



Response to Inspector's Initial Questions

Questions 4 and 5 in EXAM1

Regarding the Duty to Cooperate with Dorset Council
in preparation of the Draft BCP Local Plan

BCP Local Plan Examination

October 2024

Amended 10 February 2025

Section 3, Table:
Updated meeting notes for November 2022 and January 2023
to reference unmet housing needs

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1. Introduction

1. On 6 August 2024 the Inspectors examining the Draft BCP Local Plan provided BCP Council with some initial questions (EXAM1). Questions 3, 4 and 5 covered the Duty to Cooperate:

'Duty to Cooperate

3. It is noted from the Duty to Cooperate Statement June 2024 (SD9) that several Statements of Common Ground are being prepared. Can the Council please advise when these will be available.

4. In respect of unmet housing need, we understand that the Council sent a letter on 11 June 2024 to Dorset Council and New Forest District Council, asking if they were able to accommodate any of BCP's unmet housing need. We understand the Council's position and explanation of why this was late in the local plan preparation process. Nevertheless, the Council must demonstrate constructive and active cooperation on an ongoing basis.

5. Plan preparation commenced in 2019. It would be helpful if the Council could provide further evidence of discussions with adjoining authorities on the issue of housing need. This could be in the form of a table indicating dates of meetings, matters discussed, outcomes etc. Evidence such as agendas or minutes would be helpful.'

2. The Council replied to Question 3 on the 11 September 2024 (EXAM1A).

3. In response to Questions 4 and 5 BCP Council in EXAM1 stated:

'Duty to cooperate evidence to support the local plan is currently set out in SD8a and SD8b Statements of Common Ground and SD9 Duty to Cooperate Statement of Compliance. In response to questions 4 and 5, we will be submitting further evidence of Duty to Cooperate discussions during September. The further evidence provides a timeline of past discussions and meeting notes.'

4. This paper provides responses to Questions 4 and 5 in respect of our Duty to Cooperate with Dorset Council. Each question is responded to separately. Our response to Question 4 provides detail of the Ongoing constructive and active cooperation between the two Councils in preparation of our local plans. Our response to Question 5 provides dates of meetings, matters discussed and outcomes on the issue of housing need.

2. Question 4 - Ongoing constructive and active cooperation

5. BCP Council respond to this question in 3 parts:
 - a) Main areas of joint work
 - b) Joint local plan evidence base
 - c) A timeline of our joint work in preparing local plans

a) Main areas of joint work

Joint Strategic Planning and Transport Advisory Group

6. At a political level the Joint Strategic Planning and Transport Advisory Group provides the opportunity to discuss cross boundary issues. The Group was initially set up in 2015 under the predecessor local authorities, as the 'Strategic Planning Forum', and evolved into its current form after local government reorganisation. In 2019 the Strategic Planning Forum agreed a Statement of Common Ground for Dorset (see Appendix 1). This was prepared in readiness for local government reorganisation and setting up of BCP Council and Dorset Council in April 2019.
7. There were a series of Advisory Group meetings in 2022, but the Group did not meet in 2023 or 2024. The meeting agendas and notes are at Appendix 2.
8. At an officer level, BCP Council Planning Policy Officers, Transport Officers and Environment Officers have a strong working relationship with their equivalents at Dorset Council and there has been constructive and active cooperation throughout the Local Plan and Local Transport Plan preparation process.

Local Plan

9. As set out in Local Government (Structural Changes) (General) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 (Regulation 6(b)(4)) a new local plan covering the whole of the new Council area must be adopted within 5 years of local government reorganisation:

"(4) A single tier council must adopt a local development document under section 23 of the 2004 Act to apply to the whole of its area within a period of five years starting with the reorganisation date.

10. For both BCP Council and Dorset Council this statutory target was April 2024, five years after the Councils were formed in April 2019. We have strived to keep to this target and whilst this was not ultimately possible for reasons explained in the timeline below, the BCP Local Plan has reached an advanced stage within the five-year period (Publication consultation on the Draft BCP Local Plan commenced in March 2024).
11. BCP Council and Dorset Council officers have been actively and effectively working together since forming new Councils in April 2019. Officers hold monthly duty to cooperate meetings and have worked together on a shared evidence base to support each Council's emerging local plan. Prior to this the nine predecessor Councils also shared good close working relationships in the preparation of local plan documents.
12. The Statement of Common Ground was updated and agreed at officer level in March 2024 and published as examination document SD8a Statement of Common Ground between BCP Council and Dorset Council.

Habitat sites mitigation strategies

13. Environment and Planning Officers continue to work together to prepare joint mitigation strategies for habitat sites and implement mitigation projects. There are quarterly joint Steering Groups for the Dorset Heathlands Strategy, the Dorset Heathlands Air Quality Strategy, the Poole Harbour Recreation Strategy and the Poole Harbour nitrogen strategy. Each strategy has a co-ordinator and other staff hosted by Dorset Council but funded jointly by BCP Council and Dorset Council.

Local Transport Plan

14. Transport Policy Officers are working on a joint Local Transport Plan (LTP) for the Dorset Council and BCP Council areas. An Issues and Options consultation was held in early 2024, with a Draft Plan and adoption expected in 2025. Unfortunately, the LTP has been delayed and does not align with the BCP Local Plan. However, there is a longstanding transport strategy for the BCP Council area to locate development in the most accessible locations and to improve sustainable transport measures across the BCP area (and beyond). The Council set a target of 50% of all future trips within the BCP area to be by active travel and public transport. Joint working will be crucial to implement the cross boundary Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans, Bus Service Improvement Plans, Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Plans, strategic cycle routes and for the enhancement of rail corridors.

b) Joint local plan evidence base

15. With the target of preparing local plans by 2024 the Councils quickly got to work on commissioning joint evidence. The following examination evidence is jointly prepared by BCP Council and Dorset Council:
- SD8a Statements of Common Ground
 - HOM1a Housing Needs Assessment
 - HOM1b Review of Housing Need – Sensitivity Report
 - HOM1c Review of Housing Need – Impact Report
 - HOM2 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment
 - PE1 Employment Land Study
 - VODS7 Strategic Green Belt Review
 - CAT1 Transport modelling
 - VODS8 Health needs assessment
 - TCC1 Shoreline management plan
 - TCC6 Poole Bay, Poole Harbour and Wareham FCERM strategy
 - ONE1 & ONE2 Dorset Heathlands strategy
 - ONE4 & ONE5 Poole Harbour recreation strategy
 - ONE6 Dorset Heathlands air quality strategy
 - ONE7 & ONE8 Poole Harbour nitrogen strategy
 - ONE9 New Forest recreation strategy
 - ONE14 Landscape Character Assessment
 - ONE18 Stour Valley Park
 - OBE3 Dorset Historic Record
 - CAT4 Local Transport Plan
 - CAT7 Transforming Cities Transport Fund

c) A timeline of our joint work in preparing local plans

16. This section sets out a timeline where joint working between the two Councils influenced the preparation of the BCP Local Plan and the Dorset Council Local Plan, with an emphasis on the BCP Local Plan. This timeline highlights how changing government policy influenced the timetable and plan preparation.
17. **December 2020** - The jointly commissioned Green Belt Review for Dorset and BCP Council areas was published. The Councils were both considering options for Green Belt release to meet housing needs and this joint independent work by Land Use Consultants provided the evidence of the contribution of parcels of land to Green Belt purposes and appraises the harm of release of development option sites.
18. **January-March 2021** - The Dorset Council Local Plan Issues and Options consultation. The consultation document recognised that there may be unmet housing need arising from neighbouring local authorities, but that there was significant uncertainty around this and no indication of its scale. The consultation document considered Green Belt release and identified more housing sites than needed to meet the Dorset local housing need to enable some flexibility to respond to changes in local housing need, to give a contingency should housing not come forward at the anticipated rate and to respond to any request for Dorset Council to meet the unmet need from a neighbouring authority. It also would enable decisions to be made about which sites were to be allocated to meet housing need should impacts be identified on certain sites through the consultation and subsequent work. Regarding unmet need arising from neighbouring local authorities the consultation document states:
 - 2.2.5. National policy also states that in addition to the 'local housing need' figure, any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas should be taken into account in establishing the amount of housing to be planned for. It is anticipated that East Devon, South Somerset and Wiltshire will be able to meet their own housing needs, but there may be a level of unmet need (as yet unquantified) from Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council, New Forest District Council and / or New Forest National Park Authority.
 - 2.2.6. In due course, the local housing need figure for Dorset of 30,481 dwellings will need to be added to a figure for unmet need from neighbouring areas (as yet unknown) to give an overall 'housing requirement figure' for Dorset. However, several changes to the way housing targets are calculated for local plans have been proposed by the Government. These changes have not yet been confirmed but may ultimately result in a binding target for each local authority and the removal of the requirement to meet unmet need from neighbouring areas.
 - 2.2.7. In preparing this draft local plan, Dorset Council has examined a range of options to meet the figure for local housing need in Dorset in a sustainable way. Through this document, the council has identified sufficient land to meet more than the current requirement. This not only gives flexibility to respond to the Government's proposed changes to the 'standard method' for calculating housing numbers but also enables a contingency should the delivery of housing not come forward as expected. In addition, the identified supply will enable decisions to be made in selecting the most appropriate sites to meet the future housing need.
19. And:
 - 2.7.22. Policy DEV1 establishes a housing requirement for 30,481 new (net additional) homes during the period 2021 to 2038, which includes the figure for 'local housing need' in Dorset. Discussions are taking place to establish whether there is a need for Dorset Council to meet an element of the unmet need from Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole and the New Forest should either council not be able to meet their own need. However the Government is altering the way housing targets for an area are established, including the possibility of binding housing targets. The local plan provides sufficient land to meet the current housing requirement established through the standard methodology.
20. **February/June/December 2021** - To support local plan and local transport plan making processes the Strategic Planning Forum was relaunched in 2021 as the Joint Strategic Planning & Transport Advisory

Group (BCP and Dorset Councils). The Group met on three occasions during 2021, on 24 February, 8 June and 1 December. The agendas and meeting notes are at Appendix 2 (note there were no meeting notes on 1 December). The relaunch tied in with the Dorset Council Local Plan Issues and Options consultation.

21. **July 2021-** National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published including the option of identifying exceptional circumstances to depart from the standard method when setting a housing target:

61. To determine the minimum number of homes needed, strategic policies should be informed by a local housing need assessment, conducted using the standard method in national planning guidance – unless exceptional circumstances justify an alternative approach which also reflects current and future demographic trends and market signals. In addition to the local housing need figure, any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas should also be taken into account in establishing the amount of housing to be planned for.

22. **November 2021** - Publication of the Dorset Local Housing Need Report (HOM1) by Icen Projects Limited on behalf of BCP and Dorset Councils. In particular, HOM1b examined demographics and tested the standard method figures. The report found that:

3. Firstly, we have considered the fact that since publishing the 2014-based SNHP, ONS has revised its estimates of international out-migration, this had a notable impact on BCP (particularly the former unitary authority of Bournemouth). Had ONS had this data at the time of developing the SNHP, there is little doubt that estimates of household growth (and housing need) would have been lower (due to trends showing a notably lower level of net migration). For Dorset, ONS also revised net migration figures downwards although the difference between original and revised figures were not substantial.
4. It is considered that there are exceptional circumstances in BCP that would point to a strong case for a housing number substantially lower than the Standard Method. Put simply, since the 2014-SNHP were published, average net migration to BCP has fallen compared with the level projected in the 2014-based SNPP (by an average of 1,849 people per annum in the period to 2020).

23. And:

10. **This modelling suggests a household growth of 1,172 per annum across BCP which when adjusted for local affordability results in a capped housing need for 1,580 dwellings per annum.**
11. **In Dorset, the modelling suggests a household growth of 1,444 per annum and a capped housing need across Dorset for 1,958 dwellings per annum. On the basis of the data currently available.**

Acronyms used above:

SNHP – sub national household projections,

SNPP – sub national population projections,

ONS – Office of National Statistics

24. This recommended locally derived housing need for BCP of 1,580 dwellings per annum and Dorset 1,958 dwellings per annum, compared to the standard method of 2,667 dwellings per annum and 1,757 dwellings per annum respectively.

25. **January 2022** - Following the significant public feedback on the Dorset Council Local Plan consultation (5,960 respondents), the then Leader of Dorset Council published a statement ([A Local Plan that is right for Dorset – Cllr Spencer Flower, Leader of Dorset Council - Dorset Council news](#)), in particular, seeking government support for an extension of time beyond the 2024 deadline to prepare the local plan, and how to deal with unmet housing need from neighbouring authorities.

26. **January-March 2022** - The BCP Local Plan Issues and Options consultation (PC3). The consultation considered options for meeting housing needs including the possible release of Green Belt sites. We included questions on the standard method or the locally derived housing target. At this stage we were unsure if there was unmet need as it depended upon which option for housing growth was taken forward in the Draft BCP Local Plan. PC3 stated on page 16:

Duty to cooperate

If after all the options for meeting the housing need have been explored, we cannot meet our housing needs then we would need to establish how any unmet need might be met in adjoining areas by engaging with our neighbouring authorities.

We have a legal duty to engage constructively with neighbouring authorities on strategic issues that cross administrative boundaries. As such, we have been working with Dorset Council to discuss the housing needs across the wider area. It may be possible that Dorset could accommodate some of our unmet housing need.

Dorset Council has recently undertaken its own consultation on the Dorset Local Plan. This included a wide range of options on potential sites to deliver new homes. Dorset Council has its own housing needs to plan for and before Dorset Council can consider our unmet housing need, we must ensure all options to provide new homes within the BCP area have been fully considered.

27. **July 2022** – Publication of BCP Local Plan consultation report. This report had significant public interest and was published on the Cabinet agenda, alongside a new Local Development Scheme to continue preparation of the local plan. Dorset Council's response to the consultation is set out in Appendix A of the Duty to Cooperate Statement of Compliance (SD9). The Dorset Council response includes the following statements:

'Within the consultation document, there is a suggestion that "It may be possible that Dorset could accommodate some of our unmet housing need". The recent consultation document produced by Dorset Council explored options for meeting the growth needs of the Dorset Council area and to give some flexibility in meeting the overall supply. It included a number of sites, the delivery of which will be tested through the development of the Dorset Council Local Plan with a final suite of sites being proposed in the publication version of that Plan. Before Dorset Council will consider whether it could meet any unmet need from the BCP area, it will need to be convinced that BCP Council have explored all possible options including the release of Green Belt sites, for meeting its own need. It is BCP Council's responsibility to robustly demonstrate that it cannot meet its own housing need before a request is made to Dorset Council to consider meeting any unmet need...

...Dorset Council welcomes the commitment to continued cooperation with Dorset Council and the recognition that it is essential that BCP explore all options for meeting its own housing need before asking Dorset Council to consider whether it is appropriate for it to meet some of BCP's unmet need. Dorset Council is willing to working closely with BCP Council during the production of both council's local plans to address these and other strategic cross-boundary issues. Any such working will need to be determined by the pace of the Dorset Council Local Plan preparation. Accordingly, consideration for dealing with any BCP unmet need will need to be secondary to Dorset Council meeting its own needs and be resolved in good time to enable Dorset to meet its own timescales for submission, EIP and the ultimate SoS approval of the emerging Dorset Council Local Plan.'

28. **October 2022** – Planning Inspectorate advisory visit to BCP Council to discuss the emerging BCP Local Plan. The discussion encouraged us to set the local plan housing target by starting with the standard method and then apply the local constraints to arrive at a deliverable housing target, rather than relying on the locally derived housing need approach to setting a housing target.
29. **December 2022** - Government published a consultation document on its proposed reforms to National Planning Policy, including changes to the NPPF. The proposed changes included allowing local planning authorities the choice of whether to (i) determine its own local housing need rather than use the standard method, and (ii) that Green Belt does not need to be reviewed or altered when making

plans. As part of the proposed new planning system the duty to cooperate would be removed. The Council responded to the consultation supporting, with evidence, most of the government proposals to speed up the local plan making process.

30. **December 2022** – BCP Council’s Local Plan Advisory Group consisting of cross party councillors recommended that officers pursue an urban intensification strategy that sought to protect the South East Dorset Green Belt.
31. **February 2023** - BCP Council issued a press release with a statement from then Deputy Leader Councillor Phillip Broadhead supporting the government consultation and the proposals to speed up the local plan making process and enable local authorities the choice of releasing Green Belt - <https://www.bpcouncil.gov.uk/news-hub/news-articles/bcp-council-fully-supports-new-planning-reforms-which-protect-the-green-belt-and-strengthen-local-plan-delivery> (full copy at Appendix 3) Councillor Broadhead said:

“We absolutely welcome these proposed new reforms, which will be incredibly positive for the BCP region. Government have listened to the concerns of local authorities, and this is clearly reflected in this open consultation. These proposals will provide a clear way forward for us to deliver the first Local Plan for Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole. I’ve always been incredibly passionate about protecting our Green Belt, especially when the housing targets for this area were so unachievable, so that’s why these reforms are so welcome as they will mean punctual delivery of a Local Plan that will really work for our residents and communities.”
32. **May 2023** – BCP Council elections resulted in a change in the controlling party, but continued the cross party, desire to protect the South East Dorset Green Belt.
33. **September 2023** – BCP Council’s Local Plan Advisory Group consisting of cross party councillors, including new councillors, following the election continued to recommend that officers pursue an urban intensification strategy that sought to protect the South East Dorset Green Belt.
34. **December 2023** – BCP Council published Draft Local Plan for agreement at Overview and Scrutiny Committee (4 December), Cabinet (15 December) and Council (12 January 2024).
35. **19 December 2023** – Current NPPF published. It included para 145 that introduced Green Belt as a constraint. This provided the promised national policy support for the approach set out in the Draft BCP Local Plan.

