

Application Number:	P/FUL/2023/04091
Webpage:	https://planning.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/
Site address:	Dower House Parnham House Parnham Beaminster DT8 3LZ
Proposal:	Erection new dwelling. Construct swimming pool and pool plant house. Alterations and extensions to Dower House to provide enhanced internal accommodation; part demolition including existing boiler room, utility room, conservatory, garage, walling, structures within courtyard and detached outbuilding. Reinstatement of carriageway, gates and piers and boundary enclosure; erection of bike stores.
Applicant name:	Mr James Perkins
Case Officer:	Matthew Pochin-Hawkes
Ward Member(s):	Cllr Knox

1.0 Reason application is going to committee:

This application has been brought to committee following a scheme of delegation consultation at the request of the Service Manager for Development Management and Enforcement.

2.0 Summary of recommendation:

Refuse for the following reasons:

1. Through the construction of a substantial dwelling, swimming pool and pool house in close proximity to the former Lodge (Dower House), the proposed development would undermine the hierarchy of buildings within the Parnham Estate and Parnham House Registered Park and Garden (RPG) and would adversely affect the significance of the RPG, The Lodge and Parnham House. The resultant less than substantial harm without clear and convincing justification would not be outweighed by public benefits in conflict with West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan Policy ENV4 and the NPPF.
2. In the absence of a Section 106 Agreement linking the holiday let with the Parnham Estate, the proposal would not result in the intensification or extension of existing premises where the expansion would improve the quality and appearance of the accommodation and site in conflict with West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan Policy ECON6.

3.0 Reason for the recommendation:

- The site has a highly sensitive heritage context including the Grade II listed Lodge (aka Dower House) and falling within the setting of Parnham House (Grade I listed) and the associated Registered Park and Garden (Grade II* listed).
- Through the proposed construction of a new dwelling (holiday let), swimming pool and pool house the development would undermine the hierarchy of

buildings within the Parnham Estate causing harm to the significance of heritage assets.

- Clear and convincing justification has not been provided to justify the harm.
- The resultant less than substantial harm would not be outweighed by public benefits.

4.0 Key planning issues

Issue	Conclusion
Principle of development	Acceptable subject to planning conditions and a S106 linking the proposed dwelling (holiday let) with the Parnham Estate.
Heritage	Public benefits would not outweigh the identified less than substantial harm. Clear and convincing justification to substantiate the harm has not been demonstrated.
Design	Acceptable subject to planning conditions.
Dorset AONB / National Landscape	No harm to special qualities.
Residential amenity	The proposal would not result in a significant adverse effect on residential amenity.
Highways and parking	Through planning conditions, the proposals would not have an unacceptable impact on highway safety. Sufficient car parking would be provided.
Biodiversity	Through condition a biodiversity net gain would be secured.
Trees	Acceptable subject to planning conditions.
Community Infrastructure Levy	Development would be CIL liable.
EIA	EIA is not required in this instance

5.0 Description of Site

5.1 Parnham House is a sixteenth century, Grade I listed property located approximately 1.6km from Beaminster. Parnham House sits within Parnham Park, a Grade II* listed Registered Park & Garden (RPG). Parnham House suffered severe fire damage in 2017, resulting in the loss of its roof and most of its internal floor structures and fittings and is included in the highest risk category on Historic England's Heritage at Risk Register.

5.2 The current primary entrance to Parnham Park is located near to Beaminster off the A3066. A tree lined avenue leads to the main house. A secondary entrance is located to the north east of Parnham House and north of the application site also off the A3066. A historic eastern entrance is located within the application site. The

entrance currently serves The Lodge (also known as the Dower House), Grade II listed).

5.3 The historic eastern entrance was introduced by Dr. Hans Sauer, during his short but significant ownership of Parnham (1911- 1914). Under his ownership, the east entrance was introduced to replace the current main entrance further north. The entrance led, via a grand set of entrance gates and Dower House to the forecourt of Parnham House. The remnants of this historic route are apparent in the track that leads from the eastern entrance to Parnham House. The application site is located at the eastern entrance.

5.4 The site comprises the existing two storey Dower House and land to the east, south, and west. It is bound by the A3066 to the east and surrounding RPG to the north, south and west. There are a number of mature trees in the immediate vicinity of the site. Vehicle access is provided from the A3066 and to the north of the building.

5.5 The site includes a swimming pool to the south west of the Dower House.

6.0 Description of Development

6.1 The proposed development comprises: alteration and extension to the Dower House; erection of a new dwelling to the south of the Dower House; construction of swimming pool; reinstatement of carriageway, gates and piers; together with associated landscaping.

6.2 The alterations to the existing Dower House follow approval of planning permission and Listed Building Consent (P/FUL/2021/02420 & P/LBC/2021/02421) for similar alterations to the building. The proposed works include part demolitions and construction of extensions, predominantly affecting the eastern portion of the building. Access to the Dower House would be relocated to the east of the building via an existing track linking to the eastern entrance further north of the application site. Three car parking spaces and a bike store would be provided.

6.3 The proposed new dwelling would be located immediately south of the Dower House. It is a two storey 4-bed dwelling proposed as a holiday let. It would be of similar design, scale and proportion to the existing Dower House. In this sense it generally 'mirrors' the Dower House. Access from the A3066 would be provided via the existing access serving the Dower House. Three car parking spaces and a bike store are proposed to the west of the dwelling.

6.4 The existing swimming pool would serve the new dwelling and the proposed swimming pool would serve the Dower House. A timber pool house including a plant room and changing facilities is proposed to the north of the new swimming pool.

6.5 The historic entrance gates and piers fronting the A3066 would be reinstated together with the carriageway leading west to Parnham House.

7.0 Relevant Planning History

7.1 This planning application is associated with a parallel application for Listed Building Consent for works to the existing Dower House:

P/LBC/2023/04092 - Decision: PENDING - Decision Date: PENDING

Erection new dwelling. Construct swimming pool and pool plant house. Alterations and extensions to Dower House to provide enhanced internal accommodation; part demolition including existing boiler room, utility room, conservatory, garage, walling, structures within courtyard and detached outbuilding. Reinstatement of carriageway, gates and piers and boundary enclosure; erection of bike stores.

7.2 The applications follow approval of planning permission and Listed Building Consent for works to the Dower House in 2021:

P/FUL/2021/02420 - Decision: GRA - Decision Date: 23/12/2021

Demolition of existing boiler room, utility room, conservatory, garage, walling, structures within the courtyard and detached outbuilding, erection of single storey extension, reinstatement of carriageway, gates and piers and boundary enclosure, erection of bike store.

P/LBC/2021/02421 - Decision: GRA - Decision Date: 23/12/2021

Demolition of existing boiler room, utility room, conservatory, garage, walling, structures within the courtyard and detached outbuilding, erection of single storey extension, reinstatement of carriageway, gates and piers and boundary enclosure, erection of bike store.

