

To Whom it may concern  
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for the Attention of:  
Dorset Council  
Community Governance Review Consultation

To Whom it may Concern

28 October 2021

**Re: Blandford Town Council T/P,S&F/Boundaries and CG – Appendix F**

Dear Review Body

This confirms the objection of the Tarrant Monkton and Launceston Parish Councillors to the proposal by the Blandford Town Council dated 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2021 Ref: T/P, S&F/ Boundaries and CG (Appendix F,) made under the premiss of the Dorset Council's Community Governance Review. That proposal includes the assimilation of the Military Royal Signals camp residential areas into the Blandford Council jurisdiction, which currently form an important part of the Tarrant Monkton and Launceston (TM&L) Parish Council Ward.

Please note that we have been unable to pass an official resolution at a Parish Council meeting as there is a time limiting factor preventing this. The above letter was received on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of October and the time limit to lodge an objection to Dorset Council is the 28<sup>th</sup> October 2021.

The Blandford Town Council omitted to give advance notification of their 'Appendix F' working Group' or to advise us of their Council vote to approve Appendix F on the 18<sup>th</sup> October. Further, our TM&L Parish Clerk has not been advised of the 28<sup>th</sup> October Dorset County Council cut off date to lodge an objection to these Appendix F proposals.

We are aware that there may be an ongoing process of evaluation of the above proposal by Dorset Council over the coming months and we request full participation in that process. A short summary of our objections to their proposal would include:

1. Blandford Camp is part of the rural character of the T-M. /T-L parish and lies within the AONB unlike Blandford which is outside and urban (becoming more so as it exceeds its current boundaries). The Camp is also separated from Blandford boundaries by Tarrant Hinton and Pimperne along the main arterial road, the A354, and by Rawston along the valley road and by open countryside from the Wimborne road. Extending the Blandford boundaries would undermine the distinctions between the rural character of the AONB and the largest adjacent urban settlement.
2. There is a long historical link between the Royal Signals Military Corps Camp and the TM&L Parish. The Royal Signals Camp has been part of this Parish since its inception by Winston Churchill in June 1920, over 100 years ago. For example, fallen soldiers from the Camp are buried in our parish church and these graves are actively maintained by the Royal Signals Corps. Military representatives attend the annual Memorial service in Tarrant Monkton.
3. The geographic location of the Royal Signals site is closer in distance to the TM&L village than Blandford Town Centre. The Camp is connected to our villages by footpaths and roads and despite the extra security measures in place, these provide a daily flow of military personnel seeking R&R (and training) in our protected surroundings.

4. There is no evidence provided in the 'Appendix F' document that an enlarged Urban/Rural Blandford Town Ward would result in a more sustainable settlement benefit. Importantly, there lacks any analysis that the opposite may occur, both within the proposed enlarged Blandford Town Ward and also in the existing Parish communities which would be detrimentally affected by a resulting loss of precept revenue and significant loss of population due to the proposed smaller size.

5. There is clear evidence that well managed local town councils can thrive socially and economically within the framework of both Town and local Parish Councils. Together this provides a strong local community voice to parishioners which add to the good governance of a conurbation.

For example, the Wimborne Minster rural and urban conurbation, located 8.75 driving miles from Blandford Forum, includes several local parish councils. That conurbation is notably made up of both Town and Parish councils and is regarded by many as economically successful and one of the best managed 'Town Conurbations' in Dorset. It includes: the Wimborne Town Council; *Colehill Parish Council*; *Corfe Mullen Parish Council* and *Pamphill Parish Council*.

The two Market Towns enjoy many similar amenities. Both Blandford Forum and Wimborne Minster are 'Market Towns' with local businesses, markets and similar public amenities which attract and serve the population of many outlying Parishes.

6. Only a few years ago, the Ministry of Defence was invited by Blandford Town Council to agree an amendment to their boundaries in order to become incorporated into the Blandford Town Council area. After due consideration this change was declined by the Ministry of Defence. Perhaps Dorset County Council could review their documents relating to that event. The year of this review could have been 2013 or later? At that time other ward boundaries in North Dorset were also under review and where local Parish Councils agreed, logical boundary changes were implemented.

We sincerely trust that Dorset Council will agree with our view that the proposed boundary change proposals made with regard to Appendix F by Blandford Town Council will be assessed taking into consideration our above outline view and that this aforesaid proposal be rejected.

The Tarrant Monkton and Launceston Parish Councillors:

Mr Ronald H Stanley, Mrs Sarah Worrall, Dr Kathleen Daly, Ms Mavis Carden, Dr Christopher Ford, Mrs Margareta Stanley, Mrs Julia Corrie and Mrs Geraldine Stone

TM&L Parish Liaison Officer to the Royal Signals Regiment Camp:

(name supplied)