

STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND HABITATS REGULATIONS ASSESSMENT ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES REPORT

Prepared on behalf of Hazelbury Bryan Parish Council

HAZELBURY BRYAN NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN AREA
JULY 2017

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1 INTRODUCTION

LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND

There are three European directives that are of particular relevance to neighbourhood plans:

- **Directive 2001/42/EC** on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment (often referred to as the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive). This seeks to provide a high level of protection of the environment by integrating environmental considerations into the process of preparing plans and programmes.
- **Directive 92/43/EEC** on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora and **Directive 2009/147/EC** on the conservation of wild birds (often referred to as the Habitats and Wild Birds Directives respectively). These aim to protect and improve Europe’s most important habitats and species.

Other European directives, such as the Waste Framework Directive (2008/98/EC), Air Quality Directive (2008/50/EC) or the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC) may apply in particular circumstances.

Government guidance¹ recognises that, as a result of the SEA Directive, in some limited circumstances, where a neighbourhood plan is likely to have significant environmental effects, it may require a strategic environmental assessment. Draft neighbourhood plan proposals should therefore be assessed to determine whether the plan is likely to have significant environmental effects. A “screening” assessment is the process for doing this, and follows the requirements are set out in regulation 9 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

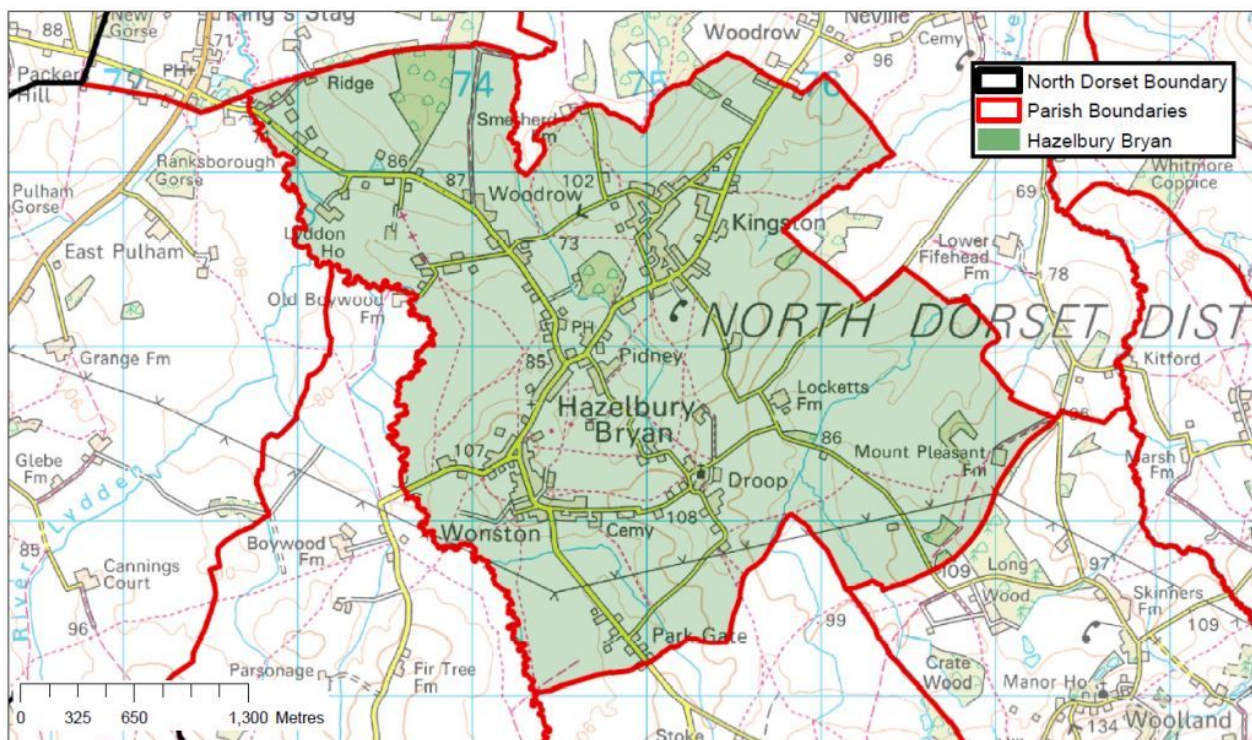
If likely significant environmental effects are identified, an environmental report must be prepared in accordance with paragraphs (2) and (3) of regulation 12 of those Regulations.

THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN AREA

The Hazelbury Bryan Neighbourhood Plan area was designated by North Dorset District Council in October 2016. It follows the parish boundary, as shown in Figure 1.1.

