



Dorset Council **Local Plan**

Consultation January 2021

Volume 1

Volume 1: Strategy and topics

Strategy and topics

1. Introduction 1

- 1.1 The Dorset Council Local Plan 1
- 1.2 Dorset’s Distinctive Characteristics 4
- 1.3 Issues and Challenges Facing Dorset 6

2. Development Strategy 15

- 2.1 Introduction 15
- 2.2 The need for housing and employment land in Dorset 18
- 2.3 Developing the spatial strategy for growth in Dorset 20
- 2.4 The need to create a sustainable pattern of growth 26
- 2.5 Green Belt Review 28
- 2.6 The Spatial Strategy for Dorset 29
- 2.7 Meeting the housing requirement 45
- 2.8 Meeting the need for employment land 52
- 2.9 Neighbourhood Plans 55
- 2.10 Housing requirement figures for neighbourhood plans 57

3. The Environment and Climate Change 59

- 3.1 Introduction 59
- 3.2 Green infrastructure strategic approach 60
- 3.3 Habitats and Species 65
- 3.4 Biodiversity and net gain 77
- 3.5 Landscape 81
- 3.6 Protecting and enhancing heritage assets 84
- 3.7 Geodiversity 95
- 3.8 Achieving high quality and sustainability in design 97
- 3.9 The landscape and townscape context 101
- 3.10 High standards of environmental performance 104
- 3.11 Shop fronts and advertisements 106

3.12 Amenity	108
3.13 Pollution and contaminated land	112
3.14 Flood risk	114
3.15 Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)	119
3.16 Land instability	125
3.17 Coastal erosion	128

4. Housing 132

4.1 Introduction	132
4.2 Housing mix	134
4.3 Affordable housing	136
4.4 Affordable housing exception sites	142
4.5 Housing for older people and those with disabilities	144
4.6 Self-build and custom-build housing	149
4.7 Second homes	152
4.8 Homes in the countryside	155
4.9 Occupational dwellings	156
4.10 Other residential development outside development boundaries	160
4.11 Gypsy, Travellers and travelling showpeople site allocations	165

5. Economy 177

5.1 Introduction	177
5.2 The supply of employment land and premises	178
5.3 Key employment sites	180
5.4 Other employment sites	183
5.5 Town centres and retail development	186
5.6 Town centre impact assessments	192
5.7 Management of centres and primary shopping areas	195
5.8 Tourism developments	198
5.9 Loss of built tourist accommodation	203
5.10 Caravan and camping	205
5.11 Farming and diversification	208
5.12 Equestrian developments	212

6. Community Infrastructure 217

6.1 Introduction	217
6.2 Making sure new development includes suitable provision for community infrastructure	220
6.3 Local community buildings and structures	224
6.4 Recreation, sports facilities, formal open space and play	230
6.5 Hot food takeaways	235
6.6 Education and training facilities	237
6.7 The transport network	238
6.8 Low carbon, decentralised and renewable energy schemes	244
6.9 Wind energy development	246
6.10 Utilities	251

Volume 2: Spatial areas and appendices

South East Dorset Functional Area

7. South East Dorset Functional Area Introduction 1

7.1 Introduction	1
7.2 Changes to the Green Belt	4
7.3 Housing and employment allocations in the South Eastern Dorset Functional Area	7

8. Corfe Mullen 13

8.1 Introduction	13
8.2 Vision for Corfe Mullen	13
8.3 Development strategy	13
8.4 Town centre strategy	14
8.5 Main development opportunities	16

9. Upton 22

9.1 Introduction	22
9.2 Vision for Upton	22
9.3 Development strategy	23

9.4 Town centre strategy	23
9.5 Main development opportunities	24

10. Blandford 26

10.1 Introduction	26
10.2 Vision for Blandford	26
10.3 Development strategy	27
10.4 Town centre strategy	27
10.5 Main development opportunities	30

11. Ferndown and West Parley 41

11.1 Introduction	41
11.2 Vision for Ferndown and West Parley	41
11.3 Development strategy	42
11.4 Town centre strategy	43
11.5 Main development opportunities	46

12. St Leonards and St Ives 60

12.1 Introduction	60
12.2 Vision for St Leonards and St Ives	60
12.3 Development strategy	60
12.4 Town centre strategy	61
12.5 Other policies	61

13. Swanage 64

13.1 Introduction	64
13.2 Vision for Swanage	64
13.3 Development strategy	64
13.4 Town centre strategy	65
13.5 Main development opportunities	67

14. Verwood 71

14.1 Introduction	71
14.2 Vision for Verwood	71

14.3 Development strategy	72
14.4 Town centre strategy	72
14.5 Main development opportunities	74

15. Wareham 78

15.1 Introduction	78
15.2 Vision for Wareham	78
15.3 Development strategy	79
15.4 Town centre strategy	79
15.5 Main development opportunities	81

16. West Moors 83

16.1 Introduction	83
16.2 Vision for West Moors	83
16.3 Town centre strategy	83
16.4 Development strategy	84

17. Wimborne Minster and Colehill 87

17.1 Introduction	87
17.2 Vision for Wimborne Minster and Colehill	88
17.3 Development strategy	88
17.4 Town centre strategy	89
17.5 Main development opportunities	92

18. Alderholt 106

18.1 Introduction	106
18.2 Vision for Alderholt	106
18.3 Development strategy options	107
18.4 Main development opportunities	109

19. Lytchett Matravers and Lytchett Minster 114

19.1 Introduction	114
19.2 Vision for Lytchett Matravers and Lytchett Minster	114
19.3 Development strategy	115

19.4 Village centre strategy	116
19.5 Main development opportunities	116

20. Sturminster Marshall **124**

20.1 Introduction	124
20.2 Vision for Sturminster Marshall	124
20.3 Development strategy	124
20.4 Village centre strategy	125
20.5 Main development opportunities	125

21. Wool **131**

21.1 Introduction	131
21.2 Vision for Wool	131
21.3 Development strategy	131
21.4 Village centre strategy	132
21.5 Main development opportunities	132

Central Dorset Functional Area

22. Central Dorset Functional Area Introduction **140**

22.1 Introduction	140
-------------------	-----

23. Dorchester **146**

23.1 Introduction	146
23.2 Vision for Dorchester	146
23.3 Development strategy	147
23.4 Town centre strategy	148
23.5 Dorchester Transport and Environment Plan	151
23.6 Main development opportunities	153

24. Weymouth **175**

24.1 Introduction	175
24.2 Vision for Weymouth	175
24.3 Development strategy	176

24.4 Flood risk and coastal erosion	176
24.5 Town centre strategy	178
24.6 Main development opportunities	190

25. Chickerell **207**

25.1 Introduction	207
25.2 Vision for Chickerell	207
25.3 Development strategy	208
25.4 Town centre strategy	208
25.5 Main development opportunities	208

26. Portland **213**

26.1 Introduction	213
26.2 Vision for Portland	214
26.3 Development strategy	214
26.4 Town centre strategy	216
26.5 Main development opportunities	217

27. Crossways/Moreton Station **222**

27.1 Introduction	222
27.2 Vision for Crossways/Moreton Station	222
27.3 Development strategy	222
27.4 Town centre strategy	224
27.5 Main development opportunities	224

Northern Dorset Functional Area

28. Northern Dorset Functional Area Introduction **237**

28.1 Introduction	237
-------------------	-----

29. Gillingham **243**

29.1 Introduction	243
29.2 Vision for Gillingham	243
29.3 Development strategy	244

29.4 Town centre strategy	245
29.5 Main development opportunities	247

30. Shaftesbury 255

30.1 Introduction	255
30.2 Vision for Shaftesbury	255
30.3 Development strategy	256
30.4 Town centre strategy	256
30.5 Main development opportunities	258

31. Sherborne 262

31.1 Introduction	262
31.2 Vision for Sherborne	262
31.3 Development strategy	262
31.4 Town centre strategy	263
31.5 Main development opportunities	265

32. Stalbridge 274

32.1 Introduction	274
32.2 Vision for Stalbridge	274
32.3 Development strategy	274
32.4 Town centre strategy	275
32.5 Main development opportunities	276

33. Sturminster Newton 284

33.1 Introduction	284
33.2 Vision for Sturminster Newton	285
33.3 Development strategy	285
33.4 Town centre strategy	286
33.5 Supporting the local economy	287

Western Dorset Functional Area

34. Western Dorset Functional Area Introduction 291

34.1 Introduction 291

35. Beaminster 295

35.1 Introduction 295

35.2 Vision for Beaminster 295

35.3 Development strategy 295

35.4 Town centre strategy 296

35.5 Main development opportunities 297

36. Bridport 303

36.1 Introduction 303

36.2 Vision for Bridport 304

36.3 Development strategy 304

36.4 Town centre strategy 305

36.5 Main development opportunities 307

37. Lyme Regis 317

37.1 Introduction 317

37.2 Vision for Lyme Regis 317

37.3 Development strategy 318

37.4 Town centre strategy 318

37.5 Main development opportunities 319

Appendices

Appendix 1: Strategic policies

Appendix 2: Neighbourhood Plan housing requirements

Appendix 3: Small sites

Appendix 4: Gypsy and Traveller site maps

Appendix 5: Gillingham southern extension

Appendix 6: Employment land

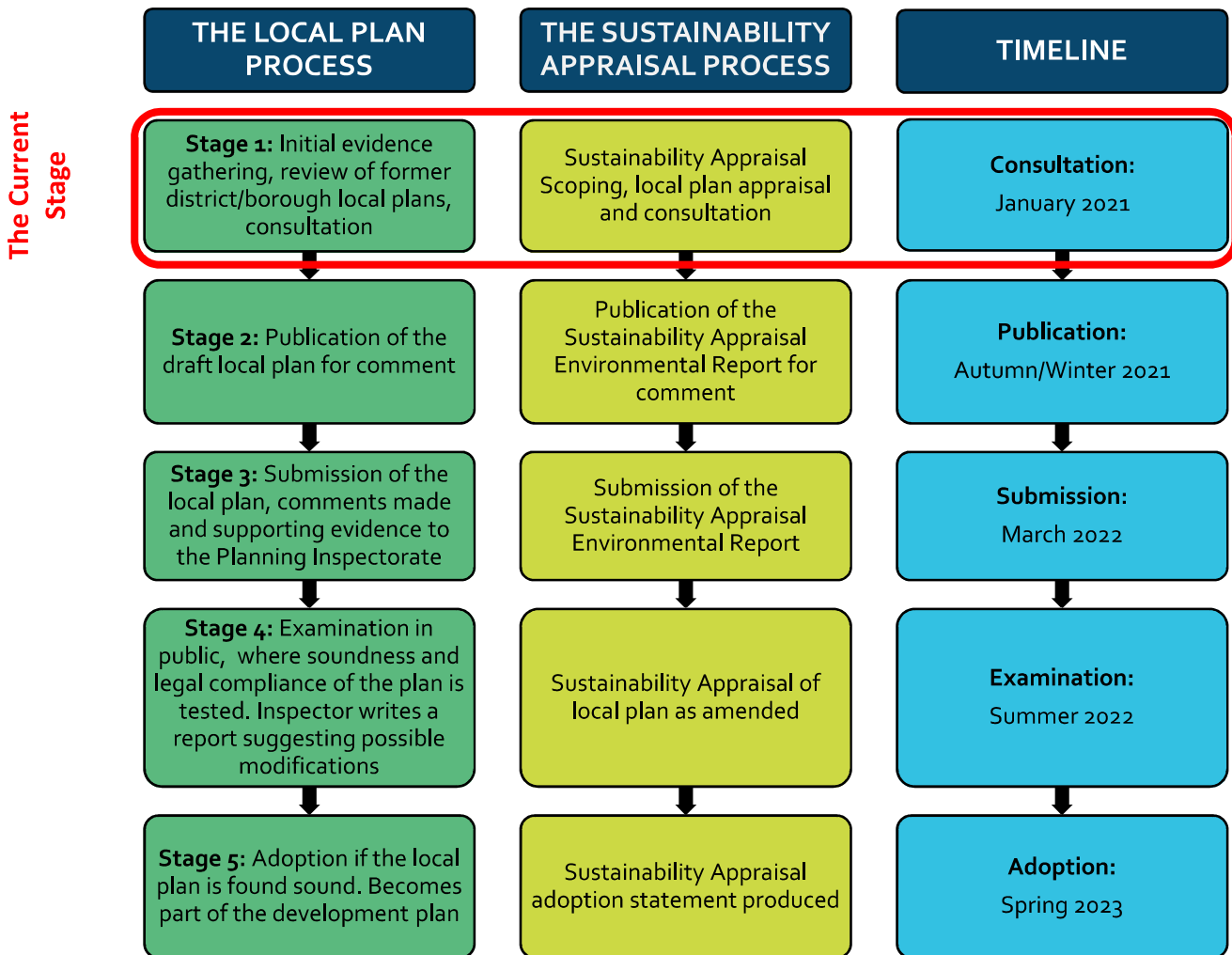
1. The Dorset Council Local Plan

1.1. Introduction

What is a local plan?

- 1.1.1. Planning involves making decisions about the use and development of land. It controls which new buildings will be built and where, and so is important for the future of our towns, villages and countryside. The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and local councils are expected to plan positively for the needs of their area.
- 1.1.2. The Dorset Council Local Plan will cover the whole of the Dorset Council area. It is being produced by the newly formed Dorset Council unitary authority. Once adopted, the local plan will form part of the development plan alongside the adopted minerals and waste policy documents and any neighbourhood plans that have also been made part of the development plan. The local plan will contain both strategic and non-strategic policies to manage development alongside further non-strategic policies contained in neighbourhood plans.
- 1.1.3. Neighbourhood plans are prepared by local communities and can be as simple or as detailed as local people want, provided they have regard to national planning policy and are in general conformity with the strategic policies of the local plan. When a neighbourhood plan is made part of the development plan, its policies will take precedence over the existing non-strategic policies in the local plan for that neighbourhood where they are in conflict.
- 1.1.4. Other development plan documents and supplementary planning documents may be produced where necessary to cover specific topics or sites, or to provide more detailed policy. These will also be used to guide decision taking. All relevant planning policy documents will be made available at the council offices and on the council's website www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk.
- 1.1.5. The Dorset Council Local Plan will eventually replace the current adopted local plans that cover the former district and borough council areas that now make up the Dorset Council area.
- 1.1.6. As the former Dorset districts and borough were all reviewing their local plans when the new Dorset Council was formed, the work undertaken in reviewing these plans has been reviewed and where relevant incorporated into the production of the Dorset Local Plan. The key stages that the council will follow in producing the local plan are set out in Figure 1.1.

Figure 1.1: Stages in producing the Dorset Council Local Plan



How long does the local plan last?

- 1.1.7. The local plan will cover the period from 2021 to 2038. The start date reflects when the local plan will be published for consultation (Stage 2), with the end date reflecting the requirement for local plans to cover at least 15 years upon adoption.
- 1.1.8. National guidance states that most local plans will require updating in whole or in part every 5 years. This local plan (once adopted) is therefore likely to be reviewed again well before the end of the plan period.

The structure of the Dorset Council Local Plan

- 1.1.9. The local plan is made up of a number of chapters which contain different elements of the strategy for the future development of the area. The policies within these chapters are interrelated and should not be viewed in isolation.

- 1.1.10. This introductory chapter sets out the purpose of the local plan as well as the plan period. It also includes a brief contextual description of Dorset, highlighting some of the broad issues that exist in the area. There is an explanation of some of the key terms used within the plan, with a more detailed explanation of specific terms included in the glossary at the end of the document.
- 1.1.11. Chapter 2 of this plan sets out the overarching vision for the plan area along with strategic priorities for the development and use of land within the Dorset Council area. It goes on to set out the spatial development strategy for the local plan area, the levels of growth that will be attained and the role of neighbourhood plans in achieving this.
- 1.1.12. In managing growth, there is a need to protect the high quality environment of the plan area. Chapter 3 includes a number of policies to minimise the impact of development on the environment including policies to help tackle climate change.
- 1.1.13. A key element of the use and development of land relates to economic growth and the provision of job opportunities for residents. Chapter 4 includes policies to facilitate economic development and support the economic vitality of our towns and the local economy.
- 1.1.14. There is a significant need for more homes within Dorset. The policies in Chapter 5 seek to deliver new homes to meet the needs of all who wish to live in the area. Chapter 6 sets out the approach to delivering the necessary supporting infrastructure to accompany growth that will take place in the period to 2038.
- 1.1.15. The second part of the plan contains chapters for each of the main towns where the majority of development will take place. These chapters contain an overall strategy for each town and policies for individual development sites.

Use of the words 'will' and 'should'

Policies in this plan are written to cater for a wide range of planning applications, from small scale domestic extensions up to large, mixed- use development sites. Because of this, some flexibility needs to be built into the policy tests on occasion.

Where the word '**will**' has been used, this means that the policy test must be complied with and it is not expected that there will be exceptions made to this policy.

Where the word '**should**' is used, this means in general it is expected that the policy test will be met, but recognises that there may be exceptions made due to specific circumstances. It does not imply that the policy is optional. If an applicant considers that their case is an exception, then they should include information explaining the reasons why they consider such an exception should be made.

1.2. Dorset's distinctive characteristics

- 1.2.1. Dorset Council was formed in April 2019 as a single unitary council covering the former districts of East Dorset, North Dorset, Purbeck, West Dorset and Weymouth & Portland. This draft local plan, when adopted, will become the first local plan for the new Dorset Council area.
- 1.2.2. The Dorset Council area covers some 252,000 hectares and is home to around 378,510 people¹. The area is located on the south coast of England between Southampton and Exeter. It is spatially diverse but primarily a rural area containing market and coastal towns and many rural villages throughout. The south-eastern edge of the Dorset Council area borders the Bournemouth/Christchurch/Poole conurbation which has a significant influence over the plan area, especially in the east.
- 1.2.3. The coast and countryside of Dorset are popular tourist destinations, with the tourist economy contributing £1.8 billion² to the local economy per annum. The county is home to many attractive rural villages and unique landscapes, with 56% of the area (1416 km²) covered by two Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) designations. These sit alongside the 'Jurassic Coast', England's only natural UNESCO World Heritage Site – a beautiful landscape underpinned by diverse geology of international importance which stretches 95 miles along the Dorset coastline.
- 1.2.4. Across the area there are a number of easily recognisable TV and film locations including West Bay where 'Broadchurch' was filmed, Custom House Quay in Weymouth starring in 'Dunkirk', Abbotsbury Swannery featuring in 'Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince', and Gold Hill in Shaftesbury playing host to the popular 1970s Hovis advert. However, Dorset's popularity also puts pressure on the area's more fragile habitats and environmental assets.
- 1.2.5. Dorset includes a series of towns and villages with clear and distinct historic identities and characters that bind those that live there. Dorset's rich heritage includes Iron Age hillforts, Roman settlements, Saxon and Georgian towns. It also has a strong literary heritage, with well-known associations including Thomas Hardy and William Barnes. It is home to the thousand year old Corfe Castle which lies in the heart of the dramatic Purbeck landscape, the ancient Cerne Abbas Giant chalk figure situated on the Dorset Downs, and an array of thousands of listed

¹ 2019 Mid-Year Estimates, ONS

² <https://www.visit-dorset.com/dbimsgs/2018-Infographic-The%20Economic%20Impact%20of%20%20Dorset's%20Visitor%20Economy-p.pdf>

buildings which form an irreplaceable part of Dorset's cultural heritage and represent tangible connections with our past.

- 1.2.6. The east of the county is heavily influenced by the urban area of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council (BCP) as the main centre of population in the area. Across the remainder of the area there are a range of market and coastal towns which act as service and employment centres for their rural hinterlands, with the largest of these being centred on the Weymouth – Dorchester corridor.
- 1.2.7. Running through the south of the council area is the Weymouth to London Waterloo railway line which connects the towns of Weymouth, Dorchester and Wareham to the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole conurbation and on to the South East and London. In the north of the council area is the Exeter to London Waterloo railway line which connects the towns of Sherborne and Gillingham with Yeovil and Salisbury. In addition, the Heart of Wessex line connects Weymouth to Yeovil and on to Bristol via a number of smaller villages, and the Swanage Railway branch line connects Swanage and Corfe Castle to the main line at Wareham, though it does not currently support regular services.
- 1.2.8. The main east – west road routes through the southern area are via the A31/A35 which is part of the Strategic Road Network. This route connects Lyme Regis and Bridport in the west via Dorchester to the BCP conurbation in the east. Whilst the A303 corridor clips the north of the county, north – south routes are often less direct and more challenging.
- 1.2.9. Aside from the tourism industry, the key economic sectors in Dorset are advanced engineering and manufacturing, including aerospace, defence, composite and marine technologies; agri-tech; and food and drink, with the area boasting a varied selection of locally produced victuals, including meat, fish, dairy and wine. The Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) area, which also covers the BCP conurbation, boasts one of the fastest growing creative and digital hubs in Europe and is a rapidly growing centre for financial services. The financial services sector is also the largest GVA (gross value added) earner for Dorset³. Workforce retention is however a big issue for the council area with many school leavers moving away to pursue careers elsewhere or to go to university due to the lack of local higher and further education facilities. Also many people move into the area to retire. These trends are expected to continue, exacerbating current issues which businesses face in recruiting and retaining suitable employees.

³ <https://www.dorsetlep.co.uk/dorsets-sectors>

1.3. Issues and challenges facing Dorset

Environmental issues

Climate change

- 1.3.1. Dorset Council has declared a climate and ecological emergency. The impacts of climate change are expected to be vast and irreversible, including hotter summers and wetter winters, with more frequent and extreme weather events bringing about increased flooding and droughts. Although the scale and details of predictions may change as more information comes forward and modelling becomes more effective, an average global temperature rise of at least two degrees centigrade is predicted by around 2040 unless the commitments made in the 2015 Paris Agreement are fully implemented. This projection is expected to pose knock on impacts on the natural environment and natural resources including water supply and biodiversity.
- 1.3.2. In order to prepare for inevitable climate change, Dorset must implement adaptation measures such as avoiding flood risk. Furthermore, as climate change is predominantly human induced, we must also mitigate against future climate change through lowering emissions of the greenhouse gases (GHGs) which cause the warming effect. The 2008 Climate Change Act commits the UK to reducing levels of GHGs to net zero by 2050 and Dorset has an important part to play in this. Annual GHG emissions were estimated in 2018 to be 43% below that of the 1990 baseline⁴, however there is still a long way to go before we reach net zero emissions.
- 1.3.3. The local plan facilitates both the adaption and mitigation of climate change and its implications in Dorset⁵ because it has the potential to influence sectors which currently produce significant GHG emissions. This includes the transport sector, which produces around 28% of net emissions, where the local plan can help reduce the need to travel through its role in managing the location of development. It can also encourage the use of public transport, support active transport through effective permeable and attractive urban design, and promote the provision of electric charging points for vehicles. The local plan also has a role to play in reducing emissions from the energy sector, which currently produces 23% of GHG emissions, by facilitating renewable energy developments. The local plan can reinforce sustainable building codes and standards to reduce emissions coming

⁴ <https://dorsetlnp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Climate-Change-Adaptation-Position-Paper1.pdf>

⁵ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/862887/2018_Final_greenhouse_gas_emissions_statistical_release.pdf

from new homes and commercial developments. It also has the potential to influence vital carbon sequestration through expanding the green infrastructure network, planting trees, and protecting trees and forests which act as important carbon sinks.

- 1.3.4. Dorset is particularly vulnerable to impacts of climate change due to its coastal location, with both rising sea levels and increasing storm frequency predicted to increase coastal erosion levels. Its high reliance on incomes from the agricultural and tourism sector, which are fragile to changes in climate, also put many of the population's livelihood at risk. The local plan will therefore sit alongside action plans and the work of many external stakeholders to both help mitigate climate change and increase the resilience of both Dorset's residents and its natural environment to climate change.

Fragile natural environment

- 1.3.5. Highly interrelated with climate change is the degradation of the natural environment and for this reason Dorset Council has declared a Climate and Ecological Emergency. Human influences are leading to exploitation of the natural environment through pollution, land degradation and recreation, which is leading to the decline of a variety of ecosystem services on which life depends.
- 1.3.6. Dorset has a range of landscapes, seascapes, habitats and sites that act as 'capital' for economic and social activity. Dorset residents place significant value on being able to access and enjoy the Dorset environment; Dorset's environmental economy has been calculated to be worth approximately £1.5 billion per annum, supporting 30,000 jobs and in total worth about 8%-10% of the area's overall economy each year⁶. Decline of our fragile natural environment will therefore lead to tensions in many regards and hence the plan has an important role to play in protecting it.
- 1.3.7. One of the local plan's priorities is to deliver sustainable development while protecting and enhancing Dorset's environment and this will be ensured throughout a variety of policies which aim to deliver environmental protection and enhancement. The plan also aims to conserve designated landscapes, including the Dorset and Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Key environmental constraints and designations have also been taken into account when developing the spatial strategy and will be followed through in all stages of site development from allocation to design, implementation and delivery. The local plan options document has been produced

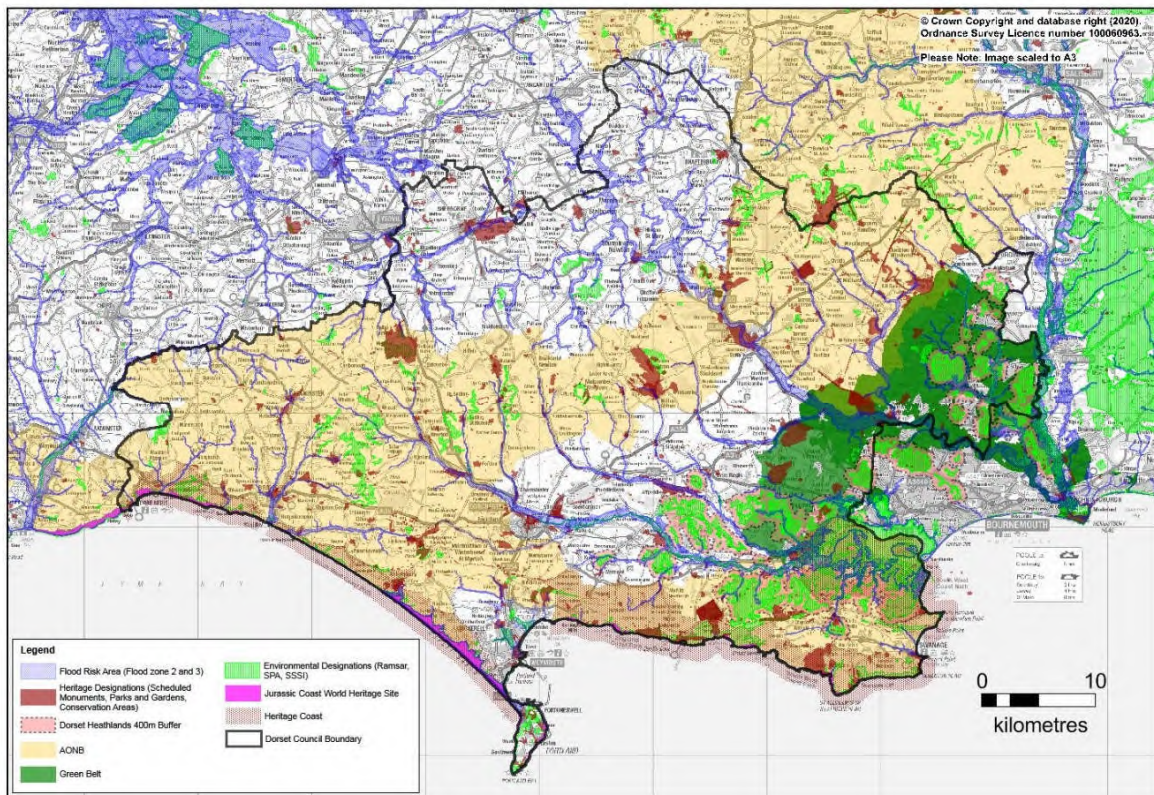
⁶ <https://jurassiccoast.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Dorsets-Environmental-Economy-Final-Report-Dec-2015.pdf>

in collaboration with various Dorset Council teams to ensure that the contributions that it can make to protecting and enhancing the natural environment are maximised in the context of sustainable development.

Coastal change and flooding

- 1.3.8. Dorset's striking coastline attracts an array of visitors annually, however coastal change such as erosion also poses dangers to residents and visitors alike. It is therefore important to get a balance between allowing Dorset's coastline to erode naturally and safeguarding homes and lives. Because coastal processes do not act in isolation, management of the coast in one location will have knock-on impacts further along the coast, and coastal management is therefore a strategic issue. This means that the approach in Dorset has to be developed with its neighbouring authorities including BCP and East Devon District Councils. Coastal defences are in place at key towns including at Swanage, Weymouth, West Bay (Bridport) and Lyme Regis. The remainder of the coast is likely to remain undefended over the lifetime of the local plan, allowing natural processes to take place.
- 1.3.9. Hand in hand with coastal erosion comes flooding, which can be caused by a variety of means including from watercourses, surface water and groundwater. Flooding can also be caused by or exacerbated by the coast. Both flooding and coastal erosion are interrelated to climate change through increased sea levels and the frequency and intensity of storms. The local plan has a role to play in managing flood risk, by ensuring new residential development does not take place in areas at risk of flooding, and that building in one area does not increase flooding risk elsewhere. Similarly, in coastal regions susceptible to erosion, the council will restrict development to manage risk.
- 1.3.10. Figure 1.2 shows the key environmental constraints across the Dorset Council area that have been taken into account during the production of this draft local plan.

Figure 1.2: The Dorset Council area and its main environmental constraints



Social issues

Housing need

- 1.3.11. House prices in Dorset are relatively high compared with much of the country. In March 2020 the average house price in Dorset was £285,000, compared to £248,000 for England as a whole⁷. These high house prices, combined with a reliance on low-wage economic sectors such as tourism and agriculture, create a high level of affordable housing need. They also contribute to the out-migration of younger people which, combined with an in-migration of older people, results in an ageing population and often makes it difficult for local people to buy or rent houses locally. From 2007-2017 Dorset saw a net loss of 15-19 year olds to other parts of the UK, with net gains mostly among those aged 30+; however the highest gain was in those aged over 65⁸. Dorset therefore has an ageing workforce which, coupled with high house prices, often makes it difficult for employers to recruit.

⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-house-price-index-england-march-2020/uk-house-price-index-england-march-2020>

⁸ <https://theartsdevelopmentcompany.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/State-of-Dorset-2019-Compilation-document.pdf>

- 1.3.12. The relatively high proportion of second homes in some parts of the area, including within the 'chocolate box' villages of the Isle of Purbeck and sporadic locations along the coast, exacerbates these affordability issues. Due to Dorset's fragile environment there is the need to balance housing provision with safeguarding the natural environment. This high quality environment that is so important for Dorset's economy further constrains opportunities for delivering the much needed housing.
- 1.3.13. Working with town and parish councils and the development industry, Dorset Council will aim to deliver a wide variety of homes in suitable locations to meet the needs of the area.

Transport and access issues

- 1.3.14. There are no motorways within the Dorset Council area but direct rail links to London, Salisbury and Bristol. The rural nature of much of Dorset poses some access issues with much of the area, especially in the north and west, having a lack of public transport services or rail connections. This leads to a high reliance on car travel which presents barriers to sustainable development, education and employment opportunities, alongside access to healthcare and other services. The former East Dorset District has the highest number of workers that commute by car or van in England and Wales at 79.5%. Many of Dorset's rural areas are⁹ relatively inaccessible with social isolation and loneliness significant issues for many in rural Dorset¹⁰.
- 1.3.15. The local plan's approach to transport comes hand in hand with its spatial strategy for development. Local and national policy aim to locate housing in sustainable locations. Within the context of Dorset's housing need, sustainable locations include settlements that are situated within 15 minutes' drive or 30 minutes' public transport travel time to larger towns. Providing homes in close proximity to these larger towns where employment and services are generally located, will enable residents to travel shorter distances to meet their everyday needs.

Health and wellbeing

- 1.3.16. The UK is in the midst of a health crisis, with rates of poor physical and mental health, obesity and many related diseases all increasing. High rates of obesity

⁹ <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s12061-016-9196-0>

¹⁰

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/784685/future_of_mobility_access.pdf

alone are estimated to cost the NHS and wider society £27 billion annually through lost productivity and sick days¹¹. Health inequalities are also increasing. Poor health is more prevalent among people on lower incomes, in areas of deprivation and where there is limited access to facilities that benefit health, and this affects much of Dorset.

- 1.3.17. As well as ensuring provision of adequate health services, many other factors have impacts on people's mental and physical health. These wider determinants of health include financial security, housing safety, employment and the environment in which people live. Planning therefore has a large role to play in improving health outcomes and reducing health inequalities.
- 1.3.18. The policies in the local plan will play an important role in enabling healthy lifestyles. This can be achieved, for example, through delivery of safe, well-lit and attractive walking and cycling routes connecting new developments to local services and facilities. Provision of green infrastructure to enable easy access to the natural environment and reducing reliance on car-based travel through provision of good quality walking and cycling routes will also be important. The local plan is being developed in collaboration with Public Health Dorset to ensure that it exploits opportunities for improving health outcomes.

Ageing population

- 1.3.19. Dorset has an older population when compared to England as a whole, with an average age of just under 47 compared with just over 40 for England. In Dorset 29% of the population are aged 65 or over, compared with the national average of 18%. One in three of the population in the east of the area is over 65. Corresponding with the national trends, the population of over 65s is expected to grow at 1.5% annually alongside a marginal decline in working population¹². The impacts of this are vast and will not only be felt through a strain on Dorset's healthcare services but also as an economic impact as there will be a smaller workforce for employers to recruit from. This will also have implications for housing supply and tenures, as older generations tend to live in under-occupied homes, either from preference or because they require specially designed or adaptable dwellings.
- 1.3.20. Research shows that 1 in 5 households across Dorset are also vulnerable to social isolation and loneliness. This is partly due to the rural nature of the area and poor transport links, but these issues are also apparent in many of Dorset's better

¹¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-matters-obesity-and-the-food-environment/health-matters-obesity-and-the-food-environment--2#:~:text=The%20overall%20cost%20of%20obesity,%C2%A349.9%20billion%20per%20year.>

¹² <https://apps.geowessex.com/insights/Topics/Topic/Population>

connected towns, showing a more complex set of factors than just a lack of transport links¹³

- 1.3.21. The local plan has a role to play in helping to tackle social isolation and loneliness. The provision of appropriate housing that is adaptable and meets the needs of residents will help address these issues alongside: wider health interventions that encourage people to keep fit and healthy, including information services, such as 'Live Well Dorset'¹⁴, which can be more cost effective than clinical interventions; improvements in accessible green spaces and active travel interventions to keep residents physically active; and the provision of community infrastructure to meet local needs.

Economic issues

Employment

- 1.3.22. Dorset's unemployment rate in 2019 was 2.5%, compared with 4.2% in the BCP conurbation and 3.8% over England as a whole. Dorset's unemployment rate is comparatively low, nevertheless there are pockets with higher rates throughout the area. A relatively high proportion of the workforce is employed in lower-skilled occupations like farming and tourism, associated with the rural and coastal nature of the area. Wages are consequently below the regional average.

Figure 1.3: Comparison of average salaries in Dorset, BCP, and England

	Dorset	BCP	England
Average Salary	£33.0k	£36.5k	£37.4k

- 1.3.23. Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership data estimates gross value added (GVA) at £28.20 per hour in the county of Dorset compared with £32.58 in the UK. This results in an output gap of £2.5 billion¹⁵. Investment in skills and training as well as infrastructure and transport is a major factor in creating a highly employable, higher-skilled local population.
- 1.3.24. The balance of jobs and housing varies across Dorset. Some towns such as Bridport have relatively balanced levels of jobs and housing whereas other towns, most notably Weymouth and Dorchester have a significant imbalance. Weymouth has a significant amount of outward commuting to Dorchester for jobs, and Dorchester relies on a much wider area for its workforce. Many Portlanders have had to look

¹³ <https://moderngov.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/Data/252/201809051000/Agenda/Social%20Isolation%20V2.2.pdf>

¹⁴ <https://www.livewelldorset.co.uk/>

¹⁵ <https://www.dorsetlep.co.uk/invest-in-dorset>

for job opportunities on the mainland and some of the employment opportunities created on the island do not match the skills of the local workforce. In the eastern part of the council area, there is a net out-migration from the area with a pull to the BCP conurbation for work. In Sherborne there is an inward flow of lesser-skilled workers who cannot afford the local house prices and an outward flow of the higher-skilled workforce to jobs elsewhere outside the town.

- 1.3.25. Dorset Innovation Park at Winfrith, Dorset's Enterprise Zone, is an advanced engineering cluster of excellence for the South West, building on strengths in the marine, defence and energy sectors. It offers a secure facility and the presence of two world leaders in defence technology – Atlas Elektronik and QinetiQ.

Broadband infrastructure

- 1.3.26. Much of Dorset, especially in the north and west, is very rural and can feel disconnected to the wider area. With working practices changing and the world becoming ever more digitised, a fast connection to the internet is important. Superfast Dorset is working to ensure that all of Dorset has access to superfast broadband and around 90% of Dorset's households currently have a superfast connection. The next step for Dorset is to upgrade to ultrafast broadband.
- 1.3.27. The local plan will seek to ensure that all new homes come with full fibre broadband to each premises and work alongside the Digital Infrastructure Strategy with the aim of transforming Dorset into a digital economy and community. This will be achieved through the creation of world-class, future-proof digital connectivity, thereby giving opportunities to create new products and open access to new markets and business opportunities.

Town centres

- 1.3.28. Due to changing population structures, national trends, and COVID-19, many facilities within town and local centres are struggling. The provision and retention of accessible local facilities for the general public within town and local centres are key to reducing social isolation and providing access to everyday facilities whilst minimising the need to travel longer distances. Continued support for these facilities and town centres is an important element of the local plan.
- 1.3.29. A significant recent change from central government has been the introduction of the new Enterprise (E) Use Class which merges the previous town centre use classes (such as shops, financial and professional services, restaurants, cafes, gyms, offices etc.) into one. This allows greater flexibility for these types of premises to change between uses without requiring planning consent.
- 1.3.30. A further change to the use classes regulations has been the expansion of uses that fall under the category of 'sui generis' which now includes pubs/drinking establishments, hot food takeaways, cinemas, concert venues and bingo and

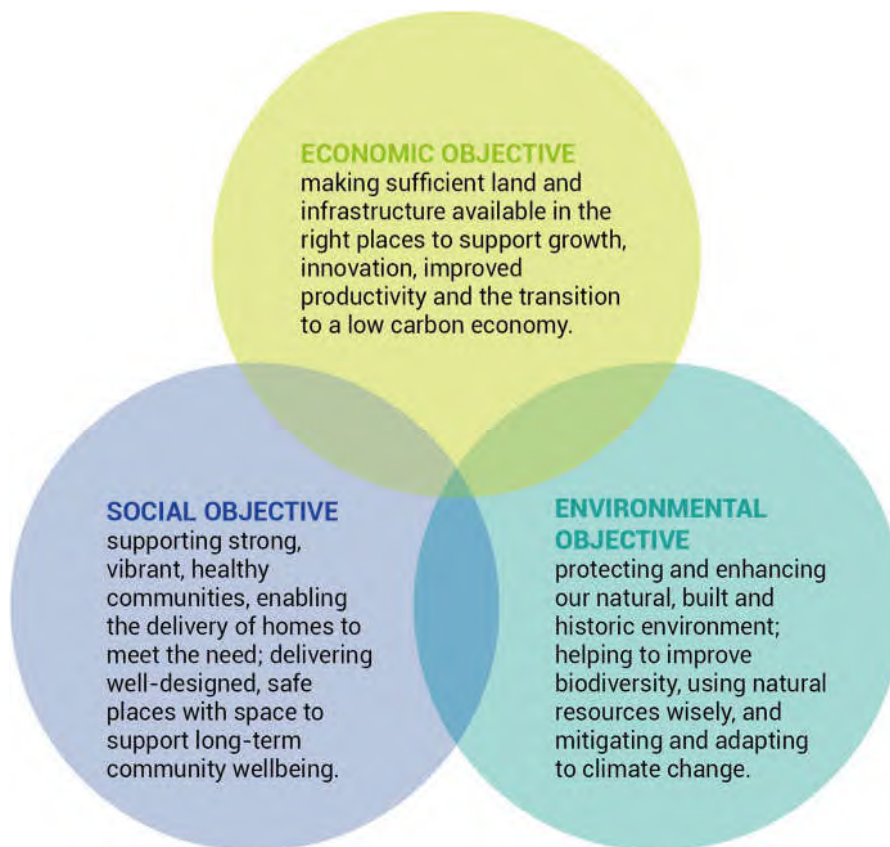
dance halls. Any change of use to one of these uses will now require planning consent. This allows for more control over both the distribution of these uses and the amenity and health implications that come with some of them.

2. The strategy for sustainable growth

2.1. Introduction

- 2.1.1. The Dorset Council Local Plan's overarching objective is to contribute to achieving sustainable development, which is generally accepted as being 'development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'.
- 2.1.2. In planning terms sustainable development has three objectives which need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways – an Economic Objective, a Social Objective and an Environmental Objective.

Figure 2.1: Sustainable Development Objectives



- 2.1.3. Using the Dorset Council Local Plan in planning decisions will influence the future patterns of development to help make Dorset more sustainable. This chapter sets out the strategic approach that will enable sustainable growth to meet the needs of Dorset to 2038. It will outline the levels of housing, economic and other development that are to be accommodated. It seeks to promote sustainable patterns of development as embodied within the Dorset Council Local Plan's Vision and to help address the Strategic Priorities.

Vision and strategic priorities

- 2.1.4. The Dorset Council Local Plan Vision reflects the environmental quality of the area and builds on the way that the pattern and hierarchy of settlements in Dorset currently function. The opportunities for growth at the market and coastal towns are recognised alongside those of the main centres of economic activity of South East Dorset and the Dorchester to Weymouth corridor. The Vision also recognises the needs of the more rural areas outside these centres.

Vision

Dorset will be a great place to live, work and visit.

The environmental quality of the area – its rural landscapes, its biodiversity, its rich heritage, its coast and its picturesque towns and villages – is what makes Dorset a special place to live, work and visit. The settlements in Dorset all have their own distinct character – from rural market towns to coastal towns; from small hamlets to the larger villages; and those settlements on the edge of the South East Dorset conurbation – and all perform important functions that contribute to Dorset’s economy and wellbeing.

By 2038 this will be improved with high quality developments that bring the homes, jobs and supporting infrastructure that Dorset needs. We will reduce our carbon footprint and seek to enhance our natural environment.

The main centres for economic activity of south east Dorset and the Dorchester to Weymouth corridor will be enhanced. Excellent employment opportunities will exist at the towns with sustainable travel opportunities provided to them from the surrounding villages.

The towns across the area will act as hubs for their rural hinterlands providing many of the services that people need on a frequent basis.

The beauty of the rural area will be maintained and enhanced where opportunities arise. The area’s rich heritage, hedgerows, trees and the character of the landscape will be respected where development takes place. The large areas of significance for biodiversity will be protected and where opportunities arise, real enhancements to the natural environment will be realised.

- 2.1.5. Drawing inspiration from the Dorset Council Plan¹, the Strategic Priorities set out the aims that the Local Plan will seek to achieve through its use in development decisions. Delivery of the strategic priorities will involve working alongside a number of partner organisations including environmental protection

¹ The Dorset Council Plan sets out the Council’s ambitions for the next 4 years.

<https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/your-council/about-your-council/dorset-council-plan/dorset-council-plan.aspx>

organisations, registered social landlords, infrastructure providers and the development industry.

Strategic priorities

Climate and ecological emergency
<p>We will take actions to minimise the impact of climate change, including minimising flood risk, and to reduce the impact on the climate, by locating and designing developments to reduce distances travelled and minimise energy use. We will support renewable energy developments appropriate to Dorset.</p> <p>We will ensure that all new development incorporates ecological net gain to help deliver the aspiration to reverse the current decline in protected species and habitats.</p>
<p><u>How the Local Plan will meet this priority:</u> Through managing where and how development takes place, the Local Plan can minimise the distance travelled and focus travel onto active travel and public transport options. Measures will be required to mitigate any impact on important ecological sites.</p> <p>The impacts of climate change can be reduced by avoiding areas at risk of flooding and building green infrastructure (including space for biodiversity) into developments.</p>
Economic growth
<p>We will deliver sustainable economic growth and improved infrastructure across the whole of Dorset, increasing productivity and the number of high quality jobs, and creating great places to live, work and visit.</p>
<p><u>How the Local Plan will meet this priority:</u> The Local Plan can help to deliver economic growth by enabling sustainable economic development in the right locations and providing homes for those who work in the area. Infrastructure provision to meet the area's needs is important to facilitating this growth. Around 21,000 new jobs are to be created across the area over the lifetime of this Plan.</p>
Unique environment
<p>We will protect and enhance Dorset's unique environment by delivering sustainable development which respects the area's biodiversity and increases the natural capital value of these assets, in recognition of the benefits this will bring to the economy and to our wellbeing.</p>
<p><u>How the Local Plan will meet this priority:</u> The Local Plan will enable development in the most appropriate locations whilst also minimising the impact of population growth and economic activity on Dorset's environment, and bringing about net gains in biodiversity.</p>
Suitable housing
<p>We will work with the development industry, town and parish councils, registered housing providers, community land trusts and local housing partners to deliver housing,</p>

including affordable housing, that meets the needs of Dorset. We want to enable those who grow up in Dorset to stay in Dorset.

How the Local Plan will meet this priority: Housing is one of the key outputs of the Local Plan. Housing, including affordable housing, will be provided across the plan area to meet the needs of those who wish to live and work in the area. Around 30,000 new homes will be provided over the lifetime of this plan, of a range of types, sizes and tenures to meet Dorset's diverse needs.

Strong, healthy communities

We will work to build and maintain strong communities where people get the best start and lead fulfilling lives.

How the Local Plan will meet this priority: The Local Plan will enable communities to thrive by providing community infrastructure and green space giving opportunities for people to meet and participate in their community.

Staying safe and well

We will work to enable a good quality of life for our residents through high quality, well designed and safe developments, with access to local greenspace for health and wellbeing.

How the Local Plan will meet this priority: Through town centre regeneration and by protecting town centres, the Local Plan will enhance people's quality of life. Healthy lifestyles will be promoted through the way development is designed, by building in safe and convenient routes for active travel, recreational opportunities and access to green space.

Q: Vision and strategic priorities?

1: Do you have any comments on the Vision and Strategic Priorities?

2.2. The need for housing and employment land in Dorset

2.2.1. The level of housing growth that needs to be accommodated in Dorset has been derived from the Government's 'standard method', whilst also taking account of unmet need from neighbouring areas. The requirement for employment land in Dorset has been derived from a workspace strategy.

- 2.2.2. The Government has recently proposed some changes to the 'standard methodology' which would alter the number of homes that are required across Dorset. Once changes have been made to the standard method, they will be reflected through subsequent iterations of the plan and prior to the publication stage.

The housing requirement for Dorset

- 2.2.3. National policy states that strategic policy-making authorities should establish a 'housing requirement figure' for their whole area, which shows the extent to which their identified housing need (and any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas) can be met over the plan period. Councils are expected to identify a supply of specific, developable sites or broad locations for growth for at least a ten-year period, and preferably for fifteen years. This local plan will cover the period from 2021 to 2038 including a fifteen-year period from adoption, which is anticipated in 2023.
- 2.2.4. The standard method in national planning guidance (calculated in June 2020) gives an uncapped figure for the 'local housing need' in Dorset of 1,793 net additional dwellings per annum (dpa). Over a 17-year period that equates to 30,481 dwellings in total.
- 2.2.5. National policy also states that in addition to the 'local housing need' figure, any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas should be taken into account in establishing the amount of housing to be planned for. It is anticipated that East Devon, South Somerset and Wiltshire will be able to meet their own housing needs, but there may be a level of unmet need (as yet unquantified) from Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council, New Forest District Council and / or New Forest National Park Authority.
- 2.2.6. In due course, the local housing need figure for Dorset of 30,481 dwellings will need to be added to a figure for unmet need from neighbouring areas (as yet unknown) to give an overall 'housing requirement figure' for Dorset. However, several changes to the way housing targets are calculated for local plans have been proposed by the Government. These changes have not yet been confirmed but may ultimately result in a binding target for each local authority and the removal of the requirement to meet unmet need from neighbouring areas.
- 2.2.7. In preparing this draft local plan, Dorset Council has examined a range of options to meet the figure for local housing need in Dorset in a sustainable way. Through this document, the council has identified sufficient land to meet more than the current requirement. This not only gives flexibility to respond to the Government's proposed changes to the 'standard method' for calculating housing numbers but also enables a contingency should the delivery of housing not come forward as expected. In addition, the identified supply will enable decisions to be made in selecting the most appropriate sites to meet the future housing need.
- 2.2.8. To reflect this approach, Policy DEV1 identifies a minimum level of housing provision and a minimum average annual rate of housing development that will need to be delivered. In the absence of any unmet need, these figures would be used for monitoring and calculating the five-year housing land supply. However,

these minimum figures may be increased, should any unmet need from adjoining areas be identified.

The need for employment land in Dorset

- 2.2.9. Economic forecasts suggest that around 21,000 new FTE (full time equivalent) jobs could be generated across the local plan area between 2018 and 2038. This gives rise to a need for between 131 and 151 hectares of employment land overall.
- 2.2.10. Prior to the publication stage of the Dorset Council Local Plan, there will be a need to refresh the data used to inform the economic forecasts to take into account the economic impact of Brexit, the Covid-19 pandemic, and recent changes to planning rules.

DEV1: The housing requirement and the need for employment land in Dorset

In the period 2021 to 2038 provision is made for:

- I. a deliverable supply of housing land to accommodate a minimum of 30,481 dwellings, which will be delivered at a minimum average annual rate of 1,793 dwellings per annum; and
- II. a minimum of 131 hectares of employment land.

Q: The housing requirement and the need for employment land in Dorset?

- 1: Do you agree with the suggested approach and what it is trying to achieve?
- 2: Do you agree with the suggested wording?
- 3: How could the paragraph / policy / section / chapter be amended to reflect your concerns?

2.3. Developing the spatial strategy for growth in Dorset

Achieving sustainable development

- 2.3.1. The spatial strategy for growth in Dorset has been developed by pursuing the overarching economic, social and environmental objectives of achieving

sustainable development in mutually supportive ways. In particular, the strategy has been developed having regard to the following factors:

- the way the housing markets and economy differ and interact across the area;
- the supply of developable sites for housing, employment and other uses;
- the role played by the area's existing settlements;
- environmental constraints, both at the strategic and local (town or village) level, including the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), Habitats Sites and sites of special scientific interest (SSSI), the heritage coast, heritage assets and areas at risk of flooding or coastal change;
- the need to create a sustainable pattern of future growth and reduce the distance people need to travel, including considering sustainable patterns of growth when reviewing Green Belt boundaries; and
- the need to ensure that remaining Green Belt land meets the five purposes set out in national policy and that land within the Green Belt remains permanently open.

2.3.2. These factors have been taken into account in shaping the development strategy and in identifying the most appropriate locations for development across the area.

