

Matter 3

ID: 578

Betterment Properties

Appendix MDB1

A HISTORY OF A CAPACITY LED HOUSING REQUIREMENT IN DORSET SINCE 1980

By M.D.Brown

Planning for housing in Dorset has been artificially constrained since at least 1980, when the South East Dorset Green Belt was first designated. Regrettably I no longer have documents and files related to the South East Dorset Structure Plan 1980, or the Dorset (Excluding South East) Structure Plan 1989. Neither are they online.

I have a personal recollection of opposing constraint lead housing policies at the time of consultation on both of those Structure Plans. It seems to me that both Dorset County Council and the Regional Planning Authority naively thought that by reducing the housing requirement figure, they would actually reduce migration to the County. In my opinion it is migrants that can afford the housing more than the existing residents. All that policy was going to do was push up prices and increase the affordability gap.

I have a number of documents still and I have attached some extracts from those documents.

Bournemouth Borough Local Plan Consultative Document 1988

Paragraph 1.12 refers to the 1980 South East Dorset Structure Plan – It notes that a *“Green Belt will be established to protect the separate physical identity of the individual settlements and to maintain the area of open land around the conurbation. Agricultural land will not normally be developed for other purposes.”*

The Green Belt had been established in the Structure Plan 1980.

Paragraph 2.2 –states that *“housing development during the period 1976-1986 has progressed faster than envisaged. In Bournemouth most of the total land allocation for the 20 years period of the Structure Plan has now been developed”*. The simple reason for that is of course that demand did not slow up, allocations had.

Paragraph 2.11 –refers to the first alteration of the Structure Plan and the fact that *the Green Belt Policies and Environmental Policies relating to the countryside are supported and strengthened.*

Paragraph 3.3 –records that *“the Structure Plan First Alteration has established that about 90% of the housing allocation has been completed during the first 10 years of the Plan.”* It should not have been a surprise for the reasons stated above.

Paragraph 4.1.5 – This document records *“The first alteration of the Structure Plan was submitted to the Secretary of State for the Environment in March 1988 and attempts to continue the restraint Policy of the 1980 Structure Plan, providing land for an average of 2,000 house completions per year over the 15 year Plan period”* .

South East Dorset Structure Plan – First Alteration

This was adopted on the 6th April 1990.

Paragraph 6.28 –records that *“these various constraints clearly limit the amount of additional housing which can be provided in South East Dorset. An examination of the capacity of the area for further residential development over the Plan period to 2001 was made to take into account three factors:-*

- 1) Existing commitment.
- 2) An estimate of additional housing likely to come forward as a result of development, redevelopment and conversion within the existing urban area.
- 3) The capacity of additional extensions to the built up area permissible within the identified constraints.

Paragraph 6.29 –records *“The result of these studies showed that about 30,700 dwellings required to meet the OPCS migration based population projection could be accommodated in this way. However, provision for a continuation of recent trends and migration and building rates could not be sustained”* . It concludes:-

“6.30 – Within the main strategy of the Plan and the level of provision for house building is based on the capacity of the area for further development. This takes account of the many constraints which occur in South East Dorset. The resulting provision of 30,700 dwellings for the period 1986-2001 makes for a lower rate of house building than has occurred in the recent past; just over 2,000 dwellings per annum, compared with 3,100”.

Similar Policies were pursued in the Dorset (Excluding South East) Structure Plan, although I no longer have a copy of that document.

The Dorset Structure Plan – January 1996

Paragraph 1.12 – This records *“The guidance looks to the continuing economic prosperity of the Bournemouth – Poole conurbation, while accepting that the physical growth of the area is limited by environmental constraints, such as the adjoining areas of outstanding natural beauty, the New Forest and Nature Conservation interests, particularly in Poole Harbour and the Dorset Heathlands. The need for environmental conservation is important, not only in its*

own right, but in a region and county so dependent on tourism. It is vital to the success of that industry”.

Discussing the objectives of the plan Paragraph 2.39, states:- *“However, the continuation of past rates of net migration gain are not necessary to ensure a prosperous economy. Further, it is not possible to continue to accommodate these rates without causing significant damage to Dorset’s unique environment or change in the character of its towns and villages. High population growth also results in increased demands for services, such as education, health and social services...”* Consequently the Strategy is:- *“to provide for a reduced rate of migration lead population growth”*. That is reproduced in the final bullet point in Paragraph 2.40. The objective was clearly naïve.

Settlement Policies E and F sought to restrain development in villages and the countryside posing further constraints on housing.

Paragraph 6.22 – 6.26 seek to build arguments for not meeting market demand.

Paragraph 6.27 –therefore concludes *“The County Council considers in taking account of all these factors, that the level of housing provision derived from the capacity approach is to be preferred to one based on accommodation of market demand throughout the county. It continues at Paragraph 6.28, the provision of 52,900 dwellings for the Plan period will generally mean a significant reduction in building rates compared with those of the past”.*

Regional Planning Guidance for the South West of England – March 2000

The Panel report identifies that one of the key assumptions was “Adjustments in housing provision to ensure a better match between projected labour supply and forecast job increases, involving a reduction of 13,300 dwellings in Dorset and an increase of 4,000 in Gloucestershire.

Paragraph 6.54 comments that it *has accepted adjustment in housing provision for Dorset to reflect the environmental constraints in the Bournemouth / Poole area and the need for a better match between jobs and labour supply.*

It also noted that the Dorchester / Weymouth and Portland area was not seen as a principal urban area to which development would be directed.

Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Structure Plan – February 2001

Figure 6.3 shows net migration falling dramatically in 1988/89. That was of course a result of economic crisis in that period. Interest rates rose significantly causing many home owners to fall into negative equity. It took seven years to climb out of that recession. The Structure Plan in my opinion wrongly assumed that migration would not revert to former levels.

Paragraph 6.28 states that *“Taking account of all these factors, the level of housing provision derived from the “sustainable” approach is preferred to one based on accommodation of market demand* throughout the county. *The sustainable approach allows for demand to be*

met in certain areas within the limits of the locational requirements of sustainability and taking account of strategic environmental constraints". By comparison with the National Planning Policy Framework the Structure Plan at that time was looking at a fairly narrow idea of what sustainability means.

Paragraph 6.46 has a conclusion which states that *"The conclusion of the Strategic Planning Authorities is therefore that the sustainable approach with its implicit restraint of house building rates will have no detrimental effect on the economy, nor any significant implications for house prices".* Again, I consider this was naïve.

Interesting, at Paragraph 6.47 it records *"The Panel felt that this approach was a high risk strategy in the context of the open market, in that it seeks to limit supply without being able to restrict demand. The resulting imbalance could have the effect, not of restricting in migration as intended, but of creating social and economic hardships amongst the present population."* I agree with the last sentiment entirely.

I think therefore there is plenty of evidence to show that building rates over the last 20 years or more reflect constraints in planning policy. The projections based upon that period of house building are not a reflection of the full objectively assessed need for market and affordable housing. The Policies have, if anything, probably also increased significantly the gap in affordability and the lack of supply of affordable homes over 30 years.

BOURNEMOUTH BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN



CONSULTATIVE DOCUMENT



SOUTH EAST DORSET STRUCTURE PLAN STRATEGY - Chapter 2

1. STRUCTURE PLAN 1980

- 1.1 The Structure Plan incorporates the following main proposals affecting Bournemouth for the period 1976 to 1996:-
- 1.2 New development generally will be within the main urban areas, the open spaces between the settlements will be protected.
- 1.3 Housing land will be available at North Bournemouth for between 3,200 and 4,000 dwellings and at Littledown for between 300 and 500 dwellings.
- 1.4 Consolidation of development in the existing urban area should provide up to 10,500 dwellings.
- 1.5 Manufacturing at Yeomans Road site on 32 acres of land. Small industrial areas and sites - only in appropriate locations and not exceeding 10-acre sites.
- 1.6 Offices or light industry at Castle Lane East (Wessex Fields) on 33-acre site .
- 1.7 Hospital site allocated at Castle Lane East.
- 1.8 Major Office development will be permitted in the Lansdowne/Central Station areas up to a total of 82,000 sq m. Offices elsewhere in Bournemouth shall not exceed 54,000 sq m in total.
- 1.9 No new major out-of-town shopping centres will be permitted. Retail warehouses only where necessary for surrounding residential areas.
- 1.10 Encouragement will be given for retaining and/or extending Hotels. Encouragement will generally be given for Tourism and for Recreation.
- 1.11 A new sports centre should be provided in or near the town centre.
- 1.12 A green belt will be established to protect the separate physical identity of the individual settlements and to maintain the area of open land around the conurbation. Agricultural land will not normally be developed for other purposes.
- 1.13 No other major residential, industrial, commercial or shopping developments are proposed.
- 1.14 Transportation schemes include Winton & Moordown Relief Road, Cemetery Junction improvements, Wimborne Road Northbourne improvements, Castle Lane West Relief Road and Kinson Relief Road. Also, adjacent to Bournemouth - Wallisdown Relief Road and Christchurch Relief Road.

2 STRUCTURE PLAN - FIRST ALTERATION 1988

- 2.1 The Structure Plan First Alteration incorporates the following main proposals for Bournemouth and extends the Plan period up to 2,001:-
- 2.2 Housing development during the period 1976 to 1986 has progressed faster than envisaged. In Bournemouth most of the total land allocation for the 20-year period of the Structure Plan has now been developed.
- 2.3 Consolidation within the existing urban area will be permitted.
- 2.4 Housing allocation at Littledown Estate has been increased by 600-700 dwellings, and at North Bournemouth there remain 200-300 to be completed.
- 2.5 Manufacturing at Yeoman's Road site amended to allow general manufacturing and service industry.
- 2.6 Office development will remain in the existing major areas but will not be limited by floor area criteria. No new major areas are proposed.
- 2.7 Small office developments will be allowed, subject to the local planning authority, only in appropriate locations.
- 2.8 Large Retail developments will be permitted only in the main centres, the town centre, Boscombe and Winton, where they will be the subject of traffic management schemes. Retailing of bulky durable goods etc. is excluded from these areas.
- 2.9 Improvements to existing shopping centres including design and environmental enhancements will be encouraged.
- 2.10 No other major retail developments will be permitted in Bournemouth.
- 2.11 Green Belt policies and Environment policies relating to the countryside are supported and strengthened.
- 2.12 An Environmental policy to protect existing parks and private and public open spaces within the built-up area.
- 2.13 Developments which expand the role of Tourism will be supported.
- 2.14 Tourism policies have been retained. Loss of prime tourist accommodation will be resisted.
- 2.15 Major new indoor and outdoor sports facilities will be encouraged.
- 2.16 Policies to protect buildings of architectural or historic interest and features of archaeological interest.
- 2.17 Policy to protect and enhance the landscape by positive measures.
- 2.18 Transportation schemes include Kinson relief road, Castle Lane West relief road, improvement of Wimborne Road, Kinson.

IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT THE STRUCTURE PLAN FIRST ALTERATION MAY BE SUBJECT TO REVISIONS DURING THE PROCESS OF BECOMING A STATUTORY DOCUMENT. IF SUCH REVISIONS ARE SIGNIFICANT THIS LOCAL PLAN MAY HAVE TO BE MODIFIED TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF THEM. MODIFICATIONS PROPOSED BY DORSET COUNTY COUNCIL ON 6th JANUARY 1988 HAVE BEEN INCORPORATED.

PRESENT SITUATION - Chapter 3

- 3.1 This is an appropriate stage at which to examine the rate of growth of development in the Borough during the first years of the Structure Plan, from 1976 onwards, and in response to the results of that, prepare for the strategy now proposed in the First Alteration for the remaining years of the Structure Plan.
- 3.2 The Structure Plan incorporated the major area for HOUSING development in Bournemouth as originally established in the North Bournemouth Policy Proposals of 1973, which allowed for a total housing commitment of between 3,500 and 4,500 homes in that area. It was envisaged that this allocation would satisfy housing demands in the Borough for the whole of the twenty years of the original Structure Plan period, taking into account that there would, in addition, be a modest proportion of infill and redevelopment throughout the existing urban area.
- 3.3 The Structure Plan First Alteration has established that about 90% of the HOUSING allocation has been completed during the first ten years of the Plan.
- 3.4 The Borough of Bournemouth has allocated land at Littledown Estate for 600 houses in addition to the original Structure Plan allocation and the growth rate is such that progress on these has also been taking place since 1985 and over 60% are complete.
- 3.5 POPULATION statistics during the last ten years indicate a reduction in population during the five years up to 1981 and an increase since 1981, although it is difficult to establish a direct pattern between population growth and housing due to various social factors affecting the statistics.
- 3.6 It is evident, however, that the growth rate of HOUSING development in Bournemouth is well ahead of that forecast in the Structure Plan and this is examined in detail in the Population and Housing chapter.
- 3.7 Development of the local ECONOMY and the task of increasing the number of available jobs was - and is - seen as an important responsibility to be undertaken by all local authorities in South East Dorset and the proposal to establish an Economic Development Unit was incorporated in the Structure Plan.
- 3.8 Whilst many of the proposals in the Structure Plan have attempted to improve job opportunities in the conurbation, the national EMPLOYMENT situation has suffered such serious problems that local progress has not been as effective as anticipated. Bournemouth's employment record has been influenced by national trends and the percentage of unemployed people in the Borough is at present significant, although lower than the national average. The complex reasons for this are referred to in the Employment Chapter. Certain sectors of the economy in Bournemouth have, however, made good progress and the Service Industries are steadily becoming more important for employment prospects.
- 3.9 Manufacturing INDUSTRY has traditionally been a comparatively small factor in the local economy, not assisted by the very limited amount of land available and suitable for industrial development.

4.1.3 In order to provide for 35,000 new homes, land for a further 20,600 to 26,400 dwellings was required adjacent to the urban areas on sites termed "Principal Housing Areas" selected on the basis of existing commitment or according to a set of six criteria. In relation to the Bournemouth Borough Local Plan area, two such areas were identified, namely North Bournemouth and Littledown, and allocated by the adoption of the following proposal:-

"Proposal 7.2 - Between 1976 and 1996 the provision of additional dwellings will be as follows (including the level of planning permissions outstanding in June 1976):

<u>Area</u>	<u>Number of Dwellings</u>
Littledown	300-500
North Bournemouth	3,200-4,000 "

4.1.4 However, whilst the development of the "Principal Housing Areas" has proceeded as intended, many more dwellings have been built within the existing urban areas of S.E. Dorset than was foreseen. Thus the control over the rate of housebuilding which the Structure Plan intended, which involved a reduction from about 3,100 dwellings per year in 1976 to about 1,400 dwellings per year towards the end of the Structure Plan Period, has not been achieved. Instead of 21,000 dwellings being built before 1986, about 28,200 dwellings were already built by March 1985. Therefore the average building rate in South East Dorset has not declined and remains near the 1976 level, which would result in a total of 62,000 new dwellings by 1996 if this rate were to continue, rather than the 35,000 intended.

4.1.5 The First Alteration of the Structure Plan was submitted to the Secretary of State for the Environment in March 1988 and attempts to continue the restraint policy of the 1980 Structure Plan, providing land for an average of 2,000 house completions per year over the 15-year plan period, 1986-2001. The First Alteration confirms the policy of the County Council to establish areas of Green Belt to retain the undeveloped wedges and corridors between settlements and to prevent the significant outward expansion of the existing towns, except where specified. Of particular relevance to the Local Plan area, the First Alteration proposes the completion of the consolidation of the present urban structure, and limiting extensions to the existing built-up area, by development and redevelopment within the built-up area (and by the development of a new community in the Grange Estate area in the St. Leonards area). The following new policies of particular relevance to Bournemouth are proposed:

SOUTH EAST DORSET STRUCTURE PLAN

**FIRST ALTERATION
EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM
SP40**

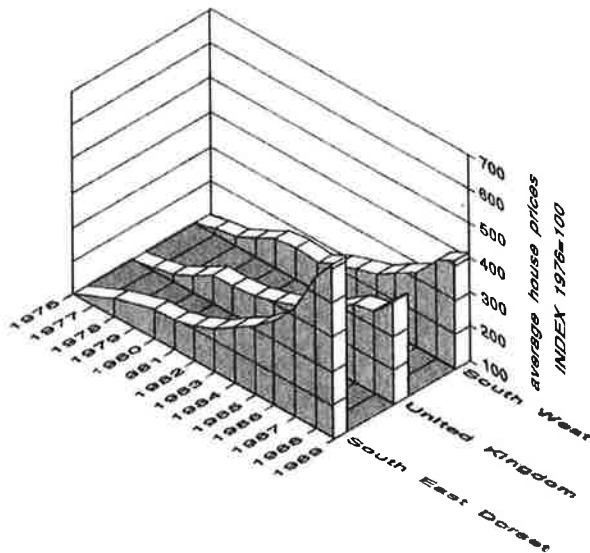
As approved by the Secretary of State for the Environment on 6 April 1990

**County Planning Department
Dorset County Council
September 1990**

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Figure 6.4
AVERAGE HOUSE PRICES



Sources: Council of Mortgage Lenders & DCC Information

sectors. In the manufacturing sector particularly, the process of industrial change has led to reductions in labour demand despite increases in floorspace. Major growth in manufacturing employment is unlikely; future growth in output will be achieved through more efficient production methods rather than through any substantial increase in the labour force. Nevertheless it is necessary to sustain a prosperous manufacturing sector in order to maintain a diverse local economy. The Plan allocates land for industrial use accordingly.

6.23

The best prospects for future employment growth are in the high technology and office sectors upon which the area is already heavily dependent. It has proved notably attractive to major insurance, banking and finance companies relocating from the South East. The area's appeal to companies in the growth industries seems likely to continue because of the preference of such companies to locate close to similar companies in areas with a skilled and specialised workforce. As with manufacturing industry, worker/floorspace ratios are declining with increasing use of micro-electronic technology. Nevertheless substantial employment growth is expected in these sectors.

6.24

Turning to labour supply, the number of economically active people is expected to increase faster than the population as a whole over the Plan period. This is due partly to changes in the age structure, which are expected to result in an increase in the proportion of the population who are of working age (except for those aged 16-24). The second factor is an expected increase in activity rates, particularly for females.

6.25

The relationship between housing development and employment growth is far from simple. It can be argued

that each stimulates the other. When the original Plan was prepared, the County Council expressed a fear that rapid economic development and employment growth would fuel pressures for additional housing, and felt it necessary therefore to set limits on office development. Clearly where a relocating firm brings with it a large section of its current workforce, there is a direct demand for housing as a result. But in most cases relocating firms also provide jobs for local people and are thus important to the local economy and to the employment prospects of local people. Economic prosperity, and hence jobs, depend on there being a supply of housing, adequate in both numbers and type, to accommodate the workforce, and particularly key workers, who are increasingly important as the need for special skills grows in an area with a large high-technology sector. Indeed, skill shortages represent a significant problem for some industries in the area.

6.26

Housing and employment development must proceed in step. A high level of housing development would be likely to increase the demand for jobs beyond the level which the local economy could be expected to supply. On the other hand, excessive housing restraint could restrict the supply of jobs by failing to meet the housing needs of firms wishing to expand or relocate to the area.

Constraints to development

6.27

In order to assess the capacity of South East Dorset to accommodate further development it is necessary to take into account the various constraints which exist in the area. In many cases the Green Belt established in the original Plan precludes development in areas where other constraints also exist. For the sake of completeness, however, the most significant factors considered are listed below and discussed briefly in Figure 6.5:

- (i) The setting of settlements including strategic gaps.
- (ii) Land of high landscape value.
- (iii) Land liable to flood.
- (iv) Land of value for nature conservation.
- (v) Land of high agricultural value.
- (vi) Mineral reserves.

Capacity of the area

6.28

These various constraints clearly limit the amount of additional housing which can be provided in South East Dorset. An examination of the capacity of the area for further residential development over the period 1986 to 2001 was made, taking account of three factors:

- (i) existing commitments: these included land with planning permission for housing (including dwellings under construction), land allocated for such use in local plans and land otherwise identified by the local planning authorities for residential development.

