



Response to the Marnhull Neighbourhood Plan, Regulation 16 Consultation

19 September 2025

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Introduction

Dorset Council welcomes progress of the Marnhull neighbourhood plan and supports its vision and objectives. We have commented on earlier versions, including the Regulation 14 version (as evidenced by the submitted Consultation Report). While Dorset Council represents various interests and objectives, one of our main roles in this situation is as Local Planning Authority which is tasked with determining planning applications in the area and also in preparing an authority-wide Local Plan. While we recognise that the submitted plan has been written by members of the community, we have to consider the implementation of the policies, and also the compatibility of the policies with the strategy forming in the emerging Dorset Council Local Plan.

The examiner should be made aware that Dorset Council launched a Local Plan Options Consultation on 18 August 2025, and this will run until 13 October 2025.¹ However, due to the early stage of plan production, the emerging local plan should only be given limited weight. Section 11 of the consultation document relates to Neighbourhood Plans, and is presented in Appendix 7 of these comments.

One of the main aims of the Local Plan consultation is to try to address the latest local housing needs figure as calculated by the December 2024 version of the standard method. Essentially the latest figure is c.80% higher than under the previous standard method, and this is requiring us to explore more options for housing growth. The examiner is no doubt aware that paragraphs 69 and 70 of the NPPF require us to provide neighbourhood areas with a housing requirement if requested to do so. Section 11.3 of the consultation document discusses this issue (see Appendix 7). While we state that we will take a “bespoke approach” to providing indicative housing requirement figures for neighbourhood areas, there will be a high degree of uncertainty until the list of new housing opportunity sites is firmed up.

¹ Details of the consultation can be found online at: <https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/w/dorset-council-local-plan-options-consultation-2025>

The Local Plan consultation identifies a number of new residential opportunity sites at Marnhull. Full details of these are presented in Appendix 8, but the table below provides a summary.

Site ref	Name	Size	Proposal
LA/MARN/001	Land at Church Farm	17.06ha	Around 250 homes
LA/MARN/006	Land south of Mill Lane	4.87ha	Around 72 homes
LA/MARN/007	Land east of Salisbury Street	21.17ha	Around 300 homes, plus potential new gypsy and traveller site
LA/MARN/009	Land between Love Lane and Nash Lane, north of the recreation ground	4.96ha	Around 75 homes

As has been noted in paragraph 1.3 of the NP, in recent years Marnhull has been subject to a number of speculative applications. Many of these have been contrary to local policy (because they have been outside the settlement boundary) but have been allowed on appeal due to the lack of a 5-year housing land supply in North Dorset. The map in Appendix 1 shows these sites and the following table summarises the permissions:

Site	Description	Status
Burton Street	Develop land by the erection of up to 61 dwellings	Under construction. See Appendix 2 for the latest layout.
Crown Road	Erect 69 dwellings with associated infrastructure	Reserved matters approved April 2025. See Appendix 3 for site layout. Construction recently commenced.
Salisbury Street	Erect up to 67 dwellings	Outline consent allowed on appeal in May 2024. See Appendix 4 for indicative site layout.
Butts Close	Erect up to 120 dwellings (outline)	Part of a hybrid application allowed on appeal in May 2025. See Appendix 5 for indicative site layout.
Tess Square	Full permission for mixed-use development including food store with café, office space with 2 flats above, and building for mixed commercial, business and service	Part of a hybrid application allowed on appeal in May 2025. See Appendix 6 for site layout.

	uses (class E), plus parking area for St Gregory's Church and School.	
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For convenience, site layout plans are provided in the appendices, which should help the examiner understand how the proposed neighbourhood plan fits in with the existing consents. More details on these applications can be found online² or on request from the Neighbourhood Planning team at Dorset Council.

Detailed comments

We hope that these comments are seen as constructive and help to finalise the plan ready for referendum.

Policy 1 'Heritage'

Marnhull is clearly a unique and historic settlement with a large number of heritage assets and historical associations. As such, we support this policy which aims to protect and enhance its key characteristics and features of special interest.

While the forward slash (/) can be useful in shorthand and notetaking, it can be ambiguous and is rarely used in formal English. In policy text, where possible it should be replaced with a comma, "and", "or", or "and/or" to improve clarity. In particular, the forward slash at the beginning of Policy 1(c) seems a little awkward. For clarity it might be better rewritten as "Development should retain, reflect and/or re-create typical heritage features...."

We have noted the concerns expressed by Chapman Lily in their response relating to the Conservation Area Appraisal, and in particular the proposed changes to the existing Conservation Area as illustrated on page 95 of the plan. Our position is that the process for reviewing and revising the Conservation Area is separate to the Neighbourhood Plan process. It may therefore be appropriate to delete from the Neighbourhood Plan the map in Appendix 6 showing the proposed revisions to the Conservation Area. It could be replaced with a map showing the existing Conservation Area along with a note stating this this could potentially be amended in the future.

² The online portal is at <https://planning.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/> - search using the reference numbers quoted in the appendices.

Policy 2 ‘Design guidelines on new buildings, boundary treatments, extensions and alterations’

We note that the policy requires development to have full regard to the Marnhull Design Guidance and Codes document. Dorset Council provided feedback on this document at the Regulation 14 stage.

As well as encouraging locally distinctive design, the policy also encourages sustainable design, for example, by requiring buildings to be located within 30° due south. As these are important, we support this policy.

Policy 3 ‘Green gaps, local green spaces and the settlement pattern’

We generally support this policy but have some specific comments relating to the proposed local green spaces and green gaps, as follows.

‘Local green spaces’

We are pleased to see that the NPPF criteria for Local Green Space (LGS) is quoted on page 28. In addition to this, we wish to highlight that there is Planning Practice Guidance on LGS,³ and feel that the following points need to be borne in mind when considering the proposed LGS sites:

- LGS should not be used in a way that undermines providing sufficient land in suitable locations to meet identified development needs (para 007).
- It is not appropriate to use LGS as a blanket designation of open countryside adjacent to settlements – it should not be used to achieve Green Belt by another name (para 015).
- There is no need to designate rights of way as these are already protected under other legislation (para 018).

As the guidance makes clear, there is a certain amount of leeway with the criteria, as the measurements can be quite subjective. Terms such as “reasonably close”, “demonstrably special”, and “extensive tract of land” are rightly open to interpretation to allow for a range of different local circumstances. However, because LGS policies should be consistent with national Green Belt policy (NPPF para 108), and therefore LGS sites are afforded a high degree of protection, we feel that the bar for LGS designation needs also to be set reasonably high.