The functional economic and housing market areas

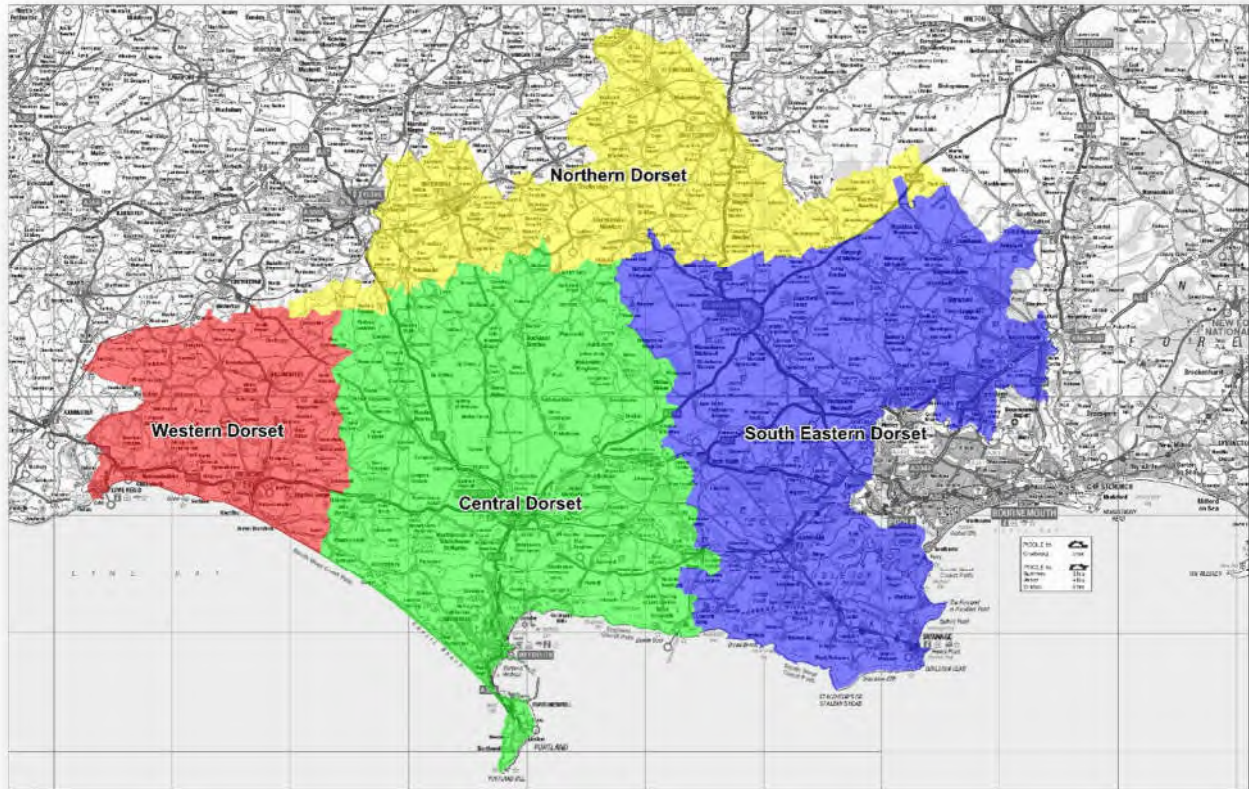
2.3.3. Successive studies have shown that there are two main housing market areas (HMAs) in Dorset, namely:

- the Bournemouth – Poole HMA, centred on the conurbation and extending into eastern Dorset and the western part of the New Forest; and
- the Dorchester – Weymouth HMA, covering much of western Dorset.

2.3.4. When looking at the previously identified housing market areas in a more fine-grained way, and considering the functional economic links within and between areas, studies have shown that there are four functional areas covering Dorset. The northern part of Dorset is influenced by the Yeovil and Salisbury HMAs and that the more strategic A303 Corridor exerts a wider economic influence across the northern part of Dorset. In the far west of Dorset studies also indicate a smaller, relatively self-contained HMA based on the Bridport / Lyme Regis / Beaminster area. The four broad Functional Housing and Economic Areas or functional areas, in Dorset are represented in Figure 2.2.

Section 2: Development strategy

Figure 2.2: Representation of the functional housing and economic areas in Dorset © Crown copyright and database rights 2020 OS 0100060963



Supply of developable housing sites

- 2.3.5. The housing needs of an area can only be met from a supply of sites that are available and suitable for development and that are likely to be economically viable. To help gain a clear understanding of this, the council has produced a Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment which has considered available opportunities for development. The council has also positively sought other opportunities to meet development needs by identifying potential sites from a range of other sources, including adopted and emerging local plans covering the former districts in Dorset; Council-owned land; neighbourhood plans; the development management process; and past experience of 'windfall' development.
- 2.3.6. In developing the spatial strategy, the council has sought to determine which of the available sites are most suitable to meet future development needs, having regard to the other factors outlined above. All the sites that will contribute to meeting development needs are considered to be in a suitable location for the development envisaged with a reasonable prospect of becoming available and being viably developed by 2038, or sooner.
- 2.3.7. There are a number of different sources of 'housing supply' that will meet the housing requirement over the period 2021 to 2038. These include completions;

extant consents; allocations; unconsented major sites; neighbourhood plan sites; rural exception sites and a windfall allowance.

- 2.3.8. The spatial strategy focuses on allocations, but Section 3.5 provides a definition for each of these sources and describes the contribution each one will make to meeting development needs. These different sources of housing supply will also provide the basis for the monitoring of delivery in future years.

The role of existing settlements

- 2.3.9. The role played by existing settlements is an important consideration in developing a spatial strategy for future growth in Dorset. The role of each settlement reflects:
- its influence on housing and economic markets;
 - its place in the settlement hierarchy within each housing and economic market;
 - its function (for example, as a market town or a seaside resort); and
 - any associated economic / social issues, such as an imbalance between housing and jobs or a lack of affordable housing.

Settlement hierarchy

- 2.3.10. Within the context of the functional housing / economic areas, a settlement hierarchy for Dorset has been derived from the review of the hierarchies in existing adopted local plans for the former Boroughs and Districts and detailed consideration of the function of each settlement. Factors that have been considered in developing the hierarchy include the population of the settlement, the number of everyday facilities (schools, shops etc.) in each settlement, the travel time to a higher order town by public transport and by car, and the availability of superfast broadband at each settlement.
- 2.3.11. The first two tiers of the settlement hierarchy are:
- **Tier 1 - Large built-up areas:** comprising in eastern Dorset, the main built-up area of the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole conurbation within the inner boundary of the South East Dorset Green Belt; and in western Dorset, the county town of Dorchester and the coastal resort of Weymouth, which is the largest urban area in rural Dorset; and
 - **Tier 2 - Towns and other main settlements:** comprising market and coastal towns across Dorset and 'other main settlements' mostly in eastern Dorset and inset from the Green Belt, close to the main built up area of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole.
- 2.3.12. The top two tiers of the settlement hierarchy, arranged in the relevant Functional Areas, are set out in Figure 2.3.

Figure 2.3: Tiers 1 and 2 of the settlement hierarchy in Dorset arranged by Functional Area

Tier 1: Large built-up areas

Section 2: Development strategy

South Eastern Dorset Functional Area	Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole conurbation (including the contiguous settlements of Upton and Corfe Mullen which are in Dorset)	
Central Dorset Functional Area	Dorchester	Weymouth (including Littlemoor)
Tier 2: Towns and other main settlements		
South Eastern Dorset Functional Area	Blandford	Wimborne Minster and Colehill
	Ferndown and West Parley	Verwood
	St Leonards and St Ives	West Moors
	Swanage	Wareham
Central Dorset Functional Area	Chickerell	Portland Settlements: Castletown; Chiswell; Easton; Fortuneswell; Grove; Southwell; Wakeham; and Weston
Northern Dorset Functional Area	Gillingham	Sturminster Newton
	Shaftesbury	Stalbridge
	Sherborne	
Western Dorset Functional Area	Beaminster	Lyme Regis
	Bridport	

2.3.13. The third and fourth tiers in the hierarchy are:

- **Tier 3 – Villages with ‘Local Plan Development Boundaries’ or villages excluded from (inset within) the Green Belt.** These are typically larger villages which have a population of 500 or more and at least some facilities enabling some day-to-day needs to be met locally; and
- **Tier 4 – Villages without ‘Local Plan Development Boundaries’ or villages included within (washed over by) the Green Belt.** These are typically smaller villages which have a population of less than 500 and few facilities. This tier includes villages with a ‘neighbourhood plan development boundary’.

2.3.14. The villages that fall within Tier 3 and which will therefore have Local Plan Development Boundaries are listed in Figure 2.4. These villages are considered appropriate locations for small-scale infilling to meet their local needs.

Figure 2.4: Tier 3: the larger, more sustainable villages arranged by Functional Area

Section 2: Development strategy

South Eastern Dorset Functional Area	Central Dorset Functional Area	Northern Dorset Functional Area	Western Dorset Functional Area
Aldersholt	Broadmayne/ West Knighton	Bradford Abbas	Burton Bradstock
Bere Regis	Cerne Abbas	Bourton	Broadwindsor
Bovington	Charlton Down	Child Okeford	Charmouth
Charlton Marshall	Charminster	Fontmell Magna	Mosterton
Corfe Castle	Crossways / Moreton Station	Hazelbury Bryan	Salway Ash
Cranborne	Maiden Newton / Higher Frome	Iwerne Minster	
Harmans Cross	Vauchurch	Marnhull	
Langton Matravers	Milborne St Andrew	Motcombe	
Lytchett Matravers	Milton Abbas	Okeford Fitzpaine	
Lytchett Minster	Piddletrenthide	Shillingstone	
Pimperne	Portesham	Stourpaine	
Sandford	Puddletown	Thornford	
Sixpenny Handley	Winterborne Stickland	Yetminster	
Stoborough	Winterbourne Abbas / Winterbourne Steepleton		
Sturminster Marshall			
Three Legged Cross			
West Lulworth			
Winterborne Kingston			
Winterborne Whitechurch			
Wool / East Burton			

Main settlements: their function and associated economic / social issues

- 2.3.15. How each of the large built-up areas, towns and other main settlements in the four housing / economic areas in Dorset function is described in the town chapters, which also provide a brief overview of the main issues associated with each settlement.
- 2.3.16. Issues that are common to many settlements include:
- an elderly and increasingly ageing population;
 - a shortage of affordable housing;
 - limited facilities and / or infrastructure; and

- out-commuting, principally as a result of limited employment opportunities, although in a few settlements, including Dorchester (where there are far more jobs than economically active residents), in-commuting is an issue.

2.4. The need to create a sustainable pattern of growth

- 2.4.1. National planning policy establishes that strategic policies should set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and quality of development in an area. The planning system should also actively manage patterns of growth in support of sustainable transport objectives.
- 2.4.2. In the South Eastern Dorset functional area the spatial strategy has been developed having regard to national planning policy on how 'all other reasonable options' for accommodating growth should be fully examined before considering changes to Green Belt boundaries. Many of the principles that apply in areas covered by Green Belts, such as making as much use as possible of suitable brownfield sites and underutilised land, have also been applied in developing the spatial strategies for the other functional areas in Dorset.
- 2.4.3. As part of looking at locations beyond the Green Belt boundary, Dorset Council is working to examine the scope for new or significantly expanded settlements to help deliver the longer term growth needs of Dorset having regard for the need to promote sustainable patterns of development. This work will examine opportunities across Dorset but it will take time before these start to deliver homes and employment. For this reason, to meet the shorter term growth needs of Dorset, allocations are proposed adjacent to existing settlements along with the significant expansion of the larger villages of Crossways / Moreton Station, Sturminster Marshall and Wool. In addition, the expansion of Alderholt could offer a further option if sufficient critical mass of facilities could be provided to create a larger self-contained settlement.

Developing the spatial strategy in the South Eastern Dorset functional area

- 2.4.4. Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council and Dorset Council have produced brownfield land registers. Both authorities have also undertaken strategic housing and employment land availability assessments. This has allowed us to understand how much development can be accommodated on brownfield and other underutilised sites.
- 2.4.5. Both councils have also considered the scope for higher densities in town centres and at other locations well served by public transport. Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council is considering the allocation of a number of town centre sites in their emerging local plan.
- 2.4.6. This work has also helped us consider the consequences of growth at urban areas inside the Green Belt boundary (i.e. within the built-up area of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole); at other towns and villages within the Green Belt (both in Dorset and Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council areas); and at locations beyond the Green Belt boundary (in the Dorset Council area).

- 2.4.7. Three towns are in the South Eastern Dorset functional area beyond the Green Belt. These are Blandford, Swanage and Wareham. While they each have key environmental constraints, we believe they also have options for growth. These options are discussed in detail in the respective town chapters.
- 2.4.8. Bere Regis has a neighbourhood plan which was made in June 2019. This proposes modest expansion at the village.
- 2.4.9. While the options above will meet a significant proportion of the identified housing needs, they will not meet all the needs. A further option is to amend the Green Belt boundary. National policy requires us to fully examine all other reasonable options before this can be justified. Having examined all the other reasonable options, we feel that changes to the Green Belt can be justified. This has been guided by a Green Belt Review and is discussed in more detail in Section 4 and Chapter 7: the South Eastern Dorset functional area section of this plan.

Developing spatial strategies for the other functional areas

- 2.4.10. We have used the brownfield land register and strategic housing and employment land availability assessment to help understand how much development can be accommodated on brownfield sites and underutilised land in the other three functional housing and economic areas.
- 2.4.11. These areas are not constrained by Green Belt. We have therefore considered the spatial options for greenfield development in these areas by having regard to:
- the potential to concentrate growth at the towns and larger settlements where communities, jobs and facilities already exist and to address the social, environmental and economic issues associated with these settlements;
 - at the towns and larger settlements, the scope to locate new development where it would be (or could be made) accessible and where there is a choice of transport modes; and at villages and smaller settlements, their scope to act as hubs providing day-to-day services to rural hinterlands;
 - the need to protect environmental areas and assets of particular importance and the need to ensure that development is sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting (as discussed in the landscape and heritage studies for Dorset).

- 2.4.12. Modest expansion is also proposed at Charminster; recognising its proximity to Dorchester and at Puddletown; reflecting the proposals in the village's neighbourhood plan.

Q: Spatial strategy and settlement hierarchy

- 1: Do the boundaries of the four functional areas reflect how the area's housing markets and economy function?
- 2: Is the distribution of housing between and within the functional areas appropriate?
- 3: Do you agree with the proposed hierarchy of settlements?
- 4: Do you agree that there is a need to amend the green belt to enable development?

2.5. Green Belt review

- 2.5.1. As noted above, we consider that due to exceptional circumstances and the lack of other reasonable options, changes to the Green Belt are justified. An assessment of the Green Belt has been undertaken which takes account of the contribution each parcel of land makes to the five purposes of Green Belts set out in national planning policy (NPPF para 134).
- 2.5.2. Our spatial strategy for development in the Green Belt takes account of the need to promote sustainable patterns of development. This includes having regard to the role and function of the settlement concerned and the environmental constraints in the area.

- 2.5.3. We propose to release land in Dorset from the Green Belt at locations where there are exceptional circumstances and development would contribute toward sustainable growth. These include on the edge of the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole conurbation (i.e. at Corfe Mullen and Upton); at towns and other main settlements; and at two of the 'larger villages' (i.e. Lytchett Matravers and Sturminster Marshall). Other releases of land from the Green Belt are likely to be proposed within the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council area; these will be set out in the BCP local plan.

Q: Green belt review

- 1: Do you agree with the suggested approach and what it is trying to achieve?
- 2: Do you agree with the suggested wording?
- 3: How could the paragraph / policy / section / chapter be amended to reflect your concerns?

2.6. The spatial strategy for Dorset

Introduction

- 2.6.1. This section sets out the spatial strategy for future growth in Dorset. It aims to meet all of Dorset's identified need for housing and employment land, together with some capacity to meet a proportion of the unmet need from the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole and New Forest areas should this need arise and subject to changes in national policy on this issue.
- 2.6.2. It includes policies for each of the four functional areas (Policies DEV2 to DEV5) setting out how growth is proposed to meet development needs at the large built-up areas, towns and other main settlements (i.e. the settlements in Tiers 1 and 2 of the settlement hierarchy) across Dorset. These policies also propose growth to meet development needs at a few of the more sustainable settlements in Tier 3 of the settlement hierarchy. This has been necessary in order to meet the identified needs for growth in the most sustainable way.
- 2.6.3. Proposals affecting the South East Dorset Green Belt, as defined on the Policies Map, will be determined against national planning policy on Green Belts.
- 2.6.4. This section also includes two policies that apply beyond the outer edge of the Green Belt relating to:

- development at villages in rural Dorset with defined local plan development boundaries or neighbourhood plan development boundaries (Policy DEV6); and
- development outside any defined development boundary in rural Dorset (Policy DEV7).

Bournemouth / Poole functional area

- 2.6.5. In the Dorset Council area, there is limited scope to change the Green Belt at the edge of the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole conurbation (i.e. at Corfe Mullen and Upton). There is, however, greater scope at some of the towns and other main settlements set within the Green Belt (notably at Ferndown / West Parley and Wimborne / Colehill). There is also some scope for growth adjacent to and within the built-up area of Wareham (as identified in the town's neighbourhood plan). Smaller scale releases of land from the Green Belt are considered appropriate at the 'main settlements' of Verwood and West Moors and at the 'larger villages' of Lytchett Matravers and Sturminster Marshall.
- 2.6.6. The scope for development at the towns beyond the Green Belt is limited, largely because they are constrained by Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. However, the Blandford + neighbourhood plan identifies further potential for growth to the north-east of Blandford. There is more limited scope at Swanage, which lies entirely within the Dorset AONB. There are also opportunities for significant growth at the larger villages of Crossways / Moreton Station and Wool. A further option of significant growth at Alderholt has been considered but this would need to lead to a significant improvement in the self-containment of the village to enable it to be considered sustainable development. Limited growth has also been identified at Bere Regis through the neighbourhood plan.
- 2.6.7. Policies DEV6 and DEV7 will apply to those parts of the South Eastern Dorset functional area that lie beyond the outer edge of the Green Belt.

DEV2: Growth in the south eastern Dorset functional area

In the parts of the south eastern Dorset functional area covered by the south east Dorset Green Belt, housing growth will be delivered:

- I. through windfall and infilling within existing built-up areas excluded from the Green Belt and through the small-scale allocation of land within the existing settlement of Wareham;
- II. on the edge of the main built-up area of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole, through Green Belt release at Corfe Mullen and Upton;
- III. on the edge of towns and other main settlements, through Green Belt release at Ferndown / West Parley and Wimborne / Colehill and more limited Green Belt release at Verwood, Wareham and West Moors;
- IV. on the edge of larger villages, through the small-scale Green Belt release at Lytchett Matravers and Sturminster Marshall.

In the parts of the south eastern Dorset functional area beyond the south east Dorset Green Belt, housing growth will be delivered:

- V. through windfall and infilling within existing settlements defined by local plan or neighbourhood plan development boundaries;
- VI. on the edge of towns and other main settlements, through the larger-scale allocation of land at Blandford; and the smaller scale allocation of land at Swanage;
- VII. on the edge of larger villages, through the larger-scale allocation of land at Crossways / Moreton Station and Wool, and the smaller-scale allocation of land at Bere Regis.

Across the south eastern Dorset functional area, employment growth will be delivered through:

- VIII. infilling and intensification within existing employment sites;
- IX. significant high quality development at Dorset Innovation Park and the use of undeveloped employment land at Blunts Farm and Bailie Gate;
- X. the release of green belt land to the southwest of Ferndown; and
- XI. sites identified at Blandford in the Neighbourhood Plan

Q: Growth in the south eastern Dorset functional area

- 1: Do you agree with the suggested approach and what it is trying to achieve?
- 2: Do you agree with the suggested wording?
- 3: How could the paragraph / policy / section / chapter be amended to reflect your concerns?

Central Dorset functional area

- 2.6.8. Proposals for significant growth at Poundbury (Dorchester) and at Weymouth have been carried forward from the adopted Joint Local Plan for the former West Dorset and Weymouth & Portland local authority areas. A major urban extension to the north of Dorchester was identified as a 'preferred option' in the review of the Joint Local Plan. Further work has been undertaken to refine this proposal, which is also taken forward in this local plan.
- 2.6.9. The adopted Joint Local Plan and emerging review also proposed significant growth at the town of Chickerell, which is taken forward in this local plan. Portland is covered by a neighbourhood plan and although there is scope for regeneration at the settlements on the island, where a number of sites have planning permission for development, further expansion is not considered appropriate.

- 2.6.10. The proposed major growth at Crossways / Moreton Station will help to meet the needs of the Central Dorset functional area, as well as the needs of the South Eastern Dorset functional area. Scope for some limited growth has also been identified at the larger villages of Charminster which is located close to Dorchester, and at Puddletown through the village's neighbourhood plan.

DEV3: Growth in the central Dorset functional area

In the central Dorset functional area housing growth will be delivered:

- I. at the county town of Dorchester, including through major urban extensions at Poundbury and North of Dorchester;
- II. at the major coastal resort of Weymouth, including through town centre regeneration and a major urban extension at Littlemoor;
- III. through regeneration within the settlements on Portland;
- IV. through the significant expansion of the town of Chickerell and the larger village of Crossways / Moreton Station and the smaller-scale expansion of the larger villages of Charminster and Puddletown; and
- V. through windfall and infilling within existing settlements defined by local plan or neighbourhood plan development boundaries.

Across the central Dorset functional area, employment growth will be delivered through:

- VI. infilling and intensification within existing employment sites;
- VII. further commercial development at Poundbury;
- VIII. the development of allocated sites at Littlemoor and Crossways / Moreton Station; and
- IX. substantial new development at North of Dorchester.

Q: Growth in the central Dorset functional area

- 1: Do you agree with the suggested approach and what it is trying to achieve?
- 2: Do you agree with the suggested wording?
- 3: How could the paragraph / policy / section / chapter be amended to reflect your concerns?

Northern Dorset functional area

- 2.6.11. The A303 Corridor functional area extends into Somerset and Wiltshire and includes the large built-up areas of Yeovil and Salisbury. The part of the A303 Corridor in Dorset, the Northern Dorset Functional Area, includes a number of market towns, with Gillingham and Sherborne being the largest. The major urban extension south of Gillingham is carried forward from the adopted North Dorset local plan. Further growth at Sherborne was proposed in the West Dorset and Weymouth & Portland Local Plan Review.
- 2.6.12. The town of Shaftesbury, where more modest expansion is proposed, is more constrained due to its hill-top location and proximity to the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB. There is also scope for some limited growth at the smaller market towns of Sturminster Newton (as identified in the neighbourhood plan) and Stalbridge.

DEV4: Growth in the northern Dorset functional area

In the northern Dorset functional area housing growth will be delivered:

- I. at the market towns of Gillingham and Sherborne, including through major urban extensions to the south of Gillingham and the west of Sherborne;
- II. through the more modest expansion of Shaftesbury and the smaller market towns of Sturminster Newton and Stalbridge; and
- III. through windfall and infilling within existing settlements defined by local plan or neighbourhood plan development boundaries.

Across the northern Dorset functional area, employment growth will be delivered through:

- IV. infilling and intensification within existing employment sites;
- V. the southern extension of Gillingham and existing undeveloped land at Shaftesbury and Sturminster Newton; and
- VI. development of land within the west of Sherborne development.

Q: Growth in the northern Dorset functional area

- 1: Do you agree with the suggested approach and what it is trying to achieve?
- 2: Do you agree with the suggested wording?
- 3: How could the paragraph / policy / section / chapter be amended to reflect your concerns?

Western Dorset functional area

- 2.6.13. The far western part of Dorset lies at some distance from the nearest large built-up areas of Dorchester / Weymouth, Exeter and Taunton. This small functional area lies almost entirely within the Dorset AONB. It is centred on the market town of Bridport, which together with adjoining parishes has its own neighbourhood plan. Much of the proposed urban extension to the west of the town at Vearse Farm already has planning permission.
- 2.6.14. There is limited scope for the further expansion of Beaminster and Lyme Regis both due to their location within the Dorset AONB and, in the case of Lyme Regis due to issues with coastal erosion and land instability.

DEV5: Growth in the western Dorset functional area

In the western Dorset functional area housing growth will be delivered:

- I. at the market town of Bridport, including through a major urban extension at Vearse Farm;
- II. through the small-scale expansion of the coastal town of Lyme Regis and the smaller market town of Beaminster; and
- III. through windfall and infilling within existing settlements defined by local plan or neighbourhood plan development boundaries.

Across the western Dorset functional area, employment growth will be delivered through:

- IV. infilling and intensification within existing employment sites;
- V. the Vearse Farm extension to Bridport; and
- VI. land at Beaminster

Q: Growth in the western Dorset functional area

- 1: Do you agree with the suggested approach and what it is trying to achieve?
- 2: Do you agree with the suggested wording?
- 3: How could the paragraph / policy / section / chapter be amended to reflect your concerns?

Development at villages in the south east dorset green belt

- 2.6.15. Policy DEV2 deals with proposals for development within existing built-up areas included those excluded from the Green Belt. However, some villages and other built-up areas lie within the Green Belt. Proposals for development in these locations, will be determined against national Green Belt policy.

Development at villages with development boundaries in rural dorset

- 2.6.16. Policies DEV2 and DEV3 have identified some 'larger villages' for expansion in order to meet Dorset's strategic development needs. In rural areas, these villages and any other larger village defined by a 'local plan development boundary' will be the main focus for development.
- 2.6.17. At the larger villages listed in Figure 2.4 that fall within Tier 3 of the settlement hierarchy, development should:
- take place within local plan development boundaries (other than where sites have been allocated in this local plan); and
 - contribute towards meeting 'local needs' which in this context means development to support a village / group of closely-related villages.
- 2.6.18. Development should also be 'at an appropriate scale to the size of a settlement', which should be determined taking the following factors into account:
- whether the proposals are of a strategic nature due to their size or the uses proposed;
 - whether the proposals would help communities to meet their local needs;
 - whether the proposals would change the character and setting of the settlement;
 - whether local infrastructure, including any necessary improvements, could accommodate or be supported by the proposed development; and
 - any cumulative impacts with other developments.
- 2.6.19. It is strategically important that local plan development boundaries are retained around the 'larger villages'. However, in preparing neighbourhood plans local communities can propose amendments to these boundaries to meet 'local needs', provided that the proposed amendments taken together would not promote less development than is set out in the local plan.
- 2.6.20. The smaller villages in rural Dorset have not been given local plan development boundaries and outside such boundaries development is 'strictly controlled' by Policy DEV7². However, development boundaries have already been introduced at some smaller villages in neighbourhood plans and further 'neighbourhood plan development boundaries' may be identified in the future.

² There are instances when development cannot be 'strictly' controlled primarily relating to the supply of deliverable housing sites and more detail is given in paragraphs 5.1.38 and 5.1.39.

- 2.6.21. In terms of the spatial strategy, the 'smaller villages' will not be the focus for growth in rural areas. Where a neighbourhood development boundary has been established at a smaller village, development within it should accord with the policies in the neighbourhood plan, which should have already taken account of 'local needs' and considered the scale of development that the village can accommodate.

DEV6: Development at villages with development boundaries in rural Dorset

In rural Dorset beyond the Green Belt and away from large built-up areas, towns and other main settlements, the 'larger villages' (in Tier 3 of the settlement hierarchy) will be the main focus for development.

Within local plan development boundaries at the 'larger villages' residential, employment and other development will normally be permitted provided that:

- I. it accords with any site-specific policies for the expansion of the village in this local plan; or
- II. it contributes to meeting the needs of the local area; and
- III. it is at an appropriate scale to the size of the settlement.

Within neighbourhood plan development boundaries, residential, employment and other development will only be permitted if it accords with the relevant policies in a neighbourhood plan.

Q: Development at villages with development boundaries in rural Dorset

- 1: Do you agree with the suggested approach and what it is trying to achieve?
- 2: Do you agree with the suggested wording?
- 3: How could the paragraph / policy / section / chapter be

Development outside local plan and neighbourhood plan development boundaries in rural Dorset

- 2.6.22. Beyond the Green Belt and outside local plan and neighbourhood plan development boundaries, development is 'strictly controlled' and restricted to the forms of development listed in Policy DEV7. For many forms of development there

are specific policies (such as Policy HOU57 relating to rural workers' housing) which also need to be applied to relevant development proposals.

- 2.6.23. When considering proposals for development outside development boundaries, regard should be had to the potential impacts on 'key' environmental constraints³, as well as on local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting

DEV7: Development outside local plan and neighbourhood plan development boundaries in rural Dorset

In rural Dorset beyond the South East Dorset Green Belt and outside any local plan or neighbourhood plan development boundary, development will be strictly controlled, having particular regard to environmental constraints and to the need for the protection of the countryside. Development will be restricted to:

- agriculture, forestry or horticulture or related enterprises such as farm diversification and equestrian development;
- alterations and extensions to existing buildings in line with their current lawful use, including their subdivision or replacement;
- new employment, tourism, educational / training, recreational or leisure-related development;
- rural exception affordable housing;
- rural workers' housing;
- the re-use of existing rural buildings;
- sites for gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople;
- the replacement of properties affected by coastal change;
- proposals for the generation of renewable energy or other utility infrastructure;
- flood defence, land stability and coastal protection schemes;
- local facilities appropriate to a rural area or close to an existing settlement; and
- landscape and / or green infrastructure requirements associated with specific allocations in a development plan document.

³ As listed in footnote 6 of the National Planning Policy Framework, 2019

Q: Development outside local plan and neighbourhood plan development boundaries in rural Dorset

- 1: Do you agree with the suggested approach and what it is trying to achieve?
- 2: Do you agree with the suggested wording?
- 3: How could the paragraph / policy / section / chapter be

The reuse of buildings outside settlement boundaries

- 2.6.24. The reuse of existing buildings can help to meet development needs by making effective use of an existing resource. Where planning permission is required, the reuse of an existing building will be permitted if:
- the existing building is suitable for reuse;
 - the proposed use is appropriate for the building concerned; and
 - the proposed scheme for reuse is acceptable in planning terms.
- 2.6.25. Proposals for the reuse of existing buildings in the South East Dorset Green Belt will be considered against national policy on green belt having regard to the purposes of the green belt designation Any proposals involving the reuse of existing buildings that are judged to be inappropriate development would, by definition be harmful to the Green Belt and will not be approved except in very special circumstances.

The suitability of existing buildings

- 2.6.26. The building to be re-used should be permanent (i.e. not the subject of a temporary consent) and of substantial construction (i.e. not derelict, constructed with temporary or short-life materials, or built without proper foundations). As an existing resource, most buildings will merit retention and reuse, but those that have a harmful impact on their surroundings or the wider landscape, such as large scale agricultural buildings with a utilitarian appearance, may not.
- 2.6.27. With the exception of schemes for residential reuse in isolated locations, existing buildings do not need to be redundant in order for reuse to be permitted. Where a scheme is for the reuse of a building that is still in use and it is intended to continue that use or activity in some form, it will be important that it can be accommodated, either on or off-site, without the need for an additional building to fulfil the function of the building to be re-used.
- 2.6.28. Where residential reuse is proposed, the scale height and depth of the existing building should enable it to be converted to create satisfactory living conditions for the future occupants. Wherever possible, existing openings should be capable of providing access to the building and sources of natural light.

- 2.6.29. Where residential reuse is proposed in an isolated location, the scheme will need to meet one of the special circumstances set out in national policy, which are:
- where the development would re-use a redundant or disused building and lead to an enhancement to the immediate setting; or
 - where a development would represent the optimal viable re-use of a heritage asset; or
 - where a scheme would be appropriate enabling development to secure the future use of a heritage asset.
- 2.6.30. Where relevant, developers will be expected to:
- confirm the redundant or disused status of the existing building; and
 - demonstrate how the proposed scheme would enhance the immediate setting.
- 2.6.31. An existing building (including curtilage) will not be considered to be isolated if it adjoins (i.e. immediately abuts) a development boundary or forms part of a village, hamlet or group of buildings without a development boundary in rural areas. In other circumstances, whether a building is isolated will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Proposals relating to the reuse of heritage assets will also need to be considered in relation to Policy ENV5.

The appropriateness of the proposed use

- 2.6.32. A wide range of different uses may be permitted in principle and for many there are specific, more detailed policies that should be applied to any relevant scheme for reuse. For example, Policy COM2 (and supporting text) explains how a building to be re-used for community purposes should be accessible and immediately proximate to the community it would serve. Reuse for tourism purposes (other than holiday accommodation) should support sustainable rural tourism for example by enabling people to enjoy landscapes, wildlife or recreational opportunities, such as long distance footpaths. However, reuse for retail would need to comply with the sequential test (in Policy ECON3) and is therefore unlikely to be acceptable.

The acceptability of the scheme for reuse

- 2.6.33. Any scheme should be designed to ensure that the type of use proposed and the scale of the proposals fully recognise the limitations associated with the existing building's design and construction, both in terms of the capacity of the existing building to accommodate the proposed use and in terms of the potential impacts a scheme may have on the character of the existing building and its surroundings.
- 2.6.34. Any scheme should enable conversion to the intended use without the need for complete or substantial reconstruction. A structural survey may be required to confirm the level of reconstruction required. As a guideline, schemes for reuse which require more than 25% of the structural walls to be rebuilt or more than 50% of the wall cladding to be replaced generally will not be permitted. Any activities associated with the reuse of the building should take place within the existing curtilage, where one exists. Where necessary to define a curtilage or operational site area as part of the scheme for reuse, this should be the minimum required to meet the operational needs of the intended reuse. Exceptionally, the small-scale

extension of an existing curtilage may be permitted where it would include boundary treatments that respect local landscape character.

- 2.6.35. A small-scale, ancillary extension (or extensions) to an existing building, may be necessary to meet essential functional requirements, such as the need for: an entrance lobby; an external corridor to avoid the need to sub-divide an attractive internal space; kitchen space; a utility room; or a bathroom. In all cases, any extension should be subordinate to the existing building and no larger than required to meet the minimum functional requirements.
- 2.6.36. For schemes that include an extension to the existing building and / or the curtilage, permitted development rights may be removed.
- 2.6.37. Proposals for the reuse of an existing building (and associated works to the site and any existing or proposed curtilage) should be designed to ensure that overall the works affecting the building, the site, and its setting make a positive contribution to local character. Any features of historic or architectural importance on or associated with an existing building should be retained as part of any scheme for conversion. Schemes for the reuse of listed buildings will usually require listed building consent even in cases where planning permission is not required.

DEV8: Reuse of buildings outside settlement boundaries

The reuse of existing buildings within the south east Dorset Green Belt and outside settlement boundaries elsewhere will be permitted provided that:

- I. in relation to the existing building / site:
 - a. the existing building is permanent, of substantial construction and merits retention;
 - b. the continuation of any current use or activity on the site, would not give rise to a future need for another building (or buildings) to accommodate that use or activity;
 - c. where residential reuse is proposed, the existing building would readily lend itself to residential conversion, in terms of its scale, height, depth and the number and location of existing openings;
 - d. where residential reuse is proposed and the existing building is in an isolated location, there are special circumstances, as set out in national policy, which would justify residential reuse in such a location;
- II. the reuse is for one of the following uses:
 - e. housing;
 - f. affordable housing;
 - g. essential rural workers' housing;
 - h. employment;
 - i. community uses;
 - j. built tourist accommodation;
 - k. other tourism uses, where there is a justifiable need for a rural location;
- III. in relation to the scheme for reuse;
 - l. the intended reuse can be achieved without the need for complete or substantial reconstruction of the existing building or any extension of the curtilage other than exceptionally, a small-scale extension;
 - m. any proposed extension to the existing building is modest in scale; ancillary in nature; subordinate to the main building; and necessary to meet the essential functional requirements of the intended reuse; and
 - n. the scheme for reuse should make a positive contribution to local character and include the retention of any features of historic or architectural importance on, or associated with, the existing building.

Q: Reuse of buildings outside settlement boundaries

- 1: Do you agree with the suggested approach and what it is trying to achieve?
- 2: Do you agree with the suggested wording?
- 3: How could the paragraph / policy / section / chapter be amended to reflect your concerns?

Development boundaries and five year supply

- 2.6.38. A local plan or neighbourhood plan development boundary is a 'planning tool' that seeks to deliver the spatial strategy by 'normally permitting' development within it and 'strictly controlling' development outside it. There may be times during the plan period when the council is not able to demonstrate a five-year supply of housing land and past experience has shown that this is likely to result in developers putting forward proposals for speculative housing development outside development boundaries.
- 2.6.39. In the absence of a five-year supply of housing land the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development' in national policy is engaged. In such circumstances, the council will need to consider what 'weight' should be given to: the spatial strategy policies set out above in this section; and where relevant, any harm likely to result from any development proposed outside a development boundary. In most instances the presumption in favour of sustainable development is unlikely to apply at settlements that fall within Tier 4 of the settlement hierarchy.

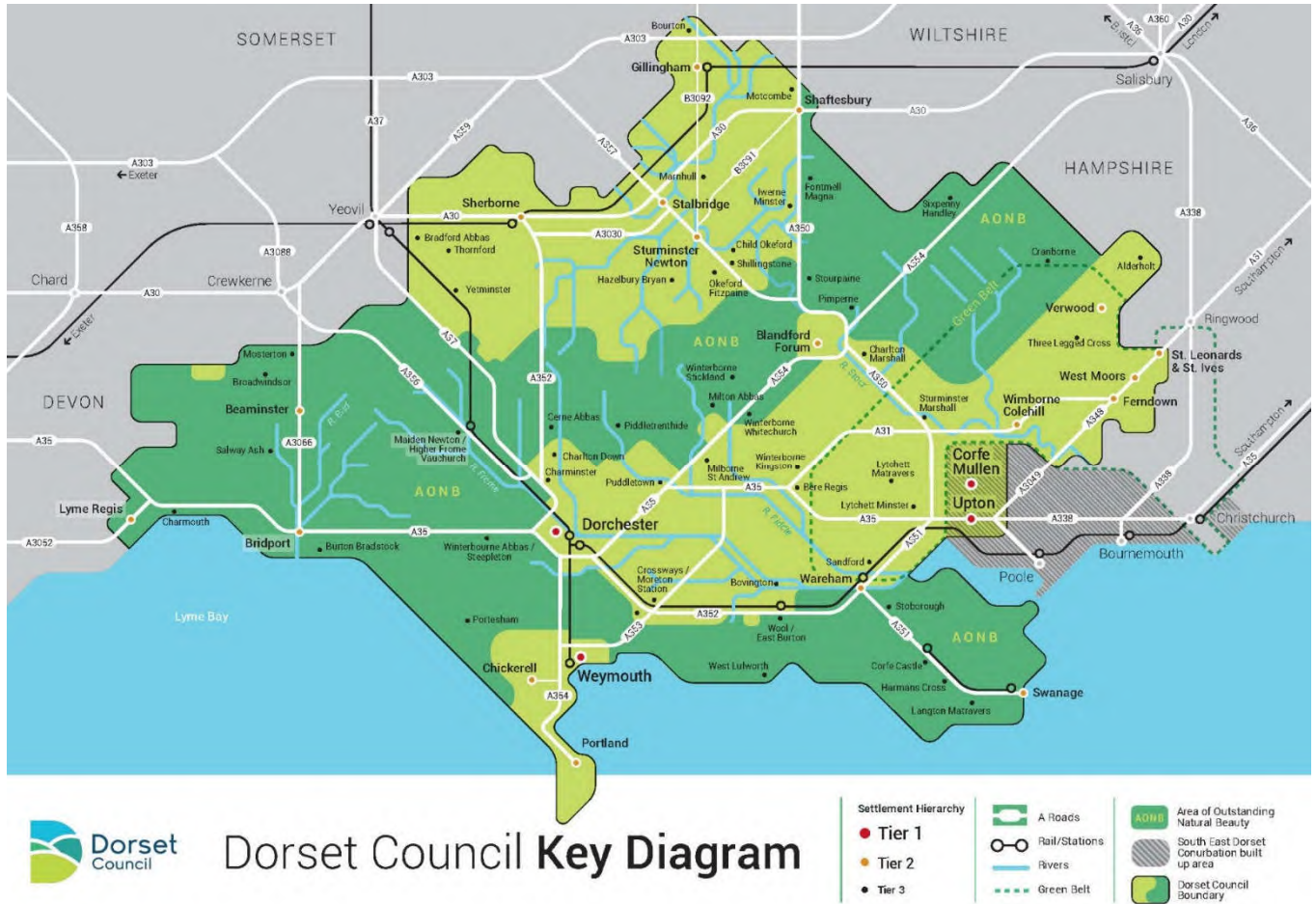
New Settlements

- 2.6.40. Dorset Council is keen to ensure that a strategic and long term approach is taken to meeting the need for housing and jobs. The supply identified in this draft local plan will enable the need for housing and jobs to be met over the plan period, with a range of sites identified. To deliver homes in the longer term, the Council is exploring opportunities to establish a new settlement.
- 2.6.41. In the coming months, the council will be inviting landowners and developers to submit developable opportunities for new settlements. The Council will set out a series of design principles and expectations that any new settlements would be expected to meet. This will include an expectation that the new settlement will include infrastructure and mix of uses to make it self-contained; a high proportion of affordable homes and high environmental performance.

Strategic Diagram

2.6.4.2. The spatial strategy outlined above and in Policies DEV2 to DEV7 is shown diagrammatically in Figure 2.5.

Figure 2.5 – Dorset Council Local Plan strategic diagram



2.7. Meeting the housing requirement

- 2.7.1. This section sets out in more detail the contribution that different sources of supply will make to meeting the overall housing requirement for Dorset over the period 2021 to 2038. The identified sources of supply include completions; extant consents; allocations; unconsented major sites; neighbourhood plan sites; rural exception sites for affordable housing; and windfall development.

Completions

- 2.7.2. 'Completions' are new homes that have already been developed since the start of the plan period. Completed development within Dorset Council area since 01 April 2021 will be counted towards the local plan housing target.
- 2.7.3. Over the past five years, the average rate of completions has been at 1,335 net additional homes per annum. This rate is below the target rate in the adopted local plans hence the pressing need to identify additional suitable and developable land.

Extant consents

- 2.7.4. 'Extant consents' are sites with planning permission, which are yet to be developed. At 01 April 2019 there were extant planning permissions for 12,050 net additional homes in Dorset, including consents for residential institutions (Use Class C2). Of these 1,818 net additional homes are on minor sites (of between 1 and 9 new homes). It has been assumed that all sites with planning permission will be developed within the plan period.
- 2.7.5. Some consents have been granted on sites allocated for housing and this has been set out within the relevant functional area section. In Figure 2.7, which summarises how the housing requirement will be met from the different sources of housing supply, the 'extant permissions' figure includes extant consents on all sites, including on allocations.

Housing allocations

- 2.7.6. 'Allocations' are sites specifically identified in the local plan for the development of a particular use (or for mixed uses). They are at the heart of the 'planned approach' to development, with site-specific policies helping to identify deliver the necessary infrastructure and facilities (such as new schools) in step with housing and employment.
- 2.7.7. Across the four functional areas, sites have been identified as the most suitable locations to contribute towards meeting the strategic housing needs of Dorset. Within each functional area the larger settlements with a good range of facilities are the focus for this strategic growth. At each of these settlement the most appropriate sites to deliver the longer term growth of the settlement have been selected having regard to the infrastructure and facilities needed at each with the aim of improving their sustainability.

Section 2: Development strategy

- 2.7.8. Figure 2.6 lists the contributions the housing allocations (including mixed use allocations) at each settlement will make to housing supply, which will be developed (wholly or partly) in the plan period. The housing supply figures include the contributions made by new allocations, as well as by sites identified in previous adopted local plans for the former districts in Dorset. Some of the larger (and older) allocations (for example, Poundbury at Dorchester) already have planning permission with some being under construction. Allocations with planning permission as at 01 April 2019 are shown as 'extant permissions' rather than 'allocations' in housing land supply calculations and in Figure 2.7.
- 2.7.9. All of the sites allocated in this plan for new homes are 'strategic allocations'. The principle of development on a strategic allocation cannot be changed through a neighbourhood plan, although they may set out more detailed policies for them, for example on design.
- 2.7.10. Assumptions about housing numbers, likely start dates and rates of development on allocated sites in the figures in the town chapters have been informed by discussions with developers, but are only indicative as circumstances may change over the plan period. For example, the number of houses delivered will depend on the mix of home types and sizes that are granted planning permission when making the most appropriate use of the site and the actual phasing will depend on when sites are brought forward by developers, on market conditions and on the build-out rate.
- 2.7.11. It is recognised that the proposed growth at Crossways will meet the needs of both the South Eastern Dorset and Central Dorset functional areas. However, to avoid duplication, all the proposed allocations are shown in the part of Figure 2.6 relating to the Central Dorset functional area.

Figure 2.6 – Housing supply from allocations at settlements in Dorset's functional areas

Settlement	Potential supply of new homes from option sites
South eastern Dorset functional area	
Large urban area: edge of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole	
Corfe Mullen	400
Upton	0
Towns and other main settlements	
Blandford	900
Ferndown / West Parley	1,100
St Leonards & St Ives	0

Section 2: Development strategy

Settlement	Potential supply of new homes from option sites
Swanage	150
Verwood	100
Wareham	0
West Moors	170
Wimborne / Colehill	495
Larger villages	
Alderholt	Options being considered for low levels of growth or significant expansion
Lytchett Matravers	200
Sturminster Marshall	425
Wool	300 (Option for additional 100)
Central Dorset Functional Area	
Large urban areas	
Dorchester	3,600
Weymouth	550
Towns and other main settlements	
Chickerell	0
Portland	0
Larger villages	
Charminster/Charlton Down	340
Crossways / Moreton Station	605
Northern Dorset functional area	
Towns and other main settlements	
Gillingham	70

Section 2: Development strategy

Settlement	Potential supply of new homes from option sites
	(Option for an additional 600)
Shaftesbury	0
Sherborne	1,200
Stalbridge	430
Sturminster Newton	0
Western Dorset functional area	
Towns and other main settlements	
Beaminster	120
Bridport	0
Lyme Regis	40

2.7.12. At 01 April 2019, it was estimated that there was a supply of 5,685 net additional homes from unconsented existing allocations in Dorset and 11,375 net additional homes from the proposed allocations (this does not include the optional sites at Alderholt, Wool and Gillingham). In addition the supply from consented existing allocations is 7,544 (included in the extant consents total). This can be broken down by functional area as follows:

- South Eastern Dorset functional area 7,544 new homes
- Central Dorset functional area 11,202 new homes
- Northern Dorset functional area 4,359 new homes
- Western Dorset functional area 1,469 new homes

Neighbourhood plan sites

2.7.13. Neighbourhood plan sites are specific sites (including allocations) that have been identified for development in a 'made' or very well advanced neighbourhood plan. The housing supply from allocations in neighbourhood plans are included in this category. Allocations in future neighbourhood plans will also contribute to this source of housing supply.

2.7.14. At 01 April 2019, it was estimated that there was a supply of 737 net additional homes from neighbourhood plan sites.

Rural exception sites

2.7.15. A rural exception site is a site specifically identified for rural exception affordable housing. Sites have only been included in this source of supply where proposals are significantly advanced by a registered affordable housing provider and funding has been approved.

- 2.7.16. At 01 April 2019, it was estimated that there was a supply of 120 net additional homes from rural exception sites.

Windfall

- 2.7.17. The local plan includes a 'windfall allowance' for 'minor sites' of up to 9 dwellings that are not specifically identified in the local plan (or neighbourhood plans), which can come forward for development under the local plan's general policy framework. The 'windfall allowance' is based on historic completions on minor sites over the past 5 years.
- 2.7.18. At 01 April 2019, the windfall allowance would deliver a total of around 6,193 net additional homes over the plan period.

Unconsented major sites and small sites

- 2.7.19. 'Unconsented major sites' are specific sites for 10 or more dwellings that can come forward for development under the general policy framework of the Dorset Council Local Plan. Such sites are either located within settlements excluded from (inset within) the Green Belt or within 'local plan development boundaries' and have been identified in the housing and employment land availability assessment or the brownfield register for Dorset.
- 2.7.20. 'Small sites' are sites of less than one hectare in size and that will deliver between 10 and 30 homes. These sites are often quick to develop and enable smaller and medium sized builders to enter the housing market. Identification of these sites within local plans something that national policy advocates however as they are often built out quickly, it is difficult to keep an up-to-date list of such sites. A selection of small sites of between 10 and 30 homes have been identified and are listed within appendix 2 of this plan.
- 2.7.21. At 01 April 2019, it was estimated that there was a supply of 3,615 net additional homes from 'unconsented major sites' and 'small sites'.

Meeting the housing requirement from the overall housing supply

- 2.7.22. Policy DEV1 establishes a housing requirement for 30,481 new (net additional) homes during the period 2021 to 2038, which includes the figure for 'local housing need' in Dorset. Discussions are taking place to establish whether there is a need for Dorset Council to meet an element of the unmet need from Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole and the New Forest should either council not be able to meet their own need. However the Government is altering the way housing targets for an area are established, including the possibility of binding housing targets. The local plan provides sufficient land to meet the current housing requirement established through the standard methodology.
- 2.7.23. The sources of the overall housing supply are set out in Figure 2.7 below. These are set with a base date of 01 April 2019 to reflect the current position with the housing requirement being for a 17 year plan period. These figures will be updated prior to the publication stage to reflect the position at that point.

Section 2: Development strategy

Figure 2.7 – Housing Requirement and Land Supply for the Dorset Council Local Plan Area⁴

Housing Requirement	30,481
Sources of Housing Land Supply	
Extant planning permissions at 01 April 2019	12,050
Supply from unconsented allocations in the Dorset Council Local Plan (figures base date to April 2019)	16,570
Small sites (10 to 30 dwellings) + major unconsented sites	3,615
Minor sites (9 dwellings or fewer) Windfall Allowance	6,193
Sites identified in neighbourhood plans (figures base date April 2019)	737
Unconsented rural exception sites with funding (figures base date April 2019)	120
Total Supply	39,285

Five-year housing land supply

2.7.24. The housing supply is currently managed through the adopted local plans for the former district areas that now make up the Dorset Council area. This is therefore the basis for calculating the five-year housing land supply and Figure 2.8 provides this detail. Further information is available in the published five-year housing land supply reports for each area.

⁴ The current data is for a base date of 1 April 2019. This data will be updated for the next stage of plan production.

Figure 2.8: Five-year Housing Land Supply at April 2019

Adopted Local Plan area	Five-year supply
East Dorset ⁵	4.91 years
North Dorset	4.00 years
Purbeck	5.3years ⁶
West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland	4.83 years

- 2.7.25. The five-year housing land supply is reviewed annually and will be re-calculated when the local plan is submitted for examination to reflect the whole Dorset Council area. Any revised figure will reflect the latest monitoring information and take account of any changes to how the five-year supply should be calculated as a result of revisions to national policy.

Q: Meeting the housing need

- 1: Do you agree with the suggested approach and what it is trying to achieve?
- 2: Do you agree with the suggested wording?
- 3: How could the paragraph / policy / section / chapter be amended to reflect your concerns?

⁵ For the East Dorset area, a joint local plan was adopted covering the East Dorset and Christchurch areas. The Christchurch area now forms part of BCP Council splitting the target between the two areas and therefore the five-year housing land supply figure has been calculated for East Dorset using the current standard methodology figure.

⁶ This has been updated through the Purbeck Local Plan examination and the Purbeck area of Dorset Council has 5.1 years as of 1st April 2020.

2.8. Meeting the need for employment land

- 2.8.1. Evidence collected to support the production of this Dorset Council Local Plan suggests that between 131 and 151 hectares of employment land are needed to accommodate the expected increase of around 21,000 new jobs over the period to 2038. This requirement is established through policy DEV1 with detail of how this requirement will be met Figure 2.9.
- 2.8.2. Employment sites have been identified as Key employment sites where they make a strategic contribution to the employment land supply. These sites will be protected for employment generating uses and uses that may degrade their acceptability for these uses will not be permitted in line with policy ECON1. All other employment sites fall under policy ECON2 where a more permissive approach is taken.

Figure 2.9 – Employment Land Supply for the Local Plan Area to 2038

Employment land requirement 2018 – 2038 (hectares)	131 to 151
Employment Land Supply (hectares)	
Completions 2018/2019	18.15
Completions 2019/2020 (excluding former PDC area)	8.30
Extant Consents on unallocated sites (excluding former PDC area)	27.84
Employment Land Allocations	129.94
New Employment Land Allocations	30.52
Total Supply 2018 - 2038	214.75

Extant Consents

- 2.8.3. Across the plan area there are a number of consented employment sites that are expected to be built over the plan period. As at April 2020, the total employment land on unallocated sites that benefits from consent was around 27.8 hectares.

Employment Land Allocations

- 2.8.4. Figure 2.0 below lists the allocations in the local plan that will contribute to the supply of employment land, some of which are identified as key employment sites. The allocation areas are approximate and further employment development may come forward as part of mixed use schemes.

Section 2: Development strategy

- 2.8.5. Each of the employment allocations have been placed within one of the four functional areas however it is recognised that sites in some areas will also contribute to meeting the needs of neighbouring areas especially where strategic sites (such as Dorset Innovation Park) are identified.

Figure 2.10 – Supply of Employment Land from Allocated Sites

Settlement	Allocated Site	Employment Land (ha)	Key site
Blandford	Land to the North East of Blandford Forum	4.7	✓
	Land off Shaftesbury Lane	2.0	✓
Ferndown	Blunts Farm	9.0 – 30.0	✓
	Land East of Cobham Road	6.5	✓
	Land at Haskins Garden Centre	2.0	✓
Verwood	Ebblake Industrial Estate	0.7	✓
Wimborne	Brook Road (north)	2.0	✓
Woolsbridge	Land at Woolsbridge Industrial Park	12.9	✓
Bere Regis	North Street	0.7	✓
Holton Heath	Holton Heath Trading Park	5.7	✓
Sturminster Marshall	Extension to the Bailie Gate Industrial Estate	3.3	✓
Wool	Dorset Innovation Park	38.4	✓
Dorchester	Poundbury Mixed Use Development	6.0	X
	Poundbury Parkway Farm Business Site	1.0	✓
	Land to the North of Dorchester	10.0	✓

Section 2: Development strategy

Weymouth	Land to the south east of Mount Pleasant Business Park	5.0	✓
	Littlemoor Urban Extension	8.0	✓
Portland	Osprey Quay	0.8	✓
Crossways	Land south of Warmwell Road	2.5	✓
Gillingham	Land south of Brickfields	11.6	✓
	Land north of Kingsmead Business Park	1.2	✓
Shaftesbury	Land south of the A30	6.6	✓
Sherborne	Land at Barton Farm	3.0	✓
	Land South of Bradford Road	5.0	✓
Stalbridge	South of Station Road (southern part)	0.7	✓
Sturminster Newton	North Dorset Business Park	2.9	✓
Bridport	Land at Vearse Farm	4.0	✓
	St Michael's Trading Estate	0.8	X
Beaminster	Land to the South of Broadwindsor Road	3.8	✓
	Land at Lane End	0.7	✓
Total		161.5	

Q: Meeting the employment need

- 1: Do you agree with the suggested approach and what it is trying to achieve?
- 2: Do you agree with the suggested wording?
- 3: How could the paragraph / policy / section / chapter be amended to reflect your concerns?

