Strategic Environmental Assessment - Addendum

Lower Winterborne Neighbourhood Plan



Prepared by: Dorset Planning Consultant Ltd, on behalf of Lower Winterborne Parish Council

Date of report: August 2026

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1. Introduction

The Regulation 14 pre-submission version of the Lower Winterborne Neighbourhood Plan (NP) was accompanied by a full Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). The SEA was prepared by AECOM, as part of the Government-funded technical support package available at that time.

As the technical support package provided by Government has now ended, the need to consider and address the responses from the consultation on the Regulation 14 pre-submission Neighbourhood Plan is provided for through this addendum, which has been prepared by Jo Witherden DipTP DipUD MRTPI of Dorset Planning Consultant Ltd, on behalf of Lower Winterborne Parish Council. Jo is a chartered town planner and a full member of the Royal Town Planning Institute. She has an upper second-class honours degree in City & Regional Planning from Cardiff University, was awarded a distinction in the Diploma in Town Planning from Cardiff University, and a distinction in the Diploma in Urban Design from Oxford Brookes University. She has worked in planning policy roles in local authorities across Dorset for nearly 20 years, and subsequently as an independent planning consultant for the past 10 years, including working with over thirty Town and Parish Councils to successfully complete their Neighbourhood Plans.

2. Consultation response at Regulation 14

The main conclusions from the SEA at Regulation 14 Stage were:

- Overall, no significant effects were considered likely.
- There should be moderate positive effects in relation to the proposed new housing and employment development targeted at meeting local needs and including an element of affordable housing delivery.
- There should be minor positive effects with regards to biodiversity, climate change, the historic environment and landscapes. This reflects the relatively low sensitivities of the plan area, as well as the small-scale nature of the developments being proposed.
- Minor negative effects may occur with regards to climate change, the historic environment, landscapes, natural resources (soils and water), and transportation. This reflects the rural nature of the Neighbourhood Plan area, and the limited settlement offer in terms of local services, facilities, sustainable transport connections and employment opportunities. Most of the proposed development sites are greenfield, and there are flood risk and water quality considerations for the proposed growth areas.

The SEA was subject to consultation alongside the draft Neighbourhood Plan. Consultation responses from the Statutory consultees are included in Appendix 1. Overall, these responses indicated broad agreement with these conclusions, although Historic England raised concern that there was no evidence that analysis of the significance or setting(s) of the heritage assets took place to underpin assertions about likely impacts and how to avoid harm or reduce it to an acceptable degree. This matter is addressed through this addendum to the SEA.

3. Heritage Impact Appraisal

Historic England advice on historic environment considerations as part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment process is set out in Historic England Advice Note 8, published December 2016[1]. This notes that the SEA should be proportionate to the type of plan under consideration and the environmental sensitivity of the area in question, and should consider:

- the significance of heritage assets (including their settings) within and adjacent to the area
- how the proposed plan policies and alternatives impact on the significance of the heritage assets (including their settings)

[1] https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/sustainability-appraisal-and-strategic-environmental-assessment-advice-note-8/heag036-sustainability-appraisal-strategic-environmental-assessment/

- what steps can be taken to avoid or minimise any adverse impacts on the significance of heritage assets (including their settings), and
- what steps can be taken to optimise any benefits to the significance of heritage assets, including their settings.

The advice goes on to advise on a number of steps needed, which are followed below:

Establish the historic environment baseline

Section 6.3 of the SEA scoping report identified the heritage assets within and adjacent to the plan.

As part of the response received from Dorset Council's Conservation Team, additional potential non-designated heritage assets within the Neighbourhood Plan area have been identified (in addition to those previously noted on the North Dorset District Council Local List). These are listed and mapped in Appendix 4 of the submission version of the Neighbourhood Plan, and are taken into account in this report.

Dorset Council has adopted a Local Heritage List[2], based on a review of nominated heritage assets that meet the criteria for inclusion on the Dorset Council Local Heritage List. Whilst this does not rule out the potential for further non-designated assets being identified in the future, no buildings or other features within the Neighbourhood Plan area of adjoining parishes of Bere Regis, Bloxworth, Charlton Marshal, Spetisbury, Winterborne Whitechurch or Winterborne Zelston were listed.

The setting and significance of the various heritage assets are considered later in this report, in relation to the policies that may adversely impact on them.

Summarise the relevant policies, plans and programmes and identify issues and opportunities for the historic environment and proposed sustainability appraisal framework

Section 6.2 of the SEA scoping report identified the heritage assets within and adjacent to the plan, and informed the identification of key issues and the SEA objectives under this topic.

Include a summary of the results of the assessment, i.e. predict and evaluate the potential impacts of the plan (including trans-boundary and/ or cumulative impacts) on the historic environment and heritage assets

Policy 1 within the Neighbourhood Plan provides supplementary policy on the approach to heritage assets (in addition to national planning policy and the Local Plan). This policy states that development "should preserve the significance of the many designated and non-designated heritage assets (including the key findings set out in Appendix 3 and consideration of potential non-designated heritage assets identified in Appendix 4), taking into account the approach to making decisions regarding heritage assets and their settings in national policy." The policy also references the need for archaeological desk-based assessments and field evaluations (where there is reasonable prospect of remains) to inform the potential to preserve remains in-situ, given the likely extent of hidden archaeological finds within the Neighbourhood Plan area.

The approach to meeting local needs through development is set out in section 7 of the Plan. The main proposals are as follows:

- Policy 13. Community-led Renewable Energy Scheme – which is supportive of a community-led small-scale wind turbine development in the area of North Down
- Policy 14. Land adjoining and north of the Recreation Ground, off North Street – which is for residential development of up to 22 homes

[2] https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/documents/d/guest/local-heritage-list-for-verification-2024

- Policy 15. Land east of Bush Park – which is for residential development of up to 10 homes and an area of public green space
- Policy 16. Land at Thorpe Farm Bungalow – which is for residential development of up to 2 homes
- Policy 17. Land at West Green Cottages – which is for residential development of up to 2 homes
- Policy 18. Abbots Court Dairy - which is for employment and / or community use in line with Policy 11 / 12

Policies 15 and 16 are considered together in this report given their proximity and potential for cumulative impacts.

Policy 13. Community-led Renewable Energy Scheme in the area of North Down

The policy supports a community-led small-scale wind turbine development in the area of North Down, subject to a number of criteria. Small scale wind turbines are defined in the supporting text as being up to 60m blade-tip height.

The policy requires that an archaeological assessment is undertaken and the siting avoids areas of known or suspected archaeological interest. It also specifies that the siting, colour and scale of any wind turbines takes account of the landform, screening and likely visibility in the wider landscape, in order to reduce adverse impacts on landscape character and views to an acceptable level.

