



# Dorset Council Local Plan



## Central Dorset Functional Area 2021 Consultation Summary of Responses



January 2023



Dorset  
Council

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## 1. Central Dorset Functional Area

### 1.1. Introduction

#### Comments of support for the approach

##### Origin3 on behalf of Obsidian Strategic

- The general principles of the development strategy for the Central Dorset Functional Area, which recognises the sustainable role of Dorchester, are supported.

##### Public response

- There is support for / agreement with the suggested approach.
- The entire policy is supported.
- There is support for more housing in the area.
- The approach is supported, subject to the majority of housing being affordable.

#### Comments of objection/disagreement with the approach

##### Public response

- There is objection to the suggested approach.
- There is a lack of clarity over what 'approach' is being put forward.
- There is concern with the scale of development across the functional area.
- There is objection to urban sprawl.
- There is objection to the quantity of development in Dorchester and Weymouth.

#### Comments in relation to policy maps

##### Pegasus Group on behalf of Persimmon

- The maps at the end of each settlement chapter appear to show some sites as being included within settlement boundaries, but others located outside. These maps should be amended to show allocated sites within settlement boundaries.

#### Figure 22.1: Function and issues of the main settlements

##### Portland Port

- The background to and the purpose of the statement about job creation not matching the skills of the local workforce on Portland is questioned. It is suggested that there should be dialogue with the Port and other local employers on this point.

##### Public response

- Whilst Dorchester may have 'twice as many jobs as economically active residents', it is not clear whether this is a problem or not and, if so, the Plan fails to address it.
- It is noted that 'Portland Port has created some jobs, but many of these do not match the skills of the local workforce.' However, nothing is proposed in the Plan to address this issue.
- Dorchester, Weymouth and Crossways have serious problems relating to the macro form of these settlements, transport networks, recreational areas and leisure facilities, redevelopment and regeneration areas, etc.

## Figure 22.2: Key environmental constraints

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### Natural England

- In relation to Dorchester, the River Frome is designated as a SSSI, not the River Piddle, as stated in Figure 22.2.

### Environmental groups (non-statutory)

- Suggestion that ‘environmental constraints’ are re-termed as ‘environmental context’ or ‘environmental considerations’ to give more neutral language.
- Environmental assets not mentioned include:
  - Dorchester town and surrounds contains a number of a wildlife sites.
  - The River Frome is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (not the River Piddle).
  - The Lorton Valley Nature Park provides a large area of nature-rich habitat and green infrastructure on the edge of Weymouth.
  - There are important marine conservation sites off the Weymouth and Portland coast
  - Crookhill Brickpits SAC lies within Chickerell.
  - Old quarries on Portland have a very high nature conservation value and the Portland Quarries Nature Park provides a focal point for access to nature on Portland.
- In the paragraph re Dorchester, we wish to see ‘Poole Harbour’ changed to ‘Poole Harbour SPA & Ramsar site’.

## Paragraph 22.1.3

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### Natural England

- The reference to ‘nitrates’ in this paragraph should be changed to ‘nitrogen’.

### Environmental groups (non-statutory)

- Support recognition of some of the main impacts of development on important wildlife sites.
- Important to get the language right when describing sites of nature conservation significance: the use of the term ‘nature conservation interests’ is inaccurate and unhelpful, with ‘interests’ suggesting this is something of importance only to specific ‘interest’ groups. We wish to see this term replaced with ‘nature conservation sites’ given the context.

## Paragraph 22.1.4

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### North Dorchester Consortium

- The recognition of the role that North Dorchester will play in meeting the needs of the Central Dorset Functional Area is supported.

## Paragraphs 22.1.5 - 22.1.7

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### Turley on Behalf of Wyatt Homes

- There is little mention of Puddletown, other than the sites proposed in the neighbourhood plan. The approach set out in paragraphs 22.1.5 and 22.1.7 misses the opportunity for additional or modest scale development options at this sustainable location.

## Figure 22.3: Housing and employment land allocations

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### Nexus Planning on behalf of Hallam Land Management

- The table does not show that allocated site CRS4: Frome Valley Road has planning permission for 140 dwellings.
- Allocated site CRS5: Woodsford Fields is capable of accommodating 402 dwellings. The capacity of the site should be increased in Figure 22.3 to reflect this capacity.

