



Wareham Neighbourhood Plan



SUBMISSION DRAFT 2019 - 2034

October 2020



Figure 1: Wareham Neighbourhood Plan Area

FOREWORD

In 2015 Wareham Town Council decided that it would prepare a Neighbourhood Development Plan so that major decisions on the location of development and related matters could be made locally. A Steering Group made up of Town and District Councillors and representatives of local organisations or sectors, chaired by Cllr Keith Critchley, and supported by the hard work of a dedicated team of volunteers, have produced this Plan.

In Summer 2016 the District Council consulted on site options for their Local Plan Review. These included 205 homes north and west of Northmoor Park and 500 homes west of the Bypass at Worgret. The Steering Group consulted local residents and found widespread opposition to these proposals. Rather than just object, the Group decided to adopt a positive approach and formulate alternative proposals which had greater community support.

Throughout the process of preparing this Plan there has been a concerted drive to consult all who live in Wareham and to involve the whole community through drop ins, presentations, exhibitions and formal consultations.

The initial consultation identified five key issues facing the town. These were:

- Providing housing and development to meet local needs
- Maintaining a thriving town centre
- Ensuring a pedestrian and cycle friendly town
- Protecting valued green spaces and community facilities
- Keeping a locally distinctive place

These issues led to five key objectives for the Plan to achieve and these provide the structure for this document. It sets out a vision and objectives for the future of Wareham, and planning policies and development guidelines for our preferred sites for new housing and other development to be built over the next 15 years.

The first Pre-Submission draft Plan was published for consultation between the 1st June and the 13th July 2018. Eighty-five comments were received, the majority in support of the Plan as drafted. All were carefully considered and a number of amendments were made to create

the Submission Draft Plan.

Following Submission to Purbeck District Council in October 2018, two key changes occurred. Firstly, it was not possible to agree with the landowner the provision of deliverable Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) west of Westminster Road to mitigate the effect of new development on internationally protected sites. Alternative mitigation arrangements have since been agreed and are set out in a Statement of Common Ground between the Town Council, Dorset Council, Natural England and the owner of the Bog Lane SANG.

FOREWORD

Secondly, the District and County Councils in Dorset were replaced by Dorset Council in April 2019 and in August 2019 they published new plans for the former Middle School site and redevelopment of the Bonnets Lane site. These proposed higher numbers of dwellings than before which meant that the housing requirement for the Town can be met within the existing settlement boundary without using greenfield land.

This revised Submission Draft Plan incorporates these changes. This Plan following consultation and consideration of comments received will be submitted to Dorset Council who will publish it for comment. The revised Plan will then be submitted for independent examination. The Examiner will consider whether the Plan, with any modifications, should be put to the Town residents for decision by a referendum.

We are grateful for the support of Dorset Council (and its predecessor Purbeck District Council), Wareham Town Council and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) in preparing this Plan. MHCLG appointed consultants AECOM to

provide technical support for which we are very grateful. Sasha White QC and Anjoli Foster from Landmark Chambers, London, have provided legal advice.

I commend this Plan to you and thank all who have contributed to this major undertaking. Following the extensive consultation which has taken place, I believe that the Plan reflects the will of most of the local community and should allow our Town to develop in a measured and positive way.

Cllr Lucia Kirk, Town Mayor 2020-21



Figure 2: Wareham Local Plan Consultation Event

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Abbreviations used in this Plan:

- AONB – Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- CIL – Community Infrastructure Levy
- DC – Dorset Council
- HRA – Habitats Regulations Assessment
- MHCLG – Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
- NPPF – National Planning Policy Framework
- PDC – Purbeck District Council
- SAC – Special Area of Conservation (international nature conservation site)
- SAM - Scheduled Ancient Monument
- SANG – Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace
- SPA - Special Protection Area

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Wareham Town Council, Town Hall, East Street, Wareham, BH20 4NS
Telephone 01929 553006
E-mail: office@Wareham-tc.gov.uk

1. Introduction

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Neighbourhood Plan Area

1.1.1 The Neighbourhood Plan area establishes the area in which this Neighbourhood Plan will have effect. The area was agreed by Purbeck District Council in September 2015 and covers the whole of Wareham Parish (see Figure. 1).

1.2 The Plan Period

1.2.1 At the time of writing this Plan, the Purbeck Local Plan Part 1: Planning Purbeck's Future (2012) was the adopted plan for the area, setting out the strategic vision and planning policies for the period 2006 - 2027.

1.2.2 A review of the 2012 Local Plan is currently underway, looking further ahead to 2034. The Purbeck Local Plan 2018 - 2034 was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for examination in January 2019. A Public Examination into the soundness of the Plan took place between July – October 2019. To align with the emerging Local Plan, this Neighbourhood Plan covers the period 2019-2034. Changes to the Local Plan or local circumstances may trigger the need for the Neighbourhood Plan to be reviewed and updated before then.

Should this be necessary there will be full local consultation before any changes are made.

1.3 Historic Development of Wareham

1.3.1 Wareham has a long history which spans some two thousand years. The presence of high-quality minerals in the area including clay, stone and shale was exploited by the Romans. The “black burnished” pottery ware produced here is found throughout Britain in places occupied by the Legions. The location of Wareham on a south facing ridge between the two rivers Frome and Piddle was well chosen and the Town developed as a small market centre and port. In about 700 St Aldhelm, first bishop of the West Saxons, founded a nunnery and imposing stone-built church.

1.3.2 In the ninth century Viking raids led Alfred, King of Wessex, to fortify the Town by building earthen ramparts 2,200 yards in extent which surrounded the Town to the west, north and east, the south side being defended by the river. The rectilinear street pattern of the Town dates from this period and together with

the Walls, gives the historic Town a very distinctive character.

1.3.3 By the time of the Norman invasion in 1066 Wareham was Dorset's largest borough with three hundred houses, a population of over 1,000 and two mints producing coinage. The Normans built a motte and bailey castle in the south west quadrant of the Saxon town and the present curved streets of Trinity and Pound Lane follow the castle inner and outer baileys.

1.3.4 However, Wareham's fortune changed due to the silting of the river and the growth of Poole which received a royal charter in 1248. This led to a decline in the Town's fortunes to a modest medieval market centre.

1.3.5 In 1762 a disastrous fire started at the Bull's Head Inn in South Street leading to the devastation of the Town and the loss of 133 buildings. The rebuilding that subsequently took place was of brick-built houses in the Georgian style which gives a strong homogeneity to the buildings along the main streets today.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.3.6 In 1847 the railway arrived linking Wareham with Dorchester, Southampton and London. Development grew up around the station with Victorian houses, lodgings and the Railway Hotel.

1.3.7 The flood plains to north and south of the historic town have restricted the scope of development to the more elevated ridge to the east and west, and the rising land to the north of the Railway Station.

1.3.8 Development in the first half of the 20th Century was very limited. Within the Walls the Borough Council built council housing at Bells Orchard, Nundico and Edward Crescent and private ribbon development occurred along Sandford Road, Bestwall Road and Worgret Road.

1.3.9 The major growth period occurred in the 1950s to 1970s partly fuelled by the growth of employment at nearby Poole and partly by the Government decision in 1956 to build an experimental nuclear reactor site at Winfrith Heath to the west. This led to the need for more housing for the rapidly expanding workforce. The Winfrith site opened in 1961.

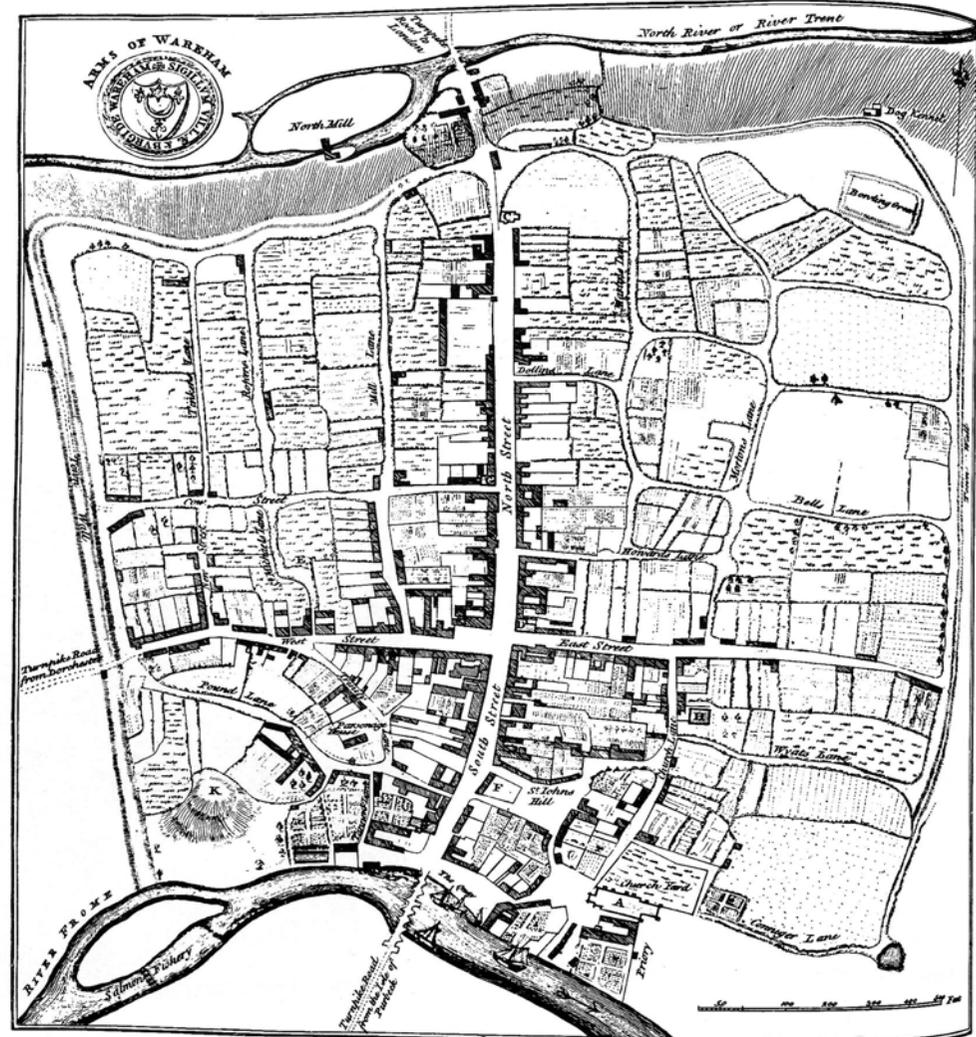


Figure 3: Plan of Wareham from "The History and Antiquities of the County of Dorset" by John Hutchins 1774

1. INTRODUCTION

1.3.10 Development of bungalows and detached private houses in Bestwall Road commenced in the late 1930s and in Stowell Crescent in the 1950s and 1960s.

