
Basic Conditions Statement

Bradford Abbas and Clifton Maybank Neighbourhood Plan



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Date of report: April 2026

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1. Introduction

When a Neighbourhood Plan is submitted to the Local Planning Authority, it needs to be accompanied by a statement, known as the Basic Conditions Statement, which explains how the neighbourhood development plan as proposed meets the requirements of paragraph 8 of Schedule 4B of the 1990 Act.

This means:

- the legal requirements (as prescribed) have been complied with in connection with the preparation of the Plan;
- the Plan has had appropriate regard to:
 - national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State,
 - the need for mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change, and
 - the local nature recovery strategy for the area;
- the making of the Plan does not result in the development plan for the area proposing less housing is provided;
- the Plan will contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, and would not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, retained EU obligations and the requirements of Chapter 8 of Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

2. A summary of the Plan and reasons why it should be made in the proposed terms

This is the first Neighbourhood Plan for the two parishes of Bradford Abbas and Clifton Maybank. It has been prepared by local residents, shaped by feedback from the local community, with technical input from a range of planning and other experts, on behalf of the Parish Council. When finalised, it will have the official status of being part of the “development plan” for the area, to be used in determining planning applications. It also includes a number of projects that fall

outside the scope of the Neighbourhood Plan to influence, but which the Parish Council will seek to further.

The Plan contains 12 policies, which aim to ensure that any changes will reflect and strengthen the distinctive character of the two parishes, making a genuinely positive contribution to the community as a whole. These include:

- Policies seeking to reinforce the local landscape character (Policy 1), safeguard particularly important views and green spaces (Policy 2 and 6), retain the dark night skies (Policy 3).
- A policy to add to the protection of what is important about our historic environment (Policy 5). This notes the findings of the Bradford Abbas Conservation Area Appraisal, and the significance of the many designated and non-designated heritage assets, including those recorded in the Neighbourhood Plan.
- A policy and project that recognises the importance of recreational access to the countryside and which encourages the improvement and extension of these to create a wide variety of route options, including options that are suitable for use of people with mobility difficulties, wheelchairs or buggies (Policy 4 and Project P1).
- A policy and projects on managing local flood risks – with local knowledge of flooding areas highlighted on a map and described in the supporting text (Policy 7 and Projects P3-5).
- Policies that seek to meet local needs by highlighting important local community facilities and supporting opportunities for additional facilities and services appropriate to the character of the area (Policies 8 and 10 and Projects P7-8). The plan does not seek to allocate housing sites to meet local needs, as opportunities are limited and the need for affordable housing is planned to be progressed through a rural exception site scheme. As such, Policy 9 sets the basis for this.
- A policy and projects on creating a safer highway network, given the rural and ‘shared’ nature of many of the roads and lanes in the parish, again pulling on local knowledge of issues highlighted on a map and described in the supporting text (Policy 11 and Project P10).

- Design guidance based on the character and local qualities of the parishes, to help ensure future development, particularly housing, complements and enhances the area's existing character (Policy 12)

