

Report subject	<b>Designation of Lilliput Neighbourhood Forum and Area</b>
Meeting date	1 October 2025
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	<p>Neighbourhood forums are organisations empowered to lead on the preparation of a neighbourhood plan within a defined area.</p> <p>Neighbourhood planning involves the local community in developing a shared vision to help shape the future development and growth of their local area. A neighbourhood plan must proceed through several statutory stages before it can be formally 'made' (adopted) by the Council.</p> <p>BCP Council has received an application for designation of the Lilliput Neighbourhood Forum and Area. The area forms part of the Canford Cliffs ward, a small area southeast of the Parkstone Ward and the southern section of the Penn Hill Ward.</p> <p>The application was subject to a statutory public consultation inviting representations. The consultation ran between 14 July and 25 August 2025. 64 representations were received by BCP Council.</p> <p>A prospective forum can determine what area is most suitable to plan for. However, the Local Planning Authority must first formally designate the forum (as a 'qualifying body') and designate the neighbourhood area, having regard to a range of factors including comments received from consultation. It is recommended that the Lilliput Neighbourhood Forum and Area are both designated and no amendment to the area is proposed.</p>
Recommendations	<p><b>It is RECOMMENDED that Cabinet:</b></p> <p>(a) Approves the application by the Lilliput Neighbourhood Forum and designates both the forum and area</p>
Reason for recommendations	<p>To meet the statutory obligations including provisions set out in (i) the Localism Act 2011 (ii) the Town &amp; Country Planning Act 1990 and the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended by the Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017) and (iii) the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 (as amended).</p>

Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Millie Earl – Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Planning
Corporate Director	Glynn Barton, Chief Operations Officer
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Wards	Canford Cliffs; Parkstone; Penn Hill;
Classification	For Decision

