



# BCP Local Plan - Plan content and evidence consultation

October 2026

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Strategic Planning – Policy Team

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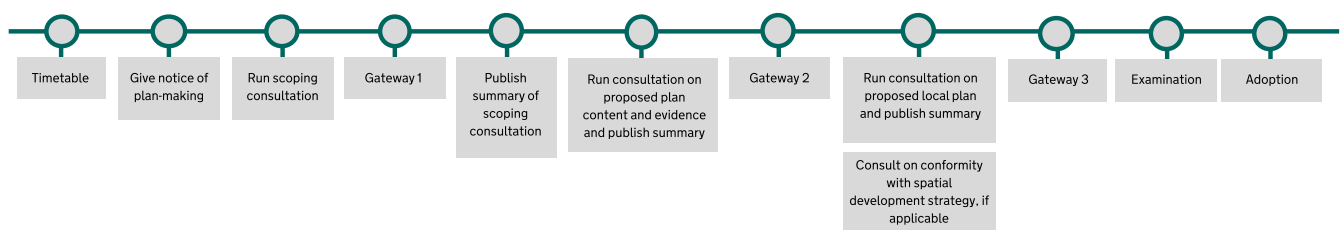
# 1. Introduction

## About this Consultation

1. We are preparing a new Local Plan for Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole (BCP). The Local Plan will guide how land is used and how development takes place across the area over a 15-year period from 2029 to 2044.
2. The Local Plan will set out where new homes, jobs, infrastructure and community facilities should be located. It will also set out policies needed to manage development, protect and enhance the area's important environmental and heritage assets, respond to climate change and support sustainable growth.
3. All local planning authorities are required to have an up-to-date Local Plan. Once adopted, the BCP Local Plan will become the main planning document for the area and will be used to help determine planning applications.
4. This document forms the Plan Content and Evidence Consultation. It presents the emerging vision, objectives, spatial strategy and proposed content of the Local Plan, together with the evidence that has informed the approach so far.
5. The purpose of this consultation is to seek views from residents, businesses, landowners, developers, infrastructure providers, community groups and other stakeholders before the Local Plan is drafted and submitted for independent examination.
6. Comments received through this consultation will help shape the next stage of plan preparation, which will be a full draft version of the Local Plan. Comments received may lead to changes to the proposed policies, site allocations, supporting evidence or the way key issues are explained.

**Figure 1. The new plan-making process**

Tasks in local plan-making where the sequence is required by law



## What is a Local Plan?

7. A Local Plan is the key planning document for an area. It sets out a long-term strategy for development and provides the policies used to guide decisions on planning applications. The Local Plan will include:
  - a vision for the future of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole;

- measurable objectives for growth, change and environmental improvement;
- site and areas identified for homes, jobs, infrastructure and community facilities;
- policies to guide development and manage its impacts; and
- a framework for monitoring delivery and implementation.

## Why are we preparing a new Local Plan?

8. National planning legislation and policy requires local planning authorities to prepare and maintain an up-to-date development plan. The BCP area is currently covered by three local plans prepared by the former legacy Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole councils. These plans were adopted at different times between 2012 and 2018 and so do not provide a single, up-to-date strategy for the whole area.
9. Since those plans were prepared, there have been significant changes made to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), as well as in housing and economic needs, environmental priorities, infrastructure requirements and the way BCP functions. A new Local Plan is needed to provide a consistent planning framework for the whole BCP area and to address current and future challenges.
10. Preparing a new Local Plan also allows us to consider how growth can be planned positively and sustainably, without it there is less influence over proposals that are submitted to the council.

## What are we consulting on?

11. This consultation seeks views on both the emerging content of the Local Plan and the evidence that supports it including the:
  - draft vision, objectives and measurable outcomes;
  - proposed spatial strategy;
  - Possible growth locations;
  - Potential planning policies and the proposed approach that these should take;
  - Summary of supporting technical evidence and assessments we intend to gather and evidence gathered to date; and
  - sustainability appraisal and other assessment work undertaken to date.
12. Respondents can choose any or all aspects which they would like to comment on.
13. Some aspects of plan-making are set by national policy or legislation. This means that not every issue can be decided locally through this consultation. Where national policy sets a requirement or strongly influences the approach we must take, this is explained in the relevant parts of the document.

## Where can I view and respond to the consultation?

14. The consultation will run for 6 weeks from X October 2026 to XX 2026 (to be confirmed).
15. The consultation documents, interactive maps and online response form will be available to view via the Council's online consultation portal.
16. Physical hard copies of key consultation documents will be available at libraries.

17. Officers will also be organising drop in events at some of the libraries to provide additional assistance as required including responding to queries or questions, or to help people to submit their comments using the response form.
18. Using the response form (either online or hard copy) enables the Council to receive comments in a consistent format and enables the Council to consider and summarise responses in a timely manner, which is necessary in order to meet the 30-month timetable requirement set by Government for preparing a Local Plan. Only in exceptional circumstances (and by prior agreement) will comments be accepted in another format.
19. All comments received during the consultation period will be reviewed and considered as part of the continuing preparation of the Local Plan. The Council may use AI-assisted tools to help organise and summarise consultation responses, but the responses will still be reviewed by officers, and professional judgement will remain central to the assessment of the issues raised.
20. Following the consultation, the Council will publish a summary of the responses received and explain how the issues raised have been considered in preparing the next stage of the Local Plan.

## 2. The supporting evidence

21. Planning law requires that all plans should be informed by a baseline understanding of the needs, opportunities, constraints and wider context of the area to which they relate. Policy PM8 of the NPPF (2026) advises that the preparation of plans should then be shaped and underpinned by information and data that is: relevant to the matters being considered in the plan; proportionate, so that it is focused and not unnecessarily extensive; and drawn from suitable and reliable sources that are sufficiently up to date.
22. To achieve this, the NPPF also advises that plan-makers should:
  - a. Draw upon existing evidence, and update this where appropriate, before preparing or commissioning wholly new evidence (which should be done only where necessary);
  - b. Consider using relevant evidence produced by other plan-makers, where doing so could avoid duplication and support alignment between plans, local strategies and priorities;
  - c. Work jointly with neighbouring or other relevant plan-makers to prepare evidence, particularly relating to cross-boundary matters, where joint working could increase resource efficiency and/or support a more strategic approach and improved cooperation; and
  - d. Not prepare new or additional evidence after a plan has been submitted for examination, unless requested to do so by an appointed Inspector or examiner.
23. Evidence related to development needs should be produced using sufficiently up-to-date information and data, and where evidence on development needs is established at an early stage of plan preparation, it should not require review and updating (unless there are strong reasons to do so).
24. BCP Council has been preparing this necessary evidence base through various studies and technical assessments which will help the Council understand the area's development needs, opportunities and constraints, and ensure that emerging policies and spatial choices are justified, effective and deliverable.
25. The evidence base covers a wide range of topics, including housing, employment, infrastructure, transport, environmental capacity, flood risk, viability, design, heritage, town centres, sport and recreation and Gypsy and Traveller needs. The table below summarises the key evidence prepared or being updated to inform this consultation. Full copies of the evidence documents are available on the Council's website [Local Plan: evidence | BCP](#).
26. Some evidence is complete, while other studies are still being prepared, updated or refined as the Local Plan progresses. Where evidence is ongoing, the consultation explains the current position and the issues that still need further testing. Responses to

this consultation will help inform how the evidence is interpreted and how it should shape the next stage of the Local Plan.

27. The evidence should be read alongside the Sustainability Appraisal (SA). This incorporates the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) required by regulations. The SA helps test the likely effects of different options and ensure that environmental, social and economic considerations are taken into account.
28. The figures for Housing Land Supply in the Table below are indicative at this stage and will be refined as site assessments, infrastructure requirements, environmental constraints and consultation responses are considered.

**Figure 2. List of Evidence**

| Key Evidence                              | Status                 | Key points to note / findings                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|-------------------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Housing Needs Assessment</b>           | Published October 2026 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Government's standard method for calculating housing need has generated figure which identifies a housing need for BCP of <b>2,980 homes per year</b>, equivalent to <b>44,700 homes over the plan period</b>.</li> <li>BCP Council has separately commissioned a housing needs assessment to understand which types and tenure of homes are needed to meet the standard method figure.</li> <li>The assessment identifies a significant need for <b>affordable housing</b>, estimated at around <b>27,500 homes</b> over the plan period.</li> <li>Affordable housing need reflects both existing unmet need and newly arising need from households unable to access market housing.</li> <li>Market housing need is focused mainly on <b>two- and three-bedroom homes</b>.</li> <li>Affordable housing need is focused mainly on <b>one- and two-bedroom homes</b>.</li> <li>The assessment also identifies a need for specialist accommodation.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Draft Land Availability Assessment</b> | Published October 2026 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Within the existing urban area, identified sites could potentially provide around <b>30,600 homes</b> over the plan period.</li> <li>This would leave a shortfall of around <b>14,100 homes</b> against the Government's standard method housing need.</li> <li>Sites promoted in the Green Belt could potentially provide around <b>7,800 homes</b>.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |

| Key Evidence                                  | Status                 | Key points to note / findings                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|-----------------------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                               |                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Even if all currently identified were taken forward, there would remain a residual shortfall of around <b>6,200 homes</b> against the standard method.</li> </ul> <p>Note: The <b>figures are indicative</b> at this stage and will be refined as site assessments, infrastructure requirements, environmental constraints and consultation responses are considered.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Employment Needs Assessment</b>            | Published October 2026 | <p>The Employment Needs Assessment is showing that there is a need of around 127 hectares of employment land between 2026 and 2043/44. With existing permissions and allocations providing about 41 hectares, there is a remaining requirement of approximately 86 hectares to be planned for.</p> <p>The Local Plan will aim to protect and intensify existing employment areas while identifying new opportunities, supporting key economic assets such as Bournemouth Airport and Poole Port whilst also preventing the unnecessary loss of employment land.</p> <p>Note: A new need figure will need to be calculated at the time of the draft plan to account for any new supply identified over the next two years.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Green Belt Review</b>                      | Published October 2026 | <p>The review assesses how different areas of Green Belt contribute to the NPPF purposes of the Green Belt and considers whether any areas meet the national policy definition of Grey Belt.</p> <p>Initial findings indicate that many areas of Green Belt within BCP make a strong contribution to preventing settlement coalescence, maintaining the identity of communities and preserving the historic setting of Christchurch.</p> <p>The review will help inform the assessment of site options and future Local Plan decisions. However, it does not allocate land for development, amend Green Belt boundaries or determine whether development will take place.</p> <p>Note: <b>Green Belt prevents uncontrolled spread of urban development.</b> It is not the same as an environmental protection, so it does not automatically mean that Green Belt land has a high landscape or wildlife value. The Local Plan will continue to protect our most important natural habitats, green spaces, heritage assets and coastline.</p> |
| <b>Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)</b> | Ongoing                | <p>BCP SFRA Level 1 – published in 2024 but will need updating to reflect changes in government legislation, new mapping available and updates to modelling.</p> <p>The <a href="#">Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)</a> provides a high-level overview of all flood sources (including rivers, the sea, surface water and other sources) across a local planning authority area, while the Level 2 SFRA delivers detailed, site-</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |

| Key Evidence                                                | Status  | Key points to note / findings                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|---------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                             |         | <p>specific hazard data (such as flood depth, velocity, and breach analysis) when development in high-risk zones is unavoidable.</p> <p>Poole SFRA Level 2 – last published in 2017. The Council are in the late stages of updating this and the new Poole SFRA level 2 is anticipated to be published early 2027.</p> <p>Christchurch SFRA Level 2 – last published in 2019. The Council are in the early stages of updating this and an update to the Christchurch SFRA level 2 is anticipated to be published in Summer 2027.</p> <p>It is also likely that a Strategic Sequential Test will need to be undertaken. The existing Strategic Sequential Test supporting the legacy Local Plans will need to be updated including the Poole Town Centre area. Any sites across BCP that are at risk of flooding as detailed in the Housing Land Availability Assessment will need to pass the sequential test.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Transport Assessment (including transport modelling)</b> | Ongoing | <p>Transport modelling of sites and spatial options is ongoing. The Transport Background Paper identifies a constrained transport network, with existing congestion and continued reliance on private car use. It also highlights relatively strong bus use and good accessibility to the main town centres, although connectivity is weaker in some outer areas.</p> <p>The background evidence indicates that, of the homes currently identified through the Housing Land Availability Assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• around <b>91%</b> are within an existing high-frequency bus route or potential extension;</li> <li>• around <b>35%</b> are within reach of a railway station; and</li> <li>• around <b>62%</b> are in locations with good or potentially improved walking and cycling infrastructure.</li> </ul> <p>The transport modelling will help assess the likely transport impacts of different site options and identify where mitigation, public transport improvements, walking and cycling enhancements, or highway interventions may be required.</p> |
| <b>Infrastructure Planning Evidence</b>                     | Ongoing | <p>Engagement with infrastructure providers is ongoing and forms part of this consultation. The emerging evidence identifies infrastructure issues that will need to be considered as site options and spatial strategy choices are refined.</p> <p>The evidence indicates that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• additional school places are likely to be required to support some strategic growth locations;</li> <li>• in some parts of the area, existing school capacity may be available due to falling birth rates and some schools operating below capacity; and</li> <li>• further work is needed to identify the infrastructure required to support growth, including education, health,</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |

| Key Evidence                                                                    | Status                                                                        | Key points to note / findings                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                 |                                                                               | transport, utilities, green infrastructure and community facilities.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Whole Plan Viability Report</b>                                              | Ongoing                                                                       | <p>A full whole-plan viability assessment will be prepared as the Local Plan progresses. Existing viability evidence indicates that brownfield development is challenging, particularly in some town centre and lower-value locations, due to factors such as build costs, site constraints, infrastructure requirements.</p> <p>The evidence also indicates that viability is generally stronger in higher-value areas and on greenfield sites. Further viability testing will be needed to understand how the emerging strategy, site allocations and policy requirements can be delivered in practice.</p> |
| <b>Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Show People Assessment (GTAA)</b>         | Published October 2026                                                        | <p>The assessment identifies a need for at least <b>17 permanent Gypsy and Traveller pitches</b> over the plan period. This need will need to be addressed through the Local Plan.</p> <p>The GTAA also recommends a managed approach to transit provision, including negotiated stopping arrangements and temporary stopping places, to respond to unauthorised encampments.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Retail, Leisure and Tourism Needs Assessment</b>                             | Ongoing                                                                       | <p>The BCP Retail Study was last published in 2021. It is currently in the later stages of being updated and is anticipated to be published in late 2026.</p> <p>The emerging evidence, however, indicates limited demand for additional retail floorspace; continuing demand for food and drink uses; and changing leisure trends.</p> <p>The emerging evidence on Tourism Accommodation highlights the importance of the visitor economy to BCP. It recommends a spatially targeted approach to protecting and supporting visitor accommodation in key tourism locations to meet needs.</p>                 |
| <b>Playing Pitch and Built Facilities Assessment</b>                            | Ongoing                                                                       | <p>Earlier evidence prepared for the 2024 draft BCP Local Plan identified the need to retain, invest in and improve existing sports pitches and built facilities. It also identified increased demand for football provision, including a need for at least <b>five 3G pitches</b>. This evidence will inform the Local Plan's approach to sport, recreation and community infrastructure. This evidence is in the process of being updated.</p>                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA / Sustainability Appraisal (SA))</b> | Ongoing<br>- with information available to support current consultation stage | <p>The SA (incorporating the SEA) is a statutory requirement for Local Plans. It is an iterative process and important for testing the likely environmental, economic and social effects of a plan when considered against reasonable alternatives.</p> <p>Under the new Local Plan-making process the requirement for a combined Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is intended to be removed, <b>focussing only on the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)</b> as the requirement for local plans. Further changes are expected with the full rollout and transition to</p>                                 |

| Key Evidence                                | Status                                                                     | Key points to note / findings                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|---------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                             |                                                                            | <p><b>Environmental Outcomes Reports (EORs). However, EORs legislation is not expected to be fully implemented and operational until around the end of 2027.</b> The requirement for the SA/SEA will therefore be kept under review as the plan progresses. Until such new arrangements are formalised, the requirement to prepare an SA (incorporating the SEA) will continue to apply.</p> <p>In July 2026, we consulted on the SA Scoping report with Historic England, Environment Agency and Natural England to ensure baseline information, the scope and the SA framework is sufficiently comprehensive. The SA Scoping Report was revised and will be published as part of the Consultation evidence base.</p> <p>Key findings of the appraisal include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alternative strategies each present different benefits and adverse effects</li> <li>• The proposed strategy performs well against economic and social objectives.</li> <li>• Most alternatives do not deliver the scale of development required to meet identified needs.</li> </ul> <p>At the next stage, the appraisal will also assess the sustainability implications of individual site options and identify any potential mitigation measures.</p> |
| <b>Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA)</b> | Ongoing - with information available to support current consultation stage | <p>An initial HRA Screening Report has been prepared. This document identifies all European designated sites (Special Protection areas, Special Areas of Conservation and Ramsar sites) that are within or functionally linked to the plan boundary that could be impacted by policies of the plan.</p> <p>The Report will scope out specific issues for further consideration such as nutrient neutrality and recreational pressures and will identify where further evidence and mitigation is required. Where significant effects cannot be ruled out, an appropriate assessment will be required.</p> <p>At the next stage the HRA Screening Report will be finalised and will confirm the impact pathways that need to be addressed in consultation with Natural England.</p> <p>The final HRA will:</p> <p>confirm the habitats that could be impacted, and</p> <p>include an Appropriate Assessment which identifies the likely significant effects and potential mitigation measures for consideration in the plan.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |

### 3. What the current evidence means for the Local Plan

29. The National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance set out the national policy context for the preparation of the Local Plan and how the Council should approach various issues. Together, they require the Council to plan positively to meet development needs, make effective use of land, direct growth towards sustainable locations, and ensure that plan choices are supported by a proportionate evidence base. This section considers the implications of the evidence on the key development need of housing and employment.

#### Housing

30. In relation to housing, national policy requires the Council to plan positively to meet the housing needs figure generated by the national standard method in full, unless there are strong, evidenced reasons why this cannot be achieved. The Government's standard method identifies a housing need for BCP of 2,980 homes per year, equivalent to 44,700 homes over the plan period.
31. To meet the housing needs national policy requires the Council to make as much use as possible of suitable brownfield land and underutilised land, optimising densities in locations that are well served by public transport. The Land Availability Assessment has considered more than **1,000 sites** from a range of sources, including sites promoted through the call for sites, existing allocations, planning permissions, urban opportunities and Council-owned land. All these sites can be found as part of the local plan evidence base on the website, available here: [Local Plan: evidence | BCP](#).
32. However, many of these potential sites are affected by issues such as multiple ownerships, flood risk, contamination, viability, infrastructure requirements, access, heritage impacts, or proximity to protected habitats. In some instance this means the sites are not suitable or not available for development. In others these constraints do not prevent development altogether, but they affect the scale, type, timing or viability of development that can realistically be delivered.
33. The evidence demonstrates that there enough potentially suitable/available sites within the existing urban area to provide around 30,600 homes over the plan period. If all these urban sites were taken forward, there would still be a shortfall of around **14,100 homes** against the standard method housing need. This demonstrates that there are not enough suitable and available sites within the existing urban area to meet housing needs in full.
34. When this happens, the guidance sets out that the Council should seek to optimise urban sites through increased densities and seeking to mitigate any constraints. Optimal densities and constraint mitigation have already been factored into the assessment. It is acknowledged that there are opportunities for further intensification in the most accessible locations but to achieve more development in these areas would mean encouraging sites that are not currently available to come forward. This is known as windfall development and a windfall allowance has already been included in the assessment. For the first five years of the plan the windfall level which has been included reflects the average amount of windfall development over the past five years. For the last ten years of the plan period

a higher windfall rate has been included to reflect the higher average levels of windfall seen before 2020. Policies in the plan could help to achieve this and encourage landowners and developers to bring sites forward. For example, to set out where building heights could increase to or where town houses could be built to replace large houses.