145. Once established, there is no requirement for Green Belt boundaries to be reviewed or changed when plans are being prepared or updated. Authorities may choose to review and alter Green Belt boundaries where exceptional circumstances are fully evidenced and justified, in which case proposals for changes should be made only through the plan-making process. Strategic policies should establish the need for any changes to Green Belt boundaries, having regard to their intended permanence in the long term, so they can endure beyond the plan period. Where a need for changes to Green Belt boundaries has been established through strategic policies, detailed amendments to those boundaries may be made through non-strategic policies, including neighbourhood plans.

36. **12 March 2024** – Dorset Council published a revised local development scheme which was agreed by Dorset Council’s Cabinet on 12 March 2024. The report sets out the reasons for the amended timetable including the need for additional evidence on flood risk in Weymouth, the need to identify additional Gypsy and Traveller sites and the need to respond to the updated advice from Natural England on Nutrient Neutrality. These issues would necessitate a further round of Issues and Options consultation (Regulation 18) which would mean a submission version of the local plan would not be ready by the June 2025 deadline for progress under the current plan-making system as set out in the transitional arrangements proposed through the government’s consultation.

37. The local development scheme timetable for the Dorset Council Local Plan, reflecting these transitional arrangements is below.

- Scoping and Early Engagement [September 2024]
- Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report [November 2024]
- Project Initiation Document and Gateway 1 Assessment [November 2024]
- Visioning and Strategy Engagement (8 weeks) [May 2025]
- Gateway 2 Assessment [December 2025]
- Draft Plan Engagement (6 weeks) [March 2026]
- Gateway 3 Assessment [October 2026]
- Examination [November 2026]
- Adoption [May 2027]

38. When this work commences BCP Council will work closely with Dorset Council to explore options for meeting unmet need to feed into the Dorset Draft Local Plan timetabled for March 2026. This is expected to include meetings of the Joint Strategic Planning and Transport Advisory Group. Cross boundary working will be helped that both Councils are under Liberal Democrat political leadership. This work will also feed into the future review of the BCP Local Plan.

39. **20 March to 3 May 2024** – BCP Council consultation on the Draft BCP Local Plan (Publication version under Regulation 19). Dorset Council submitted draft representations subject to Cabinet endorsement to follow in June 2024.

40. **May 2024** – Dorset Council elections resulting in a change in the controlling party.

41. **11 June 2024** - Dorset Council formally submit representations on the Draft BCP Local Plan following consideration by Cabinet.

42. **11 June 2024** - BCP Council write formally to Dorset Council to set out an unmet housing need of 15,000 homes (Appendix 4). Note further work on housing supply over summer 2024 has revised this to 16,166 homes, and this will be reflected in the proposed modification to para 4.12 of the Draft Local Plan.

43. **15 October 2024** - Dorset Council Cabinet meeting agrees a response to the BCP Council unmet housing need request. See letter dated 16 October 2024 at Appendix 5. The letter concludes that it is unlikely Dorset Council can accommodate BCP Council's unmet need and that further work is needed to explore capacity within the BCP urban area or within the Green Belt to meet housing need.

3. Question 5 - Dates of meetings with Dorset Council, matters discussed and outcomes on the issue of housing need

44. The tables below sets out details of meetings between BCP Council and Dorset Council in relation to local plan preparation with an emphasis on the draft BCP Local Plan, in particular housing need. Other information is included where relevant to the housing strategy which is highly relevant to the constraints of the area.
45. We split this section into two parts:
- a) Councillor meetings since 2019
 - b) Officer meetings since 2022

a) Councillor meetings

Date	Discussion
23 January 2019	<p>Prior to the formation of BCP Council and Dorset Council in April 2019 the nine predecessor Councillors met regularly in readiness and to ensure the Council's could quickly get on with producing local plans ahead of the April 2024 deadline.</p> <p>Committee meetings of Borough of Poole, Bournemouth Council and Christchurch and East Dorset District Council to agree a Statement of Common Ground Dorset, ahead of local plan preparation.</p> <p>The agreed Statement of Common Ground for Dorset is attached at Appendix 1 to this paper, with an example of the meeting it was discussed the Christchurch Community Committee on 23 January 2019 - https://democracy.bcpccouncil.gov.uk/CeListDocuments.aspx?Committeeld=178&MeetingId=333&DF=23%2f01%2f2019&Ver=2.</p> <p>Paras 12-32 cover housing need, possible unmet housing need arising from neighbouring councils and strategic Green Belt review. Note the housing figures have changed since 2019.</p>
24 February 2021	<p>Discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft terms of reference for discussion and agreement (attached) • Update on progress with each council's Local Plan, including joint evidence base work • Preparation of Statement of Common Ground (previous version agreed by the predecessor councils attached) • Local Plan Progress: <p>The full meeting notes are attached at Appendix 2. Relevant extracts:</p> <p>Dorset Local Plan is currently out for consultation until 15 March. Standard method housing requirement of 30,481 dwellings, but plan builds in contingency in identifying potential for 39,000 dwellings. This is because some sites may need to be removed as a result of consultation feedback; sites may not all come forward at the anticipated rate; and in recognition that there may be a need in relation to the Duty to Cooperate to accommodate some unmet housing need from surrounding local authority areas including BCP. Option sites include Green Belt urban extensions, and the strategy is based on functional areas including SE Dorset and on a settlement hierarchy, Tier 1 being the large built up area of the conurbation, Tier 2 market towns and Tier 3 larger villages. In addition the Local Plan asks questions about what level of development may be appropriate at Alderholt.</p>

	<p>Anticipating revision of draft plan through 2021 with submission for examination in March 2022.</p> <p>BCP Local Plan - anticipate options consultation in the Summer of 2021. Call for sites resulted in the submission of numerous proposed green belt urban extensions. Currently scrutinising urban potential to accommodate challenging housing requirement resultant from government methodology of 2,637 dwellings per annum or 42,192 over the 16-year plan period 2022-2038. Presently cannot quantify unmet need resultant from BCP but will quantify as further urban potential work progresses.</p> <p>BCP currently scrutinising potential to increase density in the urban area including through examining potential for taller buildings, however currently officers identifying a shortfall in urban sites to meet housing requirement.</p> <p>Joint evidence work ongoing on Gypsy and Traveller accommodation needs, Green Belt Study, Housing Needs Study, Workspace Strategy and transport studies.</p> <p><u>Preparation of revised Statement of Common Ground</u> Current version of the SoCG was 'endorsed' by the predecessor councils in early 2019 with a recommendation that future iterations of the SoCG be reviewed by the new Councils. The SoCG needs updating as it includes outdated information including being prepared in the context of the predecessor councils. In summary, the SoCG is a statutory document that will be made public and subject to examination: its purpose is to set out how councils have cooperated on cross-boundary planning matters under the 'Duty to Cooperate', the key issue here being potential unmet housing need from BCP. The JSPAG will have a key role in steering officers on the content of the SoCG.</p> <p>Agreed there was no need to update the statement of common ground immediately as it will be updated prior to submission of Local Plans. Currently the SoCG is worded as a statement of intent rather than setting out cross boundary solutions. Cllrs supported the updating of the SoCG and stressed that cooperation and joint working is essential.</p>
8 June 2021	<p>Discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dorset Council Local Plan consultation feedback • BCP local plan and urban potential progress • Progress on joint studies, including housing needs, gypsy and traveller accommodation needs, workspace strategy, and green belt • Progress on joint Local Transport Plan <p>Dorset Council Local Plan consultation feedback Around 60,000 comments, from around 7,000 individuals or organisations, a good rate of response compared with previous local plan consultations.</p> <p>Work on new communities was being undertaken alongside the local plan, looking at how to meet Dorset's needs in the longer term, and referring to discussions with Government and the council's involvement with the TCPA New Communities group.</p> <p>BCP local plan and urban potential progress CP Local Plan Issues and Options to go to Cabinet on 28 July and consultation would take place in August/September, probably for 8 weeks but</p>

	<p>possibly longer due to holidays [note this consultation was delayed until early 2022]</p> <p>Urban potential work was under way, and the consultation documents were likely to set out three or four options for different levels of urban intensification, with varying levels of unmet need.</p> <p>Progress on joint studies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing needs: work on needs of specific groups (eg affordable housing, older people’s housing etc) progressing, and initial findings being considered. The work identifies a very significant affordable housing need across the whole area. Assumptions about the level of national and international in-migration of young people are being queried. • Gypsy and traveller accommodation: update on needs evidence has been commissioned and is due to report back at the end of August. BCP has an application in for a transit site currently. • Workspace strategy: joint procurement – should be out to tender shortly. • Green belt – study concluded and published. <p>Progress on joint Local Transport Plan</p> <p>Reported intention to refresh the LTP for the whole of Dorset, covering both council areas: the current LTP runs to 2026. Work is currently at the scoping and evidence stage. Government guidance on decarbonisation of transport is anticipated to come out prior to the parliamentary recess: sustainability is a strong priority for future transport investment. North-south links and rail strategy were important matters in this area, and it was considered that the two councils were well aligned.</p>
1 December 2021	<p>Discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dorset Council Local Plan progress • BCP local plan and urban potential progress • Progress on joint studies, including housing needs, gypsy and traveller accommodation needs, workspace strategy, and green belt • Progress on joint Local Transport Plan <p>There were no notes of the meeting</p>

Officer meeting notes since 2022

Date	Discussion
8 March 2022	<p>Discussed:</p> <p>Role of Joint Strategic Planning and Transport Advisory Group - Leader and Portfolio holders supported by lead officers (not a public meeting). Agenda would consider discussion points from equivalent officer meetings.</p> <p>Housing needs - BCP Council indicated a potential unmet need of around 12k homes. This is due to the standard method inflated figures based upon international student migration data used in the 2014 Household projections.</p> <p>Area of Search - BCP queried whether this need could be met in area of search beyond the Green Belt in Dorset and whether there was potential for new towns/significant expansions of existing settlements to meet some of BCP Council needs. Dorset Council confirmed much of this area of search is remote and covered by AONB.</p> <p>Green Belt - NPPF para 142 provides guidance on sustainable forms of development and considering inner edge of Green Belt / settlements within Green Belt / previously developed sites. To release Green Belt to meet need should involve both Councils releasing Green Belt.</p> <p>Local Plan Period - BCP Council highlighted the difficult timing issue of producing a local plan by 2024 in accordance with the consequential order deadline requiring a new local authority to put a local plan in place within 5 years of formation, or risk government stepping in and take over plan making. Both parties agreed delivery of 'new settlement(s)' would be beyond 10 years and would need to meet Dorset and BCP longer term needs. To meet the 2024 deadline BCP Council suggested it could prepare a BCP local plan with a 10 year plan period. This would include an early local plan review to explore longer term needs with neighbouring authorities. It was noted that local plans should provide 15 years of supply upon adoption and it would be difficult to argue a departure from this.</p>
30 March 2022	<p>Discussed:</p> <p>Local Plan timetable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BCP just completed Issues and Options. No decision on when next stage will be due to elections in May 2023. • Dorset Council preparing Draft Plan for publication in May • <p>Gypsy and Traveller evidence – Dorset Council want to publish Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment report as soon as possible. BCP asking for further meeting with consultant to tie up a loose end on Transit provision.</p> <p>Phosphates in Poole Harbour and River Avon – implications of new Natural England evidence / requirements.</p>
September 2022	<p>Discussed:</p> <p>Revised Dorset Council Local Development Scheme (LDS) - Dorset Council Cabinet Report on 4 October 2022 will consider the revised LDS including reasons for delay in Plan production: continued progression of the Purbeck Local Plan through examination; significant number of representations received to the January 2021 Dorset Council Local Plan consultation; the need to gather additional evidence on flood risk in Weymouth; the need to respond to the change in advice on nutrient neutrality; and to consider the implications of revised national policy. The Cabinet Report - https://moderngov.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/documents/s30936/Correct%20version%</p>

Date	Discussion
	<p>20of%20the%20cover%20report%20-%20Local%20development%20Scheme%20Update.pdf</p> <p>Publication of a joint position statement on nutrients in Poole Harbour.</p> <p>Dorset Heaths long term analysis – agreed for publication. This evidence base review produced by Footprint Ecology assesses effectiveness of heathland mitigation delivery across both BCP and Dorset Council areas since 2007 and implications for housing growth.</p>
October 2022	<p>Discussed:</p> <p>Local Plan timetables Evidence gathering work Nutrient neutrality work Joint Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment – agreed to publication.</p>
November 2022	<p>Discussed:</p> <p>BCP Local Plan – update that policy team is preparing a BCP housing trajectory, unmet need, growth options and potential BCP Council sites to discuss in early 2023. Latest unmet need figure is around 16,000 homes against standard method. Nutrient neutrality work</p>
December 2022	<p>Discussed:</p> <p>Nutrient neutrality work</p>
January 2023	<p>Discussed:</p> <p>BCP Local Plan – Presentation on 4 possible BCP growth options. All options would have an unmet housing need against the standard method ranging from 8,000-20,000 homes. Nutrient neutrality work</p>
17 February 2023	<p>Discussed:</p> <p>Nutrient neutrality work</p>
April 2023	<p>Discussed:</p> <p>Nutrient neutrality work - BCP Council share with Dorset Council the proposed Local Plan housing growth within the Poole Harbour catchment to 2038 to help with assessing nutrient mitigation requirements</p>
May 2023	<p>Discussed:</p> <p>Nutrient neutrality work – Agreed a bid prepared by Dorset Council (as lead authority for nutrients in Poole Harbour) to DEFRA Local Nutrient Mitigation Fund using joint BCP/DC housing growth evidence.</p>
28 July 2023	<p>Discussed:</p> <p>BCP Local Plan - BCP Council share housing monitoring data with DC to understand latest nutrient credit position in the Poole Harbour catchment</p>
31 October 2023	<p>Discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nutrient neutrality work • Employment Study • Minerals & Waste Service Level Agreement • Local Plans updates • SATURN trip modelling of BCP Local Plan –need for model update
8 November 2023	<p>Discussed:</p> <p>BCP Local Plan - timeline of BCP Local Plan, the Publication consultation and when Dorset Council can submit their representations. Agreed to Dorset Council submitting officer response within 6 weeks consultation with formal response from Cabinet submitted and accepted late, but duly made as it would not be possible for the response to be considered by Cabinet and submitted within the consultation period.</p>
30 November 2023	<p>Discussed:</p> <p>BCP Local Plan - BCP Council share committee papers for Draft Local Plan, including draft Local Plan and the timetable for the committee process Joint Employment Study - Agree for finalisation and publication.</p>

Date	Discussion
19 March 2024	Discussed: Cross boundary issues Statement of Common Ground (SD8a) – agreed for publication
22 May 2024	Discussed Dorset Council representations on Local Plan - BCP Council shared a draft Representations statement of common ground referred to as SOCG4. This set out BCP Council officer responses to each Dorset Council representation and sought to agree possible modifications to the Draft Local Plan where necessary.
26 July 2024	Discussed BCP Local Plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • update on Submission on 27 June and examination • SOCG4 – further discussion of Dorset Council’s representations Nitrogen Reduction in Poole Harbour SPD - Dorset Council considering withdrawal of the SPD in order to align with national approach to mitigation delivery. BCP Council to continue with the SPD until resource allows – current focus in the local plan examination.
25 September 2024	Discussed BCP Local Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SOCG4 • Dorset Council response to BCP Council unmet needs letter – being considered by Cabinet on 15 October 2024. Nitrogen Reduction in Poole Harbour SPD - Dorset Council’s Cabinet agreed withdraw the Nitrogen in Poole Harbour SPD Local Plan timetables.
23 October 2024	Discussed BCP Local Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SOCG4 – Decided that it wasn’t the right format for capturing the two councils views. As an alternative Dorset Council would prefer to provide an update to SD8a to reflect the latest position regarding unmet housing need. BCP Council to focus on responding on Inspectors Initial Questions 4 and 5 from EXAM 1.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Statement of Common Ground 2019

Statement of Common Ground between local planning authorities in Dorset (2019)

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Executive Summary

The revised National Planning Policy Framework published in July 2018 introduces the requirement for a Statement of Common Ground to be prepared jointly by local planning authorities.¹ This is intended as an enhancement of the duty to cooperate that is already a legal requirement of the plan making process.