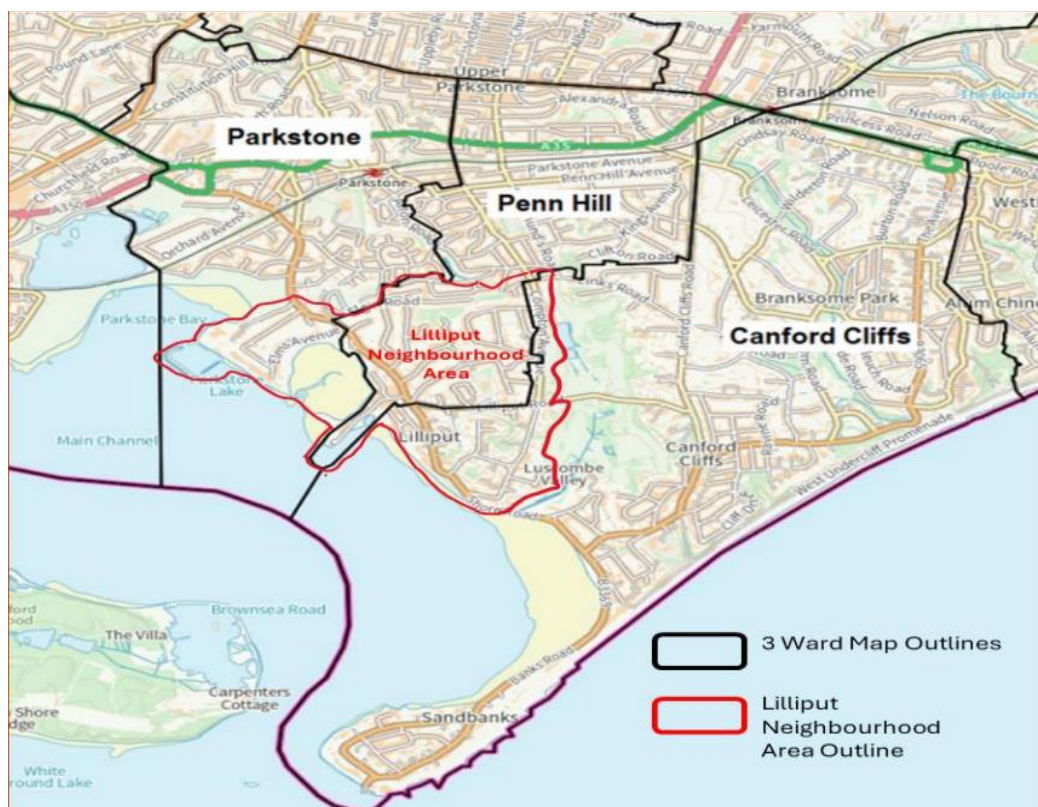
## Background

1. Brought in under the Localism Act 2011, the neighbourhood planning regime allows communities to play a stronger role in shaping the areas where they live and work by developing a neighbourhood plan for their area, containing a local vision, objectives and planning policies.
2. A neighbourhood forum is an organisation (in unparished areas) empowered to lead on the preparation of a neighbourhood plan for their area with the express purpose of promoting or improving the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of the area.
3. Once approved by the council, a neighbourhood forum has the legal status as a 'qualifying body' for five years to develop a neighbourhood plan within a designated area. No other organisation may be designated to exercise neighbourhood planning powers for that area, until the designation expires or is withdrawn.
4. There are six main stages in the neighbourhood planning process (shown below).  
**The decision to designate the forum and the area forms the first formal stage and is the subject of this report.**
  - i. Designation of neighbourhood forum as 'qualifying body' and designation of neighbourhood area by the Local Planning Authority (LPA).
  - ii. Preparation of a draft neighbourhood plan, evidence gathering and effective community engagement by the qualifying body.
  - iii. Publicity and statutory consultation on the draft pre-submission plan by the qualifying body.
  - iv. Submission of the draft plan by the qualifying body to the LPA including further statutory consultation by the LPA.
  - v. Independent examination to determine whether the neighbourhood plan meets basic conditions and other legal tests together with consideration of responses from the consultation, and production of a report by the independent examiner.
  - vi. Referendum held. If more than 50% of voters are in favour of the neighbourhood plan, it becomes part of the statutory development plan for the neighbourhood area, alongside the Local Plan. It is then subsequently 'made' (adopted) by the Council.

5. When the designation of the forum and area is agreed, stage (ii) can begin. BCP Council as the LPA, has a statutory duty in accordance with Town and Country Planning Act 1990, the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 to review, advise and support neighbourhood forums through the procedural process of preparing their neighbourhood plans.
6. Going forward, the scope and complexity of the neighbourhood plan and its focus on specific topic areas is for the local community to decide upon, based upon their aspirations, the nature of the area, economic conditions, expected levels of growth, including choosing whether or not to contain policies and allocations to meet its identified housing requirement. A neighbourhood plan may be wide-ranging or deal with one or two issues only; it can be detailed or set general principles for development. However, in all cases, it must be in general conformity with, and plan positively to support the strategic policies of the Development Plan in force (e.g. the Poole Local Plan 2018).
7. To meet basic conditions, a neighbourhood plan must have regard to the National Planning Policy Framework and guidance, contribute to achieving sustainable development, be compatible with human rights obligations and not breach the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations.

### Prospective forum/area boundary

8. On 13 May 2025, BCP Council received an application by a community group for designation of the Lilliput Neighbourhood Forum and Area. The proposed neighbourhood area shown below falls within partial areas of the Parkstone, Penn Hill and Canford Cliffs wards, with its eastern boundary adjacent to the Luscombe Valley. For context this is shown below:



**Extent of the neighbourhood boundary area within three ward boundaries**



**Proposed Neighbourhood Area**

9. When an application for designation is submitted to the LPA, it must ensure that it complies with relevant statutory requirements. The Lilliput neighbourhood forum and area application was supported by the appropriate prescribed documents including detailed justification for the area proposed. As such it was accepted by the LPA and published in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 (as amended).

