

**Joint Local Plan Review  
for  
West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland**

**INITIAL ISSUES AND OPTIONS CONSULTATION**

**FEBRUARY 2017**

## Foreword

We are delighted to introduce the review of the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland joint Local Plan.

Although it is only a short time ago since the examination and adoption of the joint Local Plan, the inspector who examined the plan said that the councils should prepare an early review. This review needs to identify additional land capable of meeting housing needs to the end of the current plan period (2031) as well as the broad locations for development in the five year period thereafter (to 2036).

The inspector pointed towards Dorchester and Sherborne as locations for future growth, but we have also considered a range of options in our coastal and market towns.

Government planning policy has changed on a number of issues including the introduction of 'starter homes' and 'self build and custom housebuilding' aimed to fulfil the Government's priority to build more homes. We are therefore addressing these issues too.

This first consultation document presents the issues relevant to the plan area today and seeks your thoughts on the different options that we can take. It is important to remember that these are 'options' which will be refined at a later stage - there is no commitment to any one solution at this point.

The review of the adopted local plan is just starting and we are keen to seek as many different views as possible before we go any further. Your views are really important to us and the feedback we receive will guide decisions as the plan progresses towards examination and adoption.

Councillor Ian Gardner

Executive Portfolio Holder for Planning, West Dorset District Council

Councillor Ray Nowak

Briefholder for Environment and Sustainability, Weymouth & Portland Borough Council

## HOW TO GET INVOLVED

Terms explained in glossary at the end of this document

Dates of consultation

Dates and venues where drop-in events are held

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## 1. Introduction

### CURRENT ADOPTED LOCAL PLAN

- 1.1 The current local plan was adopted by West Dorset District Council on 22nd October 2015 and by Weymouth & Portland Borough Council on 15th October 2015. The local plan is the basis upon which planning applications are considered.
- 1.2 The current plan covers the period 2011-2031. It contains policies against which all planning applications can be assessed and site specific allocations of land for development to meet future housing and employment needs across both West Dorset and Weymouth & Portland. It establishes that 775 new homes per annum and a total of 60ha of employment land are to be delivered in the period up to 2031.
- 1.3 Preparation of the adopted local plan began in 2011, following an agreement between the two councils to prepare a joint plan. The plan was submitted for independent examination in 2013 with the examination hearings held in November and December 2014. The inspector's report was received on 14 August 2015 and the plan was subsequently adopted by both councils.

### INSPECTOR'S REPORT KEY POINTS

- 1.4 The inspector recommended a number of modifications necessary to enable the plan to be adopted. These are summarised as:
- Acknowledgement of the need for an early review of the Local Plan by 2021 to ensure provision of sufficient housing land for the remainder of the plan period;
  - Changes to the level of housing provision and revision of the five year housing land supply position;
  - As part of the review process identify a long-term strategy for development in the Dorchester area and reappraise housing provision in Sherborne;
  - Remove reference to a trunk road service area as part of park and ride proposals at Dorchester.

### DUTY TO COOPERATE

- 1.5 The 'duty to cooperate' requires local planning authorities to engage 'constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis' with one another in the preparation of plans, and have regard to each other's relevant activities.
- 1.6 Weymouth & Portland Borough shares its boundary with West Dorset District with the duty to co-operate being addressed principally by the preparation of the joint local plan. West Dorset District also shares boundaries with East Devon, North Dorset, Purbeck, and South Somerset local authority areas.
- 1.7 The inspector highlighted "*three areas where administrative boundaries influenced development options*". Through the review, the councils will work together across

administrative boundaries to plan for the housing, transport and infrastructure that local people need in the areas of:

- Lyme Regis/Uplyme working with East Devon District Council
- Crossways/Moreton working with Purbeck District Council
- Edge of Yeovil/Sherborne working with South Somerset District Council

## THE NEED FOR REVIEW

- 1.8 The main recommended modification was that the councils undertook an early review of the plan because the inspector considered that *“there is insufficient land to meet housing needs to the end of the plan period”*. The inspector said *“I therefore recommend a review should be in place no later than 2021, if not earlier, to avoid development having to be allowed in locations which are not favoured or are in less sustainable locations”*.
- 1.9 The inspector explained that the purpose of the review was *“to identify additional land capable of meeting housing needs to the end of the current plan period”* (i.e. to 2031) *“as well as the broad location for development in the five year period thereafter”* (i.e. to 2036).
- 1.10 The inspector also commented that *“the Local Plan fails to give sufficient emphasis to the sustainable role of particular settlements and the contribution they could make to meeting development needs”* and that *“a modification is required to ensure the councils identify further development options at specific settlements as part of an early review”*. The inspector suggested that the councils should *“identify a long-term strategy for development in the Dorchester area and reappraise housing provision in Sherborne”*.

## WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF WE DIDN'T PROVIDE A REVIEW BY 2021?

- 1.11 In England and Wales, the local plan sets out in broad terms what type of development is acceptable and where. Planning decisions are then made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations suggest a different approach is necessary. If the councils do not review the local plan it becomes out of date and the ‘presumption in favour of sustainable development’ in national planning policy would apply. As a result, the councils would have less control in determining where development goes. This situation also occurs when the councils are unable to demonstrate a five-year supply of land for housing.
- 1.12 Failure to undertake a review or even start it promptly would be likely to increase the risk of developers submitting planning applications that are not in accordance with the adopted local plan.
- 1.13 It is hoped that by starting the local plan review promptly and committing to a timeframe for its completion well before 2021, developers will work with the councils through the plan-making process to address these issues. A prompt start on the review also maximises the time available to engage with local communities in reviewing policies and considering alternative options.

## WHAT THIS DOCUMENT COVERS

- 1.14 This document sets out the key issues affecting West Dorset and Weymouth & Portland both now and in the future, and discusses a range of options to tackle these issues. The issues and options consultation gives local people, businesses and other organisations the opportunity to have their say on potential future growth.
- 1.15 The main issues covered by this document are:
- To introduce a single vision for the whole plan area, (combining the two separate visions for each local authority from the adopted Local Plan).
  - To revisit the level of economic and housing growth needed across the area.
  - To revisit the approach to the distribution of development.
  - To consider growth opportunities at the main towns of Dorchester & Weymouth (including outlying parts) and the market and coastal towns of Beaminster, Bridport, Lyme Regis, Portland, Sherborne and the village of Crossways.
  - To consider opportunities for growth in West Dorset adjacent to Yeovil.
  - To reconsider the approach to protecting employment sites.
  - To establish a hierarchy of town and local centres.
  - To respond to recent Government changes to national policy in relation to affordable housing.
  - To develop an approach to a green infrastructure network to replace existing local landscape designations.
  - To identify Coastal Change Management Areas.
  - To establish if technical standards on accessibility and adaptable housing, wheelchair accessible housing, space standards and water efficiency can be justified by evidence.
  - To consider the councils' approach to wind energy development.
  - To explore ways to deliver sufficient plots for self-build and custom housebuilding in the area.

## PROCESS / CONSULTATION GOING FORWARD

- 1.16 In order to have the local plan review in place by 2021, it will need to have been prepared, consulted upon, subject to an examination and adopted by both councils.
- 1.17 The timetable for the production of planning policy documents is set out in the councils' Local Development Scheme (LDS). The LDS indicates that the councils intend to submit the reviewed local plan for examination in September 2018 with a view to adopting the plan in the following year.
- 1.18 There is however considerable flexibility in how local planning authorities carry out the initial stages of the review. After consultation on this Issues and Options document, the councils intend to gather the necessary evidence to enable the options to be refined to give a set of preferred options. These preferred options would then be subject to consultation. There is also scope for some more focused consultation on key issues (such as growth at Dorchester) should it be considered necessary.

- 1.19 Prior to submission for examination, the councils must publish the final version of the reviewed local plan to enable representations to be made that can then be considered at examination.

## SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL

- 1.20 The first stage in the production of a local plan is the preparation of a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Scoping Report. This document identifies the key environmental, social and economic issues for the local plan review and establishes SA objectives for testing the local plan proposals with the aim of ensuring that these policies contribute towards achieving sustainable development.
- 1.21 The Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report was prepared and consulted on in March 2016. The report was then amended taking on board the results of the consultation and published in its final form in July 2016.

## 2. Context

- 2.31 The plan area covers the entire administrative areas of West Dorset District and Weymouth and Portland Borough, covering an area of around 112,000 hectares. The area stretches along the coast from Lyme Regis in the west to Crossways in the east and from the tip of Portland to the village of Sandford Orcas just north of Sherborne. Within the plan area is the county town of Dorchester, and the coastal towns of Weymouth and Bridport.
- 2.32 There are wider linkages to settlements outside the plan area including Yeovil in the north and the Bournemouth/Poole conurbation in the east.

### ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

- The Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) designation recognises landscapes of particularly high quality and covers approximately 69% of West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland.
- The West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland area is home to a diverse range of wildlife habitats and species, with approximately 10,930 hectares (9.7%) of the area designated at a regional (5.5%), national (3.9%), and/or international level (2.8%).
- The West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland area has a rich historic heritage, including around 8,000 listed buildings, 90 Conservation Areas and many nationally important Scheduled Monuments.
- The highest quality agricultural land (grade I and II) represent 21% of West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland, with the highest grade land situated to the north of Bridport and to the west of Sherborne.

### SOCIAL ISSUES

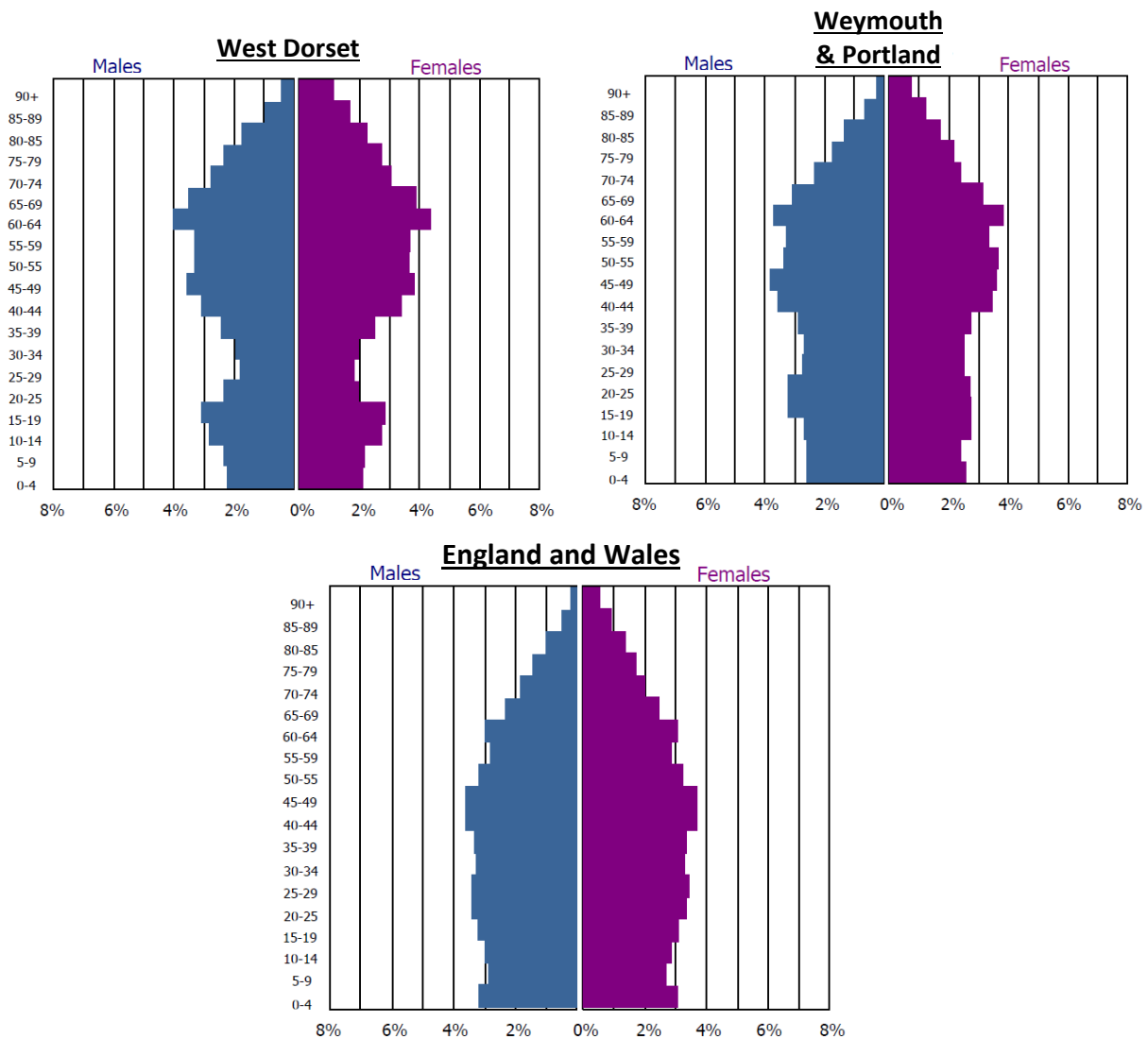
- West Dorset's population is 100,750<sup>1</sup>. The district has experienced a population increase of 5.9% between 2003 and 2013, which is less than the Dorset average (8.3%) but greater than that for England and Wales as a whole (1.3%).
- Weymouth and Portland's population is 65,170. The borough experienced a slower population growth rate of just 1.3% over this period, significantly below the population increase experienced in Dorset but on a par with the England & Wales average.
- In July 2016, the average house price in West Dorset was £264,002 while in Weymouth & Portland, the average house price was £212,167.
- The affordability of housing for first time buyers is a key issue with the ratio of lower quartile house prices to earnings in 2012 for West Dorset being 10.36 and 7.61 for Weymouth & Portland.
- The councils' housing registers currently have approximately 1,310 people registered in West Dorset and 1,350 people registered in Weymouth & Portland (September 2016).

<sup>1</sup> 2014 mid-year population estimates



- West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland have a greater proportion of residents within the older population brackets than the England and Wales average.
- Future projections indicate that there will be a significant increase in the proportion of residents in the over 65 age group.

Figure 2.1: Population profile comparison



- The average household size in 2011 was 2.2 persons per household in West Dorset and 2.3 persons per household in Weymouth & Portland. The Dorset average was 2.3 and national average was 2.4.

**ECONOMIC ISSUES**

- The output of businesses in West Dorset, as measured through gross value added or GVA, has risen since 2010 and is now above the South West average but remains below the national average. The GVA in Weymouth and Portland has fluctuated in recent years, and remains significantly below the South West and national averages.

- Both West Dorset and Weymouth & Portland have experienced a decline in employment over the last five years. Sectors which have experienced high employment decline include the public sector, transport and logistics, and wholesale and retail.
- Across Dorset as a whole, including West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland, the ageing population means that a high proportion of the labour force is nearing retirement age and there is likely to be a significant shortfall in labour supply by 2024 unless there is more in-migration of working age people.
- The majority of businesses in West Dorset (69%), Weymouth & Portland (68%) and across the South West of England (68%) are small, employing between 0-4 people.
- The proportion of new businesses opening in West Dorset (8.3%) is below that of Weymouth & Portland (12.4%), South West England (10.6%), and England and Wales (13.7%).
- West Dorset has a higher proportion of businesses within the agricultural sector than the national average, reflecting the rural nature of the district.
- Weymouth & Portland has a higher proportion of businesses within the accommodation and food and arts, entertainment and recreational sectors reflecting the dominance of the tourism sector.
- Unemployment in West Dorset has decreased during the past 5 years from 1.7% in 2009 to 0.7% in 2015, and remains below the South West average of 1.3% and the national average of 2.3%. Unemployment in Weymouth and Portland has decreased during the past 5 years from 3.3% in 2009 to 1.6% in 2015. This is above the South West average but below the national average.

### 3. A Vision for the Area

#### INTRODUCTION

- 3.1 A vision is an important part of a local plan that guides the approach to development within an area. It is about identifying the future of a place, responding to local needs and circumstances, and is translated into a framework to guide future development.
- 3.2 A vision should be aspirational but realistic, setting out in broad terms what is intended to happen in different parts of the area over the longer term. The vision should be translated into objectives for the area which explain how the key elements of the vision will be dealt with. The vision and objectives should be locally specific and based on an understanding of the characteristics and function of the area.

#### CURRENT VISION

- 3.3 The adopted local plan for West Dorset and Weymouth & Portland has separate visions for each of the council areas. These visions are specific to each geographical area and were produced independently reflecting the characteristics and priorities of each local authority. The visions were drawn up early on in the preparation of the adopted local plan.

#### A VISION FOR WEST DORSET

The spectacular landscapes of West Dorset, from the panoramic chalk ridges to the wooded valleys and undeveloped coastline, the picturesque settlements and variety of natural habitats, are something that set it apart from the rest of the country. We are proud of this, and want to be able to say the same in 20 years' time.

West Dorset has many communities of different sizes, from the small, rural villages to the larger market towns. It is important to us that we have a thriving economy, decent affordable homes and a network of community facilities, so that local people of all ages and abilities can enjoy living here and playing an active part in their community.

#### A VISION FOR WEYMOUTH & PORTLAND

We want the next 20 years to be an exciting time for the Borough, with significant investment and regeneration of key sites and infrastructure, making this a place where people of all ages will be engaged with their local community, feel a real sense of belonging and civic pride.

Weymouth and Portland are special places, set within the World Heritage Coast and the Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The relationship with the sea is key to our identity, past, present and future, from the beach to the port and harbours, the sailing opportunities, and all the related maritime industries.

We want to keep the individual identities of the communities that make up our area, linking to our maritime heritage and the beautiful coastal and rural landscapes, but always looking to the future.

## REASONS FOR CHANGE

- 3.4 The adopted local plan covers the two areas of West Dorset District Council and Weymouth & Portland Borough Council. These two areas make up the entirety of the Western Dorset Housing Market Area, which is considered to be the most appropriate area on which to draw up a local plan; a view that was supported by the local plan inspector.
- 3.5 Since the local plan was adopted, the two councils have been working with Dorset County Council and North Dorset District Council on a joint approach to economic development across the western part of Dorset, referred to as the 'Western Dorset Growth Area'. This joint approach is promoting growth and investment in the whole of the plan area, particularly in the Weymouth, Dorchester and Portland area. In addition, growth at other market and coastal towns will play an important role in sustaining the local economy.
- 3.6 The development of a single vision for the plan area, rather than two separate visions as at present, would reflect this joint approach to future economic growth. The single vision will aid the development of revised local plan objectives to guide policy development.

## REVISED VISION

- 3.7 The key elements of the two separate visions have been drawn together to provide a single vision for the whole plan area. The combined vision highlights the important characteristics of the area and the aspirations for how growth will be accommodated.
- 3.8 The proposed vision builds in the growth potential within the Weymouth, Dorchester and Portland area and reflects the potential at other market and coastal towns.

**PROPOSED VISION**

The environmental quality of the area – its landscape, coastline and its picturesque settlements – is what makes the area special and an attractive place to live and do business.

The settlements in the area each have their own character – from small rural villages in West Dorset to the larger market towns with links to their past and coastal communities such as Weymouth with extensive maritime and tourist heritage.

Looking forward, the rich natural environment, heritage and links to the past need to be considered and respected, and where possible enhanced.

Within this context, in 20 years time, we want to be proud of the area in which we live.

We want more and better paid jobs, more affordable homes and a network of community facilities that enable all ages and abilities to contribute to their community enabling a real sense of community belonging and engagement.

We wish to see significant investment and regeneration providing infrastructure to encourage businesses across the area to start and grow.

It is important that we have a thriving and resilient economy, capitalising on the linkages between Weymouth, Dorchester and Portland as the key driver of the local economy and capitalising on the opportunities at the market and coastal towns to provide for sustainable growth to serve the more rural areas.

**3-i. Do you agree with the proposed single vision being used to develop objectives and guide the strategy for development within the Local Plan area?**

## 4. Level of Growth – Housing

### INTRODUCTION

- 4.1 Establishing the level of growth required to meet future needs, especially for housing and employment land, is an important part of the planning process. It ensures that social and economic needs are met, contributing to the achievement of sustainable development. (The level of employment land required to meet needs is dealt with in section 15 of this document).

### CURRENT APPROACH

- 4.2 National planning policy requires a council to assess its housing needs and ensure that its local plan meets the full Objectively Assessed Need (OAN) for housing in the relevant Housing Market Area (HMA). West Dorset and Weymouth & Portland is considered to be a single HMA, making the whole plan area the appropriate area to plan for housing growth.
- 4.3 National planning policy also indicates that there should be sufficient land of the right type available in the right places and at the right time to support economic growth and innovation.

### **POLICY SUS1 – LEVEL OF ECONOMIC AND HOUSING GROWTH**

- 4.4 Policy SUS1 sets out the level of economic and housing growth that should be delivered in West Dorset and Weymouth & Portland in the period from 2011 to 2031.
- 4.5 It indicates that provision will be made for a deliverable supply of housing land to accommodate in the region of 775 dwellings per annum – a total of 15,500 new homes over the plan period. The delivery of this level of housing growth will support the local economy, helping to generate around 13,000 jobs, and allowing in-migration of working age people to boost the currently reducing workforce.

### REASON FOR CHANGE

- 4.6 There are a number of reasons why the level of economic and housing growth needs to be re-examined in the local plan review. In summary, they are:
- New 2014-based population and household projections;
  - The shortfall in the provision of housing land in the local plan for the period to 2031, as identified by the local plan inspector; and
  - The need for an early review of the local plan to make provision for growth for a further 5 years (i.e. to 2036), as identified by the local plan inspector.
- 4.7 These reasons are discussed in more detail below.

### THE NEW 2014-BASED POPULATION AND HOUSEHOLD PROJECTIONS

- 4.8 The starting point for assessing the OAN for housing in the local plan area is the latest household projections. For the adopted local plan, the 2012-based household projections were the starting point. These projections showed an average annual growth in households

of 494 across the local plan area, which equates to 539 dwellings per annum, taking account of vacant properties and second homes.

- 4.9 Household projections are based on trends over the previous five years, meaning that the 2012- based projections were strongly influenced by the recession. For the adopted local plan an alternative projection was therefore used, based on the 2001-2007 period which pre-dated the recession. This was used so as to allow for economic growth and the potential for people to move in to the area to work. The ageing population locally means that without more people of working age moving into the area, there would be a significant decline in the labour force. These alternative figures show an average annual growth of 709 households across the plan area, equating to an objectively assessed need of 775 dwellings per annum, taking account of vacant properties and second homes.
- 4.10 With the release of the 2014-based household projections in July 2016 there is a need to assess the impact on the need for additional dwellings. The projections show a modest increase in the forecast average annual growth in households of 539 across the local plan area which equates to a need for 589 dwellings per annum, taking account of vacant properties and second homes.
- 4.11 The need for new homes derived from the 2014-based projections, although slightly higher than the need based on the 2012-based projections, is still significantly below the need identified in the current local plan based on the 2001 / 2007 projections, as set out in summary in Figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1 – The Implications of Different Household Projections for Household Growth and the Need for Additional Dwellings

HOUSEHOLD PROJECTION	AVERAGE ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD GROWTH	AVERAGE ANNUAL RATE FOR DWELLINGS
2012-based	494	539
2014-based	539	589
2001 / 2007-based	709	775

#### SHORTFALL IN HOUSING LAND PROVISION TO 2031

- 4.12 The overall housing requirement between 2011 and 2031 is for 15,500 new homes. However, within the local plan provision is only made for 14,855 new homes. This shortfall in provision (of 645 new homes) is one of the reasons why the inspector considered it necessary to undertake a review of the local plan.

#### THE NEED FOR HOUSING TO 2036

- 4.13 The inspector considered that the local plan review should identify the broad location of development for the five years beyond the current plan period (i.e. to 2036). The inspector

indicated that this longer-term provision should be made *“in the expectation that current Government guidance will not change”*.

- 4.14 Projecting forward the OAN for housing (i.e. 775 dpa) for another 5 years would require the identification of sufficient land to accommodate another 3,875 new homes across the plan area. When added to the 645 unit shortfall in the period to 2031, this gives an overall requirement to 2036 of at least 4,520 new homes. The local plan review therefore needs to identify sufficient additional housing land to accommodate at least this level of housing growth.

#### PROPOSED APPROACH

- 4.15 Key issues relating to proposed levels of housing growth and the proposed approaches to address these issues are discussed below.

#### THE OBJECTIVELY ASSESSED NEED FOR HOUSING

- 4.16 As described on the previous page, the new 2014-based national household projections are higher than the 2012-based projections which were the starting point for the objectively assessed housing needs in the local plan. However the objectively assessed needs were considerably higher than either the 2012- or 2014- based projections, in order to make greater allowance for future economic growth and the need for in-migration to support the workforce.
- 4.17 Despite the modest increase in the 2014-based projections, there is still significant headroom in the figure of 775 per annum used in the adopted local plan and it is not therefore considered that it should be changed.

**4-i. Do you consider that the figure of 775 dwellings per annum remains an appropriate figure for the objectively assessed need for housing in the local plan area in the light of the 2014-based household projections?**

#### ADDITIONAL HOUSING LAND REQUIRED BETWEEN 2011 AND 2036

- 4.18 The inspector clearly set out the parameters for the local plan review in his report and the councils are seeking to take forward the review on that basis. Projecting forward the OAN (of 775 dpa) for a further five years (to 2036) and adding this to the shortfall in housing provision to 2031 (of 645 new homes) means that sufficient additional land needs to be identified to accommodate at least a further 4,520 new homes. This would be in addition to the supply already identified in the local plan for 14,855 new homes.

**4-ii. Do you agree with the level of additional housing provision proposed for the local plan area to meet needs for a further five years (i.e. at least an additional 4,520 new homes in the local plan area on top of that already identified)?**



## 5. Distribution of Development

### INTRODUCTION

- 5.1 Influencing the location of future growth can help to achieve a more sustainable pattern of development. Typically this means focusing future growth on larger settlements, which already have a range of jobs and services, but it is also important to provide opportunities for people in more rural areas.

### CURRENT APPROACH

- 5.2 One of the core principles in national policy is that planning should *“actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling and focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable”*.
- 5.3 Another of the core principles is that planning should *“take account of the different roles and character of different areas, promoting the vitality of our main urban areas ... recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supporting thriving rural communities within it”*.
- 5.4 National policy also states that in order *“to promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities”*.
- 5.5 The local plan Inspector highlighted that *“concentrating development in the larger settlements means there is access to existing services and facilities while new development can be the catalyst for improved provision”*.

### **POLICY SUS2 – DISTRIBUTION OF DEVELOPMENT**

- 5.6 Policy SUS 2 seeks to focus development at the main towns of Dorchester and Weymouth (including Chickerell and parts of Littlemoor). Elsewhere the market and coastal towns of Beaminster, Bridport, Lyme Regis, Portland and Sherborne and the village of Crossways are identified as a focus for future development.
- 5.7 In rural areas, development is directed to settlements with ‘defined development boundaries’ (DDBs) and which should take place at *“an appropriate scale to the size of the settlement”*.
- 5.8 The policy seeks to *“strictly control”* development outside DDBs to a limited number of uses, but also recognises that some growth may be necessary to meet local needs. The main route for achieving this would be through neighbourhood planning and other planning tools.
- 5.9 The current approach to the distribution of development needs to be re-examined for the following reasons:
- the need to accommodate further growth in the period to 2036;
  - recently granted planning permissions and appeals allowed outside defined development boundaries;

- a lack of clarity about what development ‘at an appropriate scale to the size of the settlement’ means for settlements in rural areas;
- the designation / proposed designation of additional defined development boundaries in neighbourhood plans; and
- a lack of clarity with regard to how the settlement hierarchy applies to Portland.

5.10 These reasons are discussed in more detail below.

## ACCOMMODATING GROWTH WITHIN THE SETTLEMENT HIERARCHY

### REASON FOR CHANGE

- 5.11 The councils need to identify sufficient land to accommodate at least a further 4,520 homes by 2036. This is in addition to the land for 14,855 new homes already identified in the adopted local plan. How this development should be distributed across the settlements in the plan area is an issue that needs to be resolved.
- 5.12 In the summary of his findings, the local plan Inspector stated that as part of the local plan review the councils should “*identify a long-term strategy for development in the Dorchester area and reappraise housing provision in Sherborne*”. Since he also recommended that the review of the local plan should seek to meet development needs for a further five years (i.e. until 2036), the councils will need to consider the future development needs of the main towns, market and coastal towns and the village of Crossways (the settlements in the first and second tiers of the settlement hierarchy).
- 5.13 For settlements in the third tier of the settlement hierarchy (mainly the larger villages), the local plan envisages local needs being met through development within DDBs and through neighbourhood planning.
- 5.14 The eight settlements in the top two tiers of the settlement hierarchy are likely to have sufficient capacity to accommodate the additional growth now proposed. Although it’s unlikely that the settlements at the third tier of the hierarchy would need to contribute to meeting strategic development needs, views are sought on the option of proposing some further growth at the larger villages.

### PROPOSED APPROACH

- 5.15 Settlements with DDBs and their estimated populations are listed in Figure 5.1. Tier 3 – “Other Settlements with DDBs” has been broken down into three categories by estimated population.
- 5.16 In the event that the local plan review was to propose growth at settlements at the third tier of the hierarchy, it would be appropriate to examine opportunities for development at the larger villages, with higher populations and at least some day-to-day facilities.

Figure 5.1 Settlements estimated population (2014 mid-year population estimates)

<b>TIER 1 - MAIN TOWNS</b>		
	Weymouth	52,168
	Dorchester	19,481
<b>TIER 2 - COASTAL AND MARKET TOWNS &amp; CROSSWAYS</b>		
	Bridport (inc. Allington, Bothenhampton and Bradpole)	13,661
	Portland	12,966
	Sherborne	9,645
	Chickerell	5,524
	Lyme Regis	3,637
	Beaminster	3,097
	Crossways	2,363
<b>TIER 3 - OTHER SETTLEMENTS WITH DDB'S (PARISH POPULATION)</b>		
Population over 1,000	Charminster	2,979
	• Charminster village	about 1,500
	• Charlton Down	about 1,500
	Puddletown	1,452
	Broadwindsor	1,319
	Charmouth	1,310
	Broadmayne	1,250
	Maiden Newton and Higher Frome Vauchurch	1,106
Yetminster	1,028	
Population between 600 and 1,000	Burton Bradstock	925
	Bradford Abbas	880
	Thornford	831
	Cerne Abbas	819
	Portesham	670
	Piddletrenthide	655
	Mosterton	636
	Buckland Newton	609
	Salway Ash (in Netherbury Parish)	about 427

Population less than 400	Bishop's Caundle	393
	West Knighton	388
	Winterborne Abbas	315
	Trent	301
	Sutton Poyntz(village within the WPBC area)	c.300
	Winterbourne Steepleton	270
	Evershot	211
	Godmanstone (DDB added in Cerne Valley neighbourhood plan)	147

**5-i. Do you agree that the vast majority of the additional growth proposed for the period up to 2036 should be accommodated at Dorchester, Weymouth (including Chickerell and Littlemoor), Beaminster, Bridport, Lyme Regis, Portland, Sherborne and Crossways?**

**5-ii. If the local plan review is to consider identifying sites for growth at other settlements, should opportunities be considered:**

**at settlements with populations of more than 1,000; or  
at settlements with populations of more than 600; or  
at any settlement with a defined development boundary?**

## DEFINED DEVELOPMENT BOUNDARIES

### REASON FOR CHANGE

- 5.17 A Defined Development Boundary (DDB) is a 'planning tool' which seeks to control the distribution of development. Policy SUS2 indicates that within DDBs residential, employment and other developments will normally be permitted. It then goes on to indicate that development outside DDBs will be 'strictly controlled' (although a list of specific types of development that may be permitted outside DDBs is also included).
- 5.18 There have been a number of recent cases where proposals for market housing development outside DDBs have been permitted. These were contrary to Policy SUS2 however were considered to be sustainable, in terms of national policy and Policy INT1. In such cases, regard has been had to other material considerations most notably the councils' marginal five-year housing land supply and typically the lack of demonstrable harm associated with the scheme. This raises the issue of whether Policy SUS2 and / or the supporting text should be amended to clarify that these other matters will be taken into account when the policy is applied.

## PROPOSED APPROACH

- 5.19 It is suggested that the supporting text to Policy SUS2 could be amended to clarify the other matters that should be taken into account when the policy is applied to market housing developments, most notably:
- national policy;
  - Policy INT 1 in the local plan; and
  - the councils' housing land supply position.
- 5.20 Paragraph 49 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that *"housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development"*. The NPPF indicates that sustainable development includes economic, social and environmental dimensions and paragraph 8 states that in order *"to achieve sustainable development, economic, social and environmental gains should be sought jointly and simultaneously through the planning system"*. The 'presumption' in national policy is reflected in Policy INT 1 of the local plan, which indicates that *"there will be a presumption in favour of sustainable development that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area"*.
- 5.21 Where proposals for market housing development are located outside DDBs, they are contrary to Policy SUS2. However, if on balance they are considered to improve the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area, they may be considered to comply with Policy INT1 and to reflect 'the presumption' in national policy.
- 5.22 National policy regards the provision of housing as a part of the 'social role' of the planning system and in determining the weight to give to that in decision-making, the supply of housing land, both to meet housing needs over the plan period and in the next five years, is an important consideration.
- 5.23 The inspector concluded that the local plan did not make adequate provision for housing for the whole plan period, which was one of the main reasons he recommended an early review. Whilst he concluded that there was an adequate supply to meet housing needs over the next five years, he considered this supply to be marginal, which is why he recommended that the councils *"should take advantage of every reasonable opportunity to improve their short term supply position as well as the overall amount of housing for the plan period"*.
- 5.24 The housing land supply position often means that considerable weight is given to the provision of housing, when planning applications for market housing development are determined on sites outside DDBs.

