

Bridport Area Neighbourhood Plan Review

Dorset Council Comments

Dorset Council responded to the Examiners questions on the 26 August 2026 in green italics.

Question 1 for DC. In the Basic Conditions statement, the QB states that the BANPR includes policies to support adaptation to climate change and positively supports the implementation of the local nature recovery strategy (LNRS). Do DC agree with the statement regarding climate change?

Dorset Council response:

Dorset Council agrees that the Bridport Area Neighbourhood Plan contains policies that support adaptation and mitigation to climate change.

The NPPF 2024, Annex 2 Glossary defines:

- Climate change adaptation as “Adjustments made to natural or human systems in response to the actual or anticipated impacts of climate change, to mitigate harm or exploit beneficial opportunities.” and*
- Climate Change mitigation as “Action to reduce the impact of human activity on the climate system, primarily through reducing greenhouse gas emissions.”*

The Bridport Neighbourhood Plan Review responds positively. Objectives 1 and 2 of the Plan seek to ensure transparency of anticipated carbon emissions and carbon footprints from new development. The plan subsequently includes a dedicated Climate Change chapter and a range of policies which seek to address both climate change mitigation and adaptation. In particular:

- Policy CC1 encourages the consideration and publication of whole-life carbon emissions associated with development.*
- Policies CC2, CC3 and CC4 promote energy efficiency, renewable energy generation and community-scale renewable energy schemes.*
- In relation to adaptation, the supporting text specifically references NPPF paragraph 163 and recognises the need to take account of climate change impacts, including future flood risk. The plan also states that developments should have regard to the most up-to-date predictions of flood risk and climate change impacts.*
- Policies AM1, AM3 and AM5 support active travel, walking, cycling and sustainable transport, contributing to the transition to a low-carbon and more sustainable pattern of development.*
- Policy L2 supports biodiversity enhancement, protection of wildlife corridors and habitat creation, including green roofs, green walls, street trees and sustainable drainage systems, all of which can contribute to climate resilience.*

- *Policy L5 seeks green infrastructure provision, biodiversity improvements and tree cover as part of new development.*
- *Policy D9 encourages a range of measures that support climate change adaptation, including permeable surfacing in areas susceptible to flooding, rainwater and greywater reuse, maximising natural lighting and ventilation, and the design of homes that are adaptable to changing household needs. These measures can assist in improving resilience to the effects of climate change, including more intense rainfall events, increasing temperatures and pressures on water resources.*

Overall, Dorset Council considers that the neighbourhood plan contains a range of policies that are consistent with the NPPF objective of supporting the transition to a low-carbon future and helping communities adapt to the impacts of climate change. While the Climate Change chapter is principally focused on carbon reduction and mitigation, Policy D9 and the landscape and biodiversity policies provide additional support for climate change adaptation through measures relating to water management, sustainable drainage, green infrastructure, habitat enhancement and resilient building design.

Question 2 for BTC and DC. In supporting the implementation of the LNRS, DC suggest strengthening references to the strategy in the Plan (See pages 8 – 10 of the DC Regulation 16 response). DC also suggest mapping the green spaces and linkages which have been identified as green corridors. Given that there no more statutory opportunities for public representations, I am reluctant to introduce newly mapped original information into the Plan Review. However, maps are available through the Dorset LNRS website. Page 69 of the Plan includes a sentence: “As such, the green infrastructure network will be given significant protection from development.” In my opinion, that reads more as a policy statement. Therefore, I suggest including a new paragraph in Policy L1: “4. The green infrastructure network identified in the Dorset Local Nature Recovery Strategy will be given significant protection from development.” I would be grateful for comments from both Councils on my suggested addition to the policy and from BTC on further strengthening the references to the LNRS.

Dorset Council response:

Dorset Council supports the Examiner's intention to strengthen the relationship between the Bridport Area Neighbourhood Plan and the Dorset Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS). As set out in our Regulation 16 representation, we recommended stronger references to the LNRS to help demonstrate that the Plan has taken account of this important evidence base and its nature recovery priorities. Our suggestion for page 69 was also to separate the reference to Dorset LNRS from a specific point on the BANP ambition to protect and increase green corridors and green infrastructure. While green corridors and green infrastructure absolutely support delivery of Dorset LNRS priority 7, the LNRS also includes a broader range of priorities and maps which can inform development proposals, from site design to off-site BNG.

We agree that the statement on page 69 that "the green infrastructure network will be given significant protection from development" reads more as policy than supporting text. However, we suggest a slight refinement to the Examiner's proposed wording. The Dorset LNRS includes a range of mapped information, including both existing nature areas of national importance and high opportunity nature areas. While policy L5 in the BANP advocates for the provision of Green

Infrastructure in development proposals. The high opportunity nature areas identified in the Dorset LNRS local habitat map are not granted "significant protection from development" rather the emphasis is on using the LNRS to inform site design and decision-making. We therefore consider the following wording would provide greater clarity and better reflect the purpose of the strategy:

Development proposals should support delivery of nature recovery priorities identified within the Dorset Local Nature Recovery Strategy, particularly through protecting and, where appropriate, enhancing green infrastructure.

This wording would strengthen alignment with the LNRS, support decision-making, and assist in meeting the requirement for neighbourhood plans to take account of Local Nature Recovery Strategies. We also agree that introducing new green corridor mapping at this stage would not be necessary, given that the Dorset LNRS already provides an up-to-date and publicly available mapping resource.

