

Weymouth Neighbourhood Plan

Report to Inform Habitats Regulations Assessment

Weymouth Town Council

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Quality information

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1. Introduction

Background to the Project

- 1.1 AECOM has been appointed by Weymouth Town Council (WTC) to undertake a report to inform the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) of the Weymouth Neighbourhood Plan (WNP). This is to inform both the WTC and Dorset Council of the potential effects of the WNP on Habitats sites (previously known as European sites) which are Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs), and Ramsar sites.
- 1.2 The HRA is required to determine if there are any realistic linking impact pathways between the WNP and any Habitats sites. Where Likely Significant Effects (LSEs) cannot be screened out, or a reasonable doubt over significant effects on Habitats sites remains, an analysis to inform an Appropriate Assessment (AA) is needed to determine if adverse effects on the integrity of Habitats sites will occur as a result of the WNP, either alone or in-combination.

Local Context

- 1.3 The WNP applies to the “parished” area that is under the jurisdiction of Weymouth Town Council. The plan area is located on the Dorset coastline directly to the east of Chesil Beach, the Isle of Portland is due south of the town. The area lies at the centre of the Dorset and East Devon Coast World Heritage Site (also known as the ‘Jurassic Coast’). Weymouth is the third largest settlement in the county of Dorset, having a population of around 53,000 (October 2023).

Legislative Context

- 1.4 The United Kingdom (UK) left the European Union on the 31 January 2020 under the terms set out in the European Union (Withdrawal Agreement) Act 2020 (“the Withdrawal Act”). The Withdrawal Act retains the body of existing EU-derived law within our domestic law. The most recent amendments to the Habitats Regulations – the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 – make it clear that the need for HRA continues post-Brexit.
- 1.5 The HRA process applies the ‘Precautionary Principle’¹ to Habitats sites. Plans and projects can only be permitted having ascertained that there will be no adverse effect on the integrity of the European site(s) in question. Proposals with predicted adverse effects on the integrity of Habitats sites may still be permitted if there are no Reasonable Alternatives delivering the same objectives and there are Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest (IROPI) as to why they should go ahead. In such cases, compensation is necessary to ensure the overall integrity of the site network.
- 1.6 The need for AA is set out in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended; Box 1).

¹ The Precautionary Principle, which is referenced in Article 191 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, has been defined by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO, 2005) as: “When human activities may lead to morally unacceptable harm [to the environment] that is scientifically plausible but uncertain, actions shall be taken to avoid or diminish that harm. The judgement of plausibility should be grounded in scientific analysis”.

Box 1: The legislative basis for Appropriate Assessment.

Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (As Amended)

With specific reference to Neighbourhood Plans, Regulation 106(1) states that:

“A qualifying body which submits a proposal for a neighbourhood development plan must provide such information as the competent authority [the Local Planning Authority] may reasonably require for the purpose of the assessment under regulation 105... [which sets out the formal process for determination of ‘likely significant effects’ and the ‘appropriate assessment’].”

1.7 Therefore, it is important to note that this report has two purposes:

- To assist the Qualifying Body (Weymouth Town Council) in preparing their plan by recommending (where necessary) any adjustments required to protect Habitats sites, thus making it more likely that the WNP will be deemed compliant with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended); and
- On behalf of the Qualifying Body, to assist the Local Planning Authority (Dorset Council) to discharge their duty under Regulation 105 (in their role as ‘plan-making authority’ within the meaning of that regulation) and Regulation 106 (in their role as ‘Competent Authority’) and reach the formal HRA decision.

1.8 As Competent Authority, the legal responsibility for ensuring that a decision of LSEs is made, an AA (where required) is undertaken, and Natural England are consulted, falls on the Local Planning Authority. However, they are entitled to request from the Qualifying Body the necessary information on which to base their judgment and that is a key purpose of this report.

1.9 Over the years, the term HRA has come into wide currency to describe the overall process set out in the Habitats Regulations, from Screening through to identification of IROPI. This term has been adopted to distinguish the overall process from the individual stage of AA. Throughout this report the term HRA is used for the overall process and the use of AA is restricted to the specific stage of that name.

1.10 In spring 2018, the ‘Sweetman’ European Court of Justice ruling² clarified that mitigation (i.e., measures that are specifically introduced to avoid or reduce a harmful effect on a European site that would otherwise arise) must **not** be taken into account when forming a view on LSEs. Mitigation measures should instead only be considered at the AA stage. This HRA has been cognisant of that ruling.

Scope of the HRA

1.11 There are no standard criteria for determining the geographic scope of an HRA of a Plan document. Therefore, AECOM were guided primarily by the identified impact pathways (called the source-pathway-receptor model) rather than by arbitrary borders. Current guidance suggests that the following Habitats sites be included in the scope of assessment:

- All sites within the boundary of the Weymouth Civil Parish; and,
- Other sites shown to be linked to development within the Parish boundary through a known impact pathway (these are defined below).

1.12 Briefly defined, impact pathways are routes by which the implementation of a policy within a Neighbourhood Plan document can lead to an effect upon a Habitats site. An example of this would be new residential development resulting in a local population increase and an increased demand for recreational spaces. This can lead to more people visiting Habitats sites, which can then lead to increased disturbance of qualifying overwintering and breeding birds.

² People Over Wind and Sweetman v Coillte Teoranta (C-323/17)

- 1.13 Guidance from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) states that the HRA should be *'proportionate to the geographical scope of the [plan policy]'* and that *'an AA need not be done in any more detail, or using more resources, than is useful for its purpose'* (MHCLG, 2006, p.6). More recently, the Court of Appeal ruled that provided the Council (in their role as Competent Authority) was duly satisfied that proposed mitigation could be 'achieved in practice' to satisfy that the proposed development would have no adverse effect, then this would suffice. In this case the High Court ruled that for *'a multistage process, so long as there is sufficient information at any particular stage to enable the authority to be satisfied that the proposed mitigation can be achieved in practice it is not necessary for all matters concerning mitigation to be fully resolved before a decision maker is able to conclude that a development will satisfy the requirements of Reg 61 of the Habitats Regulations.'*
- 1.14 The full details of all relevant Habitats sites discussed in this document can be found in **Appendix A**. The qualifying features, Conservation Objectives and threats / pressures to the integrity for all sites are outlined. **Appendix B** undertakes the screening of the WNP policies and their potential for linking impact pathways, alone and in-combination, to the relevant Habitats sites. Table 1 below lists all Habitats sites and linking impact pathways considered in this HR. **Note** that the inclusion of a Habitats site or linking impact pathway below does not indicate that an effect is expected, but rather that these are pathways that require appraisal.

Table 1: Geographic scope of the HRA.

Habitats site	Location	Reason for inclusion / Other exclusion (pressures / threats ³ vulnerabilities associated with the Habitats site that could link to the WNP)	site
Chesil and the Fleet SAC and Chesil Beach and the Fleet Ramsar and Marine SPA	Within and adjacent to the WNP area	- Water pollution - Public access / disturbance - Air pollution: Risk of atmospheric nitrogen deposition	- Changes in species distributions - Fisheries: marine and estuarine - Invasive species - Natural changes to site conditions - Inappropriate coastal management
Crookhills Brick Pit SAC	At its closest located 1.9km north-west of the WNP area	No site vulnerabilities link to Plan.	- Change in land management
Dorset Heathlands SAC, SPA and Ramsar	At its closest located 4.3 km north-west of the WNP area	- Public access/Disturbance - Water pollution	- Inappropriate scrub control - Undergrazing - Forestry and Woodland Management - Drainage - Invasive species - Habitat fragmentation - Conflicting conservation objectives - Wildfire/arson - Air pollution: Impact of atmospheric nitrogen deposition - Deer
Isle of Portland to Studland Cliffs SAC	Within and adjacent to the WNP area	- Public access / disturbance - Water pollution	- Undergrazing - Inappropriate scrub control - Invasive species - Agricultural management practices

³ As identified in the Site Improvement Plans or RAMS for European sites.

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Habitat fragmentation - Inappropriate coastal management - Natural changes to site conditions - Managed rotational burning
Studland to Portland SAC (Marine)	Within and adjacent to the WNP area	No site vulnerabilities link to Plan.		- Fisheries: commercial marine and estuarine
Lyme Bay and Torbay SAC (Marine)	At its closest located 9.2km - north-west of the WNP area	Public access / disturbance		- Fisheries: commercial marine and estuarine

The Layout of this Report

1.15 **Chapter 2** of this report explains the methodology by which this HRA has been carried out, including the three essential tasks that form part of HRA. **Chapter 3** provides detailed background on the main impact pathways identified in relation to the WNP and the relevant Habitats sites. **Chapter 4** undertakes the LSEs screening assessment of WNP policies and sites potentially proposed for allocation. The AA is undertaken in **Chapter 5**. The conclusions and recommendations arising from the investigations are introduced in **Chapter 5** and summarised in **Chapter 6**.

Quality Assurance

1.16 This report was undertaken in line with AECOM's Integrated Management System (IMS). Our IMS places great emphasis on professionalism, technical excellence, quality, environmental and Health and Safety management. All staff members are committed to establishing and maintaining our certification to the international standards BS EN ISO 9001:2015 and 14001:2015, ISO 44001:2017 and ISO 45001:2018. In addition, our IMS requires careful selection and monitoring of the performance of all sub-consultants and contractors.

1.17 All AECOM Ecologists working on this project are members (at the appropriate level) of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) and follow their code of professional conduct (CIEEM, 2017).

2. Methodology

Introduction to HRA Methodology

- 2.1 The HRA will be carried out with reference to the general EC guidance on HRA⁴ and that of the UK government⁵.
- 2.2 Figure 1 below outlines the key stages of HRA⁶. The stages are essentially iterative, being revisited as necessary in response to more detailed information becoming available, recommendations being made and changes to the Plan being implemented until no adverse effects remain.

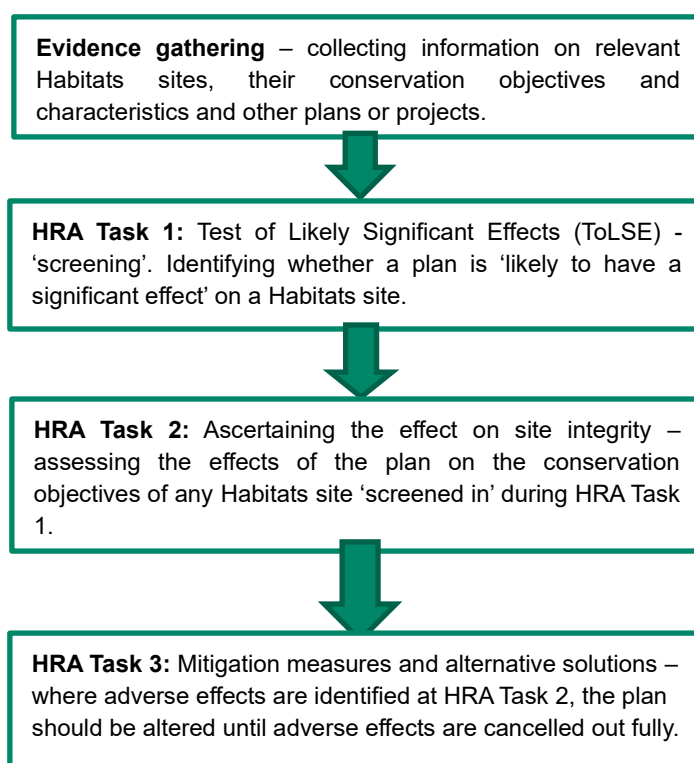


Figure 1: Four Stage Approach to Habitats Regulations Assessment.

Description of HRA Tasks

HRA Task 1 – Likely Significant Effects (LSEs) Screening

- 2.3 Following evidence gathering, the first stage of any HRA is a LSEs screening - essentially a brief, high-level assessment to decide whether the full subsequent stage known as AA is required. The essential question is:

“Is the project, either alone or in combination with other relevant projects and plans, likely to result in a significant effect upon European sites?”

⁴ European Commission (2001): Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 Sites: Methodological Guidance on the Provisions of Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive.

⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/appropriate-assessment> [Accessed 31 October 2023]

⁶ It is to be noted that the graphic does not include HRA Task 4, which encompasses a series of derogation tests that need to be met if adverse effects on Habitats sites cannot be excluded, even when considering mitigation.

- 2.4 The objective is to 'screen out' those plans and projects that can, without any detailed appraisal, be concluded not to result in adverse effects upon Habitats sites, usually because there is no mechanism for an adverse interaction.
- 2.5 The LSEs screening is based on identification of the impact source, its linking pathway and an appraisal of the specific Habitats site receptors. These are normally designated features but also include habitats and species fundamental for designated features to achieve favourable conservation status (notably functionally linked habitats outside the Habitats site boundary).
- 2.6 In the Waddenzee case⁷, the European Court of Justice ruled on the interpretation of Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive, including that:
- An effect should be considered 'likely', 'if it cannot be excluded, on the basis of objective information, that it will have a significant effect on the site' (para 44);
 - An effect should be considered 'significant', '*if it undermines the conservation objectives*' (para 48); and
 - Where a plan or project has an effect on a site 'but is not likely to undermine its conservation objectives, it cannot be considered likely to have a significant effect on the site concerned' (para 47).
- 2.7 The LSEs screening consists of two parts: Firstly, it determines whether there are any policies that could result in negative impact pathways and secondly it establishes whether there are any Habitats sites that are likely to be affected.
- 2.8 It is important to note that the LSEs screening must generally follow the Precautionary Principle as its main purpose is to determine whether the subsequent stage of AA (i.e., a more detailed investigation) is required.

HRA Task 2 – Appropriate Assessment (AA)

- 2.9 Where it is determined that a conclusion of 'no LSEs' cannot be drawn, the analysis must proceed to the next stage of HRA known as AA. Case law has clarified that AA is not a technical term. In other words, there are no particular technical analyses, or level of detail, that are classified by law as belonging to AA rather than the LSEs screening. AA refers to whatever level of assessment is appropriate to form a conclusion regarding effects on the integrity (coherence of structure and function) of Habitats sites in light of their Conservation Objectives.
- 2.10 By virtue of the fact that it follows LSEs screening, there is a clear implication that the analysis will be more detailed than undertaken at the previous stage. One of the key considerations during AA is whether there is available mitigation that would entirely address the potential effect. In practice, the AA would take any policies or proposed sites that could not be dismissed following the high-level screening analysis and evaluate the potential for an effect in more detail, with a view to concluding whether there would be an adverse effect on site integrity (in other words, disruption of the coherent structure and function of the Habitats site(s)).
- 2.11 In 2018 the Holohan ruling⁸ handed down by the European Court of Justice included among other provisions paragraph 39 of the ruling stating that '*As regards other habitat types or species, which are present on the site, but for which that site has not been listed, and with respect to habitat types and species located outside that site, ... typical habitats or species must be included in the appropriate assessment, if they are necessary to the conservation of the habitat types and species listed for the protected area*' [emphasis added].
- 2.12 In evaluating significance, AECOM relies on professional judgement as well as the results of bespoke studies, supported by appropriate evidence / data, and stakeholder consultation regarding the effects of development on the Habitats sites considered within this assessment.

⁷ Case C-127/02

⁸ Case C-461/17

HRA Task 3 – Mitigation

- 2.13 Where necessary, measures will be recommended for incorporation into the Plan to avoid or mitigate adverse effects on Habitats sites. For example, there is considerable precedent, both nationally and locally, concerning the level of detail that a Plan document needs to contain regarding mitigation for recreational effects on Habitats sites. The implication of this precedent is that it is not necessary for all measures to be deployed to be fully developed prior to adoption of the Plan, but that the Plan must provide an adequate policy framework within which these measures can be delivered.
- 2.14 When discussing mitigation for a Plan document, one is concerned primarily with the policy framework to enable the delivery of such mitigation rather than the detail of the mitigation measures themselves since these are high-level planning documents.

Confirming Other Plans and Projects That May Act In Combination

- 2.15 It is a requirement of the Regulations that the effects of any land use plan being assessed are not considered in isolation but in-combination with other plans and projects that may also be affecting the European site(s) in question.
- 2.16 In considering the potential for combined regional housing development to affect Habitats sites, the primary consideration is the impact of visitor numbers – i.e., recreational pressure and urbanisation.
- 2.17 When undertaking this part of the assessment it is essential to bear in mind the principal intention behind the legislation, i.e. to ensure that those projects or plans (which in themselves may have minor effects) are not simply dismissed on that basis but are evaluated for any cumulative contribution they may make to an overall significant effect. In practice, in-combination assessment is therefore of greatest relevance when Planning policies would otherwise be screened out because their individual contribution is inconsequential.
- 2.18 The following plans and guidance notes are considered to have the potential to act in-combination with the WNP:
- Emerging Dorset Local Plan (Options Consultation) (Dorset Council, 2021)
 - West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Adopted Local Plan (2015)
 - Portland Neighbourhood Plan
 - North Dorset District Council (2016) North Dorset Local Plan Part 1
 - North Dorset District Council (2016) North Dorset Local Plan Part 2
 - Wessex Water (2019) Final Water Resources Management Plan
 - Natural England's Advice as of the 16th of March 2022 on Nutrient Neutrality for Dorset council. Specifically, the guidance for catchment area: Chesil and The Fleet – Nitrogen and Phosphorus nutrient deposition⁹.
- 2.19 It should be noted that, while their broad potential effects are considered, this assessment does not undertake full HRA of each of these planning documents. Instead, existing HRAs that have been carried out for surrounding LPAs were drawn upon.

⁹ <https://www.Dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/-/nutrient-neutrality-1> [Accessed 20 April 2023]

3. Background to Impact Pathways

- 3.1 In carrying out an HRA it is important to avoid confining oneself to effectively arbitrary boundaries (such as Local Authority or parish boundaries), but to use an understanding of the various ways in which Land Use Plans can affect Habitats sites to evaluate whether development is connected with Habitats sites, in some cases many kilometres distant. Briefly defined, impact pathways are routes by which a change in activity associated with a development can lead to an effect upon a Habitats site. As highlighted earlier, it is also important to bear in mind CLG guidance which states that the AA should be '*proportionate to the geographical scope of the [plan policy]*' and that '*an AA need not be done in any more detail, or using more resources, than is useful for its purpose*' (CLG, 2006, p.6¹⁰).
- 3.2 Based upon Natural England's Site Improvement Plans (SIPs) and professional judgement, there are several impact pathways that require consideration regarding development proposals within the Weymouth area and the relevant Habitats sites.
- 3.3 The following impact pathways are considered relevant to the HRA of the WNP:
- Recreational pressure
 - Water quality and water resources
 - Atmospheric pollution from atmospheric nitrogen deposition
 - Construction related effects (dust / water runoff)

Recreational Pressure

- 3.4 The recreational use of a Habitats site has the potential to:
- Cause disturbance to sensitive species, particularly ground-nesting birds and (where relevant) wintering wildfowl;
 - Cause damage through erosion and fragmentation;
 - Cause eutrophication as a result of dog fouling; and
 - Prevent appropriate management or exacerbate existing management difficulties;
- 3.5 Different types of Habitats sites are subject to different types of recreational pressures and have different vulnerabilities. Studies across a range of species have shown that the effects from recreation can be complex.
- 3.6 It should be emphasised that recreational use is not inevitably a problem. Many Habitats sites also contain nature reserves managed for conservation and public appreciation of nature. HRAs of Local Plans tend to focus on recreational sources of disturbance as a result of new residents¹¹.
- 3.7 This section distinguishes between potential effects on breeding birds (between March and August) and non-breeding birds (between August to May).

