



Town Hall
East Street
Wareham
Dorset
BH20 4NS

18 February 2026

To: All Members of the Planning and Transport Committee

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED TO ATTEND a meeting of the **PLANNING AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE** to be held on **Tuesday 24 February 2026** in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, East Street, Wareham at **7.00pm** for the purpose of transacting the business set out in the agenda below.

All Members of the Public are welcome to attend.

Nicola Gray
Town Clerk

Please contact the Town Council office on 01929 553006 if you need any further information on this Agenda.

Members of the Planning and Transport Committee:

Councillor M Tighe (Chair)
Councillor D Budd
Councillor M Cotton
Councillor B Dean

Councillor D Robinson (Vice Chair)
Councillor D Cleaton
Councillor A Dallimore
Councillor M Hill

Please note that Wareham Town Council is a Statutory Consultee for Planning Applications and as such does not make the final decision on any Application. The decisions and comments this Committee make will be fed into the planning process and added to reports by Planning Officers. Dorset Council is the Planning Authority and will issue the final decision notice (Planning Determination) once their investigations into the application, consultation period and decision-making process have been completed.



1. Apologies for absence

24 February 2026 at 7pm

To receive, and consider for acceptance, apologies for absence. (LGA1972 s85)

2. Declarations of interest

To declare any interests relating to the business of the meeting and receive any dispensation requests from the Clerk. (Localism Act 2011 s29-34)

3. Public participation time

An opportunity for members of the public to raise issues of concern or interest, ask a question or make a statement or present a petition or be part of a deputation. Public participation time will be conducted in accordance with the Council's 'Protocol for Public Participation Time' which is limited to 15 minutes, with no individual speaker exceeding a maximum of three minutes each. (LGA1972 s100)

4. Confirmation of minutes of previous meeting held on Tuesday 10 February 2026

To confirm, as a correct record, the minutes of the previous meeting of the Committee (LGA1972 sch12).

5. Matters arising from the minutes of the last meeting held on Tuesday 10 February 2026

To consider any matters arising from the previous minutes of the Committee.

6. Planning Applications

Dorset Council is the local Planning Authority and consults Wareham Town Council on planning applications received for Wareham Town. To consider the following planning applications received:

Application Number: P/CLP/2026/00697
Location: 3 Hutchins Lane Wareham BH20 4FF
Proposal: To convert single garage to provide a dry household store and library including two roof windows on rear elevation and to change garage door to a sliding folding door set.

Decision required by: Information Purposes Only

Application Number: P/HOU/2026/00131
Location: 109 Wessex Oval Wareham BH20 4BS
Proposal: Erect single storey rear extension

Decision required by: 10 March 2026

7. Planning Decisions

To note final outcomes of Wareham Town planning applications.

8. National Planning Policy Framework Consultation Response Recommendation

To consider the recommended response to the National Planning Policy Framework Consultation from the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

9. Worgret Road Speed / Warning Signs

To note the information received from Dorset Council regarding the speed / warning signs on Worgret Road.

10. Any other items the Chairman deems urgent

For report, information or for the agenda at the next meeting of the Planning and Transport Committee. Councils cannot lawfully decide items of business which are not specified in the summons/agenda (LGA1972 sch. 12, paras 10(2)(b) and Longfield Parish Council v Wright (1918) 88 LJ Ch 119).

11. Date of next meeting

To note the date of the next meeting, which is scheduled for **Tuesday 10 March 2026** at **7.00pm**.



Minutes of a meeting of the Planning and Transport Committee held on Tuesday 10 February 2026 in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, East Street, Wareham at 7.00pm.

Committee Members Present: Councillors M Tighe (Chair), D Robinson (Vice Chair), D Budd, M Cotton and A Dallimore.

Officers present: N Gray, Town Clerk & RFO, S Dickins, Deputy Town Clerk

P&T 138/25-26 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr D Cleaton, Cllr B Dean and Cllr M Hill.

