

**Dorset Council Local Plan**

**Options Consultation**

**August 2025**

Dorset is changing – help us shape it.

Dorset Council is preparing a new Local Plan to guide development. The consultation explores how much development we should provide and identifies opportunity sites for new homes, employment land and traveller sites. It also identifies areas of opportunity for wind and solar power.

The Local Plan options consultation is available to view at [www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/dorset-is-changing](http://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/dorset-is-changing). You can comment on the Local Plan by completing all or part of this survey online or by using this form. You can also view the site options on a map online and make your comments. Alternatively comment on the site options using the site response form. You can view a paper copy of the Local Plan Options Consultation at your local Dorset library or at County Hall, Dorchester.

If you need help with the survey, please contact the Planning Policy team at planningpolicyconsult@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk or 01305 838334.

You are able to give your views between 18 August 2025 and 13 October 2025.

**The consultation will begin on**

**18 August 2025 and end on 13 October 2025**

**How can I make a comment?**

To give your views, please:

* Make sure you give your name and either postal or email address along with your postcode so that your response can be considered appropriately.
* Use the official form.
* Make your comments within the consultation period to ensure they are considered.
* If you are part of a group that shares a common view, please include a list of the contact details of each person (including names, addresses, emails, telephone numbers and signatures) along with a completed form providing details of the named lead representative.
* Continue on separate sheets if necessary.

Please note:

* Representations cannot be treated as confidential. By completing a representation, you agree to your name (but not your address) and comments being made available for public viewing.
* The council do not accept any responsibility for the contents of the comments submitted. We reserve the right to remove any comments containing defamatory, abusive or malicious allegations.

**You can respond:**

**Online**

View the consultation and submit your response online via the following link:

**www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/dorset-is-changing**

The benefits of providing your response this way are as follows:

* less impact on the environment as we do not need to use paper or postage
* you will be emailed a copy of your response as confirmation once submitted
* you will be able to start your response, save it, and return to it at a later date - a confirmation email will send you a link to where you left off
* using the online survey greatly assists our analysis of the responses, enabling more efficient and effective consideration of the issues raised

**E-mail**

We can also accept responses emailed to us, preferably using this form.

**planningpolicyconsult@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk**

**Written responses**

There are paper copies of the response form available upon request for those without internet orcomputer access.

Please telephone **01305 838334** to request a copy.

Responses returned by post should reference the **Dorset Council Local Plan Consultation 2025** and be sent to the **Spatial Planning Team, Dorset Council, County Hall, Colliton Park, Dorchester, Dorset DT1 1XJ**.

# Part A

**Please complete one part A form**

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| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Individual**  | **Agent (if applicable)** |
| **Name\*** | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| **Organisation**  | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| **Address line 1\*** | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| **Address line 2** | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| **Address line 3** | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| **Town** | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| **Postcode\*** | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| **Email address\*** | Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap here to enter text. |

**Client’s details if applicable:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name\*** | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| **Organisation**  | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| **Address line 1\*** | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| **Address line 2** | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| **Address line 3** | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| **Town** | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| **Postcode\*** | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| **Email address\*** | Click or tap here to enter text. |

\*essential fields

**Group representations**

If your representation is on behalf of a group, ensure the lead representative completes the contact details box above. Also, please state here how many people support the representation:

Click or tap here to enter text.

# Part B

**Consultation questions**

**Section 2: Vision and Strategic Priorities**

**2.1. The Local Plan Vision**

**Question 1: Do you have any comments on the proposed vision for Dorset?**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**2.2. Strategic priorities**

**Question 2: Do you have any comments on the proposed strategic priorities for the Local Plan?**

Click or tap here to enter text.

## Section 3: The strategy for sustainable development

**3.2. The Strategy for Dorset**

**Question 3: The proposed settlement hierarchy lists the towns and villages that will be the focus for new homes. Are there other settlements where we should plan for new homes? Do you have any comments on whether a settlement is in the right Tier or not?**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**3.3. South Eastern Dorset area**

**Question 4: Do you have any comments on the proposed strategy for the south eastern area?**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**3.4. Central Dorset area**

**Question 5: Do you have any comments on the proposed strategy for the central area?**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**3.5. Northern Dorset area**

**Question 6: Do you have any comments on the proposed strategy for the northern area?**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**3.6. Western Dorset area**

**Question 7: Do you have any comments on the proposed strategy for the western area?**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**3.7. Infrastructure Delivery**

**Question 8: Is there any important infrastructure that needs to be delivered alongside new homes in the Western/Central/South Eastern/Northern area?**

Click or tap here to enter text.

