

West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan Main Modifications: February 2015

APPENDIX 1

Chapter 2 Environment and Climate Change

Extensive changes have been made to policies and/or supporting text in this chapter so the entire chapter – as proposed to be modified – is set out as a whole. Existing text is shown as ‘normal’ text, new text is shown as *underline (italic) text*; deleted text is shown as ~~*strikethrough (italic) text*~~.

IF YOU WISH TO COMMENT ON THE MODIFICATIONS TO THIS CHAPTER PLEASE IDENTIFY THE MODIFICATION YOU ARE COMMENTING ON, USING THE RELEVANT **PAGE AND PARAGRAPH OR POLICY NUMBERS**. COMMENTS SHOULD BE BRIEF (NO MORE THAN 100 WORDS) AND MADE ON THE MODIFICATIONS RESPONSE FORM USING A SEPARATE FORM FOR EACH INDIVIDUAL POINT.

2. ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

2.1 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1.1 The area of West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland stands out from many other parts of the country for its natural environment and built heritage. The plan area contains a diverse range of natural and built environments of exceptional quality. Much of the area is designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), and a major part of the coastline is designated as a Heritage Coast and World Heritage Site. There are many important wildlife habitats and protected species. And many buildings and landscapes are of architectural or historic interest.
- 2.1.2 The local plan policies seek to protect these and other assets in the plan area in a manner commensurate with their status and giving appropriate weight to their significance. It is recognised that their active management and enhancement is to be encouraged as part of safeguarding their future, and continuing the support they provide to the local economy through making the area an attractive place to live, work and visit.
- 2.1.3 The impacts of climate change present increasing challenges, and the local plan policies seek to strengthen our resilience to key issues affecting the area such as flooding and coastal erosion. We can achieve a lot through good design, in terms of promoting better places for people to live, reducing our vulnerability to extreme weather events and other potential hazards.
- 2.1.4 The quality of design is key to making places that last. It is important that any new development responds positively to the character of its surrounds. Local distinctiveness and a sensitive response to local character goes beyond aesthetic considerations, covering issues such as the landscape or townscape setting, the pattern of streets and spaces, organisation of uses, plot patterns and the scale and positioning of buildings.

STRATEGIC APPROACH

Development should protect and enhance the natural environment - its landscape, seascapes and geological conservation interests, its wildlife and habitats and important local green spaces - by directing development away from sensitive areas that cannot accommodate change. Where development is needed and harm cannot be avoided, appropriate mitigation to off-set any adverse impact to the landscape, wildlife and green infrastructure network will be required.

High priority will be given to protecting and enhancing the area's heritage assets- including its Listed Building and Conservation Areas, and other features with local historic or cultural associations, particularly where it contributes to the area's local distinctiveness.

Development will be directed away from areas where there is likely to be significant risk to human

health or the wider environment, through flooding, coastal erosion and land instability, air and water pollution

Development should be of high quality design to help achieve sustainable, safe and inclusive communities, enhancing quality of life for residents and visitors, and designed in keeping with or to positively contribute towards the local identity of the area

2.2 PROTECTING AND ENHANCING OUR NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

LANDSCAPE, SEASCAPE AND SITES OF GEOLOGICAL INTEREST

LANDSCAPE AND SEASCAPE

- 2.2.1 The plan area covers a range of diverse landscapes, each with its own characteristics and sense of place. Areas of higher ground allow uninterrupted panoramic views of the surrounding landscapes. Within the landscape are numerous individual landmarks, such as hilltop earthworks, monuments, field patterns with associated hedges, banks and stone walls, woodlands and tree clumps, that help to contribute an individuality and sense of place at a local scale. Many of the more rural parts and some of the coastal areas have an undisturbed feeling and sense of tranquillity that are hard to find in our modern world.
- 2.2.2 From the rolling chalk downland to the more secluded clay vales, much of the countryside is designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Some of these landscapes have been captured by famous artists, such as Turner and Constable. The designation gives statutory recognition to the national importance of the landscape. A strategic framework for management of the Dorset AONB is set out in the policies of the Dorset AONB Management Plan.
- 2.2.3 The councils will have special regard to the conservation of the area's natural beauty in development management decisions. The cumulative and indirect, as well as the direct, impacts of development need to be taken into account, such as changes to drainage which could affect the landscape down stream. Effects of development outside, but affecting the AONB (within its "setting"), will also need to be carefully considered. National policy guidance gives great weight to conserving the landscape and scenic beauty of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and states that planning permission should be refused for major developments in these designated areas except in exceptional circumstances and where it can be demonstrated they are in the public interest. ~~It suggests that~~ Consideration of such applications should include an assessment of:
- the need for the development, including in terms of any national considerations, and the impact of permitting it, or refusing it, upon the local economy;
 - the cost of, and scope for, developing elsewhere outside the designated area, or meeting the need for it in some other way; and
 - any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated.
- 2.2.4 Away from the main coastal resorts, much of the coast and a wide inland strip is defined as Heritage Coast, a non-statutory designation protecting the finest stretches of undeveloped coast in England and Wales. The objectives of the designation relate to the conservation and enhancement of the area's natural beauty, enhancing the public's enjoyment and appreciation of the area, the environmental health of the inshore waters, and the social and economic needs of the area. Management of the Heritage Coast is achieved through the Dorset AONB Management Plan. Natural England is working to create the England

Coast Path, a new national trail around all of England's open coast. This project will help to improve public access to, and enjoyment of, the coast.

- 2.2.5 Areas that lie outside these national designations are not significantly less outstanding, and are worthy of conservation and enhancement.
- 2.2.6 Landscape character assessments of the area have been carried out and provide information on the different landscape character types of the area. The qualities of the coastal strip have also been considered in more detail through the Dorset Coast Land and Seascape Character Assessment. These assessments will be used as a basis to guide decisions about whether development is appropriate in the landscape and provide a framework for the provision of appropriate landscape mitigation.
- 2.2.7 Where development may be visually prominent or adversely affect landscape character, production of a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, a strategic landscape masterplan and/or a landscape management plan detailing mitigation proposals may be required.

GEOLOGY

- 2.2.8 The geology and soils of the plan area are an important resource. They provide fertile soils for agriculture and valuable minerals; and the geological exposures are of educational benefit. There are extensive areas of outcropping minerals within the plan area. To ensure these resources remain available, a safeguarding policy is implemented through the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole County Council's Minerals Local Plan and Strategy.
- 2.2.9 Most of the coastline is part of the Dorset and East Devon Coast World Heritage Site. The World Heritage site was designated by UNESCO in 2001 in recognition of its worldwide outstanding geological and scientific value. It is often referred to as the Jurassic Coast, but actually it represents a unique geological 'walk through time' spanning the Triassic, Jurassic and Cretaceous periods. The changes in the cliffs and rocks, and the ongoing coastal processes, including erosion, that continue to reveal more insights into this era, are key to what is important about the coast. Its wider landscape setting is also important to its presentation and appreciation.
- 2.2.10 The World Heritage site and its setting are protected through a wide range of international, national and local designations made either for geological, wildlife or landscape value, providing long term security for the natural values of the site. It has a management plan which sets out the significance of the area and how the various partners aim to manage and promote its enjoyment now and the future. Proposals that would better enhance or reveal the significance of the site will be supported.

At a local level, Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites (RIGS) are protected for the scientific and educational value of exposures. There is sometimes potential for designation of alternative sites and the creation of new exposures. The policy therefore allows some flexibility in protecting these sites, except where the features concerned are not capable of being created elsewhere.

ENV 1. LANDSCAPE, SEASCAPE AND SITES OF GEOLOGICAL INTEREST

- i) **The plan area's exceptional landscapes and seascapes and geological interest will be protected, taking into account the objectives of the Dorset AONB Management Plan and World Heritage Site Management Plan. Development which would harm the character, special qualities or natural beauty of the Dorset Area of Outstanding Beauty or Heritage Coast, including their characteristic landscape quality and diversity, uninterrupted panoramic views, individual landmarks, and sense of tranquillity and remoteness, will not be permitted.**

- ii) **Development should be located and designed so that it does not detract from and, where reasonable, enhances the local landscape character. Proposals that conserve, enhance and restore locally distinctive landscape features will be encouraged. Where proposals relate to sites where existing development is of visually poor quality, opportunities should be taken to secure visual enhancements. Development that significantly adversely affects the character or visual quality of the local landscape or seascape will not be permitted.**
- iii) **Appropriate ~~mitigation~~ measures will be required to ~~minimise~~ moderate the adverse effects of development on the landscape and seascape.**
- iv) **Development should maintain Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites (RIGS) for their scientific and educational value. Development that significantly adversely affects local geological features will not be permitted unless comparable sites can be identified or created elsewhere or the impact adequately mitigated through other measures.**

WILDLIFE AND HABITATS

- 2.2.11 The plan area includes a diverse range of habitats and associated species, many of which are protected through law. Some areas are of international significance *and are protected by legislation*, including the Fleet (an important site for breeding and overwintering birds), lowland heath areas around Crossways in the east, calcareous grasslands in the Cerne and Sydling Valleys, and ancient ash and alder woods. Coastal and marine areas are also proposed for protection at a European level. Many further areas are important at the national or local level. All of the sites designated (and those subject to consultation at the time of publication) are shown on the Proposals Map. Further sites may be designated during the lifetime of this plan.
- 2.2.12 It is important that we take account of the need to plan for this level of biodiversity to thrive at both a local and much larger, landscape-scale, through the appropriate protection of key sites, priority habitats and species, and the strengthening of local ecological networks.
- 2.2.13 The protection of nationally or internationally designated wildlife sites will be given great weight in planning decisions. The protection of internationally designated wildlife sites through policy ENV2 will be the over-riding policy consideration where development may cause a significant adverse impact to such a site. The strategies set out in table 2.2 have been adopted to safeguard important internationally designated wildlife sites that are known to be sensitive to certain types of development. As and when further issues arise that may adversely impact such sites, the approach to development will be carefully considered and if appropriate, a relevant strategy produced to guide new development.