**5-iii. Should Policy SUS2 continue to strictly control development outside defined development boundaries, having particular regard to the need for the protection of the countryside and environmental constraints?**

**5-iv. Should the supporting text to Policy SUS2 be amended to clarify the other matters that need to be taken into account when applying the policy to market housing developments outside DDBs, most notably:**

**national planning policy;  
Policy INT1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development; and  
the Councils' housing land supply position?**

## DEVELOPMENT 'AT AN APPROPRIATE SCALE TO THE SIZE OF THE SETTLEMENT'

### REASON FOR CHANGE

5.25 Policy SUS2 states that development in rural areas will be directed to the settlements with DDBs, and will take place *"at an appropriate scale to the size of the settlement"*. However, there is little in the supporting text to explain what this phrase means and what factors should be taken into account in making a judgement on whether a scheme is of an 'appropriate scale'. This raises the issue of whether the supporting text should be amended to provide greater clarity on this point.

### PROPOSED APPROACH

- 5.26 The supporting text to Policy SUS2 raises concerns about the sustainability of a more dispersed pattern of development, but also recognises that rural communities may need some growth to meet their local needs. The supporting text therefore establishes that meeting local needs is an important consideration in determining whether development is 'at an appropriate scale to the size of the settlement'. However, there are a number of other considerations, which should also be taken into account in making this judgement.
- 5.27 Paragraph 156 of the NPPF indicates that local plans should include strategic policies to deliver the strategic priorities for an area. This suggests that proposals of a strategic nature, both in rural areas and elsewhere, should normally be dealt with in a review of a local plan, rather than against Policy SUS2.
- 5.28 Paragraph 17 of the NPPF indicates that a core principle is that planning should *"take account of the different roles and character of different areas, promoting the vitality of our main urban areas ... recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supporting thriving rural communities within it"*. This suggests that in rural areas proposals that would change the intrinsic character of a settlement or detract from the attractiveness of the countryside that forms part of its setting would not accord with this core principle.
- 5.29 The supporting text to Policy SUS2 recognises that each village will be different in terms of its needs, opportunities and constraints, and this very much applies to infrastructure. Some villages may have few facilities and find it difficult to cope with additional development, whereas others may have facilities that could be supported by an increase in population, which would help to maintain or enhance the vitality of rural communities.

- 5.30 It is also important to recognise that whilst an individual development at a particular village may be at an appropriate scale, in combination with other similar schemes it may have a cumulative impact that is detrimental.
- 5.31 It is suggested that these are the main factors that the councils should have regard to when in determining whether development is ‘at an appropriate scale to the size of the settlement’. Views are sought on the appropriateness of these identified factors and whether any others should also be identified in the supporting text to Policy SUS2.

**5-v. Should the following factors be taken into account when determining whether a development proposal in rural areas is “at an appropriate scale to the size of the settlement”?**

- whether the proposals are of a strategic nature;**
- whether the proposals would help communities to meet their local needs;**
- whether the proposals would change the character and setting of the settlement;**
- whether local infrastructure, including any necessary improvements, could accommodate or be supported by the proposed development;**
- cumulative impacts?**

## NEWLY DEFINED DEVELOPMENT BOUNDARIES IN NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANS

### REASON FOR CHANGE

- 5.32 The local plan includes a list of settlements with defined development boundaries, which were carried forward from the previously adopted local plan. These are the larger settlements which generally have at least some community facilities and are considered to be the most sustainable locations for growth.
- 5.33 Other smaller settlements, which are considered to be less sustainable locations for growth, do not have DDBs. However, the supporting text to Policy SUS5 indicates that communities may define new DDBs around such settlements in neighbourhood plans, as a means of enabling local needs to be met.
- 5.34 Once a new DDB has been defined in a neighbourhood plan, which may be around a settlement with a small population and very few facilities, it then becomes subject to Policy SUS2 allowing development within the boundary. This may be appropriate to help meet local needs, but it also means that larger scale development in rural areas, potentially outside DDBs would be directed towards such settlements.
- 5.35 At the time of writing, new DDBs have been established at Godmanstone, Loders and Uploders and further new DDBs may be identified as more neighbourhood plans are produced. Whilst it may be appropriate for smaller communities to seek to meet their own local development needs through the identification of new DDBs, there is a concern that the strategic policy framework provided by Policy SUS 2 should not direct development to these settlements, as this may undermine the objective of directing the majority of development to larger, more sustainable settlements.

## PROPOSED APPROACH

- 5.36 All settlements with DDBs have a population of more than 200, with the exception of those settlements where new DDBs have been established in neighbourhood plans; namely Godmanstone, Loders and Uploders. Further new DDBs may be identified as more neighbourhood plans are produced, but these are also likely to be around settlements with very small populations and few facilities.
- 5.37 Where a local community decides to establish an entirely new DDB around a settlement, it would, through the preparation of the relevant neighbourhood plan, also have had the opportunity to allocate specific sites for development to meet local needs, if this was considered appropriate.
- 5.38 Policy SUS 2 and its supporting text could be amended to clarify that a different policy approach should be taken to settlements where an entirely new DDB has been introduced in a neighbourhood plan. For the avoidance of doubt, it is not proposed to alter Policy SUS 2 and its supporting text in relation to DDBs that were originally identified in the local plan and subsequently amended in a neighbourhood plan.

**5-vi. Should different policy approaches apply to settlements with DDBs identified in the local plan and settlements with new DDBs identified through neighbourhood plans?**

## THE SETTLEMENT HIERARCHY AND PORTLAND

### REASON FOR CHANGE

- 5.39 Portland falls within the second tier of the settlement hierarchy, identifying it as one of the 'market and coastal towns' which will be a focus for future development. However, 'Portland' is not a town as such but a collection of settlements that together support a range of services typically found in a town.
- 5.40 Some amendments to the local plan would help to provide clarity on how the settlement hierarchy in Policy SUS2 relates to the settlements on the Isle of Portland.

### PROPOSED APPROACH

- 5.41 It may be clearer if the individual settlements on the Isle of Portland were referred to as 'the settlements on Portland' rather than the 'coastal town' of Portland.
- 5.42 The local plan proposals map draws a number of 'defined development boundaries' (DDBs) around the settlements on the Isle of Portland. These are Easton; Fortuneswell; Grove; Southwell; and Weston. However, a closer examination of the Policies Map shows that the list does not accurately reflect the way in which the DDBs have been drawn.
- 5.43 The area referred to as 'Fortuneswell' also includes much of Portland Port and Osprey Quay. It is considered that the 'settlement' as drawn on the Policies Map could be more accurately referred to as 'Fortuneswell & Castletown'.



- 5.44 The local plan lists Easton and Weston separately. However, on the Policies Map, they share a single DDB and are shown as a single 'settlement'. It is considered that this 'settlement' as drawn on the Proposals Map could be more accurately referred to as 'Easton / Weston'.

**5-vii. Should the settlements on Portland be defined to reflect the defined development boundaries shown on the Local Plan Proposals Map? If so, should the settlements be defined as:**

**Fortuneswell & Castletown;**

**Grove;**

**Easton / Weston; and**

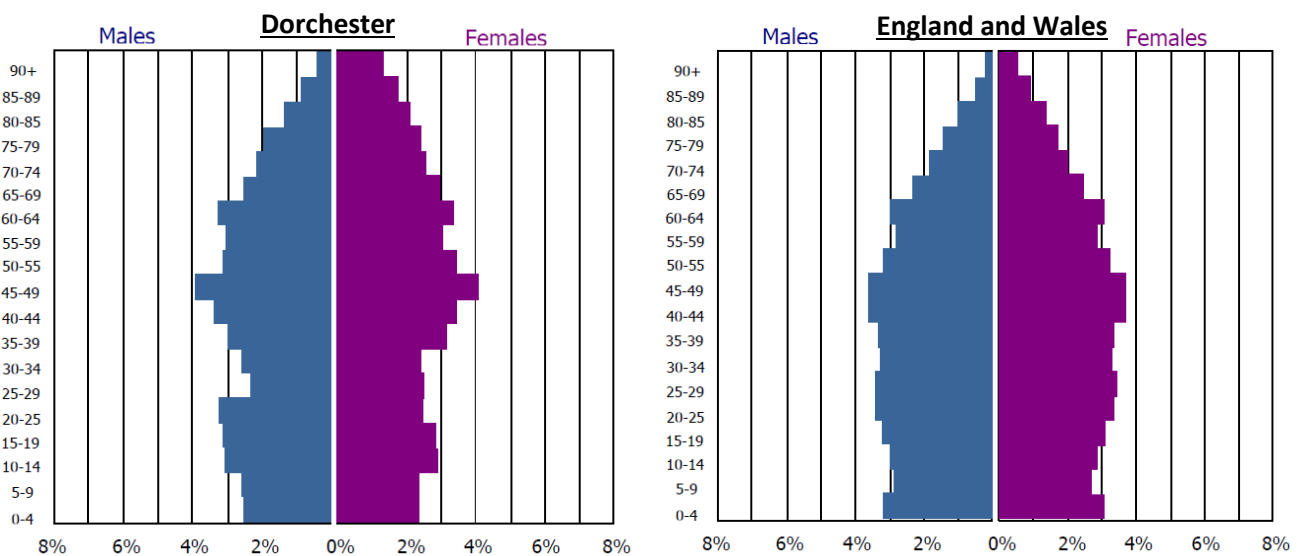
**Southwell?**

## 6. Development at Dorchester

### TOWN PROFILE

- 6.1 Dorchester is the county town and an important service centre providing jobs and services for a wide hinterland. Consequently, the town relies on a much wider area (including both nearby villages and the town of Weymouth to the south) for its workforce and economic success.
- 6.2 The town has a population of 19,481<sup>2</sup> and has rapidly grown over the past few years as a result of the development of Poundbury. This growth will continue for about another eight years at which point development at Poundbury is expected to be complete.
- 6.3 The town currently also has around twice as many jobs (18,400) as economically active residents (9,619). Workers commute in from nearby towns (particularly Weymouth) and from the surrounding rural area. Two of the largest local employers are Dorset County Hospital and Dorset County Council, which between them employ 50% of people working in Dorchester. There is a high level of need for more affordable housing in the town.

Figure 6.1: Population profile – Dorchester



- 6.4 Dorchester is the centre for many services and activities in the locality, including shopping, education, healthcare and library services. The town's leisure offer has grown considerably in recent years as a result of the development of Brewery Square.
- 6.5 Dorchester has two railway stations. Dorchester South is on the Weymouth to London (Waterloo) line and Dorchester West is on the Weymouth to Bristol line.
- 6.6 The town centre has an attractive and healthy shopping core with low numbers of vacancies and a high level of demand registered from operators in the town. The area's Roman and pre-Roman heritage is a significant feature of the town.

<sup>2</sup> 2014 mid-year population estimates

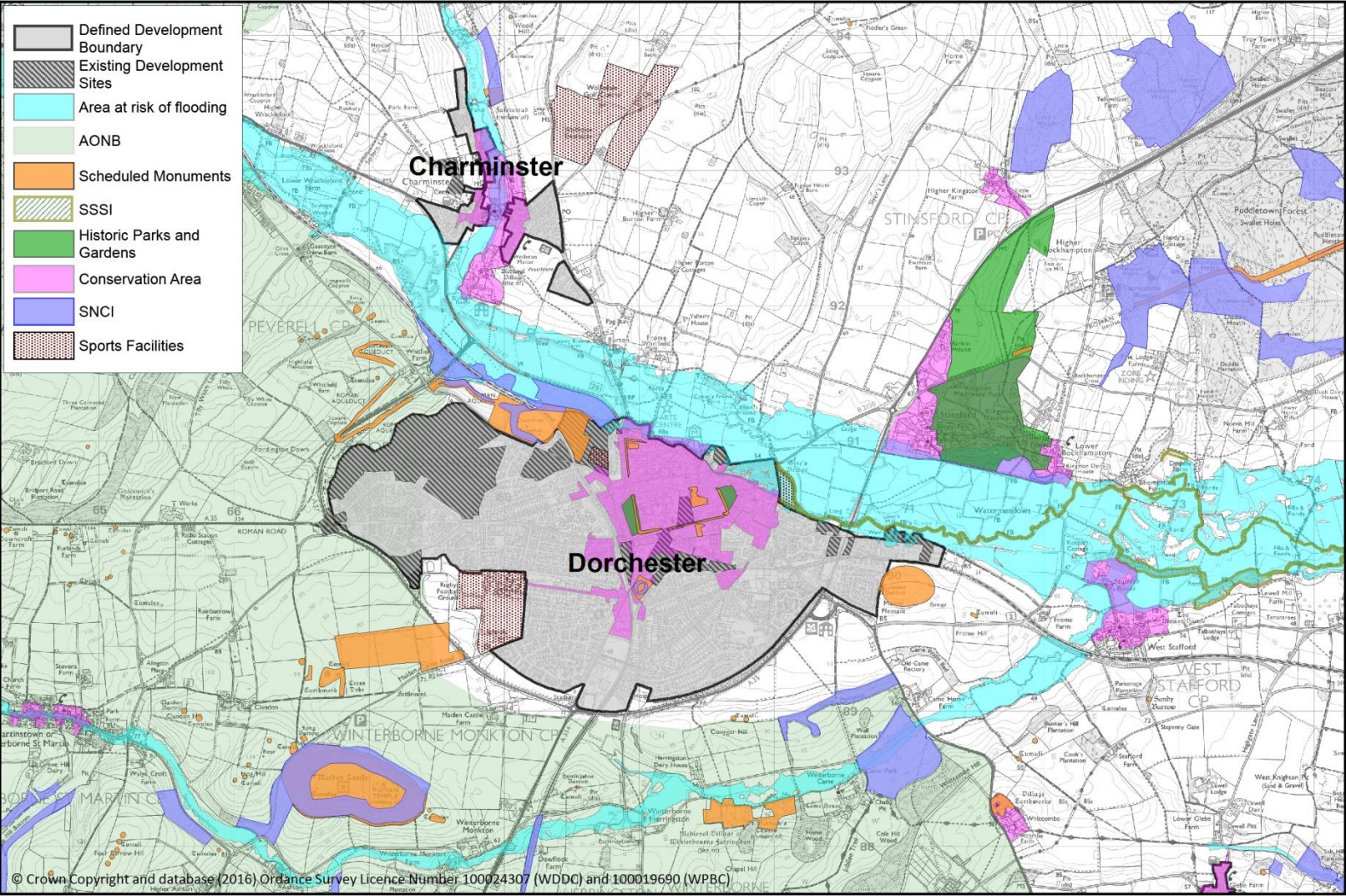
## INSPECTOR'S COMMENTS ON GROWTH AT DORCHESTER

- 6.7 The inspector for the West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Joint Local Plan considered it an *"imperative that an early review is undertaken to identify additional land"*. In reaching this conclusion, the inspector also indicated that *"a review will also provide an opportunity to consider growth options at Dorchester"*.
- 6.8 Opportunities for development at Dorchester are constrained by natural features, heritage and the town's setting in the landscape. The Inspector highlighted that considering growth options at Dorchester *"is a crucial, albeit difficult, matter for the Councils to resolve but one which it is vital to address when examining options for further growth."*
- 6.9 There is limited capacity within the town's physical boundaries of the bypass and River Frome. The inspector noted that *"Implementing options for development within existing town boundaries provides, at best, a short term solution to meeting future housing and employment needs."*
- 6.10 Development north of Dorchester was rejected during the preparation of the adopted local plan on the grounds of flooding and landscape impact. However the inspector stated that *"it is not obvious that other or better alternatives exist or indeed whether the Councils are committed to finding a solution to the longer-term expansion of the county town."* The Inspector concluded that allocating significant housing growth at Crossways was not *"a particularly sustainable option for meeting the longer term needs of the county town"*.
- 6.11 The Inspector modified the Local Plan to include a statement ensuring that *"a strategy is in place to meet the long term development needs at or in the vicinity of Dorchester by 2021 and that a site or sites necessary for its implementation are identified as part of the review proposals."*

## ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS AROUND THE TOWN

- 6.12 Dorchester is constrained by:
- the Dorset AONB;
  - the River Frome floodplain & SSSI;
  - scheduled ancient monuments primarily related to the town's Roman and pre-Roman heritage;
  - The Dorchester, Charminster and Stinsford Conservation Areas; and
  - Kingston Maurward Registered Park and Garden.

Figure 6.2 – Constraints around Dorchester



## OPPORTUNITIES

6.13 National policy is clear that there are three dimensions to sustainable development, the economic dimension, the social dimension and the environmental dimension. Future growth at Dorchester will help:

### Economic

- To support long term economic growth and job creation – including by providing homes for the necessary workforce;
- Diversify the town's economy;
- Act as a catalyst for improved service and facilities provision, strengthening the towns role as a centre for its wide hinterland;
- To maintain and improve the variety of shops in the town centre;
- Reinforce the town as a destination for tourists all year round;

### Social

- To meet local housing need;
- Balance the level of jobs and homes to improve the town's self containment;

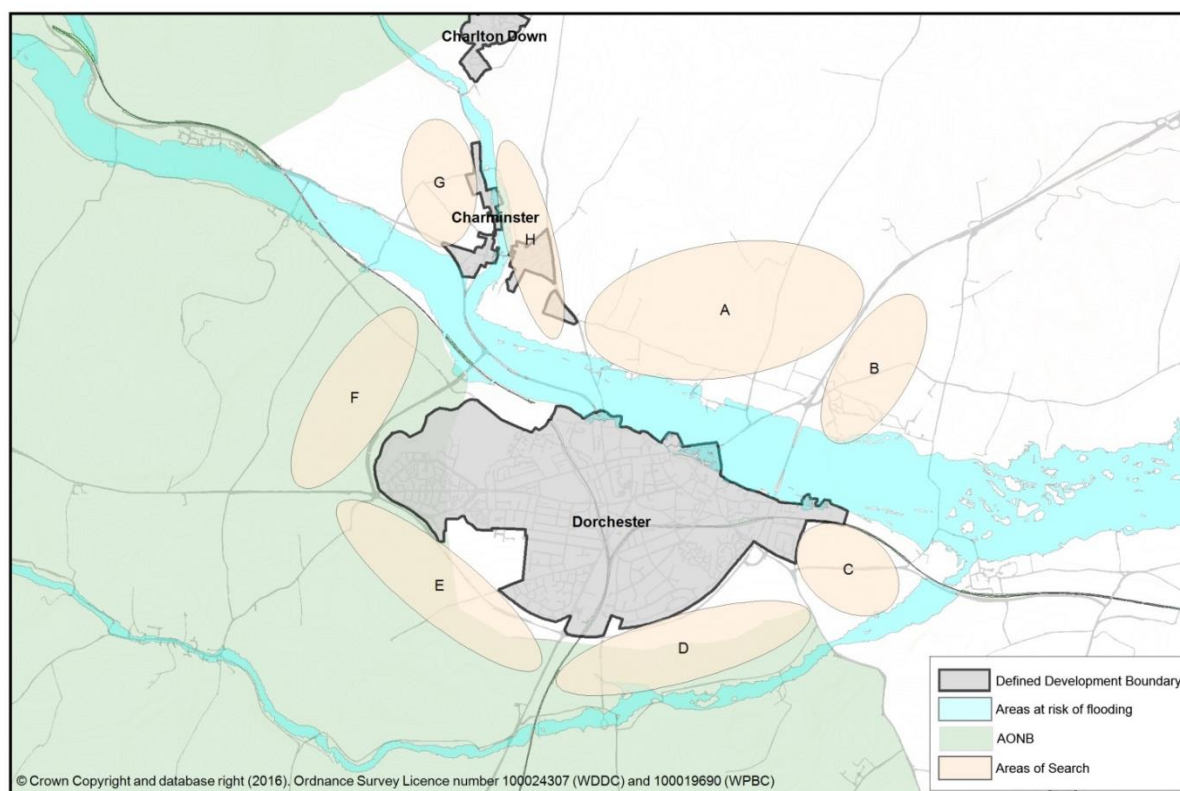
### Environmental

- To improve transport infrastructure and reduce traffic congestion within the town;
- Enhance informal recreation opportunities around the town;
- Help to maintain the wider valued wildlife and the natural environment in Dorset by focusing growth at the town.

## POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENT SITES

6.14 In considering the future growth options at Dorchester the councils have undertaken an initial 360 degree search of all possible development site options around the town (Figure 6.3). Unsuitable options have been discounted at an early stage through an initial site sieving exercise with more detail in the accompanying background paper and sustainability appraisal.

Figure 6.3: Broad areas of search – Dorchester

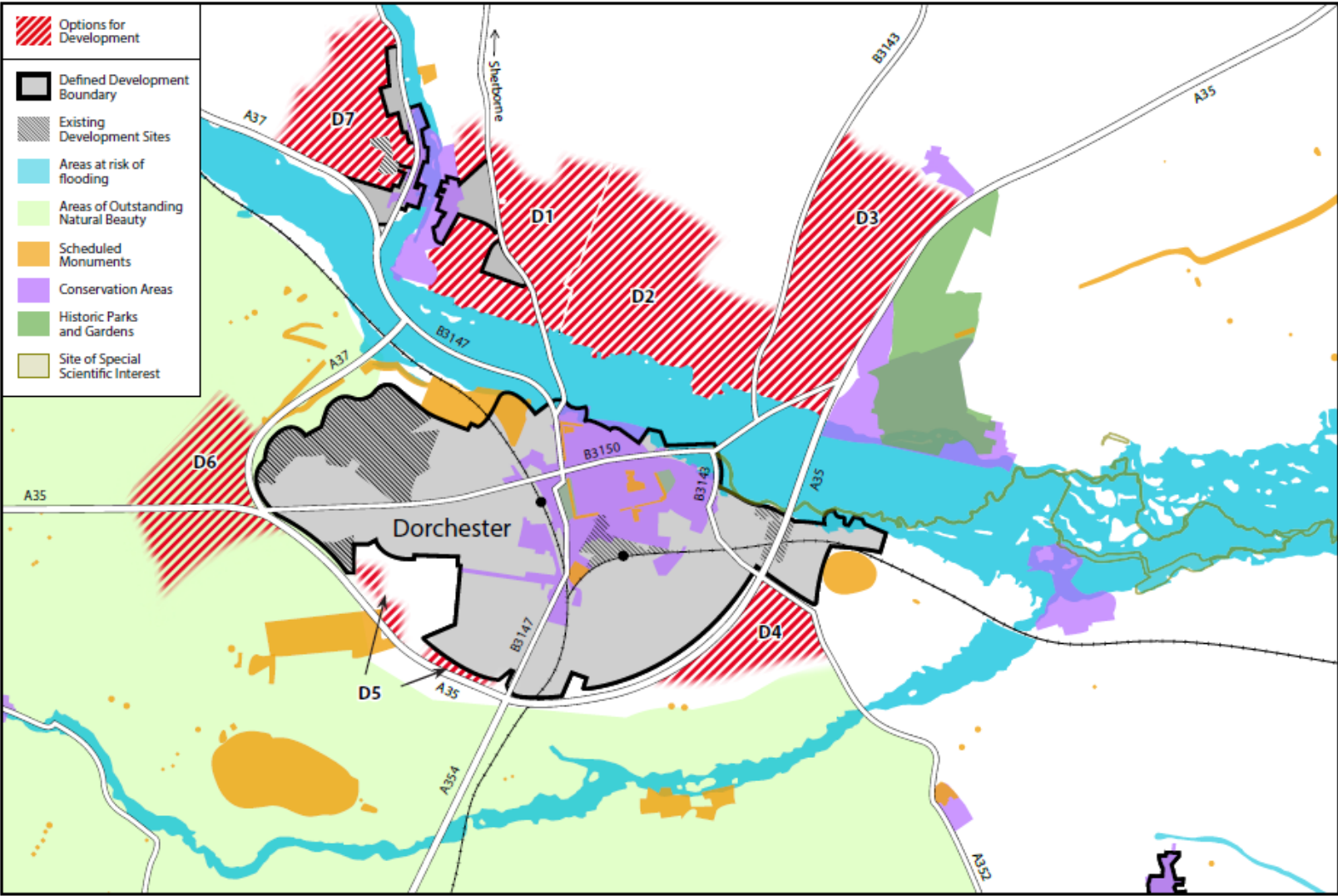


AREA	NAME	POTENTIAL IMPLICATIONS	CONCLUSION
A	North of Dorchester	Impacts on landscape, heritage assets and water quality will need to be addressed if this area is taken forward.	✓
B	Stinsford	Development is likely to result in unacceptable impacts on heritage assets, including Scheduled Monuments, Historic Park and Garden, and Conservation Area.	✗
C	East of Max Gate	Development is likely to result in unacceptable impacts on the scheduled monuments within this area.	✗
D	South-East of Dorchester	Potential for some development on the north-eastern part of this area, adjacent to the bypass, avoiding the potential impacts on the Scheduled Monuments, Dorset AONB and SNCI.	✓
E	South-West of Dorchester	Potential for significant impacts on Dorset AONB landscape and heritage assets, though there are opportunities within the bypass.	✓
F	North-West of Poundbury	Potential for some development in the southern part of this area, avoiding the Scheduled Monuments on the northern part and impacts on the Dorset AONB.	✓

AREA	NAME	POTENTIAL IMPLICATIONS	CONCLUSION
G	West of Charminster	Potential for impacts on water quality in this area.	✓
H	South-East of Charminster	Potential for some development on the southern part of this area, avoiding impacts on the Scheduled Monument and SNCI to the north.	✓

6.15 The conclusion of the first high level filter of site options has identified seven options outlined in figure 6.4. For each option an indicative capacity has been calculated and possible development issues have been identified.

Figure 6.4: Options for growth at Dorchester





DEVELOPMENT OPTIONS	INDICATIVE CAPACITY (DWELLINGS)	POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT ISSUES
D1: South-East of Charminster	2,100	Landscape impact - Impact on Charminster Conservation Area - Impact on listed Little Court and structures associated with listed Wolfeton House
D2: North of Dorchester, west of Slyer's Lane	3,200	Landscape impacts - Impact on Dorchester Conservation area - Ancient woodland - Flood risk
D3: North of Dorchester, west of A35	3,000	Landscape impact - Impact on Dorchester, Higher Kingston Farm and Stinsford Conservation Areas - Impact on Kingston Maurward Registered Park and Garden - Impact on listed Birkin House, Stinsford Cottages and milestone on Stinsford Hill
D4: South-East of Dorchester	850	Impact on listed Max Gate and Old Came Rectory
D5: South-West of Dorchester within bypass	350	Impact on nearby residents
D6: West of Poundbury	1,000	Within Dorset AONB - Impact on Maiden Castle
D7: West of Charminster	1,550	Landscape impact - Setting of Charminster Conservation Area - Impact on listed buildings in Charminster

- 6.16 As Dorchester is heavily constrained and there are limited options for development without crossing the physical constraints of the bypass or the water meadows of the River Frome, there will need to be a decision made about the level of growth to be planned for at this point in time. If a lower level of growth is to be planned for, individual options could be taken forward in this plan. If a longer-term decision about the direction of growth is to be made at this stage, however, requiring larger-scale growth, a combination of site options will need to be considered. For example D1, D2 & D3 could be developed as a larger scale development to the north of Dorchester. Alternative combinations could see the expansion of Charminster by bringing forward D1 & D7. The potential advantages of making a longer-term decision are that there is greater certainty about where future growth will take place, longer term infrastructure needs can be considered and the direction of growth will be established for future local plan reviews.
- 6.17 Inevitably different combinations of sites will have distinctive infrastructure requirements. Large scale development would require more significant infrastructure such as schools and roads where as smaller scale development would deliver less infrastructure. In addition, there may be a need to deliver land to accommodate employment uses to support additional jobs.
- 6.18 At this stage, no commitment is being made to the development of any individual or group of options. Information about the potential development options is being sought.

Additional work will need to be undertaken to further refine site suitability and fully establish infrastructure requirements as well as constraints to development such as landscape or heritage impacts.

**6-i. Dorchester has grown at an average rate of 175 new dwellings each year over the last 5 years. Should we plan for a lower level of growth, maintain that level of growth, or take a strategic longer term view for the growth of the town?**

**6-ii. Are there any issues related any of the site options that are not mentioned here?**

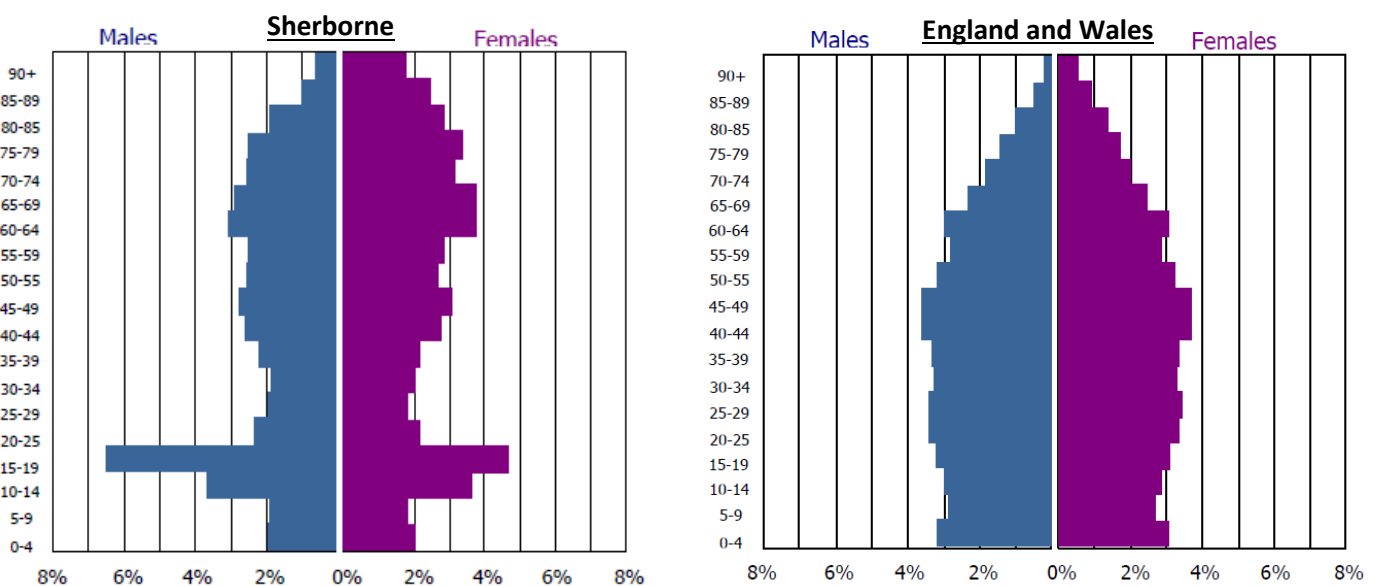
**6-iii. What are the infrastructure requirements for the development of the site options, individually or in combination with others?**

## 7. Development at Sherborne

### TOWN PROFILE

- 7.1 The historic market town of Sherborne is a major centre in the north of the district. The population of the town is 9,645<sup>3</sup> with the population structure shown Figure 7.1.
- 7.2 It has a wide range of facilities including a large number of small specialist businesses. It serves a wide hinterland with links to the towns of Dorchester, Wincanton and Sturminster Newton. The town plays host to a number of private schools which are significant local employers.

Figure 7.1: Population profile – Sherborne



- 7.3 The town also has strong links with Yeovil to the west, which supplies a significant proportion of the town's workforce. The working age population of Sherborne is 3,778 compared with the 5,080 jobs in the town. House prices in the town are significantly more expensive than in Yeovil; one of the reasons for the high commuting levels.
- 7.4 Sherborne is on the London (Waterloo) to Exeter railway line with hourly services connecting to Salisbury and Yeovil. The town sits on the A30 which provides easy links to Yeovil and on to the A303.

### INSPECTOR'S COMMENTS ON GROWTH AT SHERBORNE

- 7.5 The inspector made it clear that in his view *"Sherborne is a sustainable market town with a wide range of services and facilities and as one of the largest settlements in the Plan area it is an appropriate and suitable location for accommodating some development"*.
- 7.6 In relation to development opportunities around the town, the inspector recognised that further development at Barton Farm *"would be visible but its overall effect would be*

<sup>3</sup> 2014 mid-year population estimate

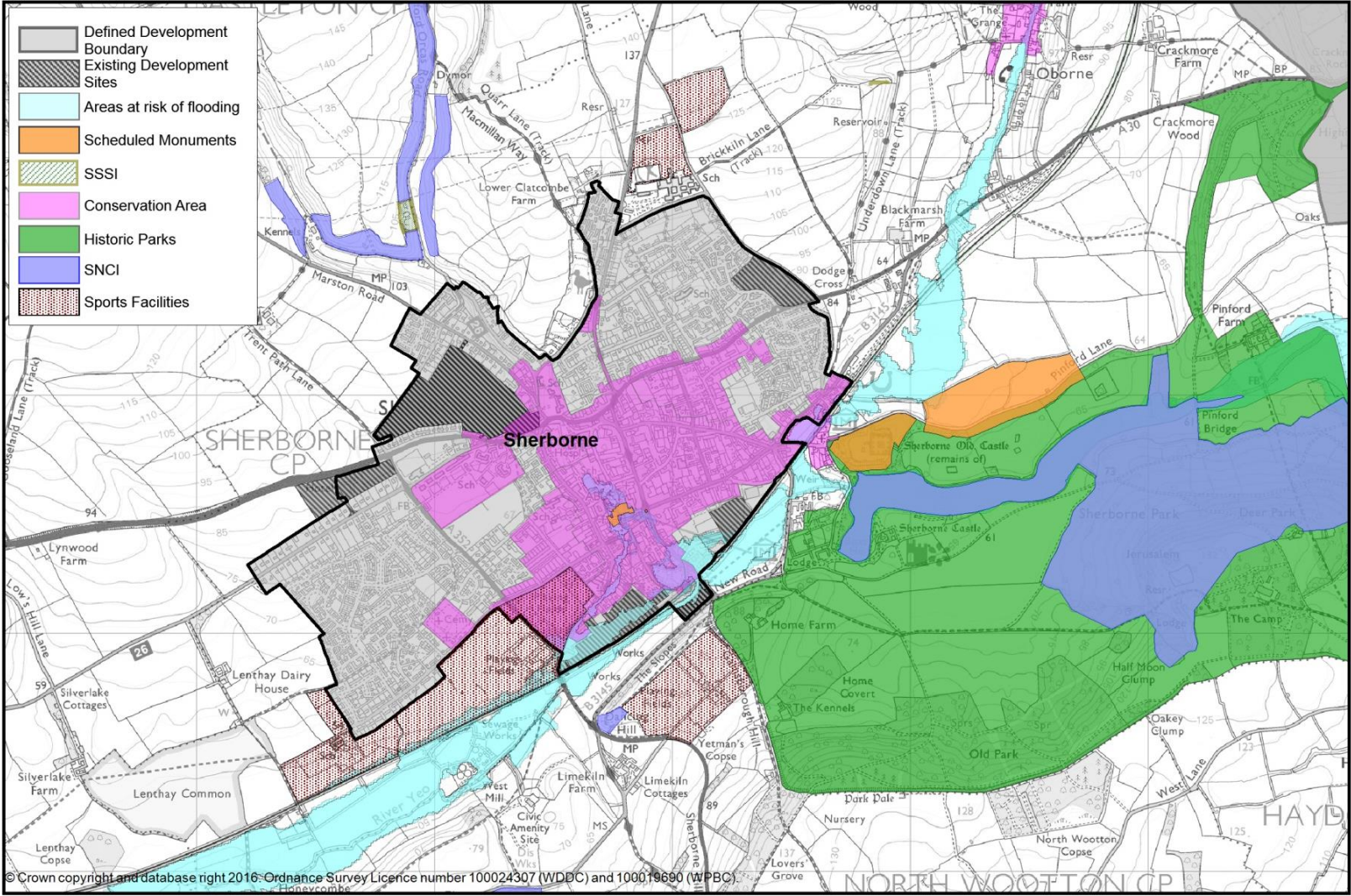
*limited because the topography restricts views from other locations including those close to the town". He also highlighted that further extension of Barton Farm "would assist in meeting future housing needs and provide an opportunity to secure a new link road from the A30 and improve access to the north".*

- 7.7 The inspector quoted earlier work on the local plan which concluded that *"high house prices had led to more commuting" to Sherborne. "Residents were travelling to better paid jobs elsewhere while those with lower-paid jobs could not afford to live there and had to commute from surrounding places such as Yeovil".*
- 7.8 There is limited available land within the existing built-up area of the town. Given the Inspector's conclusion that *"the identification of further land at Sherborne is, in my opinion, a necessary and logical requirement for the successful and sustainable planning of this part of West Dorset"* greenfield sites will need to be considered through the review of the local plan.

## ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS AROUND THE TOWN

- 7.9 Constraints around Sherborne include:
- Floodplain of the River Yeo;
  - Scheduled Monuments of Sherborne Castle, Sherborne Abbey and the Roman site by Pinford Lane);
  - Historic Parks and Gardens associated with Sherborne Castle;
  - Sandford Lane Quarry SSSI and nearby SNCI;
  - The physical barrier of the railway line.

Figure 7.2: Constraints around Sherborne



## OPPORTUNITIES

7.10 The National Planning Policy Framework is clear that there are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. Future growth at Sherborne will help:

### Economic

- To support longer term economic growth and job creation in Sherborne – including by providing homes for the necessary workforce;
- Support the existing and improve the variety of shops in the town centre;
- To enhance the town as a significant tourist destination based on its rich heritage;
- To boost the tourism economy, support all year round tourism in the area by promoting Sherborne and the surrounding area as a place to visit;

### Social

- To provide a better balance of jobs and housing, reducing in commuting from nearby settlements;
- Provide more affordable housing to meet the needs of local people;
- Balance the population profile of the town, encouraging young people to stay;
- To retain and expand local facilities and services enhancing the towns role as a local service centre;

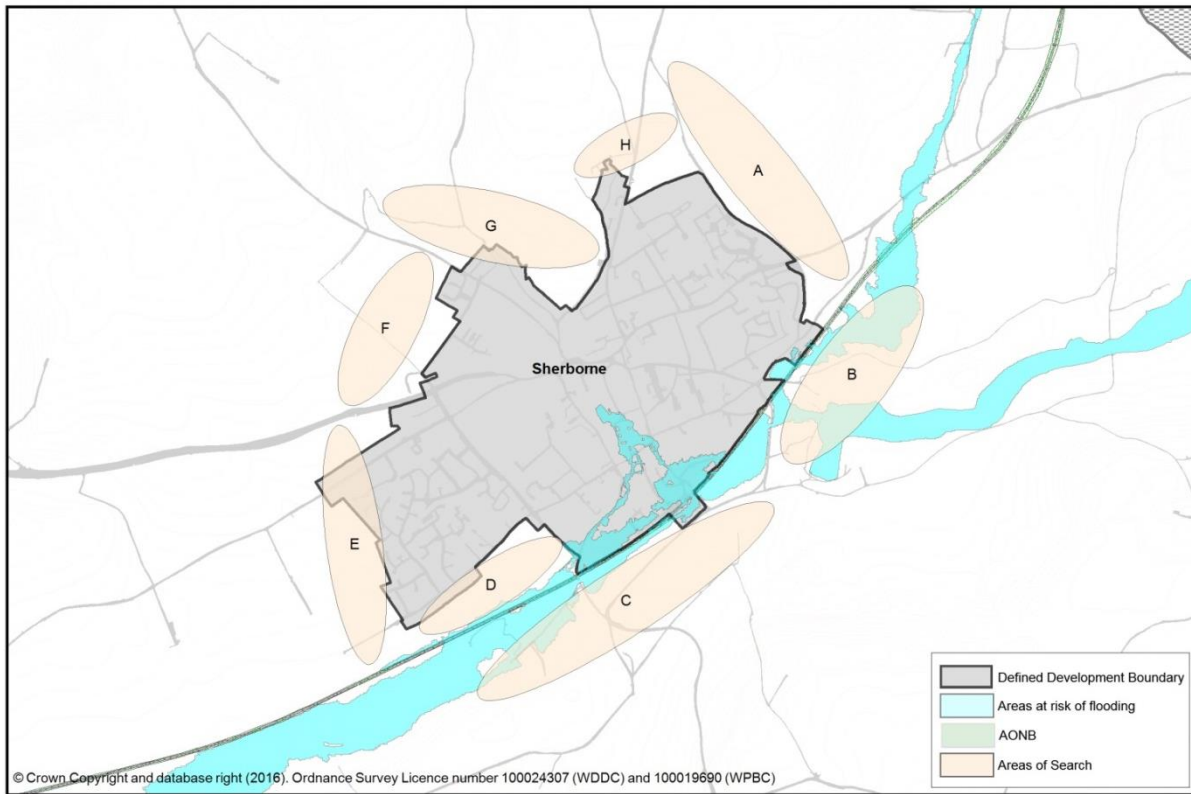
### Environmental

- Conserve and enhance the rich historic character of the town, protecting important heritage assets from inappropriate development;
- To relieve congestion in the town through improvements to transport infrastructure;
- Minimise impact on local landscapes.

## POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENT SITES

7.11 Sherborne has been subject to a full 360 degree assessment to identify potential options for development. Unsuitable options have been discounted at an early stage through an initial site sieving exercise with more detail in the accompanying background paper and sustainability appraisal.

Figure 7.3: Broad areas of search – Sherborne



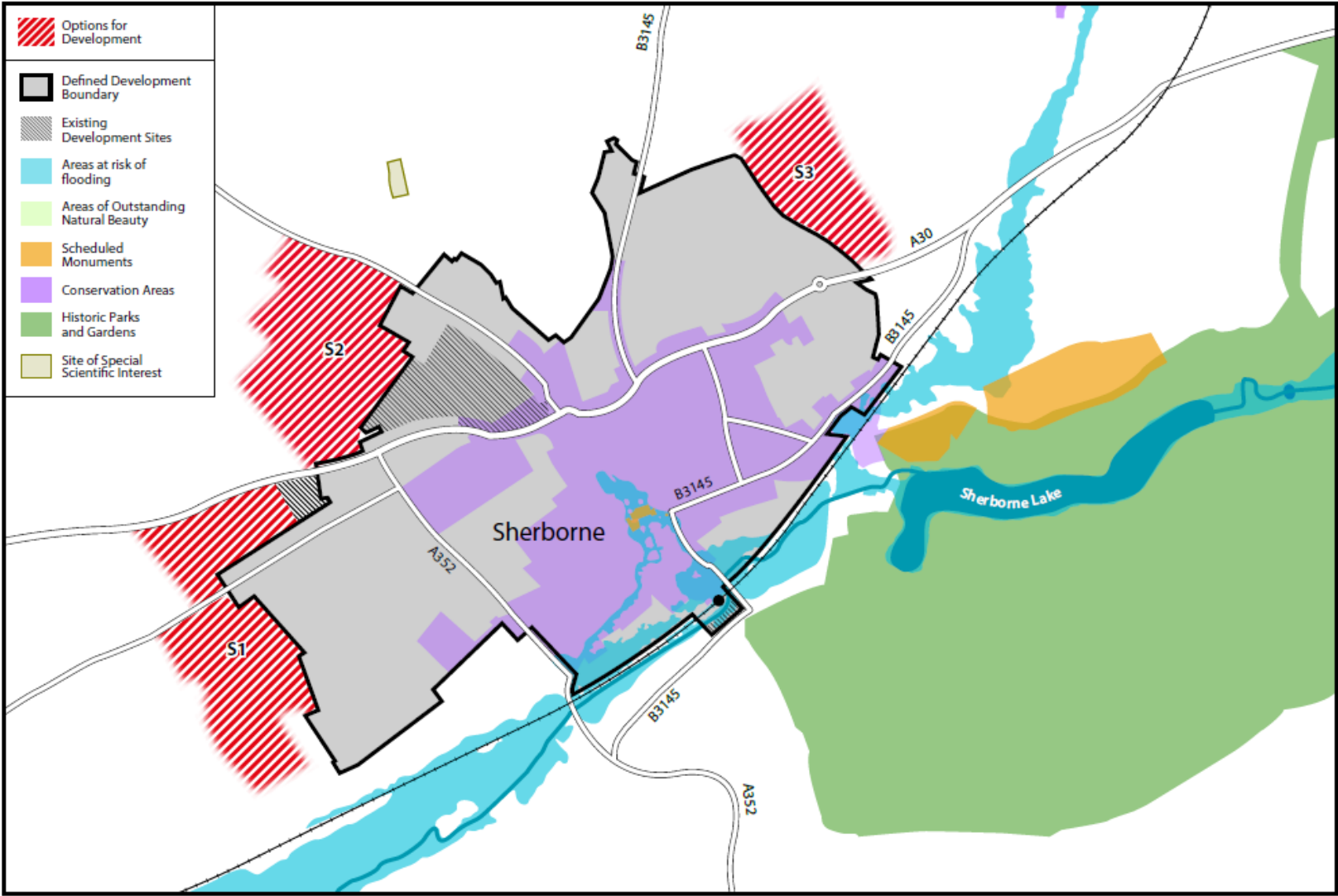
AREA	NAME	POTENTIAL IMPLICATIONS	CONCLUSION
A	East of Castle Town Way	Impacts on the landscape due to the land rising to the north, the setting of heritage assets to the south, and issues with water quality and flooding with respect to the river to the south. An area which avoids the river to the south and the higher ground to the north of this area may be suitable for development.	✓
B	Land adjacent to Sherborne Castle	Impacts on the heritage assets on this site.	✗
C	Land to South of river Yeo	Impacts on the heritage assets to the east and significant landscape impacts. In addition, there is also potential for flooding, and problems with access to essential services and facilities as a result of the physical separation caused by the floodplain and the railway line. Development in this area would also result in the loss of a sports field which provides an important recreational facility for the community. There are potential issues with the topography in parts of this area, with the site sloping steeply to the south.	✗

AREA	NAME	POTENTIAL IMPLICATIONS	CONCLUSION
D	Sherborne School Playing Fields	Impacts on the adjacent Conservation Area, flooding issues, and the loss of a school sports field which provides an important recreational facility for the community.	×
E	West of Sherborne	Potential for development on the northern section of this area, avoiding the loss of the sports field and reducing the impact on the water course on the southern boundary of this area.	✓
F	Barton Farm	Impacts on landscape will need to be addressed if this area is taken forward.	✓
G	Land North of Marston Road	Impacts on local wildlife designations and an internationally important geological site.	×
H	Land North of Quarr lane Park	This land rises steeply to the north and development in this area of local landscape importance is likely to be visually prominent and affect the setting of Sherborne, resulting in unacceptable landscape impacts and the loss of a sports field as an important community facility.	×

7.12 The conclusion of the first high level filter of site options has identified three options outlined in figure 7.4. For each option an indicative capacity has been calculated and possible development issues have been identified.



Figure 7.4: Options for growth at Sherborne



DEVELOPMENT OPTION	INDICATIVE CAPACITY (DWELLINGS)	DEVELOPMENT ISSUES
S1: Lenthay	1200	Retention of sports fields - retention of allotments - minimise impact on nearby watercourse.
S2: Barton Farm	1100	Landscape impact - Opportunities to address transport issues.
S3: East of Castle Town Way	650	Landscape impact - Impact on scheduled monuments - Impact on River Yeo - Impact on listed Blackmarsh Farmhouse and associated buildings.

- 7.13 Although three site options have been identified that could be developed individually there is no reason why combinations should not be considered or smaller portions of the options.
- 7.14 At this stage, no commitment is being made to the development of any individual or group of options. Information about the potential development options is being sought. Additional work will need to be undertaken to refine site suitability and fully establish infrastructure and employment land requirements as well as constraints to development such as landscape or heritage impacts.

**7-i. Sherborne has grown at an average rate of about 40 dwellings per year over the last 5 years. Should we plan for a lower level of growth, maintain that level of growth, or take a strategic longer term view for the growth of the town?**

**7-ii. Are there any additional issues related to the development of any of the site options?**

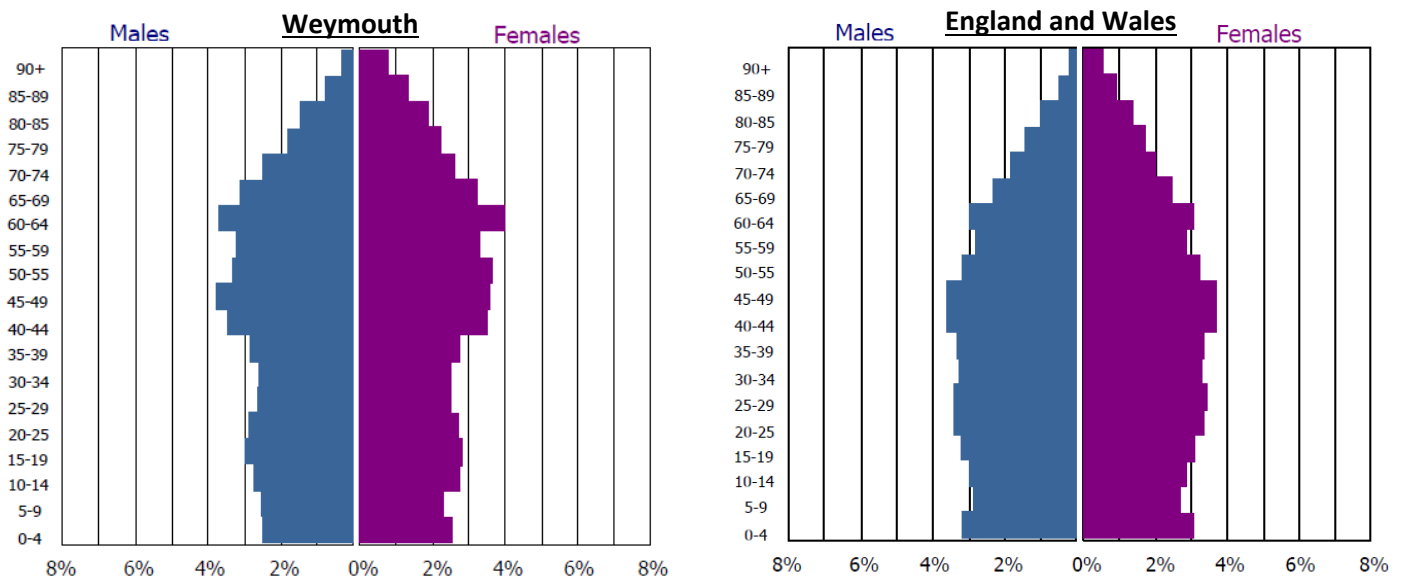
**7-iii. What are the infrastructure requirements for the development of the site options, individually or in combination with others?**

## 8. Development at Weymouth ( and Chickerell)

### TOWN PROFILE

8.1 After the Bournemouth and Poole conurbation, Weymouth is the largest urban area in Dorset with a population of 52,168<sup>4</sup>. The town of Chickerell to the north west of Weymouth has a population of 5,524<sup>5</sup>. The population structure of Weymouth is shown in Figure 8.1.

Figure 8.1: Population profile – Weymouth



- 8.2 Weymouth is a significant commercial and employment centre and is a nationally important tourist and recreation destination attracting half a million staying visitors a year.
- 8.3 Much of Weymouth's employment provision is located on the edge of the town within West Dorset district (the Granby and Lynch Lane Industrial Estates). A significant number of residents also work in Dorchester so there is a high level of out-commuting.
- 8.4 Much of the surrounding countryside is within the Dorset AONB, and other parts of Weymouth include national or international designations which protect the environment and restrict the amount of land available for future development. The high quality of life is a major attraction for people moving to the area, particularly to retire, and this ageing population places demands on health, housing and support services.
- 8.5 Weymouth urban area has two railway stations, one in the town centre and one at Upwey to the north. The railway line connects to both Bristol and London (Waterloo). Weymouth has a good network of bus routes with frequent services to Dorchester and Portland.

<sup>4</sup> 2014 mid-year population estimates

<sup>5</sup> 2014 mid-year population estimates

## INSPECTOR'S COMMENTS ON GROWTH AT WEYMOUTH

- 8.6 The local plan inspector did not recommend that any specific locations in Weymouth should be examined for their future growth potential. However, he did recommend that the Local Plan Review should identify locations for development to 2036 and recognised Weymouth's *"role as a commercial and employment centre"*.
- 8.7 Opportunities for development in Weymouth are constrained by its proximity to the sea and the tight administrative boundary and the councils have previously sought to maximise the use of available land within the town's constraints. The inspector acknowledged that *"Peripheral sites on the edge of Weymouth have a functional relationship and obvious link to the town despite being in West Dorset"*.
- 8.8 The council has more recently defined a town centre strategy area within which key brownfield sites have been identified to deliver a mixture of uses. The strategy is being guided by a town centre masterplan which was adopted in October 2015. The inspector indicated that *"any development would need careful treatment to ensure the distinctive character of the centre with its mix of historic buildings is not damaged. Nevertheless, there are areas where improvements would be beneficial and where new or more intensive uses could be introduced."*
- 8.9 Given the need to look forward a further 5 years, and the size of Weymouth, it will be important through the review to consider what additional growth will be required to meet the needs of Weymouth over the extended plan period.

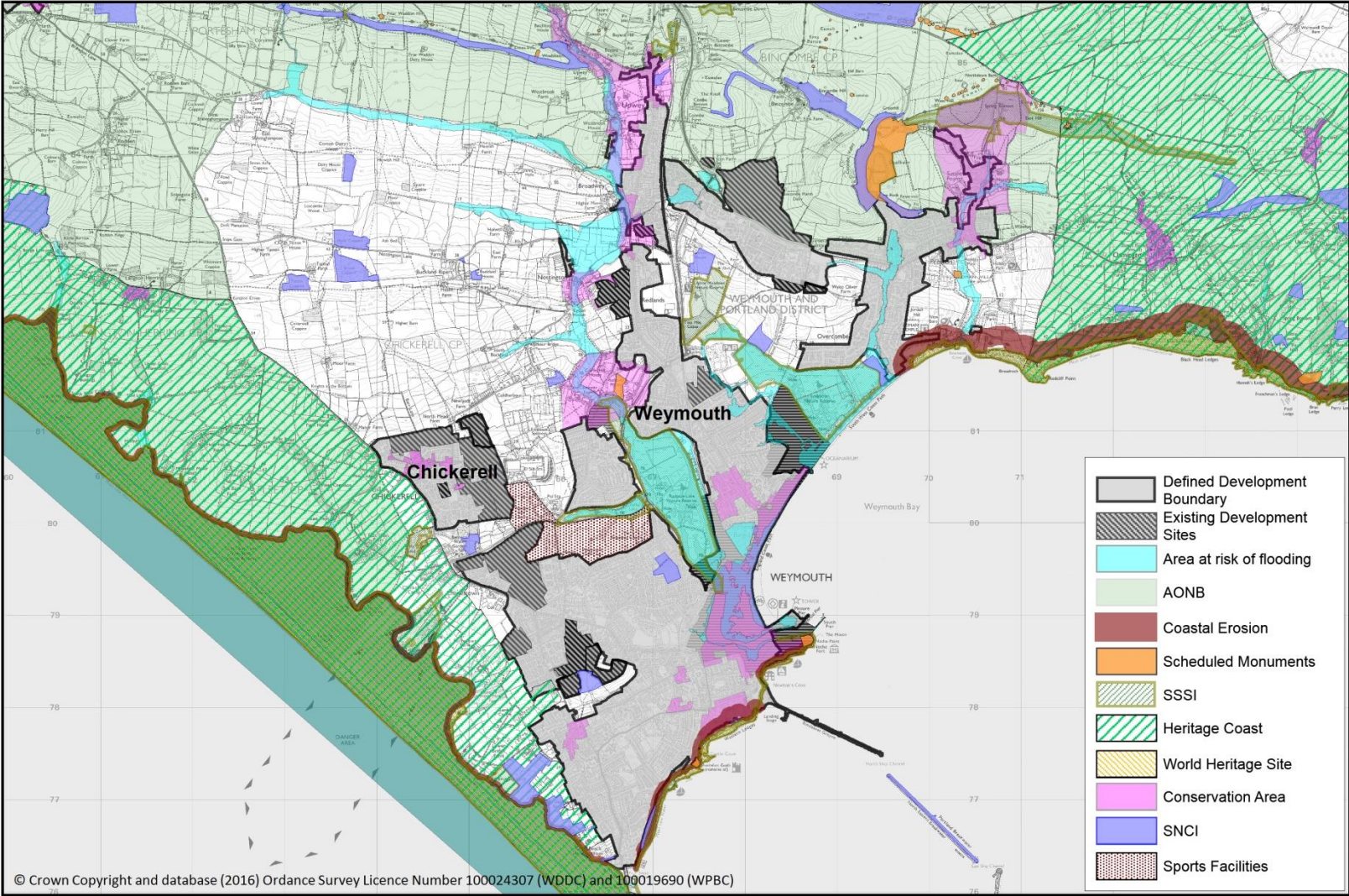
## INSPECTOR'S COMMENTS ON GROWTH AT CHICKERELL

- 8.10 The local plan inspector acknowledged that Chickerell and other areas around Weymouth town *"have a functional relationship and obvious link to the town despite being in West Dorset"* and that the growth proposed at Chickerell *"will contribute towards the housing needs of the Weymouth"*.
- 8.11 Land is allocated to the north and east of Chickerell in the adopted local plan and a further site off Radipole Lane was considered during the plan's preparation. The inspector commented that this site is *"well related to the existing residential area at Southill, has good road connections and is close to facilities and services"*

## ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS IN AND AROUND THE TOWNS

- 8.12 Weymouth and Chickerell are constrained by:
- Their proximity to the sea
  - The Dorset AONB (to the north)
  - The Heritage Coastline
  - Conservation Areas
  - SSSIs and SACs
  - Coastal erosion and flood risk in Weymouth Town Centre

Figure 8.2: Constraints around Weymouth and Chickereell



## OPPORTUNITIES

8.13 The National Planning Policy Framework is clear that there are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. Future growth at Weymouth will help to:

### Economic

- Bring about a strong diversified economy building on its coastal location and advanced engineering sector;
- Provide a better balance of housing and jobs reducing the amount of out-commuting;
- Regenerate the town centre and seafront providing improved flood defences;
- Maintain and improve the variety of shops in the town centre;
- Boost the tourism economy, supporting all year round tourism in the area by promoting Weymouth and the surrounding area as a vibrant place to visit;
- Improve transport infrastructure within the town;

### Social

- Meet local housing needs, including increasing the supply of affordable homes in the area and meeting demands for all tenures of housing;
- Balance the towns population profile;
- Retain and expand local facilities and public services including schools, doctors' surgeries, sports centres and utilities;

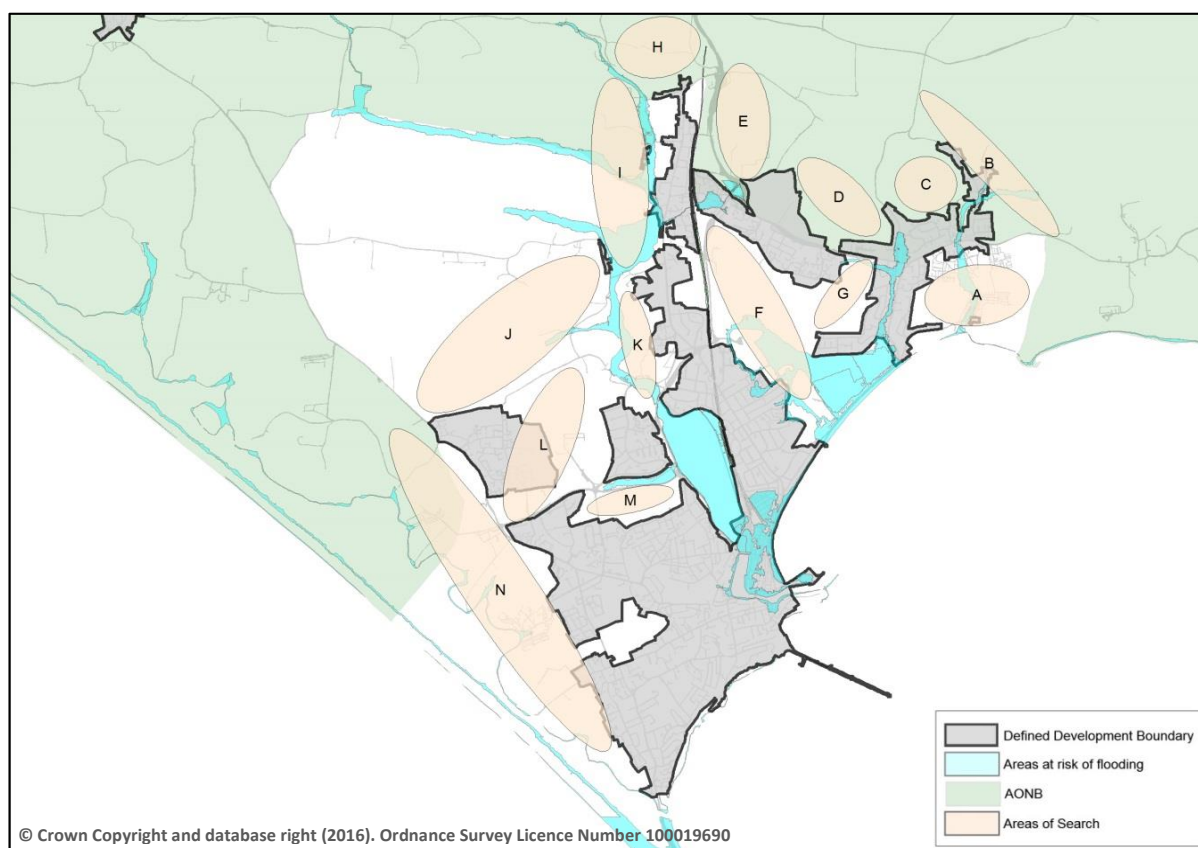
### Environmental

- Secure improved flood defences for the town centre;
- Improve access to green spaces by enhancing provision across the town;
- Maintain and enhance the character of the town recognising its seaside heritage;
- Improve air quality in town by reducing traffic.

## POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENT SITES

8.14 In considering the future growth options at Weymouth and Chickerell, the councils have undertaken an initial 360 degree search of all possible development site options around the towns. Unsuitable options have been discounted at an early stage through an initial site sieving exercise, with more detail available in the accompanying background paper and sustainability appraisal.

Figure 8.3: Broad areas of search – Weymouth



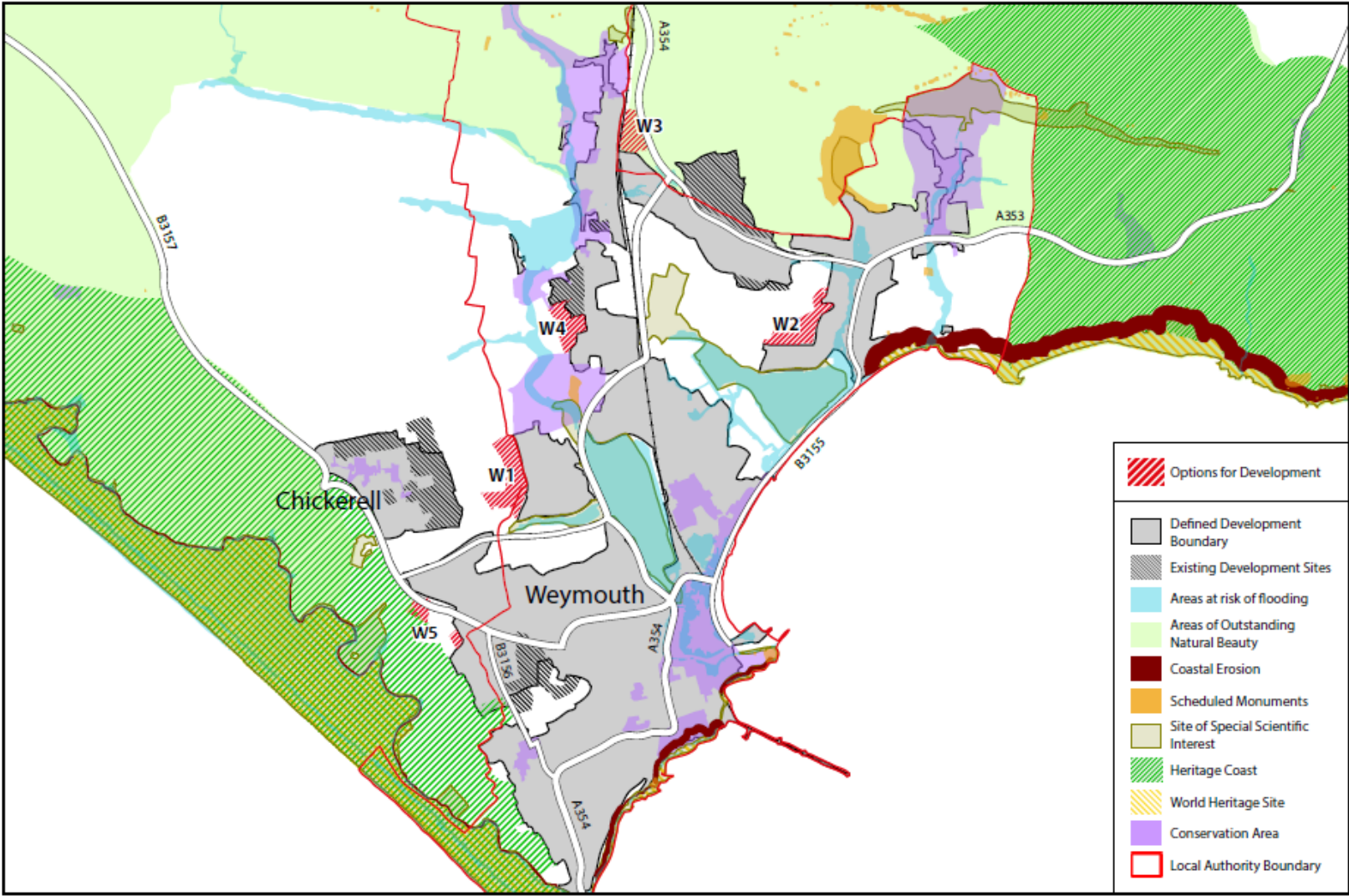
AREA	NAME	POTENTIAL IMPLICATIONS	CONCLUSION
A	Land north of Bowleaze Cove way	Impacts on European wildlife sites, World Heritage Site, scheduled monument and AONB. Vulnerable to coastal erosion and at risk of flooding.	×
B	Land north and east of Sutton Poyntz	Impacts on national wildlife designations, the Heritage Coast and the Conservation Area.	×
C	Between Sutton Poyntz and Preston	Impacts on Scheduled Monument, SNCI, AONB and Conservation Area.	×
D	Land east of Littlemoor	Impacts on Scheduled Monument, SNCI and AONB.	×
E	Land east of Upwey	Potential for development adjacent to built up area. Impacts on landscape, AONB, and heritage assets need to be given consideration.	✓
F	Land in the Lorton Valley	Impacts upon national and local wildlife designations. Area at risk of flooding.	×

AREA	NAME	POTENTIAL IMPLICATIONS	CONCLUSION
G	Wyke Oliver Farm	Potential for small scale development in the south eastern part of this area, avoiding impacts upon wildlife and landscape.	✓
H	Land north of Upwey	Impacts on landscape including AONB, conservation area and SNCI	✗
I	Land west of Upwey / Broadwey	Impacts on conservation area, landscape and AONB. Area at risk of flooding and access difficulties.	✗
J	Land north of Chickerell	Possibility for significant landscape impacts and impact on AONB.	✗
K	Nottingham	Potential for small scale development away from areas at risk of flooding. Need to consider impacts on conservation areas.	✓
L	Land East of Chickerell	Potential for development adjacent to built up area Consideration needs to be given to impact on wildlife corridor connecting SSSI to open countryside.	✓
M	Land at Weymouth Golf Course	Impacts on SSSI and the loss of golf course as a recreational facility.	✗
N	Coastal strip west of Wyke Regis	Potential for small scale development adjacent to built up area. Impact on Heritage Coast needs to be given consideration	✓

8.15 The conclusion of the first high level filter of site options has left 5 options outlined in Figure 8.5. For each option an indicative capacity has been calculated and possible development issues identified.