7.3 The wider Parnham Estate has a detailed planning history. The following are relevant to this application:

1/W/85/000741 - Decision: WIT - Decision Date: 21/11/1985

Modify access and re-open formal drive for vehicular access and land as car park

1/W/98/000024 - Decision: GRA - Decision Date: 10/03/1998

Erect 2m high boundary wall to road frontage

1/W/98/000025 - Decision: GRA - Decision Date: 10/03/1998

Erect 2m high boundary wall to road frontage

1/W/98/000545 - Decision: GRA - Decision Date: 02/11/1998

Erect summer house

1/W/98/000546 - Decision: GRA - Decision Date: 02/11/1998

Erect summer house

1/W/04/001486 - Decision: REF - Decision Date: 04/10/2004

Erect 3m high sound absorbent timber screen, dividing Parnham Park from the A3066 and the C96 (Netherbury Road)

P/FUL/2021/02707 - Decision: GRA - Decision Date: 13/04/2023

Erection of a marquee and provision of a services structure (back of house) to function as a restaurant. The provision of a 49 space car park and associated driveway improvements.

P/FUL/2021/05299 - Decision: GRA - Decision Date: 11/01/2023

Erect 4.No. River Lodges and realignment of the existing access track.

P/FUL/2021/05746 - Decision: GRA - Decision Date: 14/02/2023

Erect 6 no. Orchard Rooms and installation of two bridges.

P/FUL/2023/06528 - Decision: PENDING- Decision Date: PENDING

Erection of a Boat House for use as a holiday let within the grounds of Parnham House.

8.0 List of Constraints

- Outside Defined Development Boundary
- Within Dorset National Landscape / Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Statutory protection in order to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of their landscapes - National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act of 1949 & Countryside and Rights of Way Act, 2000)
- Within Grade II* Registered Park and Garden (RPG); Parnham House (HE ref. 1000722)
- Grade II Listed Building - THE LODGE, 300 METRES SOUTH EAST OF PARNHAM HOUSE (also known as the Dower House). HE Ref: 1221182. Statutory duty to preserve or enhance the significance of heritage assets under the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990
- Within the setting of Grade I Listed Building – PARNHAM HOUSE. HE Ref. 1221178.
- Bridleways W21/53 and W21/56 (to the east and north of the site)
- Site of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI): The Grove & Parnham Park (southern part of site in location of proposed new dwelling). Ref: ST40/048.
- Existing and higher potential ecological network
- Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) impact risk zone.
- Tree Protection Orders (Refs: TTPO/2021/0046 & WDDC/16)
- Flood Zone 1.
- S106 obligations linking built tourist accommodation with the Estate.
- SGN - Medium pressure gas pipeline 25m or less from Medium Pressure Pipelines (75mbar - 2 bar)
- Radon: Class: Class 2: 1 - 3% - Distance.

9.0 Consultations

9.1 The application has been subject to two rounds of public consultation, the second taking place following submission of amended drawings by the Applicant.

9.2 None of the consultation responses take account of the following late information submitted by the Applicant on 11 January 2024:

1. Heritage response prepared by tor&co
2. Heritage response prepared by Purcell

3. Parnham Business Plan prepared by Savills (dated June 2022)
4. Copy of events list and bookings up to September 2023

All consultee responses can be viewed in full on the website.

Consultees

Natural England

No objection. Proposed development will not have significant adverse impacts on statutory protected nature conservation sites or landscapes.

Historic England

Historic England's initial response confirmed it did not support the application and raised a series of concerns. In summary:

1. **Absence of masterplan** – Disappointed application is not linked to the restoration of Parnham House or part of any agreed and deliverable masterplan for the long-term sustainability of the Estate. Note masterplan and holistic approach has previously been requested by Historic England. Absence prevents comprehensive assessment being made.
2. **2021 permission** – Noted the previously approved development rationalised a series of ad hoc extensions in a more unified form, without significantly extending its footprint. Note the application was approved due to the heritage benefit in restoring the architectural formality and legibility of the former east entrance of the property. Approved scheme delivered heritage benefits in a less harmful manner than now proposed.
3. **Less than substantial harm** – Due to the prominent location and design, on the setting of the Grade I listed house and significance of its Grade II* RPG. Proposals for new building considered to compete with Parnham House and existing lodge and not respond to the original architectural intention underpinning the existing lodge. Extension of existing lodge is now out of alignment with its original range, unbalancing the composition of its façade when viewed from the south (note this could be overcome by design modifications). Erosion of hierarchy of buildings within the RPG. Additional domestic infrastructure (swimming pool, private curtilage and ancillary access drives).
4. **Potential fragmentation of Estate** – Raise concern that new dwelling could be sold off and further fragment the Estate in the absence of a linkage between the proposed new dwelling and Parnham House.
5. **Limited heritage benefit** – Other than the reinstatement of the east gates and gate piers.
6. **Lack of clear and convincing justification** – For any harm to, or loss of, significance.
7. **Highways** – Raise concerns with access off Bridport Road.
8. **Trees** – Arboricultural Survey, Methos Statement and Tree Constraints Plan does not address the avenue trees to the west that are located on the routes of proposed access drives. Remains to be seen how root protection areas will be protected if they are impacted. Any detrimental impact on historic planting alongside the drive would be highly undesirable.

Following review of the revised proposal Historic England maintained its concerns in respect of the proposed dwelling and continued to have significant concerns with the application on heritage grounds, Advising, in summary:

1. Dower House – Revised extension to the Dower House is now acceptable.
2. Access – Support omission of separate access drives for each house.
3. New dwelling – Design changes have reduced the physical and visual impact and lessened the risk of fragmentation of the Estate due to proposal being for a holiday let.
4. Less than substantial harm – Proposal would still leave a residual degree of harm to the RPG and setting of Parnham House which would not be outweighed by the limited and unproven benefits for Parnham claimed by the applicant.
5. Masterplan – Does not include a detailed explanation for how its elements will work together to secure the restoration and long-term future of the house and why the proposals are all necessary.

Historic England acknowledge that they might have come to a different judgement regarding the balance between harm and benefit if the proposal had been submitted as part of a comprehensive scheme for development to secure the restoration of Parnham.

Conservation Officer

The initial response from the Conservation Officer advised the officer was unable to support the development and that the proposals would cause less than substantial harm without sufficient public benefit to outweigh the harm. Proposed alterations to Dower House and proposed new dwelling would cause harm. The reinstatement of the historic entrance and reconstruction of the gates and piers would be a heritage gain, and can be supported.

Following review of the revised proposal, the Conservation Officer confirmed the revised proposals for alteration of the Dower House would be broadly acceptable albeit there are still concerns with the rear of the existing house being blocked and the treatment to the fenestration. The objection and conclusions in respect of the proposed new dwelling remain.

Landscape

The initial response from the Council's Senior Landscape Officer noted the proposal needs to be considered holistically as part of a wider masterplan for the whole of the Parnham Estate. Note Landscape Officer does not intend to provide further comment on the application until the masterplan is provided.

The subsequent response advised of concerns about the piecemeal approach to development at Parnham and considered the proposal adds to the cumulative adverse impact on the RPG and AONB and would not contribute to the protection and enhancement of a valued landscape. Conclude the proposals would cause harm to the RPG and public benefits would not outweigh harm.

Dorset AONB Team (Dorset National Landscape)

Defer to Historic England for advice on the effect of the application on the Gardens and Designated Landscape.

Natural Environment Team

Informal comments request a further bat survey is undertaken. At the time of writing the NE Team has not issued a Biodiversity Plan Certificate of Approval.

