

Puddletown Neighbourhood Plan

Basic Conditions Statement

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Plan period: 2019-2031

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1. Introduction

When a neighbourhood plan proposal is submitted to the local planning authority, it needs to be accompanied by a statement, known as the basic conditions statement, which explains how:

- the plan meets the legal requirements in terms of its contents and coverage
- the plan has had appropriate regard to national policy and is in general conformity with the strategic policies in the development plan for the area
- the plan will contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, is compatible with EU obligations, and would not be likely to have a significant effect on a European site (as defined in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2012) or a European offshore marine site (as defined in the Offshore Marine Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations 2007) (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects).

2. Legal Requirements

Has the draft plan been submitted by a qualifying body?

Yes – Puddletown Area Parish Council was responsible for the submission of the draft neighbourhood plan and supporting documents.

Does the proposed neighbourhood plan state the period for which it is to have effect?

Yes – the plan makes clear on the front cover and in section 1.1 that it is intended to cover the period from 2019-2031.

Is what is being proposed in the neighbourhood development plan making provision in relation to land or sites in the Neighbourhood Plan Area?

Yes - the Neighbourhood Plan proposal relates to planning matters (the use and development of land) and its policies relate to the designated Neighbourhood Plan area or parts thereof.

Do any of the policies relate to excluded development?

The policies contained in the Plan cover:

- Policy 1. Local Green Spaces
- Policy 2. Local landscape features
- Policy 3. Village character
- Policy 4. Respecting the history of Puddletown
- Policy 5. Design
- Policy 6. Wildlife and natural habitats
- Policy 7. European and internationally protected sites
- Policy 8. Flood Risk
- Policy 9. Noise Assessments
- Policy 10. The scale and location of new housing development in Puddletown
- Policy 11. House types
- Policy 12. Housing and community uses site allocation: land at Athelhampton Road
- Policy 13. Reserve site allocation: Northbrook Farm
- Policy 14. Supporting community facilities and local services
- Policy 15. Creating safer roads and pedestrian / cycle routes
- Policy 16. Parking Provision

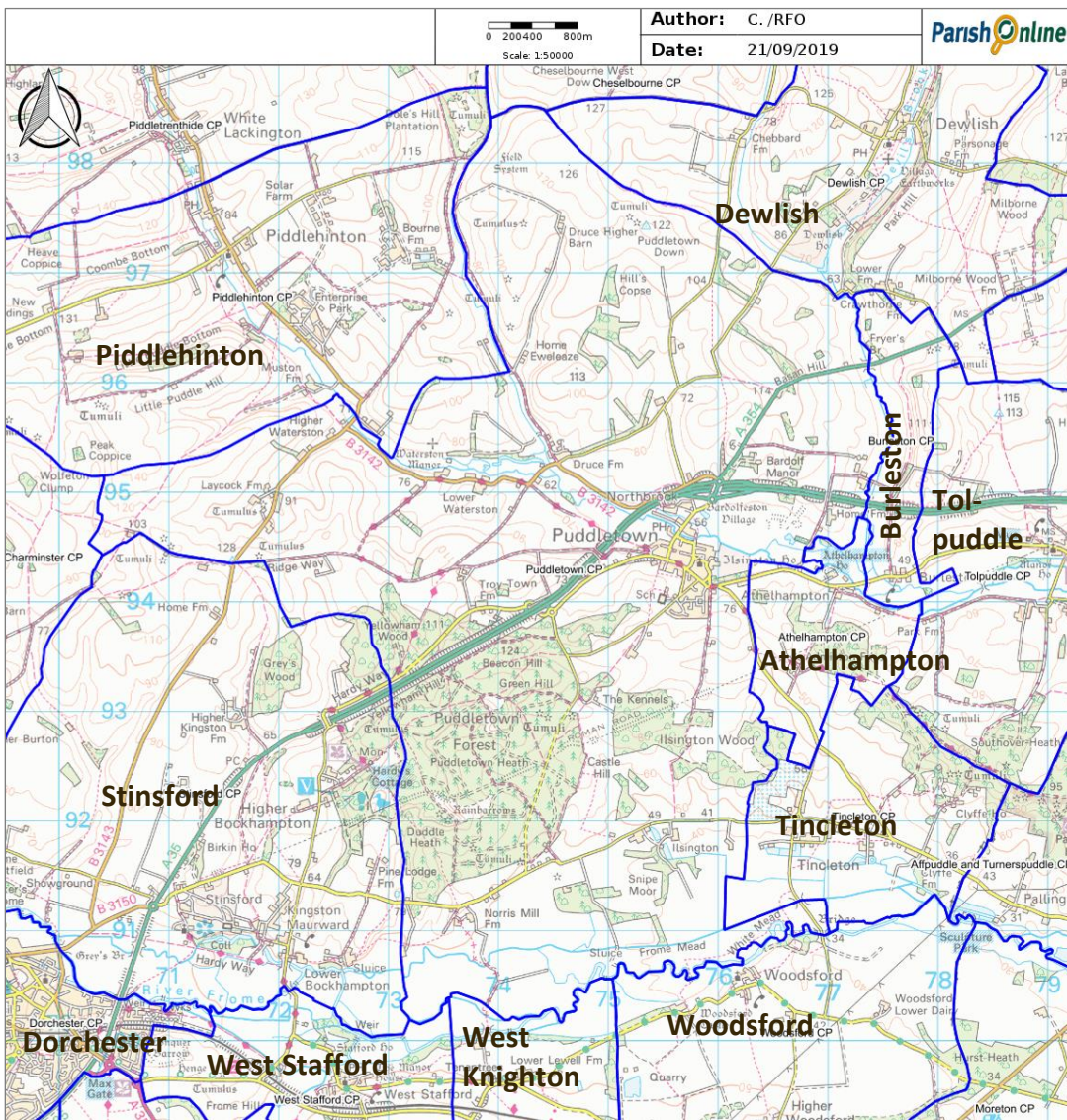
The Neighbourhood Plan policies do not deal with county matters (mineral extraction and waste development), nationally significant infrastructure or development that falls within Annex 1 to Council Directive 85/337/EEC.

