

**Resolution CM/ResDip(2008)1
on the revised regulations for the European Diploma for Protected Areas**

*(Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 20 February 2008
at the 1018th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies)¹*

Appendix 5: Model plan for annual reports

Annual report for the year

Annual reports should describe the changes that have taken place since the previous year in dynamic terms of management and function and not be limited to basic data. Any new text or map introducing a change in the situation of the area should be attached to the annual report.

State: **United Kingdom**

Name of the area: **Purbeck Heritage Coast**

Year and number of years since the award or renewal of the European Diploma for Protected Areas:

Renewal granted 4th September 2019 for 10 years (3 years since renewal)

Central authority concerned:

Name: Dorset Council
Address: County Hall, Dorchester, DT1 1XJ
Tel: 01305 228237
Fax: 01305 224835
e-mail: tom.munro@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk
www: www.dorsetforyou.com

Authority responsible for its management:

Name: Dorset National Landscape Partnership
Address: c/o Dorset County Council, County Hall, Dorchester, DT1 1XJ
Tel: 01305 228237
Fax: 01305 224835
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¹ As amended by Resolution CM/ResDip(2014)2 on 2 July 2014 at the 1204th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies.
Internet : <http://www.coe.int/cm>

1. Conditions: List here all conditions which were attached to the award or the renewal of the European Diploma. Explain either how the conditions have been totally complied with or detail the progress in complying with the conditions. Please also indicate any unresolved difficulties that you have encountered.

1. The terms of the agreement between Dorset County Council and Perenco are being strictly adhered to, and Perenco should continue to work to the highest standards;

The Wytch Farm oilfield's operating agreement with Dorset Council, the minerals planning authority, ensures:

1.1 Safety in operation and controls to ensure human and environmental health

1.2 Environmental management of areas in the estate in direct control of the company. Significant open habitat restoration has taken place; work continues. Perenco carries out a number of annual ecological surveys around its land management areas with positive results on species/diversity.

1.3 A contribution (£1,700,000) towards off-site environmental improvements in the landscape character areas affected, largely within the Purbeck Heritage Coast

1.4 Effective decommissioning and site restoration once the operation has ceased

This agreement was finalised in July 2017 and remains valid for the extent of oilfield operation (to be fully decommissioned and sites restored by 2037).

2. The extension of existing quarries or the opening of new quarries must conform to the "exceptions" principle that they should only be permitted if they do not impair the character of the Purbeck Heritage Coast as a result of any one or a combination of the following:

- the scale and duration of the project;
- the negative impact on the landscape, wildlife and the enjoyment of the area by the public or local communities;
- the practical impossibility of achieving satisfactory restoration and aftercare within a period of five years following the cessation of work;

On the whole, Dorset Council has permitted quarrying in accordance with the exceptions principle. However, Dorset Council resolved to approve an application for a physical extension and extension of operation at Swanworth Quarry in 2022, following the allocation of the site as being of strategic importance within the area's Mineral Sites Plan. The allocation of the site was contrary to the advice of the Dorset AONB team and ongoing concerns were expressed in response to the planning application, due to likely adverse impacts to the Purbeck Heritage Coast and Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty during the operational phase. However, a significant compensation package was negotiated in-principle prior to the Council resolving to approve the application and the issuing of planning permission depends upon a legal agreement to deliver this. This fund would provide resources to support landscape character enhancements within the area to offset the residual negative impacts of the quarrying.

2. Recommendations: List here all recommendations which were attached to the award or the renewal of the European Diploma. Explain either how the recommendations have been totally complied with or detail the progress in complying with the recommendations. Please also indicate any unresolved difficulties that you have encountered.

1. Secure appropriate funding incentives for continuing environment-friendly management of the landscape.

The Wild Purbeck Partnership continues to meet to discuss work programmes to tailor for appropriate funding sources.

Additionally, the Dorset AONB Team service the panel which recommends payment from the [Wytch Farm Landscape and Access Fund](#) (the £1.7M referred to in 1.1). In 2021-2022, 8 projects received funding agreements. This included around 1km hedgerow planting/restoration, 19ha removal of invasive *Rhododendron ponticum* and several projects enhancing no-car access.

Pigs, ponies and cattle graze the [Purbeck Heaths Wilder Grazing Unit](#) alongside wild Sika, with boundary works supported by the Green Recovery Challenge Fund and Wytch Farm Landscape and Access Fund.

In addition, the Dorset AONB team has secured resources from central government ([Farming in Protected Landscapes](#)) to support environmentally-friendly management activity across the entire AONB (in which the Heritage Coast area lies). This will amount to over £2m between July 2021 & March 2024. Supported projects include infrastructure to enhance coastal grassland management in the Purbeck Heritage Coast at Spyway & Wilkswood Farms (see [map](#) for locations).