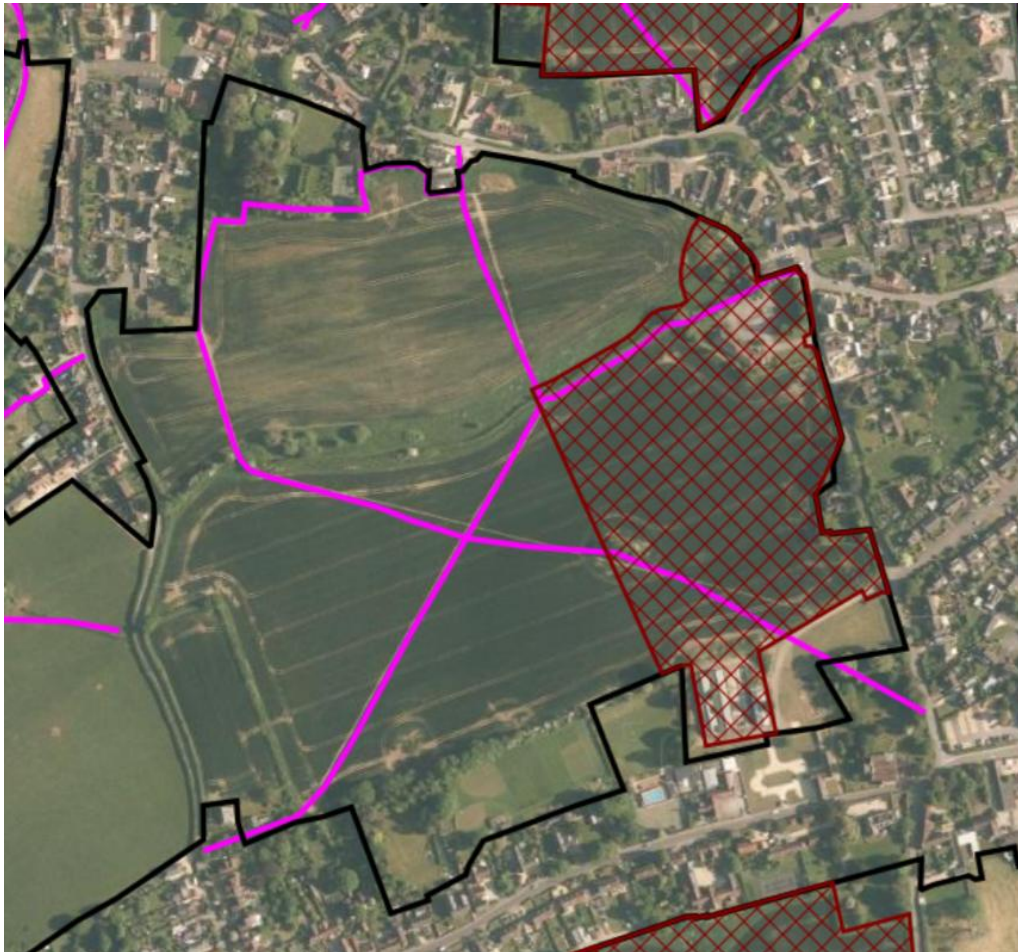
In this context, we are concerned that some of the proposed LGS sites appear to be large, intensively farmed fields. While they may have rights of way crossing them, and these may afford attractive views, we are unsure whether these features are sufficiently special, significant or important to justify LGS status. The examiner is

³ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/open-space-sports-and-recreation-facilities-public-rights-of-way-and-local-green-space#Local-Green-Space-designation>

reminded that the plan also identifies important views and green gaps as worthy of protection. We consider that these designations may be more appropriate for the protection of the features that have been deemed important on some of the proposed LGS sites.

In this vein, we wish to bring to the examiner's attention the following sites:

LGS05 – Dunfords (Central Field)



The image above shows the Council's aerial imagery for this site, with settlement boundaries (black lines), public footpaths (magenta lines), and major residential consents (red crosshatched lines) superimposed. The examiner will note that part of the eastern side of LGS05 has been cut out, which we infer is to allow for the buildings permitted under the Tess Square scheme (see Appendix 6 for the agreed site layout).

With regards to LGS05, the fields in question appear to be in arable use, as indicated by the tramlines clearly visible in the aerial photo. In Appendix 8, 'the main reason/s for the designation' column states that this is an area of land that helps separate sections of the village and is a "green lung". It also forms a setting to the church, is crossed by several historic paths, and is a hunting ground for raptors.

We have no doubt that these fields are deemed important to the local community for their contribution to the landscape, but in our view LGS is not primarily a landscape designation. As mentioned above, the plan already uses the designation of “green gap” which seems more appropriate here. The citation mentions historic paths, but these are already protected under rights of way legislation. It also mentions the setting of the church, but as this is a Grade I listed building, its setting is already protected under legislation. In terms of being a hunting ground for raptors, if this was permanent grassland there might be some merit in saying it has ecological value, but as mentioned above, it is arable farming and therefore is routinely ploughed and resown. We acknowledge that parts of the site may have ecological value (such as the hedgerows and field margins), but this does not justify designating the entire area of land.

Further, while we acknowledge that the NPPF definition allows for a level of discretion, our view is that at 16.44 ha, this site can be considered “extensive”, an attribute that is explicitly excluded by the NPPF definition.

As noted above, the eastern edge of LGS05 is subject to planning permission for commercial uses as part of the Tess Square scheme. The approved layout is shown in Appendix 6. The southwestern corner of this proposed development includes a large area of public open space. We therefore suggest that it would be more appropriate for this area of new public open space to be considered for LGS status at a later stage (e.g. during a NP review) once it has been developed and is in operation.

LGS07 – field above Burton Street adj Love Lane



The image above shows the Council's aerial imagery for this site, with settlement boundaries (black lines), public footpaths (magenta lines), major residential consents (red crosshatched lines), and Local Plan residential option sites (red diagonal lines) superimposed. The image below shows more recent aerial imagery taken from Google Earth (dated April 2025) and shows that the Burton Street site is now under construction.



As with LGS05, the key things point to make is that this is an intensively farmed arable field with a couple of public footpaths crossing it. The main reasons for designation cites the footpaths and the views to the church. It can be seen from the site layout of the Burton Street scheme (see Appendix 2) and the Google Earth image that the new development is incorporating the route of one of these public footpaths. Maintaining these routes, which are legally protected, is therefore not an issue, and does not justify designating the whole of the remaining field as LGS. Likewise, important views can also be incorporated into a successful design. As such, we cannot see sufficient evidence to justify designating this field as LGS.

LGS08 – field opposite Nash Court and Rec

The image below shows the Council's aerial imagery for this site, with public footpaths (magenta lines), listed buildings (red stars), and Local Plan residential option sites (red diagonal lines) superimposed.



The citation in Appendix 8 of the NP is that the field is critical to the setting of Nash Court (a Grade II listed building). While we agree, as mentioned above, the setting of listed buildings is already protected by legislation. We therefore don't see sufficient justification for designating this site as LGS.

