

**North Dorset District Council**  
Proposed Housing Sites  
Landscape Impact Assessment: Assessment template

NB: See methodology notes attached

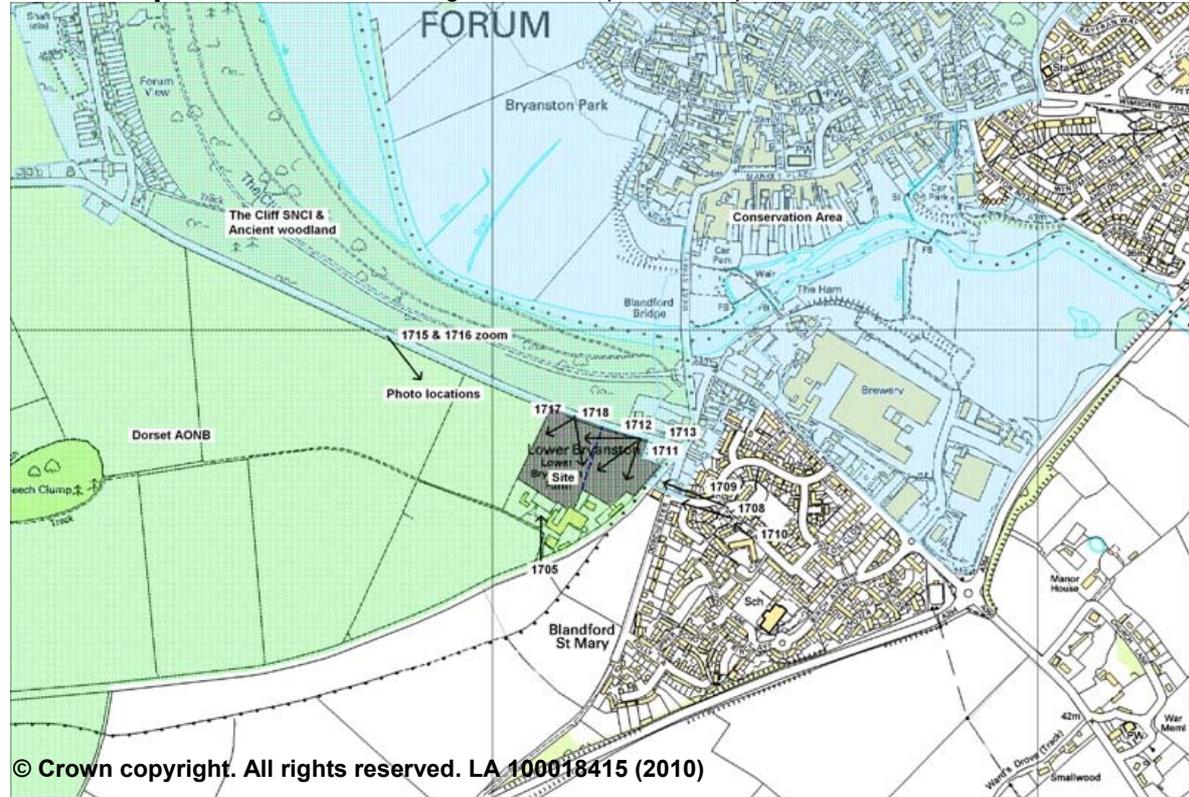
**Site name: *Blandford; Lower Bryanston Farm***

NDDC Ref: 2/03/0541

Date: 14 July 2010

Proposed housing nos:

**Location plan:** with relevant designations and photo viewpoints



**Key Characteristics:** These are the key positive features or qualities, which if lost or changed there would be a significant consequence for the current character of the landscape

- ◆ *The site forms part of the South Blandford Downs Landscape Character Area<sup>1</sup> which is part of the open chalk downland landscape type<sup>2</sup>.*
- ◆ *It is a small part of the downland landscape at a more domestic and enclosed scale.*
- ◆ *It is formed of sloping, east facing pony paddocks with a strong relationship with the adjacent farm buildings and the other dwellings on Fairmile Road.*
- ◆ *Bounded along New Road to the north by a strong mature hedgerow.*
- ◆ *The western boundary is continuous with adjacent open fields.*
- ◆ *The southern boundary forms the domestic curtilages to the farm building.*
- ◆ *There are some key trees/hedgerows around the site which contribute to its setting.*
- ◆ *A public right of way crosses the site from New Road and provides a link out into the*

<sup>1</sup> North Dorset District Council Landscape Character Assessment dated Nov 2007.

