.

Positive comments about the Review suggested that it was excellent, informative, beautifully presented and enjoyable reading. Six respondents requested membership forms. Three negative responses were received suggesting it was unwelcome, a waste of money, disappointing and potentially distressing.

This document is presented using the headings featured in the Review. Many respondents suggested other areas of concern or provided additional information. These are highlighted towards the end of this synopsis.

First View of Sherborne

Respondents agreed that the view on approaching the town on the A30 gives an unwelcome introduction to the town. They provided a few suggestions about how it might be improved but recognised the limited powers of any organisation to make a significant difference. Suggestions included: using the windows to mount exhibitions or advertise local initiatives, lowering the taxes on small businesses, improving the façade by replacing the unused shop fronts by doors and windows similar to the ones above.

Newell

Concern was expressed by a few residents that the owner of Newell House had not been contacted to provide his own comments while a previous mayor outlined his own unsuccessful attempts to enter into discussion with the owner. The deteriorating state of the building was brought to the attention of the Conservation Officer in 2018 and more recently English Heritage has taken some interest in the building but the restrictions imposed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic have limited any progress in addressing the issues.

A number of responses drew attention to the changes to the layout of the junction with the wall which used to line the curve of the road being demolished and rebuilt in its present location with several cottages being demolished. One response suggested that a plaque could be mounted providing information about the changes.

A few comments were made about the gate onto the A30 and some further information provided. The gate provided a previous owner with access to his garden and orchard but following the development of Barton Farm it was closed for safety reasons preventing residents exiting onto a very narrow pavement on the busy A30. Suggestions were made that its appearance could be improved and perhaps have a plaque of some description.

West Mill

There were very few comments about West Mill perhaps reflecting its isolated location with relatively few residents knowing of its existence. Two respondents reflected on the tragic death of a young girl who fell from the wheel around the time when some voluntary restoration work was being undertaken. It is suggested that although it would not provide a viable source of energy the wheel could be restored and perhaps be used to grind flour with the building open to the public on occasions.

Quarr Nature Reserve

Two respondents suggested that the fly tipping is actually on land owned by the Pub and that it has been there for some time. Respondents generally spoke enthusiastically about the presence of the nature reserve but suggested that some areas should be better maintained.

Nethercombe Farm

Four comments were received concerning the position of the plaque and access to the building. The building was the site of the previous International School run by Sherborne School who maintain the listed buildings. Rewording the plaque and moving it around the corner was suggested.

Graffiti

All respondents agreed that graffiti should be removed as quickly as possible.

Signage

Whilst presenting an eyesore the photograph elicited few responses apart from a comment from a Councillor that signage has been on the Council agenda for some time, a suggestion that businesses should be charged and that a single signage board should be provided.

Sherborne Police Station

There were very few comments about the empty car park apart from use as a public car park or as a site for a hotel.

Gravel Pits Lane

It was suggested that if the building had a use, as with the old chapel at the entrance to Combe, it would be worth preserving. This is not the situation with this building.

A Railway Relic

No comments received except to agree that it is probably a relic from the railway yard.

Cemetery Mausoleum

Comment suggested that as the mausoleum is the property of the Wingfield Digby estate nothing can be done about it.

Other areas of concern and suggestions mentioned by respondents

- Need to encourage tourism with parking for coaches, camper vans and more blue information plaques
- Establishment of a Friends of the Cemetery Group
- Present state of Sherborne House mentioned frequently in responses (subsequent to the publication of the review planning applications have been submitted and notices appear on the gates of the House)
- Empty shops in Cheap Street
- Unattractive and non-vernacular buildings such as The Willows extension to the hospital
- Suggestion of a hedge around the children's playground and bowling green at the Culverhayes Car Park
- Old stone work at the base of buildings around the town needs to be repaired
- Parking on narrow streets with a suggestion of reduced parking rates for those working in town
- Unhappiness with the Barton Farm Estate with regards to quality, lay out and community facilities
- Use of single bright red roof tiles on estates is to be regretted
- State of the foot path alongside the Abbey
- Need for more affordable homes
- Preserving and enhancing the open spaces that exist now and planting more trees
- Need for a plan for the whole area
- Concern about the 'wirescape' throughout the town and in Bristol Road
- Specific concerns about the Skateboard Park: litter, noise, graffiti, use by groups from outside Sherborne and the need for more trees

Thank You

Thanks to all who took the time to respond to the Review. It certainly achieved its aim of sparking debate. There were many comments which pointed to the difficulties in addressing areas of concern: limited powers, funds and volunteers, but nevertheless the Sherborne & District Society CPRE Committee will take account of all the responses and identify some where realistically they can make a difference.