

Stinsford Neighbourhood Plan

Basic Conditions Statement

Prepared by: Dorset Planning Consultant Ltd, on behalf of Stinsford Parish Council

Plan period: 2021-2038

Date of report: September 2021

Contents

1.	Introduction	1
2.	Legal Requirements	1
	Has the draft plan been submitted by a qualifying body?	1
	Does the proposed neighbourhood plan state the period for which it is to have effect?	1
	Is what is being proposed in the neighbourhood development plan making provision in relation to land or sites in the Neighbourhood Plan Area?	1
	Do any of the policies relate to excluded development?	1
	Do any of the policies extend beyond the neighbourhood area or cover an area where there is a neighbourhood development plan already in place?	2
3.	Consideration of National and Strategic Policies	2
	National Planning Policy and Guidance	3
	The Development Plan for the Neighbourhood Plan area.....	3
	Conformity Testing	5
	Conformity conclusions.....	12
4.	EU and sustainability obligations	12
	EU obligations	12
	The achievement of sustainable development	12
	Human Rights	14
	Appendix 1 – Local Plan Policies List	15

1. Introduction

When a neighbourhood plan proposal is submitted to the local planning authority, it needs to be accompanied by a statement, known as the basic conditions statement, which explains how:

- the plan meets the legal requirements in terms of its contents and coverage
- 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
- the plan will contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, is compatible with EU obligations, and would not be likely to have a significant effect on a European site (as defined in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2012) or a European offshore marine site (as defined in the Offshore Marine Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations 2007) (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects).

2. Legal Requirements

Has the draft plan been submitted by a qualifying body?

Yes - Stinsford Parish Council agreed the submission of the Neighbourhood Plan at its Parish Council meeting in September 2021.

Does the proposed neighbourhood plan state the period for which it is to have effect?

Yes – the plan makes clear on the front cover and in section 1.8 that it is intended to cover the period from 2021-2038.

Is what is being proposed in the neighbourhood development plan making provision in relation to land or sites in the Neighbourhood Plan Area?

Yes - the Neighbourhood Plan proposal relates to planning matters (the use and development of land) and its policies relate to the designated Neighbourhood Plan area or parts thereof.

Do any of the policies relate to excluded development?

The policies contained in the Plan cover:

- Policy SNP1. Protecting and strengthening our local wildlife and habitats
- Policy SNP2. Local Landscape Character
- Policy SNP3. The Landscape Setting of the Settlements
- Policy SNP4. Dark Skies
- Policy SNP5. Protecting our important local views
- Policy SNP6. Encouraging appropriate recreational access to the countryside
- Policy SNP7. Protecting Stinsford's Historic Environment
- Policy SNP8. Positively managing the Thomas Hardy connection
- Policy SNP9. Supporting the provision of affordable housing in the parish
- Policy SNP10. Supporting local employment opportunities
- Policy SNP11. Protecting and enhancing our community facilities
- Policy SNP12. Better Building Design
- Policy SNP13. Protection of Groundwater
- Policy SNP14. Traffic Management
- Policy SNP15. Transport Assessments
- Policy SNP16. Improving cycle infrastructure

