

Chapter 5

Housing

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Chapter 5

Housing

Introduction

- 5.1 Christchurch Borough Council contains a variety of housing types and styles as development has taken place at different times. It has an historic town centre and pockets of older development, much of which has been designated as Conservation Areas (see Chapter 4). The town has gradually expanded around the town centre. Much of the housing development has taken place in the post-war period with a particularly high growth level in the 1960's – 1980's. In particular the housing estates in Burton were constructed during this period around the historic Burton village. The newer development tends to be of a higher density than the older development. There have also been 'infill' developments throughout the Borough. Some areas are particularly affected by this such as the Jumpers area where development has taken place within the curtilages of the older properties. The majority of development in the Borough comprises housing and bungalows with flats relatively few in number and mainly of a low-rise, small scale type. There are no high rise blocks of flats of the type that were built in other parts of the country during the 1960's. The housing is mainly of an owner occupancy tenure, 81% falling within this category (see Table 1 below).

TENURE	PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLDS
Owner Occupied	81%
Privately Rented	5%
Rented with Job	1%
Rented from Housing Association	10%
Rented from Local Authority	3%

Source: 1991 Census

National Planning Guidance

- 5.2 National Planning Policy on housing is contained within a number of Department of Environment Circulars and Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPG's). Planning Policy Guidance Note 3: Housing, gives guidance to Local Authorities on a range of issues relating to the provision of housing. The PPG recognises that the planning system must provide an "adequate and continuous supply of land for housing, taking account of market demand and of Government policies for the encouragement of home ownership and the provision of rented housing". However, it also recognises the need to protect the environment by ensuring that established environmental policies are maintained and enhanced. PPG 3 is divided into a number of sections dealing with good design, development plan policies, new settlements, affordable housing, land availability and planning applications. It endorses the requirement that a five year supply of land for housing should be made available and full and effective use of land in existing urban areas should be made whilst also protecting valuable amenity land. As a result of

completions since 1994, combined with the number of dwellings to come forward from committed sites, the Council is able to meet its five year requirement for housing land supply.

- 5.3 Planning Policy Guidance Note 2: Green Belts, outlines the types of development that will be allowed in the Green Belt. Housing is not permitted except in very special circumstances. Also of relevance to the housing issue is the section dealing with the re-use of rural buildings and the possibility of conversion to residential use. Advice is given in Annex D of the need to examine applications for changes to residential use with particular care, considering the potential detrimental impact on the character of the countryside.

Regional Planning Guidance

- 5.4 The Secretary of State agrees that the level of house building suggested by the South West Regional Planning Conference will meet the region's needs. Throughout the region 438,000 additional dwellings between 1991 and 2011 are proposed with Dorset providing 63,000 of this total. The guidance states that the location, scale and rate of housing development should be in accordance with the principles of sustainable development. The aim of making the best use of land within existing urban areas needs to be balanced with the protection of the historic built environment and of valuable recreational and amenity space. There should also be policies to ensure sufficient availability of affordable housing.

Structure Plan Policies

- 5.5 The strategy for future development as set out in the Structure Plan is one of consolidation of the existing urban structure which involves development, redevelopment and conversion within the existing urban area together with limited extensions to it as previously allocated, but yet to be implemented. This allows the fullest use of land and existing infrastructure in built up areas and ensures the protection of the rural environment and maintenance of existing open space between settlements. Throughout Dorset provision has been made in the Structure Plan for about 52,900 new dwellings between the period of 1994 and 2011. Christchurch Borough has been allocated about 2,700 of the total figure. The strategy of limited extensions to the existing built up area has been implemented in the Borough with housing estates on the edge of the town being constructed. During the Structure Plan period until 2011 future residential development is to be found in locally allocated and 'windfall' sites. Development that occurs during the Plan period, regardless of strategic planning policies and discounting existing commitments, is referred to as windfall development. The basis of the Structure Plan total provision assumes no additional greenfield sites, since any such proposal could only be achieved by intrusion into the Green Belt. Therefore, any new windfall sites will come from within the existing urban areas, generally by way of infill, change of use, redevelopment or conversions.
- 5.6 The document "Land for Residential Development" dated March 1999, shows that 486 dwelling units were available. This figure comprises land with planning permission, including units under construction. Details of sites are given in this document which is available for purchase from the Planning and Environmental Services Department. In estimating the number likely to come forward from sites with planning permission, the

Council has assumed a rate of 100% implementation rate on sites of 5 or more units, where construction has started, and an 83% rate where construction has not commenced. The only outstanding large greenfield site is at Hoburne which has 210 units still available. The Council will continue to monitor the supply of housing and land availability on an annual basis. In addition to which an analysis of windfall development will enable progress during the Plan period to be assessed. The monitoring exercises will be undertaken in association with the County Council.

5.7 The Council's housing requirement as at March 1999 can be summarised as follows:

REQUIREMENT	
Dorset County Structure Plan Requirement	= 2,700
Completions 1994 – 1999	= 1,073
Residual Requirements	= 1,627
SUPPLY	
100% implementation of sites 5+ with planning permission (started or under construction)	= 368
83% implementation of sites 5+ with planning permission (not started)	= 38
83% of sites less than 5 units with planning permission (not started)	= 60
TOTAL from sites with planning permission	= 466
TOTAL from sites allocated in the Local Plan (Policy H2 – H7 and Policy EO3)	= 133
TOTAL estimated from windfall sites (at March 1999)	= <u>1,028</u>
TOTAL SUPPLY	1,627

5.8 The policy below outlines the Council's target allocation and the manner in which it is to be achieved.

H 1 PROVISION WILL BE MADE FOR AN INCREASE IN DWELLING STOCK OF 2,700 DWELLINGS BETWEEN 01 APRIL 1994 AND 31 MARCH 2011. THE DWELLINGS WILL COME FROM THE FOLLOWING SOURCES:

SITES ALREADY GRANTED PLANNING PERMISSION, ALLOCATED SITES, AND WINDFALL SITES (AS DEFINED ABOVE)

5.9 Christchurch is identified in Settlement Policy C of the Structure Plan as a local services centre, as it provides a range of facilities grouped together. The Structure Plan includes other general policies on housing. Housing Policy B encourages a mix of accommodation types. Housing Policy C encourages new housing development in locations that will reduce the need to travel and enable the best use of public transport. Local Plans are encouraged in Housing Policy D to include policies to provide for affordable housing. Housing Policy E ensures applications for residential caravan sites

will be treated in the same manner as permanent residential development. Housing Policy F states that where a need is identified provision should be made for additional permanent or transit sites for gypsies, although these should not be located in the Green Belt. Policy G ensures residential development contributes to community facilities.



