

Introduction

1. The Wareham Neighbourhood Plan is currently at examination and during this process the site allocations have altered in response to concerns raised by Natural England due to the lack of a SANG to mitigate for homes originally proposed to the north of the railway line.
2. In summary, the Neighbourhood Plan found alternative sites to most of the sites originally proposed to north of the railway line.
3. The Council no longer proposes releasing land from the greenbelt to the west of Westminster Road as part of the Purbeck Local Plan proposals. Additionally, the Council no longer proposes removing all of the safeguarded employment land from Westminster Road and Johns Road Industrial Estate.

Submission proposals

4. At submission, as shown on pages 21 and 45 of the Neighbourhood Plan¹, the Plan proposed the allocation of several sites, the ones that concern this document were the following:
 - a. 90 homes on Westminster Road industrial estate; and
 - b. 30 homes on Johns Road industrial estate.
5. The Neighbourhood Plan group believed only some of the dwellings on Westminster Road and Johns Road would come forward during their plan period, the remainder were expected to be delivered after their plan period. In addition the plan identified the intention to allocate 60 homes on land currently in the green belt to the west of Westminster Road through an immediate refresh of the neighbourhood plan.
6. Natural England and the HRA identified the need for a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) for sites to the north of the railway line to mitigate effects on the nearby heathland. Meetings were held with the promoters of the land to the west of Westminster Road to agree a statement of common ground on the use of SANG land to provide mitigation for the sites to the north of the railway. An agreement could not be reached.
7. The sites were dependent on a number of factors:
 - a. The Council releasing green belt land through their Local Plan review,
 - b. The Council releasing safeguarded employment land through their Local Plan review, and
 - c. A suitable SANG being in place to mitigate effects from the new homes to the north of the railway line on the nearby heathland.
8. The Council worked with the Neighbourhood Plan group and proposed removal of the green belt to accommodate 60 homes to the West of Westminster Road, and removal of safeguarded employment status from Westminster Road and Johns Road Industrial Estates to accommodate an extra 90 and 30 homes respectively. This strategy was presented to the Local Plan inspector via the submission version of The Purbeck Local Plan 2018-2034.

¹ <https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/planning-buildings-land/planning-policy/purbeck/neighbourhood-planning-purbeck/pdfs/in-progress/wareham/submission-draft-wareham-neighbourhood-plan-2018-10-12.pdf>

9. However during the course of the Neighbourhood Plan examination, the land owners of the SANG withdrew their previous agreement. Following this the Wareham Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group reviewed the allocations within their plan.

Alternative sites

10. The Neighbourhood Plan found they could still meet their devolved figure of 200 homes over the Local Plan period as there were other sites within Wareham Town, namely, the Wareham Health Hub. This scheme proposes to build a clinically appropriate facility for residents across the Purbeck area to enable them to access community NHS services including a new GP surgery.
11. Dorset Council are currently consulting on three options for what combination of housing and services can be supported at this health hub as shown at <https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/care-and-support-for-adults/building-better-lives/building-better-lives-wareham-scheme.aspx>.
12. The minimum quantum of housing is **90 homes**. Once the Health Hub is built it is also the aspiration of NHS Dorset Healthcare to release the current hospital site for further housing development. This could achieve an additional **45 homes**.
13. The commercial deliverability of all these options is considered to be secure. Dorset Council has recently undertaken a procurement exercise for Development Partners for a similar sized project in the West of the County and generated considerable market interest. As a result of this exercise Dorset Council has been able to successfully award contracts for Care Home, Extra Care Housing, and affordable Housing development.
14. Therefore the Neighbourhood Plan proposes the allocation of these sites for housing instead of their proposed numbers to the north of the railway line. They have submitted this information to their Examiner and they have agreed mitigation for these homes with Natural England.
15. This means the Neighbourhood Plan propose to deliver the following sites:

Proposed allocated sites	Number of homes proposed
Westminster Road	30
Johns Road	15
Wareham Health Hub (any option)	90 (minimum)
Wareham Hospital Site	45
Gas Works	10
Cottees	9 (has planning permission)
Total	199 (including Cottees)

16. As shown above, the Neighbourhood Plan can deliver their devolved number without the need to remove as much safeguarded employment land from Westminster Road and Johns Road, and without removing land from the green belt at west of Westminster Road.

Implications for Purbeck Local Plan

17. The Purbeck Local Plan no longer needs to remove land from the green belt to the west of Westminster Road. Additionally the Local Plan now only requires removal of some of the safeguarded employment land at Westminster Road and Johns Road.
18. Housing land supply is not affected as the Wareham Neighbourhood Plan is able to deliver their devolved housing need.