P&T 139/25-26 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

P&T 140/25-26 Public participation time

There was one member of the public present who did not wish to speak.

P&T 141/25-26 Confirmation of the minutes of the previous meeting

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 27 January 2026 were approved and were signed by the Chair following the meeting.

P&T 142/25-26 Matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting

There were no matters arising.

P&T 143/25-26 Planning Applications

The following planning applications were received from Dorset Council, in its capacity as the local Planning Authority, for Wareham Town Council to consider:

Application Number: P/TRC/2026/00329
Location: 11 Bonnets Lane Wareham BH20 4HA
Proposal: Multi-stemmed Willow – Remove

Decision: Respond with Comment – No reason to fell, a trim would be sufficient.

Application Number: P/TRC/2026/00305
Location: Located in the courtyard on the land adjoining 13 Church Street Wareham BH20 4NF
Proposal: T1 Yew – Fell. T2 Yew – Fell.
T3 Yew – Fell. T4 Yew – Fell.

Decision: Respond with Comment – No reason to fell, a trim would be sufficient.

P&T 144/25-26 Planning Decisions

The planning decisions report was noted.

P&T 145/25-26 Any other items the Chairman deems urgent

There were no items deemed urgent.

P&T 146/25-26 Date of next meeting

It was noted that the next meeting of the Planning and Transport Committee was scheduled for Tuesday 24 February 2026 at 7:00pm.

Chairman..... Date.....

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| <u>Application Number</u> | <u>Location</u> | <u>Proposal</u> | <u>WTC Decision</u> | <u>DC Decision</u> |
| P/FUL/2025/06653 | 7 Westminster Road Wareham BH20 4SP | Erect single storey extension to existing industrial unit | NO OBJECTION | Under officer consideration |
| P/VOC/2025/06703 | Wareham Riverboats Abbots Quay Wareham BH20 4LW | Replace storage kiosk. Retention and relocation of Bamford's Water Pump. Demolition of stone and concrete plinth (with a variation of conditions 1 and 4 of planning permission P/FUL/2022/04609 to update drawings following design changes and relocation of pump no longer required) | NO OBJECTION | Under officer consideration |
| P/HOU/2025/06107 | 5 Knightstone Close Wareham BH20 4NY | Erect first floor extension over existing footprint | NO OBJECTION | Out to consultation |
| P/FUL/2026/00246 | 176 Northmoor Way Wareham BH20 4SH | Sever land and erect 1no detached 3no bedroom dwelling with access, parking and associated works | NO OBJECTION | Under officer consideration |
| P/LBC/2026/00218 | Thornsæta House 13 St Johns Hill Wareham BH20 4LZ | Retain emergency repair works to chimney | NO OBJECTION | Out to consultation |
| P/TRC/2026/00329 | 11 Bonnets Lane Wareham BH20 4HA | Multi-stemmed Willow – Remove | COMMENT – No reason to fell, a trim would be sufficient. | Response issued - It is recommended that the proposed felling of the tree is acceptable. |
| P/TRC/2026/00305 | Located in the courtyard on the land adjoining 13 Church Street Wareham BH20 4NF | T1 Yew – Fell. T2 Yew – Fell. T3 Yew – Fell. T4 Yew – Fell. | COMMENT – No reason to fell, a trim would be sufficient. | Awaiting consultation expiry |