New Housing Development at Dragoon Way

- 5.10 The open areas outside the existing built up area in the Borough are covered by the South East Dorset Green Belt. Settlement Policy C is of relevance here as it specifies housing growth will be concentrated within the built up areas as contained by the existing Green Belt. This is in accordance with the principle of sustainable development as it minimises the need to travel and makes best use of public transport.

Areas identified for future housing

- 5.11 Allocated sites for residential development together with approximate numbers, appear in the Dorset County Council's Land for Residential Development document. These are reproduced below:

Allocated Site for Residential Development	Approximate N ^o of Units
11 Seaton Road, Highcliffe	2
5 – 11 Montagu Road, Highcliffe	16
419 Lymington Road, Highcliffe	12
Land south of Monkswell Green	30
Land at Works Depot, Stanpit	20
Land to rear of 108 – 116 Stour Road	4
Land at Wick Lane	9
Land at 9/9A Grove Road	15
Land at Bridge Street/Stony Lane South	<u>25</u>
TOTAL	133

Some of those sites for residential development have already been identified in the three previously adopted Local Plans. These are grouped in the following text within the respective Local Plan areas and where appropriate sites for flats are listed after sites for housing. Following this, residential sites within north Christchurch, which was not covered by a Local Plan, are put forward. Virtually all the sites fall within the category of development and redevelopment within the existing urban area and there are no major extensions to the Christchurch built-up area identified, in line with Structure Plan policy. Some of the infill sites are identified for housing to improve the environment and townscape from the existing conditions. The development of these sites, and any other sites within the Plan area should satisfy the criteria of Policy H12.

Highcliffe

H 2 THE SITE OF NO 11 SEATON ROAD IS CONSIDERED SUITABLE FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT AS DELINEATED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP.

H 3 DEVELOPMENT TO FORM SUBSTANTIAL BLOCKS OF FLATS OF NOT MORE THAN 3 STOREYS IN HEIGHT (INCLUDING THE USE OF THE ROOF SPACE), SHALL BE PERMITTED IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS:

- 1) 5 – 11 MONTAGU ROAD**
- 2) 419 LYMINGTON ROAD**

5.12 Whilst density and site coverage will be determined by the particular site characteristics involved, proposals for substantial blocks of flats within the specified areas of Policy H3 should be appropriate in scale to the immediate locality and should not result in an excessive density in relation to the site itself. However in the sites identified in the policy it is considered that three storey developments would not have an adverse effect on the local amenities and would be acceptable in these locations. Any proposals submitted to the Local Planning Authority should be for the comprehensive development of the above-mentioned sites or should not prejudice the development of the remainder of the site. Parking and other planning requirements will also need to be satisfied. See Paragraph 7.88 for information on car parking.

South Christchurch

- 5.13 Land south of Monkswell Green and Ashtree Court, Marsh Lane in Purewell adjoins both residential areas and an area of public open space. It was included within the Christchurch Interim Green Belt as approved by the Council in 1984. However, there would appear to exist here an opportunity to 'round off' the existing urban area with limited residential development and secure an additional area of public open space. Residential development will be restricted to the area defined on the proposals map. It should be designed to respect existing trees and other landscape features on the site and shall also be subject to the provision of a satisfactory vehicular access. The Local Authority will seek to associate a legal agreement with any grant of planning permission to secure the provision of the land to the south of the site (as identified in Policy L 12) as public open space. The Council recognise the potential for conflict between adjoining residential and public open space and when dealing with the planning application will ensure that adequate screening is provided.

H 4 LAND SOUTH OF MONKSWELL GREEN AND 'ASHTREE COURT', MARSH LANE, PUREWELL AS INDICATED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP IS CONSIDERED SUITABLE FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT PROVIDED THAT:

- 1) ADEQUATE SCREENING IS PROVIDED TO ADJOINING LAND WHICH IS IDENTIFIED FOR PUBLIC OPEN SPACE**
- 2) A LEGAL AGREEMENT IS SOUGHT TO SECURE THE PROVISION OF LAND TO THE SOUTH OF THE SITE (AS IDENTIFIED IN POLICY L 12) AS PUBLIC OPEN SPACE.**

- 5.14 Land at and adjoining the former Local Authority works depot at Stanpit has been identified for residential redevelopment for some time. It was first identified for such redevelopment in the Purewell Area Planning Policy which was adopted in 1969. The site formed part of a larger area earmarked for new residential development, most of which has now been developed and is known as the Riverslea Estate. A previous planning permission for 64 units, granted in 1988, has lapsed and it is now considered inappropriate to develop the whole of the site. In keeping with the guiding principle of sustainable development, the impact of residential development on the nearby SNCI and the Stanpit Marsh SSSI has been taken into account and a smaller area proposed. The Proposals Map identifies land at Stanpit Depot considered suitable for residential development. Directly to the north of the depot site lies a low lying area including a reed bed identified as a Site of Nature Conservation Interest. It would be essential therefore for the design of any residential scheme to complement the area of nature conservation interest with the occupants of any houses recognising its integrity. It is intended that the SNCI shall be retained in the ownership of the Council and managed as part of the Stanpit Marsh Local Nature Reserve Management Plan. The remainder of the depot site to the west adjoining Stanpit recreation ground is identified as public open space in Policy L 12. Inevitably, 'people pressure' will increase on Stanpit Marsh. It is essential therefore that the developer enters into a legal agreement to provide a replacement building of suitable materials for the existing information caravan on the Marsh. This will allow for effective management of the SSSI and limit the damage caused by users. The

development should also provide for services and a satisfactory vehicular access to, and parking for the building envisaged in Policy CF3. In recognition of the potential for conflicts between adjoining residential and recreational uses, the Council will ensure that adequate boundary screening is provided. The Council has adopted a Planning Brief for this site, after a period of public consultation.

