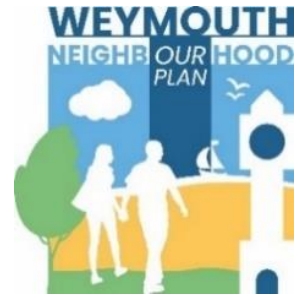


Weymouth Neighbourhood Plan

CONSULTATION STATEMENT



Prepared by: Weymouth Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Weymouth Neighbourhood Plan: Consultation Statement,
November 2024

Contents

1.	Introduction.....	1
2.	Decision to produce a Weymouth Neighbourhood Plan.....	1
3.	Defining the Weymouth Neighbourhood Area.....	1
4.	Creation of a Neighbourhood Forum and Steering Group.....	2
5.	Consultation and Engagement.....	3
5.1	Initial Survey – Draft Vision, Mission and Objectives.....	3
5.2	Promoting the Purpose of a Neighbourhood Plan.....	4
5.3	Area Walkabouts – Developing Objectives Policies and Aspirations.....	5
5.4	Theme Groups – Evidence based consultation.....	5
5.5	Call for Sites for Development.....	6
5.6	Call for Submissions for Designation as Local Green Space.....	7
5.7	Engagement with Schools.....	8
5.8	Second Consultation.....	8
5.9	Third Engagement – Resolving Key Issues.....	13
5.10	Focus Groups – Policy Development.....	14
5.11	Fourth Engagement – Allocation of Sites for Development and Local Green Space.....	14
5.12	Regulation 14 Statutory Consultation.....	16
5.13	Changes to Evidence Base	27
5.14	Policy Health Check	28

1. Introduction

The purpose of this consultation statement is to demonstrate how stakeholders including residents, businesses, landowners and statutory bodies have been involved in creating the Weymouth Neighbourhood Plan, through a process of direct engagement, written and on-line surveys, social and other media, and open public discussion.

The desire at the outset of this project to adopt a ‘bottom-up approach’ is reflected in the significant level of informal consultation (public engagement) that has taken place over a two-and-a-half-year period prior to statutory Regulation 14 consultation. This has been achieved through use of a wide range of information gathering techniques which has sought to be representative of the population of the Neighbourhood Area as a whole, whilst recognising the challenge posed over such a large and diverse population. At each stage of consultative engagement, we have sought to address four basic questions – How we consulted? What representations were received? What were the main issues raised? What did we do with the results?

The evidence base generated through this process consists of two primary sources; the views and opinions of the various stakeholders and objective evidence based upon researching or compiling relevant documents which are publicly accessible. Access to specific underpinning evidence is provided through the hyperlinks for each section.

This Consultation Statement will be submitted to the Dorset Council as the Local Planning Authority as one of the key supporting documents of the submission version of the Neighbourhood Plan.

2. Decision to produce a Weymouth Neighbourhood Plan

In Oct 2019 the newly formed Weymouth Town Council began investigating the creation of a Weymouth Neighbourhood Plan for the whole of the Town Council area. A sub-committee of councillors was established to develop a way forward and reported back to the full council. Following consultation with Dorset Council a motion was passed by Weymouth Town Council on 24th June 2020, to establish a neighbourhood plan for the whole area that came under the jurisdiction of the Town Council including Sutton Poyntz which already had a ‘made’ Neighbourhood Plan and committed to “respect and include” the policies of that Plan.

3. Defining the Weymouth Neighbourhood Area

In order to meet statutory requirements, the Neighbourhood Plan Area Application was submitted to the Dorset Council on 2nd July 2020. As Weymouth Town Council are a recognised Qualifying Body there was no need for consultation.

Dorset Council formally approved the application on 23 July 2020.

What Were the Main Issues Raised?

Dorset Council recognised the pre-existing Sutton Poyntz Neighbourhood Plan and requested that this plan should be respected in the emerging Weymouth Neighbourhood Plan.

What Did We Do with The Results?

The acceptance of the Weymouth Neighbourhood Area by Dorset Council was noted at the next meeting of Weymouth Town Council on 2nd Sept 2020.

This meeting recognised the need to respect the Sutton Poyntz Neighbourhood Plan (subsequently in forming the Steering Group a representative of the SPNP was sought and joined the Steering Group).

4. Creation of a Neighbourhood Forum and Steering Group

How We Consulted?

WTC nominated a sub-group consisting of 8 councillors who were delegated to appoint planning consultants and undertake the formation of a Neighbourhood Forum by inviting stakeholders to an on-line public meeting (necessitated by Covid restrictions) which were held on 7th Dec 2020, 18th January 2021 and 22nd Feb 2021. These meetings were advertised by the Town Council through its website and contacting local interest groups and a through a press release which appeared in the Dorset Echo.

What Representations Were Received?

On 7th Dec 2020 10 councillors were present together with 16 members of the public and representatives of local interest groups (Civic Society, Weymouth BID, WEYForward, W&P Chamber of Commerce, North Harbourside Residents Group, Lansdowne Square Residents Association, South Dorset Ramblers Association, Weymouth Area Development Trust, The Upwey Society and the Sutton Poyntz NP group).

On the 18th January 2021 5 Councillors were present with 20 members of the public or representatives of local groups present. A Terms of Reference structure (with both geographical coverage of the town and specialist expertise) was presented and attendees were urged to spread the word and nominations to the SG were sought by 1st Feb 2021.

What Were the Main Issues Raised?

The purpose, limitations and key stages in the development of a NP. How the Sutton Poyntz NP policies were to be incorporated into the Weymouth wide NP. Primary concerns were focussed around the provision of homes and the protection of open spaces such as parks, nature areas, public gardens and play areas, community identity and transport related issues.

The proposed formation of a SG and the commitment required. The need to provide representation of areas within Weymouth and of special interest groups where expertise would be helpful.

What Did We Do with The Results?

It was agreed that the Neighbourhood Forum would meet each month in order to create a better understanding of the purpose of a Neighbourhood Plan and the key stages in its creation with a view to forming a Steering Group. The latter was to consist of 4 councillors and 6 representatives of the public in line with agreed terms of reference as agreed by WTC.

Written nominations were requested, 14 were received, and following consideration by the sub-group of councillors a Steering Group was formed on 22nd February 2021. This provided 6 public representatives for Urban areas, Semi-Urban areas, Sutton Pontz NP area, Business, Environment, and Young Families, 4 Councillors providing more geographic coverage of Weymouth. This was

later extended to include an additional member of the public to support community engagement taking the members of the public to 7.

This first met on 21st March 2021. It was planned to meet 1- or 2-month intervals. It was agreed to publish notes of all SG meetings on the WTC web site and to provide an update on progress at each full meeting of the Weymouth Town Council Planning & Licensing Committee and for Key Decisions to be reported to Full Council for endorsement.

Planning Consultants ECA were engaged by the WTC to advise and guide the SG.

5. Consultation and Engagement

An overview of the various consultation and engagement activity leading up to and including the formal Regulation 14 consultation is attached [**excel spreadsheet Consultation and Engagement - WNP engagement record spreadsheet – once completed will upload**]. The information below provides a more detailed account of the various consultation and engagement activities hyperlinked to primary documents.

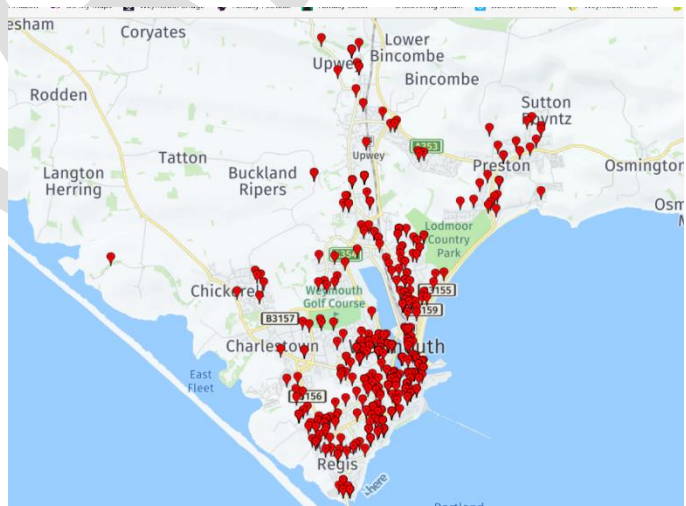
5.1 Initial Survey – Draft Vision, Mission and Objectives

How We Consulted?

