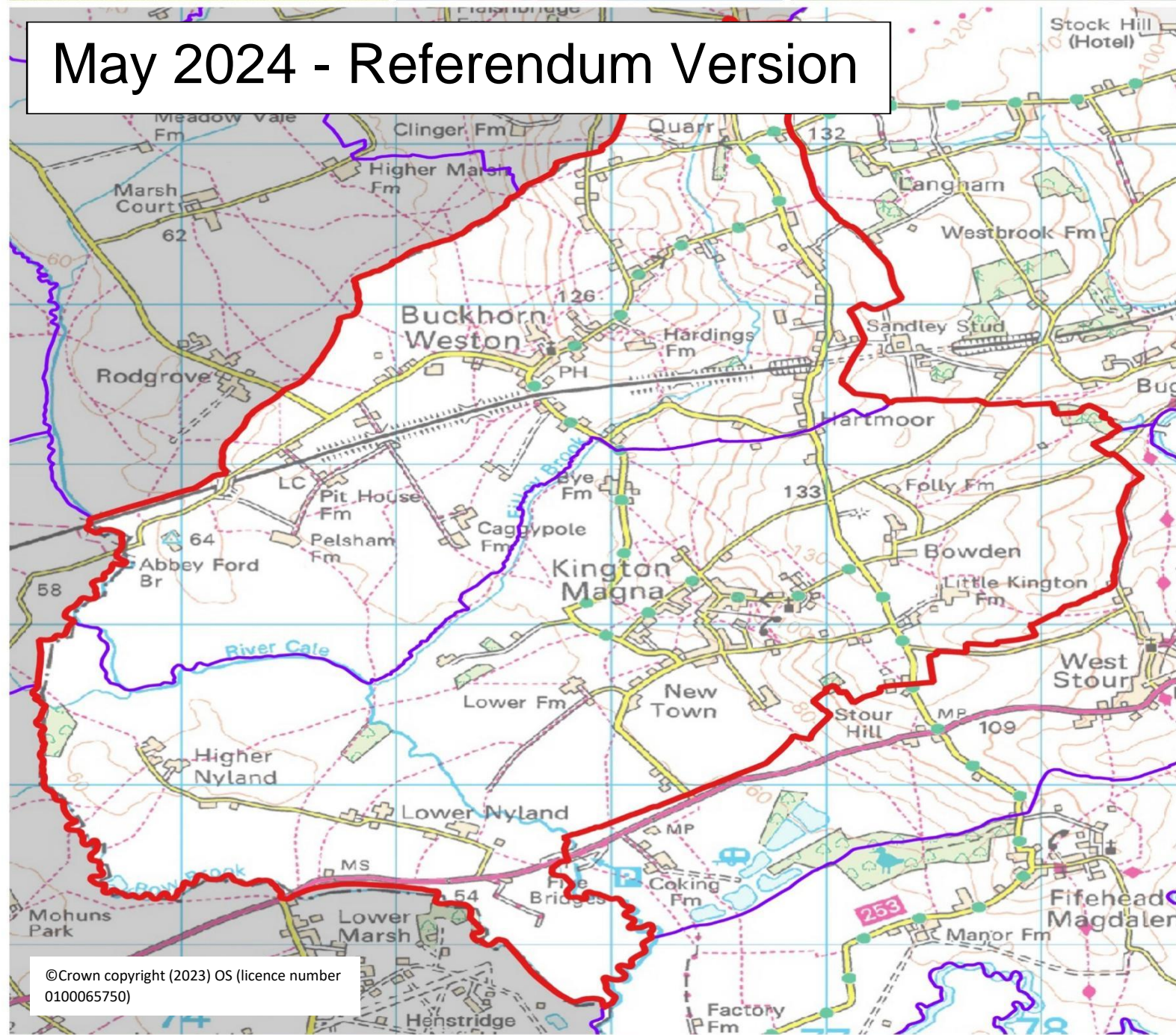




# Buckhorn Weston and Kington Magna Neighbourhood Plan 2021 to 2038



## May 2024 - Referendum Version



## FOREWORD

### **In the beginning**....our villages had a settlement boundary.

In the case of Buckhorn Weston and Kington Magna these were in place until 2016 when North Dorset Council policy meant they were removed and villages were classed as countryside. Many noticed no effect on their village, unless putting in a planning application or perhaps a passing thought that few, if any, building projects were taking place. In effect, all expansion was quashed.

The reinstatement of village boundaries across Dorset is now being supported, indeed there are many villages where these have already been reintroduced within the formation of a Neighbourhood Plan. Buckhorn Weston and Kington Magna have been lucky enough to benefit from the government grant available to investigate community opinion as to whether residents wish to take advantage of this opportunity and, if so, what shape such a Neighbourhood Plan should take.

**Step 1** was a public meeting called by the Parish Council. Two meetings were arranged, one in Buckhorn Weston Village Hall on the 27th October 2021 and the other in Kington Magna Village Hall on the 10th January 2022. Both meetings were attended by Dorset councillors and a total of 45 members of the community. There was also the opportunity for those interested to put their names forward to help. A small working group was formed.

**Step 2** was to try to explain to residents – ‘what is a Neighbourhood Plan?’ and ‘why should we?’ – giving all a chance to express their views on whether this was wanted or not. It was decided to arrange another meeting for this with a planning consultant in attendance.

Much of the focus was on the outcome if we do nothing. Without an approved plan, policy and planning will remain solely a Dorset Council decision. If the parish has its own Neighbourhood Plan, setting out our wishes for things we both do and do not want, then Dorset Council has a duty to take these into account before reaching their decision.

In the initial vote 70 surveys were returned, the majority were in favour (56 for 12 against and 2 votes neither for nor against). Based on this result the Parish Council decided to proceed with the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan. A Steering Group was formed of representatives from Kington Magna and Buckhorn Weston who were tasked with the preparation and gathering of information that would be needed. Some members left the group as they were unable to commit fully to this task.

At all times the Steering Group remit was to follow procedure as set out by law, with guidance from our allocated County Planning Officer and our own planning consultant – funded via the Government grant. All decisions were directed by the results from the surveys returned by village residents.

The main survey findings were that a majority of residents were in favour of small and infill development and were not in favour of large-scale development or large properties which would be out of character for both villages.

Several interim stages followed, culminating with this final official poll taking place in the form of a ‘yes/no’ referendum.

This plan is the culmination of work and consultation with the community. Thanks go to those involved including the volunteers for distributing leaflets (not forgetting our popular post lady Caroline), our consultant Lee Searles, Philip Reese (Planning Officer), Nigel Osborne for his IT skills, our very organised Parish Clerk, Sandra Mackintosh, Chris Wildey for producing the fabulous photos and, of

course, the Steering Group who read the legislation, deciphered statutory requirements and disseminated the information they were faced with and attended the many meetings.

FINALLY, A HUGE THANK YOU TO THE RESIDENTS OF BUCKHORN WESTON AND KINGTON MAGNA WHO ATTENDED THE MEETINGS AND CONTRIBUTED WITH THEIR VIEWS AND SUPPORT.



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# 1. INTRODUCTION TO THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

1. Situated at the north-western corner of Dorset and bordering south-east Somerset, the parish villages of Buckhorn Weston and Kington Magna enjoy a south facing aspect across the fertile grass pastures of the Blackmore Vale but with the benefit of some rising, more freely draining ground. Nyland is more low-lying and borders the River Cale which rises in Wincanton to the north west and flows south through the Vale to join the River Stour. The geology of the parish area has determined its predominant use over many centuries as rich grazing for dairy herds which, in turn, has created the unique patchwork of grass enclosed by thick, well-tended hedges of blackthorn and other native species. The low intrusive nature of livestock farming encourages abundant wildlife to inhabit the open ground, for example hares, skylarks, buzzards and roe deer, and to find shelter in the hedges and numerous small coverts. The Oak now dominates the skyline in this once Elm-studded landscape.
2. The North Dorset parish of Buckhorn Weston and Kington Magna, including Nyland, encompasses settlements predating the Domesday Book although few pre-17th century buildings survive. The names of Buckhorn and Kington reputedly are a corruption of the Saxon, Bokere or Bukere and Chintone, later become Boukere Weston and Gt. Kyngeton. The Road presently known as the A30 was originally an important route between the cathedrals of Salisbury and Exeter and Shaftesbury and Sherborne Abbeys.
3. The villages have a rich rural history, the tithe maps showing several orchards (of which only remnants remain) and evidence of a tan yard, 2 forges, several legal and illegal alehouses, bakeries, schools, Post Offices and shop, Churches and Chapels.
4. In the 1801 Census, the population in the parish was recorded as 720 of which 95% were chiefly employed in agriculture, occupying 121 houses. 200 years later (2001) the population of 706 occupied 288 properties and the census no longer records those involved in agricultural work.
5. The area profiles from Dorset Council show the ages of people living in both Buckhorn Weston and Kington Magna as follows:

*Table 1 - Buckhorn Weston and Kington Magna demographic by age*

	Buckhorn Weston	Kington Magna	Total
0-15 years	47	26	73
16-64 years	203	162	365
65+ year	96	147	243
Total	346	335	681

6. The founding architecture of the villages has also been influenced by the local geology. Forest Marble from the Stalbridge area and Coral Rag from Marnhull and Todber have been used extensively in the older buildings and remains available for building work, although costs have determined that brick and reconstituted stone are evident in more recent developments. Clay, slate or concrete tiles now provide the main roofing material with very few thatched roofs surviving.
7. With the mechanisation of farming, employment over the last 50 years has become increasingly reliant on towns and cities as centres of economic activity requiring good transport links for commuters who chose to live in the rural environment. The parish and the wider area of North Dorset, Wiltshire and

South Somerset is well served by major rail, road and bus services between the South West and London; especially the Waterloo line, the A303 and coach services stopping at Wincanton. There has been a significant increase in the use of Gillingham station as a main commuter link to the capital and the weight of traffic benefiting from the A303 connections with the major M3 and M4 motorways.

8. In contrast to rail, road routes to the North and South are less direct and all journeys require at least a few miles on single track roads increasingly pressured by a mix of farm vehicles, delivery lorries, cars, cyclists, horse riders and walkers. Unsurprisingly, given the diverse transport needs of the community and economic pressures, local bus services through the villages have ceased. Nevertheless, school children are bussed to local state schools and the less independently mobile can take advantage of the Community Assisted Transport (CAT). Air links have improved over recent years with major European hubs at Exeter, Bournemouth and Bristol now reducing the reliance on London airports. Inevitably, although more people are choosing the health benefits of walking or cycling, the car remains the only reliable and practical solution to rural transport for the majority of village dwellers.
9. Local village facilities are limited to the Church, a Public House with restaurant and the cricket club in Buckhorn whilst Kington has a Church and a village social club operated by volunteers twice a week. Both villages have a village hall and outdoor play area. Community activities in both villages are largely centred on the two village halls and often involve raising much needed funds for the ongoing maintenance of the two Churches. Due to the closure of the Post Office and shop in Buckhorn a mobile outreach Post Office van visits Buckhorn twice a week in the village hall car park and can deliver food on request.
10. In summary, the modern lives of most of the Parish remain a contrasting mix of the extraordinary privilege of inhabiting a rural idyll envied by most city dwellers but with a sadness at a lack of facilities that can prove difficult for the younger members of the community and the less mobile.

### Social, Economic and Environmental Characteristics

11. Buckhorn Weston & Kington Magna had a total of 745 residents, formed into 309 households and occupying 344 dwellings, according to the 2011 Census. This declined to 710 in 2021 according to latest Census results. The 2021 Census records a figure of 320 households, an increase of 11 since 2011.