Table 2.1 Sites Designated for Nature Conservation Importance	Site Designation	Explanation
INTERNATIONAL	RAMSAR SITES Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat, held at Ramsar, 1971	Sites of international importance as wetlands, particularly for their populations of migratory or wintering waterfowl.
INTERNATIONAL	SPECIAL PROTECTION AREAS (SPAs) EC Council Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds, 1979	Habitats of international importance for birds, designated to ensure the survival and reproduction of rare breeding and migratory species. Together with SACs they form a network of internationally important sites known as "Natura 2000" throughout the European Union.
INTERNATIONAL	SPECIAL AREAS OF CONSERVATION (SACs) EC Council Directive on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora, 1992 (The Habitats Directive)	Sites of international importance as natural habitats, designated to conserve habitats and species which are rare or threatened within the European Union. Sites hosting habitats or species which are particularly threatened have "priority" status. These sites also form part of the "Natura 2000" network.
NATIONAL	NATIONAL NATURE RESERVES (NNRs) 1949 National Parks & Access to the Countryside Act, or 1981 Wildlife & Countryside Act	Sites of key national, or international, biological or geological importance which are managed primarily for nature conservation. They are owned or leased by Natural England or approved bodies.
NATIONAL	SITES OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST (SSSIs) Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)	SSSIs collectively form a nationally important series of sites of biological or geological value and are notified by Natural England in accordance with published guidelines.
COUNTY	SITES OF NATURE CONSERVATION INTEREST (SNCIs) Non-statutory wildlife sites	Wildlife sites which are important in a county context. In Dorset they are selected in accordance with guidelines published by the Dorset Wildlife Trust. The guidelines are similar to those for SSSI selection, although the thresholds are lower.
LOCAL	LOCAL NATURE RESERVES (LNRs)	LNRs are sites of at least local importance for nature conservation,

	S.21 of the 1949 National Parks & Access to the Countryside Act	which are declared and usually managed by local authorities
--	---	---

- 2.2.14 Wildlife is not confined to designated sites. Development sites may contain or be adjacent to features which support wildlife or provide “stepping stones” for species. Such features should be retained or restored and appropriately managed. A number of rare or threatened species are also found in the plan area, including sand lizards, great crested newts, bats, otters, dormice and water voles. It is a criminal offence to kill, injure, sell or take protected species, or to intentionally damage, destroy or destruct their places of shelter. It is the developer’s responsibility to take reasonable measures to ascertain whether there are protected species on a site.
- ~~2.2.15 Where land proposed for development may be of wildlife value, applicants will be expected to provide appropriate survey information.~~
- 2.2.15 The cumulative and indirect, as well as the direct, impacts of development need to be taken into account. *in assessing potential harm.* For example, excessive visitor pressure can lead to trampling, erosion and disturbance. Increasing traffic can also create noise and adversely affect air quality, as well as severance of important migration routes for land animals. Consideration will also be given to whether any adverse impact to such sites could be avoided through meeting the need for that development elsewhere. Some habitats, such as ancient woodlands, cannot be replaced.
- 2.2.16 ~~Where development is permitted the~~ *The* council will seek to ensure that ~~it does not adversely affect~~ the conservation interests of sites and species ~~through the use~~ *are conserved and enhanced. Where significant harm resulting from a development cannot be avoided through locating on a alternative site with less harmful impacts, it should be mitigated. Mitigation could be on-site or through other measures. In cases where it is not possible to fully mitigate for the loss of appropriate biodiversity interests on a development site the applicants will be encouraged to avoid residual losses via off site compensation measures. Appropriate conditions and obligations may be used to prevent damaging impacts, secure long term protection and provide necessary compensation. Where development would cause significant *In the event that the* harm to local biodiversity, and ~~this cannot~~ *resulting from proposals can not be* adequately *avoided*, mitigated, ~~the application will or compensated,~~ *permission should* be refused. Development proposals where the primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity are encouraged. Where there are opportunities for enhancements which benefit nature conservation and biodiversity the council will seek appropriate measures to secure this.*
- 2.2.17 ~~Where land proposed for development may be of wildlife value, applicants will be expected to provide appropriate survey information. All appraisals for wildlife interests should be undertaken by a suitably qualified person.~~
- 2.2.18 *In order to comply with all relevant government legislation on biodiversity and Natural England advice, an appraisal scheme has been set up in Dorset by the DCC natural environment team; if required, a Biodiversity Appraisal accompanied by a Biodiversity Mitigation Plan (BMP) should be submitted alongside the planning application. This standardised process is the councils preferential scheme but developers can, if they so wish, demonstrate in other ways how they have met the statutory and policy requirements.*
- 2.2.19 Development proposals where the primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity are encouraged. Where there are opportunities for enhancements which benefit nature conservation and biodiversity the council will seek appropriate measures to secure this.

- 2.2.20 Where wildlife sites are relatively isolated from each other and from the wider countryside by urban development, it will be important to protect and enhance the remaining wildlife corridors. Work is needed to identify key wildlife corridors and local nature improvement areas through the green infrastructure strategy (see policy ENV 3), giving appropriate consideration to the ecological network across the area and how it connects to adjoining areas.
- 2.2.21 Locally coordinated projects such as Wild Purbeck, Pastures New and the Dorset Wild Rivers Project, the continuing enhancement and extension of the green infrastructure network, together with the development of major sites incorporating areas of open space managed for biodiversity, the restoration of habitats and features within or close to the site and the planting of trees and woodlands, will provide the main opportunities for biodiversity gains during the lifetime of this plan.

Table 2.2: Strategies to safeguard important internationally designated wildlife sites

International site	Development type / issue	Strategy
Dorset Heathlands important sites which represent some of the biggest and finest remaining areas of lowland heathland in the UK	Residential development involving a net increase in the local resident or staying visitor population, or other developments leading to greater recreational pressure on the heathlands causing disturbance to key species.	<p>The following forms of development (including changes of use) will not be permitted within a 400m buffer around protected heathland:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Residential (C3 or C4 of the Use Classes Order or similar) development that would involve a net increase in homes; - Tourist accommodation including built tourist accommodation, caravan and camping sites; - Sites providing accommodation for Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Show People (permanent and transit); and - Equestrian-related development that may directly or indirectly result in an increased adverse impact on the heathland. <p>Between 400 metres and 5 kilometres of a protected heathland, development will only be permitted where it takes all necessary steps to avoid or mitigate any adverse effects on the heathlands. There are a range of mitigation measures which may include the provision of areas of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG), access and parking management, warden services, monitoring and education.</p> <p>In the case of large scale development, a bespoke mitigation package agreed with Natural England and including the delivery of SANG will be required. Mitigation measures will be expected to be provided in perpetuity and operational before the occupation of new development.</p> <p>Where mitigation is required for smaller scale development, this will be delivered through financial contributions as outlined in the Planning Obligations</p>

International site	Development type / issue	Strategy
		<p>SPD (and its subsequent replacement) – either in the form of a planning obligation or the community infrastructure levy. The council will ensure that the monies collected are directed towards delivering identified Dorset Heathlands SPA and Ramsar and Dorset Heaths SAC mitigation projects.</p> <p>The provision of mitigation measures and their impact on the protected heathland will be monitored. If necessary, this strategy will be reviewed in light of the results.</p> <p>Proposals which alter patterns of recreational use on existing open spaces within 5km of the European Heathland sites must comply with environmental law by ensuring that significant adverse impacts upon internationally designated wildlife sites are avoided.</p>
<p>Poole Harbour important site for breeding passage and wintering birds.</p>	<p>Any development in the Poole Harbour catchment that may potentially contribute to an increase of nutrient loading (nitrogen) discharge into Poole Harbour, primarily through sewage treatment and disposal.</p>	<p>Development will only be permitted where it makes provision to avoid or mitigate any adverse effects of nutrient loading on the ecological integrity of the protected Poole Harbour sites, either as part of the development or through a contribution towards mitigation measures elsewhere.</p> <p>A strategic approach to the mitigation of anticipated adverse effects on these sites is being developed in conjunction with neighbouring authorities also affected (Borough of Poole and Purbeck District Council) the Environment Agency and Wessex Water to ensure that mitigation measures are coordinated and consistent, and to secure their delivery.</p> <p>Mitigation measures may include solutions that tackle point sources from sewage treatment works, or those that deal with diffuse pollution from agriculture.</p>

ENV 2. WILDLIFE AND HABITATS

~~i) Proposals that conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported.~~

- i) Internationally designated wildlife sites (including proposed sites and sites acquired for compensatory measures), 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.
- ii) Development that is likely to have an adverse effect upon the integrity of the Poole Harbour and Dorset Heaths International designations will only be permitted where there is provision to avoid or secure effective mitigation of the potential adverse effects in accordance with the strategy in Table 2.2.
- iii) Development that is likely to have an adverse effect upon nationally designated wildlife sites will not be permitted unless the benefits, in terms of other objectives, clearly outweigh the impacts on the special features of the site and broader nature conservation interests and there is no alternative acceptable solution.