35. Further information about the process of identifying sites and the number associated with different sites is set out in the [Housing Land Availability Assessment](#).
36. The Council has previously run two calls for sites and is running another call for sites alongside this consultation to ascertain whether landowners and developers can suggest any further potential sites that may be suitable and available.
37. The Council has also engaged, and will continue to engage, with neighbouring authorities to explore whether any of the unmet need could be addressed through strategic cooperation in adjoining areas. However, many neighbouring authorities face similar challenges.
38. Dorset Council has advised that it is unlikely to be able to accommodate any of BCP Council's unmet housing need through its emerging Local Plan. This is because it faces significant challenges in meeting its own substantially increased housing requirement, alongside environmental, landscape and infrastructure constraints. While Dorset Council remains committed to ongoing cooperation with BCP and neighbouring authorities, its current focus is on determining how far it can meet its own housing needs, with wider strategic issues potentially being considered through the future Spatial Development Strategy.
39. There are also some additional sites in Green Belt locations that could also be considered; however these are in private ownership and there is currently no indication they would be made available over the plan period. They could potentially be included in the Plan on the basis that ownerships and individual's intentions may change over the plan period, particularly if formally identified in policy for housing, but currently there is no certainty these sites would be developable allocations.
40. Second homes and short-term holiday lets are frequently raised as an issue as to why housing needs cannot be met. While these types of property can support tourism and provide flexible visitor accommodation, including for people working in the area, they can also reduce the number of homes available for permanent occupation and add pressure to the private rented sector.
41. There is a sizeable, short-term-let market in the BCP area with around 2,300 short-term-let listings and council tax records indicate there are around 5,000 second homes in the BCP area. These properties are privately owned, and the council has no planning powers to return them to permanent residential use.
42. Nationally, the Government has recognised the need for better data and local oversight, including through a mandatory registration scheme for short-term lets and proposed planning measures to give councils more control over their future growth. The Council will continue to monitor the national situation and consider how policies can help manage the impacts of short-term lets where this is justified and where the planning system provides the tools to do so.

43. In relation to second homes some Councils have sought to restrict the occupancy of new developments, preventing second homes. However, this approach can only be used for new properties that need planning permission and demand is then shifted onto existing stock. Such controls therefore have been shown to have little impact on second home ownership and other mechanisms outside the scope of planning policy are a more effective approach to managing the issue.

## Green Belt

44. In order to plan positively, BCP Council has commissioned a comprehensive review of the South East Dorset Green Belt within BCP's area to inform the preparation of the emerging Local Plan. The review provides an evidence-based assessment of how different areas of Green Belt contribute to the purposes of the Green Belt set out in national policy and considers whether any areas meet the national policy definition of Grey Belt. The findings will be considered alongside other evidence, including housing and employment needs, infrastructure capacity, transport, environmental and flood risk assessments, to inform the evaluation of spatial strategy options.
45. Where development needs cannot be met on brownfield sites or in existing urban areas, the NPPF advises that the review and alteration of Green Belt boundaries should be considered through the Local Plan process. The Council recognises the important role of the South East Dorset Green Belt in checking urban development, preventing neighbouring settlements from merging and safeguarding the countryside from encroachment. However, national policy allows Green Belt boundaries to be altered through the plan-making process where exceptional circumstances are fully evidenced and justified. Exceptional circumstances include where the scale of identified development needs cannot be met in other ways.
46. Given the evidence, the Local Plan will need to explore the release of land from the Green Belt in order to provide for development needs and to accord with national policy. The key issue for the Plan is to establish locations that are sustainable and appropriate, having regard to the infrastructure requirements, environmental constraints and the need to promote sustainable patterns of development. To date, sites in the Green Belt which have been promoted to us could deliver around **7,800 homes**.
47. The consideration of releasing of Green Belt is always contentious however, and it is recognised that it can have both positives and negative impacts. These types of sites provide opportunities to deliver market housing, affordable housing, family housing, meet Gypsy and Traveller needs, plan for infrastructure comprehensively, improve alignment between growth and sustainable transport, improve access and quality of green infrastructure and bring forward land that is more viable and deliverable. However, there are often concerns about the impact upon the environment and the impact upon infrastructure, particularly transport. These impacts need to be carefully considered.
48. A combination of urban development and some Green Belt release would, however, still leave a residual shortfall against the standard method of around **6,200 homes**.

## Gypsies and Travellers

49. Across the BCP area, there are currently two authorised permanent gypsy and traveller sites providing a total of 19 pitches. The latest Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) identifies a minimum need for 17 additional Gypsy and Traveller pitches across the BCP area between 2025/26 and 2044/45. The assessment identifies a shortfall of 1 pitch identified in the first five years and a further 16 pitches required over the remainder of the assessment period.
50. The evidence suggests that the Local Plan will need to support the accommodation needs of Gypsy and Traveller communities while ensuring provision is delivered in sustainable locations with access to services and infrastructure. This includes safeguarding existing authorised sites, facilitating appropriate opportunities for new residential pitches. The assessment also recommends maintaining criteria-based policies to address any future need for Travelling Show person accommodation should applications come forward.
51. The GTTA does also identify that there is no existing transit provision in the BCP area despite ongoing unauthorised encampment activity. The assessment recommends that the Council consider negotiated stopping arrangements and identify suitable temporary stopping places to provide a managed response to transit needs, reduce unauthorised encampments and support the lifestyle of Gypsy and Traveller communities.

## Employment

52. The latest employment land evidence identifies a need for approximately 127 hectares of employment land in Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole (BCP) between 2026 and 2043/44. This assessment includes a two-year period before the start of the plan period. The employment land requirement will be updated as the draft plan is prepared to take account of any additional land that becomes available through new permissions or other sources of identified supply. Existing permissions and allocations currently provide around 41 hectares of employment land, leaving a remaining requirement of approximately 86 hectares to be identified or otherwise planned for.
53. The Local Plan will need to balance the protection and intensification of existing employment areas with the identification of new employment opportunities. This includes supporting key economic assets such as Bournemouth Airport, Poole Port, the universities, hospitals, town centres and established industrial estates, while ensuring that employment land is not lost to other uses where it is needed to meet current and future business needs.
54. An assessment of all employment sites identified at the time of writing has identified approximately 117 hectares of potential employment land from a combination of opportunities within the urban area and sites promoted through the Call for Sites process. These include vacant land within existing employment areas, opportunities to intensify employment uses on existing sites, and sites promoted for employment use, including some located within the Green Belt. The identification and assessment of these sites do not indicate that any decisions have been made regarding their allocation in the Local Plan. Details of all assessed employment sites are provided as part of the Land Availability Assessment and the supporting Employment Land Evidence Base.

## 4. The Plan

55. Policy PM2 (Local plans) of the NPPF 2026 states that local plans should set out a positive vision and spatial strategy which supports the delivery of the spatial development strategy for their area and should set out specific proposals for accommodating development needs and conserving and improving the environment at a local level. They should do this by:
- a. Setting out a vision for the plan area, supported by no more than ten measurable outcomes, which:
    - i. Articulates how the area should change over the plan period;
    - ii. Sets aspirational aims and objectives underpinned by a realistic appreciation of what the plan's policies can genuinely shape and deliver;
    - iii. Reflects longer term expectations extending beyond the plan period where appropriate, including for any broad locations for growth and regeneration identified in the spatial development strategy, and any specific strategic site proposals; and
    - iv. Has particular regard to meeting the identified development needs of the area in a sustainable manner in accordance with policy S1.
  - b. Setting out a spatial strategy, policies for the minimum amount of development to be provided, land allocations and broad locations for growth, and designations in accordance with policy S2, for a period of no less than 10 years from the point of adoption of the plan. Local plans can cover a longer time period where this would, for example, help support the delivery of longer-term infrastructure or strategic development;
  - c. Identifying the contributions expected from development towards meeting affordable housing requirements and on-and off-site infrastructure necessary to support delivery of the plan in accordance with policy PM12; and
  - d. Including other policies, accompanied by concise explanatory text as necessary to aid interpretation, only where these support the delivery of specific allocated sites (to set clear expectations of what is required in terms of layout, infrastructure and design); or where these address particular local issues in accordance with policy PM6.

## 5. Vision and objectives

### Issues and opportunities

56. Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole forms one of the South Coast's most important urban areas. The conurbation benefits from a strong economy, nationally significant environmental assets, a diverse range of communities and an extensive network of town centres, transport connections and high streets. However, it also faces significant challenges, including housing affordability pressures, infrastructure constraints, climate change and a limited supply of development land.
57. Planning Practice Guidance recommends that, to inform the Local Plan vision, an objective assessment of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats relevant to the plan area is undertaken. The SWOT is intended to provide a high-level strategic summary of the area's main characteristics, challenges and opportunities, and to help inform the draft vision, objectives and future discussion on spatial strategy. The following draft SWOT has been prepared:

### Strengths

- **Distinctive coastal conurbation with a high quality of life** – Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole together form a significant urban area with complementary town centres, established neighbourhoods and an outstanding coastal setting, that is central to the area's identity and attractiveness, creating a high quality of life.
- **High quality natural and historic environment** – the area benefits from exceptional environmental assets, including beaches, harbours, heathlands, river corridors, open spaces and heritage assets, all of which contribute to quality of life and economic attractiveness.
- **Strong economic assets** – the area has an established and diverse economy, including tourism, health, education, marine, financial and professional services, together with growing digital and creative sectors.
- **Good strategic connectivity** – the area benefits from strong connections to London and the wider South, including rail links, key road corridors, the airport, port and ferry connections.
- **Established urban area with scope for regeneration and intensification** – the conurbation already contains town centres, employment areas, transport corridors and previously developed land that can support renewal and more efficient use of land.
- **Strong blue and green infrastructure network** – the area has an extensive network of parks, open spaces, coastline and water environments that support health, recreation, biodiversity and climate resilience.
- **Potential to align growth with sustainable transport** – much of the urban area is already served by public transport and has scope to support more walking, cycling and bus-based travel.

### Weaknesses and challenges

- **Scale of development need compared with land availability** – there is a very significant housing requirement and other development needs, but limited capacity within the existing urban area to meet them in full.

- **Severe physical and environmental constraints** – flood risk, protected habitats, the coast and heritage assets limit the range of sites suitable for development or their capacity and make spatial choices more difficult.
- **Poor housing affordability** – house prices and rents are high in relation to local incomes, affecting access to housing for younger households, families, key workers and businesses seeking to attract or retain staff.
- **Transport congestion and car dependence** – congestion is a longstanding issue and there are parts of the area where sustainable transport alternatives are limited.
- **Pressure on infrastructure and services** – growth, funding pressures and ageing infrastructure create challenges for schools, healthcare, utilities, transport and community facilities.
- **Viability constraints** – the build cost of development, particularly on brownfield land, together with environmental mitigation and infrastructure requirements, can limit delivery and affordable housing provision.
- **Town centre and retail challenges** – changing retail patterns means parts of the centres face vacancy, and there is a need to adapt to new economic and social roles.
- **Health inequalities and demographic change** – inequalities in health outcomes and a significantly ageing population create important challenges for housing, services, accessibility and place-making.

### Threats

- **Failure to plan positively for development needs** – if the Plan does not identify a realistic strategy for meeting needs and balancing competing demands for land, this could weaken the Council's ability to manage development and increase the risk of undesirable outcomes.
- **Opposition/reluctance to make difficult choices** – proposals for growth, particularly where Green Belt release is involved, may face strong resistance unless the rationale and benefits are clearly explained.
- **Infrastructure and funding uncertainty** – delivery of transport, education, utilities, flood mitigation and other infrastructure may be constrained by funding, phasing or provider capacity.
- **Environmental harm if growth is not carefully planned** – without a robust strategy, there is a risk of adverse effects in respect of habitats, landscape, water quality, flood risk and the wider green infrastructure network.
- **Viability and delivery risk** – rising costs, market conditions and policy requirements may reduce deliverability or result in land banking, particularly on brownfield sites and in lower-value locations.
- **Cross-boundary pressures** – neighbouring authorities face similar development pressures, which may limit the scope for unmet needs to be addressed elsewhere and increase pressure on BCP to plan for growth within its own area.
- **Climate change and flood risk** – increasing climate impacts may intensify (i) existing flood constraints, particularly from surface water; and (ii) the likelihood of wildfires, thereby increasing the costs and complexity of delivering development in some locations.

### Opportunities

- **To plan for growth in a more joined-up way** – the Local Plan provides an opportunity to look beyond housing numbers in isolation and consider how growth can support diverse economic development, infrastructure delivery, climate resilience, reduced carbon emissions, environmental improvement and the creation of sustainable communities as part of a single long-term strategy.
- **To prioritise regeneration and urban renewal** – the Plan can support renewal of town centres, previously developed land and other accessible urban locations, helping to make better use of land and strengthen existing places.
- **To identify the most sustainable locations** – the Plan can direct growth to the most sustainable and appropriate locations, informed by transport and infrastructure, evidence.
- **To deliver better homes and communities** – the Plan can increase the supply and range of homes, including council and affordable housing, specialist and supported housing, family housing, homes for older people and provision for Gypsy and Traveller needs.
- **To support a stronger pattern of sustainable movement** – the Plan can align development with high-frequency/mass public transport, walking and cycling networks, and help secure improvements to sustainable transport infrastructure.
- **To reshape and strengthen town centres and employment areas** – the Plan can support mixed-use renewal, re-use of vacant buildings and intensification and investment in centres and key employment locations.
- **To secure environmental improvement** – the Plan can go beyond protection alone by supporting nature recovery, improved green infrastructure, better water and air quality, and stronger climate resilience.
- **To build public understanding of the choices the area faces** – the plan-making process provides an opportunity to explain clearly the scale of need, the limits of urban capacity and the reasons why difficult spatial choices are required.

58. The vision has been developed in response to the area's development needs, the need to tackle climate change, the importance of protecting valued environmental assets and the limited availability of unconstrained land within the urban area. It recognises the importance of directing development to the most sustainable locations, making the most efficient use of previously developed land and existing infrastructure, whilst recognising that some carefully planned urban extensions will be required.

## Draft vision:

Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole form a distinctive coastal conurbation defined by its outstanding natural environment, including Poole Harbour, Christchurch Harbour, and the extensive beaches, heathlands and river corridors. The area contains the Victorian seaside resort town centre of Bournemouth, along with the historic quaysides and town centres of Poole and Christchurch. The town centres are surrounded by established district centres, neighbourhoods and employment areas, including Bournemouth Airport, Poole Port and the university campuses. The economy has strong sectors in tourism, health, marine and financial services. While the area offers a high quality of life, it faces significant challenges, including the need for more homes, pressure on infrastructure, congestion, climate change, flood risk and the need to protect and restore nature.

By 2043/44, Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole will continue to be a thriving coastal conurbation, where people of all ages can live healthy and fulfilled lives with access to high-quality homes, jobs, services and exceptional natural environments.

Development will be focused in the most sustainable and accessible locations, helping to support the town centres, strengthen communities and make the best use of land. New development will be well designed, supported by infrastructure, and shaped in a way that responds to climate change, and supports healthier, lower-carbon lifestyles.

By the end of the plan period, Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole will have a stronger network of well-connected places, a wider choice of homes, resilient local centres and employment areas, improved opportunities to travel by public transport, walking and cycling, and a greener, more nature-rich environment.

### **Sustainable growth**

Growth will be focused in the most accessible and sustainable locations, including Bournemouth, Poole and Christchurch town centres, other district centres, along high-frequency bus routes and around railway stations, and within well-planned urban extensions in north Poole, north Bournemouth and north Christchurch. We will endorse an infrastructure first approach as communities need to be sustainable and development should support walkable neighbourhoods with a strong sense of place, supported by infrastructure, community facilities and high-quality design.

### **Homes and communities**

A wide range of high-quality homes will meet the needs of existing and future communities, including council and affordable housing, specialist and supported housing, family housing and homes for older people and younger households. New and existing neighbourhoods will be inclusive, safe and healthy, with good access to education, healthcare, open space and leisure opportunities.

### **Economic growth and town centres**

The area's economy will continue to grow and diversify in line with BCPs Growth Plan. Along with protecting and intensifying existing employment areas, new employment areas will be developed at Talbot Village, Bournemouth Hospital and as part of new communities. Bournemouth, Poole and Christchurch town centres will be revitalised as attractive, mixed-use destinations for living, working and leisure, maintaining their vitality and adapting to changing economic patterns.

### **Sustainable transport and connectivity**

Growth will be supported by better public transport, walking and cycling connections, helping people move around more easily and reducing reliance on the private car. New development will be planned to improve access to jobs, services, education and leisure, while helping to address congestion and improve air quality.

### **Climate resilience**

The area will play its part in responding to climate change by enhancing green infrastructure, enriching ecological corridors, encourage renewable and low carbon energy, and adapting to future flood risk. Places will become more resilient to flood risk, coastal change, overheating, water stress, and wildfires, and new development will be expected to respond positively to these challenges.

### **Natural environment and green infrastructure**

Protecting and enhancing the area's internationally and nationally important habitats, including seas and rivers, landscapes and green spaces. Creating a stronger network of green infrastructure (parks, woodlands, trees, hedgerows) and blue infrastructure (rivers, streams, ponds, wetlands) that will improve access to nature, support biodiversity, aid nature recovery and contribute to healthier communities and recreational opportunities.

### **Design, heritage and local character**

All development will be well designed to create attractive, durable and sustainable places that reflect the qualities of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole. In some locations, change will be needed to make more efficient use of land and support growth, and this will be managed in a way that respects local context, recognises the evolving character of places, and seeks to conserve heritage assets.

## **Measurable Outcomes**

59. The Local Plan seeks to enable the following measurable outcomes to be achieved:

1. At least 2,980 net additional homes are delivered per year, equivalent to 44,700 homes between 2029 and 2044.
2. Sufficient land is allocated and safeguarded to deliver around 86 additional hectares of employment land over the plan period.
3. 70% of new homes and jobs directed into the existing urban area.
4. A mix of homes is delivered that meets identified needs, including at least 40% of affordable housing on qualifying sites, specialist accommodation and at least 17 permanent Gypsy and Traveller pitches over the plan period.
5. The proportion of trips made by walking, cycling and public transport is increased to 50% by the end of the plan period.
6. Biodiversity, ecological networks and internationally, nationally and locally important environmental assets are protected and enhanced by securing measurable biodiversity improvements, including at least 10% biodiversity net gain

on qualifying development, and with no adverse effect on the integrity of protected habitats.

7. All new homes are located within convenient walking, cycling or public transport access of key services, facilities and open space.
8. The infrastructure needed to support growth is delivered in step with development by securing 90% of critical infrastructure items identified in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan by their required trigger points or phases.
9. The vitality and viability of Bournemouth, Poole and Christchurch town centres and other defined centres is maintained and enhanced, by helping to prevent vacancy rates from exceeding 20%
10. The BCP Local Area Energy Plan is supported by enabling infrastructure and development that contributes to a net zero energy system across the BCP area by 2045, including the delivery of identified priority actions such as heat networks, renewable and low-carbon energy generation, and energy efficiency improvements.

## 6. Spatial Strategy

60. The spatial strategy will need to set out the broad pattern of development across the BCP area over the plan period. It needs to identify where homes, jobs, services and infrastructure should be located, and the areas that should be protected from inappropriate development. It is important that the strategy seeks to protect and enhance the BCP area's important habitats and environmental assets while meeting development needs and supporting sustainable economic growth.
61. The evidence base indicates that the Local Plan must provide for a range of development and infrastructure needs, including:
- 2,980 homes a year
  - 86 hectares of additional employment land
  - At least 17 Gypsy and Traveller Pitches
  - New open spaces sports facilities and play areas
  - Infrastructure, services and environmental mitigation required to support growth.
62. The emerging retail and leisure evidence indicates that there is limited need for additional retail floorspace over the plan period, reflecting changes in the retail sector, declining levels of comparison goods floorspace and the availability of vacant retail premises. In contrast it forecasts continued growth in demand for food and drink uses and identifies changing patterns of leisure activity, including increasing demand for experience and activity-based leisure uses. It also highlights the important contribution of visitor and tourist expenditure in supporting these sectors of the economy. The findings indicate that much of the future need could be accommodated through the re-use and repurposing of existing vacant and underutilised premises within centres. The strategy therefore focuses on strengthening the vitality and viability of existing centres, supporting a wider mix of uses, and improving the quality, accessibility and attractiveness of town centres and high streets.

## Settlement Hierarchy

63. A settlement hierarchy provides a framework for understanding the relative role and function of places, having regard to factors such as population, employment opportunities, access to services and facilities, public transport accessibility and infrastructure provision. It helps inform the distribution of development by directing growth to the locations that are best served and most sustainable.
64. The NPPF (policy TC1) advises us to define a settlement hierarchy. However, Bournemouth, Poole and Christchurch function as a single, integrated urban area. The towns are physically contiguous and are linked by established transport networks, employment areas, retail centres, educational facilities and community infrastructure. Together they form the principal focus for housing, employment, services and investment within the local authority area and are considered a single settlement.
65. Accordingly, the starting point for the spatial strategy is to direct the majority of development to the existing urban area. This supports the efficient use of land, maximises the use of existing infrastructure and services, and aligns with national policy objectives for sustainable development.

