

Housing Needs Review

Chesil Bank Neighbourhood Plan

August 2021

This document is an assessment of housing need for the parishes of Abbotsbury, Portesham, Langton Herring and Fleet that form the Chesil Bank Neighbourhood Plan area in Dorset. It follows the guidance provided by *Housing Needs Assessment at Neighbourhood Plan Level - A toolkit for neighbourhood planners*¹. It aims to draw conclusions about the amount of housing that is likely to be needed in Chesil Bank Neighbourhood Plan area in the period 2011 to 2031, and the types of housing that may be needed.

The assessment was carried out by Jo Witherden BSc(Hons) DipTP DipUD MRTPI of Dorset Planning Consultant Ltd, and in consultation with Dorset Council.

This report has been issued for the September 2021 consultation – and may be amended further prior to examination should further information come to light.

Contents

1. Introduction.....	1
2. Indicative Housing Requirement Figure	1
3. Key statistics	2
2011 Census and recent population estimates	2
Latest household / population projections	4
House price data	4
4. Evidence of local need.....	5
Household Survey.....	5
Dorset Council Housing Register data	5
Discussions with local Affordable Housing Registered Provider (Magna Housing)	6
5. Past Build Rates	6
6. Conclusion – Chesil Banks’ Housing Need	6

¹ <https://neighbourhoodplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/How-to-undertake-a-Housing-Needs-Assessment-HNA-2021.03.15.pdf>

1. Introduction

1.1 NPPF paragraph 66 requires Dorset Council as the local planning authority to set out a housing requirement figure for each designated neighbourhood area in its area, reflecting the overall strategy for the pattern and scale of development and any relevant allocations. Once adopted through the Local Plan, these figures should not need re-testing at the neighbourhood plan examination, unless there has been a significant change in circumstances that affects the requirement.

1.2 The adopted Local Plan is therefore the starting point for any assessment of housing need for the area. However, the adopted Local Plan does not identify specific housing need at a Neighbourhood Plan level. The emerging Dorset Council Local Plan does provide an indicative housing requirement figure, but this has not as yet been tested at examination.

1.3 To identify a specific local housing need the following key sources of information were assessed:

- > The indicative Housing Requirement Figure (in the emerging Dorset Council Local Plan)
- > Key statistics (2011 Census data, recent population estimates and the latest household / population projections and house price data)
- > Evidence of local need (through the Household Survey and Dorset Council Housing Register data, and also discussions with housing providers)
- > Past rate of development.

2. Indicative Housing Requirement Figure

2.1 The first draft of the Local Plan (January 2021)² proposed that the indicative housing requirement figure for Neighbourhood Plans areas such as Chesil Bank should be based on the existing completions and commitments, strategic allocations, plus a windfall allowance based on past trends on small sites (i.e. excluding major development and based on the previous 7 year's data, projected forward for Year 4 onwards).

2.2 The published draft plan (Appendix 2) gives a figure of 33 dwellings for the Chesil Bank Neighbourhood Plan area using this method, which would apply for the proposed Local Plan period (April 2021 – March 2038). The breakdown of this calculation is shown below:

Source	Total	Notes
Completions	0	no data yet available
Extant permissions	5	based on monitoring data up to 1 April 2020 ³
Strategic Allocations	0	
Major sites capacity within development boundaries	0	no such sites evidenced through the SHLAA
Windfall allowance	28	based on monitoring data on minor sites of 2dpa
TOTAL	33	equates to 2dpa over 17 years

2.3 It is anticipated that this figure may change slightly as it is updated with housing completions / further monitoring data.

2.4 The Local Plan does not anticipate requiring Neighbourhood Plans (going forward) to allocate sites or identify any additional land to meet the overall Local Plan housing need figure, as this figure is proposed to be met through extant permissions, strategic allocations and windfall development on sites within the settlement boundaries. However this does not prevent Neighbourhood Plans from exceeding the housing needs figure for its area, and the supporting text (2.10.7) states that "there may well be a strong basis for neighbourhood plans allocating

² <https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/planning-buildings-land/planning-policy/dorset-council-local-plan/about-the-dorset-council-local-plan-january-2021-consultation>

³ This erroneously includes a permission for 3 units at Rodden Barn Farm (WD/D/17/002752) that has a holiday let condition on and would not therefore count towards the demand or supply.

sites particularly if there is evidence of local housing need in the neighbourhood plan area that exceeds the requirement figure set out in the Local Plan.” It goes on to state that “Allocations proposed in neighbourhood plans should be in accordance with the thrust of the spatial strategy set out in the Local Plan and of a scale appropriate to the settlement at which they are located.”