## Figure 22.4: Key strategy map

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### Dorchester Civic Society

- The proposed northern link road north of Dorchester (A35 to B3147/A37) is not (and should be) shown in Figure 22.4.

### Dorchester Town Council

- On the diagram, the positioning of the symbols showing the housing and employment at Dorchester wrongly indicate that these are central to the town close to the railway and between the two rivers.

### Nexus Planning on behalf of Hallam Land Management

- Moreton Station is not illustrated on the diagram in Figure 22.4. The railway station should be shown to accurately reflect public transport connectivity within Dorset.

### Portland Port

- An icon for the port should be added to the diagram in Figure 22.4.

### Public response

- The road through Crossways and Moreton Station is shown as the A353, but is actually the B3390.
- Crossways and Moreton Station are shown as a single black dot near the junction of the A353 from Weymouth and the A352. In fact, Crossways and Moreton Station are located roughly halfway along the B3390 to the A35.
- The key diagram should have a new icon for the 'deep water commercial port' at Portland.
- A readable map is required to understand the spatial distributions of land allocated for employment and housing with transportation networks and constraints.

## Growth / housing in the Central Dorset Functional Area

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### Dorchester Town Council

- We are concerned with the lightweight appraisal of the Central Dorset functional area and its environmental constraints.
- An alternative option for balancing housing and jobs would be to create more jobs in the locations where the workers commute in from, which in this case is Weymouth (including Chickerell) and (to a lesser extent) the surrounding villages.

### Origin3 on behalf of Obsidian Strategic

- It is not possible to ascertain the total amount of growth directed to Weymouth and Dorchester, relative to other towns and villages in the Central Dorset Functional Area and therefore, it is difficult to tell if the strategy for this area is justified.

### Weymouth Civic Society

- We are concerned with amount of land allocated in the Central Dorset area. There is little additional land in Weymouth, Chickerell, and Portland for housing, without impinging on areas of high landscape value or other unsuitable sites.

### Weymouth Town Council

- There is little evidence that a balance between homes and employment is being achieved.
- Loneliness is an issue over the entire county.

### Public response

- The strategy for growth lacks imagination.
- The housing targets are flawed and the algorithm that created them is outdated.
- The housing numbers are inappropriate and should be challenged. The imposed housing target is not validated or addressed by the Plan.
- The housing proposals are out of proportion with the needs of local communities.
- The new homes proposed will be unaffordable.
- There is no provision to mitigate the large amount of second homes in the area.
- All settlements should take a 10% increase in housing stock with sites allocated through neighbourhood plans.
- Brownfield land should be used for development and reference to brownfield sites should be made in the Plan.
- A Charlton Down-style development should be proposed in the Piddle Valley.
- Suggestion that it may be better to consider Weymouth and Dorchester as complimentary, and that the short distance between them offers both rail and regular bus connections.
- Suggestion whether it is better to attract investment to Weymouth, create new jobs and prevent in commuting to Dorchester.
- Imbalance of employment provision between Weymouth and Dorchester – 10ha for Dorchester and 5ha for Weymouth.
- Master plans for Dorchester, Weymouth and Crossways are required for dealing with all issues.

## 1.2. Comments in respect of specific settlements

### Charminster

#### Origin3 on behalf of Obsidian Strategic

- The availability of the health centre at Charlton Down (DOR15: Forston Clinic - 90 dwellings) within the plan period is questioned.

### Chickerell

#### Origin3 on behalf of Obsidian Strategic

- The future growth at Chickerell is based on existing allocations, part of which has planning permission.

### Public response

- The draft plan considers Chickerell as an independent settlement although it is part of Weymouth geographically and functionally and has not the required facilities to stand as an independent town.

- Chickerell is well connected and served by Weymouth town centre and functions as a suburb of Weymouth.
- It is difficult to understand why Littlemoor is considered as the extension of Weymouth but not Chickerell.
- The draft plan should have considered Chickerell as part of Weymouth built up area and developed an overall spatial strategy for Weymouth including Chickerell.