## Pattern of growth

66. The starting point of the spatial strategy will be to prioritise development within the urban area. This makes the best use of land that is already well connected to jobs, shops, services and public transport. Within the existing urban area, the greatest levels of growth and highest densities of development should be directed to the most accessible locations such as town centres, district centres, around railway stations and along high frequency public transport corridors. Focusing development within these locations would support high streets and centres, make best use of existing infrastructure, strengthen public transport and reduce reliance on the private car.
67. The most accessible parts of the BCP area are shown on the potential strategy map below and include:
- The Town Centres (Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole);
  - Major district and local centres;
  - High frequency public transport corridors; and
  - Areas with excellent access to jobs, education and services.
68. However, the evidence shows that development within the urban area alone will not meet all the identified housing and employment needs. This means some urban extensions will also be needed. These need to be carefully planned as sustainable, well-connected and well-designed places, with supporting infrastructure, services, community facilities, public transport and, where appropriate, employment provision, together with good walking and cycling connections and integration with nearby centres, employment areas and existing neighbourhoods. Potential for urban extensions on Green Belt land exist across the northern parts of the BCP area in north Poole, north Bournemouth and to the north of Christchurch. (See paragraphs 30 to 32 about Green Belt)
69. The strategy will continue to protect the area's designated natural habitats, green spaces, heritage assets and coastline.

## Why this strategy?

70. The potential spatial strategy has been shaped by the need to balance substantial development requirements with the BCP area's significant environmental, infrastructure and land supply constraints. Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole is a highly urbanised area containing internationally important habitats, areas at risk of flooding or wildfire, and heritage assets. These constraints limit the amount of land that is suitable, available and achievable for development.
71. In response, the potential strategy follows a clear sequence:
- a) First, it makes the most efficient use of land within the existing urban area by directing growth to town centres, other accessible locations, previously developed land and opportunities for redevelopment and intensification.

- b) Second, as urban capacity is insufficient to meet identified needs, it provides for selected strategic urban extensions in locations that can be planned comprehensively and supported by infrastructure.
- c) Finally, it seeks to protect and enhance the area's important environmental assets and secure the infrastructure, services and mitigation needed to support sustainable communities.

## Options considered

61. As part of preparing the Local Plan, we must consider all options for how development needs could be accommodated. In considering options, it is important to recognise that whilst each has advantages and disadvantages, no single option is without impacts. The role of the spatial strategy is therefore to identify the approach that provides the most appropriate overall balance between meeting development needs, directing growth to sustainable locations, supporting infrastructure and protecting important environmental and community assets.

### **(i) Urban capacity only**

This option would seek to meet development needs solely within the existing urban area, using sites with planning permission, suitable and available urban sites, opportunities for redevelopment and intensification, and a windfall allowance. This approach would make best use of land and infrastructure within the urban area and support existing facilities and services, but it would not deliver the range of homes we need in sufficient numbers, particularly affordable housing and family housing.

This approach has been fully explored through the Housing Land Availability Assessment and is an essential part of the proposed strategy. However, the evidence shows that in isolation it would not provide enough land to meet identified development needs in full. For that reason, an urban capacity only approach does not accord with the requirements of National Policy and would not be a robust approach to take forward.

### **(ii) Higher intensification of the urban area**

This option would place even greater emphasis on intensifying development within the urban area, including higher-density redevelopment in accessible places and transport corridor locations. Increasing density in sustainable locations is an important part of the proposed strategy and is supported by national policy. It would make best use of land and infrastructure within the urban area and support existing facilities and services.

However, given the limited number of known suitable and available sites a strategy based primarily on significantly higher urban intensification would still not meet development needs in full. This would mean a higher reliance on windfall development on sites that are not currently available significantly over and above rates ever achieved, making it difficult to evidence that such an approach is justified and deliverable. It would also result in a much greater reliance on smaller flatted schemes, which would not align well with identified needs for family housing. In addition, constrained urban brownfield sites face viability challenges, which can limit the delivery of affordable housing and other policy requirements. A strategy of significantly greater intensification could therefore make more efficient use of land in principle, but at the expense of deliverability, housing mix and, in

some locations, townscape character. For these reasons, this is not considered to be an appropriate strategy on its own.

### **(iii) Green Belt release only**

This option would rely primarily on the release of Green Belt land to accommodate development needs, with less emphasis on brownfield regeneration or intensification within the existing urban area.

This is not considered to be an appropriate strategy because national policy is clear that local planning authorities should first make as much use as possible of suitable brownfield land and underutilised urban land, and should focus growth in sustainable locations. A strategy that moved directly to Green Belt release without first maximising opportunities within the urban area would not accord with national policy. It would also fail to make best use of land and infrastructure already available within the existing urban area. In addition, although Green Belt sites can provide opportunities for more comprehensive development, including family housing, infrastructure and planned new communities, such sites can also have greater impacts on the landscape, habitats and the transport network.

### **(iv) A constraints-based strategy**

This option would argue that development needs cannot be met in full because of the area's constraints and would therefore seek to plan for a lower level of growth. However, National Policy requires the council to meet development needs unless there are clear and evidenced reasons why this cannot be achieved.

Green Belt is not, in itself, a justification for reducing need, because national policy makes clear that Green Belt boundaries should be reviewed through the plan-making process where necessary. Other constraints, such as flood risk, habitats and infrastructure limitations, are important. They must be addressed and taken into account, and they may limit development in some instances, but many can be mitigated, managed or taken into account in determining the most appropriate locations for growth.

A strategy based primarily on constraints would risk under-planning for housing and employment needs. Unless supported by clear evidence that impacts could not be avoided, mitigated or managed, such an approach would be unlikely to be found sound at examination.

### **(v) Challenging the standard method**

This approach would seek to argue that the standard method housing figure should not apply to the BCP area because of local circumstances and constraints.

National policy does allow for exceptional circumstances in limited situations, such as on island authorities, but there is currently no clear evidence to suggest that BCP falls within a category where a departure from the standard method would be justified. The Council has previously tested this approach at examination in early 2025, and it was not successful. There is nothing at present to indicate that such an approach would be found

sound. For that reason, the standard method remains the appropriate basis for plan-making.

#### **(vi) Meeting BCP's needs elsewhere**

The Council is required to engage constructively with neighbouring authorities on strategic planning matters. However, neighbouring authorities face similar pressures and land constraints. The starting point set out in national guidance is to seek to meet BCP's needs within the plan area and, if a shortfall remains after all reasonable options have been explored, to engage with neighbouring authorities. Therefore, while neighbouring authorities can be approached to assist in meeting unmet needs an approach which seeks to meet a high proportion of needs elsewhere would not be found sound.

Given the current shortfall neighbouring authorities have been contacted to see if they can assist in meeting the unmet need. While this could reduce pressure within BCP, it would also place reliance on other authorities that face similar development pressures and constraints, and on decisions outside the Council's control. It therefore cannot be treated as a substitute for identifying the most appropriate strategy within the plan area.

### **Options conclusion**

72. No other single option referred to above is capable of meeting development needs in a way that is both realistic and consistent with national policy. The proposed spatial strategy therefore combines the main positive elements of the single options considered: maximising development within the urban area, making the most of sustainable locations, and identifying carefully planned urban extensions.

#### **Do Nothing approach**

This would mean not preparing a new BCP Local Plan and instead continuing to rely on the adopted plans of the former Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole authorities, together with national policy and guidance. Planning applications would continue to be determined against the development plan as a whole, but the policy framework would become increasingly dated and less able to provide a clear, positive and comprehensive strategy for meeting current housing, employment, infrastructure and environmental needs.

Furthermore, the Council is however required to prepare and keep an up-to-date Local Plan. The new plan-making system also reinforces the expectation that local planning authorities progress plan preparation within defined timescales. The Council has already committed to preparing a new Local Plan and has begun the evidence-gathering and engagement needed to support that process.

If the Council were to stop plan preparation, there would be a risk of government intervention. The exact form of any intervention would depend on the circumstances and the powers used by the Secretary of State. It could include requiring the Council to revise

its plan timetable, directing particular steps in plan preparation, or taking more direct action if the plan-making process failed to progress.

Doing nothing would also leave the Council in a reactive position. It would not remove development pressure or prevent speculative planning applications, including applications on Green Belt sites. Instead, the Council would have to respond to proposals on a case-by-case basis, using an ageing policy framework that risks development coming forward without the same ability to secure the right pattern of growth, infrastructure, affordable housing, environmental mitigation and place-making outcomes.

For these reasons, doing nothing is not considered to be a justifiable option. It would fail to plan positively for identified needs, would not provide the certainty needed by communities, infrastructure providers and developers, and would be inconsistent with the Council's commitment to prepare a new Local Plan.

## Infrastructure

73. The successful delivery of a spatial strategy depends upon timely investment in infrastructure.

74. Development will need to be supported by improvements to:

- Public transport networks;
- Walking and cycling infrastructure;
- Strategic and local highway networks;
- Education provision;
- Healthcare services;
- Utilities infrastructure;
- Green and blue infrastructure networks; and
- Community facilities.

75. As part of this consultation the Council is engaging with infrastructure providers, government agencies and development partners to ensure that growth is supported by the infrastructure required to create sustainable communities.

## 7. Potential site and Growth Areas

76. A comprehensive assessment of potential development sites has been undertaken through the Council's Land Availability Assessment. This has drawn on two formal 'Call for Sites' exercises, a review of existing site allocations, and an assessment of Council-owned assets. In identifying potential development opportunities, the Council has had regard to the NPPF, which advises that sites should be suitable, available and achievable in order to support development. In addition to submissions for housing and employment development, a number of sites were notified to BCP Council through the 'Call for Sites' process for infrastructure-related purposes. These submissions have not been assessed through the housing and employment land availability assessment. Instead, they will be considered alongside the relevant technical evidence and infrastructure planning work as preparation of the Local Plan progresses.

77. The residential sites we are examining as part of this Local Plan fall into different groups:

**Sites with planning permission** - these sites already have permission, but construction is not complete, all these sites are considered suitable and available, although many will be completed before the start of the Plan period.

**Sites in the urban area which are suitable and available** - these sites have no known constraints and appear to be available for development.

**Potential sites in the urban area** - sites which may be suitable or available but have a constraint and issue that needs further investigation before it can be considered suitable and available.

**Potential sites in the Green Belt** - sites which have been promoted by landowners/developers.

**Other Green Belt sites** - sites which could be explored further but have not been put forward by the landowner or developer.

78. Just because a site or area is identified and categorised does not mean it will definitely be allocated in the draft Local Plan. This consultation provides an opportunity for people to provide more information about these sites which will be considered in the final assessment.

## 8. Policy approach

### Existing Local Plan

79. The BCP Local Plan will cover the period 2029-2044 and, once adopted, will provide one up to date planning document that is based on up to date social, economic and environmental evidence, and is conformity with all recent new planning legislation, policy, guidance and relevant case law. As well as setting out our development strategy the Local Plan will provide policies by which to determine planning applications and will allocate sites to guide new development.
80. The BCP Local Plan will cover the whole of the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole administrative area and will be produced by BCP Council.
81. Once adopted the BCP Local Plan will supersede:
- Bournemouth Local Plan (saved policies) 2002
  - Bournemouth Affordable Housing Development Plan Document 2009
  - Bournemouth Core Strategy 2012
  - Bournemouth Town Centre Area Action Plan 2013
  - Christchurch Local Plan (saved policies) 2001
  - East Dorset and Christchurch Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy 2014
  - Poole Local Plan 2018
82. BCP Council has inherited a wide range of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) and Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) from each of the predecessor local authorities. Subjects covered by SPDs are typically either detailed policy approaches on complex areas of planning policy or types of development such as affordable housing; or briefs for significant development sites or areas of specific interest such as town centres. These documents do not form part of the development plan but do have weight as a material consideration in decision making. Those currently in force can be found:
- a. [Here](#) for Bournemouth
  - b. [Here](#) for Christchurch
  - c. [Here](#) for Poole
83. SPDs can no longer be produced under the new Local Plan system and those existing will cease to have effect when the new Local Plan is adopted. If BCP Council wish to retain any elements of an SPD, it can either (a) incorporate relevant provisions of the SPD into the Local Plan, (b) replace the SPD with guidance, or (c) replace it with a new Supplementary Plan. Any proposed new Supplementary Plans will require independent examination. Our priority at this stage is to gain an understanding of which elements of current SPDs need to be retained.

### Proposed Local Plan

84. This chapter sets out an overview of proposed local BCP policies, as required by the NPPF, to add further detail to the national policy or that are needed to cover a locally specific issue.
85. Policy PM6 of the NPPF sets out that plan makers should:

- Not include policies that duplicate, substantively restate or are inconsistent with the content of national decision-making policies, unless directed by other policies in the Framework;
- Only address matters, and include policies, that are necessary and relevant to the plan being prepared, and that avoid unnecessary duplication of other parts of the development plan;
- Only include policies that extend beyond site or location-specific requirements where these are necessary and where plan-makers consider there is a clear and justified reason for inclusion.

86. It is currently structured in a manner that reflects the chapters in the NPPF. The NPPF can be viewed at [National Planning Policy Framework 2026](#).

87. Each policy section lists, in a table at the beginning, the relevant NPPF policies on:

- Plan-making: BCP Council has to take these into account when setting its own policies.
- Decision-making: BCP's policies cannot duplicate, substantively restate or be inconsistent with these.

88. The following shows a summary of policies which we are initially considering for inclusion in the Local Plan, on the basis that they are expected to meet the conditions of NPPF Policy PM6. This list is not exhaustive and will be updated as the plan progresses.

89. Section 1 explains how comments and feedback on the policies and evidence should be submitted.

## List of Potential Local Plan Policies

|                                                |                                                                                    |
|------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Achieving sustainable development</b>       |                                                                                    |
| <b>S.A</b>                                     | Settlements                                                                        |
| <b>Meeting the challenge of climate change</b> |                                                                                    |
| <b>CC.A</b>                                    | Renewable and low carbon energy developments                                       |
| <b>CC.B</b>                                    | Local water efficiency standards                                                   |
| <b>Delivering a sufficient supply of homes</b> |                                                                                    |
| <b>HO.A</b>                                    | Housing Strategy                                                                   |
| <b>HO.B</b>                                    | Affordable housing                                                                 |
| <b>HO.C</b>                                    | Housing mix and protecting small family homes                                      |
| <b>HO.D</b>                                    | Mix of tenures on sites for 150 homes or more                                      |
| <b>HO.E</b>                                    | Housing requirement figure and gypsy and traveller pitch requirement               |
| <b>HO.F</b>                                    | Allocation of gypsy, traveller and travelling show people sites                    |
| <b>HO.G</b>                                    | Accessible homes                                                                   |
| <b>HO.H</b>                                    | Specialist needs housing                                                           |
| <b>HO.I</b>                                    | Self and custom build                                                              |
| <b>HO.J</b>                                    | Houses in multiple occupation                                                      |
| <b>HO.K</b>                                    | Housing for multi-generational and extended families                               |
| <b>Building a strong effective economy</b>     |                                                                                    |
| <b>E.A</b>                                     | Economic strategy                                                                  |
| <b>E.B</b>                                     | Employment site allocations                                                        |
| <b>E.C</b>                                     | Loss of existing employment sites                                                  |
| <b>E.D</b>                                     | Local labour agreements                                                            |
| <b>E.F</b>                                     | Tourist attractions                                                                |
| <b>E.G</b>                                     | Tourist accommodation                                                              |
| <b>Ensuring the vitality of town centres</b>   |                                                                                    |
| <b>TC.A</b>                                    | Town centre strategy                                                               |
| <b>TC.B</b>                                    | Locally defined threshold for impact assessment                                    |
| <b>TC.C</b>                                    | Areas for greater diversity and/or intensification                                 |
| <b>TC.D</b>                                    | Town centre infrastructure and public realm                                        |
| <b>TC.E</b>                                    | Cultural infrastructure/evening economy                                            |
| <b>Securing clean energy and water</b>         |                                                                                    |
| <b>W.A</b>                                     | Planning for energy and water                                                      |
| <b>W.B</b>                                     | Securing renewable and low carbon energy and electricity network infrastructure    |
| <b>W.C</b>                                     | Renewable and low carbon energy development and electricity network infrastructure |
| <b>Making effective use of land</b>            |                                                                                    |
| <b>L.A</b>                                     | Density standards                                                                  |
| <b>Protecting Green Belt</b>                   |                                                                                    |
| <b>GB.A</b>                                    | Green Belt boundaries                                                              |
| <b>GB.B</b>                                    | Beneficial uses of Green Belt Land                                                 |
| <b>Achieving well designed places</b>          |                                                                                    |
| <b>DP.A</b>                                    | Design expectations and standards                                                  |

|                                                          |                                       |
|----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <b>DP.B</b>                                              | Nationally Described Space Standards  |
| <b>DP.C</b>                                              | Tall buildings                        |
| <b>DP.D</b>                                              | Shopfronts                            |
| <b>Promoting sustainable transport</b>                   |                                       |
| <b>TR.A</b>                                              | Transport routes                      |
| <b>TR.B</b>                                              | Movement thresholds                   |
| <b>TR.C</b>                                              | Parking standards                     |
| <b>TR.D</b>                                              | Highway safety                        |
| <b>TR.E</b>                                              | Servicing and deliveries              |
| <b>TR.F</b>                                              | Local transport infrastructure        |
| <b>Promoting healthy communities</b>                     |                                       |
| <b>HC.A</b>                                              | Community facilities                  |
| <b>HC.B</b>                                              | Outdoor recreation standards          |
| <b>HC.C</b>                                              | Local Green Space                     |
| <b>Pollution, public protection and security</b>         |                                       |
| <b>P.A</b>                                               | Water pollution                       |
| <b>P.B</b>                                               | Bournemouth Airport safeguarding      |
| <b>P.C</b>                                               | Sewage treatment odour areas          |
| <b>P.D</b>                                               | Air and soil pollution                |
| <b>Managing flood risk and coastal change</b>            |                                       |
| <b>F.A</b>                                               | Strategic Flood Risk Assessments      |
| <b>F.B</b>                                               | Sequential Test                       |
| <b>F.C</b>                                               | SuDs                                  |
| <b>F.D</b>                                               | Flood defences                        |
| <b>F.E</b>                                               | Coastal change management areas       |
| <b>Conserving and enhancing the natural environment</b>  |                                       |
| <b>N.A</b>                                               | Hierarchy of designated natural sites |
| <b>N.B</b>                                               | Nature recovery opportunities         |
| <b>N.C</b>                                               | Green infrastructure standards        |
| <b>N.D</b>                                               | Protected habitat site issues         |
| <b>Conserving and enhancing the historic environment</b> |                                       |
| <b>HE.A</b>                                              | Heritage assets                       |

## Achieving sustainable development

### NPPF Policies

#### Plan-making

S1: Positive plan-making

S2: Producing a spatial strategy

#### Decision making

S3: Presumption in favour of sustainable development

S4: Principle of development within settlements

S5: Principle of development outside settlements

S6: Neighbourhood plans and the presumption

### Potential Local Plan Policies

#### S.A: Settlements

Policies S3 and S4 of the NPPF discuss ‘settlements’ **and** apply a stronger presumption in favour of development if the site is located within a settlement.

Settlements are defined in NPPF Annex B (glossary) as including cities, towns, villages and other predominantly built-up areas, including land which is allocated or has permission for development which will form part of the built-up area once the development is complete. This includes areas defined as a settlement in the development plan (whether using defined settlement boundaries or equivalent terms, or criteria for identifying settlement extents where boundaries have yet to be defined). Settlements do not include hamlets and scattered groups of houses located outside predominantly built-up areas, unless specifically defined as a settlement in the development plan. For the purpose of this Framework they also exclude villages which lie within and are defined as part of the Green Belt in the development plan.

**Potential Policy: A Local Plan policy which defines the settlements in BCP.**

**For purposes of clarification the Local Plan could set out the areas defined as settlements across BCP although as discussed in the Settlement Hierarchy in section 4, Bournemouth, Poole and Christchurch function as a single, integrated urban area and could be considered a single settlement.**

## Meeting the challenge of climate change

### NPPF Policies

#### Plan-making

CC1: Planning for climate change

#### Decision making

CC2: Mitigation of climate change

CC3: Adaptation of climate change

### Potential Local Plan Policies

#### CC.A: Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Developments

Policy PM13 Setting Standards permits local authorities to justify higher energy standards than building regulations for new development.

The NPPF (2026) allows development plan policies to establish quantitative energy efficiency standards above Building Regulations requirements, to promote reductions in energy demand and drive greater improvement in overall energy performance.

Section 2 Plan Making policies – includes an objective that development plans should seek to mitigate and adapt to climate change.

