

Bourton Neighbourhood Plan

Strategic Environmental Assessment Scoping Report

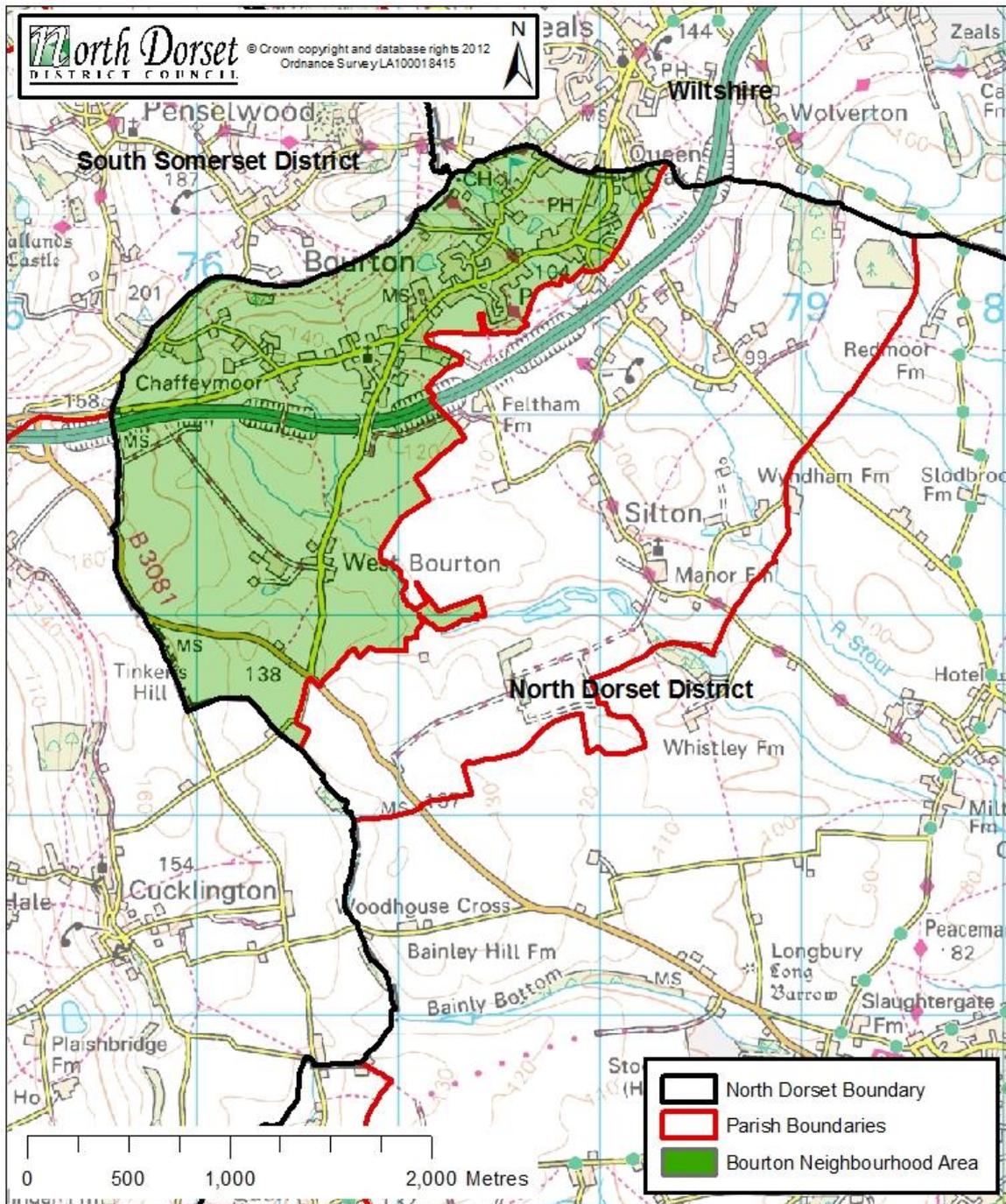
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Name of the neighbourhood area	Bourton Neighbourhood Area
Designation date	10th December 2012
Organisation who made the application	Bourton Parish Council

Figure 1: Bourton Parish – Designated Neighbourhood Area

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Bourton Parish is on the northern border of Dorset. It borders the parishes of Penselwood and Cucklington in South Somerset and Zeals in Wiltshire as well as the parish of Silton in Dorset. Settlements within the parish include Bourton village and the hamlet of West Bourton. The nearest towns offering a range of services are Wincanton, 4km to the west and Gillingham, approximately 5km to the south east.
- 1.2 Bourton Neighbourhood Area was designated on 10th December 2012 and covers the whole of the parish as shown in Figure 1.
- 1.3 The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive (2001/42/EC) and the Regulations require an assessment of the likely significant effects of the implementation of a plan. The aim is to provide a high level of protection for the environment and to integrate environmental considerations into the preparation of plans.
- 1.4 A screening report¹ has been produced for the Bourton Neighbourhood Plan which concluded that the proposals within the draft plan had the potential to have significant environmental effects and therefore a SEA was required. It would be through careful site selection, avoidance of impacts and mitigation that the likely significant effects of the plan would be avoided or minimised. The SEA process will help to minimise the likely significant effects of the plan.
- 1.5 The proposals in the draft plan, which led to the requirement for an SEA, concern the community's expressed wish to build a new village hall and the associated need to accommodate a small amount of housing development to assist in the delivery of the new hall and an associated amenity area. The background to this issue and a Short List of potential sites is at Appendix A.
- 1.6 The SEA process includes a scoping stage which involves a review of the context within which the Neighbourhood Plan sits and an assessment of the baseline information on the Neighbourhood Area with a view to identifying the environmental issues. This information is then used to assess the proposals within the Neighbourhood Plan in order to minimise the likely significant effects that may arise as a result of its implementation.

¹ Bourton Neighbourhood Plan Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Report, February 2014

2. Context

- 2.1 The Neighbourhood Plan sits within a framework of other plans and programmes which define what issues it can and cannot tackle. These plans and programmes include international directives, which the United Kingdom has signed up to, e.g. the Habitats Directive; national policy like the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF); Local policy such as the North Dorset Local Plan and strategies produced at the parish level. This section also has regard to the Sustainability Appraisal produced in 2009 by North Dorset District Council to support the production of its Local Plan.

The Birds Directive (79/409/EEC)

- 2.2 The Birds Directive is Europe's oldest piece of nature conservation legislation. It provides a framework for the protection of wild bird species naturally occurring in the European Union area. The directive recognises that habitat degradation and loss is the most serious threat to wild birds and establishes a network of Special Protection Areas (SPA) important for rare or vulnerable species including migratory species.

The Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC)

- 2.3 The aim of the Habitats Directive is to preserve biodiversity by requiring measures to maintain or restore natural habitats and wild species at a favourable conservation status. It establishes a network of Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and requires the assessment of plans which are likely to have a significant effect on the integrity of a SAC.

Ramsar Convention

- 2.4 Ramsar sites are wetlands of international importance designated under the Ramsar Convention. Although they are not covered by the Habitats regulations, as a matter of Government policy, Ramsar sites should be treated in the same way as European wildlife sites. European wildlife sites and Ramsar sites are collectively known as internationally designated wildlife sites.

The Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC)

- 2.5 The Water Framework Directive (WFD) seeks to establish a framework for the protection of surface waters and groundwater across the EU. It aims to provide a common approach with common objectives, principles and basic measures designed to prevent any further deterioration of surface and groundwaters.
- 2.6 A significant proportion of rivers, lakes and coastal waters are environmentally damaged or under threat with the main pollution sources being from agriculture and from waste water. The WFD requires that all inland and coastal waters reach at

least “good” status by 2015.

The Renewable Energy Directive (2008/0016/EU)

- 2.7 This Renewable Energy Directive establishes a common framework for the use of energy from renewable sources in order to limit greenhouse gas emissions and to promote cleaner transport. It establishes an EU wide target for 20% of energy consumption to be from renewable sources by 2020 with a UK target of 15% by 2020.

Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979

- 2.8 The Act establishes the Scheduled Monuments designation. Scheduled monuments are designated by the Secretary of State as archaeological sites of national importance. Permission is required to undertake works affecting a scheduled monument.

The Planning (Listed Building & Conservation Areas) Act 1990

- 2.9 The Act establishes a process for applying for permission to undertake works to a listed building and to undertake certain works within a Conservation Area.
- 2.10 A Listed building is a building of special architectural or historic interest which appears on lists compiled and approved by the Secretary of State. Conservation Areas are designated by Local Planning Authorities as areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character of which is desirable to preserve.

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000

- 2.11 The Act provides for public access on foot to certain types of land, amends the law relating to public rights of way, increases measures for the management and protection of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and strengthens wildlife enforcement legislation, and provides for better management of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

The Climate Change Act 2008

- 2.12 The Act sets up a framework for the UK to achieve its long-term goals of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and to ensure steps are taken towards adapting to the impact of climate change. The main provision of the Act is to set emission reduction targets and establish a reporting framework for greenhouse gas emissions. The targets established in the Act are to secure reductions in greenhouse gas emissions of at least 80% by 2050 and reductions in CO₂ emissions of at least 26% by 2020, both against the 1990 baseline.

The Localism Act 2011

- 2.13 The Act made provisions for the abolition of Regional Strategies, placed a Duty to Cooperate on Local Planning Authorities and introduced Neighbourhood Planning for local communities.
- 2.14 Neighbourhood Planning enables local communities to draw up a neighbourhood development plan to plan for their area. Within the framework of national policy and the strategic approach established in the local authority's Local Plan, communities have the opportunity to say where they think new houses, businesses and shops should go and what they should look like.
- 2.15 A neighbourhood plan is, however, not able to tackle "excluded development" such as development that consists of a county matter, e.g. as those relating to minerals and waste, highways and schools, matters that would require an Environmental Impact Assessment under EU Directive 85/337/EEC and projects which constitute a nationally significant infrastructure project.

The National Planning Policy Framework

- 2.16 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in March 2012 and sets out the Government's policy in relation to planning. It therefore constitutes part of the framework within which neighbourhood plans need to operate.
- 2.17 The NPPF establishes the presumption in favour of sustainable development which sets out that development should be approved if it is in accordance with the development plan. In cases where the development plan is absent, silent or policies are out of date, permission should also be granted unless the impacts would outweigh the benefits or the NPPF indicates that permission should be refused.
- 2.18 The NPPF covers many subject areas, setting out the approach to each. Relevant areas are:

The Economy

- 2.19 There is a requirement for a sequential impact test for retail, offices and leisure proposals outside existing town centres. The NPPF also indicates that significant weight should be given to supporting economic growth through the planning system. Planning policy should not place undue burdens on business developments.

The Rural Economy

- 2.20 Planning policies in local and neighbourhood plans should support economic growth to create jobs and prosperity. They should:
- support sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business;
 - promote the development and diversification of agriculture;
 - support sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments that respect the character of the countryside; and

- promote the retention and development of local service and community facilities in villages.

Sustainable Transport

- 2.21 Plans should aim for a balance of uses within an area to reduce the need to travel but also plan with sustainable travel choices in mind.

Communications Infrastructure

- 2.22 The NPPF recognises the importance of high quality communications infrastructure to economic growth and the provision of local facilities and services.

Delivering Homes

- 2.23 The NPPF requires local planning authorities to meet their full objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing and to maintain a supply of deliverable sites.
- 2.24 In rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities including to support rural facilities. Isolated homes in the countryside should be avoided.

Design

- 2.25 The government attaches great importance to good design. The NPPF suggests that local and neighbourhood plans should develop robust and comprehensive policies setting out the quality of development that will be expected for the area.

Healthy Communities

- 2.26 The NPPF states that the planning system plays an important role in facilitating social interaction and creating healthy inclusive communities and that local planning authorities should facilitate neighbourhood planning. Planning policies should therefore seek to create places which promote opportunities for people to meet, develop safe and accessible environments where crime does not undermine community cohesion and provide high quality public space.
- 2.27 Neighbourhood plans have a defined role in the designation of Local Green Space where development will be ruled out if the sites meet a set of criteria defined in the NPPF.

Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change

- 2.28 The NPPF highlights the role of planning in meeting the challenge of climate change including facilitating reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, enabling adaptation, minimising vulnerability, improving resilience and facilitating renewable and low carbon energy developments.

- 2.29 The NPPF highlights the role all communities have to play in contributing to the generation of energy from renewable and low carbon sources. It highlights the role of neighbourhood planning in the delivery of community-led initiatives.
- 2.30 In relation to flood risk, the sequential and exception tests are outlined to direct developments to areas at the lowest risk of flooding.

The Natural Environment

- 2.31 The role of the planning system in enhancing the natural and local environment includes protecting valued landscapes, geological conservation interests and soils. The NPPF advocates an ecosystem services approach to the natural environment by recognising the linkages between different aspects of the natural environment and the benefits it brings. It also highlights the need for the planning system to minimise impacts on biodiversity through the establishment of ecological networks.
- 2.32 In relation to soils, there is a focus on previously developed land of low ecological value and on recognising the value of the best and most versatile agricultural land. Protection for designated wildlife sites should be commensurate with their status, their importance and the contribution they make to ecological networks with the presumption in favour of sustainable development not applying where an appropriate assessment is required. AONB are given the highest status of protection in relation to their landscape and scenic beauty. Additionally, the conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage in these areas are important considerations.
- 2.33 The impact of pollution resulting from development proposals should be considered especially relating to health, the natural environment, general amenity and the sensitivity of the receiving area.

The Historic Environment

- 2.34 In relation to the historic environment, the NPPF highlights the need for heritage assets and their settings to be conserved and, where appropriate, enhanced. Significant adverse impacts on heritage assets should be avoided and unavoidable adverse impacts should be mitigated. This approach applies to designated and non-designated heritage assets and seeks to conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance.

The Planning Practice Guidance

- 2.35 On 6 March 2014 the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) launched the planning practice guidance web-based resource. For the first time, planning practice guidance has been made available entirely online in a usable and accessible way. The guidance allows users to link between the National Planning Policy Framework and relevant planning practice guidance, as well as between different categories of guidance. DCLG is actively managing the planning practice guidance and any necessary updates can now be made as soon as possible.
- 2.36 The practice guidance provides advice on the neighbourhood planning system introduced by the Localism Act including key stages and decisions (e.g. deciding neighbourhood areas, the legal tests for neighbourhood plans, and the process of independent examination and referendum).
- 2.37 Only a draft Neighbourhood Plan or Order that meets each of a set of basic conditions can be put to a referendum and be made. Basic conditions include having regard to National Policy and advice, Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas and sustainable development, being in general conformity with the strategic policies in the Development Plan, compatible with EU Obligations and ensuring the making of the neighbourhood plan is not likely to have a significant effect on a European site or a European offshore marine site.

The Neighbourhood Planning (General) (Amendment) Regulations 2015

- 2.38 In early 2015 the Government announced its intention to amend the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. Regulation 2(4) adds to the list of documents that a qualifying body must submit to a local planning authority with a proposal for a neighbourhood plan. The additional document which must be submitted is either an environmental report prepared in accordance with the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, or a statement of reasons why an environmental assessment is not required.