¹ NPPG Paragraph: 027 Reference ID: 11-027-20150209

Figure 1.1: the Hazelbury Bryan Neighbourhood Plan area



Name of the neighbourhood area	Hazelbury Bryan Neighbourhood Area	 <p>© Crown copyright and database rights 2015 Ordnance Survey LA100018415</p>
Designation date	Consultation Draft	
Organisation who made the application	Hazelbury Bryan Parish Council	

SEA SCREENING AND SCOPING OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Articles 2 and 3 of the SEA Directive provide the legislative framework for deciding whether a plan or programme requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment, which is summarised in diagrammatic form in Appendix 1. The broad basis for the decision for development plans is whether significant environmental impacts are likely.

Before making a final decision, Natural England, Historic England and the Environment Agency will be consulted on this screening assessment. Their responses will be considered and any necessary changes made prior to the final decision being made on the screening, which will be made available to the public.

If the screening determination is that a significant environmental impacts are likely, the next stage is to scope the likely requirements for such an assessment, again in consultation with the statutory bodies.

2 POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

The significance of the effect of a Neighbourhood Plan on the environment does depend on the proposals within the plan, and the environmental sensitivity of the area.

In appraising the need for a Strategic Environmental Assessment, the environmental problems relevant to the plan area, together with the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:

- > the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, or higher levels of protection

- > special natural characteristics or cultural heritage,
- > exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values, and intensive land-use

all need to be taken into account. The following therefore provides an overview of the potential environmental issues relevant to Neighbourhood Plan area. [Links](#) to maps showing the extent of coverage are provided, where available.

LANDSCAPE QUALITY

The Plan area sits within the rolling and clay vales associated with Blackmore Vale. Key characteristics include

- > a tranquil and unified landscape
- > undulating and rolling farmland with irregular shaped fields bounded by thick hedgerows
- > the chalk escarpment forms a backdrop and landmark to the area
- > twisting hedge lined lanes with narrow verges
- > small bridged stream crossings often with low parapets
- > numerous scattered farmsteads
- > use of locally distinctive building materials, mainly stone and brick, adding to character.

The Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty covers a small strip within the southern edge of the parish up to Thickthorn Lane, including the small hamlet of Park Gate. Outside of the Plan area, the AONB include viewpoints from Bulbarrow Hill. Development within or visible from the AONB may impact on the enjoyment and significance of this nationally valued landscape.

There is an extensive network of public rights of way criss-crossing the area, but no registered commonland or open access land.

<https://explorer.geowessex.com/?layers=51,4805,11705,6408,48,511&basemap=26&x=375353.89&y=108871.55&epsg=27700&zoom=14>

The area enjoys dark skies and a general lack of light pollution

<http://nightblight.cpre.org.uk/maps/print.html?0|5003.3,5207.833957513791,5562.1,5667.249503893426,0|thBl=1,th0=1,th1=0,th2=0,th3=1,th4=0,th5=0,th6=1,th7=0,th8=1||thBl=OpenStreetMap>

BIODIVERSITY AND GEODIVERSITY ASSETS

The Blackmore Vale Commons and Moors SSSI straddles the northern boundary of the parish, and includes a number of parcels of land north of the Common / Silly Hill. Much of the site is in favourable (or unfavourable but recovering) condition