## Crossways / Moreton

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### Origin3 on behalf of Obsidian Strategic

- The scale of the proposed allocations of Crossways is not commensurate with the role of the settlement, despite it having a railway station.
- The availability and deliverability of the Crossways / Moreton allocations and commitments (1,644 dwellings) is questioned. There are concerns about market capacity, and (on many sites) the need for the prior extraction of sand and gravel.

## Dorchester

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### Dorchester Town Council

- We are concerned with the lightweight appraisal of Dorchester and its environmental constraints, which neglects referencing any issues to the north side of the town.

### Origin3 on behalf of Obsidian Strategic

- The deliverability of 3,500 dwellings at North Dorchester within the plan period is questioned. It is considered that there will be a potential shortfall of 620 dwellings.

### Chapman Lily Planning on behalf of Southern Strategic Land

- The plan's strategy for central Dorset is too heavily skewed towards Dorchester. Growth at the town is coming at the expense of much-needed new homes (including affordable housing) at other settlements.
- It is highly likely that any contribution towards housing supply from sites in Dorchester would be small and towards the end of the plan period.
- Additional homes are needed to meet the identified shortfall and small to medium-sized sites that can be built out quickly, such as at Broadmayne would ensure a boost to supply in the early part of the plan period.

### Public response

- There are concerns about the heritage impacts on Dorchester.
- There are concerns about the impacts on tourism in Dorchester.
- The bottom field of Thomas Hardy School should be allocated for development.
- Concern with sustainability of the approach and lack of well researched settlement hierarchy to justify statements about Dorchester.
- Query are house prices in Weymouth significantly cheaper than Dorchester?
- Query regarding any gender implications for the employment profile of Dorchester relating to low incomes and administrative work and work in the care sector.
- Query whether the plan assumes that people living in these towns and villages and working in Dorchester will move to Dorchester? – will the council control house prices in Dorchester to accommodate this?
- Concern with the expected decline of public sector jobs in Dorchester.

- Level of employment land allocation in Dorchester will accelerate in-commuting from Weymouth rather than preventing it.
- In the absence of any public transport provision this size of employment land allocation will result in unsustainable development.

## Portland

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### Origin3 on behalf of Obsidian Strategic

- There is a lack of additional allocations at Portland.

## Puddletown

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### Origin3 on behalf of Obsidian Strategic

- The potential allocations in the Puddletown Neighbourhood Plan will become part of the development plan for Puddletown.

## Weymouth

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### Origin3 on behalf of Obsidian Strategic

- At Weymouth, projected annual completions will need to be much higher than past rates. Evidence is needed to confirm deliverability.
- The achievability of the town centre regeneration area (WEY2 – 400+ dwellings) is questioned. It is not clear which sites will deliver this, and whether the land is available.
- The achievability of the site at Louviers Road (WEY12) is questioned. The site had permission for 100 dwellings, but this has not been implemented and has now expired. Evidence is needed to show that the site is available.

### Weymouth Civic Society

- There is a need to limit housing growth in the Weymouth area, to prevent exacerbation of the housing / employment imbalance and the resulting increase in levels of commuting from Weymouth to Dorchester, as demonstrated in paragraph 1.3.24, which says ‘Weymouth has a significant amount of outward commuting to Dorchester for jobs’.

### Public response

- It is not clear how many jobs are available in Weymouth for the working age population.

## 1.3. Other issues

### Environment

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#### Public response

- There will be significant impacts on the natural environment.
- There is a lack of mitigation for impacts on the natural environment.
- There will be an impact on the countryside.
- There will be significant impacts on the AONB.
- The Frome Valley is an important open space, which feeds the River Frome SSSI and Poole Harbour and which borders National Nature Reserves. It should be protected from runoff.
- There will be an impact on drainage into the floodplain.



- There is a requirement for more locally grown food and tree planting at a time of climate change and post Brexit.

## Economy

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### Portland Town Council

- Portland / Weymouth / Dorchester are in a growth corridor and should be referred to as such.
- Would Portland's status as Tier 2 in the settlement hierarchy attract the right employment?
- The nature of work is changing but these changes have not filtered through to the plan.
- Dorchester is referenced as an employment centre but office-based working is likely to be cut back following Covid.
- Commuting linked to manufacturing / industrial work will continue more or less unchanged.

