

Sustainability Appraisal Non-technical Summary



Sustainability Appraisal Non-technical Summary

West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan

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1 Introduction

- 1.0.1 This report provides the non-technical summary of the sustainability appraisal of the West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan, highlighting the key stages and findings of the sustainability appraisal.
- 1.0.2 The main purpose of this sustainability appraisal is to ensure that the key environmental, social and economic issues in West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland are taken into account when developing the West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan. The sustainability appraisal aims to encourage a more sustainable future pattern of development and way of living in West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland, with a view to promoting sustainable development.
- 1.0.3 The sustainability appraisal also includes a health impact assessment to ensure that the positive health impacts are maximised and negative health impacts are minimised.

1.1. THE WEST DORSET, WEYMOUTH AND PORTLAND LOCAL PLAN

- 1.1.1 The West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan ('Local Plan'), once adopted, will offer a long-term planning strategy for the entire administrative area of West Dorset and Weymouth and Portland until 2031. This will give local communities, developers and investors greater certainty about the types of applications that are likely to be approved, and greater security of future development land supply.
- 1.1.2 The Local Plan sets out the housing and employment land requirements for the district and borough and allocates sufficient land within the plan area to meet them. In addition, the Local Plan provides a general policy framework which includes policies to fulfil the Plan's strategic objectives.

1.2. LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND TO SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL

- 1.2.1 European Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment ('the SEA Directive') introduces a requirement to complete a Strategic Environmental Assessment for plans prepared for town and country planning and land use purposes.
- 1.2.2 The SEA Directive is transposed into UK law through the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations (2004), which requires the sustainability appraisal of local development plan documents, such as the Local Plan.
- 1.2.3 A sustainability appraisal is required to consider the social and economic effects of a plan, in addition to the environmental effects which are required by the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive. The combined sustainability appraisal and strategic environmental assessment process is referred to as sustainability appraisal in this document.

1.3. THE SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL PROCESS

- 1.3.1 The sustainability appraisal process occurs alongside the development of the Local Plan,

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feeding into its development throughout the plan making process.

1.3.2 There are five key stages in the preparation of sustainability appraisal for local development documents:

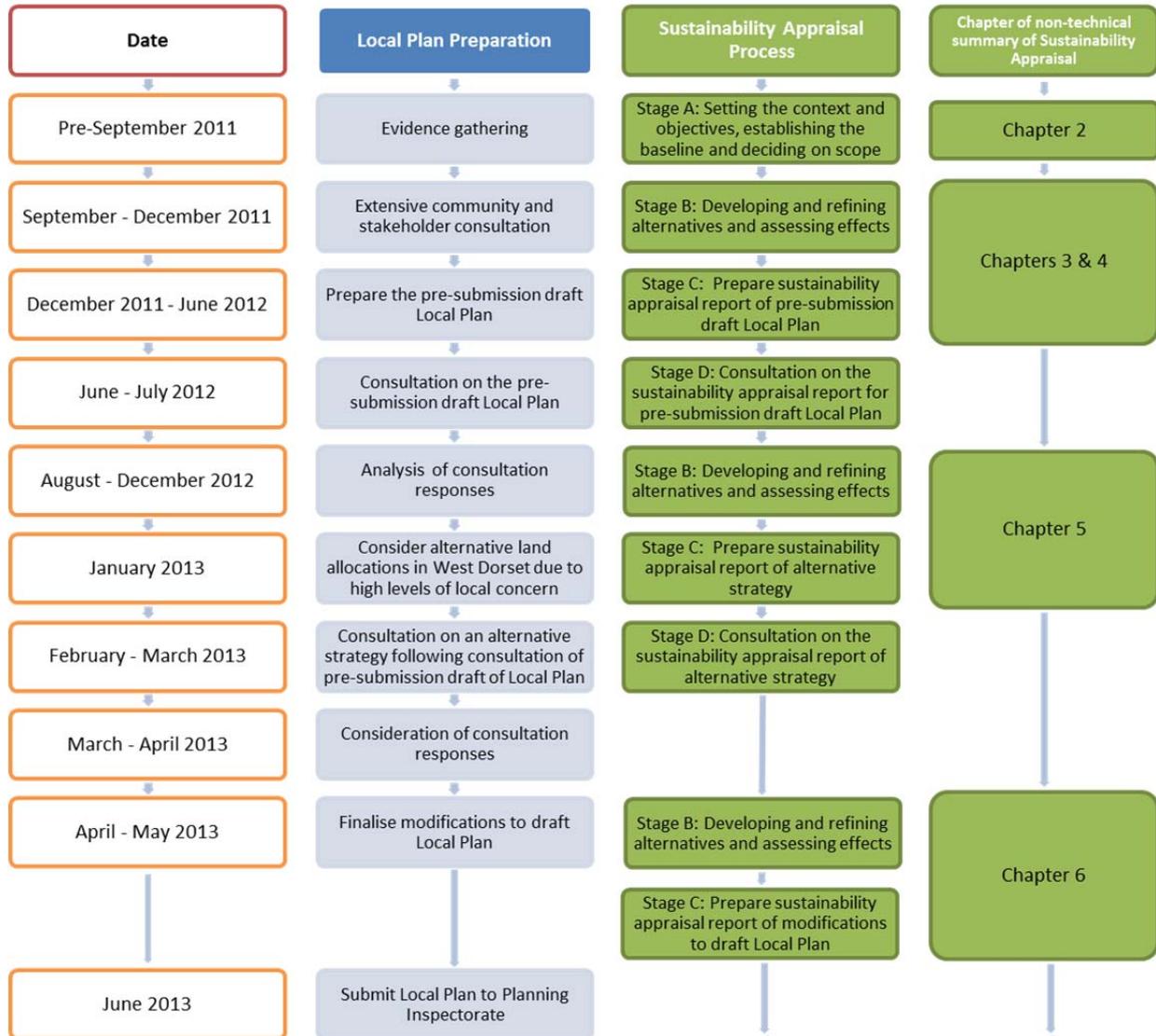
- Stage A: Setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding on the scope.
- Stage B: Developing and refining alternatives and assessing effects
- Stage C: Preparing the Environmental Report
- Stage D: Consulting on the draft plan or programme and the Environmental Report
- Stage E: Monitoring implementation of the plan or programme

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SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL OF THE WEST DORSET, WEYMOUTH AND PORTLAND LOCAL PLAN

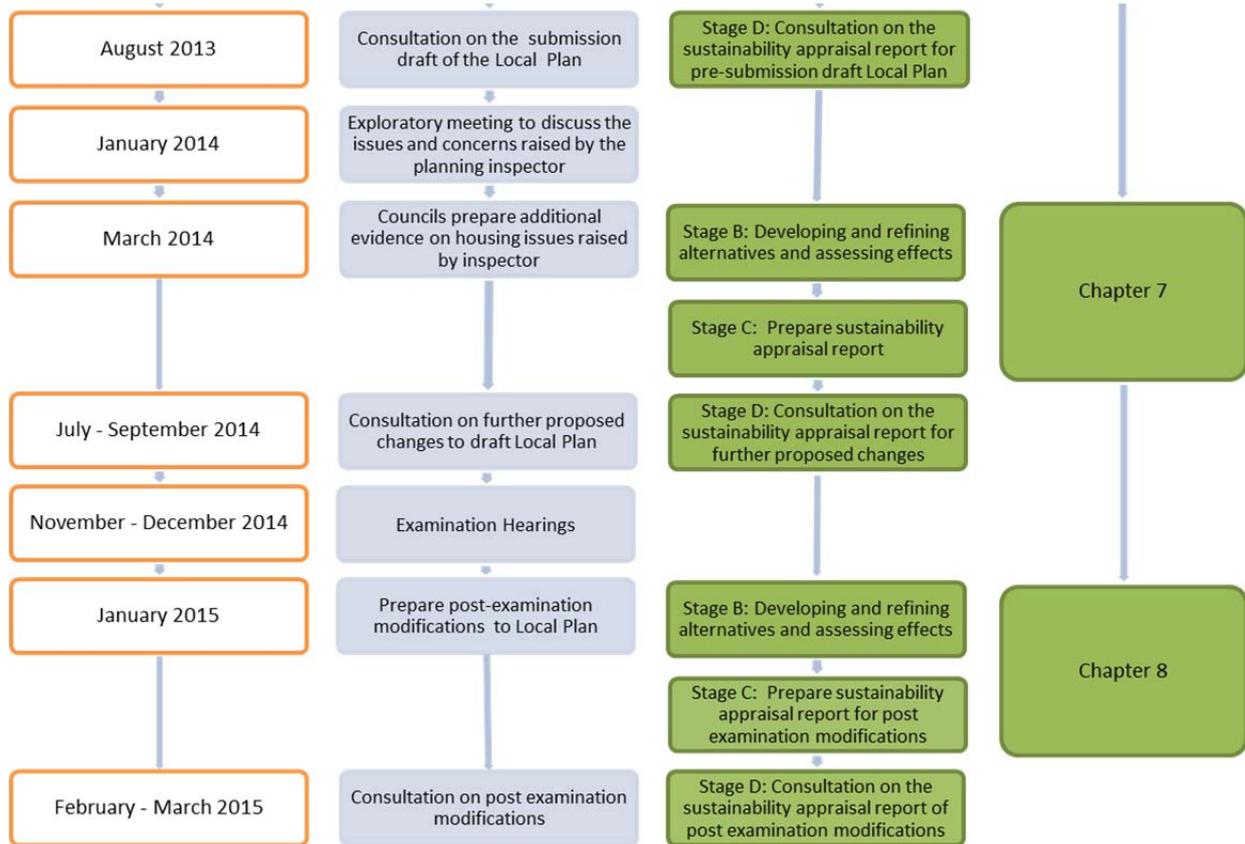
1.3.3 The Sustainability Appraisal process is iterative, in that the stages of the Sustainability Appraisal occur alongside the development of the Local Plan, feeding into its development throughout the plan making process. The diagram below provides a summary of the stages in the development of the Local Plan and Sustainability Appraisal which accompanied it.



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2 The Scope of the Sustainability Appraisal

- 2.0.1 The scoping stage of the sustainability appraisal involves:
- identifying the environmental protection objectives from other plans and programmes;
 - characterising the local area; and
 - identifying the key environmental problems.
- 2.0.2 This process allows a sustainability framework to be developed, which comprises a series of sustainability objectives which cover the key social, economic and environmental issues within the plan area. These sustainability objectives are later used to assess the environmental performance of the plan.
- 2.0.3 This chapter provides a summary of the scoping of the sustainability appraisal.

2.1. LINKS TO OTHER PLANS, PROGRAMMES AND OBJECTIVES

2.1.1 The purpose of reviewing the policy context of the Local Plan is to identify the relevant objectives and targets of other plans and programmes, so they can be reflected in the sustainability framework. This will ensure that there is no conflict between the Local Plan and other documents, and ensure that any common objectives between the Local Plan and the other documents are exploited.

2.1.2 The table below shows the key messages from this exercise.

Topic	Key messages
Environment and Climate Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect and enhance our valued landscapes, wildlife habitats and green infrastructure network, air and water quality, built heritage and archaeology whilst promoting sustainable development to satisfy the needs and demands of the area. • Provide for the transition to a low carbon future by promoting the improvement of the energy performance of buildings, a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, and the uptake of renewable energy technologies. • Ensure that we create places people want to live in, that are free from nuisance (such as noise) and where they feel safe from issues such as the risk of flooding and coastal erosion.
Achieving a Sustainable Pattern of Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To boost the supply of housing and employment sites. • To seek positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural and historic environment, as well as in people's quality of life. • To take account of and support local strategies to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all. • Make Weymouth & Portland a successful business location and improve it as a

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	<p>place to live, work and visit.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the development of affordable housing, particularly in West Dorset. • There is a variety of housing to meet a range of incomes, including enough affordable housing for those in need. • Reduce the need to travel.
Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places at the right time; • Set criteria and allocate land to meet demand; • Support existing and emerging sectors; • Support the expansion and growth of existing businesses; • Promote the viability and vitality of town centres; • Define town centres and primary shopping areas; • Apply a sequential approach for town centre uses; • Support the development and diversification of agriculture and land based rural business; • Support tourism and leisure development; and • Support the development and retention of local facilities and services.
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase significantly the delivery of new homes. It aims to provide a choice of high quality homes; • widen opportunities for home ownership and creating sustainable mixed communities; • Provide mixed housing provision to provide for balanced communities. • To set policies to meet affordable housing needs on site, or by off site provision or by financial contribution if it can be robustly justified.
Community Needs and Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improve electronic communication technology (broadband); • improve public transport infrastructure; • Tackle climate change through the promotion of renewable energy; • Ensure good quality provision and access to open spaces, culture and recreational facilities and improve the provision of public transport, particularly in rural areas.