PLANNING AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE REPORT

Meeting Date: 24 February 2026

Agenda Item: 8

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|---------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Subject: | National Planning Policy Framework Consultation Response Recommendation |
| Prepared by: | Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, Sam Dickins, Deputy Town Clerk |
| Purpose of Report: | To consider the recommended response to the National Planning Policy Framework Consultation from the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. |
| Background: | <p>The Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government announced a consultation for proposed reforms to the planning system within the National Planning Policy Framework on 16 December 2025. Documents relating to the consultation can be found on the Gov.uk website.¹ This consultation closes on 10 March 2026.</p> <p>The Committee resolved to request the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group drafted a recommended response to the National Planning Policy Framework Consultation for consideration at its meeting on 27 January 2026.</p> |
| Key Points: | <p>The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group has drafted a recommended response to the National Planning Policy Framework Consultation and commended it to the Planning and Transport Committee at its meeting on 12 February 2026.</p> <p>The recommended National Planning Policy Framework Consultation response is contained in Appendix 1, with responses to relevant questions beginning on page 5 of this report (Agenda Pack Page 11).</p> <p>With the consultation closing late on 10 March 2026, a response to the consultation would be difficult to submit in a timely fashion within Council's usual meeting schedule if not agreed at the Committee's meeting on 24 February 2026.</p> |
| Implications: | <p>Failure to respond to the National Planning Policy Framework Consultation will mean an absence of the Town Council's views for sustainable national planning policy and development in Wareham, exposing the town to development the Town Council deems unsuitable.</p> <p>An under-considered response may expose the Town Council to erroneously advocating for / failing to challenge unsuitable National Planning Policy Framework changes.</p> <p>Failure to respond may be viewed by residents as the Town Council not fulfilling its stewardship responsibilities.</p> <p>Unsustainable development in or around Wareham may strain services, liveability, ease of access and sense of place.</p> <p>Failure to respond risks strategic misalignment between the National Planning Policy Framework and Wareham Neighbourhood Plan.</p> |
| Recommendation: | To consider the recommended response to the National Planning Policy Framework Consultation from the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group for submission by Wareham Town Council. |

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/national-planning-policy-framework-proposed-reforms-and-other-changes-to-the-planning-system>



Consultation on revised National Planning Policy Framework Response Recommendation

Summary of Key Proposals and Reforms

1. Separation of Plan making from Decision Making Policies

The most significant change is the separation of the National Planning Policy Framework into two distinct tracks to reduce local variation and increase certainty:

- **Plan-making policies:** Guidelines for plan making bodies (local authorities) to create local plans and for qualifying bodies making neighbourhood plans. Neighbourhood plans remain part of the development plan for the area.
- **National Decision-Making Policies (NDMPs):** These apply directly to planning applications and appeals.
- **Weight of Policy:** Crucially, any local plan or neighbourhood plan policies that are "inconsistent in any way" with the new national policies will be given **very limited weight** in decisions except where they have been examined and adopted against the Framework.

2. Reintroduction of Strategic Planning

The draft NPPF contains details of spatial development strategies (SDSs) which were introduced in the Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025 enacted at the end of last year. SDSs are to be prepared by Strategic Planning Authorities which are primarily mayoral combined authorities being introduced across England.

3. Housing and Urban Growth

The draft shifts from a "tilted balance" to a more permanent "default yes" for development in specific locations:

- **Brownfield & Urban land:** Development on suitable urban land is acceptable by default.
- **Transit-Oriented Development:** A "default yes" is established for land around rail stations.
- **Minimum density:** 40 dwellings per hectare (dph) around all stations and 50 dwellings per hectare (dph) around "well-connected" stations located within the top 60 Travel to Work Areas (TTWA) in England by Gross Value Added (GVA). Based on [Litchfield's analysis](#)² this would not include Wareham.

