

Strategic Environmental Assessment for the Portland Neighbourhood Plan

Environmental Report to accompany the submission
version of the Neighbourhood Plan

Portland Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

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Quality information

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Non-Technical Summary

What is Strategic Environmental Assessment

A strategic environmental assessment (SEA) has been undertaken to inform the Portland Neighbourhood Plan. This process is required by the SEA Regulations.

Neighbourhood Plan groups use SEA to assess Neighbourhood Plans against a set of sustainability objectives developed in consultation with interested parties. The purpose of the assessment is to avoid adverse environmental and socio-economic effects through the Neighbourhood Plan, and identify opportunities to improve the environmental quality of the area covered by the Neighbourhood Plan and the quality of life of residents.

What is the Portland Neighbourhood Plan?

The Portland Neighbourhood Plan is currently being prepared as a Neighbourhood Development Plan under the Localism Act 2011 and the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. The Portland Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared in the context of the West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan, which was adopted in October 2015.

The Neighbourhood Plan has been submitted to Dorset Council for subsequent independent examination.

Purpose of this Environmental Report

This Environmental Report, which accompanies the submission version of the Neighbourhood Plan, is the latest document to be produced as part of the SEA process. The first document was the SEA Scoping Report (August 2016), which includes information about the Neighbourhood Plan area's environment and community. The second document was the Environmental Report (June 2018) which accompanied the Neighbourhood Plan for Regulation 14 consultation in summer 2018.

The purpose of this Environmental Report is to:

- Identify, describe and evaluate the likely significant effects of the Portland Neighbourhood Plan and alternatives; and
- Provide an opportunity for consultees to offer views on any aspect of the SEA process which has been carried out to date.

The Environmental Report contains:

- An outline of the contents and main objectives of the Portland Neighbourhood Plan and its relationship with other relevant policies, plans and programmes;
- Relevant aspects of the current and future state of the environment and key sustainability issues;
- The SEA Framework of objectives against which the Portland Neighbourhood Plan has been assessed;
- The appraisal of alternative approaches for the Portland Neighbourhood Plan;
- The likely significant environmental effects of the Portland Neighbourhood Plan;
- The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects as a result of the Portland Neighbourhood Plan; and
- The next steps for the Portland Neighbourhood Plan and accompanying SEA process.

Assessment of alternative approaches for the Portland Neighbourhood Plan

A key aim of the Neighbourhood Plan is to ensure that housing provision is appropriately located for local needs. The West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan does not allocate any sites for housing in the Neighbourhood Plan area, or provide a housing number for the Neighbourhood Plan to deliver. However, as part of the examination of the Local Plan, the inspector recommended that it was *'imperative that an early review is undertaken'*¹, with the Local Planning Authority subsequently seeking to identify additional housing land capable of meeting housing need to 2036. Additionally, the Local Plan notes that future economic opportunities for the Isle of Portland will be based on maximising the potential of existing major employment sites and Portland Port, and additionally capitalising on the Isle's environmental and heritage assets to further develop sectors such as tourism and leisure.

In light of this, the Neighbourhood Plan seeks to encourage a balanced mix of housing in appropriate places that people need and want, in addition to accommodating responsible and sustainable tourism development which both strengthens the Isle's business function and protects the special and unique character of Portland's natural and built environment.

To support decision making on this element of the plan, the SEA process has considered two sets of options.

A first consideration was where, in broad terms, to facilitate new housing provision in the area in the context of the eight settlement areas of the Neighbourhood Plan area, namely Castletown, Chiswell, Easton, Fortuneswell, Grove, Southwell, Wakeham and Weston. Two alternative approaches linked to the broad location of development in the Neighbourhood Plan area were therefore appraised through the SEA process. These were as follows.

- **Option 1:** Facilitate the development of greenfield sites in the vicinities of the eight main settlements in the Neighbourhood Plan area.
- **Option 2:** Focus development on previously developed sites in Portland.

Following consultation with the local community, a further element in which the Neighbourhood Group was keen to explore was the issue of permanent and second homes and holiday letting. To consider this issue in more detail, and provide further sustainability context, the SEA process appraised two options, as follows:

- **Option A:** Introduce a policy through the Neighbourhood Plan which seeks to restrain second home ownership and holiday rentals in the Neighbourhood Plan area through introducing restrictions on the use of new housing; and
- **Option B:** Do not introduce restrictions on the use of new housing in the Neighbourhood Plan area.

These two sets of options were then appraised as 'reasonable alternatives' against both the baseline and relatively (i.e. against each other). The findings of the appraisal are presented in Chapter 4 in the main body of the Environmental Report.

Assessment of the current version of Portland Neighbourhood Plan

The submission version of the Portland Neighbourhood Plan presents 34 planning policies for guiding development in the Neighbourhood Plan area, grouped under the seven objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan. These were updated following Regulation 14 consultation undertaken on the Neighbourhood Plan in summer 2018.

Utilising the SEA Framework of objectives and assessment questions developed during the earlier scoping stage of the SEA, the SEA process has assessed the policies put forward through the current

¹ Dorset County Council (2017): 'West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan Review' [online] available to access via: <https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/local-plan-review> last accessed [03/04/18]

version of the Portland Neighbourhood Plan. The Environmental Report has presented the findings of the assessment under the following SEA Themes:

- Air Quality
- Biodiversity and Geodiversity;
- Climate Change;
- Landscape and Historic Environment;
- Land, Soil and Water Resources
- Population and Community;
- Health and Wellbeing; and
- Transportation

The assessment has concluded that the current version of the Neighbourhood Plan is likely to lead to significant positive effects in relation to the ‘Population and Community’ and ‘Health and Wellbeing’ SEA Themes. These benefits largely relate to the Neighbourhood Plan’s focus on delivering housing which meets local needs, supporting sustainable economic growth, enhancing green infrastructure networks and recreational and leisure opportunities, and improving the quality of the public realm.

The Neighbourhood Plan is also likely to lead to significant positive effects in relation to the ‘Biodiversity’, ‘Landscape and Historic Environment’ SEA Themes. This relates to the plan’s focus on enhancing ecological networks and protecting internationally and nationally designated biodiversity sites, and conserving and enhancing the distinctive landscapes and heritage assets which are central to the Isle’s character. The plan also has a strong focus on rejuvenating areas of historic environment and geodiversity interest, including within the World Heritage Site.

The Neighbourhood Plan will also initiate a number of beneficial approaches regarding the ‘Climate Change’, ‘Land, Soil and Water Resources’ and ‘Transportation’ SEA themes. However, these are not considered to be significant in the context of the SEA process given the scope of the Neighbourhood Plan, existing Local Plan provisions and the scale of proposals.

In summary, the level of future development proposed through the Local Plan has the potential to lead to increased pressures on the sensitive environmental context of the Neighbourhood Plan area. In this regard, the policies of the Neighbourhood Plan have a close focus on protecting and enhancing the special qualities of Portland, and facilitating inclusive growth which will help ensure the integrity of its sensitive environmental designations are maintained and enhanced.

Next Steps

The *Neighbourhood Plan for Portland 2017-2031* has been submitted to Dorset Council for subsequent independent examination. This Environmental Report accompanies the Neighbourhood Plan.

At independent examination the Neighbourhood Plan will be considered in terms of whether it meets the Basic Conditions for Neighbourhood Plans, legal requirements and its general conformity with higher level planning policy.

If independent examination is favourable, the Neighbourhood Plan will be subject to a referendum, organised by Dorset Council. If more than 50% of those who vote agree with the plan, then it will be passed to Dorset Council to be ‘made’. Once made, the Neighbourhood Plan will become part of the development plan for the Isle of Portland.

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1. Introduction

Background

- 1.1 AECOM has been commissioned to undertake an independent Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in support of Portland's emerging Neighbourhood Plan.
- 1.2 The Neighbourhood Plan for Portland 2017-2031 is currently being prepared as a Neighbourhood Development Plan under the Localism Act 2011 and the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. The Portland Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared in the context of the West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan, which was adopted in October 2015. The Neighbourhood Plan has been submitted to Dorset Council for subsequent independent examination.
- 1.3 Key information relating to the Portland Neighbourhood Plan is presented in **Table 1.1**.

Table 1.1: Key facts relating to the Portland Neighbourhood Plan

Name of Responsible Authority	Portland Town Council
Title of Plan	Neighbourhood Plan for Portland 2017-2031
Subject	Neighbourhood plan
Purpose	The Portland Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared as a Neighbourhood Development Plan under the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. The plan will be in conformity with the adopted West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan (2015)
Timescale	To 2031
Area covered by the plan	Portland Parish. (Figure 1.1)
Summary of content	The Portland Neighbourhood Plan will set out a vision, strategy and range of policies for the plan area.
Plan contact point	Andy Matthews: portlandcommunitypartnership@gmail.com

SEA explained

- 1.4 The Portland Neighbourhood Plan was screened in by Weymouth and Portland Borough Council as requiring a Strategic Environmental Assessment
- 1.5 SEA is a mechanism for considering and communicating the likely significant effects of an emerging plan, and reasonable alternatives in terms of key environmental issues. The aim of the SEA is to inform and influence the plan-making process with a view to avoiding or mitigating negative environmental effects and maximising positive effects. Through this approach, the SEA for the Neighbourhood Plan seeks to maximise the emerging Neighbourhood Plan's contribution to sustainable development.
- 1.6 The SEA has been prepared in line with the procedures prescribed by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (the SEA Regulations) which transpose into national law the EU Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive².
- 1.7 The SEA Regulations require that a report is published for consultation alongside the draft plan which 'identifies, describes and evaluates' the likely significant effects of implementing 'the plan, and reasonable alternatives'. The report must then be taken into account, alongside consultation responses, when finalising the plan.
- 1.8 In line with the SEA Regulations this Environmental Report must essentially answer four questions:
 - What is the scope of the SEA?
 - What has plan-making/SEA involved to up to this point?
 - 'Reasonable alternatives' must have been appraised for the plan.
 - What are the appraisal findings at this stage?
 - i.e. in relation to the draft plan
 - What happens next?
- 1.9 These questions are derived from Schedule 2 of the SEA Regulations, which present 'the information to be provided in the report'. Table 1.2 presents the linkages between the regulatory requirements and the four SEA questions.

Structure of this Environmental Report

- 1.10 This document is the Environmental Report for the Portland Neighbourhood Plan and hence needs to answer all four of the questions listed above with a view to providing the information required by the SEA Regulations.
- 1.11 Each of the four questions is answered in turn within this report, as follows:

² Directive 2001/42/EC

Table 1.2: Questions that must be answered by the Environmental Report in order to meet regulatory³ requirements

Environmental Report question	In line with the SEA Regulations, the report must include... ⁴
What is the plan seeking to achieve?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan and relationship with other relevant plans and programmes
What is the sustainability 'context'?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The relevant environmental protection objectives, established at international or national level Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan including those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance
What's the scope of the SEA?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan including those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance
What are the key issues & objectives?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key problems/issues and objectives that should be a focus of (i.e. provide a 'framework' for) assessment
What has plan-making/SEA involved up to this point?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outline reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with (and thus an explanation of the 'reasonableness' of the approach) The likely significant effects associated with alternatives Outline reasons for selecting the preferred approach in light of alternatives appraisal/a description of how environmental objectives and considerations are reflected in the draft plan.
What are the assessment findings at this stage?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The likely significant effects associated with the submission version of the plan The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects of implementing the submission version of the plan
What happens next?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The next steps for plan making/SEA process.

³ Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004

⁴ NB this column does not quote directly from Schedule II of the Regulations. Rather, it reflects a degree of interpretation.

2. Local Plan context and vision for the Portland Neighbourhood Plan

Local Plan context for the Portland Neighbourhood Plan

- 2.1 The PNP is being prepared in the context of the adopted West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan. The Local Plan, which covers the period 2011-2031, was adopted in October 2015. The Local Plan policies will be used to facilitate development and guide planning decisions in the part of Dorset Council which was covered by Weymouth and Portland Borough and West Dorset District, and the Portland Neighbourhood Plan should be in general conformity with the Plan.

West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan proposals for Portland

- 2.2 The West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan notes that future economic opportunities for the Isle of Portland will be based on maximising the potential of existing major employment sites and Portland Port, and additionally capitalising on the Isle's environmental and heritage assets to further develop sectors such as tourism and leisure.
- 2.3 The Local Plan highlights that over the previous plan period a significant amount of housing growth was identified on Portland. Not all of these sites have been completed and so there are over 450 homes with permission that should still be built as a result. Because of the number of existing commitments and the constrained nature of the Isle, no new strategic allocations have been identified for Portland for the current plan period. However the LPA are currently in the process of undertaking another land review and the SHLAA process has identified sites with the potential for another 500 further dwellings. Alongside, a number of large public sector sites in the Neighbourhood Plan area remain outside of this process, and with the rationalisation of the public estate, these potentially could provide further supply of units at a strategic level.
- 2.4 The following developments have consent and are expected to play a major role in delivering the Local Plan Vision for Portland.
- Portland Port is a major employment site with planning consent for approximately 35 hectares of port land for B1, B2 and B8 uses, a statutory harbour undertaking, and an additional 17 hectares of seabed has consent for marine works.
 - Osprey Quay has various planning consents for a mix of uses, including employment, leisure, retail and housing development.
 - Former Hardy Complex is a site with planning consent which comprises the conversion of former Navy accommodation for housing. Planning permission for 554 new homes was granted in 2004. The existing officers' accommodation blocks have been partly completed, with Atlantic House completed in 2009. The remaining phases of construction, which would provide 384 homes, have not yet progressed.
 - Southwell Business Park has planning consent for change of use of Maritime House on the park to 'Portland Academy' (use class D1). This will provide an educational academy for 5-19 year olds that would link closely with business and the local community. It is a key employment site. Additional land is available to provide around 3,000m² of light industrial units.
 - Land at Kingbarrow Quarry, Tout Quarry, Verne Yeates, Inmosthay Quarry and Perryfield Quarry Butterfly Conservation Nature Reserves have been allocated as part of the 'Portland Quarries Nature Park' to promote sustainable tourism, management of conservation and heritage interest, enhancement of public access and open spaces and opportunities for volunteer and community involvement.

Review of the West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan

- 2.5 As part of the examination of the West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan, the Independent Examiner recommended that it was *'imperative that an early review is undertaken'*⁵, with an objective of identifying additional housing land capable of meeting housing need to 2036.
- 2.6 The Local Plan Review began in early 2017 through undertaking an 'Issues and Options' consultation. Whilst housing numbers were the main focus within the document, West Dorset District Council along with Weymouth and Portland Borough Council have taken the opportunity to look at other aspects after consideration of Government policy changes since the Local Plan was adopted. These include:
- The need to develop a more comprehensive and effective approach to managing green infrastructure;
 - The changing nature of employment and growth opportunities;
 - Government housing initiatives; and
 - Climate change and erosion and sustainable energy.
- 2.7 To support the 'Issues and Options' consultation, West Dorset District Council and Weymouth and Portland Borough Council produced a background paper providing information on the approach to future development on Portland.
- 2.8 Subsequent to the Issues and Options Consultation, the 'Preferred Options' document for the Local Plan review was released for consultation between August and October 2018. Chapter 8 of the Preferred Options document relates to Portland. The proposed strategy for the reviewed and revised Local Plan is to meet the housing needs of the Island through the redevelopment of brownfield sites and existing allocations (i.e. sites already allocated in the current Local Plan).

Vision for the Portland Neighbourhood Plan

- 2.9 The vision for the Portland Neighbourhood Plan is represented by the following set of topic-based aims, which have been derived from the results of the consultation processes undertaken in support of the Neighbourhood Plan. The draft aims are as follows:
- **Environment** - protect the special and unique character of Portland's natural and built environment and use its natural resources carefully
 - **Business and Employment** - strengthen the Island's business function, building growth and prosperity
 - **Housing** - encourage a balanced mix of housing in appropriate places that people need and want
 - **Transport** - support non-car travel options and accommodate the car in an unobtrusive manner
 - **Shopping and Services** - support the shopping areas and service functions
 - **Community Recreation** - realise the leisure and recreation potential of the Island
 - **Sustainable Tourism** - accommodate responsible and sustainable tourism development

⁵ Dorset County Council (2017): 'West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan Review' [online] available to access via: <<https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/local-plan-review>> last accessed [03/04/18]

3. The Scope of the SEA

SEA Scoping Report

- 3.1 The SEA Regulations require that: “When deciding on the scope and level of detail of the information that must be included in the report, the responsible authority shall consult the consultation bodies”. In England, the consultation bodies are Natural England, the Environment Agency and Historic England.⁶ These authorities were consulted on the scope of the Portland SEA in August 2016.
- 3.2 The purpose of scoping was to outline the ‘scope’ of the SEA through setting out:
- A context review of the key environmental and sustainability objectives of national, regional and local plans and strategies relevant to the Neighbourhood Plan;
 - Baseline data against which the Neighbourhood Plan can be assessed;
 - The key sustainability issues for the Neighbourhood Plan; and
 - An ‘SEA Framework’ of objectives against which the Neighbourhood Plan can be assessed.
- 3.3 Baseline information (including the context review and baseline data) is presented in **Appendix A**.
- 3.4 Comments received on the Scoping Report, and how they have been considered and addressed, are presented in **Table 3.1**.

Table 3.1: Consultation responses received on the SEA Scoping Report

Consultation response	How the response was considered and addressed
<p>Historic England David Stuart: Historic Places Adviser, South West</p>	
<p>We have not had any involvement in the preparation of the Plan since our letter of initial advice sent in October 2014. But following receipt of your consultation we have visited the Plan’s website and familiarised ourselves with its Second Draft Policy Set which we assume remains the most up to date schedule of policy proposals.</p> <p>Looking at this there appears to be no site allocation policies and so the basis upon which it has been determined that an SEA is required is not clear (the SEA Scoping Report doesn’t seem to provide any illumination on this point either). If that basis were made explicit it would assist in highlighting a focus or emphasis as far as the themes or issues and depth of understanding within the Scoping exercise are concerned (Note: policy Port/BE6 alludes to the need for a masterplan approach to this area but doesn’t seem to be allocating it in any respect).</p>	<p>Given the significant environmental constraints within the Neighbourhood Plan area (including biodiversity, landscape and historic environmental consideration), and the potential for the Neighbourhood Plan to set the framework for development in sensitive areas, the decision was undertaken to proceed with the SEA process without undertaking formal screening consultation.</p>

⁶ In-line with Article 6(3).of the SEA Directive, these consultation bodies were selected because ‘by reason of their specific environmental responsibilities,[they] are likely to be concerned by the environmental effects of implementing plans and programme’.