H 5 LAND AT THE FORMER LOCAL AUTHORITY WORKS DEPOT AT STANPIT AS INDICATED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP IS TO BE DEVELOPED FOR RESIDENTIAL USE SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING:

- 1) THE PROVISION OF SATISFACTORY VEHICULAR ACCESS FROM STANPIT.**
- 2) A FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION BY WAY OF A PLANNING OBLIGATION WILL BE SOUGHT FOR REPLACEMENT OF THE EXISTING STANPIT MARSH INFORMATION CARAVAN.**
- 3) THE PROVISION OF A SURFACE WATER DRAINAGE SCHEME FOR THE NEW DEVELOPMENT THAT DOES NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE RETAINED NATURE CONSERVATION AREA IN PARTICULAR AND STANPIT MARSH IN GENERAL.**
- 4) THE PROVISION AS PART OF THE DEVELOPMENT, OF A SATISFACTORY VEHICULAR ACCESS TO THE BUILDING ENVISAGED UNDER POLICY CF3.**
- 5) THE PROVISION OF AN ADEQUATE BUFFER STRIP BETWEEN THE NEW HOUSING AND THE SNCI, TOGETHER WITH A WILDLIFE CORRIDOR LINKING THE SNCI TO THE OPEN SPACE TO THE SOUTH.**

Christchurch Town Centre

- 5.15 Two sites have been identified for residential development in the Christchurch Town Centre area. In the case of the Stour Road site, residential redevelopment will involve the loss of employment land, but will improve the environment and townscape. Land at Wick Lane, between the footpath to Druitt Gardens and Regent Way, is also proposed for residential development. N° 13 Wick Lane could be retained. This allocation formed part of the published Planning Brief for land west of the High Street, the land use principles of which were agreed by the Council following public consultation. With sensitive design appropriate to the historic area, residential development will enhance the character of this part of the Conservation Area and improve the street scene along this entrance to the town centre. Also the proposed use is in accordance with the Council's policy of encouraging the retention of a resident population in the town centre area as it is considered important to the physical and social fabric of the town centre (see paragraph 5.34).

H 6 THE FOLLOWING SITES ARE CONSIDERED SUITABLE FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT AS DELINEATED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP:

- 1) **LAND TO THE REAR OF 108 – 116 STOUR ROAD, ADJACENT TO Nº 3 RIVERSLEA ROAD.**
- 2) **LAND AT WICK LANE.**

North Christchurch Area

5.16 The Poster Hoarding Site at the junction of The Grove/Barrack Road and the building and land at Nºs 9 and 9A The Grove (the former Night Club Site) is allocated for residential redevelopment. The latter includes flats and a hot food takeaway; its redevelopment provides an opportunity to remove the nightclub use, which has been a non-conforming use in this residential area and has caused problems with noise and general disturbance. It is recognised that the site is currently within two ownerships. Although the following policy requires the site to be considered on a comprehensive basis, it would not rule out a phased approach to the development of the site. However the Council would need to approve as part of any overall scheme for the site, a detailed phasing programme which would demonstrate that the implementation of any particular phase would not prejudice the overall development of the site. Open space on the Barrack Road frontage of the Poster Hoarding Site is important to the streetscape and to complement the openness of the recreation grounds opposite. Any redevelopment scheme would therefore be subject to the retention of part of the existing open space. The size and form of space to be retained will be negotiated as part of a redevelopment scheme.

H 7 A PROPOSAL FOR THE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OR REDEVELOPMENT OF LAND AT NºS 9 AND 9A THE GROVE AND ON THE POSTER HOARDING SITE AT THE JUNCTION OF BARRACK ROAD AND THE GROVE WILL BE SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:

- 1) **IT IS A COMPREHENSIVE PROPOSAL IN THAT IT WILL INCLUDE ALL LAND AND PROPERTY WITHIN THE DEFINED AREAS.**
- 2) **AN AREA OF OPEN SPACE AT THE BARRACK ROAD FRONTAGE OF THE POSTER HOARDING SITE IS TO BE PROVIDED AS PART OF A RESIDENTIAL SCHEME FOR THE SITE.**

Affordable Housing

5.17 During the 1980's the increase in property prices meant that many people were unable to enter the property ladder as an owner occupier. At the same time the role of local authorities as providers of council houses changed to one of acting as enablers. This combination has inevitably had consequences on the availability of properties at an 'affordable level' both for sale and for rent.

5.18 In answer to growing pressure from interested groups the Government realised the need to provide a framework for providing affordable housing. Registered Social Landlords

provide properties for rent and part ownership. In a number of cases these non-profit making organisations have taken over the role of local authorities as housing providers.