Figure 8.5: Options for growth at Weymouth and Chickereall



DEVELOPMENT OPTION	INDICATIVE CAPACITY (DWELLINGS)	DEVELOPMENT ISSUES
W1: West of Southill	350	Landscape impact - Potential impact on SSSI - Proximity of electricity substation.
W2: Wyke Oliver Farm	300	Redevelopment of farm buildings - Landscape impact Topographical constraints - Green link to Lodmoor.
W3: West of Relief Road, Upwey	180	Within AONB - Landscape impact - Vehicular access constraint.
W4: South of Wey Valley	200	Impact on Radipole Conservation Area - Landscape impact - Impact on listed Corfe Hill House
W5: Adjacent Budmouth College	100	Impact on Heritage Coast - Impact on international wildlife designations

8.16 Five site options have been identified adjoining the urban area of Weymouth. Any of these sites could be developed individually, but there is no reason why combinations should not be considered or smaller portions of each of the options.

8.17 At this stage, no commitment is being made to the development of any individual or group of options. Information about the potential development options is being sought. Additional work will need to be undertaken to refine site suitability and fully establish infrastructure and employment land requirements as well as constraints to development such as landscape or heritage impacts.

**8-i. Weymouth urban area has grown at an average rate of 150 dwellings per year over the last 5 years. Should we plan for a lower level of growth, maintain that level of growth, or take a strategic longer term view for the growth of the town?**

**8-ii. Are there any additional issues related to the development of the site options?**

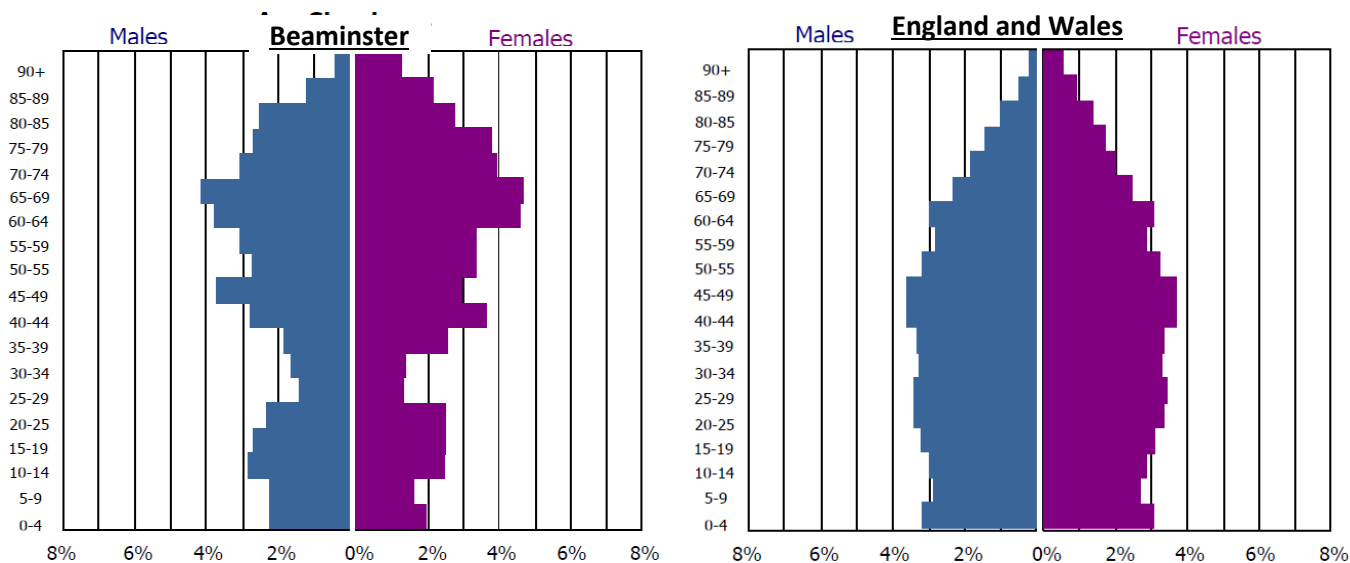
**8-iii. What are the infrastructure requirements for the development of the sites options, individually or in combination with others?**

## 9. Development at Beaminster

### TOWN PROFILE

- 9.1 Beaminster is a small rural market town, located wholly within the Dorset AONB. It has a population of just over 3,000 and provides services and facilities to the surrounding rural area. It has a secondary school, a range of local shops and community facilities in its centre, and some significant local businesses.
- 9.2 The town lies about 8km north of Bridport, on the A3066, at the source of the River Brit. Crewkerne lies about 10km north-west of the town, with its rail links to London Waterloo, Sherborne and Exeter. Beaminster has an impressive landscape setting, set within a bowl of hills that provide a dramatic backdrop to the north of the town.
- 9.3 There is a net out-flow of workers (by about 400), as there are more economically active residents than people working in the town. The major employers in the town are Clipper Teas, Danisco and Dorset County Council.

Figure 9.1: Age Structure – Beaminster



### INSPECTOR'S COMMENTS ON GROWTH AT BEAMINSTER

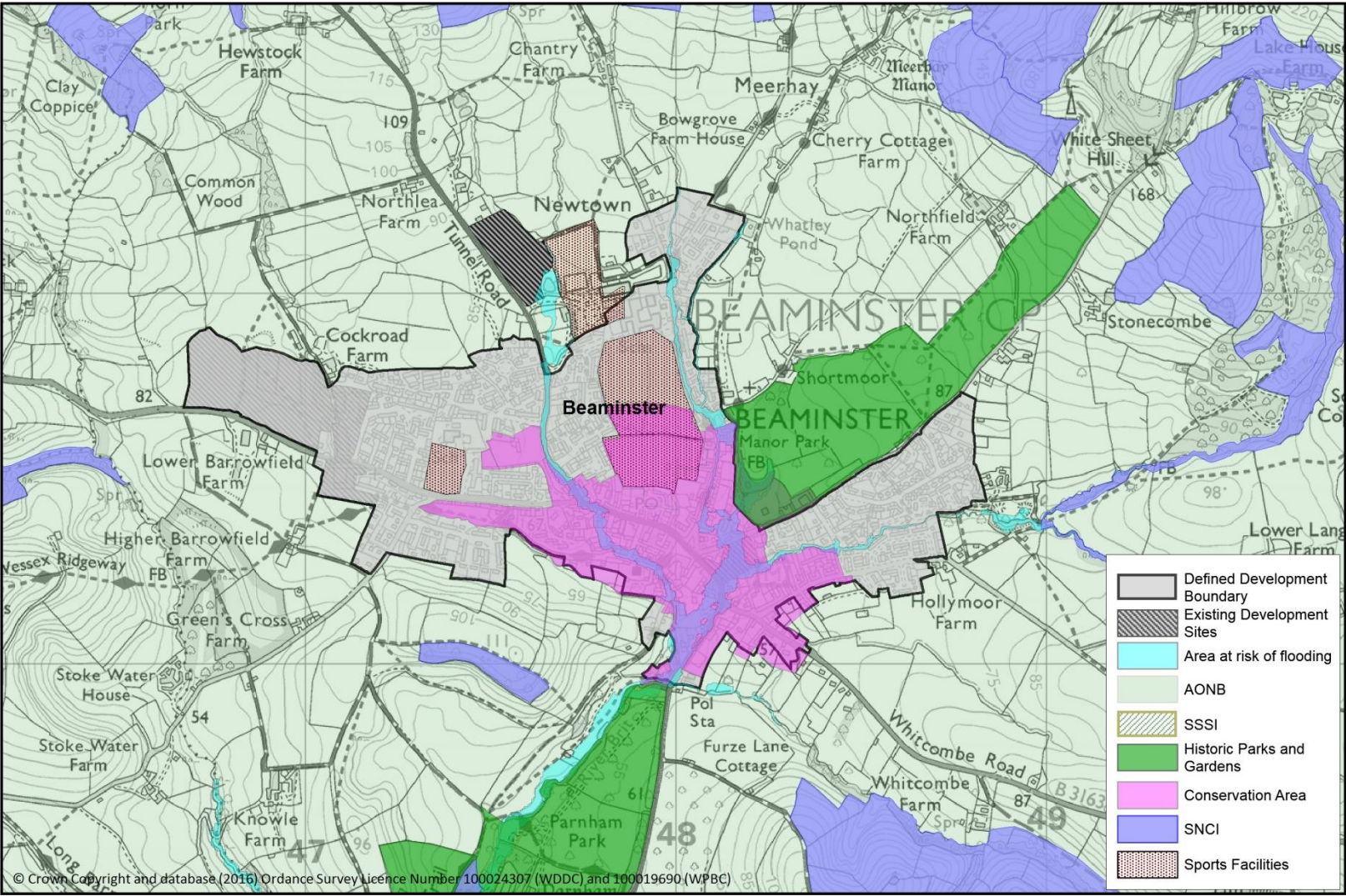
- 9.4 The planning inspector's report into the West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan noted that *“three sites were identified in the Pre-Submission Plan as suitable locations for housing provision in Beaminster but were later reduced to one following public consultation on the draft proposals”*. Local residents cited road safety concerns along a narrow section of East Street in relation to the proposal at Hollymore Lane.
- 9.5 The inspector noted that the *“Highway Authority has been unable to resolve complaints about this problem”*. It was suggested that a 'shared surface' could provide a workable solution and the Inspector was of the view that such a surface *“could help offset safety issues although further work should be undertaken to determine what level of additional development could be accommodated”*.

- 9.6 In relation to the Land off Broadwindsor Road allocation (BEAM1) for 120 dwellings, the Inspector concluded that the site does not represent *“major development in the AONB”* however he did accept that the site would represent *“a significant scheme for Beaminster”*.
- 9.7 The inspector went on to state that he had *“had regard to its potential impact on the landscape while recognising that some development is required to maintain the vitality of the settlement”* and concluded that *“there are exceptional circumstances to support the allocation because of the need for new homes and jobs”*.

## ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS AROUND THE TOWN

- 9.8 Beaminster is constrained by:
- the Dorset AONB;
  - the River Brit floodplain
  - Scheduled monuments and listed buildings
  - Beaminster Conservation Area; and
  - Beaminster Manor & Parnham House Registered Park and Gardens.

Figure 9.2: Constraints around Beaminster.



## OPPORTUNITIES

9.9 The National Planning Policy Framework is clear that there are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. Future growth at Beaminster will help to:

### Economic

- Support further jobs provision in the town;
- Continue its role as a local service centre to surrounding villages;

### Social

- Meet local needs for housing including affordable housing;
- Improve accessibility to community facilities including schools;

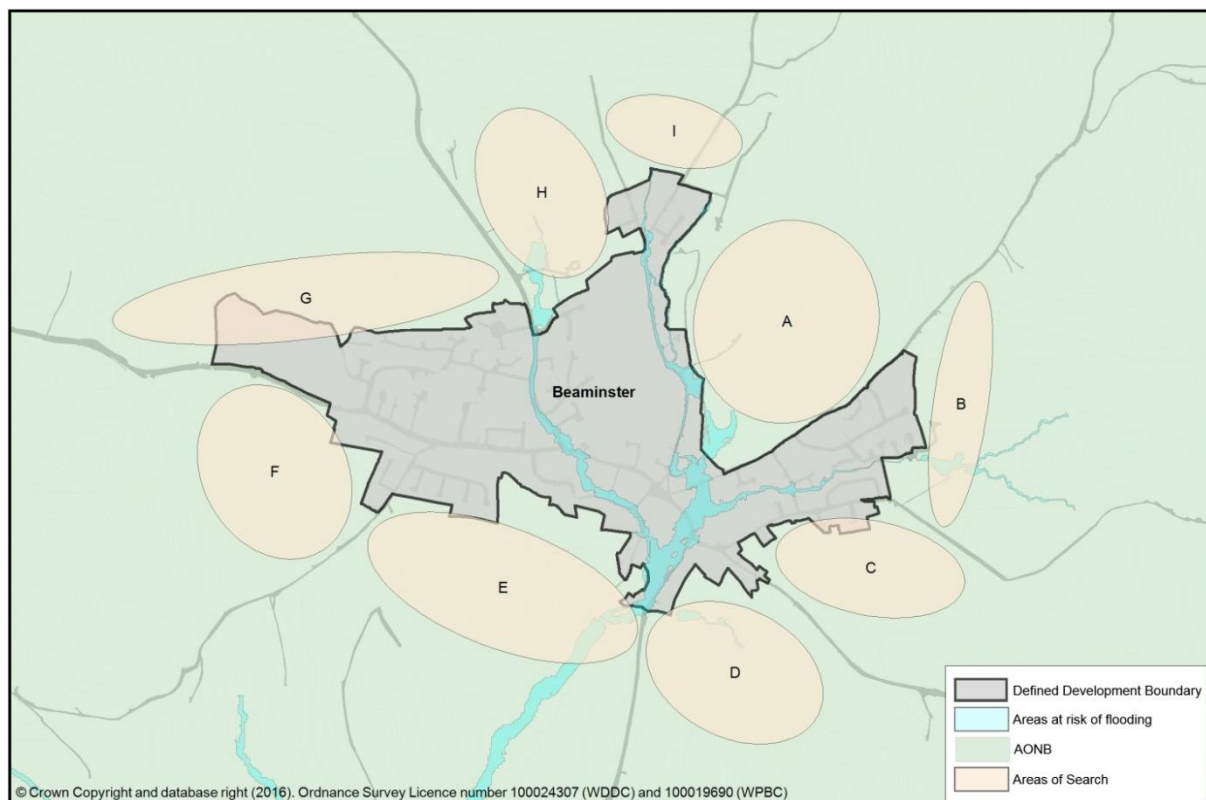
### Environmental

- Retain its attractive historic character;
- Respect the beauty of the surrounding countryside;
- Help resolve transport issues.

## POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENT SITES

9.10 In considering the future growth options at Beaminster the Council has undertaken an initial 360 degree search of all possible development site options around the town. Unsuitable options have been discounted at an early stage through an initial site sieving exercise which can be viewed in the accompanying background paper and sustainability appraisal.

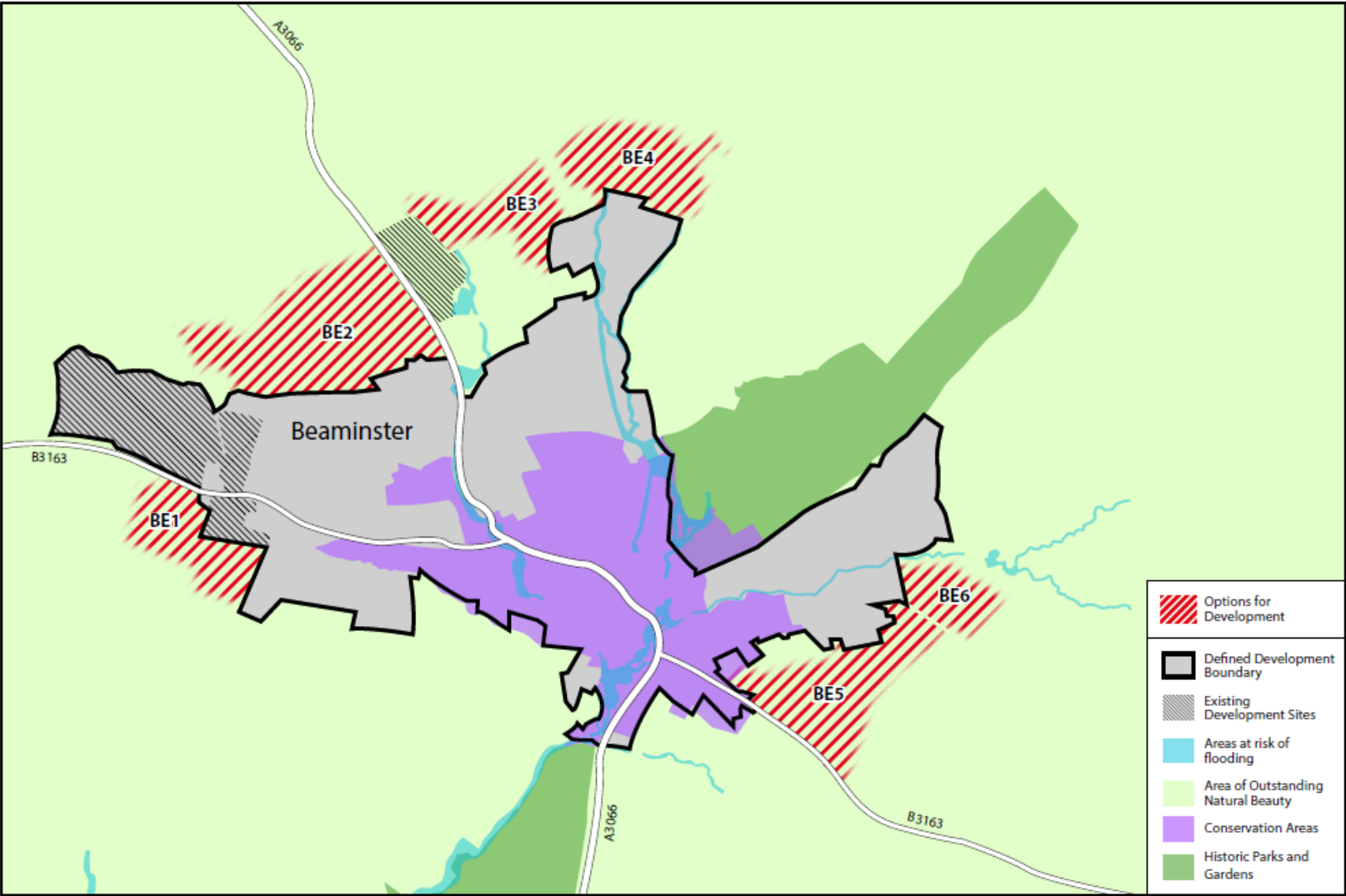
Figure 9.3: Broad areas of search – Beaminster



AREA	NAME	POTENTIAL IMPLICATIONS	CONCLUSION
A	North-East of Beaminster	Impacts on AONB, landscape, Historic Park and Garden and setting of Beaminster Conservation Area	×
B	East of Beaminster	Impacts on AONB, landscape, Historic Park and Garden and SNCI. Potential for development in the south of this area.	✓
C	Land between Whitcombe Road & Hollymoor Common Lane	Impacts on AONB, landscape, Beaminster conservation area. Potential for development in the north of this area.	✓
D	Land between Bridport Road & Whitcombe Road	Impacts on AONB, landscape, Historic Park and Garden, Beaminster conservation area and SNCI. Part of area is at risk of flooding.	×
E	South of Beaminster	Impacts on AONB, landscape, SNCI, Historic Park and Garden and Beaminster conservation area. Part of area is at risk of flooding.	×
F	South of Broadwindsor Road	Impacts on AONB, landscape and heritage assets.	✓
G	West of Tunnel Road	Impacts on AONB, landscape and heritage assets.	✓
H	East of Tunnel Road	Impacts on AONB and landscape. Part of area is at risk of flooding.	✓
I	North of Beaminster	Impact on AONB and landscape impacts	✓

9.11 The conclusion of the first high level filter of site options has identified six options outlined in figure 9.4. For each option an indicative capacity has been calculated and possible development issues have been identified.

Figure 9.4 Options for growth at Beaminster





DEVELOPMENT OPTIONS	INDICATIVE CAPACITY (DWELLINGS)	POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT ISSUES
Be1: South of Broadwindsor Road	115	Within Dorset AONB - Impact on listed Barrowfield Farmhouse and other buildings
Be2: West of Tunnel Road	278	Within Dorset AONB - Potential heritage impact
Be3: West of Chantry Lane	95	Within Dorset AONB - Landscape impact - Highway capacity
Be4: Off Bowgrove Road	149	Within Dorset AONB - Landscape impact - Impact on listed Bowgrove Farmhouse - Highway capacity
Be5: East of Whitcombe Road	161	Within Dorset AONB - Impact on listed Edgely Cottage and listed buildings in East Street
Be6: North of Hollymoor Common Lane	51	Within Dorset AONB - Impact on listed buildings in East Street

9.12 Although the table and map presents six options that could be developed individually there is no reason why they could not come forward in combination or as smaller parcels.

9.13 At this stage, no commitment is being made to the development of any individual or group of options. Information about the potential development options is being sought. Additional work will need to be undertaken to further refine site suitability and fully establish infrastructure and employment land requirements as well as constraints to development such as landscape or heritage impacts.

**9-i. Beaminster has grown at an average rate of just 3 dwellings a year over the last 5 years. Should we maintain that level of growth, or take a strategic longer term view for the growth of the town?**

**9-ii. Are there any additional issues related to the development of the site options?**

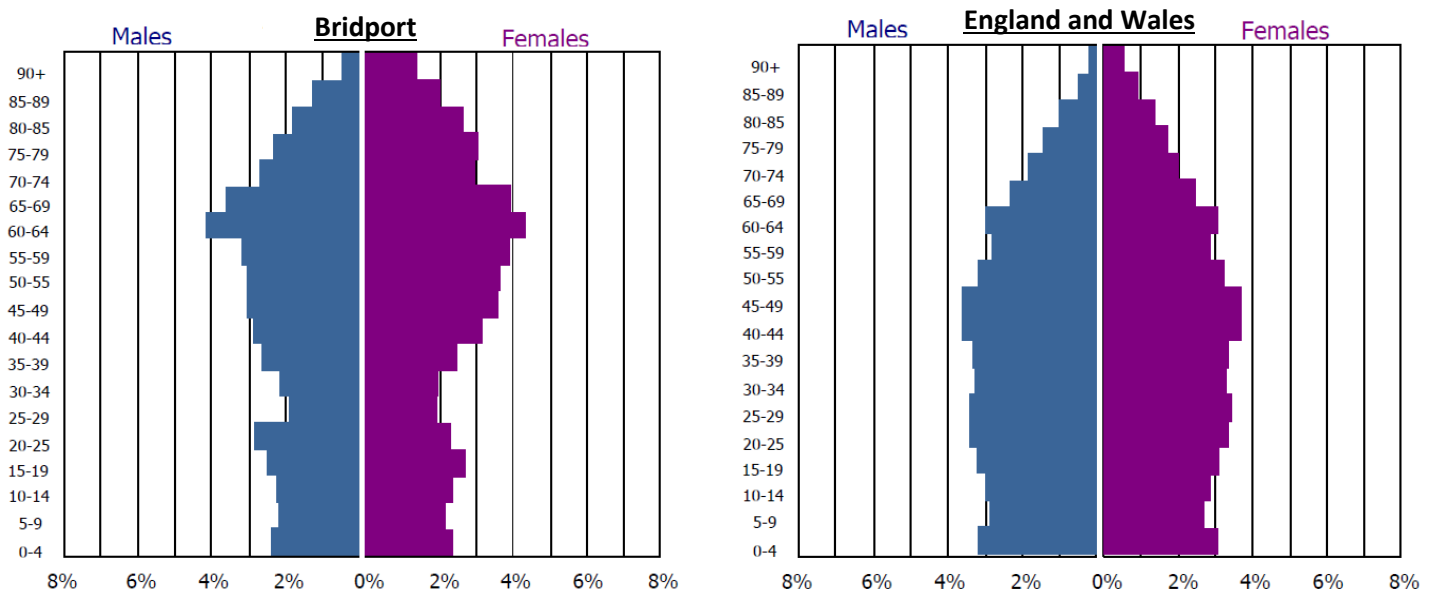
**9-iii. What are the infrastructure requirements for the development of the site options, individually or in combination with others?**

## 10. Development at Bridport

### SETTLEMENT PROFILE

- 10.1 Located within the Dorset AONB, Bridport is the largest town in the west of the district. The busy market town is located on the A35 south coast trunk road about 20km west of Dorchester, and extends south to the harbour at West Bay.
- 10.2 Bridport has a population of about 13,660<sup>6</sup> people within the built-up area (which includes parts of the adjoining parishes of Allington, Bradpole and Bothenhampton). The population structure for Bridport is shown in Figure 10.1.

Figure 10.1: Population structure – Bridport



- 10.3 It has a popular weekly market, a good range of local and national shops, healthcare centre, schools, community buildings, and several industrial estates. These factors make it the most suitable and sustainable location for further development in this part of the district.
- 10.4 Bridport serves a wide rural area for higher level services such as shopping, education, healthcare, leisure, entertainment and library services. The town is however relatively well self contained with the number of people working in the town slightly higher than the total number of economically active residents, by about 900.
- 10.5 The closest railway stations to Bridport are at Dorchester on the Weymouth to London (Waterloo) line and on the Weymouth to Bristol line; and at Axminster on the Exeter to London (Waterloo) line. There are reasonably regular bus services to and from the town.

<sup>6</sup> 2014 mid-year population estimates

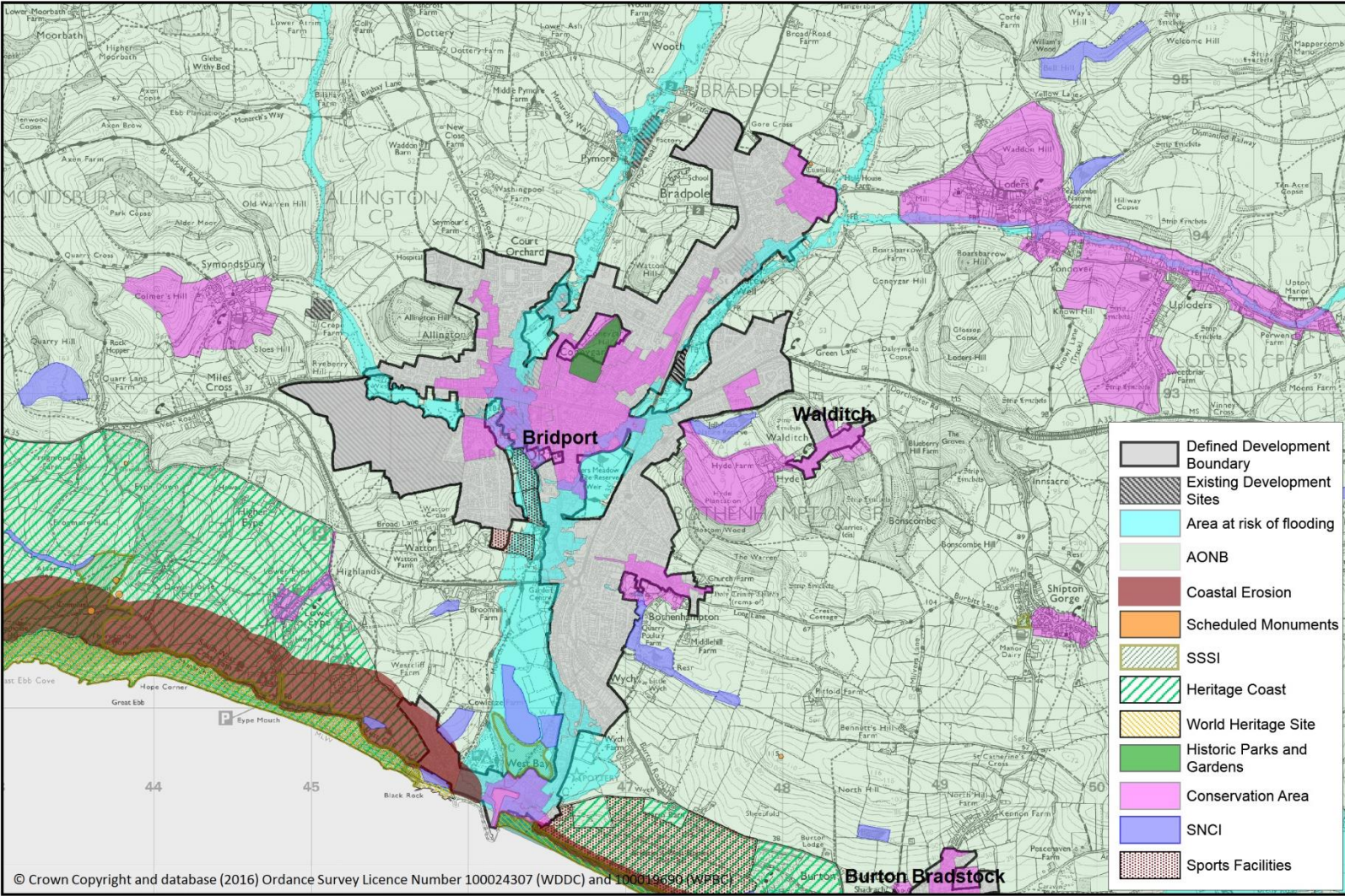
## INSPECTOR'S COMMENTS ON GROWTH AT BRIDPORT

- 10.6 The inspector noted that *“as the largest settlement in this part of West Dorset, Bridport was the most suitable location to meet future development needs in both the immediate and wider area”*.
- 10.7 While national policy protects AONBs from major development unless there are exceptional circumstances and development is in the public interest, the inspector acknowledged that the *“Councils are well aware of the importance of protecting designated landscape but face the difficult problem of balancing such concerns with the need to provide homes and jobs to meet future needs”*. The inspector recognised that *“In order to achieve this and adhere to sustainable development principles it is inevitable that some areas in the AONB will be affected”*.
- 10.8 The inspector concluded that there were *“exceptional circumstances to justify the identification of Vearse Farm”* as an allocation within the local plan. He stated that his overall view was that Vearse Farm was a *“relatively well-contained site bounded to the west and south by the A35 bypass, by the B3162 to the north and the current western limits to the town on the east”*. The scale of the development (760 dwellings) was considered by the inspector to offer opportunities to address some traffic issues and introduce new facilities into the town.

## ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS AROUND THE TOWN

- 10.9 Bridport is constrained by:
- the Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB);
  - extensive areas at flood risk;
  - the surrounding topography;
  - the World Heritage Site designation of the adjoining coastline;
  - Bridport, Bothenhampton, Bradpole, Walditch and West Bay Conservation Areas; and
  - Downe Hall Historic Parks and Garden.

Figure 10.2: Constraints around Bridport



- 10.10 The relationship of the surrounding hills with the flood meadows is central to the character of Bridport. The town is located between the meadows and the hills which, therefore, dictate its boundaries and form. The flood meadow areas are important as buffers between the older town and newer development to the east, and act as open spaces within the town.
- 10.11 In addition to these, a large area of parkland at Walditch is important to the character and setting of both Bridport and Walditch, and a disused quarry at Bothenhampton is a valuable wildlife site.

## OPPORTUNITIES

- 10.12 The National Planning Policy Framework is clear that there are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. Future growth at Bridport will help:

### Economic

- Meet the growth needs of the western part of West Dorset in the most sustainable location;
- Support the continued prosperity of the town supporting existing and new facilities;

### Social

- Provide much needed affordable housing within the town;
- Complement the development of Vearse Farm and other allocations by providing for growth needs in the longer term;

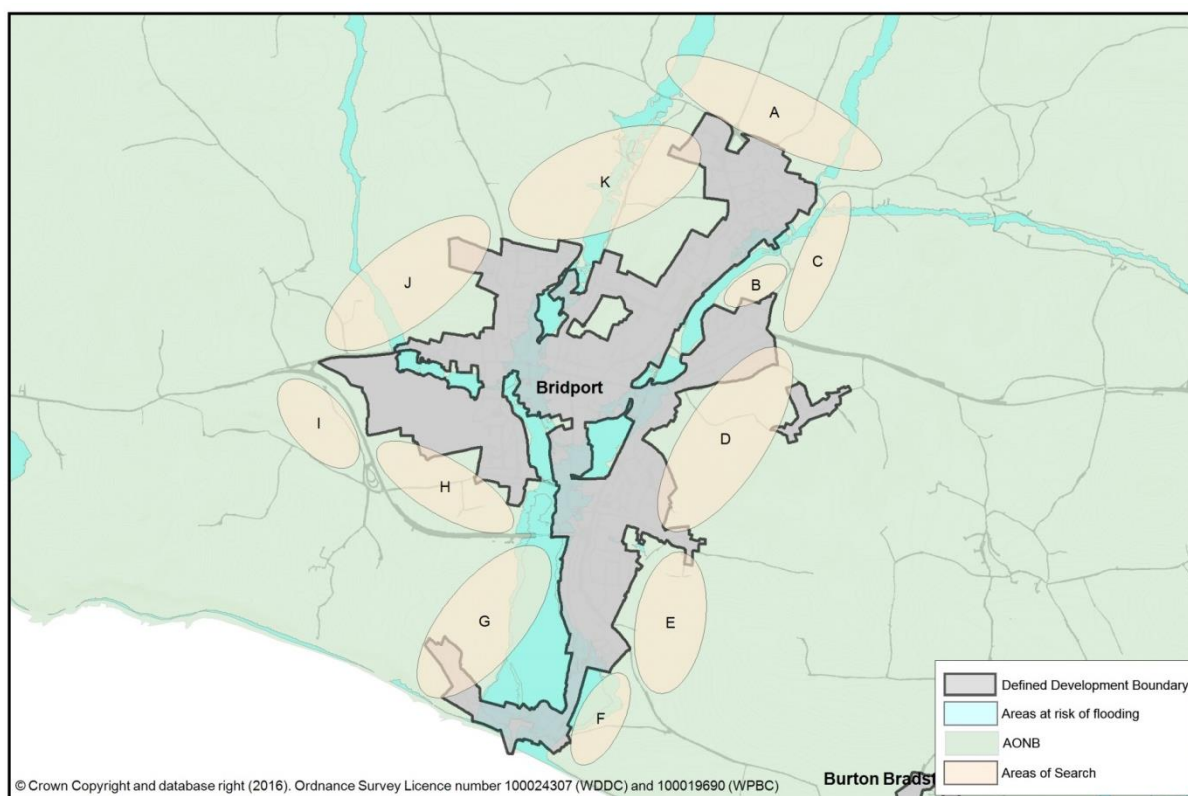
### Environmental

- Respect the town's character derived from its heritage, the Dorset AONB, the floodplain, the surrounding topography and countryside views.

## POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENT SITES

- 10.13 In considering the future growth options at Bridport the councils have undertaken an initial 360 degree search of all possible development site options around the town. Unsuitable options have been discounted at an early stage through an initial site sieving exercise with more detail in the accompanying background paper and sustainability appraisal.

