

# STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT SUBMISSION STAGE ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT

Prepared on behalf of Yetminster and Ryme Intrinseca Group Parish Council

YETMINSTER AND RYME INTRINSECA NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN  
JULY 2021

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JUNE 2021

This is the non-technical summary of the environmental report (the Strategic Environmental Assessment) for the Milton Abbas Neighbourhood Plan. The report was prepared by Jo Witherden BSc(Hons) DipTP DipUD MRTPI of Dorset Planning Consultant Ltd, based on the pre-submission version of the plan, and has been updated in light of the amendments to the plan agreed in response to comments received as part of the pre-submission consultation.

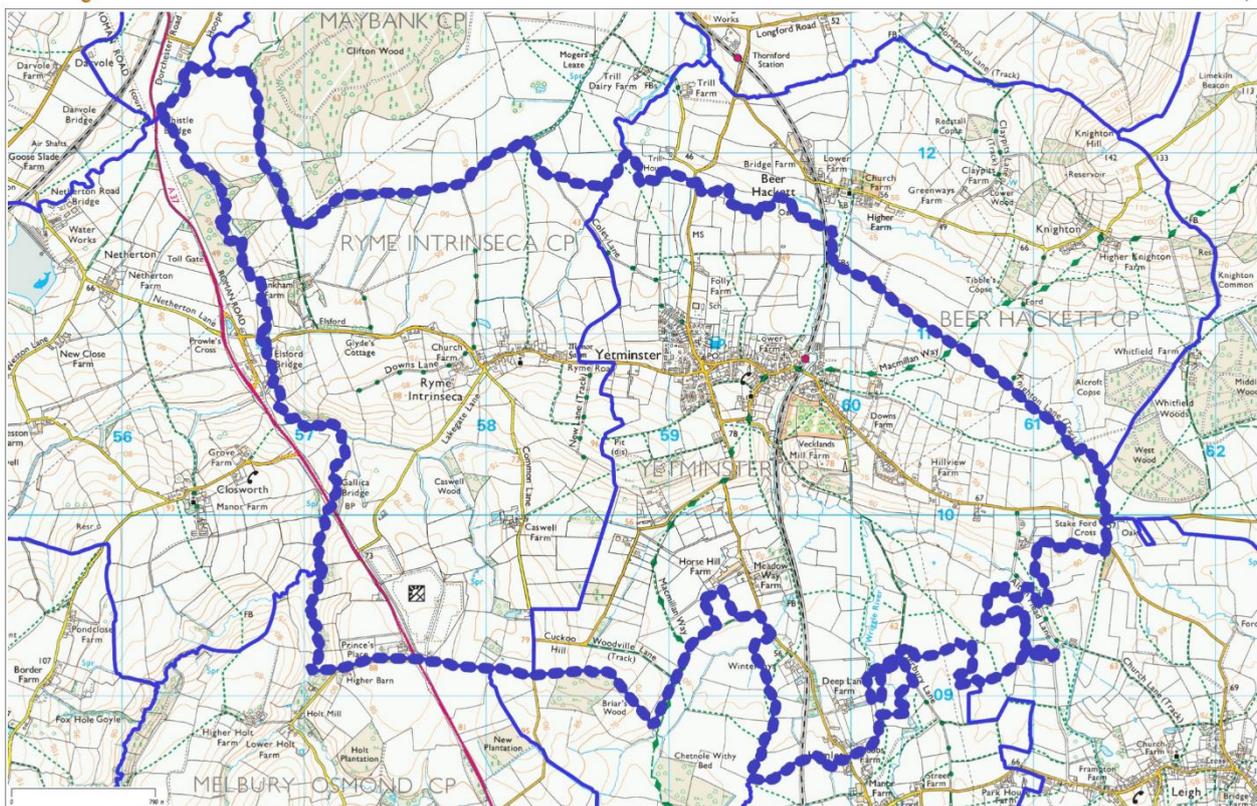
A Strategic Environmental Assessment is required to accompany Neighbourhood Plans where it is considered that the plan could give rise to a significant environmental effect, taking into account the content of the plan, its relation to other plans and projects, and the environmental sensitivity of the area. Amongst other things, it must set out the likely significant effects of the Plan on the environment, the measures envisaged to prevent / reduce / offset any significant adverse environmental effects, and how any reasonable alternatives were assessed and compare to the Plan.

## The Neighbourhood Plan area



Neighbourhood Plan Area  
Showing Plan Area and Parish Boundaries

Yetminster CP



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The Neighbourhood Plan covers the Neighbourhood Plan area, which is based on the civil parishes of Yetminster and Ryme Intrinseca.

The main environmental issues identified for the area include:

- a number of detrimental features noted in the landscape character assessments, primarily related to farming and land management practices (loss of wet woodland and riverside vegetation, fragmentation of hedgerows and / loss and decline in hedgerow trees), the negative visual impacts associated with some large agricultural buildings, and the loss of traditional orchards around settlements. Whilst not all of these impacts are a direct result of development, there is potential that development could result in the loss or furtherance of some of these problems on a low level.
- features that are detrimental to the Conservation Area relating to the highway / streetscape, the business area by the station, and the condition of Upbury Farm and its outbuildings. Development may provide an opportunity to positively address some of these issues.
- the flood risk and related sewer inundation. Whilst there is national and local plan policies that seek to address these matters the Neighbourhood Plan could potentially provide further guidance benefitting from the specific knowledge of issues in the locality.
- the ageing population profile. Whilst there are a range of services and facilities within the larger village of Yetminster, higher level facilities (such as hospital, secondary school etc, are situated in Sherborne / Yeovil and Dorchester), and there are limited local employment opportunities. Development may be able to help sustain facilities but could also increase pressure where there may be limited capacity, and add to travel patterns accessing services and facilities outside of the area.

In addition to the above, the potential for residential (and other types of) development) to increase in phosphate levels from agricultural sources such as the use of fertilisers and wastewater from housing to cause eutrophication - a dense growth of algae which adversely affects the balance of flora and invertebrates within the Somerset Levels and Moor Ramsar Site, contributing to its declining condition, which is currently "unfavourable" was identified at a late stage in the plan's preparation, and this issues has primarily been covered through a separate Habitats Regulations Assessment.

The Plan's vision is that, by 2036, it will be a vibrant, supportive community which values its historic environment and rural setting. Local people's requirements will have been met by providing a variety of housing, business opportunities and community facilities. Changes will have retained the distinctive characteristics of the individual villages and will have made a genuinely positive contribution to our environment in terms of the scale, design, materials, layout and density of development.

The plan allocates land on 2 sites in the main village of Yetminster (where there is also significant development already under construction) and includes 2 further site allocations in the smaller settlement of Ryme Intrinseca. These allocations in total should meet the proposed housing target, and there may be scope for further housing development through infill development and rural exception affordable housing sites. The plan also contains policies to ensure locally important features are protected and that design of new building is appropriate to the character of the area and the needs identified, together with policies on climate change, infrastructure, sustainable business growth and transport.

Having understood the likely scope of the Plan, and reviewed the environmental characteristics and issues relating to the area and the objectives contained in overarching plans and programmes for the area (including international, national and more locally focussed documents), the following objectives were identified to inform the Plan's assessment:

Objective	Assessment basis for site allocations
Ensure no <b>ecological interests</b> would be harmed by development, and where opportunities arise, enhance habitats and biodiversity	Consider proximity to nature conservation designations and possible presence of protected species / habitats and whether development could include ecological benefits eg connecting wildlife corridors All sites >0.1ha proposed for inclusion in the plan should be

	subject to an ecological walkover survey to identify the likely harm and any potential mitigation
Ensure development respects and reinforces the area's rural <b>landscapes</b> and character	Through site visits assess visibility in views from public areas and potential harm to features that contribute positively to the local landscape character, including land of local landscape importance and impact on reason for designation
Protect the area's <b>heritage assets</b> , and where opportunities arise, enhance the historic character of the area	Consider proximity to existing heritage designations and potential harm to these assets including their setting and significance, and whether development could include enhancements, inviting responses from WDDC conservation team. Where assessment highlights potential harm, sites proposed for inclusion in the plan will be subject to a more detailed assessment to identify the likely harm and any potential mitigation
<b>Reduce flood risk</b>	Record proximity to existing flood risk zones (as mapped) and local knowledge of flooding incidences, inviting responses from Wessex Water and the DCC Flood Risk Management team. Where assessment highlights potential harm, sites proposed for inclusion in the plan will be subject to more detailed evaluation of whether any risk can be avoided, and potential mitigation
<b>Avoid sterilisation</b> of high grade agricultural land or minerals resources	Assess scale of loss of productive farmland (including grade where known) and record whether a site is within a minerals' safeguarding area. Prioritise development of brownfield sites
Provide housing, employment and community facilities to help <b>meet local needs</b>	Assess quantity of houses that could be provided including affordable housing, and the potential for the site to accommodate new jobs or community facilities to help reduce the need to travel.
<b>Ensure safe access</b> and a pedestrian-friendly environment	Consider distance to key community facilities, access to the countryside / nature, and whether the site is safe and accessible, inviting responses from DCC as Highways Authority

Potential site options were identified from a call for sites undertaken in November 2017 and those sites submitted to the Local Planning Authority for their housing land availability database. The sites put forward by landowners were first assessed by members of the neighbourhood plan working group, together with their planning advisor, in June 2018, and subsequently assessed independently by AECOM (an independent planning consultancy), which helped confirm those sites which were largely free from constraints, those sites where there were some constraints which may be possible to overcome, and those sites with significant constraints which should preclude development. As the indicative number of dwellings that potentially could be accommodated by all sites (regardless of their merits) was well in excess of the housing need identified at that time, it was considered reasonable to focus on those sites which did not have significant constraints.

The preferred sites were then subject to further checks as appropriate – most notable ecological site surveys and site meetings with the Council's Conservation Area Team Leader. Since that time (following comments made at the pre-submission consultation stage), further heritage impact assessment work was undertaken and the results of this are reflected in the findings below. The following table helps identify the impacts of the Plan's policies, including combined impacts, alongside the reasonable alternatives. The cumulative and other effects of the Plan's policies have also been considered.

<b>Environmental assessment objective</b>	<b>Biodiversity, fauna &amp; flora</b>	<b>Landscape</b>	<b>Cultural heritage</b>	<b>Climate change (flood risk)</b>	<b>Soils (agriculture and minerals)</b>	<b>Local needs (homes / jobs / community)</b>	<b>Health (safe and accessible)</b>
<b>Policies and reasonable alternatives</b>							
EN1: Building Conservation	-	✓	✓	-	-	-	-
EN2: Local Landscape Character	✓	✓✓	-	-	-	-	-
EN3: Local Biodiversity	✓✓	✓	-	-	-	-	-
EN4: Local Green Spaces	✓	✓	✓	-	-	-	-
EN5: Land of Local Landscape Importance	✓	✓✓	✓	-	-	-	-
EN6: Views	-	✓✓	✓	-	-	-	-
EN7: Important Open Gap	✓	✓	-	-	-	-	-
EN8: Footpaths and Bridleways	-	-	-	-	-	-	✓
CC1: Publicising Carbon Footprint	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
CC2: Individual & Community Scale Energy	✓	✎	✎	-	-	✓	-
CC3: Renewable Energy and Waste...	✓	✎	✎	-	-	-	-
CC4: Energy Generation to Offset Predicted...	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
CC5: Drainage	-	-	-	✓	-	-	-
CS1: Existing Comm / Leis Services & Facilities	-	-	-	-	-	✓	✓
CS2: New Comm / Leis Services & Facilities	-	-	-	-	-	✓	✓
H1: Housing Land (assessed under H4-8)	<i>See assessment under Policies H4-8</i>						
H2: Housing Types	-	-	-	-	-	✓✓	-
H4: Land fronting Melbury Rd (Site 4)	✘	-	-	✎	✘	✓	✎
H5: Kilbernie, Chapel Lane (Site 10)	-	✓	✓	✎	✓	✓	-
H7: Land at Downfield, RI (Site 11)	-	✓	-	-	-	✓	✘
H8: Land at Old Forge, RI (Site 12)	-	✘	✘	-	✓	-	✘
H9: Housing Design	-	✓	✓	✓	-	-	✓
BS1: Sustainable Growth of Businesses	-	-	-	-	-	✓	✎
T1: Highway Safety	-	✎	✎	-	-	-	-
T2: Vehicle Parking	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
T3: Electric Vehicle Charging Points	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Reasonable alternatives</b>							
Alt1: Site 7a adj Yew Tree Cottage, Brister End	-	-	✘✘	✎	-	✓	✘
Alt2: Site 13 land W of Thornford Road	✎	-	-	✎	✘	✓✓	✘
Alt3: Site 17 Cross Farm	✎	✘✘	✘✘	-	-	✓	-
Alt4 (was H3): Site 15 East of Stonyacres	-	✘	✘✘	-	✘	✓✓	✓
Alt5 (was H6): Site 14 North of Chapel Meadow	-	-	✘✘	✎	✘	✓✓	-

The site allocations included in the Plan have been compared to the rejected reasonable alternatives (initially Sites 7a, 13 and 17, to which Sites 14, 15 and 17 were added following the changes made following the pre-submission consultation). Site 7a was rejected given the greater heritage impacts and distance from key community facilities – although an application to extend and alter the building on that site to form a dwelling (ref WD/D/20/001340) has subsequently been approved. The rejection of Site 13 was considered reasonable given the level of housing need identified and that the alternative larger sites (Sites 14 and 15) were considered preferable

(particularly in terms of access to key community facilities). Whilst the latter have now been removed from the plan, the housing needs are still demonstrably met. Site 17 was considered likely to have a significant potential adverse impact on the character of this part of the Conservation Area, and also on views of the church from the High Street. Sites 14 and 15 have also now been rejected on the basis of the likely adverse heritage impacts (which are not considered to be outweighed by the public benefits of additional housing). So, in short, the alternative options would have a similar or potentially greater level of harm and there is no obvious reason why these should have been allocated instead.

This assessment also indicates that, overall, the adverse impacts of the Plan are likely to be balanced or outweighed by positive impacts. Although the sites that are allocated may result in some minor adverse impacts on the environment, these impacts can largely be mitigated through criteria contained in the policy wording which ensures that the issues are addressed in the detailed planning stage.

The recommendations that were made as part of the assessment process have now been incorporated into the submission version of the plan. These were with reference to:

- ⇒ *clarification in CC2 regarding avoidance of substantial harm to heritage assets*
- ⇒ *requirement for Biodiversity Mitigation and Enhancement Plan as a criterion in relation to site allocations (as set out in EN3)*
- ⇒ *cross-reference to requirement for a site-specific Surface and Foul Water Drainage Strategy (as set out in CC5) in relation to site allocations in Yetminster (NB this recommendation was no longer relevant with the removal of site 14)*
- ⇒ *follow the HRA recommendation to mitigate the potential for increased phosphate discharge into the hydrological catchment of Somerset Levels and Moors Ramsar Site.*
- ⇒ *clarify in relation to Policy T1 that the provision of pavements will only be sought in relation to development within or adjoining Yetminster and Ryme Intrinseca, and that any highway schemes should adhere to the Rural Roads Protocol as adopted by the Highway Authority, to preserve and enhance the historic character of the area*

In conclusion, there are no likely significant adverse impacts identified as a result of the assessment of plan's objectives and proposed policies. The main potential significant impacts identified relate to the positive impact through safeguarding local landscape character.

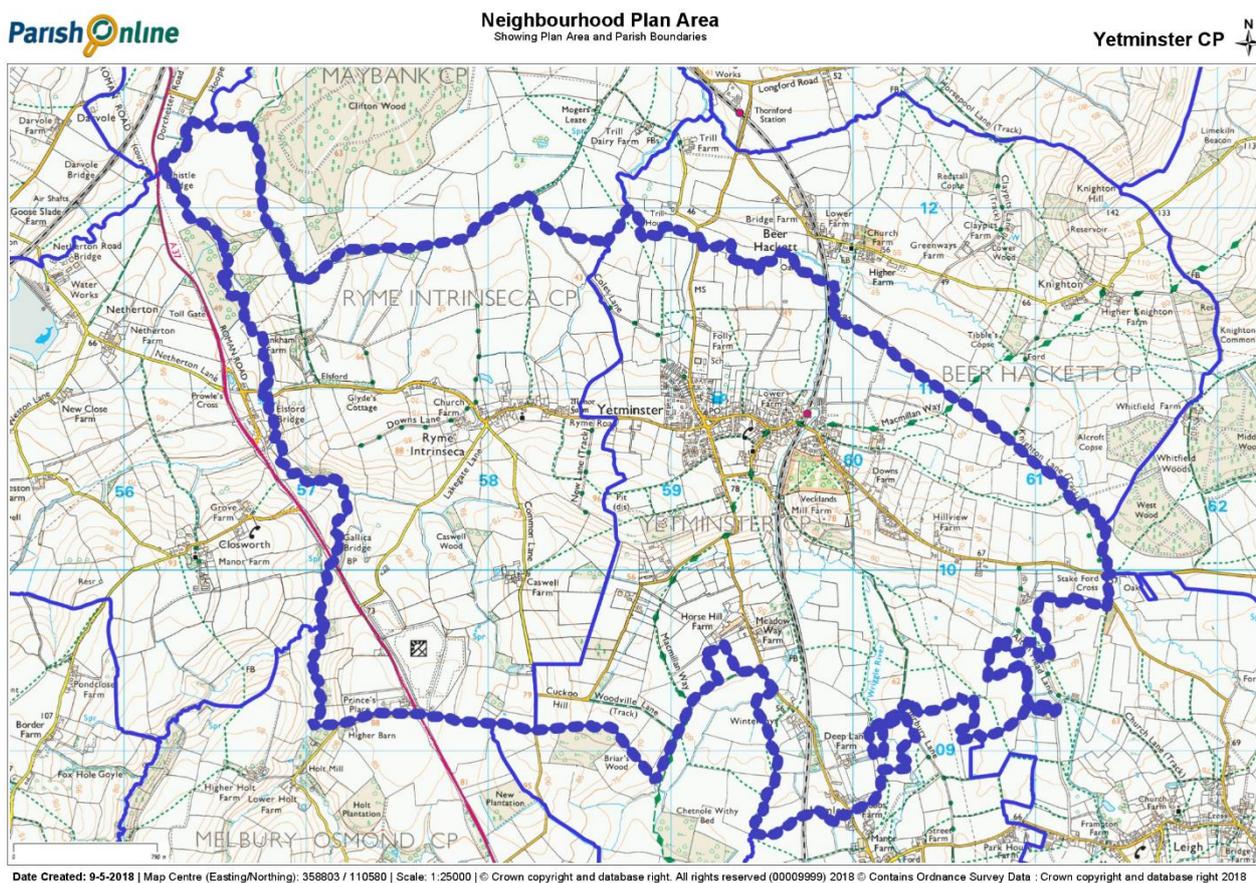
# 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This environmental report has been prepared by Jo Witherden BSc(Hons) DipTP DipUD MRTPI of Dorset Planning Consultant Ltd, on behalf of Yetminster and Ryme Intrinseca Group Parish Council. The Parish Council is the qualifying body authorised to act in preparing a neighbourhood development plan in relation to the Yetminster and Ryme Intrinseca Neighbourhood Plan area.

## THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN AREA

1.2 The Yetminster and Ryme Intrinseca Neighbourhood Plan area was designated by the former West Dorset District Council in June 2016. It includes both the civic parishes of Yetminster and Ryme Instrinseca, as shown below.

The Neighbourhood Plan area



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## LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND AND PROCESS

1.3 Government guidance<sup>1</sup> recognises that where a neighbourhood plan is likely to have significant environmental effects, it may require a strategic environmental assessment (SEA) in accordance with the SEA Directive (2001/42/EC).

1.4 There are other European directives that may also be of relevance to neighbourhood plans, such as Directive (1992/43/EC) on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora and Directive (2009/147/EC) on the conservation of wild birds (often referred to as the Habitats and Wild Birds Directives respectively) which aim to protect and improve Europe’s most important

<sup>1</sup> [www.gov.uk/guidance/strategic-environmental-assessment-and-sustainability-appraisal](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/strategic-environmental-assessment-and-sustainability-appraisal)

habitats and species. If an SEA is not required it is highly unlikely that the need for more detailed assessments under these directives will be required.

1.5 The Waste Framework Directive (2008/98/EC), Air Quality Directive (2008/50/EC) or the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC) may apply in particular circumstances.

1.6 Draft neighbourhood plan proposals should therefore be assessed at a reasonably early stage to determine whether the plan is likely to have significant environmental effects. A “screening” assessment is the process for doing this formally, in consultation with Natural England, Historic England and the Environment Agency. The process for this is outlined in Appendix 1. If likely significant environmental effects are identified, an environmental report must be prepared<sup>2</sup>.

1.7 Once a decision has been taken that an SEA is required, it is necessary to consult on its scope with the Natural England, Historic England and the Environment Agency. The legislation makes clear that they should respond within 5 weeks. Their responses have to be considered and should shape the scope of the final environmental report.

1.8 The next steps are the testing of any reasonable alternative options and the preparation of the environmental report. The significance of environmental effects that are likely to arise from the pre-submission draft neighbourhood plan are evaluated against objectives based on the issues raised through screening and scoping, and compared to the likely effects of any reasonable alternatives that have been identified. Suggestions for mitigation and techniques for monitoring policies are also made.

1.9 The environmental report is then published for consultation alongside the pre-submission draft Neighbourhood Plan if this is possible. Natural England, Historic England and the Environment Agency have to be consulted.

1.10 The process as described above is outlined in **Appendix 2**.

## MEETING THE SEA DIRECTIVE REQUIREMENTS

1.11 The table below identifies how the various parts of this environmental report address the requirements of the Directive.

