

Cabinet

3 March 2026

Adoption of Local Heritage List For Decision

Cabinet Member:

Cllr S Bartlett, Planning and Emergency Planning

Local Councillor(s): all

Senior Leadership Team:

J Britton, Executive Director for Place Services

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Statutory Authority:

Report status: Public (the exemption paragraph is N/A)

Executive summary

- 1.1 Dorset (Dorset Council and BCP Council) was successful in jointly securing government funding for a pilot project to create a list of local heritage assets.
- 1.2 A local list includes non-designated heritage assets, which do not meet the threshold for formal designation (such as listed buildings) but nonetheless have local heritage value. Non-designated heritage assets have a degree of heritage significance which merits consideration in planning decisions¹.
- 1.3 A draft list has been compiled following a public consultation exercise (link included in main report and Appendix(s)). The data has been formatted so that all entries contain consistent information. The draft list went out to public consultation for verification earlier in the year.
- 1.4 Plan-making bodies should make information about non-designated heritage assets accessible to the public to provide greater clarity and certainty for developers and decision-makers, and it is therefore helpful to keep an up-to-date local list of such assets². The purpose of this report is to request that the draft list be agreed and published by Dorset Council. It is also recommended that authority be delegated to the Director of Planning, in consultation with the

¹Planning Practice Guidance, para. 039 Reference ID: 18a-039-20190723

² Planning Practice Guidance – para 040 Reference ID: 18a-040-20190723.

Cabinet Member for Planning, to approve further modifications to the list in the interests of maintaining an up-to-date record.

2. **Recommendation(s)**

- 2.1 That the list of local heritage assets is approved and the list is published on Dorset Council's website;
- 2.2 That delegated authority is given to the Director of Planning, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning, to approve any future modifications to the list.

3. **Reason for the recommendation(s)**

- 3.1 To approve and publish a list of local heritage assets which can be used to inform future planning decisions.

3. **Background**

- 3.1 Non-designated heritage assets include buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified by plan-making bodies as having a degree of heritage significance meriting consideration in planning decisions but which do not meet the criteria for designated heritage assets.
- 3.2 Most buildings have little or no heritage significance and thus do not constitute heritage assets. Only a minority have enough heritage significance to merit identification as non-designated heritage assets, and so it is important to maintain an up-to-date public record which is kept under review so that changes can be incorporated as necessary. Publishing a local list ensures transparency about their significance and the fact that their status is a material planning consideration.

Policy Background

- 3.3 Paragraph 216 of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024) states: The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss to, and the significance of, the heritage asset.
- 3.4 The following local plan policies are relevant to non-designated heritage assets:

3.4.1 [Christchurch and East Dorset LP 2014](#)

Objective 2 refers to a local list in reference to maintaining and improving the character of towns and villages.

Policy HE1 (Valuing and conserving our historic environment). Policy refers to non-designated heritage assets and a local list of heritage assets to be created and maintained.

3.4.2 [West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland LP 2015](#)

Section 2.3 (Protecting and enhancing our heritage assets)

Policy ENV4 (Heritage Assets). Policy

includes requirements relating to non-designated heritage assets which are similar to para 216 of the NPPF and requires any harm to be justified.

3.4.3 [North Dorset Local Plan Part 1 2016](#)

Para 4.116 refers to local listings. Para 4.169 states that the Council has developed a local list of non-designated heritage assets and that a series of criteria have been established.

Para 4.127 refers to non-designated heritage assets

Policy 5 (The Historic Environment). Policy includes a section on “Justifying harm to a non-designated heritage asset”

3.4.4 [Swanage Local Plan 2017](#)

Although there is no policy as this is covered by the Purbeck LP, paras 270-271 (page 77) discuss the option of setting up a local list.

3.4.5 [Purbeck Local Plan 2024](#)

Policy E2 (Historic Environment). Policy includes requirements relating to non-designated heritage assets which are similar to para 216 of the NPPF (and other details). Glossary item on “heritage asset” refers to local listing.

3.5 Dorset was successful in obtaining government funding through a joint bid with BCP for a pilot project to develop a local list. Land Use Consultants (LUC) was appointed by Dorset Council on behalf of both Councils to carry out the work.

3.6 The first part of the work was to develop and agree a rigorous and consistent set of criteria, standards and processes for both Dorset Council and BCP Council which could then be used to assess heritage assets. This work included:

a) **Standards for inclusion** on the local list: levels of significance which vary from none through little, moderate and high to outstanding. To meet the threshold for inclusion in the list, the asset needs to be outstanding in one criterion, of high interest in one and moderate in two, or moderate or above in at least four of the criteria.

b) **Types of heritage asset.** These have been divided into four categories: buildings; structures; gardens and designed landscapes; and sites and places. Definitions and examples are detailed at the following link to the Council’s website: [Types of heritage asset - Dorset Council](#)

c) **Types of heritage value:** these were drawn from the National Planning Policy Framework and Historic England’s Conservation principles, policy and guidance. There are six values: archaeological; historic illustrative; historic associative; architectural; aesthetic or artistic; and communal. For each of these values, a definition is provided together with examples of heritage assets which feature the value: [Types of heritage value - Dorset Council](#). Factors that might affect the level of the value are also given.