### Public response

- The local plan must diversify the employment base.
- The plans for jobs and employment hubs are queried. The Plan needs to address Covid generally and the decline of the High Street.
- A vision for the digital economy in the area is required.
- Poundbury, Crossways and Littlemoor are all not suitable for employment.

## Infrastructure

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### Public response

- The pressure on local services must be considered.
- There is a lack of the necessary infrastructure.
- There is a concern that the provision of infrastructure will be left to planners and developers.
- It is not clear where land will be set aside for health centres, surgeries, neighbourhood orchards, children's skate parks, swimming pools and urban farms.
- There will be a requirement for specialised services for the elderly.
- The plans for the provision of more GPs are queried.

## Transport

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### Chesil Bank PC

- There are no new road links proposed to serve traffic from Portland / Chickerell that uses B3157 coast road. The road has been the subject of many accidents and causes severe congestion to the villages. There is increasing HGV use and such vehicles can become jammed and block the road. It is used by residents as an alternative to the congested Weymouth Relief Road. Planned housing development will exacerbate existing problems of heavy traffic use on these narrow roads and lanes.

### Portland Town Council

- There are significant transport issues to Portland and connectivity is an important concern. Infrastructure on Portland, especially transport and roads, has not been developed with housing.
- The forthcoming update to the Transport Plan could lead on many of these changes and cycling infrastructure could be better served to tackle the issue of connectivity.
- The following railway improvements should be pushed forward: connecting the Basingstoke / Exeter line to the Weymouth / Bristol line at Yeovil Junction; and updating the track between Weymouth / Bournemouth from single to double track.

## Public response

- The policy ignores out-commuting to the east which will continue with increased employment in Poole and at Bournemouth Airport. This will have impacts on the climate and biodiversity.
- Electric cars will become the norm.
- Lack of data on connectivity between the settlements.
- It should not be assumed that all travel is for employment purposes.

## Deliverability

### Origin3 on behalf of Obsidian Strategic

- Any decisions about future supply both in terms of the first five years or during the whole plan period should take account of deliverability. There is a lack of a housing trajectory for the Dorset area. This will need to be made available in order to assess the deliverability of the strategy.

## 1.4. Omission sites

### Broadmayne: General points

#### Chapman Lily Planning on behalf of Southern Strategic Land

- There is a concern that the spatial strategy has not been translated into actual strategy.
- Although some growth is proposed at some larger villages, Broadmayne is a larger village that has been ignored.
- Given how unconstrained land has been promoted at Broadmayne, it should have been considered as a reasonable alternative option for growth.

### Broadmayne: Land at Broadmead (LA/BRWK/001)

#### Chapman Lily Planning on behalf of Southern Strategic Land

- Land at Broadmead, Broadmayne could deliver about 120 homes (as an upper end target) or 80 to 120 units with a slightly lower density, an element of employment space and integrated open space.
- The site is nestled between Martel Close and Broadmead to the north, appearing as a very obvious gap in the built form. The site has a strong degree of enclosure by existing development and hedgerows and there are no protected trees on or near the site.
- There is a lack of constraints. There are no heritage assets onsite or nearby that would be affected and there is a low probability of flooding. Any surface water flood risk could be mitigated through SUDs.
- The AONB boundary lies along the site's southwestern edge and this relationship could be respected through strategic planting. The setting of the Heritage Coast to the south could be safeguarded through a sensitive design and landscaping scheme.
- The development could be served by existing infrastructure in Broadmayne and the surrounding area, which includes pubs, a village hall, places of worship, convenience retail, playing fields, allotment gardens, a post office and industrial premises.
- The A352 passes through Broadmayne, providing excellent connections to Dorchester and Weymouth. Buses at Charlmont Cross also provide regular services to Dorchester and Weymouth. A right of way through the site would be retained and the long expanse of frontage along Broadmead presents an excellent opportunity for points of access and links into the village.

