

WEYMOUTH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2021-2038

Dorset Council is satisfied that the Weymouth Neighbourhood Plan 2021-2038, as modified, meets the basic conditions, is compatible with the Convention rights and complies with the definition of a neighbourhood development plan.

A referendum will therefore be held on the 11 December 2025.

Background

The Weymouth Neighbourhood Area was designated by Dorset Council on the 6 July 2020 and covers the whole of the area under the jurisdiction of Weymouth Town Council, with the exception of the Nightingale Road area, the Littlemoor Urban extension and the top of Plaisters Lane, Sutton Poyntz as shown on Map 1a. The relevant body is confirmed as Weymouth Town Council.

The Weymouth Neighbourhood Plan was submitted to Dorset Council on 6 December 2024 and updated 15 January 2025. Dorset Council was satisfied that the documents submitted met the requirements of Regulation 15 of the 'Regulations'. The Town Council was notified of Dorset Council's conclusion and informed that the plan could proceed to examination.

The regulation 16 consultation commenced on 24 January 2025 and was due to run until 7 March 2025. However, because of local concerns that not all late changes had been considered fully by Weymouth Town Council the submitted Neighbourhood Plan was reconfirmed by Weymouth Full Council on 26 February 2025. The Regulation 16 consultation was duly extended until 10 April 2025 to maintain a minimum six-week consultation period.

An independent examiner, Andrew Mead MRTPI MIQ, was appointed to examine the Plan and the examiner's report was received on 23 September 2025.

In summary, the examiner's report concluded that the Weymouth Neighbourhood Plan 2021-2038 would meet the basic conditions and other legal requirements, subject to his recommended modifications as set out in Appendix A of this decision statement.

Dorset Council has considered each of the recommendations and modifications contained in the examiner's report. In considering the conclusions of the independent examiner, Dorset Council agreed that the legal requirements and basic conditions had been met. The referendum version of the neighbourhood plan agreed by Dorset Council includes the examiner's recommended modifications as set out in Appendix A of this document.

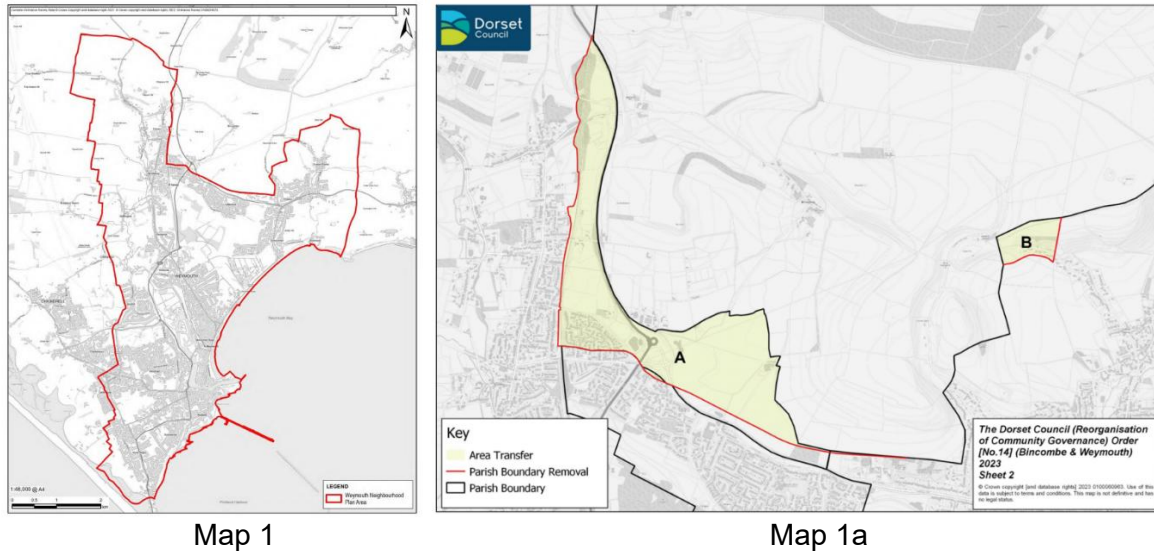
Dorset Council is therefore satisfied that the plan as amended...