The District-wide Local Plan 2003 – Saved Policies

- 2.39 The Local Plan was adopted in 2003. As part of the review process, some of the policies in this version of the Local Plan, have been “saved” and hence continue to form part of the Development Plan for the District. The policies which directly relate to Bourton are set out in Table 2.1.
- 2.40

Figure 2.1: Retained policies relevant to Bourton from the North Dorset District-Wide Local Plan (1st Revision) Adopted 2003

Retained policy number	What the policy says	Implications for the Bourton Neighbourhood Plan
1.7 Development within Settlement Boundaries	Settlement boundaries around all settlements outside the four main towns, as defined in the adopted Local Plan are removed and countryside policies will apply unless new settlement boundaries are defined in neighbourhood plans or Local Plan Part 2 where a community has decided to 'opt in'.	For Bourton, the settlement boundary will be removed. The countryside policy will therefore apply.
1.9 Important Open/Wooded Areas (IOWAs) within Settlements	IOWAs were designated to protect the amenity and character of settlements from the pressure of infill development. They will be saved until they are reviewed either through Plan Part 2 or a neighbourhood plan.	Areas designated under the IOWA policy are protected from development. The Neighbourhood Plan has the opportunity to review these spaces.
1.12 River Valleys	River valleys are an important landscape feature. Policy 1.12 states that development will not be permitted within the River Valley areas that are defined on the Proposal Maps. The policy and areas identified on the Proposals Map are retained and will continue to be used for development management purposes until they are reviewed through Local Plan Part 2 or a neighbourhood plan.	The River Stour runs through the Neighbourhood Area and hence the River Valleys policy applies. The Neighbourhood Plan has the opportunity to review the River Valleys designation.
1.20 Contaminated Land	Contamination is a material planning consideration and Policy 1.20 will be retained and will continue to be used for development management purposes until updated national guidance is published.	The Neighbourhood Plan will need to consider any contaminated land within and adjacent to the Neighbourhood Area. A former landfill site exists off Brickyard Lane, adjacent to the boundary of the Neighbourhood Area.
3.2 Development of Defined Employment Areas	The Policy identifies a number of employment sites. Existing and developed sites will continue to be protected and sites that have not yet been developed will be retained for employment uses until they are reviewed through Local Plan Part 2.	There are two employment sites within or adjacent to the Neighbourhood Area, Bourton Mill and South of Lilac Cottage. The Lilac Cottage site, which is adjacent

Retained policy number	What the policy says	Implications for the Bourton Neighbourhood Plan
		<p>to the area boundary in the Parish of Silton, is retained under this designation.</p> <p>The Bourton Mill site within the Neighbourhood Area, is protected under this policy, however, the Employment Land Review, produced in April 2007, suggested that it would be appropriate for this site to be released for other uses. Subsequent to this, the site has been granted permission for mixed use development.</p>
Bourton		
BN1	<p>Policy BN1 identifies an unimplemented employment allocation on land south of Lilac Cottage (within the adjacent parish) identified in Local Plan Policy 3.2. Existing and developed sites will continue to be protected and the sites allocated under this policy that have not been developed to date will be retained until they are reviewed through Local Plan Part 2 or a neighbourhood plan.</p>	<p>This policy relates to a site outside but adjacent to the Neighbourhood Plan area and therefore will not need to be considered as part of the Neighbourhood Plan.</p>

The North Dorset Local Plan 2011 – 2026 Part 1

- 2.41 The replacement to the adopted Local Plan was submitted to the Secretary of State for examination in December 2014. The policies which relate to Bourton within this plan are set out in Table 2.2.

The Cranborne Chase & West Wiltshire Downs AONB Management Plan 2014 – 2021

- 2.42 The primary purpose of the AONB designation is ‘conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area’. In pursuing the primary purpose of designation, account should be taken of the needs of agriculture, forestry and other rural industries and of the economic and social needs of local communities. Particular regard should be paid to promoting sustainable forms of economic and social development that in themselves conserve and enhance the environment.
- 2.43 The setting of an AONB is the surroundings in which the area is experienced. If the quality of the setting declines, then the appreciation and enjoyment of the AONB diminishes. The construction of high or expansive structures or a change generating movement, noise, odour, vibration or dust over a wide area will affect the setting. As our appreciation of the relationships between neighbouring landscapes grows, so our understanding of what constitutes the setting continues to evolve.
- 2.44 Views are one element of setting, being associated with the visual experience. Views are particularly important to the AONB because of the juxtaposition of high and low ground and the fact that recreational users value them. Without management, views within, across, from and to the AONB may be lost or degraded.

The Dorset Heritage Strategy

- 2.45 The strategy sets out the objectives and priorities for the management of Dorset’s heritage based around six main themes. The main objectives and outcomes are the identification of heritage assets; the conservation of heritage assets; education and interpretation of heritage; the promotion of sensitive stewardship of the heritage assets; enabling access to the assets whilst conserving them; and encouragement of and support for local organisations concerned with protection of the heritage.

The Dorset Play Strategy

- 2.46 The Dorset Play Strategy identifies the key elements of play space provision and the importance of play space for the physical and mental development of children and young people. It highlights the barriers to play, most of which can be overcome when planning for new play space. These barriers are:
- Accessibility: Provision of play space within easy walking distance especially in densely populated urban areas where access to private gardens can be limited. Access can be restricted due to fear, lack of investment, overcrowding and

disability. The Dorset Play Partnership supports the “3 frees” in relation to access to play: - free of charge, free to come and go and free to choose what children do whilst they are there.

- Quality of Provision: Perception of quality has a direct impact on willingness to use play space. Play space should meet the needs of users in all age groups including those with a disability.
- Child Safety: Safety concerns include traffic, crime and the fear of crime. Road safety is clearly something that can be designed into a scheme through measures such as traffic calming and signage. Crime and perceived crime can be designed out by incorporating surveillance into a scheme. Offering stimulating opportunities for adventurous play where children can manage their own risks enables them to explore and develop their own abilities.
- Time constraints: These include the competition from new technologies and also the pressure on parents’ time to supervise appropriate outdoor play hence the need for safe and accessible outdoor space.

2.47 General principles of provision:

- Promoting high quality play services and spaces.
- Creating play spaces and services that are inclusive and accessible.
- Managing risk in play provision. Risk-taking is an essential feature of children’s play, allowing them to explore limits and develop their capabilities and confidence. See “Managing Risk in Play Provision”.
- Participation: the play strategy values the contribution children, young people and communities make to ensuring play services and spaces are effective and well used.
- Supporting the Third Sector: the strategy recognises the important contribution of the voluntary and community sector in delivering play.
- Promoting and supporting play workforce development.
- Evaluation: The Play Partnership will be responsible for the delivery and review of this strategy and action plan and will report to the Children’s Trust.

2.48 Play space should offer opportunities for adventurous outdoor play and should be planned, designed and developed with the involvement of local communities and young people.

Figure 2.2: Policies from the North Dorset Local Plan Part 1 2011 to 2016 – Submission Version

Local Plan Part 1 policy number	What the policy says	Implications for the Bourton Neighbourhood Plan
Policy 1 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development	The presumption in favour of sustainable development is derived from National policy. The policy is a standard policy which sets out that when considering development proposals, the Council will take a positive approach, work proactively with developers, work to secure developments that improve the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area and take decisions in accordance with the development plan.	There are no direct implications for the Bourton Neighbourhood Plan other than that it will form part of the development plan once “made”
Policy 2 – Core Spatial Strategy	The policy sets out the spatial approach to development in North Dorset. It seeks to direct growth to the four main towns of Blandford, Gillingham, Shaftesbury and Sturminster Newton. These towns will act as the main service centres in the District. Outside the four main towns, Countryside Policy will apply to restrict development which does not require a rural location. Development within the countryside will be delivered through neighbourhood plans or by ‘opting-in’ with the focus being on meeting local needs.	The settlement boundary around Bourton village will be removed on adoption of the emerging Local Plan. The parish has the option of reinstating this boundary through the Neighbourhood Plan or by ‘opting in’ to Local Plan Part 2.
Policy 3 – Climate Change	Policy 3 sets out the approach to tackling climate change. It sets out the approach to managing development to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through location, design, the fabric of new buildings and the use of renewable and low carbon energy sources. The policy also sets out the need to consider adaptation to the impacts of climate change through measures such as improved water efficiency, avoidance of flood risk and measures to reduce heat stress. The policy highlights the role of every community in tackling climate change including through the neighbourhood planning process.	The policy highlights the role of every community in tackling climate change. It also sets out a requirement for neighbourhood plans to consider local actions to mitigate and adapt to climate change.

Local Plan Part 1 policy number	What the policy says	Implications for the Bourton Neighbourhood Plan
Policy 4 – The Natural Environment	<p>Policy 4 recognises that the natural environment of North Dorset and the ecosystem services it supports will be enhanced through the protection of environmental assets and the establishment of a coherent ecological network of designated sites and stepping stones linked via corridor features. The landscape character of the District will be protected through retention of the features that characterise the area. Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) will be managed in a way which preserves their natural beauty. The policy also seeks to protect Internationally Important Wildlife sites, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), locally designated natural environment sites and local protected or rare species.</p>	<p>Neighbourhood plans should have due regard to these important environmental designations. It is important that neighbourhood plans have regard to the landscape character to ensure that the character of an area is not degraded through incremental development.</p> <p>Neighbourhood plans within or adjacent to AONBs should be mindful of their management plans.</p>
Policy 5 – The Historic Environment	<p>The Historic Environment includes many individual ‘heritage assets’ which contribute to local identity and distinctiveness. Policy 5 sets out the Council’s approach to decision making on proposals affecting heritage assets. The policy recognises that, in exceptional circumstances, a proposal for enabling development that would not otherwise be permitted maybe supported if it can be demonstrated that this will secure the long term preservation and enhancement of a designated heritage asset.</p>	<p>Neighbourhood plans should consider the historic environment in plan preparation and can nominate items for inclusion on the local list of non-designated heritage assets.</p>
Policy 6 – Housing Distribution	<p>Policy 6 directs the vast majority of housing growth at the District’s four main towns of Blandford, Gillingham, Shaftesbury and Sturminster Newton. In the countryside (including Stalbridge and the villages) a minimum of 230 dwellings will be provided during the plan period. The focus is on meeting local housing needs; primarily through neighbourhood planning and, where a local housing need can be demonstrated, on rural exception sites, as set out in Policy 9 – Rural Exception Schemes.</p>	<p>Neighbourhood plans should conform to this strategic approach to housing distribution.</p>

Local Plan Part 1 policy number	What the policy says	Implications for the Bourton Neighbourhood Plan
Policy 7 – Delivering Homes	<p>All housing should contribute towards the creation of mixed and balanced communities. Policy 7 seeks to deliver 40% of market housing in North Dorset as one or two bedroom properties and 60% of market housing as three or more bedroom properties, with an emphasis on the provision of two and three bedroom properties. In the period to 2026, the Council will seek to deliver 60% of affordable housing in North Dorset as one or two bedroom properties and 40% of affordable housing as three or more bedroom properties. These proportions will be the starting point for negotiations on the mix of house sizes on all sites where 10 or more dwellings are proposed.</p> <p>The Council will seek to meet the needs of different groups in the community and support the provision of age-restricted housing for the elderly. Residential density should make effective use of the site while respecting the character and distinctiveness of the locality. The policy supports sensitively designed infilling within established settlement boundaries.</p>	<p>A neighbourhood plan could consider a different mix if it can be soundly justified by local circumstances. In the case of rural exception sites, the mix should reflect identified local needs in accordance with Policy 9 – Rural Exception Affordable Housing.</p> <p>In the event that a neighbourhood plan re-establishes the settlement boundary local communities are encouraged to develop detailed policies relating to infilling.</p> <p>The Council also encourages local communities to develop more detailed policies relating to infilling through the neighbourhood planning process.</p>
Policy 9 – Rural Exception Affordable Housing	<p>Policy 9 explains that rural exception schemes will only be permitted within or adjoining the built-up area of Stalbridge or any of the District’s villages. Rural exception affordable housing schemes will not be permitted within or adjoining the settlements of Blandford (Forum and St. Mary), Gillingham, Shaftesbury and Sturminster Newton.</p> <p>Rural exception affordable housing schemes (including schemes that include small numbers of market housing units) will only be permitted if a local need for rural exception affordable housing can be demonstrated in an up-to-date local needs survey.</p> <p>Where these schemes are proposed they should be located in the built up</p>	<p>Neighbourhood plans can allocate small scale rural exception sites.</p>

Local Plan Part 1 policy number	What the policy says	Implications for the Bourton Neighbourhood Plan
	<p>area of the settlement or, if no such site is available, a small site adjoining the built up area. The rural exception site should not exceed more than nine dwellings in total of which the proportion of market housing should not exceed a third and should be accompanied by a viability assessment.</p>	
<p>Policy 11 – The Economy</p>	<p>Policy 11 seeks to secure sustainable economic development that enables North Dorset’s economy to grow and diversify in ways which support the role and function of different places within the District. The economic development of the four main towns will be supported by the development of key strategic sites to meet the identified need for employment land, mixed use regeneration of sites on the edge of existing town centres with a focus on office and non-B-Class employment generating uses and the continued improvement of town centres.</p> <p>Economic development in the countryside will be supported by enabling rural communities to meet their own needs and countryside policies which permit the re-use of existing buildings, the retention and small scale expansion of existing employment sites, the provision of certain tourist accommodation and equine related development.</p>	<p>The Council will support communities that wish to take forward economic development in their town or village. Neighbourhood plans could allocate specific sites for economic development to enable local communities to meet their own needs, if they can not be met through the Countryside Policy alone.</p>
<p>Policy 12 – Retail, Leisure and Other Commercial Developments</p>	<p>The Council recognises that town centres are at the heart of local communities and this policy aims to support their viability and vitality. It defines the hierarchy and network of centres in the District and sets out the Council’s approach to the definition of town centres, primary shopping areas, and primary and secondary shopping frontages; makes clear the different uses that may be permitted in these locations, seeking to concentrate main town centre uses in town centres and retail and other A Class uses in shopping areas and frontages.</p>	<p>Sites for new commercial community facilities may be allocated by local communities in neighbourhood plans.</p>
<p>Policy 13 – Grey</p>	<p>By working alongside developers, agencies and other partners the Council</p>	<p>Sites to provide essential infrastructure</p>

Local Plan Part 1 policy number	What the policy says	Implications for the Bourton Neighbourhood Plan
Infrastructure	will ensure that the necessary grey infrastructure is put in place to support growth development and North Dorset's economy.	may also be identified in the Local Plan Part 2 or through the Neighbourhood Plan for Bourton.
Policy 14 – Social Infrastructure	The Council will work with partners and developers to ensure that the level of social infrastructure across the District is maintained and enhanced through the retention and improvement of existing facilities and new provision.	<p>Local communities also have the opportunity to address economic development issues and the provision and retention of commercial and non-commercial community facilities through the neighbourhood planning process and the Government's Community Rights.</p> <p>Outside the towns, cultural facilities and their provision will be a matter for local communities to decide and will be delivered through the neighbourhood planning process unless an overriding need can be demonstrated.</p> <p>The assessment of future needs and the opportunities for new formal and informal indoor sport and recreation provision should ideally be identified by local communities through the neighbourhood planning process.</p>
Policy 15 – Green Infrastructure	The Council will produce a Green Infrastructure (GI) Strategy for North Dorset which sets out a strategic approach to the provision, design and management of an integrated network of green spaces, green links and other	Neighbourhood plans should consider measures that assist in delivering key green infrastructure benefits and the