1.3.11 North of the railway line there was rapid expansion with the Kingsbere Estate of Council houses in the late 1940s and 1950s, and Walls View Road, Wessex

Oval, Northport Drive and Drax Avenue in the 1960s. Northmoor Park, a large housing estate, commenced in the late 1960s. Since then development has been incremental infilling, around an average of about 10 dwellings per year other than in 2015-17 when the Westgate development was completed to the west of the town with 153 homes.

1.3.12 The presence of the floodplain of the River Piddle together with the railway line and, since 1980, the bypass, has resulted in a town divided into two parts with a single foot and cycle path connecting the two.



Figure 4: Wareham 1938 OS Map



Figure 5: 1980 OS Map illustrating the development growth to the north of Wareham

1. INTRODUCTION

1.4 Wareham Today

1.4.1 Today the Town functions as an administrative and service centre for the Purbeck area with offices for Dorset Council and Aster Housing Association, primary and secondary schools, library, sports and health centres for the area together with local shops and other services. The current population of the Town is 6,025 (2017 ONS mid-year estimate), but many of its facilities and services are used by those living in the surrounding villages, and the Town is estimated to have a total catchment population of about 28,000. The close proximity of the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole conurbation (population 400,000), 8 miles to the east and the good communications by rail and road, also means that inevitably many residents will choose to work, shop and enjoy leisure facilities in the conurbation.

1.4.2 The Town, like many in rural Dorset, has an ageing population as illustrated in Figure 6. Fourteen percent of the population are aged between 0-15 (19% in England and Wales) and 30% are aged 65+ (18% in England and Wales). The proportion of elderly residents is set

to increase.

1.4.3 The Town comprises some 2,557 households (ONS 2011). Sixty-eight percent are owner occupiers, 16% rent from the public sector and 14% from the private sector. Second homes comprise about 2% of the housing stock (which is comparatively low compared to the more coastal areas in Purbeck). Median house prices are high - £450,000 for a

detached house, £270,000 for a semi-detached, £260,000 for a terraced and £180,000 for a flat (Land Registry 2016).

1.4.4 In Purbeck lower quartile house prices are 10.8 times earnings (ONS 2017). The difference between house prices and wage levels means that it is very difficult for many local residents to afford their own home.

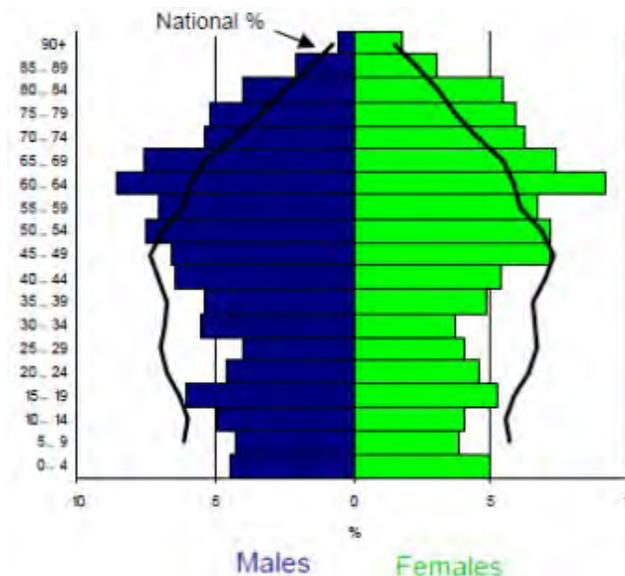


Figure 6: Wareham Parish Population Pyramid 2011



Figure 7: 1970s Housing at Northmoor Park



2. Our Vision, Objectives and Themes

2. OUR VISION, OBJECTIVES AND THEMES

2.1 The Purbeck Local Plan 2018-2034 and the Housing Requirement

2.1.1 During the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan discussions took place with the former Purbeck District Council over the amount of housing that the Plan should seek to provide. It was recognised that any figure should take into account the constraints and opportunities in and around Wareham and the opportunities to meet the wider District needs elsewhere.

2.1.2 Purbeck District Council has provided an indicative housing requirement for Wareham over the period 2019 – 2034) of 300 new homes (including windfall). This figure has been included in the Local Plan Submission 2018-2034.

2.2.1 What people told us...

Our first consultation, which took place in late 2015, was to find out what local people thought were the key issues and opportunities for Wareham. During July/August 2016 a consultation was carried out on options for future housing, including proposals proposed by the District Council in the review of the Local Plan, and a further survey was conducted

in Spring 2017. The main issues that came forward from those early consultations highlighted:

- the desire for more housing that would help local people and young families buy or rent homes. However, the large-scale proposals for development being promoted in 2016 through the Local Plan Review, to the north (205 houses) and west of the town (500 houses), were not supported, whereas options involving brownfield sites (such as the regeneration of Westminster Road Industrial Estate and development on the Health Centre and Hospital sites) were supported.
- general support for more jobs for local people
- the importance of improving local healthcare facilities and bringing these into one place
- the benefits of good walking and cycling links and concerns that these were not well planned or maintained
- the vital importance for accessibility to the Town Centre shops, post office, schools and facilities of retaining the ground level railway crossing for pedestrians and cyclists
- the importance of a thriving Town Centre – and the need for good access and parking, and a clear role and identity for the town

2. OUR VISION, OBJECTIVES AND THEMES

- the high value placed on the strong and distinctive character of the Town, its buildings and its landscape setting.
- the area's green spaces and recreation facilities – in particular the Purbeck School, former Middle School and Wareham St Mary Primary School playing fields, Wareham Recreation Ground, Hauses Field, the Sward north of the Station, the allotments (Bestwall and Northmoor), The Quay, the Common and the water meadows should be protected from development.



Figure 8: West Walls Scheduled Ancient Monument

2.3 The overarching Vision and main Objectives

- 2.3.1 Based on the issues and opportunities that were most important to local people, the following vision for the Town was agreed.

“

A charming, historic Saxon walled town, with a thriving retail centre and a strong and united community, located in a unique natural setting as the gateway to the Isle of Purbeck

”



Figure 9: Wareham Quay

2. OUR VISION, OBJECTIVES AND THEMES

2.3.2 Following from this, five objectives were identified to guide the Plan and decisions on planning applications.

3.3.3 These were:

CHAPTER

3

HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT TO MEET LOCAL NEEDS

Identify the main sites to be developed to deliver the housing needed between 2019 - 2034

4

A THRIVING TOWN CENTRE

Protect the vitality of the Town Centre, by retaining the diversity of shops and leisure facilities and having accessible car parking and public toilets. Outside of the town centre, the local shopping parade in Carey Road should continue to meet the day-to-day needs of local residents in north Wareham

5

A PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLING FRIENDLY TOWN

Retain and improve the key routes linking the various parts of the Town with the Town Centre, for pedestrians and cyclists

6

VALUED GREEN SPACES & COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Protect and enhance the valued green spaces within the Neighbourhood Plan area. Ensure that the community facilities for local residents can be provided locally, where such needs arise

7

A LOCALLY DISTINCTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE PLACE

Protect local character, by making sure the design of new development reflects the local traditions and materials, or develops in new ways which complement the existing styles. Tackle Climate Change through sustainable design and layouts.

2.3.4 Together these objectives aim to create a more sustainable Town. Each of the themes are covered in turn in the sections of the Plan that follow.

3. Housing and Development



3. HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT

3.1 How much housing development is needed?

3.1.1 There is no definite housing target for Wareham in the adopted 2012 Local Plan, but there is a target of 475 dwellings, or 22 - 23 dwellings / annum for 2006 to 2027 for the Central Area which includes Wareham, Sandford and Stoborough. As of March 2018, 314 dwellings had been completed and a further 57 dwellings with consent, leaving sites for a further 104 dwellings to be found in this wider area. The Local Plan is currently being revised and will cover the period 2018 – 2034.

3.1.2 Monitoring records going back to 2001 indicate that the average build rate in Wareham has been around 18 dwellings a year including a significant period of growth in the last few years. Projecting this rate of growth forward would indicate the need for about 270 dwellings in the 15-year period.

3.1.3 Over the past 15 years, excluding 153 homes at the Westgate development (which was a Local Plan allocation), 149 homes were completed on small unallocated sites under 10 units, making

an average “windfall” development of 10 dwellings pa. An assessment has been made of potential infilling sites and this confirms that there is potential for this rate to continue. However, it is considered prudent to assume a 33% discount rate to the past average to provide a robust assumption on windfall housing deliverability. At least 100 dwellings are therefore expected to be delivered through normal small-scale planning applications known as windfall development. For example, the site known as Cottees Market gained planning permission for 9 residential units in February 2019, and development commenced in late 2019.

3.1.4 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2018 proposes that local plans should set out a housing requirement for designated neighbourhood plan areas (paras 65 and 66). Following discussions, the former Purbeck District Council provided an indicative housing requirement for Wareham of 300 new homes (including windfall) equating to an average of 20 per year. This requirement was included within the Submitted Local Plan 2018 – 2024 policy H2. Through the examination of the emerging Local Plan

in 2019, the housing target for Wareham was confirmed as 203 dwellings (excluding completions and extant consents as at 1 April 2019 and any windfall allowance). Details of the site allocations chosen to meet this requirement are given in section 3.3.

Policy H1 – Housing Requirement

Over a period of fifteen years from 2019 to 2034 about 300 new dwellings (on average 20 per year) are proposed for the Neighbourhood Plan Area of which 100 are anticipated as windfall development, and 200 through site allocations. This level of growth is expected to meet the housing requirement for the Neighbourhood Plan Area over the Plan period.

3. HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT

3.2 Type and size of housing

3.2.1 Within the overall number of dwellings built, planning policy can influence the mix in terms of type, tenure and size. The 2012 Local Plan sought at least 40% of homes to be built as affordable housing types (and at least 50% in any extensions to the settlement), primarily for rent. This is changing slightly through the Local Plan 2018-2034, with a requirement of 40% on larger sites of 10 or more homes (or 0.5ha in size), reducing to 30% on previously developed (brownfield) sites. The most recent Strategic Housing Market Assessment suggests nearly all market housing should be 2 or 3 bedrooms, with a greater emphasis on 1-bedroom homes in the affordable housing provision (about a third of that provision).

3.2.2 A Housing Needs Assessment has been undertaken specifically for Wareham Town by consultants AECOM. This shows that the need for affordable housing in the Neighbourhood Plan area is clear. The affordable housing register shows a strong demand for affordable homes, particularly 1 and 2 bedroom rented

properties, with over 100 households in housing need either living in or having a connection to Wareham (and many more with no current local connection). Nearly all the existing affordable housing stock in Wareham is for rent, with very few shared ownership or similar properties available locally. Affordability levels in Wareham have worsened in recent years, as a result placing greater pressure on the private rental sector to meet local needs.