2.9. Neighbourhood Plans

2.9.1. Communities can have a greater role in shaping the areas in which they live and work by establishing statutory policies through neighbourhood plans. There is no legal requirement for a community to prepare a neighbourhood plan, but it is a right which communities in England can choose to use.

2.9.2. Neighbourhood planning has the potential to bring together a local community, landowners and developers, service providers and Dorset Council to build a consensus about the future of an area. Where a town or parish council exists, they should lead on neighbourhood planning. Elsewhere a 'neighbourhood planning forum' must be designated to lead the process.

2.9.3. A neighbourhood plan forms part of the development plan for an area and sits alongside the local plan prepared by the local planning authority. Planning applications in the local plan area will be determined using both the local plan (once adopted) and any neighbourhood plans that have been 'made' part of the development plan; and by having regard to any material considerations.



Strategic priorities and strategic policies

2.9.4. National policy indicates that the ambition of a neighbourhood should be aligned with the strategic needs and priorities of the wider area. Section 1.2 of this draft local plan establishes a Vision for the Dorset Council local plan area and identifies a set of Strategic Priorities. In order to reflect national policy, neighbourhood plans should be prepared to positively contribute to the local plan's Vision and Strategic Priorities.

Section 2: Development strategy

- 2.9.5. National policy indicates that a neighbourhood development plan should support the strategic development needs set out in a local plan and the 'basic conditions' require that a neighbourhood plan must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of a local plan. As a result, a neighbourhood plan should not promote less development in the neighbourhood area than is set out in the local plan or undermine the local plan strategic policies.
- 2.9.6. The strategic topic-based policies in the local plan are those that take forward the Strategic Priorities set out in each of Chapters 2 to 6. It is considered that all of the housing allocations in the plan are strategic in the sense that they all play a role in contributing towards fulfilling the Strategic Priority of meeting the overall housing needs in the plan area⁷. In terms of employment sites strategic employment allocations are those identified as 'key employment sites'. A few policies have both strategic and non-strategic aspects where neighbourhood plans can suggest an alternative approach to the non-strategic elements such as development that would be appropriate outside of development boundaries in the neighbourhood plan area. Further information on strategic and non-strategic policies (including policies that include both strategic and non-strategic aspects) is set out in appendix 1.
- 2.9.7. Neighbourhood plans should be prepared to reflect the local plan's strategic priorities; and to be in general conformity with its strategic policies and the strategic element of policies that have both strategic and non-strategic aspects.

Infrastructure needs

- 2.9.8. Consideration should be given to the infrastructure needed to support development (such as homes, shops or offices) proposed in a neighbourhood plan. Engagement with infrastructure providers may be necessary to determine what infrastructure is needed to support growth. Where a need for new or enhanced infrastructure is identified and evidenced, a neighbourhood plan should set out the infrastructure required to address the demands of the development proposed.

Deliverability

- 2.9.9. If policies and proposals are to be implemented as a community intends, then a neighbourhood plan needs to be deliverable. National guidance indicates that landowners and developers should be involved in preparing neighbourhood plans to avoid placing unrealistic pressures on the cost and deliverability of development. Infrastructure requirements may have implications for the viability of a site-based proposal and viability may also be an issue in relation to a policy (for example a policy to seek a higher level of affordable housing locally). In such circumstances it may be necessary to assess the viability of policies or proposals to ensure that they are deliverable.

⁷ This does not mean that the Council considers that all of the housing sites proposed are strategic sites in respect of their size or the number of dwellings that they could deliver.

2.10. Housing requirement figures for neighbourhood plans

- 2.10.1. National policy requires that local plans should set out a housing requirement figure for designated neighbourhood areas. For any neighbourhood area designated after the adoption of a local plan, a local planning authority should provide an indicative figure, if requested to do so.
- 2.10.2. National policy does not prescribe a methodology for setting a housing requirement at the neighbourhood level, but indicates that any figure should take account of factors such as:
 - the latest evidence of local housing need;
 - the population of the neighbourhood area; and
 - the most recently available planning strategy for the local planning authority.
- 2.10.3. The 'housing need' for a local plan area should be determined using the Government's standard methodology. For the Dorset Council area this figure is currently 1,793 net additional homes per annum as set out in policy DEV1. The housing need figure is a key input into determining the housing requirement for a local plan area.
- 2.10.4. The overall planning strategy for the distribution of development across the Dorset Council area is set out in Chapter 5, with the spatial strategy for the distribution of growth established in policies DEV2 to DEV5.
- 2.10.5. Having regard to the housing requirement set out in policy DEV1 and the planning strategy it is proposed that the housing requirement figures for neighbourhood areas are the sum of:
 - completions since the beginning of the plan period;
 - extant planning permissions;
 - housing allocations;
 - capacity on major sites (of 10 or more dwellings) within development boundaries as evidenced through the SHLAA; and
 - a windfall allowance on minor sites (of less than 10 dwellings).
- 2.10.6. For the purposes of this public consultation the plan period is anticipated to begin on 1 April 2021 and, therefore, no completions have yet been recorded. The latest available and complete dataset for extant planning permissions is dated the 1 April 2020. The housing requirement figures include known allocations in submitted or made Neighbourhood Plans as well as adopted and emerging Local Plan allocations in this consultation draft. A windfall allowance on minor sites has been estimated and projected forward to 2038, the end of the plan period. All data sources will need to be updated as the plan progresses through the plan making process. More information regarding the Methodology is set out in the Neighbourhood Plans Background Paper.
- 2.10.7. The housing requirement figures for designated neighbourhood plan areas are set out in appendix 2 of this Local Plan. The figures should be viewed as minimum requirement figures and, therefore, can be exceeded. However, the scope of a neighbourhood plans is up to a neighbourhood planning body. There is no

Section 2: Development strategy

requirement for neighbourhood plans to allocate sites or identify any additional land to meet the overall Local Plan housing need figure. Nevertheless, there may well be a strong basis for neighbourhood plans allocating sites particularly if there is evidence of local housing need in the neighbourhood plan area that exceeds the requirement figure set out in the Local Plan. Allocations proposed in neighbourhood plans should be in accordance with the thrust of the spatial strategy set out in the Local Plan and of a scale appropriate to the settlement at which they are located.

- 2.10.8. Housing requirement figures set out in relation to designated neighbourhood plan areas should only be used to inform the preparation of neighbourhood development plans. They should not be used as sub-area targets in housing land supply (including five-year housing land supply) calculations.
- 2.10.9. The commissioning of a local housing needs assessment for a neighbourhood plan area is considered helpful in assessing the need for different types and sizes of houses in the area.

DEVg: Neighbourhood plans

Neighbourhood plans should be prepared:

- I. to positively contribute to the local plan vision and strategic priorities and be in general conformity with its strategic policies;
- II. to identify the infrastructure needed to support development; and
- III. to ensure that the policies and proposals are deliverable.

Where provision is made for housing, the housing requirement figure for a neighbourhood plan area, set out in appendix 2, should be met and where possible exceeded.

Q: Neighbourhood Planning

- 1: Do you have any comments on the approach to establishing housing targets for Neighbourhood Plans?

3. The Environment and Climate Change

3.1. Introduction

- 3.1.1. Dorset contains a high quality natural and built environment. A significant proportion of the area is designated as AONB with a significant proportion of the coastline being designated as Heritage Coast and part of the UNESCO World Heritage Site. There are many internationally and locally important habitats and protected species and a significant number of listed buildings, scheduled monuments and other heritage assets.
- 3.1.2. The Local Plan’s Vision recognises the importance of this outstanding environment and seeks enhancement with a move towards a more sustainable future. The strategic policies in this chapter will help to deliver on the Strategic Priorities for the Plan related to the Environment and Climate Change. They are listed in Figure 3.1.

Figure 3.1: Strategic policies within the Environment and Climate Change section

Strategic Priority	The role of the Local Plan	Relevant Strategic Policies
<p>Unique environment</p> <p>We will protect and enhance Dorset’s unique environment by delivering sustainable development which respects the area’s biodiversity and increases the natural capital value of these assets, in recognition of the benefits this will bring to the economy and to our wellbeing.</p>	<p>The Local Plan will enable development in the most appropriate locations whilst also minimising the impact of population growth and economic activity on Dorset’s environment, and bringing about net gains in biodiversity.</p>	ENV1: Green Infrastructure: strategic approach
		ENV2: Habitats and species
		ENV4: Landscapes
		ENV5: Heritage assets
		ENV6: Geodiversity
		ENV7: Achieving high quality design
		ENV8: The landscape and townscape context
<p>Climate and ecological emergency</p> <p>We will take actions to minimise the impact of climate change including minimising flood risk and to reduce the impact on the climate by locating and designing developments to</p>	<p>Through managing where and how development takes place, the Local Plan can minimise the distance travelled and focus travel onto active travel and public transport options. The impacts of climate change can be reduced by</p>	ENV3: Biodiversity and net gain
		ENV12: Pollution control
		ENV13: Flood risk
		ENV14: Sustainable drainage systems (SuDs)

Section 3: The Environment and Climate Change

<p>reduce distances travelled and minimise energy use. We will support renewable energy developments appropriate to Dorset. We will ensure that all new development incorporates biodiversity net gain to help deliver the aspiration to reverse the current decline in protected species and habitats.</p>	<p>avoiding areas at risk of flooding and building green infrastructure into developments.</p>	ENV15: Land instability
		ENV16: New built development in Coastal Change Management Areas
		ENV17: Replacement or relocation of existing development in Coastal Change Management Areas

Q: Climate change

1: What else could the local plan do to mitigate climate change and help people adapt to its effects?

3.2. Green infrastructure strategic approach

- 3.2.1. Green infrastructure incorporates a range of spaces and assets that provide environmental and wider benefits, from children’s playgrounds to informal green space and from sustainable drainage features to cycleways.
- 3.2.2. These benefits, known as ecosystem services, can include improved wellbeing, improved outdoor recreation and access through enhanced rights of way and cycle routes, enhancements to biodiversity and landscapes, food and energy production, and can address climate change through urban cooling, reduced air pollution and the management of flood risk.
- 3.2.3. Everyone benefits from the provision of green infrastructure with responsibility for different components resting with individuals, landowners and parish and town councils, Dorset Council, community and private organisations as well as nature conservation bodies. Maximising the benefits of a green infrastructure network will require partnership working across the council area and neighbouring areas.

Section 3: The Environment and Climate Change

Figure 3.2: Types of green infrastructure and related policies

Type	Description	Primary Function
Outdoor recreation facilities, parks and gardens (policy COM4: Recreation, sports facilities, and open space)	Sports pitches and greens, playgrounds, urban parks, country parks, formal gardens	To provide opportunities for sport, play and informal recreation (for example Bridport Leisure Centre, Redlands Sports Hub, Dorchester Borough Gardens)
Amenity greenspace (policy ENV8: The landscape and townscape context)	Village greens, urban commons, informal recreation spaces, landscape planting, other incidental space	To make attractive and pleasant built environments and to provide spaces for informal recreation (for example the 'green' off Sprague Close, Weymouth, and the open space at Baggs Lane, Wareham).
Natural and semi-natural green spaces (policies ENV1: Green infrastructure: strategic approach; ENV2: Habitats and species; ENV3: Biodiversity and net gain ENV5: Heritage assets; ENV6: Geodiversity)	Designated wildlife sites, habitats of importance to biodiversity, the Dorset and East Devon Coast World Heritage Site, Regionally Important Geological Sites, Dorset's Ecological Networks, Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace, Heathland Infrastructure Projects	To support biodiversity and/or geodiversity, its study and enjoyment (for example Radipole Lake in Weymouth, By-the-way Field in Wimborne, Jellyfields Nature Reserve in Bridport, Hod and Hambleton Hills SSSI near Blandford).
Green corridors (policies ENV1: Green infrastructure: strategic approach; ENV8: The landscape and townscape context; ENV13: Flood risk)	Rivers and floodplains, road and rail corridors, cycling routes, rights of way, paths, trees and hedgerows, dry stone walls	To provide corridors linking wildlife sites, as part of the existing and potential ecological network, and sustainable travel network (for example the North Dorset Trailway, the River Brit corridor).
Local character areas (policies ENV4: Landscape; ENV5: Heritage assets; ENV6: Geodiversity; ENV8; The landscape and townscape context; ENV16: New built development in Coastal Change)	Coastline, local green spaces, historic landscape screening, treed areas	To contribute to the character of the landscape, settlements or buildings at the strategic or local scale (for example the undeveloped coastline of Portland, or historically important spaces such as

Section 3: The Environment and Climate Change

Management Areas; ENV17: Replacement or relocation of existing development in Coastal Change Management Areas)		Sherborne Abbey Close or the 'slopes' in Shaftesbury)
Other (policies COM1: Making sure new development makes suitable Provision for community infrastructure)	Community spaces: Allotments, community gardens, orchards, cemeteries and churchyards	To provide accessible community facilities to meet local needs (for example Poundbury Community Farm, St George's churchyard, Portland and Bestwall Allotments, Wareham).

- 3.2.4. The green infrastructure network is not only made up of specific sites but also incorporates incidental spaces and features (such as hedgerows) that enhance the local environment, give an area its local character, support the functions of specific sites and offer multiple wider benefits.
- 3.2.5. The key to transforming individual green spaces and features into beneficial green infrastructure is to maximise their multi-functionality and deliver strong inter-site connectivity allowing them to act as a network. This approach enhances the benefits that each individual element of green infrastructure delivers. Examples include:
- cycle routes including wildlife corridors for enhanced biodiversity which in turn support mental and physical well-being. Further links can also be made to the wider public rights of way and cycle network;
 - tree planting around recreational and amenity open spaces not only has benefits for biodiversity but also provides shade and urban cooling;
 - additions to the existing ecological network and the creation of new wildlife corridors or stepping stones between individual ecological network sites.
- 3.2.6. There are a number of strategic projects where nearby developments can contribute to realising the benefits of multi-functional green infrastructure. These include:
- The Stour Valley Park: running from Sturminster Marshall to Hengistbury Head along the Stour Valley offering improved recreational opportunities as well as wildlife and landscape benefits;
 - Lodmoor Country Park: situated on the eastern edge of Weymouth, adjacent to the RSPB Lodmoor Nature Reserve and offering a network of walking and cycling routes through a mix of woodland, wetland and grassland habitats;

Section 3: The Environment and Climate Change

- Lorton Valley Nature Park: between Littlemoor, Radipole and Weymouth, providing recreational opportunities and a key wildlife corridor between the coast and inland greenspace;
 - Portland Quarries Nature Park: involves the restoration of worked out stone quarries on Portland to create limestone grassland habitat of international importance emphasising the natural and cultural importance of quarrying on and offering recreational opportunities;
 - Durlston Country Park: on the edge of Swanage and including internationally important grassland, an award winning visitor centre and café with a strong community focus and health and wellbeing links;
 - Avon Heath Country Park: on the edge of the south-east Dorset conurbation with emphasis on conservation, wildlife and recreation;
 - Moors Valley Country Park: between Verwood and Ringwood with a strong focus on family friendly recreation and health and wellbeing.
- 3.2.7. Development should take any available opportunities to improve the way the green infrastructure network functions, including the delivery of multifunctional benefits and linkages between different green infrastructure elements. Any enhancements should complement, and not detract from, the primary function of any site that forms part of the network (for example new flood risk attenuation measures should not make an area whose primary function is for recreation unusable).
- 3.2.8. To protect and manage and maintain green infrastructure for the long term, developers will be expected to put appropriate arrangements in place to ensure the benefits are sustained over time. These arrangements may include a partnership with different agencies including potentially with parish councils, town councils or Dorset Council. The long-term management of green infrastructure

Section 3: The Environment and Climate Change

provided through development will be secured through conditions or Section 106 or Conservation Covenant planning agreements with the developers.

ENV1: Green infrastructure: strategic approach

- I. The primary function of any element of the green infrastructure network will be protected from the adverse impacts of development and, where appropriate enhanced by relevant policies in the development plan.
- II. Developers will be expected to incorporate enhancements to any element of the green infrastructure network which performs, or could perform, other functions to deliver multifunctional green infrastructure benefits in accordance with relevant Local Plan Policies.
- III. Any strategic development site should include provision of sufficient green infrastructure to serve the site itself and, where suitable opportunities exist, strengthen the existing green infrastructure network for example by:
 - enhancing and connecting cycling and walking provision between local facilities, local open spaces and where appropriate, the countryside;
 - connecting together and enriching biodiversity and wildlife habitats; and
 - improving connections, green corridors and links between different components of the green infrastructure network.
- IV. Any new green infrastructure provided as part of a development scheme, or any new elements of green infrastructure identified in neighbourhood plans (including local green spaces), will form part of the green infrastructure network.
- V. Development proposals must make adequate provision for the long-term management and maintenance of the green infrastructure network.

Q: Green infrastructure: Strategic approach

- 1: Do you agree with the suggested approach and what it is trying to achieve?
- 2: Do you agree with the suggested wording?
- 3: How could the paragraph / policy / section / chapter be amended to reflect your concerns?

3.3. Habitats and species

- 3.3.1. Legislation and National Policy¹ establishes that public authorities have a duty to have regard to conserving biodiversity as part of policy and decision making. This applies to all nature, and Dorset Council is committed to ensuring that rare and threatened habitats and species both within and outside designated sites are protected.
- 3.3.2. Careful stewardship of our environmental assets will ensure that development is complementary to Dorset's unique natural environment and does not erode the qualities that make Dorset attractive in the first place. This is particularly important in the context of the emerging Environment Bill² which integrates the principle of biodiversity net gain alongside local nature recovery strategies and nature recovery networks into all aspects of development.

Figure 3.3: Definitions of habitats sites

European Sites

The network of sites designated as SAC/SPA (including proposed SACs/SPAs) under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations, 2017 (as amended)

International Sites

The network of sites designated as Ramsar sites (including proposed Ramsar sites) under the Ramsar Convention, 1971

National Site Network

The network of European and International Sites in the UK, including those designated and proposed prior to 31st December 2020, and those designated after 31st December 2020

Natura 2000 Network

The network of European and International Sites across Europe

Habitats Site

A term used in NPPF, 2019, and which includes designated and proposed SACs, SPAs and Ramsar sites

¹ Including Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act, 2006 (Sect 40); the Countryside and Rights of Way Act, 2000; the NPPF, 2019 and the associated Planning Practice Guidance and Government Circular 06/2005.

² The Environment Bill, published in draft on 15th October 2019

Section 3: The Environment and Climate Change

Hierarchy of designated sites

- 3.3.3. The Dorset Council Local Plan area covers a varied and geodiverse landscape which is very important to the people and wildlife of Dorset, as is reflected in the value people place on their 'patch'. It is also shown by the large number of wildlife sites which are designated for their importance on an international, national and local level, and the large number of protected species which use these and other habitats. In addition, the majority of the Dorset Council coast is covered by the Dorset and East Devon Coast World Heritage Site and a significant proportion of the Plan area is covered by the Dorset AONB and part of the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB.

Figure 3.4: Hierarchy and explanation of designated sites

Site Designation		Explanation
European / International Sites	Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) Designated under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017) (as amended).	Sites (terrestrial and marine) designated to conserve habitats and species which are rare or threatened and of international importance. Together with SPAs and Ramsar sites, these form the National Site Network in the UK (see box at 1.3.1). There are 17 SACs in the Plan area, 15 terrestrial and 2 marine.
	Special Protection Areas (SPAs) Designated under the EC Council Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds and incorporated into the Habitats Regulations.	Habitat (terrestrial and marine) of international importance for birds, designated to ensure the survival and reproduction of rare breeding and migratory species. Together with SACs and Ramsar sites, these form the National Site Network in the UK (see box at 1.3.1). There are 5 SPAs in the Plan area, 4 terrestrial and 1 marine.
	Ramsar Sites Designated under the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl	Sites of international importance as wetlands, particularly for their populations of migratory or wintering waterfowl. Together with SACs and SPAs, these form the National Site Network in the UK (see box at 1.3.1).

Section 3: The Environment and Climate Change

	Habitat, held at Ramsar, Iran, 1971.	There are 4 Ramsar Sites in the Plan area.
National Sites	Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) Designated under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981.	SSSIs are a nationally important series of sites, 'jewels in the crown' of UK wildlife and geology. They underpin the National Site Network of International and European sites in the UK. There are 134 SSSIs in the Plan area.
	National Nature Reserves (NNRs) Designated under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act, 1949, subsequently strengthened by the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981.	These are sites of key national or international, biological or geological importance which are managed primarily for nature conservation, but also designed to be accessible to the general public for research and recreation. There are 12 NNRs in the Plan area.
	Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs)	MCZs are our nationally important network of marine sites, designated under the Marine and Coastal Access Act, 2009. There are 9 MCZs off the Dorset Coast.
Local Sites	Sites of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCIs) Non-statutory wildlife sites of local importance designated by Dorset Wildlife Trust.	SNCIs are important in a county context and selected in accordance with guidelines published by the Dorset Wildlife Trust. SNCIs provide important protection for locally valuable habitats and species which would otherwise be unprotected. They also form a key part of the wider ecological network, helping to link International, European and National sites by functioning as stepping stones. There are 1,245 SNCIs in the Plan area.

Section 3: The Environment and Climate Change

	<p>Local Nature Reserves (LNRs)</p> <p>Designated under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act, 1949.</p>	<p>LNRs are sites of local importance for nature conservation and recreation.</p> <p>They also form a key part of the wider ecological network, helping to link International, European and National sites by functioning as stepping stones.</p> <p>There are 28 LNRs in the Plan area.</p>
--	---	--

3.3.4. The table does not provide an exhaustive list and other features of biodiversity which are also afforded protection at a national and local level include:

- Habitats and species of principal importance under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006;
- Dorset Biodiversity Strategy priority habitats and species;
- Ancient woodland and ancient and veteran trees;
- Important hedges (as identified under the Hedgerow Regulations, 1997);
- Non-statutory sites set aside for wildlife and/or recreation, such as nature reserves and Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) sites.

European and International sites

3.3.5. Figure 3.4 shows the 23 European and International Sites that form part of the National Sites Network and that lie wholly or partly in Dorset. The protection of these sites is given great weight in planning decisions with national policy³ clearly stating that that ‘the presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply where the plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on a habitats site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects)’.

3.3.6. Any proposal that could impact on an International and / or European site is legally required to be subject to Appropriate Assessment⁴. In addition, several International and / or European sites in Dorset have been identified to be at risk. These particular risks are discussed below. As a result, they are subject to further guidance contained within Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD). The impacts of new development on the affected International and/or European sites will be monitored to continue to inform the evidence base against which the SPDs are reviewed

Heathland sites which form part of the National Site Network

³ Paragraph 177 of the NPPF, 2019

⁴ As required under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017) (as amended)

Section 3: The Environment and Climate Change

- 3.3.7. Dorset is recognised for having some of the best lowland heath left in England, and is home to a wide range of specialised species. However, the Dorset Heaths SAC, Dorset Heaths (Purbeck and Wareham) and Studland Dunes SAC and Dorset Heathlands SPA/Ramsar sites are particularly sensitive to certain developments that give rise to recreational pressure. The Dorset Heathlands Planning Framework SPD has been adopted and applies to all development within a 5km buffer of International and European heathland sites. The following forms of development (including changes of use) are not permitted within a 400m buffer around protected heathland:
- Residential development that would involve a net increase in homes;
 - Tourist accommodation including built tourist accommodation, caravan and camping sites;
 - Sites providing accommodation for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Show People (permanent and transit); and
 - Equestrian-related development that may directly or indirectly result in an increased adverse impact on the heathland.
- 3.3.8. Between 400m and 5 km from the designated heath, development will only be permitted where it avoids significant environmental effects upon the International and European sites. In the case of large scale development, significant adverse impacts may be avoided through a bespoke mitigation package agreed with Natural England. This may include the provision of areas of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) provided in perpetuity and operational before the occupation of the new development. For smaller scale development, the mitigation will be delivered through financial contributions towards Heathland Infrastructure Projects (HIPs) and Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM).

Poole Harbour SPA/Ramsar – Impact of increased Nitrates and Recreation

- 3.3.9. Poole Harbour is designated as an SPA and Ramsar site. Research has shown that Poole Harbour is particularly sensitive to eutrophication from nitrates carried in from the catchment area. Recreation on the harbour also has an impact on birds, which are species interest features of the SPA. For this reason, the Nitrogen Reduction in Poole Harbour SPD and the Poole Harbour Recreation SPD have been produced.
- 3.3.10. The Nitrogen Reduction in Poole Harbour SPD addresses the issue of elevated concentrations of nitrogen in the harbour, which encourage the formation of algal mats on mudflats and affect the viability of the harbour's important bird populations. The SPD requires new development within the hydrological catchment of Poole Harbour to be 'nitrogen neutral' ensuring that new development does not contribute to further impacts within the designated area.

Section 3: The Environment and Climate Change

- 3.3.11. The Poole Harbour Recreation SPD addresses the need to avoid or mitigate harm arising from increased levels of leisure activities on Poole Harbour SPA and Ramsar sites, where it has been shown that disturbance from these activities leads to reduced feeding time, habitat avoidance and reduced fitness and breeding success in birds. Development within the identified zone of influence is required to deliver mitigation through financial contributions which will be used in Strategic Access, Management and Monitoring (SAMMs) and identified Poole Harbour Infrastructure Projects (PHIPs).

Chesil and the Fleet SAC and Chesil Beach and the Fleet SPA/Ramsar

- 3.3.12. Recent research has shown that recreational pressure is significantly affecting the Chesil and the Fleet International and European sites. Mitigation is required to ensure that development can take place without leading to a significant effect on these sites. Dorset Council is working to produce the Chesil and the Fleet SPD to address the issue. The SPD will set out how development must contribute financially to the identified mitigation measures and may include a mix of Strategic Access, Management and Monitoring (SAMMs) as well as infrastructure projects such as provision of an alternative area for recreation in the vicinity of the International and European sites.
- 3.3.13. Interim measures have been put in place by Dorset Council to ensure development can take place without leading to significant effect on the International and European sites. These involve use of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) or Section 106 planning agreement contributions to be put towards the mitigation measures outlined above.

Other National Site Network sites where likely significant effect has been identified

- 3.3.14. Consultation with Natural England and neighbouring local authorities has established that there are a number of other International and European sites which are subject to pressures likely to lead to significant effect. These are:
- Rooksmoor SAC, Cerne and Sydling Downs SAC and Fontmell and Melbury Downs SAC. These sites are designated for habitat interest features which are sensitive to aerial nutrient deposition, in addition to species interest features which would be affected by changes to the habitat interest feature. New development may need to address this issue where it leads to additional vehicle movements which result in an exceedance of threshold limits. The Council are working with Natural England and partner local authorities to develop an appropriate mitigation strategy.
 - Somerset Levels and Moors SPA / Ramsar, River Avon SAC, Avon Valley SPA / Ramsar and River Axe SAC. These sites have been identified as being vulnerable to increased levels of phosphate, including those arising from development and

Section 3: The Environment and Climate Change

Dorset Council are working with Natural England and partner local authorities to determine an appropriate mitigation strategy.

National Sites

- 3.3.15. National sites such as SSSIs and NNRs represent the best sites nationally for habitats and species and are accorded the highest level of protection in law and policy after International and European sites. In Dorset these include sites such as Hod and Hambleton Hills SSSI, designated for its rare chalk grassland and associated species but also of huge cultural and landscape importance. Another example is the Frome River SSSI which is the most westerly example of a major chalk stream in Britain.
- 3.3.16. Dorset Council will not permit development that would adversely affect a SSSI or NNR, including development proposed on land outside these designated areas which would be likely to have an adverse effect on the site(s) either alone or in combination with other developments. In considering whether, exceptionally, the benefits of a development would clearly outweigh the likely impact on a national site, the council will consider the impacts on the biological or geological features of the site that make it of national designation quality, as well as any broader impacts on the national network of SSSIs and NNRs.

Local sites

- 3.3.17. Local sites include Sites of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI) and Local Nature Reserves (LNR) as well as those areas of otherwise undesignated priority and Biodiversity Action Plan habitats. SNCIs are a non-statutory designation designated locally by Dorset Wildlife Trust, with the aim of protecting our most valuable local assets. LNRs are designated for their wildlife interest but also for their opportunities for education and the enjoyment of nature, themes which are of increasing importance as part of the council's health and wellbeing remit. There are 1245 SNCIs and 28 LNRs in Dorset, covering nearly 5% of the total plan area. The amount of habitat (and associated rare and threatened species) protected at a local level is therefore considerable.
- 3.3.18. Local sites such as SNCIs and LNRs form a key part of the existing ecological network in the plan area, and are afforded additional importance through their role as wildlife corridors and stepping stones. For this reason, they have a key role to play in protecting and enhancing our national and international sites. The opportunity they provide for enhancements and net gain, as well as the contribution to the wider ecological network (underpinning the emerging Nature Recovery Network) (see Policy ENV2) is also important in delivering the objectives of the Environment Bill.

Section 3: The Environment and Climate Change

- 3.3.19. For this reason, their protection is important. Development likely to affect a local site will be refused unless adequate mitigation can be provided or, as a last resort, compensation in the form of a suitable alternative site alongside funding towards its management. Dorset Council encourages and welcomes development which enhances and expands the network of local sites.

Protected species

- 3.3.20. Many rare or threatened species are found in the plan area and are afforded different levels of protection through international and national legislation and policy. Dorset Council declared a Climate and Ecological Emergency in November 2019 and Local Plan policy is one of the ways in which the Council seeks to reverse the loss of habitats and species in the plan area.
- 3.3.21. European protected species (EPS) are those listed in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017) (as amended) and are afforded the highest level of protection. They are often listed as species interest features of International or European sites but also occur in the wider landscape where there is suitable breeding, resting and foraging habitat. They include all species of bat, great crested newt, sand lizard, smooth snake, otter and dormouse among others. All species protected under the Habitats Regulations are also protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981, and badgers are given protection under the Protection of Badgers Act, 1992.
- 3.3.22. It is the developer's responsibility to take reasonable measures to ascertain whether there are protected species on a proposed development site. Where an EPS is found outside an International or European site, determination of impacts on the species is the responsibility of the competent authority and developers will, where appropriate, be required to provide adequate surveys (usually an Ecological Impact Assessment, EIA) to enable assessment of impacts. Case law has established that the competent authority must have sufficient information to decide whether development would be likely to lead to an offence under the Habitats Regulations and, if this were so, whether a licence from Natural England would be likely to be granted.
- 3.3.23. The exception to this is where EPS are a feature of International and European sites. In this situation then Natural England must decide whether the proposal can be allowed to happen.
- 3.3.24. Species (and habitats) listed in Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 are a material consideration in planning. Where initial assessment and further survey shows that there will be impacts on these species, the developer must follow the mitigation hierarchy to avoid, mitigate and if

Section 3: The Environment and Climate Change

necessary provide compensation, as well as providing net gain as stipulated in the emerging Environment Bill (see Policy ENV3).

- 3.3.25. In addition, there are many species of local importance where the mitigation hierarchy must also be applied to ensure they are given due consideration when impacted by development. This is covered more fully in Policy ENV2 and also in the emerging Biodiversity SPD which provides additional guidance.
- 3.3.26. Data collected from all surveys must be submitted to the Dorset Environmental Records Centre.

Ancient woodland, trees, and hedges

- 3.3.27. Ancient woodland is any wooded area that has been wooded continuously since at least 1600 AD. It includes:
- Ancient semi-natural woodland mainly made up of trees and shrubs native to the site, usually arising from natural regeneration
 - Plantations on ancient woodland sites are areas of ancient woodland where the former native tree cover has been felled and replaced by planted trees, usually of species not native to the site.
- 3.3.28. Ancient and veteran trees are trees which, because of their age, size or condition are of cultural, historical, landscape and nature conservation value. They can be found as individuals or groups within ancient wood pastures, historic parkland, hedgerows, orchards, parks or other areas.
- 3.3.29. The plan area is recognised for the exceptional quality and quantity of its woodland and hedgerows, which contribute to enjoyment of the landscape but also its outstanding biodiversity. Trees also play an important role in climate change mitigation and adaptation and the council is committed to supporting this through internal policy, through production of the 'Dorset Council Tree Planting Checklist' (April 2020) and as set out in the 'Dorset Council Tree Planting and the Climate Emergency' position statement.
- 3.3.30. National planning policy states that loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats should be refused unless there are wholly exceptional circumstances and a suitable compensation strategy exists. In Dorset this includes ancient woodland and ancient and veteran trees (whether within an ancient woodland or within the wider landscape) but also other habitats such as some types of sand dune, saltmarsh, reedbed and heathland. The council will seek Natural England's advice on whether a habitat affected by development should be considered to be irreplaceable by virtue of it being technically difficult or requiring significant timescales to replace.
- 3.3.31. Wholly exceptional reasons which may justify the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats include infrastructure projects (including nationally significant infrastructure projects, orders under the Transport and Works Act 1992,

Section 3: The Environment and Climate Change

and hybrid bills) where the public benefit would clearly outweigh the loss or deterioration of habitat. Development of this type, which would be likely to result in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats must be accompanied by a suitable compensation strategy.

- 3.3.32. A countryside hedgerow is a boundary line of bushes which can include trees. A hedgerow is protected, meaning it cannot be removed without further consideration, if it meets certain criteria for length, location and importance, as defined under the Hedgerow Regulations, 1997. Development affecting hedgerows will be considered under the Dorset Biodiversity Appraisal Protocol (see Policy ENV2) to ensure adequate mitigation and, as a last resort, compensation is secured.

ENV2: Habitats and species

International and European sites

- I. Proposals for development must not adversely affect the integrity of International or European sites either alone or in-combination with other plans and projects, unless the tests set out under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017) (as amended) are met. Where adverse impacts are identified measures must be put in place to avoid, mitigate or compensate these impacts. Adverse impacts that cannot be avoided or adequately mitigated will not be permitted other than in exceptional circumstances. These circumstances only apply where:
 - there are no suitable alternatives;
 - there are Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest; and
 - necessary compensatory provision can be secured to ensure that the overall coherence of the National Site Network of SACs, SPAs and Ramsars is protected.
- II. Where specific impacts have been identified in relation to particular sites, mitigation measures for these sites will include:
 - In relation to Dorset Heaths SAC, Dorset Heaths (Purbeck and Wareham) and Studland Dunes) SAC and Dorset Heathlands SPA/Ramsar, contributions from development within 5km of the heathland designations towards the sustainable management of the heathland sites or contributions towards the provision of suitable alternative natural greenspace (SANG).
 - In relation to the Poole Harbour SPA/Ramsar,
 - contributions towards the effective management of the site to reduce eutrophication from additional nitrates arising from development,
 - contributions towards the effective management of the site to reduce recreational pressure

Section 3: The Environment and Climate Change

- In relation to Chesil and the Fleet SAC and Chesil Beach and the Fleet SPA/Ramsar, contributions towards the effective management of the site to reduce recreational pressure or contributions towards the provision of suitable alternative natural greenspace.
- In relation to Fontmell and Melbury Downs SAC, Cerne and Sydling Downs SAC and Rooksmoor SAC, contributions towards measures to reduce aerial nutrient deposition arising from increased traffic linked to new development.
- In relation to Somerset Levels and Moors SPA/Ramsar, River Avon SAC, Avon Valley SPA/Ramsar and the River Axe SAC, contributions towards measures to reduce increased levels of phosphate arising from development.

National sites (SSSI and NNR)

- III. Proposals for development which do not adversely affect the integrity of International or European sites or other internationally designated sites, but which are likely to have an adverse effect on a national site (whether the development is within or outside the site) will not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits clearly outweigh both the impacts on the special features of the site and broader impacts on the national network of sites. In these circumstances, development will only be permitted where it can be shown that adverse impacts on biodiversity will be:
- Mitigated, or
 - Where adverse impacts cannot be adequately mitigated, compensation will result in the maintenance or enhancement of biodiversity.

Local sites (SNCIs, LNRs)

- IV. Local sites will be safeguarded from development through use of the mitigation hierarchy with avoidance as the preferred approach. This is in recognition of their intrinsic value for rare and threatened habitats and species, and their role in the wider ecological network where they function as wildlife corridors and stepping stones. Where impact is unavoidable, developers must provide mitigation or, as a last resort, compensation in the form of replacement habitat in a suitable alternative location to ensure there is no net loss of biodiversity, as set out in Policy ENV2. Where this last option is used, funding will be secured to enable management of the replacement site for at least 30 years.

Protected species

- V. Adverse impacts on European Protected Species and UK protected species must be avoided wherever possible subject to the legal tests afforded to them and where applicable, unless the need for or benefits of development clearly outweigh the loss. In all cases the mitigation hierarchy must be applied.

Section 3: The Environment and Climate Change

- VI. Development that is likely to have an adverse effect on a European Protected Species will only be permitted if:
- there are reasons of overriding public interest why the development should proceed, and
 - there is no alternative acceptable solution, and
 - adequate provision can be made for the retention of the species or their safe relocation

Ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees, and hedges

- VII. Development resulting in the loss or deterioration of ancient woodland, ancient or veteran trees (or other irreplaceable habitats) will be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists. Proposals that would result in the loss of individual ancient or veteran trees located outside ancient woodlands will be refused on the same grounds.
- VIII. The removal of large mature tree species and their replacement with smaller shorter lived species will be resisted.
- IX. Important hedgerows will be given consideration as set out in the Hedgerow Regulations, 1997, and development affecting an important hedge will be expected to avoid impacts in the first instance. If this is not possible then mitigation must be provided, or as a last resort compensation to include funding for management for at least 30 years.

Proposals where the primary purpose is to conserve or enhance biodiversity and deliver a net gain for such objectives will be supported in principle where this accords with other policies in the Local Plan.

Q: Habitats and species

- 1: Do you agree with the suggested approach and what it is trying to achieve?
- 2: Do you agree with the suggested wording?
- 3: How could the paragraph / policy / section / chapter be amended to reflect your concerns?

Section 3: The Environment and Climate Change

3.4. Biodiversity and net gain

- 3.4.1. Dorset Council's Local Plan approach to avoiding significant harm and securing net benefits for biodiversity must be applied to all proposals which may affect biodiversity interests, whilst also having regard to the protection afforded to habitats and species by legislation and national and local planning policies.
- 3.4.2. Use of the mitigation hierarchy is fundamental to Dorset Council's approach to protecting biodiversity. Development must avoid adverse impact on biodiversity features as a first principle. Where impacts cannot be avoided through alternative location or design then mitigation measures must be put in place in order to reduce the impact to the point where it no longer has significant effect. Where this is not fully possible the applicant must address residual losses via off-site compensation measures. These must result in at least 'like for like' habitat creation either via direct habitat management measures or provision of funding through a legal agreement with the Council. Where a proposal identifies a need for mitigation and/or compensation, full details of these measures must be incorporated into the project design and will be secured via appropriate condition.

The Dorset Biodiversity Appraisal Protocol

- 3.4.3. In order to comply with existing government legislation and Natural England advice on biodiversity, Dorset Council operates the Dorset Biodiversity Appraisal Protocol (DBAP), incorporating the Dorset Biodiversity Compensation Framework, across the Plan area. The DBAP requires a Biodiversity Plan summarising all impacts on ecology to be submitted, assessed and approved by the Council's Natural Environment Team prior to validation. This standardised process is the Council's preferred approach to assessing impacts on biodiversity arising from development. It is based on the mitigation hierarchy and designed to set out and resolve ecological issues at the start of the application process. The scheme is being updated to include the measures set out in the Environment Bill and will be published as a Supplementary Planning Document. The aim is to provide clear advice to developers which will be updated as national guidance progresses.
- 3.4.4. To ensure that the planning authority has sufficient information to properly determine a planning application, applicants are expected to undertake an Ecological Impact Assessment. This assesses the potential effects of their development proposals on relevant species or habitats. The assessment must be appropriate to the nature and scale of the development, as set out in the DBAP and national guidance BS42020: Biodiversity Code of Practice for Planning and Development.

Section 3: The Environment and Climate Change

- 3.4.5. The Dorset Environmental Records Centre must be consulted to provide baseline data to inform ecological assessments and all data gathered for the purpose of ecological assessment should be submitted to DERC.

The Environment Bill

- 3.4.6. In addition to the legislative and policy framework set out in the supporting text of Policy ENV2, the government introduced the Environment Bill to parliament in 2019. This Bill, expected to become law within the drafting and consultation phases of the Dorset Council Local Plan, makes provision for targets, plans and policies for improving the natural environment. The Environment Bill legislates the measures contained in the government policy paper 'A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment' (2018) and states that the 25 Year Plan forms the first of the 'Environment Improvement Plans' which the government will be required to produce periodically under the new Bill.
- 3.4.7. Measures included in the Environment Bill which form part of this plan include:
- Biodiversity net gain, incorporating use of biodiversity metrics and conservation covenants
 - a Nature Recovery Network
 - Local Nature Recovery Strategies

Net gain

- 3.4.8. Biodiversity net gain is an approach to development that leaves the natural environment in a measurably better state than beforehand. Developers will be required to produce a baseline assessment of the biodiversity currently present on site and then estimate how proposed designs will increase that biodiversity, either on or off-site. Calculation of pre- and post-construction biodiversity levels will be based on Defra's Biodiversity Metric (as set out in the Environment Bill) which creates an indicative biodiversity quality score pre- and post-construction. Developers must monitor and maintain habitat creation or other net gain measures for a minimum of 30 years, and this must be set out clearly as part of a planning application. Where long-term land use change is required as part of off-site net gain (and/or habitat compensation) provision, the use of conservation covenants is encouraged. These are voluntary but legally binding agreements which continue even after a landowner has parted with the land, to ensure that the conservation value of the land is protected.
- 3.4.9. In seeking to secure biodiversity net gain (or provision of compensatory habitat under the mitigation hierarchy) developers will be expected to consider the restoration and re-creation of priority and locally important habitats, the protection and recovery of priority species and measures to enhance the existing and potential Ecological Network.

Section 3: The Environment and Climate Change

- 3.4.10. Developers will be required to deliver a minimum 10% net gain from all relevant development. In addition, they will be expected to incorporate biodiversity enhancements in and around the built environment where there are suitable opportunities. These can include bird boxes, bat boxes, reptile hibernacula, bee houses, and other features which will contribute to the wider green infrastructure of the development.
- 3.4.11. Guidance on achieving net gain and enhancements is set out in the Dorset Biodiversity Appraisal Protocol and will be incorporated into the Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document to further guide and inform development.
- 3.4.12. Documents such as the National Design Guide (MHCLG, 2019), Biodiversity Net Gain Good Practice Principles for Development (CIEEM, IEMA, CIRIA, 2019) and the emerging BS8683 British Standard for Net Gain (in draft) should also be referred to.

Nature Recovery Network and Ecological Networks

- 3.4.13. Planning Practice Guidance states that “the Nature Recovery Network is an expanding and increasingly connected network of wildlife rich habitat across England”, and that “Local ecological networks can make a significant contribution to developing the Nature Recovery Network”. In Dorset, the Dorset Environmental Records Centre produce regularly updated Ecological Network Maps of the potential and existing ecological network for the Local Nature Partnership. These will be used to underpin Dorset’s emerging Nature Recovery Network and must be used to identify opportunities for habitat compensation (if required) and net gain. This will help ensure that the ecological network is capable of delivering a wide range of ‘ecosystem services’ such as improvements to health and wellbeing, flood risk management and climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Local Nature Recovery Strategy

- 3.4.14. The Environment Bill includes a requirement for the production of Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS). LNRS should set out priorities and opportunities for protecting and restoring nature in the area. They will be a useful tool to guide development and associated provision of compensatory habitat and net gain. While the Dorset LNRS is in draft, developers should refer to the Dorset Ecological Network (existing and potential) Maps and the Dorset Biodiversity Strategy, 2010, as well as areas identified as strategic Green Infrastructure such as Stour Valley Park and the Portland Quarries Nature Park. Documents such as the Weymouth and Portland Urban Wildlife Corridors and Stepping Stones (DERC, 2020) report should also be used to identify local opportunities for compensatory

Section 3: The Environment and Climate Change

habitat creation and net gain. Use of these sources will ensure that development contributes to the restoration and enhancement of biodiversity in Dorset.

ENV3: Biodiversity and net gain

- I. Proposals for development should avoid harm to biodiversity. If significant harm cannot be avoided proposals must incorporate adequate mitigation or (as a last resort) compensation. Where harm cannot be avoided and adequate mitigation or compensation is not proposed, permission will be refused.
- II. Development (other than that exempt under the terms of the Environment Bill) must deliver a minimum of 10% net gain in biodiversity through the restoration and re-creation of habitats forming part of the existing and proposed Ecological Network.
- III. Wildlife enhancements will be secured where appropriate within the built environment for all scales of development.
- IV. Developments will provide for the long-term monitoring and management of biodiversity features retained and enhanced within the site and for features created off-site to compensate for development impacts or to enable delivery of net gain.
- V. All new, enhanced and restored biodiversity provision should seek to be an exemplar of best practice and innovation in its design and on-going management.
- VI. Proposals where the primary purpose is to conserve or enhance biodiversity and deliver a net gain for such objectives will be supported in principle where this accords with other policies in the Local Plan.

Q: Biodiversity and net gain

- 1: Do you agree with the suggested approach and what it is trying to achieve?
- 2: Do you agree with the suggested wording?
- 3: How could the paragraph / policy / section / chapter be amended to reflect your concerns?

3.5. Landscape

Introduction and approach

- 3.5.1. Dorset's unique environment makes it a special place to live, work and visit and one of the council's priorities is to help to deliver sustainable development while protecting and enhancing the environment. Dorset includes two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs), two Heritage Coasts and many other 'valued landscapes'. Outside these designated areas, landscapes (and seascapes) may still be attractive, may play an important role in the setting of settlements, and may be popular with local people.
- 3.5.2. As all landscapes in Dorset are important, our approach is to ensure that they are not harmed by development that would detract from their character and visual quality. In assessing harm to landscapes (and seascapes), the council will take account of any direct, indirect and cumulative impacts. Indirect impacts could be caused, for example, by changes to drainage which could affect the landscape downstream of a development. Cumulative impacts could be caused, for example, by the extension of an existing development which already causes harm due to its character or nature.
- 3.5.3. Special considerations also apply in AONBs, Heritage Coasts and other 'valued landscapes' in line with national policy.

Information requirements

- 3.5.4. Developers should demonstrate that they have fully considered the context of their proposals, which will require sufficient information to be supplied with any application so that the council can fully assess the likely impacts of the proposed development on the landscape.
- 3.5.5. All major development applications must be accompanied by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) carried out by a qualified professional in accordance with current guidelines published by the Landscape Institute. Applications for smaller developments may require an LVIA or landscape appraisal if the proposals are likely to impact on landscape character and / or be visually intrusive in the wider setting. Further guidance is provided in the council's validation checklist.
- 3.5.6. In order for the impacts of a development on the landscape to be assessed, all applicants should provide:
 - an assessment of the existing landscape / townscape character of the site and its intrinsic / visual qualities, including features such as trees, patterns of hedgerow, woodland, topography and watercourses;

Section 3: The Environment and Climate Change

- an assessment of sensitivity of the landscape to the development proposed;
 - an assessment of the landscape and visual impact of a proposal (including the potential cumulative impacts), which should demonstrate how the landscape character, qualities, sensitivity and wider setting have informed the proposed application. This should include evidence of the sensitive incorporation of local character and important landscape features into the proposed scheme;
 - measures to mitigate the impacts on the landscape together with evidence of their effectiveness; and
 - evidence that opportunities to improve and enhance the character and quality of an area have been taken (including, where appropriate, measures to enhance the existing local green infrastructure network in accordance with Policy ENV1).
- 3.5.7. Landscape and seascape character assessments and townscape appraisals are available on the council's website and the AONBs' websites and should be used to guide the principles of the design and mitigation measures.

Designated landscapes

- 3.5.8. Dorset includes various designated landscapes of the highest quality, where special considerations in national policy apply.

Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty

- 3.5.9. A large proportion of the county is covered by the two designated Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB): the Dorset AONB; and the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB. AONB designation gives statutory recognition to the national importance of the landscape and the council will have regard to the conservation and enhancement of this natural beauty when making planning decisions. In considering how proposals may affect the landscape and scenic beauty of the AONBs, consideration will be given to impacts on: the distinctive character of the landscapes; local landscape features; and special qualities, such as tranquillity and remoteness.
- 3.5.10. Proposals should not conflict with the aims and objectives of the relevant AONB Management Plan and developers will be required to demonstrate how they have had regard to them.
- 3.5.11. The council will seek to protect the AONBs from development which is outside the designated areas, but which would cause harm to its landscape character or adversely affect its natural beauty or harm the setting of the designated area (for example because of its visual prominence).

Heritage Coasts

- 3.5.12. Most of the Dorset coastline falls within either the West Dorset Heritage Coast or the Purbeck Heritage Coast. All areas of defined Heritage Coast, except a small

Section 3: The Environment and Climate Change

area west of Chickerell, lie within and are subject to policies that protect the Dorset AONB. The small section of the West Dorset Heritage Coast that lies outside the Dorset AONB is protected by policy ENV4.

Other 'Valued Landscapes'

- 3.5.13. A non-designated area may be considered to be a valued landscape if it shows demonstrable physical attributes that make it special. The identified physical qualities of a landscape can be established through the use of the most recent landscape character assessments. The physical attributes that make a landscape valued include: landscape quality (condition); scenic quality; rarity; representativeness; conservation interests; recreation value; perceptual aspects and associations. The appraisal of these attributes will help to establish whether the landscape is 'valued' in national policy terms. If this is not possible, a full Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) may be required to make that judgement.
- 3.5.14. Neighbourhood Plans can have a role in identifying 'valued landscapes' based on their physical attributes.

ENVV4: Landscape

- I. All development should conserve and enhance the landscape and seascape. Development should respond positively to the local and wider context of the proposal site and should avoid adverse impacts on existing features.
- II. Where an adverse impact is unavoidable, mitigation measures should be incorporated into the development proposal in order to reduce this impact. Mitigation should result in no significant adverse impacts on the landscape or seascape.
- III. Mitigation measures must be appropriate to and make a positive contribution to the character of the landscape / seascape setting of the area. Measures should be adequate and proportionate to mitigate:
 - any adverse impacts on the existing landscape character and key landscape features; and
 - any adverse impacts on visual amenity.
- IV. Development which significantly harms the visual quality or landscape / seascape character and / or fails to take opportunities to conserve and enhance these qualities will be refused.

AONB

- V. Within an AONB, major development will be refused unless there are exceptional circumstances and it can be demonstrated to be in the public interest. Minor development within an AONB or affecting its setting, will only be permitted if:

Section 3: The Environment and Climate Change

- it does not harm the landscape and scenic beauty of the AONB and its setting; and
- it does not conflict with and contributes towards the aims and objectives of the relevant AONB Management Plan.

Heritage Coast and the AONB

- VI. Development within the section of the West Dorset Heritage Coast that lies outside the Dorset AONB will only be permitted if it does not harm the special character of the area. Major development will only be permitted if it is compatible with the special character of the Heritage Coast.

Other valued landscapes

- VII. Where development is proposed in an area either designated as a valued landscape in the development plan or that possesses the physical attributes that enable the area to qualify as valued landscape, the impacts of the development on that landscape will need to be weighed against the benefits of the proposal. Developments that have significant adverse impact on the identified qualities of the valued landscape will be refused.

Q: Landscape

- 1: Do you agree with the suggested approach and what it is trying to achieve?
- 2: Do you agree with the suggested wording?
- 3: How could the paragraph / policy / section / chapter be amended to reflect your concerns?

3.6. Protecting and enhancing heritage assets

- 3.6.1. Dorset benefits from a rich and diverse range of heritage assets which contribute to local character, distinctiveness and a sense of place. In addition to a World Heritage Site, over 9,200 Listed Buildings, nearly 1,000 Scheduled Monuments, 174 Conservation Areas and 39 Registered Parks and Gardens, Dorset's historic environment includes a vast range of non-designated heritage assets, including

Section 3: The Environment and Climate Change

buildings of local importance, non-registered historic parks and gardens, historic and cultural features of the landscape and non-scheduled archaeological sites. Dorset's Historic Environment Record (HER) provides information about many of these heritage assets.