Local Plan Part 1 policy number	What the policy says	Implications for the Bourton Neighbourhood Plan
	green elements.	objectives of the GI Strategy, including the designation of Local Green Space, where appropriate.
Policy 20 – The Countryside	<p>In the countryside the focus is on meeting local rather than strategic needs. Any growth in the countryside will be ‘additional’ to the strategic growth in the four main towns.</p> <p>Although the emphasis of policy in the countryside is on restraint, the Council will permit some forms of development to support the rural economy and meet essential rural needs. Development in the countryside will only be permitted if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • it is of a type appropriate in the countryside, or • for any other type of development if it can be demonstrated that there is an 'overriding need' for it to be located in the countryside. <p>Neighbourhood plans are about meeting local needs, which could be achieved in different ways. Some communities may seek to meet local needs by re-instating or reviewing settlement boundaries to encourage infilling. Others may prefer to meet local needs by allocating a specific site for housing or employment.</p>	<p>Consider the local needs of those people who live in the parish of Bourton. Where needs can not be met by Local Plan policies, communities through the neighbourhood planning process may consider allocating areas for housing, employment or other forms of development, including new commercial community facilities or cultural facilities to meet local needs. Any growth proposed in the countryside must be based on evidence and fulfil local needs.</p> <p>Countryside policies will apply to Bourton unless a new settlement boundary is defined in the Neighbourhood Plan or North Dorset Local Plan Part 2.</p>
Policy 22 – Renewable and Low Carbon Energy	Policy 22 sets out in more detail than Policy 3 how the Council will consider proposals for renewable and low carbon energy.	The Neighbourhood Plan will need to have regard to these policies when proposals are being developed.
Policy 23 – Parking	Policy 23 considers residential and non-residential parking.	
Policy 24 – Design	Policy 24 requires development to be designed to improve the character and quality of the area within which it is located. The policy also includes space	

Local Plan Part 1 policy number	What the policy says	Implications for the Bourton Neighbourhood Plan
	standards for cycle parking, storage for bins and recyclables.	
Policy 25 – Amenity	Policy 25 deals with several aspects of amenity including; privacy and open space, sunlight and daylight, artificial light intrusion, noise and vibration and unpleasant emissions.	
Policy 26 – Sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople	Policy 26 sets out criteria for the assessment of permanent caravan sites, transit caravan sites and emergency stopping places for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.	
Policy 27 – Retention of Community Facilities	Policy 27 sets out the requirements for the retention of community facilities.	
Policy 28 – Existing Dwellings in the Countryside	Policy 28 seeks to ensure that exceptions to the general policy of restraint in the countryside are not abused, for example, by attempts to establish new or additional permanent dwellings in the countryside; and any development associated with existing dwellings in the countryside does not have a harmful effect on its surroundings.	
Policy 29 – The Re-use of Existing Buildings in the Countryside	Policy 29 is primarily aimed at redundant, disused or underused buildings. It sets out: the characteristics existing buildings should have to make them acceptable for re-use; the Council’s approach to different types of use; and how the Council will assess the acceptability of any scheme for re-use.	
Policy 30 – Existing Employment Sites in the Countryside	This policy permits the redevelopment and limited expansion of existing employment sites in the countryside for employment purposes to help support the rural economy. Whilst it provides such businesses with some flexibility, it also seeks to ensure that such development does not have a harmful effect on its surroundings. Proposals for expansion beyond the scale appropriate to a rural location would usually necessitate relocation to alternative premises in a more suitable location, such as an industrial estate	The Neighbourhood Plan will need to have regard to these policies when proposals are being developed.

Local Plan Part 1 policy number	What the policy says	Implications for the Bourton Neighbourhood Plan
	at a town or village.	
Policy 31 – Tourist Accommodation in the Countryside	<p>Policy 31 permits caravan and tent camping sites which are sustainably located, or that will demonstrably support farm diversification, provided that in both cases they can be successfully integrated into the landscape.</p> <p>The acceptability of any proposal for tourist accommodation in the countryside (including any extensions to existing hotels, guest houses etc.) will need to be considered against all other relevant planning policies, including those relating to design, amenity and environmental protection.</p>	
Policy 32 – Equine-related Developments in the Countryside	Policy 32 sets out the Council’s approach to equine-related developments in the countryside.	
Policy 33 – Occupational Dwellings in the Countryside	Policy 33 sets out the Council’s approach to the provision of dwellings for agricultural, forestry and other full-time workers in the countryside where there is an essential need for them to live at or near their place of work.	

The Bourton Village Plan

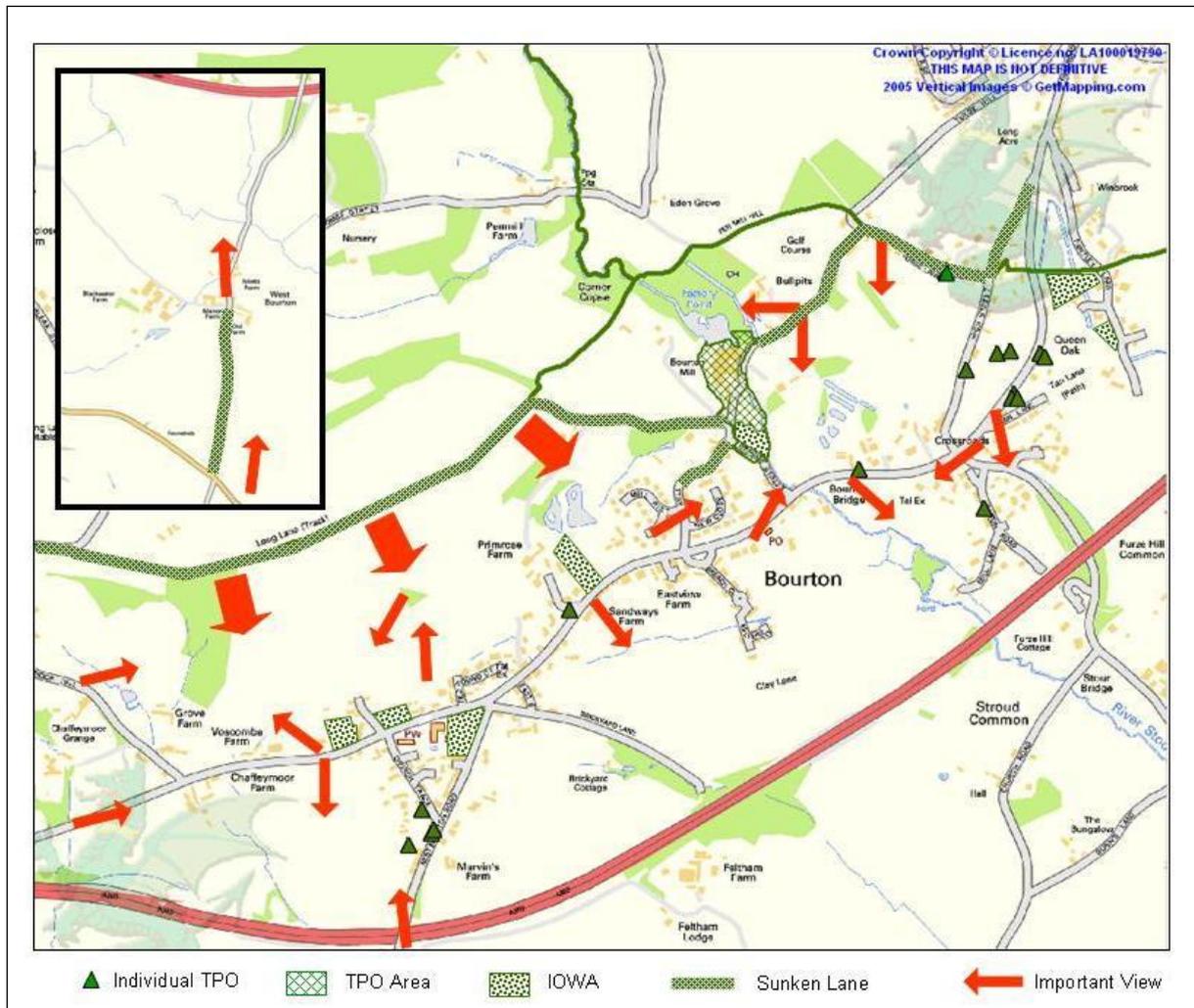
- 2.49 The Village Plan was approved by NDDC, adopted by Bourton Parish Council and published in August 2008. It was based on questionnaires hand delivered to each house in the village. The results may be summarised as follows:
- There is support for maintenance and improvement of the village environment and in particular the footpath network.
 - There are concerns about speeding and parking.
 - The Village Hall, built in the 1970s, serves not only Bourton but also the wider community. It is a much used facility despite its limitations. There are a number of serious problems due to its age, construction, location and inadequate facilities. There is strong support for a new village hall on a new, easily accessible site with adequate parking and a sizeable outdoor amenity area.
 - There is a requirement for affordable, 2/3 bedroom starter homes. The provision of truly affordable accommodation for local people is seen as a priority. Opinion for and against further residential development is divided and inconclusive. There is a preference for schemes of less than 7 houses.
 - There is strong support for future developer contributions to be spent in the village and for the Village Hall to be the principal beneficiary.

The Bourton Village Design Statement

- 2.50 The Bourton Village Design Statement (VDS) was adopted by North Dorset District Council as a Supplementary Planning Document on 30 September 2011.
- 2.51 The VDS describes the distinctive character of the village and its surrounding countryside and sets out design principles to demonstrate how local character can be protected and enhanced if there is to be any new development. The aim of the design statement is to protect, maintain and enhance the village environment, its surroundings and the quality of life for the people who live there.
- 2.52 Bourton does not have an historic core and has developed from the amalgamation of a number of small hamlets with subsequent infill of later development. However, the surveys carried out for both the Village Plan and the VDS show that the village does have a valued heart and residents especially cherish the community spirit, location, treasured views, surrounding countryside, peacefulness and rural character of the village. Any future development should be sensitive to anything which affects these values and in any proposal to alter or extend an existing building or create a new one, the opportunity should be taken to safeguard or reinforce those elements identified as being important such as the use of materials, scale, form and spatial relationship within its context.
- 2.53 The VDS defines a series of guidelines which indicate a range of constraints and considerations that will be applicable to new development. They are intended to

maintain the setting of the village in the rural landscape and to safeguard the atmosphere and appearance of the village and its rural context.

Figure 2.3: Important Views into and out of the Village



Neighbourhood Planning Group Questionnaires

2.54 Due to changing circumstances, the Neighbourhood Planning Group distributed, collected and analysed two questionnaires, the results of which were published in March 2013 and June 2014. The household response rates, in both cases, were over 70% and the following majority views were expressed, some of which serve to confirm the conclusions of the Village Plan and the VDS:

Questionnaire 1

- Concerns remain over speeding traffic.
- Noise pollution (from the A303) is a significant concern.
- Street lighting should be turned off at midnight.
- If the Mill development goes ahead, there will be no need for further new housing in the next 15 years.

- If the Mill development does not go ahead, up to 20 new homes should be built elsewhere in the village in the next 15 years; these should be single houses, or groups of up to five.
- Footpaths and bridleways, trees, hedgerows, views and open spaces should be protected.
- The rural nature of the village is important to 96% of respondents.
- Tourist accommodation and small businesses should be attracted to the village to provide more local employment and help sustain community facilities. However, there are concerns over the potential for an increase in heavy goods traffic and the effect on the environment.
- There is strong support for a hydro-electric power source at the dam by the mill and majority support for rooftop photovoltaic installations. Wind turbines and photovoltaic farms are not wanted in the area.

2.55 NDDC's decision to remove Settlement Boundaries and implement a Countryside Policy of restraint had not emerged at the time of this questionnaire, so views relating to the Settlement Boundary have not been included here.

Questionnaire 2

- A large majority of respondents (82%) accept the principle of a small amount of housing development to assist the delivery of the new Village Hall and amenity area.
- There should be no further housing development before 2026, other than that which has already been given consent or is noted above.
- Growth should be managed by proposals in the Neighbourhood Plan and agreed by the community.
- The Settlement Boundary should not be reviewed and re-drawn, hence the Local Plan will be relied on to protect the rural character, treasured views and the majority of open/green spaces.
- Four IOWAs, which are identified as special to the community, should be assessed as potential Local Green Spaces.
- Local initiatives should be undertaken to protect and enhance wildlife by creating a network of habitats and linking corridors.

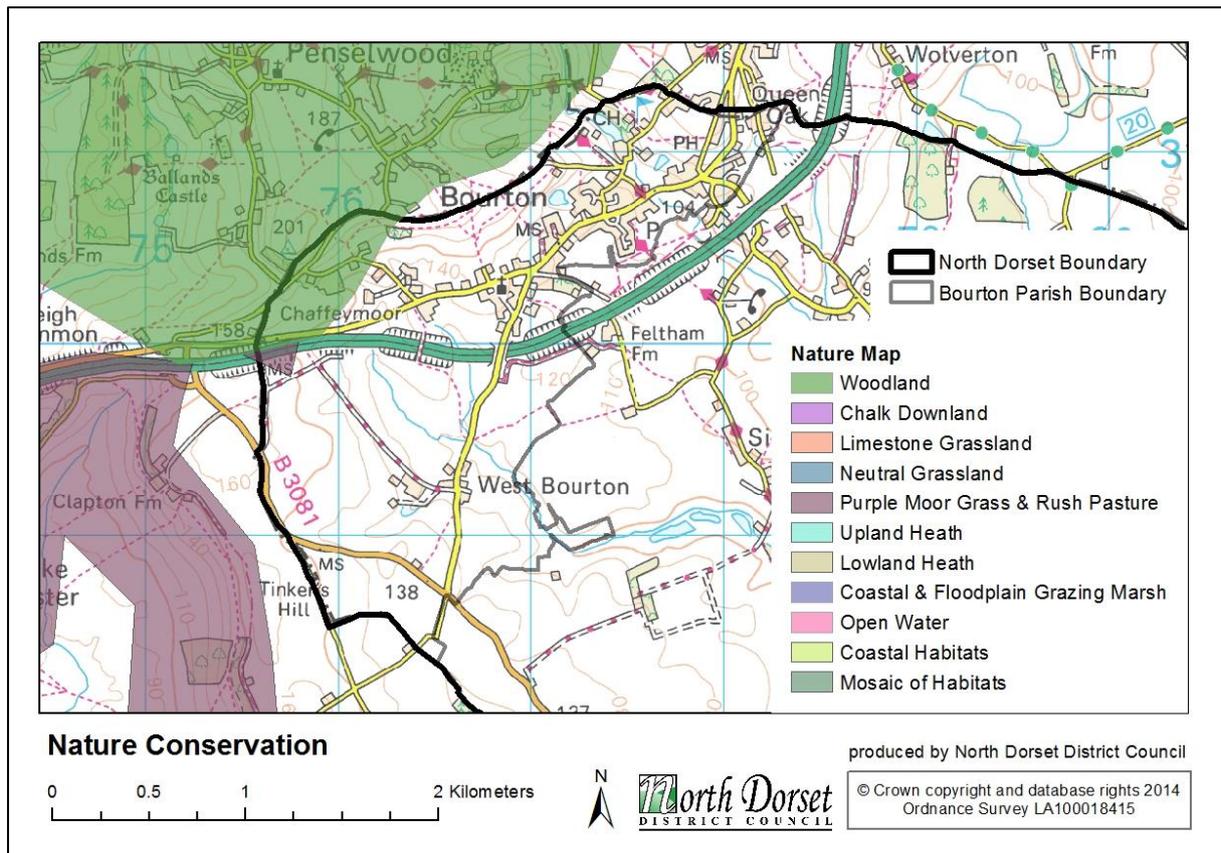
3. Baseline

- 3.1 Analysis of the baseline information enables the current and future situation in the Neighbourhood Area to be evaluated. It also enables existing problems and issues to be identified so that proposals within the Neighbourhood Plan can be designed to help tackle the issues. Trends in data help to give an understanding of how the situation in the Neighbourhood Area may change over time without the plan.
- 3.2 The information that is readily available for the Bourton Neighbourhood Area highlights a number of issues. Some of these are specific to Bourton whilst others are Dorset-wide and national trends. Information has been grouped under headings from Schedule 2 of the SEA Regulations for ease of analysis.

Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna

- 3.3 There are no nationally or internationally protected nature conservation sites within the Bourton Neighbourhood Area, however, there are two Sites of Nature Conservation Interest - pockets of undisturbed habitat - and the area also contains woodland, wetland, fields, meadows, hedgerows and sunken lanes which provide linked wildlife habitats.
- 3.4 The native wildlife includes deer, foxes, bats and badgers and there have been signs of the presence of otters on the banks of the River Stour, which runs through the village. Bird life is also plentiful and varied, with woodland, wetland, hedgerow and open field species commonly seen. Wild plants and flowers proliferate, with over 70 species identified on the village wild flower bank.
- 3.5 Note. As a direct result of discussions within the Neighbourhood Plan Natural Environment Focus Group, a number of volunteers formed a Wildlife and Habitats Group which has organised a series of public presentations, arranged a survey of village wetland and other habitats, erected barn owl boxes and (in agreement with Bourton Parish Council) tended the village's wild flower bank and verges.

Figure 3.1: South West Nature Map



Landscape

3.6 Bourton Neighbourhood Area falls into two Landscape Character Areas, each of which has its own special characteristics (Figure 3.2). The northern and western parts of the Neighbourhood Area fall within the Limestone Ridges character area. This area is characterised by:

- An elevated open plateau area of undulating farmland landscape with distinctive sloping edges in places;
- Thick dense hedgerows and frequent small copses and plantations;
- Open views from higher areas across the Vale to the chalk escarpment;
- Many scattered villages and farmsteads and a distinctive settlement pattern along the ridges or on the side slopes to the ridges;
- The traditional use of locally available and distinctive limestone in the villages and in other buildings and structures;
- Numerous twisting hedge lined lanes, straighter ridge top roads and many public Rights of Way;

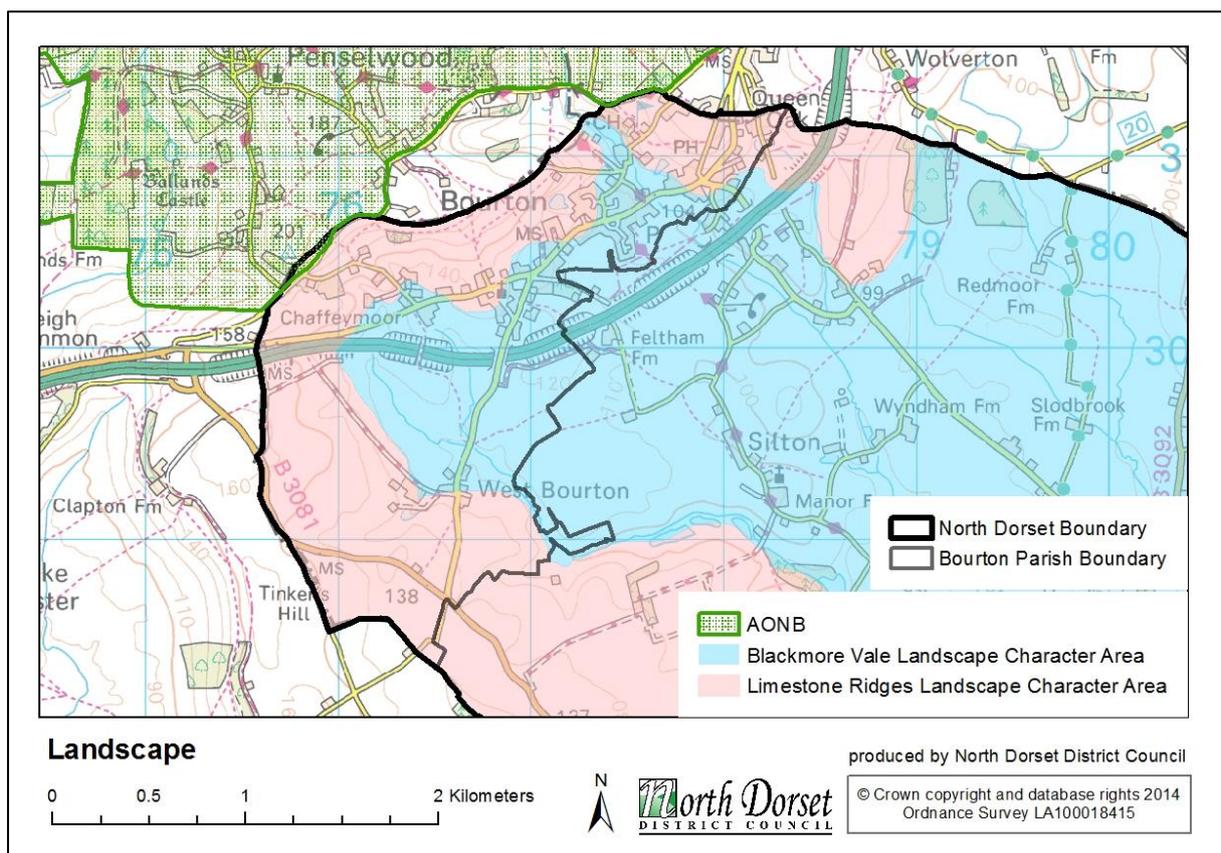
3.7 The southern part of the Neighbourhood Area falls within the Blackmore Vale area which is characterised by:

- A broad expansive clay Vale which is tranquil and unified;

- A unique mosaic of woods, straight hedgerows and grassland fields ‘dotted’ with distinctive mature hedgerow oaks;
- Open views across the undulating hills to flat pastoral landscape to the chalk escarpment backdrop;
- Dense network of twisting lanes often with grass verges and sharp double 90° bends;
- Small hump backed bridges with low stone or brick parapets;
- Many very small villages and hamlets built with locally distinctive materials, such as stone, redbrick, tile and thatch;
- A network of ditches, streams and brooks which drain into the tributaries of the Stour;

3.8 A small part of the north west of the Neighbourhood Area falls within the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB. Any development within the Neighbourhood Area has the potential to have an impact on the setting of the AONB.

Figure 3.2: Landscape



Soil

3.9 Soil is a finite resource that fulfils many important functions including crop production, as a store for water and for biodiversity. The best and most versatile agricultural land (classified as Grade 3a, Grade 2 or Grade 1) should be safeguarded

with development being diverted to other, less valuable areas. The majority of the District is Grade 3 agricultural land and this is also the case in Bourton (Figure 3.4).

- 3.10 Just outside, but abutting the Neighbourhood Area, is a former landfill site (Figure 3.3). This site is on the northern side of Brickyard Lane. The site was used for the disposal of largely inert material such as glass, concrete, bricks, tiles, soil and stones.

Figure 3.3: Landfill Sites

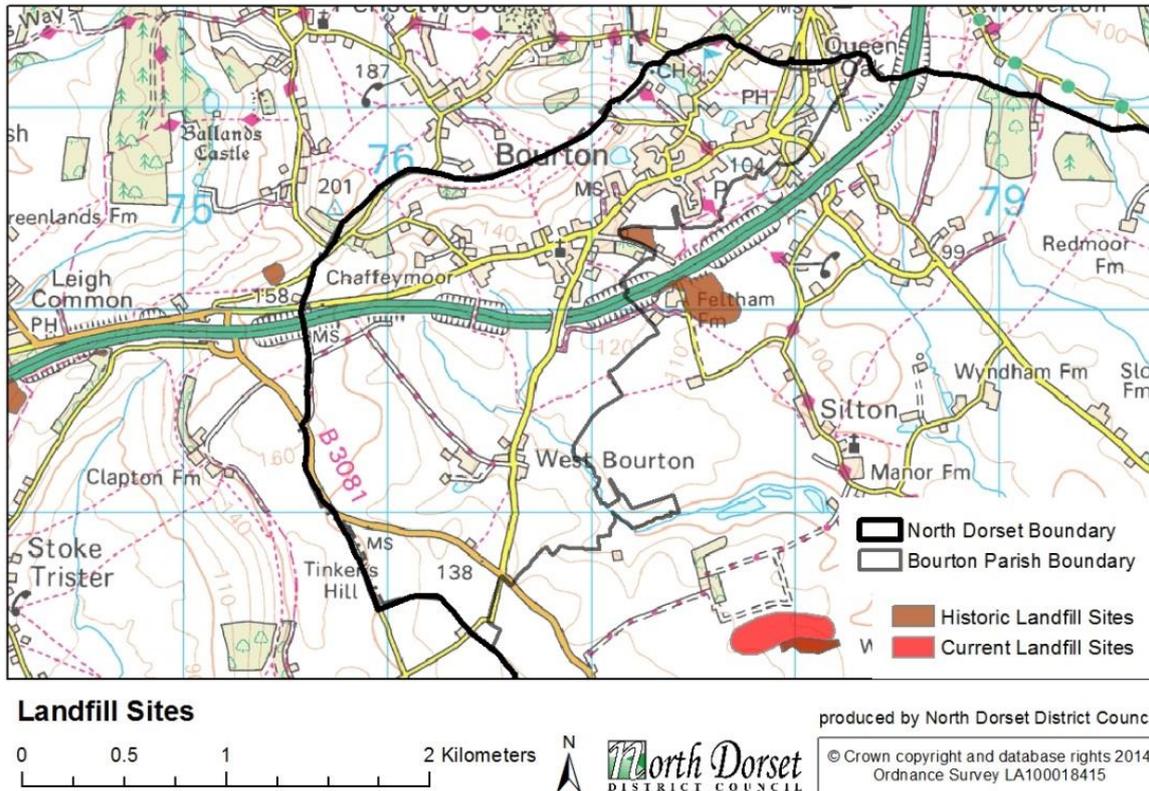
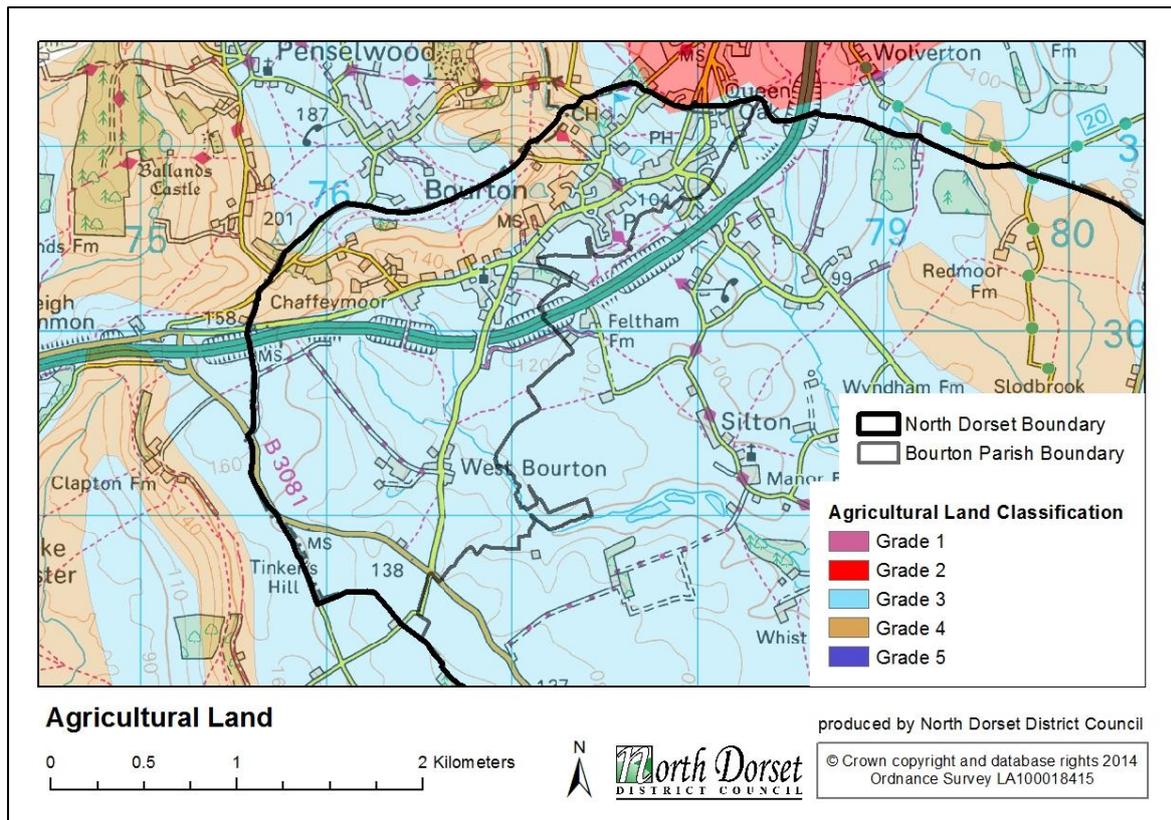


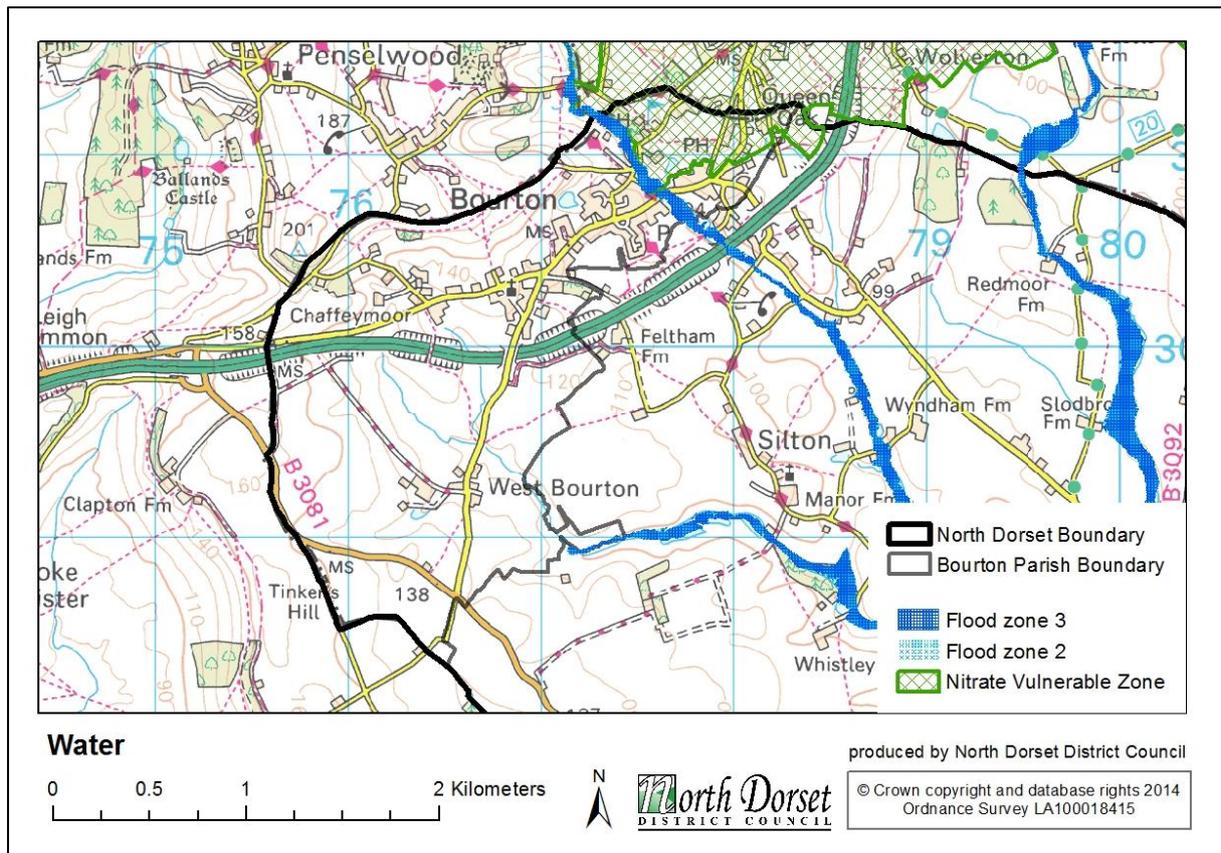
Figure 3.4: Agricultural Land Classification



