

Bridport Town Council

Bridport Area Neighbourhood Plan Review - Regulation 14 Consultation Analysis

The Regulation 14 consultation on the revised Bridport Area Neighbourhood Plan (BANP) closed on 30 December 2025. This analysis presents an overview of the responses from the community and focuses on feedback that requires further consideration by the BANP Steering Group. The Steering Group will need to decide how best to respond to the consultation feedback and possibly undertake further work to amend the proposed text/ policy revisions. BANP Steering Group recommendations will then be tabled to the BANP JCC Meeting scheduled for January 29th.

Online Consultation Response

112 responses were received - See Consultation Feedback summary document.

Overall the community response was strongly supportive of the revised Bridport Area Neighbourhood Plan. Those Agreeing with the revised policies ranging between 76-89% whilst those disagreeing ranged between 1-9%:

Revised BANP	% Agree % Disagree	
Vision	85% agree, 9% neutral, 5.5% disagree.	Respondents broadly support the revised vision in principle but consistently mention that it must prioritise genuinely affordable and diverse housing for local people (especially younger residents), be matched by adequate infrastructure, services and employment, protect rural character and village identity, reduce carbon emissions in practice, and avoid overdevelopment driven by speculative or non-local demand.
Objectives	86.5% agree, 8% neutral, 5.5% disagree.	Respondents generally support the Objectives in principle but call for stronger, more enforceable commitments on social and affordable housing, transport and infrastructure, carbon reduction, and environmental protection.
Climate Change Chapter	81% agree, 13% neutral, 6% disagree.	Comments are largely sceptical of the proposed CC1 amendment, viewing it as difficult to implement in practice, and unlikely to deliver meaningful carbon reductions, particularly for smaller developers and where climate policies conflict with design considerations.
Access & Movement Chapter	77% agree, 14% neutral, 9% disagree.	Written responses are divided on the proposal, broadly supporting the need for social rented housing but expressing strong concern that redevelopment of the bus station site must not compromise its role as a transport hub, and calling for clearer wording and firm safeguards for public transport and parking provision.

January 15th 2026

Revised BANP	% Agree % Disagree	
Economy & Employment Chapter	77% agree, 20% neutral, 3% disagree.	Responses show broad support for the inclusion of co-working hubs and live-work spaces to support small businesses and evolving work patterns, with comments expressing concerns about vagueness, deliverability, and whether such facilities would be well used.
Affordable Housing Policies	76% agree, 16% neutral, 8% disagree.	There is strong support for integrating affordable (especially social rented) housing to avoid segregation, but respondents express widespread concern about vague definitions, lack of enforceability, developer compliance, and the need for clearer mechanisms, higher design quality and stronger local delivery models.
Housing Mix and Balance Policies	79% agree, 12% neutral, 9% disagree.	There is strong support for prioritising affordable, smaller homes to meet local need and avoid dominance by large, high-value/luxury housing, but many respondents say that 3-bedroom homes are essential for families, question the policy's viability and evidential basis, and call for clearer alignment with the Housing Needs Assessment, stronger enforcement, and adequate supporting infrastructure.
Sheltered and Retirement Homes	81% agree, 12% neutral, 7% disagree.	Respondents broadly support restricting sheltered, retirement and extra care housing to proven local need and accessible locations and to avoid the proliferation of high-priced retirement developments that primarily attract non local retirees. Many welcome the emphasis on affordability and the intention to prevent retirement schemes from displacing housing that better meets needs of local people, particularly younger residents and key workers. Concern raised about potential age discrimination, policy rigidity, clarity over affordable rented and affordable ownership, infrastructure impacts, and consistency with national and emerging local plan policy.
Community Facilities Chapter	77% agree, 20% neutral, 3% disagree.	Most respondents support adding the Assembly Rooms, British Legion Hall and Masonic Hall as community facilities, while also calling for stronger emphasis on youth provision.
Landscape Policies	89% agree, 10% neutral, 1% disagree.	Respondents largely support strengthening protection of the Dorset National Landscape and the updated terminology, while seeking clearer definitions, effective enforcement, and a balanced approach.
Biodiversity Policies	88% agree, 8% neutral, 4% disagree.	Respondents support stronger biodiversity protections but urge replacing optional or vague wording with mandatory, enforceable requirements, clarifying ambiguous references, and ensuring developments provide meaningful habitat improvements, green spaces, and wildlife connectivity.
Riverside Corridor Green Space	76% agree, 23% neutral, 1% disagree.	The new Riverside Corridor Green Space is widely welcomed with a suggestion that the removal of Peter Foote Play Area as a designated Green Space should be justified through community consultation.