Due to Covid restrictions the Neighbourhood Forum agreed to initiate an on-line survey. With the help of planning consultants a survey was produced which was open to public feedback in January 2021 [Initial-Survey-WNP-Auto-Generated-Summary.pdf \(weymouthtowncouncil.gov.uk\)](#).

What Representations Were Received?

A total of 424 responses were received and collated. These responses were primarily from members of the public but also from people working in the area. The following shows the distribution of responses from people in the immediate Weymouth area.



What Were the Main Issues Raised?

The main issues raised were:

Things People Liked: Coastline and Countryside (93%), Harbour (83%), Countryside and Parks with their walking space (64%), Cultural Facilities (40%) and the Town Centre (40%).

Things People Disliked: Traffic and access related issues, lack of jobs and training opportunities (particularly for young people), state of the streets, shops and poor entertainment facilities. Concern with the number of unused town centre brownfield sites and buildings was a strong message and 32% were concerned with crime particularly in the town centre.

The Most Important Things to Address: Approximately 30% of answers reflected the belief that all of the issues were of equal importance. Second to this was employment and skills (nearly 20%), followed by leisure and culture (10%) and then housing, green space, climate change, transport

and travel. Parking provision proved to be the most divisive issue with those wanting better parking balanced by those wanting to promote better public transport.

The top five priorities were:-

- Diverse employment (96%),
- Affordable local housing (93%),
- Sustainable tourism (56%),
- Heritage and culture (56%), and
- Climate change (55%).
- Transport in its various forms was a medium priority along with education, skills and training whilst flooding, sustainable growth and equality and diversity were mentioned by less than 5% of the respondents.

What Did We Do with The Results?

The information was collated, and a report produced which was publicised on the WTC website.

[\[Initial-Survey-WNP-Initial-Vision-May-2021.pdf \(weymouthtowncouncil.gov.uk\)\]](#)

Based upon the above information draft Vision and Mission and Aims were produced as a basis for further public consultation [\[Weymouth-Neighbourhood-Plan-Vision-Mission-Aims.pdf \(weymouthtowncouncil.gov.uk\)\]](#). The information gained underpins the NP approach and further discussion led to agreement to proceed with more analysis, such as Housing Needs Analysis and Call for Sites and to engage members of the public and forum through identification of 5 Theme Groups addressing the main concerns; Environmental Sustainability, Landscape & Greenspaces, Homes, Jobs and Neighbourhoods.

5.2 Promoting the Purpose of a Neighbourhood Plan

How We Consulted?

Councillors and Members of the Neighbourhood Forum/Steering Group attended community events (Littlemoor Picnic, Weymouth Mayors Picnic and Summer Fayre at The Marsh, Westham, WTC Expo event at Redlands.) in the period April to June 2021 in order to publicise the Weymouth Neighbourhood Plan and get public feedback on the concept.

What Representations Were Received?

Over 30 face to face conversations were held with residents and local groups e.g. Friends of the Marsh and Post It responses recorded on key issues. A total of 5 theme-based questionnaires were completed at the WTC Expo event.

What Were the Main Issues Raised?

The main issues raised were: The Status of a Neighbourhood Plan, how it would affect future planning decisions and what issues it could influence, the need for Affordable Homes, the importance of retaining open space for recreation and the need to keep leisure facilities such as the swimming pool.

What Did We Do with The Results?

Identified key issues that aligned with the initial survey feedback.

5.3 Walkabouts – Developing Objectives Policies and Aspirations

How We Consulted?

A series of 11 public walkabouts were organised and undertaken in the period July to December 2021 across the Neighbourhood Area covering Mount Pleasant and Lodmoor, Sutton Poyntz, Preston, Littlemoor, Lodmoor Hill, Rodwell/Chapelhay/South Harbourside, Upwey/Broadwey, Nottingham, Redlands, Westham/Abbotsbury Road, Town Centre/Park District areas.

[\[Weymouth-Neighbourhood-Walkabout-Summary.pdf \(weymouthtowncouncil.gov.uk\)\]](#) a

Each walkabout followed a defined pre-agreed route that was representative of the area and was advertised up to 7 days in advance through posters in shops and public places, on social media and the WTC web site and via ward Town and County councillors. A prompt list was used and a record kept of those attending (for future contact) and of the issues raised. The prompt list was, in part, derived from the key features and opportunities presented in the consultants Character Area Assessment.

What Representations Were Received?

A total of over 130 members of the public and councillors attended the walkabouts. Comments from those present were recorded and included in the notes which were circulated to attendees.

What Were the Main Issues Raised?

The main issues raised for each walk were summarised for each area [\[WNP Walkabout Issue Summaryjan2022rev1.xlsx\]](#) and also relative to each of the five key themes of Homes, Jobs, Sustainable Environment, Communities and Landscape and Greenspace. The walkabouts improved members of the Steering Groups understanding of the diversity of communities, neighbourhoods and levels of development across Weymouth. This was particularly important when considering areas for development, potential local green space or other protections. In particular members were shocked at the decline in the appearance and facilities within the Park District and area to its north bounded by Carlton Road South and Alexandra Road with a high incidence of HMOs, old peoples homes, care homes, flats and apartments.

What Did We Do with The Results?

The issues raised were used to inform the Vision Mission and Aims [\[Weymouth-Neighbourhood-Plan-Vision-Mission-Aims.pdf \(weymouthtowncouncil.gov.uk\)\]](#), the five Theme Papers and key findings and messages [\[Weymouth NP Key Findings and Messages.pdf \(weymouthtowncouncil.gov.uk\)\]](#) which were used to create draft policies.

5.4 Creation of Theme Groups and the Development of Theme Papers

In order to provide objective based supporting evidence for the development of policies the SG decided to create five Theme Groups – Homes, Jobs, Environmental Sustainability, Landscape and Greenspace and Communities. Each was to be co-ordinated by a member of the SG and to communicate on-line or face to face; future Covid restrictions permitting. This proposed approach was launched at a meeting of the NP Forum on 19th April 2021.

The Theme Groups were tasked with developing Theme papers based upon the collation of relevant information already in the public domain and input from topic specialists and members of the public.

How We Consulted?

A special public meeting of the Neighbourhood Forum was held at the New Town Hall on 28th February 2022 in order to explain the work of the Theme Groups and seek members of the public and third-party organisations willing to join the respective groups.

Each group then elected a lead and held working group meetings to develop Theme Papers.

What Representations Were Received?

Following presentations by the SG Chair and each of the Theme Group leads those present raised multiple questions as to the role of the theme groups, how to get involved and how this would contribute to the creation of a neighbourhood plan. Those present were members of the public or councillors and several organisations such as the Civic Society, Upwey Society and RSPB were represented.

What Were the Main Issues Raised?

The main issues related to achieving the aims and objectives and clarification as to the process to be followed.

Issues were discussed at the Neighbourhood Forum meeting on 28th February 2022.

What Did We Do with The Results?

Interested individuals were invited to join the Theme Groups of interest and were involved in producing papers on the relevant topic which were used subsequently to help inform the key findings and messages [[Weymouth NP Key Findings and Messages.pdf](#) (weymouthtowncouncil.gov.uk)] and the development of objectives, policy and aspirations.

5.5 Call for Sites for Development

How We Consulted?

Call for Sites for Development issued by Weymouth Town Council via Dorset Echo ([Weymouth Town Council launched 'call for sites' | Dorset Echo](#)) and as press release to local developers and landowners in the period 15th September to 27th October 2021

What Representations Were Received?