Consultation response	How the response was considered and addressed
<p>Overall, we are pleased with the policy provisions proposed for the protection and enhancement of the historic environment but as the Plan is currently drafted do not anticipate a need for us to become involved in more detailed liaison.</p>	<p>Comment noted</p>
<p>As far as the Historic Environment Section of the Scoping Report is concerned we are broadly content with the scope of content and the SEA Objectives and Assessment Questions which have been identified. But it would be helpful to give consideration to the full range of issues affecting the historic environment in case this helps in defining the range of Questions which it is useful to ask.</p>	<p>The assessment questions within the Landscape and Historic Environment section of the SEA Framework have been reviewed and updated to acknowledge the importance of the local heritage assets within the Neighbourhood Plan area, reading as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Conserve and enhance the significance of buildings and structures of architectural or historic interest, both designated and non-designated, and their setting?</i> • <i>Support the undertaking of archaeological investigations and, where appropriate, recommend mitigation strategies.</i> • <i>Conserve and enhance archaeological remains, including historic landscapes?</i> • <i>Support the integrity, wellbeing and historic setting of both designated and non-designated buildings and structures of architectural or cultural heritage interest (including those heritage features at risk)?</i>
<p>We are pleased to see that the Isle's Heritage Assets At Risk is identified. Should there be a specific Question concerning the improvement of their wellbeing for example?</p>	<p>The assessment questions with the Landscape and Historic Environment section of the SEA Framework have been updated, as follows.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Support the integrity and setting of the conservation areas on Portland?</i> • <i>Conserve and enhance the special qualities of the conservation areas on Portland in line with the recommended actions within the adopted conservation area appraisal?</i>
<p>We are also intrigued by the inclusion of a specific Question on street clutter and road signage. While we agree that this is a laudable inclusion the rationale for this is not clear as it is not trailed in the preceding text of the chapter. If it is an issue relating to Conservation Areas are there other issues affecting these (and other) heritage assets which should be similarly identified?</p>	<p>In line with the SEA regulations, the SEA process has considered a broad range of evidence to identify the potential environmental issues affecting the Neighbourhood Plan area.</p>
<p>Otherwise, guidance on the consideration of the historic environment in the SA/SEA process can be found on our website at https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/strategic-environ-assessment-sustainability-appraisal-historic-environment/</p>	
<p>Natural England (no substantive comments received)</p>	
<p>Environment Agency (no substantive comments received)</p>	

Key Sustainability Issues

3.5 Air Quality

- Air quality in most locations in the Neighbourhood Area is currently good, with no significant issues identified.
- Due to the absence of significant and tangible air quality issues in the plan area, **air quality has been scoped out for the purposes of the SEA process.**

3.6 Biodiversity and Geodiversity

- Internationally and nationally designated nature conservation sites are present in the PNP area.
- Much of the built up area within of the Neighbourhood Area is within an SSSI Impact Risk Zone for the Isle of Portland SSSI for residential and commercial development.
- The PNP area has a rich geodiversity resource, which should be protected and enhanced.
- Areas of biodiversity value within the PNP area should be protected and enhanced. Their integrity should also be supported through improved ecological connections in the area, including through the provision of green infrastructure enhancements.
- Features of biodiversity and geodiversity value should be protected from the impacts of future development and where possible enhanced.
- The integrity of the Biodiversity Action Plan Habitats present in and around the PNP area should be supported through the PNP, with due regard to the key habitats and species present at these sites.

3.7 Climate Change

- An increase in the built footprint of the PNP area (associated with the delivery of new housing and employment land) has the potential to increase overall greenhouse gas emissions.
- Whilst per capita greenhouse gas emissions for Weymouth and Portland continue to be lower than for Dorset, South West and England averages, these are also falling at a lower rate than at the county, regional and national level.
- Tidal / sea flooding across the A354 is key issue for the PNP area. This risk is likely to increase in line with predicted sea level rises as a result of climate change.
- The PNP should seek increase the PNP area's resilience to the effects of climate change through supporting adaptation to the risks associated with climate change in the area.

3.8 Landscape and Historic Environment

- The Isle of Portland has a rich historic environment, with many features and areas nationally or locally designated for their cultural heritage interest.
- There are four conservation areas present within the Neighbourhood Area.
- New development has the potential to lead to beneficial and adverse effects on the historic environment, including through affecting the setting of cultural heritage assets and landscape/townscape quality.
- New development could lead to pressures on non-designated sites and townscapes, including from the loss of key built and natural features.
- Improvement in access to, and enhancement of, historic environment assets through development has potential for positive benefits for tourism.

3.9 Land, Soil and Water Resources

- The southern half of the PNP area contains Grade 3 agricultural land - It is uncertain whether this comprises land classified as 'the best and most versatile' agricultural land.
- There is one Household Waste and Recycling Centre in the PNP area

- Water availability in the wider area may be affected in the future by regional increases in population and an increased occurrence of drought exacerbated by the effects of climate change.

3.10 Population and Community

- Since 2001 the population of the PNP area has grown at a significantly slower rate than regional and national averages
- The Neighbourhood Area has a higher proportion of people in the under 16 age group than borough and regional averages; and also a higher proportion of residents within the 16-24 age group than borough, regional, and national averages.
- There are significant pockets of deprivation in the Neighbourhood Area. Most significant pockets of deprivation occur in Fortuneswell North Ward, which is within the 10% most deprived areas nationally for income deprivation.
- There is significant degree of benefit dependency on the Isle of Portland.
- The Neighbourhood Area has a higher proportion of home ownership than regional and national averages.
- Unlike many other areas which are shown to have ageing populations, the PNP area has a relatively balanced age structure between people of working age and older people. However there have been recent increases in the proportion of the 65+ age group within the Neighbourhood Area.

3.11 Health and Wellbeing

- In general, health in Portland is comparable to borough averages, which in turn are slightly less favourable than regional and national averages.
- The prevalence of disability is slightly lower than borough averages but slightly higher than regional and national averages.
- The average life expectancy at birth for wider Weymouth and Portland area (78.5 for males and 83.0 for females) is similar to the England average.
- Health priorities noted for Weymouth and Portland include tackling levels of teenage pregnancy, physical activity, drug misuse and violent crime.

3.12 Transportation

- There are no mainline or branch line railway stations present in the PNP area.
- There are frequent bus services to Weymouth which acts as a transport hub for the area.
- The A354 is the only land access to Portland and is at high risk from sea / tidal flooding and coastal erosion. This risk is likely to increase in the future in line with the effects of climate change.
- The topography of Underhill, coupled with the frequency of PSV and HGV traffic, works against the development of active travel solutions such as enhancements to walking and cycling networks.
- The narrowness of a number of roads in Tophill increases the difficulty of designing sustainable transport solutions.
- New development areas should be situated in accessible locations which limit the need to travel by the private car.
- Continued enhancements to public transport and walking and cycling networks should be promoted.

SEA Framework

3.13 The issues were then translated into an ‘SEA Framework’. This SEA Framework provides a methodological framework for the appraisal of likely significant effects on the baseline. The SEA framework for the Portland Neighbourhood Plan is presented below, excluding the Air Quality SEA theme which has been scoped out due to the absence of any significant issues.

Table 3.2: SEA Framework for the Portland Neighbourhood Plan

SEA Objective	Assessment questions
Biodiversity and Geodiversity	
Protect and enhance all biodiversity and geological features	<p>Will the option/proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect and enhance Chesil Beach and the Fleet in line with the relevant designations? • Support continued improvements to the status of the Isle of Portland to Studland Cliffs SAC? • Support continued improvements to the status of the Nicodemus Heights SSSI? • Protect and enhance semi-natural habitats? • Protect and enhance priority habitats, and the habitat of priority species? • Achieve a net gain in biodiversity? • Protect and enhance the PNP area’s rich geodiversity resource? • Support access to, interpretation and understanding of biodiversity and geodiversity?
Climate Change	
Promote climate change mitigation in Portland	<p>Will the option/proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limit the increase in the carbon footprint of the plan area from population growth? • Promote the use of sustainable modes of transport, including walking, cycling and public transport? • Reduce the need to travel? • Increase the number of new developments meeting sustainable design criteria? • Generate energy from low or zero carbon sources? • Reduce energy consumption from non-renewable resources?
Support the resilience of the Isle of Portland to the potential effects of climate change	<p>Will the option/proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that no development takes place in areas at highest risk of flooding, and ensure that sufficient mitigation is planned for development in areas at risk, taking the likely effects of climate change into account? • Ensure that the effects of climate change on coastal flooding and coastal erosion is taken into account? • Improve green infrastructure networks in the plan area to support adaptation to the potential effects of climate change? • Sustainably manage water run-off, ensuring that the risk of flooding is not increased and where possible reduce flood risk? • Ensure the potential risks associated with climate change are considered through new development in the plan area? • Increase the resilience of biodiversity in the plan area to the effects of climate change?

Landscape and Historic Environment

<p>Protect, maintain and enhance Portland's cultural heritage resource, including its historic environment and archaeological assets.</p>	<p>Will the option/proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preserve the historic settlement pattern of the Isle of Portland? • Conserve and enhance the significance of buildings and structures of architectural or historic interest, both designated and non-designated, and their setting? • Support the integrity of the historic setting of key buildings of cultural heritage interest? • Conserve and enhance local diversity and distinctiveness? • Support access to, interpretation and understanding of the historic environment? • Support the undertaking of archaeological investigations and, where appropriate, recommend mitigation strategies. • Conserve and enhance archaeological remains, including historic landscapes? • Support the integrity, wellbeing and historic setting of both designated and non-designated buildings and structures of architectural or cultural heritage interest (including those heritage features at risk)?
<p>Protect and enhance the character and quality of the Isle of Portland's landscapes and townscapes.</p>	<p>Will the option/proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the integrity of the landscape with regards to the Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site? • Conserve and enhance landscape and townscape features? • Support the integrity and setting of the conservation areas on Portland? • Conserve and enhance the special qualities of the conservation areas on Portland in line with the recommended actions in the adopted conservation area appraisal?
<h2>Land, Soil and Water Resources</h2>	
<p>Ensure the efficient use of land.</p>	<p>Will the option/proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the use of previously developed land? • Avoid the development of the best and most versatile agricultural land, which on the Isle of Portland comprises Grade 3 agricultural land?
<p>Promote sustainable waste management solutions that encourage the reduction, re-use and recycling of waste.</p>	<p>Will the option/proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the amount of waste produced? • Move waste up the waste hierarchy? • Maximise opportunities for local management of waste in order to minimise export of waste to areas outside? • Encourage recycling of materials and minimise consumption of resources during construction?
<p>Use and manage water resources in a sustainable manner.</p>	<p>Will the option/proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support improvements to water quality? • Minimise water consumption?

Population and Community

<p>Cater for existing and future residents' needs as well as the needs of different groups in the community, and improve access to local, high-quality community services and facilities.</p>	<p>Will the option/proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the development of a range of high quality, accessible community facilities? • Encourage and promote social cohesion and encourage active involvement of local people in community activities? • Maintain or enhance the quality of life of existing local residents? • Improve the availability and accessibility of key local facilities, including specialist services for disabled and older people? • Encourage and promote local employment and training opportunities?
<p>Reduce deprivation and promote community cohesion</p>	
<p>Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing, and ensure an appropriate mix of dwelling sizes, types and tenures.</p>	<p>Will the option/proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the provision of a range of house types and sizes? Meet the needs of all sectors of the community? • Provide quality and flexible homes that meet people's needs? • Promote the use of sustainable building techniques, including use of sustainable building materials in construction? • Provide housing in sustainable locations that allow easy access to a range of local services and facilities?

Health and Wellbeing

<p>Improve the health and wellbeing of Portland's residents</p>	<p>Will the option/proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote accessibility to a range of leisure and community facilities, for all age groups? • Promote accessibility to, and enhancement of range of health facilities? • Facilitate access to the community and services for disabled people and older people? • Provide and enhance the provision of community access to green infrastructure, in accordance with Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards? • Improve access to the countryside for recreation?
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Transportation

<p>Promote sustainable transport use and reduce the need to travel.</p>	<p>Will the option/proposal help to...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the need to travel through sustainable patterns of land use and development? • Encourage modal shift to more sustainable forms of travel? • Enable transport infrastructure improvements? • Facilitate working from home and remote working?
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4. What has plan making / SEA involved to this point?

Introduction

- 4.1 In accordance with the SEA Regulations the Environmental Report must include...
- An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with; and
 - The likely significant effects on the environment associated with alternatives / an outline of the reasons for selecting the preferred approach in light of alternatives appraised.
- 4.2 The 'narrative' of plan-making / SEA up to this point is told within this part of the Environmental Report. Specifically, this chapter explains how preparation of the current version of the Portland Neighbourhood Plan has been informed by an assessment of alternative locations for non-strategic scale development in the Neighbourhood Plan area.

Overview of plan making / SEA work undertaken since 2013

- 4.3 The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group has sought to encourage discussion and debate within the community about the issues and opportunities for the Neighbourhood Plan area. Plan-making for the Portland Neighbourhood Plan has been underway since 2013. Initial work incorporated a number of informal and formal consultation exercises carried out by the Neighbourhood Plan Group, including on the scope of the Neighbourhood Plan⁷.
- 4.4 The key methods which the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group have used within the consultation process have included:
- Public exhibitions, meetings and events;
 - Regular articles in the 'Free Portland News' and the 'Weymouth and Portland Advertiser';
 - Use of social media and dedicated website;
 - Local newspaper and noticeboards;
 - A community questionnaire;
 - Focus groups and workshops;
 - Survey and discussion with local businesses;
 - Directly contacting wider-than-local organisations and agencies (strategic stakeholders) which have an indirect interest in the Neighbourhood Plan; and
 - Consultation 'windows' during which comments have been invited on draft documents.

Assessment of reasonable alternatives for the Neighbourhood Plan

- 4.5 A key element of the SEA process is the appraisal of 'reasonable alternatives' for the Portland Neighbourhood Plan. The SEA Regulations⁸ are not prescriptive as to what constitutes a reasonable alternative, stating only that the Environmental Report should present an appraisal of the '*plan and reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and geographical scope of the plan*'.
- 4.6 The following sections therefore describe how the SEA process to date has informed the preferred development strategy for the Neighbourhood Plan area and potential locations for housing development. Specifically, this chapter explains how the Portland Neighbourhood

⁷ Portland Town Council (2017): 'Background to the Portland Plan', [online] available to access via: <https://www.portlandplan.org.uk/portland-plan-background/> last accessed [03/04/18]

⁸ Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004

Plan's development strategy has been shaped through considering alternative approaches for the location of non-strategic scale development in the Neighbourhood Plan area.

- 4.7 As discussed in Chapter 2 of this Environmental Report, the Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared in conjunction with the provisions of the West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan. The Local Plan does not allocate any sites for housing in the Neighbourhood Plan area, or provide a housing number for the Neighbourhood Plan to deliver. However, as part of the examination of the Local Plan, the Independent Examiner recommended that it was *'imperative that an early review is undertaken'*⁹, with an objective of identifying additional housing land capable of meeting housing need to 2036. Additionally, the Local Plan notes that future economic opportunities for the Isle of Portland will be based on maximising the potential of existing major employment sites and Portland Port, and additionally capitalising on the Isle of Portland's environmental and heritage assets to further develop sectors such as tourism and leisure.
- 4.8 In light of this, the key objective for the Neighbourhood Plan, which was developed following extensive consultation, is to encourage a balanced mix of housing in appropriate places that people need and want, in addition to accommodating responsible and sustainable tourism development which both strengthens the Isle's business function and protects the special and unique character of Portland's natural and built environment.
- 4.9 To support decision making on this element of the plan, the SEA process has considered two sets of options.
- 4.10 A first consideration was where, in broad terms, to facilitate new housing provision in the Neighbourhood Plan area. Eight broad settlement areas are located in the Neighbourhood Plan area including Castletown, Chiswell, Easton, Fortuneswell, Grove, Southwell, Wakeham and Weston. In this context two alternative approaches linked to the broad location of development in the Neighbourhood Plan area were appraised through the SEA process. These were as follows.
- **Option 1:** Facilitate the development of greenfield sites in the vicinities of the eight main settlements in the Neighbourhood Plan area.
 - **Option 2:** Focus development on previously developed sites in Portland.
- 4.11 These two options were subjected to assessment, with Table 4.1 below presenting the findings of the appraisal of Option 1 and Option 2. To support the assessment findings, the options have been ranked in terms of their sustainability performance against the relevant SEA theme. It is anticipated that this will provide the reader with a likely indication of the comparative sustainability performance of the two options in relation to each theme considered.

⁹ Dorset County Council (2017): 'West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan Review' [online] available to access via: <<https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/local-plan-review>> last accessed [03/04/18]

Table 4.1: Appraisal findings: reasonable alternatives for broad locations of development

Option 1: Facilitate the development of greenfield sites in the vicinities of the eight main settlements in the Neighbourhood Plan area.

Option 2: Focus development on previously developed sites in Portland.

SEA Theme	Discussion of potential effects and relative merits of options	Rank of preference	
		Opt 1	Opt 2
Biodiversity and geodiversity	<p>The key biodiversity designations in the Neighbourhood Plan area include the Chesil Beach and The Fleet Ramsar Site, which is also designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), the Isle of Portland to Studland Cliffs Special Area of Conservation (SAC), the Studland to Portland Marine SAC, the Isle of Portland SSSI, the Nicodemus Heights SSSI, the Portland to Harbour Shore SSSI, and the Chesil Beach and Stennis Ledges Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ).</p> <p>As such Option 1, which is likely to focus a greater degree of development in the more sensitive parts of the Neighbourhood Plan area in relation to these European and nationally designated sites, has increased potential for effects on the qualifying features for their designation (i.e. habitats and species listed in the annexes of the European Habitats Directive '92/43/EEC' and the European Birds Directive '79/409/EEC').</p> <p>The relative merits of Option 2 compared to Option 1 however largely depend on the provision of green infrastructure to accompany new development areas in order to enhance ecological networks, retaining and incorporating biodiversity features within the design. Nonetheless, Option 2 would limit the amount of landtake on areas central to the ecological integrity of the various European and nationally designated sites, therefore supporting the protection of these key designations.</p>	2	1
Climate change	<p>In terms of greenhouse gas emissions, Weymouth and Portland Borough observed an 11.8% reduction in total emissions per capita compared to the totals for Dorset (13.8%), the South West (18.3%) and England (17.7%). The extent to which the two options have the potential to support climate change mitigation is a key element.</p> <p>In this context, Option 2 is likely to encourage a distribution strategy which promotes development at locations in closer proximity to the services and facilities in eight settlement areas of Portland. This will support a limitation of emissions in the Neighbourhood Plan area through reducing the need for residents to travel for day to day services, in addition to facilitating access to the public transport network.</p> <p>In regards to climate change adaptation, the extent to which the options promote climate change adaptation depends on the specific location, design, layout and scale of development. However, Option 1 is likely to result in an increased loss of features which support climate resilience and provide natural flood defence mechanisms.</p>	2	1

Option 1: Facilitate the development of greenfield sites in the vicinities of the eight main settlements in the Neighbourhood Plan area.

