

6. Community infrastructure

6.1. Introduction

- 6.1.1. A wide variety of community facilities and services are part of the overall infrastructure needed to support development. These are provided across the plan area by various businesses and other organisations. The provision and location of these can play an important role in encouraging a sense of community in an area, as well as minimising the need to travel by car.
- 6.1.2. As a community grows larger, the infrastructure to support it needs to grow with it. The larger settlements in the plan area are recognised as the shopping, service and employment centres for a much wider rural area as well as their own populations. Smaller scale services and facilities in local neighbourhoods and villages are also vitally important for many residents, and for maintaining a sense of community, though economic changes and increasing car ownership have resulted in the loss of many of these facilities in the last twenty years.

Community infrastructure includes but is not limited to:

- shops, cafes, restaurants and public houses;
- post offices, banks and building societies;
- education and training facilities, pre-school centres and other children's services;
- doctors' surgeries and dental practices, day-care centres, hospitals and other healthcare / social service facilities;
- community halls / hubs, including places of worship;
- cultural facilities, such as arts centres;
- libraries and museums;
- sports facilities and open space of public value;
- roads, rail, port facilities and bus services, routes for pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians, including associated infrastructure such as petrol stations and vehicle electric charging points, signage, parking / storage;
- waste management, collection, recycling and disposal services;
- coast protection and flood defence schemes;
- community safety and emergency services (fire, police, ambulance and coastguard);
- community renewable energy / low carbon infrastructure;
- community business support, including broadband technology / telecommunications.

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- 6.1.3. The provision of community infrastructure to support the role and function of settlements is important in delivering a number of the strategic priorities of this plan and strategic policies are included to help with its delivery.
- 6.1.4. The council needs to plan for the delivery of infrastructure within the area, which means not only assessing what is needed, but how it is provided, how those facilities are maintained if they are not likely to be self-funding, and what impact any future change or loss of such facilities may have on communities.

Figure 6.1: Strategic priorities for community infrastructure

Strategic Priority	The role of the Local Plan	Relevant Policies in this Section
<p>Economic Growth</p> <p>We will deliver sustainable economic growth and improved infrastructure across the whole of Dorset, increasing productivity and the number of high quality jobs, creating great places to live, work and visit.</p>	<p>The Local Plan can help to deliver Economic Growth by enabling sustainable economic development in the right locations and providing homes for those who work in the area.</p>	<p>Transport</p>
		<p>COM7: Creating a safe, efficient and low carbon transport network</p>
		<p>COM8: Parking standards in new development</p>
<p>Strong, healthy communities</p> <p>We will work to build and maintain strong communities where people get the best start and lead fulfilling lives.</p>	<p>The Local Plan will enable communities to thrive by providing community infrastructure and green space giving opportunities for people to meet and participate in their community and enabling active participation in community life.</p>	<p>The provision of community infrastructure</p>
		<p>COM1: making sure new development makes suitable provision for community infrastructure</p>
		<p>COM2: new or improved local community buildings and structures</p>
		<p>COM3: retention of local community buildings and structures</p>
		<p>Encouraging healthy lifestyles</p>
		<p>COM4: Recreation, sports facilities and open space</p>
<p>COM5: Hot food takeaways</p>		

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		<p>Strategic Policies</p> <p>DEV1: the housing requirement and the need for employment land in Dorset</p> <p>DEV9: Neighbourhood plans</p> <p>Promoting healthy lifestyles</p> <p>COM7: Creating a safe, efficient and low carbon transport network</p> <p>COM5: Hot food takeaways</p>
<p>Staying safe and well We will work to enable a good quality of life for our residents through high quality, well designed and safe developments, with access to local greenspace for health and wellbeing.</p>	<p>Through town centre regeneration and by protecting town centres, the Local Plan will enhance people’s quality of life. Promotion of healthy lifestyles through the way development is designed.</p>	<p>Community facilities</p> <p>COM4: Recreation, sports facilities and open space</p> <p>COM1: Making sure New Development makes Suitable Provision for Community Infrastructure</p> <p>COM2: New or improved local community buildings and structures</p> <p>COM3: Retention of Local Community Buildings and Structures</p>
<p>Climate and Ecological Emergency We will take actions to minimise the impact of climate change including minimising flood risk and to reduce the impact on the</p>	<p>Through managing where and how development takes place, the Local Plan can minimise the distance travelled and focus</p>	<p>Renewable Energy</p>

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<p>climate by locating and designing developments to reduce distances travelled and minimise energy use. We will support renewable energy developments appropriate to Dorset.</p> <p>We will ensure that all new development incorporates ecological net gain to help deliver the aspiration to reverse the current decline in protected species and habitats.</p>	<p>travel onto active travel and public transport options.</p> <p>The impacts of climate change can be reduced by avoiding areas at risk of flooding and building green infrastructure into developments.</p>	<p>COM10- Renewable energy development</p>
		<p>COM11- Small scale wind energy development</p>

Infrastructure Delivery Plan

6.1.5. An Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) provides an overview of the range of infrastructure projects required to support the growth in the local plan. An IDP will be produced for the submission stage of the local plan production, once future infrastructure needs become clearer through consultation. Thereafter, it will be updated and reviewed when required to keep track of infrastructure delivery during the plan period. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan will:

- identify the infrastructure and services required to support the growth targets set out in the local plan;
- identify the costs and likely means of funding, including that required through public finance and developer contributions sources, any funding secured, funding gaps and the delivery agencies;
- provide evidence to help finance the critical infrastructure to support growth.

6.2. Making sure new development includes suitable provision for community infrastructure

6.2.1. Where possible and practicable (for example on larger developments), community infrastructure should be provided as part of the development, creating attractive and vibrant places to live. Good planning will make sure that the infrastructure needed is well located and phased to be brought in alongside new development. It will not

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always be practicable to provide community facilities in every settlement and with every new development, nor will it be practicable to provide community facilities and infrastructure ahead of development.

Planning obligations and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

- 6.2.2. Planning obligations, commonly secured through section 106 agreements and financial contributions through the Community Infrastructure Levy, play an important role in providing the infrastructure necessary to support new development.
- 6.2.3. Planning obligations can be financial or in-kind and are required to help make development acceptable in planning terms. These obligations largely address site-specific needs that result from growth and pressure on existing infrastructure. Planning obligations need to meet three tests. They must be:
 - necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
 - directly related to the development; and
 - fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.
- 6.2.4. The Community Infrastructure Levy is a charge which can be levied by local authorities on new development in their area. The levy tends to deal with the cumulative impact of development on existing infrastructure. The levy only applies where a local authority has consulted on and approved a charging schedule which sets out its levy rates and has published the schedule on its website. The charging schedule specifies what types of development are liable for the levy and the rates for these development types.
- 6.2.5. Dorset Council currently administers the following charging schedules, introduced by its predecessor councils:
 - East Dorset (implemented 3 January 2017)
 - Purbeck (implemented 5 June 2014 and currently under review)
 - West Dorset (implemented 18 July 2016)
 - Weymouth & Portland (implemented 18 July 2016)
- 6.2.6. A charging schedule for North Dorset was prepared and examined, but was not adopted or implemented.
- 6.2.7. Dorset Council is working on a new charging schedule for the whole authority area which it plans to adopt alongside the Local Plan in 2023.
- 6.2.8. Amended CIL Regulations which came into effect in September 2019 require councils to produce an Infrastructure Funding Statement which will identify infrastructure

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need, the total cost of this infrastructure, anticipated funding from developer contributions and the choices made about how these contributions will be used. The first funding statement will be published by Dorset Council in December 2020.

