

# Alderholt Neighbourhood Plan

Site Options and Assessment 2023

24 July 2023

## Quality information

Prepared by	Checked by	Verified by	Approved by
Anthony Whitaker Principal Consultant	Anthony Whitaker Principal Consultant	Anthony Whitaker Principal Consultant	Anthony Whitaker Principal Consultant

## Revision History

Revision	Revision date	Details	Authorized	Name	Position
1 <sup>st</sup> Draft	07/06/2023	1 <sup>st</sup> Draft	AW	Anthony Whitaker	Principal Planner
Final	24/07/2023	Final Draft	AW	Anthony Whitaker	Principal Planner

Prepared for:

Alderholt Parish Council (the ‘Qualifying Body’)

Prepared by:

AECOM Limited  
3rd Floor, Portwall Place  
Portwall Lane  
Bristol BS1 6NA  
United Kingdom  
T: +44 117 901 7000  
aecom.com

© 2023 AECOM Limited. All Rights Reserved.

This document has been prepared by AECOM Limited (“AECOM”) for sole use of our client (the “Client”) in accordance with generally accepted consultancy principles, the budget for fees and the terms of reference agreed between AECOM and the Client. Any information provided by third parties and referred to herein has not been checked or verified by AECOM, unless otherwise expressly stated in the document. No third party may rely upon this document without the prior and express written agreement of AECOM.

### Disclaimer

This document is intended to aid the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan and can be used to guide decision making and as evidence to support Plan policies, if the Qualifying Bodies (QBs) so chooses. It is not a Neighbourhood Plan policy document. It is a ‘snapshot’ in time and may become superseded by more recent information. The QB is not bound to accept its conclusions. If landowners or any other party can demonstrate that any of the evidence presented herein is inaccurate or out of date, such evidence can be presented to the Neighbourhood Plan at the consultation stage. Where evidence from elsewhere conflicts with this report, the QB should decide what policy position to take in the Neighbourhood Plan and that judgement should be documented so that it can be defended at the Examination stage.

## Table of Contents

1. Introduction .....	5
2. Policy context.....	7
National Planning Policy .....	7
Dorset Planning Policy .....	10
Christchurch and East Dorset Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy (2014): .....	10
East Dorset Local Plan (2002) Saved Policies: .....	11
Dorset Local Plan (Regulation 18) Options Consultation (2021): .....	11
Emerging Alderholt Neighbourhood Plan .....	12
3. Methodology .....	14
Stage 1: Site Identification .....	14
Stage 2: Site Review.....	14
Stage 3: Assessment against the emerging Neighbourhood Plan objectives .....	14
4. Site assessment.....	18
Stage 2 Dorset SHLAA Review table .....	18
SHLAA Review outcomes .....	25
Neighbourhood Plan Site Assessment Table.....	26
5. Conclusions .....	33
Affordable Housing .....	35
Next Steps .....	36

## Figures

Figure 1.1: Designated Alderholt Neighbourhood Area (March 2019).....	5
Figure 3.1: Map of all SHLAA 2021 sites in Alderholt (source: Dorset Council) .....	15
Figure 4.1: Stage 2 Assessment Results.....	24

## Tables

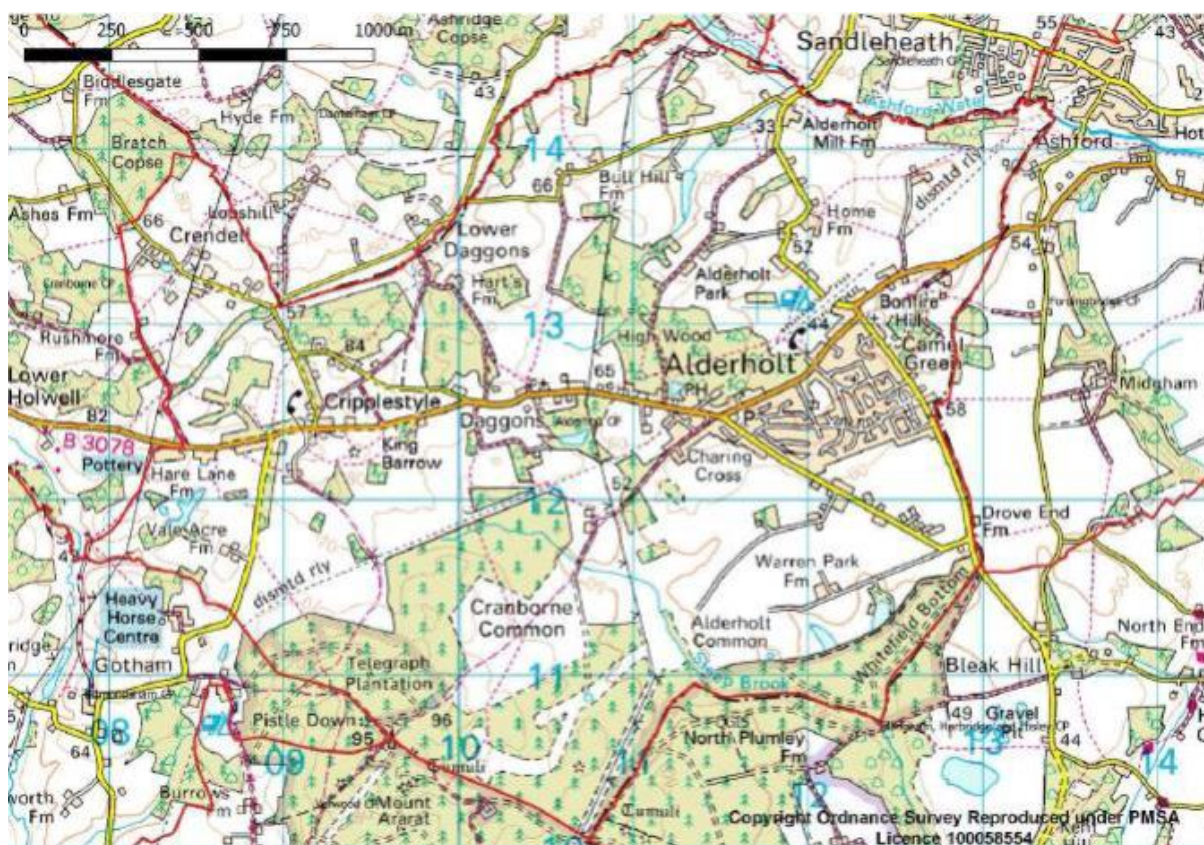
Table 3.1: Neighbourhood Plan Objectives and Site Assessment Criteria .....	16
Table 4.1: Dorset SHLAA Review Table .....	18
Table 4.2: Neighbourhood Plan Site Assessment Table .....	26

## Abbreviations used in the report

AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
DLUHC	Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
dpa	Dwellings per hectare
Ha	Hectare
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SHLAA	Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment
SHMA	Strategic Housing Market Assessment
SOA	Site Options and Assessment
SPA	Special Protection Area
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest

# 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report is an independent assessment of potential development sites for the Alderholt Neighbourhood Plan (ANP) on behalf of Alderholt Parish Council (APC) (the 'Qualifying Body'). The work undertaken was agreed with the Qualifying Body and the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) as part of the national Neighbourhood Planning Technical Support Programme led by Locality.
- 1.2 The Alderholt Neighbourhood Area, which was designated in March 2019 is shown in **Figure 1.1**. The Neighbourhood Area includes the entire parish with the village of Alderholt and a small number of hamlets including Crendell, Cripplestytle and Daggons.



**Figure 1.1: Designated Alderholt Neighbourhood Area (March 2019)**

- 1.3 The Qualifying Body is currently in the process of gathering evidence to inform and support the Neighbourhood Plan and potential site allocations within it. This emerging Neighbourhood Plan is expected to cover the plan period between 2022 and 2034.
- 1.4 A Call for Sites was carried out by Dorset Council in October 2019 to encourage local communities and landowners to put forward land which may be suitable for development. The Call for Sites identified 19 sites which were assessed in the 2020 Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) and have been updated in 2021. The Qualifying Body is using the list of sites submitted in the 2021 SHLAA however this needs to be reviewed in light of emerging Dorset Local Plan policy (consulted on in 2021) and more recent information, including that submitted by landowners to the Parish Council.

- 1.5 As of June 2023 no formal housing requirement figure exists within an adopted development plan document for the Qualifying Body. The latest consultation for the Dorset Local Plan in January-March 2021 proposes a housing requirement of 30,481 dwellings (1,793dpa) for the plan area, and a neighbourhood plan housing requirement figure for Alderholt of at least 192 dwellings (or 11.2dpa) over the plan period 2021/2-2037/38. As a location beyond the Green Belt consultation questions were asked about exceeding this requirement at Alderholt, with potentially 300 dwellings (at the lower end) or an unspecified strategic scale of development.
- 1.6 Since this consultation, the Dorset Local Development Scheme (October 2022), sets out a new Local Plan Review timetable period with adoption predicted in 2026. It is not yet known how this will affect the emerging housing requirement for the Neighbourhood Area or for Dorset as a whole.
- 1.7 The purpose of this Site Options and Assessment (SOA) report is to produce a clear and evidence-based assessment as to whether the identified sites are suitable, available and likely to be viable for the proposed use, and therefore appropriate for allocation in the Alderholt Neighbourhood Plan. It includes a review of sites identified through the Dorset Council SHLAA to ensure all possible site options have been considered and that plan-making proceeds on an up-to-date understanding of site suitability, availability and achievability in the area.
- 1.8 This assessment does not in itself select or allocate sites for development. It is the responsibility of the Qualifying Body to decide, guided by this report and other relevant available information, whether to allocate sites and if so, which sites to select to best address the identified development need and Neighbourhood Plan objectives.