- iv) In other locations, including locally identified wildlife sites *and water-bodies*, where significant harm to nature conservation interests cannot be avoided, *adequately mitigated or compensated for, it should be mitigated. Where it cannot be avoided or adequately mitigated, compensation will result in the maintenance or enhancement of biodiversity* development will not be permitted. Features of nature conservation interest should be safeguarded by development.
- v) Proposals that would result in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats, such as ancient woodlands and veteran trees, will be refused unless the need for and public benefits of the development ~~site~~ clearly outweigh the loss.
- vi) *Proposals that conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported. Opportunities to incorporate and enhance biodiversity in and around developments will be encouraged.* Development of major sites ~~will should be expected to demonstrate no net loss in biodiversity, and~~ take opportunities to help connect and improve the wider ecological networks.
- vii) Development that is likely to have an adverse effect on internationally protected species will not be permitted unless there are reasons of overriding public interest why the development should proceed and there is no alternative acceptable solution. Development on sites supporting other protected species will only be permitted where adequate provision can be made for the retention of the species or its safe relocation.

Monitoring Indicator: change in areas designated for their intrinsic nature conservation value.

Target: net increase

Monitoring Indicator: condition of sites designated for their nature conservation interest.

Target: net increase

Monitoring Indicator: Heathland bird Populations. **Target:** no net decrease

~~**Monitoring Indicator:** Productivity of heathland birds. **Target:** no net decrease~~

Monitoring Indicator: Visitor numbers to protected heathland sites **Target:** No net increase

Monitoring Indicator: Visitor numbers to SANGs following implementation **Target:** Net increase

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE, INCLUDING IMPORTANT LOCAL GREEN SPACES

- 2.2.22 Green infrastructure refers to a network of spaces and linkages that are generally valued for their wildlife, geological, landscape or historic importance and may also have recreational value and help reduce flood risk. Although often important in their own right, when considered as a holistic network they provide much greater benefits.
- 2.2.23 Developing a coherent green infrastructure network is a key step towards a more comprehensive and effective approach to managing these spaces, and working in partnerships with a range of organisations from landowners and local communities through to statutory consultees such as the Environment Agency and Natural England.
- 2.2.24 The councils will work together with local communities, developers and other relevant partners, such as town and parish councils, to develop a green infrastructure strategy for the plan area, details of when this work will commence will be given in the Local Development Scheme . This will identify those areas to be included in the green infrastructure network, which can include small open gaps which prevent neighbouring communities that have distinct and separate characters from merging into one another,

areas of particular local landscape or townscape importance, historically important spaces such as those identified within Conservation Area Appraisals, and the more urban key wildlife corridors and local nature conservation sites referred to in the above policy. The reasons for their inclusion will be clearly recorded. Local communities may identify further areas of particular importance to them through neighbourhood development plans, making clear the reason/s for their designation. Such a network is intended to support, but not prevent, the long-term development of communities. The resulting green infrastructure network will be given significant protection from development.

2.2.25 In the interim period, until such time as the green infrastructure network is defined, the following policy will apply to:

- Areas / Land of Local Landscape Importance (as identified in the previously adopted local plans)
- Portland Coastline (as identified in the previously adopted local plan for Weymouth and Portland)
- Important Open Gaps (as identified in the previously adopted local plan for Weymouth and Portland)
- Historically important spaces (as identified in adopted Conservation Area Appraisals)
- Sites of Nature Conservation *Interest Importance*, Local Nature Reserves and Ancient Woodlands, Lorton Valley and Portland Quarries nature parks.

Information on these areas and their special features may be found in a number of other published documents.

ENV 3. GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE NETWORK

- i) The councils will work together with local communities and other relevant partners to develop a green infrastructure strategy for the plan area.**
- ii) Development that would cause harm to the green infrastructure network or undermine the reasons for an area's inclusion within the network will not be permitted unless clearly outweighed by other considerations.**
- iii) Development proposals that promote geodiversity and biodiversity within this network of spaces and provide improved access and recreational use (where appropriate) should be supported.**

2.3 PROTECTING AND ENHANCING OUR HERITAGE ASSETS

2.3.1 Much of the area retains strong links with its past heritage, providing a sense of continuity, local identity and pride. This includes a rich historic and built heritage largely protected through Listed Building and Conservation Area status. There are also a large number of heritage assets that are of local architectural or historic interest and importance that add to the richness of the local built environment. In recognition of this interest, and in order to ensure that the character of these buildings is respected by development, the Councils have prepared lists of locally important heritage assets. There is also a multitude of archaeological sites and features. The South Dorset Ridgeway is a fine example of this, with a concentration of prehistoric barrows. There are also cultural associations with some of these places through the works of authors such as Thomas Hardy, William Barnes and Jane Austen and painters such as Fra Newbery.

2.3.2 Heritage assets ~~cannot be replaced, they~~ provide wide social, cultural, environmental and economic benefits and once lost they can not be replaced. Every year English Heritage publishes a list of those heritage assets most at risk of being lost as a result of neglect, decay or inappropriate development. The councils also maintain a local building at risk register of Grade II Listed Buildings. Each council has a commitment to the management of

heritage assets through the ongoing production and review of conservation area appraisals, reducing the vulnerability of assets and securing their removal of assets from the local and national 'at risk' registers.

2.3.3 Wherever possible, the councils' strategy is to ensure that historic buildings and other heritage assets that make a positive contribution to local character are put to an appropriate and viable use that is consistent with their conservation. These assets can be harmed through development, either directly or by an indirect impact to the setting. Such harm should be exceptional and will require clear and convincing justification. The effect of development on the significance of a heritage asset will be taken into account in determining planning applications, and proposals will be expected to include available information sources to help evaluate any such impact. Where development is likely to impact on a heritage asset, a statement of heritage significance must be submitted with the application. The information required in the statement will be proportionate to the importance of the asset and no more than is needed to understand the potential impact. It should normally include:

- reference to the Dorset Historic Environment Record (maintained by Dorset County Council)
- information on the purpose of works / justification for the development
- a description of the built heritage asset and its setting, including its historical context and evolution (identifying any key phases when additions or alterations have taken place). Where there is evidence of deliberate neglect of or damage to a heritage asset, the deteriorated state of the heritage asset will not be taken into account in any decision.
- an assessment of its overall significance, and the significance of the particular element/s affected by the proposal, identifying the degree of harm if any.

2.3.4 Development that makes a positive contribution to, or better reveals the significance of the heritage asset, will be encouraged. One of the strategic objectives of the local plan is to protect and enhance the outstanding built environment and the local distinctiveness of places within the area. Our strategy and policies for the historic environment will be to protect and enhance our heritage assets, secure positive improvements and play a positive role in the delivery of other plan objectives such as supporting the local economy and regeneration of key areas. Key initiatives include:

- The council's Weymouth Town Centre Strategy (policy WEY 1) will provide a mechanism for improving the condition of the historic environment and provide an opportunity to secure appropriate sustainable economic viable uses.
- Providing public realm improvements in town centres, for example the Dorchester Transport and Environment Plan (DTEP).
- Recognising the importance of markets to the vitality of historic town centres, ports, resorts and harbours.
- Encouraging heritage led tourism, for example through the conversion of the Shire Hall, Dorchester into a sustainable heritage visitor centre.
- Monitoring and reducing the number of 'at risk' heritage assets on the local and national registers.
- Working in partnership with local stakeholders to appraise conservation areas which are deemed to be under threat of inappropriate development or incremental degradation.

- Continuing to prepare and update lists of locally important heritage assets through conservation areas appraisals.
- Engaging communities in the use of neighbourhood plans as a tool for addressing conservation issues, and supporting them in the identification of locally important heritage assets.
- Exploring the potential for CIL or S106 funding to support future public realm projects.
- Using masterplans and relevant evidence to further assess the impact of development on the significance of any heritage asset or its setting.

ARCHAEOLOGY

- 2.3.5 Today's archaeological remains reflect human activity over thousands of years. The plan area is particularly rich in archaeological remains, which include burial grounds, farms and field systems, defence installations and industrial sites, lime-kilns, lighthouses and older quarry workings. Archaeological sites are an important educational, recreational and tourist resource and the councils will encourage steps to secure their appropriate management and interpretation.
- 2.3.6 Many archaeological sites are legally protected in whole or part through designation as Scheduled Monuments, in which case the granting of planning permission will be contingent on approval by the Secretary of State. There are also sites of regional or county importance. The level of protection afforded to these sites will depend upon:
- The intrinsic importance of the remains and their settings;
 - The need for development and availability of alternative sites;
 - The opportunities for mitigating measures and whether the remains are preserved in situ;
 - The potential benefits, particularly to education, recreation and tourism
- 2.3.7 The area covered by the plan has significant potential for undesignated archaeological remains and a great deal of archaeological material has yet to be discovered.
- 2.3.8 Applications affecting sites of archaeological importance must be accompanied by the results of an archaeological assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation in order that an informed decision can be made on the application. This may also be required in areas of archaeological potential. Advice is available from the County Archaeologist.