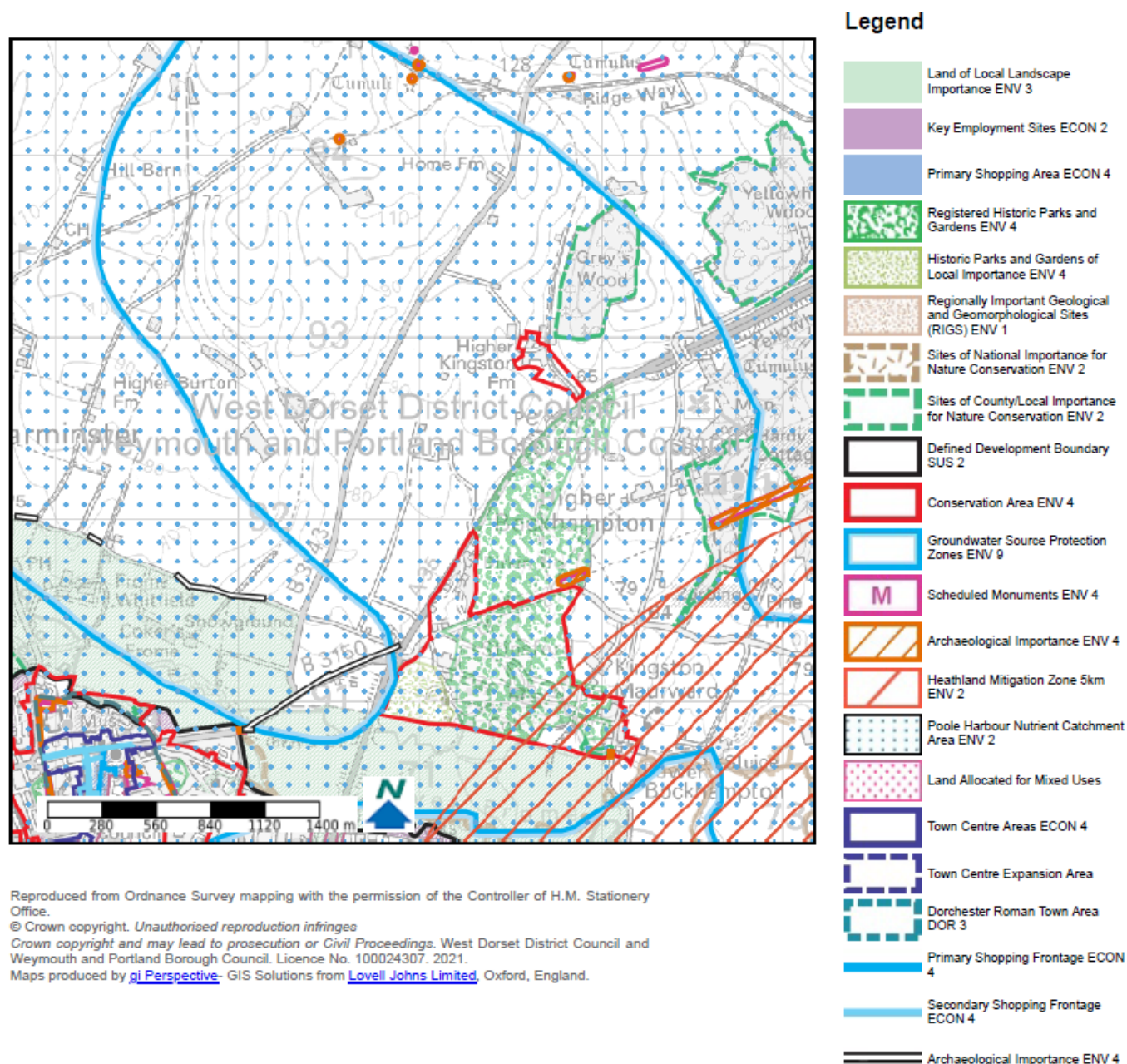
National Planning Policy and Guidance

National planning guidance comes primarily from the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as issued in July 2021, but where appropriate, reference is made to the online National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) and Ministerial Statements.

The Development Plan for the Neighbourhood Plan area

The West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan, which was adopted by West Dorset District Council on 22nd October 2015, contains the bulk of the strategic planning policies for the area.