3. Key statistics

2011 Census and recent population estimates

3.1 The following tables provide an overview of the key statistics for Chesil Bank and its constituent parishes as recorded in the 2011 Census⁴ (Langton Herring and Fleet are combined due to the low data). Data for West Dorset is included for comparison purposes.

3.2 Table KS101EW sets out the ‘usual resident population’ i.e. the number of people that would be normally resident in the parish. The total population for the Neighbourhood Plan area in 2011 was 1,406. This shows a slight decrease (2.8%) compared to the population present in the previous 2001 Census, and compared to the general increase (7.5%) in the West Dorset population. The current population estimates show the levels as having returned to the 2001 levels overall, but with the population of Portesham having grown substantially, and Abbotsbury having seen further decline.

KS101EW – Usual resident population	Portesham	Abbotsbury	Fleet and Langton H	Chesil Bank NP area	West Dorset
[2001 Census]	708	503	236	1,447	93,360
All usual residents	685	481	240	1,406	99,264
Lives in a household	685	481	236	1,402	96,596
Lives in a communal establishment	0	0	4	4	2,668
Density (persons / ha)	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.9
[2019 estimates]	745	460	238	1,443	n/a

3.3 Table QS406EW includes data on ‘household size’ i.e. the number of people that were living in that dwelling at that time. 2 person households made up nearly half (46.6%) of all households, with nearly 3 in 4 (73.2%) households either being 1 or 2 people, and the remaining ¼ being 3 or more people. Overall this is not significantly different from the West Dorset average.

3.4 The average (mean) age across the Neighbourhood Plan area was 48.6 years, slightly higher than the West Dorset average (46.2) and highest in Portesham parish (51.1).

QS406EW - Household size	Portesham	Abbotsbury	Fleet and Langton H	Chesil Bank NP area	West Dorset
1 person household	83 26.3%	66 30.1%	20 20.0%	169 26.6%	14,161 31.9%
2 people household	156 49.4%	90 41.1%	50 50.0%	296 46.6%	17,794 40.1%
3 people household	34 10.8%	31 14.2%	17 17.0%	82 12.9%	5,733 12.9%
4 people household	31 9.8%	19 8.7%	4 4.0%	54 8.5%	4,585 10.3%
5 people household	10 3.2%	12 5.5%	7 7.0%	29 4.6%	1,563 3.5%
6+ people household	2 0.6%	1 0.5%	2 2.0%	5 0.8%	550 1.2%

⁴ As sourced from

<https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/query/select/getdatasetbytheme.asp?theme=75>

3.5 Tables KS401EW, QS411EW and KS401EW includes data on the type and size of dwellings. In particular these tables highlight:

- > A particularly high proportion of vacant dwellings (likely to be second homes) in Fleet / Langton Herring;
- > A greater proportion of terraced dwelling and apartments in Abbotsbury than average, and in contrast higher than average percentage of detached homes in Langton Herring and Fleet and also in Portesham;
- > Generally larger house sizes (in terms of number of bedrooms) particular in Langton Herring and Fleet and also in Portesham than average for the wider West Dorset area. As a consequence, there are greater levels of 'under occupancy' (with a higher proportion of 1 and 2 person households occupying homes with 3 or more bedrooms).
- > Abbotsbury parish has a relatively high proportion of homes managed for affordable housing needs (making up about 1 in 5 properties), whereas Portesham is slightly below the average for West Dorset (making up about 1 in 10 properties – although this will have improved with the provision of affordable housing through the Malthouse Meadows scheme) and Langton Herring and Fleet have very fewer such homes.

