

Portland Neighbourhood Plan - Examiner's Questions

To Dorset Council (DC)

<p>1. Please confirm that, following reorganisation, DC is now the Mineral Planning Authority and Waste Planning Authority for the Portland Neighbourhood Plan area.</p>	
<p>2. Please provide the date of adoption of the Minerals Sites Plan (paragraph 3.17 of the Neighbourhood Plan) and the current position on the emerging Waste Plan.</p>	
<p>3. Paragraph 3.18 of the Plan refers to Mineral Safeguarding Areas (MAS) and Mineral Consultation Areas (MCA) and Map 3 is entitled Mineral Consultation Area. However, paragraph 3.20 quotes from the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Minerals Strategy in respect of the designation of a Minerals Safeguarding Area. What is the DC's view on whether Map 3 should show the MCA or MSA? Or do they cover the same area here?</p>	
<p>4. Representations have been made on the Plan on behalf of Powerfuel Portland Limited, in particular seeking various amendments to the Plan's policies to include reference to 'energy recovery from waste' and 'waste to fuel'. Please provide the DC's view as to whether the changes sought relate to provisions and policies for 'excluded development', as set out in the Regulations.</p>	

<p>5. Please confirm the dates of the application for and designation of the Neighbourhood Area as the dates in the Plan differ from those in the Basic Conditions statement. For example, paragraph 1.1 of the Plan gives the date of designation as November 2013, whereas the Basic Conditions Statement (page 3) states that it was formally approved on 18 July 2013, but refers to minutes of the Town Council dated 5 November 2013. I have also seen different dates as to when the application was made.</p>	
<p>6. Please confirm that the Shoreline Management Plan referred to in policy Port/EN1 is the South Devon and Dorset Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) which can be accessed on the Dorset Council website (this will require a correction to Footnote 23). Also, could I be provided with a readable hard copy of the SMP summary leaflet as it is unreadable when printed off the web at A4?</p>	
<p>To Portland Town Council (PTC)</p>	
<p>7. Please advise on the PTC's response to the request of Wessex Water that Yeates Reservoir No.2 should be excluded from the boundaries of the Portland Quarries Nature Park.</p>	<p>The boundaries of the Portland Quarries Nature Park both existing and aspirational are those defined by Weymouth and Portland BC. The policy seeks to endorse and facilitate the long-term aspirations of the project. The exclusion of the reservoir from the boundaries is a matter for the LPA to comment on. There is an adjacent historical site which is not widely known.</p>

<p>8. Please advise on the PTC's progress in establishing a schedule of assets of local heritage value (paragraph 7.39 of the Plan).</p>	<p>Policy Port/EN4 has significance because it recognises that there are local undesignated heritage assets. These are a matter of interest to the community and the Town Council is committed to maintaining a local list.</p> <p>The principal of establishing a Schedule of Local Heritage Value has been accepted by the Town Council and appointed a lead Councillor to take this forward. Work necessary to produce a 'local list' in consultation with the community has not yet commenced. It was thought inappropriate to commence a further consultation in 2019 when there were a number of other planning related consultations occurring.</p> <p>In preparing the Schedule of Local Heritage Value we intend to follow the guidance provided by Historic England in Advice Note No. 7 Local Heritage Listing. We shall work with Dorset Council and establish an appropriate nomination process, selection criteria and approval procedure for inclusion on the local list. In discussions on this matter the Town Council originally proposed three candidate sites these were Lanos Arch, Nicodemus Knob and the Tudor Cottage at Brandy Row. Basic research for the first two has been undertaken via the Portland History Site see https://www.portlandhistory.co.uk/lanos-arch.html and https://www.portlandhistory.co.uk/nicodemus-knob.html. The Town Council elected in May 2019 however decided initially to focus on the Coffin House in Victoria Gardens and the Underground Hospital within Portland Hospital Grounds. As stated the Council has appointed a lead Councillor to take this forward. Additionally, and following a presentation by a local artist group the Tudor House at Brandy Row is also being progressed. Information on these developments are recorded on the Town Council's Planning and Highways Advisory Committee. The Town Council is also now working actively with the Conservation Officer.</p>
<p>9. I note the intention of the Town Council set out at paragraph 7.62 of the Plan to commission a report on guidelines in respect of a common palate of materials, etc. Have those guidelines been drafted?</p>	<p>The Town Council is aware of this commitment made as a result of Portland Heritage and Character Assessment of 2017. This has not yet been commissioned. It is one of several community investments to be made in association with CIL income.</p>
<p>10. Please provide the most recent data on housing affordability in Portland and explain the seeming discrepancy between the box on page 6 of the Plan which gives a ratio of house prices to income of 8 whereas paragraph 9.4 states house prices, on average, are 11 times higher than average wage levels.</p>	<p>The box on page 6 applies to Portland only. The figure was derived from the Dorset Insight website. The wage levels in the area have remained largely static over the last few years with an average at around £20k if you compare this with the average house cost then you can see how the movement has occurred. See <u>https://apps.geowessex.com/insights/AreaProfiles/Parish/portland</u></p> <p>NB. the word in Box 6 should read "prices" not "process".</p> <p>The reference in para. 9.4 is to the borough of Weymouth and Portland. House price levels are lower on Portland than around Weymouth. This is reflected in the requirement for an affordable housing percentage of 25% on Portland as against 35% for the rest of Dorset.</p>