Number of submissions totalled 12. Representations were received from landowners or their agents (Beverley Road, Budmouth Avenue, Chesterfield Place, New Bond Street, Nottingham Lane, Plaisters Lane, Redlands Farm and Wyke Oliver Farm) and were also made by members of the Steering Group through identifying land as a result of the Walkabouts and contacting the landowner (Jubilee Sidings, Lodmoor Old Tip, Mount Pleasant Tip).

What Were the Main Issues Raised?

The sites varied from large sites mainly outside the Defined Development Boundary and smaller sites often in sensitive conservation areas.

What Did We Do with The Results?

The process following submission, adhered to the NPPF and guidance issued by Locality. The suitability of the sites was independently assessed through a Site Options Assessment by AECOM. To better represent the potential sites within the NP Area, additional sites were added, to

those coming forward from the Call for Sites, from the 2021 SHLAA published by Dorset Council. This took the total number of sites under assessment to 61.

Of the 12 sites resulting from the Call for Sites, 3 were deemed unsuitable for development by the independent assessors the remainder were deemed potentially suitable so long as constraints could be overcome. New Bond Street and Westwey House have changed ownership since first registering.

A long list of sites was formed and dialogue has continued with the Site Owners or their agents to determine site potential, availability, deliverability.

A short list of sites was formed and these formed the basis for further public engagement (3rd Public Engagement see below #5.9) and viability testing.

5.6 Call for Submissions for Designation as Local Green Space

How We Consulted?

Request for Designation as Local Green Space issued on the WTC web site on 9th February 2022 (along with a form and guidance) for an initial six-week period and notified to the Dorset Echo. This initial period was subsequently left open and further submissions evaluated upon receipt.

Town and County Councillors were provided with the submission guidance and form in April 2022 and asked to facilitate submissions within their respective wards.

What Representations Were Received?

In the period February 2022 to August 2023 a total of 53 submissions were received from the public. Note that two further submissions were received as part of the Regulation 14 feedback.

What Were the Main Issues Raised?

A range of sites were suggested as being suitable across the Neighbourhood Plan Area based upon the guidance issued as aligned with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

What Did We Do with The Results?

Summary list of sites produced, and reference issued. Applications acknowledged and evaluations of site suitability completed prior to informing landowners that their land had been proposed for designation. Objections were considered by the SG with supporting advice from the planning consultant.

All sites were visited, an initial evaluation completed against the data on the submission form completed by the SG and these forwarded to the planning consultant for a review and publication of a report.

The SG discussed the report and supported the inclusion of 47 sites in the pre-submission Plan. Some sites were deemed of such special importance that they were included under LGS designation as well as other general policies.

5.7 Engagement with Schools

How We Consulted?

Consultation with Schools

<u>School</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Years</u>	<u>Approx No of Children</u>
Southill Primary School	11/05/2022	Years 5 & 6	60
Holy Trinity Primary School	09/05/2022	Years 5 & 6	120
Conifers Primary School	09/06/2022	Years 5 & 6	120
Radipole Primary School	06/09/2022 26/09/2022	Years 5 & 6	120
WeyValley Academy	17/10/2022	Year 8	125
		Total	525

What Representations Were Received?

A3 resources were designed and produced to differentiate age and abilities of the different children/students that have taken part in the School Engagement program.

An introductory Power Point presentation was made and used to introduce the concept of a Neighbourhood Plan, along with written prompts to be used in the classroom. The WNP engagement fits in well with the National Curriculum Citizenship requirements in primary schools, and Geography curriculum in secondary schools. A mixture of small group discussion and individual thinking was used to record new ideas that could be incorporated into WNP. The activity has been delivered by Lara Wood (SG Member and local resident) in all primary schools except Holy Trinity, where the current class teachers led the sessions.

Approximately 45-55 minutes was spent with each class. Photographs of completed A3 sheets have been recorded, and all physical evidence retained for display and further reference.

What Were the Main Issues Raised?

Wide range of suggestions made that cover all five theme groups.

Please refer to summary outcomes against individual themes for each school.

What Did We Do with The Results?

Results were incorporated into the key findings and messages

[[Weymouth_NP_Key_Findings_and_Messages.pdf \(weymouthtowncouncil.gov.uk\)](https://weymouthtowncouncil.gov.uk)] which were used to inform the draft vision, objectives, policies and aspirations.

5.8 Second Consultation

How We Consulted?

Dorset Coastal Forum were engaged to conduct a consultation over the period May to September 2022 through an on-line survey and a series of drop-in events with hard copy and e-copy surveys available; five of these were pre-organised across the Neighbourhood Area and several others were provided in response to local requests. All publicity leaflets and posters contained a QR code to enable access to the on-line survey. Separate theme-based survey forms were used in order not to overwhelm participants and to help focus on participant priorities.

The arisings from the drop-in events are summarised below

Organised Events

How We Consulted?	What Representations Were Received?	What Were the Main Issues Raised?	What Did We Do With The Results?
DCF Workshop 1 at Park Street Community Centre, Chelmsford Street 21 st June 16.00-19.00	Display boards with Vision and Mission statement and Draft Aims for each Theme. Invitation to public to comment.	All 3 attendees expressed support for and understood the Vision and Mission statements.	All feedback comments and survey completions collated, and a report issued by DCF as the 'second consultation' which will inform Theme Group objectives, key findings and messages.
DCF Workshop 2 at St Pauls Church, Littlemoor 29 th June 16.00-19.00	As above Gave out 20 to 30 information sheets with QR code for survey in shops area.	11 attendees. Support for Vision and Mission statements. Protect green and open spaces, connect cycle routes, segregate cycle/walking routes, more job opportunities through training and apprenticeships, more solar panels/community energy schemes, better use of park and ride, 20mph zones, youth facilities, provide allotments.	As above.
DCF Workshop 3 at Pauls Church Hall Westham 8 th July 16.00-19.00	As above	20 attendees. Liked community spirit, views, access to shops, The Marsh, The Fleet. Support for Mission and Vision statements. Retention and access to green spaces, trees, affordable homes (different tenures), adequate infrastructure for new developments, solar panels, more non-tourist jobs, facilities for remote working, EV charging points, priority to walking/cycling, segregate cycle/walking routes. Community facilities within walkable distance.	As above.

Request Events

How We Consulted?	What Representations Were Received?	What Were the Main Issues Raised?	What Did We Do with The Results?
Steering Group and Dorset Coastal Forum Stall at Weymouth Town Council Expo Event 23/04/2022 12 noon to 14:30 at Redlands Centre, Dorchester Road	Survey covering all themes in a single document. 5 surveys completed.	Responses to 5 set questions for each theme.	Information collated by DCF. Incorporation of feedback into Theme papers
Individual Theme Surveys available and Tourist Survey conducted at Weymouth Information Shop 16 th June 2022 10.00-14.00	X surveys completed Y post it responses from random tourist survey.	Affordable homes Tourists (mostly from cruise liners) were positive about Weymouth with loss of town centre shops being the main concern expressed.	Information collated by DCF.
Three Steering Group members attended Westham Community Group meeting 7 th July 18.00-20.00	Questions clarifying purpose and process of the Weymouth Neighbourhood Plan	Protection of the Marsh recreational area. The NP process was explained and how to get involved.	Recommended consideration of Local Green Space designation by community groups.
Attend Littlemoor Community Centre at request of Residents Association with Theme surveys available on 18 th July 16.00-19.00.	17 Surveys completed	Need for affordable homes to buy/rent, protect green and open spaces, concern at new proposed development particularly lack of services and shops.	As above
Stall with Theme and Tourist survey at WTC Beach event 24 th July 2022 09.30-15.00	78 visitor surveys (5 questions) completed. 20 hard copy surveys completed and a similar number of QR codes given to people who indicated they would definitely complete the on-line survey.	Visitor survey – 78% arrive by car and 19% by public transport; 69% come as a family group and over 40% are regular visitors attracted by beach, harbour and countryside; over one third stay in caravans and are satisfied with their accommodation and one fifth are day visitors; two thirds of people would visit out	As above. Summary issued to Steering Group.

