

Dorset Council

Land North of Dorchester **Heritage Impact** **Assessment**

Final report

Prepared by LUC

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Dorset Council

Land North of Dorchester
Heritage Impact Assessment

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Background

1.1 From 1 April 2019 Dorset's nine councils were replaced by two entirely new organisations, Dorset Council and Bournemouth, Christchurch, and Poole Council. Up until then, work had been underway on a series of district-based Local Plan Reviews to consider the area's future growth options; subsequently, it was agreed that work would begin on a single Local Plan to be adopted in 2023.

1.2 As part of their Joint Local Plan Review, West Dorset District and Weymouth & Portland Borough Councils undertook an initial 360-degree search of all possible development site options around the main settlements, with unsuitable options discounted at an early stage through an initial site scoping exercise and sustainability appraisal. Having considered the constraints and opportunities associated with each broad area, a refined set of development options were identified. These areas formed the basis for an Issues and Options Consultation (February 2017).

1.3 To support the selection of preferred options for the Local Plan Review, a strategic landscape and heritage assessment was commissioned to look at the sensitivity of the landscape and historic environment to development. The West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Strategic Landscape and Heritage Study (LUC July 2018) looked at areas around the main towns where development would be focussed and included Dorchester.

1.4 The assessment was undertaken in two stages. Stage 1 was a high level and independent review of the areas considered at the Issues and Options Consultation. Stage 2 was a more detailed assessment that looked in greater detail at a series of refined areas. It provided a score on their landscape and heritage sensitivities, highlighting those assets that had the potential to be affected by the development of the site, and outlined guidance for sustainable development.

1.5 Land to the North of Dorchester ("the site" – see Figure 1.1 and 1.2) was assessed as two areas: 'Dorchester 1: North Dorchester' and 'Dorchester 6: South and East of Charminster'. The stage 2 assessment of these sites reached the following conclusions:

- **Dorchester 1: North Dorchester** had a high heritage sensitivity. This was due primarily to the potential for harm to designated assets through change to their

settings, notably: Poundbury Camp Scheduled Monument; Kingston Maurward Registered Park and Garden; Dorchester Conservation Area; Stinsford Conservation Area. The potential for physical change to a series of non-designated heritage assets of low significance, as well as a non-designated barrow group of greater importance, was also highlighted along with the potential loss of part of the non-designated designed landscape of Frome Whitfield.

- **Dorchester 6: South and East of Charminster** had a medium-high heritage sensitivity. This was due primarily to the potential for harm to designated assets through change to their settings and the potential loss of low-medium significance non-designated archaeological assets.

1.6 Any development sited to the north of Dorchester was initially rejected during the preparation of the adopted local plan on the grounds of flooding and landscape impact. However, the inspector stated that: *"it is not obvious that other or better alternatives exist or indeed whether the Councils are committed to finding a solution to the longer-term expansion of the county town."* Consequently, as a result of the Issues and Options Consultation and a thorough consideration of the evidence collected, sites 1 and 6 to the north of Dorchester were included in the Local Plan Review Preferred Options Consultation (August 2018).

1.7 Land to the North of Dorchester ("the site") was identified in Policy DOR15 for a mixed-use development to meet the growth needs of the town over the longer term. It is expected to deliver around 3,500 new homes, 10ha of employment land, around 4 ha of commercial/retail space, community facilities, new schools, healthcare provision and a significant amount of open space as an attractive recreational feature and Local Nature Reserve.

1.8 To help delivery of the site, support has been secured through the Government's Garden Communities Programme. The qualities that garden communities are expected to embody are set out in a prospectus published by the government (August 2018) and include being well designed, with a mix of uses and well-integrated green spaces. They must also have a clear identity, informed by strong local vision and engagement, along with a consideration of how the natural and historic environment of the local area is reflected and respected.

Aims and objectives

1.9 The aim of this Heritage Impact Assessment is to provide robust and independent evidence base that will assist Dorset Council in considering the implications for the historic environment of the development of the site, to provide guidance on sustainable development options with regards to

the historic environment, and to ensure that this is fully informed and accords with national policy.