	The Borough's ratio seems to have fluctuated over the past few years between 8-12%. The latest ratio on the opening doors Dorset website has 10.8% for Weymouth & Portland BC area, see http://www.openingdoorsdorset.co.uk/pt-case-studies/updated-home-truths-report-2017-18/
11. Please provide details of the most recent housing need assessment for Portland.	The last overall housing need assessment was conducted as part of the Local Plan Review. A request has been made to the LPA for a specific Portland assessment. The indicative shorthand method of population for NP area/ Total Housing area * assessed total need has been used as a quick check.
12. The DC has commented on policy Port/HS1 of the Plan and in particular its concerns at the requirement that developers should provide 'an up to date assessment of housing need on Portland'. Please clarify how it is proposed that this policy would be applied.	<p>We note that the new local planning authority is taking a different and less rigorous approach to housing needs assessment on a local basis. We would expect the local planning authority to ensure that the developer provides sufficient relevant evidence commensurate with the type and scale of housing development proposed.</p> <p>We do think it is important that new housing schemes are justified on the basis of local housing needs. We could accept, as DC suggests, "introducing a degree of flexibility into the policy framework" as long as it was relevant and used the most up-to-date sources of information and market intelligence. For larger schemes, if necessary, it is not unreasonable to require a developer to commission an objective assessment to help inform the development proposal.</p> <p>In terms of remaining abreast of the local housing market., Portland Town Council would be prepared to partner DC and jointly commission a local housing needs assessment on a regular basis or agree an updating process to previous work this could include : those on housing register, indication from employers and a local call based on agreed criteria.</p>
13. Please clarify what is meant in policy Port/HS2 by 'community housing assets', and if these differ, and in what respects, from 'community housing schemes'.	The term "Community Housing Assets" is only used as the policy title. It has been used to cover both the building and housing aspects of the policy.
14. Please explain how policy Port/EN7 on design and character would facilitate community-led housing projects, as suggested in paragraph 9.15 of the Plan.	This is an out-dated reference it should be corrected to Port/EN6.
15. Paragraph 9.16 of the Plan allows for a 'small proportion of open market housing' on exception sites. Please explain how it is proposed that this test would be applied,	This is a matter for the local planning authority. In accordance with para. 77 of the NPPF we have allowed for some market housing on an exception site if it would help facilitate the provision of affordable housing to meet identified local needs. As the NPPF Appendix states "A proportion of market homes may be allowed on the site at the local planning authority's discretion, for example where