Option 2: Focus development on previously developed sites in Portland.

SEA Theme	Discussion of potential effects and relative merits of options	Rank of preference	
		Opt 1	Opt 2
Landscape and historic environment	<p>In relation to landscape constraints, the Neighbourhood Plan area is located within the setting of the Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site (WHS) and the West Dorset Heritage Coast. As such, Option 1 has the potential to have a greater impact on the character of the undeveloped coastline of Portland, with developments located within closer proximity to natural landscape features contributing to the Outstanding Universal Value of the WHS. Additionally, Option 1 would result in a greater loss of open spaces contributing to the 'green gaps' between the main settlements on Portland and therefore impact upon the character, distinctiveness and setting of the eight settlement areas.</p> <p>There are increased opportunities for enabling the reuse, rejuvenation and revitalisation of heritage assets through Option 2, due to the fact that the majority of Portland's 192 listed buildings, nine scheduled monuments and four conservation areas are located within or within proximity to the existing settlements on the Isle. Additionally, Option 2 will provide numerous opportunities to improve and enhance heritage assets (and their settings) on the Isle if high quality design and layout is incorporated into new development.</p>	2	1
Land, Soil and Water Resources	<p>One of the primary land uses in parts of Portland is quarrying. Almost all of the greenfield land surrounding the eight main settlements of the Isle is covered by the Portland Mineral Consultation Area (MCA), in order to protect known locations of specific mineral resources. In this context, Option 1 is likely to facilitate a greater amount of non-minerals related development within the MCA in comparison to Option 2, which could potentially result in the sterilisation of these resources. However, the provisions of the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Minerals Strategy¹⁰ 2014-2028 will prevent inappropriate non-mineral related development within the MCA.</p> <p>Additionally, Option 2 is likely to promote the most efficient use of land through promoting the development of previously developed sites.</p>	2	1
Population and community	<p>Option 2 will facilitate development in closer proximity to the services and facilities in the main settlements on Portland, including Castletown, Chiswell, Easton, Fortuneswell, Grove, Southwell, Wakeham and Weston. Comparatively, Option 1 may promote a greater proportion of development to less accessible areas of the Neighbourhood Plan area. This may do more to limit access to services and facilities and contribute less to community vitality.</p> <p>Nevertheless, given land availability, both options will help deliver new housing provision across Portland. Additionally, due to the compactness of the Isle, both options have the potential to increase pressures on local services.</p>	=1	=1

¹⁰ Dorset County Council (2014): 'Minerals Strategy', [online] available to download via: <<https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/mcs>> last accessed [18/04/18]

Option 1: Facilitate the development of greenfield sites in the vicinities of the eight main settlements in the Neighbourhood Plan area.

Option 2: Focus development on previously developed sites in Portland.

SEA Theme	Discussion of potential effects and relative merits of options	Rank of preference	
		Opt 1	Opt 2
Health and Wellbeing	<p>Both options will support the location of development with good access to the public rights of way network and the range of open spaces present locally. This includes the Chiswell Walled Garden, Easton Gardens, the Grove Governor’s Community Garden and Victoria Gardens (located within the developed areas on Portland), and the South West Coast Path.</p> <p>The delivery of larger scale development in the Neighbourhood Plan area has the potential to concentrate effects on road safety and noise quality from increased traffic flows at certain locations. This may have effects on the health and wellbeing of residents. Impacts in this regard are possible under both options, and depend on the location of new development areas and the integration of elements such as sustainable transport and green infrastructure provision.</p>	=1	=1
Transportation	<p>Option 2 may promote development in locations which are better connected to the public transport network; however this depends on the location of new development. Comparatively, Option 1 may, through locating development in locations outside of the main settlements, stimulate development in the more inaccessible parts of the Neighbourhood Plan area. This has the potential to increase the dependency on privately owned vehicles, contributing less to supporting sustainable methods of travel.</p> <p>However the potential effects of both options depend on the location of development in conjunction with key public transport links and accessibility to services and facilities.</p>	2	1

- 4.12 Following consultation with the local community, a further element in which the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group was keen to explore was the issue of permanent and second homes and holiday letting. To consider this issue in more detail, and provide further sustainability context, the SEA process appraised two options, as follows:
- **Option A:** Introduce a policy through the Neighbourhood Plan which seeks to restrain second home ownership and holiday rentals in the Neighbourhood Plan area through introducing restrictions on the use of new housing; and
 - **Option B:** Do not introduce restrictions on the use of new housing in the Neighbourhood Plan area.
- 4.13 As for the previous set of options, these two broad options were appraised as 'reasonable alternatives' against both the baseline and relatively (i.e. against each other). They were again considered through the SEA Framework of objectives and assessment questions developed during scoping and ranked in terms of their sustainability performance against the relevant theme. The findings of the appraisal are presented in Table 4.2 below.

Table 4.1: Appraisal findings: reasonable alternatives for broad locations of development

Option A: Introduce a policy through the Neighbourhood Plan which seeks to restrain second home ownership and holiday rentals in the Neighbourhood Plan area through introducing restrictions on the use of new housing.

Option B: Do not introduce restrictions on the use of new housing in the Neighbourhood Plan area.

SEA Theme	Discussion of potential effects and relative merits of options	Rank of preference	
		Opt A	Opt B
Biodiversity and geodiversity	<p>Option B has the potential to lead to increased effects on biodiversity assets during peak periods. This includes through increasing activities which affect designated sites in the Neighbourhood Plan area. However, these effects are unlikely to be significant given the current management of the sites.</p> <p>Future housing developments in the Neighbourhood Plan area have the potential to have significant impacts on biodiversity assets if they are located inappropriately and have a poor design and layout. Likewise, future developments have the potential to promote net gains in biodiversity value. In this context, for both options, potential effects on biodiversity depend on aspects such as the provision of green infrastructure to accompany new development areas and the retention and incorporation of biodiversity features. It is unlikely that the tenure of housing will affect the extent to which this achieved.</p>	N/A	N/A
Climate change	<p>In terms of adaptation to the effects of climate change, an increase in the Neighbourhood Plan area's year round (rather than seasonal) population through Option A has the potential to increase resilience to extreme weather events. This includes through increasing the year round availability of 'human capital' which will help improve the maintenance of existing properties (and settlements) and enabling a more effective response to extreme weather events when they occur.</p> <p>In terms of greenhouse gas emissions, road transport is an increasingly significant contributor to emissions in the Neighbourhood Plan area. Whilst greenhouse gas emissions are likely to increase during peak holiday periods under Option B, Option A has the potential to increase the carbon footprint of the Neighbourhood Plan area during the rest of the year. Overall it is uncertain at this level of detail which of the options is likely to do most to limit greenhouse gas emissions over an annual period.</p>	1	2
Landscape and historic environment	A policy which seeks to restrain second home and holiday home ownership in the Neighbourhood Plan area is unlikely to have any significant implications to the outstanding universal value of the Jurassic Coast WHS, the landscape quality or the integrity of the heritage assets on Portland. Potential effects depend largely on the location, design and layout of new development areas.	N/A	N/A
Land, Soil and Water Resources	In terms of soil quality and availability, the tenure of new housing in the Neighbourhood Plan area is unlikely to have significant effects.	N/A	N/A

Option A: Introduce a policy through the Neighbourhood Plan which seeks to restrain second home ownership and holiday rentals in the Neighbourhood Plan area through introducing restrictions on the use of new housing.

Option B: Do not introduce restrictions on the use of new housing in the Neighbourhood Plan area.

SEA Theme	Discussion of potential effects and relative merits of options	Rank of preference	
		Opt A	Opt B
Population and community	Based on the most recently completed census in 2011, Portland was home to 12,884 people forming 5,175 households. The total number of dwellings on the Isle was 5,608, indicating that almost 8% of all dwellings in 2011 were either empty or second homes. In this context, a policy restricting the use of new homes as second homes or holiday lets through Option A has the potential to support the affordability of housing for local people. Option A, through increasing the year-round population also has increased potential to support the viability of services and amenities, including health and education provision. It will also support the viability of public transport provision. This will promote accessibility to services, facilities and amenities for local people.	1	2
Health and Wellbeing	Option A, through facilitating a larger increase in the year-round population of the Neighbourhood Plan area, has the potential to support the viability of the health services and leisure and recreational facilities.	1	2
Transportation	Congestion levels in the Neighbourhood Plan area are significantly affected by visitor traffic, particularly along the A354 which is the only route connecting Portland to the mainland. In this context, Option B may be more likely to contribute to congestion issues during peak times of the year, including the summer period. Due to relatively small proportion of the total housing stock that will be affected by the options, effects are likely to be limited however. Whilst Option A has the potential to increase year-round traffic flows, it also has the potential to support the viability of year-round public transport networks, supporting accessibility for those living in the Neighbourhood Plan area by sustainable modes of transport.	1	2

Current approach in the Portland Neighbourhood Plan

- 4.14 The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared in conjunction with the provisions of the West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan, as discussed above.
- 4.15 The current version of the Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate specific sites for housing and employment. Instead it seeks to focus future development within the existing settlement areas of Portland (i.e. the defined development boundaries), with a focus on brownfield sites. This is with a view to supporting the distinctiveness of the eight settlements on the Isle of Portland, protecting landscape character, and limiting potential impacts on the sensitive environmental designations present on the Isle of Portland. It also anticipated that this will enable the rejuvenation of significant areas of previously developed land available on the island, with the potential to secure enhancements to the quality of the built environment, including the fabric and setting of the historic environment.
- 4.16 This approach was chosen following the outcomes of stakeholder engagement and consultation events, and the findings of the assessment of reasonable alternatives.
- 4.17 This approach has been subsequently supported by the Preferred Options for the emerging Local Plan Review, the proposed strategy for which is to meet the housing needs of the Island through the redevelopment of brownfield sites and existing allocations (i.e. sites already allocated in the current Local Plan).

Neighbourhood Plan policies

- 4.18 To support the implementation of the vision for the Portland Neighbourhood Plan, the submission version of the Neighbourhood Plan puts forward 34 policies, which are grouped under the seven objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan. The policies, which were developed following extensive community consultation and evidence gathering, are presented in Table 4.2.
- 4.19 The previous Regulation 14 version of the Portland Neighbourhood Plan put forward 35 policies to guide development in the Neighbourhood Plan area. The appraisal of these earlier policies was presented in the SEA Environmental Report accompanying the Regulation 14 consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan.

Table 4.2: Portland Neighbourhood Plan policies (submission version)

Policy Number	Policy Name
Environment	
Port/EN0	Protection of European Sites
Port/EN1	Prevention of Flooding and Erosion
Port/EN2	Renewable Energy Development
Port/EN3	The Portland Quarries Nature Park
Port/EN4	Local Heritage Assets
Port/EN5	Historic Piers
Port/EN6	Defined Development Boundaries
Port/EN7	Design and Character
Port/EN8	The Verne
Port/EN9	Public Realm Improvements
Business and Employment	

Policy Number	Policy Name
Port/BE1	Protecting Existing Business Sites and Premises
Port/BE2	Up-grading of Existing Employment Sites and Premises
Port/BE3	New Employment Premises
Port/BE4	New Business Centres
Port/BE5	Facilitating Home Working
Port/BE6	The Northern Arc
Housing	
Port/HS1	Housing Mix
Port/HS2	Community Housing Assets
Port/HS3	Second Homes
Port/HS4	Hardy Block
Transport	
Port/TR1	Improving Public Transport Links
Port/TR2	Improving the Transport Infrastructure
Port/TR3	Reducing Parking Problems
Port/TR4	Increasing Travel Links
Shopping and Services	
Port/SS1	Reinforcing Local and Neighbourhood Centres
Community Recreation	
Port/CR1	Protecting Recreation Spaces
Port/CR2	Local Green Space
Port/CR3	Allotments
Port/CR4	Sites of Open Space Value
Port/CR5	New Community Facilities
Port/CR6	Community and Visitor Events
Sustainable Tourism	
Port/ST1	Sustainable Tourism Development
Port/ST2	Beach Huts
Port/ST3	Tourist Trails
Port/ST4	Marine Berths for Tourists

5. What are the appraisal findings at this current stage?

Introduction

- 5.1 The aim of this chapter is to present appraisal findings and recommendations in relation to the current submission version of the Portland Neighbourhood Plan. This chapter presents:
- An appraisal of the submission version of the Portland Neighbourhood Plan under the seven SEA theme headings; and
 - The overall conclusions at this current stage.

Approach to this appraisal

- 5.2 The appraisal is structured under the seven SEA themes taken forward for the purposes of the SEA.
- 5.3 For each theme, ‘significant effects’ of the current version of the plan on the baseline are predicted and evaluated. Account is taken of the criteria presented within Schedule 2 of the Regulations. So, for example, account is taken of the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of effects as far as possible. These effect ‘characteristics’ are described within the assessment as appropriate.
- 5.4 Every effort is made to identify / evaluate effects accurately; however, this is inherently challenging given the high level nature of the plan. The ability to predict effects accurately is also limited by understanding of the baseline and the nature of future planning applications. Because of the uncertainties involved, there is a need to exercise caution when identifying and evaluating significant effects and ensure all assumptions are explained. In many instances it is not possible to predict significant effects, but it is possible to comment on merits (or otherwise) in more general terms.

Biodiversity and Geodiversity

- 5.5 There are a number of European and nationally designated sites located within and/or adjacent to the Neighbourhood Plan area, including the Chesil Beach and The Fleet Ramsar Site, which is also designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), the Isle of Portland to Studland Cliffs Special Area of Conservation (SAC), the Studland to Portland Marine SAC, the Isle of Portland SSSI, the Nicodemus Heights SSSI, the Portland to Harbour Shore SSSI, and the Chesil Beach and Stennis Ledges Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ). In the local context, key sites of ecological and geological importance include the Verne Yeates Local Nature Reserve (LNR) and the Isle of Portland Local Geological Site, respectively. Furthermore, there is a dispersed network of BAP Priority Habitats on Portland, some of which overlap with the Weymouth and Portland Ecological Network¹¹.
- 5.6 In relation to the European designated biodiversity sites present in the Neighbourhood Plan area, Policy Port/EN6 (Defined Development Boundaries) outlines support for development or redevelopment proposals within the defined development boundaries (DDBs) of the Neighbourhood Plan area, therefore encouraging development away from these protected sites. In addition a number of the policies set out provisions which directly seek to protect the integrity of these European designated sites. A key policy in this regard is Policy Port/EN0 (Protection of European Sites), which states that all internationally designated wildlife sites will be safeguarded from development that could adversely affect them, unless there are reasons of overriding public interest why the development should proceed and there is no alternative acceptable solution. This is further supported by: Port/EN2 (Renewable Energy Development), which highlights that new renewable or low carbon energy sources will only be supported if the

¹¹ Dorset Local Nature Partnership (2018): ‘Weymouth and Portland Ecological Network Map’, [online] available to download via: <https://www.dorsetlnp.org.uk/ecological_networks.html> last accessed [03/04/18]

proposals do not affect the integrity of European sites of conservation importance; Port/EN5 Historic Piers, which highlights that proposals to protect and enhance Portland's historic piers will only be supported where they do not lead to adverse effects on European designated sites; and policies Port/EN8 (The Verne) and Port/BE6 (The Northern Arc), which highlight that the integrity of European sites should not be adversely affected as a result of water pollution from site runoff or dust emissions during construction or the operational stage associated with development activities at The Verne or the Northern Arc.

- 5.7 Additionally, Natural England has developed Site Improvement Plans (SIPs) for each Natura 2000 site in England as part of the Improvement Programme for England's Natura 2000 sites (IPENS) project. A 'Natura 2000' site is the combined term for sites designated as SPAs and SACs. Although the IPENS project closed in 2015, the Chesil Beach and The Fleet SIP¹², Portland-Studland & St Albans-Durlston SIP¹³ and the Studland to Portland SIP¹⁴ contain a variety of priority issues for the SPAs and SACs within and/or adjacent to the Neighbourhood Plan area which extend until 2020. One of the key priority issues within the SIPs is the impact of public access/disturbance to Natura 2000 sites resulting from tourism and population growth. Within the Neighbourhood Plan, Policy Port/CR2 (Local Green Spaces) recognises the local significance and community value of 14 local green spaces across Portland, stating that proposals for development on this land which lead to the loss of, damage to or adverse impact on these green spaces will not be supported. Furthermore, Policy Port/CR4 (Sites of Open Space Value) outlines that areas of incidental open space within residential areas that contribute to local amenity and/or green infrastructure should also be protected from development. In this regard, the provisions of Policy Port/CR2 and Policy Port/CR4 have the potential to indirectly benefit the European sites through protecting and promoting the use of a number of alternative open green spaces for recreational uses.
- 5.8 These provisions are reflected by findings of the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) process which has been undertaken alongside the Neighbourhood Plan.¹⁵ This assessment undertook both screening and Appropriate Assessment.
- 5.9 The European designated sites considered within the Appropriate Assessment for impact pathways that could not be screened out at the screening stage were:
- Isle of Portland to Studland Cliffs SAC
 - Chesil and the Fleet SAC
 - Chesil Beach and the Fleet Ramsar and Marine SPA
 - Lyme Bay and Torbay Marine SAC
- 5.10 Impact pathways considered were: direct landtake, effects from construction activities e.g. dust and surface runoff, recreational pressure, air quality and water quality.
- 5.11 In relation to these impact pathways, the HRA findings highlighted that, given the Neighbourhood Plan is within conformity with the provisions of the adopted Local Plan, the potential for likely significant effects on the integrity of these sites would be limited. However a number of recommendations were suggested in the HRA report to minimise potential effects, which were then taken into account when finalising the Neighbourhood Plan prior to submission.
- 5.12 The entirety of the Neighbourhood Plan area overlaps with a SSSI Impact Risk Zone for all development types. Specific impacts to these nationally designated sites are difficult to

¹² Natural England (2014): 'Site Improvement Plan: Chesil Beach and The Fleet (SIP041)', [online] available to download via: <<http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5436996537286656?category=5755515191689216>> last accessed [03/04/18]

¹³ Natural England (2014): 'Site Improvement Plan: Portland Studland St Albans Durlston (SIP178)', [online] available to download via: <<http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6737802813243392?category=5755515191689216>> last accessed [03/04/18]

¹⁴ Natural England (2015): 'Site Improvement Plan: Studland to Portland (SIP233)', [online] available to download via: <<http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6460646937853952?category=5755515191689216>> last accessed [03/04/18]

¹⁵ AECOM (April 2019) Portland Neighbourhood Plan Submission Draft Plan (December 2018) Habitats Regulations Assessment

determine in the absence of any specific allocations through the Neighbourhood Plan, and this will need to be addressed through the planning process. Policy Port/EN6 (Defined Development Boundaries) outlines support for development or redevelopment proposals within the defined development boundaries (DDBs) of the Neighbourhood Plan area, all of which encompass the existing built-up areas of Portland. Specifically, Policy Port/EN6 goes on to state that development within the DDBs will be supported subject to compliance with the other policies within the Neighbourhood Plan, which includes those relating to the protection of natural assets (see Policy Port/ENV2, for example). As such, it is anticipated that future development within the DDBs is unlikely to lead to significant negative impacts on the condition of the SSSIs.

