

Villagers win round one in homes battle

FAMILIES in Thorncombe, near Bridport, who have been fighting a controversial plan for 60 new homes in their village, won the first round yesterday.

West Dorset planners in Dorchester rejected proposals for the new houses as an extensive intrusion into open countryside in an area of outstanding beauty.

The Village Trust said it was profoundly concerned by the many objections to the scheme, which would have almost doubled the size of the village in less than two years.

Apart from the number of homes involved, there was concern about the ability of sewers and other services to cope with a new development on such a scale, said the trust.

And Councillor John Terrett (Con, Thorncombe) told the committee yesterday: "It is unacceptable that villages should change to such an extent in a short time."

He proposed a total embargo on all but small development, until sewage and other problems could be resolved, but was defeated on a 10-9 vote.

Both the trust and the parish council said a phased scheme of perhaps 30 new homes over six years, with some emphasis on the provision of reasonably-priced houses for local people, would be in line with village needs.