

# Part B

## Strategy

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## B1 The strategy of this plan

### The broad aims of this plan

B1.1 The broad aims of this plan reflect the strategic policies of the Hampshire County Structure Plan(1996-2011) Review and the District Council's corporate strategy.

B1.2 This plan's basic strategy can be summarised as:

**Taking an integrated approach to promoting a high quality and sustainable environment, which conserves and enhances the District's special environmental qualities, while also addressing the needs of the people who live and work in the District.**

B1.3 This strategy has three main elements:

- i Development restraint
- ii Meeting local needs
- iii Conserving and enhancing the environment.

### Aim 1: Development restraint

B1.4 The sensitive nature of the environment in New Forest District - the New Forest itself, the surrounding countryside, and the coast - requires a planning strategy which restrains development in the District.

B1.5 The New Forest is a particularly sensitive environment. The need to restrict development within the Forest itself has been accepted for many years. However, development pressures on the areas outside the New Forest are also great, and can themselves adversely affect the Forest - by increasing the use of the Forest, adding to traffic through the Forest, and adding to recreational pressures and demands for additional infrastructure in the Forest. The protection of the New Forest requires that development in and around it be limited to a level which is compatible with sustaining its special environmental qualities.

B1.6 Outside the New Forest, most of the rest of District is also of high environmental quality, with much being subject to special designations, including an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Special Protection Areas and Ramsar Sites, Special Areas of Conservation, National and Local Nature Reserves, Green Belt, Strategic Gaps and Conservation Areas. These areas also need to be protected from harmful development.

B1.7 A strategy of restraint on further allocations of development land is compatible with meeting the development requirements of the County Structure Plan, given the amount of land already allocated for development in the District.

### Aim 2: Meeting local needs

B1.8 Within a strategy which will restrain new development, it is important to ensure that such development opportunities as do occur are directed whenever possible towards meeting the needs of the District's local communities.

B1.9 Within this framework, this plan aims to:

- i support the local economy so as to provide opportunities for local businesses, including national and international businesses represented locally, to thrive and provide a good range of local job opportunities, without adding to growth pressures on the District;
- ii enable local people to find satisfactory housing within the District, with particular help being directed to those who cannot afford to buy on the open market;

- iii provide a good range of shopping, leisure and community facilities in the District's towns and villages, appropriate to their scale, and conveniently located to serve the local communities; and,
- iv provide for transport needs, reducing dependence on the car.

### Aim 3: Conserving and enhancing the environment.

B1.10 The quality of the environment is the District's most valuable asset and the impact on the environment will be an important consideration in every planning decision.

B1.11 Development to meet the needs of the present should not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs - in other words development should be sustainable.

B1.12 This plan seeks to reflect the commitment, expressed in the **New Forest District Environmental Charter** (1992), that:

*"The New Forest District Council will seek to promote the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources and to minimise environmental pollution in all its own activities and through its influence over others. The Council will review all of its policies, programmes and services, and will take action wherever possible to contribute to the protection and enhancement of the New Forest and its surrounding areas."*

B1.13 Under Aim 3 three parts of the District's environment have been identified for special attention in preparing this plan:

- i The New Forest
- ii The Coast
- iii Town centres.

### The New Forest

B1.14 Sections A3 and D1 set out the importance of the New Forest within the District.

B1.15 The policies for the New Forest are being co-ordinated with the planning policies of the other district councils preparing local plans for parts of the New Forest (Salisbury District Council and Test Valley Borough Council) so that a consistent planning approach will be in force throughout.

B1.16 Tied in with the land-use planning policies set out in this Plan, management policies have been developed through a Strategy for the New Forest prepared by the New Forest Committee.

B1.17 The New Forest's unique environment attracts many visitors to the District each year. Visitors make an important contribution to the local economy and support many local jobs. However it is essential that visitor pressures are carefully controlled and managed to ensure that the unique landscapes and cultural heritage of the New Forest are protected. The District Council has prepared a tourism and visitor strategy which draws together the many issues that affect tourism and visitor management throughout New Forest District.

B1.18 The policies of this plan aim to:

- i protect the special qualities of the New Forest; and
- ii recognise the special needs of the communities that live in the New Forest, including those of Commoners.

### The Coast

B1.19 In parallel with this local plan, the District Council has prepared a Coastal Management Plan. This draws together a wide range of environmental, economic, recreational and coastal protection issues. Its scope is wider than can be covered by statutory local plan policies. However, it is important that appropriate planning policies to complement the management plan are included in the local plan. Accordingly this plan gives special focus to coastal planning policies in Section C13.

- B1.20 The policies for the coast aim to:
- i maintain and enhance its natural beauty, and its nature conservation value;
  - ii conserve coastal features of historic, archaeological and geological value;
  - iii retain coastal sites for uses requiring coastal locations;
  - iv enable essential coast protection and flood defence works while minimising their environmental impact;
  - v provide for coast-related recreational activities, including public access, where this does not harm nature conservation interests.

### Town centres

B1.21 The Council recognises the need to give particular attention to the District's town centres because of their importance to the economic, social and cultural life of the District. Their character and vitality could be improved, making them more attractive places to visit and enjoy.

B1.22 If they are to keep their vitality and viability, town centres will need to respond not only to increased competition (including from out-of-centre shopping developments) but also to increased public expectations. They must offer a good range of shops and community facilities and a safe and attractive environment.

