

# LANDSCAPE PAPER

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## 1. AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY

### (Appendix 1: Map)

The Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty was among the first AONBs to be designated (in 1959). The designation embraces areas of high landscape quality and its primary purpose is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the AONB (Page 6, AONB Management Plan 2004 - 2009). AONB boundaries in Purbeck were set in 1959 and remain in place.

Chapter 2 of the Management Plan deals with landscape issues. The areas of landscape character that are relevant to Purbeck are as follows:

#### ***South Purbeck*** (Page 32)

Chalk, limestone, shale and clay rocks

Trends: deterioration due to the following: tourism pressure (congestion, caravan sites, car parks), quarrying, military use, scrub encroachment. 49 ha of area were converted to development between 1990 and 1998, 75% of which occurred with dispersed settlements.

#### ***The Dorset Heaths*** (Page 33)

Lowland heath with heather, mires, marshes, stunted pines and gorse scrub

Trends: deterioration due to fly tipping, fires, recreational pressure and traffic, mineral extraction, military use.

### **AONB Management Plan**

There are 17 actions as follows:

- Landscape character and condition survey
- Promote application and utilisation of Historic Landscape Character Assessment in AONB
- AONB Built Environment Character Assessment
- Production and implementation of AONB Interpretation and Education Strategies and implementation of AONB Communication Strategy
- Develop and implement South Dorset Ridgeway Initiative
- Develop and implementation a Tree and Woodland Programme
- Establish funding streams for grants to support countryside management and community projects that help deliver AONB objectives
- Develop a Winterbournes Project
- Focus attention on the increasing litter problem and removal of eyesores
- Liaise with planning authorities and inform planning decisions that impact upon the AONB
- Liaise with Highways Authorities to influence transport decisions that impact on the AONB
- Work with LA partners to achieve strategic AONB objectives
- Assist Dorset Strategic Partnership to achieve strategic objectives for AONB
- Development of trails and greenways
- Develop an AONB proofing checklist
- Produce monitoring and evaluation system for the AONB
- Management and administration on behalf of the partnership

## **2. LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT**

Purbeck currently has two Landscape Character Assessments, one for the AONB and one for areas outside the AONB. For areas within the AONB, a draft document is available on Dorset AONB's web-site. For areas outside the AONB a draft document is undergoing regular updates and will be finalised in 2008. It is available on Purbeck District Council's website.

## **3. PLANNING POLICY GUIDANCE NOTE 20: COASTAL PLANNING**

Paragraph 1.16 states that Heritage Coasts are not a statutory designation, but the designation "provides a flexible management tool for balancing the requirements of conservation and access in the coastal zone". Paragraph 1.17 states the objectives of Heritage Coasts, which refer to conserving, protecting, enhancing the beauty of the coast, facilitating their enjoyment, understanding and

appreciation, maintaining the environmental health of inshore waters, taking account of the needs of agriculture, forestry and fishing, and economic and social needs of coastal communities.

Paragraph 2.16 refers to a precautionary approach required for policies relating to land likely to be affected by erosion or land instability. It says these areas should be identified and mapped.

Paragraph 2.22 states that environmental considerations must be taken into account in preparing development plans, including policies for the improvement of the physical environment and conservation of natural beauty and amenity of the land.

Paragraph 4.5 states that local authorities should define: the coastal zone for planning purposes, policies for safeguarding the environment, parts of the coast where opportunities exist for development requiring a coastal location, parts where physical constraints make development inappropriate and parts which need regeneration.

Paragraph 4.6 states that information may be needed on the following:

- Earth science information (geology, geomorphology)
- Ecological diversity
- Baseline water and air quality information
- Landscape assessment
- Agricultural land quality
- Areas of fishing interest
- Archaeological and built heritage interest
- Rates of erosion
- Areas subject to flooding or land instability
- Effects of sea defence and coast protection work
- Assessment of impact of development
- Identification of environmental sensitivities
- Identification of sensitive locations
- Assessment of likely impact of sport, recreation and tourism developments
- Assessment of trends in development requiring a coastal location

## **4. HERITAGE COAST**

### **(Appendix 2: Map)**

The landscape in which the Dorset & East Devon World Heritage Site sits in part of the Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and for a long time has been known as *Heritage Coast*. One important objective of the heritage coast is to conserve, protect and enhance the natural beauty of the coast. The Government considers the designation to be a “flexible management tool for balancing the

requirements of conservation and access in the coastal zone” which “helps focus attention and resources on the planning and management of the coast” (PPG20, para 1.17). The Government also seeks to protect the undeveloped coast from development.

There is no specific management plan as such for the Heritage Coast. However, the Dorset Coast Strategy covers the Heritage Coast area.

## **5. DORSET AND EAST DEVON COAST WORLD HERITAGE SITE (“JURASSIC COAST”)**

### **(Appendix 3: Map)**

The Dorset & East Devon Coast World Heritage Site is defined as the cliffs and the beach. People also refer to the wider *Jurassic Coast*, which is a hinterland behind the site where the visitors to the site stay. This has no inland defined boundary and is merely a loose term. Often it is taken as 10 miles inland of the site.