<p>and what is the local evidence to support its inclusion in the Plan.</p>	<p><i>essential to enable the delivery of affordable units without grant funding.</i>” We expect the local planning authority to apply its usual tests and judgment. We are not seeking to prescribe or to change the way the LPA uses its discretion. Given the amount of publicly owned sites we feel that social value should figure here.</p>
<p>16. Please provide evidence to justify policy Port/HS3, in particular relevant up to date local evidence on the impact of second homes on Portland’s housing market and on the vitality and sustainability of particular neighbourhoods.</p>	<p>The growth in second homes is an ‘issue’ affecting local neighbourhoods and streets on Portland that is not easy to pick up in any statistics but is very apparent to the permanent residents that live there. The community at large is very aware of the growing number of second homes and concerned about its impact if the trend continues without some control being exercised when necessary. The policy supports on-going monitoring of the situation and enables the local planning authority to apply a principle residency condition in circumstances where there is clear evidence that an increase in second homes would not be in the interests of community sustainability and the vitality of certain neighbourhoods. We have seen by examination of the electoral register that both existing areas and new developments are recording figures of 30 to 40% without a registration. This is reinforced by local observation of some of the newer estates. It should be noted that a residency requirement has featured in allocations in two recent estates constructed.</p>
<p>17. Footnote 55 on page 66 of the Plan refers to the draft Portland Tourism and Visitor Management Strategy, prepared by the Portland Community Partnership in 2013. Please advise on its current status and provide an electronic link to the Strategy.</p>	<p>The Portland Tourism and Visitor Management Strategy, was presented to the previous Town Council for discussion and confirmation of support in June 2015 see http://www.portlandtowncouncil.gov.uk/Minutes-Marine-June-2015.pdf. The Strategy also served as part of the Evidence base in the production of the Economic Vision Report specifically Destination Development which is part of the Neighbourhood Plan’s evidence base , see https://www.portlandplan.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Economic-Vision-for-Portland-280116-Submitted-Version.pdf. The new Town Council has recently formed a Tourism Action Group and a copy of the Strategy has been circulated. http://www.portlandtowncouncil.gov.uk/Agenda-Marine-Sept-2017.pdf</p>
<p>18. Policy Port/ST1 refers to ‘proposals relating to land outside the settlement boundary’ Should this instead refer to ‘defined development boundary’?</p>	<p>The use of the term “<i>settlement boundary</i>” is intended to embrace both the DDB and other built-up areas. We recognise that the changing nature of employment and tourism offer may require this flexibility.</p>

<p>19. Please provide information on the major tourism projects referred to in paragraphs 12.25 and 13.12. In particular, please advise on the progress on Eden Portland on which I understand an application was anticipated to be made late 2018 (Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership website).</p>	<p>The Chair of Memo the Charity that is working with Eden International on the development of Eden Portland has made a written submission and this letter is attached ‘-Eden Portland – Portland Neighbourhood Plan’</p>
<p>20. Please indicate on a map base the differences, if any, between the neighbourhood centre boundaries for Easton and Fortuneswell and those shown in the Preferred Options Local Plan Consultation Document.</p>	<p>See attached document (‘Local Centre Review’), which includes the map requested and explains the rationale used for defining the centres in question. The areas delineated in the Neighbourhood Plan better reflect those buildings and uses that the community regards as being part of its local ‘centre’ and therefore appropriate to be subject to the Local Plan policy regarding retail and local centre uses. We have commented on the boundaries in the LP Review and suggested that they should be amended to better reflect how the centres are perceived by the community.</p>
<p>21. Please provide me with an amended version of Map 16 indicating existing trails and those which are aspirational.</p>	<p>Illustrative Map as requested attached. (See file aspirational path review) Please note that the only truly aspirational path is the section between the two fences on the Port area as the others referred to are Rights of Way or are well used paths which connect Rights of Way (we have included two examples). We are having discussions with the Port at this time about a possible route across their land area.</p>
<p>22. Please advise on the current ownership of the allotments south of Grove Road (paragraph 12.17).</p>	<p>The area of land south of Grove Rd upon which the allotment sites are located are predominantly owned by the Stone Firms and are leased and managed now by Portland Town Council. The area transferred under Local Government changes to Portland Town Council also incorporates an area of unregistered land which includes allotments</p>