

14 July 2025

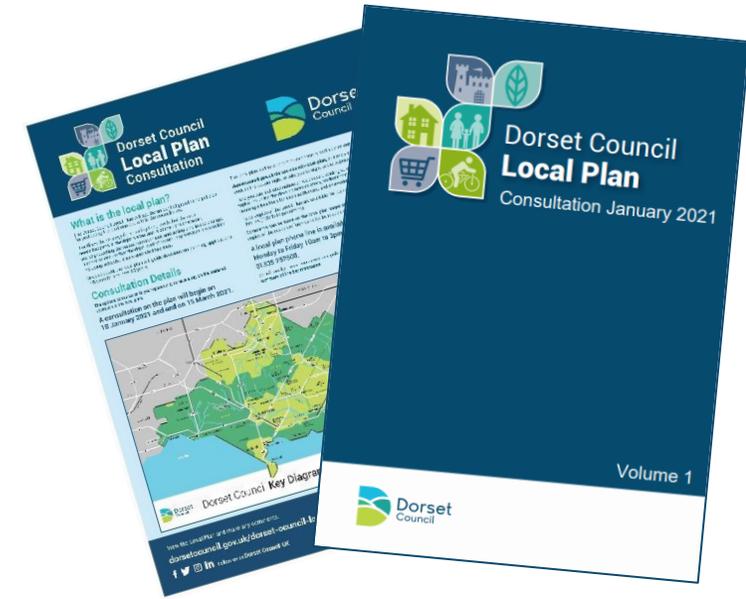
Parish and Town Council  
briefing



# Dorset Council Local Plan

# Agenda

1. Context for the Local Plan
2. Adopted Local Plans
3. New Dorset Council Local Plan
4. Consultation arrangements



## New NPPF introduced in December 2024

New mandatory approach to calculating housing need:

- Old approach – need for 1,793 new homes per year
- New approach – need for **3,246 new homes per year** - or just over 50,000 by 2043

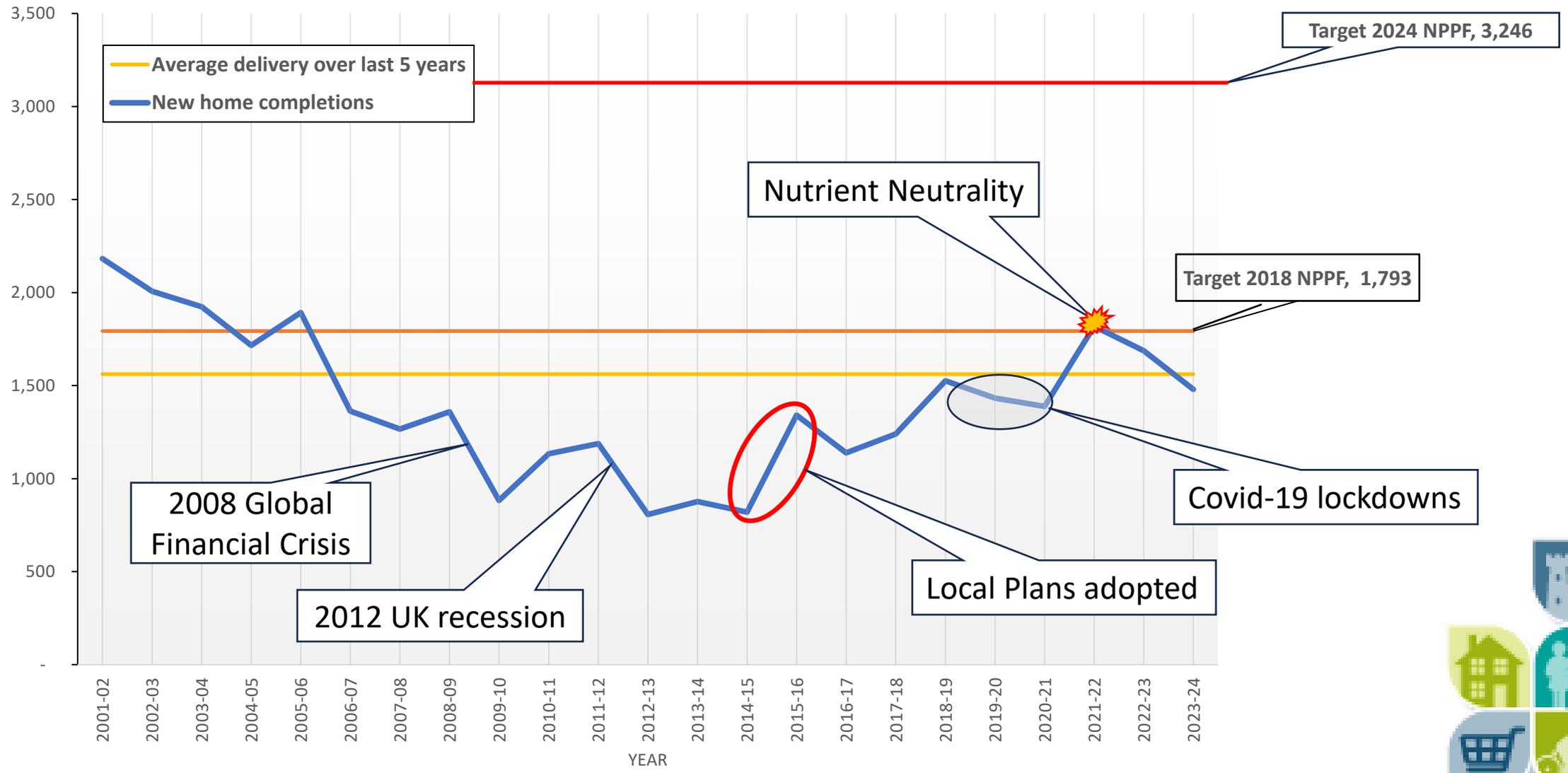
We need to respond to this higher housing need through the Local Plan