- 5.19 The Government first set out national policies on affordable housing in Circular 7/91. These were generally carried forward in the revised Planning Policy Guidance note 3: Housing, published in March 1992. The PPG was followed in December 1992 by the Department of the Environment Consultation Paper – Draft Explanatory Note on Planning and Affordable housing which attempted to clarify points in the earlier PPG. The draft explanatory note was taken forward with the publication of Circular 6/98 “Planning and Affordable housing”. A further revision of PPG 3: Housing was published in March 2000.
- 5.20 The Circular suggests ways in which Local Planning Authorities can increase the supply of affordable housing in appropriate circumstances through negotiation with developers and others. Affordable housing can be secured by (i) negotiations with developers either of sites of 25 or more dwellings or residential sites of 1 hectare or more, (ii) planning restrictions on density and occupancy to reduce the market price of a property and (iii) releasing sites within or adjoining existing rural villages that would not otherwise be released.
- 5.21 Christchurch Borough Council commissioned a report on housing needs, published in January 1992, based on a sample of households within the Borough. This survey, as far as possible, has been updated and used as the basis for the compilation of the Christchurch Borough Council Housing Strategy Statement published in September 1994 (a more recent survey has been undertaken which is discussed in the paragraph below). The strategy statement identifies demands for affordable housing. Special need is identified for housing for elderly persons due to the high proportion of those over pensionable age in the Borough. Analysis of the Housing Needs Register indicates that there has been a rise in the number of young applicants requiring one bedroomed accommodation. It is concluded that, as the majority of housing in Christchurch is in the owner occupied sector and there are very few properties within the private rented sector, there is therefore a definite need for social housing and particularly for rented social housing. It is suggested that the need may be met by an increase in the number of private lets available for social housing, with properties being leased and managed by local housing associations, the development of small new building schemes by local housing associations and a change in tenure of existing properties. Although there is a particular shortage of rented housing, the Council will also pursue options for owner occupation via a range of schemes. Affordable housing can be provided by ways other than new buildings and there may be opportunities for converting or re-using redundant commercial premises.
- 5.22 Statistics for the year 1999/2000 indicated that the authority had received 198 homeless applications with a total of 67 applicants in temporary accommodation at the end of this period. The Council has a statutory duty to re-house the homeless. The results of the independent Housing Needs Survey carried out for the Council and completed in May 1995 gave a detailed profile of the extent of housing need in the Borough and likely trends between 1995 and 2001 and towards 2011. The study found that the clear majority of people in Christchurch Borough consider themselves adequately housed. Most people are satisfied with their housing conditions and the basic amenities available.



Affordable housing development at Arthur Road

- 5.23 Borough house prices are higher than average in county and UK terms. Whilst there is a very wide income distribution in the Borough, a large proportion of people have low incomes. The survey identified the two most important issues as being a problem of affordability and a significant level of 'concealed' households living within an existing household. It also found that most demand is for smaller types of housing, particularly one and two-bedroomed flats; and that 11.4% of households in the Borough contain someone with a special need. Another significant finding from the study is the projected increase of very elderly people within the Borough by 2011, and the need to examine the related housing and care needs of this particular sector. The underlying total need identified by the survey was for 200 additional affordable housing units per annum until 2011.
- 5.24 In terms of monitoring housing need, the Council must also have regard to the needs identified in the Housing Register. At the end of May 2000, there were 486 applicants on the Housing Register who were in housing need. Of these, 88% of applicants require general needs family housing and 12% require sheltered housing. There is an acute shortage of general needs accommodation of all sizes (1, 2, 3 and 4 bedroom houses) with particular emphasis on 2 and 3 bedroom units suitable for families. Current statistics highlight the overwhelming need for family accommodation in the rented sector.
- 5.25 The need for affordable housing across the Borough is therefore clearly demonstrated. Furthermore, the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Structure Plan (formerly the Dorset County Structure Plan) recognises that, despite the amount of new house-building which has taken place in Dorset, there remains a scarcity of housing available to those on lower incomes and unable to compete in the housing market. It will not be possible to meet all the affordable housing needs identified by the survey likely to arise in the Borough over the Plan period. The mix of tenures and market price sectors need to be sensitive to

providing balanced communities. In the 1995 Housing Needs Survey it was recommended that a target of 30% of the annual development programme should be affordable housing. Using the Housing Land Availability figures at the time of the release of the Deposit Local Plan – March 1996 – it can be calculated that 30% of the Borough's remaining Structure Plan housing requirement to be found by the end of the plan period would represent an annual supply of roughly 26 new affordable dwelling units. In terms of new housing provision a balance has to be struck between housing need, the strategic housing requirement and government advice which promotes mixed and balanced communities. Although the above figure does appear low, it must be recognised that it is not intended to represent maximum supply and it does not represent the only means of providing affordable housing within the Borough. Other initiatives including the purchase of existing housing stock are currently being actively pursued by the Council and local housing associations to assist in addressing local housing need.

- 5.26 Considerable weight will be attached to the provision of affordable housing as a material planning consideration in determining planning applications; higher densities and lower car parking standards may be deemed appropriate to enable such provision, unless it would prejudice the realisation of other planning objectives in the Plan. The whole question of affordable housing is an issue which is closely and regularly monitored. The housing enabling and planning policy functions of the Council work closely in monitoring housing need and assist jointly in the preparation of the Council's Housing Strategy and Annual Plan. A new Housing Needs Survey commissioned by the Council was published in November 2000. Its findings will be assessed together with information gained through the monitoring process and will assist in determining whether the Council's strategy is effective or in need of review.



Affordable Housing Development At Purewell Cross

5.27 Although its role as a direct provider has ceased, the Local Authority has a vital enabling role in the provision of affordable housing. The following policy is designed to ensure that new developments contribute to the housing stock of affordable housing. The policy is primarily aimed at developments of 25 or more dwellings or residential sites of one hectare or more, irrespective of the number of dwellings. The potential of each site will be assessed individually, as some may be able to take 100% affordable content. On other sites, the Council will negotiate a minimum quota of 30% as affordable housing. The Council expects developers to comply with this policy, irrespective of whether the annual target has been achieved. A developer will not usually be expected to provide affordable housing within a small private sheltered scheme or other schemes of special needs housing catering for a specific group. Schemes on substantial sites, in accordance with national guidelines, will be examined on their individual merits, taking into account local circumstances and need for elderly or other special needs households that cannot afford sheltered housing provided by the market, as well as the economics of provision and operational matters. The criteria set out in the policy are designed to ensure that as far as possible supply matches the need.