- 3.6.2. The conservation of the historic environment contributes to sustainable development by bringing wider social, cultural, and economic benefits. This is achieved through the processes set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and associated Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). Further guidance, including technical guidance on specific conservation topics, is available from Historic England and other heritage bodies.
- 3.6.3. National policy aims to protect all designated and non-designated heritage assets in a manner that reflects their significance. Where a development proposal would affect a heritage asset (or assets), national policy requires an assessment of the significance of the relevant asset (or assets) and an evaluation of the harm to the significance that would result. Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset requires clear and convincing justification. The effect of a development proposal on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in decision-making.
- 3.6.4. Dorset Council will apply national policy and guidance and have regard to guidance from Historic England and other heritage bodies when making decisions on development proposals affecting heritage assets.

Designated heritage assets

- 3.6.5. Designated heritage assets are designated (or listed) under statute. Some heritage assets, such as listed buildings, benefit from statutory protection, requiring specific statutory duties to be exercised or specific statutory tests to be applied in assessing the impact of a development upon them. They may also be subject to a separate specific heritage-related consent regime.
- 3.6.6. World Heritage Sites are sites, places, monuments or buildings of Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) to all humanity. Most of Dorset's coastline forms part of the Dorset and East Devon Coast World Heritage Site (also known as 'The Jurassic Coast'). It was designated by UNESCO in 2001 because of its natural, rather than cultural, significance. World Heritage site designation brings no additional statutory controls but protection is afforded through national planning policy and other designations that may cover the site. Much of the Dorset coast is also defined as Heritage Coast.
- 3.6.7. Scheduled Monument designation provides protection for nationally important monuments and archaeological remains. Works affecting a scheduled monument are likely to require prior written consent from the Secretary of State for Digital,

Section 3: The Environment and Climate Change

Culture, Media and Sport (known as Scheduled Monument Consent) as well as planning permission.

- 3.6.8. Conservation Areas: local authorities have a duty to designate areas of special architectural or historic interest as conservation areas and to make sure their character and appearance is preserved or enhanced. In designating conservation areas, consideration is given not only to individual and groups of buildings but also to their surrounding townscape, landscape and setting. Many of the conservation areas in Dorset have appraisals that describe their character and identify special features.
- 3.6.9. Tighter planning controls exist in conservation areas with consent required for the demolition of buildings and for works to trees. The council may make Article 4 directions to remove permitted development rights in all or part of a conservation area where important features are being degraded.
- 3.6.10. Listed Buildings: Buildings 'listed' as being of special architectural or historic interest are protected by law. Listing covers the whole property, inside and out, any object or structure fixed to it, and any object or structure within the building's curtilage that was built prior to 1 July 1948.
- 3.6.11. Proposed works to listed buildings may require listed building consent as well as planning permission. Listed building consent is required for any works which would affect its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest and so, depending on the nature of the works, this could include repairs when these are extensive or affect particularly significant elements of the building.
- 3.6.12. The register of Historic Parks and Gardens is intended to celebrate designed landscapes of note, and encourage appropriate protection. Parks and gardens of national significance are identified by Historic England and listed in its Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest as either Grade I (international importance), Grade II* (exceptional historic interest), or Grade II (special historic interest). Entry on the register is a material consideration when determining a planning application.

Non-designated heritage assets

- 3.6.13. Non-designated heritage assets receive no statutory protection, but national policy establishes that the effect of development on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account when a planning application is determined.
- 3.6.14. Buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes are considered to be non-designated heritage assets where they demonstrate architectural, artistic / aesthetic or historic interest; offer a cultural connection to the past; are locally

Section 3: The Environment and Climate Change

significant through association with notable persons or events; or add significantly to the character or appearance of an area.

- 3.6.15. Non-designated heritage assets that have already been identified include locally listed heritage assets, non-registered parks and gardens and undesignated archaeological sites. Though many are identified in legacy 'Local Lists', Conservation Area Appraisals and Neighbourhood Plans, many more remain to be identified. Applicants are encouraged to consider the potential for non-designated heritage assets at the earliest stages of development proposals.
- 3.6.16. Archaeological sites of regional or county importance are not legally protected. However, an undesignated archaeological site which is shown to be of equivalent importance to a Scheduled Monument will be given the same level of protection as a designated heritage asset in accordance with national policy.

A positive strategy for the historic environment

- 3.6.17. Heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource that can contribute significantly to the understanding of the heritage of a place and enhance the quality of life of existing and future residents and visitors. The best way to ensure the longevity of heritage assets is to ensure that they are regularly maintained and have viable uses consistent with their conservation. The council will work positively and strategically to achieve this aim including in relation to heritage on the 'at risk register'.
- 3.6.18. To enable the enjoyment of the historic environment, the council will work to explain and develop a better understanding of the importance of the historic environment by:
- producing and reviewing Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans and considering the possibilities for enhancements and additional protection, e.g. through Article 4 Directions;
 - working with communities to identify non-designated heritage assets through 'Local Lists', Conservation Area Appraisals and Neighbourhood Plans; and
 - maintaining a local 'buildings at risk' register of Grade II listed buildings.
- 3.6.19. To guide development in respecting the historic environment, the council will develop plans and strategies including:
- using site allocation policies, masterplans, design briefs, design codes and detailed design policies to avoid or minimise harm to the significance of affected heritage assets and their settings;
 - providing advice and guidance to neighbourhood plan groups in addressing the historic environment in Neighbourhood Plans;
 - producing topic-specific guidance notes and Supplementary Planning Documents on heritage-related themes as necessary;

Section 3: The Environment and Climate Change

- helping to create successful places for businesses, for example by contributing to and supporting public realm strategies in town centres; and
 - supporting strategies to develop heritage-led tourism and heritage-led regeneration.
- 3.6.20. The Council will work with partner organisations and applicants to:
- develop and implement management plans affecting historic landscape and natural features including the AONBs and the Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site;
 - encourage the early use of pre-application advice service to ensure that heritage assets are considered from the outset of a development proposal and so that heritage assets are seen as an opportunity rather than a constraint to development;
 - encourage appropriate energy efficiency improvements through a 'whole-house approach', informed by an understanding of the construction of the building to guide appropriate repair, maintenance and retrofit;
 - encourage the sustainable reuse and adaptation of existing buildings in preference to demolition;
 - explore opportunities to address heritage assets on the national and local Heritage at Risk registers (working with Historic England and other partners) to encourage the appropriate repair and reuse of these assets; and
 - address unauthorised works or ongoing neglect and deterioration of heritage assets by utilising statutory enforcement powers, where necessary.

Assessing significance

- 3.6.21. When considering development proposals that may have a direct or indirect impact on one or more heritage asset, it is important to assess the significance of any assets concerned. This includes the contribution made by the setting of any assets affected.
- 3.6.22. Statements of heritage significance submitted in support of a planning application should be impartial and objective. The statement should demonstrate a thorough familiarity with the affected heritage assets. It should not simply justify a scheme that has already been designed. The scope and design of the proposal should be informed by the assessment of significance and not the other way around.
- 3.6.23. The information provided in any 'statement of heritage significance' should be proportionate to the significance of the asset and no more than is needed to understand the potential impact of a development proposal. However, the analysis to inform the statement should be as full as necessary to demonstrate that the significance of the heritage asset and the potential impacts of the development proposal have been understood. All heritage assets that may be affected by the

Section 3: The Environment and Climate Change

- proposal will need to be considered through the statement of heritage significance.
- 3.6.24. For buildings of Grade I and Grade II* listing, or those which show a complex evolution, applicants should provide a detailed appraisal (also referred to as a Conservation Statement) which both identifies and assesses significance and also identifies scope for change and areas for retention. This should consider cumulative impacts of change to the heritage asset and also the impact of the proposal on nearby heritage assets.
- 3.6.25. Dorset has a large number of nationally important heritage assets such as historic houses, castles, parks and gardens. These assets are often complex, with multiple layers and interests to consider and specific pressures on their management. Where development is proposed, Conservation Management Plans should be produced to draw together all that is significant about the asset, assessing why it matters and how it will be conserved and managed whilst balancing pressures and needs for change. These Conservation Management Plans should take a long-term view of the future of the heritage asset.
- 3.6.26. Where Conservation Statements and Conservation Management Plans are provided, they should incorporate the statement of heritage significance.
- 3.6.27. Applications affecting known sites of archaeological importance must be accompanied by the results of an archaeological assessment and where necessary, a field evaluation, in order that an informed decision can be made on the application. Where it is reasonable to assume that previously unrecorded archaeological remains exist on a site, the council will require a desk-based assessment and, if necessary, a more detailed assessment such as a field evaluation. Advice on the information required in any particular case is available from the council's archaeologists

Assessing harm

- 3.6.28. In determining planning applications the council will consider the impact that proposed development will have on the significance of a heritage asset, recognising that impacts can be positive, negative or neutral.
- 3.6.29. When considering the impact of proposals on heritage assets, the council's assessment will be guided by finding a solution that will avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal. The council will work proactively with applicants to determine whether such conflict is necessary or if proposals could be taken forward in a different way to sustain and, where possible, enhance the assets.
- 3.6.30. Recognising that impacts can be positive, the council will encourage development proposals which:

Section 3: The Environment and Climate Change

- are sympathetic to their historic context in terms of form, scale, mass, materials, setting and any other aspects that contribute to the significance of affected heritage assets;
 - demonstrate high-quality design which contributes to local character and distinctiveness;
 - bring vacant or redundant heritage assets back into an appropriate and optimum viable use in a manner consistent with their conservation;
 - minimise the impact on visual or non-visual aspects of setting that contribute to the asset's significance; and
 - where appropriate, successfully integrates modern design approaches into historic settings.
- 3.6.31. Different considerations apply when considering the direct or indirect impacts development may have on different types of heritage assets. When assessing proposals affecting the Dorset and East Devon Coast **World Heritage Site**, the Council will have particular regard to the Jurassic Coast Partnership Plan, which aims to:
- protect the site's Outstanding Universal Value (OUV);
 - conserve its natural heritage; and
 - promote the sustainable use and enjoyment of the site.
- 3.6.32. Recognising that impacts can be positive, the council will encourage development proposals in **Conservation Areas**, which:
- preserve or enhance the characteristics which contribute to the significance of a Conservation Area, such as settlement pattern and the form and use of buildings; and
 - avoid adverse impacts on and loss of buildings, significant spaces, views, and any elements which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a Conservation Area.
- 3.6.33. Buildings within Conservation Areas are often characterised in terms of their contribution to its character or appearance (i.e. positive, neutral or negative). As designated areas of special architectural and historic interest, most buildings in Conservation Areas are usually considered to be positive contributors.
- 3.6.34. Buildings will typically only be considered to be negative contributors to Conservation Areas when they demonstrate incongruous or poor design, scale or inappropriate materials. Poor condition of historic buildings through lack of regular maintenance is not usually sufficient for a building to be considered negative unless in exceptional cases, such as sites or buildings of long-standing vacancy or dereliction where circumstances have prevented reasonable maintenance or use.

Section 3: The Environment and Climate Change

- 3.6.35. When assessing proposals that affect a **listed building**, the council will have particular regard to the impacts on the original plan form, roof, walls and openings as well as interior and exterior features. Recognising that impacts can be positive, the council will encourage development proposals affecting listed buildings, which:
- retain the legibility of historic plan-form, both the original form and that arising from subsequent alterations which reflect changes in occupancy, use or circulation (e.g. extensions or changes to openings and internal walls); and
 - maximise the retention of historic fabric, such as roof structures, masonry, structural timbers, historic floors, doors and windows, again including both original fabric and that associated with subsequent alterations.
- 3.6.36. In cases where the extent of the curtilage of a listed building is not clear, an assessment of the extent of the curtilage will be required, which should encompass considerations such as historical and current ownership and spatial / functional relationships.
- 3.6.37. The council will have a presumption against the demolition of listed buildings or a total loss of significance through other means and will encourage sustainable and innovative approaches to reuse and adaptation.
- 3.6.38. In assessing proposals that may impact upon **non-scheduled archaeology**, the council will have particular regard to:
- the intrinsic importance of the remains and their settings;
 - the need for development and the availability of alternative sites;
 - the opportunities for mitigating measures and whether the remains are preserved in situ; and
 - the potential benefits, particularly to education, recreation and tourism.

Weighing public benefits against harm

- 3.6.39. In decision-making, the council will weigh the 'public benefits' of a proposal against the 'harm' caused to the significance of a heritage asset. The greater the significance of a heritage asset and the greater any harm to such significance, the greater the amount of public benefit that will need to be demonstrated in order for a proposal to be acceptable. Conversely, the greater the positive contribution to conserving, revealing and enhancing the significance of a heritage asset or securing a use for the asset that is appropriate, viable and consistent with its conservation, the greater the likelihood of support for development.
- 3.6.40. **Public benefits** are those that would benefit the wider community and not just private individuals or organisations. However, benefits do not always have to be visible or publicly accessible. In the widest sense, a public benefit may help to fulfil the planning system's role in securing sustainable development. The scale of any

Section 3: The Environment and Climate Change

expected public benefits will need to be established, and will be weighed against the harm through the decision making process.

- 3.6.41. Where there is evidence of deliberate neglect or damage to a heritage asset, measures to improve the deteriorated state of the heritage asset will not be regarded as a public benefit for the purposes of decision-making.
- 3.6.42. **Harm:** Where proposals would have an overall negative impact on a heritage asset, the council will seek to establish whether the scale of harm to its significance is: less than substantial; substantial; or total loss. Any level of harm to a designated heritage asset will require clear and convincing justification.
- 3.6.43. Developers will be expected to demonstrate that reasonable steps have been taken to avoid or minimise harm caused to the significance of a heritage asset and that the public benefits could not be achieved in an alternative and more appropriate or sustainable way. When considering these issues, the council will have regard to:
- whether public benefits can be delivered in an alternative or more sustainable way;
 - whether all reasonable efforts have been undertaken to mitigate the extent of harm to significance;
 - whether the works required are the minimum to secure the long-term future of the heritage asset;
 - whether the proposed use is the 'optimum viable use', taking into account that this might not be the same as the most economically viable use;
 - whether there is evidence of deliberate neglect or damage to a heritage asset; in these cases the deteriorated state of the heritage asset will not be regarded as a public benefit for the purposes of decision-making; and
 - whether proposals have a serious adverse impact on one or more key aspects of the significance of a heritage asset, in which case the harm is more likely to be substantial.
- 3.6.44. Where development would result in significant change to the character of a heritage asset (e.g. farm building conversions) or in exceptional cases, where substantial harm or loss is permitted, the council will require a programme of historic building recording. The manner and method of recording should be proportionate to the nature of the loss and the importance of the asset. The council will also require that this record be made publicly accessible through local archives and appropriate online repositories.
- 3.6.45. The council may also impose measures to ensure that any approved replacement development proceeds and / or to secure the structural integrity of any remaining or adjoining structures / features.

Section 3: The Environment and Climate Change

Heritage assets at risk

- 3.6.46. Every year Historic England publishes a list of designated heritage assets (specifically Scheduled Monuments, Grade I and II*) most at risk of being lost as a result of neglect, decay or inappropriate development. The council also maintains a local 'buildings at risk' register of Grade II Listed Buildings.
- 3.6.47. In exceptional circumstances, where a heritage asset is at risk and no viable use can be established to bring the asset back into use or secure it in a manner compatible with its reason for designation, it may be appropriate to enable development that would not normally be permitted, to facilitate the conservation and enhancement of the asset. In such exceptional circumstances, the applicant would need to demonstrate that other uses of the asset which do not conflict with local planning policies have been fully and rigorously explored. This provision may apply unless there is evidence of deliberate neglect or damage to the heritage asset.

Hidden/unidentified heritage assets

- 3.6.48. Dorset has significant potential for undesignated archaeological remains and a great deal of archaeological material has yet to be discovered. Similarly, important features and fabric of listed buildings can often be hidden due to later phases of construction or alterations.
- 3.6.49. Applications for development on sites which have the potential for hidden or unidentified heritage assets should be accompanied by an assessment of the likelihood of the site containing previously unidentified remains of heritage interest. Where there is reasonable evidence indicating the likely presence of such features on site, further survey work or evaluation may be required, including where necessary a field evaluation.
- 3.6.50. The sheer amount of heritage in Dorset means that there is the possibility for previously unrecorded heritage assets to come to light during the planning process. In these cases, the council will establish if these interests are sufficient to merit consideration in planning decisions as non-designated heritage assets.

Section 3: The Environment and Climate Change

ENV5: Heritage Assets

The impact of development proposals affecting heritage assets will be assessed against the significance of the heritage assets being affected.

- I. Development proposals should avoid or minimise harm to the significance of heritage assets, taking into account the contribution of their setting, and ensure that they are conserved in a manner consistent with their significance.
- II. Where possible, opportunities to enhance or better reveal significance should be identified and these will be taken into account when assessing the impact of the development proposal.
- III. When considering applications for development that would harm the significance of a non-designated heritage asset regard will be given to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the asset. Development will only be permitted if the scale of harm or loss is not outweighed by the significance of the asset.
- IV. Direct harm to locally important archaeological remains will not be permitted unless the public benefits demonstrably outweigh their significance. In such cases, a programme of recording, analysis and publication will be required.
- V. Where harm to / loss of a heritage asset can be justified, any lost features should be recorded and their significance assessed and these findings should be made publically available. Appropriate steps will be taken to ensure the new development will proceed after any justified loss has occurred and to safeguard the structural integrity of any retained or adjoining structures / features.
- VI. In exceptional circumstances, a proposal for enabling development may be supported if it would secure the long-term conservation and enhancement of a heritage asset considered to be at risk. Such development will only be permitted if:
 - it can be demonstrated that it would not be possible to secure the long-term conservation and enhancement of the heritage asset in ways that are more consistent with relevant planning policies;
 - it can be demonstrated that the enabling development is the minimum necessary to secure the long-term conservation and enhancement of the heritage asset; and
 - the benefits of the enabling development outweigh the dis-benefits of departing from relevant planning policies.

Q: Heritage assets

- 1: Do you agree with the suggested approach and what it is trying to achieve?
- 2: Do you agree with the suggested wording?
- 3: How could the paragraph / policy / section / chapter be amended to reflect your concerns?

3.7. Geodiversity

3.7.1. The geology of Dorset is internationally, nationally and locally recognised. It is considered to be important for its scientific and educational value, whilst also underpinning the landscape character of the area, its agriculture, and its public amenity importance.

The Dorset and East Devon Coast World Heritage Site

3.7.2. The Jurassic Coast Partnership Plan 2020-2025 identifies the 'Outstanding Universal Value' (OUV) of the World Heritage coastline in Dorset and East Devon and as a strategic aim seeks the protection, conservation and enhancement of the World Heritage Site (WHS) and its setting through local planning policy. The document's OUV statement identifies the following OUV attributes:

- Stratigraphy (the rock record) and structure
- Palaeontological record
- Geomorphological features and processes
- Ongoing scientific investigation and educational use, and role in the history of science
- Underlying geomorphological processes in the setting of the Site

3.7.3. The Partnership Plan highlights the geological value of the WHS, and identifies a significant opportunity to promote the role of geodiversity within the area's landscapes; with an emphasis on the presentation of the site and people's ability to use and enjoy it.

Section 3: The Environment and Climate Change

- 3.7.4. A key characteristic of the WHS is its high rate of erosion, creating a dynamic coastline which maintains rock exposures and the productivity of the coastline for fossil discoveries. Development requiring increased coastal defences would therefore be harmful to the OUV of the site.
- 3.7.5. Although of natural, rather than cultural significance, national and local policies relating to designated heritage assets (policy ENV5) will be applied where proposals may have the potential to affect its significance, including its setting.
- 3.7.6. When refusing the proposed Navitus Bay Wind Park, the Secretary of State accepted that the proposals would change how the WHS would be experienced or enjoyed in its surroundings, and so would have adverse implications for the site's significance and OUV. Consequently, how a development could adversely affect the use and enjoyment of the World Heritage Site will be a consideration when determining planning applications.

Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites

- 3.7.7. At the local level, Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites (RIGS) are protected for their scientific and educational value. There is sometimes potential for designation of alternative sites and the creation of new exposures. The policy therefore allows some flexibility in protecting these sites, except where the features concerned are not capable of being re-created elsewhere.

ENV6: Geodiversity

- I. Development within the World Heritage Site, or that which is likely to affect its setting, will only be permitted if it can be satisfactorily demonstrated that the 'Outstanding Universal Value' of the coastline and its geology will be preserved. Potential harm to the World Heritage Site will be evaluated with consideration of the following:
 - its significance (including its setting);
 - its attributes in relation to the 'Outstanding Universal Value' and
 - the presentation, use and enjoyment of the site.
- II. Development should maintain Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites (RIGS) for their scientific and educational value. Development that significantly adversely affects local geological features will not be permitted unless comparable sites can be identified or created elsewhere or the impact adequately mitigated through other measures.

Q: Geodiversity

- 1: Do you agree with the suggested approach and what it is trying to achieve?
- 2: Do you agree with the suggested wording?
- 3: How could the paragraph / policy / section / chapter be amended to reflect your concerns?

3.8. Achieving high quality and sustainability in design

- 3.8.1. Good design is a requirement in every location and at every scale of development from large scale mixed use schemes to minor extensions and changes to commercial units and shop fronts.
- 3.8.2. Good design and place-making has a fundamental influence on the environment, the economy and on people's lives. They are essential to achieving the aims of sustainable development, resilience to climate change and improvements to health and wellbeing. Good design creates places that:
 - are appropriate to their location and context;
 - are attractive and durable and function effectively;
 - enhance and support communities and the requirements of its residents;
 - enable and support healthy lifestyles; and
 - are resilient to climate change.
- 3.8.3. Design also influences how we feel about a place and should make places special and unique – something that is often referred to as 'a sense of place'.
- 3.8.4. It is accepted by Government that high quality, sustainable design should be the aim of all who are involved in the development process and Dorset Council has the firm intention to significantly raise the standard of design and the quality of development across the county.
- 3.8.5. The following principles of good design link closely to other policies in the local plan, particularly Policy ENV4: Landscape, Policy ENV5: Heritage assets, Policy ENV1: Green Infrastructure: Strategic approach, Policy ENV3 Biodiversity and Net

Section 3: The Environment and Climate Change

Gain, transport policies and other environmental policies. They are relevant to both urban and rural settings and will be used in the decision making process.

Figure 3.5: Principles of good design

Quality	Principles of good design
Permeability	The route network follows a clear hierarchy and provides multiple connections within and between existing built and natural environments. They are designed to an adoptable standard and to be safe and accessible, prioritising people above vehicles and supporting active travel.
Legibility	Places are clearly connected to their surrounding environments providing spaces that are clear and simple to navigate. Existing landscape and townscape views are safeguarded. Landmarks and other way- finding features are included within developments with new routes aligned to key views. Buildings are designed to reflect their context, function and importance.
Lively public realm	Public and private spaces are clearly defined with active frontages overlooking public areas. Public spaces are attractive and designed to encourage activity and continual public use.
Safety and security	Routes and spaces are carefully planned to ensure that they will be well used with doors and windows overlooking them. There is a clear definition between public and private spaces. Layout and design take account of public safety and security so that people feel safe and the fear of crime, malicious threats and antisocial behaviour does not undermine quality of life or social cohesion.
Identity and distinctiveness	Places respond positively to their landscape and townscape setting with an appropriate mix of building densities, types, sizes and uses. Layout, design, architectural style and use of materials are relevant in their setting and promote local distinctiveness whilst also creating places that have their own identity where more modern and innovative design is not discouraged.
Amenity	The impact of development on the surrounding area is carefully considered and effective mitigation is incorporated into development proposals. Places are attractive and tranquil

Section 3: The Environment and Climate Change

Quality	Principles of good design
	with no excessive overshadowing, loss of privacy, noise or pollution in places people expect to enjoy.
Inclusiveness and functionality	Places have facilities that are located and designed to be accessible to all users. Layouts (including parking provision) is considered and convenient for residents and visitors. Internal and external private spaces are sufficient in size to ensure occupants can undertake day-to-day tasks and have a high quality living environment.
Adaptability and resilience	Buildings are adaptable to meet the needs of their occupiers now and in the future. Buildings are highly energy efficient and designs meet national standards as a minimum. Buildings are flexible so that they can be adapted to meet changing requirements in the future. Proposals include natural features that improve resilience to climate change.
Healthy and inclusive	Health and wellbeing is supported with designs including opportunities for people to meet and layouts that encourage walking and cycling. Safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities, local shops, allotments and access to healthier food choices are provided.
Biodiversity	Places retain and protect existing natural features and habitats (including trees) and include new interconnected, multi-functional blue and green infrastructure networks that connect beyond the site boundary, support biodiversity and improve the quality of life for residents. Incorporate the requirement for minimum 10% biodiversity net gain into site design at the earliest stage, to integrate with provision of other green infrastructure. This network is integrated in a holistic and imaginative way, includes innovative Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and contributes to the creation of quality open spaces and a 'sense of place'.

- 3.8.6. A design led approach to development is crucial for successful place-making and achieving high quality, sustainable design. It should be integrated into the development process at the earliest stage and throughout the evolution of a scheme. The level of detail required will be proportionate to the scale and

Section 3: The Environment and Climate Change

complexity of the site and the development proposals. The Council strongly advises applicants for major schemes or in sensitive locations to engage with the Council on the design of a scheme at the earliest opportunity in the pre-application process to ensure a collaborative, proactive and positive approach ensuring good design is embedded from the start.

- 3.8.7. Developers should adhere to the local design expectations set out in the Dorset Council Design Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which will be produced alongside this plan. In addition regard should be had to national design guidance and good practice guides, neighbourhood plans; other SPDs; Landscape Character Assessments; masterplans and village / town design statements. Developers should also effectively engage with local communities about design at an early stage in the development process so that expectations can be clarified and views can be taken into account.
- 3.8.8. Plans should be based on a thorough analysis of the site and its wider setting and demonstrate a clear and logical design process that responds to the principles of good design as set out in Figure 3.5. This should be articulated fully within the material submitted to support development proposals.
- 3.8.9. For strategic housing sites, applicants should submit a masterplan covering the whole site for approval at an early stage. For sites that the Council considers to be particularly sensitive and / or substantial in scale, a Design Code may also be necessary. The council will assess development proposals using the design toolkit Building for a Healthy Life (BHL).
- 3.8.10. Schemes of a particularly sensitive nature; or where design discussions have reached an impasse will be expected to engage with a design review panel that operates under the nationally accepted Design Review Principles and Practice guidance document. Their advice and recommendations should inform any design changes and will also be used by the Council as part of the decision making process.

Section 3: The Environment and Climate Change

- 3.8.11. Reflecting national policy, developments that do not meet the principles of good design, as set out above and therefore fail to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions will be refused permission.

ENV7: Achieving high quality design

- I. Development proposals, excluding those without external alterations, should clearly demonstrate the design rationale of the scheme. This rationale should demonstrate how the principles of good design have been addressed through the consideration of the site and its wider setting.
- II. Planning permission will only be granted for proposals that are of high quality and that follow the principles of good design and place making.
- III. Permission will be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions.

Q: Achieving high quality design

- 1: Do you agree with the suggested approach and what it is trying to achieve?
- 2: Do you agree with the suggested wording?
- 3: How could the paragraph / policy / section / chapter be amended to reflect your concerns?

3.9. The landscape and townscape context

- 3.9.1. The local context of a development site is the landscape and townscape character of the immediate areas and its relationship with the wider surroundings. Features and attributes that contribute to the context of a place are what give an area its unique identity and distinctiveness. It includes landscape and natural features; settlement patterns; existing buildings and qualities within the townscape and the function of a place.

Section 3: The Environment and Climate Change

- 3.9.2. New development can have a significant visual and environmental impact on local context. It is important to ensure that all development proposals (including associated servicing and infrastructure) take the opportunities available to improve the character and quality of an area. Understanding and appreciating the context of a place early on in the development process is essential to ensuring that proposals are appropriate and successful in their design response. This will ensure that the identity and distinctiveness of a place is enhanced and the overall quality of an area is improved.
- 3.9.3. Although in some locations the context will be less defined it is still important to show an analysis and understanding of a place and how this has informed development proposals. In addition, there are some locations that have suffered from poorly designed development in the past, this does not set a precedent for further poor quality design and instead proposals should repair and improve the area by drawing inspiration from the best local places and buildings.

The siting of buildings

- 3.9.4. The siting and design of buildings plays an important role in how a place functions and contributes to reinforcing local character and a sense of place. Buildings should generally be sited and designed (in terms of scale, mass, architectural quality and material used) to enclose streets and spaces and contribute to legibility and way-finding, making it easier for people to find their way around. Well designed, beautiful buildings with high quality materials can bring variety and vibrancy to an area and contribute to the local distinctiveness of a place.
- 3.9.5. The density of development will differ across the local plan area and higher densities should reflect the sustainability of the location of the site. Higher densities will be more appropriate in town centres and other locations that are well served by public transport. However, the scale, mass and positioning of any new building should be in harmony with the local character of the area or any agreed masterplan for the area.

External space provision

- 3.9.6. Developments should be fit for purpose and designed to ensure that functional elements (such as bin stores, recycling facilities, drying areas, cycle parking, mobility scooter storage and private amenity / garden space with associated storage and composting facilities) will be successfully accommodated, having regard to the uses proposed and character of the area. These facilities will also need to be provided to a level that is appropriate to the scale of development proposed.
- 3.9.7. The provision of private amenity / garden space should reflect the character of the area and the size and type of dwelling proposed; and take account of the likely

Section 3: The Environment and Climate Change

number of occupants. Existing mature trees and hedges should however be incorporated within the public realm of the development rather than within private gardens. Provision of outside space of at least equivalent to the ground floor footprint of a dwelling is seen as good practice. The provision of amenity garden space below this level would not generally be considered sufficient.

Landscaping

- 3.9.8. Landscaping is fundamental to the success of a place and should form an integral part of any development scheme. Proposals should be developed alongside layout plans to ensure that they relate well to each other and to the wider character of the area. Soft landscaping (trees and planting) are important as they contribute to biodiversity, reduce the impact of development and provide colour, shape and texture to the built environment. Hard landscaping (surface materials and some forms of enclosure) can have a significant impact on the quality of a place. Materials should be relevant and appropriate to their local context and be of high quality, durable and easily maintained.

Extensions

- 3.9.9. The scale and design of extensions can have a significant impact on the individual character of a building and how it relates to its surroundings. This is particularly noticeable in the roof form as this reflects the shape and symmetry of the entire building. In general, extensions should be visually subsidiary to the original building to avoid overwhelming the original character of the building. In some cases proposals that are not subservient to the host building may be acceptable if they achieve visual enhancement to both the building and surrounding area. The roof pitch of any extension should reflect the pitch of the original building and where possible, the inclusion of dormer windows should be restricted to the rear of a property, if they do not form part of the character of the area. Extensions should also be well-related to the original building in terms of architectural quality, window proportions and materials.

Section 3: The Environment and Climate Change

ENV8: The landscape and townscape context

- I. All development proposals should be based on a clear response to the context of a site, its immediate setting and the surrounding built environment and its landscape character and should respect and enhance the established townscape.
- II. Provision should be made for the retention, enhancement and future maintenance of features that contribute to an area's identity and distinctiveness.
- III. The siting and design of buildings (in terms of scale, mass, density, architectural quality and materials) will respect and enhance the character of the surrounding area, reinforce a sense of place and actively improve legibility and character.
- IV. Developments should contribute positively to the creation of a successful and attractive places through the inclusion of appropriate hard and soft design features to integrate into the character of the surrounding area.

Q: Landscape and townscape context

- 1: Do you agree with the suggested approach and what it is trying to achieve?
- 2: Do you agree with the suggested wording?
- 3: How could the paragraph / policy / section / chapter be amended to reflect your concerns?

3.10. High standards of environmental performance

- 3.10.1. The use of buildings in the UK accounts for around 35% of greenhouse gas emissions with approximately two thirds of this being from residential properties. A significant amount of greenhouse gas emissions also arise during the construction of new buildings. It is therefore important that new development, conversions and changes of use achieve high standards of environmental performance.
- 3.10.2. High standards of environmental performance will be sought in larger developments through a nationally recognised assessment process and for

Section 3: The Environment and Climate Change

individual buildings through both design considerations and building regulations. Particular care is required in relation to historic buildings where proposals to improve environmental performance need to be compatible with their heritage interest.

- 3.10.3. For larger developments where masterplans are to be prepared (including new mixed-use communities and single-use developments of a significant size) a nationally recognised assessment of environmental performance (such as BREEAM Communities) should be carried out. Such an assessment should be undertaken in parallel with the master-planning process to ensure that sustainable solutions are worked into the design early on, reducing the need to rework plans at later stages.
- 3.10.4. New buildings which promote high levels of sustainability should not be incompatible with the existing character of an area if they have been designed with both objectives in mind.
- 3.10.5. Energy consumption can be reduced if buildings and layouts are designed to a good standard of environmental performance from the outset. Methods which may be appropriate include:
 - applying passive solar design principles to the design of buildings and the spaces between and around them;
 - southerly facing roof slopes used for solar thermal and / or photovoltaic installations, which, where possible should be integrated into the roof design;
 - maximising opportunities for natural lighting and ventilation to buildings;
 - minimising the amount of unnecessary overshadowing, including impact on existing renewable energy generators dependent on sunlight;
 - putting in place systems to collect rainwater for use;
 - not using those materials that are the most harmful to the environment; and
 - Sustainable Urban Drainage principles (in accordance with Policy ENV14).
- 3.10.6. The Government has recently consulted on proposals to increase the energy efficiency of new homes through the Future Homes Standard. This will be achieved through building regulations and is scheduled to be introduced by 2025. The results of this consultation, once published, will help inform how the local plan addresses the energy efficiency of new homes.
- 3.10.7. In considering improvements for energy conservation it is important to remember that many historic (traditional) buildings perform very differently from modern buildings and expert advice should be sought when making improvements. The types of improvement that are most likely to be effective and compatible with a historic building (including listed buildings) include:

Section 3: The Environment and Climate Change

- improved draught proofing;
 - increased roof insulation using natural materials;
 - installation of secondary glazing;
 - installation of an energy efficient boiler; and
 - installation of a ground heat source pump.
- 3.10.8. The installation of solar panels or photovoltaics within the curtilage of a historic (listed) building may also be possible provided that these would not irreversibly damage the historic fabric of the building, and that the impact on the listed building, including views of the building, would be limited. The roofscape, together with the location and design of the panels, including choice of materials, colours, specification etc., will all have a bearing on the potential impact.

ENVg: Achieving high levels of environmental performance

- I. New buildings and alterations / extensions to existing buildings are expected to achieve high standards of environmental performance.

Q: Achieving high levels of environmental performance

- 1: Do you agree with the suggested approach and what it is trying to achieve?
- 2: Do you agree with the suggested wording?
- 3: How could the paragraph / policy / section / chapter be amended to reflect your concerns?

3.11. Shop fronts and advertisements

- 3.11.1. The council will encourage high quality design and materials in shop front development. In some cases it may be desirable to reinstate traditional shop fronts or features. Good quality contemporary shop fronts can have a positive effect where these relate to modern buildings or would otherwise improve the character of the area. Standardised 'off the shelf' designs can be harmful if they lack detail,

Section 3: The Environment and Climate Change

are of inappropriate materials, or detract from the character of the building or area.

- 3.11.2. The design of shopfronts including the features associated with them such as shutters, canopies, awnings, grilles, advertisements and means of illumination can all have a significant impact on the character of an area. It will be important that the design of a shop front gives consideration to the character of the area and respects the heritage associated with it. The historic fabric of a building should not be harmed or lost especially in the case of a heritage asset.
- 3.11.3. The design of a shopfront, including associated advertisements should ensure that the form, size and proportions are in keeping with the building. The level of illumination must respect the building, local character and uses in the nearby area (for example, where there are residential units near to the proposed illumination).
- 3.11.4. So as to create an open and inviting street scene, any security shutters or grilles should be behind the shop window. Alternatively they should be designed as open grilles and their housings should be set behind the existing shop fascia.
- 3.11.5. Advertisements are controlled with reference to their effect on amenity and public safety only, so the regime is lighter touch than the system for obtaining planning permission for development. In terms of amenity, the council will consider the effect on the quality and character of the locality (including impact on landscape, wildlife and historic character), as well as the amenity issues outlined in Policy ENV11. In relation to public safety, the effect on road safety will be the main consideration. In all cases, any cumulative impacts of advertisements on amenity and / or public safety will be taken into account.

ENV10: Shop fronts and advertisements

- I. High quality design and materials in shop front development are expected. Proposals for new or replacement shop fronts, including associated features will normally be permitted if they are compatible with the character and heritage of the area and of the building.
- II. Decisions controlling advertisements will be made in the interests of amenity and public safety.

Q: Shop fronts and advertisements

- 1: Do you agree with the suggested approach and what it is trying to achieve?
- 2: Do you agree with the suggested wording?
- 3: How could the paragraph / policy / section / chapter be amended to reflect your concerns?

3.12. Amenity

- 3.12.1. In relation to development, amenity is any positive element, or elements, that contribute to the overall enjoyment of an area or building. Amenity can be adversely affected through loss of privacy; loss of daylight and sunlight⁵; through the overbearing scale of built development; noise; vibration; unpleasant odours; or intrusion from artificial lighting schemes.
- 3.12.2. For the purposes of this policy, noise sensitive development can include residential development, educational institutions and hospitals; as well as noise sensitive land uses such as parks, greenspaces and cemeteries.

Design

- 3.12.3. Design has a direct influence on the relationship between new and existing development and the distribution of different uses across a site. Good design can be used to help overcome some of the possible adverse impacts on amenity arising from new development. In particular, the design of development should respond to amenity issues through sensitive consideration of the size and position of new buildings, the size and position of features (such as windows, doors and external

⁵ Whilst loss of daylight and sunlight are material considerations in the determination of planning applications, private rights to light are not, and are a legal issue as outlined in Planning Practice Guidance: Paragraph: 008 Reference ID: 21b-008-20140306 and <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/determining-a-planning-application>

Section 3: The Environment and Climate Change

- staircases) in new buildings, privacy screening, hard and soft landscaping, and the layout and distribution of uses.
- 3.12.4. In some cases it may not be possible to overcome amenity issues through design alone. In these instances development may be ruled out either through the impact of the proposed development on the amenity of existing residents or the impact on the amenity of future occupants from existing lawful uses.
- 3.12.5. To ensure adequate privacy in homes, new developments should be designed to minimise overlooking to and from neighbouring development. An appropriate level of privacy at the rear of homes should be provided through either sufficient rear garden depth or orientation and screening to prevent direct overlooking.
- 3.12.6. New development should receive adequate daylight and sunlight to create satisfactory living and working environments. Schemes should be designed to ensure that both proposed developments and any existing adjacent development would receive adequate natural light and any associated open spaces such as gardens, would not be unacceptably overshadowed. The scale, massing and position of development can also have an overbearing and dominating impact on their surroundings which can be exacerbated by changes in landform. Careful attention to the layout and orientation of buildings can avoid issues of inadequate natural light and overbearing development.

Noise

- 3.12.7. The level of noise generated by a development should not give rise to significant adverse impacts on health and quality of life of occupiers or users of neighbouring properties. Noise generating developments include some industrial uses as well as some town centre uses such as takeaways, nightclubs and bars. The council will have regard to the relationship between proposed development which is sensitive to noise and established development and infrastructure which generates noise. Acceptable noise levels will vary according to the noise source, the receptor and the times of day when the noise is generated. This approach is not intended to unduly restrict existing, established businesses that may need to expand unless a significant increase in noise levels would result.
- 3.12.8. The amenity of new development around existing sources of noise, such as main roads and railway lines, can be adversely affected. This impact will need to be given consideration when deciding on planning applications and the appropriate location for development.
- 3.12.9. Bournemouth Airport, which sits outside the Dorset Council boundary, is a significant noise source and a noise level action plan has been produced for the site. The action plan maps the varying noise levels around the airport. The impact

Section 3: The Environment and Climate Change

of noise associated with the airport on proposed development will need to be considered along with whether the impacts can be satisfactorily mitigated.

- 3.12.10. Where noise from development is likely to cause adverse effects on amenity, the council will expect applicants to demonstrate how these adverse effects can be avoided or satisfactorily mitigated. Examples of this include reducing the noise generated at source, limiting or restricting the hours of use, through layout and design and physical noise attenuation measures. The council will refuse planning permission where noise from a development is likely to give rise to significant adverse impacts on amenity taking into account the mitigation proposed.
- 3.12.11. The countryside areas are particularly valued for their tranquillity, particularly in the AONBs. This means that even small increases in noise levels can give rise to significant adverse effects. Noise connected with new development can affect the character of these areas and the way they are enjoyed by visitors and the people who work in these areas. For this reason, particularly within the two AONBs, the level of noise production above the current level will be given consideration through planning decisions.

Unpleasant odours and emissions

- 3.12.12. Sewage treatment works and some employment uses can give rise to unpleasant odours. Similarly, restaurants and takeaways can create odours that may be unpleasant. Whilst such emissions should not be harmful to health, they can adversely affect amenity. Development that has the potential to give rise to unpleasant odours should take all measures possible to minimise the impact on neighbouring uses.

Artificial lighting

- 3.12.13. Lighting schemes can affect the amenities of occupiers and have wider impacts through increasing light pollution leading to a loss of 'dark skies' (particularly in more rural areas), and tranquillity. The glare from lighting schemes can also have an adverse effect on local residents, vehicle users, cyclists, horse riders, pedestrians and some wildlife, such as bats.
- 3.12.14. Although not all proposals for external lighting require planning consent, where it is proposed through a development, applicants will be expected to demonstrate that:
- the scheme is the minimum necessary to achieve its purpose; and
 - light scatter, spillage and glare are minimised through the control of light direction and intensity; and
 - the intensity and daytime appearance of any light fittings and cables would not have a detrimental impact on the character of the surrounding area.

Section 3: The Environment and Climate Change

3.12.15. Where schemes are likely to have a significant adverse impact on local landscape character, Policy ENV4 will apply.

ENV11: Amenity

- I. Proposals for development should be designed to minimise their impact on the amenity and quiet enjoyment of existing and future residents or users within a development and close to it. Development proposals will only be permitted if:
 - they do not have a significant adverse effect on the living conditions of occupiers of residential properties through loss of privacy;
 - they do not have a significant adverse effect on the amenity of the occupiers of properties through inadequate daylight / sunlight or excessive overshadowing, overbearing impact or flicker;
 - they do not generate a level of activity, noise or vibration that will detract significantly from the character and amenity of the area or the quiet enjoyment of residential properties; and
 - they do not generate unpleasant odours unless it can be demonstrated that the effects on amenity, living conditions, health and the natural environment can be mitigated to the appropriate standard.
- II. Development which is sensitive to noise, vibration or unpleasant odour emissions will not be permitted in close proximity to existing sources where it would adversely affect the amenity of future occupants.
- III. Proposals for external lighting schemes (including illuminated advertisement schemes) should be clearly justified and designed to minimise potential pollution from glare or spillage of light. The intensity of lighting should be the minimum necessary to achieve its purpose, and the benefits of the lighting scheme must be shown to outweigh any adverse effects.

Q: Amenity

- 1: Do you agree with the suggested approach and what it is trying to achieve?
- 2: Do you agree with the suggested wording?
- 3: How could the paragraph / policy / section / chapter be amended to reflect your concerns?

3.13. Pollution and contaminated land

Pollution

- 3.13.1. Activities and processes that pollute the air, water or land are generally regulated through separate pollution control regimes operated by pollution control authorities. However, the council will take account of the nature and characteristics of the proposed development, and its relationship with neighbouring development and uses, when assessing the potential individual and cumulative impacts of pollution (for example as a result of air pollution from traffic); and the potential impacts of pollution on the living conditions, amenity, public health and the environment.
- 3.13.2. Poor air quality is damaging at every stage of our lives. Air quality in Dorset is generally good due to its rural nature. However there are two areas where air quality is recognised as an issue and where Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) have been designated. These are in Chideock and Dorchester, with both being designated in response to nitrogen dioxide emissions from traffic. Where appropriate, developers will need to consider the implications of their proposals on air quality; where air quality is an identified issue, they will need to take opportunities to improve it and specifically around the actions in the relevant AQMA action plans. The cumulative impacts of developments in or affecting an AQMA will need to be taken into account in decision making.
- 3.13.3. Groundwater makes a significant contribution to drinking water supplies across Dorset and contributes considerably to the flow of our rivers. Groundwater source protection zones (SPZ), as defined by the Environment Agency, show the level of risk to a groundwater source from contamination. Groundwater can be contaminated as a result of the use of land within the source protection zone including through soakaways and septic tanks and by uses or development that involves storage, or spreading, of waste or pollutants on land. The council will seek to protect groundwater sources when assessing planning applications and may require a detailed hydrological risk assessment in support of a development proposal within an SPZ to inform decisions.

Contaminated land

- 3.13.4. Past developments and processes, such as old gas works and landfill, may have resulted in contamination of land and water resources. These can pose a threat to human health, the natural environment and amenity. Few sites are so badly contaminated that they cannot be re-used at all, but the contamination may limit the range of potential future uses and impact on the cost and viability of development. The council will encourage proposals that help bring contaminated

Section 3: The Environment and Climate Change

sites into productive use. Where a site is affected by contamination, responsibility for securing safe development rests with the developer and / or landowner.

- 3.13.5. Where it is anticipated that contamination may be present near or on a proposed development site, an assessment of the risk to site workers, groundwater, surface water, future occupiers of the site and the wider environment will be necessary. This risk assessment should establish the likely sources, pathways and risks (including cumulative risks) posed to possible receptors as a result of the development. Remedial works to the site will be considered as part of the application for development of the site.

ENV12: Pollution control

Development proposals which will cause unacceptable on- or off-site risk or harm to human health, the natural environment or living conditions, either individually or cumulatively, will not be permitted. Development should:

- I. avoid harmful environmental impacts and health risks for both new and existing development arising from soil, air, water, or land pollution. In particular, impacts on the National Site Network must be avoided, satisfactorily mitigated and, if necessary, compensated in accordance with policy ENV2;
- II. where impacting on an Air Quality Management Area, avoid or mitigate its impact through positively contributing towards the implementation of measures to address the air quality issue including through the provision of green infrastructure and through building design and layout;
- III. prevent deterioration of and where appropriate, enhance water quality including in relation to the groundwater resource; and
- IV. where appropriate, remediate contaminated land to reduce risk to acceptable levels

Q: Pollution control

- 1: Do you agree with the suggested approach and what it is trying to achieve?
- 2: Do you agree with the suggested wording?
- 3: How could the paragraph / policy / section / chapter be amended to reflect your concerns?

3.14. Flood risk

- 3.14.1. Flooding presents a significant risk to people and property. Climate change, and more specifically rising sea levels and changes to the pattern and intensity of rainfall, is likely to have an effect on areas subject to flooding in Dorset in coming years. The risks of flooding have been taken into consideration when preparing this plan and will help to guide future development across Dorset. This policy forms part of the council's strategy for adapting to the effects of climate change.
- 3.14.2. The main river catchments in Dorset include the Stour, Avon, Frome, Piddle, Bride and Brit. The River Yeo also flows from the north of the county into Somerset. Each of these rivers and the many smaller tributaries to these have associated flood plains, some of which cover extensive areas.
- 3.14.3. Along the coast there are several areas which are susceptible to coastal flood risk especially at times of high tide and during storms. Areas where this results in a high risk include the seafront at Swanage, Weymouth, Portland, West Bay and Lyme Regis.
- 3.14.4. The county is particularly susceptible to groundwater flooding with an extensive chalk and upper greensand aquifer extending from North East to South West. This often occurs after periods of prolonged rainfall when groundwater levels rise to above the surface.
- 3.14.5. Large parts of council area are also affected by surface water flooding that often takes place due to intense or prolonged rainfall and can occur away from rivers and the sea. Surface water flooding often happens where the ground is unable to absorb rainfall, for example, due to periods of dry or cold weather, or because drainage systems cannot cope with the volume of water falling on an impermeable surface.
- 3.14.6. Although there are not significant numbers of reservoirs across Dorset, those that do exist also pose a flood risk if they are not correctly maintained.
- 3.14.7. Development will be directed to areas of lowest flood risk to make it safe for the lifetime of the development and not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere. This will be achieved through the application of the sequential and exception tests set out in national policy with the risk of flooding from all sources being taken in account. Through the application of these tests, the council will need to be satisfied that the development is safe for its lifetime and does not increase risk elsewhere.

Section 3: The Environment and Climate Change

Assessing flood risk

- 3.14.8. Flood risk is a combination of the probability and the potential consequences of flooding and considers all potential sources of flooding. The council is preparing a Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) which assesses the risks to the Dorset Council area from flooding. The SFRA also takes account of the effects of climate change on flood risk by identifying those areas that are likely to be at increased risk of flooding in the future. In addition, the Environment Agency publishes data on flooding from different sources.
- 3.14.9. The Environment Agency presents the flood data arising from main rivers and the sea according to different zones:
- Flood Zone 1: low probability (less than 1 in 1000 year probability);
 - Flood Zone 2: medium probability (from main rivers between 1 in 100 year and 1 in 1000 year probability; from coastal flooding is between a 1 in 200 year and 1 in 1000 year probability);
 - Flood Zone 3: high probability (from main rivers it is less than 1 in 100 year probability; from coastal flooding it is less than 1 in 200 year probability).
- 3.14.10. To inform the application of the sequential test, the most up-to-date evidence of flood risk, such as a Level 1 SFRA, should be used alongside advice from the Environment Agency. For sites of one hectare or more, or where development is proposed in an area identified as being at risk of flooding in the SFRA, a site specific flood risk assessment should be undertaken to help inform the development proposal and to enable the council to understand whether the development will be safe over its lifetime.

Avoiding flood risk

- 3.14.11. The sequential test will be used to guide development towards areas of lowest flood risk. The assessed flood risk should be considered when undertaking the sequential test making appropriate allowances for climate change.
- 3.14.12. To enable the council to decide whether a development will be safe over its lifetime, the sequential test should be performed using the alternative site search area parameters set out in Figure 3.6 as a guide. For development proposals that do not fit within one of the broad categories below, applicants should engage with the council prior to an application being submitted.
- 3.14.13. When undertaking the sequential test, applicants should be flexible when considering alternative site options. Sites either 10% larger or 10% smaller should be considered unless there are valid reasons why this is not applicable to the development proposal.

Section 3: The Environment and Climate Change

Figure 3.6: Parameters for undertaking the sequential test site search

Development type	Catchment search area
Dwelling houses (Use Class C3)	The settlement that the proposal is serving or other settlements listed within the settlement hierarchy within the same Functional Area.
Affordable dwelling houses delivered on rural exception sites (Use Class C3)	The boundary for the parish council containing the application site.
Commercial, business and service uses (Use Class E)	Through the application of the retail sequential test, either the boundary of the designated town centre, sites on the edge of this town centre or as an exception, sites out of this centre.
Light Industry that is not appropriate in a residential area (that falls within Use Class E), General industrial (Use Class B2) and storage and distribution (Use Class B8).	The economic area within which the use's market is located.

- 3.14.14. The onus will be on applicants to demonstrate that there are no reasonably available alternative sites that are appropriate for the development within the relevant search area with a lower risk of flooding. Applicants should use the council's SFRA to assess the flood risk on alternative sites. Available sites could include those identified through the council's Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA), or Traveller Accommodation Assessment (TAA) along with sites that benefit from planning consent that have not yet been implemented. In addition, estate agents and land agents may be able to identify appropriate alternative sites.
- 3.14.15. A Sequential Test is not necessary for householder development, small non-residential extensions and changes of use as set out in national policy. Proposals for a caravan, camping or chalet site, a mobile home or park home site will be required to undertake the sequential and exception tests as appropriate.
- 3.14.16. When necessary, and only after it is satisfied that there are no available or appropriate sites at a lower risk from flooding, the council will apply the exceptions test taking into account the flood risk vulnerability⁶ of the proposed uses in order to determine whether the proposed development would be safe and that any residual risk is outweighed by the benefits of the scheme.