² [How the new NPPF might unlock growth around rail stations - Litchfield's UK Blog](#)



- **New "Medium Site" Category:** For schemes of 10–49 homes (up to 2.5 hectares), intended to support **SME builders** with streamlined regulatory requirements.
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4. Green Belt & "Grey Belt" Reforms

The government is formalising a more permissive approach to certain Green Belt land:

- **Grey Belt definition:** Land within the Green Belt that performs poorly against strategic purposes is now more clearly defined.
 - **Removal of Safeguarding:** The purpose of "safeguarding the countryside from encroachment" is excluded from the Grey Belt assessment, potentially making more sites eligible for development. This is a significant concern.
 - **"Golden Rules":** Development on released Grey Belt land must comply with mandatory public benefits, such as affordable housing and infrastructure provision.
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5. Economic and Infrastructure Growth

Economic benefits are upgraded from "significant weight" to **"substantial weight"** in the planning balance:

- **Strategic Sectors:** Explicit support is given to **data centres**, laboratories, AI growth zones, and logistics.
 - **Clean Energy:** The extraction of coal is further restricted, while the benefits of renewable energy projects receive substantial weight.
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6. Plan-Making Efficiency

- **30-Month Target:** Local plans are expected to be prepared and adopted within 30 months.
- **Spatial Development Strategies (SDS):** New multi-authority strategies will set housing and development requirements, which local plans will then be expected to deliver without further debate.
- For **neighbourhood plans (NPs)**, the proposed reforms focus on tightening their role within the wider development plan while extending specific protections for those that meet strict delivery criteria.



7. Key Implications for Neighbourhood Plans

- **Five Year Protection Period:** The consultation proposes continuing the protection for neighbourhood plans **to five years**. This means that for five years after being "made," a plan's policies carry significant weight even if the local authority cannot demonstrate a five-year housing land supply (5YHLS).
- **Removal of Housing Delivery Tests:** The government proposes removing the current tests that require local authorities to demonstrate at least a three-year housing supply and score above 45% in the Housing Delivery Test for an NP to be protected. This simplifies the route to protection for communities with up-to-date plans.
- **Minimum Development Requirement:** A new policy (PM5) explicitly states that neighbourhood plans **should not propose less development** than what is already set out in the wider local plan or strategic policies.
- **Consistency with NPPF:** A new policy PH17 clarifies that examination of neighbourhood plans will include an assessment of whether they accord with the NPPF policy in that they should not duplicate, substantively restate or modify the content of national decision-making policies.
- **Neighbourhood Priorities Statements:** The government is proposing a simplified version of an NP called a "neighbourhood priorities statement". These will allow communities to formally input into local plan preparation, and authorities will be required to take them into account. These will not form part of the Development Plan.

8. Structural and Transitional Impacts

- **National Decision-Making Policies (NDMPs):** The 2025 draft introduces a clear separation between plan-making and decision-making policies. Any local or neighbourhood policy that is **inconsistent** with these new national standards will be afforded **very limited weight**.
- **Deadlines for Submission:** All neighbourhood plans submitted after **30 June 2025** must comply with the new legal framework. Plans submitted before this date can follow existing rules but must still align with the final 2026 NPPF once published.
- **Mandatory Housing Allocations:** To benefit from protection under paragraph 14, an NP must contain **both policies and specific site allocations** to meet the identified housing requirement.



9. Suggested Comments on NPPF Consultation

The consultation comprises 225 questions, many of which are not relevant to the Neighbourhood Plan or Wareham. Respondents do not need to answer every question. Below are the suggested comments on questions considered relevant to the Neighbourhood Plan preparation and the development of Wareham. The numbered questions are in ***bold and italic*** with comments where disagreement is recommended below each question. In some instances, the explanation is repeated as analysis is likely to be undertaken separately for each question. No explanation is required where a policy is supported.

Questions ask whether respondents “*Strongly Agree, Partly Agree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Partly Disagree, Strongly Disagree*”. Suggested responses are in ***bold, italic and underlined***.

2) Do you agree with the new format and structure of the draft Framework which comprises separate plan-making policies and national decision-making policies? Strongly Agree

The restructure in particular to separate out plan making from decision making policies is most welcome as it creates greater clarity.