- 5.13 In order to protect and enhance the biodiversity and geodiversity of the Neighbourhood Plan area, Policy Port/EN3 (The Portland Quarries Nature Park) seeks to positively contribute towards one of the key environmental opportunities identified in the Background Paper as part of the Local Plan Review¹⁶. The provisions of Policy Port/EN3 state that proposals which seek to further the creation of a 'Quarries Nature Park' will be supported provided that they avoid damage to ecologically important sites. Markedly, the creation of The Portland Quarries Nature Park will potentially enhance the ability for species to connect between key sites of biodiversity importance by expanding the Weymouth and Portland Ecological Network, in addition to safeguarding the geological interest of land formerly used for quarrying activities. Moreover, the provisions of Policy Port/EN3 align with aspirations of Policy PORT3 within the adopted West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan. Finally, the policy recognises the geodiversity resource of the area through seeking to ensure that activities do not compromise safeguarded Portland Stone reserves in the area.
- 5.14 Overall, the Neighbourhood Plan providing a solid basis for the protection and enhancement of habitats and ecological networks in the Neighbourhood Plan area, aligning to the provision of Policy ENV2 (Wildlife and Habitats) within the Local Plan. Additionally, it is important to acknowledge that the Site Improvement Plans for the Natura 2000 sites along with the Management Plan for the Jurassic Coast UNESCO World Heritage Site provide further protection to the natural environment (including biodiversity and geodiversity). Similarly, the work carried out by the Dorset Local Nature Partnership will also help to create 'more, bigger, better and joined'¹⁷ ecological networks in the area, and the international and national protection offered by the key biodiversity and geodiversity designations will support their integrity.

Climate Change

- 5.15 In terms of climate change mitigation, road transport is an increasingly significant contributor to greenhouse gas emissions in the Neighbourhood Plan area. Based on the 2011 census data, the most popular method of travelling to work in the Neighbourhood Plan area is via driving a car or van, with fewer economically active residents choosing to work mainly at or from home in comparison to the regional and national trends. Policy Port/TR1 (Improving Public Transport Links) outlines support for opportunities which seek to improve or develop public transport links between the settlements on Portland, and between Portland and the mainland. Additionally, Policy Port/TR4 (Increasing Travel Links) states that development proposals that improve accessibility, improve links to or extend the network of footpaths, bridleways and cycle routes will be supported if they do not result in unacceptable harm to the natural environment. Therefore, the provisions of Policy Port/TR1 and Port/TR4 will help support a limitation of greenhouse gas emissions within the Neighbourhood Plan area.
- 5.16 As per the provisions of Policy SUS2 (Distribution of Development) within the adopted West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan, development proposals which would be located outside of the DDBs will be strictly controlled, with restrictions on the types of development in order to protect the countryside and respect the environmental constraints. However, 'proposals for the generation of renewable energy or other utility infrastructure' will be supported through

¹⁶ West Dorset District Council and Weymouth & Portland Borough Council (2017): 'Background Paper: Development on Portland: Section 6 - Opportunities' [online] available to download via: <<https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/local-plan-review-evidence>> last accessed [04/04/18]

¹⁷ Dorset Local Nature Partnership (2018): 'Dorset's Ecological Network: More, Bigger, Better and Joined', [online] available to access via: <https://www.dorsetlnp.org.uk/ecological_networks.html> last accessed [03/04/18]

Policy SUS2. In this context, Policy Port/EN2 (Renewable Energy Development) within the Neighbourhood Plan stipulates that development proposals for energy generating infrastructure using renewable or low carbon energy sources (including wind and tidal power) will be supported providing that there will be no unacceptable environmental effects. Additionally, Policy Port/EN2 goes on to state that community-based renewable and low carbon energy generation initiatives will be encouraged, therefore outlining a statement of intent for generating energy from low or zero carbon sources and reducing energy consumption from non-renewable resources within the timescales of the Neighbourhood Plan.

- 5.17 In terms of climate change adaptation, the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework will help address potential flood risk issues in the Neighbourhood Plan area. However, a number of policies within the Neighbourhood Plan will further help manage flood risk issues in the area. For example, Policy Port/EN1 (Prevention of Flooding and Erosion) suggests that development proposals in areas designated by the Shoreline Management Plan to be protected ('hold the line') will be supported if they are specifically aiming to prevent coastal erosion or flooding and protect local property and businesses.
- 5.18 Further supporting climate change adaptation, Policy Port/CR2 (Local Green Spaces) and Policy Port/CR4 (Sites of Open Space Value) seek to protect open and green spaces within the Neighbourhood Plan area from future development. The provision of these policies will support climate change adaptation through helping to reduce the impact of surface water runoff by protecting these natural flood defence mechanisms, in addition to supporting the green infrastructure work being carried out by Dorset Council and other organisations.
- 5.19 Overall therefore, the Neighbourhood Plan policies discussed above directly aim to address the impacts of climate change, supporting Policy EN3 (Green Infrastructure Network), Policy EN5 (Flood Risk) and Policy ENV6 (Local Flood Alleviation Schemes) within the adopted West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan.

Landscape and Historic Environment

- 5.20 The Neighbourhood Plan area has a rich historic environment and distinctive character, and is located within the setting of the Jurassic Coast: Dorset and East Devon UNESCO World Heritage Site (WHS) and the West Dorset Heritage Coast. In regards to the historic environment constraints, there are 192 listed buildings, nine scheduled monuments and four conservation areas designated for their heritage value. Completed in 2017, Appendix 2 of the Isle of Portland Heritage and Character Assessment¹⁸ also contains a list of non-designated heritage assets of local value, including a variety of buildings within the Underhill Conservation Area, Grove Conservation Area, the Portland (Easton, Reforne, Straits and Wakeham) Conservation Area and Weston Conservation Area.
- 5.21 A key objective of the Neighbourhood Plan is to protect the special and unique character of Portland. In regards to the landscape considerations, the 2014-2019 Management Plan¹⁹ for the Jurassic Coast WHS outlines a variety of aims for this internationally protected site, including:
- To protect the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) and setting of the WHS;
 - To conserve and enhance the WHS and its setting for science, education and public enjoyment;
 - To strengthen understanding and awareness of the OUV of the WHS; and
 - To improve sustainable access to the WHS, and enable visitors to enjoy a welcoming experience and high quality facilities; and
- 5.22 In this context, Policy Port/ST3 (Tourist Trails) outlines support for proposals which would further the creation of a network of tourist and leisure trails which are sensitive to the character of the locality and provide improved accessibility for wheelchairs and those with impaired

¹⁸ AECOM (2017): 'Isle of Portland Heritage and Character Assessment', [online] available to download via: <<https://www.portlandplan.org.uk/document-library/#2017>> last accessed [03/04/18]

¹⁹ Jurassic Coast Partnership (2014): 'Dorset and East Devon Coast World Heritage Site Management Plan: 2014-2019', [online] available to download via: <<https://jurassiccoast.org/documents/>> last accessed [03/04/18]

- mobility and Port/EN5 Historic Piers highlights that the renovation or alteration of historic piers should be designed sensitively, and with careful regard to the pier's historical interest and setting, as well as the need to avoid any significant harmful impact on the Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site.
- 5.23 Policy Port/EN9 (Public Realm Improvements) recognises the value of proposals which improve the public realm through the introduction of high quality pavements, signage, street furniture and public art installations. Additionally, Policy Port/EN2 (Renewable Energy Development) states that renewable energy provision is acceptable if it does not result in the loss or significant harm to landscape character, amenity, historic environment, views, or the archaeological and geological value of the coast. Therefore, the provisions of these policies should directly and indirectly contribute to the key aims of the current Management Plan for the WHS, listed above.
- 5.24 In the absence of any proposed allocations through the Neighbourhood Plan, Policy Port/EN6 (Defined Development Boundaries) will ensure that future development is focused within the existing built-up areas of Portland. Additionally, the provisions of Policy Port/EN7 (Design and Character) aim to ensure that any future developments respect the distinctiveness of the settlements within the Neighbourhood Plan area. Specifically, Policy Port/EN7 outlines that development proposals will be expected to be of a design which complements the prevailing size, height, scale, materials and layout of the existing surrounding development, in addition to demonstrating how it reflects the existing character of the locality as identified within the Portland Heritage and Character Assessment and how it applies the principles of the Conservation Area Appraisal. This focus on previously developed land provides significant opportunities to enhance the fabric and setting of the historic environment.
- 5.25 Furthermore, a number of policies within the Neighbourhood Plan aim to protect and enhance townscape character. For example, Policy Port/EN8 (The Verne) outlines support for proposals which aim to achieve sustainable re-use of this area of the Citadel through the restoration and redevelopment of buildings, providing that the design is sensitive to the area's historical and architectural setting. Policy Port/BE2 (Up-grading of Existing Employment Sites and Premises) supports proposals where the design of the upgrades would aim to reflect the maritime and industrial character of the area in which it is located, wherever possible. Similarly, Policy Port/HS4 (Hardy Block) suggests that development proposals which involve reducing the height and visual impact of Hardy Block and enhancing the overall character of the neighbourhood centre of Castletown, will be supported.
- 5.26 In regards to the historic environment, there are a number of policies within the Neighbourhood Plan which seek to support the integrity and setting of both designated and non-designated heritage assets on Portland. For example, Policy Port/EN4 (Local Heritage Assets) seeks to ensure that any development proposal which affects a local heritage asset must demonstrate how it will protect and enhance the asset. Additionally, Policy Port/EN4 also states that development proposals in proximity to a heritage asset should provide a clear assessment of the significance and impact of the proposal on the asset and its setting in order to justify the approach taken. Similarly, Policy Port/EN5 (Historic Piers) outlines support for development proposals which would conserve and enhance these heritage assets, on the basis that the renovation or alteration of the piers are sensitively designed with careful regard to the historical interest and setting of the asset.
- 5.27 Overall, the policies outlined above provide a robust basis for the conservation and enhancement of landscape and townscape character in the Neighbourhood Plan area and the conservation and enhancement of heritage assets and their settings. When considered with Local Plan policies, the priorities and actions set out by the WHS Management Plan and the recommended actions of the updated Conservation Area Appraisal for Portland, these provide an added layer of protection to the rich historic and distinctive character of the Isle.

Land, Soil and Water Resources

- 5.28 Based on the 1:250,000 series of Agricultural Land Classification (ALC)²⁰ maps produced by Natural England, the southern part of the Neighbourhood Plan area is underlain by Grade 3 Agricultural Land. However, in the absence of a detailed ALC assessment, it is not currently possible to determine whether the site is underlain by the 'Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land' (i.e. Grade 3a Land). Comparatively, the northern section of the Neighbourhood Plan area is defined as 'other land primarily in non-agricultural use' on the regional ALC map. In this context, it is useful to acknowledge that quarrying activities are prevalent across the Neighbourhood Plan area, as Portland is underlain by limestone geology. As such, almost the whole of the Neighbourhood Plan area is designated as a minerals safeguarding area (MSA) in order to protect known locations of specific mineral resources from sterilisation. This is reflected by the policy for the Portland Quarries Nature Park (Port/EN3), which seeks to ensure safeguarded Portland Stone reserves are not compromised.
- 5.29 In terms of promoting the most efficient use of land, Policy Port/EN6 (Defined Development Boundaries) outlines support for development within the existing DDBs on the Neighbourhood Plan area, which contain the existing built-up areas of Portland. Additionally, Policy Port/BE2 (Up-grading of Existing Employment Sites and Premises) welcomes proposals which would improve, modernise and/or upgrade these areas. Similarly, Policy Port/BE4 (New Business Centres) recognises the value of converting and adapting vacant buildings for start-up businesses, small business hubs and training centres. In this context the brownfield first approach to the spatial strategy for the Isle of Portland promoted by the Neighbourhood Plan will support the efficient use of land.
- 5.30 Policy Port/CR2 (Local Green Spaces) and Policy Port/CR4 (Sites of Open Space Value) aim to retain and protect the network of locally important green spaces within the Neighbourhood Plan area. Whilst these policies do not specifically relate to land, soil and water resources, they will positively help to promote and protect these resources, including through the promotion of high quality green infrastructure networks in the Neighbourhood Plan area, the protection and enhancement of key landscape features, and enhancing the capacity of the built and natural environment to support the regulation of soil and water quality. Water quality will be further supported by policies Port/EN8 (The Verne) and Port/BE6 (The Northern Arc), which highlight that water pollution from site runoff or dust emissions during construction or the operational stages associated with development activities at The Verne or the Northern Arc should be minimised.

Population and Community

- 5.31 Within the West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan, Policy SUS2 (Distribution of Development) classifies Portland (i.e. the Neighbourhood Plan area) as a 'Market and Coastal Town' within the settlement hierarchy, and a focus location for future development. Due to the existing level of development proposals with planning permission on Portland which have been carried over from the Local Plan, including a further 384 residential dwellings on the Hardy Complex (see Policy PORT2), no further sites for strategic growth have been identified for Portland. As such, the policies within the Portland Neighbourhood Plan seek to encourage future development which positively contribute to the delivery of the Plan's long term vision for Portland (which is reflected in its aims), whilst also aligning to Local Plan policies.
- 5.32 As previously discussed, Policy Port/EN6 (Defined Development Boundaries) encourages future growth within the existing built-up areas of Portland. Policy Port/HS1 (Housing Mix) states that development proposals for ten or more dwellings must contain an appropriate mixture of house types and sizes and show how they contribute to meeting the current housing needs of the neighbourhood area by referring to an up-to-date assessment of housing need on Portland.
- 5.33 Policy Port/HS2 (Community Housing Assets) outlines support for community housing schemes on exception sites located adjacent to an existing DDB which would comprise 100% affordable

²⁰ Natural England (2011): 'ALC Map South West', [online] available to download via:
<<http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/144017?category=5954148537204736>> last accessed [03/04/18]

housing, providing there is a need for this type of development. Under these conditions, it is expected that future development within the Neighbourhood Plan area will meet local housing needs arising locally and conform to the conditions of Policy SUS2 (Distribution of Development) within the adopted West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan.

- 5.34 A number of policies within the Neighbourhood Plan will positively enhance community vitality, supporting the quality of life of residents and the satisfaction of residents within the neighbourhood as a place to live. For example, Policy Port/SSI (Reinforcing Local and Neighbourhood Centres) states that development proposals in the local and neighbourhood centres of Castletown, Chiswell, Easton and Fortuneswell which seek to add to the diversity of facilities and services will be supported. Similarly, Policy Port/CR6 (Community and Visitor Events) promotes the temporary use of buildings and open spaces for organised events providing that there is clear support from local residents and the event would not cause any significant adverse environmental problems or any harmful impacts on the amenities of neighbouring residents. Principally, Policy Port/CR6 seeks to encourage and promote social cohesion and encourage active involvement of local people in community activities. Furthermore, Policy Port/HS3 (Second Homes) states that new unrestricted second homes will not be supported; with new open market housing with a restriction to ensure its occupancy as a Principal Residence supported whenever it is deemed appropriate by the Local Planning Authority, after consultation with the Town Council. This has the potential to support the availability and affordability of new housing, improving accessibility to the housing stock for local people. Alongside, through increasing the year-round population, the policy also has the potential to promote the viability of services, facilities and amenities and public transport provision. This will support the quality of life of residents and promote community cohesion.
- 5.35 Based on the 2011 census data, the total percentage of residents with at Level 4 qualification or above (18.1%) is lower than the totals for Weymouth and Portland (22.5%), the South West of England (27.4%) and England (27.4%). Additionally, fewer residents are employed as managers, directors, senior officials or employed within professional occupations in Portland, compared to the regional and national trends. In this context, a number of policies within the Neighbourhood Plan aim to support the economic vitality of Portland. For example, Policy Port/BE1 (Protecting Existing Business Sites and Premises) states that any development proposals located outside of neighbourhood centres and key employment areas (i.e. Portland Port, Southwell Business Park, Inmosthay Industrial Estate, Tradecroft Industrial Estate, Albion Stone Works and the Stone Firms Work Area) which would result in the loss of existing business premises will only be supported if they have been empty for over 18 months without securing a viable alternative employment or community use. Similarly, Policy Port/BE3 (New Employment Premises) encourages proposals for new business premises within or adjacent to settlements if they can be shown to benefit the local economy. Furthermore, Policy Port/BE6 (The Northern Arc) encourages a masterplan approach (based on a private, public and community sector partnership) to realise the economic and employment potential of this section of Portland, which includes the areas covered by the provisions of Policy PORT 1 (Osprey Quay) and Policy PORT 2 (Former Hardy Complex) within the adopted West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan.
- 5.36 In order to capitalise on the environmental economy of Portland and positively address some of the identified opportunities for Portland in the Background Paper for the Local Plan Review, a number of policies within the Neighbourhood Plan promote sustainable tourism as a way to encourage future growth. For example, Policy Port/ST2 (Beach Huts) supports the replacement of beach huts at West Weares, Church Ope Cove and Portland Bill providing that they are appropriate to the character and topography of the site and would avoid negative environmental impacts. Policy Port/ST4 (Marine Berths for Tourists) supports development proposals for new marine berths and facilities at Osprey Quay, Castletown and Portland Port providing there would be no demonstrable harm to landscape character, wildlife and habitats, or to the setting of heritage and historical assets.
- 5.37 Furthermore, Policy Port/ST1 (Sustainable Tourism Development) recognises the potential for Portland to extend and expand its existing tourism uses in order to promote the unique characteristics of the area, with Policy Port/ST3 (Tourist Trails) supporting proposals which further the network of tourist and leisure trails. In addition to potentially enhancing the economic prosperity of the Neighbourhood Plan area, Policy Port/ST1 and Policy Port/ST3 will also

positively align to the aforementioned aims of the 2014-2019 Management Plan for the Jurassic Coast: Dorset and East Devon UNESCO WHS.