Historic England advice on the setting of heritage assets[3] notes that "The area of assessment for a large or prominent development, such as a tall building in an urban environment or a wind turbine in the countryside or offshore, can often extend for a distance of several kilometre." The landscape visual impact assessment (LVIA) for a recent planning application P/FUL/2025/01365 relating to the repurposing of the existing turbine at Rogers Hill Farm, Bere Regis, which is approximately 60m in height, indicates that this 60m turbine is visible from up to 2.5km distance, although not necessarily dominant in such views.

The search area itself ranges from 80m AOD to just over 100m AOD, sitting below the summit of Peat Hill (155m AOD). As such a turbine of up to 60m could be seen from all directions. Based on a distance of up to 2.5km, the potential heritage assets that could be impacted would include more than 30 Listed Buildings, and over 20 scheduled monuments. The ability to assess this impact is beyond the scope of this report to consider in detail without commissioning an equivalent LVIA.

The closest designated heritage assets are the two scheduled bowl barrows on Peat Hill – approximately 140m outside of the area of search, to the north.

- Bowl barrow 560m NNE of North Down Barn[4] is described as a "low mound, 21m in diameter and 0.6m high measured from downslope and 0.4m from upslope. There is no clear indication of a quarry ditch surrounding the mound but this will survive as a buried feature c.2m wide"
- Bowl barrow 550m north of North Down Barn[5] is described as "a mound, c.15m in diameter and 0.3m high, which is most clearly visible from downslope to the south as a low chalk earthwork. Surrounding the mound is a quarry ditch from which material was taken during the monument's construction. This has become infilled over the years but will survive as a buried feature c.2m wide."

Their importance relates to their function as funerary monuments dating from the Late Neolithic period to the Late Bronze Age. Whilst there are over 10,000 surviving bowl barrows recorded nationally, they often occupy prominent locations, and are considered to be "a major historic element in the modern landscape". The register goes on to not that the considerable variation of form and longevity helps provide important information "on the diversity of beliefs

[3] https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/gpa3-setting-of-heritage-assets/

[4] https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1014853

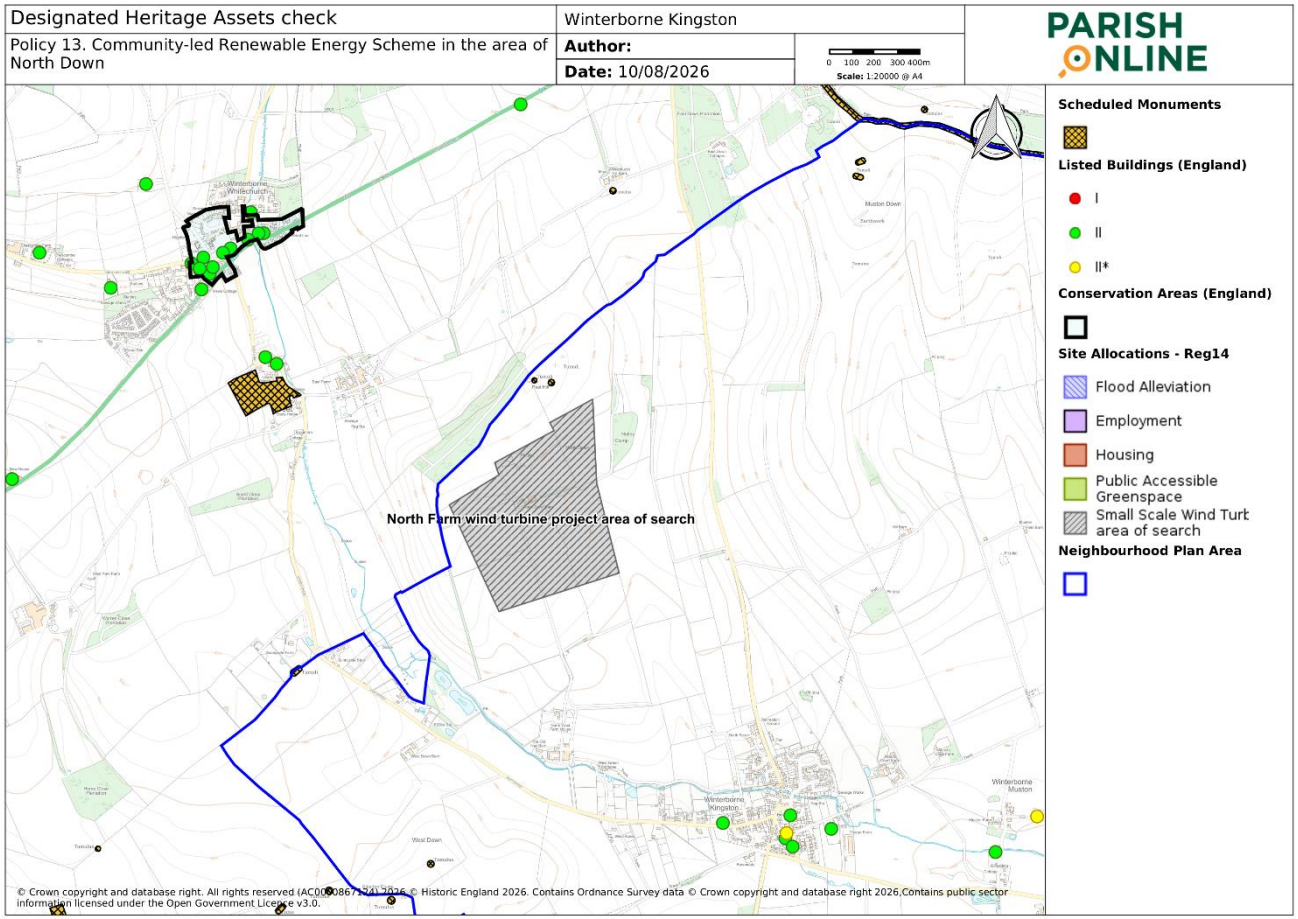
[5] https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1014852?section=official-list-entry

and social organisations amongst early prehistoric communities." Both are noted as being reduced in height by ploughing, but likely to contain archaeological remains, providing information about Bronze Age burial practices, economy and environment. They are both on the 'at risk' register.

The register notes that the barrows are part of a group five barrows at the northern end of North Down, with the remaining three shown on the Dorset Heritage Explorer[6] as to the north. Their respective immediate setting is likely to be defined by this grouping. The immediate setting of the barrows will remain unchanged, as will their position along the ridge. However any turbines would clearly be a noticeable feature in the agricultural backdrop, and appreciation of the wider position in the prehistoric funerary landscape, and as such are likely to cause less than substantial harm.

