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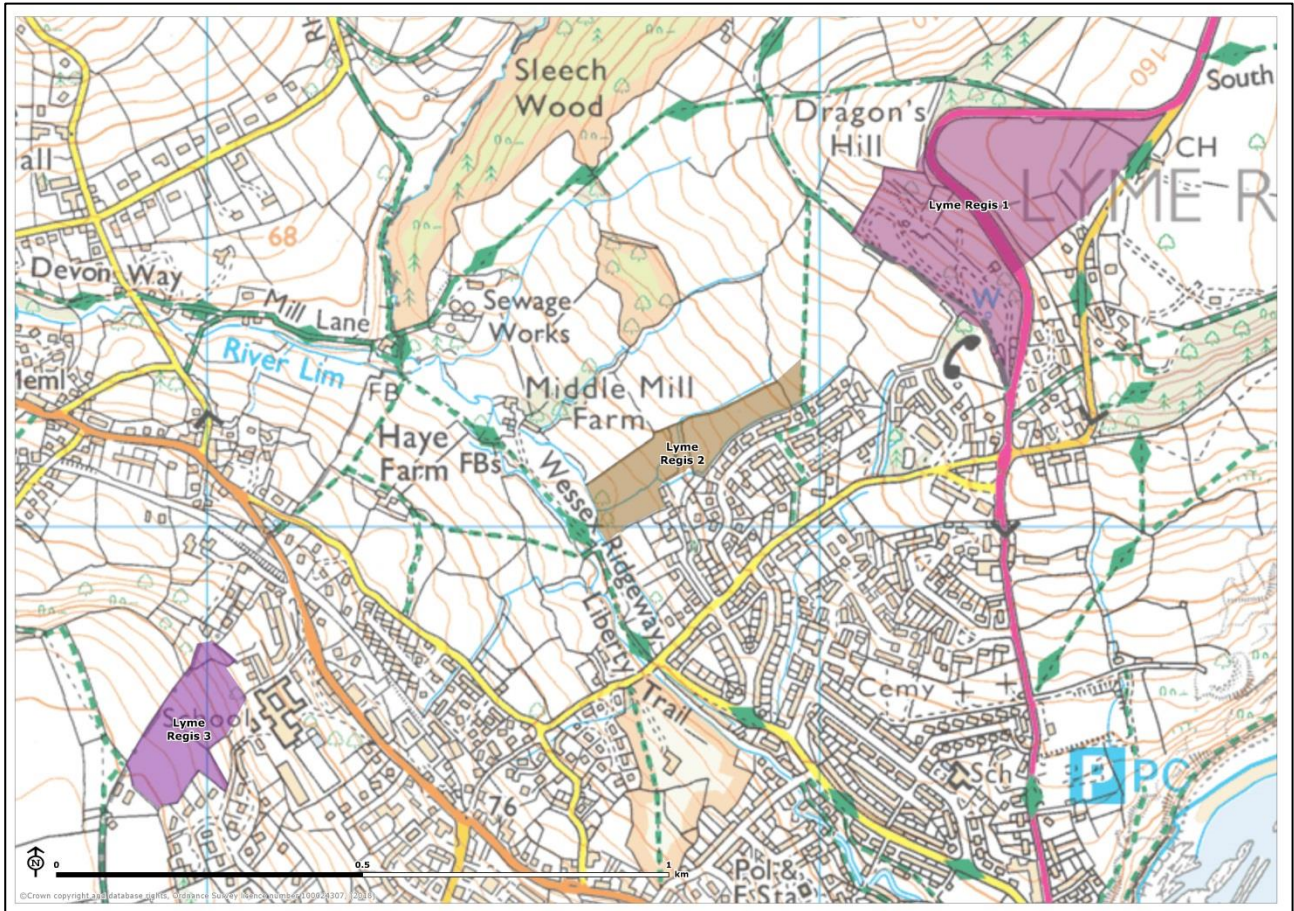
West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Strategic Landscape and Heritage Study