Do any of the policies extend beyond the neighbourhood area or cover an area where there is a neighbourhood development plan already in place?

No - the Neighbourhood Plan policies relate only to Puddletown parish (which is the designated Neighbourhood Plan Area) and to no other area.

There are no other neighbourhood plans relating to Puddletown parish or the remaining parishes in the Parish Council’s area (which includes Athelhampton, Burleston and Tolpuddle). The Piddle Valley parishes to the north-west are subject to their own Neighbourhood Plan (which was made in May 2018), and to the west Stinsford Parish has also been designated as a Neighbourhood Plan area, but no plan as yet has been published.

Map 1 – Neighbourhood Plan Designated Area



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3. Consideration of National and Strategic Policies

The Neighbourhood Plan must have regard to national policy and guidance from the Secretary of State and be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan that covers the area.

The following conformity assessment summarises how the Neighbourhood Plan relates to the relevant national planning guidance and strategic development plan policies.

National Planning Policy and Guidance

National planning guidance comes primarily from the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as issued in February 2019, but where appropriate, reference is made to the online National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) and Ministerial Statements.

The Development Plan for the Neighbourhood Plan area

The West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan, which was adopted by West Dorset District Council on 22nd October 2015, contains the bulk of the strategic planning policies for the area. Dorset County Council's Minerals Strategy (adopted May 2014) also forms part of the development plan for the area, together with the more recently adopted Minerals Site Plan and the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Waste Plan. None of the minerals or waste development plans contain proposals for the Neighbourhood Plan Area, other than identify Minerals Safeguarding Areas (with particular reference to sand and gravel, most notably in the southern part of the parish).

The NPPG makes clear that in considering whether a policy is in general conformity, a view should be taken on whether the neighbourhood plan policy or development proposal supports and upholds the general principle that the strategic policy is concerned with and the degree, if any, of conflict and the rationale and evidence to justify that approach.

The NPPG also states that it is important to minimise any conflicts between policies in a neighbourhood plan and an emerging Local Plan, and that the reasoning and evidence informing the Local Plan process may be relevant to the consideration of the basic conditions against which a neighbourhood plan is tested. Work progressed on a review of the Local Plan, and a preferred options document was published for consultation (August – October 2018). However in June 2019 Dorset Council's Cabinet made the decision to halt this work and instead focus its resources on the production of a Dorset-wide Local Plan. The decision favoured the latter, with the proposed timescales including the following milestones:

- >> Options Consultation: September 2020
- >> Publication of draft plan: September 2021
- >> Examination: Summer 2022
- >> Adoption: Spring 2023

As such there is currently no clear steer on the emerging local plan policies.

The following table considers each policy or groups of related policies in turn, against the relevant national and local policies for that particular topic. Prior to April 2019, West Dorset District Council provided advice on which policies or parts thereof should be considered strategic. The list is reproduced in Appendix 1.

Conformity Testing

The NPPG makes clear that in considering whether a policy is in general conformity, a view should be taken on whether the neighbourhood plan policy or development proposal supports and upholds the general principle that the strategic policy is concerned with and the degree, if any, of conflict and the rationale and evidence to justify that approach.

The NPPG also states that it is important to minimise any conflicts between policies in a neighbourhood plan and an emerging Local Plan, and that the reasoning and evidence informing the Local Plan process

may be relevant to the consideration of the basic conditions against which a neighbourhood plan is tested.

The following table considers each policy in turn, against the relevant national and local policies for that particular topic.