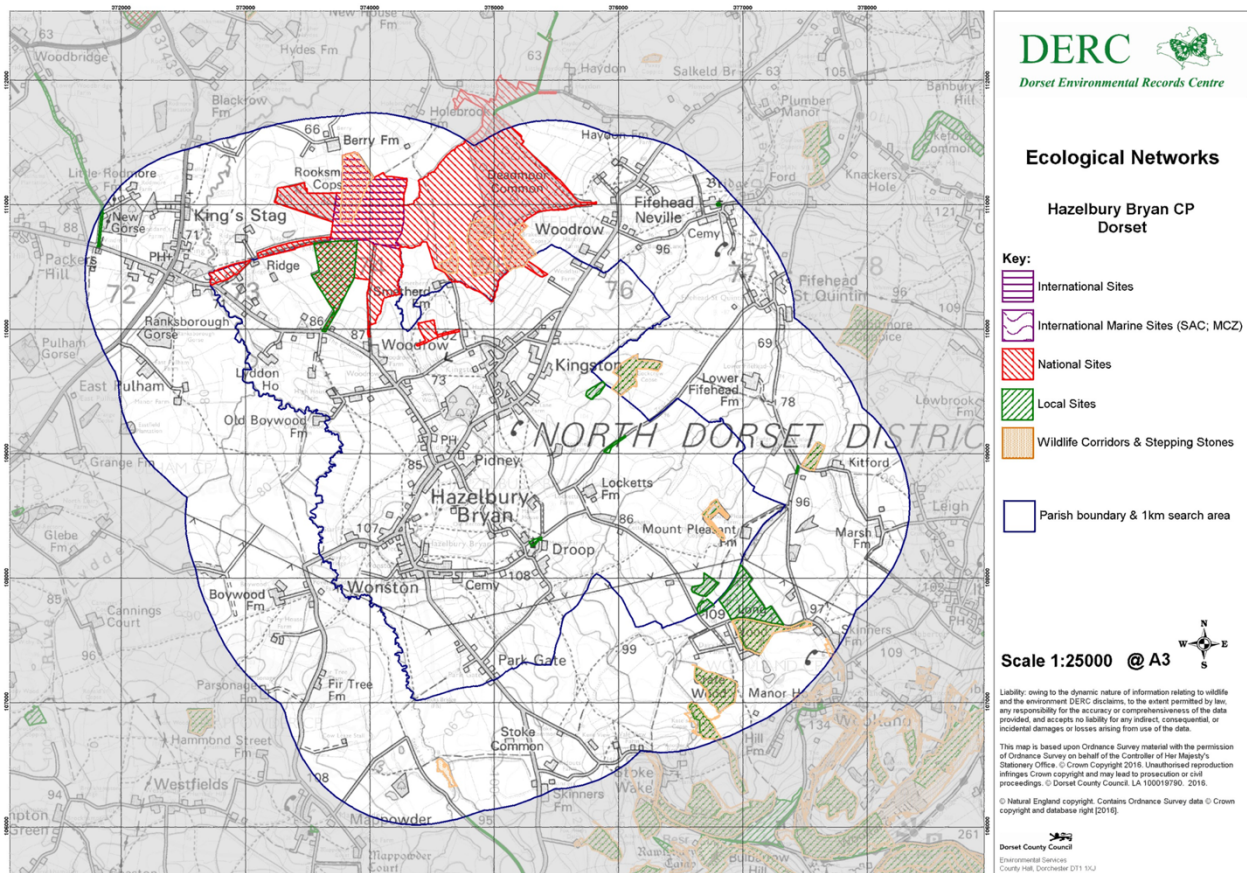
- > Alners Gorse is owned and managed by Butterfly Conservation and over the last couple of years efforts have been made to restore the open grassland and manage the scrub for the marsh fritillary and brown hairstreak butterfly. The former is steadily increasing whilst the brown hairstreak occurs here at one of its key sites in the SSSI
- > Rookmoors Field (west) is mostly managed as a traditional hay-meadow with one area of ranker but still species-rich unimproved grassland. The meadows support notable grasses and indicator herbs found in old more traditionally managed grasslands.
- > Ridge Drove is a long drove route and Hilltop Farm Field is a separate field bounded by thick hedges and mature trees which provide excellent conditions

for the brown hairstreak butterfly. The grassland along the drive is unimproved and provides important nectar sources for insects.

- > Rookmoors Field (west) is a fine example of a mixed unimproved grassland managed by hay-cutting and aftermath grazing. Stands of damp and seasonally inundated grassland with add further diversity to the fields. The hedges support a healthy population of brown hairstreak
- > Silly Hill Meadow An interesting mosaic of unimproved and semi-improved lowland meadow with supporting hedgerows for brown hairstreak. At least half the field is species-rich with good herb indicators

There is also an area of ancient woodland (replanted) at Thorncroft Copse

In addition there are sites of local nature conservation importance – none of which are on sites adjoining existing settlements other than the churchyards.



HERITAGE ASSETS


There are 26 Listed buildings or structures within the neighbourhood plan area, many of which lie within the conservation area at Wonston / Pleck. The most notable of the Listings being the Grade I Church Of St Mary And St James, Droop. The remainder are Grade II. In addition to these, there are 5 buildings that are locally listed.