Breeding birds (February to August)

- 3.8 The Chesil Bank is situated on the West Dorset coast, stretching 29 km from West Bay to Portland, and is one of the five largest shingle beaches in Britain. The shingle bank provides

¹⁰ Department for Communities and Local Government. 2006. *Planning for the Protection of European Sites: Appropriate Assessment*. <http://www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1502244>

¹¹ The RTP1 report 'Planning for an Ageing Population'(2004) which states that 'From being a marginalised group in society, the elderly are now a force to be reckoned with and increasingly seen as a market to be wooed by the leisure and tourist industries. There are more of them and generally they have more time and more money.' It also states that 'Participation in most physical activities shows a significant decline after the age of 50. The exceptions to this are walking, golf, bowls and sailing, where participation rates hold up well into the 70s'.

nesting for internationally important populations of breeding little tern (*Sternula albifrons*), and although not designated features of the site, it also supports increasing numbers of breeding common tern (*Sterna hirundo*) and a small number of breeding ringed plover (*Charadrius hiaticula*).

- 3.9 Concern regarding the effects of disturbance on birds stems from the fact that they are expending energy unnecessarily and the time they spend responding to disturbance is time that is not spent feeding (this will apply all year round)¹². Disturbance therefore risks increasing energetic output while reducing energetic input, which can adversely affect the 'condition' and ultimately the survival of the birds. In addition, displacement of birds from one feeding site to others can increase the pressure on the resources available within the remaining sites, as they have to sustain a greater number of birds¹³. Moreover, the more time a breeding bird spends disturbed from its nest, the more its eggs are likely to cool and the more vulnerable they, or any nestlings, are to predators.
- 3.10 The little tern colony at Chesil beach dropped from 100 pairs in 1997 to zero in 2009. This led to the creation of the Chesil Little Tern Project which helps to protect the colony¹⁴. Little terns lay their eggs (2-3) within a small dip in the pebbles and incubate for 18 to 22 days before hatching. The fledglings will stay on the beach for several weeks being fed by the adults while practicing fishing and diving skills before the whole colony migrates south to Africa in August. The little tern project is a partnership managed by the RSPB and supported by Dorset Wildlife Trust, Natural England, The Portland Court Leet, The Crown Estate and the Chesil Bank & Fleet Nature Reserve. The project focuses on providing protection from predators and reducing recreational disturbance with the use of electric fencing and hides. Wardens and volunteers also monitor the birds around the clock to prevent predators and visitors disturbing the birds. The little tern project due to the localised nature of the colony, is a very effective method of guarding the terns at Chesil beach from recreational pressure (and predators) and has produced good results. It is estimated that in 2018 there were 25 successful fledglings, and in 2020 the breeding population had a minimum of 50 pairs, double the number present in 2013¹⁵.

Non-breeding birds (September to January)

- 3.11 The potential for disturbance may be different in winter than in summer, in that there are often a smaller number of recreational users. In addition, the consequences of disturbance at a population level may be reduced because birds are not breeding. However, activity outside of the summer months can still cause important disturbance, especially as birds are particularly vulnerable at this time of year due to food shortages. Disturbance which results in the abandonment of suitable feeding areas can have severe consequences for those birds involved and their ability to find alternative feeding areas. Evans & Warrington¹⁶ found that on Sundays total water bird numbers (including shoveler and gadwall) were 19% higher on Stocker's Lake LNR in Hertfordshire, and attributed this to observed greater recreational activity on surrounding water bodies at weekends relative to week days displacing birds into the LNR. However, in this study, recreational activity was not quantified in detail, nor were individual recreational activities evaluated separately; and
- Tuite et al¹⁷ used a large (379 site), long-term (10-year) dataset (September – March species counts) to correlate seasonal changes in wildfowl abundance with the presence of various recreational activities. They found that shoveler was one of the most sensitive species to disturbance. The greatest impact on wildfowl numbers during these months was associated with sailing/windsurfing and rowing.

¹² Riddington, R. *et al.* 1996. The impact of disturbance on the behaviour and energy budgets of Brent geese. *Bird Study* 43:269-279

¹³ Gill, J.A., Sutherland, W.J. & Norris, K. 1998. The consequences of human disturbance for estuarine birds. *RSPB Conservation Review* 12: 67-72

¹⁴ <https://www.dorsetwildlifetrust.org.uk/conservation-partnership/little-tern-project> [Accessed 31 October 2023]

¹⁵ Dadds, J. & Archer, R. 2020. Chesil Beach Little Tern Recovery Project: 2020 Breeding Season Report. RSPB.

¹⁶ Evans, D.M. & Warrington, S. 1997. The effects of recreational disturbance on wintering waterbirds on a mature gravel pitlake near London. *International Journal of Environmental Studies* 53: 167-182

¹⁷ Tuite, C.H., Hanson, P.R. & Owen, M. 1984. Some ecological factors affecting winter wildfowl distribution on inland waters in England and Wales and the influence of water-based recreation. *Journal of Applied Ecology* 21: 41-62

- 3.12 More recent research has established that human activity including recreational activity can be linked to disturbance of wintering waterfowl populations.
- 3.13 Human activity can affect birds either directly (e.g. through causing them to flee) or indirectly (e.g. through damaging their habitat or reducing their fitness in less obvious ways e.g. stress). The most obvious direct effect is that of immediate mortality such as death by shooting, but human activity can also lead to behavioural changes (e.g. alterations in feeding behaviour, avoidance of certain areas and use of sub optimal areas etc.) and physiological changes (e.g. an increase in heart rate) that, although less noticeable, may ultimately result in major population-level effects by altering the balance between immigration/birth and emigration/death¹⁸.
- 3.14 The effect that varying levels of noise will have on different species of bird is poorly understood except that a number of studies have found that an increase in traffic levels on roads does lead to a reduction in the bird abundance within adjacent hedgerows - Reijnen et al (1995) examined the distribution of 43 passerine species (i.e. 'songbirds'), of which 60% had a lower density closer to the roadside than further away. By controlling vehicle usage they also found that the density generally was lower along busier roads than quieter roads¹⁹. A study on Holt Heath noted reduced levels of fitness due to occupation of sub optimal habitats alongside roads amongst heathland species.
- 3.15 A study on recreational disturbance on the Humber²⁰ assesses different types of noise disturbance on waterfowl referring to studies relating to aircraft (see Drewitt 1999²¹), traffic (Reijnen, Foppen, & Veenbaas 1997)²², dogs (Lord, Waas, & Innes 1997²³; Banks & Bryant 2007²⁴) and machinery (Delaney et al. 1999; Tempel & Gutierrez 2003). These studies identified that there is still relatively little work on the effects of different types of water based craft and the impacts from jet skis, kite surfers, windsurfers etc. (see Kirby et al. 2004²⁵ for a review). Some types of disturbance are clearly likely to invoke different responses. In very general terms, both distance from the source of disturbance and the scale of the disturbance (noise level, group size) will both influence the response (Delaney et al. 1999²⁶; Beale & Monaghan 2005²⁷). On UK estuaries and coastal sites, a review of WeBS data showed that, among the volunteer WeBS surveyors, driving of motor vehicles and shooting were the two activities most perceived to cause disturbance (Robinson & Pollitt 2002)²⁸.

Other activities causing disturbance

- 3.16 Activities other than recreation may also lead to disturbance of wildlife.
- 3.17 Disturbing activities are on a continuum. The most disturbing activities are likely to be those that involve irregular, infrequent, unpredictable loud noise events, movement or vibration of long duration. The presence of people and dogs generate substantial disturbance effects because of the areas accessed and the impact/effect of a potential predator on bird behaviour. Birds are least likely to be disturbed by activities that involve regular, frequent, predictable, quiet patterns of

¹⁸ Riley, J. 2003. Review of Recreational Disturbance Research on Selected Wildlife in Scotland. Scottish Natural Heritage.

¹⁹ Reijnen, R. et al. 1995. The effects of car traffic on breeding bird populations in woodland. III. Reduction of density in relation to the proximity of main roads. *Journal of Applied Ecology* 32: 187-202

²⁰ Helen Fearnley Durwyn Liley and Katie Cruickshanks (2012) Results of Recreational Visitor Survey across the Humber Estuary produced by Footprint Ecology

²¹ Drewitt, A. (1999) Disturbance effects of aircraft on birds. English Nature, Peterborough.

²² Reijnen, R., Foppen, R. & Veenbaas, G. (1997) Disturbance by traffic of breeding birds: evaluation of the effect and considerations in planning and managing road corridors. *Biodiversity and Conservation*, 6, 567-581.

²³ Lord, A., Waas, J.R. & Innes, J. (1997) Effects of human activity on the behaviour of northern New Zealand dotterel *Charadrius obscurus aquilonius* chicks. *Biological Conservation*, 82,15-20.

²⁴ Banks, P.B. & Bryant, J.V. (2007) Four-legged friend of foe? Dog-walking displaces native birds from natural areas. *Biology Letters*, 3, 611-613.

²⁵ Kirby, J.S., Clee, C. & Seager, V. (1993) Impact and extent of recreational disturbance to wader roosts on the Dee estuary: some preliminary results. *Wader Study Group Bulletin*, 68, 53-58.

²⁶ Delaney, D.K., Grubb, T.G., Beier, P., Pater, L.L.M. & Reiser, H. (1999) Effects of Helicopter Noise on Mexican Spotted Owls. *The Journal of Wildlife Management*, 63, 60-76.

²⁷ Beale, C.M. & Monaghan, P. (2005) Modeling the Effects of Limiting the Number of Visitors on Failure Rates of Seabird Nests. *Conservation Biology*, 19, 2015-2019.

²⁸ Robinson, J.A. & Pollitt, M.S. (2002) Sources and extent of human disturbance to waterbirds in the UK: an analysis of Wetland Bird Survey data, 1995/96 to 1998/99: Less than 32% of counters record disturbance at their site, with differences in causes between coastal and inland sites. *Bird Study*, 49, 205.

- sound or movement or minimal vibration. The further any activity is from the birds, the less likely it is to result in disturbance.
- 3.18 The factors that influence a species response to a disturbance are numerous, but the three key factors are species sensitivity, proximity of disturbance sources and timing/duration of the potentially disturbing activity.
- 3.19 The distance at which a species takes flight when approached by a disturbing stimulus is known as the 'tolerance distance' (also called the 'escape flight distance') and differs between species to the same stimulus and within a species to different stimuli.
- 3.20 The potential for apparent disturbance may be less in winter than in summer, in that there are often a smaller number of recreational users. In addition, the consequences of disturbance at a population level may be reduced because birds are not breeding. However, activity outside of the summer months can still cause important disturbance, especially as birds are particularly vulnerable at this time of year due to food shortages. Disturbance which results in abandonment of suitable feeding areas can have severe consequences for those birds involved and their ability to find alternative feeding areas. Several empirical studies have, through correlative analysis, demonstrated that out-of-season (October-March) recreational activity can result in quantifiable disturbance.
- Tuite et al²⁹ found that during periods of high recreational activity, bird numbers at Llangorse Lake decreased by 30% as the morning progressed, matching the increase in recreational activity towards midday. During periods of low recreational activity, however, no change in numbers was observed as the morning progressed. In addition, all species were found to spend less time in their 'preferred zones' (the areas of the lake used most in the absence of recreational activity) as recreational intensity increased;
 - Underhill et al³⁰ counted waterfowl and all disturbance events on 54 water bodies within the South West London Water Bodies Special Protection Area and clearly correlated disturbance with a decrease in bird numbers at weekends in smaller sites and with the movement of birds within larger sites from disturbed to less disturbed areas.
- 3.21 Human activity can affect birds either directly (e.g. through causing them to flee) or indirectly (e.g. through damaging their habitat). The most obvious direct effect is that of immediate mortality such as death by shooting, but human activity can also lead to behavioural changes (e.g. alterations in feeding behaviour, avoidance of certain areas etc.) and physiological changes (e.g. an increase in heart rate) that, although less noticeable, may ultimately result in major population-level effects by altering the balance between immigration/birth and emigration/death³¹. The effect of disturbance on birds changes during the seasons in relation to a number of very specific factors, for example in winter below freezing temperatures, bird fat resource levels and the need to remain watchful for predators rather than feeding. These considerations lead to birds apparently showing different behavioural responses at different times of the year.
- 3.22 The degree of effect that varying levels of noise will have on different species of bird is poorly understood except that a number of studies have found that an increase in traffic levels on roads does lead to a reduction in the bird abundance within adjacent hedgerows - Reijnen et al (1995) examined the distribution of 43 passerine species (i.e. 'songbirds'), of which 60% had a lower density closer to the roadside than further away. By controlling vehicle usage they also found that the density generally was lower along busier roads than quieter roads³².

²⁹ Tuite, C. H., Owen, M. & Paynter, D. 1983. Interaction between wildfowl and recreation at Llangorse Lake and Talybont Reservoir, South Wales. *Wildfowl* 34: 48-63

³⁰ Underhill, M.C. et al. 1993. Use of Waterbodies in South West London by Waterfowl. An Investigation of the Factors Affecting Distribution, Abundance and Community Structure. Report to Thames Water Utilities Ltd. and English Nature. Wetlands Advisory Service, Slimbridge

³¹ Riley, J. 2003. Review of Recreational Disturbance Research on Selected Wildlife in Scotland. Scottish Natural Heritage.

³² Reijnen, R. et al. 1995. The effects of car traffic on breeding bird populations in woodland. III. Reduction of density in relation to the proximity of main roads. *Journal of Applied Ecology* 32: 187-202

Mechanical/abrasive damage and nutrient enrichment

3.23 Most types of aquatic or terrestrial European site can be affected by trampling, which in turn causes soil compaction and erosion:

- Wilson & Seney (1994)³³ examined the degree of track erosion caused by hikers, motorcycles, horses and cyclists from 108 plots along tracks in the Gallatin National Forest, Montana. Although the results proved difficult to interpret, it was concluded that horses and hikers disturbed more sediment on wet tracks, and therefore caused more erosion, than motorcycles and bicycles.
- Cole et al (1995a, b)³⁴ conducted experimental off-track trampling in 18 closed forest, dwarf scrub and meadow & grassland communities (each tramped between 0 – 500 times) over five mountain regions in the US. Vegetation cover was assessed two weeks and one year after trampling, and an inverse relationship with trampling intensity was discovered, although this relationship was weaker after one year than two weeks indicating some recovery of the vegetation. Differences in plant morphological characteristics were found to explain more variation in response between different vegetation types than soil and topographic factors. Low-growing, mat-forming grasses regained their cover best after two weeks and were considered most resistant to trampling, while tall forbs (non-woody vascular plants other than grasses, sedges, rushes and ferns) were considered least resistant. Cover of hemicryptophytes and geophytes (plants with buds below the soil surface) was heavily reduced after two weeks, but had recovered well after one year and as such these were considered most resilient to trampling. Chamaephytes (plants with buds above the soil surface) were least resilient to trampling. It was concluded that these would be the least tolerant of a regular cycle of disturbance.
- Cole (1995c)³⁵ conducted a follow-up study (in 4 vegetation types) in which shoe type (trainers or walking boots) and trampler weight were varied. Although immediate damage was greater with walking boots, there was no significant difference after one year. Heavier trampers caused a greater reduction in vegetation height than lighter trampers, but there was no difference in effect on cover.
- Cole & Spildie (1998)³⁶ experimentally compared the effects of off-track trampling by hiker and horse (at two intensities – 25 and 150 passes) in two woodland vegetation types (one with an erect forb understorey and one with a low shrub understorey). Horse traffic was found to cause the largest reduction in vegetation cover. The forb-dominated vegetation suffered greatest disturbance, but recovered rapidly. Higher trampling intensities caused more disturbance.

3.24 Walkers with dogs contribute to pressure on sites through nutrient enrichment via dog fouling and also cause greater disturbance to fauna as dogs are less likely to keep to marked footpaths and also tend to move in a more erratic manner. Sites being managed by nature conservation bodies and local authorities frequently resort to hardening eroded paths to restrict erosion but at the same time they are losing the habitats formerly used by sand lizards and burrowing invertebrates. Motorcycle scrambling and off-road vehicle use can cause more serious erosion, as well as disturbance to sensitive species. Boats can also cause some mechanical damage to intertidal habitats through grounding as well as anchor and anchor line damage.

³³ Wilson, J.P. & J.P. Seney. 1994. Erosional impact of hikers, horses, motorcycles and off road bicycles on mountain trails in Montana. *Mountain Research and Development* 14:77-88

³⁴ Cole, D.N. 1995a. Experimental trampling of vegetation. I. Relationship between trampling intensity and vegetation response. *Journal of Applied Ecology* 32: 203-214

Cole, D.N. 1995b. Experimental trampling of vegetation. II. Predictors of resistance and resilience. *Journal of Applied Ecology* 32: 215-224

³⁵ Cole, D.N. 1995c. Recreational trampling experiments: effects of trampler weight and shoe type. *Research Note INT-RN-425*. U.S. Forest Service, Intermountain Research Station, Utah.

³⁶ Cole, D.N., Spildie, D.R. 1998. Hiker, horse and llama trampling effects on native vegetation in Montana, USA. *Journal of Environmental Management* 53: 61-71

Water Quality and Water Resources

- 3.25 Increased amounts of housing or business development can lead to reduced water quality of rivers and estuarine environments. Sewage and industrial effluent discharges can contribute to increased nutrients on Habitats sites leading to unfavourable conditions. In addition, diffuse pollution, partly from urban run-off has been identified during an Environment Agency Review of Consents process and a joint Environment Agency and Natural England evidence review, as being a major factor in causing unfavourable condition of Habitats sites.
- 3.26 The quality of the water that feeds Habitats sites is an important determinant of the nature of their habitats and the species they support. Poor water quality can have a range of environmental effects:
- At high levels, toxic chemicals and metals can result in immediate death of aquatic life, and can have detrimental effects even at lower levels, including increased vulnerability to disease and changes in wildlife behaviour. Eutrophication, the enrichment of plant nutrients in water, increases plant growth and consequently results in oxygen depletion. Algal blooms, which commonly result from eutrophication, increase turbidity and decrease light penetration. The decomposition of organic wastes that often accompanies eutrophication deoxygenates water further, augmenting the oxygen depleting effects of eutrophication. In the marine environment, nitrogen is the limiting plant nutrient and so eutrophication is associated with discharges containing available nitrogen;
 - Some pesticides, industrial chemicals, and components of sewage effluent are suspected to interfere with the functioning of the endocrine system, possibly having negative effects on the reproduction and development of aquatic life; and
 - Increased discharge of treated sewage effluent can result both in high levels of macroalgal growth, which can smother the mudflats of value to SPA birds and in greater scour (as a result of greater flow volumes).
- 3.27 At sewage treatment works, additional residential development increases the risk of effluent escape into aquatic environments in addition to consented discharges to the catchment. In many urban areas, sewage treatment and surface water drainage systems are combined, and therefore a predicted increase in flood and storm events could increase pollution risk.

