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Report on Bere Regis Neighbourhood Plan Review (2019 – 2034)

An Examination undertaken for Dorset Council with the support of Bere Regis Parish Council on the Neighbourhood Plan Review published in April 2026.

Independent Examiner: Andrew Mead BSc (Hons) MRTPI MIQ

Date of Report: 7 October 2026

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Main Findings - Executive Summary

I made an initial determination on 28 July 2026 that the modifications contained in the Bere Regis Neighbourhood Plan Review 2019 - 2034 (the Plan Review/the Plan) are not so significant or substantial as to change the nature of the made Neighbourhood Plan which the Plan Review would replace.

From my examination of the Plan Review and its supporting documentation, including the representations made, I have concluded that subject to the Examiner Modifications (**EMs**) set out in this report, the Plan Review meets the Basic Conditions.

I have also concluded that:

- The Plan Review has been prepared and submitted for examination by a qualifying body – Bere Regis Parish Council (BRPC);
- The Plan Review has been prepared for an area properly designated – the parish of Bere Regis as shown on Map 1 page 9 of the Plan Review;
- The Plan Review specifies the period to which it is to take effect – 2019-2034; and
- The policies relate to the development and use of land for a designated neighbourhood area.

Therefore, I recommend that Dorset Council (DC) should make the Plan Review with the **EMs** specified in this report (there will be no statutory requirement for a referendum).

1. Introduction and Context

Bere Regis Neighbourhood Plan Review 2019–2034

- 1.1 Bere Regis is an attractive thriving village situated in the Bere valley on the intersection of the A35 and A31. Wool is 9km to the south and Blandford Forum 14km to the north. The Neighbourhood Plan Area covers the parish of Bere Regis. The parish population in 2021 was 1,800.¹ It is the subject of the Bere Regis Neighbourhood Plan which was “made” (approved and adopted) in June 2019 by Dorset Council (DC).
- 1.2 In the following years, the main source of government planning policy, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) has been updated. The Plan has been reviewed to ensure that it remains up to date and reflects the needs and aspirations of parish residents.

¹ 2021 Census: page 20, paragraph 3.18 of the Plan.

The Independent Examiner

- 1.3 As the Plan Review has now reached the examination stage, I have been appointed as the examiner of the Bere Regis Neighbourhood Plan Review (2019 – 2034) by DC with the agreement of the BRPC.
- 1.4 I am a chartered town planner and former government Planning Inspector. I am an independent examiner, with experience of examining many neighbourhood plans and do not have an interest in any of the land that may be affected by the Plan Review.

Submitted Documents

- 1.5 I have considered all policy, guidance and other reference documents relevant to the examination, including those submitted which comprise:
- The Bere Regis Neighbourhood Plan Review (2019-2034) (April 2026);
 - the summary of proposals and reasons for the modifications as set out in the Plan²;
 - the Bere Regis Neighbourhood Plan Review Modifications Statement (April 2026);
 - the statement from DC in their Regulation 16 representation on the nature of the proposed modifications (July 2026);
 - Map 1 on page 9 of the Plan Area, which identifies the area to which the proposed Neighbourhood Plan Review relates;
 - a copy of the extant Bere Regis Neighbourhood Plan 2019-2034, as made;
 - the Consultation Report (April 2026);
 - the Basic Conditions Statement (April 2026);
 - Parish Plan and Parish Plan Action Points (2007)
 - Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) (April 2026)
 - Census 2021 Review (Nov 2024)
 - Historic Environment Statement (2018)
 - Conservation Area Appraisal (2002)
 - Overview of Planning Designations and Policy Review (Nov 2024)
 - Noise Impact Assessment (2017)
 - Housing Site Evidence (March 2025)
 - Areas of Local Green Space (April 2026)
 - Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening and Scoping Opinion (Aug 2025)
 - Ecology Reports of Site Allocations (Jan 2024)
 - Habitat Regulations Assessment (June 2026)
 - all the representations which have been made in accordance with the Regulation 16 consultation; and
 - the response from BRPC received on 3 August and the joint response from BRPC and DC dated 17 August in answer to my

² See paragraphs 2.5 – 2.10 below.

questions of clarification dated 3 August 2026 and the email from DC dated 14 September 2026.³