- An area to the northwest has potential to create a highly attractive SANG, well connected to the local population.
- The way in which sites are assessed in the SHLAA is inconsistent and there is a concern that this site was only deemed acceptable as an affordable housing exception site.
- There is also a concern that the West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Strategic Landscape and Heritage Study did not consider the merits of growth at other Tier 3 settlements, including Broadmayne.

### **Compton Valence: Compton Valence Farm (LA/COVA/001)**

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#### **Compton Valence Farms**

- This locally run family farm in West Dorset could be an early ‘windfall site’. It would be a community-led development, which would provide income to the Parish, whilst also meeting the increased demand for those wanting to live remotely in the countryside. The site could be delivered in the short term: 2 to 5 years from adoption of the Local Plan.
- It would deliver houses for local residents looking to get onto the property ladder, which would be a positive, given the significant drop in sites coming to the market due to a range of factors. It would also provide employment space for local services, aligning it with the Government’s agenda to help rural communities whilst supporting SMEs.
- More bespoke units than on larger mainstream housing developments, would create a potentially mixed demographic. The development would make other positive contributions, such as an improvement to the local school bus service.
- The conclusions of the recent SHLAA submission are challenged. It is considered that the site could support a sustainable rural development as: it is accessible; there are hedgerow boundaries and visual impacts could be mitigated; and there is scope for community orchard or playing fields. The stated heritage impacts should be reconsidered as the buildings within the site are unlisted. The stated contamination impact should also be reconsidered.

### **Martinstown: Land to the east of Martinstown (LA/WSTM/002)**

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#### **Public response**

- Suggest that development of around 30 new homes to the east of Martinstown would improve the sustainability of the village through improvement to existing facilities.

### **Martinstown: Land on the west side of Duke Close (LA/WSTM/004)**

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#### **Greenslade Taylor Hunt on behalf of Morrish Homes**

- A SHLAA submission has been made alongside a local plan representation.
- The site is unconstrained and in a village with more than two key services and access to more.

### **Milborne St Andrew: West of Milton Road Close (referred to as Land to the North of Dorchester Road) (LA/MILB/001)**

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#### **Macra Land on behalf of Nicola Pye**

- Land north of Dorchester Road, Milborne St Andrew is a suitable location for 35-40 dwellings. The site could provide a range of accommodation types and sizes, including open market and affordable housing (or possibly an affordable housing scheme), in a high quality development.
- The site is in a sustainable location within convenient walking and /or cycling distance of services, facilities, and the limited employment opportunities within the village. The village and

site are connected with sustainable transport options, allowing access to other more significant settlements.

- Although Milborne St Andrew is classified as a Tier 3 settlement, it does have a reasonable number of facilities. Modest levels of growth would support those facilities, helping to protect the future sustainability of the village.
- Much of Dorset is constrained by AONB, Green Belt or other designations and land should only be removed from the Green Belt in exceptional circumstances. The unconstrained land in Milborne St Andrew should be allocated before any Green Belt land is released.

### **Milborne St Andrew: Homefield (LA/MILB/003)**

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#### **Alder King on behalf of Wessex Strategic**

- Promotes a development site at Homefield, Milborne St Andrew as delivering 80 new homes, a suitable alternative natural greenspace, a new pre-school facility and open space.
- Considers that earlier issues relating to the site can be overcome.
- Considers that the site will make a positive contribution to housing delivery in general and specifically affordable homes.

### **Milborne St Andrew: Land to the north of Blandford Road (LA/MILB/005)**

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#### **Savills on behalf of Wyatt Homes**

- The proposed development site is well related to the existing village and new homes would support the viability of this settlement.
- The site could deliver around 47 new homes (including affordable homes, comprising 40% of the total development) and community facilities (including doctors surgery and pre-school).
- Planning applications have been made, which together with support evidence (including planning statement, design and access statement, ecological appraisal, biodiversity mitigation plan, landscape and visual appraisal, transport statement, historic environment desk based assessment, flood risk assessment, utilities and geotechnical/contamination reports), demonstrate that new homes could be delivered at the site.
- There is an opportunity to deliver a strategic SANG to the north of the site with capacity to mitigate the impacts from homes on this and other sites within/around the settlement.