1.10 It will further help inform the Local Plan site allocation and a masterplan for development of the site. In this regard, it will shape the criteria against which future development proposals are judged, provide information on where and how development could take place, and identify mitigation and enhancement measures, as well as any site-specific design requirements.

1.11 This will be achieved by:

- Identifying the value and significance (including the contribution made by setting) of heritage assets within the site and those within the wider landscape that may be affected as a result of setting change.
- Understanding the physical, setting and cumulative impact the development would have on the heritage significance of those assets.
- Outlining options for the avoidance and minimisation of harm.
- Outlining opportunities for enhancement of the historic environment and heritage assets.

Legislation, policy, and guidance

1.12 The assessment has regard for legislative requirements in relation to the historic environment and has been informed by national and local planning policy. It also takes account of established sector guidance on the assessment of significance of heritage assets and how to assess the impact of proposals on that significance.

Statutory Duties

1.13 Legislation relating to archaeology and Scheduled Monuments is contained in the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979, as amended.

1.14 Legislation regarding buildings of special architectural or historic interest is contained in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, as amended. Section 66 of the 1990 Act is relevant as it states that the decision maker, when exercising planning functions, must give special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building and its setting. Section 72 of the 1990 Act provides protection for the character and appearance of Conservation Areas.

National Planning Policy

1.15 National planning policy is laid out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2019). The NPPF reflects the statutory requirement to have special regard for the preservation and enhancement of the historic environment by:

- making the conservation of the historic environment and good design fundamental to achieving sustainable development (para.8)
- requiring great weight to be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets (para.193)
- requiring consideration of direct and indirect effects to the significance of non-designated assets (para. 197).
- requiring any harm to have clear and convincing justification (para.194)
- requiring a proportionate level of information about the significance of assets that helps the local authority make informed decisions about proposals that affect them (para.189).

1.16 Section 16 of the NPPF – entitled Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment – relates specifically to the management of the historic environment in the planning system. It provides guidance for planning authorities, property owners, developers and others on the conservation and management of heritage assets, both designated and non-designated.¹ Overall, the objectives of Section 16 of the NPPF can be summarised as seeking to:

- deliver sustainable development;
- understand the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits brought by the conservation of the historic environment;
- recognise that that heritage assets from local to high value are an irreplaceable resource and require conservation in a manner appropriate to their significance; and,
- recognise the contribution that the historic environment makes to our knowledge and understanding of the past.

1.17 Achieving sustainable development involves seeking positive improvements in the quality of the environment and, in the case of heritage assets, requiring local planning authorities to set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment (para. 185), identifying opportunities to enhance or better reveal the significance of heritage assets (para.200). It is also a fundamental part of Plan-making, as set out in Chapter 3 of the NPPF, that:

"The preparation and review of all policies should be underpinned by relevant and up-to-date evidence. This should be adequate and proportionate..." and "should demonstrate how the plan has addressed relevant economic, social and environmental objectives [...]."

Significant adverse impacts on these objectives should be avoided and, wherever possible, alternative options which reduce or eliminate such impacts should be pursued." (paragraphs 31 and 32).

1.18 The purpose of this report, along with the other Stage 1 and Stage 2 reports, is to address both the plan-making and historic environment chapters of the NPPF by providing a robust evidence base to inform the development of the Local Plan.

Local Policy

1.19 Whilst work is being progressed on the new local plan for Dorset, existing adopted Development Plan Documents will continue to apply.

1.20 The West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan (2015) sets out its approach to the protection and enhancement of heritage assets in Policy ENV4. This seeks to protect assets 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 a part of safeguarding their future and continuing the support they provide to the local economy through making the areas an attractive place to live, work and visit.

Sector Guidance

1.21 The study has been conducted in line with recognised practice, as set out in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) Standards and Guidance - noting that this is a strategic study, whereas the standards are targeted towards project-specific assessment. Therefore, it is not fully compliant, relying on readily available data and omitting a full aerial photo search and archive visit.

1.22 In addition, guidance published by Historic England on The Setting of Heritage Assets: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 ('GPA3') has been followed to understand the contribution of setting to the significance of assets and impacts thereon. Similarly, The Historic Environment and Site Allocations in Local Plans: Historic England Advice Note 3 ('HEAN3') has informed the methodology.

