



Eastern Area Planning Committee

Date: Wednesday, 21 October 2026
Time: 10.00 am
Venue: The Allendale Centre, Hanham Road, Wimborne, Dorset, BH21 1AS

Members (Quorum: 6)

David Tooke (Chair), Duncan Sowry-House (Vice-Chair), Alex Brenton, Ray Bryan, Toni Coombs, Beryl Ezzard, Scott Florek, Hannah Hobbs-Chell, David Morgan, Julie Robinson, Andy Skeats and Gary Suttle

Chief Executive: Catherine Howe, County Hall, Dorchester, Dorset DT1 1XJ

For more information about this agenda please contact Democratic & Governance Services Meeting Contact joshua.kennedy@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

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Agenda

Item	Pages
1. APOLOGIES	
To receive any apologies for absence	
2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	
To disclose any pecuniary, other registrable or personal interest as set out in the adopted Code of Conduct. In making their decision councillors are asked to state the agenda item, the nature of the interest and any action they propose to take as part of their declaration.	
If required, further advice should be sought from the Monitoring Officer in advance of the meeting.	
3. MINUTES	5 - 10
To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 02 September.	

4. **REGISTRATION FOR PUBLIC SPEAKING AND STATEMENTS**

Members of the public wishing to speak to the Committee on a planning application should notify the Democratic Services Officer listed on the front of this agenda. This must be done no later than two clear working days before the meeting. Please refer to the Guide to Public Speaking at Planning Committee. [Guide to Public Speaking at Planning Committee](#)

The deadline for notifying a request to speak is 8.30am on Monday 19 October.

5. **P/FUL/2026/03658 – SANDPIT FIELD, DE MOULHAM ROAD, SWANAGE** 11 - 50

Ground stabilisation with enhanced replacement planting, demolition of WWII gun emplacement on Sandpit Field, stopping up and infilling of Walrond Road to create a continuous green space, creation of a plaza area and a seating area adjacent to Shore Road, a new vehicular emergency access in the south west corner of Sandpit Field, a new pedestrian access on the western edge onto De Moulham Road, accessibility improvements across the site, and 46 new beach huts.

6. **P/FUL/2026/03657 – SANDPIT FIELD, DE MOULHAM ROAD, SWANAGE** 51 - 82

Ground stabilisation of the area with enhanced replacement planting, demolition of the WWII gun emplacement on Sandpit Field, retention of 6 of the existing beach huts and provision of 33 additional new beach huts.

7. **P/FUL/2025/04705 - LAND ON THE EAST SIDE OF THE DROVE AND THE NORTH SIDE OF DORCHESTER ROAD (A352) WINFRITH NEWBURGH DORCHESTER DT2 8LA** 83 - 120

Change of use of land from agriculture to a development of 4 plots for travelling showpeople comprising 4no. caravans for residential occupation and 4no. storage buildings with associated access and landscaping. As amended by plans rec'd 1/5/26 to omit planted bund in Flood Zone 3.

8. **P/FUL/2026/03108 - POOLE HOUSE, JENNYS LANE, LYTCHETT MATRAVERS, BH16 6BP** 121 - 146

Demolition of pool house and store, removal of tennis court and erection of three dwellings with associated infrastructure.

9. **URGENT ITEMS**

To consider any items of business which the Chairman has had prior notification and considers to be urgent pursuant to section 100B (4) b) of the Local Government Act 1972

The reason for the urgency shall be recorded in the minutes.

10. EXEMPT BUSINESS

To move the exclusion of the press and the public for the following item in view of the likely disclosure of exempt information within the meaning of paragraph x of schedule 12 A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended). The public and the press will be asked to leave the meeting whilst the item of business is considered.

There are no exempt items scheduled for this meeting.

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Anyone requiring first aid should go to the main reception at the Allendale Centre.



EASTERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 2 SEPTEMBER 2026

Present: Cllrs David Tooke (Chair), Ray Bryan, Toni Coombs, Beryl Ezzard, David Morgan, Julie Robinson and Andy Skeats

Apologies: Cllrs Duncan Sowry-House, Alex Brenton, Scott Florek and Gary Suttle

Absent without apologies: Cllr Hannah Hobbs-Chell

Also present: Cllrs Shane Bartlett and Andy Todd

Officers present (for all or part of the meeting):

Elizabeth Adams (Development Management Team Leader), Lara Atree (Senior Lawyer - Regulatory), Kim Cowell (Development Management Area Manager (East)), Philip Crowther (Legal Business Partner - Regulatory), Susan Hetherington (Transport Development Liaison Manager), Joshua Kennedy (Democratic and Governance Officer), Megan Rochester (Senior Democratic & Governance Services Officer), Thomas Whild (Lead Project Officer) and Cari Wooldridge (Planning Officer)

28. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Ezzard declared that she was the Ward Member for Wareham, where application P/FUL/2026/02113 was located, however she was not predetermined on the application.

29. Minutes

Cllr Coombs queried the inclusion of a member being listed under 'Apologies' for the attendance record, when their apologies were not received in advance of the meeting. It was explained by the Democratic and Governance Officer that it was understood this process was in place to ensure all members are recorded at the meeting, however it was being explored whether there was an alternative that would more clearly record members' attendance and that notification would be sent to members, when a decision had been made.

30. Registration for public speaking and statements

Representations by the public to the Committee on individual planning applications are detailed below. There were no questions, petitions or deputations received on other items on this occasion.

31. P/FUL/2026/02113 - Holton Heath Garage, Wareham Road, Holton Heath, BH16 6JW

The Planning Officer presented the application to retain the existing petrol filling station and forecourt with 24-hour opening hours and lighting scheme. It was noted that the application had been brought before the Committee because part of the application site was owned by Dorset Council.

The location plan was shown, identifying the site as a BP petrol filling station with an associated convenience store. Members were advised that the site was located outside the settlement boundary and the part of the application site on Dorset Council land was highlighted. The site also lay within the 400-metre heathland buffer zone. An aerial photograph was shown, illustrating the site's relationship with surrounding residential development and some commercial uses to the north. Photographs taken from various points around the site were displayed, including views of the access and egress arrangements.

The site plan was presented showing the development as implemented. The Planning Officer explained that, although the site was located within the countryside, all aspects of the operational development had previously been assessed and found acceptable, and they remained acceptable. The main change proposed related to the extension of opening hours of the filling station. It was considered that the use of the site would largely generate passing or linked trips rather than creating significant new travel demand.

Members were shown plans comparing the approved shop layout with the existing layout. It was advised that the facilities provided met an identified need and were located close to an existing settlement. The extension of opening hours demonstrated that this local need would continue to be met. The site was situated in an accessible location off Wareham Road and the impact of the extended operating hours was judged to be minimal.

The Planning Officer reported that objections had been received from residents of the park homes located to the rear of the site, primarily concerning impacts on residential amenity. It was noted that noise generated by the petrol filling station and retail use broadly coincided with the site's hours of operation. Previous planning conditions had restricted operating hours in order to protect local amenity; however, the site had been operating on a 24-hour basis in breach of those conditions. A noise impact assessment accompanied the application and concluded that there would be a negligible impact on noise levels. The assessment found that forecourt noise was largely dominated by general traffic movements on the highway and that night-time activity would be similar to existing traffic noise from the adjoining road network.

To mitigate amenity impacts, conditions were proposed restricting delivery and waste collection times. A further condition would require retail sales between 11.00 pm and 6.00 am to be conducted through a serving hatch only and would prohibit the use of loudspeaker systems during those hours.

It was explained that the application was supported by a lighting assessment. Proposed downlighters to the canopy and forecourt were shown on plans. It was noted that the existing totem sign had previously been granted separate advertisement consent and did not form part of the current application. Lighting

levels would be adjusted and dimmed during hours of darkness to minimise impacts on neighbouring properties.

Photographs of the Wareham Road access arrangements were displayed. The Highway Authority considered that the proposal would not have a material impact on the local highway network. It was concluded that visits associated with the extended hours would largely comprise existing or linked trips rather than entirely new journeys, and therefore there were no highway grounds on which to recommend refusal.

The Planning Officer addressed concerns raised by neighbouring residents regarding the site exit and the potential for customers using the petrol station to obstruct access to the adjacent park home site. It was noted that the entry and exit lanes were clearly marked with directional arrows and that a defined route through the forecourt had been provided.

Concerns regarding increased litter and anti-social behaviour were also considered. It was advised that it was difficult to directly attribute such issues to 24-hour operation of the site. Adequate litter bins were available within the area, and a member of staff would remain on site at all times. CCTV coverage and site lighting would also contribute to site security and management.

In conclusion, it was advised that the development was considered acceptable in terms of its layout, scale and design. The proposal was supported by noise and lighting assessments that had been reviewed by the relevant Dorset Council teams, and it was also considered acceptable in highway safety terms.

Public representation was received from Alan Poole and Christine Wilson, in objection to the application. They raised concerns as residents of the residential park located behind the garage. They stated that there were existing issues with the garage including noise disturbance when the garage opens, conflict with users of the garage blocking the entrance to the park and users of the garage accessing the park for dog walking. They were concerned about increased opening hours as they did not believe there was sufficient demand to justify the 24-hour opening times and were concerned about increased noise and light pollution.

The Planning Officer clarified that any need is a commercial issue rather than planning and that the applicant can apply for increased opening hours if they consider that there is demand. Alcohol sales would be restricted by licensing rather than planning. There should be a disabled parking space at the front of the shop. Anti-social behaviour would be the responsibility of the owner of the garage to report to the police rather than a planning issue.

In response to members questions officers provided the following responses:

- The distance between the rear of the filling station and nearest residential dwellings was approximately 8.5m.
- The current planning consent permitted opening hours between 06:00 – 23:00.
- The Planning Officer was not aware that any enforcement action had been taken in regard to opening outside of permitted hours.

- The most recent consent for the garage was granted in 2022, and it was believed that it opened in 2024. Before that there was an established commercial use.
- Condition 3 would restrict the times of waste collection by vehicles, however it was considered to be unreasonable to restrict the times that smaller waste bins were emptied.
- A condition regarding lighting was included in the recommendation.
- If planning conditions were not adhered to there would be an enforcement process and failure to comply with either enforcement notice or breach of condition notice would be an offence.
- The majority of the access road into the residential park was owned by the park operator.

It was proposed by Cllr Coombs and seconded by Cllr Skeats, to approve the application, with an additional condition requiring an acoustic fence to be erected on the rear boundary, because of the increased hours of use resulting in additional noise impact on nearby residents. It was agreed to leave details and materials of the acoustic fences to be agreed by the Local Planning Authority.

Meeting Adjourned 11:11 – 11:19

Draft wording of the proposed condition was presented to members and the proposer and seconder confirmed that they were content with the wording.

Upon being put to the vote the proposal to grant the application, with an additional condition for the installation of an acoustic fence, fell.

It was proposed by Cllr Ezzard and seconded by Cllr Robinson, that the application be refused on the grounds that the increased hours of operation would lead to an unacceptable level of noise disturbance for the residents of the nearby park home.

Cllr Coombs left the meeting at 11:33.

The meeting was adjourned 11:35 – 11:53, to allow officers to provide a draft form of wording for the reason for refusal.

One member raised concern about refusing the application and stated that should the decision be appealed successfully there would be no means of mitigating the impacts of the application.

Upon being put to a vote, the motion to refuse the application fell.

It was proposed by Cllr Bryan and seconded by Cllr Skeats that the application be approved in accordance with the officer's recommendation and with an additional condition requiring details of the installation of acoustic fencing to be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for agreement and the acoustic fence to be erected before the increased hours of operation are permitted. The precise wording of the condition would be delegated to officers. Cllr Bryan also requested that officers notify the applicant that they are currently in breach of their existing planning permission.

Decision: That the application be granted subject to the conditions set out in the appendix to these minutes.'

32. **P/FUL/2026/03042 - Colehill First School, Pilford Heath Road, Colehill, BH21 2HL**

The Planning Officer presented the application for the demolition of an existing covered area, replacement with a new roof structure, and the erection of a single-storey extension. It was noted that the site was owned by Dorset Council.

The site context and location plan were shown, identifying the site within Colehill with vehicle access from Cannon Hill Road. Members were advised that the site lay within the settlement boundary. It was also highlighted that the entire site was subject to a Tree Preservation Order.

An aerial photograph was displayed showing the area proposed for demolition. Photographs of the site were then shown. The location of the proposed tree protection fencing was identified, demonstrating how retained trees would be safeguarded during construction.

Existing and proposed site plans were presented, together with existing and proposed rear elevations. The Planning Officer explained that the extension would have a maximum height of 4.5 metres, reducing to 2.1 metres at its lowest point. The proposed materials would comprise shiplap cladding and grey roof tiles.

It was advised that the proposal represented a modest single-storey extension within the settlement boundary and that no adverse impacts had been identified. Subject to conditions, including those relating to tree protection, the development was considered acceptable.

Cllr Todd spoke in support of the application, as the ward member and a member of Colehill Town Council. He noted that it was a modest and sensible proposal which would improve a community facility and there had been no objections from consultees or members of the public.

It was proposed by Cllr Morgan and seconded by Cllr Skeats, that the application be granted.

Decision: That the application be granted subject to the conditions set out in the appendix to these minutes.

33. **Urgent items**

There were no urgent items.

34. **Exempt Business**

There was no exempt business.

Decision List

Duration of meeting: 10.00 am - 12.33 pm

Chairman

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Application Number:	P/FUL/2026/03658
Webpage:	https://planning.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/
Site address:	Sandpit Field De Moulham Road Swanage
Proposal:	Ground stabilisation with enhanced replacement planting, demolition of WWII gun emplacement on Sandpit Field, stopping up and infilling of Walrond Road to create a continuous green space, creation of a plaza area and a seating area adjacent to Shore Road, a new vehicular emergency access in the south west corner of Sandpit Field, a new pedestrian access on the western edge onto De Moulham Road, accessibility improvements across the site, and 46 new beach huts
Applicant name:	Swanage Town Council
Case Officer:	Thomas Whild
Ward Member(s):	Cllr Suttle and Cllr Tomes

- Reason application is going to committee:** The application site includes land within the ownership of Dorset Council.
- Summary of recommendation:** GRANT subject to the conditions set out at the end of the report.
- Key planning issues**

Issue	Conclusion
Principle of development	Ground stabilisation, public open space improvements and the stopping up of part of Walrond Road are acceptable in principle and accord with relevant planning policy.
Conservation and Heritage Assets	Harm would occur to designated and non-designated heritage assets, including loss of the gun emplacement, but this is outweighed by the substantial public benefits of the scheme.
Landscape	The scheme would result in temporary construction impacts but deliver long-term landscape and visual benefits consistent with the Dorset National Landscape.
Highways	The proposals would not have an unacceptable impact on highway safety or a severe residual cumulative impact on the road network and are considered to be acceptable.
Flood Risk and Drainage	The proposal would not increase flood risk and would maintain appropriate drainage arrangements, with some drainage benefits arising from reduced hard surfacing.
Trees	Tree impacts are acceptable subject to protection measures, replacement planting and arboricultural controls secured by condition.

Biodiversity and Biodiversity Net Gain	Ecological impacts are acceptable subject to mitigation, and the scheme exceeds the statutory 10% biodiversity net gain requirement.
Impacts on Amenity	Amenity impacts are acceptable, with construction effects capable of mitigation and event-related impacts appropriately controlled through other regulatory regimes.
Character and Appearance	The proposal would enhance the coherence and attractiveness of the site while retaining its established seaside character.
Ground Contamination	Contamination risks can be adequately addressed through investigation and remediation conditions.

4. Description of site

- 4.1 The application site comprises existing areas of open space on the eastern edge of Swanage. The eastern boundary of the site is defined by Shore Road, with the beach and sea beyond, and the western boundary is defined by De Moulham Road. The southern boundary is defined by Victoria Avenue (A351). To the north the site is bounded by residential properties.
- 4.2 The site consists of two areas of public greenspace, bisected by Walrond Road, which runs in an east-west orientation, from Shore Road in the east, travelling westwards into the town. The southern part of the site comprises Sandpit Field. This area is predominantly open and laid to grass with hedgerows along the western and part of the southern boundaries. There are trees on the western boundary, within the south western corner of the site and in the north eastern part of the field. The southern and northern boundaries are defined by Purbeck stone retaining walls.



Figure 1 - Images of the existing gun emplacement, taken before it was fenced off for safety reasons.

- 4.3 The eastern edge of the site forms an area of landscaped gardens with paths from the field down to shore road – the ground falling away by approximately 6.5m from the high point within the field, to the eastern edge of the site. There is a World War II gun emplacement in the north east of the field. The gun emplacement has been painted and used as a public seating area until recently when issues with the stability of the structure have resulted in it being fenced-off and public access to it being restricted.

- 4.4 The area to the north of Walrond Road comprises Weather Station Field. The land is split into three sections. At the southern end there is an area of open greenspace which terraces down from the higher ground along De Moulham Road down to the eastern edge of the site where it sits above the road. The boundaries are defined by Purbeck stone retaining walls. There is a weather station in the south western corner of this area, within a small compound defined by chain-link fences.
- 4.5 Centrally within this parcel is a terraced area known as the Spa Retreat, which comprises an area of beach huts on terraced hardstanding. The beach huts currently only occupy the western part of the area, with access to the eastern part restricted due to ground stability issues. To the northern end of the site the land is open greenspace with landscaped gardens and paths down to Shore Road.
- 4.6 The areas surrounding the site comprise a variety of uses. The areas to the west, southwest and north of the site are predominantly residential, comprising a mix of purpose built apartment blocks and detached houses, some of which have been subdivided, along De Moulham Road, transitioning to detached housing on the roads which extend westwards including Walrond Road, Gannetts Park, Beach Gardens and Rabling Road. The beach lies to the east of the site. To the south, on the opposite side of Victoria Avenue, is the recreation ground which includes the town's war memorial and a play area with beach huts and tourist attractions at its southern end.

5. Description of development

- 5.1 The proposed development comprises engineering works to provide ground stabilisation of Sandpit Field and Weather Station Field, together with works to re-landscape the eastern edge of the site. The land is currently unstable; there are significant cracks in many of the retaining walls, particularly along Shore Road and Walrond Road, as well as in various locations within the site. The stabilisation is proposed to be achieved through a 'soil nailing' technique which involves the fixing of a series of steel bars into the slope to stabilise it.
- 5.2 The proposal also includes works intended to enhance the area and create a single enlarged space suitable for accommodating events such as the Swanage Carnival. This would be achieved through the stopping up of the easternmost section of Walrond Road, which bisects the two parts of the site and infilling it to create a single landscaped event space. The gardens on the eastern edge would be relandscaped, and a plaza would be created at what is currently the junction of Walrond Road and Shore Road. As part of the landscaping works, new paths are to be created between the event space and shore roads at shallower gradients than the existing site, to enhance accessibility. In order to achieve an appropriate gradient, the level of the field is to be reduced at the eastern end.
- 5.3 Towards the northern end of the site, it is proposed to reinforce and extend the area of beach huts, allowing for beach huts to be returned to the lower terraces which are currently closed to the public due to the ground instability, and for additional beach huts to be provided on the upper slopes. The beach huts proposed comprise a mix of sizes including huts which are intended to be accessible for people in wheelchairs or with limited mobility.
- 5.4 In order to complete the works it is proposed to demolish the World War II gun emplacement on Sandpit Field. The proposals include the provision of interpretation boards on the site of the gun emplacement. The existing weather station on weather station field is to be retained, albeit on a smaller footprint. The weather station would be within a perimeter chain link fence, with an information board to be provided.

6. Background and relevant planning history

Application Ref	Decision	Decision Date	Description
6/1975/0220	GRA	04/06/1975	Site 3 additional beach chalets.
6/1975/0222	WIT	01/12/1975	Site 20 beach chalets.
6/1975/0295	GRA	15/07/1975	Site 5 cedar day chalets (renewal).
6/1976/0081	REF	26/03/1976	Siting of 20 beach chalets.
6/1977/0014	GRA	25/03/1977	Starters hut (renewal).
6/1979/1023	GRA	19/03/1980	Station 5 day chalets (renewal).
6/1980/0026	GRA	19/03/1980	Retain starter's hut (renewal).
6/1980/0372	GRA	25/06/1980	Site 3 beach chalets (renewal).
6/1983/0004	GRA	08/03/1983	Station five day chalets (renewal).
6/1983/0275	GRA	02/06/1983	Retain starter's hut (renewal).
6/1985/0155	GRA	01/05/1985	Site three beach chalets (renewal).
6/1985/0754	GRA	28/11/1985	Station five day chalets (renewal).
6/1986/0080	GRA	04/04/1986	Retain starter's hut (renewal).
6/1987/0534	GRA	16/10/1987	Use kiosk for take-away hot food sales.
6/1989/0141	GRA	13/03/1989	Retain starter's hut (renewal).
6/1990/0181	GRA	27/04/1990	Station 8 No. beach chalets (renewal).
6/2000/0325	GRA	22/06/2000	Station 8 No. beach chalets (renewal).
6/2005/0009	GRA	10/02/2005	Erect a CCTV pole and base.
P/ESC/2025/02552	RES	03/06/2025	Screening opinion - SCH3249 - Proposed control structure and beach recharge along the Swanage Beach Frontage.

7. List of constraints

Swanage Conservation Area - Distance: 11.48m

Tree Preservation Order: (PDC/TPO 107) (on northern boundary of the site)

Wessex Water Treatment Works Catchment Other WRC catchments

Poole Harbour Recreation Zone

Dorset Council Land Freehold : Electricity substation at Victoria Avenue, Swanage

Higher Potential ecological network

Wildlife Present: insect - moth

High Opportunity Nature Areas

Dorset National Landscape

Natural England - RAMSAR - Distance: 2845.68m

Special Area of Conservation (SAC) (5km buffer): Studland to Portland (UK0030382); - Distance: 40.96m

Special Area of Conservation (SAC) (5km buffer): St Albans Head to Durlston Head (UK0019863); - Distance: 887.37m

Special Area of Conservation (SAC) (5km buffer): Isle of Portland to Studland Cliffs (UK0019861); - Distance: 934.86m

Special Area of Conservation (SAC) (5km buffer): Dorset Heaths (Purbeck & Wareham) & Studland Dunes (UK0030038); - Distance: 2845.68m

Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) impact risk zone; Natural England Consultation

Scheduled Monument: The old prison and pump (List Entry: 1002727); - Distance: 389m

Flood Zone 3 and Flood Zone 2

Main River Consultation Zone

Environment Agency – (EA) - Main River Consultation Zone - Distance: 11.16

National Coastal Erosion Risk Map Shoreline Management Plan – Risk of erosion identified when 95 percentile, 70 percentile and no allowance for climate change applied; medium term – now until 2055; and longer term – now until 2105

National Coastal Erosion Risk Map – Risk of erosion with no further intervention when 95 percentile, 70 percentile and no allowance for climate change applied; medium term – now until 2055; and longer term – now until 2105

RAD - Radon: Class: 1.0 (Low risk, protective measures unlikely to be required)

Contaminated Land

8. Consultations

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

Consultees

1. Dorset National Landscape Team – No objection

The site comprises a prominent area of public open space within the urban seafront of Swanage and is therefore somewhat distinct from some of the wider undeveloped rural and coastal landscapes that more clearly express the special qualities of the designated landscape.

The site does not make a substantial contribution to the defining characteristics of the surrounding landscape, due to its urban location. Overall, broadly agree with the conclusions of the submitted assessment which concludes that there would not be significant adverse effects on the national landscape, and would be a minor benefit in the longer term.

Due to the prominent location the quality of design remains critical and careful attention should be given to landscape design and the detailed design of built elements. Encourage the Council to place significant weight on the advice of its own landscape and urban design specialists.

The comments acknowledge the inclusion of the WWII gun emplacement and importance of the Council obtaining and giving due weight to advice from heritage and conservation specialists.

2. Environment Agency – No objection

No objection subject to the imposition of a condition with regard to potential ground contamination, and Informatives in respect of construction near to main rivers.

The comments note that the ground investigation report and planning statement state there may be a risk to controlled waters. Further detailed information would be required before development to address uncertainties in the ground investigation report over the geo-environmental characteristics of the site and ground water conditions which influence slope stability and contamination pathways. Consider that it would be an unreasonable burden on the developer to ask for more detailed information prior to the grant of planning permission.

Informative note added

3. Sport England Advice is provided on a non-statutory basis.

If the proposal involves the loss of any sports facility then full consideration should be given to compliance with paragraph 104 of the NPPF and relevant local policies/strategies. If the proposal involves a new sports facility, consideration should be given to relevant local playing pitch or built sports facility strategies with regard to their design.

If the proposals include housing then new or improved facilities may be needed if there is not sufficient local capacity.

4. Dorset Police Architectural Liaison Officer No comments received

5. Dorset Fire & Rescue Service – No comments received

6. Dorset Wildlife Trust – No comments received

7. Bournemouth Water Ltd (South West Water) No comments (out of catchment)

8. Wessex Water – No comments received

9. Natural England – No comment

10. Dorset Council (DC) - Natural Environment Team Certificate of approval for EclA received.

11. DC – Highways

Initial comments – Defer for further information

Most matters could be addressed through planning conditions or separate highway approvals processes but there remain matters that need further assessment before the scheme can be fully supported.

The additional information requested comprises, further information required to confirm the locations of automatic traffic county surveys to allow validation; information on visibility splays access turning and parking geometry and relationship to junction for the new emergency access; an assessment of parking impact; consideration of pedestrian considerations for the shore road plaza; a road safety audit of works for the stopping up of part of Walrond Road.

Revised comments, following additional highways information

The additional information has confirmed that the scheme would not have an unacceptable impact on highways safety or a severe residual cumulative impact on the road network and therefore there is no objection subject to relevant planning conditions.

Although the additional information refers to related highway improvement proposals in the vicinity of the site, the Highway Authority has confirmed that the conclusions on the acceptability of the proposals in highways terms are not reliant upon the delivery of those highway works.

12. DC - Dorset Waste Team No comment

13. DC - Economic Development and Tourism – Support

The proposed enhancements to public open space, accessibility improvements, additional visitor facilities and provision of beach huts are considered likely to have a positive impact on Swanage's visitor economy. The scheme will improve the quality and attractiveness of the seafront environment for residents and visitors, support accessibility and inclusivity, and has the potential to increase visitor dwell time and expenditure within the town.

14. DC - Flood Risk Management – No objection

This proposed option proposes more significant changes than in the 'essential option' including the stopping up and infilling of Walrond Road. The applicant has adequately assessed flood risk and they will not increase risk elsewhere.

The removal of Walrond Road creates a net decrease in impermeable catchment area, decreasing runoff from the whole site. The Proposed drainage strategy is viable, deliverable and makes effective use of existing drainage infrastructure.

Please ensure that the drainage plan contained within appendix A of the drainage strategy is listed in the approved plans condition.

15. DC - Env. Services – Protection No comment

16. DC - Building Control No comments received

17. DC - Coastal risk management No comments received

18. DC - Trees (East & Purbeck) – No objection subject to conditions

The arboricultural assessment identifies potential impacts on several retained trees, including prominent Grade B Holm Oaks (T18 and T19) and a Corsican Pine (T23), and advises that development within root protection areas should be avoided or undertaken using approved no-dig construction methods and appropriate arboricultural supervision. Soil decompaction is supported to improve conditions for T18 and T19, while the proposed removal of a number of Category C and U trees and poor-quality specimens is considered acceptable. Concerns are

raised regarding proposed replacement planting within root protection areas and the need for updated tree protection measures and arboricultural method statements to address works near retained trees, including T30. Subject to the submission and approval of a detailed arboricultural method statement, updated tree protection plan and soft landscaping scheme, no objection is raised to the proposed development on arboricultural grounds.

19. DC - Public Health Dorset - Support

Public Health support the objectives of the development to enhance public access and inclusivity of this area. This offers the potential to support health and wellbeing in a number of ways including enabling physical activity, social interaction and contact with nature.

20. DC - Env. Services - Food, Safety & Port Health – No comments received

21. DC - Asset & Property – No comments received

22. DC - Public Transport - No comments received

23. DC- Licensing – No comments received

24. DC – Landscape – No objection

The Landscape Visual Impact Assessment has assessed likely landscape and visual effects arising from the scheme and has been undertaken in accordance with GVLIA3 Guidance, considering the effects during both the construction and operational phase.

There would be temporary minor adverse landscape effects and moderate to moderate major adverse visual effects from the scheme during the construction period. Once complete the landscape and visual effects of the scheme would be moderated to moderate to minor beneficial effects.

There is no objection from a landscape and visual perspective. As noted by the Dorset National Landscape team it will be important to ensure that the detailed design of the hard and soft landscape treatments is appropriate to the high profile setting and character of the area. Landscape conditions for details, implementation and management of hard and soft landscaping should therefore be included.

25. DC - Conservation Officers The comments confirm the conclusions of impact assessment within the submitted heritage statement which notes the total loss of the Gun Emplacement as a non-designated heritage asset as well as harm to the setting of the Swanage Conservation Area and War Memorial designated heritage assets.

It is confirmed that the removal of the gun emplacement would diminish the legibility of Swanage's wartime landscape and the evidential and communal value derived from the surviving wartime heritage of the area. As such it is not supported. However it is not considered that the asset is of such high significance as to warrant objection to the scheme on conservation grounds.

The scheme is also noted to result in substantial harm to the 'Sandpit' non designated heritage asset which is listed in the Historic Environment Record (HER). The harm is because the current landscaping of the site retains features from the asset and reflects the historic mineral workings and with the changes this would be lost.

The tangible benefits of the proposals are noted and the conservation officer is content to defer the final assessment as to whether the loss of the non-designated heritage asset and harm to other heritage assets is outweighed by the benefits of the proposals, to the decision maker.

26. DC - Archaeology - Steve Wallis Concurs with the conclusions of the Conservation officer with regard to the impacts on heritage asset and the need for recording which should be carried out to level III and made available to the public. Interpretation boards should also be secured.

27. WPA Consultants (geo-environmental)

It is noted from the WSP reporting that the presence of made ground, a sub station and extensive earthworks are likely matters of concern that require further investigation and risk assessment. It may also be prudent to consider unexploded ordnance in the vicinity of WWII infrastructure. WPA recommends that the development should be subject to Dorset standard contaminated land planning conditions.

28. Swanage Town Council No comment as the owner of the property and the applicant.

29. Swanage Ward councillors - No comments received

Representations received

Total - objections	Total - No objections	Total - comments
60	15	10

Comments in Support

- Positive regeneration of the seafront and wider town.
- Need for ground stabilisation works.
- Improved green space, landscaping and pedestrian access.
- Improved accessibility.
- Improved routes through the site and provision for community events.
- Support for closure of Walrond Road.
- Support for retention of trees and provision of additional café and toilet facilities.
- Consistency with the Shoreline Management Plan.
- Current proposals are an improvement on previous iterations.
- Limited concern regarding the loss of the WWII gun emplacement given its condition, nearby war memorial and perceived lack of public significance.

Comments in Objection

- Loss of the WWII gun emplacement, including its heritage value and calls for recognition as a non-designated heritage asset.
- Concerns regarding the adequacy of heritage assessment, consultation and evidence relating to the gun emplacement's condition.
- Objection to closure of Walrond Road, including impacts on traffic, parking, emergency access, disabled access and the evidence used to justify closure.
- Excessive cost and scale of the project, with preference for a more limited scheme and concern over public expenditure.
- Loss of established trees and concerns regarding the landscaping approach.

- Expansion, design and impacts of the beach huts, including effects on character, views, stability and landscape interests.
- Lack of need for an enlarged events space and concerns regarding noise and disturbance.
- Lack of need for an additional kiosk and concerns regarding impacts on existing businesses, noise and litter.
- Objection to closure of existing toilet facilities.
- Concerns regarding ground stability, including whether the proposed works could worsen instability or affect nearby properties.
- Adverse effects on the character of the seafront.
- Construction impacts and highway safety concerns.
- Concerns regarding consultation, transparency, completeness of information and consideration of related schemes.

General Comments

- Relationship with the separate Shore Road proposals should be clarified.
- Concerns regarding replacement tree planting and potential impacts on sea views.
- Suggestion to improve seafront railings.
- Suggestion to provide additional parking combined with ground stabilisation measures.
- Apparent discrepancy relating to the western boundary path.
- Suggestion to retain historic landscaping features within the site.
- Request for specialist consultation regarding the gun emplacement.

9. Duties

- 9.1 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.
- 9.2 Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that when considering whether to grant planning permission for a development which affects a listed building or its setting, there is a general duty to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.
- 9.3 Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas.
- 9.4 Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000) requires Local Planning Authorities to seek to further the purposes of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of National Landscape (formerly known as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty) when making any decision which affects such land.

10. Relevant policies

Development plan

In this case the development plan comprises the **Purbeck Local Plan 2024, Swanage Local Plan 2017 and the Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Waste Plan 2019.**

Adopted Purbeck Local Plan 2024:

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

- V1: Spatial strategy for sustainable communities
- E1: Landscape
- E2: Historic environment
- E4: Assessing flood risk
- E5: Sustainable drainage systems (SuDs)
- E6: Coastal change management areas
- E10: Biodiversity and geodiversity
- E12: Design
- EE4: Supporting vibrant and attractive tourism
- I2: Improving accessibility and transport
- I3: Green infrastructure, trees, and hedgerows
- I4: Recreation, sport and open space

Adopted Swanage Local Plan:

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

- STCD: Swanage townscape character and development
- SGI: Swanage green infrastructure
- OSR: Open space and recreation

Adopted Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Waste Plan 2019

- Policy 22 - Waste from new developments

Material considerations

Emerging local plans:

Policy DM4: Emerging development plan proposals of the NPPF provides that local planning authorities may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to:

- the stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced its preparation, the greater the weight that may be given);
- the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant plan policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and

- the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the NPPF (the closer the policies in the emerging plan are to the policies of the NPPF, the greater the weight that may be given).

The Dorset Council Local Plan

The emerging Dorset Local Plan is being prepared in accordance with plan-making processes set out in the Levelling Up and Regenerating Act 2023 and Local Planning Regulations (2026). As the plan is still at an early stage of the plan making process, limited weight can be attached to it when taking decisions on planning applications. Decisions on planning applications should continue to be assessed against the policies in adopted development plans, national planning policy and any other relevant material considerations.

