

# Strategic Environmental Assessment for the Weymouth Neighbourhood Plan

Interim SEA Environmental Report

Weymouth Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

September 2023

## Quality information

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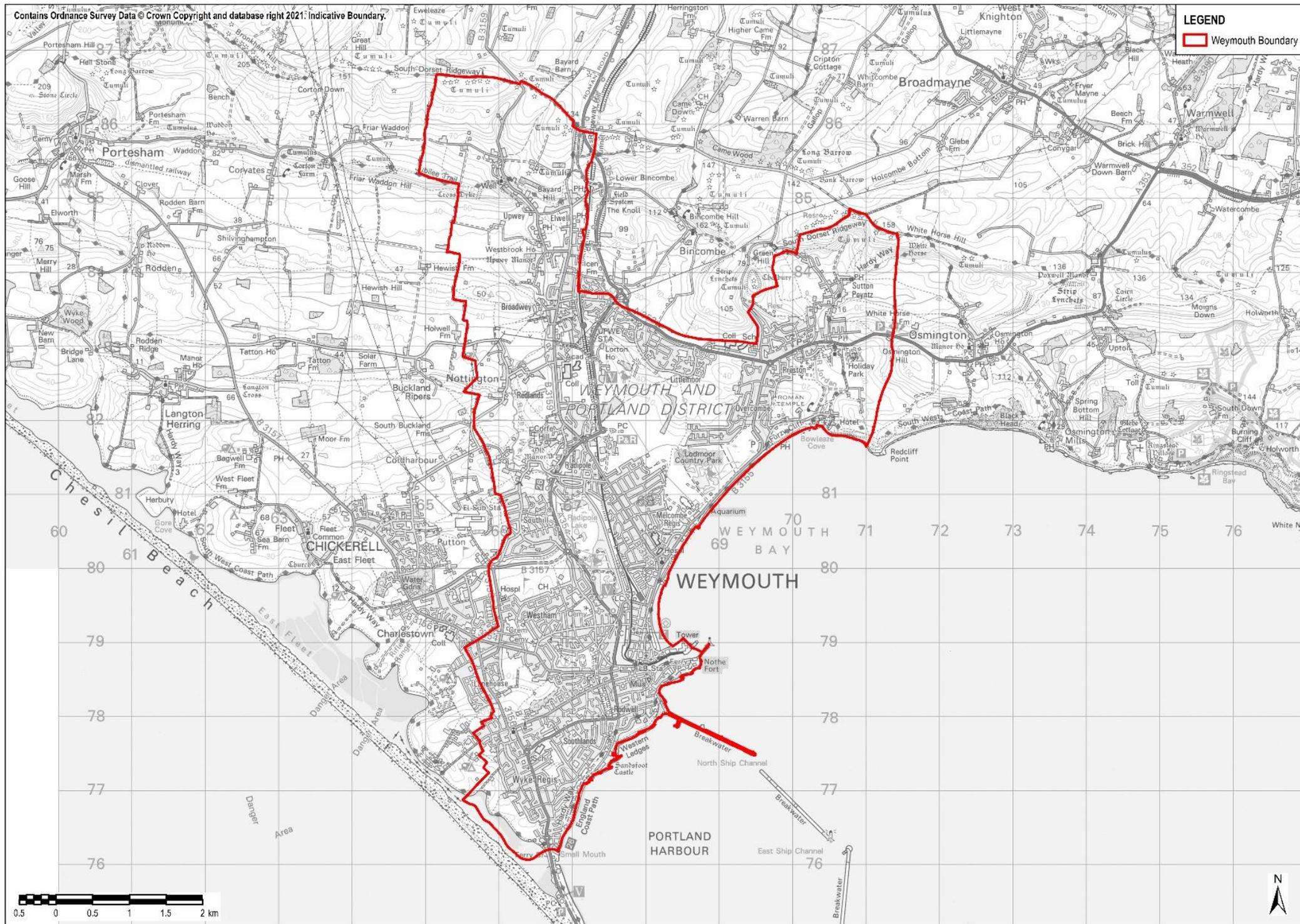
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Front cover: Weymouth Beach as viewed from the Jubilee Clock, taken from [Weymouth Town Council's](#) webpages.

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# 1. Introduction

## Background

- 1.1 AECOM has been commissioned to undertake an independent Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in support of the emerging Weymouth Neighbourhood Plan (hereafter referred to as “the WNP”). The neighbourhood area is shown in the figure above.
- 1.2 SEA is a mechanism for considering and communicating the potential impacts of an emerging plan, and potential alternatives in terms of key environmental issues. The aim of SEA is to inform and influence the plan-making process with a view to avoiding and mitigating potential negative impacts and maximising the potential for positive effects. Through this approach, the SEA for the WNP seeks to maximise the emerging plan’s contribution to sustainable development.

## Purpose of this Interim Environmental Report

- 1.3 This Interim Environmental Report is the latest document to be produced as part of the SEA process. The first document was the SEA Scoping Report (July 2022), which included information about the neighbourhood area’s environment and community and set out the proposed approach to the SEA process<sup>1</sup>. The Scoping Report was released for consultation with the statutory consultees for SEA (the Environment Agency, Historic England, and Natural England), as well as Dorset Council, between July and August 2022.
- 1.4 The purpose of this Interim Environmental Report is to:
  - Provide an outline of the options that have been developed as ‘reasonable alternatives’ for the purposes of the SEA.
  - Appraise the relative sustainability merits and the likely significant environment effects of these options.
  - Provide a sustainability context for different approaches that can be taken for the WNP; and
  - Inform the development of the preferred approach for the WNP.

## Local Plan context for the WNP

- 1.5 Until April 2019, West Dorset District Council and Weymouth and Portland Borough Council were in the process of undertaking a review of the West Dorset, Weymouth, and Portland Adopted Local Plan. The evidence generated is now feeding into the emerging Dorset Council Local Plan (as Dorset has been re-organised into a unitary authority).
- 1.6 The emerging Dorset Council Local Plan has reached Regulation 18 consultation. Regulation 18 consultation on the emerging Dorset Council Local Plan was completed between January and March 2021. Dorset Council are

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<sup>1</sup> The Scoping Report was released for consultation with the statutory consultees for SEA (Natural England, Historic England, and the Environment Agency), and Dorset Council, between July and August 2022. Responses received on the Scoping Report, and how they have been addressed, shall be presented in the full SEA Environmental Report (alongside the assessment findings within this Interim Environmental Report) and will accompany the Neighbourhood Plan at Regulation 14 consultation.

considering the representations received from the consultation process, which will inform the development of the draft plan. According to the latest available Local Development Scheme for Dorset, which was released in October 2022, it is anticipated that the emerging Dorset Council Local Plan will be adopted in spring 2026. The Local Development Scheme outlines the timetable for the Dorset Local Plan progress<sup>2</sup>.

- 1.7 Neighbourhood plans will form part of the development plan for Dorset, alongside, but not as a replacement for the Local Plan. Neighbourhood plans are required to be in general conformity with the Local Plan and can develop policies and proposals to address local place-based issues. In this way it is intended for the Local Plan to provide a clear overall strategic direction for development in Dorset, whilst enabling finer detail to be determined through the neighbourhood planning process where appropriate.

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<sup>2</sup> [Dorset Council - The Local Development Scheme for Dorset Council \(2022\)](#)

## 2. Consideration of reasonable alternatives through the SEA

### Introduction

- 2.1 The 'narrative' of plan-making / SEA up to this point is told within this part of the Interim Environmental Report. Specifically, how the SEA process to date has informed the consideration of different approaches for key elements of the emerging WNP. The following information is included in accordance with the SEA Regulations:
- An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with; and
  - The likely significant effects on the environment associated with alternatives.
- 2.2 As discussed within **Chapter 4**, the findings of this Interim Environmental Report will be reviewed by Weymouth Town Council and the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group alongside the evidence base documents which have been prepared to support the development of the emerging WNP to date.
- 2.3 The preferred approach for the emerging WNP will be developed and the draft version of the emerging WNP updated and finalised, ready for assessment.

### Defining reasonable alternatives

- 2.4 Whilst work on the emerging WNP has been underway for some time, the aim here is not to provide a comprehensive explanation of work to date, but rather to explain work undertaken to develop and appraise reasonable alternatives.
- 2.5 In the context of the above, this chapter of the Interim Environmental Report presents information on reasonable alternative approaches to addressing key issues that are of central importance to the emerging WNP.

### Top-down considerations (e.g., strategic factors)

- 2.6 The emerging DCLP sets out a housing requirement of 3,225 homes for the neighbourhood area. Approximately 2,030 of these homes are likely to be on sites allocated in the emerging DCLP, with the residual housing numbers to be met through neighbourhood plan allocations, windfall development, and existing commitments. For example, the recently approved urban extension to the north of Littlemoor will provide a significant area of growth, including a business park and up to 500 homes (ref: WP/16/00253/OUT).
- 2.7 The neighbourhood plan may allocate sites for additional development due to the high affordable need identified in a local housing needs assessment (minimum of 1,775 homes). In this respect, a key focus of the emerging WNP is to encourage opportunities for affordable home delivery. Due regard will also be given to the emerging DCLP for further housing guidance.

### Bottom-up considerations (e.g., site availability)

- 2.8 Weymouth Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (with support from an independent planning consultancy) has undertaken assessments of the various sites in Weymouth in terms of their suitability for a neighbourhood plan

allocation. A total of 61 sites were considered through an initial site options and assessment process<sup>3</sup>, with 31 sites considered as 'suitable' or 'potentially suitable' to take forward as a neighbourhood plan allocation.

2.9 A secondary assessment of the sites was also completed by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, with each site appraised against the following criteria, from which preferential sites came forward.

- **Criteria 1:** Do not consider sites assessed as 'unsuitable' in the Site Options and Assessment Report.
- **Criteria 2:** Consider sites inside the defined development boundary (DDB) with potential for more than 20 homes.
- **Criteria 3:** Consider sites outside the DDB with potential for more than 10 homes.
- **Criteria 4:** Consider sites outside the DDB with potential for less than 10 homes where they are supporting very local housing needs.
- **Criteria 5:** Consider sites near to urban areas which are suitable for B2 (general industrial) employment.
- **Criteria 6:** In-use sites will not be considered unless there is, or can be, adequate or alternative provision nearby; and
- **Criteria 7:** Sites providing employment will not be considered for residential unless affordable housing provision of 35% is enabled and some employment use is retained.

2.10 Reflecting the above, the shortlisted site options (which have been endorsed for further consideration by Weymouth Town Council) are presented in Weymouth Town Council's Site Assessment Process Report<sup>4</sup>, which contributes to the evidence base for the emerging WNP. These sites have been the focus for the SEA and are discussed in further detail below.

## Options for the focus of development within the DDB

2.11 Through the site assessment process and secondary assessment of the sites, several brownfield site options within the DDB were identified as 'suitable' or 'potentially' suitable for a Neighbourhood Plan allocation.

2.12 In the wider context, in September 2022 Dorset Council submitted a successful Levelling Up Fund (LUF) Bid for Weymouth's Waterside Regeneration. Whilst it has been confirmed that this funding will not directly facilitate redevelopment opportunities, it is likely to include infrastructure works to make brownfield site options within the DDB (particularly the Waterside area and areas within the town centre environment) more attractive to developers.

2.13 In this respect, the relative sustainability merits of considering alternative uses within the DDB has been explored. Informed by the aspirations within the

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<sup>3</sup> AECOM (2023) [Weymouth Neighbourhood Plan Site Options and Assessment Report](#) The Site Options Assessment (SOA) Report contributes to the evidence base for the emerging WNP and will accompany the emerging WNP at Regulation 14 consultation. The SOA Report provides further clarity on the site identification process and methodology and details the full assessment findings.

<sup>4</sup> Weymouth Town Council (2023): [Weymouth Neighbourhood Plan - Site Assessment Process Report](#)

existing Town Centre Masterplan/Strategy for Weymouth and with respect to the vision/objectives of the emerging WNP, the following options have been considered through the SEA:

- **Option A:** Provide an additional focus on residential development within the DDB (*with a view to encouraging opportunities for affordable home provision*).
- **Option B:** Provide an additional focus on the development of employment uses within the DDB.
- **Option C:** Focus on proposals which would support key areas of Weymouth's economy (*e.g., tourism, leisure, and recreation*).
- **Option D:** Focus on proposals which would encourage opportunities for protecting Weymouth's natural and built-environment (*e.g., climate mitigation/adaptation, biodiversity net-gain, enhancements to townscape*).
- **Option E:** Support a range of uses within the DDB, considering proposals on a case-by-case basis.