3.2.3 Estate agents said that they had few enquiries from first time buyers as properties are largely beyond the price that people on local wages at the beginning of their career can afford. Alternative affordable housing products, such as shared equity, discounted market sales housing and starter homes, could provide an opportunity for first-time home buyers to get on the housing ladder, although the level of discount would need to be more than the minimum 20% to be affordable to local households on an average income. An analysis of the existing housing stock highlights the fact that Wareham has fewer flats and apartments, particularly with 2 bedrooms, than typical of the

area, and in contrast a higher number of terraced homes.

3.2.4 The household trends and projections point towards much higher growth in one-person households and the proportion of elderly residents, and far fewer households with three or more dependent children. There is a clear trend of older people downsizing, with a greater tendency to choose a flat or apartment, in both the affordable and market housing sectors.

3.2.5 The estate agents operating in the area told us that there is a largely untapped demand from local people looking to downsize into the Town Centre due to age and mobility issues, who typically need two bedroomed ground floor flats or bungalows with parking and small gardens at an affordable price. Although Wareham has a reasonable range of older people's housing (such as sheltered housing for those of retirement age), the evidence suggests that more provision of this type of accommodation will be required by the end of the Plan period.

3. HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT



Figure 10: Recent cottage style housing on West Walls

3.2.6 The housing needs assessment recommends that at least 50% of new homes are two bedroomed and that larger homes with four or more bedrooms are not required. Within the affordable housing mix, the Neighbourhood Plan allows for a higher proportion of intermediate housing, to support local households trying to get onto the housing ladder, than the Local Plan anticipates.

3.2.7 Given the over-supply of larger homes (with four or more bedrooms) the subdivision of such properties into two or

more smaller homes would be beneficial. However, care needs to be taken that there is sufficient external space for both parking (in line with Policy H11) and amenity space to allow for day to day needs such as drying space and bin stores.

Policy H3 – Stock of Smaller Dwellings

The subdivision of larger homes will be supported provided that there is adequate parking and private amenity space for future occupants.

Policy H2 – Housing Mix

New residential development should comprise predominantly smaller dwellings with 1, 2 or 3 bedrooms.

On larger sites providing 10 or more new dwellings, there should be a mix of dwelling sizes and types, and at least 10% of any open market provision should be suitable for residents with limited mobility or who may require a degree of care.

On sites of 10 or more dwellings, or which have a site area of more than 0.5Ha, 40% affordable housing will be sought on greenfield sites and 30% affordable housing will be sought on brownfield sites. The inclusion of other routes to affordable home ownership can comprise up to 40% of the total affordable housing requirement, if a local need for such tenures can be evidenced.



Figure 11: Housing in St Johns Hill

3. HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT

3.3 Where should the housing development go?

3.3.1 Finding suitable sites for development in and around Wareham is not easy because the area is highly constrained by various environmental designations and physical factors.

Flood risk zones, with extensive areas at risk of flooding along the plains of the Rivers Piddle and Frome and draining in from Wareham Forest. The District Council published a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment of the Purbeck area in January 2018, and in line with national policy, its Flood Risk policy steers development to areas with the lowest risk of flooding.



Figure 12: South Causeway Road Flooded January 2020

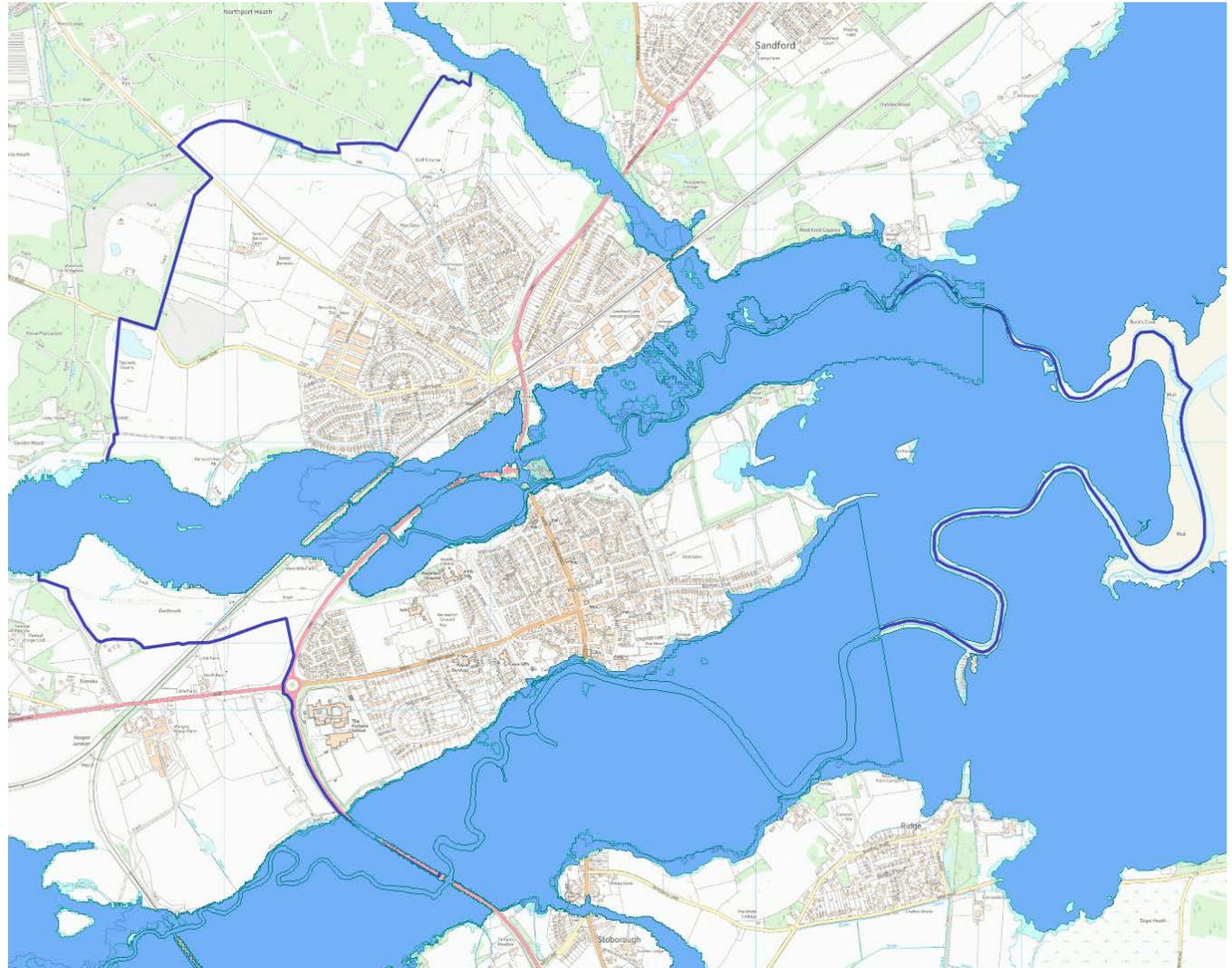


Figure 13: EA Flood Risk Areas

3. HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT

Nationally, European and internationally important wildlife sites, particularly focused on the heathlands, water meadows and Poole Harbour. The area is extremely rich in protected species. Within 400m of a protected heathland site (SAC) residential development that would involve a net increase in dwellings, tourist accommodation and equestrian related development will not be permitted. Between 400m and 5km of a heathland site mitigation measures are likely to be required to mitigate the adverse effects on the sites' integrity. These can take the form of Heathland Infrastructure Projects (HIPs), including e.g. Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) and Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM) provision in accordance with the Dorset Heathlands Planning Framework SPD¹. All development will need to accord with the Local Plan (2018-2034) Policy E9 and the Recreation in Poole Harbour SPD. Developments will also be required to mitigate the impact of any increase in nitrogen produced by sewage from new homes that may adversely affect Poole Harbour, in line with the Local Plan policy. The details of how this will be assessed is set out in supplementary

¹ A Statement of Common Ground has been agreed between the Town Council , Dorset Council, Natural England and a landowner concerning heathland mitigation measures for the proposals in this Plan

guidance, and applicants will be expected to provide mitigation directly as part of their application.

Wareham Common is an area of registered common land, much of which is also of high wildlife value.

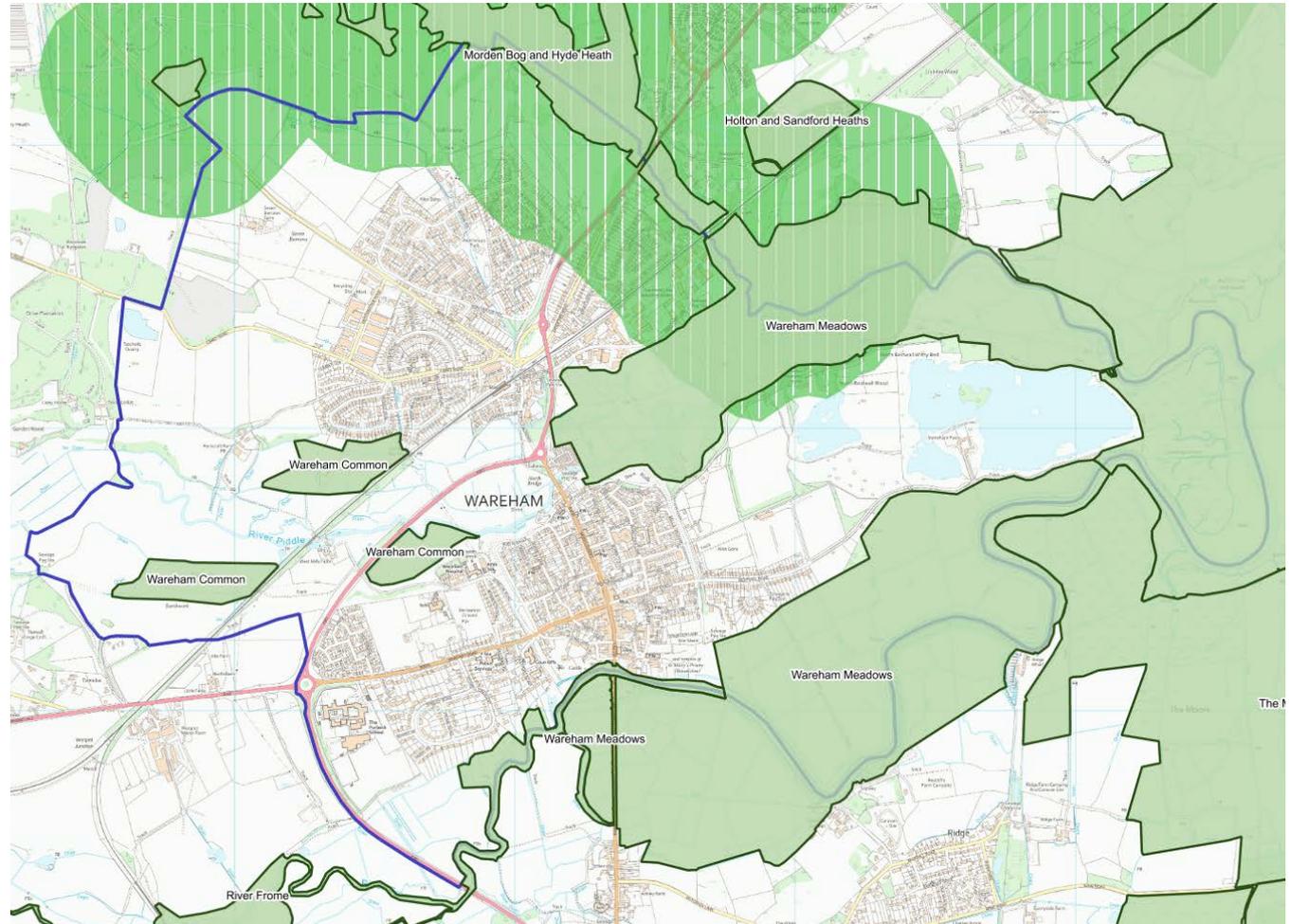


Figure 14: Nature Conservation Sites (SSSIs, SACs and RAMSAR sites) and 400m Heathland Zone south of Wareham Forest

3. HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT

3.3.2 The following policy has been included following a thorough assessment of the likely significant effects of the Plan, to ensure that there should be no adverse effects on the integrity of these important wildlife sites as a result of the Plan.

