



Neighbourhood Plan for  
Portland 2017-2031  
Submission Version

# The Portland Plan

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**Cover photograph courtesy of NASA - International Space Station**

# Portland Neighbourhood Plan

## Submission Version

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Nb. Larger-scale high definition maps associated with the  
Portland Neighbourhood Plan can be on-line found in a Map Book at  
<https://www.portlandplan.org.uk/>

## Foreword

The Portland Neighbourhood Plan has been some time in preparation. Portland presents a complex and unique set of circumstances that needs very careful consideration and planning.

We are grateful that the Localism Act 2012 has provided the community with the opportunity to get involved in that planning and to put in place a Neighbourhood Plan that must be acknowledged by developers.

We must have regard to national planning policy and conform to the strategic policies of the West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan. Beyond that, we are free to set the land use policies that we feel are necessary.

Over a period of five years, much research, several surveys, lots of consultation and considerable discussion has been led by a working group of local people. We have taken expert advice along the way. We have striven hard to achieve an acceptable balance between development and preservation and resolve any potential conflicts between economic growth and community wellbeing. We are particularly grateful to everybody, whether individuals, organisations or businesses with an interest in Portland's future that responded constructively to the consultations we have undertaken on the Plan. The many views and comments we received have been taken into account.

The Portland Neighbourhood Plan represents a shared community vision for Portland. Its purpose is to help realise that vision by shaping development and growth on Portland over the next 13 years. The Neighbourhood Plan should ensure that we get the right type of development in the right place.

I would like to record my thanks to Locality<sup>1</sup> and its partners who have provided much appreciated technical and financial assistance to enable us to get this far, and for the support and encouragement we've received throughout from Weymouth and Portland Borough Council.

Jim Draper  
Portland Town Councillor and  
Chair, Portland Neighbourhood Plan Group

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<sup>1</sup> Locality is the national network of ambitious and enterprising community-led organisations, working together to help neighbourhoods thrive. It has administered grants and support on behalf of the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

# 1. Introduction

## The Plan Area

- 1.1 The Portland Neighbourhood Plan applies to the parished area that is under the jurisdiction of Portland Town Council. The Plan area as designated by Weymouth and Portland Borough Council in November 2013 is shown on the map below.

Map 1 Portland Neighbourhood Area



## 2. Portland Now

2.1 The Isle of Portland is located directly south of Weymouth, in a unique position at the eastern end of the famous Chesil Beach, at the centre of the Jurassic World Heritage Coast. It is perhaps best known as the home of Portland stone, used to build several high-profile buildings across the UK and worldwide including St Paul's Cathedral in London and cladding on United Nations building in New York. The Island has more recently come to wider prominence as host of the very successful sailing events of the 2012 Olympics. Portland Harbour is one of the largest deep-water, man-made harbours in the world with the Port currently operating considerably below its potential capacity.

population  
**12,844**  
(2011)

businesses  
**292**

2.2 Portland is a unique and beautiful island with a stunning natural environment. The Island's landscape may be fractured as a result of extensive quarrying activity, but it has expansive views of the sea and the Jurassic coastline from its cliffs and is well known for its exceptional flora and fauna. Portland is home to almost 13,000 people many of whom have been affected by the decline in the island's economic fortunes.

adults with no  
qualification  
**23.4%**

2.3 The local economy is still adjusting to the withdrawal of the Royal Navy in the 1990s. Quarrying, whilst symbolic of the Island's economy, is a small employer. Economic revival is focussed growing new business and employment opportunities at Portland Port, Osprey Quay, and Southwell Park. Tourism is also a key industry, with potential to expand. Currently visitors tend to stay for only a few hours rather than a day or longer and mainly visit Portland Bill.

households  
without a car  
**24.6%**

2.4 It is sad to report that too many of the Island's population experiences social and/or economic deprivation, particularly in the Underhill area, with high unemployment levels, low levels of educational attainment, high levels of teenage pregnancies and poor health. Many residents are dependent on the Weymouth area for shops, services, education and employment, with fewer opportunities on the Island itself.

households in  
private rented  
**16.9%**

2.5 Tackling deprivation is one of several challenges the Portland Town Council is facing up to along with its partners in pursuit of greater prosperity and more community wellbeing.

1 person  
households  
**30%**

2.6 There are significant physical challenges too that we face:

*Topography* – the Island is a tilted table of limestone, rising sharply to nearly 500 feet before gently sloping south to Portland Bill, creating access issues particularly in Underhill.

households in  
flats and  
maisonettes  
**16.4%**

*Natural Environment* – much of the Island's natural environment is designated as special and has been afforded statutory protection from change and development.

*Villages* – Portland is characterised by several distinct local communities. All have their own unique identities. Many have historic centres and heritage features that should be protected and enhanced.

area of  
quarries  
**324ha.**

*Quarried Landscape* – A large area of the Island is dominated by quarries, some of which continue to be worked. Others that have become redundant. The landscape left from open cast quarrying is difficult to restore and re-use.

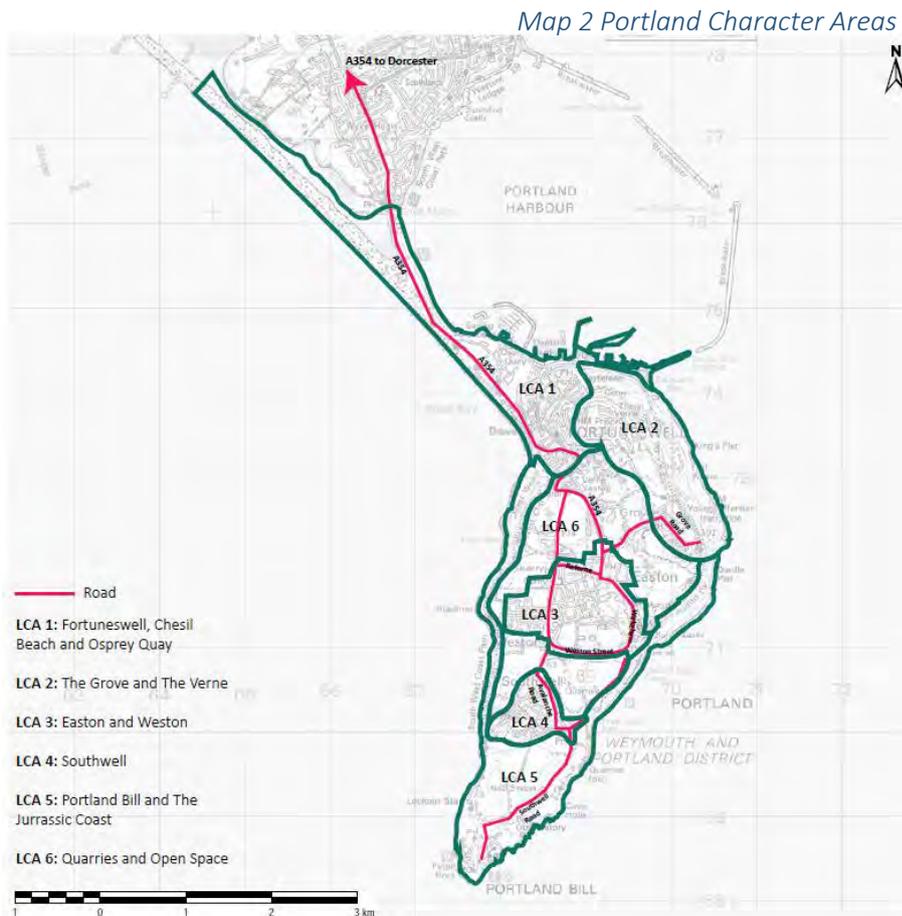
*Lack of Gateways* – There are several locations on the Island that are important because of their role as 'entrances'; too many provide a negative first impression with no sense that the visitor is entering such a unique and special area.

designated  
priority  
habitats  
**34%**

*Connectivity* - improving transport links to national routes and the proposed 'Jurassic Coast Highway'.

2.7 A recent study<sup>2</sup> carried out in conjunction with the Neighbourhood Plan has identified six distinct character areas on Portland. These have been informed by consideration of the Island's historical development, transport networks, urban structure and built development, land use and levels of activity; green space and public realm, views and landmarks. Natural England defines key characteristics as "those combinations of elements which help to give an area its distinctive sense of place" that would result in significant consequences for the current character if they were changed or lost. As a result, they form an important bedrock to the development of planning and management policies for Portland and a reference point against which to monitor change.

2.8 The six 'character areas' of Portland are identified and named on the diagram below:



2.9 The implications of the character assessment and its conclusions is that there are two areas of Portland forming the Island's spine, with little potential for development which should remain as they are i.e. the nationally important Portland Bill and Jurassic Coast area (LCA5) and the rugged open landscape area of Quarries and Open Space (LCA6) that contribute much to the character of the whole Island. The other four areas, each with their own distinctive mix of uses and character, all experience development pressures and have varying degrees of development potential that can be realised with a relevant and appropriate set of neighbourhood plan policies.

2.10 The Portland Neighbourhood Plan endeavours to facilitate the development that is wanted, in a way that respects and enhances the character distinctions and reinforces the role and the sustainability of each of the areas.

persons employed on the Island  
**2,990**

main roads  
**1**

persons commuting off the Island  
**3,200**

ratio of house process to income  
**x8**

listed buildings  
**202**

empty school buildings  
**3**

daily traffic on Beach Road  
**18,000**

staying visitors  
**38,000**

day visitors  
**343,000**  
(2013)

<sup>2</sup> Portland Heritage and Character Assessment of 2017, AECOM for Portland Town Council, March 2017

### 3. The Strategic Planning Context

- 3.1 In preparing our Neighbourhood Plan we are obliged, by law, to:
- have regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State
  - ensure the Plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the Local Plan

#### National Planning Policy Framework

- 3.2 We have been mindful of the current national planning framework as set out in the 2018 publication<sup>3</sup>, supplemented by the Planning Practice Guidance relating to neighbourhood planning matters which is published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government via a dedicated website<sup>4</sup>.

#### West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan

- 3.3 The more local strategic context is provided by the West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan. The current Local Plan was adopted on 15th October 2015. *“It controls which new buildings will be built and where they should go. Nationally there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development and local councils are expected to plan positively for the needs of their area.*
- 3.4 *The Local Plan is the main basis for making decisions on planning applications. Planning decisions must be made in accordance with the Local Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. And it gives local communities, developers and investors greater certainty about the types of applications that are likely to be approved. The Local Plan sits alongside the National Planning Policy Framework, which must also be taken into account in making decisions on planning applications and in the preparation of local and neighbourhood development plans.”<sup>5</sup>*
- 3.5 The Local Plan recognises that important role that a neighbourhood plan can play. *“Neighbourhood development plans, when adopted, will form part of the development plan. These are prepared by the local community (such as the parish or town council, or elsewhere a neighbourhood forum). These can be as simple, or as detailed, as local people want, provided that they are in line with national planning policy, and the strategic policies of the Local Plan. Where they are in conflict, the policies contained in the neighbourhood development plan will effectively replace the non-strategic policies in the Local Plan for that neighbourhood.”<sup>6</sup>*
- 3.6 The adopted Local Plan includes a specific policy on neighbourhood plans. Its Policy SUS5 states that neighbourhood plans should:
- *“show how they are contributing towards the strategic objectives of this plan and be in general conformity with its strategic approach*
  - *clearly set out how they will promote sustainable development in their area at the same level or over and above that which would otherwise be delivered through the local plan*
  - *have due regard to information on local need for new homes, jobs and facilities, for their plan area and any outlying areas which they may serve*
  - *demonstrate that they are credible, justifiable and achievable. This can be assisted by involving landowners, developers and service providers in their preparation.*
- Communities preparing neighbourhood development plans will need to show how their proposals are in general conformity with this strategic approach”.*

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<sup>3</sup> National Planning Policy Framework, Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, March 2018

<sup>4</sup> <http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/>

<sup>5</sup> West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan <http://www.planvu.co.uk/wdwp/written/cpt1.htm>

<sup>6</sup> West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan <http://www.planvu.co.uk/wdwp/written/cpt1.htm>

- 3.7 The adopted West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan, alongside its policies covering the plan area, has three specific policies for Portland. These are intended to help realise the Borough Council's vision for Portland: *"In 2031, Portland:*
- *has maintained and enhanced the unique character of the island in terms of its built and natural assets, whilst thriving economically and socially for the benefit of residents and visitors*
  - *is the home of specialist maritime industries and other growth sectors that benefit from its unique location, providing it with a good supply of well-paid jobs that benefit the local community and wider area. Portland Port will have maintained and expanded its role as a port of national and international importance as a location for sustainable job creation*
  - *has a broad tourist offer including activity based on sustainable tourism such as water sports, climbing, walking and bird watching that capitalises on its unique location*
  - *has reduced the levels of multiple deprivation and has good education and skills provision"*<sup>7</sup>

## Local Plan Review

- 3.8 In finding the new Local Plan 'sound' in 2015, the Inspector recommended that an early review should be undertaken primarily because the Local Plan did not make adequate provision for the whole of the plan period (2011 to 2031). The Inspector also noted that the councils' five-year supply of housing land was close to the minimum required to provide choice and competition.
- 3.9 The Review got underway early in 2017. Whilst housing numbers was a focus, the local planning authority has also taken the opportunity to look at other aspects where recent evidence or Government policy changes has had an impact on the 2015 Plan. These include the need to develop a more comprehensive and effective approach to managing green infrastructure; the changing nature of employment and growth opportunities; Government housing initiatives; climate change and erosion and sustainable energy. Matters that have an impact too, on neighbourhood planning for Portland.
- 3.10 The Local Plan Review is scheduled to be completed by 2019. The first stage of the Review was an Issues and Options document that was the subject of a district wide consultation during February and March 2017. A dialogue was established at that time between the Neighbourhood Plan Management Group and the local planning authority, which has been maintained. This has enabled us to frame our approach and policies in the knowledge of what is emerging from the Local Plan Review and to influence that Review from a Portland Neighbourhood Plan perspective, whilst remaining in conformity with the strategic policies of the presently adopted Local Plan. The Submission Version of the Neighbourhood Plan has been influenced by the 'Preferred Options' publication<sup>8</sup> that was out for consultation between August and October 2018. Chapter 8 of the Preferred Options document relates to Portland. The proposed strategy for the reviewed and revised Local Plan is to meet the housing needs of the Island through the redevelopment of brownfield sites and existing allocations (i.e. sites already allocated in the current Local Plan). This approach is consistent with the approach taken in the Neighbourhood Plan.

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<sup>7</sup> West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan <http://www.planvu.co.uk/wdwp/written/cpt8.htm>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/planning-buildings-land/planning-policy/west-dorset-and-weymouth-portland/local-plan-review/pdf/20180802-lpr-preferred-options-main-document-final.pdf>

## Portland Economic Strategy

- 3.11 The Economic Plan for Portland sets out the vision, objectives and proposed interventions towards securing economic growth of Portland over the next 15 years. It is a most important document that represents a joint approach, consensus and shared vision as to how the Portland economy should develop and grow to bring most benefit to those that live or work on the island and have the community's best interests at heart. It has provided a major building block for the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 3.12 The Economic Plan sets out the shared vision and five strategic objectives for transforming the economic prospects of Portland. It includes too a set of actions that can be turned into reality on the ground.
- 3.13 The Economic Vision for Portland is:  
*"Drawing upon our key strengths, the island will be a leader in innovative business, destination development, maritime services and low carbon technologies, connecting its residents and businesses to more opportunities, and providing an ideal environment to grow, start and locate a business. Portland will be a leading player in the thriving Western Dorset Growth Corridor and to the UK."*
- 3.14 The strategic objectives are as follows:  
SO1 Business Transformation: *To support the growth and development of a vibrant business community focusing interventions on those growing and opportunity sectors, including the maritime, advanced engineering and renewable energy, capable of delivering higher skilled, higher waged jobs*  
SO2 Destination Development: *To support the sustainable growth of the visitor economy, which celebrates the unique strengths of Portland, supports jobs and generates business opportunities*  
SO3 Low Carbon Economy: *Capitalising on its natural resources and advantages, support the development of a low carbon economy, specifically renewable*  
SO4 Employment and Skills: *To support the delivery of an appropriately skilled, motivated and productive workforce to drive economic growth*  
SO5 Infrastructure Improvements: *To ensure the provision of adequate infrastructure improvements as a basis to secure smart economic growth*
- 3.15 An important focus both in terms of developing and delivering the Economic Plan is the local community taking the lead in shaping the island's economy for the benefit of all communities. *"The involvement and participation of local groups and local people will continue during the delivery phase to empower communities to maintain a sense of place, become more resilient given economic challenges and opportunities and increase their well-being."*<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> 'Future Portland', Portland Economic Vision and Plan (2015-2030), Portland Community Partnership, Nov 2015  
<https://www.portlandplan.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Economic-Vision-for-Portland-280116-Submitted-Version.pdf>

## Safeguarding Portland's Minerals

- 3.16 Almost the whole of the neighbourhood area is designated as a mineral safeguarding area. Portland stone is derived principally from a 9m thick bed known as the Freestone which occurs within the Portland Limestone Group. It is overlain in most places by several metres of thinly bedded limestones and clays ('the Caps') and is underlain by 20-30 metres of limestone known as the Cherty Series. This is unsuitable for building stone because of its high chert (a type of silica) content, however, the Cherty Series and the Caps can be crushed for use as aggregate.
- 3.17 The Neighbourhood Plan must be in conformity with the strategic policies of the Minerals and Waste Plans which form part of the Development Plan. The policies of the Neighbourhood Plan must be in general conformity with the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Minerals Strategy (2014) and should have regard to the emerging Minerals Sites Plan and Waste Plan, which were published as draft documents on the 1<sup>st</sup> December 2017, and "carry some weight"<sup>10</sup>. The Minerals Strategy includes a specific policy, PD1, relating to 'Underground Mining and High Wall Extraction of Portland Stone'<sup>11</sup>.

- 3.18 The NPPF (para. 204) requires local planning authorities to define 'Mineral Safeguarding Areas' (MSAs) to protect known locations of specific mineral resources from sterilisation; to safeguard transport and processing facilities, and to seek prior extraction of minerals where it is necessary for non-mineral development to take place. Significantly, it also states that planning policies should also "ensure that worked land is reclaimed at the earliest opportunity... and that high-quality restoration and aftercare of mineral sites takes place". Because of the number and quality of quarries on Portland, it is no surprise that most of the Island is designated part of an MSA, under Policy SG1 of the Minerals Strategy. It is also defined as a 'Mineral Consultation Area' by Policy SG2. Policy SG3 safeguards operational and permitted mineral sites. Together the policies of the Mineral Strategy seek to protect important mineral resources from unnecessary sterilisation.

Map 3 Portland Mineral Consultation Area



- 3.19 The definition of development triggering a consultation in the Minerals Strategy is:
- any extension of and / or change to the curtilage of a property within the MCA
  - any material change in the use of land, particularly a change of use to residential area, hospice, travellers' sites, cemeteries and prisons within the MCA
  - any new built development proposed within the MCA
- In order to exclude the majority of routine householder or other (including employment, office and retail) applications, development within the curtilage of an existing property does not require consultation".*
- 3.20 This does not mean that development cannot take place within the MCA. As the Strategy says "the designation of a Minerals Safeguarding Area does not indicate that there is a presumption in favour of extraction, nor does it indicate certainty of location of high quality or economically viable mineral deposits. There is no expectation that permission would be granted for development in these areas".

<sup>10</sup> Response from Minerals and Waste Planning, Dorset County Council, 16 November 2017

<sup>11</sup> Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Minerals Strategy Part 2 (2014) <https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/planning-buildings-land/planning-policy/dorset-county-council/minerals-planning-policy/mineral-strategy/minerals-strategy.aspx>

## Portland Town Council - Position Statement

- 3.21 Over recent years there have been many outside bodies that have expressed views on how Portland should develop in future. We respect their right to take a view and, in most cases, we acknowledge their well-intentioned advice. Too often however, Portlanders have felt they are being planned for and not planned with.
- 3.22 The opportunity, afforded by the Localism Act 2012, to prepare our own Neighbourhood Plan has been both liberating and energising. It has not been easy. Portland may be a distinct geographical entity, but it is also a complex network of inter-related issues and opportunities that are made even more complicated by the aspirations of those who regard Portland primarily as place to live and those that wish to exploit its location and natural assets primarily for business or tourism purposes. The Portland Neighbourhood Plan represents an attempt to reconcile these, sometimes diverse, interests and put in place an acceptable development strategy that will facilitate *Growth with a Purpose*. To achieve this, our approach is one of evolution rather than revolution.
- 3.23 Portland is rich in assets both natural and man-made. In the past, Portland was a relatively self-sustaining community. The size of the population was closely linked to the availability of resources and food production. Settlements grew up around water courses and there was little movement both within settlements and on and off the mainland. Fishing and agriculture provided the main economic income streams. Wind and solar opportunities were taken e.g. Portland windmills and East Coat Salt Pans. Virtually all houses and field walls would have been constructed from Portland stone, many by quarrymen using spoil stone for their own purposes. Waste would have been largely natural and reusable or recyclable.
- 3.24 Things started to change when stone began to be extracted in larger quantities. In recognition of this, the Crown (Charles II) established a scheme to recompense the community for the loss of land (herbage) which has continued to this day. This scheme in many respects reflects the current trend towards stewardship income streams.
- 3.25 As the population further expanded through the arrival of the Navy and Prisons, the need to improve access and expand utilities brought an increased reliance on the mainland, which persists to the present day.
- 3.26 We are proud of what Portland is and has been. The Neighbourhood Plan represents the land use and development aspect of a wider renewal strategy that will maintain Portland's unique character whilst helping all its inter-dependent components to flourish in a way that increases the resilience and sustainability of the Island and its communities.
- 3.27 The Neighbourhood Plan reflects a strong desire to:
- revive and diversify the island's economy
  - create more and better local jobs
  - improve existing centres
  - facilitate the delivery of local services
  - meet the housing needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century in the interests of local people
  - attract visitors and serve them well
- and whilst doing so:
- strengthen the sense of community
  - protect our unique location and natural environment
  - safeguard the island's minerals
  - respect our heritage
  - make good and responsible use of our natural resources and assets
- 3.28 'Responsible use' means taking a full and balanced account of the interests of society, future generations, and other species, as well as of private needs, and accepting significant answerability to society, for the policies we put in place and the decisions and actions we take.

## 4. Purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan

- 4.1 Neighbourhood planning is intended to give communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and shape the development and growth of the local area. The national Planning Policy Guidance says that, in accordance with the Localism Act 2011, we are able to “choose where we want new homes, shops and offices to be built, have our say on what those new buildings should look like and what infrastructure should be provided, and grant planning permission for the new buildings we want to see go ahead”.
- 4.2 We have approached the task with an open mind as to what the Portland Neighbourhood Plan would cover and what its themes and purposes would be. We understood from the outset that it would have to meet the ‘basic conditions’:
- have regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State
  - contributes to the achievement of sustainable development
  - is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area – the West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan
  - does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations
- 4.3 Within these constraints we have consulted widely and engaged with our local community to understand what is needed and what it is possible to influence and effect via a set of neighbourhood planning policies. We have considered carefully the policies of the Local Plan and assessed, based on our agreed objectives, whether a more localised or detailed neighbourhood plan policy is necessary. In several instances, we have concluded that the Local Plan policy is sufficient. We have only introduced a neighbourhood plan policy where it will help ensure the area develops in the way we wish it to.
- 4.4 The Portland Neighbourhood Plan sets out how we would like to see the area developed over the next 13 years or so and through its policies aims to guide sustainable development to provide the maximum benefit to those that live, work or visit in our area.

### The Neighbourhood Planning Process

- 4.5 The development and preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan has been undertaken by a Working Group comprised of representatives of groups on the Island and town councillors, overseen by a Management Group set up as a sub-committee of Portland Town Council.
- 4.6 It was understood from the outset that for the Plan to be truly representative of the planning issues of relevance in the area and to be *the community’s plan*, we needed to carry out a thorough and on-going consultation process with those who live and work in the area and those that visit here on a regular basis. We also recognised that the Plan could not be properly developed without the input of organisations and agencies with a district, county, sub-regional or national remit and an interest in the area.
- 4.7 The process and the types of consultation exercise and discussion that we have gone through is documented in detail in a **Consultation Statement**, which accompanies the submission version of the Plan. The key methods we have used have included:
- Public exhibitions, meetings and events
  - Regular articles in the Free Portland News and the Weymouth and Portland Advertiser
  - Use of social media and dedicated website
  - Local newspaper and noticeboards
  - A community questionnaire
  - Focus groups and workshops
  - Survey and discussion with local businesses

- Directly contacting wider-than-local organisations and agencies (strategic stakeholders) which have an interest in our planning issues
- Consultation ‘windows’ during which comments have been invited on draft documents

4.8 The development of the Neighbourhood Plan was based on a desire to be open and to welcome comments and contributions from all quarters. Our aim has been to encourage discussion and debate within the community about the issues and opportunities that face us and strive to achieve a community consensus. This Plan represents the product of this process.

### The Plan’s Status

- 4.9 The Neighbourhood Plan, once ‘made’ (i.e. adopted), will form part of the statutory development plan for the area. This means that its policies will have significant weight (or real teeth) when it comes to being used by the local authority to help determine proposals for development submitted through planning applications. It will form the local tier of planning policy on the Island. It sits with the West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan (also part of the statutory development plan) and underneath the umbrella of national planning policy in the Government’s National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as the main planning policy documents relevant to the Portland area. Other important planning documents which govern specific issues are the Minerals and Waste Plans produced at the county-wide level.
- 4.10 However, the Neighbourhood Plan should not be treated as a blueprint. When this Plan is ‘made’ its policies will be used by the local planning authority when it considers decisions that need to be made about development proposals submitted through the planning application process. The Neighbourhood Plan’s policies cannot guarantee that a proposal will be refused nor be granted permission, but the policies will carry significant weight, alongside policies of the NPPF and Local Plan when weighing up the appropriateness of the development proposal in question.

## 5. The Structure of Our Plan

- 5.1 Our Plan sets out the neighbourhood planning aims and objectives for the neighbourhood area, which have been developed following a dialogue with the community and shaped by existing planning policies, plans and contributions of key organisations and agencies.
- 5.2 Having explained our rationale for these, the Plan sets out our local planning policies on a topic by topic basis. Our topics have been derived by pulling together common aims and common key issues arising from consultation. The brief introduction to each topic, which includes a short description of the situation on Portland today, is based on the findings of the research, surveys and consultations that have taken place as part of the neighbourhood planning process.
- 5.3 For each topic we set out the aim and objectives the neighbourhood planning policies are seeking to respond to and a summary of the characteristics of that topic and the key issues which have been identified. Then, for each policy, we set out our justification for why we need the policy, including key supporting evidence and reference to other planning policies in national and county-wide planning documents to which the policy relates.
- 5.4 It is important to note that, while we have packaged policies under topic headings, when development proposals are being assessed, the whole plan (i.e. all policies) should be considered as policies in one topic may apply to proposals which naturally fit under another.
- 5.5 Our Plan finishes with an explanation of how we will monitor and review the Plan, a glossary which seeks to demystify some of the planning terminology used in our Plan and a bibliography which includes the details of documents and current web-links to those documents.

### Companion Documents

- 5.6 Several other documents have been prepared to accompany the Neighbourhood Plan. We are obliged to produce a:
  - **Consultation Statement**
  - **Basic Conditions Statement**
- 5.7 We have also commissioned a **Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)** and a **Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)**. Where a neighbourhood plan is likely to have significant environmental effects, it requires a strategic environmental assessment. Given the substantial tracts of statutorily protected land on Portland, a SEA for its Neighbourhood Plan was an inevitability. The National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) states that if likely significant environmental effects are identified, an environmental report must be prepared in accordance with paragraphs (2) and (3) of regulation 12 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. The HRA was deemed necessary by the local planning authority. The HRA is required to assess the potential effects of Portland Neighbourhood Plan on the Natura 2000 Network, otherwise known as ‘European sites’ and Government policy ‘Ramsar’ sites.
- 5.8 The SEA Environmental Report<sup>12</sup>, produced by specialist consultants on behalf of the Town Council, is the outcome of an on-going SEA process that informed the Plan’s development. Its purpose has been to:
  - identify, describe and evaluate the likely significant effects of the Portland Neighbourhood Plan and alternatives; and
  - provide an opportunity for consultees to offer views on any aspect of the SEA process which has been carried out to date.