### Approach to the options appraisal

2.14 Utilising the SEA Framework of objectives and assessment questions development during the earlier scoping stage of the SEA, the options appraisal has been presented through eight SEA themes, as follows:

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

2.15 The appraisal considers the relative sustainability merits of each option. Findings are presented as a commentary on effects. To support the appraisal findings, the options have been ranked in terms of their sustainability performance against the relevant SEA Theme (e.g., '1' is the most favourable option). It is anticipated that this will provide the reader with a likely indication of the relative performance of the five options in relation to each theme considered. Options which perform similarly are given an equal ranking within the appraisal findings.

## Appraisal findings

2.16 Sources of information to support the appraisal includes (but is not limited to): Ordnance Survey maps; MAGIC Interactive Map<sup>5</sup>; the Environment Agency's Flood Risk Maps for England<sup>6</sup>; Google Earth<sup>7</sup>; interactive maps and documents available to access on Dorset Council's webpages; national and local planning policy documents; and baseline studies available to access on Weymouth Town Council's webpages.

2.17 **Table 2.1** to **Table 2.8** below present the findings of the options appraisal for each SEA Theme.

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<sup>5</sup> MAGIC (2021): 'Interactive Map', [online] available to access via [this link](#)

<sup>6</sup> Environment Agency (2021): 'Flood Map for Planning', [online] available to access via [this link](#)

<sup>7</sup> Google (2021): 'Google Earth', [online] available to access via [this link](#)

Table 2.1: Appraisal findings: Air Quality

Option A: Provide an additional focus on residential development within the DDB.

Option B: Provide an additional focus on the development of employment uses within the DDB.

Option C: Focus on proposals which would support key areas of Weymouth’s economy.

Option D: Focus on proposals which would encourage opportunities for protecting Weymouth’s natural and built environment.

Option E: Support a range of uses within the DDB, considering proposals on a case-by-case basis.

Discussion of potential effects and relative merits of options	Rank of preference				
	A	B	C	D	E
<p>It is recognised that transport emissions are a key contributor to air quality concerns within Dorset. In this respect, Option A and Option E will help to support the delivery of new homes within the most sustainable locations within the neighbourhood area with respect to services and facilities and public transport networks. This has the potential to reduce the reliance on private vehicles for undertaking day-to-day activities within the neighbourhood area (and associated emissions), whilst also encouraging opportunities to connect new development areas with local walking and cycling networks which will help to facilitate active travel opportunities. Option B and Option C perform least favourably in this respect and would likely increase the need for housing to be located outside of the DDB.</p> <p>A focus on protecting and enhancing the natural environment within the DDB through Option D has the potential to encourage urban greening on sites which are otherwise predominantly covered by areas of hardstanding. Opportunities to encourage urban greening will increase the percentage cover of trees and vegetation at these locations (e.g., natural absorbers of pollutants), with associated air quality benefits, although it is recognised that this is dependent on the design of new development areas. In this respect, Option E, by encouraging a range of uses within the DDB and considering proposals on a case-by-case basis, may help to enable the ‘win-win’ opportunities associated with the effective planning of key areas within the DDB to be realised. For example, by supporting proposals which support sustainable and high-quality design which delivers appropriate green and open spaces within new development areas.</p>	=1	4	5	3	=1

Table 2.2: Appraisal findings: Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Option A: Provide an additional focus on residential development within the DDB.

Option B: Provide an additional focus on the development of employment uses within the DDB.

Option C: Focus on proposals which would support key areas of Weymouth’s economy.

Option D: Focus on proposals which would encourage opportunities for protecting Weymouth’s natural and built environment.

Option E: Support a range of uses within the DDB, considering proposals on a case-by-case basis.

Discussion of potential effects and relative merits of options	Rank of preference				
	A	B	C	D	E
<p>It is important to recognise that potential impacts to ecological and geological resources are influenced by a number of factors. For example, incorporating green infrastructure enhancements (including amenity and open spaces) through new development areas can deliver net-gains for nature, tackle local air quality concerns by widening tree and vegetation cover, and increase the number of alternative spaces for recreational uses. In this respect, Option D and Option E have the potential to ensure that these considerations are appropriately incorporated into new development areas within the DDB, whilst also encouraging the remediation of potentially contaminated sites to benefit the natural environment. Nonetheless, smaller sites within the DDB may have limited scope to deliver enhancements given the lack of available space.</p> <p>Most of the sensitive ecological sites within the neighbourhood area are located outside of the DDB. Therefore, options which would facilitate opportunities for housing growth within the DDB (e.g., Option A and Option E) are likely to perform more positively in this respect by delivering housing at relative distance from designated sites which will help to safeguard their integrity.</p>	=2	4	5	1	=2

Table 2.3: Appraisal findings: Climate Change

Option A: Provide an additional focus on residential development within the DDB.

Option B: Provide an additional focus on the development of employment uses within the DDB.

Option C: Focus on proposals which would support key areas of Weymouth’s economy.

Option D: Focus on proposals which would encourage opportunities for protecting Weymouth’s natural and built environment.

Option E: Support a range of uses within the DDB, considering proposals on a case-by-case basis.

Discussion of potential effects and relative merits of options	Rank of preference				
	A	B	C	D	E
<p>The extent to which the options support climate change mitigation efforts is dependent (in part) on a strategy which promotes new development at locations in closer proximity to local services and facilities, public transport networks, and walking and cycling networks. Therefore, prioritising housing and employment growth within the DDB (as proposed through Option A, Option B and Option E) has the potential to limit the need to travel to local facilities for some day-to-day activities (and associated greenhouse gas emissions). This is likely to limit potential increases in CO2 emissions by encouraging opportunities to engage with sustainable and active travel.</p> <p>Another key influence on climate change mitigation efforts is the extent to which new development areas incorporate energy efficient materials and technologies through design. With respect to the climate crisis and Dorset Council’s declaration of a climate and ecological emergency in 2019, it is anticipated that new development areas will encourage efficiency through design. However, Option D is likely to provide additional assurance that these considerations are taken forward through new development areas.</p> <p>The extent to which the options have the potential to support climate change adaptation efforts depends on the specific location, design, layout and scale of development, and the incorporation of features which support climate resilience. Many areas within the DDB are within Flood Zone 3, signalling areas which have a high fluvial or coastal flood risk potential. Option E, which encourages a range of uses within the DDB considering proposals on a case-by-case basis, has the potential to ensure that new development areas come forward in appropriate locations. However, the significance of potential effects is dependent on what uses are brought forward, and the design of new development areas. It is also considered that the provisions of the NPPF and national policy (including relating to the sequential / exception test) will help guide development away from potential flood risk areas and ensure that appropriate mitigation measures are implemented.</p> <p>Regarding surface water flood risks, it is anticipated that any surface water run-off issues could largely be addressed through appropriate drainage management through the design of new development proposals. Therefore, all options perform similarly in this respect.</p>	=1	4	5	3	=1

Table 2.4: Appraisal findings: Community Wellbeing

Option A: Provide an additional focus on residential development within the DDB.

Option B: Provide an additional focus on the development of employment uses within the DDB.

Option C: Focus on proposals which would support key areas of Weymouth’s economy.

Option D: Focus on proposals which would encourage opportunities for protecting Weymouth’s natural and built environment.

Option E: Support a range of uses within the DDB, considering proposals on a case-by-case basis.

Discussion of potential effects and relative merits of options	Rank of preference				
	A	B	C	D	E
<p>With regards to housing numbers, a local housing needs assessment for the neighbourhood area identifies a minimum affordable housing need of 1,775 homes. In this respect, Option A, through providing an additional focus on residential development within the DDB, has the potential to positively contribute to the delivery of affordable dwellings. However, it is recognised that opportunities for the emerging WNP to deliver housing of an appropriate type and tenure is dependent in part on the distribution of new development (i.e., recognising that larger site allocations have an increased scope to deliver community benefits and affordable housing provision). In this respect, Option E, which would consider proposals on a case-by-case basis, perhaps offers greater potential for appropriate development to come forward in the right locations.</p> <p>While Option B and Option C has the potential to support the vibrancy of the town centre environment, supporting additional sectors of the local economy and more appropriately reflecting town centre uses in a post-pandemic context, these options are less likely to facilitate additional housing growth within the DDB (e.g., within the most sustainable locations in the neighbourhood area with respect to access and connectivity to public transport networks and services / facilities, and opportunities to engage in active travel).</p> <p>The benefits to physical and mental health and wellbeing resulting from close contact to the natural environment are well documented. There are a number of open and green spaces within the neighbourhood area, and a key ambition for the emerging WNP is to expand and improve connections between green infrastructure networks. In this context, an additional focus on residential and employment uses within the DDB (which is likely through Option A, Option B, and Option C) is likely to densify the town centre environment and potentially reduce opportunities to incorporate additional public realm enhancements in these locations. Option D offers more potential to deliver these benefits, with Option E having the potential to ensure a more coordinated approach to the delivery of green infrastructure enhancements by weighing up the pros and cons of proposals with respect to wider WNP objectives and aspirations.</p>	2	=3	=3	=3	1

Table 2.5: Appraisal findings: Historic Environment

Option A: Provide an additional focus on residential development within the DDB.

Option B: Provide an additional focus on the development of employment uses within the DDB.

Option C: Focus on proposals which would support key areas of Weymouth’s economy.

Option D: Focus on proposals which would encourage opportunities for protecting Weymouth’s natural and built environment.

Option E: Support a range of uses within the DDB, considering proposals on a case-by-case basis.

Discussion of potential effects and relative merits of options	Rank of preference				
	A	B	C	D	E
<p>It is recognised that many heritage assets and areas are present within the DDB, positively contributing to the special qualities of the neighbourhood area. In this respect, all options (which focus growth within the DDB) will likely facilitate new development within proximity to designated and non-designated heritage assets and areas (and their settings).</p> <p>There are sites within the DDB which are areas of underutilised land which likely detract from the character of the neighbourhood area in their current form – indirectly and adversely impacting the setting of nearby heritage assets and areas. In this respect, high quality and sensitive redevelopment of these sites has the potential to rejuvenate features and areas of historic environment interest and sensitivity, which will positively restore and safeguard Weymouth’s significant heritage interest. For example, by supporting proposals which enhance the visual interpretation of important features and their wider historic setting. Option D and Option E perform more favourably in this respect.</p> <p>With respect to Option A, Option B, and Option C, opportunities to enhance the setting of nearby heritage designations may be possible through the application of sensitive design and mitigation measures within new development areas. However, it will be essential for new development areas to be accompanied by a proportionate heritage assessment which provides further details about the heritage significance and sensitivities of the site(s), alongside outlining any proposed mitigation measures to ensure that the historic environment is safeguarded and enhanced wherever possible.</p>	=3	=3	=3	1	2

Table 2.6: Appraisal findings: Land, Soil and Water Resources

Option A: Provide an additional focus on residential development within the DDB.

Option B: Provide an additional focus on the development of employment uses within the DDB.

Option C: Focus on proposals which would support key areas of Weymouth’s economy.

Option D: Focus on proposals which would encourage opportunities for protecting Weymouth’s natural and built environment.

Option E: Support a range of uses within the DDB, considering proposals on a case-by-case basis.

Discussion of potential effects and relative merits of options	Rank of preference				
	A	B	C	D	E
<p>Providing an additional focus on residential and employment uses within the DDB (through Option A, Option B, and Option E) will reduce pressures to find sites outside of the DDB for these purposes. In this respect, these options will help to support the most efficient use of land within the neighbourhood area, potentially enabling the remediation of areas of contaminated land, and also helping to safeguard areas of productive agricultural land outside of the DDB.</p> <p>Whilst it is recognised that Option D would likely facilitate additional opportunities to deliver public realm improvements and green infrastructure enhancements, this may reduce the available land within the DDB which could accommodate new homes. Therefore, on balance, Option D and Option C are the least favourable options with respect to the land, soil, and water resources SEA theme as this may result in additional land-take outside of the DDB for residential uses.</p>	1	3	5	4	2

Table 2.7: Appraisal findings: Landscape and Townscape

Option A: Provide an additional focus on residential development within the DDB.

Option B: Provide an additional focus on the development of employment uses within the DDB.

Option C: Focus on proposals which would support key areas of Weymouth’s economy.

Option D: Focus on proposals which would encourage opportunities for protecting Weymouth’s natural and built environment.

Option E: Support a range of uses within the DDB, considering proposals on a case-by-case basis.

Discussion of potential effects and relative merits of options	Rank of preference				
	A	B	C	D	E
<p>In terms of nationally protected landscapes, the Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is within proximity to the neighbourhood area. In this respect, opportunities to facilitate new homes at distance from the AONB is preferable from a landscape perspective. This is more readily achievable through Option A and Option E.</p> <p>At the local level, the relationship between the natural and built environment within the neighbourhood area is an important contributor to its character. The redevelopment of underutilised brownfield sites within the DDB is likely to support townscape enhancements and improve the quality of the public realm, encouraging development which incorporates materials and design features which complement the surrounding areas. However, it is noted this is dependent on the design of the schemes which are brought forward at these locations. Option D and Option E perform most favourably in this respect.</p> <p>Option B and Option C would likely increase pressures to find sites outside of the DDB for residential uses. However, potential impacts to landscape and townscape character are dependent (in part) on the design of new development areas and the extent to which proposals address any sensitivities (e.g., through appropriate landscaping schemes or preparing design masterplans).</p>	=1	=4	=4	=1	=1

Table 2.8: Appraisal findings: Transportation

Option A: Provide an additional focus on residential development within the DDB.