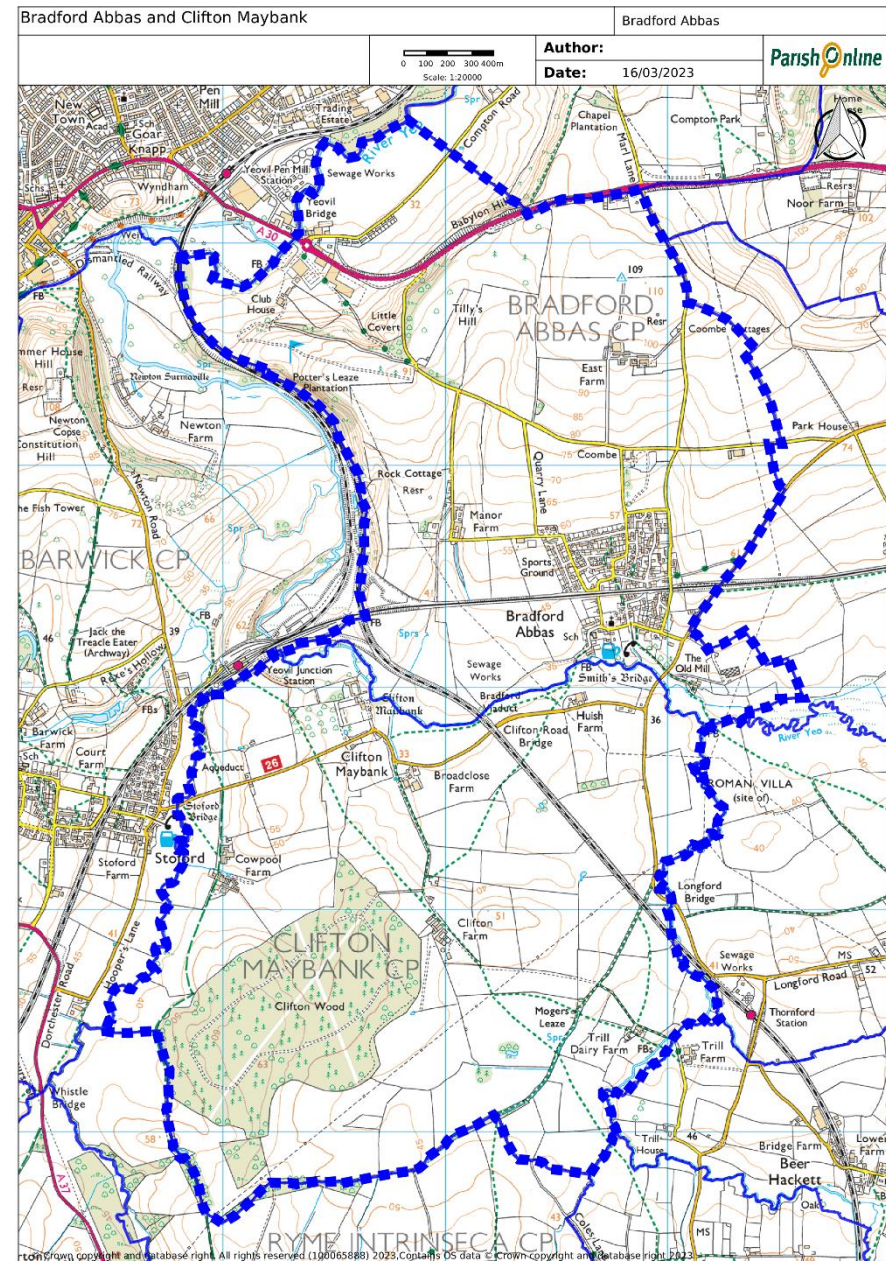
3. Other Legal Requirements

Has the Neighbourhood Plan been submitted by a qualifying body?

The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared and submitted for examination by Bradford Abbas Parish Council, which is the qualifying body. There is no Parish Council for the Clifton Maybank area, but consultation with the community indicated their wish to be part of the Neighbourhood Plan.

The Neighbourhood Plan Area was designated by Dorset Council on 20 September 2022 ¹.

Map 1 – Neighbourhood Plan Designated Area



¹ Decision recorded on Dorset Council website
<https://moderngov.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=1053>

Do the Plan's proposals relate to the development and use of land or sites in the Neighbourhood Plan Area?

The Neighbourhood Plan relates to planning matters (the use and development of land) and its policies relate only to the designated Neighbourhood Plan area or parts thereof.

Do any of the policies extend beyond the Neighbourhood Plan Area or cover an area where there is a Neighbourhood Plan already in place?

The Neighbourhood Plan policies relate only to Bradford Abbas and Clifton Maybank parishes (which is the designated Neighbourhood Plan Area) and to no other area.

Do any of the policies relate to excluded development?

The Neighbourhood Plan policies do not deal with county matters (mineral extraction and waste development), nationally significant infrastructure or other strategic / significant development that falls within Annex 1 to Council Directive 85/337/EEC.

Does the proposed Neighbourhood Plan state the period for which it is to have effect?

The Neighbourhood Plan makes clear on the front cover and introduction that it covers the period from 2024 to 2039.

Was the Neighbourhood Plan consulted on as per the requirements in Part 5 Section 14 of Neighbourhood Planning Regulations?

The consultation formally ran for over 8 weeks from its launch event on 30 September (2025) to 01 December. It was widely publicised, in a manner that was considered likely to bring it to the attention of people who live, work or carry on business in the neighbourhood area. This included:

- i. Announcement of publication of Draft Plan and details of consultation period featuring in September and October editions of The Pennant

- ii. Laminated posters promoting the launch event were displayed in prominent locations throughout the two parishes in the preceding weeks
- iii. The draft Neighbourhood Plan plus details of the consultation period and how to respond were uploaded to Parish Council website on 25 September, and a link to Parish Council website plus reminder of the launch meeting were placed on The Pennant Facebook page (which has approximately 3,000 members)
- iv. Laminated posters displayed around the village plus messages on Facebook and The Pennant promoted the two drop-in consultation sessions held 11 and 12 October – the first at St Mary's Church and the second at the Sports and Social Club.
- v. Further reminders about the date of the deadline for submission of comments were placed in the November edition of The Pennant, and a reminder about above deadline date placed on Facebook.

Respondents were encouraged to complete a response form (either online or paper copies) which were processed via Survey Monkey software. Further details on how the consultation was run are set out in the accompanying Consultation Statement.

The following statutory consultees were consulted, as per the list provided in paragraph 1 of Schedule 1 and taking into account whether their interests may be affected by the Neighbourhood Plan.

Potential consultee	Considered as potential interest
Mayor of London	n/a
Local planning authority, county council or parish council any part of whose area is in or adjoins the area	Dorset Council, and Somerset Council (as an adjoining Local Planning Authority) Parish / Town Councils covering: – Barwick & Stoford

Potential consultee	Considered as potential interest
	– Over Compton, Nether Compton, Sandford Orcas and Trent (Queen Thorne) – Thornford & Beer Hackett (Thornhackett) – Yeohead and Castleton – Yeovil Town – Yetminster and Ryme Intrinseca.
Coal Authority	n/a
Homes and Communities Agency	n/a
Natural England	Natural England
Environment Agency	Environment Agency
Historic England	Historic England
Network Rail Infrastructure Limited	Network Rail Town Planning Team (Southern Region & Wessex Asset Protection Team)
Strategic highways company any part of whose area is in or adjoins the area	National Highways
Marine Management Organisation	n/a
Electronic communications providers	n/a
Health Service providers	n/a
Electricity or Gas Infrastructure Providers	Scottish & Southern Electricity
Water or Sewerage undertakers	Wessex Water
Voluntary bodies some or all of whose activities benefit all or any part of the neighbourhood area	Bradford Abbas & Clifton Maybank Village Hall Committee Bradford Abbas Community Land Trust