### Business Activity

12. The main activity is agriculture with 10 working farms primarily involved in dairy with some meat production through beef and sheep. In addition, land is rented out and some diversification has taken place through equine based activities and the provision of holiday let self-catering accommodation. There are also small businesses which include car maintenance, repairs and servicing etc, car sales, metal fabrication, equine veterinary, cider production, tree surgery and the local inn 'The Stapleton Arms' which provides a restaurant and accommodation. A number of people operate their business from home providing professional and technical services, catering and home improvements.



### Community Facilities

13. The main community facilities in the Parish are the village halls, one in Buckhorn Weston and one in Kington Magna. The hall in Kington Magna incorporates the social club which includes a bar serving alcohol which is run by volunteers. The Parish has 2 churches at St. John the Baptist in Buckhorn Weston and All Saints in Kington Magna. Both villages have public spaces incorporating play equipment that are run by volunteers and funded by the villages. Most village activities take place in the village halls, including short mat bowls, skittles, Pilates, Tai Chi, dancing, art club, ladies group/women's institute, coffee mornings, soup lunches, fundraising jumble sales, Christmas fayre, wedding receptions and more.
14. The Stapleton Arms in Buckhorn Weston is an important meeting place that also organises a range of events for the community.
15. Buckhorn Weston has a thriving cricket club with a new pavilion, grounds and parking. Membership includes all age groups, male and female.
16. There are community notice boards and post boxes in both villages and in Kington Magna a disused telephone box has been reutilised into a book swap depository. Kington Magna has a mobile fish & chip van which visits each week.





## Housing

17. In the 2011 Census the 309 households occupied 344 dwellings. At that time 67.7% of these dwellings were detached and a higher proportion of people in the Parish owned their home compared with the rest of North Dorset and across England. Between 2011 and 2022 Dorset Council shows that 5 new dwellings were built, all for market housing. From 2012 – 2021, the average house price (median land registry based on sales) has increased by 70.9% and currently stands at £470,000. No households lived in shared ownership dwellings in the Parish and the proportion of households living in social and private rented dwellings were also lower in the Parish than North Dorset and England.

## Services and Utilities

18. Most properties in the Parish have mains drainage, water and electricity. As is common with rural villages, mains gas is not available, but most properties have oil and a few use liquid propane gas. A number of properties have renewable energy obtained via solar panels either installed on roofs or some ground mounted and there is also a small wind turbine.
19. Both villages are in the process of being added to the Superfast Dorset roll-out broadband to enable all properties to have access to the internet at suitable speeds.

## Crime

20. There are very few incidents of rural crime reported in the Parish. The Police provide information to the Parish Clerk on any incidents and attend Parish Council meetings whenever possible to give updates and advice to the community.

## Transport and Travel

21. The parish is not served by a main bus route, but residents are able to call the Ring & Ride C.A.T. (community accessible transport) which provides people of all ages with access to nearby Wincanton, Bruton, Henstridge, Milborne Port, Castle Cary and all villages in-between. The nearby village of Templecombe and the town of Gillingham both have main line railway stations on the Exeter to London Waterloo line which are used by people living in the parish but working in London. On the whole most people living in the parish rely on owning a car or using a local taxi service.



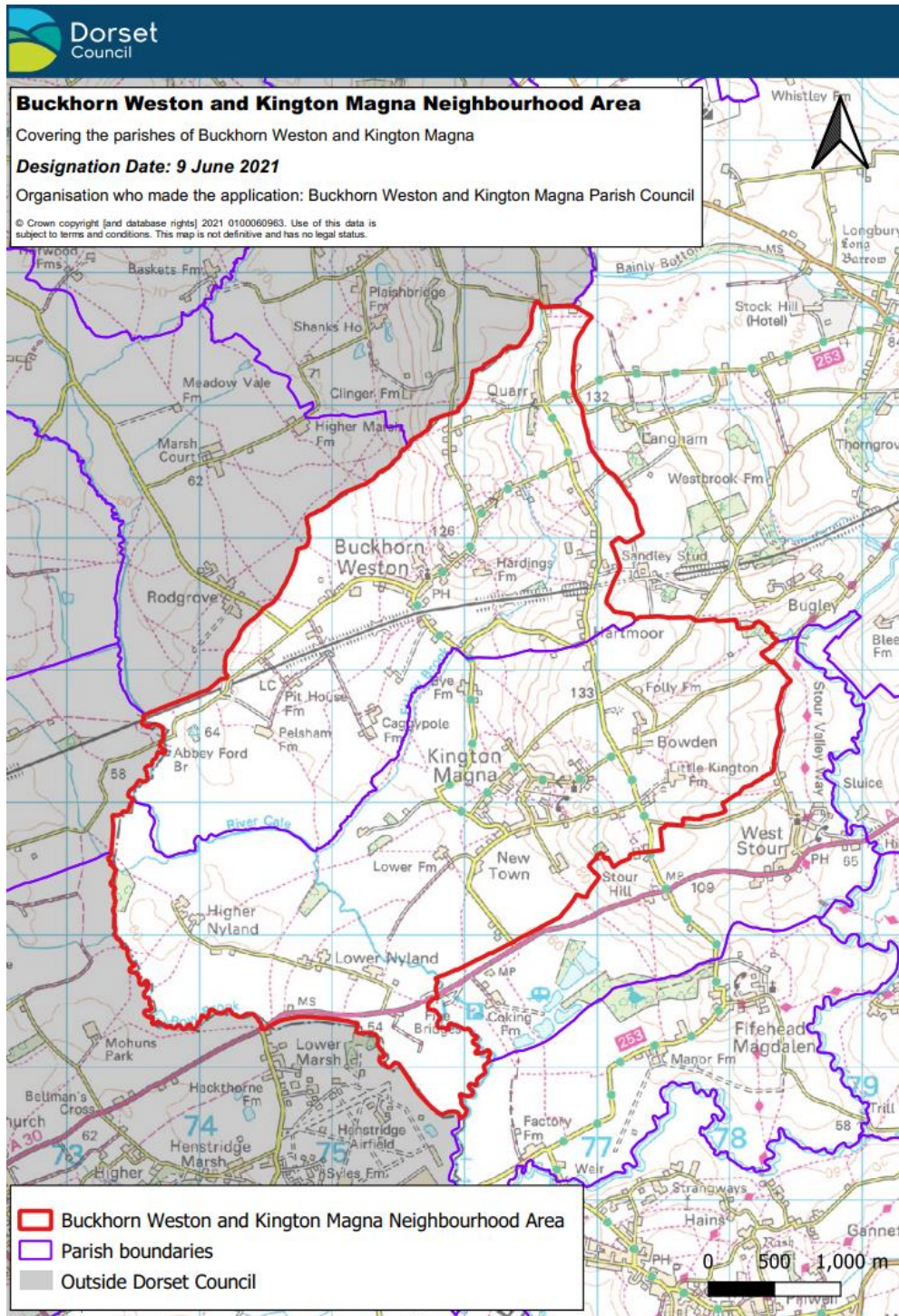
22. Both villages benefit from having school age children transported to school in nearby Bourton (primary age) and Gillingham (secondary age).

## 2. THE ROLE AND SCOPE OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

### Neighbourhood Planning Area

23. Buckhorn Weston and Kington Magna Parish Council applied for designation of the Neighbourhood Area for its Neighbourhood Plan with an area based on the boundary of the parishes. This was approved by Dorset Council on 9 June 2021. The Neighbourhood Area is set out in Figure 1.

Figure 1 - Buckhorn Weston and Kington Magna Neighbourhood Area Boundary



Source: Dorset Council

## Policy Framework for the Neighbourhood Plan

24. Neighbourhood Plans must operate in accordance with the guidance set out in the NPPF which says that succinct and up-to-date plans should provide a positive vision for the future of each area; a framework for addressing housing needs and other economic, social and environmental priorities; and a platform for local people to shape their surroundings. This applies to plans at all levels and so neighbourhood plans should play their part in the planning system in the same way.
25. A key reference to the role of neighbourhood planning is set out in Paragraph 29 of the NPPF. Here, it says Neighbourhood Plans give communities the power to develop a shared vision for their areas and through them shape, direct and help to deliver sustainable development, by influencing local planning decisions as part of the statutory development plan.
26. Neighbourhood Plans are required to meet Basic Conditions and other legislative requirements. The basic conditions are set out in paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as applied to Neighbourhood Development Plans by section 38A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The basic conditions are:
  - a) having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State it is appropriate to make the order (or Neighbourhood Development Plan).
  - b) the making of the order (or Neighbourhood Development Plan) contributes to the achievement of sustainable development.
  - c) the making of the order (or Neighbourhood Development Plan) is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area).
  - d) the making of the order (or Neighbourhood Development Plan) does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations.
  - e) prescribed conditions are met in relation to the Order (or plan) and prescribed matters have been complied with in connection with the proposal for the order (or Neighbourhood Development Plan)
27. Importantly, neighbourhood plans should not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area or undermine those strategic policies. A key requirement is that Neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in any development plan that covers their area.
28. At a later stage, this Neighbourhood Plan will be subject to an independent examination to assess whether it has been prepared in accordance with the above legal and procedural requirements. Whilst the legal test of soundness does not apply to neighbourhood plans, the principles of soundness will be used in the examination. The principles of soundness are set out below:
  - a) **Positively prepared** – The development of the plan has been undertaken with significant public engagement to identify the key themes it should focus on and has involved further consultation to check public views on work undertaken
  - b) **Justified** – Policies within the plan are supported by appropriate evidence and justification, which are included for public scrutiny.
  - c) **Effective** – The plan focuses on a limited number of important objectives that could make a significant contribution to meeting expressed local needs.

d) **Consistent with national policy** – The plan has been subject to on-going dialogue with Dorset Council Officers and the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group have received professional planning support to ensure that the plan conforms with national policies.

29. Once the Neighbourhood Plan has been brought into force, its policies will be considered alongside Local Plan policies under section 38(6) of the 1990 Act. Neighbourhood Plan policies will take precedence over existing non-strategic policies in the local plan covering the Neighbourhood Area, where they are in conflict; unless they are superseded by strategic or non-strategic policies that are adopted subsequently.

#### National Planning Policies

30. The current version of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in December 2023. The NPPF sets out national planning policies in a single document and in so doing sets the framework for plan-making and decision-making on development proposals. The Framework explains the relationship between the NPPF, Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans. This influences how local planning authorities approach the development of local plan policies and how they regard policies as strategic or non-strategic in nature. The NPPF identifies matters on which the government thinks local communities through Neighbourhood Plans can contribute to the achievement of national policy goals and also express their own ambitions and objectives.

#### Local Plans Context

31. The adopted local plan for the area is made up of the following development plan documents:
- a) North Dorset Local Plan Part One 2016 covering the period 2011-2031.
  - b) Saved policies from the North Dorset District Local Plan 2003.
  - c) Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole and Dorset Waste Plan, 2019-2033
  - d) Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Minerals Strategy 2014 (for period 2014-2028)
  - e) Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole and Dorset Minerals Sites Plan 2019 (for period 2019-2034).
32. In many aspects of detailed local planning policies, the adopted North Dorset Local Plan Part 1 is now increasingly out of date, with successive changes to the National Planning Policy Framework in place, changes to use classes affecting planning control of changes of use of shops, and a step change in policies for sustainability. The Part One Plan set out core spatial strategy and strategic policies.
33. Dorset Council replaced North Dorset District Council in 2019 and is preparing a new local plan to meet planned requirements for the period 2021-2038. Dorset Council has completed a Regulation 18 Options Consultation (January 2021).