## 2. Policy context

- 2.1 All Neighbourhood Development Plan policies, including allocations, must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the adopted Local Plan and should have regard to emerging Local Plan policies. A number of sources have been reviewed in order to understand the context for potential site allocations. This includes national policies, local policies and relevant evidence base documents.
- 2.2 National Policy is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (2021)<sup>1</sup> and is supported by Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)<sup>2</sup>. The NPPF is a high-level document which sets the overall framework for more detailed policies contained in local and neighbourhood plans.
- 2.3 The statutory local plan-making authority for Alderholt is Dorset Council. Dorset Council was founded in 2019 following local government reorganisation merging the former Weymouth and Portland; West Dorset; North Dorset; Purbeck, and East Dorset District Councils with Dorset County Council. Alderholt is located in the former East Dorset administrative area. The adopted development plan for this part of Dorset consists of the Christchurch and East Dorset Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy (2014) and the East Dorset Local Plan (2002) Saved Policies. An emerging single Dorset Council Local Plan is being prepared but is at an early stage following Regulation 18 “Options” Consultation in January 2021.
- 2.4 Existing Minerals and Waste Plans are the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Minerals Strategy (2014); Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole and Dorset Mineral Sites Plan (2019); and Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole and Dorset Waste Plan (2019).
- 2.5 A number of supporting evidence base documents have also been reviewed in order to understand the context for potential site allocations, including the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA), Dorset Council Local Plan Regulation 18 consultation, Housing Needs Assessment, Settlement Hierarchy Background Paper, Functional Areas Background Paper, Alderholt Traffic Modelling Report and the Alderholt Traffic Forecasting Report.

### National Planning Policy

- 2.6 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government’s planning policies and how these should be applied. It provides a framework within which locally prepared plans for housing and other development can be produced. The policies of particular relevance to development in Alderholt are set out below, but this report has regard to all other aspects of national planning policy where appropriate.
- 2.7 An overarching aim of the NPPF is to promote sustainable development. **Paragraph 11** states that in order to achieve sustainable development, plans should promote a sustainable pattern of development that seeks to: meet the

<sup>1</sup> Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

<sup>2</sup> Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>

development needs of their area; align growth and infrastructure; improve the environment; and mitigate climate change.

- 2.8 **Paragraph 13** states that neighbourhood plans should support the delivery of strategic policies contained in local plans or spatial development strategies; and should shape and direct development that is outside of these strategic policies.
- 2.9 **Paragraph 60** emphasises that to support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay.
- 2.10 **Paragraph 62** states that the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies.
- 2.11 **Paragraph 65** notes that where major development involving the provision of housing is proposed, planning policies and decisions should expect at least 10% of the homes to be available for affordable home ownership, unless this would exceed the level of affordable housing required in the area, or significantly prejudice the ability to meet the identified affordable housing needs of specific groups.
- 2.12 **Paragraph 70** states that neighbourhood planning groups should give particular consideration to the opportunities for allocating small and medium-sized sites (up to 1ha, consistent with paragraph 69a) suitable for housing in their area.
- 2.13 **Paragraph 78** states that in rural areas, planning policies should be responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs.
- 2.14 **Paragraph 80** highlights the need to avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside.
- 2.15 **Paragraph 86** stresses the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities, by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation.
- 2.16 **Paragraph 106** supports a mix of uses across an area and within larger scale sites to minimise the number and length of journeys needed for employment, shopping, leisure, education and other activities.
- 2.17 **Paragraph 119** notes that planning policies and decisions should promote effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions.
- 2.18 **Paragraph 159** states that inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk (whether existing or future). Where development is necessary in such areas, it should be made safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere.



- 2.19 **Paragraph 161** sets out that plans should apply a sequential, risk-based approach to the location of development in order to avoid flood risk to people and property. **Paragraph 162** explains that the purpose of the sequential test is to steer development to areas with the lowest risk of flooding, and that development should not be allocated or permitted if there are reasonably available sites for the proposed development in areas with a lower risk of flooding.
- 2.20 **Paragraph 163** states that where it is not possible to locate development in zones at lower risk of flooding, the exception test may have to be applied, according to the potential vulnerability of the site and the nature of the proposed development. The exception test is set out in **Paragraph 164**, which states that it should be demonstrated that the development would provide wider sustainability benefits that outweigh the flood risk, and that the development would be safe for its lifetime, without risking flood risk elsewhere, and where possible reducing overall flood risk.
- 2.21 **Paragraph 175** states that plans should allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in the NPPF. Footnote 53 suggests that where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, areas of poorer quality land should be preferred to those of high quality.
- 2.22 **Paragraph 179** seeks to protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity through the plan-making process. In particular, plans should promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gain for biodiversity.
- 2.23 **Paragraph 180** requires local planning authorities to apply a list of principles in relation to biodiversity and geodiversity when determining planning applications. Principle (A) states that if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused.
- 2.24 **Paragraph 182** states that the presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply where the plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on a habitats site, unless an appropriate assessment has concluded that the plan or project will not adversely affect the integrity of the habitats site.
- 2.25 **Paragraph 199** states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation.
- 2.26 **Paragraph 201** goes on to emphasises that where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss.

## Dorset Planning Policy

### Christchurch and East Dorset Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy (2014):

- 2.27 **Policy KS4** Housing Provision in Christchurch and East Dorset states that about 8,490 new homes will be provided in the plan area between the years 2013 and 2028. This will comprise about 5,000 homes within the existing urban areas (which includes Alderholt village), and a further 3,465 provided as new neighbourhoods at Christchurch, Burton, Corfe Mullen, Wimborne/Colehill, Ferndown/West Parley and Verwood. The Councils aim for a total of 35% of the new homes to be affordable. The plan requirement is based on the 2015 Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA). The figures for the Christchurch and East Dorset areas have been combined into a single requirement covering both areas.
- 2.28 **Policy KS2** outlines the Settlement Hierarchy for the plan. Alderholt is defined as a “Rural Service Centre” which is described as the “main providers for the rural areas where residential development will be allowed of a scale that reinforces their role as providers of community, leisure and retail facilities to support the village and adjacent communities”. As a Rural Service Centre Alderholt is one of the larger rural settlements in East Dorset though it has no strategic allocations. The expectation is that windfall sites would continue to be developed within the village envelope where appropriate, as defined on the Policies Map, or on rural exception sites. The hamlets within the neighbourhood area are defined as “Settlements where development would not be allowed unless it was functionally required to be in the rural area”.
- 2.29 **Policy LN4** (Affordable Housing Exception Sites) supports in principle development adjoining or very close to Alderholt which otherwise would be considered inappropriate for development provided that it delivers affordable housing in perpetuity, in accordance with the criteria set in the policy.
- 2.30 **Policy PC4** (The Rural Economy) states that applications for economic development will be encouraged where development is located in or on the edge of existing settlements where employment, housing, services and other facilities can be provided close together. Such proposals should be small scale to reflect the rural character.
- 2.31 **Policy LN7** (Community Facilities and Services) supports, in principle, new and expanded community facilities in Alderholt, including multi-use of facilities and guards against the unnecessary loss of facilities.
- 2.32 **Policy HE3** (Landscape Quality) designates Areas of Great Landscape Value (AGLV). One such designation exists in the plan area to the north and west of the village. The policy states that “Within the Areas of Great Landscape Value development will be permitted where its siting, design, materials, scale and landscaping are sympathetic with the particular landscape quality and character of the Areas of Great Landscape Value. Planning permission will be refused for major developments in these designated areas except in exceptional circumstances and where they are in the public interest.” The AGLV landscape appraisal has been published as supplementary planning guidance to assist in the preparation and promotion of their conservation, enhancement and

management and to encourage developments that enhance their landscape quality and character.

- 2.33 **Policy ME2** (Protection of Dorset Heathlands) prevents residential development within 400m of the Dorset Heathlands Special Protection Area (SPA) / Special Area of Conservation (SAC) / Ramsar site and Cranborne Common Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), and requires development within 5km to provide mitigation in the form of contributions towards Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG). Most of the Parish is within the Dorset Heathlands 5km Heathland Buffer with some parts in the south west and west within 400m.

### East Dorset Local Plan (2002) Saved Policies:

- 2.34 **Policy HODEV2** sets criteria for new housing developments in urban areas and village envelopes.
- 2.35 **Policy A1** states that housing development will be permitted in Alderholt within the village envelope Policy HODEV1 within the policy envelope defined on the Proposals Map.