SECTION 2 Local Landscape Character and the Built Environment	Policy 1. Local Green Spaces Policy 2. Local Landscape Features Policy 3. Village character Policy 4. Respecting the history of Puddletown Policy 5. Design
Overview of national policy and guidance	
<p>NPPF para 99. The designation of land as Local Green Space through local and neighbourhood plans allows communities to identify and protect green areas of particular importance to them. Designating land as Local Green Space should be consistent with the local planning of sustainable development and complement investment in sufficient homes, jobs and other essential services. Local Green Spaces should only be designated when a plan is prepared or updated, and be capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period.</p> <p>NPPF para 100. The Local Green Space designation should only be used where the green space is: a) in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves; b) demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and c) local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.</p> <p>NPPF para 101. Policies for managing development within a Local Green Space should be consistent with those for Green Belts.</p> <p>NPPF para 122. Planning policies should support development that makes efficient use of land, taking into account: a) the need for development, and the availability of land suitable for accommodating it; b) local market conditions and viability; c) the availability and capacity of infrastructure and services; d) the desirability of maintaining an area’s prevailing character and setting (including residential gardens), or of promoting regeneration and change; and e) the importance of securing well-designed, attractive and healthy places.</p> <p>NPPF para 125. Plans should, at the most appropriate level, set out a clear design vision and expectations, so that applicants have as much certainty as possible about what is likely to be acceptable. Design policies should be developed with local communities so they reflect local aspirations, and are grounded in an understanding and evaluation of each area’s defining characteristics. Neighbourhood plans can play an important role in identifying the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in development.</p> <p>NPPF para 126. the level of detail and degree of prescription should be tailored to the circumstances in each place, and should allow a suitable degree of variety where this would be justified.</p> <p>NPPF para 170. Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment</p> <p>NPPF para 180. Planning policies and decisions should limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation</p> <p>NPPF para 184. Heritage assets range from sites and buildings of local historic value to those of the highest significance, ... and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance.</p> <p>NPPF para 197. 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 and the significance of the heritage asset.</p> <p>Reference is also made to the ten characteristics identified in the National Design Guide 2019, i.e:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Context - C1 Understand and relate well to the site, its local and wider context; C2 Value heritage, local history and culture – Identity – I1 Respond to existing local character and identity; I2 Well-designed, high quality and attractive; 	

I3 Create character and identity

- Built form – B1 Compact form of development; B2 Appropriate building types and forms; B3 Destinations
- Movement – M1 An integrated network of routes for all modes of transport; M2 A clear structure and hierarchy of connected streets; M3 Well-considered parking, servicing and utilities infrastructure for all users
- Nature – N1 Provide high quality, green open spaces with a variety of landscapes and activities, including play; N2 Improve and enhance water management; N3 Support rich and varied biodiversity
- Public spaces – P1 Create well-located, high quality and attractive public spaces; P2 Provide well-designed spaces that are safe; Make sure public spaces support social interaction 32
- Uses – U1 A mix of uses; U2 A mix of home tenures, types and sizes; U3 Socially inclusive
- Homes & buildings – H1 Healthy, comfortable and safe internal and external environment; H2 Well-related to external amenity and public spaces; H3 Attention to detail: storage, waste, servicing and utilities
- Resources – R1 Follow the energy hierarchy; R2 Selection of materials and construction techniques; R3 Maximise resilience
- Lifespan – L1 Well-managed and maintained; L2 Adaptable to changing needs and evolving technologies; L3 A sense of ownership

Most relevant Local Plan policies

WDWPLP ENV3 - Green Infrastructure Network -states that the councils will work together with local communities and other relevant partners to develop a green infrastructure strategy for the plan area. The policy states that development that would cause harm to the green infrastructure network or undermine the reasons for an area’s inclusion within the network will not be permitted unless clearly outweighed by other considerations.

WDWPLP ENV4 - Heritage assets – refers to the protection of heritage assets, including non-designated assets, and broadly mirrors national planning guidance.

WDWPLP ENV10-14 - are about Achieving High Quality and Sustainability in Design – with emphasis placed on development contributing positively to the local identity of the area. ENV10 states that development should be informed by the character of the site and its surroundings, provide for the future retention and protection of trees and other features that contribute to an area’s distinctive character, and where appropriate incorporate features that would enhance local character. ENV11 makes clear that streets and spaces are well-defined, safe and pleasant to use, with active and overlooked public areas and secure private areas. ENV12 relates to the siting, alignment, design, scale, mass, and materials used, which should complement and respect the character of the surrounding area or actively improve legibility or reinforce the sense of place. ENV13 encourages achieving high standards of environmental performance.

WDWPLP ENV15 – on the Efficient and Appropriate Use of Land - states that development should optimise the potential of the site and make efficient use of land, subject to the limitations inherent in the site and impact on local character.

WDWPLP ENV16 – on Amenity - states that proposals for external lighting schemes should be clearly justified and designed to minimize potential pollution from glare or spillage of light.

WDWPLP COM5 - resists the loss of open space of public value and recreational facilities. Strategic Approach clarifies that a flexible approach may be taken which recognizes the changing needs in society

Assessment of general conformity

Policy 1: deals with Local Green Spaces. These have been assessed against the criteria set out in the NPPF. A separate evidence documents has been produced to demonstrate this. The wording of the policy is very similar to that found to have met the basic conditions in other Dorset Neighbourhood Plans (e.g. Hazelbury Bryan).

Policy 2: identifies features of local landscape importance, and that these should be retained or reinforced through development. This is clearly in line with the national policy on conserving and enhancing the natural environment, and the strategic approach reflected in Policy ENV10 of the Local Plan.

Policy 3: on Village Character similarly identifies the overarching characteristics of Puddletown Village, and how

these should be retained or reinforced through development. Whilst there is some tension between this policy and the need to make efficient use of land, both national and local policy make clear that this needs to be considered against the need to avoid harming the area’s local character. Given the character of the area and the availability of land suitable for accommodating the identified needs without relying on windfall infill development, this policy is not considered to be in conflict.