Other known heritage assets are at a greater distance, being over 900m away from the area of search. Other than similar barrows / archaeological remains, the nearest such assets include:

- The scheduled deserted medieval village at West Farm (approximately 820m to the NW)
- Grade II West Farmhouse[7] and Wheel House[8] (approximately 980m to the NW)
- Grade I Church of St Mary in Winterborne Whitechurch[9] (approximately 1.5km to the NW)
- Winterborne Whitechurch Conservation Area (approximately 1.5km to the NW)



It is also possible that other buildings in the area may qualify as of local importance, but no buildings within Winterborne Whitechurch were included in the recently adopted Local List. At such a distance, whilst assets such as the Grade I church are of great significance, it is considered unlikely that the setting of the identified heritage assets would be greatly impacted. Nonetheless, it

6 https://heritage.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/map
7 https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1118542
8 https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1152765
9 https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1118538

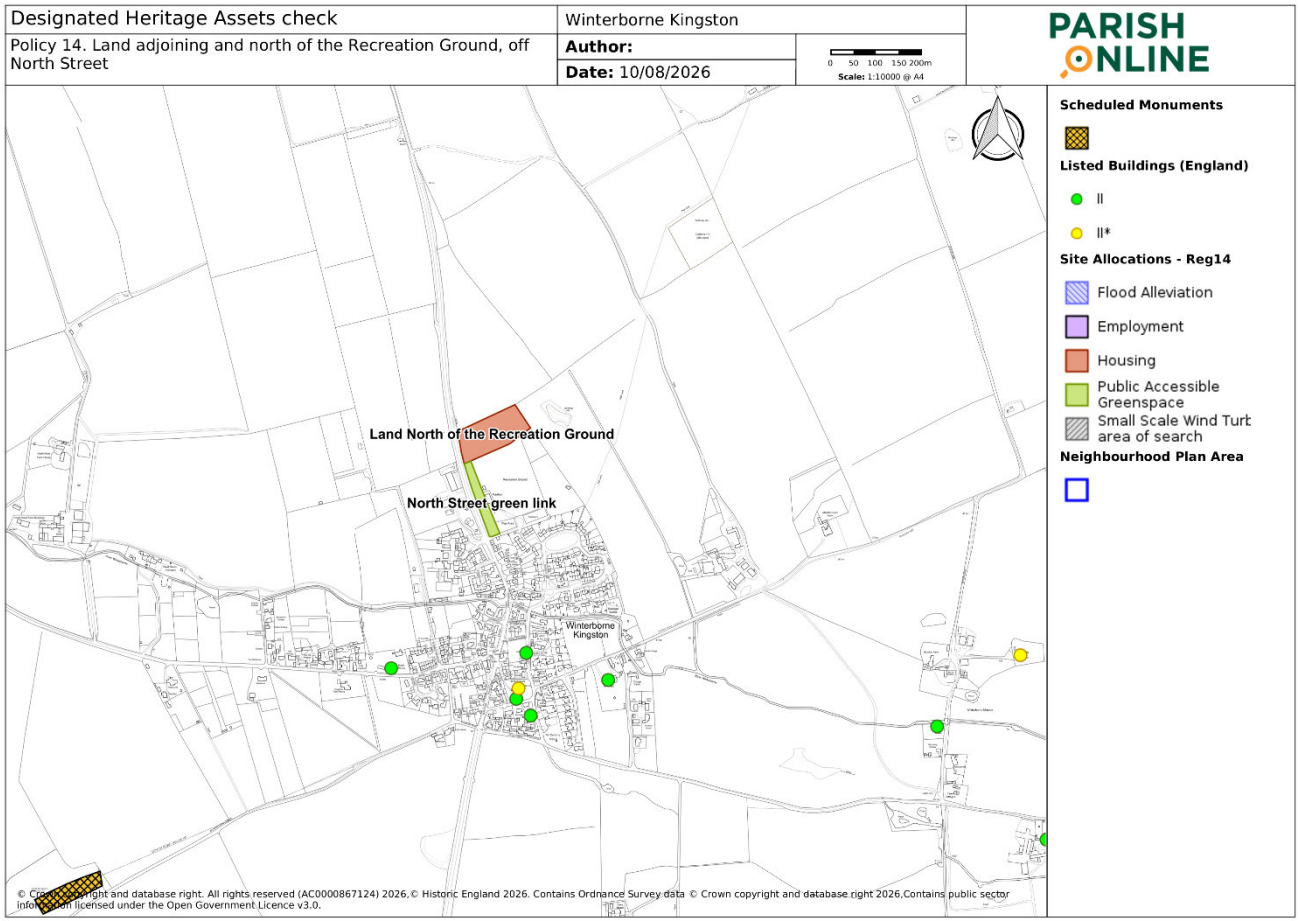
would be appropriate for the impacts on such assets to be considered in greater detail as part of any planning application, and it would be appropriate for guidance on this is included in the Neighbourhood Plan.

The policy addresses the potential presence of other (non-designated) archaeological remains within the search area, a number of which are recorded on the Dorset Heritage Explorer website.

Policy 14. Land adjoining and north of the Recreation Ground, off North Street

This housing site is some distance from any designated heritage assets. The nearest is within the centre of the village (the Grade II Listed Crofters, which is some 450m to the south), with much intervening built development and occupying a low-lying position, and as such as a limiting setting that does not extend as far as the site. The Grade II* Church of St Nicholas is about 520m to the south, and similarly does not occupy an elevated position, and as such its setting would not be affected by this site's development. Other designated heritage assets, such as the Grade II*Muston Manor and Scheduled section of Roman road north of Bagwood Coppice, are at a considerable distance (around 1.2km) and would not fall within their respective settings.

There are no locally important historic buildings identified in the immediate vicinity of the site.



The Dorset Heritage Explorer identifies that the northern part of the site potentially forms part of a banked field system that may be prehistoric in origin[10]. This was identified through lidar imagery, and no above-ground features have been identified. The monuments layer on Dorset Explorer (which reflects the maps on the Historic England Aerial Archaeology Mapping Explorer[11]) suggests that the banks may abut rather than cross the site. The development of the site (and associated foundations) may not therefore directly harm this non-designated heritage asset, and its significance is likely to be low.