The Dorset Strategic Planning Forum was established to consider strategic planning issues that affect cross boundary matters, and to guide strategic planning at the ‘larger than local’ scale through effective policy development across boundaries, in order to help ensure that each of the Dorset local planning authorities could meet the duty to cooperate. The local planning authorities are currently at various stages in reviewing their local plans, and the Statement of Common Ground will be required evidence at each local plan examination.

This Statement of Common Ground has been prepared jointly by the local authorities within Dorset, all of which are represented on the Strategic Planning Forum, and will be extended to include the surrounding authorities. It describes the geographical area covered by the statement; the plan-making authorities responsible; and the proposed governance arrangements for joint working. The main body of the Statement provides a summary of the key strategic planning matters in Dorset on which cooperation is intended. This has taken account of the guidance in national planning policy on strategic issues where cooperation might be appropriate. These

¹ Paragraph 27, National Planning Policy Framework 2018

include the need for homes and jobs; provision of shops and leisure facilities; ensuring that supporting infrastructure is in place; promoting healthy communities; and protecting and enhancing the natural environment.

The revised National Planning Policy Framework introduces a new standard methodology for the assessment of housing requirements at district level. It states that strategic plans should be based upon a local housing need assessment conducted using this standard methodology, unless there are exceptional circumstances that justify an alternative approach. It also states that in establishing this figure, any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas should also be taken into account.²

The standard methodology is due to be reviewed again and so the housing figures to be planned for are not fully confirmed. It is likely however that there will be an increase in the requirements for the area, compared with the combined current adopted local plan targets. As a result, there is a key requirement for the local planning authorities to work together to set out a strategic approach to the provision of additional homes in Dorset. This will need to be informed by an appraisal of all reasonable options for the distribution of growth. Joint working is already taking place on the provision of accommodation for gypsies and travellers.

In addition to the provision of new homes, the local planning authorities will need to work together to address any cross-boundary issues relating to employment land. A range of related matters also need to be considered as an integral part of planning for new homes and jobs. These include highlighting the importance of providing services and facilities to support growth, supporting healthy communities through effective planning, and the need to continue with effective joint working to protect Dorset's outstanding natural environment, including internationally protected sites.

Introduction

1. The requirement for the preparation of a Statement of Common Ground to demonstrate effective and ongoing joint working on strategic matters that cross administrative boundaries was introduced in the revised National Planning Policy Framework published in July 2018.³ This is intended as an enhancement of the 'duty to cooperate' introduced in the Localism Act 2011 as a legal requirement of the plan making process⁴. The duty requires councils and public bodies to '*engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis*' to develop strategic policies on cross boundary matters.
2. The Statement of Common Ground is intended as a written record of progress made on planning for strategic matters across local authority boundaries. It is intended to record where effective cooperation is or is not taking place, demonstrate that plans are deliverable, and provide evidence that the duty to cooperate has been fulfilled.

Plan making authorities and governance arrangements

3. This Statement has been jointly prepared by the nine local authorities within Dorset, including the Bournemouth and Poole unitary authorities: Bournemouth Borough Council; Christchurch Borough Council; Dorset County Council; East Dorset District Council; North Dorset District Council; Borough of Poole; Purbeck District Council; West Dorset District Council and Weymouth & Portland Borough Council. After 1 April 2019, these local authorities will be replaced by two new unitary authorities: Bournemouth,

² Paragraph 60, National Planning Policy Framework 2018

³ Paragraph 27, National Planning Policy Framework 2018

⁴ The duty to cooperate is set out in Section 110 of the Localism Act 2011, available at:

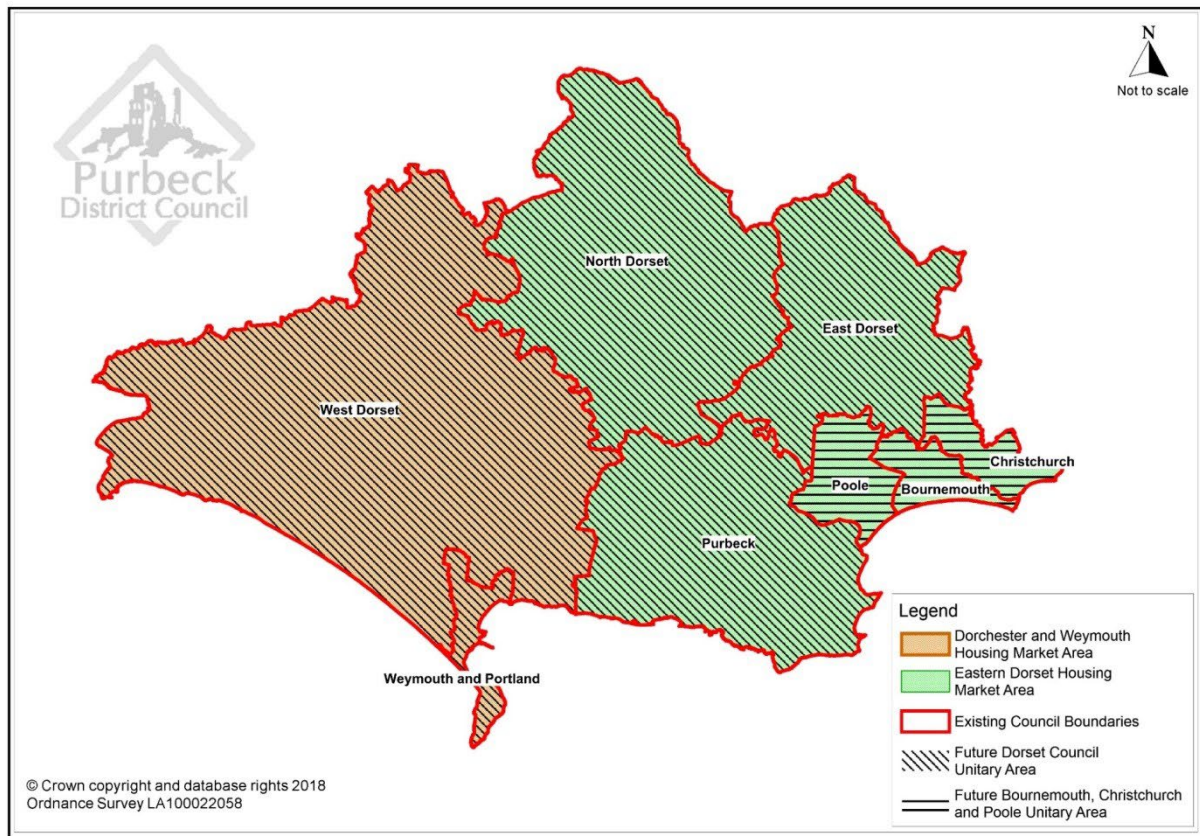
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/20/section/110/enacted>

Christchurch and Poole Council; and Dorset Council. The Statement has also been prepared in discussion with the adjoining local authorities of New Forest District Council; Wiltshire Council; South Somerset District Council; and East Devon District Council.

4. There is a strong history of effective joint working between the planning authorities in Dorset, and continued cooperation will be essential to support sustainable economic growth in the area. Cooperation on planning matters can also contribute to wider partnership working, helping to deliver mutually beneficial objectives for a range of stakeholders
5. The Dorset Strategic Planning Forum was established in 2015 to ensure that cooperation on strategic issues continues on an open and constructive basis across Dorset even where individual authorities may have different points of view. This approach will ensure that constructive cooperation on strategic matters is achieved in accordance with the statutory requirements.
6. Terms of Reference for the Strategic Planning Forum state that the main purpose of the Forum is to fulfil obligations under the legal duty to cooperate. The Terms of Reference go on to state that the Forum will guide strategic planning at the 'larger than local' scale through effective policy development across boundaries, and will work with the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and the Local Nature Partnership (LNP) in the development of strategy to inform and align spatial and investment priorities.
7. The Statement of Common Ground will be maintained and kept up to date through joint working between the plan-making authorities in the area. This will be overseen by the Strategic Planning Forum and the drafts of any revisions to the Statement will be considered by that joint body before being taken to the individual local authorities for approval.

Geographical Area covered by this Statement

8. This statement covers the whole of the Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership area: the whole area of Dorset, Bournemouth and Poole. The area is shown on the plan below, which also indicates the current and future local authority boundaries and the housing market areas. It is important to note that the housing market areas do not coincide with the new unitary council boundaries and may be reviewed in future. This geography may be extended in future to include the adjoining authorities of New Forest, Wiltshire, South Somerset and East Devon.



Key Strategic Matters Addressed by this Statement

9. The revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out that the strategic policies required for the area of each local planning authority should set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and quality of development, and make sufficient provision for:
- housing (including affordable housing), employment, retail, leisure and other commercial development;
 - infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, security, waste management, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and coastal change management, and the provision of minerals and energy (including heat);
 - community facilities (such as health, education and cultural infrastructure); and
 - conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscape and green infrastructure, and planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaptation.⁵
10. These strategic policy areas are those for which joint working across local authority boundaries are most likely to be necessary. This Statement considers each of these broad themes in turn, and identifies broad cross boundary issues and opportunities affecting Dorset planning authorities in relation to each theme. The Statement concludes with a summary of the intended scope for joint working, highlighting the importance of cross-boundary working in supporting economic growth and directing development to the most sustainable locations. Joint working on strategic planning matters will have an important role in helping to deliver the LEP's Strategic Economic Plan, and any future revisions of this. It will also be influenced by sub-regional issues, such as plans for growth in Portsmouth and Southampton, and the

⁵ Paragraph 20, National Planning Policy Framework 2018

proposed establishment of sub-national transport bodies to formulate and potentially deliver transport strategies for wider areas. Sub-regional issues are not considered in detail in this paper, but will form part of the wider context for strategic joint working in Dorset.

Current and emerging local plans in Dorset

11. The Dorset local planning authorities are currently at various stages in reviewing their local plans, as summarised in table 1. Work on the local plan reviews will both inform, and be informed by, joint working and cooperation across the whole Dorset area.

Local Plan	Plan period	Current status	Progress with review
Eastern Dorset Housing Market Area			
Bournemouth Local Plan Core Strategy 2012	2006 - 2026	Adopted October 2012	Issues consultation took place winter 2017; Issues and Preferred Options consultation due to take place late 2018. Review to run to 2033
Christchurch and East Dorset Core Strategy	2013 - 2028	Adopted April 2014	Separate local plan reviews now taking place for Christchurch and East Dorset. Options consultation on both plans JulySeptember 2018, and pre-submission
			consultation March 2019. Reviews to run to 2033.
North Dorset Local Plan – 2011 to 2026 Part 1	2011 - 2026	Adopted January 2016	Issues & Options consultation took place winter 2017-18; Preferred Options consultation likely early 2019. Review to run to 2033 but may be extended to 2036.
Poole Core Strategy Site Specific Allocations and Development Management DPD & Poole Infrastructure Plan DPD	2006 - 2026	Adopted February 2009 (Core Strategy) Site Specific Allocations and Development Management DPD & Poole Infrastructure Plan DPD adopted 2012	Plan is due to be adopted in November 2018. Runs to 2033.
Purbeck Local Plan Part 1	2006 - 2027	Adopted November 2012	Options consultations completed. Presubmission publication autumn 2018, submit by March 2019 and adopt by end of 2019. Runs to 2034.
Western Dorset Housing Market Area			

West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan	2011 - 2031	Adopted October 2015	Issues and Options consultation early 2017; Preferred Options consultation place August-October 2018 and pre-submission consultation 2019. Review to run to 2036.
Pan-Dorset			
Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Minerals Strategy	2014 - 2028	Adopted May 2014	No review currently scheduled in Local Development Scheme.
Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Mineral Sites Plan	Likely to be 2018 - 2033	In preparation	Plan submitted March 2018. Examination 2018 (hearings September – October 2018)
Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Waste Plan	Up to 2016: policies saved in 2009	Adopted June 2006	Plan submitted in March 2018. Examination 2018
Joint Gypsy and Traveller Site Allocations Development Plan Document	In preparation: timetable currently under review.		

Table 1: Status of current and emerging local plans in Dorset (September 2018)

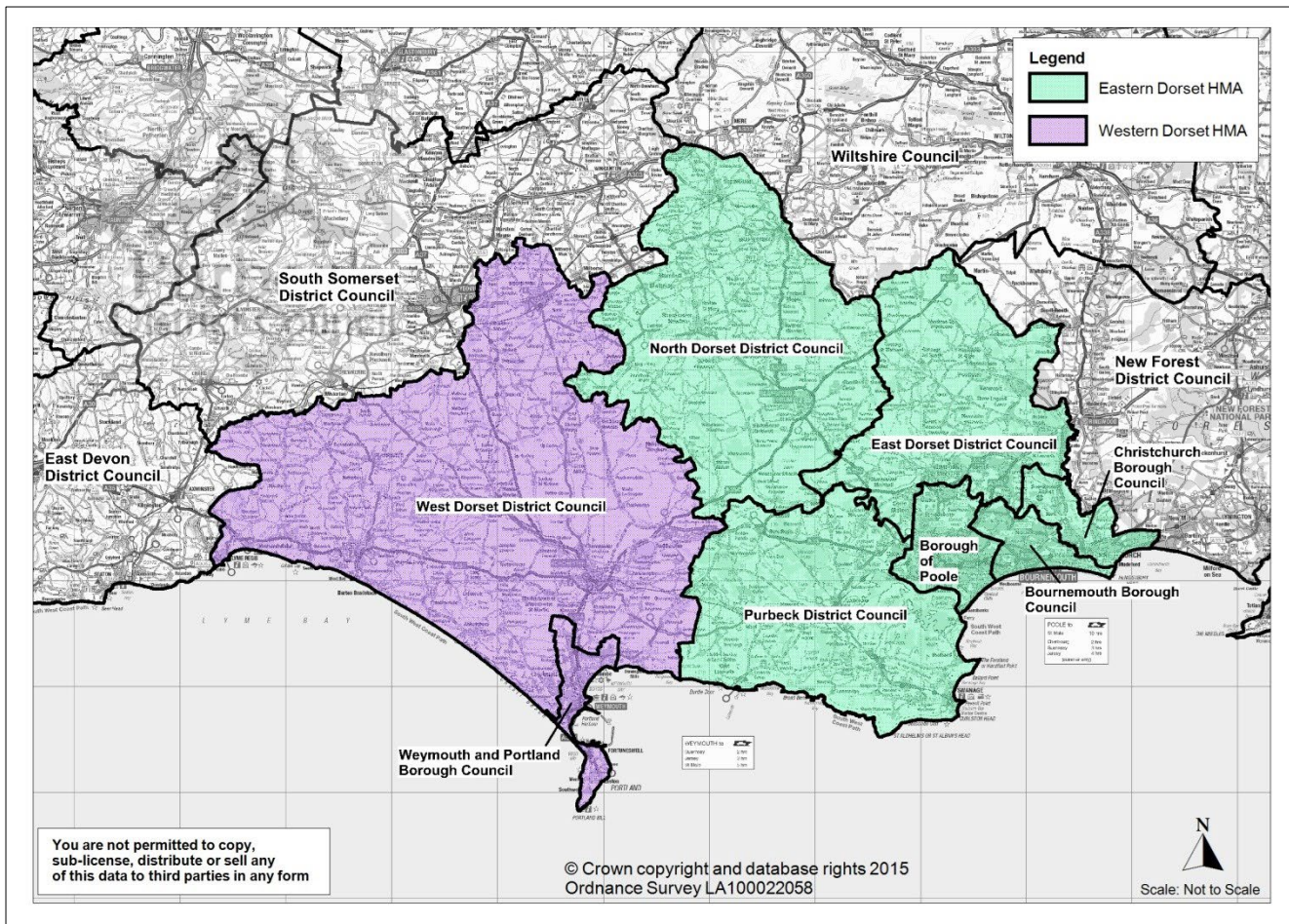
Providing the homes and jobs needed in Dorset

Housing need within Dorset

12. Significant changes have been made in the revised NPPF to the method for assessing housing need.
13. The previous NPPF required local planning authorities to meet '*the full, objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing in the housing market area*', as far as was consistent with other policies set out in the NPPF⁶. It went on to state that '*joint working should enable local planning authorities to work together to meet development requirements which cannot wholly be met within their own areas*'⁷. Two housing market areas (HMAs) were identified in Dorset, as shown on map 1. The Eastern Dorset HMA includes Bournemouth, Christchurch, East Dorset, North Dorset, Poole and Purbeck, whilst the Western Dorset HMA includes West Dorset and Weymouth and Portland.

⁶ Paragraph 47 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2012

⁷ Paragraph 179 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2012



Map 1: Dorset housing market areas

14. The objectively assessed housing needs for the Dorset authorities, assessed under the previous national policy requirements, were identified in the Eastern Dorset

Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) (December 2015, and since reviewed), and the Weymouth and Portland and West Dorset Strategic Housing Market Report (July 2014, with the conclusions reviewed in 2017 during the early stages of preparing the revised local plan).