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<sup>12</sup> Strategic Environmental Assessment for the Portland Neighbourhood Plan, AECOM, May 2019. The SEA can be found at: [https://www.portlandplan.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Portland-NP-Submission-SEA-Environmental-Report\\_V2.0\\_090519.pdf](https://www.portlandplan.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Portland-NP-Submission-SEA-Environmental-Report_V2.0_090519.pdf)

- 5.9 The initial SEA, to accompany Regulation 14 consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan, concluded that the Portland Neighbourhood Plan was *“likely to lead to significant positive effects”* in relation to the following many of the assessment themes applied.
- 5.10 A review of the SEA<sup>13</sup> was undertaken following revisions to the Plan in the light of the Regulation 14 consultation. It concluded that the Submission Version of the Portland Neighbourhood Plan is likely to lead to significant positive effects in relation to the ‘Biodiversity’, ‘Landscape and Historic Environment’, ‘Population and Community’ and ‘Health and Wellbeing’ SEA Themes. The Neighbourhood Plan will also initiate beneficial approaches regarding the ‘Climate Change’, ‘Land, Soil and Water Resources’ and ‘Transportation’ SEA themes. Whilst the level of future development proposed through the Local Plan has the potential to lead to increased pressures on the sensitive environmental context of the Neighbourhood Plan area, *“the policies of the Neighbourhood Plan have a close focus on protecting and enhancing the special qualities of Portland and facilitating inclusive growth which will help ensure the integrity of its sensitive environmental designations are maintained and enhanced”*.
- 5.11 The HRA<sup>14</sup> was equally as thorough. It followed current guidelines and included in the scope of its assessment:
- All European sites within the Neighbourhood Plan area boundary; and
  - Other European sites shown to be linked to development within the Neighbourhood Plan boundary through a known ‘pathway’, i.e. routes by which a change in activity within the plan area can lead to an effect upon a European site.
- 5.12 The sites that were subject of the HRA were:
- Within the plan area:
- Chesil and the Fleet SAC and Chesil Beach and the Fleet Ramsar and Marine SPA
  - Isle of Portland to Studland Cliffs SAC
- Outside the plan area:
- Studland to Portland SAC (Marine), adjacent to the Plan area
  - Crookhills Brick Pit SAC, 1.9 km away at its closest located
  - Lyme Bay and Torbay SAC (Marine), 9.2 km away at its closest located
- 5.13 The HRA concluded that the Portland Neighbourhood Plan will not affect the integrity of European sites in relation to direct land take or to recreational pressure due to the overarching provisions in the West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Adopted Local Plan (2015) and the Local Plan Review (Preferred Options Stage, 2018). However, it did recommend that *“a policy (as above) is provided within the Neighbourhood Plan which supports the overarching Local Plan European sites protection policy ENV2”*. This has been addressed by including policy Port/ENO, in this Plan.
- 5.14 In terms of construction activities such as dust and pollution from surface run off, the Neighbourhood Plan does have the potential to cause a likely significant effect accordingly it recommended that policies EN5, EN8 and BE6 were amended to ensure that the development is carefully designed and planned to ensure that no adverse effects occur. With regards to water and air quality, the HRA concluded that as the Neighbourhood Plan is not allocating further growth it will have no significant adverse effects upon European sites that have not been identified and addressed at a higher tier level by the Local Plan (2015) and at a wider level within the Draft Final Water Resources Management Plan (2018) by Wessex Water. The HRA concluded overall that, subject to a few minor policy changes, *“the Plan document will not result in an adverse effect on the integrity of any European sites either alone or in combination”*.

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<sup>13</sup> Strategic Environmental Assessment for the Portland Neighbourhood Plan, AECOM, May 2019. The SEA can be found at: [https://www.portlandplan.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Portland-NP-Submission-SEA-Environmental-Report\\_V2.0\\_090519.pdf](https://www.portlandplan.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Portland-NP-Submission-SEA-Environmental-Report_V2.0_090519.pdf)

<sup>14</sup> Habitats Regulations Assessment, AECOM, Apr 2019. The HRA can be found at: <https://www.portlandplan.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Portland-Neighbourhood-Plan-HRA-Final.pdf>

## 6. Vision, Aims and Objectives

### Developing a Neighbourhood Plan Framework

- 6.1 The framework for the Neighbourhood Plan comprises:
- a **vision statement** regarding the long-term future of Portland;
  - the **aims** - it is hoped that the Plan can help achieve; and
  - the **objectives** - that expect the Plan to attain by the application of appropriate neighbourhood planning policies
- 6.2 The Portland communities are not without vision. We have already concurred with the vision statement for Portland in the Local Plan and ‘signed up’ to the economic vision for Portland as set out in the recently approved Economic Plan for Portland 2015.
- 6.3 A neighbourhood plan should set out a vision for the future of its neighbourhood. The vision should reflect a desired end state that is consistent with the values and overall priorities of the community. Portland’s neighbourhood planning group has been ‘visioning’ from the outset of the neighbourhood plan process. Understanding more about the Island and its people and what is needed and wanted is a major contributor to the visioning process. Our vision is represented by the following set of topic-based aims. It is, we believe, wholly consistent with the Local Plan vision and the economic vision for Portland. The aims have been derived from the consultation process and our analysis of what we have been told. With these high level aims we have endeavoured to capture the direction of travel the community wants the Neighbourhood Plan to take to bring benefits for local people.

#### Portland Neighbourhood Plan – Aims

**Environment** - *protect the special and unique character of Portland’s natural and built environment and use its natural resources carefully*

**Business and Employment** - *strengthen the Island’s business function, building growth and prosperity*

**Housing** – *encourage a balanced mix of housing in appropriate places that people need and want*

**Transport** - *support non-car travel options and accommodate the car in an unobtrusive manner*

**Shopping and Services** - *support the shopping areas and service functions*

**Community Recreation** - *realise the leisure and recreation potential of the Island*

**Sustainable Tourism** – *accommodate responsible and sustainable tourism development*

## Portland Neighbourhood Plan Objectives

6.4 The objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan were set following a process that involved considering what local people told us during the consultation on the neighbourhood planning aims and objectives, the feedback we received from local businesses, community groups and voluntary organisations and reconciling all this with the emerging objectives of the economic strategy, to achieve the maximum synergy. The process is explained in more detail in a document that can be found on the website<sup>15</sup>.

<b>Portland Neighbourhood Plan – Objectives</b>
<b>Environment</b>
<i>Support measures that improve our resilience to climate change</i>
<i>Make responsible use of the Island’s natural resources</i>
<i>Identify opportunities to increase renewable and sustainable energy production</i>
<i>Identify, protect and enhance the Island’s biodiversity</i>
<i>Support Portland Quarry Nature Park development plan where appropriate</i>
<i>Support of the re-use of redundant mines and quarries in benign and sustainable ways</i>
<i>Recognise and protect heritage buildings, spaces and structures and enable the appropriate use of heritage assets</i>
<i>Protect and enhance the distinct character of settlements</i>
<i>Support public realm improvements in identified areas such as Sea Wall/West Weares</i>
<b>Business and Employment</b>
<i>Protect existing employment spaces</i>
<i>Facilitate appropriate conversions and extensions of local business space</i>
<i>Enable business hub development in local building if justified</i>
<i>Set criteria for developing land for business development</i>
<i>Set criteria for new business development to priority and growth industries</i>
<i>Establish policy that supports conversion of redundant buildings for business purposes</i>
<i>Encourage creation of business start-up units</i>
<i>Encourage and facilitate Northern Arc masterplan-approach</i>
<i>Support development that provides for local education and training opportunities</i>
<i>Encourage development to bring about better connectivity for all</i>
<b>Housing</b>
<i>Focus development on brownfield sites</i>
<i>Recognise exception site development to meet affordable housing needs provided by approved providers including a Community Land Trust</i>
<i>Relate housing development to local housing need</i>
<i>Establish a second home policy</i>
<i>Set criteria for new housing development including standards and infrastructure requirements</i>
<b>Transport</b>
<i>Support development which helps facilitate improvements to the public transport network</i>
<i>Support development which helps facilitate a more effective transport network</i>
<i>Support provision of off-street parking including public car parks</i>
<i>Support improvements to existing footpath, bridleway and cycle routes and extension to the networks</i>
<b>Shopping and Services</b>
<i>Retain existing retail spaces</i>
<i>Support new shops in appropriate locations</i>
<i>Define and protect shopping centres</i>
<b>Community Recreation</b>
<i>Support development of leisure and recreation facilities</i>
<i>Protect and enhance local parks</i>
<i>Support development of new community buildings and spaces</i>
<i>Support new facilities for young people</i>
<i>Support use of buildings or land for events and festivals</i>
<b>Sustainable Tourism</b>
<i>Support sustainable tourism-related development in appropriate locations</i>
<i>Support the creation of individual, or a network of, tourist trails</i>
<i>Facilitate appropriate new marine developments</i>

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.portlandplan.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Neighbourhood-Plan-The-Story.pdf>

## 7. Environment

### Overview

- 7.1 The boundaries of Portland extend along the Chesil Bank to as far as opposite Littlesea Caravan Park. The perceived boundary however commences at Ferrybridge. The entrance to the Island is dominated by the Chesil Bank and Hamm Beach before entering the more urban setting of Underhill, which has limited natural open space within it, but which is flanked by the Verne Local Nature Reserve together with East and West Weares. East Weares, of which only the north-east corner is visible, is predominantly within the ownership of Portland Port and for many represents a 'hidden' and relatively inaccessible side to the Island extending as far down as Church Ope Cove.
- 7.2 The entrance to the Island and Chiswell and Osprey Quay areas are subject to flooding controls which may impact upon the future of these areas. The environment of Osprey Quay is subject to a management plan and part of the 'estate'. Ownership of the nine hectares of land at Osprey Quay – including flood defences, open space areas of a business park and the promenade between Portland Castle and the marina was passed from the HCA<sup>16</sup> to the Land Trust<sup>17</sup> in 2014. The deal included an endowment to be used for the maintenance of the flood defences, which protect the businesses and leisure uses provided at Osprey Quay. The Land Trust is also charged with improving the environment and to explore possibilities of green regeneration that is complementary to the economic development taking place.
- 7.3 Ascending to Tophill, it becomes evident that the Island's landscape is fractured because of extensive quarrying activity, but it has stunning views of the sea and the Jurassic coastline from its cliffs, and is well known for its exceptional flora and fauna. Much of the Island is designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI) and Local Nature Reserve (LNR). These special and natural environments are safeguarded by both national and local plan policies. The environmental policies of the Neighbourhood Plan focus on ensuring that the built and man-made environment (such as quarries, gravel pits and other mineral workings) created by generations of Portlanders, is similarly respected and any change and restoration that takes place does so in a way that causes least harm and, wherever possible, enhances the unique place that is the Isle of Portland.
- 7.4 It is this balance of maintaining and improving the environment and at the same time providing opportunities for economic-related development, which is at the core of the Island's future.
- 7.5 Restoring the quarries to a productive use is one of many challenges. One option is the creation of a wildlife reserve, which has been successful at Kingbarrow, for example. Alternatively, where restoration conditions are not in place, it is felt that redundant quarries could provide opportunities for appropriate activities, as long as they conform generally with the restoration requirements of the current Minerals Strategy.
- 7.6 Portland is an historic and special environment in so many ways. The built environment is arguably as significant and important as the natural environment. Portland has around 200 listed buildings and structures. Many of them are in one of the Island's four conservation areas. Several areas of the Island are on the national schedule of ancient monuments<sup>18</sup>. There are many more local heritage assets and the whole Island has been identified as having archaeological potential<sup>19</sup>. The whole Island is also designated a RIGS<sup>20</sup>.

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<sup>16</sup> HCA = Homes and Communities Agency (now 'Homes England')

<sup>17</sup> The Land Trust, a national land management charity, Registered Charity No. 1138337

<sup>18</sup> Protected under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act of 1979

<sup>19</sup> Local Plan para. 2.3.8

<sup>20</sup> RIGS = Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Site

- 7.7 The close relationship between the Island’s stone history and its natural and public realm are emphasised by the variety of installations that can be found across the Island. These stretch from more subtle examples such as Nicodemus and Pulpit Rock, to structures such as Lano’s Arch or the tipping bridges; all of which have left features which are considered integral parts of the Island’s heritage. To these can be added a wide range of sculptures, public realm and art installations such as the Spirit of Portland Sculpture and Boat Crane at New Road, Sculpture Park in Tout Quarry, Legacy Trail Cairns, The Memory Stones and Olympic Rings, together with a wide range of memorials including the Cenotaph. The location and setting of many of these are as important as the feature themselves. Encroachment and poorly considered options for land use can undermine their impact and importance just as much as any heritage building.
- 7.8 To help establish an appropriate framework for the environment policies in the Neighbourhood Plan, the Town Council commissioned a Heritage and Character Study. The Study has helped identify what makes the different parts of the Island special today. AECOM, a leading environmental consultancy, has taken a fresh look at Portland in 2017. Its Character Assessment Report provides important evidence to support the planning policies in the Neighbourhood Plan. Government guidelines say neighbourhood plans should develop policies based on an understanding of the defining characteristics of an area. In doing so, policies can ensure that development responds to local character and history, and reflects the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation. The Character Assessment Report has identified six distinct ‘character areas’ on Portland. It has made recommendations about how development needs to be controlled in the interests of protecting or enhancing their unique character. It was the subject of a community consultation during the spring of 2017, before being accepted as a relevant source of reference for the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 7.9 The Island has also been subject to a recent (2017) character re-appraisal of its conservation areas<sup>21</sup>. The Island has four conservation areas:
- Underhill, incorporating Chiswell, Maidenwell, Fortuneswell and Castletown, designated in 1976 with boundary extensions in 1997, 2000, 2014 and 2017
  - Grove, designated in 1981, with extensions in 2017
  - Portland (Easton, Wakeham and Reforne), designated pre-1974, with extensions in 2017
  - Weston, designated in 1994, with extensions in 2014
- The resultant document, with its wealth of detail and analysis, has also influenced the policies in this Plan and should be an important point of reference to would-be developers.
- 7.10 The nature of the historic construction method, sourced mainly from local stone, coupled with its integration into the landscape means that the built environment has significant resonance and complementarity with its natural environment. An example of the ‘harmony’ we regard as important, is the landscape area of the Verne Nature Reserve, which is largely man made as a result of remodelling at the time of construction of the Verne Citadel.
- 7.11 Almost everybody agrees that all we have that is special must be preserved and protected at all costs. *“Portland is a unique and beautiful island with a stunning natural environment and significant opportunities for regeneration and renewal.”*<sup>22</sup> To that end, and in accordance with the recommendation made by the Habitats Regulations Assessment carried out to accompany the Submission Version of the Portland Neighbourhood Plan, an overarching policy Port/ENO has been included to ensure that all ‘European sites’ are fully protected.

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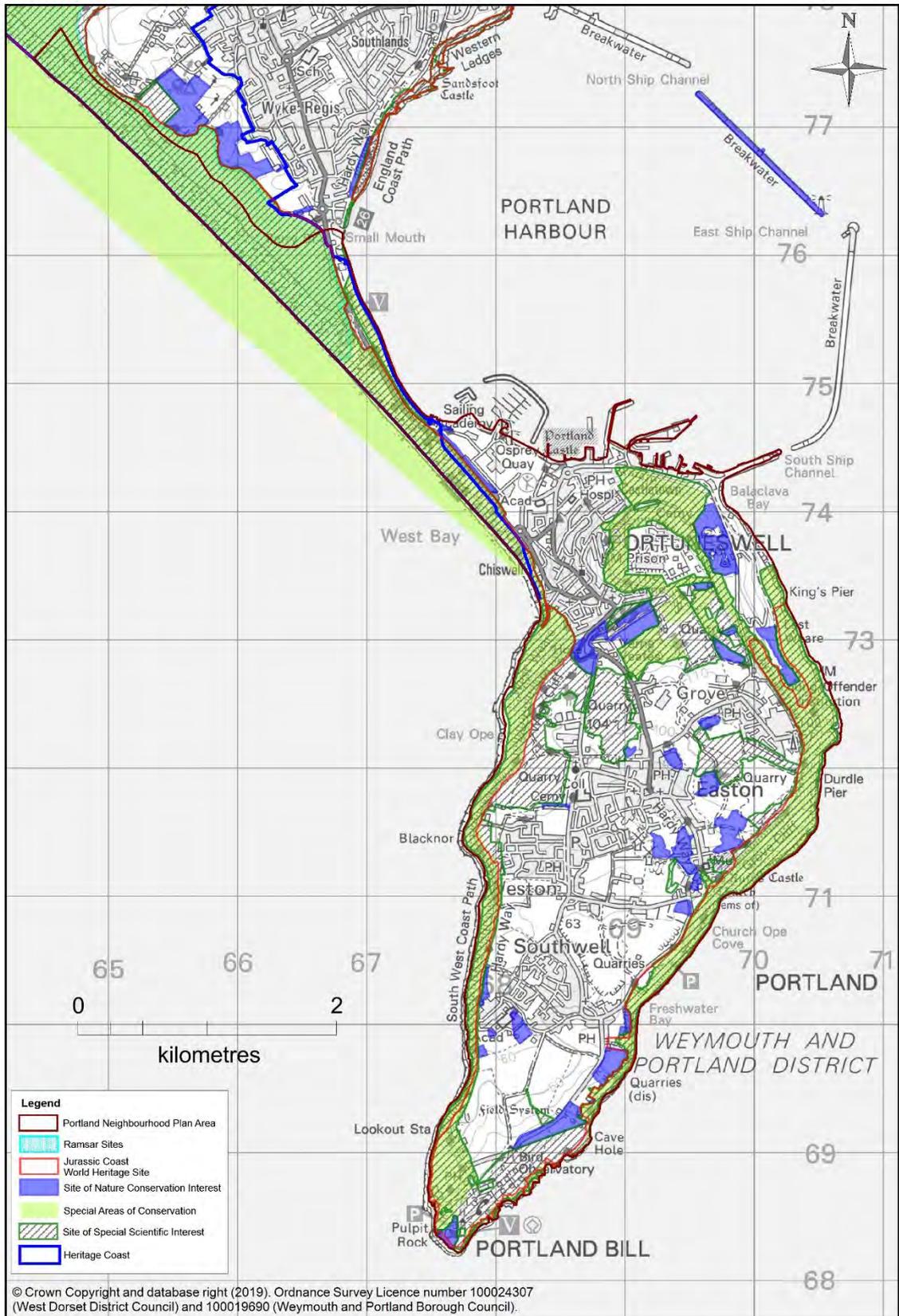
<sup>21</sup> Appraisal of the Conservation Areas of Portland, Weymouth and Portland Borough Council, Mar 2017 <https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/planning-buildings-land/planning/planning-constraints/conservation-areas/weymouth-and-portland/pdfs/appraisal-of-the-conservation-areas-grove-easton-reforne-straits-wakeham-underhill-and-weston-of-portland.pdf>

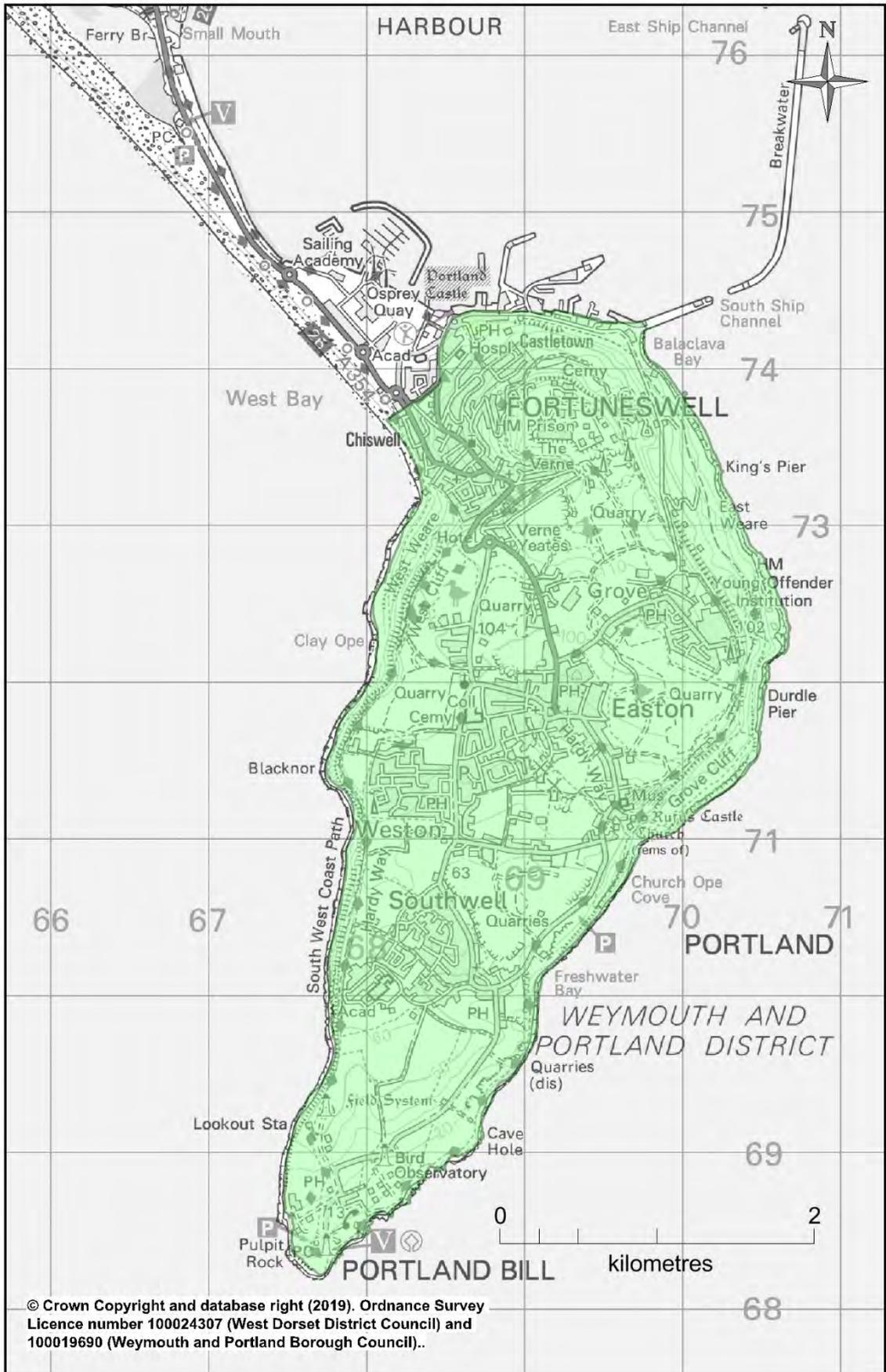
<sup>22</sup> Portland Vision, Terence O’Rourke for SW Regional Development Agency, 2008

**Policy No. Port/ENO Protection of European Sites**

In accordance with Local Plan Policy ENV2, all internationally designated wildlife sites, will be safeguarded from development that could adversely affect them, unless there are reasons of overriding public interest why the development should proceed and there is no alternative acceptable solution.

Map 4 Designated Ecological Areas, Portland





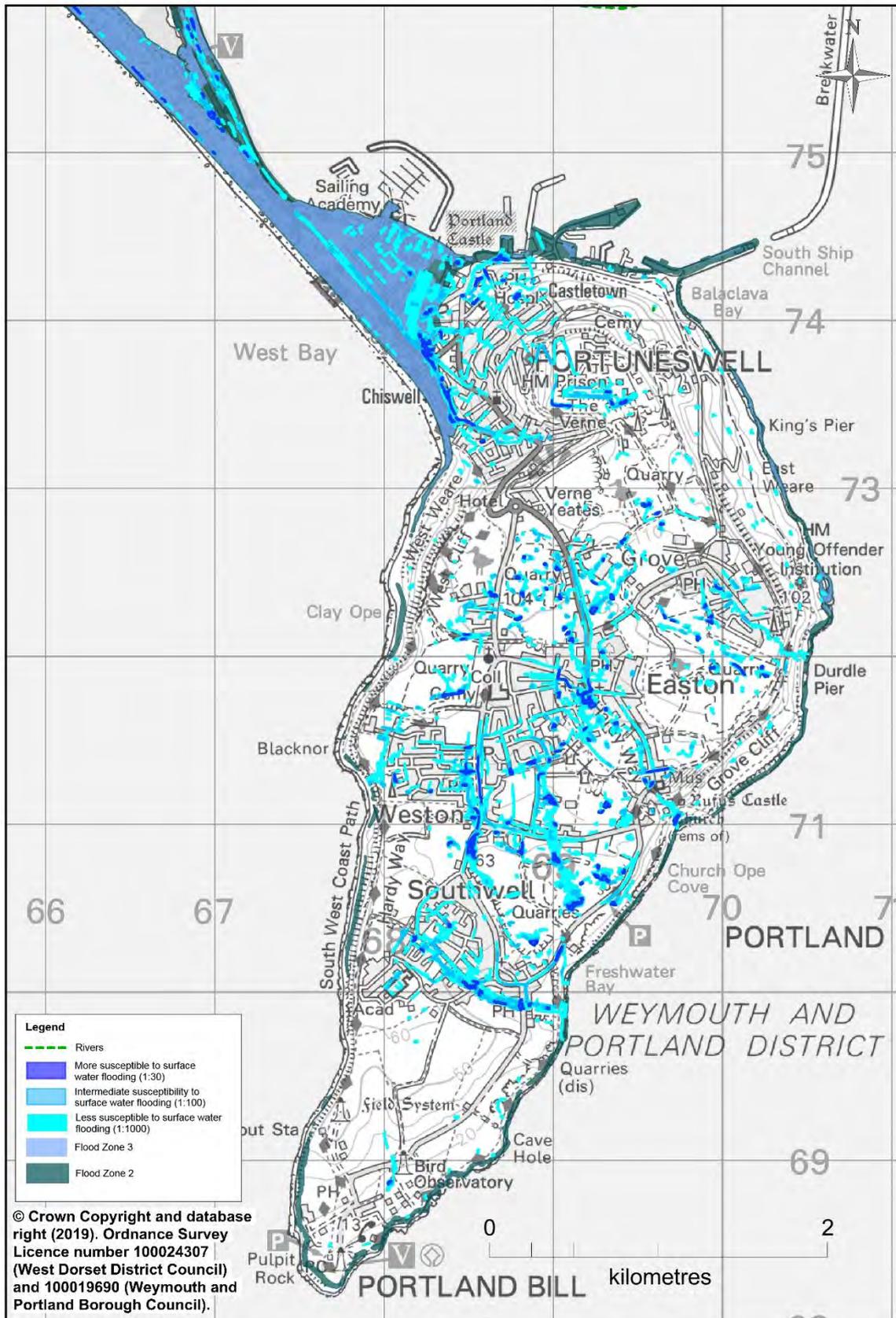
Environment	
Aim	<i>Protect the special and unique character of Portland's natural and built environment</i>
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support measures that improve our resilience to climate change</li> <li>• Make responsible use of the Island's natural resources</li> <li>• Identify opportunities to increase renewable and sustainable energy production</li> <li>• Identify, protect and enhance the Island's biodiversity</li> <li>• Support Portland Quarry Nature Park development plan where appropriate</li> <li>• Support of the re-use of redundant mines and quarries in benign and sustainable ways</li> <li>• Recognise and protect heritage buildings, spaces and structures and enable the appropriate use of heritage assets</li> <li>• Protect and enhance the distinct character of settlements</li> <li>• Support public realm improvements in identified areas such as Sea Wall/West Weares</li> </ul>

## Our Neighbourhood Plan Policies and their Explanation/Justification

### Policy No. Port/EN1 Prevention of Flooding and Erosion

**Development proposals, in areas designated by the Shoreline Management Plan to be protected ('hold the line'), specifically to prevent coastal erosion or flooding and protect local property and businesses will usually be supported. In other areas, where economically significant features or infrastructure are at risk, essential flood defence proposals should satisfy the requirements of Local Plan Policy ENV 5.**

- 7.12 Map 6 shows the areas of Portland that are prone to flooding or surface water accumulation. The low-lying areas of Chiswell and Osprey Quay, together with Beach Road, are most at flood risk. The series of storms and gales experienced since the Millennium have challenged the sea defences, which have largely worked and coped well over the last 30 years. Over that period, the newly-developed Osprey Quay area, much of which is in the flood plain, has developed its own sea defences and Flood Defence Plan. These defences include interceptor drains, flood alleviation channels and sea walls. The Portland Breakwaters form an important part of the flood defence.
- 7.13 The following areas of the Island have also suffered with water related issues in recent years:  
Fortuneswell – from various streams forcing their way through to the surface  
Wakeham – Surface water at times of heavy rainfall
- 7.14 The defined flood zones as shown on Map 6 are:
- Zone 1: a low probability of flooding – this zone comprises land as having a less than 1 in 1,000 annual probability of river and sea flooding (<0.1%).
  - Zone 2: a medium probability of flooding - this zone comprises land assessed as having between a 1 in 100 and 1 in 1,000 annual probability of river flooding (0.1%- 1%), or between a 1 in 200 and 1 in 1,000 annual probability of sea flooding (0.1% - 0.5%) in any year.
  - Zone 3a: a high probability of flooding – this zone comprises land assessed as having a 1 in 100 or greater annual probability of river flooding (>1%), or a 1 in 200 or greater annual probability of flooding from the sea (>0.5%) in any year.
  - Zone 3b: the functional flood plain – this zone comprises land where the water has to flow or be stored in times of flood.



7.15 The Island’s resistance and resilience to flooding is an on-going process. It is almost impossible to prevent flooding that results from major storms, such as that experienced in January 2014 when 15ft waves over-whelmed Chiswell, or to stop Beach Road from being near-impassable at times of very high tides. However, work to increase our resilience or to slow down the rate of coastal erosion resulting from these severe natural events will be welcomed where it is necessary.

