

THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME FOR DORSET COUNCIL



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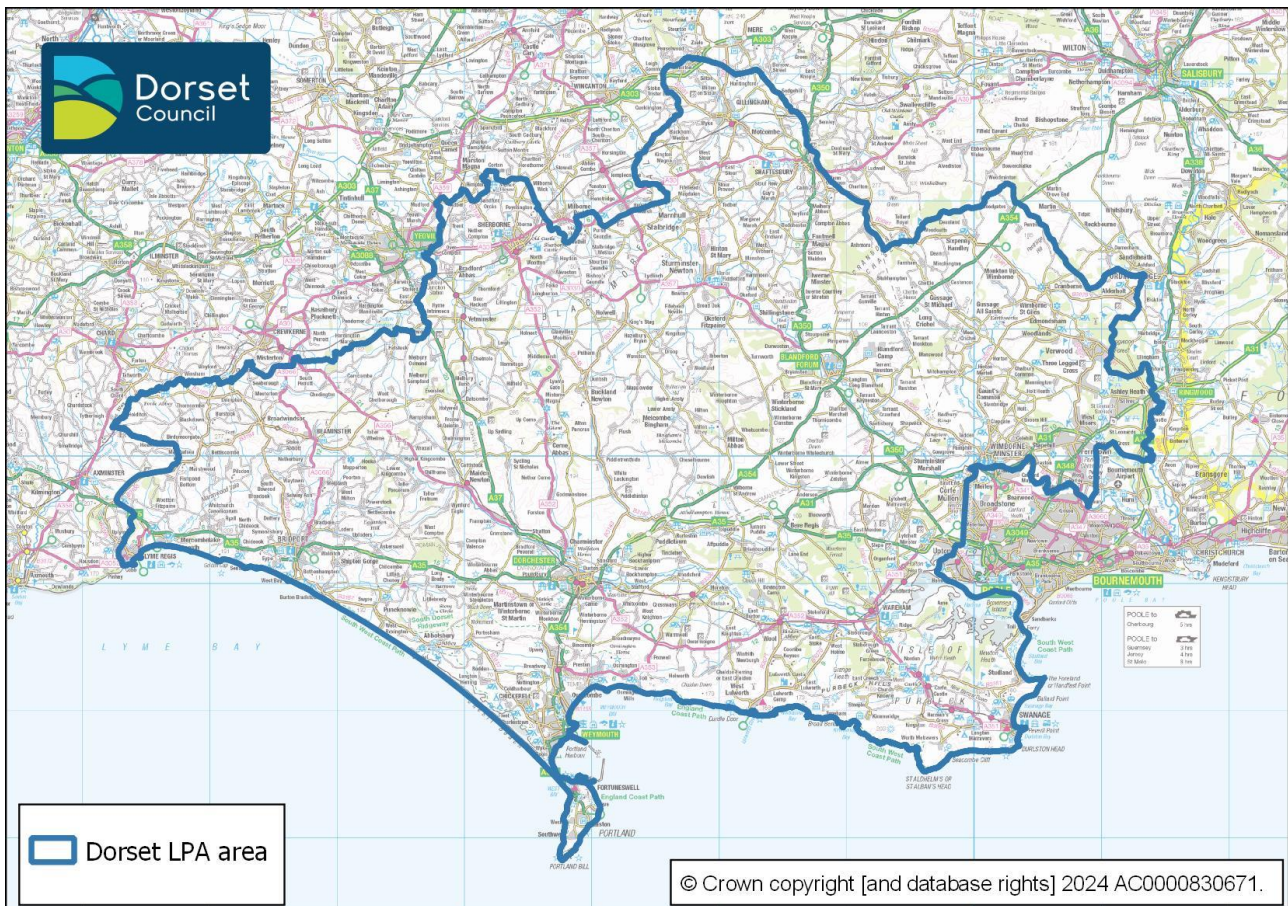
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This is the Local Development Scheme (LDS) for Dorset Council, setting out a programme for the preparation of new development plan documents¹. The main development plan document that will be produced is the new local plan for Dorset. A Minerals and Waste Local Plan will also be produced. These development plan documents will be prepared to cover the whole of the Dorset Council LPA area as shown in Figure 1, unless stated otherwise.

Dorset Council is not currently producing any joint development plan documents however, some of the evidence to support plan production is being produced jointly. There is a need for development plan documents to be founded on proportionate evidence to enable an understanding of local issues relevant to plan production. The joint preparation of this evidence enables cross-boundary issues to be better understood and reflected in policy.