H 8 AFFORDABLE HOUSING WILL BE SOUGHT ON SITES OF 25 OR MORE DWELLINGS OR ON RESIDENTIAL SITES OF 1 HECTARE OR MORE (IRRESPECTIVE OF THE NUMBER OF DWELLINGS), EXCEPT WHERE IT CAN BE DEMONSTRATED THAT THE PROVISION OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING WOULD PREJUDICE THE REALISATION OF OTHER PLANNING OBJECTIVES THAT NEED TO BE GIVEN PRIORITY IN DEVELOPMENT OF THE SITE.

AT LEAST 30% OF THE TOTAL NUMBER OF DWELLINGS ON A RESIDENTIAL SITE THAT FALLS WITHIN THE ABOVE THRESHOLD WILL BE AFFORDABLE HOUSING.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING ENCOMPASSES THE RANGE OF BOTH SUBSIDISED AND LOW-COST MARKET HOUSING (IRRESPECTIVE OF TENURE OR FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS) THAT WILL BE AVAILABLE ON THE OPEN MARKET. LOCAL NEED ENCOMPASSES:

- 1) EXISTING RESIDENTS NEEDING SEPARATE ACCOMMODATION IN THE AREA.**
- 2) PERSONS WHOSE WORK PROVIDES IMPORTANT SERVICES AND WHO NEED TO LIVE CLOSER TO THE LOCAL COMMUNITY (I.E. THE BOROUGH OF CHRISTCHURCH).**
- 3) PEOPLE WHO ARE NOT NECESSARILY RESIDENT LOCALLY BUT HAVE LONG-STANDING LINKS WITH THE LOCAL COMMUNITY, (EG ELDERLY PEOPLE WHO NEED TO MOVE BACK TO BE NEAR RELATIVES OR YOUNG PEOPLE WHO HAVE BEEN FORCED TO MOVE OUT BECAUSE OF THE LACK OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING).**
- 4) PEOPLE WITH THE OFFER OF A JOB IN THE LOCALITY, WHO CANNOT TAKE UP THE OFFER BECAUSE OF THE LACK OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING.**

TO ENSURE THAT THE DWELLINGS ARE GUARANTEED TO CONTINUE TO SERVE AFFORDABLE HOUSING NEEDS IN THE LONG TERM, ARRANGEMENTS WILL BE REQUIRED TO ENSURE THAT INITIAL AND SUBSEQUENT OCCUPANCY OF A DWELLING IS RESTRICTED TO THOSE IN NEED OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING. SUCH ARRANGEMENTS WILL EITHER BE THROUGH A HOUSING ASSOCIATION OR SIMILAR BODY OR THROUGH THE USE OF CONDITIONS OR PLANNING OBLIGATIONS.

- 5.28 PPG 3 identifies another way of increasing the stock of affordable housing by releasing sites which would not otherwise be permitted. Developments of affordable housing for local people may in exceptional circumstances be considered on sites not identified for development in the Local Plan, i.e. the Green Belt. However, the Green Belt area in Christchurch Borough does not appear to conform to the definition of the type of Green Belt in Annex A of PPG 3 that the exceptions policy applies to. The Green Belt within Christchurch Borough is drawn tightly to the urban area. There are three main settlements outside the main built up area of Christchurch. Burton is about 1.2km from the urban area of Christchurch, and Winkton is about 3.2km to the north. Hurn, in the northwest, is about 1.6km from the edge of the urban area at St Catherine's. Winkton and Hurn are sited within the Green Belt whilst Burton is surrounded by it. As the exceptions policy is arguably not applicable to the Green Belt in Christchurch, a policy dealing with this type of affordable housing is not included. This will accord with the principle of sustainable development in not encroaching into the countryside area, in order to make best use of sites within built-up areas. However, if there is a proven need for affordable homes in any of these three areas, proposals for small scale affordable housing within the built-up areas of the two settlements of Winkton and Hurn and on the edge of all three settlements will be assessed on their merits.

Infill Development: Special Area Policy

- 5.29 In addition to the named sites in Policies H2 – H7, proposals in the built up area for residential infill development and redevelopment will inevitably come forward within the Plan period. Infill development is usually in the form of subdivision of existing garden land in established residential areas to form building plots. These can range from single plots to much larger developments if a number of gardens are assembled. Redevelopment can be in the form of redeveloping existing residential sites, or other redundant sites where the existing use has ceased. Although infill development makes an important contribution to the housing land supply within the Borough, in certain locations there has been considerable pressure for plot subdivisions, which has had an adverse effect on the character and amenity of the area. The Council considers that there is one area in the Borough of particular character which requires a special policy to deal with proposals for infilling.

Chewton Farm, Highcliffe

- 5.30 A part of the Borough which the Council considers to have a character that is worthy of protecting and is at risk from infill development is the area bounded by Chewton Farm Road, Avenue Road and Seaview Road and known as the Chewton Farm Estate. This area consists mainly of substantial residential properties set in large plots providing a form of large family accommodation which is not in abundance throughout the remainder

of the Plan area. The Chewton Farm Estate is an entity which, whilst not justifying Conservation Area status, is considered worthy of protection. For this reason the following Policy applies.

- H 9 PROPOSALS FOR THE REDEVELOPMENT OF ANY AREA OF LAND FOR RESIDENTIAL PURPOSES INCLUDING ONE OR MORE GARDENS IN THAT PART OF THE CHEWTON FARM ESTATE IDENTIFIED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP WILL NOT BE PERMITTED WHERE THEY ADVERSELY AFFECT THE SPECIAL CHARACTER AND AMENITY OF THIS ESTABLISHED RESIDENTIAL AREA.**

Willow Way

- 5.31 In Willow Way many of the riverside properties have, following successful planning appeals, been erected ostensibly as holiday homes and accordingly the normal planning standards (eg distances between dwellings) have been relaxed. However, in practice the restriction prohibiting permanent residential use is abused and in view of the difficulties of enforcement and government advice relating thereto, it is proposed that:

- H 10 THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY SHALL, WHERE SO REQUESTED, AUTHORISE THE USE OF EXISTING DWELLINGS IN WILLOW WAY FOR PERMANENT RESIDENTIAL OCCUPATION.**

- 5.32 This relaxation is proposed because of the wholly exceptional circumstances of this case and should not be taken as being indicative that the Council are prepared to relax their normal minimum standards on either new development in Willow Way or on any other development in the Plan area.