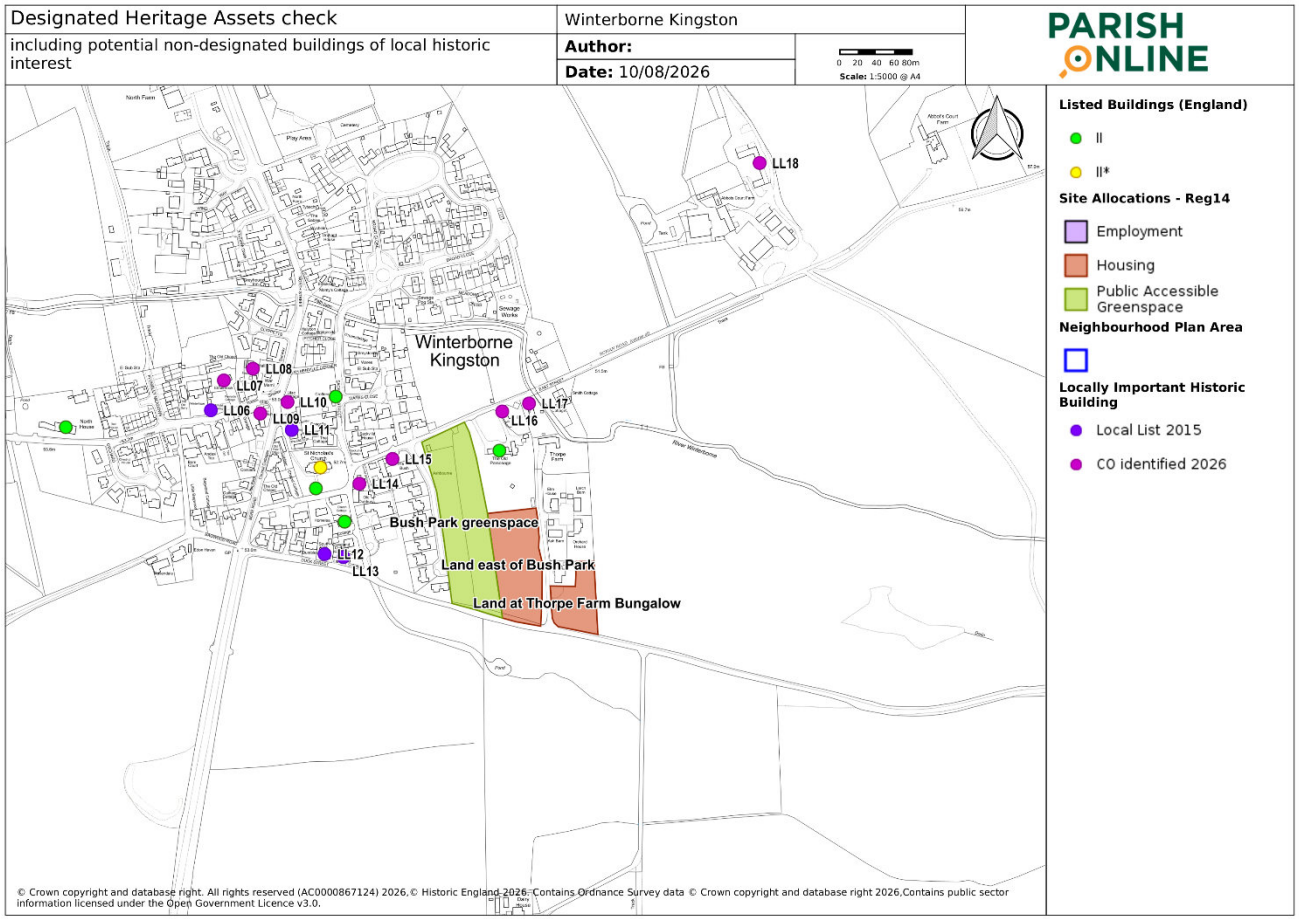
[10] Monument record MDO46567 https://heritage.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/Monument/MDO46567

[11] https://historicengland.org.uk/research/results/aerial-archaeology-mapping-explorer/

Whilst Policy 1 would ensure that archaeological desk-based assessments and field evaluations are required as part of any planning application to inform the development of this site, it would be appropriate for guidance on this is included in the site allocation policy.

Policy 15. Land east of Bush Park and Policy 16. Land at Thorpe Farm Bungalow

These two housing sites would altogether provide up to 12 new homes on land accessed off Marsh Lane. Policy 15 also reserves the western portion of the site for the provision of land for public informal recreation as part of a potential heathland infrastructure project. The land is currently in agricultural use as pasture.



There are no designated heritage assets within either site that would be directly impacted by their development, however the area is noted on the Dorset Historic Environment record as part of the "remains of medieval croft boundaries or strip fields with associated ridge and furrow and banked field boundaries, to the east of Winterborne Kingston village. The features cover an area of 17 hectares and are visible as earthworks on aerial photographs and lidar imagery"[12]. The monuments layer on Dorset Explorer (which reflects the maps on the Historic England Aerial Archaeology Mapping Explorer) suggests that there may be three banks running north-south across the southern end of the site covered by Policy 15, and the western end of a single bank running east-west across the site covered by Policy 16. These could potentially be harmed or event destroyed by the proposed development. However, given the extensive nature of the medieval field system these banks are unlikely to be considered of high significance (demonstrably of equivalent significance to scheduled monuments). The policy addresses the potential presence of archaeological remains within the two sites, in line with Government guidance.

The Old Parsonage[13] is a Grade II Listed building that lies approximately 65m to the north of the area of land allocated for housing, and east of the proposed

[12] MDO46543 https://heritage.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/Monument/MDO46543

[13] https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1118573?section=official-list-entry

public open space. The Listing records this as a "Detached parsonage, now private dwelling. C18 with extensive C19 alterations. Rendered and whitewashed with thatched roof having end copings with kneelers. End brick stacks. 2 storeys, 3 window range with extension left. Central C19 porch with panelled door. C19 sashes with vertical glazing bars."

Dorset Council's Conservation Officer has commented that the Old Parsonage "is discretely sited within the extent of private grounds that are encompassed by a dense, mature, natural boundary of substantial height" but goes on to advise that following points need to be considered in terms of its setting and significance:

- its intended physical isolation from the settlement, likely to emphasise high status, which can be experienced in views towards it from East Street, but also from Bush Park, the public right of way through the proposed greenspace, and from Marsh Lane;
- that the building is set within a large plot (forming the immediate setting of the building), again indicating a house of some status;
- its historical relationship with the church (further to the west at the start of East Street) as the home of the vicar/rector by the late-19th century, but possibly also earlier
- its spatial and some-time historical relationship with the complex of buildings to the north east (these are shown in the Neighbourhood Plan as LL16 and LL17), which were in the same ownership by the late 19th century and could qualify as non-designated heritage assets.

Historic maps available online indicate that the rear part of the Old Parsonage garden (now in use for private tennis courts) has previously been divided from the main house[14].

The land east of Bush Park (Policy 15) is considered to make some contribution to the significance of this heritage asset, taking into account the building's physical isolation from the settlement, high status and its historical relationship with the church, linked along East Street.

Policy 15 requires that the development respects the setting of the Old Parsonage, taking into account its historical relationship with the church and wider settlement, particularly as experienced from East Street, but also in wider views. This will impact on the scale, design and layout of the development. The policy wording makes clear that the entire frontage onto East Street should be kept free of any built development, and the supporting text notes that development is likely to be limited to the southern part of the site, with consideration given to views across the site.

On this basis, whilst there may be some less than substantial harm to this designated heritage asset, which is of national importance due to its Grade II status, the harm would be mitigated and should be at the lower end of the scale.

It is unlikely that development would materially impact on the wider group including the buildings to the north-east (Cob Cottage and 167/168 East Street), as these are primarily experienced from East Street alone, and the policy wording makes clear that the entire frontage onto East Street should be kept free of any built development.

The smaller parcel of development land at Thorpe Farm Bungalow (Policy 16) is considered unlikely to impact on these heritage assets, given the distance and greater extent of intervening development.

