

## **WAREHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN EXAMINATION STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND**

### **Mitigation measures to protect the nearby European and International Nature Conservation Sites**

#### **1 GENERAL**

- 1.1 This Statement of Common Ground (SOCG) has been produced by Wareham Town Council to assist the Examiner at the Wareham Neighbourhood Plan Examination and the Purbeck Local Plan Examination.
- 1.2 It provides evidence concerning the provision of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) and Heathland Infrastructure projects (HIPs) intended to mitigate the impact of increased recreational pressure likely to result from development proposed in the Wareham Neighbourhood Plan (2018) currently at Examination.
- 1.3 This statement is agreed by Dorset Council, Wareham Town Council, Natural England and Henry Scott acting for, and on behalf of, the Trustees of D E Scott 1970 Settlement (owner of the Bog Lane SANG).

#### **2 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 Purbeck District Council (from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 part of Dorset Council) has prepared and submitted for Examination the Purbeck Local Plan (2018 – 2034) which proposes in Policy H2 Housing Land Supply 300 dwellings for Wareham Parish over this period including site allocations and windfall.
- 2.2 Wareham Town Council has prepared and submitted for Examination a Neighbourhood Plan for Wareham covering the period 2019 - 2034. This has been prepared in close liaison with the former Purbeck District Council and identifies how the development proposed for Wareham in the submitted Local Plan will be delivered.
- 2.3 The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared with the close involvement of the local community and is widely supported. Besides a number of drop-in events, public presentations and workshops, all households in the Parish have been sent questionnaires and leaflets as the Plan has progressed. At both Regulation 14 and Regulation 16 stages there have been relatively few objections received and a significant number of comments in support of the proposed allocations.

#### **3 HEATHLAND INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS (HIPs) and SUITABLE ALTERNATIVE NATURAL GREENSPACE (SANG)**

- 3.1 Both Local and Neighbourhood Plans have undertaken Habitats Regulations Assessments (HRAs). These conclude that mitigation measures are required to protect the nearby European and International Nature Conservation Sites from the impact of increased recreational and urban pressures likely to result

from the development planned in Wareham. Policies in the existing Purbeck Local Plan Part 1 and emerging Purbeck Local Plan 2019 address the approach to mitigating the impacts on Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation and Ramsar sites. The Dorset Heathlands Planning Framework 2015-2020 SPD gives guidance on the type, scale and delivery of heathland infrastructure projects and how these and strategic access management and monitoring will be secured. This includes that “for large sites of approximately 50 or more dwellings provision of SANGs should form part of the overall infrastructure provision of that site, particularly where urban extensions or development on greenfield sites are proposed. Within the built-up area brownfield sites are unlikely to be able to accommodate the scale of space required for a SANG and would therefore make a contribution through either s106 or CIL towards HIP provision.”

- 3.2 At Wareham the Neighbourhood Plan proposes that during the Plan period 2019 – 2034 30 dwellings will be delivered at Westminster Road on former employment land and 15 dwellings at Johns Road also on former employment land. However, the Neighbourhood Plan Policies map and Policies H5 and H6 indicated a much larger area of land than would be required to deliver this scale of development. The Town Council has asked the Examiner to recommend a reduction in the size of the allocations to reflect the Plans intended scale of development and to modify policies H5 and H6 accordingly. A schedule of proposed modifications is attached. The revised proposals map is also attached. This would result in development of a total of 45 units north of the Railway on sites H5 and H6 together.
- 3.3 Provided that the Examiner agrees with the modifications referred to, the parties agree that the delivery of mitigation of sites H5 and H6 (total 45 dwellings) on brownfield land may be facilitated by Dorset Council through the strategic SPD mechanism by way of a contribution through either s106 or CIL towards HIP provision. The authority will need to carry out an appropriate assessment of each application at the plan stage to ensure that the HIP mitigation is appropriate and secured.
- 3.4 South of the Railway Line the allocations in the Neighbourhood Plan total 155 dwellings. This comprises 90 dwellings on site GS2 (Health Hub) 45 dwellings on the Hospital and Health Centre site (H8), 10 dwellings on Cottees site in East Street (site H9) and 10 dwellings on the former gas works site (site H7). This scale of new housing development indicates that the provision of a SANG or access to SANG capacity will be required. In association with the Westgate Development on Worgret Road a SANG has been provided at Bog Lane, Stoborough. This covers an area of 14 Ha, is suitably located and with improvement has capacity to mitigate for the effects of the developments proposed to be allocated in the Neighbourhood Plan south of the Railway. Henry Scott acting for, and on behalf of, the Trustees of D E Scott 1970 Settlement, the freehold owner of the Bog Lane SANG, is agreeable to make this site available to mitigate the development for a suitable consideration.