- 6.2.9. The council will collect funds for infrastructure via CIL, planning obligations or a combination of the two, depending on the nature of development. On larger more complex strategic allocations, it is expected that some forms of infrastructure will need to be provided as part of the development. Infrastructure requirements for these sites will be secured through a planning obligation requiring the developer to enter into a section 106 agreement and these sites are therefore proposed to be excluded from a CIL charge. Examples ¹ of such sites include:
- North of Dorchester (policy DOR13)
 - North and east of Blandford (policy BLAN7)
 - Vearse Farm, Bridport (policy BRID2)
 - Gillingham Southern Extension (policy GILL2)
- 6.2.10. Details of the infrastructure requirements for allocated sites can be found in the site-specific policies.
- 6.2.11. Infrastructure for smaller, less complex development sites will normally be met through the use of the CIL with planning obligations sought alongside if necessary. The council's Infrastructure Funding Statement will report on infrastructure secured through these planning obligation tools.

Level of community infrastructure provision

- 6.2.12. Policy COM₄ on Recreation, Sports Facilities and Formal Open Space and Policy ENV₁ on Green Infrastructure contain guidance on the level of provision and approach to delivery of some of the key community infrastructure that is generally expected across the plan area. It is also important to note that quantity guidelines should not be interpreted either as a maximum or minimum level of provision; rather, they are benchmark standards that can be adjusted to take account of local circumstances. However, community infrastructure is not limited to these examples.

¹ The approach to the delivery of infrastructure will be tested through whole plan viability. A more comprehensive list of sites that will need to meet their community infrastructure needs through planning agreements, rather than through CIL will be identified for submission of the Local Plan.

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- 6.2.13. When negotiated through section 106 agreements, the council will ensure that the level of contributions towards community infrastructure is well related in scale and kind to the proposed development. As such, contributions may be reduced where there is strong evidence that the need is lower, for example education and open space contributions from care homes and one-bedroom homes. Future maintenance needs will also be considered, particularly if the facilities are predominantly for the benefit of the users associated with the development.

COM1. Making sure new development makes suitable provision for community infrastructure

- I. Where new development will generate a need for new or improved community infrastructure, and this need is not met through the Community Infrastructure Levy, suitable provision should be made on-site in larger developments or, if not practicable to do so, by means of a financial contribution. The provision should be appropriate to the scale and needs of the development having regard to:
 - existing facilities in the area, including the quantity and quality of provision;
 - the economic viability and the need for the development;
 - the ongoing maintenance requirements.
- II. Community infrastructure will be phased to come forward in advance of, or at the same time as the development when negotiated through planning obligations. When delivered through the Community Infrastructure Levy, such provision will be expected to take place as soon as reasonably practicable after the funds are collected.
- III. Contributions will not be sought from new community facilities or affordable housing, with the exception of site-specific measures necessary to make that development acceptable.

Q: Policy COM₁ sets out the approach that the council will take to ensure that new development meets its infrastructure needs through planning agreements and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). Do you have any comments on this policy?

6.3. Local community buildings and structures

New local community buildings and structures

6.3.1. The provision of community facilities is important for the health, social, educational, spiritual, recreational and cultural wellbeing of the community. The need for additional facilities is likely to arise through the plan period due to growth in homes and employment.

Local Community Buildings and Structures include but are not limited to:

- local community shops¹ and post offices;
- banks and building societies;
- cafes, restaurants and public houses – especially where there are only one or two locally;
- petrol stations;
- education and training facilities, pre-school centres and other children’s services;
- doctors’ surgeries and dental practices, day-care centres, hospitals and other healthcare / social service facilities;
- meeting places such as community halls and places of worship;
- cultural facilities, such as arts centres, theatres, libraries and museums.

Sports facilities and open space are covered separately.

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- 6.3.2. To ensure the needs of our communities are met, a wide variety of facilities and services are required. It is important that facilities are located within easy reach of those wishing to use them. Some facilities are town centre uses and depending on their scale and the area served will be directed towards town or local centres through the sequential test, contributing to making them vibrant places (Policy ECON5).
- 6.3.3. Within development proposals and in existing settlements, facilities need to be located to be accessible to the community they will serve (where appropriate, taking into account how this may change through the development of strategic housing sites). Where possible, facilities should be located on public transport routes and should avoid generating significant additional car based trips by facilitating opportunities for active travel, including pedestrian and cycle routes.
- 6.3.4. In rural settlements, facilities can provide a key focus in helping to maintain a sense of community and in creating more sustainable settlements enabling day-to-day needs to be met locally, reducing the need to travel. Such facilities are encouraged to locate within or immediately adjoining existing settlements, particularly where new housing development is permitted. However, in some areas, it may not always be possible to meet local community needs within existing settlements. In such instances, development appropriate to a rural area may be permitted where located to be accessible to the community it supports.
- 6.3.5. Proposals in the open countryside (outside development boundaries and not in close proximity to an existing settlement) will require special justification. This should explain why the use cannot reasonably be met within a settlement, any identified local need it would meet and any overriding benefits derived from the proposed location. The proposal will need to ensure that it is sensitive to its surroundings in terms of its scale, nature and the uses proposed. Proposals within the green belt are unlikely to be acceptable and would be assessed against national policy on green belts.
- 6.3.6. It is important that established local community facilities and services be able to develop and modernise. Such improvement can enhance their viability and encourage their retention for the benefit of the community. The council will respond positively to applications that would ensure the continued use of community buildings and structures.
- 6.3.7. Some facilities have the potential to incorporate other complementary community functions, providing an efficient use of resources and delivering services that may otherwise be inaccessible. Proposals for the provision of new, or expansion of existing,

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community facilities to provide multi-use community hubs will be therefore be supported.

- 6.3.8. Development will not be permitted if it would undermine the viability of existing facilities which are better placed to serve local communities without the need to rely on the private car.