- (ii) an estimate of the additional amount of housing likely to come forward as a result of development, redevelopment and conversion within the existing urban area.
- (iii) the capacity of additional extensions to the built-up area which were permissible within the identified constraints.

6.29

The result of these studies showed that the 30,700 dwellings (gross) required to meet the OPCS migration based population projection could be accommodated in this way. However provision for a continuation of recent trends in migration and building rates could not be sustained.

Conclusion

6.30

Within the main strategy of the Plan the level of provision for house building is based on the capacity of the area for further development. This takes account of the many constraints which occur in South East Dorset. The resulting provision of 30,700 dwellings for the period 1986 to 2001 makes for a lower rate of house building than has occurred in the recent past: just over 2,000 dwellings per annum compared with 3,100. Chapter 5 outlined the undesirable effects of the continuation of this past rate. On the other hand the reduced rate is not based on tight restraint and therefore avoids the possible undesirable consequences of such a policy. Further, the Plan's provision is sufficient to meet the needs of industry and employment in a balanced way and at the same time is compatible with the protection of the environment.

POLICY 1.4A

PROVISION WILL BE MADE FOR ABOUT 30,700 NEW DWELLINGS IN THE PLAN AREA BETWEEN 1986 AND 2001. THE DISTRIBUTION BETWEEN DISTRICTS IS TO BE:

DISTRICT	NUMBER OF DWELLINGS
BOURNEMOUTH	ABOUT 9,100
CHRISTCHURCH	ABOUT 2,500
EAST DORSET	ABOUT 6,800
POOLE	ABOUT 9,600
PURBECK	ABOUT 2,700
TOTAL	ABOUT 30,700

LOCATION OF HOUSING PROVISION

6.31

As well as giving the overall level of housing provision Policy 1.4A sets out the distribution by District. This was derived from the capacity study outlined above. The following policies set out in more detail the locational aspects of the overall housing provision. These are derived from the main strategy (see Chapter 5).

6.32

This states that housing development will be concentrated in two types of location. One is development and redevelopment within the existing urban areas. However certain safeguards are necessary to ensure that, in implementing this aspect of the strategy, the broad aims of the County Council are achieved. Consequently three particular criteria have been included in Policy 1.5 which are felt to be important in helping to achieve the Council's aims set out in Chapter 4.

POLICY 1.5

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT WILL GENERALLY BE PERMITTED WITHIN THE EXISTING URBAN AREAS, PROVIDED THAT:

- (i) THE SCALE AND NATURE OF DEVELOPMENT IS IN CHARACTER WITH ITS SURROUNDINGS, AND THE AMENITIES OF ADJOINING RESIDENTIAL AREAS CAN BE SAFEGUARDED;
- (ii) THE DEVELOPMENT WILL NOT GIVE RISE TO LOCAL TRAFFIC OR PARKING PROBLEMS;
- (iii) THE NECESSARY INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES ARE ADEQUATE OR CAN BE PROVIDED BEFORE DEVELOPMENT TAKES PLACE.

6.33

The other location for housing provision is extensions to the built-up area as identified in Policy 1.6. Many of these sites were identified in the original Plan and are committed for development either by planning permission or by being allocated in local plans. Some sites identified in the original Plan have been omitted because they are entirely or largely complete. Two new sites are included: North Poole and Sandford/Holton Heath. No other extensions to the existing built-up area will be permitted since these would amount to intrusions into the Green Belt.

6.34

The list of sites also includes a number within the urban area. In order to achieve the overall policy of restraint, it is essential that the number of major sites within the existing urban area is limited to those identified in Policy 1.6. The original Plan identified any site of 200 units or more in this way and no change to this criterion has been made in the Plan as altered. Consequently the development of 200 or more units on any site not 'identified' in the policy will be resisted.

POLICY 1.6

BETWEEN 1986 AND 2001 PROVISION FOR NEW DWELLINGS WILL BE MADE IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS:

AREA	NUMBER OF DWELLINGS
BROADSTONE	ABOUT 800
CANFORD HEATH	ABOUT 1,300
CORFE MULLEN	ABOUT 600
CREEKMOOR	ABOUT 500
FERNDOWN	ABOUT 1,800

Figure 6.5
CONSTRAINTS TO DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH EAST DORSET

The setting of settlements including strategic gaps.

Since the early stages of preparation of the original Plan, the need to protect the separate identity of individual settlements has been a basic tenet of strategic and local planning in South East Dorset. Some of the key "green wedges" which the planning authorities intend to protect from development, are shown diagrammatically here.

Land of high landscape value.

Apart from the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty in the north-western and south-western parts of the Plan area, the principal areas of high landscape value are the Avon and Stour Valleys and the land to the West of Corfe Mullen. In addition there is much attractive landscape in other rural parts of the area for example around the Lytchetts and the Holt area. The Council attaches importance to the Government's advice on "the continuing need to protect the countryside for its own sake".

Land liable to flood.

While this is obviously a development constraint, most of the land liable to flood is in areas which should be protected as "green wedges" or for landscape reasons.



Dorset County Structure Plan

Deposit Plan

CSP21

All comments on this document should be sent to the
County Planning Officer, County Hall, Dorchester, Dorset DT1 1XJ,
to arrive not later than 8th March 1996.

County Planning Department
Dorset County Council

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1.9 Since the Project Report of the County Structure Plan was published in January 1993, a number of reports and working papers have been published. These provided background information and technical analysis related to the topics covered in the draft plan for public consultation. The draft plan was published in November 1994 and the comments received have been taken into account in producing this deposit version of the Plan. In addition to this document a technical appendix has been produced to explain in more detail the assumptions and analysis on which the employment and housing provisions have been based. A list of all the relevant documents may be found in Appendix A.

THE NATIONAL & REGIONAL PLANNING CONTEXT

1.10 The Government sees the main purpose of the town and country planning system as the regulation and use of land in the public interest. The system must make adequate provision for development and, at the same time, protect the natural and built environment. To achieve this, development and growth must be sustainable (a concept which is elaborated in the next chapter). By guiding development to appropriate locations and preventing it where it is not acceptable, the planning system can secure economy, efficiency and amenity in the use of land.

1.11 The Regional Planning Guidance for the South West re-emphasises the need for sustainable development. It draws attention to the outstanding environmental quality and diversity of the Region. The enhancement of the environment is linked closely to economic prosperity, and adequate provision must be made for this. In part economic prosperity will be aided through the improvement of the transport system. As far as Dorset is concerned, the Guidance recognises the need for maintaining and improving transport links within the region and with other regions and, in particular, the need for improvements both to east-west and north-south road routes, the significance of the ports of Poole and Weymouth, and the importance of the continuing provision of air routes from Bournemouth International Airport. Reference is made to the requirement that major road schemes should aim to improve accessibility to the motorway trunk road network where this is consistent with the strategic role of the network and can assist economic development, provide new access to new development, cater for tourism related traffic, or improve road safety. Although the Guidance recognises that the region is served by a relatively limited rail network, it is recommended that Plans should have regard to the desirability of maintaining and developing this network, including links to other regions and the continent.

1.12 On other development-related matters the Guidance recognises the important part which Dorset plays in the winning of minerals. Also it suggests the amount of housing which should be provided in the County to the year 2011. The Guidance looks to the continuing economic prosperity of the Bournemouth-Poole conurbation, while accepting that the physical growth of the area is limited by environmental constraints such as

the adjoining Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the New Forest, and nature conservation interests, particularly in Poole Harbour and the Dorset Heathlands. The need for environmental conservation is important not only in its own right, but in a Region and County so dependent on tourism, it is vital to the success of that industry. Consequently the Guidance stresses the need for the protection and enhancement of a resource which, in the case of the South West, is of national significance.

Overview of This Document

1.13

This document is divided into two principal parts: the Explanatory Memorandum, which sets out the reasoned justification for the policies of the Plan, and the Written Statement, which lists the policies themselves. Figure 1.3 summarises the organisation of the document.

1.14

The Explanatory Memorandum elaborates national and regional planning guidance and draws on earlier background work to develop its proposals. Section 2 of the document outlines Dorset County Council's vision for the future of the County and how the Structure Plan will help to achieve it. To this end, it sets out the strategy of the Plan, and highlights sustainable development as the guiding principle behind its policies. The policies are set out in the following two sections, which address the issues of guiding development and caring for the environment. The fifth section appraises the policies in terms of their economic, environmental and social effects. In the final section of the Explanatory Memorandum, the matters of implementation, monitoring and review are considered.

1.15

The Written Statement follows this section, and then a number of appendices, including a glossary of terms and a schedule showing the relationship between the new policies and those contained in existing structure plans in Dorset. The key diagram acts as a geographical index to the proposed policies.

2.30

However continuing growth in road transport over the whole road system in Dorset would be incompatible with the principle of sustainable development. Motorised transport is a major user of non-renewable resources, as well as a significant source of greenhouse gas emissions. Of particular concern is the use of the private car, which in these terms is one of the least efficient forms of transport. If non-renewable resources are to be used more efficiently and pollution be reduced, a further element of the strategy will be:

“to create opportunities to reduce the need to travel, particularly by private car”.

2.31

This will be achieved principally through the policies which address the location of new development. Different land uses will be encouraged to cluster so as to reduce the number and distance of journeys which will be necessary between them. However new development will have only a limited effect on the overall quantity and patterns of journeys. If growth in car-borne transport is to be contained, it will also be necessary to provide for attractive alternatives, such as public transport, cycling and walking. This is more likely to be possible in urban areas as part of a package of measures to manage road based traffic demands. As well as minimising environmental impact and increasing choice, the aim also is to improve safety in travel. The strategy, therefore, is:

“to provide opportunities to meet travel needs in ways which minimise environmental damage and costs, provide maximum choice, and improve safety”.

2.32

The housing provisions of the Plan will need to ensure that an adequate supply is available to house the workforce necessary for the development of the local economy, to provide for those who cannot compete for market housing, and to ensure that those in special need of help or supervision are well housed. Concerning the last two, the Plan is limited in the contribution it can make. Nevertheless there are mechanisms within the planning system which contribute to the supply of non-market housing, and the Plan will therefore encourage their use. A further element of the strategy is thus:

“to make adequate provision for the housing needs of Dorset”.