Planning Policy Context

- 1.6 The Development Plan for this part of Dorset Council, not including documents relating to excluded minerals and waste development, includes the Purbeck Local Plan (PLP) (2018 – 2034) adopted in 2024, replacing the Purbeck Local Plan Part 1 which was adopted in 2012 and so was extant when the current Bere Regis Neighbourhood Plan was made. The PLP is being replaced by the Dorset Council Local Plan (DCLP). DC have agreed that the DCLP will now be prepared in accordance with The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026. The 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 currently taking place until 25 October 2026. Gateway 1 (self-assessment) is expected on 30 November 2026. Adoption is not expected until 2029.
- 1.7 This Plan Review has been prepared in the context of the version of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published in December 2024. A revised NPPF was published during the examination on 17 August 2026. However, the revised version does not apply for the purposes of this examination.⁴ Unless otherwise stated, all references in the report are to the December 2024 NPPF and the accompanying Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).

2. Procedural Considerations

Initial Determination

- 2.1 As the proposal has been submitted as a modification of the made Neighbourhood Plan, I undertook an initial determination under Paragraph 10(1) of Schedule A2 to the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) ("the 2004 Act"). This concerned whether the modifications contained in the Plan Review are so significant or substantial as to change the nature of the Neighbourhood Plan which the Plan Review would replace.
- 2.2 If there is no change to the nature of the made Plan, the modification proposal can be examined under the streamlined process set out in Schedule A2 of the 2004 Act (no referendum). Otherwise, the examination would proceed under Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act

³ View all the listed document at: <https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/w/bere-regis-neighbourhood-plan>

⁴ See the transitional arrangements provided by Annex A, Paragraph 6 of the August 2026 NPPF: [National Planning Policy Framework - GOV.UK](#)

1990 (as amended), whereby an examination and referendum would be required.

- 2.3 BRPC and DC are required to publish statements setting out their reasoned views on this matter. For BRPC, the provision is contained in Regulation 15(1)(f) of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) ("the 2012 Regulations"). For DC, the provision is at Regulation 17(e)(ii).
- 2.4 The views of BRPC were publicised at the Regulation 14 stage in the Plan Review (See page 12; paragraphs 2.19 and 2.20) and in the Modifications Statement (SE10).⁵ The reasons for the review are further publicised in the Basic Conditions Statement (pages 3 – 8). This information indicates that the modifications made require examination but not a referendum.
- 2.5 To inform the determination, I considered all the relevant submitted documents and representations. In particular:
- the Consultation Statement which demonstrates that, through the Plan Review and the Modifications Statement, BRPC alerted respondents to the nature of the changes being made to the Plan through the review;
 - the comments throughout the submission draft Neighbourhood Plan Review (Regulation 15), which explain very briefly the reasons for reviewing the Neighbourhood Plan, along with the more detailed Bere Regis Neighbourhood Plan Review Modifications Statement⁶;
 - the written statement on this matter provided by DC to comply with Regulation 17(e)(ii).
- 2.6 BRPC state in their Modifications Statement that the Plan Review removes Policies BR1, BR4 and BR8 from the made Plan because they are no longer required, as they duplicate a policy in the adopted Purbeck Local Plan or the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Policy BR6 has been removed because the policy was prepared in 2012: the evidence is out of date. BRPC consider that the removal of the policies is a material modification, but that it does not change the nature of the Plan. In addition, Policies BR7 (new Policies BR1a-e.), BR2, BR3 and BR4 have been rephrased. It is also noted the other changes are relatively minor in nature; and the Plan period is not extended. The qualifying body are of the view that the proposed changes are not so significant or substantial as to change the nature of the Plan.
- 2.7 DC have compared the policies in the made Plan with those of the submitted Plan Review and have considered the contents of each policy, along with the Modifications Statement prepared and submitted by the Parish Council. DC has also considered government guidance, in

⁵ Regulation 14(a)(v).

⁶ I consider, in essence, BRPC has sought to substantially comply with the requirements of Regulations 14(a)(v) and 15(1)(f).

particular, the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) on 'updating a neighbourhood plan'. PPG Reference ID: 41-106-20190509 summarises the three types of modification that can be made to a neighbourhood plan.