Map 2 – West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan Policies Map

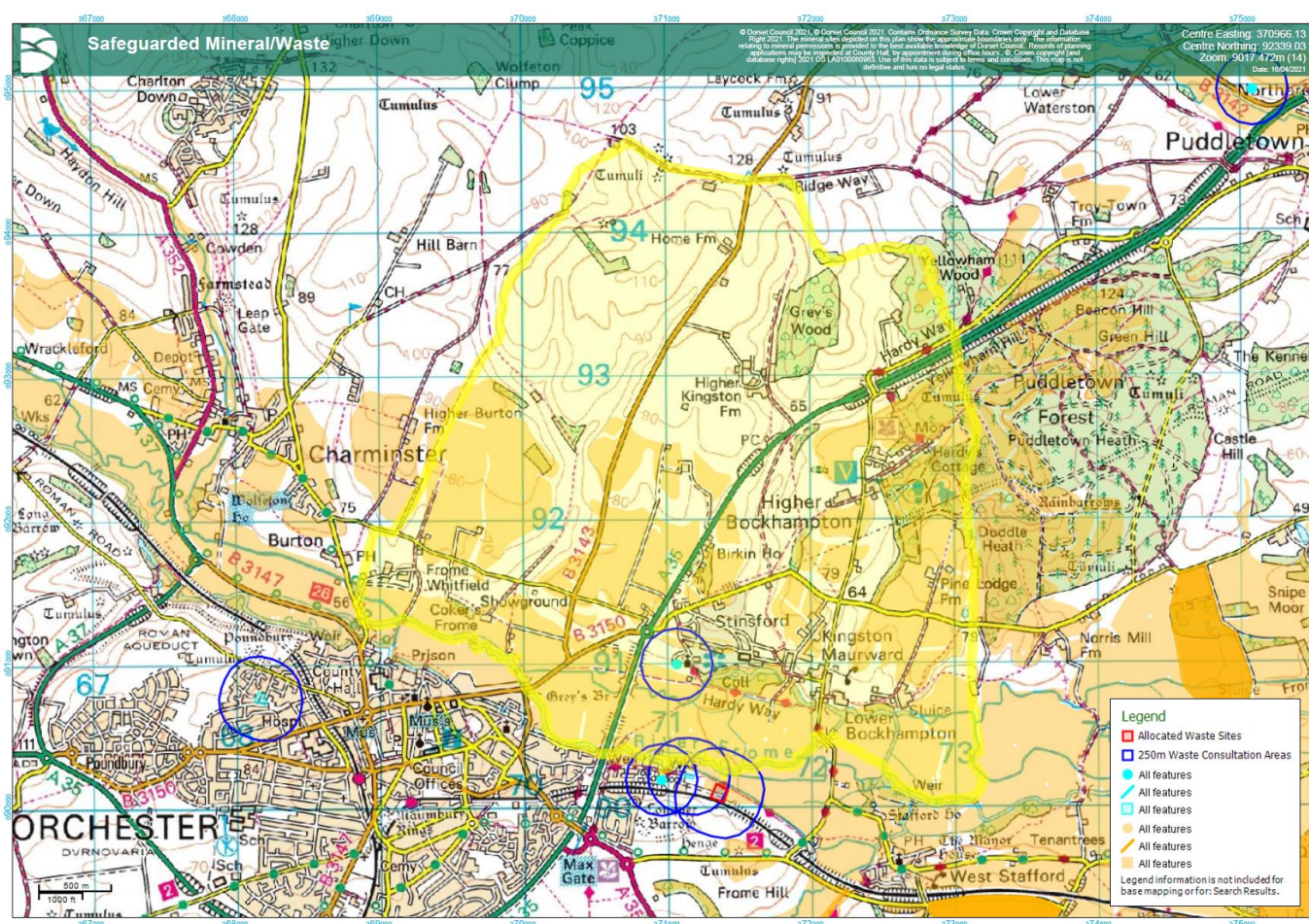


Stinsford parish does not contain any settlements with a defined development boundary, and therefore is treated as 'countryside' for planning purposes. In particular, policy SUS 2 on the distribution of development is a key strategic policy, which makes clear that "Outside defined development boundaries, development will be strictly controlled, having particular regard to the need for the protection of the countryside and environmental constraints." This means that in general, open market housing is not permitted, other than through the re-use of existing rural buildings within Stinsford /

Lower Bockhampton (as these are jointly listed as a settlement of 200+ population without a defined development boundary), and that development such as new or expanded employment sites are more strictly controlled. Whilst the plan area falls outside the Dorset AONB, there are various heritage assets and county-level natural conservation sites within the parish, and development here could also impact upon internationally important wildlife sites through increased waste water (that discharges into Poole Harbour) and recreational pressures on nearby heathland.

Dorset County Council's Minerals Strategy (adopted May 2014) also forms part of the development plan for the area, together with the more recently adopted Minerals Site Plan and the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Waste Plan. The minerals and waste development plans identify much of the parish as a Minerals Safeguarding Area, and there is a safeguarded waste site in the southern part of Stinsford Parish, and other safeguarded waste sites and a site allocated in the 2019 Waste Plan.

Map 2 – Minerals and Waste policies relevant to the area (map supplied by Dorset Council)



The NPPG makes clear that in considering whether a policy is in general conformity, a view should be taken on whether the neighbourhood plan policy or development proposal supports and upholds the general principle that the strategic policy is concerned with and the degree, if any, of conflict and the rationale and evidence to justify that approach. Prior to April 2019, West Dorset District Council provided advice on which policies or parts of the adopted Local Plan should be considered strategic. The list is reproduced in Appendix 1.

The NPPG also states that it is important to minimise any conflicts between policies in a neighbourhood plan and an emerging Local Plan, and that the reasoning and evidence informing the Local Plan process may be relevant to the consideration of the basic conditions against which a neighbourhood plan is tested. Work initially progressed on a review of the Local Plan for the West Dorset / Weymouth area,

and a preferred options document was published for consultation (August – October 2018). However, following local government reorganisation (April 2019), Dorset Council's Cabinet made the decision to halt this work and instead focus its resources on the production of a Dorset-wide Local Plan. The initial proposed timescales including the following milestones. But in June 2021, the Council announced its intent to publish a new programme in late July, pushing back the programme by about 6 months (some 60,000 comments had been submitted in the January 2021 consultation). As such, whilst a draft options plan has been published, the plan is still considered to be at a very early stage and is unlikely to be adopted before the end of 2023 (at the earliest).

	2020 programme		2021 programme
>> Options Consultation:	January 2021	>>	Complete
>> Publication of draft plan:	September 2021	>>	May 2022
>> Submission	March 2022	>>	October 2022
>> Examination:	Summer 2022	>>	Spring 2023
>> Adoption:	Spring 2023	>>	Winter 2023

The emerging plan does propose a strategic allocation within the parish (which means that the proposed indicative housing target is for 2348 homes) and the proposed strategic allocation is acknowledged in the Neighbourhood Plan. Where relevant issues relating to the emerging plan are noted in this statement.

Conformity Testing

The following table considers each policy in turn, against the relevant national and local policies for that topic.

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT	Policy SNP1. Protecting and strengthening our local wildlife and habitats Policy SNP2. Local Landscape Character Policy SNP3. The Landscape Setting of the Settlements Policy SNP4. Dark Skies Policy SNP5. Protecting our important local views Policy SNP6. Encouraging appropriate recreational access to the countryside
Overview of national policy and guidance	
<p>NPPF para 98. Access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities.</p> <p>NPPF para 100. Planning policies and decisions should protect and enhance public rights of way and access, including taking opportunities to provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks.</p> <p>NPPF para 174. Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment, by: protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan); recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland; and minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures.</p> <p>NPPF para 179. To protect and enhance biodiversity, plans should identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.</p> <p>NPPF para 185. Planning policies and decisions should limit the impact of light pollution from artificial</p>	

light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation.

Most relevant Local Plan policies

WDWPLP ENV1 - Landscape and seascape includes the protection of landscape, seascape and mitigation where appropriate in line with national policy. As well as referencing nationally important landscapes, it makes clear that development should be located and designed so that it does not detract from and, where reasonable, enhances the local landscape character.

WDWPLP ENV2 - Wildlife and habitats includes protection of wildlife and habitats depending on their status / importance, and mitigation where appropriate in line with national policy.

