

Bere Regis Neighbourhood Plan Review - examination

Dorset Council's and Bere Regis Parish Council's responses to the examiner's letter (3 Aug 2026)

17 August 2026

Note:

- The examiner's questions are in black
- Bere Regis Parish Council's responses are in red
- Dorset Council's responses are in green

Questions for BRPC and DC

1. DC has raised the issue of the delineation of Local Green Space (LGS) 2 which is described in the Plan as "Green Space around the Church". As I saw on my site visit and is readily apparent from the aerial photograph submitted by DC, there is an extended area of LGS2 which is used for car parking and there are small areas of adjoining open space which could easily be included in the LGS.

There is also a lack of consistency with nearby LGS3 The Play Park which, in the Review Plan, now excludes the adjoining car park. The LGS appears to be more associated with the adjacent residential development than the Church and, bearing in mind the titles of LGS7 and LGS8, lends itself to be described as "Land north of Elder Road". But that is only a passing comment and not a matter for meeting a Basic Condition.

I note that BRPC agrees with DC that the car park should not be included in LGS2. However, I would still be grateful if BRPC and DC could agree an appropriate boundary for LGS2 and submit a plan which I could then include as a modification, rather than rely on a form of words which could result in an misunderstanding.¹

BRPC: DC are invited to comment on the below map. If this cannot be accepted, then it is suggested to split the LGS into 2a and 2b (because there will be no connection between them). It is confirmed below that all land is within the same ownership.

¹ Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) Reference ID: 41-041-20140306 advises that a neighbourhood plan should be drafted with sufficient clarity that a decision maker can apply it consistently and with confidence when determining planning applications. It should be concise, precise and supported by appropriate evidence.



Title No. DT321944

Title Area: 2.463 ha

Parcel Area: 2.462 ha

Title Address: 2, 3, 4, 6, 9, 10 to 22 (even) 23, 24, 26, 27, 28, 30, 31 and 32 to 40 (even) Old Barn Road, Bere Regis, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10, 15, 19, 20, 21, 23, 24, 27, 29, 31 and 35 to 45 (odd) Manor Farm Road, Bere Regis, 1, 2 and 4 to 20 Turberville Court, Bere Regis and 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 11, 12, 13 and 16 to 30 Elder Road, Bere Regis

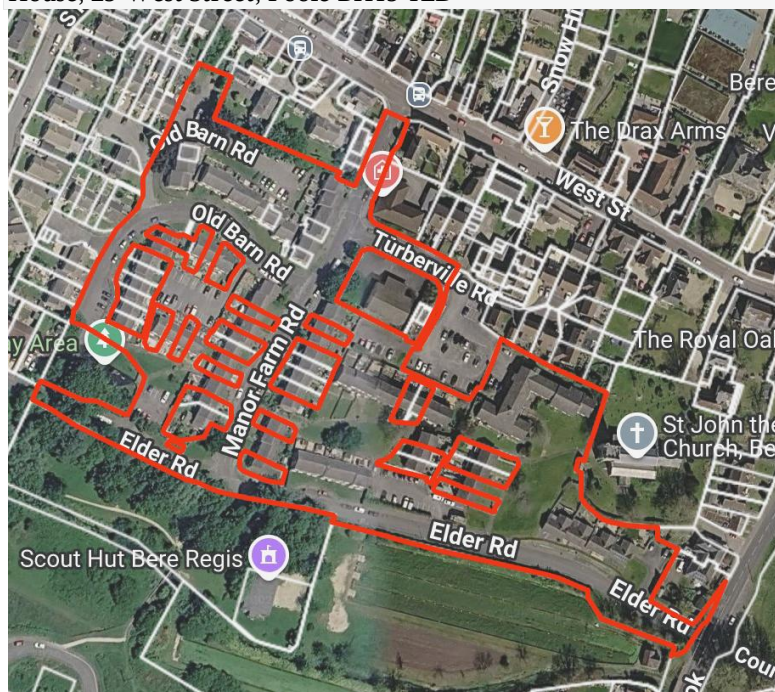
Tenure: Absolute freehold title

Highlight parcel area

Show linked leasehold titles

Date Added: 2011/12/07

Proprietor: SYNERGY HOUSING LIMITED (Registered Society (Company & Corporate Body)), Link House, 25 West Street, Poole BH15 1LD



DC: Taking a cue from the examiner's observation that "there are small areas of adjoining open space which could easily be included in the LGS," the latest proposal adds additional land into the proposed LGS. We appreciate it is only a small amount, the land

appears to be under one ownership (with reference to land registry parcels), and appears to form a continuous open space (I'm not aware of physical boundaries within the area). Our concern is that this change is quite late in the day and hasn't been consulted on. We therefore suggest that the landowner (Synergy Housing²) is consulted to confirm that they have no objection to these changes.