Policy 4: relates to local heritage and specifically refers to key features identified through the Conservation Area Appraisal, identified Locally Important Buildings and also the promotion of the area’s connections with Thomas Hardy and the Tolpuddle Martyrs. The policy has been based on an understanding and evaluation of the area’s heritage, and no obvious conflicts with national or local policy have been identified.

Policy 5: deals with design, based on an appraisal of the village’s character that was drawn up by Urban Fera working with local residents. The policies have been written to avoid being over-prescriptive but instead highlight the key considerations and also the need to consider the design in the context of Dorset Council’s declared climate change emergency. National policy is very clear that Neighbourhood plans can play an important role in identifying the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in development.

SECTION 3 The Environment	Policy 6.	Wildlife and natural habitats
	Policy 7.	European and internationally protected sites
	Policy 8.	Flood Risk
	Policy 9.	Noise Assessments

Overview of national policy and guidance

NPPF para 150. New development should be planned to avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change.

NPPF para 163. When determining any planning applications, local planning authorities should ensure that flood risk is not increased elsewhere.

NPPF para 165. Major developments should incorporate sustainable drainage systems unless there is clear evidence that this would be inappropriate. The systems used should: a) take account of advice from the lead local flood authority; b) have appropriate proposed minimum operational standards; c) have maintenance arrangements in place to ensure an acceptable standard of operation for the lifetime of the development; and d) where possible, provide multifunctional benefits.

NPPF para 174. To protect and enhance biodiversity, plans should identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.

NPPF para 180. Planning policies and decisions should avoid noise giving rise to significant adverse impacts on health and the quality of life.

Noise Policy Statement for England (2010) aims to avoid significant adverse impacts on health and quality of life, and mitigate and minimise adverse impacts. It noted that further research was required to increase understanding of what may constitute a significant adverse impact on health and quality of life from noise. The **NPPG Paragraph: 007 Reference ID: 30-007-20190722** clarifies that plans may include specific standards to apply to various forms of proposed development and locations in their area. Care should be taken, however, to avoid these being applied as rigid thresholds, as specific circumstances may justify some variation being allowed.

Most relevant Local Plan policies

WDWPLP ENV2 – Wildlife and Habitats – covers the protection of wildlife sites and water bodies, irreplaceable habitats and protected species (broadly mirrors national planning guidance), and states that opportunities to incorporate and enhance biodiversity in and around developments will be encouraged.

WDWPLP ENV5 – on Flood Risk - development should be planned to avoid risk of flooding (from surface water run-off, groundwater, fluvial and coastal sources) where possible.

WDWPLP ENV16 – on Amenity - states that development which is sensitive to noise will not be permitted in close proximity to existing sources where it would adversely affect future occupants.

Assessment of general conformity

Policy 6 and 7: takes account of the wildlife areas and species and aims to ensure adverse impacts on wildlife should be avoided or mitigated. This is clearly in line with the national policy on conserving and enhancing the natural environment, and Policy ENV2 of the Local Plan. Whilst there is a degree of overlap, the specific reference to the BMEP (which is not in ENV2 but is currently a validation requirement) and climate change resilience add further depth to the approach and are supported by Natural England. Policy 6 is similar to that adopted in the Broadwindsor Area NP which passed its examination. Policy 7 is similar to the approach taken in the Milborne St Andrew Neighbourhood Plan which was found to meet the Basic Conditions.

Policy 8: adds further detail in terms of local flood risk issues, linked with the ecological status of the River Piddle. It is considered to be in general conformity with the Local Plan’s strategy of avoiding flood risk.

Policy 9: highlights the need to consider noise impacts from the A35 and draws on the latest evidence and guidance as to what is appropriate. The policy does not include reference to allowing some variation to the recommended standards as it is difficult to consider what specific circumstances may justify some variation being allowed, given that there are likely to be alternative sites that could be developed that are not so effected.

SECTION 4 - Housing	Policy 10. The scale and location of new housing development in Puddletown
	Policy 11. House types
	Policy 12. Housing and community uses site allocation: land at Athelhampton Road
	Policy 13. Reserve site allocation: Northbrook Farm

Overview of national policy and guidance

NPPF para 59. To support the government’s objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed

NPPF para 61. Within this context, the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies

NPPF para 63. Provision of affordable housing should not be sought for residential developments that are not major developments, other than in designated rural areas (where policies may set out a lower threshold of 5 units or fewer).

NPPF para 65 - 66. Strategic policy-making authorities should establish a housing requirement figure for their whole area, which shows the extent to which their identified housing need (and any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas) can be met over the plan period. Within this overall requirement, strategic policies should also set out a housing requirement for designated neighbourhood areas which reflects the overall strategy for the pattern and scale of development and any relevant allocations. Where it is not possible to provide a requirement figure for a neighbourhood area through the Local Plan, the Local Planning Authority should provide an indicative figure, if requested to do so by the Neighbourhood Planning Body. This figure should take into account factors such as the latest evidence of local housing need, the population of the neighbourhood area and the most recently available planning strategy of the local planning authority.

NPPF para 69. Neighbourhood planning groups should consider the opportunities for allocating small and medium-sized sites suitable for housing in their area.

NPPF para 77-78. In rural areas, planning policies and decisions should be responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs. Housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services.

NPPF para 103. The planning system should actively manage patterns of growth in support of these objectives. Significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. However, opportunities to maximise

sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making.