3.7 Of key importance was ensuring that all the assets had met a consistent set of standards that have been assessed and checked. For this reason it was not

possible to automatically include lists of non-designated heritage assets included in Conservation Area appraisals or Neighbourhood plans. In many cases these include a list of assets but do not have a description or explanation how they meet the required criteria. As they are identified in these documents they can still be considered as material considerations when planning applications are being assessed, but the detailed assessment against the criteria would have to be undertaken by a Conservation officer at that stage in the process.

- 3.8 Public engagement was undertaken in accordance with Dorset Council's [Statement of Community Involvement](#). In recognition of the value of ensuring that local lists are inclusive and representative of the communities that value them, consultation involved engaging with parish councils, heritage groups and members of the public, all of whom were encouraged to submit nominations through an online form. This was developed by LUC and a link was included on the web pages of both Councils to enable members of the public to submit nominations. Some respondents submitted hard copies of nominations which were also considered. Online meetings were held for those interested in learning more about the process.
- 3.9 Work then took place to ensure the data is in a consistent format for the verification process (which took place earlier this year). Having a project involving two local authorities has also produced robust criteria for the whole of Dorset which is of benefit.
- 3.10 Checking the nominated assets has been time consuming to ensure they fulfil the required criteria. Some organisations did not use the online form and submitted lists of assets which did not contain sufficient information to be scored. These organisations were requested to list their top assets, and these were then assessed using online information available by LUC.
- 3.11 A verification process was undertaken earlier this year, when the public were asked to check the list and inform us if they had evidence that there were errors relating to any of the assets. Fifteen responses were received and information submitted has been used to check the assets and refine the final list which is now submitted for adoption.
- 3.12 At this time, people who had submitted assets during the consultation process were contacted and informed if their nominated asset had met the criteria for inclusion on the list. All identified owners of assets were contacted by letter (as we did not have email addresses) to inform them that their asset had been included on the draft list which would be taken to committee in due course.

Next steps

- 3.13 Members are requested to approve the list for publication ([local-heritage-list-for-verification-2024](#)). Assets can then be uploaded onto the Council's mapping system (QGIS) and this will provide clarity and transparency about their status as material considerations when planning applications are being assessed.
- 3.14 Once the list has been approved, it will be possible to add to the list in future as additional assets are identified for example through the planning process or as a result of communities undertaking work to identify local assets (for example through the neighbourhood plan making process). In order to streamline this process the Committee is also asked to give delegated authority to the Director of Planning, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning, to approve future additions to the list. In order for assets to be added to the list they will need to be submitted via the form on the Council's website to ensure that they meet the required criteria. The assets will also be added to the Council's Historic Environment Record (HER).
- 3.15 It is proposed to have a three month window during the year, when additional assets can be submitted for consideration to be added to the list.

4. Alternative options considered

- 4.1 The project has been undertaken in partnership with BCP which has advantages both in establishing a consistent framework across BCP and Dorset Council areas, and this was also essential to secure government funding needed to procure LUC to undertake the work. Alternative options of not working jointly with BCP or attempting to carry out the work in-house without recourse to Government funding would have placed undue pressure on team resources and missed out on the funding opportunity.
- 4.2 An alternative option of not proceeding with a local list was considered. This was discounted because it would run counter to advice from Government and Historic England, and would result in less certainty about the status of locally important heritage assets in Dorset. As a result it was agreed that appointing a consultancy to undertake the work was the preferred option. This had the advantage of being able to draw on a variety of skills and disciplines for a project which required both conservation and digital skills.

5. Legal considerations

- 5.1 As set out above, there are local plan policies and national planning policy which requires the impacts of proposed development affecting non-designated heritage assets to be considered during the planning application process. That said, they do not constitute formal designations and there are