⁶ As set out in the National Planning Practice Guidance

Section 3: The Environment and Climate Change

Managing and mitigating residual flood risk

- 3.14.17. In those instances where the risks from flooding cannot be avoided, the council expects applicants to:
- apply a sequential approach at site level by avoiding development in the parts of the site which flood and by locating the most vulnerable elements of the development in the parts of the site with the lowest flood risk;
 - demonstrate that development will not increase flood risks on site or elsewhere;
 - preparing flood warning and evacuation plans; and
 - Incorporate flood resistance and resilience measures into the design of buildings.
- 3.14.18. The council will also explore the opportunities to reduce the causes and impacts of flooding with applicants. In particular, the council will expect applicants to consider:
- the layout and form of development (including green infrastructure):
 - incorporating Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) into the development;
 - safeguarding land within a site for flood risk management purposes; and
 - providing appropriate offsite works that protect and support development and the surrounding area more generally, conferring wider sustainability benefits.
- 3.14.19. Unless otherwise agreed with the Environment Agency, development will not be permitted within an 8 metre buffer zone around an existing flood alleviation scheme where it would adversely impact on the future maintenance, upgrading or replacement of a flood alleviation scheme.
- 3.14.20. The council will support new flood defence and flood management schemes, including river restoration, wetland creation, tree planting on a large scale for natural flood management and flood storage. Proposals for flood defence and flood management schemes will be assessed against relevant planning policies.

Section 3: The Environment and Climate Change

ENV13: Flood risk

- I. Development should be located in areas of lowest risk from flooding. The council will use the sequential test to decide whether there are reasonable alternatives to development within areas at risk of flooding.
- II. Where there are no reasonable alternatives arising out of the sequential test, development will only be approved where, through the application of the exception test, it can be demonstrated that the development will be safe for the lifetime of the development and that the proposal does not increase flood risk elsewhere. In applying the exception test, the wider sustainability benefits of the development proposal will be weighed against the flood risk.
- III. Where opportunities exist, developments should deliver a reduction in flood risk.
- IV. Where residual flood risk is identified on a development site, measures must be incorporated into the proposal to minimise the risk. When making decisions, the inclusion of opportunities to minimise risk will be taken into account including:
 - the layout of the development proposal with built form being located to avoid areas of flood risk within the site's boundary;
 - the location of the most vulnerable uses in areas with the lowest flood risk within the site's boundaries;
 - the provision of safe access and egress at times of flood;
 - the inclusion of flood resilient and resistant measures within the development;
 - the inclusion of SuDS to manage surface water flows
- V. The council will support the relocation of existing highly vulnerable development and essential infrastructure on land at risk from flooding provided:
 - the existing development is lawful;
 - the site for relocation is at a lower flood risk ;
 - the size of any replacement buildings or the application site are not materially larger than the existing buildings or site;
 - the type, scale and location of the replacement development is consistent with relevant planning policies; and
 - the applicant provides for the suitable restoration of the existing site.
- VI. Unless agreed with the Environment Agency, development will not be permitted within an 8 metre buffer around an existing flood alleviation scheme or main river.
- VII. The council will support planning applications for new flood defence and flood management schemes providing they accord with the relevant planning policies.

Q: Flood risk

- 1: Do you agree with the suggested approach and what it is trying to achieve?
- 2: Do you agree with the suggested wording?
- 3: How could the paragraph / policy / section / chapter be amended to reflect your concerns?

3.15. Sustainable drainage systems (SuDS)

- 3.15.1. Development, particularly on greenfield sites, may disrupt and impede the natural processes which take place when rain falls on land and vegetation. Introducing smooth, impermeable surfaces such as hardstanding and the roofs of buildings and clearing vegetation often associated with a site's re-development:
- reduces percolation into the ground, which increases flow rates and the amount of any surface water runoff from a site; and
 - increases the speed of any surface water runoff from a site by reducing interaction with the natural environment, which typically slows runoff and promotes evaporation.
- 3.15.2. Increased flow rates and quantities of surface water runoff from land increase the likelihood of flooding, erosion and pollution. Delivering high quality SuDS as part of greenfield or brownfield development provides an opportunity to help deliver sustainable development including by:
- managing the risks from flooding including taking opportunities to reduce the causes and impacts of flooding;
 - mitigating and adapting to climate change;
 - maintaining and enhancing networks of green infrastructure including safe and accessible green space;
 - providing opportunities for net gains in biodiversity including by contributing to ecological networks; and
 - helping prevent new development from contributing to water pollution.

Section 3: The Environment and Climate Change

- 3.15.3. SuDS should therefore be integrated into development proposals in a holistic and imaginative way so that they form an integral part of the green and blue infrastructure, providing multi-functional benefits, including improving opportunities for biodiversity. Consideration of SuDS design is also included in the Dorset Biodiversity Appraisal Protocol and should be referred to where proposals fall under this process. The council will produce a SuDS Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) to give greater detail on how SuDS can be designed into development proposals.
- 3.15.4. There are a wide range of SuDS available as identified in Figure 3.7. These can offer wider benefits and their multi-functionality is recognised in Policy ENV1. Development proposals should include SuDS that accord with the drainage hierarchy set out in Figure 3.8 ensuring that the proposals will be viable and deliverable.

Figure 3.7: Types of SuDS

SuDS type	Description
Rainwater harvesting	Measures to collect rainwater which falls on roofs and other paved surfaces so that it can be re-used
Soakaways/infiltration	Areas designed to allow water to pass into the ground rather than flow across the ground
Green roofs	Planted layer of soil on a building's roof to help reduce rates of runoff
Permeable paving	Areas of hardstanding that allow for the permeation of surface water into the ground below
Bio-retention systems	Collection of runoff, allowing temporary ponding, and filtering through vegetation and underlying soils
Trees	Supporting evapotranspiration and enhancing biodiversity and shade
Swales/detention & infiltration basins/ponds/wetlands	Areas that slow runoff from a site by storing water as well as treating water and enhancing biodiversity

- 3.15.5. In order to achieve high quality SuDS the council expects applicants to take account of, and where appropriate, apply standards from all of the following when designing a drainage system:
- Defra technical standards for sustainable drainage systems;
 - Dorset Council's Local Flood Risk Management Strategy;
 - The most up-to-date Strategic Flood Risk Assessments available for the area;

Section 3: The Environment and Climate Change

- Any relevant Surface Water and / or Drainage and Wastewater Management Plan(s);
- Relevant Environment Agency Catchment and Flood Risk Management Plan; and
- Any other Dorset-related flood risk management document produced by a risk management authority.

Section 3: The Environment and Climate Change

Figure 3.8: The Drainage Hierarchy

1	Stores surface water runoff for reuse within the development site;
2	<p>Attenuates surface water runoff in ponds, open water features or bio-retention systems within the development site for gradual discharge and:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. uses infiltration techniques which allow surface water runoff to soak into the ground; b. discharges surface water runoff to a surface water body; c. discharges surface water runoff to a surface water sewer or other drainage system; d. discharges surface water runoff to a combined sewer.
3	<p>Attenuates runoff by storing in tanks, or sealed water features, for gradual discharge and:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. uses infiltration techniques which allow runoff to soak into the ground; b. discharges runoff to a surface water body; c. discharges runoff to a surface water sewer or other drainage system; d. discharges runoff to a combined sewer

3.15.6. Applicants will be expected to submit details of an appropriate Surface Water Drainage Strategy to support the development of their site. This should include details of the SuDS that are appropriate to the site. SuDS will be expected as part of a drainage strategy for:

- all major development sites;
- development of land that is at risk from flooding from any source; and
- developments where surface water runoff from the development is likely to increase the risk of flooding from any source, elsewhere.

3.15.7. Sustainable drainage systems that are designed to discharge water into the ground or a surface water body. In some instances SuDS may not be appropriate and it will be for the applicant to demonstrate that this is the case. Examples of where SuDS may not be appropriate include:

- land with insufficiently permeable soils and / or geology; or
- land with a high-water table; or
- unstable land; or

Section 3: The Environment and Climate Change

- contaminated land.
- 3.15.8. Early in the development design process, the drainage strategy for a site should give full consideration to SuDS. Pre-application engagement is recommended to assist with this. Pre-application advice can help to identify, understand and resolve issues associated with the development of a drainage strategy (including appropriate SuDS) which responds to the characteristics of a site and delivers the greatest benefits to the environment and surrounding amenity. Innovative proposals, that maximise multifunctional benefits, are welcomed and should be supported by evidence and brought forward at an early stage. The council expects SuDS to be designed to:
- reduce the causes and impacts of flooding (taking account of the expected effects of climate change);
 - remove pollutants from urban run-off at source and;
 - combine water management with green space with benefits for amenity, recreation, wildlife and biodiversity.
- 3.15.9. Applicants should consider the cost of future management of SuDS schemes over the lifetime of development. At the start of the design process they should liaise with adopting bodies such as water companies and / or highways authorities to ensure that eventual designs meet adoption requirements. A Maintenance & Management Strategy should be submitted to support the development proposal providing clear arrangements and schedules for the long-term operation and ownership of the drainage system proposed.

Section 3: The Environment and Climate Change

ENV14: Sustainable drainage systems (SuDS)

- I. Developments should incorporate appropriate viable and deliverable SuDS set out clearly in a Surface Water Drainage Strategy. These SuDS should be designed to:
 - reduce the causes and impacts of flooding on site or elsewhere;
 - provide opportunities to treat and clean surface water runoff to protect the receiving environment;
 - ensure accessibility for maintenance and amenity;
 - consider the characteristics of the site and its surroundings (including risks from flooding, geology, water table and surface features of land) and use SuDS to enhance the character and nature of the proposed development;
 - respect the appearance and character of the surrounding area (taking particular note of protected landscapes and heritage assets); and
 - contribute towards mitigating the impact of development and achieving net gains in biodiversity.
- II. SuDS must not discharge surface water runoff directly to foul sewer systems but should follow the drainage hierarchy.
- III. Where necessary, financial contributions will be sought for the maintenance and improvement of drainage infrastructure. Development should provide financial contributions as necessary to mitigate impacts on the sewer network and local drainage to ensure there are no adverse effects resulting from the development.

Q: Sustainable drainage systems (SUDs)

- 1: Do you agree with the suggested approach and what it is trying to achieve?
- 2: Do you agree with the suggested wording?
- 3: How could the paragraph / policy / section / chapter be amended to reflect your concerns?

3.16. Land instability

- 3.16.1. Where unstable ground conditions exist there is a risk of landslides and subsidence, which may be triggered by natural processes (such as excess rainfall) or man-made processes (such as through excavation or local drainage systems). Proposals for development could also have the potential to trigger ground movements either within or beyond a development site.
- 3.16.2. To avoid putting people at risk, new development should be directed away from areas vulnerable to land instability. The council will only permit development in these areas if it can be demonstrated that there is no significant risk of instability, or where a significant risk exists, it could be satisfactorily managed to avoid putting people at risk.
- 3.16.3. In areas where there is a risk of land instability, a ground stability report will be required unless:
- the development is unlikely to have the potential to trigger the occurrence of subsidence or land instability either by significantly altering groundwater conditions or by way of a significant change in magnitude of loads applied to the ground (as can reasonably be assessed);
 - surface water runoff is accommodated within existing, fully functioning, piped water disposal systems;
 - the development would have adequate foundations, and for alterations or modifications to existing structures, the existing foundations are capable of supporting the additional loadings⁷; and
 - there is no significant filling or excavation of the ground.
- 3.16.4. Any ground stability report should be prepared by a suitably qualified and experienced geotechnical specialist to provide sufficient evidence to demonstrate that the proposed development will not unacceptably adversely affect ground stability, or that ground instability can be satisfactorily mitigated in the design of the development.
- 3.16.5. The report should show whether the land / site is stable or could be made stable to support the loads imposed over the expected lifetime of the development, whether the development would threaten land stability in the wider local area, and whether any instability could be reduced to an acceptable level by mitigation and stabilisation measures. Any potential impacts on the character of the area,

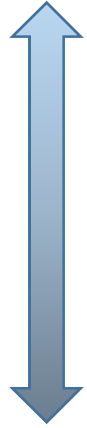
⁷ the combined dead, imposed and wind loads are sustained and transmitted by the development to the ground by use of suitably designed foundations (without requiring adaptation, underpinning, extension or replacement of these foundations at a later stage)

Section 3: The Environment and Climate Change

environmental designations, and public rights of way should also be highlighted. Where necessary to reduce potential risk, a temporary permission may be used to limit the planned lifetime of the proposed development. Restoration conditions may also be imposed.

- 3.16.6. Extensive site investigations have previously been undertaken in the Lyme Regis and Charmouth area. Four slope instability (landslide) zones have been identified in those settlements, as shown on the policies map and described in Figure 3.9 below. However, land instability may be an issue elsewhere across the plan area, for example, due to coastal processes as covered by policies ENV16 and ENV17.

Figure 3.9: Descriptions of Slope Instability Zones

Slope instability zones	Description	Hazard
Zone 1	Areas where there are unlikely to be problems or significant constraints arising from slope instability.	 <p>Lowest</p> <p>Highest</p>
Zone 2	Areas where problems arising from slope instability may impose significant constraints on development.	
Zone 3	Areas where slope instability and/or coastal erosion is likely to impose considerable constraints on development.	
Zone 4	Areas in which there has been severe, destructive slope instability and/or coastal erosion in recent historical times. Development will not be permitted in all but the most exceptional of cases.	

- 3.16.7. In the Lyme Regis and Charmouth areas a ground stability report will be required to accompany planning applications in Zones 2, 3, and 4; subject to the tests listed in paragraph 3.16.3.
- 3.16.8. Due to the impacts of surface water on land stability, drainage systems that are designed to discharge additional surface water into the ground or a surface water body may not be appropriate within areas of land instability.

Section 3: The Environment and Climate Change

ENV15: Land instability

- I. New built development will be directed away from areas subject to land instability or potential land instability to avoid putting people at risk unless it can be demonstrated that the site is stable or could be made stable, and that the development is unlikely to trigger land sliding, subsidence, or exacerbate erosion within or beyond the boundaries of the site.
- II. Proposals for built development in the Lyme Regis and Charmouth Land Instability Zones shown on the policies map will not be permitted unless the following criteria can be met:
 - Proposals for development in zones 2, 3 and 4 are accompanied by an appropriate ground stability report prepared by a suitably qualified and experienced engineer demonstrating that the development can be carried out safely, including any mitigation and stabilisation measures necessary to ensure there would be no adverse effect on slope stability both on and surrounding the site;
 - Development in Zone 3 comprising regularly occupied premises will not be permitted unless there are no suitable alternative sites in lower hazard Slope Instability Zones; and
 - Development in Zone 4 will not be permitted unless it is essential transport and/or utilities infrastructure that cannot be provided on suitable alternative sites in lower Slope Instability Zones.

Q: Land instability

- 1: Do you agree with the suggested approach and what it is trying to achieve?
- 2: Do you agree with the suggested wording?
- 3: How could the paragraph / policy / section / chapter be amended to reflect your concerns?

3.17. Coastal erosion

New development in Coastal Change Management Areas (CCMAs)

- 3.17.1. Much of Dorset's coastline is at risk from coastal change. Coastal change includes any physical change to the coastline arising from erosion, coastal landslip, permanent inundation or coastal accretion. Coastal slope instability is closely related to coastal change and is covered by Policy ENV15 which covers land instability more generally. Managing coastal change needs to take account of the interests of coastal communities, the economy and the environment. The overall aim is to secure a sustainable and affordable approach to the threats arising from coastal change, whilst respecting natural processes and conserving natural habitat.
- 3.17.2. The most recent Shoreline Management Plans⁸ (SMPs) set out an overarching strategy for managing the coast over three time horizons ('epochs'); short (0 to 20 years), medium (20 to 50 years) and long term (50 to 100 years). Some communities along the coastline will be affected by a change in policy approach between the first and second 'epochs' identified in the SMPs. The council recognises that the changes in the coastline connected with a transition between different management approaches will, in some cases, create particular challenges for the affected communities.
- 3.17.3. In addition to the SMP for the western part of the Dorset coast, Coastal Risk Planning Guidance (CRPG) was produced in 2013 for the western stretch of coastline from White Nothe (east of Weymouth) to Lyme Regis. This guidance sets out the nature of the risks posed to coastal areas from future coastal change.
- 3.17.4. The council has used the predicted coastal erosion zones presented within the SMPs and the CRPG to identify Coastal Change Management Areas (CCMAs). These are parts of the shoreline that are likely to be significantly affected by coastal change over the next 100 years over the three time 'epochs'. The council has used this information to identify a single CCMA region on the policy map to show the vulnerable area which is projected to be at risk over the next 100+ years.
- 3.17.5. Parts of the coastline within the plan area that have existing coastal defences include Weymouth Town Centre, West Bay Harbour, Swanage Bay, and Lyme Regis Harbour. Whilst these areas have an SMP policy of 'hold the line' there is a need for maintenance and improvement of defences for which funding is largely uncertain. Elsewhere along the coastline, the SMP policy allows for the managed realignment of the shoreline or no active intervention in natural processes.

⁸ The Poole and Christchurch Bays Shoreline Management Plan Review (2011), and the South Devon and Dorset Shoreline Management Plan Review (2011)

Section 3: The Environment and Climate Change

Applying these policies means that sections of the coastline may be subject to coastal change.

- 3.17.6. Within CCMA's new dwellings will not be appropriate. Essential infrastructure and Ministry of Defence (MoD) development may be appropriate subject to the impact of the development being minimised and managed through appropriate mitigation measures.
- 3.17.7. All other types of development within CCMA's will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. A vulnerability assessment must be prepared to support any development proposals. This assessment will need to consider the level of risk from coastal change, the characteristics of the site and the nature of the proposed development. Any potential impacts on the character of the area, environmental designations, and public rights of way should also be highlighted within a submitted vulnerability assessment. The relevant SMP and CRPG data should be used to inform the preparation of the assessment and determine whether a site is likely to be at risk from coastal change in the short, medium or long term.
- 3.17.8. Where necessary to reduce potential risk, temporary permissions may be used to limit the planned lifetime of proposed developments along with appropriate restoration conditions.
- 3.17.9. The council will also take account of the policy recommendations in the relevant SMPs relating to the future management of Dorset's coastline when considering planning applications relating to existing and proposed coastal defences.

Section 3: The Environment and Climate Change

ENV16: New built development in Coastal Change Management Areas

- I. New residential development (including replacement dwellings and changes to residential use) will not be permitted in CCMA. Any other development that is permitted within the CCMA may be subject to a time-limited permission. Extensions to existing residential properties may be appropriate.
- II. Essential infrastructure and Ministry of Defence (MoD) installations may be permitted in CCMA provided:
 - there are clear plans to manage any impacts arising from proposed development on coastal change; and
 - proposed essential infrastructure will not have an adverse impact on rates of coastal change elsewhere; and
 - any adverse impacts on rates of coastal change elsewhere are minimised with suitable mitigation.
- III. Other new development or changes of use may be permitted within a CCMA where it is supported by a vulnerability assessment which demonstrates that development will:
 - be safe over its planned lifetime without increasing risk to life or property, or requiring new or improved coastal defences; and
 - not prevent communities from sustainably responding to the impacts of climate change; and
 - not restrict natural processes from responding to the impacts of climate change; and
 - not affect the natural balance and stability of the coastline, or the rate of change to the shoreline elsewhere.

Q: New built development in Coastal Change Management Areas

- 1: Do you agree with the suggested approach and what it is trying to achieve?
- 2: Do you agree with the suggested wording?
- 3: How could the paragraph / policy / section / chapter be amended to reflect your concerns?

Section 3: The Environment and Climate Change

Replacement or relocation of existing development in Coastal Change Management Areas (CCMAs)

- 3.17.10. Where existing development is at risk from coastal change, the relocation of the development to an area that is not subject to risk of coastal change, outside CCMAs, may be acceptable. Planning permission for replacement development will only be permitted where the existing development is lawful and is likely to be at risk within the short to medium term (i.e. within the next 50 years). In order to assess these risks, the council will have regard to the location of the building within the CCMA and applicants will be required to submit detailed assessment of risk within a coastal erosion vulnerability assessment.
- 3.17.11. The relocation should aim to reduce significantly the risk from coastal erosion. In addition, the new site should be appropriate for the relocated use so as to not result in conflict with neighbouring uses for example the relocation of an industrial use to a residential area or where there is an impact on protected areas such as wildlife sites or heritage assets.
- 3.17.12. In most instances, the relocated use should be focused on the more sustainable settlements as listed in the settlement hierarchy, in order to minimise the distance travelled to everyday services and facilities. An exception to this would be where there is a functional need for the relocated building to be located elsewhere, for example, a rural worker's dwelling or an agricultural building associated with a farm holding.

Section 3: The Environment and Climate Change

ENV17: Replacement or relocation of existing development in Coastal Change Management Areas

- IV. Proposals for the relocation of existing lawful development from within a CCMA to an area of reduced risk from coastal processes must meet the following criteria:
- the existing building must be at an immediate or medium term risk from coastal erosion (i.e. within the next 50 years); and
 - the replacement building must be located outside the identified CCMA; and
 - the replacement building should be within or adjacent to a settlement listed in the settlement hierarchy unless there is a functional need for the building to be located elsewhere; and
 - the use of the new building is not materially different to that of the building to be relocated; and
 - the replacement building and hardstanding should be of a similar size to that being replaced.
- V. The character, appearance and use of the replacement building should be appropriate to the new location.
- VI. In all instances, the replacement building should be safe for a period of at least 100 years.
- VII. The existing building must be demolished and the site restored within three months of the occupation of the replacement.

Q: Coastal erosion

- 1: Do you agree with the suggested approach and what it is trying to achieve?
- 2: Do you agree with the suggested wording?
- 3: How could the paragraph / policy / section / chapter be amended to reflect your concerns?

4. Housing

4.1. Introduction

- 4.1.1. House prices in Dorset are significantly above the national average whilst wages are relatively low, resulting in housing that is unaffordable to many people who wish to live here. One of the key objectives for the Dorset Council Local Plan is to provide suitable housing to meet the identified need and support the Government’s objective of boosting the supply of homes.
- 4.1.2. The proposals set out in this chapter seek to ensure the supply of homes is of the right type for those who wish to live in Dorset. The overall number of homes that are needed across the area is established through the Government’s standard methodology and is based on projected household growth and local affordability. The local plan Development Strategy (Section 2) establishes the overall housing target, along with the strategic approach to delivering homes across the plan area, focusing on the most sustainable locations. This section sets out how this supply of housing will be managed to deliver the homes that people in Dorset need.
- 4.1.3. Delivering the right type of housing is important to delivering the following Strategic Priorities, with the role of the local plan highlighted.

Strategic Priority	The role of the Local Plan	Relevant Strategic Policies in this Section
<p>Suitable Housing</p> <p><i>We will work with the development industry, town and parish councils, registered housing providers, community land trusts and local housing partners to deliver housing, including affordable housing, that meets the needs of Dorset. We want to enable those who grow</i></p>	<p>Housing is one of the key outputs of the local plan. Housing, including affordable housing, will be provided across the plan area through a number of policies.</p>	<p>Housing site allocations</p> <p>DEV1: The housing requirement and need for employment land in Dorset DEV9: Neighbourhood plans</p>
		<p>Affordable housing</p> <p>HOUS1: Housing mix HOUS2: Affordable housing HOUS3: Affordable exception sites</p>
		<p>Self-build</p> <p>HOUS6: Self-build & custom build housing</p>
		<p>The housing needs of specific groups</p> <p>HOUS4: Care villages HOUS5: Residential care homes</p>

Section 4: Housing

<p><i>up in Dorset to stay in Dorset.</i></p>		<p>HOUS1: families with children HOUS1: Housing mix</p> <p>HOUS1: Students HOUS1: Student accommodation and HMOs</p> <p>HOUS11: Gypsy, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople site allocations HOUS12: Sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople</p>
<p><i>Strong, healthy communities</i></p> <p><i>We will work to build and maintain strong communities where people get the best start and lead fulfilling lives.</i></p>	<p>The local plan will enable communities to thrive by providing community infrastructure and green space giving opportunities for people to meet and participate in their community and enabling active participation in community life.</p>	<p>HOUS2: Affordable housing HOUS3: Affordable housing exception sites HOUS4: Care villages HOUS5: Residential care homes</p>

- 4.1.4. Most housing built over the plan period is likely to be conventionally constructed, however modular homes can also play their part in meeting housing needs. Proposals for modular homes will be subject to the same policies, including design policies, as conventionally constructed housing.

4.2. Housing Mix

- 4.2.1. Providing a mix of housing types and sizes across a development helps to create inclusive communities and more vibrant neighbourhoods. The housing needs of all sections of the community, including families, single people, people with disabilities and the elderly, should all be met through the creation of mixed communities on development sites. The exact mix of housing types will need to vary depending on the settlement and to reflect the need for different types and sizes of homes of different tenures and this will change over time. To respond to these changes a flexible approach is required whilst also encouraging an appropriate mix of types of homes in an area.
- 4.2.2. The mix and size of dwellings should not simply follow the tenure of the houses with affordable homes being smaller, as there is often a need for larger affordable homes,¹ for example for families or for disabled people.
- 4.2.3. Within Dorset, there is a greater proportion of elderly people than the national average². Those of over 65 years old make up more than 28% of the population of the plan area and this proportion is increasing year on year. Their need for homes can often be different to that of the majority of the population due to reduced mobility for example.
- 4.2.4. As part of the overall mix of housing, the needs of those with a disability and the elderly can be met more effectively through the provision of homes which are more accessible than the conventional home or which can be adapted to make them more accessible. The standards for Accessible and Adaptable Dwellings are set out in requirement M4(2) of the Building Regulations.
- 4.2.5. The provision of accessible and adaptable dwellings, as part of the overall housing mix, is an important part of meeting Dorset's housing needs. These homes are suitable for those with or without mobility problems and are adaptable to suit care needs as they change. This enables residents to remain in their own home, reducing the upheaval and costs associated with moving home. On major residential development sites (those of 10 or more dwellings or of 0.5 hectares or more), it is expected that at least 20% of the overall housing provided across all

¹ Affordable housing means subsidised housing as defined in National Policy.

² Percentage of the population over 65 years old in Dorset is 28.6% compared to England and Wales at 18.3%. (ONS 2018 Mid-year estimates).

tenures will be provided at the accessible and adaptable dwellings standard established through building regulations.

HOUS₁: Housing Mix

- I. New residential developments of all tenures should contribute towards achieving sustainable and balanced communities through an appropriate mix of homes of different sizes, types and affordability.
- II. On major residential development sites, at least 20% of all dwellings across all tenures should be provided at the Accessible and Adaptable Dwellings standard as established through building regulations unless robust justification is provided to explain why this cannot be achieved on site.
- III. Where specific need for a certain mix of different sizes, types and affordability of homes has been identified through a neighbourhood plan, development proposals should look to meet this need.

Q: Housing mix

1. Do you agree that major residential development sites should provide at least 20% of the homes as accessible and adaptable homes to meet the needs of the elderly and less mobile?

4.3. Affordable Housing

- 4.3.1. Affordable housing is housing that is subsidised and therefore less costly for the occupier than market housing. Affordable housing is defined in national policy as housing provided for sale or rent for those whose needs are not met by the market. There are different types of affordable housing including:
- affordable housing for rent (including social rent, affordable rent and affordable private rent);
 - starter homes;
 - discounted market sales housing; and
 - other affordable routes to home ownership, such as shared ownership housing
- 4.3.2. There is a significant need for affordable housing in Dorset to meet the needs of those who cannot afford to rent or purchase homes on the open market. House price to earnings ratios for the Dorset Council area are significantly higher than the national average and also higher than that for the South West³. This is primarily due to high demand for homes, the constraints to housing delivery and the relatively low wages in some sectors of the local economy.
- 4.3.3. Affordable housing for rent, discounted market sales housing and other affordable routes to home ownership typically provide a discount (usually of around 20%) below local market rents/values. As market values vary considerably from area to area, so does the cost of this type of affordable housing. This means that affordable housing is not always affordable to everyone especially those in the greatest need.
- 4.3.4. Social rented housing typically provides a greater discount (often up to 40%) below local market rents and is therefore affordable to a greater proportion of the population. However, being subject to a greater subsidy social rented housing is more costly to provide. Although social rented homes are not available to buy, they are available for long-term rent.

Affordable housing threshold

- 4.3.5. In line with national policy, major development sites⁴ will be expected to make provision for affordable housing. In designated rural areas, affordable housing will be sought on sites of 5 to 9 dwellings. Provision at these thresholds will also be

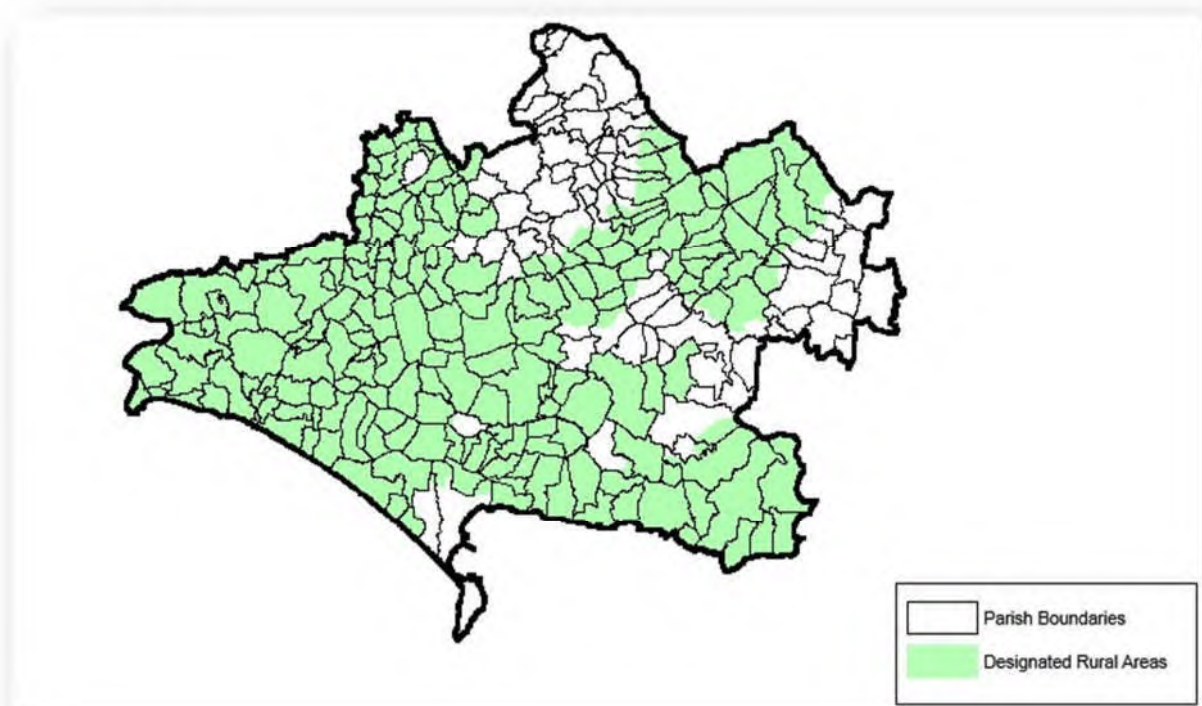
³ Ratios of lower quartile house price to lower quartile workplace based earnings are often used as they represent those who are looking to start off on the housing ladder. The 2019 ratios are: Dorset 10.71, South West 8.91, South East 10.46, England 7.27. Source ONS

⁴ For residential development, a 'major development' is one where 10 or more homes will be provided or the site is of 0.5 hectares or more.

expected on sites that form part of a mixed-use scheme. Designated rural areas include areas within the two AONBs as well as areas designated by order of the Secretary of State as a rural area. These are shown on the policies map.

- 4.3.6. Having a lower threshold in designated rural areas will help to balance the overall delivery of new homes against the delivery of affordable housing. Often, given the smaller size of sites in rural areas, the rate of delivery of affordable housing can be low if a higher threshold is used. However, given the characteristics of development finance on smaller sites, a lower threshold may restrict the provision of housing overall.

Figure 4.1: Designated rural areas in Dorset



Proportions of affordable housing

- 4.3.7. The proportion of affordable housing sought on open market housing sites will reflect the differences in financial viability of development in different parts of the local plan area. Evidence suggests that there are areas where affordable housing can be sought at a higher level than others and that these higher levels of provision would meet a greater proportion of the need. Affordable housing will therefore be sought on open market residential development sites at different rates across three broad zones as shown in Figure 4.2. The percentage of affordable housing that will be sought and the exact boundaries of the zones will be fixed through more detailed viability evidence.

Figure 4.2: proportions of affordable housing requirements in the 3 zones

	Areas that fall within each zone	Affordable housing requirement ⁵
Zone 1	The Isle of Purbeck (excluding Swanage), the Piddle and Cerne Valleys, Cranborne Chase and rural northern Dorset	Requirement within the range of 35% to 45%
Zone 2	The remainder of Dorset outside Zone 1 and Zone 3	Requirement within the range of 30% to 40%
Zone 3	Gillingham, Crossways, Wool, Weymouth Town Centre and on Portland	Requirement within the range of 20% to 30%

- 4.3.8. The amount of affordable housing required on a development site may be reduced where a vacant building is brought back into a lawful use or is demolished to be replaced by a new building. The intention is to incentivise the reuse or redevelopment of brownfield land and buildings. In such circumstances, the developer will be offered 'vacant building credit' equivalent to the existing gross floorspace of any relevant vacant buildings when the affordable housing contribution (whether on-site, off-site or financial) is calculated.

Tenure split

- 4.3.9. Within Dorset there is a high level of need for affordable housing. Affordable home ownership products will meet the needs of a proportion of those whose needs are not met by the open market but there will also be a need for subsidised rented homes. National policy currently requires local plans to make provision for at least 10% of affordable homes to be provided as affordable home ownership products.
- 4.3.10. Affordable rented homes meet the needs of a proportion of those who cannot meet the cost of affordable home ownership products however they are also unaffordable to many particularly where market rents are high. Social rented homes provide a greater discount below market rents and are therefore more affordable to those in greatest need.
- 4.3.11. A proportion of this need can be met through housing association developments or community-led developments (through neighbourhood plans or community land

⁵ The exact affordable housing percentages to be sought within each zone will be fixed through a detailed assesment of development viability within each area.

- trusts). Within these types of developments, the affordable housing tenure split will be established to respond to the evidence of local need at the time.
- 4.3.12. There will however also be a need for market-led housing schemes to deliver affordable housing. Evidence suggests that provision of affordable home ownership products at about 30% of the total will meet a proportion of the need, though provision at levels above this are likely to oversupply this type of product. First Homes⁶, delivered at 25% of the overall affordable housing supply on a site, will fall into the definition of Affordable Home Ownership and therefore make up part of the 30% requirement.
- 4.3.13. The remaining need is for homes for affordable rent and for social rent with the greatest need being for the latter. Social rented products are more costly to provide due to the higher level of subsidy associated with their provision. There is therefore a balance to be struck between the provision of housing to more closely meet the levels of need and the delivery of a higher proportion of affordable homes. For this reason, as a starting point, 30% of the overall affordable housing provision should be affordable rented homes with 40% being delivered as social rented homes. More detailed viability work will be undertaken to establish exactly what proportion can be delivered on development sites.
- 4.3.14. In order to create balanced communities on development sites, affordable housing should be designed to be indistinguishable from other housing. In order to create such 'tenure blind' developments, the affordable units should be distributed amongst the market housing and not clustered in a few locations. Affordable housing could for example be provided in a short row of terraced houses and by being pepper-potted around larger sites.

On- and off-site provision and financial contributions

- 4.3.15. The expectation is that affordable housing provision should be made on site. An exception may be made to this where off-site provision or a financial contribution of broadly equivalent value can be robustly justified. In such cases there should be compelling evidence that off-site provision or a financial contribution would be of greater all-round benefit, for example, through the improvement or more effective use of existing affordable housing stock. Any alternative agreed approach to on-site provision should contribute to the objective of creating mixed and balanced communities.

⁶ First Homes are proposed as homes sold at a discount of at least 30% of market rates prioritised for local first time buyers and key workers.
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/864267/Guide_to_First_Homes.pdf

- 4.3.16. Where on-site provision at the relevant proportion indicates that a fraction of an affordable home should be provided (above the number of whole units required), a financial contribution will normally be sought for that fraction. The level of financial contributions sought and guidance on how it should be calculated will be established through further evidence.

Assessing viability

- 4.3.17. Where the level of affordable housing on a site differs from the level set out in Figure 1.2 above on viability grounds, a viability assessment will be required. Any viability assessment should be prepared by the District Valuer (or another mutually agreed independent assessor) to a methodology agreed by Dorset Council. Any assessment (and its independent validation by the council), will be funded by the applicant.
- 4.3.18. The assessment should be submitted at the same time as the relevant planning application, which is likely to require pre-application discussions. Any assessment should adopt an 'open-book' approach with the aims of being transparent, reducing areas of contention, and reaching an agreed position on viability.
- 4.3.19. Applicants will be expected to provide clear evidence of efforts to identify possible sources and levels of housing grant (or other subsidy) that may be available to make a scheme viable and clear evidence of any attempts to secure such grant (or subsidy). Applicants will be expected to take a flexible approach to achieving the proportion of affordable housing sought in policy, for example by considering whether a scheme could be made viable by adopting an alternative split of affordable tenure models.
- 4.3.20. Where it is not economically viable to deliver the proportion of affordable housing sought, the council will seek to secure the maximum amount of affordable housing achievable within the viability constraints identified at the time of the assessment.

HOUS2: Affordable housing

- I. Housing on major sites and sites of 5 to 9 net additional dwellings in 'designated rural areas' will contribute to the provision of affordable housing.
- II. Such developments should contribute to the provision of affordable housing in the following proportions:
 - 40% of the total number of dwellings on sites in Zone 1;
 - 35% of the total number of dwellings on sites in Zone 2; and
 - 25% of the total number of dwellings on sites in Zone 3.
- III. In most cases, where one or more affordable homes are being provided, these should be provided on the open market site. Financial contributions towards the provision of affordable housing will be required for any shortfall that cannot be delivered on the site.
- IV. Applicants seeking to justify a lower level of affordable housing provision will be expected to provide an assessment of viability, which should adopt an 'open book' approach and take account of grant funding or any other subsidy. A lower level of provision will only be permitted if the assessment shows that it is not economically viable to make the minimum level of provision being sought and there are good reasons to bring the development forward.
- V. The affordable homes should be provided at:
 - a maximum of 30% (but not less than 10%) affordable home ownership products; and
 - a minimum of 30% social rent; and
 - a minimum of 40% affordable rent.
- VI. The type, size and mix of affordable housing on a development site should help to address the identified and prioritised affordable housing needs in the local area, resulting in a balanced community of housing and/or flats that are 'tenure blind'.

Q: Affordable housing

1: Do you agree that affordable housing should be delivered by developments at different rates across Dorset?

2: Do you agree with the suggested tenure split?

4.4. Affordable Housing exception sites

- 4.4.1. An exception site is a small site that is allowed as an exception to normal local plan policies, in areas where housing would not normally be permitted, in order to deliver affordable housing in perpetuity. Requiring these exception sites to provide 100% affordable housing keeps land values relatively low, helping to meet identified local housing needs.
- 4.4.2. Exception sites should be small scale (proportionate in size to the existing settlement) and located within or on the edge of villages or towns. Small-scale exception sites within the green belt may be appropriate in accordance with national policy for green belt and the impact of the proposal on the Green Belt purposes. Larger-scale sites that could result in unbalanced communities are not normally acceptable as exception sites.
- 4.4.3. National policy indicates that exception sites should seek to address the needs arising from a local community by accommodating households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection. Any local need for affordable housing, which could not be met in other ways (for example on the open market), should be identified and should relate to the town, main settlement, parish, or (in the case of small rural communities) group of parishes where the proposed scheme would be located.
- 4.4.4. The number, size, type and tenure split of the affordable dwellings proposed on an exception scheme should aim to address the identified local need for affordable housing.
- 4.4.5. In designated rural areas, the greatest need is often for social or affordable rented housing. Affordable home ownership products, including shared ownership housing, and self- and custom-built housing that meets the national definition of affordable housing, may also be permitted on exception sites if a local need has been identified. The homes on these sites should remain affordable in perpetuity.
- 4.4.6. Outside designated rural areas, national policy is to be amended to allow for 'First Homes' exception sites. These will enable the delivery of First Homes for purchase by local first-time buyers along with a proportion of other types of affordable housing.
- 4.4.7. As exception schemes are permitted on sites that would not normally be used for housing, particular care should be taken to ensure that the character, scale and design of any scheme enables it to be successfully integrated into its surroundings.
- 4.4.8. Affordable homes on an exception site should remain available to meet local housing needs in perpetuity and future occupancy will be prioritised for people with a local connection. The future re-sale value of any affordable home ownership

products on an exception site (including any shared ownership and self- and custom-built homes) will have their future re-sale value fixed in perpetuity below open market value to ensure that they remain affordable for subsequent occupiers.

- 4.4.9. Any self-build home on an exception site should have a gross internal area of no more than 20% above the nationally described space standard (including built-in storage) for a dwelling with the corresponding number of bed spaces, unless a larger dwelling is required to meet special needs. The council may also remove permitted development rights to extend any affordable home ownership products on exception sites to ensure that they remain of a size that is likely to be affordable for subsequent occupiers.
- 4.4.10. National policy indicates that small numbers of market homes may be permitted on rural exception sites at a local planning authority's discretion. This is not supported because it: would reduce the likelihood of 100% affordable housing sites being delivered; could potentially increase land values; and could result in significant unplanned growth adjoining settlements. If a local community wishes to take forward this approach in their area, then a policy to allow small numbers of market homes on rural exception sites should be progressed through a neighbourhood plan.

HOUS₃: Affordable housing exception sites

An affordable housing exception scheme will be permitted if:

- I. it is adjoining an existing settlement;
- II. the proposal is capable of meeting an identified local need for affordable housing within the settlement, parish or group of parishes where the scheme is located, including within the Green Belt, which cannot otherwise be met;
- III. the character, scale and design of the scheme is appropriate to the location and size of the existing settlement; and
- IV. there are secure arrangements to ensure the homes remain affordable in perpetuity.

Q: Affordable housing exception sites

- 1: Do you agree with the suggested approach and what it is trying to achieve?
- 2: Do you agree with the suggested wording?
- 3: How could the paragraph / policy / section / chapter be amended to reflect your concerns?

4.5. Housing for older people and those with disabilities

- 4.5.1. Dorset already has a high percentage of older people. At present 29% of our residents are over 65 years of age and by the end of the plan period this proportion is projected to grow. It is estimated that approximately 42% of our population are living with a long term health problem or disability. Housing appropriate for the elderly and those living with disabilities is important in helping them to live safe and independent lives and Dorset Council need to plan to meet these needs.
- 4.5.2. Health and social care is an important sector in the local economy and is also one of the fastest growing.
- 4.5.3. As people become less mobile or when facing a disability their accommodation needs change. Often this can mean having to move away from their family home and community resulting in significant upheaval and sometimes a feeling of isolation. Enabling people to stay in their communities helps them lead a more active and engaged life and reduces the number of times they need to move home.
- 4.5.4. The strategy for meeting care needs is to enable people requiring differing levels of care to remain within their community, living independently for as long as possible whilst enabling varying levels of care to be provided as needs change. The local plan will help to achieve this aim through the provision of the range of accommodation types including:
 - a proportion of all new homes delivered as Accessible and Adaptable Dwellings (M4[2] as required by policy HOUS1);
 - the delivery of 'community integrated care hubs' providing a range of care accommodation to respond to different needs;

- individual care provision schemes that meet the identified needs of a specific area in the form of specialist purpose built accommodation for older people or those with disabilities;
 - care homes for complex dementia and nursing care.
- 4.5.5. Care provision should be focused in the most accessible locations and close to town centres and GP surgeries. Ideally care provision should be within 1km of each with suitable access available along a flat route or a route appropriate for mobility scooters. This will reduce reliance on travel by car, allow for the developments to be integrated into communities and ensure residents and workers can access local facilities and participate in community life.
- 4.5.6. Care provision must enable access for those who have limited mobility. This could be achieved preferably through the provision of apartments with lifts to upper floors or less where this is not feasible for residents' needs, through developments of single storey dwellings.

Community integrated care hubs

- 4.5.7. Community integrated care hubs will provide for a range of needs from day opportunities, extra care to complex care as well as housing for workers with key skills. This approach enables a progression through different types of homes within a community setting with greater levels of care being available as care needs change. It will provide much needed affordable housing for workers with key skills close to where they will work.

- 4.5.8. Dorset Council is in the process of delivering a care village on its own land. The Bridport Gateway development on the southern side of the town centre will deliver a care home, extra care housing and communal space. Affordable housing will be provided as part of the

Community integrated care hubs

Community integrated care hubs are developments providing for the changing needs of residents through a range of accommodation types, from independent living accommodation with care available, to homes for complex care needs.

A care hub would be integrated with a community and have good access to local facilities. It would provide on-site communal facilities that could sometimes be available to the wider community and would include communal gardens.

Affordable homes for key workers and for older people or those with disabilities would form an important part of this type of development.

development for key workers, for supported living and for general needs. Another scheme is proposed in Wareham over three sites incorporating the former middle school site, the current Wareham Hospital site and a site on Bonnets Lane. This

Purbeck Gateway development seeks to deliver a residential care home, extra care housing, a GP surgery, a community hub with communal space and housing.

- 4.5.9. There is an identified need for similar schemes in Central, South Eastern and Northern Dorset. Proposals of this nature should also include internal and external communal space and space open to the community such as a community meeting space.
- 4.5.10. The care provided as part of a care hub must enable the creation of balanced communities through the provision of a range of housing types and tenures. It must be sufficiently flexible to enable residents to receive the level of care they need and can afford. The presumption is that affordable care units should be provided on site in the same proportion as for general housing (as set out in Policy HOUS2) unless there is a practical reasons as to why this is not possible. Where affordable housing or affordable care housing is not provided on-site, an equivalent contribution will be sought to enable off-site provision.
- 4.5.11. Affordable housing for key workers is an important part of a care hub as it would enable those who deliver care to live close to their place of work. Where there are insufficient key workers or no one in need of supporting living accommodation, the affordable housing may be made available to those in need on the housing register.
- 4.5.12. The different elements of a community integrated care hub can be provided on separate sites in close proximity to each other or within the same building. The different elements can be provided in different buildings or parts of a building to enable effective and legal management of the facility.

Q: Community care hubs

- 1: Do you agree with the suggested approach and what it is trying to achieve?
- 2: Do you agree with the suggested wording?
- 3: How could the paragraph / policy / section / chapter be amended to reflect your concerns?

Specialist purpose built accommodation

4.5.13. Other smaller scale care provision is also needed in the Dorset Council area. This type of housing would be for older people or those with disabilities and would be provided through specialist purpose built accommodation. Specialist purpose built accommodation can take a variety of different forms such as extra care, sheltered housing, age specific housing as well as housing for those with autism or learning difficulties.

Specialist purpose built accommodation

Extra care accommodation provides for a range of care needs. Individual homes provide opportunities for residents to live independently. Communal areas can be provided. This type of care is considered to be C3 use class.

4.5.14. It is important to recognise that the affordability of housing for older people and those who have a disability can be as much of an issue as it is for the younger generation. In some instances where there is a need for care, the cost of housing coupled with the cost of care can be inhibitive leading to greater health problems. Within care facilities residents often pay a service charge to give access to communal facilities and access to care.

4.5.15. Where affordable units are provided as part of the scheme, the management of this arrangement becomes more complex and can harm the viability of the scheme's delivery and long-term running as subsidised units would be unlikely to be able to pay the full service charge.

4.5.16. Where age restricted housing is proposed, decisions will be made in accordance with those policies that apply to conventional unrestricted housing sites including Policy HOUS1: Housing Mix and Policy HOUS2: Affordable Housing.

HOUS4: Specialist purpose built accommodation

- I. Proposals for specialist purpose built accommodation will be supported where they:
 - respond to an identified need in the immediate area; and
 - provide a range of tenures.

Q: Specialist purpose built accommodation

- 1: Do you agree that specialist purpose built accommodation as extra care should provide affordable housing?
- 2: Are there any practical limitations to this approach?
- 3: Are there other approaches that could be taken to deliver for those who cannot afford to pay market rates?

Residential care homes

4.5.17. Nursing or residential care homes provide an additional level of care for those who are in greatest need. These residential institutions have individual rooms where a high level of care is provided to support daily living. Examples include facilities that provide specialist dementia care, end of life care or nursing care for people with complex needs. People who are capable of independent living would not normally qualify for a bed in a residential care home.

4.5.18. Demand for spaces in traditional residential care homes is declining across Dorset and existing facilities are struggling to fill beds. The exception to this is for the provision of complex dementia and nursing care. For this reason, proposals for new residential care homes will only be permitted where they respond to an identified need. Where a new home for complex dementia and nursing care is proposed, it would need to be registered as a care home with the Care Quality Commission. Such housing should also provide therapy rooms and day care opportunities. It should be located within a town listed within Tier 1 or Tier 2 of the settlement hierarchy or on a public transport corridor in order to facilitate ease of access for workers and visitors.

Housing for complex dementia and nursing care (residential care)

Housing for complex dementia and nursing care should provide specialist accommodation with considerable communal facilities. This type of accommodation is for those incapable of independent living. This type of care is considered to be C2 use class.

HOUS5: Housing for complex dementia and nursing care

- I. Residential Care Homes will only be permitted where they respond to a specific evidenced need for residents who require round the clock care. Such facilities should be located within a town or on a public transport corridor. Developments of this type will provide:
 - opportunities for day care available to the wider community;
 - therapeutic equipment and space for therapy for complex needs that are also available for use on a day care basis;
 - sufficient outdoor space to enable therapeutic recreation.

Q: Housing for complex dementia and nursing care

- 1: Do you agree with the suggested approach and what it is trying to achieve?
- 2: Do you agree with the suggested wording?
- 3: How could the paragraph / policy / section / chapter be amended to reflect your concerns?

4.6. Self-build and custom-build housing

- 4.6.1. National policy indicates that councils should plan for the needs of 'people wishing to build their own homes'. 'Self-build' is defined as a project where an individual directly organises the design and construction of their own new home. 'Custom-build' homes tend to be those where an individual works with a specialist developer to help deliver their own new home. Collectively, these will be referred to as self-build housing. The Dorset Council Self-Build Register provides evidence of demand for a wide range of self-build and custom-build plots across the plan area, varying in size, location and tenure.
- 4.6.2. Self-build housing is acceptable, in principle, on sites within development boundaries of those settlements listed within the settlement hierarchy and shown on the policies map. Self-build housing may also be permitted on housing allocations identified to help meet the strategic housing need of Dorset.

Self-build housing outside settlement boundaries

- 4.6.3. Self-build housing may be permitted on sites outside settlement boundaries where such developments would meet the criteria of relevant policies.
- 4.6.4. Policy HOUS3 allows a proportion of new homes on an affordable housing exception site to be self build, provided that any such homes meet the definition of 'affordable housing'. Policy HOUS3 also seeks to limit the size of such dwellings and to control their future re-sale value in order to ensure that they would remain affordable in perpetuity. Where First Homes exception sites are permitted, housing that meets the definition of a First Home, could be built as a self-build home.
- 4.6.5. Open market self-build homes may be delivered under policy HOUS6. This policy permits the replacement of an existing dwelling outside development boundaries on a one-for-one basis and also permits the subdivision of an existing home outside a development boundary, particularly if the home has formerly been two or more dwellings. Policy HOUS6 may allow new self-build homes to be constructed where there is an essential need for a worker in agriculture, forestry or a rural-based business to live on site. In addition, where an existing building outside a development boundary is appropriate for conversion under policy HOUS9, this could be as a self-build dwelling.

Design codes

- 4.6.6. Self-build housing will generally be individually designed. However, where it is proposed to build 5 or more units on the same site, it will be important that each home has some consistency of design both with the other self-build homes and on strategic housing sites, with other new homes. Where it is proposed to build 5 or more self-build homes on the same site, it is expected that any application should be accompanied by an agreed design code.

Neighbourhood planning

- 4.6.7. Where a local community wishes to facilitate self build housing in an area, this should be achieved through a neighbourhood plan.

HOUS6: Self-build and custom-build housing

- I. Self-build and custom-build housing schemes may be permitted on sites within development boundaries or on strategic housing allocations.
- II. Outside development boundaries self-build and custom housebuilding schemes may be permitted:
 - on an affordable housing exception site, in accordance with Policy HOUS3;
 - through the replacement of an existing dwelling, in accordance with Policy HOUS9;
 - through the subdivision of an existing home, in accordance with Policy HOUS9;
 - through the conversion of an existing building, in accordance with Policy DEV8;
or
 - as a rural workers' dwelling, in accordance with Policy HOUS8.
- III. A scheme for more than 5 self-build or custom-build dwellings on any site should be developed in accordance with an agreed design code.

