

Purbeck Local Plan Part 1

Policy AH – Affordable Housing

The Council will apply the following policy in relation to affordable housing provision when determining planning applications for all new residential development, including residential elements of mixed use schemes.

Developments that result in a net increase of 2 or more dwellings, or are on a site area of 0.05 hectares or more will be required to provide the following affordable housing contribution:

- At least 50% in the Swanage and Coast sub-market areas as shown on Map 16 and the settlement extensions at Lytchett Matravers and Wareham
- At least 40% elsewhere

In all cases the Council will take account of:

- Current identified local need in the District;
- Economic viability of provision;
- Other overriding planning objectives for the site; and
- Any other considerations deemed relevant to the delivery of affordable housing.

Any part units will be met through a commuted sum. Affordable housing provision should be provided on site. Where on site provision is not feasible, the Council will in the first instance seek to secure equivalent off-site provision and, where this is demonstrated to be undeliverable, the payment of a commuted sum to the equivalent amount of on site provision. The applicant will be expected to provide robust justification in support of off site provision or the payment of a commuted sum. This should identify how it would contribute to wider objectives relating to the creation of sustainable and mixed communities and / or meeting a particular identified local housing need. Affordable housing provision required as part of settlement extensions will be provided on site without exception.

Where it is considered that there are significant economic viability constraints that would prevent the provision of affordable housing in accordance with the policy, the applicant will be required to provide full justification of exceptional circumstances to the Council's satisfaction. Such justification will be expected to include a financial viability appraisal, site suitability appraisal, and development mix appraisal. This 'open book' approach will enable the Council to form a view on the viability of the proposed scheme, including the identification of economic constraints (for example, existing high use values) and their impact. The appraisal will be subject to independent verification, which the applicant will be expected to fund.

To ensure the development of mixed and sustainable communities, the affordable housing element of schemes should be fully integrated or 'pepper potted' through the site apart from in exceptional circumstances where sufficient justification for concentration in one location is provided by the applicant and agreed by the Council. Sites which are phased or sub-divided and developed separately will be considered by the Council as part of a larger 'comprehensive' scheme. Affordable housing provision will be required in accordance with the combined site area rather than smaller phased or subdivided areas. The affordable housing provision must be provided on each phase or subdivision.

Further detail will be set out in the Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document, which will look to identify new ways of providing housing in rural areas that is affordable to local people.