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2.2. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PLAN AREA AND KEY ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

2.2.1 The characteristics of the plan area can be used to accurately predicting the possible effects of the Local Plan and what is likely to happen without its implementation. These characteristics also help to highlight the key issues affecting the plan area and assist in developing sustainability objectives which are relevant and address the key environmental issues.

2.2.2 The main environmental, social and economic issues and problems that were identified during the scoping process are as follows:

Key sustainability issues and problems	How they can be reflected in the sustainability framework
The internationally designated Dorset Heathlands and Poole Harbour wildlife sites are considered sensitive to certain types of development.	This issue may be addressed by providing protection to areas which have been designated on the basis of their ecological importance through the sustainability framework.
Protecting the rich historic and built heritage and archaeological remains from the impacts of development.	This issue may be tackled by preventing unacceptable impacts upon built heritage and archaeological remains through the sustainability framework.
Protecting the landscape and seascape character of the largely undeveloped coastline within the plan area, which has designations including the Heritage Coast, Portland Coast, and Dorset and East Devon Coast World Heritage Site.	This issue may be addressed by protecting the distinctive features of the landscape and townscape through the sustainability framework.
The potential loss of green spaces causing habitats to be isolated through the loss of wildlife corridors (habitat fragmentation).	This issue may be tackled by encouraging the connection of habitats and creation of wildlife corridors in the sustainability framework.
The risk of flooding, particularly in Weymouth and Bridport.	This issue may be addressed by reducing vulnerability to flooding through the sustainability framework.
The loss of productive farmland, which provides local food security by giving local people the chance to grow their own food, will reduce local resilience to climate change.	This issue may be tackled by protecting (and enhancing, where possible) soil quality through the sustainability framework.
Many people are unable to afford a decent home by buying or renting on the open market	This issue may be addressed by including scope to increase the availability of decent, affordable housing in the Local Plan through the sustainability framework.

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Key sustainability issues and problems	How they can be reflected in the sustainability framework
There are above average levels of unemployment in Weymouth and Portland.	This issue may be tackled by increasing economic activity and providing employment opportunities through the sustainability framework.
Reliance on the car to access jobs and services, particularly from more rural areas.	This issue may be addressed by improving access to services and facilities by sustainable transport means through the sustainability framework.

2.3. SUSTAINABILITY FRAMEWORK

- 2.3.1 The sustainability framework consists of a series of sustainability objectives which are used to test whether the policies within the Local Plan promote sustainable development.
- 2.3.2 The sustainability objectives have been informed by the findings of the scope of the sustainability appraisal. This ensures that the sustainability framework is relevant and specific to the Local Plan and addresses the key sustainability concerns. The sustainability framework also considers human health impacts, as part of the health impact assessment process which is incorporated into this SA.
- 2.3.3 The sustainability framework for this sustainability appraisal consists of the following nine sustainability objectives (please note that the numbering does not suggest a hierarchy of objectives):
- 1 To maintain or enhance features of historic and cultural importance;
 - 2 To maintain, protect and enhance the landscape, townscape and seascape;
 - 3 To reduce our contribution to climate change;
 - 4 To reduce vulnerability to climate change;
 - 5 To maintain or enhance soil and water quality;
 - 6 To protect or enhance biodiversity, geodiversity and the quality of natural habitats;
 - 7 To encourage the development of sustainable, safe and vibrant communities to improve quality of life;
 - 8 To encourage sustainable economic growth; and
 - 9 To provide decent, affordable housing that meets the need of the local community

3 September 2011: Sustainability Appraisal of Options

3.0.1 The sustainability appraisal provides a useful tool in identifying the most sustainable approach to key planning issues during the development of the Local Plan.

3.1. SELECTION OF OPTIONS

3.1.1 The options, or alternatives as they are often referred to, that were considered during the development of the Local Plan were mainly identified through national policy and guidance, consultation, and the evidence base for the Local Plan. The options are largely strategic at this stage, rather than including fine detail.

3.1.2 Some approaches or suggested areas for land allocations were discounted for the following reasons:

- Unsustainable locations: Sites which were remote from essential services and facilities, and therefore largely inaccessible by sustainable modes of transport;
- Unacceptable environmental impacts: Development would result in unacceptable impacts upon environmental receptors, such as the landscape and protected species and habitats;
- Physical constraints: Topographical features or hydrological issues causing the site to be unsuitable;
- Opposition: Objections from statutory consultees and other organisations, or high levels of public opposition;
- Unfeasible: Land ownership or legal reasons meaning that development is unachievable; and
- Planning policy issues: Development would contradict with other local plan objectives.

3.1.3 In some cases, there was no reasonable alternative approach and therefore none that could be assessed, for example where national planning policy is prescriptive about the approach that should be taken, or environmental or legal constraints prevent any reasonable alternative.

3.2. METHODOLOGY

3.2.1 The alternatives were tested using the sustainability framework developed specifically for this sustainability appraisal. The sustainability framework consists of a series of sustainability objectives, each with decision-making criteria to assist in the process of making a judgement about the possible sustainability effects of an alternative approach. In addition, baseline information and any other evidence was used to predict the effect of the approaches where available, along with the professional opinion of specialists such as the relevant Council Officers.

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3.3. DIFFICULTIES IN UNDERTAKING THE ASSESSMENT

- 3.3.1 The alternatives considered at this early stage in the development of the Local Plan were largely strategic and considered a general policy direction rather than a more detailed approach. In some instances, the alternatives lacked the detail that was required to accurately assess whether an impact was likely to occur or not.
- 3.3.2 In some instances, a policy or allocation may have a positive effect in some respects and a negative effect in another respects upon a particular environmental, social or economic receptor. A balanced judgement is required to determine whether the overall net effect is either positive, neutral or negative which may be complex and require the evaluation of many different effects.

3.4. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL OF POLICY OPTIONS

- 3.4.1 In some instances, the preferred approach according to the sustainability appraisal of policy options was not selected for the Local Plan. Justification for not selecting this approach are as follows:
- Flood risk: The preferred option was considered unacceptably restrictive, preventing the development of adequate levels of housing, services and infrastructure. Therefore, a more permissive approach was taken, to permit development on medium/high risk flood zones providing no reasonable alternatives exist, adequate measures are taken to mitigate the flood risk, and the safety of potential occupants is ensured.
 - Affordable housing: The chosen level of affordable housing was based on viability assessment work, commissioned by the Council and completed by an external consultant. This work suggested that the preferred approach may unreasonably restrict development, taking into account current market conditions and the need to provide incentives for development.
 - New Local Community Buildings and Structures: The preferred approach, according to the sustainability appraisal, was to only enable new local community buildings and structures within or adjoining settlements. However, it is believed that this approach may have significant detrimental impacts upon rural locations, which may not be able to provide community facilities due to the restrictions in these locations. The approach taken forward in the Local Plan was to enable new local community buildings and structures in rural locations, in order to serve rural areas in addition to the settlement areas, and provide mitigation against the adverse environmental impacts identified during the sustainability appraisal.
 - Provision of education and training facilities: The sustainability appraisal favoured the approach of retaining, as opposed to permitting the development of, existing playing fields during the provision of education and training facilities. It is believed that the approach favoured by the sustainability appraisal would significantly restrict the development of education and training facilities. Therefore, the Local Plan adopts the

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approach of enabling the loss of playing fields, but includes policy that mitigates the adverse landscape, climate change, and biodiversity impacts highlighted by the sustainability appraisal.

SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL OF LAND ALLOCATIONS

3.4.2 The sustainability appraisal of land allocation options is summarised in the following tables and an explanation of significant adverse impacts for each plan area is also provided.

3.4.3 The scoring system used to define whether the impact of a policy or allocation was positive or negative in the tables is as follows:

++	Strong positive impact
+	Positive Impact
0	Neutral or negligible effect
-	Negative effect.
--	Strong negative effect
?	The relationship is unclear
n/a	The sustainability objective is not applicable to the option being assessed

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EASTERN AREA

3.4.4 The following land allocation options were considered for the Eastern chapter:

Option	Location	Option	location	Option	location
A	Poundbury mixed use development	F	Red Cow Farm	K	Land SE of Dorchester
B	Poundbury Parkway Farm Business site extension	G	Land south of St Georges Road	L	Land W of Dorchester
C	Charles Street	H	Land west of Syward Road	M	Land at Crossways
D	Future town centre expansion	I	Dorchester Transport and Environment Plan	N	Land at Chickerell
E	Weymouth Avenue Area	J	Land to the north of the Watermeadows	O	Land at Southill

3.4.5 A summary table showing the findings of the sustainability appraisal of the land allocation options for the eastern areas are presented below.

Sustainability objectives	Options (with land allocations proposed in the June 2012 draft Local Plan in bold and discounted sites in normal font)														
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O
Historic & cultural features	0	0	0	0	-	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	0	0	0
Landscape, townscape & seascape	-	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	--	0	0	-	-	-
Climate change mitigation	+	+	-	+	+	0	+	0	++	-	-	-	+	+	-
Climate change vulnerability	0	-	-	+	+	0	+	0	+	--	0	-	+	+	0
Soil and water quality	-	-	0	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Biodiversity, geodiversity, & habitats	-	-	0	0	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	--	--	-	--
Quality of life	++	++	++	++	++	0	0	0	+	--	-	-	+	+	0
Economy	++	++	++	++	++	++	+	0	++	0	0	0	+	+	+
Housing	++	0	+	0	++	++	++	++	0	++	++	++	++	++	++

Summary of key impacts

3.4.6 The sustainability appraisal identified significant adverse impacts associated with development of the land to the north of the watermeadows, land to the SE of Dorchester, land at Crossways, and land at Southill. Of these sites, the Local Plan will only allocate the land at Crossways. The potential adverse impacts of the development at Crossways upon biodiversity and habitats is due to the potential additional recreational pressures that may be placed upon the Dorset Heathlands internationally designated wildlife site.

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NORTHERN AREA

3.4.7 The following land allocation options were considered for the Northern chapter:

Option	location	Option	location
A	The Former Gas Works Site	E	Land to the West of Sherborne, East of Lenthay Dairy House Between Bradford and Lenthay Roads
B	Barton Farm Mixed Use Development	F	East of Coldharbour Business Park
C	Future Town Centre Expansion at Land at Newland Car Parks (North and South)	G	Development in Yetminster, on land to the north, west and east of St Andrew's Primary School.
D	Land at Sherborne Hotel		

3.4.8 A summary table showing the findings of the sustainability appraisal of the land allocation options for the northern areas are presented below.

Sustainability objectives	Options (with land allocations proposed in the June 2012 draft Local Plan in bold and discounted sites in normal font)						
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Historic & cultural features	0	0	-	0	0	--	-
Landscape, townscape & seascape	0	+	0	0	0	--	0
Climate change mitigation	+	+	+	+	--	-	+
Climate change vulnerability	+	-	0	+	--	0	+
Soil and water quality	++	-	0	0	-	0	0
Biodiversity, geodiversity, & habitats	0	-	0	0	-	--	-
Quality of life	+	++	+	0	--	0	-
Economy	++	++	++	++	++	++	+
Housing	++	++	0	0	++	0	++

Summary of key impacts

3.4.9 The sustainability appraisal identified significant adverse impacts associated with development of the land to the West of Sherborne, East of Lenthay Dairy House between Bradford and Lenthay Roads, and the land to the East of Coldharbour Business Park. None of these sites will be allocated for development in the Local Plan.

