

Non-Technical Summary

STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT OPTIONS STAGE ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT

Prepared on behalf of Broadwindsor Group Parish Council

BROADWINDSOR AREA NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN NOVEMBER 2017

This non-technical summary explains the scope and main findings of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the Broadwindsor Area Neighbourhood Plan, at its site options assessment stage.

The assessment has been undertaken to comply with the SEA Regulations. It is subject to consultation with the Environment Agency, Natural England and Historic England, the public and any other interested parties. It considers the likely effects of the plan on the environment, and its evaluation includes an assessment of reasonable alternatives. It also considers appropriate mitigation and monitoring measures.

As a first step, various plans and programmes were reviewed and information collected on the environmental characteristics of the Neighbourhood Plan Area. The review included an appraisal of the National Planning Policy Framework, the adopted West Dorset Local Plan, and key documents that informed the scope of the Local Plan's own sustainability appraisal. The views of the Environment Agency, Natural England and Historic England were also sought on the proposed scope of the SEA.

The key environmental issues that may be relevant for the SEA were identified as:

- **Biodiversity, geology, flora and fauna** - the potential for development to harm significant ecological interests is limited as development is unlikely to harm nationally or internationally designated sites. However 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, and opportunities to enhance biodiversity could be identified.
- **Landscape** – Much of the area is part of the Dorset AONB, a nationally important landscape. Major development is likely to be harmful, and all sites have potential to harm features of local landscape character. The scale of development proposed and sensitivity of the landscape to change will need to be taken into account in any site selection process, and policies identifying and protecting key landscape features may be something that can be usefully identified in the Neighbourhood Plan.
- **Cultural heritage** – there is potential for development to harm the significance of heritage assets, particularly Listed Buildings which may adjoin a development site, the setting of the scheduled monuments and the Broadwindsor Conservation Area. There are also opportunities to improve the Conservation Area through improvements to the streetscape and appropriate design guidance. The Conservation Team at the District Council and the Historic Environment team at the County Council should be involved in the site selection process, and policies identifying and protecting undesignated heritage assets may be something that can be usefully included in the Neighbourhood Plan.
- **Soil, Water, Air, Material Assets and Climatic Factors** – there are flooding issues within the Neighbourhood Plan Area, largely related to the network of streams and local soils and topography, and the avoidance of flood risk should therefore be a key consideration. The presence of any contamination from historic sites use within the vicinity of the site should also be checked with the appropriate authorities. The grade of agricultural land should also be considered on sites where there may be a significant loss of productive farmland. The possible sterilisation of minerals

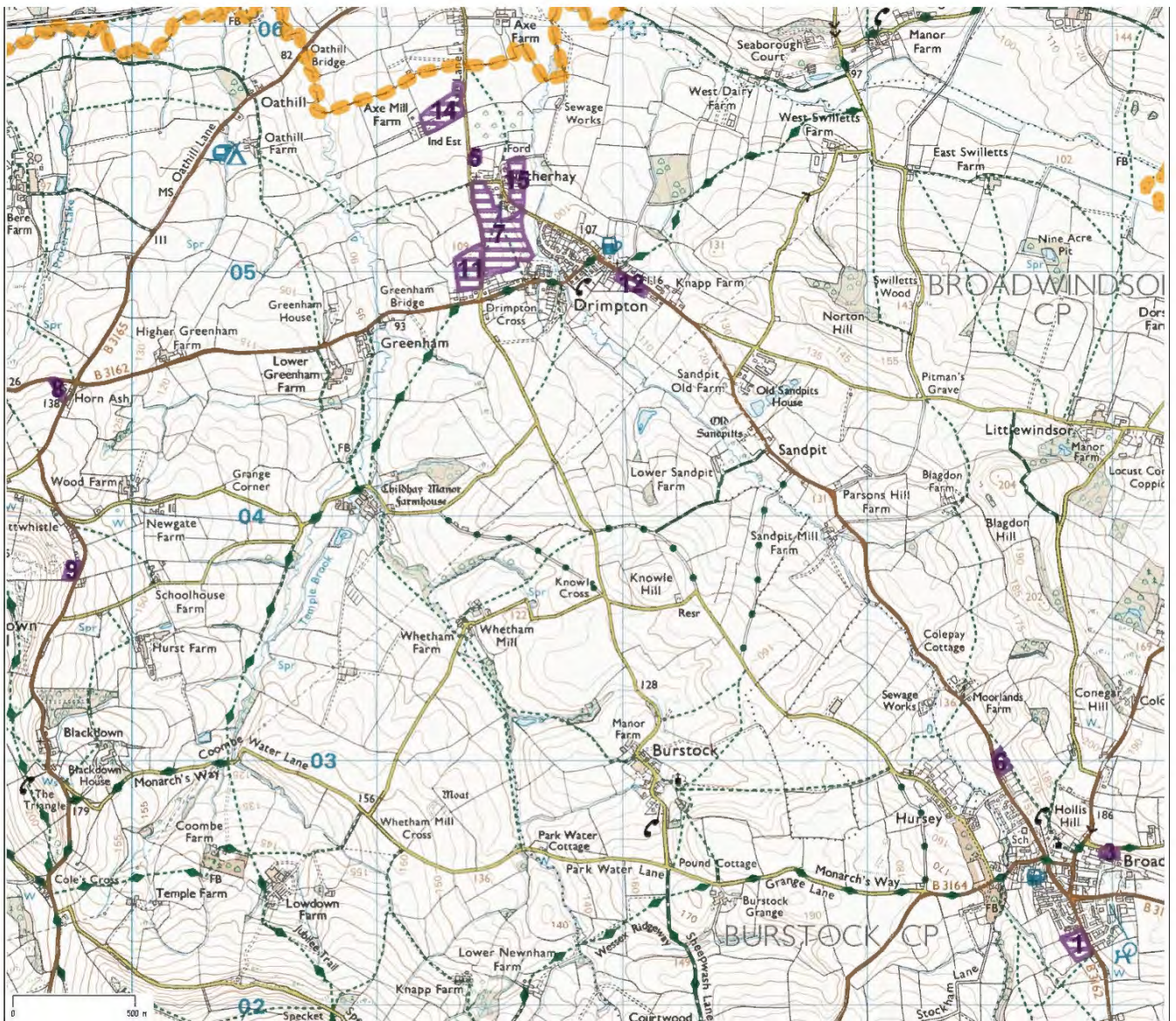
resources should also be checked with the appropriate authorities.