#### Setting a Time Period for the Neighbourhood Plan

34. The intention of this Neighbourhood Plan is to ensure that it is in conformity with adopted plans whilst ensuring conformity with updated requirements in the NPPF and, where appropriate, with emerging local plans in preparation.
35. The plan should meet the basic requirement to conform with adopted local policies or national policies where these supersede them. There is an opportunity to take account of policies in the emerging Dorset Local Plan, again where these do not conflict with adopted and national policies.

**The time period for the Neighbourhood Plan is to 2021-2038, covering the start of work on the plan to the end period of the emerging local plan.**

## Promoting Sustainable Development

36. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires that plans seek to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development through meeting economic, social and environmental objectives (set out in paragraph 8 of the NPPF). The Buckhorn Weston and Kington Magna Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared with these requirements in mind. Table 2 demonstrates how plan policies support the achievement of sustainable development.

*Table 2 - Achievement of Sustainable Development objectives*

<b>Neighbourhood Plan Policy</b>	<b>Economic objective</b>	<b>Social Objective</b>	<b>Environmental Objective</b>
POLICY BWKM 1 – SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY FOR BUCKHORN WESTON	To facilitate development to strengthen the local community and support services	Will enable small amounts of housing to be provided to meet local needs	
POLICY BWKM 2 – SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY FOR KINGTON MAGNA	To facilitate development to strengthen the local community and support services	Will enable small amounts of housing to be provided to meet local needs	
POLICY BWKM 3 - THE DESIGN AND FORM OF NEW DEVELOPMENT WITHIN SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES			Will ensure that the character of the villages is retained as new housing is provided
POLICY BWKM 4 - LOCAL HOUSING REQUIREMENTS		Prioritises delivery of housing of the right size to meet local needs	
POLICY BWKM 5 - LIGHTING SCHEMES			Will foster a better approach to protecting dark skies
POLICY BWKM 6 - SUSTAINABLE AND ENERGY EFFICIENT BUILDINGS			Will make a contribution to net zero carbon objectives
POLICY BWKM 7 - IMPORTANT GAPS			Will preserve important open land within villages
POLICY BWKM 8 - LOCAL GREEN SPACE			Will protect valued open areas for the community

## Meeting Basic Conditions

37. Neighbourhood Plans are required to meet Basic Conditions one of which is that policies in the Neighbourhood Plan must be in broad conformity and must not conflict with the NPPF, guidance from the Secretary of State and with adopted local plans. Table 3 provides references to the NPPF and adopted local plans which are relevant to and support the inclusion of policies within the Buckhorn Weston and Kington Magna Neighbourhood Plan.

*Table 3 - Meeting Basic Condition for broad conformity and no conflict with Strategic Policies*

<b>Neighbourhood Plan Policy</b>	<b>NPPF December 2023 References</b>	<b>Adopted North Dorset Local Plan Policy Support</b>	<b>Emerging Dorset Local Plan 2021-2038 - Policy Support</b>
POLICY BWKM 1 – SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY FOR BUCKHORN WESTON	NPPF Para 70 (d)	Policy 2 of the 2016 Plan.  Policy 2 of the 2016 District-wide Local Plan removes settlement boundaries from smaller villages and invites Neighbourhood Plans to review and reinstate them where desired.	DEV4 and DEV6 provides framework for development within neighbourhood plan development boundaries
POLICY BWKM 2 – SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY FOR KINGTON MAGNA	NPPF Para 70 (d)	Policy 2 of the 2016 Plan removes settlement boundaries from smaller villages and invites Neighbourhood Plans to review and reinstate them where desired.	DEV4 and DEV6 provides framework for development within neighbourhood plan development boundaries
POLICY BWKM 3 - THE DESIGN AND FORM OF NEW DEVELOPMENT WITHIN SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES	NPPF Para 28, Para 116 (c) Para 124 (e), Para 129, Para 134, Para 135 and Para 136.	Policy 7 of 2016 plan refers to support for the provision of design and infill policies in Neighbourhood Plans where Settlement Boundaries are restored. Policy 24 also refers to the importance of local design considerations.	
POLICY BWKM 4 - LOCAL HOUSING REQUIREMENTS	NPPF Para 63-64	Policy 7 and Policy 8 of the 2016 Adopted Local Plan Part 1 refers to the importance of providing housing in the right mix, with the right housing types and sizes.	HOUS1 and HOUS2 provide framework for setting out local needs through Neighbourhood Plans.
POLICY BWKM 5 - LIGHTING SCHEMES	NPPF Para 191 (c)	Policy 25 of the 2016 Adopted Local Plan seeks to protect people and wildlife from the effects of lighting on new development.	ENV11 policy on amenity addresses impacts from lighting.
POLICY BWKM 6 - SUSTAINABLE AND ENERGY EFFICIENT BUILDINGS	NPPF Para 157, Para 159 (b) and Para 160	Policy 3 in the 2016 Local Plan says that new development should reduce GHG emissions, seek to improve energy performance, and mitigate the impacts of climate change.	ENV9 supports the achievement of high levels of environmental performance in buildings
POLICY BWKM 7 - IMPORTANT GAPS	NPPF Para 96 (c), 180(a) and (b)	Policy 15 of the 2016 Local Plan seeks to protect and enhance	ENV1 Green Infrastructure identified

		<p>existing green infrastructure and to support provision of new green infrastructure in settlements and in the countryside to meet a range of recreational and biodiversity objectives.</p> <p>Policy 4 of the 2016 Local Plan seeks to ensure that Landscape Character is maintained through protection of identified landscape character features.</p>	<p>in Neighbourhood Plans will form part of the Green Infrastructure Network.</p> <p>ENV4 says that all development should conserve and enhance the landscape.</p>
POLICY BWKM 8 - LOCAL GREEN SPACE	NPPF Para 105-107	Policy 15 of the 2016 Adopted Local Plan Part 1 supports the designation of Local Green Space.	ENV1 Green Infrastructure identified in Neighbourhood Plans will form part of the Green Infrastructure Network

### Strategic Environment Assessment Screening Opinion

38. In May 2023, Dorset Council published a Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Report for the Buckhorn Weston and Kington Magna Neighbourhood Plan to determine whether or not a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is required through a process known as SEA screening.
39. The report met the requirements of European Directive 2001/42/EC on the Assessment of the Effects of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment and the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations (2004).
40. Responses received from the statutory consultees, the Environment Agency, Natural England and Historic England, are included in Appendix A of the report. The Screening Report concluded that the plan is not likely to result in adverse environmental effects and that a full SEA is not required for the Buckhorn Weston and Kington Magna Neighbourhood Plan.

### Consultation with the Community

41. Engagement of the local community is regarded as essential in developing a vision and objectives for the future development of neighbourhoods and to provide the detailed information to support non-strategic policies that can make a difference to localities.
42. The preparation of the Buckhorn Weston and Kington Magna Neighbourhood Plan has been supported by engagement and consultation in a variety of forms and at several stages as the plan has developed. These are summarised in the detailed Consultation Report which has been prepared to support the plan.

### 3. OUR VISION AND DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES

43. The consultation events held in February 2022 and the residents survey undertaken in March and April 2022 identified a range of challenges and opportunities for consideration within the Neighbourhood Plan. The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group established in June 2022 has worked with the results of these consultations to develop a coherent view on the challenges and opportunities, a vision and objectives to guide the neighbourhood plan.
44. The starting point was a recognition of the geographical position of the parishes of Buckhorn Weston and Kington Magna, located to the south-west of Gillingham. There was also a recognition of the planning context, whereby adopted planning policies characterise the area and its settlements as open countryside and make allowance for only a strictly limited range of new developments. In short, people know that if nothing changes, very little would happen in the parish in development terms.
45. By and large, the residents of the parish value their countryside setting and rural character and want this preserved – they do not want large amounts of development that would change this. Over time however, residents have seen the larger villages of Buckhorn Weston and Kington Magna lose the limited services they once had and have experienced reductions in public transport to almost zero. Property prices have risen, no new housing has been provided, and young people can no longer afford to stay in the village when they reach adulthood. Unless extremely lucky, any change in accommodation requirements for the young, for families and for the elderly tends to result in people having to leave the parishes and to probably live in nearby towns.
46. Overall, the villages have ageing populations and many wonder what the future holds for the local communities if they have no new development, no services and no young people to sustain them.
47. Two key considerations have been raised in deciding whether to do anything to promote new development. The first is whether to establish development (settlement) boundaries around villages in the parishes. Doing this would lead to more policy support for some new development. But residents are clear that this should not mean significant new development, but small amounts of new housing based on development of infill sites, redevelopments of existing sites and, where it might be appropriate, development on the edges of the villages within the development boundaries.
48. There is concern that any new housing provision will not meet local needs. Where open market housing is developed, local people, especially the young, are very likely to be outbid.
49. Residents also want to ensure that new development, whether new planned development or householder development, is in keeping with local village design and character. They also want to create a positive environment for existing housing to incorporate sustainable building and low carbon energy measures.
50. Ways to secure better public transport services from the villages to nearby towns are important to residents of the parishes. Important social, economic and environmental benefits would result from availability and use of demand responsive transport services to connect villages in the Neighbourhood Area to nearby service centres.
51. Throughout, residents value the rural character of their locality. Keeping the skies dark and tackling sources of light pollution, and protecting and enhancing wildlife and green infrastructure, are priority issues for residents of the parishes.



52. Based on the issues raised, a vision is set of the outcomes the plan hopes to achieve and some clear objectives to guide the plan. These do not address all the matters raised but are focused on those which can make an important contribution.

### Vision

#### **Vision for the Neighbourhood Plan**

**To meet the housing needs of parish residents throughout their lives and create a more sustainable parish which maintains its important rural character.**

### Objectives to achieve the Vision

53. Based on the Vision, some objectives are identified to help deliver it.

**Objective 1 – Secure new housing to meet the needs of parish residents**

**Objective 2 – Make sure the design of new development takes account of the existing settlement character of the parish**

**Objective 3 – Positively promote renewable and low carbon energy measures in the parish**

**Objective 4 – Tackle light pollution and promote dark skies in the parish**

54. The objectives form the basis for the following chapters of the Neighbourhood Plan which set out specific neighbourhood plan policies.

## 4. SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES

55. This section of the Neighbourhood Plan restores new Settlement Boundaries for Buckhorn Weston and Kington Magna. The restrictive countryside policies do not apply to land within a settlement boundary but any development proposals in such areas will be expected to meet the requirements of policy BWKM 3.

### Conformity with Adopted Local Plan Policies.

56. The Adopted North Dorset Local Plan Part 1 from 2016 removed settlement boundaries around smaller settlements in the former district including Buckhorn Weston and Kington Magna. A part 2 local plan was intended to provide a policy basis for re-establishing them where needed, or they could be re-established through the making of Neighbourhood Plans.
57. Following the creation of Dorset Council which replaced five of the former districts within Dorset, the Part 2 Local Plan was not progressed. Draft policies within the emerging Dorset Council Local Plan retain the approach set out in the North Dorset Local Plan Part 1, allowing Neighbourhood Plans the ability to re-establish the boundaries where desired. The restoration of the settlement boundaries is therefore consistent with adopted and emerging local plan policies.

### Local Housing Requirement

58. A request was made to Dorset Council for the local housing requirement for the parish. The confirmed position is provided at **Appendix A**. The local housing requirement is based on the latest information and is provided for the period covered by the emerging Dorset Council Local Plan. This indicates a requirement for 12 dwellings over the period 2021 to 2038 and of this total, 6 dwellings are extant planning permissions. A further 6 dwellings would be expected through windfall over the period.
59. In view of the current state of local plan preparation, the response makes clear that the parish is not restricted to this number provided that, in potentially seeking to deliver more housing, it aims to meet local and not strategic housing needs. In deciding to restore settlement boundaries and in the process potentially create further opportunities to deliver housing to meet local housing needs, the Neighbourhood Plan is therefore consistent with the latest position on the local housing requirement.