Directive Requirements	Where covered
A non-technical summary	Front
An outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan and relationship with other relevant plans and programmes	Section 4
The environmental characteristics of the area (particularly those areas that could be significantly affected by the plan)	Section 2
Existing environmental problems and how these are likely to change over time if the plan was not implemented	Section 2
Relevant established environmental protection objectives and how these have been taken into account	Section 3
A description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how)	Section 5
An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives evaluated	Section 5 and 6
The likely significant effects of the plan on the environment (including secondary, cumulative, permanent and temporary effects)	Section 6 and 7
The measures envisaged to prevent / reduce / offset any significant adverse environmental effects of the plan or programme	Section 6 and 7
A description of monitoring measures	Section 7

<sup>2</sup> Environmental Assessment of Plans & Programmes Regulations 2004

## 2. POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

### LANDSCAPE QUALITY

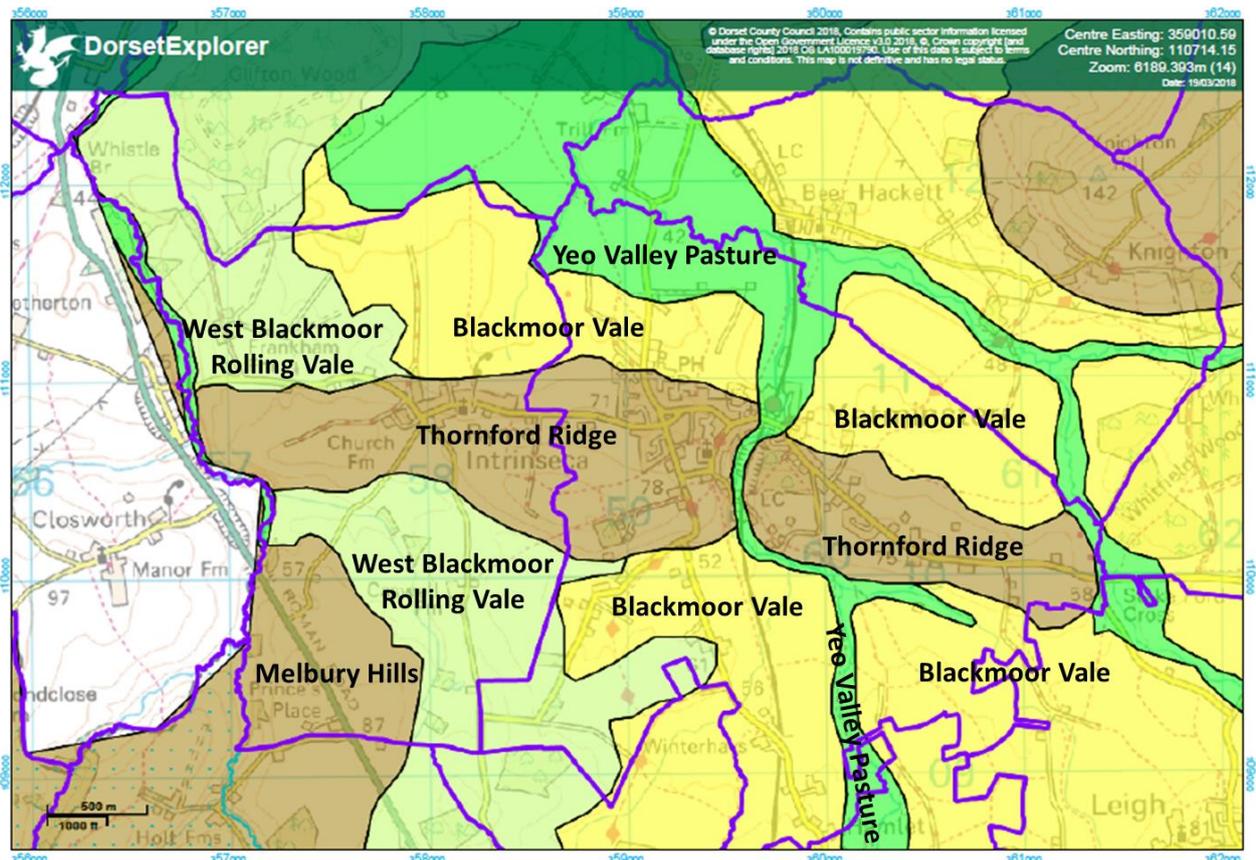
2.1 The Plan area lies just beyond the northern edge of the Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty – a nationally valued landscape. The main settlements lie within the Thornford Ridge and Blackmoor Vale landscape character areas (as defined in the West Dorset Landscape Character Assessment, February 2009), with the Yeo Valley Pasture character area following the River Wriggle that flows from south to north through Yetminster parish. Further west, the landscape changes to include parts of the West Blackmoor Rolling Vale and Melbury Hills.

2.2 Key common characteristics include:

- The landform is generally flat and largely open in character, gently sloping towards the river floodplain.
- Fields are defined by hedgerow boundaries with incidental hedgerow trees (mainly oak). Some fields have distinctive curving and dogleg field boundaries formed during the enclosures of the late medieval or post medieval period. Field sizes tend to be smaller around the fringes of the settlements,
- Areas of mixed or deciduous woodlands of varying size, including some ancient semi natural woodland, and carr woodland in more flooded areas, plus scattered deciduous copses and tree groups. Riparian vegetation such as Alder and Willow flank the river corridor.

2.3 Detrimental features include

- Historic loss of traditional orchards around settlements.
- Fragmentation of hedgerows and / loss and decline in hedgerow trees.
- Loss of wet woodland and riverside vegetation
- Some large agricultural buildings have a negative visual impact.



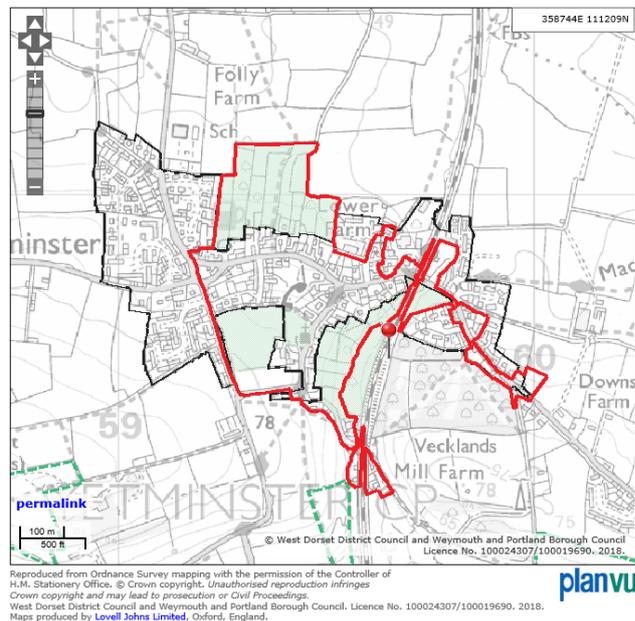
Map courtesy of Dorset County Council

2.4 There are three areas designated as ‘Land of Local Landscape Importance’ under the previous (2006) Local Plan, which will be reviewed as part of the Local Plan Review. The designation currently applies to:

- St Andrew’s Church area which is important to the setting of the church;
- Open spaces between Church Street and the railway line which act as a buffer between parts of the settlement and provide an attractive setting for the river. This area also acts as a buffer between the railway line and the settlement, protecting the amenity of the village.
- The field to the west of the church which is an open area within the settlement that contributes positively to its character and to the Conservation Area. It provides a setting for the Church and acts as a buffer between the development on its sides, and combines with other undeveloped land to create an important “green wedge” at the heart of the village and Conservation Area.
- Paddocks to the north of the public house that form an attractive and interesting area in their own right. They are a wedge of countryside which comes up to the centre of the village and act as a buffer between existing parts of the settlement to the west and east and, therefore, contribute to the character of the settlement by providing a relationship between the built and natural environment.

Land of Local Landscape Importance  
courtesy of West Dorset District Council

2.5 There is an extensive network of public rights of way radiating out from the village of Yetminster, allowing the enjoyment of the local landscape character.



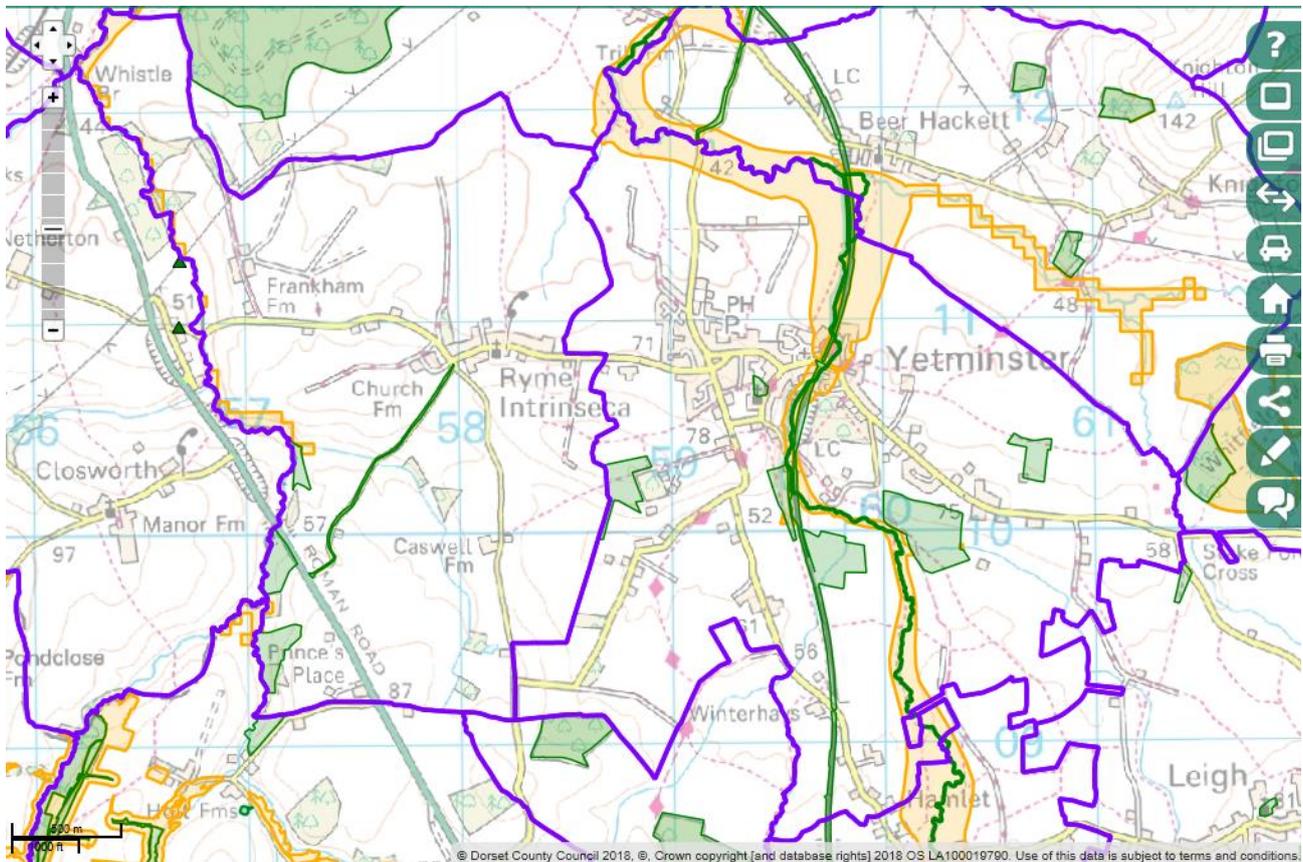
2.6 There are no national or European wildlife designations within the Neighbourhood Plan area. However, the surrounding areas include Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), which are national designations for wildlife or geological interest. The Trill Quarry SSSI approximately 740m to the north of the Plan area is designated for its geological rather than ecological importance, and the Melbury Park SSSI approximately 1.7km to the south of the Plan area is particularly notable for tree lichens.

2.7 There are a number of locally important wildlife sites within the Plan area. This includes on the western fringe of Ryme Parish areas around Gallica Bridge, comprising semi-improved and grassland and deciduous woodland, and Lakegate Lane (rural lane) leading south-westerly from Ryme Intrinsic. The churchyard in Yetminster is also of wildlife interest, as are a number of sites primarily to the south side of the village, the nearest being 50m south of Shearstones (Sycamore Farm - 11.5ha - of unimproved and semi-improved neutral grassland, and a species-rich hedge), and areas approximately 200m south of the junction of Birch Lane and Mill Lane (Mill House Meadow - 2.5ha of semi-improved neutral grassland with a varying species richness). Other sites include Cuckoo Hill Meadow (1.2ha of semi-improved neutral grassland and marshy grassland) and Yetminster Lime Kiln (3.3ha of unimproved grassland with a calcareous influence containing a rich flora). The railway embankment and river corridor are also of local wildlife interest.

BIODIVERSITY AND GEODIVERSITY ASSETS

2.8 There are no national or European wildlife designations within the Neighbourhood Plan area. However, the surrounding areas include Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), which are national designations for wildlife or geological interest. The Trill Quarry SSSI approximately 740m to the north of the Plan area is designated for its geological rather than ecological importance, and the Melbury Park SSSI approximately 1.7km to the south of the Plan area is particularly notable for tree lichens.

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Map of the Ecological Network courtesy of Dorset County Council

2.10 *Since the original scoping exercise, evidence has come to light around the adverse impacts of phosphates on Somerset Levels and Moors Ramsar site, which are some distance from Yetminster (approximately 18km or more as the crow flies). The problems arise from residential development (and other types of development) within the hydrological catchment of the Ramsar site, which includes the whole of the Neighbourhood Plan Area. The increase in phosphate levels from agricultural sources such as the use of fertilisers and wastewater from housing is causing eutrophication - a dense growth of algae which adversely affects the balance of flora and invertebrates – and is contributing to the declining condition of the Somerset Levels and Moor Ramsar Site, which is in an "unfavourable" (poor) condition.*

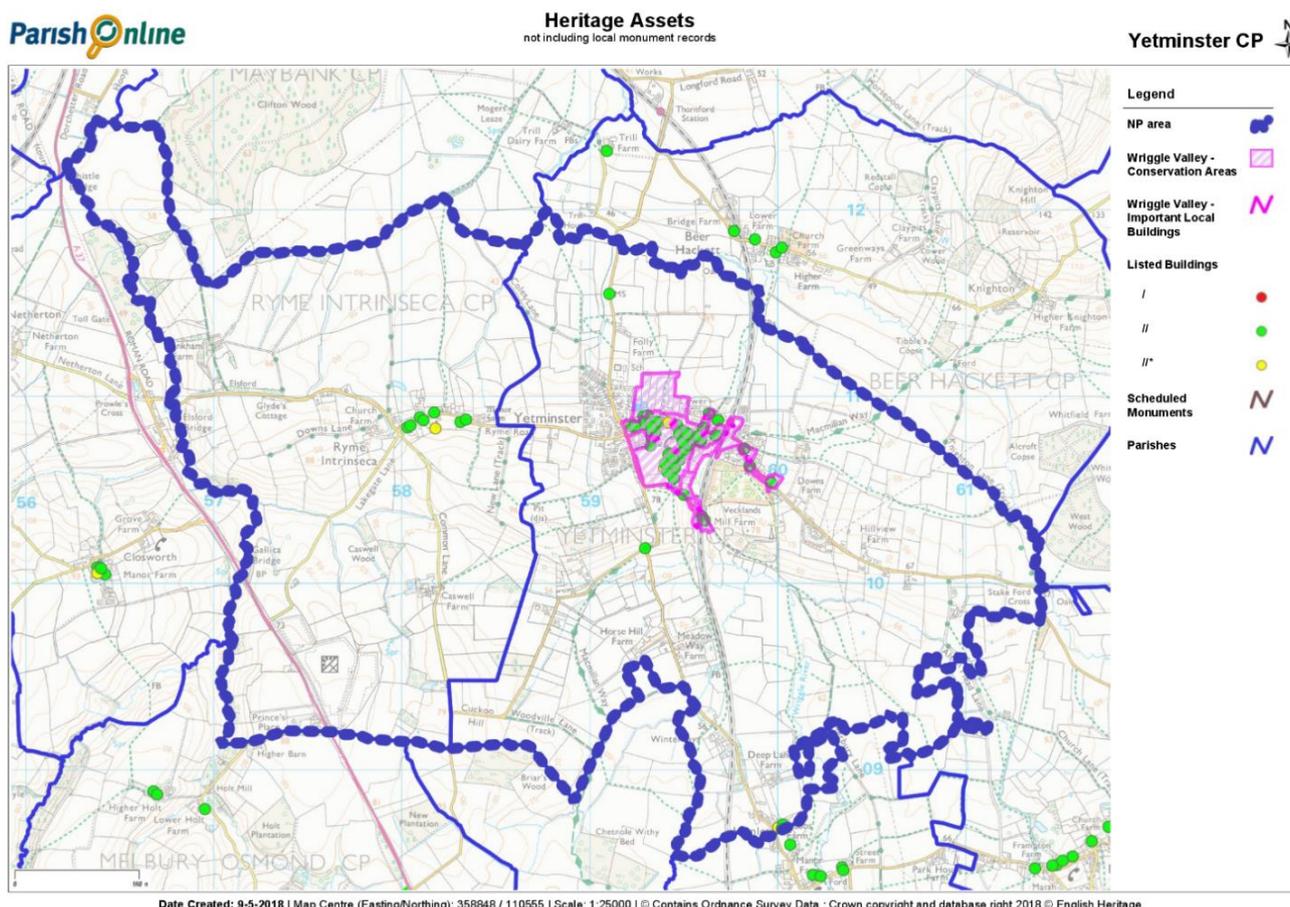
## HERITAGE ASSETS

2.11 There are 74 Listed buildings or structures within the Neighbourhood Plan area, including the Grade I listed "Parish Church of St Andrew" and four Grade II\* Listed Buildings.

2.12 Yetminster Conservation Area was designated in September 1970 and extended in December 2009 and October 2010. The latest Conservation Area Appraisal prepared in 2009, and

provides a detailed description of the character of the area including locally important buildings, spaces and views. The area's special interest largely derives from the following factors:

- The fundamental influence of the three manorial prebends on the development of Yetminster, including Brister End;
- A pleasant landscape setting, with undulating topography, mature trees, a small river, green spaces in the centre of the village and views out of distant hills;
- Some specimen trees in the churchyard and gardens and some attractive private gardens visible from the public realm;
- An interesting medieval and post-medieval archaeology, related to ownership and tenure and their effects upon plan form and building types;
- A particularly rich assemblage of late medieval and post-medieval vernacular houses displaying a range of plan forms;
- 56 Listed Buildings within the conservation area, including a Grade I parish church and two Grade II\* larger houses;
- About a dozen important local buildings, including late C19 cottages, a mid-C19 Nonconformist chapel and a K6 telephone box;
- A large coherent group of quality buildings covering most of the village centre, linked by stone boundary walls, gardens and green space;
- Valuable details, such as boundary walls and gate piers; iron railings and gates; stone date stones and plaques and churchyard memorials;
- The consistent use of two local limestones, together with Hamstone dressings, stone and clay tiles, thatch and slate.



Map of Heritage Assets (accept sites of local archaeological importance)

2.13 In contrast detrimental features are listed as follows:

- Poles and wires on parts of High and Church Streets;
- Occasional problems with traffic density and speeds, along High Street, around the western crossroads and over the railway bridge into Brister End;

- A visible and obtrusive pair of garages on the south side of High Street, linked to a bungalow and a wide highway access, all detracting from the overall coherence of the street;
- A rather bare space at the side of Boyle’s School, currently used for parking;
- Concerns over the condition of Upbury Farm and its outbuildings, with the latter, in particular, at risk; exceptional grouping requiring a comprehensive overall strategy;
- A broken finger to the DCC post at the western crossroads;
- Some examples of insensitive treatment of Listed and unlisted buildings of value, notably harsh, raised cement pointing and (for unlisted properties) some unworthy replacement doors and windows
- The untidy and fragmented nature of the business area by the station, with poor surfacing, recent brick walls with poor detailing, a mixture of materials, and second hand cars scattered throughout the site; its employment value is fully recognised but the area is not a good ‘gateway’ to arriving rail travellers; it would benefit from careful improvement.

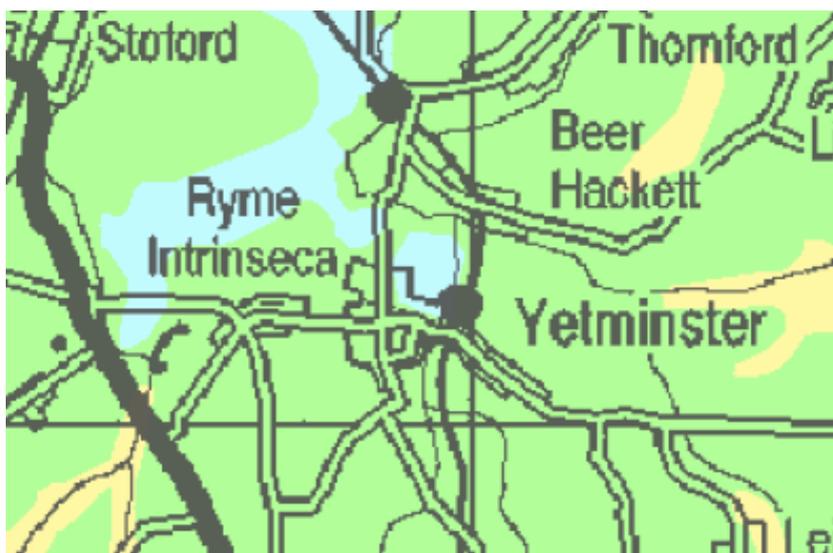
2.14 There are no Scheduled Monuments within the plan area, with the nearest (a “Roman villa 900yds (820m) NW of parish church”) located 1.6km to the north of the plan area. There are also number of undesignated monuments registered on the Dorset Historic Environment Record, including several lime kilns in the area and green lanes.

2.15 There are no registered historic parks or gardens in or close to the area, or locally listed gardens as identified by the Dorset Garden Trust.

2.16 There are no heritage assets on the national at risk register.

**AGRICULTURAL LAND VALUE**

2.17 The farmland is mainly Grade 3 (moderate) but does have some areas of Grade 2 quality farmland particularly in the north-western part of the plan area and immediately north of Yetminster. The areas of Grade 4 (poor) are largely outside of the Plan area.