LGS10 – area between Tess' Cottage and Carraway Lane

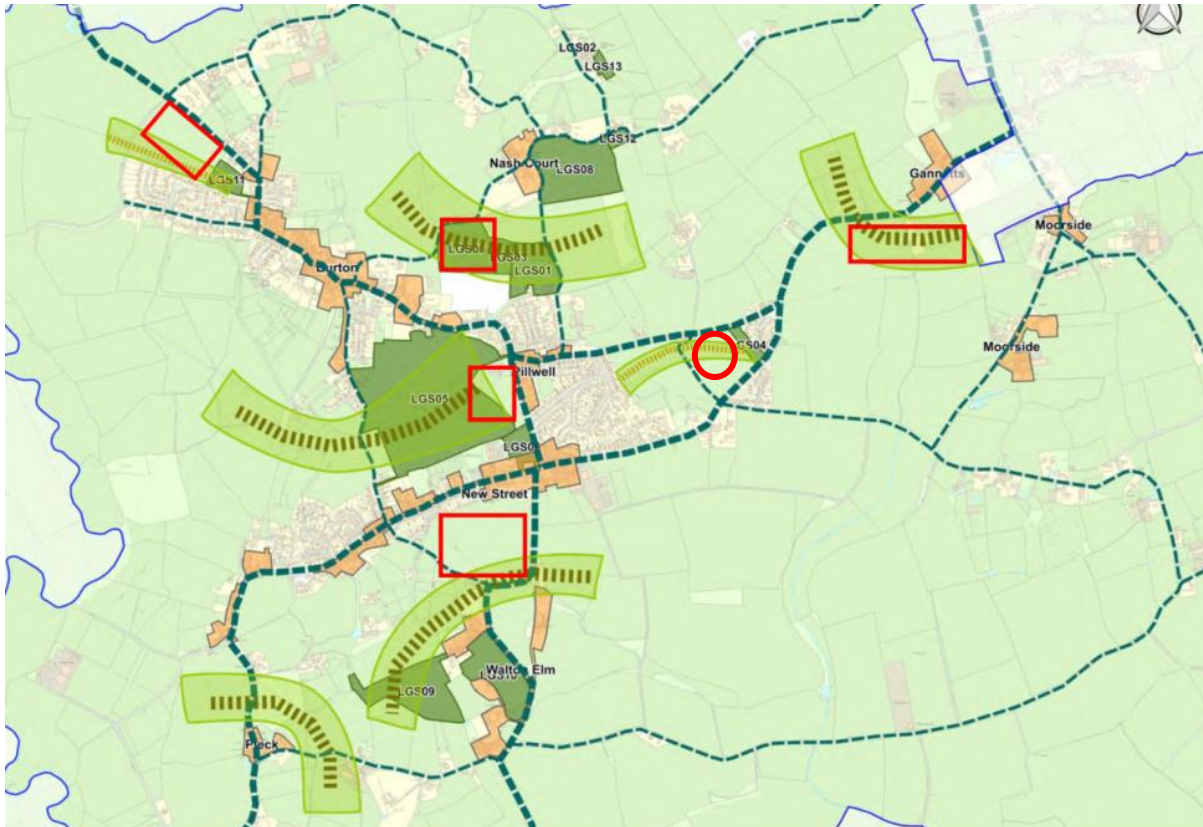


The image above shows the Council's aerial imagery for this site, with public footpaths (magenta lines), and listed buildings (red stars) superimposed.

Again, this is farmed as an arable field. The citation in Appendix 8 states that it is critical to the setting and views of Tess' Cottage and the Old Brewery, and is crossed by a footpath. As set out above, listed buildings and rights of way are already protected by separate legislation. We therefore cannot see sufficient justification for this site to be given LGS status.

'Green Gaps'

Map 1 identifies a number of Green Gaps which are afforded protection by Policy 3(a) against development that would undermine the rural, undeveloped nature of these gaps. We have some concern that these areas appear quite large, albeit they are qualified in Map 1 with "broad location" in parentheses. While we appreciate that these have the objective of preserving historical settlement patterns, relatively little evidence appears to have been provided in support of them. This is in contrast to LGS (evidence is supplied in Appendix 8) and Important Views (evidence is supplied in Appendix 11 and a separate Views Report). As the Green Gaps don't have reference numbers, it is difficult to comment on them individually, but we will point out that they overlap sites that have planning permission or housing opportunity sites identified in the Local Plan options consultation (as shown on the map in Appendix 1 of this response). To assist the examiner, we have illustrated these by drawing red rectangles where there are potential conflicts over an extract of Map1, as shown on the map below. We have also placed a red circle over the Salisbury Street site, which currently has outline permission (see Appendix 4 for indicative layout). Our urban designer is concerned that the size of this particular green gap is unlikely to allow for sufficient land to achieve the quantum of developed approved by the outline permission.



Our view is that the Green Gap designation and associated policy could have the consequence of restricting or even prohibiting development in areas that either have planning permission or areas that may be needed to contribute to Dorset Council's approach to try and meet its overall housing need figure. In Policy 3 it appears to function as a type of Green Belt policy, stating that development will not be permitted that would undermine the rural, undeveloped nature of the green gaps. NPPF para 144 states: "New Green Belts should only be established in exceptional circumstances." PPG states that LGS should not be used as a backdoor way to achieve Green Belt by another name, and should not be used in a way that undermines plan making (paras 007 and 015). We suggest that the use of the Green Gap designation is also an attempt to achieve Green Belt by another name, it has the potential to undermine future plan making, and therefore does not have due regard to national policy.

Policy 4 'Tranquillity and dark skies'

We appreciate that this is a rural area where within reason, tranquillity and dark skies can be expected. We therefore support this policy.

Policy 5 'Important views'

We note that a considerable amount of evidence has been put forward in justification for the Important Views, included in Appendix 11 and a separate Views Report. Nevertheless, we are a little surprised by the sheer number of Important Views

identified, as shown on Map 2. A question to ask is whether overuse of a designation diminishes its significance. On a more practical front, it is difficult to make out the individual views in Map 2 due to a considerable amount of overlapping. In mitigation, we note that Policy 5 does not prohibit development in these areas *per se*, but allows development that preserves and/or enhances the important views. We note that the foci of the views are either of notable listed buildings or of prominent landscape features, and we agree that public views of these are generally important.

Policy 6 ‘Woodlands, hedgerows and wildlife areas’

In part (c) of the policy, we suggest that “pollinator nest sites” is amended to “pollinator nesting sites” as that appears to be the commonly used term. Otherwise we support this policy.

Policy 7 ‘Meeting local housing needs’

As set out in our introduction, there is uncertainty regarding housing need/requirement for specific settlements at present. In particular, for settlements where we are consulting on new residential opportunity sites, we are at present unable to provide a housing requirement figure with any degree of confidence. This is consistent with the response we made at Regulation 14 in March 2025, which is quoted on page 118 of the NP. In that response we state that it is probably reasonable to consider 17 dwellings per annum to be a minimum figure for Marnhull, but there are reasons why it might go up.

Policy 7(a) states:

Given the identified supply exceeds the housing need requirement, the release of unallocated greenfield sites for open market housing outside of the revised settlement boundary (as indicated on Map 3) should be resisted.

The statement quoted above may pass the basic condition that it is in general conformity with strategic policies in the *adopted* local plan. However, December 2024 saw the publication of a new NPPF and a new standard method for calculating local housing need. We therefore question whether this policy has due regard to national policy and advice. In addition, it seems to be ignoring the direction of travel of the emerging local plan, which was highlighted in our Regulation 14 response. Even if this is not a basic condition matter, our concern is that such a statement gives an unrealistic expectation to the reader that all additional development outside of the revised settlement boundary can be resisted. Even if the Local Plan does not progress in the form outlined in the August 2025 Options consultation, the reality is that Dorset Council is unlikely to have a 5-year housing land supply from 1 November

2025 onwards (when the Annual Position Statement expires).⁴ This has the consequence that the tilted balance, as set out in paragraph 11 of the NPPF, comes into play, and new speculative developments may be approved or allowed on appeal.