B1.23 Many different things shape the way town centres function and look. Planning policies have a role to play in guiding development, but the general state of town centre environments depends on many other factors as well.

B1.24 In this plan the Council is seeking to do more than establish an appropriate set of planning policies for each town centre. It puts forward ideas on how each town centre could be improved. It hopes to provide a framework through which the local communities and businesses can take positive steps to help enhance their town centres and the way they are used to best effect, and to ensure they continue to play an important role in community life.

B1.25 The plan aims to make the District's town centres attractive and prosperous focal points for community life by:

- i guiding new development in scale, location and use to enable town centres to function more effectively and become safer, more convenient and more attractive places;
- ii encouraging more residential accommodation, and strengthening town centre community life and facilities;
- iii reducing the environmental impact of traffic and car parking, and making the centres more inviting for pedestrians and cyclists by giving them greater priority; and
- iv environmental improvement schemes.



## B2 The objectives of this plan

### **Objective 1 New Forest**

To give protection of the New Forest the highest priority, and to avoid development within or in proximity to the New Forest which will lead to harmful human or animal pressures on the New Forest, or have any adverse effect on its landscape, ecology or the supply of back-up grazing land.

### **Objective 2 Coast**

To maintain and improve the environmental quality and character of the District's coast, recognising the need to undertake coast protection and flood defence works.

### **Objective 3 Town Centres**

To enhance the attraction of town centres in the District.

Objectives 1 to 3 reflect the special focus which the plan will give to the New Forest, the coast, and town centres, although other objectives also are relevant to these areas. The reasons for this special focus are summarised in paragraphs B1.13 to B1.25.

The importance of protecting the New Forest is recognised in Government policy statements. Policies C5 and C6 in the Structure Plan highlight the special strategic planning considerations which apply in the New Forest.

The emphasis given to the Coast reflects government guidance in Planning Policy Guidance Note 20 (PPG 20), Coastal Planning.

Government planning guidance on town centres is given in Planning Policy Statement 6 (PPS6), Planning for Town Centres.

### **Objective 4 Countryside**

To protect the character and appearance of the countryside for its own sake.

### **Objective 5 Landscape**

To achieve and maintain a high quality landscape in rural and urban areas; and to protect and maintain trees and woodland of high amenity and landscape value.

### **Objective 6 Natural environment**

To promote biodiversity and protect and enhance wildlife, sites of nature conservation importance, and special geographical and geological features; and to promote public education and understanding of the care and quiet enjoyment of the natural environment.

### **Objective 7 Built heritage**

To protect and enhance the archaeological and historic built heritage of the District; ensure that the integrity of buildings and places is respected; and promote public education and understanding of the historic built environment.

### **Objective 8 Public access**

To increase public access to, and enjoyment of, the countryside and coast, within environmental constraints.

### **Objective 9 Environmental design**

To encourage the highest possible standards of design in new development and in environmental improvements; and to provide attractive, stimulating and safe places in which to live, work and play.

### **Objective 10 Special needs**

To ensure that the special needs of people with impaired or restricted mobility are met.

### **Objective 11 Pollution**

To protect air and water quality and to reduce the burden of pollution of air, land and water (including noise) by controlling potentially polluting development.

### **Objective 12 Safety**

To minimise development which would put people or property at risk and encourage forms of development which would enhance community safety.

### **Objective 13 Energy conservation**

To encourage energy conservation, including (in appropriate locations) the development of renewable energy sources, and design, layout and building construction which maximise energy efficiency.

Objectives 4 to 13 identify the environmental concerns which underlie policies throughout the plan. These objectives address the protection of the countryside for its own sake, the protection and enhancement of important local natural and historic features, and also wider environmental issues such as pollution and energy conservation. The objectives also reflect the interaction between people and the environment.

Government planning guidance covering these policy areas is given in PPG9, Nature Conservation, PPG15, Planning and the Historic Environment, PPG16, Archaeology and Planning, PPS22, Renewable Energy, PPS23, Planning and Pollution Control, PPG24, Planning and Noise, and Circular 5/94, Planning Out Crime.

### **Objective 14 Housing provision**

To meet the Structure Plan requirement to provide for 5480 dwellings between April 1996 and March 2011, and to identify additional 'reserve' provision for 500 dwellings, while minimising the need to release greenfield sites for development.

### **Objective 15 Housing needs**

To address the current imbalance in the housing stock in the District by increasing the supply of smaller one and two bedroom dwellings, and to make best use of available resources to maximise the provision of "affordable" housing to meet local needs.

Objectives 14 and 15 recognise the need to provide for the strategic requirements for the District, as set out in the adopted Hampshire County Structure Plan 1996 – 2011 (Review), and the particular need for affordable housing. Further explanation is given in Sections B3 and B4

Government planning guidance on housing policy is given in PPG3, Housing.

### **Objective 16 Employment**

To provide for the employment needs of the District's resident population by encouraging economic activity and job opportunities, principally in the main towns.

### **Objective 17 Local businesses**

To cater for the development needs of businesses already in the District and to encourage new small firms, where this does not result in unacceptable environmental consequences or add unacceptably to pressures on the New Forest.

### **Objective 18 Employment sites**

To provide for a reasonable range of types and sizes of sites, in accordance with Structure Plan policies.