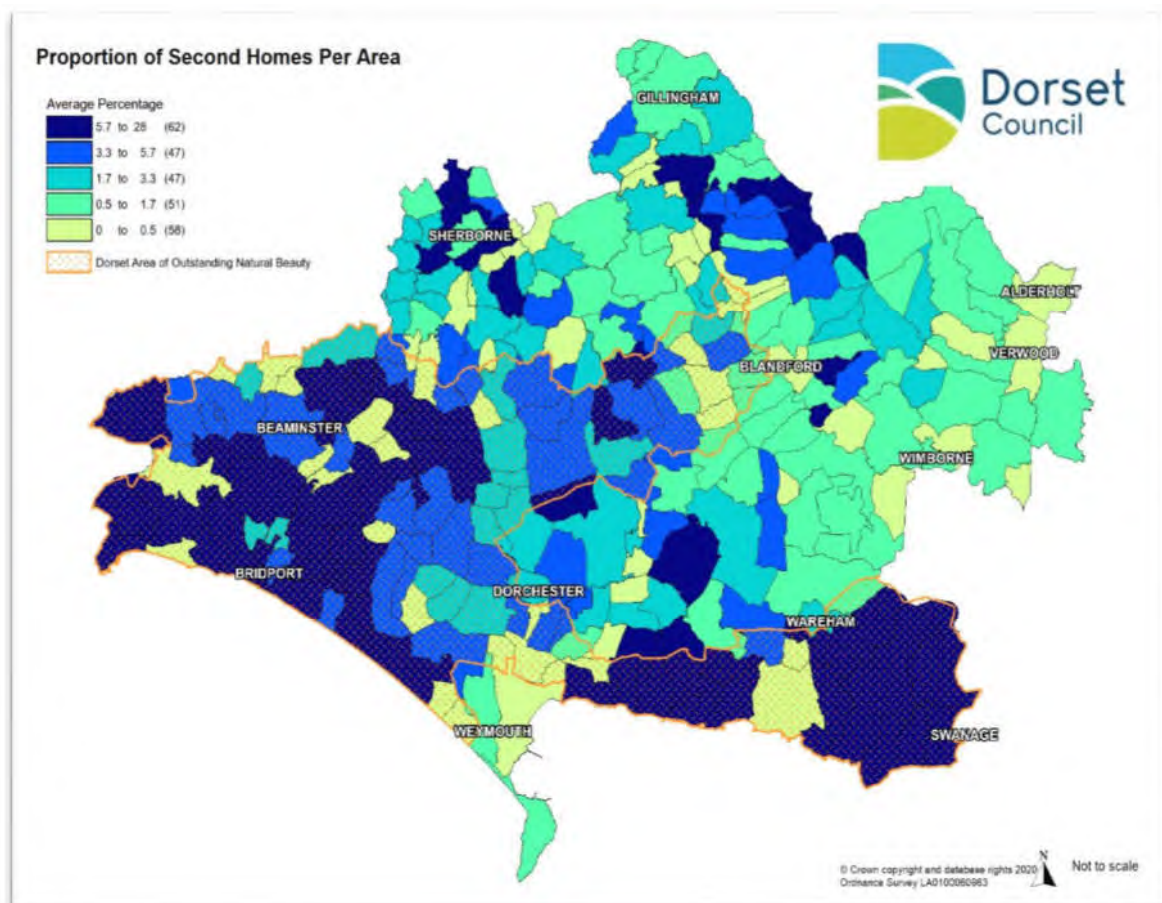
Q: Self build and custom build housing

- 1: Do you think the council should identify sites for self / custom build housing?
- 2: Can you suggest any additional sites which could be allocated for this purpose?

4.7. Second Homes

- 4.7.1. High rates of second home ownership exist in parts of Dorset, predominately within the Western Dorset functional area and parts of the Isle of Purbeck. These areas are attractive for second homes due to their rural nature, spectacular landscapes and proximity to the coast. Council Tax and Electoral Roll data for each parish have been used to show where concentrations of second homes exist within Dorset (Figure 4.4).

Figure 4.4: Percentage of second homes by area



- 4.7.2. High levels of second homes can impact on local communities in various ways including:
- increases in house prices — although the picture is often more complex as demand for housing arises from a number of sources including those moving to an area to retire, and for work, as well as those buying a second home.
 - lack of spend in the local economy — however the presence of second homes can result in additional spend to refurbish homes and the employment of local builders, cleaners and gardeners to maintain properties. The use of a second

- home also results in spend within the local leisure-based economy both within and outside the tourism season.
- falling school rolls — although school rolls fluctuate for a number of reasons including those related to local perception of a good school, changes in leadership at a school, changes in the age profile of an area and Ofsted reports.
 - impacts on village life — fewer people living in a village can have an impact on the local community creating a ghost village at certain times of year. However, many second homes are used frequently by returning visitors who do often play an active part the local community.
- 4.7.3. The situation is therefore not straightforward with both positive and negative impacts. However the planning system is a blunt tool in tackling the issue as planning only controls the occupancy of new homes. Other mechanisms, such as the use of higher council tax rates on second homes, may be more appropriate.
- 4.7.4. The main mechanism available through the planning system for controlling second homes is through a 'principal residence' policy. This type of policy would require any new dwellings to be occupied as a principal residence. However, in the areas where there is a high prevalence of second homes, there are very few new homes built, as to do so would have the potential to harm the very environment that makes them attractive.
- 4.7.5. A 'principal residence' policy would have no impact on existing dwellings within a village, but would have the potential to increase the interest in these for purchase as second homes, possibly increasing their sale prices. However, ultimately it will be the choice of the current owner of a property whom they sell their home to.
- 4.7.6. If a 'principal residence' policy were to be introduced in areas where the percentage of second homes was high, the demand for second homes elsewhere might well increase, resulting in a shift of the issue to other communities. In addition such a policy would be very difficult to enforce as regular checks would be required and evidence of continued occupation as a primary residence provided.
- 4.7.7. As highlighted, high levels of second home ownership are very localised, meaning that evidence of the negative effects is not available. A local plan policy covering the whole of Dorset would not therefore be appropriate. Where there are high levels of second home ownership, it may be appropriate for a neighbourhood plan to introduce a 'principal residence' policy or an equivalent mechanism that might help to address concerns.
- 4.7.8. Given the positive and negative impacts of high levels of second home ownership and the localised nature of the issue, should the council:
- a. look to introduce a 'principal residence' policy in the local plan;

- b suggest that where there is a specific issue in a location, the issue is tackled through neighbourhood plans; or
- c use other means to try and address the issue.

Q: Second homes

1: What approach do you think the Council should explore to address the pockets of high second home ownership?

4.8. Homes in the countryside

- 4.8.1. National policy indicates that planning policy should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside except in certain circumstances. As the plan area is largely rural in character, it is important to specify under which circumstances isolated homes in the countryside would be considered.
- 4.8.2. As they would be located in areas not normally suitable for development, it is imperative that they improve the setting and character of the immediate area, as well as having particular regard to landscape and design.
- 4.8.3. Within the Green Belt, new homes can be suitable where they are replacing or extending an existing building, provided that it is of the same use and not materially larger than the original.

HOUS7: Isolated homes in the countryside

- I. Isolated homes in the countryside may be permitted where:
 - the scheme improves the setting and character of the immediate area and/or heritage asset;
 - the scheme has particular regard to minimising its impact on the landscape; and
 - the scheme is of exceptional quality with innovative design.
- II. Isolated homes in the countryside suitable for rural workers may be permitted where:
 - it provides for a rural worker either near to or at their place of work;
 - it is essential for the economically viable rural business that one, or more, rural workers are readily available at most times;
 - no other suitable accommodation exists; and
 - the accommodation is well related to any existing building.
- III. Within the Green Belt the replacement, extension or alteration of an existing building will be acceptable provided it is for residential purposes and not materially larger than the original.

Q: Isolated homes in the countryside

- 1: Do you agree with the suggested approach and what it is trying to achieve?
- 2: Do you agree with the suggested wording?
- 3: How could the paragraph / policy / section / chapter be amended to reflect your concerns?

4.9. Occupational dwellings

- 4.9.1. Policy HOUS7 sets out the circumstances where it may be appropriate to allow permanent dwellings for full-time workers in agriculture, forestry or other rural businesses (and new temporary dwellings for full-time workers in agriculture) outside local plan development boundaries or in the Green Belt. The council will seek to secure the retention of any such permanent dwellings for occupational purposes to support the rural economy, unless it can be demonstrated that an essential need no longer exists.

Occupational dwellings in the green belt

- 4.9.2. Proposals for occupational dwellings in the South East Dorset Green Belt will be considered against both national Green Belt policy and Policy HOUS8.
- 4.9.3. Any occupational dwelling proposed as a new building will be considered inappropriate development in the Green Belt. Such proposals would by definition, be harmful to the Green Belt and will not be approved except in very special circumstances.
- 4.9.4. Any occupational dwelling proposed through the reuse of an existing building (of permanent and substantial construction) will not be considered inappropriate development in the Green Belt and may be permitted, provided it preserves the openness of the Green Belt and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within it.

Functional need

- 4.9.5. Any proposed occupational dwelling should only be considered where it is essential for the existing proper functioning of the farming, forestry or other rural

enterprise for one or more full-time workers to be readily available at most times. The essential need should be justified in relation to the activities and operations of the business, not the personal preferences or circumstances of the individuals involved or for security reasons. For full-time agricultural workers, such a requirement might arise if workers need to be on hand day and night in case animals or agricultural processes require essential care at short notice, or to deal quickly with emergencies that could otherwise cause serious loss of crops or products.

- 4.9.6. Applicants will be expected to demonstrate why the identified accommodation needs could not be met in other ways, for example by living in a nearby town or village, or making use of accommodation already existing on the farm, area of forestry or rural business unit.

Financial test

- 4.9.7. A 'financial test' will be applied to establish whether the farming, forestry or rural business enterprise to which the new dwelling would relate is economically viable. When a planning application is submitted, it will need to be demonstrated that the enterprise:
- has been established for a continuous period of at least the previous three years prior to the date of the application;
 - has been profitable for at least one of those three years; and
 - is both financially sound on that date and also has a clear prospect of remaining so.
- 4.9.8. A proposal should be supported by a business plan prepared by a suitably qualified person and accompanied by evidence of how the maintenance or growth of the enterprise will be funded.

Size, design and siting

- 4.9.9. Agricultural, forestry or other occupational dwellings should be of a size commensurate with the established functional requirements of the enterprise, rather than those of the owner or occupier. Dwellings that are unusually large in relation to the agricultural, forestry or rural business needs of the unit or unusually expensive to construct in relation to the income the unit can sustain in the long term will not be permitted.
- 4.9.10. An occupational dwelling should be sited so that the agricultural, forestry or essential rural worker is conveniently located to undertake the activities required to meet the established functional need. An occupational dwelling for agriculture or forestry should be well related to existing farm or forestry buildings or adjacent

to the unit for which the functional need has been established. An occupational dwelling for a rural business should be located on that business site.

Temporary agricultural workers' dwellings

- 4.9.11. Temporary occupational dwellings will only be permitted for agricultural workers, not for forestry workers or workers in other rural businesses. To demonstrate a functional need for a temporary agricultural workers' dwelling, clear evidence of a firm intention and ability to develop the farming enterprise concerned will be required. To meet the financial test for a temporary agricultural workers' dwelling, clear evidence that the proposed enterprise has been planned on a sound financial basis, with a reasonable prospect of delivering a sustainable profit before or by the expiry of the period for which temporary consent is being sought, will be required.
- 4.9.12. Any temporary agricultural workers' dwelling should take the form of a caravan, a wooden structure or other temporary accommodation which can be easily dismantled. Any temporary dwelling will be granted permission for a specified period (usually no longer than three years) with conditions requiring its removal at the end of that period.

Removal of occupancy conditions

- 4.9.13. The occupancy of any occupational dwelling is likely to be controlled by condition (and maybe also by planning agreement). The removal of such a condition will only be permitted if it can be demonstrated that it has outlived its usefulness to the farming, forestry or other rural enterprise and there is no further need for a dwelling associated with a nearby holding/enterprise. To demonstrate that a dwelling is no longer required in connection with the holding/rural enterprise to which it relates, there should be evidence to show that the dwelling has been:
- made publicly available without any unreasonable restriction and with amenity land proportionate to its size; and
 - suitably advertised and marketed at a price reflecting: its condition; the existence of the occupancy restriction; and comparable sales prices for tied dwellings in the locality (where available) for a continuous period of at least twelve months immediately prior to the date that an application is submitted.
- 4.9.14. Proposals for the removal of an agricultural or forestry occupancy condition will be considered on the basis of an up-to-date assessment of the demand for farm or forestry dwellings in the locality and not just on the particular farm or forestry holding. Proposals to remove the occupancy condition for an essential rural worker should be supported by evidence that the dwelling is no longer needed for the continuing rural enterprise. In the event the enterprise fails, the occupancy condition will only be lifted if the marketing exercise shows there is no realistic

prospect of the occupational dwelling being required to support a suitable new rural enterprise associated with it.

HOUS8: Occupational Dwellings

A new permanent dwelling for a worker in agriculture, forestry or other rural business will only be permitted outside defined development boundaries if:

- I. there is an essential existing functional need, which could not be fulfilled by any other means, for a full-time worker to live at or in the immediate vicinity of their place of work;
- II. the viability of the enterprise to which the proposed dwelling relates can be demonstrated by satisfying the 'financial test' applied by the council;
- III. it is of the minimum size and an appropriate design commensurate with the established functional requirement and reflective of the enterprise's financial projections; and
- IV. it is sited so as to meet the identified functional need and is well related to existing farm, forestry or rural business buildings, or other dwellings.

A new temporary dwelling for a worker in agriculture will only be permitted outside defined development boundaries if:

- V. it is essential to support a new farming activity for which there is a clearly established functional need, which could not be fulfilled by any other means, for a full-time worker to live on or in the vicinity of the holding;
- VI. the viability of the enterprise to which the proposed dwelling relates can be demonstrated by satisfying the 'financial test' applied by the council; and
- VII. it takes the form of a caravan, a wooden structure, or other temporary accommodation of the minimum size required to support the proposed new farming activity.

An agricultural, forestry or rural enterprise occupancy condition will only be lifted if it can be demonstrated that:

- VIII. a suitable sustained attempt has been made to advertise and market the occupational dwelling;
- IX. the dwelling no longer serves a need in connection with the holding/rural enterprise site to which it relates; and
- X. in the case of agricultural and forestry occupancy conditions, there is no occupational need elsewhere that it could reasonably serve nor is it likely that any such needs will arise in the foreseeable future.

Q: Occupational dwellings

- 1: Do you agree with the suggested approach and what it is trying to achieve?
- 2: Do you agree with the suggested wording?
- 3: How could the paragraph / policy / section / chapter be amended to reflect your concerns?

4.10. Other residential development outside development boundaries

- 4.10.1. Outside development boundaries, where development is strictly controlled, it may be appropriate in limited circumstances to permit: the replacement or extension of existing dwellings; the construction of ancillary domestic buildings within existing residential curtilages; the small scale extension of residential gardens; and the subdivision of existing dwellings.

Replacement buildings, extensions and ancillary domestic buildings

- 4.10.2. This policy only permits the replacement or extension of an existing permanent dwelling on a one-for-one basis, or the construction of ancillary domestic buildings within the residential curtilage of an existing permanent dwelling. This is to ensure that permanent residential use is not established on a site where only temporary consent exists, or where permanent use has lapsed as a result of dereliction.
- 4.10.3. A replacement dwelling outside a development boundary should be located over the footprint of the existing dwelling, unless its relocation elsewhere within the existing residential curtilage would bring about a significant environmental benefit (for example, to make the replacement dwelling less intrusive in the landscape, or address a highway safety issue). Where it is proposed to relocate a replacement dwelling within an existing residential curtilage, a legal agreement requiring the demolition of the original dwelling will normally be required. For the purposes of this policy 'original' is defined as the building as it was built or as it existed as of 1st July 1948.

- 4.10.4. The design of any development associated with an existing dwelling outside a development boundary should be sympathetic to: the site itself; areas adjacent to the site (for example, buildings or landscape features nearby); and the wider area as a whole (i.e. landscape character area, AONB or conservation area). Proposals, either individually or cumulatively, should not lead to over development of the site or, in the case of extensions and ancillary domestic buildings, should not over dominate the existing dwelling. Poorly designed replacement dwellings, extensions or ancillary domestic buildings will be refused permission, regardless of their size.
- 4.10.5. As a guide, a replacement dwelling should not be more than 50% larger than the existing dwelling it replaces (including any previously approved extensions or alterations to the original dwelling that have been constructed). When assessing the percentage increase in size, the gross internal area (GIA) of the existing dwelling will be compared with the GIA of the proposed replacement dwelling.
- 4.10.6. The scale, height and massing of any extension should appear subservient to the existing dwelling and the design should respect the character and appearance of the existing dwelling. In considering the size and design of extensions, account will be taken of the extent to which the dwelling has been previously extended or could be extended under permitted development rights.
- 4.10.7. Any domestic accommodation needs, such as the need for a games/hobby room or workshop or for a residential annex for dependent relatives or domestic household staff should, wherever possible, be met through the extension of an existing dwelling or through the conversion of an existing building within a residential curtilage. Ancillary domestic buildings will only be permitted exceptionally where it can be demonstrated that the identified accommodation needs cannot be met in these other ways. In cases where an ancillary domestic building is permitted, it should, wherever possible, be located and designed to enable it to be subsumed into the main dwelling when the need for the ancillary use ceases.
- 4.10.8. In order to be genuinely ancillary, such buildings should be no larger than necessary to perform the particular function for which they are intended. If an ancillary domestic building is permitted, it will be tied by agreement to prevent it from being severed from the main dwelling. In the case of a residential annex, occupancy will be restricted by condition or agreement to ensure that it would not be occupied as a separate dwelling.
- 4.10.9. Regard will be given to the cumulative effects of successive proposed extensions or ancillary buildings (including those constructed under permitted development rights) on an existing dwelling, its immediate setting and its wider surroundings.

- 4.10.10. Where a replacement dwelling, an extension or an ancillary domestic building is allowed outside a development boundary, permitted development rights may be removed.

Small-scale extensions to residential gardens

- 4.10.11. The extension of existing residential gardens will not generally be permitted. However, exceptionally a small-scale extension may be permitted where the size and shape of the enlarged plot would reflect (and the treatment of the relocated boundary would reinforce) the existing patterns of nearby properties. Typically any such extensions would only apply to gardens associated with properties on the outskirts of settlements, or within hamlets or groups of buildings in the wider countryside.
- 4.10.12. There should be a positive relationship between the proposed garden extension (including its boundary treatment) and the surrounding field pattern, the topography and any nearby landscape features. Features of the landscape which would usually form part of the open countryside such as paddocks, orchards, or areas of woodland should not be included in any garden extension.
- 4.10.13. Mown lawns, flowerbeds and non-indigenous tree and shrub species can erode rural character and domestic paraphernalia (including sheds, greenhouses, washing lines, play equipment and summerhouses) can have an urbanising effect. Landscape planting (of species native to the local area) should be designed to screen any such potential uses and protect visual amenity. Where this is not possible, permitted development rights may be removed.

The subdivision of existing dwellings

- 4.10.14. The creation of additional separate dwellings outside development boundaries through replacements and extensions will be avoided. However, it is recognised that the subdivision of an existing dwelling (which is not a replacement and has not been significantly extended) may be acceptable, especially where houses have been joined together in the past to form one dwelling. Proposals for the reuse of any ancillary buildings associated with the subdivision, such as garaging and outhouses, would be considered against Policy HOU5g and especially the requirement that new ancillary buildings are not needed as a result. Permitted development rights may be removed where the subdivision of an existing dwelling outside a development boundary is permitted.
- 4.10.15. Any scheme for subdivision should enable the existing dwelling to be converted to create satisfactory living conditions for the future occupants of the new smaller dwellings without the need for extensions, other than very minor extensions (for example, to create separate entrance lobbies or porches). A scheme for subdivision may require changes to the external appearance of the existing dwelling (for

example, additional entrances) and changes within any residential curtilage (for example, additional car parking spaces, room for bin storage etc.) which should not detract from the character of the local area.

Low-impact dwellings

4.10.16. Low-impact dwellings (LIDs) make use of renewable natural, local and reclaimed materials in delivering low or zero carbon homes and are often self-sufficient in terms of waste management, energy, water and other needs. Although LIDs are sustainable in many respects, accessibility to essential services (such as schools and health), is also an important consideration. Outside development boundaries proposals for low-impact dwellings will be considered against policies for conventional dwellings.

HOUSg: Other residential development outside development boundaries

- I. The replacement of an existing permanent dwelling outside defined development boundaries will be permitted, provided that:
 - the existing dwelling will be replaced by a single new dwelling, which is of a size and design that respects the character and appearance of the development plot, its immediate setting and its wider surroundings;
 - the new dwelling can be satisfactorily accommodated within the existing curtilage or an extended curtilage compliant with criterion iv); and
 - the development would make a positive contribution to local character.
- II. The extension of an existing permanent dwelling outside defined development boundaries will be permitted provided that:
 - the extension would not create an additional separate dwelling (or dwellings);
 - the extension is subordinate in scale and proportions to, and in character with, the original dwelling;
 - the development would not require an extension of the existing residential curtilage, other than a small-scale extension compliant with criterion iv); and
 - the development would make a positive contribution to local character.
- III. An ancillary domestic building within an existing residential curtilage outside defined development boundaries will only be permitted exceptionally, if:
 - the building is ancillary to an existing permanent dwelling and either would be used for purposes incidental to the enjoyment of the existing dwelling or would be a residential annex ancillary to the existing dwelling;
 - the proposed use could not be accommodated in an extension to the main dwelling or through the conversion of an existing building within the existing residential curtilage;

- the building would not require an extension of the existing residential curtilage, other than an extended curtilage compliant with criterion iv); and
- the building would be designed to be proportionately smaller in scale and subsidiary in form to the existing dwelling, designed not to detract from the character of the existing dwelling and would make a positive contribution to local character. Wherever possible the building should be located and designed to be capable of being subsumed into the existing permanent dwelling in the event that the need for the ancillary use ceases.

IV. The small-scale extension of an existing residential garden outside defined development boundaries will only be permitted exceptionally, where the extension:

- reflects and/or reinforces existing plot and boundary patterns in the locality; and
- includes a boundary treatment and landscape planting to successfully integrate the development with the local landscape and rural character.

V. The subdivision of an existing dwelling outside defined development boundaries will be permitted provided that:

- the development can be accommodated within the existing dwelling; and
- the resulting changes are compatible with local character.

Q: Other residential development outside development boundaries

1: Do you agree with the suggested approach and what it is trying to achieve?

2: Do you agree with the suggested wording?

3: How could the paragraph / policy / section / chapter be amended to reflect your concerns?

4.11. Gypsies, Travellers and travelling showpeople

Introduction

- 4.11.1. The council recognises that Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople have distinct, but equally rich, cultures and traditions. The main cultural groups are Romany Gypsies, Irish Travellers, Scottish Gypsies and Travellers, Welsh Gypsies and Travellers, bargees and other people living on boats and New Travellers. Romany Gypsies, Irish Travellers and Scottish Travellers are recognised in law as distinct ethnic groups and are legally protected under the Equalities Act 2010. Travelling Showpeople have their own distinctive culture and traditions connected with the holding of fairs and circuses. The site requirements of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople can also be distinct, for example Travelling Showpeople typically need large plots to store and maintain the equipment and vehicles connected with their businesses in the leisure industry.
- 4.11.2. The council recognises each group's distinctive characteristics, cultures and specific site requirements, but notes that Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople all share nomadic lifestyles that are typically co-ordinated around a settled base. Hereafter, this local plan will refer to Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople collectively as 'Travellers' other than when referring to the specific accommodation requirements of each group.
- 4.11.3. The council recognises that Travellers are entitled to specific types of accommodation that allow them to continue with their traditional and nomadic way of life. The council has sought to develop a strategy that provides fair and equal treatment for Travellers by supporting the needs of their way of life, whilst respecting the interests of the settled community, through the identification of suitable sites to meet the identified need, and setting out how individual proposals for Traveller sites will be considered.

The need for traveller sites in Dorset

- 4.11.4. There are three types of sites that can meet Traveller needs:
- Permanent sites – providing residents with a permanent home;
 - Transit sites – permanent sites that provide temporary accommodation when required;
 - Temporary or emergency stopping places.
- 4.11.5. In accordance with national planning policy, the council has assessed the need for Traveller pitches and plots through a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA). The total need, assessed in 2017 (using definitions in national

planning policy for Traveller sites⁷), for permanent sites in the Dorset Council area was 20 pitches for Gypsies and Travellers and 1 plot for a Travelling Showperson. Since this assessment was undertaken, evidence supporting the emerging Purbeck Local Plan identifies a further requirement for 4 Travelling Showpeople plots.

- 4.11.6. There are a group of people, who associate themselves as Travellers (including those people that are recognised as distinct ethnic groups under the Equalities Act 2010) and who actively choose to live in a caravan rather than a house but, are excluded from the planning definition. For many of these people, their occupation of a caravan is an essential part of their identity and lifestyle. The council has sought to define the needs of Travellers who fall outside the planning definition of Travellers. The council's 2017 needs assessment (GTAA) indicated that there was a requirement for 31 pitches to provide accommodation for these 'Travellers who are excluded from the planning definition'.
- 4.11.7. The GTAA assessment suggested that monitoring of the use of existing transit sites, and the frequency at which enforcement action was taken against breaches in planning control, should be undertaken to determine whether further capacity was required. Monitoring suggests that the transit site identified in the accommodation assessment (i.e. Piddlehinton Camp with a capacity for 25 pitches) is regularly used but that the demand for transit pitches is seasonal and does not exceed the supply. Based on this, the council does not consider that further transit pitches need to be provided in the Dorset Council area.
- 4.11.8. The council has a duty to prepare its local plan in cooperation with neighbouring councils. In accordance with this, the council has regular discussions with neighbouring councils around all planning matters including in relation to any unmet need for Traveller sites. At the point of preparing this consultation document for the local plan, no neighbouring councils have identified an unmet need for Traveller accommodation from their areas. The council will continue to actively engage with neighbouring councils throughout the continuing preparation of the Dorset Local Plan.
- 4.11.9. Using this evidence, it is estimated that over the 17 year plan period the total need for:
- around 20 pitches for Gypsies and Travellers, as defined in planning policy;
 - around 5 plots for Travelling Showpeople;
 - around 31 pitches for 'Travellers who are excluded from the planning definition';
 - around 25 pitches transit pitches.

⁷ Planning policy for travellers sites, August 2015 – Department for Communities and Local Government

4.11.10. This equates to less than 1 plot per year for Travelling Showpeople and approximately 3 pitches per year for Gypsies and Travellers. The council will use these figures when monitoring the delivery of sites and calculating the five-year Traveller sites land supply.

HOUS10: The requirement for traveller sites

- I. In the period 2021 to 2038 provision is made for land to accommodate at least:
- 20 pitches for Gypsies and Travellers;
 - 5 plots for Travelling Showpeople;
 - 31 pitches for 'Travellers who are excluded from the planning definition'; and
 - 25 pitches as a transit site.

Q: The requirement for traveller sites

- 1: Do you agree with the suggested approach and what it is trying to achieve?
- 2: Do you agree with the suggested wording?
- 3: How could the paragraph / policy / section / chapter be amended to reflect your concerns?

Meeting the need for Traveller accommodation

4.11.11. The strategy for meeting Traveller needs in Dorset has been developed having regard to:

- the traditional and nomadic way of life of Travellers;
- the supply of sites;
- the role played by the area's existing settlements and the need to create a sustainable pattern of future growth;
- environmental constraints, both at strategic and local (town or village) level; and
- the need to ensure that development in the Green Belt is in accordance with national policy.

4.11.12. Prior to the formation of Dorset Council, the predecessor councils were jointly working on a development plan document for Travellers which was to include

allocations to meet the area's needs. As part of this process, the councils undertook consultation in 2011 and again in 2014. The sites considered as part of these consultations have been reviewed and re-evaluated to consider their suitability as Traveller sites. In addition the availability and suitability of council-owned land has been considered along with areas around existing Traveller sites and sites submitted to the council for this purpose.

- 4.11.13. As with the settled community, Travellers need access to services and facilities (including schools, shops and health services). Travellers often choose to live in small groups with their extended family, and may live and work from the same settled base between travelling. However, many Travellers have an aversion to living in bricks and mortar homes.
- 4.11.14. The council intends to allocate suitable sites to meet the identified need and also set out its approach to considering other applications for Traveller sites. In doing this, the council has sought to select sites which support and facilitate the nomadic and/or traditional way of life of Travellers by ensuring that sites:
- are well related to existing services and facilities, and provide an opportunity for small family groups of Travellers to live and work from the same settled base; and
 - are suitable for trailers, caravans or other mobile homes for example avoiding flood risk or noise and odour from neighbouring uses.
- 4.11.15. When considering sites to meet the needs of Travellers, consideration has been given to the environmental constraints and designations across Dorset. These include consideration of landscape impact, flood risk, land stability and the presence of the Green Belt. All reasonable alternatives have been considered before considering whether changes should be made to Green Belt boundaries.
- 4.11.16. The proposed allocations make provision for:
- around 57 pitches for Gypsies and Travellers;
 - around 5 plots for Travelling Showpeople;
 - around 31 pitches for 'Travellers who are excluded from the planning definition'; and
 - a transit site with capacity for 25 pitches.

Gypsy, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople site allocations

- 4.11.17. The council proposes to meet the needs of Travellers over the plan period by allocating land for development as set out in Policy HOUS12 and shown on the policies map (in Appendix 4). For the purposes of this consultation draft of the local plan, the council has not sought to prepare specific allocations policies for each Traveller site. Instead the sites have been listed in Figure 4.5 along with key development considerations for each. The council will review the site specific

details when drafting site allocations policies for the traveller sites for inclusion in the submission version of the local plan, taking account of responses made in the course of the current consultation.

HOUS12: Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople site allocations

- I. Sites, as shown on the policies map, are allocated to meet the needs of Gypsies, Travellers, Travelling Showpeople and 'Travellers who are excluded from the planning definition'.
- II. The site at Military Lane, Kingston is reserved for travelling showpeople.
- III. The site at Piddlehinton Camp is provided as 25 transit pitches on a seasonal basis from 1st April to 31st August inclusive each year.
- IV. The sites allocated for occupation by Gypsies, Travellers and 'Travellers who are excluded from the planning definition' are:
 - Wintergreen, Beaminster;
 - Thornicombe, Blandford;
 - Land North of Woodhouse Cross;
 - Plant World, Gillingham;
 - Land at Pleck;
 - At King Stag, Sturminster Newton;
 - Land at Moorcourt Farm, Marnhull;
 - Site at Calves Lane, Shatesbury;
 - Land at Enmore Green, Shatesbury;
 - Land at Washpond Lane and Ulwell Road, Swanage;
 - Knighton Lane, West Knighton;
 - Higher South Buckland Farm, Nottingham; and
 - Blunts Farm, Wimborne.
- V. Planning applications will be permitted on the allocated sites provided that:
 - any impact resulting from the proposal on the character and value of the landscape or the settlements adjacent to the site can be avoided or adequately mitigated; and
 - provision is made for safe vehicular and pedestrian access into the site along with adequate on-site parking, turning and storage of associated equipment and vehicles connected with the use of the site; and
 - the layout and design of the site ensures appropriate levels of privacy and amenity for the occupiers of the proposed caravans and neighbouring uses; and

- the use can be appropriately managed in accordance with a detailed management plan.

Q: Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople site allocations

1: Do you have any comments on the proposed site allocations for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling showpeople?

Other Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Sites

- 4.11.18. In addition to the sites proposed for allocation, proposals for sites for Travellers will be expected across the plan area. These new sites will help to provide a continuing supply of accommodation for Travellers and will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- 4.11.19. Applications for Traveller sites must be assessed against relevant national and local planning policies. These include policies relating to:
- the protection of habitats and species
 - landscape impact
 - impact on heritage assets
 - green belt
 - design
 - amenity
 - flood risk
 - land stability and coastal erosion
- 4.11.20. All proposed sites should be within a reasonable distance of a settlement that provides for everyday facilities such as shops, schools, health facilities and public transport. These settlements are listed within the settlement hierarchy in the Development Strategy section of this plan.
- 4.11.21. The council also expects those applicants seeking planning permission for a Traveller site through the criteria-based policy to show that the occupiers of the proposed site fall within the categories defined within 'Planning policy for traveller

sites' (August 2015) or within the definition of 'Travellers who are excluded from the planning definition' as defined in the glossary of this plan.

4.11.22. Applicants may wish to submit some or all of the following as evidence in support of their application:

- whether the occupiers of the proposed Traveller site have previously led a nomadic lifestyle;
- if the occupiers of the proposed Traveller site have ceased a nomadic lifestyle, the reasons for ceasing this lifestyle;
- if the occupiers of the proposed Traveller site have ceased a nomadic lifestyle, whether they intend to resume a nomadic lifestyle and if so, how soon and in what circumstances;
- the number of proposed pitches or plots and how this relates to the households needs; and
- whether any members of the household have specific personal circumstances (i.e. in respect to health, medical/educational) that require a specific location.

HOUS13: Sites for gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople

- I. Planning applications for Gypsy, Traveller, Travelling Showpeople and 'Travellers who are excluded from the planning definition' that are not allocated through this local plan will be supported where:
 - the occupiers of the proposed sites meet the planning definitions of 'Gypsies and Travellers' and 'Travelling Showpeople' or are 'Travellers who are excluded from the planning definition';
 - the site is adjacent to or a reasonable distance from a settlement listed within the settlement hierarchy;
 - the site can be safely accessed and adequate on-site parking, turning and storage for equipment/vehicles associated with the proposed use can be provided;
 - the use would not result in harmful overlooking, overshadowing or significant adverse effects from noise or light pollution for occupants of the site or neighbours;
 - the proposed use would not demonstrably harm the appearance, character, and setting of the surrounding landscape and/or the historic environment; and
 - the use can be properly managed in accordance with a detailed management plan.

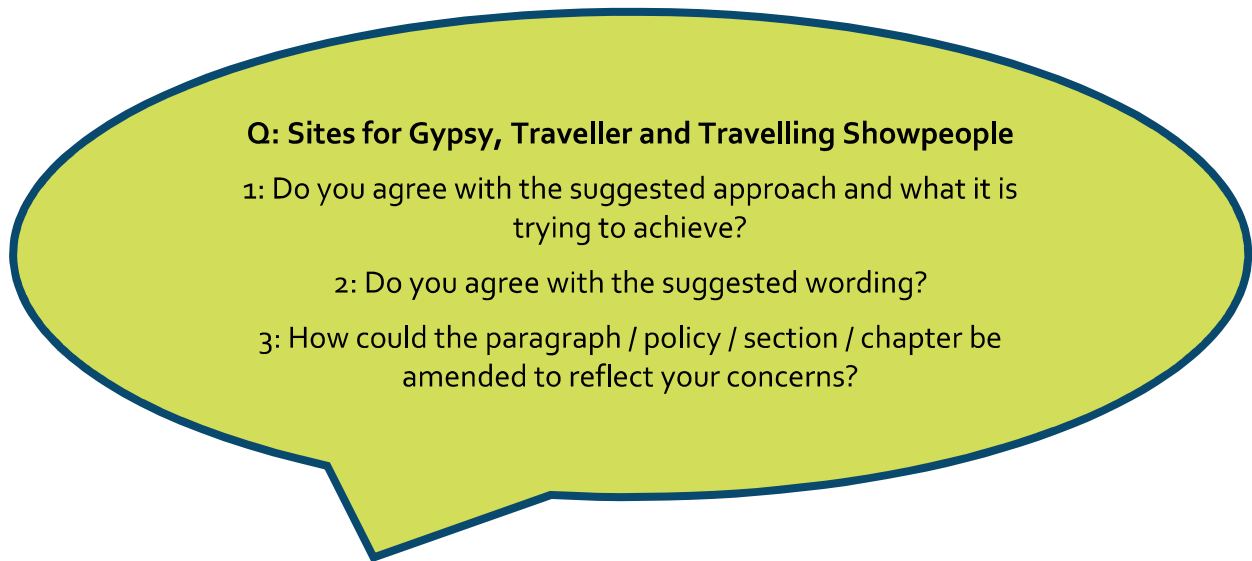


Figure 4.5: List of potential sites for Gypsy, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

Reference and Site Name	Developable Area (Ha) and Estimated Capacity	Suitable for	Key Development Considerations
GT/BEAM/001 Wintergreen, Beaminster	Area: 0.02 Capacity: Around 1	Gypsies and Travellers	<p>An existing unauthorised but established site, suitable for Gypsy and Traveller development to authorise existing use, using existing access</p> <p>Southern part of site at risk from surface water flooding - developable in accordance with the application of site level sequential test</p> <p>AONB- the scale and extent of development should be limited in these areas subject (design should respond to landscape setting to avoid, and where necessary, mitigate adverse impact on landscape character)</p> <p>Proposals should respect the setting of the nearby listed buildings</p>
GT/BLFO/001 Thornicombe, Blandford	Area: 0.39 Capacity: Around 8	Gypsies and Travellers	<p>Site availability</p> <p>Suitable for expansion of the existing Gypsy and Traveller site to the south west of existing council site</p> <p>Access to the south off the A354 or through existing site</p>

Section 4: Housing

Reference and Site Name	Developable Area (Ha) and Estimated Capacity	Suitable for	Key Development Considerations
			<p>30% of site at moderate / high risk of surface flooding - developable in accordance with the application of site level sequential test</p> <p>A higher-density scheme will be acceptable where it can be demonstrated this will not adversely impact the privacy or amenity of neighbouring properties</p>
GT/GILL/001 Land North of Woodhouse Cross	Area: 0.21ha Capacity: Around 3	Gypsies and Travellers	<p>An existing unauthorised but established site, deemed suitable for Gypsy and Traveller development in terms of authorising the existing use.</p> <p>Retain boundary hedgerow</p>
GT/GILL/002 Plant World, Gillingham	Area: 1.28 Capacity: Around 15	Gypsies and Travellers	<p>Availability- current retail uses on site</p> <p>Suitable for redevelopment for Gypsy and Traveller use using existing access off B3092</p> <p>Proposals should respect the setting of the nearby Conservation Area</p> <p>Development must be in accordance with the Gillingham Neighbourhood Plan, specifically policies relating to Milton-on-Stour</p>
GT/HAZE/003 Land at Pleck	Area: 0.3ha Capacity: Around 2	Gypsies and Travellers	<p>Availability</p> <p>Design should respond to landscape setting to avoid, and where necessary, mitigate adverse impact on landscape character</p> <p>Possible demolition of existing building to facilitate re-development</p> <p>Development must be in accordance with Hazelbury Bryan Neighbourhood Plan, including Policy HB8. To retain Wonston and Pleck Distinctive Character.</p>
GT/KIRU/001 Land at Military Lane	Area: 0.68 Capacity: Around 15	Travelling showpeople	<p>Availability</p> <p>Design should respond to landscape setting to avoid, and where necessary, mitigate adverse impact on landscape character</p>

Section 4: Housing

Reference and Site Name	Developable Area (Ha) and Estimated Capacity	Suitable for	Key Development Considerations
			<p>Retain boundary trees and vegetation</p> <p>Development must be in accordance with Hazelbury Bryan Neighbourhood Plan, including policies HB4. to retain key rural views, and HB11. to retain Kingston's distinctive character.</p>
GT/LYDL/001 King Stag, Sturminster Newton	Area: 0.06 Capacity: Around 1	Gypsies and Travellers	<p>A previously permitted site (allowed on appeal), seemingly not implemented. Suitable for Gypsy and Traveller development using existing access from 'The Common'</p> <p>Development must consider blanket TPO on site and retain protected trees. Existing hedges should also be retained</p> <p>South and east of site at risk from surface water flooding - developable in accordance with the application of site level sequential test</p>
GT/MARN/003 Land at Moorcourt Farm, Marnhull	Area: 0.56 Capacity: Around 15	Gypsies and Travellers	<p>No key constraints</p> <p>Suitable for Gypsy and Traveller development using existing access off Stoneylawn</p> <p>A higher-density scheme will be acceptable where it can be demonstrated this will not adversely impact the privacy or amenity of neighbouring properties</p>
GT/PIWL/004 Transit traveller site, Piddlehinton	Area: 1.81 Capacity: Around 25	Gypsies and Travellers	<p>Suitable for expansion of existing Gypsy and Traveller uses using existing access off B3143</p> <p>Development must be in accordance with the Piddle Valley Neighbourhood Plan including Policy 3 regarding improving wildlife areas and Policy 6 regarding road safety concerns</p> <p>Site is within Poole Harbour nutrient catchment area. Poole Harbour is designated</p>

Section 4: Housing

Reference and Site Name	Developable Area (Ha) and Estimated Capacity	Suitable for	Key Development Considerations
			as Special Protection Area and Ramsar - appropriate assessment needed to ascertain whether development will adversely affect the integrity of European sites
GT/SHAF/001 Site at Calves Lane, Shaftesbury	Area: 1.01 Capacity: Around 3	Gypsies and Travellers	Availability Suitable for expansion of existing Gypsy and Traveller site with access off Calves Lane Low density development relating to the existing authorised site No key constraints Seek to retain existing hedges and trees growing around the sites boundaries
GT/SHAF/004 Land at Enmore Green, Shaftesbury	Area: 0.74 Capacity: Around 15	Gypsies and Travellers	No key constraints Suitable for Gypsy and Traveller development using existing access at Woodlands Lane Development must be in accordance with Motcombe Neighbourhood Plan, including policies MOT6. and MOT7. which relate to protecting and enhancing local diversity and protecting local views
GT/SWAN/002 Land at Washpond Lane and Ulwell Road, Swanage	Area: 0.2 Capacity: Around 2	Gypsies and Travellers	Suitable for Gypsy and Traveller development using the existing access off of Ulwell Road or Washpond Lane 52% of the site in flood zones 2 and 3 and not suitable for development AONB - the scale and extent of development should be limited (design should respond to landscape setting to avoid, and where necessary, mitigate adverse impact on landscape character) Development should retain the boundary vegetation along the site's north eastern edge at Ulwell Road

Section 4: Housing

Reference and Site Name	Developable Area (Ha) and Estimated Capacity	Suitable for	Key Development Considerations
			Within 5km of Dorset Heathlands - appropriate assessment needed to ascertain whether development will adversely affect the integrity of European sites
GT/WEKN/001 Knighton Lane, West Knighton	Area: 0.04 Capacity: Around 2	Gypsies and Travellers	An existing unauthorised but established site, deemed suitable for Gypsy and Traveller development in terms of authorising the existing use
GT/WEYM/004 Higher South Buckland Farm, Nottingham, Weymouth	Area: 0.66 Capacity: Around 15	Gypsies and Travellers	Suitable for sensitively designed Gypsy and Traveller development (design should respond to landscape setting to avoid, and where necessary, mitigate adverse impact on landscape character) Proposals should respect the setting of the nearby Nottingham Conservation Area and listed buildings
GT/WIMI/002 Blunts Farm, Wimborne	Area: 0.5 to 0.7 Capacity: 10 - 15	Gypsies and Travellers	Availability - subject to meeting employment land requirements (currently allocated for B1, B2 and B8 uses), may be suitable for mixed G+T/employment development (neighbouring uses would need to be compatible with one another) Avoid adverse impacts from vehicle noise from nearby A31, where not possible seek to mitigate adverse effects Within 5km of Dorset Heathlands - appropriate assessment needed to ascertain whether development will adversely affect the integrity of European sites

5. Economy

5.1. Introduction

- 5.1.1. A prosperous local economy is vital to achieving the strategic priorities of Dorset Council. The council’s Economic Growth Strategy sets out its ambitions to enable clean, inclusive, sustainable and good quality economic growth across the whole council area, and thereby bring improved standards of living, quality of life, health and wellbeing for all its residents.
- 5.1.2. The local plan can help deliver this sustainable economic growth by enabling development in the right locations, whilst minimising the impact of that activity through the protection and enhancement of Dorset’s unique environment. The Economic Growth Strategy and Local Industrial Strategy reinforce the message that a significant and sustained increase in productivity must not come at the expense of the environment.
- 5.1.3. Delivering sustainable economic growth is fundamental to the future prosperity of Dorset and forms one of the strategic priorities of the local plan.

Strategic Priority	The role of the Local Plan	Relevant Strategic Policies in this Section
Economic Growth We will deliver sustainable economic growth and improved infrastructure across the whole of Dorset, increasing productivity and the number of high quality jobs, creating great places to live, work and visit.	The Local Plan can help to deliver economic growth by enabling sustainable economic development in the right locations and providing homes for those who work in the area. Infrastructure provision to meet the area’s needs is important to facilitating this growth. Around 21,000 new jobs are to be created across the area over the lifetime of this plan.	Employment sites <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ECON1: Protection of key employment sites
		Retail / town centres <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ECON3: Hierarchy of centres and the sequential test - ECON4: Town centre impact assessments
		Tourism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ECON6: Supporting Vibrant and Attractive Tourism - ECON8: Caravan and Camping Sites
		The Rural Economy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ECON10: Diversification of land based rural businesses

- 5.1.4. The economy and the environment are closely linked. The outstanding natural and historic environment of the local plan area contributes to the economy by making

the area an attractive place to live, work and visit. The network of town, district and local centres are not just places where people can access a range of services and facilities. Many centres have links to the past, with listed buildings and other historic features or connections and are places that people identify with strongly. The high quality of the coast and countryside, with its designated landscapes and heritage assets, is particularly valuable for tourism and attracting inward investment.

- 5.1.5. Economic development can also have a significant impact on the quality and character of the area, particularly in residential or rural locations. Although the farming industry and other land based businesses of our rural areas employ a relatively small proportion of the population, the rural economy has a great influence on the landscape and active management of the countryside.
- 5.1.6. Recent significant events such as the declaration of a climate and ecological emergency, Brexit and the Covid-19 pandemic have the potential to profoundly impact the local and wider economy. Although some effects are already becoming apparent there is much uncertainty and it is too early to tell how places and sectors will change as a result of these issues. Further work will be necessary to fully appreciate their implications for the economy.

5.2. The supply of employment land and premises

- 5.2.1. As Dorset's population grows, employment opportunities are vital to the maintenance of balanced, sustainable and prosperous communities. Sufficient land needs to be provided if future economic growth is to be successfully delivered.
- 5.2.2. Our latest projections (December 2019) indicate that between 2018 and 2038, economic growth in the Dorset Council area will lead to the creation of up to 21,000 new jobs (FTE) across all industries. We estimate that this equates to a need for between 131ha and 151ha of employment land for offices, light industrial, general industrial, storage and warehousing (use classes B2 and B8 and former use class B1). However, we are aware that further evidence is needed to evaluate fully the potential impacts of Brexit, the Covid-19 pandemic, and recent changes to the Use Classes Order on these figures. This will be undertaken prior to the next stage of the local plan production.
- 5.2.3. The scale and type of new employment development should be appropriate to its location and focused in places where it will provide people with the opportunity to work locally, helping to promote social inclusion and reduce the need to travel.
- 5.2.4. The local plan's approach to meeting the projected demand is through supporting the right types of economic development in the most appropriate locations, as set out in the Development Strategy in Section 2. Sites reserved for employment uses

have been allocated at several of the larger settlements (summarised in Figure 2.10). Flexible policies for the rural area have been included instead of allocations in and around other settlements. Further employment allocations may come forward in neighbourhood plans.

Protecting employment sites

- 5.2.5. In meeting the future needs of the economy and local communities it is important that an appropriate range of employment facilities is maintained across the plan area.
- 5.2.6. Existing employment sites may come under pressure for change of use to non-employment uses. The loss of employment sites can reduce local job opportunities and impact negatively on economic competitiveness, potentially undermining economic growth.
- 5.2.7. Suitable protection of existing employment sites (taking into account their significance) will help to provide sufficient opportunities for employment needs to be met locally, to reduce the need to travel, and to promote economic growth and social inclusion.
- 5.2.8. In accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, and based on available evidence, the local plan outlines a strategy for encouraging sustainable economic growth at appropriate locations. While safeguarding land for employment uses is an important part of the strategy, there may be instances where the changes can occur without the need for planning permission.
- 5.2.9. The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order (as amended) puts uses of land and buildings into various categories. The changing of land or a building to a different activity within the same use class does not require planning permission.
- 5.2.10. Use class E was introduced in September 2020. It replaces the former B1 use (offices and light industrial) but also includes the former A1, A2 and A3 uses (shops, financial and professional services, and restaurants), plus clinics, crèches and gyms. Buildings within this class can move between these uses without the need for planning permission. It also allows for a mix of those uses and permits a building to have a number of uses taking place concurrently or at different times of the day.
- 5.2.11. The changes are not limited by location; they affect any buildings within the relevant uses wherever they are. Consequently, the ability for local plans to control the distribution and retention of these facilities and services is reduced.
- 5.2.12. Permitted development rights may also apply to some buildings on employment sites. These allow conversion to other uses, such as residential, without the need for planning permission. Development allowed under such rights cannot be

controlled by local plan policies though may be subject to other conditions and exceptions.

Definition of employment

- 5.2.13. For planning purposes, employment uses have previously been defined as offices, light industrial, general industrial, storage and warehousing. Industries of these types will continue to be supported. However, in recognition of the diverse nature of employment generating development and the wide range of sectors in the plan area that make a contribution to the economy, we have adopted a broader definition of 'employment'.

Figure 5.1: Definition of employment

Employment

Employment uses include development in the B2 and B8 Use Classes (general industrial, storage and distribution), plus similar and compatible sui generis uses such as waste management infrastructure. They also include other development providing direct, on-going local employment opportunities which are appropriately located within an industrial estate/business park. Examples might include offices and research and development facilities.

They do not include businesses such as retail, farming, care homes, tourist accommodation and attractions, or development that indirectly benefits the local economy, such as housing.

5.3. Key employment sites

- 5.3.1. 'Key employment sites' contribute significantly to the supply of employment land for B2 (general industrial), B8 (storage and distribution) and other uses commonly found on industrial estates such as offices and research and development facilities. They often provide a location for development that is not compatible with residential areas. Key sites are of particular importance for the supply of jobs and their contribution to the economy, making a significant contribution to delivering the economic strategy, meeting anticipated employment needs or those of identified priority sectors. These sites are important for local and inward investment. They generally include larger existing employment sites as well as new sites proposed as part of strategic allocations in the plan (listed at Figure 2.10).
- 5.3.2. In addition to these strategically important key sites there are a number of smaller, locally significant sites. While these sites do not fulfil the same strategic function, they have an important role in servicing the local economy, providing locations to support local businesses or valuable 'bad neighbour' activities. Where the

contribution of these sites is considered particularly valuable these have also been defined as 'key'.

- 5.3.3. Some key employment sites can encompass waste facilities. These include waste transfer facilities, scrapyards and sewage treatment works. Such facilities may be defined under B2 or B8 use classes as industrial processes, or may be defined as sui generis uses. Existing waste management facilities meeting specified criteria, and allocated waste sites, are safeguarded by the Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Waste Plan.

The appropriateness of the proposed use

- 5.3.4. Given the contribution key sites make to the supply of land for 'traditional industries' and the difficulties associated with these sometimes unneighbourly types of development, B2 and B8 Uses will continue to be supported and protected on key sites.
- 5.3.5. To provide sufficient flexibility to respond to the economy it is appropriate not to limit development on key sites solely to these sectors. In recognition of diverse nature of employment, key employment sites will also be safeguarded for a wider range of employment uses as defined in Figure 5.1.
- 5.3.6. However, the introduction of a broader range of uses to a key employment site has the potential to constrain future activity of the site. Unsuitable development could dictate what future employment uses are acceptable, limiting the operation of existing and future businesses.
- 5.3.7. Uses must be compatible with the key employment function of the site. Development which would result in a material change to the character of the area or prejudice the efficient and effective use of the key site will not be permitted.
- 5.3.8. In considering if an employment use may be appropriately located on a Key Employment Site, regard will be had for whether the proposed use:
- is unneighbourly in character or would be difficult to accommodate in an alternative location;
 - meets an identified need for waste management infrastructure;
 - is a complementary or ancillary use required to meet the needs of workers;
 - has strong trade links to other employment uses on the site;
 - is compatible with the core employment function of the site;
 - demonstrates an economic enhancement (in terms of wage rates, skills levels, job numbers, levels of productivity, etc.);
 - operates in a 'key sector' as identified by the Dorset LEP or Dorset Economic Growth Strategy.

- 5.3.9. Proposals that would help to facilitate suitable economic activity, support businesses or meet an identified need for waste management infrastructure will generally be supported. However, for some uses other policies will also apply. For example, town centre uses should follow the 'town centre first' approach set out in policy ECON3; this requires applicants to demonstrate that no other sequentially preferable sites can be found closer to town centres.
- 5.3.10. The council is committed to supporting sustainable economic growth. Where there are recognised viability issues preventing the delivery of key employment sites, we will work with developers to understand and seek to address potential barriers. However, these sites have an important role in meeting the needs of businesses and providing land for employment purposes, some of which are unneighbourly in character. Consequently, the loss of land on key employment sites to uses that do not provide direct, on-going local employment opportunities (including residential development) will be resisted.