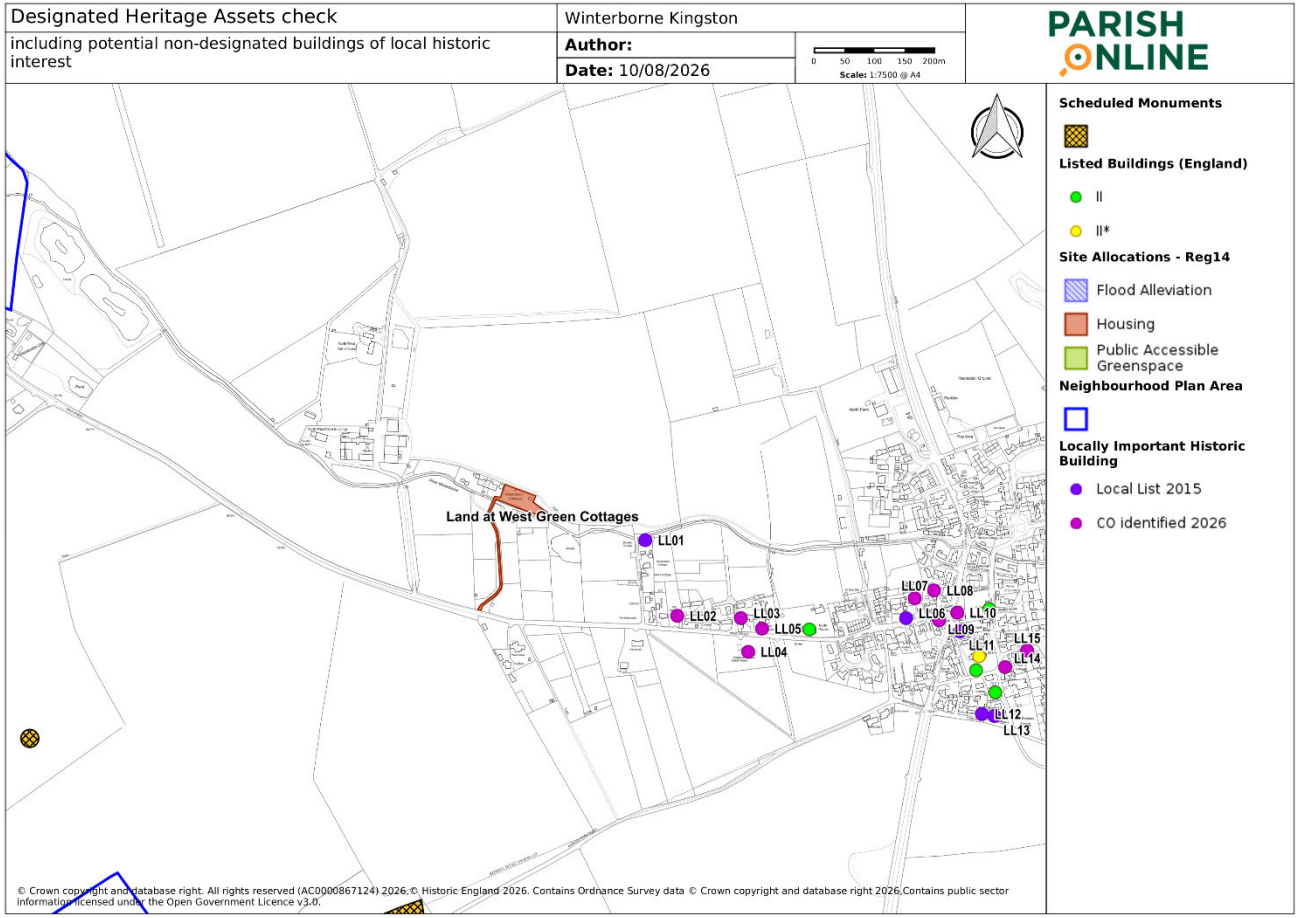
Whilst there are other designated and non-designated heritage assets in the wider vicinity, including the non-designated building known as The Olde Bush (LL15) on East Street, and Grade II* Church of St Nicholas further to the west, and the two potential non-designated heritage assets on Duck Street (LL12 and LL13) which may experience a minor increase in traffic, neither development site is considered to fall within their setting. Any potential harm to their significance is likely to be negligible, particularly given the limited scale of

[14] Dorset Sheet XXXIII.SW 1887 https://maps.nls.uk/view/101446721 and Dorset Sheet XXXIII.SW Revised: 1900, Published: ca. 1933

development and the avoidance of development fronting directly onto East Street.

Policy 17. Land at West Green Cottages

This small housing site, part of an existing residential garden, is some distance from any designated heritage assets. The nearest is the Grade II North Farmhouse[15], which is some 460m to the east, with much intervening built development. Its interest, as described in the Listing, relates to its early C19 origins, including features such as casements with glazing bars, panelled door in lattice, timber porch, and outshut (extension). Whilst the farmhouse may have links to the wider farmland which it served, there are no clear links between the site and this Listed Building, whose setting would not extend beyond its immediate surroundings. Given the scale of the site, its position adjoining the existing cottages, and distance from the scheduled monuments in the vicinity (section of Roman road approximately 670m to the south and bowl barrow approximately 860m to the south-west) any impact on their wider setting is likely to be negligible.