Area where loss of residential accommodation will be resisted: Town Centre

- 5.33 The main commercial areas of the town centre comprise Bargates, High Street, Church Street and Castle Street. Despite the predominance of commercial uses the maintenance of a resident population is considered to be important to the physical and social fabric of this part of the town.

- 5.34 The need to prevent loss of the resident population is particularly great in the main shopping centre itself i.e. that part of the commercial area south of the by-pass. This is so because of the pressure for commercial operations to take over residential premises. Retaining residential accommodation in the town centre conforms to the guiding principle of sustainable development in that it helps to protect greenfield sites from development and provides homes close to places of employment, public transport, shops and other services. The effects of a reduction in the town centre living accommodation include:

- (i) The socially undesirable effect of a decanting of population at night thereby creating a 'ghost town'.

- (ii) The possible deterioration of properties no longer maintained to such a high standard because of the absence of resident owners/occupiers.
- (iii) The loss of variety in the street scene.
- (iv) The loss of opportunity for the old and less mobile to live in the shopping and social centre of the town.

In the light of the above the following policy is proposed:

H 11 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS WHICH WOULD RESULT IN A LOSS OF RESIDENTIAL ACCOMMODATION IN THAT PART OF THE PLAN AREA DELINEATED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP WILL NOT BE GRANTED PLANNING PERMISSION EXCEPT WHERE SUCH PROPOSALS ARE NECESSARY TO ACHIEVE OTHER POLICY OBJECTIVES OF THE LOCAL PLAN.

General Development Policies

Infill Development

5.35 Infill development is an important tool in the overall goal of achieving sustainable development. The use of appropriate sites within the built up area for housing, thereby consolidating the urban area in line with the Structure Plan Strategy referred to in Paragraph 5.5, will protect the environment as green field sites will not be developed. It also provides homes close to places of employment, shops, public transport, schools and other services thereby reducing the need to travel. Sites for residential infill development and redevelopment which are not identified as part of Policies H2 – H7 may come forward within the plan period. It is important to ensure that all new development is appropriate in scale, form, detail and materials and fits in well with the established residential area. Any new development must have regard to the existing townscape, character, distinctive features of the area, and also the amenities of adjoining properties. Within the built up areas there may be areas of open land or gardens which contribute to the character and amenity of the area. Paragraph 8.16 of Chapter 8 (Leisure and Community Needs) acknowledges the importance of both public and private open space in contributing to the environmental quality of the area and Policy L 1 aims to resist the loss of these spaces so as to avoid an appearance of overdevelopment and in the interest of amenity and nature conservation. In this context criterion 3 of the following policy will be important. Also there should be adequate provision of recreational open space within any new residential development. This is dealt with in the open space section of Chapter 8 and Policy L20 is applicable here.

5.36 Proposals within Conservation Areas are subject to their special policies yet there will be other areas of the Borough which the Council considers to have a unique character and amenity – eg the Chewton Farm estate which has a special policy to deal with proposals for infilling – see Policy H 9. Another unique area is the Jumpers area of Christchurch which is characterised by low density residential development comprising detached properties set in substantial plots with long rear gardens. The abundance of mature trees and shrubs contributes to the spaciousness, quietness and privacy of the area.

This is an example of an area where sensitive planning control is necessary to ensure that the cumulative effects of redevelopment do not damage the character and amenity of this established residential area. There is a need to have regard to the special character of areas such as Jumpers when considering development proposals. In such cases detailed character assessments will need to be carried out as part of any planning application. Any development proposals will be assessed against the criteria of Policy H12.

- 5.37 The following policy sets out criteria that general residential development must meet. It is aimed at covering the whole range of residential development and redevelopment, private or institutional, so will include houses, flats, sheltered accommodation and nursing homes. It also deals with extensions to existing residential premises. However more detailed design advice relating to the different types of residential development is set out in Supplementary Planning Guidance published by the Council. This should be considered alongside the general development policy below. Copies of present SPG for the Erection of Compact Dwelling Units, the Conversion of Property into Flats, Extensions to Residential Properties and Elderly Persons' Accommodation can be obtained from the Planning and Environmental Services Department. These will be reviewed, and extended to include other subject areas in the future.



*Residential Conversion of Former Officer's Mess
Dragoon Way*

H 12 PROPOSALS FOR PRIVATE OR INSTITUTIONAL RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT, ON ALLOCATED AND NON-ALLOCATED SITES, OR EXTENSIONS TO EXISTING RESIDENTIAL PREMISES WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THAT:

- 1) THEY ARE APPROPRIATE IN CHARACTER, SCALE, DESIGN AND MATERIALS TO THE IMMEDIATE LOCALITY.**
- 2) THE RESIDENTIAL AMENITIES OF EXISTING AND FUTURE OCCUPIERS OF DWELLINGS ARE NOT ADVERSELY AFFECTED BY NOISE OR DISTURBANCE OR BY THE LOSS OF LIGHT OR PRIVACY.**
- 3) THEY DO NOT RESULT IN THE LOSS OF AN IMPORTANT LANDSCAPE OR OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURE, SUCH AS OPEN SPACE OR TREES, WHICH IS PART OF THE CHARACTER OF THE AREA.**
- 4) THEY INCLUDE WHERE APPROPRIATE AN ADEQUATE PROVISION OF OPEN SPACE (SEE POLICY L20).**
- 5) PERMANENT ACCOMMODATION FOR ELDERLY PERSONS IN THE FORM OF SHELTERED ACCOMMODATION WILL ONLY BE OCCUPIED BY PERSONS OF AGE 60 YEARS OR OVER OR IN THE CASE OF OCCUPATION BY COUPLES, ONE OCCUPANT IS OVER THE AGE OF 60 YEARS AND THE OTHER IS OVER THE AGE OF 55.**

5.38 There are a number of Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings in the Borough. Proposals within Conservation Areas and affecting Listed Buildings will be subject to the additional considerations set out in the appropriate policies in Chapter 4.