Emerging neighbourhood plans

Swanage Neighbourhood Plan

The draft Swanage Neighbourhood Plan is intended to replace the adopted Swanage Local Plan. Consultation on the pre-submission draft (regulation 14) took place between 26 June and 7 August 2026. The draft plan includes policy SWAN8: *The Green Seafront Stabilisation & Enhancement Scheme*, which specifically sets out to support proposals for the stabilisation of the green seafront and the stopping up and infilling of part of Walrond Road. However as the consultation on the draft plan has only recently concluded and the plan has not been subject to examination, only very limited weight may be afforded to it.

Local Nature Recovery Strategy

The Dorset Local Nature Recovery Strategy identifies local priorities for nature recovery and maps areas where action would be most beneficial. In planning decisions it is a material consideration, helping to ensure that development supports biodiversity enhancement and aligns with Dorset's agreed priorities for nature recovery.

National Planning Policy Framework (17 August 2026)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), published on 17 August 2026, sets out the Government's national planning policies for both plan-making and decision-making in England.

When determining development proposals decision-makers are required to take a positive and proactive approach and to seek to approve sustainable development where possible.

The NPPF introduces a permanent presumption in favour of sustainable development, through Policies S3 to S5 (which replaces the former "tilted balance" contained in paragraph 11 of the previous NPPF) and sets out the principles for development within and outside settlements. The Framework also confirms that planning applications should be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Other relevant NPPF chapters and policies include:

- Chapter 3: Decision making policies. Local planning authorities should approach decision making positively, proactively and proportionately. They should work with applicants through pre-application engagement and consultations and aim to resolve concerns through planning conditions or obligations where possible to avoid delay and to enable an approval rather than a refusal. Applications that accord with the development plan, the NPPF and other material considerations should not be refused where they can clearly be approved.
 - DM1 Preparing development proposals

- DM2 Information requirements
- DM3 Determining development proposals
- DM4 Emerging development plan proposals
- DM6 Use of planning conditions and obligations
- DM7 Relationship with other regulatory regimes
- Chapter 4: Achieving Sustainable Development. The objective of the policies in this chapter is to meet development needs through sustainable patterns of development, including by maximising the potential for growth on suitable land within settlements, enabling development which will support the rural economy, rural communities and the provision of infrastructure, and limiting development away from settlements to help safeguard the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.
 - S3 Presumption in favour of sustainable development
 - S4 Principle of development within settlements
- Chapter 5: Meeting the challenges of climate change. Planning decisions should support climate change mitigation and adaptation, including reducing greenhouse gas emissions, increasing resilience to climate impacts and directing development away from areas at unacceptable risk from flooding.
 - CC2 Mitigation of climate change
 - CC3 Adaptation to climate change
- Chapter 12: Making effective use of land. Planning decisions should give substantial weight to proposals that make more effective use of land and buildings, while maintaining good design, living conditions and local character. This includes redevelopment of previously developed, vacant, underused, contaminated or derelict sites, reuse of existing buildings, creation of additional homes through sensitive infill, upward extensions and development within existing plots. Higher-density development is also promoted within settlements in well-connected locations near public transport. Development that fails to make efficient use of land in accordance with the policy should be refused.
 - L2 Making effective use of land
- Chapter 14: Achieving well-designed places. Development should be high quality, respect and enhance local character, deliver sustainable and attractive places, and accord with relevant design policies. Proposals that demonstrate good design and place-making should be supported, while those that fail to meet established design standards should be refused unless clearly justified.
 - DP3 Key principles for well-designed places

- DP4 The design process
- Chapter 15: Promoting sustainable transport. The objective of the policies in this chapter is to ensure that transport considerations are taken fully into account in the preparation of development plans and the evolution and assessment of development proposals; using a vision-led approach to embed the role that transport infrastructure and choices can play in creating well-designed, sustainable, inclusive and popular places.
 - TR4 Street design, access and parking
 - TR6 Assessing transport impacts
 - TR8 Public rights of way
- Chapter 16: Promoting healthy communities. The objective of the policies in this chapter is to promote the creation of healthy and inclusive places and support the provision of appropriate public services, by enabling development which can support this aim and seeking to retain, improve and deliver new facilities which are important for community wellbeing and minimising inequalities.
 - HC7 Development affecting existing recreational land and facilities
 - HC8 Development affecting Local Green Space
- Chapter 17: Pollution, public protection and security. The objective of the policies in this chapter is to ensure that new development is appropriate for its location, taking into account risks posed by pollution and other hazards; that any impacts which development might have are taken into account; and that sufficient provision is made for development required for public safety and security.
 - P2 Ground conditions
 - P3 Living conditions and pollution
 - P4 Impact of development on existing activities
 - P5 Maintaining public safety and security
- Chapter 18: Managing flood risk and coastal change. Development proposals should minimise risks to development arising from all sources of flooding and coastal change, taking into account the impacts of climate change, by steering development away from areas of risk, ensuring that development will be safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere, and incorporating sustainable drainage systems where appropriate.
 - F4 Assessing flood risk for decision-making
 - F6 Development in areas at risk of flooding from rivers or the sea
 - F7 Ensuring development is safe from flooding

- F8 Sustainable drainage systems and watercourses
- F9 Development in Coastal Change Management Areas
- Chapter 19: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment: Development should conserve and enhance the natural environment by protecting important landscapes, habitats, biodiversity and trees, while maximising opportunities for nature recovery, green infrastructure and biodiversity net gain. Proposals should avoid significant environmental harm, prioritise land of lower environmental value where possible, and be sensitively designed in protected landscapes and coastal areas. Development causing unacceptable impacts on designated sites, irreplaceable habitats or biodiversity that cannot be adequately avoided, mitigated or compensated for should be refused.
 - In National Landscapes substantial weight should be placed on the importance of conserving and enhancing their natural beauty.
 - Decisions in Heritage Coast areas should be consistent with the special character of the area and the importance of its conservation
 - Improving the natural environment biodiversity is to be protected and encourage net gains for biodiversity.
- N2 Improving the natural environment
- N3 Trees in new development
- N4 Protected Landscapes
- N5 Maintaining the character of the coast
- Chapter 20: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment – Great weight should be given to the conservation of heritage assets. Development that preserves or enhances designated or non-designated heritage assets should be approved. while any harm must be clearly justified and weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. Proposals causing substantial harm to, or loss of, heritage assets should only be permitted in exceptional circumstances where overriding public benefits outweigh the harm.
 - HE4 Securing the conservation of heritage assets
 - HE5 Assessing effects on heritage assets
 - HE6 Proposals affecting designated heritage assets
 - HE7 Decisions on non-designated heritage assets
 - HE9 Conservation areas
 - HE10 Loss or removal of heritage assets

Other material considerations

National Planning Practice Guidance

All of Dorset:

Dorset AONB Landscape Character Assessment

The Dorset National Landscape Management Plan 2026-31

Supplementary Planning Documents/Guidance for Purbeck area:

Swanage Green Infrastructure Strategy

District Design Guide SPD

Managing and using traditional building details in Purbeck

Poole Harbour Recreation 2019-2024 SPD

Swanage Conservation Area Appraisal

Shoreline Management Plan 15 – Hurst Spit to Durlston Head

The site sits within the ‘Promenade’ (N.1) area of the Handfast Point to Durlston Head subsection. Within this area the management approach is one of ‘Hold the Line’ for the time horizon of the Shoreline Management Plan (SMP), to 2105. The intention of the SMP is therefore to retain defences to their current alignment, with maintenance and replacement of defences taking place as necessary.

11. 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.

12. Public Sector Equalities Duty

12.1 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.

12.2 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.

12.3 An Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) of the project has previously been undertaken when considering applications for funding. It concluded that the project would have a positive impact in respect of the protected characteristics of Age, Disability, Gender

identity/reassignment, Marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, people with caring responsibilities and socio-economic deprivation.

- 12.4 The positive effects were identified as being substantial, due to the inclusive design and diversification of the spaces, the replacement of steep and stepped paths with more accessible gradients, the provision of accessible toilets and a quieter secondary event space which was specifically identified as being beneficial to older people, disabled people, neurodivergent people, carers and families with young children. The increased seating, shade and clear routes were considered to improve comfort and accessibility for people of all ages. It was also noted that the introduction of unisex accessible toilets would provide a positive impact for transgender, non-binary and gender-diverse people. The expanded events area was identified as enabling more year-round free or low cost activities, reducing financial barriers to participation.
- 12.5 The EqIA did not identify negative impacts for any protected group, with the impacts for all other groups being considered to be neutral.
- 12.6 It should be noted that the provision of toilet blocks, which contributed to the positive effects identified, do not form part of this planning application. Space is retained within the scheme for their provision and it is the applicant's intention that they would be provided as part of the scheme. However, this would be under available permitted development rights. Although the positive benefits of their provision may not be attributed to this planning application, their omission at this stage does not result in any negative impacts compared to the existing situation.

13. Public Benefits

- 13.1 The proposals would provide a number of benefits, including public benefits. These are summarised in the table below:

What	Amount / value
Material considerations	
Stabilisation of ground to ensure public safety and contribution to the aims of the shoreline management plan to 'hold the line'	Substantial public benefit
Provision of enlarged area of public open space and associated contribution to the town's role as a visitor destination.	Significant public benefit
Provision of enhanced wheelchair accessible routes into and around the greenspace and beach hut areas.	Significant public benefit
Provision of additional beach hut accommodation and associated contribution to the town's role as a visitor destination	Moderate benefit
Net gain in biodiversity	Moderate benefit

14. Planning Assessment

Principle of development

- 14.1 At its core, the intention of the proposed development is to provide ground stabilisation of the land which makes up the 'green seafront' within Swanage. There is extensive evidence of ground instability across the site, with cracks evident in retaining walls at various locations, cracks in the ground and uneven ground throughout both Sandpit Field and Weather Station Field. In addition to the engineering works to stabilise the field and landscaping to reinstate it to its current purpose, the application includes proposals to create an enlarged area of open space through the stopping up of Walrond Road and the joining of Weather Station Field and Sandpit Field, and the extension of the 'Spa Retreat' area to provide additional space for the siting of beach huts.
- 14.2 The eastern part of the site is within a Coastal Change Management Area, as defined through the Purbeck Local Plan. Within these areas, Policy E6 states that essential infrastructure may be permitted, provided there are clear plans to manage any impacts arising from the development on coastal change; and the proposed infrastructure will not have an adverse impact on rates of coastal change elsewhere, or any adverse impacts on rates of coastal change are minimised.
- 14.3 Policy F9 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that development should not be permitted in Coastal Change Management Areas unless it can be demonstrated that the development would be safe over its planned lifetime; would reflect the provisions of the relevant Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) and not have an unacceptable effect on coastal change processes and provide wider sustainability benefits.
- 14.4 The site is within the area covered by Shoreline Management Plan 15, Hurst Spit to Durlston Head. The site sits within the 'Promenade' (N.1) area of the Handfast Point to Durlston Head subsection, where the management approach is one of 'Hold the Line' for the time horizon of the plan, to 2105. The intention of the SMP is therefore to retain defences to their current alignment, with maintenance and replacement of defences taking place as necessary. As such the proposal to stabilise the ground is aligned with the objectives of the SMP as it would contribute to securing the current alignment of the coastline and preventing collapse of the eastern slopes which would contribute to coastal erosion.
- 14.5 The closure of Walrond Road and creation of a larger event space and plaza and the expansion of the beach huts are not directly required in order to provide ground stabilisation or coastal defence. However, given that the SMP policy is to 'hold the line' the provision of these facilities would not conflict with the SMP or coastal erosion processes or defences and would comply with policy E6 of the Local Plan and policy F9 of the NPPF. The expansion of public open space is considered to be consistent with the objectives of the Local Plan in respect of infrastructure which include encouraging healthy communities through access to open space and encouraging walking and cycling. Although policies do not specifically address proposals where open space is provided separately from other development, policy I3 seeks to ensure that development protects and strengthens the green infrastructure network through the provision of new green and open space and the improvement of links between different components of the network. Policy I4 also seeks to safeguard existing spaces while requiring replacement facilities to be equivalent to or an improvement on the existing resource. The provision of an enlarged area of public open space is consistent with these policies and is considered to be a public benefit of the scheme to which significant weight may be afforded.
- 14.6 The Neighbourhood Plan, Local Plan and NPPF do not contain policies which specifically seek to protect existing roads or prevent against their stopping up. Therefore the closure

and infilling of Walrond Road is not considered to be unacceptable in principle, provided that the works would not result in unacceptable impacts upon the highway network. Those impacts are considered in detail below, but it is concluded that the closure of the eastern section of Walrond Road would not result in severe impacts upon the transport network or any highway safety issues, subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions. Therefore the closure and infilling of the road is considered to be acceptable in principle, subject to other considerations.

Conservation

- 14.7 The application site is not located within a conservation area and there are no listed buildings on the site. Nonetheless, the site adjoins the Swanage Conservation Area, to the south. The site also includes a World War II gun emplacement which would be demolished in order to facilitate the ground stabilisation works proposed. The demolition of the gun emplacement has been the subject of a significant number of objections to the application, raising concerns about the loss of a structure of heritage value.
- 14.8 The gun emplacement is not listed. An application for the structure to be listed was made by a member of the public in July 2026. This was considered by Historic England with the decision being made in August 2026 that it does not merit listing as it lacks architectural interest and its historic interest has been compromised through works and deterioration which have affected the interest of remaining coastal defences within Swanage. Overall it was concluded that while the structure is of some local interest, it lacks the level of architectural and historic interest in a national context to warrant listing. It has been confirmed by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, that an appeal against that decision was lodged, and the decision was upheld. The gun emplacement therefore constitutes a non-designated heritage asset.
- 14.9 A heritage statement prepared by the applicant has considered the impact on this and other heritage assets within the area. The designated and non-designated heritage assets which were considered and the conclusions in respect of them is set out in the table below. The assessment has been reviewed by the council's senior conservation officer who has confirmed that they agree with the conclusions with regard to the impacts on each asset.

Asset	Status of asset	Conclusion
Gun Emplacement, Sandpit Field	Non-designated heritage asset	Total loss of significance
Sand pit	Non-designated heritage asset	Substantial harm
Swanage conservation area	Conservation area – designated heritage asset	Harm
Church of the Holy Spirit and St Edwards	Grade II listed building	No effect
Swanage War Memorial	Grade II listed building	Harm

De-Moulham Villas	Locally Listed Building (Non-designated heritage asset)	No effect.
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- 14.10 In considering the impact of development on the historic environment, policy E2 of the PLP states that great weight will be given to the protection of designated heritage assets, with consideration to be given to the significance of the asset, with the expectation where the development would lead to the partial or total loss of a heritage asset, the applicant will be required to secure a programme of recording and analysis of that asset.
- 14.11 Section 20 of the NPPF is concerned with conserving and enhancing the historic environment, and has introduced some changes in approach compared to previous versions, which were in place at the time that the PLP was adopted. Policy HE6 of the NPPF now requires substantial weight to be given to the conservation of heritage assets, compared to great weight in previous versions. The NPPF also introduces a new framework for the assessment and categorisation of impacts on heritage assets. The assessment set out in the heritage statement is consistent with the current NPPF and adopts the categories of impact that are set out within it.

Impact on designated heritage assets

- 14.12 With regard to designated heritage assets, Policy HE6 (3) of the NPPF states that any harm will be a matter of considerable importance and weight. Policy HE6(4) goes on to state that where a proposal would harm the significance of such an asset, the effect on the asset and its significance should be weighed against any public benefits.
- 14.13 In this instance, the impact of the proposals on three designated heritage assets has been assessed, as set out in the table above. In respect of the Church of the Holy Spirit and St Edwards (Grade II listed), the assessment finds no effect. In respect of Swanage Conservation Area and Swanage War Memorial (Grade II Listed), the assessment finds that there would be harm. In accordance with NPPF Policy HE6(3), this is afforded **significant weight**.
- 14.14 Where harm is identified, policy HE6(4) requires that the effect on the asset and its significance is weighed against any public benefits arising from the proposal.
- 14.15 The public benefits of the scheme, and the weight which is attributed to them is set out in the table within section 13 of this report. The benefits include essential ground stabilisation works which will contribute to the aims of the shoreline management plan and ensure public safety, which is afforded substantial weight, the provision of an enlarged area of public open space and accessibility improvements to the open space, each of which are afforded significant weight. In aggregate it is considered that these public benefits are sufficient to overcome the harm that has been identified to the Swanage War Memorial and Swanage Conservation Area, through the changes to their settings.

Impact on non-designated heritage assets

- 14.16 Policy HE7(2) of the NPPF states that where a development proposal would harm the significance of a non-designated heritage asset, this should be weighed against the benefits of the proposal, and balanced judgment made, having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the asset. HE7(3) goes on to state that where the harm would be substantial or result in the total loss of significance of a non-designated heritage asset, this should only be supported where the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefits of the proposal.

- 14.17 As set out in the table above, the assessment has considered the impacts on three non-designated heritage assets. De-Moulham Villas, a locally listed building would not be affected by the proposals. Sand Pit would suffer substantial harm and the Gun Emplacement would suffer a total loss of significance, given its proposed demolition.
- 14.18 While the level of harm would be high, amounting to substantial harm and total loss, the significance of the assets must also be considered.
- 14.19 Sand Pit is identified as being of low significance, which has been agreed by the conservation officer. The former quarry has been infilled and landscaped so does not immediately appear as a quarry but the activity has influenced topography of the site, allowing the historic function to be understood. The proposed works and in particular the infilling of Walrond Road and the creation of the plaza in its place reduce this legibility and contribute to the harm. Although the harm is substantial, the asset is of low significance. As such it is considered that the harm is outweighed by the aggregate benefits of the scheme which include benefits which, individually carry substantial and significant weight.
- 14.20 The Gun Emplacement within Sandpit Field is identified in the heritage statement as being of low significance, which has been agreed by the conservation officer. It is acknowledged that the structure has some interest from the survival of the gun position and underground chambers, which provide evidence of the WWII coastal defences within Swanage, which is enhanced by the relationship to other infrastructure in the locality. However, in considering a recent application for the structure to be listed, Historic England have noted that the structure has been modified to become a seaside shelter with the entrance to the associated store being blocked and the front opening partially infilled and a low wall constructed, with no evidence remaining of a gun holdfast or bolt ring, and that steps have been added to create a viewing platform with the addition of modern metal railings. In view of the nature of the structure, the modifications made to it and the loss of the neighbouring light anti-aircraft battery, the structure has limited historic interest in the national context and did not therefore merit listing.
- 14.21 The alterations to the gun emplacement have therefore resulted in an erosion of the structure's historic significance. Although the structure is near to the town's war memorial, it does not sit within a strong context of other contemporary features. The structure was not identified as being of particular importance or interest when the Purbeck Society conducted its local survey of non-designated heritage assets between 2017 and 2021, which has fed into the local list. Although that does not prevent the structure from being considered as a non-designated heritage asset, it does indicate that it was not previously viewed as a structure of particular interest. In view of the available evidence and assessment it is considered that the conclusion that the structure is of low significance is appropriate.
- 14.22 In addition to the heritage assessment findings that confirm that the proposals would involve the total loss of a non-designated heritage asset of low significance, the applicant has provided further supporting information to justify the design decision to remove the structure. The supplementary planning statement notes that monitoring of ground movement on Sandpit Field has been ongoing since late 2020 with routine site monitoring and risk assessment being carried out since 2023. The ongoing assessments have identified that the continuing ground movement has contributed to structural defects in the gun emplacement, with the recommendation in the most recent report of August 2026 that it be fenced off due to the risk of collapse.

- 14.23 Although a detailed assessment of potential options to restore the structure has not been provided it is understood that, due to the extent of the structural faults, any such intervention would be significant and of a nature which would not be compatible with the objective of conserving and enhancing the historic environment. The current proposals, and in particular the objective of providing accessible routes to Shore Road, also mean that ground levels in the vicinity of the structure would need to be reduced to achieve a suitable slope. The retention of the gun emplacement would therefore prevent this objective from being achieved.
- 14.24 As the gun emplacement is considered to be of low significance, influenced by the previous loss of features and context, and is already suffering structural failure due to the ground stability issues on the site, it is considered that the aggregate benefits of the scheme which individually carry substantial and significant weight, are sufficient to outweigh the loss of the asset in this instance.
- 14.25 Where development proposals result in the loss of the whole or part of a heritage asset (whether designated or not) NPPF policy HE10 states that the development should not be approved without all reasonable steps being taken to ensure that the new development will proceed after the loss has occurred, and that the applicant should record and advance understanding of the significance of the asset to be lost, in a manner proportionate to its significance, making any evidence publicly accessible by depositing it in the relevant historic environment record.
- 14.26 In this instance it has been recommended that the gun emplacement be subject to a level III recording which will be secured by condition. In respect of the steps to be taken to ensure the development will proceed under HE10(1)(a), it is considered appropriate to secure this through an appropriately worded condition preventing any works of demolition of the gun emplacement until such time as the Council is provided with evidence of a programme for the implementation of the development, and that a contractor has been appointed for its delivery.

Landscape

- 14.27 Although the site is located centrally within the town of Swanage it is within the Dorset National Landscape, which washes over the town. Policy N4(1) requires that substantial weight should be placed on the importance of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of these areas.
- 14.28 Policy N4(2) of the NPPF states that proposals for major development within protected landscapes should be refused other than in exceptional circumstances. As set out in footnote 59 of the framework, for the purposes of this policy, the question of whether a proposal is 'major development' is a matter for the decision maker, taking into account its nature, scale and setting, and whether it could have a significant adverse impact on the statutory purposes for which the area has been designated.
- 14.29 The proposals meet the definition of 'major development' as set out in section 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 as the overall site area is in excess of 1 hectare. However, the nature of the development, being principally ground stabilisation and re-landscaping of an existing area of open space, the relatively limited and contained scale of the development and the setting, within the established urban area of Swanage is such that the proposals are not considered to constitute major development for the purposes of policies N4 and N5 of the NPPF.

- 14.30 The application has been accompanied by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA), the scope of which was agreed with the council's Senior Landscape Architect during pre-application discussions. Having reviewed submitted documents the Council's Senior Landscape Architect has confirmed that the LVIA has been prepared in accordance with relevant guidance and has appropriately assessed the likely landscape and visual effects and that they concur with its conclusions.
- 14.31 The LVIA considers the landscape and visual effects of the scheme, informed by a review of available Landscape Character Assessments and fieldwork comprising 10 viewpoints which were agreed with the Council ahead of the LVIA being produced. The site is noted as being in an urban landscape type within the wider Corfe Valley landscape character area (clay valley character type). It is assessed that the location, scale and size of the site mean that the impacts are more likely to be local and less likely to be at a national or regional level.
- 14.32 With regard to the landscape effects the assessment reaches the following conclusions for the affected receptors:

Receptor	Construction phase	Operational Phase
Dorset National Landscape	Minor adverse effect	Minor beneficial effect
Community and institutional character area	Moderate adverse effect	Moderate beneficial effect
Active coastal waters seascape character area	Moderate to minor adverse effect	Minor beneficial effect
Large buildings – mixed character area	Minor to negligible adverse effect	Minor to negligible beneficial effect

- 14.33 The visual effects of the scheme are assessed as ranging from between Moderate Adverse to Major Adverse effects for the construction phase of the site, with the greatest effects predicted for receptors in close proximity to the site. Following completion of the works the effects are reduced and are predicted to reduce but predicted to remain in year 1 and the early establishment period while planting matures. By year 15 it is assessed that the long-term visual effects are predominantly beneficial, with the greatest benefits arising close to the site. The long-term effects for receptors close to the site would be Moderate Beneficial to Moderate to Minor Beneficial effects. The effects for more distant receptors would also be beneficial but to a lesser extent, being either Minor Beneficial or Negligible Beneficial effects.
- 14.34 The LVIA therefore concludes that the long-term effects of the scheme would be predominantly beneficial, which is confirmed by the comments received by the Council's Senior Landscape Architect, and the comments received from the Dorset National Landscape team, both of whom emphasise the importance of the imposition of appropriate conditions to ensure that the new landscaping is of an appropriate standard.
- 14.35 In light of these conclusions it is therefore concluded that the scheme would, when complete, provide beneficial landscape and visual impacts which would be compatible with the special qualities and purposes of the Dorset National Landscape. The proposal therefore complies with the requirements of policy E1 of the Purbeck Local Plan and Policy N4 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Highways

- 14.36 A key element of the proposals, which is necessary to facilitate the creation of a single enlarged area of open space suitable for public events is the stopping-up and infilling of the eastern section of Walrond Road, between De Moulham Road and Shore Road. The

formal stopping-up of the highway is the subject of a separate application, under Section 247 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. That section allows the Secretary of State to make an order to stop up or divert a highway, where it is necessary to enable development for which planning permission has been granted. The stopping up application is currently under consideration by the Department for Transport. Public consultation on a draft order runs until 5 November 2026.

- 14.37 Neither the development plan policies nor the NPPF contain policies which set out specific considerations for the stopping up of highways. The application therefore falls to be considered against the general highways policies of the Purbeck Local Plan, and the NPPF, with which the local plan is broadly consistent. Policy I2 of the Purbeck Local Plan sets out broad principles for transport and accessibility of building on location through improvements to road and rail connections, promoting transport choice with public transport, rights of way and cycling networks to provide alternatives to the car, and promoting safety, security and opportunities for healthy lifestyles.
- 14.38 The policy goes on to state that proposals for development which support these priorities will be supported where they meet the key criteria set out in the policy. Of particular relevance to the current proposals are the requirement for development proposals to be supported by a detailed transport assessment and travel plan where it is likely they would result in significant transport implications; do not compromise highway safety and/or contribute towards new or improve access to the highway and providing adequate parking across Purbeck.
- 14.39 The application is supported by a transport assessment which identifies that vehicle movements along Walrond Road are light, when compared to traffic along De Moulham Road and Shore Road. On this basis it concludes that the impact of the closure of the eastern section of Walrond Road would have little impact on the surrounding local road network, with any impacts being a redistribution of existing traffic flows rather than creation of additional traffic flows.
- 14.40 Initial comments from the highway authority requested further details of the traffic counts that the transport assessment was based on, the operation of the new vehicular access for emergency vehicles in the south western corner of the site, further details of the impact of the development, including the loss of parking capacity on Walrond Road, on parking, consideration of pedestrian routes and a road safety audit of the works to stop up Walrond Road.
- 14.41 Responses to these queries were provided in a highways technical note and road safety audit report. With regard to the traffic counts, details of locations have been provided which have satisfied the highways authority with regard to the methodology and its conclusions.
- 14.42 With regard to the proposed emergency access in the south western corner of the site, the Highways Authority's concerns related to visibility and the proximity of the access to the junction of De Moulham Road and Victoria Avenue. The technical note places the proposals in the context of the separate shore road highway improvement scheme which will also improve the public realm, highway and pedestrian environment. That scheme includes build-outs on De Moulham road, which would move approaching vehicles away from the kerb and improve their visibility. Although the available visibility splay would be below the recommended distance for a 30mph environment it is noted that vehicles approaching would be slowing down for the junction. The technical note confirms that emergency vehicles would be able to enter, turn and exit in a forward gear.

- 14.43 The applicant also notes that the new access is intended solely for use by emergency vehicles in the event that the main access to the site cannot be accessed. The use of the new secondary access is intended to be tightly controlled for those purposes only. The Highway Authority is satisfied that, subject to a condition requiring measures, such as bollards or a locked gate and appropriate signage, to restrict usage of the access, that there would not be an unacceptable impact upon highway safety. Although the applicant has referred to the Shore Road Scheme, the Highway Authority's conclusion is that the acceptability of the emergency access is not reliant upon the shore road scheme or any other off-site works.
- 14.44 In respect of parking the technical note confirms that the development would lead to the removal of approximately 60m of on street parking, equivalent to space for around 10 vehicles, albeit that the full length of the road is not currently available for parking, having been fenced off due to the land instability. The technical note confirms that alternative on-street parking provision would remain on De Moulham Road, Victoria Avenue and residential streets to the west. Off-street parking is also available at the Main Beach Car Park (285 spaces) and North Beach Car Park (105 spaces). Parking utilisation has been assessed using parking transaction data for the car parks and the note confirms that at their highest, the utilisation rates for the main beach and north beach car parks are 80.1% and 30.6% respectively in the month of August. Earlier months of the year showed significantly lower utilisation rates. Based on these figures it can be concluded that although the proposals would displace up to 10 vehicles, that would not place a significant burden on the overall parking capacity within the town.
- 14.45 The technical note also refers to the fact that Walrond Road rises steeply from Shore Road towards De Moulham Road such that parking on the incline would generally be considered an accessible option for many people with reduced mobility. In this context there are no dedicated blue badge parking spaces in the immediate area.
- 14.46 In considering the pedestrian environment around the new plaza, the Transport Technical Note again places the proposals in the context of the Shore Road Improvements, which do not form part of this planning application but which are intended to be complementary to it, including through the provision of crossing points and widening pedestrian routes. The Highways Authority considers the proposals to be acceptable, noting that they will improve accessibility by reducing gradients and introducing step-free routes. Similarly the results of the road safety audit have been noted but the highway authority do not consider that the issues identified are so significant as to justify objecting to the proposal.
- 14.47 Overall the final comments of the Highway Authority confirm that it considers that the proposal would not have an unacceptable impact on highway safety or result in a severe residual cumulative impact on the road network, and raises no objection to the proposals subject to conditions. It is therefore concluded that the proposals, including the stopping up and infilling of Walrond Road would not lead to any conflict with policy I2 of the Purbeck Local Plan or policies TR4 or TR6 of the NPPF. As such the impacts of the proposal on the highway network are considered to be acceptable.

Flood Risk and Drainage

- 14.48 The majority of the site, which comprises the higher ground at the western side of the site is within flood zone 1 and is not therefore considered to be at risk of flooding. However the eastern edge of the site falls within flood zones 2 and 3, associated with tidal flooding. Flood zone 3 equates to an annual probability of flooding of greater than 0.5%. The eastern edge of the site being affected by tidal flood risk is reflective of its proximity

to the sea and the ground levels which slope down to the road at the eastern end of the site. As the use of the land is and will remain for amenity open space, it is a water compatible use as defined in Annex F of the NPPF.

- 14.49 The flood risk assessment accompanying the application confirms that the modelled tidal flood event would affect only the very easternmost edge of the site where it meets shore road. While there is risk of flooding to Shore Road, that is not affected by the proposed development and as noted in the flood risk assessment, in the event of a flood, safe access and egress would remain available from De Moulham Road.
- 14.50 The sequential test requires that development is directed towards areas at least risk of flooding. However the nature of the proposals is primarily for stabilisation of the existing site, for which the sequential test is not relevant. The closure of a section of Walrond Road to expand the event space is similarly driven by the availability of the existing open space so it would not be reasonably possible to locate the works on an alternative site. As the use of the site is as open space, it is a water compatible use meaning that it is not necessary to consider the exceptions test.
- 14.51 The application is also accompanied by a drainage strategy which proposes to replicate the existing drainage arrangements on the site, of predominantly drainage to the ground, which is considered to be appropriate and in line with the site's current and future use and its status as an area of landscaped greenspace. In reviewing and confirming the acceptability of the proposals the Lead Local Flood Authority notes that the closure and infilling of Walrond Road will lead to a reduction in the impermeable area across the site, reducing pressure on drainage systems.
- 14.52 The proposal is therefore considered to comply with policies E4 and E5 of the Purbeck Local Plan and policies F4 to F7 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Trees

- 14.53 Following comments from the Council's Tree Officer raising concerns in respect of the initially submitted information the applicant has provided revised arboricultural information, including an Arboricultural Impact Assessment, Arboricultural Method Statement Heads of Terms and Tree Protection Plan. Whilst the development has the potential to affect a number of trees on the site, including the prominent Category B Holm Oaks (T18 and T19) and Corsican Pine (T23), it is concluded that these impacts can be appropriately managed through the implementation of suitable tree protection measures and arboricultural controls. The Tree Officer emphasises that all construction activities must be kept outside retained trees' Root Protection Areas wherever possible and that any works within such areas, including pathways and associated infrastructure, should be undertaken using no-dig construction techniques to avoid damage to important tree roots.
- 14.54 The proposal would necessitate the removal of a number of Category C and U trees and large shrubs, together with two poor-quality Sycamores (T1 and T2) and a Hawthorn (T21). The Tree Officer raises no objection to these removals, noting their limited arboricultural value, and welcomes the proposed replacement tree planting across the site. It is also recommended that soil decompaction works are undertaken within the Root Protection Areas of Holm Oaks T18 and T19 to improve their long-term health and vigour.
- 14.55 Subject to the submission and approval of a detailed Arboricultural Method Statement, an updated Tree Protection Plan, and a comprehensive soft landscaping scheme securing replacement planting, the Tree Officer raises no objection to the development. It is considered that these measures can be secured by planning condition and would ensure

the satisfactory protection and long-term retention of the site's most significant trees. Subject to the imposition of a condition to require this it is therefore considered that the proposal complies with policy E1 of the PLP with regard to trees, and policy N2(1)(d) of the NPPF.

Biodiversity

- 14.56 The application is accompanied by an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA), considering the impacts of the scheme on biodiversity. The EclA has been informed by desk studies, a habitat survey and habitat suitability assessment for protected species including badger, bats, dormouse, great crested newt, nesting birds and reptiles. This has been supplemented by a ground level tree assessment for roosting bats and a bat activity and foraging habitat suitability assessment.
- 14.57 The EclA notes that the majority of the site comprises modified grassland with pockets of neutral grassland and scattered trees throughout as well as areas of developed land and sealed surface. The site is also noted to be bordered by non-native ornamental and native hedgerows. The modified grassland comprises the areas used for amenity purposes and was noted to be in poor condition and subject to a regular mowing regime. The neutral grassland is present in the eastern and central parts of the site and is in poor condition, with limited maintenance. The trees are in a variety of conditions and include native species, and the hedgerows are also noted as being in poor condition, subject to regular trimming. The habitats on the site have been assessed as having only local value.
- 14.58 No evidence of the use of the site by badger has been identified and based on the assessment that the site would offer limited potential habitat for great crested newt, dormouse and reptiles it was possible to exclude those from further assessment. The EclA notes there is potential for the hedgerows and scattered trees to support nesting birds. With regard to bats, a more detailed assessment has been carried out and has identified that there is negligible potential for the trees and beach huts on the site to support roosting bats. The habitats on the site are acknowledged to have potential for bat foraging but activity surveys have recorded low levels of activity.
- 14.59 Impacts from the development during the construction phase on nearby designated sites from dust and runoff has been considered with the impacts being either negligible or low for all sites. No significant effects have been identified for any on site habitats or protected and notable species. During the operational phase the impacts are further reduced, representing either a low or negligible impact, and therefore not resulting in any significant effects.
- 14.60 Notwithstanding the low level of impact, mitigation has been proposed which would reduce all impacts in both the construction and operational phases to be negligible. The mitigation includes protective fencing for retained trees and hedgerows, a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) to cover working practices and ensure that they are compatible with the protection of retained and nearby important habitats, and that they provide appropriate measures to avoid impacts on protected species. During the operational phase, the EclA includes recommendations for any new lighting to be installed, to ensure it remains low-level and minimises upward spill to minimise impacts upon foraging bats. The EclA also identifies enhancements in the form of at least two tree-mounted bat boxes and the use of native wildflower seeding on areas of modified grassland.
- 14.61 The EclA has been approved by the Council's Natural Environment Team through the Dorset Biodiversity Appraisal Protocol. Therefore, subject to appropriate conditions to

secure the mitigation and enhancement measures set out in the EclA, the impacts on biodiversity are considered to be acceptable and the scheme therefore complies with policy E10 of the PLP which is broadly consistent with relevant policies in the NPPF.