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WESTERN AREA

3.4.10 The following land allocation options were considered for the Western chapter:

Option	location	Option	location
A	Southwest Quadrant St Michaels Trading Estate	H	Burton Bradstock Flood Alleviation Scheme
B	St Andrews Employment Allocation	I	Land East of Wychside Close
C	Land at Vearse Farm	J	Land to Rear/West Of 169 To 179 Victoria Grove, Bridport
D	Land North of Happy Island Way	K	Allington and Ryeberry Hill
E	Land to East of Bredy Vet Centre, off Jessops Avenue	L	Land at Watton Hill
F	Future Town Centre Expansion at Bridport	M	Land North of Bradpole, to East of Mangerton Lane
G	Broomhills Waste Transfer Site		

3.4.11 A summary table showing the findings of the sustainability appraisal of the land allocation options for the western areas are presented below.

Sustainability objectives	Options (with land allocations proposed in the June 2012 draft Local Plan in bold and discounted sites in normal font)												
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
Historic & cultural features	--	0	0	0	-	-	0	0	0	0	-	0	0
Landscape, townscape & seascape	+	-	0	-	-	0	-	+	-	0	--	--	--
Climate change mitigation	+	-	0	++	0	+	+	0	-	-	-	+	-
Climate change vulnerability	0	0	0	++	-	-	0	+	-	--	-	0	--
Soil and water quality	-	--	-	-	-	-	-	++	0	-	0	-	-
Biodiversity, geodiversity, & habitats	-	0	-	-	-	-	-	+	--	-	-	-	-
Quality of life	++	0	++	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	-	0	-
Economy	++	++	++	0	++	++	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Housing	++	0	++	++	++	0	0	0	++	+	++	++	++

Summary of key impacts

3.4.12 Of the sites allocated for development in the Local Plan, only one showed a significant adverse impact. A potential adverse impact upon historic and cultural features was identified at the Southwest Quadrant, St Michael's Trading Estate. This site contains historic buildings from the rope making industry that once dominated this area, and is considered by English Heritage to be important industrial archaeology.

4 June 2012: Sustainability Appraisal of pre-submission draft Local Plan

4.1. FINDINGS OF THE SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL OF THE LOCAL PLAN OBJECTIVES

- 4.1.1 The Local Plan sets out 8 strategic objectives which highlight the priorities and aims of the Plan. It is important for these strategic objectives to be in accordance with sustainability objectives, in order for the plan to strive towards achieving sustainable development and address the key environmental issues for the plan area.
- 4.1.2 The strategic objectives in the Local Plan were tested for compatibility with the sustainability framework. The sustainability appraisal indicated that there were no significant adverse impacts associated with the Local Plan objectives. Potential adverse impacts upon the natural and built environment were identified with respect to strategic objective 2, which was to “Meet local housing needs for all as far as is possible”. However, these impacts may be mitigated through strategic objectives 5 and 8, which are the overriding objectives in those areas of the plan which are particularly sensitive to change, thus providing protection to the natural and built environment.

4.2. FINDINGS OF THE SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL OF POLICIES

- 4.2.1 The following section provides a summary of the findings of the sustainability appraisal of the policy framework chapters (Chapter 2-6) of the pre-submission draft Local Plan in June 2012.

ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

- 4.2.2 The sustainability appraisal highlighted the conflict between the strategic objectives of the Local Plan to meet housing needs and support the economy, and enhance the natural environment.
- 4.2.3 The sustainability appraisal identified potentially adverse impacts associated with the longer term loss of biodiversity and habitats as a result of major developments and the potential loss of local wildlife designations, trees and hedgerows, and key wildlife corridors, as a result of the Wildlife and Habitats policy not providing adequate protection (ENV 2).
- 4.2.4 Flood risk is likely to become an increasingly important issue as the impacts of climate change are realised. The sustainability appraisal highlighted longer term issues with the degree of protection from flooding given to the development types defined as less vulnerable by the flood risk policy (ENV 5), such as shops, businesses, leisure facilities, and sewage treatment works. The appraisal indicated potential adverse environmental impacts associated with pollution from flooded sewage treatment works which would effect soil and water quality, in addition to the secondary impacts upon biodiversity and habitats. Also, the appraisal indicated potential adverse economic impacts associated with the loss of trade and cost of flood repairs to businesses and shops, and a lack of investment as a result of an economic infrastructure that is vulnerable to flooding. Potential adverse social impacts associated with the safety of future occupants and access to services and facilities were also identified.

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SUSTAINABLE PATTERN OF DEVELOPMENT

- 4.2.5 This chapter sets the level of economic and housing growth (SUS 1), and the strategy of how growth will be distributed across West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland (SUS 2). The policy indicates a preference to distribute development close to larger settlements and within defined development boundaries, an approach which is supported by the sustainability appraisal. However, some development will be permitted outside the defined development boundaries (SUS 2 and SUS 4), and the sustainability appraisal highlighted potentially adverse impacts upon environmental receptors including landscape quality, the loss of productive agricultural land, and the decline of biodiversity as a result.
- 4.2.6 The impacts of neighbourhood planning (SUS 3) on a strategic level cannot be accurately appraised at this stage, as they are yet to be written and are likely to differ greatly according to the geographical area being considered. Neighbourhood plans may be subject to sustainability appraisal in their own right, with any adverse impacts associated with them addressed at this stage.

ECONOMY

- 4.2.7 This chapter sets out the economic vision for West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland. The sustainability appraisal indicated that the policy in this chapter supports the local economy, encouraging investment and business growth and recovery during this time of recession. The sustainability appraisal also highlights the conflict between economic growth and environmental protection, particularly in instances where development such as holiday homes, caravan and camping sites, and new agricultural buildings may occur outside the defined development boundaries. Whilst it is appreciated that such developments are necessary to enable the growth of certain industries and locations, rural areas may be sensitive in terms of landscape and wildlife importance, which may in particular require protection through this policy. The sustainability appraisal also highlighted issues with sustainable transport in light of the remote location of the development outside the defined development boundary, and the permanent loss of productive agricultural land.

HOUSING

- 4.2.8 The policy included in this chapter intends to provide the appropriate type and mix of accommodation and housing in West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland. Once again, the sustainability appraisal highlighted the conflict between the strategic objectives of facilitating growth and development and protecting the natural environment, particularly in instances where development may occur in rural areas which are more likely to be environmentally sensitive.

COMMUNITY NEEDS AND INFRASTRUCTURE

- 4.2.9 This chapter includes policies on the provision and location of community facilities and services. The sustainability appraisal identified very few sustainability issues associated with the policies in this chapter, largely as the majority of community facilities will be developed in areas adjoining settlements and large developments, which appeared to be the most sustainable approach according to this sustainability objective. One exception is

the provision of new or improved recreational facilities (COM 4), which may occur in coastal or countryside locations. The sustainability appraisal appreciated that some recreational activities require a countryside or coastal setting, and preventing development in these areas would reduce access to a full range of recreational facilities, adversely affecting the quality of life sustainability objective. However, the conflict between development for recreational activities in coastal and countryside locations and environmental protection which need to be addressed through amendments to the policy.

4.3. FINDINGS OF THE SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL OF LAND ALLOCATIONS

4.3.1 The following section provides a summary of the sustainability impacts associated with the chapters of the Local Plan which allocate land for development (Chapters 7-16).

WEYMOUTH

4.3.2 The Weymouth town centre policy (WEY 1) outlines the strategy for Weymouth town centre, and applies to a number of proceeding policies in this chapter of the Local Plan, as outlined in the Figure 7.1 of the Local Plan. The sustainability appraisal identified flooding is a key issue in Weymouth, with the potential for adverse environmental, social and economic impacts resulting from flood events.

4.3.3 The sustainability appraisal highlighted the issues surrounding the provision of a range of activities in Weymouth, particularly to fill the activities gap between the hours of 5-8pm. Whilst the growth of late night entertainment industry, which is a key element of Weymouth's economy, may be restricted as a result of policy, the sustainability appraisal indicated that this is necessary in order to provide access to a wider range of activities and improve public safety.

4.3.4 The sustainability appraisal identified a number of land allocations which may have adverse impacts upon biodiversity, geodiversity and habitats. Development at the Station Area and Swannery Car Park (WEY 3) may have potentially adverse impacts upon 'the Swannery' Site of Special Scientific Interest, and the potential for tourist and leisure related development at Bowleaze Cove (WEY 15) may impact upon the international wildlife designations and sites of geological interest in close proximity to the site.

4.3.5 The sustainability appraisal also highlighted the sustainability issues associated with development at Lodmoor Gateway (WEY 8). This site is remotely located from the existing town centre, encouraging less sustainable transport methods. Furthermore, there are flood risks and coastal erosion issues associated with this site, and potentially adverse impacts resulting from contaminated land.

PORTLAND

4.3.6 The sustainability appraisal identified potentially adverse environmental impacts associated with the safeguarding of land at Portland Port for operational and ancillary uses (PORT 1). There are potential impacts upon the historic military features in the area, the local landscape and heritage coastline status, and the local, national and internationally designated wildlife sites.

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LITTLEMOOR AND CHICKERELL

- 4.3.7 The main issue identified by the development of these areas by the sustainability appraisal was the loss of habitat and productive agricultural land to development. Whilst significant impacts have been identified by the sustainability appraisal in some instances, in other cases the loss of habitats or agricultural land is not considered significantly adverse due to the quality of the habitats/agricultural land, the nature of the surrounding areas of the development and its ability to adsorb the effects of the development. Also, some developments (CHIC 2) will provide a network of green open spaces which will reduce the loss of habitat and minimise the permanent loss of productive agricultural land.
- 4.3.8 The proposed development at Littlemoor (LITT 1) is within the Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. However, the landscape impacts associated with this development has been adequately mitigated by the policy, which requires the positive enhancement of the Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty designation.

DORCHESTER

- 4.3.9 This chapter allocates land for housing and employment use in the Dorchester area, and provides a strategy for Dorchester town centre and a transport and environment plan for Dorchester.
- 4.3.10 The sustainability appraisal highlighted the ecological issue affecting all development in Dorchester and other areas within the Poole Harbour catchment. Effluent from development within the Poole Harbour catchments contributes to the degradation of the Poole Harbour internationally designated wildlife site, since the emission of nitrates causes the formation of algal flats on the mud flat habitats in Poole Harbour.
- 4.3.11 The sustainability appraisal indicated that the extensive area of development at Poundbury (DOR 1) would result in the loss of productive agricultural land. However, since the development includes the provision of green spaces (as outlined in the Poundbury Development Brief), the irreversible loss of productive agricultural land and soil quality will be minimised.
- 4.3.12 The Dorchester Transport and Environment Plan (DTEP) (DOR 10) aims to support the economic prosperity of the town, reduce the traffic passing through Dorchester, and provide a higher quality environment. The sustainability appraisal indicated that whilst the provision of land for DTEP is likely to result in the loss of habitat and productive agricultural land, the environmental, social and economic impacts of the scheme greatly outweigh these impacts.
- 4.3.13 The sustainability appraisal outline plans for the development of land around Dorchester (DOR 11). The environmental impacts of the urban expansion cannot be fully assessed at this stage, as the location of the potential urban extension remains unknown. However, the environmental impacts of the proposed development will be fully assessed if and when land is identified for development.

CROSSWAYS

- 4.3.14 The sustainability appraisal for the Crossways development indicated potentially adverse landscape impacts, and recommends that provision is made for cycle links, in addition to transport links, to encourage the use of more sustainable transport methods.
- 4.3.15 The provision of the site of alternative natural green space with the development at Crossways is considered sufficient to mitigate the impacts of increased recreational pressure as a result of the development upon the Dorset Heathlands International site.