1.23 The approach to the study has been established, as far as it practicable, in line with recognised practice as set out in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) Standards and Guidance; however, some adjustments and deviations from the standards have had to be made to accommodate the

¹ Paragraph 194 of the NPPF (2019) , footnote 63, states that: "Non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest that are demonstrably of equivalent

significance to scheduled monuments, should be considered subject to the policies for designated heritage assets."

strategic nature of this study, whereas the standards are targeted towards project-specific assessment.

1.24 A full description of the methodology used to undertake the study is set out in **Chapter 2**.

Definitions

1.25 The following definitions are provided in Annex 2 of the NPPF:

- **Heritage Assets:** A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage assets include designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).
- **Archaeological Interest:** a heritage asset which holds or potentially could hold evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point. Heritage assets with archaeological interest are the primary source of evidence about the substance and evolution of places, and of the people and cultures that made them.
- **Architectural and artistic interest:** These are interests in the design and general aesthetics of a place. They can arise from conscious design or fortuitously from the way the heritage asset has evolved. More specifically, architectural interest is an interest in the art or science of the design, construction, craftsmanship and decoration of buildings and structures of all types. Artistic interest is an interest in other human creative skill, like sculpture.
- **Historic interest:** An interest in past lives and events (including pre-historic). Heritage assets can illustrate or be associated with them. Heritage assets with historic interest not only provide a material record of our nation's history but can also provide meaning for communities derived from their collective experience of a place and can symbolise wider values such as faith and cultural identity.
- **Designated Heritage Assets:** World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, Protected Wreck Sites, Registered Park and Gardens, Registered Battlefields and Conservation Areas.
- **Significance:** The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. This interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.²

- **Setting:** The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance, or may be neutral.

1.26 Definitions of other terms used in this report can be found in Appendix A.

Sources

1.27 The asset identification and scoping exercise, assessment of heritage significance, and assessment of impact were informed with reference to the following sources:

- The West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Strategic Landscape and Heritage Study (LUC July 2018).
- GIS data for the proposed land allocation.
- LiDAR-derived Digital Terrain Model (DTM) and Digital Surface Model (DSM).
- Historic England (HE) National Heritage List for England (NHLE) designated heritage asset data.
- Dorset Council Historic Environment Record (DHER) data, relating to non-designated heritage assets. This included Historic England's National Mapping Programme (NMP) data.
- Information from Dorset Council on locally listed buildings, Conservation Areas, and the Dorset Historic Towns Survey.
- Modern Ordnance Survey (OS) base mapping.
- Historic mapping – such as OS and tithe maps.
- Recent and readily available digital aerial photos.
- Recent digital aerial and LiDAR imagery (principally used alongside historic mapping to identify unrecorded features and to understand past land use and character).
- Publications and grey literature
- Consultation responses from Historic England and the North Dorchester Consortium to the Local Plan review.
- Consultation with the Council's building conservation and archaeological advisors, and advisors at Historic England.
- Site visits to the site and all heritage assets identified for detailed assessment, unless otherwise stated.

² A fuller understanding of the concept of heritage significance, and the process required to understand the contribution made by relevant heritage values, is

established in Historic England's 'Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment' (2008).

Report structure

1.28 The report is structured as follows:

- **Chapter 2:** Sets out the methodology used to undertake the study.
- **Chapter 3:** Includes information on the site's geology, topography and historic, as well as cultural and historic landscape character.
- **Chapter 4:** Assessment of designated assets within the site.
- **Chapter 5:** Assessment of non-designated assets within the site.
- **Chapter 6:** Assessment of designated assets with the potential to experience setting change as a result of development of the site.
- **Chapter 7:** Assessment of non-designated assets with the potential to experience setting change as a result of development of the site.
- **Chapter 8:** Assessment of the archaeological potential of the site and the impact of the development of the site on it.
- **Chapter 9:** Assessment summary, conclusions and recommendations.