Potential consultee	Considered as potential interest
	Bradford Abbas Preschool Bradford Abbas Sports & Recreational Club Rose & Crown pub St Mary's CE Primary School
Bodies which represent the interests of different racial, ethnic or national groups; different religious groups; persons carrying on business in the area; and disabled persons in the area.	St Mary's Church PCC

The following clauses were introduced in March 2026 through the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023.

Would the plan have the effect of preventing development from taking place which is proposed in the development plan and would provide housing?

This clause replaces the previous requirement for the making of the plan to be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area).

The West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan, adopted October 2015, contains the planning policies providing housing for the area. There are no sites or specific proposals for development within the Neighbourhood Plan area included within the Local Plan.

Policy SUS 2 on the distribution of development is a key strategic policy, and sets out the following points:

- Development in rural areas will be directed to the settlements with defined development boundaries, and will take place at an appropriate scale to the size of the settlement. Settlements with no defined development boundary may also have some growth to meet their local needs.

- Within the defined development boundaries residential, employment and other development to meet the needs of the local area will normally be permitted.
- Outside defined development boundaries, development will be strictly controlled, having particular regard to the need for the protection of the countryside and environmental constraints.

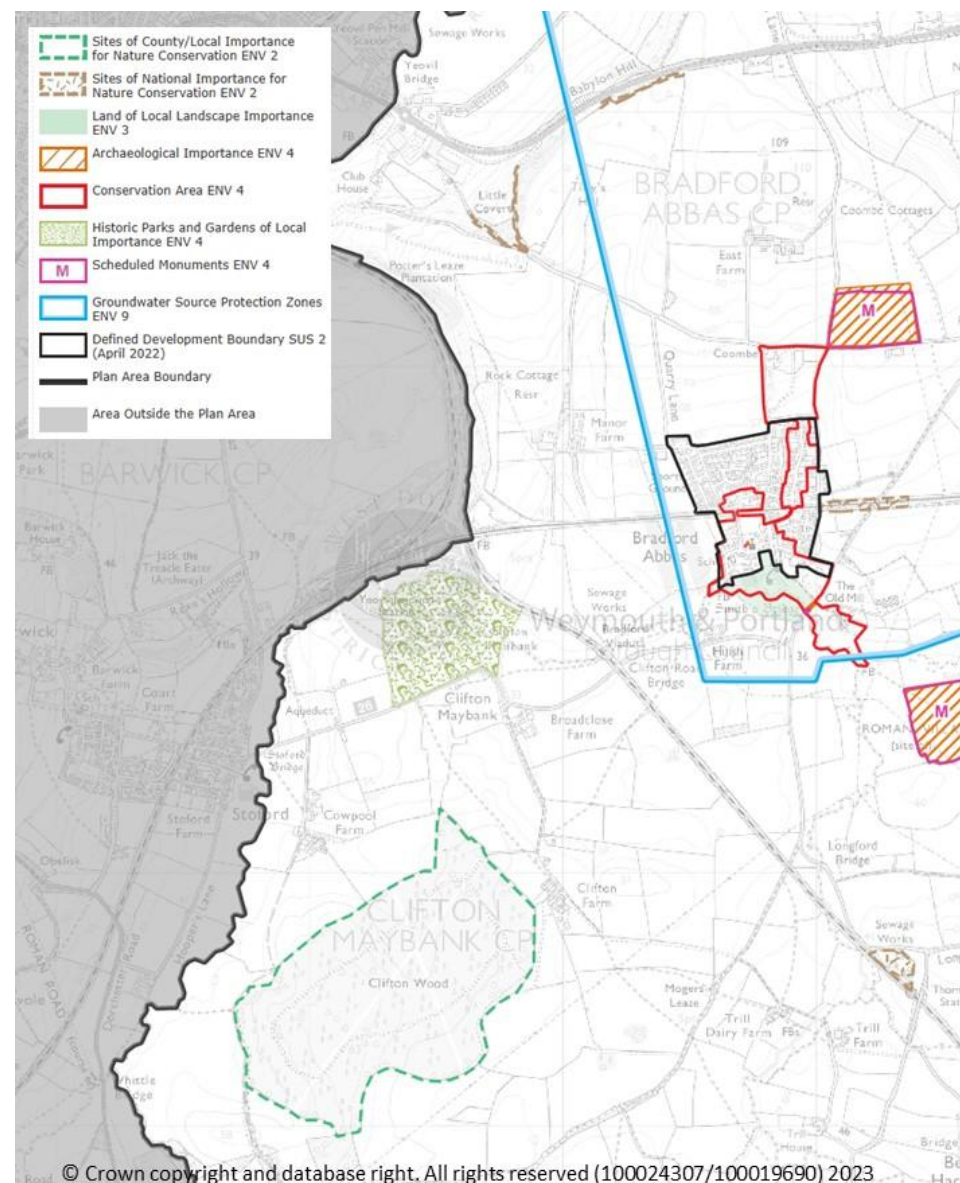
The settlement of Bradford Abbas has a defined development boundary, with areas outside of this boundary treated as ‘countryside’ for planning purposes.

