

**Dorset County Council Response to North Dorset District Council's Mid Hearing
Written Material May 2015**

MHD006 – Issue 1: Duty to Co-operate, Legal Requirements and the Council's broad strategy.

Note on :

Extending the Plan Period;

The Need for early review of the Local Plan Part1; and

The Relationship of Local Plan Part 1 with the Local Plan Part 2.

Dorset County Council SUPPORTS the recommendations made in this paper that:

- That the plan period be extended to cover the period from 2011 to 2031;
- That the annualised housing target be increased from 280 dwellings per annum to 285 dwellings per annum to take account of a second homes allowance;
- That the overall housing supply target for the Local Plan be for the provision of 5,700 dwellings by 2031;
- That no further allocation of employment land is needed to meet the projected growth in demand; and
- The Council proceeds to the adoption of Local Plan Part 1 based on the current evidence to enable a significant boost to housing supply with a provision for an early plan review to incorporate new emerging evidence, joint working arrangements and ongoing engagement under the Duty to Cooperate.

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MDH007 - Issue 1: Duty to Co-operate, Legal Requirements and the Council's Broad Strategy

Note on:

Reappraising the Council's Approach to Development in the Countryside to Promote a Strong Rural Economy

Dorset County Council SUPPORTS the recommendations made in this paper that:

- Settlement boundaries be retained around Stalbridge and the eighteen of the identified More Sustainable Villages (MSVs). These villages are: Bourton, Charlton Marshall, Child Okeford, East Stour, Fontmell Magna, Hazelbury Bryan, Iwerne Minster, Marnhull, Milborne St Andrew, Milton Abbas, Motcombe, Okeford Fitzpaine, Pimperne, Shillingstone, Stourpaine, Winterborne Kingston, Winterborne Stickland and Winterborne Whitechurch;
- Settlement boundaries around Less Sustainable Villages (LSVs) will be removed in accordance with the Spatial Strategy proposed through Local Plan Part 1 (LP1);
- Over the period 2011 to 2031, 826 dwellings out of the 5700 dwellings district wide total be built in Stalbridge and the eighteen MSVs. This equates to a requirement of 41 dwellings per annum;
- Retain the spatial strategy of meeting strategic employment needs at the four main towns, with local need being met through existing allocated employment sites in Stalbridge, the villages and the countryside, and through the LP1 exceptions policies;
- No additional employment sites be allocated in Stalbridge, the MSVs, LSVs and the countryside in LP1;
- Subsequently, if a specific need is identified in Stalbridge, the MSVs, LSVs or countryside locations then provision be made through either LP2 or Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDPs).

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MHD009 –Issue 4 Housing

Note on:

The delivery of Affordable Housing

Dorset County Council **does not support** the recommendation that no changes are required to the Local Plan arising from further consideration of the delivery of affordable housing.

Dorset County Council is concerned that MHD009 fails to recognise the affordable housing needs of elderly and vulnerable people as discussed at the examination hearing by Mr Derek Hardy (Lead Commissioner, Adult and Community Services, DCC) on Thursday 12th March 2015.

To summarise, Dorset County Council is seeking to ensure that policy in individual Local Plans recognises the growing need for both open market and affordable accommodation to meet the needs of elderly and vulnerable people and enables different forms of provision in order to achieve sustainable and inclusive communities. Similar representations have been made to the other Dorset local planning authorities to ensure that policy on this issue is aligned across the County.

By requiring appropriate and adaptable housing, good layout and design, housing schemes should create opportunities for older and vulnerable people to live securely, independently and inclusively within communities. Where there is evidence of need, larger scale developments should make provision for older and vulnerable people in both market and affordable housing. Across all types and tenures the provision of homes which incorporate flexible and sustainable design principles, including "Lifetime Homes" and those that contribute to achieving affordable warmth should be encouraged.

To this end, Dorset County Council has been seeking amendments to the North Dorset Local Plan Part 1 at the various different stages of consultation.

In respect of Policy 8 the County Council seeks to ensure that affordable housing developments on larger sites make provision for specially adapted or supported housing where a need for this type of housing can be evidenced.

In respect of Policy 7 the County Council seeks to clarify the different approach in respect of Use Class C2 and other forms of specialist housing and to ensure that developers recognise and address the strategic aims and objectives of the County Council in delivering care.

Proposed Change to Policies 7 and 8

The proposed new text sought by Dorset County Council is highlighted in **bold**

POLICY 7: DELIVERING HOMES

Housing Mix

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All housing should contribute towards the creation of mixed and balanced communities.