Atmospheric Pollution (Nitrogen Deposition)

- 3.28 The main pollutants of concern for Habitats sites are oxides of nitrogen (NO_x), ammonia (NH₃) and sulphur dioxide (SO₂). NO_x can have a directly toxic effect upon vegetation. In addition, greater NO_x or NH₃ concentrations within the atmosphere will lead to greater rates of nitrogen (N) deposition to soils. An increase in atmospheric N deposition to soils is generally regarded to lead to an increase in soil fertility, which can have a deleterious effect on the quality of semi-natural, nitrogen-limited terrestrial habitats.

Table 2: Main sources and effects of air pollutants on habitats and species

Pollutant	Source	Effects on habitats and species
Acid deposition	SO ₂ , NO _x and ammonia all contribute to acid deposition. Although future trends in S emissions and subsequent deposition to terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems will continue to decline, it is likely that increased nitrogen emissions may cancel out any gains produced by reduced sulphur levels.	Can affect habitats and species through both wet (acid rain) and dry deposition. Some sites will be more at risk than others depending on soil type, bed rock geology, weathering rate and buffering capacity.
Ammonia (NH ₃)	Ammonia is released following decomposition and volatilisation of animal wastes. It is a naturally occurring trace gas, but levels have increased considerably with expansion in numbers of agricultural livestock. Ammonia reacts with acid pollutants such as the products of SO ₂ and NO _x to produce fine ammonium (NH ₄ ⁺) emissions located in intensive agricultural landscapes.	Adverse effects are as a result of nitrogen deposition leading to eutrophication. As emissions mostly occur at ground level in the rural environment and NH ₃ is rapidly deposited, some of the most acute problems of NH ₃ deposition are for small relict nature reserves located in intensive agricultural landscapes.

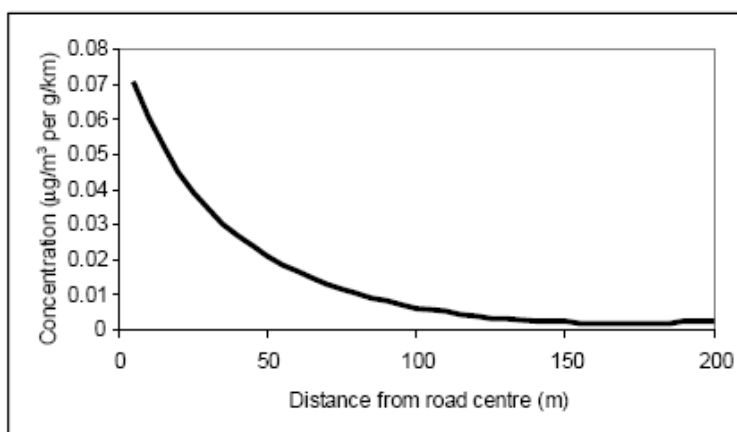
		containing aerosol which may be transferred much longer distances (can therefore be a significant trans-boundary issue.)
Nitrogen oxides NO _x	Nitrogen oxides are mostly produced in combustion processes. About one quarter of the UK's emissions are from power stations.	Deposition of nitrogen compounds (nitrates (NO ₃), nitrogen dioxide (NO ₂) and nitric acid (HNO ₃) can lead to both soil and freshwater acidification. In addition, NO _x can cause eutrophication of soils and water. This alters the species composition of plant communities and can eliminate sensitive species.
Nitrogen deposition	(N) The pollutants that contribute to nitrogen deposition derive mainly from NO _x and NH ₃ emissions. These pollutants cause acidification (see also acid deposition) as well as eutrophication.	Species-rich plant communities with relatively high proportions of slow-growing perennial species and bryophytes are most at risk from N eutrophication, due to its promotion of competitive and invasive species which can respond readily to elevated levels of N. N deposition can also increase the risk of damage from abiotic factors, e.g. drought and frost.
Ozone (O ₃)	A secondary pollutant generated by photochemical reactions from NO _x and volatile organic compounds (VOCs). These are mainly released by the combustion of fossil fuels. The increase in combustion of fossil fuels in the UK has led to a large increase in background ozone concentration, leading to an increased number of days when levels across the region are above 40ppb. Reducing ozone pollution is believed to require action at international level to reduce levels of the precursors that form ozone.	Concentrations of O ₃ above 40 ppb can be toxic to humans and wildlife, and can affect buildings. Increased ozone concentrations may lead to a reduction in growth of agricultural crops, decreased forest production and altered species composition in semi-natural plant communities.
Sulphur Dioxide SO ₂	Main sources of SO ₂ emissions are electricity generation, industry and domestic fuel combustion. May also arise from shipping and increased atmospheric concentrations in busy ports. Total SO ₂ emissions have decreased substantially in the UK since the 1980s.	Wet and dry deposition of SO ₂ acidifies soils and freshwater, and alters the species composition of plant and associated animal communities. The significance of impacts depends on levels of deposition and the buffering capacity of soils.

3.29 SO₂ emissions are overwhelmingly influenced by the output of power stations and industrial processes that require the combustion of coal and oil. NH₃ emissions are dominated by agriculture, with some chemical processes also making notable contributions. As such, it is unlikely that material increases in SO₂ or NH₃ emissions will be associated with Local Plans. NO_x emissions, however, are dominated by the output of vehicle exhausts. Within a 'typical' housing development, by far the largest contribution to NO_x (92%) will be made by the associated road traffic. Other sources, although relevant, are of minor importance (8%) in comparison. Emissions of NO_x could therefore be reasonably expected to increase due to greater vehicle use as a result of the WNP.

3.30 According to the World Health Organisation, the NO_x Critical Level for the protection of vegetation is 30 µgm⁻³ and the threshold for SO₂ is 20 µgm⁻³. In addition, ecological studies have determined Critical Loads (CLs) of atmospheric N deposition (that is, NO_x combined with ammonia NH₃) for key habitats within Habitats sites.

3.31 According to the Department of Transport's Transport Analysis Guidance, '*Beyond 200m, the contribution of vehicle emissions from the roadside to local pollution levels is not significant*' (see Plate 1). This is therefore the distance that has been used throughout this HRA in order to determine whether Habitats sites are likely to be significantly affected by development under the WNP.

Plate 1. Traffic contribution to concentrations of pollutants at different distances from a road (Source: DfT)



Construction Impacts (dust emissions, water runoff)

- 3.32 The Neighbourhood Plan supports initiatives that have the potential to affect local air quality at the SAC, through increased emission of dust during construction associated with topsoil stripping etc. This would have the potential for temporary localised effect on plant growth of calcareous grasslands that are a primary reason for the designation of the Isle of Portland to Studland Cliffs SAC. According to recent guidance from the Institute of Air Quality Management “an assessment will normally be required where there is...an ‘ecological receptor’ within: 50m of the boundary of the site; or 50m of the route(s) used by construction vehicles on the public highway...”. This is based on a view that heavy dust soiling is most likely to adversely affect vegetation and this will rarely occur more than 50m from dust generating activities even in the absence of mitigation measures such as wetting. The dust has an effect by coating vegetation within 50m of construction works to such an extent that it disrupts photosynthesis and changing the botanical composition of the sward.
- 3.33 The supported initiatives within the Policies also carry the risk of effects on water quality including; spillage of fuels or other contaminating substances or leaching of substances (e.g. cement or grout) used in construction, which may negatively affect groundwater quality. This could lead to changes in qualifying habitats.
- 3.34 In practice, it is illegal to pollute watercourses (whether or not they are designated as Habitats sites) under the Environmental Damage (Prevention and Remediation) (England) Regulations 2015 and Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016 so any site where a risk exists will build protection measures into their construction and operational procedures. Each initiative brought forward will have to provide a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP). The plan will be implemented during construction and will include best practice measures to ensure dust emissions and surface runoff does not adversely affect the SAC.

4. Screening for Likely Significant Effects (LSEs)

Introduction

4.1 The initial scoping of Habitats sites summarised in Table 1 identifies that potential vulnerabilities exist in relation to:

- Recreational pressure
- Water quality
- Water resources
- Atmospheric pollution through nitrogen deposition
- Construction related activities (dust/run off)

4.2 The full LSEs screening for the WNP is presented in Appendix B. The assessment considered the potential vulnerabilities of Habitats sites included in Table 1.

4.3 After an initial investigation into linking impact pathways, the following Habitats sites have been screened out as having no linking impact pathways:

- Studland to Portland SAC (Marine). This site is offshore of the Isle of Portland adjacent to the WNP area. The site is designated for reefs and is only sensitive to changes in commercial marine and estuarine fisheries. The WNP does not include any policies which are linked to fisheries and, therefore, although Natural England's Supplementary Advice on Conservation Objectives for the SAC indicate it is vulnerable to water quality impacts from nitrogen and sedimentation, it has not been identified as a Habitats site for which nutrient neutrality is a requirement. This site is therefore not discussed further within this HRA.
- Crookhills Brick Pit SAC. At its closest location, this site lies approx. 1.2km west of the WNP area. The site is designated solely for its population of great-crested newt and is primarily sensitive to changes in land management. As this SAC lies outside the WNP area, and is more than 500m away, it contains no policies that are linked to changes in land management. This site is not discussed further within this HRA.

4.4 Therefore, the following sections focus on the Chesil and the Fleet SAC, SPA / Ramsar (including marine components), Isle of Portland to Studland Cliffs SAC and Lyme Bay and Torbay SAC.

Summary of Likely Significant Effects (LSEs) Test Alone

4.5 Of the 57 Neighbourhood Plan policies four policies were considered to have the potential to result in a likely significant effect alone:

- Policy W20 – Housing Allocation Site – Land at Wyke Oliver Farm North. This proposed housing development of around 250 houses is allocated within the WNP area. The Isle of Portland to Studland Cliffs European Site (SAC) is at its closest 1 km away from the allocated site.
- Policy W21 – Housing Allocation Site – Land at Redlands Farm. This proposed housing development of approximately 150 houses is allocated within the WNP area. The Isle of Portland to Studland Cliffs European Site (SAC) is at its closest 3.2 km away from the allocated site. The allocation is also 3.7 km away from Chesil & The Fleet SAC, SPA and Ramsar site.

- Policy W22 – Housing Allocation Site – Land at Beverley Road, Littlemoor. This proposed housing development of approximately 25 houses is allocated within the WNP area. The Isle of Portland to Studland Cliffs European Site (SAC) is at its closest 3.0 km away from the allocated site. The allocation is also 5.2 km away from Chesil & The Fleet SAC, SPA and Ramsar site.
 - Policy W24 – Mixed-Use Scheme – Jubilee Sidings. This proposed development includes housing and commercial development within the WNP area. The Isle of Portland to Studland Cliffs European Site (SAC) is at its closest 2.7 km away from the allocated site. The allocation is also 3.1 km away from Chesil & The Fleet SAC, SPA and Ramsar site. In each of the above policies the identified linking pathway with potential for effects in isolation is “water quality (surface water runoff)”.
- 4.6 Lyme Bay & Torbay Marine (SAC) is at a distance from the above policies which means that ‘alone’ effects are not a linking pathway. Therefore, only the Chesil and the Fleet European Site (SAC, Ramsar and Marine SAC and SPA) and the Isle of Portland to Studland Cliffs (SAC) will be discussed within the ‘alone’ section of the Appropriate Assessment.
- 4.7 Policies considered to have an effect on Habitats sites ‘in combination’ with other plans and projects are discussed below.

Summary of LSEs Test In-Combination

- 4.8 Of the 57 Neighbourhood Plan policies, four policies, were considered to have the potential to result in a likely significant effect in combination:
- Policy W20 – Housing Allocation Site – Land at Wyke Oliver Farm North. This proposed housing development of approximately 250 houses is allocated within the WNP area.
 - Policy W21 – Housing Allocation Site – Land at Redlands Farm. This proposed housing development of approximately 150 houses is allocated within the WNP area.
 - Policy W22 – Housing Allocation Site – Land at Beverley Road, Littlemoor. This proposed housing development of approximately 150 houses is allocated within the WNP area
 - Policy W24 – Mixed-Use Scheme – Jubilee Sidings. This proposed development includes housing and commercial development within the WNP area.
- 4.9 The above policies provide for the following realistic potential linking impact pathways that could result in likely significant effects on Habitats sites in combination:
- Recreational pressure: as a result of new housing. (Policies: W20, W21, W22 and W24).
 - Water quality and resources: increased demand for water and increased effluent as a result of increased accommodation. (Policies: W20, W21, W22 and W24).
 - Air pollution through increases in atmospheric nitrogen deposition: as a result of traffic generated by new housing. (Policies: W20, W21, W22 and W24).
- 4.10 All remaining policies are development management policies that do not provide impact pathways that could potentially link to Habitats sites.
- 4.11 Each of the above policies will be discussed further within the ‘in combination’ section of the appropriate assessment in relation to the following Habitats sites.

Chesil & The Fleet SAC / SPA / Ramsar

- 4.12 Chesil and The Fleet SAC/ SPA / Ramsar is located north-west of the Isle of Portland and south of Weymouth. They have been identified to be vulnerable to **increased disturbance through recreational pressure, water pollution and air pollution through increases in atmospheric nitrogen deposition.**

Isle of Portland to Studland Cliffs SAC

- 4.13 The Isle of Portland to Studland Cliffs SAC is located within the south-east of Weymouth parish and also fully surrounds the coast of the Portland island. The SAC has been identified to be vulnerable to **increased disturbance through recreational pressure, water pollution and air pollution** through **increases in atmospheric nitrogen deposition**.

Lyme Bay & Torbay SAC

- 4.14 Lyme bay and Torbay marine SAC is located at its closest point, approximately 8.8 km west of the WNP area. This SAC has been identified to be vulnerable to **increased disturbance through recreational pressure**.

5. Appropriate Assessment

Construction Effects (Alone)

- 5.1 Construction related effects include emissions of dust from machines and construction activities, water surface runoff and pollutants from development sites. The four identified policies have the potential to cause an effect through the emission of dust and surface runoff during the construction of schemes delivered under these policies.
- 5.2 The Isle of Portland to Studland Cliffs SAC is vulnerable to emissions of dust (specifically regarding the calcareous grassland habitat) and water pollution. The Chesil & The Fleet SAC / SPA / Ramsar is vulnerable to water pollution.
- 5.3 None of the identified policies involving construction are close enough to the Habitats Sites for emissions of dust to be a consideration.
- 5.4 These Habitats sites lie sufficiently close to these policy target areas that potential water quality effects could occur due to site runoff during the construction and operational phases of the developments. There is a risk of pollutants due to site run off entering the water courses and significantly affecting the Isle of Portland to Studland Cliffs SAC and the Chesil & The Fleet SAC / SPA / Ramsar sites.
- 5.5 At the WNP level, it is not possible to undertake any further assessment of these effects as this requires the appraisal of design and construction specifications. As such, this impact pathway is deferred to the planning application level. This does not represent any deliverability issues, as careful planning of developments can fully mitigate any potential significant effects on water quality through runoff. For example, it is illegal to pollute watercourses under the Environmental Damage (Prevention and Remediation) (England) Regulations 2015 and the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016. Therefore, mitigation measures to protect water quality are routine whether or not the waterbodies in question are part of, or connected to, European sites.
- 5.6 In the February 2024 version of this HRA it was recommended that Policies W20, W21, W22 and W24 be amended to ensure that developments are carefully designed and planned to ensure that no adverse effects on the integrity of Habitats sites occur as a result of water pollution stemming from site runoff during construction or the operational stage of each of the developments. Note that this recommendation is AECOM opinion and it is ultimately for the group and examination process to determine policy wording. Rather than make amends to each policy, the Group has amended Policy W19 to state '*Developments are carefully designed and planned to ensure that no adverse effects on the integrity of Habitats sites occur as a result of water pollution stemming from site run-off or dust emissions during construction or the operational stage of each of the developments.*' That resolves the recommendation.

Recreational Pressure (In-Combination)

Isle of Portland to Studland Cliffs SAC, Chesil and The Fleet SAC / SPA / Ramsar, Lyme Bay to Torbay SAC & Dorset Heath SAC / SPA / Ramsar

- 5.7 The West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan proposed to deliver 15,880 new homes over the plan period up to 2036 and across West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland. Six sites in the WNP area have been allocated for residential development within the West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Adopted Local Plan (2015); Allocations within these sites are for more than 1529 dwellings. These allocations have been through a HRA within the West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Adopted Local Plan (2015) for which the HRA concluded "that the Local Plan was unlikely to result in significant effects upon protected sites".

- 5.8 Policies W20, W21, W22 and W24 all have allocations for residential dwellings. Policies W20, W21 and W22 total allocation of 445 new dwellings. Policy W24 includes housing allocations but does not yet have a target for numbers of new dwellings.
- 5.9 These allocations in combination with other housing developments (within and without the WNP) could increase recreational pressure in the Isle of Portland to Studland Cliffs SAC and Chesil & The Fleet SAC / SPA / Ramsar. Housing allocations within the Parish will lie within the core catchment of the Portland to Studland Cliffs SAC and Chesil & The Fleet SAC / SPA / Ramsar. Visitor survey data for other coastal Habitats sites delineate catchments of at least 10 km for many coastal sites (and sometimes larger).
- 5.10 An in combination analysis of recreational pressure should, in the first instance, provide an overview of the existing baseline visitor footfall in the relevant Habitats sites. The Isle of Portland to Studland Cliffs SAC is a thin site stretching along the South West Coastal Path, a long-distance hiking trail between Poole and Lyme Regis that is used by over one million people annually. The Isle of Portland is also popular for sports climbing, with over 900 climbing routes of varying difficulty. Generally, visitor counts are not available for individual locations within these sites, although it is to be expected that visitor numbers are very high locally, particularly in the summer holiday period. Importantly, a review of Natural England's most recent SSSI condition assessment indicates that most SSSI component parts of the SAC on Portland (i.e. those most likely to be visited by future residents) are either in 'Favourable' or 'Unfavourable Recovering' conditions. One subunit is classified as being 'Unfavourable Declining', but this is not due to recreational pressure.
- 5.11 Chesil and the Fleet SAC / SPA / Ramsar is also a popular destination for walking, birdwatching, fishing and boating, located immediately adjacent to the south and west of Weymouth.
- 5.12 Natural England have recently provided evidence that recreational pressure is adversely affecting the designated habitat and species in the Chesil Beach & The Fleet SAC / SPA / Ramsar. However, an inter-authority strategic mitigation solution has not been devised. This strategy should come forward with the Dorset Local Plan that has not yet been adopted. As advised by Natural England, Dorset Council has devised an interim mitigation strategy to allow residential development in close proximity of these sites to come forward. In the absence of any site-specific data for the SAC / SPA / Ramsar, the interim mitigation strategy (using recommendations from Natural England) includes a series of mitigation measures to be funded through developer contributions, including:
- Reducing land-based disturbance to breeding little terns (e.g. targeted wardening, fencing, monitoring, seasonal by-laws, alternative strategic greenspace);
 - Limiting water-based disturbance to breeding little terns (e.g. signage, paper and online interpretation, review of water access points, watercraft permitting system);
 - Reducing land-based disturbance of overwintering birds (e.g. wardening of activity hotspots, interpretation, expansion of Dorset Dogs, screening at key birdwatching viewpoints, Codes of Conduct for key user groups);
 - Addressing trampling damage to terrestrial and intertidal vegetation (through a combination of the above measures);
 - Reducing habitat pollution (e.g. through the provision of litter/dog waste bins, wardening of the northern shore, infrastructure projects);
 - Reducing damage to subtidal habitats fishing (e.g. through engagement with user groups, wardening of activity hotspots, the introduction of permits); and
 - Addressing the deliberate mortality or damage to plants and animals (e.g. through the same measures as the above fishing mitigation measures except with harvesting, foraging and beachcombing as the sources of impact)
- 5.13 While data on the geographic origin of visitors to the Chesil Beach and The Fleet SAC / SPA / Ramsar is unavailable, Natural England recommended that a 5km catchment zone is used in which residential developments will need to make financial contributions towards the mitigation

measures. This would include the site allocations in policy W21. Based on the projected number of net new dwellings within 5km of the SAC / SPA / Ramsar (6,904 new dwellings to 2038) and the total estimated costs of the mitigation measures (£3,450,114 to 2038), an interim cost per dwelling of £499.73 was provided and later implemented into the interim strategy. It is to be noted that the per-dwelling tariff is subject to change based on the inflation index. It has been prepared in line with Regulation 122 of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), which are obligatory payments that developers need to make to obtain planning consent.