Rights of Way Officer – No comments received.

Highways

Following initial objections to the intensification of the access on highway safety grounds, the Highways Authority raises no objection subject to planning conditions.

Building Control – No comments received.

Dorset Waste Team

Note waste and recycling materials will have to be presented for collection at the end of the drive adjacent to the adopted highway.

Environmental Protection – No comment.

Environmental Assessment

Note proximity to West Dorset Alder Woods SAC (2.7km) and conclude likely significant effects may be screened out.

Trees – No objection subject to conditions.

Dorset Fire & Rescue Service

Note development would need to be designed to meet current Building Regulations requirements. Requests comments made under B5 of Approved Document B, The Building Regulations 2010 be made available to the applicant/agent and draw attention to recommendations to improve safety and reduce property loss in the event of fire.

Dorset Wildlife Trust – No comments received.

Forestry Commission – No comments received.

Ramblers Association – No comments received.

Scotia Gas Networks (SGN)

SNG confirm location of SGN gas pipes in proximity to the site. Note there should be no mechanical excavations taking place above or within 0.5m of a low/medium pressure system or above or within 3.0m of an intermediate pressure system. The position should be confirmed using hand dug trial holes. Safe digging practices recommended in accordance with HSE publication HSG47 "Avoiding Danger from Underground Services" before any mechanical plant is used.

The Gardens Trust and Dorset Gardens Trust

The Gardens Trust and Dorset Gardens Trust provided a joint response confirming they do not wish to comment on the designs for the proposed new Dower House at this stage.

The Trusts raise general questions about the impacts of the application on the various other projects at Parnham Park acknowledging the applicant is working to make the Estate financially viable. The Trusts note they are unable to see how the application fits into the bigger picture at Parnham Park due to the absence of an estate plan showing the overall intentions for Parnham Park. Consider long-term vision/management plan is necessary.

National Amenity Societies – No comments received.

Beaminster Town Council

Beaminster Town Council recommended the original application for approval noting the development to mirror the existing Dower House could only enhance the facilities offered on the site. Their subsequent response in respect of the revised proposal confirmed no objection noting some concern with regard to the Highway Officers recommendation to close the main entrance.

Netherbury Parish Council (adjacent parish)

The Parish Council’s initial comments noted the proposals for the new Dower House and alterations to the existing Dower House are in keeping with the existing architecture. Question how the two projects will generate sufficient income to cover the expenses of the building work and investment in the restoration in Parnham House. Note the reinstatement of the drive on the A3066 means cars will be joining a road with a speed limit of 60mph. Request that a Business Plan is made available so detailing all current and proposed planning applications concerning Parnham Park so that they are able to consider the overall effect and impact of the development on the site.

The Parish Council’s second comments on the application raised concerns with how Parnham Park can justify the costs involved for the application and how a rental return will generate sufficient funds to invest into the restoration of Parnham House.

Ward Councillors – No comments received.

Representations received

At the time of writing, three objections have been received; two of which were from the same person. They raise the following concerns, in summary:

1. Acknowledging the expectation that there will be further applications for housing and buildings within the Estate, the application should not be considered without a masterplan and business model for the entire envisaged development at Parnham. This is needed to allow impacts on the Grade II* RPG to be assessed. Raises concerns with the existing access being used in the future by visitors due to poor visibility.
2. Following submission of the Masterplan, the objector reiterated that consideration of the application should be delayed until the details of all proposed buildings are provided, so that the impact of all developments can be properly assessed.
3. Recommend the Planning Committee take Historic England’s comments very seriously. The masterplan shows what could be very major development for Beaminster without information of how the house would be restored. Piecemeal approach does not allow residents to make an informed comment on the application. Recommend refusal until a comprehensive plan for the Estate can be weighed up for benefit and harm.

Total - Objections	Total - No Objections	Total - Comments
3	0	3

10.0 Duties

10.1 s38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that the determination of planning applications must be in accordance with the development plan unless material circumstances indicate otherwise.

10.2 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 - section 66 requires that in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, special regard is to be had to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

11.0 Relevant Policies

The following policies are considered to be relevant to this proposal:

Development Plan

West Dorset and Weymouth & Portland Local Plan (2015)

- ENV1 – Landscape, seascape & sites of other geological interest
- ENV2 – Wildlife and habitats
- ENV3 – Green infrastructure network
- ENV4 – Heritage assets
- ENV10 – The landscape and townscape setting
- ENV12 – The design and positioning of buildings
- ENV13 – Achieving high levels of environmental performance
- ENV16 – Amenity
- ECON6 – Built Tourist Accommodation
- SUS2 – Distribution of development
- HOUS6 – Other residential development outside defined development boundaries
- COM7 – Creating a safe and efficient transport network
- COM9 – Parking standards in new development

Neighbourhood Plans

Beaminster Neighbourhood Plan – In preparation – limited weight applied to decision making.

Other Material Considerations

Dorset AONB Landscape Character Assessment

Dorset AONB Management Plan 2019-2024

Supplementary Planning Documents/Guidance for Southern/Western Area:
WDDC Design & Sustainable Development Planning Guidelines (2009)

Landscape Character Assessment February 2009 (West Dorset)

Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance (Historic England, 2015)

National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023):

Paragraph 11 sets out the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Development plan proposals that accord with the development plan should be approved without delay. Where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date then permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts of approval would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the NPPF or specific policies in the NPPF indicate development should be restricted.

Relevant NPPF sections include:

- Section 4. Decision taking: Para 38 - Local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. They should use the full range of planning tools available...and work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.
- Section 12 'Achieving well designed places indicates that all development to be of a high quality in design, and the relationship and visual impact of it to be compatible with the surroundings. In particular, and amongst other things, Paragraphs 131 – 141 advise that:
 - Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people.
 - It is important to plan positively for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design for all development, including individual buildings, public and private spaces and wider area development schemes.
 - Development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design.
- Section 15 'Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment'- In Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing the landscape and scenic beauty (para 182). Paragraphs 185-188 set out how biodiversity is to be protected and encourage net gains for biodiversity.
- Section 16 'Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment'- When considering designated heritage assets, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight), irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance (para 205). Harm should require clear and convincing justification (para 206). Where less than substantial harm arises, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal (para. 208). The effect of an application on the significance of non-designated heritage assets should also be taken into account (para 209).

National Planning Practice Guidance

12.0 Human rights

Article 6 - Right to a fair trial.

Article 8 - Right to respect for private and family life and home.

The first protocol of Article 1 Protection of property.

This recommendation is based on adopted Development Plan policies, the application of which does not prejudice the Human Rights of the applicant or any third party.

13.0 Public Sector Equalities Duty

13.1 As set out in the Equalities Act 2010, all public bodies, in discharging their functions must have “due regard” to this duty. There are 3 main aims:-

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics
- Taking steps to meet the needs of people with certain protected characteristics where these are different from the needs of other people
- Encouraging people with certain protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where participation is disproportionately low.

13.2 Whilst there is no absolute requirement to fully remove any disadvantage the Duty is to have “regard to” and remove or minimise disadvantage and in considering the merits of this planning application the planning authority has taken into consideration the requirements of the Public Sector Equalities Duty. In particular the revised Dower House and new dwelling include sleeping accommodation at ground floor level.