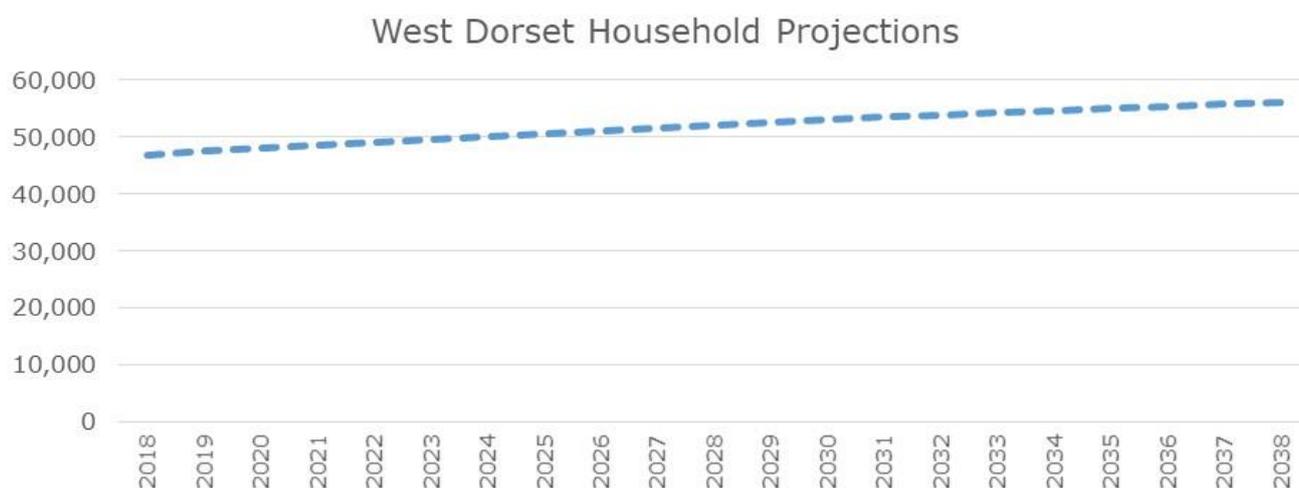
KS401EW - Accommodation type	Portesham	Abbotsbury	Fleet and Langton H	Chesil Bank NP area	West Dorset
All dwellings	344	256	132	732	49,319
Vacant (no usual residents)	28 8.1%	37 14.5%	32 24.2%	97 13.3%	4,953 10.0%
Detached dwelling	161 46.8%	69 27.0%	72 54.5%	302 41.3%	18,231 37.0%
Semi-detached dwelling	79 23.0%	75 29.3%	31 23.5%	185 25.3%	11,902 24.1%
Terraced dwelling (including end-terrace)	96 27.9%	100 39.1%	25 18.9%	221 30.2%	11,148 22.6%
Flat, maisonette or apartment	6 1.7%	12 4.7%	2 1.5%	20 2.7%	7,539 15.3%
Caravan / temporary structure	2 0.6%	0 0.0%	2 1.5%	4 0.5%	519 1.1%

QS411EW - Number of bedrooms	Portesham	Abbotsbury	Fleet and Langton H	Chesil Bank NP area	West Dorset
0 bedrooms	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	59 0.1%
1 bedroom	11 3.5%	10 4.6%	4 4.0%	25 3.9%	4,013 9.0%
2 bedrooms	67 21.2%	72 32.9%	15 15.0%	154 24.3%	11,930 26.9%
3 bedrooms	135 42.7%	88 40.2%	35 35.0%	258 40.6%	18,256 41.1%
4 bedrooms	87 27.5%	38 17.4%	34 34.0%	159 25.0%	7,514 16.9%
5 or more bedrooms	16 5.1%	11 5.0%	12 12.0%	39 6.1%	2,614 5.9%

QS405EW - Tenure - Households	Portesham	Abbotsbury	Fleet and Langton H	Chesil Bank NP area	West Dorset
Home owned (with or without a mortgage)	236 74.7%	86 39.3%	86 86.0%	408 64.3%	30,823 69.4%
Shared ownership (part owned, part rent)	1 0.3%	8 3.7%	0 0.0%	9 1.4%	370 0.8%
Social rented	29 9.2%	35 16.0%	2 2.0%	66 10.4%	6,159 13.9%
Private rented	35 11.1%	80 36.5%	9 9.0%	124 19.5%	6,093 13.7%
Living rent free	15 4.7%	10 4.6%	3 3.0%	28 4.4%	941 2.1%

Latest household / population projections

3.6 The latest ONS household projections were published in June 2020⁵ and are based on the 2018 population estimates. For West Dorset area (the lowest level available) this estimates a growth of about 1.1% per annum over the next 10 year to 2038, with the rate then falling to about 0.7% over the following 10 years.



3.7 Applying this level of growth to the number of dwellings in Chesil Bank Parish (344 in 2011) would suggest that on average there should be about 4 new dwellings needed per annum over the next 10 years, falling to a lower rate of about 3 new dwellings per annum after 2028.

House price data

3.8 House price data has been taken from the Land Registry Open Data website⁶ for the period April 2016 – March 2021, based on Postcode sector DT3 4-- and then excluding Chickerell and related addresses, to broadly align with the Neighbourhood Plan area. This highlighted some 130 house sales during that 5 year period (excluding sales of farms, pubs etc).

3.9 The average (median) house price recorded was £385K. Prices ranged from £100K (for a flat in Portesham) to over £1million (with 4 such houses / estates falling within this bracket). Some 18 homes were registered as new (with an average selling price of £350K).