2.33

The fostering of community life will require a variety of approaches, some linked to economic and housing policies to ensure vibrant village communities; some to the design, scale and layout of new development (which can also help to reduce crime); some to the provision of facilities for recreation, culture and the arts; and some to encourage community focus within established urban areas. In summary, the strategy is:

“to provide opportunities to maintain and improve community life”.

2.34

The enhancement of the distinctive quality and diversity of the natural and built environment will be addressed in a variety of ways. Traditionally the planning system has encouraged environmental conservation through the designation of areas of significantly high quality, within which protective policies are applied and/or high standards of design are expected. The Plan will continue this approach. In addition it will emphasise the significance of the conservation of the wider environment, including land, air and water, both within Dorset and beyond. In this respect, both the use of resources and the potential polluting effects of proposals need to be considered. Further the mutual interdependency of all elements of the environment should be taken into account when development is proposed. All these matters will need careful consideration if the vision is to be realised, both in relation to human needs and aspirations and to the environment itself. A further element of the strategy is therefore:

“to conserve and improve Dorset’s environmental inheritance”.

2.35

The achievement of the vision in a sustainable manner will depend to a large extent on the location of new development. To a considerable degree, this will be determined by many of the elements of the strategy outlined so far. The conscientious stewardship of all resources will mean that the take-up of greenfield land is minimised. Land is a finite resource. Great care therefore needs to be taken when releasing for development previously unused sites. Since the start of the two Structure Plans which cover Dorset, over 1,250 hectares of greenfield land have been developed. This may not seem a great deal in a County of nearly 265,300 hectares. However bearing in mind the extent of critical environmental assets in Dorset, the need to protect other areas subject to environmental stress and land of high agricultural quality, and the fact that about 16,200 hectares of land is already in urban use, the opportunities for continuing such rates of development are limited.

2.36

The corollary of this is that new built development should be located principally within existing built-up areas, especially towns. This will encourage the recycling of urban land and buildings, and make best use of the investment in infrastructure and community facilities which has already taken place. Not only will this reduce the demand for land as a resource, but also demands for other resources, which would otherwise be exploited to provide for infrastructure and community needs in new locations. It will also encourage the restoration of derelict and contaminated land, thereby reducing pollution to land, air and water.

2.37

The concentration of new development within the built-up areas will also help to contain future growth in travel demand, particularly by car. To an extent this will be achieved by locating as closely as possible housing, employment, shopping, leisure and other community facilities. Increased densities of population within urban areas will help to make public transport more viable. In turn, this should help to improve its quality, availability and attractiveness, and reduce reliance on the private car. Thus the strategy is:

“to concentrate new built development in existing built-up areas, particularly the conurbation and other towns”.

2.38

Throughout the twentieth century the South East Dorset conurbation has spread significantly from the original town centres of Bournemouth and Poole. Substantial areas of greenfield land have been taken up for development. Many communities have lost their identity as they have become part of a much wider urban area, which now stretches some 26 kilometres from east to west and 23 kilometres north to south. The continuation of this pattern of development would not accord with the principle of sustainable development. For example, it would require the continued release of greenfield land, and threaten areas of very high environmental quality. It would result in increasing numbers and lengths of journeys, particularly by private car. Also it would further erode the separate identity of existing communities. Therefore the next element of the strategy is:

“to contain the outward spread of the South East Dorset conurbation”.

2.39

Finally the amount of growth for which the Plan should make provision needs to be considered. If the key to sustainable development is a prosperous economy, this will require some physical and population growth. In Dorset, population growth is achieved only because more people move into the County than move out. However the continuation of past rates of net migration gain are not necessary to ensure a prosperous economy. Further, it is not possible to continue to accommodate these rates without causing significant damage to Dorset's unique environment or changing the character of its towns and villages. High population growth also results in increased demands for services such as education, health and social services. Further, migration itself may be associated with an increase in health problems and the disruption of family and community ties, which would be contrary to the vision. Consequently the strategy is:

“to provide for a reduced rate of migration-led population growth”.

2.40

In summary, the strategy on which the County Structure Plan is based is:

- to secure the conscientious stewardship of all resources
- to provide for the restructuring of Dorset's economy and the development of local enterprise
- to improve the accessibility of Dorset to other areas
- to create opportunities to reduce the need to travel, particularly by private car
- to provide opportunities to meet travel needs in ways which minimise environmental damage and costs, provide maximum choice and improve safety
- to make adequate provision for the housing needs of Dorset
- to provide opportunities to maintain and improve community life
- to conserve and improve Dorset's environmental inheritance
- to concentrate new built development in existing built-up areas, particularly the conurbation and other towns
- to contain the outward spread of the South East Dorset conurbation
- to provide for a reduced rate of migration-led population growth.

3.17

It is not proposed that this reduction in the house-building rate will be compensated by additions to existing settlements or the development of new settlements beyond the Green Belt. First, these areas would not be attractive to people who want the lifestyle offered in the Bournemouth-Poole conurbation. Some element of the demand for housing in South East Dorset, particularly from those wishing to live in the smaller towns and villages, could be met in settlements closest to the outer boundary of the Green Belt, but the scale of the development required would substantially alter the character of these places. Further, this option and that of a new settlement would be contrary to the principle of sustainable development. Land-take, the demand for other resources, environmental stress, threats to areas of high environmental quality, and waste generation would all increase. Also, unless such settlements were self-contained in terms of housing, employment, shopping and community facilities, the number of car-borne journeys and their distances would rise significantly. Self-containment would be difficult to achieve: recent research by the Department of the Environment suggests that new settlements would have to have a minimum of 10,000 dwellings for this to be possible. Even then, people would continue to commute, shop or make other journeys beyond where they lived, according to choice. This is more likely in South East Dorset, where the employment, shopping and leisure opportunities of the conurbation are obvious incentives to make such journeys.

Villages

3.18

Nevertheless the principle of self-containment for existing villages throughout Dorset is one which should be sought after, both to reduce the number of car-borne journeys and to foster community life. As noted earlier, the function of the village has changed significantly, so that many now serve merely as dormitory areas for the larger urban centres. Additional housing development simply increases the level of commuting, much of which is by car, since viable and attractive public transport is particularly difficult to provide in rural areas. The problem can be addressed in two ways. First further housing development will be restricted to those villages where it will help to maintain or improve existing community facilities, such as shops and schools, or where it is needed for affordable local housing. Second additional employment opportunities should be provided in villages. Not only will this help to reduce the need for commuting, but it will also help to diversify the rural economy. In turn, this may help to supplement agricultural incomes and thereby aid farmers and landowners in their stewardship of the countryside. Development in villages should be within boundaries defined in Local Plans, with the possible exception of that required to meet local affordable housing needs.

SETTLEMENT POLICY E

THE ROLE OF VILLAGES (INCLUDING THE SETTLEMENTS OF THE ISLE OF PORTLAND) AS SELF-CONTAINED COMMUNITIES WILL BE ENCOURAGED AND STRENGTHENED BY ALLOWING HOUSING AND OTHER DEVELOPMENT ONLY WHERE IT WILL HELP TO MAINTAIN OR IMPROVE EXISTING COMMUNITY FACILITIES (INCLUDING SHOPPING AND EDUCATION), PROVIDE AFFORDABLE LOCAL NEEDS HOUSING OR BROADEN EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES.

Scale and Design of Built Development

3.19

The reasons, in the context of sustainable development, for concentrating new built development within existing built-up areas were set out earlier. However without care such an approach could have consequences which would be contrary to the guiding principle of the Plan. Town cramming and poor design would result in a deterioration in the urban environment, and hence the quality of life of urban residents. However, for the Plan's strategy to be successful, it is essential that the quality of the urban environment should improve, rather than deteriorate. This will make the main urban areas more attractive for people to live in, and thereby alleviate pressure on the countryside. Equally important is the need to preserve the existing distinctive high quality and character of many of Dorset's towns and villages. They form a significant part of the environmental inheritance of the County which must be conserved and improved.

SETTLEMENT POLICY F

BUILT DEVELOPMENT IN THE SETTLEMENTS IDENTIFIED IN SETTLEMENT POLICIES A TO E SHOULD BE OF A SCALE AND DESIGN WHICH RESPECTS AND REFLECTS THE FORM, SETTING, HISTORIC CHARACTER AND OTHER DISTINCTIVE ATTRIBUTES OF EACH SETTLEMENT.

The Countryside

3.20

It is fundamental to the strategy that development in the countryside should be kept to a minimum. However some development must be located there. First, agriculture and forestry need new buildings as they adapt to changing economic circumstances. On the other hand, buildings no longer needed for these purposes can be used to provide other employment opportunities. Second, generally speaking, minerals can only be worked where they are found, and for the most part this is in rural locations. Worked-out sites and other locations in rural areas may also provide opportunities for the disposal of waste and for countryside recreation. Third, source materials for many forms of renewable energy are also found in the countryside, and it is appropriate that generation facilities should be located close by. Fourth, service infrastructure, such as roads and gas, electricity, water and telephone supply lines, is also necessary in rural areas. Finally, some new housing is needed in the countryside, particularly where it is essential for the efficient and secure operation of rural enterprises. Exceptionally it may also be allowed to provide affordable homes for local needs.

For example, research by the County Council indicates that the overall state of the national and regional housing markets has significant effects on rates of migration. Therefore if the factors outlined in paragraph 6.18 result in a continuation of the current sluggish state of the housing market, it is reasonable to assume that migration will be significantly lower than during a period of high market activity. This will be reinforced if job uncertainty continues to be a feature of the economy. Because of this, and given the costs of moving house, people are becoming more reluctant to migrate when taking up new jobs. Instead weekly commuting is preferred. On the other hand, if the national economic situation improves and the housing market revives, this does not mean that provision should be made in Dorset to accommodate higher rates of net in-migration. Simply because national conditions may be such as to stimulate greater movements of people, locally these must be constrained in the context of sustainable development to levels which meet local economic needs and can be accommodated within strategic environmental constraints.