- (i) meets the basic conditions (as set out in Schedule 4B to the Town & Country planning Act 1990); and
- (ii) is compatible with the Convention rights (within the meaning of the Human Rights Act 1998); and
- (iii) complies with the provision concerning Neighbourhood Development Plans made by or under Sections 38A and 38B of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, and

...can now proceed to a referendum.

The area covered by the Weymouth Neighbourhood Plan 2021-2038

The neighbourhood plan area covers the jurisdiction of Weymouth Town Council, with the exception of the Nightingale Road area, Littlemoor Urban extension and the top of Plaisters Lane, Sutton Poyntz as shown on Map 1 & Map 1a .



Details of the Neighbourhood Plan Referendum

The independent examiner considered that it was appropriate for the referendum to be held over the neighbourhood area.

Information about the referendum will be published on the Council's website and made available for inspection no fewer than 28 days before the referendum.

Where to find more information...

Copies of this decision statement, the examiner's report and the neighbourhood plan can be viewed online at: [Weymouth Neighbourhood Plan - Dorset Council](#)

Appendix A: Modifications from Examiner’s Report

Appendix: Modifications

Below are the recommendations and modifications taken from the Examiner’s Report.

Note: Additions are shown in **bold** and deletions are show in ~~strike through~~.

Proposed modification no. (PM)	Page no./ other reference	Modification
PM1	Paragraph 1.7.	The final sentence of paragraph 1.7 should read: “The Weymouth Neighbourhood Plan covers the whole of the area under the jurisdiction of Weymouth Town Council, with the exception of the Littlemoor Urban extension and the top of Plaisters Lane, and including Sutton Poyntz as shown on Map 1a”.
PM2	Following paragraph 7.11	Include new policy: “Proposals for development should aim to meet the Relevant Environmental objectives and aspire to achieve the Environmental Targets in Table X (p 25) and, where appropriate, Appendix A of the Plan.” For each relevant policy, add to the supporting text, immediately prior to the associated ‘Relevant Environmental Targets’ table: “The policy will align with the relevant environmental targets and objectives as shown in the table below.”
PM3	Policy W02	Delete Clause 3 and paragraph 8.24.
PM4	Policy W03	Clause 2: Amend the first sentence to: “Where impacts to biodiversity are identified, proposals must apply the mitigation hierarchy as advised in the NPPF.”
PM5	Policy W05	Clause 1: Amend the final phrase to: “... by providing for a Biodiversity Net Gain of at least 10% with a target of at least 20% judged on a case by case basis.”
PM6	Policy W06	Delete Clause 2.
PM7	Policy W08	Amend the opening sentence to: “Coastal recreation areas shown on Map 10 are for public recreation and enjoyment and are protected from development unless it is for: ...; etc.”
PM8	Policy W09	Amend Clause 3 to: “Development proposals should demonstrate through a Landscape and Visual Impact Analysis that there would be no compromise to:

		<p>i. the visual openness and landscape character of the gap: or</p> <p>ii. the character or setting of local heritage assets."</p> <p>Amend Maps 11A and 11B by the deletion of extraneous information to show only the boundary of the Green Gaps so that their clarity and purpose is not obscured.</p>
PM9	Policy W11	Map 13 and Appendix C: Delete Southill Garden Village
PM10	Policy W12	Delete Clause 4.
PM11	Policy W13	Amend the policy to: "Development proposals likely to have a significant impact on the important public panoramas, vistas and views identified on Maps 15A – F and defined in the accompanying Tables should demonstrate due regard to the local design guidance available at that time and should be accompanied by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA)."
PM12	Policy W14	Combine Clauses 1 and 2 to: "The defined development boundaries are shown on Map 16. Development will be supported within the development boundaries, with particular emphasis on brownfield redevelopment."
PM13	Policy W16	Amend Clause 1.i to: "a minimum of 10% satisfy M4(2) of the Building Regulations;" Amend Clause 1.ii to: "adequate secure and accessible storage for cycles, etc." Amend Clause 1.iii to: "adequate accessible storage facilities for refuse, etc." Add Clause 6: "Developments are carefully designed and planned to ensure that no adverse effects on the integrity of Habitats sites occur as a result of water pollution stemming from site run-off or dust emissions during construction or the operational stage of each of the developments."
PM14	Policy W18	Delete Clauses 2.ii and 2.iv. Amend Clause 5 to: "Proposals for housing and mixed use developments that result in between 2 and 9 units on sites of less than 0.5ha will provide up to 35% Affordable Homes or the commuted sum equivalent to the Local Authority for development of Affordable Homes in the Weymouth Area, subject to a Financial Viability Assessment to determine the precise amount."
PM15	Policy W19	Amend Map 20 to "Map 18" .