CONSERVATION AREAS

- 2.3.9 Councils have a duty to designate areas of special architectural or historic interest as Conservation Areas and make sure that their character and appearance is preserved or enhanced. In designating Conservation Areas, consideration is given not only to individual and groups of buildings but also to their surrounding townscape, landscape and setting.
- 2.3.10 Conservation Area designation means that greater control is exercised over new development which affects the area and its setting, including the demolition of buildings and the lopping, topping or felling of trees. In assessing proposals that may affect a Conservation Area, the councils will have particular regard to:
- avoiding the loss of buildings and features which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the area;
 - the characteristics of proposed development (including its function) and how it reinforces local distinctiveness;

- the relationship of the new development to historic development patterns both in terms of the siting of buildings on plots and the form and layout of streets or the settlement as a whole;
 - the appropriateness of the proposed design and use of the development and its likely impact on any built or landscape features which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.
- 2.3.11 Adverse impacts on buildings, open spaces (including garden areas and the setting of Important Local Buildings), views or features (including trees, walls and architectural features such as windows, doors, chimneys, porches, canopies and ironmongery) which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the area, will not normally be permitted.
- 2.3.12 Applications for total or partial demolition of an Important Local Building (as identified in the Conservation Area Appraisals) or an unlisted building that makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of a conservation area, will be required to explain the planning benefits of redevelopment and justify why the repair and retention is not viable ..
- 2.3.13 Proposals for demolition will be refused where this would lead to an unsightly gap in the street scene or where there are no suitable arrangements in place to provide an approved replacement development in keeping with the character of the conservation area. Where consent is granted, a planning condition will be imposed to prevent implementation until a contract has been let for the approved replacement development.
- 2.3.14 *Information relating to Conservation Areas and their special features may be found in Conservation Area Appraisals and other published documents on the website www.dorsetforyou.com*

LISTED BUILDINGS

- 2.3.15 Buildings are 'listed' by English Heritage as being of special architectural or historic interest. They are protected by law. Listing covers the whole property, inside and out, and any object or structure fixed to it, and any object or structure within the building's curtilage that was built prior to 1 July 1948.
- 2.3.16 Owners of Listed Buildings should keep them in good repair. If a Listed Building falls into disrepair and remains neglected, the councils can serve an urgent works notice or a repairs notice on the owner specifying what work needs to be done. The councils may carry out works and seek to recover the costs from the owner in certain circumstances.
- 2.3.17 A Listed Building can be harmed through inappropriate development. Even minor alterations and extensions or development within its setting, can potentially adversely affect the significance of a Listed Building. The original plan form, roof, walls and openings as well as interior and exterior features should be retained. The replacement of doors, windows and other features with alternatives that harm the character or significance of the building will not normally be permitted.
- 2.3.18 The best way to conserve Listed Buildings is to keep them in use, ideally the use for which they were originally designed. Consent will not be given for the demolition of any Listed Building without clear and compelling evidence from the applicant that the building cannot be conserved, including that adequate efforts have been made to retain the building in its current use or a compatible alternative use, and that its redevelopment will provide substantial planning benefits, including economic regeneration or environmental enhancement. The evidence should include an assessment of the condition of the building, costs of repair and what alternatives have been considered and why they have been dismissed. Where consent is granted for the demolition of a Listed Building, owners will be

required to make provision for the appropriate recording and assessment of details of the building. Measures must be taken during demolition and building works to ensure the structural stability of retained parts and adjoining structures.

HISTORIC PARKS AND GARDENS

Historic parks and gardens are important both for their own intrinsic value, and for their contribution to the character of their surrounding landscapes, *tourism, recreation and leisure*. Parks and gardens of national significance are identified by English Heritage and listed in its Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest as either Grade I (international importance), Grade II* (exceptional historic interest), or Grade II (special historic interest).

- 2.3.19 In addition to these sites, there are other historic parks and gardens in the plan area that are of local importance. Dorset County Council and the Dorset Gardens Trust are preparing a list of sites.
- 2.3.20 The appearance or setting of a park or garden will be a material planning consideration in the determination of planning applications.

ENV 4. HERITAGE ASSETS

- ~~i) *Proposals which respect, protect or enhance the significance and setting of heritage assets will be supported.*~~
- ~~ii) *In considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a heritage asset a judgement will be made, taking into account the scale of any harm, potential public benefit and the nature, significance and level of importance of the asset.*~~
- ~~iii) *Where nationally important archaeological remains and their settings are affected by proposed development, there should be a presumption in favour of their physical conservation. Development should not be permitted which would have an adverse effect upon the remains and their settings. Adequate provision must be made for preserving any archaeological remains, either in-situ or by record.*~~
- ~~iv) *Proposals for development within a Conservation Area, or outside but which would affect its setting or the views into or out of the area, should not be permitted unless they preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.*~~
- ~~v) *Development should not be permitted if it is likely to have an adverse effect on the significance, setting, character or integrity of a Listed Building. The total or substantial demolition of a Listed Building will be wholly exceptional.*~~
- ~~vi) *Substantial harm to or loss of a historic park or garden should not be permitted.*~~
- i) *The impact of development on a designated or non-designated heritage asset and its setting must be thoroughly assessed against the significance of the asset. Development should conserve and where appropriate enhance the significance.*
- ii) *Applications affecting the significance of a heritage asset or its setting will be required to provide sufficient information to demonstrate how the proposals would positively contribute to the assets's conservation.*
- iii) *A thorough understanding of the significance of the asset and other appropriate evidence including Conservation Area Character Appraisals and Management Plans should be used to inform development proposals including potential conservation and enhancement measures.*
- iv) *Any harm to the significance of a designated or non-designated heritage asset must be justified. Applications will be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal; if it has been demonstrated that all reasonable efforts have been made to*

sustain the existing use, find new uses, or mitigate the extent of the harm to the significance of the asset, and; if the works proposed are the optimum required to secure the sustainable use of the asset.

- v) The desirability of putting heritage assets to an appropriate and viable use that is consistent with their conservation will be taken into account.
- vi) Where harm can be justified, appropriate provision will be required to capture and record features, followed by analysis and where appropriate making findings publically available.

Monitoring Indicator: number of designated heritage assets at risk. **Target:** no net increase

Monitoring Indicator: number of conservation areas with up to date appraisals (assessed every 10 years). **Target:** at least 65%

2.4 PROTECTING OURSELVES FROM NATURAL AND MAN-MADE DISASTERS

2.4.1 The consequences of climate change, including extreme weather events, are some of the biggest challenges facing the country. Although reducing greenhouse gas emissions is expected to help prevent the worst scenarios, we will still need to adapt to some degree of change, including:

- heavy rainfall and more frequent and severe storms
- increased average sea levels
- warmer, wetter winters and hotter, drier summers
- greater flooding (inland and coastal)
- coastal erosion
- crop failures / agricultural decline
- species and habitats decline
- human health risks from extreme temperatures
- more limited drinking water resources

2.4.2 This part of the chapter covers issues in relating to flooding, coastal erosion, land instability, agricultural land, and contamination.

FLOOD RISK

2.4.3 Flooding usually occurs adjacent to rivers and other watercourses or in low-lying coastal areas, but it can also occur elsewhere, such as groundwater flooding caused by springs, or where buildings or other structures affect the natural drainage of the land. Some areas are at risk from both fluvial and tidal flooding, or have the potential to exacerbate flooding elsewhere through surface water runoff and overland flow. The councils wish to avoid danger to life and damage to property wherever flood risk may exist. Dorset County Council is the lead Local Flood Authority in managing local flood risk and surface water flooding and the take up of sustainable drainage systems.

2.4.4 Flood risk has been mapped in the Strategic Flood Risk Assessments for the area, and updated flood risk maps are also shown on the Environment Agency website. The defined flood zones 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.

Surface water mapping can be found in the Dorset Strategic Surface Water Management Plan.

2.4.5 Weymouth Town Centre, the Park District and the Chiswell area of Portland are particularly vulnerable to flooding. In West Dorset, Bridport is considered to be the most vulnerable area to flooding. Some uses are more vulnerable than others, and this will also be taken into account in determining the level of risk and acceptability of a proposal. Table 2.3 provides an indicative list of vulnerable development types, please note that this list is not exhaustive.

Table 2.3: Vulnerability Classification

Highly Vulnerable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Basement dwellings - Caravans, mobile homes and park homes intended for permanent residential use - Hazardous substances
More Vulnerable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hospitals - Living accommodation (including built tourist accommodation) - Drinking establishments and nightclubs - Non-residential uses for health services, nurseries and educational establishments
Less Vulnerable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Buildings used for shops, offices and other businesses - Assembly and leisure - Land and buildings used for agriculture and forestry. - Water treatment works which do not need to remain operational during times of flood - Sewage treatment works (if adequate measures to control pollution and manage sewage during flooding events are in place)

2.4.6 Appropriate surface water management and Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDs) should be incorporated within development proposals. Proposals for development in medium and higher flood risk areas must be accompanied by a site-specific flood risk assessment, clearly identifying whether the development will be safe for its lifetime taking account of the vulnerability of its users, and whether there may be any potential increase or reduction in flood risk elsewhere.

ENV 5. FLOOD RISK

- i) **New development or the intensification of existing uses should be planned to avoid risk of flooding (from surface water run-off, groundwater, fluvial and coastal sources) where possible. The risk of flooding will be minimised by:**
 - steering development towards the areas of lowest risk and avoiding inappropriate development in the higher flood risk zones
 - ensuring development will not generate flooding through surface water run-off and/or exacerbate flooding elsewhere
- ii) **In assessing proposals for development in an area with a medium or higher risk of flooding, the council will need to be satisfied that:**
 - there are no reasonably available alternative sites with a lower probability of flooding (where a site has been allocated this test will have been satisfied) adequate measures will be taken to mitigate the risk and ensure that potential occupants will be safe, including measures to ensure the development is appropriately flood resilient and resistant, and
 - safe access and escape routes are provided where required.

In the case of major development on unallocated sites, wider sustainability benefits should not remove the need to consider flood risk or surface water management, or the need to mitigate accordingly.
- iii) **Development will not be permitted where it would adversely impact on the future maintenance, upgrading or replacement of a flood defence scheme.**

Monitoring Indicator – number of planning permissions granted contrary to the advice of the

Environment Agency or Dorset County Council on either flood defence grounds or water quality.

Target: 0

Monitoring Indicator – The extent of the plan area that lies within flood zone 3. **Target:** no net increase.