This means that, in general, open market housing can only take place within the settlement boundary or through the conversion of existing rural buildings. Some new employment, community facilities and affordable housing may be built on land outside but adjoining the village, but other restrictions (such as environmental constraints) may limit such opportunities.

The Neighbourhood Plan does not propose to amend the defined settlement boundary and supports the conversion of existing rural buildings and the provision of rural exception sites for affordable housing. The selection of Local Green Spaces relate to sites which have not been identified as suitable for development through the Dorset Council’s latest Call for Sites. Only one such site was put forward, which is land at Babylon Hill², which is on land north of the A30 close to the boundary with Yeovil, and which was concluded by Dorset Council to be an ‘unsuitable site’.

On this basis it is concluded that the Plan would not have the effect of preventing development from taking place which is proposed in the development plan and would provide housing.

Map 2: extract from the West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan Policies Map



² <https://wa.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/ShelaaWebsite/pages/Site.aspx?i=908>

Have any requirements imposed in relation to the order by or under Part 6 of the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 (environmental outcomes reports) have been complied with?

The regulations setting out the requirements for environmental outcomes reports have not as yet been brought forward.

4. Consideration of the Plan's contribution to mitigating and adaption to climate change

National planning policy suggests that plans “should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, taking into account the long-term implications for flood risk, coastal change, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating and drought from rising temperatures. Policies should support appropriate measures to ensure the future health and resilience of communities and infrastructure to climate change impacts, such as providing space for physical protection measures, or making provision for the possible future relocation of vulnerable development and infrastructure.”

Climate change matters have been considered as part of the plan making process, and can be seen to influence policies throughout the Neighbourhood Plan. This is illustrated by the following examples:

- the Plan includes a section on Climate Change – Renewable Energy and Flood Risk (Section 3).
- the Plan promotes alternative options for travel in Section 7, that will encourage walking within the village and cycling more generally as an alternative to car-based travel.
- The design codes and guidance include consideration of building orientation in relation to achieving better levels of solar gain, the use of landscaping to create connecting wildlife corridors, as well as broader points on sustainability including energy efficiency and matters such as rainwater attenuation systems.

5. Consideration of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy

Dorset's Local Nature Recovery Strategy was adopted by Dorset Council in December 2025, and as such was not available to inform the Regulation 14 draft plan Neighbourhood Plan.

The Local Nature Recovery Strategy does not specifically reference this area, but the three layers that comprise the mapped elements of the strategy (see <https://gi.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/dorsetexplorer/u/3B127E57CB>) indicate both existing designations (nature areas of national importance), high opportunity nature areas and potential activities. These are concentrated in Clifton Maybank – most notably around Clifton Wood – and along the river corridors and Babylon Hill. They include land to the south of Bradford Abbas Village, where the creation or enhancement of woodland habitat is a proposed activity, overlapping to a degree with the proposal Local Green Spaces. The activity of tree planting would not be prevented by Policy 6 (as the planting of woodland does not require planning permission).

The LNRS webpage <https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/w/how-the-dorset-local-nature-recovery-strategy-will-work-with-planning-policy-1> explains that high opportunity nature areas do not prevent development but can highlight the importance of considering the nature recovery activities that can be delivered as part of site design, using both the potential activities map layer and the potential activities in the written part of the strategy (in particular those under Priority 7 - urban). Priority 7 which is relevant for urban areas is to “have increased nature-rich spaces, so wildlife can travel between buildings, roads, parks, gardens and the wider countryside.” A range of potential activities are included in the strategy, which include:

- in new developments, keep as many existing trees on site as possible and if trees are lost, carry out new tree planting, with numbers greater than those removed. Favour local and native species, or new species that provide a similar ecological function if more resilient or suited to the urban environment
- increase the use of hedges, rather than just fences and walls, as boundary treatments

- create sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) features such as rain gardens, swales, street trees and ponds to slow water and provide wetland or boggy habitat
- use permeable materials if creating hard surfaces
- use water butts to catch rainwater
- include species enhancements in the design of new buildings and developments, such as bird and bat boxes/bricks, bee bricks, and hedgehog highways
- protect and enhance green corridors that connect up nature areas to help wildlife travel through towns.

Many of the above elements already featured in the Neighbourhood Plan, primarily Policy 1 on local landscape character and the Design Guidance and Codes referenced in Policy 12. On this basis, whilst it was not possible to take account of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy in the preparation of the Regulation 14 version of the Neighbourhood Plan, the Plan is broadly in accord with the policy and no clear conflicts have been identified.

6. Consideration of National Policies and Guidance

The Neighbourhood Plan must have regard to national policy and guidance from the Secretary of State.

National planning guidance comes primarily from the published National Planning Policy Framework (last updated December 2024), but where appropriate, reference is made to the online National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) and Ministerial Statements.

Whilst there is no longer a requirement for Neighbourhood Plans to be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan that covers the area, this was a consideration during the plan's preparation and the conclusions have been retained as this should aid in consideration of the need to avoid unnecessary duplication (NPPF paragraph 16(f)).