Health and Wellbeing

- 5.38 Reflecting the outcomes of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, the priorities within the 2016-2019 Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy²¹ (JHWS) for Dorset aim to reduce inequalities, promote healthy lifestyles and prevent ill health, and work better to deliver high quality care. In this context, the policies contained within the Neighbourhood Plan will bring a range of benefits for the health and wellbeing of residents in the parish, as well as addressing some of the priorities within the JHWS.
- 5.39 In relation to the quality of life and the wellbeing of local residents, there is a strong focus through the Neighbourhood Plan policies on protecting and expanding existing social and community facilities for all residents and visitors to Portland. Specifically, Policy Port/CR5 (New Community Facilities) outlines support for proposals which provide additional community, social or recreation facilities for the direct benefit of young people. The policy also recognises the value in engaging with local youth organisations in order to establish whether the proposal is meeting an identified local need. Policy Port/CR1 (Protecting Recreation Spaces) outlines a list of 18 areas of land which are valuable to the local community due to their sports and recreation value, stating that they should be protected in accordance with Policy COM5 (The Retention of Open Space and Recreational Facilities) of the adopted West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan. Furthermore, Policy Port/CR3 (Allotments) affirms that proposals which would harm or result in the loss of existing allotments on Portland will not be supported unless replacement provision is made of at least an equivalent quality.
- 5.40 Additionally, a number of policies within the Neighbourhood Plan aim to improve the public realm. For example, Policy Port/EN7 (Design and Character) states that development proposals will be required to incorporate and enhance existing landscape features as part of an appropriate level of landscaping, whilst also ensuring that the development has a high quality design which uses locally appropriate materials and colours. Similarly, Policy Port/EN9 (Public Realm Improvements) supports proposals which would improve the public realm through the introduction of high quality pavements, signage, street furniture and public art installations. Consequently, these policies will positively impact the visual amenity of the Neighbourhood Plan area and increase the satisfaction of residents within the neighbourhood as a place to live.
- 5.41 Based on the 2011 census data, 79.9% of residents within the Neighbourhood Plan area consider themselves to have 'very good health' or 'good health' in comparison to 81.5% for the South West of England and 81.4% for England. There is now robust evidence that access to the natural environment improves people's health and wellbeing through encouraging healthy outdoor recreation and relaxation. In this context, a number of policies within the Neighbourhood Plan aim to protect and enhance access to open space, including Policy Port/CR2 (Local Green Space) and Policy Port/CR4 (Sites of Open Space Value). Additionally, Policy Port/ST3 (Tourist Trails) and Policy Port/TR4 (Increasing Travel Links) aim to enhance the public rights of way network across Portland and therefore facilitate access to areas of open space. As such, it is expected that these policies will positively promote healthy lifestyles for residents and visitors to the Neighbourhood Plan area.

Transportation

- 5.42 Due to its geographical location, the Neighbourhood Plan area is fairly isolated. As Portland is not connected to the rail network, the A354 road is the only route connecting residents to the mainland and is at risk from flooding and coastal erosion. In this context, the vision for the 2011-2026 Local Transport Plan (LTP3) for Bournemouth, Poole and Dorset is to achieve a 'safe, reliable and accessible transport system for Bournemouth, Poole and Dorset that assists in the development of a strong low carbon economy, maximises the opportunities for sustainable transport and respects and protects the area's unique environmental assets'. The vision of the LTP3 is reflected through Policy COM7 (Creating a Safe and Efficient Transport

²¹ Dorset County Council (2016): 'Dorset Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2016-2019', [online] available to download via: <<https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/healthandwellbeingboard>> last accessed [03/04/18]

Network) within the adopted West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan and also within the Neighbourhood Plan policies. For example, Policy Port/TR1 (Improving Public Transport Links) states that opportunities to improve or develop public transport connections between the settlements of Portland and to the mainland will be supported. Additionally, Policy Port/BE5 (Facilitating Home Working) recognises the value of agile and flexible working by supporting proposals for the use of part of a dwelling for B1 business use. Although this does not directly link to transport improvements, the provisions of this policy will indirectly support a low carbon economy through reducing the need for residents to travel for business purposes.

- 5.43 Based on the 2011 census data, the most popular method of travelling to work in the Neighbourhood Plan area is via driving a car or van. In this context, there is a need to encourage a modal shift from the reliance on privately owned vehicles towards alternative modes of transport. Policy Port/TR4 (Increasing Travel Links) outlines support for development proposals that improve the accessibility, the links to or extend the network of footpaths, bridleways and cycle-routes within the Neighbourhood Plan area, providing they do not result in unacceptable harm to the natural environment. Additionally, Policy Port/TR2 (Improving the Transport Infrastructure) touches on the importance of improving the network in the interests of safety and reducing congestion, with Policy Port/TR3 (Reducing Parking Problems) ensuring that new developments would not increase the levels of street parking. By improving road safety, reducing congestion and increasing accessibility of the public rights of way network across the Neighbourhood Plan area, the provisions of these policies seek to encourage more sustainable methods of travel.

Conclusions at this current stage

- 5.44 The assessment has concluded that the current version of the Neighbourhood Plan is likely to lead to significant positive effects in relation to the 'Population and Community' and 'Health and Wellbeing' SEA Themes. These benefits largely relate to the Neighbourhood Plan's focus on delivering housing which meets local needs, supporting sustainable economic growth, enhancing green infrastructure networks and recreational and leisure opportunities, and improving the quality of the public realm.
- 5.45 The Neighbourhood Plan is also likely to lead to significant positive effects in relation to the 'Biodiversity', 'Landscape and Historic Environment' SEA Themes. This relates to the plan's focus on enhancing ecological networks and protecting internationally and nationally designated biodiversity sites, and conserving and enhancing the distinctive landscapes and heritage assets which are central to the Isle's character. The plan also has a strong focus on rejuvenating areas of historic environment and geodiversity interest, including within the World Heritage Site.
- 5.46 The Neighbourhood Plan will also initiate a number of beneficial approaches regarding the 'Climate Change', 'Land, Soil and Water Resources' and 'Transportation' SEA themes. However, these are not considered to be significant in the context of the SEA process given the scope of the Neighbourhood Plan, existing Local Plan provisions and the scale of proposals.
- 5.47 In summary, the level of future development proposed through the Local Plan has the potential to lead to increased pressures on the sensitive environmental context of the Neighbourhood Plan area. In this regard, the policies of the Neighbourhood Plan have a close focus on protecting and enhancing the special qualities of Portland, and facilitating inclusive growth which will help ensure the integrity of its sensitive environmental designations are maintained and enhanced.

6. What are the next steps?

- 6.1 The *Neighbourhood Plan for Portland 2017-2031* has been submitted to Dorset Council for subsequent independent examination. This Environmental Report accompanies the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 6.2 At independent examination the Neighbourhood Plan will be considered in terms of whether it meets the Basic Conditions for Neighbourhood Plans, legal requirements and its general conformity with higher level planning policy.
- 6.3 If independent examination is favourable, the Neighbourhood Plan will be subject to a referendum, organised by Dorset Council. If more than 50% of those who vote agree with the plan, then it will be passed to Dorset Council to be 'made'. Once made, the Neighbourhood Plan will become part of the development plan for the Isle of Portland.

Appendix A Context Review and Baseline

Air Quality

Context Review

Key messages from the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) include:

- 'Planning policies should sustain compliance with and contribute towards EU limit values or national objectives for pollutants, taking into account the presence of Air Quality Management Areas and the cumulative impacts on air quality from individual sites in local areas. Planning decisions should ensure that any new development in Air Quality Management Areas is consistent with the local air quality action plan'.
- New and existing developments should be prevented from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of air pollution.

In terms of the local context, Weymouth and Portland Borough Council is required to monitor air quality across the borough, report regularly to Defra and take action where nationally set levels are likely to be exceeded. Monitoring is undertaken to assess levels of nitrogen dioxide, Sulphur dioxide, ozone, benzene and particulates. Where exceedances exist, areas are declared as Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAS) and local authorities are required to produce an Action Plan to improve air quality in the area.

Summary of Current Baseline

Air quality is monitored in two locations within PNP area by Weymouth and Portland Borough Council as part of its ongoing Air Quality Updating and Screening Assessment process. In this context nitrogen dioxide is monitored at the following two locations:

- Fortuneswell
- St Georges estate

The results indicate that there have been no recent exceedances of the 40 µg/m³ annual mean nitrogen dioxide objective. As such no AQMAS have been declared in the PNP Neighbourhood Area.

Summary of Future Baseline

Whilst no significant air quality issues currently exist in the Neighbourhood Area, new employment and / or housing provision both within the Neighbourhood Area has the potential to have adverse effects on air quality through increasing traffic flows and associated levels of pollutants such as nitrogen dioxide. Areas of particular sensitivity to increased traffic flows are likely to be village centres and the routes with the largest congestion issues. However, these effects may be offset in part by factors such as measures implemented through the Dorset Local Transport Plan to encourage modal shift from the private car and the improved fuel economy and efficiency of vehicles.

Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Context Review

At the European level, the EU Biodiversity Strategy²² was adopted in May 2011 in order to deliver an established new Europe-wide target to 'halt the loss of biodiversity and the degradation of ecosystem services in the EU by 2020'.

Key messages from the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) include:

²² European Commission (2011) Our life insurance, our natural capital: an EU biodiversity strategy to 2020 [online] available at: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/biodiversity/comm2006/pdf/2020/1_EN_ACT_part1_v7%5b1%5d.pdf

- Contribute to the Government's commitment to halt the overall decline in biodiversity by minimising impacts and achieving net gains in biodiversity wherever possible.
- Promote the 'preservation, restoration and recreation of priority habitats, ecological networks' and the 'protection and recovery of priority species'. Plan for biodiversity at a landscape-scale across local authority boundaries.
- Set criteria based policies for the protection of internationally, nationally and locally designated sites, giving weight to their importance not just individually but as a part of a wider ecological network.
- Take account of the effects of climate change in the long term. Adopt proactive strategies to adaptation and manage risks through adaptation measures including green infrastructure (i.e. 'a network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities').
- Plan positively planning for 'green infrastructure' as part of planning for 'ecological networks'.
- High quality open spaces should be protected or their loss mitigated, unless a lack of need is established.

The Natural Environment White Paper (NEWP)²³ sets out the importance of a healthy, functioning natural environment to sustained economic growth, prospering communities and personal well-being. It was in part a response to the UK's failure to halt and reverse the decline in biodiversity by 2010 and it signalled a move away from the traditional approach of protecting biodiversity in nature reserves to adopting a landscape approach to protecting and enhancing biodiversity. The NEWP also aims to create a green economy in which economic growth and the health of our natural resources sustain each other and markets, business and Government better reflect the value of nature. It includes commitments to:

- Halt biodiversity loss, support functioning ecosystems and establish coherent ecological networks by 2020;
- Establish a new voluntary approach to biodiversity offsetting to be tested in pilot areas;
- Enable partnerships of local authorities, local communities and landowners, the private sector and conservation organisations to establish new Nature Improvement Areas; and
- Address barriers to using green infrastructure to promote sustainable growth.

At the local level the Dorset Local Nature Partnership was officially recognized by the government in 2012. Local Nature Partnerships (LNPs) are partnerships of a broad range of local organizations, businesses and people who aim to help bring about improvements in their local natural environment.

The Dorset Local Nature Partnership sets out a series of aims, it will:

- Provide leadership for those working to protect and enhance the environment in Dorset.
- Advocate the good management of Dorset's natural environment for its own sake and the many benefits it offers.
- Articulate the importance of Dorset's natural environment to economic and social wellbeing in a manner appropriate to diverse audiences.
- Ensure that the natural environment is taken into account in policy and decision-making.

The Local Nature Partnership's recent document *The Natural Place for Business*²⁴ advocates support for projects which overall provide a net gain for the natural environment and / or increase the natural resource asset base. Its key recommendations are as follows:

- That all projects in Dorset seeking LEP and Dorset Growth Board funding, or planning permission from local authorities to develop, should quantify either their impacts on the natural environment or their use of environmental services.

²³ Defra (2012) The Natural Choice: securing the value of nature (Natural Environment White Paper) [online] available at: <http://www.official-documents.gov.uk/document/cm80/8082/8082.pdf>

²⁴ Dorset Local Nature Partnership (2016) *The Natural Place for Business: A Natural Capital Investment Strategy for Dorset*

- That all development projects increase Dorset's Natural Capital by ensuring a net gain for the natural environment and/or increase in the natural resource asset base. There are several established methods to achieve this.
- That development projects in Dorset are planned in a way that integrates economic, environmental and social goals (as being championed by the Resilient Dorset collaboration).
- Projects with a purely financial justification should not be seen as a priority for public funding as their success will be more at risk and because they erode the resource or community goodwill base, thus restricting future development. These projects should not receive public funding.

The Dorset and East Devon Coast World Heritage Site Management Plan 2014 – 2019²⁵ sets out a wide ranging vision for the Jurassic Coast, Dorset and East Devon World Heritage Site. World Heritage sites are listed as such for their special cultural or physical significance. In the context of the Jurassic Coast, Dorset and East Devon World Heritage Site, it has been designated in a large part due to the unique exposures of sedimentary rocks along the coast which form a near complete record of the Triassic, Jurassic and Cretaceous periods in Earth history, and as such contribute significantly towards the geodiversity of the UK. The Management Plan is the third revision of the Plan first submitted to UNESCO for scrutiny in 1999 as part of Dorset and East Devon Coast's nomination for World Heritage Site listing. It is a formal requirement of both UNESCO and the UK Government for managing a World Heritage Site. It is a public document which outlines aims and policies for managing the Site over the coming years, and indicates a range of activities for achieving them. It also explains the reasons for designation and how it is protected and managed. It is open to wide public consultation so that a greater degree of community participation in management is achieved.

Summary of Current Baseline

The PNP area is rich in both biodiversity and geodiversity assets and development is heavily constrained by both national and international biodiversity and geodiversity designations. These designated sites are discussed below.

Chesil Beach and the Fleet Lagoon

Chesil Beach and the Fleet Lagoon lie partly within the north west corner of the PNP area. Chesil Beach is one of the three major shingle structures in Britain and is of international importance for coastal geomorphology. Along about half its length it encloses the Fleet, the largest tidal lagoon in Britain, and which supports saltmarsh and reedbeds. The fossil-rich and stratigraphically important sequence of Jurassic strata exposed along the landward side of the Fleet adds further value to the site. The site has been designated both nationally and internationally for its biodiversity and geodiversity value. The site is internationally important for wintering ducks, geese, and swans and nationally important for breeding birds. Fleet Lagoon has been designated a wetland of international importance under the Ramsar Convention and a Special Protection Area (SPA) under EEC Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds (79/409). This area has also been designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) for the presence of priority habitats including coastal lagoons, annual vegetation drift lines, perennial vegetation stony banks, and Mediterranean and Thermo-Atlantic *halophilous* scrubs. At the national level, the site has been designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) because Chesil Beach and its associated features are of the highest importance to the study of coastal geomorphology, and provide a habitat for nationally important bird species. The Fleet, due to its salinity gradient, hydrographic regime, varied substrates, and relative lack of pollution in comparison to most other lagoons, is extremely rich in wildlife.

The Isle of Portland to Studland Cliffs SAC

The Isle of Portland to Studland Cliffs are designated as an SAC due to the presence of a number of qualifying habitats which include: annual vegetation of drift lines, vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts, semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (*FestucoBrometalia*); dry grasslands and scrublands on chalk or limestone; and *Gentianella anglica*.

Nicodemus Heights SSSI

²⁵ Jurassic Coast Partnership (2014) *The Dorset and East Devon Coast World Heritage Site Management Plan* [online] available at: <http://jurassiccoast.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Jurassic-Coast-World-Heritage-Site-Management-Plan-2014-%E2%80%93-2019-Approved.pdf>

Nicodemus Heights lies in the north-eastern part of the Isle and has been designated as a SSSI due to its importance for limestone grassland communities for: nationally rare and scarce bryophytes and higher plants; for the endemic plant early gentian *Gentianella anglica*; and for the nationally scarce butterfly, the silver-studded blue *Plebejus argus*.

The Isle of Portland SSSI

The cliffs and quarries of Portland are of international importance for their geology and biodiversity and have been designated as an SSSI. This relates in particular to their extensive, well-exposed and accessible outcrop of the Portland and Purbeck Beds. A full sequence from the Kimmeridge Clay, through the whole of the Portland Beds and well into the Purbeck Beds, can be seen and has been studied by geologists for over 150 years. The Isle has a rich limestone flora and some unquarried areas hold long-standing, unimproved grassland supporting a diverse range of plants but there is also considerable botanical interest in many of the old quarry workings which have become colonised by limestone plants.

SSSI Impact Risk Zones

SSSI Impact Risk Zones are a GIS tool/dataset which maps zones around each SSSI according to the particular sensitivities of the features for which it is notified. They specify the types of development that have the potential to have adverse impacts at a given location.

Due to the significant number and coverage of SSSIs located on the Isle of Portland, many areas fall within Impact Risk Zones which relate to urban residential developments of 50 units or more, and rural residential developments of 10 units or more. Development taken forward through the Neighbourhood Plan may therefore have potential effects on SSSIs located on Portland. As such, potential effects of site allocation on the SSSIs located on Portland should be considered further as part of the SEA process.

Biodiversity Action Plan Priority Habitats

'Priority habitats' are those which are characteristic of Dorset and for which Dorset makes a significant contribution to the UK aims of the Biodiversity Action Plan. Key areas of BAP Priority Habitat in the PNP area include:

- Maritime cliffs and slopes comprising of dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates
- Lowland calcareous grasslands
- Coastal vegetated shingle comprising perennial vegetation of stony banks
- Deciduous woodland

The Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site and Portland's geodiversity

The Isle of Portland has an exceptionally rich and varied geological resource. The rich geodiversity of the Isle of Portland is reflected by virtually the whole Neighbourhood Area being designated as a Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Site.

The Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site stretches from Orcombe Point near Exmouth in East Devon to Old Harry Rocks near Swanage in East Dorset, a distance of 155 kilometres. Designated in 2001, the Jurassic coast was the second wholly natural World Heritage Site to be designated in the United Kingdom. The Jurassic Coast consists of Triassic, Jurassic and Cretaceous cliffs, spanning the Mesozoic Era, documenting 180 million years of geological history – this rich geodiversity is the primary reason for its designation.

In the context of the PNP the Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site stretches round much of the coastline of the isle of Portland and the geology is composed of sedimentary and metamorphic rocks. There are three major groups present in Portland; the Portland Stone Formation, the Kimmeridge Clay Formation and the Purbeck Group. An outline of these groups is provided below.

Portland Stone

Portland stone is a limestone from the Tithonian stage of the Jurassic period and consists of beds of white-grey limestone separated by chert beds. This group is the source of much of the quarried rock on Portland. The Portland Stone limestone is sufficiently well cemented to allow it to resist weathering but not so well cemented that it cannot be readily worked by masons. This is one of the reasons why Portland Stone is favoured as a monumental and architectural stone.