LOCAL FLOOD ALLEVIATION SCHEMES

2.4.7 *In addition to the extent of fluvial and tidal flooding, there are parts of the plan area affected by surface water, groundwater and sewer flooding. The councils recognise the need for local flood alleviation schemes in response to this increased risk. Work involving DEFRA, the Environment Agency, Dorset County Council, West Dorset District Council and the Burton Bradstock Flood Action Group has led to the outline design of a scheme to divert surface water run off from the fields to the north and west of the village, because a number of properties in the centre of the village are liable to frequent flooding (one to two years). Although funding is not currently available to implement the works, the land identified for an alleviation scheme needs to be kept free of built development to ensure that when funding is secured the scheme can go ahead. A similar approach may need to be taken elsewhere in the plan area of as other schemes are progressed.*

ENV 6. LOCAL FLOOD ALLEVIATION SCHEMES

- ~~i) Land to the north of Barrowfield Close and North Hill Close, as shown on the Proposals Map, will be reserved for the implementation of the Burton Bradstock Flood Alleviation Scheme. Any development that would significantly undermine its delivery will not be permitted.~~
- i) Where local flood alleviation schemes are drawn up in consultation with the local community and agreed by DEFRA, the Environment Agency and Dorset County Council, development that would significantly undermine their delivery will be resisted.

COASTAL EROSION AND LAND INSTABILITY

2.4.8 As a first principle, new development should be directed away from areas vulnerable to coastal erosion and land instability, to avoid putting people at risk. Where there is development close to the coast in areas where there is risk, a sustainable and well informed approach will be taken. Coastal erosion and land instability will have an impact on our existing coastal communities, as there are only limited funds available for new or improved coastal defences. And even if there were sufficient funds, we also need to consider wider impacts of coastal defences on the natural environment. The status of the World Heritage Site depends on allowing these ongoing coastal processes. The introduction of tidal flows in an area can also provide opportunities to re-create inter-tidal habitats, although in places this may have an adverse impact on the integrity of valuable freshwater habitats. Managing coastal erosion is about finding 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.

2.4.9 Although there are uncertainties regarding the extent and pace of sea level rise and coastal change, the Shoreline Management Plan has defined the over-arching strategy for managing the coast, identifying which sections of the coast are to be protected in the short (0 to 20 years), medium (20 to 50 years) and long term (50 to 100 years). However its delivery will be dependent on the funding available at the time. In addition to this, Coastal

Risk Planning Guidance for West Dorset and Weymouth & Portland has been prepared which sets out the nature of risks posed to coastal areas from future coastal change and a detailed exploration of planning for, and managing, adaptation has been undertaken through the Dorset Coastal Change Pathfinder project on the 'Jurassic Coast'. Marine Plans are also to be written, covering defined inshore and off-shore areas, and will help establish where planning conditions or restrictions may be placed on what developers do.

- 2.4.10 Additional coastal defences are currently planned at Lyme Regis and Weymouth Town Centre to continue to defend these areas. Although existing defences will continue to protect the majority of other coastal areas in the medium term, a number of smaller communities will not be defended because of the ongoing sustainability of maintenance and the associated costs. The coastline is expected to continue to erode in areas such as Old Castle Road in Wyke, Bowleaze Cove and Furzy Cliffs, and parts of Ringstead Bay and the river mouth at Charmouth.
- 2.4.11 Managing the risk from coastal change will require further work to be undertaken to identify all the areas likely to be affected by physical changes to the coast, and what limited development may be appropriate according to local circumstances. These areas will be identified as Coastal Change Management Areas (CCMAs).
- 2.4.12 The councils will undertake more detailed studies to inform policy development in these areas using the Coastal Risk Planning Guidance and the Dorset Coastal Change Pathfinder Project. In some locations, the relocation and rollback inland of existing coastal development and infrastructure will also need to be considered carefully alongside landscape, wildlife and visual impacts.
- 2.4.13 Unstable ground conditions may occur on the coast or inland, and can be caused by a variety of factors including coastal erosion and the local geology. Known land instability zones within Lyme Regis and Charmouth are shown on the Proposals Map. Where unstable ground conditions exist, landslides and subsidence may be triggered by natural processes (such as excess rainfall) or manmade processes (such as through excavation or local drainage systems). It is important that proposals for development do not trigger ground movements either within or beyond a development site. The submission of a ground stability report or coastal erosion study may be necessary, depending on the scope and scale of the proposed development.

A ground stability report will not be necessary if the development is unlikely to have the potential to trigger the occurrence of subsidence or land instability either by significantly altering groundwater conditions or by way of a significant change in magnitude of loads applied to the ground (as can reasonably be assessed). The proposed development would also need to meet the following tests:

- i. Surface water run-off is accommodated within existing, fully functioning, piped water disposal systems.
- ii. The combined dead, imposed and wind loads are sustained and transmitted by the development to the ground by use of suitably designed foundations (without requiring adaptation, underpinning, extension or replacement of these foundations at a later stage).
- iii. There is no significant filling or excavation of the ground.

If these tests are not met then the developer will be required to submit to a ground stability or coastal erosion vulnerability report. The report should be prepared by a suitably qualified and experienced geotechnical specialist, to provide sufficient evidence to

demonstrate that the proposed development will not unacceptably adversely affect ground stability or that ground instability can be satisfactorily mitigated in the design of the development. The report should show whether the land / site is stable or could be made stable to support the loads imposed over the expected lifetime of the development, whether the development would threaten land stability in the wider local area, and whether any instability could be reduced to an acceptable level by mitigation and stabilisation measures. Any potential impacts on the character of the area, environmental designations, and public rights of way should also be highlighted.

- 2.4.14 Where necessary to reduce potential risk, a temporary permission may be used to limit the planned lifetime of the proposed development. Restoration conditions may also be imposed.

ENV 7. COASTAL EROSION AND LAND INSTABILITY

- i) **New development will be directed away from areas vulnerable to coastal erosion and land instability to avoid putting people at risk unless it can be demonstrated that the site is stable or could be made stable, and that the development is unlikely to trigger landsliding, subsidence, or exacerbate erosion within or beyond the boundaries of the site.**
- ii) **The council will identify Coastal Change Management Areas through a supplementary planning document, based on the Shoreline Management Plan and supporting evidence. Within these areas no new development will be permitted for residential or similarly occupied uses. The replacement of properties affected by coastal change may be permitted within a defined area agreed through a community relocation strategy as an exception to normal policy.**

Monitoring Indicator – number of planning applications granted to support roll back in areas of coastal erosion and land instability.

AGRICULTURAL LAND AND FARMING RESILIENCE

- 2.4.15 Agricultural land is an important resource for current and future populations. The production of local food and energy crops can be supported through community initiatives such as allotments, community orchards and community woodland planting. Safeguarding farmland for future local food and energy crop production is an important consideration in planning. Where development of agricultural land is unavoidable, poorer quality land should be used in preference to higher quality land, except where this would be inconsistent with other policy and sustainability considerations. However it is recognised that many settlements would have located in the more productive agricultural areas, and as such options to expand these settlements to meet local needs may inevitably be on higher quality agricultural land.

ENV 8. AGRICULTURAL LAND AND FARMING RESILIENCE

- i) **Community schemes providing local food, or crops for local energy production, will be encouraged.**
- ii) **Where possible, the council will steer built development towards areas of poorer quality agricultural land where this is available, except where this would be inconsistent with other policy and sustainability considerations.**

Monitoring Indicator – amount of high quality agricultural land lost to development (Grade 1, 2, 3a).

POLLUTION AND CONTAMINATION

- 2.4.16 Past developments and processes, such as old gas works and landfill, may have resulted in contamination of land and water resources, which can pose a threat to human health, the natural environment and general amenity. Few sites are so badly contaminated that they cannot be re-used at all, but the contamination may limit the range of potential future uses and impact on the cost and viability of development. The councils will encourage proposals that help bring contaminated sites into productive use. Where a site is affected by contamination, responsibility for securing safe development rests with the developer and/or landowner .
- 2.4.17 Where it is anticipated that contamination may be present near or on a proposed development area, a contaminated land assessment will need to be submitted. This should establish the likely sources, pathways (such as seepage or air-borne transmission) and risks (including cumulative risks) posed to possible receptors (such as humans, wildlife and public water supplies). In assessing the level of risk, the councils will take into account any remedial works or mitigation included as part of the application.
- 2.4.18 Controls on developments that pose a risk to groundwater are essential in order to ensure an adequate, safe water supply across much of our area. Groundwater feeds into both the public water supply and over 500 private water supplies. This supply may be adversely affected through pollution and may also be depleted through surface water and drainage systems that do not allow water to percolate into the soils. The most vulnerable groundwater sources have been defined as Groundwater Source Protection Areas, and are identified on the Proposals Map.
- 2.4.19 See also Policy ENV 16 which safeguards against development that is likely to result in contaminated land and considers the effects of water pollution on amenity, health and the natural environment.

ENV 9. POLLUTION AND CONTAMINATED LAND

- i) **Development will not be permitted which would result in an *significant unacceptable* risk of pollution to ground water, *surface water-bodies and tidal waters sources*.**

Planning permission for development on or adjoining land that is suspected to be contaminated will not be granted unless it can be demonstrated that there is no unacceptable risk to future occupiers of the development, neighbouring uses and the environment from the contamination.

Monitoring Indicator – annual change in chemical & biological quality of waterways throughout the plan area. **Target:** no decrease in quality.