3) Do you agree with the proposed set of annexes to be incorporated into the draft Framework? Partly Disagree

We have serious concerns over Annex E: on Green Belt assessments. There are five purposes of the Green Belt. These are:

- a) Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- b) Prevent the merging of neighbouring towns;
- c) Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- d) Preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- e) Assist urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

We are concerned at the omission of (c) above from the criteria in Annex E for the assessment of green belt which will include the identification of grey belt land. This is a serious omission since the safeguarding the countryside from encroachment is one of the main purposes of green belt designation.

37) Do you agree to the proposed approach to development within settlements (S4)? Strongly Agree

Policy S4 sets out sensible criteria for development within settlements.



38) Do you agree to the proposed approach to development outside settlements (S5)? Partly Disagree

Policy S4(j) allows development outside settlements where there is the absence of a 5-year land supply or where the most recent housing delivery test scores less than 75%. In the light of the major changes to the local plan system there needs to be a transitional period before Policy S4(j) applies.

When the revised NPPF is adopted later this year most existing local plans will be out of date. The document recognises that new style local plans should take 36 months to prepare. As a result, there should be transitional arrangements in place whereby Policy S5(j) only comes into effect after a reasonable period for local planning authorities to get their plans adopted and ensure a five-year land supply, say 4-5 years. This would provide a real incentive for local authorities to focus their resources on getting a new style local plan in place with at least a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites within the transition period.

As Introduction para 2 states, the planning system should be genuinely plan led. To activate S5(j) immediately would lead to plan making resources being diverted onto dealing with speculative applications and appeals, delaying local plan production, thus undermining the plan led system and public confidence. We need to move from the “sticks” approach to “carrots”.

41) Do you agree that neighbourhood plans should contain allocations to meet their identified housing requirement in order to qualify for this policy (S6)? Strongly Agree

42) Do you agree with the approach to planning for climate change in policy CC1? Strongly Agree

The emphasis in NPPF on planning for climate change is warmly welcomed

43) Do you agree with the approach to mitigating climate change through planning decisions in policy CC2? Strongly Agree

The emphasis in NPPF on planning to mitigate climate change is warmly welcomed.



44) Do you agree with the approach to climate change adaptation through planning decisions in policy CC3? Strongly Agree

The emphasis in NPPF on adapting for climate change is warmly welcomed.

48) Do you agree the requirements for spatial development strategies and local plans in policy HO1 and policy HO2 are appropriate? Strongly Disagree

The methodology used in the Standard Method set out in Annex D is very simplistic and flawed with its reliance on stock-based data rather than demographic projections. Using 0.8% of existing housing stock as a baseline is a proxy unrelated to an area's real housing need and ignores a location's actual capacity for growth. In many areas this method creates unachievable housing targets. With the very welcome reintroduction of strategic planning by combined authorities, it is hoped that the Government will introduce a much more sophisticated methodology based on demographic and economic projections and recognising the varying capacity of different areas to accommodate different levels of growth sensitivity.

53) Do you agree the new Annex D to the draft Framework is sufficiently clear on the wider procedural elements of 5-year housing land supply, the Housing Delivery Test and how they relate to decision-making? Strongly Disagree

The methodology used in the Standard method set out in Annex D is very simplistic and flawed with its reliance on stock-based data rather than demographic projections. Using 0.8% of existing housing stock as a baseline is a proxy unrelated to an area's real housing need and ignores a location's actual capacity for growth. In many areas this method creates unachievable housing targets. With the very welcome reintroduction of strategic planning by combined authorities, it is hoped that the Government will introduce a much more sophisticated methodology based on demographic and economic projections and recognising the varying capacity of different areas to accommodate different levels of growth sensitivity.

The Housing Delivery Test quite unfairly and unreasonably penalises local planning authorities for the slow build out rates of some sites. Planning authorities do not build any homes. They allocate land for development. Developers and registered providers build the houses. The reason that allocated sites and sites with planning permission are not started or have slow build up rates is often nothing to do with the planning authority. It is due to poor market conditions, high interest rates making mortgages unavailable to many prospective purchasers, materials shortages and skilled labour shortages.