- 5.14 The Lyme Bay and Torbay SAC lies approx. 8.3 km west of Weymouth. Although some coastal Habitats sites have catchments of over 10km, the development allocated within the WNP is much more likely to lead to an increase in recreational pressure within Habitats sites closer to Weymouth. It is considered unlikely that a significant portion of new Weymouth residents would travel 8.8 km distance to the Lyme Bay and Torbay SAC, when similar destinations and habitats are available much closer to home. Adverse effects on the integrity of the Lyme Bay and Torbay SAC are excluded on this basis.
- 5.15 Each of the Habitats sites in question are also managed appropriately for visitor pressure. Chesil and the Fleet is managed by relevant European Marine Sites authorities including Dorset Council which have a management scheme which operates alongside Ilchester Estates' Management Plan and Natural England advice under the Habitats Directive.
- 5.16 The Dorset Heath SAC, Ramsar and SPA lies approximately 4.3 km to the northwest of the WNP area at its closest point. Data on visitors to the Dorset Heath is dated and does not give details of individual elements of the heath. However, the available data³⁷ suggests that 59% of people arrive by car and of those 75% live within 5.3 km of the site. Calculations suggest that 500 dwellings at a distance of 525 m from an access point will increase visitors by an average of 1.42 visits per hour. Developments further away than this can be expected to have a lower impact on visitor numbers. Proposed development sites in the WNP tend to be in the central or west parts of the plan area and are up to 12 km away from the Dorset Heath Habitats sites. Due to distance of allocations, it is reasonable to assume that the effect of recreational pressure as a result of these new dwellings on the Dorset Heaths will be negligible and thus not significant.

Policy Mitigation Included in the WNP

- 5.17 Development proposals coming forward must be considered in relation to the entire policy framework of the WNP and the policies included in the overarching West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan. It is important to note that individual policies need not necessarily make reference to other policies within a plan or other planning documents, for there to be a mitigating effect.
- 5.18 The WNP itself contains a strong protective framework regarding biodiversity and nature conservation. This is encapsulated in four objectives for environmental sustainability which are regarded as "cross-cutting" and all policies in the WNP will be tested against them. These are complemented by specific policies, for example, Policy W02 (Conservation of the Natural Environment) states that '*Areas of nature conservation, such as country parks, nature parks and nature reserves should be retained and protected from any detrimental negative impacts likely to arise from development.*', which will by definition include Habitats sites. Policies W01 to W12 all relate to and provide protection for the environment.
- 5.19 Likewise, the policies supporting tourism development within the parish also have a strong agenda of protecting Habitats sites. For example, Policy W40 (Temporary Activities and Uses) and Policy W34 (Sustainable Development) refer to all four environmental sustainability objectives and states that no support will be given to proposals cause significant adverse environmental problems.
- 5.20 In addition to this, the adopted West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Adopted Local Plan (2015) states that '*Internationally designated wildlife sites (including proposed sites and sites acquired for compensatory measures), will be safeguarded from development that could adversely affect them, unless there are reasons of overriding public interest why the development should proceed and there is no alternative acceptable solution.*' This is the over-riding policy consideration where development may cause an adverse effect upon the integrity of a Habitats site. The

³⁷ <https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/file/70002> [Accessed 30 October 2023]

Neighbourhood Plan must comply with the Local Plan and any revisions thereof, and therefore this policy provides protection from adverse effects on the integrity of the SAC.

Policy Recommendations for the WNP

- 5.21 Overall, it is considered that the existing policy framework in the WNP provides adequate protection for the Isle of Portland to Studland Cliffs SAC, and Dorset Heath SAC, Ramsar and SPA. However, Natural England's most recent condition assessment indicates that the Chesil Beach & The Fleet SAC is being adversely affected by recreational pressure. In the February 2024 version of this HRA it was recommended that the WNP should include a policy that acknowledges the interim mitigation strategy for the site and requires development proposals to make adequate financial contributions accordingly. The following text has since be inserted into Policy W16 in the WNP: *'To mitigate adverse effects on the integrity of the Chesil Beach & The Fleet SAC regarding in-combination recreational pressure, any development proposals that provide for a net increase in the population must make adequate financial payments in accordance with the interim mitigation strategy for the SAC. A financial tariff will be required for all such proposals within 5km of the Habitats site, in line with Natural England advice. This policy aligns with the aims of Policy ENV2 of the adopted Local Plan, which centres on the protection of Habitats sites.'*
- 5.22 Since this policy has been introduced into the Neighbourhood Plan it can be concluded that the Plan will not affect the integrity of the Isle of Portland to Studland Cliffs SAC, Chesil and the Fleet SAC, SPA and Ramsar (including marine component), Dorset Heath SAC, Ramsar and SPA, and Lyme Bay to Torbay SAC (marine component) in combination with other plans and projects regarding recreational pressure.

Water Resources (In-Combination)

Isle of Portland to Studland Cliffs SAC & Chesil Beach and The Fleet SAC

- 5.23 Increased amounts of housing or business development can lead to reduced water quality of rivers and estuarine environments. Sewage and industrial effluent discharges can contribute to increased nutrients on Habitats sites leading to unfavourable conditions. In addition, diffuse pollution, partly from urban run-off has been identified during an Environment Agency Review of Consents process and a joint Environment Agency and Natural England evidence review, as being a major factor in causing unfavourable condition of Habitats sites.
- 5.24 As the quantum of development to be provided by the WNP is in conformity with the overarching West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Adopted Local Plan (2015) (which has been subject to HRA that concluded no adverse effects on integrity), impact pathways relating to increase water demand and increased water treatment provided by the additional business/housing, that could result in an increase in water abstraction and increased effluent has been addressed at a higher tier level within the West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Adopted Local Plan and is also addressed at a wider level within the Revised Draft Final Water Resources Management Plan (2019) by Wessex Water who supply and treat water in the Portland area. That document includes a statement in section 11.1.1 that 'Our final planning scenario consists of demand management schemes (e.g., metering and water efficiency measures) and as these will not result in any new development or water abstraction, and will be largely implemented within urban areas, the Plan is not likely to have a significant effect, alone or in combination, on the integrity of any Habitats sites'.
- 5.25 It can therefore be concluded that the Plan will not affect the integrity of Habitats sites regarding water resources.

Water Quality (In-Combination)

Chesil Beach and The Fleet SAC

- 5.26 As of 2022, Natural England notified Dorset Council of updated advice on nutrient neutrality for development proposals within the catchments of internationally protected habitat sites. Chesil and the fleet was highlighted as a catchment area within Dorset that should be protected against Nitrogen and Phosphorus deposition. All developments will need to demonstrate nutrient neutrality for Phosphorus and Nitrogen using the tools: Chesil and The Fleet nutrient budget calculator guidance and The Chesil and The Fleet catchment map³⁸. Looking at The Chesil and The Fleet catchment map none of the allocated developments from the Weymouth Neighbourhood plan are located within the catchment area, so should not affect nutrient neutrality at Chesil and the Fleet.
- 5.27 It can therefore be concluded that the Plan will not affect the integrity of Habitats sites regarding water quality.

Atmospheric Pollution (In-Combination)

Isle of Portland to Studland Cliffs SAC, Chesil and The Fleet SAC / SPA / Ramsar & Dorset Heath SAC / SPA / Ramsar

- 5.28 The following plan policies have the potential to cause an in combination effect upon Habitats sites within 200m of journey-to-work routes:
- Policy W20 – Housing Allocation Site – Land at Wyke Oliver Farm North.
 - Policy W21 – Housing Allocation Site – Land at Redlands Farm.
 - Policy W22 – Housing Allocation Site – Land at Beverley Road, Littlemoor.
 - Policy W24 – Mixed-Use Scheme – Land at Jubilee Sidings.
- 5.29 According to the Department of Transport's Transport Analysis Guidance '*Beyond 200m, the contribution of vehicular emissions from the roadside to local pollution levels is not significant.*' This is because traffic exhausts are located only a few inches above ground, sitting horizontally to it. Therefore, the vast majority of emitted pollutants are never dispersed far and are very quickly deposited. This limited impact distance is also related to the mix of the exhaust gases, small dimension of exhausts and velocity of the exhaust gases emitted.
- 5.30 None of the developments are within 200 m of the Habitats sites therefore any increase in vehicular traffic around the developments can be excluded.
- 5.31 An increase in journey-to-work routes is a likely consequence of the increase in dwellings. There is however no evidence that these traffic would come within 200 m of the designated sites. Likely commuting routes e.g., to the railway station or to the larger town of Dorchester will not bring traffic into the zone of influence of these Habitats sites.
- 5.32 The habitat types are currently classed (by Natural England with reference to all the following Chesil and the Fleet SSSI units: 1, 2 and 37) as 'Favourable' (unit 1 and 37) and 'Unfavourable Recovering' (unit 2) The reason behind the impact classification for unit 2 is due to fluctuating populations of little tern and ringed plover that breed on the beach within this unit, however the vegetated shingle within this unit is classified as 'Favourable'. An analysis of potential air quality effects from the Portland Energy Recovery Facility was undertaken by DTA Ecology on behalf of Dorset Council. This specifically considered air quality at the SAC. It reported that the maximum nitrogen deposition rates across the SAC from Air Pollution Information System (APIS) ranges from 7.2 – 8.6kg/ha/yr. The target for air quality at the site is to 'maintain and restore concentrations and deposition of air pollutants to below the site-relevant Critical Load or Level

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https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/documents/35024/2469035/NN_map_Chesil+and+the+Fleet+SAC_Ramsar_SPA.pdf/32987122-cce9-a09e-183d-df856a7940a8?t=1649407824411 [Accessed 30 October 2023]

values given for this feature of the site on the Air Pollution Information System'. The area does exceed the critical load close to the A354 (Portland Road). Exceedance effects within this habitat include an increase in tall grasses, decrease in prostrate plants, increased nitrogen leaching, soil acidification and loss of typical lichen species. However, the DTA Ecology analysis ultimately concluded that this exceedance of the critical load is localized and the trend is still improving, so there should not be a significant effect from the Energy Recovery Facility. It therefore follows that a similar conclusion can be drawn for the Neighbourhood Plan policies if they affected traffic flows on the A354 to Portland.

6. Conclusions and Recommendations

- 6.1 This assessment undertook both screening and Appropriate Assessment of the policies and any allocations within the Weymouth Neighbourhood Plan.
- 6.2 The Habitats sites, considered within the Appropriate Assessment for impact pathways that could not be screened out at the screening stage were:
- Isle of Portland to Studland Cliffs SAC
 - Chesil and the Fleet SAC
 - Chesil Beach and the Fleet Ramsar and Marine SPA
 - Dorset Heath SAC, Ramsar and SPA
 - Lyme Bay and Torbay Marine SAC
- 6.3 Impact pathways considered were effects from construction activities (surface runoff), recreational pressure, air quality and water resources and quality.
- 6.4 With regards to water resources and water quality, as the development to be provided by the WNP is in conformity with the overarching West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Adopted Local Plan (2015) (which has been subject to HRA that concluded no adverse effects on integrity), impact pathways relating to increase water demand and water treatment provided by the additional business/housing, that could result in an increase in water abstraction and increased effluent has been addressed at a higher tier level within the West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Adopted Local Plan (2015) and is also addressed at a wider level within the Draft Final Water Resources Management Plan (2018) by Wessex Water who supply and treat water in the Weymouth area. Also, no allocated/proposed developments are within the Chesil and the Fleet catchment so they should not affect nutrient neutrality for that European site. It can therefore be concluded that the Weymouth Neighbourhood Plan will have no significant adverse effects upon Habitats sites.
- 6.5 Air pollution through increases in atmospheric nitrogen deposition has been screened out following Appropriate assessment as any increases in vehicular traffic resulting from the policies is not deemed to be within the zone of influence of the Habitats sites.
- 6.6 In terms of construction activities i.e., surface run off, the Plan has the potential to cause a likely significant effect at the screening stage, however, it is not possible to undertake any further assessment of these effects stemming from these development sites at the Neighbourhood Plan level, as this would require the provision of detailed design and construction details. As such this will be deferred to the individual planning application level and is not appropriate to assess at the Neighbourhood Plan level. This will not provide any deliverability issues as careful planning of the development could potentially ensure that the developments do not affect water quality from runoff or from dust emissions. Policies W23A (Land at Lodmoor Old Tip – North Section), W23B (Lodmoor Old Tip – Mid Section) and W23C (Lodmoor Old Tip – South Section) have been screened out at the LSE stage as posing no likely significant effect because a) the development allocations do not provide details of design and b) the sites were over 1km away from any Habitats Sites.
- 6.7 It was, however, recommended in the February 2024 version of this report that policies W20, W21, W22 and W24 are amended to ensure that the developments are carefully designed and planned to ensure that no adverse effects on the integrity of Habitats sites occur as a result of water pollution stemming from site runoff or dust emissions during construction or the operational stage of each of the developments. Rather than make amends to each policy, the Group has amended Policy W19 to state *'Developments are carefully designed and planned to ensure that no adverse effects on the integrity of Habitats sites occur as a result of water pollution stemming from site run-off or dust emissions during construction or the operational stage of each of the developments.'* That resolves the recommendation.

- 6.8 Policy W42 (Offshore Renewable Energy Projects) has been screened out at the LSE stage as posing no likely significant effect because a) the Neighbourhood Plan Group does not have the authority to permit renewable energy proposals and b) the policy explicitly states that such development will only be supported if there are no significant adverse impacts on the natural undeveloped coastland and that geodiversity and biodiversity is protected.
- 6.9 It has been concluded that the WNP will not affect the integrity of Habitats sites in relation to recreational pressure due to the overarching provisions in the West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Adopted Local Plan (2015) and the emerging Dorset Local Plan with which all new housing in the Neighbourhood Plan will need to comply. In the February 2024 version of this HRA it was recommended that a policy is included within the Neighbourhood Plan which supports the Local Plan policies for the protection of Habitats sites such as *"Any development brought forward must ensure that it can be implemented without any adverse effect upon the integrity of the Habitats sites. Proposals that will adversely affect the integrity of Habitats sites will not be supported."* The following text has since been inserted into Policy W16 in the WNP: *'To mitigate adverse effects on the integrity of the Chesil Beach & The Fleet SAC regarding in-combination recreational pressure, any development proposals that provide for a net increase in the population must make adequate financial payments in accordance with the interim mitigation strategy for the SAC. A financial tariff will be required for all such proposals within 5km of the Habitats site, in line with Natural England advice. This policy aligns with the aims of Policy ENV2 of the adopted Local Plan, which centres on the protection of Habitats sites.'*
- 6.10 Having assessed the final version of the Neighbourhood Plan, it can be concluded that the Plan document will not result in an adverse effect on the integrity of any Habitats sites either alone or in combination.

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

Conservation Objectives³⁹

- 6.11 With regard to the SAC and the natural habitats and/or species for which the site has been designated (the 'Qualifying Features' listed below), and subject to natural change;
- 6.12 Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring;
- The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats,
 - The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats, and
 - The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats rely.

Qualifying Features

- 6.13 The reason for the designation of the SAC is for the following features⁴⁰.
- 6.14 Annex I habitats that are a primary reason for selection of this site:
- Coastal lagoons,
 - Annual vegetation of drift lines,
 - Perennial vegetation of stony banks,
 - Atlantic salt meadows (*Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima*).
- 6.15 Mediterranean and thermos-Atlantic scrubs (*Sarcocornetea fruticosi*) Annex I habitats present as a qualifying feature, but not a primary reason for selection of this site.
- Atlantic salt meadows (*Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima*)
- 6.16 The reason for the designation of the SPA is for the following features⁴¹.
- 6.17 Bird species referred to in Article 4 of Directive 2009/147/EC and listed in Annex II of Directive 92/43/EEC:
- Little Tern (*Sterna albifrons*)
 - Wigeon (*Anas penelope*)
- 6.18 The reason for the designation of the Ramsar is for the following features⁴².
- 6.19 **Criterion 1** - The Fleet is an outstanding example of rare lagoon habitat and is the largest of its kind in the UK. In Europe lagoons are classified as a priority habitat by the EC Habitats and Species Directive. The site also supports rare saltmarsh habitats.
- 6.20 **Criterion 2** - The Fleet supports 15 specialist lagoonal species – more than any other UK site – and five nationally scarce wetland plants as well as ten nationally scarce wetland animals. Chesil Bank is one of the most important UK sites for shingle habitats and species.
- 6.21 **Criterion 3** - The site is the largest barrier-built saline lagoon in the UK and has the greatest diversity of habitats and of biota.

³⁹ <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6443620974460928> [Accessed 27 October 2023]

⁴⁰ <https://sac.jncc.gov.uk/site/UK0017076> [Accessed 27 October 2023]

⁴¹ <https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/file/5788690001428480> [Accessed 27 October 2023]

⁴² <https://jncc.gov.uk/jncc-assets/RIS/UK11012.pdf> [Accessed 27 October 2023]

- 6.22 **Criterion 4** - The site is important for a number of species at a critical stage in their life cycle including post-larval and juvenile bass *Dicentrarchus labrax*.
- 6.23 **Criterion 6** – Species/populations occurring at levels of international importance.
- 6.24 Bird species referred to in Article 4 of Directive 2009/147/EC and listed in Annex II of Directive 92/43/EEC:
- 6.25 Qualifying species/population (as identified at designation)
- 6.26 Species with peak counts in winter:
- Dark bellied brent goose – 1460 individuals representing an average of 1.4% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1998/9 – 2002/3).
- 6.27 Species/populations identified subsequent to designation for possible future consideration under Criterion 6
- Mute swan – 1169 individuals representing an average of 3.1% of the population (5 year peak mean 1998/9 – 2002/3)
- 6.28 **Criterion 8** – The site is important as a nursery for bass *Dicentrarchus labrax*.