BRIDPORT

- 4.3.16 This chapter allocates land for housing and employment use, future town centre expansion, and the provision of a waste management site.
- 4.3.17 The sustainability appraisal indicated that development associated with the future town centre expansion in Bridport (BRID 4) and St Michael's Trading Estate (BRID 5) may have significant adverse cumulative or synergistic impacts upon the adjacent river habitat and the European protected species such as the otter and water vole populations that inhabit this river. Both sites are located within medium to low flood risk areas, and with flood events likely to increase in future as a consequence of climate change, the sustainability appraisal identified potentially adverse impacts upon environmental, social and economic receptors.
- 4.3.18 The sustainability appraisal of the Broomhills Waste Management Site (BRID 6) indicates potential adverse ecological impacts associated with the local wildlife designation located in close proximity to the site, and potential longer term flooding impacts associated with the stream that runs through the site. However, this policy suggests the site as a preferred location for a waste management site rather than actually allocating land. Dorset County Council, as mineral planning authority, will be required by legislation to carry out the appropriate environmental assessment should the site be selected for waste management purposes, in order to mitigate the identified impacts.

BEAMINSTER

- 4.3.19 The allocations at Lane End Farm (BEAM 3) and to the North of Broadwindsor Road (BEAM 1) would result in the loss of agricultural. However, this is unlikely to significantly reduce the ability of the community to grow food locally, as the surrounding areas provide large tracts of productive farmland and the development itself includes some green spaces which will prevent the permanent loss of soil quality on the productive agricultural areas at the site.
- 4.3.20 The sustainability appraisal also indicated that there are potential flooding issues at the land allocations to the North of Broadwindsor Road (BEAM 1).

LYME REGIS

- 4.3.21 The sustainability appraisal indicated that the development of land at Woodberry Down (LYME 1) would result in the potential loss of community facilities, reducing access to

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community and recreational facilities. Furthermore, the loss of downland as a result of the development may adversely impact upon wildlife and habitats.

- 4.3.22 Policy LYME 2 outlines the potential for developing sites around Lyme Regis for housing and employment use rather than allocating specific areas. At this stage, it is not possible to accurately assess the possible impacts of this scheme, other than the economic and housing impacts associated with the development.

SHERBORNE

- 4.3.23 The sustainability appraisal identified potential adverse impacts associated with surface water runoff at Barton Farm (SHER 1). The loss of farmland due to development at Barton Farm is not considered significant due to the large amount of farmland situated in the areas surrounding the site.

4.4. CUMULATIVE, SECONDARY AND SYNERGISTIC IMPACTS

- 4.4.1 In accordance with the SEA Directive (Annex 1(f)), the cumulative, secondary and synergistic effects of the plan were assessed.
- 4.4.2 Cumulative effects arise where policies or allocations have an insignificant effect individually, but may have a significant effect together or in combination with one another. For example, two separate developments close to a wildlife population may not cause significant adverse impacts upon these species when considered individually, but may do when considered in combination.
- 4.4.3 Secondary effects are not a direct result of the plan, but occur as a result of the consequential impacts. For example, development may reduce the population of a plant species through recreational pressure which then affects water runoff and the flood regime of a nearby watercourse.
- 4.4.4 A synergistic effect is where the effect of two or more effects acting together which is greater than the simple sum of the effects when acting alone. For example, a wildlife habitat can become progressively fragmented with limited effects on a particular species until finally the fragmentation makes the areas too small to support the species at all.
- 4.4.5 The following table presents the cumulative, secondary and synergistic impacts of the Local Plan that were identified through the sustainability appraisal of the June 2012 draft Local Plan:

Policies	Effects	Significance of impact
DOR 1, DOR 2, DOR 4, DOR 5, DOR 6, DOR 7, DOR 8,	Cumulative effect on the Poole Harbour internationally designated area. Any development in the Poole Harbour catchment may contribute to an increased nutrient loading (nitrogen) discharge into the harbour primarily through sewerage treatment and disposal causing harm to the SPA and Ramsar	The Poole Harbour Aquatic Management Plan (2011) indicates a potentially significant adverse impact upon the Poole Harbour wildlife designation from increased nutrient loading. However, the potential cumulative effects are mitigated

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Policies	Effects	Significance of impact
DOR 9, DOR 11, CRS 1.	site.	through section (iii) of policy ENV 2.
WEY 1, WEY2, WEY 5.	Cumulative, secondary and synergistic effects on the late night entertainment industry and associated businesses in Weymouth. These policies, in combination, may restrict the use of areas in Weymouth for late night entertainment purposes. There may be a secondary effect upon local businesses that rely on those that use late night entertainment, such as taxi services and late night food vendors. A synergistic effect may result from people no longer visiting Weymouth for late night entertainment purposes as a result of there being too few venues in the area due to these policies.	Whilst the growth of the late night entertainment industry is restricted through this policy, it is necessary in order to provide the benefits associated with increasing access to a wider range of activities, including those that occur during the current gap in activities between 5-8pm, and enabling other industries to develop. Furthermore, the sustainability appraisal suggests that policy WEY 1 will ensuring that Weymouth remains active in terms of late night entertainment. The possible cumulative, secondary and synergistic impacts are therefore not considered significant.
BRID 4, BRID 5.	<p>Cumulative effect of development in central Bridport, within a low to medium risk flood areas adjacent to the Rivers Brit, Asker and Symene, increasing flood risk on the river system.</p> <p>Secondary impacts as a result of flooding may affect social and economic receptors, particularly since this is a town centre area, with possible impacts upon public safety, access to services and facilities, and the local economy as a result of flood damage.</p> <p>Increased recreational pressure resulting from the development of both sites may, in combination, impact upon habitats and cause a decline in the population of Otters and Water Voles, which are European and U.K protected species.</p>	The baseline information and identification of environmental problems suggest that Bridport, along with Weymouth, is particularly sensitive to flooding. Therefore, it is suggested that there may be longer term impacts associated with this flooding at this site. The river habitat surrounding the site is also considered sensitive due to the protected species that inhabit the site, and therefore there may be a significant cumulative effect upon biodiversity and habitats.
PORT 1 to PORT 4 inclusive.	Cumulative effect of development in Portland increasing traffic on The Fleet, effecting the bird populations inhabiting the Fleet, an internationally designated area. Chesil and the Fleet is a Special Protection Area (in addition to being a Special Area of Conservation and Ramsar site) due to its importance as a site for breeding and	Traffic on the Causeway does not, at present, have a significant notable effect upon birds within the Chesil and the Fleet Special Protection Area. The allocations presented in the Local Plan would not require the widening of the Causeway, preventing the need to develop the

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Policies	Effects	Significance of impact
	<p>overwintering birds. The increased pressure upon this European protected site as a result of additional traffic along the Fleet, which is a road which passes through the protected area, due to development upon Portland, may increase disturbance to the bird species.</p>	<p>internationally designated wildlife area, and the additional traffic is unlikely to have any significant effect. Therefore, there is unlikely to be a significant cumulative effect upon bird populations with the Special Protection Area.</p>
<p>ENV 2, ENV 3, WEY 1 to WEY 17 inclusive, PORT 1 to PORT 4 inclusive, LITT 1, LITT 2, CHIC 1 to CHIC 3 inclusive.</p>	<p>Cumulative and synergistic effect of development in Weymouth and Portland causing habitat fragmentation adversely impacting upon biodiversity and habitats. Large areas of Weymouth and Portland are urbanised and interspersed with designated wildlife sites. Development in Weymouth and Portland may sever links between these wildlife habitats causing habitats to be isolated and preventing species from migrating between sites (habitat fragmentation). The issue is not as pronounced in the other plan areas, which are generally more rural with fewer designated wildlife sites. Potential synergistic effect of the loss of wildlife corridors due to a number of developments causing habitat fragmentation to the extent that habitats have become too small to support species in any number.</p>	<p>The allocations for Weymouth and Portland take into account to the findings of a report¹ on wildlife corridors in Weymouth and Portland. The location of allocated areas ensure that wildlife corridors are maintained. Some allocations will provide wildlife corridors within the development, for example WEY 10, WEY11, and LITT 1. The Local Plan also prevents the loss of interconnected wildlife sites in Weymouth through the establishment of the Lorton Valley Nature Park (WEY 17) and in Portland through the Portland Quarries Nature Park (PORT 4). Also, the general policy framework in the Local Plan gives protection to the entire plan area, by providing a Green Infrastructure Strategy (ENV 3) and key wildlife corridors will be protected from development (ENV 2). These measures are considered sufficient to prevent a significant adverse impact upon habitats and biodiversity from habitat fragmentation.</p>

4.5. MITIGATION

4.5.1 The table below recommends a series of measures to prevent, reduce or offset any significant adverse effects identified by the sustainability appraisal for the presubmission draft Local Plan in June 2012. In some instances, mitigation measures may be suggested

¹ “Urban Wildlife Corridors and Stepping Stones: Weymouth and Portland Borough”, produced by the Dorset Environment Records Centre, September 2010.

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where there is an opportunity for enhancement even though no adverse impacts were identified.

Policy	Sustainability appraisal recommendations
ENV 2 Wildlife and Habitats	<p>Longer term adverse impacts upon wildlife and habitat may be mitigated by adding the following wording (added text <i>in italics</i>, deleted text in strikethrough) to section (v) of policy:</p> <p>“Development of major sites will be expected to <i>must</i> demonstrate no net loss in biodiversity”,</p> <p>and changing the wording at the end of section (iv) of policy, which protects local wildlife designations, trees and hedgerows, and key wildlife corridors, from “will be resisted” to “will not be permitted”.</p>
ENV 5 Flood Risk	<p>It is recommended that all development, including those classified as less vulnerable development, must show that adequate measures have been taken to mitigate the flood risk and ensure that potential occupants will be sustainability appraisal.</p>
ENV 10 Contaminated Land	<p>The policy should also protect the built environment against the impacts of contaminated land by including the following wording (<i>in italics</i>) in the policy:</p> <p>“Planning permission for development on or adjoining land that is suspected to be contaminated will not be granted unless it can be demonstrated that there is no unacceptable risk to future occupiers of the development, neighbouring uses and the <i>built and natural</i> environment from the contamination”.</p>
SUS 2 Distribution of Development	<p>The following wording (<i>in italics</i>) could be added to part (v) of this policy, to ensure that development outside the defined development boundaries does not adversely impact upon landscape, biodiversity and the loss of agricultural land:</p> <p>“Outside defined development boundaries, development will be strictly controlled, having particular regard to the need for the protection of the countryside, <i>particularly landscape interests, wildlife sites and productive agricultural land</i>, and be restricted to...”</p>
SUS 4 Re-use and Replacement of Buildings Outside DDBs	<p>In order to mitigate impacts upon habitats and biodiversity, the policy should include a requirement for the developer to demonstrate that there will be no significant increase upon key wildlife habitats and species resulting from the adaptation, replacement or reuse of rural buildings. The following wording may be added to part (i) of this policy:</p> <p>“<i>there is no resulting unacceptable impact upon wildlife and habitats</i>”.</p>
ECON 1 Provision of Employment	<p>The policy should require the developer to consider impacts upon habitats and biodiversity, climate change (through accessibility/sustainable transport) and soil quality (retention of productive agricultural land) by including the following text to the final bullet point in part (i) of the policy:</p> <p>“...providing the development does not result in a significant loss of productive agricultural land or significant adverse impacts upon habitats and biodiversity,</p>