WDWPLP ENV3 - Green Infrastructure Network - states that the councils will work together with local communities and other relevant partners to develop a green infrastructure strategy for the plan area. The policy states that development that would cause harm to the green infrastructure network or undermine the reasons for an area's inclusion within the network will not be permitted unless clearly outweighed by other considerations. In the interim Land of Local Landscape Interest will continue to be protected. *The emerging Dorset Local Plan does not propose to retain these local designations but references in 3.5.14 the fact that "Neighbourhood Plans can have a role in identifying 'valued landscapes' based on their physical attributes."*

WDWPLP ENV10 - Landscape and townscape setting - states that development should be informed by the character of the site and its surroundings, provide for the future retention and protection of trees and other features that contribute to an area's distinctive character, and where appropriate incorporate features that would enhance local character.

WDWPLP COM7 – is about creating a safe and efficient transport network. It broadly aligns with national policy, and ensures that development is not permitted unless it can be demonstrated that it would not have a severe detrimental effect on road safety, or measures can be introduced to reasonably mitigate potentially dangerous conditions. It also references that support should be given for the delivery of a strategic cycle network and improvements to the public rights of way network. Development should not result in the severance or degradation of existing or proposed routes.

Assessment of general conformity

Policy SNP1. Protecting and strengthening our local wildlife and habitats - takes account of the wildlife areas and species and aims to ensure adverse impacts on wildlife should be avoided or mitigated. This is clearly in line with the national policy on conserving and enhancing the natural environment, and Policy ENV2 of the Local Plan. Whilst there is a degree of overlap, the specific reference to potential threats and enhancements relevant to the area and identification of locally important habitats (as shown on Figure 2) provides greater depth. No conformity issues raised by Dorset Council.

Policy SNP2 - 5. Local Landscape Character; The Landscape Setting of the Settlements; Dark Skies; Protecting our important local views - identifies features of local landscape importance, and that these should be retained or reinforced through development. There is no accepted national standard as to what constitutes an important local landscape / view etc and therefore the reasons for these designations are explained. These policies are clearly in line with the national policy on conserving and enhancing the natural environment, and the strategic approach reflected in Policy ENV10 of the Local Plan. No conformity issues raised by Dorset Council - the supporting text has been updated to better reflect that the Local Plan is being updated and, when adopted (2023/4) any strategic allocation will then have precedence (as the more recent plan), and the text goes on to indicate how the policy may still be considered under such circumstances.

Policy SNP6. Encouraging appropriate recreational access to the countryside – highlights a locally-

specific issue reflecting the pressures on the countryside as a recreational resource for the large population in Dorchester as well as local residents. National policy is clearly supportive of protecting and enhancing public rights of way and access to the countryside, and this is reflected in Policy COM7 of the Local Plan.

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT	Policy SNP7. Protecting Stinsford's Historic Environment Policy SNP8. Positively managing the Thomas Hardy connection
-----------------------------	--

Overview of national policy and guidance

NPPF para 85. Planning policies and decisions should recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. In these circumstances it will be important to ensure that development is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads and exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable (for example by improving the scope for access on foot, by cycling or by public transport). The use of previously developed land, and sites that are physically well-related to existing settlements, should be encouraged where suitable opportunities exist.

NPPF para 189. Heritage assets range from sites and buildings of local historic value to those of the highest significance, ... and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance.

NPPF para 203. The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

Most relevant Local Plan policies

WDWPLP ENV4 - Heritage assets – refers to the protection of heritage assets, including non-designated assets, and broadly mirrors national planning guidance.

WDWPLP ECON5 - Tourism attractions and facilities – includes strategic locational principles reflected in criteria ii-iii and originating in policy SUS2, in particular directing development, where possible and practicable, towards established settlements, or making use of existing or replacement buildings.

Assessment of general conformity

Policy SNP7. Protecting Stinsford's Historic Environment – in particular highlights locally important, undesignated heritage assets (and avoids unnecessary duplication of national and Local Plan policy protection on designated heritage assets). Following feedback from Dorset Council the policy was modified to better reflect the NPPF phraseology.

Policy SNP8. Positively managing the Thomas Hardy connection – recognises the importance of the Thomas Hardy connection to the rural economy and the potential adverse impacts of increased visitor numbers on the wider environment. This reflects the guidance in NPPF para 85 and the locational criteria in Policy ECON5 of the Local Plan.

HOUSING, EMPLOYMENT AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES	Policy SNP9. Supporting the provision of affordable housing in the parish Policy SNP10. Supporting local employment opportunities Policy SNP11. Protecting and enhancing our community facilities
---	---

Overview of national policy and guidance

NPPF para 60. To support the government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that

the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed

NPPF para 66 - 67. Strategic policy-making authorities should establish a housing requirement figure for their whole area, which shows the extent to which their identified housing need (and any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas) can be met over the plan period. Within this overall requirement, strategic policies should also set out a housing requirement for designated neighbourhood areas which reflects the overall strategy for the pattern and scale of development and any relevant allocations. Where it is not possible to provide a requirement figure for a neighbourhood area through the Local Plan, the Local Planning Authority should provide an indicative figure, if requested to do so by the Neighbourhood Planning Body. This figure should take into account factors such as the latest evidence of local housing need, the population of the neighbourhood area and the most recently available planning strategy of the local planning authority.

NPPF para 70. Neighbourhood planning groups should consider the opportunities for allocating small and medium-sized sites suitable for housing in their area.

NPPF para 78-79. In rural areas, planning policies and decisions should be responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs. Local planning authorities should support opportunities to bring forward rural exception sites that will provide affordable housing to meet identified local needs, and consider whether allowing some market housing on these sites would help to facilitate this. Housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services. Where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby.