56) Do you agree our proposed changes to the definition of designated rural areas will better support rural social and affordable housing? Partly Disagree

The main problem delivering rural and affordable housing is a lack of grant aid to make schemes viable on rents or shared ownership mortgages that local people, often on low household incomes, can afford. There needs to be a major grant scheme to enable local authorities and registered providers to build the homes that are needed at rents that local people can afford.

60) Do you agree with our proposals to ask authorities to set out requirements for a broader mix of tenures to be provided on sites of 150 homes or more? Partly Disagree

Local authorities should have the ability to specify the mix of tenures and sizes on all sites rather than just those over 150. Having a threshold of 150 will have the unintended consequence of an increase in the number of sites for 149 dwellings coming forward.

65) Would requiring a minimum proportion of social rent, unless otherwise specified in development plans, support the delivery of a greater number of social rent homes? Partly Disagree

The main problem delivering housing is a lack of grant aid to make schemes viable on rents or shared ownership mortgages that local people, often on low household incomes, can afford. There needs to be a major grant scheme to enable local authorities and registered providers to build the homes that are needed at rents that local people can afford.

67 and 71) Do you agree that applicants should have discretion to deliver social and affordable housing requirements via cash payments in lieu of on-site delivery on medium sites? Strongly Disagree

Taking cash payments in lieu of onsite affordable and social housing delivery just transfers the problem of delivering housing at affordable rents or values to the local council or registered provider. Finding sites to build affordable housing is not easy, The best solution is where affordable housing is provided on site, tenure blind in appearance, and “pepper potted” in amongst market housing to create a genuinely mixed and inclusive community.



83) Do you agree with the proposed changes to the Housing Delivery Test rule book? Strongly Disagree

The Housing Delivery Test quite unfairly and unreasonably penalises local planning authorities for the slow build out rates of some sites. Planning authorities do not build any homes. They allocate land for development. Developers and registered providers build the houses. The reason that allocated sites and sites with planning permission are not started or have slow build up rates is often nothing to do with the planning authority. It is due to poor market conditions, high interest rates making mortgages unavailable to many prospective purchasers, materials shortages and skilled labour shortages. The test should be withdrawn.

88) Do you agree with the proposed changes to policy for planning for town centres? Strongly Agree

This policy promotes the vitality and viability of town centres by promoting town centre first for retailing location and encouraging the enhancement of centres.

89) Do you agree with the approach to development in town centres in policy TC2? Strongly Agree

Again, this policy promotes town centre first in terms of the location of retailing.

91) Do you believe the sequential test in policy TC3 should be retained? Strongly Agree

This policy sets out the sequential test for proposals for town centre uses.

114) Do you agree policy L1 provides clear guidance on how Local Plans should be prepared to promote the efficient use of land? Strongly Agree

This policy aims to accommodate as much development as possible on previously developed land.



132) Do you agree policy GB2 gives sufficient detail on the expected roles spatial development strategies and local plans play in assessing Green belt land?

Strongly Disagree

We have serious concerns over policy GB2 and Annex E: on Green Belt assessments. There are five purposes of the Green Belt. These are:

- a) Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- b) Prevent the merging of neighbouring towns;
- c) Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- d) Preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- e) Assist urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

We are concerned at the omission of (c) above from the criteria in Annex E for the assessment of green belt which will include the identification of grey belt land. This is a serious omission since the safeguarding the countryside from encroachment is one of the main purposes of green belt designation.

134) Do you agree the expectations set out in policy GB5 are appropriate and deliverable in Local Plans? Partly Disagree

There is no question in relation to policy GB4 Defining Green Belt Boundaries, so this opportunity is used. The footnote 48 to policy GB4 refers to neighbourhood plans altering Green Belt boundaries where a need for changes to Green Belt boundaries has been established but not made in local plans. The problem is that in practice local plan preparation is often not in synchronisation with neighbourhood plan preparation and so the neighbourhood plan is not able to make minor amendments to enable a housing site to be allocated. It is suggested that this be amended to allow neighbourhood plans to make minor amendments to Green Belt boundaries where the LPA is in agreement, but the local plan is not yet adopted. The neighbourhood plan system already has checks in place to ensure that there is no abuse of this through independent examination and through the LPA making the final decision to “make “the plan.