COM2. New or improved local community buildings and structures

- I. Local community buildings or structures will be supported within or adjoining an existing settlement. Development in the countryside may be permitted on well related and accessible sites where the proposal meets an identified community need and:
 - no suitable sites or premises exist within or adjoining the relevant settlement; or
 - there are overriding community, amenity and environmental benefits derived from the proposed location.
- II. Proposals for new, replacement or improved local community buildings or structures must:
 - be of a scale and function compatible with the location and appropriate to its role within the settlement and retail hierarchy; and
 - not have unacceptable impacts on local amenity, highway network, the natural or built environment; and
 - be well-located in terms of accessibility to their main catchment population, enabling active travel, and not generate significant additional single purpose trips by private car.
- III. The council will respond positively to applications for the improvement, expansion, appropriate multi-use or co-location of facilities where this would enhance their viability or ensure their continued use.
- IV. Where practicable, the design of community buildings should allow for a range of current and future uses.

The retention of existing local community buildings and structures

- 6.3.9. The loss of local community facilities and services can significantly reduce a community's ability to meet its day to day needs locally, decreases customer choice and will also have an adverse impact on the social interaction and wellbeing of that

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community. In addition to this intrinsic merit, some community buildings and structures may also have further value as heritage assets or tourist attractions or facilities.

- 6.3.10. In common with national trends, some facilities in the plan area have struggled to remain open. This can be a particular problem in rural areas where local shops, post offices and public houses are central to village life. For many residents, particularly those without access to a private car, their loss makes accessibility to facilities and services a significant challenge, leading to isolation and impacting on overall quality of life. The overall vibrancy and sustainability of rural communities is also harmed.
- 6.3.11. Though the council wishes to ensure that local facilities are protected, to enable communities to continue to meet their needs, it recognises there will be occasions when a facility may be unused, underused, has relocated, is surplus to requirements or is no longer viable.
- 6.3.12. Where an existing community facility may be lost, preference is given to the change of use or redevelopment to alternative community uses that would support a local need. Where this is not the best option for the site, for example due to the community use becoming unviable, developers will be expected to demonstrate that the potential to use the site or building for other community uses compatible with the location, has been investigated.
- 6.3.13. For commercial facilities, run by individuals or companies for profit, the key consideration will be whether the business is viable or could be made viable through development. For community-run facilities there may be other reasons which might justify a loss, for example where there may be no need for the facility / service, or it may no longer be practical to continue the current use in that location.
- 6.3.14. Proposals that would result in a substantial decline in the range and quality of facilities and services for local people will be resisted.
- 6.3.15. Applicants proposing to redevelop or convert facilities which are of established community value will be expected to engage with local communities at an early stage in the planning process. The local community should be fully involved in order to gain a proper understanding of the importance of the facility to its users and the implications of any proposal which may affect it. Regard will be had for whether the facility is listed as an Asset of Community Value and any initiative by the community to acquire the asset under the Community Right to Bid.
- 6.3.16. Proposals which would result in the loss of a community facility must demonstrate that satisfactory efforts have been made to retain the facility and that opportunities

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for conversion to alternative viable community uses have been explored. The applicant will be required to submit sufficient evidence to justify the loss of the facility. The information and level of detail will depend on the nature of the proposal but should include:

- what consultation there had been with local community groups / service providers and details of representations received;
- evidence to confirm that the property or site has been appropriately marketed for a meaningful period and that there is no realistic interest in its future community use. (This should include details of the marketing approach, sales literature, the length of time that the marketing was active and any changes during this period, and the asking price, the level of interest generated and any offers received);
- where the current use is no longer viable, a viability assessment which shows that this is the case. The applicant will be expected to fund the independent verification of the submitted viability assessment by a person appointed by the council.

6.3.17. In considering proposals that would result in the loss of local community facilities, the councils will take into account what other facilities and services are available locally and whether there are proposals to consolidate that service into a community facility hub.

COM3. Retention of local community buildings and structures

- I. Development, including change of use, which results in the permanent loss of local community buildings or structures (including where the most recent lawful use was as a community use), will not be permitted unless:
 - in the case of facilities not run as commercial businesses, it can be demonstrated that there is no local need for the facility or it is no longer practical to continue the existing use; or
 - in the case of commercial community facilities, such a facility is no longer viable; or
 - a suitable replacement is provided in an equally accessible location to serve the local community.

Preference will be given to the change of use or redevelopment to appropriate alternative community uses. Uses other than community uses should be justified with consideration given to whether alternative community uses to meet local needs are not required, suitable or viable.

- II. The council will look favourably on applications which would:
 - diversify and support the continuation of the existing community use (for example the change of part of the site to maintain the original use in a viable form); or
 - help meet identified development needs through the more effective use of sites / premises while maintaining or improving the existing community service provision (for example through a community hub).

Q: Policies COM2 and COM3 deal with the provision and retention of community buildings and structures. Do you have any comments on these policies?

6.4. Recreation, sports facilities, formal open space and play

- 6.4.1. Recreation, sports facilities, and formal and informal open spaces contribute to the promotion of healthier lifestyles, community cohesiveness and support our valuable environment and wildlife. Recreation and sports facilities can include outdoor sports pitches (including school playing fields), recreational grounds, play areas, sports and leisure centres. Some community centres such as village halls also provide multi-functional space which can be used for indoor sports. It is important to safeguard existing areas and provide new facilities and / or improve the quality of existing facilities as an integral element of new development. Facilities should be engaging, accessible for all of the community and where possible they should be multi-functional.
- 6.4.2. The responsibility for sports facilities and public open space is shared with parish and town councils. The town or parish council for each area is normally responsible for playing fields, parks and allotments, and has the ability to raise money for sport through their local precept or can use their portion of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds. Some sports centres, playing fields and swimming pools are provided in schools, operated privately as a commercial business or through community trusts and are made available for wider community use playing a vital role in sport and recreation provision.
- 6.4.3. Evidence collected has provided an assessment of the current quality and capacity of the local plan area's existing outdoor and indoor sports facilities, as well as the estimated future need.
- 6.4.4. The Active Dorset Playing Pitch Strategy indicates that residential developments of 600 units or more are likely to generate demand for additional sports pitches for sports such as football and cricket. These types of facilities can often be provided together and usually require the provision of ancillary facilities such as clubhouses, changing rooms, and car parking. The estimation of future need indicates a requirement of around 69 additional pitches over local plan period. The Playing Pitch Strategy also recommends safeguarding and improving existing facilities alongside securing community use of existing private facilities in order to contribute towards future need.
- 6.4.5. The Sports and Leisure Facilities Needs Assessments concludes that there is adequate capacity for indoor sports facilities across the local plan area, but that in many cases

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the quality of the facilities is sub-standard and outdated. Opportunities should be taken to enhance and improve the existing facilities.

- 6.4.6. The requirement for sports and recreational facilities, including play areas, will be considered on a site by site basis in relation to the local need and recommendations detailed within the most up to date assessments of need and to meet as a minimum, the Fields in Trust standards (detailed in Figure 6.1, Figure 6.2 and Figure 6.3).
- 6.4.7. These quantitative guidelines should not be interpreted either as a maximum or minimum level of provision but a benchmark standard that can be adjusted to take account of facilities in the local area. An assessment of existing provision, along with detail of the needs expressed by nearby town and parish councils and Dorset Council, should be included to support the level of provision being made as part of a development. Developments should look to complement existing provision rather than adhere strictly to the on-site standards.