How We Consulted?	What Representations Were Received?	What Were the Main Issues Raised?	What Did We Do with The Results?
		of season. 55% of people had no adverse comments and those who did mainly identified parking related issues with a few noting limited high quality food outlets, lack of short stay hotels and empty shops.	
Stall at WTC event in Nothe Gardens on 5 th August 2022 10.00-14.00.	3 surveys completed. Several people took details of the QR code for the on-line survey.	General interest in the Neighbourhood Plan process and what it aimed to achieve.	All feedback comments and survey completions collated and a report issued by DCF as the 'second consultation' which will inform Theme Group objectives, key findings and messages.
Stall at Meet the Town Council event at Weymouth Information Shop St Marys, Street on 6 th August 10.00-14.00.	4 surveys completed Post it notes made of responses.	Most people approached in the street were tourists who were generally happy with Weymouth, a few commented on the run-down shops; on a positive note the level walkable access was commented upon.	As above
Stall at Upwey Summer Picnic on 7 th August with surveys available.	17 surveys completed, 3 sets of 5 handed out and 6 QR code leaflets taken. 38 persons had conversations about Neighbourhood Plan.	Conversations focussed on the need to protect green spaces, retain services in rural areas and provide affordable homes.	As above
Stall at Littlemoor Summer Fayre in Community Centre 13 th August 12 noon – 16.00	No surveys completed, several information leaflets with QR code distributed to enable on-line survey completion.	Two Local Green Space (LGS) submissions. Concern regarding additional housing development at Littlemoor and the pressures created on infrastructure. Need for affordable homes. The purpose and process of the Neighbourhood Plan.	As above. LGS submissions entered on register by Theme Group lead for subsequent evaluation.
Stall at Littlemoor Summer Picnic at Top Club 28 th August	Three hard copy surveys completed.	Affordable homes and protection of green/open	All feedback comments and survey completions collated, and a report issued by DCF which will

How We Consulted?	What Representations Were Received?	What Were the Main Issues Raised?	What Did We Do with The Results?
13.00 – 16.00	Several information leaflets with QR code distributed to enable on-line survey completion.	spaces including recreational facilities.	inform Theme Group objectives, key findings and messages.
Stall at Freshers Day at Weymouth College on 20 th September 2022.	Verbal questions to students around college course and job opportunities, staying in Weymouth or moving for jobs and where they will live to work recorded on post it notes	Main issues - general preference to stay in Weymouth for work, a good range of courses offered, catering and social care were high on the list of course taken with media mentioned. Most students expected to be living with parents in 10 years.	Steering group summary of feedback comments. Feedback informed WNP 44 – Further and Higher Education and Skills Provision.

On-line Consultation

How We Consulted?	What Representations Were Received?	What Were The Main Issues Raised?	What Did We Do With The Results?
An on-line consultation was undertaken on behalf of the SG by Dorset Coastal Forum (DCF) using a dedicated web site and social media. A question-based format was used which was also available as hard copy. The consultation began on 2 nd May 2022 and ended on 31 st July 2022	The on-line survey conducted by DCF received 918 visits and resulted in 448 surveys being completed.	The main issues are detailed in the report.	Analysis formed basis for third engagement (key questions around future land use) and development of policy gists/ideas for discussion at the Focus Groups/Theme workshops (February 2023) Results of the consultation were published in a report which was presented to the SG on [] and placed on-line on the WTC web site on [].

The collated information from the second consultation was used to compile key findings and messages and subsequently the development of policy and aspirations.

5.9 Third Engagement – Evidence of Support on Key Issues

How We Consulted?

In January/February 2023 in order to clarify public views and strengthen evidence in specific policy areas a pre- Regulation 14 consultation was carried out with specific focus on 10 key policy related questions mostly related to possible land use. The survey was conducted online using Survey Monkey with hard copy available in libraries at Wyke, Littlemoor and Weymouth as well as the Weymouth Information Shop. Extensive online and media publicity was undertaken by Weymouth Town Council.

What Representations Were Received?

573 people chose to complete the online questionnaire during the consultation period 3rd November – 15th December and a further 23 people submitted written replies.

What Were the Main Issues Raised?

The main issues raised are detailed in the 3rd Engagement report [3rd-Engagement-Report.pdf](https://weymouthtowncouncil.gov.uk/3rd-Engagement-Report.pdf) (weymouthtowncouncil.gov.uk).

What Did We Do with The Results?

The results were analysed by the planning consultant and published on-line on the WTC web site 23rd August 2023 and used to inform Focus groups/Theme workshops and subsequently to guide the drafting of .NP policies.

In summary over two thirds of respondents supported the various environmental objectives including carbon neutrality and biodiversity, while the renewable energy initiatives of solar panels (78.2%) and hydro-electricity generation (52.4%) received the most support with onshore wind turbines, solar panels on land and neighbourhood heat source schemes all receiving 40 to 50% in favour and significantly exceeding those against.

Almost two thirds of respondents supported the protection of Local Green Space from development and over two thirds supported neighbourhood growing space provision as was also the case for retention of green gaps and buffer zones. Almost four times as many people supported extension of the cycle network as opposed this proposal. Regarding development of sites 72.3% of respondents supported mixed use development of obsolete/redundant sites and 48.6% supported development of specific sites for employment use with 14.2% opposed.

The most contentious area was the development of residential sites both inside and outside the Defined Development Boundary (Questions 7 and 8). This caused the publication of the results to be delayed due to evidence of party-political interference in the process which it was felt by the Steering Group had adversely distorted response data. Appropriate advice was sought and protocols followed including an appeal to the Democratic Officer at Dorset Council who chose not to investigate. The results were finally published online in August 2023 and the delay explained within the report.

Important note: Following independent advice from Locality it was decided to provisionally exclude the results for Q7 and Q8 which were inconclusive and the subject of perceived interference and carry out an additional specific engagement with regard to all development sites including those lying outside the DDB. This also provided an opportunity to clarify options on sites proposed for designation for Local Green Space and on the inclusion of sustainable living options within new developments.

5.10 Focus Groups – Policy Development

How We Consulted?

Five themed Focus Groups were conducted by public invitation (based upon members of the public who had previously expressed an interest in supporting particular themes) at the New Town Hall Weymouth. This was facilitated and a feedback report provided by DCF.

The focus groups were held on the following dates:-

- **Communities** Theme Group – 20th February 2023
- **Sustainable Environments** Group – 20th February 2023
- **Jobs** Theme Group – 22nd February 2023
- **Landscapes & Greenspaces** Theme Group – 22nd February 2023
- **Homes** Theme Group – 28th February 2023

What Representations Were Received?

A total of 71 people attended the Focus Group meetings as follows:-

- Communities = 15
- Sustainable Environment = 12
- Jobs = 9
- Landscapes & Greenspaces = 19
- Homes = 16

What Were the Main Issues Raised?

The main issues related to the responses to the 10 key questions in the ‘3rd engagement’.

The outcomes were published in the attached report ([3rd-Engagement-Combined-Report-August-2023.pdf \(weymouthtowncouncil.gov.uk\)](https://www.weymouthtowncouncil.gov.uk/3rd-Engagement-Combined-Report-August-2023.pdf))

What Did We Do with The Results?

Output from each theme was summarised by the consultants and presented in a report (see above) to the March 2023 Steering Group. The results informed the further development of draft policy in key areas.

5.11 Fourth Engagement – Allocation of Sites for Development and Local Green Space

How We Consulted?