Stage 2 Assessment: Lyme Regis

Prepared by LUC
July 2018



Lyme Regis



Representative photographs of the settlement

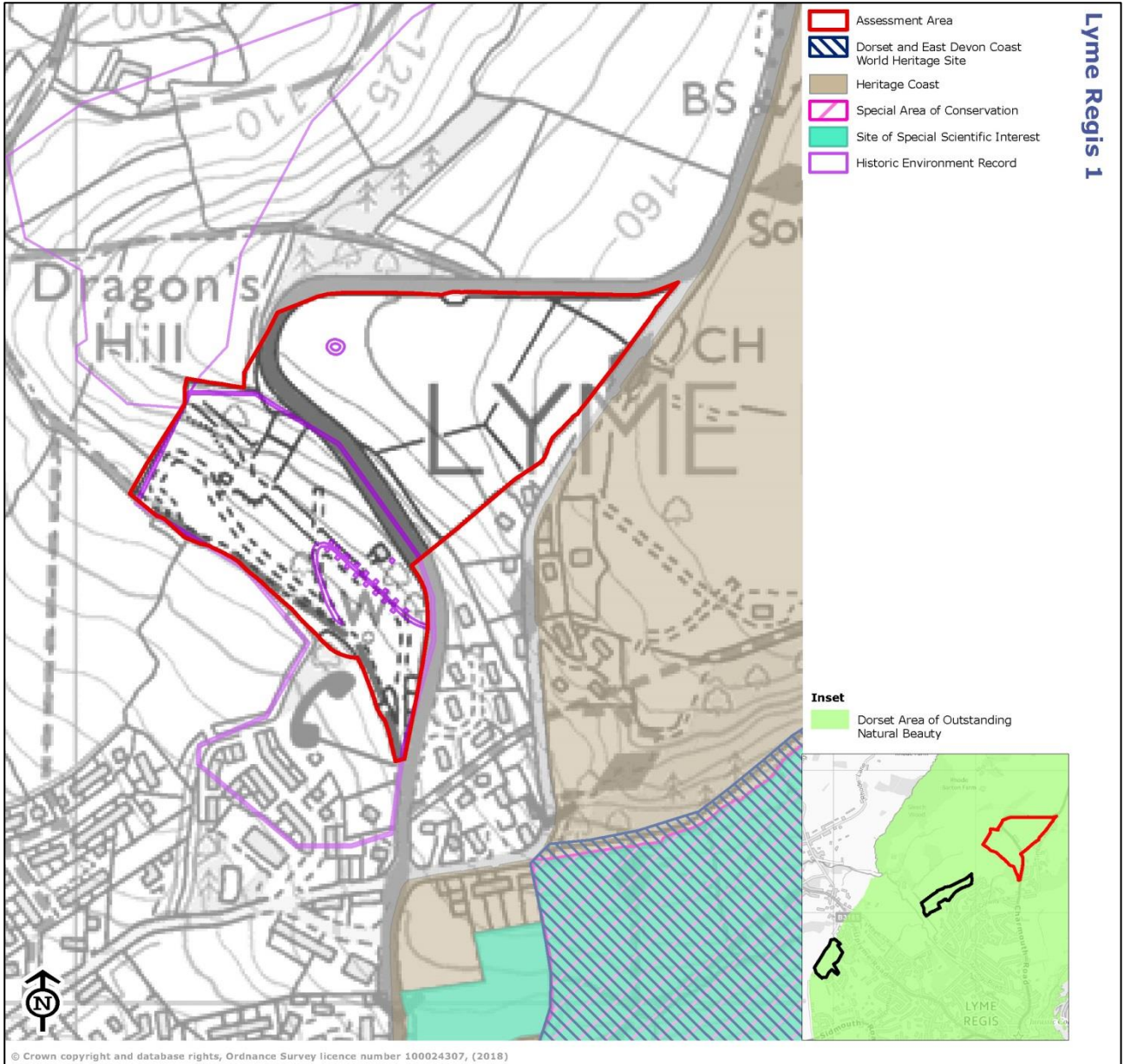


Location and description

Lyme Regis is a coastal settlement, located on the Devon/Dorset border where the River Lim flows into the English Channel at Lyme Bay. The coast forms part of the Jurassic Coast, designated as a World Heritage Site. It is a historic settlement mentioned in the Domesday Book. By the 13th century, it was a prosperous channel port. The town grew significantly in the 20th century with development on the slopes that surround the historic core of the town which is focused around the harbour.