### Method for Identifying New Settlement Boundaries

60. Before identifying new boundaries, the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group considered the best approach to the exercise. Advice was received to inform the group's approach, included in a supporting Settlement Boundary Methodology Report to the Neighbourhood Plan. This included principles which should be followed in identifying potential boundaries and practical assessment questions that can be asked in determining whether specific plots should be included or excluded.
61. By using the methodological tools and advice provided, the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group surveyed the boundaries of Buckhorn Weston and Kington Magna, marking suggested boundaries and assessing whether the land inside the boundaries exhibit the characteristics of settlements (as opposed to the countryside). The initial boundaries were reviewed and assessed against the criteria and principles set out methodology report. In particular, the group were concerned to ensure that the boundaries created were sensible and addressed key criteria about to demonstrate that land inside the boundaries is settlement orientated or focused with strong enclosing features. They also sought to avoid the creation of large development plots within the boundaries on the edge of the villages.

### Consultation on Proposed Settlement Boundaries

62. The consultation chapter of this Neighbourhood Plan and the Consultation Report provide full details of the consultation events and survey undertaken in October 2022 to ask residents of the parish what they thought of the principle of restoring settlement boundaries around the two villages and what they thought of the specific boundary proposals. The response to the survey demonstrated strong support for both the principle of restoring the boundaries and the specific boundary proposals, around both Buckhorn Weston and Kington Magna.

### Buckhorn Weston Settlement Boundary

63. The restored Settlement Boundary for Buckhorn Weston is set out in Figure 2 and Figure 3 and is provided in two parts. It incorporates the main part of the village and the satellite area of Shepherds Hill. Shepherds Hill is approximately 280m along a lane from the edge of the main village. The settlement there is urban in character with the area and residents functionally linked to the main village.
64. A further area, south of the railway line is included within the settlement boundary reflecting the community's view of this area being part of the village based on a former garage use on one plot (making it a brownfield plot) and an existing dwelling which forms the entrance to the village. Elsewhere, the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group sought to ensure that the settlement boundary avoided the splitting of plots, albeit consistent with the criteria and principles set out in Settlement Boundary methodology.

Figure 2 - Settlement boundary and policy designations for Buckhorn Weston (Main Village).

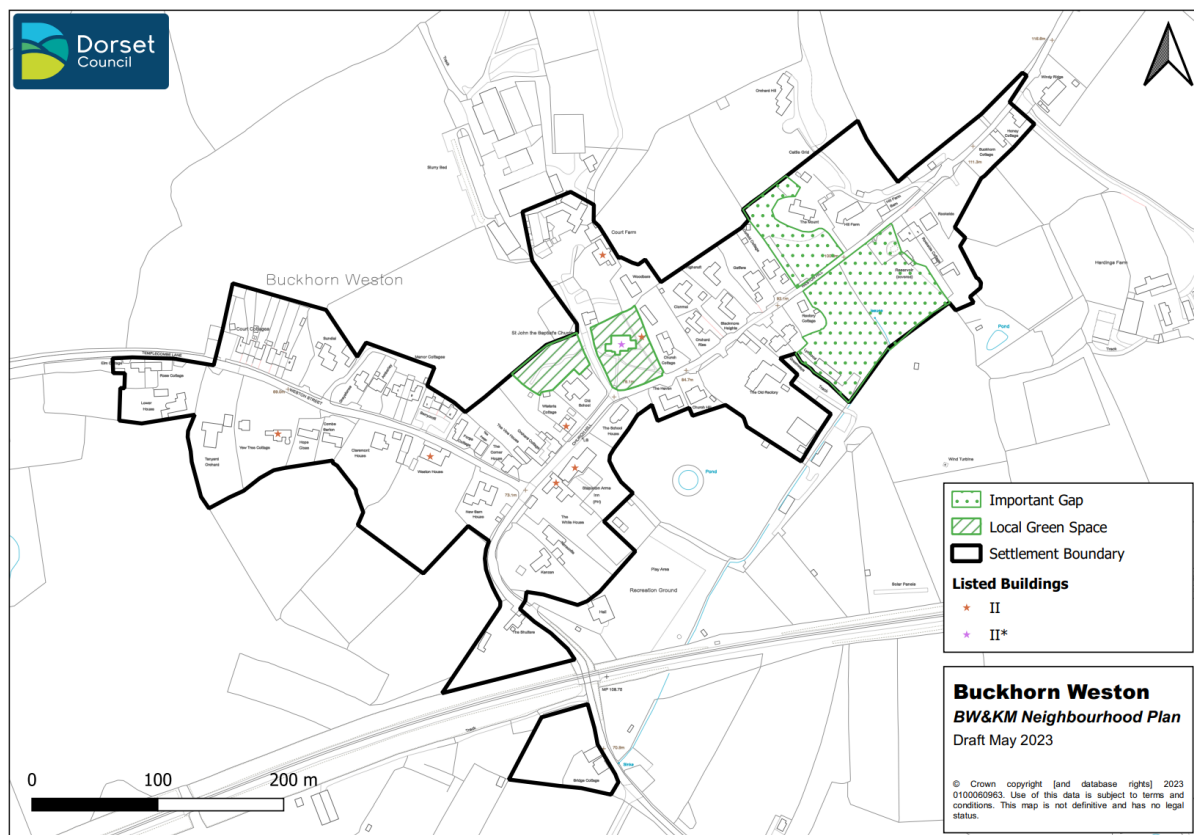
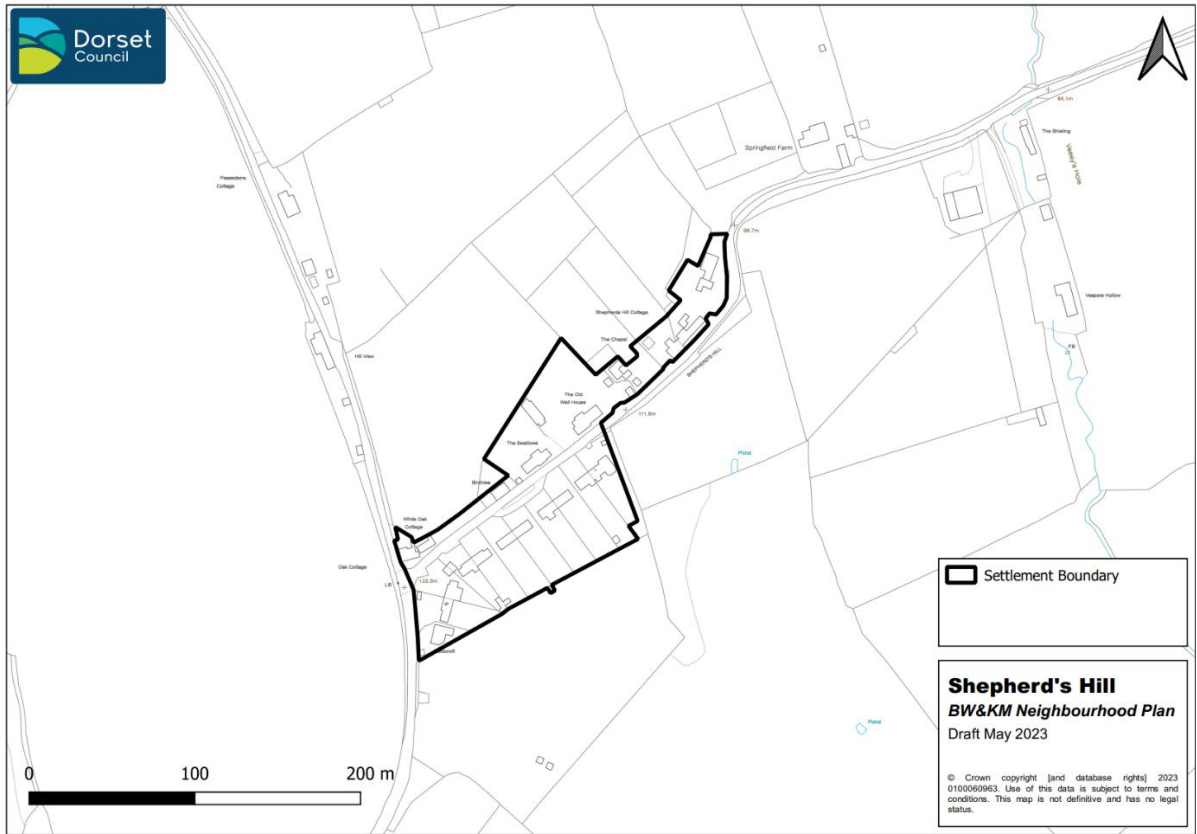


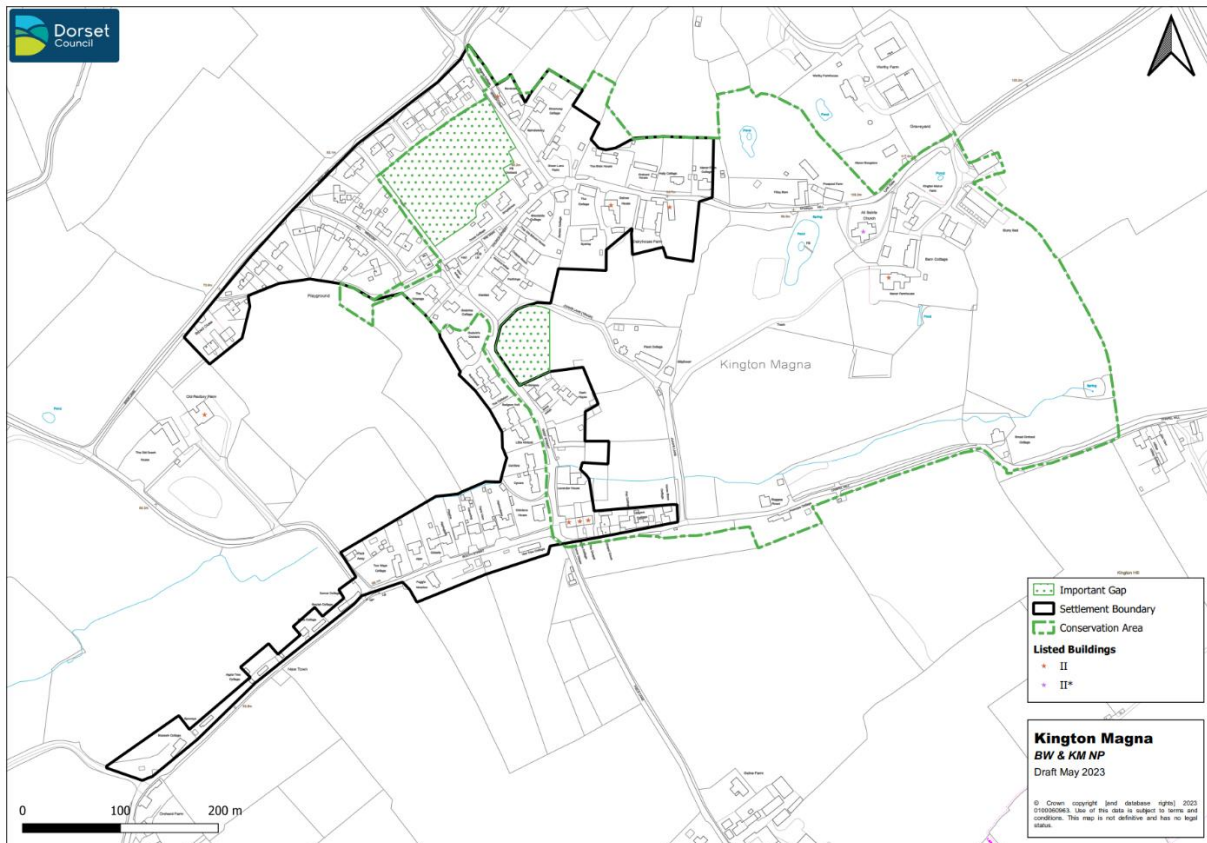
Figure 3 - Settlement Boundary and policy designations for Buckhorn Weston (Shepherds Hill)



## Kington Magna Settlement Boundary

65. The restored Settlement Boundary for Kington Magna is set out in Figure 4. The boundaries are broadly similar to the previous settlement boundary for the village with the opportunity taken to remove some open land to the east of West Street (north site) and to include gardens within the boundary that meet the assessment criteria relating to strong boundary features for the settlement. An extension to the previous settlement boundary is incorporated along Common Lane, where a row of residential properties is considered to be functionally part of the settlement.