A director at the synergy housing team has been contacted on 14/08/2026 and any responses will be forwarded to the examiner immediately.

In the event that a response is not received within a suitable timeframe, the QB would like to note that the proposed change is an amendment to the boundary of an existing LGS rather than a wholly new designation, and part of the same landholding is already subject to that designation. It is also noted that the proposed removal of the car park from LGS2 represents a corresponding amendment to the existing LGS boundary, and the landowner will not have been separately consulted on that change either. It is therefore unclear why the modest extension of the boundary would raise a particular consultation concern where the agreed removal of land from the same LGS does not.

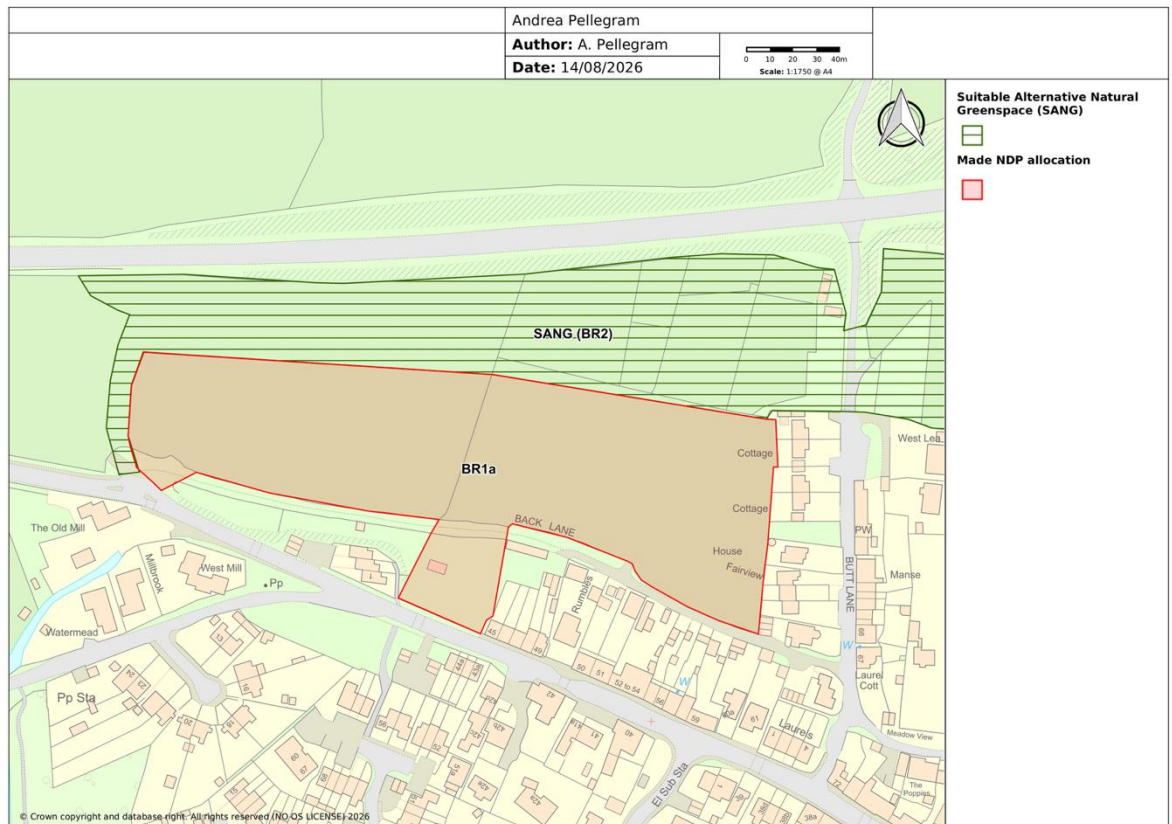
The PPG advises that qualifying bodies should contact landowners at an early stage regarding proposed designations, with landowners subsequently having opportunities to make representations through the neighbourhood plan process. However, there is no requirement to obtain the landowner's consent to a Local Green Space designation. Therefore, it is considered that the changes proposed would be appropriate at this stage, however, if the Examiner considers that the additional land should not be included without further consultation, an alternative proposed boundary is shown below.