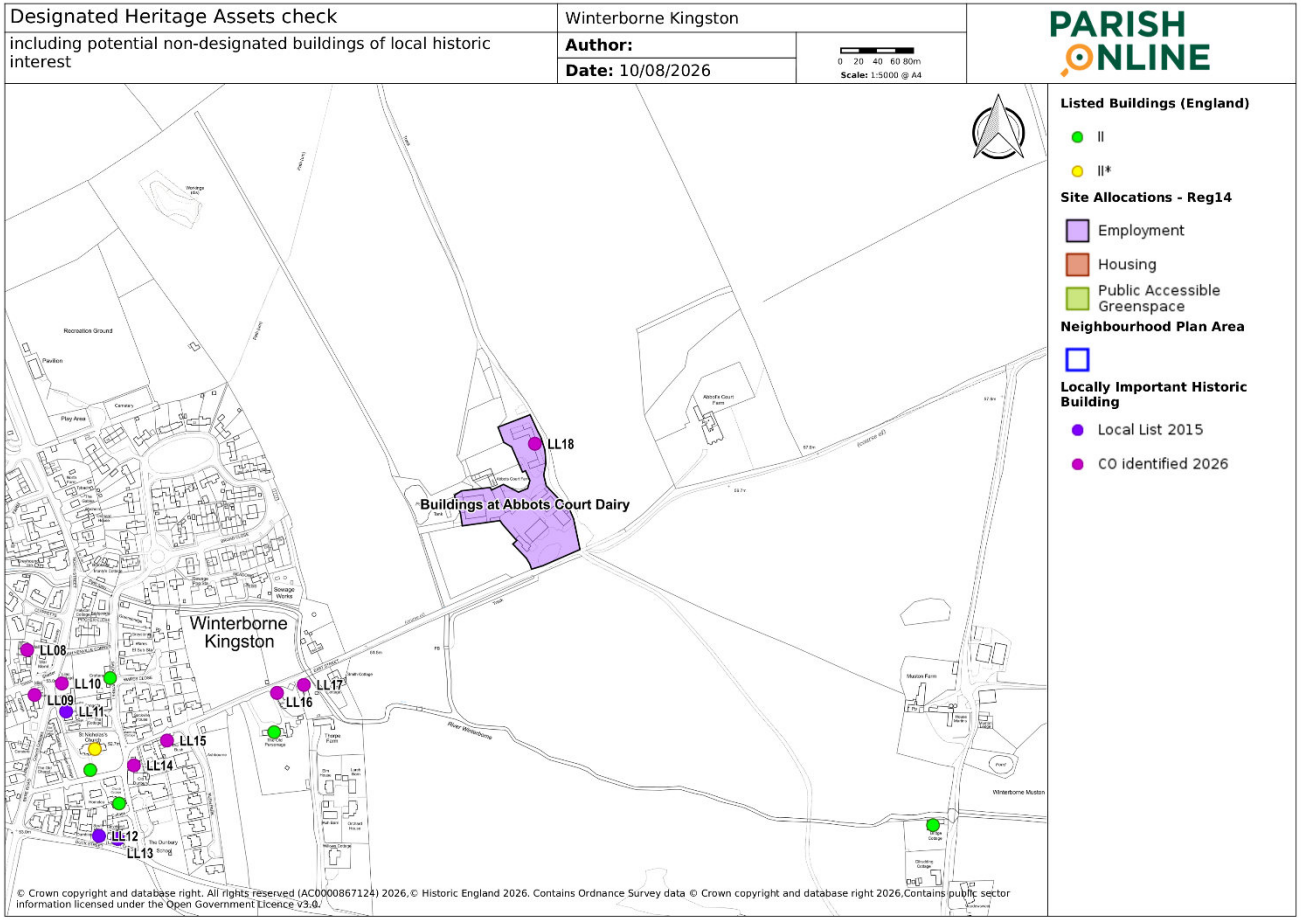
The Dorset Heritage Explorer identifies that the northern part of the site potentially forms part of a banked field system that may be prehistoric in origin[16] (the same as for Policy 14). This was identified through lidar imagery, and no above-ground features have been identified. The monuments layer on Dorset Explorer (which reflects the maps on the Historic England Aerial Archaeology Mapping Explorer) suggests that the banks may abut rather than cross the site. The development of the site (and associated foundations) may not therefore directly harm this non-designated heritage asset, and its significance is likely to be low. Whilst Policy 1 would ensure that archaeological desk-based assessments and field evaluations are required as part of any planning application to inform the development of this site, it would be appropriate for guidance on this is included in the site allocation policy.

[15] https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1304659

[16] Monument record MDO46567 https://heritage.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/Monument/MDO46567

Policy 18. Abbots Court Dairy

This policy supports the sensitive conversion of the historic farm buildings at Abbots Court Dairy, and re-purposing / replacement of the modern farm buildings and related structures for employment and / or community use, subject to a number of criteria. At present the older buildings do not have a clear uses, with the remaining modern buildings being used for agricultural related storage and, in one case, for business use. The site is set slightly apart from the village, accessed either via East street or via a private access track that runs north to join up with the main road north of the village.



There are no designated heritage assets within the site that would be directly impacted by their development, however the farmhouse and outbuildings (marked on the map as immediately south of the cottages, but likely to be intended to refer the cottages themselves as well as the outbuildings to the south) are noted on the Dorset Historic Environment record as nineteenth century and potentially forming the site of a medieval grange[17]. The westernmost part of the site also potentially forms part of a banked field system that may be prehistoric in origin[18] (the same as for Policies 14 - 16), but the monuments layer on Dorset Explorer (which reflects the maps on the Historic England Aerial Archaeology Mapping Explorer) does not suggest that any of the banks cross the site. Given the policy references the retention of the existing historic buildings and does not supported infill development, any groundworks are likely to be minimal and not impact on underground archaeological remains.

Dorset Council's Conservation Officer also advises that the barns to the north-eastern corner of the site feature many original features such as ventilation slit openings, hoist doors, large door openings, and a possible cart shed, and are very likely to be a non-designated heritage asset of sufficient interest to qualify for inclusion in the Council's Local Heritage List. The policy supports their retention and conversion to employment and / or community use, and the

[17] MDO45905 https://heritage.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/Monument/MDO45905

[18] Monument record MDO46567 https://heritage.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/Monument/MDO46567

Conservation Officer supports this approach as more likely to suit these buildings (rather than domestic use) through sensitive conversion. On the advice of the Conservation Officer, the policy has been updated to make specific reference to:

- retaining and re-using vernacular materials and features which contribute positively to the historic character of the site, such as the ventilation slit openings, hoist doors, and large door openings;
- ensuring new fenestration and detailing is appropriately designed to respect the historic character of the site;
- mitigating the potential impact of parking areas and external storage.

A number of designated heritage assets lie within the village to the west, including the Grade II Old Parsonage and Grade II* Church of St Nicholas, considered earlier in this report with reference to Policies 15 and 16. Whilst there is no significant intervisibility or clear historic connection between these heritage assets and Abbots Court Dairy, traffic generated by a more intensive use of the site could indirectly impact on their setting. The policy does consider the wider implications that may arise from the intensification of use of this site, including the impact of increase traffic along East Street and Church Street, and requires this to be assessed, and potential mitigation of ensuring that larger vehicles, or high volumes of traffic, access the site via the private track to the north.

Summary of the results of the assessment, recommended mitigation measures, and assessment of any harmful, residual, impacts that cannot be avoided

The results of the assessment are summarised here:

Policy 13. Community-led Renewable Energy Scheme:

Potential harm:	Mitigation:	Residual harm:
Less than substantial harm to the setting of the nationally significant scheduled bowl barrows on Peat Hill	Policy ensures that the siting, colour and scale of the wind turbine / group takes account of the landform, screening and likely visibility in the wider landscape, in order to reduce adverse impacts on the setting and significance of any heritage assets, the setting of the Dorset National Landscape, local landscape character and related views to an acceptable level, informed by a Landscape Visual Impact Assessment and Heirtage Impact Assessment	Less than substantial harm possible but minimised
Potential for less than substantial harm to heritage assets in the wider area (over 800m distance), although given the distance it is considered unlikely that their setting would be greatly impacted		Less than substantial harm possible but minimised
Potential for substantial harm to (non-designated) archaeological remains within the search area.	Policy ensures that an archaeological assessment is undertaken and the siting avoids areas of likely high archaeological interest, and any finds are appropriately recorded.	None

Policy 14. Land adjoining and north of the Recreation Ground, off North Street (up to 22 homes)

Potential harm:	Mitigation:	Residual harm:
Potential for substantial harm to (non-designated) archaeological remains within the search area.	Policy ensures that an archaeological assessment is undertaken to inform how any remains will be preserved in situ or appropriately recorded.	Negligible.