6.21

An alternative approach to measuring future demand is to use past building rates. These should be over a sufficiently long period to iron out short term fluctuations. While it could be argued that, on the one hand, the consideration above of national economic factors suggests the overall demand for market housing may decline, on the other hand, local past building rates themselves may not reflect in entirety the level of demand at the time, since they were subject to increasingly restrictive planning policies. However the continuation of past rates also assumes that past patterns of demand will continue. This would not take account of factors such as changing household characteristics, demographic changes and changes in tastes. With these caveats in mind, if the building rates of 1984 to 1994 were to continue, then some 74,600 dwellings would be constructed during the Structure Plan period.

Implications of Provision for Market Demand

6.22

Comparison of the results of these two demand-led approaches with the "capacity" approach shows that to satisfy demand, an additional 10,800 to 21,700 dwellings will be required. It should be noted that the "capacity" approach does allow for the meeting of a substantial amount of market demand. However, if the estimated demand was to be met in full, it would contravene both the Regional Planning Guidance and the principles of sustainable development.

6.23

As noted earlier, the suggested provision in the Regional Planning Guidance is not inflexible or a precise target. However to meet the market demand level would require an increase of between 18% and 38%: well beyond the limits of flexibility. Further, there would need to be substantial intrusions into the South East Dorset Green Belt and these could not be accommodated without detriment to heavily constrained areas. The Regional Planning Guidance recognises the limitations which these constraints impose in terms of the potential for significant new development in this area. For the reasons outlined in the Settlement Pattern chapter, it is not considered

realistic or acceptable to deflect this demand beyond the Green Belt to existing or new settlements (see paragraph 3.17).

6.24

For the County as a whole, the accommodation of the total number of dwellings which may be required as a result of market demand would have significant resource impacts. To build an additional 21,700 dwellings would require nearly 1,100 hectares of land for housing and ancillary purposes. About 1,300,000 tonnes of minerals would be needed for house-building alone. The resulting households would consume over 5.5 million litres of water per day and generate over 40,000 tonnes of waste each year. In addition, the critical environmental landscape and wildlife resources of the County would be exposed to 40,000 additional pairs of feet.

6.25

The additional population would also increase the labour supply. To some extent, this growth itself will create jobs to provide the goods and services demanded by the additional population. However it is questionable whether the forecast increase in the number of jobs will be sufficient to absorb the total additional labour supply, particularly that associated with the higher of the two demand measures.

6.26

Finally, the social effects of additional growth and migration should not go unnoticed. These fall into a number of categories. First, there will be additional demands on services such as education, health and social services. Second, relatively rapid rates of growth in small communities can give rise to social tensions and change the character of areas. This is evident particularly in the rural areas and has presented its own difficulties. Third, research is beginning to show that population movement can be associated with an increase in health problems, as well as contributing to family breakdown and the disruption of family and community ties. If the strategy of the Structure Plan is to contribute to the improvement of health and community life, these effects suggest that a reduction in net migration is desirable.

THE PREFERRED LEVEL OF PROVISION

6.27

The County Council considers in taking account of all these factors that the level of housing provision derived from the "capacity" approach is to be preferred to one based on accommodation of market demand throughout the County. The "capacity" approach allows for demand to be met in certain areas, but only where the principle of sustainable development will not be compromised.

6.28

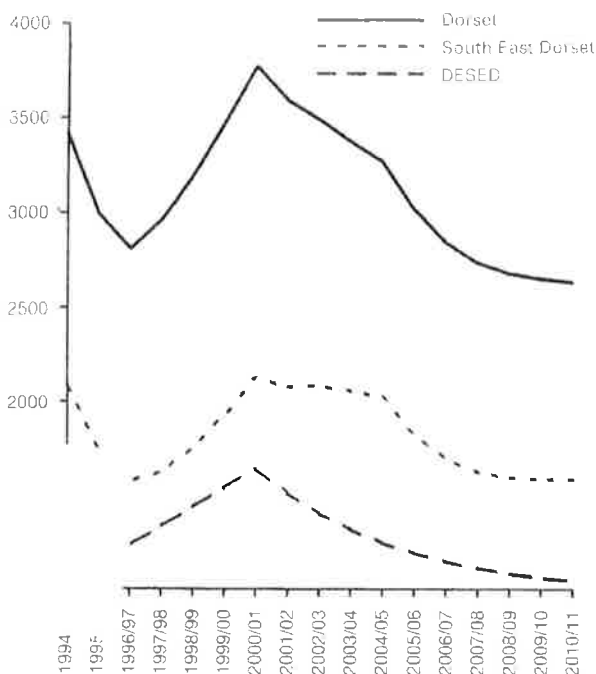
The provision of 52,900 dwellings for the Plan period will generally mean a significant reduction in building rates compared with those of the past. Assuming the housing market picks up by the end of the century, the provision allows for a recovery in rates to about 3,800 dwellings per annum. By the end of the Plan period it is envisaged that the rate will decline to about 2,600: similar to that experienced in the last few years (see Figure 6.4). Will this have serious implications for economic growth and house prices?

Restraint and Economic Growth

6.29

It has already been shown that, overall, this level of building will provide an adequate workforce for the whole period, provided the assumptions concerning unemployment, commuting and double jobbing prove to be robust. However if building rates tail off towards the end of the period, will this lead to labour shortages? While net inward migration may decrease, there will still be substantial inward flows of migrants. For example, during 1991/92, when the lowest level of house-building

Figure 6.4
Projected House-building Rates
1994-2011



for many years was recorded (2,700 dwellings), some 24,700 people moved into Dorset. On this basis, there will remain a very adequate labour supply.

6.30

Also, because of the changing nature of work, the need to migrate is unlikely to increase, and employment-linked migration may even fall substantially in the long run. This is largely due to the revolution in telecommunications, enabling people to change jobs without moving house. However in certain economically and technologically elite groups, and amongst young, reasonably well-educated workers, migration might well increase substantially. On the whole, the success of local economies is likely to depend on how well they are able to attract and retain the affluent and the skilled through maintaining and improving their environmental quality, cultural and leisure amenities. In other words, increasingly, work will tend more and more to follow the workforce. The nurturing of a strong local skills base will be even more essential in

the future than it is at present, and in this respect a residential environment of the highest quality will be the critical factor.

Restraint and House Prices

6.31

It is often assumed that local housing markets are very sensitive to the effects of changes in the supply of new dwellings. Some argue that a reduction in house-building will create local shortages, which then drive up prices and create even greater difficulties of access to housing for lower, and even moderate, income households.

6.32

However this argument is flawed. First, new homes comprise only a small proportion of the total market for housing in most localities at any one time. Research carried out in South East Dorset during the 1980s demonstrated that, at that time, new dwellings locally comprised only about 15% of the total market. The cessation of building altogether in these terms would hardly be cataclysmic. Buyers would not, on the whole, be denied access to the market, apart from those insisting on a brand new home. Some relatively marginal increases in prices would probably occur.

6.33

Second, prices locally only relate to demand in a limited way. Local housing markets in the United Kingdom are not geographically isolated and potential migrants normally have quite a wide choice of potential destinations and locations. Past boom periods in house prices relate more to regional and national trends than to local conditions, and are far more a response to the availability of mortgage finance, interest rates, income levels, and consumer confidence at a national level than to the number of new houses built locally.

6.34

The conclusion therefore is that the capacity approach, with its implicit restraint of house-building rates, will have no detrimental effect on the economy nor any significant implications for house prices. Structure Plan provision will therefore be based on it.

HOUSING POLICY A

PROVISION WILL BE MADE TO ENABLE ABOUT 52,900 DWELLINGS (GROSS) TO BE CONSTRUCTED BETWEEN APRIL 1994 AND MARCH 2011. THE DISTRIBUTION BETWEEN DISTRICTS IS TO BE:

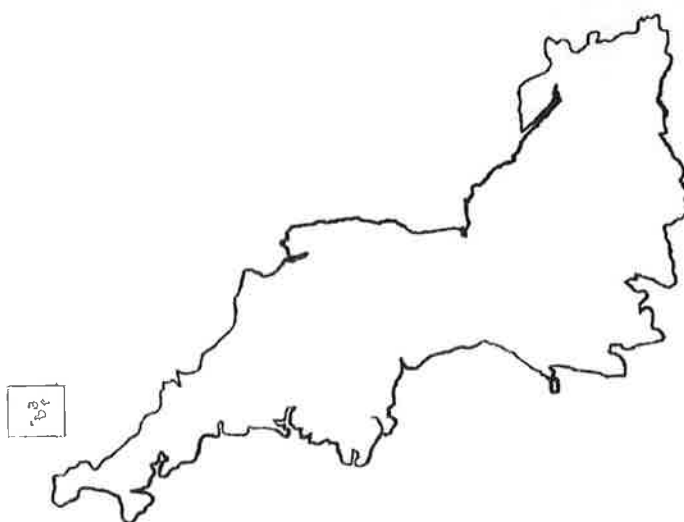
DISTRICT	NO. OF DWELLINGS
BOURNEMOUTH	ABOUT 12,400
CHRISTCHURCH	ABOUT 2,700
EAST DORSET	ABOUT 4,400
NORTH DORSET	ABOUT 5,900
POOLE	ABOUT 9,500
PURBECK	ABOUT 3,800
WEST DORSET	ABOUT 9,500
WEYMOUTH & PORTLAND	ABOUT 4,700



REGIONAL PLANNING GUIDANCE FOR THE SOUTH WEST OF ENGLAND

Public Examination

March 2000



Panel Report

Derivation of SWRPC Figures

6.42 The starting point for the revised SWRPC estimates of housing requirements is the ONS/DETR 1996-based projections of population and households. These project an increase in households of 412,000 in the period 1996-2016. The household projections have been translated into dwelling requirements by making allowances for concealed and sharing households, vacancies and non-main dwellings (second and holiday homes) and then adjusting the results to take into account a reduced migration level, labour market factors and infrastructure and environmental considerations.