Biodiversity net gain

- 14.62 In addition to the impacts of the scheme on biodiversity there is a statutory requirement for all development proposals to demonstrate a net gain in biodiversity of at least 10%. The application is accompanied by a statutory biodiversity metric and biodiversity net gain statement which has quantified the baseline habitats and which confirms that there are no habitat of very high distinctiveness affected.
- 14.63 In applying the biodiversity gain hierarchy, it is noted that habitats of value, the existing trees, are to be retained wherever possible. The remainder of the scheme achieves a 10% increase in biodiversity through the habitat creation which would take place as a result of the new landscaping proposals and through the enhancement of some existing retained on site habitats, predominantly grassland. Overall the scheme results in a net increase in area habitats of 1.12 habitat units, representing a 16.28% increase, and in hedgerow units of 0.07 habitat units, representing a 28.67% increase. The proposal is therefore considered to meet the biodiversity gain objective.
- 14.64 As the biodiversity improvements would be achieved on-site and would involve habitats of medium distinctiveness and habitats enhancements to increase the distinctiveness of the baseline habitats, the enhancements are considered to be 'significant' meaning that a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) would be required when approving the biodiversity gain plan. The HMMP would include provisions for maintaining and monitoring the enhancements for a period of 30 years, and would need to be secured by a legal agreement at the time the Biodiversity Gain Plan is submitted for approval. The net gain in biodiversity is a benefit of the scheme to which moderate weight may be afforded.

Impacts on amenity

- 14.65 The scheme would result in the creation of an enlarged area for public events than is currently available. The proposals also note the small area to the north of the Spa Retreat beach huts as a secondary event space, both of which have been the subject of concern. At present the site is already used for a variety of public events during the course of the year, including the Swanage Carnival and Swanage Folk Festival. However while the space would be larger, events which would have greatest potential for impacts on amenity, such as live music or evening events would also be subject to controls through the licencing regime, which is able to tailor any controls to the specific characteristics of the event that is planned. In this context, policy DM7 is clear that proposals should be assessed on the basis of whether they would be an acceptable use of land, and that decision-makers should assume that separate regulatory regimes will operate effectively unless there is clear evidence to the contrary.
- 14.66 Concerns raised in respect of the secondary event space are noted, but the space is small so would not be suitable for events with a large number of participants or significantly noisy activities. The applicant notes that this is intended to serve specifically as a quiet space separate from the main event space, which they recognise may be of benefit to neurodivergent people or other groups who may benefit from a quieter space.

Together with the separation from neighbouring properties provided by the electricity sub station to the north, and the fact that the space is similar to the existing open space in this location it is not considered that it would result in an unacceptable impact on amenity.

- 14.67 There is potential for impacts during the construction period including noise from plant and equipment, although these would be restricted to working hours, and would be on the seaward side of the site which is furthest from the nearest receptors. While there would be potential for dust the CEMP would include measures for managing dust. It is not therefore considered that the potential impacts would be appropriately managed.
- 14.68 Concerns have been raised in respect of the impact of the beach huts on views from De Moulham road. There is no inherent right to a view and therefore any impact on views would not be a material planning consideration. Notwithstanding this it is noted that there would be no change in the level of the ground on which the beach huts would sit. The current beach huts sit below the level of the road so that only the roof and upper parts of the huts on the uppermost tier are visible from De Moulham Road. They would also be further screened by the new native hedgerow which forms part of the scheme. The additional beach huts on the lower levels would not be readily visible.

Character and appearance

- 14.69 The overall character of the site would remain similar to the existing situation, albeit with the open space forming a single and cohesive whole rather than smaller parcels of space separated by Walrond Road. The plaza at the eastern edge of the site would provide a focal point where Walrond Road currently emerges onto Shore Road. On the western side new landscaping and access in the current position of Walrond Road would provide a more attractive entrance to the site.
- 14.70 The new and replacement beach huts would have a traditional and simple form which is typical of the seaside location, comparable to the existing beach huts on the site and to other beach huts within the town. Concern has been raised over the materials specified which include composite cladding, and UPVC doors on the 'chalet' huts. It has also been suggested in third party comments that a grey colour palette would be inappropriate.
- 14.71 The materials used in the construction, while not traditional timber construction would have a similar appearance and provide benefits in terms of the overall longevity of the huts and their resistance to the maritime environment. With regard to the colour palette, the submitted drawings indicate that the huts are to be a combination of red, yellow, blue and green. This colour palette is considered to be appropriate for beach huts in a seaside tourist location. Therefore, subject to an appropriate condition to confirm precise details of the colours and finish of the beach huts it is considered that their impact upon the character of the area would be appropriate as it would create a visually attractive and characterful beachfront area, which reflects the established character.
- 14.72 The proposals are therefore considered to comply with policy E12 of the PLP, Policy DP3 of the NPPF.

Ground contamination

- 14.73 Sandpit Field is identified as having the potential for ground contamination, in light of previous uses. The application has been accompanied by a geoenvironmental assessment which identifies made ground and the presence of a substation as other

potential sources of contamination and recommends further assessment is carried out. This has been reviewed by the council's specialist consultant and the Environment Agency who recommend the imposition of a condition to secure the investigation and remediation of any ground contamination. Subject to the imposition of this condition it is considered that the proposal will avoid unacceptable impacts or risks and comply with policy P2 of the NPPF.

Project funding

- 14.74 Dorset Council's Cabinet approved a £2.5 million capital grant for the works covered by this planning application at its meeting on 19 May 2025. The grant covers part of the cost of the scheme with the remainder of the estimated £6.9 million cost being paid by Swanage Town Council.
- 14.75 It is noted that third party comments have raised concerns in respect of the overall cost of the proposals, and the public expenditure required to deliver them. While those concerns are noted, the overall cost of the scheme and agreement of Dorset Council's cabinet to provide funding towards meeting that cost is not a material consideration for the determination of the planning application.

15. Environmental implications

- 15.1 The development would give rise to additional CO2 emissions through the construction period, from plant and machinery and through the materials used in the ground stabilisation works which would include concrete as well as the embodied energy within the construction of the beach huts. Once operational the emissions associated with the site would be minimal as the site would remain as public open space without any heating/cooling requirements or day to day power needs outside of events which already take place.
- 15.2 The nature of the development, in landscaping the eastern edge of the site to provide more accessible routes from the event space to the seafront is such that there would be waste arisings from the excavation works. The applicant has indicated that they intend to re-use arisings as fill material for the infilling of Walrond Road, so far as possible. This is considered to be an appropriate approach, which would be in accordance with the objectives of policy 22 of the Bournemouth Christchurch Poole and Dorset Waste Plan, which encourages proposals for major development to demonstrate that waste arising from construction, demolition and excavation to be minimised and managed in accordance with the waste hierarchy.

16. Summary of issues and the planning balance

- 16.1 The proposal comprises essential ground stabilisation works which would contribute to public safety of users of the existing open space and surrounding highways. The works would contribute to the aims of the adopted shoreline management plan which is to hold the line. The proposals would also involve the closure and infilling of the eastern section of Walrond Road to create a single enlarged events space, with the remainder of the space being re-landscaped, and an enlarged beach hut area provided.
- 16.2 The proposals would result to harm to designated and non-designated heritage assets. This would include harm to the Swanage Conservation Area and substantial harm to the Sand Pit non-designated heritage asset. The World War II gun emplacement (non-

designated heritage asset) would be lost in its entirety. In accordance with Policy HE6 of the NPPF, substantial weight is afforded to the conservation of assets. However, the harm that has been identified is considered to be outweighed by the aggregate benefits of the scheme which include the substantial public benefits of the ground stabilisation works and significant public benefits of enhanced access and the creation of an enlarged and enhanced area of green space which may be used for public events, and moderate benefits to the tourist economy of providing additional beach huts on the site.

- 16.3 The proposal has been considered against relevant policies in respect of Landscape, Highways, Flood Risk and Drainage, Trees, Biodiversity, Amenity, Character and appearance and ground conditions and has been found to be acceptable in each case. These matters weigh neutrally in the planning balance.
- 16.4 Overall the planning balance is therefore considered to weigh in favour of the proposals which are considered to comply with the development plan as a whole

17. Recommendation

GRANT planning permission subject to the conditions set out below.

The applicant's agreement to the pre-commencement conditions was received on 9 October 2026.

Recommendation: Approve subject to the following conditions:

1. The development to which this permission relates must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this permission.

Reason: This condition is required to be imposed by Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:
UK0028605.5048-WSP-RLB-SG-02 0 Site location plan - new option
UK0039558.6605-WSP-XX-XX-DR-LA-010 P05 Proposed site plan sheet
UK0039558.6605-WSP-SW-DR-GEO-101 Ground engineering interventions
UK0039558.6605-WSP-XX-XX-DR-LA-022 P03 Proposed beach hut specification sheet 01 of 02
UK0039558.6605-WSP-XX-XX-DR-LA-023 P01 Proposed beach hut specification sheet 02 of 02
UK0039588.6605-WSP-XX-XX-DR-CD-0502 P03 Drainage general arrangement plan
UK0039558.6605-WSP-XX-XX-DR-LA-011 P04 Hard landscape and street furniture plan
UK0039558.6605-WSP-XX-XX-DR-LA-012 P01 Landscaping details
UK0039558.6605-WSP-XX-XX-DR-LA-013 P03 Landscaping details

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

3. Prior to the commencement of development on the site, a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) (Biodiversity) must be submitted to and approved in writing by the local Planning Authority. The CEMP must include the following:
a) Risk assessment of potentially damaging construction activities.

- b) Identification of "biodiversity protection zones".
 - c) Practical measures (both physical measures and sensitive working practices) to avoid or reduce impacts during construction (may be provided as a set of method statements).
 - d) The location and timing of sensitive works to avoid harm to biodiversity features.
 - e) The times during construction when specialist ecologists need to be present on site to oversee works.
 - f) Responsible persons and lines of communication.
 - g) The role and responsibilities on site of an ecological clerk of works (ECoW) or similarly competent person.
 - h) Use of protective fences, exclusion barriers and warning signs
- The development shall take place strictly in accordance with the approved CEMP.

Reason: To protect biodiversity during the construction phase.

4. Before the development hereby approved commences a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) must be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. The CTMP must include:
- construction vehicle details (number, size, type and frequency of movement)
 - a programme of construction works and anticipated deliveries
 - timings of deliveries so as to avoid, where possible, peak traffic periods of the network
 - a framework for managing abnormal loads
 - location of construction site access
 - contractors' arrangements (compound, storage, parking, turning, surfacing and drainage)
 - wheel cleaning facilities
 - vehicle cleaning facilities
 - inspection of the highways serving the site (by the developer (or his contractor) and DorsetHighways) prior to work commencing and at regular, agreed intervals during the construction phase
 - a scheme of appropriate signing of vehicle route to the site
 - a route plan for all contractors and suppliers to be advised on
 - temporary traffic management measures where necessary

The development must be carried out strictly in accordance with the approved Construction Traffic Management Plan.

Reason: To minimise the likely impact of construction traffic on the surrounding highway network and prevent the possible deposit of loose material on the adjoining highway.

5. No development approved by this planning permission shall commence until a remediation strategy to deal with the risks associated with contamination of the site in respect of the development hereby permitted, has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the LPA. This strategy will include the following components:
- 1. A detailed site investigation scheme, based on the results from the WSP Ltd Ground Investigation Report dated 26/6/2026 to provide information for a detailed risk assessment to all receptors that may be affected, including those off-site.

2. A tiered risk assessment using the results of the site investigation referred to in (1).
3. An options appraisal including sustainability and treatability studies of the remediation measures required and how they are to be undertaken.
4. A remediation strategy and verification plan providing details of the data that will be collected in order to demonstrate that the works set out in the remediation strategy are complete and identifying any requirements for longer-term monitoring of pollutant linkages, mitigation, maintenance and arrangements for contingency action.

Any changes to these components require the written consent of the LPA. The scheme shall be implemented as approved.

Reasons

1. To ensure that the development does not contribute to and is not put at unacceptable risk from or adversely affected by unacceptable levels of water pollution in line with paragraph P2(1-2) of the NPPF.
2. To ensure the development will contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate in line with paragraph P2(1-2) of the NPPF.
3. To prevent deterioration of groundwater quality within the Wealden Group Secondary A Aquifer, and to protect connected controlled waters including Swanage Bay, Ulwell Stream and the Swan Brook catchment from contamination arising through the disturbance of Made Ground and historical infill deposits.
6. No demolition, works or development shall take place until a written scheme of historic building recording, post recording analysis & publication in respect of the WWII Gun Emplacement has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development hereby approved shall only be implemented in full accordance with the approved historic building recording scheme.

Reason: To ensure provision is made for the recording of the historic fabric

7. Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved (including demolition, material storage and all preparatory work), a scheme for the protection of the retained trees, in accordance with BS 5837:2012 (as amended), including a scaled tree protection plan (TPP) and an arboricultural method statement (AMS) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority (LPA). The TPP and AMS shall include :
 - a) Details of preparatory tree work in accordance with BS 3998:2010 and good arboricultural practice.
 - b) Methods of demolition within the root protection area (RPA) of retained trees (as defined in BS 5837: 2012).
 - c) Details of construction within or impacting the RPA of retained trees.
 - d) A full specification for the construction of any roads, parking areas and driveways affecting trees RPA. This shall include details of a no-dig construction method, the extent

of areas to be constructed using this specification, and relevant cross-sections through these areas.

- f) A specification for protective fencing during demolition and construction phases and a scaled plan showing its alignment.
- h) A Scaled Tree Protection Plan (TPP) showing protection measures and identifying prohibited construction activities within RPAs.
- j) Details of site access, temporary parking, welfare facilities, loading/unloading and storage of equipment, materials, fuels and waste as well concrete mixing and prohibition of fires
- k) Methodology and detailed assessment of root pruning
- m) Arboricultural supervision and inspection by a suitably qualified arboriculturist
- n) Reporting procedure for inspection and supervision
- o) Methods to improve rooting environments for retained and proposed trees and landscaping
- p) Veteran and ancient tree/woodland protection and management

The development thereafter shall be implemented in strict accordance with the approved details.

Reason: Required prior to commencement of development to satisfy the Local Planning Authority that the trees to be retained will not be damaged during demolition or construction and to protect and enhance the appearance and character of the site and locality.

8. No demolition (or alteration by way of partial demolition) of the WWII Gun Emplacement on Sandpit Field shall commence until arrangements have been put in place to secure the implementation of the development permitted under this permission, and these arrangements have been agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The arrangements shall include details of the time scale and timetable for carrying out the development hereby approved. Thereafter, the development shall be carried out in accordance with the agreed details.

Reason: To ensure that the benefits justifying the loss of the non-designated heritage asset are secured.

9. Prior to the commencement of any development hereby approved, above damp course level, full details of hard landscape proposals shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These details shall include where appropriate : proposed finished levels or contours, means of enclosure, vehicular and pedestrian access and circulation areas, hard surfacing materials, minor artefacts and structures (eg; furniture, play equipment, signs, lighting, refuse or other storage units, proposed and existing functional services above and below ground (eg; drainage, power, communication cables, pipelines, etc, indicating lines, manholes, supports etc), retained historic landscape features and proposals for their restoration where relevant. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure the provision of amenity afforded by appropriate landscape design and maintenance of existing and/or new landscape features.

10. Prior to the commencement of any development hereby approved, above damp course level, a soft landscaping and planting scheme shall be submitted to, and approved in writing, by the Local Planning Authority. The approved scheme shall be implemented in full during the planting season November - March following commencement of the development or within a timescale to be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include provision for the maintenance and replacement as necessary of the trees and shrubs for a period of not less than 5 years.

Reason: In the interest of visual amenity.

11. Prior to development of the beach huts above damp proof course level, details (including colour photographs) of all external facing materials for the wall(s) and roof(s) shall have been submitted to, and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter, the development shall proceed in accordance with such materials as have been agreed.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory visual appearance of the development.

12. The development hereby permitted must not be occupied or utilised until a scheme showing precise details of the proposed cycle parking facilities is submitted to the Planning Authority. Any such scheme requires approval to be obtained in writing from the Planning Authority. The approved scheme must be constructed before the development is occupied and, thereafter, must be maintained, kept free from obstruction and available for the purpose specified.

Reason: To ensure the proper construction of the parking facilities and to encourage the use of sustainable transport modes.

13. Before the development hereby approved is first brought into use, the highway improvement works shown broadly in accordance with drawing **UK0039558.6605-WSP-XX-XX-DR-LA-010 Rev P05** (or an alternative scheme agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Highway Authority) shall be completed and made available for use, including the proposed footway improvements and emergency vehicular access crossing.

Reason: These works are required to provide suitable pedestrian infrastructure and a safe emergency access arrangement and are necessary to mitigate the impact of the development and ensure safe and suitable access for all highway users.

14. Prior to the first use of the development, the secondary vehicular access located in the south-west corner of Sandpit Field, as shown on Drawing No **UK0039558.6605-WSP-XX-XX-DR-LA-010 P05**, shall be fitted with measures and signage to restrict its use to emergency vehicles only in accordance with a scheme which shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Thereafter, the access shall be retained solely for emergency access purposes and shall not be used for general vehicular access to or from the site at any time.

Reason: To prevent unauthorised vehicular use of the access in the interests of highway safety.

15. The site shall not be utilised for any organised public event unless and until interpretation boards in respect of the WWII gun emplacement to be demolished have been installed.

The board(s) installed shall be in accordance with details which shall have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: to advance public knowledge and interpretation of the non-designated heritage asset

16. The beach huts hereby approved shall not be used other than for daytime recreational purposes only, and in particular shall not be used as overnight holiday or permanent residential accommodation.

Reason: The hut is suitable for daytime recreational use only.

17. The detailed biodiversity mitigation, compensation and enhancement strategy set out within the approved Biodiversity Plan, certified by the Dorset Council Natural Environment Team on 27/08/2026 must be strictly adhered to during the carrying out of the development. The development hereby approved must not be first brought into use unless and until:

- i) the mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures detailed in the approved Biodiversity Plan have been completed in full, in accordance with any specified timetable.
- ii) evidence of compliance, including photographic evidence, in accordance with section F of the approved Biodiversity Plan has been supplied to the Local Planning Authority. The development shall subsequently be implemented entirely in accordance with the approved Biodiversity Plan and thereafter the approved mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures must be permanently maintained and retained in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To mitigate and compensate for impacts on ecological receptors, and to provide biodiversity gains.

Informative Notes:

1. Biodiversity Net Gain

The effect of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that planning permission granted for the development of land in England is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition "(the biodiversity gain condition)" that development may not begin unless:

- (a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and
- (b) the planning authority has approved the plan.

The planning authority, for the purposes of determining whether to approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan if one is required in respect of this permission would be Dorset Council.

There are statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not always apply. These are listed below.

Based on the information available this permission is considered to be one which will require the approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development is begun because none of the statutory exemptions or transitional arrangements listed below are considered to apply.

Read more about Biodiversity Net Gain and Biodiversity Gain Plans at
<https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/w/biodiversity-net-gain> and
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/submit-a-biodiversity-gain-plan>

2. This application is subject to Biodiversity Net Gain. A Section 106 Agreement is likely to be required to secure the maintenance and monitoring of any Biodiversity Gain Plan or Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) approved by the Council.

3. The Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016 require a permit or exemption to be obtained for any of the following activities:
 - erecting any temporary or permanent structure in, over or under a main river, such as a culvert, outfall, weir, dam, pipe crossing, erosion protection, scaffolding or bridge
 - altering, repairing or maintaining any temporary or permanent structure in, over or under a main river, where the work could affect the flow of water in the river or affect any drainage work
 - building or altering any permanent or temporary structure designed to contain or divert flood waters from a main river
 - dredging, raising or removing any material from a main river, including when you are intending to improve flow in the river or use the materials removed
 - diverting or impounding the flow of water or changing the level of water in a main river
 - quarrying or excavation within 16 metres of any main river, flood defence (including a remote defence) or culvert
 - any activity within 8 metres of the bank of a main river, or 16 metres if it is a tidal main river
 - any activity within 8 metres of any flood defence structure or culvert on a main river, or 16 metres on a tidal river
 - any activity within 16 metres of a sea defence structure
 - activities carried out on the floodplain of a main river, more than 8 metres from the riverbank, culvert or flood defence structure (or 16 metres if it is a tidal main river), if you do not have planning permission (you do not need permission to build agricultural haystacks, straw stacks or manure clamps in these places)

For further guidance please visit Flood risk activities: environmental permits - GOV.UK or contact our National Customer Contact Centre on 03708 506 506 (Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm) or by emailing enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk. The applicant should not assume that a permit will automatically be forthcoming once planning permission has been granted, and we advise them to consult with us at the earliest opportunity.

4. Informative: The proposed retaining wall will require the approval of the Local Highway Authority in accordance with Section 167 of the Highways Act 1980 and the applicant/developer is required to submit plans, sections and specifications of the retaining wall for approval, prior to construction works commencing to the Local Highway Authority. They can be contacted by telephone at 01305 221000, by email at

dorsethighways@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk, or in writing at Dorset Highways, Dorset Council, County Hall, Dorchester, DT1 1XJ.

5. The applicant should contact Dorset Highways by telephone at 01305 221020, by email at dorsethighways@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk, or in writing at Dorset Highways, Dorset Council, County Hall, Dorchester, DT1 1XJ, before the commencement of any works on or adjacent to the public highway, to ensure that the appropriate licence(s) and or permission(s) are obtained.
6. The developer is responsible for coordinating and booking their own road space for utilities and construction works to minimise disruption to the highway network.
7. Informative: National Planning Policy Framework
In accordance with policy DM3 of the NPPF the council, as local planning authority, takes a positive approach to development proposals and is focused on providing sustainable development.
The council works with applicants/agents in a positive and proactive manner by:
 - offering a pre-application advice service, and
 - as appropriate updating applicants/agents of any issues that may arise in the processing of their application and where possible suggesting solutions.In this case:
 - The applicant/agent was updated of any issues and provided with the opportunity to address issues identified by the case officer.
 - The applicant was provided with pre-application advice.
 - The application was acceptable as submitted and no further assistance was required.
8. The applicant's attention is drawn to the letter from the Environment Agency dated 24 September 2026 in respect of this application.
9. Any work carried out to comply with conditions relating to land contamination must be conducted in accordance with DEFRA and the Environment Agency's 'Model Procedures for the Management of Land Contamination, CLR 11'.
10. A contravention of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and the Protection of Badgers Act 1992 may constitute a criminal offence to particular plants and animals. The grant of this consent does not override any requirements to notify Natural England or to comply with the legislation. All buildings and especially roof spaces can support bat roosts which may be damaged or disturbed by demolition, building works or timber treatment. Please note that all bats and their roosts are fully protected under law. It is a requirement of the legislation to notify Natural England of any operation which may affect bats or their roosts, even when the bats are apparently absent. The grant of this planning permission does not override

any relevant statutory species protection provision contained within such legislation. For further advice on a particular species please contact Natural England or the Dorset Council Natural Environment Team: Tel: 01305 224931; Email: net@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

11. The applicant is advised that planning permission does not authorise the stopping up or extinguishment of public highway rights. Any such proposals will require a separate legal process and approval under the relevant legislation before works commence. Early engagement with the Highway Authority is recommended.
12. In addition to this permission, the highway improvement(s) referred to in condition 14, above must be carried out to the specification and satisfaction of the Highway Authority in consultation with the Planning Authority and it will be necessary to enter into an agreement, under a minor works Section 278 of the Highways Act 1980, with the Highway Authority, before any works commence on the site. The applicant should contact Dorset Council's Highways Development team. They can be reached by email at highwaysdevelopment@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk, or in writing at Highways Development team, Economic Growth and Infrastructure, Dorset Council, County Hall, Dorchester, DT1 1XJ.
13. The development hereby approved includes the construction of structures adjacent to or within 6m of the adopted highway. You are advised that before undertaking any work on the adopted highway you must prepare and submit an AiP Structural Report. You will be required to pay technical approval fees (as determined by the proposed category of structure to be assessed) before the report will be considered and approved. Contact the Highway Authority's Bridges and Highway Structures Team at 01305 225383.
14. The applicant should contact Dorset Highways by telephone at 01305 221020, by email at dorsethighways@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk, or in writing at Dorset Highways, Dorset Council, County Hall, Dorchester, DT1 1XJ, before the commencement of any works on or adjacent to the public highway, to ensure that the appropriate licence(s) and or permission(s) are obtained.
15. The developer is responsible for coordinating and booking their own road space for utilities and construction works to minimise disruption to the highway network.

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Application Number:	P/FUL/2026/03657
Webpage:	https://planning.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/
Site address:	Sandpit Field De Moulham Road Swanage
Proposal:	Ground stabilisation of the area with enhanced replacement planting, demolition of the WWII gun emplacement on Sandpit Field, retention of 6 of the existing beach huts and provision of 33 additional new beach huts.
Applicant name:	Swanage Town Council
Case Officer:	Thomas Whild
Ward Member(s):	Cllr Suttle and Cllr Tomes

- Reason application is going to committee:** The application site includes land within the ownership of Dorset Council.
- Summary of recommendation:** GRANT subject to conditions as set out at the end of this report
- Key planning issues**

Issue	Conclusion
Principle of development	Ground stabilisation is justified by existing instability and accords with coastal change and shoreline management policies.
Conservation and Heritage Assets	Harm would occur to the Conservation Area and non-designated heritage assets, including loss of the gun emplacement, but this is outweighed by the substantial public benefits of the scheme.
Landscape	The proposal would conserve the Dorset National Landscape, with only temporary construction impacts.
Highways	No significant highway impacts are identified, subject to a Construction Traffic Management Plan.
Flood Risk and Drainage	The proposal would not increase flood risk or affect existing drainage arrangements.
Trees	Tree impacts are acceptable subject to protection measures and replacement planting.
Biodiversity	Ecological impacts are acceptable subject to mitigation, and the scheme delivers the required minimum 10% biodiversity net gain.
Impacts on Amenity	Amenity impacts would be limited and acceptable, with temporary construction effects capable of mitigation.
Character and Appearance	The proposal would maintain the established character of the site and seafront.
Ground Contamination	Contamination risks can be adequately addressed through investigation and remediation conditions.

- Description of site**

- 4.1 The application site comprises existing areas of open space on the eastern edge of Swanage. The eastern boundary of the site is defined by Shore Road, with the beach and sea beyond, and the western boundary is defined by De Moulham Road. The southern boundary is defined by Victoria Avenue (A351). To the north the site is bounded by residential properties.
- 4.2 The site consists of two areas of public greenspace, bisected by Walrond Road, which runs in an east-west orientation, from Shore Road in the east, travelling westwards into the town. The southern part of the site comprises Sandpit Field. This area is predominantly open and laid to grass with hedgerows along the western and part of the southern boundaries. There are trees on the western boundary, within the south western corner of the site and in the north eastern part of the field. The southern and northern boundaries are defined by Purbeck stone retaining walls.
- 4.3 The eastern edge of the site forms an area of landscaped gardens with paths from the field down to shore road – the ground falling away by approximately 6.5m from the high point within the field, to the eastern edge of the site. There is a World War 2-gun emplacement in the north east of the field. The gun emplacement has been painted and used as a public seating area until recently when issues with the stability of the structure have resulted in it being fenced off and public access to it being restricted.



Figure 1 - Images of the existing gun emplacement, taken before it was fenced off for safety reasons.

- 4.4 The area to the north of Walrond Road Comprises Weather Station Field. The land is split into three sections. At the southern end there is an area of open greenspace which terraces down from the higher ground along De Moulham Road down to the eastern edge of the site where it sits above the road. The boundaries are defined by Purbeck stone retaining walls. There is a weather station in the south western corner of this area, within a small compound defined by chain link fences.
- 4.5 Centrally within this parcel is a terraced area known as the Spa Retreat, which comprises an area of beach huts on terraced hardstanding. The beach huts currently only occupy the western part of the area, with access to the eastern part restricted due to ground stability issues. To the northern end of the site the land is open greenspace with landscaped gardens and paths down to shore road.
- 4.6 The areas surrounding the site comprise a variety of uses. The areas to the west, southwest and north of the site are predominantly residential, comprising a mix of purpose-built apartment blocks and detached houses, some of which have been sub-divided, along De Moulham Road, transitioning to detached housing on the roads which

extend westwards including Walrond Road, Gannetts Park, Beach Gardens and Rabling Road. The beach lies to the east of the site. To the south, on the opposite side of Victoria Avenue, is the recreation ground which includes the town's war memorial and a play area with beach huts and tourist attractions at its southern end.

5. Description of development

- 5.1 The proposed development comprises engineering works to provide ground stabilisation of Sandpit Field and Weather Station Field, together with works to re-instate landscaping to the eastern edge of the site once the ground stabilisation has been completed. The land is currently unstable; there are significant cracks in many of the retaining walls, particularly along Shore Road and Walrond Road, as well as in various locations within the site. The stabilisation is proposed to be achieved through a 'soil nailing' technique which involves the fixing of a series of steel bars into the slope to stabilise it.
- 5.2 Towards the northern end of the site, once ground stabilisation works are complete, it is proposed that new beach huts will be constructed on the 'Spa Retreat' area, including the upper terraces, where there are currently beach huts and on the lower terraces, where beach huts which previously occupied the area have been removed due to the worsening ground stability issues. The beach huts proposed comprise a mix of sizes including huts which are intended to be accessible for people in wheelchairs or with limited mobility.
- 5.3 In order to complete the works it is proposed to demolish and remove a World War II gun emplacement on Sandpit Field; which currently serves as a seating area and viewing platform, to allow for the regrading of slopes in this part of the site. The existing weather station on weather station field is to be retained, albeit on a smaller footprint. The weather station would be within a perimeter chain link fence.
- 5.4 The works that are the subject of this planning application are intended to be the minimum required to effectively stabilise the ground, plus the removal of the gun emplacement, and the construction of replacement beach huts. The intention is that, once the works are completed the site would appear largely identical, save for these changes. A separate planning application is currently under consideration for more extensive works, which include the closure of Walrond Road and changes to improve access to the site for wheelchair users.

6. Background and relevant planning history

Application Ref	Decision	Decision Date	Description
6/1975/0220	GRA	04/06/1975	Site 3 additional beach chalets.
6/1975/0222	WIT	01/12/1975	Site 20 beach chalets.
6/1975/0295	GRA	15/07/1975	Site 5 cedar day chalets (renewal).
6/1976/0081	REF	26/03/1976	Siting of 20 beach chalets.

6/1977/0014	GRA	25/03/1977	Starters hut (renewal).
6/1979/1023	GRA	19/03/1980	Station 5 day chalets (renewal).
6/1980/0026	GRA	19/03/1980	Retain starter's hut (renewal).
6/1980/0372	GRA	25/06/1980	Site 3 beach chalets (renewal).
6/1983/0004	GRA	08/03/1983	Station five day chalets (renewal).
6/1983/0275	GRA	02/06/1983	Retain starter's hut (renewal).
6/1985/0155	GRA	01/05/1985	Site three beach chalets (renewal).
6/1985/0754	GRA	28/11/1985	Station five day chalets (renewal).
6/1986/0080	GRA	04/04/1986	Retain starter's hut (renewal).
6/1987/0534	GRA	16/10/1987	Use kiosk for take-away hot food sales.
6/1989/0141	GRA	13/03/1989	Retain starter's hut (renewal).
6/1990/0181	GRA	27/04/1990	Station 8 No. beach chalets (renewal).
6/2000/0325	GRA	22/06/2000	Station 8 No. beach chalets (renewal).
6/2005/0009	GRA	10/02/2005	Erect a CCTV pole and base.
P/ESC/2025/02552	RES	03/06/2025	Screening opinion - SCH3249 - Proposed control structure and beach recharge along the Swanage Beach Frontage.

7. List of constraints

Swanage Conservation Area - Distance: 11.48m

Tree Preservation Order (PDC/TPO 107)

Wessex Water Treatment Works Catchment

Poole Harbour Recreation Zone

Dorset Council Land Freehold : Electricity substation at Victoria Avenue, Swanage - Reference FH003615

Higher Potential ecological network

Wildlife Present: insect - moth

High Opportunity Nature Areas

Dorset National Landscape

Natural England - RAMSAR - Distance: 2845.68m

Special Area of Conservation (SAC) (5km buffer): - Studland to Portland (UK0030382); - Distance: 40.96m, St Albans Head to Durlston Head (UK0019863); - Distance: 887.37m, Isle of Portland to Studland Cliffs (UK0019861); - Distance: 934.86m

Dorset Heaths (Purbeck & Wareham) & Studland Dunes (UK0030038); - Distance: 2845.68m

Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) impact risk zone – Natural England consultation

Scheduled Monument: The old prison and pump (List Entry: 1002727); - Distance: 389m

Flood Zones 2 and 3

Main River Consultation Zone

NCERM Shoreline Management Plan

Radon: Class: 1.0 – low risk, protective measures unlikely to be required.

Contaminated Land

8. Consultations

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

Consultees

- 1. Environment Agency (EA)** No objection subject to the imposition of a condition with regard to potential ground contamination, and Informatives in respect of construction near to main rivers.

The comments note that the ground investigation report and planning statement state there may be a risk to controlled waters. Further detailed information would be required before development to address uncertainties in the ground investigation report over the geo-environmental characteristics of the site and ground water conditions which influence slope stability and contamination pathways. Consider that it would be an unreasonable burden on the developer to ask for more detailed information prior to the grant of planning permission.