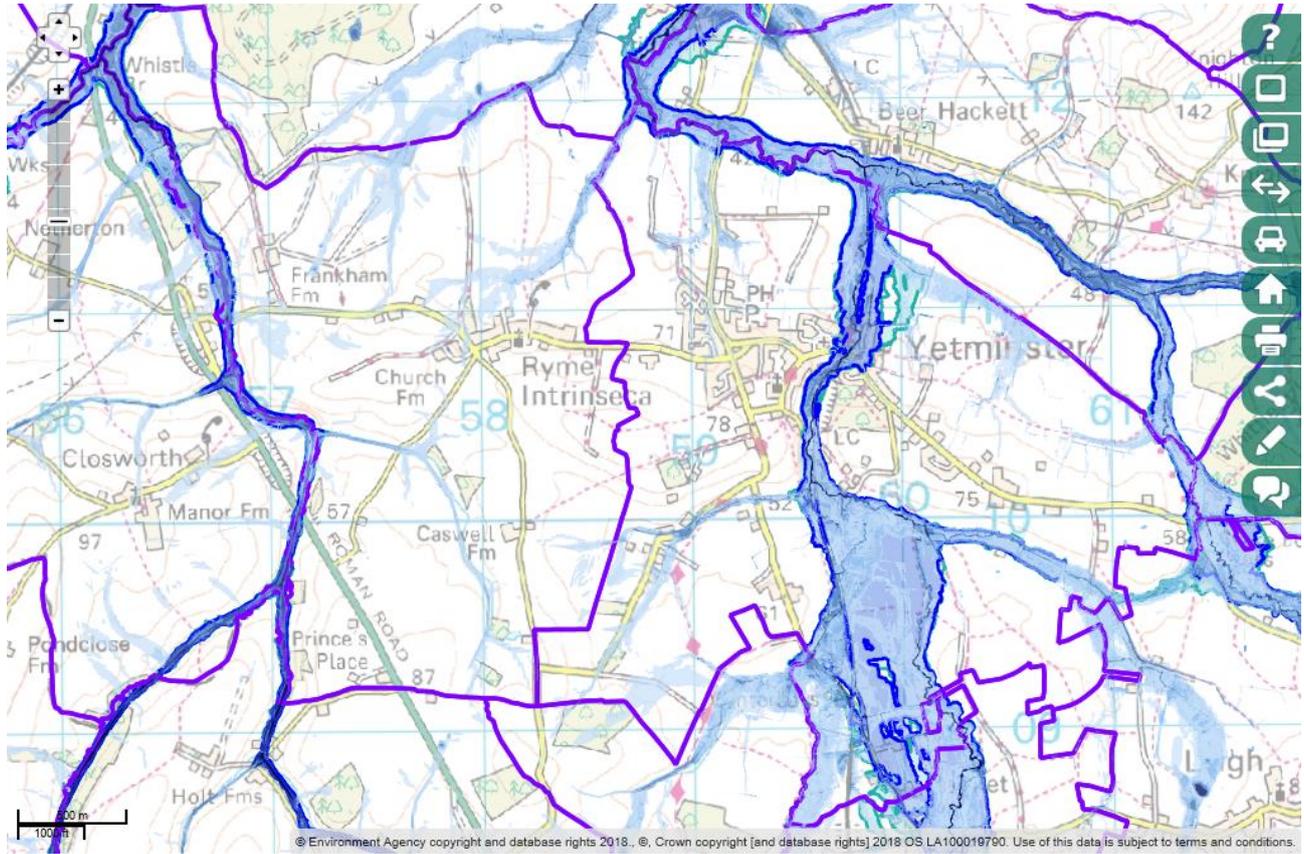
<u>Grade</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	Excellent
2	Very Good
3	Good to Moderate
4	Poor
5	Very Poor

**FLOOD RISK AND WATER QUALITY**

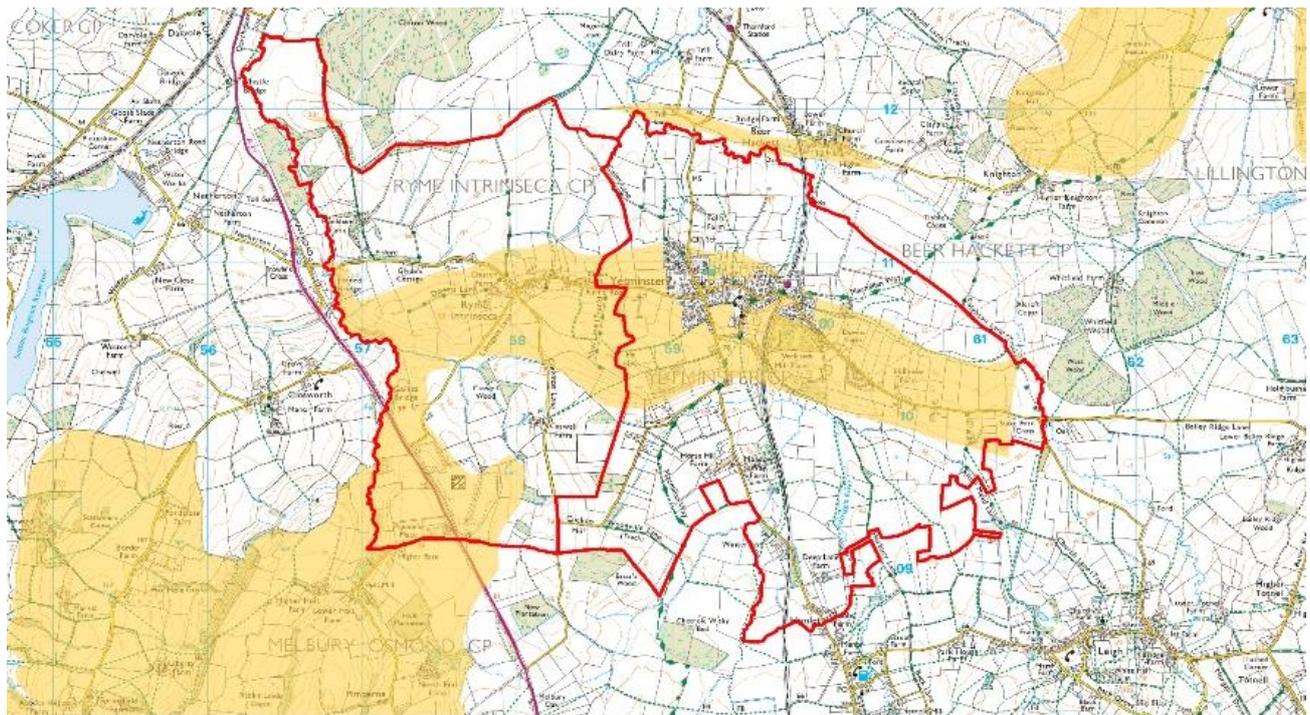
2.18 There are a series flood zones within the plan area, including a high-risk flood zone running south – to north through the settlement of Yetminster. This also impacts on accessibility to the main settlements when flooding across local roads.

2.19 Wessex Water have asked specifically to be consulted on all planning applications, major and minor, in the Yetminster sewerage catchment. This is due to the risk of sewer flooding caused by the inundation of sewers by groundwater during periods of prolonged wet weather. Wessex Water have been working with Dorset County Council to more clearly identify those areas in the parish which are susceptible to groundwater flooding.

Flood risk map courtesy of Dorset County Council



**MINERALS SAFEGUARDING**



**Yetminster and Ryme Intrinsic parishes - safeguarded mineral**

- Parish boundaries
- Safeguarded mineral

GEOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION SYSTEMS  
**Dorset County Council**  
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Minerals Safeguarding Area map courtesy of Dorset County Council

2.20 There are Minerals Safeguarding Areas defined that cover parts of the Neighbourhood Plan area. This includes a large swathe cutting across the centre of the area, including areas to the

south and west of Yetminster village relating to the potential for building stone. There are no active quarries in the Neighbourhood Plan area.

**POLLUTION RISKS**

2.21 There are no designations relating to water pollution such as nitrate vulnerability, drinking water safeguard or groundwater source protection currently operating in the area.

2.22 There are no historic landfill sites noted for the area on the Environment Agency records. There are a number of sites on the contaminated land register, most of which are relatively modest in extent and of low risk. The most significant in size are two former quarry pits, one at Quarry Farm the other south of Vecklands, to the south of the village (identified from the 1888 OS map). A more detailed check of the contaminated land register can be undertaken as part of any site assessment process.

2.23 The nearest sewage treatment works is at Thornford Bridge halt approximately 800m north of the Neighbourhood Plan area. The consultation zone in the north of the parish includes a very limited area around Trills Farm.

2.24 There are no Air Quality Management Areas identified in the area.

**HEALTH AND WELL-BEING**

2.25 Yetminster and Ryme Intrinseca are two separate parishes, who share a Parish Council. The two main settlements in the area are Yetminster Village in Yetminster, and the much smaller village of Ryme Intrinseca. There are also scattered farmsteads and a small hamlet (called Hamlet) just outside of Chetnole, to the south. According to the 2011 Census Yetminster Parish has a usual resident population of 1,105 persons, and the parish is 598ha in size. This compares to 115 persons and 470ha for Ryme Intrinseca Parish.

2.26 There is a range of services and facilities within the larger village of Yetminster, which include a primary school, a village hall, local healthcare, local shop and post office, public house and sports and recreation facilities. Most higher level facilities, such as hospital, secondary school etc, are situated in Sherborne / Yeovil and Dorchester. There are a cluster of small business workshops on Station Road. About 800m to the south of the village on Chetnole Road ABP Wholesale operate an abattoir and distribution centre – although this site does not employ many local residents. Across the area there is also the farming industry and a range of single owner/ self-employed businesses ranging from accommodation and catering to hairdressing, home services and IT.

2.27 The A37, which is the main road between the county town of Dorchester and the large town of Yeovil in Somerset, runs along the west edge of the two parishes. Yetminster is on the railway line that runs from Weymouth, through Dorchester, to Yeovil and on to Bristol, although it is not a busy main line railway, with services on general running about every 2 to 3 hours on a typical weekday. With the withdrawal of the bus service in 2017, the train is now the only form of regular public transport available. The travel to work data from the 2011 Census shows quite clearly that over 70% of workers commute 5km or more to work (to places such as Yeovil and Sherborne), and a similar proportion commute by car to work.

2.28 The parish has an ageing population profile – with the proportion of those aged under 45 dropping more significantly in the last inter-Census period than West Dorset.

	Yetminster			West Dorset		
	2001	2011	% change	2001	2011	% change
Aged up to 19	21.5%	18.9%	-2.6%	20.5%	22.1%	-1.6%
Aged 20 to 44	23.6%	19.2%	-4.4%	23.3%	26.4%	-3.2%
Aged 45 to 64	29.3%	32.9%	3.5%	29.8%	27.0%	2.8%
Aged 65 plus	25.6%	29.0%	3.5%	26.5%	24.5%	2.0%

2.29 About 20% of local resident's day to day activities is limited due to health (which is broadly the same as for West Dorset), and about 4.5% consider themselves to be in poor health. The amount of residents providing unpaid care is slightly higher than for West Dorset, at about 15% of residents (compared to 12% for West Dorset).

## EXISTING ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS

2.30 From the above assessment, the following existing environmental problems have been identified and consideration given to how these may change over time:

### *Biodiversity, Geology, Flora and Fauna*

2.31 Potential for residential (and other types of) development) to increase in phosphate levels from agricultural sources such as the use of fertilisers and wastewater from housing to cause eutrophication - a dense growth of algae which adversely affects the balance of flora and invertebrates within the Somerset Levels and Moor Ramsar Site, contributing to its declining condition, which is currently "unfavourable".

### *Landscape*

2.32 Whilst the area lies outside any nationally important landscapes, a number of detrimental features are noted in the landscape character assessments, primarily related to farming and land management practices (loss of wet woodland and riverside vegetation, fragmentation of hedgerows and / loss and decline in hedgerow trees), the negative visual impacts associated with some large agricultural buildings, and the loss of traditional orchards around settlements. Whilst not all of these impacts are a direct result of development, there is potential that development could result in the loss or furtherance of some of these problems on a low level.

### *Cultural Heritage*

2.33 The main problems noted in terms of heritage relate to the Conservation Area and upkeep of some of the historic buildings (though not so sufficient to be on the national 'at risk' register). In particular the appraisal refers to some detrimental features in the highway streetscape (in terms of traffic density and speeds, some of the garaging and access / turning areas, and the poles and wires in some streets), the business area by the station (which is not a good 'gateway' to arriving rail travellers; it would benefit from careful improvement), and the condition of Upbury Farm and its outbuildings. Development may provide an opportunity to positively address some of these issues.

### *Soil, Water, Air and Climatic Factors*

2.34 A significant environmental problem for the area is the flood risk and related sewer inundation. Whilst there is national and local plan policies that seek to address these matters the Neighbourhood Plan could potentially provide further guidance benefitting from the specific knowledge of issues in the locality.

### *Material Assets, Population and Human Health*

2.35 The area has an ageing population profile. Whilst there are a range of services and facilities within the larger village of Yetminster, higher level facilities (such as hospital, secondary school etc, are situated in Sherborne / Yeovil and Dorchester), and there are limited local employment opportunities. Development may be able to help sustain facilities but could also increase pressure where there may be limited capacity, and add to travel patterns accessing services and facilities outside of the area.

### 3. RELEVANT PLANS, PROGRAMMES AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 Based on the above appraisal, the following plans and programmes have been identified as potentially relevant, and the issues they highlight identified for consideration. In drawing up this list reference has been made to the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan Review Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report (July 2016).

Topic	Plans and Programmes	Key Objectives
<b>Biodiversity, geology, flora and fauna</b>	<p>EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020 (2011), EU Habitats Directive and Birds Directive (92/43/EEC and 79/409/EEC as amended)</p> <p>EU Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC)</p> <p>The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2012) and Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England’s wildlife and ecosystem services (2011)</p> <p>Dorset Biodiversity Strategy (Mid Term review) (2010)</p> <p>Dorset Biodiversity Protocol West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan (2015)</p>	<p>Retain the protection and improvement of the natural environment as core objectives of the planning system</p> <p>Seek to protect and conserve habitats and wild flora and fauna and avoid adverse effects upon nature conservation sites, including terrestrial and water environments</p> <p>Take into account legal protection of species in developing policies relating to biodiversity and habitat protection.</p> <p>Identify and map components of the local ecological networks</p> <p>Where development takes place, buffers should be provided to environmental assets to improve their biodiversity value and facilitate adaptation to climate change, mitigation achieved and biodiversity enhancements secured.</p>
<b>Landscape</b>	<p>European Landscape Convention (2000)</p> <p>The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2012)</p> <p>West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan (2015)</p>	<p>Recognise landscapes as an essential component of people’s surroundings, their cultural and natural heritage, and a foundation of their identity.</p> <p>The landscape character of the District will be protected through retention of the features that characterise the area.</p>
<b>Cultural heritage</b>	<p>Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act (1990)</p> <p>The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2012)</p> <p>West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan (2015)</p> <p>Yetminster Conservation Area Appraisal (2009)</p>	<p>Have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses”</p> <p>Conserve and enhance heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance and secure a viable use consistent with its conservation.</p>
<b>Soil, Water, Air and Climatic Factors</b>	<p>Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC)</p> <p>U.K Climate Change Act (2008)</p> <p>The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2012)</p> <p>South West River Basin Management Plan</p> <p>Safeguarding our Soils: A strategy for England (2009)</p> <p>Dorset County Council Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (2014)</p> <p>West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan (2015)</p> <p>Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole</p>	<p>Promote the sustainable use of water and prevent further deterioration of surface and groundwaters.</p> <p>Tackle the environmental and health problems relating to air quality</p> <p>Steer development away from areas of highest flood risk, apply sequential &amp; exceptions test, seek opportunities to relocate development to more sustainable locations.</p> <p>Improve the quality of soils and safeguard their ability to provide essential services for future generations</p> <p>Prevent contamination of land from causing unacceptable risks to human health or the wider environment</p>

Topic	Plans and Programmes	Key Objectives
	Energy Efficiency Strategy (2009) and Renewable Energy Strategy (2013) West Dorset Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2008) West Dorset Climate Change Strategy (2009) West Dorset Contaminated Land Strategy 2008-13 (2008)	Prevent harm to geological conservation interests Reduce vulnerability to the impacts of climate change, and mitigate against further climate change by reducing carbon emissions. Reduce carbon emissions to meet the UK target and move towards a low carbon economy
<b>Material assets, population and human health</b>	European Sustainable Development Strategy (2006) UK Government Sustainable Development Strategy (2005) The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2012 Transforming Dorset - Strategic Economic Plan 2014-21 Bournemouth Dorset and Poole Workspace Strategy (2016) Bournemouth, Poole and Dorset Local Transport Plan (2011-2026) Dorset Sustainable Community Strategy 2010-2020 (2010) Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Minerals Strategy (2014) West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan (2015) West Dorset Community Plan 2010-26 (2013) West Dorset District Council & Weymouth and Portland Borough Council Joint Housing Strategy 2014-19	Promote a prosperous local economy, create the conditions for enterprise to flourish Identify the size, type, tenure and range of housing to reflect local demand, to boost the supply of housing and ensure everyone can live in a good quality home Meet identified local and essential rural needs Contribute towards the creation of mixed and balanced communities that are socially inclusive Promote safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion Promote good public health, access to healthcare and opportunities for healthy, active and independent lifestyles Ensure that the necessary infrastructure is put in place to support growth Provide opportunities to reduce car use; improve safety; ensure convenient and appropriate public transport services; and seek greater network efficiency for pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians and better access to services for everyday needs. Prevent the unnecessary sterilisation of valuable mineral resources and negative impacts of incompatible development on existing minerals operations or facilities.

## 4. PROPOSED SCOPE OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

### THE RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER RELEVANT PLANS AND PROGRAMMES

4.1 Any Neighbourhood Plan has to be in general conformity with the adopted Local Plan for that area, in order to meet the basic conditions and be made<sup>3</sup>. Once a Neighbourhood Plan has been brought into force, the policies it contains may take precedence over existing non-strategic policies in a Local Plan that would otherwise conflict, until superseded by strategic or non-strategic policies that are adopted later.

4.2 The Local Plan for West Dorset was adopted in October 2015 (and its review has now commenced). The Local Plan's spatial strategy focuses the majority of new development on the main towns, including Dorchester and Sherborne. The largest settlement in the Neighbourhood Plan area - Yetminster - does not have any specific site allocations but does have a defined development boundary, and as one of the larger villages is considered to be a potentially a suitable location for some development (primarily to meet local needs) at an appropriate scale to the size of the settlement. Whilst a new Dorset-wide Local Plan is being prepared, it has yet to be submitted for its examination (scheduled for later in 2022) and has not therefore reached an advanced stage. The early draft continues a similar approach to planning as per the adopted Local Plan, and is not anticipating significant development within the area.

4.3 The Neighbourhood Plan cannot deal with county matters (mineral extraction and waste development), nationally significant infrastructure or development that falls within Annex 1 to Council Directive 85/337/EEC as these are specifically excluded by the legislation.

### THE PLAN'S CONTENTS AND MAIN OBJECTIVES

The plan's vision and objectives (which have been subject to minor updates following the consultation on the scope of this report) are as follows.

#### VISION AND OBJECTIVES

*"By 2036 we will be living in a vibrant, supportive community which will value its historic environment and rural setting. Local people's requirements will have been met by providing a variety of housing, business opportunities and community facilities. Changes will have retained the distinctive characteristics of the individual villages and will have made a genuinely positive contribution to our environment in terms of the scale, design, materials, layout and density of development".*

4.4 The following objectives reflect the resulting scope of the plan:

#### ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE AND WATER MANAGEMENT

- To safeguard the historic environment including the integrity of the Conservation Area, nationally protected buildings and sites and buildings of local historic value.
- To protect and maintain green spaces wildlife areas, footpaths and views within the plan area.

#### CLIMATE CHANGE AND WATER MANAGEMENT

- To mitigate the impact of climate change and, where practical, take steps to adapt to it.
- To promote steps to reduce or eliminate flooding and to maintain adequate sewage treatment facilities.

#### COMMUNITY SERVICES, FACILITIES AND LEISURE

- To maintain and encourage a range of services and facilities to ensure the neighbourhood remains a thriving community.

<sup>3</sup> As required under Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 section 8(2)e

- To create a safe and supportive environment to encourage a healthy lifestyle and the well-being of residents by the provision of open spaces and other facilities for sport and recreation.
- To ensure that practical steps are taken to give all members of the community the best possible access to community facilities.

## HOUSING

- To provide sufficient housing to meet the anticipated local housing needs within the plan period.
- To identify sites for new housing.
- To achieve well designed housing

## BUSINESS SERVICES & ECONOMY:

- To support existing businesses, expand local employment opportunities and maintain the area as a working community.

## TRANSPORT, ROAD SAFETY AND TRANSPORT

- To make the roads and pavements safer.
- To ensure the provision and maintenance of adequate public transport.

4.5 In terms of the likely need for further development, a pro-rata assessment was made of possible housing needs for the Neighbourhood Plan area. The conclusion from this is that a total of 144 dwellings may be required for the 25 year period 2011-2036 (covering the adopted plan and its roll-forward through the review). The first draft of the Dorset Local Plan (January 2021) included an indicative housing target for Neighbourhood Plans areas such as Yetminster and Ryme Intrinsic, suggesting that these should be based on the existing commitments (76 dwellings as of 1 April 2020) plus a windfall allowance based on past trends, which for this area would be 1.6 dwellings per annum (for the period 2024 – 2038). This would therefore equate to a 'pro-rata' housing requirement of at least 115 dwellings for our plan period (taking into account completions since 2017 and the shorter time period). Both assessments equate to about 5 or 6 dwellings a year.

# 5. ASSESSMENT PROCESS

## DETERMINING THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

5.1 From the above assessment of environmental issues and relevant plans, programmes and objectives, the following are considered to be the important issues that should be included in the assessment of options and alternatives:

5.2 **Biodiversity, geology, flora and fauna** – the potential for development to harm significant ecological interests is limited to the issues relating to the potential for residential (and other types of) development) to increase in phosphate levels contributing to the declining condition Somerset Levels and Moor Ramsar Site, which is currently "unfavourable". In addition, all sites have potential for biodiversity interest that could be harmed by development and as such their ecological interest and possible presence of protected species should be considered, and opportunities to enhance biodiversity (such as through establishing wildlife corridors connecting habitats) could be identified.

5.3 **Landscape** – although outside of any nationally designated landscapes, development may impact on local landscape character. The scale of development proposed and sensitivity of the landscape to change should therefore be taken into account in any site selection process, including identifying and protecting important landscape features, and opportunities to enhance the landscape character.

5.4 **Cultural heritage** – there is potential for development to harm the significance of heritage assets, particularly Listed Buildings which may adjoin a development site, and the Yetminster Conservation Area. The Conservation Team at the District Council should be involved in the site selection process, to assist in identifying potential harm to these assets and advising how this can

be avoided. Where possible development should make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

**5.5 Soil, water, air and climatic factors** – there are flooding issues within the Neighbourhood Plan Area, including that arising from groundwater flooding, and the avoidance of flood risk should therefore be a key consideration. The possible sterilisation of minerals resources and the grade of agricultural land should also be considered for larger greenfield sites.

**5.6 Material assets, population and human health** – given the current level of out-commuting and the ageing population, consideration should also be given to the potential to reduce reliance on the private car and provide opportunities for affordable housing, work, and community facilities in easy walking distance of the main community facilities.

**PROPOSED SUSTAINABILITY OBJECTIVES AND ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK**

5.7 The following objectives and basis for assessing the site specific allocations have been used in the more detailed appraisal of the potential impact of the plan.