- 2.8 DC notes that of the 9 original policies in the made Plan, 4 have been entirely deleted, and a fifth has been effectively replaced by a list of community assets. On the other hand, 3 policies are almost the same, receiving relatively minor changes. The residential allocations policy has been expanded considerably, from one policy into 5 separate policies. However, the residential allocations themselves are almost exactly the same.
- 2.9 Having read the qualifying body's Modifications Statement, DC understand the reasoning behind these changes. In summary, the policies marked for deletion are principally to avoid duplication with the new Purbeck Local Plan (adopted in 2024). The expanded residential allocations policies provide greater certainty to applicants, often drawing out requirements that were previously in the supporting text. DC note that the Plan period, vision and objectives all remain unchanged. All site allocations from the 2019 made Neighbourhood Plan are effectively carried forward, and the draft Plan does not add any additional site allocations. In conclusion, therefore, DC's view is that the proposed modifications are not so significant or substantial as to change the nature of the Plan.
- 2.10 Having assessed all the written documents submitted, including the representations and relevant statements, I am content that the modifications proposed in the draft Plan Review are material but do not change the nature of the made Plan. I set out my determination in my procedural letter of 28 July 2026 to DC and BRPC. Therefore, the examination can proceed under the terms of Schedule A2 to the 2004 Act which I set out below and, as a consequence, should I recommend that the draft Plan Review be made (with or without Examiner Modifications), a referendum stage will not be a necessary part of the statutory process.
- 2.11 I note that the vision and objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan Review (page 25) are identical to those of the made Plan (page 3). Nevertheless, I consider that the succinct expression of the vision in paragraph 2.18 of the Plan Review and referencing the objectives to sustainable development are compatible with the modifications in the Plan Review.

The Scope of the Examination

- 2.12 As the independent examiner, I am required to produce this report and recommend either:
- (a) that the local planning authority should make the draft plan; or
 - (b) that the local planning authority should make the draft plan with the modifications specified in this report; or
 - (c) that the local planning authority should not make the draft plan.

2.13 The scope of the examination is set out in Paragraph 11(1) of Schedule A2 to the 2004 Act. The examiner must consider:

- Whether the plan meets the Basic Conditions.
- Whether the plan complies with provisions under s.38A and s.38B of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) ('the 2004 Act'). These are principally:
 - it has been prepared and submitted for examination by a qualifying body, for an area that has been properly designated by the local planning authority;
 - it sets out policies in relation to the development and use of land and does not go beyond the scope of what may be included in a draft plan⁷;
 - it specifies the period during which it has effect;
 - it is the only neighbourhood plan for the area and does not relate to land outside the designated neighbourhood area;
 - it does not include provisions and policies for 'excluded development';
 - so far as the qualifying body considers appropriate, and having regard to the subject matter of the plan, it is designed to secure that the development and use of land in the neighbourhood area contribute to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change⁸; and
 - so far as the qualifying body considers appropriate, and having regard to the subject matter of the plan, it takes account of any local nature recovery strategy, under section 104 of the Environment Act 2021, that relates to all or part of the neighbourhood area.⁹
- Whether the referendum boundary should be extended beyond the designated area, should the plan proceed to referendum.
- Such matters as prescribed in the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended)('the 2012 Regulations').

⁷ See s.38B(A1) and s.38B(2C)(a) of the 2004 Act.

⁸ This additional requirement was commenced on 25 March 2026 by virtue of *The Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 (Commencement No. 11 and Saving and Transitional Provisions) Regulations 2026*, which brought into force section 98 of the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023.

⁹ See footnote above.

2.14 I have considered only matters that fall within Paragraph 11(1) of Schedule A2 to the 2004 Act, with one exception. That is the requirement that the draft Plan is compatible with the Human Rights Convention.

The Basic Conditions

2.15 The 'Basic Conditions' are set out in Paragraph 11(2) of Schedule A2 to the 2004 Act. In order to meet the Basic Conditions, the draft Plan must:

- Have regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State;
- Contribute to the achievement of sustainable development;
- Not result in the development plan for the area of the authority proposing that less housing is provided by means of development taking place in that area than if the draft plan were not to be made¹⁰;
- Be compatible with, and not breach, assimilated obligations¹¹; and
- Meet prescribed conditions and comply with prescribed matters.

2.16 Regulation 32 of the 2012 Regulations prescribes a further Basic Condition for a neighbourhood plan. This requires that the making of the Neighbourhood Plan does not breach the requirements of Chapter 8 of Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.¹²

Site Visit

2.17 I made an unaccompanied site visit to the Neighbourhood Plan Area on 28 July 2026 to familiarise myself with the Plan Area and visit relevant sites and locations referenced in the Plan Review and evidential documents.