- 2. Dorset National Landscape Team** The site comprises a prominent area of public open space within the urban seafront of Swanage and is therefore somewhat distinct from some of the wider undeveloped rural and coastal landscapes that more clearly express the special qualities of the designated landscape.

The site does not make a substantial contribution to the defining characteristics of the surrounding landscape, due to its urban location. Overall broadly agree with the conclusions of the submitted assessment which concludes that there would not be significant adverse effects on the national landscape, and would be a minor benefit in the longer term.

Due to the prominent location the quality of design remains critical and careful attention should be given to landscape design and the detailed design of built elements. Encourage the Council to place significant weight on the advice of its own landscape and urban design specialists.

Acknowledges the inclusion of the WWII gun emplacement and importance of the Council obtaining and giving due weight to advice from heritage and conservation specialists.

3. **Dorset Wildlife Trust** No comments received
4. **Wessex Water** No comments received
5. **Natural England** No comment
6. **Dorset Fire & Rescue Service** No comments received
7. **Dorset Police Architectural Liaison Officer** No comments received
8. **Dorset Council (DC) - Natural Environment Team** Certificate of approval under Dorset Biodiversity Appraisal Protocol issued
9. **DC - Highways** No objection subject to conditions
10. **DC - Dorset Waste Team** No comment
11. **DC - Env. Services – Protection** No comment
12. **DC - Coastal risk management – no comments received**
13. **DC - Trees (East & Purbeck) Initial comments:** Detrimental impacts upon trees are identified but no concrete mitigation is suggested, only options for mitigation which are not reflected in the plans. Essential detail within the submitted tree survey and constraints drawing is illegible.

The Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS) is a head of terms and is not sufficiently detailed to adequately address all arboricultural constraints with no tree protection plan. A full AMS and tree protection plan will be needed.

Comments on amended information - The proposal would affect the prominent Category B Holm Oaks (T18 and T19), primarily through regrading works. Subject to an Arboricultural Method Statement, updated Tree Protection Plan and replacement planting, the arboricultural impacts are considered acceptable.

14. **DC - Asset & Property** No comments received
15. **DC – Landscape Officer:** The Landscape Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) has assessed likely landscape and visual effects arising from the scheme and has been undertaken in accordance with GVLIA3 Guidance, considering the effects during both the construction and operational phase.

There would be temporary minor adverse landscape effects and moderate to moderate major adverse visual effects from the scheme during the construction period. Once complete the landscape and visual effects of the scheme would be moderated to moderate to minor beneficial effects.

There is no objection from a landscape and visual perspective. As noted by the Dorset National Landscape team it will be important to ensure that the detailed design of the hard and soft landscape treatments is appropriate to the high profile setting and character of the

area. Landscape conditions for details, implementation and management of hard and soft landscaping should therefore be included.

- 16. DC - Flood Risk Management** The proposed development proposes no additional drainage or modifications to existing arrangements, nor does it introduce new impermeable services. Existing SW drainage features will be retained and maintained with only minor remedial works.

No objection and no drainage/flood risk conditions are required in this instance.

- 17. DC - Public Transport** No comments received

- 18. DC - Conservation Officers** Confirm the conclusions of impact assessment within the submitted heritage statement which notes the total loss of the Gun Emplacement as a non designated heritage asset as well as harm to the setting of the Swanage Conservation Area and War Memorial designated heritage assets.

It is confirmed that the removal of the gun emplacement would diminish the legibility of Swanage's wartime landscape and the evidential and communal value derived from the surviving wartime heritage of the area. As such it is not supported. However it is not considered that the asset is of such high significance as to warrant objection to the scheme on conservation grounds.

The tangible benefits of the proposals are noted and the conservation officer is content to defer the final assessment as to whether the loss of the non-designated heritage asset and harm to other heritage assets is outweighed by the benefits of the proposals, to the decision maker.

- 19. DC - Archaeology - Steve Wallis** – Concurs with the conclusions of the conservation officers. The recording of the gun emplacement should be secured to level III and submitted to the Dorset Historic Environment Record with details of an information board to be secured by condition.

- 20. WPA Consultants (contaminated land)** It is noted from the WSP reporting that the presence of made ground, a sub station and extensive earthworks are likely matters of concern that require further investigation and risk assessment. It may also be prudent to consider unexploded ordnance in the vicinity of WWII infrastructure. WPA recommends that the development should be subject to Dorset standard contaminated land planning conditions.

- 21. Swanage Town Council** No comment as the owner of the site and applicant.

- 22. Swanage Ward Councillors** No comments received

Representations received

Total - objections	Total - No objections/support	Total - comments
11	3	2

Comments in support

- Support for the principle of reinstating the beach huts.
- Support for keeping Walrond Road open.
- The ground stabilisation works are necessary and should not be delayed.
- The proposal would improve the area.
- The loss of the WWII gun emplacement is not considered significant given the nearby war memorial.

Comments in objection

- Loss of the WWII gun emplacement and resulting harm to the town's heritage, including its historic relationship with the war memorial, its value as a surviving wartime feature, and its use as a viewpoint and shelter.
- The public benefits do not outweigh the loss of the gun emplacement.
- The supporting surveys do not adequately assess the extent or condition of the gun emplacement, and options for its retention should be explored.
- Claims regarding anti-social behaviour and the temporary nature of the gun emplacement do not justify its removal.
- The public has not been fully informed of the extent of the proposals, including demolition of the gun emplacement.
- Inappropriate design and materials proposed for the beach huts.
- Expansion of beach huts would reduce the availability of open green space.
- Impact of the beach huts on the National Landscape.
- Impact of the beach huts on views from De Moulham Road.
- Removal of trees.
- Loss of access routes to the beach.
- Potential noise impacts from events and use of the site outside normal hours.
- Concerns regarding the cost of the scheme, previous lack of maintenance, and whether retention of the gun emplacement could be achieved within the project budget.

General comments

- The historic weather station should be appropriately recognised.
- It would be a missed opportunity not to deliver the wider improvements proposed under the related scheme.
- Improved wheelchair access should be provided alongside the stabilisation works.
- Additional tree planting should be undertaken and existing trees retained where possible.
- Existing landscape features, including stone seats, should be retained where possible.
- If the gun emplacement is removed, interpretation or commemorative information should be provided on site.

9. Duties

- 9.1 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.
- 9.2 Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that when considering whether to grant planning permission for a development which affects a listed building or its setting, there is a general duty to have special regard to the

desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

- 9.3 Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas.
- 9.4 Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000) requires Local Planning Authorities to seek to further the purposes of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of National Landscape (formerly known as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty) when making any decision which affects such land.

10. Relevant policies

Development plan

In this case the development plan comprise The Purbeck Local Plan 2024 **the Swanage Local Plan 2017 and the Bournemouth Dorset and Poole Waste Plan 2018**

Local Plan Adopted Purbeck Local Plan 2024 (PLP):

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

- V1: Spatial strategy for sustainable communities
- E1: Landscape
- E2: Historic environment
- E4: Assessing flood risk
- E5: Sustainable drainage systems (SuDs)
- E6: Coastal change management areas
- E10: Biodiversity and geodiversity
- E12: Design
- EE4: Supporting vibrant and attractive tourism
- I2: Improving accessibility and transport
- I3: Green infrastructure, trees, and hedgerows
- I4: Recreation, sport and open space

Adopted Swanage Local Plan 2017:

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

- STCD: Swanage townscape character and development
- SGL: Swanage green infrastructure
- OSR: Open space and recreation

Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Waste Plan 2019

- Policy 22 - Waste from new developments

Material considerations

Emerging local plans:

Policy DM4: Emerging development plan proposals of the NPPF provides that local planning authorities may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to:

- the stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced its preparation, the greater the weight that may be given);
- the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant plan policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and
- the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the NPPF (the closer the policies in the emerging plan are to the policies of the NPPF, the greater the weight that may be given).

The Dorset Council Local Plan

The emerging Dorset Local Plan is being prepared in accordance with plan-making processes set out in the Levelling Up and Regenerating Act 2023 and Local Planning Regulations (2026). As the plan is still at an early stage of the plan making process, limited weight can be attached to it when taking decisions on planning applications. Decisions on planning applications should continue to be assessed against the policies in adopted development plans, national planning policy and any other relevant material considerations.

Emerging neighbourhood plans

Swanage Neighbourhood Plan

The draft Swanage Neighbourhood Plan is intended to replace the adopted Swanage Local Plan. Consultation on the pre-submission draft (regulation 14) took place between 26 June and 7 August 2026. The draft plan includes policy SWAN8: *The Green Seafront Stabilisation & Enhancement Scheme*, which specifically sets out to support proposals for the stabilisation of the green seafront and the stopping up and infilling of part of Walrond Road. However as the consultation on the draft plan has only recently concluded and the plan has not been subject to examination, only very limited weight may be afforded to it.

Local Nature Recovery Strategy

The Dorset Local Nature Recovery Strategy identifies local priorities for nature recovery and maps areas where action would be most beneficial. In planning decisions it is a material consideration, helping to ensure that development supports biodiversity enhancement and aligns with Dorset's agreed priorities for nature recovery.

National Planning Policy Framework (17 August 2026)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), published on 17 August 2026, sets out the Government's national planning policies for both plan-making and decision-making in England.

When determining development proposals decision-makers are required to take a positive and proactive approach and to seek to approve sustainable development where possible.

The NPPF introduces a permanent presumption in favour of sustainable development, through Policies S3 to S5 (which replaces the former "tilted balance" contained in paragraph 11 of the previous NPPF) and sets out the principles for development within and outside settlements. The

Framework also confirms that planning applications should be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Other relevant NPPF chapters and policies include:

- Chapter 3: Decision making policies. Local planning authorities should approach decision making positively, proactively and proportionately. They should work with applicants through pre-application engagement and consultations and aim to resolve concerns through planning conditions or obligations where possible to avoid delay and to enable an approval rather than a refusal. Applications that accord with the development plan, the NPPF and other material considerations should not be refused where they can clearly be approved.
 - DM1 Preparing development proposals
 - DM2 Information requirements
 - DM3 Determining development proposals
 - DM4 Emerging development plan proposals
 - DM6 Use of planning conditions and obligations
 - DM7 Relationship with other regulatory regimes
- Chapter 4: Achieving Sustainable Development. The objective of the policies in this chapter is to meet development needs through sustainable patterns of development, including by maximising the potential for growth on suitable land within settlements, enabling development which will support the rural economy, rural communities and the provision of infrastructure, and limiting development away from settlements to help safeguard the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.
 - S3 Presumption in favour of sustainable development
 - S4 Principle of development within settlements
- Chapter 5: Meeting the challenges of climate change. Planning decisions should support climate change mitigation and adaptation, including reducing greenhouse gas emissions, increasing resilience to climate impacts and directing development away from areas at unacceptable risk from flooding.
 - CC2 Mitigation of climate change
 - CC3 Adaptation to climate change
- Chapter 12: Making effective use of land. Planning decisions should give substantial weight to proposals that make more effective use of land and buildings, while maintaining good design, living conditions and local character. This includes redevelopment of previously developed, vacant, underused, contaminated or derelict sites, reuse of existing buildings, creation of additional homes through sensitive infill, upward extensions and development

within existing plots. Higher-density development is also promoted within settlements in well-connected locations near public transport. Development that fails to make efficient use of land in accordance with the policy should be refused.

- L2 Making effective use of land
- Chapter 14: Achieving well-designed places. Development should be high quality, respect and enhance local character, deliver sustainable and attractive places, and accord with relevant design policies. Proposals that demonstrate good design and place-making should be supported, while those that fail to meet established design standards should be refused unless clearly justified.
 - DP3 Key principles for well-designed places
 - DP4 The design process
- Chapter 15: Promoting sustainable transport. The objective of the policies in this chapter is to ensure that transport considerations are taken fully into account in the preparation of development plans and the evolution and assessment of development proposals; using a vision-led approach to embed the role that transport infrastructure and choices can play in creating well-designed, sustainable, inclusive and popular places.
 - TR4 Street design, access and parking
 - TR6 Assessing transport impacts
 - TR8 Public rights of way
- Chapter 16: Promoting healthy communities. The objective of the policies in this chapter is to promote the creation of healthy and inclusive places and support the provision of appropriate public services, by enabling development which can support this aim and seeking to retain, improve and deliver new facilities which are important for community wellbeing and minimising inequalities.
 - HC7 Development affecting existing recreational land and facilities
 - HC8 Development affecting Local Green Space
- Chapter 17: Pollution, public protection and security. The objective of the policies in this chapter is to ensure that new development is appropriate for its location, taking into account risks posed by pollution and other hazards; that any impacts which development might have are taken into account; and that sufficient provision is made for development required for public safety and security.
 - P2 Ground conditions
 - P3 Living conditions and pollution

- P4 Impact of development on existing activities
- P5 Maintaining public safety and security
- Chapter 18: Managing flood risk and coastal change. Development proposals should minimise risks to development arising from all sources of flooding and coastal change, taking into account the impacts of climate change, by steering development away from areas of risk, ensuring that development will be safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere, and incorporating sustainable drainage systems where appropriate.
 - F4 Assessing flood risk for decision-making
 - F6 Development in areas at risk of flooding from rivers or the sea
 - F7 Ensuring development is safe from flooding
 - F8 Sustainable drainage systems and watercourses
 - F9 Development in Coastal Change Management Areas
- Chapter 19: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment: Development should conserve and enhance the natural environment by protecting important landscapes, habitats, biodiversity and trees, while maximising opportunities for nature recovery, green infrastructure and biodiversity net gain. Proposals should avoid significant environmental harm, prioritise land of lower environmental value where possible, and be sensitively designed in protected landscapes and coastal areas. Development causing unacceptable impacts on designated sites, irreplaceable habitats or biodiversity that cannot be adequately avoided, mitigated or compensated for should be refused.
 - In National Landscapes substantial weight should be placed on the importance of conserving and enhancing their natural beauty.
 - Decisions in Heritage Coast areas should be consistent with the special character of the area and the importance of its conservation
 - Improving the natural environment biodiversity is to be protected and encourage net gains for biodiversity.
- N2 Improving the natural environment
- N3 Trees in new development
- N4 Protected Landscapes
- N5 Maintaining the character of the coast
- Chapter 20: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment – Great weight should be given to the conservation of heritage assets. Development that preserves or enhances designated or non-designated heritage assets should be approved. while any harm must be

clearly justified and weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. Proposals causing substantial harm to, or loss of, heritage assets should only be permitted in exceptional circumstances where overriding public benefits outweigh the harm.

- HE4 Securing the conservation of heritage assets
- HE5 Assessing effects on heritage assets
- HE6 Proposals affecting designated heritage assets
- HE7 Decisions on non-designated heritage assets
- HE9 Conservation areas
- HE10 Loss or removal of heritage assets

Other material considerations

National Planning Practice Guidance

All of Dorset:

Dorset AONB Landscape Character Assessment

The Dorset National Landscape Management Plan 2026-31

Supplementary Planning Documents/Guidance for Purbeck area:

Swanage Green Infrastructure Strategy 2018

District Design Guide SPD (adopted 2014)

Managing and using traditional building details in Purbeck

Poole Harbour Recreation 2019-2024 SPD

Swanage Conservation Area Appraisal

Shoreline Management Plan 15 – Hurst Spit to Durlston Head

The site sits within the 'Promenade' (N.1) area of the Handfast Point to Durlston Head subsection. Within this area the management approach is one of 'Hold the Line' for the time horizon of the Shoreline Management Plan (SMP), to 2105. The intention of the SMP is therefore to retain defences to their current alignment, with maintenance and replacement of defences taking place as necessary.

11. 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.

11.1 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.

12. Public Sector Equalities Duty

- 12.1 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.
- 12.2 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.
- 12.3 An Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) of the project undertaken by Dorset Council on behalf of Swanage Town Council in April 2026 when considering applications for funding of the scheme concluded that the project would have a positive impact in respect of the protected socio-economic deprivation as the proposal would allow for the continuation of free to attend events on the Green Seafront which would not be possible if ground stability issues were allowed to worsen.
- 12.4 The EqIA did not identify negative impacts for any protected group, with the impacts for all other groups being considered to be neutral.

13. Public Benefits

The proposals would provide a number of benefits, including public benefits. These are summarised in the table below:

What	Amount / value
Material considerations	
Stabilisation of ground to ensure public safety and contribution to the aims of the shoreline management plan to ‘hold the line’	Substantial public benefit
Provision of additional beach hut facilities and the consequential contribution to the tourist economy of Swanage	Moderate benefit
Net gain in biodiversity	Moderate benefit

14. Planning Assessment

Principle of development

- 14.1 The proposed development is to provide ground stabilisation of the land which makes up the 'green seafront' within Swanage, with re-landscaping of the site following the completion of the work. There is extensive evidence of ground instability across the site, with cracks evident in retaining walls at various locations, cracks in the ground and uneven ground throughout both Sandpit Field and Weather Station Field. In addition to the engineering works to stabilise the field and landscaping to reinstate it to its current purpose, the stabilisation works will also allow for beach huts to be returned to the whole area of the 'Spa Retreat' at the northern part of the site. At present, beach huts have been removed and access restricted to the lower tiers of the area due to the ground stability issues.
- 14.2 The eastern part of the site is within a Coastal Change Management Area, as defined through the Purbeck Local Plan. Within these areas, Policy E6 states that essential infrastructure may be permitted, provided there are clear plans to manage any impacts arising from the development on coastal change; and the proposed infrastructure will not have an adverse impact on rates of coastal change elsewhere, or any adverse impacts on rates of coastal change are minimised.
- 14.3 Policy F9 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that development should not be permitted in Coastal Change Management Areas unless it can be demonstrated that the development would be safe over its planned lifetime; would reflect the provisions of the relevant Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) and not have an unacceptable effect on coastal change processes and provide wider sustainability benefits.
- 14.4 The site is within the area covered by Shoreline Management Plan 15, Hurst Spit to Durlston Head. The site sits within the 'Promenade' (N.1) area of the Handfast Point to Durlston Head subsection, where the management approach is one of 'Hold the Line' for the time horizon of the plan, to 2105. The intention of the SMP is therefore to retain defences to their current alignment, with maintenance and replacement of defences taking place as necessary. As such the proposal to stabilise the ground is aligned with the objectives of the SMP as it would contribute to securing the current alignment of the coastline and preventing collapse of the eastern slopes which would contribute to coastal erosion.

Conservation

- 14.5 The application site is not located within a conservation area and there are no listed buildings on the site. Nonetheless, the site adjoins the Swanage Conservation Area, to the south. The site also includes a World War 2 gun emplacement which would be demolished in order to facilitate the ground stabilisation works proposed. The demolition of the gun emplacement has been the subject of a significant number of objections to the application, raising concerns about the loss of a structure of heritage value and historic interest.
- 14.6 The gun emplacement is not listed. An application for the structure to be listed was made by a member of the public earlier this year. This was considered by Historic England with the decision being made in August 2026 that it does not merit listing as it lacks architectural interest and its historic interest has been compromised through works and deterioration which have affected the interest of remaining coastal defences within Swanage. Overall it was concluded that while the structure is of some local interest, it lacks the level of architectural and historic interest in a national context to warrant listing. It has been confirmed by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, that an appeal

against that decision was lodged, and the decision was upheld. The gun emplacement therefore constitutes a non-designated heritage asset.

- 14.7 A heritage statement prepared by the applicant has considered the impact on this and other heritage assets within the area. The designated and non-designated heritage assets which were considered and the conclusions in respect of them is set out in the table below. The council's senior conservation officer has confirmed that they agree with the conclusions with regard to the impacts on each asset.

Asset	Status of asset	Conclusion
Gun Emplacement, Sandpit Field	Non-designated heritage asset	Total loss of significance
Sand pit	Non-designated heritage asset	Harm
Swanage conservation area	Conservation area – designated heritage asset	Harm
Church of the Holy Spirit and St Edwards	Grade II listed building	No effect
Swanage War Memorial	Grade II listed building	No effect
De-Moulham Villas	Locally Listed Building (Non-designated heritage asset)	No effect

- 14.8 In considering the impact of development on the historic environment, policy E2 of the PLP states that great weight will be given to the protection of designated heritage assets, with consideration to be given to the significance of the asset, with the expectation where the development would lead to the partial or total loss of a heritage asset, the applicant will be required to secure a programme of recording and analysis of that asset.
- 14.9 Section 20 of the NPPF is concerned with conserving and enhancing the historic environment, and has introduced some changes in approach compared to previous versions, which were in place at the time that the PLP was adopted. Policy HE6 of the NPPF now requires substantial weight to be given to the conservation of heritage assets, compared to great weight in previous versions. The NPPF also introduces a new framework for the assessment and categorisation of impacts on heritage assets. Although the policies within the NPPF are non-statutory, they are a material consideration for the determination of applications. In view of this, the approach to assessment as set out in the NPPF is adopted, in particular, affording substantial weight to the conservation of assets.
- 14.10 The assessment set out in the heritage statement is consistent with the current NPPF and adopts the categories of impact that are set out within it.

Impact on designated heritage assets

- 14.11 With regard to designated heritage assets, Policy HE6 (3) of the NPPF states that any harm will be a matter of considerable importance and weight. Policy HE6(4) goes on to state that where a proposal would harm the significance of such an asset, the effect on the asset and its significance should be weighed against any public benefits.
- 14.12 In this instance, the impact of the proposals on three designated heritage assets has been assessed, as set out in the table above. In respect of the Church of the Holy Spirit and St Edwards (Grade II listed), and the Swanage War Memorial (Grade II Listed), the assessment finds no effect. In respect of Swanage Conservation Area the assessment

finds that there would be harm. In accordance with NPPF Policy HE6(3), this is afforded **Significant weight**.

- 14.13 Where harm is identified, policy HE6(4) requires that the effect on the asset and its significance is weighed against any public benefits arising from the proposal.
- 14.14 The public benefits of the scheme comprise the stabilisation of the ground to ensure public safety and the contribution to the aims of the shoreline management plan to 'hold the line'. As set out in section 13 of this report, this is considered to represent a substantial public benefit of the scheme. As this public benefit would be substantial it is considered to be sufficient to outweigh the harm that would be caused to the Swanage Conservation area, which is afforded significant weight.

Impact on non-designated heritage assets

- 14.15 Policy HE7(2) of the NPPF states that where a development proposal would harm the significance of a non-designated heritage asset, this should be weighed against the benefits of the proposal, and balanced judgment made, having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the asset. HE7(3) goes on to state that where the harm would be substantial or result in the total loss of significance of a non-designated heritage asset, this should on only be supported where the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefits of the proposal.
- 14.16 As set out in the table above, the assessment has considered the impacts on three non-designated heritage assets. De-Moulham Villas, a locally listed building would not be affected by the proposals. Sand Pit would suffer harm and the Gun Emplacement would suffer a total loss of significance, given its proposed demolition. While the level of harm to the Gun Emplacement would be high, amounting to total loss, the significance of the assets must also be considered.
- 14.17 Sand Pit is identified as being of low significance, which has been agreed by the conservation officer. The former quarry has been infilled and landscaped so does not immediately appear as a quarry but the activity has influenced topography of the site, allowing the historic function to be understood. The proposed works would result in alterations to sections of the surviving landform which contribute to its understanding. However the wider context would remain legible, leading to the conclusion that the effects would amount to harm.
- 14.18 The WWII Gun Emplacement within Sandpit Field is identified as being of low significance, which has been agreed by the conservation officer. It is acknowledged that the structure has some interest from the survival of the gun position and underground chambers, which provide evidence of the WW2 coastal defences within Swanage, which is enhanced by the relationship to other infrastructure in the locality. However, in considering a recent application for the structure to be listed, Historic England have noted that the structure has been modified to become a seaside shelter with the entrance to the associated store being blocked and the front opening partially infilled and a low wall constructed, with no evidence remaining of a gun holdfast or bolt ring, and that steps have been added to create a viewing platform with the addition of modern metal railings. In view of the nature of the structure, the modifications made to it and the loss of the neighbouring light anti-aircraft battery, the structure has limited historic interest in the national context and did not therefore merit listing.
- 14.19 The alterations to the gun emplacement have therefore resulted in an erosion of the structure's historic significance. Although the structure is near to the town's war

memorial, it does not sit within a strong context of other contemporary features. The structure was not identified as being of particular importance or interest when the Purbeck Society conducted its local survey of non-designated heritage assets between 2017 and 2021, which has fed into the local list. Although that does not prevent the structure from being considered as a non-designated heritage asset, it does indicate that it was not previously viewed as a structure of particular interest. In view of the available evidence and assessment it is considered that the conclusion that the structure is of low significance is appropriate.

- 14.20 In addition to the heritage assessment findings that confirm that the proposals would involve the total loss of a non-designated heritage asset of low significance, the applicant has provided further supporting information to justify the design decision to remove the structure. The supplementary planning statement notes that monitoring of ground movement on Sandpit Field has been ongoing since late 2020 with routine site monitoring and risk assessment being carried out since 2023. The ongoing assessments have identified that the continuing ground movement has contributed to structural defects in the gun emplacement, with the recommendation in the most recent report of August 2026 that it be fenced off due to the risk of collapse.
- 14.21 Although a detailed assessment of potential options to restore the structure has not been provided it is understood that, due to the extent of the structural faults, any such intervention would be significant and of a nature which would not be compatible with the objective of conserving and enhancing the historic environment. In the vicinity of the structure, the stabilisation would be achieved by regrading the existing slopes, meaning the retention of the structure would prevent the intervention to stabilise the slope in that area, or would require an alternative approach which may itself result in harm to the structure in other ways.
- 14.22 While the gun emplacement is considered to be of low significance the proposals will result in the total loss of it and therefore irreversible harm to a feature which retains some evidential and communal value. That value has however been limited because of the alterations that have been made to the structure. The stabilisation works are necessary for public safety reasons, and have contributed to the structural failings. Given the substantial public benefits of the ground stabilisation it is considered that in these circumstances the loss is justified.
- 14.23 Where development proposals result in the loss of the whole or part of a heritage asset (whether designated or not) NPPF policy HE10 states that the development should not be approved without all reasonable steps being taken to ensure that the new development will proceed after the loss has occurred, and that the applicant should record and advance understanding of the significance of the asset to be lost, in a manner proportionate to its significance, making any evidence publicly accessible by depositing it in the relevant historic environment record. This will include interpretation boards to be erected on the site, where gun emplacement currently stands.
- 14.24 In this instance it has been recommended that the gun emplacement be subject to a level III recording which will be secured by condition. In respect of the steps to be taken to ensure the development will proceed under HE10(1)(a), it is considered appropriate to secure this through an appropriately worded condition preventing any works of demolition of the gun emplacement until such time as the Council is provided with evidence of a programme for the implementation of the development, and that a contractor has been appointed for its delivery.

Landscape

- 14.25 Although the site is located centrally within the town of Swanage it is within the Dorset National Landscape, which washes over the town. Policy N4(1) requires that substantial weight should be placed on the importance of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of these areas.
- 14.26 Policy N4(2) of the NPPF states that proposals for major development within protected landscapes should be refused other than in exceptional circumstances. As set out in footnote 59 of the framework, for the purposes of this policy, the question of whether a proposal is 'major development' is a matter for the decision maker, taking into account its nature, scale and setting, and whether it could have a significant adverse impact on the statutory purposes for which the area has been designated.
- 14.27 The proposals meet the definition of 'major development' as set out in section 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 as the overall site area is in excess of 1 hectare. However, the nature of the development, being principally ground stabilisation and re-landscaping of an existing area of open space, the relatively limited and contained scale of the development and the setting, within the established urban area of Swanage is such that the proposals are not considered to constitute major development for the purposes of policies N4 and N5 of the NPPF.
- 14.28 Due to the nature of the proposals - to carry out ground stabilisation works followed by the re-landscaping works after the ground has been made stable, the overall degree of change to the site once construction is complete would be small. While there would be some adverse impacts during the construction period, due to the presence of plant and machinery and the construction activities, these would be temporary and reversible in nature. The Council's Senior Landscape Architect has provided comments and has not raised any objection subject to appropriate conditions to secure the full details and implementation and maintenance of the hard and soft landscaping.
- 14.29 It is therefore concluded that the proposal would conserve the natural beauty of the Dorset National Landscape and would therefore comply with policy E1 of the PLP, which is broadly consistent with relevant policies in the National Planning Policy Framework.

Highways

- 14.30 The proposals would not result in any alterations to the existing highways or access arrangements for the site. The proposals have been reviewed by the Local Highway Authority who note that while the number of beach huts would increase, the visitor activity is expected to be modest, seasonal and dispersed through the day, meaning that the resulting impacts are not considered likely to be significant. It should be noted that the increase in the number of beach huts would simply be returning to the historic usage of that part of the site, prior to the land stability issues requiring access to part of the beach hut area being restricted.
- 14.34 Implementation of the ground stabilisation will require working from the highway and it is expected that temporary road closures and traffic management measures would be required while the work is ongoing. The highway authority advises that any management should be designed and implemented with regard to the objectives of the NPPF including maintaining safe and suitable access and minimising disruption.
- 14.35 The highways authority has no objection to the scheme, subject to the submission and approval of a construction traffic management plan, prior to the commencement of the

development. Subject to the imposition of such a condition it is considered that the proposals would comply with policy I2 of the PLP.

Flood Risk and Drainage

- 14.37 The majority of the site, which comprises the higher ground at the western side of the site is within flood zone 1 and is not therefore considered to be at risk of flooding. However, the eastern edge of the site falls within flood zones 2 and 3, associated with tidal flooding. Flood zone 3 equates to an annual probability of flooding of greater than 0.5%. The eastern edge of the site being affected by tidal flood risk is reflective of its proximity to the sea and the ground levels which slope down to the road at the eastern end of the site. As the use of the land is and will remain for amenity open space, it is a water compatible use as defined in Annex F of the NPPF.
- 14.38 The flood risk assessment accompanying the application confirms that the modelled tidal flood event would affect only the very easternmost edge of the site where it meets shore road. While there is risk of flooding to Shore Road, that is not affected by the proposed development and as noted in the flood risk assessment, in the event of a flood, safe access and egress would remain available from De Moulham Road.
- 14.39 The sequential test requires that development is directed towards areas at least at risk of flooding. However, the nature of the proposals is for stabilisation of the existing site, for which the sequential test is not relevant. As the existing use of the site is as open space and it will remain as such, it is a water compatible use meaning that it is not necessary to consider the exceptions test.
- 14.40 The application is also accompanied by a drainage strategy which confirms that there are no changes to the existing drainage of the site. On this basis the Lead Local Flood Authority has confirmed that it has no objection to the proposals.
- 14.41 The proposal is therefore considered to comply with policies E4 and E5 of the Purbeck Local Plan and policies F4 to F7 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Trees

- 14.42 The Council's Tree Officer has reviewed the revised arboricultural information submitted in support of the proposal, including the Arboricultural Impact Assessment, Arboricultural Method Statement Heads of Terms and Tree Protection Plan. Particular attention has been given to the potential impact of the proposed regrading works on the two prominent Category B Holm Oaks (T18 and T19), which make a significant contribution to the character of the area. The Tree Officer advises that all construction and grading activities must be kept entirely outside the Root Protection Areas of these trees in order to avoid harm to their long-term health and stability. It is also noted that proposed replacement planting currently shown within the Root Protection Area of T18 would need to be relocated and reflected within an updated Tree Protection Plan.
- 14.43 The proposal would require the removal of a number of Category C and U trees and large shrubs, including several Cabbage Palms, together with two poor-quality Sycamore trees (T1 and T2). The Tree Officer raises no objection to the removal of these trees where necessary to facilitate the development, having regard to their limited arboricultural value. The Tree Officer also notes that some sympathetic crown lifting of the prominent Sycamore (T30) may be required to accommodate the proposed beach huts, although detailed specifications for any such works would need to be agreed through a subsequent Arboricultural Method Statement.

- 14.44 Subject to the submission and approval of a detailed Arboricultural Method Statement, an updated Tree Protection Plan and a comprehensive soft landscaping scheme incorporating replacement tree planting, the Tree Officer raises no objection to the development. It is considered that these matters can be satisfactorily addressed through appropriately worded planning conditions to ensure the protection of retained trees and the delivery of replacement planting across the site.

Biodiversity

- 14.45 The application is accompanied by an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA), considering the impacts of the scheme on biodiversity. The EclA has been informed by desk studies, a habitat survey and habitat suitability assessment for protected species including badger, bats, dormouse, great crested newt, nesting birds and reptiles. This has been supplemented by a ground level tree assessment for roosting bats and a bat activity and foraging habitat suitability assessment.
- 14.46 The EclA notes that the majority of the site comprises modified grassland with pockets of neutral grassland and scattered trees throughout as well as areas of developed land and sealed surface. The site is also noted to be bordered by non-native ornamental and native hedgerows. The modified grassland comprises the areas used for amenity purposes and was noted to be in poor condition and subject to a regular mowing regime. The neutral grassland is present in the eastern and central parts of the site and is in poor condition, with limited maintenance. The trees are in a variety of conditions and include native species, and the hedgerows are also noted as being in poor condition, subject to regular trimming. The habitats on the site have been assessed as having only local value.
- 14.47 No evidence of the use of the site by badger has been identified and based on the assessment that the site would offer limited potential habitat for great crested newt, dormouse and reptiles it was possible to exclude those from further assessment. The EclA notes there is potential for the hedgerows and scattered trees to support nesting birds. With regard to bats, a more detailed assessment has been carried out and has identified that there is negligible potential for the trees and beach huts on the site to support roosting bats. The habitats on the site are acknowledged to have potential for bat foraging, but activity surveys have recorded low levels of activity.
- 14.48 Impacts from the development during the construction phase on nearby designated sites from dust and runoff has been considered with the impacts being either negligible or low for all sites. No significant effects have been identified for any on site habitats or protected and notable species. During the operational phase the impacts are further reduced, representing either a low or negligible impact, and therefore not resulting in any significant effects.
- 14.49 Notwithstanding the low level of impact, mitigation has been proposed which would reduce all impacts in both the construction and operational phases to be negligible. The mitigation includes protective fencing for retained trees and hedgerows, a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) to cover working practices and ensure that they are compatible with the protection of retained and nearby important habitats, and that they provide appropriate measures to avoid impacts on protected species. During the operational phase, the EclA includes recommendations for any new lighting to be installed, to ensure it remains low-level and minimises upward spill to minimise impacts upon foraging bats. The EclA also identifies enhancements in the form of at least two

tree-mounted bat boxes and the use of native wildflower seeding on areas of modified grassland.