## Section 4: Housing Delivery Strategy

**4.2. Local Housing Need and Housing Delivery**

**Question 9: The Local Plan sets out a strategy to meet the area’s housing needs through allocating sites for new homes, the flexible settlements policy, new settlements and the efficient use of land. Are there any other measures could help to meet housing needs?**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**4.3. Housing supply**

**Question 10: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the Plan including a lower housing target for the first few years and a higher figure towards the end of the plan period to meet housing needs?**

**a. Agree** [ ]

**b. Disagree** [ ]

**c. I have another suggestion** [ ]

Click or tap here to enter text.

**4.4. Meeting housing needs of specific groups**

**Question 11: Where should a policy allowing sites for only affordable homes apply?**

**a. All of Dorset** [ ]

**b. Only around those towns and villages listed in the proposed settlement hierarchy** [ ]

**c. Only in the Green Belt** [ ]

Click or tap here to enter text.

## Section 5: Flexible Settlements Policy

**5.2. Proposed approach – Flexible settlements policy**

**Question 12: We have suggested that the Local Plan will not include clear boundaries to define the edges of towns and villages. Instead, the flexible settlements policy would allow new homes to be built around certain towns and villages. How much do you agree or disagree with this approach?**

**a. Agree** [ ]

**b. Partially agree** [ ]

**c. Neutral** [ ]

**d. Partially disagree** [ ]

**e. Disagree** [ ]

**Please provide any further comments or reasoning…**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**5.3. The scale of development**

**Question 13: We propose that the flexible settlements policy will include a limit of 30 homes per site. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this threshold?**

**a. The limit of 30 homes is about right** [ ]

**b. There should be less homes** [ ]

**c. More homes per site should be allowed** [ ]

**Please explain your reasoning**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**5.4. Number of sites at each settlement**

**Question 14: At a town/village, should one flexible settlement policy site be started, before another one is permitted?**

**a. Yes** [ ]

**b. No** [ ]

**Please provide any further comments**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**5.5. Settlements where the flexible settlements policy would apply**

**Question 15:** **We have suggested that the flexible settlements policy will only apply to the areas around certain towns and villages, these are those ranked as ‘Tier 1, Tier 2 or Tier 3’ in our settlement hierarchy. What do you think about the locations where we have suggested that the flexible settlements policy should apply?**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**5.6. Continuous built-up areas and edge of continuous built-up areas**

**Question 16: We have suggested that the flexible settlement policy should only be applied around the ‘continuous built-up areas’ (i.e. ‘densely populated areas with high concentrations of buildings, infrastructure and paved roads’) of certain towns and villages. Do you have any comments on our definition of this ‘continuous built-up area’?**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**5.7. Green Belt**

**Question 17: We have suggested that the flexible settlements policy should not beapplied in the Green Belt. What are your thoughts on this?**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**5.8. Approach to countryside development and urban intensification**

**Question 18: Away from the towns and villages listed in the settlement hierarchy, there may be types of development that we could support. Do you have any comments on this approach and on the types of development that could be supported in the countryside?**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**5.9. Neighbourhood plans and the flexible settlements policy**

**Question 19: We have suggested that the flexible settlements policy should not beapplied in places with a recently made neighbourhood plan which includes allocationsfor new homes. What are your thoughts on this?**

Click or tap here to enter text.

## Section 6: Employment Strategy

**6.3. Employment allocations**

**Question 20: The Local Plan will retain and protect existing key employment sites,identify new employment sites at locations close to more sustainable settlements,allow for expansion of existing employment sites and allow for new employment sitesin suitable locations. Do you have any comments on this approach?**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**6.4. Employment development away from allocated sites**

**Question 21: The Local Plan will enable employment land to be developed outsideidentified sites at certain towns and villages, subject to certain considerations. Do youagree with this approach?**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**6.5. Mixed use development**

**Question 22: We have suggested that larger scale housing sites should be required toprovide land for employment uses. Proposals for 300 homes or more would be mixedresidential and employment developments, with a ratio of 0.25ha of employmentspace for every 100 homes. How much do you agree or disagree with this approach?**

**a. Agree** [ ]

**b. Partially agree** [ ]

**c. Neutral** [ ]

**d. Partially disagree** [ ]

**e. Disagree** [ ]

**Please provide any further comments or reasoning…**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**6.6. Protecting employment sites**

