

**NORTH DORSET LOCAL PLAN 2011 – 2026 PART 1
EXAMINATION**

**RESPONSE TO
INSPECTOR'S QUESTION 1 TO THE COUNCIL**

January 2015

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1. Introduction

Inspector's Question 1

- 1.1 The Inspector would welcome written confirmation that the North Dorset Local Plan has been:
- Prepared in accordance with the statutory requirements, including the 2004 Act (as amended) and the 2012 Regulations;
 - Prepared in accordance with the Council's Local Development Scheme;
 - Prepared in accordance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement;
 - Prepared with regard to national policy and the North Dorset Sustainable Community Strategy;
 - Supported by a Sustainability Appraisal;
 - Supported by a Habitats Regulations Assessment; and
 - Prepared in compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty.

2. Council Response to Question 1

Statutory Requirements

- 2.1 The North Dorset Local Plan has been prepared in accordance with the statutory requirements, including the 2004 Act (as amended) and the 2012 Regulations. The Council has prepared a Submission Statement, as required by Regulation 22(1)(c) of the 2012 Regulations, which provides more details of the plan preparation and consultation processes. This is available as Submission Document SUD018.
- 2.2 The Duty to Co-operate, as set out in Section 110 of the Localism Act, is also a statutory requirement of the plan preparation process. The Council's Duty to Co-operate Statement, which is available as Submission Document SUD019, sets out how the Council has effectively co-operated to plan for issues with cross-boundary impacts. Submission Document SUD019, which was produced in November 2014, supersedes an earlier version produced in November 2013 to accompany the Pre-submission Document.

Local Development Scheme

- 2.3 The Local Plan has been prepared in accordance with the sixth revision of the Local Development Scheme (LDS), which was published in November 2014 and is available as Submission Document SUD021.
- 2.4 Since 2005, the Council has produced a series of LDSs, which provide an overview of how the Council's intentions have changed, in terms of planning policy

document production, both in response to reforms of the planning system and other factors. A discussion of these changes is provided in Section 1 of the Submission Statement (Submission Document SUD 018).

Statement of Community Involvement

- 2.5 The Local Plan has been prepared in accordance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), which was adopted in July 2006. More detail is set out in the Submission Statement (Submission Document SUD 018), which provides an overview in paragraphs 1.24 and 1.25, with details of the consultation undertaken at each stage of plan preparation set out in Chapters 2 to 9.

National Policy and the North Dorset Sustainable Community Strategy

- 2.6 The Local Plan has been prepared with regard to national policy (including both the National Planning Policy Framework – NPPF – and the Government's online Planning Policy Guidance – PPG) and the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) for North Dorset.
- 2.7 The NPPF was published in March 2012 and has been used throughout the process of drawing up the Local Plan Pre-submission Document. The 'presumption in favour of sustainable development', promoted by the NPPF is a golden thread that runs through the Pre-submission Document, as set out in Policy 1 and its supporting text. Policy 1 sets out how the Council will take decisions in the context of 'the presumption' and the supporting text provides guidance on how this will be applied in North Dorset.
- 2.8 The publication of the Pre-submission Document in November 2013 predates the publication of the PPG (in March 2014). A number of changes have been proposed to the Pre-submission Document to recognise the existence of, and to reflect the guidance in, the PPG (including any revisions to it up to November 2014). These proposed changes are included in the Schedule of Proposed Changes, which is available as Submission Document SUD015. Where a change is proposed to recognise the existence of, or to reflect the guidance in, the PPG it is indicated in the 'Reason for Change' column of the schedule.
- 2.9 Shaping Our Future – Dorset Sustainable Community Strategy 2010–2020, which was produced by the Dorset Strategic Partnership in November 2010, is the SCS both for the County and for North Dorset. It is available as Evidence Base Document NDC004. The issues and challenges raised in the SCS (as well as national and more local issues and challenges) have shaped the Local Plan's vision and objectives, as explained in Chapter 2 of the Pre-submission Document.

- 2.10 A more detailed discussion of how national policy, the SCS and local issues have shaped the vision and objectives of the Local Plan is set out in the Vision and Objectives Background Paper 2013, available as Evidence Base Document NDC001.

Sustainability Appraisal

- 2.11 The North Dorset Local Plan is supported by a Sustainability Appraisal (SA). Submission Documents SUD003a to SUD003d make up the SA Report of the Pre-submission Document, published in November 2013. Submission Document SUD008 is a supplement to the SA Report, which was produced in August 2014 to support public consultation on the Pre-submission Focused Changes Documents.

Habitats Regulations Assessment

- 2.12 The North Dorset Local Plan is supported by a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA). Submission Document SUD005 is the HRA of the Pre-submission Document, published in November 2013. Submission Document SUD009 is an addendum to the HRA, which was produced in July 2014 to support public consultation on the Pre-submission Focused Changes Documents.
- 2.13 A number of recommendations have been made as the HRA process has progressed. The implications of the HRA for the Local Plan and the actions the Council has taken in response to the recommendations in the HRA are discussed in more detail in Evidence Base Document ECC005, published in November 2014.

Public Sector Equality Duty

- 2.14 The North Dorset Local Plan has been prepared in compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty. An equality impact assessment of the Pre-submission Document has been prepared and is available as Submission Document SUD004.