Objective	Assessment basis for site allocations
Ensure no <b>ecological interests</b> would be harmed by development, and where opportunities arise, enhance habitats and biodiversity	Consider proximity to nature conservation designations and possible presence of protected species / habitats and whether development could include ecological benefits eg connecting wildlife corridors All sites >0.1ha proposed for inclusion in the plan should be subject to an ecological walkover survey to identify the likely harm and any potential mitigation
Ensure development respects and reinforces the area’s rural <b>landscapes</b> and character	Through site visits assess visibility in views from public areas and potential harm to features that contribute positively to the local landscape character, including land of local landscape importance and impact on reason for designation
Protect the area’s <b>heritage assets</b> , and where opportunities arise, enhance the historic character of the area	Consider proximity to existing heritage designations and potential harm to these assets including their setting and significance, and whether development could include enhancements, inviting responses from WDDC conservation team. Where assessment highlights potential harm, sites proposed for inclusion in the plan will be subject to a more detailed assessment to identify the likely harm and any potential mitigation
<b>Reduce flood risk</b>	Record proximity to existing flood risk zones (as mapped) and local knowledge of flooding incidences, inviting responses from Wessex Water and the DCC Flood Risk Management team. Where assessment highlights potential harm, sites proposed for inclusion in the plan will be subject to more detailed evaluation of whether any risk can be avoided, and potential mitigation
<b>Avoid sterilisation</b> of high grade agricultural land or minerals resources	Assess scale of loss of productive farmland (including grade where known) and record whether a site is within a minerals’ safeguarding area. Prioritise development of brownfield sites
Provide housing, employment and community facilities to help <b>meet local needs</b>	Assess quantity of houses that could be provided including affordable housing, and the potential for the site to accommodate new jobs or community facilities to help reduce the need to travel.
<b>Ensure safe access</b> and a pedestrian-friendly environment	Consider distance to key community facilities, access to the countryside / nature, and whether the site is safe and accessible, inviting responses from DCC as Highways Authority

**IN THE ABSENCE OF A NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

5.8 There is no legal requirement to produce a Neighbourhood Plan for all areas, and in its absence planning decisions would be made in line with the development plan (which in this case is

the West Dorset and Weymouth Local Plan 2016), unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

5.9 The strategic approach of the Local Plan is that “development opportunities in rural areas will be focused primarily at the larger villages and should take place at an appropriate scale to the size of the village (unless identified as a strategic allocation). Neighbourhood development plans will also bring forward new development, and may allocate additional sites, or extend an existing (or add a new) development boundary to help deliver growth. Away from existing settlements, development opportunities will be more limited and focussed on those activities that will help meet essential rural needs and support the rural economy.”

5.10 In order to be made, a Neighbourhood Plan must meet the basic conditions. These include the requirement that the Plan has had appropriate regard to national policy and is in general conformity with the strategic policies in the development plan for the area, and that the plan will contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.

5.11 In the absence of a Neighbourhood Plan, although development may still take place within the defined development boundary, the potential for development outside of this area is strictly controlled (unless delivered through an exception-type policy or if the Council lacks a 5 year housing land supply). This is likely to have an adverse social and economic impact if local needs cannot be met. Features of local environmental importance (such as valued green spaces) may not be readily apparent and therefore some environmental harm could also occur.

5.12 The Neighbourhood Plan provides the opportunity to achieve a more co-ordinated and planned pattern of development that takes into account environmental, social and economic issues, giving greater certainty to local communities, local businesses and service providers, to enable more sustainable patterns of development.

## SCOPING CONSULTATION

5.13 The Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England were consulted on the scope of the Strategic Environmental Assessment. The consultation commenced on 01 June 2018, for the statutory 5 weeks, in line with the requirements set out in the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

5.14 The responses to the consultation and how these were acted upon are summarised below:

Respondent	Summary of response	Actions taken
Environment Agency	We have considered the information contained and can confirm that the SEA topic areas and objectives adequately cover the environmental constraints for this area. We support that the plan will look to prevent development in flood risk areas and manage surface water runoff, the plan should look for opportunities to reduce existing local issues. We also support that the plan is looking to enhance biodiversity interests and this should include the green corridors and networks in the area, including watercourses.	Response noted.
Historic England	There are no specific comments on its content, potentially useful advice notes highlighted.	Response noted.
Natural England	Natural England do not consider that the plan is likely to have significant effects on protected sites. We welcome the inclusion of the Ecological Network mapping layer as a tool to identify important areas for wildlife and suggest that the locally important wildlife sites within the plan area which are Sites of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI) are identified as such in any accompanying text. There appears to	Response noted. Improved access to nature has now been included under the ‘safe access’ objective.

be a good network of public rights of way in the plan area, continued and improved access to nature for health and wellbeing purposes should be identified as an objective in the plan

## SITE OPTIONS CONSULTATION

5.15 To establish what sites local landowners would be prepared to put forward for possible development, a 'call for sites' was run in November 2017 and some 12 sites were submitted as part of this process. Two additional sites identified as having potential as part of the 2014 SHLAA and the 2016 SHLAA update were also considered, together with two additional sites identified by the housing working group as having potential for housing development, but from which no landowner contact had been made.

5.16 Sites that had been submitted to the District Council's SHLAA and excluded were not considered to be reasonable alternatives (with the exception of Site 1 where the request was made that this should be considered alongside Sites 2 and 3 as a package). This includes the large site off Ryme Road, which was excluded as unsuitable for development, adverse visual impact and poorly connected to the village centre. This site was also the subject of an outline planning application for the erection of 98 dwellings in October 2015. The planning application was appealed on the grounds of non-determination in February 2016, and the Planning Committee considered the application in April 2016 where they determined that they would have refused it had it not been appealed. In May 2016 the applicant (Gladman Developments Ltd) contacted the Neighbourhood Plan Group to suggest the site as a suitable candidate for the Neighbourhood Plan. The Appeal Inquiry held in November 2016, and the decision to dismiss the appeal made in January 2017, despite the lack of a 5 year housing land supply, on the grounds that the proposal would result in significant harm to the character and appearance of the landscape, and would also add to the existing imbalance between jobs and homes within the village and would be likely to lead to an increased reliance on the use of cars and an increase in carbon emissions contrary to the strategic objectives of the Local Plan. There was no response from Gladman to the 2017 call for sites, and contact was made with them following this to specifically notify them that, given the excluded status of their site in the latest SHLAA report, unless the landowner presented compelling reasons that the issues raised by the Local Planning Authority are not material, that it would not be further considered. There was no response from them to this letter. On this basis (no landowner or other interest shown, dismissed at appeal and also excluded from the SHLAA) the site has not been considered further as part of this assessment process.

5.17 Stake Ford Barn (numbered Site 6) has not been included in the assessment as prior approval for its change of use to a dwelling was granted in May 2018. Similarly the site east of Thornford Road was not assessed given that outline planning permission for up to 87 dwellings was granted on 23 September 2016 and reserved matters subsequently granted for 85 dwellings on 15 November 2018.

5.18 The site options assessed for the purpose of the options consultation are therefore as listed below:

- Sites 1 to 3: Mill Lane, Yetminster (applicant request that these be considered jointly)
- Site 4: Land adjoining Basils, Melbury Road, Yetminster
- Site 5: Land adjacent to Shearstones, Brister End, Yetminster
- Site 7: Yew Tree Cottage, Brister End (split site, 7a land adjoining, 7b land opposite)
- Site 8: Land NE of Brister End between Mapledurham and Hillview Farm, Yetminster
- Site 9: Land NE of Brister End beyond Windyridge, Yetminster
- Site 10: Kilbernie, Chapel Lane, Yetminster
- Site 11: Old Grain Store, Downfield, Ryme Intrinsic
- Site 12: The Old Forge, Manor Farm, Ryme Intrinsic
- Site 13: Land W of Thornford Road and N of Frylake Meadow, Yetminster (2014 SHLAA)
- Site 14: Land N of Chapel Meadow, Yetminster (2016 SHLAA update: revised area)
- Site 15: Land E of Stonyacres, north of High Street
- Site 16: Land at Upbury Farm

5.19 Maps showing these site options are provided in **Appendix 3**.

5.20 Members of the neighbourhood plan working group, together with their planning advisor, visited all of the sites in June 2018, and took notes of possible issues. Technical expertise was also sought from the District and County Councils regarding landscape, heritage, highways, flooding, contaminated land. The following table summarises the extent to which the various options performed against the sustainability criteria at that stage of the plan’s development.

**Sustainability Assessment – Overview of Potential Impacts of Site Options**

Topic↓ & Site→	1 - 3	4	5	7a	7b	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
<b>Ecology *</b>	-	-	-	0	-	-	-	0	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Landscape</b>	--	0	0	0	-	0	0	+	0	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Heritage</b>	--	0	0	--	-	0	0	+	0	+	0	0	-	--
<b>Flooding</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	-	0	0
<b>Soils / Minerals</b>	-	-	-	0	0	-	-	++	0	+	-	-	-	-
<b>Local Needs</b>	++	+	++	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	++	++	++	++
<b>Safe Access</b>	-	-	--	-	-	--	--	-	--	--	-	-	-	-

\* ecology walkover surveys still to be carried out to check for on-site issues (if site is to be allocated)

Key: **++** significant positive impact possible      **-** some adverse impact likely  
**+** some positive impact likely      **--** significant adverse impact possible  
**0** neutral impact likely      **?** impact uncertain

5.21 Based on those assessments, the following sites were assessed as likely to be preferable in avoiding significant harm, and maximizing environmental benefits:

Best performing sites		Mitigation measures suggested
Site 4:	Land adjoining Basils, Melbury Road, Yetminster	Include mitigation for loss of hedgerow Ensure careful design so that development relates positively to the junction with (and view from along) Birch Lane and does not dominate the skyline. Relocate and provide improved access Consider feasibility of providing off-road footpath connecting to Queen Street and off-road link to footpath N34/5 (to the south).
Site 7b:	opposite Yew Tree Cottage, Brister End	Retain hedgerows as far as practical, and yew trees to road front, and include additional ecological mitigation Development to consider historic context, and be subordinate and sensitive to setting of Yew Tree Cottage (opposite) New vehicular access would need to be made off Downs Lane.
Site 10:	Kilbernie, Chapel Lane, Yetminster	Design to be sensitive to the context of the Conservation Area and Listed Building Consider feasibility of improving shared-surface pedestrian connection to High Street along Chapel Lane (see also site 14)
Site 13:	Land W of Thornford Road and N of Frylake Meadow, Yetminster	Retain hedgerows and hedgerow trees as far as practical and include additional ecological mitigation Limit development to south side of public footpath, with landscaping along this edge Include measures to avoid access road becoming impassable in the event of flooding Extend the existing footpath along the west side of Thornford Road

Best performing sites		Mitigation measures suggested
Site 14:	Land N of Chapel Meadow, Yetminster	Retain hedgerows and hedgerow trees as far as practical and include additional ecological mitigation. Remove existing structures / clutter and reinforce landscape planting to northern site boundaries and along river corridor Improve vehicular access and include measures to avoid this becoming impassable in the event of flooding Consider feasibility of improving shared-surface pedestrian connection to High Street along Chapel Lane
Site 15:	Land E of Stonyacres, north of High Street	Retain hedgerows as far as practical and include additional ecological mitigation. Limit height of buildings towards southern end of site, avoid development towards southern edge of site closest to Listed Buildings and strengthen intervening landscaping to Listed Buildings. Avoid development on the small area of land where surface water flood risk is noted, and as a precaution require FRA to consider drainage flows across the site Consider feasibility of providing off-road footpath connecting north to Folly Farm development and formalising footpath south to High Street

5.22 The detailed site assessments (as reproduced in **Appendix 4**) were sent to the following consultees as well as being made available to the general public via the Neighbourhood Plan website and printed copies made available at the consultation event on Saturday 7 July at St Andrew’s School Hall.

- Adjoining Parish Councils (Barwick and Stoford (in South Somerset), Cam Vale Group Parish Council, Chetnole and Stockwood Group, Leigh Parish Council, Melbury Osmund Parish Council, Thornford and Beer Hackett Parish Council)
- Dorset AONB Partnership
- Dorset County Council (Planning – with a request to liaise with Highways and PRow teams)
- Environment Agency
- Highways England
- Historic England
- Natural England
- Network Rail Infrastructure Limited
- Scottish and Southern Energy
- Somerset County Council
- South Somerset District Council
- Southern Gas Network
- Wessex Water
- West Dorset District Council (Spatial Policy and Design and Conservation Teams)

5.23 The options consultation ran from 9 July 2018 for a period of 3 weeks. The responses to the consultation and how these were acted upon are summarised below:

Options Consultation Outcomes

Respondent	Summary of response	Actions proposed
Dorset AONB Partnership	Due to the distances between the site options and the AONB, it is felt unnecessary to provide detailed comments on the various options at this stage. However, were the Plan to favour a larger site to meet all of or much of the proposed growth, it would be worth reconsulting regarding the potential impact of this on wider views.	Noted – no further action required

<p><b>Environment Agency</b></p>	<p>Given the nature of the growth and location of development (that there is no new built development in flood risk areas), we have no further comments to make at this time.</p>	<p>Noted – no further action required</p>
<p><b>Historic England</b></p>	<p>The more detailed assessment of all those sites which were considered and the degree of heritage understanding associated with those which were dismissed (as set out in the Appendices) provides much reassurance about the robustness and integrity of the methodology used and the corresponding basis for the conclusions which informed those which have been carried forward.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
	<p>The fact that any heritage assets more than 400m from a site are unlikely to be affected should not be assumed, and therefore further assessment may be appropriate depending on their significance and setting.</p>	<p>All the sites have been visited and assessed independently by AECOM and the potential impact on heritage assets has not been restricted to those within 400m.</p>
	<p>Site 15 is carried forward on the basis that some adverse impact is likely. It refers to the specific extension of the conservation area boundary to include the site as part of a series of gardens and crofts which in turn formed part of an early field system. It is tempting to assume that the loss of just a part of this regime will therefore cause only minor harm but it does seem that the existence and retention of the whole system is a key part of its contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area and its relationship with its wider setting. On that basis, and notwithstanding the consideration of visibility, the loss of just a part will therefore have a significant impact on the integrity of the whole and in its incrementality set an unfortunate and subsequently irresistible precedent. I am therefore inclined to believe that the harm to the conservation area will therefore be greater than the report would suggest and it may become necessary to review its suitability.</p>	<p>Noted – the potential heritage impact will be reassessed on this basis in consultation with the Conservation team at WDDC</p>
<p><b>Natural England</b></p>	<p>All preferred sites should be subject to a preliminary walk-over survey, given the rural location of the sites and their potential ecological value.</p>	<p>Noted – ecology surveys have been scheduled</p>
	<p>Site 7b is currently a greenfield plot which lies between Vecklands Wood and Downs Lane. Development of Site 7b could result in a detrimental degradation effect on the adjacent woodland which may be difficult to mitigate by a single dwelling plot (due to viability). We recommend the inclusion of this site in the preferred options is reviewed and where housing targets can be met by combination of other preferred sites thought should be given to whether it is necessary to take it forward Site 7b</p>	<p>Noted – the potential ecological impact will be reassessed on this basis (NB this site was subsequently allowed on appeal)</p>
	<p>Site 10 has the potential to be used by roosting bats and as such it is recommended that the site be</p>	<p>Noted – ecology surveys have been scheduled</p>

	assessed for its use by bats as part of the walk-over survey (if deemed appropriate) to inform any future development	and this factor would be considered
<b>Wessex Water</b>	Site 1 – 3 There is an existing public foul sewer crossing site 2. To avoid build over this will need to be accommodated by the site layout or relocated.	Noted – this factor will need to be taken into account if the sites are allocated
	Site 11 Our records show that there is a mains water distribution main running to the south of the site (outside of the site boundary).	Noted – this factor can be taken into account at planning application stage
	Site 12 The options stage report proposing that surface water drainage could be towards the road. Our records do not identify any public surface water drains in this location.	Noted – this factor is unlikely to impact on the site allocation
	Site 13 Our records show the presence of a public surface water sewer running along the eastern boundary of the site parallel with Melbury Road. This will need to be accurately located on site to inform site layout.	Noted – this factor can be taken into account at planning application stage
	Map provided showing areas where further development may increase or be at risk of sewer flooding caused by the inundation of sewers by groundwater during periods of prolonged wet weather. This potentially impacts on sites 1-5, 7, 8 (part), 10, 13 – 16. Typical advice will include ensuring that no surface water is directed to the public foul sewer and internal plumbing is designed in such a way to reduce the risk of restricted toilet use.	Noted – this factor will need to be taken into account if the sites are allocated
<b>West Dorset District Council</b>	Ensure that the final report includes the reasons the rejected options were not taken forward and the reasons for selecting the preferred approach in light of the alternatives.	Noted – this will be explained in the pre-submission stage report
	Ensure that the final report includes a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of knowhow) encountered in compiling the required information.	Noted – this will be explained in the pre-submission stage report
	Strongly recommend that the reasons for not including the Ryme Road (Gladman) site are clearly explained if the site is not assessed as a potential option.	Noted – this will be explained in the pre-submission stage report.

**TECHNICAL OR OTHER DIFFICULTIES WITH THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS**

5.24 Evidence is constantly updated which can make elements of the assessment out of date (such as the appraisal of relevant policies and programmes), although this is unlikely to materially affect the objectives and scoring.

5.25 It was not practical to carry out a landscape visual impact assessment in relation to the potential site allocations, and a judgement on likely impact has therefore been made without the benefit of using a qualified landscape architect to assess the likely impacts. Consultation with the relevant advisors (such as Dorset Council) has however been undertaken and the results of the independents assessment as undertaken by AECOM have also been taken into account.

5.26 National planning guidance on plan-making advises that this should be based on proportionate evidence. Given the scale of development proposed and likely environmental impacts the above difficulties are not considered to be of significant concern.

## 6. TESTING

### TESTING OF THE PLAN'S POLICIES AND REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES

6.1 This section provides a summary of the sustainability impacts associated with each policy area in the pre-submission draft Neighbourhood Plan, and has been updated in response to the site specific policies to take on board the further research and changes made in response to the pre-submission consultation feedback.

6.2 The results of the analysis of each policy is provided in table format against each of the sustainability objectives in Section 5, and graded as follows:

Key:		significant positive impact likely
		positive impact likely
	-	neutral impact likely
		adverse impact likely
		significant adverse impact likely
		impact uncertain but unlikely to be adversely significant
		impact uncertain but potentially adversely significant

### ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE AND WATER MANAGEMENT POLICIES:

6.3 Policies ENV1-8 and CC1-4 deal with the objectives of safeguarding the historic environment, protecting and maintaining green spaces, wildlife areas, footpaths and views within the plan area and mitigating the impact of climate change and, where practical, take steps to adapt to it (including reducing flood risk and maintaining adequate sewage treatment facilities). No reasonable alternatives were identified for further assessment – the only other option being the omission of the policies and reliance on the Local Plan (ie the baseline).

Environmental assessment objective	Biodiversity, fauna & flora	Landscape	Cultural heritage	Climate change (flood risk)	Soils (agriculture and minerals)	Local needs (homes / jobs / community)	Health (safe and accessible)
<b>Policies and reasonable alternatives</b>							
EN1: Building Conservation	-	✓	✓	-	-	-	-
EN2: Local Landscape Character	✓	✓✓	-	-	-	-	-
EN3: Local Biodiversity	✓✓	✓	-	-	-	-	-
EN4: Local Green Spaces	✓	✓	✓	-	-	-	-
EN5: Land of Local Landscape Importance	✓	✓✓	✓	-	-	-	-
EN6: Views	-	✓✓	✓	-	-	-	-
EN7: Important Open Gap	✓	✓	-	-	-	-	-
EN8: Footpaths and Bridleways	-	-	-	-	-	-	✓
CC1: Publicising Carbon Footprint	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
CC2: Individual & Community Scale Energy	✓			-	-	✓	-
CC3: Renewable Energy and Waste...	✓			-	-	-	-

CC4: Energy Generation to Offset Predicted...	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
CC5: Drainage	-	-	-	✓	-	-	-

6.4 The following table sets out the basis for the above scores.

Objective	Assessment basis
<b>Biodiversity, fauna &amp; flora</b>	A number of policies will have a positive impact due to the retention of features and spaces / corridors which support wildlife and biodiversity. Whilst the adopted Local Plan ENV2 encourages opportunities to incorporate and enhance biodiversity in and around developments, EN3 will require this in a more comprehensive manner and should therefore achieve a more significant positive impact. Policies CC2 and CC3 make specific reference to avoiding harm to biodiversity.
<b>Landscape</b>	The area’s rural landscape and character are reinforced by a number of features and spaces protected through these policies. In particular, EN2 and EN5 identifies features and areas which make a significant landscape contribution, and EN6 identifies key views that are important to the appreciation and enjoyment of this landscape. Whilst CC2 and CC3 would encourage (for example) the installation of solar panels on the roofs of buildings that could be visually intrusive, the policy wording seeks to ensure that it is designed appropriate to the character of the area – it is therefore uncertain whether this may still result in a negative impact but it is not considered it is likely to be significant (and a number of schemes could be developed regardless under permitted development rights).
<b>Cultural heritage</b>	Policy EN1 draws attention to the importance of a number of undesignated heritage assets that might otherwise be overlooked in the decision making process. Several of the spaces and vies protected under policies EN4-6 are important to the setting and enjoyment of historic buildings and features. Policy CC3 make specific reference to avoiding substantial harm to heritage assets, but the historic environment is not specifically highlighted in Policy CC2 (although this would be balanced in the decision-making with regard to Policy EN1) – so whilst the scores record the impact as uncertain whether this may still result in a negative impact it is not considered that it is likely to be significant
<b>Climate change (flood risk)</b>	No obvious issues related to flood risk identified in relation to any of the policies in this section. The Local Plan policy in respect of avoiding areas at risk of flooding would still apply. Policy CC5 provides additional checks that development is designed to respond to the specific flood risk issues relevant to the area. NB whilst Policies CC1 and CC4 refer to minimising the carbon footprint of development / using renewable energy sources, this is not specifically covered as an assessment basis under this objective.
<b>Soils (agriculture / minerals)</b>	No obvious issues related to the potential loss of productive farmland or minerals’ resources identified in relation to any of the policies in this section.
<b>Local needs (homes / jobs / community)</b>	No obvious issues related to the provision of housing, jobs or community infrastructure identified. The protection of green spaces does not undermine the plan’s ability to meeting local needs through the site allocations. The provision of community-scale renewable energy project is encouraged under Policy CC2 and therefore is considered to have a positive impact regarding meeting local needs.
<b>Health (safe and accessible places)</b>	No obvious issues related to the creating safe and accessible places. Whilst Policy EN2 looks to retain roadside hedges, these should not impact on achieving highway access (particular given that wide grass verges could be used to provide the necessary visibility splays). Policy EN8 specifically supports improved public access along public footpaths and bridleways in the area, including the use of permissive paths and opportunities to create new paths and links.

**SEA Assessment recommendations:**

⇒ include clarification in CC2 regarding avoidance of substantial harm to heritage assets.

**COMMUNITY SERVICES, FACILITIES AND LEISURE POLICIES:**

6.5 Policies CS1-2 deal with the objectives of maintaining and encouraging a range of services and facilities to ensure the neighbourhood remains a thriving community, creating a safe and supportive environment to encourage a healthy lifestyle and the well-being of residents by the provision of open spaces and other facilities for sport and recreation, and ensuring that all practical steps are taken to improve access to community facilities. These largely expand on the Local Plan policies that cover these issues, and no reasonable alternatives were identified for further assessment – the only other option being the omission of the policies and reliance on the Local Plan (ie the baseline).