14.0 Financial benefits

What	Amount / value
Material Considerations	
Construction benefits	Limited jobs during construction including spin off benefits in local economy (unquantified).
Parnham Estate	Limited financial contribution towards the Parnham Estate (unquantified, although the Business Plan dated June 2022 notes a minimum of £350 per bedroom per night would be targeted).
Economic benefits	Limited additional expenditure by guests of holiday let and jobs supported in local economy, including at Parnham Park (unquantified, although the Business Plan dated June 2022 identifies the totality of the hospitality proposals could support 33 jobs).

Community Infrastructure Levy	In accordance with West Dorset CIL Charging Schedule and CIL Regulations.
Non Material Considerations	
Council tax	According to the rateable value of dwelling.
New Homes Bonus	A proportion of provisional 2023/24 allocation of £1,824,767.

15.0 Environmental Implications

15.1 The proposal would lead to additional CO2 emissions from the construction of the proposed development and from the activities of future residents and occupiers.

15.2 The construction phase would include the release of CO2 emissions from workers vehicles during the construction process. CO2 emission would be produced as a result of the production and transportation of the building materials and during the construction process.

15.3 This has to be balanced against the benefits of providing housing (albeit with occupation limited to a holiday let) in reasonably close proximity to Beaminster and should be offset against factors including the provision of electric car charging, low-carbon energy and the new dwelling being reasonably energy efficient as required by Building Regulations and the 2021 Approved Documents. The current Building Regulations require a 31% and 27% improvement from the 2013 standards in terms of CO2 emissions for dwellings and non-residential uses respectively.

15.4 The proposed drawings show both the existing Dower House and proposed dwelling would be served by air source heat pumps. As a listed building, the Dower House does not benefit from permitted development rights to install a heat pump. Accordingly, significant weight is ascribed to the support for low carbon heating improvements to the Dower House in accordance with the NPPF (Para. 164). The provision also accords with Local Plan Policy ENV13.

16.0 Planning Assessment

Principle of development

Principle of alteration and extension of Dower House

16.1 There are several structures on the Dower House site that are not original including garage and sheds, boiler room and conservatory all of which would be removed as part of the proposal.

16.2 The principle of alteration and extension of the existing Dower House and associated reinstatement of the entrance and gates is acceptable in line with the 2021 planning permission.

16.3 The Dower House is located outside of the defined development boundary and therefore Local Plan Policy HOUS 6 is applicable. The proposed extension to the existing dwelling is large in size however it would replace existing structures on the site. It would also be single storey in height and therefore would be subordinate in

height to the original dwelling. The scale and proportion of the extension towards the west has been reduced in scale and would be subordinate to the original dwelling and would not harm the character of the locality and its landscape (assessed below). Accordingly, the principle of alteration and extension of the Dower House is acceptable.

Principle of erection of new dwelling

16.4 The proposal originally comprised a new open market dwelling. This would not have been acceptable in principle under Policies SUS2 or HOUS6 given the location of the site outside of a defined development boundary.

16.5 The applicant subsequently revised the application by confirming that the new dwelling would be proposed for holiday-let purposes only as built tourist accommodation.

16.6 Policy SUS2 confirms development will be strictly controlled outside defined development boundaries having regard to the need for the protection of the countryside and environmental constraints. It details the range of development types acceptable in principle outside defined development boundaries. These include 'new employment, tourism, educational/training, recreation or leisure-related development' aligning with the proposed holiday let use.

16.7 As the proposal involves the erection of new built tourist accommodation Local Plan Policy ECON 6 is applicable. The policy notes new built tourist accommodation will be supported inter alia through the "*replacement, intensification or extension of existing premises where the expansion would improve the quality and appearance of the accommodation and site*" (bullet point 3).

16.8 The Applicant advises that the holiday let would contribute to the financial sustainability of the existing business at Parnham Park and would help to provide a secure and viable future for the Estate which would in turn support the restoration and ongoing use of Parnham House.

16.9 Whilst a formal enabling development case (NPPF Para. 214) has not been advanced as part of this planning application, the submitted Business Plan (dated June 2022) outlines the overarching objective to create a market leading sustainable hospitality business, based in and around Parnham House. It explains that the envisaged hospitality venture seeks to secure the future of Parnham House. It outlines the headline elements, costs and revenues of the project. The target market is stated to comprise: private guest stays, small events / milestone celebrations; and exclusive hire.

16.10 Accommodation within the house and grounds is stated to be critical in delivering this vision. In order to generate a viable level of revenue to cover the costs of the Estate during the restoration period the Business Plan identifies a requirement for a total of 34 bedrooms across the Estate comprising a minimum of 5 bedrooms within the main house plus 29 bedrooms in the remainder of the Estate. The planned accommodation is identified at pages 6-7 of the Business Plan as including the:

- Dower House and mirrored new dwelling (i.e. the proposed development);
- River Lodges (approved in April 2023, not yet implemented);
- Orchard Rooms (approved in February 2023, not yet implemented);
- Boathouse (planning application validated November 2024); and

- Accommodation created via renovation of the West Wing, and ancillary buildings by North Wing (partially complete).

16.11 The Business Plan envisages that the Main House would provide a hub for guests. Other hub spaces would include the walled garden and boathouse which are identified as *"important revenue generators and are especially important prior to the availability of hub space in Parnham House"*.

16.12 The Applicant has submitted an events list up to September 2023 which shows a holiday accommodation business starting in June 2021 and including the provision of accommodation and facilities for birthdays, weddings and recreational stays. Between June and December 2021 there were guests staying at the Estate for a total of 60 nights, in 2022 it was 20 nights and in 2023 up to September it was 37 nights. The list identifies events for a single booking of up to 40 overnight guests staying at accommodation within the West Wing, Butlers Apartments and Dower House, plus camping within the grounds. All are in residential use, albeit there are no planning restriction on renting the accommodation for holiday purposes providing the use of the accommodation would not amount to a material change of use. The Dower House is listed on Airbnb and Booking.com.

16.13 The events list also identifies 102 event enquiries including weddings, birthday parties, corporate events and private hires which have not been confirmed. The reasons stated include not having suitable accommodation to meet client requirements. Notwithstanding the absence of purpose-built tourist accommodation at the Estate, on balance the new dwelling could be considered an intensification of the existing holiday accommodation business at Parnham.

16.14 To comply with the second part of bullet point 3 the development also needs to improve the quality and appearance of the accommodation and site. The Business Plan states that the aim of the mirror Dower House is to serve the needs of multi-generation family guests. This aim is apparent in the design which has accessible ground floor sleeping accommodation and the swimming pool which would cater to the needs of the old and young within one 4-bed property.

16.15 It is not unreasonable to accept that the proposal would result in income generation that would assist in the maintenance and management of the Parnham Estate including the Registered Park and Garden. It is stated by the Applicant that the new holiday let *"will double the income generated to be spent on maintaining the estate when compared to the existing permission solely to extend the existing Dower House."* Although no evidence has been submitted, this statement is considered reasonable given the proposals would result in the ability to let a 4-bed unit in addition to the Dower House. It is noted that the claim relates to revenue only and does not account for the costs of construction. To ensure the holiday let is provided as an intensification to the existing/approved provision, the proposed development would be tied to Parnham House as part of a Section 106 legal agreement so that it cannot be sold off separately. This approach would be consistent with that secured in relation to the planning applications for the River Lodge and Orchard Room developments and would ensure compliance with Policy ECON6. A reduced time limit condition for implementation aligned with the River Lodge and Orchard Room developments would also ensure the proposal improved the quality and appearance of the accommodation and site in accordance with Policy ECON6. However, at the current time no such Section 106 agreement for the proposed development has been entered into and therefore the tie has not been secured.

