

Puddletown Neighbourhood Plan: Indicative Housing Requirement Figure

Note: The calculations below are based on the approach consulted on within the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland joint Local Plan Preferred Options. Since the creation of the new Dorset Council on 1 April 2019, a decision has been made to cease work on the former district council local plans with a view to producing a single local plan for the Dorset Council area. As such, the approach and calculations below may be subject to change.

Context

Paragraph 65 of the 2019 NPPF states:

*"Strategic policy-making authorities should establish a housing requirement figure for their whole area, which shows the extent to which their identified housing need (and any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas) can be met over the plan period. **Within this overall requirement, strategic policies should also set out a housing requirement for designated neighbourhood areas which reflects the overall strategy for the pattern and scale of development and any relevant allocations.** Once the strategic policies have been adopted, these figures should not need retesting at the neighbourhood plan examination, unless there has been a significant change in circumstances that affects the requirement."*

The current housing requirement for West Dorset and Weymouth & Portland is 775 dwellings per annum (dpa) as established in the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan. This plan was adopted in October 2015 however this was before the requirement in national policy to set housing requirements for designated neighbourhood areas was introduced.

This eventuality is covered by paragraph 66 of the 2019 NPPF, which states:

*"**Where it is not possible to provide a requirement figure for a neighbourhood area, the local planning authority should provide an indicative figure, if requested to do so by the neighbourhood planning body.** This figure should take into account factors such as the latest evidence of local housing need, the population of the neighbourhood area and the most recently available planning strategy of the local planning authority."*

Preferred Option for the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland area

The councils consulted on how such an 'indicative figure' might be derived in paragraph 3.6.13 to 3.6.21 of the Preferred Options document for the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan Review, which was published in August 2018. Views were also sought on the proposed approach in Question 3-ix. It should be noted that this text and question were based on the proposed national approach in the draft revised NPPF (published in March 2018), rather than the final July 2018 version or the amended February 2019 version.

Paragraph 3.5.20 of the Preferred Options document for the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan Review says:

"In rural areas (i.e. excluding the settlements in the top two tiers of the settlement hierarchy), it is proposed that a housing requirement for any neighbourhood area containing a settlement with a DDB defined through the local plan or local plan review should plan for a level of housing growth which would increase the population of the neighbourhood planning area by a minimum of 5% over a 20-year period. Any neighbourhood area which does not contain a settlement with a DDB defined through the local plan or local plan review, should plan for a level of housing growth which would increase the population of the neighbourhood planning area by a minimum of 2% over a 20-year period. In either case neighbourhood plan groups may wish to focus on housing provision which would meet 'local' (i.e. village / parish / group of villages or parishes needs), for example needs for: affordable housing; self-build housing; or homes for the elderly, including homes for local older people to downsize."

Puddletown Neighbourhood Area

The Puddletown Neighbourhood Area contains a settlement (Puddletown) with a DDB established through the adopted Local Plan. As such, the Puddletown Neighbourhood Plan should plan to deliver growth in population of a minimum of 5% over a 20 year plan period.

The current population of the parish of Puddletown & Athelhampton is 1,492 (2017 mid-year estimates, ONS). A minimum growth rate of 5% would equate to an increase in population of 75 persons. This is equivalent to a minimum of 35 new homes over the 20 year plan period.

Table 3.4 in the Preferred Options document confirms that the housing need figure (794 dwellings per annum derived from the standard methodology in national policy at the time of preparation of the Preferred Options document) for the area can be met in full through the inclusion of the extant planning permissions across the plan area. This includes those extant permissions within the Puddletown Neighbourhood Area.

The table below separately lists permissions on sites, within the Puddletown Neighbourhood Area as of the base date of 1 April 2019. The table also gives the number of completed dwellings over recent years.

Site (as at 01 April 2019)	Dwellings
Manor Buildings, Manor Farm, Waterston Lane	1
Coombe Barn, White Hill	2
Northbrook Farm, Northbrook	2
Camelot House, Three Lanes End	5

Land South of High Street	7
Land North West of Three Lanes Way	41
Total permission	58
Completions 2014/15	0
Completions 2015/16	6
Completions 2016/17	7
Completions 2017/18	3
Completions 2018/19	2

In addition to the above permitted sites, housing supply identified in Table 3.4 of the Preferred Options document includes an allowance for windfall from minor sites (those of 9 dwellings or fewer). For the Puddletown Neighbourhood Area, the windfall allowance would be equivalent to 4 dwellings per annum however it would not be appropriate to include an allowance for the immediate two years as many of the sites that would form this windfall allowance would already have planning consent. The windfall allowance for the 20 year plan period is therefore equivalent to 4 dwellings per annum x (20 years – 2 years) = 72 dwellings

Adding together the total number of homes on consented sites to the expected windfall rate, the total supply expected from the Puddletown Neighbourhood Area over the next 20 years is 130 new homes.

Conclusion

On the basis of the approach to setting indicative figures for neighbourhood plans in the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Preferred Options document; taking into account the number of homes that already have consent and the appropriate windfall allowance, there is no requirement for the Puddletown Neighbourhood Plan to deliver any new housing other than that which the community wish to see developed.