Figure 6.2: Guidance on standards of play / games area provision

Scale of development	Local Area for Play (LAP)	Locally Equipped Area for Play (LEAP)	Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play (NEAP)	Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA)
10-200 dwellings	✓	✓	x	Contribution
201-500 dwellings	✓	✓	Contribution	✓
501+ dwellings	✓	✓	✓	✓

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Figure 6.3: Guidance on standards of formal outdoor space provision

Open Spaces Type	Quantity Guideline (Ha per 1,000 population)	Walking distance (metres from dwelling)	Quality Guideline
Playing Pitches	1.20	1,200	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Located where they are of most value to the community being served • Appropriately landscaped and provision of footpaths • Designed so as to be free of the fear of harm or crime • Positively and safely managed to the highest possible condition with available finance, taking account of the need for repair and replacement over time if necessary
All Outdoor Sports	1.60	1,200	
Equipped/designated Play Areas	0.25	LAPs- 100m LEAPs- 400m NEAPs- 1,000m	
Other outdoor provision (MUGAs and skateboard parks)	0.30	700m	

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Figure 6.4: Guidance on standards of built recreation facilities

Facility	Urban ²	Rural ³
Community Venue	Community venue/s accessible to all, of a good standard, able to accommodate arts performances, indoor sports and local meetings, and in 600m walking distance of most of the population.	
Indoor Sports Hall	20 minute walk time (1.6km radial catchment)	30 minute drive time.
Health & Fitness	30 minute walk time (1.6km radial catchment)	30 minute drive time.
Swimming Pool	30 minute walk time (1.6km radial catchment)	30 minute drive time.

- 6.4.8. The provision of new built sports, leisure, and recreational facilities should normally be focused in places where they are most accessible to the community they serve. Development away from the community they serve will require special justification.
- 6.4.9. Development sites will be expected to provide facilities on site or, where it is not practical to do so, contribute to new or improved facilities off-site. Off-site contributions will need to be agreed with the council. Provision of facilities will be secured through Section 106 agreements, with the needs of smaller sites and other requirements being met through the Community Infrastructure Levy.
- 6.4.10. Development that provide new or improved recreation, sports, and play facilities should seek high quality, innovative design that is appropriate to its setting, and is supported by community involvement during its planning and implementation phases.

² Defined as Tier 1 and Tier 2 settlements

³ Defined as Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3 settlements

COM4. Recreation, sports facilities and open space

New or Improved Facilities

- I. Residential development should make provision for formal and informal recreation, play, sports and/or open space facilities on-site. The provision should be appropriate to the scale and needs of the development, having regard to existing facilities in the area, including the quantity and quality of provision.
- II. Where it can be evidenced that on-site provision would not be practicable, the council will consider financial contributions to provide and/or enhance existing facilities off site.
- III. Proposals for new or improved recreation, sports and open space facilities will be permitted where:
 - the proposal would be well-located to be accessible to its main catchment population enabling active travel and would not generate significant single purpose trips by private car; and
 - the proposal would not undermine the commercial viability of nearby community facilities which may be better placed to service the needs of the surrounding community; and
 - the proposal demonstrates a creative concept and high quality design, is deliverable and provides for ongoing maintenance.
- IV. Proposals for new or enhanced recreational facilities away from settlements at the coast (including marine based recreation) or in the countryside will only be permitted if they require a coastal or countryside location and their scale is in keeping with the surrounding environment. Such proposals must not:
 - be intrusive in the landscape;
 - adversely affect land or marine conservation;
 - cause unacceptable impacts to local amenity; or
 - cause unacceptable increased vehicle movements.

Safeguarding Existing Facilities

- V. Development on, or a change of use to, open spaces of public value and recreational facilities (including school playing fields), or proposals resulting in the loss of built sports and recreational facilities, will not be permitted unless:

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- the development proposed is ancillary to the use of the site and the proposal will either support or improve the recreational and amenity value of the site, or does not adversely affect the number, size or quality of playing pitches or their use; or
- the proposed development is for an indoor or outdoor sports facility, the provision of which would be of sufficient benefit to the development of sport as to outweigh the detriment caused by the loss of the open spaces and recreational facilities (including school playing fields); or
- alternative and/or suitable replacement outdoor or indoor provision of equal or better recreational quality or value is provided in a location which is suitable to meet any deficiency in provision, and/or better placed and accessible to the surrounding community it serves, and there is a clear community benefit; or
- it can be demonstrated that the open space, buildings or land are surplus to requirements, and there is no need for alternative open space of public value or recreational uses which could reasonably take place at the site.

Q: Policy COM4 sets out requirements for provision of recreation and sports facilities and open space provision. Do you have any comments on policy COM4?

6.5. Hot food takeaways

- 6.5.1. One of the strategic priorities of the local plan is to 'support strong, healthy communities' with accessibility to a range of services and facilities. Fundamental to achieving this is the creation of places which encourage healthy lifestyles, for example through provision of leisure facilities; safe walking and cycling routes; and green infrastructure.
- 6.5.2. Hand-in-hand with this is the provision of healthy food environments, where healthy foods are more readily available than unhealthy alternatives. Takeaway foods tend to be high in energy, salt, fat and sugar, often with single meal portions containing levels higher than the recommended daily amounts. Evidence indicates that the availability of such foods is one factor associated with increased levels of obesity and excess weight amongst adults and children.
- 6.5.3. Being obese or carrying excess weight can lead to many associated illnesses including having a higher risk of developing type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease and certain cancers, as well as mental health issues. These obesity and overweight related ill-health treatments incur major annual costs to the NHS and wider society.
- 6.5.4. Restricting the provision of hot food takeaways close to facilities frequented by children can help to tackle childhood obesity levels. This includes educational establishments used primarily by children and other facilities such as children's play areas; skate parks; leisure centres; and youth centres.
- 6.5.5. Hot food takeaways will be restricted within 'easy walking distance' of these facilities, which is considered to be anywhere within a five minute walk, equating to 400m. As a town centre use, any proposal for a hot food takeaway will also be considered Policy ECON3.

COM5. Hot food takeaways

- I. Proposals for new hot food takeaway outlets will not be permitted within a 400m radius of a school; other educational establishment; play area; skate park; leisure centre or youth centre.

Q: A policy is being proposed to restrict hot food takeaways within easy walking distance of schools and other places where young children congregate. Do you have any comments on Policy COM5?

6.6. Education and training facilities

- 6.6.1. Good education and training facilities are key to making sure that our local workforce has appropriate skills and training, and encouraging young families to want to live in the area. Schools and colleges also play a key role in bringing the community together and providing facilities that the local community can use. It is important that there is adequate provision for pupils reasonably close or accessible to where they live.
- 6.6.2. The library service provides good access to reading and learning opportunities. Although there is a good network of county and community-supported libraries, some premises within the area fall below the national space standard.
- 6.6.3. Arts centres, museums and visitor centres are at the heart of communities if they capture local experience and history, fostering shared community identity and understanding. They also have a role in supporting local tourism.