Policy 15. Land east of Bush Park (up to 10 homes and public green space)

Potential harm:	Mitigation:	Residual harm:
Potential for substantial harm to (non-designated) archaeological remains within the search area.	Policy ensures that an archaeological assessment is undertaken to inform how any remains will be preserved in situ or appropriately recorded.	Negligible.
Less than substantial harm to the setting of the nationally significant Grade II Listed Old Parsonage	Policy requires that the development respects the setting of the Old Parsonage, taking account of its historical relationship with the church and wider settlement, and wider views. The policy wording also makes clear that the entire frontage onto East Street should be kept free of any built development.	Less than substantial harm possible but minimized.

Policy 16. Land at Thorpe Farm Bungalow (up to 2 homes)

Potential harm:	Mitigation:	Residual harm:
Potential for substantial harm to (non-designated) archaeological remains within the search area.	Policy ensures that an archaeological assessment is undertaken to inform how any remains will be preserved in situ or appropriately recorded.	Negligible.

Policy 17. Land at West Green Cottages (up to 2 homes)

Potential harm:	Mitigation:	Residual harm:
Potential for substantial harm to (non-designated) archaeological remains within the search area.	Policy ensures that an archaeological assessment is undertaken to inform how any remains will be preserved in situ or appropriately recorded.	Negligible.

Policy 18. Abbots Court Dairy (employment and / or community use

Potential harm:	**Mitigation:**	**Residual harm:**
Potential for substantial harm to (non-designated) historic barns of sufficient interest to qualify for inclusion in the Council's Local Heritage List.	Policy secures the sensitive conversion of these buildings that respects the historic interest of this site, and includes details on this as advised by the Conservation Officer.	Less than substantial harm possible but minimized.
Potential for less-than substantial harm to the setting of the nationally significant Grade II Listed Old Parsonage, Grade II* Church of St Nicholas and other non-designated heritage assets as a result of increased traffic along East Street / Church Street	Policy requires this indirect impact to be assessed, and identifies potential mitigation through ensuring that larger vehicles, or high volumes of traffic, access the site via the private track to the north.	Less than substantial harm possible but minimized.
Potential for substantial harm to (non-designated) archaeological remains within the search area.	Policy ensures that an archaeological assessment is undertaken to inform how any remains will be preserved in situ or appropriately recorded.	Negligible.

Appendix 1: Statutory Consultee consultation responses

Date: 08 July 2026
Our ref: 548321

clerk@lowerwinterborne-pc.gov.uk
BY EMAIL ONLY

Hornbeam House
Crewe Business Park
Electra Way
Crewe
Cheshire
CW1 6GJ

Dear Sir/Madam,

Lower Winterborne Neighbourhood Plan May -Jun 2026

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated and received by Natural England on 01 May 2026.

Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.

Screening Request: Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

It is Natural England's advice, on the basis of the material supplied with the consultation, that significant effects on statutorily designated nature conservation sites or landscapes are unlikely.

The proposed neighbourhood plan is unlikely to significantly affect any Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ), Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection area (SPA), Ramsar wetland or sites in the process of becoming SACs or SPAs ('candidate SACs', 'possible SACs', 'potential SPAs') or a Ramsar wetland. The plan area is unlikely to have a significant effect on a National Park, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or Heritage Coast, and is unlikely to impact upon the purposes for which these areas are designated or defined.

The Regulation 14 version of the Lower Winterborne Neighbourhood Plan (LWNP) is accompanied by a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA), including an Appropriate Assessment (AA), which identifies recreational pressure and air quality effects as potential impact pathways for internationally designated sites. This includes affecting the Dorset Heaths SAC, Dorset Heathlands SPA and Ramsar site, and Dorset Heaths & Studland Dunes SAC. However, it concludes that these effects can be appropriately mitigated through existing Dorset Council strategies, which are referenced in Policy 4 of the LWNP and provide a protective framework for development proposals coming forward under the Plan.

The conclusions of the HRA AA provide further support for the view that the Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to give rise to significant environmental effects requiring Strategic Environmental Assessment, subject to the continued application of the identified mitigation measures and the policies of the Plan.

Guidance on the assessment of Neighbourhood Plans, in line with the Environmental Assessmer of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 is contained within the Planning Practice Guidance. This identifies three triggers that may require the production of an SEA:

- a neighbourhood plan allocates sites for development
- the neighbourhood area contains sensitive natural or heritage assets that may be affected by the proposals in the plan
- the neighbourhood plan may have significant environmental effects that have not already been considered and dealt with through a sustainability appraisal of the Local Plan.

Natural England does not hold information on the location of significant populations of protectec species, so is unable to advise whether this plan is likely to affect protected species to such an extent as to require an SEA. Further information is included in Natural England's standing advice on protected species.

Furthermore, Natural England does not routinely maintain locally specific data on all environmental assets. The plan may have environmental impacts on priority species and/or habitats, local wildlife sites, soils and best and most versatile agricultural land, or on local landscape character that may be sufficient to warrant an SEA. Information on ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees is set out in Natural England/Forestry Commission standing advice.

We therefore recommend that advice is sought from your ecological, landscape and soils advisers, local record centre, recording society or wildlife body on the local soils, best and most versatile agricultural land, landscape, geodiversity and biodiversity receptors that may be affected by the plan before determining whether a SEA is necessary.

Natural England reserves the right to provide further advice on the environmental assessment of the plan. This includes any third party appeal against any screening decision you may make. If a SEA is required, Natural England must be consulted at the scoping and environmental report stages.

Please send any new consultations, or further information on this consultation to consultations@naturalengland.org.uk.

Yours faithfully

Rosalind Tuck
Higher Officer,
Sustainable Development, Dorset
Wessex Area Team
Natural England, Horizon House, Deanery Road, Bristol BS1 5AH

From: Stuart, David [redacted]
Sent: Monday, 22 June 2026 20:09:43
[redacted]
Subject: Lower Winterborne Neighbourhood Plan – Regulation 14 Consultation

FAO Alison Clothier

Thank you for your Regulation 14 consultation on the pre-submission version of the Lower Winterborne Neighbourhood Plan.

Our main interest in such Plans is where sites are proposed as allocations for development as experience has shown that these have the greatest potential to generate impacts on heritage assets. Our concern therefore is to ensure that appropriate evidence supports the Plan to demonstrate that where site allocations occur there is conformity with overarching national and local planning policy for the protection and enhancement of the historic environment.