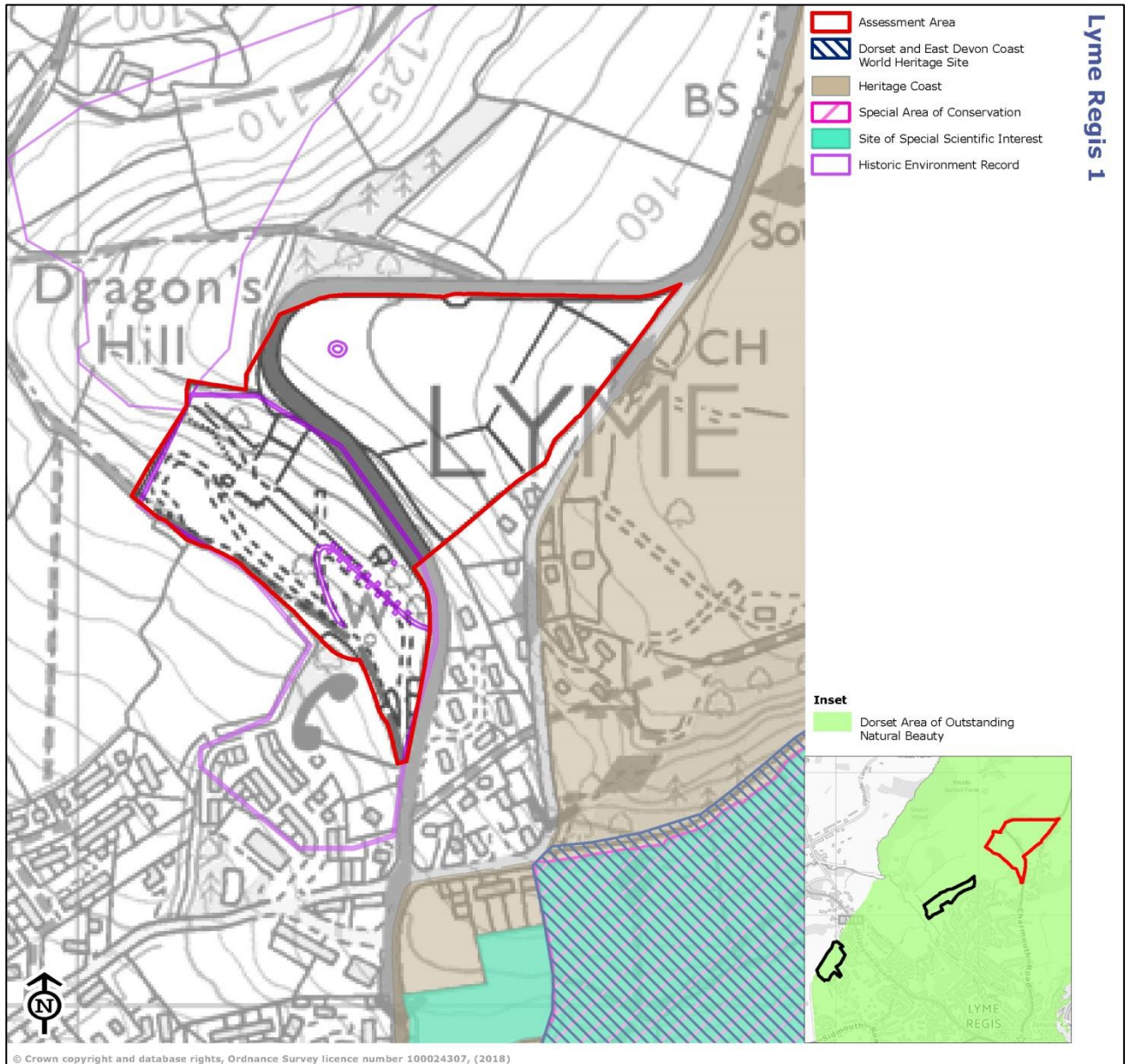
The location of the town is characterised by the dramatic slopes of the river valley, transitioning to the distinctive backdrop provided by the English Channel.