### Dorset Local Plan (Regulation 18) Options Consultation (2021):

- 2.36 The new Dorset Council Local Plan will set out planning policies and propose allocations to meet the needs of the whole of the Dorset Council area. It will look ahead until at least 2041 in order to ensure provision for growth for 15 years on adoption. The key stages and likely timescales are:
- Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report: (July 2019) – Complete
  - Options Consultation: (January 2021) – Complete
  - Publication: (December 2024)
  - Submission: (April 2025)
  - Examination: (Autumn 2025)
  - Adoption: (Spring 2026)
- 2.37 It is intended that the Dorset Council Local Plan will replace all existing local plans in the Dorset Council area upon adoption.
- 2.38 The draft plan identifies a Dorset-wide housing land supply of 39,285 dwellings (Figure 2.7) against a requirement of 30,481 dwellings. These figures do not include any allocations at Alderholt. Only limited weight can be afforded to the emerging Dorset Local Plan at present, given its early stage (the plan is not expected to be examined until 2025). It does not have the equivalent of an 'East Dorset' housing requirement, but proposes a minimum requirement of 1,793dpa across the plan area.
- 2.39 Alderholt is within the South Eastern Dorset Functional Area in the emerging plan. At Alderholt, which lies on the outer edge of the Green Belt, two potential options are being considered for strategic growth. The draft plan states that the level of growth that may be appropriate at Alderholt is not fully understood but it would need to deliver significant employment and facilities to improve the self-containment of the settlement.

- 2.40 Data from the published Local Housing Needs Assessment<sup>3</sup> for the emerging Dorset Local Plan calculated a potential housing figure for the East Dorset area as 516dpa, capped at 455dpa.
- 2.41 The potential level of housing proposed for Alderholt in the Regulation 18 consultation is expressed as two possible options:
- Option 1 ALDE/A: Small-scale expansion on land between Hillbury and Ringwood Roads (around 300 new homes and 0.25ha commercial).
  - Option 2 ALDE/B: Significant expansion – comprising a series of sustainable urban extensions around the settlement to create a self-contained ‘town’ (to be quantified).
- 2.42 Major Development Sites are identified on the draft policies map – the Former Alderholt Surplus Stores and Land north of Ringwood Road Alderholt SP6 3HZ. Both of these sites have planning permission and are not formal allocations.
- 2.43 **Policy ALD2** shows the proposed Trailway at Alderholt. Under the policy Dorset Council will work with Hampshire County Council to investigate the feasibility of establishing a trailway between Fordingbridge and Alderholt using as much of the former Salisbury to Poole railway line as possible.
- 2.44 **Policy DEV9** (Neighbourhood Plans) states that “Where provision is made for housing, the housing requirement figure for a neighbourhood plan area, set out in Appendix 2, should be met and where possible exceeded.” Appendix 2 outlines a minimum 192 dwellings for Alderholt, or 11.2dpa over the period 2021/22-2037/38.

## Emerging Alderholt Neighbourhood Plan

- 2.45 The draft Alderholt Neighbourhood Plan Housing Target Paper prepared by Dorset Planning Consultant Ltd sets out an approach for arriving at a housing target for the Alderholt Neighbourhood Plan. In the absence of a binding housing requirement figure in the Dorset development plan (under NPPF Paragraph 66) it is understood that the Parish Council is advocating the numbers in this Housing Target Paper are adopted by officers at Dorset Council as an ‘indicative’ housing requirement figure under NPPF Paragraph 67 until such time as the figure is confirmed in the adopted development plan. The Alderholt Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared on this basis.
- 2.46 The Housing Target Note takes into account a parish-level Local Needs Assessment in March/April 2017, commitments and completions during the plan period, the standard method housing need figure for Dorset and the emerging strategy in the Regulation 18 draft Local Plan.
- 2.47 The Housing Target Note arrives at a housing requirement figure of 16dpa or 192 dwellings over the plan period 2022-2034. Taking into account commitments and completions this results in a residual figure of 50 dwellings to allocate in the plan period, which given the need for affordable housing should be allocated on one or more sites above 10 dwellings with at least 35% affordable housing. It is noted that this is broadly consistent with the proposed Dorset Local Plan Appendix 2 minimum housing requirement figure of 192

---

<sup>3</sup> [Dorset and BCP Local Housing Needs Assessment](#), Icen Projects Limited on behalf of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole and Dorset Council, November 2021

dwellings to 2038 (11.2dpa), but lower than the 300 dwelling 'small scale expansion' figure consulted on as an option by Dorset Council in the Regulation 18 consultation (which works out as 16.7 dwellings per annum over the period 2021-2038).

## 3. Methodology

- 3.1 The approach to site assessment is based on the Government’s Planning Practice Guidance. The relevant sections are the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (March 2015)<sup>4</sup>, Neighbourhood Planning (updated February 2018)<sup>5</sup> and Locality’s Neighbourhood Planning Site Assessment Toolkit<sup>6</sup>. These all support assessing whether a site is appropriate for allocation in a Neighbourhood Plan based on whether the proposed development is suitable and achievable and the site is available for the proposed use. In this context, the methodology for identifying, appraising and reviewing sites is presented below.

### Stage 1: Site Identification

- 3.2 The first task is to identify which sites should be considered as part of the site assessment. For the Alderholt Neighbourhood Plan a total of 19 sites were identified from the Dorset SHLAA 2021.
- 3.3 A Neighbourhood Plan Call for Sites has not been undertaken however the landowners from the 2021 SHLAA were approached to confirm that their sites were still available for development. During this process one additional site was promoted at “Land at Fordingbridge Road, (opposite Rose Cottage)” however this is remote from the village located near Wolvercroft Garden Centre along the B3078 and is not considered a reasonable site and has therefore not been included in the assessment. **Figure 3.1** shows a map of all sites identified for assessment.

### Stage 2: Site Review

- 3.4 The 2021 SHLAA conclusions have been reviewed and updated, refining conclusions and adding detail where necessary. The ‘Excluded’ and ‘Included’ conclusion categorisation used by Dorset Council have been retained for consistency, using the methodology<sup>7</sup> published by Dorset Council, outlining the reasoning for any difference.

### Stage 3: Assessment against the emerging Neighbourhood Plan objectives

- 3.5 Following the SHLAA review the sites are then considered against the emerging Neighbourhood Plan objectives to identify the sites that perform most favourably against the plan objectives. The emerging plan Vision (on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2023) is:

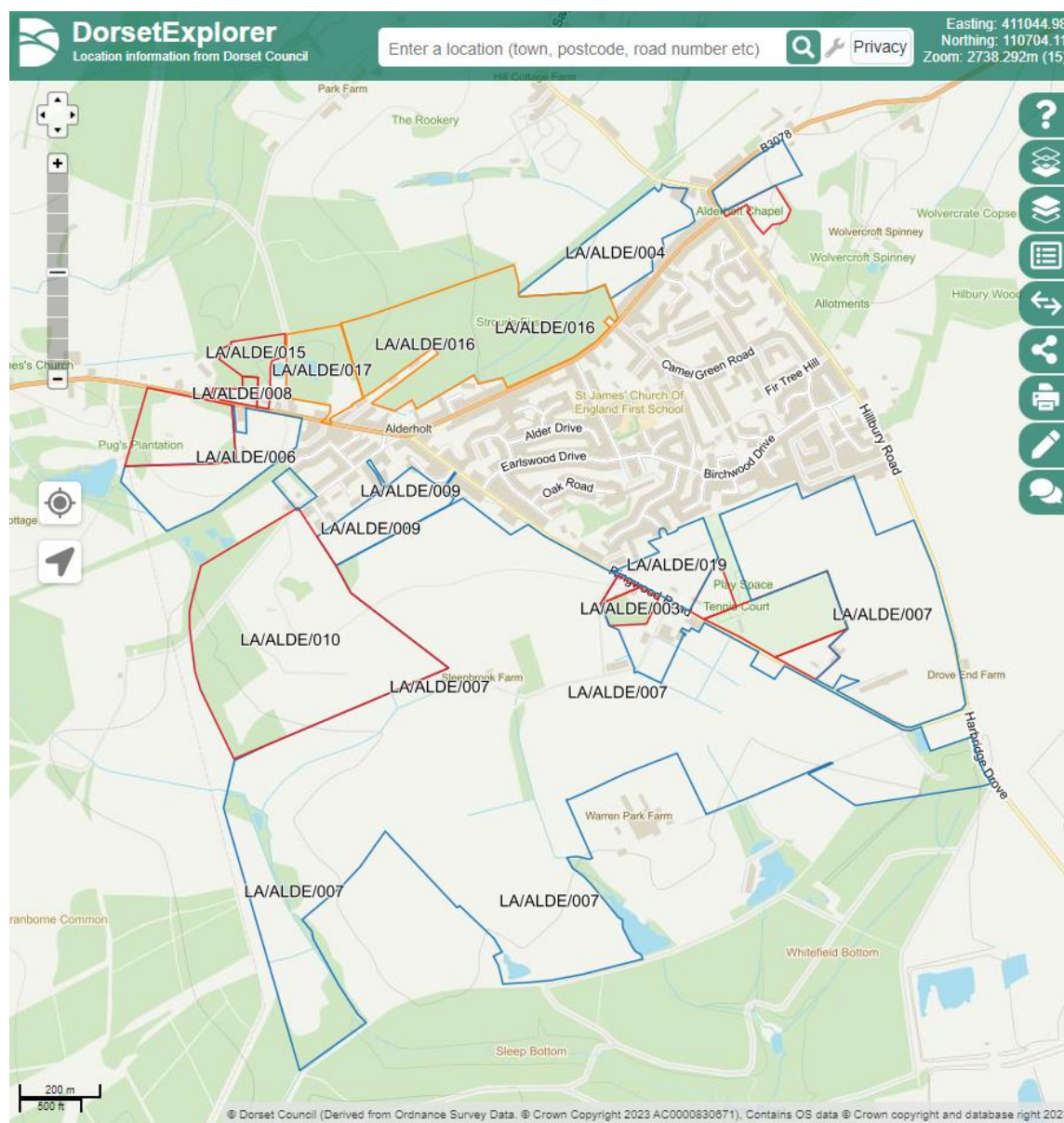
*“Our vision is to ensure that Alderholt remains a village with the essential amenities and facilities that enables residents and visitors to enjoy the beautiful countryside whilst being part of an active and friendly community in a peaceful rural setting.”*