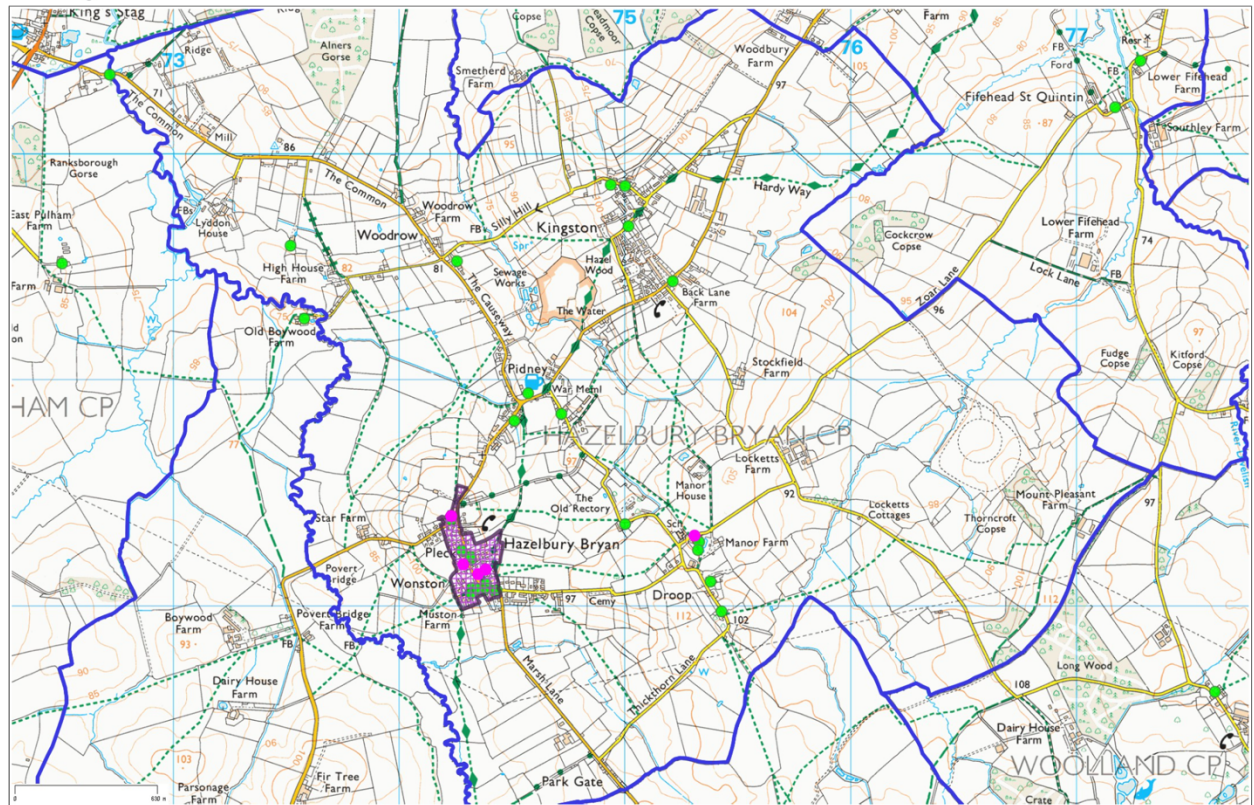
Droop	Kingston / Pidney area	Wonston / Pleck area
Church Of St Mary And St James Table tomb 3m south of south porch of Parish Church Of St Mary And St	Cypress Cottage, Kingston Grenestede Farmhouse, Kingston Back Lane Farm Farmhouse, Kingston	Candlesticks Home Farm Farmhouse Briarlea, Bryan Cottage, Nuttlebury

<p>James Barn approximately 40 metres south of Parish Church Of St Mary And St James Droop Farmhouse The Crooked Billet <i>Locally Listed:</i> <i>Almshouses (Church Cottage)</i></p>	<p>Rosemary Cottage, Kingston Thatched Cottage, 3, Partway Lane, 2, Partway Lane Tudor Cottage, Pidney The Antelope, Pidney Little Whitemoor Farm, Woodrow Cross Roads Farmhouse, Woodrow</p>	<p>Olive house Wonston Farmhouse Hillview Cottage Old Forge Cottage, Middle Cottage, Tiny Cottage, Cornerways Muston Farm Farmhouse Pair of cottages immediately north of Olive House The Old Malt House, Droop Wessex House Clover Cottage, Pleck <i>Locally Listed:</i> <i>Drum and Monkey</i> <i>Wonston Cottage</i> <i>The Brewery Farm</i> <i>Cobbles, Pleck</i></p>
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Kings Stag Bridge on the boundary with King Stag parish is also a Listed structure



Hazelbury Bryan CP 



There are no heritage assets on the at risk register.

There are no scheduled monuments in the plan area, but a significant number of monuments are noted, including an extensive area of strip fields to the north of The Common / Silly Hill and ancient drive roads.

There are no registered historic parks or gardens in or close to the area, or locally listed parks or gardens.

To see locally noted sites please access

<http://explorer.geowessex.com/?layers=2787,2795,1408,2786,4205,51&basemap=26&x=375609.10&y=109011.59&epsg=27700&zoom=14>