Protected species and locally important habitats are not confined to designated sites. At an application level these interests will be protected through the Dorset Council's Biodiversity Mitigation Protocol and Dorset Biodiversity Compensation Framework. Where an ecological survey highlights the potential presence of a protected species or an important habitat, measures should be taken to avoid any harm or, if this isn't possible, mitigation and potentially compensatory measures will need to be agreed. This could, for example, provide for significant environmental enhancements along the River Frome.

Policy H4. Nationally, European and Internationally Important Wildlife Sites and, protected species and locally important habitats

Development will only be supported where it would not lead to an adverse

effect upon the integrity, either alone or in-combination, directly or indirectly, on nationally, European and internationally important sites. Development should avoid having an adverse impact on protected species and wherever possible, features of local nature conservation/biodiversity interest should be protected and appropriately managed.

Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) covers the area west, south and east of the built-up area of Wareham Town (and the area to the east is also Heritage Coast). This is a nationally important landscape, and national planning policy is very clear that great weight should be given to conserving its landscape and scenic beauty, and that

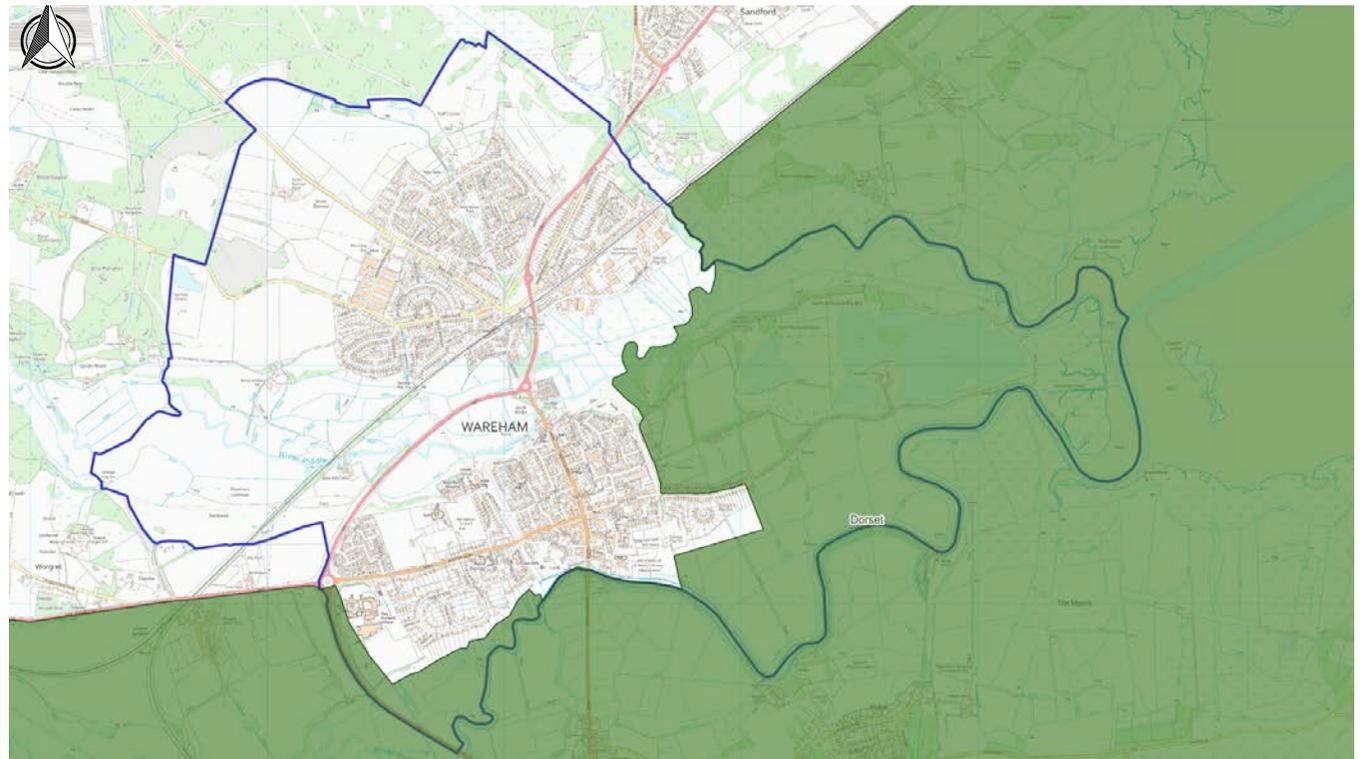


Figure 15: The Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty covers the area west, south and east of the Town

3. HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT

only in exceptional circumstances should major development be allowed and only where it is in the public interest. Dorset is currently a candidate for designation as a National Park. This is strongly supported, and the boundary should include the whole of Wareham Parish in view of its outstanding landscape character, ecological value and heritage assets.



Green Belt designation covers much of the remaining area outside the town boundary to the north, east and west, and the fundamental aim of this designation is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. National policy prevents inappropriate development (that is harmful to the Green Belt) except in very special circumstances. Major housing development or a new employment site on greenfield sites would be inappropriate, though limited affordable housing for local community needs can be considered. Green Belt boundaries should only be altered in exceptional circumstances, through the preparation or review of the Local Plan. NPPF proposes that where a need for changes to Green Belt boundaries has

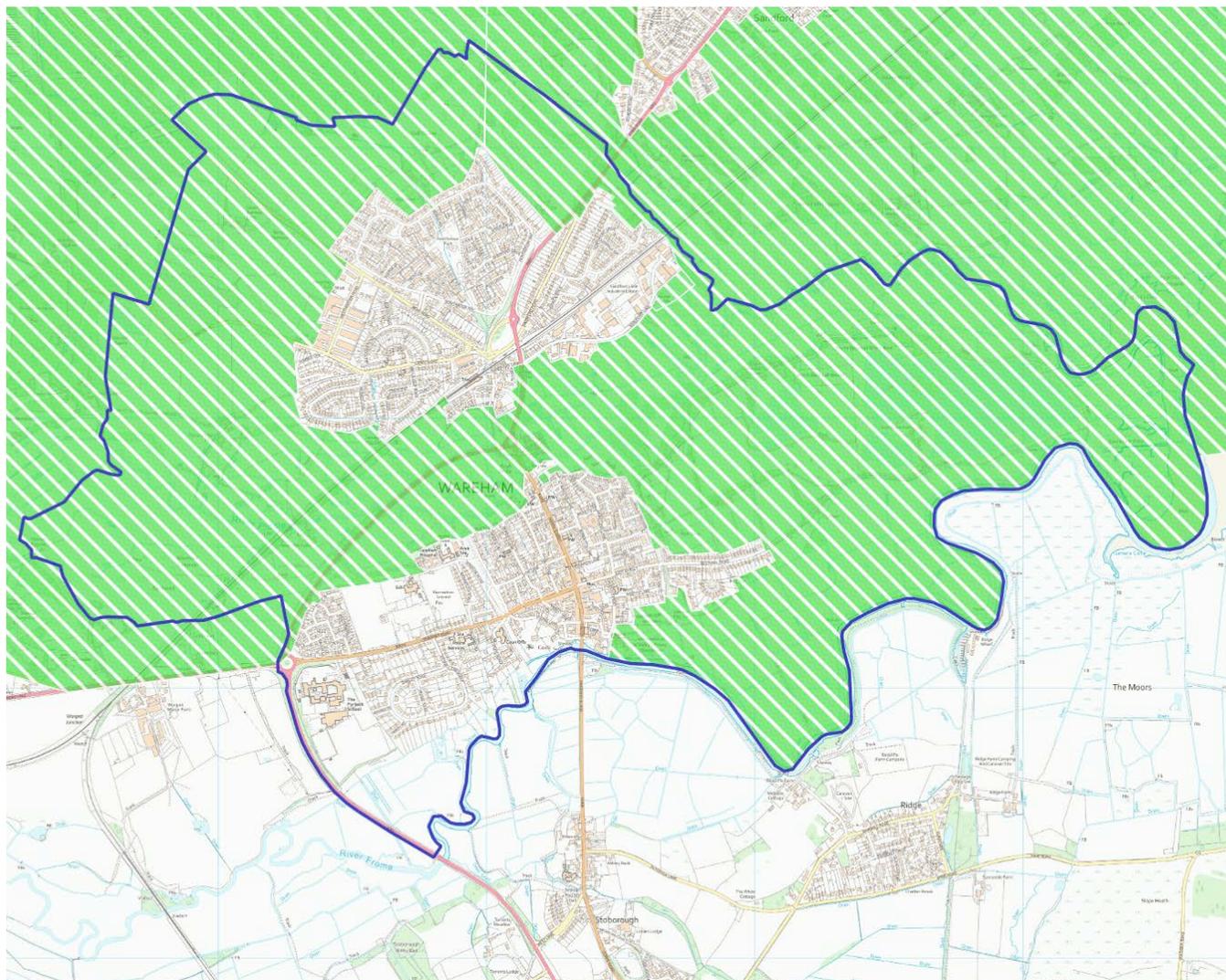


Figure 16: Designated Green Belt

3. HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT

been demonstrated through a local plan, detailed amendments to those boundaries may be made through neighbourhood plans (NPPF para. 135).

➤ The Conservation Area, historic Listed Buildings and Scheduled Monuments, in particular the ancient Saxon walls, motte & bailey castle and Seven Barrows. National planning policy is very clear that great weight should be given to these assets' conservation, and substantial harm to their significance (which includes any impact on their setting) must be avoided.

➤ **Topography.** To the north west of the Town are minor scarp slopes where the land rises steeply to Seven Barrows and Wareham Forest. Development on these slopes and beyond would be prominent in the landscape and in views across the Town.