15. The revised NPPF however introduces a new standard methodology for '*local housing need assessments*' for each local planning authority area. This standard method should now be used unless there are exceptional circumstances that justify an alternative approach which also reflects current and future demographic trends and market signals. In establishing this figure, any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas should also be taken into account.⁸
16. Table 2 sets out the current adopted local plan housing targets, the local housing needs assessment figures published with the consultation on the new methodology (in September 2017). The Government has already indicated that, following the release of the latest household forecasts (September 2018), the methodology is likely to be reviewed as a result of the reduction in these latest figures for many local authorities across the UK. Accordingly, the local housing needs assessment figures will be calculated and the table below revised once the Government's intentions are known and any changes made to the methodology confirmed.

⁸ Paragraph 60, National Planning Policy Framework 2018

Local planning authority	Current local plan housing target	Local Housing Needs Assessment based on published figures from new methodology (September 2017)
Bournemouth	730 homes per annum (2006 to 2026)	1,022 homes per annum
Christchurch	Joint target for 122 homes per annum in Christchurch and East Dorset (8679 to 8684)	352 homes per annum
East Dorset		442 homes per annum
Christchurch and East Dorset (joint)		(or 668 homes per annum joint target)
North Dorset	285 homes per annum (2011 to 2031)	366 homes per annum
Poole	500 homes per annum (2006 to 2026) or 710 per annum, 2013 to 2033, from about-to-be-adopted local plan)	782 homes per annum
Purbeck	120 homes per annum (2006 to 2027)	168 homes per annum
Total for Eastern Dorset	2,201 homes per annum (plan periods not aligned)	3,130 homes per annum
HMA		
West Dorset	775 homes per annum in West Dorset and Weymouth and Portland (2011 to 2031)	780 homes per annum in West Dorset and Weymouth and Portland (joint OAN) (2011 to 2031)
Weymouth and Portland		
Total for Western Dorset HMA	775 homes per annum (2011 to 2031)	780 homes per annum
Total for Dorset	2,976 homes per annum (plan periods not aligned)	3,910 homes per annum

Table 2: Comparison of current adopted local plan housing targets and published figures resulting from the new standard methodology (2017)

17. This demonstrates that the housing needs for the whole Dorset area have risen significantly from those in the adopted local plans, in particular in the Eastern Dorset HMA, where the new methodology demonstrates a need to provide between 323 and 1,723 additional homes per year in the Eastern Dorset HMA, over and above the current local plan housing targets. The most significant increase, in the 2017 figures, is in the figure for Bournemouth, where the demographic forecasts are particularly affected by the rate of international migration. The household forecasts published in September 2018 show a

reduction from the 2017 figures, but the Government has indicated that the methodology will be adjusted⁹ in order to ensure that the figures are sufficient to meet the national target. The figures arising will be the basis for joint working between the local authorities on the distribution of housing within the area.

18. Recent housing delivery rates across Dorset as a whole have fallen significantly short of the local plan figures. Table 3 shows the housing completions for each local planning authority in 2016/17 and 2017/18. This highlights the need for a step change in housing delivery rates if the housing needs resulting from the new standard methodology are to be met.

Local planning authority	Housing completions (net)	
	2016/17	2017/18
Bournemouth	581	635
Christchurch & East Dorset	430	407
North Dorset	142	152
Poole	570	307
Purbeck	89	124
Total for Eastern Dorset HMA	1,812	1,625
West Dorset and Weymouth & Portland	772	613
Total for Western Dorset HMA	772	613
Total housing completions for Dorset	2,584	2,238
Total requirement under new standard methodology 2017	3,910	

Table 3: Recent housing completions in Dorset

19. The local housing needs assessments resulting from the new standard methodology do not take account of constraints, such as Green Belt, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and internationally protected heathlands, which may restrict the ability of the Eastern Dorset authorities in particular to plan for their housing requirements within their areas. Previous Government guidance was clear that assessing need through the SHMA was just the first stage in developing the appropriate housing requirements in a local plan, and that SHMA figures should not be seen as a proxy for the final requirement in the plan.¹⁰
20. The introduction of the new standard methodology places greater emphasis on the importance of cooperation and meeting needs within adjoining local authority areas where they cannot be met in the area in which they arise. The revised presumption in favour of sustainable development in the 2018 NPPF states that strategic plans should, as a minimum, provide for objectively assessed needs for housing and other development as

⁹ Covering notes at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/housing-and-economic-development-needs-assessments>

¹⁰ This was clarified in a letter from Brandon Lewis to the Chief Executive at the Planning Inspectorate about strategic housing market assessments (19 December 2014) which can be accessed online at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/strategic-housing-market-assessments>

well as any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas (as established through statements of common ground).¹¹

Proposed approach to meeting housing needs

21. There is a key requirement for the Dorset local planning authorities to work together to set out a strategic approach to the provision of additional homes in Dorset, seeking to meet the assessed local housing needs, and this is the greatest priority for joint working. The increased housing targets resulting from the new standard methodology, together with the sensitive and nationally and internationally recognised environmental assets in the area, make this particularly challenging.
22. The starting point for this work is the aim that each local planning authority will seek to meet its housing requirements within its own boundaries. At present, the extent to which each authority can meet its own needs is not fully understood, as the work on assessing potential development options in each area is at different stages, and in particular, the housing requirements are not yet confirmed. The latest household forecasts, published in September 2018, were lower than previously forecast, resulting in lower housing need across most local authorities under the new methodology, compared with those published in 2017. The Government has stated in the updated NPPG on 'housing and economic development needs assessments' that the new methodology is likely to be reviewed very shortly, in order to avoid the requirements falling short of the national 300,000 target by the mid-2020s. This Statement will

therefore need to be updated as soon as possible after any change in the methodology is finalised. That update will set out an indicative assessment of each area's likely ability to meet its own needs. In the meantime, the table below sets out the interim position at September 2018. This indicates that there is a strong possibility that Bournemouth and Christchurch will be unable to meet their needs as a result of their limited geographical areas and significant environmental constraints. There is also a risk of unmet need arising from the adjoining New Forest District (see paragraphs 29-32 below). These risks will increase if the housing requirements are raised.

23. Should it prove to be the case that some authorities in the area are unable to meet their identified needs, the local planning authorities are committed to working together to assess the potential for some or all of this need to be met within other authorities' areas. This work will need to be informed by an appraisal of all reasonable options for the distribution of growth across Dorset, taking account of issues such as land availability, infrastructure capacity, and development constraints.

Local plan review	Current/last stage	Proposed figure in local plan review	Likelihood of OAN being met in local plan review
Bournemouth	Reg 18 Issues and Preferred Options to go to Cabinet for approval	Not yet determined	Risk of not being met
Christchurch	Reg 18 Options consultation July-September 2018	5,270 (2013-2033): 263 per annum	Not being fully met (up to 2033)

¹¹ Paragraph 11(b), National Planning Policy Framework 2018

East Dorset	Reg 18 Options consultation July-September 2018	8,854 (442.7 per annum)	Being met up to 2033
North Dorset	Reg 18 Issues and Options consultation	Not yet determined (but aiming to meet in full)	Not yet known
Poole	Post-examination	14,200 (2013-2033): 710 per annum	SHMA figures being met (to 2033) but new methodology figures to be considered in next review
Purbeck	Preparing for presubmission	2,688 (168 per annum)	Intending to meet requirements up to 2034
West Dorset and Weymouth & Portland	Reg 18 Preferred Options consultation	Supply 19,116 (2016-2036): 955.8 per annum, against target of 15,880 or 794 per annum	Likely to be fully met or exceeded (to 2036)

Table 4: Latest housing numbers in local plans

Strategic Green Belt Review

24. The South East Dorset Green Belt extends over some 168 square kilometres of open land in and around Upton, Wimborne, Ferndown, Poole, Bournemouth and Christchurch and stretching south-west as far as Wareham. As highlighted above, land allocated as Green Belt can be a constraint which may prevent local planning authorities from meeting their full objectively assessed housing needs. National policy refers to '*policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance*' and defines these as including '*land designated as Green Belt*'. Where such policies provide a clear reason for refusing development, this is justified under the presumption in favour of sustainable development even if development plan policies are out of date.¹²

25. National policy states that once established, Green Belt boundaries should only be altered where exceptional circumstances are fully evidenced and justified, through the preparation or updating of plans. Strategic policies should establish the need for any changes to Green Belt boundaries, having regard to their intended permanence in the long term, so they can endure beyond the plan period.¹³

26. Before concluding that exceptional circumstances exist to justify changes to Green Belt boundaries, the strategic policy-making authority should be able to demonstrate that it has examined fully all other reasonable options for meeting its identified need for development, including making best use of brownfield sites, optimising the density of development, and discussing with neighbouring authorities whether they could accommodate some of the identified need, as demonstrated through the statement of common ground.¹⁴ Before any amendment to Green Belt boundaries in South East Dorset, therefore, it will need to be demonstrated that this latter solution has been properly considered through joint working.

27. When considering whether or not to allocate land for development within the South East Dorset Green Belt, it is important to recognise the potential sustainability benefits of

¹² Paragraph 11 (d) National Planning Policy Framework 2018

¹³ Paragraph 136, National Planning Policy Framework 2018

¹⁴ Paragraph 137, National Planning Policy Framework 2018

providing new homes in close proximity to the conurbation, within easy reach of jobs and services. Not developing in the Green Belt would displace development pressure to elsewhere in Dorset. This is not to say that all areas outside the Green Belt are inherently unsustainable, but there are some more remote parts of the county where development could result in less sustainable commuting patterns and an increase in congestion. There is also the risk of market demand in these areas being lower, so that development might be less likely to be implemented.

28. It will therefore be important for joint working on strategic planning issues across Dorset to be informed by an appraisal of all realistic options for development, including the option of releasing land from the Green Belt. Green belt boundaries have been reviewed in the emerging local plan reviews, on an individual local authority basis, but a Strategic Green Belt Review will be required to help inform this options appraisal. The Strategic Green Belt Review will need to consider whether or not the current extent of the Green Belt remains fit for purpose, and whether changes may be appropriate to help accommodate the county's development needs. Any Green Belt reviews across South East Dorset will need to be assessed against the following five purposes of Green Belt as set out in paragraph 134 of the NPPF 2018:

- To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- To prevent neighbouring towns merging into each other;
- To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

Unmet housing need from areas adjoining Dorset

29. The Eastern Dorset SHMA considers housing provision in local authority areas which adjoin the Eastern Dorset HMA and concludes that the principal issue of potential unmet housing need is likely to arise from New Forest District¹⁵. This relates partly to Eastern Dorset and partly to South Hampshire.

30. New Forest District Council has an adopted Core Strategy (adopted in 2009)¹⁶ which covers the area outside the National Park, whilst the National Park Authority has an adopted Core Strategy and Development Management Policies DPD (adopted in 2010)¹⁷. Both authorities are preparing local plan reviews. The District Council's Local Plan Review was published for pre-submission public consultation on 29 June 2018. It proposes 10,500 additional homes between 2016-2036, based on a 2017 Objectively Assessed Need assessment for the New Forest area, which identified needs of 521 per annum (10,420) for the New Forest District outside the national park, and 63 per annum (1,260) within the National Park. The National Park Authority's Local Plan Review was submitted in May 2018 and examination hearings will take place in November 2018. The submission Local Plan proposes an additional 800 dwellings, rather than the objectively assessed need of 1,260 identified in the SHMA, which cannot be met without

¹⁵ See paragraphs 10.53-10.58 of the Eastern Dorset SHMA (2015)

¹⁶ The Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy for New Forest District (outside the National Park) (2009) can be accessed online at: <http://www.newforest.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=14183>

¹⁷ The New Forest National Park Core Strategy and Development Management Policies DPD (2010) can be accessed online at: http://www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/info/20040/planning_policy/23/core_strategy

conflict with statutory National Park purposes. There is therefore an unmet need in the National Park. The new standard methodology also results in significantly higher figures (965 per annum for New Forest District including that part within the National Park).

31. The Eastern Dorset HMA also adjoins Wiltshire and South Somerset, whilst the Western Dorset HMA adjoins South Somerset and East Devon. Officers have not identified any current issues of unmet need arising from East Devon, South Somerset, or Wiltshire, but discussions with these adjoining authorities will continue through the local plan preparation process and this situation could change.

32. The Dorset local planning authorities will need to consider any issues of unmet need arising from neighbouring local authority areas. At this stage, it is likely that the principal issue of potential unmet housing need will arise from New Forest District.

Housing mix

33. The NPPF requires local planning authorities to address the need for all types of housing, including affordable housing and the needs of different groups in the community¹⁸. The Eastern Dorset SHMA identifies a recommended housing mix across the HMA for the period 2013-2033, as set out in table 4. This shows a higher need for one and two bedroom properties for affordable homes, and a higher need for two and three bed properties on the open market. However, this will vary by location. The SHMA also includes recommendations for the appropriate housing mix in each local authority area, and goes on to state that local authorities should consider detailed evidence for their areas when setting policies for the future mix of housing.

	1-bed	2-bed	3-bed	4+ bed
Market	10%	45%	35%	10%
Affordable	35-40%	30-35%	20-25%	5-10%
All dwellings	20%	40%	30%	10%

Table 4: Recommended Housing Mix for Eastern Dorset HMA, from 2015 SHMA

	1-bed	2-bed	3-bed	4+ bed
Market	0-5%	30-35%	40-45%	20-25%
Affordable	20-25%	45-50%	20-25%	5-10%
All dwellings	30-35%	35-40%	20-25%	5-10%

Recommended Housing Mix for Eastern Dorset HMA, from emerging SHMA update 2018

34. The Western Dorset SHMA¹⁹ indicates a greater need for two and three bedroom homes on the open market, but again this will vary according to location, and will change over the plan period.

35. The mix of homes needed across the Eastern Dorset HMA is likely to have implications for the most appropriate strategy for housing. As an example, family housing is unlikely to be provided in the more central areas of the conurbation, where flats are more viable, and hence a need for family housing may lead to pressure for development on the edges of the conurbation. This relationship between housing mix and the appropriate location of development will need to be considered as part of the appraisal of options for future growth in Dorset.

¹⁸ See paragraphs 59-62 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2018

¹⁹ The Weymouth and Portland and West Dorset Strategic Housing Market Report (2014) can be accessed online at: <https://www.dorsetforyou.com/article/410419/Local-Plan-Examination-Document-Library-Other-Evidence---Sustainable-Pattern-of-Development>

36. Local authorities will also need to consider the need for different types of affordable housing (intermediate housing and social or affordable rented homes), specialist housing and accommodation for older persons (sheltered housing and extra care provision), registered care provision (for households who live in care homes), student housing provision, and wheelchair accessible homes. The Eastern Dorset SHMA considers each of these matters and includes recommendations for the individual local authorities to consider through their local plans.

37. The Government has widened the definition of 'affordable housing' which now includes; affordable housing for rent; starter homes; discounted market sales housing; and other affordable routes to home ownership (the latter including shared ownership and 'rent to buy').²⁰ The revised NPPF states that where major housing development

is proposed, planning policies and decisions should expect at least 10% of the homes to be available for affordable home ownership, as part of the overall affordable housing contribution from the site.²¹

38. The issue of housing mix will be considered in more detail by individual local authorities through their local plans, though there may be a need to consider the broad mix of housing types needed across the whole area, and issues around consistency of approach, as part of any joint working.

Gypsy and Traveller provision

39. The Dorset local authorities are all working together to prepare a Dorset-wide Gypsy and Traveller (including Travelling Showpeople) Joint Development Plan Document (DPD). An updated needs assessment was completed in 2017, taking into account changed definitions in Government guidance, and the pre-submission DPD is currently in preparation. It is anticipated that this issue will be dealt with through the joint DPD.

Dorset's economy and employment land requirements

40. The NPPF sets out that planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt, and that significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.²² Planning policies should set out a clear economic vision and strategy which positively and proactively encourages sustainable economic growth, having regard to Local Industrial Strategies and other local policies for economic development and regeneration.

41. Dorset is covered by a single Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). A 'Review of Economic Evidence' undertaken for the Dorset Leaders Growth Board in February 2015²³ notes that 'the issue of Dorset as a functional economic market area was fully addressed when the establishment of the Dorset [LEP] was proposed and approved by government'. It goes on to state that 'whilst, like all LEP areas, there is diversity within Dorset, it does function as a specific business location with its own identity and as an economic area, whilst also having links to the wider locality and their economies'.

²⁰ Annex 2: Glossary, National Planning Policy Framework 2018

²¹ Paragraph 64, National Planning Policy Framework 2018

²² Paragraph 80, National Planning Policy Framework 2018

²³ The Dorset Leaders' Growth Board 'Review of Economic Evidence' (February 2015) can be viewed online at: https://www.dorsetforyou.com/media/201819/Dorset-Review-of-EconomicEvidence/pdf/Dorset_Review_of_Economic_Evidence.pdf ²⁴ See 'Review of Economic Evidence' at link above.