Environmental Vulnerabilities⁴³

- 6.29 Natural England's Site Improvement Plan identifies the following threats and pressure for the integrity of the SAC & SPA:
- Water Pollution
 - Changes in species distributions
 - Public Access/Disturbance
 - Fisheries: Commercial marine and estuarine
 - Invasive species
 - Natural changes to site conditions
 - Air Pollution: risk of atmospheric nitrogen deposition
 - Inappropriate coastal management

Crookhills Brick Pit SAC

Introduction

- 6.30 Crookhill Brickpit is a disused brickpit which has important geological features (exposure of Lower and Middle Oxford Clay). The site contains several ponds that support Great crested newts *Triturus cristatus*, including one pond which has been recorded to have one of the highest counts of the species in Dorset. The site also contains a variety of habitats used by great crested newts in the terrestrial phase, including grassland, scrub and quarry spoil.

Conservation Objectives⁴⁴

- 6.31 With regard to the SAC and the natural habitats and/or species for which the site has been designated (the 'Qualifying Features' listed below), and subject to natural change;
- 6.32 Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring;

⁴³ <https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5436996537286656> [Accessed 27 October 2023]

⁴⁴ <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5649075949010944> [Accessed 27 October 2023]

- The extent and distribution of the habitats of qualifying species,
- The structure and function of the habitats of qualifying species,
- The supporting processes on which the habitats of qualifying species rely,
- The populations of qualifying species, and,
- The distribution of qualifying species within the site.

Qualifying Features⁴⁵

6.33 The reason for the designation of the SAC is for the following feature.

6.34 Annex II species:

- Great crested newt *Triturus cristatus*

Environmental Vulnerabilities⁴⁶

6.35 Natural England's Site Improvement Plan identifies the following threats and pressure for the integrity of the SAC:

- Change in land management.

Dorset Heathlands SAC, SPA and Ramsar

Introduction⁴⁷

6.36 The Dorset Heathlands are an extensive network of lowland heath within south east Dorset that are recognised for their national and international importance for nature conservation. Evidence shows that the Dorset Heathlands are under significant pressure from an increasing number of people living nearby. As population grows, urbanising impacts from human pressures and damage caused by domestic pets have the potential to cause ongoing adverse effects on the protected habitats and species.

Conservation Objectives⁴⁸

6.37 With regard to the SAC and the natural habitats and/or species for which the site has been designated (the 'Qualifying Features' listed below), and subject to natural change;

6.38 Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring;

- The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats and habitats of qualifying species,
- The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats,
- The structure and function of the habitats of qualifying species,
- The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats and the habitats of qualifying species rely,
- The populations of qualifying species, and
- The distribution of qualifying species within the site.

⁴⁵ <https://sac.jncc.gov.uk/site/UK0030349> [Accessed 27 October 2023]

⁴⁶ <https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6640766080253952> [Accessed 27 October 2023]

⁴⁷ [The Dorset Heathlands Planning Framework 2020-2025](https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5808199001178112) [Accessed 27 October 2023]

⁴⁸ <https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5808199001178112> [Accessed 27 October 2023]

Qualifying Features

- 6.39 The reason for the designation of the SAC is for the following features⁴⁹.
- 6.40 Annex I habitats that are a primary reason for selection of this site:
- Northern Atlantic wet heaths with *Erica tetralix*
 - European Dry Heaths
 - Depressions on Peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion
- 6.41 Annex I habitats present as a qualifying feature, but not a primary reason for selection of this site
- Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (*Molinia caerulea*)
 - Calcareous fens with *Cladium mariscus* and species of the *Caricion davallianae* (Priority feature)
 - Alkaline fens
 - Old acidophilous oak woods with *Quercus robur* on sandy plains
- 6.42 The reason for the designation of the SPA is for the following features⁵⁰.
- 6.43 Bird species referred to in Article 4 of Directive 2009/147/EC and listed in Annex I of Directive 92/43/EEC:
- Dartford Warbler (*Sylvia undata*)
 - Nightjar (*Caprimulgus europaeus*)
 - Woodlark (*Lullula arborea*)
 - Hen harrier (*Circus cyaneus*)
 - Merlin (*Falco columbarius*)
- 6.44 The reason for the designation of the Ramsar is for the following features⁵¹.
- 6.45 **Criterion 1** – Contains particularly good examples of (i) northern Atlantic wet heaths with cross-leaved *Erica tetralix* and (ii) acid mire with *Rhynchosporion*. Contains largest example in Britain of southern Atlantic wet heaths with Dorset heath *Erica ciliaris* and cross-leaved *Erica tetralix*.
- 6.46 **Criterion 2** – Supports one nationally rare and 13 nationally scarce wetland plant species, and at least 28 nationally rare invertebrate species. Has a high species richness and high ecological diversity of wetland habitat types and transitions, and lies in one of the most biologically rich wetland areas of lowland Britain being continuous with three other Ramsar sites: Poole Harbour, Avon Valley and the New Forest.

Environmental Vulnerabilities⁵²

- 6.47 Natural England's Site Improvement Plan identifies the following threats and pressure for the integrity of the SAC & SPA:
- Inappropriate scrub control
 - Public Access/Disturbance
 - Undergrazing
 - Forestry and woodland management
 - Drainage
 - Water pollution

⁴⁹ <https://sac.jncc.gov.uk/site/UK0019857> [Accessed 27 Oct 2023]

⁵⁰ <https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/file/6091374382284800> [Accessed 27 Oct 2023]

⁵¹ <https://rsis.ramsar.org/RSapp/files/RSrep/GB964RIS.pdf> [Accessed 27 Oct 2023]

⁵² <https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5181909839642624> [Accessed 27 Oct 2023]

- Invasive species
- Habitat fragmentation
- Conflicting conservation objectives
- Wildfire/ arson
- Air pollution: impact of atmospheric nitrogen deposition
- Deer

Isle of Portland to Studland Cliffs SAC

Introduction

6.48 Isle of Portland to Studland Cliffs, including the detached peninsula of Portland, with St Albans Head to Durlston Head, forms a single unit of cliffed coastline around 40 km in length. The cliffs are composed of hard Jurassic limestones, with chalk at the eastern end, interspersed with slumped sections of soft cliff made up of sands and clays. The cliffs support species-rich calcareous grassland that host species such as wild cabbage *Brassica oleracea var. oleracea* and early spider-orchid *Ophrys sphegodes*, which are rare in the UK.

Conservation Objectives⁵³

- 6.49 With regard to the SAC and the natural habitats and/or species for which the site has been designated (the 'Qualifying Features' listed below), and subject to natural change;
- 6.50 Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring;
- The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats and habitats of qualifying species
 - The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats
 - The structure and function of the habitats of qualifying species
 - The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats and the habitats of qualifying species rely
 - The populations of qualifying species, and,
 - The distribution of qualifying species within the site.

Qualifying Features⁵⁴

- 6.51 The reason for the designation of the SAC is for the following features.
- 6.52 Annex I habitats that are a primary reason for selection of this site:
- Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic Coasts
 - Semi-natural dry grassland and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (*Fesuco-Brometalia*) (important orchid sites)
- 6.53 Annex I habitats present as a qualifying feature, but not a primary reason for selection of this site:
- Annual vegetation of drift lines
- 6.54 Annex II species that are a primary reason for selection of this site:
- Early gentian *Gentianella anglica*

⁵³ <https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5124023511941120> [Accessed 23 October 2023]

⁵⁴ <https://sac.incc.gov.uk/site/UK0019861> [Accessed 23 October 2023]

Environmental Vulnerabilities⁵⁵

6.55 Natural England's Site Improvement Plan identifies the following threats and pressure for the integrity of the SAC:

- Undergrazing
- Inappropriate scrub control
- Invasive species
- Agricultural management practices
- Public Access/Disturbance
- Water Pollution
- Habitat fragmentation
- Inappropriate coastal management
- Natural changes to site conditions
- Managed rotational burning

Studland to Portland SAC (Marine)

Introduction

6.56 This site lies off the south coast of Dorset and contains numerous areas of reef in many forms, which exhibit a large amount of geological variety and biological diversity. Features of particular interest within the Studland Bay to Ringstead Bay area include a series of limestone ledges (up to 15m across) protruding from shelly gravel at Worbarrow Bay, which support a rich sponge and sea fan community; dense brittlestar beds (*Ophiothrix fragilis*) on shale reefs extending from Kimmeridge; a unique reef feature, known as St Albans ledge, extending out over 10km offshore and subject to strong tidal action; and an area of large limestone blocks known as the "seabed caves". The Portland Reefs are characterised by flat bedrock, limestone ledges (Portland stone), large boulders and cobbles. On the western side of Portland Bill, rugged limestone boulders provide deep gullies and overhangs. Mussel beds (*Mytilus edulis*) are found to occur in very high densities on bedrock associated with strong currents to the southeast of Portland Bill.

Conservation Objectives⁵⁶

6.57 With regard to the SAC and the natural habitats and/or species for which the site has been designated (the 'Qualifying Features' listed below), and subject to natural change;

6.58 Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring;

- The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats
- The structure and function (including typical species of qualifying natural habitats, and
- The supporting processes on which the qualifying natural habitats rely

Qualifying Features⁵⁷

6.59 The reason for the designation of the SAC is for the following features.

6.60 Annex I habitats that are a primary reason for selection of this site:

⁵⁵ <https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/file/5037990040567808> [Accessed 23 October 2023]

⁵⁶ <https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6554772136001536> [Accessed 23 October 2023]

⁵⁷ <https://sac.incc.gov.uk/site/UK0030382> [Accessed 23 October 2023]

- Reefs

Environmental Vulnerabilities⁵⁸

6.61 Natural England's Site Improvement Plan identifies the following threats and pressure for the integrity of the SAC:

- Fisheries: Commercial marine and estuarine

Lyme Bay and Torbay SAC (Marine)

Introduction

6.62 This site is situated mostly within the Western English Channel and Celtic Regional Sea and lies off the south coast of England off the counties of Dorset and Devon. The site comprises of two main areas containing Annex I 'reef' and 'sea cave' habitat. The reef features extend over a large area. Unlike other sites within the Lyme Bay and Torbay site, they do not extend directly out from the coast but occur as outcropping bedrock slightly offshore. The softer sediment habitats are commonly found between the bedrock or cobble / boulder areas. Examples of the classical wave-eroded sea caves are found at all the sites of different levels and rock types.

Conservation Objectives⁵⁹

6.63 With regard to the SAC and the natural habitats and/or species for which the site has been designated (the 'Qualifying Features' listed below), and subject to natural change;

6.64 Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring;

- The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats
- The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats, and
- The supporting processes on which the qualifying natural habitats rely

Qualifying Features⁶⁰

6.65 The reason for the designation of the SAC is for the following features.

6.66 Annex 1 habitats that are a primary reason for selection of this site:

- Reefs
- Submerged or partially submerged sea caves

Environmental Vulnerabilities⁶¹

6.67 Natural England's Site Improvement Plan identifies the following threats and pressure for the integrity of the SAC:

- Fisheries: Commercial marine and estuarine
- Public Access/Disturbance

⁵⁸ <https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6460646937853952> [Accessed 23 October 2023]

⁵⁹ <https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/4715163420721152> [Accessed 23 October 2023]

⁶⁰ <https://sac.jncc.gov.uk/site/UK0030372> [Accessed 23 October 2023]

⁶¹ <https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5932217985400832> [Accessed 23 October 2023]

Appendix B Screening for Likely Significant Effects

Policy Number & Name	Policy Text	Test of likely Significant Effects (Alone)	Test of Likely Significant Effects (In Combination)
Policy W01: Shoreline Protection	Development proposals, specifically to prevent coastal erosion or flooding, and protect property and businesses, in areas designated by the South Devon and Dorset Shoreline Management Plan to be protected ('hold the line') will be supported.	No Likely Significant Effects. This policy is supporting the existing South Devon and Dorset Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) ⁶² . Policy W01 does not introduce new actions or proposals beyond the scope of the SMP. Overall, this policy will not result in LSEs on Habitats sites and is screened out from AA.	
Policy W02: Conservation of the Natural Environment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Areas of benefit to nature and geological conservation, such as country parks, nature parks and reserves must be retained and protected from detrimental negative impacts likely to arise from development. 2. Any development brought forward must ensure that it can be implemented without adverse effect upon the integrity of the Habitats sites. Proposals that will adversely affect the integrity of Habitats will not be supported. 3. Support is given to the recognition of wildlife areas at Wey Valley Watermeadows on land shown on Map 7. 	No Likely Significant Effects. This policy confirms the protection of areas of nature conservation and Habitats Sites from adverse impacts arising from development. This policy also seeks to recognise other wildlife areas including the Wey Valley Water meadows. This policy does not allocate any residential or employment development with linking impact pathways to Habitats sites. Overall, this policy will not result in LSEs on Habitats sites and is screened out from AA.	
Policy W03: Wildlife Habitats and Areas	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Development proposals that are likely to have a significant adverse effect on the integrity of habitats of local and national importance and the wild flora and fauna in those areas that form part of the ecological network will not be supported unless unavoidable due to exceptional circumstances and the proposed mitigation measures are proportionate to the status of the site and satisfy the requirements of the local planning authority. 2. Where impacts to biodiversity are identified, proposals must apply the 	No Likely Significant Effects. This policy confirms protection of wildlife habitats and areas and complements the local plan policy ENV2. This policy does not allocate any residential or employment development with linking impact pathways to Habitats sites. Overall, this policy will not result in LSEs on Habitats sites and is screened out from AA.	

⁶² <https://www.dors-etcouncil.gov.uk/countryside-coast-parks/beaches-and-coast/coastal-protection-and-management/shoreline-management-plans.aspx> [Accessed 23 October 2023]

	<p>mitigation hierarchy and do everything possible to firstly avoid then to minimise impacts. Compensation measures will be permissible as a last resort only.</p> <p>3. Proposals to protect or restore any existing features, or to create new features of wildlife habitat – particularly where these form linkages between habitats within or beyond the site will be encouraged and supported.</p>
<p>Policy W04: Wildlife Corridors</p>	<p>1. All development proposals impacting the areas recognised as Wildlife Corridors on Map 9 should meet the requirements of the Dorset Biodiversity Appraisal Protocol.</p> <p>2. Wherever appropriate, development proposals should demonstrate they take the opportunity to enhance and extend the network of Wildlife Corridors as a means of mitigating development impact with a focus on increasing biodiversity, wildlife value and general amenity value of these corridors.</p> <p>3. Where wildlife corridors are disrupted as an unavoidable consequence of adjacent or nearby development, developers will be required to minimise the impact and to carry out remedial action in accordance with a scheme agreed with the Local Planning Authority.</p>
<p>Policy W05: Ecological Impact of Development</p>	<p>1. Development proposals should comply with national legislation and the requirements of the Local Planning Authority and, unless statutorily exempt, must contribute to the enhancement of the natural environment by providing for a substantial biodiversity net gain.</p> <p>2. All development proposals should consider potential ecological impacts at an early stage in their design consistent with best practice guidance and identify an array of suitable habitats and other measures (e.g. bat tiles, swift bricks, bird boxes, retention of hedges and other heritage boundaries, green roofs, rainwater</p>

	gardens etc) to be included in development.	
Policy W06: Trees, Woodlands, and Hedgerows	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Development proposals should avoid the loss of or damage to trees, woodland, orchards, or hedgerows that contribute positively to the character, biodiversity, and amenity of an area. 2. Development proposals which could result in loss or damage to ancient, protected, or veteran trees will not be supported. 3. Where loss or damage to trees, woodland, orchards, or hedgerows is unavoidable, development proposals must provide for appropriate replacement planting on the site with an indigenous species along with a method statement for the ongoing care and maintenance of that planting. The planting of new trees and hedgerows on the same basis will be supported. 4. Replacement planting should at least be on a two-for-one basis, adopt a 'right tree right place' approach and demonstrably increase the canopy cover on site consistent with an overall objective of a minimum 15% canopy cover over the plan period. 	<p>No Likely Significant Effects.</p> <p>This policy outlines protection for trees, woodlands and hedgerows. It outlines the expectations placed upon developers in this respect.</p> <p>This policy does not allocate any residential or employment development with linking impact pathways to Habitats sites.</p> <p>Overall, this policy will not result in LSEs on Habitats sites and is screened out from AA.</p>
Policy W07: Rights of Way, and Access to the Countryside	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rights of way and other non-vehicular public access routes should be protected. Proposals for improvements or extensions to those that exist will be supported where there is no adverse or harmful impact on biodiversity. 2. New developments must ensure that existing footpaths, bridleways, cycleways and other rights of way are retained, or that any diversion would not result in an adverse impact on biodiversity, residential amenity, or the safety of the public. 3. Opportunities to connect major new developments via footpath, bridleway and cycleway links to the network of countryside and coastline footpaths should be maximised. 	<p>No Likely Significant Effects.</p> <p>This policy outlines protection for existing footpaths, rights of way and bridleways. It provides broad support for new footpaths and trails, however only where there is no adverse impact on Habitats sites.</p> <p>This policy does not allocate any sites for development.</p> <p>Overall, this policy will not result in LSEs on Habitats sites and is screened out from AA.</p>

<p>Policy W08: Coastal Green Recreation Areas</p>	<p>Coastal recreation areas shown on Map 10 are protected from development for purposes of public recreational access and enjoyment unless it is for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. coastal defence purposes; or ii. for the improvement or extension of an existing built facility; or iii. the provision of an additional unobtrusive small-scale public facility; or iv. improved accessibility; or v. enhanced recreation opportunities of an appropriate scale and nature; and vi. enhances the quality and appearance of the built environment in relation to the coastal landscape and seascape. 	<p>No Likely Significant Effects.</p> <p>This policy outlines protection for coastal recreation areas and describes circumstances which may lead to exceptions to this.</p> <p>This policy does not allocate any residential or employment development with linking impact pathways to Habitats sites.</p> <p>Overall, this policy will not result in LSEs on Habitats sites and is screened out from AA.</p>
<p>Policy W09: Green Gaps</p>	<p>1.The areas (shown on Map 11) are fundamental to retaining and protecting the special character and setting of settlement areas and preventing coalescence (the joining or merging of elements to form one mass).</p> <p>2.Development proposals in the designated green gaps will not be supported unless it can be demonstrated that the development is for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. measures to prevent flooding; or, ii. improvements to access to the countryside; or iii. enhancement of recreation activities; or, iv. for essential agricultural uses to enhance food production. <p>3.Development should not compromise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. the visual openness and landscape character of the gap; or ii. the character or setting of important local heritage assets. 	<p>No Likely Significant Effects.</p> <p>This policy outlines protection for Green Gaps and describes circumstances leading to exceptions to this.</p> <p>This policy does not allocate any residential or employment development with linking impact pathways to Habitats sites.</p> <p>Overall, this policy will not result in LSEs on Habitats sites and is screened out from AA.</p>
<p>Policy W10: Local Green Space</p>	<p>The areas listed in Schedule 1 of the Neighbourhood Plan are designated 'Local Green Spaces' and are protected from new development unless minor and ancillary to their existing use, or 'very special circumstances' can be demonstrated.</p>	<p>No Likely Significant Effects.</p> <p>This policy outlines protection for Local Green Spaces and describes circumstances leading to exceptions to this.</p> <p>This policy does not allocate any residential or employment development with linking impact pathways to Habitats sites.</p> <p>Overall, this policy will not result in LSEs on Habitats sites and is screened out from AA.</p>
<p>Policy W11: Incidental Open Space</p>	<p>Areas of incidental open space in residential areas that were designed as part of the layout to contribute to local amenity, character and/or</p>	<p>No Likely Significant Effects.</p>