➤ **Infrastructure.** Although no specific infrastructure capacity issues have been identified in the preparation of this Plan, it is expected that funding towards improvements will be made through the Community Infrastructure Levy.

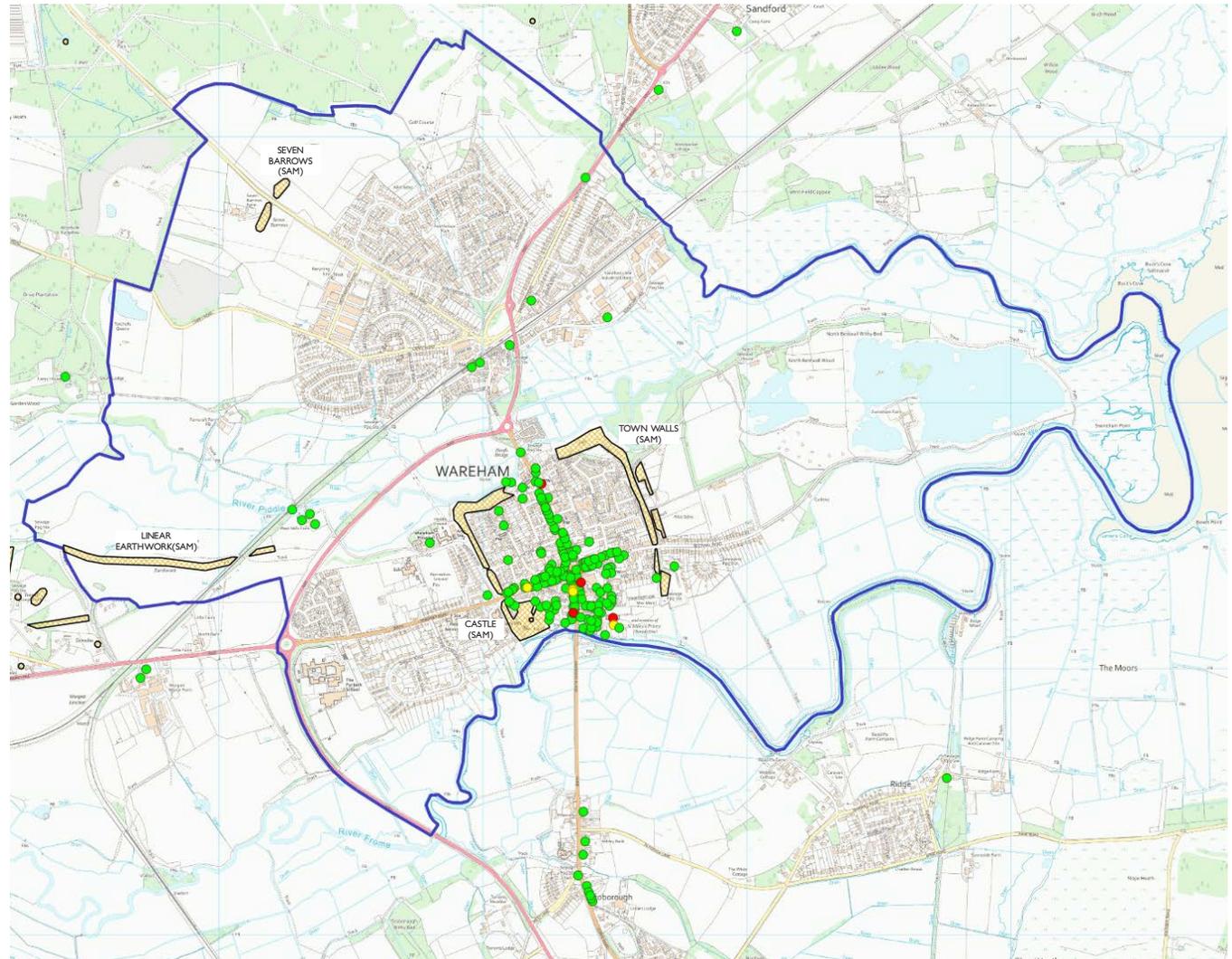


Figure 17: Ancient Monuments and Listed Buildings

3. HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT

Similarly transport assessments will be required for major developments which have significant transport implications, and advice on the likely requirements can be obtained from Highways England and the Highways Authority.

Conclusion on constraints and opportunities

3.3.3 A 360-degree appraisal of possible development sites around the Town plus vacant and under used land within the Town has been undertaken by consultants AECOM in 2017/18, and the preparation of this Plan has also been accompanied by a Strategic Environmental Assessment. These studies confirmed the very constrained nature of the settlement, and that the most suitable sites for new development were previously developed (or brownfield) land at the former Wareham Middle School, Wareham Hospital and Health Centre (following relocation of health facilities), Bonnets Lane (following relocation of care facilities), the former gas works and Autopoint sites and underused land on industrial estates at Westminster Road and Johns Road.

3.3.4 Government policy encourages reuse of underused brownfield land for housing (NPPF paras. 117 and 118). It also states that, before concluding that exceptional circumstances exist to justify changes to Green Belt boundaries, all other reasonable options for meeting the need for housing development should have been examined including making as much use as possible of suitable brownfield sites and underutilised land (NPPF para. 137).

3.3.5 The strategy of the Neighbourhood

Plan is therefore to maximise the reuse of vacant and underused (or brownfield) land to meet the housing requirement and to re-provide important community facilities. Work on Masterplanning the key sites indicates that the housing requirement can be met without the need to go into greenfield or Green Belt land.

3.3.6 The table below shows how the Local Plan's housing requirement for Wareham is to be delivered through proposals in this Neighbourhood Plan.

Potential Housing Delivery		
Site	Dwellings	Notes
Westminster Rd (H5)	30	Mainly vacant and underused units on southern part of Westminster Road
Johns Road (H6)	15	Former engineering works north of Johns Road
Hospital/Health Centre site (H8)	40	Subject to relocation of health facilities.
Former Middle School site (GS2) and Bonnets Lane site (GS3)	100	Extra care housing, keyworker and affordable housing, care home together with the proposed health hub
Former Gasworks and Autopoint sites (H7)	20	Former Gas Works shortly to be released for development by National Grid Property Holdings.
Windfall	100	Assume 66% of average small sites windfall development of 10 dwellings p.a. over 2003-17
Total	305	