		<p>Delete: W23A: Lodmoor Old Tip North from the list, from Map 18 and Table B.</p> <p>Delete existing Clause 2.</p>
PM16	Policy W20	<p>Amend Clause 1 to:</p> <p>“Land at Wyke Oliver Farm North as defined on Map 19 is allocated for residential development for around 250 dwellings.”</p> <p>Amend Clause 2 to:</p> <p>“Affordable housing provision should form 50% of every completed stage of the development unless a Financial Viability Assessment or other material considerations demonstrate a robust justification for a different percentage and comprise a mix of sizes, types and tenures as agreed with Dorset Council.”</p> <p>Amend Clause 4.iv to:</p> <p>”a surface water management strategy which seeks to minimise flood risk and the impact of the development on local water courses;”</p> <p>Delete Clause 2.viii.</p> <p>Amend Clause 2.ix to:</p> <p>“demonstrate through a Travel Plan and Transport Assessment that the local transport network has capacity for around an additional 250 homes.”</p> <p>Add to the supporting text the points suggested by DC in response to Q17 d).</p> <p>Add to the supporting text the explanation suggested by WTC in response to Q17 f).</p>
PM17	Policy W21	<p>Amend Clause 1 to:</p> <p>“Land at Redlands Farm as defined on Map 20 is allocated for residential development for around 150 dwellings.”</p> <p>Amend Clause 2 to:</p> <p>“Affordable housing provision should form 50% of every completed stage of the development unless a Financial Viability Assessment or other material considerations demonstrate a robust justification for a different percentage and comprise a mix of sizes, types and tenures as agreed with Dorset Council.”</p> <p>Amend Clause 4.iii to:</p> <p>”the height of dwellings should mostly be no more than two storeys in height, rising to a maximum scale of three storeys only occasionally, and development should preserve or enhance the setting of the nearby conservation area and should be positioned on site to ensure it is appropriately screened from the Wey</p>

		<p>Valley;”.</p> <p>Amend Clause 4.xii to:</p> <p>“landscaping measures and a surface water management strategy which seeks to minimise flood risk and the impact of the development on local water courses;”</p> <p>Delete Clause 4.xiv.</p> <p>Amend Clause 5 by the substitution of the second “and” by a comma, together with the addition of:</p> <p>“and demonstrate through a Travel Plan and Transport Assessment that the local transport network has capacity for around an additional 150 homes.”</p> <p>Add to the supporting text the points suggested by DC in response to Q18 b).</p>
PM18	Policy W22	<p>Amend Clause 1 to:</p> <p>“Land off Beverley Road as defined on Map 21 is allocated for around 25 dwellings.”</p> <p>Amend Clause 2 to:</p> <p>“Proposals for residential development will be supported where the following criteria are comprehensively addressed: etc”.</p> <p>Amend Clause 2.vii to:</p> <p>“Affordable housing provision should form 50% of the development unless a Financial Viability Assessment or other material considerations demonstrate a robust justification for a different percentage.”</p> <p>Delete Clause 2.ix.</p> <p>Add a new Clause 4:</p> <p>“A development proposal should be supported by a surface water management strategy which seeks to minimise flood risk and the impact of the development on local water courses.”</p> <p>Re-number existing Clause 4 as Clause 5.</p> <p>Add to the supporting text the points suggested by DC in response to question 19 c).</p>
PM19	Policy W23A	Delete the policy.
PM20	Policy W23C	Delete Clause 2.iv, Clause 2.viii and Clause 3.ii.
PM21	Policy W24	<p>Delete Clause 2.i and substitute:</p> <p>“Affordable housing provision should form 35% of the residential element of the development unless a Financial Viability Assessment or other material considerations demonstrate a robust justification for a different percentage.”</p>