Aerial context



Lyme Regis 1

Assessment area: Lyme Regis 1



Representative photographs



Landscape sensitivity assessment

Landscape character context				
<p>This assessment area falls within the Wootton Hills Landscape Character Areas. The area is wholly within the Dorset AONB. It comprises sloping land on Dragon's Hill either side of the A3052, used for agricultural land and a caravan/holiday home park.</p>				
Assessment criterion	Description			Sensitivity score
Physical character (including topography and scale)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Steep, elevated slopes known as 'Dragons Hill' reaching approximately 160 metres AOD. The fields within the area are small-medium scale. Frequent trees in the area also contribute to creating a small-scale landscape. 			M-H
Natural character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The primary land cover is farmland which is under arable and pastoral use (sheep grazing). Fields are enclosed by a mix of hedgerows and post and wire fences. Mature deciduous woodland surrounds the fields and is located along the A3052 which crosses through the area. 			L-M
Historic landscape character (<i>please see separate heritage assessment for asset-based information</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The HLC indicates that the enclosures within this area are of post-medieval origin. The static caravan park is a modern feature. The area does not contain or make a significant contribution to the setting of any historic features. 			L-M
Form, density and setting of existing development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The rural slopes form part of the setting to the north of Lyme Regis and frame the town. This area contains a static caravan park which is separate from the main built area of Lyme Regis A small development of houses has recently been constructed near the junction of Timber Hill and the A3052. 			M-H
Views and visual character including skylines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where vegetation and topography allow, there are glimpses over the adjacent settlement of Lyme Regis to the sea beyond. Skylines are generally undeveloped. The numerous mature trees within the area create wooded skylines often visible from adjacent landscapes and the town. There are long views to the surrounding wooded hills. 			M-H
Perceptual and experiential qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This area has a rural character although it is also associated with adjacent development to the south. The A3052 crosses through the area and traffic can introduce noise and movement into the landscape. 			M
Overall assessment of landscape sensitivity				
L	L-M	M	M-H	H
<p>The steep, elevated landform, mostly undeveloped character, rural setting that the area provides to the existing settlement and long views across Lyme Regis to the sea beyond result in an overall moderate-high landscape sensitivity. Sensitivity is reduced slightly by the lack of historic field patterns, limited natural features and traffic noise introduced by the A3052.</p>				

Heritage sensitivity assessment

Dorset Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) context

The assessment area is composed of post-medieval regular enclosures and a campsite.

Description and significance of heritage assets present

A definitive list of assets within each study area is provided at Appendix 1 in the Stage 2 methodology report. Only assets judged to be of a level of significance likely to influence the planning process are discussed below.

Designated assets within the assessment area:

- None

Non-designated assets within the assessment area:

- Undated field system, Dragon's Hill (very small portion)
Low importance
- 20th century building platforms
Low-negligible importance
- Undated mound; possible round barrow
Low-uncertain importance

Likely susceptibility to physical change as a result of development

As archaeological assets, the above are highly sensitive to physical change. Development of the area could result in harm to or total loss of non-designated archaeological assets.

The possible barrow is likely to have incurred truncation and damage as a consequence of agricultural activity, as is likely the case for the small area of field system within the assessment area.

The building platforms identified on aerial photography may relate either to early camp/caravan site development or may have a military origin.

Likely susceptibility to setting change as a result of development

Designated assets with the potential to experience setting change:

- None

Non-designated assets with the potential to experience setting change:

- None

Overall assessment of sensitivity of heritage assets to change within the area

L	L-M	M	M-H	H
Potential for harm to non-designated archaeological assets. While these are not likely to be of a level of significance to completely constrain development, proposals would need to provide an appropriate understanding of that significance and incorporate a proportionate mitigation strategy.				

Summary of key sensitivities and guidance for sustainable development

Summary of key sensitivities

The following provides a summary of the key landscape and heritage sensitivities within the assessment area:

- The prominent, sloping landform of Dragon's Hill.
- The setting the landscape provides to existing development within Lyme Regis.
- Long views across the existing settlement, to the sea beyond and to surround land within the Dorset AONB.
- Undeveloped skylines, punctuated by occasional trees.
- Mostly unsettled character, with development limited to occasional dwellings.
- The location of the area within the nationally valued landscape of Dorset AONB.