Housing Supply category	Supply estimate	Delivery period
Existing permissions	10,000	Short to medium term
Adopted Local Plan allocations	4,000	Medium term
Neighbourhood Plan allocations	1,500	Short to medium term
Large and small site windfall	9,500	Throughout plan period
<b>Total</b>	<b>25,000</b>	

So about 25,000 still to find – through land allocations and policy approaches



# Context for the Local Plan

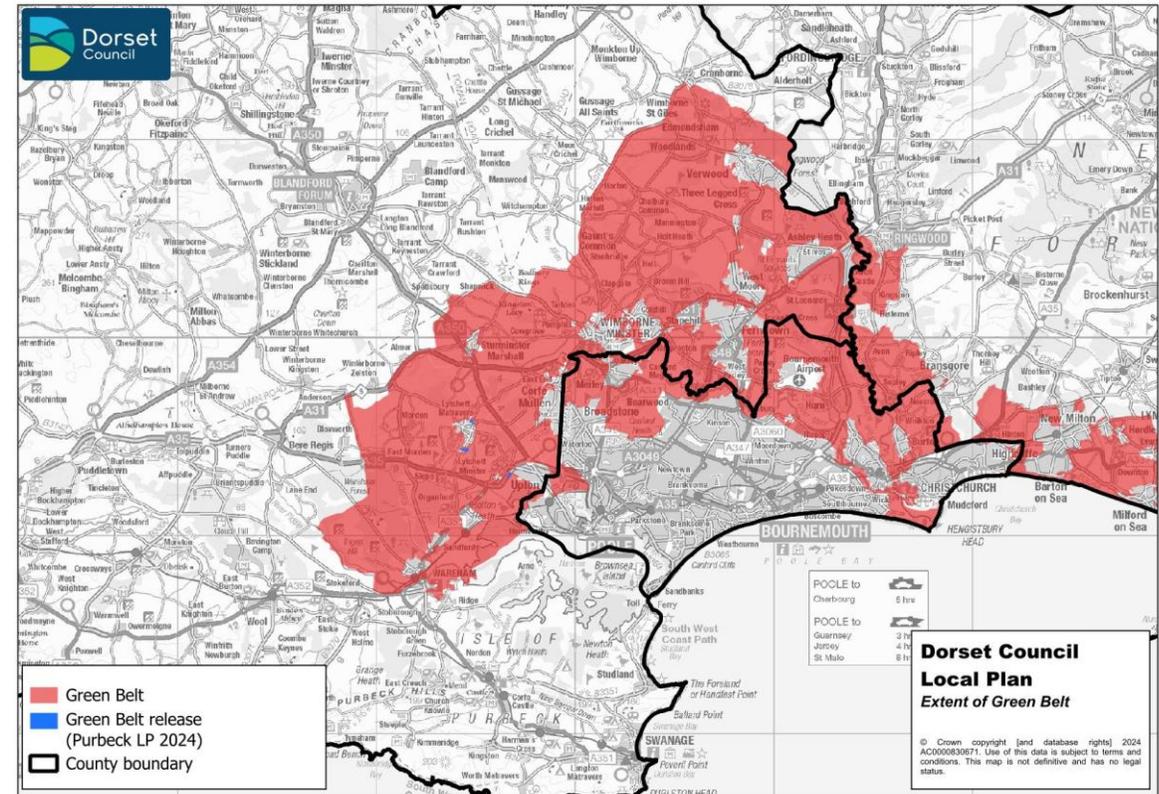


# Context for the Local Plan

## Green Belt has five purposes:

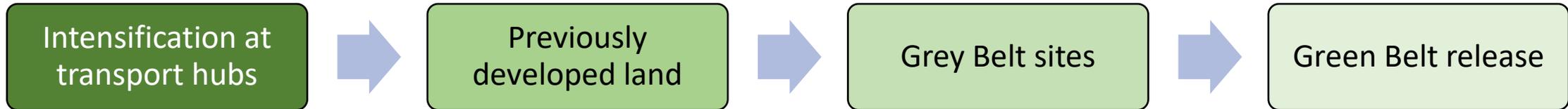
- to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

**Grey Belt** is land that does not strongly contribute to purposes a), b) or d). It does not apply to habitats sites, National Landscapes, heritage assets, and areas at risk of flooding

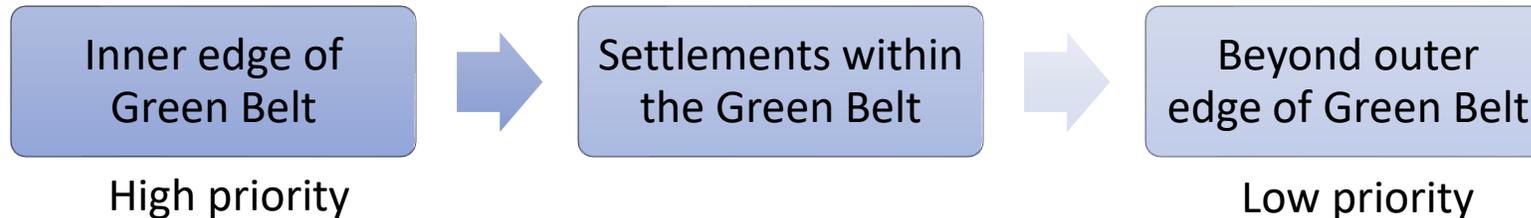


## For plan making:

Boundaries should only be altered where exceptional circumstances exist (e.g. lack of housing supply)



Consideration of sustainability of locations especially in relation to sustainable transport:



## For decision taking:

- Development that harms the purposes of the Green Belt is inappropriate development
- Should only be approved in very special circumstances
  - Very special circumstances include lack of housing land supply
  - But if Grey Belt, not considered inappropriate development in the Green Belt
  - Needs to be a sustainable location and meet the “Golden Rules”



## Golden Rules for Green Belt release

- Apply equally to Local Plan release of Green Belt land and sites subject to a planning application in the Green Belt

The following contributions should be made:

- Affordable housing:
  - Provide at a higher rate than areas outside of the Green Belt
  - Provide at least 50% affordable housing
- Make necessary improvements to local or national infrastructure
- Provide new or improved accessible green space that:
  - Is within a short walk from the new homes
  - Contributes positively to landscape setting
  - Supports nature recovery

**A development which complies with the Golden Rules should be given significant weight in favour of the grant of permission.**



- Default answer of 'yes' to proposals on brownfield land

- When paragraph 11 'Presumption' applies, now specifically refers to sustainable locations, effective use of land, good design and the provision of affordable homes.

### **Presumption:**

Where lack of five-year housing land supply or less than 75% Housing Delivery against target, we should grant permission unless...