		<p>Delete Clause 3.iv.</p> <p>Add to the supporting text the points suggested by DC in response to question 23 b).</p>
PM22	Policy W25	Delete Clause 7.
PM23	Policy W26	Delete Clause 5.
PM24	Policy W27	<p>Amend Clause 1 to:</p> <p>“Proposals for community-led development within the defined development boundaries which respond to ... etc. Proposals for community-led development outside the defined development boundaries will be required to follow government guidance in the NPPF and adopted Local Plan.”</p> <p>Delete Clause 4.</p>
PM25	Policy W28	Delete Clause iv.
PM26	Policy W29	<p>Delete Clause 2.</p> <p>Delete the final sentence of paragraph 9.142.</p>
PM27	Policy W30	<p>Delete Policy and title and replace with:</p> <p>“First Homes Exception Site Development</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Development proposals for affordable housing schemes outside the DDBs, where housing would not normally be permitted by other policies in the development plan will be supported if the scheme: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. is a First Homes exception site; ii. is adjacent to an existing settlement and in character and scale appropriate to its location; and iii. does not compromise the protection given to relevant areas by the NPPF. 2. Exception site housing schemes should normally comprise 100% affordable housing, intended only for local people including a minimum proportion of 25% First Homes. A small proportion of market homes may be allowed on the site at the local authority’s discretion, or if there is clear evidence of local need, or if this is required to make the site viable. 3. The application of a local occupancy clause on all affordable homes will be expected in perpetuity, without the requirement for further justification.” <p>Redraft paragraph 9.147 using the suggestion by WTC in its response to Q26a dated 23 June 2025.</p>
PM28	Policy W31	Delete the policy.
PM29	Policy W32	<p>Delete: “... conforms with other relevant policies in the Neighbourhood Plan and ...”.</p> <p>Amend Clause i to:</p>

		<p>“adequate, convenient, safe and secure alternative off road parking provision ...”.</p> <p>Amend Clause ii to:</p> <p>“will be adequately catered for by solutions including other car parks and out of town park and ride schemes;”.</p>
PM30	Policy W33	<p>Amend policy to:</p> <p>“Development should be phased so that it is at least in tandem with the timely and co-ordinated provision of associated infrastructure to help support sustainable growth, with particular emphasis on encouraging brownfield redevelopment and to ensure that the capacity of existing infrastructure is not significantly exceeded.”</p>
PM31	Policy W34	<p>Amend Clause 1 to: “All new development should seek to achieve high standards of sustainability.”</p> <p>Amend Clause 2 v. to:</p> <p>“adequate provision is made for the safe, secure and accessible parking and storage of bikes, etc.”</p> <p>Add new Clause 2 vi:</p> <p>“where the above methods and material create viability concerns, these should be demonstrated through a suitable financial appraisal.”</p>
PM32	Policy W35	<p>Amend final phrase in the policy to:</p> <p>“... for a period of at least 12 months or other period agreed with the local planning authority.”</p> <p>Add new Clause:</p> <p>“2. The redevelopment of employment land and premises for non-employment uses will be permitted where it will not prejudice the efficient and effective use of the remainder of the employment area and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) the present or previous (where vacant or derelict) use causes significant harm to the character or amenities of the surrounding area and it has been demonstrated that no other appropriate viable alternative employment uses could be attracted to the site; or ii) a substantial over supply of suitable alternative employment sites is locally available; or iii) redevelopment of the site would offer important community benefits or no significant loss of jobs/potential jobs.”
PM33	Policy W36	<p>Amend Clause 1.iii to:</p> <p>“not having cumulative severe impacts on highway safety ...;”.</p> <p>Amend Clause 1.iv to:</p> <p>“in the case of retail use outside the town centre,”</p>