A 4th Engagement carried out over the period 21st August to 3rd September 2023 involving 4 x 3 hour (3.30pm to 6.30pm) drop-in sessions at Waverley Centre; Abbotsbury Road; Redlands Sports Centre; Wellworthy Sports and Social Centre, Wyke Regis and Preston Village Hall. A further drop-in was held at Weymouth New Town Hall with a formal Question and Answer session on 29th August 2023. All engagements had multiple hard copy display boards with summary proposals and maps of potential development sites supported by summary information from the interim Strategic Environmental Assessment. Confirmation of the list of proposed sites for LGS designation was also provided and specific feedback requested on a site where there was conflict with a development proposal. They were attended by Steering Group members and ward councillors to answer questions and assist with completion of hard copy feedback forms. Throughout the period the display material was also made available on-line through the WTC web site along with a Survey Monkey feedback form. All events were publicised through local posters, social media, Dorset Echo

and notification to councillors and Neighbourhood Plan contacts in the week prior to the first event.

What Representations Were Received?

The engagement resulted in 61 people attending the combined events and 34 hard copy surveys being completed. Despite the low attendance the displays and face to face discussions helped to gain improved understanding of policy proposals, particularly those for the proposed development sites.

What Were the Main Issues Raised?

The feedback forms were analysed by the planning consultant and the following key outcomes were identified.

A clear majority of respondents (76%) supported the provision of Affordable Homes (AH) on brownfield and some green field sites, with priority to the former.

A majority of people supported the development of greenfield sites (with 50% AH) outside the Defined Development Boundary (DDB) at Budmouth Avenue (48%), Wyke Oliver Farm (58%), Redlands Farm (45%), Lodmoor Old Tip mid (55%) and south (52%) while the option favoured for the land south of Wessex roundabout was as a link to the wildlife corridor (45%).

For those sites inside the DDB; the preferred option at Beverley Road was for part development and part Local Green Space (45%). Mixed residential and employment use was favoured by a majority on land at Jubilee Sidings (42 %) and there was strong majority support (64 %) for employment use at Lodmoor Old Tip (north).

Views were finely balanced as to whether the town centre development policies were out of date.

There was very strong support for the Local Green Space (LGS) designations with 48% of respondents favouring inclusion in the Plan under both LGS and other applicable policies. A clear majority (58%) favoured supporting higher construction standards to enable sustainable living.

A detailed analysis of responses along with the survey questions and display material can be found in the 4th engagement report which was published on the WTC web site in October 2023 [[4th-Community-Engagement-Feedback-Analysis.pdf \(weymouthtowncouncil.gov.uk\)](https://weymouthtowncouncil.gov.uk/4th-Community-Engagement-Feedback-Analysis.pdf)]

What Did We Do with The Results?

The feedback was used along with results of the Strategic Environmental Assessment and initial Viability Testing to inform policy on potential development sites in the draft pre-submission Neighbourhood Plan which was agreed by the Steering Group at a meeting on Wednesday 4th October 2023. This was endorsed by WTC as the Qualifying Body at a full council meeting on 18th October 2023 prior to the statutory Regulation 14 consultation commencing.

5.12 Regulation 14 Statutory Consultation

How We Consulted?

The statutory consultation was carried out from 27th October to 8th December 2023 and subsequently extended to 15th December 2023. A late submission from Dorset Wildlife Trust was accepted along with additional comments from Dorset Council.

A Communications plan was agreed in advance in order to maximise public exposure to the pre-submission version. This included the following :-

- **Posters** notifying the public of the Reg 14 dates and purpose were displayed at all the libraries, Weymouth Information Shop and sent to various community hall, as well as the venues where the engagement events were going to be held.
- **Large banners** notifying the public of the Reg 14 dates and purpose were displayed at the following sites on the Esplanade near the public toilets which has the largest footfall from 1/11/24 to 15/12/24. These were damaged so one was removed.
- **Leaflets** notifying the public of the Reg 14 dates and purpose were distributed by Royal Mail to all households in the Neighbourhood Area during the period 27th November to 2nd December 2023.
- **Advertising Drums** had posters in before and during the consultation period advertising the online survey dates, how to take part and the various engagement events that were to be held during the consultation period.
- **Radio announcements** informing the public of the Reg 14 dates and purpose were broadcast from 27th Oct to 15th Dec Greatest Hits several times a day.
- Notification was placed on the following **social media** outlets as follows:
 - Facebook = 24 posts
 - Instagram = 25 posts
 - Twitter = 25 posts



All **Statutory Authorities** were formally notified between 20/11/24 and 15/12/24.

Notification of the Reg 14 dates and process with links to the **Weymouth Town Council website** were issued by e-mail for local onward communication, for example via a village newsbyte to residents of Sutton Poyntz on 25/10/2023.

Electronic Copies of the pre-submission document were made available on 27th October 2023.

Press releases were issued to the Dorset Echo – article on 28th Oct 2024, West Dorset Magazine article on 27th Oct and others giving pre-notification of the Reg 14 process on (10/11/2023 and 15/11/23) followed by updates on 29/11/23. A final Press release was issued on 13th Dec 2023.

A series of **blogs** were also issued to the Dorset Echo and published on WTC social media on the following themes:

- Landscape & Greenspace 13/11/23,
Homes and Schools Engagement 22/11/23
- Has your Community been heard 6/12/23
- Sustainable Environment 11/12/23
- Affordable Homes 13/12/23

A variety of **social media** posts made through consultation period.

Advertisements publicising the Plan and encouraging feedback as well as notifying the public of the extension to the consultation period were placed with the Dorset Echo for publication on 1st and 8th December. All public posters and banners were updated to reflect the extension.

Public drop-in events at which the Pre-Submission WNP, a precis of the plan and display board information with maps were held as follows between the hours of 4 to 7 pm to assist availability for those with children, working, etc:-

- Moonfleet Bowling Club, Westham, Thursday 16th November
- Wellworthys Social Club, Wyke Regis, Monday 20th November
- Preston Village Hall, Wednesday 22nd November
- Littlemoor Community Centre, Monday 27th November
- St Aldhelms Community Hall, Radipole Lane, Wednesday 29th November.
- Weymouth New Town Hall, Monday 4th December (6-8pm) and Wednesday 13th December (4.30 to 6.30 pm)

A **leaflet** was delivered by Royal Mail to every household in Weymouth between 27th Nov and 2nd Dec. Note Royal Mail does not guarantee delivery and may households have said they did not receive a leaflet.

Radio interviews publicising the Plan and encouraging feedback were undertaken as follows: Keep Radio 104.3 on 10th Nov 2023 and Greatest Hits Radio on 4th December 2023 by SG Chair to explain the overall Plan and the process undertaken and urging people to complete the survey

Weymouth Community TV recorded a presentation on the overall plan by Chair and Vice Chair which was placed on You Tube on Thursday 7th December and also on the WTC website.

What Representations Were Received?

The public were able to comment on the pre-submission plan through the following means -

- Survey monkey form on-line
- Hard copy feedback forms at Weymouth, Wyke Regis and Littlemoor libraries and the Weymouth Information Shop or upon request to Weymouth Town Council.
- Written and electronic responses in other formats (letter, e-mail, etc) were also received and processed as per other feedback.

A total of 312 responses were made; 289 responses from individuals were received along with 23 responses from Statutory Bodies, Groups and Businesses.

Responses were received from the following Statutory Bodies:

- Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO)
- Dorset Council Assets Team
- Dorset Council Flood Risk Management Team
- Dorset Council LLFA
- Dorset Council Planning
- Environmental Agency
- Gloucestershire CC Minerals and Waste Planning Authority – no comments
- Historic England
- National Highways
- Public Health Dorset
- Somerset Council – no comments beyond wishing the NP success.
- Wessex Water received late and processed separately.

Responses were received from the following groups

- Accessible Cycling
- Chickerell Town Council
- Dorset Ramblers
- Dorset Wildlife Trust - late
- Weymouth Civic Society
- Wyke Regis Society

Responses were received from the following businesses

- Blue Waters
- CG Fry & Son
- Chapman Lily Planning for Bellway Homes
- Chapman Lily Planning for Rapide
- Lichfields for Haven Leisure
- Turley for Morrish Homes

All feedback was recorded as it was received and analysis undertaken at the end of the Regulation 14 period with a minimum of 7 days being allowed for delayed feedback.