- 7.16 The Shoreline Management Plan<sup>23</sup> for Portland puts the issue into perspective. It recognises that there was limited action that could or should be taken to manage coastal erosion and find *“the right balance between the needs of local communities, the economy and the environment, to secure a sustainable and affordable approach to the threat while protecting natural interests.”*
- 7.17 For Portland the various scenarios tested over the period of 100 years propose the following action:
- Small Mouth to Osprey Quay – *hold the line*
  - Osprey Quay to Grove Point – *hold the line*
  - Grove Point to Portland Bill – *no active intervention*
  - Portland Bill to West Weares – *no active intervention*
  - West Weares to Checkpoint Roundabout – *hold the line*
  - Hamm Roundabout to Fleet – *no active intervention*<sup>24</sup>
- 7.18 Natural England’s National Character Area profile<sup>25</sup> for Portland also supports this approach i.e. by *“allowing natural coastal processes to operate unimpeded and realising opportunities to extend or create new coastal habitats and maintain geomorphology, geological exposures and access to fossils; and promoting the benefits of natural coastal erosion as a cost-effective form of coastal defence while protecting from severe flooding both the village of Chiswell on the north of Portland and the road that connects the island to the mainland. While defences should be minimised, and be as natural as possible, they are vital in order to preserve other island characteristics.”*
- 7.19 The most vulnerable settlement area is Chiswell. Defences at Chiswell could be outflanked as the beach to the north rolls back naturally over time. The amount of roll back and outflanking risk is dependent upon the size of wave events, though a large event in the long term is likely to occur. Due to the ‘assets’ in this area, it is unlikely that defence would cease to be provided, so continued defence in some form, but to a greater level, is likely to be required.
- 7.20 The NPPF (para. 149) requires plans to *“take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, taking into account the long-term implications for flood risk, coastal change, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating from rising temperatures. Policies should support appropriate measures to ensure the future resilience of communities and infrastructure to climate change impacts, such as providing space for physical protection measures, or making provision for the possible future relocation of vulnerable development and infrastructure”*. Portland Town Council will work closely with the responsible authorities<sup>26</sup> to ensure that the strategic flood risk management strategies are kept up-to-date and the flood defence strategy remains appropriate and effective. In particular, the economic significance of Portland Beach Road, and utilities contained therein, may require an earlier review of this area.
- 7.21 Policy Port/EN1 is generally supportive of development that is necessary to ensure that local property and businesses are protected, and people are kept safe. The policy supports flood defence works specifically designed to protect local property and businesses.
- 7.22 Where the threat of flood emanates from within an area where the approach in the Shoreline Management Plan is one of ‘no active intervention’, any development proposal specifically designed to protect valuable assets or infrastructure would need to be assessed in accordance with

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<sup>23</sup> Shoreline Management Plan – Technically Feasible Assessment, Halcrow, Sep 2010

<sup>24</sup> Portland Town Council used the Local Plan Review to request that Hamm Roundabout (same as Checkpoint) to Fleet to be changed to ‘*hold the line*’ given the likely impact of breach to Chesil Beach on wider Dorset Coastline. Any such change would need to be considered through a future review of the Shoreline Management Plan.

<sup>25</sup> National Character Area profile: 137, Isle of Portland, Natural England, 2012

<sup>26</sup> Weymouth and Portland Council produced Level 1 and 2 SFRA for the Local Plan, and Dorset County produce a SFRA to support the Minerals and Waste Local Plan.

Policy ENV5 of the current Local Plan, which reflects national policy on flood risk, including sequential and exception testing. We would expect the economic value and community significance of the property or infrastructure at risk to be taken fully into account.

#### **Policy No. Port/EN2 Renewable Energy Development**

**Development proposals for energy generating infrastructure using renewable or low carbon energy sources, including wind and tidal power, will be supported provided the proposals do not affect the integrity of European sites of conservation importance in line with the Local Plan Policy ENV2 and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and there will be no unacceptable effects on the:**

- i. visual impact in the immediate locality and the wider area**
- ii. amenity of nearby dwellings**
- iii. landscape, countryside and shore**
- iv. highway safety and traffic generation**
- v. migratory bird routes**
- vi. sites of ecological, geological and archaeological importance.**

**Proposals for installations will need to include specific assessments related to these criteria and assessments of the planning considerations relating to specific renewable technologies set out in national guidance.**

**Proposals for wind farms and wind turbines of an appropriate scale and in accordance with the policies of the Development Plan will be supported.**

**Community-based renewable and low carbon energy generation initiatives will be encouraged.**

- 7.23 The Economic Strategy recognises Portland as an ideal environment for renewable energy companies to thrive. There are opportunities to take careful and responsible advantage of tidal power as well as geo-thermal, solar and wind power development. Portland has the potential to become a leading location to test and develop renewable energy development as well as supporting the development of community renewable energy. The generation of energy locally at a community level offers the opportunity to retain spending on energy for the benefit of local people and the local economy.
- 7.24 The community has taken an interest in renewable energy. It has already demonstrated this with the Osprey Leisure Centre, managed by the South Dorset Community Sports Trust, a community organisation, which has recently won awards for progressive thinking and action on energy saving, sustainable and renewable energy initiatives, cutting costs and carbon significantly. In 2015, a 'workshop' of community stakeholders discussed the potential for Portland to become an Energy Island, following in the footsteps of Eigg in Scotland. It was agreed that it would be good to explore the potential for community owned renewable energy, backed by the creation of a Portland Trust to receive bequests to fund green projects. Policy Port/EN2 is supportive of a Portland Energy Island Plan approach.
- 7.25 Policy Port/EN2 establishes locally relevant criteria for energy generating infrastructure using renewable or low carbon energy sources that should be considered alongside the national guidance in the PPG and other national policy statements regarding the technical and other planning considerations, when development proposals are formulated. These criteria are aimed, to a large part, at ensuring that the natural environment, of sites and species, is adequately protected. The Habitat Regulations Assessment carried out for the Plan urged us to emphasise the significance of European sites of importance within the policy.

- 7.26 National planning policy asserts that applications for wind energy development will only be allowed if the development site is identified as suitable for wind energy in either a Local or Neighbourhood Plan. The Local Plan is currently (2018) under-going a review and the local planning authority has stated that *“the review presents an opportunity to consider the councils’ approach to wind energy development in light of the new Government policy”*. We shall work with the local planning authority as it undertakes the Local Plan Review and beyond, to consider whether there are suitable locations and a way of harnessing wind energy satisfactorily, on a commercial-scale on Portland.
- 7.27 Proposals for wind farms and wind turbines will be supported in areas which are deemed appropriate by the development plan. To mitigate any impact on the landscape or wildlife, new ideas around turbine design may have to be awaited and utilised. This would fit well with the aspiration for the Island to become a Research and Development centre. Any proposals would be expected to follow the guidance note issued by the Centre for Sustainable Energy<sup>27</sup>.
- 7.28 Proposals for tidal energy installations at appropriate areas on the seaward side of the neighbourhood area e.g. Ferrybridge, Harbour Breakwater will be supported if they meet the policy requirements. Land based operations for larger tidal installations may also be supported.

### **Policy No. Port/EN3 The Portland Quarries Nature Park**

**Proposals that further the creation of a ‘Quarries Nature Park’ within the areas shown on Map 7 are supported provided:**

- i. they are in keeping with the character and amenity of its surroundings;**
- ii. there is safe and appropriate access for potential users;**
- iii. any infrastructure is appropriately sited;**
- iv. they adopt high levels of sustainability in design and construction;**
- v. damage to ecologically important sites is avoided, or if avoidance is not possible, appropriate mitigation and compensation is put in place in accordance with Local Plan Policy ENV2; and**
- vi. they do not compromise safeguarded Portland Stone reserves.**

- 7.29 The Portland Quarries Nature Park is an important long-term project that will remediate unused and redundant quarry sites, thereby protecting historic and industrial heritage resources, connect and enhance biodiversity habitats and provide a visitor facility that will provide cultural and education opportunities and, in so many ways, celebrate Portland’s unique wildlife, geology and heritage. It was first brought forward as an Olympic Legacy Project.
- 7.30 The Portland Quarries Nature Park in its first phase comprises over 60ha of disused Portland quarries along with Verne Local Nature Reserve. It currently links together five key sites, King Barrow Quarry, Tout Quarry, Verne Yeates, Trade Quarry and Inmosthay Quarry, with the aim of bringing new investment to these once neglected sites that are nationally significant for nature conservation, geology and cultural heritage. There is every intention to add additional areas to the Park as opportunities arise and subject to the land owners’ agreement. These areas are currently designated as ‘aspirational’ by the Local Plan.
- 7.31 Locations within the Quarries Park area, either existing or aspirational, are subject to different nature conservation designations, which will require appropriate mitigation and compensation requirements commensurate with the status of the relevant designation.

<sup>27</sup> <https://www.cse.org.uk/downloads/reports-and-publications/community-energy/planning/neighbourhood-planning-wind-guidance.pdf>

- 7.32 Natural England’s National Character Area profile<sup>28</sup> advocates “*continuing to support the Portland Quarries Nature Park, which showcases Portland’s geology, the history of extraction and the inspiring sculpture created by carving Portland stone*”, as one of the environmental opportunities worth pursuing.
- 7.33 Local Plan Policy PORT03 recognises the importance of this initiative and allocates land shown on Map 7 below as part of the Portland Quarries Nature Park “*to promote sustainable tourism, management of conservation and heritage interest, enhancement of public access and open spaces and opportunities for volunteer and community involvement*”. The areas identified in Map 7 include stone reserves and existing operational quarries and mines which are safeguarded by Policies SG1 and SG3 of the Minerals Strategy. Areas of Broadcroft Quarry, for instance, are currently operational. The aspiration for this area to form part of the Nature Park is long-term.
- 7.34 The development of the Portland Quarries Nature Park is consistent with the recommendations of the Portland Heritage and Character Assessment of 2017. It is focussed on the rugged open landscape area of Quarries and Open Space (LCA6). The Assessment recommended that the principles for managing change should focus on sustaining, reinforcing or enhancing those aspects which enhance the industrial character and contribute to the coastal setting. “*Development within the disused quarries should be encouraged to celebrate both the industrial heritage on the island and the diverse and high-quality landscape and biodiversity.*” Part of the Quarries Nature Park also lies within the Grove and Verne (LCA2) which is significant because of its heritage value.
- 7.35 Policy Port/EN4 endorses the Portland Quarries Nature Park project and its extension. It supports appropriate development in the designated Park area and the aspirational areas that help realise the visitor potential of the Park in a responsible manner. This may include small-scale activity-related tourism development (in accordance with policy Port/ST1), subject to the necessary safeguards being in place to ensure that the essential character of the area is not compromised.
- 7.36 Any development or change should serve to reinforce the characteristics of this unique quarried landscape and its ecological systems. In accordance with the Local Plan, the preferred approach is for development, which may affect protected species or habitats, to be assessed through the Dorset Biodiversity Appraisal Protocol<sup>29</sup>, administered by Dorset County Council NET<sup>30</sup>.

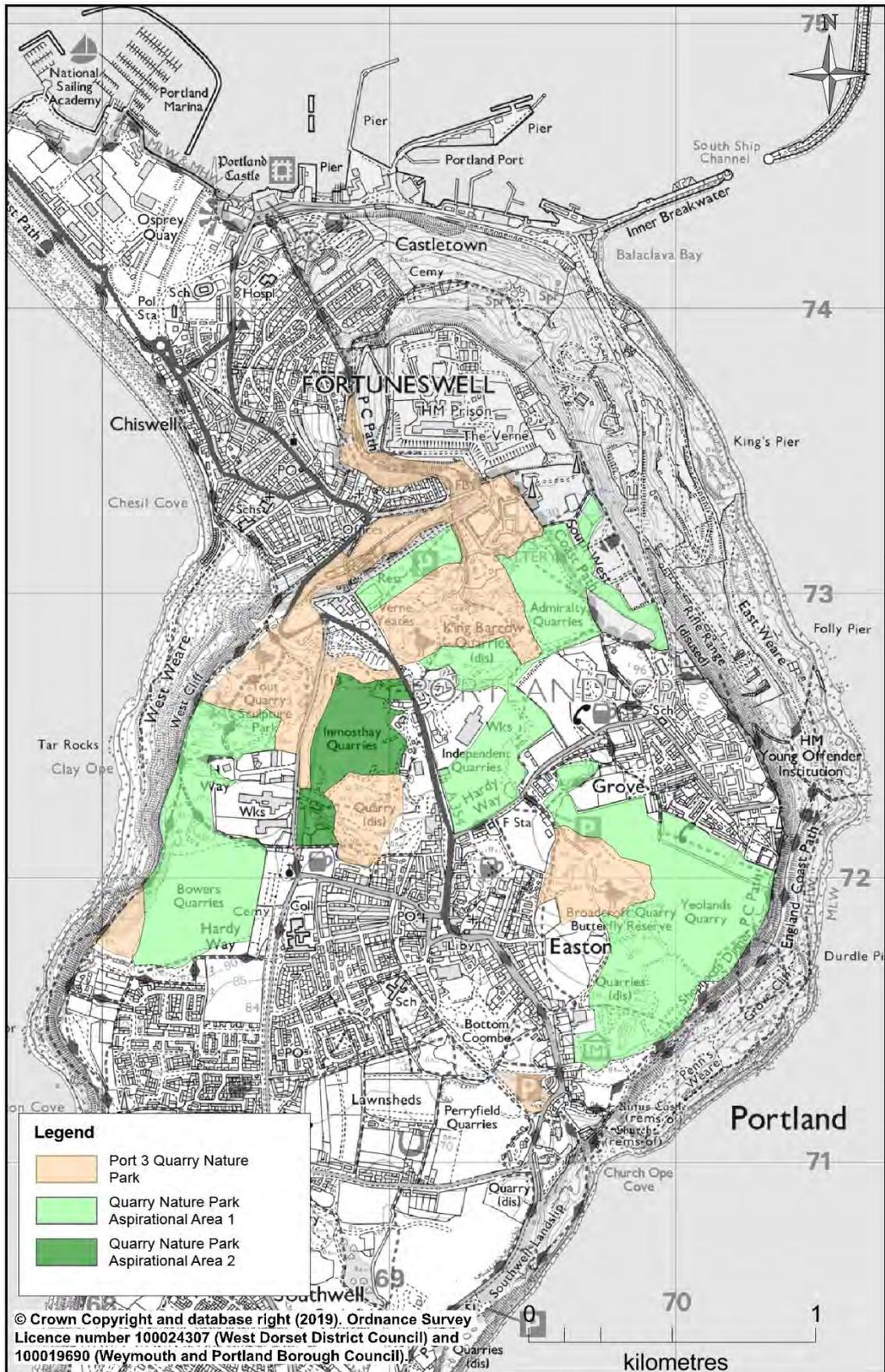
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<sup>28</sup> National Character Area profile: 137, Isle of Portland, Natural England, 2012

<sup>29</sup> <https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/countryside-coast-parks/countryside-management/biodiversity/biodiversity-appraisal-in-dorset.aspx>

<sup>30</sup> NET = Natural Environment Team

Map 7 Quarries Nature Park, Portland



**Development proposals that maintain or enhance the character and setting of any designated or non-designated heritage asset and enables the asset to be used in an appropriate manner will be supported.**

**Any renovations or alterations of buildings or structures identified as heritage assets requiring planning permission should be designed sensitively, and with careful regard to the heritage asset's historical and architectural interest and setting.**

**Development proposals in proximity to a heritage asset should provide a clear assessment of the significance and impact of the proposal on the asset and its setting and justify the design approach taken.**

- 7.37 We want to ensure that our history and heritage is recognised and respected. 95% of respondents to the Community Survey 2014 told us we must protect our old buildings and heritage features, of which we have a great deal. This is evidence by the fact that on such a relatively small location, there are four conservation areas. There are 178 Grade II (nationally important and of special interest) buildings and structures on Portland. The Island also has three Grade I (of exceptional interest) and 10 Grade II\* (of more than special interest) buildings and structure. Eight locations on the Island are scheduled as ancient monuments. Beyond these there are many other buildings, structures and locations that we regard as being an essential and important part of our history and heritage.
- 7.38 The NPPF (para. 185) encourage us to have “*a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats*”. Our heritage assets are important for historical, cultural, urban design and ‘sense of place’ reasons. They help define and make Portland such a distinct location. We wish to ensure they continue to play a significant role in the life of the Island. We want to ensure that uses are commensurate with the building’s heritage.
- 7.39 Policy Port/EN5 sets out policy requirements in the interest of protecting both designated and non-designated heritage assets. We have urged Weymouth and Portland Borough Council to establish a Local Heritage List. In its absence, on the advice of Historic England, Portland Town Council will establish a Schedule of Assets of Local Heritage Value. Members of the community can nominate buildings or structure for inclusion on this Schedule. It is hoped that those included on the Schedule will eventually be incorporated into the local planning authority’s List of Local Heritage Assets.
- 7.40 Any heritage assets identified in the Town Council’s Schedule of Assets of Local Heritage Value and/or as ‘important local buildings’ in the various Conservation Area Appraisals on the Island, should be treated as non-designated heritage assets, for the purposes of policy Port/EN4 and applying Local Plan Policy ENV4. We expect any development near a heritage asset to have a positive impact on the asset and our local heritage. Development proposals should adhere to Local Plan Policy ENV4, which requires proposals affecting the significance or setting of a heritage asset, whether statutorily designated or not, to provide “*sufficient information to demonstrate how the proposals would positively contribute to the assets’ conservation*”.

**Development proposals to protect, conserve and/or enhance the historic piers of Portland will be supported.**

**The renovation or alteration of structures should be designed sensitively, and with careful regard to the pier's historical interest and setting, as well as the need to avoid any significant harmful impact on the Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site.**

**Any development proposals brought forward regarding enhancement of the piers for social or economic use must ensure that they can be implemented without any adverse effect upon the integrity of the European sites. Proposals that will adversely affect the integrity of European sites will not be supported.**

- 7.41 The east coast of Portland is the location of several historic jetties or piers that were built mainly for the stone industry to enable transportation by sea, mainly to London. The remnants of Kings Pier Folly Pier and Durdle Pier, all in the ownership of Portland Port, date back to the 17<sup>th</sup> century and are considered worthy of protection. With careful restoration and conversion, the piers may yet have a use, economically or socially. They have been mooted as possible ferry access points from Bournemouth and Poole and Isle of Purbeck.
- 7.42 **King's Pier** is a 17th-century stone shipping quay, located at the boundary of land owned by Portland Port Ltd. When active, King's Pier was one of the most important stone shipping pier sites. Historical documents show that King's Pier was completed in 1622 for the shipment of stone to Whitehall in London. The Pier fell out of use in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The remnants of the King's Pier have served as a breakwater with fence on it to mark the start of the naval base, now the Port.
- 7.43 The current **Folly Pier** structure dates to 1765. The name Folly had originated from the fact that the Pier's exposed position beneath East Weares, coupled with landward inaccessibility, often made its use difficult. Once quarrying in the area reduced, and quarries moved inland from the cliffs, the pier fell out of use, and any cranes were removed.
- 7.44 **Durdle Pier** was constructed about 1745. It had the easiest access of the piers. By the 19th-century the Pier was reached by many tracks running from various quarried sites along East Weares. Once quarrying in the area reduced, and quarries moved inland, fishermen became the Pier's main users. The Pier's crane was one of the few remaining cranes used for lifting boats from the water around Portland's coast, and was still used into the 21st century, until the crane became broken and beyond repair. During the storms of early 2014, the Pier's crane was destroyed by the sea.
- 7.45 We hope that the piers can be brought into use for the economic and/or social benefit of the Island, but that should be subject to satisfying any security concerns of the Port. There has been recent interest in aquaculture and developing diving tourism off Portland. The current transport strategy<sup>31</sup> amongst its sustainable transport options includes "*support for the development of waterborne transport (Jurassic Coast)*". Policy Port/EN5 recognises that the pier sites could have value in future in providing links between land and sea but stresses that the history of the sites and structures must be considered. The NPPF (para. 197) says that "*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 affect directly or indirectly 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*".

<sup>31</sup> Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole 'Local Transport Plan 3' 2011-2026  
<https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/roads-highways-maintenance/roads-and-pavements/documents/ltp3-bournemouth-poole-dorset-strategy-document-final.pdf>

- 7.46 The historic piers are situated along the Portland Coastline which, in the majority, is designated as a European Site. Therefore, according to the Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) there is potential for the permissive aspects of the policy to cause an impact through recreational pressures and ‘pathways’ such as: direct land-take; construction-related effects (dust); and water quality (surface water runoff). As recommended by the HRA, we have included a requirement in the policy Port/EN5 that development proposals for the re-use of any of the piers should show that there will be no adverse effect upon the integrity of the European sites either during construction or the operational stage of the development. Any projects brought forward under the policy should be subject to early pre application consultation with Natural England.
- 7.47 Bringing the piers back into use in a way that respects their history and heritage and avoids harm to local wildlife and habitats will be a challenge; but we regarded it as a worthy one that is consistent with our overall approach to growth and development of Portland whilst being mindful and respectful of its heritage.

#### **Policy No. Port/EN6 Defined Development Boundaries**

**Map 8 defines the Defined Development Boundaries (DDBs) of Portland. Development or redevelopment proposals within the DDBs will be supported, subject to compliance with the other policies in the Neighbourhood Plan.**

- 7.48 The fact that Portland is a series of settlements is demonstrated by the pattern of “defined development boundaries” (DDBs) that has been informing planning policy on the Island since they were first designated. A series of DDBs have in place on Portland in successive local plans. Their purpose has been to mark the acceptable extent of the built-up area of the Island. In Portland’s case, this has meant a dozen DDB’s ringing both residential and industrial areas and Portland Bill. They were drawn with “*regard to the Island's unique physical and environmental characteristics, the separate identity of different communities*”<sup>32</sup>. The same boundaries have been in force for many years. They have generally served the Island well.
- 7.49 As part of the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan, we have taken the opportunity to review the boundaries to ensure they remain fit for purpose. The Local Plan says that neighbourhood plans can make significant changes to the policies in the Local Plan including extending existing defined development boundaries or adding them to settlements that do not currently have a boundary, so long as they do not undermine its strategic objectives and approach.
- 7.50 The policy approach of defining the normally acceptable limits to development remains very relevant to Portland. It helps protect the unique and sensitive open landscape of the Island and prevents the coalescence and loss of character of the separate settlement areas. The new built-up area boundaries, shown on Map 8, reflect the development that has taken place on Portland since the Millennium and current planning approvals and policies. The criteria applied and the changes from the previous DDBs are explained in a technical paper<sup>33</sup> prepared by the Plan Working Group.
- 7.51 In setting the built-up area boundary policy we were mindful of the opportunities for development or redevelopment within them. We have referred to the recently created Brownfield Register. Our surveys and research show that there are sufficient opportunities within the boundaries for us to resist development proposals outside of the boundaries unless they conform with the restrictive rural development policies in the Neighbourhood Plan and Policy SUS2 of the Local Plan. Within the boundaries shown on Map 8 residential, employment and other development to meet the needs and contribute to the sustainability of the local area will be supported unless the development proposal is contrary to other policies in the Neighbourhood Plan. Policy Port/EN6 also reflects the

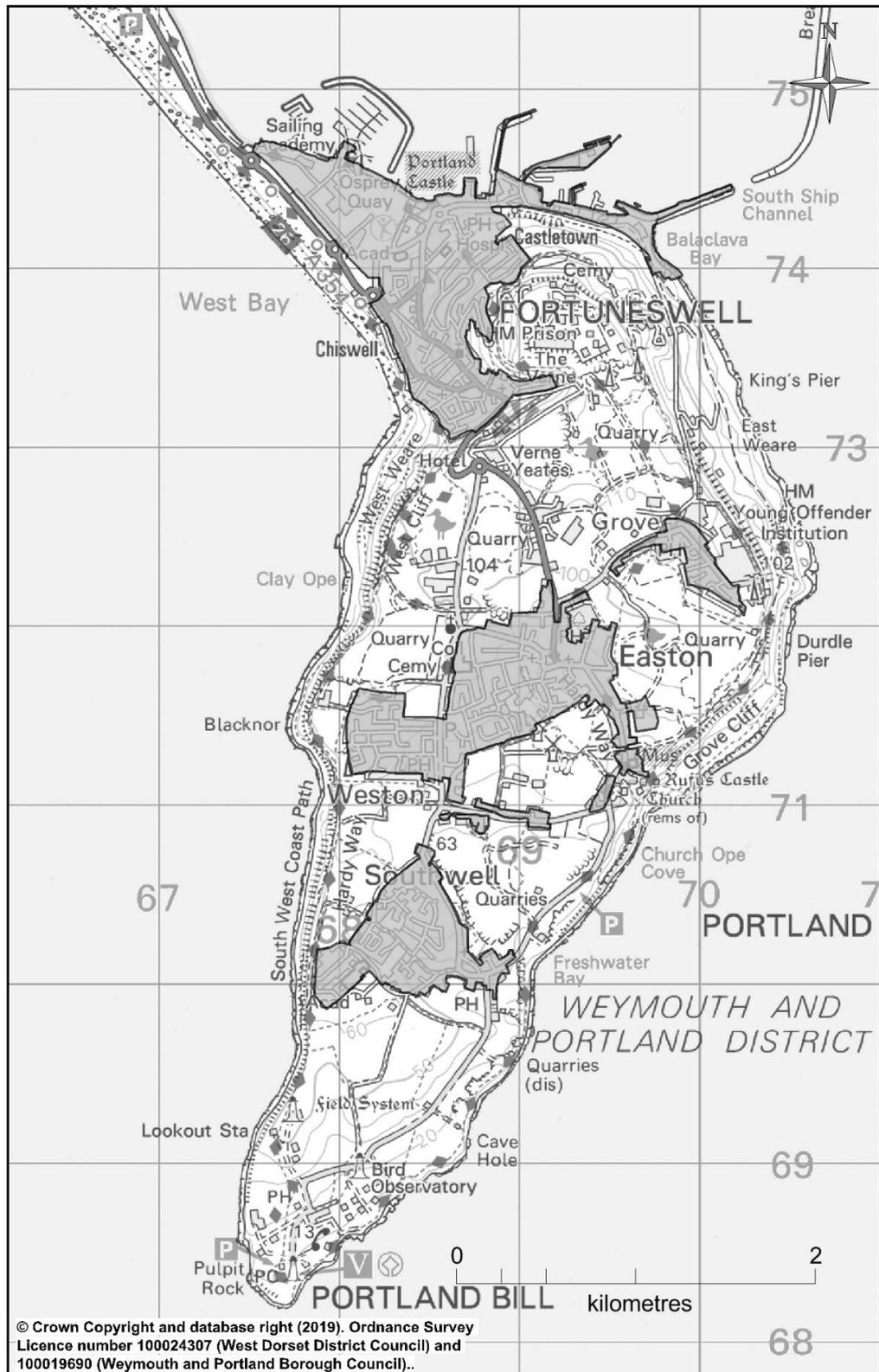
<sup>32</sup> Weymouth & Portland Local Plan (Saved Policies) - December 2008

<sup>33</sup> See BUAB Technical Paper, 2017 <https://www.portlandplan.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Portland-Plan-Development-Boundaries-Revisions.pdf>

shared intention of the local planning authority and the Town Council to prioritise development on brownfield sites in Underhill and around Easton in Tophill.

- 7.52 Any employment areas that were part of the DDBs as recognised by the Local Plan<sup>34</sup>, but are now excluded from the revised DDB as shown on Map 8, are recognised as ‘Key Employment Sites’ (see Map 10) and are subject to policy ECON2 of the Local Plan.

Map 8 Defined Development Boundaries, Portland



Nb. Larger-scale boundary plans for each settlement area can be found in the Map Appendix

<sup>34</sup> As ‘saved policies’, from previous Local Plan, at December 2008

Development proposals will be expected to be of a design which:

- i. complements the prevailing size, height, scale and mass, materials, layout, density and access of the existing surrounding development;
- ii. be of high quality design and use locally appropriate materials and colours;
- iii. demonstrates that the development reflects and reinforces, as far as is possible, the existing character of the locality as identified in the Portland Heritage and Character Assessment and applies the principles set out in the conservation area appraisals where appropriate; and
- iv. wherever possible, incorporates and enhances existing landscape features as part of an appropriate level of landscaping.