Purbeck Group

The Purbeck Group is an [Upper Jurassic to Lower Cretaceous group](#) and is famous for its fossils of reptiles and early mammals. In the context of Portland the Lulworth formation of this group overlays the Portland Stone Formation. The Lulworth Formation is a partially terrestrial formation of limestones with evaporitic material which are interbedded with mudstones.

Kimmeridge Clay

Kimmeridge Clay crops out at the northern end of Portland, the majority of which lies at or below sea level.

Active and disused quarries are a major part of the Isle of Portland's landscape covering more than 50% of the Isle's surface. Buildings in the Isle's settlements are largely constructed from local stone, giving the Isle a distinctive sense of place. Portland stone has been used for building many of the most important and best-known buildings in England, including St Paul's Cathedral and many of the government buildings in London. Portland Stone was used to build the Palace of Westminster in 1347, the Tower of London in 1349 and the first stone London Portland in 1350.

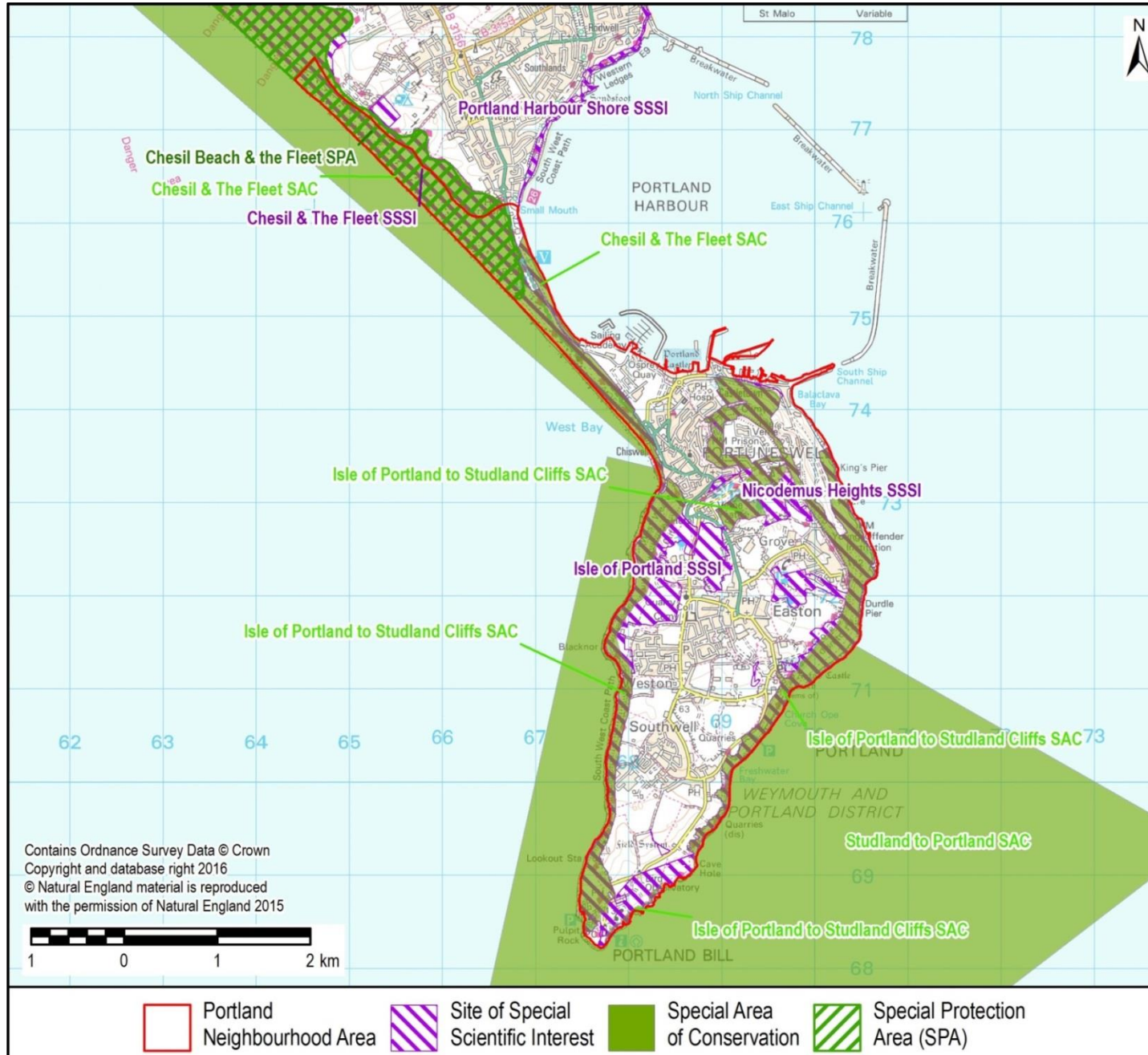
Recent years have seen an increased use of traditional and more natural building resources which often have low carbon footprints compared to synthetic building materials. The stone industry on Portland has benefited from these changes with an associated increased demand for Portland Stone²⁶.

Summary of Future Baseline

The PNP area is highly constrained by biodiversity designations. As such habitats and species have the potential to come under increasing pressures from housing and employment land provision in the area. This includes through a loss of habitats and impacts on biodiversity networks. This may be exacerbated by the effects of climate change, which has the potential to lead to changes in the distribution and abundance of species and changes to the composition and character of habitats. Sites designated for their geodiversity value are unlikely to experience the same pressures. However, development still has the potential to impact on the setting and wider landscape value of such assets and lead to the loss of geological exposures of interest. The Dorset County Council Minerals strategy also encourages the use of mining as a preferred extraction method.

A Green Infrastructure Strategy is currently being developed for the Isle of Portland.

²⁶ The Dorset Geologists Association [online] available at: <http://www.dorsetgeologistsassociation.com>



Climate Change

Context Review

In its 2007 strategy on climate change, the European Commission assesses the costs and benefits of combating climate change and recommends a package of measures to limit global warming to 2° Celsius.²⁷ In relation to energy, the Commission recommends that the EU's energy efficiency improves by 20% and the share of renewable energy grows to 20% by 2020.

Key messages from the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) include:

- Support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate as a 'core planning principle'.
- There is a key role for planning in securing radical reductions in greenhouse gases (GHG), including in terms of meeting the targets set out in the Climate Change Act 2008²⁸. Specifically, planning policy should support the move to a low carbon future through:
 - planning for new development in locations and ways which reduce GHG emissions;
 - actively supporting energy efficiency improvements to existing buildings;
 - setting local requirements for building's sustainability in a way that is consistent with the Government's zero carbon buildings policy;
 - positively promoting renewable energy technologies and considering identifying suitable areas for their construction; and
 - Encouraging those transport solutions that support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and reduce congestion.
- Direct development away from areas highest at risk of flooding, with development 'not to be allocated if there are reasonably available sites appropriate for the proposed development in areas with a lower probability of flooding'. Where development is necessary, it should be made safe without increasing levels of flood risk elsewhere.
- Take account of the effects of climate change in the long term, taking into account a range of factors including flooding. Adopt proactive strategies to adaptation and manage risks through adaptation measures including well planned green infrastructure.

The Flood and Water Management Act²⁹ highlights that alternatives to traditional engineering approaches to flood risk management include:

- Incorporating greater resilience measures into the design of new buildings, and retro-fitting properties at risk (including historic buildings)
- Utilising the environment in order to reduce flooding, for example through the management of land to reduce runoff and through harnessing the ability of wetlands to store water
- Identifying areas suitable for inundation and water storage to reduce the risk of flooding elsewhere
- Planning to roll back development in coastal areas to avoid damage from flooding or coastal erosion
- Creating sustainable drainage systems (SuDS)³⁰

Further guidance is provided in the document planning for SuDs.³¹ This report calls for greater recognition of the multiple benefits that water management can present. It suggests that successful SuDS are capable of 'contributing to local quality of life and green infrastructure'.

²⁷ Commission of the European Communities (2007) Limiting Global Climate Change to two degrees Celsius: The way ahead for 2020 and beyond [online] available at: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2007:0002:FIN:EN:PDF>

²⁸ The Climate Change Act 2008 sets targets for greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reductions through action in the UK of at least 80% by 2050, and reductions in CO₂ emissions of at least 26% by 2020, against a 1990 baseline.

²⁹ Flood and Water Management Act (2010) [online] available at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/29/contents>

³⁰ N.B. The provisions of Schedule 3 to the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 will come into force on the 1st of October 2012 and makes it mandatory for any development in England or Wales to incorporate SuDs.

Summary of Current Baseline

Potential effects of climate change

The outcome of research on the probable effects of climate change in the UK was released in 2009 by the UK Climate Projections (UKCP09) team³². UKCP09 gives climate information for the UK up to the end of this century and projections of future changes to the climate are provided, based on simulations from climate models. Projections are broken down to a regional level across the UK and are shown in probabilistic form, which illustrate the potential range of changes and the level of confidence in each prediction.

As highlighted by the research, the effects of climate change for the south west by 2050 for a medium emissions scenario³³ are likely to be as follows:

- the central estimate of increase in winter mean temperature is 2.1°C and an increase in summer mean temperature of 2.7°C; and
- The central estimate of change in winter mean precipitation is 17% and summer mean precipitation is –20%.

Resulting from these changes, a range of risks may exist for the PNP area. These include:

- increased incidence of heat related illnesses and deaths during the summer;
- increased incidence of illnesses and deaths related to exposure to sunlight (e.g. skin cancer, cataracts);
- increased incidence of pathogen related diseases (e.g. legionella and salmonella);
- increase in health problems related to rise in local ozone levels during summer;
- increased risk of injuries and deaths due to increased number of storm events;
- effects on water resources from climate change;
- reduction in availability of groundwater for abstraction;
- adverse effect on water quality from low stream levels and turbulent stream flow after heavy rain;
- increased risk of flooding, including increased vulnerability to 1:100 year floods;
- changes in insurance provisions for flood damage;
- a need to increase the capacity of wastewater treatment plants and sewers;
- a need to upgrade flood defences;
- soil erosion due to flash flooding;
- loss of species that are at the edge of their southerly distribution;
- spread of species at the northern edge of their distribution;
- deterioration in working conditions due to increased temperatures;
- changes to global supply chain;
- increased difficulty of food preparation, handling and storage due to higher temperatures;
- an increased move by the insurance industry towards a more risk-based approach to insurance underwriting, leading to higher cost premiums for business;
- increased demand for air-conditioning;
- increased drought and flood related problems such as soil shrinkages and subsidence;

³¹ CIRIA (2010) Planning for SuDs – making it happen [online] available at: <http://www.ciria.org/service/knowledgebase/AM/ContentManagerNet/ContentDisplay.aspx?Section=knowledgebase&NoTemplate=1&ContentID=18465>

³² The data was released on 18th June 2009: See: <http://ukclimateprojections.defra.gov.uk/>

³³ UK Climate Projections (2009) South West 2050s Medium Emissions Scenario [online] available at: <http://ukclimateprojections.metoffice.gov.uk/22290>

- risk of road surfaces melting more frequently due to increased temperature; and
- Flooding of roads.

The UKCP09 team has estimated that under a medium emissions scenario the central estimate of the UK absolute mean time sea level change over the period 1980-1999 to 2090-2099 is 36.9cm.

Flood risk

With regard to flood risk; there is no fluvial flood risk noted on the Isle, and only minimal surface water flooding recorded.³⁴ However, Portland's location as a tied Isle means that sea flooding is a key issue for the PNP area. In particular, there is high risk of sea flooding along the A354 (Portland Beach Road) which is the main access road to Portland (illustrated in figure 4.1) this flood risk area also affects Chesil Village. Flooding of this area generally occurs during extreme weather events such as the winter storms of 2013 and 2014 and can create major transport disruptions and affect properties in Chesil Village.

To combat this flood risk coastal flooding defence systems have been installed at Chesil Beach between Osprey Quay and West Weares. These defences include interceptor drains, flood alleviation channels and sea walls. The coastal defences on Chesil Beach help reduce the risk of flooding to approximately 110 properties in the village of Chiswell. Although six properties flooded as a result of the 2013 and 2014 storms, this number would have been higher if the defences did not exist.

Greenhouse gas emissions

In relation to greenhouse gas emissions, source data from the Department of Energy and Climate Change suggests that Weymouth and Portland Borough has had consistently lower per capita emissions than for Dorset, the South West and England since 2005. The borough has however seen a significantly smaller reduction in emissions per capita between 2005 and 2012 (11.8%) compared to Dorset (13.4%), the South West (18.3%) and England (a 17.7% reduction).

In relation to CO₂ emissions by end user, between 2005 and 2012 the emissions originating from transport-related sources increased proportionally relative to those from domestic and industrial sources within Weymouth and Portland.

Summary of Future Baseline

Climate change has the potential to increase the occurrence of extreme weather events in the PNP area, with increases in mean summer and winter temperatures, increases in mean precipitation in winter and decreases in mean precipitation in summer. This is likely to increase the risks associated with climate change (including fluvial flooding) with an increased need for resilience and adaptation. Sea level rise is forecasted to increase over the next century and this has major implications for flooding and sea defences along the A354 (Portland Beach Road) and Chiswell village.

In terms of climate change mitigation, per capita emissions are likely to continue to decrease as energy efficiency measures, renewable energy production and new technologies become more widely adopted. However, increases in the built footprint of the PNP area may lead to increases in overall emissions.

Landscape and Historic Environment

Context Review

Key messages from the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) include:

- Protect and enhance valued landscapes, giving particular weight to those identified as being of national importance.
- Heritage assets should be recognised as an 'irreplaceable resource' that should be conserved in a 'manner appropriate to their significance', taking account of 'the wider social, cultural, economic

³⁴ Environment Agency (2016) interactive flood maps [online] available at: http://watermaps.environment-agency.gov.uk/wiyby/wiyby.aspx?lang=_e&topic=floodmap&layer=default&scale=11&x=368697&y=73826#x=368755&y=73445&scale=10

and environmental benefits' of conservation, whilst also recognising the positive contribution new development can make to local character and distinctiveness.

- Set out a 'positive strategy' for the 'conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment', including those heritage assets that are most at risk.
- Develop 'robust and comprehensive policies that set out the quality of development that will be expected for the area. Such policies should be based on stated objectives for the future of the area and an understanding and evaluation of its defining characteristics'.
- Consider the effects of climate change in the long term, including in terms of landscape. Adopt 'proactive strategies' to adaptation and manage risks through adaptation measures including well planned green infrastructure.

The Government's Statement on the Historic Environment for England³⁵ sets out its vision for the historic environment. It calls for those who have the power to shape the historic environment to recognise its value and to manage it in an intelligent manner in light of the contribution that it can make to social, economic and cultural life.

The Dorset and East Devon Coast World Heritage Site Management Plan 2014 – 2019 sets out a wide ranging vision for the Jurassic Coast, Dorset and East Devon World Heritage Site. The Management Plan is the third revision of the Plan first submitted to UNESCO for scrutiny in 1999 as part of Dorset and East Devon Coast's nomination for World Heritage Site listing. It is a formal requirement of both UNESCO and the UK Government for managing a World Heritage Site. It is a public document which outlines aims and policies for managing the Site over the coming years, and indicates a range of activities for achieving them. It also explains the reasons for designation and how it is protected and managed.

Summary of Current Baseline

Landscape character

The Jurassic Coast World Heritage site stretches round much of the coastline of the Isle of Portland. The Jurassic coast was designated in 2001 and was the second wholly natural World Heritage Site to be designated in the United Kingdom. The Jurassic Coast consists of Triassic, Jurassic and Cretaceous cliffs, spanning the Mesozoic Era, documenting 180 million years of geological history. Although this rich geodiversity is the primary reason for its designation many of its features also contribute to the landscape character of the area.

In the context of the PNP, Chesil Beach is a nationally recognised example of both a tombolo (a deposition landform in which an Isle is attached to the mainland by a narrow piece of land such as a spit or bar) and a storm beach (a beach affected by particularly fierce waves).

The Weymouth and Portland Landscape Character Assessment was undertaken in February 2013³⁶ and characterised the borough's landscape by geographical area. Regarding the PNP area, its landscape type has been defined as a limestone peninsula. The assessment describes the Isle of Portland as:

"A dramatic and distinctive wedge shaped peninsula at the end of Chesil Beach. It is an exposed, windswept and rocky landscape with a strong maritime influence. Prominent limestone cliffs and undercliffs surround the Isle. Tree cover is limited due to the harsh exposed location, and is often only found in sheltered hollows. This lack of trees emphasises the broadly open skyline which is dominated by manmade structures, apart from the extensive outward views from the cliffs that take in much of the Dorset coastline."

Its particular landscape characteristics are noted as being:

- A dramatic and distinctive wedge shaped limestone peninsula with prominent cliffs.
- An open skyline with sweeping views along the coast.

³⁵ HM Government (2010) The Government's Statement on the Historic Environment for England [online] available at: http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+/http://www.culture.gov.uk/reference_library/publications/6763.aspx

³⁶ [online] available at: <https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/landscapecharacter/weymouth>

- The pale grey Portland limestone rock dominates the natural and built landscape, and results in areas of calcareous grassland.
- An exposed, windswept, rocky and raw landscape quarrying and military activity has, and continues to significantly impact upon the Isle's character.
- Little tree cover on the plateau and an historic strip field pattern, traditionally separated by dry stone walls.
- Areas of the more sheltered north eastern coast are dominated by scrub, trees and woodland.
- Networks of open spaces separate the settlements and provide an important buffer to urban and industrial development.
- Restored quarried landscapes of high amenity, biodiversity and recreational value.
- A number of distinctive landmark features such as Portland Bill and the lighthouse, and The Verne.

Historic Environment

The PNP area has a rich historic environment. The Isle of Portland has been inhabited since at least the Mesolithic period and archaeological evidence of Mesolithic inhabitants can be found at the Culverwell Mesolith Site near Portland Bill.

Notable influences on the historic environment of the Isle include:

- The construction of Portland Castle between 1539 and 1541.
- Stone quarrying: quarrying on Portland has been undertaken since Roman times and was being shipped to London in the 14th century. Extraction as an industrial exercise began in the early 17th century.
- The coming of the railways in the 19th century, preceded by the use of railways for quarrying activities.
- The construction of Portland Harbour, which is the largest man-made harbour in Europe. The initial southern breakwaters were built between 1849–72, while Portland Harbour was occupied by a Royal Navy base until 1995.
- Opening of HM Prison Portland in 1848.
- Development of the Royal Naval Air Station and its subsequent use as coastguard search and rescue helicopter station.
- Development of structures associated with Cold War activities, including the Admiralty Research Establishment.
- 20th century housing development.