Option B: Provide an additional focus on the development of employment uses within the DDB.

Option C: Focus on proposals which would support key areas of Weymouth’s economy.

Option D: Focus on proposals which would encourage opportunities for protecting Weymouth’s natural and built environment.

Option E: Support a range of uses within the DDB, considering proposals on a case-by-case basis.

Discussion of potential effects and relative merits of options	Rank of preference				
	A	B	C	D	E
<p>Option A, Option B, and Option E will help to support the delivery of new homes and employment land within the most sustainable locations within the neighbourhood area with respect to services and facilities and public transport networks. This has the potential to reduce the reliance on private vehicles for undertaking day-to-day activities within the neighbourhood area, and also encourage opportunities to connect new development areas with local walking and cycling networks which will help to facilitate active travel opportunities.</p> <p>Whilst it is recognised that Option D would likely facilitate additional opportunities to deliver public realm enhancements (e.g., by improving connectivity and accessibility within the DDB), this may reduce the available land within the DDB which could accommodate new homes.</p> <p>Option C has the potential to attract additional visitors to the neighbourhood area (e.g., through encouraging opportunities to revitalise Weymouth’s economic offer), which may increase the number of vehicles accessing areas within the DDB. Nonetheless, potential impacts may be mitigated by Weymouth’s public transport offer, which includes rail and bus links to surrounding locations.</p>	1	3	5	4	2

## Consideration of sites outside of the DDB

- 2.18 A key objective of the emerging WNP is to positively contribute to the delivery of affordable homes, with a recognition that affordable housing needs cannot be met by sites within the DDB alone.
- 2.19 To support the consideration of the suitability of the shortlisted sites for a potential allocation of a type appropriate for the emerging WNP, the SEA process has appraised the key constraints and opportunities present at the six shortlisted sites outside of the DDB for a potential allocation through the emerging WNP.
- 2.20 In this context, the sites have been considered in relation to the SEA Framework of objectives and decision-making questions developed during SEA scoping and the baseline information. These assessments undertaken through the SEA have been undertaken separately to the initial site options and assessment process completed for the emerging WNP.
- 2.21 The sites are as follows:
- Site A: Land off Budmouth Avenue.
  - Site B: Lodmoor Old Tip (Middle Section).
  - Site C: Lodmoor Old Tip (Southern Section).
  - Site D: Redlands Farm.
  - Site E: Land at Wyke Oliver Farm (North); and
  - Site F: Land South of Wessex Roundabout.
- 2.22 The assessment findings are presented below in **Table 2.9** to **Table 2.14**.

Table 2.9: Assessment findings – Site A

SEA Theme      Site A: Land off Budmouth Avenue



Air quality

There are no air quality management areas (AQMA) within Weymouth; as such, allocating any site for development would not contribute to air quality concerns in the neighbourhood area. It is noted that the Rodwell Road / Boot Hill area of Weymouth is of concern with regards to air quality in Weymouth – however, this site is a distance from this part of the neighbourhood area and is unlikely to impact it.

The nearest air quality monitoring stations are located approximately 2.2km south of the site on King Street, towards the town centre. The latest air quality annual status report (ASR) indicates the monitoring stations within Weymouth were all under the annual mean concentration target for nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>). Nonetheless, allocating this site for housing development would result in more traffic on the roads, and a subsequent increase in NO<sub>2</sub>.

Although the site is removed from AQMA, and the current air quality status of the neighbourhood area is stable, the development of this site for 56 homes will lead to increased vehicles on the local road network. This level of growth is therefore likely to have a negative effect on the local air quality. However, given the size of the site, new development areas could support opportunities for on-site green infrastructure enhancements which would help to absorb pollutants and improve air quality at the local level. As such, **uncertain effects** are concluded to be the most likely if this site was taken forward.

## SEA Theme      Site A: Land off Budmouth Avenue

**Biodiversity and geodiversity** This site is adjacent to the nationally designated Lodmoor Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), which is located to the south. It is also approximately 700m north-west of the internationally designated Isle of Portland to Studland Cliffs Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and the South Dorset Coast SSSI. The site falls within SSSI Impact Risk Zones (IRZs) for the types of development that are likely to be taken forward through the neighbourhood plan (i.e., residential, rural residential, and rural non-residential). Development in the area adjacent to the SSSI could lead to negative effects on biodiversity, for example through the loss or fragmentation of habitats, which reduces connectivity. Additionally, pressure on the SAC includes recreational uses (e.g., walking and climbing) and livestock grazing. As allocating this site for development could result in increased pressure, consultation with Natural England will be required if this site is allocated for development.

This site is also seen to be suitable for habitat creation and expansion by Natural England, as it overlaps with a Network Enhancement Zone 1 and Network Enhancement Zone 2 in its southern half, as well as areas of Network Expansion Zone to the east and west. According to guidance provided by Natural England, Network Enhancement Zones are land that connects existing patches of primary and associated habitats that is likely to be suitable for habitat creation, and Network Expansion Zones include land outside of the Network Enhancement Zones that are potentially suitable for expanding, linking and / or joining networks across the landscape. As such, development on this site should focus on expanding and joining up existing habitat patches and improving biodiversity connectivity<sup>8</sup>.

In terms of features present within the site, there is a small area of traditional orchard Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Priority Habitat in the south-west, and is adjacent to an extensive area of coastal and floodplain grazing marsh associated with the Lodmoor SSSI to the south, as well as reedbeds to the south and deciduous woodland to the west. These habitats could be disturbed by development on this site through increased noise and light pollution. There is vegetation on the site boundaries in this location that should be retained and enhanced as far as possible to avoid biodiversity impacts and to help deliver biodiversity connectivity and net gains.

Overall, **negative effects** are considered likely if development comes forward on this site. This reflects the proximity of the site to the SSSI and SAC designations, and the additional BAP Priority Habitats within the site boundaries as well as in proximity. It is noted, however, that this site is suitable for habitat connection and expansion – and biodiversity improvements / net gain would be more readily achievable through allocating this site.

<sup>8</sup> [https://magic.defra.gov.uk/Metadata\\_for\\_magic/Habitat%20Network%20Mapping%20Guidance.pdf](https://magic.defra.gov.uk/Metadata_for_magic/Habitat%20Network%20Mapping%20Guidance.pdf)

**SEA Theme      Site A: Land off Budmouth Avenue**

**Climate change** Development of this site will lead to inevitable increases in greenhouse gas emissions, linked to the construction phase of development, the increase in the built footprint of Weymouth, as well as an intensification of use at this site. As this site is of a relatively large scale for neighbourhood plan considerations, and has a relatively large housing capacity, the potential increase in greenhouse gas emissions is likely to be significant and could contribute to local climate change impacts through increasing carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions. This could further impact other themes included under the SEA framework, such as community wellbeing (through potential impacts on health linked to emissions) and biodiversity and geodiversity (through potential impacts on habitats, species, and designated sites).

Regarding flood risk, the site is wholly within Flood Zone 1 and as such is at low risk of flooding. Additionally, the site is mostly at very low risk of surface water flooding, with the south-western area of the site at low risk on the boundary with existing development off Moordown Avenue and Southdown Avenue. There is further low surface water flood risk in the north-eastern area on the boundary with development off Budmouth Avenue and Bodkin Lane. However, there is an area of high surface water flood risk outside the site to the south and south-west, linked to the Lodmoor SSSI.

Overall, given any level of growth in Weymouth will lead to an increase in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, **uncertain effects** are concluded most likely for this SEA theme if this site was taken forward for development. The extent to which the options have the potential to support climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts depends on the specific location, design, layout and scale of development, and the inclusion of features to support climate resilience.

**Community wellbeing** Weymouth has identified a need for additional housing, especially affordable housing. As the site is relatively large in size, there is likely to be potential to deliver a level of affordable housing, to help meet local needs. It is recognised that as the size of the site increases, so does the potential to deliver affordable homes – with the potential for long term positive effects.

Weymouth is well served by services, facilities and amenities – offering a number of green spaces, health services including Weymouth hospital; as well as GP practices and dental surgeries, sports facilities, retail opportunities, grocery stores, educational infrastructure and a number of independent businesses. However, this site is outside of the existing development boundary of Weymouth town. Access to these services and facilities would therefore be relatively limited, with development extending the urban built form to the north and east. This is unlikely to support a cohesive, connected community, with new development distant from the town centre. It is noted that a public right of way (PRoW) crosses the site, which would likely allows for safe active travel and exercise – if retained.

The site sits within an open area of land. Allocating it for development would contribute to the closing of the gap between Overcombe to the south-east and Littlemoor to the north. This could lead to coalescence effects if further development were to come forward to the north and west of this site.

Given the above, **negative effects** are considered likely if this site is allocated for development. This site is located outside the developed area, and whilst it has the potential to bring forward a good level of housing (especially affordable housing), it would be difficult to access the services and facilities in Weymouth. As such allocating it would not promote a cohesive community. Additionally, developing this site could contribute to closing the gap between two individual settlements and communities.

**SEA Theme Site A: Land off Budmouth Avenue**

**Historic environment** This site is not located in proximity to any international, national or local historic environment designations, nor does it sit within the setting of any historical conservation areas associated with Weymouth. However, it is approximately 700m north-west of the Dorset and East Devon World Heritage Site (WHS). Existing development screens the site from the WHS, and though housing has the potential to lead to increased recreational use of the WHS, this is not considered an issue. Additionally, it is likely the management plan for the WHS works to ensure adverse negative effects do not come forward. Given this, **neutral / no effects** are concluded likely for this SEA theme.

**Land, soil, and water resources** The indicative Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) for the south west region provided by Natural England identifies the site as falling within Grade 3 ‘Good to Moderate’ agricultural land (ALC), with a low likelihood (<20%) of being Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land. However, there is an area in the eastern extent of the site that has a moderate likelihood (20%-60%) of being BMV land. However, it is noted that this area of the site is very small, and development could be avoided in this specific location.

There are no watercourses on the site, nor does the site sit within an operational catchment. However, it is adjacent to the Lodmoor SSSI and its associated water sources, so it will be important for development to ensure water runoff does not enter the system.

Overall, given the absence of constraints, **neutral / no effects** are considered.

**Landscape** The Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is located approximately 750m north of the site. Effects are likely to be limited due to the existing built form to the north and east of this site, as well as areas of higher elevation outside of the site to the north. The site adjoins existing development to the south and east, comprising agricultural fields along Weymouth’s development boundary. Development at this site will act as an urban extension, and could set precedent for future growth into the open countryside to the north and west. There is potential for this growth to lead to the merging of settlements if this continued – specifically Overcombe and Littlemoor.

The gradient of this site slopes noticeably downwards from the north, but is more level adjacent to the Brackendown Avenue development on the southern boundary, and is relatively level in an east-west direction until the most eastern field - where it slopes down to the east. It is likely development of this site will impact on views out of the residential development along Brackendown Avenue and Budmouth Avenue. Additionally, development of the fields in the western part of the site would result in significant negative effects on the landscape character and visual amenity, as they are exposed to long range views including from the Lodmoor SSSI to the south and the public right of way that crosses the site.

Overall, **negative effects** are considered likely if this site is allocated. This reflects the site’s elevation and the likely visual impact on views from the site across the surrounding area, including the public right of way and the SSSI, and views into the site from existing development. It also reflects the potential for future development to the north and west, as well as the potential for coalescence between settlements.

**SEA Theme      Site A: Land off Budmouth Avenue**

Transportation	<p>There is a rail station in the neighbourhood area, though it is located approximately 2km from the site. The Weymouth station offers hourly services to locations including (but not limited to) London Waterloo, Southampton and Basingstoke, and less frequent direct services to Bristol Parkway. There are no bus stops within a suitable distance to this site – the nearest being located on Sunningdale Rise to the east, approximately 740m away. However, there is a public right of way crossing the site in a north-south direction, connecting Louviers Road to the north with residential development off the B3159 to the south. This allows for access to services in the centre via the B3159. This footpath should be retained to allow for safe active transportation methods.</p> <p>There is limited access to the strategic road network. Access could come from Budmouth Avenue or other residential streets in close proximity, but these tend to be long and narrow cul-de-sacs that are unlikely to have capacity to serve the whole site. As such, it is likely consultation with the highways authority will be required for this site to confirm suitable access. It is likely there will still be a continued reliance on private vehicles to access locations and services outside the neighbourhood area.</p> <p>In conclusion, <b>negative effects</b> are concluded likely for this SEA theme through development of this site. This reflects the complexities for allowing access to the site and the lack of feasible sustainable transport opportunities, given the distance to the rail station and the nearest bus stop.</p>	
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Key		
Likely adverse effect (without mitigation measures)		Likely positive effect
Neutral/no effect		Uncertain effect

Table 2.10: Assessment findings – Site B

SEA Theme      Site B: Lodmoor Old Tip (Middle Section)



Air quality

As there are no AQMAs within the Weymouth neighbourhood area, it is unlikely allocating any site for development will considerably change the air quality baseline. Whilst it is noted the Rodwell Road / Boot Hill area of Weymouth has historically been an area of concern, this site is removed from the area – and the area has experienced an improvement in air quality over recent years.

