

INDEPENDENT EXAMINATION OF THE MARNHULL

NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN

EXAMINER: Andrew Mead BSc (Hons) MRTPI MIQ

Examination Ref: 02/AM/MNP

Cllr Jules Cormack
Marnhull Parish Council

Philip Reese
Senior Planning Policy Officer
Dorset Council

Via email

21 October 2025

Dear Cllr Cormack and Mr Reese

Having carried out my visit to the Marnhull Neighbourhood Plan (MNDP) Area, I have identified some matters on which clarification from Marnhull Parish Council (MPC) and Dorset Council (DC) would assist me in my examination of the MNDP. May I request the submission of responses to my questions by **3 November 2025**, although an earlier response would be most welcome.

Questions to Marnhull Parish Council (MPC) and Dorset Council (DC)

Specific questions of clarification to the Councils are listed below, but I am happy to receive comments from either Council on any of the questions which are not directed at them in the first instance.

1. Plan Submission Date

Question to DC. What was the date of the submission of the MNDP to DC?

2. Marnhull Conservation Area

Question to MPC. Proposed changes to the existing Conservation Area are shown on the Map at page 95 of the Plan in Appendix 6. Echoing the comments of DC (page 4 of the Regulation 16 representation) and noting that the process for reviewing and revising the Conservation Area is separate to the neighbourhood planning process, I am considering recommending the replacement of the current Map in Appendix 6 with a Map showing only the existing Conservation Area. Does MPC have any comments?

3. Housing Numbers

Question to DC. Paragraph 30 of the NPPF states that neighbourhood plans should not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area or undermine those strategic policies. Is DC satisfied that the strategic policies for the area are not undermined by the MNP?

4. Settlement Boundary

Question to MPC and DC. There are five deletions to the Settlement Boundary shown on Map 3, one of which is the area of land, the Paddock, to the east of Church Hill where the Plan merely states there is no need for infill development at this time. It seems to me that, unlike the other proposed deletions, there is no substantial identified constraint which should lead to its exclusion from the Settlement Boundary. In addition, the Settlement Boundary does not take into account the latest planning permissions at Burton Close, Crown Road and Salisbury Street, Butts Close and Tess Square as shown on Appendix 1 of the DC Regulation 16 representation.

Therefore, given that DC states that in the Dorset Local Plan Options Consultation (August 2025) all settlement boundaries may be deleted and a flexible settlements policy included, (See Appendix 7 of the DC Regulation 16 representation: paragraph 11.4.1), my inclination is to recommend maintaining the Settlement Boundaries as they are now pending further work on the Dorset Local Plan and a revision of the Neighbourhood Plan. An alternative approach would be to update the Settlement Boundary by the inclusion of the planning permissions referred to above. I would welcome comments from both Councils.

5. Local Green Space (LGS)

- a) **Question to MPC.** Which LGS in the submitted Plan were the subject of an objection by the respective landowner when consulted during the consultation process in early 2025?
- b) **Question to DC.** DC questions the inclusion in the Plan of Local Green Spaces LGS05, LGS07, LGS08 and LGS10 (See DC Regulation 16 representation pages 5 – 11). Which of the designation criteria does each of the LGS fail to meet?
- c) **Question to MPC.** I also consider LGS09 may not meet the designation criterion of being demonstrably special to the local community. Does MPC wish to comment on the suggested exclusions?

6. Green Gaps

Question to MPC. For reasons outlined in the Regulation 16 representation, DC suggests that the use of the Green Gap designation is an attempt to achieve Green Belt policy by another name and has the potential to undermine future plan making. This is similar to how LGS may be misused.¹ Therefore, I am considering recommending the deletion of the Green Gap clause from Policy 3 (third bullet point beneath a) and from the relevant Maps in the Plan. Does MPC have any comments?

7. Eastward and Southward extensions of Marnhull

Question to MPC and DC. Policies 8 and 9 describe requirements for development on the two major housing extension sites at Marnhull. Each policy includes a Map. The Maps provide a useful analysis of issues at each site. However, when examining the layouts, there appear to be incompatibilities where the reserved matters application has been approved at Crown Road. Furthermore, the layouts shown for Salisbury Street and Butts Lane are extremely prescriptive and may not be achievable. Both policies include the clause: “*The*

¹ PPG Reference ID: 37-015-20140306.

development should ensure the following: etc,". I am considering recommending modification of both policies by explaining that the Maps are indicative, as already stated in paragraphs 8.14 and 8.18 of the Plan, but they are for illustrative purposes only. In addition, I am considering recommending that the requirements in the bullet points of each policy should generally be qualified by "where possible and appropriate". I would welcome comments from both Councils.

8. Community Facilities

Question to MPC. Map 6 includes three delineated proposals for: "additional allotments", "cemetery extension" and "recreation ground extension". How are these proposals to be delivered? Has the landowner been consulted in each case and ensure the proposals can be achieved?

All of the above questions are posed in the context of seeking to ensure that the Plan might be capable of meeting the Basic Conditions.

In the interests of transparency, may I prevail upon you to ensure that a copy of this letter and any subsequent responses are placed on the Parish Council and Dorset Council websites.

Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Yours sincerely

Andy Mead

Examiner