Reflecting the historic evolution of the Isle of Portland, numerous features and areas of historic environment interest in the Neighbourhood Area are recognised through historic environment designations. These include statutory listed buildings and scheduled monuments, which are nationally designated, and conservation areas, which are designated at the local level (Figure 5.1). Natural England is the statutory consultee for certain categories of listed building consent and all applications for scheduled monument consent. The historic environment is protected through the planning system, via conditions imposed on developers and other mechanisms.

The Neighbourhood Area contains a total of 192 listed buildings. This includes three Grade I listed buildings (Church of St George, Reforne; Portland Castle; and Rufus Castle and its Portland). The PNP area also includes 10 Grade II* listed buildings.³⁷

There are four conservations areas located within the Neighbourhood Area as follows:

- Underhill Conservation Area, incorporating Chiswell, Maidenwell, Fortuneswell and Castletown, designated in 1976 with boundary extensions in 1997 and 2000;

³⁷ National heritage List for England <http://list.historicengland.org.uk>

- The Grove Conservation Area which was designated in 1981;
- Portland (Easton, Reforme, Straits and Wakeham) Conservation Area, designated 1974; and
- Weston Conservation Area, designated in 1994.

A Conservation Area Appraisal was undertaken for the four conservation areas by Weymouth and Portland Borough Council in 2014, and provides detailed information on the key features and areas of interest.³⁸

The overall character of the four areas and the notable buildings found within them (as highlighted by the Conservation Area Appraisal) are discussed below.

Underhill Conservation area

The area covered by the Underhill Conservation Area is expansive and incorporates part of Chesil Beach, the northern cliffs, The Verne and common land around it, East and West Weares and part of Portland Harbour. From higher ground, there are panoramic views of Underhill, its setting, the Dorset coastline and open sea. The conservation area has 64 listed building entries that cover in the order of 74 buildings, structures or features and of those, the key listed buildings are:

- The Parish Church of St John (Grade II) – 1839 by Edward Monney plus later additions;
- Queen Anne House, Fortuneswell (Grade II*) – early C18
- The Britannia Inn (Grade II) – mid to late C19;
- 59 & 61 Fortuneswell (Grade II) – C18 house and shop with later alterations, important corner site;
- The Captain's House, 70 High St, Fortuneswell (Grade II) – mid C18, ruins (now refurbished);
- Maiden Well, High St (Grade II) – well head or cistern, an important water source before piped water;
- Cove House Inn, Chiswell (Grade II) – early C19 with earlier origins, associated with national events;
- Royal Victoria Hotel, Victoria Square (Grade II) – circa 1870, important corner position;
- Police Station with Court House, Castle Rd (Grade II) – 1904 and 1906, in important position;
- Commercial Building, including Post Office (Grade II) – 1894, unaltered commercial design;
- Portland Castle, Castle Rd (Grade I) – also a Scheduled Ancient Monument, coastal fortification, circa 1540, one of a pair with Sandsfoot Castle;
- Captain's House, Castle Rd (Grade II*) – early C19, adjoins castle, incorporates earlier fabric, Master Gunner's residence;
- Royal Breakwater Hotel (Grade II) – circa 1890 -1910, unaltered main frontage, built to serve the port; and
- The Old Rectory and its boundary walls (Grade II) - relatively prominent in views, one time isolated association with Old Hill.

Grove Conservation Area

The Grove Conservation Area incorporates the current site of the young offenders' institute and the surrounding area. Whilst the conservation area is surrounded on all sides by former quarries, in terms of topography, it is itself relatively flat. Jagged coastal paths along the cliff edge flank the eastern edge of the area, offering wide ranging south and easterly views across the English Channel and northwards, across to Weymouth Bay. Key buildings include:

- Ivy Bank and the former Rectory are detached Grade II listed houses;
- Grove Church (Grade II* listed);

³⁸ Weymouth and Portland borough Council (2014) Appraisal of Conservation Areas of Portland [online] available at: <https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/article/416983/Appraisal-of-the-Conservation-Areas-of-Portland>

- County Primary School (Grade II*);
- Former Governor's house (Grade II); and
- Grade II listed Alma Terrace.

The prison site features a number of listed buildings, listed Grade II, which include the two main accommodation blocks.

Portland (Easton, Reforne, Straits and Wakeham) Conservation Area

The Portland (Easton, Reforne, Straits and Wakeham) Conservation Area is approached via New Rd which steadily climbs to treeless height at New Ground. The focal point of the conservation area is Easton Square from which four routes radiate: Reforne, Easton Lane, Wakeham and Park Road. St George's Church is located at the western approach at the junction of Weston Rd and Wide Rd and forms the termination of the third arm of the conservation area, whilst Wakeham slopes gently to the south terminating in cliffs at Church Ope Cove (Church Hope). Key buildings include:

Reforne

- The Church of St George Reforne, Grade I;
- St George's (Heritage Trust) Centre, Assembly Hall and boundary walls to south, Grade II 1880;
- The George Inn, Grade II, 1765;
- 4 Reforne, Sugar Loaf Café, house and shop with cross passage forms part of the group with 30 & 31 Easton Square; and
- 113 Reforne has its original roof and dormer with sash windows.

Easton Street and Easton Square

- All Saints Parish Church, Straits, Grade II, 1914-17;
- Easton Methodist Church with former Manse & boundary walls, Grade II* 1906-7;
- Church Hall (former Wesleyan School) with boundary wall Easton Square, Grade II, 1878;
- Clock Tower, Easton Square, Grade II, 1907;
- 28 Easton Street, Stanley House, Grade II, 1760;
- 32 Easton Street, Grade II, two storey detached house;
- 4 Easton Square (south side) early C19 double fronted house; and
- 31 Easton Square, (north side) early - mid C18 cottage with intact C19 shop front.

Wakeham and Straits

- 23 Delhi Lane detached house, late C18;
- Wakeham original dormer and untouched shop front;
- Pennsylvania Castle Hotel with attached walls, Grade II, built 1797 – 1800;
- Ruins of St Andrew's Church in grounds of Pennsylvania Castle, Grade II*, also Scheduled Monument;
- Rufus Castle with Portland, (Bow & Arrow Castle) Grade I, 1430;
- Windmills, two circular disused and ruinous structures of rubble stone and ashlar dressings south of village, in Perryfield Quarry, Grade II, shown on Hutchins' map of 1710;
- 106 Wakeham, Grade II Circa late C17 with C19 windows;
- The terrace of cottages 203 – 217, Grade II;
- Avic's Cottage, Grade II, 1640; and
- Cast iron, wall postal box in a stone boundary wall on the south side of 145 Wakeham.

Weston Conservation Area

The Weston Conservation Area is located centrally within the Isle of Portland on ground which falls gently from north to south. Weston's conservation area is wrapped by green open land, including the lawns and Suckthumb Quarry, which ceased quarrying and was restored in the 1990s. This open space is a key characteristic of the setting of the conservation area. Key buildings include:

- Number 64 Weston Road and its attached wall, Grade II;
- Number 82 and 84 Isle Road with attached walls, Grade II;
- Wanganui Cottage, Grade II;
- Number 72 Weston Road, Grade II;
- High Croft Cottage, Grade II; and
- 52 Providence Place, Grade II.

Scheduled monuments are sites of national importance and protected by the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. According to the National Heritage List for England³⁹, there are nine scheduled monuments in the Neighbourhood Area, comprising:

- The Portland Bill stone loading quay
- Mesolithic sites near culver well
- The Verne Citadel
- A Battery 180m East of the Naval cemetery
- Rufus Castle
- Portland open fields
- Portland Castle
- RAF Portland which is the site of the Rotor early warning radar station
- East Weare rifle range

Since 2008, Historic England has released an annual Heritage at Risk Register. The Heritage at Risk Register highlights the Grade I and Grade II* listed buildings, and scheduled monuments, conservation areas, wreck sites and registered parks and gardens in England deemed to be 'at risk'. The 2015 Heritage at Risk Register⁴⁰ highlights that there are five sites in the Neighbourhood Area at risk. These are:

- The Verne Citadel – considered to be in generally satisfactory condition but with significant localised problems
- The battery 180m east of the Naval cemetery - considered to be in generally unsatisfactory condition but with major localised problems
- RAF Portland – considered to have extensive significant problems
- Rufus Castle – considered to be in slow decay with no solution agreed
- Church of St Peter - considered to be in slow decay with no solution agreed

It should be noted that not all of the area's historic environment resource is subject to statutory designations, and non-designated features comprise a large part of what people have contact with as part of daily life – whether at home, work or leisure. For example, although not listed, many buildings and areas are of historic interest, and which are seen as important by local communities. Examples of these in the plan area are likely to include undesignated open spaces and the wider historic landscape. Undesignated actual or potential archaeological finds in the area are also of significance.

³⁹ Ibid.

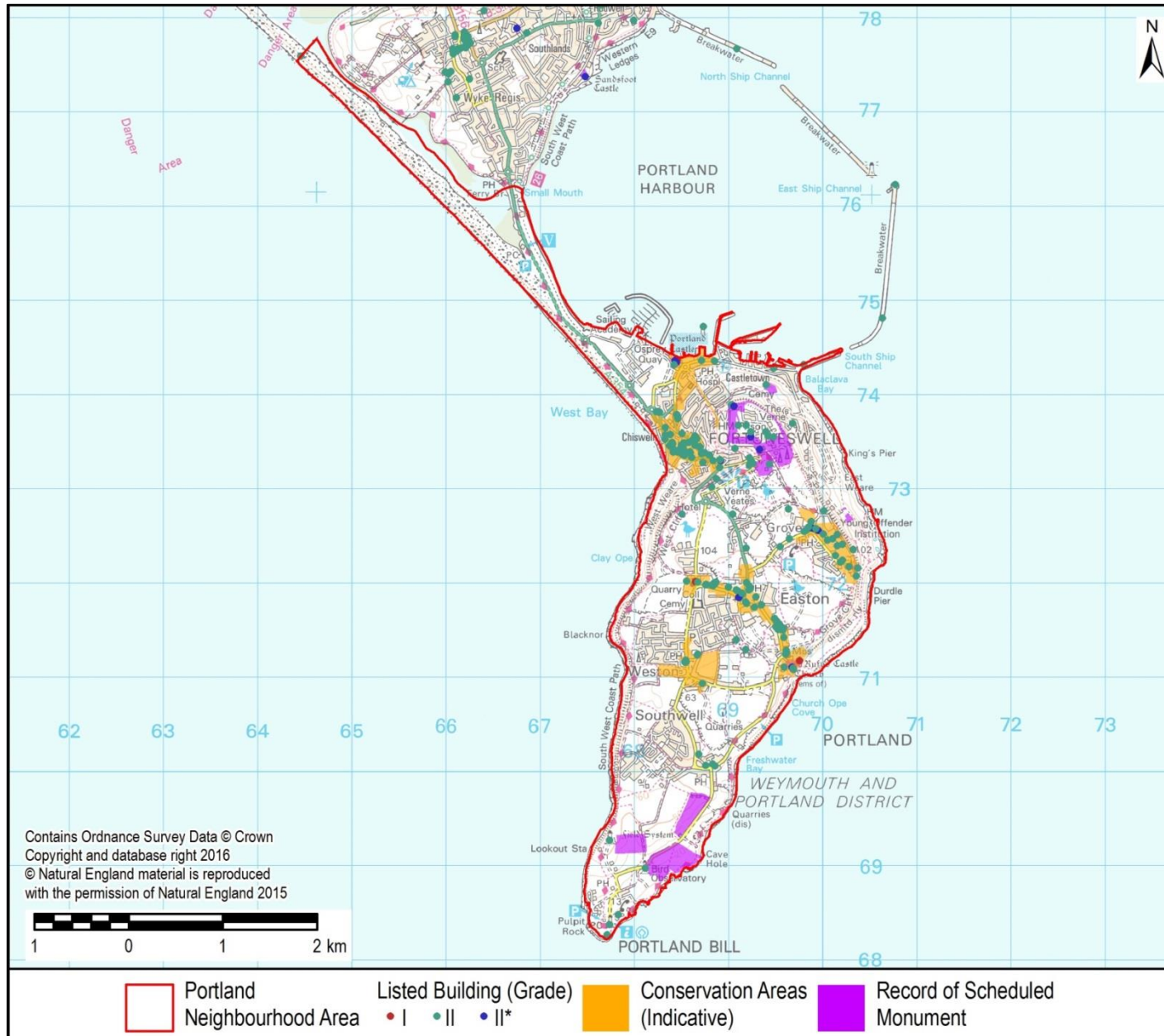
⁴⁰ Heritage at Risk Register (2015), <http://risk.historicengland.org.uk/register.aspx>

Summary of Future Baseline

New development in the Neighbourhood Area has the potential to impact on the fabric and setting of cultural heritage assets. This includes through inappropriate design and layout. It should be noted, however, that existing historic environment designations and Local Plan policies will offer a degree of protection to cultural heritage assets and their settings. Also new development need not be harmful to the significance of a heritage asset, and in the Portland context there is significant opportunity for new development to enhance the historic environment assets of the Isle with significant opportunity for improving tourism potential.

New development has the potential to lead to incremental but small changes in landscape and townscape character and quality in and around the Neighbourhood Area. This includes from the loss of landscape features and visual impact. There is also the potential for effects on landscape/townscape character and quality in the vicinity of the road network due to an incremental growth in traffic flows.

There are likely to be small scale and incremental changes in tranquility in and around the plan area, affected by changes in the levels of light and noise pollution.



Land, Soil and Water Resources

Context Review

The EU's Soil Thematic Strategy⁴¹ presents a strategy for protecting soils resources in Europe. The main aim of the strategy is to minimise soil degradation and limit associated detrimental effects linked to water quality and quantity, human health, climate change, biodiversity, and food safety.

The Water Framework Directive drives a catchment-based approach to water management. In England and Wales there are 100 water catchments and it is Defra's intention is to establish a 'framework for integrated catchment management' across England. The Environment Agency is currently seeking to establish 'Significant Water Management Issues' within catchments with a view to presenting second River Basin Management Plans to ministers in 2015. The plans will seek to deliver the objectives of the WFD namely:

- Enhance the status and prevent the further deterioration of aquatic ecosystems and associated wetlands which depend on aquatic ecosystems;
- Promote the sustainable use of water;
- Reduce the pollution of water, especially by 'priority' and 'priority hazardous' substances; and
- Ensure the progressive reduction of groundwater pollution.

Key messages from the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) include:

- Protect and enhance soils. The value of best and most versatile agricultural land should also be taken into account.
- Prevent new or existing development from being 'adversely affected' by the presence of 'unacceptable levels' of soil pollution or land instability and be willing to remediate and mitigate 'despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate'.
- Encourage the effective use of land' through the reuse of land which has been previously developed, 'provided that this is not of high environmental value'. Whilst there is no longer a national requirement to build at a minimum density, the NPPF requires local planning authorities to 'set out their own approach to housing density to reflect local circumstances'.
- Produce strategic policies to deliver the provision of a variety of infrastructure, including that necessary for water supply.
- With regards to waste, the NPPF does not contain any specific waste policies as waste planning policy will be published as part of the National Waste Management Plan.

Other key documents at the national level include Safeguarding our Soils: A strategy for England⁴², which sets out a vision for soil use in England, and the Water White Paper⁴³, which sets out the Government's vision for a more resilient water sector. It states the measures that will be taken to tackle issues such as poorly performing ecosystems, and the combined impacts of climate change and population growth on stressed water resources. In terms of waste management, the Government Review of Waste Policy in England⁴⁴ recognises that environmental benefits and economic growth can be the result of a more sustainable approach to the use of materials.

Summary of Current Baseline

The Agricultural Land Classification classifies land into six grades (plus 'non-agricultural' and 'urban'), where Grades 1 to 3a are the 'best and most versatile' land and Grades 3b to 5 are of poorer quality.

⁴¹ European Commission (2006) Soil Thematic Policy [online] available at: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/soil/index_en.htm

⁴² Defra (2009) Safeguarding our Soils: A strategy for England [online] available at: <http://archive.defra.gov.uk/environment/quality/land/soil/documents/soil-strategy.pdf>

⁴³ Defra (2011) Water for life (The Water White Paper) [online] available at <http://www.official-documents.gov.uk/document/cm82/8230/8230.pdf>

⁴⁴ Defra (2011) Government Review of Waste Policy in England [online] available at: <http://www.defra.gov.uk/publications/files/pb13540-waste-policy-review110614.pdf>

In terms of the location of the best and most versatile agricultural land, detailed classification has not been carried out in the PNP area. However, land classified as Grade 3 agricultural land covers generally covers the southern half of Portland, while the northern half of the Isle is classified as being in non-agricultural use. It is uncertain whether the Grade 3 agricultural land present in the parish comprises land classified as the best and most versatile agricultural land (i.e. Grade 3a land).

There is one Household Waste and Recycling Centre in the PNP area which is located centrally on the Isle at Easton Lane, just off the A354. There are no significant water courses located within the PNP area.

Water supply and waste water provision in the area is provided by Wessex Water. The Dorset Catchment Abstraction Management Strategy highlights that 'Water is Available for Licensing' in the area and that consumptive abstraction is available at least 95% of the time. This indicates that there is more water than required to meet the needs of the environment and new licenses can be considered depending on local and downstream impacts.

Groundwater Source Protection Zones (SPZs) have been defined by the Environment Agency in England and Wales to protect groundwater sources such as wells, boreholes and springs that are used for public drinking water supply. The zones show the risk of contamination from activities that might cause groundwater pollution in the area. No SPZs are present in the PNP area

The Nitrates Directive (91/676/EEC) requires Member States to identify areas where groundwaters have nitrate concentrations of more than 50 mg/l nitrate or are thought to be at risk of nitrate contamination. Areas associated with such groundwaters are designated as Nitrate Vulnerable Zones (NVZs) within which, Member States are required to establish Action Programmes in order to reduce and prevent further nitrate contamination. No part of the PNP area is underlain by a groundwater or surface water NVZs.

Summary of Future Baseline

Development on Portland is constrained by its geographical nature as a tied-Isle and the rich historic environment present. Therefore, in the absence of the plan, a higher proportion of development has the potential to take place on Greenfield land – particularly that in the southern half of Portland.

Due to increasing legislative and regulatory requirements, there are increasing pressures to improve recycling and composting rates.

Water availability in the wider area may be affected by regional increases in population and an increased occurrence of drought exacerbated by the effects of climate change.