Policy PM8: Evidence for Plan Making states that plans should be shaped and underpinned by sufficiently up to date information and data relevant to those matters being considered in the plan. Plan makers can consider using existing evidence or commission new evidence.

Policy PM13: Setting standards provides the basis for the policy approach in terms energy efficiency, provided it is robustly costed and does not affect viability.

Policy CC1: Planning for climate change requires development plans to take a proactive approach to mitigation to help transition to a low carbon economy to contribute towards the legally binding target of net zero by 2050.

Policy CC2: Mitigation of climate change supports proposals that are designed to conserve energy demand. This is also one of the key principles for well-designed places in Policy DP3.2b which requires proposals to be designed to minimise energy demand and overheating by considering layout and orientation from the outset.

Policy CC3: Adaptation to climate change is clear on anticipating the effects of climate change over the lifetime of development to ensure it is resilient to future pressures.

**Potential policy: a Local Plan policy for energy efficiency standards which goes beyond current or proposed Building Regulations.**

The Vision in the BCP Local Plan Content and Evidence sets out how the area will play its part in responding to the effects of climate change to address impacts and improve resilience to manage future pressures. One of its measurable objectives seeks to support the BCP Local Area Energy Plan and continue to deliver renewable energy and encourage low carbon sources of energy in our area.

The BCP Local Plan could include a local policy on energy efficiency that goes beyond current or proposed Building Regulations to ensure that this can contribute to the overall objective of the NPPF and Policy S1: Positive Plan making which seeks to mitigate climate change and adapt to its effects. This is in line with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 which states that policies should be designed to secure development and use of land which contributes to mitigation of and adaptation to climate change. The government has directed that any such standards in the Local Plan should be expressed as a percentage uplift of the Target Emission Rate (TER) calculated using the Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) or other approved calculation methodology, as long as they are in overall compliance with the NPPF, justified by appropriate evidence and considers viability. This means that there is scope for the Local Plan to also include policies that use other methodologies, such as BREEAM for commercial development or Passivhaus for residential development. There is also scope to set higher standards for energy efficiency through renewable energy requirements as part of the design of buildings to address housing growth and resulting greenhouse gas emissions and move away from fossil fuel sources. A whole plan viability report will need to test this policy approach to understand the associated costs across a range of typologies, both on brownfield and greenfield land.

Under the question *‘Is there anything missing from the key issues we have identified?’* the responses from BCP Local Scoping Consultation drew a number of responses on this topic, ranging from the need to recognise the Council’s commitment to the climate and ecological emergency and go further than adaptation and mitigation measures but properly align with the government’s net zero target. Many respondents were concerned over coastal change, increased flooding events, water quality, vulnerability of the area to sea level rise and storm events. There was support for proactive approaches to the transition to net zero by a range of measures including renewable energy, use of sustainable resources, reduction of water use, and zero carbon standards in new development. Other respondents ranked the climate and ecological emergency as the

primary issue for the Local Plan to address. This included Dorset Wildlife Trust, East Dorset Friends of the Earth and the Environment Agency. One respondent rejected the rigid use of standards which could adversely affect affordability, citing nine components where developer costs have increased and this is not matched by increases in sales values. National Trust felt that policies to address climate change impacts should focus on the natural environment and nature recovery and another should focus on mitigation and adapting to climate change.

Under the question *‘Are there any other topics or specific policies that should be included in the Local Plan?’* Dorset CPRE suggested that policies to ensure all new residential and commercial development should have rooftop solar panels, as well as all BCP Council-owned premises and car parks. Bournemouth Town Council commented on the need for policies to address overheating and nature-based solutions to climate adaption. Historic England supported renewable energy policies and identifying areas for larger scale wind energy.

The relevant key sustainability theme in the SA Scoping Report is climate change and climatic factors. However, climate change has significant interrelationships between all the other broader topics i.e. biodiversity, population, human health, fauna and flora, soil, water, air, infrastructure/transport/energy/minerals and waste, heritage, and landscape/townscape. Therefore, policies on improving energy efficiency would have a positive impact on most of these themes. The detail is captured in the SA report paras 4.129 – 4.158. The policy approach would deliver positive benefits for SA Objective 1(1-3) - Climate change – Reduce GHG emissions and support climate resilience. There would be beneficial outcomes for SA Objective 2 Natural Environment and Objective 4 Water Air and Pollution, Objective 5 Historic Environment and Design, and elements of SA Objective 8 To support health and wellbeing.

## **CC.B Local water efficiency standards**

### **Potential policy: a Local Plan policy for water efficiency standards which goes beyond current or proposed Building Regulations.**

Where water resources are under pressure, local plan policies should consider optional Building Regulations water efficiency standards of 110 litres per person per day for new homes, where justified by local evidence.

One of our key sustainability issues under the climate change theme is the need to increase resilience to water stressed areas. We know climate change will increase water stress, and water efficiency is a key mechanism for reducing pressure on water resources and helps to accommodate growth without increasing overall demand.

Our approach at this time is to review the evidence we have and consult with water companies and the environment agency to determine whether to apply the optional higher standard.

Policy CC1 Planning for Climate Change of the NPPF wants development plans to take “a proactive approach to mitigating climate change (...) They should also take a proactive approach to adapting to climate change, taking into account the implications of extreme weather and long-term climate trends including overheating, wildfires, drought,” – should do this by “c. Setting local water efficiency standards for new development where these are justified in accordance with policy PM13”.

Policy PM13 - Setting Standards in the NPPF states that quantitative standards set through development plans should provide clarity and high degree of certainty about requirements that relevant dev proposals are expected to meet. These should be:

A justified – local evidence and use/ adapt relevant national standards where appropriate. Evidence should be ... (policy PM8).

B not cover building regs other than II “Water efficiency, for which it may be appropriate to apply the tighter Building Regulations optional requirement where justified, or exceptionally a more stringent local standard in areas of serious water stress”

Policy CC2.1. Mitigation of climate change in the NPPF states that in order to contribute to climate change mitigation and the transition to net zero, development proposals should, where relevant to the proposal: c. Use design approaches which conserve energy and other resources in accordance with policy DP3(2)(b).

Policy CC3: Adaptation to climate change in the NPPF is clear on anticipating the effects of climate change over the lifetime of development to ensure it is resilient to future pressures.

## Delivering a sufficient supply of homes

### NPPF Policies

#### Plan-making

HO1: Assessing the need for homes  
 HO2: Setting requirement figures for homes  
 HO3: Providing land for homes  
 HO4: Land for strategic site development  
 HO5: Meeting the needs of different groups  
 HO6: Planning for a diverse mix of sites

#### Decision making

HO7: Meeting the need for homes  
 HO8: Providing affordable homes  
 HO9: Specialist forms of accommodation  
 HO10: Exception sites  
 HO11: Isolated homes in the countryside  
 HO12: Traveller sites  
 HO13: Build out residential and strategic sites

### Potential Local Plan Policies

#### HO.A: Housing Strategy

HO2 states where a spatial development strategy is not in place, local plans should establish the housing requirement figure and pitch and plot requirements for their area, taking account of any relevant emerging spatial development strategy. Housing requirement figures should reflect the extent to which the identified needs of the area can be accommodated over the plan period as a minimum, in accordance with policy S1; and should be higher than the overall figure identified in the local housing needs assessment where appropriate. This includes situations where a higher housing requirement is necessary to meet the needs of neighbouring areas, or to reflect growth ambitions linked to economic development or infrastructure investment.

In local plans, a housing requirement figure should also be set for designated neighbourhood plan areas, unless it is impractical to do so.

**Potential policy: a Local Plan policy which sets out the housing need and the strategy for meeting this need.**

As discussed above in section 3, the Council has prepared and published the Housing Needs Assessment as part of this consultation. The assessment sets out that the Government's standard method identifies a housing need for BCP of 2,980 homes per year, equivalent to 44,700 homes over the plan period. The assessment identifies a significant need for affordable housing, estimated at around 27,500 homes over the plan period.

A policy will set out this need for housing and the strategy for delivering this.

A policy in this respect will primarily be aimed at specifically meeting sustainability objectives 6.1-6.4 as set out in the SA Scoping Report but could also more broadly meet a number of other objectives.

**HO.B Affordable Housing**

Policy HO5 of the NPPF states that the development plan should set out policies to address the needs of different groups including setting requirements for the type and mix of affordable housing which is required to meet identified local needs. This local identified need is set out in the evidence base in the BCP Council Housing Needs Assessment (published October 2026).

Policy PM12 of the NPPF states that development plans should set out contributions expected from development to support delivery of the plan. These could be plan-wide, site specific or for different types or locations of sites or development. Policy requirements should include the levels and types of affordable housing provision required. The level of affordable housing contribution would need to be supported by evidence in the Viability Study which is still being prepared to demonstrate that this would be deliverable.

**Potential policy: a Local Plan policy which sets out affordable housing requirements.**

A policy in this respect will seek sufficient provision of affordable housing, including a minimum proportion of Social Rent housing, to be delivered across the BCP Council area to help meet the needs of households unable to access market housing. It will seek to secure affordable housing through a proportionate approach that reflects site characteristics, development viability and local housing needs.

As part of the scoping consultation, a number of responses raised affordable housing as a key issue for the Local Plan. Respondents highlighted concerns about housing affordability and the ability of local people, younger households, families and key workers to access suitable housing within the BCP area. Several comments suggested that housing affordability should receive greater emphasis within the Plan and that the focus should not be solely on overall housing numbers.

Respondents also called for stronger policies to secure genuinely affordable housing, including social rented homes. Some responses suggested specific social rent requirements on new developments and highlighted the need for robust viability evidence and up-to-date affordable housing needs evidence to support policy development and delivery.

The relevant sustainability theme in the SA Scoping Report is Homes. The evidence identifies significant housing affordability issues across the BCP area and a substantial

need for affordable housing. Affordable housing also has strong links to health, wellbeing, equality, economic resilience and community cohesion.

The policy approach would deliver positive benefits for SA Objective 6(2) Increase the supply of affordable housing, with wider benefits for SA Objective 6 Homes. There would also be beneficial outcomes for SA Objective 7 Economy, Centres and Communities and SA Objective 8 Accessibility, Movement and Health, particularly in relation to reducing inequalities, supporting wellbeing and creating mixed and inclusive communities.

### **HO.C: Housing Mix and Protecting Small Family Homes**

The NPPF does not prescribe the size, type or mix of homes required in individual local authority areas. However, the NPPF also says that local planning policies should specify an expected minimum proportion of social rented housing (this is one element that sits within the wider definition of 'affordable housing').

Policy HO1 of the NPPF states that the development plans should take into account an assessment of the size, type and tenure of housing or other accommodation needed for different groups and where there is not a spatial development strategy in place this should be based upon the housing needs assessment.

Policy HO5 of the NPPF also states that the development plan should set out policies to address the needs of different groups as set out in policy HO1.

**Potential policy: a Local Plan policy which sets out to seek to ensure development provides an appropriate range of dwelling sizes and types that reflect identified local housing needs.**

A local policy could require that developments deliver a stated range of housing with the proportions of different sizes (e.g. numbers of bedrooms) and types (e.g. affordable, housing for sale, and/r build to rent) reflecting what is needed within BCP, as set out in the housing needs assessment.

This policy will seek to ensure new housing developments provide an appropriate range of dwelling sizes and types that reflect identified local housing needs. It will also seek to safeguard the supply of smaller family homes and support the delivery of family-sized accommodation across the BCP Council area to maintain balanced communities.

### **HO.D Mix of Tenures on Sites for 150 Homes or More**

Policy HO4 of the NPPF advises that local plans identify the tenure mix on strategic sites. The BCP Council Housing needs assessment covers the local need of different types of houses needed in the BCP area.

**Potential policy: a Local Plan policy which would require the tenure on strategic sites to reflect identified local housing needs.**

This policy will seek to create balanced, inclusive and sustainable communities by ensuring larger residential developments provide a mix of housing tenures. It will seek to reduce concentrations of single-tenure development and broaden housing choice by delivering a range of market, affordable and other housing products within major schemes.

As part of the scoping consultation, there were very few responses that specifically referred to the provision of a mix of tenures on larger housing developments of over 150 homes. Where relevant comments were made, respondents generally emphasised the importance of delivering a range of housing types decided on a local level.

The relevant sustainability theme in the SA Scoping Report is Homes. The policy approach would deliver positive benefits for SA Objective 6(3) Provide an appropriate mix, type and size of homes, which directly support the delivery of mixed-tenure developments and a broader range of housing choices. There would also be positive outcomes for SA Objective 6(4) Meet the needs of different groups, including older people, disabled people, Gypsies and Travellers, students, families and other groups with specific housing needs. In addition, beneficial effects would be expected for SA Objective 8 Accessibility, Movement and Health, particularly SA Objective 8(4) Promote healthy, safe and inclusive communities and SA Objective 8(6) Reduce health inequalities and improve wellbeing, through the creation of balanced and inclusive communities.

#### **HO.E: Housing Requirement Figure and Gypsy and Traveller Pitch Requirement**

Policy HO1 of the NPPF advises that development plans should take into account an assessment of the size, type and tenure of housing or other accommodation needed for different groups including gypsies and travellers and travelling show people.

Policy HO2 of the National Planning Policy framework advises that local plans should include a policy on housing requirement. The housing need assessment for BCP Council area identifies a need of 44,700 homes over the plan period and the gypsy and traveller needs assessment identifies a need of 17 pitches over the plan period.

#### **Potential policy: a Local Plan policy which sets out the needs of Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Show people.**

This policy will establish the overall housing requirement and identified need for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Show people accommodation over the plan period. It will seek to ensure sufficient land is planned for and delivered to meet the housing needs of all sections of the community.

There were very few responses to the scoping consultation that specifically referred to Gypsy and Traveller accommodation needs. The consultation responses generally referred to the need for housing policies to meet the needs of different groups within the community and to provide a wider range of housing options, but Gypsy and Traveller provision was not identified as a significant or recurring issue by respondents.

The relevant sustainability theme in the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report is Homes. The evidence identifies a minimum need for 17 permanent Gypsy and Traveller pitches over the plan period and highlights the importance of meeting the housing needs of different groups within the community. Provision for Gypsies and Travellers is also linked to wider objectives relating to equality, inclusion, health and community wellbeing.

The policy approach would deliver positive benefits for SA Objective 6(4) Meet the needs of different groups, including older people, disabled people, Gypsies and Travellers, students, families and other groups with specific housing needs. There would also be beneficial outcomes for SA Objective 8 Accessibility, Movement and Health, particularly in relation to inclusion, health and wellbeing.

#### **HO.F: Allocation of Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Show people Sites**

Policy HO1 of the NPPF development plans should take into account an assessment of the size, type and tenure of housing or other accommodation needed for different groups including h. travellers.

Policy HO5 of the NPPF states that the development plan should, at the most appropriate level, set out policies to address the housing needs of different groups (including, but not limited to, those assessed under policy HO1) including C. i.v sites suitable for gypsies and

travellers and travelling show people, including sites suitable for mixed residential and business uses, having regard to the safety and amenity of the occupants and neighbouring residents. Sites identified for travelling show people should have regard to their need for mixed-use yards with both residential accommodation and space for storage of equipment.

Policy HO3 of the NPPF requires local plans to allocate land to meet the identified need of gypsies, travellers and travelling show people.

**Potential policy: A Local Plan policy which allocates a site or sites to meet the identified needs of Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Show people.**

This policy could seek to allocate a site, or sites, to meet the identified accommodation needs of Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Show people communities over the plan period. It will seek to provide suitable, accessible and well-located pitches that support the needs of these communities whilst respecting the character of the surrounding area. The gypsy and traveller needs assessment identifies a need of 17 additional pitches over the plan period.

The relevant sustainability theme in the SA Scoping Report is Homes. The evidence identifies a minimum need for 17 permanent Gypsy and Traveller pitches over the plan period and highlights the importance of meeting the housing needs of different groups within the community. Provision for Gypsies and Travellers is also linked to wider objectives relating to equality, inclusion, health and community wellbeing.

The policy approach would deliver positive benefits for SA Objective 6(4) Meet the needs of different groups, including older people, disabled people, Gypsies and Travellers, students, families and other groups with specific housing needs. There would also be beneficial outcomes for SA Objective 8 Accessibility, Movement and Health, particularly in relation to inclusion, health and wellbeing.

**HO.G: Accessible homes**

Policy HO5 in the NPPF outlines that local requirements should reflect the level of need and should ensure that at least 40% of housing on major developments is built to M4(2) standard.

**Potential policy: a Local Plan policy which goes beyond current or proposed Building Regulations for homes to meet M4(3) standard.**

Due to the ageing population within BCP, and the proportion of residents who identify as disabled, and the predicted increase in wheelchair users, it is seen as locally important to require the 40% target suggested by government, taking into account that the Housing Needs Assessment evidence suggests there is a need for 50%, but acknowledges that some of this need could be catered for in adapting existing accommodation. It is also highlighted that there is a requirement for homes meeting M4(3), and a need for a proportion of this to be specifically within affordable homes, where schemes contain or require affordable homes, and also in specialist older person housing, due to the nature of the accommodation. The need specifically for single storey accommodation (bungalows), was highlighted in the scoping consultation. These factors would all need further consideration with regards to viability which will be considered and evidenced as part of the Viability Study which is being prepared as the plan progresses.

This policy could seek to ensure that homes are constructed to a certain standard and specification to meet accessibility requirements for occupants. Building Regulations set out standards for accessible and adaptable homes in approved Document M.

**HO.H: Specialist needs housing**

Policy HO1 of the NPPF development plans should take into account an assessment of the size, type and tenure of housing or other accommodation needed for different groups including b. older people; c. disabled people; and f. looked after children (evidence of need for which can be found in the relevant local authority's Children's Social Care Sufficiency Strategy) and those who require other specialist community-based accommodation (where evidence of need is available for the relevant local authority).

Policy HO5 of the NPPF states that the development plan should, at the most appropriate level, set out policies to address the housing needs of different groups (including, but not limited to, those assessed under policy HO1) including C. i. Identifying sites which can provide specific types of accommodation where there is an identified need, including specialist housing for older people.

Policy HO9 of the national policy does cover specialist needs housing. However, the policy does not cover young people in care housing or the protecting against the loss of specialist housing.

**Potential policy: A Local Plan policy which supports the provision of specialist needs housing to meet the needs of different groups.**

Consideration will be given as to whether a local policy relating to specialist need housing is required. A policy could ensure the housing needs of older people, people with disabilities or specialist needs, and young people in care are met by supporting appropriate new specialist accommodation in accessible locations. The policy would also protect the loss of such facilities unless they have viability and evidence backing.

Some respondents to the Local Plan Scoping Consultation raised the need for a separate policy considering specialist needs housing. These respondents highlighted the needs of different groups in the community, and the Plan should focus on meeting these needs.

The relevant sustainability theme in the SA Scoping Report is Homes. The evidence identifies a need for specialist housing, alongside a need for accessible and adaptable homes to meet the needs of an ageing population and people with disabilities. Specialist housing is closely linked to health, wellbeing, accessibility and independent living. The policy approach would deliver positive benefits for SA Objective 6(4) Meet the needs of different groups, including older people, disabled people, Gypsies and Travellers, students, families and other groups with specific housing needs. There would also be beneficial outcomes for SA Objective 8 Accessibility, Movement and Health, particularly in relation to health, wellbeing, independent living and reducing inequalities, as well as SA Objective 6(3) Provide an appropriate mix, type and size of homes.

**HO.I: Self and custom build**

There is a legal duty to grant planning permission for sufficient plots of land to meet the demand for self and custom and build housing in the BCP area.

Policy HO1 of the NPPF development plans should take into account an assessment of the size, type and tenure of housing or other accommodation needed for different groups including i. people wishing to commission or build their own homes.

Policy HO5 of the NPPF states that the development plan should, at the most appropriate level, set out policies to address the housing needs of different groups (including, but not limited to, those assessed under policy HO1) including C.iii plots for self and custom build housing and community-led development to meet identified needs.

**Potential policy: A Local Plan policy which sets out the local need for self and custom build and how we would meet this need.**

The BCP Housing Needs Assessment identifies a continuing demand for self and custom build housing equivalent to approximately 470 households over 2028 – 2045 period. Evidence from the Call for Sites also indicates that developers are willing to consider providing self and custom build plots on larger sites. A local policy is therefore needed to establish how self and custom build housing will be delivered and contribute towards meeting identified local demand.

One respondent to the Scoping Consultation supported increased provision for self-build and custom housebuilding, including improved access to land for individuals and groups wishing to build their own homes.

This policy could seek to support the delivery of self and custom build housing across the BCP Council area to help meet identified demand and provide greater housing choice. This could include requiring a specific percentage of self and custom build plots on larger housing sites. The policy will need to take into account development viability.