The World Heritage Site Management Plan has three objectives:

- To protect the geology and geomorphology of the Site
- To conserve, and enhance where appropriate, the quality of the landscape and seascape of the Site
- To welcome local people and visitors to the Site at levels which it can sustain

## **6. DORSET COAST STRATEGY**

Action to achieve the Dorset Coast Strategy is organised around nine priorities of equal importance. The priorities draw together issues, which are common concerns of different users, and from across the range of coastal organisations - so allowing an integrated approach to be put forward. Each Priority is divided into subjects that contain a list of actions, which can be viewed either by selecting the policy from the list below or from the strategy index.

- Priority 1 (includes 15 policies, each with 2 – 6 priority actions)  
Protecting and improving the coastal environment
- Priority 2 (includes 7 policies, each with 2 – 5 priority actions)  
Delivering sustainable shoreline management
- Priority 3 (includes 5 policies, each with 2 – 4 priority actions)  
Regulated use of coastal and marine resources
- Priority 4 (includes 6 policies, each with 2 – 7 priority actions)  
Active attention to the development of coast-dependant Industries
- Priority 5 (includes 8 policies, each with 2 – 6 priority actions)  
New and sustainable coastal tourism
- Priority 6 (includes 7 policies, each with 2 – 4 priority actions)  
Managing and promoting coastal recreation

- Priority 7 (includes 4 policies, each with 2 – 5 priority actions)  
Celebrating the Dorset Coast
- Priority 8 (includes 6 policies, each with 1 – 3 priority actions)  
Building Dorset's influence in national and European decision-taking
- Priority 9 (includes 6 policies, each with 2 – 5 priority actions)  
Supporting and strengthening local management arrangements for the Dorset Coast

## **7. REGIONALLY IMPORTANT GEOLOGICAL SITES**

### **(Appendix 4: Map)**

Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites (RIGS), designated by locally developed criteria, are currently the most important places for geology and geomorphology outside statutorily protected land such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The designation of RIGS is one way of recognising and protecting important Earth science and landscape features for future generations to enjoy.

The concept of RIGS was first initiated by the Nature Conservancy Councils (NCC) publication Earth Science Conservation in Great Britain – A Strategy (1990).

RIGS sites started life as SSSIs denotified after the Geological Conservation Review (1997-1990). The statutory agencies wished to secure their conservation in another form. RIGS sites are those which, whilst not benefiting from national statutory protection, are nevertheless regionally or locally representative sites where ‘.... consideration of their importance becomes integral to the planning process’ according to the Earth Science Conservation Strategy (ESCS).

PDLP Page 22, Paragraph 2.2.27 states that “In Purbeck, the identification and selection of RIGS is still progressing, and consequently other sites are likely to be identified during the Plan period in addition to those shown on the Proposals Map. The sites identified so far include: exposures in several of the Purbeck stone quarries; low cliff sections within Poole Harbour; and the Agglestone on Studland Heath”.

The Dorset RIGS Group reviews RIGS on a regular basis to ascertain whether they are still of scientific or educational interest. There is an up-to-date map and information on the website [www.dorsetrigs.org.uk](http://www.dorsetrigs.org.uk). The website describes the importance of each site and why it was designated.

## **8. GEODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN**

The document was produced in 2005 by DCC with funding support from Natural England. The aim is to draw together existing information and ongoing projects concerned with the geology, geomorphology, soils and landscapes of Dorset and East Devon. The objectives are as follows:

- An audit of local geodiversity resources
- To have geodiversity included in policy of all Dorset and East Devon authorities by 2006
- Raise awareness of geodiversity
- Develop data storage systems
- Maintain and enhance the Earth heritage of Dorset
- World Heritage Site conservation objectives

The second objective is important to note. Actions include producing model policies for safeguarding geodiversity. It seems that this has not happened, perhaps due to lack of time or funding. However, geodiversity needs to be included in Core Strategy and DC Policies.

## **9. PARKS, GARDENS AND HISTORIC LANDSCAPE**

### **(Appendix 5: Dorset Garden Trust's Guidelines)**

There is an existing policy in PDLP Final Edition as follows: Development which would adversely affect the historic character or landscape value of an historic park or garden (as indicated on the Proposals Map), or its setting, will not be permitted. The policy is in the context of registered gardens.

PPG15 para 6.38 states that the Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England is maintained by English Heritage. PPG15 (para 2.24) states that: local planning authorities should protect registered parks and gardens in preparing development plans. The effect of proposed development on a registered park or garden or its setting is a material consideration in the determination of a planning application. This policy should remain in place. A further policy should cover those recommended for inclusion in the Purbeck Local List by the Dorset Gardens Trust.

The list of registered and recommended parks and gardens is as follows:

#### **Grade II\***

Charborough Park, Creech Grance, Encombe

#### **Grade II**

Lulworth Castle

#### **Recommended in Purbeck's Local List**

Bindon Abbey, Brownsea Castle, Durlston, Moreton House, Smedmore House, Steeple Manor