2.5 ACHIEVING HIGH QUALITY AND SUSTAINABILITY IN DESIGN

- 2.5.1 Good design has a fundamental influence on our environment, the way we live our lives and is essential to achieving the aims of sustainable development and resilience to climate change. It makes places that are attractive, usable, durable and which can adapt to changing needs. It also shapes how we feel about a place and should make places special and unique – something that is often referred to as ‘a sense of place’. The following principles of good design are relevant to both urban and rural settings.

QUALITY

DESIRED OUTCOME

PRINCIPLES OF GOOD DESIGN

PERMEABILITY	⇒ places are easy to get to and move around in.	⇒ the route network is designed to put people's comfort and convenience above vehicles
LEGIBILITY	⇒ the design makes it clear and simple for people to find their way around	⇒ places include landmarks, routes are aligned to key views and important views are safeguarded, buildings reflect their function and importance
VARIETY	⇒ they are interesting and not monotonous – there is variety and choice	⇒ places include a mix of building types, sizes, uses and/or architectural styles
LIVELY PUBLIC REALM	⇒ Appropriate levels of activity in the street so that places are attractive and inviting	⇒ public and private spaces, including linear routes, are clearly defined and with active uses promoted in public areas.
SAFETY AND SECURITY	⇒ people feel safe	⇒ there is activity in, and doors and windows overlooking, routes and spaces. There is a clear definition between public and private spaces.
ROBUSTNESS	⇒ places can adapt to the changing needs of the occupiers	⇒ places and buildings are adaptable
IDENTITY AND DISTINCTIVENESS	⇒ places have a distinct identity and reflect their history / local area	⇒ places and buildings use styles / building materials relevant and special to their local area
AMENITY	⇒ there is no friction between neighbouring land uses	⇒ there isn't excessive overshadowing, loss of privacy, noise or pollution in places people expect to enjoy.
FUNCTIONALITY	⇒ facilities are provided to a level and design to ensure places can function effectively	⇒ <i>buildings have sufficient space to undertake day to day tasks/</i> facilities such as bin stores, drying areas and sitting out spaces are provided to meet the needs of occupiers.
RESILIENCE	⇒ <i>buildings and</i> places can adapt <u>to changing needs</u> and cope with the consequences of climate change	⇒ designs meet nationally <i>recognised</i> standards of <i>Sustainable development and construction such as BREEAM Communities and Code for Sustainable Homes and are flexible to adapt to changing needs and issues.</i>

2.5.2 In designing new development, consideration needs to be given to many issues, including

- understanding the landscape / townscape setting and what contributes to local distinctiveness,
- the importance of streets, spaces and routes,

- the form, scale and positioning of buildings,
 - the detailed design and materials used,
 - the environmental performance of places and individual buildings, what uses may take place in these areas and how they may impact on the amenity and enjoyment of the place,
 - how a place functions and what facilities are required,
 - ensuring places can adapt to the changing needs of users and environmental conditions.
- 2.5.3 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 will be refused.

THE LANDSCAPE AND TOWNSCAPE SETTING

- 2.5.4 New development should make a positive contribution to local distinctiveness. Proposals should therefore be formulated with an appreciation of the built and natural context of the local area by recognising the features that collectively generate a sense of place. These can include landscape, townscape, street scene and routes through, views, the mix of uses, boundary treatments, locally recognised features etc. A detailed assessment of the site and its surroundings will be necessary to demonstrate how a proposal contributes to the local distinctiveness of that locality. The following is a checklist of matters that should form the basis of a site survey and be incorporated into supporting statements and Design and Access Statements where these are required:
- **Landform** – showing whether the site is level or how it slopes, and any specific features in terms of local geology
 - **Microclimate** – such as the prevailing wind direction, shading from buildings and other features, and any other known factors that may influence design
 - **Land uses** – in particular noting levels of activity they may generate and those that may be sensitive to noise, disturbance or overlooking
 - **Key Views** - identifying important views both in and out of the site.
 - **Routes** – existing and potential links to other sites and areas such as streets, footpaths, bridleways and cycleways,.
 - **Built form, materials, traditions and architectural detailing** – the strength of local character and what aspects have influenced it, and the relationship of the site to existing surrounding development, in terms of plot size, building alignment, layout, uses and active frontages, massing, height, proportion, scale, building styles, materials and detailing
 - **Nationally significant features**, such as national landscape designations, national and international nature conservation sites, historically and architecturally important ‘heritage assets’ which include Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings and Scheduled Monuments and Registered Parks and Gardens
 - **Locally significant features**, such as local landmark buildings, key routes and stopping places, trees and hedgerows, streams or rivers, boundary features such as stone walls
 - **Existing servicing / infrastructure** – such as cabling, street signage, kerbs, bollards etc
- 2.5.5 Conservation Area Appraisals, Urban and Landscape Character Assessments can help provide some understanding of how previous development and land uses have contributed to this sense of place. These are a material planning consideration.
- 2.5.6 The design and layout of proposals should have regard to the landscape and townscape setting of the site and effectively integrate new development (including any servicing or infrastructure requirements) into its surroundings. Development proposals should provide for the retention of existing trees and any other features of merit where their removal

would harm the character and enjoyment of the site or surrounding area. An allowance should be made for any likely future growth *of natural features and trees*. To protect natural features in residential developments, these should be incorporated into the public domain rather than private gardens. Trees to be retained should be appropriately protected throughout construction. If the loss of trees is unavoidable, replacement trees of equivalent landscape, amenity and wildlife value should be planted and maintained. Where new planting is needed, native species that are indigenous to the locality are usually preferred, to be in keeping with the local landscape character and provide greater wildlife benefit. Any proposed planting schemes will be expected to commence no later than the next available planting season following implementation of the development. Details and method statements for achieving this should be submitted as part of a design statement or landscape plan.

ENV 10. THE LANDSCAPE AND TOWNSCAPE SETTING

- i) All development proposals should contribute positively to the maintenance and enhancement of local identity and distinctiveness. Development should be informed by the character of the site and its surroundings.**
- ii) Development will provide for the future retention and protection of trees and other features that contribute to an area's distinctive character. Such features may not always be designated or otherwise formally recognised.**
- iii) Development should only be permitted where it provides sufficient hard and soft landscaping to successfully integrate with the character of the site and its surrounding area**
- iv) Opportunities to incorporate features that would enhance local character, including public art or that relate to the historical, ecological or geological interest of a site, should be taken where appropriate.**

THE IMPORTANCE OF STREETS AND SPACES

- 2.5.7 In built up areas, proposals should create layouts of buildings and spaces with a clear identity. The design should be informed by the relationship with nearby buildings and the general pattern of development that contributes to the character of the area. Where development will alter the prevailing street pattern, this should be justified in terms of improved legibility, permeability or local character.
- 2.5.8 Streets and spaces should be easy to move around and well connected to the surrounding area. Streets should be designed as public spaces and places in their own right and include a network of interconnected spaces and routes for pedestrians and cyclists as well as vehicles. Well defined public and private areas, with active and overlooked public areas and secure private areas, create places that are safe and easily understood.
- 2.5.9 *Works to the public realm within the historic environment should positively contribute to local character and identity, sensitively integrating and retaining in situ traditional surface materials, boundary treatments and street furniture.*
- 2.5.10 New developments should make provision for sustainable methods of transport including bus routes, footways, cycle routes and bridleways and proposals should not unduly limit opportunities for future connections and growth. Consideration should be given to how linkages relate to the wider route network in terms of an overall hierarchy, and how key routes and junctions are defined through their scale and enclosure, use of views, spaces and stopping places, and local landmarks. In residential areas or where pedestrian activity is high, the design of new vehicle routes should aim to keep traffic speeds below 20mph.

The road layout including any parking provision should be designed so as not to dominate the street scene.

- 2.5.11 Where a development would create a new public space, information should be provided on how the spaces are to be laid out, indicating:
- natural surveillance from development
 - key routes and stopping places, and how these relate to local landmarks
 - provision for recreation and social interaction in open spaces, including disabled users
 - surface water run-off treatment
 - lighting
 - biodiversity benefits
 - future management of the space
- 2.5.12 Proposed boundary treatments have an important influence on local character. Careful consideration needs to be given to the type, height and level of privacy required, how they define the street or space and maintain and enhance local character, and the potential impact of occupants' permitted development rights on the maintenance of these treatments.
- 2.5.13 How well a place functions is also a key determinant of good design. *Developments should be fit for purpose* and consideration needs to be given to how functional elements (such as bin stores, recycling facilities, drying areas, cycle parking, mobility scooter storage and private amenity/garden space with associated storage and composting facilities) will be successfully accommodated, with regard to the uses proposed and character of the area. These facilities will also need to be provided to a level that is appropriate to the scale of development proposed. For example the amount of private garden space proposed for dwellings should reflect the scale of the property and provide enough useable space for the likely occupants. Specific provision for bins may need to be accommodated at the kerbside where groups of properties do not front onto a highway, to avoid obstruction and clutter of pavements.

DESIGNING OUT CRIME

- 2.5.14 The layout and design of buildings should take into account the need to create a sense of safety and security. Development should normally have the main access to a building at the front, facing the street. Doors and windows should provide surveillance onto public areas; blank facades should be avoided. Private areas should be clearly defined through appropriate boundary treatment, and care taken to limit opportunities for the criminal to gain easy access to the rear of buildings and other private spaces.
- 2.5.15 Secured by Design is a set of design principles devised by the Police to promote safe design and layouts. Compliance with this standard should be considered where it does not compromise the quality of design.