Written Representations with or without Public Hearing

2.18 This examination has been dealt with by written representations. At the Regulation 16 stage, no representors suggested that a hearing would be necessary. Sufficient written evidence has been provided which I have

¹⁰ This Basic Condition applies from 25 March 2026 by virtue of *The Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 (Commencement No. 11 and Saving and Transitional Provisions) Regulations 2026*, which brought into force section 99 of the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023. This replaces the former Basic Condition which required a neighbourhood plan to be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan for the area.

¹¹ See: The Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Act 2023 (Consequential Amendment) Regulations 2023, which replaced the previous reference to 'EU' obligations.

¹² This revised Basic Condition came into force on 28 December 2018 through the Conservation of Habitats and Species and Planning (Various Amendments) (England and Wales) Regulations 2018.

supplemented by my site visit. In all respects, the representations clearly articulate their submissions to the Plan Review. There are no exceptional reasons to justify convening a public hearing.¹³

Examiner Modifications

- 2.19 Where necessary, I have specified Examiner Modifications (**EMs**) in this report in order that it meets the Basic Conditions and other legal requirements. For ease of reference, I have included the modifications separately in an Appendix.

3. Compliance Matters and Human Rights

Qualifying Body and Neighbourhood Plan Area

- 3.1 The Bere Regis Neighbourhood Plan Review (2019 – 2034) has been prepared and submitted for examination by BRPC, which is a qualifying body for an area that was designated by the former Purbeck District Council (PDC) in January 2013. PDC was replaced by DC on 1 April 2019 which carries over the statutory designation.
- 3.2 It is the only Neighbourhood Plan for the area and does not relate to land outside the designated Neighbourhood Plan Area.

Plan Period

- 3.3 The Plan Review clearly specifies the period to which it is to take effect, which is from 2019 to 2034 and is unaltered from the existing made Plan.

Neighbourhood Plan Preparation and Consultation

- 3.4 Details of the Plan Review preparation, events, activities and consultation are set out in the comprehensive BRPC Consultation Report (CR), as submitted to DC.
- 3.5 Regulation 14 consultation took place between 5 January 2026 and 22 February 2026. The main issues and concerns raised by residents and statutory consultees and how they were considered by BRPC are included as a table on pages 8 - 54 of the CR. Appendix 1 of the CR describes all comments received.
- 3.6 After the submission of the Plan Review to DC on 12 May 2026, the Regulation 16 stage was held between 8 June 2026 and 20 July 2026. Six representations were received, including one from DC, and are provided in the submitted Regulation 16 Consultation Schedule.

¹³ See Paragraph 12(2)(a) of Schedule A2.

- 3.7 I confirm that the legal requirements have been met by the consultation process. In addition, there has been regard to the advice in the PPG on plan preparation and engagement.

Development and Use of Land

- 3.8 The Plan Review sets out policies in relation to the development and use of land in accordance with Section 38A of the 2004 Act and does not exceed the appropriate scope of a neighbourhood plan.¹⁴

Excluded Development

- 3.9 The Plan Review does not include provisions and policies for “excluded development”.¹⁵

Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)

- 3.10 The Basic Conditions Statement (BCS) comments that the Dorset LNRS 2025 was adopted during the preparation of the Plan Review and that although it was not possible to take account of the LNRS in the preparation of the Regulation 14 version of the Neighbourhood Plan, the Plan is broadly in accord with the strategy and no clear conflicts have been identified. DC suggest additional comments to the supporting text to further strengthen how the Plan refers to the Dorset LNRS and, subject to those inclusions which I shall make, I consider that BRPC has discharged the legal requirements as thoroughly as it could reasonably do so. **(EM1)** I consider that none of the Plan’s policies are in direct conflict with the strategy.

Climate Change

- 3.11 I am also satisfied that, overall, the Plan Review as described in the section of the BCS “f) Climate change” is designed to secure that the development and use of land in the neighbourhood area contribute to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change. DC has not dissented from the conclusions in the BCS.

Human Rights

- 3.12 The Basic Conditions Statement (e)) advises that the Plan Review has regard to and is compatible with the fundamental rights and freedoms guaranteed under the European Convention on Human Rights. The main issues for planning in the context of human rights are: protection of property, right to respect for private and family life and prohibition of discrimination. The Plan Review complies with the requirements of the Human Rights Act 1998. All reasonable attempts were made to ensure that all residents of the parish, including those living outside the

¹⁴ See s.38B(A1) and s.38B(2C)(a) of the 2004 Act.