- 7.53 The Portland Heritage and Character Assessment of 2017<sup>35</sup> confirmed that the existence of several distinct settlement areas, each with their own identity, was an important and beneficial facet of the Island’s character and worthy of protection. The consultation for the Local Plan Review in the spring of 2017, offered up the suggestion that planning policy should continue to recognise eight distinct settlements: Castletown, Chiswell, Easton, Fortuneswell, Grove, Southwell, Wakeham and Weston. The response to the consultation showed that local people was favourable.
- 7.54 The NPPF (para. 125) stresses that neighbourhood plans can play an important role in identifying the special qualities of each area and explain how this should be reflected in development. The Portland Heritage and Character Assessment of 2017 has been accepted by Portland Town Council as a relevant source of guidance to developers. It identifies the special qualities of the different areas and settlements on the Island and sets out a design vision and expectations, which are firmly based on the objective *“to protect and enhance the distinct character of settlements”*. The NPPF (para.130) goes on to say that *“permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions, taking into account any local design standards or style guides in plans or supplementary planning documents”*.
- 7.55 Policy Port/EN7 requires development proposals to demonstrate that they have taken local character and the location’s distinctiveness fully into account. In accordance with NPPF (para. 127) we do not want to prevent or discourage *“appropriate innovation”*, but we do expect proposals to be *“sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting,”*. The PPG states that *“development should seek to promote character in townscape and landscape by responding to and reinforcing locally distinctive patterns of development”* and that the *“successful integration of new development with their surrounding context is an important design objective”*.
- 7.56 We fully endorse this approach and expect development proposals to refer to the Portland Heritage and Character Assessment which identifies the key characteristics of different areas and, importantly, the approach we should take to managing change in a positive way that does not impair future functionality or viability. The Conservation Area Appraisals also provides similarly valuable guidance for the historic areas of the Island. Portland Town Council will work with the local planning authority and the owners of the land to develop further area/settlement specific guidance on how ‘design and character matters’ can complement functional considerations to create a development that does justice to the Portland’s heritage as well as its future wellbeing.

<sup>35</sup> Portland Heritage and Character Assessment of 2017, AECOM for Portland Town Council, March 2017  
<https://www.portlandplan.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/PCP-Portland-HCA-low-res.pdf>

**Proposals to achieve sustainable re-use of the Verne through the restoration and redevelopment of buildings, will be supported provided that the renovation or alteration of existing buildings and structures is designed sensitively, and with careful regard to the historical and architectural interest and setting.**

**If any demolition is proposed of buildings which date from the original construction period, robust justification should be provided to demonstrate why these buildings and structures (or parts of) cannot be retained within the scheme.**

**Any extension or new build should be:**

- i. sensitive to the setting of the site;**
- ii. designed to a high quality and respect the distinctive character of the site; and**
- iii. of a scale and massing that is subservient to the existing buildings.**

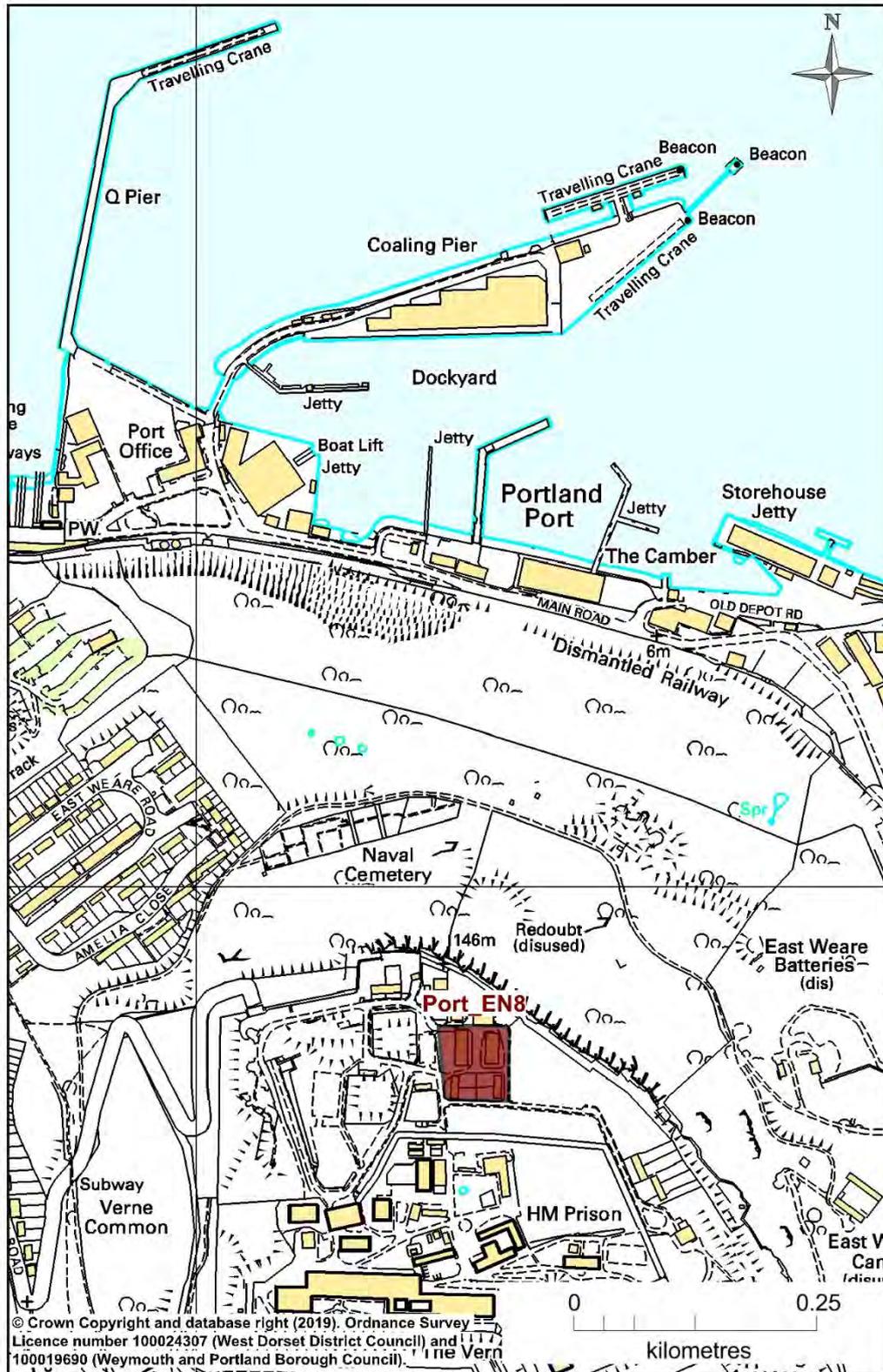
**Development proposals should be carefully designed and planned to ensure that no adverse effects on the integrity of European sites occurs as a result of water pollution stemming from site runoff or dust emissions during construction or the operational stage of each of the developments.**

- 7.57 The Verne site referred to in policy Port/EN8 is an area of 0.45ha within the Citadel area that includes four derelict buildings (see Map 9). These were formerly part of the Verne detention centre complex. The site is at the top of a steep hill and isolated from other residential areas. Consequently, it is not within a built-up area boundary and not regarded as a sustainable residential location.
- 7.58 Although the Verne is not located within a conservation area, the derelict buildings on site, which date from the original period of construction, have a local heritage value. The Verne Citadel Scheduled Monument is located within 30m of the site boundary at its closest point, and several Grade II and II\* listed buildings which are associated with this are also located within 300m of the site. Community opinion is that the Verne is something that should be protected, but not as a derelict or under-valued monument. Since the Jailhouse Café first opened, around five years ago, there has been much more awareness of the derelict buildings and their potential, and there is considerable community support for their sensitive redevelopment and suitable re-use.
- 7.59 The NPPF (para. 184) requires us to conserve heritage assets “*in a manner appropriate to their significance*”, taking into account the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets whilst putting it to viable uses consistent with their conservation. Policy Port/EN8 recognises the heritage value of the site shown on Map 9 and its context and is supportive of development proposals that will realise a unique opportunity to create something appropriate and sustainable, that is not dependent on the proximity of local facilities and services, unless it is part of a larger development scheme. As was concluded by the AECOM site assessment of the Verne<sup>36</sup>, on its own, it is not a site that is particularly suitable for housing. We would not rule out re-use for residential purposes; a need for key worker housing with the re-opening of the Verne Prison, or a live/work development for instance has some potential. As do enterprise and tourism schemes that show due respect for the heritage of the location and the quality and character of the environment.
- 7.60 In accordance with the recommendations of the Habitat Regulations Assessment there is the potential for any redevelopment scheme to have a likely significant effect “*in combination*” on the nearby Isle of Portland to Studland Cliffs SAC through construction-related activities (dust

<sup>36</sup> Portland Heritage and Character Assessment of 2017, AECOM for Portland Town Council, March 2017  
<https://www.portlandplan.org.uk/2017/06/05/major-study-confirms-portlands-unique-character/>

emission), surface water runoff (water quality) and the impact of recreational pressures. In accordance with the recommendations of the HRA, policy Port/EN8 requires any redevelopment scheme to be carefully designed and planned to ensure that no adverse effects on the integrity of European sites occurs either during construction or subsequently.

Map 9 The Verne, Portland



**Proposals to improve the public realm through the introduction of high quality pavements, signage, street furniture and public art installations will be supported. Development proposals, where appropriate, should show how they contribute to enhancing the quality of the public realm and the distinct characteristics of their location, with reference to current guidelines.**

- 7.61 The Portland Heritage and Character Assessment of 2017 refers to inadequacies in the quality of the public realm across all the settlement areas of Portland. There are many examples of areas that appear run-down or neglected. The Assessment has also highlighted the fact that too often recent development has used modern materials and lacks an attention to the vernacular and to local character.
- 7.62 Portland deserves better. The Town Council has accepted that a common palate of materials, street furniture and signage should be further developed and promoted to enhance the quality and legibility of the public realm and distinguish the different characters of individual settlements. It intends commissioning a report that will recommend guidelines as to how this can be achieved. Areas such as the ‘gateways’ at Victoria Square and Heights area, for example, are prime candidates for improvements that can make a strong character statement and set a high standard to be followed in other parts of the Portland.
- 7.63 The NPPF (para. 91) urges us to “*create opportunities for meetings between members of the community who might not otherwise come into contact with each other*”. The NPPF (para. 127) says that neighbourhood plans should help “*establish a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit*”.
- 7.64 Policy Port/EN9 is supportive of measures to improve the public realm and make them more attractive and usable. It also requires designers of public realm schemes to recognise what is deemed appropriate or tolerable in terms of style, materials, colours etc at different parts of the Island.

## 8. Business and Employment

### Overview

- 8.1 Portland has a unique coastal character and location that has determined its economic agenda and shaped its geography. The Island has several very distinct maritime and inland settlements that are separated by wide open spaces, marked by the substantial scars of the long-established quarrying industry.
- 8.2 Until the 1990's, a significant element of the local economy was based on defence-related work at Portland Port. Following the closure of the main Ministry of Defence and Royal Navy establishments, the Island has endeavoured to 'regenerate' itself as a sustainable local economy. The former naval estate has provided opportunities for regeneration and new industrial and commercial development at Osprey Quay, Southwell Business Park and Portland Port. There has been economic recovery since 2001. However economic underperformance continues to be an issue. We may have 300 or more business on Portland but only 10 employ more than 50 people.
- 8.3 Although the area is an attractive place to live and contains some large employment sites, there are still areas that suffer from high levels of multiple deprivation; three of the most deprived areas in Dorset are on Portland. Indeed, headline data indicate that Portland is underperforming compared to the national/county average across several measures of productivity and business competitiveness.
- 8.4 Far more people commute out of Portland daily to work, than come into work. Around a quarter of out-commuters would prefer to work on Portland if suitable jobs were available.
- 8.5 Businesses have told us that whilst the Island is a visually stunning place to be based and do business there are barriers to growth. The limitations of the road network is the most voiced 'complaint'. A lack of suitable premises and high-speed communication issues are also sources of frustration.
- 8.6 The Portland Economic Plan aims to build on the sector strengths of the area, particularly those sectors which have potential to grow.
- 8.7 Maritime Sector - Portland has particular strengths in the maritime sector, especially advanced engineering and manufacturing. The deep-water port creates opportunities for businesses not only in the port estate but on Portland and beyond. As well as providing world class sailing and leisure facilities, Osprey Quay offers modern workspace.
- 8.8 Renewable Energy - Portland offers an ideal environment for renewable energy companies to thrive. There are opportunities for wave and tidal power as well as solar and wind power development. The Port of Portland, with ready access to deep water, can assist in putting the region at the forefront of construction and support to renewable energy development. Portland has the potential to become a leading location to test and develop renewable energy development as well as supporting the development of community renewable energy. The generation of energy locally at a community level offers the opportunity to retain spending on energy for the benefit of local people and the local economy.
- 8.9 Tourism - The Island has several natural and visitor attractions which predominantly meet a domestic day-visitor market. Tourism 'assets' need to be an integral part of the programme to develop the visitor economy on the island. Portland Port has witnessed significant growth over the last five years. The Island also offers abundant activity adventure opportunity. In addition to the existing visitor product, there are some major tourism developments are in the planning stage, which could have a dramatic impact on the tourism offer on Portland.

Business and Employment	
Aim	<i>Strengthen the Island's business function</i>
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect existing employment spaces</li> <li>• Facilitate appropriate conversions and extensions of local business space</li> <li>• Enable business hub development in local building if justified</li> <li>• Set criteria for developing land for business development</li> <li>• Set criteria for new business development to priority and growth industries</li> <li>• Establish policy that supports conversion of redundant buildings for business purposes</li> <li>• Encourage creation of business start-up units</li> <li>• Encourage and facilitate northern arc masterplan approach</li> <li>• Support development that provides for local education and training opportunities</li> <li>• Encourage development to bring about better connectivity for all</li> </ul>

## Our Neighbourhood Plan Policies and their Explanation/Justification

### Policy No. Port/BE1 Protecting Existing Employment Sites and Premises

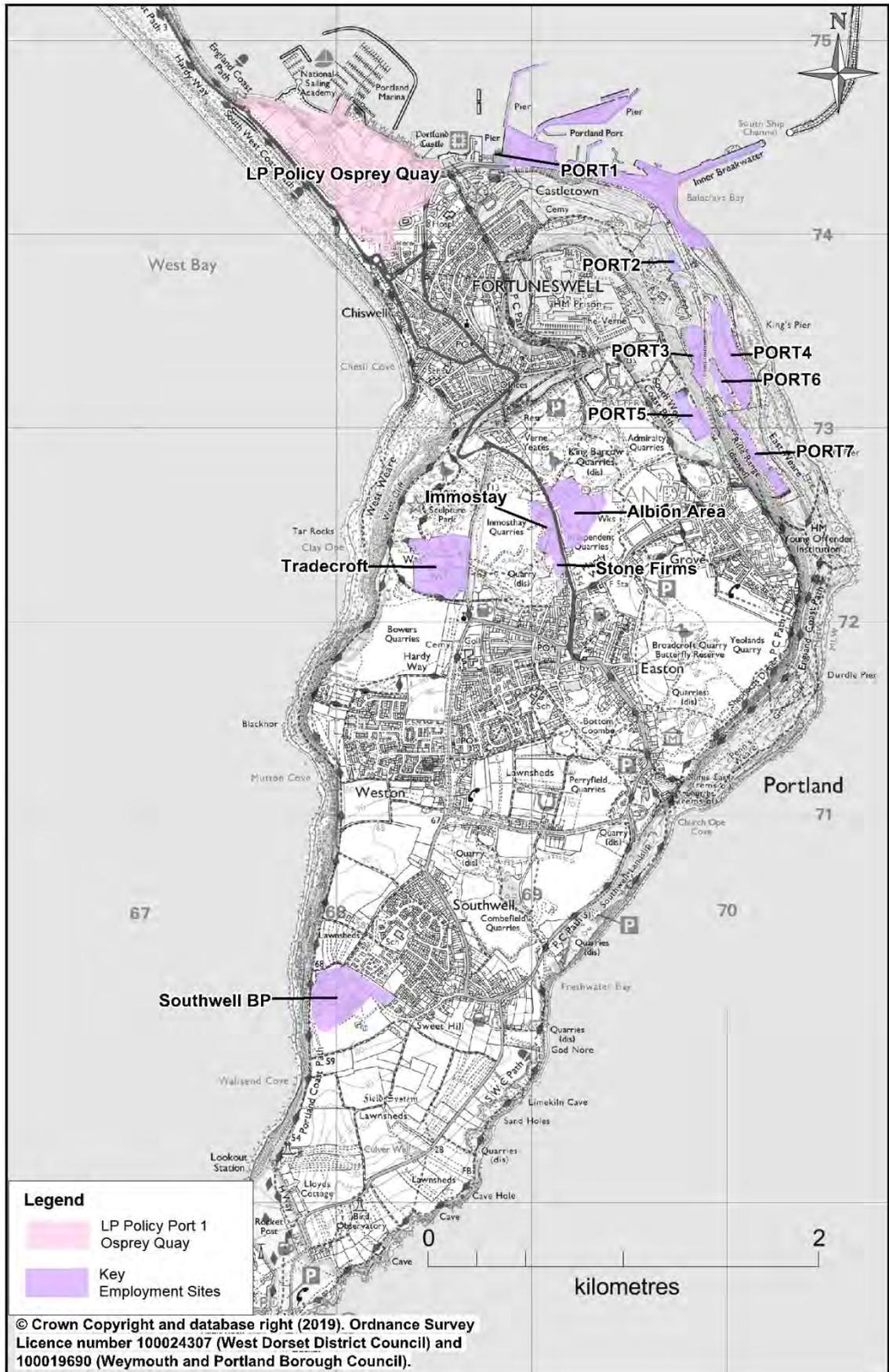
**Outside the 'key employment areas' defined on Map 10, development proposals that result in the loss of existing employment sites and premises will be supported, but only if:**

- i. any redevelopment or change of use proposals comply with Policy ECON3 of the Local Plan; and**
- ii. in order to demonstrate that there is no viable alternative employment or community use, the site/premises have been vacant for over 18 months, during which time it has been actively marketed at the current market rate.**

- 8.10 Portland has set its sights on remaining a focus for business and enterprise at the apex of the Western Dorset Growth Corridor. Several new business sites have been developed over the last decade (between 1994 and 2013, 8.21 hectares of employment land has been developed on Portland) but land suitable for modern business development is in relatively short supply because of the Island's topography and our desire to protect much of our natural and built environment. It is important therefore to retain the established employment sites. The Portland Economic Strategy makes it plain that "*employment sites must be protected to secure indigenous growth and inward investment*". Those locations regarded as 'key employment areas', identified on Map 10, are protected under Policy ECON2. of the Local Plan. They comprise the Portland Port, Southwell Business Park, Inmosthay Industrial Estate, Tradecroft Industrial Estate, Albion Stone Works, the Stone Firms Works Area and Osprey Quay, which is also afforded protection as a strategic employment area by way of its own policy, Port 1 in the Local Plan. For these areas the Local Plan applies a relatively flexible land use policy to ensure the location will continue to deliver economic benefits, particularly to the local area.
- 8.11 The NPPF (para. 80) says "*significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development*". With a limited supply of suitable land for development, policy Port/BE1 protects all employment sites from a hasty demise. The Community Consultation in 2013 made it clear that we should protect existing employment locations. When, existing sites and premises become available for re-use, we expect every effort to be made by the owner to market the site in the hope of securing a viable alternative employment use that will contribute to the Island's economic growth

and provide much needed local employment. We believe that 18 months is not an unreasonable period given the importance of economic growth and local employment is to Portland. After that period of time, any redevelopment or change of use proposal should comply with the appropriate development plan policies.

Map 10 Key Employment Areas, Portland



Nb. Larger-scale site maps can be viewed in the Map Appendix

## **Policy No. Port/BE2 Up-grading of Existing Employment Sites and Premises**

**Proposals which lead to the improvement, modernisation or upgrading of current employment sites and premises will be welcomed and supported, subject to:**

- i. there being no significant adverse impacts on the amenity of neighbours, visitor attractions and facilities and the character of the area;**
- ii. it will not have an unacceptable adverse impact on the transport network and parking conditions;**
- iii. wherever appropriate, it reflects the maritime and industrial character of the area in which it is located; and**
- iv. it will not have any other unacceptable environmental impact.**

8.12 In support of the Economic Strategy, policy Port/BE2 is supportive of development that ensures our existing employment sites and premises remain suitable to meet modern demands and practices. The policy does include safeguards to ensure that the development is appropriate to its location and does not result in any unacceptable impact on neighbours, infrastructure or the environment. Policy Port/BE2 makes it clear that we wish to support the expansion of existing business sectors in the interests of economic growth and prosperity, as long as it is appropriate to do so in that location.

8.13 We are cognisant of the findings of the Portland Heritage and Character Assessment of 2017<sup>37</sup> and the significance that sensitive design can play in reinforcing and improving the character of an area. Much of Portland's business space is in the Maritime area to the north of the Island. In this area, we expect the pattern and design of new development to reflect the maritime and industrial character of the area including commercial-scale buildings similar to the new development at Osprey Quay. This should include materials such as Portland stone, reclaimed timber, weatherboard and steel.

## **Policy No. Port/BE3 New Employment Premises**

**Development proposals to create new employment premises within or adjacent to settlement areas will generally be supported provided they can be shown to benefit the local economy, except where:**

- i. there would be a significant adverse impact on neighbours as a result of noise, light pollution, increased traffic levels, increased flood risk or inadequate provision of parking;**
- ii. the development would result in significant adverse environmental or highway problems;**
- iii. appropriate access cannot be provided; or**
- iv. the development would result in the loss of one or more dwelling-houses.**

8.14 The availability of land for business development is an issue. Most of the land with permission or allocated in the Local Plan is at the major employment sites on Portland i.e. Osprey Quay (49h), Portland Port (47h), Immosthay (7.5h), Tradecroft (6.5h), Southwell Business Park (8h). In support of the Economic Strategy, which advocates new approaches and exploiting new opportunities and markets, policy Port/BE3 recognises that some businesses may be better served and located away from the established industrial estates and business parks. The Community Consultation 2013 said we should create more employment sites for growth industries, some of which may flourish in

<sup>37</sup> Portland Heritage and Character Assessment of 2017, AECOM for Portland Town Council, March 2017  
<https://www.portlandplan.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/PCP-Portland-HCA-low-res.pdf>

locations away from the main industrial and employment areas. Policy Port/BE3 supports the creation of new premises for employment uses as defined by the Local Plan.

- 8.15 The NPPF (para. 81) says we “*be flexible enough to accommodate needs not anticipated in the plan, allow for new and flexible working practices, ...and to enable a rapid response to changes in economic circumstances*”. Development proposals for new employment premises that will provide local employment and/or deliver services, at locations in or adjacent to the settlement areas of Portland, will be supported in locations that are suitably accessible for their use and users, if they do not result in any unacceptable impact on neighbours, infrastructure or the environment. In accordance with the Portland Heritage and Character Assessment of 2017<sup>38</sup> we expect the design and materials proposed for new development to be responsive to the vernacular style and materials of the local area and in other ways conform to the design requirements of the Local Plan Policy ENV12.

#### **Policy No. Port/BE4 New Business Centres**

##### **The conversion, adaptation and use of redundant buildings for start-up businesses, small business hubs and training centres and will be supported.**

- 8.16 An important strand of the Portland Economic Strategy is creating jobs in new, more knowledge-focussed industries to offset losses in more traditional industries. This means nurturing new businesses and supporting innovation. It also means, as the NPPF (para. 82) says, planning “*positively for the location, promotion and expansion of clusters or networks of knowledge driven, creative or high technology industries*”.
- 8.17 The Community Consultation in 2013 said we should find ways to encourage and support new enterprise and business start-ups and we should convert redundant spaces for small business use. There are buildings and locations on the Island that could serve well as business centres and hubs of enterprise and innovation, which could offer a range of work units, central shared services and even support on site. Policy Port/BE4 offers support to such initiatives as they arise, subject to the businesses individually or collectively not resulting in any unacceptable impact on neighbours, infrastructure or the environment as required by policy Port/BE3.
- 8.18 Where an appropriate building falls outside of the Defined Development Boundary, Local Plan Policy SUS3 would have primacy in determination of any application. However, such a determination on Portland shall take account of landscape and other sensitive impacts given the constrained nature of the land.

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<sup>38</sup> Portland Heritage and Character Assessment of 2017, AECOM for Portland Town Council, March 2017  
<https://www.portlandplan.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/PCP-Portland-HCA-low-res.pdf>

#### Policy No. Port/BE5 Facilitating Home Working

**The extension of existing homes and provision of outbuildings to support home working may be acceptable, provided:**

- i. the scale and design of the development is sympathetic to the character of the existing buildings and surrounding area;**
- ii. the outbuilding or extension will remain available for business use ancillary to the primary use as a dwelling; and**
- iii. the development would not result in a significant adverse impact on the environment, residential amenity or cause harm by increased traffic movements.**

- 8.19 There is a growing interest in home-working which is being made easier and more appealing by the increasing availability of superfast broadband on Portland. It is already helping attract small media and creativity businesses to develop on the Island. This trend, we hope, will continue. It is good for the local economy and it helps reduce travel to work numbers. IT and other technology advancements such as 3D printing may well lead to a growing preference for smaller working spaces that can be appropriately located in sustainable live/work areas.
- 8.20 Policy Port/BE5 recognises the interest and value of home-based enterprise. The NPPF (para. 81) encourages us to “*allow for new and flexible working practices, such as live-work accommodation*”. Our policy is generally supportive of the extension of a dwelling or small-scale development within its curtilage, for appropriate business purposes by the dwelling’s occupants, if it will not result in any unacceptable impact on neighbours or the environment.

#### Policy No. Port/BE6 The Northern Arc

**A comprehensive strategic planning approach, based on a private, public and community sector partnership, that will realise the economic and employment potential whilst aiming to improve the environmental quality of the area designated on Map 11 is supported.**

**Any development brought forward regarding the Northern Arc must ensure that it can be implemented without any adverse effect upon the integrity of the European sites. Development proposals should be carefully designed and planned to ensure that no adverse effects on such sites occurs as a result of water pollution stemming from site runoff or dust emissions during construction or the operational stage of all developments.**

- 8.21 The NPPF (para. 80) places significant weight on “*the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. The approach taken should allow each area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future*”. The ‘Northern Arc’ is a concept that has evolved from work on the Portland Economic Strategy. The area in question, connecting Osprey Quay, Castletown and Portland Port is shown on Map 11. The intention is to ‘cement’ the location as a vital employment zone for the benefit of local people and the economic wellbeing of the Island, whilst ensuring that other appropriate uses can flourish, and the several important heritage and natural environment sites are suitably respected and treated. The consequences of this designation and the planning implications are still to be worked out. This approach does have the support of key land owners, including Portland Port. The Port indicated during the Local Plan Review that the preparation of strategies, plans and programmes to deliver sustainable

development and facilitate better understanding and management of the port estate would be supported<sup>39</sup>.