Education and Training Facilities

For the purpose of this Plan, 'education and training facilities' include pre-school nursery provision, schools and colleges of further education (whether provided by the local education authority or independently), work-based learning and skills training and adult and community learning centres. They may also include cultural learning that can be provided through arts centres, visitor centres, libraries and museums.

Dorset Council is the local education authority for the plan area and therefore is the key agency responsible for delivering education.

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- 6.6.4. Maintaining and improving attainment levels through the provision of new facilities will support the future success and prosperity of the area.
- 6.6.5. Where new homes are built, any additional demand for education and training will usually be catered for through the expansion of existing education provision. In some cases, particularly on larger sites, this may trigger the need for substantial changes in how the service is provided, e.g. the provision of a new school. New homes will be expected to contribute towards enhancing education facilities where these are insufficient to support the development. This may include contributions and / or the allocation of land to enable facilities to be built or extended. Where site specific requirements for expanded school provision have been identified, as a result of the additional demand for education facilities generated by development, these are set out in the site specific policies within the plan.

COM6. The provision of education and training facilities

- I. Proposals for the provision of new / replacement facilities or the expansion of existing education and training facilities will be supported, provided that:
- the location is well linked in terms of accessibility to the local catchment (taking into account how this may change through the development of strategic housing sites); and
 - any loss of facilities consequential to the development is re-provided to the same or higher standard.

Q: Policy COM6 supports provision of education and training facilities subject to a few criterion. Do you have any comments on Policy COM6?

6.7. The transport network

- 6.7.1. Dorset is a largely rural area with a dispersed population and with mostly poor public transport. The car continues to be the main mode of transport for most people, enabling them to access work, education, leisure and shopping opportunities. People in rural areas without access to a private car often find it more difficult to meet their daily needs. However, the high level of car use is a significant contributory factor in some of the major environmental and public health challenges of our time.
- 6.7.2. Transport is the biggest carbon-emitting sector in Dorset, contributing around 40% of the total carbon emissions. Emissions from transport further contribute to poor air quality, and sedentary lifestyles are associated with rises in obesity, heart disease, diabetes and other chronic conditions. For this reason, settlement patterns which enable better public transport services, promote active travel and reduce car dependency form the basis for the strategy within the local plan. This approach provides the opportunity to reduce out-commuting to other centres, reducing the need and distance travelled by private car for work or shopping, thus increasing 'self-containment'. Further development in accordance with the settlement hierarchy will help to maintain their role as service centres, contribute to their future regeneration and help to sustain the rural areas that surround them.
- 6.7.3. In addition to the location of development, the design, layout and connections made to developments will help to facilitate active travel further reducing reliance on the private car. Walking and cycling routes will need to be safe, convenient and easy to use to offer a realistic alternative to car use.
- 6.7.4. By influencing the location of new development, land use can reduce the need to travel particularly by private car and minimise its impact on the environment. At the same time the planning system must respond to the need for new transport infrastructure and recognise the challenges faced by rural settlements, where reliance on private car travel for many people, is the only realistic option. Accordingly, strategic developments will be located on or have access to existing public transport networks so that they are convenient, accessible, safe and attractive to use. Where appropriate, development proposals should be accompanied by travel plans and transport assessments outlining alternatives to private vehicle use.
- 6.7.5. Adapting to and mitigating the effects of the climate change and ecological emergency are integral to the spatial strategy and cut across all policies. Addressing the impacts of climate change will be achieved by locating the majority of growth in

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places with good, sustainable transport links and jobs and services, thereby reducing the need to travel by private car.

COM7. Creating a safe, efficient and low carbon transport network

- I. New development should be located in accordance with the settlement hierarchy to facilitate the move away from car dependency and towards healthy, lower carbon travel choices and lifestyles. Significant new developments should therefore be located close enough to existing facilities or deliver viable new facilities to make walking and cycling a realistic choice.
- II. If viable new facilities cannot be provided, high quality public transport connections should be provided as part of the development. All development should:
 - be in the most accessible locations, reducing the need to travel by car and creating opportunities for healthy lifestyle choices;
 - support the provision of local services and facilities reducing reliance on the car;
 - support active travel, building in high quality design principles which prioritise walking and cycling above other modes, and expand the strategic and local cycle and Public Rights of Way networks;
 - be well connected in a safe manner to the strategic road and rail network ;
 - seek to reduce traffic impacts on the community, especially but not restricted to severance, air quality, and the efficiency of the transport network, particularly public transport. Development will not be permitted where impacts (individually or cumulatively) are likely to be severe.

Parking provision

- 6.7.6. The provision of the right amount and type of car and cycle parking is key in helping to deliver successful and sustainable developments. In areas of Dorset high levels of car ownership and limited public transport, combined with the rural character of the area, mean that a reduction in parking capacity or further discouragement of parking, would not necessarily discourage car use. A lack of suitable parking can often cause concern and distress in a local community. Pavement parking, obstruction of driveways and damage to soft landscaping and footways are some examples of what can occur as a result of parking problems.

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- 6.7.7. Sufficient, quality cycle parking provided in accessible and convenient locations is essential in ensuring that people can undertake active travel with the mental and physical health benefits that this brings. Additionally, cycling is a low carbon form of travel that contributes to reducing carbon emissions.
- 6.7.8. The local plan seeks to accommodate parking provision commensurate with the type, size and location of development that is proposed.

COM8. Parking standards in new development

Development will be permitted provided that:

- I. provision for residential and non-residential vehicle and cycle parking is made in accordance with the council's published local parking guidance, unless a different level of provision can be justified by local or site-specific circumstances;
- II. provision for parking for people with impaired mobility is made in accordance with the council's published local parking guidance;
- III. provision for motorcycle parking is made to a level appropriate for the size and location of the development, having regard to the council's published local parking guidance.

Infrastructure for electric and other low emission vehicles

- 6.7.9. In July 2018 the government set out its ambition that at least half of new cars would be ultra-low emission by 2030, as part of plans to make the UK the best place in the world to build and own electric vehicles. Its strategy includes plans to reduce emissions from the vehicles already on the UK's roads and drive the uptake of zero emission cars, vans and trucks. In 2017 the UK government announced a ban on the sale of all new petrol and diesel vehicles from 2040. The planning process provides a mechanism to assist in the delivery of the electric vehicle recharging infrastructure. National planning policy indicates that applications for development should be designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations.
- 6.7.10. The need for infrastructure for electric and other ultra-low emissions vehicles is growing to meet changing transport requirements and technologies. Differing levels of electric vehicle provision may be suitable in different circumstances. These are:

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- **Active** provision, where parking spaces are fully wired and connected, ready to use from the outset
- **Passive** provision, requiring the provision of necessary underlying infrastructure (e.g. capacity in the connection to the local electricity distribution network and electricity distribution board, as well as cabling to parking spaces) to enable the simple installation and activation of a charge point at a future date.