Table 1. Summary of Potential Housing Delivery

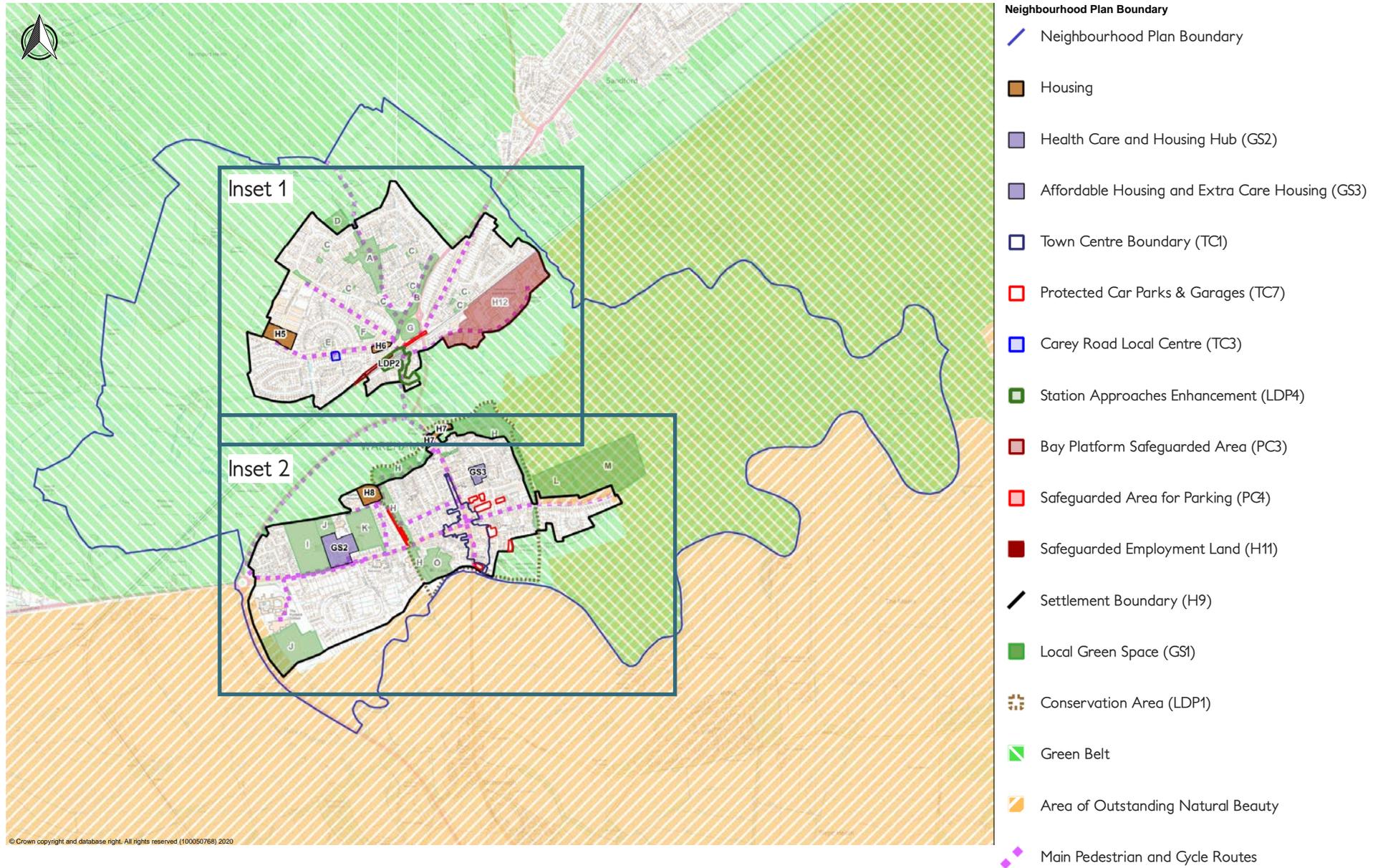


Figure 18: Wareham Neighbourhood Plan Policies Map

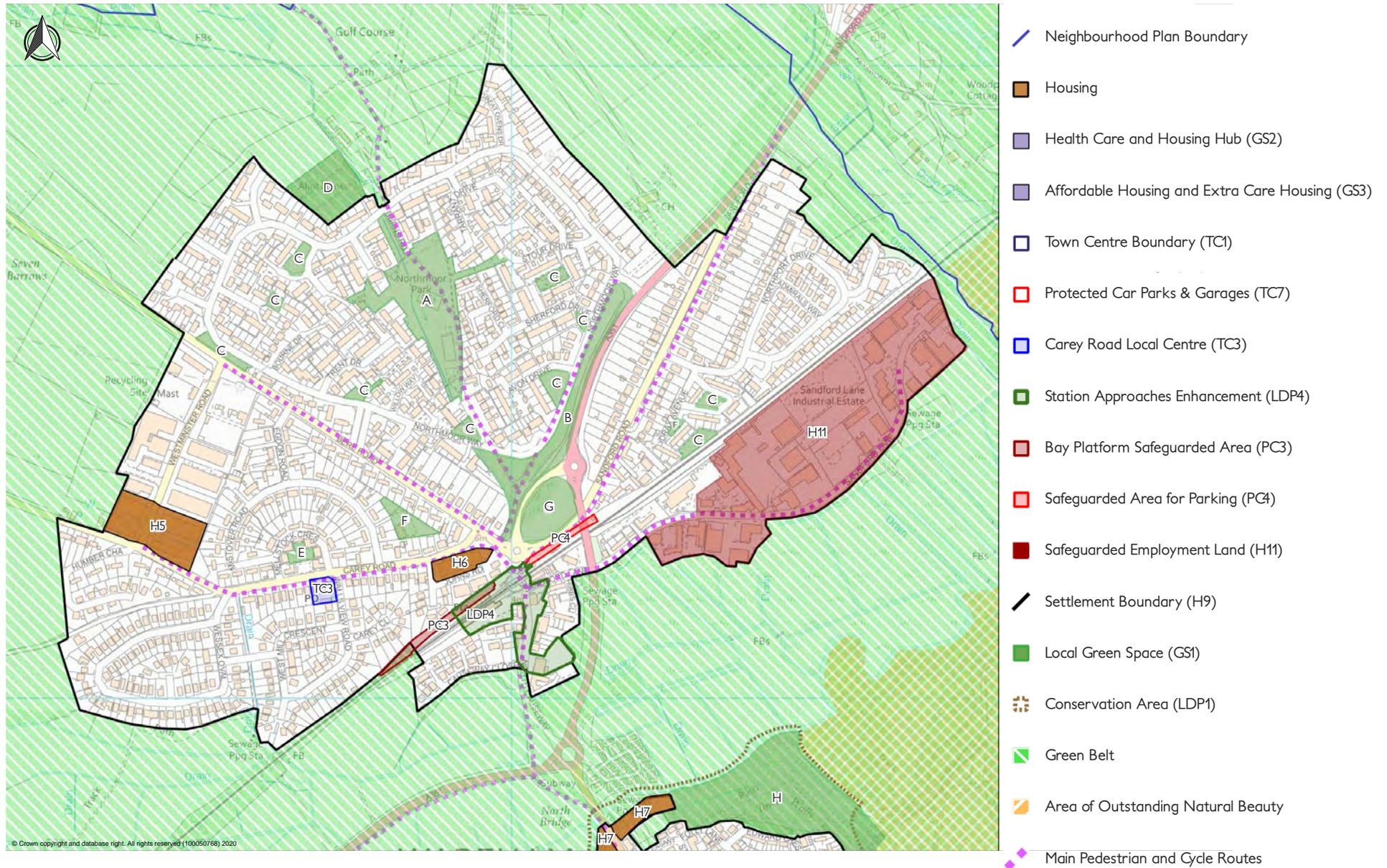


Figure 19: Wareham Neighbourhood Plan Policies Map - Inset Map 1

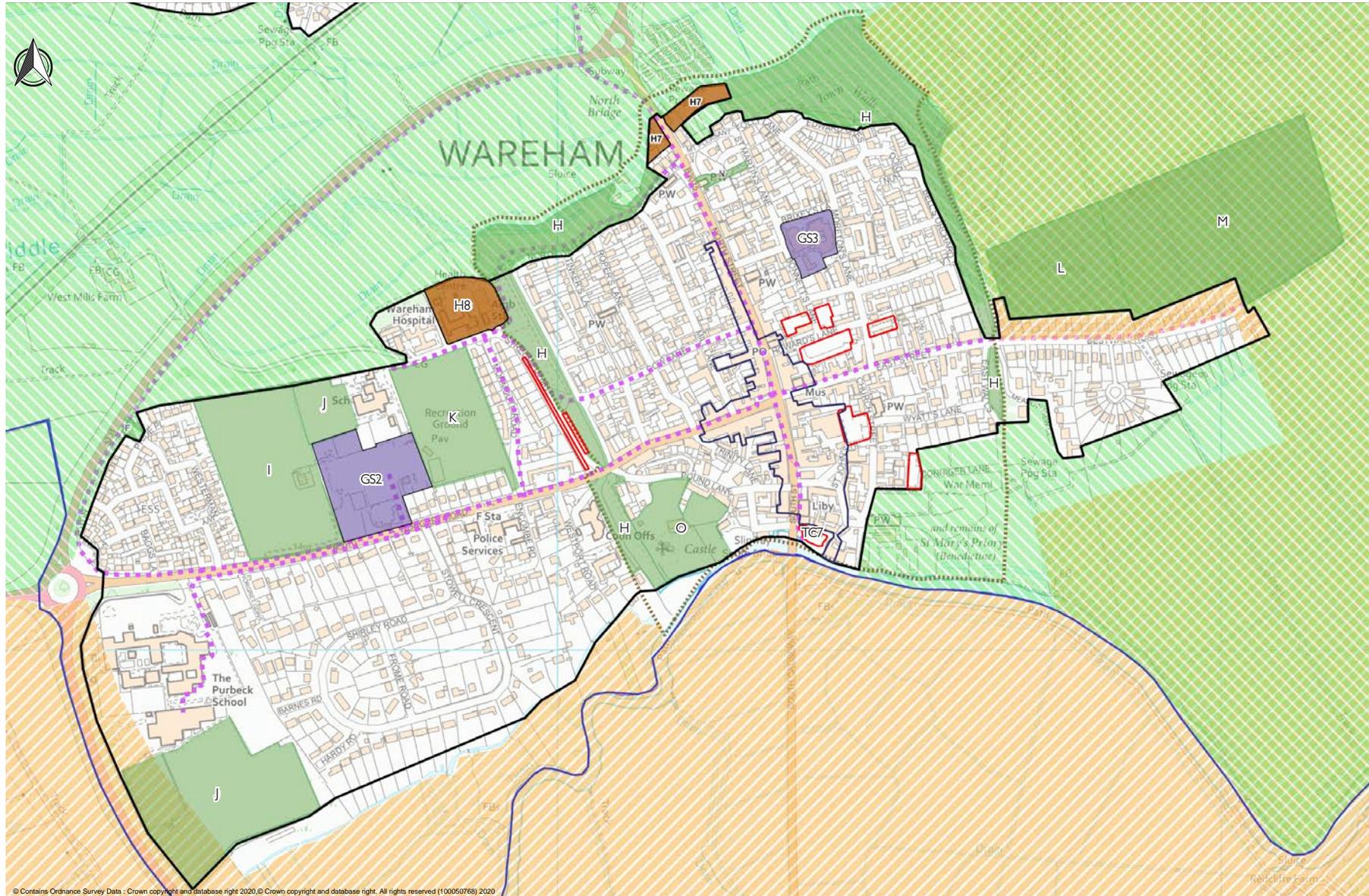


Figure 20: Wareham Neighbourhood Plan Policies Map - Inset Map 2 (Key on Inset Map 1)

3. HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT

H5 WESTMINSTER ROAD

3.4 Westminster Road

3.4.1 In responding to the early consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan, local residents had suggested that the Westminster Road Industrial Estate, built in the 1960s and early 1970s, was under used and that the accommodation there no longer meets modern business needs. In summer 2017, Daler Rowney, the main employer on the Estate, took the decision

to relocate to Bracknell. A survey of employers that same year had found that very few local residents worked in the remaining businesses and the majority drove in from the Poole area. Some owners and professional advisors confirmed that the configuration of the units no longer met modern standards for delivery vehicles, parking or yard space, that the buildings had poor insulation and needed considerable

investment and that the eaves heights were too low for modern forklift trucks and pallet stacking. The estate had a rundown appearance.

3.4.2 Bearing in mind the points above, the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan provided the opportune time to consider the long-term future of the site. Whilst both the Westminster Road and Johns Road Industrial Estates were safeguarded



Figure 21: Westminster Road Industrial Estate

3. HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT

H5 WESTMINSTER ROAD

as employment land within the 2012 Local Plan, their retention is no longer considered to be a strategic matter in the submitted revised Local Plan, which means that the Neighbourhood Plan is able to determine policies for these areas. The 2016 Dorset Workplace Strategy and 2012 updated employment land projections had identified a surplus of employment land in the area. The more modern estates of Holton Heath Trading Park and Sandford Lane Industrial Estate have vacant units and also space for intensification of the employment uses that could off-set the potential loss of some of the employment land at Westminster Road (and also Johns Road).

3.4.3 At the southern end of the Estate are a number of vacant and underused units where the owner is keen to bring forward residential development. These front onto Carey Road and adjoin residential development. This area is therefore proposed for redevelopment for housing. Given that the entire Neighbourhood Plan area falls within 5km of protected heathland (the nearest to this site being Morden Bog and Hyde Heath which is

approximately 1km distant to the north side of the Bere Road), mitigation for any additional population on this heathland may be achieved through financial contribution towards a Heathland Improvement Project (HIP), provided that the total number of new dwellings on the site and Johns Road does not exceed 50 units in total.

3.4.4 The other potential issue for the redevelopment of this site is the potential disturbance to the housing occupants from the remaining employment uses (and the associated deliveries etc). Given the housing that already exists along Carey Road this is not considered to be an insurmountable issue, and one that can be readily addressed through detailed design and layout at the application stage.

3.4.5 The partial redevelopment of this industrial site could provide about 30 dwellings, with higher numbers potentially restricted by the heathland mitigation requirements set out in Policy H4 unless a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace can be secured. The Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) prepared in

August 2019 by Wareham Town Council and agreed by Dorset Council and Natural England has assessed that under the requirements set out in the Dorset Heathlands Supplementary Planning Framework 2020 - 2025 mitigation measures for the Westminster Road Industrial Estate for an allocation of up to 30 dwellings will require a contribution through either s106 or CIL towards Heathland Infrastructure Provision (HIP). Planning applications brought forward at this site will be required to conform to the SoCG agreement.

3.4.6 Careful consideration was given to the possible extension of Northmoor Park on Green Belt land to the north, but this was rejected for sound planning reasons set out below.

3.4.7 The site lies within the designated Green Belt. The fundamental aim of national Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open (NPPF para 133). Boundaries should only be altered where there are exceptional circumstances and after all other reasonable options for meeting the need for development have been fully

3. HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT

H5 WESTMINSTER ROAD

examined, including making as much use as possible of brownfield and underused land (NPPF para 137). It is considered that there are no exceptional circumstances as all of the housing requirement can be met on brownfield land.