### **Milton Abbas: Land at St Catherines Well (LA/MILT/004)**

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#### **Terence O'Rourke Limited on behalf of Gleeson Strategic Land**

- Gleeson's site at Milton Abbas could accommodate 50-60 homes without significant landscape or heritage impacts arising and needs to be properly considered as part of the local plan process.

### **Piddlehinton: Land to the north east of the Enterprise Park (LA/PIWL/003)**

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#### **Public response**

- Notes that the land to the north east of the Enterprise Park appears to be 'unproductive', and considers that this land would be suitable for allocation as employment land used in association with the park.

### **Piddlehinton: Bourne Park/Farm, (LA/PIWL/001)**

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#### **Sibbett Gregory Wright & Coles on behalf of the landowner**

- Bourne Park has expansion scope which could provide green energy for the DOR13 allocation.

- Plans to attract an energy intensive activity (eg data storage) on to the Bourne Park campus which would be facilitated by a supportive local plan.
- Bourne Park can offer:-
  - Immediate availability
  - Low landscape impact even though closer to the AONB
  - Lower site coverage and the potential to deal with surface water run-off without impacting downstream
  - An existing low cost renewable energy infrastructure which can be readily expanded.
  - Access to super-fast fibre broadband.
  - Private drainage and water supply.
  - Seclusion from domestic habitation.
  - Scope for expansion within 20ha ring fence.
- Bourne Park has the potential for energy self-sufficiency.
- It currently has circa 10MW of varied, on site renewable electricity generation, c/w storage which is integrated with the national grid.
- Hanford are seeking to use as much as is possible of this “local” power for local use and to that end any future development at the parks could have potential access to this utility.

## **Puddletown: Land south of Athelhampton Road (LA/PUDD/001)**

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### **Turley on Behalf of Wyatt Homes**

- Puddletown has the potential to accommodate growth to meet village needs and provide housing in proximity to the Tier 1 ‘large built-up areas’ in Dorset. There is a range of services and facilities in the village and there are good connections to main roads and neighbouring counties.
- Table A2 of Appendix 2, which sets out neighbourhood plan housing requirements, results in an inconsistent approach to the distribution of development across the Tier 3 villages. Settlements with neighbourhood plans have lower housing requirements than those with allocations in the draft local plan. This approach is unsustainable. The approach is also flawed in relation to Puddletown, as the calculation of 7 dwellings per year may not reflect the local housing need and the community’s aspirations beyond 2031.
- The area of land promoted by Wyatt Homes would represent an expansion of a neighbourhood plan site on the adjoining part of the field. However, as the site straddles two parish boundaries, some of it has not been considered through the neighbourhood planning process. The site proposed for allocation in the Puddletown Neighbourhood Plan is for 18-22 dwellings. It is appropriate that the remaining 5.7 hectares should be considered for allocation through the Dorset Council Local Plan.
- The Conservation Area, wider constraints and the tightly drawn current village boundary provide few opportunities for growth. This focus on infill is not consistent with community aspirations and there are concerns that this will impact on services and facilities in Puddletown, worsening affordability and accelerating the ageing of the population as families move elsewhere.
- Puddletown is less constrained by landscape and ecological designations and future growth could contribute towards the required level of growth in Central Dorset. A reliance on the large-scale allocation of land north of Dorchester (DOR13) may result in delays to housing delivery in the area. This site provides the opportunity to deliver a high-quality housing development in a sustainable location adjacent to an emerging Neighbourhood Plan allocation site.
- Site has no overriding constraints, is close to services and facilities and could be accessed from Athelhampton Road.

- Much technical work and significant community engagement were undertaken for the neighbourhood plan process. Landscape, archaeological and heritage, and ecological surveys have been prepared and the intention is to review and update this work for the larger site.
- The site was submitted for SHLAA assessment and was considered suitable subject to policy change.

### **West Stafford: Land to the east of Wynd Close (LA/WSTA/001)**

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#### **Land Value Alliances**

- The respondent considers that the site is suitable for development with 10 new homes (including 3 self-build homes and 3 affordable homes).
- Planning permission has been granted for new homes on an adjacent site.
- The respondent considers that West Stafford is a sustainable location for further residential development.