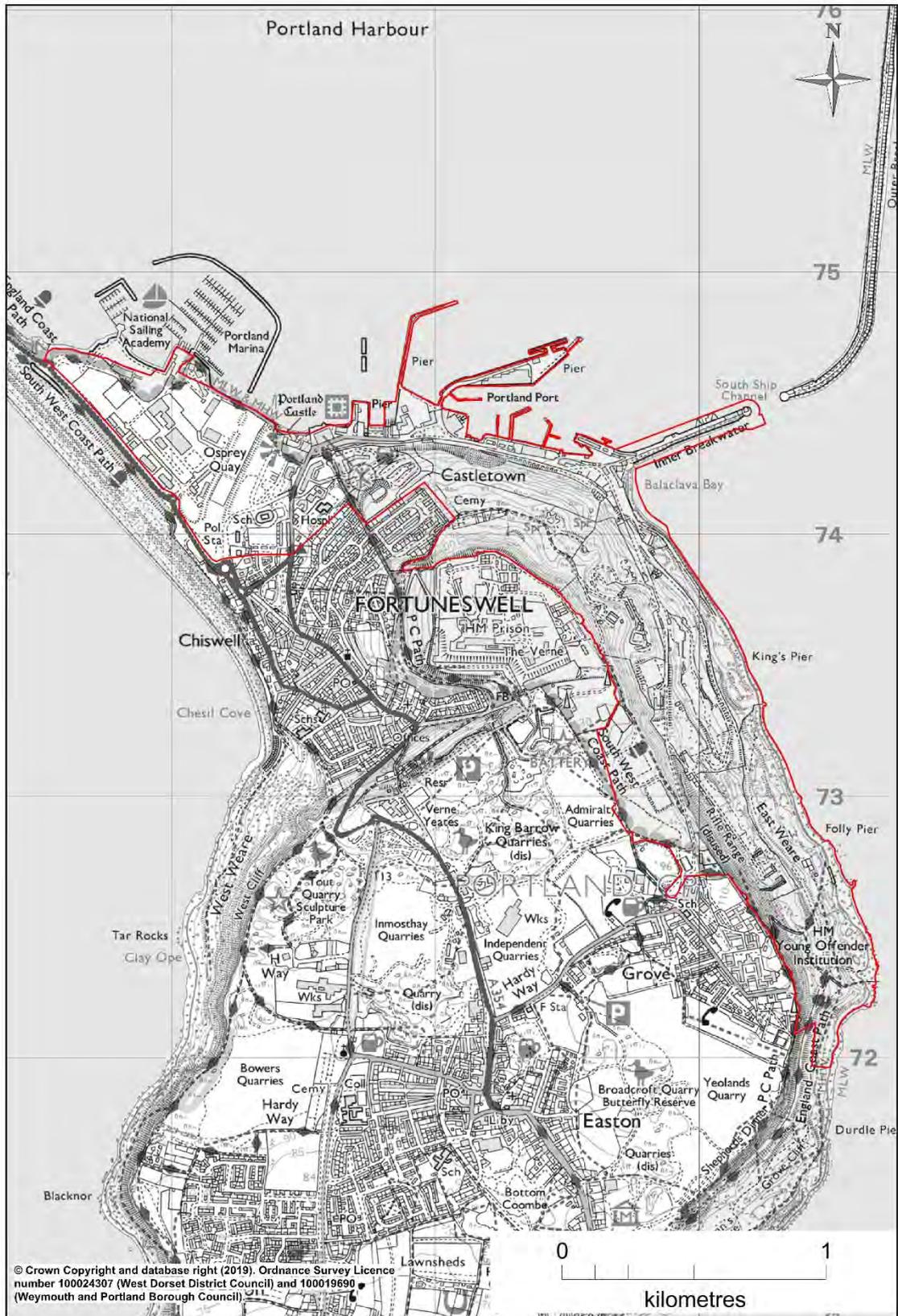
- 8.22 Portland Town Council too is supportive of the principle of the Northern Arc and advocates a partnership approach to planning for its development. In accordance with the approach to neighbourhood planning we have established, we expect a planned approach for the area to be subject to an extensive and inclusive consultation process with the Island's communities as well as local stakeholders, although we also recognise that Portland Port has secured permitted development rights in regard to its dock estate, which would provide a substantial business development opportunity. Any proposals should generally adhere to the policies of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 8.23 The area defined as the Northern Arc comprises the land that is subject to Local Plan Policy PORT1, Osprey Quay; Local Plan Policy PORT2 – Hardy Block; the Castletown and Port area of the Underhill Development Boundary (commencing at Cadets Corner junction of Victory Rd and Castle Rd); and the area known locally as East Weares to just beyond Grove Point. A comprehensive plan will provide the opportunity to achieve a much over-due rationalisation of land uses in the interests of creating a more efficient and effective business environment, as well as accommodating other uses as appropriate, in a unique and stunning location that should attract new enterprises.
- 8.24 The proposed Northern Arc area embraces some of the Maritime Character Area (LCA1) and much of the Heritage Character Area (LCA2) as identified by the Portland Heritage and Character Assessment of 2017. The area has significant heritage and environmental sensitivities which will need to be taken into account. The area includes significant scheduled Ancient Monuments and statutory environmental protections. The Assessment highlights the 'issues to be addressed' and recommends that 'character management principles' should be an integral part of the overall development strategy that builds on the industrial heritage of the area and realises the potential for modern employment land development and suitable ancillary uses, whilst improving the Green Network and Heritage Access. The environmental potential of the area is not insignificant. In accordance with the Dorset Local Nature Partnership's document 'The Natural Place for Business'<sup>40</sup>, policy Port/BE6 expects development projects to increase Dorset's 'Natural Capital' by ensuring a net gain for the natural environment. Natural England should be fully consulted during the preparation of The Northern Arc planning strategy.
- 8.25 The HRA undertaken for the Neighbourhood Plan identified that policy Port/BE6, being supportive in principle of business development within this defined area of Portland, has the potential to cause an effect on European sites through direct land take, construction-related activities, water quality (surface run off) and in combination with other policies, adversely affect European sites because of air quality and/or recreational pressure. In accordance with the recommendations of the HRA, policy Port/BE6 requires development proposals to be carefully planned and designed to ensure that no adverse effects on the integrity of European sites occurs either during construction or subsequently.

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<sup>39</sup> Joint Local Plan Review for West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Preferred Options Consultation, May 2018  
<https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/planning-buildings-land/planning-policy/west-dorset-and-weymouth-portland/adopted-local-plan/adopted-local-plan.aspx>

<sup>40</sup> <https://dorsetlnp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Dorset-LNP-Natural-Capital-Investment-Strategy-2016.pdf>

Map 11 The Northern Arc Area, Portland



## 9. Housing

### Overview

- 9.1 In 2011 Portland was home to 12,884 people forming 5,175 households. The average household size was 2.48 persons. The total number of dwellings on was 5,608 dwellings. Indicating that almost 8% of dwellings in 2011 were either empty or second homes.
- 9.2 A majority of Portland's housing stock is over 60 years old. Portland being dominated by terraced houses (approaching half of the dwelling stock). Portland has a lower proportion of owner-occupied homes and a higher proportion of homes that are privately rented than across the Borough. Almost a third of Portland residents rent their home.
- 9.3 The rate of new house-building on Portland is constrained by the amount of suitable development land available. 744 new dwellings were built between 2001 and 2013. A relatively small number of sites on Portland were identified as being available for housing development and suitable for inclusion in the latest SHLAA<sup>41</sup>. A lack of sites is one of the reasons why the population of Portland has been constrained and is forecast only to increase by 2.7% between 2011 and 2031<sup>42</sup>. The population profile for Portland is likely to 'age' significantly if many of our young people and families are unable to find suitable, affordable accommodation on Portland. There are not enough small dwellings for the young, or suitable for those more elderly households wishing to down-size and thereby release much wanted family homes.
- 9.4 House prices in Weymouth and Portland are, on average, 11 times higher than average wage levels and overall, the affordability of housing is a major issue for the local population. Around 25% of households across the 'housing market area'<sup>43</sup> cannot afford housing at current market prices/rents without the need for some form of subsidy. There is considerable concern about the likely growth of second homes as Portland gets 'discovered' in the wake of growth in tourism and visitor attractions and reduced opportunities further west.
- 9.5 Housing condition also remains an issue. There are too many dwellings that are in a poor state of repair and well below acceptable standards for today and tomorrow.
- 9.6 In 2017, there are around 380 people on the housing waiting list with a Portland local connection. Many are single persons or younger families looking for 1 or 2 bedroomed properties. We are aware that there are a substantial number of elderly people who are currently living in larger homes and wish to downsize. Part of the local housing need will be met off the Island, but imaginative and innovative solutions are needed if much of it is to be met, and our population is to be properly housed, on the Island.
- 9.7 The Neighbourhood Plan Group commissioned its own study of site suitability to establish what land may be available to provide a continued supply of new dwellings. The study<sup>44</sup> shows that, with the phased release of redundant public-sector sites and supportive facilitating policies, there is sufficient land within or adjacent to existing built-up areas to provide housing to meet local needs and allow building rates to continue at their current level. Policy Port/EN7 seeks to ensure that there is sufficient development land available, whilst protecting the more sensitive environments. The Neighbourhood Plan's housing policies are aimed at ensuring that local needs and demands are recognised and have primacy when housing development takes place.

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<sup>41</sup> Weymouth & Portland Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, Weymouth & Portland BC, 2013

<sup>42</sup> Review of Future Housing Requirements for West Dorset District and Weymouth & Portland Borough, K Woodhead, Jun 2013

<sup>43</sup> Weymouth, Portland and West Dorset

<sup>44</sup> [https://www.portlandplan.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Portland-NP-Site-Assessment-Report\\_v3.0\\_291117.pdf](https://www.portlandplan.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Portland-NP-Site-Assessment-Report_v3.0_291117.pdf)

Housing	
Aim	<i>Provide the housing that local people want and need</i>
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus development on brownfield sites</li> <li>• Recognise exception site development to meet affordable housing needs provided by approved providers including CLT</li> <li>• Relate housing development to local housing need</li> <li>• Establish a second home policy</li> <li>• Set criteria for new housing development including standards and infrastructure requirements</li> </ul>

## Our Neighbourhood Plan Policies and their Explanation/Justification

### Policy No. Port/HS1 Housing Mix

**New residential development should favour small dwellings.**

**Development proposals on major housing sites, of 10 or more dwellings or on sites of 0.5ha. or more, must contain an appropriate mixture of house types and sizes and show how they contribute to meeting the current housing needs of the neighbourhood area by referring to an up-to-date assessment of housing need on Portland.**

- 9.8 The NPPF (para. 61) says *“the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies”*. Policy HOUS1 of the Local Plan requires, subject to viability assessment, 25% of affordable dwellings on larger developments (over 10 dwellings) and *“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”*.
- 9.9 Portland is a relatively low wage economy with a relatively limited number of development opportunities, so affordability and accessibility for local people is a real issue. We recognise too, that there are not enough small (one and two bedroomed) dwellings for the young or for mature households wishing to down-size, and thereby release much wanted family homes; nor ‘accessible housing’ that would benefit those with disabilities.
- 9.10 Policy Port/HS1 seeks to address the realities of housing development opportunities and housing needs on Portland. It requires residential development proposals on larger sites to provide justification for the housing mix on the site. We want the proposer of any larger housing development to refer to an up-to-date assessment of the local housing market and needs (carried out within 12 months prior to the planning application being submitted) and demonstrate how the proposed mix of sizes and house types is locally relevant and takes account of the aspirations and re-housing needs of the parishioners of Portland. In 2018 there is clear evidence, from our recent consultations, of a local demand for smaller dwellings that will help meet the needs of young households and mature households wanting to downsize. We do recognise that housing needs will change and will require regular re-assessment. Along with the periodic housing needs assessments carried out by the local housing authority, Portland Town Council will endeavour to main up-to-date intelligence on local housing need to help guide developers.
- 9.11 The NPPF (para. 68) recognises that *“small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area”*. Many of the development opportunities on Portland are likely to be on smaller sites, yielding less than 10 dwellings. Unless viability or other material considerations, such as the character of the surrounding area, show a robust justification for larger dwellings, developments on smaller sites should also favour smaller

(one and two bedroomed) dwellings. This should apply whether the development is for affordable or open-market dwellings or a mix. All new housing development should conform to the design and layout requirements of Local Plan Policy ENV 12.

#### **Policy No. Port/HS2 Community Housing Assets**

**Proposals for community housing schemes on ‘affordable housing exception sites’, will be supported where the proposed development is:**

- i. adjacent to, or well-located to an existing DDB; and**
- ii. where there is evidence of a local need for this type of development; and**
- iii. where all the following criteria are met:**
  - a. the development is on a small site**
  - b. the site is not a statutory or non-statutory designated area of ecological or geological value**
  - c. the development would not have an adverse impact on neighbouring uses or the openness of the countryside**
  - d. the development meets the design requirements of policy Port/EN8**
  - e. the development includes sustainable design, construction and operational elements**
  - f. local occupancy and principle residency clauses are in place and, in perpetuity, for all affordable dwellings:**
    - g. the land is held in trust as a community asset; and**
    - h. the dwellings remain affordable.**

- 9.12 National policy is very supportive of self-build and custom-built homes. The 2015 Act<sup>45</sup> places a responsibility on the local planning authority to promote such housing and keep a register of individuals and associations of individuals who are seeking to acquire serviced plots of land in the authority’s area for their own self-build and custom housebuilding.
- 9.13 Whilst self-build housing projects may have some impact on meeting the need for more affordable housing, there is also a role for other forms of community housing. There are several models including co-housing, self-help housing, cooperative and tenant-controlled housing and community land trusts. Community housing is often designed to help certain groups – for example young people, older people, or those in need of affordable family homes. Housing can be rented to local people at affordable rates which are kept low over the long-term, or sold to create income for the community. It’s often eco-friendly and sustainable. Quite commonly the land remains in community ownership. Community housing may be the way for the community of Portland to provide decent and affordable homes for local people.
- 9.14 We are particularly keen to promote community-led housing projects, which are developed, owned and run by local community organisation or enterprise and focus on local housing needs and priorities. The Portland Community Land Trust<sup>46</sup> has been incorporated as a Community Benevolent Company and founding directors have been appointed.
- 9.15 Community-led housing projects that provide affordable housing within the defined development boundaries are facilitated by policy Port/EN7 of the Neighbourhood Plan. Policy Port/HS2 supports an ‘exception-site’ approach to further the provision of community-led housing, if a suitable site is identified outside, but relatively close, to the current built-up area. Any community housing

<sup>45</sup> Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2015/17/contents>

<sup>46</sup> For explanation of a Community Land Trust see Glossary

proposed on an affordable housing exception site, must fall within the definition of affordable housing set out in the Glossary.

- 9.16 Exception site development for a community-led housing scheme that meets the criteria will be supported. Any development proposal would need to show in terms of scale and design that it would not have an unacceptably adverse impact on its locality. Whilst we encourage innovation, we expect all dwellings to be designed and constructed to high standards that takes account of the challenging climatic conditions that can be experienced on the more exposed sites on Portland. A small proportion of open market housing may be permissible on the development, but only to a number appropriate to make the overall development viable and sustainable. Priority for the open market housing should be given to purchasers with a local connection who are seeking a permanent local residence.

### **Policy No. Port/HS3 Second Homes**

**New open market housing, including replacement dwellings and residential conversions, with a restriction to ensure its occupancy as a Principal Residence, will be supported whenever it is deemed appropriate by the Local Planning Authority, after consultation with the Town Council.**

**Where a principle residence condition is applied, sufficient guarantee must be provided of such occupancy restriction through the imposition of a planning condition or legal agreement.**

- 9.17 In 2011 3.4% of the Island's housing stock was second homes. The Borough Council has recognised the impact that second homes can have on a community or neighbourhood - "*significant changes can take place within communities if local people on lower wages have to move away and large numbers of homes are bought as second homes*"; but there are no specific policies in the Joint Housing Strategy. The Town Council is keen to ensure that an adequate supply of housing is available to those that need a permanent residence on Portland, including key workers and others that have been attracted to Portland for employment purposes.
- 9.18 63% of the respondents to the 2014 Community Survey said they were concerned about the number of second homes. The community response to a draft policy in the 1<sup>st</sup> Consultation Version of the Portland Neighbourhood Plan drew a significant amount of support for a policy that gives priority to people that wish to make a permanent home on Portland. The community is concerned that prime redevelopment sites, particularly those with a sea view, will be used targeted at the second-home market with houses sold at a premium and well beyond the budget of local households. This was reflected in the number of persons opposing the recently proposed redevelopment of Underhill School to provide 21 dwellings for sale, on a site "*with extensive and commanding views from the headland towards the west and north-west, in particular towards Chesil beach and the coast towards Bridport*"<sup>47</sup>.
- 9.19 There has been a 30% increase between 2000-02 and 2012-14 in the proportion of adults in the UK who own multiple properties, rising 1.6 million to 5.2 million people (one in ten adults) in that period, according to a recent report by the Resolution Foundation<sup>48</sup>. Dorset is becoming more appealing to the second home and holiday let market, as the supply in Devon and Cornwall reduces and prices have risen through increase in stamp duty. Dorset is one of the main beneficiaries of funding from the additional levy of second home purchases in recognition of the growing problem

<sup>47</sup> Design and Access Statement, MH Architects for Bayview Development, May 2017

<sup>48</sup> <http://www.resolutionfoundation.org/media/blog/homes-sweet-homes-the-rise-of-multiple-property-ownership-in-britain/>

we are facing. A recent analysis of the electoral roll of areas known to be ‘hot spots’ on Portland and newer developments have indicated that 40%-50% of homes do not to have a resident registered, implying that the home is not considered to be a ‘principal residence’. Portland Town Council will continue to monitor second home ownership on Portland using available sources, such as the electoral roll, and assess the impact it is having on specific areas of the Island. In this way, we shall be able to advise the local planning authority, in accordance with policy Port/HS3, whether there is good reason to consider applying a ‘Principal Residence’ restriction on newly developed housing.

- 9.20 Restricting the growth of second homes by Neighbourhood Plan policy is a new but growing phenomenon that has been accepted by local planning authorities, passed scrutiny, succeeded at referendum and been tested through legal challenge<sup>49</sup>. The High Court has found a policy in the St Ives Neighbourhood Plan which prohibits new dwellings being used as second homes to be lawful. Restricting second homes by placing a principal residence restriction on new development should not be done without good reason. In Portland’s case, its purpose is to safeguard the sustainability of Portland by limiting the proportion of dwellings not occupied as a principal residence (see Glossary for definition) and likely to be empty for large portions of the year. The Local Planning Authority should consider, on a development by development basis, whether a principle residence condition should be applied to any specific residential development application. The Local Planning Authority should take into account the level of second homes and holiday lets in the local area and consider whether a principle residence condition is necessary to ensure that second homes do not over-predominate, and the vitality and sustainability of the local neighbourhood is not put at risk.
- 9.21 Occupiers of homes with a Principal Residence condition will be required to keep proof that they are meeting the condition and be obliged to provide this proof if/when the Local Planning Authority requests this information. For the purposes of applying policy Port/HS3 the Occupant should supply to the Local Planning Authority (within 14 days of the Local Planning Authority's written request to do so) such information as the Authority may reasonably require in order to determine whether the principle residence condition is being complied with. Proof of Principal Residence is via verifiable evidence which could include, for example (but not limited to) residents being registered on the local electoral register and being registered for and attending local services (such as healthcare, schools etc.). This shall not preclude periods of occupation by visiting guests, but those visiting guests will not individually or cumulatively contribute towards the occupation of the property as a Principal Home.
- 9.22 We will encourage Homes England and other agencies that may be responsible for bringing redundant public sector sites forward for residential development, to ensure by legal agreements that, not only will the affordable housing remain as affordable dwellings for local people in perpetuity, but also, that no dwellings on the site will be sold either as a new dwelling or subsequently, for second homes or holiday let purposes.

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<sup>49</sup> RLT Built Environment Ltd v Cornwall Council [2016] EWHC 2817 (Admin)

**Development proposals that involve reducing the mass and visual impact of the Hardy block and enhancing the overall character of Castletown in accordance with the Portland Heritage Character Assessment will be supported.**

- 9.23 The Hardy block is part of a mid-twentieth century ‘complex’ of Navy accommodation that has over-shadowed planning for Castletown for many years. Following their sale by the MoD, the residential blocks were stripped back in 2005, with one block being refurbished, in time to serve the 2012 Olympics. The other, in a shell form, has been awaiting reconstruction and refurbishment ever since. Since 2004 there has been planning permissions in place for up to 554 dwellings on the site of the Complex.
- 9.24 The remaining development site (at 2017) comprises one massive derelict block, car parking, and a significant area of scrubland on the sloping part of the site. It is estimated that the remaining site could yield a further 384 dwellings. However, there is no lingering fondness for the Hardy block amongst the local community. Community consultations have confirmed that the community would be content to see it go. The Portland Heritage Character Assessment identifies it as an “issue”, stating “*the large, derelict multi-storey building behind Castletown is a dominant feature in the surrounding landscape and considerably reduces the quality of the area*”. This is also reflected in the commentary within the Conservation Area Appraisal, which refers to the “*incorrect scale and proportion*” of the “*incongruous, naval accommodation blocks*” which “*detract from the character and appearance of the conservation area*”. The NPPF (para. 127) says planning policies should ensure that developments “*are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting*”. The NPPF (para. 93) is also clear that a full range of social, economic and environmental benefits should be derived from policies and decisions on estate regeneration.
- 9.25 The Complex, is one of few locations on Portland that has its own policy in the Local Plan, *PORT2*, which says only that the “*former Hardy Complex ..... is allocated for housing development*”. We recognise that there is an extant planning approval for the refurbishment of the Hardy Block and it would deliver a significant number of new dwellings. However, there are real doubts as to whether so many apartment dwellings en-masse would serve to meet much local need. Given the negative impact that the block has on the character of the area and would still have, because of scale, even in its refurbished form, policy Port/HS4 supports development proposals that would reduce its effect on the character of Castletown and its visual impact on the approaches to Portland.
- 9.26 We recognise that any reduction in the height of the Hardy Block may lower the amount of housing delivered on the site. However, our own studies have indicated that (see paragraph 9.7), if there is a reduced yield from the Hardy Block, there is enough developable land within or adjacent to existing built-up areas to meet local needs and our strategic requirements.

## 10. Transport

### Overview

- 10.1 The Island of Portland is served by a single main A-Road the A354 which terminates at Easton Square. All other roads on the Island including those from Easton Square to Portland Bill and return are recognised only as C-roads (i.e. unclassified). The storms of 2014 highlighted the dependency of the Island on the Beach Road, which is our only road link to the mainland.
- 10.2 The quality and capacity of the road network is a constraining factor in many ways. It begins immediately with the limitations of the access routes to the mainland. There is a long-held desire locally to by-pass Underhill, to improve accessibility to the rest of the Island and relieve congestion and its negative impacts on parts of Underhill. It is widely believed that the current road network serves as a constraint on both economic and tourism development.
- 10.3 Portland Port is a vital as a transport hub/ gateway/ interchange between land and sea, offering import and export opportunities. The lack of an adequate road network feeding into this hub is a significant constraint on growth and the Port's status.
- 10.4 Car ownership levels on Portland are lower than in many areas of the South West. Almost a quarter of households did not have a car at the time of the 2011 Census. Car ownership is not encouraged by the problems the Island has with providing parking, its narrow roads and the lack of dedicated resident parking areas in almost all the settlement areas. This makes transport policies and the future role and impact of public transport options very significant, if we are to constrain the impact of the motor vehicle on our lives and environment.
- 10.5 The public transport service is important and is often criticised by local people. Several areas on the Island are not served. There is a need for additional routes to link to services and employment sites and for separate school services. A new rail link to and from the Island, though unlikely in the next few years, would be a much-welcomed addition and would undoubtedly contribute to making us less car dependent.
- 10.6 The Island's topography does not make cycling and walking the easiest of travel options, but there are opportunities that could be taken to provide separate, better and safer routes for both; and there is a lot of community support for making improvements so as to encourage people to walk and cycle more. More bridleways would also be welcomed.

Transport	
<i>Aim</i>	<i>Accommodate the car in an unobtrusive manner and support non-car travel options</i>
<i>Objectives</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support development which helps facilitate improvements to the public transport network</li> <li>• Support development which helps facilitate a more effective transport network</li> <li>• Support provision of off-street parking including public car parks</li> <li>• Support improvements to existing footpath, bridleway and cycle routes and extension to the networks</li> </ul>

### Policy No. Port/TR1 Improving Public Transport Links

#### **Opportunities for public transport links to be improved or developed between settlements and other destinations on the Island and between Portland and the mainland will be supported**

- 10.7 The island enjoys a relatively high frequency of bus service, but for many local people, there is little else about the current public transport service and network on Portland that we should feel satisfied with. The Community Consultation in 2013 brought forward many complaints about the frequency and reliability of the service, the lack of service to some parts of the Island, and the failure of the service to synchronise properly with employment, education and community facilities (both on and off the Island) to encourage people to leave the car at home and help make the desired service more viable. The Weymouth and Portland Access Group (WPAG) has told us that *“the retention and improvement of public transport providing access to settlements off the main spine bus route to Southwell would be of considerable benefit to many people with disabilities, people caring for young children, and people without use of their own transport”*<sup>50</sup>. Despite the Local Plan Policy COM8 supporting ‘community travel exchanges’ where local traffic, cycling and walking can link with public transport, there is no such local hub on or adjacent to Portland. The flat area of Osprey Quay or Victoria Square, which was the traditional interchange location, would appear to be areas where this could be a possibility.
- 10.8 We appreciate that the Neighbourhood Plan on its own can do little to improve the public transport situation. However, we feel it is important to signify that we are supportive of development proposals, such as interchange facilities and pedestrian links, which would help extend or improve accessibility to the public transport network. Good links between new development on the Island and public transport should be a very important consideration.
- 10.9 The NPPF (para. 104) says that we should *“identify and protect, where there is robust evidence, sites and routes which could be critical in developing infrastructure to widen transport choice”*. Policy Port/TR1 is also supportive, in principle, of development would that broaden the public transport options for local people in the years’ ahead, such as a rapid transport link from the Island to the mainland.

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<sup>50</sup> Response to Regulation Consultation on the Pre-Submission Version of the Portland Neighbourhood Plan, Jul 2018

**Improvements to the transport infrastructure and network in the interests of safety, increasing choice and/or reducing congestion are supported.**

**Development proposals and schemes that serve to take through-traffic away from the areas and roads on Portland that are regularly congested will be supported provided they will not have an unacceptable environmental impact.**

- 10.10 Several locations on Portland are regarded as traffic ‘hotspots’. Where the volume and speed of traffic can cause difficulties or safety issues to other road users. Portland has a limited distributor road network much of which carries 1,000 vehicles or more per hour<sup>51</sup>. There is general agreement that improvements are needed. The most often cited locations for traffic congestion and road safety concerns are:
- Castletown** – which is experiencing increased employment and visitor activity and increased HGV traffic to and from the Port
- Fortuneswell** – the one-way system and New Rd have problems coping with the volume of traffic and peak times. Traffic flow is regularly impeded by bus stops, HGV traffic. The stability of New Road is also an issue.
- Verne Common Estate** – the increased volume of traffic to the Verne must deal with a considerable number of on-road parked cars on the estate
- Grove Road** – the sight-lines and the number of parked vehicles are a significant impediment on this narrow road
- Reforne** - restricted sight-lines, on-road parked cars and the bus route all make traversing this area more difficult
- Haylands Estate** - is used as a through-route between Weston and Tesco/Easton Square
- Southwell** – with its many narrow roads, generally ‘suffers’ from a high traffic volume, made worse by the number of on-road parked cars
- 10.11 Recent storms have highlighted the dependency of the Island on the Beach Road and how prone it is to be flooded. There has been local debate about raising the height of the road. There has been a long-held desire of local people to enable traffic to by-pass Underhill in some way by creating a road around/through the Port (whilst addressing the Port’s security concerns). The community is open to proposals that will improve circulation whilst reducing congestion and increasing safety. The community response to a draft policy in the 1st Consultation Version of the Portland Neighbourhood Plan drew a significant amount of support for a policy that would help relieve traffic volume and congestion at the known ‘hotspots’.
- 10.12 The NPPF (para. 104) says plans should ensure “*strategies and investments for supporting sustainable transport and development patterns are aligned*”. Policy Port/TR2 recognises where the issues are and is supportive of development proposals aimed at relieving the problems in these areas and/or improving the traffic situation in the interests of safety and reducing the impact of the motor vehicle on the natural and living environment.

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<sup>51</sup> Portland Transport Capacity Technical Assessment, Dorset County Council, Aug 2012

**All development proposals must make adequate provision for off-street parking taking into consideration the type of development, the accessibility of the location, and, as regards residential development, the prevailing parking standards of Weymouth and Portland Borough Council as set out in Policy COM9.**

**Existing public car parking areas will be safeguarded, and their capacity maintained, unless it can be demonstrated that they are no longer needed or suitable alternative provision is made.**

**Development proposals specifically to provide additional public car parking areas will be supported provided the need in that location is demonstrated and:**

- i. there is no significant negative impact on habitats and biodiversity;**
- ii. the loss of or damage to trees and hedgerows is minimised and if necessary mitigated;**
- iii. visual impact is minimised;**
- iv. nearby residential amenity is protected; and**
- v. electric charging points are provided.**

- 10.13 The Community Survey of 2014 confirmed that car parking is considered a major problem. 80% of survey respondents thought it was an 'issue'. A similar proportion said we need additional off-street parking facilities on Portland. On-road parking is a necessity but not easy for car-owning households in Reforne, Southwell, The Grove and nearly all areas in Underhill. To relieve the situation at Underhill the two main car parks, at Fairfield Hambro and Lord Clyde, are free for up to 72 hours' continuous stay, with most locals using these for overnight parking. This results in very full car parks at most times and little space for visitors staying over-night. We do have a few short-term pay and display car parks mainly for day visitors, at Castletown, the Masonic, the Chesil Centre and Portland Bill. In certain areas, such as The Grove, Reforne and Southwell, on-street parking creates road narrowing and reduced sightlines to the extent that they threaten the safety of road users. The community response to the 1st Consultation Version of the Portland Neighbourhood Plan drew a significant amount of support for a policy that included protection of existing public car parks. Policy Port/TR3 therefore safeguards public car parking areas.
- 10.14 The NPPF (para. 106) says that we should "*seek to improve the quality of parking in town centres so that it is convenient, safe and secure*". Our 'centres' at Castletown, Chiswell, Fortuneswell and Easton would certainly benefit from improved parking arrangements to accommodate the visitors that will help sustain local services and facilities. Better signposting would be a useful start. The concept of 'village car parks' was discussed during our consultations. There is scope, it is believed, at Grove and Reforne for such an area.
- 10.15 So as not to add further to the problems we experience, policy Port/TR3 requires all new development on Portland to make provision for an adequate number of off-road car parking spaces, appropriate to the type of development and subsequent use.
- 10.16 Policy Port/TR3 is also supportive in principle of development proposals to create additional off-road public parking areas that will be managed in such a way as to serve an identifiable local need in the area in which they are located and are designed to minimise any adverse impact on the natural or living environment.

**Development proposals that improve accessibility or improve links to or extend the network of footpaths, bridleways and cycle-routes will be supported if they do not result in unacceptable harm to the natural environment.**

- 10.17 As a community, we recognise the benefits of getting around the local area without having to use the car. Whilst 58% of respondents to the Community Survey in 2014 thought that the footpath network was sufficient, 65% said we should improve the cycle network. The NPPF (para. 98) says we should “*protect and enhance public rights of way and access, including taking opportunities to provide better facilities for users*”. There are identifiable opportunities to improve and extend the network by making better use and management of the Quarry Haul roads and ancient cart tracks on the Island.
- 10.18 Policy Port/TR4 responds to the message from the Community Consultation in 2013 that said we should have a better more integrated network of routes that were kept in good condition and served cyclists and horse-riders as well as pedestrians. There have been complaints that damage to limestone grassland and erosion to green paths has allegedly been caused by mountain bikes and horse-riders.
- 10.19 We support development proposals that ensure our network is more comprehensive, relevant, safe and accessible, serving the needs of visitors and encouraging local people to enjoy the special environment in which they live. Such improvements should be accompanied by a management plan that ensures the network is properly used and maintained.

