

Planning Policy,
North Dorset District Council,
South Walks House,
South Walks Road,
Dorchester,
DT1 1UZ

Date: 19th January 2018
By email only

Dear Sir/Madam,

North Dorset Local Plan Review – Issues and Options

Thank you for giving the RSPB an opportunity to comment on the North Dorset Local Plan Review. We have in preparing our comments reviewed the following documents:

- North Dorset Local Plan Review – Issues and Options Consultation November 2017
- North Dorset Local Plan Review – Issues and Options Sustainability Appraisal November 2017

The plan aims to identify land capable of meeting a reported increased housing target for North Dorset. The administrative area of the Council has a wealth of habitats and natural assets, including areas designated as being of national and international importance for nature. The challenge of meeting housing demands and growth aspirations should not undermine protection of the natural environment. A Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) is required to ensure growth in housing as outlined in the plan will not impact on internationally protected sites.

The RSPB would expect that the Council's existing environmental policy (Policy 4: The Natural Environment) as outlined in the adopted North Dorset Local Plan Part 1 (January 2016) will be taken forward as part of the plan review.

Crucially the RSPB would expect this review to result in a North Dorset Local Plan which seeks to deliver an appropriately high level of protection and enhancement of the natural environment. Policies should reflect the importance of protecting sensitive habitats and species from development pressures.

We hope that these comments have been helpful. Please do consult us on further stages as the plan develops.

Yours faithfully

Heather Dixon
Assistant Conservation Officer

Dorset Office



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