Objectives 16 and 17 recognise the importance of providing for the changing needs of the local economy and for adequate local job opportunities - but also the need to manage economic growth carefully if the general restraint aims are to be achieved.

The Structure Plan has no specific requirement for additional employment land (Objective 18) but rather sets own criteria which the land allocations made in the local plan should meet. There are some 55 hectares of land currently available for new industrial or commercial development in the District. However, the plan provides for some flexibility where the land available does not cater satisfactorily for the specific needs of smaller firms. (See Section B5). Consideration may need to be given to possible port development at Dibden Bay.

Government planning guidance is given in PPG4, Industrial and Commercial Development and Small Firms.

### **Objective 19 Rural economy**

To assist in the maintenance of the economy in rural areas by providing for diversification of rural economic activities and alternative employment opportunities in the countryside, where not in conflict with environmental constraints.

The rural economy is in a state of change, and Objective 19 seeks to assist rural diversification within environmental constraints. Of great importance to the New Forest is the system of commoning, a particularly marginal part of the rural economy.

Government planning guidance is given in PPS7, Sustainable Development in Rural Areas.

### **Objective 20 Shopping**

To support and initiate measures to improve the quality and, where appropriate, quantity of shopping and service facilities available in both town centres and local shops; and to resist proposals which would adversely affect the vitality and viability of existing centres.

The main emphasis of the Objective 20 for shopping is to support existing shopping centres and local shops in the District, and to ensure that their vitality and viability is sustained, particularly in the face of competition from out-of-town shopping developments.

Government planning guidance is given in PPS6, Planning for Town Centres.

### **Objective 21 Tourism**

To support a viable and prosperous tourist industry, to the continued benefit of the local economy, while ensuring that the interests of the environment, in particular the New Forest and the undeveloped coast, are safeguarded and protected.

Objective 21 recognises that the tourist industry is an important part of the District's economy, providing about 6% of jobs and supporting many local businesses. However, tourism must be managed in a way which respects the District's sensitive environment, which after all is the reason for its popularity.

Government planning guidance is given in PPG21, Tourism.

### **Objective 22 Transport schemes**

To provide for transport schemes in accordance with Structure Plan policies.

### **Objective 23 Reduce dependence on car**

To reduce dependence on the car by maintaining and, where practicable, enhancing and encouraging the use of alternative transport modes, including public transport, walking and cycling; and through land use policies.

### **Objective 24 Transport impact**

To minimise the environmental impact of transport, particularly in relation to major road schemes, traffic-generating land uses and car parks.

### **Objective 25 Road safety**

To improve road safety, especially for vulnerable groups including pedestrians and cyclists.

Objectives 22 to 25 aim to provide for an integrated transport strategy with an emphasis on safety and protection of the environment. Environmental objectives, including reduction in carbon dioxide levels, can be assisted by policies which divert development to locations which minimise travel needs and dependence on the use of private cars. These objectives reflect government planning guidance given in PPG13 Transport and Structure Plan policies T1 to T23. Proposals for major road transport schemes are identified in Structure Plan Policies T16, T17 and T21.

### **Objective 26 Open space**

To protect and enhance existing open space and increase provision in areas of need.

### **Objective 27 Community facilities**

To enable and encourage the provision of local community and recreation facilities to meet the needs of communities within the District.

Objectives 26 and 27 recognise the need to provide public amenities and services for the District's population. Open space (Objective 26) is an amenity of particular concern in preparing a local plan. The objectives seek to provide recreational open space to meet the needs of local communities and also, if possible, to provide alternative opportunities which could take pressure off the New Forest.

Government planning guidance is given in PPG17, Sport and Recreation.

### **Objective 28 Utilities**

**To accommodate essential public utilities to serve the needs of the District's population, within environmental constraints.**

Objective 28 recognises that, in view of the environmental constraints, the District does not generally have the capacity to accommodate public utility infrastructure that may be needed for wider national, regional, or sub-regional requirements.

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## B3 Housing provision and Structure Plan requirements

B3.1 The Hampshire County Structure Plan (Review) sets the housing requirement for New Forest District up to 2011. The Local Plan must provide for enough housing development to meet this requirement.

B3.2 Policy H2 of the Structure Plan requires the provision of 5,480 additional dwellings between 1996 and 2011. At around 360 new dwellings per annum, this provides for a lower rate of development compared with the previous two decades. Between 1981 and 1991 the gross annual average number of dwelling completions was over 1,100, while in the period 1991 to 2000 this fell to around 630 dwellings per annum.

B3.3 The supply of housing land has been reassessed in accordance with national guidance, and as part of an urban capacity study carried out for the District. This has included a review of development densities on sites without detailed planning permission; increasing densities to the minimum recommended 30 dwellings per hectare and higher where appropriate, for example on town centre sites; undertaking a review of non-housing allocations to see if any are no longer required for the proposed use and may be suitable for housing; reassessing the contribution from small and large windfall sites; and investigating the potential for accommodating new housing within the urban areas.

B3.4 This plan provides for the Structure Plan base-line housing requirement (Policy H2) as set out in Table 1.