## 11. Shopping and Services

### Overview

- 11.1 Easton is the main shopping and service area on Portland. Its primacy this century has been reinforced by the Tesco supermarket development. Well over half of households on the Island use the shops and services in Easton at least once a week. The centre at Fortuneswell is still identifiable, although the number of businesses has declined significantly, and several former shops and other business spaces have been converted. The community still recognises both centres and hopes that each can establish and sustain a relevant role at the heart of the community. This role will also need to relate to the demands of visitors and tourists if it is to be sustainable. To this end, Fortuneswell for instance is being viewed favourably by the Island’s arts fraternity, and the community recognise it has the potential to develop more cafes and restaurants. An improved evening economy would be welcomed at both centres.
- 11.2 Castletown and Chiswell still have identifiable retail/commercial areas, albeit far less vibrant than in former days. The Castletown Regeneration Project is aiming to re-establish a vibrant, busy commercial centre with historical attractions celebrating the rich history of Castletown including an American-themed ‘D-Day’ attraction and several marine business units for the local fishing industry. The local shops at Weston are still regarded as being an important neighbourhood asset.
- 11.3 Portland is not self-sufficient in community services. There are concerns particularly that health services may become more distant just when most people would like to see them more localised and convenient, particularly because the population is ageing, and most people want to stay on Portland.
- 11.4 The community would like to keep a full range of local shops and services on the Island offering quality goods and services for both residents and visitors.

Shopping and Services	
Aim	<i>Support the shopping areas and service functions</i>
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retain existing retail spaces</li> <li>• Support new shops in appropriate locations</li> <li>• Define and protect two shopping centres</li> </ul>

### Our Neighbourhood Plan Policies and their Explanation/Justification

#### Policy No. Port/SS1 Reinforcing Local and Neighbourhood Centres

**Development proposals affecting the following ‘local’ centres (as identified in the Local Plan), delineated on Map 12:**

- Easton
- Fortuneswell

**will be considered against Policy ECON4 of the Local Plan.**

**Development proposals within the following ‘neighbourhood’ centres, delineated on Map 12:**

- Castletown
- Chiswell

**that add to the diversity of facilities and services and enhance the vitality and viability of the centres will generally be supported.**

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**The loss of existing business premises (Use Classes A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, B1, and C1) within neighbourhood centres will be resisted unless an equivalent replacement facility is provided within the centre, or where it is demonstrated that the continued operation of a business or service is no longer financially viable. If a specific business or service is no longer financially viable, a use from the range of acceptable Use Classes should be sought for the premises.**

**Any proposals that would result in the loss of existing publicly available car parking spaces within a local or neighbourhood centre must provide at least an equivalent number of spaces in an equivalent location that serves the local or neighbourhood centre.**

**Proposals for any new or replacement shop fronts should be designed in accordance with the relevant policy in the Local Plan (ENV14) and any Shopfront Design Guidance for Weymouth and Portland.**

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- 11.5 In accordance to the findings of the Portland Heritage and Character Assessment of 2017 and consultations, we have delineated four areas of the Island that should continue to be recognised as ‘local centres’ and the focus for shopping and services. The areas are shown on Map 12. The Local Plan Review (Preferred Options) 2018 proposes a town centre and local centre hierarchy for the district. It defines local centres including *“a range of small shops of a local nature, serving a small catchment. Typically, local centres might include, amongst other shops, a small supermarket, a newsagent, and a pharmacy. Other facilities could include a hot-food takeaway, hairdressers and launderette”*. We regard it essential that all four areas named on Policy Port/SS1 should continue to serve as a local, and convenient, hubs of commercial and business activity, to ensure the growth and development strategy of the Neighbourhood Plan is sustainable. Arguably Easton is already higher up on the hierarchy and should be regarded as a district centre, which are defined in the Local Plan Review as *“usually comprise groups of shops often containing at least one supermarket or superstore, and a range of non-retail services, such as banks and restaurants, as well as local public facilities such as a library”*. We would support the growth of Easton as a ‘district-style’ retail and service centre.
- 11.6 All four of the areas have served as ‘local centres’ for many years. With the exception, perhaps, of Easton, the other centres have been in decline over a long period. The community response to the 1st Consultation Version of the Portland Neighbourhood Plan drew a significant amount of support for policies that would help safeguard and revitalise all the centres. The Town Council in association with the Portland Community Partnership will continue to find ways to encourage local people to travel less far and frequent their use of the local centres. The Portland Passport, a shopping loyalty scheme, is just one of the initiatives being introduced.
- 11.7 The NPPF (para. 91) urges us to *“create.... strong neighbourhood centres”*. The NPPF (para. 92) says we should *“ensure that established shops, facilities and services are able to develop and modernise in a way that is sustainable and retained for the benefit of the community”*. In accordance with the Economic Strategy for Portland, we intend that the centres should develop an improved offer to suit local people and serve visitors/tourists. *“Tourism is a key driver to the economy of Portland. We need to build on the natural environment and ‘uniqueness’ of Portland. We want to establish Portland as a world-class destination in which visitor will experience a superb product and quality of service.”* Policy SO2 of the Economic Strategy is *“to support the sustainable growth of the visitor economy, which celebrates the unique strengths of Portland, supports jobs and generates business opportunities”*. The local and neighbourhood centres can play their part, which should include reinforcing their own identities and prime purposes. Fortuneswell has already seem the embryo-development of new cafes and restaurants and cultural-related retailing, which hopefully will be stimulated further with its recognition by the Local Plan as a key local centre. Chiswell and

Castletown have plenty of development potential and opportunities for tourism-related development and a unique maritime setting to exploit. By seeking to reinforce the role of Chiswell and Castletown as neighbourhood centres, we are highlighting the significance of economic viability considerations as a factor in future flood defence planning.

- 11.8 Development and redevelopment proposals within all four centres should be mindful of the requirements of other policies in the Neighbourhood Plan, such as Port/EN7, which seek to ensure that local character and distinction is safeguarded and enhanced. The local planning authority is producing a shop front design guide that applies across the neighbourhood area. Along with the Portland Heritage and Character Assessment of 2017, this should be an important source of guidance for developers.

*Map 12 Local and Neighbourhood Centres, Portland*



**Nb. Larger-scale location plans for each centre can be found in the Map Appendix**

## 12. Community Recreation

### Overview

- 12.1 Portland has so many natural assets that leisure and recreation activity should be a central feature in the lives of most local families. The 2012 Olympics and the development of Osprey Quay has enabled us to take advantage of the sea around us; the countryside is well used for walking and running; and the quarries provide opportunity for more adventurous pursuits. Where we are lacking is in providing for recreation activity close to home and for organised sport. Too many of the community halls and public venues are not of a good enough standard or with an appropriate range of facilities.
- 12.2 An assessment based on the Borough's standards shows that Underhill, in particular, is under-provided with usable open space. The loss of Officers Field to development in 2009 deprived the area of an important flat sports and recreation area.
- 12.3 The local parks we have are generally regarded as being tired and under-provided for recreation activities. The lack of sufficient stimulating facilities and spaces for children and young people is widely recognised. This sense of deprivation is made worse by the fact that the new facilities at Osprey Quay do not serve the demands of local people, largely because of cost, to the extent they should. The community wants to see a similar range of leisure and recreation opportunities in both Underhill and Tophill.
- 12.4 It is certain that the public sector will be unable to provide everything we want. The Osprey Leisure Centre must serve as an inspiration. The community, in the form of a charitable trust, took over its running in 2001 and has done so successfully ever since. Without regular core funding from the public sector, it has continued to provide swimming and a range of indoor activities for local people at a price they can afford. It is a fantastic asset and a symbol of what an enterprising community can achieve.
- 12.5 There are several identifiable opportunities on the Island to provide further and better recreation spaces. Amongst them are several former community buildings and sites that have been or are likely to be declared redundant by public bodies. In response to the 1<sup>st</sup> Consultation Version of the Neighbourhood Plan several recreation ideas and locations were suggested by the community. The Local Plan has policies to facilitate the provision of new recreation facilities and to protect existing ones. The Neighbourhood Plan's policies are aimed at ensuring the true value of such spaces to Portland is understood.
- 12.6 It must be realised too that there is a wider agenda to address i.e. the leisure and recreation potential of Portland that could attract and serve visitors. This demands quality as well as quantity. The Olympics, and the first-class leisure facilities it has endowed the Island, have set a standard for future provision. Future leisure and recreation provision on Portland should be all about the pursuit of excellence and equality of access, in the interests of enjoying a healthy lifestyle and having fun.

Community Recreation	
<i>Aim</i>	<i>Realise the leisure and recreation potential of the Island</i>
<b>Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support development of leisure and recreation facilities</li> <li>• Protect and enhance local parks</li> <li>• Support development of new community buildings and spaces</li> <li>• Support new facilities for young people</li> <li>• Support use of buildings or land for events and festivals</li> </ul>

### Policy No. Port/CR1 Protecting Recreation Spaces

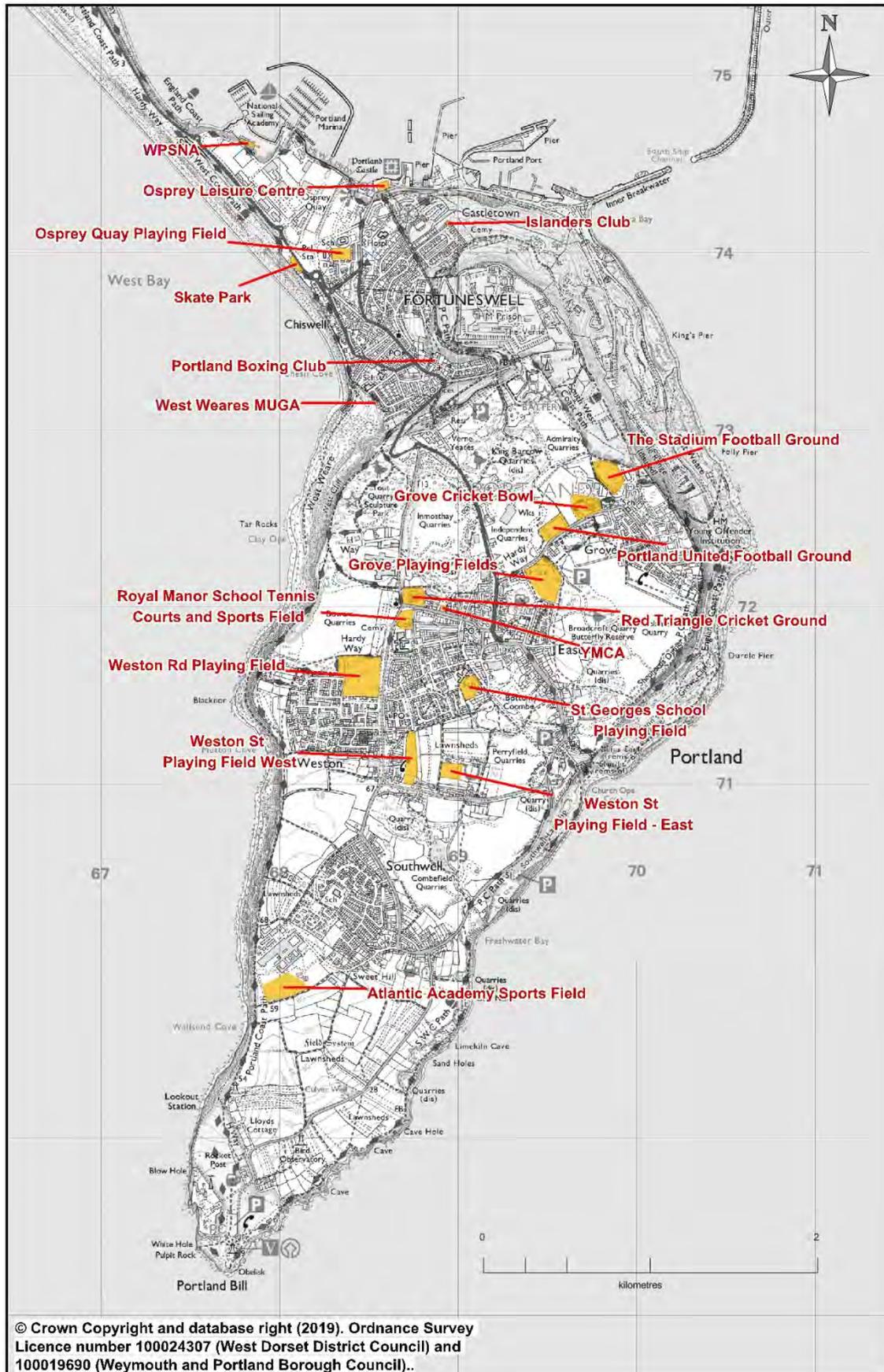
The following sports and recreational buildings and land (identified on Map 13) are very important to the local community because of their sports and recreational value. They should be afforded protection in accordance with Local Plan Policy COM5.

<b>Atlantic Academy Sports Field</b>	<b>Portland United Football Ground</b>
<b>Grove Cricket Bowl</b>	<b>Royal Manor School Tennis Courts and Sports Field</b>
<b>Grove Playing Fields</b>	<b>Red Triangle Cricket Ground</b>
<b>Grove Sports Stadium</b>	<b>St Georges School Playing Fields</b>
<b>Islanders Club for Young People</b>	<b>Weston Road Sports Field</b>
<b>Osprey Leisure Centre</b>	<b>Weston Street Playing Fields - East and West</b>
<b>Osprey Quay School Playing Field</b>	<b>West Weare MUGA</b>
<b>Portland Beach Skatepark</b>	<b>Weymouth and Portland National Sailing Academy</b>
<b>Portland Boxing Club</b>	<b>YMCA Reforne</b>

- 12.7 Portland does not have a surfeit of recreation facilities. What we have are important to us. The community has already demonstrated this by showing willing to take on the ownership, management and the development of the Osprey Leisure Centre via a Trust and the football pitches at the Grove by Portland United Youth Football Club.
- 12.8 The condition and facilities offered by the recreation spaces is very important. The Borough Council has indicated that it is finding it more difficult to fund the operation and maintenance of council-owned sports facilities to the required standard. This puts some of our most important recreation spaces at risk.
- 12.9 The Community Consultation in 2013 highlighted the need for improved facilities and more sporting opportunities for young people. More recent consultation has made us very aware of the value of good local, accessible community facilities to those with disabilities, to people caring for young children, and to the many people who do not have use of their own transport.
- 12.10 The NPPF (para. 97) makes plain that “*existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on*”. The Local Plan protects open spaces of public value and recreational facilities (including school playing fields) under its Policy COM.5. The local planning authority has recently prepared a hierarchy of open spaces across the district.
- 12.11 Since the Millennium, Portland has lost three all-weather sports pitches, several tennis courts, and most of a major sports and recreation field. The loss of Officers Field (for housing, initially provided for Olympic 2012 participants) caused a lot of displeasure locally. It was an open area for use by the Royal Navy and by locals for recreation. It was a significant asset for Underhill, not only for its community recreation use, but as an open space giving views out over Chesil Beach. It has not been replaced by bigger or better outdoor recreation space.
- 12.12 For this reason the community has made plain that it wishes to put protection in place for all the remaining recreation spaces it currently has. Our recreation assets are listed in policy Port/CR1. They include school playing fields, public and private sports grounds and indoor sports and leisure facilities. Our intention is that they should be protected under Policy Com.5 of the Local Plan, which states that development on such spaces and facilities will not be permitted unless they are no longer required by the community or replaced by alternative and better sports and recreation facilities.
- 12.13 We are proud of the Osprey Leisure Centre and the Sailing Academy and what the Osprey Leisure Centre has become under community management. We will generally support the provision of new sport and recreation facilities of that quality. We will continue to seek ways to improve the

condition of the existing facilities, many of which are not in a good condition, but are certainly still worthy of protection.

Map 13 Recreation Spaces, Portland



The areas listed below and identified on Map 14 are designated as Local Green Spaces and will be protected from development due to their particular local significance and community value:

**Chiswell Walled Garden**  
**Church Lane**  
**Easton Gardens**  
**Grove Governor's Community Garden**  
**Gooseberry Field**  
**Ladymead Garden**  
**Liberty Square**  
**Reap Lane**  
**Southwell Green**  
**Victoria Gardens**  
**Victoria Square Entrance**  
**Westcliff Play Area**  
**Weston Green**  
**West Weares**

**Proposals for development on this land that is not ancillary to the use of the land for amenity or recreational purposes will be resisted.**

**Development proposals which lead to the loss of, damage to or adverse impact on these local green spaces will not be supported.**

12.14 The NPPF (para. 99) gives us the right to designate local amenity areas that are highly regarded by the local community as 'local green spaces' and give them protection via policies in the Neighbourhood Plan. Portland has recently been subject to a Green Space Review carried out by the local planning authority in association with the Town Council. The typology of sites was used to help identify those sites that may meet the 'local green space' criteria of the NPPF (para. 100). Their eligibility was further assessed on a site by site basis<sup>52</sup> by the Neighbourhood Plan Group.

12.15 The 2017 Conservation Area Appraisals<sup>53</sup> for Portland recognises the need to "*improve or maintain amenity provided by public gardens, public spaces and trees*". The following locations (see Map 14) meet the required NPPF criteria (para. 100) and are designated as 'Local Green Space' in recognition of their significance to the community and their importance to the amenity and vitality of their neighbourhood. Policy Port/CR2 protects them for the enjoyment and appreciation by local people and visitors:

**Chiswell Walled Garden** is a community garden, located in Chiswell village close to Chesil Cove. The Garden was created between 2004-07 by the Chiswell Community Trust, with funding provided by various schemes, including the Countryside Agency's Doorstep Greens initiative. The garden is maintained by volunteers of the Trust and is open to the public.

**Church Lane** is a corner site that is dominated by a modern well-equipped children's play area surrounded by shrub beds.

**Easton Gardens**, located in the centre of Easton, is over a hundred years old. Surrounded by mature trees, it includes a garden beds and benches, a small play area and public toilet facilities. It

<sup>52</sup> See Local Green Space Assessment Report 2017 <https://www.portlandplan.org.uk/document-library/>

<sup>53</sup> Appraisal of the Conservation Areas of Portland, as amended 2017, Weymouth and Portland Borough Council, Mar 2017 <https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/planning-buildings-land/planning/planning-constraints/conservation-areas/weymouth-and-portland/pdfs/appraisal-of-the-conservation-areas-grove-easton-reforne-straits-wakeham-underhill-and-weston-of-portland.pdf>

also provides safe pedestrian routes across the centre of the village. According to the Borough Council website, "*Easton Gardens have been recognised as one of the best green spaces in the country by being awarded Green Flag status based on how safe, clean, accessible, well managed and welcoming they are*".

**Grove Governor's Community Garden** is a community garden, located in the Grove village, opposite the main entrance of the Young Offenders Institution. It dates from the 1850s, as private grounds attached to the Prison Governor's house. The Garden was abandoned after the Second World War. In 2002, as part of English Heritage's scheme to create a series of Contemporary Heritage Gardens, a competition was held to design the quarter of an acre garden - it was won by Christopher Bradley-Hole, a designer renowned for his minimalist approach. The Garden was opened to the public in 2011. As part of the 2011 Weymouth Civic Society Annual Awards, the restoration of the gardens received a special commendation. The Society commented that the gardens presented an "*attractive and peaceful amenity*", as well as being of "*botanical value*", serving as a "*recreational and educational venue for schools and other groups*". In the 2014 Appraisal of the Conservation Areas of Portland, the gardens were described as offering "*welcome respite, with its attractive landscaped flower beds, lawns and mature trees*".

**Gooseberry Field** is a historic site that was the location of an annual fayre for many years. It continues to provide for the recreation activities of the residents of Weston.

**Ladymead Gardens** is a landscaped area with mature trees and featured garden beds, on the site of the former Easton Railway Station that provides a safe pedestrian route across Easton with links to the GP surgery and supermarket.

**Liberty Square** is a newly created garden to serve improve the leisure spaces of Castletletown and specifically serve residents of new apartments, most without gardens, in the vicinity.

**Reap Lane** is a grassed area that provides informal recreation opportunities for the local community. At the corner of the site, separately fenced, is a well-equipped children's play area.

**Southwell Green, including Sweet Hill play-area**, provides for a range of informal recreation activities for residents and is regarded as a 'village green' in an area with limited open space.

**Victoria Gardens** is a public garden, located within Fortuneswell village area. The Gardens have remained a focal point since its establishment at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It comprises large feature grassed and formal bedding areas, as well as a large rockery running across the centre of the gardens, which is planted with a mixture of shrubs, perennials and bedding plants. A children's play area is located on the upper tier of the gardens, and two tennis courts are open all year to the public. A bowling green is also located in the centre of the park. The Gardens include a plaque commemorating the Island's role in the D-Day landings. The Gardens are maintained by the Friends of Victoria Gardens which was established in May 2008.

**Victoria Square** has, at its **Entrance**, a flat grass area that was designated as a community facility and put under the stewardship of the Land Trust, when the Officer's Field development took away the Naval Playing Fields. It is also part of flood alleviation network and setting of the two pillars public art installation. It is regularly used for sports and other leisure activity groups and is the location of the Annual Fair.

**Westcliff Play Area** is an area of grass that provides the only opportunity for informal recreation activities in a residential area. It includes a modern and well-equipped, fenced play area.

**Weston Green** is located at the centre of the village of Weston, has provided valuable informal recreation space for the local community for many years. It is designated as a village green in the Conservation Area assessment.

**West Weares** is a tranquil piece of elevated open space at the foot of West Cliff with views across Chesil Beach. It has recently been enhanced with the benefit of Coastal Revival Funding.

- 12.16 The value of these spaces is echoed in the findings of the last Portland Recreation Facilities Assessment carried out by the Borough Council in 2007. At that time, much of Portland was considered to have catchment gaps for parks and gardens, semi-natural greenspaces and

allotments and community gardens. We cannot afford to lose what we have. This policy, together with policies Port/CR3 and Port/CR4, is designed to help keep Portland green.

Map 14 Designated Local Green Spaces, Portland



Nb. Larger-scale location plans for each site can be found in the Map Appendix

### Policy No. Port/CR3 Allotments

**Proposals that result in harm to or loss of existing allotments on Portland will not be supported unless:**

- a) replacement provision is made, of at least equivalent quality, and located at reasonable convenience for the existing plot holders; or**
- b) overriding community benefits are achieved.**

**Proposals for new allotments and the extension of existing sites, where appropriate will be supported.**

- 12.17 Portland has several areas of allotments that are popular with local people. Most of them are privately-owned. Many of them have been long-established. The allotments on Clovens Road, for instance, are an important remnant of the ancient field system (allotments, fields, paddocks). The four areas of allotments south of Grove Road are owned and managed by Weymouth and Portland Borough Council we are informed that there is a significant waiting list. The loss of private allotments to a housing development at Reforne was opposed in 2014 by many local people.
- 12.18 The NPPF (para. 92) encourages us to “*plan positively for the provision and use of shared space, community facilities and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities*”. Community horticulture facilities such as allotments encourage healthier lifestyle and healthy leisure pursuits. Opportunities to provide more allotments, community orchards and community composting sites and encourage more local food growing should be realised. If the trend of providing smaller garden on new developments continues, this exacerbates the need for an increased supply of allotment or community gardening space.

### Policy No. Port/CR4 Sites of Open Space Value

**Areas of incidental open space within residential areas that contribute to local amenity, character and/or green infrastructure should be protected from development except in very special circumstances where:**

- i. new and appropriate alternative provision can be demonstrated to compensate for localised loss of public amenity and community wellbeing; or,**
- ii. it can be demonstrated that any damage to green infrastructure and/or local character can be rectified or the existing situation enhanced.**

- 12.19 Many of the housing areas of Portland were developed with areas of incidental open space included in the layout to provide amenity and/or a shared recreation space for residents. These, now mature, open spaces are part of the essential character of the residential areas such as: Verne Common, East Weares, Haylands and Furlands, Pounds Piece, Westcliff and Courtlands, and Southwell.
- 12.20 Policy Port/CR4 applies to all areas of incidental open space within residential areas on Portland. In many cases they form an important part of the green infrastructure by serving as green corridors through the built-up area. Recognising all these incidental areas as ‘sites of open space value’ within residential areas will place a protection upon them unless the community they serve is supportive of their change of use.

## Policy No. Port/CR5 New Community Facilities

**Proposals that provide additional community, social or recreation facilities for the direct benefit of young people are supported where it is demonstrated, through direct engagement with recognised local youth organisations, that there is a local need and young people have been consulted and involved in developing the proposal.**

- 12.21 The NPPF (para. 92) says we should “*plan positively for the provision and use of shared space, community facilities and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities*”. Much of the focus of discussion when preparing the Underhill Action Plan<sup>54</sup> was around the need and value of community and recreation spaces. Underhill is recognised as the most deprived area of Portland and it was concluded that “*improving the leisure and recreation offer for young people and families*” would contribute significantly to improving their quality of life.
- 12.22 Local Plan Policy COM4 is supportive of the provision of new or improved recreational facilities. To ensure that our young people get the maximum benefit from new facilities they should be engaged in their planning. They should be encouraged to feel a sense of ownership of the facilities. Currently (2017) there are discussions about a ‘Co-located Service’ provision centre and Community Office, with youth drop-in provision. We hope that young people can be actively involved in the management of the facility when it is developed.
- 12.23 Policy Port/CR5 requires thorough consultation and involvement of young people on Portland in facilities that are being developed for their use and benefit. This should be done by engaging with local groups that work with and support young people.

## Policy No. Port/CR6 Community and Visitor Events

**The temporary use of buildings and open spaces for organised-events will be supported provided that the proposed temporary use:**

- i. does not cause any significant adverse environmental problems;**
- ii. would not have significant harmful impacts on the amenities of neighbouring residents;**
- iii. would not have significant harmful impacts on the wider visitor experience; and**
- iv. there is clear community and neighbour support for the period of use proposed.**

- 12.24 Portland welcomes tourists and visitors and wants to be an important part of the growth strategy for Dorset. The draft Portland Tourism and Visitor Management Strategy<sup>55</sup>, which was developed in 2013 by the Portland Community Partnership, is indicative of the approach the community wishes to take to develop the ‘brand’, to improve the quality of service on offer and apply a sustainable tourism ethos to developments.
- 12.25 There are some major tourism projects at various stages of planning (as is described in the next section of this Plan). It is hoped that some of them will be realised as long as they help realise our vision for Portland and conform to the planning policies in the Neighbourhood Plan and Local Plan.
- 12.26 There is considerable scope to make good use of existing buildings and open spaces. One of the key actions in the draft Portland Tourism and Visitor Management Strategy is to develop and maintain the annual events programme and establish an Outdoor Festival that aims to attract new visitors to the Island, generates new publicity and stakeholder engagement. Policy Port/CR6 supports the temporary use of existing spaces on the Island for organised events that will attract visitors as well

<sup>54</sup> ‘Working with You’ - Underhill Action Plan 2014-15

<sup>55</sup> Portland Tourism and Visitor Management Strategy (draft), Portland Community Partnership, 2013

as local people as spectators and/or participants. It also recognises that there could be significant economic value in taking advantage of the 'tourist season'. Making best use of what we have, but on a temporary basis, of up to six months, that cause little in the way of long-term harm to the environment or nuisance to nearby uses, is consistent with a sustainable approach. It will also help develop a distinct identity for Portland, which was one of the key messages from the Community Consultation 2013.