‘Settlement boundary’

We note that Policy 7 effectively amends the settlement boundary for Marnhull, which was last amended in 2003 (when the previous North Dorset Local Plan was adopted). Policy 2 of the North Dorset Local Plan Part 1 (adopted 2016) provides the mechanism for allowing such changes by stating:

The settlement boundaries defined around the four main towns, Stalbridge and the larger villages in the North Dorset District-Wide Local Plan 2003 and proposals maps are retained and, in conjunction with Policies 16, 17, 18, 19 and 21 of this document, which identify the broad locations for housing and employment growth and regeneration, will continue to be used for development management purposes until reviewed either: through site allocations in Part 2 of the Local Plan or a neighbourhood plan.

We note that a number of representations have been received regarding the exclusion of a paddock on land east of Church Hill. As this site has not been promoted to us before now, we have not determined whether or not it is suitable for infill development. Otherwise we have no objection to the proposed amendments to the settlement boundary. However, we would point out to the examiner that the Dorset Council Local Plan Options Consultation 2025 proposes deleting all settlement boundaries and introduces a ‘Flexible Settlements Policy’ which would allow windfall development of up to 30 dwellings on the edge of existing larger settlements including Marnhull. This is discussed in Section 11.4 of the consultation document, which is reproduced in Appendix 7 of this response.

Policy 8 ‘the eastward expansion of Marnhull’

We welcome the indicative plan for the eastward expansion of Marnhull in Map 4 which helps to illustrate the rather lengthy Policy 8. We wish to reiterate that this area of land currently consists of two planning permissions, one at reserved matters and one at outline (see Appendices 3 and 4). For the western portion (the Crown Road site), it is highly unlikely that it will be possible to influence the design given that it has reserved matters consent and construction work has commenced. Thankfully, the layout in the reserved matters consent and the layout shown in Map 4 of the NP

⁴ Note that while the December 2024 NPPF effectively abolishes future Annual Position Statements, para 233 allows local authorities with an APS to be able to continue to use them until they expire. For details of the Dorset Annual Position Statement, which runs until 31 October 2025, see <https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/w/annual-position-statement> Note

have many similarities, particularly in terms of onward vehicle and pedestrian connections.

Conversely, we have concerns regarding the eastern portion (the Salisbury Street site). Our urban designer has reviewed it and considers that the proposed Green Gap is unlikely to allow for sufficient land to achieve the approved quantum of development (see comments regarding Green Gaps above). They have also expressed doubts that the position of the Green Gap in this instance will allow for the optimal position of the SUDS, which ideally should be placed at the north of site according to the topography of the site.

As mentioned above, the policy is quite lengthy and consists of a large number of bullet points. In order to assist with referencing in the future, we feel it would be better if the bullet points were converted to either letters or numbers (e.g. roman numerals). This point also applies to Policy 9.

Policy 9 ‘the southward expansion of Marnhull’

As noted in the NP, this site has outline planning permission by virtue of a hybrid application which was allowed on appeal in May 2025. There are differences between the outline scheme (see Appendix 5) and the indicative plan in Map 5, particularly in terms of the location and distribution of public open space. While the approved scheme maintains an open area running approximately south to north to allow for views of the church, the indicative plan in Map 5 sets aside a much wider area “to be retained as meadow” and to provide “setting” as well as viewing of assets including St Gregory’s tower. In contrast, the layout that has outline consent provides another green corridor running approximately west to east along the northern edge. There are therefore merits with both schemes, and these may need to be explored further at the reserved matters stage.

Policy 10 ‘Business strategy’

We note that this policy supports business / employment development at Church Farm, along the B3092 as part of the eastward expansion, through small-scale infill within the settlement boundary, and through the re-use of existing buildings / previously developed land. This policy appears proportionate in terms of supporting the local economy, and therefore it has our support.

Policy 11 ‘Supporting community facilities’

The policy protects existing community facilities and supports new community facilities. This policy therefore has our broad support. However, we note that the policy refers to Map 4 on a number of occasions, in particular in relation to sites for the expansion of the recreation ground, additional allotment space and additional cemetery space. We believe that these need to be updated to refer to Map 6. While

we appreciate that proposed expansion areas overlap with some of the residential option sites in the Local Plan consultation (see Appendix 1), we agree that new community facilities need to be provided in line with the increase in resident population. We therefore welcome the community's efforts to identify potential sites for new facilities.

Policy 12 'Highway safety, traffic and transport'

We note that the policy requires development to prioritise walking and cycling where practicable. As these active forms of travel are more sustainable, we support this policy. We note the detailed analysis that the community have done on their own road network, as evidenced by Maps 7 and 8. This has been done in consultation with Dorset Council's transport planning team.

Policy 13 'Flooding and flood mitigation measures'

Parts (a) and (b) of this policy largely repeat principles in national policy, i.e. that development should be made safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere, and that a sequential approach should be applied so that development is steered to areas with the lowest risk of flooding from any source. We see little merit in reiterating or paraphrasing national policy, and NPPF para 16(f) states that policies should avoid unnecessary duplication. For the sake of consistency, it would be better to refer to national policy where possible. We also wish to point out that as recently as 17 September 2025, parts of the national Planning Practice Guidance on flood risk were updated by the government. This indicates that this is a dynamic area of policy and that local policies are at risk of becoming out of date very quickly.

The other parts of the policy are more locally specific and therefore we generally support them. However there appears to be a grammar issue with (c) – "...and where areas of hard surfacing ~~is~~ are proposed..."

Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) screening

Where a land use plan (including a neighbourhood plan) is likely to have a significant effect on a European (habitat) site, then the plan-making authority must, before the plan is given effect, make an appropriate assessment of the implications of the plan for that site in view of that site's conservation objectives.⁵

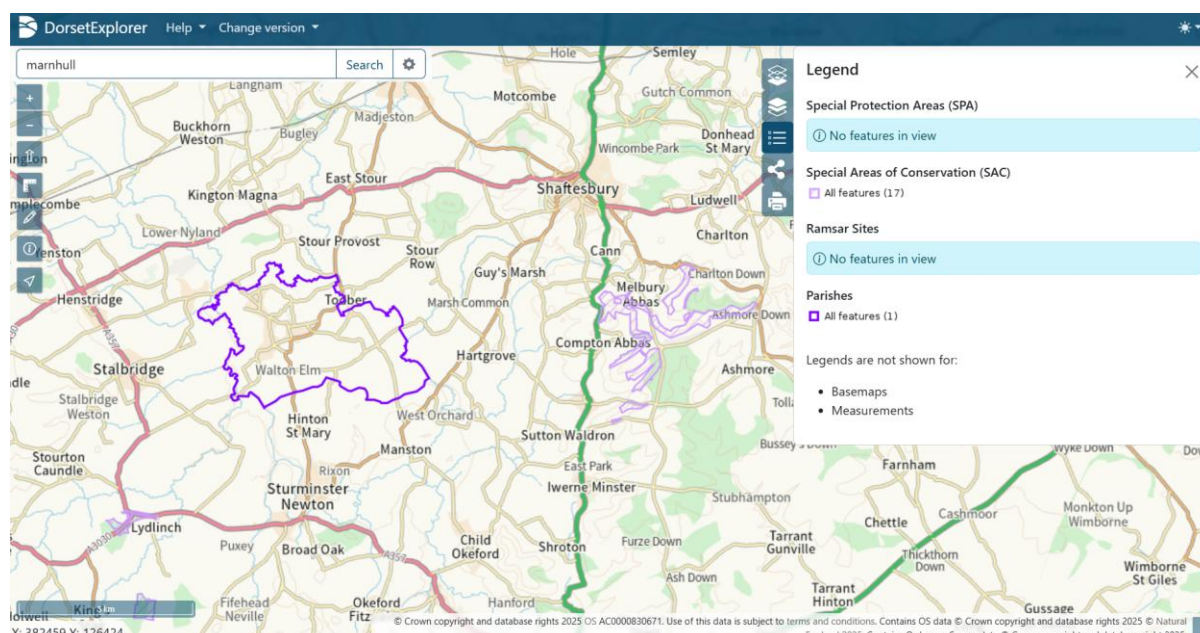
The first step is therefore a screening exercise to determine if the proposed plan is likely to result in a significant effect on habitat sites, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