Population and Community

Context Review

Key messages from the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) include:

- To 'boost significantly the supply of housing', local planning authorities should meet the 'full, objectively assessed need for market and affordable housing' in their area. They should prepare a Strategic Housing Market Assessment to assess their full housing needs, working with neighbouring authorities where housing market areas cross administrative boundaries. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment should identify the scale and mix of housing and the range of tenures that the local population is likely to need over the plan period.
- With a view to creating 'sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities' authorities should ensure provision of affordable housing onsite or externally where robustly justified.
- In rural areas, when exercising the duty to cooperate with neighbouring authorities, local planning authorities should be responsive to local circumstances and plan housing development to reflect local needs, particularly for affordable housing, including through rural exception sites where appropriate. Authorities should consider whether allowing some market housing would facilitate the provision of affordable housing to meet local needs.
- The NPPF attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. It explains how good design is a key aspect in sustainable development, and how development should improve the

quality of the area over its lifetime, not just in the short term. Good architecture and landscaping are important, with the use of design codes contributing to the delivery of high quality outcomes. Design should reinforce local distinctiveness, raise the standard more generally in the area and address the connections between people and places.

- The social role of the planning system involves ‘supporting vibrant and healthy communities’.
- The planning system can play an important role in facilitating social interaction and creating healthy, inclusive communities
- Promote the retention and development of local services and community facilities such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.
- Ensure that developments create safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion. Places should contain clear and legible pedestrian routes, and high quality public spaces, which encourage the active and continual use of public areas.
- Ensuring that there is a ‘sufficient choice of school places’ is of ‘great importance’ and there is a need to take a ‘proactive, positive and collaborative approach’ to bringing forward ‘development that will widen choice in education’.

Summary of Current Baseline

Population and age structure

According to the most recent census data available, in 2011 the total population of Portland was 12,844. This was an increase of 0.5% from the previous census in 2001. In comparison, Weymouth and Portland has shown a population growth of 2.39% in the same time period; however this is still considerably lower than the South West average of 7.31%, which in turn is lower than the national population growth of 7.88%. Mid-year estimates for the Isle of Portland suggest the population of the parish was 12,966⁴⁵ in 2013.

Portland has a slightly lower proportion of residents within the 0-15 age group (17.5%) when compared to the national average of 18.9%. This value is broadly in line with borough and regional levels. In contrast there is a higher proportion of residents within the 16-24 age group than borough, regional, and national averages.

The proportion of residents between the ages of 25 and 44 in Portland (24.0%) is broadly in line with the Weymouth and Portland average of 23% and the South West average of 24.6%. These proportions are significantly lower than the national average of 27.5%. The percentage of population that falls within the 45-59 age bracket is comparable between Portland (21.9%) and Weymouth and Portland (21.1%) which is marginally higher than the averages for the South West and England.

The proportion of residents within Portland aged 60 and over (23.4%) is significantly lower than the Weymouth and Portland average of 28.4% and also lower than the regional average (26.4%). This proportion is only marginally higher than the national average of 22.3%.

Deprivation

Census statistics measure deprivation across four ‘dimensions’ of deprivation⁴⁶ including: any member of a household not a full-time student is either unemployed or long-term sick; education (no person in the household has at least level 2 education, and no person aged 16-18 is a full-time student); health and disability (any person in the household has general health ‘bad or ‘very bad’ or has a long term health problem); and housing (household’s accommodation is either overcrowded, with an occupancy rating -1 or less, or is in a shared dwelling, or has no central heating).

Broadly speaking, based on these dimensions, Portland has higher overall deprivation levels than borough, regional, and national averages. There are fewer households classified as ‘not deprived’ in Portland (39.7%), than Weymouth and Portland (40.7%), and the South West (44.8%).

⁴⁵ Dorset CC <https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/article/343603/Portland-town-profile>

⁴⁶ ONS (2011) Census 2011, Households by Deprivation Dimensions, 2011 (QS119EW)

There are generally a higher proportion of households in Portland deprived in 1 and 2 dimensions (34.2% and 20.8%) when compared to regional (33.2% and 17.6%) averages. There are also a higher number of households in Portland deprived in 3 dimensions (4.9%) compared to regional (4.0%) averages. However, this value is lower than the national average of 5.1%. 0.5% of households within Portland are deprived in 4 dimensions. This is comparable to the national average. This is slightly lower than the borough average of 0.6%, however there are slightly more than the regional average of 0.4%.

The overall deprivation figures however mask significant pockets of deprivation within some areas of the Isle. The more recent Index of Multiple Deprivation 2015 (IMD) is an overall relative measure of deprivation constructed by combining seven domains of deprivation according to their respective weights, as described below. The seven domains of deprivation are as follows:

- The **Income** Deprivation Domain measures the proportion of the population experiencing deprivation relating to low income. The definition of low income used includes both those people that are out-of-work, and those that are in work but who have low earnings (and who satisfy the respective means tests).
- The **Employment** Deprivation Domain measures the proportion of the working-age population in an area involuntarily excluded from the labour market. This includes people who would like to work but are unable to do so due to unemployment, sickness or disability, or caring responsibilities.
- The **Education, Skills and Training** Deprivation Domain measures the lack of attainment and skills in the local population.
- The **Health Deprivation and Disability** Domain measures the risk of premature death and the impairment of quality of life through poor physical or mental health. The domain measures morbidity, disability and premature mortality but not aspects of behaviour or environment that may be predictive of future health deprivation.
- The **Crime** Domain measures the risk of personal and material victimisation at local level.
- The **Barriers to Housing and Services** Domain measures the physical and financial accessibility of housing and local services. The indicators fall into two sub-domains: 'geographical barriers', which relate to the physical proximity of local services, and 'wider barriers' which includes issues relating to access to housing such as affordability.
- The **Living Environment** Deprivation Domain measures the quality of the local environment. The indicators fall into two sub-domains. The 'indoors' living environment measures the quality of housing; while the 'outdoors' living environment contains measures of air quality and road traffic accidents.

The two supplementary indices, which are subsets of the Income Deprivation Domain (described above), are:

- The **Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index** measures the proportion of all children aged 0 to 15 living in income deprived families.
- The **Income Deprivation Affecting Older People Index** measures the proportion of all those aged 60 or over who experience income deprivation.⁴⁷

Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) are a geographic hierarchy designed to improve the reporting of small area statistics in England and Wales. They are standardized geographies designed to be as consistent in population as possible. The population of a LSOA is approximately 1,000 to 1,500 people. In relation to the IMD 2015, LSOAs are ranked out of the 32,844 LSOAs in England and Wales, with 1 being the most deprived.

There are nine Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) that are either fully or partially in the PNP area. However, data is only available for seven of these LSOAs.

As highlighted by the table, IMD ranks for LSOAs within the PNP area for the 'employment' 'education' and 'geographical barrier' domains are particularly poor. These scores are linked to the relative lack of

⁴⁷ DCLG (September 2015): Index of Multiple Deprivation 2015
<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2015>

employment opportunities and the low paid and/or seasonal nature of work available on the Isle. These ranks are also reflected by those of the sub-domain relating to the proportion of children living in low income households and older people who experience income deprivation.

In particular, there is a highly concentrated pocket of deprivation in the Castle Town LSOA (008D) which is located south of Portland Port. It is within the most deprived areas in the county for 'income' deprivation and falls within the 10% most deprived nationally. It is also within the top 10% most deprived nationally in terms of 'employment', 'education, skills and training', 'health deprivation and disability' and also 'barriers to housing and services' and 'the children and young people sub-domain'.

LSOA 008E, which covers the area of Fortuneswell and extends along Portland Beach Road is also highly deprived and falls within the 20% most deprived nationally. Of particular note are high levels of deprivation with regards to the 'education, skills and training', 'barriers to housing and services' and 'children and young people' sub-domains.

LSOA 009B also shows high levels of deprivation in some domains. It is within the 30% most deprived nationally for 'education, skills and training' and the 'children and young people sub-domain'.

Overall many domain IMD rankings are poor in Portland, in particular: 'education, skills and training' 'the children and young people sub-domain' as well as 'barriers to housing and services'.

However, it should also be noted that the LSOAs in Portland perform particularly well in regards to the 'Outdoors' sub-domain. This reflects good access to open space and countryside on the Isle of Portland and low road casualty rates.

Households

The proportion of people owning a home outright or with a mortgage in Portland (68.1%) is slightly higher than the borough average (66.8%), the South West average of (67.4%) and significantly higher than the national average of (63.3%).

The proportion of socially rented houses in Portland (13.6%) is in line with the borough (13.6%) and the South West average of 13.3% and lower than the national average of 17.7%. The proportion of privately rented households in Portland (16.9%) is broadly in line with all other comparators.

Qualifications and Employment

The PNP area has more residents with no qualifications (23.4%) compared to borough (22.5%) and regional (22.5%) averages and significantly higher than national averages (20.7%). There are a higher proportion of residents in the PNP area who hold level 1 and 2 qualifications than all other comparators. In contrast the proportion of residents (18.1%) holding level 4 qualifications or above is significantly lower than borough (22.5%), regional (27.4%) and national (27.4%) averages.

Overall the occupation profile shows that Portland has a significantly higher proportion of residents working in elementary occupations (such as machine operatives, in caring, leisure and other services) as well as skilled trade occupations when compared to borough, regional, and national averages.

In contrast, there are fewer people working as: managers, directors and senior officials; professional occupations; associate professional and technical occupations; or administrative and secretarial roles.

Overall, in 2012, the level of dependency on Public Sector employment was assessed at 45% by the Business Register and Employment Survey⁴⁸.

Summary of Future Baseline

The population of the PNP area grew at a much slower rate than regional and national averages between 2001 and 2011. This limited population growth has the potential to continue, and potentially start to decline if the vitality of the Isle and employment opportunities are not supported. Although the PNP area currently has a more balanced population structure relative to other areas of the country, the vitality of the Isle is not supported, there is potential for an increase in the proportion of older people within the PNP area.

⁴⁸ ONS (2012) Business Register and Employment Survey

Given existing pockets of deprivation it is important to create and maintain future employment and training opportunities in the local area at appropriate locations to ensure the age structure of the population remains balanced.

The suitability (e.g. size and design) and affordability of housing for local requirements depends on the implementation of appropriate housing policies through the Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan. However, without interventions, the suitability and quality of housing in the Isle may continue to decline. Unplanned development may also have wider implications in terms of transport and access to infrastructure or the natural environment.

Health and Wellbeing

Context Review

Key messages from the NPPF include:

- The social role of the planning system involves 'supporting vibrant and healthy communities'.
- A core planning principle is to 'take account of and support local strategies to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all'.
- The planning system can play an important role in facilitating social interaction and creating healthy, inclusive communities'
- Promote the retention and development of local services and community facilities such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.
- Set out the strategic policies to deliver the provision of health facilities.
- Access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities.

In relation to other key national messages in relation to health, Fair Society, Healthy Lives⁴⁹ ('The Marmot Review') investigated health inequalities in England and the actions needed in order to tackle them. Subsequently, a supplementary report was prepared providing additional evidence relating to spatial planning and health on the basis that there is: "overwhelming evidence that health and environmental inequalities are inexorably linked and that poor environments contribute significantly to poor health and health inequalities".

The increasing role that local level authorities are expected to play in providing health outcomes is demonstrated by recent government legislation. The Health and Social Care Act 2012 transferred responsibility for public health from the NHS to local government, giving local authorities a duty to improve the health of the people who live in their areas. This will require a more holistic approach to health across all local government functions.

Summary of Current Baseline

Deprivation is a significant contribution to poor health and an adverse effect on wellbeing, and elements related to the poor quality of housing and income deprivation are a key influence. The general health in Portland is comparable to borough averages, which in turn are slightly less favourable than regional and national averages.

In this context at the time of the 2011 census 42.2% of the population considered themselves in 'very good' health, which is comparable to the borough proportion (42.2%), while the South West (46.9%) and England (47.2%) averages are higher. The proportion of residents in 'good' health is slightly higher in the PNP area (37.7%) than borough (34.6%) averages and much higher than regional (34.6%) and national (34.2%) averages. Portland also shows a higher proportion of residents reporting that they are in 'fair health' (14.5%) than regional (13.4%) and national (13.1%) averages.

The proportion of residents in Portland who consider themselves in bad health (4.2%) is comparable to regional (4.0%) and national (4.2%) averages and slightly lower than borough (4.5%) averages. A similar pattern also emerges with those in very bad health. 1.3% of Portland residents reported that

⁴⁹ The Marmot Review (2011) The Marmot Review: Implications for Spatial Planning [online] available at: <http://www.nice.org.uk/nicemedia/live/12111/53895/53895.pdf>

they were in very bad health, compared with 1.4% in the borough as a whole, 1.1% in the South West, and 1.2% in England.

As shown above, reported health was slightly poorer than regional and national averages, but slightly better than borough averages at the time of the census, this is also reflected in terms of reported disabilities. The proportion of residents in Portland reporting that their day-to-day activities are not limited by disability (80.3%) is slightly higher than for the borough as a whole (78.4%) but lower than regional (81.6%) and national (82.4%) averages. The proportion of residents in Portland who feel that their day to day activities are limited 'a lot' by disability (8.7%) is lower than borough averages of 9.7% but higher than regional (8.3%) and national (8.3%) averages.

The proportion of residents who feel that their day-to-day activities are limited 'a little' by disability in Portland also follows this same pattern.

The Joint Health and Wellbeing strategy for Dorset 2013-2016⁵⁰ identifies a range of socio-demographic and health related data which is of relevance to the PNP. However, it should be noted this data is not specific to Portland; rather it covers the borough of Weymouth and Portland as a whole.

The average life expectancy at birth for the population of the Weymouth and Portland area (78.5 for males and 83.0 for females) is similar to the England average. However, average life expectancy is 4 years lower for men living in Weymouth and Portland compared to East Dorset, with a gap of 3 years for women. Within Weymouth and Portland, life expectancy is 9.2 years lower for men and 6.2 years lower for women in the most deprived areas than in the least deprived areas.

Another increasing problem is alcohol and drug misuse, and smoking rates are higher in Weymouth and Portland than other districts within Dorset; under 18s in Weymouth and Portland have significantly more admissions for alcohol related harm than the England average.

Health priorities noted for Weymouth and Portland include tackling levels of teenage pregnancy, physical activity, drug misuse and violent crime.

Summary of Future Baseline

Broadly speaking, the health of the population in Portland is slightly less favourable when compared with regional and national averages, with a higher proportion of disability reported and a lower proportion of people considering themselves in 'very good' health. Alcohol, smoking and drug use rates are also higher in the Weymouth and Portland area than those for Dorset as a whole.

Ongoing cuts to community services have the potential to lead to effects on health and wellbeing over the longer term, including care for alcohol and drug users.

Obesity is seen as an increasing issue by health professionals, and one that will contribute to significant health impacts on individuals, including increasing the risk of a range of diseases, including heart disease, diabetes and some forms of cancer.

Transportation

Context Review

European and UK transport policies and plans place emphasis on the modernisation and sustainability of the transport network. Specific objectives include reducing pollution and road congestion through improvements to public transport, walking and cycling networks and reducing the need to travel. National policy also focuses on the need for the transport network to support sustainable economic growth. The Dorset Local Transport Plan 2011-26 presents a long term strategy for the area and an implementation plan for the county.

⁵⁰ Dorset County Council (2013) Joint Health and Wellbeing strategy [online] available at: <https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/healthandwellbeingboard>

Summary of Current Baseline

Rail network

No mainline or branch railway stations are present in the PNP area. The nearest railway station is at Weymouth, approximately 5km from the PNP area. The station is the terminus of both the South Western Main Line from London Waterloo and the Heart of Wessex Line from Bristol Temple Meads and Gloucester.

South West Trains operates a twice-hourly service to London Waterloo via Bournemouth, Southampton and Basingstoke. Great Western Railway operate services every two hours via Westbury to Bristol Temple Meads and points north (e.g. Bristol Parkway & Gloucester). There is an additional service running once or twice on a Saturday to London Waterloo via Salisbury operating from late May to early September each year. On Sundays there is an hourly service to Waterloo and a limited service to Bristol.

Bus network

The most frequent bus service in the PNP area is Route 1 which operates between Portland and Weymouth every 10 minutes. At the time of writing there is a six-month trial of a community bus linking most parts of Portland with the First service 1 to and from Weymouth. This is operated by Dorset County Council.⁵¹

From late May there is an open-top bus service between Weymouth and Portland Bill. This bus, numbered 501, runs every two hours during the quieter season and every hour during the school summer holidays. The service starts and finishes at the Kings Statue.

Road network and congestion

Portland is connected to the mainland by the A354. The A354 road is the only land access to Portland, via Ferry Portland, connecting to Weymouth and to the wider road network at the A35 trunk road in Dorchester. It runs from Easton, splitting into a northbound section through Chiswell and a southbound section through Fortuneswell, then along Chesil Beach and across a Portland to the mainland in Wyke Regis.

The A354 is at high risk of sea/ tidal flooding along Chesil Beach and can flood during extreme weather events such as the 2013 and 2014 winter storms. Closure of this road due to flooding creates major access issues as it is the only land access to Portland. The road is also at risk of coastal erosion on Portland Beach Rd and along some stretches on the Isle of Portland.

The road network south of Easton is classified as 'C' roads.

Availability of cars and vans

The proportion of households with no access to a car/van (25%) is the same as borough levels and comparable to national averages of 26%. However, this is higher than regional averages of 19%. The proportion of households with one car is higher than all other comparators. The proportion of households with two or more cars/vans is however lower.

The proportion of households with three or more vehicles is lower than regional values but broadly similar to other comparators. Those with four or more are broadly comparable across all areas.

Method of travel to work

The proportion of people who travel to work driving a car or van is slightly lower than the national average and significantly lower than regional and borough averages. The number of people travelling to work on foot in Portland is comparable to that of regional and borough comparators and much higher than national averages. A higher proportion of people travel to work by bus than all other comparators, however a lower proportion of residents work from home when compared to borough, regional and national averages.

⁵¹ Timetable [online] available at: <http://www.dorset-transport.info/weymouth-transport.html>

In terms of commuting patterns, 3,200 residents commute off the Isle, with indications that 26% travel to the Weymouth area. Key employment pulls include Weymouth town centre and Granby Industrial Estate at Chickerell.

Relating to visitor traffic, it has been calculated that there are 343,000 day visitors annually to the Isle of Portland, with approximately 300,000 travelling to Portland Bill.

Summary of Future Baseline

Public transport usage has the potential to remain comparatively low due compared to private car use due to infrastructure constraints, although there is potential to increase public transport use and active travel such as cycling. There is potential for the number of people working from home in Portland to significantly increase due to modern working patterns and through the provision of high-speed broadband.

Whilst negative effects of new development on the transport network are likely to be mitigated in part by measures outlined in the Dorset Local Transport Plan 3⁵², there will be a continuing need for development is situated in accessible locations which limit the need to travel by private car. The transport network in Portland is at particular risk from climate change due to its low lying coastal location, and appropriate resilience and mitigation measures should be considered as part of any further transport network plans.

⁵² Dorset County Council (2011) Dorset Local Transport Plan 3, 2011-2026 [online] available at: <https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/travel-dorset/roads-and-driving/road-information/road-and-transport-improvement-schemes/local-transport-plan-3>