6.7.11. All relevant developments should include the necessary infrastructure to facilitate the increase in take-up of electric and ultra-low emission vehicles.

COMg. Provision of infrastructure for electric and other low emission vehicles

- I. Development proposals which include parking facilities or which are likely to generate vehicle movements or vehicle ownership will be expected to integrate the provision of infrastructure to enable the charging of electric or other ultra-low emission vehicles into the design and layout of the development.

Residential Developments

- II. Residential developments will be expected to include infrastructure suitable for charging electric or other ultra-low emission vehicles according to the following standards:
 - for all residential development with communal off-street parking provision, at least 20% of car spaces will be expected to include active charging facilities and passive provision for all remaining spaces with the layout of the car park ensuring that all spaces can be activated as demand increases; and
- III. for minor residential development (all developments of less than 10 dwellings):
 - passive infrastructure provision for each dwelling.
- IV. for major residential development (all developments of 10 dwellings or more):
 - at least 20% of dwellings will be expected to have active charging facilities, and the remaining 80% of dwellings will be expected to have passive provision; and
 - at least one rapid charging point clustered with a fast charging point for every 10 car spaces provided, or in accordance with local published guidance; and
 - where appropriate, the provision of an electric or ultra-low emission car club, with its own dedicated spaces including active charging facilities.

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- V. In circumstances where off street parking is not provided within a residential development proposal, the design and layout of the development will be expected to incorporate infrastructure to enable the on-street charging of electric or other ultra-low emission vehicles to occur safely.

Non-residential Developments

- VI. In all non-residential developments providing 1 or more car parking spaces, ducting should be installed to enable provision of charging facilities for electric or other ultra-low emission vehicles.
- VII. Where 10 or more car parking bays are provided, at least 20% of those bays are required to provide active charging facilities for electric or other ultra-low emission vehicles, and passive provision is required for all remaining bays.
- VIII. In major non-residential development where provision is required for taxi waiting, the taxi spaces will be expected to include active charging facilities.

Q: Policy COM9 sets out criteria for provision of infrastructure for electric vehicles at new development. Do you have any comments on Policy COM9?

6.8. Low carbon, decentralised and renewable energy schemes

- 6.8.1. Renewable energy includes energy obtained from natural processes that is replenished more rapidly than it is consumed. The EU Renewable Energy Directive lists a range of different renewable fuels⁴, all of which will help to reduce overall emissions of greenhouse gases.

⁴ Renewable fuels are listed in the Renewable Energy Directive as wind, solar, hydro energy; energy arising from the burning of plant and animal matter (known as bio energy); waste energy (e.g. landfill gas); and aerothermal, geothermal and hydrothermal energy (heat derived from the air, ground and water).

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- 6.8.2. In 2019 the UK became the first major economy in the world to pass laws⁵ to end its contribution to global warming by 2050, requiring greenhouse gas emissions to be brought to net zero by this date. Increasing the amount of energy produced from renewable sources will not only help to slow climate change but also ensure that the UK has a secure energy supply.
- 6.8.3. Currently in Dorset about 5.5% of the energy we use is from renewable energy sources. Locally generated renewable energy projects will be needed to increase this figure and to help meet the national net zero target. It is therefore important that opportunities are taken to generate renewable and low-carbon energy and create efficient energy networks through new development, for example by co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers, wherever this would be acceptable, and supporting community led initiatives.
- 6.8.4. There is considerable potential to generate renewable energy from within the plan area. This is evident from the large number of renewable energy projects that have been granted planning permission in recent years, primarily in the form of large scale solar farm schemes.
- 6.8.5. The high quality environment of the plan area is a major asset to the local economy but it also presents particular challenges in ensuring that renewable energy systems are sensitively located. Their individual or cumulative impact on the local environment, including the impact on the landscape character and rural amenity of the countryside or resident population will need to be considered, particularly in areas sensitive to change, and Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) are likely to be required.
- 6.8.6. Smaller-scale renewable energy proposals across the plan area are likely to be easier to integrate with the highly valued natural and built environment and will make an important contribution towards the target for installed capacity.
- 6.8.7. There may be the potential for the growth of energy crops and the use of agricultural or forestry residues for biomass boilers or for neighbourhood-scale decentralised renewable or low-carbon energy sources, such as combined heat and power schemes. There are also potential opportunities for new developments to fund investments in renewable schemes off-site which will help deliver carbon emission reductions that are difficult to achieve on-site.

⁵ The Climate Change Act 2008 (2050 Target Amendment) Order 2019

COM10. Low carbon and renewable energy development

- I. Proposals for generating heat or electricity from renewable energy sources (other than large scale wind energy) will be allowed wherever possible providing that the benefits of the development, such as the contribution towards generating renewable energy, significantly outweigh any harm. In addition, permission will only be granted provided:
 - any adverse impacts on the local landscape, townscape can be satisfactorily assimilated;
 - the proposal minimises harm to residential amenity by virtue of noise, vibration, overshadowing, flicker, or other detrimental emissions, during construction, operation and decommissioning;
 - adverse impacts upon designated wildlife sites, nature conservation interests, and biodiversity are satisfactorily mitigated.
 - any harm to the significance of a heritage asset (including its setting) is less than substantial.

Q: Policy COM10 sets out criteria for provision of infrastructure for low carbon and renewable energy development. Do you have any comments on Policy COM10?

6.9. Wind energy development

- 6.9.1. Proposals for wind energy development should only be granted planning permission if the development site is in an area identified as suitable for wind energy development in a local or neighbourhood plan; and following consultation, it can be demonstrated that the planning impacts identified by affected local communities have been fully addressed and therefore the proposal has their backing.