42. The Dorset LEP area consists of a range of distinct geographical areas which all play a key part in Dorset's economy²⁴:

- The **Conurbation** (Bournemouth, Poole, Christchurch and parts of East Dorset and Purbeck) contains the majority of Dorset's population and employment. It benefits from an airport, a major port, two universities and a strong business services and visitor economy.
- The **Central Area** is based on the twin towns of Dorchester and Weymouth and their immediate hinterland, around which major employment sites, two ports and county wide services are based.
- **Rural Dorset** is characterised by coastal and market towns, including Blandford Forum, Shaftesbury, Gillingham, Wareham, Swanage, Portland, Bridport, Sherborne and Lyme Regis, as well as the wider countryside. This area accommodates a diverse range of businesses in manufacturing, technology, tourism, retail, accommodation and food services.
- The '**Jurassic Coast**' between Swanage and Lyme Regis (and beyond into Devon) has World Heritage Status and serves as a major attractor of visitors to the area. This rural and semi-rural area is typified by a diverse range of small and micro businesses delivering retail and accommodation and food services.

43. The Dorset LEP has prepared a Strategic Economic Plan (SEP), Transforming Dorset, which outlines ambitions and aspirations for transformative change to the Dorset economy²⁴. This was launched in 2014 and refreshed in 2016. The SEP identifies four thematic priorities (Connected Dorset, Talented Dorset, Responsive Dorset, and Competitive Dorset) and emphasises that partners in Dorset are committed to ensuring that the LEP area can deliver the local growth potential suggested by economic forecasts.

44. Local planning authorities have a key role in helping to deliver the priorities of the LEP through the identification of employment land (for use classes B1: Business, B2: General industrial and B8: Storage or distribution) in their local plans.

45. The Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Workspace Strategy was prepared in 2016, updating the previous 2008 and 2012 reports.²⁵ This provides projections of the amount of B1, B2 and B8 employment land required in the period up to 2033, for the Dorset LEP area and the Eastern and Western Dorset HMAs (as functional urban areas). It also provides recommendations regarding the provision and distribution of land and premises across the Dorset LEP area and Eastern and Western Dorset HMAs. The Workspace Strategy forms part of the evidence base for the emerging local plans.

²⁴ The Dorset Strategic Economic Plan, Transforming Dorset (March 2014), is available online at: <http://dorsetlep.co.uk/local-delivery/strategic-economic-plan/>

²⁵ The 2016 Workspace Strategy is available online at <https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/planning-buildingsland/planning-policy/joint-planning-policy-work/bournemouth-dorset-and-poole-workspace-strategy-andstudy.aspx>

Provision of retail, leisure and other commercial development

Town centres

46. National planning policy states that local planning authorities should allocate a range of suitable sites to meet the scale and type of retail, leisure, commercial, office, tourism, cultural, community and residential development needed in town centres²⁶.

47. Table 5 sets out the town centres, district centres and local centres across Dorset, as identified in current and emerging local plans.

Local planning authority	Town, district and local centres
Bournemouth	Town centre: Bournemouth District centres: Castlepoint; Boscombe; Westbourne; Winton; Boscombe East; Charminster; Holdenhurst Road; Kinson; Moordown; Southbourne Grove; Tuckton; Wallisdown
Christchurch and East Dorset	Town centres: Christchurch; Ferndown; Verwood; Wimborne Minster District centres: West Moors; Highcliffe Local centres: Purewell; Barrack Road; Corfe Mullen; West Parley
North Dorset	Town centres: Blandford Forum; Gillingham; Shaftesbury; Sturminster Newton District centre: Stalbridge
Poole	Town centre: Poole District centres: Broadstone; Ashley Cross; Ashley Road (there are also a number of smaller local centres in Poole)
Purbeck	Town centres: Swanage; Wareham; Upton Key service villages: Bere Regis; Bovington; Corfe Castle; Lytchett Matravers; Sandford; Wool
West Dorset and Weymouth and Portland	Town centres: Weymouth; Dorchester; Bridport; Sherborne; Lyme Regis Local centres: Easton (Portland); Fortuneswell (Portland); Beaminster

Table 5: Town, district and local centres in Dorset

48. There are many instances across the county where town centres in neighbouring local planning authorities have an influence on one another (e.g. the town centres in North Dorset are each influenced by larger centres in neighbouring authorities, such as Poole, Salisbury and Yeovil), and this is reflected in recent retail needs assessments.

49. It is also important to recognise that retail need is likely to be driven by the location of future housing. The identification of the most sustainable broad locations for additional housing could therefore have implications for the retail hierarchies identified in the current and emerging local plans. Any cross-boundary issues identified through the retail need assessment updates will need to be considered jointly.

²⁶ Paragraph 85(d) of the National Planning Policy Framework 2018

Tourism

50. Tourism makes an important contribution to Dorset's economy. Around 8% of all Dorset employees work in tourism, with the highest proportions seen in Weymouth and Portland (14%) and Purbeck (13%)²⁷. The current and emerging local plans include policies to support and guide tourism related development, such as tourist accommodation and new tourist attractions. The Dorset strategic planning work offers

an opportunity to highlight the importance of planning for sustainable tourism across the area.

Provision of infrastructure

Transport

51. National planning policy sets out that local planning authorities should seek to support a pattern of development which facilitates the use of sustainable modes of transport. In addition, local authorities should work with neighbouring authorities and transport providers to develop strategies for the provision of viable transport infrastructure to support sustainable development²⁸.

52. The Bournemouth, Poole and Dorset Local Transport Plan (LTP) 3 sets out the strategy for the management, maintenance and development of the area's transport system. LTPs explain how funds, largely allocated by the Government, will be used to deliver improved transport and help meet the key objectives for transport established by both government and local authorities.

53. The LTP3 came into effect from April 2011, and covers the period 2011 to 2026. The plan identifies five goals to guide the approach to transport in Dorset:

- Supporting economic growth
- Tackling climate change
- Equality of opportunity
- Better safety, security and health
- Improved quality of life.

54. Key solutions are identified for each of the five goals. The Strategic Economic Plan (SEP), and future reviews, also have important implications for transport priorities.

55. The need for strategic transport infrastructure to support the delivery of future development across the area, in particular the potential increase in the rate of housing development, is a critical issue that needs to be addressed jointly as part of an integrated strategy to deliver infrastructure improvements alongside new homes and jobs. Proposals are currently being put forward to the Local Enterprise Partnership for funding to prepare integrated transport studies for both South East Dorset and western Dorset.

²⁷ Dorset in Profile 2014 (based on data from 2012), available online at:

<https://www.dorsetforyou.com/article/339782/District-profile-leaflets-and-documents>

²⁸ Paragraphs 103-104 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2018.

Telecommunications

56. National planning policy states that, in preparing local plans, local planning authorities should support the expansion of electronic communications networks, including nextgeneration mobile technology such as 5G and full fibre broadband connections²⁹.

57. The Superfast Dorset project is currently progressing across the whole of Dorset, Bournemouth and Poole, and aims to provide as close as practicably possible to 100% superfast broadband connectivity at 30Mbps by 2020, as well as 50% connectivity to ultrafast services and businesses able to access faster services as required, and 50% take up of superfast services by residents and businesses. These aims are set out in the Digital Infrastructure Strategy for Dorset (September 2015). So far, access to superfast broadband has dramatically improved, with 620 structures across the county, 83,633 properties with access to superfast broadband and 96% of the county able to get superfast broadband.

58. No specific cross boundary issues have been identified in relation to telecommunications infrastructure, but there may be opportunities in any joint working to emphasise the importance of improving telecommunications across the area, through projects such as Superfast Dorset.

Waste Management

59. A new Waste Plan is currently being prepared to provide for Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole's waste management needs. This is at an advanced stage with examination hearings taking place in 2018. The Waste Plan identifies sites for new waste management facilities to meet the county's needs. Once adopted, it will provide the policy framework for determining planning applications for waste management facilities.

60. Any cross boundary issues relating to waste management will be dealt with through the emerging Waste Plan, which covers the whole of the area. It is important to recognise the importance of sustainable planning for waste to maximise its value as a resource and as a key supporting element for economic competitiveness.

Water supply and wastewater

61. The Dorset local planning authorities have contacted water suppliers and wastewater treatment providers during the preparation of each of the current and emerging local plans, in order to ensure that any issues arising can be addressed. Joint working on the options for development across the area will need to be informed by a similar exercise, to ensure that any proposed development strategy can be accommodated in terms of water supply and wastewater infrastructure.

62. At this stage, officers have not identified any specific cross boundary issues in relation to water supply and wastewater provision. However, it is important to ensure that appropriate infrastructure is provided alongside development.

Flood risk

63. The current and emerging local plans in Dorset are each supported by Strategic Flood Risk Assessments(SFRAs), as required by national planning policy³⁰. As an example, a joint Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (Level 1 SFRA) was prepared in 2007 for Bournemouth, Christchurch, East Dorset, North Dorset and Salisbury. The study area for

²⁹ Paragraph 112 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2018.

³⁰ Paragraph 156 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2018.

the SFRA was defined by the main river catchments of the Stour and the Avon, and the SFRA formed part of the evidence base for the participating local planning authorities. The 2007 SFRA has subsequently been replaced in 2017 by jointly-procured SFRA's for Bournemouth, Christchurch, East Dorset and North Dorset councils, providing updated evidence to underpin local plan production.

64. Another example of cross boundary work in relation to flood risk is the Dorset Stour Catchment Flood Management Plan (CFMP) (2009), which gives an overview of flood risk in the Dorset Stour catchment and sets out a preferred plan for sustainable flood risk management over the next 50 to 100 years. The Management Plan was produced by the Environment Agency and Christchurch and East Dorset Councils, and informed the preparation of the Christchurch and East Dorset Core Strategy.

65. It is worth noting that flood risk is a significant constraint to development within the urban areas of Christchurch, Poole and Weymouth. This has implications for the appropriate location of future development and will affect decisions about the distribution of growth across the area. There may also be opportunities for joint working on strategic scale flood attenuation and mitigation infrastructure. No other specific cross-boundary issues relating to flood risk have been identified.

Coastal change management

66. The Dorset coast is covered by two shoreline management plans³¹ which set out policies to assist decision making on flooding from the sea and coastal erosion risk management over the next 20, 50 and 100 years. The original shoreline management plans (SMP1) have been reviewed and updated to produce SMP2.

67. The Poole and Christchurch Bays SMP2 (October 2010) covers the length of coast between Hurst Spit near Milford-on-Sea and Durlston Head near Swanage, and includes the harbours of Poole and Christchurch. The Durlston Head to Rame Head SMP2 (June 2011) covers the length of coast from Durlston Head (near Swanage) to Rame Head (near Plymouth).

68. National planning policy states that local planning authorities should identify Coastal Change Management Areas to cover any area which is likely to be affected by physical changes to the coast. In addition, local authorities should be clear about what development will be appropriate in such areas and in what circumstances, and they should also make provision for development and infrastructure that needs to be relocated away from Coastal Change Management Areas³³.

69. This matter is being addressed in the local plan reviews of each of the coastal local authorities in Dorset. The local planning authorities will however liaise with each other to ensure that a consistent approach is taken along the full length of the Dorset coastline.

Provision of minerals

70. The Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Minerals Strategy was adopted in May 2014 and sets out the strategy for quarrying stone, sand and gravel, ball clay and other minerals within the county, taking into account the need to meet requirements in a sustainable manner. The plan contains the policies and criteria used for considering planning

³¹ Information about the Shoreline Management Plans can be accessed online via: <https://www.dorsetforyou.com/article/408559/Shoreline-Management-Plans---round-2-SMP2> ³³ Paragraph 167 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2018.

applications for mineral developments. The Minerals Sites Plan, allocating suitable sites for quarrying of sand, gravel, building stones and ball clay to meet requirements, is currently going through its public examination.

71. Officers envisage that any cross boundary issues relating to the provision of minerals will be dealt with through the adopted and emerging minerals plans. Future joint work however offers the opportunity to ensure effective integration of minerals planning with growth and infrastructure needs in Dorset. There is also an opportunity to ensure the restoration of quarries has regard to economic, social and environmental opportunities that support sustainable economic growth.

Provision of energy (including heat)

72. National planning policy states that local planning authorities should have a positive strategy to promote energy from renewable and low carbon sources, and design policies to maximise renewable and low carbon energy development while ensuring that adverse impacts are addressed satisfactorily³².

73. The Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Renewable Energy Strategy to 2020 is being implemented by the Dorset Energy Partnership³³. The strategy sets out the agenda for renewable energy in Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole and identifies six priority areas:

- Supporting the development of community renewable energy;
- Maximising the local economic benefits of renewable energy generation;
- Creating a more supporting planning system for renewable energy;
- Developing locally appropriate technologies;
- Delivering leadership and partnerships that support renewable energy; and
- Improving renewable energy communications and learning.

74. The Renewable Energy Resource Assessment for Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole (March 2012) supports the Renewable Energy Strategy and summarises local renewable energy resources, based upon a national methodology³⁴. The assessment covers onshore wind, biomass, microgeneration, hydropower and offshore (wind, tidal and wave) resources.

75. In addition, the local planning authorities for Christchurch, East Dorset, North Dorset and Purbeck commissioned Land Use Consultants Ltd to undertake studies to assess landscape sensitivity to wind and solar energy development in each district. The studies were published in April 2014 and can be accessed on the relevant local planning authority pages of the Dorsetforyou website.

76. National planning policy states that planning applications for wind energy developments should not be considered acceptable unless it is in an area identified as suitable for wind energy in a development plan; and following consultation, it can be demonstrated that the planning impacts identified by the affected local community have

³² Paragraph 151 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2018.

³³ The Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Renewable Energy Strategy to 2020 is available online at: <https://www.dorsetforyou.com/renewable-energy-strategy-2020>

³⁴ The Renewable Energy Resource Assessment for Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole can be accessed online at: <https://www.dorsetforyou.com/renewable-energy-strategy-2020>

been fully addressed and the proposal has their backing.³⁵ This is reflected in current and emerging local plans across the area. There may be a role for joint working to help ensure a consistent approach to renewable energy provision, including exploring the potential for cross boundary district heating.

Provision of health, security, community and cultural infrastructure

Promoting healthy communities

77. Councils have a legal duty to take appropriate steps to improve the health and wellbeing of residents³⁸ and in April 2015, Public Health Dorset launched the LiveWell Dorset lifestyle service, which provides a single point of contact to help people with their health and wellbeing across Dorset, Bournemouth and Poole³⁶.

78. National planning policy highlights the role of planning in facilitating social interaction and creating healthy, inclusive communities³⁷. This should include consideration of how best to promote:

- Opportunities for meetings between members of the community who might not otherwise come into contact with each other;
- Safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion; and
- Safe and accessible developments, containing clear and legible pedestrian routes, and high quality public space, which encourage the active and continual use of public areas.

79. This also includes planning positively for the provision and use of shared space, community facilities and other local services; guarding against the loss of valued facilities and services; ensuring that established shops, facilities and services are able to develop and modernise in a way that is sustainable; and ensuring an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services.

80. These matters are considered through the current and emerging local plans of each of the local planning authorities in Dorset. However, the Strategic Planning Forum is also working with Public Health Dorset and the Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group to improve the links between planning and health systems in Dorset, foster shared understanding and identify opportunities for future collaboration. The aim of this is to highlight the importance of promoting healthy communities through planning, thus contributing to the wider duty on Councils to take steps to improve health and wellbeing.

A joint workshop between officers from the planning and health systems was held on 25 June 2018 and the health authorities are regularly invited to the Strategic Planning Forum meetings.

³⁵ Footnote 49, paragraph 154b of the National Planning Policy Framework 2018 ³⁸ See Section 12 of the Health and Social Care Act 2012, available online at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2012/7/contents/enacted>

³⁶ Further information on the LiveWell Dorset service can be accessed at: <http://www.livewelldorset.co.uk/index.html>

³⁷ Paragraph 91 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2018.

Green infrastructure

81. Green infrastructure can be defined as a network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities³⁸. National planning policy states that local planning authorities in their local plans should take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure, and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries.³⁹

82. The South East Dorset Green Infrastructure Strategy (Investing in Green Places, July

2011) was jointly prepared by the councils in South East Dorset (Bournemouth, Christchurch, Dorset, East Dorset, Poole and Purbeck) in partnership with Natural England, the Environment Agency and the Forestry Commission⁴⁰. The Strategy provides a non-statutory framework for green infrastructure across South East Dorset. It sets out a vision for the area which seeks to co-ordinate the planning for, and investment in, parks, open spaces, wildlife corridors, street trees and other green spaces.