The nearest air quality monitoring stations are located on King Street, approximately 1.5km south-west of the site in the centre of Weymouth. The latest ASR indicates the monitoring stations within Weymouth were all under the annual mean concentration target for nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>). Nonetheless, allocating this site for housing development would result in more traffic on the roads, and a subsequent increase in NO<sub>2</sub>.

Given the size of the site and the indicative capacity of 75-90 homes, it is possible this site could influence local air quality. This could have an effect on the Lodmoor SSSI designation which is adjacent to the site to the east – potentially affecting the biodiversity and geodiversity value of the site. However, given the size of the site, new development areas could support opportunities for on-site green infrastructure enhancements which would help to absorb pollutants and improve air quality at the local level. As such, **uncertain effects** are concluded to be the most likely if this site was taken forward.

## SEA Theme      Site B: Lodmoor Old Tip (Middle Section)

**Biodiversity and geodiversity** This site is adjacent to the Lodmoor SSSI, which is located directly to the north and east. It is also approximately 1.27km south-west of the Isle of Portland to Studland Cliffs SAC and the South Dorset Coast SSSI. As the site is in proximity to these designations, it is subject to SSSI IRZs for the types of development that are likely to be taken forward through the neighbourhood plan (i.e., residential, rural residential, and rural non-residential). As such, consultation with Natural England will be required if this site is allocated for development, given there could be the loss of connectivity with the SSSI and surrounding important areas for biodiversity and geodiversity, as well as increased pressure on the SAC. This whole site is within Network Enhancement Zone 1 and as such is seen to be suitable for the creation of primary habitat. As such, developing this site in its entirety could bring forward negative effects for the Lodmoor SSSI and biodiversity value of the wider area by reducing the connectivity of this part of the neighbourhood area.

In terms of BAP Priority Habitat, the site has coastal and floodplain grazing marsh in its eastern extent - this is associated with the large area of this habitat type in the Lodmoor SSSI to the east. Additionally, the site is adjacent to two further BAP Priority Habitat areas – an area of reedbeds on the northern site boundary, and an area of deciduous woodland on the western site boundary. As such, development of this site could result in disturbances to these habitats through increased noise and light pollution. There is a level of boundary vegetation, as well as hedgerows and trees contained in the site itself – these features likely contribute to the local biodiversity network and as such should be retained and enhanced where possible.

Overall, **negative effects** are considered likely if development comes forward on this site. This reflects the potential negative effects on the nearby national biodiversity and geodiversity designations, BAP priority habitats in proximity and the hedgerows on the site boundaries. It also acknowledges that developing this site would reduce the ability of the neighbourhood area to bring forward biodiversity improvements / net-gain, as this site is suitable for habitat connection and expansion according to Natural England.

## SEA Theme      Site B: Lodmoor Old Tip (Middle Section)

**Climate change**      Development of any site within Weymouth will lead to inevitable increases in greenhouse gas emissions, linked to the construction phase of development, the increase in the built footprint of Weymouth, as well as an intensification of use at this site. Given this site has a large capacity for housing, the associated greenhouse gas emissions increase has the potential to be significant, and subsequently negatively impact local human and environmental health.

The site is within Flood Zone 1, which indicates the site is at low risk of fluvial flooding – however, the site boundaries are within an area of Flood Zone 3 associated with a series of drains. As such, the site boundaries and the land in proximity to them are at higher risk of flooding. In terms of surface water flood risk, there are a couple of small areas within the site that are at low risk of surface water flooding – located by the existing structures on the site and an area to the north-east. However, the site is adjacent to areas at low and medium risk to the east and north, and high risk to the west. This surface water flood risk is linked to the Lodmoor SSSI to the east and north, and drains to the west. Given the level of fluvial and surface water flood risk, this site would benefit from sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) in this area in line with higher planning policy. However, the risk of flooding could be avoided by developing land away from these areas.

Given this, **uncertain effects** are considered likely if development comes forward on this site. This is due to the potential for an increase in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and due to the risk of fluvial and surface water flooding on the site, especially to the east and west, as well as the uncertainty around how flood risk in the immediate area could impact the site. It is recognised this could likely be addressed through the inclusion of sustainable drainage within new development areas, and avoiding developing on areas of land at greater risk. The extent to which the options have the potential to support climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts depends on the specific location, design, layout and scale of development, and the inclusion of features to support climate resilience.

**SEA Theme      Site B: Lodmoor Old Tip (Middle Section)**

<p>Community wellbeing</p>	<p>Allocating any site for development will help contribute to the identified housing need in Weymouth; This site has the potential to deliver between 75 and 90 new homes, contributing towards the identified housing need for the area. It is recognised that as the size of the site increases, so does the potential to deliver affordable homes – with the potential for long term positive effects.</p> <p>Weymouth is well served by services, facilities and amenities – offering a number of green spaces, health services including Weymouth hospital as well as GP practices and dental surgeries, sports facilities, retail opportunities, grocery stores, educational infrastructure and a number of independent businesses. The site is located under 1km from the town centre and a number of these key facilities and services; it is seen to be adjacent and connected to the existing settlement boundary and built up area. As such, access to these key services and facilities is already in place.</p> <p>Furthermore, there is a public right of way (PRoW) that runs along the northern site boundary and cuts through the site; and the site is located adjacent to the Lodmoor Country Park. As such, this site allows for safe and active travel, as well as providing opportunities for engagement with sport and recreational pursuits as long as the PRoW extending through the site is retained.</p> <p>Given the above, <b>positive effects</b> are considered likely if this site is allocated for development. This is due to the position of the site – allowing for easy access to services and facilities, though it would contribute to closing the gap between two distinct settlements. It has potential to bring forward a large level of housing (especially affordable housing), and provides recreational opportunities, and safe and active travel and exercise prospects.</p>
<p>Historic environment</p>	<p>This site is not located in proximity to any international, national or local historic environment designations. This site is approximately 350m north of the Weymouth Town Conservation Area, but is screened by existing development, including the aquarium and a primary school. However, the site is approximately 1.3km south-west of the Dorset and East Devon WHS. Whilst development of this site would be visually screened by the Lodmoor SSSI and country park designations and existing development to the north-east, recreational impacts on this designation could occur. This is not expected to lead to negative effects for the WHS designation given the management plan in place has not identified recreational activities as a threat. As such, <b>neutral / no effects</b> are considered likely for the historic environment if this site is taken forward for development.</p>

**SEA Theme      Site B: Lodmoor Old Tip (Middle Section)**

**Land, soil and water resources**      Indicative ALC maps suggest there is a low likelihood (<20%) of the land being BMV, with some potential for Grade 3 (which could be BMV) as well as urban uses. Whilst there is a level of uncertainty, it is considered unlikely that development of the site would lead to a loss of BMV agricultural land.

There are no watercourses on the site, but it is noted there are drains on the eastern and western site boundaries, and the water associated with Lodmoor SSSI to the east. As such, it will be important for surface water runoff to be limited at this site to avoid impacts on this designation and these features.

This site is a mix of greenfield and brownfield land. The development of brownfield land presents a positive for this SEA theme due to the efficient use of available land resources. However, given the existing household recycling centre on site, the area could have a level of contamination which would need to be remediated prior to development.

Considering the above, **uncertain effects** are concluded likely for this SEA theme if this site is allocated. Whilst the quality of the land at the site is uncertain, it has the potential to be of high quality. Additionally, there is the question around contamination linked to the recycling centre on the site at present. This could bring forward benefits to this SEA theme through effective remediation.

**Landscape**      Whilst there are no international or national landscape designations within the boundaries or in proximity to this site, the site is adjacent to the Lodmoor Country Park – located to the east (the same designation area as the Lodmoor SSSI). In terms of elevation, the delivery of 75-90 new homes on the site could impact upon long distance views to and from the country park, notably from development along Weymouth Bay Avenue, Beaumont Avenue and Grove Avenue, as well as the Lodmoor Play Park, all of which are located to the west of the site. It is noted that views may already be disturbed to an extent, due to the presence of the household recycling centre on the site.

In line with the whole neighbourhood area, this site is within the National Character Areas (NCA) 138: Weymouth Lowlands, and the site sits within the ridge and vale local character area. Pressures on this landscape area includes new housing development, grazing, climate change (higher temperatures and more frequent drought conditions etc), and renewable energy development. Development here is limited by the Lodmoor designations to the east, and existing development and sports and recreational provision to the west. However, growth could continue northwards and / or southwards of this site – this urban extension would reduce the gap between Weymouth and Overcombe.

In conclusion, **uncertain effects** are concluded most likely if this site was taken forward for development. This reflects the proximity of the site to the Lodmoor designations and existing development to the west, which could have views impacted. It also reflects the potential for development here to close the gap between two distinct settlements, and the uncertainty over the design and what mitigation could be achieved here to lessen landscape and visual impacts.

**SEA Theme      Site B: Lodmoor Old Tip (Middle Section)**

Transportation	<p>Weymouth rail station is approximately 1.5km south-west of this site. It offers hourly services to locations including (but not limited to) London Waterloo, Southampton and Basingstoke, and less frequent direct services to Bristol Parkway. The nearest bus stop to this site is located on the B3155, an approximate 540m walk away. This allows for sustainable transportation to a variety of locations in and around Weymouth. Additionally, there is a public right of way on the northern site boundary that allows for active travel to residential development and the B3159 to the west, and Littlemoor to the north. This should be retained and enhanced through development where possible.</p> <p>Whilst the site is not adjacent to any roads, existing access for the household recycling centre connects to the B3155 to the south. This then connects with Overcombe in the north-east and Weymouth in the south-west. From there, there is access to the strategic transport network (A35 and A354) and larger centres such as Dorchester to the north and Portland to the south. This road is also walking/ cycling friendly, connecting to the South West Coastal Path. However, it is likely there will still be a continued reliance on private vehicles to access locations and services outside the neighbourhood area.</p> <p>In light of the above, <b>neutral / no effects</b> are considered likely through developing this site. This is due to there being opportunities to engage with sustainable and active transportation, and the site's location in relation local strategic road network which will likely encourage private vehicle usage.</p>	
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Key		
Likely adverse effect (without mitigation measures)		Likely positive effect
Neutral/no effect		Uncertain effect

Table 2.11: Assessment findings – Site C

SEA Theme      Site C: Lodmoor Old Tip (Southern Section)



**Air quality**

Given there are no AQMAs within the Weymouth neighbourhood area, it is unlikely allocating any site for development will considerably change the air quality baseline. Though the Rodwell Road / Boot Hill area of Weymouth has been of concern over the years, this site is not within proximity to this part of the neighbourhood area and is unlikely to impact it.

The nearest air quality monitoring stations are located on King Street, approximately 1.5km south-west of the site in the centre of Weymouth. The latest ASR indicates the monitoring stations within Weymouth were all under the annual mean concentration target for nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>). Nonetheless, allocating this site for housing development would result in more traffic on the roads, and a subsequent increase in NO<sub>2</sub>.

Given the indicative capacity of 30-50 homes for this site, it is possible development at this location could negatively impact the overall air quality of the neighbourhood area. This is due to an increase in vehicles on the road linked to home ownership at this site. However, given the size of the site, new development areas could support opportunities for on-site green infrastructure enhancements which would help to absorb pollutants and improve air quality at the local level. As such, **uncertain effects** are concluded to be the most likely if this site was taken forward.

**SEA Theme      Site C: Lodmoor Old Tip (Southern Section)**

**Biodiversity and geodiversity** This site is adjacent to the Lodmoor SSSI, which is located to the east. It is also approximately 1.25km south-west of the Isle of Portland to Studland Cliffs SAC and the South Dorset Coast SSSI. As the site is in proximity to these designations, it is subject to SSSI IRZs for the types of development that are likely to be taken forward through the neighbourhood plan (i.e., residential, rural residential, and rural non-residential). As such, consultation with Natural England will be required if this site is allocated for development, given there could be the loss of connectivity with the SSSI and surrounding important areas for biodiversity and geodiversity, as well as increased pressure on the SAC. This site is also seen to be suitable for habitat creation and expansion, as it overlaps with a Network Enhancement Zone 1 and Network Enhancement Zone 2, as well as an area of Restorable Habitat. As such, developing this site for new housing could negatively impact biodiversity and geodiversity in the neighbourhood area by removing an area that could positively contribute to biodiversity net-gain activities and the improvement of biodiversity connectivity.