Figure 1: The Dorset Council area



Predicted timescales / dates for consultation periods and other key milestones are given in square brackets [], however these may be subject to change and will be updated regularly. The approach to engagement at each stage in the process will be endorsed by Dorset Council Cabinet.

In July 2023, the Government consulted on proposals to implement the parts of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill (now the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act) which related to plan-making in England. The proposals will substantially change the way local plans will be prepared. The timetable set out for the introduction of these reforms anticipated that the necessary regulations,

¹ Required under section 15 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended)

policy and guidance would have been in place by Autumn 2024 enabling the first new-style local plans to be prepared from that point onwards. However, since this consultation, there has been a change in Government and a review of changes to the planning system. A new NPPF was introduced in December 2024 and the new plan-making system, although delayed is anticipated to commence in Summer/Autumn 2025.

The transitional arrangements set out in Annex 1 of the December 2024 NPPF set out how local authorities should respond to the new planning system. The Dorset Council Local Plan reached Regulation 18 stage in early 2021 but has not yet reached Regulation 19 stage. As such, the policies in the December 2024 version of the NPPF should be used for plan-making.

With the new planning system likely to be introduced in mid to late 2025, the deadline for submitting local plans under the current planning system has been set at December 2026. There is an element of risk around waiting for the new planning system when the detail of regulations and guidance have not been produced and the timetable for its introduction is indicative. However given the proposed transitional arrangements, it is expected that there is sufficient time for the Local Plan to be prepared under the current planning system.

2.0 ADOPTED DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENTS

Whilst work is being progressed on a new local plan for Dorset, the adopted Development Plan Documents (DPD) will continue to apply to the areas they cover. They will continue to be used for decision making purposes until they are replaced. The adopted DPD are:

- Christchurch and East Dorset Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy (2014). A jointly produced Local Plan covering the former local planning authority areas of East Dorset and Christchurch. East Dorset forms part of the Dorset Council Unitary Authority whereas Christchurch forms part of the Bournemouth Christchurch and Poole Unitary Authority area.
- East Dorset Local Plan (2002). Some of the policies in the 2002 Local Plan were saved when the 2014 Core Strategy was adopted. These policies remain part of the development plan for the former East Dorset local planning authority area and will be used for decision making until they are superseded.
- North Dorset Local Plan Part 1 (2016). Covering the former North Dorset local planning authority area.
- North Dorset District-Wide Local Plan (2003): Some of the policies in the 2003 Local Plan were saved when the 2016 Local Plan Part 1 was adopted. These policies remain part of the development plan for the former North Dorset local planning authority area and will be used for decision making until they are superseded.
- Purbeck Local Plan Part 1 (2024). Covering the former Purbeck local planning authority area, adopted on 18 July 2024.
- Swanage Local Plan (2017). This Local Plan only applies in the parish of Swanage and supplements the policies in the Purbeck Local Plan Part 1.
- West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan (2015). This is a joint Local Plan covering the former local planning authority areas of West Dorset and Weymouth & Portland.
- Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Minerals Strategy (2014). This is a joint plan produced by Bournemouth Borough Council, Poole Borough Council and Dorset County Council and covers the whole of the Dorset Council and Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council areas. It contains the strategy and policies for minerals development within the area.
- Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole and Dorset Mineral Sites Plan (2019). This plan contains sites for mineral development in the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council area and the Dorset Council area.
- Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole and Dorset Waste Plan (2019). The Waste Plan provides a policy framework for waste related development across the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council area and the Dorset Council area.

These existing local plans can be viewed online here:

<https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/adopted-local-plans>

Borough / District Local Plan Reviews

Prior to the formation of Dorset Council in 2019, each of the former local planning authorities had commenced a review of their adopted local plans. The local plan reviews for East Dorset, North Dorset, and West Dorset and Weymouth & Portland will no longer be taken forward. The work undertaken on these reviews will feed into the new Dorset Council Local Plan.

3.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENTS

Dorset Council Local Plan

The Dorset Council Local Plan will set out planning policies and propose allocations to meet needs across the whole of the Dorset Council area. It will look ahead until at least 2042 in order to ensure provision for growth for 15 years upon adoption. The aim of the Local Plan will be to contribute to achieving sustainable development by meeting Dorset's needs. This will include the provision of homes, commercial development, and supporting infrastructure.