ENV 11. THE PATTERN OF STREETS AND SPACES

- i) **Within and adjoining existing settlements, development should ensure that:**
- **streets and spaces are well-defined, safe and pleasant to use, with active and overlooked public areas and secure private areas. In residential areas, or where pedestrian activity is high, the design of new vehicular routes should aim to keep traffic speed below 20mph.**
 - **Places are designed to be clear and simple for people to find their way around, and not dominated by the road layout and parking, places are well-connected throughout the site and with the surrounding area and do not unduly limit**

opportunities for future growth. Bus routes and bus stops, and strategic cycle and pedestrian routes, should be planned for.

- **the design of routes reflects the likely levels of use, and key routes will be easily identifiable through their scale, alignment and use of vistas.**
 - **provision is made for bin stores, recycling facilities, drying areas, cycle parking, mobility scooter storage and private amenity/garden space (and associated storage and composting facilities) appropriate to the uses proposed and character of the area.**
- ii) places should be designed to reduce opportunities for, and fear of, crime. Major development should achieve full Secured by Design certification unless this would conflict with other planning policies.**

THE DESIGN AND POSITIONING OF BUILDINGS

FORM, SCALE AND POSITIONING

- 2.5.16 The form, scale and positioning of buildings, and how they relate to their surrounds, has a bearing on the character of an area and how it functions. Historically, the scale of individual buildings reflected their public function or importance, with more important buildings (such as town halls and places of worship) built at larger scales than other uses. Such buildings might deviate from the general building line to emphasise their importance, either to dominate the street scene or stand apart in a defined space. Corner plots (where roads or pathways meet) are often key sites which, if developed close to the front of the plot, help visually define the layout of an area. Buildings on such plots are usually visible from a number of vantage points and provide good sites for landmark buildings, especially where such buildings perform an important function. Sites that terminate a view also need careful consideration and may provide a good location for landmark buildings. Different uses, functions, scale, detailing and positioning of buildings and spaces can bring variety and vibrancy to an area, contributing to the local distinctiveness of a place.
- 2.5.17 Applications for new development should include information on how its form, scale and positioning relates to its surroundings. Where development would differ from this, it should only be justified in terms of improved legibility or local character.
- 2.5.18 The scale and design of extensions can have a negative impact on the individual character of a building and how it relates to its surroundings. This is particularly noticeable in the roof form, as this reflects the shape and symmetry of the entire building. In general, the extension should be visually subsidiary to the original building if it is to avoid overwhelming the original character of the building and the pitch of any extension should reflect the pitch of the original building. In some cases proposals that are not subservient to the host building may be acceptable if they achieve visual enhancement to both the building and surrounding area.

DETAILED DESIGN AND USE OF MATERIALS

- 2.5.19 In many Dorset settlements there has been a subtle, localised, historic evolution of building types and use of materials as a result of the use of local skills, crafts, traditions and materials. This led to locally distinctive development that can be seen in older settlements. Exceptions were sometimes made for more important buildings, with the use of more elaborate designs and less common building materials brought in from greater distances. However, with volume building providing economies of scale, the close association of local builders with suppliers of local materials has been lost. This has produced “placeless” buildings and estates which have no connection to the local area and use the same,

repeated designs over large sites. This has resulted in areas which provide little visual interest or real sense of place and fail to integrate well into the local landscape

- 2.5.20 The type and variety of designs and materials used, the amount and type of decoration and functional elements such as the position and type of doors and windows, flues, chimneys, gutters and flashings all influence local identity in an area. All new development should respond to its local context and be visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping.
- 2.5.21 This does not mean that all buildings should replicate past designs. Original and innovative designs that reinforce the sense of place and help raise the standard of design will be encouraged. In all cases, the quality of the architecture should be appropriate to the type of building and style. Buildings should have an appropriate solid to void ratio, a sense of proportion, elegance, scale, symmetry and rhythm and should incorporate an appropriate richness of detail (without clutter). Using local stone is particularly important in preserving local historic character and ensuring high quality and sustainable design.
- 2.5.22 Good design is not restricted to external appearance and layout. It encompasses how capable developments are of fulfilling their purpose initially and into the future as needs of occupants change. Dwellings as a minimum should have sufficient internal space for a high level of functionality so that day to day tasks and activities can be carried out and ideally these minimum standards should be exceeded. The government is currently reviewing housing standards with the aim of reducing the number of technical standards and to consolidate them in a national framework centred on building regulations. A recent consultation on the technical standards is proposing a national space standard for all new dwellings. Therefore once this standard is in place dwellings should be constructed in accordance with these standards, unless it can be demonstrated that there are exceptional circumstances where it could not be achieved such as development viability. Applications for new residential development should include a schedule of accommodation sizes to allow it to be assessed against these national standards.
- 2.5.23 The plan area will be home to an increasingly older population, and both West Dorset and Weymouth and Portland have a greater proportion of people with their day to day activities limited by long term health issues compared with England as a whole. It is therefore important that new homes can adapt to the changing needs of occupiers. Lifetime Homes is a standard that relates to the design of adaptable and inclusive homes. Part M of the Building Regulations includes requirements aimed in a similar direction to the Lifetime Homes standard but they do not generally go quite as far. The government review of housing standards 2014 is proposing to include optional requirements to part M of the Building Regulations and category 2 equates to the standard in Lifetime Homes. At this stage details of the standard have not been formalised and so the impact on development proposals cannot be quantified. It is therefore the intention to work with stakeholders and the local community to develop an approach for adaptable and accessible development in accordance with government guidance. This will ensure inclusive and flexible designs which future proofs development and makes sure it is available to a wide section of the population.

ENV 12. THE DESIGN AND POSITIONING OF BUILDINGS

- i) Development will achieve a high quality of sustainable and inclusive design. It will only be permitted where it provides sufficient space to meet the needs of occupiers, is adaptable, and the siting, alignment, design, scale, mass and materials used complements and respects the character of the surrounding area or would actively improve legibility or reinforce the sense of place. This means that:

- The general design should be in harmony with the adjoining buildings and the area as a whole
 - The position of the building on its site should relate positively to adjoining buildings, routes, open areas, rivers, streams and other features that contribute to the character of the area.
 - The scale, mass and positioning of the building should reflect the purpose for which the building is proposed.
 - The quality of the architecture is appropriate to the type of building with particular regard to its architectural elegance, symmetry and rhythm, and richness of detail
 - Materials are sympathetic to the natural and built surroundings and where practical sourced locally
 - Any alterations to or extensions of buildings should be well related to, and not overpower, the original building or neighbouring properties, unless they achieve significant visual enhancement to both the building and surrounding area.
 - New housing should meet and where possible exceed appropriate minimum space standards
- ii) The council will work with stakeholders and the local community to develop an approach for adaptable and accessible homes in accordance with the latest government guidance.

HIGH STANDARDS OF ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE

- 2.5.24 Ensuring development has a high standard of environmental performance is an essential part of achieving sustainable development and often starts at the much broader site selection and master plan stage. The councils will therefore require a nationally recognised assessment (such as BREEAM Communities) to be carried out for the larger developments where masterplans are to be prepared. Like BREEAM Communities, such an assessment will be a measure of sustainable development that can be used for new mixed-use communities, or single-use developments of a significant size. It should be capable of raising sustainable design solutions when there is still ample opportunity to influence the planning process. This should in turn, reduce costs by avoiding the need to rework designs and plans at later stages.
- 2.5.25 At the more detailed level the construction, subsequent use and maintenance of individual buildings represent a major use of resources and materials. The energy used in the construction and use of buildings is estimated to account for about 50% of greenhouse gas emissions in the UK. The landform, layout and landscaping, building orientation, massing and design can all have a bearing on energy consumption. Building to a good standard of environmental performance is much more cost-effective and achievable if considered as part of the building design and layout.
- 2.5.26 New development will be expected to contribute toward the cutting of carbon emissions through sustainable design and construction methods. *These should be at least in line with the most up to date national targets. Building Regulations will play a major role in securing the more demanding standards in environmental performance in particular Part L addressing energy use and Part G on water efficiency. The Code for Sustainable Homes is a national standard framework for measuring the environmental performance of new homes (refurbishments and non-domestic buildings are assessed by the Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM)). The code covers energy and*

~~CO₂ emissions, water, materials, surface water runoff, waste, pollution, health and wellbeing, management and ecology.~~ Part L of the Building Regulations requires that all new residential development ~~complies with the energy~~ improves energy efficiency requirements of the code over a phased period, so that by 2016 all new homes will reach zero carbon. For domestic buildings this will be achieved through a combination of carbon compliance and 'allowable solutions', a mechanism for investment in carbon saving infrastructure and community projects. A similar mechanism is expected to be introduced for non domestic buildings to reach zero carbon by 2019.

~~2.5.27 Lifetime homes is a standard which relates to the design of adaptable and inclusive homes. Part M of the Building Regs includes requirements aimed in a similar direction to the Lifetime Homes Standards, however they do not generally go quite as far. As the plan area will be home to an increasingly older population, it is important that new homes can adapt to the changing needs of the occupiers and they should be built to the Lifetime Homes standard.~~

2.5.27 New development, conversions and changes of use ~~should will be expected to comply with the relevant Code for Sustainable Homes or BREEAM targets in line with Building Regulation requirements, unless it can be demonstrated by the applicant, having regard to the type of development involved and its design, that this is not feasible or viable.~~ achieve high standards of environmental performance. Implementing methods, where possible and appropriate, such as;

- opportunities for the passive solar heating of buildings and the spaces between and around them are optimised
- southerly facing roof slopes used for solar thermal and / or photovoltaic installations, which where possible should be integrated into the roof design
- opportunities for natural lighting and ventilation to buildings are maximised
- minimise the amount of unnecessary overshadowing, including impact on existing renewable energy generators dependent on sunlight
- systems in place to collect rainwater for use
- those materials that are the most harmful to the environment are not used
- Sustainable Urban Drainage Principles

~~In such cases a~~ A Sustainable Design and Construction Statement should be submitted with applications clearly explaining the reason why such targets cannot be achieved and what measures have been incorporated to contribute to the sustainability of the design.

