# Planning inspector approves controversial Premier Inn in St Ives despite fierce local opposition



In a decision hailed by local residents and activists, the planning inspector has approved the controversial hotel plans for St Ives, a picturesque Cornish town renowned for its vibrant arts scene and stunning coastal views. This development, however, has sparked significant backlash from the community, which is deeply concerned about the potential erosion of their town’s character and local amenities.

Councillor Andrew Mitchell, representing St Ives West & Towednack on Cornwall Council, remarked on the uproar, stating, "The town council was unanimous in its resolve against this development..." He reflected on the community's vigorous opposition, noting, “I have never seen such a well organised and dedicated group who mounted a brilliant case against this outrageous over-development.” Residents have vehemently described the planned hotel as both a "corporate carbuncle" and a "needless monstrosity." Their concerns extend beyond aesthetics; the proposed facility would replace the town's last remaining care home, further aggravating local fears about the diminishment of essential services.

This decision follows a series of similar planning refusals in the area. Recently, Cornwall Councillors overwhelmingly rejected plans for enhancements to the Carbis Bay Hotel and another hotel on Trewidden Road. Both proposals faced intense opposition from local residents, the Town Council, and various community groups. Mitchell again underscored the community’s commitment to preserving their coastal environment and supporting local businesses, indicating a broader sentiment that many in St Ives wish to maintain its unique charm and history rather than concede to corporate interests.

The campaign against the Premier Inn, a planned 100-bedroom hotel, garnered significant support, with 600 locals listing eight specific objections. Among these were worries about the disruption to the historic skyline, increased noise levels, and the inadequacy of parking facilities. Critics argued that recent tourist developments had already saturated the market, questioning the claimed economic benefits of the new hotel. Sibby Ealing, a local resident who actively rallied against the project, framed the opposition as a "David against Goliath" struggle, where the community aimed to protect their town against perceived corporate expansionism.

Despite the rejection by the planning committee, Whitbread, the owner of the Premier Inn brand, expressed disappointment but indicated a commitment to pursuing alternative plans for a hotel in St Ives. The company emphasised the potential benefits of job creation and increased spending from tourists, amounts that they argue could revitalise the local economy. However, critics remain sceptical, advocating for a more measured approach that prioritises community welfare over corporate profits.

The decision to halt this development reflects a growing trend among urban communities across the UK that increasingly resist top-down planning initiatives perceived as detrimental to their neighbourhoods. St Ives represents a significant case study of how local voices can shape planning outcomes in the face of powerful corporate interests. As the town moves forward from this contentious issue, the community’s collective vigilance will remain crucial in ensuring that future developments align with the interests of the locals, preserving not only the town’s physical landscape but its spirit as well.

### Reference Map

1. Paragraphs 1, 2, 3
2. Paragraphs 2, 3
3. Paragraph 3
4. Paragraphs 1, 3
5. Paragraphs 1, 2
6. Paragraph 2
7. Paragraph 3

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/2055889/uk-seaside-hotspot-beloved-tourists> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://stivestowncouncil-cornwall.gov.uk/two-controversial-planning-refusal/> - On April 29, 2024, Cornwall Councillors overwhelmingly refused two controversial planning applications: one for the Carbis Bay Hotel enhancement and another for a proposed Premier Inn on Trewidden Road in St Ives. Both applications faced strong opposition from local residents, the Town Council, and community groups. Councillor Andrew Mitchell expressed gratitude to the local community for their support in opposing the developments, emphasizing the town's commitment to protecting its coastline, townscape, and local independent businesses.
3. <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/crke8602yrvo> - A campaign group comprising 600 people listed eight objections to the development of a Premier Inn in St Ives. Concerns included potential breaches of the historic skyline, loss of privacy, noise, insufficient parking, and the closure of the last remaining care home in the town. The group also questioned the economic benefits of the development, arguing that it was unnecessary given the existing oversupply of tourist accommodation and the potential adverse impact on the residential area and town skyline.
4. <https://www.cornwalllive.com/news/cornwall-news/st-ives-premier-inn-plan-8116023> - Plans for a 100-bedroom Premier Inn hotel in St Ives have been described as a 'needless monstrosity' by concerned residents opposing the application. The proposed hotel would replace the Trewidden Care Home and is part of Whitbread's plan to invest over £10 million in the construction, creating 30 new permanent jobs. Critics argue that the development would negatively impact the town's skyline, increase congestion, and is unnecessary due to the existing oversupply of tourist accommodation.
5. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-cornwall-13205138> - Cornwall Care's proposal to build a new £12 million facility for the elderly in St Ives was rejected by councillors. The plan included a 72-bed care home and 26 flats on fields beside the town. Protesters argued that the site, located beneath a town monument, was unsuitable and that the fields were integral to the historic rural area. Despite planners recommending approval, the Cornwall Council's west sub-area planning committee voted 13 to one against the plans.
6. <https://stiveslocal.uk/premier-inn-carbis-bay-hotel-0424/> - Cornwall Councillors overwhelmingly refused two controversial planning applications: one for the Carbis Bay Hotel enhancement and another for a proposed Premier Inn on Trewidden Road in St Ives. Both applications faced strong opposition from local residents, the Town Council, and community groups. Councillor Andrew Mitchell expressed gratitude to the local community for their support in opposing the developments, emphasizing the town's commitment to protecting its coastline, townscape, and local independent businesses.
7. <https://businesscornwall.co.uk/news-by-industry/tourism-sector-business-news-cornwall/2024/04/st-ives-premier-inn-plans-rejected/> - Despite Cornwall Council's planning department recommending approval, ten members of the West Cornwall Sub-area Planning Committee rejected the controversial plans for a Premier Inn in St Ives. Critics celebrated the outcome as a 'David against Goliath' battle, emphasizing the development's potential negative impact on the town's landscape. Whitbread, the owner of Premier Inn, expressed disappointment but remained committed to opening a hotel in St Ives, citing potential long-term benefits such as year-round jobs and increased visitor spending.