Relevant key sustainability issues identified in the SA are the need for a wider mix of homes and the need to meet the housing needs of different groups. The policy supports SA Objective 6.3 Provide an appropriate mix, type and size of homes and SA Objective 6.4 Meet the needs of different groups, including other groups with specific housing needs.

**HO.J: Houses in multiple occupation**

Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) make an important contribution to the housing stock across BCP, providing low-cost accommodation for a range of different people, including students, young people, and vulnerable groups who are unable to access other types of market or affordable housing. However, it is recognised that some parts of BCP have experienced significant negative impacts as a result of high concentrations of HMOs in their area, particularly in relation to noise and disturbance and antisocial behaviour.

Parts of the BCP area have also experienced losses of a significant number of small family dwellinghouses as they have been changed to HMOs to house students.

To combat this, two Article 4 Directions were made, one covering the whole of the former Bournemouth District Council area and the other the area of Talbot Village adjacent to the Universities. The Article 4 Directions restrict permitted development rights which normally allow change of use from a family dwellinghouse to a small HMO (Use Class C4) without the need for planning permission. This means that in these areas, a planning application must be made and approved to change a dwellinghouse to a small HMO. Development of or change of use to larger HMOs do not benefit from permitted development rights and will always require planning permission across the whole of the BCP area.

Policy DM10 (Removal of national permitted development rights) of the NPPF states that the use of Article 4 directions to remove permitted development rights should be limited to situations where it is necessary to protect local amenity or the wellbeing of the area (for example safeguarding against the demolition of local facilities, preventing an over-concentration of uses which could affect the quality of life such as small Houses in Multiple Occupation, or supporting the vitality and viability of parts of town centres); be based on robust evidence; and apply to the smallest area required to mitigate the evidenced harm.

The NPPF does not include any policy on HMO development or any specific requirement for such a policy to be included in local plans.

Policy P3 (living conditions and pollution), DP3 (key Principles for well-designed places) and TR4 (street design, access and parking) of the NPPF broadly consider some of the issues associated with an overconcentration of HMOs however, it is not very specific to HMOs and none address the local issue regarding the need to retain family homes.

**Potential policy: a Local Plan policy which manages the impact of HMOs through set application criteria.**

The inclusion of a specific policy on HMOs could ensure that the impact of HMOs can be properly and sensibly managed. Policy PM6 of the NPPF allows the inclusion of policies where they are necessary and there is a clear and justified reason for inclusion and this is considered to be the case. Further evidence will likely be required to support the policy.

A policy could set out the criteria by which applications for both small and large HMOs will be assessed including a calculation of a maximum percentage of properties within a specified area of a development site that should be in use as an HMO to enable some control on numbers and to reduce over-concentrations. The policy could also include criteria relating to living standards for future occupiers and impacts on the amenities of neighbouring residents.

**HO.K: Housing for multi-generational and extended families**

Multi-generational households provide greater flexibility to meet housing needs, and support families that wish to expand their homes to enable their wider family to live with them. Such expansions commonly take the form of independent accommodation within a main dwelling, an extension to a main dwelling, or an annexe to a main dwelling.

Policy HO1 (assessing the need for homes) of the NPPF states that at the most appropriate level, development plans should also take into account an assessment of the size, type and tenure of housing or other accommodation needed for different groups including both older people and families with children.

**Potential policy: A Local Plan policy which sets out to meet the appropriate housing needs of multi-generational and extended families.**

The Housing Needs Assessment provides evidence that there is a large number of suppressed households residing across BCP due to a number of issues including the lack of affordable housing, the multi-cultural population in BCP, and the increasing ageing population in the area. As a result, large numbers of planning applications are submitted proposing to extend and adapt existing accommodation to meet this need.

A policy in this respect could set out some specific criteria to create the best possible accommodation suited to the specific needs of the occupants, but also to prevent misuse of the accommodation and cause potential over-development of a site. The policy would ensure that the new accommodation is within the curtilage of a dwelling and could provide a degree of independent living for family members without having an adverse impact upon the character and amenity of neighbouring properties. Proposals for annexes would need to demonstrate a functional connection with the main dwelling and how they will interact with each other.

As part of the scoping consultation, there were limited responses specifically relating to housing for multi-generational or extended families. However, a number of respondents highlighted the need for a wider range of housing types and sizes to meet the needs of different households and changing demographic trends. Responses called for a greater focus on housing mix rather than simply overall housing numbers and recognised the need to accommodate different family circumstances within the housing stock.

The relevant sustainability theme in the SA Scoping Report is Homes. The evidence identifies the need for a broader range of housing types to meet the needs of different households, including families, older people and those with specific housing requirements. Housing for multi-generational and extended families can help support changing demographic needs, make more efficient use of the housing stock and promote family support networks and independent living.

The policy approach would deliver positive benefits for SA Objective 6(3) Provide an appropriate mix, type and size of homes and SA Objective 6(4) Meet the needs of different groups, including older people, disabled people, Gypsies and Travellers, students, families and other groups with specific housing needs. There would also be beneficial outcomes for SA Objective 8 Accessibility, Movement and Health, particularly in relation to wellbeing, independent living and social inclusion.

## Building a strong, effective economy

### NPPF Policies

#### Plan-making

E1: Providing the conditions for long-term economic growth

#### Decision making

E2: Meeting the need for business land and premises

E3: Freight and logistics

E4: Rural business development

### Potential Local Plan policies

#### E.A Economic strategy

Policy E1 of the NPPF advises that a local plan should provide a policy on a clear economic vision and strategy.

#### **Potential policy: a Local Plan policy which sets out the economic need and the strategy to meet this need.**

A policy in this respect would seek to create a prosperous economy by supporting business growth, innovation, inward investment and the transition to a greener economy. It aims to strengthen key sectors, protect employment opportunities, enhance the visitor economy and ensure that town centres, and employment locations continue to support long-term economic success. It will link to other relevant strategies such as the BCP Growth Plan.

As part of the scoping consultation, a number of responses highlighted the need for the Local Plan to provide a clearer and more ambitious vision for the future economy of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole. Respondents considered that the scope should place greater emphasis on economic growth, business investment, job creation, skills development and the role of the area's universities. Several comments referred to the need to attract major employers, support emerging sectors, retain graduates and create opportunities for young people.

The relevant sustainability theme in the SA Scoping Report is Economy, Centres and Communities. The evidence identifies the need to support a resilient and diverse economy, maintain a sufficient supply of employment land, strengthen centres, support regeneration and reduce deprivation and inequality. An Economic Vision and Strategy can help provide a coordinated framework for investment, employment growth, skills development and sustainable economic prosperity across the BCP area.

The policy approach would deliver positive benefits for SA Objective 7 Economy, Centres and Communities, particularly SA Objective 7(1) Support a diverse and resilient local economy with access to a range of jobs, SA Objective 7(2) Provide sufficient and suitable employment land and premises, and SA Objective 7(5) Reduce deprivation and support regeneration in areas of greatest need. There would also be beneficial outcomes for SA Objective 8 Accessibility, Movement and Health through improving access to employment opportunities and supporting inclusive communities, and SA Objective 6 Homes by supporting the relationship between jobs, homes and sustainable growth.

### **E.B: Employment site allocations**

Policy E1 of the NPPF advises that development plans allocate employment land to implement the economic vision and strategy and meet identified needs over the plan period.

**Potential policy: A Local Plan policy which sets out to ensure that sufficient employment land is allocated to meet the identified economic needs.**

A policy in this respect will ensure that sufficient land is available to meet future employment needs across the plan period by allocating strategic employment sites. It aims to support economic growth, job creation and investment by safeguarding land for a range of employment uses. This policy is needed because the employment land identifies a requirement for additional employment land to support economic growth over the plan period.

As part of the scoping consultation, a number of responses highlighted the need for the Local Plan to identify sufficient land to support future employment growth. Respondents referred to the importance of providing a range of new employment sites to meet business needs, attract investment, support emerging sectors and maintain economic competitiveness. Several comments suggested that the current supply of employment land may be insufficient and that additional employment allocations would be required to support future economic growth.

Respondents also highlighted the need for new employment allocations to provide choice and flexibility for businesses, support inward investment and ensure that employment growth can be accommodated alongside planned housing growth. Some responses identified opportunities for employment growth within strategic locations and emphasised the importance of planning positively for future employment requirements rather than relying solely on existing employment areas.

The relevant sustainability theme in the SA Scoping Report is Economy, Centres and Communities. The evidence identifies the need to support a resilient and diverse economy, maintain a sufficient supply of employment land, strengthen centres, support regeneration and reduce deprivation and inequality. An Economic Vision and Strategy can help provide a coordinated framework for investment, employment growth, skills development and sustainable economic prosperity across the BCP area.

The policy approach would deliver positive benefits for SA Objective 7 Economy, Centres and Communities, particularly SA Objective 7(1) Support a diverse and resilient local

economy with access to a range of jobs, SA Objective 7(2) Provide sufficient and suitable employment land and premises, and SA Objective 7(5) Reduce deprivation and support regeneration in areas of greatest need. There would also be beneficial outcomes for SA Objective 8 Accessibility, Movement and Health through improving access to employment opportunities and supporting inclusive communities, and SA Objective 6 Homes by supporting the relationship between jobs, homes and sustainable growth.

#### **E.C Loss of existing employment sites**

**Potential policy: a Local Plan policy which sets out the need to protect existing employment land.**

The national planning policy framework does not protect existing employment sites. This policy is needed because the employment land study identifies a need for additional employment land and protecting existing employment sites will help maintain the supply of employment land.

A policy would seek to protect existing employment areas and isolated employment sites from loss to non-employment uses. It will aim to safeguard local jobs, support established businesses and ensure employment sites are only released where there is clear evidence that they are no longer viable for employment purposes.

As part of the scoping consultation, a number of responses highlighted the importance of retaining employment land and premises to support economic growth, business investment and local job opportunities. Respondents expressed concerns that the loss of employment sites could reduce the availability of land and premises for businesses, limit future economic growth and weaken the local employment base.

Several responses emphasised the need to maintain an adequate supply and range of employment sites and cautioned against the loss of established employment areas without clear evidence that they were no longer required. Some respondents also highlighted the importance of protecting key employment locations to ensure that businesses have opportunities to expand and invest within the BCP area.

The relevant sustainability theme in the SA Scoping Report is Economy, Centres and Communities. The evidence identifies the need to maintain a sufficient supply of suitable employment land and premises to support economic growth, business resilience and local job opportunities. The loss of employment sites could reduce opportunities for economic growth, constrain employment land supply and weaken the relationship between homes and jobs.

The policy approach would seek to avoid adverse effects on SA Objective 7(1) Support a diverse and resilient local economy with access to a range of jobs and SA Objective 7(2) Provide sufficient and suitable employment land and premises. Retaining employment sites would also support SA Objective 7(5) Reduce deprivation and support regeneration in areas of greatest need and SA Objective 8 Accessibility, Movement and Health by maintaining access to local employment opportunities.

#### **E.D Local labour agreements**

**Potential policy: a Local Plan policy which supports the provision of employment skills and training opportunities to promote local employment.**

The NPPF does not consider local labour agreements or the commitment for employers to recruit local workers, provide local training, and use local supply chains for major building or commercial projects.

A policy could seek to maximise the economic and social benefits of development by creating employment, training and skills opportunities for local residents. It aims to ensure that major developments contribute to workforce development through apprenticeships, work experience, recruitment initiatives and other measures that improve access to employment and career progression.

As part of the scoping consultation, there were relatively few responses specifically relating to local labour agreements. However, several respondents highlighted the importance of supporting local employment opportunities, skills development, training and apprenticeships as part of future growth. Comments referred to the need to support local businesses, create opportunities for young people, develop the construction workforce and ensure that economic growth delivers benefits for local communities.

The relevant sustainability theme in the SA Scoping Report is Economy, Centres and Communities. The evidence highlights the importance of supporting a resilient local economy, improving access to employment opportunities and ensuring that the benefits of growth are shared across communities. Local labour agreements can help maximise employment and training opportunities for local residents, support skills development and contribute to inclusive economic growth.

The policy approach would deliver positive benefits for SA Objective 7(1) Support a diverse and resilient local economy with access to a range of jobs and SA Objective 7(5) Reduce deprivation and support regeneration in areas of greatest need. There would also be beneficial outcomes for SA Objective 7(4) Support community facilities, cultural assets, education and training opportunities and SA Objective 8(6) Reduce health inequalities and improve wellbeing through increased access to employment, skills and training.

#### **E.F (no policy E.E) Tourist attractions**

Policy E1 of the NPPF requires local plans to support economic growth and resilience and make provision for sectors such as leisure and tourism where a need exists, recognising that they may be of particular importance in certain areas. It states that development plans should allocate sites to implement the economic vision and strategy making provision for the expansion or modernisation of other businesses of local, regional or national importance to support economic growth and resilience such as tourism.

The NPPF identifies tourism development as a main town centre use and thus in town centres policies TC1 and TC2 of the NPPF would be relevant stating that plans should consider opportunities to broaden the mix of uses beyond main town centre uses... strengthen or re-introduce markets, bring vacant sites and premises back into use.

#### **Potential policy: a Local Plan Policy which sets out the need for visitor and tourism facilities and how these needs can be met.**

Indeed, the town centres of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole have many tourist attractions within them or could be considered a tourist attraction in their own right due to their history. However, tourist attractions across BCP go beyond the town centres.

The Dorset Destination Management Plan (2026-2035) identifies BCPs beaches, Poole Harbour, arts and cultural venues, events and conference facilities as important components of Dorset's visitor offer and promotes investment in attractions, experiences and events that can attract visitors throughout the year.

The BCP Seafront Strategy supports the provision and enhancement of leisure attractions, visitor facilities and related infrastructure improvements across a number of seafront locations.

Emerging evidence from the Retail and Tourism Accommodation Study highlights the importance of tourism to the local economy and identifies a range of visitor attractions, cultural venues, leisure facilities and planned investment projects across Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole.

In the Scoping Consultation, Historic England highlighted the role that the historic environment can play in supporting tourism, whilst ensuring that impacts on heritage assets are avoided or minimised. One respondent highlighted the importance of water quality to tourism and water-based recreation. Another respondent raised concern over the impact of reduced investment in public realm and local amenities on tourism and the quality of life.

A policy could support the provision of new visitor attractions and tourist facilities in appropriate locations and set out criteria for assessing proposals involving their redevelopment or loss. It will need to take account of evidence relating to the ongoing viability of visitor attractions and tourist facilities where relevant.

Relevant key sustainability issues identified in the SA are the need to support the visitor economy while managing seasonal pressures on transport, town centres, public spaces, coastal environments and sensitive habitats. The policy supports SA Objective 7.1 – support a diverse and resilient local economy, 7.3 maintain and enhance the viability of centres and 7.4 support cultural assets. It also supports SA objective 7.5 create places and routes that feel safe and help reduce crime or fear of crime.

### **E.G Tourist accommodation**

Policy E1 of the NPPF requires local plans to support economic growth and resilience and make provision for sectors such as leisure and tourism where a need exists, recognising that they may be of particular importance in certain areas. The NPPF also identifies hotels as a main town centre use.

### **Potential policy: a Local Plan policy which addresses the need and impact of tourist accommodation.**

The Dorset Destination Management Plan (2026 – 2035) recognises the contribution of Bournemouth Christchurch and Poole to Dorset's visitor economy and supports growth in overnight stays and year-round tourism. The strategy therefore supports the retention and enhancement of tourist accommodation that contributes to overnight visitor stays and the wider visitor economy.

Emerging evidence from the Tourism Accommodation Assessment highlights the importance of the visitor economy to the BCP area. Tourism makes a substantial contribution to the local economy and employment base and visitor accommodation plays an important role in supporting tourism activity. The emerging evidence recommends a spatially targeted approach based on Core Tourism Accommodation Areas. A local policy is therefore required to establish the approach to the provision, retention and loss of visitor accommodation.

One respondent to the Scoping Consultation supported a flexible approach that would allow the redevelopment of obsolete or unviable visitor accommodation for housing, including through site allocations where appropriate, whilst safeguarding viable tourism accommodation.

Another respondent supported a policy to address the impact of short-term, and holiday lets on housing supply and the availability of tourist accommodation. Paragraphs 37 – 40 above explain that, whilst these uses can affect housing availability, the Council's ability to manage existing short term and holiday lets through the planning system is currently limited.

A policy could support the provision, retention and enhancement of visitor accommodation across the BCP area. The policy approach may include the identification of Core Tourism Accommodation Areas and a framework for assessing proposals for new visitor accommodation and the loss of existing visitor accommodation. It will need to take into account evidence relating to the ongoing viability of visitor accommodation where relevant.

Relevant key sustainability issues identified in the SA are the need to support the visitor economy while managing seasonal pressures on transport, town, centres, public spaces, coastal environments and sensitive habitats. The policy supports SA Objective 7.1 – support a diverse and resilient local economy, and 7.3 maintain and enhance the viability of centres.

## Ensuring the vitality of town centres

### NPPF Policies

#### Plan-making

TC1: Planning for town centres

#### Decision making

TC2: Development in town centres

TC3: Main town centre uses outside town centres

TC4: Assessing the impact of development on town centres

### Possible Local Plan Policies

#### TC.A Town Centre Strategy

##### **Potential policy: a Local Plan policy which sets out the Retail Hierarchy.**

Policy TC1 of the NPPF requires Local Plans to be informed by a strategy for town centres. The High Streets and District Centres Strategy (2021-2026) provides a framework for supporting vibrant, adaptable and resilient town and district centres across the BCP area. It promotes a diverse mix of uses, recognises the changing role of centres as multifunctional community hubs, and supports improvements to the public realm, cultural activity, partnership working and innovation to help centres adapt to changing economic and consumer trends.

Some respondents in the Scoping Consultation support the need to develop a strategy to improve local high streets.

The development of Local Plan policy will be informed by the Retail and Leisure Needs Assessment and the High Streets and District Centres Strategy alongside other relevant evidence forming part of the Local Plan evidence base and ongoing plan preparation.

Another respondent in the Scoping Consultation highlighted the prevalence of vacant commercial units and supported measures including financial and other interventions to bring back empty units back into active use, particularly to support new businesses.

This issue is being addressed through ongoing town centre initiatives outside the remit of the Local Plan, aimed at reducing vacancy rates and supporting the re-occupation of vacant premises (Bournemouth Town Centre Rental Auctions).

### Retail Hierarchy

As part of the overall strategy Policy TC1 of the NPPF requires local plans to set out a hierarchy of centres and identify any areas where specific policies on the nature and scale of development apply. Emerging evidence from the Retail and Leisure Needs Assessment provides information on the differing roles, functions and trading performance of centres across the BCP area. This evidence will inform the review of the retail hierarchy within the Local Plan. A local policy is therefore needed to establish an appropriate hierarchy and provide a framework for directing retail, leisure and other town centre uses to the most appropriate locations and for applying the town centre first approach.

In the Scoping Consultation East Dorset Friends of the Earth suggested that greater emphasis should be placed on supporting local centres that are accessible by active travel and reducing reliance on car-based peripheral centres, having regard to the role and function of centres within the retail hierarchy.

A policy would establish a hierarchy of centres across the BCP area which reflects the role, function and catchment of individual centres. It will seek to support the role and function of centres in accordance with their position within the hierarchy and set out the scale and type of development appropriate within the different categories of centre. The policy applies regardless of viability considerations.

Relevant Key Sustainability Issues identified in the SA are the need to maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of town, district and local centres and the need to support a resilient and diverse local economy. The policy supports SA Objectives 7.1 Support a diverse and resilient local economy with access to a range of jobs and 7.3 Maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of centres

Policy TC1 of the NPPF also requires local plans to define the location and extent of town centres and primary shopping areas and provides for town centre boundaries to be reduced or expanded where appropriate. Emerging evidence from the Retail and Leisure Needs Assessment provides information on the role, function and performance of centres across the BCP area, which will help inform the review of centre boundaries. Clearly defined boundaries are required to support the application of the town centre first approach and sequential test.

The town, district and local centre boundaries will be reviewed as part of the Local Plan process and a policy in this respect would confirm these boundaries, and, where appropriate, any Primary Shopping Areas which are considered necessary. It will establish whether the centre boundaries should be retained, reduced or expanded. The policy applies regardless of viability considerations.

A relevant Key Sustainability Issue identified in the SA is the need to maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of town, district and local centres. The policy supports SA Objective 7.3 Maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of centres.

With regard to retail and leisure needs (and site allocations for main town centre uses where required) policy TC1 of the NPPF requires plans to allocate a range of suitable sites within town centres to meet identified needs for main town centre uses and complimentary uses, making effective use of existing town centre sites and vacant premises.