The 2004 Planning Act³ also stipulates that a Neighbourhood Plan “must not ... be inconsistent with or (in substance) repeat any national development management policy.” These policies defined in the legislation as policies relating to the development or use of land which the Secretary of State by direction designates as national development management policies. No such policies have as yet been so designated, and the Government has signaled its intention at this time to instead rely on non-statutory national decision-making policies in the forthcoming NPPF⁴.

³ Section 38B(2C), added 25 March 2026

⁴ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/697b6bc6aacd0dc9777b4fd2/December_2025_NPPF_Consultation.pdf

Conformity Analysis

The most relevant national and local plan policies for each section of the plan, and how the policies relate to these, are summarised below:

Neighbourhood Plan Policies	National Policy: key statements (NPPF paragraph)	Local Plan: Strategic Policies (summary)
Section 2: Environment and Heritage - Policy 1. Local Landscape Character - Policy 2. Locally Important Views - Policy 3. Dark Night Skies - Policy 4. The importance of recreational access to the countryside - Policy 5. Protecting Our Historic Environment - Policy 6. Important Local Green Spaces Conformity Assessment Policy 1 on local landscape character highlights the landscape features that contribute to the area's character and seeks to ensure that these are conserved and enhanced. This is considered to align with and add detail to the direction of both national and local plan policies. Policy 2 on important local views is in broad alignment with the consideration of those landscape elements that contribute to the local landscape character. The views are all from public areas and are therefore a legitimate material consideration as being in the wider public interest. Policy 3 relates to conserving the quality of the dark night skies. This is considered important in terms of reinforcing the rural character of the area and has had regard to NPPF 198 balanced with the recognitions that the National Design Guide (M1) considered the provision of lighting as a component of well-designed streets. The	105. Planning policies and decisions should protect and enhance public rights of way and access, including taking opportunities to provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks including National Trails. 106. The designation of land as Local Green Space through local and neighbourhood plans allows communities to identify and protect green areas of particular importance to them. 107. Local Green Space designation should only be used where the green space is: a) in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves; b) demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance; and c) local in character and is not an extensive tract of land. 108. Policies for managing development within a Local Green Space should be consistent with national policy for Green Belts, excluding provisions relating to grey belt and previously developed land. 125. Planning policies and decisions should encourage multiple benefits from both urban and rural land, including through improving public access to the countryside. 135. Requires planning policies and decisions to ensure that developments are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development including green and other public space.	West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan ENV1 - Landscape and seascape includes the protection of landscape, seascape and mitigation where appropriate in line with national policy. As well as referencing nationally important landscapes, it makes clear that development should be located and designed so that it does not detract from and, where reasonable, enhances the local landscape character. ENV3 - Green Infrastructure Network - states that the councils will work together with local communities and other relevant partners to develop a green infrastructure strategy for the plan area. The policy states that development that would cause harm to the green infrastructure network or undermine the reasons for an area's inclusion within the network will not be permitted unless clearly outweighed by other considerations. ENV4 - Heritage assets – refers to the protection of heritage assets, including non-designated assets, and broadly mirrors national planning guidance. ENV10 - Landscape and townscape setting - states that development should be informed by the character of the site and its surroundings, provide for the future retention and protection of trees and other features that contribute to an area's distinctive character, and where appropriate incorporate features that would enhance local character. ENV16 – Considers impacts on amenity, including guidelines on proposals for external lighting schemes,

Neighbourhood Plan Policies	National Policy: key statements (NPPF paragraph)	Local Plan: Strategic Policies (summary)
reference to the dark night skies adds further specificity to the general approach set out in the Local Plan. Policy 4 supports improvements to recreational access to the countryside – national policy is clearly supportive of protecting and enhancing public rights of way and access to the countryside, and provides additional detail to Policy COM7 of the Local Plan which is more focused on severance and degradation. Policy 5 highlights the importance of heritage found in the area, complementing the Local Plan and national planning policies on this issue, but providing greater detail by highlighting local knowledge of potential non-designated heritage assets. No obvious conformity issues identified. Policy 6 designates areas of Local Green Space. All of the spaces are considered to be local in character, well-related to the village of Bradford Abbas, and the reason for designation (as set out in Table 2) provides the reasoning for these spaces being both special to the local community and of local significance. The policy wording adopted is based on similar wording in other recently made NPs which has been considered to be consistent with Green Belt policy. Whilst a number of sites are within the Conservation Area, the reason for designation of these spaces is not solely related to their heritage significance, and as such the LGS designation enables those additional reasons to be considered.	187. Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. This includes by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes and recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services, and minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity. 198. Planning policies and decisions should limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation. 212. When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). 216. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.. NPPG ID: 37-011-20140306 notes that if land is already protected by Conservation Area designation, then consideration should be given to whether any additional local benefit would be gained by its designation.	stating that these should be clearly justified and designed to minimize potential pollution from glare or spillage of light. The intensity of lighting should be the minimum necessary to achieve its purpose, and the benefits of the lighting scheme must be shown to outweigh any adverse effects. COM7 – is about creating a safe and efficient transport network. It also references that support should be given for the delivery of a strategic cycle network and improvements to the public rights of way network. Development should not result in the severance or degradation of existing or proposed routes. The Plan's strategy states that providing a safe transport route network for all types of travel, and providing choices for 'greener' travel options where practicable