⁵ Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, Regulation 105

There are no European habitat sites⁶ in the neighbourhood area (the parish of Marnhull) and none of the Natural England nutrient neutrality river catchments fall within the area. The nearest habitats sites to proposals in the draft plan are:

Habitat Site	Location	Potential threat, pressure or activity
Fontmell & Melbury Downs SAC	near Melbury Abbas, approximately 8km east of the eastern expansion of Marnhull	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air pollution • Sport, leisure and recreational activities
Rooksmoor SAC	near Lydlinch, approximately 6km southwest of the southern expansion of Marnhull	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air pollution • Sport, leisure and recreational activities

These are shown on the map below:⁷



In terms of the threat of air pollution, atmospheric nitrogen resulting from emissions to air from road traffic may result in the deposition of atmospheric nitrogen into the soil. This causes the enrichment of soils, affecting those habitats which are necessarily naturally low in nutrients. Step 1 of Natural England's guidance note on

⁶ Habitats Sites are any site which would be included within the definition at regulation 8 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 for the purpose of those regulations, including candidate Special Areas of Conservation, Sites of Community Importance, Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas and any relevant Marine Sites. (NPPF glossary definition)

⁷ The interactive map can be accessed using this link:

<https://gi.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/dorsetexplorer#map=12.76/50.97109/-2.18088/0&layers=426/100/100/610/100/100/611/100/100/612/100/100/&basemap=1/100/100>

the assessment of road traffic emissions asks, does the proposal give rise to emissions which are likely to reach a European site?

The Rooksmoor SAC straddles the junction of the A357 and the A3030 to the southwest of the plan area. Potentially, therefore, additional road journeys arising from the new development proposed in the plan will impact on the Rooksmoor SAC. It is difficult to quantify exactly how much additional traffic will use this junction but we consider that it will be negligible on most days. This is because the main service centres for Marnhull, providing retail, education, health, and employment services are:

- Sturminster Newton
- Stalbridge
- Shaftesbury
- Gillingham
- Sherborne
- Blandford
- Poole
- Bournemouth
- Yeovil

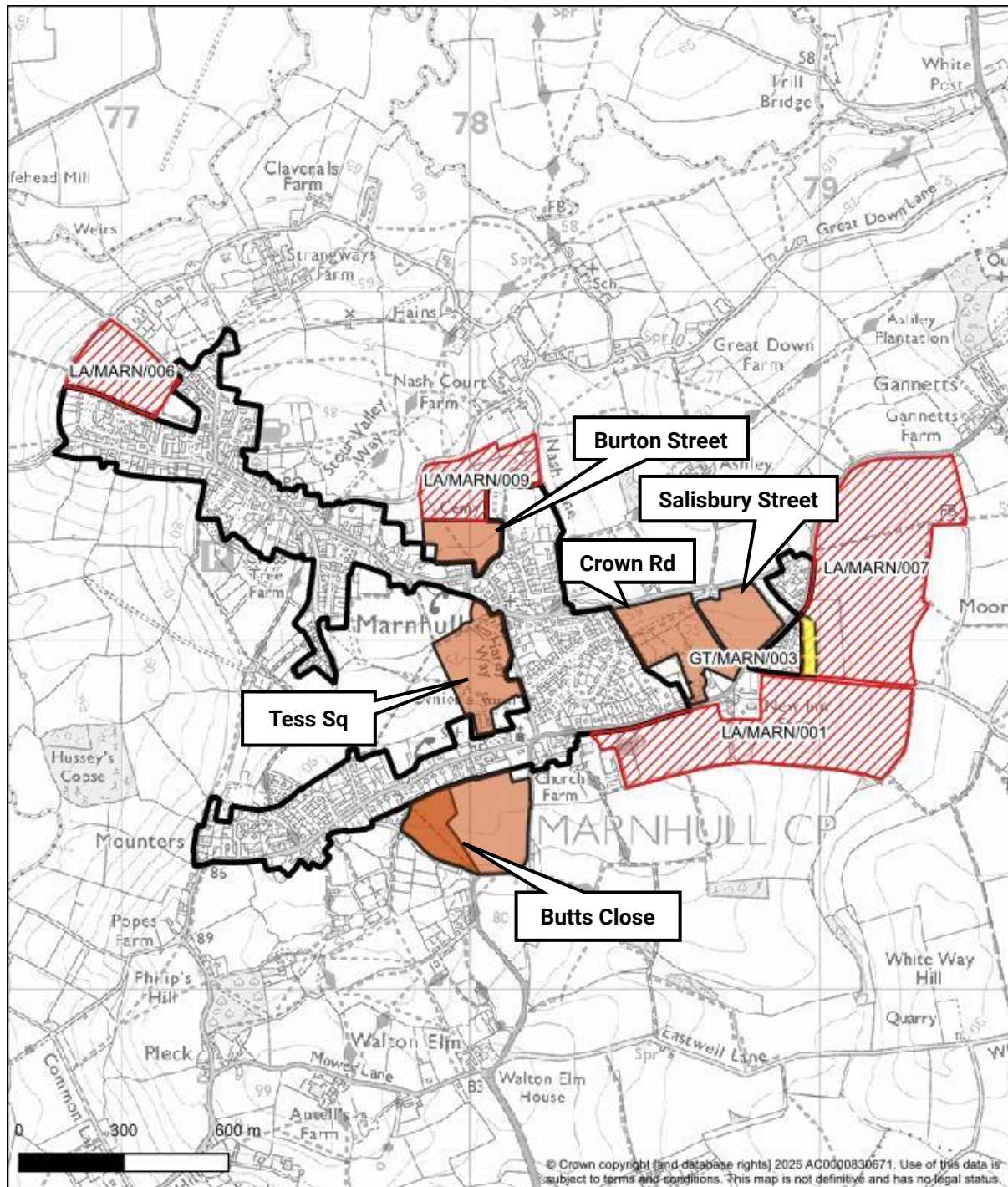
Journeys to these destinations would not normally need to go via the junction at Rooksmoor SAC. Likewise, any longer distance journeys to larger destinations such as Salisbury, Bristol or London would head north to the A30/A303 and so not require use of this junction. Essentially, only journeys directly south to Dorchester and Weymouth are likely to use this junction. Dorchester is 22 miles away and is smaller and has fewer facilities than Yeovil which is nearer at 16 miles away. Weymouth is around 30 miles away, and while being the nearest seaside resort, is unlikely to be frequent destination for Marnhull residents.

In terms of the threat of sport, leisure and recreational activities on habitats sites, we consider this to be unlikely due to the distance between the proposals in the plan area and the closest habitats sites, and because there is a wealth of accessible countryside which is nearer to the proposals which can be used for recreational purposes.