NPPF para 84. Planning policies and decisions should enable the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.

NPPF para 85. Planning policies and decisions should recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. In these circumstances it will be important to ensure that development is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads and exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable (for example by improving the scope for access on foot, by cycling or by public transport). The use of previously developed land, and sites that are physically well-related to existing settlements, should be encouraged where suitable opportunities exist.

NPPG Paragraph: 002 Reference ID: 10-002-20190509. It is the plan policies should be informed by engagement with developers, landowners, and infrastructure and affordable housing providers. Policy requirements, particularly for affordable housing, should be set at a level that takes account of affordable housing and infrastructure needs, without the need for further viability assessment at the decision-making stage.

Most relevant Local Plan policies

WDWPLP SUS1 - The Level of Economic and Housing Growth - Strategic Approach includes the requirement for housing and employment, but does not specify targets for Neighbourhood Plan areas. The district-wide housing need is shown to be met through site allocations and identified windfall sites within settlements.

WDWPLP SUS2 - Distribution of development - Strategic Approach includes reference to the settlement hierarchy and that development in rural areas will be directed to the settlements with defined development boundaries, and will take place at an appropriate scale to the size of the settlement. Settlements with no defined development boundary may also have some growth to meet

their local needs. It recognises that neighbourhood plans may allocate additional sites, add or extend development boundaries.

WDWPLP ECON1 - Provision of Employment – refers to employment development being supported: within or on the edge of a settlement (not restricted to those with a defined development boundary); through the intensification or extension of existing premises; as part of a farm diversification scheme; through the re-use or replacement of an existing building; or in a rural location where this is essential for that type of business.

WDWPLP HOUS1 - Affordable housing - Strategic Approach sets out that new open market housing sites should make provision for affordable housing. The Council have confirmed that the percentage of affordable housing on market housing sites, thresholds above which it is sought, and tenure split within the affordable provision, are not part of the strategic approach. The current Local Plan policy is based on 35% affordable housing, with a minimum of 70% social / affordable rent and a maximum of 30% intermediate affordable housing, unless identified local needs indicate that alternative provision would be appropriate. The type, size and mix of affordable housing will be expected to address the identified and prioritised housing needs of the area and should be proportionate to the scale and mix of market housing, resulting in a balanced community of housing and / or flats that are 'tenure blind'.

WDWPLP COM2 – COM6 – provide for the retention of local community facilities, focusing on sites within or adjoining an existing settlement, and provided that these would be located to their main catchment population - Strategic Approach states that community facilities should be provided within local communities, recognising the benefit of reducing car travel.

Assessment of general conformity

Policy SNP9. Supporting the provision of affordable housing in the parish – the current adopted plan does not set a specific housing target for the NP area, and does not define development boundaries for any of the settlements in the area as these are not considered to be sufficiently sustainable. The draft Local Plan figure includes the proposed North Dorset strategic allocation, and its basis does not rely on any further allocations being made in the area (and the strategic allocation has yet to be examined). The decision to specifically allocate sites was considered but not taken forward – although this would be re-evaluated following the adoption of the new Local Plan. Instead, the proposed policy was included, which is supportive of further housing delivery via rural affordable housing exception sites, allowing for some open market housing as part of any such scheme in line with para 78 of the NPPF. Whilst this is not specifically allowed through WDWPLP HOUS2, the Local Plan policy is considered non-strategic and para 5.2.11 of the supporting text makes clear that allowing market housing cross-subsidy on exception sites can be brought forward “where the community wants it, through neighbourhood planning, as it would not be contrary to the strategic policies in this plan.” Whilst consideration was given to whether the exception could be broadened to enable the long-term upkeep of the education and community facilities within the parish, this element has been removed from the policy (and moved into Project 4) as the evidence for this was less clear at this time.

Policy SNP10. Supporting local employment opportunities - this policy is generally supportive of development to support local businesses in a manner appropriate to the rural character of the area, in line with para 85 of the NPPF and reflecting the general locational approach used in Local Plan Policy ECON1. The locations of the business areas have been mapped to provide further clarity on their location and extent, in response to a suggestion from Dorset Council.