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Policy	Sustainability appraisal recommendations
	and does not limit opportunities for public transport and pedestrian/cycle routes to be used in future.”
ECON 2 Protection of Key Employment Sites	In order to encourage the use of sustainable transport modes, and introduce positive impacts in terms of air quality, climate change mitigation and climate change vulnerability, it is suggested that the policy is amended to mention “ <i>sustainable transport options</i> ”, rather than “transport options”, in part (iii) of the policy.
ECON 4 Retail and Town Centre Development	The policy permits small scale rural offices or other small scale rural development outside defined development boundaries. It is recommended that the following text (<i>in italics</i>) is added to the policy to mitigate the impacts upon habitats and biodiversity, and landscape interests: “Small scale rural offices or other small scale rural development may be permitted outside defined development boundaries, <i>providing the development does not result in significant adverse impacts upon wildlife and habitats, and the landscape amenity</i> ”.
ECON 6 Built Holiday Accommodation	The potential adverse impacts associated with unsustainable transport may be addressed through mentioning COM 7 in the preamble to this policy. The potentially adverse impacts upon wildlife and habitats from increased pressure in areas outside the defined development boundaries may be mitigated through adding the following text (<i>in italics</i>): “Outside the defined development boundaries, extensions to existing serviced accommodation will be supported where they are proportionate to the size of the original building and their location. New holiday accommodation from the alteration or replacement of existing rural buildings will also be permitted, <i>providing the development does not result in significant adverse impacts upon wildlife and habitats.</i> ”
ECON 7 Caravan and Camping Sites	The policy should require biodiversity interests to be considered during the redevelopment of caravan and camping sites by adding the following text (<i>in italics</i>) to part (ii) of the policy: “All schemes should not, individually or cumulatively, harm the landscape character, <i>sites of wildlife interest</i> , or rural amenity of the countryside.”
ECON 8 Farm Diversification	It is recommended that this policy should include scope to prevent the loss of significant amounts of productive agricultural land from the development or reuse of farmland to mitigate potentially adverse impacts upon resilience to climate change and soil quality. The policy may also consider the unacceptable impacts upon wildlife and species from the development of rural areas. It is suggested that the following wording (<i>in italics</i>) is added to this policy: “Farm diversification projects for the use of land or buildings for non-agricultural employment purposes will be supported, provided they are in keeping with the rural character, <i>prevent the permanent loss of large amounts of productive agricultural land, and avoid significant adverse impacts upon wildlife and habitats, and comprise...</i> ”

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Policy	Sustainability appraisal recommendations
ECON 9 New Agricultural Buildings	<p>Policy may include scope to minimise the impacts of the new development for agricultural purposes upon biodiversity, and demonstrate that the loss of productive agricultural land has been minimised by including the following wording (in <i>italics</i>):</p> <p><i>“The scale, siting design and external appearance of the buildings should be designed to minimise adverse impact on the landscape character, wildlife and habitats, and residential amenity as far as practicable. The permanent loss of productive agricultural land should also be minimised wherever possible.”</i></p>
ECON 10 Equestrian Development	<p>The preamble to this policy should refer to policy COM 7 to ensure that sustainable travel is a key consideration. The impacts upon wildlife and habitats and the loss of productive agricultural land may be considered by adding the following condition to this policy, after point (ii):</p> <p><i>(iii) The permanent loss of productive agricultural land should also be minimised wherever possible.</i></p> <p><i>(iv) New development and the associated activities should avoid significant adverse impacts upon wildlife and habitats.</i></p>
HOUS 2 Exception Sites	<p>The policy may include the following condition (in <i>italics</i>) to ensure that exception sites do not have a significant adverse impact upon biodiversity and habitats.</p> <p>Small scale sites for affordable housing adjoining settlements may, as an exception to normal policy, be permitted provided that: ...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>adverse impacts upon wildlife and habitats are avoided wherever possible;</i>
HOUS 5 Sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople	<p>The site allocations presented in the Gypsy and Traveller Development Plan Document will undergo a sustainability appraisal that will address sustainability issues on a site by site basis. However, on a strategic level, this policy should also give consideration to environmental impacts through the following wording:</p> <p><i>“Sites should not have a significant adverse environmental impact, particularly with regard to the landscape, the loss of productive agricultural land, and the degradation of habitats and species.”</i></p>
HOUS 6 Other Residential Development Outside Defined Development Boundaries	<p>The preamble to this policy may refer to policy COM 7, which relates to efficient transport. The potential loss of productive agricultural land, and loss of biodiversity and habitats, are potentially significant adverse impacts and it is recommended that they are addressed through adding the following text (in <i>italics</i>) to this policy:</p> <p><i>“(i) The extension of an existing lawful dwelling-house located outside the defined development boundaries will be permitted provided that the extension is subordinate in scale and proportions to the original dwelling, and does not harm the character of the locality or its landscape setting, or adversely impact</i></p>

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Policy	Sustainability appraisal recommendations
	<p><i>upon wildlife and habitats.</i></p> <p>(iv):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>The development avoids the loss of productive agricultural land, wherever possible.</i> - <i>The scheme avoids significant adverse impacts upon wildlife and habitats."</i>
<p>COM 4</p> <p>New or Improved Local Recreational Facilities</p>	<p>The development of recreational facilities in the coast or countryside may encompass sensitive areas in terms of wildlife conservation and result in the loss of productive agricultural land, in addition to the impacts upon landscape interests or local amenity mentioned in the policy. Therefore the policy needs to extend its considerations to mitigate these impacts by including the following wording (in italics):</p> <p>"ii) Proposals for recreational facilities in the coast or countryside will only be permitted if they require a rural location and their scale is in keeping with the surrounding environment. Such proposals must not:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - be intrusive in the landscape; - <i>result in the unacceptable loss of productive agricultural land;</i> - <i>cause significant adverse impacts upon wildlife and habitats; or</i> <p>cause unacceptable impacts to local amenity through increased vehicle movements."</p>
<p>WEY 3</p> <p>Station Area and Swannery Car Park</p>	<p>The potentially adverse impacts upon the adjacent national wildlife designation ('The Swannery' Site of Special Scientific Interest) should be mentioning in the preamble to this policy. Whilst some protection is given by policy ENV 2, further consideration should be given by mentioning this in the policy text given the importance of the Site of Special Scientific Interest status.</p>
<p>WEY 8</p> <p>Lodmoor Gateway</p>	<p>The policy could mention the impacts upon adjoining designated wildlife areas and address the human health and environmental issues resulting from the contaminated land at the site by including the following wording (<i>in italics</i>) to the policy:</p> <p>"The development will be expected to be of a high quality design <i>to minimise vulnerability to flooding</i> and relate positively to the adjoining highway and car parking areas. <i>The development should also address contaminated land issues and avoid significant adverse impacts upon the wildlife designations located in close proximity to the site.</i> A comprehensive approach may be required to ensure that development complies with the aims of the Weymouth Town Centre Strategy."</p>
<p>WEY 15</p> <p>Bowleaze Cove</p>	<p>Whilst the preamble to the policy mentions the areas of nature conservation and geological importance, the actual policy itself may include wording that highlight these the key issues to ensure that the impacts of development upon international wildlife designations and areas of geological interest are acceptable.. It is suggested that the policy is amended in the following way</p>

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Policy	Sustainability appraisal recommendations
	<p>(additional text in <i>italics</i>):</p> <p>“Development at Bowleaze Cove will be restricted to tourist and leisure related development. <i>The development will must avoid unacceptable impacts upon the international wildlife designations and sites of geological interest.</i>”</p>
<p>PORT 1 Portland Port</p>	<p>This policy should address the potential landscape and biodiversity impacts of development at Portland Port, by including the following text (<i>in italics</i>) to the policy:</p> <p>“Land within Port jurisdiction will be safeguarded for potential port operational and ancillary uses. <i>Proposals for these areas must be sensitive to the areas of historic importance, the local landscape interest and the heritage coastline status of this coastline. Any development or activities must avoid significant adverse impact upon international wildlife designations</i>”.</p> <p>Also, the development boundaries for Portland Port presented in the Local Plan should be amended to preclude European and Ramsar sites from development.</p>
<p>CRS 1 Crossways</p>	<p>It is recommended that the masterplan that will be produced for this site includes provision for cycle links in addition to road links, in order to encourage sustainable travel.</p>
<p>BRID 1 Land at Vearse Farm</p>	<p>This policy could require the developer to consider options to minimise the irreversible loss of soil quality and productive agricultural land as a result of the development by providing a community farm at the site. The following wording (<i>in italics</i>) could be added to the policy:</p> <p>vi) The development will be guided by a masterplan (...) It should ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>“The development provides a community farm to minimise the irreversible loss of soil quality and productive agricultural land wherever possible.”</i>
<p>BRID 4 Future Town Centre Expansion</p>	<p>The preamble to this policy should highlight the flood issues and potential impacts upon protected wildlife species.</p>
<p>BRID 5 St Michael’s Trading Estate</p>	<p>To ensure that the development does not adversely impact upon the quality of habitat of the adjacent river or substantially increase recreational pressure upon this habitat or species which include the Otter (a European protected species) and the Water Vole (a UK protected species), the following wording (<i>in italics</i>) should be included to the policy:</p> <p>St. Michael’s Trading Estate is designated for a comprehensive mixed-use development, subject to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>“avoiding unacceptable impacts upon protected wildlife species and their habitats”</i> - <i>adequately managing the flood risk from the adjacent watercourse”</i>
<p>BRID 6 Broomhills Waste</p>	<p>The preamble to this policy should mention that the impact of development upon sensitive wildlife areas, including those that have been designated for ecological importance, should be minimised.</p>

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Policy	Sustainability appraisal recommendations
Management Site	
<p>LYME 1</p> <p>Land at Woodberry Down</p>	<p>It is recommended that should the playing fields at the site be lost to development, options to replace these facilities should be considered (if it is decided that they are a valuable asset to the community) by including the following text as section (iii) of the policy:</p> <p><i>“(iii) Should the development result in the loss of playing fields, a replacement of equal or better quality should be provided in a suitable location, unless it can be demonstrated that the open space is surplus to requirements.”</i></p> <p>In order to mitigate the potential loss of downland habitat, this issue should be mentioned in the preamble or the following text added as section (iv) of the policy:</p> <p><i>“(iv) The value of the downland habitat should be assessed prior to development and measures taken, if necessary, to ensure no significant loss in rare habitat or species of importance.”</i></p>
<p>SHER 1</p> <p>Land at Barton Farm</p>	<p>It is recommended that the issue of surface water flooding should be resolved through the Masterplan document, in order to reduce vulnerability to the impacts of climate change. The following wording should therefore be added to the policy:</p> <p><i>“(iv) – How potential issues with surface water runoff may be resolved.”</i></p>

5 February 2013: Sustainability Appraisal of alternative land allocations in West Dorset

5.0.1 The consultation for the Draft Local Plan between June and July 2012 indicated a high level of public opposition to the suggested sites for development at SHER 1 (Land at Barton Farm), BEAM 2 (Land off Hollymoor Road) and CRS 1 (Land at Crossways). As a result, the Council undertook further consultation on a strategy for alternative land allocations in West Dorset.

5.1. IDENTIFICATION OF OPTIONS

5.1.1 Consideration was therefore given as to whether or not to reduce the size of the areas allocated for development at SHER 1 (Land at Barton Farm), CRS 1 (Land at Crossways), and/or remove or reduce the area of land allocated at BEAM 2 (Land off Hollymoor Lane) in the Draft Local Plan, as shown in the following table:

Allocation in Draft Local Plan	Allocation in draft Local Plan		Reduced area of allocation	
	Approx. number of dwellings	Employment land	Approx. number of dwellings	Employment land
SHER 1 Land at Barton Farm	800	6ha	280	4.2ha
BEAM 2 Land off Hollymoor Lane	70	0ha	30	0ha
CRS 1 Land at Crossways	1,200 to 1,500	Up to 15ha	700	Up to 11ha

5.1.2 The removal or reduction of these allocations would result in a shortfall in the supply of housing and employment land, preventing the Local Plan from achieving its objectives of meeting local housing needs and supporting the local economy. Therefore the Council considered the following alternative sites to provide the land for housing and employment needs:

Option	Approx dwellings/ employment	How the option was identified
Land North of Dorchester	1500units/7ha	Submitted by a consortium of landowners during the Draft Local Plan consultation between June and July 2012.
Amenity Open Space North of A35	225 units/0ha	Submitted by landowner during the Draft Local Plan consultation between June and July 2012.