¹⁵ The meaning of ‘excluded development’ is set out in s.61K of the 1990 Act.

Neighbourhood Area with local interests, and all relevant stakeholders, were given the opportunity to contribute to and comment upon the Plan Review. I have considered this matter independently and I have found no reason to disagree with the statement in the BCS and I am satisfied that the policies will not have a discriminatory impact on any particular group of individuals.

4. Assessment of the Basic Conditions

Assimilated Obligations

- 4.1 The Bere Regis Neighbourhood Plan Review was the subject of Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA). The HRA screening identified a likely significant effect upon the Dorset Heathlands Ramsar and Poole Harbour SPA and Ramsar as a result of water pollution. The HRA also identified a likely significant effect on the Dorset Heathlands SPA in respect of public access, disturbance and other human intrusion and the Dorset Heaths SAC in relation to recreational pressure as a result of the Plan.
- 4.2 The subsequent Appropriate Assessment (AA) concluded that adverse effects upon the integrity of the Poole Harbour European Sites from water quality are avoided as a result of the criteria applied to the development policies in the Plan. Adverse effects upon the Dorset Heaths from water quality impacts were avoided due to the application of the Dorset Heathlands Planning Framework 2020-25 Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), which prevents development within 400m of the Dorset Heaths and therefore prevents water quality impacts. The AA also concluded that adverse effects upon the integrity of the Dorset Heaths European Sites from recreational pressure are avoided due to policy BR2, which delivers a SANG¹⁶ to the north of the village, deflecting recreational pressure from the heathland designation in accordance with the Dorset Heathlands Planning Framework 2020-25 SPD. Therefore, the AA concluded that the Bere Regis Neighbourhood Plan Review will not result in an adverse effect upon the integrity of a European Site.
- 4.3 Natural England was consulted and responded on 17 June 2026 to say: *"Your appropriate assessment concludes that your authority is able to ascertain that the proposal will not result in adverse effects on the integrity of any of the sites in question. Having considered the assessment, and the measures proposed to mitigate for all identified adverse effects that could potentially occur as a result of the proposal, Natural England advises that we concur with the assessment conclusions, providing that all mitigation measures are appropriately secured in any planning permission given."*

¹⁶ Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace.

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- 4.4 Having read the Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulations Assessment Report, I support the above. The statutory consultees raised no objections to the Plan Review. From my independent assessment of this matter and having read the Plan Review, the supporting information and the summaries of the representations, I have no reason to disagree. Therefore, I am satisfied that the Bere Regis Neighbourhood Plan Review is compatible with the assimilated obligations that are relevant to this Plan.

Main Issues

- 4.5 Having considered whether the Plan Review complies with various procedural and legal requirements, it is now necessary to deal with whether it complies with the remaining Basic Conditions, particularly the regard it pays to national policy and guidance and the contribution it makes to the achievement of sustainable development. I test the Plan Review against the Basic Conditions by considering specific issues of compliance of all the Plan's policies.
- 4.6 As part of that assessment, I consider whether the policies are sufficiently clear and unambiguous, having regard to advice in the PPG. A neighbourhood plan policy 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.¹⁷
- 4.7 The main changes proposed to the plan policies are that, out of nine policies in the made Plan; four have been deleted; a fifth has been replaced by a list of community assets; three policies are almost exactly the same; and one housing allocations policy has been expanded from one policy to five separate policies.
- 4.8 Accordingly, having regard to the Bere Regis Neighbourhood Plan Review, the consultation responses, other evidence and the site visit, I consider that the main issues in this examination are whether the draft Plan's policies: (i) have regard to national policy and guidance; (ii) do not result in the development plan for the area proposing less housing development than would have been the case if the plan were not to be made; and (iii) would contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.

Policy Modifications

- 4.9 Policy BR7 Residential Allocations in the made Plan has been replaced by individual policies for each of the allocations.

***Policy BR1a: Back Lane (approx. 1.8ha for approx. 55 homes);
Policy BR1b: North Street (approx. 0.6ha for approx. 12 homes);
Policy BR1c: Tower Hill (approx. 0.1ha for 2 dwellings);***

¹⁷ PPG Reference ID: 41-041-20140306.