Revised BANP	% Agree % Disagree	
Design for Living Chapter	77% agree, 21% neutral, 2% disagree.	The M4(2) accessibility requirement is welcomed for supporting older and disabled residents, with a suggestion to clarify wording around disability. Potential conflicts with climate change policies are noted.

Dorset Council Response

Dorset Council have reviewed the rationale presented in the revised BANP regarding the scale of changes within the Plan and agree that the proposed changes are **'Material modifications which do not change the nature of the plan'**. From Dorset Councils perspective the BANP can go forward and be subject to Examination, and subject to the view of the Examiner, **should not require a referendum**.

On the 16 December 2025 the Government published an open consultation on the National Planning Framework: Proposed changes to the Planning system. The consultation is due to run until 10 March 2026. Dorset Council think that the JCC can continue with the preparation of BANP in accordance with the December 2024 version of NPPF. The caveat here is that when the new NPPF is published, its policies could supersede policies in BANP if there is any inconsistency. Alternatively, the JCC could choose to wait for the final version of the December 2025 NPPF to be published. Dorset Council understand that the government intend to publish the finished version of the new NPPF in the late spring / summer 2026. **DECISION FOR JCC**

Substantive comments received that require action by the BANP Steering Group are listed in the table below:

Nb Comment DC unless stated

Comment	Proposed Action
<p>On several occasions throughout the document, the Neighbourhood Plan makes reference to the earlier version of the NPPF and it is recommended that these are updated.</p>	<p>Check through BANP and make amendments: For example: On page 49, NPPF para 57 is quoted. This paragraph is now 59 and the quote slightly longer. On page 69. NPPF para 172 is quoted. This paragraph is now 189 and reference to AONBs should be updated to National Landscapes. On page 73. Table 1 refers to NPPF, Para 77. This paragraph is now 107. On page 65. The blue box refers to NPPF 2018 and should read NPPF 2024.</p>
<p>Policy CC1 Publicising Carbon Footprint Applicants should seek to minimise the ‘whole-life ’carbon footprint of development proposals.</p>	<p>Check and clarify what Government guidance is being referenced to justify this change? Retain revision or remove.</p>
<p>Policy CC2 Energy and Carbon Emissions It is appropriate only to encourage development proposals to exceed Building Regulation Standards. With he new Future Homes Standard expected in 2026 it would not be appropriate to require development to exceed the tests already set out in building regulations.(C.G.Fry)</p>	<p>Retain revised text or amend Policy CC2; For example “New development is encouraged to achieve high levels of energy efficiency, including by.....</p>
<p>Policy AM6 We support the proposed modification, as it does not alter the main objective of retaining and enhancing the site’s primary use as a transport hub. However, we recommend that Policy AM6 include a specific reference to safeguarding a walking and cycling link through the bus station to connect Foundry Lea with Tannery Road and the St Michael’s Trading Estate redevelopment,</p>	<p>Retain revised text or amend to include reference to safeguarding access as detailed by Dorset Council</p>

Comment	Proposed Action
<p>Policy AM6 criteria b and c</p> <p>What would be useful in this policy is to understand what optimisation means for the community of Bridport. For example, are there restrictions in height or density that should be adhered to or is it simply as much as possible without impacting on neighbours, heritage assets, trees and the existing transport interchange? Further information in the policy or supporting text would be useful.</p> <p>The provision of social rent housing could be given further detail. It could be stated in the policy if there is a desire to maximise the social rent in any future scheme or if there is a tenure type or design requirement for these units.</p> <p>The wording of point (c) could be clearer, identifying that the transport hub is to be the priority as set out by the introduction to the policy. If this is a design requirement then suggest rewording something along the lines of 'The transport hub should successfully integrate with the surrounding area in terms of design facades, heights, layout and connections with the surrounding area...'</p> <p>A further point (d) could then be added which seeks to deliver wider benefits to residents and visitors through shared amenity space and a high-quality public realm improvement's, to be agreed through a landscape strategy. Any strategy should include specific details on what public realm improvements should be included such as trees or planting.</p>	<p>Retain revised text or amend as proposed by Dorset Council.</p>