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Option	Approx dwellings/ employment	How the option was identified
Land Southeast of Dorchester	1000 units/At least 3ha	The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment identified land to the Southeast of Dorchester which was considered during the development of the June 2012 Draft Local Plan and appraised as an option in the accompanying Sustainability Appraisal. This option was not selected for inclusion in the Draft Local Plan. However, Council Officers have since brought forward this smaller area for consideration, which excludes land to the south and west of the site which was previously considered.

5.2. DIFFICULTIES IN UNDERTAKING THE ASSESSMENT

5.2.1 The main difficulty in undertaking the sustainability appraisal of alternative land allocations for West Dorset was the strategic nature of the alternative sites at this stage. The only detail available was an outline of the development area and a proposed policy. The sustainability impacts, in some instances, depend on the layout of the site and details of the proposed development, and this information was not available at the time of the assessment.

5.3. FINDINGS OF THE SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL OF OPTIONS

5.3.1 Reducing the area of the allocation SHER1 resulted in a less positive impact upon economy and housing, as the provision of homes and employment land is decreased. However, the amount of productive agricultural land occupied by the development will decrease as the area of the development is decreased, increasing the ability of residents to produce locally grown food.

5.3.2 Reducing the size of allocation CRS1 will significantly reduce the provision of housing.

5.3.3 There are no significant impacts associated with reducing the allocation BEAM 2, according to the sustainability appraisal.

5.3.4 The sustainability appraisal of the land north of Dorchester identified adverse impacts in the longer term associated with climate change vulnerability, soil and water quality, and quality of life. This is due to potential flooding issues associated with the flood plain to the south of the site, which would restrict access to essential services and facilities and cause a decrease in self-sufficiency in terms of food production, particularly in the longer term when the frequency and severity of flooding is likely to increase as the impacts of climate change are realised. Adverse impacts were also identified with respect to the setting of historic and cultural features, such as the Stinsford conservation area and grade 1 listed building St Michael's Church to the east of the site.

5.3.5 There were negative landscape and visual impacts identified with developing the Amenity Open Space North of the A35, with the local scheduled monuments and AONB adversely

affected. In the longer term, adverse impacts associated with surface water flooding may increase vulnerability to climate change, affect water quality, and compromise safety. Residents at the site will be able to access the essential services and facilities of Dorchester by sustainable transport means.

- 5.3.6 The Sustainability Appraisal of the land Southeast of Dorchester indicated adverse impacts upon the AONB to the south of the site and the setting of the nearby Scheduled Monuments and Historic Park and Gardens in the short to medium terms. The essential services and facilities of Central Dorchester will be accessible by sustainable transport modes, although in the longer term this may be compromised to a degree by surface water flooding at the site, which may also increase vulnerability to climate change, affect water quality and the adversely affect the safety of future residents.

5.4. SELECTION OF PREFERRED OPTIONS

- 5.4.1 The strategy for Alternative Land Allocations in West Dorset was to reduce the allocations at SHER 1 (Land at Barton Farm), BEAM 2 (Land off Hollymoor Lane) and CRS 1 (Land at Crossways), and meet the resulting shortfall in housing by allocating Land Southeast of Dorchester for development.
- 5.4.2 The consultation on the Strategy, undertaken in February and March 2013, indicated a high level of public opposition to some aspects of the Strategy. As a result, the Land Southeast of Dorchester was not added as an allocation, allocation BEAM 2 (Land off Hollymoor Lane) was omitted, and the allocations at SHER 1 (Land at Barton Farm) and CRS 1 (Land at Crossways) were reduced in the Local Plan.
- 5.4.3 The resulting shortfall in housing land supply will be addressed by undertaking further work on future development options for the end of the plan period, in the period between 2026 and 2031 subject to the results of the ongoing housing land supply monitoring.

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6 June 2013: Sustainability Appraisal of recommended modifications to pre-submission draft Local Plan

- 6.0.1 A schedule of recommended modifications to the presubmission draft Local Plan was completed in June 2013, which considers the representations made during the consultation events and suggests changes to the plan.
- 6.0.2 Only those recommendations which represent a considerable change in the direction or approach towards a policy area which has not yet been appraised during the previous stages of the sustainability appraisal were considered.

6.1. FINDINGS OF THE SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL OF RECOMMENDED MODIFICATIONS AND RECOMMENDED MITIGATION

- 6.1.1 This section summarises the sustainability effects of the recommended modifications to the June 2012 draft Local Plan and recommends the measures to prevent, reduce or offset the adverse effects.

Sustainability effects	Recommended mitigation
ENV 2 Wildlife and Habitats	
<p>Less protection is afforded to national designations. National sites were safeguarded from development that could adversely effect them in the June 2012 draft Local Plan. The recommended amendment states that development will be permitted should the benefits of development outweigh the impacts, enabling more development to come forward at these locations. The recommended amendment reflects the National Planning Policy Framework.</p> <p>The Sustainability Appraisal also identifies potential long term impacts upon sites other than international or national designations. In instances where ‘significant harm’ will occur to these sites, development will only be ‘resisted’. The Sustainability Appraisal indicates that this approach may lead to a loss of biodiversity in the longer term, with national and local sites being impacted by development.</p> <p>The recommended modifications removes the condition which safeguards key wildlife corridors. Whilst policy ENV 3 provides some mitigation to the loss of wildlife corridors in the longer term by providing protection for areas to</p>	<p>No mitigation for impacts upon National sites is suggested, as the recommended amendment reflects National Planning Policy.</p> <p>In terms of the mitigation against the longer term impacts upon sites other than international or national designations, mitigation may be provided through the change of wording in section (vi) of the policy from “<i>Development of major sites will be expected to demonstrate no net loss in biodiversity</i>” to “<i>Development of major sites must demonstrate no net loss in biodiversity</i>”, and a change of wording at the end of section (v) of the policy, which considers areas other than international or national sites, from “<i>will be resisted</i>” to “<i>will not be permitted</i>”. This more robust approach to locally designated sites and other areas will prevent the longer term loss of biodiversity, which will have secondary positive impacts upon landscape, historic features, and climate change mitigation.</p> <p>Mitigation against the cumulative and synergistic impact associated with the loss of wildlife corridors resulting in habitat fragmentation in the short term, until the</p>

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Sustainability effects	Recommended mitigation
<p>be identified in the upcoming Green Infrastructure Network Strategy, there are potential short term impacts associated with habitat fragmentation until this time.</p>	<p>Green Infrastructure Strategy is adopted, is provided by including the following condition in policy ENV 2:</p> <p><i>“key wildlife corridors shall be safeguarded from development until the Green Infrastructure Strategy has been adopted”.</i></p>
<p>SUS 1 Level of Economic and Housing Growth</p>	
<p>Slight reduction in employment land allocated in the Local Plan, and a reduction in the amount of housing allocated in West Dorset. However, the amount of employment land allocated would still exceed demand and would be likely to facilitate economic growth in the plan area. The amount of housing provided will increase housing availability but not to an extent that the demand for affordable housing is satisfied.</p>	<p>No mitigation has been suggested for this policy as the negative impacts of the development of housing and employment land upon historic and cultural features, landscape, seascape and townscape, climate change mitigation, biodiversity, soil and water quality, and quality of life are more appropriately addressed through separate policies within the Local Plan.</p>
<p>SUS 3 Re-use and Replacement of Buildings Outside Defined Development Boundaries</p>	
<p>The reuse and replacement of buildings outside the defined development boundaries is permitted for open market housing in settlements of more than 200 people. This would introduce adverse impacts upon climate change mitigation and vulnerability as development in more remote areas would cause an increase in fuel usage for transport purposes and increase reliance upon private vehicles. The reuse and replacement of buildings outside the defined development boundaries supports economic and housing growth, and the recommended modification would preserve the long term future of historic and cultural features. The potentially adverse impacts upon wildlife and habitats would result from the direct loss of habitat and additional recreational pressures.</p>	<p>In order to mitigate impacts upon habitats and biodiversity, the policy should include a requirement for the developer to demonstrate that there will be no significant increase upon key wildlife habitats and species resulting from recreational pressure the adaptation or reuse of rural buildings. The following condition may be added to part (i) of this policy:</p> <p><i>“there is no significant loss of habitat or biodiversity”.</i></p>
<p>ECON 4 Retail and Town Centre Development</p>	
<p>Small scale community facilities no longer need to undertake the sequential test, and therefore these facilities would not be preferentially located in the town centre areas and would be permitted within smaller communities. This would increase access to community facilities</p>	<p>It is considered unlikely that significant impacts will result from the small scale development outside the DDB and therefore no mitigation is proposed in this instance.</p>

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Sustainability effects	Recommended mitigation
<p>for smaller communities, reducing fuel usage and reliance on vehicles for local residents and have a positive impact upon climate change mitigation and adaptation. It is considered unlikely that significant adverse impacts upon environmental receptors would result from the small scale development.</p>	
ECON 6 Built Holiday Accommodation	
<p>Built holiday accommodation may be located outside the defined development boundaries. The appraisal identified likely positive impacts upon the visual character of the area and heritage assets as a result of conditions safeguarding the appearance of the site. However, potential adverse impacts upon the climate change mitigation and adaptation and quality of life sustainability objectives were identified, largely as a result of the location of the built holiday accommodation in more remote locations, outside the defined development boundaries. This restricts the use of sustainable transport modes, increasing the use of fuel and increasing reliance upon the private car, and also results in adverse impacts upon wildlife and habitats as a result of the direct loss of habitat and indirect impacts resulting from additional recreational pressures.</p>	<p>The potential adverse impacts resulting from the use of less sustainable transport methods may be addressed through policy COM 7, and therefore the preamble to this policy should refer to policy COM 7 to ensure that sustainable travel is a consideration. Furthermore, there may be impacts upon wildlife and habitats from increased pressure in these areas, in addition to the design and visual impacts included in the policy, which may be mitigated through adding the following text (<i>in italics</i>) to part (i) of this policy:</p> <p><i>“Through the replacement, intensification or extension of existing premises where the expansion would improve the quality and appearance of the accommodation and site and not introduce significant adverse impacts upon wildlife and habitats.”</i></p>
WEY 10. Land at Markham and Little Francis	
<p>The area of allocation is reduced, with the northeastern portion of the site no longer allocated. This means that the publically accessible green space on the northeast portion of the site would be retained and an area reserved for St Augustine’s School, improving access to leisure and community facilities. The amended policy would give greater long term protection to hedgerows and streams, resulting in benefits upon biodiversity and habitats.</p>	<p>None suggested.</p>
CRS 1. Land at Crossways	
<p>The areas to the south of Crossways are allocated rather than the areas to the north and west that were previously considered. Less land</p>	<p>None suggested.</p>

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Sustainability effects	Recommended mitigation
is provided for employment and housing, and greater protection is given towards the setting of Scheduled Monuments. Flood issues are given greater consideration, improving performance in terms of climate change vulnerability.	

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7 July 2014: Sustainability Appraisal of Suggested Further Changes to the Local Plan Following the Exploratory Meeting

- 7.0.1 The Local Plan was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate on 24th June 2013. Following this, an exploratory meeting was undertaken on 22 January 2014 between the Council, Planning Inspector Paul Crysell ('the Inspector'), and other interested parties.
- 7.0.2 Following the Exploratory Meeting, the Inspector expressed concerns with the submission draft of the Local Plan and wrote to the Councils with options for the next steps in the preparation of the Local Plan. The Councils decided to suspend the Local Plan examination for a period of six months to prepare additional evidence on housing issues to address the Inspector's concerns.
- 7.0.3 This Chapter provides an account of the sustainability appraisal of options which were considered for the level of housing supply in the Local Plan, with respect to policy SUS 1 titled 'The Level of Economic and Housing Growth'.

7.1. IDENTIFICATION OF REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES

LEVEL OF HOUSING SUPPLY

- 7.1.1 The inspector questioned the level of housing supply provided by policy SUS1 of the Local Plan during the exploratory meeting. As a result, additional work was completed following the exploratory meeting to identify the most appropriate level of housing supply. This work resulted in four possible levels of housing supply being suggested, each of which derived from different methodologies. These are summarised in the table below.