#### **Publication Consultation: 14 July – 25 August 2025**

10. A consultation was launched and representations invited for 6 weeks. **The consultation documents are appended to this report.** The regulations state that the LPA must publish the area and forum application on their website and in such other manner as they consider is likely to bring the application to the attention of people who live, work or carry on business in the area to which the application relates.
11. The LPA hosted the consultation on Engagement HQ, providing all application documentation online with digital surveys. It sent emails to all consultees on the planning policy database with details on how to respond to the consultation, provided paper copies of documentation in local libraries, erected posters across the area, issued a press release and used its social media platforms to notify users of the consultations and inviting representations. In total, 64 representations were received.

#### **Lilliput Neighbourhood Forum and Area consultation responses**

12. **54 online survey forms** were received via online engagement platform.

- 47 responses from people living within the neighbourhood boundary
- 6 responses from people living outside the neighbourhood boundary
- 1 respondent provided no answer
- 94% of respondents agreed/strongly agreed that the Lilliput Neighbourhood Forum should be designated.
- 4% disagreed with the designation.
- 2% neither agreed nor disagreed

### 13. Key messages from online responses:

- **47 respondents expressed support for the Lilliput proposal.** Three disagreed. Respondents' additional comments are provided below:
- *I am aware of some of the proposed members and consider them good representatives of the area.*
- *This would encourage local residents to be more active and involved in their own community.*
- *I strongly support this proposal as it gives local community engagement and encourages pride in the area. The existing large bureaucracy of BCP has taken away any sense of local community and become remote from residents with different agenda that does not reflect this area. The existing large bureaucracy of BCP has taken away any sense of local community and become remote from residents with a different agenda that does not represent this area.*
- *Lilliput badly needs a neighbourhood plan that reflects the needs of the area and the wishes of the population. The loss of the Government grant to help write the plan is dismal.*
- *I feel that local interests are not currently being served by the existing planning arrangements*
- *The creation of this forum will allow residents living within the boundary, local organisations and businesses operating within the boundary and those working as employees for employers within the boundary to have some say on planning, highways, design of buildings, the environment and other provision within the forum's boundary.*
- *I am all for having more localised democracy and transparency when it comes to decision making. The only reason I have not ticked 'strongly agree' is because I do not fully understand if the creation of this forum will cost us (locals) more money to run and if it might ultimately just become another step in a planning or authorisation process for new builds, street party applications, change of use and the like. Adding a forum to help locals - big tick. An extra layer to slow things down and charge - big negative*
- *The area needs cohesive planning and a design guide. Regeneration needed and Sandbanks Road speeds need reducing.*
- *Residents need a greater say in the future of the area, especially with development. The area is at huge risk of over development with opportunistic*



*developers not concerned about ecological and logistical issues that affect those who actually live here. The area cannot afford to lose its charm like so many other local areas have. This is a great idea and hugely welcomed.*

- I believe the formation of a Lilliput Neighbourhood Forum will ensure that well considered building and infrastructure projects are developed, in keeping with the local infrastructure and community by creating a planning policy that will ensure the local area is not impacted negatively with overdevelopment and poor planning.*
- It will enable residents to work together to influence the environment in which we all live, and to create a closer sense of community.*
- Provided it is treated seriously, its inputs to the various decision-making processes ought to be taken into account.*
- The residents behind this application for designation as a NF have put together a professional and well considered plan. I am certain they will do the best for the Lilliput area and, as a resident here for over 30 years. I fully support their proposed boundaries. I look forward to seeing this project progress for the benefit of our local area.*
- Very sensible plan to give people living in the area a say over future plans for the area*
- There is a body of local wisdom which is pivotal in local planning*
- Protect our neighbourhood from over development, protect nature and wildlife, to promote community wellbeing by enhancing commitment to where we live, and for visitors. Protect, preserve and enhance our history of the neighbourhood, our shoreline, shared spaces and nature reserves. Not protecting this neighbourhood would result in serious loss, to the detriment of locals and visitors alike. Our neighbourhood needs urgent protection from developers who overdevelop sites resulting in permanent loss of habitat, to the detriment of local people and the environment.*
- I believe that it is essential that the local populace should be thoroughly engaged in the life and management of the area around their home.*
- I hope the Forum can have a meaningful input on residential planning applications amongst other areas. The current level of residential development and sub-dividing of plots is unsustainable.*
- A well thought through application and one I wholeheartedly support. The Plan area is appropriate with strong suburban residential characteristics. The creation of a Neighbourhood Plan is needed to address the concerns of local residents and businesses. Specific Policies are required to enable high quality appropriate development to be progressed and support the areas unique sylvan and residential character. Lilliput is under pressure for new development, plot splitting and demand from many visitors coming to enjoy the area and harbour. A Neighbourhood Plan will set appropriate policies to support the areas future development and help recognise and protect the areas unique local character and local habitats. There are many characteristics of Lilliput which make it unique. It has a strong community passionate about the history of the area and its future. A Neighbourhood*