Figure 4 - Settlement Boundary and policy designations for Kington Magna



## Settlement Boundary Policies

### ***POLICY BWKM 1 – SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY FOR BUCKHORN WESTON***

**The Settlement Boundary for Buckhorn Weston is shown on Figure 2 and 3 and through this Neighbourhood Plan constitutes a restored settlement boundary in accordance with Policy 2 of the Adopted North Dorset Local Plan Part 1.**

### ***POLICY BWKM 2 – SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY FOR KINGTON MAGNA***

**The Settlement Boundary for Kington Magna is shown on Figure 4 and through this Neighbourhood Plan constitutes a restored settlement boundary in accordance with Policy 2 of the Adopted North Dorset Local Plan Part 1.**

## 5. POLICIES FOR DEVELOPMENT INSIDE SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES

66. The Neighbourhood Plan has restored Settlement Boundaries around Buckhorn Weston and Kington Magna because the community has expressed a clear wish to support limited amounts of new development to meet local needs.
67. Strong policies are already in place which will control development inside settlement boundaries and there is an extra layer of policy consideration relating to the Kington Magna Conservation Area (as shown in Figure 4)<sup>1</sup>. The Conservation Area Appraisal (August 2018) provides detailed guidance and requirements governing new development within the Conservation Area. The Neighbourhood Plan does not need to repeat or duplicate these.
68. Nevertheless, there is a need to consider local policies to promote development of good design and in a form which protects and enhance the character of both villages in their local context. Neighbourhood Plan policies take appropriate account of adopted policies from the North Dorset Local Plan Part 1 2016, retained policies from the 2003 Adopted Plan, and Supplementary Planning Documents.

### Infill Development, Backland development and the redevelopment of existing plots

69. The Neighbourhood Plan considers that three types of development are likely to be utilised to meet local housing needs within restored Settlement Boundaries in the parish.
70. **Infill development** occurs in spaces between existing development and will create buildings which then form part of the frontage to a road. The effect is to increase the visible density of built form facing the street and to reduce the space between buildings. It can increase the apparent massing of the development to the front, but if plots are of sufficient size, this can be accommodated without negative impacts.
71. **Backland development** occurs to the rear of one or more existing dwellings and is serviced through roads or driveways leading from the highway between or to the side of existing properties, to the rear. Backland development normally utilises rear garden space of large plots to facilitate new residential development. The overall effect is a reduction of plot size and an increase in density. There are current examples of this type of development within Buckhorn Weston and Kington Magna. Backland development considerations include the effect of new development on the amenity of existing dwellings and for new properties, and the impacts from servicing, parking and on highway safety.
72. **Redevelopment of existing plots** can create additional development through intensification. This can occur successfully particularly where small single dwellings occupy large plots and there is potential to deliver additional dwellings in the same space. The same potential exists for development of brownfield or derelict plots. The same considerations apply in relation to the impacts from new development on existing properties and from the operational aspects of development (parking, services, highway safety).
73. Overlaying all options for new development is the requirement to ensure that new development is of good design, protects amenity, maintains and enhances local character, protects and enhances the key attributes of the Kington Magna Conservation Area, and ensures that the relationship between

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1

<https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/documents/35024/307390/Adopted+23+August+2018+Kington+Magna+CA+A.pdf/523383c0-baca-bea2-c098-55832cbc87b7>

the villages and the surrounding landscape is positively maintained. The requirements arising from this are set out in the next section.

### Design Principles for new development

74. North Dorset Adopted Local Plan 2016, Policy 7 requires any infilling within newly created settlement boundaries to be sensitively designed to its local context and to respect the amenity of adjoining properties. The neighbourhood plan has considered these requirements and developed local principles which should be followed in create infill development within the settlement boundaries of Buckhorn Weston and Kington Magna. The key reference in the adopted North Dorset Local Plan Part 1 2016, is Policy 24 which establishes Design Principles which must be followed in new development and encourages neighbourhood plans to interpret the principles for their local context. Relevant elements are set out in Table 4 and are interpreted for the local context of the Neighbourhood Plan.

*Table 4 - Design Principles for new development in Buckhorn Weston and Kington Magna*

<b>Design Principles for development in BWKM</b>	<b>Principles governing development within settlement boundaries of Buckhorn Weston and Kington Magna</b>
<b>Character</b>	
What are the existing positive character features?	A wide mixture of old and new properties, large and small, with a variety of construction materials including locally quarried stone, reconstituted stone, brick, render, timber clad. Roofs are clad in a mixture of clay and concrete tiles, natural and artificial slate and a small amount of thatched. Properties are situated in a variety of positions within their land, set to the front, centrally located and to the rear of their land.
What should be reinforced?	The design of any new properties should be in harmony with adjacent properties with regard to size and materials used and should incorporate renewable energy including solar panels, heat pumps, and battery storage where possible, and electric vehicle charging points as required for all new dwellings under Part S of building regulations. New properties must provide adequate amenity space having regard to the health and welfare of new occupants. They must also include on-site off-road parking for all vehicles to avoid any congestion on our village lanes. It is important to retain the rural character of our villages.
What needs to be created through design to improve character?	The community's main priority is for the design of new development to reflect existing character and, where possible, maintain and enhance the character of the villages through the use of high-quality local materials.
What landscape features exist that contribute to character and how should these be retained/enhanced?	Both villages have significant views out from vantage points to the surrounding countryside and these should be maintained.  Both villages contain significant greenery and foliage throughout frontages which contribute to a secluded and rural village context. New development should seek to maintain and reproduce this.
How should design reflect local topography in character terms?	To influence the height and massing of any new development, reflecting the important contribution made by current development to maintain views, create a rural, green village environment with development nestled in amongst greenery.
<b>Continuity and Enclosure</b>	
How will new development promote continuity of street frontages?	Ensure new properties blend in with surrounding/adjacent properties.  Maintain set back of properties from highway to allow for garden space and planting to the front. The street scene in both villages is dominated by greenery.

<b>Design Principles for development in BWKM</b>	<b>Principles governing development within settlement boundaries of Buckhorn Weston and Kington Magna</b>
How will new development reinforce existing spatial patterns?	By avoiding large developments, through sensitive development form which matches existing development form
<b>Ease of Movement</b>	
How should local permeability be incorporated into new development?	Development is mostly linear off existing village lanes with no snickets and cut-throughs. New development is likely to follow the same form, close to existing lanes.
How should development put people before traffic?	Lanes are narrow and do not have pavements, and so traffic and pedestrians are often in the same space. In new development, space must be provided for off-street parking.
How should car parking be accommodated?	Dedicated off-street car parking spaces should be provided to serve new development within private garages or on private driveways where cars can plug into electric vehicle charging points as required for all new dwellings under Part S of building regulations.
Do public spaces work effectively for all sections of the community?	There are no formal public spaces in the villages. The main public space is the village lanes. It is important that these remain safe and attractive for pedestrians, cyclists and all road users.
<b>Energy Efficiency</b>	
Does new development address climate change (resilience)?	<p>The design of buildings should consider the opportunities and requirements arising from impacts of climate change. In areas which are at higher risk of flooding from rivers or from surface water flooding, measures will be needed to make buildings more resilient.</p> <p>Buildings should be orientated and designed to at once utilize the benefits of passive solar energy, but at the same time incorporate measures to address the potential for overheating.</p>
Does new development address net-zero through sustainable design/ construction, passive energy, renewable energy generation and low carbon measures on site?	Wherever possible, the community is very keen to promote sustainable design and construction, to utilize passive energy in design and renewable energy technology in existing and new developments. Subject to site constraints, this would include taking the opportunity to orient buildings to make the most of passive solar energy, ensuring that buildings are heat-pump ready or have them incorporated and are well insulated.



Examples of properties built recently in Buckhorn Weston & Kington Magna (centre).



### Aspects of Development Form

75. Adopted Policies (Policy 24 of the 2016 Local Plan Part 1) also set out important considerations which should influence aspects of development form. Again, these should be interpreted for the local context and set out in Neighbourhood Plans to provide clear policies to guide new development. Table 5 interprets requirements for the local context based on the principles set out in adopted policies.

*Table 5 - Principles for Development Form in Buckhorn Weston and Kington Magna Parishes*

<b>Appropriate Development Form in BWKM</b>	<b>Principles governing development form within settlement boundaries of Buckhorn Weston and Kington Magna</b>
<b>Layout – urban structure and grain</b>	
How should buildings, routes and spaces relate to one another?	Development forms should complement existing buildings by adopting similar scale and footprint in order to blend in.
How should development respect the urban grain?	Both villages have spread over time along village lanes with a single plot depth generally, beyond which is agricultural land in most cases.  There are examples of accesses created off these lanes to serve small developments of two houses.
<b>Density and mix</b>	
What density is appropriate?	Overall densities within the villages are low, based on large garden spaces. Higher densities are present in smaller areas of the villages. It is important that massing and height, and the position of frontage back to allow front garden space and off-street parking is maintained, as in existing higher density development in both villages
What mix of uses is appropriate?	Residential new-build development would be appropriate.
<b>Scale – Height and massing</b>	

<b>Appropriate Development Form in BWKM</b>	<b>Principles governing development form within settlement boundaries of Buckhorn Weston and Kington Magna</b>
What scale of building is appropriate in relation to surrounding development?	A key community objective is for new housing to blend with existing housing to maintain the character of the village. On some sites this could mean matching the scale of adjacent buildings in close proximity. On other sites, a different scale might be possible owing to the large space available.
What building heights are appropriate in relation to views, vistas and skylines?	1-storey, 1.5 storey and 2-storey maximum. 3-Storey developments will not be acceptable given the prevailing building forms and village topography.
What Massing is appropriate in relation to other buildings and spaces?	Buildings may have some width with a low height to facilitate a set back within plots to provide front garden space.  Alternatively, buildings could be two-storey positioned at 90 degrees to the road providing space to the side and behind. In these circumstances use of local design features, materials and styles to blend with existing similar development will be important.
<b>Appearance – Details and materials</b>	
What building techniques are preferred?	Dependent on common materials used throughout the village
What Building styles are preferred?	Dependent on common styles throughout the village
What lighting is appropriate on buildings and structures?	Timed, sensor control downward facing only
What materials should be used in new buildings and structures?	The traditional local stone for local buildings built during the 18th and 19th centuries was Todber freestone, Corallian limestone, Coral Rag stone (Corallian colite), Forest marble and blue/white lias. Some buildings in the area may have also utilised recycled stone from older buildings. However, the quarries that the stone was quarried from were local to Buckhorn Weston, such as the Quarr, Cucklington and perhaps further afield from Wincanton for the blue or white lias - none of these now exist.  Contemporary local building stone is supplied by local quarries at Stalbridge or Marnhull and this is Todber freestone or Forest Marble. Where possible, new developments should incorporate locally available stone from these sources, or recycled local stone where available.