6.43 The key assumptions are:

- (a) a 10% reduction in the amount of housing required by net migrants, based on an assumption that urban renaissance in other regions will reduce inter-regional migration (involving a reduction of 26,700 dwellings);
- (b) a reduction in the housing vacancy rate to 3% from the 1991 level of 4.7% (amounting to a reduction in new homes required of 22,300);
- (c) the number of second homes as a proportion of the total stock remaining constant at the 1991 level (an additional requirement of 10,700 dwellings);
- (d) a 20% reduction in concealed/sharing households compared with 1991 (an additional requirement of 7,300 dwellings);
- (e) adjustments in housing provision to ensure a better match between projected labour supply and forecast job increases (involving a reduction of 13,300 dwellings in Dorset and an increase of 4,000 in Gloucestershire);
- (f) a 'holding' reduction of 5,000 dwellings in housing provision in Avon, pending investment in infrastructure.

6.44 Discussion of the housing figures at the Examination centred around these assumptions and the alternatives put forward by the House Builders Federation (HBF) and other representatives of the development industry. The latter resulted in proposed levels of housing provision ranging from 480,000 to 506,850, compared with SWRPC's figure of 367,000 (or 372,000 assuming the infrastructure constraints in Avon are overcome).

6.45 A central part of the argument about housing provision concerns the level of migration. Growth in the South West's population and households – and therefore the additional housing requirement – is heavily influenced by net in-migration. Indeed, as we have already observed in Chapter 5, without in-migration the Region's population would be declining. The effect on the dwelling requirement is best illustrated by comparing the housing need which would result from nil net migration (i.e. gross in-migration balances gross out-migration) with that arising from the DETR 1996-based with-migration projection of households.⁶

⁶ These figures are drawn from SWRPC Supplementary Background Paper 5, Population and Housing. They are based on applying SWRPC's assumptions on vacancies, second homes and concealed/sharing households to the DETR household projections.

Housing

	Dwellings Requirement 1996-2016
With migration	407,700
Nil net migration	140,800
Difference	266,900 (65%)

In other words, if the numbers of migrants moving into the South West were balanced by an equal number leaving the Region, the dwelling requirement would be 65% less than that based on assuming a continuation of net in-migration.

6.46 The South West is therefore very different from the South East and many other regions where housing needs largely arise from the indigenous growth in households. Net in-migration has a particularly marked effect on housing demand in Devon, Dorset, Cornwall and Somerset. In Gloucestershire and Wiltshire the effect is less marked but still significant, whilst in Avon indigenous household growth accounts for the major part of housing need.

6.47 Those seeking an increase in housing provision for the Region argue that the migration assumptions adopted by SWRPC are too low, on the basis that:

- the ONS/DETR projections are based on a projection of the 1991-1996 migration trend which was itself abnormally low;
- there is no justification for a further 10% downward adjustment in migration based on urban renaissance elsewhere;
- further allowance should be made for the possible effects of 'under-provision' of housing in the South East.

Other arguments about the level of housing provision centre on the assumptions concerning concealed /sharing households, vacancy rates and second homes and the housing needs arising from economic development in different parts of the Region.

Panel's Assessment

6.48 Our detailed assessment of the various factors referred to above is set out in Appendix D. Here we present a brief summary of our conclusions. Before doing so, however, we think it is important to emphasise one or two general points.

6.49 Firstly, although we are following the approach of the Draft RPGs for the South East and East Anglia in expressing housing provision as an average annual rate we do regard it as important that the reasoning for adopting any chosen figure in RPG is set out clearly and in full. There is a very good reason for this, namely that under a PMM approach it is essential that all the assumptions underpinning the housing figures are clear and transparent (even if they cannot all be precisely quantified) so that they are capable of being monitored and reviewed alongside the total level of provision itself. One of the great merits of SWRPC's methodology is that it is clear how their figures have been arrived at, even if there are disagreements about their assumptions and reasoning.

Recommendation 6.2

RPG should be accompanied by a clear explanation of the assumptions and reasoning on which its proposed level and distribution of housing are based.

6.50 Secondly, we have previously suggested that consideration should be given to breaking down the figures for housing provision in RPG into ten year periods (or into such periods as would be most appropriate for structure plan preparation). We believe that this would provide a greater degree of certainty in the short-term, greater flexibility in the long term and, in the context of PMM, would facilitate and inform any phasing policies in development plans. All the necessary information to carry out such an exercise was not available to us. For the purposes of this report, therefore, we have concentrated our recommendations on deriving an annual average rate based on assessing housing need over the whole twenty year period. Our figures would need to be re-worked by GOSW and SWRPC if our recommendation to provide a more detailed breakdown is accepted.

6.51 Thirdly, and leading on from this, we wish to re-emphasise the considerable degree of uncertainty affecting the assumptions on which any estimates of regional housing requirements are based. We have already illustrated this in the context of migration. In addition, it is clear from the sensitivity tests accompanying the DETR 1996-based national projections of households that both demographic and economic factors can affect the rate at which new households may form. Other factors affecting the assessments for the South West include:

- the labour demand forecasts, which show a wide range of variation (from 188,100 to 518,000 additional jobs over the period 1996-2016) and which would have a major impact on the number of houses required for migrants;
- the labour supply projections, where variations in assumptions on participation rates, unemployment, double-jobbing or commuting could affect the number of workers arising from a given increase in population or households;
- variations in assumptions on vacancy rates, second homes and concealed/sharing households which, if increased up to the levels suggested by HBF and others could inflate the dwelling requirement by up to 62,000 or 3,100 dwellings per annum.

6.52 Some of this margin for error could be narrowed if our recommendation for taking a short/medium term view of housing requirements were adopted. In any event, this degree of uncertainty again emphasises the importance of putting into place effective monitoring and review arrangements in order to provide a basis for checking on actual levels of housing provision and changes in the assumptions under-pinning the figures in RPG.

6.53 Our proposals on housing provision for the Region and structure plan areas over the period 1996-2016 are set out in Table 5. These involve an average annual rate of **20,350 additional dwellings per annum for the Region as a whole**. This represents a modest increase in SWRPC's figure of 18,350. For purposes of comparison, Table 5 also includes SWRPC's proposals as presented to the Examination, together with the rates implied by current structure plan allocations (for the period 1996-2011) and the actual average annual rates of house building experienced in each area over the period 1981-99.

Housing

Table 5 Scale and Distribution of Housing Provision 1996-2016 (annual averages)

Structure Plan Area	SWRPC Position *	Outstanding Structure Plan Allocations (from 1996) ***	Past completion rates**					PANEL PROPOSALS
			1981-86	1986-91	1991-96	1996-99	1981-99	
			Avon	3,350	2,900-3,600	3,700	4,050	
Cornwall	1,800	2,450	2,250	3,050	1,750	2,000	2,292	2,200
Devon	4,050	4,750	5,250	6,650	4,050	4,000	5,114	4,300
Dorset	2,650	2,600	4,000	4,500	2,700	2,700	3,567	2,650
Gloucs.	2,000	2,500	2,750	3,400	2,600	2,200	2,783	2,400
Somerset	1,950	2,350-2,750	2,700	3,300	1,900	2,250	2,562	2,100
Wiltshire	2,550	3,400-3,650	3,550	3,800	2,850	2,900	3,313	3,000
South West	18,350	20,950-22,300	24,200	28,800	18,850	19,650	23,222	20,350

* Avon figures could conditionally increase to 3,600.

** Figures for Avon, Cornwall, Gloucs and Somerset are gross new build; figures for Dorset and Wiltshire are net, taking account of losses.

*** Where ranges are indicated for Structure Plan commitments, the bottom of the range is the latest proposed modification provision. The top of the range is the recommendation of the Panel of the Examination in Public. All figures relate to the period 1996-2011.

6.54 In deriving these proposals we have:

- (a) accepted the DETR 1996-based household projections as an appropriate starting point, recognising that these assume a lower net in-migration into the South West than in past years, but we have not adopted SWRPC's further 10% reduction in housing for migrants based on the effect of urban renaissance elsewhere;
- (b) accepted SWRPC's assumptions on vacancy rates, second homes and concealed/sharing households;
- (c) allowed for additional housing to meet the projected increase in jobs in Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire;
- (d) accepted SWRPC's adjustment in housing provision for Dorset to reflect the environmental constraints in the Bournemouth/Poole area and the need for a better match between jobs and labour supply;
- (e) not accepted the 5,000 dwellings 'holding' adjustment in Avon based on the need for infrastructure investment;
- (f) taken into account the spatial strategy and the potential for development in PUAs, including the capacity of previously developed sites and buildings;
- (g) taken into account the need for affordable housing, especially in Avon, Cornwall, Devon and Dorset (see below), past completion rates and planned levels of housing provision already incorporated in structure plans.

6.55 By implication we have not accepted the arguments for much higher figures of housing provision proposed by some participants at the Examination, notably the suggestion that the South West should plan for more housing in order to compensate for any under provision in the South East (see Chapter 2 and Appendix D for our reasoning on this point).

**BOURNEMOUTH, DORSET AND POOLE STRUCTURE PLAN
(FORMERLY DORSET COUNTY STRUCTURE PLAN)
CSP28**

February 2001

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6.16

The amount of housing which may be developed during the Plan period will take account of demand and supply considerations. It is the sum of three components:

- (i) existing commitments: these include land with planning permission for housing (including dwellings under construction), land allocated for such use in development plans and land otherwise identified by the local planning authorities for residential development at March 1994. Allowance is made for the fact that not all such commitments will be developed.
- (ii) an estimate of the additional amount of housing unaffected by strategic planning policies, which is likely to come forward during the Plan period as a result of development, redevelopment and conversion within existing built-up areas including villages. This has been derived with reference to past trends and an examination of potential sources of supply, taking account of emerging local plan policies.
- (iii) the capacity of additional extensions to the built-up areas (including some villages) to meet demand in these locations, where permitted by the Settlement Policies and taking account of the strategic constraints.

Together, these comprise the "sustainable" approach to housing provision.

6.17

Taking account of the three components, the strategic planning authorities consider that about 52,900 dwellings could be built in Dorset between 1994 and 2011. About 19,700 are expected to be built from existing commitments, 28,900 from additional development within the built-up areas, and 4,300 on further extensions to those areas. Allowing for losses to the dwelling stock and vacancies, the consequent additional labour supply from the population which could be accommodated in the additional housing is 38,500. Providing the assumptions on unemployment, commuting and double-jobbing, as set out in paragraphs 4.16 to 4.18, prove to be robust, this will be sufficient to match the forecast increase in the number of jobs. Further the 52,900 additional dwellings substantially exceed the housing needs of the present population. Consequently this "sustainable" approach satisfies both the other requirements of sustainable development.