<b>Environmental assessment objective</b>	<b>Biodiversity, fauna &amp; flora</b>	<b>Landscape</b>	<b>Cultural heritage</b>	<b>Climate change (flood risk)</b>	<b>Soils (agriculture and minerals)</b>	<b>Local needs (homes / jobs / community)</b>	<b>Health (safe and accessible)</b>
<b>Policies and reasonable alternatives</b>							
CS1: Existing Comm / Leis Services & Facilities	-	-	-	-	-	✓	✓
CS2: New Comm / Leis Services & Facilities	-	-	-	-	-	✓	✓

6.6 The following table sets out the basis for the above scores.

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Assessment basis</b>
<b>Biodiversity, fauna &amp; flora</b>	No obvious issues arising from these policies. The provision of new facilities within or adjoining existing settlements is unlikely to result in significant impacts in relation to this objective, when considered in conjunction with the other proposed policies.
<b>Landscape</b>	As above – taking into account that the most valued landscapes are protected under Policies EN4 and EN5
<b>Cultural heritage</b>	As above – taking into account that the locally important historic buildings and other features of historic interest are protected under Policy EN1
<b>Climate change (flood risk)</b>	No obvious issues arising from these policies.
<b>Soils (agriculture / minerals)</b>	As above. It is unlikely that the scale of any proposals would result in a large area of agricultural land being required for development
<b>Local needs (homes / jobs / community)</b>	The existing facilities are generally well-used and in central, accessible locations. The policies largely reflects the Local Plan stance but clarifies the facilities that are of particular local importance, and to which settlements the policy should be applied to (ie Yetminster and Ryme Intrinsic, but not the much smaller settlement of Hamlet).
<b>Health (safe and accessible places)</b>	No obvious issues arising from these policies. Policy CS2 specifically refers to ensuring that the resulting vehicular traffic movements can be safely accommodated on the rural road network

**SEA Assessment recommendations:**

⇒ no changes required.

**HOUSING POLICIES:**

6.7 Policies H1-2 deal with the strategy for meeting housing needs (the specific sites are appraised separately) and the mix in the size, type and affordability of dwellings proposed, and

Policy H7 (was H9) sets out the design criteria based on the appraisal of the character of the area and support more environmentally-friendly designs. Given the local plan strategy and evidence of local housing need (and that the policy on design expands on the Local Plan policies that cover these issues), no reasonable alternatives were identified for further assessment – the only other option being the omission of the policies and reliance on the Local Plan (ie the baseline).

6.8 The remaining policies in this section of the plan are site specific allocations. A wide number of alternatives were assessed at the site options stage in July 2018 (please refer to section 5 for information on how the options were identified). A later site assessment undertaken by AECOM independently assessed the sites (and an additional site identified at Cross Farm) and advised on those that could be rejected as potentially unsuitable for development. The results of both these assessments (and the feedback received in response to the July consultation) was used to identify the reasonable alternatives for the site allocations (as indicated in the status column in the following table). Site 07b - Land opposite Yew Tree Cottage, Brister End, was allowed at appeal (for a single dwelling) in June 2020<sup>4</sup> and therefore has been removed as a potential alternative prior to the commencement of the pre-submission consultation.

6.9 This stage was additionally informed by an ecological survey (undertaken by Bryan Edwards of Dorset Environmental Records Centre) that was undertaken of seven areas that were proposed for allocation within the Neighbourhood Plan, and liaison with the Conservation Team of the Local Planning Authority with regard to the heritage issues noted in relation to sites 12 and 15.

Site Ref	July 2018 Options Assessment	March 2019 AECOM Findings	Status
01/02 - Mill Lane	<b>Site not suitable</b> Would significantly harm the character of the LLLI (Land of Local Landscape Importance) and impact on the character of Mill Lane within the Conservation Area, and also to a degree adversely impact the setting of St Francis Cottage, and may therefore cause substantial harm.	<b>Site not suitable</b> Significant issues with access. Small size of site would not justify improvements to Mill Lane. Development here would impact the landscape and setting of the surrounding area and houses along Church Lane	<b>Rejected</b> (not a reasonable alternative)
04 - Land adjoining Basils, Melbury Road	<b>Site suitable</b> Include mitigation for loss of hedgerow Ensure careful design so that development relates positively to the junction with (and view from along) Birch Lane and does not dominate the skyline. Relocate and provide improved access Consider feasibility of providing off-road footpath connecting to Queen Street and off-road link to footpath N34/5 (to the south).	<b>Site suitable (medium constraints)</b> Site would only be feasible if issue with ransom strip were resolved Landscape and visual impact could be mitigated with careful design Sensitive design would also be required to mitigate potential impacts on the Conservation Area.	<b>Included</b> as Policy H4
05 - Land adjacent to Shearstones, Brister End	<b>Site potentially suitable (but not preferred)</b> Significant distance from key facilities (village hall, shop, school and healthcare centre).	<b>Site not suitable</b> Relatively isolated and poor pedestrian access to centre. The site is also separated from Yetminster and is not adjacent to the settlement boundary. Significant landscape and visual impact	<b>Rejected</b> (not a reasonable alternative)
07a -Land adjacent to Yew Tree Cottage,	<b>Site potentially suitable (but not preferred)</b> Yew Tree Cottage is Grade 2 Listed. Development within the grounds	<b>Site suitable (medium constraints)</b> Site only just falls into this category as it still has some significant	<b>Assessed</b> (as possible alternative)

<sup>4</sup> APP/D1265/W/20/3245923

Brister End	would be likely to detract from the semi-rural setting of Yew Tree Cottage and cause potentially significant harm.	constraints which would need to be mitigated Lack of suitable pedestrian access along Brister End Development would have significant impact on listed building and would require significant mitigation	
08 - Land NE of Brister End between Mapledurham and Hillview Farm	<b>Site potentially suitable (but not preferred)</b> Significant distance from key facilities (village hall, shop, school and healthcare centre).	<b>Site not suitable</b> Site is isolated and not adjacent to the settlement boundary (conflict with paragraph 79) Improvements would have to be made to pedestrian access to village centre for this site to be acceptable. Site would obstruct long views to north though it would be unlikely to be highly visible from north	<b>Rejected</b> (not a reasonable alternative)
09 - Land NE of Brister End beyond Windyridge	<b>Site potentially suitable (but not preferred)</b> Significant distance from key facilities (village hall, shop, school and healthcare centre).	<b>Site not suitable</b> Site is isolated and not adjacent to the settlement boundary (conflict with NPPF paragraph 79) Improvements would have to be made to pedestrian access to village centre for this site to be acceptable. Site would obstruct long views to north though it would be unlikely to be highly visible from north	<b>Rejected</b> (not a reasonable alternative)
10 - Kilbernie, Chapel Lane	<b>Site suitable</b> Design to be sensitive to the context of the Conservation Area and Listed Building Consider feasibility of improving shared-surface pedestrian connection to High Street along Chapel Lane (see also site 14).	<b>Site suitable (minor constraints)</b> Redeveloping the site could provide opportunity to replace existing dwelling with more sensitively designed dwellings in keeping with nearby heritage assets Site is centrally located with good access to centre of village	<b>Included</b> as Policy H5
11 - Old Grain Store, Downfield, Ryme Intrinsic	<b>Site potentially suitable (but not preferred)</b> Significant distance from key facilities (village hall, shop, school and healthcare centre).	<b>Site not suitable</b> Development would be in isolated location and is not adjacent to Yetminster defined development boundary Existing new dwellings has come through barn conversion. Any new development would be on greenfield land	<b>Included</b> as Policy H7
12 - Old Forge, Manor Farm, Ryme Intrinsic	<b>Site potentially suitable (but not preferred)</b> Significant distance from key facilities (village hall, shop, school and healthcare centre).	<b>Site suitable (medium constraints)</b> Site is well located in Ryme Intrinsic Well-screened and opportunity to create sensitively designed courtyard development, however it is adjacent to Grade II* listed building Contamination needs further examination SHLAA suggests that site has potential for rural affordable housing; this could be explored through neighbourhood plan	<b>Included</b> as Policy H8
13 - Land west of Thornford Road and	<b>Site suitable</b> Retain hedgerows and hedgerow trees as far as practical and include	<b>Site suitable (medium constraints)</b> Site would not have significant	<b>Assessed</b> (as possible alternative)

north of Frylake Meadow	additional ecological mitigation Limit development to south side of public footpath, with landscaping along this edge Include measures to avoid access road becoming impassable in the event of flooding Extend the existing footpath along the west side of Thornford Road	landscape and visual impact Good vehicular and pedestrian access to centre of Yetminster Potential to link to recent new development to south of site However, if group wish to allocate this site they should consider extending the development boundary	
14 - Land north of Chapel Meadow	<b>Site suitable</b> Retain hedgerows and hedgerow trees as far as practical and include additional ecological mitigation. Remove existing structures / clutter and reinforce landscape planting to northern site boundaries and along river corridor Improve vehicular access and include measures to avoid this becoming impassable in the event of flooding Consider feasibility of improving shared-surface pedestrian connection to High Street along Chapel Lane	<b>Site suitable (medium constraints)</b> Well located in the centre of Yetminster Would not have significant landscape and visual impact Access is narrow and would likely have to be upgraded	<b>Assessed and initially included</b> as Policy H6 but rejected following more detailed heritage appraisal work
15 - Land east of Stoneyacres, north of High Street	<b>Site suitable</b> Retain hedgerows as far as practical and include additional ecological mitigation. Limit height of buildings towards southern end of site, avoid development towards southern edge of site closest to Listed Buildings and strengthen intervening landscaping to Listed Buildings. Avoid development on the small area of land where surface water flood risk is noted, and as a precaution require FRA to consider drainage flows across the site Consider feasibility of providing off-road footpath connecting north to Folly Farm development and formalising footpath south to High Street	<b>Site suitable (medium constraints)</b> Site well located in centre of Yetminster with good access Landscape and visual impact would have to be mitigated as far as possible by developing most suitable area of site May be objections from Historic England regarding loss of traditional field pattern, this would need to be explored with them	<b>Assessed and initially included</b> as Policy H3 but rejected following more detailed heritage appraisal work
17 - Cross Farm	<b>Not assessed</b>	<b>Site suitable (medium constraints)</b> Site would need further investigation as not assessed on site visit Well located in centre of Yetminster within Defined Development Boundary Existing access though this would need upgrading Sensitive design necessary to fit in with development along High Street Landowner would need to be contacted to see if they would consider development	<b>Assessed</b> (as possible alternative)

6.10 Site 11 was not rejected (despite the poor performance) at this stage as there were only a limited number of sites in Ryme Intrinsic. The earlier exclusion of the Ryme Road appeal site is explained in detail in section 5.0 of this report.

6.11 It is also worth noting that a number of the sites have also been subject to planning applications as the Neighbourhood Plan has progressed:

- Site 01/02 - Mill Lane was granted consent to erect a wooden stable / livestock building in June 2020 (ref WD/D/20/000538) and has since been subject to an alternative application to erect a single dwelling in the same location (ref WD/D/20/002895) which at the time of updating this report was underdetermined.
- Site 07a has been subject to a planning application to extend and alter the building on the front of that site to form a dwelling (ref WD/D/20/001340) which was approved in October 2020.
- Site 10 has been subject to a planning application to demolish the existing bungalow and erect of 3 dwellings (ref WD/D/20/003084) which at the time of updating this report was underdetermined.

<b>Environmental assessment objective</b>	<b>Biodiversity, fauna &amp; flora</b>	<b>Landscape</b>	<b>Cultural heritage</b>	<b>Climate change (flood risk)</b>	<b>Soils (agriculture and minerals)</b>	<b>Local needs (homes / jobs / community)</b>	<b>Health (safe and accessible)</b>
<b>Policies and reasonable alternatives</b>							
H1: Housing Land (assessed under H4-8)	<i>See assessment under Policies H4-8</i>						
H2: Housing Types	-	-	-	-	-	✓✓	-
H4: Land fronting Melbury Rd (Site 4)	x	-	-	⚠	x	✓	⚠
H5: Kilbernie, Chapel Lane (Site 10)	-	✓	✓	⚠	✓	✓	-
H7: Land at Downfield, RI (Site 11)	-	✓	-	-	-	✓	x
H8: Land at Old Forge, RI (Site 12)	-	x	x	-	✓	-	x
H9: Housing Design	-	✓	✓	✓	-	-	✓
<b>Reasonable alternatives</b>							
Alt1: Site 7a adj Yew Tree Cottage, Brister End	-	-	xx	⚠	-	✓	x
Alt2: Site 13 land W of Thornford Road	⚠	-	-	⚠	x	✓✓	x
Alt3: Site 17 Cross Farm	⚠	xx	xx	-	-	✓	-
Alt4 (was H3): Site 15 East of Stonyacres	-	x	xx	-	x	✓✓	✓
Alt5 (was H6): Site 14 North of Chapel Meadow	-	-	xx	⚠	x	✓✓	-

6.12 The following table sets out the basis for the above scores.

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Assessment basis</b>
<b>Biodiversity, fauna &amp; flora</b>	<p>In terms of the site allocations, the ecology survey (which covered sites 4, 10, 11, 12, 14 and 15) noted that the grasslands were all improved or semi-improved and of little ecological interest. There were no Protected or Red Listed species recorded on the sites surveyed, although the time of the year was not ideal for the survey. The hedgebank on Site 4 was noted as potentially significant under the Hedgerow Regulations.</p> <p>Whilst walkover surveys were not carried out for the alternative sites, there is no reason to consider that these would result in significant environmental harm.</p> <p>The policy requirement under EN3 should be clearly cross referenced in the relevant allocations to ensure an overall biodiversity gain.</p> <p>The Habitats Regulations Assessment carried out following on from the pre-submission consultation also advised that Policy H1 (or H2) should be</p>

	<p>amended to mitigate the potential for increased phosphate discharge into the hydrological catchment of Somerset Levels and Moors Ramsar Site and this has been incorporated in the policy.</p>
<p><b>Landscape</b></p>	<p>H4: Land fronting Melbury Road (Site 4) is slightly raised above the road with development to either side, and is therefore not overly exposed nor likely to be harmful in landscape terms, and the retention of the hedgerow on the roadside, and further planting to the rear, will further soften any visual impacts from the surrounding area. H5: Kilbernie, Chapel Lane (Site 10) is of no obvious landscape value. There is an opportunity to replace the existing concrete panel bungalow and concrete paving with development more in keeping with the local character. H7: Land at Downfield, Ryme (Site 11) is reasonably well screened but would be visible from Downs Lane. The policy requires a landscaping scheme to soften the visual impact of the existing and proposed development, which would provide a benefit. H8: Land at the Old Forge, Ryme (Site 12) would primarily comprise backland development which would be uncharacteristic of the settlement, but providing this did not extend significantly beyond the existing hardstanding, it would largely be screened by the existing buildings to the front. Alt1: Site 7a adj Yew Tree Cottage, Brister End may be visible in long-distance views from the north-east, but any harm is unlikely to be significant subject to appropriate design and landscaping. Alt2: Site 13 land W of Thornford Road is relatively well-screened and unlikely to be significant subject to appropriate design and landscaping, particularly given the development now planned to the east side of the road. Development of Alt3: Site 17 Cross Farm would potentially harm an important view of the church from the High Street, and is described in the Conservation Area Appraisal as “a significant and important undeveloped gap” – on this basis the potential landscape harm is considered likely to be significant. Alt4 (Site 15): Land east of Stonyacres falls within the designated LLLI (albeit the site does not appear to contribute to the LLLI as significantly as those further to the east), and a requirement for a landscaping scheme to provide mitigation which should avoid significant harm. Alt 5 (Site 14): Land north of Chapel Meadow is a low-lying site with no notable landscape features, reasonably well contained in wider views in the context of the settlement edge, and a landscaping scheme could be included to mitigate any harm. Policy H9 on general design includes a number of criteria relating to create or reinforce local distinctiveness through respecting the local landscape characteristics and features.</p>
<p><b>Cultural heritage</b></p>	<p>No potential for harm to heritage assets has been identified in relation to H7 or Alt 2 (ie sites 11 and 13). Whilst site 4 (H4) adjoins the Conservation Area it is considered that development would not have an adversely impact especially if confined to the area behind the hedgerow and if sympathetic design and materials were used. Harm to the remains of The Elm (which have been largely demolished and are undesignated heritage assets) would be low if development were restricted to the west of the hedgerow and the remains were preserved, and these recommendations are included within the revised policy. Site 10 (H5) lies within the Conservation Area, and the setting of two listed buildings, two locally listed buildings and one non-designated building. It is considered that, given the current neutral / negative impact of the bungalow, if the site is developed with a building or buildings using high quality, sympathetic design and materials, with consideration given to the placing and orientation of the buildings within the plot, the impact of such development should be beneficial and will enhance the significance of the conservation area and of heritage assets within it and in proximity to it. The development of site 12 (H8) would enable the well-designed conversion of the existing old forge building (of local historic interest) but due regard needs to be paid in particular to avoiding harm to</p>

	<p>the setting of the Grade II* listed church to the west. Following the more detailed heritage appraisal, the developable area of the site has been redrawn to further protect the view of the church when entering the village from the east along Ryme Road. The policy wording makes clear that any development on the site needs to be of appropriate height and massing and carried out using design and materials sensitive to the village’s historic buildings. While development on the site would have an impact on the main range of the Old Forge it is considered that any effect this would have on the significance of the assets would be compensated by the removal of the building’s modern additions which would better reveal its significance, and overall it is probable that an impact of low adverse harm could be achieved. Development of Alt1: Site 7a (particularly new-build) would be likely to adversely impact on the setting of Yew Tree Cottage itself which is a listed building, and although this could be mitigated to a degree through design the harm is considered potentially significant. Development of Alt3: Site 17 Cross Farm would potentially harm an important view of the church from the High Street, and is described in the Conservation Area Appraisal as “a significant and important undeveloped gap” – on this basis the potential heritage harm is considered likely to be significant. Development of Alt4: Site 15 would take away one of the village’s remaining prebendal plots. Two such plots were lost when Stonyacres was built and it is considered that the loss of another plot would constitute a medium adverse impact on the prebendal crofts as a heritage asset of medium to high significance. There would also be low to medium adverse impacts on the setting of a number of Listed Buildings and develops within one of the historic fields, changing the character of this part of the Conservation Area. The development of Alt5: Site 14 North of Chapel Meadow would harm the setting of the Listed Lower Farm House, cutting it off from the agricultural landscape to the north which forms the asset’s setting, with a resulting loss of its significance. Policy H9 on general design includes a number of criteria relating to conserving or enhancing the area’s built heritage.</p>
<p><b>Climate change</b> (flood risk)</p>	<p>No significant flood risk issues were identified with any of the option sites, the only potential flooding issues noted were in relation to sites 14 (Alt5) and 13 (Alt2) within which the potential flood risk areas could be avoided. The inundation of sewers by groundwater during periods of prolonged wet weather could also be relevant to the development of sites 4, 7, 10 and 14. The requirement for a site-specific Surface and Foul Water Drainage Strategy that sets out details of how surface water and foul water drainage will be managed is required in relation to Policy CC5 and for the avoidance of doubt it is suggested that this is also cross-referenced in and relevant site allocations. Although flood risk cannot be ruled out, there is unlikely to be significant harm and the implementation of the drainage strategy could even result in a net benefit. Policy H9 on general design includes the requirement to incorporate appropriate flood risk management measures within the design.</p>
<p><b>Soils</b> (agriculture / minerals)</p>	<p>A number of the site options are farmland, and whilst there is no detailed agricultural land classification the ALC 1:250,000 suggests would suggest that sites 13, 14 and 16 could potentially be Grade 2, with the remainder likely to be Grade 3. However the total site area lost to development would be limited in extent, and therefore not significant in terms of harm. Many of the sites are also within the minerals safeguarding area (sites 4, 7a, 12, 14, 15 and 16), but due to their size and proximity to settlement are unlikely to give rise to significant sterilization. Site 7a is not in agricultural use, as is thought to be the case with site 13, and in the case of Site 11 the remaining land associated with the now converted grain store, has no obvious agricultural function. Site 10, as a brownfield site, scored positively against this criteria (but given the limited size this is not considered to be</p>

	significant), as does Site 12 in part (which is balanced against the loss of farmland in the remaining part of the site).
<b>Local needs</b> (homes / jobs / community)	Policy H2 ensures that the mix of housing on future sites will be more likely to deliver the type of houses needed locally. All of the site options would deliver a net increase in housing, but there would be greater benefit from those that (due to their size) would be able to deliver affordable housing as part of the mix (Alt3,4 and 5). Alt 3 whilst assessed as part of the SHLAA as having 0.38ha, is considered unlikely to deliver more than 10 dwellings given the more recent planning consent has reduced the site size. The potential loss of employment in respect of the Old Forge(H8) is considered to create a neutral benefit when balanced against the additional housing provided.
<b>Health</b> (safe and accessible places)	The most accessible sites in terms of community facilities are sites 4, 10, 14, 15 and 17 (Policies H4, H5, Alt3, 4 and 5) as these are broadly within 400m of at least 3 community facilities. Whilst site 4 (Policy H4) currently has a lack of safe pedestrian access into the village the policy seeks to address this through the provision of an alternative route. The development of Alt4 could help ensure that the existing permissive footpath remains permanently available as a public footpath and this would provide a positive benefit. Alt1 and 2 are less well situated but still within 800m walking distance of most facilities. Both sites in Ryme Intrinsic are likely to lead to greater reliance on the private car to access facilities and services, although the level of development proposed is not considered to be considered as resulting in significant environmental harm. Policy H9 on general design includes criteria relating to ensuring places are safe, deter crime, connect with each other and are easy to move through.

**SEA Assessment recommendations:**

- ⇒ *require Biodiversity Mitigation and Enhancement Plan as a criterion in relation to site allocations (as set out in EN3)*
- ⇒ *include cross-reference to requirement for a site-specific Surface and Foul Water Drainage Strategy (as set out in CC5) where relevant to site flood risk*
- ⇒ *follow the HRA recommendation to mitigate the potential for increased phosphate discharge into the hydrological catchment of Somerset Levels and Moors Ramsar Site.*

**BUSINESS SERVICES AND THE ECONOMY, AND TRAFFIC, ROAD SAFETY AND TRANSPORT POLICIES:**

6.13 Policy BS1 deals with the objectives of supporting existing businesses, expanding local employment opportunities and maintaining the area as a working community. It largely expands on the Local Plan policies that cover these issues, and no reasonable alternatives were identified for further assessment – the only other option being the omission of the policies and reliance on the Local Plan (ie the baseline). The traffic, road safety and transport-related policies consider how the plan can make the roads and pavements safer, and ensure the provision and maintenance of adequate public transport (which planning has limited control over). Similarly there were no reasonable alternatives were identified for further assessment for these policies other than the baseline.