**Question 23: We have suggested that the Local Plan should include policies to protectthe most important existing ‘key’ employment sites.**

**a) Do you have any views on the strategy we have suggested for protecting employment sites?**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**b) What criteria should we consider when defining ‘key’ and ‘non-key’ employment sites?**

**a. Site size** [ ]

**b. Location** [ ]

**c. Employment use type** [ ]

**d. Accessibility** [ ]

**e. Contribution to meeting economic objectives/needs** [ ]

**f. Market attractiveness** [ ]

**g. Opportunities for growth/expansion** [ ]

**h. The site’s status in previous local plans** [ ]

**i. Other** [ ]

## Section 7: Town centre development

**7.1. Town centres**

**Question 24: How do you think we should plan to support town centres in the future?**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**Question 25: What types of use do you think will be most important for the future of**

**our town centres?**

**a. Shops** [ ]

**b. Cafes/restaurants** [ ]

**c. Leisure (e.g. cinemas)** [ ]

**d. Offices** [ ]

**e. Cultural (e.g. museums)** [ ]

**f. Community (e.g. libraries)** [ ]

**g. Hotels** [ ]

**h. Other** [ ]

Click or tap here to enter text.

**7.2. Managing town centre development**

**Question 26: We are suggesting that retail impact assessments should be undertakenfor retail development proposals outside the town centres defined in the Plan, that areover the size of a small food store (280 square metres net). How much do you agree or disagree with the introduction of a threshold of 280 square metres for retail impact assessments?**

**a. Agree** [ ]

**b. Partially agree** [ ]

**c. Neutral** [ ]

**d. Partially disagree** [ ]

**e. Disagree** [ ]

**Please provide any further comments or reasoning**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**Question 27: Should the threshold also apply to leisure uses that are net 280 squaremetres?**

**a.Yes** [ ]

**b. No** [ ]

**Question 28: We are considering whether the Local Plan should include a policy whichsupports interim or temporary uses pending a permanent use for a vacant town centrebuilding - we have called these ‘meanwhile uses’. To what extent do you agree with the introduction of a meanwhile uses policy?**

**a. Agree** [ ]

**b. Partially agree** [ ]

**c. Neutral** [ ]

**d. Partially disagree** [ ]

**e. Disagree** [ ]

**Please provide any further comments or reasoning**

Click or tap here to enter text.

## Section 8: Brownfield Land

**8.3. Brownfield land delivery**

**Question 29: How else can we encourage development on brownfield land, whilst alsoplanning positively to meet our needs for homes and employment land?**

Click or tap here to enter text.

## Section 9: Green Belt Review

**9.2. Our approach to Green Belt release**

**Question 30: To what extent do you agree with taking land out of the Green Belt to help**

**meet our development needs?**

**a. Agree** [ ]

**b. Partially agree** [ ]

**c. Neutral** [ ]

**d. Partially disagree** [ ]

**e. Disagree** [ ]

**Please provide any further comments or reasoning…**

Click or tap here to enter text.

## Section 10: Self-build and custom-build housing

**10.3. Self-build plot delivery**

**Question 31: We have suggested that the Local Plan should include a flexiblesettlements policy which would allow new homes around certain towns and villages.What impact, if any, do you think the proposed flexible settlements policy might haveon opportunities for self-build homes?**

**a. High impact** [ ]

**b. Some impact** [ ]

**c. No impact** [ ]

**Please provide further comments or reasoning.**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**Question 32: Is there anything else we should do to increase the supply of self-buildplots?**

Click or tap here to enter text.

## Section 11: Neighbourhood Plans

**11.3. Housing requirement figures for neighbourhood plans**

**Question 33: We have suggested that housing requirements for neighbourhood planareas should be finalised at the next stage of preparing the Local Plan. This is likely toinvolve consideration of sites with planning permission, local plan allocations andunplanned development. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach?**

**a. Agree** [ ]

**b. Partially agree** [ ]

**c. Neutral** [ ]

**d. Partially disagree** [ ]

**e. Disagree** [ ]

**Please provide any further comments or reasoning…**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**11.4. Flexible Settlements Policy**

**Question 34: Should the housing requirement figures for neighbourhood plan areas**

**outside the Green Belt, include an allowance for sites that could come forward through**

**the flexible settlements policy?**

**a. Yes** [ ]

**b. No** [ ]

**Please provide any further comments or reasoning.**

Click or tap here to enter text.