Replacement Dwellings and Extensions in the Green Belt

5.39 There is a general presumption against new residential development in the countryside as set out in the Green Belt policy. However, there may be circumstances where a replacement dwelling will be acceptable (if the original dwelling is listed then the priority of the Council will be for its preservation and the Listed Buildings policies in Chapter 4 will apply). Any proposed dwelling should not be significantly larger than that being replaced and should be in keeping with its surroundings in terms of scale, design, materials and siting. If not controlled the individual and cumulative effect of replacement with more significantly larger dwellings would have a detrimental impact on the openness of the Green Belt and a change in the rural character of the area. The criteria in Policy H12 are relevant here. Proposals for replacement dwellings will only be acceptable where they are not replacing an abandoned residential use or a temporary dwelling. The following policy is intended to ensure that replacement dwellings in the Green Belt are allowed only where absolutely necessary and that any new dwelling is of an appropriate scale and design.

H 13 PLANNING PERMISSION WILL ONLY BE GRANTED FOR A REPLACEMENT DWELLING IN THE GREEN BELT PROVIDED THAT THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA ARE MET:

- 1) **THE REPLACEMENT DWELLING IS NOT SIGNIFICANTLY GREATER IN SIZE THAN THAT OF THE EXISTING.**
- 2) **THE SCALE, DESIGN, MATERIALS AND SITING OF THE DWELLING IS IN KEEPING WITH THE COUNTRYSIDE SURROUNDINGS.**
- 3) **THE PROPOSED DWELLING DOES NOT REPLACE A TEMPORARY DWELLING OR ONE WHERE THE RESIDENTIAL USE HAS BEEN ABANDONED.**

5.40 When considering extensions of existing dwellings in the countryside it is necessary to ensure that the extension is not disproportionate in size to that of the existing dwelling. Green Belt Policy allows for limited extensions of existing dwellings. The following policy introduces control on the size of extensions to dwellings in the rural areas of Christchurch. Proposals must be in keeping with the character of the dwelling and that of the countryside setting. If not controlled, the individual and cumulative effect of extensions which are disproportionate in size to the existing dwelling would have a detrimental impact on the openness of the green belt and a change in the rural character of the area. Policy H 12 will be applied. Permission will not be given for any extension which would facilitate the creation of a separate dwelling, for this would be contrary to Green Belt policy.

H 14 EXTENSIONS TO EXISTING DWELLINGS IN THE GREEN BELT WILL ONLY BE GRANTED PLANNING PERMISSION IF THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA ARE MET:

- 1) **THE PROPOSED EXTENSION DOES NOT SIGNIFICANTLY INCREASE THE SIZE OF THE EXISTING DWELLING.**
- 2) **THE SCALE, DESIGN AND MATERIALS OF THE PROPOSAL IS IN KEEPING WITH THE CHARACTER OF THE DWELLING AND ITS SURROUNDINGS.**
- 3) **THE PROPOSED EXTENSION DOES NOT FACILITATE THE CREATION OF A SEPARATE DWELLING.**

Agricultural Workers' Dwellings

5.41 The Council recognises that one of the few circumstances where residential development could be permitted in the Green Belt is when accommodation is required to enable farm workers to live at or near their places of work. This will only be allowed in exceptional circumstances where it is essential that a person involved in agriculture needs to be near their place of work due to operational necessity. Normally it could be as convenient for agricultural workers to live in a nearby settlement. New dwellings in the countryside should be as unobtrusive as possible and only constructed to the size needed to house the worker or family. Conditions will be applied to agricultural workers' dwellings to limit the occupancy of the dwelling to a person solely or mainly working, or last working, in the locality in agriculture or forestry, or a widow or widower of such a person, and to any resident dependants.

H 15 PROPOSED NEW HOUSING FOR WORKERS IN AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY WILL NOT BE PERMITTED UNLESS IT SATISFIES THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:

- 1) THE COUNCIL IS SATISFIED IT IS ESSENTIAL FOR OPERATIONAL REASONS.**
- 2) THE NEED CANNOT BE MET IN EXISTING ACCOMMODATION OR IN A SUITABLY CONVERTED BUILDING.**
- 3) THE DEVELOPMENT SATISFIES GREEN BELT POLICIES ENV 16, ENV 17 AND ENV 19.**
- 4) WHERE PLANNING PERMISSION IS GRANTED IT WILL BE MADE SUBJECT TO AN OCCUPANCY RESTRICTION CONDITION.**

Crime Prevention

5.42 It is recognised that good design of new development can play a part in reducing the opportunities for crime and vandalism. Policy Planning Guidance Note N^o 1: General Policy and Principles (February 1997), indicates that local planning authorities have a role to play in crime prevention as part of the design process. In considering proposals for new development the Council will therefore have regard to safety issues, particularly in relation to the provision of adequate and safe access and lighting. Circular 5/94: Planning Out Crime, gives advice about planning considerations in crime prevention, particularly through urban design measures. This will form part of the development control process and it is important to have discussions with developers at an early stage to discuss security measures in order to incorporate crime prevention measures into the planning application. In dealing with applications for development where there is potential to reduce criminal activity the Local Planning Authority will consult with the Police Architectural Liaison Officers but the following policy sets out the general aims of the Planning Authority.

H 16 DEVELOPMENT WILL BE EXPECTED TO BE DESIGNED IN A MANNER WHICH TAKES INTO ACCOUNT THE NEED FOR SECURITY AND CRIME PREVENTION. THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY WILL ASSESS THE NEED FOR SUCH MEASURES HAVING REGARD TO THE FREQUENCY AND SERIOUSNESS OF TYPES OF CRIME IN THE AREA. ANY SECURITY AND CRIME PREVENTION MEASURES WILL BE EXPECTED TO BE DESIGNED SO AS TO RESPECT LOCAL CIRCUMSTANCES AND VISUAL AMENITIES.