Principle of development within the SNCI

16.16 The new dwelling also falls partially within The Grove & Parnham Park Site of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI) which extends to the east, south and west of Parnham House. Within SNCIs, Policy ENV2 part iv) states that features of nature conservation interest should be safeguarded by development. It requires that significant harm is mitigated where it cannot be avoided. Where significant harm *“cannot be avoided or adequately mitigated, compensation will result in the maintenance or enhancement of biodiversity otherwise development will not be permitted.”*

16.17 The NPPF (Para 186) reiterates the decision making hierarchy in respect of nature conservation interests stating that *“if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused”*.

16.18 As noted in the assessment sections below, the proposed development would result in the quantitative loss of SNCI through provision of hardstanding within the SNCI comprising part of the new dwelling, associated access and parking. However, the level of harm to the SNCI is concluded to fall below the threshold of ‘significant’. Accordingly, the principle of limited development within part of the SNCI is acceptable and in accordance with Policy ENV2 subject to appropriate mitigation being secured via a Biodiversity Plan.

Heritage

16.19 The NPPF (Para. 205) requires that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, *“great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be given)...”*. Any harm to, or loss of, the significance should require *“clear and convincing justification”* (Para. 206). Where a proposal would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, the harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal (Para. 208). Local Planning Authorities are advised to look for opportunities for new development within the setting of heritage assets to *“enhance or better reveal their significance”* noting proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset or which better reveal its significance should be treated favourably (Para. 212).

16.20 Policy ENV4 requires that any harm to the significance of a designated or non-designated heritage asset is justified with the harm being weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

16.21 As noted within Section 8 of this report the Dower House is Grade II listed and the site falls within a Grade II* Registered Park and Garden (RPG). The site also falls within the setting of Parnham House (Grade I listed), located approximately 250m to the west via the former historic entrance. The significance of these heritage assets and the impacts are considered below:

Summary of significance

Parnham House (Grade I)

16.22 As described by Historic England:

“Parnham House is a Grade I listed country house with multiple phases, but whose primary importance is as a high quality and extremely picturesque example of a sixteenth century manor house. Although significantly extended and remodelled several times over its subsequent 400 years, this work was generally undertaken in a sympathetic and stylistically harmonious manner which, externally at least, maintained architectural continuity with the earlier form of the building.

Despite suffering severe damage in the fire of 2017, resulting in the loss of its roof and most of its internal floor structures and fittings, the external shell of Parnham remains standing and preserves much of its architectural interest, although it is becoming increasingly fragile as progressive deterioration has occurred during the time the main house has been left unprotected.

16.23 The spatial and functional relationship between Parnham House and surrounding heritage assets, including the Dower House and early-20th Century drive to the east contributes to the significance of the asset and illustrate its development.

16.24 The relationship with the formal gardens and agricultural parkland reflects the Estate’s basis in the local agricultural economy, whilst also reflecting the development of a high-status gentry house.

Parnham House RPG (Grade II)*

16.25 The significance of the RPG lies in its artistic and historic interest. As described by Historic England:

Parnham House “stands in a picturesque historic landscape which is in itself designated as a grade II registered park and garden, and whose principle phases of development very much reflect those of the house.*

These gardens are a representative example of an early-C20 formal garden which illustrates the taste for Revivalism in English garden design at this time. Set within the sixteenth century manorial estate they are of a particularly high quality, comprising a successful combination of geometrical planting and formal architectural features complimentary to the setting of the House.

They have a particularly strong group value with the House, stable block, the front courtyard and south terrace walls and gazebos (all listed Grade II), and the icehouse, kitchen garden walls and Lodge/ Dower House (all listed Grade II).*

The formal gardens were introduced by Dr. Hans Sauer, during his short but significant ownership of Parnham (1911- 1914). His ensemble of early-twentieth century design changes included the formal, east entrance drive off Bridport Road, which replaced the eighteenth century drive further to the north. This led, via a grand set of entrance gates and the Lodge, to the forecourt of the House, passing through an avenue that help to screen the Bridport Road from the house.”

16.26 Elements of setting which contribute to the RPG’s significance include the wider undeveloped landscape to the east, south and west, which assist in demarcating the tree-bounded registered park within, and differentiating it from, the historical agricultural landscape. Also, the visual experience of the park from the surrounding AONB (National Landscape) and footpaths within it.

16.27 The Applicant’s Heritage Statement notes the east driveway was closed by 1974. Only two of the original stone piers remain and the curved railings and low wall have been removed.

The Lodge / Dower House (Grade II)

16.28 The significance of the Dower House lies in its architectural and historic interest. As described by Historic England:

“In the later twentieth century, the ownership of the former lodge (known as the Dower House) became separated from Parnham House and this led to successive changes which considerably eroded the picturesque qualities of the drive and its entrance. The position of the access was moved, the formal piers and gates were largely demolished and the drive blocked, significantly degrading its status and visual impact as an important entrance to the Parnham estate. The building itself, once it was no longer ancillary to Parnham House, was considerably extended resulting in a dilution of its architectural quality. Remnants of the formal entrance remain, however, in two of the outer stone gate piers, the south quadrant wall and railings, and the subsidiary piers which terminated both north and south flanking walls. To the west of the Dower House the remains of the drive can still be clearly seen with its flanking avenue, albeit in a somewhat degraded state.

The application site holds considerable historic value to Parnham as the former principal entrance to the property. The applicant’s own Historic Landscape Assessment of 2021 observes that “this arrangement forms part of the ensemble of early C20th changes which make the Parnham landscape especially significant.”

16.29 The Applicant’s Heritage Statement notes the aesthetic and architectural value is considered medium to high and the historical significance is considered low.

16.30 The spatial and functional relationship with Parnham House and the visual experience of the building from the A3066 is of significance. The setting of the Dower House within an undeveloped setting enables understanding and appreciation of its purpose as an estate-edge building located at distance from the main house.

Context

16.31 Before assessing the impact of the development on the significance of heritage assets it is relevant to note that discussions with the Applicant in respect of proposals for restoration of the Parnham House are ongoing. As requested by consultees and third parties, the Applicant has submitted an initial indicative Masterplan for the Estate which identifies developments which have planning permission and/or listed building consent and potential future works. These are also captured within the submitted Business Plan. The potential future works, include:

1. Restoration of Parnham House to provide a hospitality venue;
2. Associated enabling development within the North Park;
3. A boathouse on the north east bank of Parnham Lake – the application was submitted in November 2023 and is pending determination (P/FUL/2023/06528); and
4. The mirror Dower House (this planning application).