- 14.50 The EclA has been approved by the Council's Natural Environment Team through the Dorset Biodiversity Appraisal Protocol. Therefore, subject to appropriate conditions to secure the mitigation and enhancement measures set out in the EclA, the impacts on biodiversity are considered to be acceptable and the scheme therefore complies with policy E10 of the PLP which is broadly consistent with relevant policies in the NPPF.

Biodiversity net gain

- 14.51 In addition to the impacts of the scheme on biodiversity there is a statutory requirement for all development proposals to demonstrate a net gain in biodiversity of at least 10%. The application is accompanied by a statutory biodiversity metric and biodiversity net gain statement which has quantified the baseline habitats, and which confirms that there are no habitats of very high distinctiveness affected.
- 14.52 In applying the biodiversity gain hierarchy, it is noted that habitats of value, the existing trees, are to be retained wherever possible. The remainder of the scheme achieves a 10% increase in biodiversity through habitat creation, comprising 25m of new native hedgerow, creating 0.02 hedgerow units (10.31% increase over baseline) and the enhancement of 0.52 hectares of poor condition modified grassland to a moderate condition, providing 1.77 habitat units (10.62% increase over baseline).
- 14.53 As the biodiversity improvements would be achieved on-site and are achieved by enhancing the condition of existing habitats they are considered to be 'significant' meaning that a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) would be required when approving the biodiversity gain plan. The HMMP would include provisions for maintaining and monitoring the enhancements for a period of 30 years and would need to be secured by a legal agreement at the time the Biodiversity Gain Plan is submitted for approval. The net gain in biodiversity is a benefit of the scheme to which moderate weight may be afforded.

Impacts on amenity

- 14.54 Once the works are complete, the impacts associated with the scheme would be broadly equivalent to the existing usage of the site which already includes public events and beach huts. While the number of beach huts would increase their use is considered to be relatively quiet and would be in the context of the beach itself. There is potential for impacts during the construction period including noise from plant and equipment, although these would be restricted to working hours, and would be on the seaward side of the site which is furthest from the nearest receptors. While there would be potential for dust the CEMP would include measures for managing dust. It is not therefore considered that the potential impacts would be appropriately managed.
- 14.55 Concerns have been raised in respect of the impact of the beach huts on views from De Moulham road. There is no inherent right to a view and therefore any impact on views would not be a material planning consideration. Notwithstanding this it is noted that there would be no change in the level of the ground on which the beach huts would sit. The current beach huts sit below the level of the road so that only the roof and upper parts of the huts on the uppermost tier are visible from De Moulham Road. The additional beach huts on the lower levels would not be readily visible.

Character and appearance

- 14.56 On the whole the character and appearance of the scheme would remain unchanged from the existing situation on site. The new and replacement beach huts would have a traditional and simple form which is typical of the seaside location, comparable to the existing beach huts on the site and to other beach huts within the town. Concern has been raised over the materials specified which include composite cladding, and UPVC doors on the 'chalet' huts. It has also been suggested in third party comments that a grey colour palette would be inappropriate.
- 14.57 The materials used in the construction, while not traditional timber construction would have a similar appearance and provide benefits in terms of the overall longevity of the huts and their resistance to the maritime environment. With regard to the colour palette, the submitted drawings indicate that the huts are to be a combination of red, yellow, blue and green. This colour palette is considered to be appropriate for beach huts in a seaside tourist location. Therefore, subject to an appropriate condition to confirm precise details of the colours and finish of the beach huts it is considered that their impact upon the character of the area would be appropriate as it would create a visually attractive and characterful beachfront area, which reflects the established character.
- 14.58 The proposals are therefore considered to comply with policy E12 of the PLP, Policy DP3 of the NPPF.

Ground contamination

- 14.59 Sandpit Field is identified as having the potential for ground contamination, in light of previous uses. The application has been accompanied by a geoenvironmental assessment which identifies made ground and the presence of a substation as other potential sources of contamination and recommends further assessment is carried out. This has been reviewed by the council's specialist consultant and the Environment Agency who recommend the imposition of a condition to secure the investigation and remediation of any ground contamination. Subject to the imposition of this condition it is considered that the proposal will avoid unacceptable impacts or risks and comply with policy P2 of the NPPF.

15. Environmental implications

- 15.1 The development would give rise to additional CO2 emissions through the construction period, from plant and machinery and through the materials used in the ground stabilisation works which would include concrete as well as the embodied energy within the construction of the beach huts. Once operational the emissions associated with the site would be minimal as the site would remain as public open space without any heating/cooling requirements or day to day power needs outside of events which already take place.

16. Summary of issues and the planning balance

- 16.1 The proposal comprises essential ground stabilisation works which would contribute to public safety of users of the existing open space and surrounding highways. The works would contribute to the aims of the adopted shoreline management plan which is to hold the line.
- 16.2 The proposals would result to harm to designated and non-designated heritage assets. This would include harm to the Swanage Conservation Area and the Sand Pit non-designated heritage asset. The World War II gun emplacement (non-designated heritage

asset) would be lost in its entirety. In accordance with Policy HE6 of the NPPF, substantial weight is afforded to the conservation of assets. However, the harm that has been identified is considered to be outweighed by the aggregate benefits of the scheme which include the substantial public benefits of the ground stabilisation works and the moderate benefits to the tourist economy of reinstating beach huts on the site.

- 16.3 The proposal has been considered against relevant policies in respect of Landscape, Highways, Flood Risk and Drainage, Trees, Biodiversity, Amenity, Character and appearance and ground conditions and has been found to be acceptable in each case. These matters weigh neutrally in the planning balance.
- 16.4 Overall, the planning balance is therefore considered to weigh in favour of the proposals which are considered to comply with the development plan as a whole.

17. Recommendation

Grant planning permission subject to the following conditions and Informatives.

The applicant's agreement to the pre-commencement conditions was received on 9 October 2026.

Recommendation: Approve subject to the following conditions:

1. The development to which this permission relates must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this permission.

Reason: This condition is required to be imposed by Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

SG-01 The location plan

UK0039558.6605-WSP-XX-XX-DR-LA-001 P02 Block plan of the site

UK0039558.6605-WSP-XX-XX-DR-GEO-001 Engineering Interventions

UK0039558.6605-WSP-XX-XX-DR-LA-021 P03 Beach Hut Specifications

UK0039558.6605-WSP-XX-XX-DR-LA-023 P02 Beach Hut Specifications

UK0039558.6605-WSP-XX-XX-DR-CD- P03 Drainage Plan

UK0039558.6605-WSP-XX-XXDR-LA-002 Hard Landscape and Furniture Plan

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

3. Prior to the commencement of development on the site, a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) (Biodiversity) must be submitted to and approved in writing by the local Planning Authority. The CEMP must include the following:
 - a) Risk assessment of potentially damaging construction activities.
 - b) Identification of "biodiversity protection zones".
 - c) Practical measures (both physical measures and sensitive working practices) to avoid or reduce impacts during construction (may be provided as a set of method statements).
 - d) The location and timing of sensitive works to avoid harm to biodiversity features.
 - e) The times during construction when specialist ecologists need to be present on site to oversee works.
 - f) Responsible persons and lines of communication.

g) The role and responsibilities on site of an ecological clerk of works (ECoW) or similarly competent person.

h) Use of protective fences, exclusion barriers and warning signs

The development shall take place strictly in accordance with the approved CEMP.

Reason: To protect biodiversity during the construction phase.

4. Before the development hereby approved commences a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) must be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. The CTMP must include:

- construction vehicle details (number, size, type and frequency of movement)
- a programme of construction works and anticipated deliveries
- timings of deliveries so as to avoid, where possible, peak traffic periods of the network
- a framework for managing abnormal loads
- location of construction site access
- contractors' arrangements (compound, storage, parking, turning, surfacing and drainage)
- wheel cleaning facilities
- vehicle cleaning facilities
- inspection of the highways serving the site (by the developer (or his contractor) and DorsetHighways) prior to work commencing and at regular, agreed intervals during the construction phase
- a scheme of appropriate signing of vehicle route to the site
- a route plan for all contractors and suppliers to be advised on
- temporary traffic management measures where necessary

The development must be carried out strictly in accordance with the approved Construction Traffic Management Plan.

Reason: To minimise the likely impact of construction traffic on the surrounding highway network and prevent the possible deposit of loose material on the adjoining highway.

Reason: In the interests of road safety.

5. No development approved by this planning permission shall commence until a remediation strategy to deal with the risks associated with contamination of the site in respect of the development hereby permitted, has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the LPA. This strategy will include the following components:

1. A detailed site investigation scheme, based on the results from the WSP Ltd Ground Investigation Report dated 26/6/2026 to provide information for a detailed risk assessment to all receptors that may be affected, including those off-site.
2. A tiered risk assessment using the results of the site investigation referred to in (1).
3. An options appraisal including sustainability and treatability studies of the remediation measures required and how they are to be undertaken.

4. A remediation strategy and verification plan providing details of the data that will be collected in order to demonstrate that the works set out in the remediation strategy are complete and identifying any requirements for longer term monitoring of pollutant linkages, mitigation, maintenance and arrangements for contingency action.

Any changes to these components require the written consent of the LPA. The scheme shall be implemented as approved.

Reasons

1. To ensure that the development does not contribute to and is not put at unacceptable risk from or adversely affected by unacceptable levels of water pollution in line with paragraph P2(1-2) of the NPPF.

2. To ensure the development will contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate in line with paragraph P2(1-2) of the NPPF.

3. To prevent deterioration of groundwater quality within the Wealden Group Secondary A Aquifer, and to protect connected controlled waters including Swanage Bay, Ulwell Stream and the Swan Brook catchment from contamination arising through the disturbance of Made Ground and historical infill deposits.

6. No demolition, works or development shall take place until a written scheme of historic building recording, post recording analysis & publication in respect of the WWII Gun Emplacement has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development hereby approved shall only be implemented in full accordance with the approved historic building recording scheme.

Reason: To ensure provision is made for the recording of the historic fabric

7. Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved (including demolition, material storage and all preparatory work), a scheme for the protection of the retained trees, in accordance with BS 5837:2012 (as amended), including a scaled tree protection plan (TPP) and an arboricultural method statement (AMS) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority (LPA). The TPP and AMS shall include:

a) Details of preparatory tree work in accordance with BS 3998:2010 and good arboricultural practice.

b) Methods of demolition within the root protection area (RPA) of retained trees (as defined in BS 5837: 2012).

c) Details of construction within or impacting the RPA of retained trees.

d) A full specification for the construction of any roads, parking areas and driveways affecting trees RPA. This shall include details of a no-dig construction method, the extent of areas to be constructed using this specification, and relevant cross-sections through these areas.

f) A specification for protective fencing during demolition and construction phases and a scaled plan showing its alignment.

- h) A Scaled Tree Protection Plan (TPP) showing protection measures and identifying prohibited construction activities within RPAs.
- j) Details of site access, temporary parking, welfare facilities, loading/unloading and storage of equipment, materials, fuels and waste as well concrete mixing and prohibition of fires
- k) Methodology and detailed assessment of root pruning
- m) Arboricultural supervision and inspection by a suitably qualified arboriculturist
- n) Reporting procedure for inspection and supervision
- o) Methods to improve rooting environments for retained and proposed trees and landscaping
- p) Veteran and ancient tree/woodland protection and management

The development thereafter shall be implemented in strict accordance with the approved details.

Reason: Required prior to commencement of development to satisfy the Local Planning Authority that the trees to be retained will not be damaged during demolition or construction and to protect and enhance the appearance and character of the site and locality.

8. No demolition (or alteration by way of partial demolition) of the WWII Gun Emplacement on Sandpit Field shall commence until arrangements have been put in place to secure the implementation of the development permitted under this permission, and these arrangements have been agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The arrangements shall include details of the time scale and timetable for carrying out the development hereby approved. Thereafter, the development shall be carried out in accordance with the agreed details.

Reason: To ensure that the benefits justifying the loss of the non-designated heritage asset are secured.

9. Prior to the commencement of any development hereby approved, above damp course level, full details of hard landscape proposals shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These details shall include where appropriate : proposed finished levels or contours, means of enclosure, vehicular and pedestrian access and circulation areas, hard surfacing materials, minor artefacts and structures (eg; furniture, play equipment, signs, lighting, refuse or other storage units, proposed and existing functional services above and below ground (eg; drainage, power, communication cables, pipelines, etc, indicating lines, manholes, supports etc), retained historic landscape features and proposals for their restoration where relevant. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure the provision of amenity afforded by appropriate landscape design and maintenance of existing and/or new landscape features.

10. Prior to the commencement of any development hereby approved, above damp course level, a soft landscaping and planting scheme shall be submitted to, and approved in writing, by the Local Planning Authority. The approved scheme shall be implemented in full during the planting season November - March following

commencement of the development or within a timescale to be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include provision for the maintenance and replacement as necessary of the trees and shrubs for a period of not less than 5 years.

Reason: In the interest of visual amenity.

11. Prior to development of the beach huts above damp proof course level, details (including colour photographs) of all external facing materials for the wall(s) and roof(s) shall have been submitted to, and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter, the development shall proceed in accordance with such materials as have been agreed.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory visual appearance of the development.

12. The site shall not be utilised for any organised public event unless and until interpretation boards in respect of the WWII gun emplacement to be demolished have been installed. The board(s) installed shall be in accordance with details which shall have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: to advance public knowledge and interpretation of the non-designated heritage asset

13. The beach huts hereby approved shall not be used other than for daytime recreational purposes only, and in particular shall not be used as overnight holiday or permanent residential accommodation.

Reason: The hut is suitable for daytime recreational use only.

14. The detailed biodiversity mitigation, compensation and enhancement strategy set out within the approved Biodiversity Plan, certified by the Dorset Council Natural Environment Team on 27/08/2026, must be strictly adhered to during the carrying out of the development. The development hereby approved must not be first brought into use unless and until:
- i) the mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures detailed in the approved Biodiversity Plan have been completed in full, in accordance with any specified timetable.
 - ii) evidence of compliance, including photographic evidence, in accordance with section F of the approved Biodiversity Plan has been supplied to the Local Planning Authority. The development shall subsequently be implemented entirely in accordance with the approved Biodiversity Plan and thereafter the approved mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures must be permanently maintained and retained in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To mitigate and compensate for impacts on ecological receptors, and to provide biodiversity gains.

Informative Notes:

1. Biodiversity Net Gain

The effect of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that planning permission granted for the development of land in England is deemed to

have been granted subject to the condition "(the biodiversity gain condition") that development may not begin unless:

- (a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and
- (b) the planning authority has approved the plan.

The planning authority, for the purposes of determining whether to approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan if one is required in respect of this permission would be Dorset Council.

There are statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not always apply. These are listed below.

Based on the information available this permission is considered to be one which will require the approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development is begun because none of the statutory exemptions or transitional arrangements listed below are considered to apply.

Read more about Biodiversity Net Gain and Biodiversity Gain Plans at <https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/w/biodiversity-net-gain> and <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/submit-a-biodiversity-gain-plan>

2. This application is subject to Biodiversity Net Gain. A Section 106 Agreement is likely to be required to secure the maintenance and monitoring of any Biodiversity Gain Plan or Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) approved by the Council.
3. The Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016 require a permit or exemption to be obtained for any of the following activities:
 - erecting any temporary or permanent structure in, over or under a main river, such as a culvert, outfall, weir, dam, pipe crossing, erosion protection, scaffolding or bridge
 - altering, repairing or maintaining any temporary or permanent structure in, over or under a main river, where the work could affect the flow of water in the river or affect any drainage work
 - building or altering any permanent or temporary structure designed to contain or divert flood waters from a main river
 - dredging, raising or removing any material from a main river, including when you are intending to improve flow in the river or use the materials removed
 - diverting or impounding the flow of water or changing the level of water in a main river
 - quarrying or excavation within 16 metres of any main river, flood defence (including a remote defence) or culvert
 - any activity within 8 metres of the bank of a main river, or 16 metres if it is a tidal main river
 - any activity within 8 metres of any flood defence structure or culvert on a main river, or 16 metres on a tidal river
 - any activity within 16 metres of a sea defence structure
 - activities carried out on the floodplain of a main river, more than 8 metres from the riverbank, culvert or flood defence structure (or 16 metres if it is a tidal main river), if you do not have planning permission (you do not need permission to build agricultural haystacks, straw stacks or manure clamps in these places)

For further guidance please visit Flood risk activities: environmental permits - GOV.UK or contact our National Customer Contact Centre on 03708 506 506 (Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm) or by emailing enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk. The applicant should not assume that a permit will automatically be forthcoming once planning permission has been granted, and we advise them to consult with us at the earliest opportunity.

4. Informative: The proposed retaining wall will require the approval of the Local Highway Authority in accordance with Section 167 of the Highways Act 1980 and the applicant/developer is required to submit plans, sections and specifications of the retaining wall for approval, prior to construction works commencing to the Local Highway Authority. They can be contacted by telephone at 01305 221000, by email at dorsethighways@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk, or in writing at Dorset Highways, Dorset Council, County Hall, Dorchester, DT1 1XJ.
5. The applicant should contact Dorset Highways by telephone at 01305 221020, by email at dorsethighways@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk, or in writing at Dorset Highways, Dorset Council, County Hall, Dorchester, DT1 1XJ, before the commencement of any works on or adjacent to the public highway, to ensure that the appropriate licence(s) and or permission(s) are obtained.
6. The developer is responsible for coordinating and booking their own road space for utilities and construction works to minimise disruption to the highway network.
7. Informative: National Planning Policy Framework
In accordance with policy DM3 of the NPPF the council, as local planning authority, takes a positive approach to development proposals and is focused on providing sustainable development.
The council works with applicants/agents in a positive and proactive manner by:
 - offering a pre-application advice service, and
 - as appropriate updating applicants/agents of any issues that may arise in the processing of their application and where possible suggesting solutions.In this case:
 - The applicant/agent was updated of any issues and provided with the opportunity to address issues identified by the case officer.
 - The applicant was provided with pre-application advice.
 - The application was acceptable as submitted and no further assistance was required.
8. The applicant's attention is drawn to the letter from the Environment Agency dated 24 September 2026 in respect of this application.

9. Any work carried out to comply with conditions relating to land contamination must be conducted in accordance with DEFRA and the Environment Agency's 'Model Procedures for the Management of Land Contamination, CLR 11'.

10. A contravention of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and the Protection of Badgers Act 1992 may constitute a criminal offence to particular plants and animals. The grant of this consent does not override any requirements to notify Natural England or to comply with the legislation. All buildings and especially roof spaces can support bat roosts which may be damaged or disturbed by demolition, building works or timber treatment. Please note that all bats and their roosts are fully protected under law. It is a requirement of the legislation to notify Natural England of any operation which may affect bats or their roosts, even when the bats are apparently absent. The grant of this planning permission does not override any relevant statutory species protection provision contained within such legislation. For further advice on a particular species please contact Natural England or the Dorset Council Natural Environment Team: Tel: 01305 224931; Email: net@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Application Number:	P/FUL/2025/04705
Webpage:	https://planning.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/
Site address:	Land on the East Side of The Drove and the North Side of Dorchester Road (A352) Winfrith Newburgh Dorchester DT2 8LA
Proposal:	Change of use of land from agriculture to a development of 4 plots for travelling showpeople comprising 4no. caravans for residential occupation and 4no. storage buildings with associated access and landscaping. As amended by plans rec'd 1/5/26 to omit planted bund in Flood Zone 3
Applicant name:	Mr & Mrs O'Connell
Case Officer:	James Brightman
Ward Member(s):	Cllr Beddow and Cllr Baker

1. **Reason application is going to committee:** The application is for major development, and an objection has been received from Winfrith Newburgh & East Knighton Parish Council.

2. **Summary of recommendation:**

To grant planning permission subject to conditions as set out at the end of this report

3. **Key planning issues**

Issue	Conclusion
Principle of development (including impact on residential amenity)	Acceptable - The proposal accords with local plan policy H15: Meeting the needs of gypsy, traveller and travelling showpeople. The site is well separated from the dwellings to the south on the A352 and given this relationship, the application would not have a significant negative impact on neighbour amenity. The proposal addresses an evidenced unmet need for travelling showpeople accommodation and meets the criteria of NPPF Policy HO12 so it accords with NPPF Policy S5(1)(g): Principle of development outside settlements.
Scale, design, impact on character and appearance	Acceptable - The proposal would not have a significant impact on the character of the area with the proposed landscaping and planting in place
Impact on protected Landscape	Acceptable - The site lies close to the Dorset

Issue	Conclusion
	National Landscape, but the proposal would not have a significant impact on this designated area.
Impact on heritage assets	Acceptable - The proposal would result in some harm to designated heritage assets, but this harm is outweighed by the proposal's benefits discussed in the main report.
Flood risk and drainage	Acceptable - The residential caravans and pitches are sited outside the high-risk flood area, and the storage buildings are appropriate in the high-risk flood area being less vulnerable development and have been designed to be flood resilient and not impede flood flows or reduce floodplain storage. The Environment Agency no longer objects subject to conditions
Highway impacts, safety, access and parking	Acceptable – There are no concerns with regards to impacts on the highway network
Impact on trees	Acceptable - No adverse impacts with tree protection in place
Impact on biodiversity	Acceptable - No adverse impacts with mitigation & enhancement in place
Loss of Grade 3 (good to moderate quality) agricultural land	Acceptable – The harm arising from loss of Grade 3 (Good to moderate quality) agricultural land is outweighed by the benefits of the proposal.
Nutrient neutrality – impact on Poole Harbour	Acceptable - The applicant is to purchase nitrogen credits to offset the impact on nutrient neutrality and this will be achieved by pre-commencement condition
Impact on Dorset Heathlands	Acceptable - The applicant has submitted a legal agreement to pay the required mitigation for the impact on the Dorset Heathlands (as the development is not liable for CIL)
Economic benefits	Potential spending from residents of the application site in the local area. Employment of local builders and tradespeople in the construction phase and local spend from this
Financial benefits	Business rates

Issue	Conclusion
Environmental Implications	Noise and air pollution during construction and during use of the site from operation of internal combustion engine machinery and vehicles. Biodiversity Net Gain from new on-site planting.

4. Description of site

- 4.1 The application site is mostly flat and occupies a large field with an area of approximately 1.75 hectares on the north side of the A352. Water Lane that provides access to Winfrith Newburgh lies some 45m to the southwest at its closest point. The site is in the countryside, and land designated as Dorset National Landscape lies across the A352 to the south. The settlement boundary of Winfrith Newburgh lies approximately 400 metres to the south. The current use is agricultural.
- 4.2 The site is relatively level and enclosed by vegetation along the south, east and west boundaries, and a post-and-wire fence along the north-west boundary. There is a group of mature trees in the southwest corner of the site, a small area of hardstanding at the site access and a small container at the access at the time of the officer's site visit.
- 4.3 Access to the site is via an existing vehicular access and track (The Drove) which has been upgraded to serve a solar park on land further north at North Fossil Farm (planning reference 6/2020/0595). The Drove is also a Bridleway (public right of way SE27/17).
- 4.4 The Environment Agency flood risk mapping shows an area of the eastern part of the site to be in Fluvial Flood Zone 3 (high risk) for the nearby watercourse to the east.
- 4.5 The site is rural in character, within the Dorset National Landscape and is classified as 'Good to moderate' quality on Natural England's mapping.
- 4.6 The Winfrith Newburgh Conservation Area is immediately to the south and extends over the highway verge adjacent to the site. The dwelling immediately to the south of the access at 103 Dorchester Road is Grade 2 listed.
- 4.7 The site is within 5 km of the Dorset Heathlands and within the Poole Harbour Catchment.
- 4.8 Immediately to the south there are 3 detached dwellings in narrow plots that front the road. There are a bus stop and public house beyond to the east. Water Lane provides access to Winfrith Newburgh, and the main village is to the southeast of the application site.

5. Description of development

- 5.1 The application is for the change the use of the land from agriculture to a development of 4 plots for travelling showpeople. The applicants Mr & Mrs O'Connell and their children are Members of the Showmen's Guild of Great Britain and currently live at Harmans Cross.
- 5.2 For the purposes of planning policy, "travelling showpeople" means: Members of a group organised for the purposes of holding fairs, circuses or shows (whether or not travelling together as such). This includes such persons who on the grounds of their own or their family's or dependants' more localised pattern of trading, educational or health needs or old

age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently but excludes Gypsies and Travellers. The applicants are considered to be travelling showpeople as they meet this definition.

- 5.3 The development comprises the siting of 4 caravans for residential occupation and associated amenity and parking areas and the erection of 4 storage buildings that will be used to store the rides and equipment, served by the existing access off The Drove from the A352. The storage buildings would be sited in 2 pairs with nearest building sited approximately 25m to the north of the carriageway edge of the A352. The pitches and caravans would be sited outside the floodplain, and the storage buildings would be sited within the floodplain.
- 5.4 The storage buildings would each have a footprint of 18m x 12.2m with a ridge of 6.23m and eaves of 4.6m. A section of open metal mesh would be installed at ground level to allow flood flows through the buildings. The roofs would be profiled metal sheeting in dark green. The front walls and the side walls of buildings 2 & 4 (elevations that would be most visible) would be clad with timber with the remaining walls clad with dark green metal sheeting.
- 5.5 A section of 1.2m high and 5m wide landscaped bund (located outside Flood Zone 2 & 3) will be constructed along the A352 site frontage with a 1.2m high post & rail fence at the rear facing the site. This will be to the south of the 2 pitches nearest the road. Trees will be planted at between 10m and 25m apart on the lower slope of the bund on the site side, with grass and shrubs planted on the remaining area.

Commercial use details

- 5.6 The agent has advised the following:
- The applicants and their family have separate travelling show businesses, but all their correspondence relates to a single address in Harmans Cross. The family travel for much of the year from fair-to-fair and do not operate from a set location.
 - The show season was traditionally Good Friday to Bonfire night, but this has evolved and now involves Christmas fairs where Showpeople operate fairground rides and catering.
 - After shows have finished, the Travelling Showpeople pack up and move onto the next show location, and this pattern of movements continues throughout the show season, and it is rare that they need to return to the site with HGVs during the show season. This is because the Travelling Showpeople are equipped for the whole season, although they may need to return on occasion and no more than twice a month if a planned show is postponed or delayed due to adverse weather and they are unable to attend any other shows elsewhere at short notice.
 - The business depends on maximum show attendance throughout the season, and it is therefore not in the interests of the Travelling Showpeople to be at the site with their vehicles and equipment during the show season. Return trips to the site with HGVs during their seasonal tour need to be minimised to reduce fuel costs and any return trips would be in private motor vehicles.

- The purpose of the proposal is to enable members of the applicant's family to live together but they attend different shows throughout the season and do not travel together as a convoy.
- It is difficult to specify the timing of vehicle movements as they would be dependent on the circumstances for returning to the site i.e. should the Travelling Showpeople operate a fair from Wednesday to Saturday, they would pack up on Sunday morning. If they are unable to move on to their next location because a show has been cancelled or delayed due to adverse weather, they would return to site late morning or early afternoon on a Sunday.
- The applicants and their family require and own HGVs to transport the equipment and when not in use these will be parked at the site with a single HGV per plot (4 total). The family currently have temporary and informal arrangements to park and store their HGVs and show equipment outside the show season and are seeking a permanent base from which to operate.

6. Background and relevant planning history

Land to the northwest - Land to the north of North Fossil Farm, Dorchester Rd, East Knighton

6/2020/0595 - Decision: Granted - Decision Date: 12/01/2022

Installation of 40MW ground mounted photovoltaic (PV) solar development including a substation & new fencing with associated landscape mitigation & ecological/ecosystem service enhancements

Application site

P/PAP/2024/00699 -Decision: Officer Response provided - Decision Date: 12/02/2025

Development of 4 plots for travelling showpeople comprising mixed residential and storage use.

7. List of relevant constraints

Outside settlements

Grade: II Listed Building at 103, DORCHESTER ROAD (List Entry: 1152681.0) approximately 23m to the south on the opposite side of the road.

Site is adjacent to Winfrith Newburgh Conservation Area (to the south)

Dorset Heathland Designation Buffer 5km;

Poole Harbour Nutrient Catchment Area;

Wessex Water Treatment Works Catchment

Site identified as Grade 3 (Good to moderate) in the Natural England South West Region Map [Agricultural Land Classification Map South West Region - ALC006](#)

Right of Way: Footpath SE27/14; - Starts 39.86m to the south of the site adjacent to 103 Dorchester Rd then runs south into Winfrith Newburgh

Right of Way: Bridleway SE27/17 (The Drove)

Mineral Strategy 2014 – Hydrocarbons - UKCS Licensed Blocks - Organisation: EGDON RESOURCES U.K. LIMITED (03424561)

Mineral Strategy 2014 – Mineral Safeguarded Policy SG1 - Sand and Gravel

Southern Gas Network (SGN) - Medium pressure gas pipeline 12.5m or less from 12.5m Buffer on Regional Medium Pressure Pipelines (75 mbar – 2 bar);

Adjacent to the Dorset National Landscape (12.74m to the south)

Flood Zones 2 & 3 (Fluvial)

Groundwater – Susceptibility to flooding

Environment Agency (EA)- Poole Harbour Catchment Area

EA - Risk of Surface Water Flooding Extent 1 in 30 – adjacent to site to the east:

Radon Class 1.0 (low risk, protective measures not required)

8. Consultations

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

Consultees

1. Natural England (NE)

No objection subject to securing appropriate mitigation for the impact on European Sites (Dorset Heathlands and Poole Harbour).

2. Environment Agency (EA)

The EA originally objected to the proposal as the storage buildings were in fluvial Flood Zones 2 & 3 and they would have an adverse effect on flood flows and flood storage.

The plans have been amended to show gaps under the walls of the storage buildings to allow the passage of flood water and permeable hard surfacing for the floors and adjacent hardstanding to allow water to permeate the ground, so flood storage is not adversely affected.

The revised FRA submitted addresses the principal concerns relating to flood levels, climate change, floodplain storage, storage building design and site layout. It proposes finished floor levels with at least 600mm freeboard above the precautionary design flood level for residential caravans. The screening bund has now been positioned outside the mapped flood extents, and the storage buildings have been designed to maintain floodplain storage and permit the free passage of floodwater.

The proposal would not increase flood risk elsewhere and would be acceptable in line with the NPPF subject to the inclusion of conditions to require the development to be undertaken in accordance with the Flood Risk Assessment, require caravan bases to be 37.1m AOD,

prohibit additional building in Flood Zones 2 & 3, and require the buildings to only be used for storage ancillary to residential plots.

3. Dorset Wildlife Trust (DWT)

No comments rec'd

4. Ramblers Association

No comments rec'd

5. Dorset National Landscape Team

No objection raised. Conditions advised to require details of the specification of hard landscaping (surfacing), planting (including maintenance), any lighting that might be installed and also the materials and colours for the proposed barns and caravans.

6. Dorset Council (DC) - Gypsy & Traveller Liaison Officer

The Gypsy & Traveller Liaison Officer advised verbally that he had no comments

7. DC - Natural Environment Team

The Council's Ecologist has advised that the proposal is acceptable in respect of its impact on biodiversity and for Biodiversity Net Gain following receipt of additional details from the applicant's ecologist.

The Council Ecologist advises that the mitigation measures are appropriate, and the Ecology Impact Assessment (EclA) should be secured by condition. In addition to conditions to secure a Construction Ecological Management Plan (CEMP) and pre-commencement protected species survey.

8. DC - Rights of Way Officer

Bridleway SE27/17 should not be obstructed and any damaged caused will be for the owner to repair.

9. DC - Highways

No objection subject to conditions

10. DC - Minerals & Waste Policy

No objection.

11. DC - Dorset Waste Team

No comments rec'd

12. DC Conservation Officers

No objection - limited harm to the setting of heritage assets. Timber walls advised for the buildings.

13. DC - Building Control East Team

If the caravans can be moved and craned in 2 movements, they wouldn't fall under Building Regulations. Suitable spacing and fire resistance etc and access for Fire Brigade B5 is required.

14.DC - Dorset Waste Team

No comments rec'd

15.DC - Flood Risk Management

The Flood Risk Management team raises no objection to the application subject to conditions to require a detailed surface water drainage scheme to be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority and to submit a surface water maintenance and management plan for approval.

The Flood Risk Management team accept the Environment Agency's conclusions regarding flood risk from Flood Zones and the Main River and advise that the proposed drainage strategy is based on infiltration. Results from on-site infiltration testing and groundwater monitoring taken over the winter period indicate that the site can be drained via infiltration and a viable and deliverable surface water drainage strategy is proposed.

16.DC - Trees (East & Purbeck)

No objection subject to condition to require a site meeting & Arboricultural Supervision and Monitoring Statement to be submitted

17.DC - Environmental Services – Protection

Advise that the Reporting of Unexpected Contamination Condition is included.

18.DC - Archaeology - Steve Wallis

No archaeological concerns

19. Winfrith Newburgh & East Knighton Parish Council (PC)

The PC has submitted the following material planning objections:

- The application site's existing use is for agriculture, Grade 3, not housing or B8 industrial units.
- The site is not one identified by Dorset Council as a suitable plot for accommodating travelling showpeople. Any change of use could set a damaging precedent to this protected and valued historic landscape.
- The application site is immediately adjacent to the AONB, covered by Green Belt restrictions, is immediately adjacent to the Winfrith Newburgh Conservation Area and close to protected heathland. The proposals fail to meet the requirements of these protected designations, particularly in relation to environmental and landscape quality, visual amenity and the historic nature of the adjacent Conservation Area.
- The proposal fails to comply with Local Plan Policies V1: Vision & H15: Meeting the needs of gypsy, traveller and travelling showpeople.
- The land is at risk of flooding, and the drainage scheme may be inadequate, as has been seen historically and more recently.
- The land access lacks adequate visibility splays and would increase danger on the A352.

- There is no footpath for pedestrians, so putting pedestrians and cyclists at risk on the A352.
- Approval could set the precedent for further damaging development to stretch from Wool to Crossways Roundabout along the A352 and so adversely affect the AONB, the Green Belt land and the Conservation Area.