→ **Population and Human Health** - there is a need to provide sufficient opportunities to meet local needs for housing, employment and community facilities in locations that are safe and accessible.

These issues formed the basis of the sustainability objectives.

A 'call for sites' was run in April 2017. Some 15 sites were submitted as part of this process, amounted to about 17 hectares (42 acres) of land. Members of the neighbourhood plan working group, together with their planning advisor, visited all of the sites, and took notes of possible issues. Technical expertise was also sought from the District and County Councils and the AONB team. Four sites were assessed as highly unlikely to meet the tests set out in national and local planning guidance due to their isolated nature and likely degree of landscape impact, and the landowners withdrew these sites from consideration.

Reasonable Alternatives Assessed (Possible Site Allocations)



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The site options are listed below:

– **Broadwindsor / Hursey area**

- Site 1 – Land south of Fullers, Broadwindsor
- Site 3 – Land at Manor Farm, Common Water Lane, Broadwindsor
- Site 6 – Land North of Hillside, Drimpton Road, Broadwindsor

– **Drimpton / Netherhay area**

- Site 5 – Land at Brent Paddock, Axe Lane, Netherhay
- Site 7 – Land east of Netherhay Lane, between Drimpton and Netherhay
- Site 11 – Land west of Netherhay Lane, Drimpton
- Site 12 – Land west of Manor Farm, Bridport Road, Drimpton
- Site 14 – Land at Axe Mill Industrial Estate, Netherhay
- Site 15 – Land at Beck’s Field, Netherhay

– **Blackdown area**

- Site 8 – Barn to rear of Ashleigh, Horn Ash crossroads
- Site 9 – Land south of the Mill House, Kittwhistle.

Sustainability Assessment – Overview of Potential Impacts

Topic↓ and Site→	1	3	6	5	7	11	12	14	15	8	9
Ecology	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
Landscape	-	0	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	0	-
Heritage	0	-	0	0	-	0	0	0	-	0	0
Pollution	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	?	0	0	?
Flooding	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Soils / Minerals	-	0	0	-	--	-	0	--	-	0	-
Local Needs	++	+	+	+	++	++	++	++	+	+	+
Safe Access	0	0	0	-	0	0	0	0	-	-	-

Key:	++	significant positive impact likely	-	adverse impact likely
	+	positive impact likely	--	significant adverse impact likely
	0	neutral impact likely	?	impact uncertain

The assessment of the various site options showed the potential benefits and harm in respect of each options, and topics where further assessment would be required to understand the likely nature of any impact. Potential significant adverse impacts at this stage relate to the loss of a sizeable area of Grade 2 farmland through the development of site 7 (Land east of Netherhay Lane, between Drimpton and Netherhay) and site 14 (Land at Axe Mill Industrial Estate, Netherhay). Sites 9 (Land south of the Mill House, Kittwhistle) and 15 (Land at Beck’s Field, Netherhay) also perform poorly with a number of topic areas where possible harm has been identified, compared to limited benefits, which suggests that these may be less suitable for allocation compared to some of the available alternatives.

Additional more detailed checks will be required. Potential mitigation measures will need to be considered further in regard to allocating sites, at the next stage, to help maximise environmental benefits and minimize the potential for harm.

This report will be updated at the next stage of the plan (which will be consultation on the pre-submission draft). More detailed assessment of the proposed site allocations will be undertaken at that stage, together with an appraisal of the other policies contained in the plan.

Comments are welcome on the full SEA report, as part of the options consultation.