The survey did not require all questions to be answered – in many instances people only responded to individual policies or to sections of the plan.

Our consultant processed these responses by

1. capturing all the responses from Survey Monkey ordered by a unique responders id.
2. lightly edit the responses to remove personal identifiers and to categorise and sort the various points being made – this produced just over 1500 separate points of comment or representation. The sorting corresponded to the Plan structure, the total number of comments on aspects of the Plan totalled 1438 and 395 of these were identified as having re-drafting implications. The categorisation identified comments to be
 - a. noted
 - b. noted in support
 - c. noted as critical or objection
 - d. flagged for action: add/amend/consider/ensure/update/etc
3. Generating suggested responses to the comments having re-drafting implications.

Note the responses from Dorset Wildlife Trust and Wessex Water were received late, or delayed in being passed to are consultant, at this analysis stage, but have been assessed.

A postcode analysis of responses shows a wide distribution of responses from the Neighbourhood Area. **[link still to be inserted]**.

Question 5 of the Survey asked responders whether overall they were in favour of the plan; 147 responses were in overall favour of the Neighbourhood Plan while 141 were against.

What Were the Main Issues Raised?

The main issues raised at the **drop-in sessions** related to the following policies in the pre-submission document.

Policy	Issues Raised
WNP10	General support
WNP11	Strong support for all area
WNP24	Strong opposition from local residents at the Preston drop-in tempered to some degree by the proposed transfer of green space. Main concerns were flooding, landslip, increased traffic, impact on house prices, impact on the wildlife corridor.
WNP26	Both support and opposition
WNP27	Both support and opposition
WNP29B	Opposition from some residents of Weymouth Avenue due to increased traffic volume from light industry.
WNP41	Some concern as to proposal for residency.
WNP42	Generally favourable but concern that businesses would be affected.
WNP54	Strong support for restoration of the Park and Ride scheme.

The responses were captured against the relevant part of the Pre-Submission Weymouth Neighbourhood Plan and each of the 1514 individual comments was analysed as follows;

The key issues raised in the **survey responses** were as follows:-

The 63 Policies attracted 838 comments; of these most related to Site Allocations as follows:

WNP23	Residential Site Allocations	41
WNP24	Land at Budmouth Avenue	75
WNP25	Land at Wyke Oliver Farm	48
WNP26	Land at Redlands Farm	17
WNP27	Land at Beverley Road	9
WNP28	Land at St Nicholas Street	9
WNP29	Land at Lodmoor Old Tip	43
WNP41	Land at Jubilee Sidings	9
WNP54	Land at Mount Pleasant Old Tip	49

Dorset Council raised 60 pages of comments on the Plan – they welcomed many of the Policies and made constructive comments to improve the quality of the Policy. However, the Assets Team at Dorset Council objected to Change of Use to the Land at Lodmoor Old Tip. Many of the teams at Dorset Council responded saying that without more detail of the Development intended they were unable to comment.

Comments from Dorset Council Flood Management Team, and the LLFA Team and the Environment Agency raised concerns with regards building on sites in the town centre in Flood Zone 2 and 3 and referred the Steering Group to the now released Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Level 2 for Weymouth Town Centre [[Weymouth Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment - Dorset Council](#)].

The Environment Agency also raised concerns about development on historic landfill sites and were positive about the plans inclusion of policies for the environment. Further they recommended discussions with the relevant Water Company.

Historic England were pleased that the town's community has decided to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan and impressed with the scope and detail of its policies, supporting text, and complementary aspirations, especially as they refer to the area's distinctive historic character. In addition, they commented that building heights in the Conservation Area should be discussed with Dorset Council's Heritage Team.

National Highways noted that site allocations did not make specific reference to the need for Traffic Impact Assessments and Travel Plans to support Planning Applications.

Public Health Dorset were supportive of the Plan recognising that good design contributes to health and well-being and suggested including 'a requirement for developers to demonstrate residential housing has adequate ventilation and space to dry clothing, recognising the impact this can have on indoor air quality and, for example, the production of damp and mould within the home.'

Wessex Water welcomed policy WNP37 Sustainable Development and recommended that the SG should include 'rainwater flow into sewers is not acceptable'. They identified that sites WNP24 and

WNP25 include rising mains and that sites WNP27, WNP29 and WNP41 were crossed by public sewers.

Two policies also attracted a high response level as follows:

WNP11	Local Green Space	59
WNP42	Town Centre Car Parks	42

Many individual comments were made on individual Local Green Spaces. Dorset Council Highways team and Dorset Council Assets Team objected to land they owned being designated as Local Green Space. Weymouth Town Council has approved all the land they own being designated.

The Policy for Town Centre for Car Parks was taken by many to mean the loss of car parking to development rather than a Policy to prevent change of use from Car Parks to other Uses without alternative provision. Some people were concerned at the potential impact on businesses. Some thought there were insufficient spaces particularly in the summer. Some emphasised development should only take place if sufficient alternate provision was made.

What Did We Do with The Results?

Actioning the results of the survey was delayed by the Local Government Elections. Dorset Council decided that it was not possible to discuss their comments during the Pre-election Period. Soon after this a further delay occurred through the National Elections. Again, the Pre-election period limited the availability of councillors and officers to progress processing the results.

The Steering Group has held a series of sub-group meetings to determine how to respond to the comments received through the Reg 14 consultation period. This was organised in 3 tranches based upon the perceived complexity of processing the responses and labelled Green; Amber and Red. In most cases, consensus was reached on how to respond. In some instances, particularly regarding the site allocation policies, consensus was not reached but a majority decision decided the way forward.

The Green Policy review completed in June 2024, Amber reviews in August 2024 and the Red Policy reviews concluded in September 2024.

Most of the critical responses and objections to the Plan related to site allocations. Where the responses highlighted recognised planning considerations these concerns have been evaluated and, where necessary, the policies changed to address these concerns.

Significant discussion took place regarding the pros and cons of allocating specific sites, outside the defined development boundary, for business and residential use as opposed to creating a criteria-based policy which opened up development outside the defined development boundary and protected areas without detailing specific sites. Again, consensus was not reached but the majority view was to continue with site allocations, modifying, if necessary, the Defined Development Boundary, and to retain the Exception Site Policy for sites outside the new Defined Development Boundary which only allows development for exceptional purposes such as 100% Affordable Housing where there is a need that cannot be met otherwise. Additionally, this was conditional on the site allocations including transfer of significant tracts of land to Public Open Spaces or Nature Reserves and a renewed emphasis in the WNP to supported Affordable Housing Development on brownfield sites within the Town Centre.

Many concerns raised by both residents and departments in Dorset Council cannot be addressed until a full planning application has been raised, by a developer, and submitted for review by the Dorset Council Local Planning Authority. Where this requires specific reports to be submitted by the applicant these have been highlighted, when appropriate, to particular sites being allocated.

A significant concern raised by residents, and the Environment Agency has been the Flood Risk both from climate change increasing wave surge, sea levels, rain and storm incidence. The 2nd Level Weymouth Strategic Flood Risk Assessment report indicates the extent of this and records the impact on sites within the Town Centre Masterplan area. Work is underway by Dorset Council to produce the Outline Business Case for the Esplanade and Weymouth Harbour Sea Defences. The government's response to this report will provide confidence in investment in Weymouth Town Centre.

Another major concern has been the increased strain on stressed infrastructure particularly with Weymouth's surface water run-off and combined storm/sewage drains. The Neighbourhood Plan cannot directly address these concerns but can highlight the need for investment in upgrading the system.

Where concerns are not addressable through planning conditions, they may be addressable as Aspirations and are captured in Section 13 of the Plan.

The Steering Group affirmed the Aims and Objectives in the Neighbourhood Plan with only minor modifications. A balance has been sought which allocate sites where least harm is incurred and protects large areas which are currently outside protection whilst still meeting the broad range of Aims and Objectives.