**Policy BR1d: White Lovington (approx. 1ha for approx. 17 homes);
Policy BR1e: Former School Site (approx. 0.7ha for approx. 23 homes).**

- 4.10 The allocations remain suitable, available and deliverable.¹⁸ However, DC noted the differences between Map 3a, which delineates the allocation at Policy BR1a Back Lane in the Regulation 14 version of the Plan and Map 3a in the submitted version. DC also compared Map 3a with the planning application for residential development on the site, live at the time of the representation and undetermined according to the DC website on 21 September 2026. I note that BRPC agrees to the inclusion of the "southern spur" within the boundary of Policy BR1a and the Councils have agreed an appropriate boundary for Policy BR1a to be shown on Map 3a which is indicated on the plan accompanying the joint response to my questions of clarification dated 17 August 2026. I shall make the revised boundary a modification. **(EM2)**
- 4.11 I note that each allocation includes a criterion which requires that development will only be supported where it would not lead to an adverse effect upon the integrity, either alone or in-combination, directly or indirectly, on European sites. Each of the policies have regard to national guidance¹⁹ and meet the Basic Conditions.
- 4.12 **Policy BR2: SANG.** The policy is substantially the same as in the made Plan (Policy BR2), but with two focussed changes to refer to Policy BR1a and to renumber the Noise Attenuation Policy as BR5. The policy continues to have regard to national guidance²⁰ and meets the Basic Conditions.
- 4.13 **Policy BR3: Noise Attenuation.** The policy is substantially the same as in the made Plan (Policy BR5), but with two focussed changes to include a phrase "... *that appropriate noise measures can be achieved* ..." and to update the reference to the Noise Impact Assessment Policy as SE7. The policy continues to have regard to national guidance²¹ and meets the Basic Conditions.
- 4.14 **Policy BR4: Facilities and Services.** The existing Policy BR9 in the made Plan has been replaced by Policy BR4. However, Policy BR4 now only lists facilities and services to be retained and refers to Policy EE3 and Policy 17 of the PLP to safeguard the facilities and services. Policy EE3 states that retail development in Purbeck will be managed in accordance with the settlement hierarchy and the policy identifies retail centres in Purbeck including Bere Regis as a Local Centre.
- 4.15 DC initially queried whether the Local Centre could be more clearly defined for Bere Regis in the Neighbourhood Plan. However, the Local

¹⁸ Neighbourhood Plan Review; page 26, paragraph 4.5.

¹⁹ NPPF: paragraph 61.

²⁰ NPPF: paragraph 187.

²¹ NPPF: paragraphs 96.

Centre boundary is already defined by the PLP and, indeed, the latest retail evidence base held by DC 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.²² Accordingly, DC subsequently considered showing the Local Centre on a Map in the Plan Review would be of limited value and support Policy BR4 as drafted. The policy has regard to national guidance²³ and meets the Basic Conditions.

- 4.16 **Policy BR5: Local Green Space.** Policy BR5 replaces Policy BR10 in the made Plan and lists the same eight Local Green Spaces. There is a focussed change to the words of the policy by the introduction of the phrase "*... where development might harm the reasons for their designation ...*" which has the support of DC. The Council commented on the inconsistency between the treatment of the boundaries of LGS Area 2 and LGS Area 3 as shown on Map 5. The boundary of LGS Area 3 in the made Plan has been amended to exclude the adjoining car park. Whereas LGS Area 2 still retains its adjoining car park. Following correspondence between DC and BRPC and consultation with the landowners, it was agreed by the Councils that the car park which connects the two open grassy spaces which constitute LGS Area 2 should be deleted and LGS Area 2 would become LGS Area 2a and LGS Area 2b, which I shall make as a modification. **(EM3)** The policy continues to have regard to national guidance²⁴ and meets the Basic Conditions.

Alterations to the Text

- 4.17 A consequence of the modifications would be that amendments might have to be made to the explanation within the Plan in order to make it logical. Other amendments might also include minor contextual updates correcting minor inaccuracies or typographical errors, cross referencing and any renumbering of paragraphs and policies. None of these alterations would affect the ability of the Plan to meet the Basic Conditions and could be undertaken as minor, non-material changes.²⁵

All Other Matters

- 4.18 In this examination, I have focussed on differences in the policies between the made Neighbourhood Plan and the Plan Review. Nevertheless, I have considered afresh the whole of the draft Plan. I have reviewed each policy in terms of its consistency with national policy and guidance. Other than the issues that are discussed above, I am satisfied that there are no other matters which affect the Basic Conditions. Each policy in the Plan Review has regard to national guidance, would not result in the development plan

²² See Dorset Retail, Leisure and Town Centres Study Update (March 2026) paragraphs 113 – 118, 430 – 431 and Figures 66 and 67.