Water

- 3.11 The River Stour, which flows through the parish from Factory Pond upstream of Bourton Mill in a south easterly direction, has an associated area at risk of flooding. There is also an area of flood risk along this corridor associated with the upstream reservoirs. The upper reaches of the River Stour, which run through the Neighbourhood Area, have been assessed as having moderate ecological status. The South West River Basin Management Plan has set the objective for the river to be considered 'Good' by the year 2027. Its chemical status does not require assessment.
- 3.12 There is a nitrate vulnerable zone covering the north eastern part of the Neighbourhood Area (Figure 3.5). A Nitrate Vulnerable Zone (NVZ) is designated where land drains and contributes to the nitrate found in waters where nitrogen levels are already high. It primarily relates to farming practices and sets restrictions on fertilizer use on the land.
- 3.13 There is no water quality monitoring point within or adjacent to the Bourton Neighbourhood Area.

Figure 3.5: The Water Environment



Climatic Factors

- 3.14 Within Bourton, there are 12 dwellings² which do not have central heating . This equates to 3.1% of the total housing stock in the parish, a level above the District (2.3%), County (2.8%) and National average (2.6%).
- 3.15 In the 2001 Census the number of properties in Bourton Parish which did not have central heating was 22 dwellings (6.7%), compared with the district (6.42%), county (9.60%) and national (8.37%) average.
- 3.16 The 2011 census therefore shows a decreasing trend in the number of properties within Bourton Parish which do not have central heating.

Air

- 3.17 The Bourton Neighbourhood Area is rural in character with 386 residences. The A303 trunk route runs through the area and is likely to be the main source of air pollution. There are, however, no Air Quality Management Areas within the Neighbourhood Area and no air quality issues have been identified.

² Census 2011

- 3.18 Historically, North Dorset has not routinely undertaken local air quality monitoring, as desk-top studies have indicated that this was not necessary. The First Stage Review and Assessment of Air Quality for North Dorset carried out in 1999, and the subsequent Updating, Screening and Assessment undertaken in 2003 confirmed that none of the pollutant thresholds was likely to be breached by their respective target years. This trend has continued up to the latest Air Quality Progress Report 2014.
- 3.19 A large proportion of the households within the Bourton Neighbourhood Area have two or more cars or vans (53.8%) and a relatively small but significant proportion have no cars or vans (7.4%).
- 3.20 Within the Neighbourhood Area there is a primary school, however, the catchment area secondary school is in Gillingham 5km to the south east. Just outside the Neighbourhood Area is the Silton Surgery GP Practice and within the village there is a petrol station and a shop which also has a Post Office. The village pub is the White Lion Inn. The village has basic facilities, therefore, that help reduce trips by car.

Figure 3.6: Car Ownership³

Area	% No Cars or Vans in Household	% 2 or more Cars or Vans in Household
Bourton	7.4	53.8
North Dorset	12.0	45.9
Dorset	15.5	41.0
National (England and Wales)	25.6	32.2

Material Assets

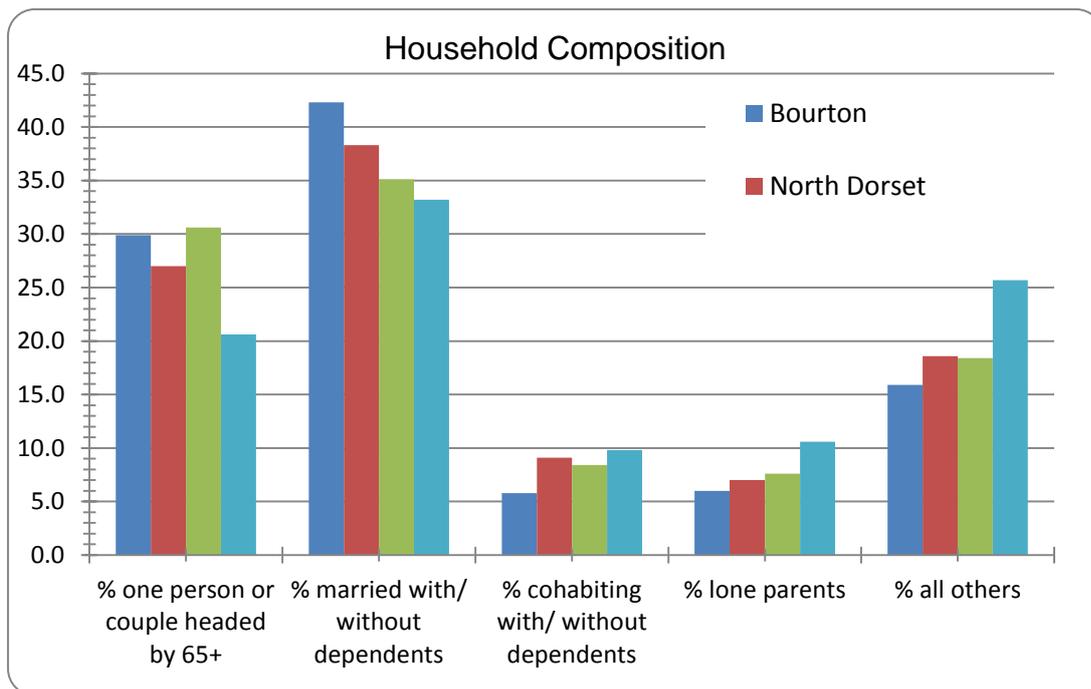
- 3.21 Over the last three years (April 2011 – March 2014), two new dwellings have been built within the Neighbourhood Area. As at January 2015 there is permission for an additional 42 dwellings which have not yet been built. The total number of dwellings within the Neighbourhood Area is 386, as recorded in the 2011 Census. The proportion of detached dwellings in Bourton Neighbourhood Area is 63%. This is above the equivalent proportion for North Dorset (43%).
- 3.22 Based on sales over the period July to September 2010, the average house price in the Bourton Neighbourhood Area was £412,318, a figure which is skewed by the small sample of sales. This compares to an equivalent price for North Dorset of £267,669 and England and Wales of £246,387.

³ 2011 Census

3.23 The composition of households in the Bourton Neighbourhood Area is shown in Figure 3.7.

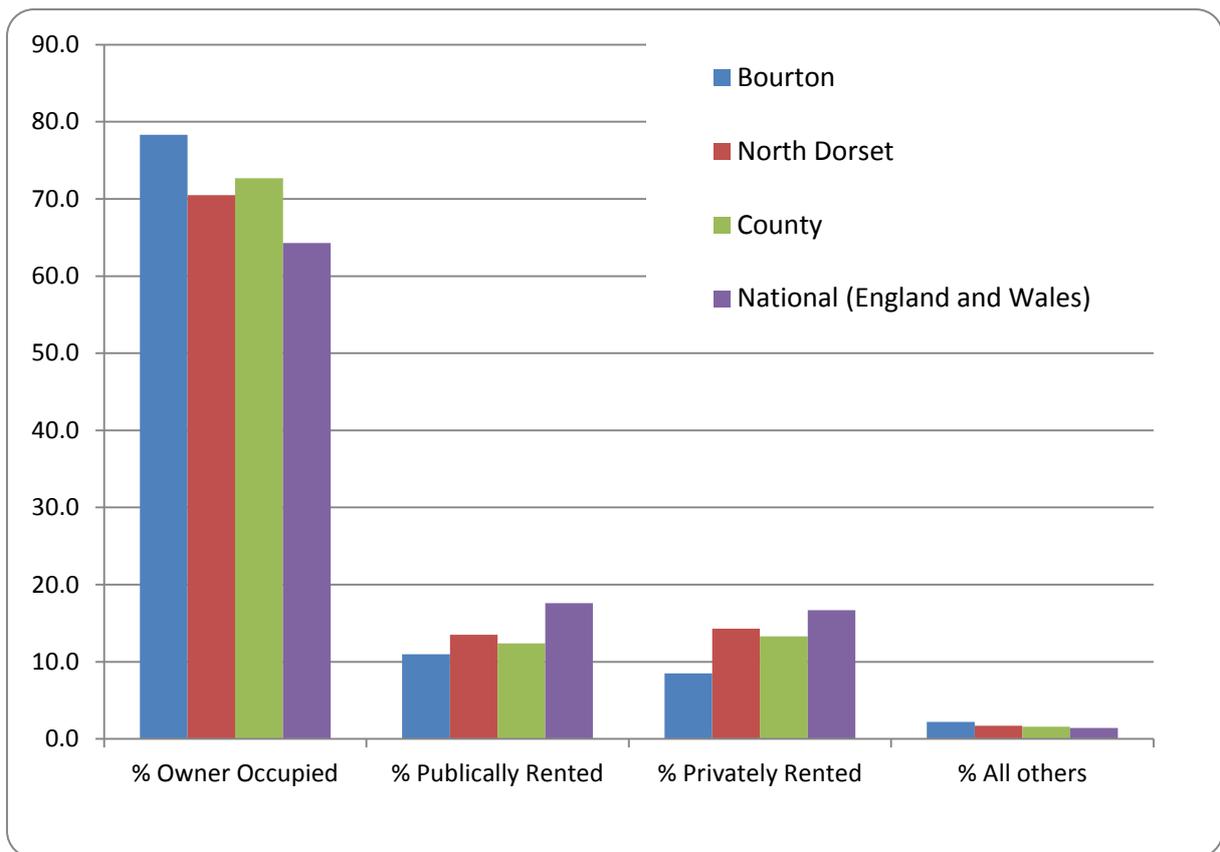
3.24 The majority of the homes in Bourton Neighbourhood Area are owner occupied at 78.3% with around 11.0% being rented publically. Figure 3.8 shows the comparison with the County and National position. The households within Bourton Neighbourhood Area have an average of 3.3 bedrooms. This is significantly above the Dorset and national pictures at 2.8 and 2.7 bedrooms per household respectively.

Figure 3.7: Household Composition⁴



⁴ 2011 Census

Figure 3.8: Tenure of Housing Stock



Cultural Heritage

- 3.25 Cultural heritage includes the physical heritage assets such as listed buildings and the landscape but also the shared memories and experiences associated with a place. The Bourton Village Design Statement includes a map of important views and this is replicated in Figure 2.3.
- 3.26 There are 33 listed buildings as shown in Figures 3.9 to 3.12. There are no ancient monuments within the parish and there is no conservation area designation within the parish.