<p>green infrastructure should be protected from development except where:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. new and appropriate alternative provision can be demonstrated to compensate for localised loss of public amenity and community wellbeing; or, ii. it can be demonstrated that any damage to green infrastructure and/or local character can be satisfactorily mitigated, or the existing situation enhanced. 	<p>This policy outlines protection for Incidental Open Space and describes circumstances leading to exceptions to this.</p> <p>This policy does not allocate any residential or employment development with linking impact pathways to Habitats sites.</p> <p>Overall, this policy will not result in LSEs on Habitats sites and is screened out from AA.</p>
<p>Policy W12: Riversides</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Development proposals to further safe and responsible access and recreation and tourism activity alongside the waterways shown on Map 15 will be supported if they conform with the NPPF requirements for development in higher flood risk areas. 2. Development proposals should take full account of natural river processes, and the ability for maintenance of the watercourse, including for flood risk management purposes. 3. Development proposals should be accompanied by a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment. 4. Development proposals should be consistent with the Environmental Objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan. 	<p>No Likely Significant Effects.</p> <p>This policy describes support for recreational use of rivers. This may have an impact on sites which are vulnerable to increased recreational pressure. However, the policy does not allocate any sites for development and so no impacts on Habitats sites can be determined.</p> <p>Programmes which potentially increase recreational pressure on Habitats sites should be further assessed at the programme level.</p> <p>Overall, this policy will not result in LSEs on Habitats sites and is screened out from AA.</p>
<p>Policy W13: Panoramas, Vistas and Views</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Development proposals should respect important public panorama, vistas, and views. Development proposals likely to impact on the area's important panoramas, vistas, and views, shown on Map 15A to 15F inclusive and defined in the text in Table Y. 2. Development proposals likely to impact on the area's important panoramas, vistas, and views, should demonstrate due regard to the local design guidance whenever available. 	<p>No Likely Significant Effects.</p> <p>This policy outlines protection for panoramas, vistas and views in the neighbourhood area.</p> <p>This policy does not allocate any residential or employment development with linking impact pathways to Habitats sites.</p> <p>Overall, this policy will not result in LSEs on Habitats sites and is screened out from AA.</p>
<p>Policy W14: Development Boundaries</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Development on brownfield sites within the defined development boundary, shall be prioritised in the development plan. 	<p>No Likely Significant Effects.</p> <p>This policy merely defines the boundaries of where development within Weymouth will be supported. The</p>

	<p>2. Development proposals will be supported within the defined development boundaries subject to alignment with the strategic environmental objectives and targets of the Neighbourhood Plan and conformity with relevant policies in the development plan.</p> <p>3. Outside of the defined development boundaries, development should be strictly controlled to safeguard the unique character, natural beauty, agricultural value, and environmental significance of countryside areas with the neighbourhood area.</p>
<p>Policy W15: Extensions and Alterations</p>	<p>1. Extensions, and alterations to a building that require planning consent, should be designed to the highest sustainability standards and reflect the character of nearby buildings and their setting. This will require particular attention to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. the choice of materials ii. the scale of development including roof heights, and iii. layout within the plot <p>2. Measures to improve the sustainability of a building, including retrofitting to increase its energy efficiency and the appropriate use of micro-renewables, are encouraged.</p> <p>3. Proposals should demonstrate due regard for the design guidance relating to the location of the development.</p>
<p>Policy W16: Major Housing Sites</p>	<p>1. In the interests of ensuring that the development of major housing sites in the neighbourhood area meets the needs of the communities and contribute significantly to increasing community resilience, their development should provide for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. a minimum of 10% dwellings that satisfy Lifetime Home Standards; ii. adequate secure storage cycles, children's buggies, and mobility scooters where appropriate; iii. adequate storage facilities for refuse and recycling including communal storage provision where appropriate;

- iv. sufficient open space, including private gardens, play areas, multi-functional public amenity and community space to satisfy Dorset Council's standards of provision, and integrated into the development;
 - v. community orchards and communal allotment space where demand and opportunity exists.
 - vi. parking and servicing provision with adequate EV charging points, which as a minimum should be in accordance with the standards adopted by the local planning authority;
 - vii. a legible street network, where applicable, which links the residential properties with services and facilities such as community building, recreation space and allotments;
 - viii. off-street resident and visitor parking and servicing provision with EV charging facilities which, as a minimum, should be in accordance with the standards adopted by the local planning authority;
 - ix. safe footpaths and cycle routes throughout the development, with relevant links, wherever possible, to the wider network;
 - x. natural surveillance of public spaces, safe footpaths and cycle ways and parking areas;
 - xi. satisfactory street lighting, designed with pedestrian safety and minimum light spoilage and pollution in mind; and
 - xii. a district heating scheme using renewable energy sources, where practical and viable.
2. Development proposals should take account of the concept of 'Walkable Neighbourhoods' and include links to new or existing community facilities that will promote walking, cycling and sustainable transport.
3. Where appropriate, application should be accompanied by an appropriate landscape and visual impact assessment, a site-specific flood risk assessment, detailed drainage proposals, a transport impact assessment and travel plan, a noise assessment and an archaeological assessment, to demonstrate that the development is acceptable or to provide appropriate mitigation measures.
4. A Drainage Impact Assessment will be required for all new development with potentially significant surface run off implications.
5. To mitigate adverse effects on the integrity of the Chesil Beach & The Fleet SAC regarding in-combination recreational pressure, any development proposals that provide for a net increase in the population must make adequate financial payments in accordance with the

interim mitigation strategy for the SAC. A financial tariff will be required for all such proposals within 5km of the European site, in line with Natural England advice. This policy aligns with the aims of Policy ENV2 of the adopted Local Plan, which centres on the protection of Habitats sites.

Policy W17: Housing Mix	New residential development should provide or contribute to a mix of housing tenure types and sizes to help maintain mixed, balanced and inclusive communities within the neighbourhood plan area. The proposed housing mixes on major sites should be based on an up-to-date local housing needs analysis.	<p>No Likely Significant Effects.</p> <p>This policy describes the expectations of Weymouth Town Council with regard to housing mix. It does not, in itself lead to any development.</p> <p>This policy does not allocate any sites for development.</p> <p>Overall, this policy will not result in LSEs on Habitats sites and is screened out from AA.</p>
Policy W18: Affordable Housing	<p>1. Weymouth Town Council is committed to maximising the provision of dwellings that are affordable and accessible to local people over the plan period.</p> <p>2. Proposals for housing and mixed-use developments, other than replacement dwellings, within the defined development area boundaries that result in a net increase of ten or more units or sites greater than 0.5 ha will be subject to the following criteria:</p> <p>i. the proposals meet the minimum target of at least 35% affordable housing on brownfield sites and at least 50% on greenfield sites unless a Financial Viability Assessment or other material consideration demonstrates a robust justification for a different percentage.</p> <p>ii. affordable housing should be provided on the same site as any open market housing which is necessary to provide cross subsidy (except where clause iv. applies);</p> <p>iii. the dwellings will be occupied by people with a local connection in housing need in accordance with a Weymouth Local Connections Policy;</p> <p>iv. where the Local Planning Authority consider that the provision of affordable housing on the proposed site is not viable, deliverable, or practical, consideration may be given to accepting a financial contribution in lieu of on-site provision. Any off-site contributions will be broadly equivalent in value to the cost of on-site provision. Developers' contributions will be broadly equivalent in value to the cost of on-site provision. Developers' contributions for affordable housing should be committed to specific schemes within the neighbourhood</p>	<p>No Likely Significant Effects.</p> <p>This policy describes the expectations of Weymouth Town Council with regards to affordable housing. It does not, in itself lead to any development.</p> <p>This policy does not allocate any residential or employment development with linking impact pathways to Habitats sites.</p> <p>Overall, this policy will not result in LSEs on Habitats sites and is screened out from AA.</p>

area and secured through a planning obligation.

3. Any affordable housing provision should demonstrate the following;

i. a tenure target of approximately 70% affordable and social rented homes and 30% intermediate housing for sale, which should include 25% First Homes in accordance with Government requirements;

ii. the type and size mix of affordable dwellings must reflect identified local needs as evidenced through the Dorset housing register or other specific local surveys;

iii. affordable homes should not be readily differentiated from the open market homes by their design, quality, location, and distribution within a site.

4. Affordable housing should be provided in perpetuity, (in accordance with the most up-to date Government policy), for example, through a Community Land Trust, section 106 agreements, other community housing scheme or Registered Provider which retains stock for the benefit of the local community at an accessible cost.

5. Proposals for housing and mixed-use developments that result in between 2 and 9 units on sites less than 0.5ha will commute a sum, proportionate to 35% Affordable Homes to the Local Authority for development of Affordable Housing in the Weymouth area.

Policy W19: The following sites are allocation as allocated on Map 20 and defined in Table B and specified within the detailed Allocation Policies:

W20: Land at Wyke Oliver Farm North - Mixed Residential

W21: Land at Redlands Farm - Mixed Residential

W22: Land off Beverley Road - Mixed Residential

W23A: Lodmoor Old Tip North - Employment

W29B: Lodmoor Old Tip Mid - Leisure

W29C: Lodmoor Old Tip South - Leisure

No Likely Significant Effects.

This policy describes the requirement for proposals to satisfy criteria set out in the WNP and to conform to other policies within the WNP.

Although sites are allocated within this policy, details of the builds are not provided. Assessment of the LSEs (both alone and in combination) are therefore conducted for policies W20 to W25 which deal with the specifics of each allocation.

Overall, this policy will not result in LSEs on Habitats sites and is screened out from AA.

<p>W24: Land at Jubilee Sidings – Employment / Training & Housing</p> <p>W25: Mount Pleasant Old Tip - Transport</p> <p>2. Support for development proposals on each of the allocated sites will be subject to them satisfying the criteria set out in their respective Neighbourhood Plan policy and conforming to other policies in the Neighbourhood plan.</p>	
<p>Policy W20: Land at Wyke Oliver Farm North</p> <p>1. Land at Wyke Oliver Farm North as defined on Mapp 21 is allocated for residential development of around 250 dwellings</p> <p>2. Affordable housing provision should form 50% of every completed stage of the development and comprise a mix of sizes, types and tenures as agreed with Dorset Council.</p> <p>3. Development should in accordance with a comprehensive masterplan, agreed with the local planning authority, which demonstrates a fully integrated and co-ordinated development of around 250 dwellings during the plan period that accords with the policies in the development plan.</p> <p>4. Development proposals should conform with relevant policies in the Neighbourhood Plan and satisfactorily address the following criteria;</p> <p>i. the retention of hedgerows and provision of landscaping including, tree-lined roads and pathways, to minimise any visual impact on the setting and local landscape character;</p> <p>ii. suitable boundary treatment, consistent with the character of the area, to adequately screen the new dwellings from existing neighbouring residential properties;</p> <p>iii. measures to ensure the development does not contribute to, or suffer from, adverse impacts arising from land stability;</p> <p>iv. a drainage regime that minimises flood risk and the impact of the development on local water courses.</p> <p>v. provision of appropriate safe vehicular and pedestrian access via Wyke Oliver Road to the satisfaction of the local highway authority;</p> <p>vi. provision of a community focus agreed with the Local Planning Authority;</p> <p>vii. Improved public access to Lorton Valley Nature Park;</p>	<p>Potential Likely Significant Effects alone</p> <p>Potential Likely Significant Effect in-combination</p> <p>This policy allocates approx. 250 dwellings on the Land at Wyke Oliver Farm North. This area is around 6 km from Chesil & The Fleet SAC, SPA and Ramsar site, and 1 km from the Isle of Portland to Studland Cliffs SAC. This development could impact this site through the following impact pathways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recreational pressure • Water quality and Water Resources <p>following impact pathways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water quality (run off) <p>In addition to potential effects alone, the policy may cause an effect on Habitats sites through the following impact pathways in-combination with other plans, projects and policies:</p>

viii. alignment with the environmental objectives and targets of the Neighbourhood Plan; and

ix. demonstrate through a Transport Assessment and Plan that the surrounding roads and the main road has capacity for around an additional 250 homes.

5. The remaining area of land shown on Map 20 is allocated as land for nature conservation. Ownership of an area of 23ha of land shall be transferred to a suitable organisation such as Dorset Wildlife Trust which will manage the site to enhance its ecological value and for recreational access as part of the Lorton Vally Nature Park. The transfer of land will be accompanied with a commuted sum to cover initial capital costs and long term future maintenance.

<p>Policy W21: Land at Redlands Farm</p>	<p>1. Land at Redlands Farm as defined on Map 22 allocated for residential development of around 150 dwelling.</p> <p>2. Affordable housing provision should form 50% of every completed stage of the development and comprise a mix of sizes, types and tenures as agreed with Dorset Council;</p> <p>3. Development should be in accordance with a comprehensive masterplan, agreed with the local planning authority, which demonstrates a fully integrated and co-ordinated development that accords with the policies in the development plan.</p> <p>4. Development proposals should conform with relevant policies in the Neighbourhood Plan and a comprehensive proposal addressing all the following criteria;</p> <p>i. the retention of hedgerows and provision of landscaping including, tree-lined roads and pathways, to minimise any visual impact on the setting and local landscape character;</p> <p>ii. suitable boundary treatment consistent with the character of the area, to adequately screen the new dwellings from existing neighbouring residential properties;</p> <p>iii. the height of dwellings should mostly be no more than two storeys in height, rising to a maximum scale of three storeys only occasionally, and should protect and enhance the setting of the nearby conservation area and sufficiently lower than the western ridge line, so as not to be visible from the Wey Valley;</p>	<p>Potential Likely Significant Effects alone</p>	<p>Potential Likely Significant Effect in-combination</p>
		<p>This policy allocates approx. 150 dwellings on the Land at Redlands Farm. This area is around 3.7 km from Chesil & The Fleet SAC, SPA and Ramsar Portland to Studland Cliffs SAC. This development could impact this site through the following impact pathways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water quality (run off) 	<p>In addition to potential effects alone, the policy may cause an effect on Habitats sites through the following impact pathways in-combination with other plans, projects and policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air quality • Recreational pressure • Water quality and Water Resources

iv. provision of appropriate safe vehicular and pedestrian access to the satisfaction of the local highway authority;

v. a legible street network, which links the residential properties with service and facilities such as community buildings,

vi. the retention of public rights of way across the site;

vii. safe footpaths and cycle routes throughout the development, with relevant links to the wider network and community facilities;

viii. a street lighting scheme designed with pedestrian safety and minimum light spillage and pollution in mind;

ix. off-street resident and visitor vehicle parking provision with EV charging facilities that satisfy the requirements of the local planning authority;

x. provision of play areas, public amenity space and community horticultural space as required to satisfy the LPA's standards of provision and integrated into the development to maximise passive surveillance;

xi. a new major public open space linked to the development to the west of the site,

xii. landscaping measures and a drainage regime that minimise flood risk and mitigates the impact of the development on local water courses;

xiii. any necessary attenuation ponds should form part of the habitat enrichment alongside broad leaf woodland comparable with the nearby coppices, and

xiv. alignment with the environmental objectives and targets of the Neighbourhood Plan.

5. The design and layout of roads should comply with the standards of Dorset Council and provide adequately for the safety of all road users as well as the amenity of residents.

6. The remaining area of land shown on Map 21 is allocated as open space. Ownership of an area of 9.1 ha of land shall be transferred to an appropriate body to provide for public use and nature conservation, along with a commuted sum to cover long-term future maintenance.