AGRICULTURAL LAND VALUE

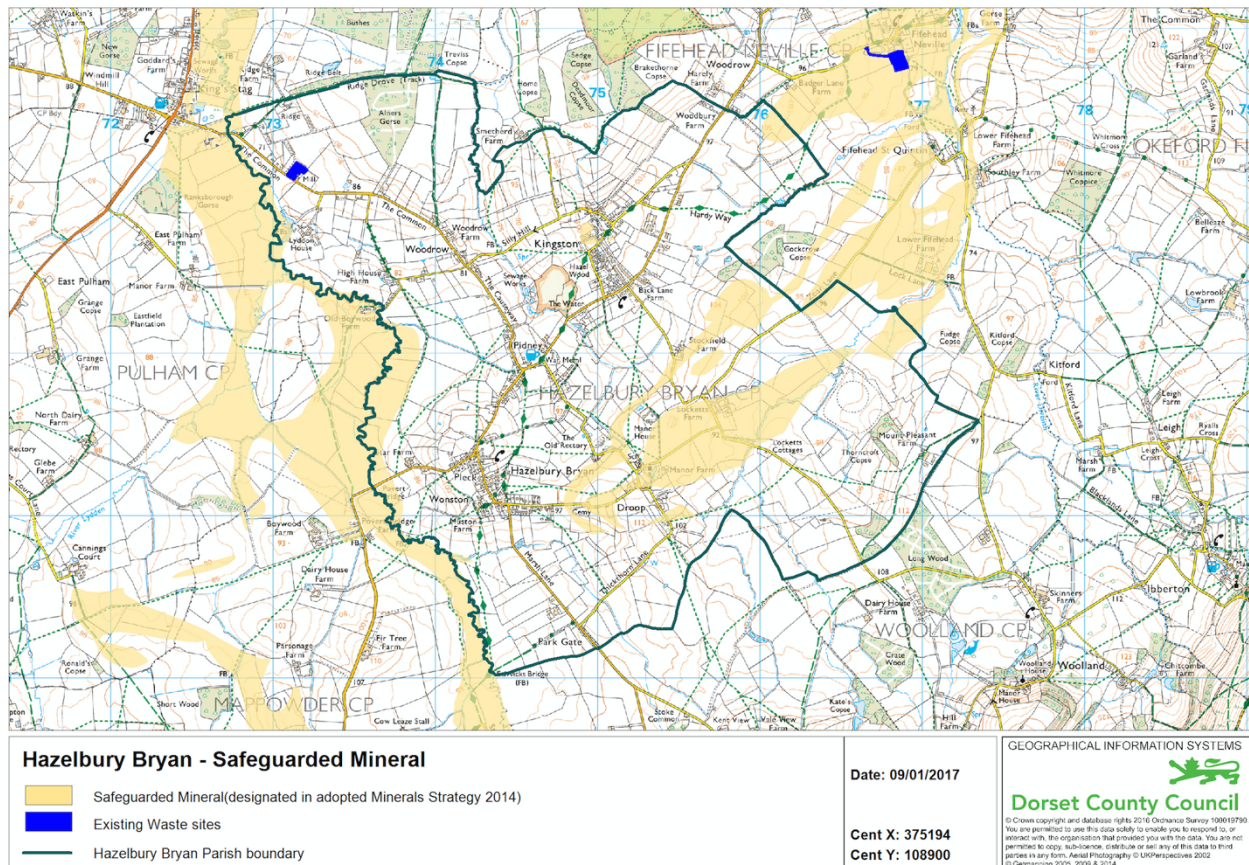
The farmland is mainly Grade 3 (moderate) to Grade 4 (poor) quality across the parish.

FLOOD RISK AND WATER QUALITY

The main area at risk from flooding relates to the Wonston Brook, however there is potential for surface water flooding across many area of the parish, and some areas have potential for groundwater flood risk (though the risk is relatively low at <25%).

<http://explorer.geowessex.com/?layers=51,9866,9865,9427,9425,9426,10125&basemap=26&x=375608.05&y=109011.60&epsg=27700&zoom=14>

MINERALS AND WASTE PROPOSALS



Information supplied by the County Council in respect of existing waste sites and safeguarded minerals zones is shown on the attached map. This highlights a need for further consultation where development is proposed within or in close proximity to these areas, to ensure these resources are not unnecessarily restricted.