In the period to 2026, the Council will seek to deliver 40% of market housing in North Dorset as one or two bedroom properties and 60% of market housing as three or more bedroom properties, with an emphasis on the provision of two and three bedroom properties.

In the period to 2026, the Council will seek to deliver 60% of affordable housing in North Dorset as one or two bedroom properties and 40% of affordable housing as three or more bedroom properties.

These proportions will be the starting point for negotiations on the mix of house sizes on all sites where 10 or more dwellings are proposed, although a different mix may be permitted if it can be soundly justified by local circumstances. On sites of less than 10 dwellings, a mix of house sizes appropriate to each specific site will be sought, although in the case of rural exception sites, the mix should reflect identified local needs in accordance with Policy 9 – Rural Exception Affordable Housing.

The Housing Needs of Particular Groups

The Council will seek to meet the needs of different groups in the community both through the provision of a suitable mix of market and affordable house sizes and by working with partners, including Registered Social Landlords and Dorset County Council.

The Council will support the provision of age-restricted housing for the elderly and will usually seek to control its occupancy by planning condition or planning obligation.

New social, care or health related development proposals, or major extension to existing developments within the C2 use class will not be subject to Policy 8 but will be required to demonstrate that any impacts upon, or risks to the strategic aims and objectives of Dorset County Council and NHS Dorset health and social care services have been accounted for and mitigated against.

All other residential development proposals for older and vulnerable people, including sheltered housing, assisted-living and extra-care accommodation must meet the requirements of Policy 8. The details of such proposals and associated delivery mechanisms will require the approval of the Local Planning Authority in consultation with Dorset County Council.

POLICY 8: AFFORDABLE HOUSING

All development that delivers three or more net additional dwellings, including housing on mixed-use sites, will contribute to the provision of affordable housing.

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Such development will contribute to the provision of affordable housing in the following proportions:

- a within the settlement boundary of Gillingham 30% of the total number of dwellings will be affordable; and
- b within the southern extension to Gillingham 35% of the total number of dwellings will be affordable, subject to any site-based assessments of viability; and
- c elsewhere in the District 40% of the total number of dwellings will be affordable.

In the event of grant funding (or another subsidy) being secured or having the prospect of being secured in relation to affordable housing provision on a site, the percentage of affordable housing provided should be maximised to reflect the level of funding secured.

In cases where a level of affordable housing provision below the target percentages is being proposed, the developer may be offered an opportunity (subject to certain requirements) to involve the District Valuer with a view to securing a mutually agreed level of affordable housing provision. In any case where viability is an issue, an 'open book' approach will be sought on any viability assessment.

If it can be demonstrated that a level of affordable housing provision below the percentages set out above can be justified on grounds of viability (taking account of grant funding or any other subsidy) an obligation will be required:

- d to secure the maximum level of provision achievable at the time of the assessment; and
- e to enable the level of provision to be increased in the future, subject to a further assessment, in the event of an improvement in the relevant financial circumstances prior to or during the construction of the site.

The presumption is that affordable housing will be provided on site. Where the size of a site means that the full required percentage of affordable housing could not be provided on site, the amount of affordable housing that can be accommodated on site will be maximised. Any shortfall in on-site provision will be met either by off-site provision or, where alternative off-site provision is not considered feasible or viable, by a financial contribution. Where a developer contribution in lieu of actual affordable housing provision is considered appropriate, contributions will be sought based on realistic assessments of the cost of delivering affordable homes.

Where developments are required to provide 10 or more affordable homes, and where a need can be evidenced by the Council or Dorset County Council at the point of submitting a planning application, 10% of the affordable element should be planned for households requiring specially adapted or supported housing.

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70 to 85% of all new affordable housing in the District will be provided as affordable rented and/or social rented housing with the remaining 15 to 30% provided as intermediate housing. As a starting point for negotiations, the Council will seek a tenure split within this range on individual sites, but a different split may be permitted if it can be justified by local circumstances or local needs. Where local market conditions would make affordable rent unaffordable for those in housing need in that area, the Council will seek the provision of social rented housing, subject to local viability considerations.

Affordable housing should be designed to be indistinguishable from other housing on a development site. On a larger site, the affordable units should be 'pepper-potted' amongst the market housing, or where there is a high proportion of affordable housing, grouped in small clusters amongst the market housing.

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MDH013 - Issue 8A: Gillingham town

**Note to clarify Dorset County Council's position in relation to improvements
needed at Gillingham Secondary School**

Dorset County Council SUPPORTS the note.