The site has a small area of coastal and floodplain grazing marsh BAP Priority Habitat on its eastern site boundary, which is linked to the Lodmoor SSSI designation. This habitat could be disturbed by development on this site through increased noise and light pollution. There is boundary vegetation on the site boundaries, and hedgerows within the site that likely contribute to the local biodiversity network. As such they should be retained and enhanced as far as possible to avoid biodiversity impacts and to help deliver biodiversity connectivity and net gains.

Overall, **uncertain effects** are considered likely if development comes forward on this site. Whilst there might be potential negative effects on the nearby national biodiversity and geodiversity designations, the site is suitable for habitat connection and expansion according to Natural England which may support opportunities for net-gains. This is dependent on the design of new development areas.

**Climate change** Development of this site will lead to inevitable increases in greenhouse gas emissions, linked to the construction phase of development, the increase in the built footprint of Weymouth, as well as an intensification of use at this site. This site has the potential to increase greenhouse gas emissions, which could impact on the natural and built environment surrounding the site and further afield.

Regarding flood risk, the site predominately falls within Flood Zone 1 and as such has a low risk of fluvial flooding; however, areas of Flood Zone 2 and Flood Zone 3 exist towards the eastern, southern and western site boundaries, and are at greater risk of flooding. Similarly, the majority of the site is at low risk of surface water flooding – with the eastern and western site boundaries at medium to high surface water flood risk. Given the level of fluvial and surface water flood risk, this site would benefit from SuDS in this area in line with higher planning policy. Additionally, it is recognised that development at the site could avoid areas at higher risk of flooding.

Given this, **uncertain effects** are considered likely if development comes forward on this site, given the potential for a great increase in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and due to the risk of fluvial and surface water flooding on the site, especially in proximity to the northern site boundary. It is recognised this could likely be addressed through the inclusion of SuDS and the avoidance of areas more susceptible to flooding.

**SEA Theme      Site C: Lodmoor Old Tip (Southern Section)**

**Community wellbeing**

Allocating any site for development will help contribute to the identified housing need in Weymouth. This site has the potential to deliver between 30 and 50 new homes, contributing towards the identified housing need for the area. It is recognised that as the size of the site increases, so does the potential to deliver affordable homes – with the potential for long term positive effects.

There are a number of key facilities and amenities in Weymouth that provide important services and opportunities, including recreational, health, and education. This site is located less than 1km from the town centre and these associated services; being adjacent and connected to the existing settlement boundary and built up area. Furthermore, as this site is connected to the existing settlement boundary, allocating this site for development is not seen to have potential to cause coalescence between settlements. However, it would still change the settlement pattern of Weymouth slightly, and could set the precedent for further growth to the north.

The site is adjacent to the Lodmoor designations, and as such could have a recreational impact. This is especially true given the car park already on the site – which could limit the number of people engaging with the recreational opportunities in this part of the neighbourhood area, which includes (but is not limited to) Lodmoor Country Park, the beach, SEA Life, a skatepark and a mini golf business.

Given the above, **positive effects** are considered likely if this site is allocated for development. This reflects the location of the site and ease of access to facilities and services, as well as its potential to bring forward needed infrastructure and a good level of affordable housing.

**Historic environment**

This site is not located in proximity to any international, national or local historic environment designations, but it does sit within the setting of the Weymouth Town Centre Conservation Area, which is located approximately 270m south-west of the site. The conservation area is on the Heritage at Risk 2022 register for the South West, and is seen to be in very bad condition with a medium vulnerability – as such, it is deteriorating significantly. Additionally, the site is approximately 1.25km south-west of the Dorset and East Devon WHS. Though it is acknowledged the site is likely screened by the Lodmoor designations and existing development, allocating this site could result in an increase in recreational pressure on this site.

Overall, **neutral / no effects** are likely with respect to the historic environment, given the relative distance of the site from internationally and nationally designated heritage assets. It is noted work on the site could improve the status of the conservation area through considerate design that better the setting, which would allow for positive effects to come forward for this SEA theme.

**SEA Theme      Site C: Lodmoor Old Tip (Southern Section)**

**Land, soil and water resources**      Indicative ALC maps suggest there is a low likelihood (<20%) of the land being BMV, with some potential for Grade 3 (which could be BMV) or land in urban use. Whilst there is a level of uncertainty, it is considered unlikely that development of the site would lead to a loss of BMV agricultural land.

There are no watercourses on the site, however there is a drain on the western site boundary, and another in proximity to the southern boundary. Given the proximity of the Lodmoor SSSI it will be essential for surface water runoff to be limited to maintain the integrity of the designated site.

There is a car park within the site boundaries which could impact on the land quality. However, the potential level of contamination linked to this feature is unlikely to be significant – and it is likely allocating this site for housing development will bring forward opportunities for remediation, with the potential for positive effects overall.

Given the above, broadly **neutral / no effects** are considered likely if this site is taken forward for development. This is due to the redevelopment of a partial brownfield site and the likely poor quality of the land, as well as the limited water concerns.

**Landscape**      There are no internationally or nationally designated landscape features within or near to this site. However, the Lodmoor Country Park is adjacent to the site to the east. Despite this proximity, it is unlikely allocating this site will significantly impact on views to and from the Country Park given the existing SEA LIFE Centre Weymouth, Weymouth Pirate Adventure Mini Gold, The Front Skatepark, Weymouth Bay Miniature Railway and the Sandworld Weymouth recreational development adjacent to the site to the west, as well as the existing built development within the site. The size of the site also contributes to reduced impacts on views. Additionally, the site slopes downwards in a south-east direction. Therefore, any potential landscape impacts (notably impacts on views) will likely be reduced in the southern part of the site as new development will be at a lower elevation.

This site is considered to be adjacent to and connected to the existing settlement boundary and built up area, and as such is unlikely to significantly change the size and character of the existing settlement. Additionally, the site is currently contained / constrained to the east, south and west. As such, development is unlikely to lead to further development in these directions, but could set the precedent for growth to the north.

Given the size of the site, its limited opportunity for future growth, and its location adjacent to existing development to the west, it is unlikely bringing forward development here will result in significant landscape impacts – especially given the site is partially brownfield and located on the edge of the Weymouth settlement. The brownfield status of this site, as well as its location in relation to Weymouth, limits the potential for negative effects on the landscape. Additionally, given there is existing development on the site, this site offers the opportunity to bring forward benefits for the landscape through the adoption of a sensitive design and layout scheme.

In conclusion, **neutral / no effects** are concluded most likely if this site is taken forward for development. This reflects the size of the site and the low likelihood of development impacting on views in the area. It also reflects the partial brownfield status of the site, as well as the potential for landscape remediation through sensitive design and layout.

**SEA Theme      Site C: Lodmoor Old Tip (Southern Section)**

Transportation	<p>Weymouth rail station is approximately 1.5km south-west of this site. This station offers hourly services to locations including (but not limited to) London Waterloo, Southampton and Basingstoke, and less frequent direct services to Bristol Parkway. The nearest bus stop to this site is located on the B3155, an approximate 300m walk away. This allows for sustainable transportation to a variety of locations in and around Weymouth. Access to this bus stop already exists via the road that runs through the site to the car park, and the household recycling centre to the north of the site. The road to the car park and the B3155 to the south offers safe pedestrian and cycle access through the pavement and cycle path provision, and the South West Coastal Path runs alongside this road to allow for longer walking routes.</p> <p>Access to the site already exists through the junction between the car park and the B3155. This road allows for vehicular access to Overcombe in the north-east to Weymouth in the south-west. From there, the wider strategic network includes the A354, connecting to the A35 to the north around Dorchester, and Portland to the south.</p> <p>Given this, <b>positive effects</b> are considered likely through developing this site. This is due to the site’s connection to the local strategic road network, and the existing access to the site from Weymouth town centre via the pavements and bus services. This allows for sustainable transportation to a variety of locations in and around Weymouth</p>	
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Key		
Likely adverse effect (without mitigation measures)		Likely positive effect
Neutral/no effect		Uncertain effect

Table 2.12: Assessment findings – Site D

SEA Theme Site D: Redlands Farm



Air quality

There are no air quality management areas (AQMAs) within Weymouth; as such, allocating any site for development would not contribute to air quality concerns in the neighbourhood area. It is noted that the Rodwell Road / Boot Hill area of Weymouth is of concern with regards to air quality in Weymouth – however, this site is a distance from this part of the neighbourhood area and is unlikely to impact it.

This site is not located within proximity to an air quality monitoring station (the nearest being located approximately 2.8km south-east on King Street), and the latest air quality annual status report indicates the monitoring stations within Weymouth were all under the annual mean concentration target for nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>). Nonetheless, allocating this site for housing development would result in more traffic on the roads, and a subsequent increase in NO<sub>2</sub>.

Given the size of the site and the indicative capacity of 150 homes, it is likely the site will influence the air quality baseline (e.g., from an increase in vehicles on the road network). However, given the size of the site, new development areas could support opportunities for on-site green infrastructure enhancements which would help to absorb pollutants and improve air quality at the local level. As such, **uncertain effects** are concluded to be the most likely if this site was taken forward.

## SEA Theme

## Site D: Redlands Farm

### Biodiversity and geodiversity

This site is within proximity to the Lodmoor SSSI, which is located approximately 500m to the east. However, given the existing development along Dorchester Road, Blenheim Road, Clarendon Avenue and Greenway Road, as well as the A354, it is likely development at this site will be screened from the designation. Additionally, the site is approximately 550m north of the Radipole Lake SSSI. Given the open nature of the landscape between the site and the designation, it is possible allocating this site for development could impact on the visual interpretation and the setting of the designation. However, this is dependent on the design of the site. As the site is in proximity to two SSSIs, it is subject to SSSI IRZs for the types of development that are likely to be taken forward through the neighbourhood plan (i.e., residential, rural residential, and rural non-residential). Consequently, consultation with Natural England will be required if this site is allocated for development. Half of the site (to the west) is within an identified Network Expansion Zone – and as such is suitable for connecting biodiversity networks across the landscape. If this action was incorporated into the development design scheme for the site, it would likely bring forward benefits for this SEA theme in this part of the site.

The western extent of this site has coastal and floodplain grazing marsh BAP Priority Habitat, which extends to the north and south outside of the site boundaries. The site is also adjacent to deciduous woodland BAP Priority Habitat located to the south. These habitats could be disturbed by development on this site through increased noise and light pollution. Additionally, there is boundary vegetation in the form of hedgerows on the site perimeter and also within the site that delineate between different fields. These features should be retained and enhanced as far as possible to avoid biodiversity impacts and to help deliver biodiversity connectivity and net gains. It is noted that development of this site has the potential to lead to fragmentation of habitats, which will reduce the connectivity of the biodiversity network in the neighbourhood area.

Overall, **negative effects** are considered likely if development comes forward on this site. This reflects the scale of the development potentially impacting designated sites (reflected through the IRZ overlaps), and the BAP priority habitats in proximity and the hedgerows on the site boundaries and within the site. It is recognised that there is the potential for mitigation measures to address any impacts, for example enhanced tree or hedgerow planting as part of the design scheme.

**SEA Theme**

**Site D: Redlands Farm**

**Climate change**

Allocating any site for development will lead to an unavoidable increase in greenhouse gas emissions. This is due to the associated development construction phases, and an increase in the built footprint and land use intensification in the neighbourhood area. Given the potentially significant housing capacity of this site, this site would increase the greenhouse gas emissions more than any of the other potential sites. This increase in emissions is likely to impact on the natural and built environment on and surrounding the site, as well as in the local area.

Given the presence of two watercourses in the western part of the site, the associated area of the site is within Flood Zone 2 and Flood Zone 3 and is at medium to high risk of fluvial flooding. The same area is at low to high risk of surface water flooding – additionally, the area around the farm structures in the eastern part of the site is at low, medium and high risk of surface water flooding, especially along the hedgerow that intersects the site in a north-south direction. It will be important to lower housing densities in these sections, or avoid placing houses in these areas altogether, to reduce the impact of fluvial and surface water flooding on the development. It is suggested the use of SuDS is explored for this site as well to reduce the flood risk, in line with higher planning policy. Avoidance of the areas at risk of flooding would likely reduce the number of houses brought forward on this site.

From the above, it is clear **negative effects** would be anticipated through taking this site forward for development. This reflects the high fluvial and surface water flood risk in the western and eastern parts of the site, plus the large potential housing capacity that will contribute a greater level of greenhouse gas emissions.

**Community wellbeing**

Allocating any site for development will help contribute to the identified housing need in Weymouth. This site has the potential to deliver 150 new homes, contributing towards the identified housing need for the area. It is recognised that as the size of the site increases, so does the potential to deliver affordable homes – with the potential for long term positive effects.