16.32 In addition to the above, Dorset Council has, within the last three years, granted planning permission for a series of hospitality related developments within Parnham Park comprising:

5. 4 x River Lodges to the west of the Walled Garden (P/FUL/2021/05299 - granted April 2023 – not implemented);
6. 6 x Orchard Rooms to the west of the Walled Garden across the River Britt (P/FUL/2021/057/56 – granted February 2023 – not implemented);

7. A temporary marquee within the Walled Garden (P/FUL/2021/02707 – granted April 2023 not implemented)
8. An extension to the Potting Shed within the Walled Garden (P/FUL/2021/04398 – implemented 2023); and
9. An associated car park between the Walled Garden and North Entrance (P/FUL/2021/02707 – constructed 2023, planning conditions not discharged).

16.33 The applicant is expecting that the proposed restoration of Parnham House to provide a hospitality venue (No. 1 above) will be funded through significant enabling development within the North Park (No. 2). The applicant considers that other proposed developments around the Estate (Nos. 3-9) would support the intended operation of Parnham House as a hospitality venue by providing complementary accommodation and function space.

16.34 The permissions for the River Lodges (No. 5) and Orchard Rooms (No. 6) have not been implemented. Restoration and repair of the West Wing has been undertaken and works have been undertaken on the North Stables of Parnham House. The South Wing remains in a precarious state and surviving elements of historic facade are vulnerable to collapse given they are not supported by scaffolding and are exposed to the elements. The lawful use of Parnham House and the Dower House remains Use Class C3 (residential dwelling).

16.35 The Business Plan (June 2022) identifies annual maintenance costs of the Estate are approximately £420k. In the absence of a working estate, it confirms alternative sources of income are required to support maintenance of the Estate and secure its sustainable future. Based on longer-weekend 4-day operation only, the Business Plan states that a minimum of £350 per bedroom per night is needed to secure a viable business. It should be noted by Members that the viability of the business and impacts of the enabling development are not known at this stage and would be rigorously assessed and verified by a third-party consultant as part of any future planning application for restoration of Parnham House (No. 1) and associated enabling development (No. 2).

16.36 Historic England and other consultees have requested that a masterplan be produced and comprehensive and concurrent applications be submitted. This approach would allow for cumulative heritage impacts and benefits to be assessed comprehensively across the Estate. Nevertheless, the Applicant has submitted a series of applications in an effort to establish a hospitality business and provide an early income stream for the Estate. Whilst a comprehensive approach is preferred, the Local Planning Authority must determine the application on the available information and consider any resultant heritage impacts and benefits on an application-by-application basis.

Impact on significance

16.37 The NPPF (Para. 201) states that Local Planning Authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. In this case, the listing descriptions, Heritage Statement & Heritage Impact Assessment (Purcell, July 2023) and Historic Landscape Assessment (Purcell, June 2021) have been considered. Expert advice has been provided by the council's Senior Conservation Officer, Historic England and The Gardens Trust to inform officer

assessment of the proposals. As summarised above, all three parties raise concern with the proposals from a heritage perspective.

16.38 The impact on the significance of affected heritage assets is assessed as follows:

Impact of the Dower House Extension

16.39 There are several structures on the Dower House site of Parnham that are not original including garage and sheds, boiler room and conservatory all of which would be removed as part of the proposal.

16.40 The proposed works to the Dower House involve the erection of a single storey extension with a glazed link between the house and the proposed extension. The proposed design is similar to the development approved in 2021, with slight revisions including revised roof form and layout. Consistent with the development approved in 2021: a glazed link is proposed; the main range of the Dower House would remain unaffected; and the entrance, gates and driveway would be restored and reinstated.

16.41 Over the course of determination the design of the Dower House extension has been revised to respond to comments from the Council's Senior Conservation Officer and Historic England. Historic England advises the Dower House extension is acceptable. However, the Council's Senior Conservation Officer has residual concerns with proposed fenestration and the roof form of the new extension obscuring the rear elevation of the building.

16.42 It is noted that the revised proposal is similar to the development approved in 2021. The development included modern glazed windows (without glazing bars) and established that the rear of the building would be partially obscured by the proposed extension. Given this fall-back position, it is considered that the revised proposal would continue to represent an appropriate response to the building, one which would ensure that the additions are clearly legible and resulting in **no harm** to the host building, Parnham House or the RPG.

16.43 The reinstatement of the entrance, gates and driveway consistent with the approved development in 2021 would provide heritage **benefit** by enhancing the status and prominence of the eastern entrance commensurate with its historic use when it was used to access Parnham House. Whilst vehicle use of the entrance would be restricted on highway safety grounds (see below) the works would physically connect the Dower House and Parnham House and have the potential to serve the Estate in the future subject to reducing the speed limit of the A3066.

Impacts of New Dwelling on the setting of Parnham House (Grade I), the RPG (Grade II) and the Dower House (Grade II)*

16.44 The proposed dwelling is clearly informed by the design of the existing Dower House, broadly mirroring the front (south) elevation adjacent to the access drive and is of similar layout and scale. Whilst there is relatively limited intervisibility between Parnham House and the Dower House, the historic approach to the house is of high heritage sensitivity and any development along the route has the potential to affect the setting of the house.

16.45 Historic England note that pairs of gate lodges are not the norm in historic parks, but where they do occur are generally designed as a matching pair of diminutive dwellings to maintain the overall estate hierarchy. The Applicant contends

that paired lodges were fairly commonly used at country house estates in the late 17th century and early 18th century and note there are also 19th century precedents. Whilst the Applicant's response is silent on local early 20th century precedents, the existence of paired lodges at other historic estates does not establish the principle of an additional dwelling at Parnham. That planning judgement must be reached having regard to the heritage and planning balance of the application.

16.46 Historic England note the provision of a new dwelling opposite the Dower House would reduce the significance of the (former) modest and rustic gate lodge (Dower House) and undermine the very tranquil character of the Parnham Estate which is not typified by estate buildings scattered around the landscape. Whilst the cumulative effect of approved (River Lodges and Orchard Rooms) and proposed (Boathouse) developments could be considered to result in a scattered approach to buildings within the RPG, the proposed new dwelling would result in a concentration of development at the historic eastern entrance to the Estate rather than scattering within the Estate.

16.47 Historic England further note gate lodges are typically modest-sized dwellings of high quality and distinctive design which "*herald the entrance to an estate by providing an architectural 'taster' of what awaits at the other end of the drive, without in any way competing with it*". The Council's Senior Conservation Officer considers the new dwelling would harm historical and communal significance, given there would originally have been one gate house. Communal significance is understood to be derived from the social norm at the time being to have one gate house and for people visiting the house to relate to The Lodge house as being the first port of call.

16.48 The new dwelling has been reduced in scale to broadly match the Dower House. This reduces the heritage harm. However, it still introduces significant built development into a highly sensitive location which was historically parkland within the RPG and setting of both Parnham House and the former lodge. The proposal essentially doubles the built footprint within this part of the Estate and introduces further domestic infrastructure in the form of the swimming pool and pool house. This would intensify the scale of development at the historic eastern entrance and is considered to undermine the original design intent for a relatively modest single lodge.