Our only previous involvement in the preparation of the Plan was a consultation on the associated SEA Scoping in May 2025. In our response we drew attention to the possibility that proposed site allocations might generate impacts on the historic environment in addition to the need identified for a full SEA (see attached). We were also pleased to note that the Scoping Report proposed the use of our relevant guidance on such matters.

The Plan proposes to allocate sites for residential development in policies 14 – 18. At least two of these have the potential to impact on heritage assets: policy 15 (Land East of Bush Park) requires development to respect the setting of the Grade II Listed Old Parsonage; and policy 18 (Abbots Court Dairy) involves the conversion of historic buildings.

Evidence relating to relevant heritage assets in connection with the site allocation policies is contained within the SEA Environmental Report. Unfortunately, despite the assurances of the earlier Scoping Report, we could find no indication of the use of our guidance. Reference is made to the existence of heritage assets in the form of proximity to proposed sites and existing screening but there is no evidence that analysis of their significance or setting(s) has taken place to underpin assertions about likely impacts and how to avoid harm or reduce it to an acceptable degree. So, for example, it is not clear that the up to 10 houses proposed in policy 15 can be delivered whilst at the same time respecting the setting of the Old Parsonage.

Policy 13 relates to the allocation of a site at North Down for a Renewable Energy Scheme. The policy refers to the need for an archaeological assessment but it is not clear how an understanding of any archaeological potential has informed the location of the site and its suitability. Equally, supporting text refers to the possible heights of wind turbines which may have the potential for long distance visual impact, perhaps on the settings of heritage assets, which affects the principle of such an allocation. But there is no evidence to suggest that possibly relevant offsite heritage assets have been identified and their significance understood and used.

We appreciate that the Plan is now at an advanced stage in its preparation and there may be limited resources available to address the points made above. We would therefore encourage liaison with the heritage team at Dorset Council to vouchsafe the site allocations from a heritage perspective prior to the formal submission of the Plan for Examination. Their written confirmation of the veracity of the policies, or recommendations for amendment, can constitute acceptable evidence and we would be happy to defer to their local knowledge and expertise.

Otherwise, we note and applaud the range of supporting policies designed to protect and enhance the area's distinctive historic character and the locally derived evidence on which these are based.

We look forward to being able to offer the Plan our unqualified support at the Regulation 16 consultation stage and wish your community well in the making of its Plan.

Kind regards

David

David Stuart | Historic Places Adviser

[redacted]

Historic England | South West

[redacted]

https://historicengland.org.uk/southwest

Historic England

Ensuring our heritage lives on and is loved for longer.
historicengland.org.uk

Environment Agency

Alison Clothier
Lower Winterborne
Parish Council,
Dorset.

Our ref: WX/2023/137162/OR-16/PO1-L01
Your ref: Lower Winterborne NP

Date: 19 June 2026

Dear Alison

LOWER WINTERBORNE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN – REGULATION 14 CONSULTATION

Thank you for consulting the Environment Agency on the above Neighbourhood Plan (NP) and supporting documents. We have reviewed the Neighbourhood Plan (NP) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) submitted. We therefore have the following comments;

Policy Allocations

Policy 13: Community-led Renewable Energy Scheme

The site is located within Source Protection Zone (SPZ) 3. We do not consider the proposed land use to have a significant adverse impact on groundwater. Furthermore, we agree to have mitigation measures proposed to safeguard the site, along with the restoration plan, which together provide an appropriate level of environmental protection.

Policy 15: Land East of Bush Park, off Marsh Lane

The southern extent of the proposed site boundary falls within Flood Zone 3, with approximately one-third of the site also located within areas identified as being at risk from future flooding (climate change allowances). In accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 173, footnote 59), a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) must accompany any planning application for development in such locations. The FRA should comprehensively evaluate flood risks to people and property, demonstrate that the development will be safe for its lifetime, and ensure that it will not increase flood risk elsewhere.

Furthermore, the site lies within SPZ 2 and SPZ 3. The relevance of the designation and the potential implication upon development proposals should be considered with reference to our Groundwater Protection guidance:
https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/groundwater-protection

Policy 16: Land at Thorpe Park Bungalow

The southern boundary of the site lies within Flood Zone 3 and areas identified as being at risk under the future flood zones (climate change allowance). We support the requirement for a site-specific FRA at the planning application stage, with particular attention given to safe access and egress arrangements.

Policy 17: Land at West Green Cottages

The site is partly located within Flood Zones 2 and 3, including areas affected by the climate change flood extent along its southern boundary. It is also adjacent to a main river. Any works undertaken within 8 metres of the main river will require an Environmental Permit. Further guidance is available at:

https://www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-risk-activities-environmental-permits.

Additionally, the site lies within SPZs 2 and 3, where groundwater protection is particularly important. To ensure that development is sustainable, applicants must provide sufficient information to demonstrate that risks to groundwater can be effectively managed, particularly for any activities with potential to impact groundwater quality or levels.

The relevance of the designation and the potential implication upon development proposals should be considered with reference to our Groundwater Protection guidance: https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/groundwater-protection

Additional Relevant Comments

Environmental and Biodiversity Net Gain

Biodiversity Net Gain is already established in the National Planning Policy Framework for new developments and planning policies. Your plan should consider how these requirements can be met and preferably where your plan can go beyond any minimum requirements to deliver environmental net gain through enhancing and protecting the environment.

Strategic Water Planning

In February 2011, the Government signalled its belief that more locally focussed decision-making and action should sit at the heart of improvements to the water environment. This is widely known as the catchment-based approach and has been adopted to deliver requirements under the Water Framework Directive. This seeks to:

- Deliver positive and sustained outcomes for the water environment by promoting a better understanding of the environment at a local level; and
- To encourage local collaboration and more transparent decision-making when both planning and delivering activities to improve the water environment.

Neighbourhood Plans provide an opportunity to deliver multi-functional benefits through linking development with enhancements to the environment. You can find

more information on the challenges that threaten the water environment and how these challenges can be managed for your plan area in your River Basin Management Plan.

Drainage And Wastewater Infrastructure

Where your plan proposes development or promotes growth, we recommend early consultation with the relevant water company. Your plan should determine whether there is (or will be prior to occupation) sufficient infrastructure capacity existing for the connection, conveyance, treatment and disposal of quantity and quality of water associated with any proposed development within environmental limits of the receiving waterbody.

This may impact on the housing figures and the phasing of development. Please note that if there is not sufficient capacity in the infrastructure then we must be consulted again if alternative methods of disposal proposed.

Closing

We encourage you to seek ways in which your neighbourhood plan can improve the local environment at the earliest stages. Together with Natural England, English Heritage and Forestry Commission we have published joint guidance on neighbourhood planning, which sets out sources of environmental information and ideas on incorporating the environmental into your plan. This is available at:

https://neighbourhoodplanning.org/toolkits-and-guidance/consider-environment-neighbourhood-plans

Should you require any additional information, or wish to discuss these matters further, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

Mr. Ololade Ashade
Sustainable Places - Planning Advisor