<sup>4</sup> Available at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/housing-and-economic-land-availability-assessment>

<sup>5</sup> Available at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--2>

<sup>6</sup> Available at <https://neighbourhoodplanning.org/toolkits-and-guidance/assess-allocate-sites-development/>

<sup>7</sup> Available at <https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/documents/35024/347286/SHLAA+-+Methodology.pdf/0b4f0bd6-1ffb-a09e-6230-bb3cfe72025f>



**Figure 3.1: Map of all SHLAA 2021 sites in Alderholt (source: Dorset Council)**

3.6 The plan objectives to achieve this vision are as follows:

- Protect the character of the village – its uniqueness on the edge of Dorset, its compact form and quiet nature, its links to the former railway and the surrounding countryside.
- Reinforce the sense of a village centre/high street.
- Protect and strengthen the highly valued amenities and community facilities that provide its residents with a strong sense of connection and community, allowing them and newcomers to be active, develop and thrive.
- Identify suitable sites for the level of development required to meet the anticipated need for housing, as well as providing opportunities for some local employment, that would be compatible with the nature of our village and limited road access.

- Ensure there are safe and attractive walking and cycling routes around the village, and support the project to re-use the former railway for recreation and onward connection to Fordingbridge.
- Protect the intrinsic beauty and enjoyment of the countryside and approaches to Alderholt
- Protect and strengthen the more isolated settlements – Cripplestyle, Daggons and Crendell and the wider countryside from inappropriate development ensuring its rural nature and the extensive biodiversity of our parish is enhanced.”

3.7 This vision and objectives have been translated into the following assessment framework against which to assess the sites:

**Table 3.1: Neighbourhood Plan Objectives and Site Assessment Criteria**

Neighbourhood Plan Objective	Assessment Criteria
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect the character of the village – its uniqueness on the edge of Dorset, its compact form and quiet nature, its links to the former railway and the surrounding countryside.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retaining Alderholt’s compact form</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reinforce the sense of a village centre/high street.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distance to the village centre/high street and support for local services</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect and strengthen the highly valued amenities and community facilities that provide its residents with a strong sense of connection and community, allowing them and newcomers to be active, develop and thrive.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoiding the loss of valued amenities and community facilities.</li> <li>• Potential to improve amenities and community facilities.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify suitable sites for the level of development required to meet the anticipated need for housing, as well as providing opportunities for some local employment, that would be compatible with the nature of our village and limited road access.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to meet the emerging Neighbourhood Plan housing requirement (50 dwellings)</li> <li>• Ability to deliver affordable housing (viable sites of 10 or more dwellings)</li> <li>• Ability to deliver local employment</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure there are safe and attractive walking and cycling routes around the village, and support the project to re-use the former railway for recreation and onward connection to Fordingbridge.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accessibility by sustainable transport</li> <li>• Ability to improve the sustainable transport network</li> <li>• Ability to fund the Trailway project</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect the intrinsic beauty and enjoyment of the countryside and approaches to Alderholt</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impact on the countryside and landscape character</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect and strengthen the more isolated settlements – Cripplestyle, Daggons and Crendell and the wider countryside from inappropriate development ensuring its rural nature and the extensive biodiversity of our parish is enhanced.”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoiding development in the hamlets and rural area</li> <li>• Impact on biodiversity (including Dorset Heathlands and Ancient Woodland)</li> </ul>

3.8 A ‘traffic light’ rating has been used based on whether the site meets the individual assessment criteria. The traffic light rating indicates ‘green’ for sites that contribute towards meeting the plan objectives and thus could be appropriate as site allocations, ‘amber’ for sites which make a limited



contribution or may have constraints that can be resolved and 'red' for sites which do not contribute towards the plan objectives. The judgement is based on each of the assessment criteria in turn and no overall rating or ranking is provided for each site as it is ultimately for the Qualifying Body to identify the most appropriate site(s) to allocate through the plan-making process, informed by evidence and stakeholder engagement. The level of weight to be attributed to each criterion is for the Qualifying Body to determine.

- 3.9 The site assessment was undertaken through a combination of desktop assessment and site visits in April and May 2023. The desktop assessment involved a review of the conclusions of the existing evidence and using other sources including Google Maps/Streetview, MAGIC maps and Local Authority data in order to judge whether a site could meet the plan objectives. The site visit allowed the team to consider aspects of the site assessment that could only be done visually. It was also an opportunity to gain a better understanding of the context and nature of the neighbourhood area.

## 4. Site assessment

4.1 **Table 4.1** provides the reviewed Dorset SHLAA conclusions and the reasons for any differences. A plan illustrating the revised AECOM assessment ratings is shown in **Figure 4.1**.

4.2 **Table 4.2** then assesses those sites that are not 'excluded' against the emerging plan objectives and the criteria in **Table 3.1**.

### Stage 2 Dorset SHLAA Review table

**Table 4.1: Dorset SHLAA Review Table**

Site Ref.	Site size (gross site area, ha)	Net site area (ha)	Proposed land use	Site capacity	SHLAA conclusions	Are the SHLAA conclusions reasonable to be carried forward to the Neighbourhood Plan Site Assessment? If not, how would the conclusions change for the Neighbourhood Plan Site Assessment <sup>8</sup> ?	Neighbourhood Plan Site Assessment conclusion. (What is the justification for this judgement?)
LA/ALDE/001 Recreation Ground	4.167	0	(Nothing recorded)	0	<b>Excluded. An unsuitable site</b> due to loss of playing fields. Intensification of development would be uncharacteristic in this area. An unsuitable site.	Yes, the loss of the playing fields would be contrary to policy. Site confirmed as not available by the landowner (Alderholt) Parish Council	No change. <b>Exclude</b> .
LA/ALDE/002 Alderholt Nursery	0.928	0	(Nothing recorded)	0	<b>Excluded. Not suitable</b> as represents uncharacteristic extension to settlement boundary. An unsuitable site.	No. Could be developed adjacent to LA/ALDE/019 which has planning permission, so would be an extension to the built settlement. Recent outline application refused for 21 dwellings (3/19/0674/OUT). Reasons for refusal could potentially be overcome with a Neighbourhood Plan allocation and mitigation.	Change – <b>include</b> in Neighbourhood Plan Site Assessment for 21 dwellings.

<sup>8</sup> This includes a consideration of how the conclusions be applied to the Neighbourhood Planning Site Assessment, e.g. Has the site been excluded or assessed as unsuitable due to size – too large or small? Does more recent or additional information now exist which could change the SHLAA findings? Are the SHLAA conclusions justified by evidence?