83. The Stour Valley forms an important sub-regional area of green infrastructure, and the South East Dorset Green Infrastructure Strategy identifies a key strategic project to develop a strategy for the Lower Stour Valley. The project aims to develop a strategy for the river Stour and its floodplain from Sturminster Marshall to Christchurch. Key aspects include provision of an accessible route for walking and cycling, encouraging access to existing 'hubs' (recreational facilities, greenspace, visitor centres, etc) and encouraging multifunctional uses via provision of footpaths, cycle routes, access to river, flood attenuation and biodiversity and landscape enhancements.

84. Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspaces (SANGs) have a key role in heathland mitigation in the eastern Dorset area, and this is discussed further below, in the section on the conservation and enhancement of the natural environment.

85. Green infrastructure networks are being identified within the current round of local plan reviews.

86. The councils will consider jointly whether any update is needed to the South East Dorset Green Infrastructure Strategy, and whether there could be merit in preparing a single joint Green Infrastructure Strategy to cover Dorset in future.

Housing Standards Review

87. The Housing Standards Review highlighted the issue of councils imposing a range of local technical requirements on the construction of new dwellings (e.g. requiring specific levels of the Code for Sustainable Homes or different wheelchair accessible housing standards). The recommendations of the review have been encompassed in the Deregulation Act which received royal assent in March 2015⁴¹.

88. The Deregulation Act provides a set of national standards (space, water efficiency and accessibility) that can only be applied if they are included in an adopted local plan. The Act also ended the Code for Sustainable Homes (Part L of the Building

³⁸ Page 67 (Glossary) of the National Planning Policy Framework 2018.

³⁹ Paragraph 171 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2018.

⁴⁰ The South East Dorset Green Infrastructure Strategy, Investing in Green Places, can be accessed online at: <https://www.dorsetforyou.com/greeninfrastructure>

⁴¹ The Deregulation Act 2015 can be accessed online at: <http://services.parliament.uk/bills/201415/deregulation.html>

Regulations is now the only energy efficiency delivery mechanism) and replaced 'Secured by Design' with Part Q (Security) of the Building Regulations. This means that existing local plan policies which seek to set standards for new development in relation to these matters are now likely to be out of date.

89. Each local planning authority will consider the implications of these changes within their local plan reviews, but the Strategic Planning Forum and joint officer working may offer an opportunity to consider the consistency of approaches to the new national standards across Dorset.

Addressing climate change and conservation and enhancement of the natural and historic environment

Climate change mitigation and adaptation

90. National planning policy highlights the role of planning in helping to shape places to secure radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimising vulnerability and providing resilience to the impacts of climate change, and supporting the delivery of renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure⁴². Climate change mitigation and adaptation are broad ranging topics, encompassing issues of flood risk, coastal change management, water supply and demand, green infrastructure, and planning positively for renewable energy provision. These issues are each considered in more detail elsewhere in this paper, but joint working across Dorset offers an

opportunity to re-emphasise the role of planning in supporting climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Conservation and enhancement of the natural environment

91. Dorset has a high quality natural environment. Around 55% of Dorset is covered by an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), whilst 19,000 hectares of the county (7% of the land area) are designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest⁴³. The county also includes a number of internationally protected sites (Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas) including the Dorset Heathlands and Poole Harbour.

92. The Dorset Local Nature Partnership (LNP) has adopted a vision and strategy for enhancing 'natural value' in Dorset⁴⁴. The strategy identifies six strategic priorities which will guide the LNP's actions:

Natural capital – investing in Dorset's natural assets;

Natural value – adding value to the local economy;

Natural health – developing Dorset's 'natural health service';

⁴² Paragraph 148 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2018.

⁴³ Dorset in Profile (2014), available online at: <https://www.dorsetforyou.com/article/339782/District-profileleaflets-and-documents>

⁴⁴ Dorset Local Nature Partnership: A vision and strategy for enhancing 'natural value' in Dorset (March 2014) can be accessed online via: http://www.dorsetwildlifetrust.org.uk/dorset_local_nature_partnership.html ⁴⁸ The Dorset AONB Management Plan can be accessed online at: <http://www.dorsetaonb.org.uk/the-dorsetaonb/management-plan>

Natural resilience – improving environmental and community resilience;

Natural understanding – improving understanding of, and engagement in, Dorset's environment;

Natural influence – integrating natural value in policy and decision-making, locally and beyond.

93. The Dorset AONB stretches from Lyme Regis in the west, along the coast to Poole Harbour in the east, and north to Hambledon Hill near Blandford Forum. It covers parts of North Dorset, Purbeck, West Dorset and Weymouth and Portland. The current Dorset AONB Management Plan (2014 to 2019)⁴⁸ sets out the AONB Partnership's vision for the landscape and describes how the area's authorities, communities and businesses might work together to achieve that vision.

94. The Cranborne Chase AONB extends from Wimborne Minster in the south to Warminster in the north, and covers parts of North and East Dorset. The current Cranborne Chase AONB Management Plan (2014 to 2019)⁴⁵ sets out objectives and policies to help conserve and enhance the AONB.

95. Joint working on strategic planning matters will be an opportunity to highlight the importance of the natural environment and nature conservation issues across the county, and to ensure that these are given full consideration when appraising options for future growth.

Dorset Heathlands

97. The Dorset Heathlands cover an extensive area of South East Dorset, with many sites designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Protection Areas (SPA), Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Ramsar sites. The local authorities of Bournemouth, Christchurch, Dorset County, East Dorset, Poole and Purbeck have been operating a strategy for the protection of heathland since 2007. During this time the local authorities and Urban Heath Partnership have been gathering evidence into the effects of urban pressures on the protected heaths to inform the future strategy for avoiding and mitigating the significant adverse effects of development.

98. Local plans and any other planning strategies will need to be accompanied by a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) to demonstrate that any proposed development strategy will not adversely affect the ecological integrity of the European designations (SAC, SPA and Ramsar). The HRA will test growth options, and will include consideration as to whether appropriate mitigation is achievable for the level of growth proposed.

99. The local planning authorities in south east Dorset have jointly produced a planning framework to manage pressures on sensitive heathlands resulting from development.

Joint working on the topic has been taking place since 2006 and the latest Dorset Heathlands Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), covering Bournemouth, Christchurch, East Dorset, Poole and Purbeck, was published in January 2016. The SPD aims to ensure that there continues to be a strategic approach to the protection of the internationally important heathlands in South East Dorset. The updated SPD is based on the current local plan housing requirements, and a further update is likely to be required following adoption of any revised local plans by any of the local authorities.

⁴⁵ The Cranborne Chase AONB Management Plan can be accessed online at:
<http://www.ccwwdaonb.org.uk/publications/aonb-management-plan/>

100. Strategic Alternative Natural Greenspaces (SANGs) can be provided alongside development to mitigate adverse effects on the Dorset heathlands. The identification of broad locations for strategic SANGs will need to be considered alongside the locations for additional housing development, through local plans and any joint working on the distribution of development.

Poole Harbour

101. Poole Harbour is an outstanding natural feature and is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar site for its nature conservation importance. Increasing nitrogen levels from sewage and agriculture are contributing to the growth of algal mats in the harbour, restricting the growth, distribution and variety of important food available for wading birds protected under European law and smothering estuarine habitats.

102. As with the Dorset Heathlands, it will be necessary to demonstrate that any proposed development strategy will not adversely affect the integrity of the Poole Harbour SPA/Ramsar. Adverse effects could arise in relation to recreational pressures and/or impacts on water quality. Habitats Regulations Assessments will need to be prepared alongside local plans and any other relevant planning strategies, to include consideration as to whether appropriate mitigation can be provided.

103. A joint 'Nitrogen Reduction in Poole Harbour' SPD has been adopted, providing detailed guidance to ensure that development does not lead to an increase in the level of nitrates in Poole Harbour. The SPD covers the catchment for Poole Harbour, which incorporates parts of North Dorset, Poole, Purbeck and West Dorset⁴⁶. It has been adopted by all four local authorities in 2017.

104. One of the options for providing mitigation is to purchase agricultural land and change the use to a sparsely treed landscape. This leads to a reduction in the amount of nitrogen which is being spread onto the land within the catchment from agriculture, which offsets the additional nitrates arising due to residential development. It is worth noting that land purchased for nitrogen mitigation can also be considered for SANGs or more general green infrastructure, thus offering multiple benefits. Nitrogen mitigation can be delivered anywhere within the catchment, and local authorities will work together to ensure that appropriate mitigation is delivered.

Conservation and enhancement of the historic environment

105. Dorset has a rich historic environment, and includes 5% of the nationally scheduled monuments⁴⁷. 95 miles of the Dorset and Devon coast, between Orcombe Point near Exmouth and Studland Bay near Poole, are protected under World Heritage status as the Jurassic Coast. The county also includes numerous other heritage assets, including listed buildings, conservation areas, and parks and gardens of special historic interest.

⁴⁶ A small part of the Poole Harbour catchment falls within East Dorset, but as it is protected habitat where no development is planned, mitigation is not necessary.

⁴⁷ Dorset in Profile (2014, data from 2013) available online at: <https://www.dorsetforyou.com/article/339782/District-profile-leaflets-and-documents>

106. The current Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site (WHS) Management Plan (2014 – 2019)⁴⁸ outlines aims and policies for managing the WHS over the coming years, and indicates a range of activities for achieving them.

107. National planning policy states that local planning authorities should set out in their local plan a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats⁵³. Each of the Dorset local planning authorities will have considered these issues through the preparation of the current and emerging local plans, but there is an opportunity for joint work to reinforce the importance of conserving and enhancing the historic environment through planning policy. There may also be scope to develop a positive strategy for conserving the historic environment across Dorset as a whole.

Summary and Priorities for joint working

108. This paper has summarised broad cross boundary matters which affect the local planning authorities in Dorset, many of which are already the subject of joint policies or joint evidence base studies. Joint working through the Strategic Planning Forum provides the opportunity to highlight key planning themes and issues across the area, and to promote continued effective joint working. There is also an opportunity for this joint working to develop further, to set out a positive planning strategy to provide for additional growth in Dorset, including additional homes. The priorities for future strategic planning work are set out in table 6. It is important to emphasise that at this stage the suggested scope of the work is necessarily broad. Each of the issues will require further investigation, and further issues may arise, as the work progresses.

109. At the time of preparing this first Statement of Common Ground, the local planning authorities are all in the process of moving towards the establishment of two new unitary councils in Dorset in April 2019. Decisions about the geography of future local plans have not yet been made, and such decisions will need to include the consideration of how best to achieve joint working between the two unitary councils on strategic planning matters including the distribution of development.

110. The table below summarises the issues raised in the main body of this Statement, identifying the potential scope for joint working between the local planning authorities. As described earlier in this Statement, the most significant challenge remains that of meeting the housing needs under the new standard methodology: whether these can be met within individual local authority areas; if not, whether they can be met within neighbouring areas of Dorset; and what the most sustainable and appropriate distribution of development across the area would be. This will be the highest priority for joint working between the local planning authorities.

Theme	Potential scope for joint working
Overall strategy	<input type="checkbox"/> Determining the most sustainable pattern of growth to meet future needs, taking account of objectively assessed needs, environmental and other constraints including Green Belt

⁴⁸ The Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site Management Plan (2014 - 2019) can be accessed online at: <http://jurassiccoast.org/conserving-the-coast/management-files/category/14-managment-plan-current> ⁵³
Paragraph 185 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2018.

Theme	Potential scope for joint working
Homes and jobs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting out a positive planning strategy to provide for additional growth in Dorset, including additional homes. • Setting out a strategic approach to the provision of additional homes in Eastern Dorset, to meet objectively assessed needs. This strategy will need to be informed by an appraisal of all reasonable options for the distribution of growth, taking account of issues such as housing mix, land availability, infrastructure capacity, and development constraints. It will need to include consideration of all options including urban potential, urban extensions and new settlements. • A Strategic Green Belt Review to help inform the strategy. • Identifying and addressing any issues of ‘unmet’ housing need arising from areas adjoining Dorset. • Providing an overview of the broad mix of housing types needed • Addressing any cross boundary issues relating to employment land provision identified through the Workspace Strategy • Addressing any strategic issues relating to education and skills
Retail, leisure and other commercial development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying key relationships between town centres, both within Dorset and in neighbouring areas. • Emphasising the importance of a ‘town centre’ first approach to new retail development. • Considering any implications of the location of additional housing for the retail hierarchies identified in the current and emerging local plans • Addressing any cross-boundary issues that may be identified through updates to existing retail studies • Highlighting the importance of planning for sustainable tourism across Dorset
Infrastructure and resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasising the importance of improving infrastructure, including improvements to transport, telecommunications, water supply and wastewater infrastructure • Ensuring effective integration of minerals planning with growth and infrastructure needs in Dorset • Ensuring sustainable planning for waste to maximise its value as a resource and as a key supporting element for economic competitiveness. • Ensuring the restoration of quarries has regard to economic, social and environmental opportunities that support sustainable economic growth, where appropriate. • Highlighting the importance of avoiding inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding • Exploring opportunities for strategic scale flood attenuation and mitigation infrastructure. • Developing a consistent approach to Coastal Change Management Areas, to be applied along the full length of the Dorset coastline

Theme	Potential scope for joint working
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring a consistent approach to renewable energy provision, including wind energy, across Dorset. • Exploring the potential for cross boundary district heating.

Health, security, community and cultural infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highlighting the importance of promoting healthy communities through planning. • Encouraging a consistent approach across Dorset to the new national standards for space, water efficiency and accessibility. • Considering whether any update is needed to the South East Dorset Green Infrastructure Strategy, and whether there could be merit in preparing a single joint Green Infrastructure Strategy to cover Dorset.
Climate change and historic and natural environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasising the role of planning in supporting climate change mitigation and adaptation. • Highlighting the importance of nature conservation issues across the county, and ensuring that these are given full consideration when appraising options for future growth. • Securing renewed commitment to the existing joint approaches to address heathlands and nitrates mitigation. • Identifying broad locations for strategic SANGs (Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspaces), to link in with the preferred strategy for additional housing, once this is identified. • Habitats Regulations Assessments (HRA) to demonstrate that any proposed development will not adversely affect the ecological integrity of the European designations. • Reinforcing the importance of conserving and enhancing the historic environment through planning policy, and developing a positive strategy for conservation of the historic environment across Dorset as a whole.

Table 6: potential scope for joint working

Appendix 2 – Meetings of the Joint Strategic Planning and Transport Advisory Group

Joint Strategic Planning & Transport Advisory Group (BCP and Dorset Councils)

Meeting 24 February 2021, 1600 – 1730, Microsoft Teams

Attendees

Cllr Drew Mellor (BCP) Cllr Philip Broadhead (BCP) Cllr Mike Greene (BCP)	Julian McLoughlin Nick Perrins Mark Axford
Cllr Spencer Flower (DC) Cllr David Walsh (DC) Cllr Ray Bryan (DC)	Mike Garrity Hilary Jordan Terry Sneller Jack Wiltshire Kate Tunks

Agenda

1. Appointment of chair and vice-chair
2. Draft terms of reference for discussion and agreement (attached)
3. Update on progress with each council's Local Plan, including joint evidence base work
4. Preparation of Statement of Common Ground (previous version agreed by the predecessor councils attached)
5. Any other business
6. Arrangements for next meeting

FEBRUARY 2021
JOINT STRATEGIC PLANNING AND TRANSPORT ADVISORY GROUP
OF BCP AND DORSET COUNCILS
TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council and Dorset Council have established a joint Strategic Planning and Transport Advisory Group to address strategic planning, minerals and waste, and transport matters, and the 'Duty to Cooperate' across Dorset.

Purpose

2. The main purpose of the Joint Strategic Planning and Transport Advisory Group is to ensure the local authorities in Dorset fulfil the obligations under the legal duty to co-operate by:
 - i. guiding strategic planning at the 'larger than local' scale through effective policy development across boundaries;
 - ii. working with the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), Local Nature Partnership (LNP) and statutory prescribed bodies in the development of strategy to inform and align spatial and investment priorities and promote sustainable economic growth; and
 - iii. guiding the maintenance and revision of the Statement of Common Ground, setting out the cross-boundary planning matters in the area and the proposed means of addressing them, ensuring that an up-to-date Statement is in place when each local plan is submitted.
3. The Committee will have no executive powers and will:
 - (a) Oversee the preparation of the Statement of Common Ground between the two authorities and other adjoining authorities;
 - (b) Oversee the work programmes for the preparation of the local plans and local transport plans;
 - (c) Advise on the scope of joint studies that will form parts of the evidence base for both plans; and
 - (d) Make recommendations to the Councils and their respective reporting structures. .
4. The Group will work on a consensus basis and advise local authorities on the outcomes of discussions in the wider interest of a collective approach to strategic planning matters.

Structure and Membership

5. The Joint Strategic Planning & Transport Group will comprise 6 elected members:
 - Three Executive members from each local authority, two of which will be the members with responsibility for the Planning and Transport portfolios or equivalent and one other member at the discretion of the local authority.
6. Other relevant local authorities and representatives from the LEP, LNP and other statutory prescribed bodies to Dorset will be invited to meetings where there are duty to cooperate matters beyond the boundaries of Dorset that require consideration, but will not be entitled to vote.
7. Each local authority member or substitute shall be entitled to remain on the Group for so long as the local authority appointing them so wishes, but shall cease to be a member or substitute

if they cease to be a member of the local authority appointing them to the Group or if that local authority removes them.

