

Thorncombe fights development plans

THORNCOMBE has reacted strongly to a plan that critics say could spoil the character of the village.

A well-attended parish meeting on Friday voted 68 votes to nil to ask West Dorset District Council to defer the plan for a major development of houses and holiday cottages, and complained that it had been "sprung on them".

Immediately after the parish council recommended that the plan should be refused.

If passed, the development

will see Higher Farmhouse, a listed building that was once the Workhouse, converted into eight holiday homes. Land next to it would be developed with 25 houses, a small factory and a new farmhouse, and another site would have a home built on it.

The parish council decided this would be too big a development, with a workshop in a green field area of outstanding natural beauty. Housing would be on a skyline and put too much

strain on roads and sewers. The holiday accommodation was surplus to requirements and involved the gutting of listed buildings.

Chairman Bert Vickery said the parish meeting, which had been convened at the request of six villagers, showed a good turn-out with just under 90 people.

During the meeting parishioners were urged to write to the planning authority, and parish clerk Ron Hawkes said the plan had come through in "undue haste".