

My name is Andrew Matthews and I am Chair of the Portland Community Partnership(PCP). The partnership supports the strategic development of Portland principally through working closely with Portland Town Council and Dorset Council.

This statement is to provide further information in support of the details already lodged.

As set out in our written submission our principal concern is the carbon emitted. As part of our Neighbourhood Plan review an updated Strategic Environmental Assessment scoping report was produced and this included a recent study from the Centre for Sustainable Energy which looked at the Carbon emissions for Portland. The scoping report says

According to the Carbon Footprint Report for Portland, the neighbourhood area consumption footprint totals 82,637 tonnes of carbon emissions a year .

This proposal would add substantially to Portland's total which is contrary to the commitment to address the climate emergency and the support for renewable energy. It is understood there maybe plans to mitigate this but these would still result in direct emissions.

Our view is informed by the following.

In 2008 a report was presented to a meeting convened by the PCP entitled 'Portland beyond 2012' which proposed a spatial strategy for Portland to take advantage of the highlighted profile the staging of the Sailing Olympics would bring. The report included an outline of a number of current projects including the potential for gas storage in the Triassic salt levels beneath the Island and the Memo project which highlighted the intrinsic links between the

Island and the global need to address biodiversity loss. These two projects set the scene on aspects of how Portland wanted to take its wider regeneration forward.

The PCP had to await for the creation of the National Planning Policy Framework in 2012 to then progress a planning framework which would support the particular place issues which Portland has. In the early days Portland Port wanted to develop a separate Business Neighbourhood Plan but after assessment it was agreed that the close relationship the rest of the Island has with the Port area needed to be considered and therefore the Neighbourhood Plan covers the whole of the Parish.

The Plan however did reflect on the particular regenerative opportunities the Port area through to Osprey Quay would provide and to indicate this the Northern Arc policy was created as well as providing the opportunity to apply flexibility over employment areas with the Port estate and potentially wider afield with other landowners at a landscape level.

The PCP also worked with the Port in exploring opportunities for energy generation, one project based around waste wood would have also supported a heat network however when the difficulties with providing the Ministry of Justice sites became apparent, due to height differences, proposals were put forward for commercial size greenhouses to grow crops such as tomatoes improving UK food resilience. These proposals were not progressed by the Port.

The Neighbourhood Plan which is lodged in the core document library together with the associated Economic Vision and Heritage and Character study includes an enabling policy on renewables energy highlighting the green energy potential the Island has.

In June 2021 the Neighbourhood Plan was endorsed by Dorset Council to become part of the development plan for the area. In that same year we commenced a review of the plan to maintain its currency. This included both housing and major project sites including the potential for Hydrogen/ Carbon Capture storage in the Triassic Salt levels (as mentioned above). The enabling work undertaken in the mid 2000s meant that the assessment read.

The site is potentially suitable, available and achievable for development. The Portland Salt Cavern site has been earmarked as a potential location for hydrogen storage. This would also provide opportunities to develop hydrogen production in the area from electrolysis. The Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Minerals Strategy states that planning permission was granted in July 2018 for the Portland Gas Storage facility and associated development. The Portland Port White Paper on hydrogen project by Xodus (published November 2022) notes that UKEn has since improved the facility's design and signed a lease option with Portland Port Limited, and the facility could be operational by 2027/28.

The potential for large scale green hydrogen production and storage means that we monitor progress in this area and we are aware of local developments using solar PV and hydrogen production. This prompted us to present a paper to the Town Council linking the creation of a Local Energy Network with support for earlier remediation of the Portland quarried landscape and its capacity to absorb carbon.

We understand the Port's needs to maintain and improve their estate and to finance this .

The importance of the Portland breakwaters as a secondary flood defence line is a key element as sea level rises.

The proposal therefore builds on the recognised commercial opportunities that access to a deep water Port provides however we consider that the opportunity around storage linked to renewables requires a wider review.

In conclusion the reality of global warming, in particular resulting sea level rises, is of vital importance to Portland and we should avoid adding to the level of emissions. The opportunities to pursue other greener and renewable routes is too evident to ignore. This application should be set alongside these in a planned manner which maximises the potential of Portland not only directly for the local area but for the interest of both the National Economy and Climate Change targets.

13th December 2023