ECON1: Protection of key employment sites

Within (existing and/or proposed) key employment sites (as identified on the policies map):

- I. employment uses (defined in Figure 5.1) will be permitted providing they are appropriate to the location, would not prejudice the efficient and effective use of the remainder of the employment site, and are in accordance with other planning policies.
- II. development which would lead to the loss of B2, B8 or similar sui generis employment land and/or premises will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that it would achieve substantial benefits that outweigh the loss.
- III. other uses that do not provide direct, on-going local employment opportunities (including residential development) will not be permitted.

Q: Protection of key employment sites

- 1: Should any sites be added or removed from the list of Key Employment Sites in Appendix 6?

5.4. Other employment sites

- 5.4.1. There are other employment locations and premises outside the key employment sites. Although they have an important role in providing jobs for local people, a more flexible approach will be taken to the development of these other (non-key) employment sites.

The appropriateness of the proposed use

- 5.4.2. Employment uses (defined in figure 5.1) will be supported on other employment sites, particularly where they facilitate suitable economic activity, support businesses or meet an identified need for waste management infrastructure.
- 5.4.3. In some cases, the size, location and characteristics of a site may mean that more intensive, mixed-use development could provide greater benefit to the community, in terms of addressing local needs, than if the site was retained solely in employment uses. For example, some non-employment development may be necessary to secure additional employment development that would not otherwise be viable.
- 5.4.4. Proposals for mixed-use redevelopment will be expected to retain an equivalent number of jobs on the site (and in the case of vacant or underused sites, consideration will be given to the potential of that site for job creation rather than the existing number of jobs). Where an equivalent proportion of employment is not being retained, the council will need to be satisfied that the non-employment use is the minimum amount required to make the scheme viable.
- 5.4.5. Some existing employment uses may cause significant environmental or amenity problems that cannot be overcome. In such cases the redevelopment of the site for a less harmful employment use will be sought as a first preference. Where it can be demonstrated that alternative employment uses are not suitable or could not be attracted to the site, other more environmentally acceptable uses may be permitted.
- 5.4.6. In some circumstances there may not be a need for an employment site to remain in employment use. There may be sufficient alternatives available in the local area, and it may not be commercially viable to retain or attract employment uses to the site. It would not benefit the local economy and the local environment for such a site to become / remain vacant. Where there is no reasonable prospect of an employment use being delivered on the site, alternative non-employment uses may be considered.
- 5.4.7. A wide range of different uses may be permitted, however in some cases other policies will also apply. For example, policies in Chapter 4 set out the approach to

housing development while policy ECON3 outlines requirements for retail and other town centre uses.

The acceptability of the scheme

- 5.4.8. Development must be appropriate in nature and scale for its location taking into account the likely effects on, and potential sensitivity of, the site and wider area. Development should not, either on its own or cumulatively with other established or proposed development in the vicinity, adversely affect the area's landscape, heritage and built environment, or the amenities of the resident population. Any potential increase in vehicle movements generated by development and the impact on the highway network must also be acceptable.
- 5.4.9. Where development is proposed on part of a larger employment area, the proposal must be compatible with any retained employment function on the rest of the site to ensure that it can still be used for employment purposes. Existing businesses and facilities should not have any unreasonable restrictions placed on them as a result of development permitted after they were established. Development which would prejudice the efficient and effective use of the remainder of an employment site will not be permitted.

Information required to support proposals

- 5.4.10. The information required in support of applications may vary depending on the nature of the proposal, its scale and location. Where non-employment uses are proposed, the council will require applicants to demonstrate that a real effort has been made to attract a suitable alternative employment use (defined in Figure 5.1) to that site, having regard to current market trends and the future land needs in that location.
- 5.4.11. Where employment sites are proposed for mixed-use development, the following information will be sought:
- description of community and regeneration benefits;
 - description of economic benefits (for example skills and training provision);
 - any local employment or other development needs addressed by the proposal;
 - existing job numbers (full time and part time) by job type;
 - the amount and type of any employment development to be retained / provided; and
 - expected job numbers (full time and part time) by job type and how this is justified.
- 5.4.12. Where an application is made for a use other than employment, the following information may be sought:

- description of any problems caused by the employment use, the measures considered to mitigate these issues and an explanation of why these problems could not be overcome;
- any other reasons why the site is thought unsuitable for employment uses;
- any local development needs addressed by the proposal;
- what other suitable, viable, alternative sites are available locally for employment uses (this should include an assessment of existing sites and premises in addition to land allocated by the local plan); and
- details of how the property has been marketed, over what period and for what price (and how the asking price was calculated), what uses it was marketed for, where it was advertised and whether there have been any offers received.

ECON2: Protection of other employment sites

- I. Outside the key employment sites, proposals leading to the loss of B2, B8 or similar Sui Generis employment land and/or premises will be permitted in accordance with other planning policies where:
 - Development comprises suitable alternative employment uses (defined in Figure 5.1); or
 - the mixed use redevelopment of the site would deliver important benefits with no significant loss of jobs / potential jobs; or
 - the present (or where vacant or derelict, the previous) use causes significant harm to the character or amenities of the surrounding area and it has been demonstrated that alternative employment uses are not suitable or achievable; or
 - it has been demonstrated that no viable employment use could be attracted to the site which has been actively and realistically marketed for re-use / redevelopment for employment use for a suitable period of time and reflecting the market value.
- II. Redevelopment of employment sites must not adversely impact upon the amenity and operation of neighbouring properties/businesses and must be appropriate to the location.

Q: Protection of other employment sites

- 1: Do you agree with the suggested approach and what it is trying to achieve?
- 2: Do you agree with the suggested wording?
- 3: How could the paragraph / policy / section / chapter be amended to reflect your concerns?

5.5. Town centres and retail development

- 5.5.1. Town centres are at the heart of communities, providing accessible shops and services, employment and leisure facilities. Vital and viable centres not only provide economic and social benefits but also help to foster civic pride, promote local identity and contribute towards the aims of sustainable development.
- 5.5.2. Across the UK the impact of COVID-19 on town centres is profound with an accelerated growth in internet sales and a significant reduction in footfall due to home-working and social-distancing. However even before the onslaught of the pandemic town centres were experiencing challenging times, with high street retailers going out of business, increases in long-term vacant premises and a reduction in the numbers of people visiting town centres. The reasons for this are wide-ranging and complex, many being beyond the scope of planning policy, but in the main centre on the long-term major restructuring of the retail and commercial leisure industries. This restructuring has been taking place in response to changing consumer behaviour, itself driven both by technological advances and prevailing economic conditions such as the fallout from the 2008 global financial crisis and more recently uncertainty over Brexit. Increasingly this has led to the need for town centres to be redefined and adapted to support a greater diversification of uses, including residential, to boost visitor numbers and footfall, dwell time and spend as the role of retail as the dominant function of town centres diminishes.
- 5.5.3. National policy requires a town centres first approach to retail (and other town centre uses) whilst acknowledging the significant challenges facing town centres and in particular the retail sector. It recognises that diversification is key to the long-term vitality and viability of town centres to 'respond to rapid changes in the retail and leisure industries'. In support of diversification, and to help town centres

recover from the economic impact of Covid-19, the government has recently introduced significant changes to the Use Classes Order aimed at:

‘...creating vibrant, mixed use town centres by allowing businesses greater freedom to change to a broader range of compatible uses which communities expect to find on modern high streets, as well as more generally in town and city centres.’¹

- 5.5.4. The main change is the creation of a new Class E, ‘Commercial, business and service’, comprising amongst others shops, financial and professional services, restaurants and cafes, and offices. In addition drinking and hot food takeaway establishments are now identified as uses which do not fall within any use class, i.e. ‘sui generis’.

Future Town Centre Need Forecasts

- 5.5.5. National policy requires the need for new town centre uses to be planned for over a minimum ten year period. Evidence to assess the quantitative and qualitative need for retail and commercial leisure floorspace for the local plan area will be refreshed to reflect the major changes to shopping patterns that are impacting significantly on town centres. The evidence will also provide advice on the identification of centre and primary shopping boundaries and local impact thresholds for assessing retail and leisure development proposals outside centres.
- 5.5.6. The forecast need identified within the existing evidence base retail studies for individual centres is set out in the relevant local plan town chapters. The council acknowledges, however, the potential for consistency issues between the studies and also the need to review future floorspace requirements due to the uncertainty in forecasting long-term retail trends and consumer behaviour. Covid -19 is likely to have implications for the relevance of the existing evidence base too both in terms of forecasting and centre health checks. Further evidence is therefore need to inform the next stage of the local plan.

Network and Hierarchy of Centres

- 5.5.7. The definition of a network and hierarchy of centres that is resilient to anticipated future economic changes is a requirement of national policy. For the Dorset Council area a three tier hierarchy of centres has been defined, as set out in Figure 4.2, informed by the existing evidence and previous local plan work. Each centre within the network provides its own distinct mix of retail, service, leisure and cultural services, and/or office employment space. Many of the smaller local

¹ Explanatory Memorandum to The Town And Country Planning (Use Classes) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2020

centres provide essential roles within their local communities and economies and are equally important as the higher level centres within the hierarchy.

- 5.5.8. Existing out-of-centre developments, comprising or including main town centre uses, do not constitute centres unless identified as such in the local plan and neither are small parades of shops of purely neighbourhood significance. Centres of purely neighbourhood significance identified in neighbourhood plans fall outside the local plan network and hierarchy and are not subject to Policy ECON3. In addition, centres outside the Dorset Local Plan area (such as Yeovil, Salisbury and those within the BCP Council area) have an important influence on the retail hierarchy but are not covered by Policy ECON3.

Figure 5.2: Network and Hierarchy of Centres

Category	Definition	Centres
Town centres	Town centres are the principal centres within an area. In rural areas they can often be found within market or coastal towns. They function as important service centres, providing a range of facilities and services for extensive rural catchment areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blandford Forum • Bridport • Dorchester • Ferndown • Gillingham • Lyme Regis • Shaftesbury • Sherborne • Sturminster Newton • Swanage • Verwood • Wimborne Minster • Wareham • Weymouth
District centres	District centres will usually comprise groups of shops often containing at least one supermarket or superstore, and a range of non-retail services, such as banks and restaurants, as well as local public facilities such as a library.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Queen Mother Square, Poundbury, Dorchester • Stalbridge • Upton • West Moors
Local centres	Local centres include a range of small shops of a local nature, serving a small catchment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abbotsbury Road, Westham, Weymouth • Beaminster • Bere Regis

	<p>Typically, local centres might include, amongst other shops, a small supermarket, a newsagent, and a pharmacy. Other facilities could include a hot-food takeaway, hairdressers and launderette. In rural areas, large villages may perform the role of a local centre.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chickerell • Corfe Castle • Corfe Mullen • Easton Square, Easton, Portland • Fortuneswell, Portland • Littlemoor Centre, Weymouth • Lodmoor Hill, Weymouth • Lytchett Matravers • Marnhull • Portland Road, Wyke Regis, Weymouth • Southill Centre, Weymouth • West Bay • West Parley • Wool
--	--	---


Sequential approach

- 5.5.9. Supporting the vitality and viability of existing town, district and local centres means that these centres should be the first priority when locations are being considered for new retail development (or for other town centre uses such as hotels, leisure, tourism development and the arts). Planning applications for main town centre uses outside existing centres will be considered through the sequential approach (Figure 4.3) with settlements higher in the hierarchy being considered first and in preference to smaller centres. Applicants will be expected to carry out a thorough assessment to explore alternative options. Centre boundaries and primary shopping areas are defined on the local plan policies map. In circumstances where no primary shopping area is defined, the boundary for applying the sequential test is the defined centre boundary.
- 5.5.10. The sequential approach means wherever possible seeking to focus new development within, or failing that, on well-located sites on the edge of, existing centres. Only if centre or 'edge-of-centre'² sites are not available, or expected to become available within a reasonable period, will 'out-of-centre' locations be considered, provided they are acceptable in all other respects including in relation to the impact on existing established centres.
- 5.5.11. As part of the sequential assessment, applicants will need to consider the extent of the catchment area likely to be served by the proposal and identify nearby centres

² Defined in NPPF 2019 Annex 2: Glossary

that may represent suitable locations to accommodate the scale and form of development proposed. The appropriate area of search will vary and should be agreed by the council. Some proposals will serve a purely localised need (e.g. local food stores) whereas others are likely to serve a much wider catchment. In some instances it may be appropriate to include centres outside the plan review area, for example Salisbury, Ringwood, Yeovil and centres within BCP council area.

Figure 5.3: The sequential approach

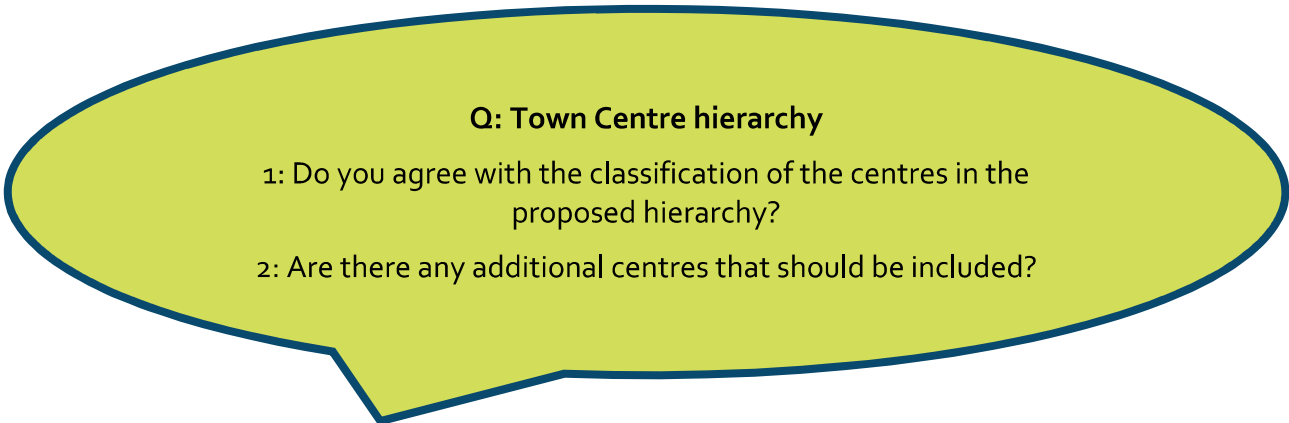
Preference	Sequential Test location	Retail Uses	Main Town Centre Uses
Highest  Lowest	↓	↓	↓
	In centre	Within the primary shopping area	Within the town centre boundary
	↓	↓	↓
	Edge of centre	Well connected to, and up to 300 metres from, the primary shopping area.	Within 300 metres of a centre boundary. For office development, this includes locations outside the centre but within 500 metres of a public transport interchange
	↓	↓	↓
Out of centre	A location which is not in or on the edge of a centre but not necessarily outside the urban area.	A location which is not in or on the edge of a centre but not necessarily outside the urban area.	

- 5.5.12. Some larger settlements may have more than one centre. In such settlements, where development cannot be located within or on the edge of the town centre, the other local centres should be looked at in preference to an out-of-centre site. All development will be expected to be appropriate in scale and type to the centre in which it would be located and also to the centre's function.

- 5.5.13. The sequential assessment should include details on the availability, suitability and viability of potential alternative town centre sites and where no available sites exist appropriate, edge-of- centre sites.

ECON3: Hierarchy of Centres and the sequential test

- I. Town, district and local centres (identified in Figure 4.2) are the focus for town centre uses. Their vitality and viability will be strongly supported and promoted through planning decisions.
- II. New centres will be supported where they are of a scale and type to serve local needs and do not adversely affect the vitality and viability of any centres.
- III. In order to sustain and enhance the vitality and viability of centres, new proposals for town centre uses will be permitted in accordance with the sequential approach as set out in Figure 4.3. Development will be directed firstly towards 'in-centre' locations, followed by 'edge-of-centre' locations. Only if no town centre or edge of centre locations are available, should 'out-of-centre' sites that are, or will be, well served by a choice of sustainable modes of transport be considered.
- IV. Applications for town centre uses that do not pass the sequential test will be refused.
- V. The sequential approach will not be applied to applications for small-scale rural development (including offices), rural tourism, small-scale community facilities or trade-related uses on employment sites.



5.6. Town centre impact assessments

- 5.6.1. Applicants should carry out an impact test where new retail or leisure development above a certain size is proposed outside centres. The purpose of such a test is to determine whether a proposal for new retail or leisure development in certain locations would impact, on its own or cumulatively with other commitments, on existing and committed public and private investment or on the role of any defined centre in the local plan area.
- 5.6.2. Edge and out-of-centre stores of greater sizes potentially have greater adverse implications for the viability and delivery of new or extended floorspace in the local plan’s existing centres. National policy sets a default (floorspace-based) impact threshold of 2,500 m² gross, above which an impact test will be required, but allows a lower threshold to be set locally. Figure 4.4 sets out the local thresholds suggested by existing evidence. Further understanding of retail impact assessment thresholds across the area will be undertaken to inform the next stage of the plan’s production.

Figure 5.4: Local impact thresholds

Local impact threshold (Gross floorspace)	Centre	Proposed centres hierarchy position
200 m ²	Swanage, Upton, Wareham	Town centre
	Bere Regis, Corfe Castle, Lytchett Matravers, Wool	Local centre
300 m ²	Blandford Forum, Bridport, Dorchester, Gillingham, Lyme Regis, Shaftesbury, Sherborne, Sturminster Newton, Weymouth	Town centre

Section 5: Economy

	Queen Mother Square (Poundbury, Dorchester), Stalbridge	District centre
	Abbotsbury Road (Westham, Weymouth), Beaminster, Chickerell, Easton Square (Easton, Portland), Fortuneswell (Portland), Littlemoor Centre (Weymouth), Lodmoor Hill (Weymouth), Portland Road (Wyke Regis, Weymouth), Southill Centre (Weymouth), West Bay	Local centre
500 m ²	Verwood	Town centre
	West Moors, West Parley	District centre
1,000 m ²	Ferndown, Wimborne Minster	Town centre

- 5.6.3. Where retail or leisure development is proposed outside a town centre area, the council will consider whether there is a need for an impact assessment³ to be submitted if the proposed gross floorspace is over the minimum relevant local threshold, and encourage applicants to engage proactively with the council early on in the planning process. Impact assessments will not be limited to new development; they may also be required for extensions, redevelopment or the variation of conditions where this would alter the effects of a development. The scope of the impact assessment and level of detail required should be proportionate and will vary according to local circumstance.

³ The steps needed to be taken in applying the impact test are set out in PPG Paragraph: 018 Reference ID: 2b-018-20190722 (Revision date: 22 07 2019)

- 5.6.4. Where a proposal is likely to lead to significant adverse impacts, the application should be refused. What constitutes a significant adverse impact will be based on the circumstances of each case. The cumulative impact of recent / committed proposals may also be relevant. Where the evidence shows there is no significant adverse impact, the positive and negative effects of the proposal will be balanced, together with locational and other considerations, to reach an overall judgement.

ECON4: Town centre impact assessments

- I. Proposals for retail and leisure development above minimum local gross floorspace thresholds, in locations outside of the town centre areas shown on the policies map are required to submit an impact test to support the proposal.
- II. Development likely to lead to a significant adverse impact on existing centres will be refused.

Q: Town centre impact assessments

- 1: Do you agree with the suggested approach and what it is trying to achieve?
- 2: Do you agree with the suggested wording?
- 3: How could the paragraph / policy / section / chapter be amended to reflect your concerns?

5.7. Management of Centres and Primary Shopping Areas

- 5.7.1. National policy requires the extent of centres, predominantly occupied by main town centre uses, to be defined along with the identification of primary shopping areas where retail uses are concentrated. These boundaries are needed in the application of the sequential approach set out in Policy ECON3. The extent of these areas for each of the centres is defined on the Local Plan Policies Map but may be amended through a made Neighbourhood Plan. Where an individually defined primary shopping area is not defined, then the full extent of the defined centre boundary should be treated as a primary shopping area.
- 5.7.2. Although not a requirement of national policy, national planning guidance allows for primary and secondary retail frontages to be defined 'where *their use can be justified in supporting the vitality and viability of particular centres*'. The aim of primary retail frontages is to maintain the predominance of retail uses, whilst the aim of secondary retail frontages is to maintain a mix of retail and non-retail uses with the opportunity for a diversity of uses such as restaurants, cinemas and businesses. Frontages are currently defined for larger centres within the Dorset Council area in the existing adopted local plans and neighbourhood plans.
- 5.7.3. The recent creation of Class E under the new Use Class system allows far greater flexibility to change uses, with, for example, a retail shop being changed into a restaurant, office or gym, and vice versa, without the need to apply for planning permission. Whilst this is not a concern in some parts of some town centres, where the additional flexibility is supported, it does inhibit the ability to manage the mix of ground floor uses. Further understanding of the role of primary and secondary retail frontages will be examined as this plan progresses.
- 5.7.4. The ability to support primary shopping areas is also inhibited, with changes of use allowed under Class E potentially leading in time to a gradual blending of primary shopping areas with the wider town centre area. Nevertheless strong support will still be given to retail and closely related uses in primary shopping areas, where defined.
- 5.7.5. In order to maintain a lively street scene within primary shopping areas and promote a safer and more secure environment, development proposals will be expected to retain or provide good quality active frontages at ground floor level having regard to Policy ENV10 This would include the where the building is proposed to change to alternative uses away from retail. Consideration should also be given to how proposals may enhance the public realm to increase footfall and enhance vibrancy. Proposals for hot food takeaways will be acceptable in accordance with Policy COM5 and Policy ENV11.

- 5.7.6. The use of upper floors for offices or residential uses is encouraged as it adds vitality to town centres without fragmenting the retail and services on the ground floors.

Markets

- 5.7.7. Markets support town centre diversity and provide low risk opportunities for new enterprises to establish themselves. They can also generate footfall, enhance vibrancy, provide access to affordable goods, attract tourists and contribute to a town's identity. They are places of social interaction, facilitating community cohesion and social inclusion. The importance of markets is recognised in national policy which suggests that they should be retained and enhanced so that they remain attractive and competitive. The council will seek to ensure that any proposals (for example town centre enhancements) for sites where outdoor markets take place do not prejudice their future operation.
- 5.7.8. In seeking the retention and enhancement of markets the council accepts that markets evolve over time and may need to expand or move. To guide the moving or introduction of markets, preference will be given to sites within primary shopping areas in prominent and accessible locations.

ECON5: Management of centres, primary shopping areas and markets

- I. The boundaries of town centre areas and primary shopping areas are defined on the Policies Map.
- II. Development proposals for town centres uses will be supported if of a type and scale appropriate to the size, role and function of the centre.
- III. Development proposals for retail and other town centre uses in primary shopping areas will be supported where:
 - a positive contribution is made to the vitality, viability and diversity of the primary shopping area and centre; and
 - an active ground floor use is maintained or provided.
- IV. New or relocated markets should be directed towards the primary shopping areas in prominent and accessible locations. Proposals that prejudice the future operation of existing markets should be refused.
- V. Public realm improvement measures intended to enhance the vitality of centres and to increase footfall are encouraged.
- VI. The use of upper floors of premises in centres for residential or other uses will be encouraged subject to the ground floor use not being undermined and, where possible, separate access to the upper floors being provided.
- VII. Planning conditions and / or planning obligations will be used where necessary and justified to prevent town centre uses being located outside centres and to maintain the predominant retail function of primary shopping areas.

Q: Management of centres, primary shopping areas and markets

- 1: Do you agree with the suggested approach and what it is trying to achieve?
- 2: Do you agree with the suggested wording?
- 3: How could the paragraph / policy / section / chapter be amended to reflect your concerns?

5.8. Tourism Developments

5.8.1. Tourism is a key part of the local economy and is a growing sector which plays an important role in creating jobs and sustaining the local economy. There are many different tourist attractions within the local plan area, including: Corfe Castle, Weymouth Sea Life Centre; Abbotsbury Swannery; the fossil museum in Lyme Regis; Moors Valley Country Park; the many harbours and beaches such as Durdle Door; and the historic towns and villages such as Sherborne, Shaftesbury, Kingston, Cerne Abbas and Milton Abbas. The area also serves as an important base for visiting tourist destinations elsewhere, such as the New Forest National Park and Bournemouth and Poole.

Tourism

For the purposes of the local plan, tourism refers to all activities of visitors, including overnight visitors and same day visitors, visits for business purposes as well as for holidays and recreation.

- 5.8.2. The attractive designated landscapes, towns and villages make the area popular with visitors but also sensitive to the pressures that tourist activities can cause. Tourism provides 43,118 jobs, equivalent to 12% of all employment within the area, and contributes approximately £863 million to the local economy annually via visitor expenditure from day trips and longer-stay accommodation. The importance of tourism to the area's economy is recognised and the council will look favourably on investment in new and improved attractions, facilities and accommodation so the tourism industry can remain vibrant and competitive.
- 5.8.3. The area's designated landscapes, important natural features and historic settlements are particularly valuable in attracting visitors, but also bring visitor pressures which need to be managed. High numbers of visitors can put pressure on some locations in terms of their tranquillity, appearance and by physical erosion. It is important that tourist related development takes place in a sustainable manner so as to ensure positive benefits whilst avoiding adverse impacts on the local environment or existing infrastructure.

Supporting vibrant and attractive tourism

- 5.8.4. The local plan sets out a positive framework for consideration of tourism proposals to appropriately manage their growth and development and protect the area's natural and built environment, in accordance with the provisions for ensuring the protection of national and international sites. Tourism development will be expected to be focused at the most sustainable locations in the area, as set out in tier one and tier two of the settlement hierarchy (Figure 2.3) unless there is a justifiable functional need for it to be located elsewhere.

- 5.8.5. Tourism development is regarded as a town centre use and the preferred location for large new tourist attractions and facilities, which are compatible with urban areas, are town centres. Locating attractions and facilities in town centres helps to support town centre economies and will often be more sustainable in transport terms, especially where a town centre is served by a range of transport options. The sequential test, as set out in policy ECON₃, will be applied to tourist attractions and facilities which are compatible with urban areas.
- 5.8.6. In addition to attractions and facilities, to continue to be vibrant and competitive the tourism sector needs good quality tourist accommodation to cater for the diverse needs of a range of visitors. The local plan differentiates between types of accommodation of a more permanent construction (built accommodation) and those of a more temporary nature (such as caravans and tents). Policy ECON₈ sets out the requirements in relation to the latter. The preference is for large new hotels and guest houses (which are considered to be town centre uses) to be located within town centres, where tourist attractions are concentrated. The sequential test will be applied to proposals for development of this kind.
- 5.8.7. Some tourism developments attract huge numbers of visitors annually, appealing to national and international markets. The council is conscious that large scale development can put undue pressure on our resources and depending on the location can potentially undermine the vitality and viability of our defined centres. Therefore, proposals for large scale development (i.e. tourism developments exceeding the floorspace thresholds established through policy ECON₄) will need to be accompanied by a Town Centre Impact Assessment. Where large scale developments are proposed, transport impacts will also be taken into account and the council will expect the application to be accompanied by a transport plan.

Sustainable rural tourism

- 5.8.8. Sustainable rural tourism is an important part of a prosperous rural economy. The coast and countryside with its landscape and wildlife designations and extensive public rights of way network are attractions in their own right. While the benefits of locating tourist attractions, facilities and accommodation in town centres and at other settlements are acknowledged, it is also recognised that some tourism developments by their very nature will not lend themselves to a town or village location and may require a more rural site.
- 5.8.9. However, the attractive landscapes that make the rural area popular with visitors are also sensitive to the pressures that tourist activities can cause. It is unlikely that major new tourism development can be accommodated in sensitive areas such as the Heritage Coast and AONB without harming the landscape character and consequently is unlikely to be supported in these locations. Applications should demonstrate that alternative locations have been fully and rigorously explored,

- providing clear evidence to justify why the alternatives would be inappropriate. In such instances any harm to the sensitive environment should be avoided and where residual impacts exist, significant mitigation will be required.
- 5.8.10. Proposals for sustainable rural tourism development which respects the character of the countryside will be supported. Well-designed development of an appropriate scale in suitable locations can spread the benefits of tourism, reduce the impacts on important natural features, and reduce the pressure on sensitive areas and habitats elsewhere.
- 5.8.11. Outside the main settlements, proposals for new development should normally include a clear justification of why such a location is needed, information on the long term viability of the enterprise and the benefits to the local economy. In order to be in keeping with the rural character such development will usually be small in scale and must be well designed. Where built tourist accommodation is permitted in a location where open market housing would normally be refused, the council will look to secure appropriate arrangements to ensure it remains in use as tourist accommodation and does not become part of the local housing stock. In cases where staff accommodation is required to provide 24-hour supervision for a rural tourism business, this may be permitted as an occupational dwelling under Policy HOUS8.
- 5.8.12. Existing rural buildings that are no longer needed for their original purpose provide an opportunity for development without the impact that new buildings would have on the surrounding landscape. In rural areas, the conversion of existing buildings to tourism uses (other than tourist accommodation) may be permitted but must also be in accordance with Policy DEV8 (The Re-use of Buildings Outside Settlement Boundaries).
- 5.8.13. In order to support existing businesses, the replacement and expansion of existing tourism attractions, facilities and accommodation will be allowed where this improves the quality of the tourism offer and the appearance of the site, provided there is no significant harm.
- 5.8.14. An increasing number of farmers are looking to diversify to supplement their farming businesses. New development for tourism uses proposed as part of a diversification scheme for a land based rural business will be supported if sufficient evidence can be provided that the development would make an ongoing contribution to the business and would be in keeping with the rural character.

Acceptability of the scheme

- 5.8.15. As with any other form of development, the acceptability of proposals for tourism development will need to be considered against all other relevant planning

policies, including those relating to design, amenity and the protection of the environment.

- 5.8.16. Whatever the location, tourism development must fit well with its immediate surroundings, be sympathetic to the wider environment and be of an appropriate scale and design for the area. Proposals should be considered in conjunction with the existing built form to avoid a potential cumulative impact. The visual, environmental and infrastructure impact of development will be carefully assessed especially in isolated or more sensitive locations.
- 5.8.17. Within the plan area there are opportunities for the provision of high quality tourism development which will enhance the visitor economy for example low impact accommodation, study centres and accommodation for disabled visitors. Some developments, such as arts and cultural tourism, help widen the appeal of the area beyond the traditional tourist season. Proposals which will increase the quality and diversity of the tourism offer will be supported.
- 5.8.18. In some cases development may offer wider benefits such as a new recreational facility that will be used by the local community or helping to maintain an historic building. The wider benefits to the community and the environment created by the development will be taken into account and weighed against its impacts, including any disadvantages arising from its location.

ECON6. Supporting vibrant and attractive tourism

- VIII. Tourism development should be focused at the most sustainable locations in accordance with the settlement hierarchy. Major development in the countryside within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or the Heritage Coast is unlikely to be permitted.
- IX. Larger tourist attractions, facilities and built accommodation should locate within town centres, followed by edge of centre locations before out of centre sites are considered (in accordance with policy ECON3). Tourism development above the thresholds established in policy ECON4 should provide an impact statement and transport plan.
- X. Outside development boundaries, tourism development will be required to:
- demonstrate that the countryside location is essential, the development is viable in the long-term and would benefit the local economy; or
 - comprise the reuse or replacement of a rural building (in accordance with policy DEV8); or
 - comprise alteration or extension to improve existing tourism development and enhance the appearance of the site; or
 - be part of a diversification scheme for land based rural businesses (in accordance with policy ECON10)
- XI. All proposals must be of a scale, type and appearance appropriate to the location.
- XII. Development needs to be sympathetic to the wider environment and must not result in an adverse impact, individually or cumulatively, upon designated landscapes and sites of biodiversity importance.
- XIII. Development that results in harmful impacts on local services, roads and other infrastructure will not be permitted.
- XIV. Development to enhance the visitor economy and increase the quality and diversity of the tourism offer in the local area will be supported. Proposals that deliver a wider environmental or community benefits will be encouraged.

Q: Supporting vibrant and attractive tourism

- 1: Do you agree with the suggested approach and what it is trying to achieve?
- 2: Do you agree with the suggested wording?
- 3: How could the paragraph / policy / section / chapter be amended to reflect your concerns?

5.9. Loss of built tourist accommodation

- 5.9.1. Tourist accommodation serves tourist attractions and facilities and contributes to the economy through its support of retail, food and drink and travel services. A vibrant and competitive tourism sector needs good quality tourist accommodation to cater for the diverse needs of a range of visitors. Its loss can detrimentally affect the economy.
- 5.9.2. It would be inappropriate to try to resist the loss of all hotel and guesthouse accommodation. The council recognises that some premises may become less attractive to visitors making them unviable to maintain or improve. Although there may be some flexibility regarding the change of use of smaller hotels and guesthouses, the loss of larger hotels and guesthouses with at least 6 guest bedrooms will be resisted. The loss of such premises may have a significant impact on the tourist sector especially if they are in prominent tourist locations.
- 5.9.3. Any proposal for the loss or reduction in size of larger premises will be required to demonstrate that real effort has been made to retain the tourist accommodation. Facilities will be expected to have been realistically marketed without success for an appropriate continuous period of time prior to the application being submitted. Evidence submitted should typically include:
 - reasons why there is no longer a market for the premises in its tourist function;
 - details of how the property has been marketed, the length of time that the marketing was active and any changes during this period, the asking price and any adjustments to this asking price, the level of interest generated and any offers received; and

- where a reduction in size is proposed, the economic impact on the ongoing viability of the business and the effect on its continuing tourism function.

ECON7: Loss of tourist accommodation

Proposals that would lead to the loss or reduction in size of a hotel or other accommodation in Use Class C1 will only be permitted:

- I. where the proposal would affect five or fewer lettable bedrooms or facilities available to residents, and the loss would not affect the ongoing viability, attractiveness or operation of the retained tourist accommodation; or
- II. where it has been demonstrated that the existing use is not viable and there is no market interest in acquisition or investment to allow the continued profitable operation of the business.

Q: Loss of tourism accommodation

- 1: Do you agree with the suggested approach and what it is trying to achieve?
- 2: Do you agree with the suggested wording?
- 3: How could the paragraph / policy / section / chapter be amended to reflect your concerns?

5.10. Caravan and camping

- 5.10.1. Caravan and camping sites are key components of the area's stock of self-catering tourist accommodation. The council will support appropriate improvements in the quality of accommodation on offer and proposals that enable existing sites to extend the visitor season.
- 5.10.2. New caravan and camping sites should be well located in relation to existing facilities. A more flexible approach may be taken where an existing site could be made more self-sufficient by having its own on-site facilities, especially where these facilities would be available to be used by the local community. However, any increase in built form would need to mitigate any impact on the landscape and is unlikely to be acceptable within the AONBs or Heritage Coast.
- 5.10.3. A new caravan or camping site may be provided as part of a diversification project for a farm or other land-based rural business. Proposals may be acceptable provided that it is directly linked to the existing business, would not form a separate enterprise and it can be demonstrated that it would materially assist in maintaining the long-term viability of the existing business. In order to be in keeping with the rural character, such diversification projects should normally be small in scale both in terms of the number of units / pitches being proposed, the scale of the ancillary buildings and the area used for such purposes.
- 5.10.4. Operators may come forward with proposals to expand, intensify or reorganise existing sites to make them more attractive to visitors. Proposals of this nature should also result in an improvement in the appearance of the accommodation itself and reduce the appearance of the site overall in the wider landscape. To achieve this, such proposals should form part of a long-term management plan and will be required to include an appropriate landscape scheme, with provision for its ongoing maintenance.
- 5.10.5. The use of an existing site may be intensified through the provision of enhanced facilities, for entertainment or other purposes, especially on larger holiday parks. However, the visual impact of any such development, particularly in open landscapes and coastal areas, will need to be carefully assessed. Intensification of

Caravan and camping sites

For purposes of the local plan, caravan and camping sites are those which primarily provide for accommodation in temporary and mobile units such as caravans (static, touring and twin unit), tents or yurts.

Where a site is permitted in a location where open market housing would normally be refused, the councils will restrict its occupancy to ensure it remains in use as tourist accommodation.

built form within the AONBs or within the Heritage Coast is unlikely to be acceptable.

- 5.10.6. The internal reorganisation of existing sites to improve their attractiveness to visitors and reduce visual impact will be encouraged. Such a proposal that would require an increase in the overall site area will be given careful consideration and may be permitted if the benefit, in terms of the overall reduction in visual impact, outweighs any adverse impacts associated with the increase in site size.
- 5.10.7. The change of use of a site, either wholly or in part, from touring accommodation to static accommodation is unlikely to result in an improvement in the appearance of the accommodation itself or the appearance of the site in the wider landscape. However, where static caravans already exist, it may be possible to significantly reduce visual impact through refurbishment or replacement with alternative mobile units. Such proposals will be looked upon favourably.
- 5.10.8. Some sites, especially the larger coastal ones, can be visually intrusive in the landscape. In considering proposals for caravan and camping sites in isolated or sensitive locations these impacts must all be taken into account, weighing up the benefits of development against any disadvantages arising from the location.
- 5.10.9. It is unlikely that new sites will be able to be accommodated within the Heritage Coast area without harming the landscape character, so such proposals are only likely to be permitted in very exceptional circumstances. Within the AONBs, proposals for new camping sites would need to be small in scale and appropriately located to minimise the impact on the landscape. Sites for caravans and camping conflict directly with the aims of the Green Belt and will not be permitted within the Green Belt. Sites located within 400m of the Dorset Heathlands habitats sites must also be avoided.

ECON8: Caravan and Camping Sites

- I. New caravan and camping sites should be well located in relation to existing facilities. The appropriate provision of facilities on existing sites may be permitted, to make them more self-sufficient.
- II. Farm diversification projects (for agricultural and other land-based rural businesses) for new caravan and camping sites will be supported, provided the development would make an on-going contribution to the business that is diversifying and would be in keeping with the rural character.
- III. Proposals for the expansion, intensification or reorganisation of existing sites must clearly demonstrate that development forms part of a long term management plan to improve the quality and appearance of the accommodation and site.
- IV. All development (including the change of use from touring to static units) must not, individually or cumulatively, have a significant adverse impact on the distinctive characteristics of the area's landscape, important wildlife habitats, heritage or built environment.
- V. New sites or extensions to sites for static or touring caravans, tents, chalets or cabins for holiday use will not be permitted within the green belt or within sites of biodiversity importance or within 400m of protected heathland sites. Proposals in the Heritage Coast and AONBs are unlikely to be supported and will only be permitted where they do not harm the special character of the area.
- VI. Development proposals must include an appropriate landscape scheme and provision for its ongoing maintenance.

Q: Caravan and camping sites

- 1: Do you agree with the suggested approach and what it is trying to achieve?
- 2: Do you agree with the suggested wording?
- 3: How could the paragraph / policy / section / chapter be amended to reflect your concerns?

5.11. Farming and diversification

New agricultural buildings

- 5.11.1. Many new agricultural buildings can be built under permitted development rights but larger agricultural buildings are controlled by the planning system.
- 5.11.2. Proposals for new agricultural buildings in the South East Dorset Green Belt will be considered against both national policy on Green Belts and any other relevant policies. National policy regards the construction of new buildings for agriculture and forestry as appropriate development in the green belt.
- 5.11.3. Where a new agricultural building is proposed, the council will wish to be satisfied that there are no existing buildings that can be re-used for agricultural purposes. It is recognised that many traditional farm buildings will not be compatible with modern farming practices, but these buildings, particularly those that make a positive contribution to local character, are a valuable resource and can be re-used in accordance with Policy DEV8.
- 5.11.4. Larger agricultural buildings can have an industrial appearance and a significant adverse impact on the local landscape character. Applicants will be encouraged to locate any new agricultural building where it would not impact on the openness and attractive character of the countryside, for example by locating it close to an existing building or on an area of existing hard standing. The impact on residential amenity, including that arising from farm traffic movements, will also be a consideration.

ECON9. New agricultural buildings

- I. New agricultural buildings, or extensions to existing agricultural buildings, will be permitted where the development is necessary for the purposes of agriculture on the unit, or locally where facilities are to be shared, and there are no existing buildings on the unit which are capable of re-use for agricultural purposes.
- II. The scale, siting, design and external appearance of any new agricultural building (or extension) should be designed to minimise adverse impact on the landscape character and residential amenity.

Q: New agricultural buildings

- 1: Do you agree with the suggested approach and what it is trying to achieve?
- 2: Do you agree with the suggested wording?
- 3: How could the paragraph / policy / section / chapter be amended to reflect your concerns?

The diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses

- 5.11.5. Diversification is where a farm or other land-based rural business branches out into different kinds of activities to support the existing business. The local plan supports diversification, where this will help to support the business to which the diversification proposal is linked.
- 5.11.6. Diversification projects include small scale retail outlets and catering (e.g. a farm shop), training and promotion of rural crafts (e.g. craft workshops), or tourism, including tourist attractions, bed and breakfast, and camping and caravanning sites. Diversification proposals for caravans and camping will be considered against Policy ECON10.
- 5.11.7. Diversification may also be land-based and could include agricultural activities, such as the production and selling of specialist livestock products, or the growing and selling specialist crops. It could also include taking land out of agricultural production, or low intervention management to deliver biodiversity net gain for development elsewhere.
- 5.11.8. Proposals for farm diversification in the green belt will be considered against both national policy on green belts and any other relevant policy.
- 5.11.9. Where a diversification project requires a building, an existing building on-site should be re-used wherever possible. Such proposals will be considered against Policy HOUS9.
- 5.11.10. The replacement of an existing building to facilitate a diversification project will be acceptable, but only if the building to be replaced does not make a positive contribution to the rural character. The loss of such buildings will be resisted.
- 5.11.11. In the green belt, the replacement of an existing building would only be considered to be appropriate development if the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces.

New built development

- 5.11.12. New built development may be permitted as part of a diversification scheme if there are no existing buildings capable of reuse and it would not be appropriate to replace an existing building because of the contribution it makes to rural character. Any new build element should relate well to existing development and should be designed, in form and function, to be ancillary to the existing enterprise.
- 5.11.13. The construction of a new building for farm diversification is unlikely to be acceptable in the green belt. If it is considered to be inappropriate development which is, by definition harmful to the green belt it will only be approved (exceptionally) in very special circumstances.

Supporting an existing enterprise

5.11.14. Any diversification project must be directly linked to the existing business and should not form a separate enterprise. It must be demonstrated that the project would materially assist in maintaining the long-term viability of the existing business. Any diversification project will usually be tied by legal agreement to the business that is diversifying to prevent it from becoming a separate enterprise, especially if the project is located in an area where it would not normally be permitted.

ECON10: Diversification of land-based rural businesses

- III. Diversification projects (for agricultural and other land-based rural businesses) for the use of land or buildings outside settlement boundaries for non-agricultural employment purposes will be supported, provided they are in keeping with the rural character and comprise:
- the use of land; or
 - the reuse of an existing building, or the replacement of an existing building which does not make a positive contribution to the local character; or
 - new ancillary development that relates well to existing development provided that there are no redundant buildings capable of reuse / suitable for replacement.
- IV. The proposed diversification project must make an on-going contribution to

Q: Diversification of land based rural businesses

- 1: Do you agree with the suggested approach and what it is trying to achieve?
- 2: Do you agree with the suggested wording?
- 3: How could the paragraph / policy / section / chapter be amended to reflect your concerns?

5.12. Equestrian developments

- 5.12.1. Riding and horse keeping are popular leisure activities across Dorset. There are many types of development associated with horses, from purely grazing and smaller scale private livery yards to equestrian centres, stud farms and commercial livery yards / equine training facilities.
- 5.12.2. Proposals for equine-related development in the green belt will be considered against both national policy on green belts and Policy ECON11.
- 5.12.3. A key consideration will be whether a proposed equine-related development constitutes appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use) for outdoor sport or outdoor recreation. Such proposals will not be considered inappropriate development, provided they preserve the openness of the green belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it⁴. Any equine-related proposals that are judged to be inappropriate development would, by definition be harmful to the green belt and will not be approved except in very special circumstances.

General Issues

- 5.12.4. Any land associated with an equine-related development should be inherently suitable for keeping horses and should be managed to maintain environmental quality, countryside character, the amenity of local residents and the welfare of the horses themselves.
- 5.12.5. The potential impacts of exercising horses off-site will be a consideration, particularly any impacts (such as soil erosion) on nearby bridleways or areas of open land; highway safety issues where riding is likely to take place on public roads; and impacts on wildlife interests especially internationally protected wildlife sites, for example through damage to vegetation.
- 5.12.6. The type and volume of traffic accessing a site will also be a consideration, especially for larger commercial facilities. Any site where horses are kept should be capable of being safely accessed by larger vehicles such as towed horse boxes, horse lorries and / or other larger vehicles. The access to a site should also be capable of accommodating any increased volume of traffic without damaging the access itself, the route to the site, or the character of the route.
- 5.12.7. Concentrations of equine-related developments could give rise to cumulative impacts, for example on the character of the countryside or on highway safety.

⁴ As set out in Paragraph 134 of the NPPF (February 2019)

The council will have regard to any such cumulative impacts when considering proposals for new or expanded equine-related developments.

- 5.12.8. Private recreational uses generally include small-scale developments such as field shelters and stables. These will generally be permitted where they are intended to be used by horses that are currently present on the site or where it is intended to graze / keep horses on a site for private recreational use (provided that they are suitably designed and located). Field shelters and / or stables should be designed using timber or lightweight materials that complement the landscape and can be removed when they are no longer needed. A separate ancillary structure of similar construction to store tack, feed and/or bedding may be permitted. The amount of tack stored on site should be kept to a minimum for security reasons.

Commercial recreation and leisure equine-related development

- 5.12.9. Commercial recreation or leisure equine-related developments (such as livery stables and riding schools) and commercial training or breeding equine-related developments (such as racing stables and stud farms) can help to diversify individual farms and the wider rural economy.
- 5.12.10. The preference is for commercial equine-related developments to re-use existing buildings, although it is recognised that it may not be possible to accommodate businesses of this scale wholly in existing buildings. An existing building or group of buildings should form the basis for a development of this nature, wherever possible. New buildings may be permitted where there is a proven essential need and no existing building is suitable. Elements of new buildings that are disproportionate in scale to or out of character with the existing buildings or have a significant impact on the landscape especially within the AONBs, are unlikely to be acceptable.
- 5.12.11. A riding arena (sand school / manège) or other exercise facilities (such as horse exercisers) may be permitted in association with a commercial equine-related development or for private recreation or leisure use. The council will expect a developer or private individual to be able to explain why an arena or other facility is needed and to be able to justify its intended size and scale. An arena and / or other exercise facilities should be sited close to the buildings to which it relates as this will limit impact on the landscape. Other key design issues include hard landscaping such as fencing and surfacing, landscape planting, drainage and the potential impacts on the amenity of nearby residents.
- 5.12.12. Approvals for riding arenas or other exercise facilities for private recreation or leisure use will be subject to conditions to prevent them from being used commercially. If a riding arena is currently used for private uses an application would be required prior to any change, as an arena (or other facility) used for

commercial purposes has a far greater neighbouring amenity impact than one used solely for private recreation and leisure purposes.

Viability and Occupational Dwellings

- 5.12.13. The council will wish to ensure that any commercial equine-related development is likely to be viable before allowing it. Such proposals should be supported by a business plan that shows the proposed enterprise has a sound financial basis. The council may permit occupational dwellings related to commercial equine-related enterprises but will not permit such dwellings to enable people to live close to horses that are kept for private recreation or leisure use. Applications for occupational dwellings will be determined under Policy HOUS8.
- 5.12.14. In the event that a commercial equine-related business fails, the owner or occupier will need to produce evidence that the business is not viable, or cannot be made viable, before a change of use may be permitted. Policy HOUS also sets out how proposals for the removal of occupancy conditions for essential rural workers will be considered.

ECON11. Equestrian development

Equine-related developments that respect the character of the countryside will be permitted provided that:

- I. adequate provision has been made for the exercising of horses without causing harm to rights of way, other equestrian routes, habitats sites or other areas that will be used for exercise;
- II. vehicular access to the site and the road network in the vicinity are capable of accommodating horse-related transport in a safe manner;
- III. the cumulative impacts of concentrations of equine-related developments, for example on the character of the countryside, on habitats sites or on highway safety, have been considered.
- IV. In the case of a new field shelter or stable used for private recreation or leisure use:
 - it will be for the exclusive use of and should be of a scale that reflects the number of horses to be kept or grazed on site;
 - it should be built of materials that are capable of being easily removed if the equine-related use ceases; and
 - any ancillary use, such as a tack room or food storage structure, should be the minimum required to meet the functional needs of the horses on site and should not give rise to security issues.
- V. In the case of commercial recreation, leisure, training or breeding enterprises, the development should re-use an existing building (or group of buildings) in the countryside. An element of new building or buildings may also be permitted alongside the reuse of an existing building (or group of buildings), provided that:
 - it can be demonstrated that no other building (or group of buildings) is available that is capable of accommodating the proposed equine-related use;
 - the element of new building is the minimum required to accommodate the proposed equine-related use (over and above the requirement to re-use the existing building or group of buildings); and
 - any new buildings and ancillary facilities would be erected to integrate with the existing building (or group of buildings) minimising impact on the landscape and local character.
- VI. In the case of a riding arena or other exercise facility:
 - it is of a size and scale appropriate to the existing commercial enterprise, or the number of privately kept horses that will use the facility; and
 - it is located close to other buildings on the site and is not visually intrusive in the landscape.

Proposals to re-use or adapt substantial purpose-built equestrian holdings for non-equestrian uses will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that continued equestrian use is inappropriate or unviable. Proposed alternative uses must accord with other policies in the local plan.

Q: Equestrian development

- 1: Do you agree with the suggested approach and what it is trying to achieve?
- 2: Do you agree with the suggested wording?
- 3: How could the paragraph / policy / section / chapter be amended to reflect your concerns?

6. Community infrastructure

6.1. Introduction

- 6.1.1. A wide variety of community facilities and services are part of the overall infrastructure needed to support development. These are provided across the plan area by various businesses and other organisations. The provision and location of these can play an important role in encouraging a sense of community in an area, as well as minimising the need to travel by car.
- 6.1.2. As a community grows larger, the infrastructure to support it needs to grow with it. The larger settlements in the plan area are recognised as the shopping, service and employment centres for a much wider rural area as well as their own populations. Smaller scale services and facilities in local neighbourhoods and villages are also vitally important for many residents, and for maintaining a sense of community, though economic changes and increasing car ownership have resulted in the loss of many of these facilities in the last twenty years.

Community infrastructure includes but is not limited to:

- shops, cafes, restaurants and public houses;
- post offices, banks and building societies;
- education and training facilities, pre-school centres and other children's services;
- doctors' surgeries and dental practices, day-care centres, hospitals and other healthcare / social service facilities;
- community halls / hubs, including places of worship;
- cultural facilities, such as arts centres;
- libraries and museums;
- sports facilities and open space of public value;
- roads, rail, port facilities and bus services, routes for pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians, including associated infrastructure such as petrol stations and vehicle electric charging points, signage, parking / storage;
- waste management, collection, recycling and disposal services;
- coast protection and flood defence schemes;
- community safety and emergency services (fire, police, ambulance and coastguard);
- community renewable energy / low carbon infrastructure;
- community business support, including broadband technology / telecommunications.

- 6.1.3. The provision of community infrastructure to support the role and function of settlements is important in delivering a number of the strategic priorities of this plan and strategic policies are included to help with its delivery.

Section 6: Community Infrastructure

- 6.1.4. The council needs to plan for the delivery of infrastructure within the area, which means not only assessing what is needed, but how it is provided, how those facilities are maintained if they are not likely to be self-funding, and what impact any future change or loss of such facilities may have on communities.