NPPG Paragraph: 009 Reference ID: 41-009-20190509. Neighbourhood plans should consider providing indicative delivery timetables, and allocating reserve sites to ensure that emerging evidence of housing need is addressed. This can help minimise potential conflicts and ensure that policies in the neighbourhood plan are not overridden by a new local plan.

NPPG Paragraph: 002 Reference ID: 10-002-20190509. It is the plan policies should be informed by engagement with developers, landowners, and infrastructure and affordable housing providers. Policy requirements, particularly for affordable housing, should be set at a level that takes account of affordable housing and infrastructure needs, without the need for further viability assessment at the decision making stage.

Most relevant Local Plan policies

WDWPLP SUS1 - The Level of Economic and Housing Growth - Strategic Approach includes the requirement for housing and employment, but does not specify targets for Neighbourhood Plan areas. The district-wide housing need is shown to be met through site allocations and identified windfall sites within settlements.

WDWPLP SUS2 - Distribution of development - Strategic Approach includes reference to the settlement hierarchy and that development in rural areas will be directed to the settlements with defined development boundaries, and will take place at an appropriate scale to the size of the settlement. Settlements with no defined development boundary may also have some growth to meet their local needs. It recognises that neighbourhood plans may allocate additional sites, add or extend development boundaries.

WDWPLP HOUS1 - Affordable housing - Strategic Approach sets out that new open market housing sites should make provision for affordable housing. The Council have confirmed that the percentage of affordable housing on market housing sites, thresholds above which it is sought, and tenure split within the affordable provision, are not part of the strategic approach. The current Local Plan policy is based on 35% affordable housing, with a minimum of 70% social / affordable rent and a maximum of 30% intermediate affordable housing, unless identified local needs indicate that alternative provision would be appropriate. The type, size and mix of affordable housing will be expected to address the identified and prioritised housing needs of the area and should be proportionate to the scale and mix of market housing, resulting in a balanced community of housing and / or flats that are 'tenure blind'.

WDWPLP HOUS3 - Open market housing mix - Strategic Approach refers to the type, size and mix of housing being expected to reflect local needs as far as possible and result in balanced communities. The policy does not specify an exact mix, but makes clear that account should be taken of the current range of house types and sizes and likely demand in view of the changing demographics in that locality.

Assessment of general conformity

Policy 10: proposes providing sufficient land through site allocations (including reserve sites) to achieve 7 dwellings per annum (averaged) over the plan period. It goes on to state that, given the identified supply, further open market housing will be restricted unless it accords with the infill policies set in the Neighbourhood Plan. The current adopted plan does not set a specific housing target for the NP area. Dorset Council provided an indicative housing need figure for the Puddletown Area in August 2019. This was the equivalent to a minimum of 35 new homes over the 20 year plan period (i.e. less than 2 dwellings per annum). They also advised that taking into account the number of homes that already have consent and an appropriate windfall allowance, there is no requirement for the Puddletown Neighbourhood Plan to deliver any new housing other than that which the community wish to see developed. Whilst the level of development is therefore higher than the minimum indicative housing need figure, it meets the basic conditions in particular having regard to the government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes and the local plan's strategy for its sustainable distribution. Whilst an earlier independent housing needs review suggested a potentially higher target of 10dpa, this was specifically to boost housing to sustain economic growth (which is less relevant for the NP area) and to increase what was considered a relatively low rate of development (whereas 2 dwellings per annum has since been confirmed as acceptable to the LPA's strategy for the area). The plan does not seek to limit rural affordable housing exception sites from being considered, or appropriate conversions, which may add

further to the identified supply, but given that both National and Local Plan policies advise of a degree of restraint to avoid an unsustainable spatial distribution of development, it is appropriate that the release of further unallocated greenfield sites is resisted so this can be effectively managed through a future review.

Policy 11: sets out the proposed housing mix that should be sought, including affordable housing. The mix of house sizes is based on a detailed appraisal of local housing need. In terms of viability, the evidence that underpinned the adopted Local Plan and CIL charging schedules <https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/planning-buildings-land/planning/community-infrastructure-levy/west-dorset-and-weymouth-and-portland-community-infrastructure-levy/how-we-prepared-the-cil-charging-schedules.aspx> looked at both the Crossways and Dorchester housing market areas, the latter have much higher residual land values. At that time the Crossways area was seen as potentially struggling to meet the CIL requirements of £100psm and 35% affordable housing provision, but this no longer appears to be the case given (1) the significant amount of developer interest in the areas with speculative planning applications and (2) a more recent viability assessment of the Moreton area (through the Purbeck Local Plan examination <https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/planning-buildings-land/planning-policy/purbeck/local-plan-review-purbeck/pdfs/examination-documents-submitted-during-hearings/sd117-eip-stage-viability-update-dsp19610-final-report-v5-with-appendices.pdf>) that suggests a 40% affordable housing contribution is now viable here. Based on this evidence it would appear that the proposed housing mix is achievable. The inclusion of local connection is considered to reflect the Local Plan strategy that development in such areas should focus on addressing local needs (as emphasized in Policy SUS2).