Guidance for sustainable development

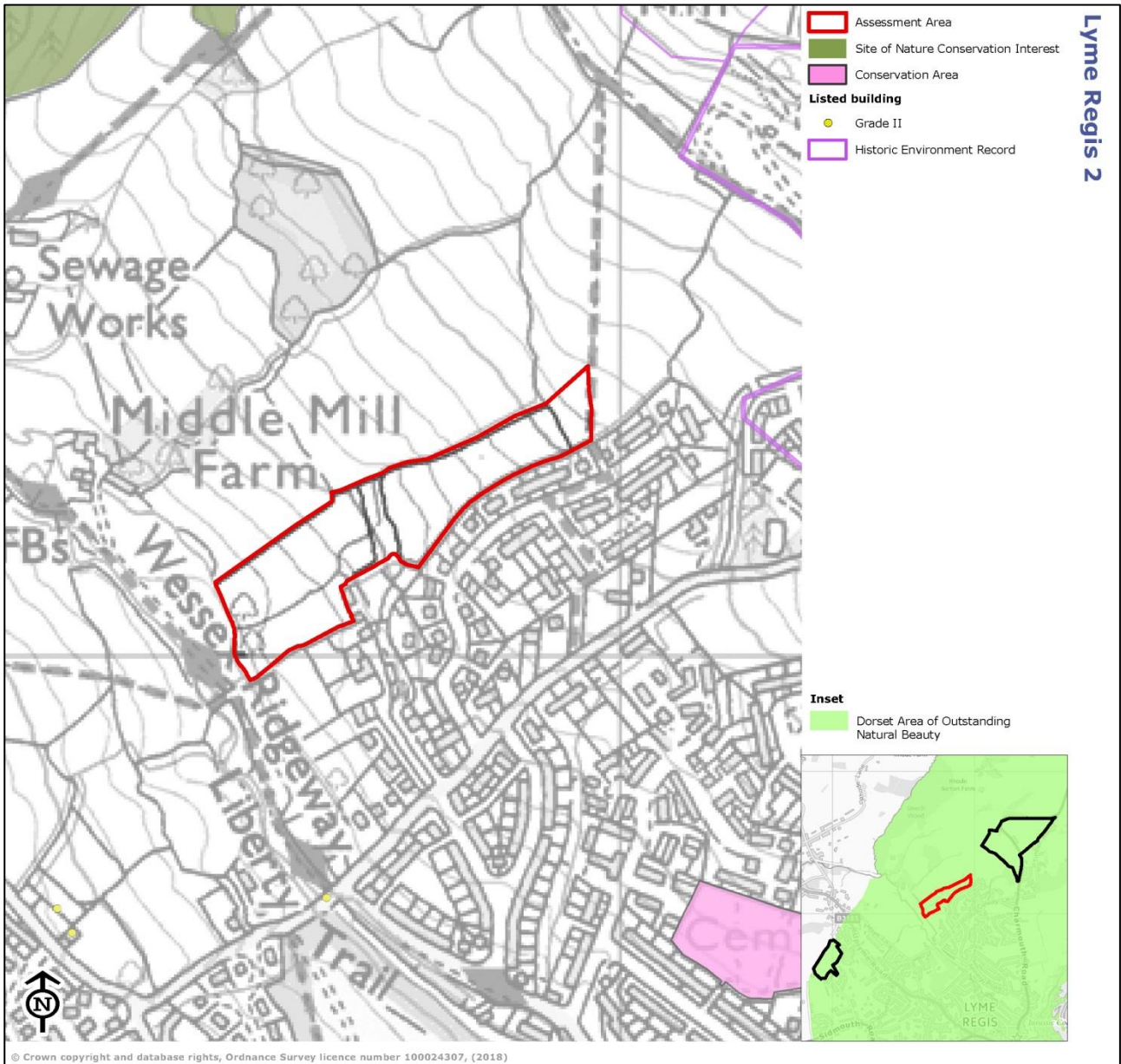
This area is within the Dorset AONB, a nationally designated landscape where there is a presumption against major development. Any development may have an impact on the character and special qualities of the AONB. Therefore, the guidance below should be closely followed.

Any new development should:

- Be limited to areas adjacent to existing settlement. New development should respect the form, style and vernacular of existing structures.
- Avoid the prominent slopes of Dragon's Hill, where it would be dominant within the wider landscape.
- Retain important semi-natural features, notably the broadleaved trees forming wooded skylines above the settlement.
- Ensure the distinct visual character of the landscape is retained.
- Protect the undeveloped setting the landscape provides to existing development within Lyme Regis.
- Understand the significance of archaeological assets within the area, and propose appropriate measures for avoidance and mitigation of effects to their significance.
- Ensure any new development does not adversely affect the special qualities of Dorset AONB, including uninterrupted panoramic views, a sense of tranquillity and remoteness, dark night skies, undeveloped rural character and a rich historic and built heritage¹.

¹ Taken from the Statement of Significance within the Dorset AONB Management Plan 2014-2019.