Figure 6.1: Strategic priorities for community infrastructure

Strategic Priority	The role of the Local Plan	Relevant Policies in this Section
<p>Economic Growth</p> <p>We will deliver sustainable economic growth and improved infrastructure across the whole of Dorset, increasing productivity and the number of high quality jobs, creating great places to live, work and visit.</p>	<p>The Local Plan can help to deliver Economic Growth by enabling sustainable economic development in the right locations and providing homes for those who work in the area.</p>	Transport
		COM7: Creating a safe, efficient and low carbon transport network
		COM8: Parking standards in new development
		COM9: Provision of infrastructure for electric and other low emission vehicles
<p>Strong, healthy communities</p> <p>We will work to build and maintain strong communities where people get the best start and lead fulfilling lives.</p>	<p>The Local Plan will enable communities to thrive by providing community infrastructure and green space giving opportunities for people to meet and participate in their community and enabling active participation in community life.</p>	The provision of community infrastructure
		COM1: making sure new development makes suitable provision for community infrastructure
		COM2: new or improved local community buildings and structures
		COM3: retention of local community buildings and structures
		Encouraging healthy lifestyles
		COM4: Recreation, sports facilities and open space
		COM5: Hot food takeaways
		Strategic Policies
		DEV1: the housing requirement and the need for employment land in Dorset
		DEV9: Neighbourhood plans

Section 6: Community Infrastructure

		<p>Promoting healthy lifestyles</p> <p>COM7: Creating a safe, efficient and low carbon transport network</p> <p>COM5: Hot food takeaways</p>
<p>Staying safe and well We will work to enable a good quality of life for our residents through high quality, well designed and safe developments, with access to local greenspace for health and wellbeing.</p>	<p>Through town centre regeneration and by protecting town centres, the Local Plan will enhance people’s quality of life. Promotion of healthy lifestyles through the way development is designed.</p>	<p>Community facilities</p> <p>COM4: Recreation, sports facilities and open space</p> <p>COM1: Making sure New Development makes Suitable Provision for Community Infrastructure</p> <p>COM2: New or improved local community buildings and structures</p> <p>COM3: Retention of Local Community Buildings and Structures</p>
<p>Climate and Ecological Emergency We will take actions to minimise the impact of climate change including minimising flood risk and to reduce the impact on the climate by locating and designing developments to reduce distances travelled and minimise energy use. We will support renewable energy developments appropriate to Dorset. We will ensure that all new development incorporates ecological net gain to help deliver the aspiration to reverse the current decline in protected species and habitats.</p>	<p>Through managing where and how development takes place, the Local Plan can minimise the distance travelled and focus travel onto active travel and public transport options.</p> <p>The impacts of climate change can be reduced by avoiding areas at risk of flooding and building green infrastructure into developments.</p>	<p>Renewable Energy</p> <p>COM10- Renewable energy development</p> <p>COM11- Small scale wind energy development</p>

Infrastructure Delivery Plan

- 6.1.5. An Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) provides an overview of the range of infrastructure projects required to support the growth in the local plan. An IDP will be produced for the submission stage of the local plan production, once future infrastructure needs become clearer through consultation. Thereafter, it will be updated and reviewed when required to keep track of infrastructure delivery during the plan period. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan will:
- identify the infrastructure and services required to support the growth targets set out in the local plan;
 - identify the costs and likely means of funding, including that required through public finance and developer contributions sources, any funding secured, funding gaps and the delivery agencies;
 - provide evidence to help finance the critical infrastructure to support growth.

6.2. Making sure new development includes suitable provision for community infrastructure

- 6.2.1. Where possible and practicable (for example on larger developments), community infrastructure should be provided as part of the development, creating attractive and vibrant places to live. Good planning will make sure that the infrastructure needed is well located and phased to be brought in alongside new development. It will not always be practicable to provide community facilities in every settlement and with every new development, nor will it be practicable to provide community facilities and infrastructure ahead of development.

Planning obligations and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

- 6.2.2. Planning obligations, commonly secured through section 106 agreements and financial contributions through the Community Infrastructure Levy, play an important role in providing the infrastructure necessary to support new development.
- 6.2.3. Planning obligations can be financial or in-kind and are required to help make development acceptable in planning terms. These obligations largely address site-specific needs that result from growth and pressure on existing infrastructure. Planning obligations need to meet three tests. They must be:
- necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
 - directly related to the development; and
 - fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

Section 6: Community Infrastructure

- 6.2.4. The Community Infrastructure Levy is a charge which can be levied by local authorities on new development in their area. The levy tends to deal with the cumulative impact of development on existing infrastructure. The levy only applies where a local authority has consulted on and approved a charging schedule which sets out its levy rates and has published the schedule on its website. The charging schedule specifies what types of development are liable for the levy and the rates for these development types.
- 6.2.5. Dorset Council currently administers the following charging schedules, introduced by its predecessor councils:
- East Dorset (implemented 3 January 2017)
 - Purbeck (implemented 5 June 2014 and currently under review)
 - West Dorset (implemented 18 July 2016)
 - Weymouth & Portland (implemented 18 July 2016)
- 6.2.6. A charging schedule for North Dorset was prepared and examined, but was not adopted or implemented.
- 6.2.7. Dorset Council is working on a new charging schedule for the whole authority area which it plans to adopt alongside the Local Plan in 2023.
- 6.2.8. Amended CIL Regulations which came into effect in September 2019 require councils to produce an Infrastructure Funding Statement which will identify infrastructure need, the total cost of this infrastructure, anticipated funding from developer contributions and the choices made about how these contributions will be used. The first funding statement will be published by Dorset Council in December 2020.
- 6.2.9. The council will collect funds for infrastructure via CIL, planning obligations or a combination of the two, depending on the nature of development. On larger more complex strategic allocations, it is expected that some forms of infrastructure will need to be provided as part of the development. Infrastructure requirements for these sites will be secured through a planning obligation requiring the developer to enter into a section 106 agreement and these sites are therefore proposed to be excluded from a CIL charge. Examples ¹ of such sites include:
- North of Dorchester (policy DOR13)
 - North and east of Blandford (policy BLAN7)

¹ The approach to the delivery of infrastructure will be tested through whole plan viability. A more comprehensive list of sites that will need to meet their community infrastructure needs through planning agreements, rather than through CIL will be identified for submission of the Local Plan.

Section 6: Community Infrastructure

- Vearse Farm, Bridport (policy BRID2)
 - Gillingham Southern Extension (policy GILL2)
- 6.2.10. Details of the infrastructure requirements for allocated sites can be found in the site-specific policies.
- 6.2.11. Infrastructure for smaller, less complex development sites will normally be met through the use of the CIL with planning obligations sought alongside if necessary. The council's Infrastructure Funding Statement will report on infrastructure secured through these planning obligation tools.

Level of community infrastructure provision

- 6.2.12. Policy COM4 on Recreation, Sports Facilities and Formal Open Space and Policy ENV1 on Green Infrastructure contain guidance on the level of provision and approach to delivery of some of the key community infrastructure that is generally expected across the plan area. It is also important to note that quantity guidelines should not be interpreted either as a maximum or minimum level of provision; rather, they are benchmark standards that can be adjusted to take account of local circumstances. However, community infrastructure is not limited to these examples.
- 6.2.13. When negotiated through section 106 agreements, the council will ensure that the level of contributions towards community infrastructure is well related in scale and kind to the proposed development. As such, contributions may be reduced where there is strong evidence that the need is lower, for example education and open space contributions from care homes and one-bedroom homes. Future maintenance needs will also be considered, particularly if the facilities are predominantly for the benefit of the users associated with the development.

COM1. Making sure new development makes suitable provision for community infrastructure

- I. Where new development will generate a need for new or improved community infrastructure, and this need is not met through the Community Infrastructure Levy, suitable provision should be made on-site in larger developments or, if not practicable to do so, by means of a financial contribution. The provision should be appropriate to the scale and needs of the development having regard to:
 - existing facilities in the area, including the quantity and quality of provision;
 - the economic viability and the need for the development;
 - the ongoing maintenance requirements.
- II. Community infrastructure will be phased to come forward in advance of, or at the same time as the development when negotiated through planning obligations. When delivered through the Community Infrastructure Levy, such provision will be expected to take place as soon as reasonably practicable after the funds are collected.
- III. Contributions will not be sought from new community facilities or affordable housing, with the exception of site-specific measures necessary to make that development acceptable.

Q: Making sure new development makes suitable provision for community infrastructure

- 1: Do you agree with the suggested approach and what it is trying to achieve?
- 2: Do you agree with the suggested wording?
- 3: How could the paragraph / policy / section / chapter be amended to reflect your concerns?

6.3. Local community buildings and structures

New local community buildings and structures

- 6.3.1. The provision of community facilities is important for the health, social, educational, spiritual, recreational and cultural wellbeing of the community. The need for additional facilities is likely to arise through the plan period due to growth in homes and employment.

Local Community Buildings and Structures include but are not limited to:

- local community shops and post offices;
- banks and building societies;
- cafes, restaurants and public houses – especially where there are only one or two locally;
- petrol stations;
- education and training facilities, pre-school centres and other children’s services;
- doctors’ surgeries and dental practices, day-care centres, hospitals and other healthcare / social service facilities;
- meeting places such as community halls and places of worship;
- cultural facilities, such as arts centres, theatres, libraries and museums.

Sports facilities and open space are covered separately.

- 6.3.2. To ensure the needs of our communities are met, a wide variety of facilities and services are required. It is important that facilities are located within easy reach of those wishing to use them. Some facilities are town centre uses and depending on their scale and the area served will be directed towards town or local centres through the sequential test, contributing to making them vibrant places (Policy ECON5).
- 6.3.3. Within development proposals and in existing settlements, facilities need to be located to be accessible to the community they will serve (where appropriate, taking into account how this may change through the development of strategic housing sites). Where possible, facilities should be located on public transport routes and should avoid generating significant additional car based trips by facilitating opportunities for active travel, including pedestrian and cycle routes.
- 6.3.4. In rural settlements, facilities can provide a key focus in helping to maintain a sense of community and in creating more sustainable settlements enabling day-to-day needs to be met locally, reducing the need to travel. Such facilities are encouraged to locate within or immediately adjoining existing settlements, particularly where new housing development is permitted. However, in some areas, it may not always

Section 6: Community Infrastructure

be possible to meet local community needs within existing settlements. In such instances, development appropriate to a rural area may be permitted where located to be accessible to the community it supports.

- 6.3.5. Proposals in the open countryside (outside development boundaries and not in close proximity to an existing settlement) will require special justification. This should explain why the use cannot reasonably be met within a settlement, any identified local need it would meet and any overriding benefits derived from the proposed location. The proposal will need to ensure that it is sensitive to its surroundings in terms of its scale, nature and the uses proposed. Proposals within the green belt are unlikely to be acceptable and would be assessed against national policy on green belts.
- 6.3.6. It is important that established local community facilities and services be able to develop and modernise. Such improvement can enhance their viability and encourage their retention for the benefit of the community. The council will respond positively to applications that would ensure the continued use of community buildings and structures.
- 6.3.7. Some facilities have the potential to incorporate other complementary community functions, providing an efficient use of resources and delivering services that may otherwise be inaccessible. Proposals for the provision of new, or expansion of existing, community facilities to provide multi-use community hubs will be therefore be supported.
- 6.3.8. Development will not be permitted if it would undermine the viability of existing facilities which are better placed to serve local communities without the need to rely on the private car.

COM2. New or improved local community buildings and structures

- I. Local community buildings or structures will be supported within or adjoining an existing settlement. Development in the countryside may be permitted on well related and accessible sites where the proposal meets an identified community need and:
 - no suitable sites or premises exist within or adjoining the relevant settlement; or
 - there are overriding community, amenity and environmental benefits derived from the proposed location.
- II. Proposals for new, replacement or improved local community buildings or structures must:
 - be of a scale and function compatible with the location and appropriate to its role within the settlement and retail hierarchy; and
 - not have unacceptable impacts on local amenity, highway network, the natural or built environment; and
 - be well-located in terms of accessibility to their main catchment population, enabling active travel, and not generate significant additional single purpose trips by private car.
- III. The council will respond positively to applications for the improvement, expansion, appropriate multi-use or co-location of facilities where this would enhance their viability or ensure their continued use.
- IV. Where practicable, the design of community buildings should allow for a range of current and future uses.

Q: New or improved local community buildings and structures

- 1: Do you agree with the suggested approach and what it is trying to achieve?
- 2: Do you agree with the suggested wording?
- 3: How could the paragraph / policy / section / chapter be amended to reflect your concerns?

Section 6: Community Infrastructure

The retention of existing local community buildings and structures

- 6.3.9. The loss of local community facilities and services can significantly reduce a community's ability to meet its day to day needs locally, decreases customer choice and will also have an adverse impact on the social interaction and wellbeing of that community. In addition to this intrinsic merit, some community buildings and structures may also have further value as heritage assets or tourist attractions or facilities.
- 6.3.10. In common with national trends, some facilities in the plan area have struggled to remain open. This can be a particular problem in rural areas where local shops, post offices and public houses are central to village life. For many residents, particularly those without access to a private car, their loss makes accessibility to facilities and services a significant challenge, leading to isolation and impacting on overall quality of life. The overall vibrancy and sustainability of rural communities is also harmed.
- 6.3.11. Though the council wishes to ensure that local facilities are protected, to enable communities to continue to meet their needs, it recognises there will be occasions when a facility may be unused, underused, has relocated, is surplus to requirements or is no longer viable.
- 6.3.12. Where an existing community facility may be lost, preference is given to the change of use or redevelopment to alternative community uses that would support a local need. Where this is not the best option for the site, for example due to the community use becoming unviable, developers will be expected to demonstrate that the potential to use the site or building for other community uses compatible with the location, has been investigated.
- 6.3.13. For commercial facilities, run by individuals or companies for profit, the key consideration will be whether the business is viable or could be made viable through development. For community-run facilities there may be other reasons which might justify a loss, for example where there may be no need for the facility / service, or it may no longer be practical to continue the current use in that location.
- 6.3.14. Proposals that would result in a substantial decline in the range and quality of facilities and services for local people will be resisted.
- 6.3.15. Applicants proposing to redevelop or convert facilities which are of established community value will be expected to engage with local communities at an early stage in the planning process. The local community should be fully involved in order to gain a proper understanding of the importance of the facility to its users and the implications of any proposal which may affect it. Regard will be had for whether the facility is listed as an Asset of Community Value and any initiative by the community to acquire the asset under the Community Right to Bid.

Section 6: Community Infrastructure

- 6.3.16. Proposals which would result in the loss of a community facility must demonstrate that satisfactory efforts have been made to retain the facility and that opportunities for conversion to alternative viable community uses have been explored. The applicant will be required to submit sufficient evidence to justify the loss of the facility. The information and level of detail will depend on the nature of the proposal but should include:
- what consultation there had been with local community groups / service providers and details of representations received;
 - evidence to confirm that the property or site has been appropriately marketed for a meaningful period and that there is no realistic interest in its future community use. (This should include details of the marketing approach, sales literature, the length of time that the marketing was active and any changes during this period, and the asking price, the level of interest generated and any offers received);
 - where the current use is no longer viable, a viability assessment which shows that this is the case. The applicant will be expected to fund the independent verification of the submitted viability assessment by a person appointed by the council.
- 6.3.17. In considering proposals that would result in the loss of local community facilities, the councils will take into account what other facilities and services are available locally and whether there are proposals to consolidate that service into a community facility hub.

Section 6: Community Infrastructure

COM3. Retention of local community buildings and structures

- I. Development, including change of use, which results in the permanent loss of local community buildings or structures (including where the most recent lawful use was as a community use), will not be permitted unless:
 - in the case of facilities not run as commercial businesses, it can be demonstrated that there is no local need for the facility or it is no longer practical to continue the existing use; or
 - in the case of commercial community facilities, such a facility is no longer viable; or
 - a suitable replacement is provided in an equally accessible location to serve the local community.

Preference will be given to the change of use or redevelopment to appropriate alternative community uses. Uses other than community uses should be justified with consideration given to whether alternative community uses to meet local needs are not required, suitable or viable.

- II. The council will look favourably on applications which would:
 - diversify and support the continuation of the existing community use (for example the change of part of the site to maintain the original use in a viable form); or
 - help meet identified development needs through the more effective use of sites / premises while maintaining or improving the existing community service provision (for example through a community hub).

Q: Retention of community buildings and structures

- 1: Do you agree with the suggested approach and what it is trying to achieve?
- 2: Do you agree with the suggested wording?
- 3: How could the paragraph / policy / section / chapter be amended to reflect your concerns?

6.4. Recreation, sports facilities, formal open space and play

- 6.4.1. Recreation, sports facilities, and formal and informal open spaces contribute to the promotion of healthier lifestyles, community cohesiveness and support our valuable environment and wildlife. Recreation and sports facilities can include outdoor sports pitches (including school playing fields), recreational grounds, play areas, sports and leisure centres. Some community centres such as village halls also provide multi-functional space which can be used for indoor sports. It is important to safeguard existing areas and provide new facilities and / or improve the quality of existing facilities as an integral element of new development. Facilities should be engaging, accessible for all of the community and where possible they should be multi-functional.
- 6.4.2. The responsibility for sports facilities and public open space is shared with parish and town councils. The town or parish council for each area is normally responsible for playing fields, parks and allotments, and has the ability to raise money for sport through their local precept or can use their portion of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds. Some sports centres, playing fields and swimming pools are provided in schools, operated privately as a commercial business or through community trusts and are made available for wider community use playing a vital role in sport and recreation provision.
- 6.4.3. Evidence collected has provided an assessment of the current quality and capacity of the local plan area's existing outdoor and indoor sports facilities, as well as the estimated future need.
- 6.4.4. The Active Dorset Playing Pitch Strategy indicates that residential developments of 600 units or more are likely to generate demand for additional sports pitches for sports such as football and cricket. These types of facilities can often be provided together and usually require the provision of ancillary facilities such as clubhouses, changing rooms, and car parking. The estimation of future need indicates a requirement of around 69 additional pitches over local plan period. The Playing Pitch Strategy also recommends safeguarding and improving existing facilities alongside securing community use of existing private facilities in order to contribute towards future need.
- 6.4.5. The Sports and Leisure Facilities Needs Assessments concludes that there is adequate capacity for indoor sports facilities across the local plan area, but that in many cases the quality of the facilities is sub-standard and outdated. Opportunities should be taken to enhance and improve the existing facilities.
- 6.4.6. The requirement for sports and recreational facilities, including play areas, will be considered on a site by site basis in relation to the local need and

Section 6: Community Infrastructure

recommendations detailed within the most up to date assessments of need and to meet as a minimum, the Fields in Trust standards (detailed in Figure 6.1, Figure 6.2 and Figure 6.3).

- 6.4.7. These quantitative guidelines should not be interpreted either as a maximum or minimum level of provision but a benchmark standard that can be adjusted to take account of facilities in the local area. An assessment of existing provision, along with detail of the needs expressed by nearby town and parish councils and Dorset Council, should be included to support the level of provision being made as part of a development. Developments should look to complement existing provision rather than adhere strictly to the on-site standards.

Figure 6.2: Guidance on standards of play / games area provision

Scale of development	Local Area for Play (LAP)	Locally Equipped Area for Play (LEAP)	Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play (NEAP)	Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA)
10-200 dwellings	✓	✓	x	Contribution
201-500 dwellings	✓	✓	Contribution	✓
501+ dwellings	✓	✓	✓	✓

Section 6: Community Infrastructure

Figure 6.3: Guidance on standards of formal outdoor space provision

Open Spaces Type	Quantity Guideline (Ha per 1,000 population)	Walking distance (metres from dwelling)	Quality Guideline
Playing Pitches	1.20	1,200	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Located where they are of most value to the community being served • Appropriately landscaped and provision of footpaths • Designed so as to be free of the fear of harm or crime • Positively and safely managed to the highest possible condition with available finance, taking account of the need for repair and replacement over time if necessary
All Outdoor Sports	1.60	1,200	
Equipped/designated Play Areas	0.25	LAPs- 100m LEAPs- 400m NEAPs- 1,000m	
Other outdoor provision (MUGAs and skateboard parks)	0.30	700m	

Section 6: Community Infrastructure

Figure 6.4: Guidance on standards of built recreation facilities

Facility	Urban ²	Rural ³
Community Venue	Community venue/s accessible to all, of a good standard, able to accommodate arts performances, indoor sports and local meetings, and in 600m walking distance of most of the population.	
Indoor Sports Hall	20 minute walk time (1.6km radial catchment)	30 minute drive time.
Health & Fitness	30 minute walk time (1.6km radial catchment)	30 minute drive time.
Swimming Pool	30 minute walk time (1.6km radial catchment)	30 inute drive time.

- 6.4.8. The provision of new built sports, leisure, and recreational facilities should normally be focused in places where they are most accessible to the community they serve. Development away from the community they serve will require special justification.
- 6.4.9. Development sites will be expected to provide facilities on site or, where it is not practical to do so, contribute to new or improved facilities off-site. Off-site contributions will need to be agreed with the council. Provision of facilities will be secured through Section 106 agreements, with the needs of smaller sites and other requirements being met through the Community Infrastructure Levy.
- 6.4.10. Development that provide new or improved recreation, sports, and play facilities should seek high quality, innovative design that is appropriate to its setting, and is supported by community involvement during its planning and implementation phases.

² Defined as Tier 1 and Tier 2 settlements

³ Defined as Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3 settlements

COM4. Recreation, sports facilities and open space

New or Improved Facilities

- I. Residential development should make provision for formal and informal recreation, play, sports and/or open space facilities on-site. The provision should be appropriate to the scale and needs of the development, having regard to existing facilities in the area, including the quantity and quality of provision.
- II. Where it can be evidenced that on-site provision would not be practicable, the council will consider financial contributions to provide and/or enhance existing facilities off site.
- III. Proposals for new or improved recreation, sports and open space facilities will be permitted where:
 - the proposal would be well-located to be accessible to its main catchment population enabling active travel and would not generate significant single purpose trips by private car; and
 - the proposal would not undermine the commercial viability of nearby community facilities which may be better placed to service the needs of the surrounding community; and
 - the proposal demonstrates a creative concept and high quality design, is deliverable and provides for ongoing maintenance.
- IV. Proposals for new or enhanced recreational facilities away from settlements at the coast (including marine based recreation) or in the countryside will only be permitted if they require a coastal or countryside location and their scale is in keeping with the surrounding environment. Such proposals must not:
 - be intrusive in the landscape;
 - adversely affect land or marine conservation;
 - cause unacceptable impacts to local amenity; or
 - cause unacceptable increased vehicle movements.

Safeguarding Existing Facilities

- V. Development on, or a change of use to, open spaces of public value and recreational facilities (including school playing fields), or proposals resulting in the loss of built sports and recreational facilities, will not be permitted unless:
 - the development proposed is ancillary to the use of the site and the proposal will either support or improve the recreational and amenity value of the site,

Section 6: Community Infrastructure

or does not adversely affect the number, size or quality of playing pitches or their use; or

- the proposed development is for an indoor or outdoor sports facility, the provision of which would be of sufficient benefit to the development of sport as to outweigh the detriment caused by the loss of the open spaces and recreational facilities (including school playing fields); or
- alternative and/or suitable replacement outdoor or indoor provision of equal or better recreational quality or value is provided in a location which is suitable to meet any deficiency in provision, and/or better placed and accessible to the surrounding community it serves, and there is a clear community benefit; or
- it can be demonstrated that the open space, buildings or land are surplus to requirements, and there is no need for alternative open space of public value or recreational uses which could reasonably take place at the site.

Q: Recreation, sports facilities and open space

- 1: Do you agree with the suggested approach and what it is trying to achieve?
- 2: Do you agree with the suggested wording?
- 3: How could the paragraph / policy / section / chapter be amended to reflect your concerns?

6.5. Hot food takeaways

- 6.5.1. One of the strategic priorities of the local plan is to 'support strong, healthy communities' with accessibility to a range of services and facilities. Fundamental to achieving this is the creation of places which encourage healthy lifestyles, for example through provision of leisure facilities; safe walking and cycling routes; and green infrastructure.
- 6.5.2. Hand-in-hand with this is the provision of healthy food environments, where healthy foods are more readily available than unhealthy alternatives. Takeaway

Section 6: Community Infrastructure

foods tend to be high in energy, salt, fat and sugar, often with single meal portions containing levels higher than the recommended daily amounts. Evidence indicates that the availability of such foods is one factor associated with increased levels of obesity and excess weight amongst adults and children.

- 6.5.3. Being obese or carrying excess weight can lead to many associated illnesses including having a higher risk of developing type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease and certain cancers, as well as mental health issues. These obesity and overweight related ill-health treatments incur major annual costs to the NHS and wider society.
- 6.5.4. Restricting the provision of hot food takeaways close to facilities frequented by children can help to tackle childhood obesity levels. This includes educational establishments used primarily by children and other facilities such as children's play areas; skate parks; leisure centres; and youth centres.
- 6.5.5. Hot food takeaways will be restricted within 'easy walking distance' of these facilities, which is considered to be anywhere within a five minute walk, equating to 400m. As a town centre use, any proposal for a hot food takeaway will also be considered Policy ECON3.

COM5. Hot food takeaways

- I. Proposals for new hot food takeaway outlets will not be permitted within a 400m radius of a school; other educational establishment; play area; skate park; leisure centre or youth centre.

Q: Hot food takeaway

1: Should the council look to restrict hot food takeaways around areas where children and young people congregate??

6.6. Education and training facilities

- 6.6.1. Good education and training facilities are key to making sure that our local workforce has appropriate skills and training, and encouraging young families to want to live in the area. Schools and colleges also play a key role in bringing the community together and providing facilities that the local community can use. It is important that there is adequate provision for pupils reasonably close or accessible to where they live.
- 6.6.2. The library service provides good access to reading and learning opportunities. Although there is a good network of county and community-supported libraries, some premises within the area fall below the national space standard.
- 6.6.3. Arts centres, museums and visitor centres are at the heart of communities if they capture local experience and history, fostering shared community identity and understanding. They also have a role in supporting local tourism.
- 6.6.4. Maintaining and improving attainment levels through the provision of new facilities will support the future success and prosperity of the area.
- 6.6.5. Where new homes are built, any additional demand for education and training will usually be catered for through the expansion of existing education provision. In some cases, particularly on larger sites, this may trigger the need for substantial changes in how the service is provided, e.g. the provision of a new school. New homes will be expected to contribute towards enhancing education facilities where these are insufficient to support the development. This may include contributions and / or the allocation of land to enable facilities to be built or extended. Where site specific requirements for expanded school provision have been identified, as a result of the additional demand for education facilities generated by development, these are set out in the site specific policies within the plan.

Education and Training Facilities

For the purpose of this Plan, 'education and training facilities' include pre-school nursery provision, schools and colleges of further education (whether provided by the local education authority or independently), work-based learning and skills training and adult and community learning centres. They may also include cultural learning that can be provided through arts centres, visitor centres, libraries and museums.

Dorset Council is the local education authority for the plan area and therefore is the key agency responsible for delivering education.

COM6. The provision of education and training facilities

- I. Proposals for the provision of new / replacement facilities or the expansion of existing education and training facilities will be supported, provided that:
 - the location is well linked in terms of accessibility to the local catchment (taking into account how this may change through the development of strategic housing sites); and
 - any loss of facilities consequential to the development is re-provided to the same or higher standard.

Q: The provision of education and training facilities

- 1: Do you agree with the suggested approach and what it is trying to achieve?
- 2: Do you agree with the suggested wording?
- 3: How could the paragraph / policy / section / chapter be amended to reflect your concerns?

6.7. The transport network

- 6.7.1. Dorset is a largely rural area with a dispersed population and with mostly poor public transport. The car continues to be the main mode of transport for most people, enabling them to access work, education, leisure and shopping opportunities. People in rural areas without access to a private car often find it more difficult to meet their daily needs. However, the high level of car use is a significant contributory factor in some of the major environmental and public health challenges of our time.
- 6.7.2. Transport is the biggest carbon-emitting sector in Dorset, contributing around 40% of the total carbon emissions. Emissions from transport further contribute to poor air quality, and sedentary lifestyles are associated with rises in obesity, heart disease, diabetes and other chronic conditions. For this reason, settlement patterns which enable better public transport services, promote active travel and

Section 6: Community Infrastructure

reduce car dependency form the basis for the strategy within the local plan. This approach provides the opportunity to reduce out-commuting to other centres, reducing the need and distance travelled by private car for work or shopping, thus increasing 'self-containment'. Further development in accordance with the settlement hierarchy will help to maintain their role as service centres, contribute to their future regeneration and help to sustain the rural areas that surround them.

- 6.7.3. In addition to the location of development, the design, layout and connections made to developments will help to facilitate active travel further reducing reliance on the private car. Walking and cycling routes will need to be safe, convenient and easy to use to offer a realistic alternative to car use.
- 6.7.4. By influencing the location of new development, land use can reduce the need to travel particularly by private car and minimise its impact on the environment. At the same time the planning system must respond to the need for new transport infrastructure and recognise the challenges faced by rural settlements, where reliance on private car travel for many people, is the only realistic option. Accordingly, strategic developments will be located on or have access to existing public transport networks so that they are convenient, accessible, safe and attractive to use. Where appropriate, development proposals should be accompanied by travel plans and transport assessments outlining alternatives to private vehicle use.
- 6.7.5. Adapting to and mitigating the effects of the climate change and ecological emergency are integral to the spatial strategy and cut across all policies. Addressing the impacts of climate change will be achieved by locating the majority of growth in places with good, sustainable transport links and jobs and services, thereby reducing the need to travel by private car.

Section 6: Community Infrastructure

COM7. Creating a safe, efficient and low carbon transport network

- II. New development should be located in accordance with the settlement hierarchy to facilitate the move away from car dependency and towards healthy, lower carbon travel choices and lifestyles. Significant new developments should therefore be located close enough to existing facilities or deliver viable new facilities to make walking and cycling a realistic choice.
- III. If viable new facilities cannot be provided, high quality public transport connections should be provided as part of the development. All development should:
 - be in the most accessible locations, reducing the need to travel by car and creating opportunities for healthy lifestyle choices;
 - support the provision of local services and facilities reducing reliance on the car;
 - support active travel, building in high quality design principles which prioritise walking and cycling above other modes, and expand the strategic and local cycle and Public Rights of Way networks;
 - be well connected in a safe manner to the strategic road and rail network ;
 - seek to reduce traffic impacts on the community, especially but not restricted to severance, air quality, and the efficiency of the transport network, particularly public transport. Development will not be permitted where impacts (individually or cumulatively) are likely to be severe.

Q: Creating a safe, efficient and low carbon transport network

- 1: Do you agree with the suggested approach and what it is trying to achieve?
- 2: Do you agree with the suggested wording?
- 3: How could the paragraph / policy / section / chapter be amended to reflect your concerns?

Parking provision

- 6.7.6. The provision of the right amount and type of car and cycle parking is key in helping to deliver successful and sustainable developments. In areas of Dorset high levels of car ownership and limited public transport, combined with the rural character of the area, mean that a reduction in parking capacity or further discouragement of parking, would not necessarily discourage car use. A lack of suitable parking can often cause concern and distress in a local community. Pavement parking, obstruction of driveways and damage to soft landscaping and footways are some examples of what can occur as a result of parking problems.
- 6.7.7. Sufficient, quality cycle parking provided in accessible and convenient locations is essential in ensuring that people can undertake active travel with the mental and physical health benefits that this brings. Additionally, cycling is a low carbon form of travel that contributes to reducing carbon emissions.
- 6.7.8. The local plan seeks to accommodate parking provision commensurate with the type, size and location of development that is proposed.

COM8. Parking standards in new development

Development will be permitted provided that:

- I. provision for residential and non-residential vehicle and cycle parking is made in accordance with the council's published local parking guidance, unless a different level of provision can be justified by local or site-specific circumstances;
- II. provision for parking for people with impaired mobility is made in accordance with the council's published local parking guidance;
- III. provision for motorcycle parking is made to a level appropriate for the size and location of the development, having regard to the council's published local parking guidance.

Q: Parking standards in new development

- 1: Do you agree with the suggested approach and what it is trying to achieve?
- 2: Do you agree with the suggested wording?
- 3: How could the paragraph / policy / section / chapter be amended to reflect your concerns?

Infrastructure for electric and other low emission vehicles

- 6.7.9. In July 2018 the government set out its ambition that at least half of new cars would be ultra-low emission by 2030, as part of plans to make the UK the best place in the world to build and own electric vehicles. Its strategy includes plans to reduce emissions from the vehicles already on the UK's roads and drive the uptake of zero emission cars, vans and trucks. In 2017 the UK government announced a ban on the sale of all new petrol and diesel vehicles from 2040. The planning process provides a mechanism to assist in the delivery of the electric vehicle recharging infrastructure. National planning policy indicates that applications for development should be designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations.
- 6.7.10. The need for infrastructure for electric and other ultra-low emissions vehicles is growing to meet changing transport requirements and technologies. Differing levels of electric vehicle provision may be suitable in different circumstances. These are:
- **Active** provision, where parking spaces are fully wired and connected, ready to use from the outset
 - **Passive** provision, requiring the provision of necessary underlying infrastructure (e.g. capacity in the connection to the local electricity distribution network and electricity distribution board, as well as cabling to parking spaces) to enable the simple installation and activation of a charge point at a future date.

Section 6: Community Infrastructure

- 6.7.11. All relevant developments should include the necessary infrastructure to facilitate the increase in take-up of electric and ultra-low emission vehicles.

COM9. Provision of infrastructure for electric and other low emission vehicles

- I. Development proposals which include parking facilities or which are likely to generate vehicle movements or vehicle ownership will be expected to integrate the provision of infrastructure to enable the charging of electric or other ultra-low emission vehicles into the design and layout of the development.

Residential Developments

- II. Residential developments will be expected to include infrastructure suitable for charging electric or other ultra-low emission vehicles according to the following standards:
- for all residential development with communal off-street parking provision, at least 20% of car spaces will be expected to include active charging facilities and passive provision for all remaining spaces with the layout of the car park ensuring that all spaces can be activated as demand increases; and
- III. for minor residential development (all developments of less than 10 dwellings):
- passive infrastructure provision for each dwelling.
- IV. for major residential development (all developments of 10 dwellings or more):
- at least 20% of dwellings will be expected to have active charging facilities, and the remaining 80% of dwellings will be expected to have passive provision; and
 - at least one rapid charging point clustered with a fast charging point for every 10 car spaces provided, or in accordance with local published guidance; and
 - where appropriate, the provision of an electric or ultra-low emission car club, with its own dedicated spaces including active charging facilities.
- V. In circumstances where off street parking is not provided within a residential development proposal, the design and layout of the development will be expected to incorporate infrastructure to enable the on-street charging of electric or other ultra-low emission vehicles to occur safely.

Non-residential Developments

- VI. In all non-residential developments providing 1 or more car parking spaces, ducting should be installed to enable provision of charging facilities for electric or other ultra-low emission vehicles.
- VII. Where 10 or more car parking bays are provided, at least 20% of those bays are required to provide active charging facilities for electric or other ultra-low emission vehicles, and passive provision is required for all remaining bays.

Section 6: Community Infrastructure

- VIII. In major non-residential development where provision is required for taxi waiting, the taxi spaces will be expected to include active charging facilities.

Q: Provision of infrastructure for electric and other low emission vehicles

1: Do you agree with this proposal?

6.8. Low carbon, decentralised and renewable energy schemes

- 6.8.1. Renewable energy includes energy obtained from natural processes that is replenished more rapidly than it is consumed. The EU Renewable Energy Directive lists a range of different renewable fuels⁴, all of which will help to reduce overall emissions of greenhouse gases.
- 6.8.2. In 2019 the UK became the first major economy in the world to pass laws⁵ to end its contribution to global warming by 2050, requiring greenhouse gas emissions to be brought to net zero by this date. Increasing the amount of energy produced from renewable sources will not only help to slow climate change but also ensure that the UK has a secure energy supply.
- 6.8.3. Currently in Dorset about 5.5% of the energy we use is from renewable energy sources. Locally generated renewable energy projects will be needed to increase this figure and to help meet the national net zero target. It is therefore important that opportunities are taken to generate renewable and low-carbon energy and create efficient energy networks through new development, for example by co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers, wherever this would be acceptable, and supporting community led initiatives.

⁴ Renewable fuels are listed in the Renewable Energy Directive as wind, solar, hydro energy; energy arising from the burning of plant and animal matter (known as bio energy); waste energy (e.g. landfill gas); and aerothermal, geothermal and hydrothermal energy (heat derived from the air, ground and water).

⁵ The Climate Change Act 2008 (2050 Target Amendment) Order 2019

Section 6: Community Infrastructure

- 6.8.4. There is considerable potential to generate renewable energy from within the plan area. This is evident from the large number of renewable energy projects that have been granted planning permission in recent years, primarily in the form of large scale solar farm schemes.
- 6.8.5. The high quality environment of the plan area is a major asset to the local economy but it also presents particular challenges in ensuring that renewable energy systems are sensitively located. Their individual or cumulative impact on the local environment, including the impact on the landscape character and rural amenity of the countryside or resident population will need to be considered, particularly in areas sensitive to change, and Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) are likely to be required.
- 6.8.6. Smaller-scale renewable energy proposals across the plan area are likely to be easier to integrate with the highly valued natural and built environment and will make an important contribution towards the target for installed capacity.
- 6.8.7. There may be the potential for the growth of energy crops and the use of agricultural or forestry residues for biomass boilers or for neighbourhood-scale decentralised renewable or low-carbon energy sources, such as combined heat and power schemes. There are also potential opportunities for new developments to fund investments in renewable schemes off-site which will help deliver carbon emission reductions that are difficult to achieve on-site.

COM10. Low carbon and renewable energy development

- I. Proposals for generating heat or electricity from renewable energy sources (other than large scale wind energy) will be allowed wherever possible providing that the benefits of the development, such as the contribution towards generating renewable energy, significantly outweigh any harm. In addition, permission will only be granted provided:
 - any adverse impacts on the local landscape, townscape can be satisfactorily assimilated;
 - the proposal minimises harm to residential amenity by virtue of noise, vibration, overshadowing, flicker, or other detrimental emissions, during construction, operation and decommissioning;
 - adverse impacts upon designated wildlife sites, nature conservation interests, and biodiversity are satisfactorily mitigated.
 - any harm to the significance of a heritage asset (including its setting) is less than substantial.

Q: Low carbon and renewable energy development

- 1: Do you agree with the suggested approach and what it is trying to achieve?
- 2: Do you agree with the suggested wording?
- 3: How could the paragraph / policy / section / chapter be amended to reflect your concerns?

6.9. Wind energy development

- 6.9.1. Proposals for wind energy development should only be granted planning permission if the development site is in an area identified as suitable for wind energy development in a local or neighbourhood plan; and following consultation, it can be demonstrated that the planning impacts identified by affected local communities have been fully addressed and therefore the proposal has their backing.

Section 6: Community Infrastructure

- 6.9.2. In order to increase the supply of renewable energy generation in Dorset to any significant degree, there is a need to identify areas for wind energy development. Identifying locations suitable for wind development will go a long way to reducing greenhouse gas emissions from Dorset and help to address climate change.
- 6.9.3. The opportunities for larger scale wind developments have been identified through an assessment of the available wind resource and consideration of environmental constraints including heritage, landscape and ecological constraints. However, if any of these areas were to supported for wind development, further detailed work would be necessary to support their allocation as well as more thorough work to support any subsequent planning applications.
- 6.9.4. The potential locations are shown in Figure 6.5 and Figure 6.6 and could deliver around 400 Gwh of renewable energy. If any of these areas have community backing and the identified planning impacts can be fully addressed, the sites could be allocated through the next stage of the local plan.

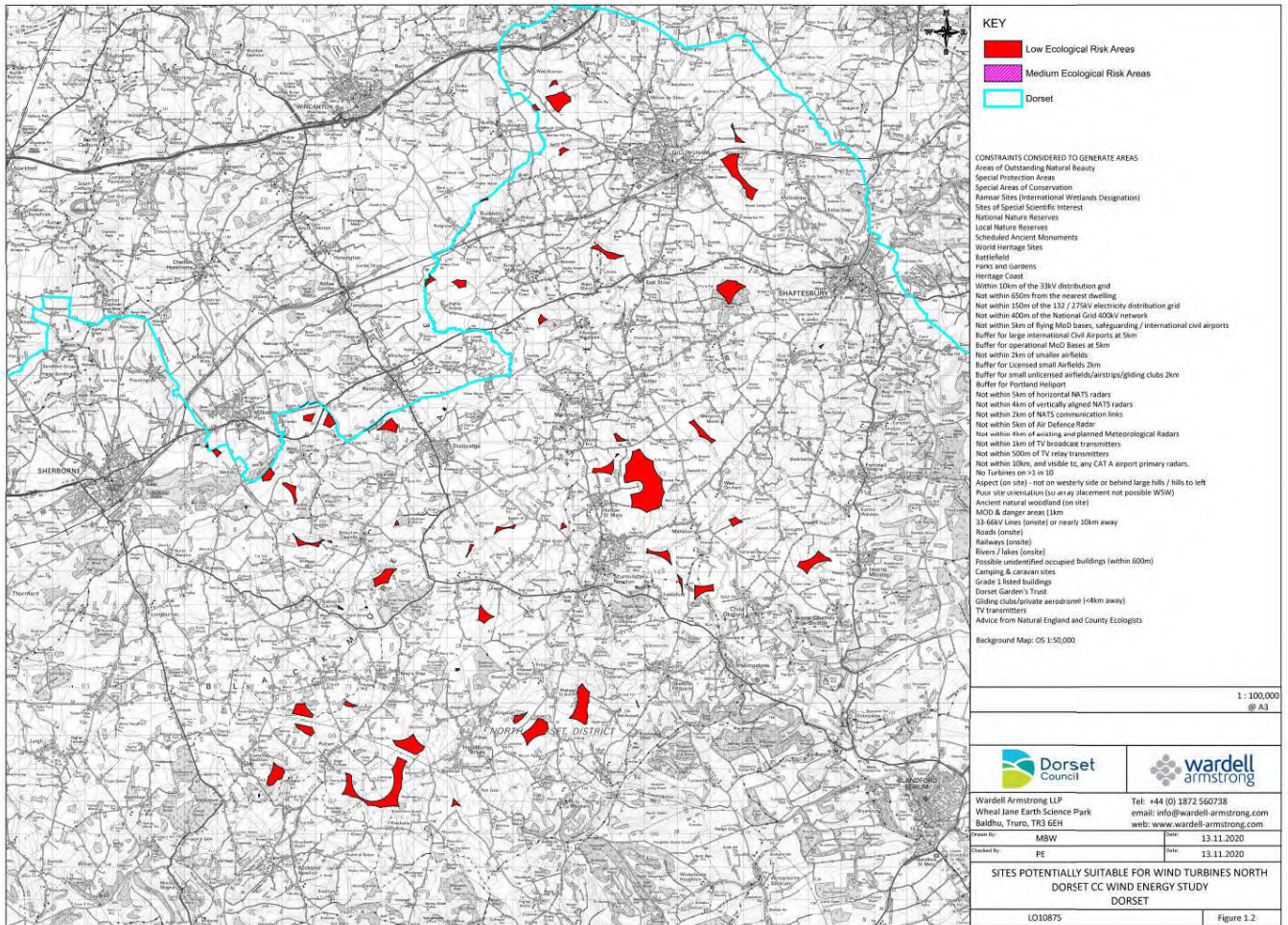
Q: Wind energy

1: The locations identified as opportunities for larger scale wind developments are shown on Figure 6.5 and Figure 6.6. Do you support the principle of allocating any of the areas for wind turbines?

2: Are there any planning issues that would need to be resolved to enable community backing to be secured?

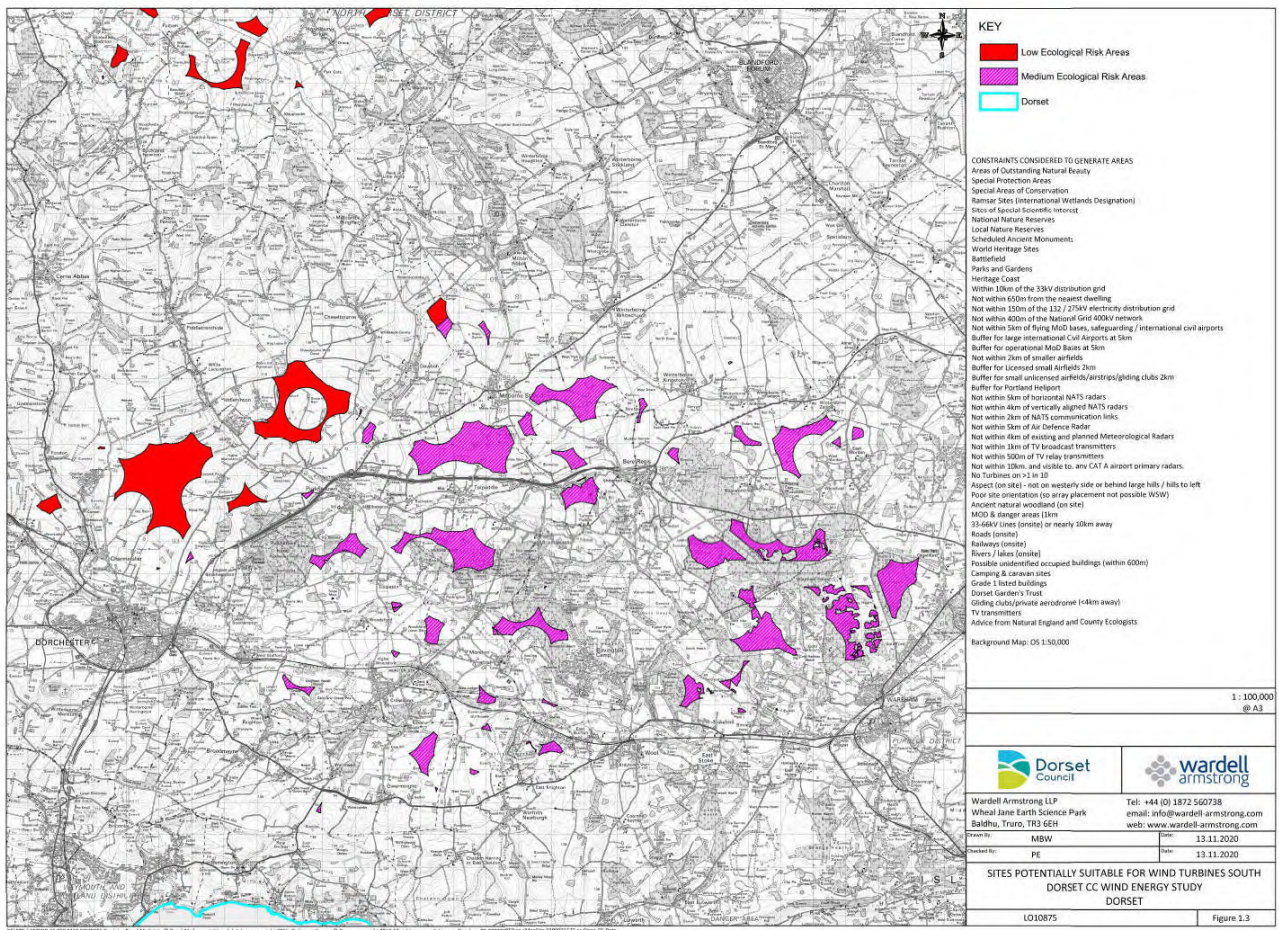
Section 6: Community Infrastructure

Figure 6.5: Wind development opportunities – Northern map



Section 6: Community Infrastructure

Figure 6.6: Wind development opportunities – Southern map



Smaller scale wind developments

- 6.9.5. Proposals for small scale wind energy developments, up to a maximum of 15m to the hub, will be supported where they can be demonstrated to be community-led.
- 6.9.6. A neighbourhood plan may seek to identify suitable areas for small scale wind energy development. However, it is not considered appropriate for neighbourhood development plans to identify areas suitable for larger scale wind energy development. This scale of development is considered strategic because the impacts of development are likely to extend beyond the neighbourhood plan area.
- 6.9.7. Limiting the cluster size and scale of wind energy development is also important in the light of the high landscape sensitivity of much of the plan area which is designated as Heritage Coast and/or an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- 6.9.8. Proposals for small scale wind energy development will only be supported where on the impacts on landscape character, heritage assets, residential amenity, designated wildlife sites, biodiversity, air traffic safety, and radar and telecommunications are acceptable.

Section 6: Community Infrastructure

- 6.9.9. All wind energy proposals must include appropriately detailed, technical impact assessments which follow industry best practice and clearly demonstrate that impacts on all properties are within acceptable thresholds.
- 6.9.10. Cumulative impacts of existing operational, consented and proposed developments must be assessed, and suitable mitigation measures proposed, to minimise impacts on biodiversity and landscape character.

COM11. Small scale wind energy development

- I. Proposals for small-scale wind energy development up to a maximum of 15m to the hub will be supported where it can be demonstrated to be community-led or is set out within an area defined as being suitable for wind energy development within a made neighbourhood plan. In addition, permission will only be granted provided:
- any adverse impacts on the local landscape, townscape or areas of historical interest can be satisfactorily assimilated;
 - the proposal minimises harm to residential amenity by virtue of noise, vibration, overshadowing, flicker, or other detrimental emissions, during construction, its operation and decommissioning;
 - adverse impacts upon designated wildlife sites, nature conservation interests, and biodiversity are satisfactorily mitigated;
 - all impacts on air traffic safety, radar and telecommunications have been adequately mitigated;
 - cumulative landscape character and visual impacts with any operational, consented and proposed development neither results in significant coalescence nor becomes a defining characteristic of the wider fabric, character and quality of the landscape; and
 - following public consultation all material planning impacts identified by affected local communities have been adequately addressed.

Q: Small scale wind energy development

- 1: Do you agree with the suggested approach and what it is trying to achieve?
- 2: Do you agree with the suggested wording?
- 3: How could the paragraph / policy / section / chapter be amended to reflect your concerns?

6.10. Utilities

6.10.1. In planning for the area, the council will work with utility service providers to assess the quality and capacity of energy supplies, water supplies, telecommunications, drainage, sewerage, and sewage treatment provision, and their ability to meet forecast demands. Where adequate capacity is not available within existing systems, assurances will be required that the necessary infrastructure will be provided.

Telecommunications and radio masts

6.10.2. Modern telecommunications are an essential and beneficial element in the life of the local community and the national economy. New technology has spread rapidly to meet the growing demand for better communications at work and at home with regular home working becoming more common. Within the plan area, there are currently a number of sites that accommodate transmitters, masts and antennas.

6.10.3. Public interest and anxiety over telecommunications has made it a contentious planning issue. Operators of communication technology have a duty to abide by codes and regulations in terms of public health. Where telecommunications development is proposed, the following information will normally be sought:

- a statement that self-certifies that the cumulative exposure, when operational, will not exceed International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection guidelines;

Section 6: Community Infrastructure

- the outcome of any consultations with organisations with an interest in the proposed development, in particular with the relevant body where a mast is to be installed near a school or college.
- 6.10.4. Proposals which involve the installation of additional equipment to an existing mast or tower will need to consider the cumulative impact upon the width and height of the existing structure. Existing masts, buildings and other structures should normally be used, unless the need for a new site has been justified, or the impact of the additional equipment leads to unacceptable visual harm. Where new sites are required, equipment should be sympathetically designed and camouflaged where appropriate and removed when no longer required.

Broadband

- 6.10.5. Digital connectivity plays a key role in both improving productivity and addressing environmental challenges. Changing working practices and increased digitisation mean it is more important than ever to be “connected”. Reliable, resilient and up-to-date digital infrastructure can support economic activity and provide community services.
- 6.10.6. The provision of broadband and electronic communications in some villages and rural areas remains very poor, particularly in terms of capacity and coverage. Across Dorset, 150,000 people are offline and 70,000 have never been online.
- 6.10.7. One of the government’s top priorities is to stimulate private sector investment to deliver the best superfast broadband network in Europe. Monies have been allocated by government to support broadband provision in Dorset. The Superfast Dorset programme has been delivering fibre optic based superfast broadband to premises in need of improved service meaning 97.3% of the county can now get access to superfast broadband.
- 6.10.8. Fibre to the Premises (FTTP), sometimes called ultrafast or full fibre broadband, is where a fibre cable runs directly from the telephone exchange into the home or business. This technology is significantly faster than standard broadband and is also capable of much higher speeds in the future. There are a number of infrastructure providers active in Dorset, some of which make installation of FTTP to larger new developments free of charge. On smaller sites co-funding or alternative solutions may be available.

Section 6: Community Infrastructure

6.10.9. In order to improve connectivity, infrastructure to achieve access to the high-speed electronic communications network will be required in all new homes and businesses. On larger developments (10+ dwellings), and on other developments where practicable, this should be provided through infrastructure to support fibre cabling.

COM12. The provision of utilities service infrastructure

- II. Development will not be permitted where the problems associated with the lack of necessary utilities service infrastructure, including energy supplies, drainage, sewerage, sewage treatment and water supply, cannot be overcome.
- III. Proposals for the development of telecommunications or radio equipment will be permitted provided that:
 - the development will not be unduly detrimental to the appearance of the locality, particularly in sensitive areas of landscape, nature conservation or townscape importance; and
 - the applicant has demonstrated that there is a need for the technology, that all technically feasible alternatives have been explored, and that the application proposal results in the least visual harm.
- IV. All new residential and commercial developments should provide the infrastructure required to enable connectivity to the high-speed electronic communications network unless it is not practical to do so. For major developments (10+ dwellings or sites of greater than 0.5 hectares) this should be through direct fibre to the premise (FTTP) access.

Q: The provision of utilities service infrastructure

1: The plan requires the provision of full fibre broadband connections to each home on major development sites. Do you agree with this proposal?