**Table 1: Summary of housing land supply to meet structure plan (Policy H2) baseline requirement**

<b>Requirement:</b>		<b>As at April 2004</b>
(a)	Structure Plan housing requirement April 1996-March 2011 (Policy H2)	5480
(b)	Net completions April 1996- March 2004	3815
(c)	Residual requirement [(a)-(b)]	1665
<b>Supply:</b>		
(d)	(i) Net large site commitments at 1st April 2004	(1147)
(d)	(ii) Proposals <sup>1</sup>	(140)
(e)	(i) Discount commitments by 10%	1032
(e)	(ii) Discount proposals by 50%	70
(f)	Windfall allowances:	
	(i) Large brownfield windfalls @ 50 per annum (overall contribution discounted by 2 years) <sup>2</sup>	250
	(ii) Small brownfield new development windfalls @ 40 per annum	280
	(iii) Small redevelopment windfalls @ 30 per annum	210
	(iv) Small change of use windfalls @ 20 per annum	140
	(v) Small sub-division windfalls @ 5 per annum	35
(g)	Total provision [(e)(i)+(e)(ii)+(f)(i)-(f)(v)]	2017
(h)	Surplus [(g)-(c)]	352

**Notes:**

1 'Proposals' refers to the following sites:

*Eling Wharf, Eling Quay, Eling Lane, Totton*

*Land at Brokenford Lane, Totton*

*Travis Perkins Depot, Queen Katherine Road, Lymington*

*Bus Depot, West Street, Fordingbridge*

2 The contribution from large windfalls is discounted by two years as windfall sites within the total for net commitments can be expected to contribute windfall completions for the discounted years. This will avoid double-counting of windfall contributions.

B3.5 The housing supply from identified sites is divided between "commitments" and "proposals". The majority of identified sites come under the term "commitments" and the overall dwelling capacity on these sites is discounted by 10% in recognition that some of this capacity may not be developed before the end of the plan period. Some of the identified sites are termed "proposals" and the capacity on these sites is discounted by the higher rate of 50%. This higher rate of discounting is designed to reflect the greater uncertainty surrounding the availability of these sites for housing development during the plan period. Proposals are listed in the note under Table 1. All other identified sites are commitments.

B3.6 In addition to the baseline requirement of 5,480 dwellings Structure Plan policy H4 requires a reserve housing provision of 500 dwellings to be made. The release of this reserve provision will be determined by the local and strategic planning authorities in the light of monitoring of the rates of development achieved throughout the plan period.

B3.7 Table 1 shows that the assessed supply provides for a surplus of some 352 dwellings over and above the Structure Plan base requirement of 5,480. This surplus should therefore contribute towards the additional 500 dwellings reserve as required by the Structure Plan. Table 2 sets out the identified reserve provision, while the release of this provision will be determined in accordance with Policy H-1.

**Table 2: Identified reserve provision**

<b>Requirement:</b>		<b>Dwellings</b>
(a)	Structure Plan Reserve Requirement (Policy H4)	500
(b)	Existing surplus over Structure Plan baseline requirement (see Table 1)	352
(c)	Residual reserve requirement [(a)-(b)]	148
	Supply:	
(d)	Identified reserve sites	
	(i) Durley Farm, Totton	100
	(ii) Land between Cracknorehard Lane & Normandy Way, Marchwood	18
	(iii) Land west of Crow Lane, Ringwood	150
(e)	Total identified reserve sites (i)+(ii)+(iii)	268
(f)	Total reserve provision (b)+(e)	620

### **Policy H-1**

#### **Release of Sites for Housing Development**

Land is identified (as shown on the Proposals Map) to meet the further reserve requirements of Structure Plan Policy H4 at:

- i Durley Farm, Hounslowdown (Policy TE-14, Section F22)
- ii Land between Cracknorehard Lane and Normandy Way, Marchwood (Policy MA-6, Section F17)
- iii Land west of Crow Lane, Ringwood (Policy RW-12, Section F20)

The need for the release of this reserve provision will be determined by the local and strategic planning authorities in the light of the results of monitoring. Until the need for the release of reserve provision is established, proposals for housing development on the identified sites, or proposals which would prejudice their development for housing, will not be permitted.

Before a reserve site is released for development, the local planning authority will produce a Supplementary Planning Document including guidance on the phasing of development having regard to the overall land supply position. If a reserve site is required it may be necessary to release only part of the identified land during the Plan period.

B3.8 Planning Policy Guidance Note 3, Housing (PPG3) sets out the presumption that previously developed land should be developed before greenfield sites and that plans should provide for the phased release of sites for development accordingly. Within this context, Policy H4 of the Hampshire County Structure Plan Review seeks to ensure that sufficient land is provided to meet housing needs, whilst avoiding the unnecessary use of greenfield sites. It requires the district to identify a "reserve provision" of sites suitable for housing development to be released only if and when

the strategic and local planning authorities decide that it is needed. Policy H-1 identifies where the provision will be allocated if it is needed.

B3.9 The greenfield site allocated for development at Durley Farm, Hounslow is now instead included as reserve provision. Additional reserve provision sufficient for 18 dwellings is identified at Marchwood and a further 150 dwellings at Ringwood.

B3.10 Supplementary Planning Guidance: "Hampshire County Structure Plan 1996-2011 (Review) – Implementing Policy H4" has been adopted by the three strategic planning authorities. This sets out in detail how the reserve provision policy will be implemented.

