



**Purbeck Core Strategy Development Plan Document**

**Examination into the soundness of the plan**

**Statement on behalf of Purbeck District Council**

**Hearing date: Thursday 18 May 2012 – 10am**

**Matter 19: Landscape, Historic Environment and Heritage (Policy LHH)**

**Issues**

19.1 Will the CS be effective in protecting the District's environmental and heritage assets?

## Introduction

1. This statement considers all the issues within Matter 19: Landscape, Historic Environment and Heritage (Policy LHH).

## Statements of common ground

2. A statement of common ground (SCG) has been agreed between Purbeck District Council and English Heritage (EH) in relation to this matter. The SCG between the Council and Natural England is also relevant.

## Why the Council considers the Core Strategy sound

3. Each issue raised by the Inspector is considered in turn below:

<h3>19.1 Will the CS be effective in protecting the District's environmental and heritage assets?</h3>
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4. The approach taken within the Core Strategy is proportionate to the existing high levels of local, national, international protection for heritage and landscape assets within the District. The preamble to Policy LHH states that the protection, conservation and enhancement of the landscape (including trees and hedgerows), historic environment and heritage of the District will be given a high priority by the Council. The policy itself sets out a comprehensive range of criteria against which impacts falling both within and outside the category of 'development' will be assessed (i.e. appearance, setting, character, interest, integrity, health and vitality). This will provide significant scope for detailed scrutiny of development proposals.
5. The Core Strategy, and Policy LHH in particular, is supported by a range of local evidence including Conservation Area Appraisals, the Dorset Landscape Character Assessment, Dorset Historic Towns Survey, AONB Management Plan, Purbeck Heritage Strategy, Townscape Character Appraisals and papers produced in preparation of the District Design Guidance. All of these help to highlight and explain the distinctive character of the District and ways in which development can help to conserve and enhance it.
6. Outside of Policy LHH, the Core Strategy contains a number of policies supportive of the environment and heritage. Policy CO provides a range of controls over development within the countryside including those affecting traditional agricultural buildings. Policies BIO and DH cover works affecting designated sites holding environmental importance. Policy GI provides for the provision of green infrastructure which provides support for local ecology amongst other benefits. In combination policies BIO, DH and GI planning positively for the creation, protection, enhancement and management of networks of biodiversity and green infrastructure as expected by para 114 of the NPPF.
7. Whilst moving away from a presumption in favour of conservation of the natural and historic environment, the NPPF does present conservation of the built, natural and historic environments as a key component of sustainable development. The NPPF maintains protection of internationally and nationally protected wildlife sites (para 113), AONB (para 114) and Heritage Coast (para 115), and therefore these designations do not need to be repeated in the Core Strategy. The combination of

the NPPF and Core Strategy will provide a sufficient basis for the determination of planning applications.

### Suggested changes for the Inspector to consider

8. Update as per changes 95-98 of the Minor Changes Schedule<sup>1</sup>.
9. In addition, the Council would like to undertake the following alterations:
10. In Policy LHH, delete the additional word 'from' and add '*(direct, indirect or cumulative)*' after 'impact'. This will clearly indicate that impacts to be assessed may be of various type and magnitude. And, add after the first paragraph of Policy LHH: '*Assessments of impact will be made relative to the significance of the asset and its component parts*'. This is consistent with national policy relating to both the historic and natural environments in NPPF.
11. As set out in the SCG with EH:
  - Add to the end of paragraph 8.17.3: '*The Dorset Historic Environment Record (maintained by Dorset County Council) is an important source of information relating to the historic environment, sites and designations.*' In paragraph 8.17.5 add '*Dorset Historic Environment Record*' to the list of sources.
  - Add the text in para 8.17.3 after 'undesigned heritage assets': '*Preparation of such a list will be considered in the future.*'
  - Add to paragraph 8.17.4 after 'service providers': '*Through use of these tools positive steps will be taken to secure the conservation and enhancement of the District's historic environment and landscape. Areas of action include reduction in the number of assets considered to be 'at risk' of loss or deterioration, securing sensitive public realm and highways improvements, input into production of design statements by local communities and identifying opportunities for heritage led regeneration.*'
  - Replace 'possible' with '*appropriate*' in Policy LHH, in order to be consistent with national policy.

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<sup>1</sup> SD26: Minor Changes Schedule