Neighbourhood Plan Policies	National Policy: key statements (NPPF paragraph)	Local Plan: Strategic Policies (summary)
Section 3: Climate Change - Policy 7. Flooding Considerations <i>Conformity Assessment</i> Policy 7 considers localized flood risk, and was considered by Dorset Council to have been prepared in general conformity with Local Plan policy ENV5 and to have regards to NPPF, paragraphs 170-182.	162. Plans should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, taking into account the long-term implications for flood risk, coastal change, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating from rising temperatures. Policies should support appropriate measures to ensure the future resilience of communities and infrastructure to climate change impacts. 182. Applications which could affect drainage on or around the site should incorporate sustainable drainage systems to control flow rates and reduce volumes of runoff, and which are proportionate to the nature and scale of the proposal.	West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan ENV5. Requires that new development or the intensification of existing uses should be planned to avoid risk of flooding (from surface water run-off, groundwater, fluvial and coastal sources) where possible. The risk of flooding will be minimised by: steering development towards the areas of lowest risk and avoiding inappropriate development in the higher flood risk zones; ensuring development will not generate flooding through surface water runoff and/or exacerbate flooding elsewhere.
Section 4: Community Services and Facilities - Policy 8. Important Community Facilities <i>Conformity Assessment</i> Policy 8 reflects national policy in terms of supporting community facilities. The emphasis within the policy is on the retention and improvement of existing facilities – adding greater detail on these to that available in the Local Plan. It also supports the provision of new facilities but specifies that these should be of a modest scale and to meet a local need, subject to suitable access including parking provision and avoiding harm to amenity and the environment.	88. Planning policies and decisions for rural areas should enable: the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship. 93. Disapplies the sequential approach to applications for small scale rural offices or other small scale rural development. 98. Planning policies and decisions should plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments; and guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs.	West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan COM3. Refers to the retention of local community buildings and structures, reflecting the strategic objectives of protecting existing facilities will be protected through a flexible approach which recognises the changing needs in society. Planning permission for proposals, including change of use, which result in the loss of local community buildings or structures (including sites which were most recently used for this purpose where the use has ceased or the building has been demolished), will not be permitted unless: • it can be demonstrated that there is no local need for the facility or that such a facility is no longer likely to be viable; and • an appropriate alternative community use to meet local needs is not needed or likely to be viable.

Neighbourhood Plan Policies	National Policy: key statements (NPPF paragraph)	Local Plan: Strategic Policies (summary)
Section 5: Housing – Policy 9. Meeting Local Housing Need Policy 9 sets out the mix of house types required based on evidence of local need, having regard to national planning policy and Local Plan Policy HOUS2. The policy goes on to provide further clarification on the parameters for rural exception sites. Dorset Council have advised that the proposed housing requirement may be calculated as the sum of completions since the beginning of the Plan period, extant planning permissions, adopted housing allocations, capacity on major sites (of 10 or more dwellings) within development boundaries as evidenced in the SHLAA and a windfall allowance on minor sites (of less than 10 dwellings). Using this methodology, the indicative housing target for the Neighbourhood Plan area would be around 2 dwellings over the next 15 years, reflecting past delivery rates. At this stage the Neighbourhood Housing Requirement is a draft figure and will not become finalised until the Dorset Council Local Plan is adopted. This allowance can be met through future infill and conversion applications.	30. Neighbourhood plans should not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area, or undermine those strategic policies. 61. It is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed. The overall aim should be to meet an area's identified housing need. 63. Within the context of establishing need, the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies. 69-70. Where strategic policies do not set out a housing requirement for designated neighbourhood area, the local planning authority should provide an indicative figure, if requested to do so by the neighbourhood planning body. 82-83. In rural areas, planning policies and decisions should be responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs, including rural exception sites. Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services. 84. Planning policies and decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside unless one or more of the circumstances (as set out) apply. NPPG ID: 41-040-20160211 Neighbourhood plans are not obliged to contain policies addressing all types of development. However, where they do contain policies relevant to housing supply,	West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan SUS1 - The Level of Economic and Housing Growth - Strategic Approach includes the requirement for housing and employment, but does not specify targets for Neighbourhood Plan areas. The district-wide housing need is shown to be met through site allocations and identified windfall sites within settlements. SUS2 - Distribution of development - Strategic Approach includes reference to the settlement hierarchy and that development in rural areas will be directed to the settlements with defined development boundaries, and will take place at an appropriate scale to the size of the settlement. Settlements with no defined development boundary may also have some growth to meet their local needs. It recognises that neighbourhood plans may allocate additional sites, add or extend development boundaries. HOUS2 – sets out criteria for affordable housing exception sites – in that these are small scale sites for affordable housing adjoining settlements that are capable of meeting an identified, current, local need within the town, local parish or group of parishes, which cannot otherwise be met, and provided the scheme is of a character, scale and design appropriate to the location, and that there are secure arrangements to ensure that the benefits of affordable housing will be enjoyed by subsequent as well as Initial occupiers. HOUS3 requires that, wherever possible, residential developments for open market housing should