B3.11 PPG3 requires the identification of sufficient sites to accommodate at least the first five years of housing development proposed in the Plan. Following adoption of the local plan in 2005 sufficient sites will need to be identified for 1080 dwellings (required building rate x 5 years). Taking the anticipated remaining commitments and proposals at 2005 (1014) together with identified reserve provision (268) there will be 5.94 years supply identified in the Plan.

B3.12 The Government has established a national target for 60% of new housing development to take place on previously developed land. Taking into account existing commitments and contributions from windfall sites, it is expected that over the plan period approximately 70% of new housing development within the District will take place on previously developed land.

## ~~B4 Housing needs and the provision of affordable housing~~

~~B4.1 This plan aims to provide for local needs, including housing which is affordable to the whole community, including those on low incomes.~~

~~B4.2 Although there has been significant housing development in the District over the past twenty years, most new dwellings built in the District have been for owner occupation. At the same time there has been a decline in social housing stock, with Council houses ceasing to be built, and existing stock sold off through 'Right to Buy' legislation. The only new 'social housing' has been provided by Housing Associations/Registered Social Landlords (RSLs), but the contribution they have made to the affordable housing stock in the District remains modest and is restricted by the level of funding available to them through the Housing Corporation and Local Authority Social Housing Grant, and the limited supply of land. High house prices throughout the District mean that a significant part of the District's population, in both the towns and the rural areas, cannot afford to purchase or rent a suitable dwelling on the open market.~~

~~B4.3 Government policy recognises that a community's need for affordable housing is a material planning consideration. Planning Policy Guidance Note 3 (PPG3): Housing (2000) and Circular 6/98: Planning and Affordable Housing, set out the Government's policy and guidance on how the planning system can contribute to the overall supply of affordable housing. Where there is a demonstrable lack of affordable housing to meet local needs, local plans should include policies seeking affordable housing.~~

~~B4.4 Within rural areas, PPG3 advises that local needs can be provided for by permitting new developments for affordable village housing as exceptions to normal policies. In addition, the Rural White Paper "Our Countryside: The Future", published in November 2000 suggested that in small villages if there is evidence of need, every new market house could be matched with an affordable home.~~

~~B4.5 The policies in this Plan are in line with the government advice referred to above.~~

### ~~Assessing Affordable Housing Needs~~

~~B4.6 In 2001 the number of households on the New Forest Housing Register had risen to over 2000 households, and in 2000/2001 there was a record number of homelessness acceptances in the District. In early 2001 the District Council commissioned a new Housing Needs and Market Assessment of the District. The new survey undertaken on behalf of the Council by David Couttie Associates (DCA) follows the methodology recommended by the Government Good Practice Guidance on Local Housing Needs Assessment.~~

~~B4.7 Some of the main findings of the survey (Housing Needs and Market Assessment 2001) are summarised below:~~

- ~~• 2660 households contain another 'concealed' household (only 170 of which are on the housing waiting list).~~
- ~~• 92% of concealed households are young people wishing to set up their own household who are the children of New Forest residents.~~
- ~~• First-time buyers need incomes of £30,000 p.a. to buy a property.~~
- ~~• 97% of these 'concealed' households are not able to afford to buy even the cheapest available housing in the District.~~
- ~~• Average house price is £169,000~~
- ~~• There is an imbalance in existing housing stock in the private sector – too many large, not enough small properties.~~

- New household demand is for smaller and affordable types of housing, particularly one or two bedroom flats and terraced houses.
- The population over 80 years old is projected to increase by over 9% between 2001-2011, growing to 13,100 people over 80 by 2011.
- 17.5% of households in New Forest contain somebody with a disability (suggesting 12,560 households). 71% of wheelchair user households do not live in accommodation suitably adapted.

### Definition of affordable housing

B4.8 The Housing Needs and Market Assessment 2001 uses the following definition of 'affordable housing' and the same definition will be employed in the Plan:

*"Affordable housing is that provided, with subsidy, for people who are unable to resolve their housing requirements in the local housing sector market because of the relationship between housing costs and incomes."*

B4.9 The subsidy referred to in the definition could take many different forms including discounts on land prices. The local planning authority will produce a supplementary planning document setting out the main forms of subsidy. Affordability will be assessed by examining the relationship between incomes and house prices in the local area. A supplementary planning document will set out formulae for assessing 'affordability' in relation to local incomes and house prices.

B4.10 The types of affordable housing which comply with this definition will include units for rent, shared ownership with grant or shared equity where land value is retained to provide housing for sale at below market levels and where control of the equity discount can be retained for so long as there is a proven need for affordable housing in the area, and may include low cost houses for sale. This list is not exclusive and other appropriate mechanisms for delivering affordable housing may be acceptable. However, the acceptability of any mechanism adopted will always be judged on whether it would make dwellings available to people who cannot afford to rent or buy houses generally available on the open market.

### Extent of Housing Need

B4.11 The Housing Needs and Market Assessment 2001 Final Report and Summary Report, give detailed information on housing needs within New Forest District. These documents are available from the District Council. This information provided by the survey and assessment has been used to inform the housing needs policies of this Local Plan.

B4.12 The main finding is that there is an annual requirement of around 730 affordable housing units additional to existing stock supply from re-lets and the current programme which provides around 140 new affordable dwellings a year. In view of the nature and extent of housing need, and the need to ensure that affordable dwellings are managed and maintained in perpetuity to meet that need, the predominant need is for rented accommodation provided by an affordable housing provider.