- Support for economic growth in key sectors – laboratories, mega-factories, digital infrastructure, freight and logistics

- Support for green energy

- A move towards Strategic Planning



# Context for the Local Plan

## Changes to come:

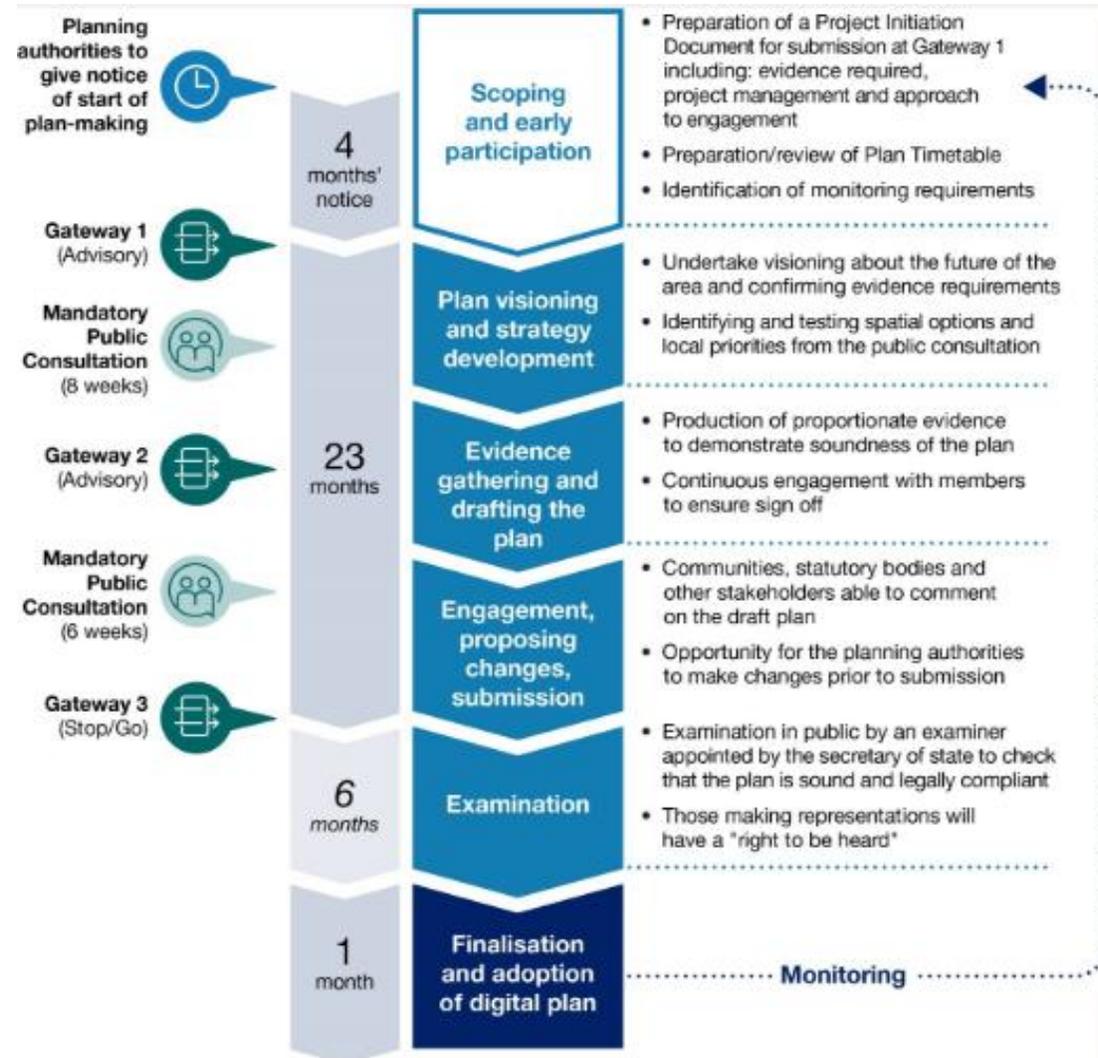
### Changes to Plan-making process

- New streamlined approach. Plans will be:
  - prepared in 30 months (plus 4 month notice period)
  - Focus on local area
  - Shorter and More digital