² It is our understanding that Aster Homes has recently taken over Synergy Housing and that Aster are now the landowners.

We therefore recommend that the "southern spur" is amended so that it looks more like the 2019 allocation and/or the current planning application.

Thank you for the comments. Please see below amended map:



3. I note that Policies BR1, BR4, BR6, BR8 and BR9 are proposed to be deleted from the made Plan and Policy BR2 is unchanged. Policy BR3 (previously Policy BR5 in the made Plan) and Policy BR5 (previously Policy PR10 in the made Plan) have focused modifications which DC supports. I would be grateful if this position is confirmed.

BRPC: The QB's position stated in Table 1 is that Policy BR9 has been modified by draft Policy BR4 (and therefore not deleted). This is because the Policy retains the same objective but achieves it in a different way. The reason for this change was explained in the modification statement as preventing duplication with the Local Plan to increase clarity for decision-makers.

DC: We welcome Table 1 on page 7 of the plan which provides a summary of the policy changes. While we take the point that new Policy BR4 follows a similar theme to old Policy BR9, it does have to be acknowledged that the policy is different. The new NP policy draws upon policies in the new Purbeck Local Plan and also Map 4 (showing community facilities). Map 4 looks to be virtually unchanged since the original neighbourhood plan was made; the only obvious difference being that the "preferred site for community hall" has been erased. While deleting a policy and introducing a wholly new policy is, in our view, a significant change, in this case it is not one that is so significant that it changes the nature of the plan.

4. Policy BR4 is a list of facilities and services to be protected under Policies EE3 and I7 of the Purbeck Local Plan (PLP) which, replaces the deleted BR9. However, DC appears to be suggesting that the Plan Review should show Bere Regis as a local centre, perhaps on Map 4, to give effect to Policy EE3 of the PLP. I do not see how this suggestion is related to the deletion of BR9 from the made Plan. I consider that the introduction of a new boundary, such as a town centre boundary, at this stage of the Plan making procedure, would not be appropriate due to all the statutory publicity having been completed (and bearing in mind there is to be no referendum). Nevertheless, if all that is sought by DC is a symbol indicating that Bere Regis is a “local centre”, this is a matter of fact and there should be no objection. I would be grateful for comments from both Councils.

BRPC: At this point, the QB is happy to accept additional wording for clarity of decision making if it is helpful. Any changes that would result in a need to repeat publicity are not considered appropriate at this stage.

DC: As noted in para 5.14 of the NP, the Local Centre boundary is already defined by the Purbeck Local Plan. It can be viewed on [Dorset Explorer](#). It therefore wouldn't be introducing anything new. However, our latest retail evidence base includes a recommendation to remove Bere Regis as a local centre from the retail hierarchy, which would have the effect of deleting this local centre boundary. This is set out in paras 113–118, 430–431, and Figures 66 and 67 of the [Dorset Retail, Leisure and Town Centres Study Update](#) (March 2026).

On this basis, our revised view is that showing the local centre on map 4, while factually correct, would be of limited use, and so on reflection we think that it would be best not to do so.

Question for DC

5. I note that an item about the Dorset Local Plan was presented to the Dorset Council's Cabinet on 28 July 2026. I should be grateful to know the outcome of the meeting and how this reflects on the timetable for the adoption of the Plan?

DC: Cabinet agreed to moving the Dorset Council Local Plan to the ‘new system’. That is to say, it will now be prepared in accordance with The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026. Details of this are published at [Dorset Council Local Plan: updates and information - Dorset Council](#)

In summary, we published our notice of intention to commence local plan preparation under the new plan-making system on 31 July 2026. Our next step will be a scoping consultation, which involves asking people what the new Local Plan should cover and how they would like to be involved. The scoping consultation is expected to take place between 21 September and 25 October. Gateway 1 (self assessment) is expected on 30 November 2026. Adoption isn't expected until 2029. There is no reason, therefore, to suggest that the emerging local plan will impact on the examination of the Bere Regis Neighbourhood Plan Review.