20. West Purbeck Members

No comments rec'd

Representations received

Total - objections	Total - Support	Total – No objections/comments
43	7	0

Summary of comments of objections:

- loss of agricultural land
- inappropriate in the rural area
- not a suitable location for the development as it should be on brownfield land
- will set an undesirable precedent
- impact from flooding
- potential contamination of the water table
- proposed tree planting would adversely impact properties opposite from loss of light
- adverse impact on highway safety
- no pedestrian access via pathways or crossings
- adverse effect on the community of Winfrith Newburgh from traffic
- impact on users of the bridleway at The Drove
- site context unsuitable for cyclists and pedestrians
- noise and lighting impacts and loss of privacy for residents opposite
- impact on biodiversity
- would not protect the character of the area whilst improving quality of life for local community or protect natural and historic asset contrary to Purbeck Local Plan vision
- not a rural exception site under local plan policy H12, site not in plan consultation for suitable site for travelling show people or Gypsies and travellers
- alternative suitable sites identified in council planning document
- adverse impact on Greenbelt
- adverse visual impact on the Dorset National Landscape

Summary of comments of support:

- poor quality agricultural land & the proposal is appropriate on the land
- no lighting to be installed
- no adverse impact on highway safety
- young families would help the community to thrive
- crossing the A352 on foot is not dangerous
- economic benefit for local shops and businesses
- travelling show people & their culture should be supported

9. Duties

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.

Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that when considering whether to grant planning permission for a development which affects a listed building or its setting, there is a general duty to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas.

Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000) requires Local Planning Authorities to seek to further the purposes of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of National Landscape (formerly known as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty) when making any decision which affects such land.

10. Relevant policies

Development plan

In this case the development plan comprises:

Local Plan Adopted Purbeck Local Plan:

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

- V1: Spatial strategy for sustainable communities
- E1: Landscape
- E2: Historic environment
- E4: Assessing flood risk
- E5: Sustainable drainage systems (SuDs)
- E7: Conservation of protected sites
- E8: Dorset heathlands
- E9: Poole Harbour
- E10: Biodiversity and geodiversity
- E12: Design

H15: Meeting the needs of gypsy, traveller and travelling showpeople

I2: Improving accessibility and transport

I3: Green infrastructure, trees, and hedgerows

Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Minerals Strategy (2014)

Policy SG1 - Mineral Safeguarding Area

Policy SG2 - Mineral Consultation Area

Policy SG3 - Safeguarding of mineral sites and facilities

Made Neighbourhood Plans

None relevant

Material considerations

Emerging local plans:

Paragraph 49 of the NPPF provides that local planning authorities may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to:

- the stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced its preparation, the greater the weight that may be given);
- the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant plan policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and
- the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the NPPF (the closer the policies in the emerging plan are to the policies of the NPPF, the greater the weight that may be given).

The Dorset Council Local Plan

The emerging Dorset Local Plan is being prepared in accordance with plan-making processes set out in the Levelling Up and Regenerating Act 2023 and Local Planning Regulations (2026). As the plan is still at an early stage of the plan making process, limited weight can be attached to it when taking decisions on planning applications. Decisions on planning applications should continue to be assessed against the policies in adopted development plans, national planning policy and any other relevant material considerations.

Emerging neighbourhood plans

None relevant

Local Nature Recovery Strategy

The Dorset Local Nature Recovery Strategy identifies local priorities for nature recovery and maps areas where action would be most beneficial. In planning decisions it is a material consideration, helping to ensure that development supports biodiversity enhancement and aligns with Dorset's agreed priorities for nature recovery.

National Planning Policy Framework (17 August 2026)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), published on 17 August 2026, sets out the Government's national planning policies for both plan-making and decision-making in England.

When determining development proposals decision-makers are required to take a positive and proactive approach and to seek to approve sustainable development where possible.

The NPPF introduces a permanent presumption in favour of sustainable development, through Policies S3 to S5 (which replaces the former "tilted balance" contained in paragraph 11 of the previous NPPF) and sets out the principles for development within and outside settlements. The Framework also confirms that planning applications should be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Other relevant NPPF chapters and policies include:

- Chapter 3: Decision making policies. Local planning authorities should approach decision making positively, proactively and proportionately. They should work with applicants through pre-application engagement and consultations and aim to resolve concerns through planning conditions or obligations where possible to avoid delay and to enable an approval rather than a refusal. Applications that accord with the development plan, the NPPF and other material considerations should not be refused where they can clearly be approved.
 - DM1 Preparing development proposals
 - DM2 Information requirements
 - DM3 Determining development proposals
 - DM4 Emerging development plan proposals
 - DM6 Use of planning conditions and obligations
 - DM7 Relationship with other regulatory regimes
- Chapter 4: Achieving Sustainable Development. The objective of the policies in this chapter is to meet development needs through sustainable patterns of development, including by maximising the potential for growth on suitable land within settlements, enabling development which will support the rural economy, rural communities and the provision of infrastructure, and limiting development away from settlements to help safeguard the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.
 - S3 Presumption in favour of sustainable development
 - S4 Principle of development within settlements
 - S5 Principle of development outside settlements
 - S6 Neighbourhood plans and the presumption
- Chapter 5: Meeting the challenges of climate change. Planning decisions should support climate change mitigation and adaptation, including reducing greenhouse gas emissions, increasing resilience to climate impacts and directing development away from areas at unacceptable risk from flooding.
 - CC2 Mitigation of climate change
 - CC3 Adaptation to climate change
- Chapter 6: Delivering a sufficient supply of homes. Planning decisions should give substantial weight to providing homes which will contribute towards meeting the evidenced accommodation needs of the community.
 - HO7 Meeting the need for homes
 - HO12 Traveller sites
- Chapter 7: Building a strong, effective economy. Planning decisions should enable businesses to invest, expand and adapt in a way that reflects the opportunities, challenges and characteristics of different areas, and supports long-term economic growth both locally and nationally.
 - E2 Meeting the need for business land and premises

- E4 Rural business development
- Chapter 14: Achieving well-designed places. Development proposals should respond to their context so that they integrate with and enhance their surroundings and should reflect relevant design principles. Substantial weight should be given to compliance with relevant development plan policies when assessing the design quality of proposals.
 - DP3 Key principles for well-designed places
 - DP4 The design process
- Chapter 15: Promoting sustainable transport. The objective of the policies in this chapter is to ensure that transport considerations are taken fully into account in the preparation of development plans and the evolution and assessment of development proposals; using a vision-led approach to embed the role that transport infrastructure and choices can play in creating well-designed, sustainable, inclusive and popular places.
 - TR3 Locating development in sustainable locations
 - TR4 Street design, access and parking
 - TR6 Assessing transport impacts
 - TR8 Public rights of way
- Chapter 17: Pollution, public protection and security. The objective of the policies in this chapter is to ensure that new development is appropriate for its location, taking into account risks posed by pollution and other hazards; that any impacts which development might have are taken into account; and that sufficient provision is made for development required for public safety and security.
 - P2 Ground conditions
 - P3 Living conditions and pollution
 - P4 Impact of development on existing activities
- Chapter 18: Managing flood risk and coastal change. Development proposals should minimise risks to development arising from all sources of flooding and coastal change, taking into account the impacts of climate change, by steering development away from areas of risk, ensuring that development will be safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere, and incorporating sustainable drainage systems where appropriate.
 - F4 Assessing flood risk for decision-making
 - F5 The sequential test
 - F6 Development in areas at risk of flooding from rivers or the sea
 - F7 Ensuring development is safe from flooding
 - F8 Sustainable drainage systems and watercourses
- Chapter 19: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment: Development should conserve and enhance the natural environment by protecting important landscapes, habitats, biodiversity and trees, while maximising opportunities for nature recovery, green infrastructure and biodiversity net gain. Proposals should avoid significant environmental harm, prioritise land of lower environmental value where possible, and be sensitively designed in protected landscapes and coastal areas. Development causing unacceptable impacts on designated sites,

irreplaceable habitats or biodiversity that cannot be adequately avoided, mitigated or compensated for should be refused.

- In National Landscapes substantial weight should be placed on the importance of conserving and enhancing their natural beauty.
 - Improving the natural environment biodiversity is to be protected and encourage net gains for biodiversity.
 - N2 Improving the natural environment
 - N3 Trees in new development
 - N4 Protected Landscapes
 - N6 Areas of particular importance for biodiversity and geodiversity
- Chapter 20: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment – Great weight should be given to the conservation of heritage assets. Development that preserves or enhances designated or non-designated heritage assets should be approved. while any harm must be clearly justified and weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. Proposals causing substantial harm to, or loss of, heritage assets should only be permitted in exceptional circumstances where overriding public benefits outweigh the harm.
 - HE4 Securing the conservation of heritage assets
 - HE5 Assessing effects on heritage assets
 - HE6 Proposals affecting designated heritage assets
 - HE9 Conservation areas

Other material considerations

National Planning Practice Guidance

Dorset Council, Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) Report of Findings April 2026

Dorset and Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (August 2022)

Supplementary Planning Documents/Guidance

Dorset AONB Landscape Character Assessment

The Dorset National Landscape Management Plan 2026-31

Dorset Heathlands Planning Framework 2020-2025 Supplementary Planning Document

Dorset Heathlands Interim Air Quality Strategy 2020-2025

Dorset Council Interim Guidance and Position Statement Appendix B: Adopted Local Plan policies and objectives relating to climate change, renewable energy, and sustainable design and construction. December 2023.

Supplementary Planning Documents/Guidance for Purbeck area:

District Design Guide SPD

Managing and using traditional building details in Purbeck

Poole Harbour Recreation 2019-2024 SPD

Winfrith Newburgh Conservation Area App

Housing land supply

Dorset Council is unable to demonstrate a 5-year supply of Gypsy and Traveller pitches as required by National Policy. In addition, the Gypsy and Traveller policy within the adopted Development Plan is out of date and the presumption in favour of sustainable development applies under NPPF Policy S5: Principle of development outside settlements. The emerging Dorset Local Plan is not sufficiently progressed and can be afforded very limited weight in decision making.

NPPF Policy S5(1) states that only certain forms of development should be approved outside settlements, as set out in criteria (a) to (j) of this policy, and these should be approved, unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects, when assessed against the national decision-making policies in the NPPF.

Criterion (g) concerns development which would address an evidenced unmet need for gypsy, traveller or travelling showpeople accommodation²⁶, provided it meets the criteria in policy HO12.

11. 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.

12. Public Sector Equalities Duty (PSED)

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.

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.

The application could affect persons with the following protected characteristics: race, age, pregnancy/maternity.

The applicant has advised that there is currently a child in their family who would live at the site and there would be no one with limited mobility.

The proposal will meet a need for Travelling Showpeople who require a large site to accommodate storage for their equipment and space for their caravans, providing opportunities to access services such as primary education (there is a primary school in Winfrith Newburgh) and healthcare associated with having a settled base; this will be in the best interests of any children.

The site is relatively flat, and a tarmac access road will provide access to the caravan pitches and storage buildings with gravel around the caravans and to the front of the storage buildings. The tarmac is an appropriate surface for wheelchairs and pushchairs, but gravel may impede their movement. However, this is dependent on the type of gravel used and a condition to require details of the gravel would allow a suitable gravel to be used (condition 12).

13. Public Benefits

The proposals would provide a number of financial and non-financial benefits, including public benefits. These are summarised in the table below:

What	Amount / value
Material considerations	
Provision of 4 permanent pitches for Travelling Showpeople which would reduce the likelihood of unauthorised sites being used.	n/a
Non-material considerations	
Council Tax/Business rates	unknown

14. Planning Assessment

Principle of development

- 14.1 As the site is not adjacent to the settlement boundary of Winfrith Newburgh, Purbeck Local Plan (PLP) Policy V1 does not apply. Policy S5 (Principle of development outside settlements) of the August 2026 NPPF sets out a list of development that is acceptable outside settlements. This includes at S5(1)(g) *‘Development which would address an evidenced unmet need for gypsy, traveller or travelling showpeople accommodation²⁶, provided it meets the criteria in policy HO12: Traveller Sites’*.
- ²⁶ Including (but not limited to) where the relevant local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable sites as set out in NPPF policy HO3(1)(a) or (b).
- 14.2 NPPF policy HO12(2) states *‘When considering proposals for traveller sites, including for the purposes of considering need under policies S5 and GB7, local planning authorities should take into account the existing level of local provision and need for additional sites and other personal circumstances which may be relevant. Applications from any traveller should be considered and not just those with local connections.’*
- 14.3 The Council’s development strategy for supporting delivery of Traveller sites in the Purbeck Local Plan (2018-2034) was based on the evidence of need presented in the ‘The Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) published in October 2017. The local plan identified that 4 Travelling Show People plots were needed (paragraph 215) in addition to the pitches identified in the GTAA.
- 14.4 The 2017 GTAA was superseded by the 2022 GTAA which has now been superseded by Dorset Council, Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) Report of Findings April 2026. This relates to the whole of Dorset Council area; there are no longer any Purbeck specific assessments of need. Within Dorset there is an inadequate level of local provision of Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople sites and this is evidenced by the Dorset Council, Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) Report of Findings April 2026. There is the following need for Travelling Showpeople sites (taken from the GTAA):

Figure 16: Total Plot Need for Travelling Showpeople Households

Travelling Showpeople	2026/27- 30/31	2031/32- 35/36	2036/37- 40/41	2041/42- 42/43	2026/27- 42/43
Meet Planning Definition (Allocations)	7	2	0	1	10
Undetermined (Criteria-Based Policy)	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	7	2	0	1	10

- 14.5 There have been no new permissions for travelling showpeople since the report was published so there is an evidenced need for travelling showpeople sites within Dorset.
- 14.6 NPPF policy HO12(3). Refers to the relocation of unauthorised traveller sites so is not relevant to this application for a new site.
- 14.7 When considering the acceptability of the proposed site, PLP Policy H15 is relevant as it deals with sites for travelling showpeople and can be given weight as it is not materially inconsistent with the NPPF 2026. Policy H15 has 5 requirements under criteria a. – e which are comparable with NPPF policy.
- Policy H15 a. the occupants have easy access to existing services and facilities including: schools, shops, health services and public transport*
- 14.8 This first requirement is similar to the aims of NPPF policy HO12(1) which requires that development proposals for traveller sites should be located so that they:
- ‘a. Provide a settled base while recognising the extent to which traditional lifestyles (whereby some travellers live and work from the same location thereby omitting many travel to work journeys) can contribute to sustainability and may also mean that locations not well-related to existing settlements may be appropriate; and*
- b. Enable access to frequently used services, such as education, welfare and health services, including ensuring that children can attend school on a regular basis...’*
- 14.9 The proposed development would provide a settled basis for Travelling Showpeople which meets their need to store large equipment on the site and move this with large vehicles when required as the site has easy and safe access onto a classified road which would provide access to sites where the Travelling Showpeople would work. The nature of the work of Travelling Showpeople is that it involves travelling to different locations to set up and operate their equipment which may include fairground rides, moveable market stalls and other related equipment so that a site in a settlement would not omit the need to travel to work.
- 14.10 The site is approximately 500m north of the settlement of Winfrith Newburgh, identified by the Purbeck Local Plan as a local service village which needs some growth to sustain vital rural services, such as the village school which lies approx. 1.1km away and a village shop which is closer using the available roads .
- 14.11 Due to the nature of the A352 and lack of provision of footways through Winfrith Newburgh along Water Lane, residents are likely to be discouraged from walking to access local facilities, but there are options to travel by bus as the proposed site is close to a bus stop (route X54) that provides a service to Dorchester (14km west), Wool (approx 4km east with a

railway station) and Wareham (13km east) and residents of the site would be able to access services and facilities in these settlements should they not have use of a private car.

- 14.12 Taking into account the broader reference of policy H15 to local facilities, there is also a public house, The Red Lion, within easy walking distance to the southeast.
- 14.13 Travelling showpeople move around the country for their work and this requires the use of motorised vehicles (including HGVs) to transport machinery and equipment, and such equipment needs to be stored on the site. Therefore, travelling showpeople would be unlikely to use public transport to access their work, but could use it to access facilities and services.
- 14.14 The A352 is a relatively busy rural road and lacks footways between the proposal site and those facilities/services in Winfrith, although pedestrians do have the opportunity to walk through the sports pitches toward the centre of the village.
- 14.15 Given the location of the site with easy access onto the Dorchester Road and a village shop and first school in Winfrith Newburgh and access to services and facilities that are essential for day-to-day living at Wool, Wareham and Dorchester, it is considered that the proposal would comply with requirement a. of Local Plan policy H15 and criteria (a) and (b) of NPPF policy HO12(1) and would not conflict with policy TR3 as there is relatively easy access to existing service and facilities taking account of the nature of the development under consideration.
- 14.16 Other requirements of PLP policy H15 are:
- b. the site can be safely accessed and adequate on-site parking, turning and storage can be provided;*
- 14.17 The access into the site from the Dorchester Road has been upgraded to serve the approved solar farm at land to the north of Fossil Farm in association with planning permission 6/2020/0595. This is considered further in the highway safety section of the report.
- 14.18 The Council's Highways Officer has raised no objection, and it is considered that the site may be safely accessed, there is adequate on-site parking and turning and adequate space on site for storage (to be provided in the buildings). This criterion is therefore complied with.
- c. the use would not result in harmful overlooking, overshadowing, noise, or light pollution for occupants of the site or neighbours;*
- 14.19 This requirement accords with NPPF policy P3(2) where development proposals should seek to provide healthy living conditions for occupiers and not give rise to or contribute to, an unacceptable level of access to daylight, sunlight or unacceptable levels of air, noise, artificial light, water, soil or other forms of pollution on or beyond the site.
- 14.20 The caravans and buildings are an appropriate distance (nearest caravan is approx. 30m and nearest building is approx. 80m) from the nearest dwellings at 103, 104, 104a & 105 Portway, Dorchester Road to the south of the A352 to prevent any harmful overlooking or overshadowing of these dwellings from the caravans and buildings.
- 14.21 The proposed tree planting along the site's south boundary shown on the indicative Landscape Masterplan would be to the north of the dwellings and the trees would be approx. 20m from the nearest parts of the dwellings. Given this orientation of the application site in

relation to the passage of the sun, there would not be any harmful impact in respect of loss of sunlight from tall trees on the application site.

- 14.22 Although an indicative landscaping masterplan has been submitted, a condition is to be imposed to require a detailed planting plan and at this stage it would be possible to agree appropriate tree species in respect of the impact of the trees on the outlook from the dwellings.
- 14.23 The residential part of the use would not bring harmful noise impacts, but it is considered that a condition is necessary to require any servicing/maintenance/work to the equipment and machinery used by the Travelling Showpeople to only be undertaken within the storage buildings. Given the information submitted by the applicant's agent in respect of how the site is to be operated in terms of vehicle movements, it is not considered it is reasonable or necessary to restrict times of vehicle movements.
- 14.24 Low-level external lighting will be required on the storage buildings and caravans in the interests of safety and security and the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Ecological Impact Assessment and Design & Access Planning Statement confirms that such lighting will be limited to the areas needed. A condition is to be imposed to require details of external lighting to prevent adverse impacts on the occupants of the nearest dwellings and also the setting of the adjacent National Landscape, the setting of the listed building and setting of the conservation Area (no. 23). The proposal accords with Requirement c. on the above basis.
- 14.25 The fourth requirement of PLP policy H15 is that
d. the impact of proposed development on European sites, alone or in combination with other existing and proposed development, will be screened for likely significant effects under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (amended) (EU exit), 2019 and/or any equivalent relevant legislation or regulations. Where there is a probability or risk of a significant effect, the proposed development will be subject of an appropriate assessment (taking into account the lifetime of the development). Development proposals should, therefore, be accompanied by information reasonably required to undertake an appropriate assessment, and demonstrate how the development will avoid or otherwise mitigate any adverse impact on the integrity of any relevant site(s) in the national site network;...

This is consistent with policy N6 of the NPPF.

- 14.26 The Council has undertaken an appropriate assessment under the Habitats Regulations. This concludes that the proposal would not have a significant adverse effect on European protected sites provided that nitrogen credits are purchased in respect of Poole Harbour and contributions secured for Strategic Access Management & Monitoring, Heathland Infrastructure Projects and Air Quality in respect of the Dorset Heathlands.
- 14.27 A pre-commencement condition (no. 3) will require nitrogen credits to be purchased for the impact on Poole Harbour and a legal obligation has been submitted to provide the required mitigation for the proposal's impact on the Dorset Heathlands. The proposal accords with Requirement d. and NPPF policy N6 on the above basis.
- 14.28 The final requirement of PLP policy H12 is:
e. the use would not demonstrably harm the appearance, character, and setting of the surrounding landscape and the historic environment.

- 14.29 This aim is consistent with NPPF policy N2 in respect of the need to consider the landscape character and natural beauty of the countryside, policy N4 in relation to avoiding harm to the statutory purposes and special qualities of protected landscapes and heritage policies HE4-HE6 & HE9 which seek to conserve heritage assets. These issues are considered in more detail in the next section of the report.
- 14.30 Given the proposal's compliance with PLP policy H15 and NPPF policy HO12, it is considered the development is acceptable in principle. Policy S5(1) requires that such development is approved, unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects.

Scale, design, impact on character and appearance (to include impact on the adjacent National Landscape)

- 14.31 The site is in the countryside so PLP policy E1 is relevant in so far as it is consistent with NPPF policies N2 'Improving the natural environment' and N4 'Protected Landscapes'. NPPF policy N4(4) requires that 'Development proposals within the setting of Protected Landscapes should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the Protected Landscapes'.
- 14.32 In this case the development primarily affects a non-designated landscape, but the site contributes to the setting of the Dorset National Landscape, which lies immediately to the south of the A352.
- 14.33 The design of the proposed development has accounted for the existing landform, placing the four large storage buildings and associated hard surfacing along the vegetated eastern site boundary (height of approx. 4 to 5m) to minimise their visual impact when seen from the A352 and the east. Although large buildings, these would have a similar appearance to agricultural buildings, having an agricultural scale and design and would use acceptable materials so are appropriate for their rural context. Their siting in 2 pairs, together with the positioning adjacent to the treed eastern boundary and screening to be provided by the proposed tree planting on the site's southern boundary, would prevent a significant adverse visual impact on the character and appearance of the area.
- 14.34 A 1.2m high post and rail fence to be positioned 3m from the eastern boundary would secure a suitable landscape buffer to prevent adverse impacts from the construction of the buildings on the existing boundary vegetation. It is anticipated that up to 4 HGVs would be parked on the hard standing outside the storage buildings during periods of occupation and these will have a visual impact when seen from the road to the south, but this would not be for long periods given the working pattern of Travelling Showpeople where they are away from the site for long periods. The visual impact from these would be most noticeable when the site is first developed as this is when the planting on the south boundary would be new and unestablished. The planting in this area is shown on the submitted indicative landscape masterplan to be native and of larger stock sizes to provide more immediate screening so will reduce the visual impact of the HGVs both initially and in time.
- 14.35 The mobile homes on each of the 4 plots would initially be readily visible from the A352 and would have an impact on the rural area. This would give rise to moderate harm given the presence of the existing field boundary hedge that marks the boundary with the road but the retention of the vegetation along the roadside to the south and the provision of new tree and shrub planting within this will in time provide greater screening of the site and there would be no significant impact on the character of the existing non-designated landscape and the proposal would have no cumulative impacts with existing or planned development and makes use of the existing trees and hedgerows adjacent to the site.

- 14.36 The application is supported by a Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA). This shows 3 viewpoints from footpaths within Dorset National Landscape (VPs 3, 5 & 6) and the Council's Landscape Planning Officer agrees that from lower elevations, such as VP 3, the site is largely shielded from view by nearby development in the foreground. More elevated and distant views associated with the ridgeline (VPs 5 & 6) will not be substantially impacted and the clustering of the proposed development with wider buildings in the view, alongside the presence of some screening, means that the proposal would be quite difficult to perceive.
- 14.37 It is accepted that initially the visual impact would be marked over the existing situation on an open field, but the DC Landscape Officer advises that the proposed landscape measures, including tree and shrub planting along with scattered tree planting within the wider field, will help to mitigate impacts upon the national landscape in the longer term and suggests that conditions are used to ensure the satisfactory specification of hard landscaping (surfacing) and planting (including maintenance) (condition 12), any lighting that might be installed (condition 23) and also the materials and colours for the proposed barns and caravans (conditions 10 & 11). Subject to these conditions it is considered that the proposal would not harm the setting of the adjacent National Landscape and would not significantly harm local landscape character.
- 14.38 The proposal considers the relatively flat landform, the character of the existing landscape, the cumulative impacts with the existing residential development to the south and the existing trees and hedgerows on and adjacent to the site and is considered to be compliant with Local Plan Policy E1 and NPPF policies N2(1)(a) and N4(4).

Impact on Heritage Assets

- 14.39 The highway verge immediately adjacent to the application site's south boundary is within the Winfrith Newburgh conservation area (a designated Heritage Asset) which extends to the south to encompass the dwellings opposite and then follows Water Lane to the village. The dwelling at 103 Portway, Dorchester Rd which lies to the south of the site access is a Grade II listed building (designated Heritage Asset). This listed building is approximately 16m from the site.
- 14.40 Local plan Policy E2: Historic Environment requires that when assessing proposals that are likely to affect the significance of a designated heritage asset then the Council will take account of the heritage asset's significance, together with factors including the nature, scope, scale, appearance and character of the proposals. The proposed development involving 4 large storage buildings, 4 caravans, parked vehicles and a planted bund partially along the site boundary with the A352 highway verge would have an impact on the setting of both these designated Heritage Assets.
- 14.41 The Council's Conservation Officer has advised that although the proposal would not impact directly (physically) on the fabric of any heritage assets, it would result in limited harm to the setting of heritage assets.
- 14.42 NPPF policy H9 notes that development proposals affecting the setting of a Conservation Area should take into account the relevant significance of the element affected and its contribution to the conservation area as a whole. The special historic interest of Winfrith Newburgh Conservation Area is derived from its buildings and structures which represent most centuries between thirteenth and the present reflecting the historic life of the village. Farming historically played an important role in the village and to the north of the conservation area open space of agricultural and recreational character is significant.

- 14.43 The planted bund proposed along the southern boundary is an uncharacteristic boundary treatment within the immediate landscape context of the Conservation Area so would have an impact on its setting. However, the 70m length of this boundary treatment is limited in its context, being less than half the width of the southern boundary, and it is proposed to reduce the visual impact of the scheme and therefore the degree of harm to the setting of the heritage assets from the proposal.
- 14.44 Other measures to minimise harm to the heritage asset's significance include the proposed timber walls on the most visually prominent walls of the buildings to improve integration with the landscape and reduce the scheme's overall visibility.
- 14.45 Notwithstanding the mitigation measures, the proposed development and bund screen would result in some limited harm to the setting of designated heritage assets comprising the conservation area and listed building at 103 Portway. NPPF policy HE4(2) requires that any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (including from development within its setting) should have a clear and convincing justification. Policy HE6(4) notes that the effect on the asset and its significance should be weighed against any public benefits resulting from the proposal.
- 14.46 Having regard to local plan policy E2 and the heritage policies of the NPPF it is judged that the moderate harm to the setting of the conservation area and listed building would in this case be justified by the public benefits of the proposal, namely the provision of 4 pitches for Travelling Showpeople to meet a demonstrable need in a sustainable location which is given significant weight, and the biodiversity gain that the new planting would provide which is given moderate weight. On this basis, it is considered the proposal accords with the above NPPF policies.

14.47 Flood risk & drainage

- 14.48 PLP policy E4 requires that in areas of flood risk the Council should be satisfied that adequate measures have been taken to mitigate the risk and ensure that occupants will be safe and safe access and egress routes are provided. The accords with NPPF policies in Chapter 18.
- 14.49 The site is generally flat, with levels falling gently between 37.0m AOD in the southwest to 35.4m AOD in the northeast. A large area of the eastern part of the site is in Flood Zones (FZs) 2 & 3 and this part of the site is at risk from fluvial flooding accordingly.
- 14.50 The application is supported by a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) dated 14/7/2026 which also deals with surface water drainage on the site. This has evolved in response to discussions with the Environment Agency (EA) to address the EA's initial concerns.

Caravans

- 14.51 This part of the development is 'Highly Vulnerable' to flood risk. The FRA advises that the proposed bases for the caravans would be outside the flood zones and so no mitigation measures are required. The caravans will be static homes and have a floor level significantly elevated above surrounding ground levels. This will ensure all floor levels are in excess of 600mm above the estimated flood level of 36.5m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD). The floor levels will be a minimum of 37.1m AOD.

Storage buildings

- 14.52 The storage buildings are 'Less Vulnerable' elements of the scheme. The storage buildings are within Flood Zones 2 and 3 and so are at risk of flooding. The floor levels of these buildings will have floor levels ranging between 35.9m AOD and 36.3m AOD. Based on the indicative design flood level of 36.5m AOD.
- 14.53 The worst-case flood depth relates to the northernmost building, which could flood to a depth of 600mm during a 1% flood event.
- 14.54 The storage buildings will be constructed using flood resilient construction and materials, utilising porous floors and open mesh walls at the lower level, which will be undamaged by flood waters and allow flood waters to pass unhindered. This design satisfies the EA as they have no objection to storage buildings provided there are gaps under the walls and doors to allow flood water to pass through the buildings.
- 14.55 Services will be kept above floor level to ensure they are not affected by a flood event, and any valuable items will be stored on racking to keep it well above predicted flood levels.
- 14.56 The site owner will sign up to the Environment Agency flood warning service, which will provide alerts in advance of forecast flood events. This will provide sufficient time to remove any equipment located within the storage units which could potentially be affected by the floodwaters.
- 14.57 Vehicles and trailers stored in the buildings will be unaffected as 600mm of floodwater would only reach part way up their wheels; the risk of any material damage is considered low.
- 14.58 The proposed 1.2m high earth bund along part of the southern boundary of the site has been positioned so that it will be outside of the predicted flood zones, meaning it will have no impact on flood storage or overland flow routes.
- 14.59 The site entrance is outside of the flood zone and provides a safe and dry route from the residential static caravans on the site and there are no access and egress concerns.
- 14.60 As part of the site has development within Flood Zones 2 & 3, the applicant was asked to undertake a Sequential Test (ST) to ascertain whether there were any other suitable and reasonably available sites in the Purbeck Local Plan area that were deliverable within a reasonable timeframe.
- 14.61 The ST considered 10 sites on the open market, the emerging Dorset Local Plan sites for Showpeople; the adopted Purbeck Local Plan and the Brownfield Site Register. The ST demonstrates that there are no reasonably available sites in a suitable location for the proposed plots for Travelling Showpeople in areas with a lower risk of flooding within the Purbeck Local Plan area.
- 14.62 The ST has only been engaged because storage buildings are proposed within FZ2 and FZ3. If these buildings were omitted from the proposal and the application was only for a change of use of the land to storage associated with the traveller site use then the ST would not be applicable.
- 14.63 The EA has withdrawn its original objection following revisions to the FRA and considers the revised FRA addresses the principal concerns relating to flood levels, climate change, floodplain storage, storage building design and site layout.
- 14.64 The EA advise that the proposal would not increase flood risk elsewhere and would be acceptable in line with the NPPF subject to the inclusion of conditions to require the development to be undertaken in accordance with the Flood Risk Assessment (condition 15), require caravan bases to be 37.1m AOD (condition 16), prohibit additional building in Flood Zones 2 & 3 (condition 25), and require the buildings to only be used for storage ancillary to residential plots (condition 26).

- 14.65 The proposal is considered to comply with Policy E4 of the Purbeck Local Plan and NPPF policies F4: Assessing flood risk for decision-making; F5: The sequential test; F6: Development in areas at risk of flooding from rivers or the sea; F7: Ensuring development is safe from flooding; & F8: Sustainable drainage systems and watercourses.

Surface water drainage

- 14.66 The Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment shows the site to be at a high risk of groundwater emergence. The EA flood risk mapping shows that the site is not at risk of flooding from surface water flooding.
- 14.67 The Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) states that a site investigation has been undertaken which established groundwater levels at 1.3 - 1.4m below ground level in November 2025 and on this basis, the likelihood of groundwater posing a flood risk to the development is considered low.
- 14.68 A surface water drainage strategy has been proposed, using infiltration to dispose of all surface water runoff from the site. Soakaway testing has been undertaken to inform the strategy design, and the FRA considers that the use of permeable paving and shallow soakaways would be effective in dealing with the surface water from the development. The strategy has been prepared in accordance with the National SuDS Standards and demonstrates that the site can be effectively drained.
- 14.69 The access road and all driveways / paved areas will be constructed using permeable surfacing, with a sufficient depth of subbase storage beneath to provide attenuation whilst runoff infiltrates into the ground. Given the good rates of infiltration recorded at the site and there is sufficient depth between proposed levels and groundwater level to accommodate the pavement construction and maintain the required vertical clearance to groundwater, it is considered that infiltration is feasible for the development.
- 14.70 All runoff will infiltrate into the ground with no off-site discharge during the design rainfall event meaning no runoff leaves the site for all rainfall design events.
- 14.71 The Council's Flood Risk Management Team has no objection to the proposal and the application is considered to accord with local plan policy E5 and policy F8 of the NPPF.

Highways impact, safety, access & parking

- 14.72 A full assessment of the development proposal was carried out by the Council's Highways Officer, including a site visit to review local conditions and the following assessment is made with regard to these comments.
- 14.73 The predicted additional vehicular movements are likely to be low and infrequent for a total of 8 private vehicles on site and 4 HGVs, as well as any associated servicing and deliveries. It is to be noted that Travelling Showpeople do not require an Operator's Licence from the Traffic Commissioners of Great Britain as they are exempt.
- 14.74 The applicant states that returning to site with an HGV during the show season would unlikely be more than twice a month per HGV and in terms of network capacity this is acceptable.
- 14.75 A swept path analysis has demonstrated that a 16.5m HGV and trailer can be accommodated within the junction with the classified road and the route to and from the site

access, circulating throughout the internal layout, undertaken in a forward gear. Parking on site is adequate.

- 14.76 For consideration of the public right of way, pedestrian visibility splays will be required to be maintained in perpetuity of the development by planning condition (no. 17), which will mean requiring low-level planting not exceeding 0.6 metres above the relative level of the adjacent carriageway, either side of the site access.
- 14.77 The nearby junction with the classified road was the subject of approved works to facilitate the solar farm development and once that development is decommissioned it is unlikely that the junction would be returned to its previous layout and to alter the junction would be subject to future planning consent. However, an appropriate condition could be imposed to ensure that the junction remains in perpetuity for this development proposal as well as the visibility splays.
- 14.78 Due to the location of the site, there are limited opportunities for active travel (walking, wheeling and cycling) to a local centre, and the proposal would be vehicle reliant. Providing off site works for additional footway, cycle path facilities would not be justified, and the development can only mitigate for its own impact.
- 14.79 Conditions are advised to require the proposed parking & turning to be provided and retained (no. 14), require the visibility splay to be retained (no. 17) and require a construction method statement to be submitted and approved and the development operated in accordance with this for the construction period (no. 5).
- 14.80 With these conditions imposed, the proposal complies with local plan Policy I2: Improving accessibility and transport and there is no conflict with NPPF policy TRC6.