## 13. Sustainable Tourism

### Overview

- 13.1 There is widespread feeling that Portland's tourism potential has not been fully tapped. The community recognises its benefits and is supportive of making efforts to attract and accommodate more visitors. Green and sustainable tourism should be the objective. The Island's natural environment and unique heritage are there to be 'enjoyed', but only if ways can also be found to safeguard and protect all that is precious to us. There is scope too for much more in the way of activities and events in the village centres that will attract tourists and will also make a difference to the social and community life of the Island. The community accepts that increased tourism is a valuable lever. Many local people would welcome and derive benefit regular evening activities, outdoor events and festivals, more public art installations, and a general uplift in the scale and quality of facilities and services.
- 13.2 The current constraints on tourism growth are readily identifiable. We are lacking in visitor accommodation. There is insufficient capacity in the road network and parking areas. Many of our public venues fall short on several levels. Moreover, there are currently not enough tourist attractions and specific visitor destinations to increase meaningfully the average visit time and expenditure.
- 13.3 There are a tourism 'assets' that can be taken advantage of. Portland Port has witnessed significant growth over the last five years and is now regularly hosting cruise ships. The tendency however, has been for passengers to be taken by coaches off the Island to other established destinations during their short stay.
- 13.4 The Island offers significant activity adventure opportunities. The Weymouth & Portland National Sailing Academy hosts world class facilities for sailors and Portland Harbour provides a safe venue with a full range of water sports including diving, paddle boarding and kayaking. The adventure tourism sector continues to grow, and the Island's topography, quarries and wildness are there to be taken advantage of, responsibly. Portland needs to establish an identity distinct from Weymouth. The Portland Brand needs to be defined and marketed in consistent way.
- 13.5 We should be helped significantly by the development of a major tourist attraction such as the proposed 'Eden Portland' project (formerly the Jurassica and MEMO projects). We must plan to help them succeed and ensure adequate infrastructure is in place, so that we can take full advantage of the benefits that can accrue to Portland and its community. This also means realising what else we have with tourist potential and how it can be sustainably and appropriately developed. Thereby ensuring that, even with enhanced visitor appeal, the Island continues to provide a pleasant, safe and affordable place for future generations of Portlanders to live, work and play.
- 13.6 We are mindful however that whilst the tourism and recreation potential of Portland is substantial, it cannot be realised at the cost of the important and sensitive natural environment. Accordingly, our policies take heed of the recommendations of recently carried out Strategic Environmental and Habitat Regulations Assessments. We also endorse fully the requirements of Local Plan Policy ENV2 and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)<sup>56</sup>.

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<sup>56</sup> <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2017/1012/contents/made>

<b>Sustainable Tourism</b>	
<b>Aim</b>	<i>Accommodate responsible and sustainable tourism development</i>
<b>Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support sustainable tourism-related development in appropriate locations</li> <li>• Support the creation of individual, or a network of, tourist trails</li> <li>• Facilitate appropriate new marine developments</li> </ul>

## Our Neighbourhood Plan Policies and their Explanation/Justification

### **Policy No. Port/ST1 Sustainable Tourism Development**

**Sustainable tourism development proposals, including extensions to or expansion of existing tourism uses, are supported in principle where they are proportionate to their location in scale and type.**

**Proposals relating to land outside the settlement boundary will need to demonstrate that the use proposed:**

- i. promotes the unique characteristics of the area;**
- ii. will not lead to significant loss or damage to any of the Island’s natural assets including landscape character, amenity, historic environment, views, ecology and wildlife corridors, archaeological or geological values of the coast, shoreline, beaches, adjacent coastal waters, and countryside; and**
- iii. avoids conflict with the prevailing strategic policies designed to protect the environment, ecology and mineral reserves.**

**Support will not be given to any tourism development that will adversely affect European sites.**

- 13.7 Sustainable tourism is tourism committed to generating a low impact on the surrounding environment and community by acting responsibly while generating income and employment for the local economy and aiding social cohesion. Rather than a type of product, sustainable tourism is an ethos that underpins all tourism activities and is integral to all aspects of tourism development and management and not just an add-on. The 2014 Community Consultation for the Neighbourhood Plan showed that 91% of respondents recognised tourism and visitors as an important part of our economy. The community response to the 1st Consultation Version of the Portland Neighbourhood Plan drew a significant amount of support and several imaginative ideas for tourism development that would not harm the Island environmentally, may stimulate earlier re-instatement of some of the worked quarries and could bring benefits to the community and the local economy.
- 13.8 The NPPF (para. 83) encourages us to enable “*rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside*”.
- 13.9 In 2013, the Portland Community Partnership prepared and consulted upon a draft Portland Tourism and Visitor Management Strategy<sup>57</sup>. It reflects the community’s aspirations towards tourism:
- Tourism will be managed on Portland in a way that will:*
- *Protect the coastal and marine environment including unique natural and heritage assets*
  - *Support visitor safety and enjoyment whilst ensuring a balance between the needs of tourists and the preservation of existing and evolving community values*
  - *Minimise adverse visitor impacts on the social, economic and physical environment*

<sup>57</sup> Portland Tourism and Visitor Management Strategy (draft), Portland Community Partnership, 2013  
Portland Neighbourhood Plan Submission Version

- *Add economic, social and environmental benefits to the community*
  - There will also be economic, environmental and social benefits:*
    - *Economic through a reduction in energy use, water use or waste production*
    - *Environmental reinforces Portland’s nature-based brand and natural visitor experiences.*
    - *Social through local jobs for local people*
- 13.10 One of Dorset’s economic strengths and ‘drivers’ is its tourism industry. Many tourist visits are heavily dependent on the appeal of the natural environment. The Dorset Local Nature Partnership claims that the seaside, beaches and coast is the most frequently listed reason for visiting Dorset, and 62% of tourist visits are motivated by coast, scenery or countryside. There is much on Portland that can be exploited but equally there is much on Portland that can be damaged if tourism and its impact is not managed.
- 13.11 Recent research (2016) remarked that Portland had: very little serviced accommodation, no provision in terms of touring caravan and camping sites, only one small 5-star holiday park, a small supply of self-catering accommodation and only three hostel/ bunkhouse accommodation operations. The resulting action plan recommended, in particular, redressing the lack of *“suitable accommodation for activity visitors, particularly in terms of a lack of provision for camping, and the potential for camping pods as an accommodation offer that would appeal to this market”*<sup>58</sup>.
- 13.12 The Town Council has agreed<sup>59</sup> that Portland’s natural focus should be on activity-holidays and adventure-seekers. It supports an approach to tourism that makes Portland an activity hub with reference to diving, mountain biking and climbing responding to distinctive offer and making Island a destination. These activities will fit with the major projects as they develop. On Portland this would include activity centres, camping pods, glamping sites and cafes.
- 13.13 The challenges we face include:
- establishing more effective links with Weymouth
  - a closer association with Jurassic Coast
  - ensuring tourism growth respects quality of landscape
  - managing and improving road access
  - identifying appropriate areas for sensitive tourism development
- 13.14 We have concluded from our own studies that there are locations on Portland that may be suitable for additional tourism activity and facilities including activity centres, activity-friendly accommodation, camp sites, camping pods, hostel/bunkhouse, self-catering accommodation. We included the quarries with substantial reserves amongst these locations. Any tourism-related development in or adjacent to the quarries should ensure these reserves are safeguarded and conform to the restoration requirements of the Minerals Strategy (Policy PD5).
- 13.15 Policy Port/ST1 is specifically designed to encourage small-scale sustainable tourism development proposals that provide for activity and adventure holidays to come forward within those areas of the Island that offer an outdoor, rugged and rural location that is away from the most environmentally sensitive areas. We would expect any such proposal to demonstrate its sustainability credentials and be accompanied by an environmental impact assessment.
- 13.16 In accordance with the recommendations of the Habitat Regulations Assessment, tourism development proposals requiring planning permission should comply with the requirements of Local Plan policy ENV2 ‘Wildlife and Habitats’, which is aimed at protecting international, national and local designated wildlife sites and water bodies. The importance of the European sites, even to the tourist potential of the Island, means our support for sustainable tourism development

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<sup>58</sup> Western Dorset Growth Corridor Study, Hotel Solutions, Jun 2016

<sup>59</sup> Marine, Environment and Tourism meeting, Portland Town Council, 6th Sep 2017

proposals is conditional on the development proposal not having an adverse effect on these important sites and locations.

#### **Policy No. Port/ST2 Beach Huts**

**Proposals for replacement beach huts at West Weares, Church Ope Cove and Portland Bill that match the footprint of existing huts, and minor extensions to the rear of beach huts on the Beach Hut fields at Portland Bill (see Map 15), will be supported where they:**

- i. are of a single-storey design which is in keeping with the traditional character and topography of the site;**
- ii. do not result in a disproportionate increase in the ridge height or include loft storage areas;**
- iii. are finished in timber, that is stained or painted to match the hut it is replacing or extending;**
- iv. have no significant impact on the existing and essential character of the site;**
- v. are for day-time recreation use with non-permanent residence; and,**
- vi. avoid any significant negative impact on the biodiversity, landscape and setting of the site and the surrounding area.**

**Where some impact is unavoidable, it will be satisfactorily mitigated.**

**Further extensions to previously extended beach huts will not be supported, except in special circumstances, neither will the provision of further patio, decking or veranda areas or 'garden' enclosures.**

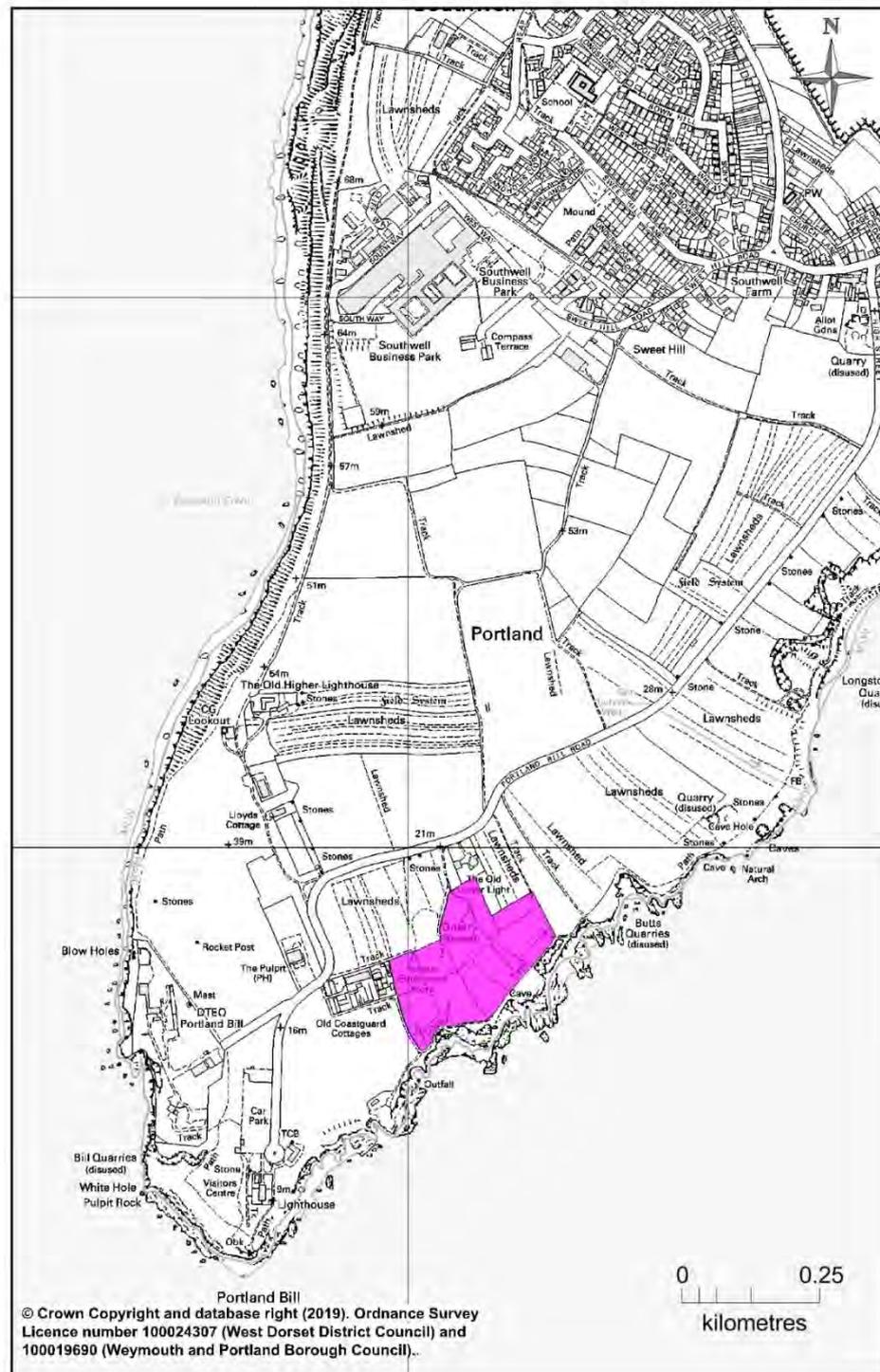
**Development proposals to provide additional beach huts will not be supported**

- 13.17 Portland Bill, Church Ope and West Weares are the location of beach huts (former fisherman's huts) that are a long-established and well-known feature of the landscape. For many years they have been used for recreational purposes. Many are no longer owned by Portlanders. We concur with the Weymouth and Portland Supplementary Planning Guidance on Portland's Beach Huts<sup>60</sup>, which says "*by their nature, these huts are located on the open coastline in sensitive areas. It is important that future developments are controlled to prevent damage to the open landscape, nature conservation interest and recreational value of these sites, both for the benefit of existing hut owners and for the wider local community and visiting public who enjoy these precious landscapes*".
- 13.18 Beach huts on Portland are being sold for considerable sums of money. Our concern is that those that can afford to purchase a beach hut may feel inclined to invest further in their asset. We wish to place some control on the development changes that are acceptable. We want to protect the sensitive landscape, with its species-rich grasslands, from damage.
- 13.19 The approach taken by the Beach Huts Supplementary Planning Guidance seems reasonable and is generally echoed in policy Port/ST2. At West Weares, Church Ope Cove and outside the hut fields at Portland Bill, additional beach huts, extensions to beach huts and the replacement of beach huts with larger structures are considered most unlikely to be appropriate due to the critical landscape, nature conservation and recreational interests in these areas. Small-scale extensions to facilitate necessary adaptation for the disabled may be acceptable.
- 13.20 In the hut fields at Portland Bill, south of Coastguard Cottages and the Old Lower Lighthouse (see Map 15), the huts are arranged along the field boundaries, forming nearly complete squares in some cases. Here, minor extensions to beach huts in non-sensitive locations might be acceptable,

<sup>60</sup> Revised Supplementary Planning Guidance Portland Beach Huts, Weymouth & Portland BC, Feb 2006

but “great care is required to preserve this sensitive balance and to avoid the character of the hut fields tipping over into one of consolidated development.... extensions should normally be to the rear of existing huts, towards the nearest field boundary. Extensions to the sides of huts will rarely be acceptable, as they would increase the enclosure of the fields. Likewise, extensions towards the centre of the fields are unlikely to be acceptable, as these would reduce the important openness of the fields.”<sup>61</sup>. A hut that has previously been extended should not receive permission for further extensions.

Map 15 Portland Beach Hut Fields



<sup>61</sup> Revised Supplementary Planning Guidance Portland Beach Huts Weymouth & Portland BC Feb 2006 <https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/planning-buildings-land/planning-policy/west-dorset-and-weymouth-portland/other-planning-documents/pdfs/sg/portland-beach-huts-2006.pdf>

**Proposals that further the creation of a network of tourist and leisure trails will be supported provided:**

- i. the construction and appearance of new paths, tracks or links are appropriate in scale and sensitive to the character of the locality;**
- ii. they avoid sensitive ecological areas and habitats;**
- iii. they avoid any significant negative impact on the biodiversity, landscape and setting of the surrounding area; and**
- iv. they provide for improved accessibility for wheelchairs and those with impaired mobility.**

**Signage and interpretation facilities should be in keeping with the established standards for local tourist trails; and, where appropriate, they further links to the strategic cycle network of the area.**

- 13.21 Portland is criss-crossed by a network of designated footpaths. In addition to these there are many undesignated footpaths which are used regularly. There is also one bridleway on the Island.
- 13.22 Most significant, perhaps, is the **Legacy Trail**<sup>62</sup>, that runs from Littlemoor on the mainland to Portland Bill (about 20km), with information 'way points', it links all the heritage sites, nature reserves and interpretation centre (see Map 16). This local long-distance path running from Littlemoor to Portland Bill was established to celebrate the Olympics. At the same time there was linked improvement work to Merchants Railway gulleys in the Tilleycoombe, Waycroft, Tout and King Barrow area. A lot of this work however has fallen into disrepair.
- 13.23 There are opportunities to establish similar legacy or themed trails, using established routes across the Island, and thereby manage the pressure on existing footpaths and open access land, including the South West Coastal Path National Trail. The following routes indicate the potential for further enhanced walking and/or cycling opportunities on the Island (also shown on Map 16):
- Merchants Railway** - was a horse drawn and cable operated incline railway, built for the stone trade on the Island. It was the earliest railway on Portland and in Dorset, opening in 1826 (one year after the Stockton and Darlington railway). The railway ran two miles from many working quarries at the north of Tophill, such as Tout, King Barrow and Waycroft Quarries, along the edge of Verne Hill (where the Verne Citadel is located), to a pier at Castletown, from where the Portland stone was shipped around the world. It was operational from 1826 to 1939. Since becoming disused the original path of the railway has become a popular public footpath. The remaining earthworks of the main line, amongst other remains, can still be traced today.
- Merchants Incline** – a section of the Merchants Railway Network of about 550m which serves as footpath to and from Castletown, which is included in the Castletown Conservation Area.
- Belle Vue Terrace/Higher Lane** - these characterful step pathways are an integral part of any heritage pathway in Underhill
- Cemetery Rd to the Engine Shed, Grove** – is a route of some 1.5 km, which cannot be fully accessed due to the Port's security concerns. If fully open and repaired, it would open up the East side of Island and improve the SW Coast Path offer. The road up to the Cemetery is in reasonable condition but the old army road beyond this is badly overgrown and in poor condition. A potential route from here using the pathways close to the cliff face, the track bed of the High Level Railway and appropriate routing around the open ground adjacent to Nicodemus is potentially viable, subject to detailed assessment. The route in places would require additional security fencing to the seaward side.

<sup>62</sup> <https://www.visit-dorset.com/explore/areas-to-visit/weymouth-and-portland/wild-about-weymouth-and-portland-legacy-trail>

**Old Hill** – is the original pathway between Underhill and Tophill. Horses were separated from foot traffic by fencing. Old Hill is in a poor condition and needs development funding. If improved the path could be a significant heritage route.

**Church Ope** – to access the beach there are two paths. The main path follows the road past Portland Museum and leads under the arch bridge of Rufus Castle, then down concrete steps to the cove. These were laid out by the Portland Urban District Council in 1906 at a time when the beach was becoming increasingly popular as a recreational area. The other path runs through a small area of woodland around the outside of Pennsylvania Castle, and passes through the ruins of St Andrew's Church (close to John Penn's Bath), before linking up over midway down the concrete steps to the cove.

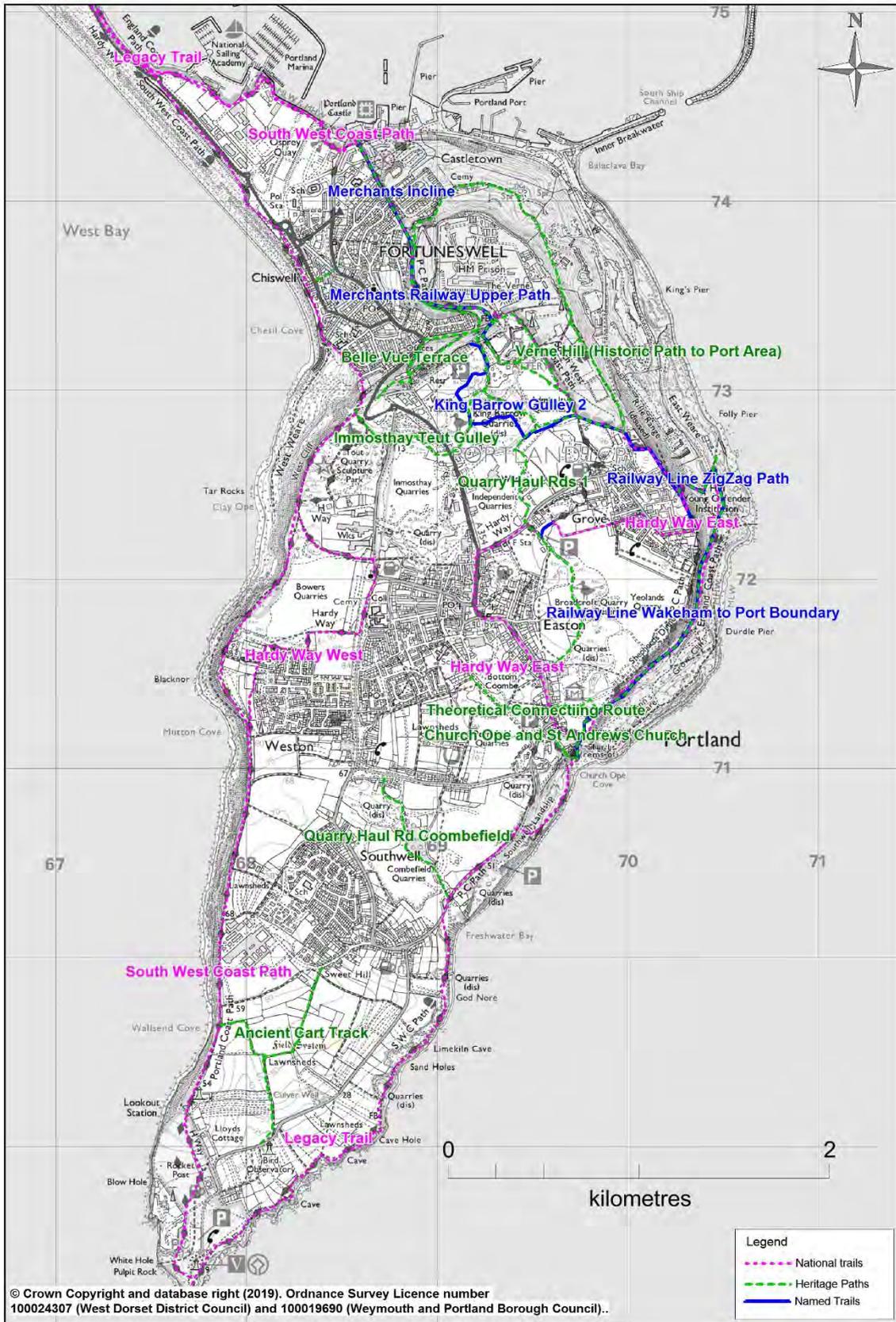
**Railway Line** – whilst much of the old railway line has now been developed on, Sections could still be used as footpaths, cycleways and bridleways but need management, conservation and interpretation.

**Southwell Ancient Cart Tracks** – are an indication of rural setting and farming history. The Cart Tracks with sensitive management could serve as cycleways and bridle-paths. Those that have been lost could be restored and used in a similar manner.

**Quarry Haul roads** – are a network of routes that connect the quarries. Some could provide the basis to an Island distributor road network, but the surface materials would have to be appropriate to the setting and heritage

**Verne Hill** - according to the historic map of early 1700s Verne Hill was the basis to the main path to the East Coast. This linkage could prove an effective route to interpret and act as a basis for conservation.

- 13.24 The NPPF (para. 98) says we should “*protect and enhance public rights of way and access, including taking opportunities to provide better facilities for users,*”. Local Plan Policy COM7 ‘Creating A Safe and Efficient Transport Network’ promotes the delivery of a strategic cycle network and supports improvements to the public rights of way network. Development, it states, “*should not result in the severance or degradation of existing or proposed routes*”. It requires links within the rights of way network to be improved, if possible, through new developments.
- 13.25 Policy Port/ST3 supports the creation of new tourist routes that will attract visitors to walk and cycle and enjoy what the Island has to offer by way of environment, views, character and heritage. Such trails need to meet appropriate accessibility standards, in terms of slope, width and surface yet, at the time, be sensitively designed into the landscape to minimise intrusion and avoid destruction or disturbance of natural habitats.



**Development proposals that enable the provision of new and additional marine berths and facilities at Osprey Quay, Castletown and Portland Port in the interests of increasing tourism are encouraged if there will be no harmful impact on:**

- i. landscape character;**
- ii. wildlife, biodiversity or protected habitats;**
- iii. the setting and character of heritage and historical assets; and**
- iv. security and commercial operations in the area.**

- 13.26 The marine environment has the potential to serve as much of a tourist draw as other environments on the Island. For most of the last century, Portland was defined by its role as a Royal Navy base. Since 1997 Portland Port has been developed largely on a commercial basis. The land area is becoming a successful business park. The harbour serves as an important commercial gateway. The latest business development plan for Portland Port emphasises its intention to continue to grow the following: *“‘agribulk’ (animal feeds, grains and fertilisers), ship repair yard, enhanced vessel services offshore and marine renewables and energy and recycled commodities”*<sup>63</sup>.
- 13.27 Portland Port offers a safe, sheltered and deep harbour which makes it a viable choice for all vessels, from small yachts to some of the largest cruise ships in the world. The cruise business is already a success story. A significant financial investment in berth infrastructure should open up in excess of 95% of the global cruise fleet enabling continued expansion into international markets. We are pleased that the tourism potential of the Port is being realised.
- 13.28 Alongside the Port, the Olympic Games of 2012 provided us with Osprey Quay and the National Sailing Academy. These have put us on the marine tourist map. We wish exploit this growing status and recognition by supporting more marine berths and facilities in the vicinity of the Osprey Quay and Castletown in particular, which will encourage an even broader marine tourist offer and more visitors. We believe that marine-based tourism could revitalise the Castletown area significantly. Portland Heritage and Character Assessment of 2017 recommends that *“development at Castletown should reflect the maritime and naval history of the area including the sensitive restoration of public houses and properties that maximise the views and physical relationship with the Port”*<sup>64</sup>.
- 13.29 Policy Port/ST4 is supportive of the provision of further berths in the interests of increasing tourism, provided it is done on a scale that does not harm the environment nor jeopardise security and commercial operations in the area.

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<sup>63</sup> Portland Port Business Development Plan, Portland Port, 2014 <http://www.portland-port.co.uk/>

<sup>64</sup> Portland Heritage and Character Assessment of 2017, AECOM for Portland Town Council, March 2017

## 14. Plan Monitoring and Review

- 14.1 There is no statutory requirement for the impact of the Neighbourhood Plan and its policies to be monitored.
- 14.2 Portland Town Council will monitor the impact of policies on change in the neighbourhood area by considering the policies':
- effectiveness in the planning application decision-making process
  - effect on local character
  - contribution to economic growth and employment
  - impact on the sustainability of communities and settlements
- 14.3 The Town Council will keep a record of planning applications, any applicable policies, and comments from the Town Council together with the eventual outcome of the application. The Town Council will establish data-gathering systems, such as those relating to local housing need and second home ownership, to help inform development decisions and monitor change. The Town Council will liaise regularly with community bodies, such as the Portland Community Partnership, to share information and feedback on planning-related matters.
- 14.4 A full or partial review of the Portland Neighbourhood Plan may be triggered by changes to legislation, changes to national or district-wide planning policies, or significant planning issues being raised by the local community that cannot be dealt with effectively by a combination of national, district and/or existing neighbourhood plan policies. Five years from the date the Plan is made, we will consider the need and value in undertaking a full Review.

## Glossary of Terms

**Affordable Housing** - housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers); and which complies with one of the various definitions of affordable housing in the NPPF<sup>65</sup>.

**Aquaculture** - the farming of fish, shellfish and other aquatic organisms.

**Biodiversity** - The variety of life in all forms e.g. wildlife, plants, etc.

**Brownfield Site** - Previously developed land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land and any associated fixed surface infrastructure.

**Community Land Trust** - is a form of community-led housing, set up and run by ordinary people to develop and manage homes as well as other assets important to that community, like community enterprises, food growing or workspaces. CLTs act as long-term stewards of housing, ensuring that it remains genuinely affordable, based on what people actually earn in their area, not just for now but for every future occupier.

**Conservation Area** - An area of special architectural or historic interest, designated under the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1991, whose character and appearance it is desirable to preserve and enhance. There are special rules on some development in conservation areas.

**European Sites** - This is a site protected for its importance to biodiversity. They are defined in Regulation 8 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 and include candidate Special Areas of Conservation, Sites of Community Importance, Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas.

**Flood Risk Assessment** - An assessment of the likelihood of flooding in an area so that development need and mitigation measures can be carefully considered.

**Green Infrastructure** - A network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities.

**Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)** - A HRA is a requirement of European Directive 92/43/EEC which assesses the potential effects a local development plan may have on one or more European sites (Natura 2000 sites). The assessment should conclude whether or not a proposal or policy in a development plan would adversely affect the integrity of the site in question.

**Heritage Asset** - A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).

**Infrastructure** - Basic services necessary for development to take place, for example, roads, electricity, sewerage, water, education and health facilities.

**Landscape Character** – The distinct and recognisable pattern of elements that occur consistently in a particular type of landscape. It reflects particular combinations of geology, landform, soils, vegetation, land use and human settlement.

**Listed Buildings** - A building of special architectural or historic interest. Listed buildings are graded I, II\* or II; with grade I the highest. Listing includes the interior as well as the exterior of the building, and any buildings or permanent structures (e.g. wells within its curtilage). English Heritage is responsible for designating buildings for listing in England.

**Local Education Authority** - The public body whose duty it is to carry out specific functions relating to education for a defined area. All references to local education authority apply in this Plan to Dorset County Council.

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<sup>65</sup> See NPPF Glossary

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/728643/Revised\\_NPPF\\_2018.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/728643/Revised_NPPF_2018.pdf)

**Local Green Space** - Green areas of importance to local communities designated to provide special protection against development.

**Local Nature Reserve** - Non-statutory habitats of local significance designated by local authorities where protection and public understanding of nature conservation is encouraged.