Neighbourhood Plan Policies	National Policy: key statements (NPPF paragraph)	Local Plan: Strategic Policies (summary)
	these policies should take account of latest and up-to-date evidence of housing need.	include a mix in the size, type and affordability of dwellings proposed, taking into account the current range of house types and sizes and likely demand in view of the changing demographics in that locality.
Section 5: Business Services and The Economy – Policy 10. Local employment opportunities Policy 10 seeks to support new / expanded provision of small-scale offices / workshops and local services that would be compatible with the rural character of the area. This policy provides greater detail to the general policy within the Local Plan, and has had regard to the more flexible approach set out in national planning policy.	85. Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. 88 Planning policies and decisions should enable: the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas; the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses; sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside; and the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities.	West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan ECON1 - Provision of Employment – refers to employment development being supported: within or on the edge of a settlement (not restricted to those with a defined development boundary); through the intensification or extension of existing premises; as part of a farm diversification scheme; through the re-use or replacement of an existing building; or in a rural location where this is essential for that type of business. The Plan’s strategy includes the general support for employment development as expressed in this policy.
Section 7. Traffic Road Safety and Transport – Policy 11. Support a safer highway network <i>Conformity Assessment</i> Policy 11 is based on a review of the issues and opportunities for encouraging / achieving more sustainable patterns of transport, drawing on local knowledge. No conformity issues identified.	109. Transport should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making , using a vision-led approach to identify transport solutions that deliver well-designed, sustainable and popular places. This should involve ensuring patterns of movement, streets, parking and other transport considerations are integral to the design of schemes, and contribute to making high quality places; identifying and pursuing opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use, taking into account the environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure. 111. Planning policies should provide for attractive and well-designed walking and cycling networks.	West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan COM7 – is about creating a safe and efficient transport network. It broadly aligns with national policy, and ensures that development is not permitted unless it can be demonstrated that it would not have a severe detrimental effect on road safety, or measures can be introduced to reasonably mitigate potentially dangerous conditions. It also references that support should be given for the delivery of a strategic cycle network and improvements to the public rights of way network. Development should not result in the severance or degradation of existing or proposed routes.

Neighbourhood Plan Policies	National Policy: key statements (NPPF paragraph)	Local Plan: Strategic Policies (summary)
Section 8: Design Guidance – Policy 12. Design Guidance <i>Conformity Assessment</i> Policy 12 seeks to ensure that development respects and reinforces the local character of the area, drawing on the appraisal work undertaken as part of the design guidance and coding. It covers settlement pattern, building line and orientation, boundary treatments, landscaping, hard surfacing, lighting, architectural variety, materials and detailing, sustainability and energy efficiency and the approach to be taken on extensions and alterations. This has had regard to national planning policy and complements the Local Plan policies, and is based on relatively recent appraisal work. It does not seek to impose bespoke standards in relation to sustainability.	132. Plans should, at the most appropriate level, set out a clear design vision and expectations, so that applicants have as much certainty as possible about what is likely to be acceptable. Design policies should be developed with local communities so they reflect local aspirations, and are grounded in an understanding and evaluation of each area’s defining characteristics. Neighbourhood planning groups can play an important role in identifying the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in development. 135. Requires planning policies and decisions to ensure that developments are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit, and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development including green and other public space, and to create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible. 139. Development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance. Conversely, significant weight should be given to: development which reflects local design policies and government guidance on design; and/or outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.	West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan ENV10 - Landscape and townscape setting - states that development should be informed by the character of the site and its surroundings, retain / incorporate features that contribute to an area’s distinctive character, and include sufficient landscaping to successfully integrate with the character of the site and its surrounding area. ENV11 - the pattern of streets and spaces – expects development to create well-defined, safe and pleasant to use streets and spaces, with active and overlooked public areas and secure private areas. Development should be legible, well-connected and are not dominated by the motorcar. Provision should be made for bin stores, recycling facilities, drying areas etc appropriate to the uses proposed and character of the area. ENV12 - the design and positioning of buildings - the siting, alignment, design, scale, mass, and materials used complements and respects the character of the surrounding area or would actively improve legibility or reinforce the sense of place. Materials should be sympathetic to the natural and built surroundings and where practical sourced locally. Any alterations to or extensions of buildings should be well related to, and not overpower, the original building or neighbouring properties, unless they achieve significant visual enhancement to both the building and surrounding area. ENV13- achieving high levels of environmental performance – expects new buildings and alterations

Neighbourhood Plan Policies	National Policy: key statements (NPPF paragraph)	Local Plan: Strategic Policies (summary)
	NPPG ID: 26-001-20191001 and 26-004-20191001 notes that the National Design Guide can be used by all those involved in shaping places including in plan-making and decision making, and that neighbourhood plan-making is one of the key ways in which local character and design objectives can be understood.	/ extensions to existing buildings to achieve high standards of environmental performance. ENV15 - efficient and appropriate use of land - development should optimise the potential of the site and make efficient use of land, subject to the limitations inherent in the site and impact on local character. ENV16 - amenity - development should be designed to minimize their impact on the amenity and quiet enjoyment of residents. Proposals for external lighting schemes should be clearly justified and designed to minimize potential pollution from glare or spillage of light.