Impact on trees

- 14.81 There is a group of semi mature trees consisting of Oak, Ash and Elm situated behind a bund in the southwestern corner of the site. The Elm trees are in a poor condition suffering from Dutch Elm disease.
- 14.82 An Arboricultural Impact Assessment has been submitted that shows the installation of protective fencing 5m from the trees and hedgerows to be retained and a 1.2m high post and rail fence to be installed on the internal side of the proposed bund and 3m internally from the site boundary on the Northern and Eastern flanks.
- 14.83 The Council's Tree Officer has advised that if the bund and fencing was constructed prior to the other development, the bund and fencing would provide sufficient protection to the existing trees and hedgerow and a condition to require a pre commencement site meeting is advised (condition 6). This is necessary to make provision for the long term maintenance of existing and proposed trees as required by NPPF policy N3 'Trees in new development'.

Impact on biodiversity

Impact on ecology

- 14.84 An Ecological Impact Assessment has been submitted that found no protected species on the site and confirms that measures will avoid harm to biodiversity as part of a Construction

Environment Management Plan (CEMP) which can be secured by a planning condition (no. 13).

14.85 The Council's Natural Environment Team (NET) raises no objection to the proposals.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

14.86 The Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment provided confirms that the proposal will result in 12.56% BNG. The loss of modified grassland and bramble scrub will be enhanced with tree planting. This would be secured by the statutory biodiversity gain plan condition with condition 7 requiring maintenance details. With this in place, the proposal complies with Policy E10 of the adopted Local Plan and NPPF policy N2: Improving the natural environment.

Dorset Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)

- 14.87 The whole of the site is identified as a high opportunity nature area to create or enhance woodland habitat in the LNRS.
- 14.88 This status is a material consideration and helps to ensure that development supports biodiversity enhancement and aligns with Dorset's agreed priorities for nature recovery.
- 14.89 The trees at the site are to be retained and the indicative landscaping plan shows new tree planting in the form of scattered trees and trees planted on the lower slope of the proposed earth bund on part of the site boundary with the highway verge of the A352. This intention would comply with the LNRS, and the planting species and details would be agreed by condition should the application be approved (no. 12).
- 14.90 The proposal accords with local plan Policy I3: Green infrastructure, trees and hedgerows as it would protect and strengthen the existing green infrastructure network.

Loss of Grade 3 agricultural land

- 14.91 NPPF Policy N2(1)(b) states that decisions should take into account the quality of agricultural land (including that classified as best and most versatile agricultural land, and its grade), and if significant development of agricultural land is necessary, use areas of poorer quality land where possible.
- 14.92 The use of the site is currently agricultural and from the Officer site visit, this appeared to be pasture.
- 14.93 The proposal would result in the loss of land in agricultural use identified on the agricultural land classification mapping of the Natural England South West Region Map which identifies the land quality as Grade 3 which is good (3a) to moderate (3b) quality. The best and most versatile agricultural land (BMV land) is in Grades 1 to 3. The loss of good/moderate quality agricultural land weighs modestly against the proposal; the application will affect a 1.75ha area of land which is not judged to represent significant development.

Nutrient neutrality – impact on Poole Harbour

- 14.94 The application site is within the Poole Harbour catchment where consideration of the nutrients impacts of new development on the integrity of this European habitat site is required by PLP policy E7.
- 14.95 The application includes a Nutrient Neutrality Assessment and Mitigation Strategy that states the applicant will apply for temporary nutrient credits from Dorset Council and also apply for

permanent credits from Natural England and together these will provide mitigation for the phosphate generated by the proposal and achieve nutrient neutrality.

- 14.96 The Council has carried out a Habitats Regulations Appropriate Assessment for the development based on the applicant's purchase of nutrient mitigation credits and concluded that this mitigation will ensure that the effect from the additional nitrogen loading from the proposed development is addressed.
- 14.97 A pre-commencement condition would be applied to the planning permission to ensure that the correct number of credits are purchased prior to the works starting (no. 3) and on this basis the proposal complies with local plan Policy E7: Conservation of protected sites. NPPF policy N6: Areas of particular importance for biodiversity & geodiversity is complied with.

Impact on Dorset Heathlands

- 14.98 Residential development within the area between 400m and 5km from the Dorset Heaths will result in a likely significant effect on these European heaths which must be adequately mitigated in order to avoid an adverse effect upon integrity of the designation.
- 14.99 Smaller scale residential development (to include the proposal) in the area between 400m and 5km from the Dorset Heaths would have an 'in-combination' effect when considered with other development in the area. This 'in-combination' effect may be mitigated against through a contribution towards Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM) and Heathland Infrastructure Projects (HIPs).
- 14.100 The application includes a completed legal obligation to provide the required contributions and the proposal would not have an adverse effect on the Dorset Heathlands and complies with local plan Policy E7 and NPPF policy N6: Areas of particular importance for biodiversity & geodiversity.

15. Environmental implications

- 15.1 The environmental implications from the proposal would occur in both the construction and operational phases of development.
- 15.2 There would be impacts during construction from emissions and noise from construction vehicles, equipment and vehicles delivering materials and associated with contractors. This would be limited to the hours of working required by the Construction management plan conditions and limited to the relatively short construction period and are to be expected from any development.
- 15.3 The operational phase would see impacts from the movement of large vehicles carrying the rides and equipment used for the Travelling Showpeople's business together with those from deliveries and the private vehicles of the Travelling Showpeople.
- 15.4 The above environmental impacts would not be severe given the small-scale of the use.
- 15.5 The completed development would bring environmental gain by providing BNG on the site which would assist the Council's Local Nature Recovery Strategy by providing appropriate species and enhancing the biodiversity in the area.

16. Summary of issues and the planning balance

- 16.3 The 2026 GTAA shows a need for 10 Travelling Showpeople Households for the period 2026/27 to 2042/43.
- 16.4 Following the updated national planning policy on Travellers ([‘Planning policy for traveller sites’, December 2024](#)) (PPTS); the Dorset Council Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) Report of Findings April 2026; and the Council’s position on the supply of Traveller sites, it is apparent that Dorset Council is unable to demonstrate a 5 year supply of Traveller sites (including Travelling Showpeople plots).

Benefits of the proposal

- 16.7 There is an identified unmet need for 10 pitches for Travelling Showpeople in Dorset and the Emerging Local Plan is at a very early stage where it cannot be given weight. The proposal would provide 4 pitches which would assist in reducing the shortfall in provision of sites for Travelling Showpeople in Dorset. This is given significant weight in the planning balance.
- 16.8 The proposal has the potential to support the local school and services in Winfrith Newburgh but with only four pitches proposed this is given limited weight.
- 16.9 The indicative landscaping plan submitted shows that in time the site would benefit from effective screening provided by the proposed tree and shrub planting. The provision of biodiversity net gain is a benefit and the proposed 0.09ha of new woodland planting is given moderate weight in favour of the proposal.

Balancing assessment

- 16.12 When considering NPPF Policy S3: Presumption in favour of sustainable development, NPPF Policy S5: Principle of development outside settlements is engaged. This states that development which would address an evidenced unmet need for gypsy, traveller or travelling showpeople accommodation²⁶, provided it meets the criteria in policy HO12, should be approved unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects, when assessed against the national decision-making policies in the NPPF.
- 16.13 As explained earlier in the report, the proposal will result in limited harm to the setting of the Conservation Area and nearby grade II listed building as a result of the modest erosion of the rural setting and uncharacteristic planted bund along part of the southern boundary representing moderate harm. Moderate harm to the landscape from the mobile homes, storage buildings and parked vehicles has also been identified although this would reduce as the new planting becomes established. The proposal will result in harm from the loss of 1.75ha of moderate to good quality agricultural land which is given modest weight as the developed area is not significant.
- 16.15 Overall the proposal accords with policy H15 of the local plan and the harm arising is not judged to substantially outweigh the benefits of the scheme when assessed against the national decision-making policies in the NPPF. The application is therefore recommended for approval subject to conditions.

17. Recommendation

Grant, subject to the following conditions:

1. Commencement

The development to which this permission relates must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this permission.

Reason: This condition is required to be imposed by Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

2. Plans

The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

24103-2; 24103-01 Rev H; 24103-02 Rev A; 24103-04; 24103-06; P0682; LA01 Rev B; H02 Rev B; H03 Rev D; H04 Rev D

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

3. Pre-commencement Nutrient mitigation

No development shall commence until the necessary nutrient mitigation credits to mitigate the impacts of the development on the Poole Harbour Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar have been secured from an accredited nutrient provider and a copy of the Nutrient Credit Certificate demonstrating that purchase, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that sufficient mitigation is provided against any impact which may arise from the development on the Poole Harbour SPA and Ramsar.

4. Pre-commencement surface water management scheme

Prior to the commencement of development a detailed surface water management scheme for the site, based upon the hydrological and hydrogeological context of the development, and providing clarification of how drainage is to be managed during construction and a timetable for implementation of the scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme should have regard to the guidance set out in the current DEFRA national standards Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS). The surface water scheme shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details including the timetable for implementation.

Reason: To prevent the increased risk of flooding and to protect water quality and to take into account current national standards for SuDS

5. Pre-commencement Construction Method Statement

Before the development hereby approved commences a Construction Method Statement (CMS) must be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. The CMS must include:

- timings of deliveries so as to avoid, where possible, peak traffic periods
- a framework for managing abnormal loads
- location of construction site access
- contractors' arrangements (compound, storage, parking, turning, surfacing and drainage)
- wheel cleaning facilities
- vehicle cleaning facilities

The approved Construction Method Statement shall be adhered to throughout the construction period for the development.

Reason: To minimise the likely impact of construction traffic on the surrounding highway network

6. Pre-commencement tree protection

No development, including any preparatory works of ground clearance, tree works, or demolition shall commence until:

- i. A site meeting has taken place between the Local Planning Authority's (LPA's) Tree Officer, the appointed Arboricultural Consultant and Site Manager, and the outcomes of the meeting have been agreed in writing by the LPA, and
- ii. An Arboricultural Supervision and Monitoring Statement, which has been informed by the agreed outcomes of the site meeting, has been submitted to and agreed in writing by the LPA.

The development shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved Arboricultural Supervision and Monitoring Statement and the Arboricultural Impact Appraisal and Method Statement prepared by Brimble Lea AIA including drawing P0682 or any variation as may subsequently be agreed in writing by the LPA.

Reason: To ensure that the development proceeds in accordance with the approved arboricultural details and that appropriate protective measures are implemented before any works commence.

7. Pre-commencement BNG management

No development shall be commenced until a timetable for the implementation and maintenance of any proposed on-site (within the red line of the application site) non-significant biodiversity net gain (see informative below), has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The implementation timetable and maintenance details must be prepared in accordance with the approved Biodiversity Gain Plan for the site. Thereafter the on-site non-significant biodiversity net gain shall be implemented and maintained for a period of no less than 5 years following the completion of said biodiversity net gain in accordance with the approved timetable and maintenance details. If within a period of 5 years from the date of the planting of any habitat it is removed, uprooted, destroyed or dies (or becomes in the opinion of the Local Planning Authority seriously damaged or defective) the habitat shall be replaced with the same habitat as set out in the approved biodiversity gain plan in the next planting season, unless the Local Planning Authority first agrees in writing to any variation.

Reason: To ensure that non-significant on-site biodiversity net gain is provided on site as required by the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) and the National Planning Policy Framework.

8. Pre-occupation surface water management details

Prior to the occupation of the development details of maintenance and management of the surface water sustainable drainage scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme should have regard to the guidance set out in the current DEFRA national standards Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS). The scheme shall be implemented and thereafter managed and maintained in accordance with the approved

details. These should include a plan for the lifetime of the development, the arrangements for adoption by any public body or statutory undertaker, or any other arrangements to secure the operation of the surface water drainage scheme throughout its lifetime.

Reason: To ensure the future maintenance of the surface water drainage system, and to prevent the increased risk of flooding and to take into account current national standards for SuDS.

9. Pre-occupation wholesome water measures

Details of measures to limit the potential consumption of wholesome water use by persons occupying the new residential caravans to 110 litres per person per day as measured in accordance with regulation 36 of the Approved Document for Part G2 of the Building Regulations 2010 (or any equivalent regulation revoking and/or re-enacting that Statutory Instrument) shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority before the residential caravans are occupied.

The submitted details shall include a water consumption calculation for the dwelling in accordance with the Approved Documents referred to above.

The approved measures shall be implemented and maintained to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority thereafter.

Reason: To secure nutrient neutrality through effective mitigation in the interests of protected Habitat Sites

10. Pre-construction external material details

Notwithstanding the details submitted on the plans and in the supporting documents, before using any external facing and roofing materials in the construction of the development, details of their manufacturer, colour and type shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority (LPA). All works shall be undertaken strictly in accordance with the details as approved, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the LPA.

Reason: To ensure the development uses external materials appropriate for its context.

11. Pre-siting caravan cladding details

Prior to the siting of any static caravans on the land, details of their cladding shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Any caravans shall be clad as approved within 1 month of their siting on the land and retained as such.

Reason: To mitigate the visual impact of the caravans within the landscape.

12. Pre-occupation/use Landscape details

Notwithstanding the Indicative Landscape Masterplan submitted, the caravans and development hereby permitted must not be occupied/used unless and until full details of both hard and soft landscape works have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and these works have been carried out as approved. The landscaping must include porous/permeable hard surfacing and native tree & shrub planting, and tree species should not have the potential for growth above 20m in height. Thereafter, the soft landscaping shall be retained for 5 years and any plants that are lost, die or become diseased in this period shall be replaced in accordance with a scheme to be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority and then planted in accordance with the approved details within 1 month of the agreement.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and to ensure the approved landscaping scheme is implemented correctly.

13. Pre-occupation/use Ecological Impact Assessment

The development hereby permitted shall be implemented strictly in accordance with the recommendations and requirements in the ecology report titled Ecological Impact Assessment by Darwin Ecology and dated August 2026.

The development hereby approved must not be first brought into use unless and until:

- i) the recommendations detailed in sections 6. & 7. of the approved ecology report have been completed in full, in accordance with any specified timetable, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority (LPA), and
- ii) written evidence demonstrating compliance has been submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA.

The development shall subsequently be implemented entirely in accordance with the approved ecology report and thereafter the approved mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures must be permanently maintained and retained in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To mitigate and compensate for impacts on ecological receptors, and to provide biodiversity gains.

14. Pre-occupation/use turning and parking construction

Before the development hereby approved is occupied or utilised the turning/manoeuvring and parking shown on Drawing Number 24103-01 Rev H must have been constructed. Thereafter, these areas, must be permanently maintained, kept free from obstruction and available for the purposes specified.

Reason: To ensure the proper and appropriate development of the site and to ensure that highway safety is not adversely impacted upon.

15. Pre-use flood mitigation compliance

Prior to first use of the storage buildings the development shall be carried out in accordance Flood Risk Assessment and Surface Water Drainage Strategy (Ref. 25057-SVC-R-001 Revision C dated July 2026), and the following mitigation measures it details:

- Floor levels of the storage units shall not exceed those specified within the approved FRA and shown on drawing 25057-SVC-100 P03.
- Finished floor levels of the storage buildings shall not exceed existing ground levels;
- Lower wall sections shall remain open to allow the free passage of floodwater in the storage buildings;
- No flood proofing, sealing measures or other barriers shall be installed which would impede flood flows; and
- No raising of ground levels shall take place beneath or around the storage buildings.

The approved mitigation measures shall thereafter be retained and maintained for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To ensure the development remains safe for its lifetime and does not increase flood risk elsewhere & to maintain floodplain storage and flood flow routes and prevent increases in flood risk elsewhere.

16. Caravan levels

No caravan with a floor level lower than 37.1mAOD in accordance with Drawing 25057-SVC-100 P03 shall be occupied on site.

Reason: To reduce flood risk to future occupants over the lifetime of the development.

17. Maintain visibility splays

The vehicular access to the site between The Drove and the A352 Dorchester Road must be retained in accordance with the details set out on the following drawings and the visibility splays shall be kept clear to a level not exceeding 0.6 metres above the relative level of the adjacent carriageway and kept free from all obstructions;

Transport Planning Associates Job No. 2302-080. Drawing Nos. H01 Rev D; H02 Rev B & LA01 Rev B

Reason: To ensure that a vehicle can see or be seen when exiting the access.

18. Limitation on occupation/use of site

The site shall not be occupied or used by any persons other than by travelling show people, as defined in Annex B of the National Planning Policy Framework August 2026 (or its equivalent in replacement national policy).

Reason: In recognition of the special needs of such persons as travelling show people and to enable the Local Planning Authority to retain control over the use of the site in the interests of the character and amenity of the area.

19. Limitation on number of plots

No more than 4 residential Travelling Showpeople plots and 4 associated storage plots shall be formed on the site and there shall be no subdivision of the plots, nor siting of any caravan beyond the approved residential hardstanding areas.

Reason: To avoid overcrowding, to safeguard the character and appearance of the area and to prevent flood risk to vulnerable development.

20. Limitation on external storage

All rides, equipment and paraphernalia associated with the business of the Travelling Showpeople shall be stored in the storage buildings. There shall be no external storage of any items on the site. Any business items shall be put in the storage buildings by the end of the day following the day they were brought back to the site.

Reason: To minimise the visual impact of the commercial use and reduce impact on flood flows across the site

21. Limitation on servicing/maintenance work

All servicing/maintenance/work to the equipment and machinery used by the Travelling Showpeople shall only be undertaken within the storage buildings and there shall be no outside servicing/maintenance/work to the equipment and machinery.

Reason: To protect the amenity of the occupants of the nearby dwellings and in the interests of visual amenity.

22. Sound testing and use limitation

No music sound systems or public address systems shall be tested or used, outside the following times:

0800-1800 hours Monday to Friday

0800-1300 hours on Saturday

and not at any time on Sundays and public holidays.

Reason: In the interests of the living conditions of the nearby residential properties.

23. External lighting

No external lighting shall be installed at the site without details first having been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The lighting shall be motion sensitive and shall be installed in accordance with the approved details and maintained as such thereafter.

Reason: To protect the amenities of the occupants of the adjacent dwellings and setting of the National Landscape, conservation area and listed building at 103 Portway, Dorchester Rd.

24. Removal of permitted development rights for enclosure >1.2m

Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any Order revoking and re-enacting that Order) (with or without modification), no fencing/walls or other means of enclosure over 1.2m in height above ground level shall be erected under Class A, Part 2 of Schedule 2 of the 2015 Order.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity.

25. Removal of permitted development rights for solid enclosure

Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any Order revoking and re-enacting that Order) (with or without modification), no solid fencing/walls or other means of enclosure shall be erected within Flood Zones 2 & 3 under Class A, Part 2 of Schedule 2 of the 2015 Order.

Reason: To allow flood flows across the site.

26. Remove PD rights for change of use of storage sheds

Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended), or any Order revoking and reenacting that Order, the storage buildings shall be used solely for storage purposes ancillary to the travelling showpeople residential plots hereby approved and for no other purpose.

Reason: To control flood risk and visual impacts.

Informative Notes

1. Biodiversity Net Gain

The effect of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that planning permission granted for the development of land in England is deemed to have been

granted subject to the condition “(the biodiversity gain condition”) that development may not begin unless:

- (a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and
- (b) the planning authority has approved the plan.

The planning authority, for the purposes of determining whether to approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan if one is required in respect of this permission would be Dorset Council.

There are statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not always apply.

Based on the information available this permission is considered to be one which will require the approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development is begun because none of the statutory exemptions or transitional arrangements listed below are considered to apply.

Read more about Biodiversity Net Gain and Biodiversity Gain Plans at <https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/w/biodiversity-net-gain> and <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/submit-a-biodiversity-gain-plan>

2. Dorset Council Waste Services (residential)

The applicant is advised that, notwithstanding this consent, before commencement of any works Dorset Council Waste Services should be consulted to confirm and agree that the proposed recycling and waste collection facilities accord with the “guidance notes for residential developments” document (<https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/bins-recycling-and-litter/documents/guidance-for-developers-a4-bookletmay-2020.pdf>). Dorset Council Waste Services can be contacted by telephone at 01305 225474 or by email at bincharges@dorsetcouncil.gov.

3. Electric vehicle charging points

The applicant is advised that prior to the development being brought into use, it must comply with the requirements of Building Regulations Approved Document S: Infrastructure for the charging of electric vehicles.

4. Fire safety

To fight fires effectively the Fire and Rescue Service needs to be able to manoeuvre its equipment and appliances to suitable positions adjacent to any premises. Therefore, the applicant is advised that they should consult with Building Control and Dorset Fire and Rescue Service to ensure that Fire Safety - Approved Document B Volume 1b Dwelling houses B5 of The Building Regulations 2006 can be fully complied with.

5. Planning permission

The site owner is advised that planning permission will be required for any additional hardsurfacing or structures on the site.

6. National Planning Policy Framework Statement

In accordance with policy DM3 of the NPPF the council, as local planning authority, takes a positive approach to development proposals and is focused on providing sustainable development.

The council works with applicants/agents in a positive and proactive manner by:

- offering a pre-application advice service, and
- as appropriate updating applicants/agents of any issues that may arise in the processing of their application and where possible suggesting solutions.

In this case:

- The applicant/agent was updated of any issues and provided with the opportunity to address issues identified by the case officer.
- The applicant was provided with pre-application advice.

6. Legal agreement

This permission is subject to an agreement made pursuant to Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 dated 22/9/2026 relating to the provision of mitigation in relation to the Dorset Heathlands

7. Flood Warning Service

The applicant is advised to register with the Environment Agency's Flood Warning Service and ensure future site occupiers are made aware of the residual flood risks identified within the FRA.

8. Flood resistance and resilience measures

The Environment Agency strongly recommend the use of flood resistance and resilience measures. Physical barriers, raised electrical fittings and special construction materials are just some of the ways you can help reduce flood damage.

To find out which measures will be effective for this development, please contact your building control department. If you'd like to find out more about reducing flood damage, visit the Flood Risk and Coastal Change pages of the planning practice guidance.

Further guidance on flood resistance and resilience measures can also be found in: Government guidance on flood resilient construction

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/flood-resilient-construction-of-newbuildings>

CIRIA Code of Practice for property flood resilience

https://www.ciria.org/CIRIA/Resources/Free_publications/CoP_for_PFR_resource.aspx

British Standard 85500 – Flood resistant and resilient construction

<https://shop.bsigroup.com/ProductDetail/?pid=000000000030299686>

9. Onsite BNG non significant.

It is likely that if the proposed BNG is on-site and it does not meet one or more of the criteria below that it will not be considered to be significant. However, what counts as a significant enhancement will vary depending on the scale of development and existing habitat, but would normally be:

- habitats of medium or higher distinctiveness in the biodiversity metric (both proposed habitats and retained habitats)
- habitats of low distinctiveness which create a large number of biodiversity units relative to the biodiversity value of the site before development - the combined number of units delivered is equal to or greater than 0.5; and/or the combined number of low distinctiveness units is equivalent to 10% or more of the baseline biodiversity unit value of the site (excluding proposed gardens)
- habitat creation or enhancement where distinctiveness is increased relative to the distinctiveness of the habitat before development - higher distinctiveness of any baseline habitat type e.g. low to medium
- enhancements to habitat condition, for example from poor or moderate to good

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Application Number:	P/FUL/2026/03108
Webpage:	https://planning.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/
Site address:	Poole House Jennys Lane Lytchett Matravers BH16 6BP
Proposal:	Demolition of pool house and store, removal of tennis court and erection of three dwellings with associated infrastructure
Applicant name:	Mr & Mrs Holden
Case Officer:	Emily Elgie
Ward Member(s):	Cllr Brenton, Cllr Robinson and Cllr Starr

1. Reason application is going to committee:

At the request of the Chair of the Planning Committee.

2. Summary of recommendation:

Grant subject to conditions set out below in Section 17 of the report.

3. Key planning issues

Issue	Conclusion
Principle of development	The site lies outside the Lytchett Matravers settlement boundary so does not accord with Policy V1 of the Local Plan however in this case the policy is materially inconsistent with the NPPF and therefore very little weight can be attributed to the conflict. Policy S5 of the NPPF relates to the principle outside of settlements; where Green Belt policies are satisfied then the application should be approved unless the benefits outweigh the harm.
Impact on the Green Belt	The site meets the definition of previously developed land and therefore the proposal can be considered under Paragraph (1)(e) of Policy GB7 of the NPPF allowing its redevelopment. Due to the location, context, and topography of the application site, the visual impact of the proposal on the openness of the Green Belt, although greater than the existing, will remain limited and therefore it is not considered to result

Issue	Conclusion
	in 'substantial harm' to the Green Belt thereby complying with Policy GB7.
Impact on highway safety	Turning and parking arrangements are acceptable. The visibility splays are considered to be acceptable for the speeds recorded in the traffic survey.
Impact on the character of the area	Although plots are smaller than nearby dwellings, they are still generous. There would be limited harm to the character of the area.
Affordable housing	No contribution can be sought because Lytchett Matravers parish does not meet the NPPF definition of a designated rural area.
Impact on neighbour amenity	The development is not considered to result in harm to neighbouring amenity from overshadowing, overlooking, being overbearing, noise and disturbance, or light pollution.
Impact on biodiversity	The Appropriate Assessment demonstrates that there would be no unmitigated harm generated to interests of nature importance. The Ecological Impact Assessment identified no protected species on the site and the biodiversity enhancements can be secured by condition.
Foul and surface water	The site is within Flood Zone 1 and the drainage strategy complies with Policy E5 of the Local Plan.

4. Description of site

- 4.1 The site lies north-east of Jennys Lane, outside the settlement boundary for Lytchett Matravers and within the Green Belt. The site is on a gentle hillside. It lies north of Hill House and Buttery Dor, residential dwellings which share the site access, and there is built form to the east (Pigeon Pottle) and northeast (Tithe Barn), but open fields are on lower land to the west. Footpath SE17/13 lies approximately 90m to the west.
- 4.2 Development along Jennys Lane is low density in character with spacious plots. Mature landscaping, hedges, and verges also contribute to a pleasant semi-rural character.

Currently the site comprises residential garden with a single storey pool house and a tennis court.

5. Description of development

It is proposed to erect three, two-storey detached dwellings on the site, each with parking areas and a detached outbuilding.

6. Background and relevant planning history

P/FUL/2025/03026 - Decision: REF - Decision Date: 15/04/2026

Demolish existing building and store, remove tennis court and erect 3no dwellings with associated parking and landscaping

The application was refused for the following reasons:

- 1. The increased use of the existing access onto the public highway would, by virtue of the limited visibility from and of vehicles using the access, be likely to prejudice the free flow of traffic and conditions of general safety onto Jennys Lane and cause additional danger to road users.*
- 2. In the absence of a legally binding mechanism to secure an appropriate contribution towards the provision of off-site affordable housing, the development is contrary to policy H11 of the Purbeck Local Plan 2018-2034 and paragraph 64 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024).*

P/FUL/2022/06986 - Decision: GRA - Decision Date: 14/06/2023

Sever plot, extend existing Pool House to form detached dwelling

7. List of constraints

Poole Harbour Nutrient Catchment Area; Poole Harbour

Wessex Water Treatment Works Catchment

Wessex Water Risk of foul sewer inundation 2023 High Risk of Foul Sewer Inundation

Poole Harbour Recreation Zone

Dorset Heathlands - 5km Heathland Buffer

Green Belt

Radon: Class: 1.0 (low risk, protective measures not required)

8. Consultations

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

Consultees

- **Natural England**

Appropriate Assessment acceptable to mitigate harms

- **Wessex Water**

No comments received

- **Woodland Trust**

No comments received

- **Dorset Wildlife Trust**

No comments received

- **Dorset Council Natural Environment Team (NET)**

NET certificate of approval issued – needs conditioning

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is considered significant due to enhancement of baseline habitat '*native hedgerow with trees*' which is a habitat of medium distinctiveness.

- **Highways**

No objection subject to conditions.

Proposed turning and parking arrangements within the site are acceptable.

Jennys Lane is unclassified with no footways adjacent and a speed limit of 60mph but reduced visibility splays are acceptable due to speed survey and can be achieved.

- **Dorset Waste Team**

The team will not enter onto the driveway/property to collect waste/recycling; all bins and containers will have to be presented at the public highway on Jennys Lane.

- **Building Control**

Compliance with the Building Regulations 1984 and associated legislation. With particular regard to Requirement B5: Access and facilities for the fire service. And B1 Section 2: Means of escape – dwellinghouses

- **Ward Member – Cllr Brenton**

Design and mass not in keeping with village style or neighbouring properties. Would be obtrusive in landscape views to south and west of site. Undeveloped valley is a distinct

separator between Lytchett Matravers and Morden. Unnatural appearance of the development not mitigated by sedum roof.

- **Lytchett Matravers Parish Council (PC)**

No objection

Representations received

Total - objections	Total - No objections	Total - comments
7	0	0

Summary of comments of objections:

- Design inappropriate – harm to the character of the countryside
- Intensification – too many dwellings on the site
- In the Green Belt – inappropriate, no very special circumstances
- Would set a precedent for development outside of Lytchett Matravers
- Highway safety
- Impact on neighbouring amenity – overlooking, noise, and light pollution
- Not Grey Belt or Brownfield land, only a small part is previously developed land
- Fails to meet reasons on P/FUL/2025/03108
- Urbanisation of rural area
- Impact on Lytchett Matravers from dwellings
- Legal agreement may not be enforceable

9. Duties

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. Relevant policies

Development plan

In this case the development plan comprises the Purbeck Local Plan (2024) and the Lytchett Matravers Neighbourhood Plan (2017):

Local Plan Adopted Purbeck Local Plan 2024:

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

- V1: Spatial strategy for sustainable communities
- V2: Green belt
- E1: Landscape
- E3: Renewable energy
- E4: Assessing flood risk
- E5: Sustainable drainage systems (SuDs)
- E7: Conservation of protected sites
- E8: Dorset heathlands
- E9: Poole Harbour
- E10: Biodiversity and geodiversity
- E12: Design
- H2: The housing land supply
- I2: Improving accessibility and transport
- I3: Green infrastructure, trees, and hedgerows

Made Neighbourhood Plans

Lytchett Matravers Neighbourhood Plan to 2031 (made June 2017)

Policy 1

Policy 2

Material considerations

Emerging local plans:

Policy DM4: Emerging development plan proposals of the NPPF provides that local planning authorities may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to:

- the stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced its preparation, the greater the weight that may be given);
- the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant plan policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and
- the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the NPPF (the closer the policies in the emerging plan are to the policies of the NPPF, the greater the weight that may be given).

The Dorset Council Local Plan

The emerging Dorset Local Plan is being prepared in accordance with plan-making processes set out in the Levelling Up and Regenerating Act 2023 and Local Planning Regulations (2026). As the plan is still at an early stage of the plan making process, limited weight can be attached to it when taking decisions on planning applications. Decisions on planning applications should continue to be assessed against the policies in adopted development plans, national planning policy and any other relevant material considerations.

Local Nature Recovery Strategy

The Dorset Local Nature Recovery Strategy identifies local priorities for nature recovery and maps areas where action would be most beneficial. In planning decisions it is a material consideration, helping to ensure that development supports biodiversity enhancement and aligns with Dorset's agreed priorities for nature recovery.

National Planning Policy Framework (17 August 2026)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), published on 17 August 2026, sets out the Government's national planning policies for both plan-making and decision-making in England.

When determining development proposals decision-makers are required to take a positive and proactive approach and to seek to approve sustainable development where possible.

The NPPF introduces a permanent presumption in favour of sustainable development, through Policies S3 to S5 (which replaces the former "tilted balance" contained in paragraph 11 of the previous NPPF) and sets out the principles for development within and outside settlements. The Framework also confirms that planning applications should be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Other relevant NPPF chapters and policies include:

- Chapter 3: Decision making policies. Local planning authorities should approach decision making positively, proactively and proportionately. They should work with applicants through pre-application engagement and consultations and aim to resolve concerns through planning conditions or obligations where possible to avoid delay and to enable an approval rather than a refusal. Applications that accord with the development plan, the NPPF and other material considerations should not be refused where they can clearly be approved.
 - DM3 Determining development proposals
 - DM4 Emerging development plan proposals
 - DM6 Use of planning conditions and obligations
 - DM7 Relationship with other regulatory regimes
- Chapter 4: Achieving Sustainable Development. The objective of the policies in this chapter is to meet development needs through sustainable patterns of development, including by maximising the potential for growth on suitable land within settlements, enabling development which will support the rural economy, rural communities and the provision of infrastructure, and limiting development away from settlements to help safeguard the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.
 - S3 Presumption in favour of sustainable development
 - S5 Principle of development outside settlements
 - S6 Neighbourhood plans and the presumption
- Chapter 5: Meeting the challenges of climate change. Planning decisions should support climate change mitigation and adaptation, including reducing greenhouse gas emissions,

increasing resilience to climate impacts and directing development away from areas at unacceptable risk from flooding.