Policy W22: Land off Beverley Road, Littlemoor	1. Land off Beverley Road as defined on Map 22 is allocated for residential development of around 25 dwellings.	Potential Likely Significant Effects alone	Potential Likely Significant Effect in-combination
	<p>2. Development proposals for residential use will be supported where the development conforms with other relevant policies in the Neighbourhood Plan and a comprehensive proposal addressing all the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. alignment with the height and form of the nearby housing; ii. the development respects the topography of the site; iii. the retention of the two through routes to Kestrel View, and the bridge over the Weymouth relief road; iv. a landscaping scheme that retains existing trees and provides wildlife corridors across the site; v. well-designed groups of dwellings, located in attractive, inclusive, and secure spaces; vi. landscape planting through the site that connects with the open space to the north and south allowing nature to permeate through the development vii. the proportion of affordable homes shall be 50% minimum as this a greenfield site; ix. alignment with the environmental objectives and targets <p>3. The design and layout of roads should comply with the standards of Dorset Council and provide adequately for the safety of all road users as well as the amenity of residents.</p> <p>4. Proposals should demonstrate, where relevant, that they respect and will cause no significant harm to the archaeology and heritage assets and their setting.</p>	<p>This policy allocates approx. 25 dwellings on the Land at Beverley Road, Littlemoor. This area is around 5.2 km from Chesil & The Fleet SAC, SPA and Ramsar site, and 3.0 km from Portland to Studland Cliffs SAC. This development could impact these sites through the following impact pathways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water quality (run-off) • Recreational pressure • Water quality and Water Resources • Water quality (run-off) 	
<p>Policy W23A: Lodmoor Old Tip – North Section</p>	<p>1. The land forming Lodmoor Old Tip north section as identified in blue on Map 22A is allocated for employment use comprising small light industrial units or workshops.</p> <p>2. Any development should meet the following conditions:</p>	<p>No Likely Significant Effects.</p> <p>This policy allocates a site for development aimed at providing employment use. This policy does not detail what this development would entail, and the site is outside a 1km radius of any Habitats Sites. Due to the lack of specificity for the development proposed, the policy cannot be assessed at this level.</p>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Retain or replace the existing pumping station; ii. Retain or re-route the existing public dual use paths across the site; iii. Conduct appropriate land stability and ground contamination investigations; iv. To reduce the visual impact, the height of development should not exceed 2-storeys; and v. To reduce the impact and to avoid ground disturbance, the height of the development should not exceed one storey. <p>3. Such development should be accompanied by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Flood Risk Assessment, SSSI Impact Assessment, Noise Assessment, Archaeological Assessment and Transport Assessment; and ii. Alignment is demonstrated with the strategic environmental objectives and targets of the Neighbourhood Plan. 	<p>Development at Land at Lodmoor Old Tip North section will need to comply with other policies within this Neighbourhood plan and the Local Plan e.g. Policy ENV2 to ensure no adverse effect on the integrity of Habitats Sites. Any development brought forward would need a project level HRA to ensure compliance, if Habitats sites are to be affected.</p> <p>At detailed design stage it is recommended that as this proposal is developed that it is designed so there is no increase in recreational issues on nearby designated sites.</p>
<p>Policy W23B: Land at Lodmoor Old Tip – Mid-Section</p> <p>The land forming Lodmoor Old Tip mid-section as identified in blue on Map 24B is allocated for leisure in accordance with the LP Policy WEY8.</p>	<p>No Likely Significant Effects.</p> <p>This policy allocates a site for development aimed at providing leisure use. This policy does not detail what this development would entail, and the site is outside a 1km radius of any Habitats Sites. Due to the lack of specificity for the development proposed, the policy cannot be assessed at this level.</p> <p>Development at Land at Lodmoor Old Tip Mid-section will need to comply with other policies within this Neighbourhood plan and the Local Plan e.g. Policy ENV2 to ensure no adverse effect on the integrity of Habitats Sites. Any development brought forward would need a project level HRA to ensure compliance, if Habitats sites are to be affected.</p> <p>It is recommended that as this proposal is developed that it is designed so there is no increase in recreational issues on nearby designated sites.</p>
<p>Policy W23C: Lodmoor Old Tip South Section</p> <p>1. The land forming Lodmoor Old Tip south section, as identified in blue on Map 23C, is allocated for leisure use which accords with LP Policy WEY8.</p> <p>2. Any development should meet the following conditions:</p>	<p>No Likely Significant Effects.</p> <p>This policy allocates a site for development aimed at providing leisure use. This policy does not detail what this development would entail, and the site is outside a 1km radius of any Habitats Sites. Due to the lack of specificity for the development proposed, the policy cannot be assessed at this level.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Retain or re-route the existing public dual use paths across the site; ii. Conduct appropriate land stability and ground contamination investigations; iii. To reduce the visual impact, the height of development should not exceed 2 or 3-storeys; iv. To reduce the potential flood risk, development on the ground floor should not include residential use but could include garages, access or amenities; v. To reduce the impact on the SSSI, the whole development should be buffered by natural planting, including native trees, following the lines of the dykes and northern and eastern boundary; vi. Access to the development should be improved, with appropriate approvals regarding the junction with the Preston Beach Road; vii. Leisure use should be complementary to that provided by the Lodmoor Country Park attractions and the Skate Board Centre and can include Indoor Leisure; and viii. The development should include a compliant level of affordable housing including social housing and provide a high quality design and landscaping. <p>3. Such development should be accompanied by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Flood Risk Assessment, SSSI Impact Assessment, Noise Assessment, Archaeological Assessment and Transport Assessment; and ii. Alignment is demonstrated with the strategic environmental objectives and targets of the Neighbourhood Plan. 	<p>Development at Land at Lodmoor Old Tip South Section will need to comply with other policies within this Neighbourhood plan and the Local Plan e.g. Policy ENV2 to ensure no adverse effect on the integrity of Habitats Sites. Any development brought forward would need a project level HRA to ensure compliance, if Habitats sites are to be affected.</p> <p>It is recommended that as this proposal is developed that it is designed so there is no increase in recreational issues on nearby designated sites.</p>
<p>Policy W24: Land at Jubilee Sidings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The land and buildings at Jubilee Sidings as identified on Map 25 is allocated for mixed use development. 2. The development shall provide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. residential particularly social housing; ii. employment and/or training use by provision of a mixture of workshops, offices, or a skills centre, and/or. 	<p>Potential Likely Significant Effects alone Potential Likely Significant Effect in-combination</p> <p>This policy allocates the Jubilee sidings for mixed-use development. This area is around 3.1 km from Chesil & The Fleet SAC, SPA and Ramsar site, and 3.7 km from Portland to</p> <p>In addition to potential effects alone, the policy may cause an effect on Habitats sites through the following impact pathways in-combination with other plans, projects and policies:</p>

- iii. residential with 100% Affordable Homes.
3. Development proposals will be supported where the development conforms with other relevant policies in the Neighbourhood Plan and a comprehensive proposal addressing all the following criteria:
- i. the scale, massing, height, density and design of a development should be appropriate to its context, including the architecture and materials of nearby buildings and sympathetic to the setting of the town centre;
 - ii. ground floor development and use should recognise the flood risk associated with the site and conform with the standing advice of the Environment Agency for Weymouth Town Centre;
 - iii. the approaches and walkways should be grassed and tree-lined; and
 - iv. the proposals align with the strategic environmental objectives and targets of the Neighbourhood Plan.
4. Any application shall be accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment and Contamination Report to demonstrate that the development is acceptable or to provide appropriate mitigation measures.

Studland Cliffs SAC. This development could impact these sites through the following impact pathways:

- Water quality (run-off)
- Recreational pressure
- Water quality and Water Resources
- Water quality (run-off)

Policy W25: Mount Pleasant Old Tip – Transport Interchange

- 1. Land at Mount Pleasant as identified on Map 26 is allocated for a transport interchange facility, leisure use and renewable energy generation.
- 2. The central part of the site (identified on Map 26) is allocated for a transport interchange hub, including ancillary functions to encourage out-of-town parking, particularly in the peak summer period.
- 3. Development proposals should ensure:
 - i. the height of any development is no more than single storey to reduce visibility impact, and
 - ii. buildings and structures should feature solar PV panels which can power the services and, potentially, the EV recharging points.
- 4. Any business operations should be in keeping with the transport hub use and might include, café, cycle hire, PEV hire, bus depot, vehicle re-charging, over-night camper vans.

No Likely Significant Effects.

This policy gives support for and additional guidance for the development of a new transport interchange.

This is an existing development, not brought forward by this plan and has been previously assessed as part of planning application WP/20/00814/FUL. The main element of this proposal is therefore outside of the scope of this HRA. Further individual elements associated with the scheme will require HRA assessment of specific proposals if they are brought forward.

Overall, this policy will not result in LSEs on Habitats sites and is screened out from AA.

- 5. The surrounding area is a Habitat Restoration Area and is allocated for limited leisure use and renewable energy generation.
- 6. Development proposals should ensure:
 - i. landscaping is sufficient to minimise the visual impact on its setting;
 - ii. the character and biodiversity of the nearby SSSI is protected and enhanced;
 - iii. wherever possible, buildings and structures feature solar PV panels; and
 - iv. leisure facilities should enhance all-year round tourism in the area;
 - v. development in the surrounding area is agreed with the managers of the Habitat Restoration Area (Dorset Willdlife Trust);
 - vi. the running track in the overflow car park is retained or an equivalent capability is provided nearby.
- 7. Development proposals should demonstrate alignment with the strategic environmental objectives and targets of the Neighbourhood Plan and conformity with other relevant policies in the development plan.

Policy W26:
Self-Build and Custom-Build Housing

- 1. Self-build and custom-build housing schemes to meet the needs of local people on the Dorset Self-Build and Custom-Building Register will be supported on sites within the DDBs and on larger housing sites.
- 2. Outside the DDBs self-build and custom housebuilding schemes will be supported on an affordable housing exception site, or where the proposal complies with the housing in the countryside policies of the development plan.
- 3. A scheme for more than five self-build or custom-build dwellings on any site should be developed in accordance with an agreed design brief.
- 4. Innovative design and sustainability approaches will be supported where they enhance the character, function, and visual amenity of the local area.
- 5. Development proposals should demonstrate alignment with the strategic

No Likely Significant Effects.

This policy describes policy guidelines for the self-building and custom-build housing within DDBs (unless exceptional circumstances prevail). Any housing built under this policy is subject to compliance with relevant environmental objectives (Objectives 1, 2, 3 and 4.) and specified associated targets.

This policy does not allocate any residential or employment development with linking impact pathways to Habitats sites.

Overall, this policy will not result in LSEs on Habitats sites and is screened out from AA.

	environmental objectives and targets of the Neighbourhood Plan and conformity with other relevant policies in the development plan.	
Policy W27: Community Housing Schemes	<p>1. Development proposals for community-owned housing developments which respond to demonstrated local housing needs and retain affordable housing for the benefit of local people in need, will be strongly supported.</p> <p>2. Innovative housing solutions that address a specific local housing need will be actively encouraged.</p> <p>3. Development proposals should demonstrate that the community has been involved in the preparation of the proposal and is supportive.</p> <p>4. Development proposals should demonstrate alignment with the strategic environmental objectives and targets of the Neighbourhood Plan and conformity with other relevant policies in the development plan.</p>	<p>No Likely Significant Effects.</p> <p>This policy describes policy guidelines and general support for community-owned housing developments. Any housing built under this policy is subject to compliance with relevant environmental objectives (Objectives 1, 2, 3 and 4.) and specified associated targets.</p> <p>This policy does not allocate any residential or employment development with linking impact pathways to Habitats sites.</p> <p>Overall, this policy will not result in LSEs on Habitats sites and is screened out from AA.</p>
Policy W28: Specialist Housing Provision	<p>Proposals for specialist purpose-built accommodation will be supported where they;-</p> <p>i. respond to an identified need in the local area;</p> <p>ii. are in a sustainable and accessible location;</p> <p>iii. provide a range of tenures; and</p> <p>iv. demonstrate alignment with the strategic environmental objectives and targets of the Neighbourhood Plan and conformity with the other relevant policies in the development plan.</p>	<p>No Likely Significant Effects.</p> <p>This policy provides general support for specialist housing provision. Any housing built under this policy is subject to compliance with relevant environmental objectives (Objectives 1, 2, 3 and 4.) and specified associated targets.</p> <p>This policy does not allocate any sites for development.</p> <p>Overall, this policy will not result in LSEs on Habitats sites and is screened out from AA.</p>
Policy W29: Houses in Multiple Occupation	<p>1. Change in use to a house in multiple occupation (HMO), where planning permission is required, will be supported where;-</p> <p>i. the proposal would not result in an over concentration of HMOs in any one area, to the extent that it would be to the detriment of, or represent an unacceptable change to, the character of the area or undermine the maintenance of a balanced and mixed local community;</p>	<p>No Likely Significant Effects.</p> <p>This policy provides general support for Houses in Multiple Occupation where conditions to determine suitability of the site are met</p> <p>This policy does not allocate any residential or employment development with linking impact pathways to Habitats sites.</p> <p>Overall, this policy will not result in LSEs on Habitats sites and is screened out from AA.</p>

- ii. the proposal would not harm the character and appearance of the building, adjacent buildings, or streetscape;
 - iii. the design, layout, and intensity of use of the building would not have unacceptable impact on neighbouring residential amenities;
 - iv. there is adequate internal and external amenity space, refuse storage, and car and bicycle parking of appropriate quantity, and, along with frontage, is of sufficiently high standard of design, layout, and construction, so as not to harm visual amenity; and
 - v. the proposal would not cause unacceptable highway problems.
2. Change of use to a small HMO (use Class 4) will require planning permission in parts of Weymouth where there is already a high incident of HMOs.

Policy W30:
Exception Site
Development

1. Development proposals for affordable housing schemes outside the DDBs, where housing would not normally be permitted by other policies in the development plan, will be supported if the scheme:-
- i. is an exception site for community-led development (in accordance with the NPPF definition), or a First Homes exception site (as defined by the Government);
 - ii. is adjacent to existing settlements and in character and scale appropriate to its location;
 - iii. is outside the Dorset National Landscape and does not compromise the protection given to such areas by the NPPF; and
 - iv. complies with the design and sustainable development policies and standards in the development plan.
2. Rural exception site housing development schemes may be supported if they are small in scale and demonstrably meets a local need, which cannot otherwise be met.
3. Exception site housing schemes should normally comprise 100% affordable housing, intended only for local people. First Home schemes can include a small quantity of other affordable housing products, if there is clear evidence of local need.
4. The application of a local occupancy clause on all affordable homes will be expected in

No Likely Significant Effects.

This policy provides details of the requirements of an exception scheme for homes built outside of DDBs.

This policy does not allocate any residential or employment development with linking impact pathways to Habitats sites.

Overall, this policy will not result in LSEs on Habitats sites and is screened out from AA.

	<p>perpetuity, without the requirement for further justification, and</p> <p>5. A small proportion of open market homes with a permanent residency condition attached to them, may be acceptable within an exception site housing scheme, but only if it can be shown they are necessary in the interests of a viable scheme.</p>	
<p>Policy W31: Principal Residence Requirements</p>	<p>Within Weymouth Town Centre, Melcombe Regis and Rodwell MSOA, proposals for open market dwellinghouses (excluding one for one replacements) will only be supported where first and future occupancy is restricted by a planning condition to ensure that each new dwellinghouse is occupied only as a Principal Residence</p>	<p>No Likely Significant Effects.</p> <p>This policy describes occupational planning conditions required to gain approval for proposed developments.</p> <p>This policy does not allocate any residential or employment development with linking impact pathways to Habitats sites.</p> <p>Overall, this policy will not result in LSEs on Habitats sites and is screened out from AA.</p>
<p>Policy W32: Town Centre Car Parks</p>	<p>Redevelopment proposals relating to car parks in or adjacent to the Town Centre will not be supported unless the proposed development conforms with other relevant policies in the Neighbourhood Plan and provides a comprehensive proposal addressing all the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. adequate alternative off-road parking provision for all residents and businesses is shown to be available in appropriate locations; ii. analysis demonstrates that peak parking demand will be adequately catered for by other car parks and out-of-town 'park & ride' schemes; iii. the provision of sufficient parking and servicing space for the operational requirements of the new development is provided within its curtilage or nearby; iv. the development provides local employment and/or night time family leisure activities and/or homes that demonstrably satisfy a local demand; and v. the proposed development would not result in an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe. 	<p>No Likely Significant Effects.</p> <p>This policy describes the way in which redevelopment proposals relating to car parks in or adjacent to the town centre will be supported.</p> <p>It includes reference to a number of developments which have already received planning approval and therefore outside of the scope of this HRA.</p> <p>Future development plans are not specified within this policy.</p> <p>Overall, this policy will not result in LSEs on Habitats sites and is screened out from AA.</p>
<p>Policy W33: Timing of Infrastructure</p>	<p>Development should be phased logically and in tandem with the timely and co-ordinated provision of infrastructure to help support sustainable growth and ensure that an unacceptable strain is not placed on the existing infrastructure.</p>	<p>No Likely Significant Effects.</p> <p>This policy describes planning considerations in respect of local infrastructure.</p>

		<p>This policy does not allocate any residential or employment development with linking impact pathways to Habitats sites.</p> <p>Overall, this policy will not result in LSEs on Habitats sites and is screened out from AA.</p>
<p>Policy W34: Sustainable Development</p>	<p>1. All new development should seek to achieve high standards of sustainability, and demonstrate that design, construction, and operation aligns with the strategic environmental objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>2. New development will be supported provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. sustainable construction methods, water conservation measures, Suitable Drainage Design and permeable surfaces are integrated into the development proposals; ii. energy conservation measures and renewable energy technology predominate; iii. development will not result in unacceptable levels of light, noise, air, or water pollution; iv. provision is made for access to the fastest possible broadband and other communication connections to all new properties; and v. adequate provision is made for the safe and secure parking and storage of bikes and electric vehicles consistent with the prevailing standard of the Local Planning Authority. <p>3. The retrofitting of energy conservation measures and renewable energy technology is supported. Where planning permission is required, measures and installations should be designed to minimise visual impact and nuisance to adjoining uses. The sensitive retrofitting of historic buildings and buildings in conservation areas should follow the guidance provide by Historic England.</p>	<p>No Likely Significant Effects.</p> <p>This policy describes planning considerations in respect of sustainable development.</p> <p>This policy does not allocate any residential or employment development with linking impact pathways to Habitats sites.</p> <p>Overall, this policy will not result in LSEs on Habitats sites and is screened out from AA.</p> <p>Overall, the measures in the policy are likely to have a positive impact on Habitats sites in the future.</p>
<p>Policy W35: Loss of Business Premises</p>	<p>Outside key employment sites, development proposals for change of use of employment land and premises to non-employment uses will be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that the existing use is no longer economically viable, and all reasonable steps, including appropriate and sustained marketing, have been taken to let or sell the site or building for employment purposes for a period of at least 18 months.</p>	<p>No Likely Significant Effects.</p> <p>This policy describes planning conditions with respect to the change of use of land and premises for proposed developments.</p> <p>This policy does not allocate any residential or employment development with linking impact pathways to Habitats sites.</p> <p>Overall, this policy will not result in LSEs on Habitats sites and is screened out from AA.</p>

Policy W36:
New Business
Development

1. Development proposals that provide additional employment opportunities through new business start-ups, the expansion of existing businesses, and the creation of workshop units and business hubs for starter businesses and micro enterprises, on brownfield sites or through the sympathetic conversion of redundant buildings, within the DDB will be supported subject to such development:

- i. respecting the character of its surroundings;
- ii. safeguarding residential amenity;
- iii. not having cumulative negative impacts on highway safety and the local transport network; and
- iv. in the case of retail use, not resulting in an over-provision in the locality.

2. Proposals that involve the creation of new employment opportunities on greenfield land or outside the DDB will be supported so long as they are:

- i. within or on the edge of a settlement;
- ii. through the intensification or extension of existing premises;
- iii. as part of a farm diversification scheme;
- iv. through the re-use or replacement of an existing building; or

v. in a rural location where this is essential for that type of business.

3. Proposals in residential areas to provide live/work units or facilitate home working in association with existing dwellings, where planning permission is required, will be supported where;

- i. the development is in keeping with the scale, form, and character of its surroundings; and
- ii. the amenity and privacy of neighbouring residents is not adversely affected.

4. Any application should be accompanied by a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment, Noise Assessment and Archaeological Assessment to demonstrate that the

No Likely Significant Effects.

This policy provides details of the conditions placed upon proposals for new business development.

This policy does not allocate any residential or employment development with linking impact pathways to Habitats sites.