Policy SNP11. Protecting and enhancing our community facilities – supports the provision of community facilities, recognising the dispersed nature of the area's settlements and importance of the college in providing viable shared facilities. The policy is considered to be in conformity with the approach taken in National Policy and the Local Plan.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE	Policy SNP12. Better Building Design Policy SNP13. Protection of Groundwater
Overview of national policy and guidance	
<p>NPPF para 127. Plans should, at the most appropriate level, set out a clear design vision and expectations, so that applicants have as much certainty as possible about what is likely to be acceptable. Design policies should be developed with local communities so they reflect local aspirations, and are grounded in an understanding and evaluation of each area's defining characteristics. Neighbourhood plans can play an important role in identifying the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in development.</p> <p>NPPF para 128. the geographic coverage and level of detail and degree of prescription should be tailored to the circumstances and scale of change in each place, and should allow a suitable degree of variety where this would be justified.</p> <p>NPPF para 152. The planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change. It should help to: shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience; encourage the reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings; and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure.</p> <p>NPPF para 154. New development should be planned to avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change.</p> <p>NPPF para 156. Local planning authorities should support community-led initiatives for renewable and low carbon energy, including developments outside areas identified in local plans or other strategic policies that are being taken forward through neighbourhood planning.</p> <p>NPPF para 169. Major developments should incorporate sustainable drainage systems unless there is clear evidence that this would be inappropriate. The systems used should: a) take account of advice from the lead local flood authority; b) have appropriate proposed minimum operational standards; c) have maintenance arrangements in place to ensure an acceptable standard of operation for the lifetime of the development; and d) where possible, provide multifunctional benefits.</p> <p>NPPF para 174. Planning policies and decisions should prevent new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, water pollution. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plan.</p> <p>NPPG Paragraph: 007 Reference ID: 30-007-20190722 clarifies that plans may include specific standards to apply to various forms of proposed development and locations in their area. Care should be taken, however, to avoid these being applied as rigid thresholds, as specific circumstances may justify some variation being allowed.</p>	
Most relevant Local Plan policies	
<p>WDWPLP ENV5 – Flood Risk - development should be planned to avoid risk of flooding (from surface water run-off, groundwater, fluvial and coastal sources) where possible.</p> <p>WDWPLP ENV9 - Pollution and contaminated land – makes clear that development should not result in an unacceptable risk of pollution to ground water, surface water-bodies and tidal waters.</p> <p>WDWPLP ENV10-14 - are about Achieving High Quality and Sustainability in Design – with emphasis placed on development contributing positively to the local identity of the area, and that new buildings and alterations / extensions to existing buildings are expected to achieve high standards of</p>	

environmental performance.

WDWPLP COM10 - Utilities Service Infrastructure - development will not be permitted where the problems associated with the lack of necessary utilities service infrastructure, including energy supplies, drainage, sewerage, sewage treatment and water supply, cannot be overcome.

WDWPLP COM11 - Renewable Energy Development - proposals for generating heat or electricity from renewable energy sources (other than wind energy which is considered under national policy and guidance) will be allowed wherever possible providing that the benefits of the development, such as the contribution towards renewable energy targets, significantly outweigh any harm.

Assessment of general conformity

Policy SNP12. Better Building Design - deals with design, based on an appraisal of the built character drawing on the Conservation Area appraisal, and general guidance on sustainable building practices. The policy aims to avoid being over-prescriptive but instead highlight the key considerations and also the need to consider the design in the context of Dorset Council's declared climate change emergency. National policy is very clear that Neighbourhood plans can play an important role in identifying the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in development. No conformity issues were raised by Dorset Council.

Policy SNP13. Protection of Groundwater - adds further detail in terms of local groundwater issues, and is considered to have regard to NPPF para 174 and Local Plan policy ENV9. No conformity issues were raised by Dorset Council.

TRANSPORT, ROAD SAFE AND ACCESSIBLE TRAVEL	Policy SNP14. Traffic Management
	Policy SNP15. Transport Assessments
	Policy SNP16. Improving cycle infrastructure

Overview of national policy and guidance

NPPF para 104. Transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals, so that: a) the potential impacts of development on transport networks can be addressed; c) opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use are identified and pursued; e) patterns of movement, streets, parking and other transport considerations are integral to the design of schemes, and contribute to making high quality places.

NPPF para 105. Significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. However, opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making.

NPPF para 106. Planning policies should: b) be prepared with the active involvement of local highways authorities, other transport infrastructure providers and operators and neighbouring councils; identify and protect, where there is robust evidence, sites and routes which could be critical in developing infrastructure to widen transport choice and realise opportunities for large scale development; d) provide for attractive and well-designed walking and cycling networks and supporting facilities such as secure cycle parking.

Most relevant Local Plan policies

WDWPLP COM7 – is about creating a safe and efficient transport network. It broadly aligns with national policy, and ensures that development is not permitted unless it can be demonstrated that it would not have a severe detrimental effect on road safety, or measures can be introduced to reasonably mitigate potentially dangerous conditions. It also references that support should be given for the delivery of a strategic cycle network and improvements to the public rights of way network.

Development should not result in the severance or degradation of existing or proposed routes.

Assessment of general conformity

Policy SNP14-16. Traffic Management, Transport Assessments and Improving cycle infrastructure - recognize the importance of walking and cycling as the most sustainable modes of transport for getting around the local area, and the rural nature of many of the routes with little specific provision to separate cyclists and pedestrians from motor vehicles. It specifically identifies key issues and potential route improvements to inform transport assessments and infrastructure provision. The policies are considered to be broadly in line with the NPPF and Local Plan policy COM7. No conformity issues were raised by Dorset Council.

Conformity conclusions

The Neighbourhood Plan includes a positive vision for the future of the area and explains how this translated into relevant policies. The analysis of the plan in relation to national planning policy and guidance and the strategic policies of the local plan, as shown in the preceding tables, does not highlight any fundamental conformity issues. No substantial conformity issues were raised by the Local Planning Authority in relation to the policy wording in their response to the pre-submission consultation, the main points focusing on clarification, which has been taken on board through amendments to the draft plan. On this basis, there are no apparent reasons to conclude other than the Neighbourhood Plan meets the basic condition of having regard to national policy and guidance from the Secretary of State and being in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan for the area.

4. EU and sustainability obligations

The 'making' of the Neighbourhood Plan must not breach or conflict, and must be compatible, with EU obligations, must not have a significant effect on a European site, and must contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. It must not breach human rights, within the meaning of the Human Rights Act 1998.

EU obligations

The plan has been subject to a screening assessment to determine whether a Strategic Environmental Assessment or Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Regulations may be required.