Assessment area: Lyme Regis 2



Representative photographs



Landscape sensitivity assessment

Landscape character context				
<p>This assessment area falls within the Wootton Hills Landscape Character Area. It is located wholly within the Dorset AONB. It comprises several small grassland fields adjacent to the River Lim and adjoining the existing northern settlement edge of Lyme Regis.</p>				
Assessment criterion	Description			Sensitivity score
Physical character (including topography and scale)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Steeply sloping land rising up from the valley of the River Lim. Small-scale landscape of grassland fields enclosed by thick hedgerows with many mature trees. 			M-H
Natural character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The primarily land use is pasture farmland, with areas of semi-natural grassland. The assessment area contains streams and hedgerows with numerous trees which divide the fields and contribute to natural character. Broadleaved woodland is located along the corridor of the River Lim. Young woodland has recently been planted on the upper slopes to the east. 			L-M
Historic landscape character (<i>please see separate heritage assessment for asset-based information</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The HLC indicates that the fields within this area are piecemeal enclosures of medieval origin. The landscape also forms part of the wider setting to several Grade II Listed Buildings including Haye House. 			M
Form, density and setting of existing development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undeveloped character although associated with the existing built edge of Lyme Regis. The slopes of the River Lim form a characteristic part of the setting to the existing settlement, although these have been developed to the south. 			M-H
Views and visual character including skylines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> From higher slopes, there is intervisibility with the opposite valley slopes of the River Lim to the south west and the undulating hills and sea beyond. Skylines are undeveloped and frequent mature trees create wooded skylines. Many views are enclosed by the presence of woodland. 			M-H
Perceptual and experiential qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong rural and natural qualities and high levels of tranquillity due to the lack of development, streamside habitats and broadleaved trees. This area feels rural and removed from the settlement despite its close proximity. 			M-H
Overall assessment of landscape sensitivity				
L	L-M	M	M-H	H
<p>The steeply sloping valley landform, medieval field patterns, characteristic rural setting the area provides to existing development, long views from higher ground, high levels of tranquillity and the strong rural character and contrast with the adjacent urban environment result in an overall moderate-high landscape sensitivity. Sensitivity is reduced slightly by the lack of designated semi-natural habitats and limited heritage features, although the area is within the AONB.</p>				

Heritage sensitivity assessment

Dorset Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) context

The area is entirely composed of medieval/post-medieval piecemeal enclosures, the boundaries of which are delineated by mature hedgerows and trees and appear to be of some antiquity. Examination of historic mapping indicates that the western fields were orchards during at least the 19th century.

Description and significance of heritage assets present

A definitive list of assets within each study area is provided at Appendix 1 in the Stage 2 methodology report. Only assets judged to be of a level of significance likely to influence the planning process are discussed below.

Designated assets within the assessment area:

- None

Non-designated assets within the assessment area:

- None

Likely susceptibility to physical change as a result of development

None. Modern aerial photography suggests that all fruit trees have been lost, removing a potential area of heritage/historic landscape significance.

The fields have some value as a good example of intact likely medieval enclosures with strong boundaries.

Likely susceptibility to setting change as a result of development

Designated assets with the potential to experience setting change:

- None

Non-designated assets with the potential to experience setting change:

- None

Overall assessment of sensitivity of heritage assets to change within the area

L

L-M

M

M-H

H

Development within the assessment area would likely result in the loss of the historic field system.

Summary of key sensitivities and guidance for sustainable development

Summary of key sensitivities

The following provides a summary of the key landscape and heritage sensitivities within the assessment area:

- The prominent valley landform, with high levels of intervisibility with the opposing valley side to the south west.
- The intricate piecemeal field pattern of medieval origin, with thick hedgerows creating an intimate landscape.
- Long views from higher ground, including the surrounding high ground and sea.
- The unsettled character of the landscape, with the valley of the River Lim providing a key part of the setting to the town of Lyme Regis.
- The strong natural and rural qualities of the landscape which create a contrast with the adjacent urban environment.
- The location of the area within the nationally valued landscape of Dorset AONB.