As a result, changes have been made by the Steering Group to a number of Policies; some of these are significant changes, whilst others are modified to incorporate advice/suggestions from responders. In addition, repetition has been removed and the intent of some of the policies has been clarified. A compendium of all [Policy Changes](#) has been published indicating the intent of the change. The changed policies themselves are included in the Submission Draft of the Neighbourhood Plan.

The principal Policy changes are as follows:

Landscape and Green Spaces

WNP02: Areas of Nature Conservation - Enhanced maps received from DERC. To confirm map alignment of Watermeadows with that of WNP26. Changes to title to read 'Conservation of the Natural Environment' and some terminology for consistency and to provide clarity ref DC, DWT and Ramblers feedback. Amended to reflect HRA and Natural England comments on adverse impacts upon the integrity of habitat sites.

WNP04: Wildlife Areas- Amended to reflect higher Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) requirement targeted at sites adjacent to wildlife corridors as per DC feedback and clarify potential contradiction by requiring all development proposals within wildlife corridors (as per map) to comply with the Dorset Biodiversity Appraisal Protocol (DBAP).

WNP11: Local Green Space - Two further sites were proposed for addition to the schedule, one of which (Chapelhay Growing Area) was assessed as meeting the NPPF criteria and added to the Schedule of sites proposed as Local Green Space. Objections by Dorset Council to three sites for Highways reasons are subject to on-going discussion with the current recommendation that they remain on the list

WNP12: Incidental Open Spaces - Following feedback from Dorset Council requesting a detailed map of the open spaces within each individual site boundary, a review was conducted with the involvement of ward councillors and draft maps have been produced which are currently under review.

WNP15: Panoramic Vistas and Views – additional views submitted by the Civic Society that meet the necessary criteria of being from a publicly accessible location within the Neighbourhood Area and taking in views primarily within that Neighbourhood Area have been added under this policy. All relate to coastal views – Nothe across Newtons Cove to Bingleaves, Bingleaves to Newtons Cove / Nothe, Beach / Esplanade to Nothe, East from Bowleaze Coveaway.

Development & Homes

As part of the response to the Regulation 14 consultation the Local Planning Authority updated the Housing Requirement for the Neighbourhood Plan area, from 3,225 to 3,118, to reflect the number of homes already delivered in the plan period 2021-2038. In the same period the demand for Social Housing, with a Local Connection to Weymouth, as evidenced by the Housing Register has increased from 376 to 513.

WNP16: Defined Development Boundaries – updated to include WNP13 Countryside and to reflect the built, in-built developments and land allocated outside the DDB, as defined in the 2015 Local Plan and the allocations proposed in the draft Weymouth Neighbourhood Plan.

WNP20: Major Housing Sites – removed duplication with other policies and added additional conditions for safe vehicular and pedestrian access, included reference to DC's standard for community facilities, need for linkages to facilities, off-street parking and EV, safe footpaths and cycleways, safe pedestrian light avoiding light pollution. Added list of assessments to support application, where appropriate; landscape and visual assessment, flood risk assessment, drainage proposal, transport impact assessment and transport plan, noise assessment and archaeological assessment. Added condition for drainage impact assessment and for consideration of heritage impact. Amended to reflect HRA and Natural England comments on mitigating impacts to habitat sites in accordance with Interim mitigation statement for SACs.

WNP22: Affordable Homes – 35% AH on brownfield sites and 50% on greenfield sites. Emphasised need for social rented. Affordable Homes can include both Social Rented and Affordable Rented – the Viability Testing is based upon Affordable Rented. In practice the difference in rent costs can fall on the council's housing benefit. Incorporated Wyke Regis Society suggestion of adding a condition for financial contribution to Affordable Homes on sites between 2 and 9 dwellings, as in the Purbeck Local Plan.

WNP23: Residential Site Allocations – updated to reflect changes to the residential site allocations and to include the non-residential site allocations -see table 1 below. This summary shows that we are allocating sites for housing, employment, transport and leisure use and additionally transferring more than twice as much land to public open spaces or Lorton Valley Nature Park.

WNP24: Land at Budmouth Avenue – removed as an allocation due to the negative impacts of the development identified in the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and reflected in the comments made by a significant number of residents in the area. This removes the potential for 230 homes on a mixed development with 50% affordable homes, and the transfer of 8.5ha land to Lorton Valley Nature Park and the creation of allotment and car parking access to LVNP but removes the likely adverse effects as identified in the SEA, namely, Biodiversity and Geodiversity, Community Wellbeing, Landscape, Transportation and which are considered as difficult to mitigate on this site.

WNP25: Land at Wyke Oliver Farm – updated to ensure concerns raised are addressed in any future development. Note that there is just one likely adverse effect identified in the SEA, namely, Landscape, which it is considered can be effectively mitigated. It is considered that this is outweighed by the benefit of bringing 250 family homes (50% affordable) to Preston with ready access to local schools and amenities with the transfer of 23ha of land to LVNP ensuring the green gap and wildlife corridor between Littlemoor and Preston are protected.

Concerns were raised that given their close proximity, allocating both WNP24 and 25 placed a high demand on infrastructure and amenities in the Preston area. Removing WNP 24 removes half this demand. Note that WNP25 is nearer to services and amenities, has considerably fewer ‘likely adverse effects’ identified in the SEA and involves the future protection of a much larger area of green space.

WNP26: Land at Redlands Farm – updated to ensure concerns raised are addressed in any future development planning applications. It is considered that the likely adverse effects as identified in the SEA, namely, Biodiversity and Geodiversity, Climate Change, Landscape, Transportation can be satisfactorily mitigated. This site is already identified in the Draft Local Plan but with only 35% Affordable Homes thus allocation was considered necessary to gain 50% Affordable Homes – this is supported by the extended Viability Testing. This site has the benefit of bringing 150 homes (50% affordable) to Redlands with ready access to local schools and amenities and the transfer of 8.8ha of land to public access ensuring the green gap and wildlife corridor between Nottingham, Radipole and Redlands is protected – this also supports the Watermeadows in Policy WNP02.

WNP27: Land at Beverley Road – updated to ensure concerns raised are addressed in any future development planning applications. Viability Testing shows potential for 50% AH so long as Section 106 demands are reduced as this development has the benefit of bringing 25 homes (50% affordable) to Littlemoor with ready access to local schools and amenities and the transfer of 0.5ha of land to Local Green Space ensuring public open spaces within Littlemoor are protected.

WNP28: Land at St Nicholas Street – removed as an allocation. Because the site is in Flood Zone 3 we cannot allocate without demonstrating sequential and exception tests which are beyond our scope. However, the preferred use of the land is for affordable housing with a fallback being for indoor leisure and this has been added to WNP45 Weymouth Town Centre. The Viability Testing suggests that the site with suitable funding could provide 60 dwellings in a 4-storey development.

WNP29A: Lodmoor Old Tip Mid-Section – modified to replace housing development with leisure use to comply with Local Plan Policy WEY8 which sets such use for the wider Lodmoor Gateway Area. This additionally addresses concerns regarding land instability, contamination and proximity of the site to the Lodmoor SSSI and SNCI.

WNP29B: Lodmoor Old Tip North Section – modified to reduce the size of the development area, to exclude land within WEY8 and the previous liquid waste storage area. The smaller area is allocated for light industrial use – retention of part of this site for employment use addresses the concerns about the lack of employment land and support to local businesses. This additionally, addresses concerns regarding land instability, contamination and proximity of the site to the Lodmoor SSSI and SNCI.

WNP29C: Lodmoor Old Tip South Section – modified to replace housing development with leisure use to comply with Local Plan Policy WEY8 which sets such use for the wider Lodmoor Gateway Area. This additionally addresses concerns regarding land instability, contamination and proximity of the site to the Lodmoor SSSI and SNCI.

WNP33: Homes in Multiple Occupation – Retained. Intent is to limit further HMOs in areas which already have a high concentration.

WNP34: Exception Site Development – On DC advice clarified difference between Rural Exception Site and First Homes exception site.