Figure 3.9: Listed Buildings Map 1

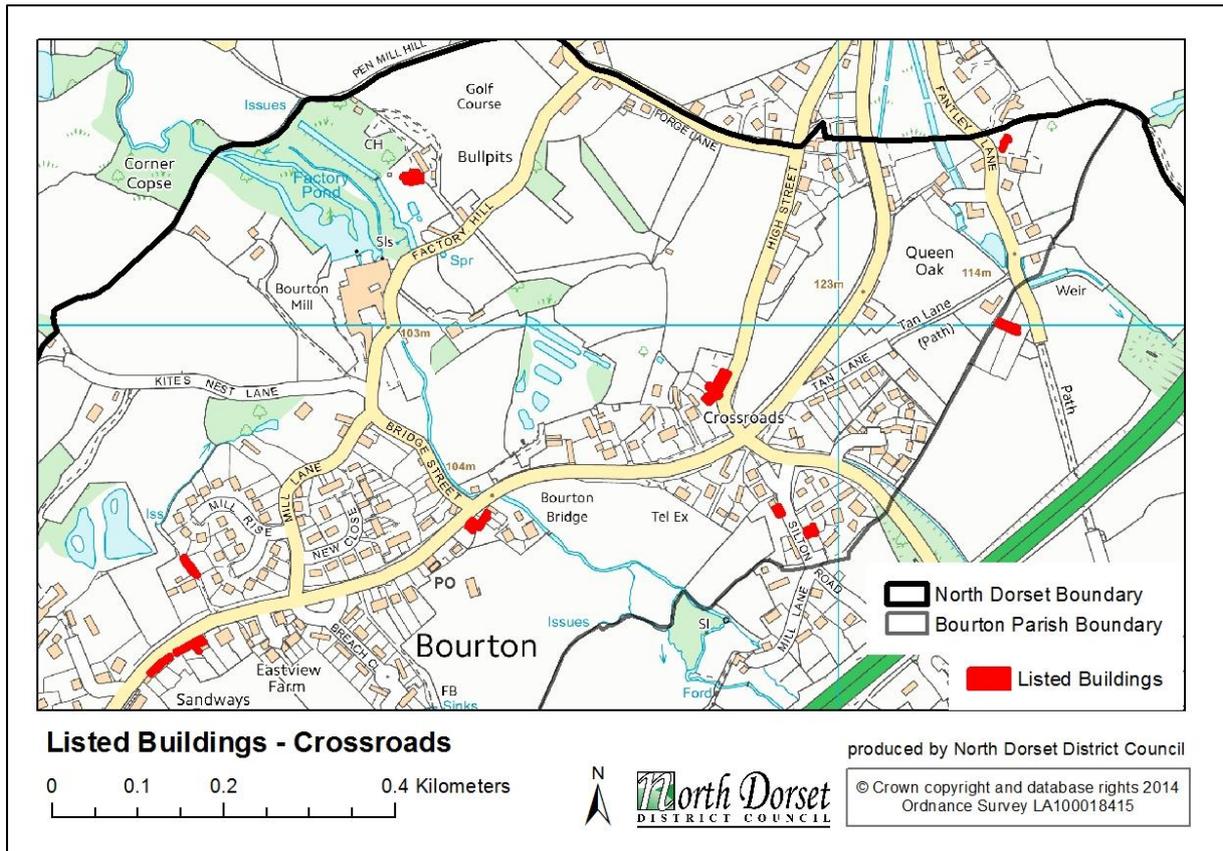


Figure 3.10: Listed Buildings Map 2

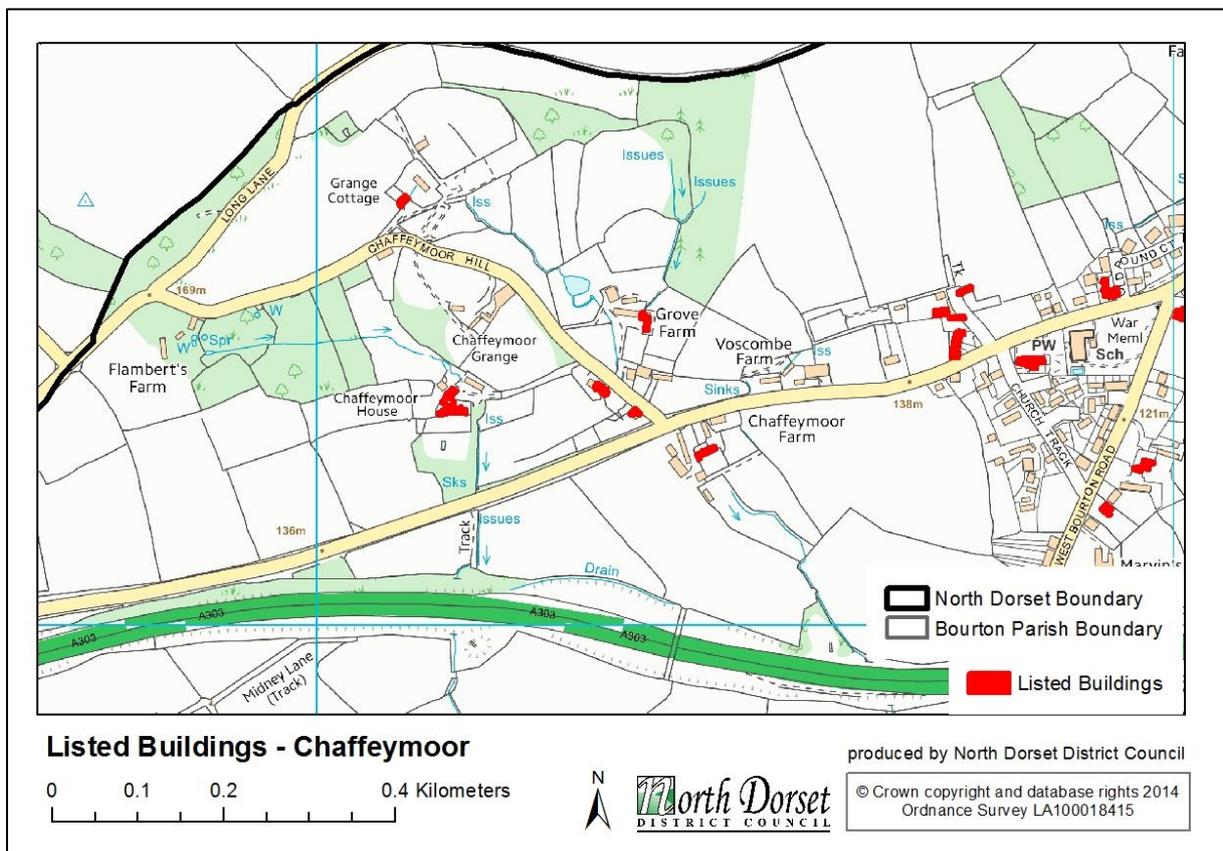


Figure 3.11: Listed Buildings Map 3

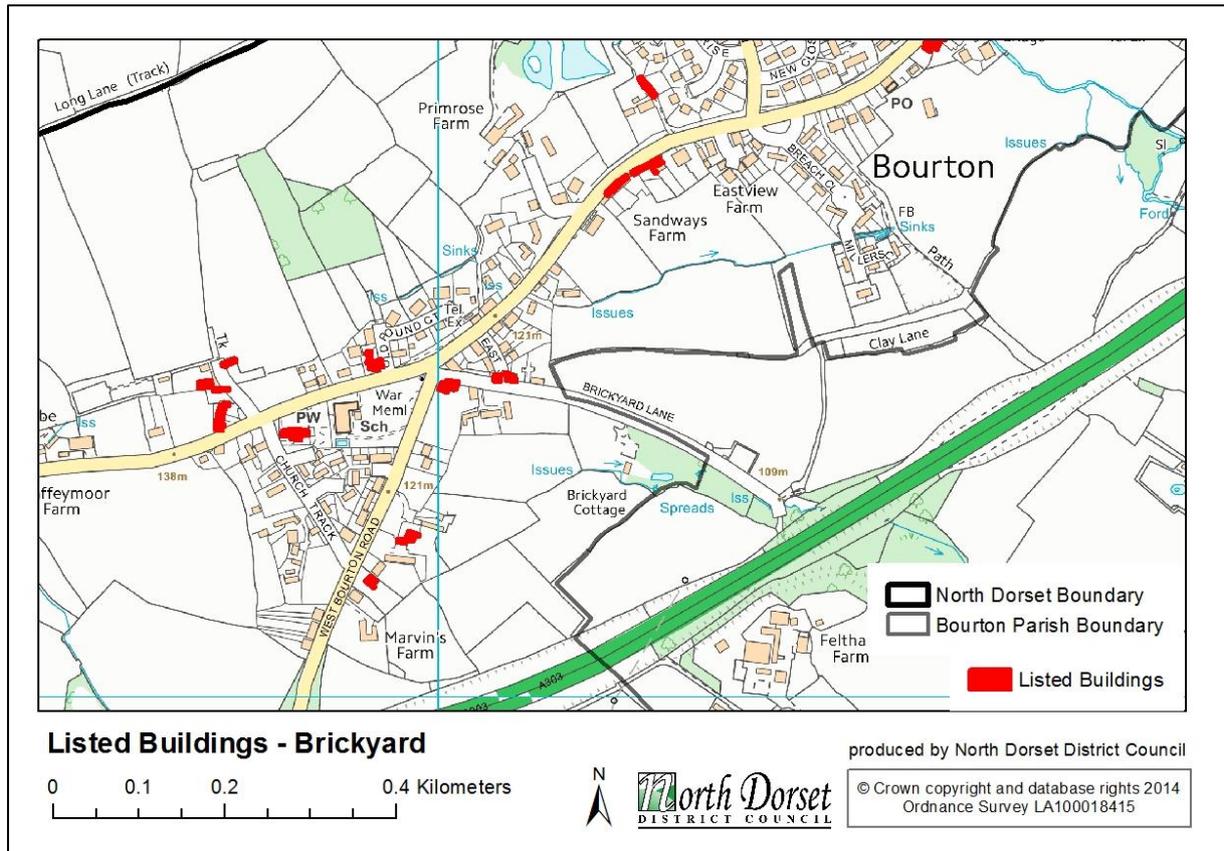
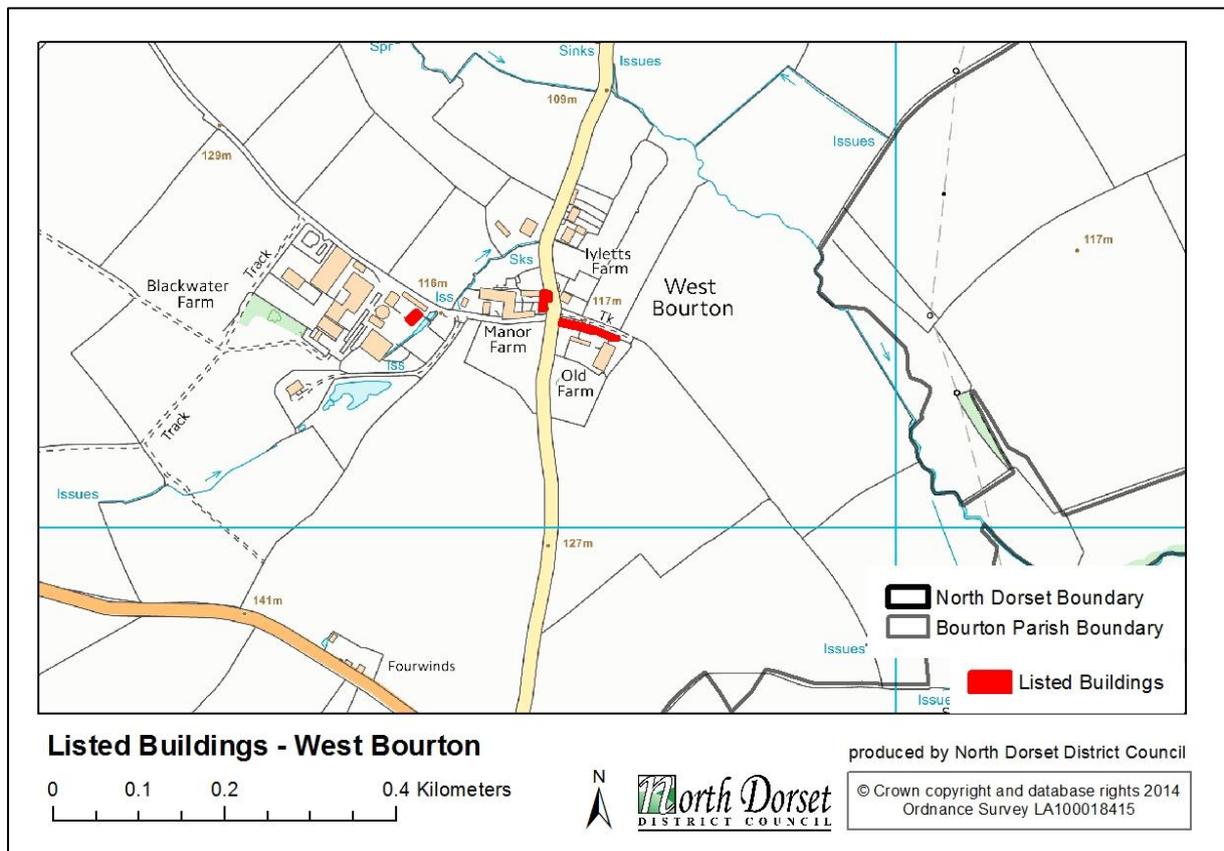


Figure 3.12: Listed Buildings Map 4



Population and Health

- 3.27 As recorded in the 2011 census, there are 822 residents living within the Bourton Neighbourhood Area, 49.1% of these are male and 50.9% are female. Of these residents, there is a large proportion (25.8%) over the age of 65, a higher proportion than in North Dorset as a whole (21.6%) and larger than nationally (16.4%). This bias towards the older age range is typical in Dorset, especially in the more rural areas of the County.
- 3.28 The 2001 census records the population of Bourton Parish as 772 residents, of which 376 (48.7%) were male and 396 (51.2%) female. The population of the village over the age of 65 was 22.4% showing a trend towards an ageing population.

Figure 3.13: Population Profile

Area	Median Age	Working age (Age 16-64)
Bourton	50	57.8%
North Dorset	44	60.4%
Dorset	47	58.5%
Dorset, Bournemouth and Poole	42	61.3%
National (England and Wales)	39	64.7%

- 3.29 The population pyramid for Bourton Neighbourhood Area (Figure 3.14) shows a very low proportion of people in the 25 to 35 age range. It also shows a significantly large proportion in the 60 to 69 age range. When compared to the equivalent picture for North Dorset (Figure 3.15) and nationally (Figure 3.16), it can be seen how significant these features are for the Bourton population profile.