- CC2 Mitigation of climate change
- CC3 Adaptation to climate change
- Chapter 6: Delivering a sufficient supply of homes. Planning decisions should give substantial weight to providing homes which will contribute towards meeting the evidenced accommodation needs of the community.
 - HO7 Meeting the need for homes
 - HO8 Providing affordable homes
 - HO11 Isolated homes in the countryside
- Chapter 12: Making effective use of land. Planning decisions should give substantial weight to proposals that make more effective use of land and buildings, while maintaining good design, living conditions and local character. This includes redevelopment of previously developed, vacant, underused, contaminated or derelict sites, reuse of existing buildings, creation of additional homes through sensitive infill, upward extensions and development within existing plots. Higher-density development is also promoted within settlements in well-connected locations near public transport. Development that fails to make efficient use of land in accordance with the policy should be refused.
 - L2 Making effective use of land
 - L3 Achieving appropriate densities
- Chapter 13: Protecting Green Belt land. The objective of Green Belt policy, as set out in this chapter, is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. The government attaches great importance to Green Belts, the essential features of which are their openness and permanence.
 - GB6 Control of development in the Green Belt
 - GB7 Development which is not inappropriate in the Green Belt
 - GB8 The Golden Rules
- Chapter 14: Achieving well-designed places. Development proposals should respond to their context so that they integrate with and enhance their surroundings, and should reflect relevant design principles. Substantial weight should be given to compliance with relevant development plan policies when assessing the design quality of proposals.
 - DP3 Key principles for well-designed places
 - DP4 The design process
- Chapter 15: Promoting sustainable transport. The objective of the policies in this chapter is to ensure that transport considerations are taken fully into account in the preparation of development plans and the evolution and assessment of development proposals; using a vision-led approach to embed the role that transport infrastructure and choices can play in creating well-designed, sustainable, inclusive and popular places.
 - TR3 Locating development in sustainable locations
 - TR4 Street design, access and parking
 - TR5 Roadside facilities
 - TR6 Assessing transport impacts

- Chapter 18: Managing flood risk and coastal change. Development proposals should minimise risks to development arising from all sources of flooding and coastal change, taking into account the impacts of climate change, by steering development away from areas of risk, ensuring that development will be safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere, and incorporating sustainable drainage systems where appropriate.
- Chapter 19: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment: Development should conserve and enhance the natural environment by protecting important landscapes, habitats, biodiversity and trees, while maximising opportunities for nature recovery, green infrastructure and biodiversity net gain. Proposals should avoid significant environmental harm, prioritise land of lower environmental value where possible, and be sensitively designed in protected landscapes and coastal areas. Development causing unacceptable impacts on designated sites, irreplaceable habitats or biodiversity that cannot be adequately avoided, mitigated or compensated for should be refused.
 - Improving the natural environment biodiversity is to be protected and encourage net gains for biodiversity.
 - N2 Improving the natural environment
 - N6 Areas of particular importance for biodiversity and geodiversity

Other material considerations

National Planning Practice Guidance

Dorset Heathlands Planning Framework 2020-2025 Supplementary Planning Document

Dorset Heathlands Interim Air Quality Strategy 2020-2025

Dorset Council Interim Guidance and Position Statement Appendix B: Adopted Local Plan policies and objectives relating to climate change, renewable energy, and sustainable design and construction. December 2023.

Purbeck District Design Guide SPD

Managing and using traditional building details in Purbeck

Poole Harbour Recreation 2019-2024 SPD

Housing land supply

Dorset Council is unable to demonstrate a 5-year housing supply. The position set out in the latest Housing Land Supply Report is 2.53 years on 1st April 2025. In addition, the adopted local plans are not designed to deliver the levels of housing needed under the Government's revised standard method. Recent calculations suggest a need of c. 3,246 new homes per year. Under the new NPPF, the consequence is that Policy S5(1)(j) applies. This supports granting permission for development outside of settlements that aims to address unmet need. It states that development needs to be "physically well-related to an existing settlement ... and be of a scale which can be accommodated taking into account the existing and proposed availability of infrastructure." However, Policy S5 suggests that permission should not be given when:

- “the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects, when assessed against the national decision-making policies in the [NPPF]”; or
- “the nature of the development would make this inappropriate”

Policy S6 ‘Neighbourhood plans and the presumption’ is very similar to paragraph 14 in the previous NPPF. For proposals involving housing, it affords greater weight to neighbourhood plan policies, where the neighbourhood plan is less than 5 years old, and the plan contains allocations to meet its identified housing requirement.

Housing Delivery Test (HDT)

The latest HDT results (2025 measurement) show that insufficient homes have been delivered within the local plan area (88%) and that a local action plan is required.

The consequences of the HDT result are set out in Annex D of the NPPF.

11. 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.

12. Public Sector Equalities Duty

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.

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.

Future occupants of the three dwellings will be reliant upon a highway without pedestrian refuge for the first 200m to access public transport and services within the village of Lytchett Matravers. The nearest bus stop is on Lime Kiln Way approximately 530m away. This would disadvantage those who because of age or disability are unable to drive.

There is also the potential for greater disturbance during the construction phase for older people and those with a disability who are housebound.

13. Public Benefits

The proposals would provide a number of financial and non-financial benefits, including public benefits. These are summarised in the table below:

What	Amount / value
Material considerations	
None	
Non material considerations	
CIL Contribution	Unknown

14. Planning Assessment

Principle of Development - Development Plan

- 14.1 The application site lies outside of the settlement boundary for Lytchett Matravers and is therefore located within the countryside for the purposes of the development plan. The spatial strategy in Policy V1 of the Local Plan directs housing development towards allocated sites, existing settlement boundaries and, in limited circumstances, other policy-compliant locations identified within the Plan.
- 14.2 Policy H1 and H2 of the Local Plan set out the Council's housing strategy across the district and identify how housing needs will be met through a combination of allocated sites within Lytchett Matravers, windfall development and other policy-complaint sites. The application site is not allocated for development so represents a windfall site.
- 14.3 Policy H8 of the Local Plan permits limited housing growth on small sites adjoining existing settlement boundaries, however the supporting text makes clear that the policy does not apply to sites within the Green Belt. Accordingly, the proposal cannot rely on Policy H8 as a policy basis for residential development. The Local Plan is silent on development proposals within the Green Belt.
- 14.4 SVI8 in appendix 2 to the Lytchett Matravers Neighbourhood Plan sets out that additional housing development will be resisted by the parish council where it is over that already identified and accepted in the absence of significant improvements to village infrastructure and amenities and where the site is more distant than a 10 minute (800m) easy walking radius of village centre facilities.
- 4.5 The site itself lies outside the 800m radius with the tip of the access just skirting the edge. Planning permission 3/21/2021 for housing at Whytewood Park on the opposite side of Jennys Lane has been identified by the applicant's agent as demonstrating that Jennys Lane is an acceptable route for accessing the village. It is noted that unlike the application site, Whytewood Park lies within the settlement boundary and 800m radius.

The neighbourhood plan in Appendix 2 SVI 8 expresses a desire to resist residential development outside this radius unless significant improvements to village infrastructure and amenities are also proposed, which is not the case here. However, the appendices do not form part of the Neighbourhood Plan and can therefore cannot be given significant weight.

- 14.6 The proposal would introduce additional housing on an unallocated site outside the settlement boundary and within the Green Belt contrary to the aims of policy V1 of the adopted Local Plan which is afforded significant weight. In accordance with section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, planning permission should therefore refused unless material considerations indicate that a decision contrary to the development plan is justified.

Principle of Development - NPPF

- 14.7 The NPPF is a material consideration of critical importance in the determination of this application. Policy S3 of the NPPF establishes a permanent presumption in favour of sustainable development. For proposals outside of settlements, this would ordinarily include consideration of Policy S5 which provides support for such development in certain specified circumstances, but that policy expressly confirms that proposals in the Green Belt must be determined in accordance with the relevant Green Belt policies in the framework.
- 14.8 Policy S5 goes on to state that where those policies determine the development is not in an inappropriate location then the proposal should be approved unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects, when assessed against the national decision-making policies in the NPPF, and the application of paragraph 2 of Policy S5.
- 14.9 The NPPF is afforded significant weight.

Principle of Development - Application of Green Belt Policies in the NPPF

- 14.10 Policy GB6 of the NPPF sets out that development in the Green Belt is inappropriate and is therefore, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should only be approved in very special circumstances unless the development falls into one of the categories identified in Policy GB7.
- 14.11 Paragraph (1)(c) of Policy GB7 allows limited infilling in villages within the Green Belt. As has already been noted, the site lies outside of the settlement boundary for Lytchett Matravers. Although the village boundary is not necessarily determinative, the site lies in a semi-rural area. As previously described in appeal 3245075 regarding another development proposal at Hill House, Jennys Lane in 2020 *'From the junction of the High Street and Jenny's Lane there is a distinct change of character, from being within the village to that of adjacent countryside. Although there are a number of residential properties along Jennys Lane, this takes the form of a loose ribbon of development'*. This description remains applicable and although in relative proximity to the settlement, the

site is not considered to be within the village, therefore the development cannot be considered infill development. The proposal cannot therefore rely upon Policy GB7(1)(c).

- 14.12 Policy GB7(1)(e) allows the *redevelopment of previously developed land (including a material change of use to residential or mixed use including residential) which would not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt.*
- 14.13 It is accepted that the site meets the definition of previously developed land as set out in the NPPF since it hosts a pool building and tennis court within an established residential curtilage and the site lies outside a built-up area. It therefore turns to assess whether substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt would arise from the development.
- 14.14 Currently the site comprises residential garden with a single storey pool house and a tennis court. The proposal seeks to erect three, two-storey detached dwellings on the site, each with parking areas and a detached outbuilding.
- 14.15 It is clear that the extent of built form and its height will increase compared to the existing development on the site, which will have a spatial and visual impact on the openness of the Green Belt. The question is whether this will cause 'substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt'. There is no definition of substantial harm provided by the NPPF.
- 14.16 The site is on a gentle hillside. It lies north of existing buildings and there is built form to the east (Pigeon Pottle) and northeast (Tithe Barn), but open fields are on lower land to the west. Footpath SE17/13 lies approximately 90m to the west but a steep hedge bank limits visibility from this path. The hedge bank along Peatons Lane also limits views of the application site except through the field gate where the built form will be viewed in the context of Hill House and development beyond.
- 14.17 The submitted building heights plan shows that the proposed dwellings would be sited at a lower height than the neighbouring Hill House by approximately 2.4m.
- 14.18 Due to the location, context, and topography of the application site, the visual impact of the proposal on the openness of the Green Belt, although greater than the existing, is judged to remain limited.
- 14.19 The proposal will impact spatial openness, but the double pitched roof form mitigates the bulk and associated impact of the two-storey development. On balance, it is judged that overall the proposal will not result in substantial harm to Green Belt openness. The proposal therefore gains support from policy GB7(1)(e) and would not be considered inappropriate in the Green Belt. Nevertheless, any permission should have permitted development rights for extensions and further outbuildings removed so that the impact of additional development can be carefully considered in the interests of Green Belt openness.
- 14.20 GB7(1)(g) which allows development in the Green Belt where all of the following apply:
- i. The development would utilise grey belt land and would not fundamentally undermine the purposes (taken together) of the remaining Green Belt across the area of the plan*
 - ii. There is an evidenced need for the type of development proposed*
 - ii. The development would be in a sustainable location, with particular reference to policy TR3 of this Framework; and*

iv. in the case of major development...(not relevant)

- 14.21 In this case the development site meets the definition of grey belt as previously developed land (comprising a building, tennis court and residential garden land outside a built up area). The proposed development is not considered to fundamentally undermine the purposes of the Green Belt across the Purbeck Local plan area and therefore satisfy criterion (i) of GB7. In addition, the Council is presently unable to demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites and can demonstrate only 2.53 years' housing land supply. The proposal would therefore contribute towards addressing an identified and significant shortfall in housing delivery, satisfying criterion (ii) of GB7.
- 14.22 Policy TR3 seeks to locate development in sustainable locations and requires development proposals to reflect the principles set out in the policy:
- a. Development proposals which could generate a significant amount of movement, in the context of the area within which they would be situated, should be in locations that are sustainable (or which can be made so...*
 - b. Opportunities should be taken to utilise existing or proposed transport infrastructure in optimising the amount of density of development which can be accommodated in different locations, especially where this can support more walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport use*
 - c. any significant adverse impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, should be mitigated to an acceptable degree using a vision-led approach;*
 - d. The environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure should be identified, assessed and taken into account- including taking opportunities to avoid or mitigate any adverse environmental effects, and to secure net environmental gains such as reductions in air pollution;*
 - e. In rural areas, opportunities to improve walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport and enhance the connectivity of an area should be taken where they exist and can be supported by the development proposal.*
- 14.23 The proposed development of three dwellings is not anticipated to generate a significant amount of movement, even accounting for the rural nature of Jennys Lane and that the development will utilise an existing vehicular access. Highways colleagues have, for the reasons set out in the Highways section of this report, concluded that the development will not have an unacceptable impact on highway safety or the operation of the network. Significant weight is attached to the findings of the Planning Inspector in the June 2020 appeal relating to Hill House to the south of the development site. The Inspector found that the location was unsustainable due to the nature of the lane which is unlit with no separate footway disincentivising journeys on foot, and the lack of evidence of regular bus services such that occupiers would be likely to rely on private vehicle which is the least sustainable mode of transport.
- 14.24 Whilst, planning permission 6/2021/0352 has subsequently been granted for the erection of 3 dwellings to the south of Jenny's Lane, officers consider that site is materially distinguishable. It lies within the settlement boundary identified by the Local Plan, within the 800m easy walking radius from village centre facilities identified by neighbourhood plan, notwithstanding its dependency upon Jenny's Lane for access in a similar manner

to the current proposal. Although both developments share access arrangements via Jenny's Lane, the grant of permission on that site does not establish a precedent for residential development beyond the settlement boundary, with application judged on its own merits.

- 14.24 There has been no material change in the physical characteristics of Jenny's lane, the availability of pedestrian infrastructure or the provision of sustainable transport options since the 2020 appeal decision. The site dwellings remain approximately 1km from the shops at the centre of Lytchett Matravers and future occupiers would be likely to rely predominantly on private vehicle travel. As such, officers do not consider that the site can be regarded as a sustainable location for residential growth when assessed against the objectives of Policy TR3 and the sustainable transport objectives of the NPPF. Policy exception GB7(1)(g) therefore cannot be relied upon.
- 14.25 Nevertheless, the proposed development has been identified as benefiting from the grey belt exception listed under GB7(1)(e) so it is not inappropriate development and there is no need to consider whether very special circumstances exist as outlined in paragraph 1 of policy GB6. Rather, the proposal falls to be determined in accordance with the balance set out in national policy.
- 14.26 The NPPF provides that where development would not be inappropriate in the Green Belt through the application of policy GB7, policies should be approved unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects when assessed against the national decision-making policies in the NPPF.

Other Material Considerations

- 14.27 Since the Purbeck Local Plan and Lytchett Matravers Neighbourhood Plan were prepared and made in 2024 and 2017 respectively, there have been significant changes to national policy and the methodology used to calculate housing requirements. In particular, the revision to the Standard Method published in December 2024 resulted in a substantial increase in Dorset's assessed housing requirement of approximately 80%. Whilst this does not diminish the primacy of the Development Plan in decision-making, it is a material consideration that demonstrates that housing need now identified across Dorset is materially greater than that which informed both the Purbeck Local Plan and the Lytchett Matravers Neighbourhood Plan.
- 14.28 The proposal would contribute towards addressing this housing shortfall through the delivery of 3 dwellings. Whilst modest in scale, the proposal would assist in increasing housing supply at a time when the Council faces a substantial deficit in the deliverable housing land supply. Significant weight is therefore attached to the contribution that the proposal would make towards meeting identified housing needs.

Principle of Development – Conclusions

- 14.29 The proposal would introduce 3 dwellings on an unallocated site outside the settlement boundary and within the Green Belt so is contrary to the aims of policies V1 and H8 of the Purbeck Local plan. The site also lies beyond the preferred area for housing growth identified by the Lytchett Matravers Neighbourhood Plan. In accordance with section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, this conflict with the Development Plan attracts significant weight against the proposal.

- 14.30 However, national planning policy has undergone significant change since the adoption of the development plan. The proposal is considered to accord with Policy GB7(1)(e) of the NPPF as the redevelopment of previously developed land that would not result in substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt. The development is not therefore considered inappropriate development in Green Belt terms and there is no requirement to demonstrate very special circumstances.
- 14.31 Notwithstanding this conclusion, Policy S5 of the NPPF confirms that where development within the Green Belt is found not to be inappropriate through the application of the relevant Green Belt policies, planning permission should be granted unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed when assessed against the national decision-making policies of the Framework when taken as a whole. In this case, the proposal benefits from the exception contained within Policy GB7(1)(e).
- 14.32 The unsustainable location of the development site attracts moderate weight against the proposal and contributes to the identified conflict with the development plan. However, that harm must be balanced against the significant weight that is afforded to the contribution that the development would make towards housing delivery at a time of significant shortfall. Further weight is attached to the redevelopment of previously developed land within the Grey Belt.
- 14.33 On balance, officers consider that the adverse impacts arising from the conflict with the development strategy and the relatively unsustainable location of the site are not sufficient to substantially outweigh the benefits of the proposal when assessed against the policies of the NPPF taken as a whole. The principle of residential development is therefore considered acceptable, subject to the consideration of the detailed matters addressed in the following section of the report.

Impact on highway safety

- 14.34 The previous application was refused on highway safety grounds. Policy TR3 requires that harm to the transport network or highway safety should be mitigated and the requirements of Local Plan Policy I2 include at (h) that development proposals should not compromise highway safety.
- 14.35 As previously, the turning and parking arrangements within the site are considered acceptable and compliant with planning policy and these can be secured by condition.
- 14.36 With regards to visibility, Jennys Lane is an unlit, unclassified, but adopted rural lane with no adjacent footways to the site location. The proposal would use the existing wide vehicular access onto Jennys Lane that has a shared use with the two existing dwellings, and which would also support the extant consent to convert the pool house to a single dwelling.
- 14.37 The posted speed limit for the lane is 60mph, however the traffic survey undertaken that the 7 day average 85th percentile speed was 30.7mph northeast bound and 28.3mph southwest bound reducing the necessary visibility splay lengths.
- 14.38 The indicated splay to the east is offset from the carriage edge, however this is considered to be acceptable due to the narrow nature of the lane making the likelihood of overtaking low. The information submitted with this revised application shows that visibility splays of 43m to the south and 37m to the east/north can be achieved.

- 14.39 Although pedestrians are required to share the carriageway with vehicles, the traffic flows are low and under the threshold at which pedestrians mixing with vehicles can be suitable for most people as per the Active Travel England Rural Design Guidance. This advises that where pedestrians are walking in the carriageway, traffic volumes should be no more than 1,000 vehicles per day or 100 vehicles per hour.
- 14.40 The Highways officer has raised no objection to the proposals subject to conditions. The application is considered to meet the requirement of Policy I2 of the Local Plan and Policies TR3 and TR4 of the NPPF and has overcome the previous reason for refusal on highway grounds.

Impact on the character of the area

- 14.41 Development along Jennys Lane is low density in character with spacious plots. Mature landscaping, hedges, and verges also contribute to a pleasant semi-rural character. In this context, the layout of the proposal properties is likely to appear uncharacteristically regimented although, as has already been established in the Green Belt section, there are limited viewpoints from which the three properties would be viewed.
- 14.42 Policy DP3 of the NPPF sets out the key principles for well-designed places requiring development proposals to respond to their context and integrate with and enhance their surroundings while policy L2 requires that substantial weight should be given to development proposals that amongst other things (b) make better use of vacant and underutilised land and buildings.
- 14.43 Neighbourhood Plan (NP) policy 2 which sets out local design principles and Local Plan Policy E12 which requires that development positively integrates with their surroundings are consistent with the NPPF. Neighbourhood Plan criteria include supporting *'the efficient use of land taking account of capacity in existing infrastructure and services, access to sustainable means of transport, the local area's prevailing character and the requirement to deliver high quality buildings and places'*.
- 14.44 The proposed two storey dwellings would have a double apex form with contemporary fenestration design including extensive glazing to the western (rear) elevations. The materials are in keeping with the vernacular; red brick is common along Jennys Lane, while the recessive wood cladding will help soften the visual impact.
- 14.45 Officers consider that three dwellings are the maximum that could be achieved on the site without resulting in harmful overdevelopment. The smaller plot sizes will alter the character of the area, but these remain generous at approximately 0.68ha (approximately 54m deep by approximately 15m wide), offering opportunities for boundary planting; soft landscaping can reasonably be secured by condition.
- 14.46 The proposed dwellings which each have a garage are judged to provide adequate storage space and there is room for bins on the plots as required by NP Policy 2. All three dwellings have four bedrooms suggesting family housing which is judged appropriate on this stepped site and gardens will be clearly defined.
- 14.47 Another requirement of NP Policy 2 is that developments should *'create a place with locally inspired or otherwise distinctive character'*. Although within the NP appendices and so not policy, it is notable that SVI 7 highlights the distinct character of the village as *'a hilltop settlement separated from the nearby conurbation by sloping open countryside'*.

The development would have an impact on the openness on this hillside site but as it is already developed, albeit in a more modest form, the harm would be limited.

- 14.48 Although officers considered that the proposal is not fully in accordance with Policy E12 requirements that development should '*positively integrate with their surroundings*', limited harm to the character of the area has been identified. Conditions removing permitted development rights for extensions and outbuilding are judged necessary to control further development of the plots which could accentuate their visual impact.

Affordable Housing

- 14.49 NPPF policy HO5(1)(a) explains that '*In Designated Rural Areas development plans may set affordable housing requirements for residential developments which are not major development.*' Policy H11 of the Local Plan requires all new residential development in areas that are not designated as rural, to provide for 20% affordable housing through a commuted sum payment.
- 14.50 Policy H11 refers to three areas where the affordable housing requirement does not apply to minor development because they are not designated as rural, but since the publication of the NPPF which includes a new definition of rural areas this part of the policy is out of date. Lytchett Matravers does not benefit from the definition of Designated Rural Areas set by the NPPF 2026 as it has a population of more than 3,000 and a density of more than 2 persons per hectare. As the Local Plan requirement for affordable housing is materially inconsistent with the NPPF an affordable housing contribution cannot reasonably be required.

Impact on neighbour amenity

- 14.51 The application site is located in an area of low-density development on the outskirts of the village.
- 14.52 Hill House lies to the south of the application site and would be side on to the proposed development, approximately 17m from the southernmost proposed unit (no. 1). Two first floor windows are proposed in Unit 1 which could increase the perception of overlooking however these are to serve en-suites so would reasonably be obscure glazed.
- 14.53 The proposed development lies at an oblique angle to Pigeon Plotte, a chalet bungalow to the east, with a minimum separation distance from the proposed garage at unit 1 to the side of Pigeon Plotte of approximately 20m. Given this is the minimum building to building distance and the proposed dwellings are sited further to the west on slightly lower land, it is not considered that the proposed development would be overbearing on or overshadow this neighbouring property. Pigeon Plotte has a rear dormer window facing west, the glazed cheeks of two side dormers also face the site and a side balcony is visible from the site. It is recognised that there would be a perception of overlooking from the front bedroom windows within the proposed dwellings which face Pigeon Plotte, however as they are set a minimum of approximately 23m from the shared boundary an objection the grounds of overlooking and loss of privacy could not be sustained.
- 14.54 Tithe Barn is situated to the north-east of the site, approximately 38m (building to building) from the northernmost dwelling. With a minimum separation of approximately 8m between the front windows in the proposed units and the site boundary the scheme would introduce a perception of overlooking, however most of the overlooking would be towards the south-eastern most part of the garden so it is not considered that the proposal would result in harmful loss of privacy from overlooking and nor would the development be overbearing or result in overshadowing.

- 14.55 Whilst the three dwellings would inevitably increase general light spill in the area, it is not considered that this would cause demonstrable harm to neighbouring amenity given the separation distances involved between the site and neighbouring properties.
- 14.56 The provision of three dwellings on the site utilising the eastern access track adjacent to the boundary with Pigeon Plotte would increase the ambient noise of the site however it is not considered that the levels of noise from domestic use would be sufficiently unreasonable to refuse planning permission.
- 14.57 Although there may be some loss of view experienced by neighbouring dwellings this is not a material planning consideration that can be taken into account when assessing the merits of the scheme.
- 14.58 The development is judged to comply with Policies L2 and P3 of the NPPF and Policy E12 of the Local Plan in relation to neighbouring amenity.

Impact on biodiversity

Protected sites:

- 14.59 An Appropriate Assessment has been undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulation 2017, Article 6 (3) of the Habitats Directive having due regard to Section 40(1) of the NERC Act 2006 and the NPPF, which shows that there is no unmitigated harm generated by the proposals to interests of nature importance. Natural England has raised no objection.

Biodiversity on site:

- 14.60 The application is accompanied by an Ecological Impact Assessment which identifies no protected species on the site but the need for precautionary mitigation measures for nesting birds, bats, and common reptile species. Enhancement can be secured via integrated bat features, build in bird boxes, hedgehog friendly fencing and integrated bee bricks. These features can reasonably be secured by condition.

Foul and surface water

- 14.61 The application site is in Environment Agency Zone 1, and the proposal is acceptable in relation to fluvial, surface water, and groundwater flood risk.
- 14.62 The application is accompanied by a drainage strategy which includes a maintenance strategy. As connection to the foul water network is not available the properties will rely on three package treatment plants with the final effluent discharged to a drainage ditch in the northwest via a singular combined outfall.
- 14.63 Permeable paving and cellular storage will be used with surface water run off directed to a drainage ditch located to the north-west of the site which flows west. Discharge will be controlled to a restricted rate. The strategy takes account of climate change.
- 14.64 The proposal is judged to accord with Local Plan Policy E5 Sustainable Drainage Systems.

Other considerations

- 14.65 There is extant permission, P/FUL/2022/06896, to sever the plot and extend the pool house to form a dwelling. This acts as a fall-back position but has a much lesser impact on the Green Belt and the character of the area and would introduce fewer trips onto the highway.

15. Environmental implications

- 15.1 During construction there would be emissions and noise from the construction work and vehicles however these would be limited in duration and typical of any development.
- 15.2 Once the development was operational, there would be emissions from the day-to-day movement of private motor vehicles however this would not be great due to the small scale of the site.
- 15.3 On completion of the development, there would environmental gains from the creation of new habitats under biodiversity net gain.

16. Summary of issues and the planning balance

Consideration	Compliance with Policy	Weight Afforded
Principle of development	Conflicts with Policies V1 of the adopted Local Plan.	Significant weight against but diminished by incompatibility with NPPF policy S5 in this case.
	Conflict with Neighbourhood Plan Appendix 2 SVI 8	Very limited weight against
	Contributes three dwellings to Housing Land Supply	Significant weight in favour
Green Belt	Complies with Policy GB7 of the NPPF	Significant weight in favour
Highways	There would be no pedestrian refuge for the first 200m to access public transport and services within the village; nearest bus stop 530m away contrary to policy I2(d) and (e) of Local Plan and sustainability aims of TR3 and TR4 of the NPPF.	Moderate weight against
	No harm to highway safety and appropriate parking provision as required by NPPF policies TR3 and TR4.	Neutral
Character of Area	Limited harm – not fully compliant with Policy E12 of the Local Plan which required positive integration.	Moderate weight against
Affordable Housing	No contribution can be sought	Neutral
Neighbour Amenity	Complies with Policy E12 of the Local Plan	Neutral
	Complies with Policies L2 and P3 of the NPPF	Neutral
Biodiversity	No harm to internally protected habitats – complies with Policy E7 of the Local Plan	Neutral

	BNG enhancement can be secured in compliance with Policy E10 of the Local Plan.	Moderate weight in favour
Foul and Surface Water	Complies with Policy E5 of the Local Plan	Neutral

- 16.1 In applying Policy S5 of the NPPF, it has been established in the Green Belt section of the report, that the proposal complies with Policy GB7.
- 16.2 The development is redevelopment of previously developed land that will not result in substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt so is not inappropriate. The previous reason for refusal on highway safety grounds has been overcome by the provision of appropriate visibility splays, and following the publication of the latest NPPF it is no longer appropriate to require an Affordable Housing contribution. In the context of the Council's lack of five year housing land supply it is judged that the harm arising to the character of the area from the regimented layout of the buildings on this hillside location and the unsustainability of the location do not represent substantial harm that would outweigh the social and economic benefits of the contribution of three houses which are in relatively close proximity to the settlement of Lytchett Matravers.

Recommendation

Grant subject to conditions set out below. Pre-commencement conditions were agreed on 12 October 2026.

1. The development to which this permission relates must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this permission.
Reason: This condition is required to be imposed by Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).
2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:
2425050 011 B Location Plan
2425050 002 B Block Plan
2425050 005 B House 1 Proposed Floor Plans & elevations
2425050 008 A House 1 Garden Room Floor Plans & Elevations
2425050 006 B House 2 Proposed Floor Plans & Elevations
2425050 009 A House 2 Garden Room Floor Plans & Elevations
2425050 007 B House 3 Floor Plans & Elevations
2425050 010 A House 3 Garden Room Floor Plans & Elevations
2425050 012 Proposed Building Heights
2425050 003 A Proposed Section
2425050 004 A Block Plan & Proposed Roof Plans

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

3. The development shall not be commenced until a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (the HMMP) has been prepared in accordance with the approved Biodiversity Gain Plan and submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The HMMP shall include:
- i) A non-technical summary;
 - ii) The roles and responsibilities of the people or organisation(s) delivering the HMMP;
 - iii) The planned habitat creation and enhancement works to create or improve habitat to achieve the biodiversity net gain in accordance with the approved Biodiversity Gain Plan and a timetable for implementation;
 - iv) The management measures to maintain habitat in accordance with the approved Biodiversity Gain Plan for a period of 30 years from the completion of the habitat and enhancement works as set out in the HMMP.
 - v) The monitoring methodology and frequency in respect of the created or enhanced habitat to be submitted to the Local Planning Authority.

Thereafter the development shall be carried out, along with the management and monitoring of habitat, in accordance with the approved HMMP.

Reason: In the interests of biodiversity to secure the monitoring and management of significant onsite habitats.

4. Prior to development above damp proof course level, details (including colour photographs) of all external facing materials for the walls and roofs shall have been submitted to, and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter, the development shall proceed in accordance with such materials as have been agreed.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory visual appearance of the development.

5. Prior to development above damp course level, a soft landscaping and planting scheme shall be submitted to, and approved in writing, by the Local Planning Authority. The approved scheme shall be implemented in full during the planting season November - March following commencement of the development or within a timescale to be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include provision for the maintenance and replacement as necessary of the trees and shrubs for a period of not less than 5 years.

Reason: In the interest of visual amenity.

6. Before the development hereby approved is occupied or utilised the visibility splay areas over a distance of 43metres to the west and 37 metres to the east (as shown on Drawing Number 26-935-SK01) must be cleared/excavated to a level not exceeding 0.60 metres above the relative level of the adjacent carriageway. The splay areas must thereafter be maintained and kept free from all obstructions.

Reason: To ensure that a vehicle can see or be seen when exiting the access.

7. Before the development hereby approved is occupied or utilised the turning/manoeuvring and parking shown on the Proposed Floor Plans and Block Plans (Drawing no.004 Rev A) must have been constructed. Thereafter, these areas, must be permanently maintained, kept free from obstruction and available for the purposes specified.

Reason: To ensure the proper and appropriate development of the site and to ensure that highway safety is not adversely impacted upon.

8. The detailed biodiversity mitigation, compensation and enhancement strategy set out within the approved Biodiversity Plan, certified by the Dorset Council Natural Environment Team on 05 August 2026, must be strictly adhered to during the carrying out of the development.

The development hereby approved must not be first brought into use unless and until:

- i) the mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures detailed in the approved Biodiversity Plan have been completed in full, in accordance with any specified timetable.
- ii) evidence of compliance, including photographic evidence, in accordance with section F of the approved Biodiversity Plan has been supplied to the Local Planning Authority. The development shall subsequently be implemented entirely in accordance with the approved Biodiversity Plan and thereafter the approved mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures must be permanently maintained and retained in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To mitigate and compensate for impacts on ecological receptors, and to provide biodiversity gains.

9. Notice in writing shall be given to the Local Planning Authority within one month of the habitat creation and enhancement works as set out in the approved HMP having been completed. The notice shall include a completion report evidencing the completed habitat enhancements.

Reason: In the interests of biodiversity to secure the monitoring and management of significant onsite habitats.

10. Prior to the first occupation of the development, hereby permitted, the drainage shall be constructed and maintained in perpetuity in accordance with the details in drawing 25131-GAP-XX-XX-DR-C 9000 P01 dated 26 March 2025 and the Drainage Strategy 25131-GAP-ZZ-XX-RP-C-9000-B dated April 2025.

Reason: To avoid drainage problems as a result of the development with consequent pollution or flood risk and to take into account current national standards for SuDS.

11. The finished floor levels for houses 2 and 3 shall not exceed those identified for the dwelling on plot 1 on drawing 002 B.

Reason: In the interests of the character of the area and neighbouring amenity

12. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any Order revoking and re-enacting that Order) (with or without modification) no enlargement(s) of the dwellinghouses hereby approved, permitted by Class A and Class B of Schedule 2 Part 1 of the 2015 Order, shall be erected or constructed.

Reason: To protect the openness of the Green Belt.

12. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any Order revoking and re-enacting that Order) (with or without modification) no garages, sheds or other outbuildings permitted by Class E of Schedule 2 Part 1 of the 2015 Order shall be erected or constructed.

Reason: To protect the openness of the Green Belt.

Informatives

1. In accordance with policy DM3 of the NPPF the council, as local planning authority, takes a positive approach to development proposals and is focused on providing sustainable development.

The council works with applicants/agents in a positive and proactive manner by:

- offering a pre-application advice service, and
- as appropriate updating applicants/agents of any issues that may arise in the processing of their application and where possible suggesting solutions.

In this case:

- The application was acceptable as submitted and no further assistance was required.

2. This development constitutes Community Infrastructure Levy 'CIL' liable development. CIL is a mandatory financial charge on development, and you will be notified of the amount of CIL being charged on this development in a CIL Liability Notice. To avoid additional financial penalties, it is important that you notify us of the date you plan to commence development before any work takes place and follow the correct CIL payment procedure.

3. The net gain biodiversity measures required by condition 8 should accord with best practice guidance published on the Council's website
https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/w/species-and-habitat-advice-notes-and-guidance-sheets?p_i_back_url=%2Fsearch%3Fq%3Dspecies%2Band%2Badvice%2Bsheets

4. The applicant is reminded of their responsibility to submit photographic evidence of compliance with the Biodiversity Plan or LEMP to Dorset Natural Environment Team in order to comply fully with requirements of condition 7.

5. The Council is responsible for street naming and numbering within our area. This helps to effectively locate property to deliver post and for access by emergency services. New or changed addresses must be registered with the Council. This link has more information.

<https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/planning-buildings-land/street-naming-and-numbering/street-naming-and-numbering>

6. Please check that any plans approved under the building regulations match the plans approved in this planning permission or listed building consent. Do not start work until revisions are secured to either of the two approvals to ensure that the development has the required planning permission or listed building consent.
7. Dorset Waste Team will not enter onto the driveway/property to collect waste/recycling; all bins and containers will have to be presented at the public highway on Jennys Lane.

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