Site Ref.	Site size (gross site area, ha)	Net site area (ha)	Proposed land use	Site capacity	SHLAA conclusions	Are the SHLAA conclusions reasonable to be carried forward to the Neighbourhood Plan Site Assessment? If not, how would the conclusions change for the Neighbourhood Plan Site Assessment <sup>8</sup> ?	Neighbourhood Plan Site Assessment conclusion. (What is the justification for this judgement?)
LA/ALDE/003 Cromwell Cottage	0.978	0	(Nothing recorded)	0	<b>Excluded. Not suitable</b> as represents uncharacteristic extension to settlement boundary. An unsuitable site.	Yes, whilst LA/ALDE/019 has permission adjacent across Ringwood Road this would be uncharacteristic and result in the loss of significant tree cover.	No change. <b>Exclude.</b>
LA/ALDE/004 Cross Farm	5.39	3	House	60	<b>Excluded. A suitable site subject to policy change.</b> The site is relatively well screened and adjoins built development. This site could form an extension of the existing development fronting Station Road. There is a large area of surface water flooding	Yes – the site is suitable subject to policy change (Neighbourhood Plan allocation). Surface water flood risk is a concern and a pumping station is located adjacent to the site, therefore capacity is likely to be lower (perhaps 30 dwellings). Access confirmed as being possible via 137 Station Road (under the control of the landowner).	No change – <b>include</b> in Neighbourhood Plan Site Assessment for 30 dwellings.
LA/ALDE/005 Foxhill Farm	0.949	0	(Nothing recorded)	0	<b>Excluded. An unsuitable site.</b> The site is isolated from the existing village, as such, the intensification of existing development would mean uncharacteristic development well beyond the existing development boundary. An unsuitable site.	Yes. Residential development would intensify the existing development (campsite) beyond the development boundary.	No change. <b>Exclude.</b>
LA/ALDE/006 Infield House Daggons Road	5.7	0.8	House	16	<b>Excluded. A suitable site subject to policy change.</b> Some development potential from within the field fronting Daggons Road. A suitable site subject to policy change.	Yes – the site is suitable subject to policy change (Neighbourhood Plan allocation). The site is in two separate ownerships therefore has been divided into 006a (frontage along Daggons Road) and 006b (remainder of the site).	Partial change – <b>include 006a</b> in Neighbourhood Plan Site Assessment and <b>exclude 006b.</b>
LA/ALDE/007 Land at Alderholt	124.6	30	House and employment	900	<b>Excluded. A suitable site subject to policy change.</b> A developable site which would need	Yes – the site is suitable subject to policy change (Neighbourhood Plan allocation), however at 900 dwellings this would be a	No change – <b>include 007a and 007b</b> in Neighbourhood Plan

Site Ref.	Site size (gross site area, ha)	Net site area (ha)	Proposed land use	Site capacity	SHLAA conclusions	Are the SHLAA conclusions reasonable to be carried forward to the Neighbourhood Plan Site Assessment? If not, how would the conclusions change for the Neighbourhood Plan Site Assessment <sup>8</sup> ?	Neighbourhood Plan Site Assessment conclusion. (What is the justification for this judgement?)
					to be comprehensively developed through a masterplan. Partly within 400m of the Dorset Heathlands. A suitable site subject to policy change.	strategic allocation and best addressed through the Local Plan process. The site has been divided into three smaller parcels with 007a (west of Ringwood Road) and 007b (west of Hillbury Road) being considered non-strategic scale adjacent to Alderholt and 007c (the remainder further to the south) being considered too large (and strategic scale) for the Neighbourhood Plan to deal with.	Site Assessment and <b>exclude 007c.</b>
LA/ALDE/008 Land at Birch Hill and The Oaks	0.53	0	(Nothing recorded)	0	<b>Excluded. An unsuitable site.</b> Intensification of development would be uncharacteristic in this area. No footpath connectivity to village centre. Partly within a Site of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI). An unsuitable site.	Yes. Uncharacteristic extension of the settlement boundary plus SNCI intersect and lack of footpath.	No change. <b>Exclude.</b>
LA/ALDE/009 Land at Blackwater Grove	3.6	2	House	50	<b>Excluded. A suitable site subject to policy change.</b> Potential for development. A suitable site subject to policy change.	Yes – the site is suitable subject to policy change (Neighbourhood Plan allocation). Potential access constraints to the site at Blackwater Close needs investigation as whilst under the control of the landowner the highway width appears inadequate to provide access for 50 dwellings. Unsuitable access from Ringwood Road/Attwood Close. Access could be possible via LA/ALDE/007a.	No change. <b>Include.</b>
LA/ALDE/010 Land at Crossroads	22.976	0	(Nothing recorded)	0	<b>Excluded. An unsuitable site.</b> Development would result in clear extension into open countryside.	Yes. Site is in partly use as a solar farm with inadequate access along an unmade track. Proximity to Dorset Heathlands.	No change. <b>Exclude.</b>

Site Ref.	Site size (gross site area, ha)	Net site area (ha)	Proposed land use	Site capacity	SHLAA conclusions	Are the SHLAA conclusions reasonable to be carried forward to the Neighbourhood Plan Site Assessment? If not, how would the conclusions change for the Neighbourhood Plan Site Assessment <sup>8</sup> ?	Neighbourhood Plan Site Assessment conclusion. (What is the justification for this judgement?)
					Partly within 400m of the Dorset Heathlands. An unsuitable site.		
LA/ALDE/011 Land at Pugs	4.419	0	(Nothing recorded)	0	<b>Excluded. An unsuitable site.</b> Site detached from settlement. Intensification of development would be uncharacteristic in this area. No footpath connectivity to village centre. An unsuitable site.	Yes. Site is detached from the settlement and would be uncharacteristic.	No change. <b>Exclude.</b>
LA/ALDE/012 Land to the east of Hillbury Road (Parcel 1)	0.924	0	(Nothing recorded)	0	<b>Excluded. An unsuitable site.</b> Not suitable due to proximity to SNCI. An unsuitable site.	Yes. Furthermore access is constrained on the junction of B3078 and Hillbury Road, and would need to be accessed from ALDE/013 (Parcel 2). Uncharacteristic extension. Previous application 3/21/0046 refused on design, amenity, ecological and drainage reasons.	No change. <b>Exclude.</b>
LA/ALDE/013 Land to the east of Hillbury Road (Parcel 2)	1.797	1	House	20	<b>Excluded. A suitable site subject to policy change.</b> Some suitability fronting existing highway avoiding impact on nearby SNCI. A suitable site, subject to policy change	Yes. Site is gently sloping so would have an impact on character if more than the frontage was developed. The site is suitable subject to policy change (Neighbourhood Plan allocation).	No change. <b>Include.</b>
LA/ALDE/014 Watchfields, Ringwood Road	0.264	0	(Nothing recorded)	0	<b>Excluded. An unsuitable site.</b> Unsuitable due to lack of footpath links to village centre. Outside of development boundary. Intensification of development would be visible from wider views. An unsuitable site.	Yes. The site already contains a residential property with minimal scope for intensification. The adjacent ALDE/019 permission changes things slightly but the site is unlikely to yield more than perhaps a single additional dwelling which may not be viable.	No change. <b>Exclude.</b>

Site Ref.	Site size (gross site area, ha)	Net site area (ha)	Proposed land use	Site capacity	SHLAA conclusions	Are the SHLAA conclusions reasonable to be carried forward to the Neighbourhood Plan Site Assessment? If not, how would the conclusions change for the Neighbourhood Plan Site Assessment <sup>8</sup> ?	Neighbourhood Plan Site Assessment conclusion. (What is the justification for this judgement?)
LA/ALDE/015 Pittswood, Daggons Road	1.554	0	(Nothing recorded)	0	<b>Excluded. An unsuitable site.</b> Most of the land beyond the rear garden is covered by mature woodland. Mostly within a Site of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI) and within 5k of the Dorset Heathlands. An unsuitable site.	Yes. Uncharacteristic extension of the settlement boundary plus SNCI intersect and lack of footpath. Landowner has also confirmed the site is not available.	No change. <b>Exclude.</b>
LA/ALDE/016 Stroud Firs	14.5	1	House	25	<b>Excluded. A developable site with amendments.</b> The site is located in close proximity to existing services and facilities with few constraints. A partly developable site subject to policy change.	Partially. The site is almost entirely wooded and adjacent to Ancient Woodland. Difficult to achieve biodiversity net gain, particularly with SANG provision, though information from the landowner suggests this is feasible. Surface Water Flood Risk along the frontage of Station Road. Former railway line runs through the site which is intended to be reopened as a footpath/cyclepath. The area south of the former railway line contains some scrubland (1.4ha) which could be developed (016a), though access is challenging. North of the railway line is unsuitable (016b).	Partial change – <b>include 016a</b> in Neighbourhood Plan Site Assessment and <b>exclude 016b.</b>
LA/ALDE/017 Alderholt Surplus Stores	3.313	1.99	House	89	<b>Included. A developable site with amendments.</b> A developable site subject to the exclusion of the northern half of the site which is subject to a blanket TPO and SNCI designation.	Site has planning permission for 89 dwellings (3/11/0558/REM). Now counted as a commitment, no need to assess or allocate.	Committed site. <b>Exclude.</b>
LA/ALDE/019 Land north of Ringwood Road	3.15	1.89	House	44	<b>Included. A suitable site subject to policy change.</b> Site is outside the development boundary	Site has planning permission (3/16/1446/OUT and 3/19/2077/RM for 44	Committed site. <b>Exclude.</b>

