

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

## **Consideration of amendments to Policy COM7 and COM11**

Arising in Matter 7



West Dorset District Council and  
Weymouth & Portland Borough Council

At the EIP session on Matter 7 – Community & Infrastructure Policy COM1-11 on Tuesday 2 December, the Inspector and objectors raised concerns over Policy COM7 – CREATING A SAFE AND EFFICIENT TRANSPORT NETWORK and Policy COM11 RENEWABLE ENERGY DEVELOPMENT. The main issues were:

1. Reference to equestrians in the road user hierarchy diagram. The Inspector sought reasons for including a local variant to cover equestrians in para 6.5.5
2. COM7 iv) – For reasons of consistency with the NPPF (para 32), the Inspector suggested using the term ‘severe’ when dealing with road safety impacts.
3. COM11 – The Inspector suggested the wording of this policy could be more positive in response to concerns raised by objectors.
4. COM11 – An objector suggested the inclusion of a hierarchy of harm so that the policy could consider features of local and national significance.

**1. Reference to equestrians in the road user hierarchy diagram. The Inspector sought reasons for including a local variant to cover equestrians in para 6.5.5**

The councils suggest the following wording change to the last sentence of paragraph 6.5.5:

The following road-user hierarchy ~~diagram~~ is reflective of the road users commonly found in the plan area. This hierarchy should be applied where appropriate.

**2. COM7 iv) – For reasons of consistency with the NPPF (para 32), the Inspector suggested using the term ‘severe’ when dealing with road safety impacts.**

The councils suggest the following wording change to criterion iv) of Policy COM7:

‘Development will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that it would not have a ~~significant~~ severe detrimental effect on road safety, or measures can be introduced to reasonably mitigate potentially dangerous conditions’.

**3. COM11 – The Inspector suggested the wording of this policy could be more positive in response to concerns raised by objectors.**

The councils suggest the following wording change to criterion i) of policy COM11:

Proposals for generating heat or electricity from renewable energy sources ~~should be permitted~~ will be allowed wherever possible providing that the benefits of the development, such as the contribution towards renewable energy targets, significantly outweigh any harm. In addition, permission will only be granted provided:

**4. COM11 – An objector suggested the inclusion of a hierarchy of importance for different environmental considerations so that the policy could consider features of local and national significance.**

The councils have considered this suggestion. The objector has not provided an explanation for the need to provide a hierarchy of importance for different environmental considerations in policy COM11.


There is no requirement in the NPPF for renewable energy policies to give different weight to environmental receptors when considering proposals for renewable energy development.

The councils consulted on the renewable energy policy at an early stage of plan preparation and recognised the need to include of environmental safeguards within the policy. None of the consultation responses suggested taking the approach offered by the objector.

The councils consider that it would be inappropriate to give varying degrees of importance to environmental safeguards, as proposals should be considered on their own merits and in accordance with the individual environmental policies contained in the Local Plan.

## Suggested changes to the Plan

- 6.5.5 New development should not create significant highway safety problems. Local road layouts should therefore be designed carefully to discourage through traffic, reduce vehicle flows and restrain vehicle speed. Proposals for accesses and roads serving new development should be designed to be visually attractive, to meet the requirements of all road users, and minimise vehicle speed and the risk of accidents, particularly to pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians. The following road-user hierarchy is reflective of the road users commonly found in the plan area. This hierarchy should be applied where appropriate.

<b>Consider FIRST</b>	Pedestrians
	Cyclists
	Equestrians
	Public transport users
	Specialist service vehicles – eg emergency services, waste etc
<b>Consider LAST</b>	Other motor traffic

### COM 7. CREATING A SAFE AND EFFICIENT TRANSPORT NETWORK

- i) Development that generates significant movement should be located where the need to travel will be minimised and the use of sustainable transport modes including public transport, walking and cycling can be maximised.
- ii) Development should be located where the volume of traffic likely to be generated can be accommodated on the local highway network without exacerbating community severance.
- iii) Development will not be permitted where the residual cumulative impacts on the efficiency of the transport network are likely to be severe.
- iv) Development will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that it would not have a **significant severe** detrimental effect on road safety, or measures can be introduced to reasonably mitigate potentially dangerous conditions.
- v) The delivery of a strategic cycle network and improvements to the public rights of way network will be supported. Development should not result in the severance or degradation of existing or proposed routes. Where development degrades the attractiveness of a route, compensatory enhancements will be sought such that there is a net improvement to the public right of way network. Where development proposals provide the opportunity to significantly improve links within the public rights of way network, an appropriate link through the development will be required.

### COM 11. RENEWABLE ENERGY DEVELOPMENT

- i) Proposals for generating heat or electricity from renewable energy sources ~~should be permitted~~ will be allowed wherever possible providing that the benefits of the development, such as the contribution towards renewable energy targets, significantly outweigh any harm. In addition, permission will only be granted provided:
  - any adverse impacts on the local landscape, townscape or areas of historical interests can be satisfactorily assimilated

- **the proposal minimises harm to residential amenity by virtue of noise, vibration, overshadowing, flicker, or other detrimental emissions, during construction, its operation and decommissioning**
- **adverse impacts upon designated wildlife sites, nature conservation interests, and biodiversity are satisfactorily mitigated.**