<b>Environmental assessment objective</b>	Biodiversity, fauna & flora	Landscape	Cultural heritage	Climate change (flood risk)	Soils (agriculture and minerals)	Local needs (homes / jobs / community)	Health (safe and accessible)
<b>Policies and reasonable alternatives</b>							

BS1: Sustainable Growth of Businesses	-	-	-	-	-	✓	✋
T1: Highway Safety	-	✋	✋	-	-	-	-
T2: Vehicle Parking	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
T3: Electric Vehicle Charging Points	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

6.14 The following table sets out the basis for the above scores.

Objective	Assessment basis
<b>Biodiversity, fauna &amp; flora</b>	No obvious issues arising from these policies.
<b>Landscape</b>	The provision of pavements (under Policy T1) is unlikely to be appropriate to the character of rural areas and it would be advisable to clarify that the provision of pavements applies to development within or adjoining the main settlements. Otherwise no obvious landscape issues arising from these policies.
<b>Cultural heritage</b>	Policy BS1 specifically references the need for all new employment development to respect the character of its surroundings by way of its scale, massing, design and landscaping. Whilst there are no obvious issues arising from these policies, it would be appropriate to reference that the highway schemes (supported in Policy T1) should adhere to the Rural Roads Protocol as adopted by the Highway Authority, to preserve and enhance the historic character of the area.
<b>Climate change (flood risk)</b>	No obvious issues arising from these policies.
<b>Soils (agriculture / minerals)</b>	No obvious issues arising from these policies.
<b>Local needs (homes / jobs / community)</b>	No obvious issues arising from these policies. Policy BS1 clarifies that employment sites within or adjoining Ryme Intrinsic may be favourably considered (which was not clear in the Local Plan and may give rise to further opportunities) and encourages that their design allows them to adapt to alternative business uses.
<b>Health (safe and accessible places)</b>	No obvious issues arising from these policies. Policy BS1 clarifies that employment sites within or adjoining Ryme Intrinsic may be favourably considered (which was not clear in the Local Plan and may give rise to further opportunities in what is a less accessible location) - but does include specific reference to road safety as a consideration.

**SEA Assessment recommendations:**

⇒ *clarify in relation to Policy T1 that the provision of pavements will only be sought in relation to development within or adjoining Yetminster and Ryme Intrinsic, and that any highway schemes should adhere to the Rural Roads Protocol as adopted by the Highway Authority, to preserve and enhance the historic character of the area*

**CONSIDERATION OF ALTERNATIVES - OVERVIEW**

6.15 The main alternatives identified related to the choice of site options. The first step was to identify the reasonable alternatives, that were then assessed in more detail against the environmental objectives. A further step has been taken following the pre-submission consultation to remove sites that were re-appraised as having a potentially significant adverse impact.

6.16 The reasons for rejecting the reasonable alternatives were based on the lack of need to include additional sites (given that the preferred sites would more than meet the anticipated housing need, and the Local Plan’s strategy is that the towns are the focus for meeting the strategic need) and site-specific issues as identified in the following table:

Rejected alternatives	Reasons the sites were rejected
-----------------------	---------------------------------

Rejected alternatives		Reasons the sites were rejected
Site 7a	adj Yew Tree Cottage, Brister End	Potential impact on the setting of Yew Tree Cottage and distance from key community facilities
Site 13:	land W of Thornford Road	Whilst this site performed reasonably well against the various environmental criteria, there was limited need for larger sites and the alternative larger sites (Sites 14 and 15) were initially considered preferable (particularly in terms of access to key community facilities).
Site 14:	North of Chapel Meadow	These two sites were included in the pre-submission draft as site allocations, but following further, more detailed assessment of the potential for significant adverse heritage impacts, these have been rejected
Site 15:	East of Stonyacres	
Site 17:	Cross Farm	Potential impact on the character of this part of the Conservation Area, and views of the church from the High Street.

**CUMULATIVE AND OTHER EFFECTS OF THE PLAN'S POLICIES**

6.17 While some of the policies may individually have a relatively minor impact on the environmental, social and economic characteristics of the Neighbourhood Plan area, collectively this impact could be much more significant. So, as part of this assessment, the combined impacts of the policy proposals have been considered, by reviewing the potential impacts in one table, and considering the potential for synergies that may make this impact more significant than the sum of these impacts alone.

Environmental assessment objective	Biodiversity, fauna & flora	Landscape	Cultural heritage	Climate change (flood risk)	Soils (agriculture and minerals)	Local needs (homes / jobs / community)	Health (safe and accessible)
<b>Policies and reasonable alternatives</b>							
EN1: Building Conservation	-	✓	✓	-	-	-	-
EN2: Local Landscape Character	✓	✓✓	-	-	-	-	-
EN3: Local Biodiversity	✓✓	✓	-	-	-	-	-
EN4: Local Green Spaces	✓	✓	✓	-	-	-	-
EN5: Land of Local Landscape Importance	✓	✓✓	✓	-	-	-	-
EN6: Views	-	✓✓	✓	-	-	-	-
EN7: Important Open Gap	✓	✓	-	-	-	-	-
EN8: Footpaths and Bridleways	-	-	-	-	-	-	✓
CC1: Publicising Carbon Footprint	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
CC2: Individual & Community Scale Energy	✓	👤	👤	-	-	✓	-
CC3: Renewable Energy and Waste...	✓	👤	👤	-	-	-	-
CC4: Energy Generation to Offset Predicted...	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
CC5: Drainage	-	-	-	✓	-	-	-
CS1: Existing Comm / Leis Services & Facilities	-	-	-	-	-	✓	✓
CS2: New Comm / Leis Services & Facilities	-	-	-	-	-	✓	✓
H1: Housing Land (assessed under H4-8)	<i>See assessment under Policies H4-8</i>						
H2: Housing Types	-	-	-	-	-	✓✓	-
H4: Land fronting Melbury Rd (Site 4)	✗	-	-	👤	✗	✓	👤

H5: Kilbernie, Chapel Lane (Site 10)	-	✓	✓	✋	✓	✓	-
H7: Land at Downfield, RI (Site 11)	-	✓	-	-	-	✓	✘
H8: Land at Old Forge, RI (Site 12)	-	✘	✘	-	✓	-	✘
H9: Housing Design	-	✓	✓	✓	-	-	✓
BS1: Sustainable Growth of Businesses	-	-	-	-	-	✓	✋
T1: Highway Safety	-	✋	✋	-	-	-	-
T2: Vehicle Parking	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
T3: Electric Vehicle Charging Points	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

6.18 This analysis indicates that, overall, the adverse impacts are likely to be balanced or outweighed by positive impacts of the plan, with the most positive impacts scored against the objective of meeting local needs. The main adverse impact is in relation to soils due to the loss of productive farmland. However there are very few alternative sites (particularly brownfield or in much lower agricultural grade) that could deliver the housing needed, and the scale (cumulatively) is still unlikely to be significant given the limited size of the site allocations and the amount of agricultural land in the wider area.

6.19 The potential for secondary (indirect) impacts has been considered but no specific issues identified. Whilst there may be temporary impacts related to construction, and the landscape mitigation is unlikely to be fully effective in the short term, these are not considered to be so significant as to justify further evaluation or additional measures that cannot be satisfactorily accommodated through standard planning conditions.

## 7. CONCLUSIONS AND PROPOSED MONITORING

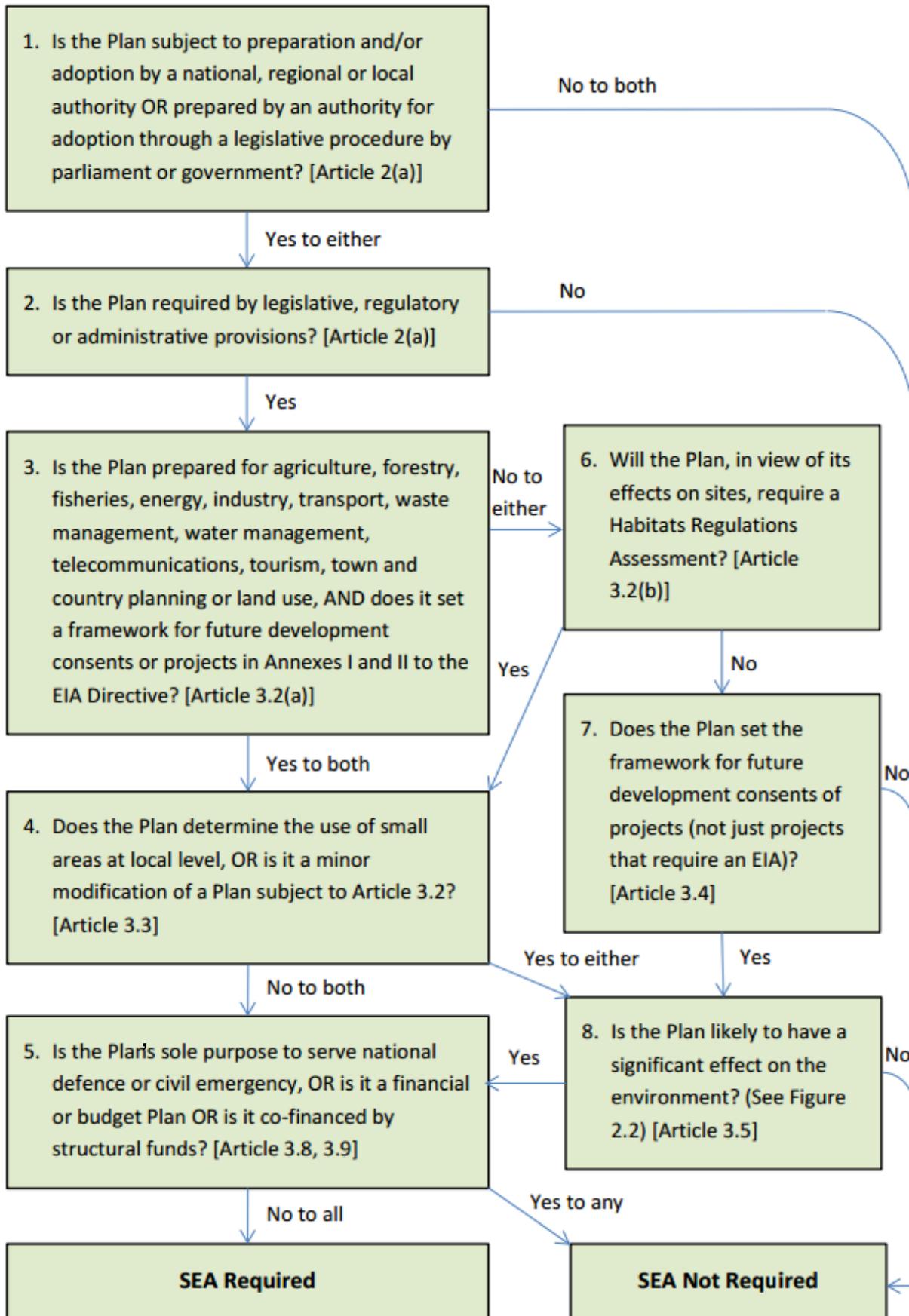
### LIKELY SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS

7.1 There are no likely significant adverse impacts identified as a result of the assessment of plan’s objectives and proposed policies. The only significant impacts identified for this Neighbourhood Plan are positive ones in relation to the delivery of housing, employment and community facilities, and landscape and biodiversity benefits mainly due to the protection given to particular areas and features that are not protected through national designations (and the requirement for biodiversity gains no currently embedded into the adopted Local Plan policy).

### MONITORING

7.2 It is suggested that the delivery of housing (by size and type) is monitored on an annual basis .

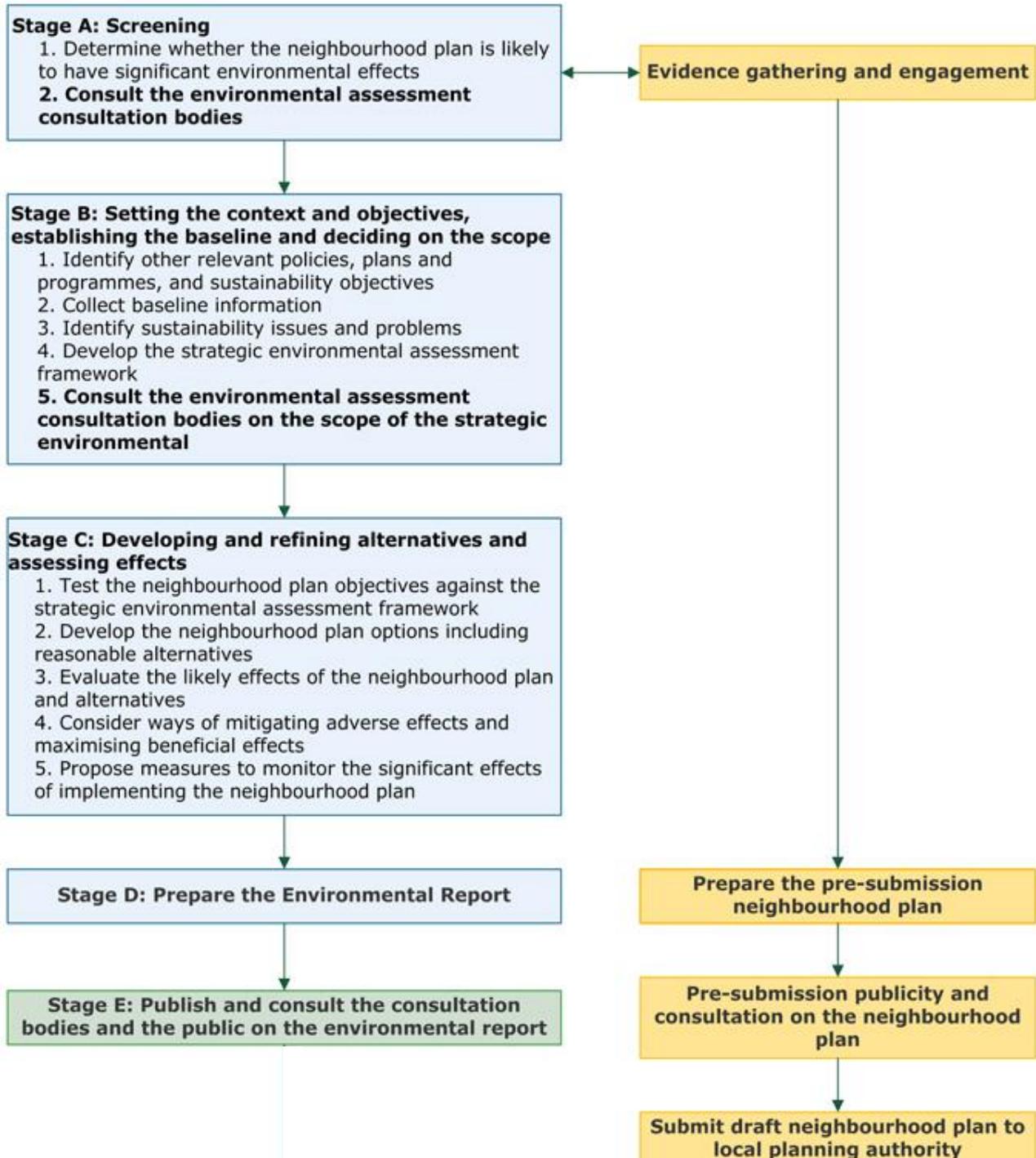
**APPENDIX 1: A DIAGRAM SUMMARISING THE SEA SCREENING PROCESS.**



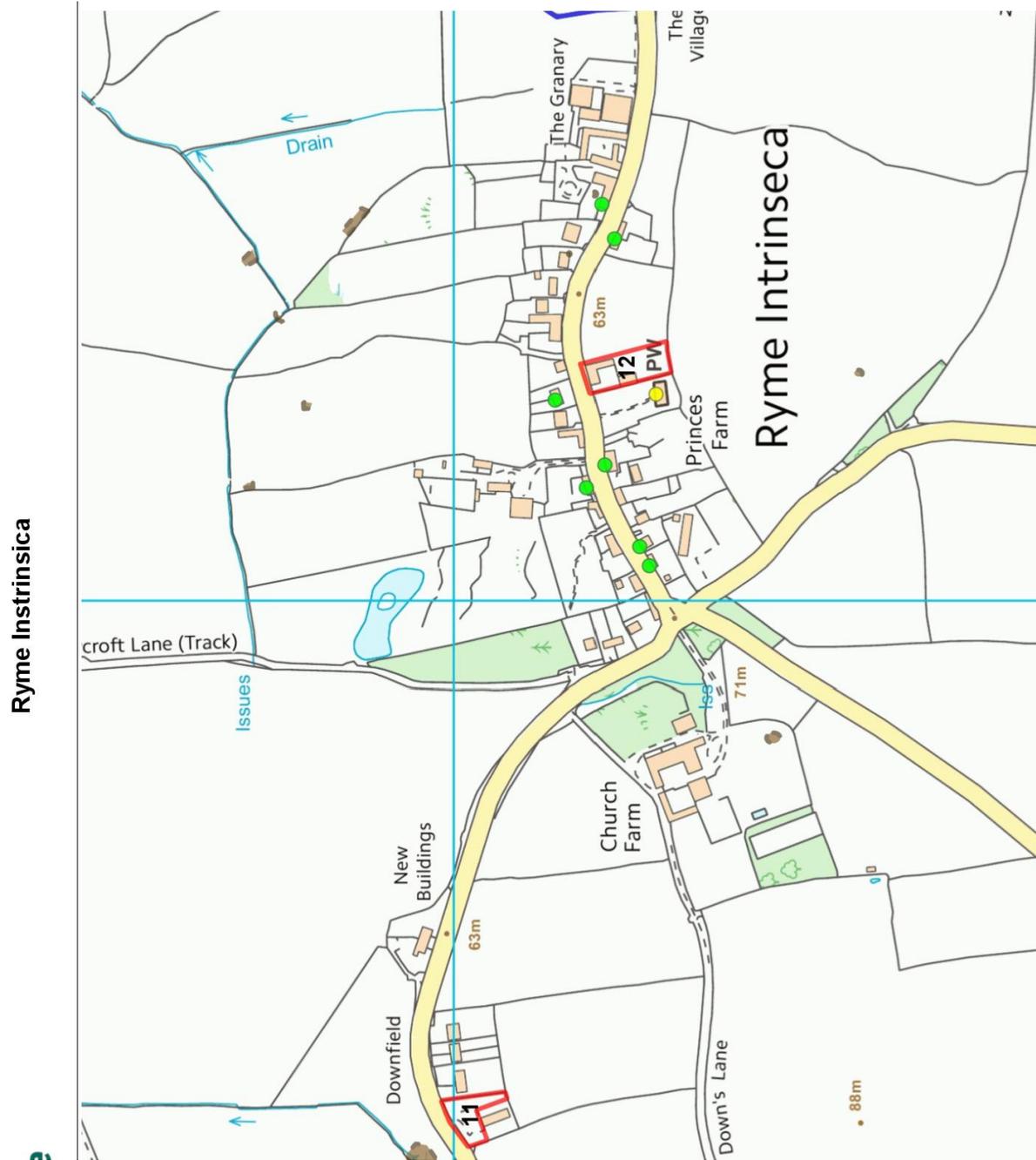
## APPENDIX 2: SEA STAGES

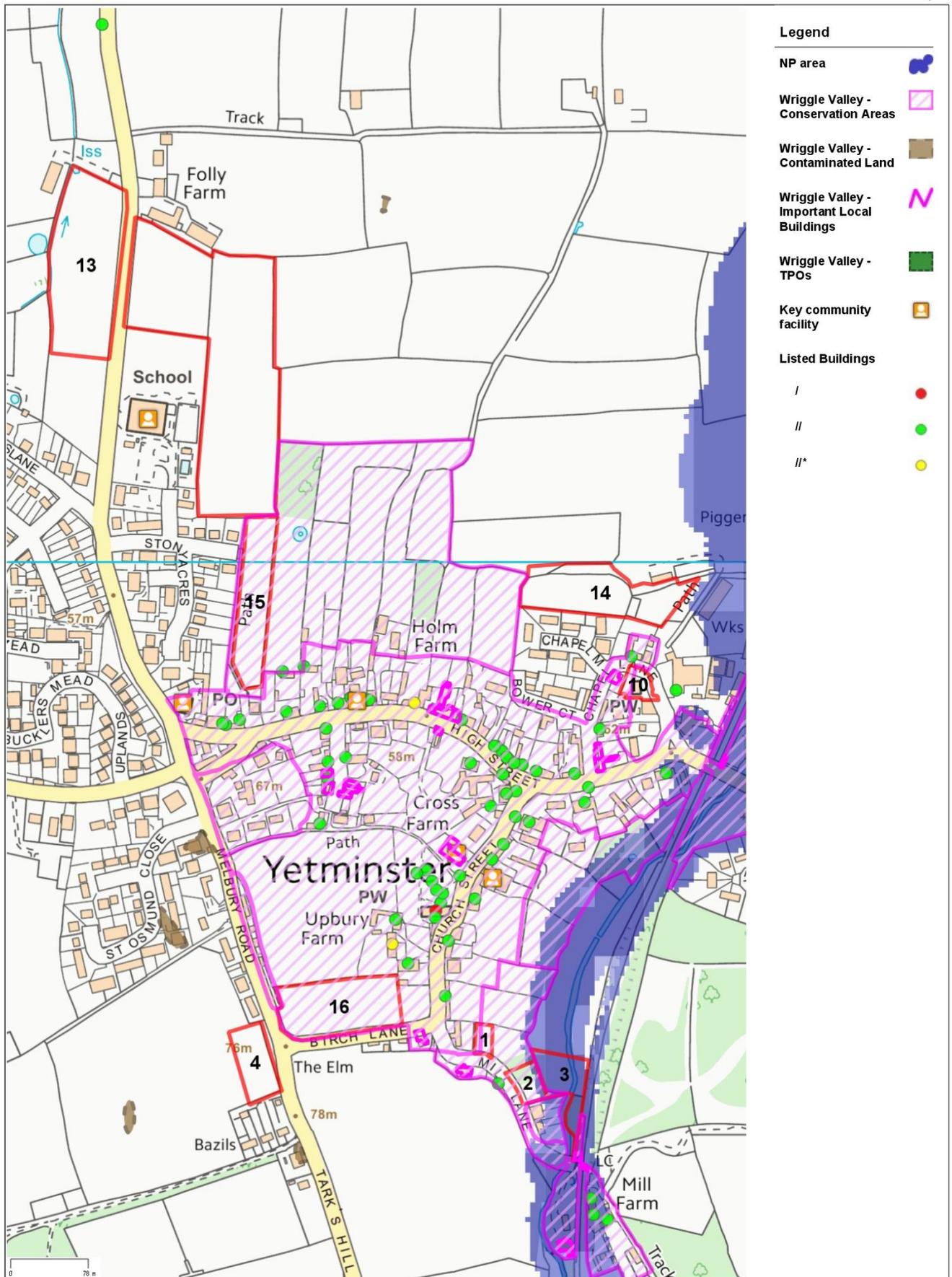
### Strategic environmental assessment process