***POLICY BWKM 3 - THE DESIGN AND FORM OF NEW DEVELOPMENT WITHIN SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES***

**Within the Settlement Boundaries of Buckhorn Weston and Kington Magna, planning applications for new development which meet the design principles set out in Table 4 and principles on development form set out in Table 5 will be supported.**

**Affordability of Local Housing**

76. In order to understand housing needs in the parishes, in terms of housing type, tenure and mix, a Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) was commissioned and undertaken by AECOM. This is a supporting document to this plan. The assessment examined the changes in population in the Parishes and their ability to access different forms of housing based on their socio-economic capacity and needs.

77. The HNA noted a decline in population between the Census in 2011 and 2020 based on estimates, with estimated population now at 681 (a decline of 64 since 2011). Since completion of the HNA, 2021 Census results have become available at parish level and this confirms a population of 710 for BWKM in 2021. This is a smaller decline (of 35 people) than that noted in the HNA.
78. In terms of home ownership, the 2011 Census recorded the tenure in which people lived and from this determined that the proportion owning their own home was significantly higher in BWKM than across the rest of North Dorset and England. In 2011, no households lived in shared ownership dwellings in the parishes, with the proportion of households living in social and private rented dwellings also lower in BWKM than in North Dorset and England as a whole.
79. The 2021 Census indicates that 55.6% of households own their house outright, 24.1% own with a mortgage, loan or shared equity, 10.2% are households living in social rented accommodation and 10.2% live in private rent or 'rent free' accommodation. The proportion of households in owner-occupied tenures is 79.7% which is much higher than Dorset as a whole (71.3%).
80. The HNA notes that Dorset Council Completions data shows that 5 dwellings were built between 2011 and 2022, all for market housing. Between 2012 and 2021, the median house price increased by 70.9% and currently stands at £470,000. The lower quartile price for BWKM has increased by 81.9% from £240,000 in 2012 to £436,500.

#### Access to market housing - affordability

81. Based on the increase of market prices for housing, the HNA finds that local households on average incomes are unable to access even entry-level homes unless they have the advantage of a very large deposit. **Market housing for purchase**, even with the benefit of a higher-than-average income, is likely to remain out of reach to most.
82. **Private renting** is generally only affordable to higher earners. Households made up of one and two lower quartile earners cannot afford the given rental thresholds.

#### Affordable housing – affordability of different types of housing

83. All schemes of 11 or more dwellings (or a cumulative gross floorspace threshold of 1,000 square metres) set out in the Adopted North Dorset Local Plan Part 1 2016, Policy 8, must provide affordable housing (40% requirement subject to viability).
84. With regard to affordable home ownership, the HNA considers the affordability of different types of affordable housing to people living in BWKM. These can be provided when affordable housing requirements arise on market housing schemes that come forward in the area. Relevant proposals that come forward within Settlement Boundaries at the scale would trigger consideration of the options below.
85. **First Homes** - First Homes are a government initiative and must form the first 25% of any affordable housing requirement arising from a market housing scheme. It is based on providing a discount from market housing prices to improve affordability for local people. The HNA examined the level of discount required to enable access to First Homes should any market schemes come forward which are large enough to trigger an affordable housing requirement. First Homes are available for first time buyers with an income of less than £80,000 per annum. Access to First Homes can be prioritised for local people and/or key workers.
86. The HNA recommends that First Homes are delivered at a 50% discount from market prices in BWKM. Although this wouldn't make First Homes affordable to households on mean average incomes, it would increase accessibility to home ownership.

87. **Shared Ownership** – The HNA has concluded that shared ownership will be more affordable than First Homes, particularly at a 10% equity share, but is broadly accessible to the same groups. **Rent to Buy** is considered more affordable than First Homes and Shared Ownership.
88. **Affordable Rented** - Affordable rented housing is generally affordable to households with two lower earners depending on their household size. However, households with a single lower earner appear unable to afford any of the tenures considered including the smallest socially rented units. Many such individuals will, if unable to secure a social rented dwelling require additional subsidy through Housing Benefit to access housing.

#### Affordable Housing Needs in BWKM over the plan period

89. Based on adopted policies prior to the formation of this Neighbourhood Plan, Dorset Council set a total housing requirement which would deliver just 12 dwellings (of all types) over the emerging local plan period 2021-2038 which would include 6 dwellings already consented in extant planning permission, leaving only 6 further dwellings to be provided over the next 16 years. Based on thresholds it is likely that no affordable housing will be provided under this scenario.
90. The Neighbourhood Plan has been established with the purpose of facilitating the provision of more housing to meet identified local housing needs. It is supportive of new development within restored Settlement Boundaries to be provided where appropriate through infill development, backland development, plot intensification and development on brownfield plots.
91. No estimate has been made of how many new homes could be delivered through these means and no site allocations have been proposed for inclusion in the Neighbourhood Plan. Rural Exceptions Sites proposals for affordable housing will be determined in accordance with adopted Policy 9 of the North Dorset Local Plan 2016. Market Housing schemes coming forward in small numbers will not generate a requirement for affordable housing and is likely to be market housing unless the applicant decides to make them affordable.

#### The Need for different types and size of housing

92. This section considers the need for different types and sizes of housing based purely on the housing needs of the population and clearly will be subject to other considerations such as settlement character and design considerations set out elsewhere in the Neighbourhood Plan. The HNA provides an indication of the likely need for different types and sizes of homes based on demographic change.
93. **House types** - In 2011, over 50% of the housing stock were detached dwellings. The 2021 census this was probably similar but the Census changed the basis for counting, through the creation of a Bungalow category. This shows that BWKM has an above-average proportion of this type of housing compared to Dorset and England. The area has a low proportion of flats and terraced properties, particularly flats with only 0.9% in 2011 and 1.1% in 2021. The proportion of terraced properties was lower in BWKM than in the rest of Dorset and England whilst the proportion of detached dwellings was significantly higher.
94. In both 2011 and 2021 3-bedroom properties form the largest proportion of dwellings in the parish, followed by 4-bedroom and 2-bedroom properties. In the rest of Dorset, 3-bedroom properties are also the most common, but the next largest proportion is then 2-bedroom properties.
95. **Age Composition** - The 45-64 years age group forms the largest proportion of the BWKM population in both 2011 and 2020. However, the 65-84 age group has increased by 11% in this time, indicative of an ageing population. Between 2011 and 2020, the proportion of the population aged 0-15, 16-24, and 25-44 years fell whilst the proportion of the population aged 45-64, 64- 84, and 85 years and over

age grew. The 2021 Census shows that the population in the parish is higher than the Dorset average in the age range 50-80 years and lower than the Dorset average in most other 5-year age bands.

96. Looking forward to 2038, the HNA suggests that population growth will be driven by the oldest households, with the 65 and over category expanding by 72% by 2038. The 55 to 64 years age group will also expand, whilst all other groups are expected to get smaller.
97. **Household size** - BWKM has a much lower proportion of one person households compared to Dorset and England and a much higher proportion of family households. The proportion of one family only aged 66 and over is significantly higher than nationally, whilst the proportion of families with no children is 9.5 percentage points higher than the nationally. BWKM has a lower proportion of families with dependent children compared to Dorset and England and there is a similar proportion of families with non-dependent children across all three geographies. The 2021 Census results confirm this situation with 20.6% in one person households (30.6% for Dorset as a whole) and 73.4% in single family households (64.9% in Dorset as a whole). 52.5% of households are two-person households (40.7% in Dorset as a whole).
98. **Occupancy of dwellings** – The HNA finds that under-occupancy of the current housing stock is high in BWKM. This is particularly evident in families aged under 65 with no children and families aged 65+. The HNA discusses whether this means the larger housing isn't being occupied by households with the most family members, but by the people with the most wealth, or by older people who have not chosen or are not able to move to smaller properties. Under-occupancy is also common in single person households, indicating a potential lack of smaller dwellings. The 2021 Census results confirm this picture with 67.2% of households living in accommodation with two or more surplus bedrooms and 24% with one surplus bedroom, and only 0.6% of households in over-occupied accommodation.
99. **Future size and type requirements** – The HNA suggests that the majority of new dwellings in the plan area between now and 2038 should be 2-bedrooms, with 54.6% of new properties suggested to be of this size in order to meet the indicative mix. This is followed by 36.5% 1-bedroom dwellings and 8.9% 3-bedroom dwellings. It is suggested that further development of larger dwellings would not be needed purely in housing supply terms.

### Policy implications

100. The HNA analysis indicates that a growing population of increasingly elderly people living in small households (singles or couples with no children) are occupying the largest houses in the BWKM. It is suggested that they might wish to move into smaller properties within BWKM. The Neighbourhood Plan will facilitate the provision of housing within settlement boundaries with supportive policies towards new housing development in a range of circumstances. These will prioritise the provision of smaller properties to meet identified needs.
101. The potential for affordable housing provision within settlement boundaries is low given the potential for infill development is limited to small plots. Viability considerations will also limit the potential to deliver affordable housing as a component of a proposed development.

#### **POLICY BWKM 4 - LOCAL HOUSING REQUIREMENTS**

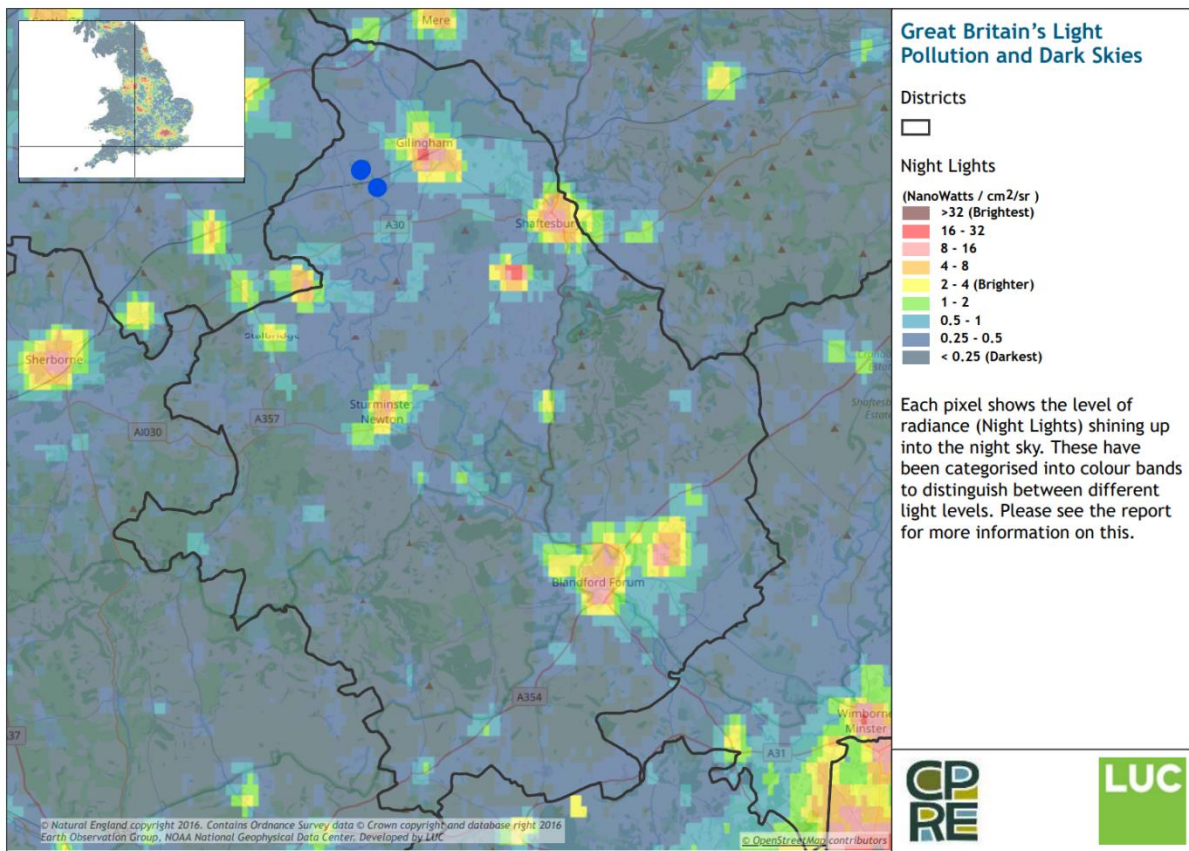
**Within the Settlement Boundaries of Buckhorn Weston and Kington Magna, planning applications for the development of two-bedroom and three-bedroom homes will be supported in order to meet identified local housing needs.**

## 6. OTHER DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

### Promoting Darker Skies

102. The Neighbourhood Plan aims to secure good practice in lighting new development. It then wants to ensure that development is then operated over time consistent with this.
103. Buckhorn Weston and Kington Magna lie within a deeply rural area Landscape Character Area characterised by its dark skies, and this is seen as a positive feature. Lighting from new development should not undermine that. Figure 5 is taken from the Interactive Dark Skies Map with location of Buckhorn Weston and Kington Magna highlighted in blue.