Guidance for sustainable development

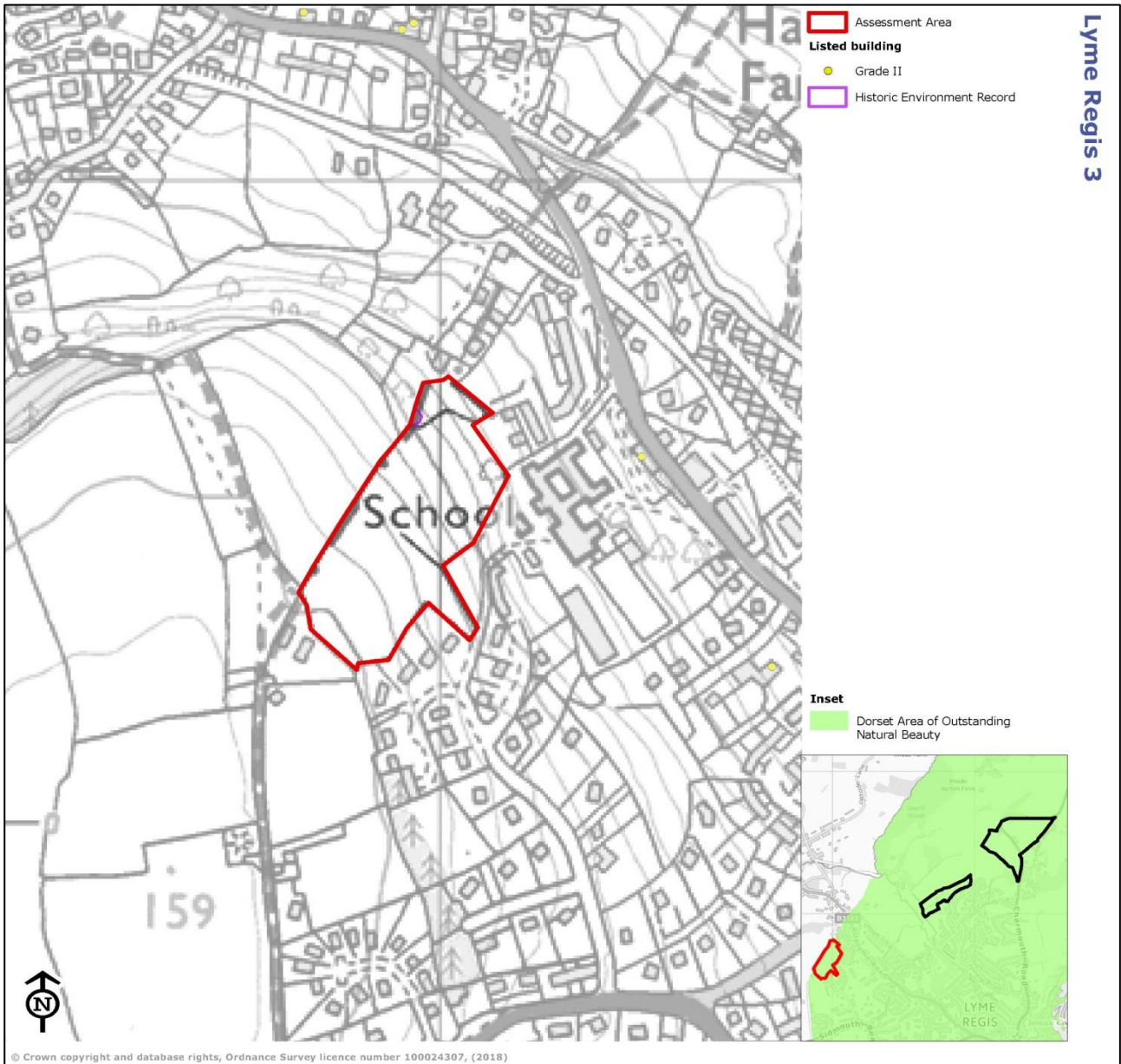
This area is within the Dorset AONB, a nationally designated landscape where there is a presumption against major development. Any development may have an impact on the character and special qualities of the AONB. Therefore, the guidance below should be closely followed.

Any new development should:

- Be limited to areas immediately adjacent to existing development. This area is not suitable for large scale development which would be likely to have adverse effects on a number of the special qualities of the landscape.
- Respect the setting of existing development and be in keeping with the form, style and vernacular of existing development.
- Ensure that the strong naturalistic and tranquil qualities of the landscape are retained.
- Protect and conserve the valued semi-natural habitats including broadleaved woodland, mature trees and hedgerows and the adjacent river.
- Retain the structure of the landscape by preserving the intricate, historic field pattern of medieval origin.
- Protect the visual character of the landscape, including intervisibility with slopes on the western side of the River Lim.
- Ensure any new development does not adversely affect the special qualities of Dorset AONB, including uninterrupted panoramic views, a sense of tranquillity and remoteness, dark night skies, undeveloped rural character and a rich historic and built heritage².

² Taken from the Statement of Significance within the Dorset AONB Management Plan 2014-2019.