The draft screening opinion was subject to consultation alongside the pre-submission version of the Neighbourhood Plan. The consultation ran from Monday 15th March through to Tuesday 27th April 2021. The purpose of this consultation was to seek affirmation from the statutory environmental consultees on the conclusion that the full SEA and HRA AA process is not necessary to support the production of the Stinsford Neighbourhood Plan.

The statutory consultees agreed with the findings that the scope of Stinsford Neighbourhood Plan is such that these sensitive environmental assets are unlikely to be significantly affected by the plan, as the plan does not allocate any additional development. On this basis the need for a fuller assessment was ruled out.

The achievement of sustainable development

The Neighbourhood Plan's policies were assessed against the sustainability objectives as set out in paragraph 8 of the NPPF:

- **an economic objective** – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support

growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure

- **a social objective** – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and
- **an environmental objective** – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

With the following table summarising the key findings:

Key:	✓	positive impact likely
	-	neutral impact likely
	x	adverse impact likely
	?	impact uncertain but unlikely to be significant

Sustainability assessment objective	Economic	Social	Environmental	
Policies and reasonable alternatives				Notes / explanation
SNP1. Protecting and strengthening our local wildlife and habitats	-	-	✓	Whilst these policies largely add to the existing protections, it further highlights the local issues that need to be taken into account. For example, the potential for a notably greater impact from woodland loss (in an area where there is low coverage) and problems associated with recreational pressures (largely arising from outside the NP area). The retention of landscape character and views also helps support social (cultural) well-being.
SNP2. Local Landscape Character	-	✓	✓	
SNP3. The Landscape Setting of the Settlements	-	✓	✓	
SNP4. Dark Skies	-	-	✓	
SNP5. Protecting our important local views	-	✓	✓	
SNP6. Encouraging appropriate recreational access to the countryside	-	-	✓	These policies seek to highlight the many non-designated heritage assets and associations with Thomas Hardy to ensure that these are preserved and enhanced where possible. The Thomas Hardy connection is also a major factor in local tourism, but the pressures from this need to be balanced against possible adverse environmental impacts.
SNP7. Protecting Stinsford's Historic Environment	-	✓	✓	
SNP8. Positively managing the Thomas Hardy connection	?	✓	✓	
SNP9. Supporting the provision of affordable housing in the parish	-	✓	-	This policy supports small-scale schemes for affordable housing with a limited number of open market homes to come forward.

SNP10. Supporting local employment opportunities	✓	-	?	This policy supports small-scale schemes for employment to come forward under limited circumstances, recognising the rural nature and poor transport connectivity of much of the parish.
SNP11. Protecting and enhancing our community facilities	-	✓	-	This policy supports the protection and improvement of community facilities in a manner in keeping with the character of the area.
SNP12. Better Building Design	?	?	✓	This policy highlights the importance of good design in relation to local character and climate change. Whilst it may impact on build costs in the short-term it should result in lower running costs.
SNP13. Protection of Groundwater	-	-	✓	This policy highlights localised issues with regards to potential groundwater pollution.
SNP14. Traffic Management	-	✓	✓	These policies seek to ensure that the impacts on pedestrian and cyclists and their ability to safely use the highway network is fully considered, taking into account local knowledge of issues. The promotion of walking and cycling is also relevant in terms of reducing climate change.
SNP15. Transport Assessments	-	✓		
SNP16. Improving cycle infrastructure	-	✓	✓	

Human Rights

No issues have been raised in relation to the possible contravention of Human Rights in the preceding consultations, and given the conclusions on the plan's general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan and regard to National Planning Policy, it is reasonable to conclude that the making of the plan should not breach human rights.

Appendix 1 – Local Plan Policies List

Policies relating to the towns are not shown here as not relevant to the area.

POLICY	SUBJECT	STRATEGIC ASPECTS
INT1	Presumption in favour of sustainable development	Strategic policy (reflects national policy, as well as strategic objectives of the local plan)
ENV1	Landscape, seascape and sites of geological interest	Strategic Approach includes the protection of landscape, seascape and sites of geological interest, and mitigation where appropriate
ENV2	Wildlife and habitats	Strategic Approach includes protection of wildlife and habitats, and mitigation where appropriate
ENV3	Green infrastructure network	Strategic Approach includes protection of important local green spaces, and mitigation where appropriate
ENV4	Heritage assets	Strategic Approach includes protection of heritage assets
ENV5	Flood Risk	Strategic Approach includes directing development away from areas at risk of flooding
ENV6	Local flood alleviation schemes	Linked to policy ENV5 above
ENV7	Coastal erosion and land instability	Strategic approach includes directing development away from areas at risk of coastal erosion
ENV8	Agricultural land and farming resilience	Not specifically covered in Strategic Approach
ENV9	Pollution and contaminated land	Strategic Approach includes directing development away from areas at risk of air and water pollution
ENV10	Landscape and townscape setting	Strategic Approach includes that development should be of high quality design, and contributing to local identity of area
ENV11	Pattern of streets and spaces	Strategic Approach includes that development should be of high quality design, and contributing to local identity of area
ENV12	Design & positioning of buildings	Strategic Approach includes that development should be of high quality design, and contributing to local identity of area
ENV13	High levels of environmental performance	Strategic Approach includes that development should be of high quality design, and contributing to local identity of area
ENV14	Shop fronts and advertisements	Strategic Approach includes that development should be of high quality design, and contributing to local identity of area, but does not specifically refer to shopfronts and advertisements
ENV15	Efficient and appropriate use of land	Strategic Approach includes that development should be of high quality design, and contributing to local identity of area
ENV16	Amenity	Strategic Approach refers to enhancing quality of life for residents and visitors
SUS1	Level of economic and housing growth	Strategic Approach includes the requirement figures for housing and employment
SUS2	Distribution of development	Strategic Approach includes: the principles that have led to the proposed distribution (p55-56) the strategic site allocations as listed in Table 3.7 reference to the settlement hierarchy and development within settlement boundaries general restriction of development in rural areas – but recognition that neighbourhood plans may allocate additional sites, add or extend development boundaries, and that some development types are needed