8. Up to three officers per local authority may also attend meetings of the Group. Further attendees will be at the discretion of the Chairman.
9. Servicing arrangements (including organising and note taking at meetings) will be reviewed annually and it is expected that the Local Authorities will rotate the responsibility. Servicing will normally be provided by the authority whose member is Chairman.

Agreeing on Recommendations

10. The Group has no executive powers and any agreement on matters does not necessarily reflect the views of any Council. All reasonable endeavours will be made to settle matters by consensus and any recommendations must be by the majority of those attending.
11. Named substitutes may be appointed to the Group. Substitutes shall be notified to the clerk at the start of the meeting. The member appointed as a substitute shall have the same voting rights as the member for whom s/he is substituting and who does not attend.

If there is discord on any matter, this will be recorded in the minutes for each meeting to make clear the scope of any disagreement.

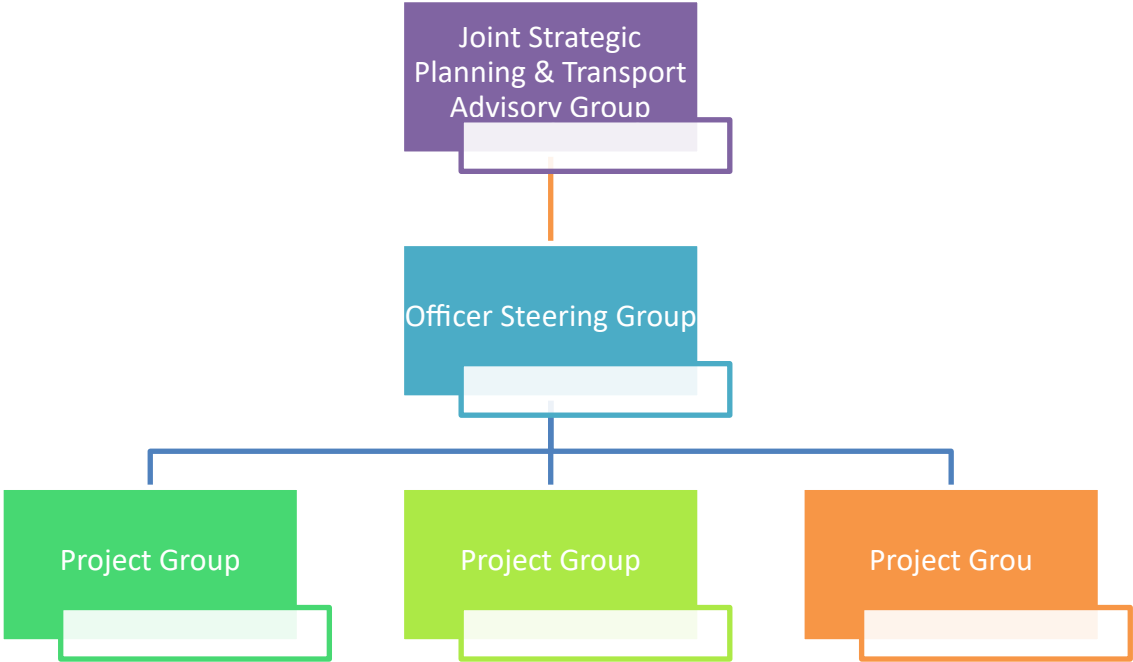
Chairmanship and Vice-Chairman

12. The Chairman will be from the servicing authority and the Vice-Chairman from the nonservicing authority. The appointment of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman will take place at the first meeting for the municipal year ahead and thereafter will alternate between the two authorities on an annual basis, unless otherwise agreed. If the Chairman is not in attendance, responsibility for chairing the meeting will fall to the vice chairman.
13. Meetings of the Group will be arranged on a 'needs' basis. Meetings will also be held where elected members from both local authorities request the convening of a special meeting which will be arranged within a reasonable period
14. Draft notes should be circulated as soon as practicable to enable member organisations to act as soon as possible if necessary.

Responsibilities

15. To act in the wider Dorset interest and advise the local authorities and organisations on a Dorset wide approach to relevant strategic matters. ..
16. To meet when required to receive reports, evidence and findings from officers of the local authorities and others with an interest in strategic planning and related matters.
17. To ensure both local authorities are complying with the legal duty to cooperate.
18. To engage neighbouring and other relevant authorities in strategic matters where there are cross boundary issues and ensuring the legal duty to cooperate is met. **Officer Support**
19. The Group will be supported by an officer steering group from both authorities. There will also be a series of officer project groups, depending on need at the time, but likely to cover areas of joint working such as green belt reviews, habitats regulation assessment, strategic housing market assessments and workspace strategy.

Proposed Structure



Joint Strategic Planning & Transport Advisory Group (BCP and Dorset Councils)

Meeting Notes: 24 February 2021, 1600 – 1730, Microsoft Teams

Attendees

Councillors	Officers
Cllr Drew Mellor (BCP) Cllr Philip Broadhead (BCP) Cllr Mike Greene (BCP)	Julian McLaughlin Nick Perrins Mark Axford
Cllr Spencer Flower (DC) Cllr David Walsh (DC) Cllr Ray Bryan (DC)	Mike Garrity Hilary Jordan Terry Sneller Jack Wiltshire Kate Tunks

Note of Meeting

1. Appointment of chair and vice-chair. Cllr David Walsh appointed as Chairman and Cllr Philip Broadhead appointed as Vice Chairman.
2. Draft terms of reference for discussion and agreement. MG introduced item. Stressed importance of establishing a framework through the JSPAG to enable space for an open exchange between councils to further the requirements of the Duty to Cooperate. Group to have non-executive powers, will have an important role in steering respective local plans, built in flexibility to allow other groups to attend, e.g other neighbouring councils, LEP, LNP.

Draft ToR discussed by group and wording agreed subject to following amendments:

Specify group to consist of Executive Cllrs only (ToR para 5);

Amend para 12 to read '.... thereafter will alternate between the two authorities on an annual basis unless otherwise agreed';

Amend references to '*strategic planning*' throughout ToR to read '*strategic matters*' as broadens scope to beyond planning, e.g transport issues; Amend table in ToR to indicate more than one officer project group.

3. Update on progress with each council's Local Plan, including joint evidence base work
TS updated the group on the Dorset Local Plan progress. Currently out for consultation until 15th March, online consultation reaching broader groups of people. TS explained strategic priorities of DLP, planning for 21,000 jobs and 130-150H of employment land; standard method housing requirement of 30,481 dwellings but plan builds in contingency in identifying potential for 39,000 dwellings. This is because some sites may need to be removed as a result of consultation feedback; sites may not all come forward at the anticipated rate; and in recognition that there may be a need in relation to the Duty to Cooperate to accommodate some unmet housing need from surrounding local authority areas including BCP. Option sites include Green Belt urban extensions, and the strategy is based on functional areas

including SE Dorset and on a settlement hierarchy, Tier 1 being the large built up area of the conurbation, Tier 2 market towns and Tier 3 larger villages. In addition the Local Plan asks questions about what level of development may be appropriate at Alderholt.

MA updated progress with the BCP Local Plan. Anticipate options consultation in the Summer of 2021. Call for sites resulted in the submission of numerous proposed green belt urban extensions. Currently scrutinising urban potential to accommodate challenging housing requirement resultant from government methodology of 2,637 dwellings per annum or 42,192 over the 16-year plan period 2022-2038. Presently cannot quantify unmet need resultant from BCP but will quantify as further urban potential work progresses.

Local Plans questions/comments: Cllr RB queried Bournemouth Airport site proposals, it was confirmed these were within the current site envelope of BA. Cllr PB stressed that BCP currently scrutinising potential to increase density in the urban area including through examining potential for taller buildings, however currently officers identifying a shortfall in urban sites to meet housing requirement. Cllr SF commented on target date of 2023 for adopting BCP local plan. Cllr MG commented on online consultation and agreed could be effective and reach wider groups. JM commented on the recent TCF consultation as a useful example of online engagement. The matter of Gypsy and Traveller site provision was raised, and it was confirmed by officers that the joint evidence work on G and T accommodation needs was ongoing. Officers confirmed that other joint work includes the Green Belt Study, Housing Needs Study, Workspace Strategy and transport studies. NP asked about the next Dorset LP milestone, TS responded anticipating revision of draft plan through 2021 with submission for examination in March 2022.

4. Preparation of Statement of Common Ground

MA introduced the item reminding members that the current version of the SoCG was 'endorsed' by the predecessor councils in early 2019 with a recommendation that future iterations of the SoCG be reviewed by the new Councils. The SoCG needs updating as it includes outdated information including being prepared in the context of the predecessor councils. In summary, the SoCG is a statutory document that will be made public and subject to examination: its purpose is to set out how councils have cooperated on cross-boundary planning matters under the 'Duty to Cooperate', the key issue here being potential unmet housing need from BCP. The JSPAG will have a key role in steering officers on the content of the SoCG.

Cllrs discussed the timeframe for updating the SoCG and it was agreed that as cross boundary matters progressed through the JSPAG the SoCG will be updated, however there was no need to update immediately as it will be updated prior to submission of Local Plans. Currently the SoCG is worded as a statement of intent rather than setting out cross boundary solutions. Cllrs supported the updating of the SoCG and stressed that cooperation and joint working is essential.

5. Any other business

Forward plan of items and future meeting dates of the JSPAG to be drafted for next meeting.

Cllr MG in respect of transportation cross boundary issues stressed that the councils are part of the sub national transport body and that is essential that housing locations and transport matters are considered together at the early stage of plan making.

Cllrs discussed north south connectivity, in particular the merits of future investment in the A338/A37/A350. Comments made that government funding on transport infrastructure more likely where areas are developing at scale. Transport officers commented that they will be feeding into Highway England RIS2 on how to improve north south connectivity to the M4 and that LTP4 is to be refreshed.

Cllr RB stressed the importance of the councils resolving together tourism pressures over the summer, Cllr MG commented that a group had been established between councils to consider this matter.

Cllr SF commented that the first JSPAG had resulted in a good exchange and demonstrated initiative and drive to work together at the larger than local scale.

END

Joint Strategic Planning & Transport Advisory Group (BCP and Dorset Councils)

Meeting 8 June 2021, 1300 – 1500, Microsoft Teams

Attendees	
Cllr Drew Mellor (BCP) Cllr Philip Broadhead (BCP) Cllr Mike Greene (BCP)	Julian McLaughlin Nick Perrins Mark Axford
Cllr Spencer Flower (DC) Cllr David Walsh (DC) Cllr Ray Bryan (DC)	Mike Garrity Hilary Jordan Terry Sneller Jack Wiltshire Kate Tunks

Agenda

1. Apologies for absence
2. Notes of meeting on 24 February
3. Dorset Council Local Plan consultation feedback
4. BCP local plan and urban potential progress
5. Progress on joint studies, including housing needs, gypsy and traveller accommodation needs, workspace strategy, and green belt
6. Progress on joint Local Transport Plan
7. Any other business
8. Forward plan of future meetings:

Thursday 26 August 2021, 0930-1100	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local plan progress • Completed studies • Local Transport Plan progress
Wednesday 1 December 2021, 1530-1700	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local plan progress • BCP consultation feedback • Local Transport Plan progress

Joint Strategic Planning & Transport Advisory Group (BCP and Dorset Councils)

Meeting 8 June 2021, 1300 – 1500, Microsoft Teams

Attendees	
Cllr Philip Broadhead (BCP) Cllr Mike Greene (BCP)	Julian McLaughlin Mark Axford
Cllr Spencer Flower (DC) Cllr David Walsh (DC) Cllr Ray Bryan (DC)	Mike Garrity Hilary Jordan Terry Sneller Jack Wiltshire Kate Tunks

Notes of meeting

1. Apologies for absence

Cllr Drew Mellor (BCP); Nick Perrins (BCP)

2. Notes of meeting on 24 February

Notes accepted, no comments received

3. Dorset Council Local Plan consultation feedback

TS presented an update on the Dorset Council Local Plan consultation and an overview of the feedback received. Taking place during lockdown, the consultation had been largely online, including a series of podcasts and webinars which had had a large number of viewings. The council received around 60,000 comments, from around 7,000 individuals or organisations, a good rate of response compared with previous local plan consultations.

Matters raised by statutory consultees included:

- The need to demonstrate exceptional circumstances for development in the AONB
- The risk to landscape and biodiversity from development
- Some additional evidence work necessary
- Environment Agency has revised flood maps for some areas
- Highways England comments on the A35 around Dorchester and the A31 around Wimborne / Ferndown.

Other general comments, from other respondents, included:

- Concerns about the housing numbers and requests to challenge them
- Issues around town centre policy post-Covid
- Need for transport improvements, including public transport
- Need for electric vehicle charging points
- Need to prioritise active travel, and protect pedestrian and cycle facilities.

It was noted that there had been no response from the LEP.

DW talked about the work on new communities that was being undertaken alongside the local plan, looking at how to meet Dorset's needs in the longer term, and referring to discussions with Government and the council's involvement with the TCPA New Communities group.

RB referred to the major problem of grid capacity that needed to be overcome to meet the ambitions for growth and implement the climate and ecological emergency strategy.

SF talked about the opportunities of developing at scale, and the potential benefits in terms of achieving government funding, particularly if the two councils worked together.

4. BCP local plan and urban potential progress

MA went through the current programme for the BCP local plan. It would go to Cabinet on 28 July and consultation would take place in August/September, probably for 8 weeks but possibly longer due to holidays.

Urban potential work was under way, and the consultation documents were likely to set out three or four options for different levels of urban intensification, with varying levels of unmet need.

5. Progress on joint studies, including housing needs, gypsy and traveller accommodation needs, workspace strategy, and green belt

Housing needs: work on needs of specific groups (eg affordable housing, older people's housing etc) progressing, and initial findings being considered. The work identifies a very significant affordable housing need across the whole area. Assumptions about the level of national and international in-migration of young people are being queried.

Gypsy and traveller accommodation: update on needs evidence has been commissioned and is due to report back at the end of August. BCP has an application in for a transit site currently.

Workspace strategy: joint procurement – should be out to tender shortly.

Green belt – study concluded and published.

6. Progress on joint Local Transport Plan

JM and JW reported on the intention to refresh the LTP for the whole of Dorset, covering both council areas: the current LTP runs to 2026.

Work is currently at the scoping and evidence stage.

Government guidance on decarbonisation of transport is anticipated to come out prior to the parliamentary recess: sustainability is a strong priority for future transport investment.

North-south links and rail strategy were important matters in this area, and it was considered that the two councils were well aligned.

7. Any other business

Members were reminded that where the named member cannot attend, or where a specific portfolio is due to be discussed, a substitute Cabinet member may be invited to the meetings.

8. Forward plan of future meetings:

Thursday 26 August 2021, 0930-1100	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Local plan progress• Completed studies• Local Transport Plan progress
Wednesday 1 December 2021, 1530-1700	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Local plan progress• BCP consultation feedback• Local Transport Plan progress

Joint Strategic Planning & Transport Advisory Group (BCP and Dorset Councils)

Meeting 1 December 2021, 1530 – 1700, Microsoft Teams

Attendees	
Cllr Drew Mellor (BCP) Cllr Philip Broadhead (BCP) Cllr Mike Greene (BCP)	Julian McLaughlin Nick Perrins Mark Axford
Cllr Spencer Flower (DC) Cllr David Walsh (DC) - chair Cllr Ray Bryan (DC)	Mike Garrity Hilary Jordan Terry Sneller Jack Wiltshire Kate Tunks

Agenda

1. Apologies for absence
2. Notes of meeting on 8 June
3. Dorset Council Local Plan progress
4. BCP local plan and urban potential progress
5. Progress on joint studies, including housing needs, gypsy and traveller accommodation needs, workspace strategy, and green belt
6. Progress on joint Local Transport Plan
7. Any other business
8. Forward plan of future meetings (dates to be confirmed):

March 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local plan progress • Completed studies • Proposals for developing Statement of Common Ground • Local Transport Plan progress
June 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local plan progress

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• BCP consultation feedback• Statement of Common Ground progress• Local Transport Plan progress
September 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Local plan progress• DC publication plan feedback• Finalising Statement of Common Ground• Local Transport Plan progress
December 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Local plan progress• Local Transport Plan progress

Appendix 3 – BCP Council statement on new planning system February 2023

<https://www.bcpCouncil.gov.uk/news-hub/news-articles/bcp-council-fully-supports-new-planning-reforms-which-protect-the-green-belt-and-strengthen-local-plan-delivery>

BCP Council fully supports new planning reforms, which protect the Green Belt and strengthen Local Plan delivery

BCP Council will consider its response to the current Planning Policy Reforms consultation, and the implications for the delivery of its new Local Plan, at a Cabinet meeting next week.