## Section 12: Sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

**12.3. Strategy for meeting Traveller needs**

**Question 35: We have suggested that our Local Plan objectives for Travellers should be:**

**• to reduce the numbers of unauthorised sites,**

**• to provide opportunities for sites to expand,**

**• to encourage new Traveller sites in sustainable locations, and**

**• to provide opportunities for Travellers to deliver their own sites.**

**Do you have any comments on the objectives for meeting the need for Traveller sites?**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**Question 36: To help ensure that enough pitches are provided to meet Dorset’s needs, Traveller pitches could be delivered alongside homes for the settled community on large scale residential development. Are there any issues which you think we need to consider in locating Traveller pitches alongside new built homes for the settled community?**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**Question 37: We are suggesting that 5 Traveller pitches should be provided for every 500 homes on large development sites. Is this threshold correct?**

**a. Yes** [ ]

**b. No-it should be higher** [ ]

**c. No-it should be lower** [ ]

**Please provide any further comments or reasoning.**

**12.5. Criteria based policy for Traveller sites**

**Question 38: To encourage Travellers to deliver their own sites, we are suggesting thatthe Local Plan should include a criteria policy which takes account of the site’slocation, access, neighbouring development, environmental impact and managementof the site. Do you think we need to add or change any of the suggested criteria?**

Click or tap here to enter text.

## Section 13: Strategic Heathland Recreation Mitigation

**13.1. Background**

**Question 39: We have identified opportunity sites which could deliver more homes tohelp meet Dorset’s housing needs. Do we need to change the approach to mitigatingimpacts on protected Dorset Heaths habitat sites as part of planning to meetincreased housing needs?**

**a. Yes** [ ]

**b. No** [ ]

**Please provide further comments or reasoning.**

**13.3. Shapwick, Kingston Lacy and the Stour Valley Park**

**Question 40: To what extent do you agree or disagree with development at Shapwick**

**to enable the delivery of public benefits from investment in the Kingston Lacy Estate?**

**a. Agree** [ ]

**b. Partially agree** [ ]

**c. Neutral** [ ]

**d. Partially disagree** [ ]

**e. Disagree** [ ]

**Please provide any further comments or reasoning**

Click or tap here to enter text.

## Section 14: Onshore Wind, Solar, and Battery Energy Storage

**14.2. Identifying suitable areas**

**Question 41: We have outlined some areas which could be appropriate for windturbines, ground mounted solar panels and battery energy storage. To what extent doyou agree or disagree with identifying broad areas of opportunity for wind, solar andbattery energy storage?**

**a. Agree** [ ]

**b. Partially agree** [ ]

**c. Neutral** [ ]

**d. Partially disagree** [ ]

**e. Disagree** [ ]

**Please provide any further comments or reasoning**

Click or tap here to enter text.

## Section 15: North of Dorchester Masterplan

**15.3. Matter 1: Eastern edge**

**Question 42: Since Roman times, the centre of Dorchester has had a prominentposition in the landscape. One of the threats to this identity is at the eastern edge ofthe potential development area (near the A35). Would you support keeping thiseastern area more green and open, even if that means fewer homes, facilities and jobs?**

**a. Agree** [ ]

**b. Partially agree** [ ]

**c. Disagree** [ ]

**d. Partially disagree** [ ]

**e. Neutral** [ ]

**Please provide any further comments or reasoning…**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**15.4. Matter 2: Employment locations**

**Question 43. Supporting jobs, homes and services all in one place is an essential partof the health of a town. Do you see new workspaces that are integrated into walkableneighbourhoods and local centres as an attractive part of Dorchester in the future?**

**a. Agree** [ ]

**b. Partially agree** [ ]

**c. Disagree** [ ]

**d. Partially disagree** [ ]

**e. Neutral** [ ]

**Please provide any further comments or reasoning…**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**15.5. Matter 3: Pigeon House Farm neighbourhood**

**Question 44: We believe that the valley at Pigeon House Farm can play an important role in encouraging access to nature and celebrating local landscape — What type of development, if any, do you think could help support this in a sustainable way?**

**i. A smaller scale of development** [ ]

**ii. A larger scale of development** [ ]

**iii. The use of the area as an undeveloped landscape buffer, for recreation, education and nature interpretation, without any housing development.** [ ]

**iv. A mixture of the above** [ ]

**Please provide any further comments or reasoning…**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**15.6. Matter 4: Main east to west route**

**Question 45: What are your priorities for a new east–west route?**

Click or tap here to enter text.