Overall, this policy will not result in LSEs on Habitats sites and is screened out from AA.

	development is acceptable or to provide appropriate mitigation measures.	
Policy W37: Mixed-Use Employment Schemes	<p>Outside of the key Employment Site identified in the Local Plan, development proposals for the appropriate conversion or redevelopment of buildings and sites for mixed use development (including residential) within the defined development boundary, will be supported providing;</p> <p>i. the mix and balance of uses is consistent with the needs and character of the locality;</p> <p>ii. the proposed uses would not cause unacceptable nuisance to nearby properties and uses;</p> <p>iii. they no dominated by retail uses, nor will cause harm to existing businesses;</p> <p>iv. the design proposals enhance the character and appearance of the building/site and the character of the area;</p> <p>v. where appropriate, conversion opportunities are taken to eliminate the need for complete reconstruction; and</p> <p>vi. the proposals demonstrate alignment with the strategic environmental objectives and targets of the Neighbourhood Plan and conformity with other relevant policies in the development plan.</p>	<p>No Likely Significant Effects.</p> <p>This policy describes planning considerations in respect of proposals for mixed-use development.</p> <p>This policy does not allocate any residential or employment development with linking impact pathways to Habitats sites.</p> <p>Overall, this policy will not result in LSEs on Habitats sites and is screened out from AA.</p>
Policy W38: Higher & Further Education & Skills Provision	<p>1. Development proposals for higher and further education, including university-level provision and for skill training, especially associated with technical and green skills, shall be supported provided the development;</p> <p>i. is of high quality and innovative design, commensurate with the function of the building and campus and responds to the landscape context;</p> <p>ii. is safely accessible by pedestrians and cyclists and is well related to bus routes;</p> <p>iii. includes appropriate and adequate provision for vehicle and cycle parking; and</p> <p>iv. would not result in a significant loss of amenity to local residents or other adjacent uses.</p> <p>2. Development proposals should demonstrate alignment with the strategic environmental objectives and targets of the Neighbourhood Plan.</p>	<p>No Likely Significant Effects.</p> <p>This policy describes support for the creation of higher and further education provision provided specified conditions are met.</p> <p>This policy does not allocate any residential or employment development with linking impact pathways to Habitats sites.</p> <p>Overall, this policy will not result in LSEs on Habitats sites and is screened out from AA.</p>
Policy W39: Weymouth Town Centre	<p>1. Development proposals within the area defined as Weymouth Town Centre on Map 29 should generally conform with the Local</p>	<p>No Likely Significant Effects.</p> <p>This policy describes general support for appropriate development within the town centre.</p>

<p>Plan policy 'Weymouth Town Centre Strategy' and the latest Town Centre masterplan.</p> <p>2. Development and change of us that contributes to a diverse range of uses in the Town Centre including new office, leisure, community, hotel, retail, and residential use, will be supported if they;</p> <p>i. are compatible with the core retail offer; ii. will generate vitality and add viability to the Town Centre; and iii. will not harm existing businesses and residential properties; iv. Provide housing to meet the local needs including a significant proportion of affordable homes.</p> <p>3. Proposals which seek to stimulate an appropriate evening economy in the town centre are strongly encouraged.</p> <p>4. Proposals that make better use of upper floors and underused floorspace in the town centre will be supported.</p> <p>5. Public realm improvement proposals, which will enhance the appeal of, and use of, the town centre by pedestrians, are strongly supported.</p> <p>6. To protect the historic environment, proposals must ensure that any impact upon designated or non-designated heritage assets (including assets of archaeological importance) and their settings have been assessed in accordance with national policy and guidance and will only be supported where they meet the relevant requirements of the NPPF and Development Plan.</p> <p>7. Development proposals should demonstrate alignment with the strategic environmental objectives and targets of the Neighbourhood Plan.</p>	<p>This policy does not provide for any specific development with linking impact pathways to Habitats sites, it merely states general support. Project level HRAs would be required for individual proposals.</p> <p>Overall, this policy will not result in LSEs on Habitats sites and is screened out from AA.</p>
<p>Policy W40: Temporary Activities and Uses</p> <p>1. The temporary use of buildings and open spaces for organised events and activities, which require planning permission, will be supported provided that the proposed temporary use:</p> <p>i. does not cause any significant adverse environmental problems; ii. would not result in loss or damage to the area's natural resources; iii. would not have significant harmful impacts on the amenities of neighbouring residents;</p>	<p>No Likely Significant Effects.</p> <p>This policy describes general support for temporary activities and uses within the town centre. The policy includes a requirement that the activity does not have significant adverse environmental impacts.</p> <p>This policy does not provide for usage with linking impact pathways to Habitats sites, it merely states general support. Project level HRAs would be required for individual proposals.</p>

	<p>iv. would not have significant harmful impacts on the wider visitor experience; and</p> <p>v. there is a clear community and neighbour support for the period of use proposed.</p> <p>2. Development proposals should demonstrate alignment with the strategic environmental objectives and targets of the Neighbourhood Plan.</p>	<p>Overall, this policy will not result in LSEs on Habitats sites and is screened out from AA.</p>
<p>Policy W41: Sustainable Tourism Development</p>	<p>1. Sustainable tourism development proposals and/or extensions to or expansion of existing tourism uses that extend the tourism season, enhance the visitor economy and increase the quality and diversity of the tourism offer are supported in principle throughout the neighbourhood area. Development proposals should be consistent with the hierarchy of preference expressed in the Local Plan.</p> <p>2. All proposals must be of a scale, type, and appearance appropriate to the character of the location and ensure that any impact upon conservation areas, designated or non-designated heritage assets (including assets of archaeological importance) and their settings have been assessed in accordance with national policy and guidance.</p> <p>3. 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.</p> <p>4. Development that results in harmful impacts on local services, roads and other infrastructure will not be supported.</p> <p>5. Development that delivers a wider environmental or community benefits will be encouraged.</p> <p>6. Development proposals should demonstrate alignment with the strategic environmental objectives and targets of the Neighbourhood Plan and conformity with other relevant policies in the development plan.</p>	<p>No Likely Significant Effects.</p> <p>This policy describes general support for tourism development proposals. The policy includes a requirement that the development does not have significant adverse environmental impacts.</p> <p>This policy does not identify specific sites with linking impact pathways to Habitats sites, it merely states general support. Project level HRAs would be required for individual proposals.</p> <p>Overall, this policy will not result in LSEs on Habitats sites and is screened out from AA.</p>
<p>Policy W42: Facilitating Offshore Renewable Energy Projects</p>	<p>Development proposals to facilitate low and zero carbon offshore renewable energy projects will be supported if:</p> <p>i. the natural and undeveloped coast, geodiversity and biodiversity is protected; and</p> <p>ii. it is demonstrated, through a coastal landscape and seascape impact assessment</p>	<p>No Likely Significant Effects.</p> <p>In principle, development proposals offshore energy generating infrastructure are likely to be associated with impact pathways linking to Habitats sites. Particularly Chesil & The Fleet SAC, SPA and Ramsar site and the Portland to Studland Cliffs SAC.</p>

(where required), that there will be no significant adverse impact on the natural undeveloped coast.

However, this policy only expresses general support for such proposals with the specific condition that the natural and undeveloped coast, geodiversity and biodiversity is protected.

Ultimately, it is not in the power of Weymouth Town Council to determine the outcome of any planning proposal of this nature which would be decided by the secretary of state.

This policy does identify specific sites with linking impact pathways to Habitats sites, it merely states general support. Project level HRAs would be required for individual proposals to assess the impact upon Habitats sites.

Overall, this policy will not result in LSEs on Habitats sites and is screened out from AA.

<p>Policy W43: Community Energy Schemes</p>	<p>Community energy initiatives which contribute to the promotion, development, and delivery of sustainable energy sources for the neighbourhood area will be supported, provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. the siting and scale of the proposed development is appropriate to its setting and position including cumulative landscape and visual impacts; ii. the proposed development does not create an unacceptable impact on the amenities of residents and visitors to the town in terms of noise, vibration, or electromagnetic interference; and iii. where appropriate the energy generating infrastructure and its installation complies with the Microgeneration Certification Scheme or equivalent standard. 	<p>No Likely Significant Effects.</p> <p>This policy describes general support for community energy schemes.</p> <p>This policy does not identify specific sites with linking impact pathways to Habitats sites, it merely states general support. Project level HRAs may be required for individual proposals.</p> <p>Overall, this policy will not result in LSEs on Habitats sites and is screened out from AA.</p>
<p>Policy W44: Design</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All proposals for new development should demonstrate high quality design, use of materials and detail, with the recognised local character and context; also, having regard to prevailing scale, massing and density and the development principles set out elsewhere in the Neighbourhood Plan. 2. Within conservation areas and in proximity to heritage assets, development proposals are expected to demonstrate how they will positively conserve and enhance the unique characteristics of the area. 3. Innovative design approaches will be supported where they enhance the character, function and visual amenity of the local plan. 4. Development should not increase the risk of flooding and/or exacerbate existing drainage problems and should be designed to 	<p>No Likely Significant Effects.</p> <p>This development management policy relates to the design and character of proposals rather than allocating residential or employment development. Therefore, there are no impact pathways linking to this policy.</p> <p>Overall, the policy will not result in LSEs on Habitats sites and is screened out from AA.</p>

<p>maximise the retention of surface water on the development site and to minimise run-off.</p> <p>5. Development proposals within the Dorset National Landscapes (DNL), must be in accordance with the great weight afforded to their landscape and scenic beauty in national policy and the requirements of the DNL Management Plan for high quality design, materials and standards of workmanship.</p> <hr/> <p>Policy W45: Heritage Assets</p> <p>1. Development proposals should demonstrate, where relevant, that they respect and will cause no harm to heritage assets and their setting.</p> <p>2. Development proposals affecting designated and non-designated heritage assets should be accompanied by proportionate historic environment heritage impact assessments, demonstrating how any harm would be avoided, minimised, or mitigated.</p> <p>3. Development proposals on previously undeveloped land should be accompanied by the results of an archaeological assessment of the development site.</p> <p>4. Where appropriate, development should take opportunities within the setting of any designated and non-designated heritage assets to better reveal and enhance their significance.</p>	<p>No Likely Significant Effects.</p> <p>This policy does not allocate sites to be developed, but merely supports the maintenance or enhancement of local heritage assets. The exact assets to be renovated have not been specified and cannot be assessed at this level. Generally, the protection of Local Heritage Assets has no bearing on Habitats sites.</p> <p>Development of heritage assets and development in proximity to heritage assets will have to comply with other policies within this Neighbourhood Plan and the Local Plan e.g. Policy ENV2 to ensure no adverse effect on the integrity of Habitats sites. Any development brought forward would need a project level HRA to ensure compliance, if Habitats sites are to be affected.</p> <p>Overall, this policy will not result in LSEs on Habitats sites and is screened out from AA.</p>
<p>Policy W46 Transport and Travel</p> <p>1. Development proposals should:</p> <p>i. identify the realistic level of traffic it is likely to generate and demonstrate, through an appropriate assessment of traffic impacts, that any infrastructure or highways improvements necessary to mitigate the impact on the highway network have been identified and shall be delivered as part of the scheme;</p> <p>ii. maximise opportunities to walk and cycle and connect safely with existing walking and cycling routes; and</p> <p>iii. support public transport schemes and infrastructure wherever possible.</p> <p>2. Development that would give rise to unacceptable highway dangers and/or air pollution will not be supported.</p>	<p>No Likely Significant Effects.</p> <p>This policy describes the expectations of the Town Council with regard to development proposals and their impact on transport. It specifically states that proposals which give rise to unacceptable levels of air pollution will not be supported.</p> <p>This policy does not identify specific sites with linking impact pathways to Habitats sites, it merely states general support. Project level HRAs may be required for individual proposals.</p> <p>Overall, this policy will not result in LSEs on Habitats sites and is screened out from AA. The policy is intended to facilitate a move to lower carbon transport which may have a positive impact on Habitats sites.</p>
<p>Policy W47: Public Transport</p> <p>Development proposals that make public transport more accessible through improvements to the infrastructure and network such as interchange areas, travel linkages, bus stops / refuges and enhanced information provision and do not cause</p>	<p>No Likely Significant Effects.</p> <p>This policy provides for the promotion of public transport use and therefore for public transport facilities such as bus stops provided that these do not damage the local area.</p>

	<p>unacceptable harm to the surrounding area will be supported.</p> <p>This policy does not identify specific sites with linking impact pathways to Habitats sites, it merely states general support. Project level HRAs may be required for individual proposals.</p> <p>Overall, this policy will not result in LSEs on Habitats sites and is screened out from AA. The policy is intended to facilitate a move to lower carbon transport which may have a positive impact on Habitats sites.</p>
<p>Policy W48: Off-street Parking</p> <p>1. Development should be designed to discourage additional on-street parking on the existing road network.</p> <p>2. Development proposals that do not comply as a minimum with Dorset Council's off-street car and cycle parking guidance will not be supported.</p>	<p>No Likely Significant Effects.</p> <p>This policy gives additional guidance to developers as to requirements to consider adequate parking.</p> <p>This policy sets out conditions for achieving planning approval and will not directly lead to developments.</p> <p>Overall, this policy will not result in LSEs on Habitats sites and is screened out from AA.</p>
<p>Policy W49: Vehicle Charging Facilities</p> <p>1. Development proposals which provide 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 ultralow emission vehicles into the design and layout of the development in accordance with the current requirements of the local planning authority.</p> <p>2. The provision of public electric vehicle charging outlets in suitable locations will be supported.</p>	<p>No Likely Significant Effects.</p> <p>This policy gives additional guidance to developers as to provision of vehicle charging facilities within new developments.</p> <p>This policy does not identify specific sites with linking impact pathways to Habitats sites, it merely states general support. Project level HRAs may be required for individual proposals.</p> <p>Overall, this policy will not result in LSEs on Habitats sites and is screened out from AA.</p>
<p>Policy W50: Cycle Routes</p> <p>Development proposals to improve and extend existing cycle routes, to effect better segregation from motor traffic, and to link them to the wider network of walking and cycling routes will be supported.</p>	<p>No Likely Significant Effects.</p> <p>This policy is supportive of improvements and extensions to the cycleway network.</p> <p>This policy sets out conditions for achieving planning approval and will not directly lead to developments.</p> <p>Overall, this policy will not result in LSEs on Habitats sites and is screened out from AA.</p>
<p>Policy W51: Traffic Impact</p> <p>1. Development proposals to reduce the volume and impact of motor vehicles including:</p> <p>i. traffic calming and gateway treatments to deter non-local traffic in residential streets and visitor areas;</p> <p>ii. extending the areas of pedestrian and cycling priority in town, village, and neighbourhood centres;</p>	<p>No Likely Significant Effects.</p> <p>This policy gives general support for development proposals which reduce the volume and impact of motor vehicles.</p> <p>This policy does not identify specific sites with linking impact pathways to Habitats sites, it merely states general support. Project level HRAs may be required for individual proposals.</p>

	<p>Overall, this policy will not result in LSEs on Habitats sites and is screened out from AA.</p>
<p>iii. establishing functioning Park and Ride facilities in appropriate locations;</p> <p>iv. campervan / motorhome overnight parking areas, which do not harm the character of the area, and</p> <p>v. the provision dedicated cycle or public transport lanes will be supported provided they have been subject to consultation with the community.</p> <hr/> <p>Policy W52: Existing Community Buildings</p> <p>1. Development proposals, including change of use, which results in the permanent loss of local community buildings, hubs, or structures (including where the most recent lawful use was as a community use), will not be supported unless:</p> <p>i. it can be demonstrated following discussions with the community, that there is no local need for the facility; or</p> <p>ii. it is no longer viable or practical to continue the existing use;</p> <p>iii. a suitable replacement facility is provided in an equally accessible location to serve the local community, and</p> <p>iv. the community has been offered an opportunity at a realistic current use price, for its acquisition or operation.</p> <p>2. Extensions and improvements to existing community buildings will be supported if they are intended to:</p> <p>i. 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);</p> <p>ii. help meet identified community needs through the more effective use of sites / premises, while maintaining or improving the existing community service provision (for example through a community hub); and</p> <p>iii. improve accessibility.</p>	<p>No Likely Significant Effects.</p> <p>This policy provides additional guidance to developers in the form of restrictions on change of use of community buildings.</p> <p>This policy does not identify specific sites with linking impact pathways to Habitats sites.</p> <p>Overall, this policy will not result in LSEs on Habitats sites and is screened out from AA.</p>
<p>Policy W53: Public Houses</p> <p>1. Development proposals that involve the loss of a public house with heritage, cultural,</p>	<p>No Likely Significant Effects.</p>

	<p>economic, or social value must demonstrate that its use as a public house is unviable, and its retention has been fully explored. A period of at least 12 months vacancy should precede any change of use application, which should be accompanied by authoritative evidence of continued marketing over at least a 18-month period and no market interest in the building as a public house forthcoming, nor interest from local communities for the space to be used for alternative community uses.</p> <p>2. The loss of part of a public house, including cellar space, car parking or other facilities complementary to its operation as a public house, will be resisted where it would adversely affect such operation.</p> <p>3. Development proposals having an adverse impact on the existing operation and/or viability of a public house will be strongly resisted.</p>
<p>Policy W54: Sports and Recreation</p> <p>1. The outdoor sports and recreation facilities and spaces identified in the table XX will be protected except in the following circumstances:</p> <p>i. the applicant satisfactorily demonstrates that there is no continuing demand for the facility, and it is not possible to use the facility for other sports and recreation activity, or</p> <p>ii. alternative provision of at least an equivalent quality, size, suitability and convenience within the neighbourhood area is made.</p> <p>2. Development proposals which would lead to a reduction in the size or quality of these facilities and spaces will only be supported where the existing facilities are re-provided to a better quality or quantity in an accessible location.</p> <p>3. Development proposals for improved, new and/or additional sports and recreation facilities and spaces will be supported where they:</p> <p>i. respond to a demonstrable need and demand for the proposed facility;</p> <p>ii. meet up-to-date standards of design set by the appropriate agency or governing body;</p> <p>iii. provide community access; and</p> <p>iv. demonstrate how they will be effectively managed and maintained in perpetuity.</p>	<p>This policy provides protection for existing public houses and general support for new public houses.</p> <p>This policy does not identify specific sites with linking impact pathways to Habitats sites, it merely states general support. Project level HRAs may be required for individual proposals.</p> <p>Overall, this policy will not result in LSEs on Habitats sites and is screened out from AA.</p> <hr/> <p>No Likely Significant Effects.</p> <p>This policy provides protection for existing sport facilities and general support for new sport facilities.</p> <p>This policy does not identify specific sites with linking impact pathways to Habitats sites, it merely states general support. Project level HRAs may be required for individual proposals.</p> <p>Overall, this policy will not result in LSEs on Habitats sites and is screened out from AA.</p>

	4. Development proposals should demonstrate engagement with the local community to ensure proposals have taken into account the views and aspirations of the local community.	
Policy W55: Public Spaces	<p>1. Development proposals that will enhance the public realm, such as streets, squares, pavements, through the provision of street furniture, planting, and appropriate scale signage, will be supported provided it is demonstrated through a design and access statement that the proposals will enhance the character, appearance, and sense of place in their immediate locality.</p> <p>2. New or improved lighting should be limited, unobtrusive and energy efficient, and minimise light pollution.</p> <p>3. Innovative design and art installations in the public realm is encouraged.</p>	<p>No Likely Significant Effects.</p> <p>This policy provides support for development proposals that will “enhance the public realm”.</p> <p>This policy does not allocate any residential or employment development with linking impact pathways to Habitats sites.</p> <p>Overall, this policy will not result in LSEs on Habitats sites and is screened out from AA.</p>
Policy W56: Allotment and Community Gardening Provision	<p>1. Proposals that result in harm to or loss of existing allotments will not be supported unless:</p> <p>i. replacement provision is made, of at least equivalent quality, and located at reasonable convenience for the existing plot holders; or</p> <p>ii. overriding community benefits are achieved.</p> <p>2. Proposals for new allotments and community horticulture projects on appropriate sites and within new developments will be supported.</p>	<p>No Likely Significant Effects.</p> <p>This policy provides protection for existing spaces and general support for new allotments and community horticulture projects.</p> <p>This policy does not allocate any development sites with linking impact pathways to Habitats sites.</p> <p>Overall, this policy will not result in LSEs on Habitats sites and is screened out from AA.</p>
Policy W57 New Burial Grounds	<p>Proposals for new burial grounds will be supported in principle, providing they are:</p> <p>accessible and located reasonably close to the existing built-up area;</p> <p>i. in locations where local residential amenity can be protected;</p> <p>ii. meet the requirements of the Environment Agency.</p>	<p>No Likely Significant Effects.</p> <p>This policy provides general support and planning conditions for new burial grounds.</p> <p>This policy does not allocate any development sites with linking impact pathways to Habitats sites.</p> <p>Overall, this policy will not result in LSEs on Habitats sites and is screened out from AA.</p>