3.4.8 The townscape analysis undertaken by the Matrix Partnership (see figure 57 on page 71) identifies countryside on the northern edge of Northmoor Park as “High quality landscape adjacent to the Town” with the minor scarp where development would be more prominent coming to the edge of the estate. Development would be very visible from the Northport Greenway footpath and cycle route into Wareham Forest past Tantinoby Farm and from the Golf Course. In comparison, the countryside west of Westminster Road is not shown as high quality and the minor scarp would allow development to take place which would not intrude into views across the Town from the south.

3.4.9 Northmoor Park is much closer to and accessible to the internationally important nature conservation sites in Wareham Forest. There is no intervening

land which could be used as an effective Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace and there is therefore a likelihood that development here would lead to increased pressure and disturbance to these important nature conservation sites.

3.4.10 The land north of Northmoor Park includes well used allotments that are highly valued by the local community. They are secure, with low levels of theft. They are very well established and would take many years to re-establish were they to be moved.

3.4.11 Almost the entire area surrounding the Town is designated as a Minerals Safeguarding Area. The Mineral Sites Plan proposes an eastward extension to Tatchells Quarry (which is not currently operational), to the north-west of north Wareham for sand and gravel extraction. There is a 250m consultation zone proposed so that measures can be taken to avoid development within that zone constraining the extraction of the minerals resource.

Policy H5. Westminster Road

The redevelopment of the southern part of the Westminster Road Industrial Estate for residential development plus employment will be supported. The main vehicular access should be from Bere Road. New development must demonstrate good quality design as set out in Policy LDP2 and must contribute to tackling climate change as set out in Policy LDP3, and conform with the following principles of development (as illustrated in figure 22):

- Create active building frontages along Carey Road and Westminster Road
- Development to be generally 2 storeys in height
- Avenue of trees to be created along Westminster Road to soften the appearance of the street
- Main access to the development to be from Bere Road
- Vehicular access to individual sites to be from Westminster Road
- Large oak tree at junction of Carey Road and Westminster Road to be retained.

New residential development must provide heathland mitigation in accordance with Policy H4.

H5 Principles of Development - Illustrated

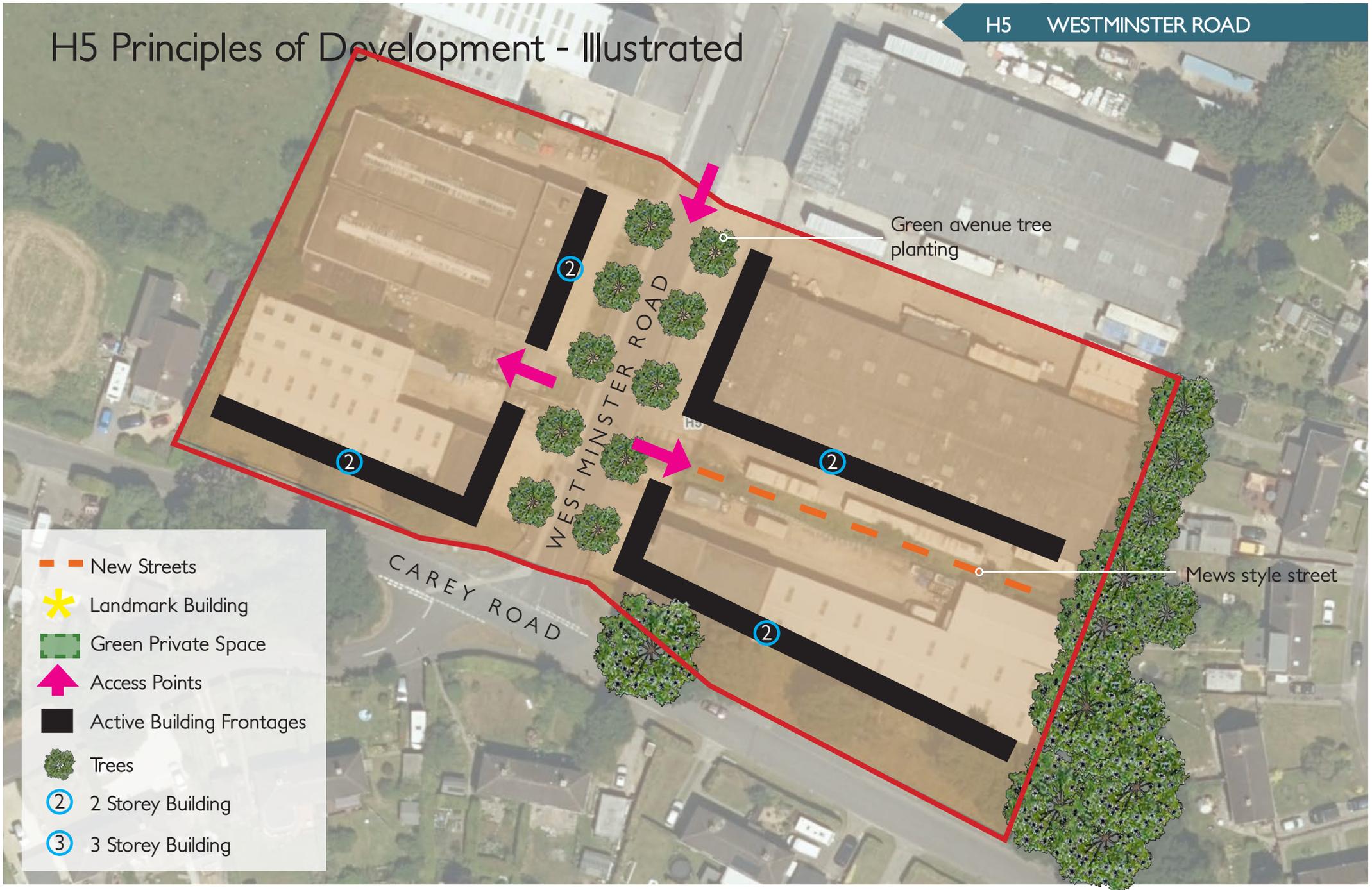


Figure 22: H5 Principles of Development - Illustrated

3. HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT

H6 JOHNS ROAD

3.5 Johns Road

3.5.1 Johns Road is a small industrial site established in the 1960s although it has previously been used as a yard since the 1920s. It is currently given over primarily to the motor trade. The former engineering works on the north side is underused and suitable for redevelopment for housing. The industrial site has an unattractive rundown appearance at a key location in northern Wareham. As with Westminster Road, the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan has provided an opportunity to consider the long-term future of this site.

3.5.2 The site adjoins the Railway Station and is a gateway site into north Wareham. The trees and hedgerows on the edge of the site are important features to be retained. The Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) prepared in August 2019 by Wareham Town Council and agreed by Dorset Council and Natural England has assessed that under the requirements set out in the Dorset Heathlands Supplementary Planning Framework 2020-2025 mitigation measures for the Johns Road Industrial

Estate for an allocation of up to 15 dwellings will require a contribution through either s106 or CIL towards Heathland Infrastructure Provision (HIP). Planning applications brought forward at this site will be required to conform to the SoCG agreement.

3.5.3 As the site is close to operational railway land, consideration will need to be given to the impact of both construction works on the railway and ensuring that future occupants are not unduly disturbed by the railway operations. It

is recommended that Network Rail is consulted at an early stage to ensure that these factors are taken into account in the final layout and design.

3.5.4 The partial redevelopment of this industrial site (based on the area occupied by the former engineering works) could provide about 15 dwellings, with higher numbers potentially restricted by the heathland mitigation requirements set out in Policy H4 unless a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace can be secured.



Figure 23: Johns Road Industrial Estate

H6 Principles of Development - Illustrated



Policy H6 Johns Road

The redevelopment of the industrial land on the north side of Johns Road for residential development will be supported, subject to the retention of the trees and hedgerows adjoining Carey Road and Bere Road. Development should include measures to ensure that future occupants are not unduly disturbed

by railway operations. New development must demonstrate good quality design as set out in Policy LDP2 and must contribute to tackling climate change as set out in Policy LDP3, and conform with the following principles of development (illustrated in figure 24):

- Create an active building frontage along Carey Road
- Development to be generally 2

storeys in height

- Retain the trees fronting onto Carey Road and Bere Road
- Vehicular access to be from Johns Road
- Parking to be at the rear of homes fronting onto Johns Road

New residential development must provide heathland mitigation in accordance with Policy H4.

Figure 24: H6 Principles of Development - Illustrated

3. HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT

H7 WAREHAM TOWN NORTHERN GATEWAY

3.6 Wareham Town Northern Gateway

3.6.1 The former Town gasworks and showroom site has been vacant for many years and has been subject to a lapsed planning permission for 11 new units plus a flat above the former gas showroom. National Grid are currently undertaking remedial works prior to disposal of the site for development.

The Autopoint garage site occupies the other half of the gateway into the Town. There is potential here to redevelop the site for housing with a building opposite the gas showroom to create a gateway with houses or flats overlooking the river and Common to create an attractive edge to the Town and the Common. A good quality design will be required at this prominent location.

3.6.2 A small part of both sites is within the Environment Agency Flood Risk area and consideration must be given to flood avoidance and mitigation measures as part of any redevelopment scheme.

3.6.3 The two sites together could provide about 20 dwellings. New development must be carefully designed and planned

to ensure that no adverse effects on the integrity of the Poole Harbour European sites occurs as a result of water pollution stemming from site runoff during the construction or operational (and if required decommissioning) stages of each development. A noise impact assessment be carried out to inform a project level HRA in order to determine that construction and operational activities will not significantly disturb SPA or Ramsar interest features. The Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) prepared in August 2019 by Wareham Town Council and agreed by Dorset Council, Natural England and the Trustees of D. E. Scott 1970 Settlement (owner of the Bog Lane SANG), has assessed that under the requirements set out in the Dorset Heathlands Supplementary Planning Framework 2020-2025 mitigation measures for the site for an allocation of up to 20 dwellings a holistic approach will be taken. SANG is therefore, required to mitigate the effects of the combined 160 dwellings allocated south of the railway. The SoCG has agreed to improvements to the Bog Lane SANG to mitigate the effect upon the Dorset Heathlands European Sites

from increased recreational pressure. Planning applications brought forward at this site will be required to conform to the SoCG agreement.

3. HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT

H7 WAREHAM TOWN NORTHERN GATEWAY



Figure 25: Former Gas Office and Showroom

Policy H7 – Wareham Town Northern Gateway (Gasworks and Autopoint sites)

The redevelopment of the former gasworks site and Autopoint garage site for residential development will be supported subject to providing a high-quality gateway design at this northern entry point to the original Saxon town. New development must demonstrate good quality design as set out in Policy LDP1 and must contribute to tackling climate change as set out in Policy LDP3, and conform with the following principles of development (illustrated in figure 27):

- Development to create an attractive gateway to the north of the town, with a new landmark building on the Autopoint site up to 3 storeys in height
- Existing landmark building on frontage of gasworks site to be retained (and converted to residential)
- Buildings other than landmark buildings to

be mainly 2 storeys in height

- Create an urban active building frontage onto North Street
- Treatment of riverside frontage to create an attractive edge
- Retain existing trees around both sites
- Consider retention of 95 North Street as positively contributing to the character of the Conservation Area
- Avoid development within the flood risk area on the Autopoint site (more detailed site survey needed to confirm extent)

Regard must be given to potential flood risk. No new dwellings should be built within the areas at risk of flooding, and regard must be given to minimising potential flood risk both within the site and to adjoining properties. New residential development must also provide heathland mitigation in accordance with Policy H4. A ground contamination assessment will be required on both sites and if appropriate mitigation will be required.