POLLUTION RISKS

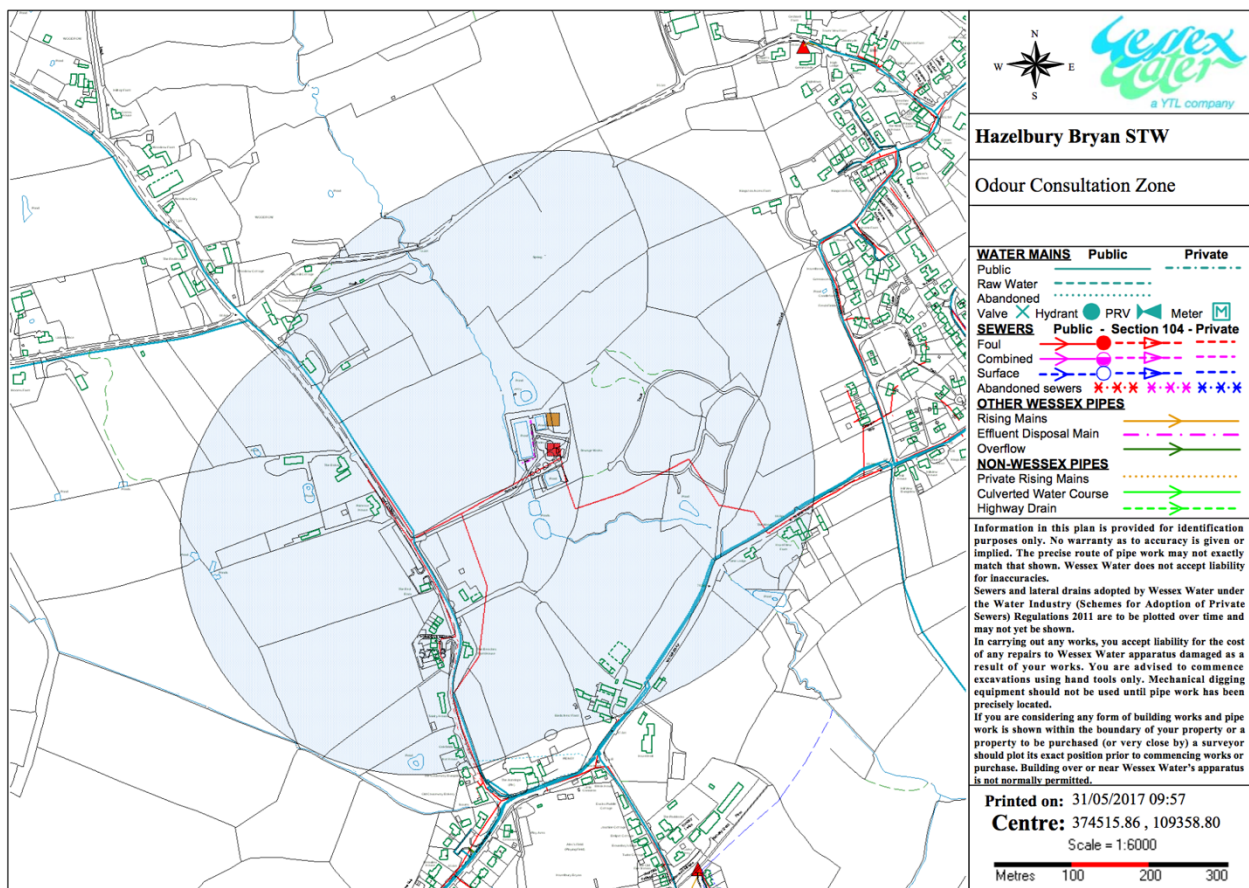
The eastern part of the area lies within a surface water safeguarding zone for the lower part of the River Stour in relation to pesticides (metaldehyde levels), but the area is not subject to wider constraints regarding nitrate vulnerability or groundwater source protection.

There are no Air Quality Management Areas in the area.

There have been 2 major or significant major polluting incidences recorded in the past 5 years – one of water pollution (from oils and fuel) at Old Boywood Farm, and another impacting on land and water (from agricultural materials and wastes) on land south-east of Droop.

The District Council hold data on potentially contaminated land, which includes various sites across the area, for which different levels of information is held.

There is a sewage treatment works north of Pidney, and an odour consultation zone has been defined that extends approximately 400m in all directions. Within this zone Wessex Water have highlighted that there is a risk that future occupants may be subject to an unreasonable level of odour.



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3 RELEVANT PLANS, PROGRAMMES AND OBJECTIVES

Based on the above appraisal, the following plans and programmes have been identified as potentially relevant, and the issues they highlight identified for consideration.

Topic	Plans and Programmes	Key Objectives
Biodiversity , geology, flora and fauna	<p>EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020 (2011), EU Habitats Directive and Birds Directive (92/43/EEC and 79/409/EEC as amended)</p> <p>EU Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC)</p> <p>The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2012 and Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services (2011)</p> <p>Dorset Biodiversity Strategy (Mid Term review) (2010)</p> <p>Dorset Biodiversity Protocol</p> <p>North Dorset Local Plan 2016</p>	<p>Seek to protect and conserve habitats and wild flora and fauna and avoid adverse effects upon nature conservation sites, including terrestrial and water environments</p> <p>Take into account legal protection of species in developing policies relating to biodiversity and habitat protection.</p> <p>Identify and map components of the local ecological networks</p> <p>Where development takes place, buffers should be provided to environmental assets to improve their biodiversity value and facilitate adaptation to climate change, mitigation achieved and biodiversity enhancements secured.</p>
Landscape	<p>European Landscape Convention (2000)</p> <p>The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2012</p> <p>North Dorset Local Plan 2016</p> <p>Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty: a Framework for the Future: AONB Management Plan 2014 - 2019</p>	<p>Recognise landscapes as an essential component of people's surroundings, their cultural and natural heritage, and a foundation of their identity.</p> <p>Protect and enhance valued landscapes - including the statutory duty on all 'relevant authorities' to have regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing natural beauty when discharging any function affecting land in AONBs, which includes their setting, dark night skies, tranquillity and undeveloped rural character.</p> <p>The landscape character of the District will be protected through retention of the features that characterise the area.</p>
Cultural heritage	<p>The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2012</p> <p>North Dorset Local Plan 2016</p>	<p>Conserve and enhance heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance</p> <p>Any development proposal affecting a heritage asset (including its setting) should sustain and enhance its significance and secure a viable use consistent with its conservation.</p>
Soil, Water, Air and Climatic	<p>Nitrates Directive (91/676/EEC), EU Air Quality Directive (2008/50/EC),</p>	<p>Reduce water pollution caused by nitrogen from agricultural sources and prevent such pollution in the</p>