Figure 3.14: Population Pyramid for Bourton

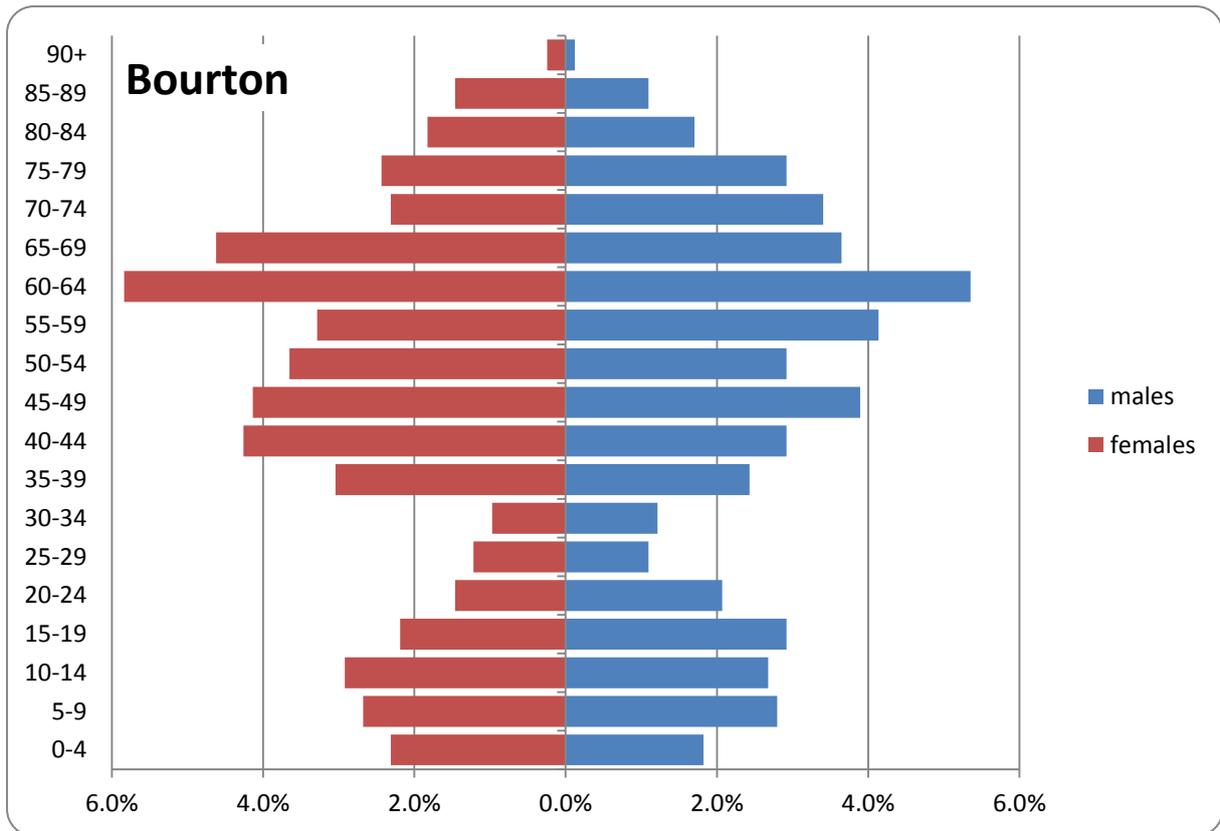


Figure 3.15: Population Pyramid for North Dorset

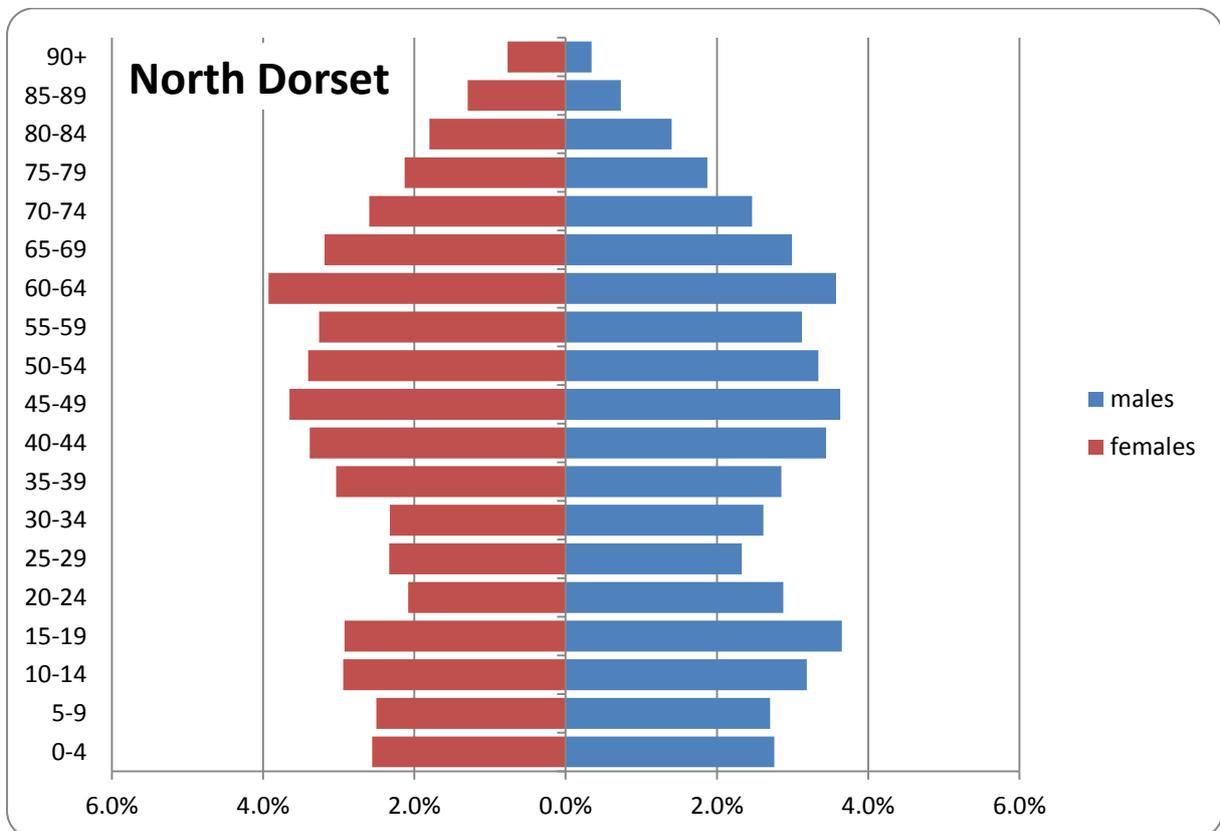
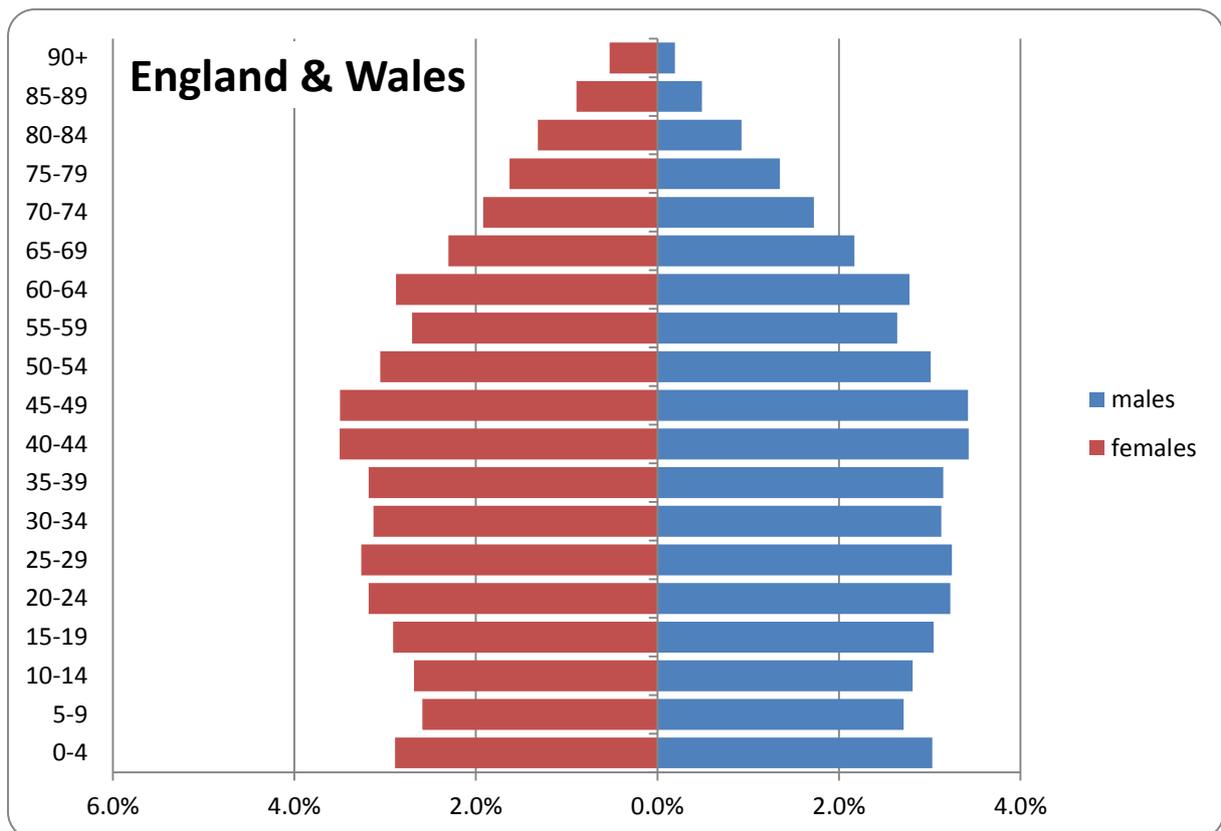


Figure 3.16: Population Pyramid for England and Wales



3.30 Within Bourton Neighbourhood Area, 13.1% of the usual residents provide unpaid care. This compares to a figure of 10.9% for North Dorset and 10.3% nationally.

3.31 Of the 822 usual residents of Bourton Neighbourhood Area, 19.2% have their day to day activities limited due to poor health. Within North Dorset, the equivalent figure is 17.5% with the national figure being 17.9%.

Economy

3.32 Within Bourton Neighbourhood Area, there are 590 residents of working age (in the 16-64 age range). Of these, 68.8% are economically active with the majority being employed on a full time basis. Of those that are economically inactive, the vast majority are retired, with a significantly higher proportion than for both North Dorset and nationally (Figure 3.17).

3.33 Trend data taken from the 2001 Census (Figure 3.17) shows that, although the economically active population has increased the percentage of residents in part and full time employment has remained largely the same.

Figure 3.17: Economically Active Residents

	All Economically Active	Employees Part-time	Employees Full-time	Self-employed	Unemployed
Census 2001	355	19.7	49.2	26.7	2.2
Census 2011	406	18.7	49.5	23.4	4.7

Figure 3.18: Economically Active Residents

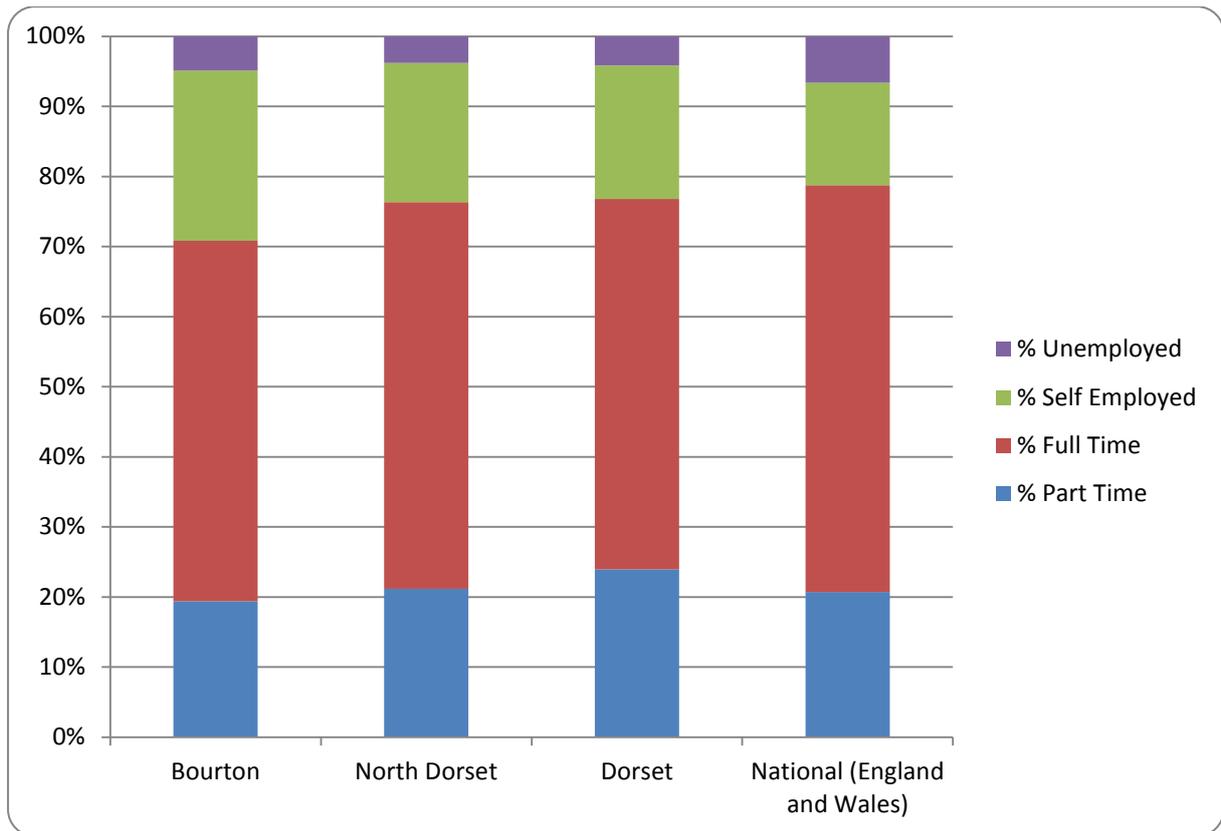
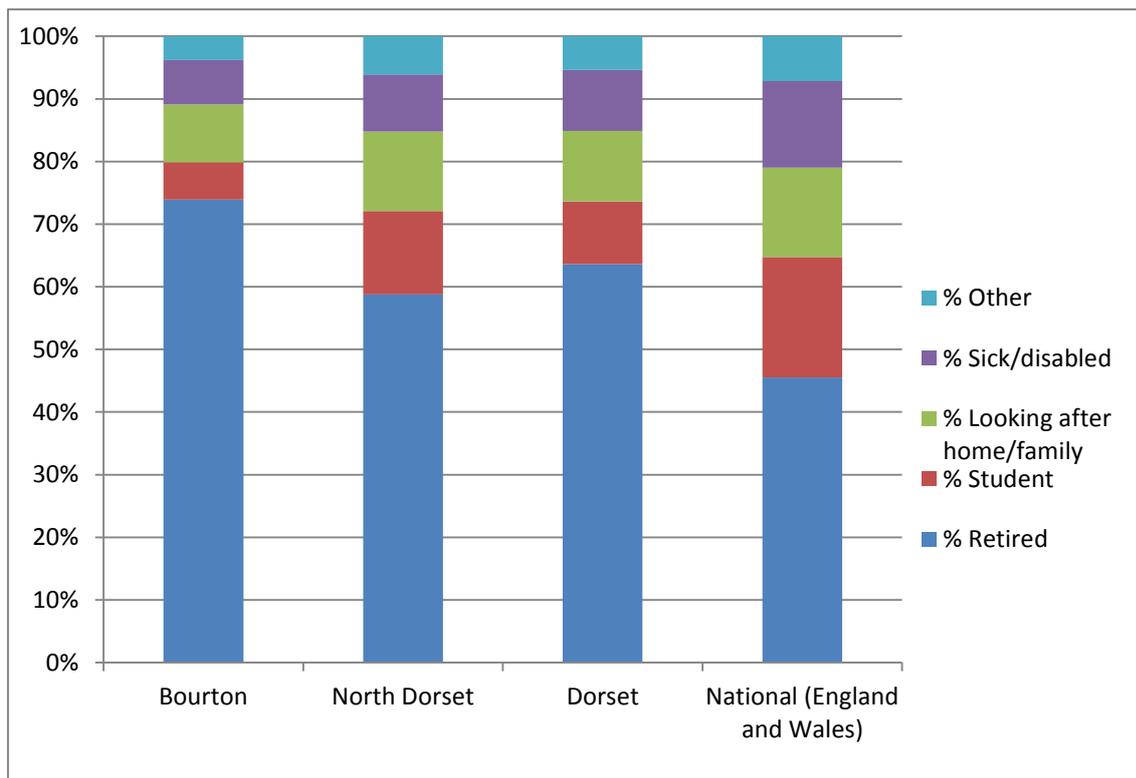


Figure 3.19: Economically Inactive Residents



3.34 Within Bourton Neighbourhood Area, 44.4% of residents in employment are in high skilled occupations and 14.8% are in low skilled occupations (Figure 3.20). The proportion in high skilled occupations is higher than the North Dorset and national equivalents. This is reflected in the proportion of residents of the Bourton Neighbourhood Area who have a higher level qualification (35.8%) compared with the North Dorset and national figures.

Figure 3.20: Skills and Qualifications (2011 Census)

Area	All Usual Residents in Employment (Aged 16-64)	% High skill occupation	% Intermediate skill occupation	% Low skill occupation
Bourton	385	44.4	40.8	14.8
North Dorset	33,432	39.1	41.9	19.0
Dorset	190,903	40.0	43.4	16.6
National (England and Wales)	26,526,336	40.9	40.8	18.4

Area	All Usual Residents (Aged over 16)	% no qualifications	% higher level qualifications (Level 4+)
Bourton	687	18.2	35.8
North Dorset	56,230	20.0	26.9
Dorset	345,596	21.3	27.0
National (England and Wales)	45,496,780	22.7	27.2

Figure 3.21: Skills and Qualifications (2001 Census)

Area	All Usual Residents (Aged 16 -74)	% no qualifications	% higher level qualifications (Level 4/5)
Bourton	554	25.0	24.5
North Dorset	43,611	25.0	18.2
National (England)	35,532,091	28.8	19.9

3.35 Trend data suggests that, since 2001, the percentage of the population with no qualifications has decreased both in Bourton Parish and North Dorset as a whole. Although a different definition is used, the 2011 Census shows a general trend towards a higher level of qualifications in the Parish which is rising above the District and National average.

4. Issues and Objectives

- 4.1 The key issues arising out of the analysis of baseline data above, and the review of relevant plans, have been used to identify objectives against which options for the Neighbourhood Plan and site allocations within it can be tested.

Issue 1 – Intergenerational imbalance

- 4.2 There is a high proportion of wealthy educated retirees within the Neighbourhood Area. The ageing population and atypical population profile is a specific issue for Bourton Neighbourhood Area and may require specific policies, e.g. the building of certain types of dwellings or the Village Hall being designed in a certain way to cater for the older population.

Objective 1: To meet the diverse needs of the population.

Issue 2 – Accessibility to services and high car ownership

- 4.3 Within the Neighbourhood Area, there is a high proportion of households with two or more cars/vans. This is reflective of the rural nature of the Area. There are reasonable facilities within the Area, however, bus services are inadequate. Car use is inevitable within a rural area and hence there is a need to provide parking spaces appropriate to any development being proposed.