Published on Wednesday 01 February 2023

BCP Council will consider its response to the current Planning Policy Reforms consultation, and the implications for the delivery of its new Local Plan, at a Cabinet meeting next week.

BCP Council's proposed response to the [Levelling-Up and Regeneration Bill: reforms to national planning policy open consultation](#), recognises that the current method used to set housing targets for local authorities is outdated, and current figures aren't achievable for the BCP area. The reforms significantly provide new clarity and protection for local Green Belt, as it will no longer need to be reviewed to meet housing-need targets.

Councillor Philip Broadhead, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Development, Growth and Regeneration, said: "We absolutely welcome these proposed new reforms, which will be incredibly positive for the BCP region. Government have listened to the concerns of local authorities, and this is clearly reflected in this open consultation.

"These proposals will provide a clear way forward for us to deliver the first Local Plan for Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole. I've always been incredibly passionate about protecting our Green Belt, especially when the housing targets for this area were so unachievable, so that's why these reforms are so welcome as they will mean punctual delivery of a Local Plan that will really work for our residents and communities.

"Unlike many areas, we're incredibly lucky to have 15 miles of coastline, and significant areas of protected Heathland and Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), but this also provides an additional challenge and does restrict development opportunities. These new reforms will allow the Planning Authority for this area to consider the true local picture and decisions will reflect what is right, and achievable, for this conurbation."

The proposed reforms also provide a greater emphasis on protecting the character of an area, whilst also stressing the importance of quality development. This will provide Local Authorities more powers to refuse development if it doesn't meet locally set standards.

Cllr Broadhead, added: "We know locally that there is a need for new homes in this area, but this change in reform will not only protect our Green Belt, but will also secure better quality urban development. The challenge for us now is to set policy which will protect existing family homes and the character of well-established family streets and provide new family homes and family-friendly apartments.

"We continue to engage with local communities on the development of our Local Plan, but I'm confident that these reforms strengthen our position to deliver a timely, and much-needed, single Local Plan for this area."

BCP Council expect to publish a Draft Local Plan in Autumn 2023, which will be open for public consultation and examination, with full adoption expected around December 2024. You can find out more about the development of a new Local Plan, and join a mailing list at www.bcpCouncil.gov.uk/LocalPlan

Appendix 4 – BCP Council unmet need letter to Dorset Council

From: Steve Dring

Sent: 11 June 2024 15:59

To: Terry Sneller <terry.sneller@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk>; Hilary Jordan <hilary.jordan@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk>; Mike Garrity <mike.garrity@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk>

Cc: Laura Bright <laura.bright@bcpcouncil.gov.uk>

Subject: Unmet need request

Good afternoon

We have discussed the Draft BCP Local Plan and housing requirements at length in our regular monthly duty to cooperate meetings. However, your representations have highlighted that we have omitted to formally request if Dorset Council can assist in meeting unmet housing need. This letter is to formally make that request.

The Draft BCP Local Plan at para 4.9 sets out the indicative housing need derived from the standard method as 2,806 homes per year from 2022 to 2032. The updated figure for 2023 to 2033 is 2,718 homes per year. Over a 15 year period this would equate to 40,770 homes.

In preparing the Draft Local Plan we have used the indicative housing need derived from the standard method as the starting point for setting a housing requirement. We have then taken a constraints based approach. As you are aware the BCP area is highly constrained with significant areas covered by environmental designations or being at risk from flooding. The coast to the south and Green Belt to the north, also limit the amount of land suitable for development. Our Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment has looked comprehensively across various sources of land to examine where new homes and businesses could be built considering if land is suitable and available and whether or not development is achievable, and if constraints could be overcome. While some significant regeneration opportunities exist there is a shortfall of land which is suitable and available for development.

The Draft BCP Local Plan at Policy H1: Housing Supply sets a stepped housing target of 1,200 homes per year from 2024/25 to 2028/29 and 1,800 homes per year from 2029/30 to 2038/39. This equates to 24,000 homes over a 15 year period. There is a shortfall of 16,770 homes over the 15 year period. Para 8.4 of the Draft BCP Local Plan indicates that within the confines of the constraints outlined above we have identified a housing supply of 25,316. This reduces the shortfall to 15,454 homes over the Plan period. We are updating these figures to incorporate the outcome of the 2023/24 monitoring and will update you shortly on the up-to-date figure.

Type	Amount
Sites with planning permission but not built	9,110
Allocations*	7,815
Windfall sites	8,390
Total	25,316**

*Excluding those where planning permission has been granted but not yet implemented

**This total includes all remaining sites with planning permission as of April 2023, it is anticipated that around 1,200 of these will be completed in 2023/24

Figure 8.1 - Housing supply in the BCP area

The Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment identified a need for 29 households, including those households that do not meet the definition. We have identified a site for around 15 pitches at Branksome Triangle and note your support in your representations. Subject to more detailed work we may be able to accommodate further pitches at the Branksome Triangle site or look at other sites within the BCP area to meet the unmet need of 14 households. Therefore we are not formally requesting Dorset Council assist in meeting these unmet needs.

We are therefore seeking formal confirmation whether Dorset Council can help us to meet this unmet housing need. The preparation of emerging Dorset Local Plan will provide the platform to test this unmet need in addition to Dorset Council's needs. We note Dorset Council's representations about the sustainability of growth on the outer edge of the Green Belt as opposed to the inner edge. We are happy to explore the options for meeting unmet need with the Dorset Council and contribute to sustainability appraisal in the upcoming Dorset Council Local Plan. This outcome of this work may require a review of the BCP Local Plan.

In regard to meeting employment needs the jointly prepared Employment Land Study (2024) identifies a need for the BCP area of between 66.4 and 97.4 hectares of employment land over the period 2021 to 2039 (see Draft Local Plan para 9.4). Policy E2: Employment Supply makes provision for 72 hectares of employment which is sufficient to meet the needs identified. Figure 9.2 demonstrates how employment supply in the region of 92 hectares. We note Dorset Council's support for this position in its representations. There is no unmet employment need.

Entering into the examination phase of the BCP Local Plan I would like to thank you for your continued support.

Kind Regards



Steve Dring
Interim Planning Policy Manager
Planning and Transport
01202 817764
steve.dring@bcpcouncil.gov.uk
bcpcouncil.gov.uk

Appendix 5 – Dorset Council response to BCP Council unmet need letter



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Wendy Lane
BCP Council Civic Centre
(Town Hall)
Bourne Avenue
Bournemouth
BH2 6DY

Date: 16/10/2024
Ref: BCP Local plan
Officer: Michael Garrity
☐ 01305 221826
☐ mike.garrity@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

VIA Email

Dear Ms Lane,

RE: Unmet need request BCP Local Plan

Dear Ms Lane,

On 11 June 2024, Dorset Council received a request from BCP Council to consider whether Dorset Council could assist in meeting the unmet need for housing that was not being met through the BCP Council Local Plan. The unmet need is considered significant at more than 15,000 new homes over the period to 2039 and this would have potentially far-reaching implications for Dorset Council. This response has therefore been considered and agreed by Dorset Council's Cabinet.

It is understood that through the application of the Government's Standard Method for calculating local plan housing targets, the Local Housing Need (LHN) for BCP Council is 2,806 new homes per annum. This is equivalent to just over 40,000 new homes over the 15-year plan period. The equivalent figures for Dorset Council are 1,793 new homes per annum or around 26,900 homes over the 15-year plan period.

The jointly prepared Review of Housing Need, published in December 2021 examined the components of this housing target specifically the 2014-based household projections. The review concluded that average net in-migration to the BCP area was considerably lower than that projected through the 2014-based household projections which would lead to a lower LHN figure. The revised projections from this study suggests a LHN figure of around 1,600 new homes per annum for BCP Council, equivalent to around 24,000 homes over the plan period. Despite this locally produced evidence, national policy states that the LHN figures calculated using the Standard Method, should be the advisory starting point for establishing the housing target for an area. In addition to the LHN, any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas should also be taken into account in establishing the amount of housing to be planned for in the local plan.

It is within this context that Dorset Council needed to consider the unmet need request from BCP Council. In responding to the unmet need request, Dorset Council have examined the policies for managing housing supply in the submitted Local Plan alongside the evidence that supports this supply.

Dorset Council supports the efforts within the BCP Local Plan to focus the delivery of housing on urban intensification within the existing built-up areas. Approximately 90% of the new housing being proposed is

within the existing urban areas with the remaining 10% being delivered at the three existing strategic urban extensions. It is however concerning that there are no proposals within the BCP Council Local Plan to release development sites from the Green Belt despite the shortfall in identified supply.

The BCP Local Plan refers to a historic delivery rate of 1,117 dwellings per year over the last 15 years, a rate below that proposed in the Local Plan. Therefore, in order to achieve the proposed delivery rates, a change in the policy framework is likely to be necessary.

Opportunities within the BCP built-up area

The policies in the Local Plan seek to manage development within the plan area to minimise any harm that may arise from the levels of development proposed and Dorset Council supports this approach. However, these policies need to be applied as guidelines so that innovative approaches at higher densities are not prevented.

The summary of Capacity Testing for Key Sites (HOM13) prepared as evidence for the BCP Local Plan assessed a limited number of sites by applying urban design principles alongside site specific constraints. Dorset Council have reviewed the sites in this assessment and concluded that with modest adjustments to site design, height or layout a significant number of additional homes could be delivered. Therefore by increasing the densities in appropriate locations in BCP (e.g. by adding an additional storey to a building), an increase in supply could be achieved with minimal impact, and this would be preferable to displacing the need out to the Dorset Council area.

It is unclear whether an up-to-date review of the need for open space, sports facilities and play areas has been completed. This type of assessment could identify areas that are surplus to requirements and that could be released to help meet housing need. If this work has not been complete, Dorset Council suggest that it is undertaken to support BCP in efforts to meet its housing need.

Opportunities within the Green Belt

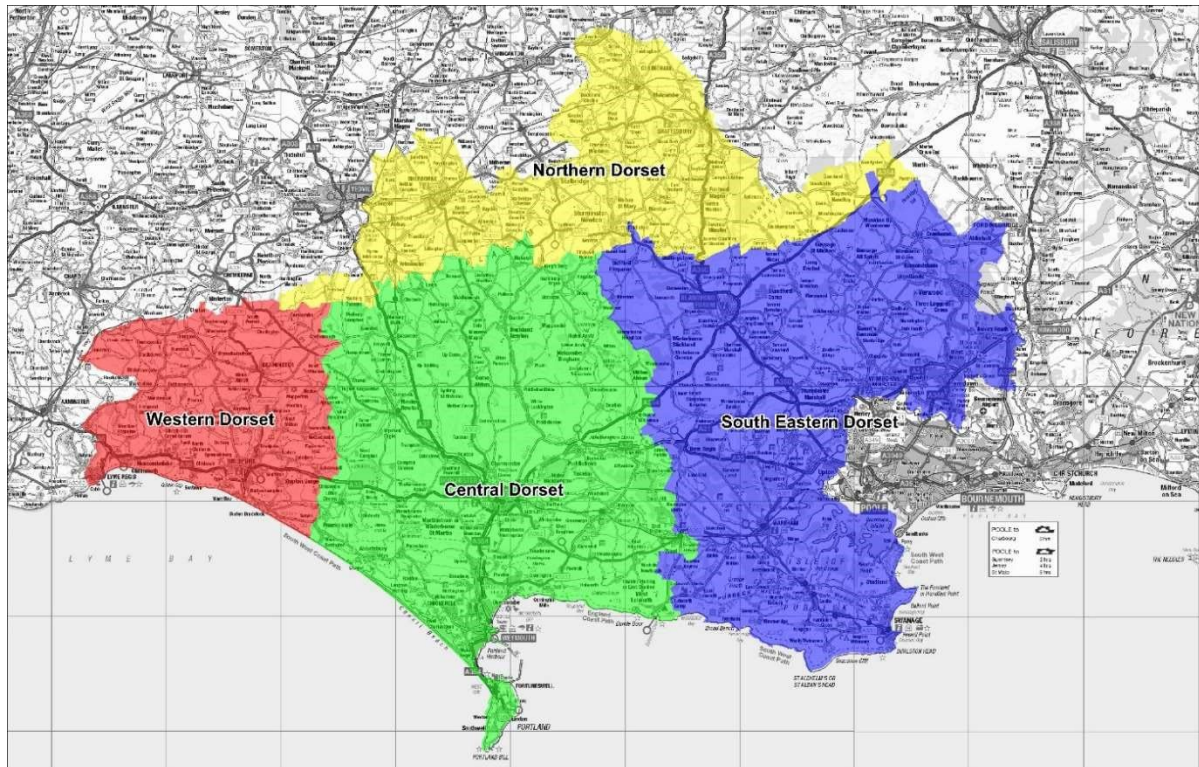
National policy makes provision for Green Belt to be released through the plan-making process where exceptional circumstances exist. To demonstrate that exceptional circumstances exist, all other reasonable options to meeting housing need should be examined. This includes a strategy for making use of brownfield land and optimising density, specifically promoting a significant uplift in density. National policy also suggests that decisions to release Green Belt land for development should be informed by discussions with neighbouring authorities and when reviewing these boundaries, the need to promote sustainable patterns of development should be taken into account. Sites submitted to BCP Council within the Green Belt have the potential to deliver significant additional growth.

Dorset Council's interpretation of this national Green Belt policy is that opportunities for maximising delivery within the existing urban area should be explored first. Once this has been undertaken, options within the Green Belt should be considered with the aim of delivering sustainable patterns of development. This would suggest a consideration of constraints but would also include a presumption that housing should be delivered close to the origin of the need rather than being displaced to more remote areas. A strategic review of options for Green Belt release should be undertaken independently of the two councils to recommend options for delivering additional housing. It is unreasonable and unsustainable to expect Dorset Council to release sites within their part of the Green Belt to make up for the deficit arising from the BCP Council area if BCP Council are not releasing sites within their part of the Green Belt.

Opportunities within Dorset area, outside the Green Belt

To inform the Dorset Council Local Plan, a review of housing market and functional economic areas at the local scale has been undertaken. This concluded that there are four broad functional areas in Dorset, and it is clear from this work that parts of the Dorset Council area, the South Eastern Dorset Functional Area, are closely linked to the BCP area. However, there are limits to these linkages, with the influence of the BCP conurbation reducing further away from the shared boundary. It would be inappropriate to consider meeting any need that originates from within the BCP Council area in the western or northern extremes of Dorset.

Figure 1: Functional areas in Dorset



Within each of the four functional areas, Dorset Council has identified the most appropriate settlements for growth based on an assessment of their relative sustainability. At these locations, development can be supported by or help enhance existing infrastructure provision. The most suitable settlements are the main towns (including parts of the southeast Dorset conurbation that cross into the Dorset Council area) where the Dorset Council Local Plan will seek to focus most growth. Alongside these towns, a number of larger villages were identified as being appropriate for lower levels of growth, primarily to meet local needs.

Consultation on the emerging Dorset Council Local Plan (January 2021) identified potential development opportunities sufficient to meet the LHN for Dorset at the main towns across the plan area. This included potential sites for Green Belt release. Since this work was undertaken, Dorset Council has adopted the Purbeck Local Plan which included release of Green Belt to enable the delivery of new homes.

Opportunities for delivering additional growth beyond that identified within the draft Dorset Council Local Plan (January 2021) within the Green Belt are yet to be explored in detail but are likely to be limited in scale due to the highly sensitive environment in this area.

Looking beyond the Green Belt would displace development further away from the origin of the need and in many instances, into the National Landscapes that cover much of Dorset. This approach would not be appropriate as significant development within the National Landscapes would be contrary to national policy. There are also multiple other designations that would significantly restrict the capacity for additional growth.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Dorset Council does not consider that it would be appropriate to meet the unmet housing need that BCP Council has requested without a full examination of the opportunities within the BCP area.

It is recommended that BCP Council undertake a review of their supply in the light of the suggestions and opportunities identified by Dorset Council before concluding that the LHN cannot be met within the BCP Council area. It is also recommended that BCP Council engage in a full and thorough review of the Green Belt alongside Dorset Council to identify those areas most suitable for release with the aim of meeting housing need in the most sustainable locations.

Since submission of the BCP Council Local Plan, the Government have released a revised NPPF for consultation. This response does not reflect the detail of these changes, but many will be relevant. Changes include a revised Standard Method for calculating LHN and proposals around the review of Green Belt. These were detailed in the Written Ministerial Statement that accompanied the consultation and therefore will have a bearing on the progression of the BCP Council Local Plan through the examination process. It is likely that the Dorset Council Local Plan will have to reflect these changes to national policy and therefore will need to aim to meet a significantly higher housing target than the current LHN further reducing the capacity for Dorset Council to meet the unmet housing need from BCP Council.

Dorset Council will continue to engage with BCP Council in the production of their Local Plan.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael Garrity', written in a cursive style.

Michael Garrity
Head of Planning
Economic Growth and Infrastructure