Site Ref.	Site size (gross site area, ha)	Net site area (ha)	Proposed land use	Site capacity	SHLAA conclusions	Are the SHLAA conclusions reasonable to be carried forward to the Neighbourhood Plan Site Assessment? If not, how would the conclusions change for the Neighbourhood Plan Site Assessment <sup>8</sup> ?	Neighbourhood Plan Site Assessment conclusion. (What is the justification for this judgement?)
					however relates well to the existing settlement and no absolute constraints would limit its development. A suitable site subject to policy change.	net dwellings) and is now counted as a commitment. No need to assess or allocate.	
LA/ALDE/020 Land at Blackwater House	0.56	0.56	House	13	<b>Excluded. A suitable site subject to policy change.</b> Outside the development boundary however relates well to the settlement pattern and could be suitably brought forward as part of a larger scheme. Suitable site subject to policy change.	Yes. Site is accessible via Blackwater Grove and would round off the settlement in this location. The site is suitable subject to policy change (Neighbourhood Plan allocation). The landowner has confirmed that a larger site area than considered through the 2021 SHLAA is now available (3.8ha), including part of the trailway.	Partial change. <b>Include with larger boundary.</b>

Source: Dorset Council SHLAA (2021) and AECOM





## SHLAA Review outcomes

4.3 Following the SHLAA site review the following SHLAA sites are 'included' and taken forward for further assessment in Stage 3:

- LA/ALDE/002 Alderholt Nursery – 21 dwellings
- LA/ALDE/004 Cross Farm – 30 dwellings
- LA/ALDE/006a South of Daggons Road – 16 dwellings
- LA/ALDE/007a Land South of Ringwood Road – up to 250 dwellings
- LA/ALDE/007b West of Hillbury Road – up to 180 dwellings
- LA/ALDE/009 Land at Blackwater Grove – 50 dwellings
- LA/ALDE/013 Land to the east of Hillbury Road (Parcel 2) – 20 dwellings
- LA/ALDE/016a Stroud Firs (south) – 25 dwellings
- LA/ALDE/020 Land at Blackwater House – 40 dwellings

4.4 The following SHLAA sites are 'excluded' (rejected) at this stage:

- LA/ALDE/001 Recreation Ground
- LA/ALDE/003 Cromwell Cottage
- LA/ALDE/005 Foxhill Farm
- LA/ALDE/006b Infield House Daggons Road
- LA/ALDE/007c Land at Alderholt
- LA/ALDE/008 Land at Birch Hill and The Oaks
- LA/ALDE/010 Land at Crossroads
- LA/ALDE/011 Land at Pugs
- LA/ALDE/012 Land to the east of Hillbury Road (Parcel 1)
- LA/ALDE/014 Watchfields, Ringwood Road
- LA/ALDE/015 Pittswood, Daggons Road
- LA/ALDE/016b Stroud Firs (north)
- LA/ALDE/017 Alderholt Surplus Stores
- LA/ALDE/019 Land north of Ringwood Road

## Neighbourhood Plan Site Assessment Table

4.5 The table below shows the site assessment against the criteria developed to reflect the emerging Neighbourhood Plan objectives in **Table 3.1**.

**Table 4.2: Neighbourhood Plan Site Assessment Table**

Criterion	LA/ALDE/002 Alderholt Nursery – 21 dwellings	LA/ALDE/004 Cross Farm – 30 dwellings	LA/ALDE/006a South of Daggons Road – 16 dwellings	LA/ALDE/007a Land South of Ringwood Road – up to 250 dwellings	LA/ALDE/007b West of Hillbury Road – up to 180 dwellings	LA/ALDE/009 Land at Blackwater Grove – 50 dwellings	LA/ALDE/013 Land to the east of Hillbury Road (Parcel 2) – 20 dwellings	LA/ALDE/016a Stroud Firs (North) – 25 dwellings	LA/ALDE/020 Land at Blackwater House – 40 dwellings
<b>Retaining Alderholt’s compact form</b>	Partial brownfield site, which offers the potential to round off the settlement envelope when combined with LA/ALDE/019 adjacent	Well-contained site bounded by the former railway line to the north of the village	Infilling along the frontage of the B3078 would be an extension of the existing built form	Extending the built form significantly south-westward towards beyond Ringwood Road.	Extends Alderholt southwards but would partially ‘round off’ the settlement between the sports club and Hillbury Road	Development adjoins Alderholt on two boundaries so would be a logical extension well-related to the village envelope.	Extends Alderholt further eastwards towards Fordingbridge however partially mitigated by development to the west and north.	Well-contained site bounded by the former railway line to the north of the village, though the developable part of the site is detached from the Alderholt village boundary.	Rounding off adjacent to residential development on two boundaries, and the former railway line to the north
<b>Distance to the village centre/high street and support for local services</b>	Well located for the shop, school, pub and recreation ground within short walking distance	Further distance to walk to the village centre. Access proposed through 137 Station Road which would be	Well located for the shop and pub within short walking distance	Well located for the shop, school, pub and recreation ground within short walking distance	The south east part of the site is relatively distant to the village centre but there is good access to the primary school and	Well located for the shop, school, pub and recreation ground within short walking distance	Site is distant from the village centre with poor pedestrian access	Reasonable access to the village centre via Station Yard. Footpath access may be possible through Stroud Firs however this is unpaved	Well located for the shop, school, pub and recreation ground within short walking distance

Criterion	LA/ALDE/002 Alderholt Nursery – 21 dwellings	LA/ALDE/004 Cross Farm – 30 dwellings	LA/ALDE/006a South of Daggons Road – 16 dwellings	LA/ALDE/007a Land South of Ringwood Road – up to 250 dwellings	LA/ALDE/007b West of Hillbury Road – up to 180 dwellings	LA/ALDE/009 Land at Blackwater Grove – 50 dwellings	LA/ALDE/013 Land to the east of Hillbury Road (Parcel 2) – 20 dwellings	LA/ALDE/016a Stroud Firs (North) – 25 dwellings	LA/ALDE/020 Land at Blackwater House – 40 dwellings
		demolished. Footpath access may be possible through Stroud Firs however this is unpaved and liable to surface water flooding. Footpath access from Sandleheath Road in the north east would be unattractive.			recreation ground			and liable to surface water flooding.	
<b>Avoiding the loss of valued amenities and community facilities</b>	No amenities or community facilities lost	No amenities or community facilities lost	No amenities or community facilities lost	No amenities or community facilities lost	No amenities or community facilities lost	No amenities or community facilities lost	No amenities or community facilities lost	Loss of part of Stroud Firs however this would be partially mitigated through SANG provision	No amenities or community facilities lost
<b>Potential to improve amenities and community facilities</b>	The site is adjacent to the Recreation Ground however the partial	Adjacent to old railway line, potential to contribute towards the Alderholt	Adjacent to old railway line, potential to contribute towards the Alderholt	The site is of a scale that could deliver improved amenities and community	The site is adjacent to the Recreation Ground with the potential to enhance	Unlikely to directly deliver on-site amenities or improvements	Adjacent to old railway line, potential to contribute towards the Alderholt	Contains the old railway line, potential to contribute towards the Alderholt	Contains the old railway line, potential to contribute towards the Alderholt

Criterion	LA/ALDE/002 Alderholt Nursery – 21 dwellings	LA/ALDE/004 Cross Farm – 30 dwellings	LA/ALDE/006a South of Daggons Road – 16 dwellings	LA/ALDE/007a Land South of Ringwood Road – up to 250 dwellings	LA/ALDE/007b West of Hillbury Road – up to 180 dwellings	LA/ALDE/009 Land at Blackwater Grove – 50 dwellings	LA/ALDE/013 Land to the east of Hillbury Road (Parcel 2) – 20 dwellings	LA/ALDE/016a Stroud Firs (North) – 25 dwellings	LA/ALDE/020 Land at Blackwater House – 40 dwellings
	brownfield nature of the site may impact viability to deliver improvements.	Trailway project.	Trailway project.	facilities on-site.	provision and is of a scale that could deliver on-site facilities as well	to adjacent facilities	Trailway project.	Trailway project.	Trailway project.
<b>Ability to meet the emerging Neighbourhood Plan housing requirement (50 dwellings)</b>	21 dwellings could make a partial contribution towards meeting the housing requirement.	30 dwellings could make a partial contribution towards meeting the housing requirement.	16 dwellings could make a partial contribution towards meeting the housing requirement.	250 dwellings would significantly exceed the housing requirement	180 dwellings would significantly exceed the housing requirement	50 dwellings would meet the housing requirement in full	20 dwellings could make a partial contribution towards meeting the housing requirement.	25 dwellings could make a partial contribution towards meeting the housing requirement.	40 dwellings could make a partial contribution towards meeting the housing requirement.
<b>Ability to deliver affordable housing (viable sites of 10 or more dwellings)</b>	Site is of a sufficient scale to deliver affordable housing; however the partial brownfield nature of the site may impact viability to deliver 35% affordable housing in line with policy	Site is of a sufficient scale to deliver affordable housing with no known viability concerns	Site is marginally above the threshold to deliver affordable housing with no known viability concerns.	Site is of a sufficient scale to deliver affordable housing with no known viability concerns	Site is of a sufficient scale to deliver affordable housing with no known viability concerns	Site is of a sufficient scale to deliver affordable housing with no known viability concerns	Site is of a sufficient scale to deliver affordable housing with no known viability concerns	Site is of a sufficient scale to deliver affordable housing, however the requirement to deliver SANG and Biodiversity Net Gain site may impact viability to deliver 35% affordable housing in line with policy	Site is of a sufficient scale to deliver affordable housing with no known viability concerns