Figure 10.3: Broad Areas of Search – Bridport

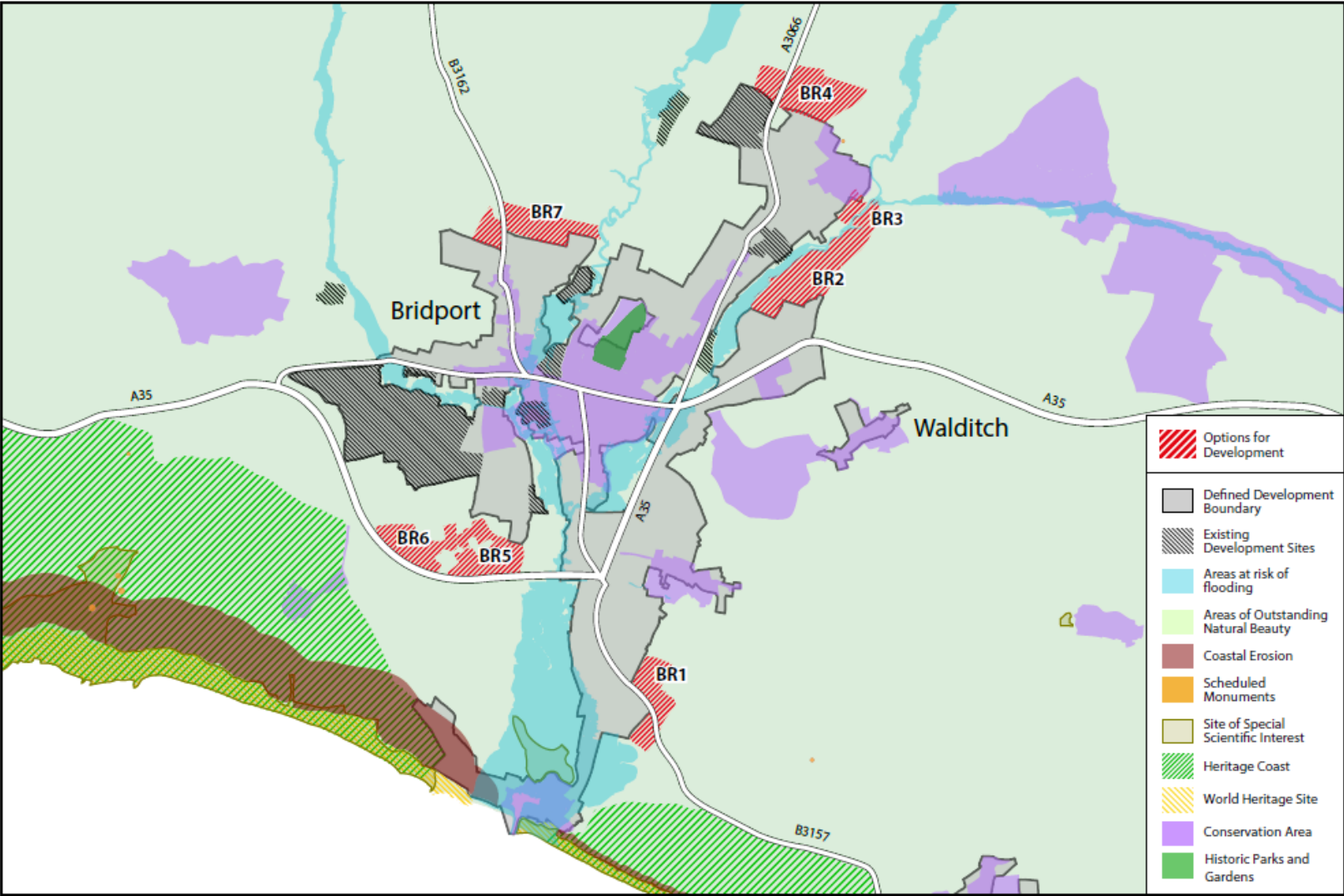


AREA	NAME	POTENTIAL IMPLICATIONS	CONCLUSION
A	North of Bradpole	Potential for some development in this area avoiding impacts on Dorset AONB, landscape and the parts of area at risk of flooding.	✓
B	Happy Island Way	Potential for development within this area avoiding impacts on the Dorset AONB and areas at risk of flooding.	✓
C	East of Lee Lane	Potential for development within this area avoiding impacts on the Dorset AONB	✓
D	Land between Bridport and Walditch	Within Dorset AONB, impacts on SNCI, landscape and conservation areas.	✗
E	East of Wych	Potential for development within this area avoiding impacts on Dorset AONB, SNCI and landscape.	✓
F	East of West Bay	Potential for development within this area avoiding impacts on Dorset AONB, the Heritage Coast and areas at risk from flooding.	✓
G	North-West of West Bay	Within Dorset AONB, impacts on SSSI. Part of area at risk of flooding and vulnerable to coastal erosion.	✗

AREA	NAME	POTENTIAL IMPLICATIONS	CONCLUSION
H	Watton	Potential for some development within the bypass avoiding impacts on the Dorset AONB, on the SNCI and avoiding areas at risk of flooding.	✓
I	Land south of Miles Cross	Within Dorset AONB, impact on landscape due to topography, physically separated from built up area	✗
J	West of Allington	Potential for some development in north east avoiding impacts on Dorset AONB, on the landscape and elevated areas around Allington Hill. Part of area at risk of flooding	✓
K	West of Bradpole / Pymore	Potential for some development adjacent to existing urban edge in south west of the area avoiding impact on Dorset AONB, landscape and areas at risk of flooding.	✓

The conclusion of the first high level filter of site options has left seven options outlined in Figure 10.4. For each option an indicative capacity has been calculated and possible development issues identified.

Figure 10.4 Options for growth at Bridport





DEVELOPMENT OPTION	INDICATIVE CAPACITY (DWELLINGS)	DEVELOPMENT ISSUES
Br1: East of Wychside Close	160	Within Dorset AONB - Impact on landscape - Impact on listed Wych Farmhouse - Adjacent to SNCI - Impact Heritage Coast
Br2: Happy Island Way	230	Within Dorset AONB - Impact on landscape - Impact on listed Whitehouse Farmhouse - Steep slope to River Asker - Opportunity to secure significant recreation space
Br3: Home Farm, Bradpole	140	Within Dorset AONB - Impact on landscape - Impact on listed Whitehouse Farmhouse, Stepps Farmhouse and Home Farmhouse - Steep slope to River Asker - Opportunity to secure significant recreation space
Br4: Land north of Watford Lane / Gore Lane	290	Within Dorset AONB - Impact on landscape - Distance from town centre - Relatively high ground
Br5: East of Watton	190	Within Dorset AONB - Impact on landscape - Impact on listed Providence Cottage and associated Coach House - Access issues
Br6: West of Watton	170	Within Dorset AONB - Impact on landscape - Access issues
Br7: Dottery Road	220	Within Dorset AONB - Impact on landscape - Impact on listed building on Dottery Road

10.14 Although Figure 10.4 presents seven options that could be developed individually, they could come forward in combination or as smaller parcels.

10.15 At this stage, no commitment is being made to the development of any individual or group of options. Information about the potential development options is being sought. Additional work will need to be undertaken to refine site suitability and fully establish infrastructure and employment land requirements as well as constraints to development such as landscape or heritage impacts.

**10-i. Bridport has grown at an average rate of 20 dwellings per year over the last 5 years. This development rate is likely to be increased to approximately 100 per year until 2030. Should we plan for a level of growth lower than 100 per year, maintain that level of growth, or plan for a higher level of growth for the town?**

**10-ii. Are there any additional issues related to the development of any of the site options?**

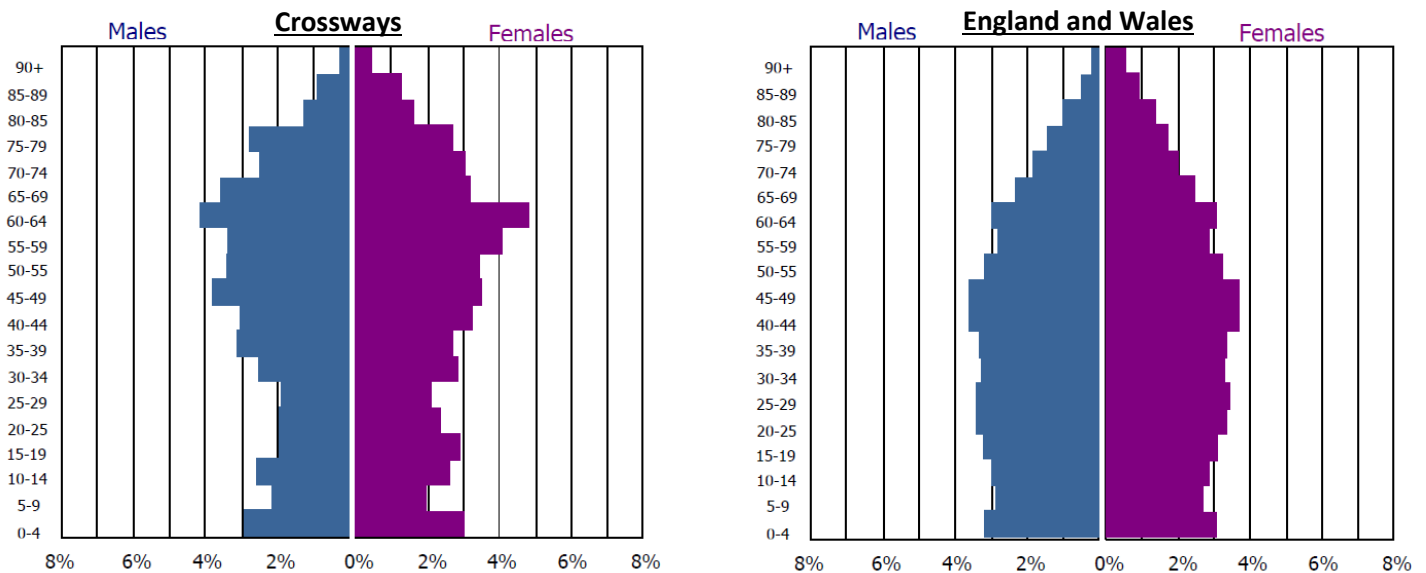
**10-iii. What are the infrastructure requirements for the development of the site options, individually or in combination with others?**

## 11. Development at Crossways

### SETTLEMENT PROFILE

11.1 Crossways parish has a population of 2,267 (2011 Census). The population structure is shown in the population pyramid below.

Figure 11.1: Population structure - Crossways



11.2 The area now occupied by Crossways village was formerly an RAF fighter airbase. This airbase, known as RAF Warmwell, played an important role during the Second World War.

11.3 The village sits on the Weymouth to London (Waterloo) railway line approximately 6 miles to the east of Dorchester. Moreton railway station is located in Purbeck district just to the north east of the village. The village acts as a dormitory for Dorchester and towns further to the east. Although the village hosts a number of facilities such as the school, shop and doctors' surgery, it relies on Dorchester for many higher level services.

11.4 Areas around the village hold an important resource of sand and gravel. Much of the resource around the village has already been extracted with further areas proposed for extraction in the County Minerals Sites Plan.

### INSPECTOR'S COMMENTS ON GROWTH AT CROSSWAYS

11.5 The inspector recognised the potential sustainability of the settlement of Crossways however he also recognised that due to the limited services in the village, many people are likely to rely on their cars.

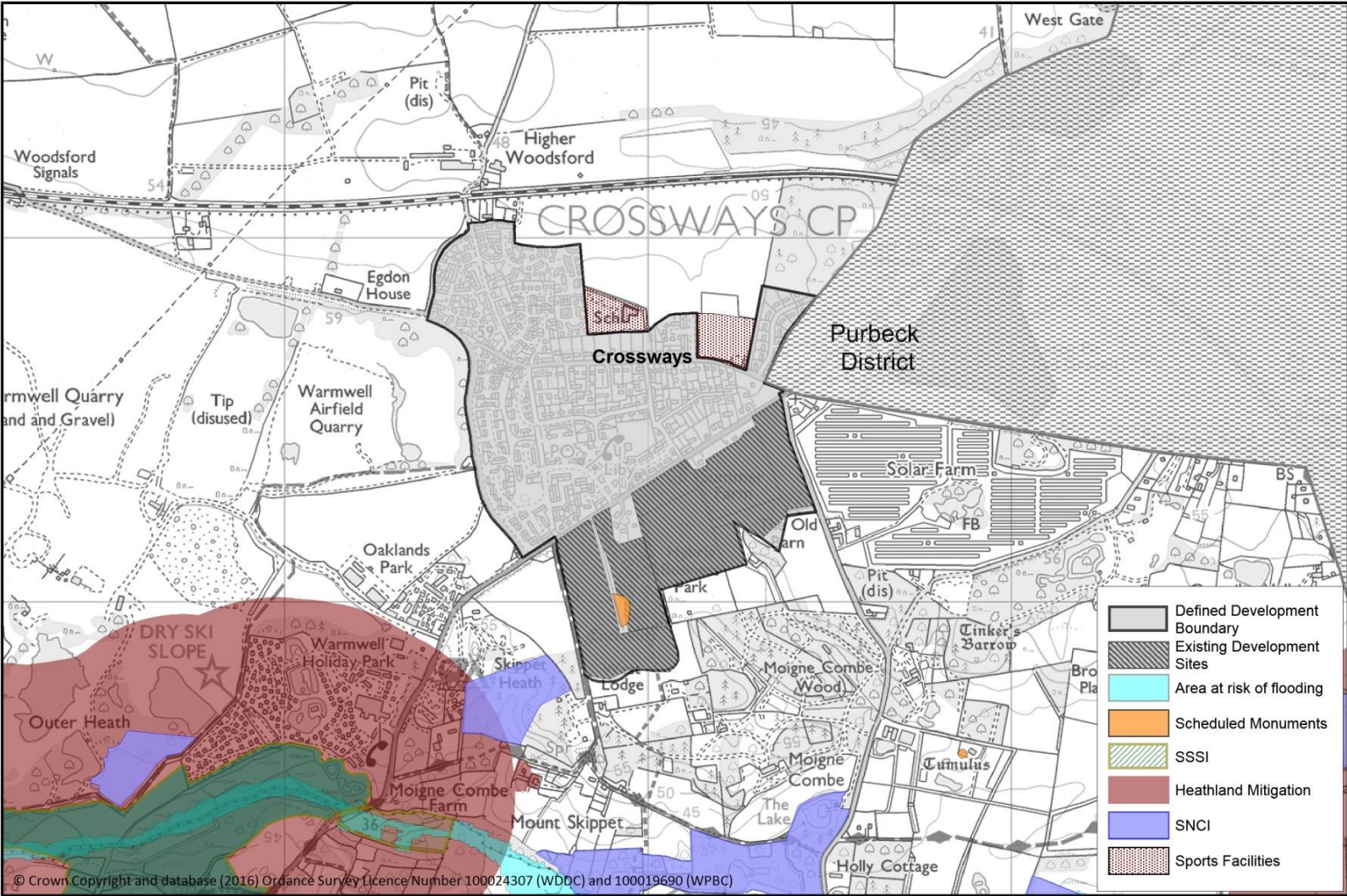
11.6 During the preparation of the now-adopted local plan, the councils identified a number of options for housing growth at Crossways. The inspector was of the view that *"there are limited differences between the sites originally identified for housing purposes."* with each of them being *"a broadly sustainable location"* for residential development.

- 11.7 In relation to the proposed sites, the inspector concluded that the site at Frome Valley Road *“would extend the village into more open landscape.”* This site now has planning consent for residential development.
- 11.8 The inspector concluded that the Woodsford Fields site to the north of the village *“would be contained by the railway line.”* He commented that the site *“is of sufficient merit to warrant consideration as a location for longer-term development.”*
- 11.9 In early drafts of the local plan, the village of Crossways was earmarked for significant growth to offset some of the development needs of Dorchester. The inspector concluded that *“without substantial enhancements to transport links I do not consider it is a particularly sustainable option for meeting the longer term needs of the county town.”*
- 11.10 The inspector noted that Purbeck District Council is reviewing its Local Plan and there may be implications for the Crossways area. He recognised that a joint approach is needed should growth in this location be seen as a longer-term option.

## ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS AROUND THE VILLAGE

- 11.11 In comparison with other settlements in the plan area, Crossways is relatively unconstrained. The main constraint is its proximity to internationally protected Dorset Heathlands. These sites have a 400-metre exclusion buffer around them where residential development is not permitted. In addition, mitigation in the form of suitable alternative natural greenspace (i.e. recreation space) (SANGs) is required for any site within 5 kilometres. This 5 kilometre buffer covers the whole of Crossways village.
- 11.12 Other constraints include:
- The Earthwork in Bowley's Plantation scheduled monument to the south;
  - Skippet Heath SNCI to the south;
  - The boundary between Purbeck District and West Dorset District, which touches the north eastern corner of the village;
  - Areas reserved for minerals extraction.

Figure 11.2: Constraints around Crossways



## OPPORTUNITIES

11.13 The National Planning Policy Framework is clear that there are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. Future growth at Crossways will help:

### Economic

- support longer term economic growth and job creation in the area;
- maintain and improve the variety of facilities and services in the village;
- provide opportunities to improve local roads and connections to Moreton station;

### Social

- supply housing to help meet needs including the increasing the supply of affordable homes;
- provide opportunities for more families to move into the village;
- improve the viability of local facilities;

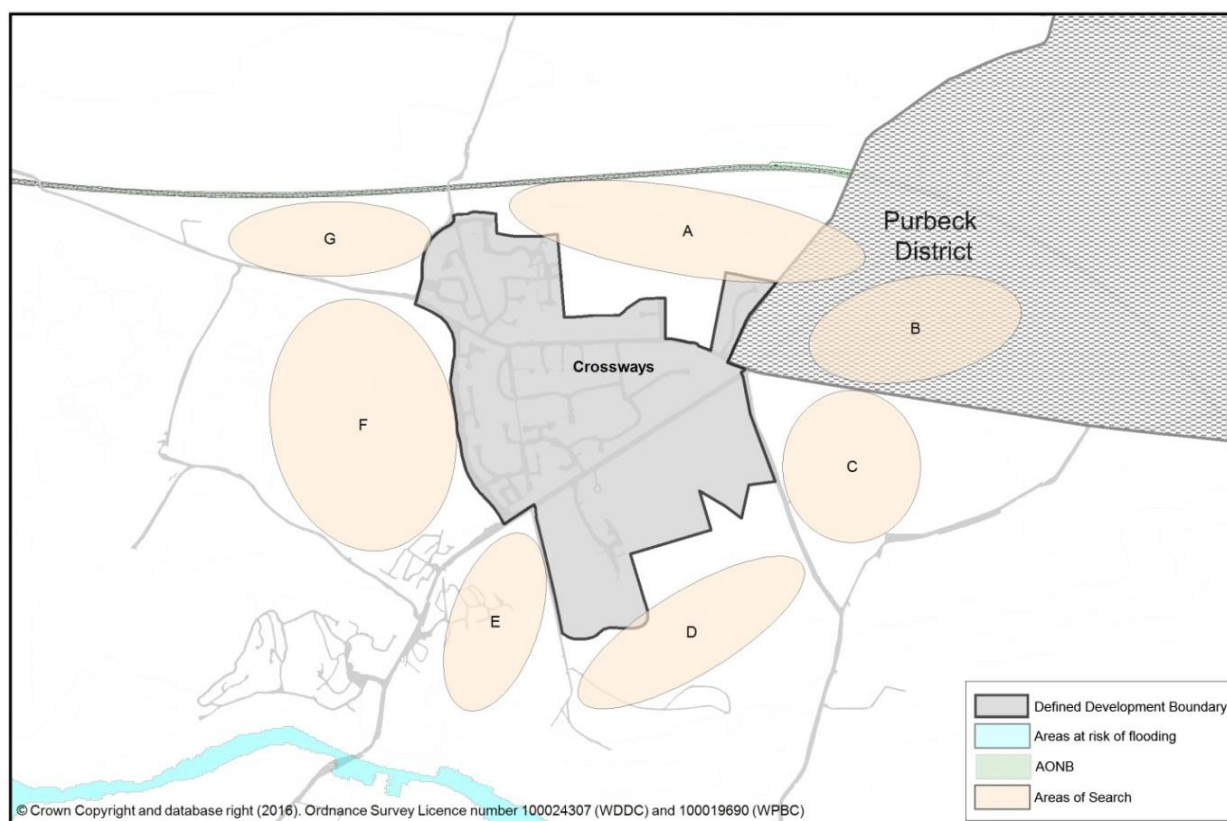
### Environmental

- offer the opportunity to upgrade the sewage treatment works;
- help to maintain the wider valued wildlife and the natural environment by providing SANGs;
- opportunities for improved formal and informal recreation.

## POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENT SITES

11.14 In considering the future growth options at Crossways, the Council has undertaken an initial 360 degree search of all possible development site options around the village. Unsuitable options have been discounted at an early stage through an initial site sieving exercise with more detail in the accompanying background paper and sustainability appraisal.

Figure 11.3: Broad areas of search – Crossways



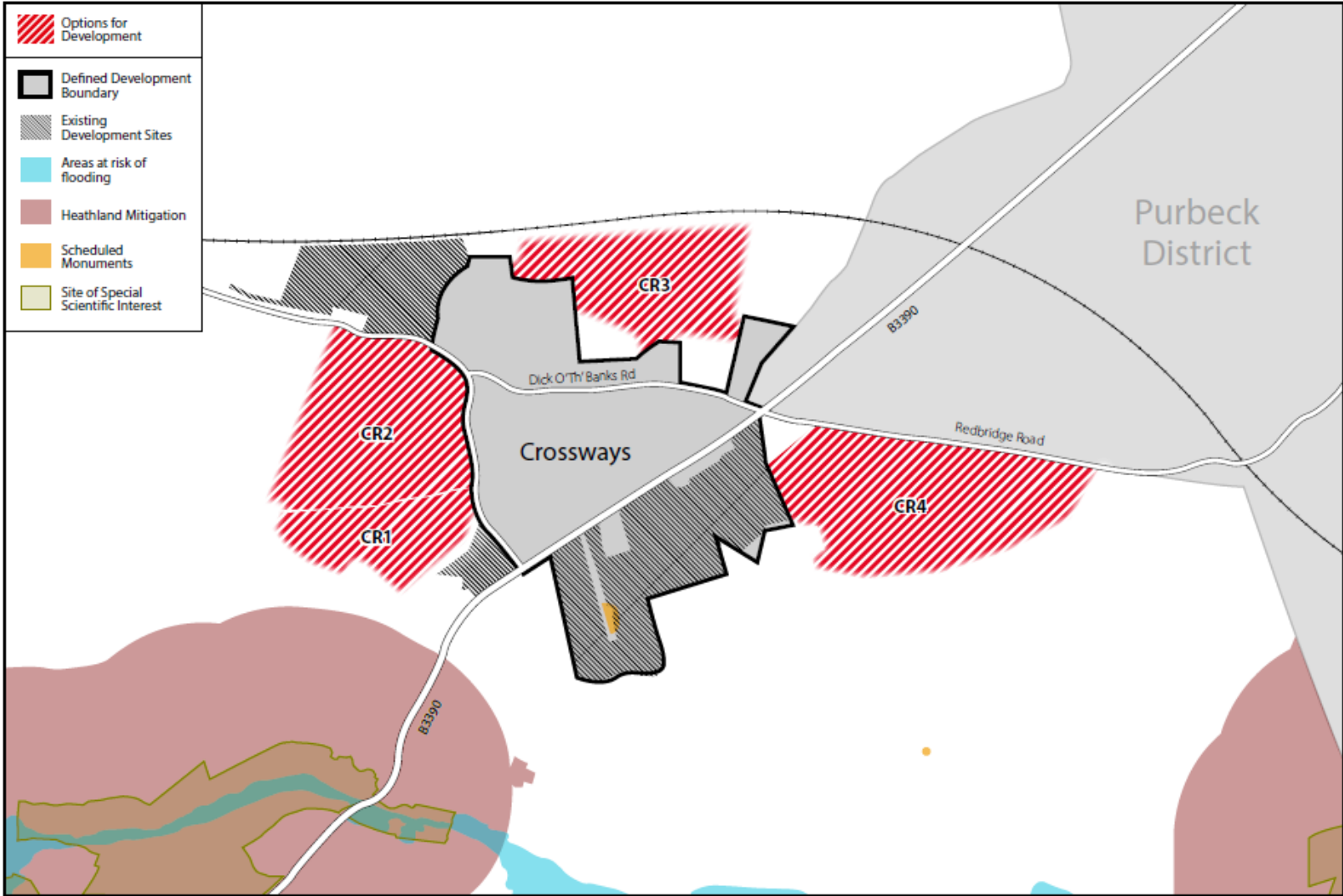
AREA	NAME	POTENTIAL IMPLICATIONS	CONCLUSION
A	Land at Woodsford Fields	Considered by Inspector to be a realistic option for development, SANG required as part of any scheme.	✓
B	Land within Purbeck District	Within Purbeck District (Currently being promoted by Purbeck District Council in the partial review of their Local Plan).	-
C	Land between Moreton Road and Redbridge Road	Currently in use as a solar farm with a temporary permission (expires 2036). Theoretically this is a longer term development option. SANG required as part of any scheme.	✓
D	Land south of existing allocation	Forms part of the SANG for the allocated site therefore cannot be developed without further SANG provision.	✗
E	Land west of Warmwell Road allocation	Currently Warmwell Country Touring Park, part of the SANG for the Warmwell Road allocation and part SNCI	✗

AREA	NAME	POTENTIAL IMPLICATIONS	CONCLUSION
F	Land to the west of the link road, west of Crossways	In part covered by Warmwell Airfield Quarry with the remainder being open farmland. The development of this area would result in breaching of the link road. SANG required as part of any scheme.	✓
G	Land to the north of Frome Valley Road	This area already has planning consent for residential development.	-

- 11.15 As a result of the initial sieve of potential development areas, the sites in Figure 11.4 have been identified as possible options for growth at Crossways that merit further consideration. For each an indicative level of development has been calculated and potential development issues have been identified.



Figure 11.4 Options for growth at Crossways



DEVELOPMENT OPTIONS	INDICATIVE CAPACITY (DWELLINGS)	POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT ISSUES
Cr1 West Crossways	250	SANG required - Impact on road network - detached from settlement due to link road
Cr2 Warmwell Airfield Quarry	500	SANG required - Impact on road network - detached from settlement due to link road
Cr3 Woodsford Fields	400	SANG required - Impact on road network - Enclosed between settlement and railway - Provision of links to railway station
CrS4 Redbridge Road Quarry and Landfill	600	Currently a solar farm (expires in 2036) - SANG required - Impact on road network

- 11.16 Although the table and map present site options that could be developed individually there is no reason why different combinations should not be considered. For example, CROS1 and CROS2 could be developed together to deliver higher levels of growth. No matter which option is finally taken forward, a full assessment of infrastructure, employment land and mitigation requirements will be necessary.
- 11.17 The potential options will be subject to further work including assessments of landscape and heritage impacts, the potential for impacts on nearby wildlife sites and impacts on transport/the local road network.

**11-i. Crossways has grown at an average rate of 14 dwellings a year over the last 5 years with the development rate expected to rise to around 60 dwellings per year as the current allocation is built. Should we plan for a lower level of growth than the 60 dwellings per year, maintain that level of growth or should a strategic longer term view for the growth of the village be planned?**

**11-ii. Are there any additional issues related to the development of any of the site options?**

**11-iii. What are the infrastructure requirements for the development of the site options, individually or in combination with others?**

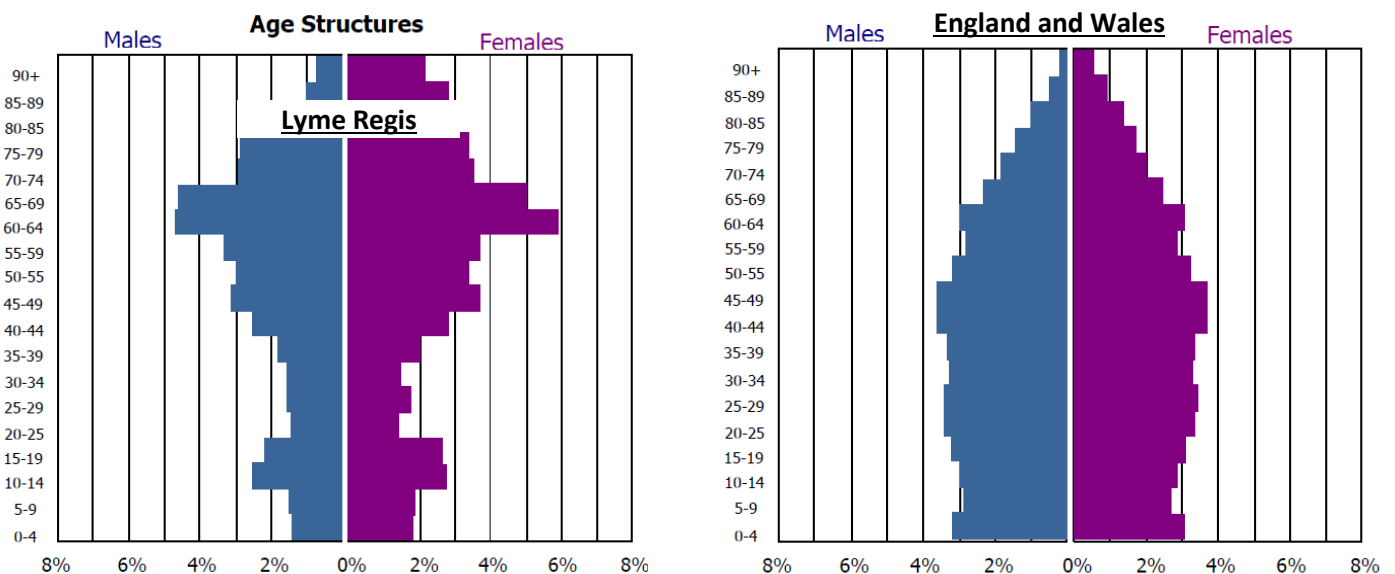
## 12. Development at Lyme Regis

### TOWN PROFILE

12.1 Lyme Regis is situated on the westernmost edge of West Dorset district, on the border with East Devon and wholly within the Dorset AONB. The town is an historic coastal town with a resident population of around 3,670. A further 1,663 people live in the adjoining village of Uplyme in East Devon.

12.2 The population structure for Lyme Regis is shown in the following population pyramid.

Figure 12.1 Population Pyramid - Lyme Regis



12.3 The town is one of Dorset's principal tourist resorts and an important centre for visitors to the World Heritage Coast. As a result, the town has the problem of having a significant number of second and holiday homes. Figures from 2011 show that more than 20% of the housing stock are second homes.

12.4 Land instability is an issue for parts of the town and coastal defence works have recently been completed.

12.5 The town is relatively self-contained in terms of employment, as there are about 1,500 economically active residents and 1,300 people working in the town. The type of employment offered is predominantly in accommodation and food service activities with major employers in the town being Dorset County Council and Lyme Regis Community Care Ltd.

12.6 Challenges for the local plan include taking advantage of the economic benefits of tourism and the World Heritage Site location, while meeting the local needs for affordable housing and jobs, and protecting the town's unique character and environment.

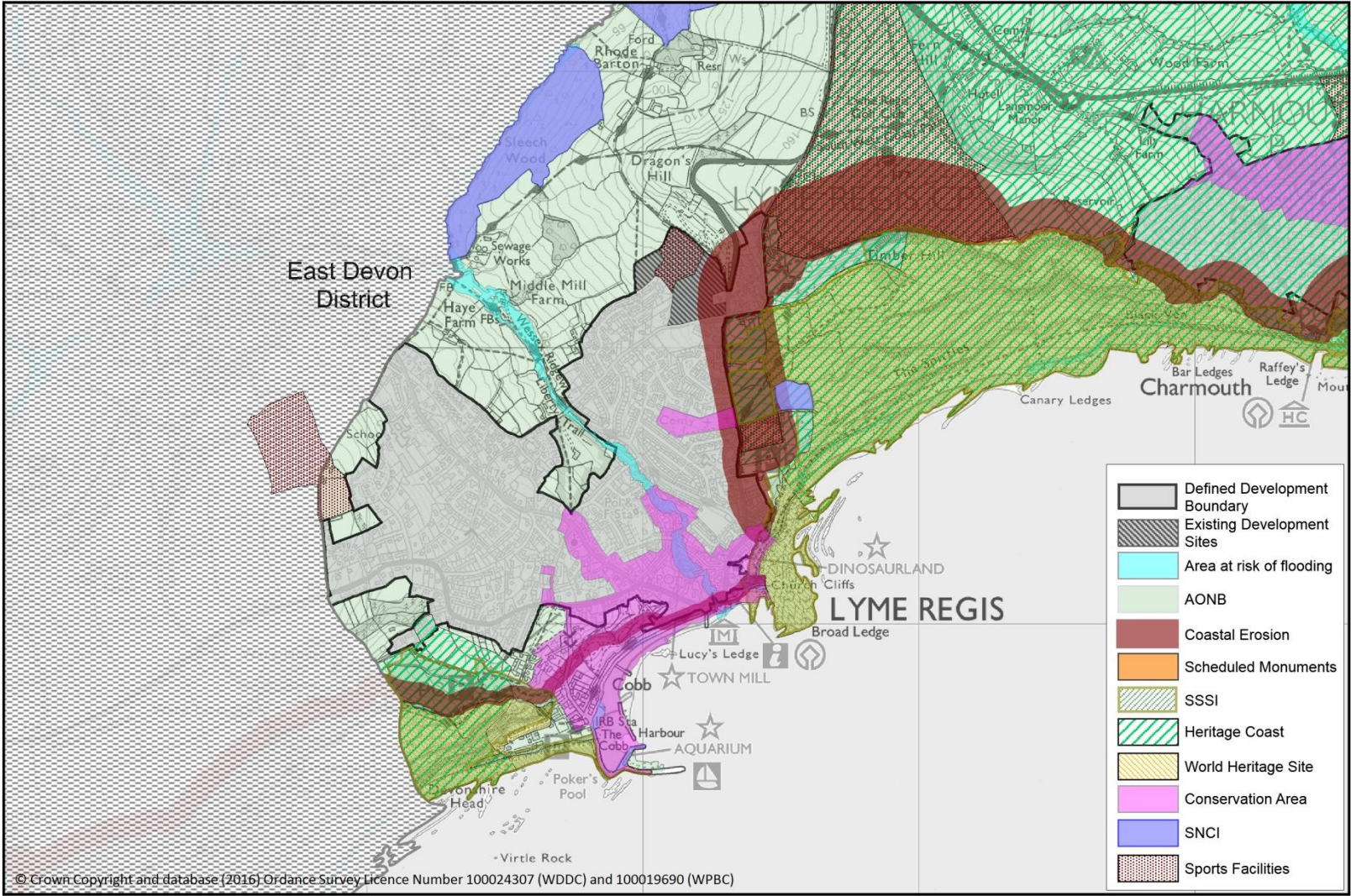
## INSPECTOR'S COMMENTS ON GROWTH AT LYME REGIS

- 12.7 Due to the proximity of Lyme Regis to the district boundary and the presence of Uplyme in East Devon, the inspector highlighted the need for cross-boundary discussions. He said that he did *“not consider the close relationship between two parts of what can be viewed as the same settlement should be dismissed”* However, he recognised that *“it is unclear whether additional sites in Uplyme could be made available”* and recognised that options *“are limited because of the location of both settlements in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and land stability and access issues”*.
- 12.8 The allocation at Woodberry Down, included in the adopted local plan, was considered by the inspector to be visually *“well contained by the surrounding landform so its impact on the AONB is limited”*.

## ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS AROUND THE TOWN

- 12.9 Lyme Regis is constrained by:
- the Dorset AONB and the East Devon AONB;
  - Land instability;
  - Dorset and East Devon World Heritage site;
  - Lyme Regis Conservation Area and other heritage assets;
  - Steep slopes and few areas of level ground;
  - Its landscape setting.

Figure 12.2 Constraints around Lyme Regis



## OPPORTUNITIES

12.10 The National Planning Policy Framework is clear that there are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. Future growth in the Lyme Regis area will help to:

### Economic

- Support the tourism based economy;
- Provide opportunities for business growth;
- Maintain and improve the variety of shops in the town centre;

### Social

- Meet the need for affordable housing;
- Balance the local housing market by providing more homes for local people;
- Balance the age profile;
- Develop links with Uplyme in East Devon;
- retain and expand local facilities and services including shops, schools and doctors surgeries;

### Environmental

- Preserve the towns heritage and fossil interests;
- Preserve the towns setting in its landscape.

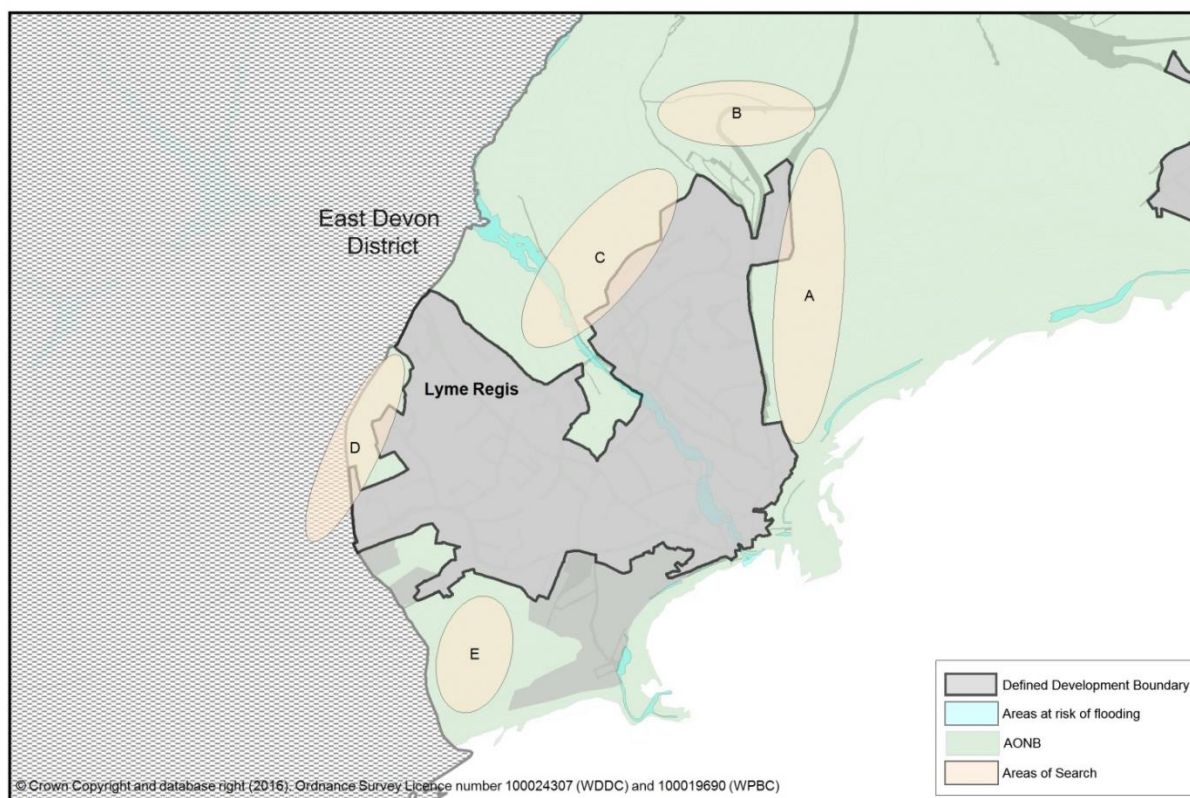
## POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENT OPTIONS

12.11 The topography, the Dorset AONB and East Devon AONB, land stability issues and the coast, all act together to limit opportunities for development in the Lyme Regis area.

12.12 Opportunities for delivering growth in the area have been explored with East Devon District Council and it is considered that the settlements together are only suitable for limited local growth. The Uplyme Neighbourhood Plan, currently being prepared by Uplyme Parish Council, has promoted small scale infilling within the development boundary of the village. Similarly the East Devon Villages Plan does not propose any allocations for the area.

12.13 In considering the future growth options at Lyme Regis, the councils have undertaken an initial 360 degree search of all possible development site options around the town. Unsuitable options have been discounted at an early stage through an initial site sieving exercise, with more detail in the accompanying background paper and sustainability appraisal.

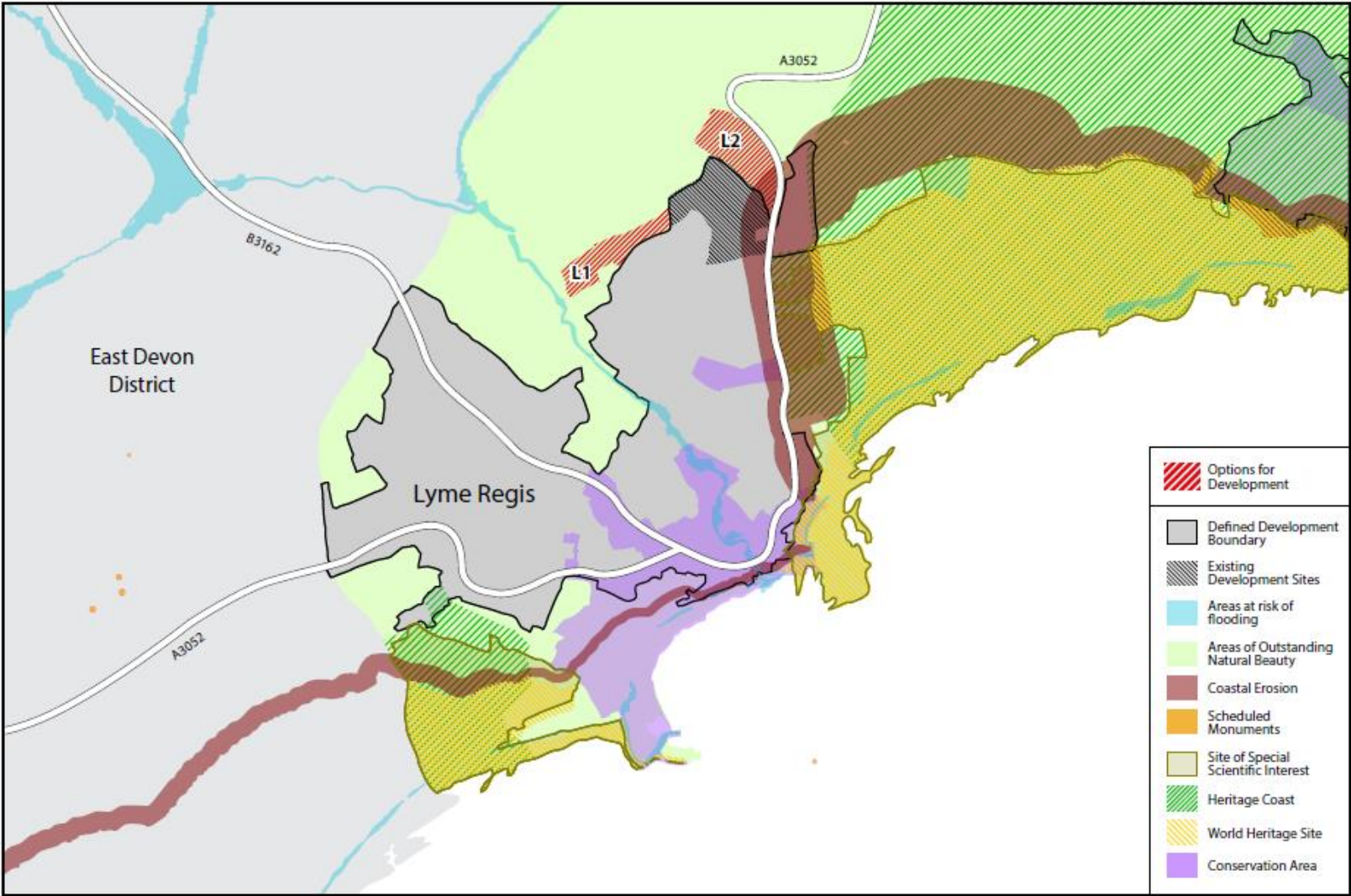
Figure 12.3: Broad areas of search – Lyme Regis



AREA	NAME	POTENTIAL IMPLICATIONS	CONCLUSION
A	East of Charmouth Road	Impacts on Sidmouth to West Bay SAC, East Devon and Dorset World Heritage Site, the Heritage Coast, the Dorset AONB. The site is also subject to coastal erosion.	×
B	Dragon's Hills	Potential for development within this area avoiding impact on the Dorset AONB, on the Sidmouth to West Bay SAC and landscape impact. Part of area is also subject to coastal erosion.	✓
C	North West of Lyme Regis	Potential for some development in this area avoiding impacts on the Dorset AONB, landscape impacts, and areas at risk of flooding.	✓
D	West of Lyme Regis	Located within East Devon and therefore cannot be allocated through this Local Plan Review.	×
E	Ware	Impacts upon Sidmouth to West Bay SAC, East Devon and Dorset World Heritage Site, the Heritage Coast, the Dorset AONB, and is subject to coastal erosion.	×

12.14 The conclusion of the first high level filter of site options has left two options outlined in Figure 12.4. For each option an indicative capacity has been calculated and possible development issues identified.

Figure 12.4 Options for growth at Lyme Regis





DEVELOPMENT OPTION	INDICATIVE CAPACITY (DWELLINGS)	DEVELOPMENT ISSUES
L1: North of Lyme Regis	60	Within Dorset AONB - Landscape impact - Highway implications - possible surface water flooding issues.
L2: Timber Vale	80	Within Dorset AONB , Landscape impact, Land instability

- 12.15 The table and map present two options, but there is no reason why they could not come forward in combination or as smaller parcels.
- 12.16 At this stage, no commitment is being made to the development of any individual or group of options. Information about the potential development options is being sought. Additional work will need to be undertaken to further refine site suitability and fully establish infrastructure and employment land requirements as well as constraints to development such as landscape or heritage impacts.

**12-i. Lyme Regis has grown at an average rate of 15 dwellings per year over the last 5 years. Given the constrained nature of the Lyme Regis area, should we plan for a lower level of growth or maintain the current level of growth?**

**12-ii. Are there any additional issues related to the development of the site options?**

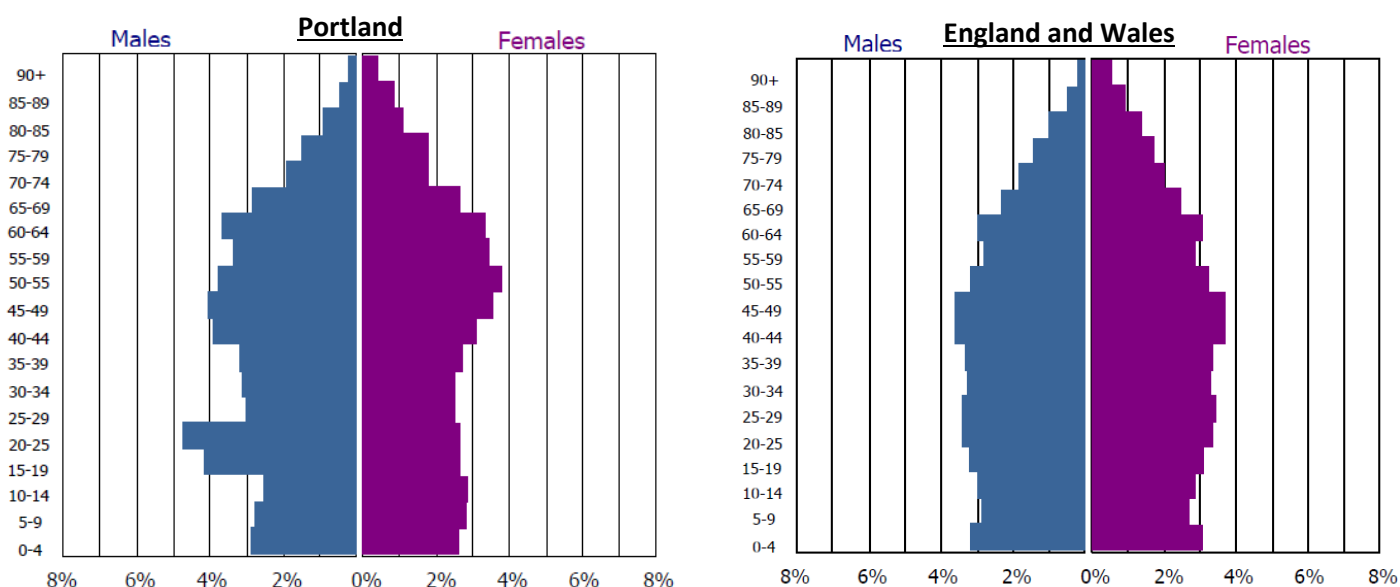
**12-iii. What are the infrastructure requirements for the development of the site options, individually or in combination with others?**

## 13. Development on Portland

### TOWN PROFILE

- 13.1 The Isle of Portland extends about 4.5 miles into the English Channel giving it a unique coastal character. It is linked to the mainland by Chesil Beach and supports a number of distinctive settlements separated by wide open spaces, parts of which are marked by the presence of the Portland Stone quarrying industry.
- 13.2 'Portland' is not a town as such, but a series of settlements each with their own distinct identity. The Isle of Portland has a population of over 12,800 (2011 census), with the main settlements being Castletown, Easton, Fortuneswell, Grove, Southwell and Weston. The population structure of Portland is shown in the following population pyramid:

Figure 13.1: Population Pyramid – Portland



- 13.3 Portland Harbour is one of the largest man-made harbours in the world. The Royal Naval base closed in 1995 and since then the area has developed as a civilian port and recreation area. In 2012 it hosted the Olympic and Paralympic sailing events. The former naval estate has provided opportunities for regeneration alongside new industrial and commercial development at Osprey Quay, Southwell Business Park and Portland Port.
- 13.4 Portland is at the heart of the Dorset and East Devon Coast World Heritage Site and much of the island is covered by national and international environmental designations. The high quality landscape, important wildlife interests and the single carriageway road access across Chesil Beach all limit opportunities for further major development.
- 13.5 Although Portland is an attractive place to live with some large employment sites, some areas still suffer from high levels of multiple deprivation despite recent regeneration projects, including those to support the 2012 Olympics.

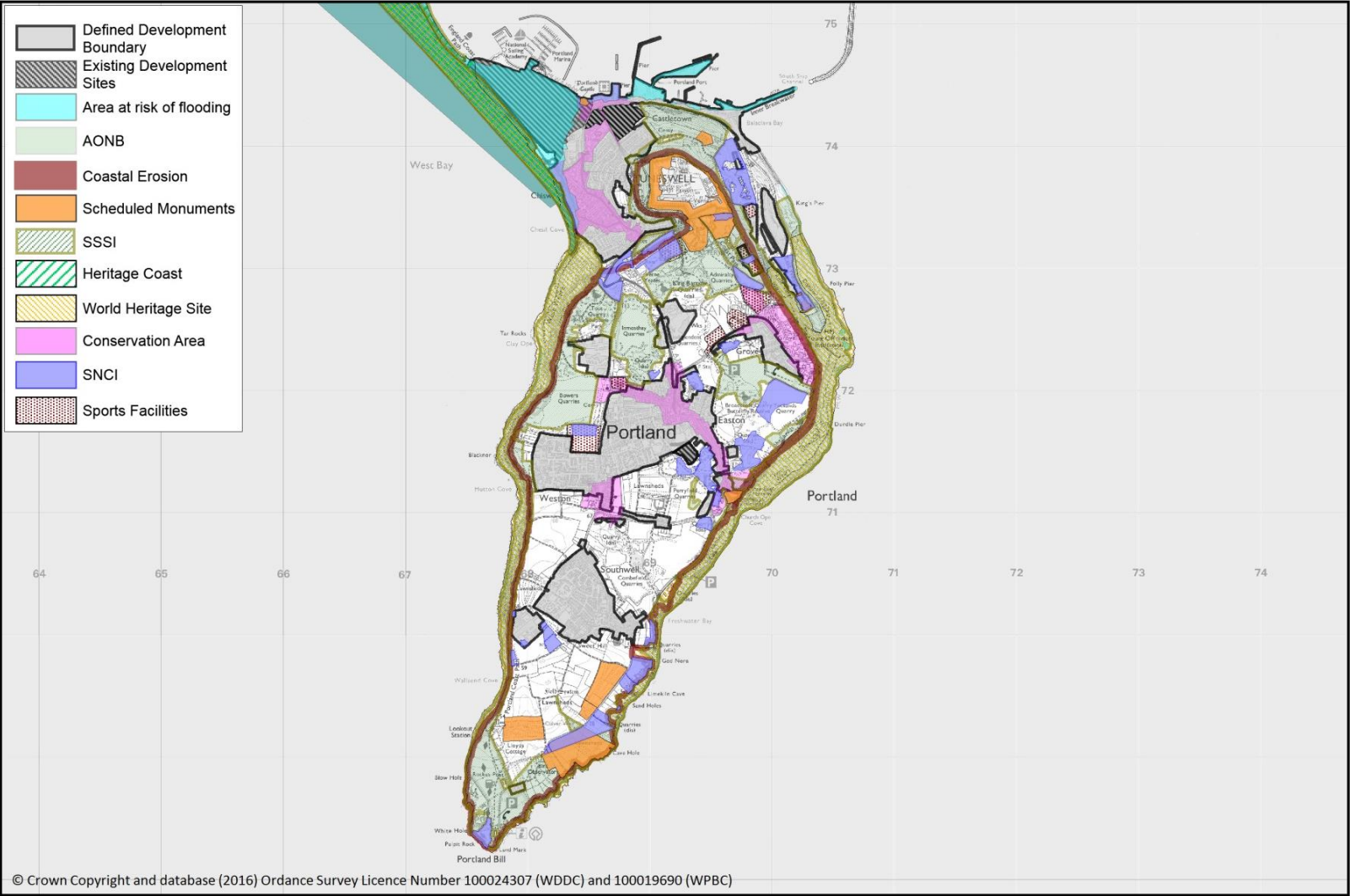
## INSPECTOR'S COMMENTS ON PORTLAND

- 13.6 The inspector recognised that the proposals in the local plan for Portland were *“modest reflecting in part the opportunities which exist for employment and housing but which have not been fully exploited”*. In particular the inspector noted the mixed use redevelopment opportunities at Osprey Quay and the proposals (which have planning permission) for the redevelopment of Royal Navy accommodation at the former Hardy Complex.
- 13.7 The inspector considered the role and future prospects for Portland Port, but he was not convinced of the need to include a specific Port-related policy in the local plan, recognising that *“a balance has to be struck between encouraging and promoting business activities and safeguarding other interests”*, in particular to need to protect the environment.
- 13.8 The inspector felt there were too many uncertainties about timescales, funding and potential environmental impacts to justify the protection of a ‘safeguarded route’ for the A354 Weymouth to Portland Relief Road in the local plan stating that *“Uncertainty over timescales runs the risk of unreasonably ‘blighting’ land and properties”* and that there is not *“sufficient justification for safeguarding a route at present”*.
- 13.9 However, the Inspector supported a policy promoting Portland Quarries Nature Park, and was satisfied that the approach *“reflects the Councils’ longer term aspirations”* whilst also safeguarding *“the interests of existing operators”*.

## ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS ON PORTLAND

- 13.10 Environmental constraints on the Isle of Portland include:
- the World Heritage Site;
  - the Heritage Coast (from Chesil Cove along Chesil Beach);
  - Chesil & The Fleet Special Area of Conservation (SAC);
  - the Isle of Portland to Studland Cliffs SAC;
  - Areas at risk of flooding;
  - Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs);
  - Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs);
  - Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Site (RIGS);
  - scheduled monuments;
  - Conservation Areas at Fortuneswell, Grove, Easton and Weston.

Figure 13.2 Constraints around Portland



## OPPORTUNITIES

13.11 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that there are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. In terms of these three roles of the planning system, future growth on Portland will help to:

### Economic

- develop specialist maritime industries and other growth sectors that benefit from this unique location;
- provide a good supply of well-paid jobs that benefit the local community and wider area;
- develop sustainable tourism based on activities that capitalise on this unique location, including water sports, climbing, walking and bird watching;
- maintain and expand the role of Portland Port as a port of national and international importance; and
- continue regeneration at Osprey Quay;

### Social

- reduce levels of multiple deprivation;
- develop good education and skills provision; and
- see the redevelopment of the Hardy Complex for housing;

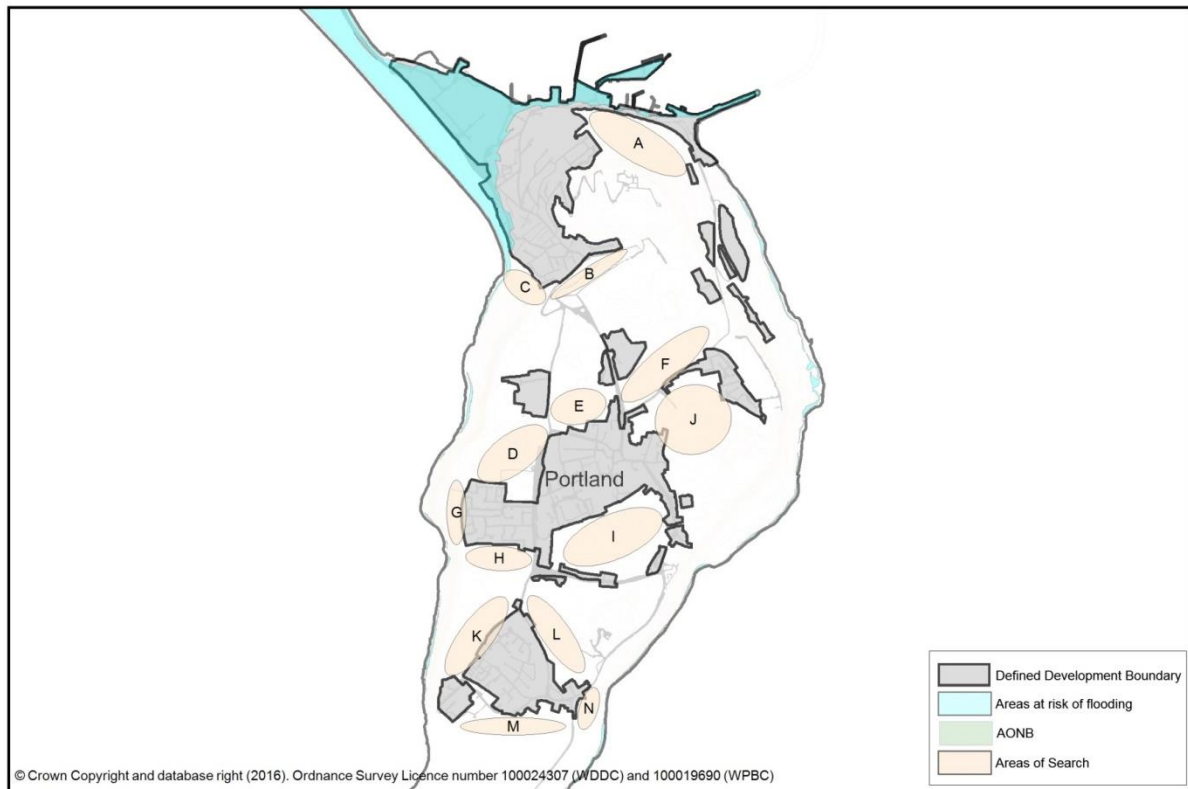
### Environmental

- maintain and enhance the unique character of the island and its built and natural environment; and
- maintain and expand Portland Quarries Nature Park.

## POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENT SITES

13.12 In considering the future growth options on Portland the councils have undertaken an initial 360 degree search of all possible development site options around the main settlements. Unsuitable options have been discounted at an early stage through an initial site sieving exercise more detail in the accompanying background paper and sustainability appraisal.

Figure 12.3 Broad areas of search - Portland

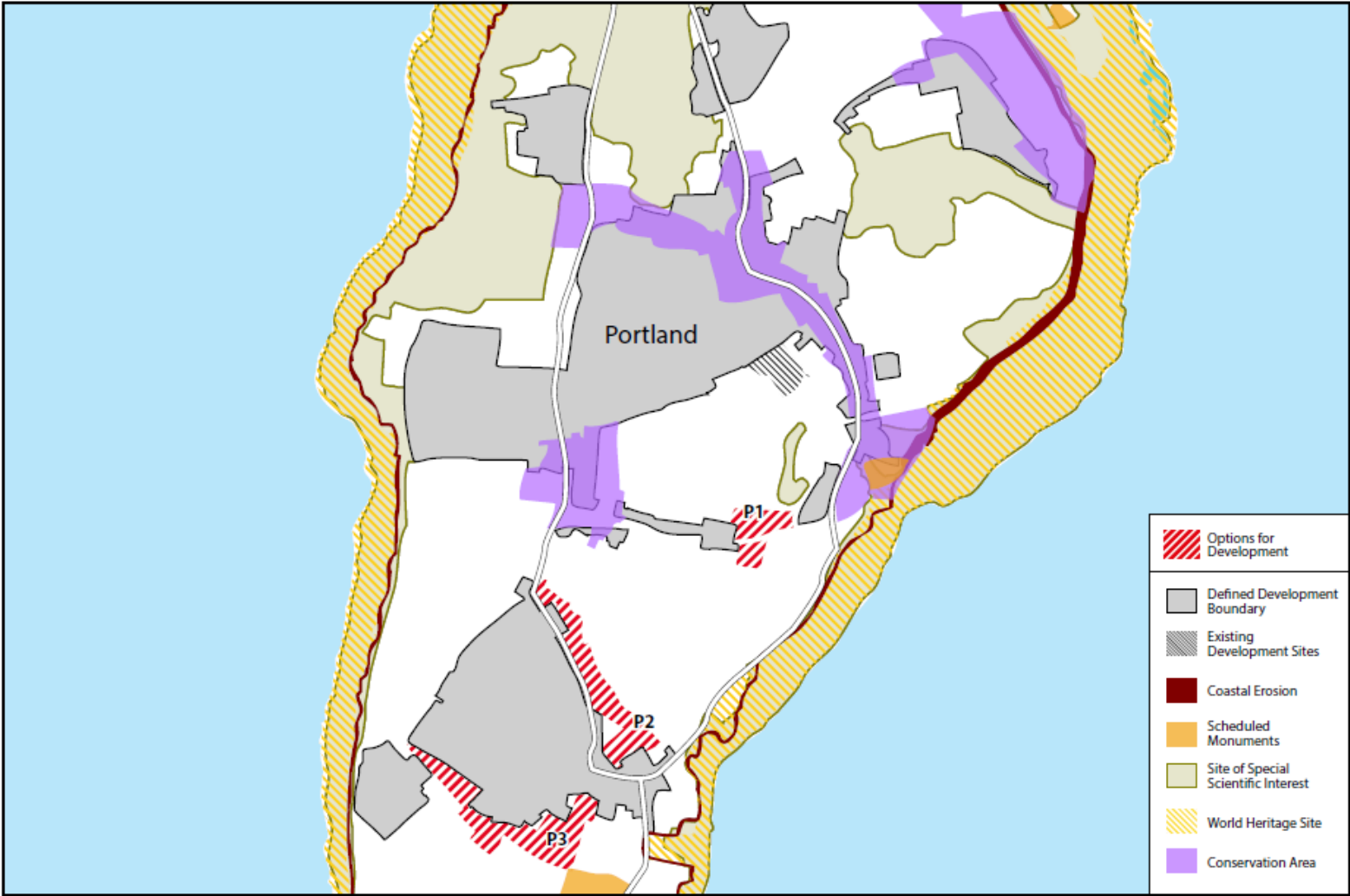


AREA	NAME	POTENTIAL IMPLICATIONS	CONCLUSION
A	South of Castletown	Impacts on Isle of Portland to Studland Cliffs SAC, Isle of Portland SSSI, and scheduled monuments. Steep topography.	✗
B	New Ground	Impacts on Isle of Portland to Studland Cliffs SAC, Isle of Portland SSSI and nearby SNCI	✗
C	West Weare	Impacts on Isle of Portland to Studland Cliffs SAC, Isle of Portland SSSI and World Heritage Site. Area also vulnerable to coastal erosion.	✗
D / E / F	Bowers, Inmosthay and Independent Quarries	Impacts on Isle of Portland to Studland Cliffs SAC, Isle of Portland SSSI and Portland (Easton) conservation area. Areas either working quarries or part of Portland Quarries Nature Park.	✗
G / H	West of Weston / Barleycrates Lane	Impacts on Isle of Portland to Studland Cliffs SAC, Isle of Portland SSSI and World Heritage Site. Area in part vulnerable to coastal erosion.	✗
I	Weston Road to Perryfields Quarries	Potential for development along Weston Road avoiding impacts on Isle of Portland SSSI, nearby SNCI and Weston conservation area.	✓
J	Between Easton & Grove	Impacts on Isle of Portland SSSI and nearby SNCI	✗

AREA	NAME	POTENTIAL IMPLICATIONS	CONCLUSION
K	Reap Lane	Impacts on Isle of Portland to Studland Cliffs SAC, Isle of Portland SSSI and World Heritage Site. Area in part vulnerable to coastal erosion.	×
L	East of Avalanche Road	Potential for development associated with built up area of Southwell.	✓
M	South of Sweet Hill Road	Potential for development associated with built up area of Southwell, avoiding impacts on nearby SNCI.	✓
N	Freshwater Quarries	Impacts on Isle of Portland to Studland Cliffs SAC Isle of Portland SSSI, World Heritage Site and nearby SNCI. Area in part vulnerable to coastal erosion.	×

- 13.13 The conclusion of the first high level filter of site options is that there are no significant opportunities around the settlements of Castletown, Easton, Fortuneswell and Grove, largely due to the combination of different environmental constraints.
- 13.14 Three options outlined in Figure 12.4 have been identified for further consideration. For each option an indicative capacity has been calculated and possible development issues identified.

Figure 12.4 Options for growth at Portland





DEVELOPMENT OPTION	INDICATIVE CAPACITY (DWELLINGS)	DEVELOPMENT ISSUES
P1: Eastern end of Weston Street	50	Possible impact on SAC, SSSI and SNCI , World Heritage Site, Portland Coastline, scheduled monument and conservation area.
P2: North of Southwell	100	Landscape impact
P3: South of Southwell	130	Landscape impact - impact on Portland Coastline, SNCI and scheduled monument

- 13.15 Although the table and map present three option sites that could be developed individually there is no reason why they could not come forward in combination or as smaller parcels.
- 13.16 At this stage, no commitment is being made to the development of any individual or group of options. Information about the potential development options is being sought. Additional work will need to be undertaken to further refine site suitability and fully establish infrastructure and employment land requirements as well as constraints to development such as landscape or heritage impacts.

**13-i. Development on Portland has taken place at an average rate of 45 dwellings per year over the last 5 years. Given the constrained nature of Portland and the need to address social and economic issues, should we plan for a lower level of growth or maintain the current level of growth?**

**13-ii. Are there any additional issues related to the development of any of the site options?**

**13-iii. What are the infrastructure requirements for the development of the site options, individually or in combination with others?**

## 14. Development at Yeovil

### TOWN PROFILE

- 14.1 Yeovil is located within South Somerset District on the northern boundary of West Dorset. The town is approximately 6 miles west of Sherborne and surrounded by a large rural hinterland of smaller market towns and villages. The town has a population of around 30,400<sup>7</sup>. It is connected to Sherborne by the A30 and Dorchester by the A37, with the A303 just to the north. The town has two railway stations with Yeovil Pen Mill connecting to Weymouth and Dorchester to the South and Bristol and Yeovil Junction connecting to London (Waterloo) and Exeter.
- 14.2 Yeovil plays a significant economic role in Somerset with nearly half of the jobs in South Somerset district located in the town. Yeovil has a relatively high proportion of manufacturing jobs with a high proportion in the defence and aerospace sectors.
- 14.3 Although Yeovil is a relatively large town, it sits in an attractive rural setting, within a sensitive landscape defined by escarpments to both the north and south. The River Yeo flood plain along the eastern edge of the town is also a defining feature.