Housing supply (per annum)	Methodology used
529	The housing supply of 529dpa was estimated using statistics from the 5 year period from 2007-12, and is therefore based on a time of economic recession when economic growth has been particularly low. This projection uses the estimates and assumptions for the rates of fertility, mortality and migration provided in the Office of National Statistics' 2012 projection for England, rather than using actual rates.
554	The housing supply of 554dpa was also estimated using statistics from the 5 year period from 2007-12, during a period which was largely recessionary. However, this projection uses the latest set of official Sub National Population Projections from the Office of National Statistics which were released in May 2014.
679	The housing supply of 679dpa was estimated using statistics from the 10 year period from 2001-11, which includes periods of both economic recession and higher growth and therefore reflects housing requirements across the full economic cycle.

775

The housing supply of 775dpa was estimated using statistics from the 5 year period from 2001-07, during the pre-recession period of higher economic growth.

PLAN PERIOD

- 7.1.2 The housing supplied by the allocations currently included in the Local Plan would not be sufficient to meet the highest possible level of housing supply of 775 dwellings per annum over a period of 20 years, providing 17 years of housing supply instead. It is essential that the Local Plan provides the allocations to meet the level of housing supply in order for it to be considered sound at the upcoming examination in public. Therefore, if the housing supply figure of 775 dwellings per annum was used and no further housing land allocations made, the plan period in policy SUS1 would need to be reduced from 20 years to 17 years. It is also not considered a reasonable option to reintroduce housing allocations that have been previously considered and rejected during the process of developing the Local Plan, in order to provide sufficient land for this level of housing over a 20 year period. Reducing the plan period to less than 17 years is not considered a reasonable alternative either, as the intention is to retain as long a plan period as possible in order to provide a longer term vision for development, and provide reasonable certainty of future housing supply. For these reasons, the option for the highest possible level of housing supply of 775 dwellings per annum will be considered over a reduced plan period of 17 years.
- 7.1.3 The allocations currently in the Local Plan would provide sufficient housing to meet the projected levels of housing supply of 529, 554 or 678 dwellings per annum over a period of 20 years. Therefore, the options for the lower levels of housing supply will be considered over the existing 20 year plan period.
- 7.1.4 Please note that reducing the plan period to any less than 14 years (i.e. ten years beyond the potential adoption date of 2015) would be contrary to national policy as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework and Ministerial Statement of March 2014 and is therefore not considered a reasonable option.

AREA OF HOUSING TARGET

- 7.1.5 The options for the level of housing supply were calculated for the whole plan area, which represents a single Housing Market Area, rather than the district of West Dorset and the borough of Weymouth & Portland separately. This is in line with paragraph 47 of the National Planning Policy Framework which states that local planning authorities must meet the full objectively assessed needs 'in the housing market area'.
- 7.1.6 Whilst it would be acceptable under the National Planning Policy Framework to split the housing target presented in policy SUS1 between the district of West Dorset and the borough of Weymouth & Portland, a joint target provides greater flexibility in terms of providing the housing supply. Should the target be split between these two areas, some of the existing allocations in Weymouth and Portland would need to be removed and some of the previously rejected allocations in West Dorset would need to be added to the Local Plan. Reintroducing housing allocations to the Local Plan that have previously been considered and rejected during the process of developing the Local Plan is not considered a

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reasonable option. Furthermore, since the requirement within the National Planning Policy framework is to meet the target over the entire Housing Market Area, and the geographical area covered by the Local Plan is both the district and the borough, a joint target is considered the most reasonable approach. Therefore, the options for housing supply in this sustainability appraisal are considered across the whole plan area.

7.2. SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL METHODOLOGY

7.2.1 The methodology explained in Chapter of 3 this Environmental Report was used to appraise the recommended modifications to the draft Local Plan.

7.3. DIFFICULTIES IN UNDERTAKING THE ASSESSMENT

7.3.1 There were relatively few difficulties in undertaking this assessment due to the depth of the work completed by the consultants in deriving the possible levels of housing supply. This work considered factors such as the amount of in-migration of people of a working age for each option, which enabled the economic consequences to be evaluated in confidence.

7.3.2 However, despite the extensive amount of work completed, the relationships and interactions between the different components explored in this sustainability appraisal are complex. Professional opinion, as well as the quantitative evidence provided by the consultants' work, was required in most instances to provide a judgement on the consequences of each level of housing supply.

7.4. FINDINGS OF THE SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL

7.4.1 The results of the sustainability appraisal of the options are explained in the following paragraphs for each of the options.

OPTION A: 529 DWELLINGS P.A OVER 20YRS AND OVER THE WHOLE PLAN AREA

7.4.2 Reducing the amount of housing supplied by policy SUS 1 to 529 homes per annum would result in the potential to remove some of the sites allocated for development from the Local Plan, as the current allocations would provide a significant over-supply. However, there is still likely to be some adverse impact upon the natural environment from this level of development.

7.4.3 This reduced level of housing supply was derived from the amount of housing development which occurred during a period of recession, when the rate of housing development was low. Therefore, by setting this level of housing in policy SUS 1, the Local Plan would be providing only enough housing for a period of recession. Should the economy recover, this level of housing supply would no longer be appropriate and will fail to meet the local housing need.

7.4.4 Also, the Local Plan has a role to play in driving the recovery of the local economy. By only providing sufficient housing for an economy in recession, this level of housing supply would effectively prevent the higher growth which is required to encourage the recovery of the local economy. The additional work on housing issues has also suggested that this level of

housing supply would result in a decreasing population of people of a working age due to the low in-migration of people of a working age. This would result in a shrinking workforce and would not encourage the growth of local businesses, obstructing the growth of a sustainable local economy.

- 7.4.5 In light of this, the undersupply of housing resulting from this option would have an adverse impact upon the economy and housing sustainability objectives during the first 5 years of the plan (in the short term). The continuing undersupply of housing would have a significant adverse impact by the end of the plan period (in the medium term), and in 50 years time (in the long term).
- 7.4.6 The Local Plan will provide new essential services, such as health facilities and schools, as well as new leisure and community facilities through development, by allocating land for mixed use development schemes and collecting financial contributions through the Communities Infrastructure Levy. Therefore, it follows that as more development occurs, more of these services and facilities will be provided to meet the needs of the growing communities in these areas. For this lower rate of development, fewer new community and recreational facilities will be provided, but there will also be less need for such services and facilities. Therefore the impact upon access to services and facilities, which is relevant to the quality of life sustainability objective, is considered negligible.

OPTION B: 554 DWELLINGS P.A OVER 20YRS AND OVER THE WHOLE PLAN AREA

- 7.4.7 Option B, to amend policy SUS 1 to provide 554 dwellings per annum, would result in similar impacts to option A, since both options propose a similar level of housing supply over a 20 year period.
- 7.4.8 As for option A, option B would allow for the removal of some of the sites allocated for development from the Local Plan, as the current allocations would provide a significant over-supply. However, there is still likely to be a degree of adverse impact upon the natural environment resulting from this level of development.
- 7.4.9 This housing projection was based upon statistics from 2007-12, which was largely a recessionary period, and therefore only provides sufficient housing for a period of low economic activity. Should the economy recover, this level of housing supply would no longer be appropriate and would fail to meet the local housing need as well as restricting economic growth, as explained for option A.
- 7.4.10 In light of this, the undersupply of housing resulting from this option would have an adverse impact upon the economy and housing sustainability objectives during the first 5 years of the plan (in the short term). The continuing undersupply of housing would have a significant adverse impact by the end of the plan period (in the medium term), and in 50 years time (in the long term).

OPTION C: 678 DWELLINGS P.A OVER 20YRS AND OVER THE WHOLE PLAN AREA

- 7.4.11 Setting the level of housing supply at 679 houses per year over a 20 year period would require the current allocations in the Local Plan to be retained. There is likely to be a degree of adverse impact upon the natural environment from this development.

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- 7.4.12 This level of housing supply was derived from statistics over a ten year period, and covers the full economic cycle with periods of recession and of higher growth. Whilst this approach may provide sufficient housing over the short term, as the economy attempts to recover from a period of recession, it may not provide sufficient housing in the longer term should a period of higher growth occur.
- 7.4.13 Also, as for Options A and B, the Local Plan has a role to play in driving the recovery of the local economy and by not providing sufficient housing for a healthy economy, the Local Plan may effectively encourage further years of economic recession and impair the recovery of the local economy. Furthermore, the additional work on the housing figures has suggested that this level of housing supply would only allow a low level of in-migration of people of a working age, resulting in a shrinking workforce and obstructing the growth of a sustainable local economy.
- 7.4.14 Therefore, the impact of this level of housing supply upon the economy and housing sustainability objectives would be negligible in the first 5 years of the plan (in the short term), whilst the recovery from the economic recession occurs. However, it is likely that there would an undersupply of housing by the end of the plan period (in the medium term), and in 50 years time (in the long term), resulting in an adverse impact.

OPTION D: 775 DWELLINGS P.A OVER 17YRS AND OVER THE WHOLE PLAN AREA

- 7.4.15 Setting the level of housing supply at the significantly higher rate of 775 houses per year results in adverse impacts upon the natural environment in the short and medium term, as for options A, B and C. A potentially significant adverse impact upon the natural environment is noted in the long term, in 50 years time, as other potentially less sustainable sites come forward for development within this period, in order to meet this level of housing supply.
- 7.4.16 This significantly higher level of housing supply has been derived from a period of higher growth nationally, in the pre-recession period of 2001 to 2007. This level of housing supply would provide sufficient housing to meet the demand during a period of high economic activity and enable an increase in the workforce population, supporting the growth of a sustainable local economy. In light of this, the impact of this increased level of housing supply upon the economy and housing sustainability objectives would be positive.

7.5. SELECTION OF PREFERRED OPTION

- 7.5.1 The preferred option is option D, to increase the level of housing supply to 775 dwellings. The adverse impacts upon the natural environment are likely to be greatest for option D as the higher rate of development will mean that less sustainable sites will be more likely to come forward for development earlier which otherwise may not have done. These environmental impacts are likely to be mitigated to a degree through other policies within the local plan (particularly within Chapter 2), but there will inevitably be a greater adverse impact upon natural environment resulting from the higher rate of development.
- 7.5.2 The higher rate of housing provided by option D would enable an increase in the population of people of a working age within the plan area. Providing a growing workforce

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is likely to support economic growth locally. Therefore, by providing this level of housing, the Local Plan may play a role in developing a sustainable local economy and stimulating a recovery from the economic recession.

- 7.5.3 The level of housing supply provided by option D is the greatest, since it provides sufficient housing for a period of high economic activity. This housing is therefore most likely to meet the housing needs of the local community.

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8 February 2015: Sustainability Appraisal of Main Modifications to the Submission Local Plan following the Examination

- 8.0.1 The Examination in Public of the Local Plan took place in November and December 2014. Following this, the Council has put forward a schedule of main modifications which the Council wish to make to the submission version of the Local Plan, which take into account all representations since the publication of the submission plan and the round table discussions with the Inspector and other participants which took place during the examination.
- 8.0.2 This Chapter provides the sustainability appraisal of the Council’s suggested main modifications. All recommended modifications to the submission Local Plan were considered. However, in accordance with the Government’s National Planning Practice Guidance, only those recommendations which represent a considerable change in the direction or approach towards a policy area which has not yet been appraised during the previous stages of the sustainability appraisal were reappraised. The policies reappraised were ENV 2, ENV 4, ENV 6, ENV 9, ENV 13, SUS 1, HOUS 1, HOUS 6. The land allocations reappraised were DOR 10, CRS 1, CRS 2, BRID 3, BRID 5.

8.1. METHODOLOGY

- 8.1.1 The methodology explained in Chapter 3 of this non-technical summary of the sustainability appraisal was used to appraise the recommended modifications to the draft Local Plan.