16.49 This increase in scale would harm the spatial and functional relationship between the Dower House and Parnham House and undermine the understanding of the Dower House as an estate-edge building located at distance from the main house. This increase in scale would conflict with the hierarchy of buildings within the RPG and is considered harmful to the group value of the Dower House and Parnham House, detracting from the significance of The Lodge as a feature of the early 20th century landscape. As a result, the proposed development of the new dwelling, pool and pool house is considered to result in **less than substantial harm** within the lower-middle of the spectrum.

16.50 In terms of justification, the Applicant states that the holiday let would contribute to the financial sustainability of the business that provides a secure and viable future for the Estate. Subject to a planning obligation linking the proposed dwelling with the Estate, the proposed dwelling can be expected to financially support the Estate and Parnham House. However, as the proposals for restoration of Parnham House are still evolving and no specific financial information assessing the viability of the holiday let (including construction costs and operational income) has

been submitted with this application, the contribution of the holiday-let is unclear. Whilst there is scope for clarity to be provided if a revised planning application were to be submitted with sufficient justification alongside development proposals for restoration of Parnham House, it is considered that the Applicant has not provided the necessary clear and convincing justification for the harm as part of this current application (NPPF Para. 206).

16.51 In summary, the heritage impacts are as follows. Overall, the net effect of the proposals are considered to result in less than substantial harm:

Heritage Asset	Proposed Works		
	Dower House Extension	Reinstatement of entrance, gates and driveway	New Dwelling (including swimming pool)
Parnham House (Grade I)	No Harm	Benefit	Less than Substantial Harm
Parnham House RPG (Grade II*)	No Harm	Benefit	Less than Substantial Harm
Dower House (Grade II)	No Harm	Benefit	Less than Substantial Harm

Heritage Balance

16.52 As less than substantial harm has been identified, the NPPF requires that the harm is weighed against the public benefits of the proposal (Para. 208).

16.53 Public benefits are defined in the PPG (Para. 020 Reference ID: 18a-020-20190723) as anything that delivers economic, social or environmental objectives as described in the NPPF (Para. 8). Public benefits should flow from the proposed development and be of a nature or scale to be of benefit to the public at large and not just be a private benefit. However, benefits do not always have to be visible or accessible to the public in order to be genuine public benefits.

16.54 The following public benefits are attributed to the proposed development:

1. Short term construction jobs and supply chain benefits and jobs associated with the operation of the holiday let;
2. Reinstatement of historic driveway and restoration of entrance and gates;
3. Increased choice of visitor accommodation at Parnham Park and within Beaminster;
4. Enabling members of the public to experience the RPG and Dower House from a unique vantage point (the holiday let);
5. Increased spending by visitors of the holiday let, contributing to local businesses, services and facilities;

6. Financial support to the ongoing maintenance of the Estate and the restoration of Parnham House;
7. Biodiversity enhancements;
8. Support for low carbon heating improvements to the Dower House through installation of a heat pump;
9. CIL payments.

16.55 The overarching objectives to sustainable development are outlined in the NPPF (Para. 8) as having economic, social and environmental objectives. It is considered that the nature of the above identified public benefits contain some overlap between these objectives.

16.56 Social benefits of the proposed development would arise through an increase in the choice of visitor accommodation. CIL payments would assist in making the development acceptable through funding infrastructure provision. Heritage benefits would be delivered through the partial¹ reinstatement of the historic east entrance and associated entrance and gates together with the ability for members of the public to experience the Estate from a new (albeit paid) vantage point. It is noted that the benefits associated with the restoration of the east entrance, entrance and gates were also delivered through the development approved in 2021 which was concluded to result in no harm. As explained above, the Applicant has not justified or quantified the financial support that would be derived from the holiday let for supporting the ongoing maintenance of the Estate and the restoration of Parnham House – this benefit is therefore only afforded limited weight. Overall, it is considered that moderate weight can be attached to the social benefits.

16.57 Economic benefits would arise for the local economy from provision of jobs during construction and operation of the holiday let and through the spending of visitors staying in the holiday let. The scale of these economic benefits has not been estimated by the Applicant. However, given the proposal consists of one 4-bed holiday let together with extensions to the Dower House, the cumulative economic benefits are concluded to be of limited weight.

16.58 Subject to a planning condition, the proposal would deliver a biodiversity net gain. The gain has not been quantified and is afforded limited weight due to the scale of development and location within the SNCI. As instructed by the NPPF (Para. 164) significant weight is ascribed to the support for low carbon heating improvements to the Dower House through the proposal to install a heat pump. In the context of the climate and ecological emergency the cumulative environmental benefits are given moderate weight.

16.59 The NPPF (Para. 205) requires that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, “*great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be)*...”. In this instance less than substantial harm has been identified in relation to the significance of Grade I, Grade II* and Grade II heritage assets. Grade I buildings are of exceptional interest only representing around 2.5% of all listed buildings. Accordingly, greater weight is afforded to the harm to Parnham House and to the RPG with great weight afforded to the harm to the Dower House. Applying this weight to the harm it is concluded that the identified less than substantial harm is not outweighed by the above public benefits.

¹ The access would be restricted on highway safety grounds.

16.60 Therefore, the harms are such that the proposal would not accord with the Local Plan taken as a whole and would conflict with policy ENV4 of the local plan and the NPPF.

Design

16.61 Notwithstanding the above conclusions on heritage, the design of the development has clearly been informed by the character of the site and its surroundings. The layout, massing and materiality of the mirror Dower House takes influence from the existing Dower House. The use of stone and roof treatments and the incorporation of decorative features matches the design of the Dower House and would be complementary. The proposed location of the new swimming pool also mirrors the location of the existing swimming pool. From a design perspective, the proposal is well-related to the existing Dower House and reinstated access route. Subject to planning conditions in respect of external materials, external doors, window design and detailing (including rainwater goods, gates, finials and piers), the design accords with Policies ENV10 and ENV12.

Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty / National Landscape

16.62 Given the relatively limited scale of development within the Dorset AONB (National Landscape), the development is not considered to harm the special qualities of the Dorset AONB (National Landscape) and accords with Policy ENV1.

Residential amenity

16.63 The proposed holiday let would be located to the south of the Dower House across the access route. Window-to-window distances between the first floor bedrooms would be approximately 16m.

16.64 The West Dorset Design and Sustainable Development SPD (2009, Paras. 7.5.1- 7.5.2) notes that whilst there is no minimum distance between neighbouring properties, 20m between facing buildings will normally give good privacy between the rear of buildings. The SPD notes closer distances may be possible where homes are not directly facing each other, or suitable screening can be achieved.

16.65 At approximately 16m, the separation distance falls short of the planning guidelines of the SPD. This would result in a sub-standard level of amenity to the affected rooms. However, overall both dwellings have sufficient amenity and reduced window-to-window distance would not result in significant adverse effects on residential amenity. The design objective to mirror the Dower House and respect the historic entrance further supports reduced separation distances in this instance and would not result in significant adverse effects on residential amenity in accordance with Local Plan Policy ENV16.

Highways and parking

16.66 The existing access historically provided access to Parnham House. Today it solely serves the Dower House.

16.67 The proposal seeks to reinstate the historic access so that it serves the new dwelling and provides access to the main house and wider Estate from the A3066. Access to the Dower House is proposed to the north, from an existing access.