### Neighbourhood plan preparation



**APPENDIX 3: MAPS OF SITE OPTIONS ASSESSED**

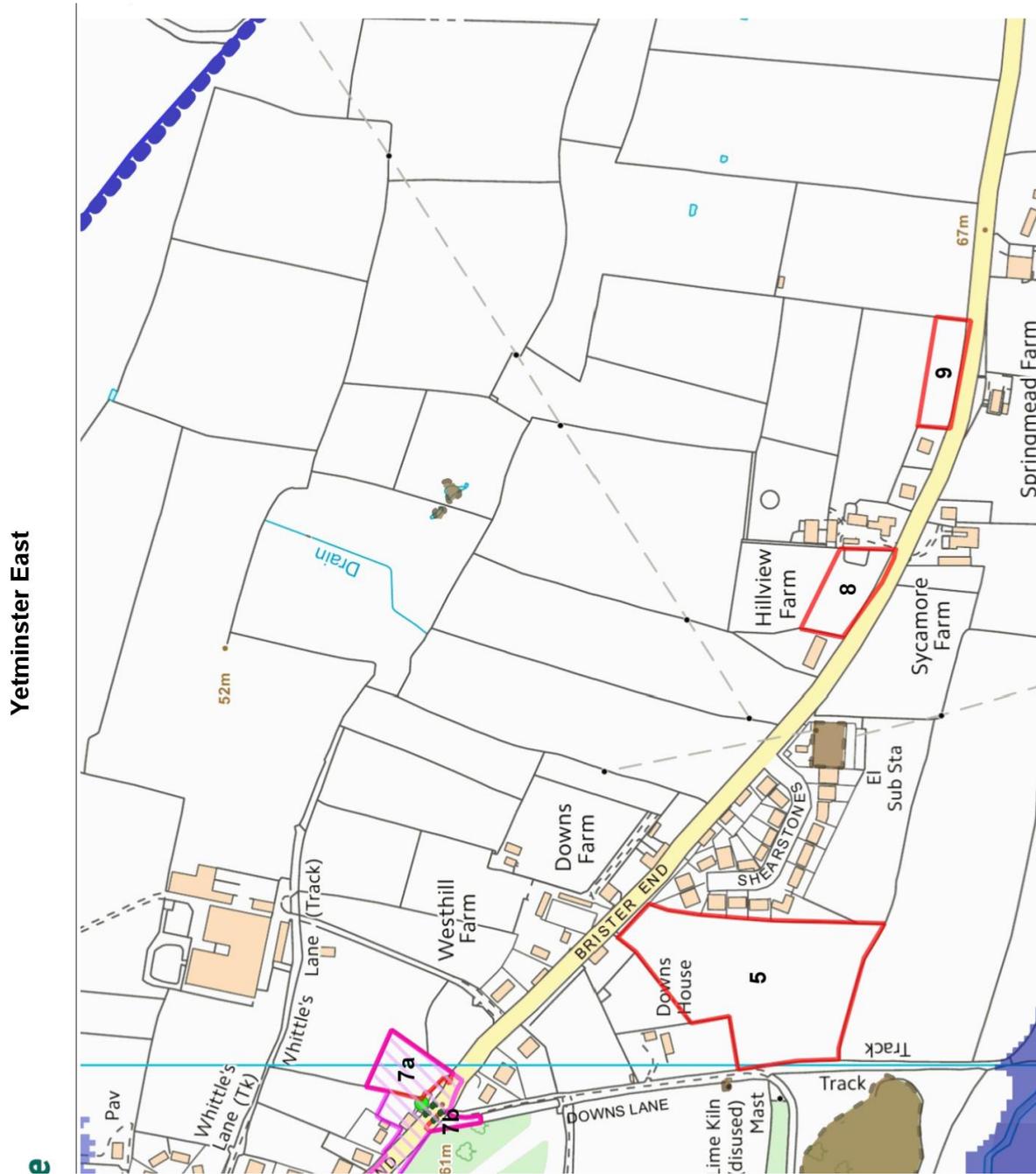




**Legend**

- NP area
- Wriggle Valley - Conservation Areas
- Wriggle Valley - Contaminated Land
- Wriggle Valley - Important Local Buildings
- Wriggle Valley - TPOs
- Key community facility
- Listed Buildings
  - I
  - II
  - III\*

Date Created: 11-6-2018 | Map Centre (Easting/Northing): 359381 / 110917 | Scale: 1:5000 | © Crown copyright and database right. All rights reserved (00009999) 2018 © Contains Ordnance Survey Data : Crown copyright and database right 2018 © English Heritage © Environment Agency 2018



**APPENDIX 4 - DETAILED SITE ASSESSMENTS (JULY 2018)**

Key:	<b>++</b> significant positive impact possible	<b>-</b> some adverse impact likely
	<b>+</b> some positive impact likely	<b>--</b> significant adverse impact possible
	<b>0</b> neutral impact likely	<b>?</b> impact uncertain

**SITES 1 - 3: LAND OFF MILL LANE**

**SITE DESCRIPTION**

The sites lie off Mill Lane, and have been promoted together as a ‘package’ and therefore assessed as such. They are relatively small, with Site 1 being part of the field below The Garden House (a hedgerow has been planted to provide a new boundary to divide it from the remaining

part of the field), and adjoins, agricultural land leading down to the river to the east. Site 2 is part of the field adjoining and to the north of 3 - 6 Mill Lane, opposite a cottage, with agricultural land to north and floodplain to east. Site 3 is within the floodplain, with agricultural land to north and south, the railway to east.

Site size (entire area): 0.4ha comprising Site 1: 0.05ha, Site 2: 0.10ha Site 3: 0.25ha

Proposed use: Site 1: single dwelling, Site 2: pair of affordable houses, Site 3: public open space and circular walk with river views

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## ECOLOGY

There are no wildlife designations impacting directly on the site. Sites 1 and 2 fall largely outside of the potential ecological network (which follows the river floodplain), Site 3 falls within this area and the banks of the Wriggle are noted as likely to be of local wildlife interest and potentially host protected species. None of the sites have been intensively farmed. The hedgerows, and also the mature trees (within site 2) are of potential local wildlife interest. The management of Site 3, if secured, could provide ecological enhancements.

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## LANDSCAPE

Site 1: gently sloping, part hedgerow boundaries bordering on the lane, which could potentially be retained. Site 2: the ground slopes down towards river although the southern section closest to the row of cottages is less steep. There is hedge to lane frontage and a number of large, mature native deciduous trees within and on the edge of the site that would be likely to be impacted by development in this location. Site 3: is broadly level site with river running through, hedges to some site boundaries. The main views of all three sites are from Mill Lane. All sites fall within the designated LLLI (Land of Local Landscape Importance), with the exception of the area within the development boundary (of Site 1) and the southern part of Site 3. The update of SHLAA identified the Site 1 (WD/YETM/007) as likely to harm the openness of this area. On this basis, particularly with the likely loss of trees on site 2 and the intimate and sloping nature of the fields, some landscape harm is likely and would significantly harm the character of the LLLI.

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## HERITAGE

Sites 1 and 2 fall within the Conservation Area, Site 3 adjoins. Site 1 adjoins the garden of Greystones (LB Grade 2), although due to the intervening development of The Garden House is unlikely to impact significantly on its setting. Sites 1 and 2 lie opposite St Francis Cottage (LB Grade 2) and would potentially impact on the character (and setting) provided by the very rural nature of Mill Lane at this point. In the Conservation Area Appraisal the view along Mill Lane is marked as important, although this is likely to be seasonal depending on the vegetation. The update of SHLAA identified the Site 1 (WD/YETM/007) as 'unsuitable for development because it would be prominent in views along Mill Lane'. Overall, the changes proposed are likely to significantly impact on the character of Mill Lane within the Conservation Area, and also to a degree adversely impact the setting of St Francis Cottage, and may therefore cause substantial harm.

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## FLOOD RISK

Sites 1: no known flood risk. Site 2 adjoins flood risk zone 3 to the east but this area could readily be avoided. Site 3 subject to extensive flood risk (River Wriggle runs through site) but is not proposed for built development.

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## SOILS / MINERALS

These are greenfield sites, which according to landowner Grade 4 agricultural land – however ALC 1:250,000 suggests more likely to be Grade 2 or 3. The site area likely to be lost to development would be limited in extent. They are also within minerals safeguarding area, although due to site size and proximity to settlement unlikely to give rise to significant sterilization.

**LOCAL NEEDS**

The landowner proposes 2 affordable units and public open space, plus one open market dwelling, providing potentially significant community benefits (albeit that the proposed POS would only provide a limited circular route and does not connect in with other sites).

**SAFE ACCESS**

There is an existing field access (reinstated) to Site1 and also to Site 2, which may be suitable for the limited level of development proposed. Access to the proposed POS provides a benefit although this is also limited due to lack of stream crossing point and connecting routes. However visibility further along Mill Lane (leading to the junction with Birch Lane / Church Street) is particularly poor, with no obvious scope for improvement. Pedestrian access into settlement would be along Mill Lane narrow lane with limited traffic, no pavements. Although not severe (as the lane has little traffic being a no through road), the higher risk of accidents and lack of potential mitigation is considered to be significant. The sites are within easy walking distance (400m) of village hall and health centre and within walking distance (800m) of the station and shop. They are just over 800m walking distance to school.

**CONCLUSIONS:**

Topic	Score	Potential mitigation
<b>Ecology</b>	-	Retain hedgerows and mature trees as far as practical and include additional mitigation
<b>Landscape</b>	--	Retain hedgerows and mature trees as far as practical
<b>Heritage</b>	--	Retain hedgerows as far as practical and ensure development is of a scale and sensitive to its context for a rural lane within the Conservation Area
<b>Flooding</b>	0	Avoid development within the flood risk zones. Any structures proposed over the river to allow access to the proposed public open space should not impede the river's flow.
<b>Soils / Minerals</b>	-	No mitigation identified
<b>Local Needs</b>	++	
<b>Safe Access</b>	-	Secure access to nature. No feasible mitigation identified in relation to poor pedestrian access into settlement

**SITE 4: LAND ADJOINING BASILS, MELBURY ROAD, YETMINSTER****SITE DESCRIPTION**

Part of open agricultural field in relatively elevated position, to rear of strip of unmanaged land (in separate ownership) which previously contained a dwelling (now demolished)

Residential to north and south, agricultural to east and west.

Site size (entire area): 0.26ha (approx.)      Proposed use: Housing

**ECOLOGY**

No designated sites or sites identified as having ecological potential within 200m. Hedge to front boundary (dividing field from roadside strip) and roadside strip appear largely unmanaged and may provide wildlife habitats. Field of no obvious ecological interest. On this basis, some harm is possible, but unlikely to be significant.

**LANDSCAPE**

The site is at a slightly higher level than the adjoining road and slopes gently to the west, and is of no obvious landscape merit, although would be notable from public rights of way extending westward from Melbury Road. Development here would fill in a gap in the frontage of Melbury Road. However, subject to careful design this could be seen as appropriate 'rounding off' of development on this side of Yetminster, and unlikely to be harmful in landscape terms.

**HERITAGE**

The site lies just outside Conservation Area. It is not marked as significant in terms of views in or out of the Conservation Area, although it is opposite the junction with Birch Lane (noted as a gateway marking the transition from countryside to village). Historically there was development here. The view of this site from along Birch Lane is therefore potentially sensitive and would require careful design, but is not considered likely to cause harm.

Concerns are raised in the Conservation Area Appraisal over the condition of Upbury Farm and its outbuildings, with the latter, in particular, at risk. The submitted site is within the same family ownership as Upbury Farm and development here could, but there is no obvious planning reason to limit development in this location to enabling development.

**FLOOD RISK**

Not within or in close proximity to any known flood risk zones (as mapped).

**SOILS / MINERALS**

The field is a greenfield site. The ALC 1:250,000 suggests it is Grade 3 farmland. However for a small scheme as proposed the total site area lost to development would be limited in extent. It is

within minerals safeguarding area, although due to site size and proximity to settlement unlikely to give rise to significant sterilization.

**LOCAL NEEDS**

Given surrounding character, potential for approx. 4 – 6 dwellings along road front, depending on arrangements for access and parking. Additional dwellings would require backland development which although feasible would need careful consideration in terms of how this might service a larger area. Based on the current extent, no affordable housing or other community benefits could be required.

**SAFE ACCESS**

Existing field access has poor visibility, and a new access point would be required, using the third party land to the front (in separate ownership). There is no existing footway along this part of Melbury Road / Birch Lane. However there is potential to link through the land adjoining Upbury Farm (within the same ownership) to connect to Queen Street to provide an alternative off-road route. There is access to nature via the nearby public rights of way, and an off-road link to N34/5 (to the south) could be secured

The site is within easy walking distance (400m) of shop, village hall and health centre. Within walking distance (800m) of station and school.

**CONCLUSIONS:**

Topic	Score	Potential mitigation
<b>Ecology</b>	-	Include mitigation for loss of hedgerow
<b>Landscape</b>	0	Careful design will be needed to ensure that houses here do not dominate the skyline and that they relate positively to the junction with and view from along Birch Lane.
<b>Heritage</b>	0	
<b>Flooding</b>	0	
<b>Soils / Minerals</b>	-	No mitigation identified
<b>Local Needs</b>	+	
<b>Safe Access</b>	-	Relocated and improved access would be required. Consider feasibility of providing off-road footpath connecting to Queen Street, and off-road link to footpath N34/5 (to the south)

**SITE 5: LAND ADJACENT TO SHEARSTONES, BRISTER END**



**SITE DESCRIPTION**

A relatively level agricultural field rising slightly away from the road. Residential to eastern boundary and to north, farmland to other sides.

Site size (entire area): 2.0ha

Proposed use: housing

**ECOLOGY**

Land immediately to south designated as of local wildlife interest. The site’s hedgerow boundaries may be of local wildlife value, but the field itself appears to be improved grassland. On this basis, some harm is possible, but unlikely to be significant.

**LANDSCAPE**

Hedge to road frontage. The field rises gently from Brister End towards the centre of site (approximately where the pylons cross) and then falls away gently, and there are distant views of hills to south. Development in the front portion of the field would fill in a gap, and subject to landscaping to the south would be unlikely to be harmful in landscape terms.

**HERITAGE**

The site lies approximately 140m from eastern end of Conservation Area and there are no Listed Buildings closer. There are disused Lime Kilns on Downs Lane to western edge of site of archaeological interest, but these are unlikely to be impacted by the development. On this basis, no potential harm is identified.

**FLOOD RISK**

The site is not within or in close proximity to any known flood risk zones (as mapped).

**SOILS / MINERALS**

This is a greenfield site, the ALC 1:250,000 suggests Grade 3 farmland. It is within a minerals safeguarding area. Although consideration should be given to potential for extraction of building stone, given proximity to adjoining residential properties development here is unlikely to give rise to significant sterilization.

**LOCAL NEEDS**

Due to potential scale of development, affordable housing should be viable as part of the housing mix, providing a significant benefit.

**SAFE ACCESS**

There is an existing field access from Brister End but this would need to be improved and potentially relocated eastwards to provide the necessary visibility splays. Pedestrian access into village would be along Brister End (potentially via Downs Lane), which has no pavements. The site is within walking distance (800m) of the station, but other key facilities (village hall, shop, school and healthcare centre) are further than 800m distance. It is therefore likely to significantly increase trips by car to local facilities. There is potential to link to Downs Lane and bridleway N34/19 to provide easy access to Vecklands (Woodland Trust site) and the countryside

**CONCLUSIONS:**

Topic	Score	Potential mitigation
<b>Ecology</b>	-	Retain hedgerows as far as practical & include additional mitigation
<b>Landscape</b>	0	Subject to limiting development to northern portion of the site. Provide landscape belt to south.
<b>Heritage</b>	0	Subject to avoiding dev’t in close proximity to disused lime kilns
<b>Flooding</b>	0	
<b>Soils / Minerals</b>	-	No mitigation identified
<b>Local Needs</b>	++	
<b>Safe Access</b>	--	Improved access would be required. No feasible mitigation identified regarding walking routes, although a link to Downs Lane & bridleway N34/19 would enable access to Vecklands and the countryside.

## SITE 7A. LAND ADJOINING YEW TREE COTTAGE, BRISTER END



## SITE DESCRIPTION

Land to the rear of Yew Tree Cottage, forming part of the large residential garden (and including the potential to use the converted garage for residential use (currently subject to holiday occupancy condition). Residential land to west and south, farmland to north and east.

Site size (entire area): 0.24ha

Proposed use: housing

## ECOLOGY

No designated sites or sites identified as having ecological potential within 200m. The site is managed as a residential garden, and therefore unlikely to have significant ecological value.

## LANDSCAPE

Garden land, relatively well contained in views. No obvious harm identified, although backland development is not characteristic of this locality.

## HERITAGE

Within the Conservation Area. Yew Tree Cottage is Grade 2 Listed. Development within the grounds would be likely to detract from the semi-rural setting of Yew Tree Cottage and cause potentially significant harm. The garage adjoining the cottage has been converted for holiday letting but could not be readily extended without compromising the setting of the listed building.

## FLOOD RISK

Not within a known flood risk zones (as mapped), although noted that surface water flooding along the access road may occur.

Wessex Water comments are invited on this assessment

## SOILS / MINERALS

Garden land. The site lies within the minerals safeguarding area, although due to site size and proximity to settlement unlikely to give rise to significant sterilization.

## LOCAL NEEDS

Given site size and character it is unlikely that any affordable housing or other community benefits could be required.

**SAFE ACCESS**

There is an existing vehicular access to Yew Tree Cottage (serving house and holiday let conversion). Pedestrian access into village would be along Brister End, which has no pavements. The site is within walking distance (800m) of the station, village hall and healthcare centre but shop and school and are both more than 800m distance. The site is reasonably well located to access Vecklands (Woodland Trust site) and the countryside (via bridleway N34/19).

**CONCLUSIONS:**

Topic	Score	Potential mitigation
<b>Ecology</b>	0	
<b>Landscape</b>	0	Retain existing landscaping along boundaries
<b>Heritage</b>	--	Any development should be of a scale and sensitive to its context as the setting of Yew Tree Cottage
<b>Flooding</b>	0	
<b>Soils / Minerals</b>	0	
<b>Local Needs</b>	+	
<b>Safe Access</b>	-	No feasible mitigation identified

**SITE 7B. LAND OPPOSITE YEW TREE COTTAGE, BRISTER END**



**SITE DESCRIPTION**

Small, intimate site opposite Yew Tree Cottage and currently used for garden / orchard. Residential to north and east, farmland to south and west.

Site size (entire area): 0.04ha

Proposed use: one dwelling

**ECOLOGY**

No designated sites or sites identified as having ecological potential within 200m. Hedgerow may be of local wildlife interest (requires assessment).

**LANDSCAPE**

The two yew trees on the road frontage (which appear to be of limited stature) are subject to Tree Preservation Orders, and form a matching pair to those opposite. Hedgerow boundaries including small hedgerow trees contribute to the rural character of the road and lane to side. The development of this site would impact on this rural character, particularly if a substantial length of the hedgerow were removed, although the impact would be limited to the immediate area.

**HERITAGE**

Within the Conservation Area. Opposite Yew Tree Cottage, Grade 2 Listed. Appears to be an old pump and potentially the remains of a former building (potential footprint noted). Although a very small scale development here should be possible, it would be likely to cause a degree of harm to

the character of the area, although significant harm should be avoidable given likelihood of historic development in this location.

**FLOOD RISK**

Not within a known flood risk zones (as mapped), although surface water flooding along the access road may occur.

**SOILS / MINERALS**

Garden land associated with (but severed by road from) Yew Tree Cottage. Within minerals safeguarding area, although due to site size and proximity to settlement unlikely to give rise to sterilization.

**LOCAL NEEDS**

Given site size and character it is unlikely that any affordable housing or other community benefits could be required.

**SAFE ACCESS**

No existing vehicular access. Given TPO and setting of Yew Tree Cottage, new vehicular access would need to be formed off Downs Lane. Pedestrian access into village would be along Brister End, which has no pavements. The site is within walking distance of the station, village hall and healthcare centre but shop and school and are both more than 800m distance. The site is reasonably well located to access Vecklands (Woodland Trust site) and the countryside (via bridleway N34/19).

**CONCLUSIONS:**

Topic	Score	Potential mitigation
<b>Ecology</b>	-	Retain hedgerows as far as practical and include additional mitigation
<b>Landscape</b>	-	Retain hedgerows as far as practical, and yew trees to road front
<b>Heritage</b>	-	Development to consider historic context, and be subordinate and sensitive to setting of Yew Tree Cottage (opposite)
<b>Flooding</b>	0	
<b>Soils / Minerals</b>	0	
<b>Local Needs</b>	+	
<b>Safe Access</b>	-	New vehicular access would need to be made off Downs Lane. No feasible mitigation identified regarding walking routes.

**SITE 8: LAND BETWEEN MAPLEDURHAM AND HILLVIEW FARM, BRISTER END**



**SITE DESCRIPTION**

Roadside field on off Brister End between increasing scattered / sporadic development. Residential on road front on either side, farmland (and stable complex) to rear.  
 Site size (entire area): 0.34ha (front part of field) Proposed use: housing

**ECOLOGY**

Land approx. 90m to the south is designated as of local wildlife interest, and a further site of local wildlife interest lies approx. 250m to the north east. Hedgerow to road frontage and eastern side of potential wildlife interest, but remainder of field appears to be improved grassland of no particular ecological value.

**LANDSCAPE**

Broadly level site with hedgerows to road boundary. Due to road running along slightly elevated ridge, there are long distance views to north (but no public rights of way nearby). Housing on this site would fill a gap between an isolated house and the farm access, forming a ribbon of development extending well beyond the core of the village.

**HERITAGE**

No designated heritage assets within 400m of the site.

**FLOOD RISK**

Not within or in close proximity to any known flood risk zones (as mapped).

**SOILS / MINERALS**

Greenfield site currently farmed, ALC 1:250,000 suggests Grade 3 farmland. The site is within a minerals safeguarding area, although due to site size and proximity to residential properties unlikely to give rise to significant sterilization.

**LOCAL NEEDS**

Given site size and character it is unlikely that any affordable housing or other community benefits could be required.

**SAFE ACCESS**

Existing field access but likely to be improved for housing development. Pedestrian access into village would be along Brister End, which has no pavements. There are no key community facilities within walking distance (800m). Although surrounded by countryside there is not ready access via the local Rights of Way network.

**CONCLUSIONS:**

Topic	Score	Potential mitigation
<b>Ecology</b>	-	Retain hedgerows as far as practical & include additional mitigation
<b>Landscape</b>	0	Subject to limiting development to roadside portion of the site. Provide landscape belt to northern edge.
<b>Heritage</b>	0	
<b>Flooding</b>	0	
<b>Soils / Minerals</b>	-	No mitigation identified
<b>Local Needs</b>	+	
<b>Safe Access</b>	--	Improved access would be required. No feasible mitigation identified regarding walking routes.