The Dorset Peat Partnership has secured national funding c£1M for works to re-wet and stabilise peaty soils for wildlife and climate benefits. Several sites are in the Purbeck National Nature Reserve, within the Heritage Coast.

The Dorset AONB partnership has led a consortium of over 40 individuals and landowners in an application for the national Landscape Recovery pilot for funds to deliver a 2-year programme developing a coherent, long-term funding package for land management with both government and private investors, likely to be worth multiple £ million per year for 20 years. Land included covers most of the Purbeck Heritage Coast's terrestrial area (called the Isle of Purbeck Landscape Recovery programme). This bid was not successful, however the shared vision and work programme is a good basis from which to carry out further fundraising for delivery. There is also a third round of pilots to come, which we intend to bid into.

A large-scale, long-term funding proposal to be put to the National Lottery Heritage Fund is in development

2. Promote and improve public transportation and other more sustainable methods of transport, particularly near the most visited sites.

The Wytch Farm Landscape and Access Fund promotes non-car access in the eligible area. The new offroad cycle between Corfe Castle and Studland and pedestrian access from Norden (a train/bus point) to the visitor attractions of Corfe Castle remain in development.

The [Beryl e-bike hire scheme](#) was extended to the Purbeck Heritage Coast area at Studland in 2023.

3. Monitor the number of visitors in order to determine its impact on the environment. A visitor management strategy should be prepared for the areas with the largest number of visitors in order to avoid any negative impact either on the quality of recreational experience or on the natural resources of the Purbeck Heritage Coast.

A visitor management strategy is being prepared for the Purbeck Heaths National Nature Reserve; this includes the 'hot spots' of Studland and Arne. If the National Lottery Heritage Fund bid is successful, it will resource expansion across the southern section of the Purbeck Heritage Coast.

Visitor information, including messages encouraging responsible behaviour, has been installed at Kimmeridge.

4. Consider further investments towards the improvement of the habitat and landscape connectivity within the Purbeck Heritage Coast.

a) Numerous farm stewardship agreements are in application to support habitat and landscape connectivity in the award area.

b) Work continues on the new Purbeck Heaths NNR Management Plan, paving the way towards more joined-up conservation activity across that area.

c) The beaver reintroduction feasibility study led by National Trust has led to an application for a wild-release licence. This is still being considered by central government.

d) The Dorset National Landscape Partnership has completed a first draft Nature Recovery Plan, currently being shared with close partners for comment. This should help guide action and investment in the area.

e) Dorset Council is leading development of the [Local Nature Recovery Strategy](#). This is a statutory requirement to identify and agree priorities for nature recovery and propose actions in the locations where it would make a particular contribution to achieving those priorities. Heritage Coast partners are fully engaged.

5. Promote the monitoring of the main species and habitats in the area and encourage partners to coordinate efforts and produce good quality data for the whole Diploma holding area.

a) Purbeck Heaths NNR partner organisations are implementing a comprehensive monitoring programme for the NNR as part of the site's Management Plan. This covers the Heritage Coast's northern section.

b) a baseline survey and ongoing monitoring programme for the Heritage Coast's southern section is proposed, and we are seeking resources to implement it.

c) The Purbeck Heaths Natural History Forum continues to recruit, train and direct an army of volunteer naturalists. This provides a one-stop-shop for volunteers to receive insurance and direction for recording and survey across multiple landowners' holdings.

6. Initiate studies focusing on the biological control of invasive alien species occurring in the Purbeck Heritage Coast, particularly the Canada goose and the sika deer, and if deemed necessary, prepare a strategic plan for their control.

These species have greatest effect on the northern part of the Heritage Coast that will form the new NNR. A Deer Management Plan has been agreed amongst the NNR partners and is in implementation.

The Wytch Farm Landscape and Access Fund supported a wide study into the distribution and impact of non-native invasive plants and significant rhododendron control is being carried out.

3. **Site Management:** List here any changes to the European Diploma holding site management, in relation to both terrestrial and aquatic environments (as appropriate), and in relation to staff and finances, since the last annual report was submitted to the Council of Europe. Please also indicate any unresolved difficulties that you have encountered.

Risk: Public finance continues to represent a risk; all conservation bodies are working hard to secure funds from alternative sources for the ongoing conservation of the Heritage Coast and surrounding area.

4. **Boundaries:** Give details of any changes to the boundaries of the European Diploma holding site since the last annual report was submitted to the Council of Europe. If there are any changes, please attach an appropriate map to this report. Please also indicate any unresolved difficulties that you have encountered.

No changes.

5. **Other information:** List here any other information about the European Diploma holding site which you consider should be provided to the Council of Europe.

In November 2023, the management authority was re-named, from the Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty to the Dorset National Landscape. This is part of a national change affecting all 34 English AONBs. Deeper than a new name, it a clear re-statement of a mission to recover nature and help all people connect to it in these protected landscapes.

The website address has been changed, as have social media handles, but the personnel contacts remain the same.