Emerging Policy

The NPPG also recommends that any conflicts between policies in a neighbourhood plan and an emerging Local Plan should be minimised, and that the reasoning and evidence informing the Local Plan process may be relevant to the consideration of the basic conditions against which a neighbourhood plan is tested.

A first draft of the new Dorset Council Local Plan was published for consultation in January 2021, and identified Bradford Abbas as a Tier 3 settlement. Draft Policy DEV4, which sets out the development strategy for the northern Dorset functional area, reads as shown here:

DEV4: Growth in the northern Dorset functional area

In the northern Dorset functional area housing growth will be delivered:

- I. at the market towns of Gillingham and Sherborne, including through major urban extensions to the south of Gillingham and the west of Sherborne;
- II. through the more modest expansion of Shaftesbury and the smaller market towns of Sturminster Newton and Stalbridge; and
- III. through windfall and infilling within existing settlements defined by local plan or neighbourhood plan development boundaries.

Across the northern Dorset functional area, employment growth will be delivered through:

- IV. infilling and intensification within existing employment sites;
- V. the southern extension of Gillingham and existing undeveloped land at Shaftesbury and Sturminster Newton; and
- VI. development of land within the west of Sherborne development.

A further site options consultation (Regulation 18) took place in August – October 2025, as due to changes in the housing target method, further sites would be required in order to meet the new housing target. However as confirmed in Dorset Council’s response, there were no additional opportunity sites identified for the Neighbourhood Plan area.

The next draft of the Local Plan (Regulation 19) is expected to be produced for consultation in late Summer 2026, and the Plan’s examination and adoption anticipated in 2027. As such, the Local Plan remains at a relatively early stage and is not being given any significant weight in planning decisions at this time.

Conformity conclusions

The analysis of the plan proposals in relation to national planning policy and guidance and the policies of the local plan, as shown in the preceding tables, does not highlight any fundamental conformity issues.

7. EU and sustainability obligations

The ‘making’ of the Neighbourhood Plan must not breach or conflict, and must be compatible, with EU obligations, must not have a significant effect on a European site, and must contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. It must not breach human rights, within the meaning of the Human Rights Act 1998.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

A draft screening opinion was produced in February 2025, based on the objectives and draft policies likely to form part of the Regulation 14 Plan. The report concluded that “the Bradford Abbas Neighbourhood Plan is not likely to have significant environmental effects and therefore a full SEA is not required”. The three statutory consultees were sent the screening report on 3 March 2025. All three confirmed that, based on the information provided, the conclusions of the SEA were accepted.

Environment Agency: “we do not consider there to be potential significant environmental effects relating to constraints within our remit.”

Historic England: “we have no objection to the view that a full SEA is not required.

Natural England: “on the basis of the material supplied with the consultation... significant effects on statutorily designated nature conservation sites or landscape are unlikely” – although they also advised that advice should be sought from other bodies that may hold local information before determining whether a SEA is necessary.

In responding to the Regulation 14 consultation, Dorset Council’s Senior Environmental Assessment Officer was consulted, and the response confirmed that they “were not aware of any local information which would draw a different judgement to the SEA Screening conclusion.”

Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

Whilst a Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA) or Screening Assessment has not been drafted, in responding to the SEA Screening Assessment Natural England advised that “on the basis of the material supplied with the consultation ... significant effects on Habitats sites, either alone or in combination, are unlikely.”

In responding to the Regulation 14 consultation, Dorset Council’s Senior Environmental Assessment Officer has advised that it would nonetheless be prudent to consider adding in text similar to that recommended in the case of the North Cadbury and Yarlinton Neighbourhood Plan, given that the area falls within the Somerset Moors river catchment, and as such development in the area may indirectly impact on that internationally important site as a result of waste water treatment and land management practices. This addition has been made to the submission draft.

The achievement of sustainable development

The Neighbourhood Plan's policies were assessed against the sustainability objectives as set out in paragraph 8 of the NPPF:

- **an economic objective** – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure
- **a social objective** – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and
- **an environmental objective** – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

The table that follows summarises the key findings:

Sustainability assessment objective	Economic	Social	Environmental	
Policies				Notes / explanation
1. Landscape Character	-	-	✓	policies primarily contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment
2. Locally Important Views	-	-	✓	
3. Dark Night Skies	-	-	✓	
4. Countryside Access	-	✓	-	supports healthy communities
5. Historic Environment	-	-	✓	seeks to protect and enhance our historic environment
6. Local Green Spaces	-	✓	✓	protects the natural environment and opportunities for social interaction
7. Flooding	-	-	✓	adapting to climate change
8. Community Facilities	-	✓	-	supports accessible services
9. Local Housing Need	-	✓	-	meeting local housing needs
10. Local employment	✓	-	-	meeting local business needs
11. Safer highway network	-	✓	-	promotes active and safe travel
12. Design Guidance	-	-	✓	seeks to enhance the built environment, adapt to climate change

Human Rights

No issues have been raised in relation to the possible contravention of Human Rights in the preceding consultations, and given the conclusions on the plan's general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan and regard to National Planning Policy, it is reasonable to conclude that the making of the plan should not breach human rights.

Key:

✓	positive impact likely
-	neutral impact likely
✗	adverse impact likely
?	impact uncertain but unlikely to be significant