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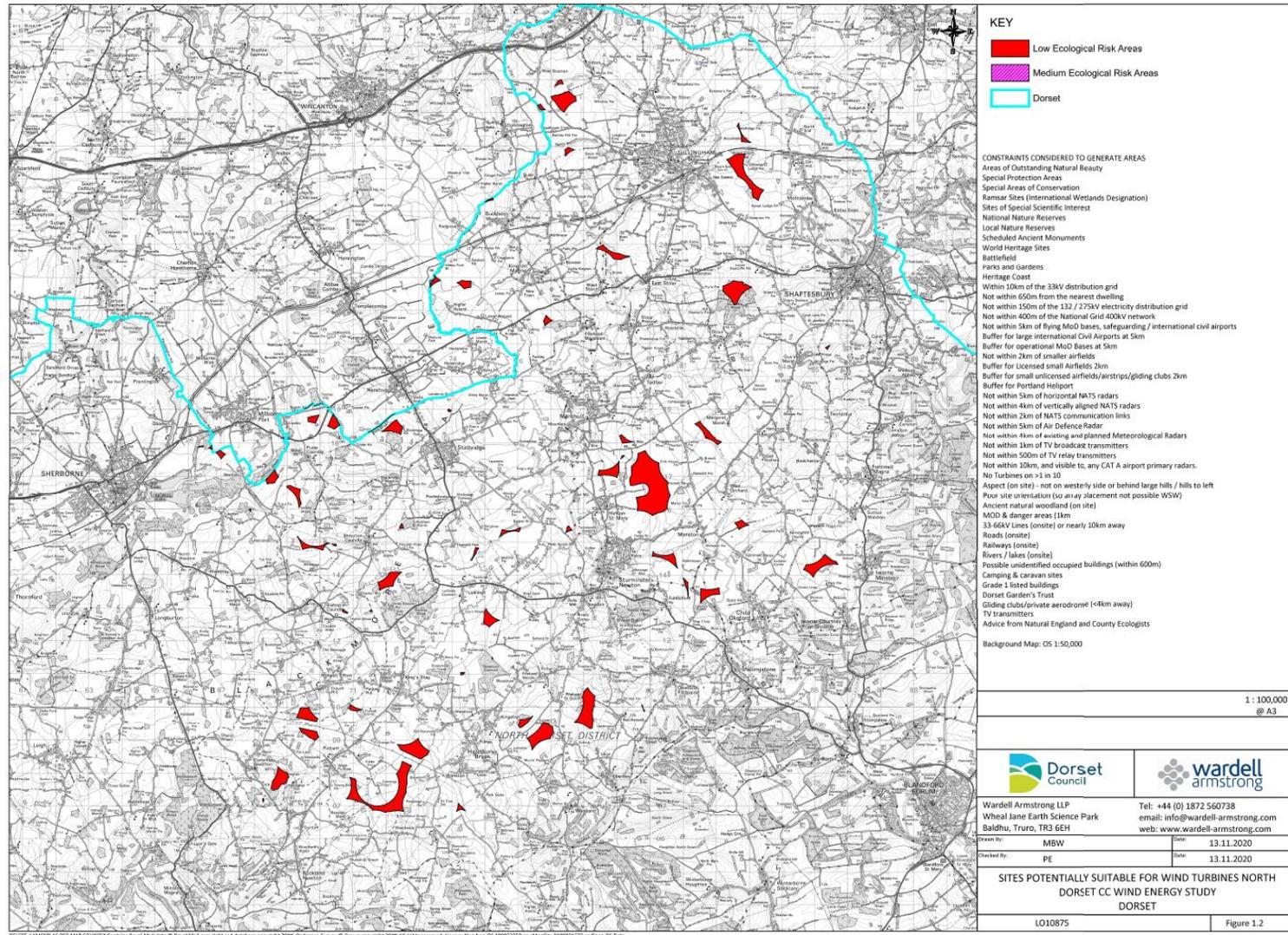
- 6.9.2. In order to increase the supply of renewable energy generation in Dorset to any significant degree, there is a need to identify areas for wind energy development. Identifying locations suitable for wind development will go a long way to reducing greenhouse gas emissions from Dorset and help to address climate change.
- 6.9.3. The opportunities for larger scale wind developments have been identified through an assessment of the available wind resource and consideration of environmental constraints including heritage, landscape and ecological constraints. However, if any of these areas were to be supported for wind development, further detailed work would be necessary to support their allocation as well as more thorough work to support any subsequent planning applications.
- 6.9.4. The potential locations are shown in Figure 6.5 and Figure 6.6 and could deliver around 400 Gwh of renewable energy. If any of these areas have community backing and the identified planning impacts can be fully addressed, the sites could be allocated through the next stage of the local plan.

Q: The locations identified as opportunities for larger scale wind developments are shown on Figure 6.5 and Figure 6.6.

1. Do you support the principle of allocating any of the areas for wind turbines?
2. Are there any planning issues that would need to be resolved to enable community backing to be secured?

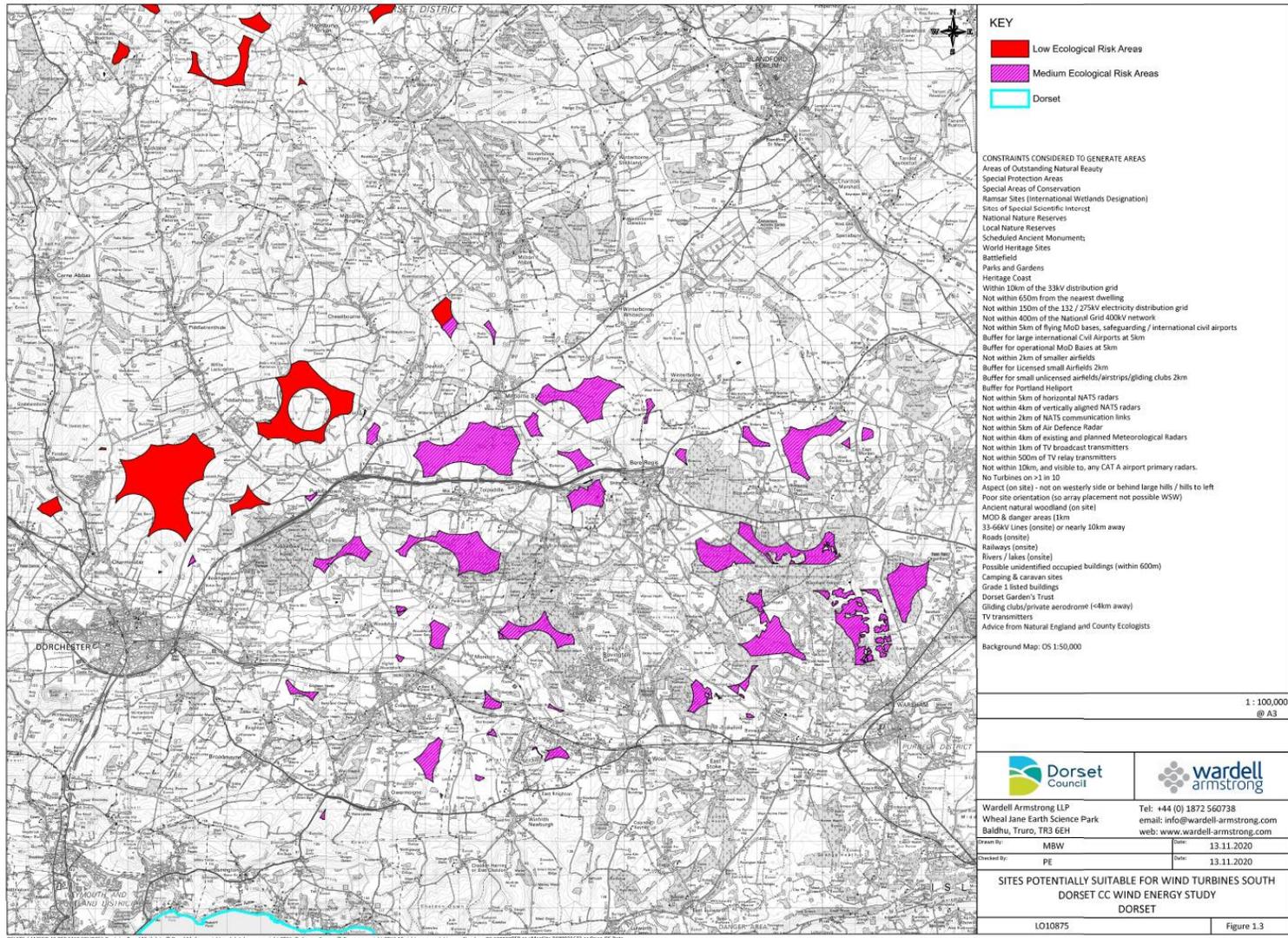
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Figure 6.5: Wind development opportunities – Northern map