Policy 12 and 13: propose the two site allocations, on land off Athelhampton Road on the east side of the village, and Northbrook Farm on the north side of the village (as a reserve site). The two sites chosen are not isolated and relate well to the road network. The site options were subject to a full Strategic Environmental Assessment, and are considered to be sustainable options with no significant adverse effects. The appraisal also helped identify further mitigation where appropriate for inclusion in the policies. The Local Plan is clear that Neighbourhood Plans may allocate sites, add or extend development boundaries, and national policy encourages Neighbourhood Plans to consider the opportunities for allocating small and medium-sized sites suitable for housing in their area, with the NPPG making specific reference to allocating reserve sites.

SECTION 5. Community facilities and other infrastructure	Policy 14. Supporting community facilities and local services
Overview of national policy and guidance	
<p>NPPF para 83. Planning policies and decisions should enable d) the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.</p>	
<p>NPPF para 84. Planning policies and decisions should recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. In these circumstances it will be important to ensure that development is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads and exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable (for example by improving the scope for access on foot, by cycling or by public transport). The use of previously developed land, and sites that are physically well-related to existing settlements, should be encouraged where suitable opportunities exist.</p>	
<p>NPPF para 94. It is important that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities.</p>	
<p>NPPF para 96. Access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities.</p>	
Most relevant Local Plan policies	
<p>WDWPLP COM2 and COM3 – provide for the retention of local community buildings and structures and supports new or improved local community buildings and structures, focusing on sites within or adjoining an existing settlement, and provided that these would be located to their main catchment population - Strategic Approach states that community facilities should be provided within local communities, recognising the benefit</p>	

of reducing car travel

WDWPLP COM4 and COM5 - resist the loss of recreational facilities and open space of public value, and supports new or improved facilities, similarly in locations well-related to their main catchment population. Strategic Approach clarifies that a flexible approach may be taken, recognizing the changing needs in society

WDWPLP COM6 – supports the provision of new/replacement facilities or the expansion of existing education and training facilities will be supported

Assessment of general conformity

Policy 14: sets out the community facilities in or close to the village that are real benefit to the local community and should be protected, and also identifies and supports a number of specific improvements, either through reserving the land necessary or enabling it through the delivery of the housing sites. These all have a significant number of local users and are located within or close to the village. The policy is considered to be in conformity with the approach taken in National Policy and the Local Plan.

SECTION 7. Transport and Traffic

Policy 15.

Creating safer roads and pedestrian / cycle routes

Policy 16.

Parking Provision

Overview of national policy and guidance

NPPF para 98. Planning policies and decisions should protect and enhance public rights of way and access, including taking opportunities to provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks.

NPPF para 102. Transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals, so that: a) the potential impacts of development on transport networks can be addressed; c) opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use are identified and pursued; e) patterns of movement, streets, parking and other transport considerations are integral to the design of schemes, and contribute to making high quality places.

NPPF para 103. Significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. However, opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making.

NPPF para 104. Planning policies should: b) be prepared with the active involvement of local highways authorities, other transport infrastructure providers and operators and neighbouring councils; identify and protect, where there is robust evidence, sites and routes which could be critical in developing infrastructure to widen transport choice and realise opportunities for large scale development; d) provide for high quality walking and cycling networks and supporting facilities such as cycle parking

NPPF para 105. If setting local parking standards, policies should take into account: a) the accessibility of the development; b) the type, mix and use of development; c) the availability of and opportunities for public transport; d) local car ownership levels; and e) the need to ensure an adequate provision of spaces for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles.

Most relevant Local Plan policies

WDWPLP COM7 – is about creating a safe and efficient transport network. It broadly aligns with national policy, and ensures that development is not permitted unless it can be demonstrated that it would not have a severe detrimental effect on road safety, or measures can be introduced to reasonably mitigate potentially dangerous conditions. It also references that support should be given for the delivery of a strategic cycle network and improvements to the public rights of way network. Development should not result in the severance or degradation of existing or proposed routes.

WDWPLP COM9 – is about parking standards in new development, but is not considered to be a strategic policy. It refers to using the Bournemouth, Poole & Dorset Residential Car Parking Study (or its replacement), and taking account of: levels of local accessibility; historic and forecast car ownership levels; the size, type, tenure and location of the dwellings; and the appropriate mix of parking types (e.g. unallocated, on-street,

visitor etc).
Assessment of general conformity
<p>Policy 15: recognizes the importance of walking and cycling as the most practical and sustainable modes of transport for getting around the village, and considers how this can be improved through planning. It specifically identifies safe pedestrian routes and quiet lanes around the village the advisory cycle route into Dorchester (as far as the parish boundary). The policy is considered to be broadly in line with both national and local policies.</p> <p>Policy 16: sets out the requirements in terms of the quantum and design of parking. This broadly follows the county standards, but takes into account the difficulties with on-street parking and the higher reliance on car ownership than anticipated when the parking standards were drawn up. The policy is considered to be broadly in line with both national and local policies.</p>

Conformity conclusions

The Neighbourhood Plan includes a positive vision for the future of the area and explains how this translated into relevant policies. The analysis of the plan in relation to national planning policy and guidance and the strategic policies of the local plan, as shown in the preceding tables, does not highlight any fundamental conformity issues. No substantial conformity issues were raised by the Local Planning Authority in relation to the policy wording in their response to the pre-submission consultation, the main points focusing on clarification, which has been taken on board through a number of amendments to the draft plan. On this basis, there are no apparent reasons to conclude other than the Neighbourhood Plan meets the basic condition of having regard to national policy and guidance from the Secretary of State and being in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan for the area.