Deadline to submit plan by December 2026 under current plan-making process

### National Development Management Policies

- Detailed national policies on some topics (e.g. Flood Risk, National Landscapes...)
- No need for a local policy



## Key points:

1. National policy has changed – some changes are significant
2. New housing targets will require a change in approach – developers will also need to step up delivery
3. National Development Management Policies will be introduced – later this year
4. Plan-making process will change – some point during 2025/26
5. Transitional arrangements mean that Local Plan must be submitted by December 2026 under current plan-making arrangements



# Adopted Local Plans

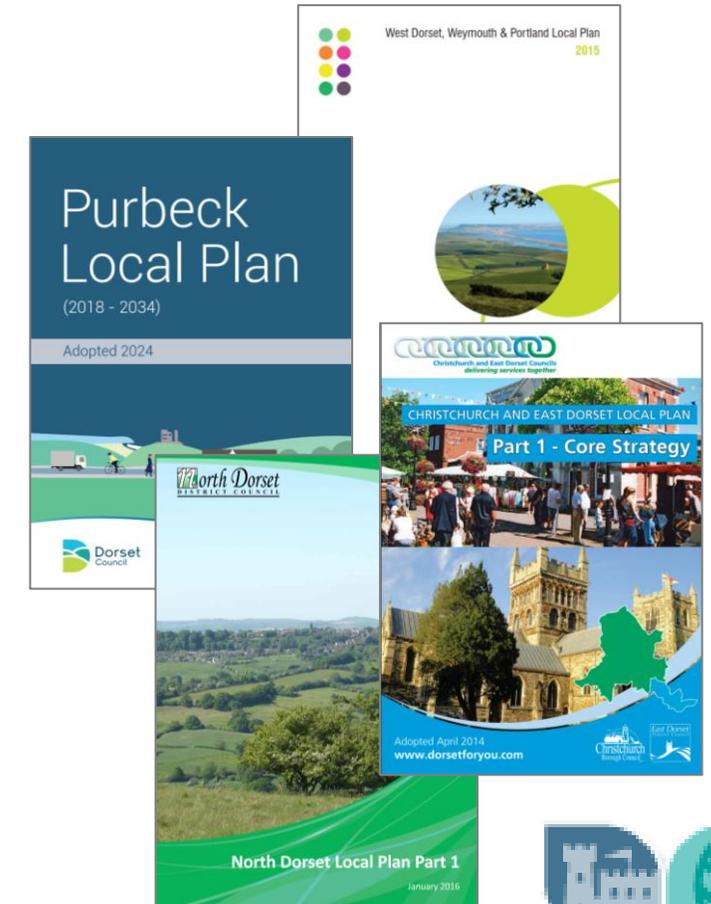
Local Plans needs to be:

- consistent with National Policy
- prepared with the objective of meeting the needs of the area
- based on evidence
- deliverable
- Reviewed every five years

At the point of adoption, the current local plans would have met these tests. However,

- They were adopted a long time ago (except Purbeck)
- Are no longer consistent with National Policy in many respects
- Each have different strategy around sites / settlements / policies – inconsistencies across Dorset
- The strategies are not geared up to meeting higher housing targets