16.68 The A3066 is a 60mph road and the access is located on a bend. Due to this, visibility splays are limited and below the required distance to ensure adequate highway safety. The Highways Authority advised in relation to the previously

approved development of the Dower House (P/FUL/2021/02420) that *“the access is not in an ideal location and it appears that the visibility available does not meet guidance, however in planning terms there appears to have been an established gated access in this location as such an objection to the principle [for reinstating the access to serve the Dower House] is unlikely to be sustainable... the Highway Authority would be highly unlikely to support any future intensification of use of this access.”*

16.69 If unrestricted the proposed access could serve the new dwelling, Parnham House and the wider Estate resulting in significant vehicle movements at the existing access. Due to there being inadequate visibility splays for the speed of the road this situation would result in an unacceptable impact on highway safety and would represent a clear reason for refusal on highway grounds under the NPPF (Para. 115). To prevent this situation arising and ensure no intensification of the access, the Highways Authority recommend a planning condition requiring the access to Parnham House and the wider Estate being permanently obstructed by erection of bollards to prevent use by motor vehicles. This condition would resolve the highway safety concerns and ensure no intensification of the use of the access.

16.70 Mindful of the emerging proposals for restoration of Parnham House, associated hospitality development and enabling residential development within the grounds, it may be possible to remove this restrictive planning condition in the future to allow access to Parnham House and the wider Estate if the speed of the road is reduced to an acceptable speed to ensure required visibility.

16.71 Sufficient car and cycle parking would be provided for the Dower House and new dwelling. Subject to planning conditions, the proposed development would be acceptable from a highways and parking perspective and in accordance with Local Plan Policies COM7 and COM9.

Biodiversity

16.72 The site of the new dwelling falls partially within The Grove & Parnham Park Site of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI) which extends to the east, south and west of Parnham House. As noted above, the proposal is not considered to cause significant harm to the SNCI.

16.73 The submitted Biodiversity Plan (BP) is based on the original proposed development. Revised supporting documents were not submitted when the proposals were amended. Given the greater extent of hard landscaping, the Biodiversity Plan is considered to represent an overly robust assessment of the biodiversity impacts.

16.74 The Biodiversity Plan identifies the following mitigation measures:

- 3,740sq.m of species rich wildflower grassland in the north park;
- 490sq.m of native shrub planting between the new dwelling and A3066
- New tree and hedge planting
- Bat roosts, bat tubes and bee bricks

16.75 Whilst the proposals have been amended and the submitted Biodiversity Plan does not align with the proposed development, there is considered to be ample opportunity to deliver the requisite biodiversity net gain in accordance with Policy ENV2 and the NPPF (Para. 180). Given the absence of a certified Biodiversity Plan, a Biodiversity Plan would need to be secured via planning condition.

16.76 Initial comments from the Natural Environment Team requested that the applicant provide an updated bat survey due to existing surveys being more than two years old. Those surveys related to the Dower House and the associated potential impact of the roof works on bat roosts. Exceptionally, due to the approval of a similar development in 2021 (P/FUL/2021/02420) an updated bat survey is not considered necessary in this instance given the applicant has a fall-back position which can be implemented until 23 December 2024 without the need for a further bat survey. However, should the works to the Dower House commence after this permission lapses (23 December 2024), it would be reasonable to require a further bat survey prior to commencement of works to the Dower House. This could be secured via planning condition. Subject to this condition, the proposal accords with Policies ENV2 and ENV3 of the Local Plan.

Trees

16.77 The proposed holiday let is within a lawned area opposite the Dower House. There is some large tree cover close to the proposed plot with dense understorey of mature overstood laurel to the east alongside the A3066.

16.78 The submitted Arboricultural Survey, Tree Constraints Plan and Arboricultural Method Statement identify the proposed works to trees and associated impacts of the original proposed development. Revised supporting documents were not submitted when the proposals were amended. Nevertheless, given the reduced extent of works and omission of the 'D'-shaped accesses shown in the original proposal, the supporting documents are considered to represent an overly robust assessment of the anticipated arboricultural impacts.

16.79 A number of trees and sections of hedge are proposed to be removed to facilitate the restored access (T5) and increased visibility splays (T11, T12, T13, T14, H2 and H3) or because they are too close to buildings (T6).

16.80 The Tree Officer initially raised objection in respect of the original proposals to the removal of T5, a London Plane tree located to the north of the Dower House within the previously proposed access route to the Dower House. This tree is described as having a significant stem size with a number of features including decay and stem hollowing that would indicate that the tree has notable or veteran tree status. The Tree Officer advised that it must not be felled to facilitate the development and should instead be retained and an appropriate Veteran Tree Management Plan put in place to ensure safe retention.

16.81 The revised proposal avoids the tree, although the new revised access to the north would affect part of the RPA. Subject to the retention of T5 and appropriate construction methods within the RPA the revised proposals is considered acceptable from an arboricultural perspective. Necessary pre-commencement conditions would require a revised Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Constraints Plan, Tree Removals Plan and Tree Protection Plan. Subject to these conditions, the proposal accords with ENV10 and would provide for the future retention and protection of trees that contribute to the area's distinctive character.

Community Infrastructure Levy

16.82 The adopted charging schedule only applies a levy on proposals that create a dwelling and/or a dwelling with restricted holiday use. All other development types are therefore set a £0 per square metre CIL rate.

16.83 The development proposal is CIL liable. Confirmation of the final CIL charge would be included in a CIL liability notice issued prior to the commencement of the development Index linking as required by the CIL Regulations (Reg. 40) using the national All-In Tender Price Index of construction costs published by the Building Cost Information Service (BCIS) of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors.

EIA

16.84 Following consideration of the relevant selection criteria for screening Schedule 2 development presented in Schedule 3 of the EIA regulations, it was concluded that the proposed development is not likely to result in significant environmental impacts. Therefore, the Planning Authority hereby adopts an EIA screening opinion that an Environmental Statement is not required in this instance.

17.0 Conclusion

17.1 Clear and convincing justification for the harm to the significance of Parnham House (Grade I), the RPG (Grade II*) and the Dower House (Grade II) has not been provided. The public benefits of the proposal are not considered to outweigh the identified harm. Accordingly, the development conflicts with Policy ENV4 and the NPPF (Paras. 206 and 208) and is not considered to comply with the Local Plan when read as a whole. It is therefore recommended for refusal on heritage grounds.

17.2 In the absence of a completed Section 106 Agreement the linkage between the proposed holiday-let and other holiday accommodation within the Estate would not be secured and the proposal would not secure the intensification of existing accommodation at the Estate. The proposal would therefore also conflict with Policy ECON6.

18.0 Recommendation

18.1 Refuse planning permission for the following reasons:

3. Through the construction of a substantial dwelling, swimming pool and pool house in close proximity to the former Lodge (Dower House), the proposed development would undermine the hierarchy of buildings within the Parnham Estate and Parnham House Registered Park and Garden (RPG) and would adversely affect the significance of the RPG, The Lodge and Parnham House. The resultant less than substantial harm without clear and convincing justification would not be outweighed by public benefits in conflict with West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan Policy ENV4 and the NPPF.
4. In the absence of a Section 106 Agreement linking the holiday let with the Parnham Estate, the proposal would not result in the intensification or extension of existing premises where the expansion would improve the quality and appearance of the accommodation and site in conflict with West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan Policy ECON6.