Topic	Plans and Programmes	Key Objectives
Factors	Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC) U.K Climate Change Act (2008) The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2012 South West River Basin Management Plan Safeguarding our Soils: A strategy for England (2009) Dorset County Council Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (2014) North Dorset Local Plan 2016 North Dorset Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) (2008) (<i>being updated</i>) Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Energy Efficiency Strategy (2009) and Renewable Energy Strategy (2013)	future Promote the sustainable use of water and prevent further deterioration of surface and groundwaters. Tackle the environmental and health problems relating to air quality Steer development away from areas of highest flood risk, apply sequential & exceptions test, seek opportunities to relocate development to more sustainable locations. Improve the quality of soils and safeguard their ability to provide essential services for future generations Prevent harm to geological conservation interests Reduce vulnerability to the impacts of climate change. Reduce carbon emissions to meet the UK target and move towards a low carbon economy
Material assets, population and human health	European Sustainable Development Strategy (2006) The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2012 Transforming Dorset - Strategic Economic Plan 2014-21 Bournemouth Dorset and Poole Workspace Strategy (2016) Bournemouth, Poole and Dorset Local Transport Plan (2011-2026) Dorset Sustainable Community Strategy 2010-2020 (2010) Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Minerals Strategy (2014) North Dorset Local Plan 2016	Promote a prosperous local economy and reduce poverty Meet identified local and essential rural needs Ensure there are employment sites and healthy town centres Boost the supply of housing and ensure everyone can live in a good quality home Contribute towards the creation of mixed and balanced communities that are socially inclusive Promote safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion Promote good public health, access to healthcare and opportunities for healthy, active and independent lifestyles Ensure that the necessary infrastructure is put in place to support growth To prevent the unnecessary sterilisation of valuable mineral resources and negative impacts of incompatible development on existing minerals operations or facilities.

Topic	Plans and Programmes	Key Objectives
		Provide an integrated transport system and better accessibility to services for everyday needs.

4 PROPOSED SCOPE OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Having undertaken some initial consultation on the issues that matter the most to local residents, the likely scope of the plan has been identified as follows. Work is now underway gathering evidence and assessing possible options.

SCOPE	Progress to date
<p>Setting out the location and amount and type of new housing and employment development to be accommodated in the plan period to 2031.</p>	<p>Initial analysis of population projections and past build rates would indicate a possible range of between 45 – 50 new homes for the period 2011-31, of which 29 have either been completed or have consent. As such, the Neighbourhood Plan is likely to identify sites for in the region of 20 homes.</p> <p>There is unlikely to be a need for significant additional employment. A proposal has been submitted for the relocation of an existing site which will be assessed, but otherwise the plan is likely to rely on the Local Plan policies for employment.</p>
<p>Ensuring the retention and enhancement of community facilities – what is needed for the local population</p>	<p>Initial analysis has identified those facilities that are particularly valued by the local community, and also a number of potential improvements that may be enabled through the neighbourhood plan, namely</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Improved parking provision for existing facilities – Expansion of the allotments – Expansion of the cemetery – Improvements to provide a network of safe walking routes
<p>Setting out design standards relating to character and highlighting important features of local character</p>	<p>In terms of character, this is likely to cover appropriate styles, materials, density etc suitable for the area taking into account the conservation area status of the area around Wonston</p> <p>The distinctive settlement pattern, as comprised of seven hamlets, important green spaces and views, and other features of local importance, will also be identified for appropriate level of protection.</p>

REFINING SITE OPTIONS

The following criteria are intended for use as a first step of identifying the most appropriate sites for further consultation:

1. **Supporting a working, active village** (would the development of the site support the improvement or continued use of key community facilities and/or provide opportunities to work locally?)
2. **Retaining important green spaces** (would the site use previously developed land, and would it avoid the loss of an important view or local landscape features, or sites likely to be rich in biodiversity?)
3. **Strengthening the built form and character** (is the site well related to one of the hamlets, unlikely to significantly diminish an important gap or adversely impact on the setting of a heritage asset, and not notably prominent in the wider landscape?)
4. **Avoiding harm to existing and future occupants** (could the site be developed to avoid overlooking of private properties, and not be impacted by odours or other emissions arising from existing unneighbourly developments or likely to be affected by flooding?)
5. **Promoting a safe and walkable village** (would most of the main amenities (shop, school, pub, village hall) be in safe and easy walking distance of the site, and can the site be accessed safely?)