Objective 2: To tackle the accessibility issues in the area, reducing reliance on the private car whilst also including appropriate parking.

Issue 3 – Affordability of housing

- 4.4 There is a high proportion of retirees and a high proportion of home owners within the Neighbourhood Area. Similarly, there is a large proportion of detached dwellings and a very low proportion of flats. In Bourton, the household size is relatively low, however, the number of bedrooms per household is relatively high indicating an under occupancy of dwellings. There may be a need for more affordable dwellings within the area and for more dwellings that meet the needs of particular groups, e.g. the elderly or infirm or those on a lower income.

Objective 3: To deliver appropriate housing.

Issue 4 – Lack of employment opportunities

- 4.5 Within Bourton Neighbourhood Area the proportion of full time employees is significantly lower than the district and national average and similarly the proportion of self-employed is higher than the district and national average. The unemployment rate is also higher than the district and county rate.

- 4.6 This could be related to the lack of employment opportunities within in the Neighbourhood Area with the main employers being located in Gillingham to the south east or Wincanton to the west. Provision of space for economic activity would help to improve job prospects within the area.

Objective 4: To improve employment opportunities/economic activity in the area.

Issue 5 – Heritage assets

- 4.7 Within the Bourton Neighbourhood Area there are 33 listed buildings. There is no conservation area designation or ancient monuments.
- 4.8 The VDS concludes that it is important that due regard is given to the listed buildings when developing adjoining sites. Although there are a significant number of listed buildings in the village, and many of them are clustered in particular locations, there is no Conservation Area. The character of a number of individual areas is, however, worthy of protection.

Objective 5: To assess the potential to harm a heritage asset or its setting.

Issue 6 – Landscape impact

- 4.9 Bourton Neighbourhood Area falls into two Landscape Character Areas, each of which has its own special characteristics. The northern and western parts of the Neighbourhood Area fall within the Limestone Ridges character area and the southern part within the Blackmore Vale character area.
- 4.10 A small part of the Neighbourhood Area falls within the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB. Any development has the potential to impact upon the setting of the AONB.
- 4.11 The VDS notes that the Parish enjoys varied and far-reaching views which are particularly treasured by the local community. These key views have been mapped within the VDS and are replicated in Figure 2.3.

Objective 6: To assess the possible negative impact on landscape character and on the AONB and its setting or the potential to harm one of the key views identified in the VDS.

Issue 7 – Flood risk

- 4.12 One of the main impacts of climate change within the Bourton Neighbourhood Area is the increased risk of flooding, especially flash flooding associated with increased intensity of rainfall that is predicted to occur as a result of climate change.

- 4.13 The areas around the River Stour are at risk from fluvial flooding but also at risk from flooding associated with the upstream reservoirs. In addition, development within an area can cause an increased risk of surface water flooding. It is important, therefore, to avoid areas at risk of flooding and to manage surface water appropriately with the aim of reducing flood risk where possible.

Objective 7: To avoid areas at risk of flooding and reduce flood risk by managing surface water.

Issue 8 – Climate Change

- 4.14 Release of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere is recognised to be having an impact on the climate. This is predicted to result in warmer, wetter winters with increased rainfall events and hotter, drier summers with increased instances of drought. Reducing greenhouse gas emissions through increased energy efficiency and increased use of renewable and low carbon energy will help to minimise Bourton's contribution to climatic change.

Objective 8: To include measures to minimise energy consumption and to produce energy from renewable or low carbon sources.

Issue 9 – Agricultural land, brownfield land and contaminated land

- 4.15 Land use classification data shows that the majority of Bourton is covered by Grade 3 agricultural land with the exception of a band of Grade 4 agricultural land that follows the contour of the ridge. Government policy set out in the NPPF, paragraph 112, states that where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, local planning authorities should seek to use areas of poorer quality land in preference to that of a higher quality.
- 4.16 The NPPF, paragraph 111, asserts that planning policies and decisions should encourage the effective use of land by re-using land that has been previously developed (brownfield land), provided that it is not of high environmental value.
- 4.17 Landfill site mapping shows a former landfill site just outside but abutting the Neighbourhood Area on the northern side of Brickyard Lane. The NPPF, paragraph 109, clarifies that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.

Objective 9: To reuse brownfield land, avoid the most productive agricultural land and include measures to remediate contaminated land.

Issue 10 – Biodiversity

- 4.18 Intensively farmed agricultural land can often have little ecological value. Rivers, ponds, scrub, hedgerows and trees are important ecological features which play host to a range of species. Retention of such features and inclusion of areas for wildlife within the plan can significantly enhance the biodiversity in an area.

Objective 10: To retain important biodiversity features and include new areas for biodiversity enhancement within the area.

Issue 11 – Water resources and air quality, light and noise

- 4.19 It is important to maintain the quality of water courses in the area as they are not only important for biodiversity but also provide an important source of drinking water. In addition, air pollution can have an impact on biodiversity and human health.
- 4.20 The VDS recognises that, in a rural community, dark night skies are important and enhance the character of an area. The main road has retained its street lighting from when it functioned as a major trunk road and many villagers feel that reduction in the period of use of the street lighting, or even its removal, would reduce light pollution and enhance the character of the area. Against this has to be weighed the feelings of safety that street lighting provides for walkers at night. The NPPF also requires that good design, planning policies and decisions should limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation.
- 4.21 The NPPF, paragraph 109, states that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by preventing both new and existing development from contributing to noise pollution.

Objective 11: To minimise pollution of water and air and minimise light and noise pollution.

5. Assessment Approach

5.1 The framework of objectives (in Figure 5.1) will be used to assess the likely significant effects of the Neighbourhood Plan, including the site options for the proposed new Village Hall allocation.

Figure 5.1: Proposed SEA Framework

Issue	Objective
Issue 1 – Intergenerational imbalance	Objective 1: To meet the diverse needs of the population.
Issue 2 – Accessibility to services and high car ownership	Objective 2: To tackle the accessibility issues in the area, reducing reliance on the private car whilst also including appropriate parking.
Issue 3 – Affordability of housing	Objective 3: To deliver appropriate housing.
Issue 4 – Lack of employment and training opportunities	Objective 4: To improve employment and training opportunities/economic activity in the area.
Issue 5 – Heritage assets	Objective 5: To assess the potential to harm a heritage asset or its setting.
Issue 6 – Landscape impact	Objective 6: To assess the possible negative impact on landscape character and on the AONB and its setting or the potential to harm one of the key views identified in the Village Design Statement.
Issue 7 – Flood risk	Objective 7: To avoid areas at risk of flooding and reduce flood risk by managing surface water.
Issue 8 – Climate Change	Objective 8: To include measures to minimise energy consumption and to produce energy from renewable or low carbon sources.
Issue 9 – Agricultural land, brownfield land and contaminated land	Objective 9: To reuse brownfield land, avoid the most productive agricultural land and include measures to remediate contaminated land.
Issue 10 – Biodiversity	Objective 10: To retain important biodiversity features and include new areas for biodiversity enhancement within the area.
Issue 11 – Water resources and air quality, light and noise	Objective 11: To minimise pollution of water and air and minimise light and noise pollution.

5.2 The assessment of the likely significant effects of the proposed draft policies and policy intents will be considered. Any alterations required as a result of this

assessment will be included in the production of the draft Neighbourhood Plan for the Regulation 14 consultation.

- 5.3 The assessment of the likely significant effects on the short-listed sites for the new village hall will be considered and an allocation for this use will only be made if the effect is acceptable.

Proposed Site Assessment Criteria:

- Opportunity to meet the housing needs of an ageing population – site accessible and reasonably level;
- Site is accessible to main facilities and bus stops in the village and can include appropriate parking;
- Are there options for development to increase employment opportunities;
- Impact of the proposed site development on heritage assets;
- Visual Impact of the proposed site development on landscape character;
- Impact of the proposed site development on wildlife and biodiversity and any opportunities to increase biodiversity with development;
- Resilience of the site to flooding risk;
- Is the site greenfield or brownfield and currently vacant;
- Is the site lower grade agricultural land;
- Impact of the proposed site development on water courses;
- Vehicular access is available and acceptable;
- Ability of the site to deliver desired community benefits.

6. Policy in Development

- 6.1 This chapter introduces the Neighbourhood Plans Vision and Policy Intentions. The chapter also links the emerging policy intentions to community consultation already carried out for the Village Plan (2008), Village Design Statement (2011) and Neighbourhood Plan in March 2013 and June 2014.

Neighbourhood Plan (NP) Vision

- 6.2 The Neighbourhood Planning group has developed the following Vision statement over the course of the Neighbourhood Plan's preparation.

To further develop a vibrant, friendly, safe and inclusive community, while preserving the distinctive rural atmosphere of Bourton and promoting the health and well-being of all residents, in the context of a shared and sustainable future.

Bourton will be a great place to live and work and will be known for its rich rural character, attractive green spaces and thriving natural environment. It will be safe and enjoyable to move around on foot, horseback and bicycle and will be well served by public transport.

NP Policy Intentions

Management of Development

Intention: To control the volume, location and quality of new development

- 6.3 Consultation undertaken at the early stages of the neighbourhood plan has identified a desire for a replacement village hall. A large majority of respondents (82%) accept the principle of a small amount of housing development to assist the delivery of the new Village Hall and amenity area.
- 6.4 Bourton Neighbourhood Plan Group have indicated that the approximate parameters of the development they are looking to secure through the Neighbourhood Plan process would be:
- 6.5 Village hall: 500m² gross footprint.
- "The proposed new building will replace an existing, almost life-expired, industrial-type barn of a similar height to the new hall, constructed with asbestos cement roof and cladding".*
- 6.6 Residential development: Small scale (5 to 10 dwellings).
- "As an aid to the delivery of a new village hall, we will be considering a site of some 0.3 hectares for a small development of private housing. Also, and again to assist the delivery of the new hall, we will be considering a small development of*

private housing on the site currently occupied by the existing village hall i.e. what would then be a brownfield site”.

Landscape Setting

Intention: To maintain the setting of the village in the rural landscape and to safeguard the atmosphere and appearance of the village and its rural context.

- 6.7 The VDS defines a series of guidelines that indicate a range of constraints and considerations that will be applicable to new development.
- 6.8 The Village Design Statement questionnaire asked whether there were any views residents would like to see protected. The report concluded that the views across the Blackmore Vale, from Kit’s Nest and the river meadows were highly prized although any countryside view was considered cherished. Map 7 of the VDS identified additional important views that included those into the village from east, west and south and several to the north and south from the old A303 across the Green Fingers of open land between clusters of buildings.

Building Form

Intention: To ensure that all development is of high quality and sits well within its environment.

- 6.9 The VDS defines a series of guidelines that indicate a range of constraints and considerations that will be applicable to new development.

Traffic and Parking

Intention: To ensure that traffic generated by new development can be safely accommodated by the surrounding road network and to avoid parking, this is associated with development, becoming highly intrusive, resulting in a general degradation of the rural village atmosphere.

- 6.10 The Bourton Village Plan identified speeding and parking as a local issue.
- 6.11 The VDS defines a series of guidelines that indicate a range of constraints and considerations that will be applicable to new development.
- 6.12 The March 2013 questionnaire determined that 63.6% of residents felt that speeding is a problem in Bourton. The March 2013 questionnaire also found that 70.8% of respondents felt that if new housing is to be built two parking spaces per property should be provided.

Biodiversity, Habitats and Climate Change

Intention: To avoid any direct or indirect impact on local biodiversity, protect wildlife habitats

- 6.13 The June 2014 questionnaire determined that 78.79% of residents would like to see the preparation of a local initiative, in cooperation with landowners and farmers for the whole parish that aims to protect and enhance the wildlife by creating a network of habitats and linking corridors.
- 6.14 The March 2013 questionnaire determined that there is strong support for a hydro-electric power source at the dam by the mill and majority support for rooftop photovoltaic installations. Wind turbines and photovoltaic farms are not wanted in the area.
- 6.15 The Adopted North Dorset Local Plan 2003 recognises that the River Stour is an important landscape feature and provides a habitat for wetland flora and fauna.

Health and Wellbeing

Intention: To promote a strong, vibrant and healthy community, to help create healthy living environments, to encourage physical activity and to create places and spaces, accessible to all, in support of community activity and social events for all age groups.

- 6.16 The March 2013 questionnaire determined that residents thought footpaths and bridleways (96.9%), trees and hedgerows (93.2%), open spaces (90.4%) should be protected.
- 6.17 The Bourton Village Plan recognised that there is support for maintenance and improvement of the village environment and in particular the footpath network.
- 6.18 The June 2014 questionnaire determined that 86.97% of residents agreed that the IOWA identified should be assessed as potential Local Green Space and where appropriate, designated as such to protect them from development.

Business and the Economy

Intention: To support local businesses, encourage new businesses, home working and social enterprises that benefit the community, and help to move Bourton towards a low carbon economy by encouraging local jobs and enterprise.

- 6.19 The March 2013 questionnaire determined that tourist accommodation and small businesses should be attracted to the village to provide more local employment and help sustain community facilities. However, there are concerns over the potential for an increase in heavy goods traffic and the effect on the environment.

7. Next Steps

- 7.1 This Scoping Report will be sent to the three statutory bodies⁵ for a five week period for their comments as regards its suitability to set the context for undertaking the Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 7.2 This report and comments received on it will then inform the production of the Environmental Report which will include the assessment of site options for the village hall development.
- 7.3 The Environmental Report will be available for comment with the draft neighbourhood development plan during the Reg14 consultation.

⁵ The Environment Agency, English Heritage and Natural England

8. References

Bourton Neighbourhood Plan Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Report,
February 2014

Appendix A

New Village Hall - Background.

- A.1 The Bourton Village Hall Management Committee (BVHMC) was tasked to investigate potential sites for a new village hall once it had become clear, following a survey, that its refurbishment and ongoing repairs would be increasingly expensive and non-viable. The lease of the site was also nearing its term (22 years unexpired) and, from surveys of residents, it was clear that the hall could not provide the space and facilities which were required.
- A.2 Initially, 13 sites were investigated by the BVHMC, with the assistance of officers from NDDC, and several sites were ruled out for various reasons. When NDDC indicated that the most likely route for the BVHMC to achieve its aims was to include the scheme within the neighbourhood planning process, the evidence they had gathered was handed over to the NPG for consideration and review within the SEA. The NPG has carried out an initial plan-based review against the SEA criteria and has reduced the potential sites to a short list of six.
- A.3 The sites on the short list (and shown on the attached plan, Figure A.1) are:
1. Land at Voscombe Farm and adjoining property.
 2. Land at Chaffey Moor Farm.
 3. Land to the west of Sandways Farm.
 4. Land at rear of Bourton garage.
 5. Land at Kittymead.
 6. Land adjacent to the White Lion PH.
- A.4 There has been a consistently high level of support for the provision of a new village hall over a number of years, starting with the Village Plan in 2008, and continuing in BVHMC surveys and in the questionnaire sent to every household by the NPG in 2014. In the NPG questionnaire, in answer to the question “ Would you accept the principle of a small amount of housing development to assist in the delivery of a new village hall and associated amenity area?” 81.86% of those who responded answered Yes.
- A.5 The short-listed sites will be assessed against the criteria laid down in the Scoping Report and the most suitable one included as an allocated development site within the Neighbourhood Plan.

Figure A.1: New Village Hall – Short Listed Sites