⁵ As sourced from <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationprojections/datasets/householdprojectionsforengland>

⁶ <https://landregistry.data.gov.uk/app/ppd/ppd>

3.10 The 'first quartile' house price (indicating the cost of the average house in the bottom half of the housing market) for the area was about £285K. This is the price point that would normally be expected to be a guide price for first time buyers.

3.11 Average total annual household income for the area (based on middle layer super output area West Dorset 012, for the financial year ending March 2018⁷) was approximately £41,800). This suggests that, with a 4x mortgage multiplier an average household buying their first home could afford a property of around £200K, plus their deposit. This indicates that current house prices are unlikely to be affordable to first time buyers on average incomes, without a deposit of more than 25%.

4. Evidence of local need

Household Survey

4.1 A household survey was undertaken in 2019, with some 301 completed questionnaire forms returned (about 36% of all households). Whilst this was a reasonable rate of return it was notable that there were comparatively few returns from 'younger' households.

4.2 About a quarter (26%) of responses to our survey indicated that their housing need was likely to change in the next 10 years. Perhaps not surprisingly, this figure was higher (at around 34%) from households with dependent children. For those indicating that their housing need was likely to change, the main need (accounting for 86% of the responses) was for housing to buy or rent on the open market. The remaining need (14%) was approximately equally split between affordable to buy and affordable to rent (though the numbers are relatively small to be statistically robust). The main requirement was for 2 or 3 bedroom homes (accounting for 38% and 43% of the demand respectively), with just one response indicating a specific need for a wheelchair accessible / adapted housing.

4.3 We took the opportunity to re-check this data on housing need in a subsequent survey in 2020, to see if the previous findings still held true. The responses this time were slightly lower, with just under one fifth (19%) indicating that their housing need was likely to change in the next 10 years. Again, for those indicating that their housing need was likely to change, the main need (accounting for 63% of those responses) was for housing to buy or rent on the open market. The next most popular choice was for a starter home / discounted sale home. The main requirement was for 2 or 3 bedroom homes, with those looking to rent generally needing 1 or 2 bedroom properties.

Dorset Council Housing Register data

4.4 An assessment of the Affordable Housing Register for Dorset can be helpful in showing how many people are seeking properties in the Neighbourhood Plan area, although it should be noted that this can only be a 'snapshot' based on this point in time, and can be an under-estimate (as not all households will register if they consider there is little prospect of getting a homes) but can also over-estimate (as people may remain on the register for some time after their housing needs are resolved). The following data was taken in February 2021:

Total	34
Couple/single requiring 1 bedroom	22
Family requiring 2 bedrooms	7
Family requiring 3 bedrooms	3
Family requiring 4+ bedrooms	2

Total	34
Under 25	1
Between 25 and 29	3
Between 30 and 39	8
Between 40 and 49	6
Between 55 and 59	1
Between 60 and 64	4
65 and over	11

⁷ As sourced from <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandworkinghours/datasets/smallareaincomeestimatesformiddlelayersuperoutputareasenglandandwales>

4.5 This data shows that there were 34 applicants on their housing register with a local connection to Chesil Bank. About one third of the applicants (11 of the 34) were older residents (aged 65 and over). Most applicants on the waiting list were looking for rented accommodation for 1 or 2 bedroom homes.

Discussions with local Affordable Housing Registered Provider (Magna Housing)