Sites that have significant negative scores against the above criteria will not be included in the plan and are unlikely to be considered as deemed to be reasonable alternatives, and will not be.

5 THE MAIN ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES FOR THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

IDENTIFICATION OF ISSUES

From the above assessment of environmental issues and relevant plans, programmes and objectives, the following are considered to be the important issues that should be included in the assessment of options and alternatives, if it is determined that a Strategic Environmental Assessment is required:

- Although sites designated for their ecological interest are unlikely to be selected given the criteria used for site selection, all sites have potential for biodiversity interest that could be harmed by development and as such their ecological interest and possible presence of protected species should be considered
- Although the potential for development to harm nationally important landscapes is unlikely (no sites have been identified within the Dorset AONB, and the scale of development proposed is unlikely to have a major impact), the potential impact on the Dorset AONB should remain a consideration
- There is potential for development to harm the significance of heritage assets, particularly given the potential extensive nature of such assets' setting, this should be considered

- There is potential for flood risk to new or existing development as a result of siting within a flood risk area or increased run-off, and as such this should be considered
- There is potential for harm as a result of re-using contaminated sites, proximity to existing unneighbourly uses (most notably the sewage treatment works which should be considered. The potential sterilisation of minerals resources may also be material if large sites are proposed.
- There is potential impact on health and wellbeing, in terms of opportunities for housing and employment, and improved community facilities, particularly where these would meet a local need and could be safely accessed without reliance on a motor car.

PROPOSED SUSTAINABILITY OBJECTIVES AND ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

The following objectives and basis for assessing the site specific allocations are suggested for use in the more detailed appraisal of the potential impact of the plan.

SEA topic areas	Objective	Assessment basis for site allocations
Biodiversity, geology, flora and fauna	Ensure no ecological interests would be harmed by development, and where opportunities arise, enhance habitats and biodiversity	Options Stage: record proximity to nature conservation designations and consider possible presence of protected species / habitats and whether development could include ecological benefits eg connecting wildlife corridors Pre-Submission Stage: all sites >0.1ha proposed for inclusion in the plan will be subject to an ecological walkover survey to identify the likely harm and any potential mitigation
Landscape	Ensure development respects and reinforces the area's rural landscapes and character	Options Stage: record proximity to Dorset AONB and through site visits assess visibility in views from public areas, and potential harm to features that contribute positively to the local landscape character Pre-Submission Stage: any sites identified as likely to be harmful to the AONB proposed for inclusion in the plan will be subject to a landscape impact assessment to identify the likely harm and any potential mitigation
Cultural heritage	Protect the area's heritage assets, and where opportunities arise, enhance the historic character of the area	Options Stage: record proximity to existing heritage designations and consider potential harm to these assets including their setting and significance. Pre-Submission Stage: where assessment or NDDC conservation team / DCC historic environment team highlight potential harm, sites proposed for inclusion in the plan will be subject to a heritage impact assessment to identify the likely harm and any potential mitigation
Soil, Water, Air and	Ensure development does not result in an	Options Stage: record proximity to existing contaminated land sites and whether the site

Climatic Factors	unacceptable risk of pollution.	lies within the odour consultation zone or a minerals safeguarding area. Pre-Submission Stage: where assessment highlights potential harm, sites proposed for inclusion in the plan will be subject to further assessment as advised by NDDC / Wessex Water
	Reduce flood risk	Stage 1: record proximity to existing flood risk zones (as mapped) and local knowledge of flooding incidences. Stage 2: where assessment or liaison with DCC / EA / Wessex Water highlights potential harm, sites proposed for inclusion in the plan will be subject to flood risk assessment to confirm the level of risk and any potential mitigation
Material assets, population and human health	Provide housing, employment and community facilities to help meet local needs	Assess quantity of houses that could be provided (or might be lost) including affordable housing, and the potential for the site to accommodate new jobs or community facilities
	Ensure safe access and a pedestrian-friendly environment	Consider whether the site is safe and accessible (using feedback from the Highways Authority where applicable).
	Ensure development does not result in an unacceptable risk of pollution.	Options Stage: record whether site is within a minerals safeguarding area. Pre-Submission Stage: where sites are within a minerals safeguarding area liaise with DCC regarding potential mitigation measures

APPENDIX 1: A DIAGRAM SUMMARISING THE SEA SCREENING PROCESS.

