

This note summarises the principles underlying the approach of the Sutton Poyntz Society to commenting on planning applications not only for Sutton Poyntz but also its environs, which could affect the residents of the village and its visitors.

Sutton Poyntz is a village separate and distinct from the urban sprawl of Weymouth. It has been designated a Conservation Area and is within and surrounded by the Dorset Downs AONB. Approaching the village from any direction, either by road or footpath, the visitor immediately notices the green aspect of the village entrances. The approach down Sutton Road has been damaged by recent development but nevertheless the closer approach to the village still retains a distinctly rural, green aspect. Approaching on foot, the views coming from the White Horse Hill direction exemplify the point.

Further into the village the green gaps become noticeable. Although reduced by development in recent years, there are still some valuable gaps left. Most noticeably on the east side of Plaisters Lane and beside the pond.

Once in the heart of the village it is the ability to see the surrounding hills which creates the impression of a contained rural village. These views are critical to the nature of the Conservation Area and it is again very disappointing that recent development has caused damage to these views. Approaching the village down Sutton Road at the moment (2008) also presents a view of the village surrounded by the Dorset downland.

For the past thirty years or more local residents have fought to maintain the green gap between Preston and Sutton Poyntz. This green gap is vital to prevent the village being swallowed up in urban sprawl. It is essential that any approved development, change in nature, or use of land anywhere in Sutton Poyntz weakens neither the clear physical nor the visual distinction between Sutton Poyntz and the rest of Weymouth. Backland development and filling of green gaps generally creates an impression of urban development and is undesirable in Sutton Poyntz.

Where development is permitted building should be on a scale, of a design, and of materials which enhance the status of the village as a Conservation Area. In general this means a small village scale, local stone, and thatch for roofing in some parts of the village.

In summary the issues of principle underlying the approach of the Sutton Poyntz Society to planning are:

- Preservation of the separation from urban Weymouth
- Preservation of green entrances to the village
- Preservation of open gaps and views of the hills