A new Dorset Council Local Plan is needed to address these issues

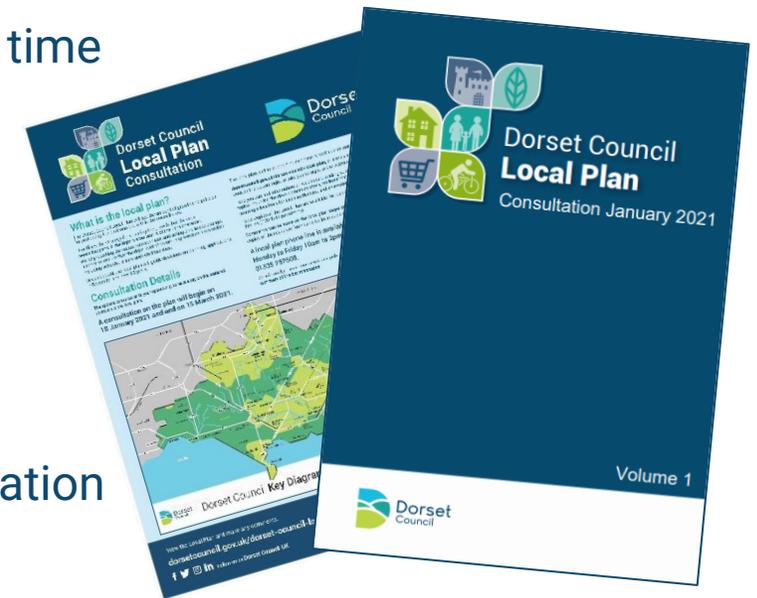


# The emerging Dorset Council Local Plan

- Undertook consultation on a draft Local Plan in January 2021
- Contained detailed topic and site policies to meet housing need at that time
- Further work needed to consider:
  - Flood risk in Weymouth
  - Climate Change
  - Changes in function of town centres
  - Gypsy and Traveller needs

In response to these issues and changes in national policy, further consultation is needed

- Will not include detailed policies:
  - builds on January 2021 consultation where detail was proposed so have valuable feedback on these
  - pending National Development Management Policies
- Need to explore new opportunities for addressing housing and other needs



# The emerging Dorset Council Local Plan



Continued focus for development on towns and larger villages

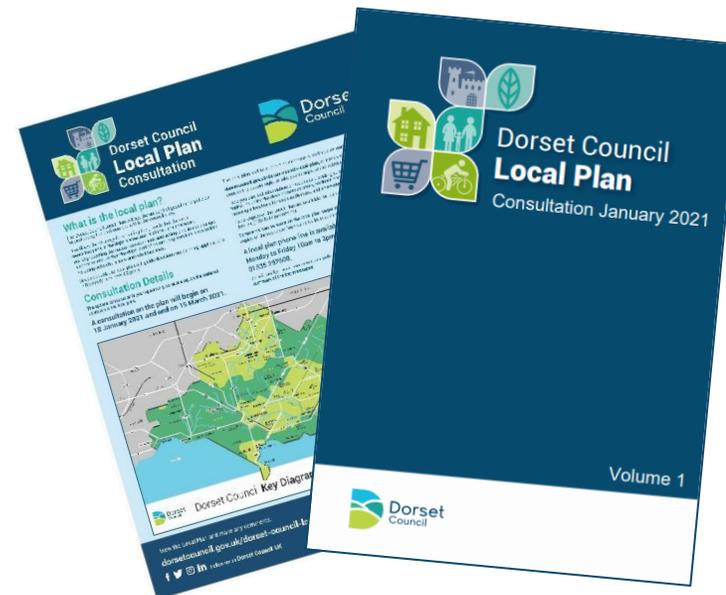
Looking at site opportunities for meeting housing, employment and traveller needs plus changes to policy framework

Looking at broad locations for Wind and Solar energy

Need to demonstrate that we have explored all opportunities for meeting need

After consultation:

- Review comments received
- Prepare full draft plan for consultation - August 2026
- Submission for examination - December 2026
- Examination and Adoption - 2027



# Consultation Arrangements

Local Plan consultation will start on **18 August** and run until 13 October – 8 weeks

Joint consultation alongside Local Transport Plan and initial early consultation on Minerals and Waste Plan

- Consultation material will be online from 18 August

[dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/dorset-is-changing](http://dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/dorset-is-changing)

- Will be holding drop-in events across Dorset
- Please publicise the consultation within your area and engage with residents – we're looking at a 'pack' of material to assist.

- Please submit comments online and encourage others to do the same!

**Using the online survey greatly assists our analysis of the responses, enabling more efficient and effective consideration of the issues raised – and ultimately speeds up the plan-making process**

Ferndown	Village Hall	Tue 2nd Sep
Blandford	Royal British Legion Club	Thu 4th Sep
Bridport	Town Hall	Wed 10th Sep
Dorchester	Corn Exchange	Thu 11th Sep
Weymouth	Library	Fri 12th Sep
Weymouth	Library	Sat 13th Sep
Lytchett Matravers	Village Hall	Wed 17th Sep
Verwood	Memorial Hall	Mon 22nd Sep
Crossways	Village Hall	Tue 23rd Sep
Gillingham	Town Hall	Thu 25th Sep
Swanage	Emmanuel Baptist Church	Tue 30th Sep
Sherborne	Digby Hall	Tue 7th Oct





# Dorset Council **Local Plan**