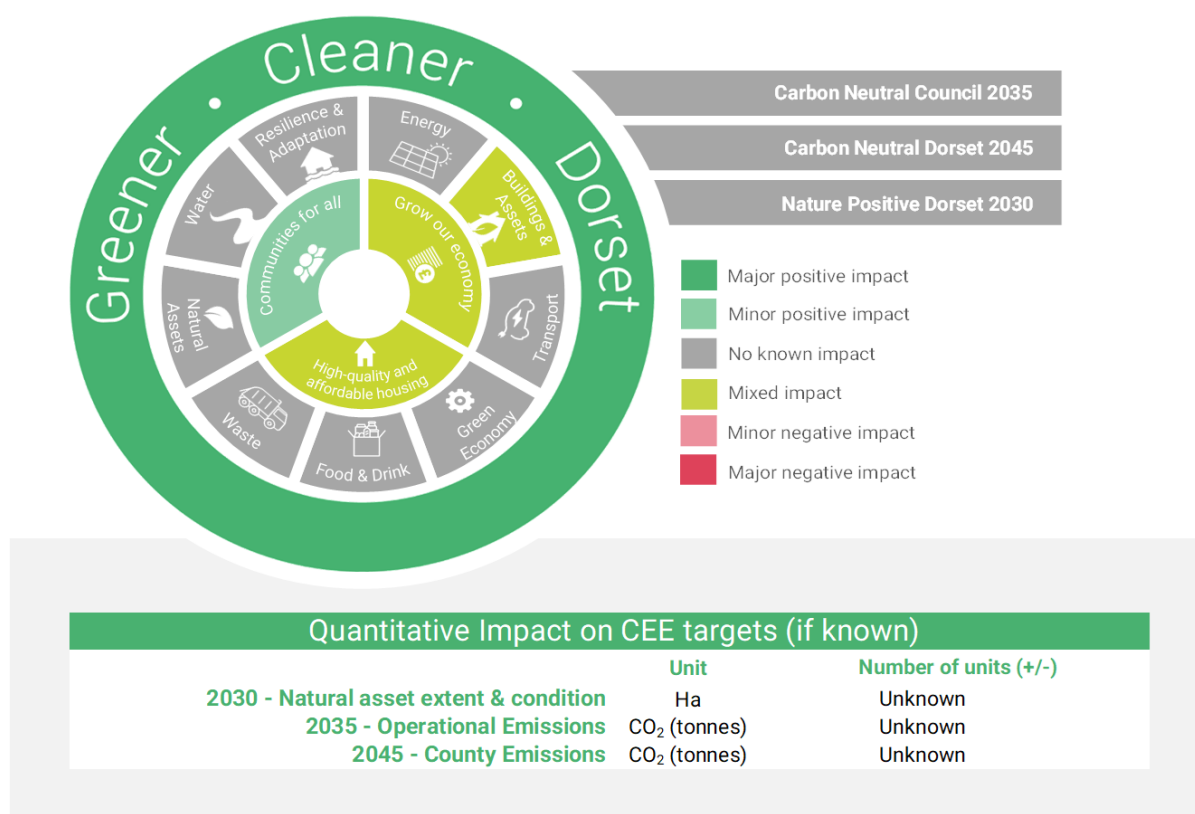
no other legal implications or additional constraints placed on owners of assets as a result of their inclusion in the list.

6. Financial implications

- 6.1.1 The work to develop the list was undertaken jointly with BCP through consultants engaged using government grant funding. There has been some Council input through officer time but no capital funding. Maintenance of the list will be undertaken by members of the conservation team as capacity allows.

7. Natural environment, climate & ecology implications

- 7.1.1 By ensuring that non designated heritage assets are taken into consideration during the planning process this process will raise awareness of locally important heritage assets. Where the assets are buildings and can be incorporated within a proposed development, the embedded carbon within them may reduce the quantity of building materials required.



- 7.1.2 In general the proposal is neutral in terms of the majority of the aspects considered in the wheel. Adopting a list will not result directly in outcomes such as solar panels or retrofitting, and this accounts for the largely neutral outcome. While an adopted list will not result in additional planning constraints, there may be occasions where non designated sites are retained within a proposal and this would have a positive impact in terms of embedded carbon.

8. **Well-being and health implications**

- 8.1 Non designated heritage assets add to the interest and diversity of local communities, thereby having a positive impact on health and wellbeing.

9. **Other implications**

- 9.1 None

10. **Risk implications**

- 10.1 HAVING CONSIDERED: the risks associated with this decision; the level of risk has been identified as:

Current Risk: low to medium

Residual Risk: low

11. **Equalities**

- 11.1 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.

Whilst there is no absolute requirement to fully remove any disadvantage the Duty is to have “regard to” and remove or minimise disadvantage and in considering the merits of this planning application the planning authority has taken into consideration the requirements of the Public Sector Equalities Duty. In this case it is not considered that the adoption of a local list will impact on people with protected characteristics.

12. **Appendices**

- 12.1 [local-heritage-list-for-verification-2024](#)

Background papers

- 13.1 [The Dorset Local Heritage List - Dorset Council](#)

14 **Report sign-off**

- 11.1 This report has been through the internal report clearance process and has been signed off by the Director for Planning and on behalf of the Monitoring Officer.