### Addressing the Need

B4.13 As a Housing Authority, the District Council has a wide range of statutory housing duties. Each year the Council produces a Housing Strategy looking ahead five years. A key part of this strategy is the housing enabling role the Council pursues, working in partnership with a number of Registered Social Landlords. However, lack of financial resources and site availability severely restricts efforts to address affordable housing need in the District. The Housing Strategy will help to identify the type of housing that is required to meet the prevailing local need.

B4.14 As a Local Planning Authority, there are two principal ways that affordable housing needs can be addressed through the planning system:

- Within rural areas, by permitting small scale 'affordable' housing development which addresses a local need as an exception to normal policies – see Policy NF H8 (Section D3) and Policy CO H7 (Section E2);

- Within urban areas and villages, by seeking to negotiate with developers of housing sites, above a certain threshold, the inclusion of an element of 'affordable' housing in such schemes. These are often referred to as PPG3 sites.

B4.15 Government advice on the size of site on which a local planning authority may seek to negotiate an element of affordable housing is given in Circular 6/98: Planning and Affordable Housing. The Circular sets a site threshold of "25 or more dwellings or residential sites of 1 hectare or more, irrespective of the number of dwellings". However, in areas where this threshold would normally apply, the Circular also makes provision for local planning authorities to seek to adopt a lower threshold through policies in the Local Plan, if exceptional local constraints and need can be demonstrated. The Circular sets the minimum at which this discretionary threshold can be set as "15 or more dwellings, or residential sites of 0.5 of a hectare or more, irrespective of the number of dwellings". In settlements of 3000 or less, no threshold applies. The Council considers that the findings of the 2001 Housing Needs and Market Assessment demonstrate without any doubt that exceptional circumstances do exist in New Forest District in terms of the constraints on finding new sites and the extent of housing need.

### **Policy AH-1**

**Affordable Housing in defined built up areas and settlements with populations of more than 3000 (excluding Bransgore) and on allocated and reserve sites**

In considering schemes for, or including, residential development in defined built up areas with a population of more than 3000 (excluding Bransgore) or on allocated or reserve sites, the local planning authority will seek to negotiate with developers the inclusion of an element of affordable housing on all suitable sites. Suitable sites will comprise those where:

- i 15 or more dwellings are proposed; or
- ii the site is 0.5 of a hectare or more, irrespective of the number of dwellings.

Negotiations will take account of the proximity of the site to local services and facilities, access to public transport, whether there will be particular costs associated with the development, whether the provision of affordable housing would prejudice the realisation of other planning objectives that need to be given priority in the development of the site, and the need to achieve a successful housing development.

For the purposes of this policy, applications for planning permission for development which forms part of a more substantial proposed development, on the same land or adjoining land, should be treated as an application for planning permission for the more substantial development.

Where an element of affordable housing is to be sought, the District Council's target is to negotiate 35% of dwellings on the site to be affordable dwellings which will address an identified local housing need.

Provision of affordable housing to meet the requirements of this policy should be made entirely on-site.

In exceptional circumstances where it would allow priority housing needs to be better met or where it is more likely to widen housing choice and encourage better social mix, the local planning authority may accept off-site provision. In such situations the first preference would be for the developer to make an equivalent contribution of an agreed number, size and type of affordable dwellings on a different site (or sites). This site should itself meet the suitability criteria for sites set out in this Policy. Where the agreed number of dwellings to be provided 'off-site' is 15 or more dwellings, the local planning authority's target will be to negotiate 35% of the dwellings on the sites combined to be affordable dwellings which will address an identified local housing need. If provision on an alternative site (or sites) is not possible, then as a last resort the local planning authority may be prepared to accept as an alternative a financial contribution sufficient to enable an affordable housing provider to provide the agreed number, size and type of affordable dwellings on a different site which, in itself, should meet the suitability criteria for sites set out in this policy, by the construction of new buildings, or by other agreed means. The local

~~planning authority's target will be to negotiate a financial contribution sufficient to provide for affordable dwellings off-site equivalent to 35% of the dwellings on the sites combined to be affordable dwellings which will address an identified local housing need.~~

~~In circumstances where the affordable housing contribution is for under 15 dwellings and an equivalent contribution of dwellings or finance is to be made on an alternative site which does not meet the suitability criteria in terms of its size or capacity, the contribution shall be sufficient to provide for affordable dwellings equivalent to 35% of the dwellings on the original development site to be affordable dwellings which will address an identified local housing need.~~

~~A planning condition or legal agreement will ensure that the affordable housing provided will only be occupied by households in need of affordable housing in New Forest District.~~

## **Policy AH-2**

~~Affordable Housing in rural areas and small settlements (including Bransgore)~~

~~In considering schemes for, or including, residential development (excluding single replacement dwellings) in the New Forest, in the countryside outside the New Forest, in Bransgore and in settlements with populations of less than 3000, the Local Planning Authority will seek to negotiate with developers the inclusion of an element of affordable housing on all suitable sites.~~

~~Assessment of site suitability will take into account the proximity of the site to local services and facilities, access to public transport, whether there will be particular costs associated with the development, whether the provision of affordable housing would prejudice the realisation of other planning objectives that need to be given priority in the development of the site, and the need to achieve a successful housing development.~~

