

NEWS

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PLANNERS RESPOND TO GOVERNMENT HOUSING REQUIREMENTS

As part of a government-led programme Councils are being asked to assess the amount of land available for housing development in England. This process is known as a **Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment** (SHLAA). SHLAAs will provide the evidence base to support the delivery of sufficient land to meet the community's need for more homes. The Assessment is being carried out in line with current government guidance.

In order to plan for the future and ensure each Council is making the best use of land, the assessment must identify sites which could potentially be suitable for housing. There is no guarantee that suggested sites will be appropriate for housing development. The Assessment will rigorously examine all sites to determine their suitability.

In Dorset, this exercise is being undertaken jointly by all Councils across the county – Bournemouth, Christchurch, East Dorset, North Dorset, Poole, Purbeck, West Dorset and Weymouth & Portland.

In North Dorset housing has been delivered significantly above the planned rate in the Structure and Local Plans. The District Council produced a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) to manage housing land supply in July 2007 and this document remains in force. The SHLAA will look to the future and will be used to examine how housing needs could be met in the longer term.

The guidance stresses the importance of a partnership approach to SHLAAs, with local authorities working closely with stakeholders, such as house builders, landowners, local property agents and local communities. There is an opportunity at the outset of this process for stakeholders and the wider community to identify sites that may make a contribution to the future supply of housing. If you wish to suggest a site please complete a form and send it to your local Council. Forms can be accessed via the following:

- www.north-dorset.gov.uk.
- Planning Policy, Council Offices, Nordon, Salisbury Road, Blandford. Tel 01258 484201.
- At Blandford, Gillingham, Shaftesbury, Sturminster Newton and Stalbridge libraries.

The form requires site specific details that will enable councils to assess its suitability for inclusion on the final SHLAA. It is important to note that the information supplied to the local authority may be made public, if requested. Completed forms must be received by 31st January 2008.

- more follows -

Planners respond to government housing requirements continued...

The SHLAA will be updated on an annual basis so there will be further opportunities for sites to be put forward for consideration in the future. Further information on SHLAA can be found at the Council website or on the Communities and Local Government website www.communities.gov.uk.

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For more information contact: the Planning Policy Office at North Dorset District Council on 01258 484201 or the Communications Manager on 01258 484100.