*Forum and Plan will help provide the Policies to influence its future evolution and success, whilst retaining a respectful and welcoming, family friendly neighbourhood.*

- Lilliput has its own identity and history with high usage by visitors to Sandbanks. For both residents and the many thousands of passing visitors it merits its own plan. Improvement of the shopping area especially parking is much required. The fish and chip shop, Mark Bennet Cafe, Rockets and Rascals Cafe and Koh Thai restaurant but especially Tesco, results in this pavement area having a high footfall and giving it a vibrant area for socialising which needs better standard pavement and parking.*
- Apart from the mistaken use of the term "South Deep" when referring to Parkstone Bay I find the application well-written and compelling. "South Deep" is the name of a restaurant in Parkstone Bay Marina but it is not the name of the bay.*
- There is far too much development taking place in our area, particularly with a very detrimental effect on the environment. The pouring of concrete is known to have many detrimental consequences and this is used everywhere. In addition, many perfectly sound properties are knocked down in order to build new ones on the site in order to make profits for developers. The abundance of luxury housing is not being sold, leading to many empty properties, in addition to the barely used second homes in our area.*
- We operate as a member's club in the area designated to be within the Lilliput Forum area. Generally, we are in favour of increased transparency for decisions impacting our locality. The only reason not to put 'strongly agree' is because at this stage it is not totally clear if the proposals will increase costs for local residents, employers and clubs, such as ours. We would also be concerned if this forum became just another rung in the planning process, hampering legitimate progress or indeed controlling unwarranted development.*
- Local matters dealt with by local people seems appropriate and beneficial.*
- In general, I consider the application and the stated mission to be well considered. However, I believe that the Resident member category should be limited to those whose main residence is within the neighbourhood and that any second homers and landlords should be excluded.*
- The Lilliput Neighbourhood Forum will specifically look after the interests of the residents that live within the boundary.*
- This appears to be a group of nimbys who want total control over their own area without caring about the overall mismanagement of BCP planning.*
- Whilst it has the potential for nimbyism, it must if approved for being beneficial, inevitably raise the question of why only Lilliput. Why not other BCP areas/villages/parishes.*

#### **Consultation responses received by email/post**

##### **14. 10 responses were received by email/post from:**

- 4 people living within the boundary*

- 3 people living outside the boundary
- 3 statutory consultee (Natural England, Historic England and National Highways) – no concerns raised.

#### 15. Key messages email/postal responses:

- **6 respondents expressed support** for the Lilliput proposal. One respondent objected. Respondents' comments are provided below:
- *I live on West Cliff Bournemouth and agree with Lilliput having a grassroots voice like this*
- *The neighbourhood forum will give the views of the residents by the residents for the residents.*
- *I would be happy to support a neighbourhood forum which takes into consideration the concerns of local residents. I would like to see the unique character and charm of Lilliput being retained and future development being acceptable.*
- *I strongly support this researched application. A plan is needed to address the many concerns of local residents and businesses. Specific policies are required to enable high quality appropriate development to be progressed and support the areas wooded and residential character.*
- *We are under pressure from new development, plot splitting and demand from many visitors. We are a strong community with a history and future, and we would like to put a stop to it being ruined. A neighbourhood forum and plan will help provide the policies to influence its future evolution and success, whilst retaining a respectable and welcoming family-friendly neighbourhood.*
- *A neighbourhood plan is essential to state the concerns of residents within the designated area and hopefully take their concerns seriously. Lilliput has a unique character which is being eroded due to overdevelopment including the division of plots, hence no parking or very little within the development.*
- *I work in the area and would have liked to join this group and also have strong family links, but I have been informed that I am excluded as they claim its only for businesses with an address in the area. I believe that this is incorrect as it does not comply with the legislation. Will safeguards be put in place so that this does not happen to myself and anyone else if this becomes a neighbourhood forum. The LNF must not be a closed entity for in a democracy there must be transparency inclusivity and clarity.*