There are a number of key facilities and amenities in Weymouth that provide important services and opportunities, including recreational, health, and education. Whilst this site is approximately 2.5km from the town centre and its associated services (and is this seen to be outside the development boundary), it is adjacent to a play area, and in proximity to Radipole Primary School, and a sports ground. It is also within proximity to a garage and an M&S supermarket, as well as Redlands Leisure and Community Park. This allows for engagement with recreational opportunities.

Given the above, broadly **uncertain effects** are considered likely if this site is allocated for development. This reflects the potential housing growth the site could provide, as well as its proximity to recreational opportunities. However, the site is a distance from the town centre and its associated amenities, like healthcare provision. Access to these is provided via Dorchester Road.

**SEA Theme**

**Site D: Redlands Farm**

**Historic environment**

The site is within 300m north-west / north / north-east of a number of historic environment features, including a scheduled monument (Humpty Dumpty Field, Radipole – Historic England List Entry Number: [1002395](#)), and three Grade II listed buildings: Mill to North East of The Meadows (The Meadows Not Included (Historic England List Entry Number: [1147986](#)), Corfe Hill House (Historic England List Entry Number: [1271637](#)) and Marvels Cottage with Outbuilding (Historic List Entry Number: [1147984](#)). It is possible developing this site could impact on the setting of these features. However given the distance, development between these features and the site, and the elevation of the site being lower or similar to historic environment features, there is potential for negative effects to be reduced. However, the site is adjacent to the Radipole Conservation Area (located to the south) and in proximity to the Nottingham Conservation Area (located approximately 75m to the north). It is likely allocating this site for development will detract from the setting of these conservation areas – and change their interpretation and experience.

This site is located in an area with a variety of historic environment features. Despite the distance between the site and specific features, the site is also within proximity to two conservation areas and has the potential to negatively impact on their setting. Nonetheless, it is recognised that the design of new development areas can support opportunities to enhance the setting of nearby heritage assets. As such, **uncertain effects** are considered likely for this site under this SEA theme.

**Land, soil and water resources**

According to the indicative ALC for the south-west, undertaken by Natural England, this site is mostly Grade 3 ‘Good to Moderate’ agricultural land, with an area of Grade 4 ‘Poor’ by the watercourse. Despite this, the site is seen to be mostly within urban / industrial use, with the western part having a low likelihood (<20%) of being BMV land. As such, allocating this site for development is unlikely to result in the loss of land better suited for agricultural purposes.

The River Wey is on the western site boundary; as such, the site sits within the Wey Water body catchment. The Wey waterbody has a moderate ecological status and a failed chemical status. Given this, development has the potential to exacerbate ecological and chemical processes in this stretch of the waterbody. It will be important to ensure the potential design of the development reduces surface water runoff into the River Wey to ensure the water regimes remain in their current state.

Given the above, **uncertain effects** are concluded most likely for this SEA theme, given the presence of the watercourse.

## SEA Theme

## Site D: Redlands Farm

### Landscape

This site is not located within or in proximity to a landscape designation. However, the site is a large greenfield site located outside the development boundary, with open landscape to the north and west. The delivery of new homes at this site would lead to the loss of open greenfield land, altering the settlement pattern and resulting in urban sprawl to the north-east of Weymouth. Allocating this site for development could also set the precedent for further growth to the west and north, which could encroach on the gap between Weymouth and Nottingham, as well as encroach on the linear ribbon development seen along Dorchester Road.

The site, like the whole neighbourhood area, is within the National Character Areas (NCA) 138: Weymouth Lowlands, and the site sits within the ridge and vale local character area. Pressures on this landscape area includes new housing development, grazing, climate change (higher temperatures and more frequent drought conditions etc), and renewable energy development.

The eastern half of the site is fairly level, but slopes steeply downwards towards the west when the middle of the site is reached. The site also slopes downwards from the north to the south. The most eastern field is at a similar elevation to the existing development adjacent to it. The varying topography of the site will lead to varying impacts in terms of long and short distance views depending on where the development is focussed.

Overall, **negative effects** are considered likely if this site were to come forward for development. This reflects the site's large greenfield status, the steeply sloping elevation, and the potential to set the precedent for further growth in this area. It is noted that the landscape impact could be partially mitigated through sensitive design choices.

**SEA Theme**

**Site D: Redlands Farm**

**Transportation**

This site is approximately 1km from Upwey rail station located to the north-east, and approximately 2.6km from the Weymouth station to the south-east. The Weymouth station offers hourly services to locations including (but not limited to) London Waterloo, Southampton and Basingstoke, and less frequent direct services to Bristol Parkway. The Upwey station is on the same line. There is a bus stop on the northern site boundary that provides access to three bus services. These bus services provide sustainable transportation opportunities to locations including Littlemoor, Weymouth town centre, and Poundbury. Additionally, Dorchester Road on the eastern site boundary has pavement and cycle lanes to allow for safe active transportation opportunities. Dorchester Road, also known as the B3159, provides vehicular access to the A354 to the south and north, which runs to Weymouth town centre and onto Portland in the south, and to Dorchester in the north.

In addition to the sustainable and active transport provision off site, there are three PRoWs on the site – footpaths that travel in a broadly north-south direction, connecting Nottingham to Redlands. There is a further PRoW on the southern site boundary – another footpath connecting Redlands to Radipole. These PRoWs should be maintained and enhanced where possible to ensure safe access continues and the wider PRoW network is well connected.

As it currently stands, the existing access to the site is narrow and is in poor condition. It is not capable of serving development on the site. However, the site includes land that leads directly onto Dorchester Road to the east, which would allow access if a junction was created and the road widened. Alternatively, access could be provided through land immediately to the north of the site. It is likely there will still be a continued reliance on private vehicles to access locations and services outside the neighbourhood area.

In conclusion, **negative effects** are concluded likely for this SEA theme through development of this site, due to the access constraints at this location.

Key	
Likely adverse effect (without mitigation measures)	Likely positive effect
Neutral/no effect	Uncertain effect

Table 2.13: Assessment findings – Site E

SEA Theme                      Site E: Land at Wyke Oliver Farm (North)



Air quality

As there are no AQMAs within the Weymouth neighbourhood area, it is unlikely allocating any site for development will considerably change the air quality baseline. Whilst it is noted the Rodwell Road / Boot Hill area of Weymouth has historically been an area of concern, this site is removed from the area – and the area has experienced an improvement in air quality over recent years.

This site is not located within proximity to an air quality monitoring station (the nearest being located on King Street approximately 2.7km south), and the latest air quality annual status report indicates the monitoring stations within Weymouth were all under the annual mean concentration target for nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>). Nonetheless, allocating this site for housing development would result in more traffic on the roads, and a subsequent increase in NO<sub>2</sub>.

Given the size of the site and the indicative capacity of 112-135 homes, it is likely this site could influence local air quality (e.g., from additional vehicles on the road network). However, given the size of the site, new development areas could support opportunities for on-site green infrastructure enhancements which would help to absorb pollutants and improve air quality at the local level. As such, **uncertain effects** are concluded to be the most likely if this site was taken forward.

**SEA Theme**

**Site E: Land at Wyke Oliver Farm (North)**

**Biodiversity and  
geodiversity**

This site is within 500m of the Lodmoor SSSI, which is located to the south of the site. It is also approximately 750m north-west of the Isle of Portland to Studland Cliffs SAC and the South Dorset Coast SSSI. As the site is in proximity to these designations, it is subject to SSSI IRZs for the types of development that are likely to be taken forward through the neighbourhood plan (i.e., residential, rural residential, and rural non-residential). Development of the site could result in additional pressure on the SAC – as such, consultation with Natural England will be required if this site is allocated for development.

Whilst there are no BAP Priority Habitats within the site boundaries, the site is adjacent to an extensive area of traditional orchard on the northern boundary. This habitat could be disturbed by development on this site through increased noise and light pollution, as well as potential destruction to allow for access to and from the site. Additionally, there are hedgerows on the site boundaries and within the site itself delineating different fields, which will contribute to the local biodiversity network. These should be retained where possible.

Overall, **uncertain effects** are considered likely if development comes forward on this site. This reflects uncertainty over the potential impacts on the nearby national biodiversity and geodiversity designations, and the hedgerows on the site boundaries, as well as the BAP Priority Habitat to the north of the site.

**Climate change**

Development of this site will lead to inevitable increases in greenhouse gas emissions, linked to the construction phase of development, the increase in the built footprint of Weymouth, as well as an intensification of use at this site. As this site is of a large scale and has a large housing capacity, the potential increase in greenhouse gas emissions is likely to be significant and could contribute to local climate change impacts through increasing carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions. This could further impact other areas included under the SEA framework, such as community wellbeing (through potential impacts on health linked to emissions) and biodiversity and geodiversity (through potential impacts on habitats, species and designated sites).

Regarding flood risk, the site is mostly within Flood Zone 1, with areas within Flood Zone 2 and Flood Zone 3 located in the middle of the site to the west of Wyke Oliver Farm. However, the areas affected are not of a significant size. It is noted there are areas of Flood Zone 2 and Flood Zone 3 to the north of the site, which could impact upon the northern site boundary. The same areas of the site are at risk of surface water flooding – ranging from low to high risk in and around Wyke Oliver Farm and around the waterbody on the site. Again, given the areas affected are small, or adjacent to the northern site boundary, it is unlikely development would be affected by flooding, as these areas could be avoided.

Given the above, **uncertain effects** are concluded most likely. This is due to the uncertainty linked to the potential affects of flooding on development; though it is noted these could be largely avoided through an appropriate design scheme.

**SEA Theme**

**Site E: Land at Wyke Oliver Farm (North)**

<p>Community wellbeing</p>	<p>Weymouth has identified a need for additional housing, especially affordable housing. This site has the potential to deliver between 112 and 135 new homes, contributing towards the identified housing need for the area. It is recognised that as the size of the site increases, so does the potential to deliver affordable homes – with the potential for long term positive effects.</p> <p>Weymouth is well served by services, facilities and amenities – offering a number of green spaces, health services including Weymouth hospital as well as GP practices and dental surgeries, sports facilities, retail opportunities, grocery stores, educational infrastructure and a number of independent businesses. Whilst this site is outside of the existing development boundary, it is considered to be connected to it. As such, access to these services and facilities is relatively good through driving. It is noted there are a number of PRoW on the western site boundary, that connect Littlemoor to the residential development off the B3159 that provides opportunities for active travel uptake.</p> <p>Overall, <b>uncertain effects</b> are considered likely if this site is allocated for development. It is of a size large enough to help meet housing targets in Weymouth and bring forward a good amount of affordable housing. However, given its location outside of the development boundary, there is uncertainty over how well it will connect to the main settlement of Weymouth and encourage community integration.</p>
<p>Historic environment</p>	<p>Whilst there are two listed buildings within 300m of this site to the east, it is unlikely allocating this site for development will impact on the setting of these features given the site is screened by existing development. As such, allocating the site for development is unlikely to impact upon locally or nationally designated sites. However, it is approximately 760m north-west of the Dorset and East Devon WHS. Existing screening exists through the presence of housing development between the site and the designation. Whilst it is acknowledged there could be a recreational impact on this site through a greater number of people using the site, recreational pressure is not considered to be an issue according to management plan for the designation. Given this, <b>neutral / no effects</b> are concluded likely for this SEA theme.</p>
<p>Land, soil and water resources</p>	<p>The indicative ALC for the south west region provided by Natural England demonstrates this site is within an area of Grade 3 ‘Good to Moderate’ agricultural land, with a low likelihood (&lt;20%) of being BMV land. However, it is noted there is a small section of land extending from the development to the east that has a moderate likelihood (20%-60%) of being best and most versatile land. Despite this, given this size of this area in comparison to the rest of the site, allocating this site would not lead to the loss of productive agricultural land. It is noted that the western edge of this site is within a gas pipeline safeguarding zone.</p> <p>There are no watercourses on the site. However, there is a small pond in the southern part of the site, and a drain intersecting the site - from Wyke Oliver Farm to the east to the residential development to the west. It is not anticipated that allocating this site will result in impacts on these water features.</p> <p><b>Uncertain effects</b> are concluded for this SEA theme. Whilst there is limited potential for the loss of BMV land, consideration should be given to the gas pipeline safeguarding zone that is located along the western edge of the site.</p>

## SEA Theme

## Site E: Land at Wyke Oliver Farm (North)

### Landscape

The site is in proximity to the Dorset AONB, which is located north of the A353. Given the proximity, it is likely development (especially in the northern part of the site) will affect the setting of the designation. This is due to the open greenfield nature of the site – developing the land here would alter the settlement pattern of Littlemoor and result in urban sprawl in this part of the neighbourhood area. It is also due to the elevated topography in this part of the site – though it is noted there is screening adjacent to the northern boundary that will likely help with visual mitigation if it is maintained. The elevation of the site slopes downwards from the north, and then steeply inclines in the southern third. As such, developing the southern part of the site would likely have significant adverse impacts on the landscape character of the Lorton Valley and on the visual amenity of the area, which includes the PRoW on the western site boundary.