Comment	Proposed Action
<p>Policy EE1</p> <p>Draft Policy EE1 of the neighbourhood plan supports safeguarding two identified existing employment sites and follows a similar approach to Policy ECON2 of the adopted West Dorset and Weymouth & Portland Local Plan. However, it makes reference to B1 uses which were replaced by the new Use Class E on 1 September 2020. Use Class E encompasses a broad range of commercial, business and service uses. Uses previously defined in the revoked Class B1 are now covered by part E(g).</p> <p>We note that draft policy EE1 is supported by additional text that makes reference to an identified need to “ensure protection to employment sites that can or do provide flexible, small-business workspaces and shared workspaces, ensuring affordable and adaptable spaces.” The Old Timberyard in West Bay is provided as a specific example. However, policy EE1 itself does not appear to be modified and as currently worded would only apply to The Old Laundry and East Road trading estates in Bridport.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> We are unclear on the purpose of the additional text. Is it the intention to extend the safeguarding approach of draft policy EE1 to additional sites?</p> <p>We would highlight that NPPF encourages making effective use of land, including allowing alternative uses where employment sites are unlikely to come forward for their allocated use. Similarly, Policy ECON3 of the adopted local plan includes flexibility to allow for alternative uses on non-key employment sites where justified. If EE1 is intended to propose additional stricter protection to more/all employment sites without flexibility there may be potential conflict.</p>	<p>Check and update use class references.</p> <p>Consider amending text to clarify that policy EE1 extends safeguarding to additional sites that provide affordable and adaptable workspace. Being mindful of potential conflict with NPPF and Local Plan.</p>
<p>Policy EE2</p> <p>It is unclear what types of new and small businesses are supported under Policy EE2 in terms of planning use classes, or whether there are any restrictions relating to location or potential impacts. If other policies in the plan address these matters, it would be helpful to signpost them within the supporting text to provide clarity and avoid ambiguity. For example, would this policy potentially support a broader range of uses on identified key employment sites than the adopted local plan would permit?</p> <p>Would it support development in unsustainable rural locations?</p>	<p>Reconsider ambitions of Policy EE2 and retain of amend text accordingly</p>

Comment	Proposed Action
<p>Policy EE2 Live/Work While policy EE2 supports co-working hubs and live-work spaces it does not define them. The live/work phrase in particular is ambiguous and open to interpretation.</p>	<p>Reconsider ambitions of Policy EE2 and retain of amend text accordingly</p>
<p>Policy H1 it would be preferable for the policy to require that development proposals reflect the available evidence unless it can be demonstrated that an alternative approach is more appropriate, for example for site specific or viability reasons. (C.G.Fry)</p>	<p>Retain revised text or amend Changes sought by C.G.Fry: <i>The affordable housing mix will be guided by the latest Bridport Area Housing Needs Assessment and the Council s evidence, taking into account the latest trends as well as site specific and other considerations.</i></p>
<p>Policy H4 Policy H4 has been amended with a new tailpiece expressing a preference for smaller low-cost homes and opposition to developments proposing homes with mainly 3 or more bedrooms (although the Policy wording is a little clumsy in this regard). The suggestion that sites providing mainly 3+ bedroom homes should not supported is unfounded and unjustified given that all age groups shown below occupy a high percentage of 3-bedroom homes. Part 1 of Policy H4 already considers the need for development to contain a mix of housing types and sizes to meet a range of needs. Part 2 of Policy H4 therefore contradicts the first part of the Policy by stating that developments offering mainly 3-bedroom or greater properties will be opposed. (C.G.Fry)</p>	<p>Check Part 1 and Part 2 of Policy H4 - retain revised text or amend. C.G.Fry request deletion of Part 2 of H4</p>
<p>Policy H5 Criterion 1 We welcome the Housing Needs Assessment's reference to our Extra Care Housing (ECH) strategy and its recognition of Housing with Care as a priority. However, we note the proposed exclusion of ECH from the accessibility requirement: "Be located so as to afford reasonably level and easy access to shopping and social facilities whether on foot or by use of mobility scooter or similar, except for Extra Care homes where this restriction does not apply." This appears inconsistent with our strategy, which identifies proximity and ease of access to local services as important for ECH residents.</p>	<p>Check Policy intention - retain revised text or amend: DC suggest that unless the intention is to maximise flexibility for site selection, we should align criterion with the ECH strategy.</p>