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Figure 6.6: Wind development opportunities – Southern map



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Smaller scale wind developments

- 6.9.5. Proposals for small scale wind energy developments, up to a maximum of 15m to the hub, will be supported where they can be demonstrated to be community-led.
- 6.9.6. A neighbourhood plan may seek to identify suitable areas for small scale wind energy development. However, it is not considered appropriate for neighbourhood development plans to identify areas suitable for larger scale wind energy development. This scale of development is considered strategic because the impacts of development are likely to extend beyond the neighbourhood plan area.
- 6.9.7. Limiting the cluster size and scale of wind energy development is also important in the light of the high landscape sensitivity of much of the plan area which is designated as Heritage Coast and/or an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- 6.9.8. Proposals for small scale wind energy development will only be supported where on the impacts on landscape character, heritage assets, residential amenity, designated wildlife sites, biodiversity, air traffic safety, and radar and telecommunications are acceptable.
- 6.9.9. All wind energy proposals must include appropriately detailed, technical impact assessments which follow industry best practice and clearly demonstrate that impacts on all properties are within acceptable thresholds.
- 6.9.10. Cumulative impacts of existing operational, consented and proposed developments must be assessed, and suitable mitigation measures proposed, to minimise impacts on biodiversity and landscape character.

COM11. Small scale wind energy development

- I. Proposals for small-scale wind energy development up to a maximum of 15m to the hub will be supported where it can be demonstrated to be community-led or is set out within an area defined as being suitable for wind energy development within a made neighbourhood plan. In addition, permission will only be granted provided:
 - any adverse impacts on the local landscape, townscape or areas of historical interest can be satisfactorily assimilated;
 - the proposal minimises harm to residential amenity by virtue of noise, vibration, overshadowing, flicker, or other detrimental emissions, during construction, its operation and decommissioning;

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- adverse impacts upon designated wildlife sites, nature conservation interests, and biodiversity are satisfactorily mitigated;
- all impacts on air traffic safety, radar and telecommunications have been adequately mitigated;
- cumulative landscape character and visual impacts with any operational, consented and proposed development neither results in significant coalescence nor becomes a defining characteristic of the wider fabric, character and quality of the landscape; and
- following public consultation all material planning impacts identified by affected local communities have been adequately addressed.

Q: Policy COM11 deals specifically with small scale wind energy developments. Do you have any comments on Policy COM11?

6.10. Utilities

6.10.1. In planning for the area, the council will work with utility service providers to assess the quality and capacity of energy supplies, water supplies, telecommunications, drainage, sewerage, and sewage treatment provision, and their ability to meet forecast demands. Where adequate capacity is not available within existing systems, assurances will be required that the necessary infrastructure will be provided.

Telecommunications and radio masts

6.10.2. Modern telecommunications are an essential and beneficial element in the life of the local community and the national economy. New technology has spread rapidly to meet the growing demand for better communications at work and at home with regular home working becoming more common. Within the plan area, there are currently a number of sites that accommodate transmitters, masts and antennas.

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- 6.10.3. Public interest and anxiety over telecommunications has made it a contentious planning issue. Operators of communication technology have a duty to abide by codes and regulations in terms of public health. Where telecommunications development is proposed, the following information will normally be sought:
- a statement that self-certifies that the cumulative exposure, when operational, will not exceed International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection guidelines;
 - the outcome of any consultations with organisations with an interest in the proposed development, in particular with the relevant body where a mast is to be installed near a school or college.
- 6.10.4. Proposals which involve the installation of additional equipment to an existing mast or tower will need to consider the cumulative impact upon the width and height of the existing structure. Existing masts, buildings and other structures should normally be used, unless the need for a new site has been justified, or the impact of the additional equipment leads to unacceptable visual harm. Where new sites are required, equipment should be sympathetically designed and camouflaged where appropriate and removed when no longer required.

Broadband

- 6.10.5. Digital connectivity plays a key role in both improving productivity and addressing environmental challenges. Changing working practices and increased digitisation mean it is more important than ever to be “connected”. Reliable, resilient and up-to-date digital infrastructure can support economic activity and provide community services.
- 6.10.6. The provision of broadband and electronic communications in some villages and rural areas remains very poor, particularly in terms of capacity and coverage. Across Dorset, 150,000 people are offline and 70,000 have never been online.
- 6.10.7. One of the government’s top priorities is to stimulate private sector investment to deliver the best superfast broadband network in Europe. Monies have been allocated by government to support broadband provision in Dorset. The Superfast Dorset programme has been delivering fibre optic based superfast broadband to premises in need of improved service meaning 97.3% of the county can now get access to superfast broadband.
- 6.10.8. Fibre to the Premises (FTTP), sometimes called ultrafast or full fibre broadband, is where a fibre cable runs directly from the telephone exchange into the home or business. This technology is significantly faster than standard broadband and is also

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capable of much higher speeds in the future. There are a number of infrastructure providers active in Dorset, some of which make installation of FTTP to larger new developments free of charge. On smaller sites co-funding or alternative solutions may be available.

- 6.10.9. In order to improve connectivity, infrastructure to achieve access to the high-speed electronic communications network will be required in all new homes and businesses. On larger developments (10+ dwellings), and on other developments where practicable, this should be provided through infrastructure to support fibre cabling.

COM12. The provision of utilities service infrastructure

- I. Development will not be permitted where the problems associated with the lack of necessary utilities service infrastructure, including energy supplies, drainage, sewerage, sewage treatment and water supply, cannot be overcome.
- II. Proposals for the development of telecommunications or radio equipment will be permitted provided that:
 - the development will not be unduly detrimental to the appearance of the locality, particularly in sensitive areas of landscape, nature conservation or townscape importance; and
 - the applicant has demonstrated that there is a need for the technology, that all technically feasible alternatives have been explored, and that the application proposal results in the least visual harm.
- III. All new residential and commercial developments should provide the infrastructure required to enable connectivity to the high-speed electronic communications network unless it is not practical to do so. For major developments (10+ dwellings or sites of greater than 0.5 hectares) this should be through direct fibre to the premise (FTTP) access.

Q: Policy COM12 supports the need for higher quality broadband provision. Do you have any comments on this?