Figure 5 - Light Pollution and Dark Skies around Buckhorn Weston and Kington Magna



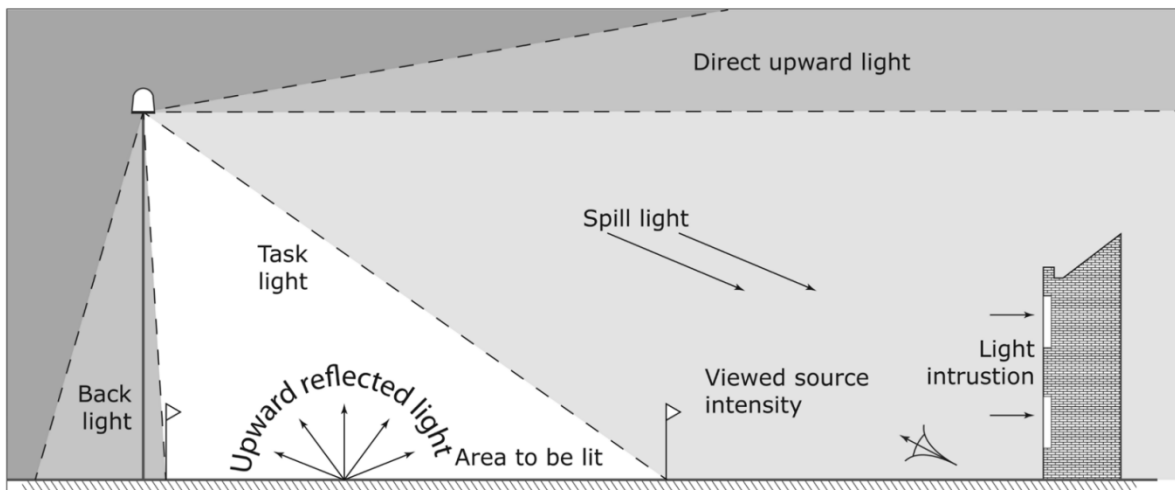
Source: CPRE - Interactive Dark Skies Map (Captured in December 2022)

104. Adopted Local Plan policies recognise that artificial lighting from development can have a significant impact on the character of rural areas. Policy 25 of the North Dorset Part 1 Local Plan 2016 seeks to control the impact from lighting from development. By itself, the policy should work but lighting is often considered to be a minor element of new development and once consented, lighting is often not subject to condition and so it is then difficult to intervene through enforcement. The installation of new lighting on existing properties can also be permitted development, meaning that intervention needs to rely on Environmental Health in the context of a nuisance complaint.
105. Figure 6 is taken from guidance produced by the Institute of Lighting Professionals (ILP) and this demonstrates the different forms of light pollution. The effects of poor lighting are felt on three levels:

- a) The first impact is on immediate human and animal neighbours who may be affected with serious physiological and ecological problems. Obtrusive light can keep you awake or impede your view of the night sky, or adversely affects the performance of an adjacent lighting installation, which is regarded as a form of pollution. It may also be a nuisance in law. It is an unnecessary use of energy.
- b) The second level is where badly lit development across a settlement, impacts on the quality of local environment and undermines settlement character.
- c) Thirdly, at the broadest level, large individual developments or the accumulation of light spill from many poorly lit developments across an area can create sky glow, the brightening of the night sky, which acts directly against national dark skies objectives. This is evident locally from development at Henstridge Airfield.

106. The ILP good practice guidance ‘GN01-21 – The Reduction of Obtrusive Light’ provides useful guidance on how to avoid creating impacts from lighting. All development should follow good practice and this needs to be secured through planning permissions so that planning control remains over the future operation of development in accordance with approved lighting details.

Figure 6 - Sources of Light Pollution from Development



Source: Institute of Lighting Professionals, Guidance Note GN01/21 The Reduction of Obtrusive Light (2021)

**POLICY BWKM 5 - LIGHTING SCHEMES**

Where relevant, applications for development will be supported if details of proposed lighting are provided in accordance with good practice guidance to ensure that impacts on amenity, on settlement character and dark skies will be avoided and that approved details will be secured via a suitably worded planning condition. Development should be designed to conserve and enhance the quality of dark night skies and prevent glare. In particular:

- a) External lighting should be avoided where possible.
- b) Where lighting is considered necessary, its design should minimise its impact, both on the amenity of the occupants of neighbouring properties, and in terms of light spillage and glare.
- c) Light sources should be fully shielded and pointed downwards, so that light is not emitted above the horizontal.
- d) Movement sensitive and timed PIR lights, downlighters or ‘wall washers’ are examples of lighting schemes that generally have less adverse impact whilst providing appropriate illumination.

## Renewable Energy and Sustainable Buildings

107. Consultation on the development of the Neighbourhood Plan revealed significant concern over the ability of local residents to make changes to their properties to help them address the impact of climate change and to improve the carbon footprint of their properties and so of their lives. Many properties, particularly those located within the Kington Magna Conservation Area, are listed buildings or, through their design, contribute to the character of the Conservation Area.
108. There are no easy answers to this problem – broader net-zero objectives may accommodate the higher carbon emissions and lower energy efficiency of historic buildings as a price to be paid for protecting important heritage and cultural assets, offset by other measures which reduce emissions overall. Heritage buildings are viewed as having their own value and contribution to sustainability. That said, the local community of Buckhorn Weston and Kington Magna view the need to address the impacts of climate change and to improve the sustainability of their community as of paramount importance. They want to ensure that, wherever possible, new development and changes to existing buildings include measures which deliver this aim.

## Sustainable Building Design to Support Net Zero

109. New buildings built with the support of policies in this Neighbourhood Plan will be around for decades to come and so it is important that they are designed to minimise the need to use fossil fuels for power and heating, and scarce resources with high environmental impacts in their construction. Ahead of changes in building regulations in 2025, all new residential development should be highly energy efficient and future proof, with installed measures, space and capacity to accommodate new sustainable heating and power technologies. Dorset Council published a sustainability checklist and guidance relating to sustainable design and construction which became effective on planning applications from January 2024.

## Reducing the Climate Change Impacts of Existing Buildings

110. The local community is supportive of measures that individual householders will need to take to improve energy efficiency, reduce carbon emissions and address the potential impacts of climate change (such as extreme weather events, flood risk and overheating of homes in prolonged hot weather). This may be subject to constraints in some areas and on some buildings, owing to their heritage value or contribution to character of the Kington Magna Conservation Area.

### ***POLICY BWKM 6 - SUSTAINABLE AND ENERGY EFFICIENT BUILDINGS***

**Positive support will be given to development proposals that incorporate the following sustainable design features:**

- a) High levels of energy efficiency delivered through insulation, airtightness and passive energy measures which exceed current building regulations requirements.**
- b) On site renewable and low carbon energy systems.**
- c) Infrastructure and space to enable the installation of sustainable power and heat technologies as they become required and available.**
- d) Retrofit of existing properties to improve energy efficiency and incorporate renewable and low carbon energy systems.**
- e) Installation of Electric Vehicle chargepoints at existing residential, commercial and community buildings.**
- f) Rainwater harvesting features to reduce treated water use in gardens**
- g) Incorporation of greywater systems in new residential, commercial and community buildings**



## 7. GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

111. Several sites within the Parish were previously identified as Important Open or Wooded Areas (IOWA) in the 2003 Local Plan. The policy protected such sites from development. Dorset Council has stated that it does not intend to carry on with the IOWA designation in the new Dorset Council Local Plan and is no longer actively applying the designation.
112. The Neighbourhood Plan has reviewed the sites to consider their value to the local community and their role in supporting the character of Buckhorn Weston and Kington Magna. This is set out in Table 6 together with recommendations for their role within the Neighbourhood Plan.

*Table 6 - Review of open areas within and around Buckhorn Weston and Kington Magna*

Site and Location	Review against criteria	Recommendation
<b>Buckhorn Weston</b>		
1 – Land to north of Church Hill	Steep, sloping wooded ground not suitable for Local Green Space but provides an Important gap.	Designate as an Important Gap.
2 – Land to South of Church Hill	The area provides views from Church Hill south and west into the Vale and as such affords significant public amenity from the vantage point of Church Hill public highway.  The land appears to be within the curtilage of existing private dwellings and its main function is to allow a view through the site to the landscape beyond, affording views - so is not suitable for Local Green Space designation but it does provide an important gap in built development.	Designate as an Important Gap.
3 – St. John the Baptist Churchyard	When viewed against NPPF criteria for the designation of Local Green Space, the Churchyard is located within the heart of Buckhorn Weston village, close to the community it serves. The area under consideration is not an extensive tract of land and is local in character. The value to the local community lies in its significant contribution to the character of the village and also in the visual/amenity terms benefits it provides to public areas of the village. The public are able to access and use the churchyard for recreation and reflection.	Designate Churchyard as Local Green Space.
4 – Land to west of Pound Lane	Village Graveyard. When viewed against NPPF criteria for the designation of Local Green Space, the Village Graveyard is also located within the heart of Buckhorn Weston village, close to the community it serves. The area under consideration is not an extensive tract of land and is local in character. The value to the local community is similar to that of the churchyard in that it provides amenity benefit for the public who are able to access and use the village cemetery for recreation and reflection.	Designate as Local Green Space.
<b>Kington Magna</b>		
5 – Field to rear of Green Lane and Church Street	The site was brought into the Conservation Area in recognition of the contribution this open land makes to the setting of buildings within the Conservation Area.  There is potential to designate this land as an Important Gap.	Designate as an Important Gap.
6 – Land to east of West Street (north site)	The site has been left outside the restored Settlement Boundary and is located within the Open Countryside. In the terms set by the 2003 plan, this site no longer requires IOWA protection.  Additionally, the site lies within the Conservation Area and is noted as an important open area providing setting.	Designate as an Important Gap

Site and Location	Review against criteria	Recommendation
	The site makes a significant contribution to the setting of buildings within the Conservation Area and of the settlement to the countryside and wider landscape character.	
7 – Land to east of West Street (south site)	This land lies between two houses within the Conservation Area and also is within an area of Archaeological Importance. The site is not visible from the lane frontage as it is located behind a tall hedge. There is no public access to the site.	The site will be within the restored Settlement Boundary for Kington Magna, without designation as an Important Open or Wooded Area, Important Gap or Local Green Space.