Comment	Proposed Action
<p>Policy H5 Criterion 3 while a mix of housing tenures is desirable, local or national policy does not seek to 'prioritise' one form of tenure over another,</p>	<p>Check Policy intention - retain revised text or amend: DC recommended that this criterion is removed from the Plan. DC suggest this issue can be addressed by either the affordable housing policies H1, H2 and H3 or the Housing Mix & Balanced community Policy H4.</p>
<p>Policy H7 Self and Custom Built Homes There is no evidence on which to base encouragement for the inclusion of 4% or any other % of serviced plots on major schemes. (C.G.Fry)</p>	<p>Retain revised text or amend: C.G.Fry request• Delete of 4% target from Policy H7</p>
<p>Policy CF1 Protection of Existing Community Infrastructure The policy could be strengthened by seeking to ensure that point 2 is explored in full prior to any application being submitted for a change of use. The policy could require advertising periods for the sale or rent of the unit prior to an application for the loss of the community facility. A suggestion of 12 months for example with evidence submitted with any application.</p>	<p>Consider DC proposal to strengthen Policy CF1 - retain revised text or amend.</p>
<p>Heritage Chapter No revision was proposed in the Regulation 14 consultation but DC have raised issues that could be addressed by deciding to include revision: The text in the blue box on page 66 is considered relevant to the overall heritage section and not just non-designated assets. We recommend that this policy text is repositioned to reflect relevance to all heritage. A statement regarding the conversion and adaptive reuse of designated and non-designated heritage assets and the protection of historic fabric and special architectural character and appearance. A statement supporting a commitment to sustainable measures in maintaining designated and non-designated assets within the context of addressing the challenges of climate change. A statement supporting a commitment to the long-term, sustainable protection of historic buildings, sites, and structures from harm. A statement regarding a commitment toward heritage-led development/ regeneration. Inclusion of identifying the value of non-designated assets and the process / criteria for their identification.</p>	<p>Consider DC comments and make any amendments.</p>

Comment	Proposed Action
<p>Policy L1 Agree. Update reflects name change to 'National Landscape 'designation. (DC)</p> <p>Policy L1 is a general policy relating to development in the National landscape (NL) and as such its title is misleading. At 1. and 2., Policy L1 applies incorrect tests for development in the NL and is not, as claimed in the Basic Conditions Statement, compliant with the National Planning Policy Framework 2024 (NPPF). (C.G.Fry)</p>	<p>Consider wording of Policy L1 retain revised text or amend: C.G.Fry request Amend the title of policy L1 to reflect its content and operation Amend Policy L1 1. to reflect the NPPF tests Delete Policy L1 2.</p>
<p>Policy L2 criterion 1 'Where feasible developers are encouraged to seek biodiversity gains above 10%' - This may need clarification to explain what is meant by feasible. The asterisked text regarding exemptions should be removed or modified to say 'Exemptions from the requirement will apply to those applications set out in the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024' as the current text does not cover all legally allowed exemptions.</p>	<p>Remove Asterisked text - Consider policy intention to seek 10% uplift and add clarification if wish to retain.</p>
<p>Policy L3 The wording of point 2 could be refined as inappropriate development has not been defined and is slightly ambiguous. The suggestion in the NPPF is to be in line with Green Belt policy.' Extended site N meets NPPF, para 107 criteria and can be supported.</p>	<p>Consider policy intention and amend text to clarify. DC suggest rewording to '<i>Any development proposals in areas designated as Local Green Spaces will be determined in accordance with the national policy for Green Belts.</i></p>
<p>Green Corridor Management On page P69, the term 'green corridor' would not normally refer to footpaths, but to linear green infrastructure features which (along with 'stepping stone' fragments of habitat) link larger areas of wildlife habitat, regardless of their public accessibility or designation as a right of way. I wonder if public access (along 'corridors' such as rights of way) is being conflated with the ecological meaning of the phrase 'green corridor' and would suggest this should be clarified in the policy supporting text. Additionally, the title of Policy L1 refers to green corridors, but these are not addressed in the policy or its supporting text.</p>	<p>Consider wording of Green Corridor management retain revised text or amend: DC suggest To avoid confusion renaming Policy L1 to: Development in the Dorset National Landscape.</p>

Comment	Proposed Action
<p>Biodiversity Net Gain The supporting text covers BNG and bird conservation, with no explanation of how these two subject areas are linked. Perhaps the policy supporting text needs a sentence explaining this approach - it may be that the policy only focuses on issues felt to be particularly important to Bridport, or that aren't covered in the adopted local plan?</p>	<p>Consider policy intentions around BNG retain revised text or amend: DC suggest including a biodiversity policy on habitats and biodiversity areas (incorporating BNG, green corridors etc) and then a second policy dealing with species impacts (including specific wording on birds, bats and hedgehogs).</p>
<p>Policy D9 The removal of 'lifetime homes standard' is noted. Planning update March 2015 - GOV.UK advises "Neighbourhood plans should not be used to apply the new national technical standards." but we believe they can be 'encouraged'</p>	<p>Retain revised text or amend.</p>