### INSPECTOR'S COMMENTS ON DUTY TO COOPERATE

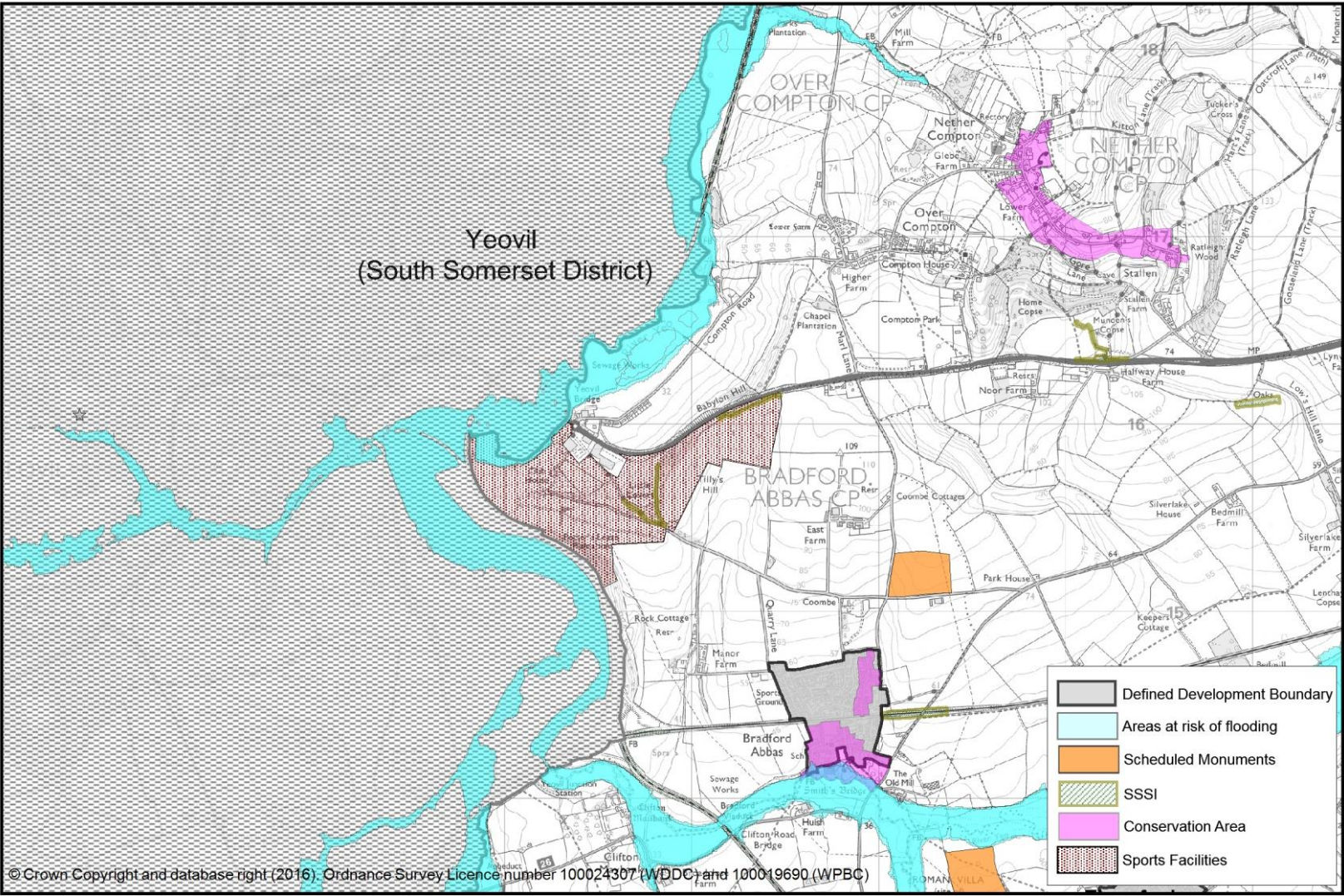
- 14.4 The local plan inspector highlighted three specific locations where cross boundary planning considerations were necessary including the Yeovil area. He noted that options had been explored during the early stages of the production of the South Somerset Local Plan but had not been pursued.
- 14.5 The inspector stated that *"it is not unreasonable to suggest that peripheral areas of West Dorset could offer opportunities for more effective plan-making if administrative boundaries were ignored because there is potential overlap with Housing Market Areas in adjacent authorities."* It is therefore considered appropriate to consider development options within West Dorset but adjacent to the Yeovil urban area.

### ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS AROUND THE TOWN

- 14.6 Close to the West Dorset boundary, Yeovil is constrained by:
- the river Yeo floodplain;
  - Registered Park and Gardens of Barwick Park & Newton Surmaville;
  - Landscape sensitivity;
  - High grade agricultural land;
  - Scheduled ancient monuments.

<sup>7</sup> 2011 Census

Figure 14.1: Constraints around Yeovil



## OPPORTUNITIES

14.7 Future growth at Yeovil will help:

- To maintain Yeovil as the focus for growth in the South Somerset economy;
- To meet housing need identified in the Yeovil housing market;
- To support a vibrant retail, leisure and service base for the town and wider area;
- To ensure that Yeovil delivers its growth in a way that is as sustainable as possible to reduce the need for reliance on car movements, the main cause of poor air quality;
- Deliver development in a sustainable location.

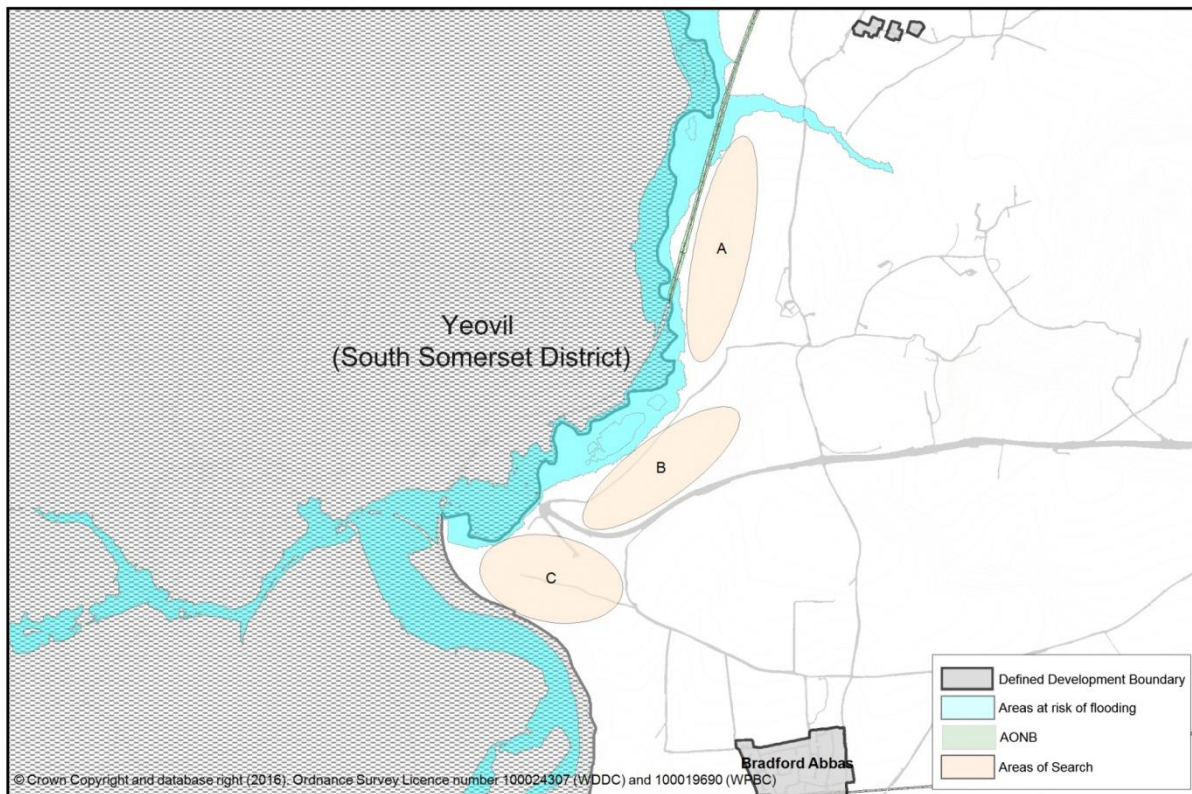
## POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENT SITES

14.8 Yeovil has been identified by South Somerset as a focus for growth and an important sub-regional centre offering a wide range of services and shopping facilities not available elsewhere. It is a focal point for industry with a large number of people commuting into the town for work. Yeovil is adjacent to the district boundary and has strong commuting links with Sherborne. Development in the Yeovil area is a sustainable option for meeting growth needs of this part of the district as well as for meeting the need arising from the town itself.

14.9 Land to the east of Yeovil (in West Dorset) is located near to the existing built up area of the town and has previously been considered as an option for future growth in the production of the South Somerset Local Plan as part of their 360 degree search for sites. Although this direction for growth was discounted, both Councils are now embarking upon reviews of their respective Local Plans and the opportunity arises to reappraise future development opportunities.

14.10 South Somerset District Council is reviewing its Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA), a document that considers future housing need. In the event that future large scale housing need is identified in the Yeovil area, a growth option in West Dorset would need to be considered.

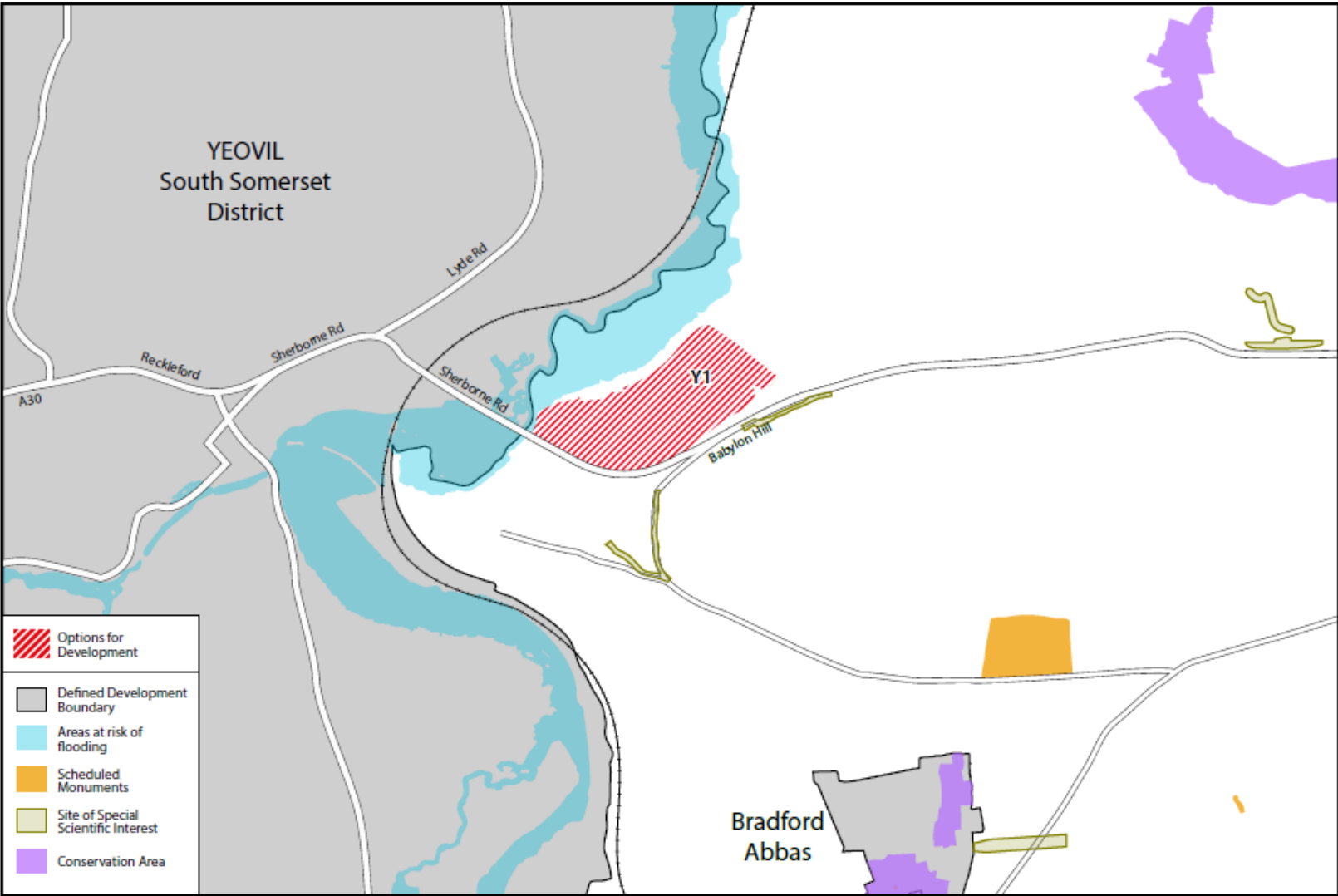
Figure 14.2: Broad areas of search – Yeovil



AREA	NAME	POTENTIAL IMPLICATIONS	CONCLUSION
A	Land west of Over Compton	Separated from urban area of Yeovil by railway line and River Yeo with no obvious crossing point.	×
B	Land north of A30	Potential for some development between area at risk of flooding and steep ground of Babylon Hill. Development within landscape constraints.	✓
C	Land south of A30	Potential impact on SSSI. Steep and wooded and currently in use as a golf course.	×

14.11 The conclusion of the first high level filter of site options has identified a single option as outlined in Figure 14.3. For this option, an indicative capacity has been calculated and possible development issues have been identified.

Figure 14.3 Options for growth at Yeovil



DEVELOPMENT OPTIONS	INDICATIVE CAPACITY (DWELLINGS)	POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT ISSUES
Y1: East of Yeovil	425	Flood risk - Landscape impact - Steep topography - Impact on SSSI

14.12 At this stage, no commitment is being made to the development of this option; information about the options is being sought. Additional work will need to be undertaken to refine its suitability and fully establish infrastructure and employment land requirements as well as constraints to development such as landscape or heritage impacts.

**14-i. Is it appropriate to develop adjacent to the urban area of Yeovil but within West Dorset?**

**14-ii. Are there any additional issues related to the development of the site option?**

**14-iii. What are the infrastructure requirements for the development of the site option?**

## 15. Affordable Housing

### INTRODUCTION

- 15.1 The need for affordable housing is a key issue for the area and for the local plan. Delivery of affordable housing through the planning system is a well established principle with national planning policy requiring local planning authorities to meet housing and affordable housing needs.

### CURRENT APPROACH

#### **POLICY HOUS 1 – AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

- 15.2 The provision of affordable housing on sites where open market housing is proposed is dealt with by Policy HOUS1 in the current local plan. The policy:
- Seeks a contribution towards the provision of affordable housing on all market housing sites (i.e. establishes a 'zero threshold');
  - Establishes the 'percentage targets' that should be provided as affordable housing on market housing sites, which are 25% in Portland and 35% in Weymouth and West Dorset; and
  - Seeks a mix of 70% (minimum) social / affordable rent and 30% (maximum) intermediate affordable housing, unless local needs justify a different mix.

#### **POLICY HOUS 2 – AFFORDABLE HOUSING EXCEPTION SITES**

- 15.3 The provision of affordable housing exception sites is dealt with by Policy HOUS2 in the current local plan. This allows for small scale sites for affordable housing adjoining settlements:
- that meet current local needs; and
  - have secure arrangements to ensure that the benefits of the affordable housing will be enjoyed by subsequent as well as initial occupiers.
- 15.4 The supporting text highlights that future occupancy will be prioritised for local people and also explains that market housing cross-subsidy on exception sites will not be permitted.

### REASON FOR CHANGE

- 15.5 The councils are already applying recent changes to national planning policy to support small-scale developers, custom and self-builders. The councils no longer require affordable housing contributions on small development sites, and have reduced the contributions requested where a vacant building is brought back into use or demolished and replaced by a new building (known as 'vacant building credit').
- 15.6 The Government is making more fundamental changes, seeking to shift the emphasis from the provision of affordable housing to rent to affordable housing to buy, principally through the provision of 'starter homes'. The Housing and Planning Act 2016 (the Act) provides the legislative basis for these changes, which will also be reflected in revised



national policy. At the current time, the detail of the Act has not been implemented and revised national planning policy in relation to ‘starter homes’ is yet to be produced, so some of the details are not yet clear.

- 15.7 These changes have major implications for the affordable housing policies in the Local Plan, even though it was adopted very recently, in October 2015.

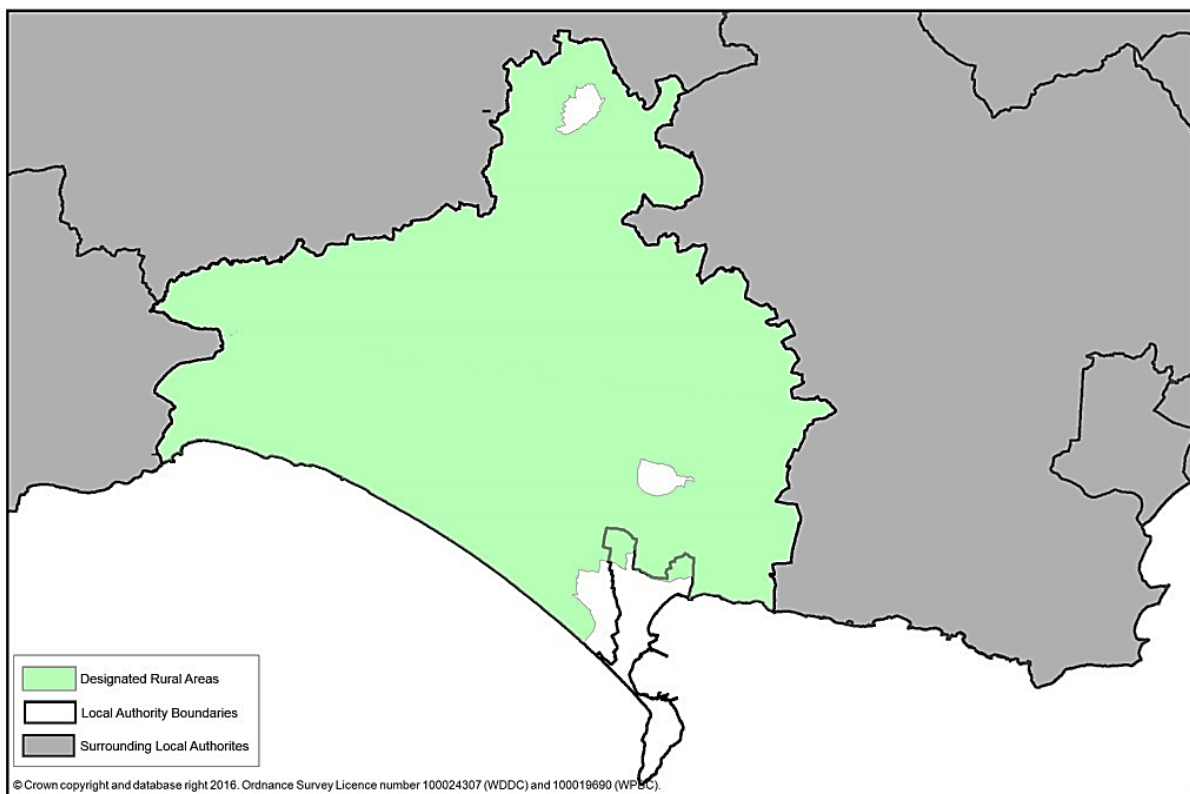
## PROPOSED APPROACH

- 15.8 Key issues relating to different aspects of policies HOUS1 and HOUS2 are discussed below.

### THE OPTIONAL THRESHOLD OF 5 UNITS IN ‘RURAL AREAS’

- 15.9 Under national policy, affordable housing contributions are not required on residential sites of 10 units or fewer, or where the maximum combined gross floor space is 1,000 square metres or less. National policy also allows councils to choose to apply a lower, 5-unit threshold in designated rural areas as shown in Figure 15.1 (referred to as ‘rural areas’), with the aim of providing a balance between boosting housing supply on small sites and maintaining the flow of affordable housing.

Figure 15.1: Designated Rural Areas<sup>8</sup>



- 15.10 Designated ‘rural areas’ include National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) and any ‘area designated by order of the Secretary of State as a rural area’. Much of West Dorset district and small parts of Weymouth and Portland borough lie within the

<sup>8</sup> Rural areas as set out in S157(1) of the Housing Act 1985

Dorset AONB and the whole of West Dorset district, with the exception of the parishes of Chickerell, Dorchester and Sherborne has also been designated as a 'rural area' by the Secretary of State.

- 15.11 The councils are currently applying (on an interim basis) the lower 5-unit threshold to relevant planning applications for housing in those areas where it could apply. In summary these are:
- West Dorset District (excluding the parish of Sherborne and those parts of the parishes of Chickerell and Dorchester that lie within the Dorset AONB); and
  - Those parts of Weymouth and Portland Borough within the Dorset AONB (around Upwey, Preston and Sutton Poyntz).
- 15.12 Policy HOUS1 will be revised to apply the national 10-unit threshold outside 'rural areas' and to make provision for the offering of vacant building credit. Views are sought on whether policy HOUS1 should also be revised to include the optional national 5-unit threshold, which would be applied to the areas described above rather than the national 10-unit threshold.
- 15.13 National policy makes it clear that in areas where a council chooses to apply the 5-unit threshold, it must also allow developments of 6 to 10 units to provide affordable housing contributions in cash, deferred until after completion, rather than in the form of units on site. In the event that Policy HOUS1 was revised to apply the 5-unit threshold in 'rural areas', the policy would also be revised to include this provision from national policy.

**15-i. Should Policy HOUS1 be revised to apply the optional lower threshold in national policy and guidance within 'rural areas' as shown in Figure 15.1 (rather than the national 10-unit threshold), so that affordable housing contributions would not be sought on sites of 5 units or less in these areas?**

#### MEETING THE NEED FOR OTHER FORMS OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING ALONGSIDE 'STARTER HOMES'

- 15.14 A 'starter home' is a new home available for purchase by first-time buyers under the age of 40, which is made available at 20% (or more) below market value and with a 'price cap' (outside London) of £250,000. The Government also intends to widen the definition of affordable housing in national policy to include starter homes.
- 15.15 The Government has suggested a single national minimum requirement of 20% of all homes to be delivered as starter homes as part of any residential development of 10 units or more.
- 15.16 Policy HOUS1 sets out the 'percentage targets' that should be provided as affordable housing on market housing sites, which are 25% in Portland and 35% in Weymouth and West Dorset. These targets have been established in a recently adopted local plan and it is not proposed to revise them. However, it is understood that the approach local authorities should take is to make the starter home requirement part of the relevant percentage target for an area.

- 15.17 In the event that the Government decides to require that 20% of all homes on sites of 10 units or more must be provided as starter homes, this would mean that on relevant sites the councils would seek:
- In Portland: 20% starter homes; 5% other forms of affordable housing; and 75% market housing; and
  - In Weymouth and West Dorset: 20% starter homes; 15% other forms of affordable housing; and 65% market housing.
- 15.18 This raises the issue of what ‘other forms of affordable housing’ should be sought alongside the provision of starter homes. At present, without any requirement to provide starter homes, policy HOUS1 seeks a minimum of 70% social / affordable rented and a maximum of 30% intermediate affordable housing (unless local needs indicate that alternative provision would be more appropriate on a particular site).
- 15.19 The evidence behind the tenure mix currently sought indicates a greater need for social / affordable rent and it may be appropriate to prioritise the provision of these types of affordable housing alongside the provision of starter homes. However, since starter homes are only available to those under the age of 40, older people may also have some need for affordable housing to buy or part buy (for example, under a shared equity arrangement).

**15-ii. In the light of the expected statutory requirement to provide a proportion of starter homes on all reasonably sized housing sites, should the focus for the provision of other types of affordable housing be primarily on:**

**affordable housing to rent; or  
affordable housing to buy or part-buy (for example, under a shared equity arrangement)?**

#### MARKET HOUSING ON AFFORDABLE HOUSING EXCEPTION SITES

- 15.20 The local plan rejects the idea of allowing market housing to cross-subsidise affordable housing on exception sites. There were concerns that this approach would reduce the likelihood of 100% affordable housing sites being delivered and could result in significant unplanned growth adjoining settlements.
- 15.21 At the time the local plan was produced, grant funding for exception sites was more readily available, but this has declined in recent years. Some financial contributions towards affordable housing will be achieved from developers of sites between 6 and 10 dwellings in ‘rural areas’, but such contributions may be limited especially in Weymouth and Portland, where only a small part of the borough lies within the Dorset AONB and there is no ‘designated rural area’.
- 15.22 In the light of these changing circumstances, the issue of allowing market homes to cross-subsidise affordable housing on exception sites needs to be reconsidered. It is envisaged an approach would only be allowed exceptionally in the event that: a 100% affordable scheme would not be viable; and a 100% affordable scheme could not be made viable through grant-funding and / or financial contributions from elsewhere. It is envisaged that

the amount of market housing permitted on an exception site should be the minimum necessary to make the scheme viable.

**15-iii. Should Policy HOUS2 allow market homes to cross-subsidise the provision of affordable housing on exception sites?**

**15-iv. How should the provision of market homes on such sites be controlled to ensure that the emphasis remains on meeting local affordable housing needs and significant unplanned growth adjoining settlements is avoided?**

## 16. Self Build Housing

### INTRODUCTION

16.1 National policy indicates that local planning authorities should plan for the needs of different groups in the community such as “*people wishing to build their own homes*”. In simple terms, we define self-build as projects where an individual directly organises the design and construction of their new home. Custom build homes tend to be those where an individual works with a specialist developer to help deliver their own home.

### CURRENT APPROACH

16.2 The adopted local plan does not contain a specific policy on self-build and custom housebuilding however mechanisms exist which could deliver self build housing.

- Self build schemes would be, in principle, acceptable within defined development boundaries (DDBs) or anywhere else where open market housing is allowed.
- The subdivision of an existing home may be appropriate outside DDBs, particularly if the home has formerly been two or more dwellings.
- The replacement of an existing lawful dwelling outside a DDB may be permitted on a one for one basis.
- Outside DDBs if schemes meet the definition of ‘affordable’ then there is the possibility of the exception site policy catering for these types of homes. In addition, permission may be granted where schemes meet the criteria for rural workers’ dwellings.
- Neighbourhood development plans could make provision for self-build and custom build homes in locations where the local plan policy does not allow them.

### REASON FOR CHANGE

16.3 Local authorities are required to keep a register of individuals and associations who are seeking to acquire serviced plots of land in the authority’s area for self build and custom build house building (referred to as the Self-build Register). Local authorities have a duty to have regard to the register that relates to their area when carrying out their planning, housing, land disposal and regeneration functions.

16.4 A second duty is placed on local authorities to grant permissions on serviced plots of land to meet the demand for self-build and custom housebuilding in their area as evidenced by the number of people on the Self-build Register.

16.5 The West Dorset and Weymouth & Portland Self-build Registers were launched on 1 April 2016. As at 13 October 2016 there are 53 individuals registered in the West Dorset Area and 27 individuals registered in the Weymouth & Portland area.

16.6 In order to help deliver infrastructure to support development, the councils collect money through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). The Government however is keen to encourage the further supply of serviced plots of land by offering an exemption to self build and custom build housing from CIL.

## PROPOSED APPROACH

- 16.7 There are a number of different mechanisms in which the councils could promote the provision of serviced plots of land for self build and custom building in order to meet the need evidenced by the Self-build Register. In summary they are:
- The current approach – continue to rely on self build & custom housebuilding plots coming forward through existing planning policy
  - Through land allocations – allocate suitable land for registered custom builders through either land acquisition or council land disposal
  - As part of the housing mix – seek a proportion of residential sites to be set aside for self build and custom housebuilding either through site by site negotiation or as a fixed percentage on all sites over a certain site size
  - As exception sites – encourage suitable self build schemes from local individuals in housing need
- 16.8 These mechanisms are discussed in more detail below.

## CURRENT APPROACH

- 16.9 Locally, self build housing is already supported through Policy SUS2 which allows for infill development within existing DDBs. Outside of DDBs, self build plots can also come forward in certain situations as either replacement dwellings or sub-division of properties in the countryside. Exceptions to usual planning policy also apply to affordable housing exception sites and rural workers dwellings. The introduction of neighbourhood planning offers a further route for the delivery of plots in a specific locality
- 16.10 As detail of the requirement to provide serviced self-build plots is not yet available and the Self-build Register is in its infancy, it is not clear whether sufficient serviced plots would be delivered through this mechanism. There are however 184 permissions for single dwellings within the plan area.

## LAND ALLOCATION

- 16.11 In addition to the current approach the councils could consider identifying either publicly owned or privately submitted sites to meet the need for self-build and custom house building plots. The intention would be to allocate new specific areas to offer to registered self build and custom housebuilders. This approach has the benefit of increasing the supply of sites in identified locations of need, though there is some uncertainty regarding how desirable it is for land owners to offer sites and service the plots.

## HOUSING MIX

- 16.12 An alternative approach could be to introduce a new housing mix policy to allow for self build to be considered as part of the housing mix for on site negotiations. A proportion of self-build plots could then be sought on all open market development sites where there is an identified need, as evidenced by the Self- Build register. The number and size of plots to be provided would depend on the level of need.

- 16.13 Alternatively, a percentage policy could be used to require a proportion of allocated or windfall sites over a certain size to make provision for self-build and custom housebuilding, usually in the form of serviced plots.
- 16.14 The policy approach (whether through percentage or housing mix) could be an effective approach for delivering a range of suitable plots of land across the Plan area.

### EXCEPTION SITES

- 16.15 Although custom build is generally considered to be a form of market housing, it also has a track record of delivering dwellings at a lower cost. Adapting Policy HOUS2 on affordable housing exception sites to support suitable self build schemes from individuals in housing need could help to provide serviced plots enabling those housing need to build or commission houses that are specially tailored to meet their specific requirements.
- 16.16 This approach could see small parcels of land outside but adjoining settlements with being made available for self build schemes as an exception to planning policy. Self-build and custom build plots would be sold with the benefit of outline planning permission, and with access and services supplied to the plot boundary.
- 16.17 Qualifying applicants would need to be in housing need and unable to access a suitable home currently available on the open market in the local area. The future re-sale value of the affordable home would be fixed in perpetuity below open market value to ensure that it remains affordable for subsequent occupiers.

**16-i. Should serviced self build plots be delivered to meet the demand identified on the local Self-build Register through:**

**Current approach;  
Land allocation;  
Housing mix;  
Exception site; or  
A mixture of the above**

**16-ii. Is there an alternative mechanism that can be used to meet the demand for self build and custom housebuilding?**

## 17. Level of Growth – Employment land

### INTRODUCTION

- 17.1 Establishing the level of growth and the future need for employment land is an important part of the planning process. It ensures that social and economic needs are met, contributing to the achievement of sustainable development.

### CURRENT APPROACH

- 17.2 National planning policy indicates that there should be sufficient land of the right type available in the right places and at the right time to support economic growth and innovation.

### **POLICY SUS1 – LEVEL OF ECONOMIC AND HOUSING GROWTH**

- 17.3 Policy SUS1 sets out the level of economic and housing growth that should be delivered in West Dorset and Weymouth & Portland in the period from 2011 to 2031.
- 17.4 Economic forecasts prepared to inform the local plan production suggested that around 13,000 additional jobs could be generated in the period up to 2031, which the additional housing also to be provided, would help to support. The plan indicates that 60.3 hectares of employment land should be provided to accommodate some of these jobs.
- 17.5 The adopted local plan (Table 3.2) shows that the total supply of employment land between 2011 and 2031 is 85.5 hectares, which significantly exceeds the forecast requirements and also allows for likely vacancies, churn and a degree of market choice.

### **REASON FOR CHANGE**

- 17.6 There are a number of reasons why the level of economic and housing growth needs to be re-examined in the local plan review. In summary, for employment land they are:
- The growth agenda being promoted through the Western Dorset Growth Area;
  - The revised assessment of predicted growth levels and the need for employment land, as set out in a revised workspace strategy; and
- 17.7 These reasons are discussed in more detail below.

### **THE WESTERN DORSET GROWTH AREA INITIATIVE**

- 17.8 The Dorset Councils Partnership takes a co-ordinated approach to economic development and regeneration across North Dorset, West Dorset and Weymouth & Portland, which is promoted as the Western Dorset Growth Area (WDGA). This approach identifies common themes across the area, gives a better understanding of the links between economic development and regeneration proposals and helps to co-ordinate support for discrete projects.
- 17.9 The emerging strategic economic plan and shared vision identifies Dorchester, Weymouth and Portland as the 'core area' for growth and defines the main coastal and market towns (including Bridport, Sherborne and Lyme Regis) as Rural Dorset Growth Towns.
- 17.10 The local plan review's strategic approach of meeting the OAN for housing and employment land will support the WDGA's growth agenda. However, this will need to be kept under review as the WDGA's strategic economic plan emerges and further economic development and regeneration projects are identified.

### **THE REVISED WORKSPACE STRATEGY AND THE FUTURE NEED FOR EMPLOYMENT LAND**

- 17.11 A revised workspace strategy was produced in 2016 taking account of recent changes in the economic context. The revised strategy looked at current business sector forecasts and reassessed the future need for employment land with a view to enabling a 'step change' in



growth to be accommodated and providing considerable flexibility to businesses in terms of the availability of sites.

- 17.12 Making provision for a further five years and taking account of the revised assessment, the 'step change plus 20% flexibility' scenario indicates a need for between 62 and 65 hectares of employment land for the period from 2013 to 2036. This is slightly above the need identified in the plan of 60.3 hectares for the period 2011 to 2031 but still below the identified supply of employment land.

#### PROPOSED APPROACH

- 17.13 Key issues relating to proposed levels of employment land and the proposed approaches to addresses these issues are discussed below.