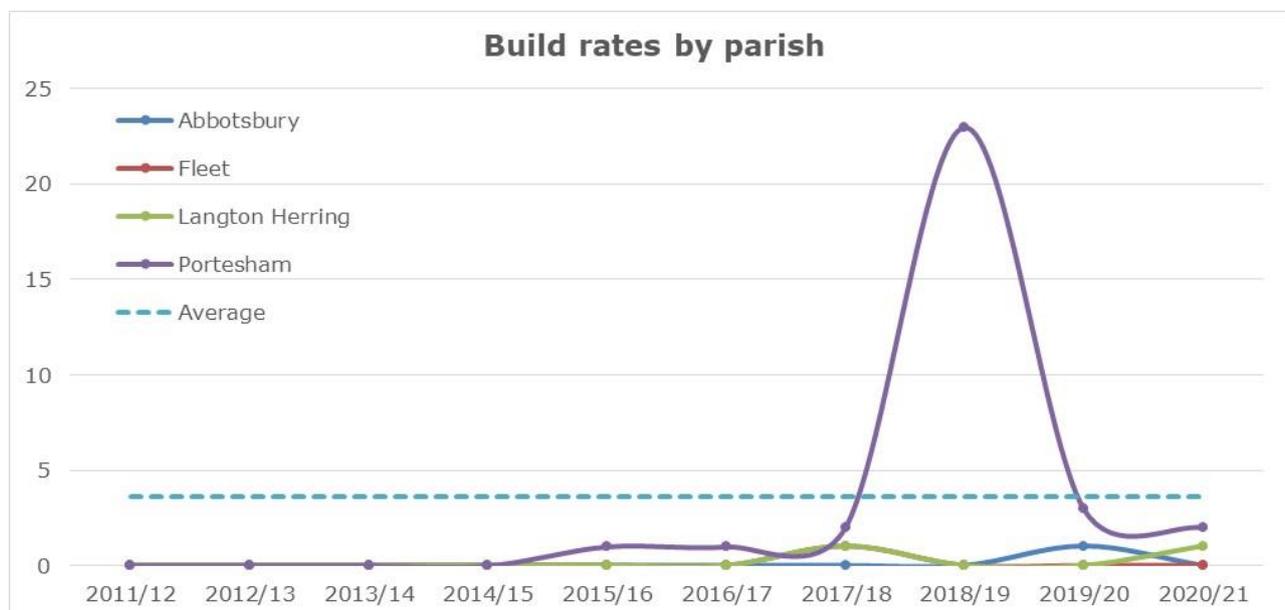
4.6 In December 2019 members of the Neighbourhood Plan working group met with David Aldwinkle, Magna Housing Property Director. Magna Housing is the largest Housing Association in Dorset (with some 4,500 homes) and has affordable homes in Malthouse Meadows, Portesham and sheltered housing in Portesham and Abbotsbury for the over 55s.

4.7 Key points of discussion were recorded as follows:

- > County-wide, there is a huge demand for affordable housing, with approximately 50 people on the waiting list for every affordable home within the housing stock.
- > Average tenancy length is 6 years but this varies considerably.
- > Magna Housing bases its rent on 60% of market value (lower than the upper limit of 80% set as the maximum rate by the Government). Typically 2 bedroom affordable properties are rented out at £90 per week and 3 bedroom affordable properties are rented out at £110 per week (2019).
- > Demand in villages is generally low (compared to the towns) because of the need for transport, and therefore take-up is lower. It is not unusual for people on the waiting list to decline an offer of a village homes because of transport issues.
- > Main challenge to Magna to acquire new homes is finding suitable land.

5. Past Build Rates

5.1 Housing data from 2011-2021 show a build rate of 36 homes over a 10 year period, giving a mean average of 3.6 dwellings per annum. This includes the large scale development of 22 homes in Portesham on land adjacent Malthouse Meadow (which was approved contrary to the Local Plan, which was considered out of date at that time). Very few dwellings were approved in the other parishes of Abbotsbury, Fleet and Langton Herring (4 in total). Without the Malthouse Meadows 'anomaly' the average build rate would be between 1 – 2 dwellings per annum.



6. Conclusion – Chesil Banks’ Housing Need

6.1 The starting point for the housing need figure is based on the proposed minimum figure in the emerging Local Plan, which equates to **2 dwellings per annum**. This is then assessed against the other evidence that has been examined:

Data Source	Notes	Possible change
2011 Census and recent population estimates	Applying the overall level of projected growth would suggest a slightly higher level of housing may be needed of between 3 – 4dpa. New dwellings could look to redress any imbalance in house types, in particular smaller dwelling types / possible apartments in Portesham, Langton Herring and Fleet.	 Smaller dwelling types / possible apartments in Portesham, Langton Herring and Fleet.
House price data	Whilst it is unlikely that growth per se will result in lower house prices, the data suggests that there is likely to be a need for homes at a price point suitable for first time buyers.	Homes for first time buyers.
Household Survey	The survey results, whilst not statistically robust, indicate a strong indication of need for 2 or 3 bedroom homes and starter home / discounted sale home.	Smaller dwelling types / homes for first time buyers.
Dorset Council Housing Register data	The level of recorded housing need locally is comparatively high compared to the minimum housing need figure. An uplift in the housing numbers could help deliver some of this need more effectively if this would make schemes more viable.	 To help bring forward affordable homes for rent
Past Build Rates	Whilst the base build rate has been quite low (at between 1 – 2 dwellings per annum) the development of the larger scale scheme adjoining Malthouse Meadows indicates that a higher level of growth could be accommodated.	 To exceed previous housing growth levels and therefore 'boost' supply

6.2 The above table identifies that it would be prudent to provide some additional housing sites to increase the housing provision over and above what would come through windfall sites (which would normally comprise conversions / replacement buildings for housing, houses for rural workers who need to be on-site, and infill within Portesham’s defined settlement boundary). This could enable a better mix of housing that could address some of the imbalance / needs identified.