The site, like the whole neighbourhood area, is within the National Character Areas (NCA) 138: Weymouth Lowlands, and the site sits within the ridge and vale local character area. Pressures on this landscape area includes new housing development, grazing, climate change (higher temperatures and more frequent drought conditions etc), and renewable energy development. Development of this site is bounded in the north by the A353, and by existing development to the east and west. The open nature of the site extends south, and it is considered that development could set the precedent for urban sprawl / coalescence effects, closing the existing gap between development to the east and west.

Overall, **negative effects** are considered likely if this site is allocated. This reflects the potential negative impacts on the AONB to the north, and the loss of open greenfield land that forms a gap between development to the east and west. Development here has the potential to bring forward urban sprawl effects to the south.

**SEA Theme**

**Site E: Land at Wyke Oliver Farm (North)**

**Transportation**

The Weymouth rail station is located approximately 2.6km from the site to the south-west; it offers hourly services to locations including (but not limited to) London Waterloo, Southampton and Basingstoke, and less frequent direct services to Bristol Parkway. There are bus stops in proximity to the northern site boundary – approximately 75m to the north. These bus stops provide access to sustainable transport to locations including Weymouth town centre, Poundbury, Blandford, and Dorchester. Additionally, there is a PRoW on the western site boundary that connects the Louviers Road to the north with residential development off the B3159 to the south. This allows for access to services in the centre via the B3159. This footpath should be retained to allow for safe active transportation methods

In addition to the PRoW and bus stops, the site is in proximity to the A353, which offers safe pedestrian and cycle access through pavement provision on both sides of the road. This strategic road allows for travel via private vehicle to the A354 to the north-east (providing access to Weymouth, Portland and Dorchester), the A352 to the north-east, and the B3155 to the west – which runs through Overcombe to reach Weymouth town centre. It is likely there will still be a continued reliance on private vehicles to access locations and services outside the neighbourhood area.

However, as it currently stands there is no existing access to the site – it could be established from Littlemoor Road / A354, but this would involve land not within the site boundary. As such, consultation with the local highways authority would be needed.

In conclusion, while the site holds reasonable active / sustainable travel opportunities, **uncertain effects** are concluded. This reflects issues with access as well as the likelihood of bring forward high private vehicle use.

Key		
Likely adverse effect (without mitigation measures)		Likely positive effect
Neutral/no effect		Uncertain effect

Table 2.14: Assessment findings – Site F

SEA Theme

Site F: Land South of Wessex Roundabout



Air quality

Given there are no AQMAs within the Weymouth neighbourhood area, it is unlikely allocating any site for development will considerably change the air quality baseline. Though the Rodwell Road / Boot Hill area of Weymouth has been of concern over the years, this site is not within proximity to this part of the neighbourhood area and is unlikely to impact it.

This site is not located within proximity to an air quality monitoring station - the nearest are located on the A354 Rodwell Road approximately 2km south-east. The latest air quality annual status report indicates the monitoring stations within Weymouth were all under the annual mean concentration target for nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>). Nonetheless, allocating this site for housing development would result in more traffic on the roads, and a subsequent increase in NO<sub>2</sub>.

Although the site is removed from AQMAs, and the current air quality status of the neighbourhood area is stable, the development of this site for 50 homes will lead to increased vehicles on the local road network. This level of growth is therefore likely to have a negative effect on the local air quality. However, new development areas could support opportunities for on-site green infrastructure enhancements which would help to absorb pollutants and improve air quality at the local level. As such, **uncertain effects** are concluded to be the most likely if this site was taken forward.

## SEA Theme

## Site F: Land South of Wessex Roundabout

### Biodiversity and geodiversity

This site is approximately 20m west of the Radipole Lake SSSI. It is also approximately 1.2km east of the Crookhill Brick Pit SAC and SSSI designations, and approximately 1.7km from the Chesil and The Fleet Ramsar, Special Protection Area (SPA), SAC and SSSI designations. Given the proximity of these designations, the site overlaps with SSSI Impact Risk Zones (IRZs), and the majority of the site sits within an IRZ for the types of development that could potentially be taken forward through the neighbourhood plan (i.e., residential, rural residential, and rural non-residential). As such, consultation with Natural England will likely be required for this site if taken forward as a Neighbourhood Plan allocation. It is noted, however, that the site is seen to be suitable for habitat creation that would benefit these international and national biodiversity designations, as it overlaps with a Fragmentation Action Zone. This zone connects existing patches of primary and associated habitats which are currently highly fragmented. As such, development this site in its entirety could bring forward negative effects for the biodiversity value of the area by reducing biodiversity connectivity.

It is acknowledged that development here would require a Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) to understand the impacts of recreational disturbance on the Chesil and The Fleet designations.

The site does not overlap with any Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Priority Habitat, though it is within 70m south-west of two extensive areas of deciduous woodland associated with Radipole Lake. These habitats could be disturbed by development on this site through increased noise and light pollution. Additionally, there are extensive hedgerows and trees on the site boundaries. These could be impacted by development on the site, as they may need to be removed to allow for access into the site. Hedgerows should be retained and enhanced as far as possible to avoid biodiversity impacts and to help deliver biodiversity connectivity and net gains. It is also noted that this site sits within the Chickerell Wildlife Corridor – this forms an important network of multifunctional greenspace that delivers a wide range of environmental benefits<sup>9</sup>.

Overall, **negative effects** are considered likely if development comes forward on this site. This reflects the potential negative effects on the nearby national biodiversity and geodiversity designations, BAP priority habitats in proximity and the hedgerows on the site boundaries. It also acknowledges that developing this site would reduce the ability of the neighbourhood area to bring forward biodiversity improvements / net-gain.

<sup>9</sup> Chickerell Town Council (2021) 'Chickerell Town Neighbourhood Plan 2021-2036' can be accessed [here](#).

## SEA Theme

## Site F: Land South of Wessex Roundabout

### Climate change

Development of this site will lead to inevitable increases in greenhouse gas emissions, linked to the construction phase of development, the increase in the built footprint of Weymouth (and Chickerell given the cross boundary nature of the site) and an intensification of use at this site. Given the capacity of the site, the increase in greenhouse gas emissions has the potential to be great (but less than some other potential sites); impacting local carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions and contributing to climate change effects in the local area. This in turn has the potential to cause effects for other areas included under the SEA framework, such as community wellbeing (through potential impacts on health linked to emissions) and biodiversity and geodiversity (through potential impacts on habitats, species and designated sites). However, an increase in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions linked to growth is inevitable across all options.

In terms of flood risk, the whole site is within Flood Zone 1 and has a low risk of fluvial flooding. However, the site is at low, medium and high risk of surface water flooding – associated with Radipole Lake to the east and drains to the east and north. This flood risk is located in the northern half of the site and is most prevalent on the northern site boundary. The site may benefit from SuDS in this area in line with higher planning policy, and development could be focused away from areas at risk – but would result in a decrease in the number of homes brought forward.

Given this, **negative effects** are considered likely if development comes forward on this site, due to the risk of surface water flooding on the site, especially in proximity to the northern site boundary. It is recognised this could likely be addressed through the inclusion of SuDS within new development areas, and through avoiding developing on certain parts of the site.

**SEA Theme**

**Site F: Land South of Wessex Roundabout**

<p>Community wellbeing</p>	<p>Allocating any site for housing development will make a positive contribution towards meeting the local housing needs as outlined by Dorset Council, and has the potential to bring forward a good level of affordable housing.</p> <p>Weymouth is well served by services, facilities and amenities – offering a number of green spaces, health services including Weymouth hospital as well as GP practices and dental surgeries, sports facilities, retail opportunities, grocery stores, educational infrastructure and a number of independent businesses. This site is located adjacent to the built up area of Weymouth and the settlement boundary. Whilst new development at this location would be in proximity to these services and facilities, access would likely rely on vehicular transportation given the distance from the centre. It is acknowledged there is pavement provision on the B3158 and the B3157 that could provide a level of active transportation.</p> <p>However, allocating this site for housing development will remove its safeguarding status for employment usages, specifically for the western part of the site.</p> <p>Additionally, the site is partially within the Chickerell neighbourhood area – as such, the Chickerell Neighbourhood Plan will need to be considered if development comes forward here, and their consideration will be required. The proximity of the site to Chickerell as well as Weymouth could cause a coalescence effect and negatively impact the two settlements' individual identities.</p> <p>Given this, <b>negative effects</b> are considered likely if development comes forward on this site. This reflects the loss of a potential employment site for housing, and the location of the site outside the settlement boundary (including outside of the neighbourhood area).</p>	
<p>Historic environment</p>	<p>This site is not located in proximity to any international, national or local historic environment designations, nor does it sit within the setting of any historical conservation areas associated with Weymouth or the adjacent Chickerell neighbourhood area. Given this, it is unlikely development at this site will impact the historic environment of Weymouth, and <b>neutral / no effects</b> are concluded likely.</p>	
<p>Land, soil and water resources</p>	<p>According to the indicative ALC for the south west region provided by Natural England, this site is considered to be within an area of Grade 3 'Good to Moderate' agricultural land, with a low likelihood (&lt;20%) of being BMV land. As such, allocating this site does not have the potential to lead to the loss of productive agricultural land.</p> <p>There is a pond on the site located on the eastern site boundary, and there are drains located to the east and north of the site that travel westwards. Additionally, the Radipole Lake designated is located directly to the north-east of the site.</p> <p>Given the site is unlikely to the loss of best and most versatile land, and the lack of watercourses on the site, it is considered likely that <b>neutral / no effects</b> will be brought forward by allocating this site.</p>	

## SEA Theme

## Site F: Land South of Wessex Roundabout

### Landscape

There are no international or national landscape designations within proximity to this site. This site is located adjacent to the built up area and the settlement boundary of Weymouth, and is located on the neighbourhood area boundary with Chickerell neighbourhood area directly west. The proximity of the site to Chickerell as well as Weymouth could cause an urban sprawl effect - negatively impacting the landscape through expanding development and creating a larger urban area. The Chickerell Neighbourhood Plan will need to be considered if development comes forward here, and their town council's consideration will be required.

The site, like the whole neighbourhood area, is within the National Character Areas (NCA) 138: Weymouth Lowlands, and the site sits within the ridge and vale local character area. Pressures on this landscape area includes new housing development, grazing, climate change (higher temperatures and more frequent drought conditions etc), and renewable energy development. However, development at this location is limited by the B3157 adjacent to the north, B3158 to the east, businesses to the west and Weymouth Golf Club to the south. As such, it is unlikely development would set the precedent for future development in this area.

The site is relatively level when travelling in an east-west direction, but it does incline from the north to the south. Given the level of screening on the site provided by the boundary hedgerows and trees, and the location of the site, it is unlikely development will impact on views from residential developments to the north and south. However, it is noted the views from the golf course to the south could be impacted, and the businesses to the west could have views into the site. This could be mitigated through development design and the retention of the boundary vegetation.

Overall, **uncertain effects** are considered likely if this site is allocated. This reflects the greenfield nature of the site and its location outside the settlement boundary, with the potential to impact on views. However, the site is contained by roads and the roundabout to the north east, and development to the west. As such, any landscape effects are likely to be reduced.

**SEA Theme**

**Site F: Land South of Wessex Roundabout**

Transportation	<p>There is a bus stop on the eastern site boundary on the B3158 that can allow for sustainable transportation to locations within Weymouth, including the Asda and the rail station. The Weymouth station offers hourly services to locations including (but not limited to) London Waterloo, Southampton and Basingstoke, and less frequent direct services to Bristol Parkway. The B3158 supports safe active transportation through the provision of pavement. This allows for safe pedestrian access into the centre of Weymouth.</p> <p>The site is at a junction between the B3157 and the B3158; providing access to the strategic road network, connecting with locations within and outside of Weymouth. This includes Chickerell and settlements on the B3157 to Bridport, and Dorchester via the A35 and A354 to the east. It is likely there will still be a continued reliance on private vehicles to access locations and services outside the neighbourhood area.</p> <p>Access to the site could be achieved via Radipole Lane on the eastern site boundary, or the Chickerell Link Road on the northern site boundary. It is noted that considerations will need to be given to the potential impacts on Wessex Roundabout, which is adjacent to the site to the north-east. As the site is located outside the main settlement of Weymouth, it is likely allocating this site will lead to an increased uptake in private vehicle use to access amenities across the neighbourhood area.</p> <p>Given this, <b>negative effects</b> are considered likely through developing this site. This is due to it being located outside of the main settlement of Weymouth, and the potential safety issues associated with establishing access near to the junctions of a busy roundabout.</p>	
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Key		
Likely adverse effect (without mitigation measures)		Likely positive effect
Neutral / no effect		Uncertain effect

## Options for non-principal residences

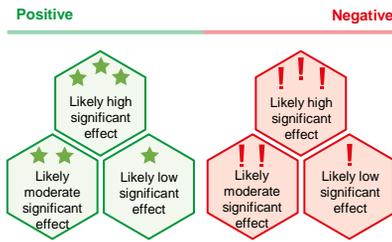
2.23 The location and environmental quality of the neighbourhood area has resulted in a demand for second homes and holiday lets, and this is part of the tourism-related aspects of the local economy. The emerging WNP recognises the benefits of the visitor economy, but also acknowledges the key challenges associated with this key sector of the local economy. This includes with respect to reducing the supply of available housing which affects the ability of local people to buy or rent in the neighbourhood area.