MARKET DEMAND AND HOUSING PROVISION

6.18

An alternative approach to assessing the provision for housing is to estimate and provide for the level of market demand which will occur during the period of the Plan. In Dorset the demand for housing arises from three sources:

people already resident in the area, those wanting to move into the area, and those wanting second or holiday homes. This last category accounts only for a very low percentage of total demand. The 1991 Census shows that 3.3% of total household spaces in Dorset were not main residences, although the geographical distribution showed much higher concentrations in Purbeck and the western coastal area of West Dorset. In these locations 12 to 20% of accommodation fell into this category.

6.19

Nevertheless, for the most part demand for housing is for main residences. It is difficult to predict accurately the level of such demand when the factors which affect it relate largely to national economic performance. Interest rates, real income growth, and unemployment levels are the critical variables. These depend to an extent on government policy, but also on international economic trends. At present, interest rates are a fundamental instrument of Government economic regulation and will continue to be adjusted to achieve the Government's objectives. However a change in political fortunes may result in less emphasis on their significance. Whether allowing the market to determine interest rates would result in fewer and smaller scale fluctuations is open to question. Real household income growth is also dependent on national and international economic performance as well as Government policy. As far as the latter is concerned there appears to be a consensus of opinion which suggests that disparities in income distribution will continue to grow. This may increase the need for social housing. At the time this Plan was prepared, national unemployment was forecast to decline slowly, with the consequence that the demand for market housing nationally would be dampened. It was also assumed that local demand for housing would also be affected in the early years of the Plan by high rates of local unemployment. In this respect, it was considered that South East Dorset might witness lower demand, and the Weymouth area be similarly affected if efforts to provide new employment to replace defence jobs were anything less than completely successful.

6.20

Since most of the demand for new housing in Dorset arises from outside the County, one approach to the estimation of the level of this demand is by the use of population projections, where the key variable is net migration. Nationally such projections are produced by the Office of Population Censuses and Surveys (OPCS) (now the Office for National Statistics). The 1993-based sub-national projections broadly assumed a continuation of previous rates of net migration. On average this is a rate of 7,000 net migrants entering Dorset each year. This compares with an average of 4,800 implied by the "sustainable" housing provision. This level broadly represents a continuation of the trends of the recent past (see Figure 6.3). Using the OPCS migration assumptions together with the 1992-based household projections from the Department of the Environment (now the Department for Transport, the Environment and the Regions) would give a dwelling requirement for Dorset for 1994 to 2011 of 63,700.

6.21

Using past trends disregards the factors which influence migration rates, and which may suggest that future patterns will differ significantly from those of the past. For example, research by Dorset County Council indicates that the overall state of the national and regional housing markets has significant effects on rates of migration. Therefore if the factors outlined in paragraph 6.19 resulted in a continuation of the sluggish state of the housing market at the time of the preparation of this Plan, it would be reasonable to assume that migration will be significantly lower than during a period of high market activity. This will be reinforced if job uncertainty continues to be a feature of the economy. Because of this, and given the costs of moving house, people are becoming more reluctant to migrate when taking up new jobs. Instead weekly commuting is preferred. On the other hand, if the national economic situation improves and the housing market revives, this does not mean that provision should be made in Dorset to accommodate higher rates of net in-migration. Simply because national conditions may be such as to stimulate greater movements of people, locally these must be constrained in the context of sustainable development to levels which meet local economic needs and can be accommodated taking account of the Settlement Policies of the Plan and strategic environmental constraints.

6.22

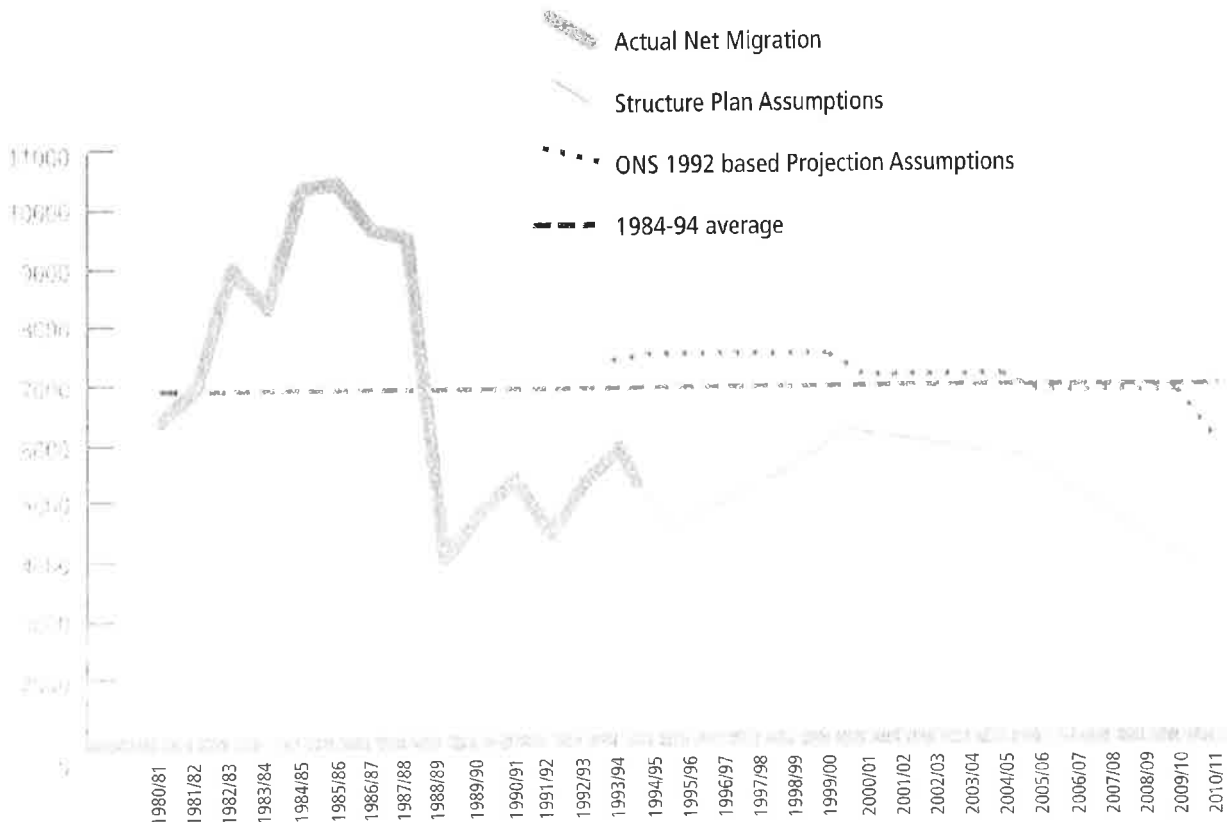
An alternative approach to measuring future demand is to use past building rates. These should be over a sufficiently long period to iron out short term fluctuations. While it could be argued that, on the one hand, the consideration above of national economic factors suggests the overall demand for market housing may decline, on the other hand, local past building rates themselves may not reflect in entirety the level of demand at the time, since they were subject to increasingly restrictive planning policies. However the continuation of past rates also assumes that past patterns of demand will continue. This would not take account of factors such as changing household characteristics, demographic changes and changes in tastes. With these caveats in mind, if the building rates of 1984 to 1994 were to continue, then some 74,600 dwellings would be constructed during the Structure Plan period.

Implications of Provision for Market Demand

6.23

Comparison of the results of these two demand-led approaches with the "sustainable" approach shows that to satisfy demand, an additional 10,800 to 21,700 dwellings will be required. It should be noted that the "sustainable" approach does allow for the meeting of a substantial amount of market demand. However, if the estimated demand was to be met in full, it would contravene both the Regional Planning Guidance and the principles of sustainable development.

Figure 6.3
Net Migration to Dorset 1980 to 2011



Source: ONS and Dorset Strategic Planning Authorities

6.24

As noted earlier, the suggested provision in the Regional Planning Guidance is not inflexible or a precise target. However to meet the market demand level would require an increase of between 18% and 38%: well beyond the limits of flexibility. Further, there would need to be substantial intrusions into the South East Dorset Green Belt and these could not be accommodated without detriment to heavily constrained areas. The Regional Planning Guidance recognises the limitations which these constraints impose in terms of the potential for significant new development in this area. For the reasons outlined in the Settlement Pattern chapter, it is not considered realistic or acceptable to deflect this demand beyond the Green Belt to existing or new settlements (see paragraph 3.19).

6.25

For the County as a whole, the accommodation of the total number of dwellings which may be required as a result of market demand would have significant resource impacts. To build an additional 21,700 dwellings would require nearly 1,100 hectares of land for housing and ancillary purposes. About 1,300,000 tonnes of minerals would be needed for housebuilding alone. The resulting households would consume over 5.5 million litres of water per day and generate over 40,000 tonnes of waste each year. In addition, the critical environmental landscape and wildlife resources of the County would be exposed to 40,000 additional pairs of feet.

6.26

The additional population would also increase the labour supply. To some extent, this growth itself will create jobs to provide the goods and services demanded by the additional population. However it is questionable whether the forecast increase in the number of jobs will be sufficient to absorb the total additional labour supply, particularly that associated with the higher of the two demand measures.

6.27

Finally, the social effects of additional growth and migration should not go unnoticed. These fall into a number of categories. First, there will be additional demands on services such as education, health and social services. Second, relatively rapid rates of growth in small communities can give rise to social tensions and change the character of areas. This is evident particularly in the rural areas and has presented its own difficulties. Third, research is beginning to show that population movement can be associated with an increase in health problems, as well as contributing to family breakdown and the disruption of family and community ties. If the strategy of the Structure Plan is to contribute to the improvement of health and community life, these effects suggest that a reduction in net migration is desirable.