Emerging Retail and Leisure Needs evidence identifies limited need for additional convenience or comparison retail floorspace across the BCP area but identifies a growth in demand for food and drink uses over the plan period, changing patterns of leisure activity and opportunities to repurpose vacant and underutilised premises. A local policy is therefore needed to establish how future retail, food and drink and leisure needs will be accommodated across the BCP area and whether any site allocations are required.

A policy could help to ensure that sufficient retail, food and drink and leisure provision is available to meet identified needs over the plan period. It will support the efficient use, reuse and adaptation of existing premises and direct new development to appropriate locations.

Relevant Key Sustainability Issues identified in the SA are the need to maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of town, district and local centres and the need to support a resilient and diverse local economy. The policy supports SA Objectives 7.1 Support a diverse and resilient local economy with access to a range of jobs and 7.3 Maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of centres.

### **TC.B Locally defined threshold for impact assessment**

**Potential policy: a Local Plan policy which sets out the threshold for impact assessments for proposals outside of town centres.**

Policy TC1 of the NPPF allows local plans, where appropriate, to set a locally defined threshold above which an impact assessment will be required for proposals outside town centres. Policy TC4 sets out the circumstances in which impact assessments are required. A default national threshold of 2,500 sq. meter gross floorspace applies unless a locally defined threshold is adopted. Emerging evidence from the Retail and Leisure Needs Assessment will inform whether a lower local impact threshold is justified. A local policy is therefore needed to establish an appropriate threshold that reflects local circumstances and supports the vitality and viability of centres.

Some respondents in the Scoping consultation supported the inclusion of a lower locally defined impact threshold.

This policy will seek to establish a locally appropriate threshold above which retail and other main town centre use proposals will be required to demonstrate their impact on existing centres. This policy applies regardless of viability considerations.

A relevant Key Sustainability Issue identified in the SA is the need to maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of town, district and local centres. The policy supports SA Objective 7.3 Maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of centres.

### **TC.C Areas for greater diversity and/or intensification**

Policy TC1 of the NPPF requires local plans to identify areas within centres that are particularly suitable for a greater diversity and/or intensification of uses, including residential development. It also supports broadening the mix of uses within centres, including residential development, where this would not undermine the vitality and viability of a centre.

**Potential policy: a Local Plan policy which identifies areas that can be diversified/suitable for intensification of uses.**

Emerging evidence from the Retail and Leisure Needs Assessment highlights changes in the mix of uses within centres across the BCP area, including growth in food and

beverage, health and beauty and other service uses. The assessment also identifies opportunities to reuse and repurpose surplus retail floorspace and accommodate future needs within existing centres. A local policy is therefore required to identify where greater diversity and/or intensification of uses may be appropriate and support the continued vitality and viability of centres.

One of the respondents in the Scoping Consultation highlighted the role of town centres and underutilised brownfield sites in accommodating housing growth and supporting urban regeneration. Support was expressed for the redevelopment of previously developed land and underperforming commercial and tourist accommodation in sustainable town centre locations. Another respondent highlighted opportunities to utilise existing high street buildings for residential accommodation. In contrast another respondent expressed concern that the conversion of commercial premises to residential uses could undermine the role and function of town centres and supported restrictions on housing, particularly at ground floor level.

A policy could identify areas within centres that are suitable for a greater diversity and/or intensification of uses.

Relevant Key Sustainability Issues identified in the SA are the need to maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of town, district and local centres, the need to support a resilient and diverse local economy, and the need to make effective use of previously developed land. The policy supports SA Objectives 7.1 Support a diverse and resilient local economy with access to a range of jobs, 7.3 Maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of centres and 3.1 Make effective use of previously developed land.

#### **TC.D Town centre infrastructure and public realm**

Policy TC1 of the NPPF requires local plans to identify areas within centres where infrastructure and public realm improvements are proposed.

#### **Proposed policy: a Local Plan policy which sets out to identify where improvements can be made to infrastructure and public realm.**

A policy in this respect would identify areas where infrastructure and public realm improvements can enhance the attractiveness and accessibility of centres and help maintain their vitality and viability.

In the Scoping Consultation Historic England noted the importance of heritage and local character in supporting the attractiveness and economic success of town centres and high streets. Other respondents including Dorset Local Nature Partnership supported public realm improvements and some expressed concern over the decline of the public realm and its impact on perceptions of safety and attractiveness of town centres.

Relevant Key Sustainability Issues identified in the SA are the need to maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of town, district and local centres and to improve accessibility, support sustainable travel choices and create safe, inclusive places and routes, need to protect and reinforce local character, townscape and distinctiveness and need to secure high quality, inclusive and context-sensitive design in new development. The policy supports SA Objectives 7.3 Maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of centres and 8.5 Create places and routes that feel safe and help reduce crime and fear of crime, 5.2 protect and enhance local character, distinctiveness and townscape and 5.3 promote high quality, inclusive and resilient design.

#### **TC.E Cultural infrastructure / evening economy**

Policy E1 of the NPPF advises that local plans should support economic growth and make provision for leisure, tourism and cultural uses where a need exists. Policy TC1 seeks to support the vitality and viability of town centres, including through a diverse mix of uses and activities within centres.

**Potential policy: a Local Plan policy which sets out to identify where support is needed for cultural infrastructure and the evening economy.**

A local policy relating to cultural infrastructure and the evening economy could support cultural, performance, entertainment and leisure use that contribute to the evening economy, whilst ensuring that proposals do not adversely affect local character or residential amenity. Evidence on ongoing viability of these uses may be relevant.

A respondent in the Scoping Consultation supported a cultural infrastructure policy to protect cultural, music, performance and event venues that contribute to the evening economy (and suggested a special policy area covering the Bournemouth arc, including the BIC and the Winter Gardens).

Relevant Key Sustainability Issues identified in the SA are the need to support a resilient and diverse local economy, the need to maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of town, district and local centres, and the need to protect and improve community facilities and cultural assets. The policy supports SA Objectives 7.1 Support a diverse and resilient local economy with access to a range of jobs, 7.3 Maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of centres and 7.4 Support community facilities, cultural assets, education and training opportunities.

## Supporting high-quality communications

### NPPF Policies

#### Plan-making

CO1: Proposals for telecommunications infrastructure

CO2: Supporting information for telecommunications infrastructure proposals

#### Decision making

None.

### Potential Local Plan Policies

None currently suggested.

## Securing clean energy and water

### NPPF Policies

#### Plan-making

W1: Planning for energy and water

W2: Securing renewable and low carbon energy and electricity network infrastructure

#### Decision making

W3: Renewable and low carbon energy development and electricity network infrastructure

W4: Water infrastructure

### Potential Local Plan Policies

**W.A Planning for Energy and Water**

Policy W1 Planning for Energy and Water in the NPPF sets out the need for plan makers to seek early engagement with utility providers, regulators and network operations to ascertain a clear understanding of energy supply and network capacity, constraints, investment programmes and future requirements for water supply, drainage and wastewater capacity as well as associated requirements for infrastructure provision, to enable sustainable growth.

Policy PM2: Local Plans encourages Local Plan policies to cover a longer time period than 10 years, where this would help support the delivery of longer-term infrastructure or strategic development.

Policy PM6: General principles for plan making states that plan makers should engage positively with key stakeholders at appropriate points during preparation so that relevant issues are identified and addressed as early as possible. This is reiterated in PM7: Initiating plan making which states that regular engagement should take place with key stakeholders who are likely to be critical to the delivery of the plan and PM10: Maintaining cooperation between plan making authorities requires plan making authorities to engage proactively and regularly with infrastructure providers.

Policy DM1: Preparing development proposals states that major development proposals would be expected to be informed by engagement with infrastructure providers at pre-application stage. Policy E2: Meeting the need for business land and premises specifically recognises the availability of electricity network infrastructure, grid connections, water and wastewater capacity. This makes locations particularly important for new development.

**Potential policy: a Local Plan policy for energy and water infrastructure and the impact from climate change.**

The Vision in section 5 of this document sets out how the area will play its part in responding to the effects of climate change to address impacts and improve resilience to manage future pressures. One of its measurable outcomes is to support the BCP Local Area Energy Plan and continue to deliver renewable energy and encourage low carbon sources of energy in our area.

It is proposed that at this early stage we will need to meet with infrastructure and utility providers to understand their needs and long-term strategies and plans. For example, National Water Resource Plans and National Electricity Strategies. Our policy approach could include exploring opportunities/sites suitable for additional infrastructure requirements, and large-scale renewable energy proposals to meet growth as the plan progresses.

Relevant responses from the Scoping Consultation demonstrated broad support for this approach, particularly that utilities are planned alongside new housing. Some key points from Wessex Water's response include support for tighter water efficiency standards due to our area's water stress, that large developments should provide site-wide drainage strategies rather than separate approaches for individual parcels, their support for nature-based solutions such as constructed wetlands and SuDS. Wessex Water recommend that Gypsies and Traveller accommodation considers access to water and wastewater infrastructure and buffer zones. They support a policy for protecting water recycling centre odour zones and suggest high energy demand developments consider district heating networks. Given their desire for ongoing engagement and early discussions on infrastructure planning, we will explore such opportunities with Water and Wastewater providers and energy providers to support sustainable growth and addressing the national net zero carbon target by 2050.

## **W.B Securing renewable and low carbon energy and electricity network infrastructure**

Policy W2 Securing renewable and low carbon energy and electricity network infrastructure in the NPPF expects the development plan to support the transition to clean power by planning positively for the increased supply and use of renewable and low carbon energy and electricity network infrastructure requiring local authorities to identify and map suitable allocations areas for such infrastructure where doing so would help deliver development. However, this is an expectation, rather than an absolute requirement of Local Plans.

Policy PM1: Spatial Development Strategies in the NPPF also requires strategic level authorities to set out the type, extent and location of strategic infrastructure including renewable and low carbon energy, confirming that more detailed issues should be addressed through other parts of the development plan, such as the Local Plan.

Policy E1: Providing the conditions for long term economic growth in the NPPF states that to support business investment and employment, development plans should allocate sites which make provision for new, expanded or upgraded facilities and infrastructure including electricity network infrastructure to provide grid connections. These matters depend on evidence from infrastructure providers.

Policy W2 in the NPPF does not prescribe that such areas/site allocations must always be identified through a Local Plan and because the NPPF envisages a strategic role for Spatial Development Strategies in planning for infrastructure and setting a framework for investment and growth across wider geographies, we will consider whether this issue further to determine whether the Local Plan policy could provide a detailed framework policy for assessing proposals in accordance with the strategic approach established through an SDS.

### **Potential Policy: a Local Plan Policy which supports the provision of appropriate renewable and low carbon energy infrastructures.**

A policy could be developed to identify suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy infrastructure. However, this may be most appropriately undertaken at a strategic level through a Spatial Development Strategy, given its cross-boundary nature across a wider geography. At the very least, the Local Plan can provide detailed development management and place-based policies to support implementation of that strategy. Therefore, discussions with relevant utility and infrastructure providers following on from W.A. Planning for Energy and Water will inform the outcome on the policy approach for W.B Securing renewable and low carbon energy and electricity network infrastructure.

Relevant responses from the Scoping Consultation demonstrated strong concern for key infrastructure to be clearly identified, properly planned and delivered alongside growth. However, this was across a broad spectrum of infrastructure types. Common issues were raised across the climate emergency and meeting national net zero commitments.

The relevant key sustainability theme in the SA Scoping Report is climate change and climatic factors. However, climate change has significant interrelationships between all the other broader topics i.e. biodiversity, population, human health, fauna and flora, soil, water, air, infrastructure/transport/energy/minerals and waste, heritage, and landscape/townscape. Therefore, policies on improving energy efficiency would have a positive impact on most of these themes. The detail is captured in the SA report paras 4.129 – 4.158. The policy approach would deliver positive benefits for SA Objective 1(1-3)

- Climate change – Reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and support climate resilience. There would be beneficial outcomes for SA Objective 2 Natural Environment and Objective 4 Water Air and Pollution, Objective 5 Historic Environment and Design, and elements of SA Objective 8 To support health and wellbeing.

### **W.C Renewable and low carbon energy and electricity network infrastructure**

Policy W3 reflects the national decision-making framework set out in the NPPF, which affords significant weight to the delivery of renewable and low carbon energy development and the infrastructure required to support the transition to a net zero energy system. The NPPF is clear that proposals for renewable and low carbon energy generation, together with supporting electricity network infrastructure, should be assessed positively and considered in the round against all relevant planning considerations.

### **Potential policy: a Local Plan policy which sets out to identify suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy infrastructure.**

The Local Plan's approach to renewable and low carbon energy development will depend in part on the role of any future Spatial Development Strategy (SDS) in identifying areas suitable for large-scale renewable energy generation and strategic electricity network infrastructure. Should the Council choose to rely on the SDS to undertake this strategic spatial identification, the Local Plan could instead focus on providing a detailed and supportive policy framework for smaller-scale and embedded renewable energy opportunities.

This could include support for rooftop solar photovoltaic installations on residential, commercial and industrial buildings; solar canopies over car parks; battery energy storage systems in appropriate locations; district heat and heat network infrastructure; electric vehicle charging infrastructure; and renewable and low carbon energy measures integrated into major development schemes. Such an approach would provide greater certainty for applicants, facilitate the delivery of decentralised energy infrastructure, and support the Council's climate change, energy resilience and decarbonisation objectives alongside national policy ambitions.

## **Making effective use of land**

### **NPPF Policies**

#### **Plan-making**

L1: Planning for an effective use of land

#### **Decision making**

L2: Making effective use of land

L3: Achieving appropriate densities

### **Potential Local Plan Policies**

#### **L.A: Density standards**

Policy L1 of the NPPF states that development plans should identify ways of accommodating as much as possible of the identified need for development in the area on previously developed land:

- by setting minimum residential density standards for town centres and for locations that have a high level of connectivity where this can support more effective land use and extend beyond the minimum requirements of policy L3

- identify whether minimum density standards should be set for other parts of the plan area, especially where there are opportunities for intensification
- allocate sites of all sizes which have the potential for redevelopment to a more effective use
- should contain policies (and masterplans where appropriate) to optimise the use of allocated sites that set ambitious but deliverable expectations for scale and density

**Potential policy: a Local Plan policy which sets out to identify the density standards of the area.**

A policy in this respect within BCP could help to build more sustainable areas; support town centre regeneration; increase deliverability through improved viability; and also reduce pressure on greenfield land. A policy could provide indicative figures for town centre locations, including a minimum density. Allocation site densities will be set out with the individual allocations. Heritage and conservation remain a key constraint for consideration when considering set density standards, as does the impact on local character, public realm, and green space and trees. Density standards will need to be informed by and help to inform the Viability Assessment evidence which is currently being prepared as the plan progresses.

## Protecting Green Belt land

### NPPF Policies

#### Plan-making

- GB1: Establishing new Green Belts
- GB2: Assessing existing Green Belt land
- GB3: Altering existing Green Belt boundaries
- GB4: Defining Green Belt boundaries
- GB5: Beneficial uses of Green Belt land

#### Decision making

- GB6: Control of development in the Green Belt
- GB7: Development which is not inappropriate in the Green Belt
- GB8: The Golden Rules

### Potential Local Plan Policies

#### GB.A: Green Belt Boundaries

Policy GB3 of the NPPF sets out circumstances in which the existing Green Belt boundaries can be altered which is only through the preparation and updating of local plans and where exceptional circumstances are fully evidenced and justified. Exceptional circumstances in this context include a local planning authority being unable to meet its identified need for development in full providing that they have examined all other reasonable options for doing so.

**Potential policy: a Local Plan policy which sets out to review the Green Belt boundaries.**

A policy in this respect could set out the approach to reviewing and, where justified by exceptional circumstances, altering Green Belt boundaries. To support a review of Green Belt boundaries the Council has prepared and published as part of this consultation the BCP and Dorset Joint Green Belt Assessment October 2026 (as discussed above in section 3).

In the Scoping Consultation a key main theme in the responses received wanted greater protection of the Green Belt.

Any changes to the green belt boundaries would need to be carefully considered to ensure that it meets the sustainability objectives as set out in the SA Scoping Report 2026.

#### **GB.B: Beneficial Uses of Green Belt Land**

Policy GB5 of the NPPF requires development plans to set out opportunities for benefits for both communities and nature from Green Belt land. The policy should seek to ensure that future Green Belt designation not only provides protection but also seeks to optimise multi-functional opportunities and benefits for both people and wildlife. Comments from Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) Dorset, East Dorset Friends of the Earth and others demonstrate how highly the Green Belt is valued locally and the central role that it can play in terms of nature recovery, climate change and food production.

#### **Potential policy: a Local Plan policy which sets out to identify opportunities for improvement and protection in the Green Belt.**

A policy could secure improved opportunities for access to green spaces within the Green Belt for purposes such as outdoor sports, recreation, use of land for allotments and community food production. It will also set out how Green Belt land will be expected to contribute to achieving the priorities set out in the Dorset Local Nature Recovery Strategy for improving species abundance and improving habitat and wildlife networks across BCP and connections across boundaries with adjoining authorities.

In the Scoping Consultation a key theme raised in a number of responses is a request for policies to provide greater protection for biodiversity, wildlife, green spaces and ecological networks in the context of the Green Belt.

This policy could help to meet many of the sustainability objectives set out in the SA Scoping Report 2026.

## **Achieving well-designed places**

### **NPPF Policies**

#### **Plan-making**

DP1: A strategy for design

DP2: Local design guides, design codes and masterplans

#### **Decision making**

DP3: Key principles for well-designed places

DP4: The design process

### **Potential Local Plan Policies**

#### **DP.A: Design Expectations and Standards**

#### **Potential policy: a Local Plan policy which sets out design codes and standards.**

To include character considerations not covered in the NPPF. To achieve higher densities while integrating development into its context, it would be useful to include wording on: relating buildings to the established building line and urban grain, using contextual materials and appropriate boundary treatments, breaking up large facades and using built form and soft landscaping to step gradually up sloping sites.

A policy should also include liveability/ amenity related issues for future residents like space standards, separation distances, daylight as well as standards for co-living schemes (consideration to be given to which section of the plan this falls under).

The 2026 Homes England guidance [Parking What Works Where Second Edition](#) highlights that integrating car parking into the design of developments is always a major issue.

The NPPF mentions design reviews – there are currently two panels offering this in the area. A policy on design reviews may involve a threshold (for illustration 250 dwellings or more) in order to focus limited resources. In cases falling below the threshold, the policy could encourage developers to take smaller schemes to a panel if they choose and include wording on what situations it might be pertinent to do so.

There is also encouragement (NPPF DP1.1b) to identify where design guides, codes and masterplans are necessary. A policy may therefore identify sites or areas to prioritize for design codes and guidance, drawing on the example of the Lansdowne Design Code and the work which is starting on a code for development on transport corridors. The policy may also identify key town centre/ regeneration allocations that could benefit from guidance or a code.

Design policies can also support climate change adaptation and mitigation. For instance, NPPF policy CC3/1/e also calls for design measures to prevent the spread of wildfires such as avoiding the use of timber fencing.

#### **DP.B: Nationally Described Space Standards**

**Potential policy: a Local Plan policy which sets out to implement the Nationally Described Space Standards whilst meeting housing requirements.**

The NPPF allows for the implementation of the Nationally Described Space Standards at a local level, under policy PM13. A local policy will seek to require these standards as a minimum to ensure that high-quality homes are delivered that have a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of residents, helping to prevent overcrowding and providing space for healthy eating, work and study from home, and consider everyone has a basic right to reasonable internal space and storage. The BCP area is tasked with bringing forward a significant amount of new housing in an already built-up urban area, but quantity should be balanced with quality.

#### **DP.C: Tall buildings**

**Potential policy: a Local Plan policy which sets out a tall buildings assessment.**

Some respondents in the Scoping Consultations supported a tall buildings policy to guide the assessment of proposals within town centres, particularly Bournemouth town centre, and provide greater clarity regarding appropriate locations and assessment criteria.

A tall buildings/ general building heights policy will likely be required, linked to the [building heights study](#). This could refer to street enclosure ratios.

#### **DP.D: Shopfronts**

**Potential policy: a Local Plan policy which guides shopfronts.**

A policy in this respect could include reference and link to the [BCP wide shopfronts guide](#).

## Promoting sustainable transport

### NPPF Policies

#### Plan-making

TR1: Vision-led approach to planning for transport

TR2: Local parking standards

#### Decision making

TR3: Locating development in sustainable locations

TR4: Street design, access and parking

TR5: Roadside facilities

TR6: Assessing transport impacts

TR7: Marine ports, airport and other aviation facilities

TR8: Public rights of way

### Potential Local Plan Policies

#### TR.A: Transport Routes

Policy TR1 of the NPPF promotes sustainable transport and accessibility but does not identify locally important transport corridors, routes or connectivity and accessibility priorities within the BCP Council area. A local policy is therefore required to reflect local travel patterns, infrastructure constraints and investment priorities.