While Dorset Council recognises that the Examiner's proposed modification relates to Policy L1, there may also be merit in considering whether reference to the Dorset LNRS would sit more naturally within Policy L2 (Biodiversity) or Policy L5 (Enhancement of the Environment), given their direct focus on biodiversity, habitat enhancement and green infrastructure.

Question 3 for BTC and DC. Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA). I refer to the Regulation 16 representation from Natural England (NE) dated 10 June 2026, and the letter from NE dated 6 June 2026, which state that the HRA screening identified a likely significant effect on the Chesil and the Fleet Special Area of Conservation (SAC). The Appropriate Assessment concluded that a change to Policy L2 was required to highlight the need for a contribution towards the Interim Strategy for Mitigating the Effects of Recreational Pressure on the Chesil Beach and the Fleet SAC, Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar designation. Providing that this mitigation is provided, then it can be concluded that the Bridport Area Neighbourhood Plan does not result in an adverse effect upon the integrity of a European site.

Policy L2 does not appear to have been amended to satisfy that requirement. Please could BTC and DC agree an appropriate amendment to Policy L2 and submit it to me.

Dorset Council response:

We suggest the following wording is added to Policy L2.

The developers of net new residential dwellings within the Neighbourhood Area will make a financial contribution to delivery of the Chesil & Fleet Interim Recreation Mitigation Strategy, in line with Dorset Council guidance.

Further information and link: [Microsoft Word - OR fn interim strategy for recreational pressure at Chesil and the Fleet 200421 DRAFT](#)

Question 4 for BTC. Policy AM6. DC suggest including "wheeling" in the policy in section a). Is that acceptable?

Question 5 for BTC. Policy EE1. DC suggest substituting “Class E(g)” for Class E in the first paragraph. Is that acceptable?

Dorset Council response:

Dorset Council understands the reasoning behind retaining the wider Class E category and agrees that a number of Class E uses can contribute to local employment opportunities and economic activity.

Our original comment arose because Class E also includes a number of uses that are traditionally regarded as town centre uses, including retail, food and drink, and certain leisure uses. As drafted, the policy could potentially support such uses within the employment area, which may not be the intention if the primary purpose of the policy is to safeguard employment land.

If the Town Council's intention is to retain flexibility for a wider range of employment-generating uses, Dorset Council would not object to retaining the reference to Class E. However, it may be helpful to consider whether the supporting text should clarify the role of the employment area and the types of development envisaged, particularly where proposals involve uses that would normally be directed towards a town centre location.

Question 6 for BTC and DC. Policy EE2. DC consider that the policy could benefit from clearer criteria linking the support for the identified development types to appropriate locations and a wider policy framework. It seems to me that many locational issues would be resolved in the environmental section of the West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan, such as Policy ENV16. However, please could DC suggest any appropriate amendments to the policy and agree them with BTC before submitting them to me.

Dorset Council response:

Dorset Council supports the intent of Policy EE2 and notes that amenity, design, environmental and other development management considerations are already addressed through strategic Development Plan policies, including Policy ENV16, and through national policy. However, the policy currently provides support for a range of business uses without clearly linking that support to the wider planning policy framework. Dorset Council therefore considers that a proportionate modification would be to clarify that proposals should be appropriate to their location and accord with the Development Plan, rather than introducing detailed additional criteria.

Policy EE2 Provision for New & Small Businesses

- 1. Development proposals that provide working spaces which encourage homeworking and creative small businesses will be supported, provided they are appropriate to their location and accord with relevant policies in the Development Plan.**
- 2. Support will be given for developments on sites that provide for:**
 - a) Start-up businesses by enabling low-cost facilities in cooperative clusters.**
 - b) Co-working hubs and live-work spaces;**

c) Working from home, enabling extensions and small new buildings.

d) Enabling microbusinesses.

Provided that the scale and nature of the proposal are appropriate to their setting and accord with relevant Development Plan policies.

Proposed supporting text.

Proposals supported under Policy EE2 will also be assessed against relevant Development Plan and national planning policies. Depending on the nature and location of the proposal, this may include policies relating to employment development, design, amenity, transport, pollution and the rural economy. Relevant policies include Policy ENV16 (Amenity) and national policy supporting economic growth, rural enterprise and high-quality living and working environments.

Question 7 for BTC. DC suggests that the definition of Affordable Housing on page 48 of the Plan is replaced with a direct reference to the NPPF Annex 2 definition. Do BTC agree?

Question 8 for BTC and DC. Policy H3. DC suggests amending the Plan to refer to: “... affordable housing, preferably at social rent ...”. Does this mean amending the final phrase of section 2 of the policy which would then become: “If the development is phased, then the approved proportion of open market to affordable housing, preferably at social rent, will apply for each phase.” Is that correct? Do BTC agree with the suggestion?

Dorset Council response:

The Councils Housing Team has confirmed that this wording would work.

Question 9 to BTC and DC. Policy H4. In response to the comment from DC, would the following amendment to Policy H4.2 be acceptable: “To help shape a balanced future community, development of 1 or 2 bedroomed homes suited to first time buyers will be strongly preferred.”

Dorset Council response:

Yes, this proposed modification would address the concern raised.

We also note that the Town Council response has added two additional commas to improve the flow of the sentence.