2.24 In the context of the above, the relative sustainability merits of establishing a 'principal residency policy' within the Neighbourhood Plan has been explored. The following options have been considered through the SEA:

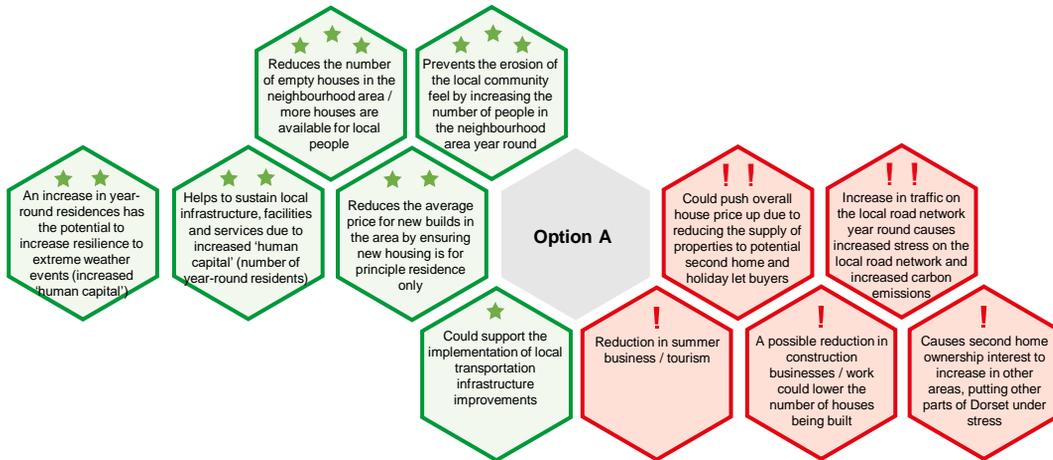
- **Option A:** Take a policy approach to limit non-principal residences and holiday homes within the neighbourhood area.
- **Option B:** Do not take a policy approach to limit non-principal residences and holiday homes within the neighbourhood area.

2.25 An overview of the likely significant effects (both positive, and negative) of each option is presented in the diagram below. The positive impacts are presented in the 'green' shaded areas on the likely significant effects diagram, and the negative impacts are presented in the 'red' shaded areas on the likely significant effects diagram. The number of positive 'stars' and negative 'exclamation marks' within each shaded area represents the potential impact of the likely significant effects (i.e., low, moderate, or high).

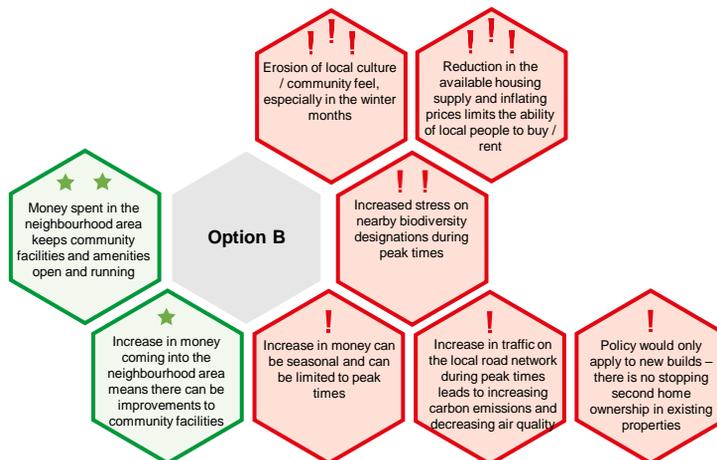
Likely significant effects:



**Option A: Take a policy approach to limit non-principal residences and holiday homes within the neighbourhood area**



**Option B: Do not take a policy approach to limit non-principal residences and holiday homes within the neighbourhood area**



## 3. Conclusions at this current stage

### Summary of assessment findings

#### Options for the focus of development within the DDB

3.1 **Table 3.1** below summarises the rankings of the options in terms of their relative performance for each SEA theme. This is followed by the key conclusions of the appraisal findings.

Table 3.1: Summary of rankings by SEA theme

SEA Theme	Option A	Option B	Option C	Option D	Option E
Air Quality	=1	4	5	3	=1
Biodiversity and Geodiversity	=2	4	5	1	=2
Climate Change	=1	4	5	3	=1
Community Wellbeing	2	=3	=3	=3	1
Historic Environment	=3	=3	=3	1	2
Land, Soil and Water Resources	1	3	5	4	2
Landscape and Townscape	=1	=4	=4	=1	=1
Transportation	1	3	5	4	2

3.2 The assessment findings conclude **that there is the potential for mixed effects (e.g., positive, and negative) associated with Option A – Option D against the SEA themes**. For example, Option A will deliver new housing provision within the most sustainable locations in the neighbourhood area with respect to proximity to services and facilities, accessibility to public transport options and walking / cycling networks. This is a significant positive for community wellbeing, and also with respect to facilitating affordable home delivery in appropriate locations (a key priority for the Neighbourhood Plan). However, it is recognised that there might be locations within the DDB which are perhaps less suitable for affordable homes (e.g., the size of a site reducing the viability of delivering an appropriate housing mix).

3.3 Option B, Option C, and Option D also have the potential to deliver positive effects, for example:

- Option B and Option C: Supporting the vibrancy of the town centre environment; supporting additional and emerging sectors of the local economy, more appropriately reflecting town centre uses in a post-pandemic context; and rejuvenating both the daytime and evening economies in the neighbourhood area.

- Option D: Encouraging greater opportunities for green infrastructure enhancements and net-gain opportunities; additional scope for implementing climate change resilience measures, positively tackling the climate crisis; delivering public realm enhancements to enhance the character of the built-environment and the attractiveness of Weymouth as a place to live and work; and improving the understanding and enjoyment of Weymouth's natural and built-environmental assets.
- 3.4 However, **a focus on Option B, Option C and Option D may result in fewer homes being delivered within the DDB, with additional emphasis therefore placed on identifying sites outside of the DDB to meet emerging housing requirements. This is likely to lead to significant negative impacts** (e.g., delivering housing in less sustainable locations; maintaining a reliance on private vehicles to access locations within the DDB, given the relative distance of sites from services and facilities; delivering homes within closer proximity to internationally and nationally protected sites for biodiversity; and encroaching into the open countryside and reducing green gaps – with associated impacts to landscape and townscape character).
- 3.5 On balance, **Option E, through encouraging a range of uses within the DDB and considering proposals on a case-by-case basis, may help to enable the 'win-win' opportunities associated with the effective planning of key areas within the DDB to be realised.**

### Consideration of sites outside of the DDB

- 3.6 A summary of the findings is presented in **Table 3.1** below. This provides an indication of how the sites have performed in relation to each of the SEA themes, with the colouring as follows:
- **Green:** likely positive effects resulting from an allocation at this location.
  - **Yellow:** likely to be limited or no effects resulting from an allocation at this location.
  - **Blue:** likely to be uncertain effects resulting from an allocation at this location (i.e., there are constraints, but the effects are perhaps dependent or influenced on the design and mitigation measures which could be brought forward as part of a proposal).
  - **Red:** likely negative effects resulting from an allocation at this location.

Table 3.1: Summary of SEA site assessment findings

Site	Air Quality	Biodiversity and Geodiversity	Climate Change	Community Wellbeing	Historic Environment	Land, Soil, and Water Resources	Landscape	Transportation
A	Neutral/no effect	Likely adverse effect	Neutral/no effect	Likely adverse effect	Uncertain effect	Uncertain effect	Likely adverse effect	Likely adverse effect
B	Neutral/no effect	Likely adverse effect	Neutral/no effect	Likely positive effect	Uncertain effect	Neutral/no effect	Neutral/no effect	Uncertain effect
C	Neutral/no effect	Neutral/no effect	Neutral/no effect	Likely positive effect	Uncertain effect	Uncertain effect	Uncertain effect	Likely positive effect
D	Neutral/no effect	Likely adverse effect	Likely adverse effect	Neutral/no effect	Neutral/no effect	Neutral/no effect	Likely adverse effect	Likely adverse effect
E	Neutral/no effect	Neutral/no effect	Neutral/no effect	Neutral/no effect	Uncertain effect	Neutral/no effect	Likely adverse effect	Neutral/no effect
F	Neutral/no effect	Likely adverse effect	Likely adverse effect	Likely adverse effect	Uncertain effect	Uncertain effect	Neutral/no effect	Likely adverse effect

Key	
Likely adverse effect (without mitigation measures)	Likely positive effect
Neutral/no effect	Uncertain effect

3.7 The appraisal findings highlight that ‘uncertain effects’ and ‘likely negative effects’ are likely for all site options under one or more SEA themes. If the emerging WNP takes forward any of these site options, it will be important for new development areas to appropriately address any concerns or constraints associated with the sites.

3.8 In the context of the above, the draft plan appraisal findings (i.e., the next stage of the SEA), will consider the extent to which the emerging WNP policies and proposals address any constraints to the sites, including with respect to mitigation and enhancement measures.

### Options for non-principal residences

3.9 The appraisal concludes that **Option A is likely to perform more favourably than Option B with respect to the Transportation and Air Quality SEA themes**. Option B, by taking an approach which would not limit non-principal residences in the neighbourhood area, will likely result in longer-term increases in traffic at peak times of the year. Issues will be more pronounced during these times, e.g., during the summer months. Although Option A would bring an increase to year-round traffic flows, it could also offer support to the local transport network to improve sustainable transport and maintaining the viability of public transport options.

3.10 **The Community Wellbeing SEA theme also performs more favourably under Option A.** By taking a policy approach which seeks to limit non-principal residences in the neighbourhood area, this is likely to increase the availability of housing stock for local people and ensure that fewer properties are left unoccupied throughout the year. However, it is recognised this could cause more pronounced issues for neighbouring areas as the interest in second homes and holiday lets could shift to other locations along the Dorset coastline.

3.11 Additionally, by having a higher ‘human capital’ (number of year-round residents) across the year, local infrastructure, facilities, and services can be maintained and improved – such as health and education. **This will also bring benefits under the Community Wellbeing SEA theme.** Furthermore, a

higher human capital can also improve the maintenance of existing properties and enable a more effective response and increased resilience to extreme weather events. **This is a significant positive under the Climate Change SEA theme.**

- 3.12 It is recognised that establishing a principal residency policy will only apply to new housing developments within the neighbourhood area. In this respect, Option A could lead to a shift in focus of second home ownership from new builds to the existing housing stock, including buildings that may be significant from a heritage perspective (i.e., nationally designated and / or locally recognised). This could lead to inappropriate development occurring on buildings with heritage importance, or buildings with heritage importance deteriorating as they become second homes or holiday lets, as the property might not be occupied or maintained throughout the year. **Therefore, there could be negative impacts on the Historic Environment SEA theme under Option A.**
- 3.13 With respect to Option B, during peak times of the year heritage assets and resources may experience increased stresses associated with an influx of visitors (and associated recreational and tourism activities). This is also a consideration when thinking about the resilience of ecological assets within and within proximity to the neighbourhood area, and with respect to landscape and townscape character (e.g., impacts to noise and disturbances). **However, it is difficult to conclude whether these impacts would be significantly different to what is currently experienced within the neighbourhood area.**

## 4. Next steps

- 4.1 The findings of this Interim Environmental Report will be reviewed by Weymouth Town Council and the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group alongside the evidence base documents which have been prepared to support the development of the emerging WNP to date.
- 4.2 The preferred approach for the emerging WNP will be developed and the draft version of the emerging WNP updated and finalised, ready for assessment.
- 4.3 This Interim Environmental Report will subsequently be updated to include the full SEA findings, specifically:
  - The reasonable alternatives assessment (as presented in this report); and
  - The appraisal of the draft Plan and the likely significant effects that would result from plan implementation.
- 4.4 The updated and final version of the SEA Environmental Report (i.e., the key output of the SEA process) will be prepared and published alongside the emerging WNP at Regulation 14 consultation.