#### **Potential policy: a Local Plan policy which sets out to support sustainable travel and existing transport corridors.**

This policy will seek to protect and enhance the strategic and local transport network and ensure development is located and designed to support sustainable travel. It will seek to encourage walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport use, improve connectivity between communities, and support access to employment, services and facilities.

The BCP Council area experiences significant transport pressures arising from population growth, constrained urban areas, seasonal visitor traffic and limited opportunities for highway expansion. A local policy is needed to identify priority transport corridors, protect key routes from adverse impacts, and ensure growth is coordinated with local transport objectives and infrastructure investment.

As part of the scoping consultation, transport routes emerged as a significant issue for respondents. Comments highlighted the importance of ensuring that future development is supported by an effective transport network, including road, public transport, walking and cycling connections. Respondents raised concerns about congestion, journey times, accessibility and the capacity of existing transport routes to accommodate future growth. Several responses supported improvements to walking, cycling and public transport routes, including better connections to town centres, employment areas, open spaces and coastal destinations. Others highlighted the need to safeguard strategic transport corridors, improve rail connections and maintain the efficiency of the strategic and local road network. Some respondents also referred to the importance of protecting existing and potential future transport routes to support longer-term connectivity and growth.

The relevant sustainability theme in the SA Scoping Report is Accessibility, Movement and Health. The evidence highlights the need to reduce car dependency, improve

accessibility to jobs and services, increase opportunities for walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport use, and create safe and inclusive transport networks. Highway safety, transport infrastructure and parking standards are important components in supporting sustainable growth and ensuring development is accessible and well connected.

The policy approach would deliver positive benefits for SA Objective 8(1) Reduce the need to travel and locate development where everyday services and facilities are accessible, SA Objective 8(2) Increase opportunities for walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport use, and SA Objective 8(5) Create places and routes that feel safe and help reduce crime and fear of crime. There would also be beneficial outcomes for SA Objective 1 Climate Change through supporting more sustainable travel patterns, SA Objective 4(2) Maintain or improve air quality, and SA Objective 7 Economy, Centres and Communities through improving access to employment, services and community infrastructure.

#### **TR.B: Movement Thresholds**

Policy TR3 of the NPPF requires transport impacts to be considered but does not specify locally applicable thresholds or triggers for transport assessments and travel plans. In the absence of any national policy, a local policy will be needed to provide certainty and reflect local network conditions and capacity constraints.

#### **Potential policy: a Local Plan policy which sets out to assess the impact of developments on travel and limit impact where possible.**

This policy will establish thresholds for when transport assessments, travel plans and other supporting evidence will be required. It will ensure that development proposals are assessed proportionately according to the scale and nature of likely transport impacts.

A locally defined approach provides clarity and consistency for applicants and decision-makers. It ensures that developments generating significant levels of movement are appropriately assessed and that mitigation measures are secured where necessary to minimise congestion and support sustainable travel.

As part of the scoping consultation, respondents frequently raised concerns about the impact of future growth on the transport network and the need for infrastructure to be delivered alongside development. A number of responses highlighted existing congestion issues, pressure on key routes and concerns about whether additional development could be accommodated without improvements to transport infrastructure. Several respondents specifically referred to the need to understand and manage the transport impacts of growth, including traffic generation, highway capacity and accessibility.

The relevant sustainability theme in the SA Scoping Report is Accessibility, Movement and Health. The evidence highlights the need to reduce car dependency, improve accessibility to jobs and services, increase opportunities for walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport use, and create safe and inclusive transport networks. Highway safety, transport infrastructure and parking standards are important components in supporting sustainable growth and ensuring development is accessible and well connected.

The policy approach would deliver positive benefits for SA Objective 8(1) Reduce the need to travel and locate development where everyday services and facilities are accessible, SA Objective 8(2) Increase opportunities for walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport use, and SA Objective 8(5) Create places and routes that feel safe and help reduce crime and fear of crime. There would also be beneficial outcomes for SA Objective 1 Climate Change through supporting more sustainable travel patterns, SA Objective 4(2) Maintain or improve air quality, and SA Objective 7 Economy, Centres and

Communities through improving access to employment, services and community infrastructure.

### **TR.C: Parking Standards**

Policy TR2 of the NPPF requires a local plan to set its own parking strategy. The national planning policy expects local authorities to develop locally appropriate standards that reflect accessibility, local car ownership levels and the availability of sustainable transport choices

These policies will establish parking standards for residential, commercial and other development, ensuring that appropriate levels of car parking, cycle parking, motorcycle parking and electric vehicle infrastructure are provided. It will also set standards for the size, type and nature of parking which will need to be provided it will seek to balance the need to manage car use with the practical parking demands of different parts of the BCP Council area.

### **Potential policy: a Local Plan policy which sets out to identify parking needs and meet these needs through its parking strategy.**

Parking demand varies considerably across Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole depending on connectivity and accessibility, public transport availability, time of day, housing type and local character. A local policy is needed to ensure parking provision responds to local circumstances while avoiding harm to the highway network, residential amenity and townscape quality.

As part of the scoping consultation, parking was a frequently raised issue. A number of respondents expressed concern that existing parking provision is already under pressure and that future development could exacerbate parking problems if appropriate standards are not applied. Comments highlighted on-street parking pressures, the need for sufficient parking associated with new housing and concerns about the impact of parking on highway safety, congestion and residential amenity.

The relevant sustainability theme in the SA Scoping Report is Accessibility, Movement and Health. The evidence highlights the need to reduce car dependency, improve accessibility to jobs and services, increase opportunities for walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport use, and create safe and inclusive transport networks. Highway safety, transport infrastructure and parking standards are important components in supporting sustainable growth and ensuring development is accessible and well connected.

The policy approach would deliver positive benefits for SA Objective 8(1) Reduce the need to travel and locate development where everyday services and facilities are accessible, SA Objective 8(2) Increase opportunities for walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport use, and SA Objective 8(5) Create places and routes that feel safe and help reduce crime and fear of crime. There would also be beneficial outcomes for SA Objective 1 Climate Change through supporting more sustainable travel patterns, SA Objective 4(2) Maintain or improve air quality, and SA Objective 7 Economy, Centres and Communities through improving access to employment, services and community infrastructure.

### **TR.D: Highway Safety**

Policy TR4 of the NPPF requires safe and suitable access, but does not address local network characteristics, accident hotspots or specific highway design considerations within the BCP area. A local policy is required to apply these principles to local circumstances. This policy will seek to ensure that development proposals provide safe

and suitable access for all users and do not result in unacceptable impacts on highway safety. It will promote road safety, safe movement for pedestrians and cyclists, and appropriate access arrangements for new development.

**Potential policy: a Local Plan policy which sets out to provide safe and suitable access for current and future transport networks.**

The BCP Council area transport network includes heavily trafficked roads, constrained junctions, town centres and areas with significant pedestrian activity. A local policy is needed to address site-specific highway safety issues, ensure consistent decision-making and secure improvements where new development may increase risk.

As part of the scoping consultation, highway safety was identified by a number of respondents as an important issue for the Local Plan. Comments highlighted concerns about the impact of future development on road safety, junction capacity, pedestrian safety and the ability of existing highway infrastructure to accommodate additional traffic. Several respondents considered that highway safety should be given greater prominence alongside transport planning and infrastructure delivery.

A number of responses referred to specific highway safety issues, including the need for safe crossing points, road design, congestion, parking-related safety concerns, safer routes for pedestrians and cyclists, and the impact of increased traffic on existing communities. Some respondents also highlighted the importance of maintaining road infrastructure, improving visibility, managing roadside vegetation and ensuring that highway changes do not adversely affect road users.

The relevant sustainability theme in the SA Scoping Report is Accessibility, Movement and Health. The evidence highlights the need to reduce car dependency, improve accessibility to jobs and services, increase opportunities for walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport use, and create safe and inclusive transport networks. Highway safety, transport infrastructure and parking standards are important components in supporting sustainable growth and ensuring development is accessible and well connected.

The policy approach would deliver positive benefits for SA Objective 8(1) Reduce the need to travel and locate development where everyday services and facilities are accessible, SA Objective 8(2) Increase opportunities for walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport use, and SA Objective 8(5) Create places and routes that feel safe and help reduce crime and fear of crime. There would also be beneficial outcomes for SA Objective 1 Climate Change through supporting more sustainable travel patterns, SA Objective 4(2) Maintain or improve air quality, and SA Objective 7 Economy, Centres and Communities through improving access to employment, services and community infrastructure.

**TR.E: Servicing and Deliveries**

**Potential policy: a Local Plan Policy which sets out appropriate requirements for servicing, deliveries and refuse collection within development proposals.**

Policy TR4 of the NPPF outlines site design and access, but local requirements are needed for servicing arrangements. This policy will seek to ensure that development proposals incorporate appropriate arrangements for servicing, deliveries and refuse collection without adversely affecting highway safety, congestion, residential amenity or the efficient operation of the transport network.

The growing importance of home deliveries, commercial servicing and urban logistics creates increasing pressure on town centres, employment areas and residential streets.

As part of the scoping consultation, a number of responses highlighted concerns about the effect of future development on the operation of the transport network, including servicing, deliveries and access for essential vehicles. Several responses emphasised that transport planning should consider not only passenger movements but also the needs of businesses, service providers and servicing vehicles.

Some respondents highlighted the importance of ensuring that roads, employment areas and town centres remain accessible for commercial activity and that development proposals properly account for the operational needs of businesses.

The relevant sustainability theme in the SA Scoping Report is Accessibility, Movement and Health. The evidence highlights the need to reduce car dependency, improve accessibility to jobs and services, increase opportunities for walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport use, and create safe and inclusive transport networks. Highway safety, transport infrastructure and parking standards are important components in supporting sustainable growth and ensuring development is accessible and well connected.

The policy approach would deliver positive benefits for SA Objective 8(1) Reduce the need to travel and locate development where everyday services and facilities are accessible, SA Objective 8(2) Increase opportunities for walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport use, and SA Objective 8(5) Create places and routes that feel safe and help reduce crime and fear of crime. There would also be beneficial outcomes for SA Objective 1 Climate Change through supporting more sustainable travel patterns, SA Objective 4(2) Maintain or improve air quality, and SA Objective 7 Economy, Centres and Communities through improving access to employment, services and community infrastructure.

#### **TR.F: Local Transport Infrastructure**

##### **Potential policy: a Local Plan policy which sets out to identify transport infrastructure requirements and the associated funding.**

Policy TR1 of the NPPF requires a local plan to identify specific transport projects, investment priorities or funding mechanisms required within Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole. A local policy is therefore needed to link development with locally identified transport infrastructure requirements and delivery programmes.

A policy could secure improvements to transport infrastructure needed to support growth, including walking and cycling routes, public transport facilities, highway improvements, mobility hubs and other sustainable transport measures. It will ensure development contributes fairly towards infrastructure required to mitigate its impacts.

Significant housing and employment growth proposed across the BCP area will place additional demands on existing transport infrastructure. A local policy is needed to identify infrastructure priorities, secure developer contributions and ensure necessary improvements are delivered alongside growth.

As part of the scoping consultation, a significant number of responses highlighted the importance of ensuring that infrastructure is planned and delivered alongside growth. Respondents raised concerns about the capacity of existing transport infrastructure to accommodate additional housing and employment development, with comments referring

to road networks, public transport, walking and cycling infrastructure, healthcare facilities and wider community infrastructure. Many respondents felt that infrastructure requirements should be more clearly identified and linked to future growth.

The relevant sustainability theme in the SA Scoping Report is Accessibility, Movement and Health. The evidence highlights the need to reduce car dependency, improve accessibility to jobs and services, increase opportunities for walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport use, and create safe and inclusive transport networks. Highway safety, transport infrastructure and parking standards are important components in supporting sustainable growth and ensuring development is accessible and well connected.

The policy approach would deliver positive benefits for SA Objective 8(1) Reduce the need to travel and locate development where everyday services and facilities are accessible, SA Objective 8(2) Increase opportunities for walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport use, and SA Objective 8(5) Create places and routes that feel safe and help reduce crime and fear of crime. There would also be beneficial outcomes for SA Objective 1 Climate Change through supporting more sustainable travel patterns, SA Objective 4(2) Maintain or improve air quality, and SA Objective 7 Economy, Centres and Communities through improving access to employment, services and community infrastructure.

## Promoting healthy communities

### NPPF Policies

#### Plan-making

HC1: Planning for healthy communities

HC2: Local Green Space

#### Decision making

HC3: Community facilities and public service infrastructure serving new development

HC4: Proposals for new and improved community facilities, public service infrastructure and development providing public health benefits

HC5: Hot food takeaways

HC6: Retention of key community facilities and public service infrastructure

HC7: Development affecting existing recreational land and facilities

HC8: Development affecting Local Green Space

### Potential Local Plan Policies

#### HC.A: Community facilities

Policy HC1 of the NPPF requires development plans to set out the local need for community facilities and public service infrastructure. Facilities are required for health and wellbeing, and for social opportunities, preventing isolation, and promoting inclusivity. This will be based upon evidence which will assess and identify the need for leisure and sports facilities, both existing and future need, taking into consideration the potential housing growth, and whether specific sites need allocating for sports facilities, health facilities and schools. It could outline whether on-site provision or a contribution would be more appropriate on larger developments.

**Potential policy: a Local Plan policy which sets out to identify and meet the need for community facilities in development plans.**

#### HC.B: Outdoor recreation standards

Policy HC1 of the NPPF requires development plans to set out local standards for the provision of different types of outdoor recreational land, including areas for play, sport, informal recreation and allotments. The local standards in this policy will be based on Natural England's Accessible Green Space Standard using local evidence to specify the size, proximity, capacity and quality of green and blue spaces needed within BCP. Having these standards set out in policy will ensure future provisions provide a well-connected network of high quality, accessible and inclusive play and recreation spaces throughout BCP, offering a mix of spaces size and type including doorstep spaces close to people's homes as well as larger strategic spaces offering a wider range of recreation opportunities.

**Potential policy: a Local Plan policy which sets out the standards for outdoor recreation to provide a range of recreation opportunities.**

### **HC.C: Local Green Space**

Policy HC1 of the NPPF requires local planning authorities to consider whether any land is suitable for designation as Local Green Space and at Policy HC2 sets out the criteria which green spaces must meet to be designated. This includes their proximity to the community they serve; whether it can be demonstrated that they are of particular value to the community because of things like their beauty, historic significance, recreational value, tranquillity or richness of wildlife; and they must be local in character and not an extensive tract of land.

**Potential policy: a Local Plan policy which sets out to identify land that is suitable for Local Green Spaces designation.**

The policy could list the local green spaces that are considered to meet the criteria and are capable of being retained for such use beyond the plan period, with the listed local green spaces designated on the policies map. These spaces will then be protected through national policy.

## Pollution, public protection and security

### **NPPF Policies**

#### **Plan-making**

P1: Planning for clean and safe places

#### **Decision making**

P2: Ground conditions

P3: Living conditions and pollution

P4: Impact of development on existing activities

P5: Maintaining public safety and security

P6: Land and operations for defence and public safety

### **Potential Local Plan Policies**

#### **P.A: Water Pollution**

Policy P1 of the NPPF advises that development plans should seek to support efforts to avoid and mitigate risks from natural and man-made pollution to create clean, liveable and safe environments.

**Potential policy: a Local Plan policy which sets out to identify opportunities to reduce water pollution and any specific mitigation measures.**

A number of comments were received in the Scoping Consultation raising concerns about the pollution in local rivers and Christchurch and Poole Harbours, which includes internationally designated habitat sites. It is recognised that pollution levels in our water ways are a concern and that there is a need to reduce future impacts and identify opportunities for improvement.

Whilst a large proportion of the pollution occurs outside of the BCP boundary and higher up the river catchments, a policy on water pollution would identify measures to ensure that future development within BCP would make a positive impact on water quality and not worsen the existing situation.

The policy could include opportunities and priorities already identified in the Dorset Local Nature Recovery Strategy and the South West River Basin Plan and consider where other opportunities for nature-based mitigation solution could be implemented. It could also set out measures such as specific sustainable drainage requirements for development to reduce the amount of surface water run-off entering our river courses and harbours and consider whether there are specific uses that should be restricted or would require specific mitigation measures.

A large number of responses to the Scoping Consultation have raised concerns about water pollution and this has been identified as the strongest and most frequently raised theme.

#### **P.B Bournemouth airport safeguarding**

Policy TR7 of the NPPF is specific to development proposals involving an airport **but** does not protect the airport operations from impacts of proposed developments.

Policy P1(1)(c) states that development plan should identify whether restrictions on certain types or forms of are necessary as a consequence of safeguarding areas around aerodromes and to reflect the implications of these areas in any allocations of land within the plan.

A specific policy could safeguard the airport's strategic role in the BCP Council area.

**Potential policy: a Local Plan policy which sets out safeguarding measures for Bournemouth Airport's operation and identify mitigation measures to protect residential amenity.**

This policy will seek to safeguard Bournemouth Airport's operation by ensuring development does not compromise aviation safety, airport infrastructure or future airport operations. It will also seek to manage the effects of aircraft noise on communities by supporting appropriate noise mitigation measures and ensuring noise-sensitive development is located and designed to protect residential amenity. This policy is needed because development in the vicinity of Bournemouth Airport has the potential to affect aviation safety, airport operations and future growth.

In the BCP Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report (2026) the relevant sustainability themes in the SA Scoping Report are Accessibility, Movement and Health and Water, Air, Pollution and Waste. The evidence highlights the importance of reducing the adverse effects of transport infrastructure on health and wellbeing, creating safe environments and avoiding exposure to noise and other sources of pollution. Safeguarding Bournemouth Airport's Public Safety Zone and managing aircraft noise impacts can help ensure that development is appropriately located and that significant adverse effects on residents and occupiers are avoided.

The policy approach would deliver positive benefits for SA Objective 8(4) Promote healthy, safe and inclusive communities and SA Objective 8(5) Create places and routes that feel safe and help reduce crime and fear of crime. There would also be beneficial outcomes for SA Objective 4(3) Avoid, reduce and manage contamination, noise and other environmental pollution through reducing the potential for noise disturbance and safeguarding amenity, health and wellbeing.

**P.C: Sewage treatment works odour areas**

**Potential policy: a Local Plan policy which sets out to ensure new development is protected from negative impacts of nearby sewage treatment works.**

NPPF policy P3 requires that development proposals should provide healthy living conditions for occupiers and users in terms of adequate access to light and avoiding exposure to levels of air, noise, artificial light or other sources of pollution which could have an unacceptable adverse effect on health and the quality of life. Where necessary suitable mitigation measures should be incorporated to secure acceptable living conditions. A locally specific policy is required in addition to manage the potential conflicts arising in specific relation to sewage treatment works **and** ensure both new development and critical infrastructure can operate over the long term.

This policy will seek to ensure that new development is appropriately located and designed to avoid unacceptable impacts from odour and other environmental effects associated with sewage treatment works. It will also seek to protect the continued operation of wastewater infrastructure by preventing incompatible development that could give rise to amenity concerns or constrain future operation of these facilities. This policy is needed because development located close to sewage treatment works may be affected by odour and other environmental impacts, which can harm residential amenity and constrain the operation of essential wastewater infrastructure.

In the BCP Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report (2026) the relevant sustainability themes in the SA Scoping Report are Water, Air, Pollution and Waste and Accessibility, Movement and Health. The evidence highlights the importance of avoiding, reducing and managing noise, odour and other environmental pollution that can affect amenity, health and quality of life. Safeguarding sewage treatment works odour consultation areas can help ensure that sensitive development is not located in areas where it may be adversely affected by odour nuisance and can avoid potential conflicts between existing infrastructure and new development.

The policy approach would deliver positive benefits for SA Objective 4(3) Avoid, reduce and manage contamination, noise and other environmental pollution. There would also be beneficial outcomes for SA Objective 8(4) Promote healthy, safe and inclusive communities and SA Objective 8(6) Reduce health inequalities and improve wellbeing through protecting residential amenity and avoiding adverse effects on health and quality of life.

**P.D: Air and soil pollution**

Policy P1 of the NPPF states that development plans should consider any wider opportunities to reduce air, water, soil, noise or other forms of pollution, and contribute to compliance with national and local environmental targets and objectives, through the spatial strategy and policies for specific parts of the plan area (such as by identifying opportunities for strategic nature-based solutions).