We therefore conclude that the Marnhull Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to have a significant impact on European habitat sites. An appropriate assessment is therefore not required in this instance. It should be noted that Natural England have responded to the Regulation 16 consultation and have not indicated that an HRA appropriate assessment is required.

Appendix 1: Local Plan consultation sites



The map below forms part of the Dorset Council Local Plan Options Consultation, August 2025.



Consultation sites

-  Residential option - proposed
-  Gypsy & traveller site - proposed

Existing allocations & consents

-  Settlement boundary - existing
-  Residential permission - extant

Appendix 2: Burton Street site layout

From variation of conditions application P/VOC/2024/00663, approved 23 July 2024.
Site is under construction.



Appendix 3: Crown Road site layout

From reserved matters application P/RES/2024/03588 approved 25 April 2025. Site is under construction.



Appendix 4: Salisbury Street indicative layout

From outline application P/OUT/2023/00627 allowed on appeal 8 May 2024. A reserved matters application has not been submitted to date.



Appendix 5: Butts Close indicative site layout

From hybrid application P/OUT/2023/02644 allowed on appeal 6 May 2025. A reserved matters application has not been submitted to date.



Appendix 6: Tess Square layout

From hybrid application P/OUT/2023/02644 allowed on appeal 6 May 2025. This has full permission.



Appendix 7: Extract from the Dorset Council Local Plan Options Consultation (August 2025) – Section 11 ‘Neighbourhood Plans’

11. Neighbourhood Plans

- 11.1.1. Communities can have a greater role in shaping the areas in which they live and work by establishing statutory policies through neighbourhood plans. There is no legal requirement for a community to prepare a neighbourhood plan, but it is a right which communities in England can choose to use.
- 11.1.2. Neighbourhood planning has the potential to bring together a local community, landowners and developers, service providers and Dorset Council to build a consensus about the future of an area. Where a town or parish council exists, they should lead on neighbourhood planning. Elsewhere a 'neighbourhood planning forum' must be designated to lead the process.
- 11.1.3. A neighbourhood plan forms part of the development plan for an area and sits alongside the Local Plans and other development plan documents we might prepare. Planning applications will be determined using both the Local Plan (once adopted) and any neighbourhood plans that have been 'made' part of the development plan; and by having regard to any other material considerations.

11.2. Strategic priorities and strategic policies

- 11.2.1. National policy indicates that neighbourhood plans should be aligned with the strategic needs and priorities of the wider area. Section 2 of this consultation document establishes a Vision for the Dorset Council Local Plan area and identifies a set of Strategic Priorities. Neighbourhood plans should be prepared to positively contribute to the Local Plan's Vision and Strategic Priorities. The final version of the Dorset Council Local Plan will contain a series of strategic policies which will aim to deliver against the strategic priorities.
- 11.2.2. National policy also indicates that neighbourhood plans must be prepared in general conformity with the strategic policies of a local plan. As a result, a neighbourhood plan should not promote less development in the neighbourhood area than is set out in the local plan or undermine the local plan strategic policies.
- 11.2.3. The strategic policies in the Local Plan will be those that contribute towards the delivery of the Strategic Priorities set out in Section 2. All of the proposed housing allocations in the final version of the Local Plan will be strategic in that they will all play a role in contributing towards meeting the housing needs of the plan area. The strategic employment allocations will be those identified as 'key

employment sites'. A few policies may have both strategic and non-strategic aspects.

11.3. Housing requirement figures for neighbourhood plans

- 11.3.1. We are required to set out housing requirement figures for designated neighbourhood plan areas. National policy does not prescribe a methodology for doing this at the neighbourhood level, but explains that strategic policies, such as those that will be included in the Dorset Council Local Plan, should set out *'a housing requirement for neighbourhood areas which reflects the overall strategy for the pattern and scale of development, and any relevant allocations'*²⁶ set out in the local plan.
- 11.3.2. The 'housing need' for a local plan area should be determined using the Standard Method. For the Dorset Council area this figure, as set out in Section 4 of this consultation document, is currently 3,246 net additional homes per annum. Over recent years, around 1,660 new homes have been built in Dorset, so this is a significant increase.
- 11.3.3. We outlined the overarching strategy for meeting housing need in this document but the amount of housing that will be required in each neighbourhood plan area is yet to be finalised. As the Local Plan progresses towards adoption, this detail will be fixed.
- 11.3.4. We are likely to present details of housing requirements for neighbourhood plan areas at the point of pre-submission consultation (regulation 19) on the new Local Plan that is scheduled for August 2026. Prior to August 2026, we will take a bespoke approach to providing neighbourhood planning bodies with an indicative housing requirement figure when requested to do so.
- 11.3.5. It is likely that the methodology that will be used to produce housing requirement figures for neighbourhood areas will be similar to the method which we presented as part of the January 2021 Local Plan Consultation. The 2021 consultation document detailed that the proposed housing requirement figures for neighbourhood areas should be the sum of:
- completions since the beginning of the plan period;
 - extant planning permissions;
 - housing allocations – both existing and proposed;

²⁶ National Planning Policy Framework, December 2024, paragraph 69

- capacity on major sites (10 or more dwellings) within development / settlement boundaries as evidenced through the SHLAA; and
- a windfall allowance on minor sites (less than 10 dwellings) based on recent completion levels

11.3.6. For the purposes of this public consultation, the local plan period is anticipated to begin on 1 April 2026 and, therefore, no completions have yet been recorded. If we use the method which has been outlined, the housing requirement figures will include known allocations in submitted or made neighbourhood plans as well as adopted and emerging local plan allocations. A windfall allowance on minor sites will also be estimated and projected forward to 2043, the end of the local plan period as currently proposed. All data sources will need to be updated as the plan progresses through the plan making process.

Question 33: We have suggested that housing requirements for neighbourhood plan areas should be finalised at the next stage of preparing the Local Plan. This is likely to involve consideration of sites with planning permission, local plan allocations and unplanned development. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach?

- a. Agree
- b. Partially agree
- c. Neutral
- d. Partially disagree
- e. Disagree

Please provide any further comments or reasoning...

11.4. Flexible Settlements Policy

- 11.4.1. As set out in Section 5 of this consultation document, we propose to introduce a flexible settlements policy that would allow for development of sites up to 30 dwellings adjacent to the built-up edge of settlements that are in Tier 1, Tier 2 or Tier 3 of the settlement hierarchy, subject to certain criteria being met. It is proposed that this policy would apply across the whole of the Dorset Council plan area except for settlements in the Green Belt.
- 11.4.2. We also propose that the policy would not apply in instances where a neighbourhood plan has been made (adopted) within 5 years of a planning

application being determined and which contains policies and allocations to meet their identified housing requirement.

- 11.4.3. The neighbourhood plan housing requirement figures that we prepare as part of the new Local Plan should be taken as a minimum for a neighbourhood plan area and can therefore be exceeded. However, the scope of a neighbourhood plan is up to a neighbourhood planning body. There is no requirement for neighbourhood plans to allocate sites or identify any additional land to meet housing needs. Nevertheless, there may well be a strong basis for neighbourhood plans allocating sites particularly if there is evidence of local housing need in the neighbourhood plan area. Allocations proposed in neighbourhood plans should be in accordance with the thrust of the spatial strategy set out in the Local Plan and not be strategic in nature.