#### Considerations

16. The Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 require that the LPA must make a decision on whether to designate a neighbourhood forum and area within 13 weeks from the date of publication of the consultation. The decision must therefore be made before 13 October 2025 and has been brought to Cabinet today in order to meet that deadline.



## **Designation of the neighbourhood forum**

17. The LPA must, in determining whether to designate an organisation or body as a neighbourhood forum in accordance with section 61(F)(5) consider whether it meets the conditions by demonstrating that:
- It is established for the purpose of promoting or improving the social, economic and environmental well-being of a prospective neighbourhood area.
  - Its membership is open to individuals to live and work in the area including elected councillors
  - Its membership includes a minimum of 21 individuals who live, work or are elected councillors in the area.
  - It has a written Constitution.
  - Such other conditions as may be prescribed.
18. The Town and Country Planning Act section 61(F)(7) further clarifies that the LPA must have regard to the desirability of such designation and whether:
- the organisation has secured or taken reasonable steps to attempt to secure membership from at least 21 individuals from who live, work and carry on business and elected members of the council whose area falls within the area concerned.
  - Its membership is drawn from different places in the neighbourhood area and from different sections of the community in that area, and
  - Its purpose of the organisation (in general terms) which should reflect the character of that area.
19. The Lilliput Neighbourhood forum has demonstrated that it has met all requirements for submission including a written Constitution and has secured in excess of the requisite number of forum members, most of whom are residents, four are business owners/workers, five are local ward councillors and one is a local MP. The membership is considered sufficiently representative of the neighbourhood area proposed.

## **Designation of the neighbourhood area**

20. The power for the LPA to designate a Neighbourhood area is exercisable under Section 61G of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
21. An LPA must designate a neighbourhood area if it receives a valid application in accordance with Section 8 of the Regulations and some or all of the area has not yet been designated. However, it can also refuse to designate the area if it considers the area is not appropriate and must give reasons for doing so.
22. Neighbourhood areas cannot overlap. Once designated, no other neighbourhood area/forum can be designated in the same area. This is because the neighbourhood forum has a legal status as a 'qualifying body' for five years to develop a neighbourhood plan within the designated area. This does not affect the existence or creation of other community groups e.g., residents' groups, in the area. Neighbourhood Forums expire after five years or can be withdrawn before that time.

23. Electoral ward boundaries can be a useful starting point on the appropriate size of a neighbourhood area; these have an average population of about 5,500 residents, although forums can choose not to follow an administrative boundary. Unlike parish council areas, the LPA cannot consider the desirability of maintaining the existing boundaries of neighbourhood areas. Therefore, it must consider any practical implications.
24. The Lilliput Neighbourhood Area crosses three ward boundaries and regard has been had to designating this area given it is made up (of parts) of three electoral wards and any implications for the LPA e.g. in managing a referendum or providing the forum with an indicative housing requirement. However, this situation exists in other parts of the conurbation, and part of Canford Cliffs ward itself already contains an adopted Neighbourhood Plan on the Sandbanks Peninsula.
25. National guidance sets out key factors which should be considered when deciding whether the neighbourhood area is consistent with its settlement boundary reflecting areas of any planned expansion, catchments for walking to local services – shops, primary schools, GP surgeries, parks and other facilities, areas where networks of community groups operate, physical characteristics of the neighbourhood, buildings which may be a consistent scale or style, whether the area forms part of a coherent estate for businesses or residents, whether infrastructure or physical features define a natural boundary (e.g. major road), natural setting or features of the area, and the size of population in the area.
26. Lilliput Neighbourhood Forum has provided a detailed supporting statement which sets out the rationale for the proposed neighbourhood area, demonstrating that it is inclusive, consistent and coherent in character. The consultation feedback shows support for the area and officers conclude that it is appropriate to be designated.