**Potential policy: a Local Plan policy which sets out for development plans to minimise air and soil pollution where possible.**

## Managing flood risk and coastal change

### NPPF Policies

#### Plan-making

- F1: Assessing flood risk for plan-making
- F2: Planning for effective flood risk management
- F3: Managing coastal change

#### Decision making

- F4: Assessing flood risk for decision-making
- F5: The sequential test
- F6: Development in areas at risk of flooding from rivers or the sea
- F7: Ensuring development is safe from flooding
- F8: Sustainable drainage systems and watercourses
- F9: Development in Coastal Change Management Areas

### Potential Local Plan Policies

#### F.A Strategic Flood Risk Assessments

**Potential policy: a Local Plan policy which sets out to provide a strategic flood risk assessment to inform development.**

Policy F1 (Assessing flood risk for plan-making) of the NPPF sets out in order to manage development in ways which minimise the risk of flooding to people and property, development plans should be informed by an up-to-date strategic flood risk assessment which considers current and future flood risk from all sources, including cumulative impacts in, or affecting, areas susceptible to flooding. Through the scoping consultation, the Environment Agency have confirmed that BCP will require an updated SFRA Level 1 and updated SFRA Level 2s, to include updated modelling and data from the National Flood Risk Assessment 2 (NaFRA2). This in turn will need to inform measures or bespoke solutions which might be required in certain sensitive areas of BCP. The SA Scoping Report details that there is a need to reduce the vulnerability to tidal, fluvial and surface water flooding, given the urban character of the area, and other constraints such as heritage, habitats and the natural environment. This includes directing development away from the most vulnerable areas for flooding **and** improving resilience. A Policy is therefore needed to require development to comply with updated SFRAs, and to highlight bespoke solutions or actions within sensitive areas of BCP.

A policy in this respect would principally help to meet the sustainability objectives 1.3 (Reduce vulnerability to flooding, sea level rise, overheating and other climate risks) and 1.4 (Support resilient places and infrastructure that can adapt to future climate conditions).

#### F.B Sequential Test

Policy F2 of the NPPF states that development plans should take a risk-based approach when identifying suitable locations for development, taking into account all sources of flood risk and the current and future impacts of climate change. They should do this, and manage any residual risk, by applying the sequential test in policy F5 and, where relevant, policy F6.

**Potential policy: A Local Plan policy which sets out the need for, approach to and application of the sequential test for planning applications.**

The Council will need to undertake a strategic sequential test of site allocations to support the Local Plan, and this will ascertain which locations are suitable for development. Through the Scoping consultation the Environment Agency have made clear that any proposed site allocations in Flood zone 2 and 3 must have evidence of the sequential test and be supported by flood resilient measure as part of its construction. A local policy would define the need for the Strategic Sequential Test, and the approach to, and application of, the sequential test for planning applications. This would be based upon evidence within the council's SFRAs. There could be localised sequential test areas, where the need for development has been demonstrated, and therefore the sequential test passed.

The exceptions test may also need local consideration above that detailed in the NPPF, however this is not clear at present, and will be reviewed.

A policy in this respect would principally help to meet the sustainability objectives 1.3 (Reduce vulnerability to flooding, sea level rise, overheating and other climate risks) and 1.4 (Support resilient places and infrastructure that can adapt to future climate conditions).

### **F.C Sustainable Drainage systems (SuDs)**

**Potential policy: A Local Plan policy which sets out to incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems into development.**

The NPPF seeks to ensure that Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) are incorporated into development where possible. Plan-making policy F2 requires new development to utilise opportunities to improve green and other infrastructure to reduce causes and impacts of flooding, and this could encompass the use of SUDs, but is not explicit. Decision-making policy F8 requires development to incorporate SUDs where development could affect drainage on or around the development site. Through the Scoping Consultation, the Environment Agency have requested that new development needs to incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and water efficiency measures, and that the Local Plan should consider how climate change will impact the appropriate of plans in the future, and therefore requiring SuDS to be multifunctional and biodiverse. Other responses to the scoping consultation raise the need for appropriate and effective sustainable drainage.

A policy in this respect would principally help to meet the sustainability objectives 1.3 (Reduce vulnerability to flooding, sea level rise, overheating and other climate risks) and 1.4 (Support resilient places and infrastructure that can adapt to future climate conditions).

### **F.D Flood defences**

**Potential policy: a Local Plan policy which sets out to assess the need for and impact of flood defences existing infrastructure and on the delivery of other infrastructure or development.**

Policies F2 and F3 of the NPPF mention infrastructure as part of new development to reduce flood risk. However, there is no specific mention of flood defences, and this could be considered under a local policy, given that they are a key part of strategic development in the coastal areas of BCP, and form key protection to vulnerable areas where development already exists and future development lay exist. It is important that flood defences are given due consideration, whether the defence would be the entirety of proposed development, or required mitigation as part of a larger development. A large amount of detail on delivering flood defences within Poole and Christchurch town centres are contained within agreed strategies with the Environment Agency. It would need to be

considered whether a flood defence affects the delivery of other strategic infrastructure or development. It will also need to be considered whether a proposed development puts future pressure on defences.

A policy in this respect would principally help to meet the sustainability objectives 1.3 (Reduce vulnerability to flooding, sea level rise, overheating and other climate risks) and 1.4 (Support resilient places and infrastructure that can adapt to future climate conditions).

#### **F.E Coastal Change Management Areas**

The NPPF requires through Policy F3 that local plans reduce the risk from coastal change by avoiding inappropriate development in vulnerable areas and not exacerbating the impacts of physical changes to the coast. The local plan can identify a Coastal Change Management Area for an area 'likely to be affected by physical changes to the coast'.

**Potential policy: a Local Plan policy which sets out to identify the appropriate requirements to protect and maintain stability of the coastline for development in Coastal change Management Areas.**

BCP have identified 3 Coastal Change Management Areas: Rockley Park, Holes Bay and Hengistbury Head which correspond with the policy areas in the shoreline management plan where managed realignment or no active intervention would be proposed during the plan period. In accordance with the NPPF, development within these zones will be restricted and managed. There are also designated Coastal Vulnerability Zones, which benefit from the SMP and FCERM strategies, but are at future risk, and development would need to accord with the various strategies for managing change along the coastline, amongst other criteria. Additionally, there is a Cliff and Chine Stability Consultation Zone, which requires the consideration of SUDs and drainage within these areas to prevent impact upon the stability of the cliffs. A policy will be required to further detail the requirements of development within these identified zones to ensure future protection and stability of the coastline, in conjunction with climate change impacts.

A policy in this respect could help to meet the sustainability objectives 1.3 (Reduce vulnerability to flooding, sea level rise, overheating and other climate risks) and 1.4 (Support resilient places and infrastructure that can adapt to future climate conditions).

## Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

### **NPPF Policies**

#### **Plan-making**

N1: Identifying environmental opportunities and safeguards

#### **Decision making**

N2: Improving the natural environment

N3: Trees in new development

N4: Protected Landscapes

N5: Maintaining the character of the coast

N6: Areas of particular importance for biodiversity and geodiversity

### **Potential Local Plan Policies**

#### **N.A: Hierarchy of designated sites**

**Potential policy: a Local Plan policy which defines a hierarchy of designated habitat and wildlife sites.**

Policy N1 of the NPPF states that local development plans should set out a hierarchy of designated habitat and wildlife sites. The hierarchy would include internationally designated protected sites such as our heathlands and Poole and Christchurch Harbours which include Special Protection Areas (SPA), Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Ramsar sites. It would also include nationally significant sites such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI); and locally designated sites such as Local Nature Reserves (LNR) and Sites of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI). The policy could also include other areas considered to be of biodiversity and geological importance within BCP.

The policy would set out specific considerations and requirements in terms of impacts on the protected sites and related habitat areas to ensure their future protection and improvement, building on existing strategies and mitigation measures. It will also take account of emerging national policies and site-specific environmental delivery plans.

A large number of respondents to the Scoping consultation requested a specific policy to protect Christchurch Harbour. This policy would provide specific nature conservation considerations for this site as well as all other important, protected sites.

#### **N.B: Nature Recovery opportunities**

The NPPF advises that local development plans should identify opportunities for the conservation, enhancement and recovery of landscapes, sensitive waterbodies, important habitats and priority or threatened species.

**Potential policy: a Local Plan policy which sets out to identify opportunities for nature recovery.**

The policy will build on the priorities set out in the Dorset Local Nature Recovery Strategy, the BCP Biodiversity Duty Report and other evidence to identify opportunities for habitat restoration, the use of nature-based solutions, and the creation and strengthening of ecological networks to support nature recovery and improve species abundance.

#### **N.C: Green infrastructure standards**

**Potential policy: a Local Plan policy which sets out green infrastructure standards to inform and improve the delivery of green infrastructure.**

Policy N1 of the NPPF requires local development plans to set out local standards for green infrastructure provision. Using the Natural England Green Infrastructure Standards as a starting point, the policy will be developed to provide specific and appropriate requirements for BCP which will seek to improve the quality and quantity of green infrastructure delivered.

The policy could include standards relating to urban nature recovery, building on objectives set out in the Dorset Nature Recovery Strategy. It could also include requirements to improve urban tree canopy cover setting out expectations for tree retention and provision of new trees in development in line with the Natural England Tree Canopy Standard and introduce the Urban Greening Factor Standard to be applied to all new developments which scores surface cover types such as natural and semi-natural vegetation, street trees, hedgerows, sustainable drainage features, and green roofs and walls based on their wider benefits in terms of functionality, sustainability and climate resilience. These standards will complement the standards set out in the outdoor recreation policy.

#### **N.D: Protected Habitat sites issues**

**Potential policy: a Local Plan policy which sets out the issues on important habitat sites from development and identifies mitigation options.**

This policy will set out the issues that arise from development that can have an impact on important habitat sites such as the Dorset Heathlands, Poole Harbour, the River Avon and the New Forest such as water pollution and recreation pressures.

It will also set out details of the mitigation options available and when they would be required and will be supported by separate and detailed strategy documents for each of the issues and sites.

## Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

### NPPF Policies

#### Plan-making

HE1: Planning for the historic environment

HE2: Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites

HE3: Historic Environment Records

#### Decision making policies

HE4: Securing the conservation of heritage assets

HE5: Assessing the effects on heritage assets

HE6: Proposal affecting designated heritage assets

HE7: Decisions on non-designated heritage assets

HE8: World Heritage Sites

HE9: Conservation areas

HE10: Loss or removal of heritage assets

### Potential Local Plan Policies

#### HE.A: Heritage assets

Policy HE1 of the NPPF states that development plans a) should identify the heritage assets within the plan area, including those heritage assets at most risk through neglect, decay or other threats, set out the key issues facing them and identify where these assets can be used to support sustainable development; and b) be supported by a local heritage list to identify non-designated heritage assets that are important to the local community.

Policy HE2 of the NPPF states that to conserve the significance of conservation areas development plans should identify opportunities for new development affecting these assets to enhance or better reveal their significance, alongside any measures needed to safeguard their importance and long-term future; and reflect these in policies for site allocations and/or accompanying design guides, design codes or masterplans; and

Historic England also responded to the Scoping Consultation carried out in July 2026 stating that *"While we acknowledge that the emerging NPPF establishes that the content of national policies for heritage assets should not be repeated in the Local Plan, this does not necessarily mean that the plan should not contain specific approaches to local heritage issues, place-based policies for historic areas, or proportionate evidence on the potential heritage impacts (and opportunities) associated with its site allocations. We are therefore concerned that the Scoping document suggests that there will not be any local policies which consider and promote BCP's important heritage."*

**Potential policy: a Local Plan policy which sets out to identify and assess heritage assets and any opportunities to support sustainable development.**

Therefore, a policy could set out the heritage assets within BCP, their issues, threats, conservation and how they support sustainable development and the potential reuse of buildings:

- Listed buildings
- Registered parks and gardens
- Conservation areas
- Archaeological assets and scheduled monuments
- Non designated heritage assets (such as locally listed buildings)

Policy HE1 states that these should be informed by a proportionate heritage assessment. The Council is currently preparing the BCP Heritage Strategy which provide evidence to support this policy and its wording.

As per policy HE1, conservation of the historic environment can bring wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits which meets the aims of the Sustainability Appraisal. Historic England have been consulted in respect of the Sustainability Scoping Report.

# Glossary

|                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Article 4 Direction</b>                   | Removes permitted development rights in a defined area.                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Affordable Housing</b>                    | Homes that are offered at lower prices or rents to help people who cannot afford housing on the open market. The NPPF contains a specific detailed policy definition of 'affordable housing' which the local plan has to follow. |
| <b>Available Site</b>                        | A site with no known legal or ownership barriers to development and where the owner or promoter has indicated an intention to develop or release the land.                                                                       |
| <b>Biodiversity</b>                          | The variety of plants, animals and habitats in an area.                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)</b>           | Development leaving biodiversity in a better state.                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Blue Infrastructure</b>                   | The network of water-based natural and semi-natural features—such as rivers, ponds, wetlands, and sustainable drainage systems—used to manage water and enhance urban environments.                                              |
| <b>Brownfield Land</b>                       | Previously developed land or buildings, often but not always suitable for re-development.                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Call for Sites</b>                        | A consultation exercise inviting landowners, developers and other interested parties to submit land for consideration in the Local Plan and Land Availability Assessment.                                                        |
| <b>Capacity</b>                              | The estimated number of homes or amount of development that a site could accommodate. This may be based on planning permissions, density assumptions or site-specific assessments.                                               |
| <b>Carbon Emissions</b>                      | Gases released into the atmosphere that contribute to climate change.                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Coastal Change Management Area (CCMA)</b> | Areas expected to undergo significant physical changes such as erosion, landslips, permanent flooding etc.                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Community Facilities</b>                  | Places such as schools, libraries, health centres and community buildings.                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Conservation Area</b>                     | A designated area with special historic or architectural character.                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Deliverable Site</b>                      | A site capable of being developed and delivering homes within the plan period.                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Density</b>                               | The number of dwellings per hectare (dph) used to estimate development potential. Different assumptions apply depending on location and accessibility.                                                                           |

|                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Development</b>                                               | The building of new homes, workplaces, community facilities etc.                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Development Plan</b>                                          | Statutory planning framework.                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Duty to Cooperate</b>                                         | Requirement to work with neighbouring authorities on strategic matters.                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Employment Land</b>                                           | Land used, or that could be used, for businesses and jobs.                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Environmental Outcomes Reports (EOR)</b>                      | Proposed environmental assessment system replacing some current assessments.                                                                                                                |
| <b>Evidence Base</b>                                             | Studies and technical reports supporting the Local Plan.                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Flood Risk</b>                                                | The likelihood of an area being affected by flooding.                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Green Belt</b>                                                | Designated land which surrounds or sits alongside urban areas with a primary function or preventing urban sprawl.                                                                           |
| <b>Greenfield Land</b>                                           | Previously undeveloped land.                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Green Infrastructure</b>                                      | A strategic network of natural and semi-natural spaces, features, and water systems.                                                                                                        |
| <b>Grey Belt</b>                                                 | Land in the Green Belt comprising previously developed land and/or any other land that, in either case, does not strongly contribute to any of purposes (a), (b), or (d) in policy GB2      |
| <b>Habitat</b>                                                   | A natural area where plants and animals live.                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>HELAA (Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment)</b> | The previous form of land availability assessment used by local planning authorities to identify potential housing and employment sites.                                                    |
| <b>Housing Need</b>                                              | The number and type of homes needed in an area.                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Infrastructure</b>                                            | The roads, schools, healthcare, public transport and services people need.                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP)</b>                        | Plan identifying infrastructure needed to support growth.                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Land Availability Assessment (LAA)</b>                        | A technical assessment that identifies and assesses sites and broad areas for their potential to accommodate future development by considering suitability, availability and achievability. |
| <b>Nature Recovery</b>                                           | Actions taken to improve habitats and help wildlife thrive.                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)</b>                     | Strategy identifying nature recovery priorities.                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Local Plan</b>                                                | Main planning document for the area.                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Major Development</b>                                         | Larger scale development as defined in planning legislation.                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Material Consideration</b>                                    | Matter relevant to planning decisions.                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>M4(2)</b>                                                     | Accessible and adaptable homes standard.                                                                                                                                                    |

|                                                  |                                                                                                                                                          |
|--------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>M4(3)</b>                                     | Wheelchair user dwelling standard.                                                                                                                       |
| <b>National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)</b> | The Government's overarching planning policy document which provides guidance on plan-making and decision-taking.                                        |
| <b>National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)</b> | Government guidance supporting the NPPF, including the methodology for site assessments and land availability studies.                                   |
| <b>Nationally Described Space Standards</b>      | National minimum internal space standards.                                                                                                               |
| <b>Planning Inspectorate</b>                     | Body examining Local Plans and planning appeals.                                                                                                         |
| <b>Public Transport</b>                          | Services such as buses and trains that everyone can use to travel.                                                                                       |
| <b>Ramsar Site</b>                               | Internationally important wetland site.                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Regeneration</b>                              | Improving an area through investment and redevelopment.                                                                                                  |
| <b>Renewable Energy</b>                          | Energy from sources such as the sun, wind and water.                                                                                                     |
| <b>Section 106 Agreement</b>                     | Legal agreement securing planning obligations.                                                                                                           |
| <b>Sequential Test</b>                           | Method of directing development away from flood risk.                                                                                                    |
| <b>Settlement Hierarchy</b>                      | Ranking of places based on size and function.                                                                                                            |
| <b>Site Allocation</b>                           | Land identified for future development in the Local Plan.                                                                                                |
| <b>Site Assessment</b>                           | The process of evaluating a site's suitability, availability, achievability, capacity and delivery timescale.                                            |
| <b>Spatial Strategy</b>                          | The overall approach for deciding where growth should take place.                                                                                        |
| <b>Standard Method</b>                           | The Government's prescribed formula for calculating local housing need. For BCP this equates to 2,980 homes per year or 44,700 homes over fifteen years. |
| <b>Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)</b>  | Environmental effects assessment.                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)</b>    | Assessment of flood risk across the area.                                                                                                                |
| <b>Strategic Site</b>                            | Large site of strategic importance.                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Sustainability Appraisal (SA)</b>             | Assessment of environmental, social and economic effects.                                                                                                |
| <b>Town Centre</b>                               | A designated area for main shopping and other uses.                                                                                                      |
| <b>Transport Infrastructure</b>                  | Roads, railways, cycle routes, footpaths and public transport facilities.                                                                                |
| <b>Travelling Show people</b>                    | People who travel for fairs and shows.                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Urban Extension</b>                           | Planned expansion adjoining an urban area.                                                                                                               |
| <b>Viability</b>                                 | Whether a development can financially be built and funded.                                                                                               |
| <b>Water Stress Area</b>                         | Area with pressure on water resources.                                                                                                                   |

|                                        |                                                                                                                                           |
|----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Whole Plan Viability Assessment</b> | Assessment of deliverability of plan policies.                                                                                            |
| <b>Wildlife Corridor</b>               | A route that allows plants and animals to move between habitats.                                                                          |
| <b>Windfall Site</b>                   | A site that comes forward for development but was not specifically allocated in a development plan                                        |
| <b>Windfall Allowance</b>              | An estimate of future housing delivery from windfall sites, justified using historic delivery rates and evidence of future opportunities. |

# List of Abbreviations

|              |                                                   |
|--------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| <b>BNG</b>   | Biodiversity Net Gain                             |
| <b>CCMA</b>  | Coastal Change Management Area                    |
| <b>EOR</b>   | Environmental Outcomes Report                     |
| <b>GB</b>    | Green Belt                                        |
| <b>GTAA</b>  | Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment      |
| <b>HELAA</b> | Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment |
| <b>LAA</b>   | Housing Land Availability Assessment              |
| <b>IDP</b>   | Infrastructure Delivery Plan                      |
| <b>HRA</b>   | Habitats Regulation Assessment                    |
| <b>LNRS</b>  | Local Nature Recovery Strategy                    |
| <b>NDSS</b>  | Nationally Described Space Standards              |
| <b>NPPF</b>  | National Planning Policy Framework                |
| <b>NPPG</b>  | National Planning Practice Guidance               |
| <b>SA</b>    | Sustainability Appraisal                          |
| <b>SAC</b>   | Special Area of Conservation                      |
| <b>SEA</b>   | Strategic Environmental Assessment                |
| <b>SFRA</b>  | Strategic Flood Risk Assessment                   |
| <b>SPA</b>   | Special Protection Area                           |
| <b>SPD</b>   | Supplementary Planning Document                   |
| <b>SSSI</b>  | Site of Special Scientific Interest               |
| <b>SuDS</b>  | Sustainable Drainage Systems                      |