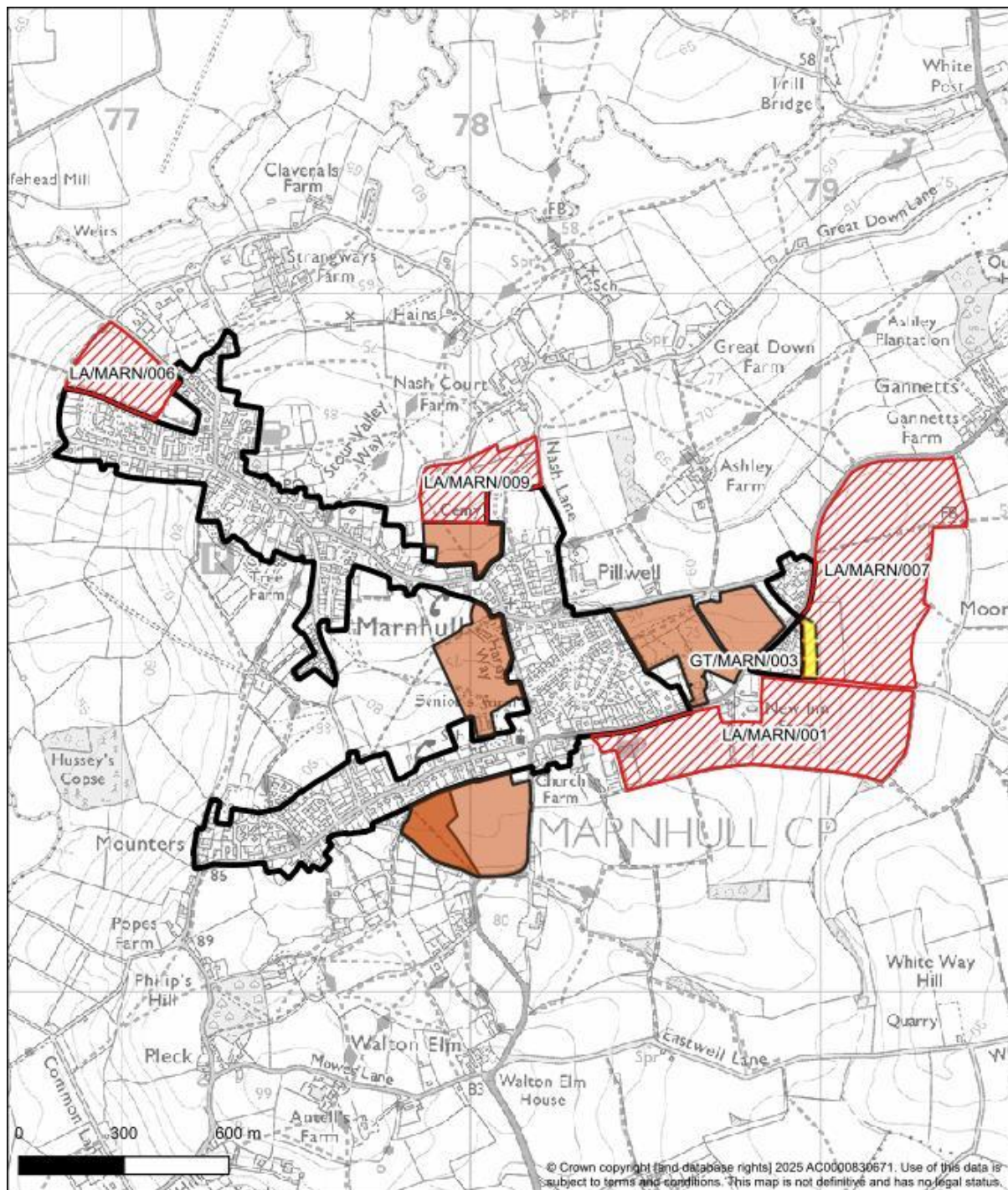
Question 34: Should the housing requirement figures for neighbourhood plan areas outside the Green Belt, include an allowance for sites that could come forward through the flexible settlements policy?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Please provide any further comments or reasoning.

Appendix 8: Extract from Dorset Council Local Plan Appendix A: Opportunity sites for housing – Marnhull section

Marnhull



Consultation sites

- Residential option - proposed
- Gypsy & traveller site - proposed

Existing allocations & consents

- Settlement boundary - existing
- Residential permission - extant

LA/MARN/001 - Land at Church Farm

Site name	Land at Church Farm
Site reference	LA/MARN/001
Site area (ha)	17.06ha
Parish/Settlement	Marnhull
Proposed uses (estimated number of homes/capacity)	Around 250 homes
Greenfield/Brownfield	Greenfield

Considerations	Summary	Proposed approach
Proposal	Around 250 homes	
Specific design requirements	Village location. Adjacent to existing residential development.	Appropriate density of development for the village location.
Natural environment and ecology	Hedgerows on boundaries. Records of priority species nearby.	Retain suitable habitat and buffer boundaries. Mitigation strategy. Lighting strategy.
Landscape and visual	Site is bounded by well-trimmed hedgerows with few trees. Site bisected by public right of way and others run along or adjacent to its west, south & east boundaries. Some residential and farm properties at the site boundaries. Open relatively flat landscape with distant views to Cranborne Chase National Landscape approximately 8km to east and south. Development of site unlikely to have significant impact on views from the National Landscape at this distance but may have cumulative impact together with other proposed development sites in Marnhull.	Retain and enhance existing field boundary hedgerows especially on south and east boundaries. Retain and enhance route of public rights of way- use small middle field as public open space.
Heritage	Site is within proximity of the Marnhull Conservation Area to the west and thus a moderate quantum of designated and non-designated assets. Note Grade I Church of St Gregory,	Refer to landscape comments. To include high quality designed development referencing vernacular materials, presented in an appropriate layout, scale and density which serves to

	<p>Grade II* Farmhouse and attached Barn. Grade II Rosedale Cottage and Shaston View to the north.</p> <p>Human remains recorded on the site.</p>	<p>positively enhance and not challenge identified assets and their setting.</p> <p>Pre-determination archaeological evaluation</p>
Flood risk	<p>There are no significant flood risks to this site.</p> <p>There is a watercourse to discharge surface water to in close proximity however it is approximately 80m across third party land. Infiltration into soil may need to be investigated (including winter groundwater monitoring).</p>	<p>If infiltration proves not to be viable agreements with relevant landowners may need to be made in order to discharge surface water to the nearby watercourse.</p> <p>If a substantiated discharge location can be provided then there are no major constraints to development with regards to flooding & surface water drainage.</p>
Amenity, health, education	<p>Consideration towards safeguarding land for St Gregory school extension may be useful. Focus of development in Marnhull welcome from an education point of view.</p>	<p>Secondary contributions towards Gillingham School required.</p>
Transport (access and movement)	<p>Existing access recently formed onto B3092 which would be suitable to serve this development parcel. No other access points should be considered.</p>	<p>Tactile pedestrian crossing point to reach footway on northern side of B3092.</p> <p>Transport Assessment and Travel Plan required</p> <p>Access and internal layout should be designed for a bus route</p> <p>Bus service contribution</p>