		Amend Clause 4 to: “Where required, any application should be accompanied by appropriate site specific assessments, which might include a Flood Risk Assessment, Noise Assessment, or Archaeological Assessment to demonstrate that ...”.
PM34	Policy W37	Delete Clause v. Delete Clause vi.
PM35	Policy W38	Delete Clause 2.
PM36	Policy W39	Amend Clause 2.iv to: ”Where appropriate, provide housing to meet local needs including at least 35% Affordable Homes.” Amend Clause 4 to: “Proposals which make more intensive use of upper floors ..., etc.” Amend Clause 1 to refer to Map 28 and not Map 27. Delete Clause 7.
PM37	Policy W40	Substitute “transitory” for “temporary” in the title, throughout the policy and where appropriate in the supporting text. Delete Clause 1.iv. Delete Clause 2.
PM38	Policy W41	Delete the final sentence in Clause 1. Delete Clause 6.
PM39	Policy W43	Delete Clause iii.
PM40	Policy W44	Amend Clause 1 to: “All proposals ... use of material and detail, which, in areas with a positive character, would harmonise with it; also, having regard to ...”. Amend Clause 2 to: “... how they will positively preserve or enhance the unique characteristics of the area.”
PM41	Policy W45	Amend Clause 1 to: “Development proposals must demonstrate, where relevant, ... etc.” Amend Clause 2 to “Development proposals affecting designated and/or non-designated heritage assets and/or the 11 designated Conservation Areas shown on Map 29 must be accompanied by assessments, which clearly demonstrate how any potential for impact, resulting in harm, would be avoided as a result of mitigation.” Amend Clause 3 to:

		<p>“Development proposals on previously undeveloped land must be accompanied ... etc.”</p> <p>Amend Clause 4 to:</p> <p>“Where appropriate, development must identify and secure opportunities within the setting of any designated and/or non-designated heritage assets ... etc.”</p> <p>Amend the supporting text by the suggestions of DC in points 369 – 373 of the Regulation 16 response.</p>
PM42	Policy W46	<p>Amend Clause 2 to:</p> <p>“Development that would give rise to unacceptably severe highway danger and significant air pollution will not be supported.”</p>
PM43	Policy W48	Delete “as a minimum” from Clause 2.
PM44	Policy W49	Delete Clause 1.
PM45	Policy W50	Amend “... (Map 29) ...” to “... (Map 30) ...”.
PM46	Policy W52	Delete Clause 1.iv.
PM47	Policy W53	<p>Amend the second sentence of Clause 1 to:</p> <p>“Any change of use application should be accompanied by authoritative evidence of continued marketing over at least a 12 month period and no market interest ... etc.”</p>
PM48	Policy W57	<p>Amend policy to:</p> <p>“Proposals for new burial grounds will be supported in principle, subject to local need, the avoidance of significant harm to both residential amenity and the landscape and the provision of suitable access which would not cause severe danger to traffic.”</p>

Examiner’s note: Whilst I have sought to set out the necessary changes in the PMs in the Appendix to this report, the acceptance of the recommended modifications would mean that further consequential amendments may be needed to the explanatory text within the Plan in order to make it logical and suitable for the referendum. Amendments of a more minor nature might cover the incorporation of factual updates; correcting inaccuracies, typographical and punctuation errors; any text improvements suggested helpfully by DC in their Regulation 16 consultation response; and resultant changes to the Plan’s paragraph and policy numbering, in agreement with DC. By way of specific examples, these might include the policies map (updated as per recommended modifications) attached to the Regulation 16 comments from the Chair of the WNP Steering Group (submitted on 9 April 2025) and the removal of the words ‘local housing’ in paragraph 9.95 (which are no longer relevant). 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.¹

¹ PPG Reference ID: 41-106-20190509.