146) Do you agree that policy DP1 provides sufficient clarity on how development plans should deliver high quality design and placemaking outcomes? Strongly Agree

The introduction of a clear policy on delivering high quality design is warmly welcomed.



164) Do you agree with the clarification that Local Green Space should not fall into areas regarded as grey belt or where Green Belt policy on previously developed land apply? Strongly Disagree

There are instances where there are existing green spaces such as registered allotments, sports fields, play areas and open spaces which are within the exiting Green Belt and may fall within grey belt. It is highly desirable that these spaces which are highly valued by the community are protected from any future development. This policy should be dropped.

182) Do you agree the policy in Policy N4 provides a sufficiently clear basis for considering development proposals affecting protected landscapes and reflecting the statutory duties which apply to them? Strongly Disagree

Our National Parks and National Landscapes (AONBs) are the crown jewels of our countryside, enjoyed by millions and hugely important for tourism and the local economy. To allow major development in these areas would be an act of sheer vandalism for which future generations would never forgive us. The protection these landscapes enjoy was introduced by a Labour Government in 1949 and the strengthened protection was introduced by the Labour Government as recently as December 2024.

Footnote 71 to policy N4 states that “whether a proposal is ‘major development’ is a matter for the decision maker, taking into account its nature, scale and setting, and whether it could have a significant adverse impact on the statutory purposes for which the area has been designated or defined.”

This is entirely unsatisfactory. NPPF is intended to provide clarity for plan maker, decision taker and applicant. As drafted in footnote 70, this is open season for some quite large developments in nationally protected landscapes. It is unrealistic to think that major developments can be mitigated in our National Parks and National Landscapes. This is potentially one of the most harmful policies in the whole of this draft NPPF and one for which future generations will not forgive us. It lacks clarity and will lead to uncertainty, unnecessary arguments, planning appeals and potentially large sporadic development in our most sensitive and beautiful landscapes. NPPF already has a definition of major development in the glossary, and this is the definition that should apply in this policy.

PLANNING AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE REPORT



Meeting Date: 24 February 2026

Agenda Item: 9

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| Subject: | Worgret Road Speed / Warning Signs |
| Prepared by: | Sam Dickins, Deputy Town Clerk |
| Purpose of Report: | To note the information received from Dorset Council regarding the speed / warning signs on Worgret Road. |
| Background: | The Town Council was contacted by Dorset Council on 12 February 2026 noting Dorset Council's proposal to remove 2 speed / warning signs on Worgret Road. |
| Key Points: | <p>The 2 speed indicator signs on Worgret Road have not been operational for approximately 12 – 18 months.</p> <p>Dorset Council recently inspected the signs and have concluded the current signs are unmaintainable as some parts are now obsolete.</p> <p>During this inspection, Dorset Council carried out a speed survey of the area indicating that area would not meet its criteria to install a Speed Indicator Device (SID).</p> <p>Awareness for Councillors of the rationale behind their removal can help assuage residents' concerns.</p> <p>Photographs of the speed / warning signs are presented on the overleaf.</p> <p>Dorset Council has noted it will repeat a speed survey in 6 – 12 months to determine whether the speed in the road is still consistently below threshold, or whether Worgret Road warrants a Speed Indicator Device at that juncture.</p> |
| Implications: | The removal of speed / warning signs can come as unexpected for residents, particularly near sensitive locations such as schools. |
| Recommendation: | To note the information received from Dorset Council regarding the speed / warning signs on Worgret Road. |