POLICY	SUBJECT	STRATEGIC ASPECTS
		to support the rural economy.
SUS3	Adaptation and reuse of buildings outside defined development boundaries	Not strategic
SUS4	Replacement of buildings outside defined development boundaries	Not strategic
SUS5	Neighbourhood development plans	Neighbourhood plans need to take account of this policy, which sets out expectations of how neighbourhood plans will relate to the local plan. The Strategic Approach identifies that neighbourhood plans can allocate development beyond that allocated in the local plan, and can extend or add settlement boundaries. But it also sets out principles such as concentrating development where jobs and facilities are accessible, and development being at an appropriate scale to the size of the village.
ECON1	Provision of employment	Strategic Approach includes the general support for employment development as expressed in this policy. The specific wording on live-work units is not considered to be strategic.
ECON2	Protection of key employment sites	Strategic Approach includes the protection of existing employment sites, taking into account their significance – the key employment sites are clearly the more strategically significant ones.
ECON3	Protection of other employment sites	Strategic Approach includes the protection of existing employment sites, taking into account their significance.
ECON4	Retail and town centre development	Strategic Approach includes directing retail and town centre uses to the town centres of Weymouth, Dorchester, Bridport, Sherborne and Lyme Regis, or to local centres, and avoiding development that would undermine the functioning of any centre or adversely affect its vitality or viability. This indicates that criteria i-iv are strategic but that criteria v-vi are not.
ECON5	Tourism attractions and facilities	Not strategic, except for the strategic locational principles reflected in criteria ii-iii and originating in policy SUS2
ECON6	Built tourist accommodation	Not strategic, though criterion ii reflects a strategic aspect of policy ECON4
ECON7	Caravan and camping sites	Not strategic
ECON8	Diversification of land-based rural businesses	Not strategic
ECON9	New agricultural buildings	Not strategic
ECON10	Equestrian development	Not strategic
HOUS1	Affordable housing	Strategic Approach sets out that: the type, size and mix of housing will be expected to meet local needs as far as possible and result in balanced communities opportunities will be taken to secure affordable homes to meet local needs New open market housing sites should make provision for affordable housing. The percentage of affordable housing on market housing sites, thresholds above which it is sought, and tenure split within the affordable provision, are not part of the strategic approach.
HOUS2	Affordable housing	The Strategic Approach refers to flexible policies that encourage

POLICY	SUBJECT	STRATEGIC ASPECTS
	exception sites	affordable housing to come forward, but does not refer to exception sites so this is not a strategic policy. The local plan policy allows these sites only for affordable housing, but the text indicates that if a community wants to allow open market cross-subsidy on exception sites they could do this in neighbourhood plans without being contrary to the strategic policies.
HOUS3	Open market housing mix	Strategic Approach refers to the type, size and mix of housing being expected to reflect local needs as far as possible and result in balanced communities, as reflected in this policy, so it is strategic.
HOUS4	Development of flats, hostels and houses in multiple occupation	Not strategic
HOUS5	Residential care accommodation	Not strategic
HOUS6	Other residential development outside defined development boundaries	Not strategic
COM1	Making sure new development makes suitable provision for community infrastructure	Strategic Approach states that new local community facilities will be provided as part of developments where possible and practicable
COM2	New or improved local community buildings and structures	Strategic Approach states that community facilities should be provided within local communities, recognising the benefit of reducing car travel
COM3	The retention of local community buildings and structures	Strategic Approach states that existing facilities will be protected through a flexible approach which recognises the changing needs in society
COM4	New or improved local recreational facilities	Strategic Approach states that community facilities should be provided within local communities, recognising the benefit of reducing car travel
COM5	The retention of open space and recreation facilities	Strategic Approach states that existing facilities will be protected through a flexible approach which recognises the changing needs in society
COM6	The provision of education and training facilities	Strategic Approach states that community facilities should be provided within local communities, recognising the benefit of reducing car travel
COM7	Creating a safe and efficient transport network	Strategic Approach states that providing a safe transport route network for all types of travel, and providing choices for 'greener' travel options where practicable, are also a key part of the strategy, and that development contributions towards transport infrastructure will be made
COM8	Transport interchanges and community travel exchanges	Not regarded as a strategic policy, but Strategic Approach does refer to providing choices for greener travel options where practicable
COM9	Parking standards in new development	Not strategic, though may be impacts on COM7 on safe and efficient transport networks
COM10	The provision of utilities service infrastructure	Strategic Approach refers to developer contributions towards strategic infrastructure needs
COM11	Renewable energy development	Not identified in the plan as a strategic policy, but there is national policy on the subject which must be taken into account