2.5.28 New buildings which promote high levels of sustainability should not be incompatible with an existing character, if they have been designed with both objectives in mind. In considering improvements for energy conservation it is important to remember that many traditional (historic) buildings perform very differently from modern buildings. The types of improvement that are most likely to be effective and compatible with a Listed Building include:

- improved draught proofing
- increased roof insulation
- installation of secondary glazing
- installation of an energy efficient boiler
- installation of a ground heat source pump

The installation of solar panels or photovoltaics within the curtilage of a Listed Building may also be possible, provided that these would not irreversibly damage the historic fabric of the building, and that the impact on the listed building, including views of the building, would be limited. The roofscape, together with the location and design of the panels, including choice of materials, colours, specification etc, will all have a bearing on the

potential impact. Anyone considering how best to improve their Listed Building is advised to obtain expert advice from a suitably qualified architect or surveyor.

ENV 13. ACHIEVING HIGH LEVELS OF ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE

- i) New buildings and alterations / extensions to existing buildings are expected to achieve high standards of environmental performance. ~~unless it is demonstrated that this would not be viable or significantly compromise other policies in this plan. The expected standards are:~~
- ~~— New homes to be delivered in the period 2013 – 2015 should meet Code for Sustainable Homes level 4, and those delivered from 2016 onwards should meet level 5.~~
 - ~~— Non-domestic development should be completed to a Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) standard of at least ‘very good’.~~
- ii) ~~Where these standards are not achievable, applicants will need to show that reasonable steps have been taken to ensure that:~~
- ~~— opportunities for the passive solar heating of buildings and the spaces between and around them are optimised,~~
 - ~~— southerly facing roof slopes are used for solar thermal and/or photovoltaic installations, which where possible should be integrated into the roof design~~
 - ~~— opportunities for natural lighting and ventilation to buildings are maximised,~~
 - ~~— the amount of unnecessary overshadowing is minimised, including impact on existing renewable energy generators dependent on sunlight~~
 - ~~— systems are in place to collect rainwater for use~~
 - ~~— those materials that are the most harmful to the environment are not used~~
 - ~~— Sustainable Urban Drainage principles have been employed~~
- iii) ~~All new homes should be built to Lifetime Homes Standard.~~

Monitoring indicator: ~~percentage of new homes constructed achieving Code for Sustainable Homes level 4 or above.~~

Monitoring indicator: ~~percentage of new homes constructed achieving Code for Sustainable Homes level 5 or 6.~~

Monitoring indicator: ~~percentage of new non-domestic buildings achieving BREEAM very good or above.~~

SHOP FRONTS AND ADVERTISEMENTS

2.5.29 Shop fronts and advertisements are essential to commercial activities. They affect the appearance of the building or area, and can contribute positively to the street scene. However they can also have an adverse impact if they are visually intrusive through their design, colour, materials and/or degree of illumination. Their impacts can be particularly noticeable in historic settlements, and in the countryside (especially those areas recognised for their unspoilt natural character). The cumulative impact of such development will also be considered.

2.5.30 The Councils will encourage high quality design and materials in shop front development. In some cases it may be desirable to reinstate traditional shop fronts or features. Good quality contemporary shop fronts can have a positive effect where these relate to modern

buildings or would otherwise improve the character of the area. Standardised “off the shelf” designs can be harmful if they lack detail, are of inappropriate materials or detract from the character of the building or area.

ENV 14. SHOP FRONTS AND ADVERTISEMENTS

- i) High quality design and materials in shop front development are encouraged. Proposals for new or replacement shop fronts, including associated features such as shutters, canopies, awnings, grilles, advertisements and means of illumination, will normally be permitted if:**
- they are compatible with and respect the character, appearance and scale of the building, and do not result in the loss of historic fabric in the case of a heritage asset;
 - they are compatible with and respect the building’s surroundings in terms of size, proportions, form, design, materials, and use of colour and level of illumination;
 - any security shutters are designed as open grilles or are placed behind the window and their housing box is set behind the existing fascia; and
 - any advertisement associated with the shop front does not visually dominate the individual building or street scene.
- ii) Decisions controlling advertisements will be made with regard to amenity (including its impact on the local landscape, wildlife and historic character) and public safety (including its impact on road safety).**

EFFICIENT AND APPROPRIATE USE OF LAND

- 2.5.31 Development should make efficient use of land, and not create wasted or leftover land that has no real function. However this does not mean that every private garden should be developed, as large gardens may be an important characteristic of an area and provide local wildlife and landscape benefit. The re-use of previously developed (brownfield) land will be encouraged provided it is not of high environmental value.
- 2.5.32 Proposals for development of new buildings or change of use within settlements should, where practicable, contribute towards an appropriate mix of uses, aimed at increasing the level of self-containment, reducing the need for car-based travel and contributing to biodiversity through a balance of homes, open spaces, local services, community facilities and employment workspace. In this mix, uses that will generate a comparatively high degree of pedestrian activity should normally be clustered together, in or close to local centres, to ensure that trips can be shared and public transport can be effectively routed. Open spaces within new developments will be expected, where practicable, to perform a number of functions (such as for wildlife, recreation, flood risk mitigation, carbon storage, or food production).
- 2.5.33 The density of development will differ across the plan area, as the scale and positioning of buildings should be in harmony with the local character of the area (see Policy ENV 132).

ENV 15. EFFICIENT AND APPROPRIATE USE OF LAND

- i) Development should optimise the potential of the site and make efficient use of land, subject to the limitations inherent in the site and impact on local character.**

AMENITY

- 2.5.34 Impact on amenity is one of the most important determining considerations within the planning application process, as it can impact greatly on the quality of life for those affected. Noise, light and overlooking are key factors affecting amenity, together with issues such as disturbance and pollution. *In addition the scale and massing of development if too large can have an overbearing and dominating impact on surroundings, and in particular on neighbouring properties which adversely affects amenity.*
- 2.5.35 Design can have a direct influence on the relationship between new and existing development, and the distribution of activities within a development. In some cases amenity reasons will rule out the provision of a development at a particular location either through the impact of the proposed development on existing residents or the impact on future occupants from existing lawful uses; in others, it may be possible for the impact on amenity to be made acceptable through appropriate design, layout and distribution of uses within the development. A basic level of privacy at the rear of homes can normally be provided through either sufficient rear garden depth or orientation and screening to prevent direct overlooking.
- 2.5.36 While recognising that many developments will create some noise, the level of noise should not give rise to significant adverse impacts on health and quality of life. Acceptable noise levels will vary according to the noise source, receptor and time, and the policy is not intended to unduly restrict existing, established businesses that may need to develop. Planning conditions may be used to reduce adverse impacts. In countryside areas particularly valued for their tranquillity, no significant increase will be allowed.
- 2.5.37 There are certain impacts on amenity that renewable energy schemes can generate such as flicker, vibration and shadowing and these will need to be considered carefully when making decisions on the acceptability of such schemes.
- 2.5.38 Air pollution may be caused by industrial processes (including the use of biomass boilers and combined heat and power plants) or through local traffic generation, and may be exacerbated by local microclimatic factors. The councils may ask for an air quality assessment if there is reason to believe that the development would give rise to a significant change in air quality (either individually or cumulatively with other planned development). Particular caution will be exercised in or close to designated Air Quality Management Areas, and due regard had to any air quality action plan. For example, the action plan for Chideock AQMA suggests that further development within the designated area should be limited.
- 2.5.39 The potential pollution of bathing water will be considered under this policy.
- 2.5.40 Lighting schemes can affect the amenities of occupiers and have wider impacts on a landscape scale through increasing light pollution loss of 'dark skies' (particularly in more rural areas), and tranquillity. The glare from lighting schemes can also have an adverse effect on local residents, vehicle users, cyclists, equestrians, pedestrians and some wildlife, such as bats. Not all lighting proposals require planning consent, but potential light pollution should be addressed at the planning application stage, when details of any external lighting schemes should be submitted. Applicants will be expected to demonstrate that any lighting scheme proposed is the minimum needed for security and working purposes and minimises potential light pollution from glare and spillage. Where such schemes are likely to have a significant adverse impact on local landscape character, policy ENV 1 will apply.

ENV 16. AMENITY

- i) Proposals for development should be designed to minimize their impact on the amenity and quiet enjoyment of both existing residents and future residents within the development and close to it. As such, development proposals will only be permitted provided:
- They do not have a significant adverse effect on the ~~amenity~~ living conditions of occupiers of residential properties through loss of privacy;
 - They do not have a significant adverse effect on the amenity of the occupiers of properties through inadequate daylight or excessive overshadowing, overbearing impact or flicker ~~or diminished outlook~~;
 - They do not generate a level of activity or noise that will detract significantly from the character and amenity of the area or the quiet enjoyment of residential properties; and
 - They do not generate ~~significant unacceptable~~ pollution, vibration or detrimental emissions unless it can be demonstrated that the effects on amenity and living conditions, health and the natural environment can be mitigated to the appropriate standard ~~will be made acceptable~~.
- ii) Development which is sensitive to noise or unpleasant odour emissions will not be permitted in close proximity to existing sources where it would adversely affect future occupants.
- iii) Proposals for external lighting schemes (including illuminated advertisement schemes) should be clearly justified and designed to minimize potential pollution from glare or spillage of light. The intensity of lighting should be the minimum necessary to achieve its purpose, and the benefits of the lighting scheme must be shown to outweigh any adverse effects.