THE PREFERRED LEVEL OF PROVISION

6.28

Taking account of all these factors, the level of housing provision derived from the "sustainable" approach is preferred to one based on accommodation of market demand throughout the County. The "sustainable" approach allows for demand to be met in certain areas, within the limits of the locational requirements of sustainability and taking account of strategic environmental constraints.

HOUSING POLICY A

PROVISION WILL BE MADE TO ENABLE ABOUT 52,900 DWELLINGS (GROSS) TO BE CONSTRUCTED BETWEEN APRIL 1994 AND MARCH 2011. THE DISTRIBUTION BETWEEN DISTRICTS IS TO BE:

DISTRICT	NO OF DWELLINGS
BOURNEMOUTH	ABOUT 12,400
CHRISTCHURCH	ABOUT 2,700
EAST DORSET	ABOUT 4,400
NORTH DORSET	ABOUT 5,900
POOLE	ABOUT 9,500
PURBECK	ABOUT 3,800
WEST DORSET	ABOUT 9,500
WEYMOUTH & PORTLAND	ABOUT 4,700

6.29

Table 6.1 sets out the components which make up the provision, as described in paragraph 6.16 above. Additionally, current commitments have been divided to show approximately how many dwellings will be built on greenfield sites, and how many within existing built-up areas and villages. In the case of the latter, these include a number of greenfield sites around which village envelopes have been or will be drawn. The Table is only illustrative: it will be for local plans finally to apportion development between different types of sites within each district.

Gross and Net Provision

6.30

The housing provision set out in RPG 10 is expressed in gross terms, and the provision in this Plan therefore is expressed similarly. This means that the figures do not take account of the number of losses likely to be incurred during the period of the Plan. The Government Office for the South West has requested that this Explanatory Memorandum includes the net equivalent figures derived from the housing provision in the Plan. In net terms, the provision is estimated to be as follows:

East Dorset

6.34

Again the provision is based on commitments at 1994 and estimates of development likely within urban areas and villages. It includes the existing strategic allocations at Ferndown and Verwood, as well as that at Corfe Mullen, where development had reached its planned level by 1994, but there remained a number of dwellings with planning permission.

North Dorset

6.35

As well as commitments at 1994 and further development which will be unaffected by strategic policy within towns and villages, it is expected that there will be some further greenfield land released around the main towns after 2001.

Poole

6.36

Provision for Poole comprises commitments at 1994 and an estimate of the likely additional development which will occur within the urban area by 2011. Included in the commitments are the existing strategic allocations at Broadstone, Canford Heath and Talbot Heath. Those at Pitwines and Creekmoor were complete by 1994. The amount of housing which will be developed at the other remaining strategic allocation, North Poole, will depend on the final alignment of the A31 to Poole Link Road and related junction arrangements. For the purposes of this Plan, the existing commitment of 750 dwellings has been assumed. No additional greenfield sites are proposed, to avoid intrusion into the Green Belt.

Purbeck

6.37

Commitments at 1994 include the strategic allocations at Sandford/Holton Heath and Lytchett Matravers. An estimate of further development which will be unaffected by strategic policy is included in the provision. No additional post-2001 greenfield sites are proposed within the South East Dorset part of the District, but some allowance has been made for such development in the remainder of the District in accordance with Settlement Policy D.

West Dorset

6.38

The provision is derived from all three components described in paragraph 6.16. It is expected that further greenfield development will take place at Crossways and Dorchester (principally at Poundbury).

Weymouth and Portland

6.39

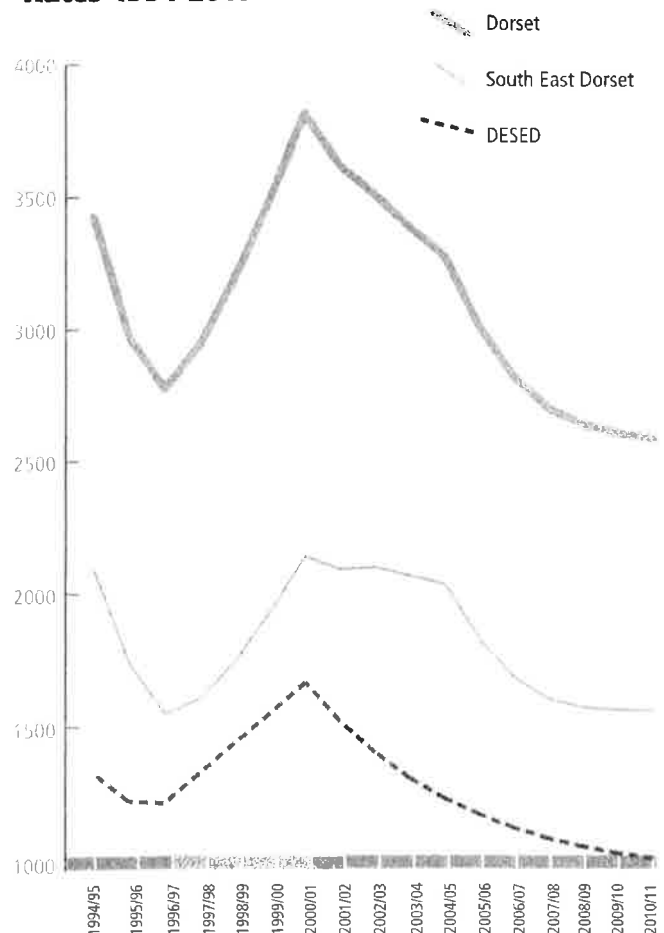
Again the provision is derived from all three components. However because of the anticipated low level of demand for housing resulting from the change in defence and related industries, the estimate of development from within the urban area is somewhat lower than it would otherwise have been. The reason for this is that such development tends to be very demand responsive. Further, it is anticipated that there will be a significant additional release of second-hand properties on the housing market as the defence changes occur. Allowance has been made for these before the provision was derived and therefore estimates of these dwellings will not count towards the figure for the Borough.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE LEVEL OF PROVISION

6.40

The provision of 52,900 dwellings for the Plan period will generally mean a significant reduction in building rates compared with those of the past. Assuming the housing market picks up by the year 2000, the provision allows for a recovery in rates to about 3,800 dwellings per annum. By the end of the Plan period it is envisaged that the rate will decline to about 2,600: similar to that experienced in the last few years (see Figure 6.4). Will this have serious economic and social implications?

Figure 6.4 Projected Housebuilding Rates 1994-2011



Restraint & Economic Growth

6.41

It has already been shown that, overall, this level of building will provide an adequate workforce for the whole period, provided the assumptions concerning unemployment, commuting and double jobbing prove to be robust. However if building rates tail off towards the end of the period, will this lead to labour shortages? While net inward migration may decrease, there will still be substantial inward flows of migrants. For example, during 1991/92, when the lowest level of housebuilding for many years was recorded (2,700 dwellings), some 24,700 people moved into Dorset. On this basis, there will remain a very adequate labour supply.

6.42

Also, because of the changing nature of work, the need to migrate is unlikely to increase, and employment-linked migration may even fall substantially in the long run. This is largely due to the revolution in telecommunications, enabling people to change jobs without moving house. However in certain economically and technologically elite groups, and amongst young, reasonably well-educated workers, migration might well increase substantially. On the whole, the success of local economies is likely to depend on how well they are able to attract and retain the affluent and the skilled through maintaining and improving their environmental quality, cultural and leisure amenities. In other words, increasingly, work will tend more and more to follow the workforce. The nurturing of a strong local skills base will be even more essential in the future than it is at present, and in this respect a residential environment of the highest quality will be the critical factor.

Restraint and House Prices

6.43

It is often assumed that local housing markets are very sensitive to the effects of changes in the supply of new dwellings. Some argue that a reduction in housebuilding will create local shortages, which then drive up prices and create even greater difficulties of access to housing for lower, and even moderate, income households.

6.44

However this argument is exaggerated. First, new homes comprise only a small proportion of the total market for housing in most localities at any one time. Research carried out in South East Dorset during the 1980s demonstrated that, at that time, new dwellings locally comprised only about 15% of the total market. The difference between the provision based on the "sustainable" approach and provision based on demand as indicated by the Department of the Environment 1992-based household projections is 10,800. This would reduce the total number of dwellings on the market at any one time by 2.5%. The strategic planning authorities consider that this would have only a marginal effect on house prices.

6.45

Second, prices locally only relate to demand in a limited way. Local housing markets in the United Kingdom are not geographically isolated and potential migrants normally have quite a wide choice of potential destinations and locations. Past boom periods in house prices relate more to regional and national trends than to local conditions, and are far more a response to the availability of mortgage finance, interest rates, income levels, and consumer confidence at a national level than to the number of new houses built locally.

Conclusion

6.46

The conclusion of the strategic planning authorities is therefore that the "sustainable" approach, with its implicit restraint of housebuilding rates, will have no detrimental effect on the economy nor any significant implications for house prices.

6.47

Nevertheless, both the Panel that conducted the Examination in Public of the Plan and the Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions have expressed concerns about the possible implications of the "sustainable" approach. The Panel felt that this approach was "a high risk strategy in the context of the open market, in that it seeks to limit supply without being able to restrict demand. The resulting imbalance could have the effect, not of restricting in-migration as intended, but of creating social and economic hardship among the present population." (County of Dorset Structure Plan to 2011, Report of the Panel, paragraph 10.21.) The Panel therefore recommended that there should be careful monitoring of the take up of the housing provision, and, in the event of demand outstripping supply to an extent sufficient to cause social problems, there should be speedy action to produce an Alteration to the Plan.

6.48

The Secretary of State agreed with the approach suggested by the Panel. While not objecting to the level of housing provision set out in the Plan, he looked to the County, Unitary Authorities and Districts to devise adequate machinery, in consultation with the Government Office for the South West, to monitor housing need. Depending on what the monitoring indicated, it might be necessary for the strategic planning authorities to review this part of the Structure Plan in advance of the normal review of the level of housing provision in Regional Planning Guidance. Details of the monitoring machinery relating to the Secretary of State's requirements are set out in Chapter 12 (paragraphs 12.36 and 12.37).

HOUSING NEEDS AND MIX

6.49

Within the overall provision for housing, it is essential that the needs of all sections of the community are met, and provided in ways which achieve a proper social mix of