Criterion	LA/ALDE/002 Alderholt Nursery – 21 dwellings	LA/ALDE/004 Cross Farm – 30 dwellings	LA/ALDE/006a South of Daggons Road – 16 dwellings	LA/ALDE/007a Land South of Ringwood Road – up to 250 dwellings	LA/ALDE/007b West of Hillbury Road – up to 180 dwellings	LA/ALDE/009 Land at Blackwater Grove – 50 dwellings	LA/ALDE/013 Land to the east of Hillbury Road (Parcel 2) – 20 dwellings	LA/ALDE/016a Stroud Firs (North) – 25 dwellings	LA/ALDE/020 Land at Blackwater House – 40 dwellings
<b>Ability to deliver local employment</b>	No employment is proposed	Landowner is open to employment / workspaces	No employment is proposed	0.25ha of employment is proposed on this site under ALD1/A in the Local Plan	0.25ha of employment is proposed on this site under ALD1/A in the Local Plan	No employment is proposed	No employment is proposed	No employment is proposed	No employment is proposed
<b>Accessibility by sustainable transport</b>	No footpath along the highway, although adjacent site LA/ALDE/019 has potential footpath and cycling access linking to the village centre and primary school via Broomfield Drive (3/19/2077/RM)	Access is suggested through 137 Station Road which links to a footpath. Additionally a Public Right of Way runs through the site to the south west towards Station Road. Relatively distant to village services and bus stop on Hillbury Road	No existing footpath but potential to extend footpath to nearby village centre	No existing footpath but potential to extend footpath to nearby village centre and link to the Recreation Ground	No existing footpath but the adjacent Recreation Ground offers potential access to the village centre and school, although the site is relatively distant to the village centre and would be unattractive for pedestrians. Hillbury Road footpath runs as far as Hillbury Park and could potentially be extended	No existing footpath but potential to extend footpath to nearby village centre via Blackwater Grove	Distant to village services which would be unattractive for pedestrians but bus stop is nearby on Hillbury Road. Public right of way runs adjacent to the site which could potentially be upgraded.	Unattractive pedestrian access to the village centre given the circuitous route via Station Yard and woodland.	No existing footpath but extension to Blackwater Grove is possible. Short walk to the village centre and bus stop on Ringwood Road.

Criterion	LA/ALDE/002 Alderholt Nursery – 21 dwellings	LA/ALDE/004 Cross Farm – 30 dwellings	LA/ALDE/006a South of Daggons Road – 16 dwellings	LA/ALDE/007a Land South of Ringwood Road – up to 250 dwellings	LA/ALDE/007b West of Hillbury Road – up to 180 dwellings	LA/ALDE/009 Land at Blackwater Grove – 50 dwellings	LA/ALDE/013 Land to the east of Hillbury Road (Parcel 2) – 20 dwellings	LA/ALDE/016a Stroud Firs (North) – 25 dwellings	LA/ALDE/020 Land at Blackwater House – 40 dwellings
<b>Ability to improve the sustainable transport network</b>	If footpath access can be secured then access to the bus stop on Birchwood Drive is feasible.	Potential to assist with delivering the Alderholt Trailway project	Footpath access to bus stop on Station Road. Potential to assist with delivering the Alderholt Trailway project	Potential to improve the footpath network to the south west of the village. Scale of development could help fund public transport improvements and improve patronage	Potential to improve the footpath network to the south east of the village. The nearest bus stops are a short walk away if access can be secured via the Recreation Ground. Scale of development could help fund public transport improvements and improve patronage	If footpath access can be secured then access to the bus stop on Ringwood Road is feasible.	Distance to village services unlikely to support walking or cycling. Bus stop nearby but with no footpath access unless a link is made to the adjacent public right of way	Potential to assist with delivering the Alderholt Trailway project	If footpath access can be secured then access to the bus stop on Ringwood Road is feasible. Potential to assist with delivering the Alderholt Trailway project
<b>Ability to fund the Trailway project</b>	Developer contributions could potentially be made towards the Trailway Project.	Adjacent to old railway line, potential to contribute towards delivering the Alderholt Trailway project.	Adjacent to old railway line, potential to contribute towards the Alderholt Trailway project.	Developer contributions could potentially be made towards the Trailway Project.	Developer contributions could potentially be made towards the Trailway Project.	Developer contributions could potentially be made towards the Trailway Project.	Developer contributions could potentially be made towards the Trailway Project.	Site contains the old railway line, potential to contribute towards delivering the Alderholt Trailway project.	Site contains the old railway line, potential to contribute towards delivering the Alderholt Trailway project.

Criterion	LA/ALDE/002 Alderholt Nursery – 21 dwellings	LA/ALDE/004 Cross Farm – 30 dwellings	LA/ALDE/006a South of Daggons Road – 16 dwellings	LA/ALDE/007a Land South of Ringwood Road – up to 250 dwellings	LA/ALDE/007b West of Hillbury Road – up to 180 dwellings	LA/ALDE/009 Land at Blackwater Grove – 50 dwellings	LA/ALDE/013 Land to the east of Hillbury Road (Parcel 2) – 20 dwellings	LA/ALDE/016a Stroud Firs (North) – 25 dwellings	LA/ALDE/020 Land at Blackwater House – 40 dwellings
<b>Impact on the countryside and landscape character</b>	Limited impact given surrounding development (recreation ground and consented LA/ALDE/019. Part brownfield	Site is within the Area of Great Landscape Value and would be an extension to the village envelope but it is well contained by mature vegetation	Some impact on the arrival into Alderholt from the west, however mature vegetation to the south west limits long distance views.	Proposal would be a significant extension to the village beyond Ringwood Road and would urbanise the approach to the village from the south, and for users of the Recreation Ground	Proposal would be an extension to the village but the impact would be mitigated by mature vegetation screening long distance views	Some impact due to the extension of the village however the impact is limited to private residential properties rather than more publicly accessible viewpoints	Sloping site on the eastern approach to Alderholt would be highly visible and would extend the built form of Alderholt towards Fordingbridge. Prominent location on the bend of the B3078 and adjacent to a public right of way	Site is within the Area of Great Landscape Value and would be an isolated development beyond the village envelope but it is well contained and screened by mature vegetation.	Site is within the Area of Great Landscape Value and would be an extension to the village envelope but it is well contained and screened by mature vegetation.
<b>Avoiding development in the hamlets and rural area</b>	Site is located adjacent to Alderholt not the other hamlets	Site is located adjacent to Alderholt not the other hamlets	Site is located adjacent to Alderholt not the other hamlets	Site is located adjacent to Alderholt not the other hamlets	Site is located adjacent to Alderholt not the other hamlets	Site is located adjacent to Alderholt not the other hamlets	Site is located adjacent to Alderholt not the other hamlets	Site is located near to Alderholt and would not development in the other hamlets	Site is located adjacent to Alderholt not the other hamlets
<b>Impact on biodiversity (including Dorset</b>	Within 5km Dorset Heathland Buffer so would	Within 5km Dorset Heathland Buffer so	Within 5km Dorset Heathland Buffer so would	Within a SSSI Impact Risk Zone for 50 dwellings or	Within a SSSI Impact Risk Zone for 50 dwellings or	Within a SSSI Impact Risk Zone for 50 dwellings or	Adjacent to a Site of Nature Conservation Importance.	Within 5km Dorset Heathland Buffer so would	Within 5km Dorset Heathland Buffer so

Criterion	LA/ALDE/002 Alderholt Nursery – 21 dwellings	LA/ALDE/004 Cross Farm – 30 dwellings	LA/ALDE/006a South of Daggons Road – 16 dwellings	LA/ALDE/007a Land South of Ringwood Road – up to 250 dwellings	LA/ALDE/007b West of Hillbury Road – up to 180 dwellings	LA/ALDE/009 Land at Blackwater Grove – 50 dwellings	LA/ALDE/013 Land to the east of Hillbury Road (Parcel 2) – 20 dwellings	LA/ALDE/016a Stroud Firs (North) – 25 dwellings	LA/ALDE/020 Land at Blackwater House – 40 dwellings
<b>Heathlands and Ancient Woodland)</b>	need to contribute towards SANG provision	would need to contribute towards SANG provision. In close proximity to proposed SANG reference 3/20/1732/FUL	need to contribute towards SANG provision	more. Within 5km Dorset Heathland Buffer so would need to contribute towards SANG provision.	more. Within 5km Dorset Heathland Buffer so would need to contribute towards SANG provision.	more. Within 5km Dorset Heathland Buffer so would need to contribute towards SANG provision. Site directly linked to Dorset Heathlands by a bridleway which likely limits SANG attractiveness	Within 5km Dorset Heathland Buffer so would need to contribute towards SANG provision	need to contribute towards SANG provision. In close proximity to proposed SANG reference 3/20/1732/FUL. Would result in the loss of scrubland within Stroud Firs	would need to contribute towards SANG provision. Site directly linked to Dorset Heathlands by a bridleway which may limit SANG attractiveness