~~Where an element of affordable housing is to be sought, the District Council's target is to negotiate 35% of dwellings on the site to be affordable dwellings which will address an identified local housing need. In the case of one or two dwellings, an equivalent contribution will be sought.~~

~~Provision of affordable housing should be made entirely on site, unless the development is too small in scale to make this practical (e.g. if the development is for a single dwelling).~~

~~Where the proposed development is for less than 3 dwellings, or in other exceptional circumstances where it would allow priority housing needs to be better met or is more likely to widen housing choice and encourage better social mix, the local planning authority may accept off-site provision. In these circumstances the local planning authority may be prepared to accept either:-~~

- ~~a an equivalent contribution of an agreed number, size and type of affordable dwellings on a different site which, in itself, should meet the suitability criteria for sites set out in this Policy. In such cases, the local planning authority's target will be to negotiate 35% of the dwellings on both sites combined to be affordable dwellings which will address an identified local housing need; or,~~
- ~~b a financial contribution sufficient to enable an affordable housing provider to provide the agreed number, size and type of affordable dwellings on a different site by the construction of new buildings, by buying into the existing stock or by other agreed means. The local planning authority's target will be to negotiate a financial contribution sufficient to provide for affordable dwellings equivalent to 35% of the dwellings on both sites combined to be affordable dwellings which will address an identified local housing need.~~

~~A planning condition or legal agreement will ensure that the affordable housing provided will only be occupied by households in need of affordable housing in New Forest District.~~

~~B4.16 In view of the significant need for affordable housing throughout New Forest District, and taking account of the exceptional environmental constraints, it is~~

~~considered appropriate to maximise the number of opportunities in the District (as permitted under government advice), for the negotiation of an element of affordable housing on sites that come forward for residential development. Accordingly, in the defined built up areas the District Council adopts the minimum site threshold which is currently permitted under the advice in Circular 6/98: Planning and Affordable Housing. The Council will only accept off site provision in circumstances where the resulting affordable housing provided would more appropriately meet the local housing need than it would have done if it was provided on site, for example, by virtue of its location and the type of dwelling that can be provided.~~

~~B4.17 In settlements in rural areas with a population of 3000 or fewer (as defined by S.I.1997/625, The Housing (Right to Acquire or Enfranchise) (Designated Rural Areas in the South East) Order 1997), Circular 6/98 states that site thresholds for negotiation of an element of affordable housing should be based on assessments of local needs and the available supply of land for housing. This justifies the lower site thresholds proposed within the New Forest (including the defined settlements) and in the countryside outside the New Forest; and settlements with populations of less than 3000. The later includes the villages of Sandleheath, Everton, Ashford, and Fawley Village. To maximise opportunities to address local housing needs in Bransgore outside the National Park and within the settlement boundary, for the purposes of affordable housing policies, Bransgore will continue to be subject to the same policy (Policy AH 2) as the defined villages within the New Forest. The Rural White Paper "Our Countryside: The Future" published in November 2000 recognised the shortage of affordable housing in many rural areas. It stated, "Local authorities should negotiate an appropriate element of affordable housing and there is no reason why, in small villages if there is evidence of need and subject to financial viability, they should not seek to match every new market house with an affordable home."~~

~~B4.18 Opportunities for new housing development within the defined New Forest villages are limited by environmental constraints and the availability of land. In the rest of the New Forest, and the countryside outside the New Forest (including villages), planning policies do not normally permit new houses to be built. Where new dwellings may be permitted under the policies of this Local Plan, it is the Council's intention to negotiate an element of affordable housing on all sites which are capable of satisfactorily being developed to provide additional dwellings.~~

~~B4.19 While the District Council's target is to negotiate 35% of dwellings on sites to be affordable dwellings, schemes that propose a higher provision will be particularly welcomed and encouraged.~~

~~B4.20 The target of 35% of dwellings to be affordable dwellings on sites in built up areas is considered a realistic target that should be achievable through negotiation on all sites. The level of need throughout the District would justify a higher target. Housing Need and Market Assessment 2001 identified an annual need for around 730 additional affordable dwellings, in addition to the 140 currently provided each year in the District. This compares with an expected total house building rate of 288 dwellings per annum over the remainder of the local plan period (April 2004 March 2011). The targets given in Policies AH 1 and AH 2 reflect the level of social housing funding which is likely to be available to implement schemes within a reasonable timescale, rather than housing need. Advice on the availability of subsidy from social housing funding will be set out in a supplementary planning document.~~

~~B4.21 In addition to policies AH 1 and AH 2 above, policies NF H8 (Section D2) and CO H7 (Section E2) enable the provision of affordable housing as an exception to normal policies of this Plan. On exception sites all dwellings are required to be affordable dwellings that meet the needs of local people in housing need.~~

~~B4.22 The District Council will produce a supplementary planning document relating to the implementation of the affordable housing policies of this Plan, including the calculation of developer contributions, the exceptional circumstances which may justify off site provision and the detailed methodology for assessing adjoining sites.~~



## B5 Employment provision and Structure Plan requirements

**B5.1** Most of the District's population lives within the built-up areas and most employment opportunities are within or adjoining the built-up areas. This plan continues this approach as it protects the countryside, encourages use of land within the built-up areas, and enables the numbers and lengths of journey-to-work trips by car to be minimised. While most rural areas have reasonable accessibility to the main employment centres within and adjacent to the District, provision is made for the expansion of businesses located in rural areas.