### **Options Appraisal –**

27. There are two options open to the Council:

#### **28. Option 1: Designate the Lilliput Neighbourhood Forum and Area**

- **Cohesive Area:** The proposed neighbourhood plan area focusses on an area considered to be a sustainable neighbourhood within catchment of Lilliput Local Centre. It is consistent in residential character, appearance and topography, the area connects well to local retail and community facilities, transport links and surrounding parks, local open green spaces and the harbour shoreline.
- **Community led:** Forum led by community group on behalf of local residents and business owners. Members of the forum include five BCP Councillors.
- **Consultation feedback:** This has shown strong and positive support for the designation of the forum and area.
- The area extends into three wards which could result in complexity for the LPA in providing information and managing a referendum.
- If this option was taken forward, there are some human resource implications as a result of the council's statutory duty to advise, support

and respond to the forum at key stages of the neighbourhood planning process. No financial implications have been identified for the LPA. However, the government has withdrawn new grant funding for neighbourhood planning groups. As such, the forum would be expected to self-fund activities e.g. around instructing consultants, evidence gathering and consultation and writing the plan.

#### **29. Option 2: Do not designate the Lilliput Neighbourhood Forum and Area**

- There may be legal impacts if reasons are not given for designating the neighbourhood forum and area. Any reasons for refusal should be discussed, agreed and minuted at Cabinet.

#### **Summary of financial implications**

30. As part of its statutory duty to support neighbourhood planning groups, there are implications for officer time in the planning policy team to enable attendance at meetings, responding to emails and requests, making appropriate legal and planning issues checks, responding to consultations, publishing the neighbourhood plan for consultation, planning for independent examination and referendum. Whilst the costs of officer time are included in existing budgets, the cost of the examination and referendum need to be met by the Council.
31. There is financial support available for Local Planning Authorities from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) to meet the cost of the referendum. LPA's can claim £20,000 when they issue a decision statement detailing their intention to send the plan to referendum (as set out under Regulation 18 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012).
32. When a Neighbourhood Plan is 'Made' (adopted by the Council), the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Neighbourhood Portion rises from 15% to 25%.

#### **Summary of legal implications**

33. The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) and Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) set out the statutory requirements placed on LPAs to assess applications to designate a planning forum.
34. Part 2 of the Regulations makes provision in relation to the procedure for designating a neighbourhood area, including the content of the application and what the LPA must do to publicise such an application (Regulations 5 and 6). Part 3 of the Regulations makes provision in relation to the procedure for designating an organisation or body as a neighbourhood forum, which authorises them to act in relation to the neighbourhood area. In particular, provision is made as to the content of an application and what the LPA must do to publicise an application and publicising any designation of a neighbourhood forum (Regulations 8-12).

#### **Summary of human resources implications**

35. Work involved with supporting and advising neighbourhood planning groups can be resourced within the planning policy team and within existing budgets.

Managing a referendum will also need additional resource from electoral services officers.

### **Summary of sustainability impact**

36. None.

### **Summary of public health implications**

37. None.

### **Summary of equality implications**

38. The written constitution of the Lilliput Neighbourhood Forum sets out how it will be inclusive to all residents, businesses, organisations, stakeholders, and elected Members within the Neighbourhood Plan Area to ensure engagement and involvement with all sections of the community.

### **Summary of risk assessment**

39. Any delay in making a decision on the neighbourhood forum and area designation without clear reasons could cause reputational harm to the Council.

### **Background papers**

There are no background papers to this report.

### **Appendices**

1. BCP 'Haveyoursay' website consultation page
2. Lilliput Neighbourhood Forum and Area Combined Application form
3. Lilliput Neighbourhood Area Map
4. Lilliput Neighbourhood Forum Written Constitution
5. Lilliput Neighbourhood Forum Mission Statement
6. Lilliput Neighbourhood Forum Supporting Statement
7. BCP Council's Consultation Poster