Source: AECOM



## 5. Conclusions

- 5.1 Alderholt Parish Council (the ‘Qualifying Body’) intend to allocate land for residential development that accord with the strategic policies of the development plan, the emerging Local Plan and the objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 5.2 A total of 19 SHLAA sites were identified for assessment. Out of these sites 11 sites were ‘excluded’ from further assessment in their entirety as they were not suitable, available and achievable. A total of five sites were taken forward in their entirety for further assessment. The remaining three sites were partially ‘excluded’ with four sub-areas ‘included’ for further assessment: LA/ALDE/006a, LA/ALDE/007a, LA/ALDE/007b and LA/ALDE/016a.
- 5.3 As a result of this process a total of nine sites were ‘included’ and assessed in terms of their ability to meet the emerging neighbourhood plan objectives. The nine sites were assessed in terms of their ability to meet the emerging Neighbourhood Plan objectives. Taking each criterion in turn:
- Retaining Alderholt’s compact form:
    - Sites **LA/ALDE/002, 004, 006a, 009 and 020** all met this objective by forming logical extensions to the village.
    - Site **LA/ALDE/007a** would form a significant extension to the south west. Sites **LA/ALDE/007b** and **013** which would extend the settlement to the south east and east respectively, whilst **016a** would be detached from the village but well screened by woodland.
  - Distance to the village centre/high street and support for local services:
    - **LA/ALDE/002, 006a, 007a, 009 and 020** are well-located and would support the village centre, whilst **LA/ALDE/013** is distant and **004, 007b and 016a** are somewhat distant, especially by foot.
  - Avoiding the loss of valued amenities and community facilities
    - None of the sites would lead to the loss of amenities or facilities. **LA/ALDE/016a** would result in a partial loss of Stroud First however this would be partially mitigated through SANG provision.
  - Potential to improve amenities and community facilities
    - **LA/ALDE/004, 006a, 013 and 020** contain or are adjacent to the Alderholt Trailway and could facilitate it’s delivery, whilst **LA/ALDE/007a** and **007b** is of a sufficient scale to deliver on-site infrastructure as well as improvements to the adjacent Recreation Ground.
  - Ability to meet the emerging Neighbourhood Plan housing requirement (50 dwellings)
    - **LA/ALDE/002, 004, 006a, 013, 16a and 020** would all make contributions towards meeting the housing requirement and would need to be combined somehow across two or more sites, **LA/ALDE/009** would meet it in full on its own, whereas **LA/ALDE/007a and 007b** are

the largest sites and capable of significantly exceeding the housing requirement.

- Ability to deliver affordable housing (viable sites of 10 or more dwellings)
  - All sites would be able to deliver affordable housing by virtue of being larger than 10 dwellings; however **LA/ALDE/002** is partially brownfield so may not deliver the full 35% on viability grounds and **LA/ALDE/006a** is only marginally above the 10 dwelling threshold so may not trigger the policy if the eventual capacity of the site is lower than estimated. **LA/ALDE/016a** is constrained by the requirement to deliver SANG and biodiversity net gain which may also impact on viability.
- Ability to deliver local employment
  - The only sites with the ability to deliver any local employment are **LA/ALDE/007a** and **007b**, offering 0.25ha, and the landowner at **LA/ALDE/004** is open to delivering employment or workspaces.
- Accessibility by sustainable transport
  - Accessibility to existing footpaths is an issue for all of the sites however **LA/ALDE/002**, **004**, **006**, **007a**, **009** and **020** are more likely to be able to be served by an extension to the footpath network. Additionally **LA/ALDE/007b** and **013** are located some distance from the village centre whilst **016** is an unattractive walk for pedestrians via woodland and Station Yard.
- Ability to improve the sustainable transport network
  - The ability to improve the network is generally limited to footpath improvements with the exception of **LA/ALDE/004**, **006a**, **016a** and **020** which could help fund the Trailway.
  - In isolation none of the sites are likely to have a significant impact on improving the bus network, with the exception of **LA/ALDE/007a** and **007b** which is of such a scale it could fund improvements via S106 and help improve bus patronage through a higher number of residents.
- Ability to fund the Trailway project
  - All sites have the potential to contribute funding towards the Alderholt Trailway project (though this is within the control of Dorset Council through its planning obligations and Community Infrastructure Levy), however due to their location adjacent to or containing the former railway line Trailway **LA/ALDE/004**, **006a**, **016a** and **020** could actively assist in delivering the scheme.
- Impact on the countryside and landscape character
  - **LA/ALDE/007a** would be a significant extension to the village south west of Ringwood Road and affect the setting of the village in this location.
  - **LA/ALDE/013** is a visually prominent, sloping site that would affect the eastern approach to the village.
  - **LA/ALDE/006a**, **007b** and **009** would be visible and extend the village into the countryside but not unacceptably so. **016a** would be isolated

development within an Area of Great Landscape Value but is well screened which mitigates its impact.

- **LA/ALDE/002, 004 and 020** are well-contained and screened by vegetation with limited impact on landscape character, despite the location of 004 and 020 being within the Area of Great Landscape Value.
  - Avoiding development in the hamlets and rural area
    - None of the sites would increase development at the hamlets or in the rural area as they are all potential extensions to Alderholt village.
  - Impact on biodiversity (including Dorset Heathlands and Ancient Woodland)
    - All sites are within 5km of the Dorset Heathlands so SANG would be required. **LA/ALDE/004** is near proposed SANG which would likely further reduce impacts on the Heathlands.
    - By virtue of their scale **LA/ALDE/007a, 007b and 009** are within the SSSI Impact Zones whereby Natural England would need to be consulted (50 dwellings or more).
    - **LA/ALDE/013** is adjacent to a SNCI whilst **016a** is surrounded by woodland and would result in the loss of scrubland, however SANG would be proposed on-site.
    - **LA/ALDE/009** and **020** are both located along a bridleway which provides direct access to the Dorset Heathlands, likely making SANG provision less effective in reducing visitor pressure.
- 5.4 Given the size of the emerging housing requirement figure (192 dwellings, and a residual 50 to find) and the scale of the sites promoted at **LA/ALDE/007a and LA/ALDE/007b** (up to 250 or 180 dwellings respectively) are far larger than the housing requirement figure.
- 5.5 The housing requirement figure is a minimum and the Parish Council may wish to explore exceeding this in order to secure additional benefits (such as infrastructure and affordable housing, for example), however this is optional given the strategic planning policy context. The Parish Council may wish to only partially allocate the 007a or 007b sites at a lower quantum given the housing requirement.
- 5.6 It is noted that the 007a and 007b sites are part of a much larger LA/ALDE/007 strategic site promotion in the 2021 SHLAA which is being considered as a strategic allocation for comprehensive development in the emerging Local Plan, therefore if the Parish Council is considering a non-strategic allocation on one of these sites then it should be discussed with Dorset Council at the earliest opportunity.

## Affordable Housing

- 5.7 All 9 of the sites identified as suitable or potentially suitable for allocation for housing or mixed use development have the potential to accommodate 10 or more dwellings and if the sites were proposed as market housing, they would be required to include a proportion of affordable housing. They are therefore

potentially suitable for Discounted Market Housing (e.g. First Homes<sup>9</sup>), affordable housing for rent, or other affordable housing types (see NPPF Annex 2). The proportion of affordable housing is usually set by the Local Plan (in this case 35%) but is expected to be above 10%, unless the proposed development meets the exemptions set out in NPPF para 65.

- 5.8 The requirement for Affordable Housing provision on sites proposed for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan should be discussed with the Local Planning Authority (usually your neighbourhood planning officer) to understand the specific requirements for the sites proposed for allocation.

## Next Steps

- 5.9 Based on the findings of this report, the Qualifying Body should engage with Dorset Council and the community to select sites for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan which best meet community needs and plan objectives from the shortlist of suitable and potentially suitable sites.
- 5.10 The site selection process should take into account the findings from all evidence base studies to direct future development to the most appropriate, sustainable locations.
- 5.11 The site selection process should be based on the following:
- The findings of this site assessment;
  - Discussions with the planning authority;
  - The extent to which the sites support the vision and objectives for the neighbourhood plan;
  - The potential for the sites to meet the identified infrastructure needs of the community;
  - Engagement with key stakeholders; and
  - General conformity with strategic Local Plan policy
- 5.12 The Qualifying Body should be able to demonstrate that the sites are viable for development, i.e. that they provide an adequate financial return for the developer. It is recommended that the Qualifying Body discusses site viability with Dorset Council. It is further suggested that any landowner or developer promoting a site for development should be contacted to request evidence of viability for the proposed development.

---

<sup>9</sup> The Government recently consulted on the First Homes Policy and a minimum of 25% of all affordable housing units secured through developer contributions will need to be first homes. You can find out more here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/first-homes>