**SITE 9: LAND BEYOND WINDYRIDGE, BRISTER END****SITE DESCRIPTION**

Site on the very outskirts of the village, agricultural field behind hedgerow. Residential on road front to west, farmland on all other sides.

Site size (entire area): 0.27ha (front part of field)      Proposed use: housing

**ECOLOGY**

Land approx. 150m to the north east is designated as of local wildlife interest. Hedgerow of potential local wildlife interest. No clear view of site to allow assessment of field, but likely to be similar in character to Site 8.

**LANDSCAPE**

Although it was not possible to visually assess the site, it is broadly level with hedgerows to road boundary and likely to be similar in character to Site 8. Housing on this site would extend a ribbon of development well beyond the core of the village.

**HERITAGE**

No designated heritage assets within 400m of the site. No harm identified.

**FLOOD RISK**

Not within or in close proximity to any known flood risk zones (as mapped). No harm identified.

**SOILS / MINERALS**

Greenfield site currently farmed, ALC 1:250,000 suggests Grade 3 farmland. The site is within a minerals safeguarding area, although due to site size and proximity to residential properties unlikely to give rise to significant sterilization.

**LOCAL NEEDS**

Given site size and character it is unlikely that any affordable housing or other community benefits could be required.

**SAFE ACCESS**

No existing field access but potential to incorporate new entrance. Pedestrian access into village would be along Brister End, which has no pavements. There are no key community facilities within

walking distance (800m). Although surrounded by countryside there is not ready access via the local Rights of Way network.

**CONCLUSIONS:**

Topic	Score	Potential mitigation
Ecology	-	Retain hedgerows as far as practical and include additional mitigation
Landscape	0	Subject to limiting development to roadside portion of the site. Provide landscape belt to northern edge.
Heritage	0	
Flooding	0	
Soils / Minerals	-	No mitigation identified
Local Needs	+	
Safe Access	--	New vehicular access would be required. No feasible mitigation identified regarding walking routes.

**SITE 10: KILBERNIE, CHAPEL LANE, YETMINSTER**



**SITE DESCRIPTION**

An existing developed site with bungalow within the village. Neighbouring uses include residential, chapel and small industrial estate

Site size (entire area): 0.09ha

Proposed use: housing (replacement of existing bungalow with 2 dwellings)

**ECOLOGY**

River corridor approximately 80m to east of local wildlife importance. The site itself is residential garden of no obvious wildlife interest or potential.

**LANDSCAPE**

The site is prominent because it is elevated above the adjoining highway, but of no obvious landscape value. There is an opportunity to replace the existing concrete panel bungalow and concrete paving with development more in keeping with the local character.

**HERITAGE**

Partly within the Conservation Area, opposite Lower Farm House and adjoining barns (LB Grade 2) and adjoining the Methodist Church (identified as an important local building). The sensitive redevelopment of this site could improve their setting.

**FLOOD RISK**

Not within a known flood risk zones (as mapped), although surface water flooding along Chapel Lane to the north side may occur.

**SOILS / MINERALS**

Brownfield site, of no agricultural value or potential for minerals working.

**LOCAL NEEDS**

Given site size it is unlikely that any affordable housing or other community benefits could be required.

**SAFE ACCESS**

Existing vehicular access serving bungalow. Pedestrian access into village would be along Chapel Lane, which has no pavements on the section immediately adjoining the site. The site is within easy walking distance (400m) of the station, village hall and healthcare centre, and also within walking distance (800m) of the shop. The school is just outside walking distance at approximately 900m. There is ready access to the countryside via the footpath N34/12.

**CONCLUSIONS:**

Topic	Score	Potential mitigation
Ecology	0	
Landscape	+	
Heritage	+	Subject to development being more sensitive to the context of the Conservation Area and Listed Building
Flooding	0	
Soils / Minerals	++	
Local Needs	+	
Safe Access	-	Consider feasibility of improving shared-surface pedestrian connection to High Street along Chapel Lane

**SITE 11: OLD GRAIN STORE SITE, DOWNFIELD, RYME INTRINSECA**



**SITE DESCRIPTION**

Relatively exposed site within Downfield slightly beyond the outskirts of Ryme Intrinseca, with former agricultural grain store being converted to two dwellings (under permitted development rights). Residential to east, agricultural land to other sides.

Site size (entire area): 0.12ha

Proposed use: housing

**ECOLOGY**

No designated sites or sites identified as having ecological potential within 200m. There are mature trees including native oak along roadside frontage are the only obvious features that may support local wildlife interest.

**LANDSCAPE**

Broadly level site rising slightly away from the road, no nearby public rights of way. Mature trees (including native oak) to road boundary. The scale and materials used to clad the converted grain store make this visible in approach along the road into Ryme Intrinsic, although this may lessen with weathering. The further development of this site is unlikely to significantly alter the landscape impact of the existing development, subject to avoiding the area closest to the road.

**HERITAGE**

No designated heritage assets within 400m of the site. No obvious harm identified

**FLOOD RISK**

Not within a known flood risk zones (as mapped), although surface water flooding along sections of the access road may occur.

**SOILS / MINERALS**

With the conversion of the grain store to agriculture, the remaining land associated with the store, although not previously developed, has no obvious function.

**LOCAL NEEDS**

Given site size and character it is unlikely that any affordable housing or other community benefits could be required.

**SAFE ACCESS**

Existing access shared with converted grain store currently being converted to residential. Pedestrian access into village would be along roads with no pavements (potentially using of permissive off-road path for part of the route). There are no key community facilities within walking distance (800m). Although surrounded by countryside there is not ready access via the local Rights of Way network.

**CONCLUSIONS:**

Topic	Score	Potential mitigation
<b>Ecology</b>	-	Avoid root protection zone of roadside trees and include additional mitigation.
<b>Landscape</b>	0	Strengthen landscaping to site boundary, particularly in regard to views from the approach along the road from the west.
<b>Heritage</b>	0	
<b>Flooding</b>	0	
<b>Soils / Minerals</b>	0	
<b>Local Needs</b>	+	
<b>Safe Access</b>	--	No feasible mitigation identified regarding walking routes.

## SITE 12: THE OLD FORGE, MANOR FARM, RYME INTRINSECA



## SITE DESCRIPTION

Old Forge on roadside within Ryme Intrinsic, leading into field wrapping around its southern and eastern side. Residential to north, church to east, agricultural land to other sides.

Site size (entire area): 0.20ha

Proposed use: housing

## ECOLOGY

No designated sites or sites identified as having ecological potential within 200m. There is potential that the building may be used by bats due to its age. The field is bordered by hedgerow and hedgerow trees – including yew within the churchyard, and appears to be largely unimproved grassland, further assessment required.

## LANDSCAPE

The site rises slightly away from road, with the field providing green gap in the built-up frontage added to the character of the settlement. The front portion of the site is developed, including an area of hardstanding to the rear of the Forge building. Hedge and mature hedgerow trees along the site boundaries contribute to the local landscape character. Development to the rear (beyond the hardstanding) would comprise backland development which would be uncharacteristic of the settlement, but providing this did not extend significantly beyond the existing hardstanding, it would largely be screened by the existing buildings to the front.

## HERITAGE

The site is opposite Lilac Cottages (Grade 2) and the rear of the site adjoins the church which is a Grade 2\* Listed Building. There is a disused lime kiln on Common Lane, approx. 150m to south, of potential archaeological interest. The original Forge is a stone building which, although neglected, is of local interest and contributes to the character of the area. It could probably be converted to residential (subject to a structural survey) with the later additions that do not contribute to its character removed / replaced. Development within the field to the rear would be likely to have an adverse impact on the setting of the Grade 2\* church, and although the trees within the church grounds and on the site boundary provide a degree of screening, limits the extent of development possible without giving rise to substantial harm.

On the basis that development to the rear is limited and based on a more detailed consideration of the impact on the setting of the church, the benefit of retaining the Forge in active use in keeping with its historic character is considered to provide an overall positive benefit.

**FLOOD RISK**

Surface water flooding is shown as possible within the building courtyard, although given the topography it should be possible for this to drain down to the road. On this basis a neutral impact is recorded.

**SOILS / MINERALS**

Brownfield site to front portion, agricultural field to rear. ALC 1:250,000 suggests Grade 3 farmland. Although within a minerals safeguarding area, given the site size and limited access it is unlikely to give rise to significant sterilization.

**LOCAL NEEDS**

Given site size and character it is unlikely that any affordable housing or other community benefits could be required. Potential loss of existing commercial uses (small workshop accommodation) in the old forge. As such, a balance (neutral) score is considered appropriate.

**SAFE ACCESS**

Existing vehicular access has reasonable visibility. Pedestrian access into village would be along roads with no pavements (potentially using of permissive off-road path for part of the route). There are no key community facilities within walking distance (800m). The site lies opposite footpath N29/3 which provides access to the countryside.

**CONCLUSIONS:**

Topic	Score	Potential mitigation
<b>Ecology</b>	-	Assessment for bats required, and include appropriate mitigation.
<b>Landscape</b>	-	Any development to the rear (beyond the hardstanding) should not extend significantly beyond the existing hardstanding, and landscaping to strengthen protection of setting of church.
<b>Heritage</b>	+	Limit development to the conversion of existing stone forge building, unless enabling development to rear is justified.
<b>Flooding</b>	0	Ensure surface water run-off from courtyard area can drain into the road
<b>Soils / Minerals</b>	+	
<b>Local Needs</b>	0	
<b>Safe Access</b>	--	No feasible mitigation identified regarding walking routes.

**SITE 13: SHLAA SITE W OF THORNFORD ROAD AND N OF FRYLAKE MEADOW**



**SITE DESCRIPTION**

A broadly level roadside field adjoining the recently developed affordable housing exception site. Residential to south, primary school and new estate consented to east, farmland to north and west.

Site size (entire area): 1.21ha

Proposed use: housing

**ECOLOGY**

No designated sites or sites identified as having ecological potential within 200m. Currently pasture, may be unimproved grassland. Hedgerow boundaries with occasional native hedgerow trees (including Ash) are also potential source of local wildlife interest (requires assessment). On this basis, some harm is possible, but unlikely to be significant subject to a similar design with the layout set back from the road frontage and hedgerow / trees largely retained.

**LANDSCAPE**

Broadly level site with hedgerows and hedgerow trees along site boundaries. Public footpath crosses northern part of site, and would become urbanised in character, unless northern extent of development limited to south side of footpath.

**HERITAGE**

Roadside milestone marker (Listed G2) approx. 140m north of site, Conservation Area to rear of school / Stoneyacres approx.. 200m east of site. Development of this site is unlikely to impact on the setting of either, and no harm therefore identified.

**FLOOD RISK**

Drainage ditch near western boundary. North-western part of site (beyond footpath) subject to potential fluvial and surface water flooding. It should be possible to develop site without encroaching into the flood risk area. Access road also subject to flooding on occasion.

**SOILS / MINERALS**

Greenfield site used for agriculture, ALC 1:250,000 suggests Grade 2 or 3 farmland. The site is not within a minerals safeguarding area.

**LOCAL NEEDS**

Due to potential scale of development, affordable housing should be viable as part of the housing mix, providing a significant benefit.

**SAFE ACCESS**

Existing field access, likely to require improvement. No pavements, but potential to extend the existing footpath along the west side of Thornford Road to provide safe pedestrian access. Within easy walking distance (400m) of the shop and school station, but other key facilities (village hall, station and healthcare centre) just beyond 800m walking distance. The site has access to the countryside via footpath N34/8.

**CONCLUSIONS:**

Topic	Score	Potential mitigation
<b>Ecology</b>	-	Retain hedgerows and hedgerow trees as far as practical and include additional mitigation
<b>Landscape</b>	-	Limit development to south side of public footpath, with landscaping along this edge
<b>Heritage</b>	0	
<b>Flooding</b>	-	Subject to avoiding area within flood risk zone. Consider measures

		to avoid access road becoming impassable in the event of flooding.
<b>Soils / Minerals</b>	-	No mitigation identified
<b>Local Needs</b>	++	
<b>Safe Access</b>	-	Extend the existing footpath along the west side of Thornford Road

**SITE 14: SHLAA SITE N OF CHAPEL MEADOW**



**SITE DESCRIPTION**

The site consists of two small fields and two barns on the site’s northern edge. There is residential development to the south; agricultural land to remaining sides. The site could be expanded to include the barns within the development area if not longer required in connection with the farming operations.

Site size (entire area): 0.7ha                      Proposed use: housing

**ECOLOGY**

River corridor approximately 60m to east of local wildlife importance. Hedgerows and occasional hedgerow trees likely to be of local wildlife interest. Existing builds open and therefore considered unlikely to provide for roosting birds / bats. Some areas appear overgrown / not intensively farmed. Full access to site not possible – further assessment required.

**LANDSCAPE**

Broadly level and low-lying site with no notable landscape features, well contained in wider views. Public footpath runs to the east. Adjoins Land of Local Landscape Importance to west. Development could be visible from the wider footpath network, but unlikely to be significant harm subject to careful design, and could result in improvements to the site through clearance of the existing clutter.

**HERITAGE**

Conservation area on fields to west. Site lies to the rear of Lower Farm House (to south) which is Listed Grade 2, however the garden area to its rear provides a degree of buffer, and the development here could improve on the run-down state of the site.

**FLOOD RISK**

Proposed site area excludes the existing flood risk zones (as mapped) associated with the river to the east, although surface water flooding along the access road is known to occur and would require improvement.

**SOILS / MINERALS**

Greenfield site, part occupied by farm buildings and hard-standing. The ALC 1:250,000 suggests Grade 2 or 3 farmland. The site is partly within a minerals safeguarding area, although due to site size and proximity to settlement unlikely to give rise to significant sterilization.

**LOCAL NEEDS**

Due to potential scale of development, affordable housing should be viable as part of the housing mix, providing a significant benefit.

**SAFE ACCESS**

The existing farm access track east of Lower Farm House would need to be upgraded. Pedestrian access into village would be along Chapel Lane, which has no pavements on the section immediately adjoining the site. The site is within easy walking distance (400m) of the station, village hall and healthcare centre, and also within walking distance (800m) of the shop. The school is just outside walking distance at approximately 900m. There is ready access to the countryside via the footpath N34/12.

**CONCLUSIONS:**

Topic	Score	Potential mitigation
<b>Ecology</b>	-	Retain hedgerows and hedgerow trees as far as practical and include additional mitigation
<b>Landscape</b>	-	Removal of structures / clutter. Reinforce landscape planting to northern site boundaries and along river corridor.
<b>Heritage</b>	0	Removal of structures / clutter. Design and layout to be sensitive to setting of Lower Farm House (Listed) and Conservation Area.
<b>Flooding</b>	-	Subject to avoiding area within flood risk zone. Improvements to vehicular access need to include measures to avoid this becoming impassable in the event of flooding.
<b>Soils / Minerals</b>	-	No mitigation identified
<b>Local Needs</b>	++	
<b>Safe Access</b>	-	Consider feasibility of improving shared-surface pedestrian connection to High Street along Chapel Lane

**SITE 15: LAND E OF STONYACRES, NORTH OF HIGH STREET**



**SITE DESCRIPTION**

Paddock to the rear of the High Street, on gently sloping land. Residential to south and west, recent planning consent for housing at Folly Farm on land to north, extended gardens / paddocks to east

Site size (entire area): 0.52ha

Proposed use: no landowner contact  
but assessed for housing

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## ECOLOGY

No designated sites or sites identified as having ecological potential within 200m. Currently grazed, may be unimproved grassland. Hedgerow boundaries, partly overgrown, also potential source of local wildlife interest (requires assessment). On this basis, some harm is possible, but unlikely to be significant.

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## LANDSCAPE

Site gently slopes down to the north, and includes hedgerow boundary to eastern side. The site falls within a designated LLLI (Land of Local Landscape Importance). Current footpath along edge of site is permissive (ie not established public right of way). With development to the High Street (reducing the intervisibility) and consented development at Folly Farm, the outlook has and will become more enclosed in wider views and this paddock does not now appear to contribute to the LLLI as significantly as those further to the east. On this basis, although some harm is possible, the level of harm is considered unlikely to be significant.

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## HERITAGE

The site is within the Conservation Area and to the rear of Boyle's Old School (a Grade 2 LB on the south along the High Street). The Conservation Area was specifically extended in 2010 to include the gardens and crofts behind properties (from School House to The Old Post Office inclusive) fronting the north side of High St that are historically associated (as shown on the 1840 Tithe Map) with those properties. Together, the crofts represent an early field system with mature hedgerow and small patches of woodland and the appraisal notes that their amenity value is observable from public footpath N34/11 and from approaches off High St.

The rear setting of other Listed Buildings on the High Street could also be affected – including The Cedars (G2), The Old Court House (G2) and barn to the north (G2). However, intervening vegetation and development provides some screening. In particular, the site is no longer as closely associated with the frontage building because of intervening development of two houses (granted consent in 2009). Although a visual connection to the High Street remains, this is also much narrowed, and the site is not visible from N34/11 (the permissive footpath along the edge of site is not an established public right of way).

On this basis, although some harm is possible, the level of harm is considered unlikely to be substantial, particularly if the focus of development is on the lower, northern section close to the potential vehicular access via Stonyacres.

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## FLOOD RISK

Potential for the northern section of the eastern boundary to be subject to surface water flooding, but the known flood risk zones (as mapped) do not extend across the site, and there would be no need to develop in the flood risk area.

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## SOILS / MINERALS

Greenfield site currently used for grazing of horses. ALC 1:250,000 suggests Grade 2 farmland, however it is not of a size or readily accessible to make a significant contribution. The site is within minerals safeguarding area, although due to site size and proximity to settlement unlikely to give rise to significant sterilization.

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## LOCAL NEEDS

Due to potential scale of development, affordable housing should be viable as part of the housing mix, providing a significant benefit.

**SAFE ACCESS**

Existing access from the High Street not suitable for additional traffic. Potential alternative vehicular access from Stoneyacres. Permissive footpath along western boundary of site – potential to formalise and extend to link Folly Farm development to the High Street. The site is within easy walking distance of the school, shop, village hall and healthcare centre, and also within walking distance of the station. There is potential to improve access to the countryside by linking into the Folly Farm development that in term links to the PRow network.

**CONCLUSIONS:**

Topic	Score	Potential mitigation
<b>Ecology</b>	-	Retain hedgerows as far as practical and include additional mitigation
<b>Landscape</b>	-	Retain hedgerows as far as practical and limit height of buildings towards southern end of site
<b>Heritage</b>	-	Avoid development towards southern edge of site closest to Listed Buildings and strengthen intervening landscaping.
<b>Flooding</b>	0	Avoid development on the small area of land where surface water flood risk is noted, and as a precaution require FRA to consider drainage flows across the site
<b>Soils / Minerals</b>	-	No mitigation identified
<b>Local Needs</b>	++	
<b>Safe Access</b>	-	Consider feasibility of providing off-road footpath connecting N to Folly Farm development and formalising footpath south to High St

**SITE 16: LAND AT UPBURY FARM**



**SITE DESCRIPTION**

A largely hidden field on the edge of the Conservation Area, screened by high hedges from the surrounding lanes. Residential to east and south, farmland to remaining sides

Site size (entire area): 0.7ha (approx)

Proposed use: no landowner contact but assessed for housing

**ECOLOGY**

Church grounds approx. 80m to NW of local wildlife interest. Banks of the Wriggle approx. 160m to east of site are also noted as likely to be of local wildlife interest and potentially host protected species. Hedgerows and potentially unimproved grassland may be of local wildlife interest (requires assessment). On this basis, some harm is possible, but unlikely to be significant.

**LANDSCAPE**

Site slopes gently from west to east and is surrounded by hedgerows. The site lies outside of the designated LLLI (Land of Local Landscape Importance), which covers adjoining land to north (seen as a valuable ‘green wedge’ at the heart of the village). There are public rights of way across the fields to the north and south. Development could be visible above hedge height, and if the hedgerow were removed the site would potentially be prominent in views. On this basis, some harm is possible, but unlikely to be significant subject to careful design.

**HERITAGE**

Site falls within the Conservation Area. Also adjoins Upbury farmhouse (LB Grade 2\*) and barns (Grade 2) and slopes down eastward towards Greystones (Grade 2). Development could have an impact on their setting, although intervening vegetation provides some screening. Upbury Farmhouse is noted in the Conservation Area Appraisal as likely to be the oldest house (a late medieval hall house) and home to Benjamin Jesty, a pioneer of vaccination against smallpox. The associated ‘infields’ related to Upbury Farm are considered important historically. On this basis, although some mitigation may be possible, given the elevated nature of the site and significance of nearby heritage assets, the level of harm may be substantial.

Concerns are raised in the Conservation Area Appraisal over the condition of Upbury Farm and its outbuildings, with the latter, in particular, at risk. The submitted site is understood to be within the same family ownership as Upbury Farm and development here could, subject to a legal agreement, be considered as enabling development to fund repairs and maintenance of the Listed farmhouse. The same could also apply to Site 4.

**FLOOD RISK**

Not within or in close proximity to any known flood risk zones (as mapped).

**SOILS / MINERALS**

Greenfield site in agricultural use. ALC 1:250,000 suggests Grade 3 farmland. The site is within the minerals safeguarding area, although due to site size and proximity to settlement development here would be unlikely to give rise to significant sterilization.

**LOCAL NEEDS**

Due to potential scale of development, affordable housing should be viable as part of the housing mix, and this would contribute to a significant positive benefit.

**SAFE ACCESS**

Existing field access onto Melbury Road is unsuitable due to poor visibility, and any new vehicular access would be problematic without removal of a substantial length of the boundary hedge. There is no existing footway along this part of Melbury Road / Birch Lane, although the local roads are not heavily trafficked. There is potential to link through the site north (on land within same ownership) to connect to Queen Street to provide an alternative off-road route. The site is within easy walking distance (400m) of the shop, village hall and health centre. Within walking distance (800m) of station and school. It is also well-located to access to the countryside via the PRoW network.

**CONCLUSIONS:**

Topic	Score	Potential mitigation
<b>Ecology</b>	-	Retain hedgerows as far as practical & include additional mitigation
<b>Landscape</b>	-	Retain hedgerows as far as practical and limit height of buildings to avoid dominating the skyline
<b>Heritage</b>	--	Avoid development towards eastern edge of site closest to Listed

		Buildings and strengthen intervening landscaping. Consider potential for legal agreement to fund repairs and maintenance of the Listed farmhouse (as enabling development).
<b>Flooding</b>	0	
<b>Soils / Minerals</b>	-	No mitigation identified
<b>Local Needs</b>	++	
<b>Safe Access</b>	-	Improved access would be required. Consider feasibility of providing off-road footpath connecting to Queen Street