Figure 1.1: Site location plan

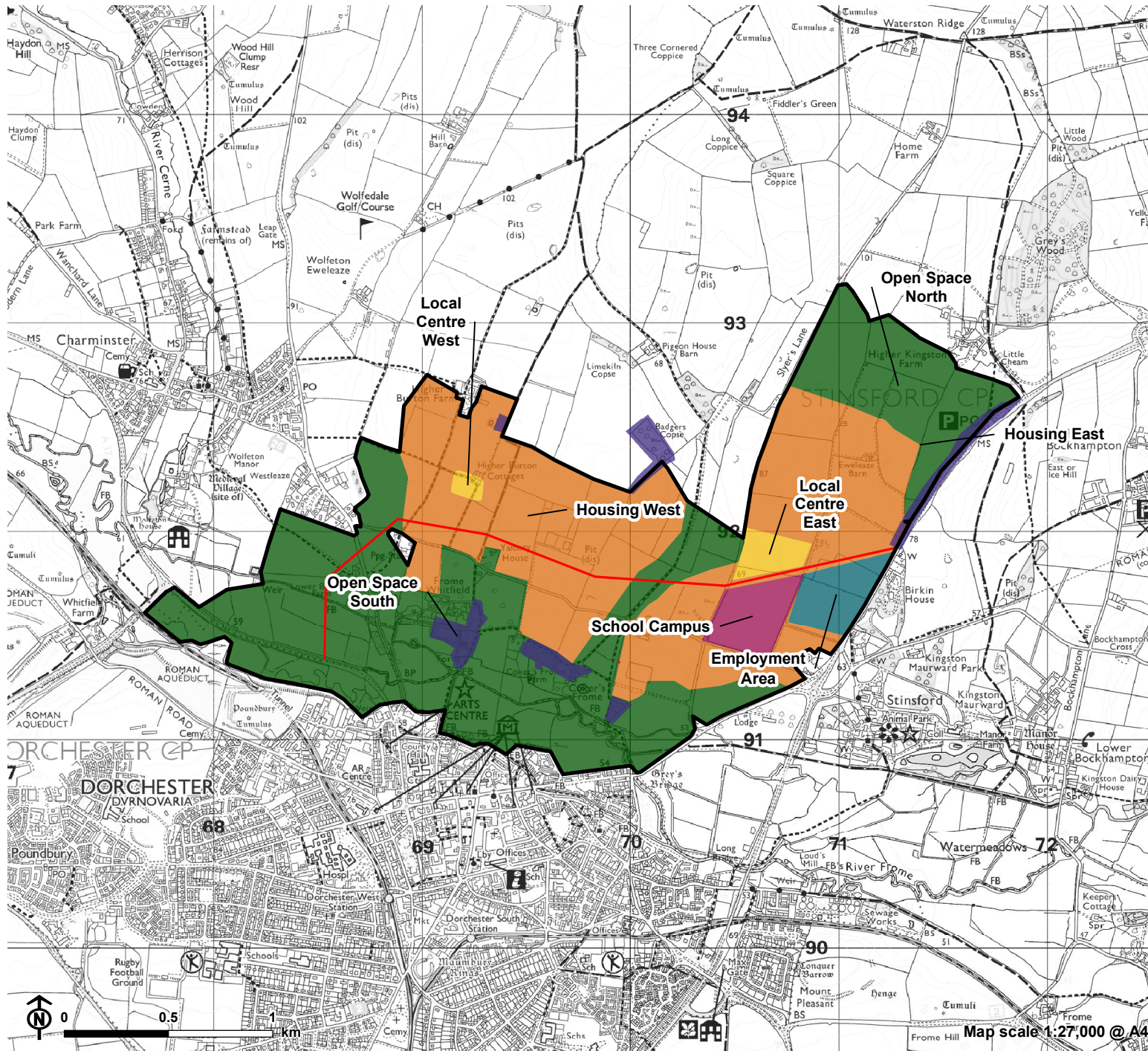


- Site boundary
- Strategic landscaping
- New link road
- Category**
- Employment land
- Housing
- Local centre
- Open space
- School campus

Map scale 1:175,000 @ A4



Figure 1.2: Indicative masterplan



- Site boundary
- Strategic landscaping
- New link road
- Category**
- Employment land
- Housing
- Local centre
- Open space
- School campus