LA/MARN/006 - Land south of Mill Lane

Site name	Land south of Mill Lane
Site reference	LA/MARN/006
Site area (ha)	4.87ha
Parish/Settlement	Marnhull
Proposed uses (estimated number of homes/capacity)	Around 72 homes
Greenfield/Brownfield	Greenfield

Considerations	Summary	Proposed approach
Proposal	Around 72 homes	
Specific design requirements	Village location. Adjacent to existing residential development.	Appropriate density of development for the village location.
Natural environment and ecology	Hedgerows on boundaries. Site is within amber risk zone for Great Crested Newt Grassland likely used by foraging/commuting bats.	Retain suitable habitats and buffer boundaries. Lighting strategy.
Landscape and visual	Site is bounded by farm track lined with mature trees, a small field with a tree lined edge to east, & residential development on Ham Meadow to south. Public right of way runs along southern boundary. Trees on west, north and east boundaries screen/filter views but residential development on southern boundary would be clearly visible from the site and would impact local landscape character. Site on edge of landform and ground levels fall sharply to the west to reveal open and expansive views.	Retain and protect trees & hedgerows especially on western boundary. Retain and enhance public right of way route. Avoid built development on western boundary.
Heritage	Limited heritage concern. Site occupies high ground overlooking a river valley,	To include high quality designed development referencing vernacular materials, presented in an appropriate layout, scale and density which serves to

	indicating archaeological potential	positively enhance and not challenge the local setting. Pre-determination archaeological evaluation
Flood risk	There are no significant flood risks to this site. However there does not appear to be a watercourse or surface water sewer to discharge surface water to in close proximity. Infiltration into soil may need to be investigated (including winter groundwater monitoring).	A surface water discharge location will need to be identified and substantiated.
Amenity, health, education	No specific issues identified	
Transport (access and movement)	Mill Lane is very narrow with no pedestrian facilities. Forming a suitable vehicular access into the site will be extremely difficult. This site is not suitable for a bus route.	Access from Ham Meadows, to the south. Bus service contribution to improve services in the village A reduction in the cumulative level of development allocated in Marnhull would be more appropriate.

LA/MARN/007 - Land east of Salisbury Street

Site name	Land east of Salisbury Street
Site reference	LA/MARN/007
Site area (ha)	21.17ha
Parish/Settlement	Marnhull
Proposed uses (estimated number of homes/capacity)	Around 300 homes (plus potential new gypsy and traveller site)
Greenfield/Brownfield	Greenfield

Considerations	Summary	Proposed approach
Proposal	Around 300 homes (plus potential new Gypsy and Traveller site)	
Specific design requirements	Village location. Adjacent to existing residential development.	Appropriate density of development for the village location.
Natural environment and ecology	Hedgerows on boundaries. Priority species records in the area. Grassland likely used by foraging / commuting bats. Good habitat connectivity.	Retain suitable habitats and buffer boundaries. Lighting strategy.
Landscape and visual	Site Bounded to west & north by B3092 Salisbury Street, to east by open farmland and to south by Stoneylawn. Residential development adjacent to southwest boundary. Public right of way crosses northern portion of site. Boundary hedgerows with few trees allow open views across site from B3092. Site on the edge of landform and ground levels fall gently to the east to reveal open and expansive views to distant Cranborne Chase National Landscape approximately 8km away.	Retain and enhance existing field boundary hedgerows. Retain and enhance route of public right of way. Consider limiting extent of development to area south of the public right of way.
Heritage	Limited heritage concern. Size of site suggests potential for archaeological remains	Refer to landscape comments. To include high quality designed development referencing vernacular materials, presented

		<p>in an appropriate layout, scale and density which serves to positively enhance and not challenge the local setting.</p> <p>Pre-determination archaeological evaluation</p>
Flood risk	<p>There is a watercourse with overbank flooding in the north-east corner of the site. Development must be located outside of the area of flood risk.</p> <p>It is likely that surface water runoff from the site could discharge to the watercourse on the north-east edge of the site.</p>	<p>Development must be located outside of the area of flood risk.</p> <p>Overall, there are no major constraints to development with regards to flooding & surface water drainage.</p>
Amenity, health, education	No specific issues identified	
Transport (access and movement)	<p>Access onto B3092 is possible - suggest as close to the Sodom Lane junction as is possible. Issues with lack of pedestrian connectivity.</p> <p>Located 1.8k-2km from existing local centre in the north of the village, could be a barrier to active travel journeys.</p>	<p>Footway into centre of settlement, along Sodom Lane, required.</p> <p>Transport Assessment and Travel Plan required</p> <p>Access and internal layout should be designed for a bus route.</p> <p>Development to provide additional services in the village to encourage active travel journeys</p> <p>Bus service contribution required.</p>
Other issues	<p>The site also includes an area proposed as an option site for Traveller uses. (GT/MARN/003).</p> <p>Southwest corner of the site is Dorset Council owned.</p>	<p>Consider the integration of Traveller pitches within wider development of housing for the settled community.</p> <p>Use mechanisms to support comprehensive development of the site, such as master planning.</p>

LA/MARN/009 - Land between Love Lane and Nash Lane, north of the recreation ground

Site name	Land between Love Lane and Nash Lane, north of the recreation ground
Site reference	LA/MARN/009
Site area (ha)	4.96ha
Parish/Settlement	Marnhull
Proposed uses (estimated number of homes/capacity)	Around 75 homes
Greenfield/Brownfield	Greenfield

Considerations	Summary	Proposed approach
Proposal	Around 75 homes	
Specific design requirements	Village location. Adjacent to existing residential development.	Appropriate density of development for the village location.
Natural environment and ecology	Hedgerows on boundaries. Site is within amber risk zone for Great Crested Newt. Grassland likely used by foraging/commuting bats. Good habitat connectivity.	Retain suitable habitats and buffer boundaries. Lighting strategy.
Landscape and visual	Area to the north of Recreation Ground and site under construction for residential development between Love Lane and Nash Lane. Mature trees on east, southeast & southwest boundaries, some covered by Tree Preservation Orders. Public rights of way cross western edge and eastern portion of site. Shallow valley feature and small woodland in valley screen and filter views to east though view to Cranborne Chase National Landscape approximately 8km away are possible. Site is likely to feel quite enclosed as a consequence.	Retain protected trees. Retain and enhance existing field boundary hedgerows. Retain and enhance route of public rights of way. Any development needs to form a coherent whole with recreation ground and recent development to south.

Heritage	<p>Site is within proximity of Marnhull Conservation Area and thus a low quantum of designated and non-designated assets to the southwest. Grade II Nash Court, Manor House and Nash Lodge to north/northeast.</p> <p>Size of site suggests potential for archaeological remains</p>	<p>Refer to landscape comments. To include high quality designed development referencing vernacular materials, presented in an appropriate layout, scale and density which serves to positively enhance and not challenge identified assets and their setting.</p> <p>Pre-determination archaeological evaluation.</p>
Flood risk	<p>There are no significant flood risks to this site.</p> <p>However there does not appear to be a watercourse or surface water sewer to discharge surface water to in close proximity. Infiltration into soil may need to be investigated (including winter groundwater monitoring).</p>	<p>A surface water discharge location will need to be identified and substantiated.</p>
Amenity, health, education	No specific issues identified	
Transport (access and movement)	Love Lane and Nash Lane are narrow roads and no pedestrian facilities available.	Vehicular and pedestrian access will need to be taken from the new development to the south.