The Dorset Council Local Plan will be taken forward under the current plan-making system². As such, a deadline of December 2026 has been set for submission of the Local Plan. . The key stages and likely timescales, including work that has already been undertaken on producing the Local Plan are:

- Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report [July 2019] – complete
- Options consultation (Regulation 18) [January 2021] – complete
- Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report refresh [March 2025]
- Site options consultation (Regulation 18) [August 2025]
- Publication consultation (Regulation 19) [August 2026]
- Submission (Regulation 22) [December 2026]
- Examination [Summer 2027]
- Adoption [Winter 2027]

Work commenced on the Dorset Council Local Plan at the point that Dorset Council was formed in 2019. A consultation on a draft of the plan was undertaken in January 2021. This information will continue to be used to inform the Dorset Council Local Plan.

The Dorset-wide Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Site Allocations Joint Development Plan Document (DPD) which was being prepared by the former local planning authorities in Dorset, will no longer be taken forward. Any policies relating to, and allocations needed for, Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople in the Dorset Council area will be included within the Dorset Council Local Plan.

It is intended that the Dorset Council Local Plan will replace all adopted local plans in the Dorset Council area upon adoption.

Dorset Council Minerals and Waste Plan

The Minerals Strategy (2014) is now more than five years old and Dorset Council is of the view that it needs to be reviewed. In addition, since the end of 2024 the Mineral Sites Plan (2019) and Waste Plan (2019) are both five years old and in need of review.

Dorset Council aim to integrate the currently separate minerals and waste plans into a single document, the Dorset Council Minerals and Waste Local Plan. This Plan will establish a strategic approach and set out the appropriate policy structure and site allocations to maintain a steady and appropriate supply of minerals to meet identified need. It will also establish the strategic approach and appropriate policy basis and site allocations to manage waste in Dorset.

² Following the process set out in The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012

The Dorset Council Minerals and Waste Plan will be taken forward as a new-style local plan. Once adopted, it is anticipated that the Minerals and Waste Plan will supersede the Minerals Strategy (2014), the Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole and Dorset Mineral Sites Plan (2019) and the Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole and Dorset Waste Plan (2019).

The key stages and likely timescales are:

- Scoping and Early Engagement [September 2025]
- Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report [November 2025]
- Project Initiation Document and Gateway 1 Assessment [November 2025]
- Visioning and Strategy Engagement (8 weeks) [May 2026]
- Gateway 2 Assessment [December 2026]
- Draft Plan Engagement (6 weeks) [March 2027]
- Gateway 3 Assessment [October 2027]
- Examination [November 2027]
- Adoption [May 2028]

4.0 DORSET COUNCIL DESIGN GUIDE

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires all local planning authorities to prepare design guides or codes consistent with the principles set out in the National Model Design code and which reflect local character and design preferences. Dorset Council intends to prepare a Design Code and Guide to apply to the whole of the authority area, which will support the preparation of detailed design codes at a neighbourhood or site-specific level. The status of the design guide will be kept under review in anticipation of changes to the national planning system.

It is anticipated that work on the Design Guide will be completed in draft towards the end of 2025. This will then be followed by a period of engagement before being adopted. Adoption is anticipated in August 2026.

5.0 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANS

When neighbourhood plans are ‘made’ they form part of the statutory development plan. By March 2025, 36 neighbourhood plans in the Dorset Council area had been made and a large number of others were in production including reviews of existing plans. Up-to-date information on neighbourhood plans can be viewed here –

<https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/planning-buildings-land/planning-policy/neighbourhood-plans-in-dorset.aspx>

EXISTING NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANS	PROPOSED NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANS
<p>The following neighbourhood plans have been made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Alderholt ▪ Arne ▪ Askerswell ▪ Bere Regis ▪ Blandford + (Review) ▪ Bridport Area ▪ Bourton ▪ Broadwindsor ▪ Buckhorn Weston & Kington Magna ▪ Buckland Newton ▪ Cerne Valley ▪ Charmouth ▪ Chesil Bank ▪ Chickerell ▪ Fontmell Magna (Review) ▪ Gillingham ▪ Hazelbury Bryan ▪ Holwell (Review) ▪ Loders ▪ Lytchett Matravers ▪ Milborne St Andrew ▪ Milton Abbas ▪ Motcombe ▪ Piddle Valley ▪ Pimperne (Review) ▪ Portland ▪ Puddletown ▪ Shaftesbury ▪ Shillingstone ▪ Stinsford ▪ Sturminster Marshall ▪ Sturminster Newton ▪ Sutton Poyntz ▪ Upper Marshwood Vale ▪ Wareham ▪ Yetminster and Ryeme Intrinseca 	<p>The following neighbourhood plans have been examined and are going to referendum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Wimborne St Giles ▪ Wool <p>The following neighbourhood plan is currently at examination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Knightsford <p>The following neighbourhood plans have been submitted for examination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Melbury Abbas and Cann ▪ Weymouth <p>The following neighbourhood areas have been designated and a number of neighbourhood plans are in preparation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Beaminster ▪ Bradford Abbas & Clifton Maybank ▪ Chetnole and Stockwood ▪ Church Knowle ▪ Colehill ▪ Corfe Mullen ▪ Corscombe, Halstock and District ▪ Iwerne Minster ▪ Leigh ▪ Longburton (Cam Vale) ▪ Lower Winterborne ▪ Maiden Newton and Frome ▪ Vauchurch ▪ Marnhull ▪ Okeford Fitzpaine ▪ Puncknowle & Swyre ▪ Swanage ▪ Trent ▪ West Lulworth ▪ Wimborne Minster