<sup>2</sup> Dorset County Council Landscape Character Assessment dated Nov 2009

*open countryside beyond.*

- ◆ *The site lies just within the boundary of the Dorset AONB.*
- ◆ *The Cliff ancient woodland and SNCI to the north of the site provides a mature, distinctive wooded backdrop to the site.*

**Summary of overall character:** based on scale, landform, pattern/complexity, settlement & human influences, skyline, visual relationships & views, intervisibility, perceptual/aesthetic criteria.

*The site forms part of the South Blandford Downs Landscape Character Area which, in turn, is part of the wider undulating, open chalk downland landscape which extends south and south-west of Blandford.*

*The site is formed of small scale, sloping, pony paddocks which slope steeply at first then flatten out towards the eastern edge of the site. It is dominated and therefore has a strong relationship with the buildings and environs of Lower Bryanston Farm. It is bounded by this farm to the south, open fields to the west and a dense hedgerow along the northern boundary with New Road. There are some important trees/hedgerows around the rest of the site which contribute to its setting and character. The hedges form part of the planned enclosure of the downland in post medieval times. The use of pony paddocks does, together with its juxtaposition with existing housing, contribute to an urban fringe feel to the site. A public right of way crosses the site from New Road and provides a link from the urban areas out into open countryside. The site lies just within the boundary of the Dorset AONB and the Cliff SNCI and ancient woodland to the north provides a distinct, wooded backdrop to the site.*

**Sensitivities/vulnerabilities:** to include threats to key characteristics. Assumes no mitigation measures; which are outlined below.

- ◆ *Development would impact on the open, undeveloped character of the site creating a negative impact on landscape character and the AONB. It would be seen as development on a green field site within this designated landscape.*
- ◆ *Development would impact negatively on the surrounding hedgerows and trees particularly if no buffer is provided against these key features.*
- ◆ *Development would also create a new hard urban edge to this part of the settlement facing west into open countryside and creating a barrier to the open countryside sweeping up to the existing built-up edge of the settlement.*

**Value:** based on AONB status (including setting of AONB), wildlife, public 'good' (access/enjoyment & amenity value), setting for the wider settlement, historic value (see EH Conservation Principles)

*The site has a high value in terms of landscape and visual impact due to being within the Dorset AONB. It has some value in providing a green open undeveloped wedge which flows in from the wider countryside up to the existing urban edge. It has some amenity value for passers-by, users of the public rights of way and residents as green, open countryside.*

**Sensitivity Analysis:** this takes the form of a 'guidance statement' informed by scale, landform, pattern/complexity, settlement & human influences, skyline, visual relationships & views, intervisibility, perceptual/aesthetic criteria which will outline opportunities for mitigation/enhancement.

*If development was located just within the lower/ flatter eastern half of the site (the blue dotted line indicates the recommended limit of development on the plan above) then this would minimise the identified impact. If the creation of a new, hard, urban, west facing edge was softened by structural planting this would also be a key mitigation measure. Development in this suggested, limited location would also sit within the context of existing development and be at a low enough elevation not to create a significant negative landscape and visual impact on the wider character of the AONB and the setting of the town. If existing hedgerows/trees were protected, maintained and managed this would also be a key mitigation point.*

*The use of SUDS (Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems) and other sustainable construction techniques should be explored for this site.*

*The development of the strategic Landscape Masterplan for the site is essential and should be developed 'up front' prior to any future planning application based on the Poole, Dorset and Bournemouth Landscape and Development checklist dated Feb 2008.*

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