WNP35: Principal Residency – Comment from DC on the lack of persuasive evidence prompted further work resulting in an updated Housing Needs Analysis. This shows sufficient evidence in the Town Centre regarding level of Empty Homes denying homes for local people. Recommendation that the policy is modified to be Town Centre specific.

Jobs & Local Economy

WNP41: Mixed Use Scheme at Jubilee sidings – retained. Potential for wider site development of land owned by Network Rail. Concerns about flood risk and access addressed by proximity of Alexandra Bridge.

WNP42: Town Centre Car Parks – modified to emphasise no development on these sites unless adequate alternate provision is made. This addresses concerns about town centre car parking spaces being lost to residential development and the potential impact on local business.

WNP45: Weymouth Town Centre Masterplan – modified to include additional condition regarding the inclusion of Affordable Homes where possible and incorporating the former proposed allocation at St Nicholas Street.

WNP47: Sustainable Tourism Development – strengthened to support development which extends the tourist season.

Communities

WNP54: Mount Pleasant Old Tip – retained as Transport inter-change hub but modified to restrict development outside the Park and Ride. Modified to ensure that either the running track is retained or alternate provision is made nearby and that development outside the Park & Ride respects the wildlife recovery area.

Non Policy Changes

The number of comments made on the Non-Policy and the key issues are captured in the 'Change Summary to WNP Non-Policy from Reg 14' document.

The following comments are noted:

- The comments in support wished good luck and success, offered strong support, praised the scope of proposal, the excellent and far-reaching proposals, the comprehensive plan, the right direction, the exhaustive investigation and analysis, the commendable policies and the welcome protection to greenspaces, and commended the endeavour.
- The comments objecting to the plan were wide ranging; too large to comprehend, development blights nature, Weymouth too big for a neighbourhood plan, each area should have its own plan, waste of taxpayers' money, poor community engagement, Dorset council needs to respect what the community say, builders will ignore it, unwanted development on greenfield sites, and too much housing.

Where possible, comments on the presentation and maps have been addressed in the updated Plan. This included updating the Objective relevant to Communities which had been omitted from this section but were consulted on.

A number of comments were received on the Engagement and Consultation process – these are noted. The Steering Group responded by publishing on the Town Council website a set of Frequently Asked Questions to address some common comments.

In addition, it is intended to distribute a Leaflet to all households in Weymouth in the 2025 New Year summarising the changes to the Neighbourhood Plan, the Rationale for these changes, and the effect of the changes and identifying the further opportunities for residents to participate in the Neighbourhood Plan process through responding to the Regulation 16 Consultation and/or voting in the Neighbourhood Plan Referendum in 2025. This will be delivered to the Post Office using their mass delivery service for printed leaflets.

To resolve the confusion over the reference to Strategic Environmental Targets these have been relabelled as Supporting Environment Targets with supporting text clarifying that these are not mandatory but advisory. This also addresses the concern that these Targets would drive up the cost of housing development.

A number of comments were critical of referring to affordable homes rather than social housing. Given that the NPPF refers to affordable homes we have now added the phrase including social housing.

A number of comments were critical that we set an aim to prioritise developments on brownfields but allocated greenfield sites. There are two reasons behind this firstly, the brownfield sites in the town centre are already allocated as Strategic Sites in the WDW&P Local Plan and we cannot therefore allocate these within the Neighbourhood Plan; secondly even if all the brownfield sites are developed with the Local Plan policy level of affordable homes this still leaves a significant shortfall in the delivery over the next 15 years of social housing.

Similarly, concerns were raised at the lack of site allocations for employment. This again relates to many of the Town Centre sites being already allocated for mixed development (residential, business and leisure) in the Town Centre. However, two sites are allocated for business use, additional to the Local Plan allocations, with an exclusion to retail as there is an over-provision of retail in Weymouth, as a whole. It is also noted that the key employment land allocated in the Local Plan has been significantly eroded by permissions for retail employment.

Concerns were raised concerning the shortage of local school places, doctors, dentists, fire service, entertainment centres and other amenities. The provision of such services is out with the remit of a Neighbourhood Plan. But this is noted in Section 13 Aspirations. At a lower financial level it is to be hoped that the increase in Community Infrastructure Level resulting from an approved (made) Neighbourhood Plan will enable Weymouth Town Council to fund some smaller scale community facilities or support such initiatives.

A result of a number of policies being combined or removed and some restructuring to respond to comments on how the Policies relate to the Objective has led to a re-ordering of the Policies in the Submission Draft. To avoid confusion the new Policies are prefixed by a 'W'.

What is the main effect of these changes?

The result of these policies being applied is that, in addition to the allocations in the extant Local Plan:

- 425 homes enabled with 50% (212) affordable on 3 mixed site developments, consuming 16.9ha of land
- 31.9ha of land transferred for either Public Open Space or added to LVNP guaranteeing significant green gaps and wildlife corridors are preserved
- 15.3ha of land allocated for Leisure use, mostly outdoor leisure use
- 3.0ha of land provided for employment use on 2 sites
- Nearly 60ha of land is designated Local Green Space, protecting the Town from infill development
- Allocating 3.82ha land as Transport Interchange Hub to relieve peak period (summer) stress on town centre

These allocations are supported by additional policies which benefit Weymouth

- Green gaps and wildlife corridors preserved between Littlemoor and Preston
- Green gaps and wildlife corridors preserved between Radipole, Nottingham and Redlands
- Brownfield Land in the Town Centre is prioritised for Leisure, Employment and Affordable Housing in a to be amended Town Centre Plan
- New affordable homes are prioritised for local residents, particularly young families and key workers
- New development in the town centre is constrained as principal residencies, rather than 2nd homes and holiday lets
- Conversion of premises to Homes in Multiple Occupation is restricted in areas within Weymouth which already have a high level.
- Constraining future development on Town Centre Car Parks

This reduction in sites for affordable homes will require a greater focus on brownfield site development in the town centre. Given the scarcity of sites for development across Weymouth such brownfield sites should only be developed if they can either deliver employment (not retail) or affordable homes for rent (social housing).

5.13 Updates to the Evidence Base

The Housing Needs Analysis has been updated to incorporate 2021 Census data and additional evidence around Houses in Multiple Occupation and the levels of 2nd Homes and Holiday lets in Weymouth.

As part of the response to the Regulation 14 consultation the Local Planning Authority updated the Housing Requirement for the Neighbourhood Plan area, from 3,225 to 3,118, to reflect the number of homes already delivered in the plan period 2021-2038. In the same period the demand for Social Housing, with a Local Connection to Weymouth, as evidenced by the Housing Register has increased from 376 to 513.

In February 2024 Dorset Council released the Weymouth Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Level 2 report. This 400-page report indicated increased incidence and extent of Flooding in the Town Centre arising from rain, tide and storm. Allocations and developments in the Flood Zone 3 areas will be required to conduct Sequential and Exception Tests to the satisfaction of Dorset Council for development to proceed.

The HNA also confirms that the level of Homes without a usual resident is highest in the Melcombe Regis, the Town Centre, and Rodwell (MSOA) at 21.9% of dwellings. Dorset Council have provided updated figures showing that households with a local connection, on the Housing Register in Weymouth have increased from 376 to 513 in a year.

The Viability Testing Report has been updated to respond to changes made by Dorset Council in CIL and S106 and comments on the earlier draft reports. Changes by Dorset Council have reduced the Section 106 levy on nutrient neutrality this has reduced the cost of development making viability margins greater on sites in Weymouth.

The Steering Group has updated the self-assessment 'How Green is my Plan' – this now scores 71.5/100. [[How Green Is My Plan Submission Version Scored FINAL v6.xlsx](#)]

5.14 Policy Health Check

Because of the extent of the changes a Policy Health Check is due to be undertaken as part of the Technical Support from Locality – this will focus on checking that Policy Statements are robust and reflect the policy intent

This concludes the Consultation Statement produced to support the WNP Submission Draft.