**Local Plan** - A portfolio or folder of documents (Development Plan Documents (DPDs) and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs), setting out the planning strategy for a local planning authority area.

**Local Planning Authority** - The public body whose duty it is to carry out specific planning functions for a defined area. All references to local planning authority apply in this Plan to West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland District Council.

**Major Development** - For housing, development is where 10 or more homes will be provided, or the site has an area of 0.5 hectares or more. For non-residential development it means additional floorspace of 1,000m<sup>2</sup> or more, or a site of 1 hectare or more, or as otherwise provided in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. (This is the NPPF definition.)

**Minerals Plan** - A statutory development plan prepared by a minerals' planning authority (Dorset CC) setting out policies for the control of development constituting of the winning and working of minerals or the deposit of mineral waste.

**Natura 2000 Network** - The European network of protected sites established under the Birds Directive and the Habitats Directive (SACs and SPAs – see elsewhere in this Glossary).

**Neighbourhood Plan** - A plan prepared by a Town or Parish Council or Neighbourhood Forum for a neighbourhood area (made under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

**NPPF - The National Planning Policy Framework** sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It sets out the Government's requirements for the planning system only to the extent that it is relevant, proportionate and necessary to do so. It provides a framework within which local people and their accountable councils can produce their own distinctive local and neighbourhood plans, which reflect the needs and priorities of communities.

**PPG** - The National **Planning Practice Guidance** is a web-based resource which brings together planning guidance on various topics into one place. It was launched in March 2014 and coincided with the cancelling of most of the Government Circulars which had previously given guidance on many aspects of planning.

**Permitted Development** - Permission to carry out certain limited forms of development without the need to make an application to a local planning authority, as granted under the terms of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order.

**Previously Developed Land** - is that which is or was occupied by a permanent structure (excluding agricultural or forestry buildings), and associated fixed-surface infrastructure. The definition covers the curtilage of the development.

**Principle Residence** - residences occupied as the residents' sole or main residence, where the residents spend the majority of their time when not working away from home.

**Public Arts** - Permanent or temporary physical works of art visible to the public, whether part of a building or free-standing. For example, sculpture, lighting effects, street furniture, paving, railings and signs.

**Public Realm** – are those parts of a village, town or city (whether publicly or privately owned) available, for everyone to use. This includes streets, squares and parks.

**Public Right of Way** is a highway over which the public have a right of access along the route.

**Ramsar Site** - A wetland of international importance, protected under the Ramsar Convention on the sustainable use and conservation of Wetlands.

**Renewable Energy** - is energy flows that occur naturally and repeatedly in the environment, for example from the wind, water flow, tides or the sun.

**Registered Social Landlord** – is a technical name for a body registered with the Housing Corporation. Most Housing Associations are RSLs.

**Second Home** - is a property that is furnished but no-one's sole or main residence.

**Scheduled Monument** - means any monument which is for the time being included in the schedule [compiled and maintained by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport]

**SHMA - A Strategic Housing Market Assessment** is a study of the way the housing market works in an area. It considers the type of households living in the area, where they work and what sort of housing they live in. It attempts to estimate future housing needs across the area, broken down by tenure and size of housing.

**Shoreline Management Plan** - a non-statutory document that provides a broad assessment of the long-term risks associated with coastal processes.

**SNCI Site of Nature Conservation Importance** - Locally important sites of nature conservation adopted by local authorities for planning purposes.

**Special Area of Conservation (SAC)** - A site of Community importance designated by the Member States where the necessary conservation measures are applied for the measurement or restoration, at a favourable conservation status, of the habitats and or species for which the site is designated.

**Special Protection Area (SPA)** - A site designated under the Birds Directive by the Member States where appropriate steps are taken to protect the bird species for which the site is designated.

**SSSI - A Site of Special Scientific Interest** identified under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000) as an area of special interest by reason of any of its flora, fauna, geological or physiographical features (basically, plants, animals, and natural features relating to the Earth's structure).

**Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)** – is a procedure (set out in the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004) which requires the formal environmental assessment of certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment.

**SUDS** - is a concept that makes environmental quality and people a priority in drainage design, construction and maintenance. The sustainable drainage system (SUDS) approach includes measures to prevent pollution, reduce surface water runoff at source and provide a range of physical structures designed to receive the runoff.

**Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)** - Documents which add further detail to the policies in the Local Plan. They can be used to provide further guidance for development on specific sites or issues, such as design. Supplementary planning documents are capable of being a material consideration in planning decisions but are not part of the development plan.

**Transport Impact Assessment** - considers the impact of a proposed development on all modes of transport and requires developers to consider ways to reduce the number of private car journeys and increase the use of more sustainable modes, to their development.

**Transport Interchange Point** - at which transfer between types of (modes) transport may take place.

**Use Class Order** - The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 puts uses of land and buildings into various categories. Planning permission is not needed for changes of use within the same use class.

**Waste Plan** - A statutory development plan prepared (or saved) by the waste planning authority (Dorset CC) setting out policies in relation to waste management and related developments.

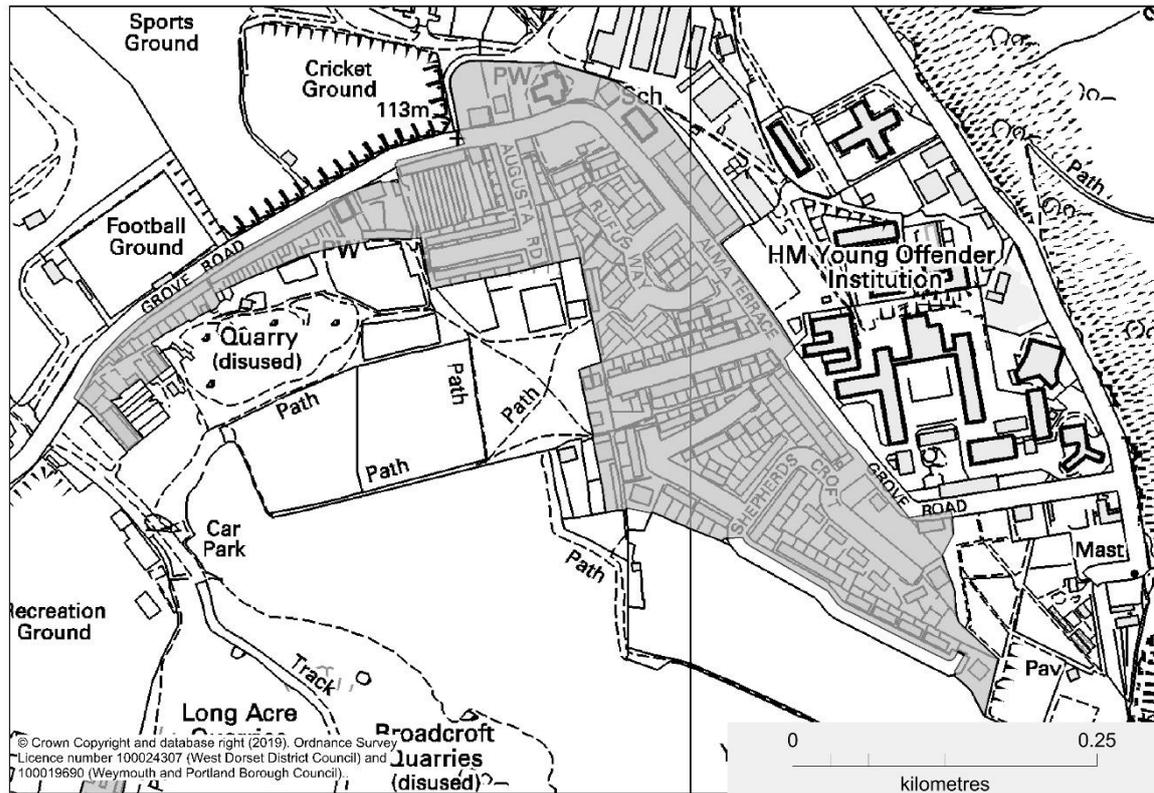
# Map Appendix

## Policy Port/EN6 – Defined Development Boundaries

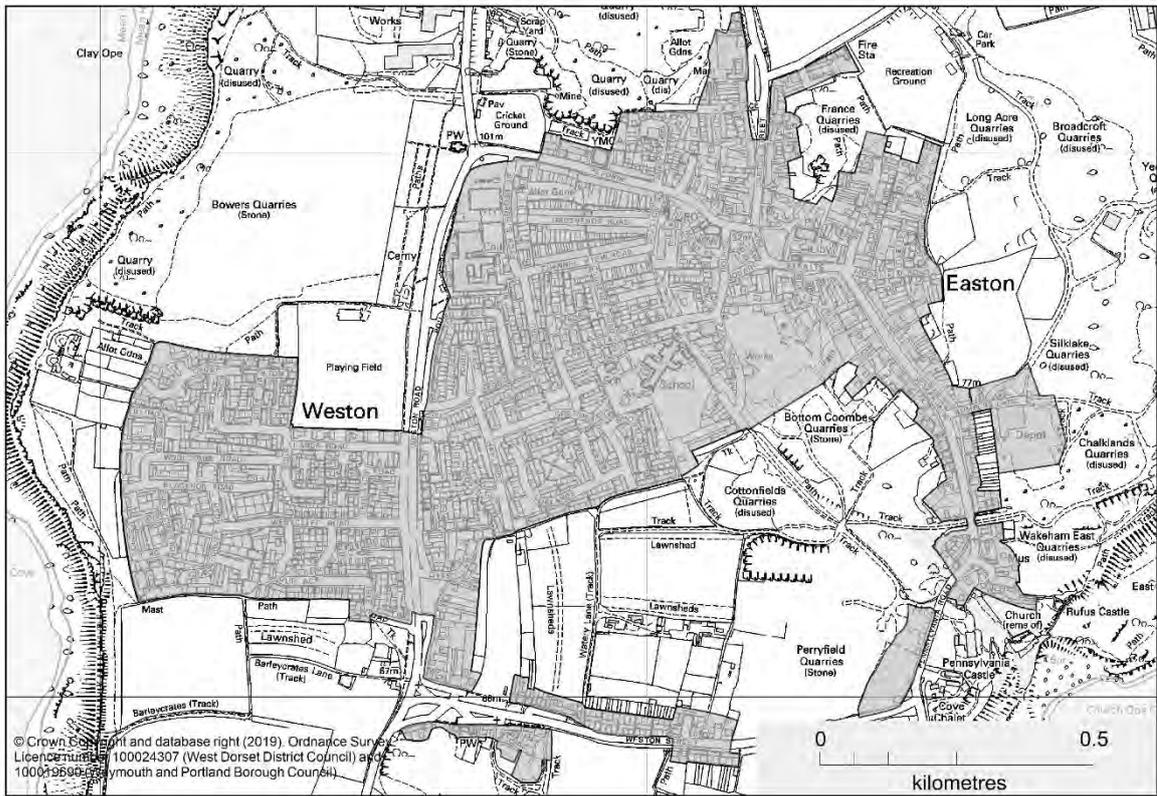
### Fortuneswell / Castletown DDB



### The Grove DDB



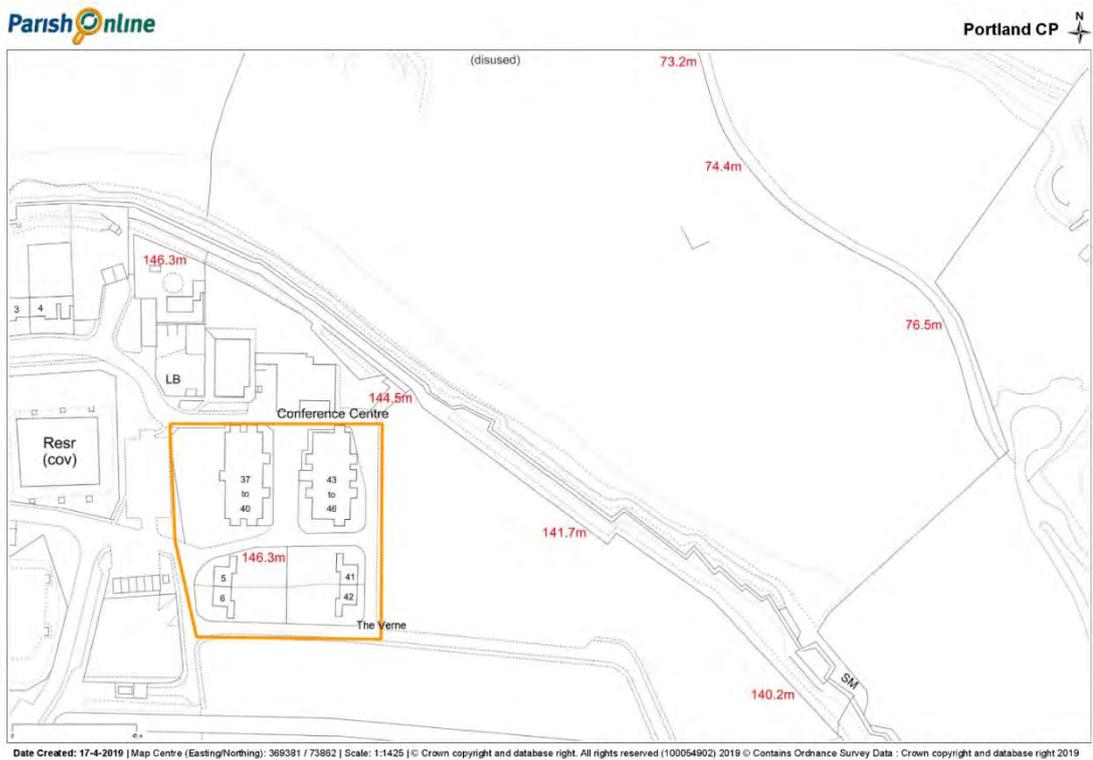
Weston / Easton DDB



Southwell DDB



The Verne Policy Area



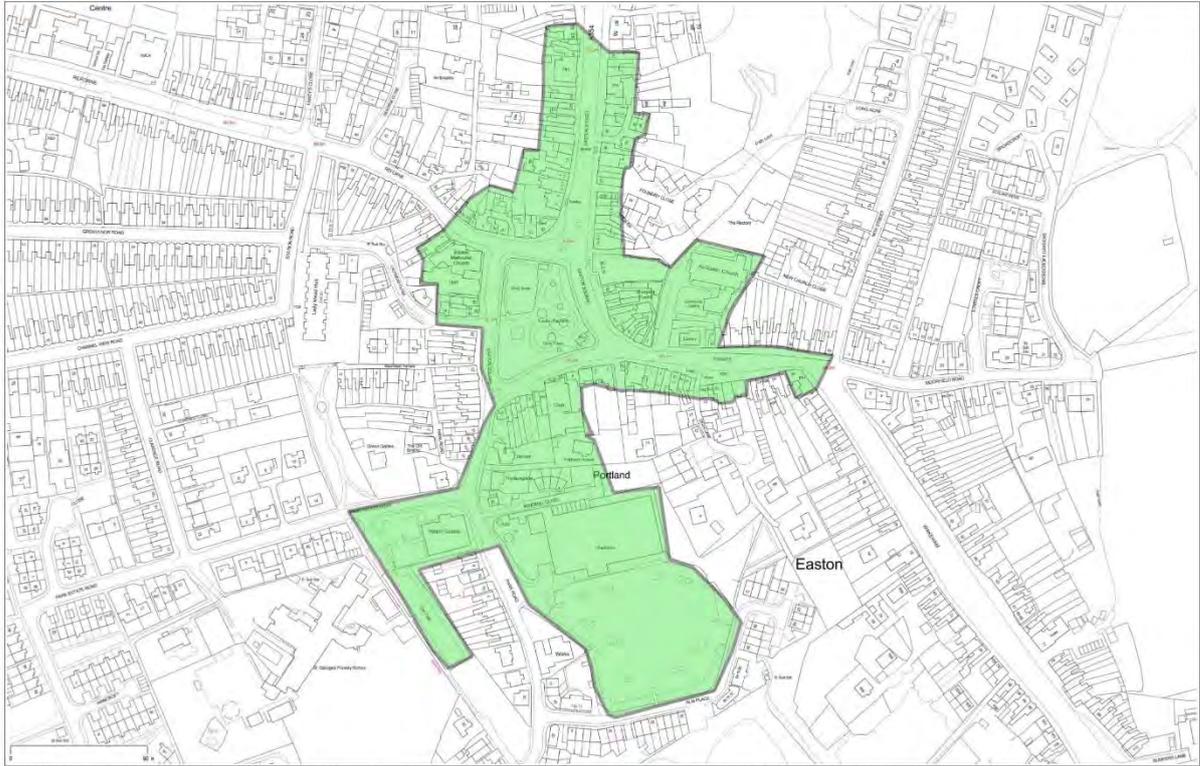




*Easton Local Centre*



Portland CP



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*Fortuneswell Local Centre*



Portland CP



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Chiswell Neighbourhood Centre



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Castletown Neighbourhood Centre

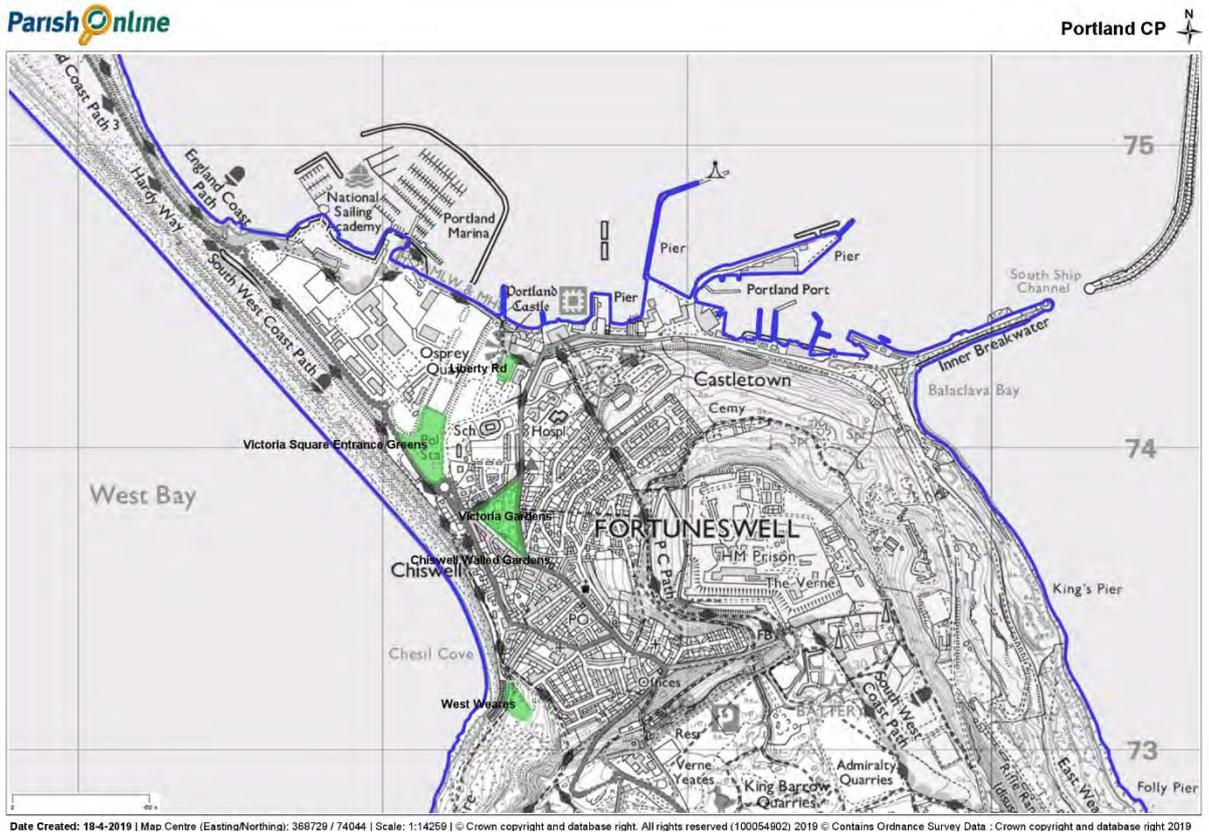


Portland CP

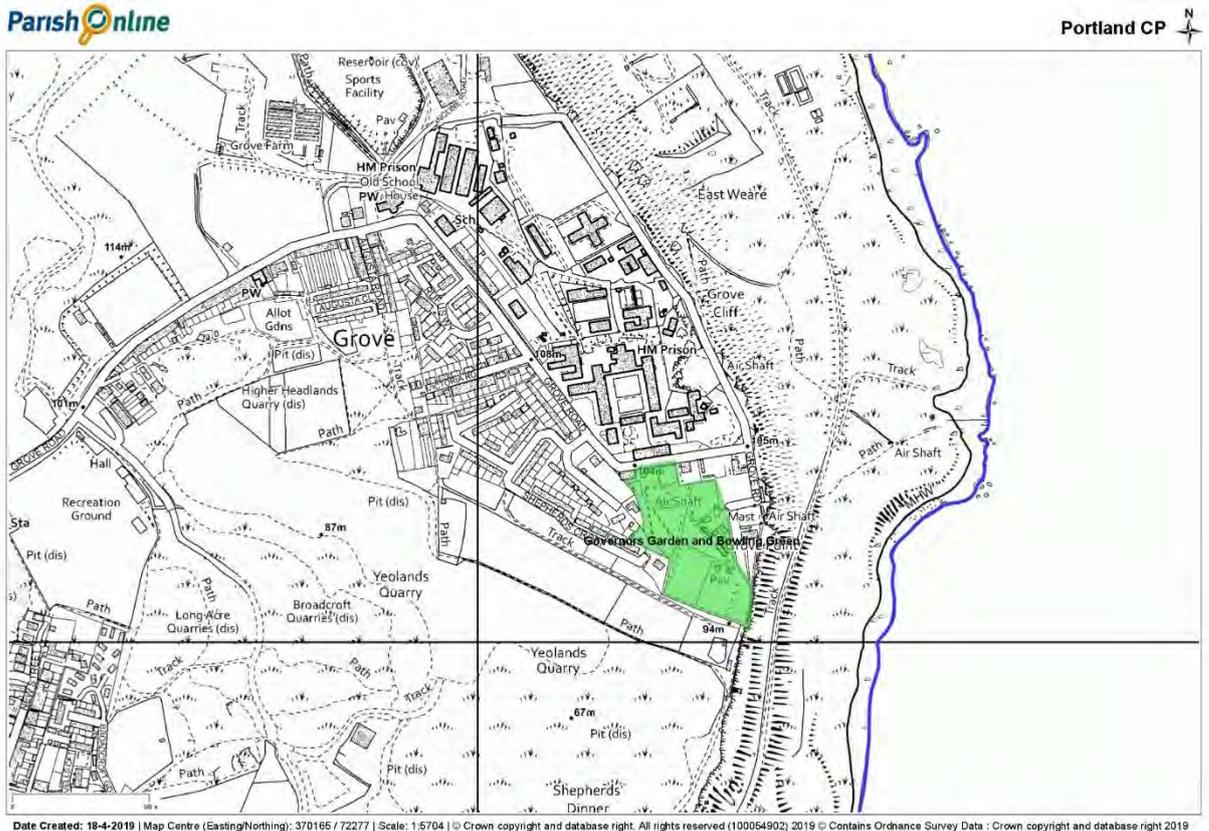


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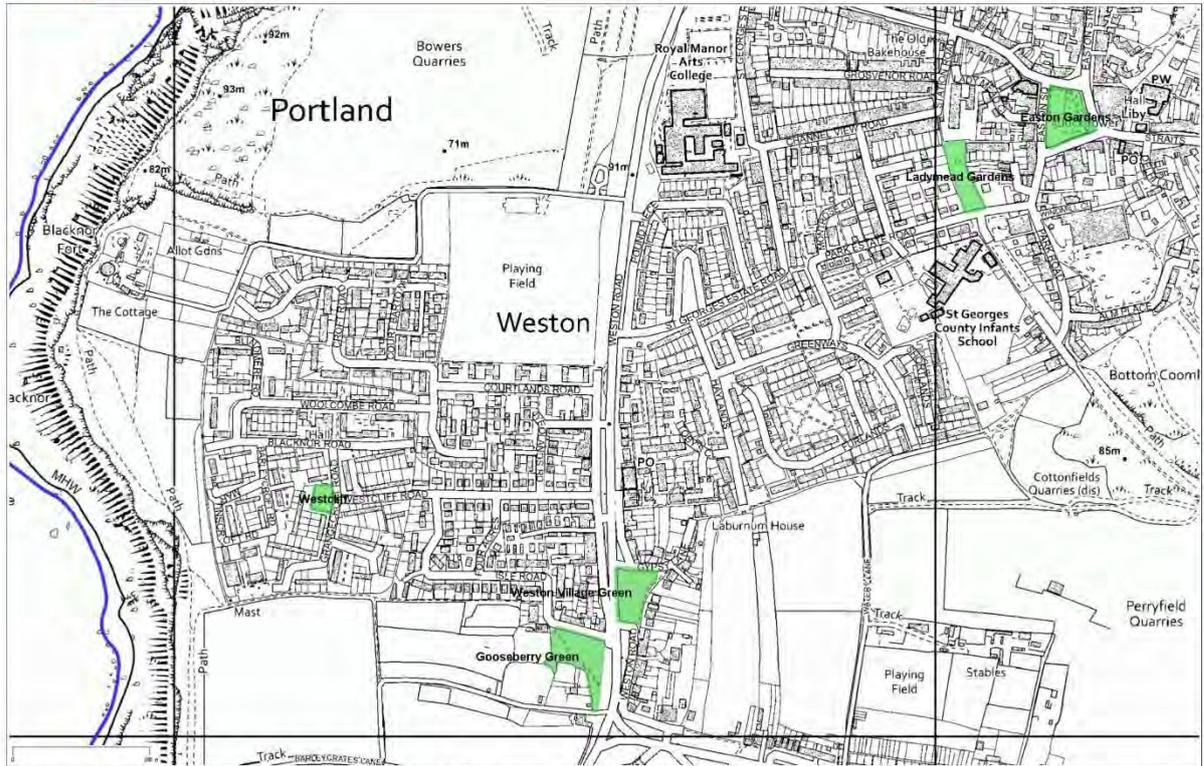
Fortuneswell / Castletown area Local Green Spaces



The Grove area Local Green Spaces

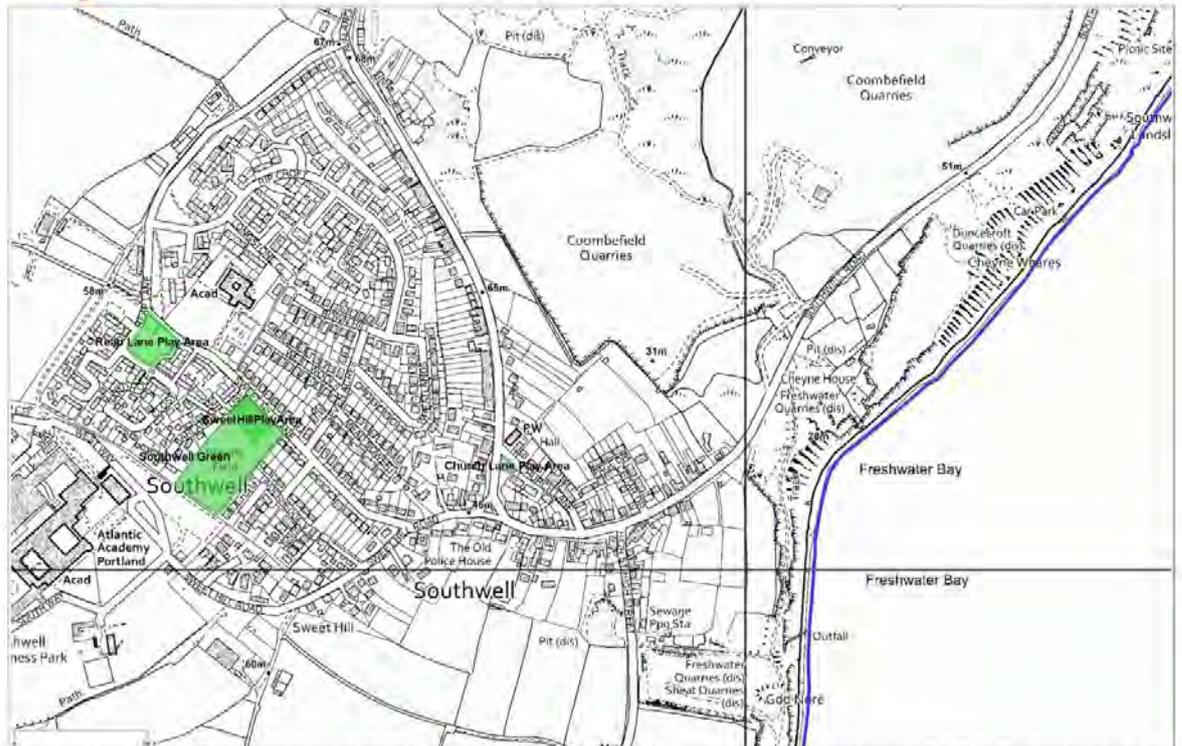


Weston and Easton area Local Green Spaces



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Southwell area Local Green Spaces



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