Assessment area: Lyme Regis 3



Representative photographs



Landscape sensitivity assessment

Landscape character context				
<p>This assessment area falls within the Lyme Regis Landscape Character Area. This whole of this area is within the Dorset AONB. It comprises a small area of agricultural land adjacent to the north west of Lyme Regis.</p>				
Assessment criterion	Description	Sensitivity score		
Physical character (including topography and scale)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Steeply sloping land associated with the upper valley slopes of the River Lim. The fields are generally small-scale although the sense of exposure and long views increases the perceived scale of the landscape. 	M-H		
Natural character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The primary land cover within this area is grassland. The fields are framed by hedgerows with frequent mature trees which contribute to natural character. 	L-M		
Historic landscape character (<i>please see separate heritage assessment for asset-based information</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The HLC does not cover much of this area, although the majority of the adjacent land is of post-medieval or modern origin. This area does not form an immediate setting to any heritage assets or the historic core of the adjacent settlement. 	L-M		
Form, density and setting of existing development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This area has an undeveloped character, although it is strongly associated with the existing urban edge. The landscape overlooks and forms part of the backdrop to the existing settlement. Recent new residential development has been constructed to the east of the area. 	M		
Views and visual character including skylines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skylines are open and undeveloped and are prominent above the valley. Mature trees form skyline features. Long views across the valley of the River Lim to the landscape beyond (including the hills to the east) and out towards the sea. 	H		
Perceptual and experiential qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Although this area is undeveloped and has rural characteristics, it is strongly associated with existing development which surrounds the area. 	M		
Overall assessment of landscape sensitivity				
L	L-M	M	M-H	H
<p>The prominent, steeply sloping landform, undeveloped character, long views across the valley of the River Lim and open, undeveloped skylines result in this assessment area having overall moderate-high landscape sensitivity. Sensitivity is reduced by the limited natural features within the landscape, likely lack of historic field patterns and strong association of the landscape with the existing urban development.</p>				

Heritage sensitivity assessment

Dorset Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) context

HLC data not available for assessment area; however, it appears to comprise post-medieval piecemeal enclosures.

Description and significance of heritage assets present

A definitive list of assets within each study area is provided at Appendix 1 in the Stage 2 methodology report. Only assets judged to be of a level of significance likely to influence the planning process are discussed below.

Designated assets within the assessment area:

- None

Non-designated assets within the assessment area:

- Old gravel pit
Low-negligible importance

Likely susceptibility to physical change as a result of development

While the gravel pit is susceptible to physical change, it is of negligible heritage significance.

Likely susceptibility to setting change as a result of development

Designated assets with the potential to experience setting change:

- None

Non-designated assets with the potential to experience setting change:

- Cropmark field boundary (in East Devon)
Low importance

Overall assessment of sensitivity of heritage assets to change within the area

L

L-M

M

M-H

H

The position of assessment area in the landscape avoids effects on important Roman assets to the west (Higher Holcombe Roman villa, Scheduled Monument). Similarly, Braeside Spring Cottages (Grade II Listed Buildings) to the east appear to be 'tucked in' to the steeply-sloping topography, and will likely avoid effects.

Summary of key sensitivities and guidance for sustainable development

Summary of key sensitivities

The following provides a summary of the key landscape and heritage sensitivities within the assessment area:

- The prominent slopes associated with the upper valley of the River Lim.
- Network of hedgerows which contribute to the habitat resource in the landscape.
- Open and undeveloped skylines, which can be prominent within the wider landscape.
- The undeveloped character of the landscape.
- Long views across the valley of the River Lim to the higher ground beyond.
- The location of the area within the nationally valued landscape of Dorset AONB.

Guidance for sustainable development

This area is within the Dorset AONB, a nationally designated landscape where there is a presumption against major development. Any development may have an impact on the character and special qualities of the AONB. Therefore, the guidance below should be closely followed.

Any new development should:

- Avoid steeply sloping areas where it would be highly prominent above the existing town, including in long views from elsewhere in the Dorset AONB.
- Respect the distinct visual character of the area, with long views across Lyme Regis to the hills beyond (to the east).
- Conserve important semi-natural features within the landscape, including hedgerows and mature trees. Utilise these features to screen development where possible.
- Respect the open and undeveloped skylines and their role in setting of Lyme Regis.
- Be limited to areas where new development would be strongly associated with existing dwellings. New structures should respect the form, style and vernacular of existing structures.
- Ensure any new development does not adversely affect the special qualities of Dorset AONB, including uninterrupted panoramic views, a sense of tranquillity and remoteness, dark night skies, undeveloped rural character and a rich historic and built heritage³.

³ Taken from the Statement of Significance within the Dorset AONB Management Plan 2014-2019.

Potential in-combination effects on heritage assets

No significant in-combination effects are anticipated.