8.2. SUMMARY OF SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL OF RECOMMENDED MAIN MODIFICATIONS

- 8.2.1 This section summarises the sustainability effects of the recommended modifications to the June 2012 draft Local Plan and recommends measures to prevent, reduce or offset the adverse effects.

Sustainability effects	Recommended mitigation
ENV 2: Wildlife and Habitats	
<p>The amended policy provides greater protection for water bodies by requiring significant harm to water bodies to be mitigated or compensated for. The amended policy therefore performs better under the ‘soil and water quality’ sustainability objective.</p> <p>The amended policy no longer requires the developer to demonstrate that a proposal will result in no net loss of biodiversity. Less protection is also afforded to wildlife corridors, with the amended policy now stating that development ‘should’ rather than ‘will’ take opportunities to help connect and improve wider ecological networks. Whilst these</p>	<p>None suggested, since this policy reflects the National Planning Policy Framework.</p>

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Sustainability effects	Recommended mitigation
<p>changes may result in less protection to habitats and species, the policy will result in the conservation of a wider range of habitats by preventing significant harm to water bodies in addition to designated wildlife sites and irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodlands). As a result, the amended policy has an overall positive effect on biodiversity in the short and medium term.</p> <p>The protection against the loss of biodiversity and designated wildlife sites is subject to the adverse effects upon wildlife and habitats outweighing the benefits of the development. In the long term, the public need for development may outweigh the perceived impact upon biodiversity, resulting in these safeguards no longer applying. This would cause the loss of habitats and decline in biodiversity in the long term.</p>	
ENV 4: Heritage Assets	
<p>The amended policy gives protection against potential impacts on both designated and non-designated heritage assets, based on the significance of the asset in question.</p> <p>The amended policy allows a degree of harm to the significance of heritage assets, providing that the works proposed secure the sustainable future use of the asset. This may enable improvements to the energy and water efficiency of older heritage assets and permit the use of renewable energy technologies, improving their performance of this policy under the climate change mitigation and adaptation sustainability objectives. Furthermore, the amended policy enables heritage assets to be put to an appropriate and viable use, such as commercial or residential use, providing that it is consistent with their conservation. Rather than causing damage, these amendments to the policy will secure the longer term sustainable use of the heritage assets whilst at the same time preventing significant harm.</p>	None suggested.
ENV 6: Local Flood Alleviation Schemes	
<p>The amended policy provides protection against development which compromises the delivery of local flood alleviation schemes across the plan area, including the Burton Bradstock flood alleviation scheme. This provides more widespread protection against flooding across the entire plan area, causing positive secondary impacts upon the economy, housing, habitats and biodiversity, housing, and quality of life, and climate change vulnerability. This protection will result in more positive impacts in the longer term, as the risk of flooding increases in the face of climate change.</p>	None suggested.
ENV 9: Pollution and Contaminated Land	

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Sustainability effects	Recommended mitigation
<p>The amended policy provides protection to surface water bodies and tidal waters, in addition to groundwater, providing greater protection against impacts upon water quality. Whilst the policy does not prevent adverse impacts on the built environment from aggressive ground conditions, these impacts are likely to be mitigated against by providing protection against the risk of contamination to water, human health and the environment.</p>	<p>None suggested.</p>
<p>ENV 13: The Design and Positioning of Buildings</p>	
<p>The policy has been amended to reflect the removal of the Code for Sustainable Homes standard which has been incorporated into the building regulations. The amended policy has been reduced to a single sentence which states that new development is expected meet high standards of development. The result is an overall negligible impact on the sustainability objectives.</p>	<p>None suggested, as the amendments reflect the removal of the Code for Sustainable Homes standard which has been incorporated into the building regulations.</p>
<p>SUS 1: Level of Housing and Economic Growth</p>	
<p>The Council completed further work on housing land supply following the examination. This showed that the amount of housing provided by the land allocations in the Local Plan is now just over 16,300 homes. This is sufficient to provide 775 homes a year over a plan period which extends to 2031, rather than just to 2028, as suggested in the Further Modifications (July 2014) . Policy SUS 1 has been updated accordingly.</p> <p>The sustainability appraisal of the amended policy identified adverse impacts from development upon the environmental sustainability objectives. However, these impacts are likely to be mitigated through the policies in the Environment and Climate Change chapter of the Local Plan.</p> <p>The amended policy will provide a level of housing which will encourage the sustainable growth of the local economy and meet for the future local housing need, resulting in a strong positive impact upon the economy and housing sustainability objectives in the medium and long term.</p>	<p>None required, as the adverse impacts upon the environmental sustainability objectives will be mitigated by the policies in the Environment and Climate Change chapter of the Local Plan.</p>
<p>HOUS 1: Affordable Housing</p>	
<p>This policy has been amended to reflect the new affordable housing thresholds which were introduced by the Government in November 2014 and relaxes the need for affordable housing for smaller schemes. The amendment will reduce the availability of affordable housing, and therefore the amended policy performs less well under the housing sustainability objective. However, the amendment is not predicted to</p>	<p>None required, as the amendments to this policy reflect the new affordable housing thresholds which were introduced into national</p>

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Sustainability effects	Recommended mitigation
<p>have significant secondary impacts upon the economy, since the decrease in affordable housing provision is unlikely to significantly affect the infrastructure required to provide a local workforce, or quality of life, by reducing access to essential services and facilities due to a decrease in money collected through planning obligations.</p>	<p>policy in November 2014.</p>
<p>HOUS 6: Other Residential Development Outside Defined Development Boundaries</p>	
<p>The policy has been amended to enable new housing for rural workers outside the defined development boundaries, providing that there is an essential need for a worker to live at or near their place of work. The need for other requirements to be met prior to such development being permitted has been removed.</p> <p>The amended policy performs better under the economy sustainability objective, as the policy is more likely to deliver homes for workers, providing the infrastructure to enable rural industries to develop and grow and providing employment opportunities.</p>	<p>The loss of biodiversity and habitats may be mitigated through adding the following text (<i>in italics</i>) to this policy:</p> <p>(i) The extension of an existing lawful dwelling-house located outside the defined development boundaries will be permitted provided that the extension...does not harm the character of the locality or its landscape setting, <i>or adversely impact upon wildlife and habitats.</i></p>
<p>DOR 10: Dorchester Transport and Environment Plan</p>	
<p>The area of the Dorchester Park and Ride has been extended to the north, adjacent to the boundary with the A35. Whilst the area which the allocation now extends into is within a medium to low risk flood zone, the reason for extending the allocation is to allow for the installation of surface water attenuation measures which will address the flooding issues. The area in which the allocation has been extended into is within the Dorset AONB (as is the rest of the park and ride site), but is relatively low lying and will not introduce significant landscape impacts.</p>	<p>None suggested.</p>
<p>CRS 1: Land at Crossways</p>	
<p>The policy provides additional protection for the Bowleys Camp Scheduled Monument, requiring this historic asset to be protected and preserved. Therefore, this policy performs better under the historic and cultural features sustainability objective.</p>	<p>None suggested.</p>

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Sustainability effects	Recommended mitigation
CRS 2: Land around Crossways	
<p>This new policy ensures that the Councils will work together with other local authorities and network rail to provide a long term, integrated approach to development at Crossways through the provision of a Masterplan. This results in longer term positive impacts upon historic and cultural features, climate change mitigation and adaptation, quality of life, economy and housing sustainability objectives.</p>	<p>Natural England should be included in these discussions to ensure a strategic approach to the provision of SANG as mitigation against impacts upon the Dorset Heathlands European designation is provided.</p>
BRID 3: Land to the East Of Bredy Veterinary Centre, Off Jessops Avenue	
<p>Amendments to the policy will ensure that a wildlife corridor alongside the River Asker will be protected and enhanced, with improved public access also. The amended policy performs better under the biodiversity sustainability objective, since it provides habitat and protect species of European importance, and quality of life sustainability objective, since it provides access to a public amenity which can be used for recreational purposes. There are potential longer term impacts associated with the risk to surface water flooding on the northern section of the site.</p>	<p>The following wording (<i>in italics</i>) should be included to the policy:</p> <p><i>“Development will adequately manage the flood risk from surface water flooding.”</i></p>
BRID 5: St Michaels Trading Estate	
<p>Amendments to the policy ensure that a wildlife corridor along the River Brit, which includes St Michaels Island, will be provided with the development. This will protect the water quality within the River Asker which runs adjacent to the site, create a habitat, and protect species including Otter and Water Vole. The development area is within a medium to low flood risk area, which may have longer term impacts as flood events are likely to increase in frequency and magnitude in the future.</p>	<p>The following wording (<i>in italics</i>) should be included to the policy:</p> <p>St. Michael’s Trading Estate is designated for a comprehensive mixed-use development, subject to:</p> <p><i>“adequately managing the flood risk from the adjacent watercourse”</i></p>

8.3. CUMULATIVE, SECONDARY AND SYNERGISTIC IMPACTS

8.3.1 There are two potential cumulative, secondary and synergistic effects which are relevant to the modifications to the submission draft of the Local Plan, both of which relate to land allocations in Bridport.

- 8.3.2 The previous appraisal of cumulative, secondary and synergistic effects identified a potential cumulative effect of a series of developments within or adjacent to risk flood zones in Central Bridport exacerbating flooding issues. The magnitude of this impact was predicted to increase in the longer term, as the frequency and severity of flooding increases in light of climate change. The appraisal also identified potential secondary impacts of flooding upon social and economic receptors in Bridport Town Centre, with impacts upon public safety, access to services and facilities, and the local economy as a result of flood damage.
- 8.3.3 Since the cumulative, secondary and synergistic effects were last assessed, additions have been made to policy BRID 1 and the preamble to this policy which ensure that no development occurs on the flood plain of the River Symene. However, additions to policies BRID 3, BRID 4 and BRID 5 may be required to ensure that the cumulative and secondary impacts of flooding in Bridport are addressed in a strategic manner (see Figure 11.4).
- 8.3.4 The previous assessment of cumulative, secondary and synergistic effects also identified potential cumulative impacts of development in Central Bridport upon the populations of European protected species including the Otter and Water Vole. The development of the land allocations next to the Rivers Brit, Asker and Symene may result in the loss or degradation of riverside habitats, and an increase in recreational pressure which results in a decline in biodiversity across Bridport.
- 8.3.5 The modifications to the submission draft of the Local Plan ensure that a wildlife corridor is retained along the river banks of the land allocations at St Michaels Trading Estate (BRID 5) and the land to the east of Bredy Vet Centre (BRID 3). The amended policies promote the enhancement of the habitats within the wildlife corridor and protect species of European importance, which addresses the potential cumulative impacts upon habitats and species which were previously identified.

Sustainability Appraisal Non-technical Summary

9 Monitoring

- 9.0.1 The significant effects of the implementation of the Local Plan must be monitored to identify any unforeseen adverse effects and enable appropriate remedial action to be taken if necessary.
- 9.0.2 Monitoring should be focussed on the significant effects identified throughout this sustainability appraisal, although in some instances there are no indicators available to accurately monitor them.
- 9.0.3 It is proposed that the time and frequency of the monitoring will coincide with the regular monitoring report for the Local Plan.

Significant Effects	Potential Indicators	Source of Information
Longer term loss of biodiversity	Information on the condition and change of area of local, national, and international designated wildlife sites.	Natural England provides survey data on the status of designated wildlife sites. Further data is provided by Dorset County Council with the assistance of the Dorset Environmental Records Centre.
Impacts of development upon internationally designated wildlife sites	Information on the condition of internationally designated wildlife sites.	Natural England, and Dorset County Council with the assistance of the Dorset Environmental Records Centre.
River quality	Water quality, including the rivers within Central Bridport.	Environment Agency.
Air quality	Air quality within Air Quality Management Areas.	West Dorset District Council and Weymouth and Portland Borough Council.
Access to services and facilities	Percentage of developments within 30 minutes of key services and facilities.	Dorset County Council.
Access to affordable housing	Number of units granted each year through social housing schemes and planning obligations, and the number of people on the housing register	West Dorset District Council and Weymouth and Portland Borough Council.



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