Figure 26: Northern Gateway

H7 Principles of Development - Illustrated



Figure 27: H7 Principles of Development - Illustrated

3. HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT

H8 FORMER HOSPITAL AND HEALTH CENTRE SITE

3.7 Former Hospital and Health Centre Site

3.7.1 The proposed relocation of the health and ambulance facilities to the site of the former Middle School buildings (Policy GS 2) creates an opportunity to redevelop the Hospital and Health Centre site for housing purposes. This site adjoins the listed former workhouse, the Town Walls Ancient Monument and the Common, and therefore the setting of these heritage assets will require careful consideration in the design. It also backs onto mature trees along the northern boundary which form an important feature in the local landscape and should be retained.

3.7.2 This site lends itself for flats and terraced housing and could provide about 40 dwellings. The Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) prepared in August 2019

by Wareham Town Council and agreed by Dorset Council, Natural England and the Trustees of D. E. Scott 1970 Settlement (owner of the Bog Lane SANG), has assessed that under the requirements set out in the Dorset Heathlands Supplementary Planning Framework 2020-2025 mitigation measures for the Hospital and Health Centre Site for an allocation of up to 40 dwellings a holistic approach will be taken. SANG is, therefore, required to mitigate the effects of the combined 160 dwellings allocated south of the railway. The SoCG has agreed to improvements to the Bog Lane SANG to mitigate the effect upon the Dorset Heathlands European Sites from increased recreational pressure. Planning applications brought forward at this site will be required to conform to the SoCG agreement or such other measures as agreed with Natural England

Policy H8 – Former Hospital and Health Centre site

Provided that the GP surgery is relocated, the redevelopment for residential development of the former Wareham Health Centre (GP Surgery), Wareham Hospital and Ambulance Station will be supported, subject to the retention of the trees along the northern boundary. New

development must demonstrate good quality design as set out in Policy LDP2 and must contribute to tackling climate change as set out in Policy LDP3, and conform with the following principles of development (illustrated in figure 29):

- Create active building frontages onto Streche Road and onto the access road within the site
 - Enhance the setting of the listed former workhouse by creating active building frontages facing west
 - Create an active building frontage facing the common
 - Buildings to be generally 2 storeys in height
 - Vehicular access to the site to use the existing eastern access point and a new access road to be curved so as to contain views along it
 - There should be a pedestrian and cycle route through the site
 - Parking to be provided to the rear or alongside homes
 - Trees and vegetation surrounding the site to be retained and strengthened within a publicly maintained area
- New residential development must also provide heathland mitigation in accordance with Policy H4.



Figure 28: Wareham Hospital

H8 Principles of Development - Illustrated

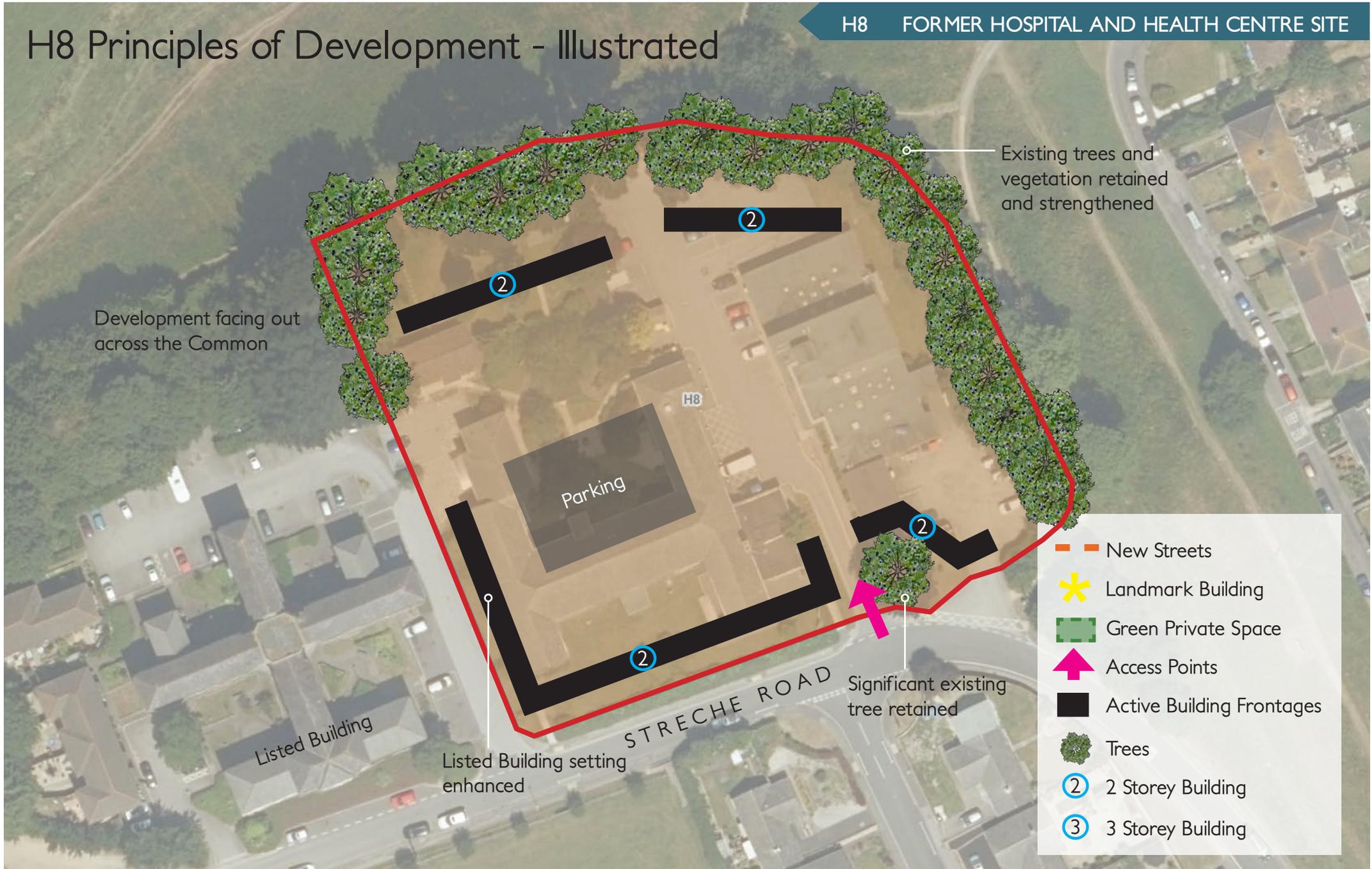


Figure 29: H8 Principles of Development - Illustrated

3. HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT

3.8 Settlement Boundary

3.8.1 Within the Settlement Boundary set out on the policies map residential development will be permitted subject to meeting the other policies in the Plan. Outside the Boundary the land is Green Belt where the construction of new buildings is inappropriate other than exceptions such as agriculture, forestry, outdoor recreation, allotments, extensions etc set out in NPPF para 145 and the Local Plan.

Policy H9 –Settlement Boundary

Residential infilling will be supported within the settlement boundary shown on the Policies Map providing it complies with the other policies in the Plan. New development must demonstrate good quality design as set out in Policy LDP1 and 2 and must contribute to tackling climate change as set out in Policy LDP3. New development must also provide heathland mitigation in accordance with Policy H4.

3.9 Parking Space

3.9.1 Within the Town Walls, other than the four main streets, the lanes are generally narrow with parking where allowed on one side only. Many of the older properties have no garage or on-plot parking space. This combined with pressure from workers in the Town looking for a free on-street parking space creates pressure on the available on-street parking and has a negative impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area and listed buildings. Recent new development with very limited or no on-site parking has exacerbated the situation. It is therefore proposed that all new residential development, other than

for care homes provides at least one dedicated parking space per unit ideally on-plot or conveniently located within the site.

H10 – Parking Space

New residential development within the Conservation Area, other than care homes and extra-care housing, will be required to provide at least one dedicated parking space per unit provided on-plot or nearby within the site. New residential development elsewhere should meet the Highway Authority's normal parking standards.



Figure 30: Long Stay Parking at Streche Road

3. HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT

3.10 Sandford Lane Employment Estate

3.10.1 Sandford Lane is the Town's largest and most modern employment estate. It is well located in terms of rail and road access. Although there are a number of vacant units at the present time there is scope to intensify development to provide for future needs. The Green Belt boundary is drawn tightly around the existing estate and prevents its further expansion at this time. Although mostly within the 400m heathland zone, development within the estate for employment purposes should not result in additional harm to the heathlands and therefore is acceptable. The western boundary of the safeguarding area has been drawn to exclude Dorset Council's Purbeck Connect centre which caters for adults with learning and physical disabilities and may in the future become available for residential development.

3.10.2 The site is on the edge of the River Piddle flood plain, overlooked from the Town Walls Ancient Monument and very visible from the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. In order not to harm these assets, new buildings should be

low in profile and designed to blend into the landscape. The existing planting along the southern and eastern sides of the Estate could be strengthened and, where development provides an opportunity to provide further planting, such opportunities should be taken.

3.10.3 On-street parking along Sandford Lane leads to congestion due to inadequate provision within some existing premises. To avoid exacerbating the problem adequate parking should be provided on-site for new development.

Policy H11 – Sandford Lane Employment Safeguarding

The Sandford Lane area defined on the Policies Map should be safeguarded for employment use. New buildings and roofs should be low in profile, dark in colour and non-reflective to blend into the landscape when viewed from the AONB and Town Walls to the east and south. A comprehensive scheme of planting of native species along the southern and eastern sides of the Estate will be sought to further assimilate new development into the landscape. Developments should have sufficient on-site parking to avoid the need to park on Sandford Lane itself. New development must demonstrate good quality design as set out in Policy LDP2 and must contribute to tackling climate change as set out in Policy LDP3. New development must also be carefully designed and planned to ensure that no adverse effects on the integrity of the Poole Harbour European sites occurs as a result of water pollution stemming from site runoff during the construction or operational (and if required decommissioning) stages of each development. A noise impact assessment be carried out to inform a project level HRA in order to determine that construction and operational activities will not significantly disturb SPA or Ramsar interest features. Lighting should be designed to minimise the impact on the adjoining AONB and nature conservation sites.

3. HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT



Figure 31: Sandford Lane Employment Estate Viewed from the Town Walls