²³ NPPF: paragraph 98.

²⁴ NPPF: paragraphs 106 - 108.

²⁵ PPG Reference ID: 41-106-20190509.

for the area proposing less housing development, would contribute to sustainable development and would meet the Basic Conditions.

5. Conclusions

Summary

- 5.1 The Bere Regis Neighbourhood Plan Review (2019 –2034) has been duly prepared in compliance with the procedural requirements. My examination has assessed whether the Plan Review meets the Basic Conditions and other legal requirements. I have had regard for all the responses made following consultation on the Plan Review and the evidence documents submitted with it.
- 5.2 I have set out modifications to some of the supporting text dealing with the Dorset LNRS and the Maps accompanying Policies BR1a and BR5 to ensure the Plan Review meets the Basic Conditions and other legal requirements.

Examiner Recommendation

- 5.3 I recommend that DC should make the Neighbourhood Plan Review with the modifications specified in the Appendix to this report.

Overview

- 5.4 Inevitably, considerable time and effort has been devoted to the development and production of the succinct and well-illustrated Plan Review and I congratulate those who have been involved. I appreciated the documentation which was submitted from both Councils at the various stages of the examination and especially the constructive comments made in response to my questions. The Plan Review should continue to prove to be a useful tool for future planning and change within Bere Regis over the coming years.

Andy Mead

Examiner

Appendix: Examiner Modification

Examiner Modification number (EM)	Policy/other reference	Modification
EM1	Para 4.15	Add a final sentence: <i>This will be important to support delivery of Dorset LNRS priorities 4 – rivers, lakes and wetlands, 6 – hedgerows, 2 – woodlands, 12 – species abundance and diversity, and 13 – priority species”.</i>
	Para 4.16	Add a new third sentence: <i>“These measures all support delivery of Dorset LNRS priority 7 - urban.”</i>
	<u>Appendix 1</u>	
	LGS Area 5	Add a new sentence: <i>“The site therefore supports delivery of Dorset LNRS priorities 4 – rivers, lakes and wetlands, 7 – urban, 12 – species abundance and diversity, and 11 – nature connection.”</i>
	LGS Area 6	Add a new sentence: <i>“The site therefore supports delivery of Dorset LNRS priorities 4 – rivers, lakes and wetlands, 7 – urban, 12 – species abundance and diversity, and 11 – nature connection.”</i>
	LGS Area 7	Add a new sentence: <i>“The site therefore supports delivery of Dorset LNRS priorities 7 – urban, 12 – species abundance and diversity, and 11 – nature connection.”</i>
	LGS Area 8	Add a new sentence: <i>“The site therefore supports delivery of Dorset LNRS priorities 4 – rivers, lakes and wetlands, 7 – urban, 12 –</i>

		<i>species abundance and diversity, and 11 – nature connection.”</i>
EM2	Policy BR1a Map 3a	Substitute the plan on page 5 of the attachment accompanying the email from BRPC and DC dated 17 August 2026 ²⁶ for Map 3a in the submitted Plan.
EM3	Policy BR5	Subdivide: “2 – Green Space around the Church” into: <i>“2a and 2b – Green Space around the Church”</i> Amend Appendix 1 – Local Green Space Information to: <i>“Shared green space associated with housing estate. The eastern area has unobstructed views of the nearby church. As well as providing a green area amongst the built environment which provides recreational and amenity benefits, this site prevents any further encroachment around the medieval St John’s Church – a site of historic interest.”</i> On Map 5: Local Green Spaces, substitute the areas shown as 2a and 2b on the plan submitted by Pellegram Ltd on behalf of BRPC dated 8 September 2026 for the area shown on Map 5 as 2; the correspondence about which (and revised plan) is an attachment to the email dated 14 September 2026²⁷ from BRPC.

²⁶ View at: <https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/documents/d/guest/20260814-brpc-and-dc-comments-v2>

²⁷ View at: <https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/documents/d/guest/20260914-brpc-and-aster-responses-re-lgs2>