113. Table 6 demonstrates that some parcels of land make a valuable contribution to settlement character and its relationship to the countryside. Preserving these sites is important and means of protecting them from development so their openness can be maintained. In some cases, this can be achieved through designation of Local Green Spaces, but this is not appropriate in every case.

### Important Gaps

114. The Neighbourhood Plan identifies sites for which the designation of Important Gap status is appropriate where development will only be supported if it maintains the gaps. At Land North of Church Hill, Buckhorn Weston, this site provides a gap in development that should be maintained in relation to the adjoining site Land South of Church Hill.
115. At Land South of Church Hill, Buckhorn Weston, this site provides a view from a public vantage point across the site to wider landscape beyond, demonstrating the relationship between the village and the Clay Vale as set out in the Landscape Character Area key features for the Limestone Hills LCA. There are few other vantage points in the villages which means this site is important in this context.
116. At land east of West Street (north site), Kington Magna, this site is of some importance in framing the edge of the settlement against the adjacent countryside again with reference to the Landscape Character Areas of the Clay Vale and the Limestone Hills, whilst also of importance in the context of the setting of development within the Kington Magna Conservation Area.
117. At the field to the rear of Green Lane and Church Street, Kington Magna, this open land makes an important contribution to the setting of buildings within the Kington Magna Conservation Area.

#### **POLICY BWKM 7 - IMPORTANT GAPS**

**The following sites, shown on Figure 2 and Figure 4, are designated as Important Gaps which make a significant contribution to the character of their settlement in the context of wider Landscape Character. Development will only be supported which avoids a reduction in, and function of, the Important Gaps**

- a) Land to North of Church Hill, Buckhorn Weston**
- b) Land South of Church Hill, Buckhorn Weston.**
- c) Land to the east of West Street (north), Kington Magna.**
- d) Field to rear of Green Lane and Church Street, Kington Magna.**

## Local Green Spaces

118. During the development of the Neighbourhood Plan, engagement and consultation with the community led to the identification of green areas of particular importance, which need special protection. These are to be designated as Local Green Spaces, where new development will be ruled out other than when appropriate or in very special circumstances in accordance with green belt policies.
119. A Local Green Space can be designated due to its local significance or the fact that it is demonstrably special to the local community. Designated areas can include areas of historic significance, playing fields, wildlife sites or areas which contribute to the character and appreciation of an area. The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group used their local knowledge and feedback from consultation to identify candidate sites for designation as Local Green Spaces.
120. The NPSG assessed sites against the criteria set out in paragraph 102 of the National Planning Policy Framework. To be suitable for designation, a site should:
- a) be in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves
  - b) be demonstrably special to a local community
  - c) hold a particular local significance, for example, because of its
    - i. beauty,
    - ii. historic significance,
    - iii. recreational value (including as a playing field),
    - iv. tranquillity or
    - v. richness of its wildlife
  - d) be local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.
121. Adopted and emerging local plan policies also support the designation of Local Green Space in Neighbourhood Plans. Policy 15 of the North Dorset Local Plan Part 1, 2016 says that Neighbourhood plans should consider measures that assist in delivering key green infrastructure benefits, including the designation of local green space, where appropriate.
122. Site 3 and Site 4 in Table 6 are considered to satisfy the criteria for Local Green Space Designation.

### ***POLICY BWKM 8 - LOCAL GREEN SPACE***

**The following sites shown on Figure 2 are designated as Local Green Space. Other than in very special circumstances, no inappropriate development will be permitted that would harm their reason for designation:**

- a) St. John the Baptist Churchyard, Buckhorn Weston**
- b) Land to West of Pound Lane, Buckhorn Weston**

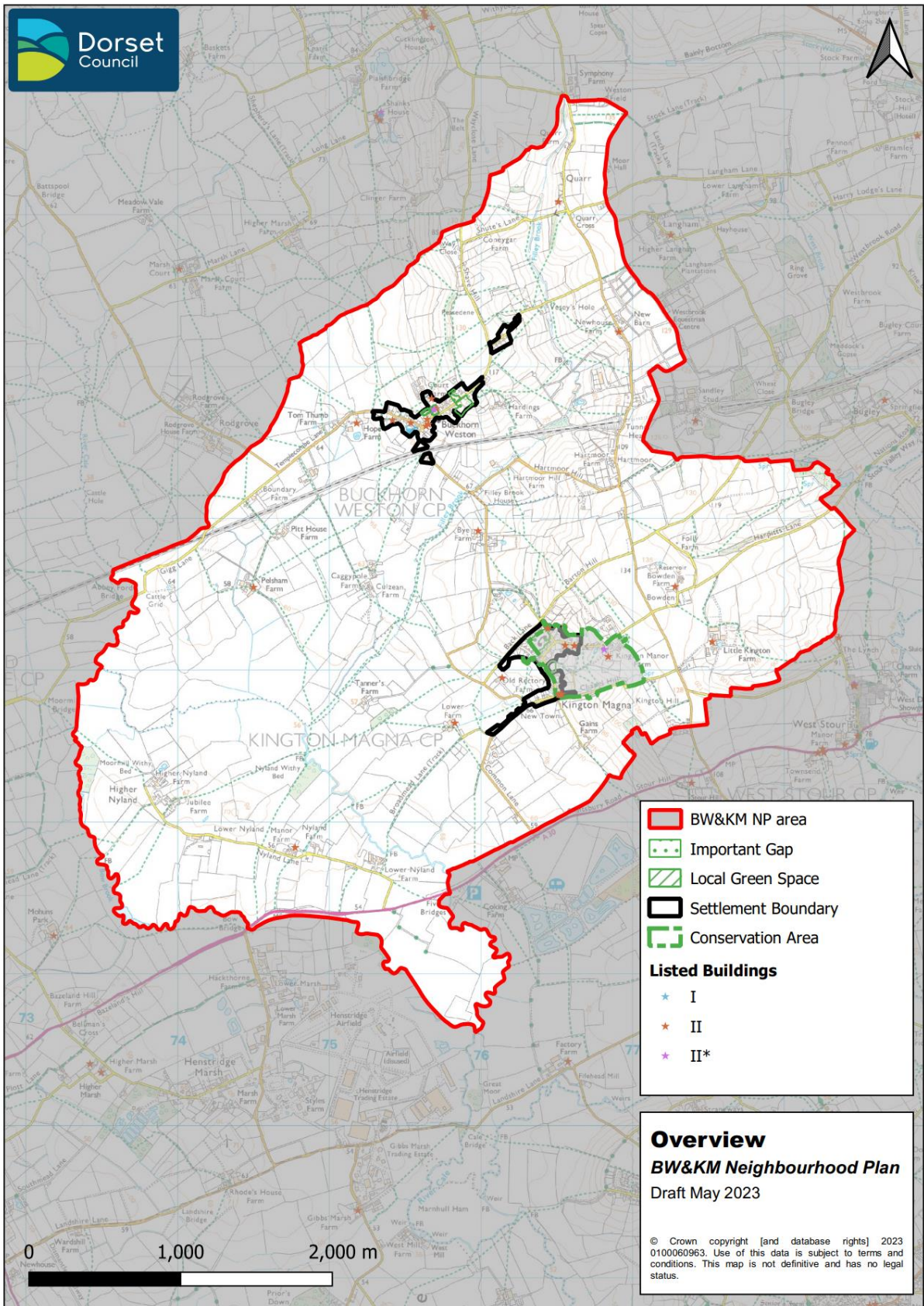
## 8. MONITORING, DELIVERY AND REVIEW

123. The Neighbourhood Plan provides policies which are focused on securing restored settlement boundaries around Buckhorn Weston and Kington Magna. The restoration of settlement boundaries around these two largest settlements in the Parish give rise to the need for further policies to ensure that any development that comes forward within settlements accords with local community priorities. An overview policy map is provided in Figure 7.
124. The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to achieve a number of things which will require further actions, active monitoring and periodic review every five years to determine whether objectives and policies are being achieved and observed. Key requirements are identified in Table 7.

*Table 7 - Monitoring for Neighbourhood Plan delivery*

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Monitoring indicators for Policy</b>
POLICY BWKM 1 – SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY FOR BUCKHORN WESTON	Number of homes granted planning permission for residential development each year.  Outcomes of Planning Applications for residential development outside of the settlement boundary.
POLICY BWKM 2 – SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY FOR KINGTON MAGNA	Number of homes granted planning permission for residential development each year.  Outcomes of Planning Applications for residential development outside of the settlement boundary.
POLICY BWKM 3 - THE DESIGN AND FORM OF NEW DEVELOPMENT WITHIN SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES	Review decisions on planning applications to understand whether policy is working over time.
POLICY BWKM 4 - LOCAL HOUSING REQUIREMENTS	Review decisions on planning applications to understand whether policy is working over time.  Monitor the type and size of new housing provided.
POLICY BWKM 5 - LIGHTING SCHEMES	Review Planning Applications, other applications for discharge of conditions, and decision on enforcement action.
POLICY BWKM 6 - SUSTAINABLE AND ENERGY EFFICIENT BUILDINGS	Review decisions on planning applications to understand whether policy is working over time.
POLICY BWKM 7 - IMPORTANT GAPS	Review decisions on planning applications to understand whether policy is working over time.
POLICY BWKM 8 - LOCAL GREEN SPACE	Review decisions on planning applications to understand whether policy is working over time.

Figure 7 - Overview Policy Map for Buckhorn Weston and Kington Magna Neighbourhood Plan



## APPENDIX A – HOUSING REQUIREMENT

A housing requirement for the parish of Buckhorn Weston and Kington Magna was sought from Dorset Council. The established position on 13<sup>th</sup> October 2022 is set out below. Based on the established methodology, there is a total housing requirement in the parish of 12 dwellings between 2021-2038. Six of these are extant planning permissions at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022. The remaining six dwellings would be expected through windfall over the period.

Appendix 2 of the [Dorset Council Local Plan Options Consultation](#) (Jan 2021) provided a set of housing requirement figures for areas that were designated neighbourhood areas at the time. Para 2.10.5 of the draft Local Plan provides a summary of the factors used to calculate the figures, as follows:

- a) completions since the beginning of the plan period (assumed to be 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021);
- b) extant planning permissions;
- c) housing allocations;
- d) capacity on major sites (of 10 or more dwellings) within development boundaries as evidenced through the SHLAA; and
- e) a windfall allowance on minor sites (of less than 10 dwellings).

As Buckhorn Weston & Kington Magna was not a designated neighbourhood area at the time that the Options consultation was published, the draft plan did not include a requirement figure for this area. A retrospective application of the same methodology leads to the following indicative figures:

Factor	Number of dwellings
Completions since 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2021	0
Extant planning permissions (at 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2022)	6
Local Plan or Neighbourhood Plan allocations	None
Capacity on major SHLAA sites	None
Windfall allowance*	6
<b>Total requirement for 2021-2038</b>	<b>12</b>

\*The windfall allowance is calculated by looking back at the average annual completion rate over recent years and multiplying it by 14. As there were 3 completions over the last 7 years, this creates a windfall allowance of 6.

From the table above, the indicative housing requirement for Buckhorn Weston & Kington Magna is 12 dwellings for the period of the Dorset Council Local Plan (2021-2038). Given the early stage of preparation of the Dorset Council Local Plan, the Parish is able to consider its own local needs as it requires.