Gypsies

5.43 Under the Caravan & Sites Act 1968 County Councils had a statutory duty to determine what sites are necessary for gypsies and to acquire the necessary land. The District/Borough Councils had a duty to provide the necessary services and to manage the sites. 'Gypsies' are defined in Section 16 of the 1968 Act as "persons of nomadic habit of life, whatever their race or origin". The term does not include travelling show

people, 'new age travellers' or circus people. The Government have introduced legislation to reform the 1968 Act. The Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 repeals the duty of local authorities to provide gypsy sites and also withdraws grant aid to local authorities for this purpose which effectively means that the emphasis will now be on private sector provision for sites. Circular 1/94: Gypsy Sites and Planning, published January 1994, revises the guidance on planning aspects of gypsy sites. One of the main changes it proposes is to withdraw the previous guidance on the necessity to accept the establishment of gypsy sites in protected areas such as Green Belts and SSSI. It states clearly that Green Belt land should therefore not be allocated for gypsy sites in development plans. The aim should be to secure provision appropriate to gypsies' accommodation needs while protecting amenity and the guidance note advocates locational or criteria based policies.

5.44 The Dudmoor area of Christchurch has sporadic development of unauthorised buildings and caravans occupied in some cases by gypsies. It has been the general policy of the Council to resist these structures and this stance has been consistently supported by Department of Environment Planning Inspectors at appeal. Appeal decisions have recognised that there are strong policy and amenity objections to the retention of those caravan sites. This was at a time when Government advice indicated that it may be necessary to accept gypsy sites in the Green Belt. Now that this advice has changed with the publication of Circular 1/94 the case against the siting of gypsy caravans in this open countryside area is even stronger.

5.45 In accordance with their statutory duty under the 1968 Act (now repealed) the County Council and Borough Council have been working together over a number of years to assess the suitability of alternative sites for the Dudmoor gypsies. Unfortunately a suitable site has not yet been secured. Circular 1/94 advises that when the statutory duty is repealed, both County and Borough Councils should continue to make adequate gypsy site provision in their development plan through use of locational or criteria based policies. Although Dorset County and Christchurch Borough Council have had negotiations into various alternative sites for gypsy accommodation in the north Christchurch area, none of these have reached fruition and therefore it is not possible to include a locational policy in this Local Plan. In view of the repeal of the statutory duty and the change in planning guidance on the provision of gypsy sites, the following criteria based policy is put forward to assess future proposals:

H 17 PROPOSALS FOR GYPSY CARAVAN SITES WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED PROVIDING THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA ARE MET:

- 1) THE SITE IS WITHIN A REASONABLE DISTANCE OF LOCAL SERVICES AND FACILITIES.**
- 2) THERE IS NO ADVERSE AFFECT ON THE AMENITIES OF NEARBY RESIDENTS.**
- 3) THERE IS ADEQUATE AVAILABILITY OF PUBLIC SERVICES AND UTILITIES.**

Travelling Show People

- 5.46 Organised groups of travelling show people or circus people travelling together are considered as a separate group from gypsies in planning guidance terms. Planning advice relating to travelling show people is contained in Department of Environment Circular 22/91. It suggests that local planning authorities should consider the need for temporary sites for travelling show people and gives guidance in assessing the suitability of planning applications for such sites. In the event of there becoming a need for such accommodation any proposal will be assessed using the criteria set out in Circular 22/91 and in accordance with other policies contained in this plan.

Mobile Homes

- 5.47 There are several mobile home or residential caravan parks in the Borough. Mobile homes can provide a low cost form of home ownership but arguably they can also be visually unattractive and out of keeping with the character of the surrounding area. It is therefore not considered appropriate to allocate new sites for this use or accept extensions of these sites or an intensification of such users. Proposals may come forward for redevelopment of these sites for permanent housing. As some of the existing mobile home sites are in Green Belt locations where planning permission would not be granted today, their redevelopment for permanent housing would not be acceptable.

- H 18 PROPOSALS FOR NEW RESIDENTIAL CARAVANS OR MOBILE HOMES OR EXTENSIONS OF SUCH SITES WILL NOT BE GRANTED PLANNING PERMISSION WHERE THEY ADVERSELY AFFECT THE VISUAL AMENITY OR CHARACTER OF AN AREA.**

Chapter 5: Housing

POLICY H 1

States that an increase in dwelling stock of 2700 dwellings will be provided for.

POLICY H 2

Identifies a site in Highcliffe suitable for residential development.

POLICY H 3

Identifies sites in Highcliffe suitable for the development of flats.

POLICY H 4

Identifies land south of Monkswell Green and 'Ashtree Court', Marsh Lane, Purewell as suitable for residential development.

POLICY H 5

Identifies land at the former Local Authority Works Depot at Stanpit as suitable for residential development.

POLICY H 6

Identifies sites in the Christchurch Town Centre area as suitable for residential development.

POLICY H 7

Identifies a site at the junction of The Grove and Barrack Road as suitable for residential redevelopment subject to the retention of open space.

POLICY H 8

Sets out criteria for the provision of affordable housing.

POLICY H 9

Seeks to protect the special character and amenity of the Chewton Farm estate area.

POLICY H 10

Authorises the use of existing dwellings in Willow Way for permanent residential occupation.

POLICY H 11

Resists the loss of residential accommodation in the identified Town Centre area.

POLICY H 12

Sets out criteria for residential infill development and redevelopment.

POLICY H 13

Sets out criteria for replacement dwellings in the Green Belt.

POLICY H 14

Sets out criteria for extensions to existing dwellings in the Green Belt.

POLICY H 15

Sets out criteria for agriculture workers' dwellings.

POLICY H 16

Requires design of new development to take into account need for security and crime prevention.

POLICY H 17

Sets out criteria for proposals for gypsy caravan sites.

POLICY H 18

Seeks to control development of new residential caravans or mobile homes or extensions of such sites.