**B5.2** There are some 60,000 jobs in the District. Job opportunities are concentrated at Totton and in the Waterside parishes and to a lesser extent at New Milton, Lymington, Ringwood and Fordingbridge.

**B5.3** Economic activity in the district is characterised by wide diversity with no undue reliance on any one specific sector. In common with much of the UK there has been considerable restructuring of the local economy with an overall loss of manufacturing employment and an increase, albeit at a lower level, of service jobs. There remains, however, a significant manufacturing presence in the district alongside major chemical and engineering plants. Although perceived as a largely rural district, only 3% of the workforce is actually engaged in agriculture. Conversely, because the district is an important tourist destination, 7% of the workforce is directly or indirectly engaged in tourism. An increasing proportion of the workforce is female and an increasing number of jobs are part-time.

**B5.4** During the 1980s and early 1990s the number of jobs in the district remained relatively static, while the labour force increased by more than 20%. This resulted in more people commuting outside the district to work. Between 1996 and 2011 the number of jobs in the district is predicted to increase by around 8% from about 57,100 to 61,700. Over the same period, the total labour supply is expected to grow by the lower rate of 4.5%. This implies a reduction in out-commuting of 7.3% over the plan period.

**B5.5** The provision of jobs in the district has been set back by the loss of a number of major manufacturing employers over that past decade. There has been a loss of 1,500 jobs along the Waterside at sites in Hythe and Marchwood, along with reductions in employment at the refinery complex at Fawley, and a further 450 jobs at the Ampress site in Lymington. More recently there have also been significant job losses at Ringwood. These job losses have not been replaced by new employers of a similar size. Unemployment in the district rose to a peak of 8.6% in 1993, but has declined in recent years. The average rate in 2004 was 0.9%. Although unemployment in the district is consistently lower than the county and national averages, there are pockets of higher unemployment (particularly among males) in parts of the coastal towns and along the Waterside.

**B5.6** Set in the context of the above factors, the employment strategy of this Plan is, wherever possible, to concentrate provision for new employment opportunities in existing built-up areas where the need is greatest, where they are readily accessible to the majority of the population and to avoid areas of greatest ecological, conservation and landscape constraint. Although the majority of the district is rural in character, there is reasonable access to sufficient employment opportunities as few rural settlements are any great distance from one or more of the main towns in, or around, the district and the jobs which are located there. There is no available evidence that the workforce in rural areas is disadvantaged in terms of access to employment, nor do rural wards exhibit higher unemployment rates than the towns in the district. Thus, although policies exist within the Plan to address the needs of rural areas, the prime objective in terms of employment policy is to make provision within the main built-up areas.

B5.7 Those sites allocated and available for employment purposes are listed in Appendix G2. These are gross area estimates for sites of 0.5 hectares or greater which were available for general employment development i.e. not reserved for individual firms' own expansion requirements at November 2004. For the purposes of monitoring the take-up and availability of employment land the district is sub-divided into three areas; Totton & Waterside, Lymington & New Milton and Ringwood & Fordingbridge. Appendix G2 shows that there is about 37 hectares of land available for employment purposes, plus a possible further 3 hectares if land is allocated at Ringwood as provided for in Policy RW-12, Section F20.

Totton & Waterside	16.78 ha
Lymington & New Milton	10.40 ha
Ringwood & Fordingbridge	9.69 ha

(Possible additional 3 ha reserve provision at Ringwood: Policy RW-12)

**TOTAL 39.87 ha**

B5.7 As a matter of urgency the local planning authority will carry out a review of employment land requirements and supply. The review will assess the sufficiency of both the quantity and quality of available sites against the needs of the workforce in the district. It will examine the type, size and location of available employment sites and their suitability for uses which may reasonably be expected to locate in the area and their ability to accommodate the reasonable requirements of existing businesses within the district. Sites required to take advantage of, or to improve, particular business, industrial or locational opportunities will be assessed.

### Structure plan employment policies

B5.8 The Hampshire County Structure Plan Review (see Policy EC2) requires local authorities to make provision for:

- i a reasonable range of types and sizes of sites in a variety of locations, suitable for uses which might reasonably be expected to locate within their area;
- ii sites to permit the known and reasonable requirements of existing businesses within their area to be accommodated;
- iii sites required to take advantage of particular business, industrial or locational opportunities within their area or to improve such opportunities; and
- iv sites required to provide job opportunities for the workforce in the area.

B5.9 All of the above are to be considered having regard to the individual and cumulative impact of proposals on overheating of the local economy, on housing land requirements, on the highway network or on other interests of acknowledged importance. The Structure Plan also stresses the importance of monitoring the supply and take-up of industrial, commercial and business floorspace, labour market trends and the needs of particular sectors of the economy.

B5.10 The objectives and policies of this plan are consistent with the Structure Plan requirements having regard to the environmental constraints affecting most of the District outside the defined built-up areas and the need to avoid generating growth pressures which could adversely impact on the District's special environmental qualities.

B5.11 Port development requiring access to deep water may be permitted at Dibden Bay as indicated diagrammatically on the Proposals Map provided that it complies with the requirements of Policy EC6 of the Structure Plan Review. This matter is dealt with in detail in Policy DW-C3, Section C13.

B5.12 Progress in developing the allocated sites, and the continued availability of sites, will be monitored regularly in order that choice does not become restricted.