4. EU and sustainability obligations







The ‘making’ of the Neighbourhood Plan must not breach or conflict, and must be compatible, with EU obligations, must not have a significant effect on a European site, and must contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. It must not breach human rights, within the meaning of the Human Rights Act 1998.

EU obligations

The plan has been subject to a full Strategic Environmental Assessment, including the relevant scoping stage, and assessment of the pre-submission draft plan. The reports were sent to the statutory consultees (the Environment Agency, Natural England and Historic England) and made publically available at the relevant times. Natural England’s response to the scoping consultation also advised that they did not consider that an HRA is required based on the information available and submitted. Although no response was received within the 5 week scoping consultation period from either Historic England or the Environment Agency, they later confirmed that there were no issues that they would have raised associated with the SEA or the plan contents.

The achievement of sustainable development

The Neighbourhood Plan’s policies were assessed against the environmental sustainability objectives at pre-submission stage, with the following table summarising the key findings:

Key:		significant positive impact likely
		positive impact likely
		neutral impact likely
		adverse impact likely
		significant adverse impact likely
		impact uncertain but unlikely to be adversely significant



impact uncertain but potentially adversely significant

Environmental assessment objective	Biodiversity,	Landscape	Heritage	Material Assets	Climate change	Transport	Population	Human Health
Neighbourhood Plan policy								
1. Local Green Spaces	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	-	-	✓
2. Local Landscape Features	✓	✓✓	✓	-	✓	-	-	-
3. Village character	✓	✓✓	✓	x	x	-	-	-
4. Respecting the history of Puddletown	-	✓	✓✓	-	-	-	-	-
5. Design	-	✓✓	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	-
6. Wildlife and Natural Habitats	✓	-	-	-	✓	-	-	-
7. European protected sites	✓	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
8. Flood Risk	✓	-	-	-	✓	-	-	-
9. Noise Assessments	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	✓
10. The scale/location of new housing	✓	x	-	x	✓	✓	✓✓	-
11. House types	-	-	-	-	✓	-	✓✓	-
12. Site allocation: Chapel Ground	✓	x	-	x	✓	✓	✓✓	✓
13. Reserve site: Northbrook Farm	✓	-	✓	-	-	✓	✓	x
14. Supporting Facilities and Services	-	-	-	-	-	✓	✓✓	✓
15. Safer roads and ped/cycle routes	-	✓	-	-	✓	✓	-	-
16. Parking Provision	-	✓	-	-	✓	-	-	-

The Strategic Environmental Assessment concluded that, overall, the adverse impacts of the neighbourhood plan are likely to be balanced or outweighed by positive impacts of the plan, with the most positive impacts scored against the objective of meeting local needs, and also protecting landscape character. The main adverse impact that has been identified is in relation to soils, due to the loss of productive farmland. However the scale (cumulatively) is still unlikely to be significant given the limited size of the site allocations and the amount of agricultural land in the wider area.

A Habitats Regulation Assessment of the Plan will be required and is being supplied by Dorset Council, who consider they have sufficient information available to undertake this work.

Human Rights

No issues have been raised in relation to the possible contravention of Human Rights in the preceding consultations, and given the conclusions on the plan's general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan and regard to National Planning Policy, it is reasonable to conclude that the making of the plan should not breach human rights.

Appendix 1 – Local Plan Policies List

Policies relating to the towns are not shown here as not relevant to the area.

POLICY	SUBJECT	STRATEGIC ASPECTS
INT1	Presumption in favour of sustainable development	Strategic policy (reflects national policy, as well as strategic objectives of the local plan)
ENV1	Landscape, seascape and sites of geological interest	Strategic Approach includes the protection of landscape, seascape and sites of geological interest, and mitigation where appropriate
ENV2	Wildlife and habitats	Strategic Approach includes protection of wildlife and habitats, and mitigation where appropriate
ENV3	Green infrastructure network	Strategic Approach includes protection of important local green spaces, and mitigation where appropriate
ENV4	Heritage assets	Strategic Approach includes protection of heritage assets
ENV5	Flood Risk	Strategic Approach includes directing development away from areas at risk of flooding
ENV6	Local flood alleviation schemes	Linked to policy ENV5 above
ENV7	Coastal erosion and land instability	Strategic approach includes directing development away from areas at risk of coastal erosion
ENV8	Agricultural land and farming resilience	Not specifically covered in Strategic Approach
ENV9	Pollution and contaminated land	Strategic Approach includes directing development away from areas at risk of air and water pollution
ENV10	Landscape and townscape setting	Strategic Approach includes that development should be of high quality design, and contributing to local identity of area
ENV11	Pattern of streets and spaces	Strategic Approach includes that development should be of high quality design, and contributing to local identity of area
ENV12	Design & positioning of buildings	Strategic Approach includes that development should be of high quality design, and contributing to local identity of area
ENV13	High levels of environmental performance	Strategic Approach includes that development should be of high quality design, and contributing to local identity of area
ENV14	Shop fronts and advertisements	Strategic Approach includes that development should be of high quality design, and contributing to local identity of area, but does not specifically refer to shopfronts and advertisements
ENV15	Efficient and appropriate use of land	Strategic Approach includes that development should be of high quality design, and contributing to local identity of area
ENV16	Amenity	Strategic Approach refers to enhancing quality of life for residents and visitors
SUS1	Level of economic and housing growth	Strategic Approach includes the requirement figures for housing and employment
SUS2	Distribution of development	Strategic Approach includes: the principles that have led to the proposed distribution (p55-56) the strategic site allocations as listed in Table 3.7 reference to the settlement hierarchy and development within settlement boundaries general restriction of development in rural areas – but recognition that neighbourhood plans may allocate additional sites, add or extend development boundaries, and that some development types are needed to support the rural economy.