#### THE NEED FOR ADDITIONAL EMPLOYMENT LAND TO 2036

- 17.14 The 'step change' scenario in the revised workspace strategy plans for an increase in Gross Value Added (GVA) of 2.4% per annum across the whole of Dorset. This compares with a national trend forecast of about 2.0% GVA annually.
- 17.15 The 'step change' scenario would see growth in total employment of about 15,100 jobs across the local plan area between 2013 and 2033 representing an increase of about 0.9% per annum. As a comparison, the adopted local plan predicts growth of 13,070 jobs between 2011 and 2031 in the local plan area, which represents an increase of 0.83% per annum.
- 17.16 The updated requirement for employment land for the period 2013 to 2036 based on the 'step change' scenario is for between 62 and 65 hectares. This updated requirement is broadly equivalent, but slightly higher, than the figure of 60.3 hectares in the adopted local plan. The identified supply of employment land still significantly exceeds the projected demand and on that basis there is no intention to allocate any additional employment land as part of the local plan review to meet the overall need for employment land to 2036. Provision of employment land as part of any larger development sites may however be sought in order to provide a balance of land uses.

**17-i. Do the figures in the revised workspace strategy provide an objective assessment of the overall need for employment land in the local plan area, especially in the light of national and local aspirations for economic growth?**

**17-ii. Do you agree with the assessment that there is no need to allocate any additional employment land in the local plan area in order to meet overall employment needs in West Dorset and Weymouth & Portland in the period up to 2036?**

17.17 Although the overall identified supply of employment land significantly exceeds the forecast need, the councils would welcome views on whether there are needs for further employment land to be identified at any specific towns (or other locations) in the local plan area, in order to ensure a range and choice of sites more locally and / or to encourage more self-contained communities.

**17-iii. Is there a need at any of the towns (or other locations) in the local plan area for additional employment land to be allocated in order to meet particular local employment needs or encourage greater self containment?**

## 18. Protection of Employment Sites

### INTRODUCTION

- 18.1 Existing employment sites and premises provide valuable opportunities for jobs close to where people live, and benefit the local economy. However there is increasing pressure for change of use from employment to non-employment generating uses. The loss of employment uses can negatively impact on the local economy.

### CURRENT APPROACH

- 18.2 The protection of existing employment sites is dealt with by policies **ECON2** and **ECON3** in the current local plan.

#### **POLICY ECON2 PROTECTION OF KEY EMPLOYMENT SITES**

- 18.3 Policy **ECON2** seeks to identify and safeguard “key employment sites”. These sites are the larger employment sites that make a significant contribution to the employment land supply. The policy:
- Protects key sites for B class uses (light industrial, general industrial, storage and distribution)
  - Permits other employment uses which would enhance the local economy for example through higher wage rate, skill levels, job numbers or contribute to the achievement of aims and objectives identified by the Local Economic Partnership
  - Permits other employment uses that provide on-site support to other businesses though it generally does not permit retail development
- 18.4 While the policy does not allow uses that do not provide direct, on-going local employment opportunities (like residential development) the supporting text highlights that where there are recognised viability issues preventing the delivery of sites the councils will work with developers to understand and seek to address potential barriers.

#### **POLICY ECON3 PROTECTION OF OTHER EMPLOYMENT SITES**

- 18.5 Policy **ECON3** seeks to safeguard other (non-key) employment sites but takes a more flexible approach to help facilitate a broader range of development. In addition to allowing economic uses the policy permits non-employment uses (including residential development) where:
- employment uses are resulting in harm to the character or amenity of the area
  - there is an over-supply of suitable alternative employment sites
  - redevelopment would not result in a significant loss of jobs
  - redevelopment offers important community benefits
- 18.6 The redevelopment for non-employment uses is only permitted where it would not prejudice the effective and efficient use of the remainder of the employment area for employment uses.

## REASON FOR CHANGE

- 18.7 National policy states that *“planning policies should avoid the long term protection of sites allocated for employment use where there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for that purpose”*. It also requires that *“land allocations should be regularly reviewed”*.
- 18.8 Applications for alternative uses for land or buildings should be treated on their merits having regard to market signals and the relative need for different land uses to support sustainable local communities.
- 18.9 We consider the local plan’s general approach to the protection of employment sites will ensure a variety of locations continue to be available for a mix of employment uses in the future. The approach will also allow for the efficient use of land by permitting appropriate alternative uses on those sites considered to make a less important contribution to the employment land supply or which are no longer fit for purpose.
- 18.10 However, the review of the local plan provides an opportunity to examine our approach and evaluate the selection of “key employment sites” to ensure it is appropriate and consistent with national policy.

## PROPOSED APPROACH

- 18.11 Sites identified as “key employment sites” will continue to be protected for B class uses and other employment uses that enhance the local economy (as set out in policy ECON2).

Figure 18.1: Key Employment Sites

TOWN	SITE
Weymouth	Littlemoor urban extension
	Mount Pleasant
Portland	Portland Port
	Southwell Business Park
	Inmosthay Industrial Estate
	Tradecroft Industrial Estate
Chickerell	Granby Industrial Estate
	Lynch Lane Industrial Estate
	Link Park
Dorchester	Poundbury Parkway Farm Business Park
	Marabout & The Grove Industrial Estate
	Poundbury West Industrial Estate
	Loudsmill
	Great Western Industrial Estate
	Railway Triangle

TOWN	SITE
	Casterbridge
Crossways	Land at Crossways
	Hybris Business Park
Bridport	Vearse Farm
	North Mills Trading Estate
	Amsafe
	Dreadnought Trading Estate
	St Andrews Trading Estate
	Crepe Farm
	Gore Cross
	Pymore Mills
Beaminster	Broadwindsor Road
	Horn Park Quarry
	Danisco Site
	Lane End Farm
Lyme Regis	Lyme Regis Industrial Estate / Uplyme Business Park
Sherborne	Barton Farm
	Hunts Depot
	Coldharbour Business Park
	South Western Business Park
Broadmayne	Roman Hill Business Park
Charminster	Charminster Farm
Piddlehinton	Enterprise Park

- 18.12 The sites in Figure 18.1 have been selected as “key” on the basis of the contribution (existing or potential) that they make to the employment land supply in the plan area. They are strictly protected to help ensure their ongoing contribution to the local economy.
- 18.13 However, the selection of a site as “key” and the controls that that designation places on the types of uses considered appropriate in those locations could, in some limited circumstances, constrain the ability to respond to local economic needs and impact on their future viability. This could particularly be a concern for sites occupied by only one firm. It is important that only those sites performing a very important role in the local economy are identified as “key”, thereby justifying this extra level of protection.
- 18.14 A reduction in the number of sites identified as “key” could improve the focus and application of the policy. Sites deselected from the “key employment sites” designation

would no longer be protected by Policy ECON2. Instead, development on these sites would be considered against the criteria in Policy ECON3.

- 18.15 As outlined, Policy ECON3 on employment sites not identified as “key” there will continue to be a more flexible approach, where in certain circumstances non-employment uses including residential development would be considered.
- 18.16 Although not identified as “key”, other employment sites provide valuable job opportunities and contribute to the overall mix of employment land available. The loss of these sites to non-employment uses could negatively impact on the local economy, resulting in a shortfall of available sites and limiting local access to employment.
- 18.17 The approach to development on other (non-key) sites will need to continue to strike a balance between ensuring that viable employment sites contributing to the local economy are protected, whilst being flexible enough to enable sites with no reasonable prospect of employment development being developed or alternative uses.

**18-i. Are there “key employment sites” listed in figure 18.1 that should no longer be given the higher level of protection afforded to “key employment sites”? Please tell us which ones and why.**

## 19. Retail and Town Centres

### INTRODUCTION

- 19.1 Main town centre uses include retail development; leisure & entertainment facilities, the more intensive sport and recreation uses (such as a cinemas); offices; and arts, culture and tourism developments.
- 19.2 The NPPF sets out two tests that should be applied when considering town centre uses, the sequential test and the impact test.
- The sequential test requires applications for main town centre uses to be located in town centres as first preference, then in edge of centre locations and only if suitable sites are not available should out of centre sites then be considered. The sequential approach does not apply to applications for small scale rural development, community facilities or employment trade related uses on employment sites.
  - The impact test determines whether there would be any likely significant adverse impacts of locating main town centre development outside existing town centres. In the local plan, an impact test is required for all proposals above a 1000m<sup>2</sup> floorspace threshold.

### CURRENT APPROACH

- 19.3 National policy states that in drawing up their Local Plans, local planning authorities should *“define a network and hierarchy of centres that is resilient to anticipated future economic changes”*.
- 19.4 The glossary to the NPPF clarifies that *“References to town centres or centres apply to city centres, town centres, district centres and local centres but exclude small parades of shops of purely neighbourhood significance.”* Although the Glossary of terms list the hierarchy of town and local centres a definition is not provided with the intention that this is locally defined.
- 19.5 Weymouth, Dorchester, Bridport, Sherborne and Lyme Regis town centres are defined through Policy ECON4. These centres are defined on the local plan policies map. The Local Plan also recognises that more local centres exist in the smaller towns and neighbourhood areas, relative to the size of the area they serve. The Local Plan list examples such as Easton, Fortuneswell and Beaminster that have an important role in meeting local need.

### REASON FOR CHANGE

- 19.6 The glossary to the NPPF states that *“Town centres are areas identified on the proposals map”* suggesting that centres that are not identified on the proposals map can not therefore be considered as *“centres”*.
- 19.7 The role, function and hierarchy of the town and local centres have not however been comprehensively defined, and local centres are not shown on the policies map. Applications that may affect local centres are considered on a case by case basis.

- 19.8 To provide a standard basis on which to determine planning applications for retail uses, it is proposed that the Local Plan Review outlines a definition of centres within a hierarchy which can be applied locally before defining the extent of the centres.

## PROPOSED APPROACH

- 19.9 Figure 19.1 includes a definition of town and local centre and suggests which centres fit within each category. The intention will be to apply the final definitions across the plan area to identify which centres fit within each category and therefore enable the extents of the centres to be defined on the local plan policies map.

Figure 19.1: Hierarchy of the town and local centres

CATEGORY	DEFINITION	LOCAL HIERARCHY
City Centres	City centres are the highest level of centre identified in development plans. In terms of hierarchies, they will often be a regional centre and will serve a wide catchment.	There are no city centres in the plan area.
Town centres	Town centres are the principle centres within an area. In rural areas they can often be found within market or coastal towns. They function as important service centres, providing a range of facilities and services for extensive rural catchment areas.	Town centres have been defined at Weymouth, Dorchester, Bridport, Sherborne and Lyme Regis.
District Centres	District centres will usually comprise groups of shops often containing at least one supermarket or superstore, and a range of non-retail services, such as banks and restaurants, as well as local public facilities such as a library.	A District Centre is under construction at Queen Mothers Square, Poundbury.
Local Centres	Local centres include a range of small shops of a local nature, serving a small catchment.  Typically, local centres might include, amongst other shops, a small supermarket, a newsagent, and a pharmacy. Other facilities could include a hot-food takeaway, hairdressers and launderette. In rural areas, large villages may perform the role of a local centre.	Larger local centres in the plan area include:  <b>Weymouth &amp; Portland</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Easton Square</li> <li>• Portland Road, Wyke Regis</li> <li>• Littlemoor Centre</li> <li>• Fortuneswell</li> <li>• Abbotsbury Road, Westham</li> <li>• Lodmoor Hill</li> <li>• Southill Centre</li> </ul> <b>West Dorset</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beaminster</li> <li>• Chickerell</li> <li>• West Bay</li> </ul>



CATEGORY	DEFINITION	LOCAL HIERARCHY
Small parades of shops	<p>Small parades of shops are largely defined by how people use them and their relation to other centres.</p> <p>They have a mainly local customer base, with strong local links and local visibility, have a high number of independent small or micro-businesses with some multiples and symbol affiliates; and have a mixture of retail based shops (convenience stores, newsagents, greengrocers etc) and some local service businesses (hairdressers, café etc).</p>	<p>Small parades of shops of purely neighbourhood significance are not regarded as centres.</p> <p>There is no intention to identify “small parades of shops” within the local plan.</p>

19.10 The councils are commissioning a retail study to examine the need for additional retail floorspace and the potential to accommodate future retail growth in and around the town centres. Town centre boundaries already identified on the local plan policies map, would be reviewed as a result of the retail study with a view to meeting the need for town centre uses in the most appropriate location.

**19-i. Are there any other factors in defining a retail hierarchy that the councils should consider?**

**19-ii. Using the draft definition of local and town centres, do you agree with the centres named under each category?**

## 20. Green Infrastructure

### INTRODUCTION

- 20.1 Green Infrastructure is defined in the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) as a *“network of multifunctional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities”*
- 20.2 The multiple and far reaching benefits of a green infrastructure network are set out in national policy. These benefits include:
- Provision of opportunities for recreation, social interaction and play;
  - Driving economic growth through the creation of high quality environments;
  - The potential to improve public health and community wellbeing by enhancing the quality of the environment and providing opportunities for sport
  - Impacting on the delivery of ecosystem services and ecological networks
  - Mitigating the risks associated with climate change by managing flooding and water resources, plus helping species adapt to climate change by facilitating opportunities for movement
  - Reinforcing local landscape character, adding to a sense of place.
- 20.3 Green Infrastructure is therefore a key consideration within local plans and planning decisions.

### CURRENT APPROACH

#### **POLICY ENV3 – GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE NETWORK**

- 20.4 Policy ENV3 states that the councils will work together with local communities and other relevant partners to develop a green infrastructure strategy for the plan area.
- 20.5 For the interim period prior to the development of this strategy, the Local Plan defines green infrastructure as:
- Areas / Land of Local Landscape Importance (as identified in the previously adopted local plans);
  - Portland Coastline (as identified in the previously adopted local plan for Weymouth and Portland);
  - Important Open Gaps (as identified in the previously adopted local plan for Weymouth and Portland);
  - Historically important spaces (as identified in adopted Conservation Area Appraisals);
  - Sites of Nature Conservation Interest, Local Nature Reserves and Ancient Woodlands, Lorton Valley and Portland Quarries nature parks.
- 20.6 In addition, there is a number of national and international designations (including SSSI, NNR, SAC, SPA and Ramsar) which are important for the protection of habitats and biodiversity. These designations also form an important part of the Green Infrastructure Network.

- 20.7 Policy ENV3 states that *“proposals that promote geodiversity and biodiversity within this network of spaces and provide improved access and recreational use (where appropriate) should be supported.”* Conversely *“Development that would cause harm to the green infrastructure network or undermine the reasons for an area’s inclusion within the network will not be permitted unless clearly outweighed by other considerations.”*

#### REASON FOR CHANGE

- 20.8 The NPPF states that planning should *“take account of the different roles and character of different areas, promoting the vitality of our main urban areas, protecting the Green Belts around them, recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supporting thriving rural communities within it”*
- 20.9 Having a plan-wide framework for West Dorset and Weymouth and Portland will assist in planning positively for green infrastructure giving a greater likelihood of achieving the multiple benefits associated with green infrastructure provision.
- 20.10 Policy ENV3 is an interim policy pending the intended development of a separate Green Infrastructure Strategy. It affords protection to various environmental designations identified through previous local plans prior to their assessment for potential inclusion within a Green Infrastructure network. The local plan review however provides the opportunity to alter this approach and define a green infrastructure network through this process.
- 20.11 It is not possible to define a network until a system for categorising different types of green spaces has been established. Once established, green spaces identified through the previous designations will be reassessed to determine whether they should continue to be included in the GI network. New sites may also be included if they fall into any of the definitions.

#### PROPOSED APPROACH

- 20.12 In order to define the Green Infrastructure network a series of categories need to be established to identify different elements and their function and benefit within the network. Given the multifunctional nature of the network areas may be included in more than one category.
- 20.13 Some of the areas included within designations may not be publicly accessible due to their environmental sensitivity, particularly if they are included within an international or national designation. These areas are also protected by other policies within the local plan.
- 20.14 It is proposed to adopt the categories for the types and functions of Green Infrastructure shown in Figure 20.1.

Figure 20.1: Types and functions of green infrastructure

TYPE	EXAMPLES	PRIMARY FUNCTION
Outdoor recreation facilities, parks and gardens	Sports pitches and greens, playgrounds, urban parks, country parks, formal gardens.	Offer opportunities for sports, play and recreation and to enable easy access to the countryside (for example Bridport Leisure Centre, Redlands Sports Hub, Dorchester's Borough Gardens)
Amenity greenspace	Informal recreation spaces, housing green spaces, landscape planting, village greens, urban commons, other incidental space	Creating attractive and pleasant built environments, providing community and private outdoor leisure space (for example 'Green' off Sprague Close, Weymouth)
Natural and semi-natural green / blue spaces	Nature reserves, woodland and scrub, grassland, heathlands, wetlands, ponds, open and running water, landscape planting	Creating areas for biodiversity, geodiversity, access to education associated with the natural environment (for example Radipole Lake, Jellyfields Nature Reserve, Portland Quarries Nature Park)
Green corridors	Rivers including their banks and floodplains, trees & hedgerows, dry stone walls, road and rail corridors, cycling routes, pedestrian paths, rights of way, Coast	Creating a sustainable travel network promoting walking and cycling, enhancements to semi natural habitats and integrating micro green infrastructure into urban areas (for example Rodwell Trail, English Coastal path, River Brit corridor)
Local character areas	Churchyards, treed areas, roadside verges, landscape screening, setting of a building, open gaps, important views	Creates a sense of character within a settlement contributing to the attractiveness of an area or building. (for example Sherborne Abbey Close, Tree lined Avenues and Green spaces at Coneygar Road, Coneygar Lane and Beaumont Ave in Bridport, Open gap between Preston and Sutton Poyntz)
Other	Allotments, community gardens, orchards, cemeteries and churchyards	Providing accessible facilities to meet needs within settlements, including enabling local food production (for example Poundbury Community Farm, Bridport Community Orchard, St Georges church yard, Portland)

**20-i. Do you think the definitions of Green Infrastructure above offer a suitable framework for identifying green infrastructure types?**

**20-ii. Is there anything missing from the categories?**

## 21. Design

### INTRODUCTION

- 21.1 The plan area has an exceptionally high quality built and natural environment and ensuring this is preserved and enhanced through good design in new development is a key aspect of sustainable development. High quality and sustainable design encompasses a wide range of elements from how a place looks and functions to the environmental performance of individual buildings.
- 21.2 In March 2015 the government introduced a new approach for setting technical standards for new housing development. It consolidated all technical standards into building regulations and provided the opportunity to have enhanced standards for access and water efficiency, as long as the requirement for them was in a local plan.
- 21.3 The new approach also introduced nationally described space standards for new dwellings which could only be applied through local plan policy. The optional enhanced technical standards for access are in two parts described in '*Accessible and Adaptable Dwellings*' and '*Wheelchair User Dwellings*'.

### CURRENT APPROACH

- 21.4 The adopted local plan currently requires development to comply with national technical standards as set out in Policy ENV12: *"Development will achieve a high quality of sustainable and inclusive design. It will only be permitted where it complies with national technical standards"*. These are the minimum standards set by building regulation and do not include any of the enhanced optional standards.
- 21.5 In relation to accessibility, Policy ENV12 also states that *"The councils will work with stakeholders and the local community to develop an approach for adaptable and accessible homes in accordance with the latest government guidance"*.
- 21.6 The preamble to policy ENV13 makes reference to water efficiency by mentioning methods to achieve high environmental performance with regard to new development. The methods include *"putting in place systems to collect rainwater for use"* and *"Sustainable Urban Drainage principles"*.

### REASON FOR CHANGE

- 21.7 At the time the Technical Standards were introduced the Local Plan was at an advanced stage of preparation and so could not incorporate any optional standards. The Ministerial Statement that introduced the standards states that: *"The optional new national technical standards should only be required through any new local plan if they address a clearly evidenced need, and where their impact on viability has been considered, in accordance with the NPPF and NPPG"*.

The NPPF states "Local planning authorities should take account of evidence that demonstrates a clear need for housing for people with specific housing needs and plan to meet this need." Para 9 says that *"pursing sustainable development involves seeking*

*positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural and historic environment as well as in peoples quality of life”* which includes amongst other things; replacing poor design with better design, improving the conditions in which people live, work, travel and take leisure and widening the choice of high quality homes.

## PROPOSED APPROACH

- 21.8 The review of the local plan provides the opportunity to examine the evidence to establish if any enhanced standards are justified.
- 21.9 The adoption of any higher technical and space standards will have an impact on the build costs and subsequent affordability of new build properties. It may also have an impact on the overall viability of schemes and therefore before any additional standards are introduced, viability assessments of different options will need to be carried out.
- 21.10 There are a number of ways that enhanced standards could be applied and at this stage it is intended to seek views on possible options to take forward and test for viability.

## ACCESSIBILITY AND ADAPTABLE HOUSING

- 21.11 Accessible and adaptable standards mean making reasonable provision for most people to access a dwelling and incorporating features that make it potentially suitable for a wide range of occupants such as those with reduced mobility, older people, and some wheelchair users.
- 21.12 Within the plan area there is a higher proportion of people within the older age groups than in the country as a whole and that population is becoming increasingly significant. In addition, Weymouth & Portland has 21.6% of its population with long term illness or disability and West Dorset has 20.2% compared with 17.7% within England as a whole<sup>9</sup>.
- 21.13 This suggests that consideration should be given to the need to provide dwellings with enhanced accessibility to ensure the needs of an increasing proportion of the population are met in new developments.

**21-i. Should there be a requirement to provide a proportion of new houses at the enhanced accessibility and adaptability standards? or**

**21-ii. Should the requirement for enhanced accessibility and adaptability standards in new housing apply in certain site specific circumstances only? For example sites in town centres or sites with level access to facilities most suitable for people with reduced mobility.**

<sup>9</sup> Public Health England 2013

## WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE HOUSING

- 21.14 The standard for wheelchair accessible housing would require new dwellings to make reasonable provision, either at completion or at a point following completion, for a wheelchair user to live in the dwelling and use any associated private outdoor space, parking and communal facilities that may be provided for the use of other occupants.
- 21.15 These standards can only be applied where the local authority is responsible for allocating or nominating a person to live in a dwelling.

**21-iii. Should a requirement for a proportion of new houses to be suitable for wheelchair users be included within the Local Plan?**

**21-iv. Should a requirement for new homes to be suitable for wheelchair users be introduced in certain site specific circumstances? Examples might be sites in town centres or sites with level access to facilities.**

## NATIONALLY DESCRIBED SPACE STANDARDS

- 21.16 In pursuing sustainable development in line with the NPPF we also need to ensure that homes provide adequate space to undertake typical day to day activities, and to avoid the health and social costs that arise where space is inadequate.

Figure 21.1: Minimum gross internal floor areas and storage (m<sup>2</sup>)

NUMBER OF BEDROOMS (B)	NUMBER OF BED SPACES (PERSONS)	1 STOREY DWELLINGS	2 STOREY DWELLINGS	3 STOREY DWELLINGS	BUILT-IN STORAGE
1b	1p	39 (37)*			1.0
	2p	50	58		1.5
2b	3p	61	70		2.0
	4p	70	79		
3b	4p	74	84	90	2.5
	5p	86	93	99	
	6p	95	102	108	
4b	5p	90	97	103	3.0
	6p	99	106	112	
	7p	108	115	121	
	8p	117	124	130	



NUMBER OF BEDROOMS (B)	NUMBER OF BED SPACES (PERSONS)	1 STOREY DWELLINGS	2 STOREY DWELLINGS	3 STOREY DWELLINGS	BUILT-IN STORAGE
5b	6p	103	110	116	3.5
	7p	112	119	125	
	8p	121	128	134	
6b	7p	116	123	129	4.0
	8p	125	132	138	

**21-v. Should there be a requirement for new housing to comply with nationally described space standards?**

## WATER EFFICIENCY

21.17 In relation to water efficiency, Environment Agency data shows that the water companies serving the region (Wessex Water and South West Water) are classified as Medium Stress both in current and future scenario. It is therefore suggested that currently national standards for water efficiency in West Dorset and Weymouth & Portland area are appropriate and there is no evidence to suggest that optional enhanced standards should be required.

**21-vi. Is there any evidence not considered above which would support the inclusion of enhanced standards for water efficiency within the local plan?**

## 22. Coastal Change

### INTRODUCTION

22.1 Much of the coastline within the plan area is subject to coastal change. Although there are uncertainties regarding the extent and pace of sea level rise and coastal change, risks to property, habitats and infrastructure are expected from the constant evolution of the coast.

### CURRENT APPROACH

22.2 National planning policy looks to reduce risk from coastal change by avoiding inappropriate development in vulnerable areas or actions that would add to physical changes to the coast.

22.3 The general approach is:

- For local authorities to identify Coastal Change Management Areas likely to be affected by physical changes to the coast.
- Make clear what development will be appropriate in Coastal Change Management Areas and make provision for development and infrastructure that needs to be relocated away from coastal change management areas.

### **POLICY ENV7 – COASTAL EROSION AND LAND INSTABILITY**

22.4 The principle of the current approach is to direct new development away from areas vulnerable to coastal erosion and land instability unless it can be demonstrated that the site is stable or can be made stable. The areas of coastal change are shown on the proposals map.

22.5 Policy ENV7 recognises that further work is necessary and proposes to identify Coastal Change Management Areas (CCMAs) based on the Shoreline Management Plan and supporting evidence.

### REASON FOR CHANGE

22.6 Identifying Coastal Change Management Areas and the forms of development and associated infrastructure that are appropriate within them is necessary to comply with national policy.

22.7 To fully comply with the requirements of national policy, the Local Plan should also consider the case for making provision for development and infrastructure that needs to be relocated away from Coastal Change Management Areas.

### PROPOSED APPROACH

22.8 The extent of coastal change is currently defined through the Shoreline Management Plan 2 (SMP2). The SMP2 defines the over-arching strategy for managing the coast and identifies which sections of the coast are to be protected in the short, medium and long term. In addition to this, Coastal Risk Planning Guidance for West Dorset and Weymouth &

Portland (2014) has been prepared which sets out in more detail the nature of risks posed to coastal areas from future coastal change.

### COASTAL CHANGE MANAGEMENT AREAS (CCMAS)

- 22.9 The Coastal Risk Planning Guidance (CPRG) has mapped coastal risks from erosion, land sliding, flooding or managed realignment in 33 individual zones between Lyme Regis in the West and Ringstead Bay in the east. The guidance document has recommended that 29 of the 33 zones should be established as CCMA with the exceptions being existing defended areas such as Weymouth Town Centre, West Bay and Lyme Regis Harbours.
- 22.10 Given the nature and extent of risk across the plan area coastline, the councils propose to follow this guidance and designate all parts of the West Dorset and Weymouth & Portland Coastline as a CCMA in the Local Plan Review except for the defended areas of Weymouth Town Centre, West Bay Harbour and Lyme Regis Harbours.

**22-i. Do you agree that all parts of coastline except for the defended areas of Weymouth Town Centre, Weymouth Harbour and Lyme Regis Harbour should be designated as a Coastal Change Management Area?**

### APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT WITHIN COASTAL CHANGE MANAGEMENT AREAS

- 22.11 The proposed approach to development within CCMA is outlined in Figure 22.1.

Figure 22.1: Approach to development within CCMA

RISK OF COASTAL EROSION	APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT	EXAMPLES
Immediate (20 year time horizon)	Limited range of types of development directly linked to the coastal strip. Time-limited planning permission only	Beach huts, cafes/tea rooms, car parks and sites for holiday or short-let caravans and camping This excludes permanent residential development
Medium (20 to 50 year time horizon)	Wider range of types of development with time limited planning permission	Hotels, shops, office or leisure activities requiring a coastal location and providing substantial economic and social benefits to the community. This excludes permanent residential development
long-term (up to 100-year time horizon)		

- 22.12 Permanent new residential development will not be appropriate within the coastal change management area.

**22-ii. Should the council limit the type of development that should or should not occur in the CCMA as set out in Figure 22.1?**

- 22.13 There are many existing commercial and social assets across the coastline which will be affected by coastal change and in many cases, it may not be economically viable or environmentally sustainable to protect all development at risk.
- 22.14 A potential way of mitigating the economic and social impacts associated with coastal change is to facilitate relocation of affected property (e.g. houses, farmsteads, commercial premises) further inland through roll back policies which seek to provide flexibility to enable development that would not normally be permitted in undeveloped coastal locations. The alternative would be that the councils do nothing and accept that nature will take its course, and that property, infrastructure and habitats will be permanently lost.

**22-iii. Should the council introduce a rollback policy to allow development threatened by coastal erosion to obtain planning permission to be replaced and relocated further inland?**

**22-iv. If so, should the council restrict the types of development which can roll back?**

- 22.15 In some undefended areas, for instance along the north-western shore of Portland Harbour, the rate of coastal erosion is likely to result in the loss of residential properties, roads, commercial premises e.g. caravan / holiday parks and coastal footpaths.

**22-v. In areas where the risk to assets is most acute, should the councils formally allocate land for the relocation of development, infrastructure and habitat affected by coastal change?**

## 23. Wind Energy

### CURRENT APPROACH

- 23.31 Policy COM 11 of the adopted Local Plan sets out the approach for all forms of renewable energy development other than wind energy development. The policy includes a positive strategy that allows proposals for generating heat or electricity from renewable sources (other than wind energy) where possible, providing that the benefits of the development significantly outweigh the harm.

### REASON FOR CHANGE

- 23.32 The exclusion of wind energy development from policy COM11 was a late modification to the policy as a result of a change to national policy.
- 23.33 National planning policy asserts that applications for wind energy development will only be allowed if the development site is identified as suitable for wind energy in either a Local or Neighbourhood Plan. Wind energy applications must also demonstrate that the planning impacts identified by local communities have been addressed and therefore the proposal has their backing.
- 23.34 The review of the local plan presents an opportunity to consider the councils approach to wind energy development in light of the new Government policy.

### PROPOSED APPROACH

- 23.35 National policy states that local planning authorities should *“consider identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources, and supporting infrastructure, where this would help secure the development of such sources”*.
- 23.36 Suitable areas for renewable energy development would need to be identified and allocated in either the local plan or a neighbourhood plan. In either case national policy is clear that sites must be supported by the local community.
- 23.37 A local plan allocation would give greater certainty as to where such development will be permitted, as the councils should not have to give permission for speculative wind energy applications when they judge the impact to be unacceptable.
- 23.38 In identifying suitable areas for wind energy development the councils would be contributing positively towards increasing the supply of renewable and low carbon energy. Consideration would need to be given to the rich diversity of the local environment including the Dorset AONB and the World Heritage Site designations and the ability to secure community support.
- 23.39 An alternative route would be to rely on local initiatives for wind energy development, led by local communities and delivered through neighbourhood plans.
- 23.40 In either case, individual planning applications will continue to be considered on a case by case basis, with consideration given to the appropriateness of a project’s scale and design in that location.

**23-i. Should the councils allocate suitable sites for wind energy through the local plan or rely on locally led initiatives such as neighbourhood plans?**

## 24. Glossary

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)	An area of countryside in England which has been designated for conservation due to its significant landscape value.
Affordable Housing	Social rented (normally owned by Housing Associations as registered providers, with rents set in accordance with the national rent regime), affordable rented (where the rent is set to be no more than 80% of the local market rent (including service charges, where applicable)) and intermediate housing (homes for sale and rent provided at a cost above social rent, but below market levels), provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market, having regard to local incomes and local house prices. Intermediate housing can include shared equity (shared ownership and equity loans), other low cost homes for sale that remain at an affordable price. Affordable housing should include provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or, where this is not possible, for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision.
Coastal Change Management Area (CCMA)	An area likely to be affected by coastal change (physical change to the shoreline through erosion, coastal landslip, permanent inundation or coastal accretion). These will be defined through future policy
Conservation Area	A conservation area is an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)	A levy allowing the councils to raise funds from owners or developers of land undertaking new building projects in the area.
Duty to Cooperate	Places a legal duty on local planning authorities, county councils in England and public bodies to engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis to maximise the effectiveness of Local and Marine Plan preparation in the context of strategic cross boundary matters.  The duty to cooperate is not a duty to agree. But local planning authorities should make every effort to secure the necessary cooperation on strategic cross boundary matters before they submit their Local Plans for examination.
Green Infrastructure (GI)	A network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities.
Housing Market Area (HMA)	The functional housing market area is ...the geographical area in which a substantial majority of the employed population both live and work and where those moving house without changing employment choose to stay” (Maclennan et al, 1998)

Key Employment Site	Larger employment sites that make a significant contribution to the employment land supply.
Local Green Space	Local Green Space designation is a way to provide special protection against development for green areas of particular importance to local communities.
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	The National Planning Policy Framework was published on 27 March 2012 and sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.
National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)	The planning practice guidance is a web-based resource intended to assist planning practitioners in an accessible and usable way. Ultimately the interpretation of legislation is for the Courts but this guidance is an indication of the Secretary of State's views.
Objectively Assessed Need (OAN)	The housing that households are willing and able to buy or rent, either from their own resources or with assistance from the State.
Registered Park and Garden	The Register of Historic Parks and Gardens of special historic interest in England provides a listing and classification system for historic parks and gardens similar to that used for listed buildings. The register aims to "celebrate designed landscapes of note, and encourage appropriate protection", so safeguarding the features and qualities of key landscapes for the future.
Shoreline Management Plan (SMP)	A plan providing a large-scale assessment of the risk to people and to the developed, historic and natural environment associated with coastal processes.
Self Build and Custom Housebuilding	We define self-build as projects where someone directly organises the design and construction of their new home. Custom build homes tend to be those where you work with a specialist developer to help deliver your own home.
Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	Sites designated by Natural England under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.  A SSSI is a conservation designation that may be made on any area of land which is considered to be of special interest by virtue of its fauna, flora, geological or physiographical / geomorphological features.
Starter Homes	A Starter Home is a new dwelling only available for purchase by qualifying first-time buyers and which is made available at price which is at least 20% less than its market value but which is below the price cap. A price cap of £250,000 outside Greater London and £450,000 in Greater London. The purchaser must be a first-time buyer (falling within the statutory definition) under the age of 40.