6.0 COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) provides a mechanism for collecting financial contributions from developers towards the provision of infrastructure to support development. On 1st April 2019, Dorset Council became the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Authority and began administering the charging schedules adopted by the former district and borough councils.

Charging schedules have been adopted for all the former district and borough councils, except North Dorset, where CIL is not charged. Links to the relevant charging schedules are available here - <https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/planning-buildings-land/planning/community-infrastructure-levy/community-infrastructure-levy.aspx>

The Government amended the CIL Regulations in 2019. These changes are intended to complement the assessment of viability in the National Planning Policy Framework and aim to make the system of developer contributions more transparent and accountable. Key changes include measures to ensure that consultation on preparing charging schedules is proportionate; and operational reforms, which aim to provide a more transparent approach to reporting on the use of developer contributions to fund infrastructure. The Council is now required to prepare and publish an 'Infrastructure Funding Statement' each year, details of which can be found via the link in this section.

The Government requires that local plans should set out the contributions expected from development and that the viability of all relevant policies including the cost implications of CIL and S106 should be taken into account at plan making stage. Development of the proposed Dorset Council Local Plan will require the review of evidence relating to infrastructure needs and viability and presents an opportunity to prepare a single replacement CIL charging schedule for the new plan area. This will be undertaken alongside or ahead of the preparation of the Local Plan.

7.0 SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENTS AND GUIDANCE

Adopted Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) and Guidance (SPG) will continue to apply to the areas they covered prior to April 2019.

The proposed changes to the planning system suggest that SPD will not form part of the new plan framework with the detail in SPD being incorporated into Local Plans. As such, SPD will only be updated or produced where there is a pressing need to do so to cover the short period to the new Dorset Council Local Plan being put in place.

SPD relating to internationally important wildlife sites will be the priority for any review or production. Priorities for review include:

- The Dorset Heathlands Planning Framework
- The Poole Harbour Recreation Planning Framework
- The Dorset Heathlands Air Quality Strategy

These three SPDs also relate to areas within Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole and any reviews will be carried out jointly with BCP Council.

A further SPD relating to the impact of recreation on the Chesil and the Fleet SAC / SPA will be considered for production alongside the Dorset Council Local Plan.

Further SPDs relating to Mineral Safeguarding and/or Minerals and Waste Site Restoration will be considered for production alongside the Dorset Council Minerals and Waste Local Plan.

8.0 STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

A single Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) for the Dorset Council area, which also relates to minerals and waste policy, has been adopted. This sets out how Dorset Council will involve the community in the preparation and review of planning policy documents and in making planning decisions.

The Statement of Community Involvement is available online at:

<https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/documents/35024/282495/December-2020-updated-Dorset+Council+Statement+of+Community+Involvement.pdf/22a75a43-b18b-a852-fc00-108b27be69a9>

It is anticipated that the SCI will be refreshed and updated during 2025.

9.0 KEY PROGRAMME MILESTONES

The following table outlines the key programme milestones for the production of Development Plan Documents³. All timescales are indicative and may be subject to change.

Development Plan Document	Q1 2025	Q2 2025	Q3 2025	Q4 2025	Q1 2026	Q2 2026	Q3 2026	Q4 2026	Q1 2027	Q2 2027	Q3 2027	Q4 2027	Q1 2028	Q2 2028
Dorset Council Local Plan	Sc	Sc	C				P	S		E		A		
Dorset Council Minerals and Waste Local Plan			Sc	PID G				G				G E	E	A

Key:

Sc	Scoping (including Sustainability Appraisal)
C	Consultation (regulation 18)
P	Publication (regulation 19)
S	Submission (regulation 22)
PID	Project Initiation Document Preparation
G	Gateway assessments
E	Examination
A	Adoption

³ The timetable for the production of the Dorset CIL Charging Schedule or its replacement will run in parallel to the Dorset Council Local Plan.