POLICY	SUBJECT	STRATEGIC ASPECTS
SUS3	Adaptation and reuse of buildings outside defined development boundaries	Not strategic
SUS4	Replacement of buildings outside defined development boundaries	Not strategic
SUS5	Neighbourhood development plans	Neighbourhood plans need to take account of this policy, which sets out expectations of how neighbourhood plans will relate to the local plan. The Strategic Approach identifies that neighbourhood plans can allocate development beyond that allocated in the local plan, and can extend or add settlement boundaries. But it also sets out principles such as concentrating development where jobs and facilities are accessible, and development being at an appropriate scale to the size of the village.
ECON1	Provision of employment	Strategic Approach includes the general support for employment development as expressed in this policy. The specific wording on live-work units is not considered to be strategic.
ECON2	Protection of key employment sites	Strategic Approach includes the protection of existing employment sites, taking into account their significance – the key employment sites are clearly the more strategically significant ones.
ECON3	Protection of other employment sites	Strategic Approach includes the protection of existing employment sites, taking into account their significance.
ECON4	Retail and town centre development	Strategic Approach includes directing retail and town centre uses to the town centres of Weymouth, Dorchester, Bridport, Sherborne and Lyme Regis, or to local centres, and avoiding development that would undermine the functioning of any centre or adversely affect its vitality or viability. This indicates that criteria i-iv are strategic but that criteria v-vi are not.
ECON5	Tourism attractions and facilities	Not strategic, except for the strategic locational principles reflected in criteria ii-iii and originating in policy SUS2
ECON6	Built tourist accommodation	Not strategic, though criterion ii reflects a strategic aspect of policy ECON4
ECON7	Caravan and camping sites	Not strategic
ECON8	Diversification of land-based rural businesses	Not strategic
ECON9	New agricultural buildings	Not strategic
ECON10	Equestrian development	Not strategic
HOUS1	Affordable housing	Strategic Approach sets out that: the type, size and mix of housing will be expected to meet local needs as far as possible and result in balanced communities opportunities will be taken to secure affordable homes to meet local needs New open market housing sites should make provision for affordable housing. The percentage of affordable housing on market housing sites, thresholds above which it is sought, and tenure split within the affordable provision, are not part of the strategic approach.
HOUS2	Affordable housing exception sites	The Strategic Approach refers to flexible policies that encourage affordable housing to come forward, but does not refer to

POLICY	SUBJECT	STRATEGIC ASPECTS
		exception sites so this is not a strategic policy. The local plan policy allows these sites only for affordable housing, but the text indicates that if a community wants to allow open market cross-subsidy on exception sites they could do this in neighbourhood plans without being contrary to the strategic policies.
HOUS3	Open market housing mix	Strategic Approach refers to the type, size and mix of housing being expected to reflect local needs as far as possible and result in balanced communities, as reflected in this policy, so it is strategic.
HOUS4	Development of flats, hostels and houses in multiple occupation	Not strategic
HOUS5	Residential care accommodation	Not strategic
HOUS6	Other residential development outside defined development boundaries	Not strategic
COM1	Making sure new development makes suitable provision for community infrastructure	Strategic Approach states that new local community facilities will be provided as part of developments where possible and practicable
COM2	New or improved local community buildings and structures	Strategic Approach states that community facilities should be provided within local communities, recognising the benefit of reducing car travel
COM3	The retention of local community buildings and structures	Strategic Approach states that existing facilities will be protected through a flexible approach which recognises the changing needs in society
COM4	New or improved local recreational facilities	Strategic Approach states that community facilities should be provided within local communities, recognising the benefit of reducing car travel
COM5	The retention of open space and recreation facilities	Strategic Approach states that existing facilities will be protected through a flexible approach which recognises the changing needs in society
COM6	The provision of education and training facilities	Strategic Approach states that community facilities should be provided within local communities, recognising the benefit of reducing car travel
COM7	Creating a safe and efficient transport network	Strategic Approach states that providing a safe transport route network for all types of travel, and providing choices for 'greener' travel options where practicable, are also a key part of the strategy, and that development contributions towards transport infrastructure will be made
COM8	Transport interchanges and community travel exchanges	Not regarded as a strategic policy, but Strategic Approach does refer to providing choices for greener travel options where practicable
COM9	Parking standards in new development	Not strategic, though may be impacts on COM7 on safe and efficient transport networks
COM10	The provision of utilities service infrastructure	Strategic Approach refers to developer contributions towards strategic infrastructure needs
COM11	Renewable energy development	Not identified in the plan as a strategic policy, but there is national policy on the subject which must be taken into account