



## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee are invited to attend this meeting at South Walks House, South Walks Road, Dorchester, Dorset, DT1 1UZ to consider the items listed on the following page.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Matt Prosser'.

Matt Prosser  
Chief Executive

**Date:** Tuesday, 22 November 2016  
**Time:** 2.15 pm  
**Venue:** Committee Room A

**Members of Committee:**

D Turner (Chairman), J Dunseith (Vice-Chairman), T Bartlett, S Brown MBE, P Cooke, D Elliott, R Gould, T Harries, J Haynes, S Hosford, R Kayes, M Lawrence, M Rennie, D Rickard, M Roberts, J Sewell and P Shorland

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### USEFUL INFORMATION

For more information about this agenda please telephone Lindsey Watson (01305) 252209 email [lwatson@dorset.gov.uk](mailto:lwatson@dorset.gov.uk)

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Members of the public are welcome to attend this meeting with the exception of any items listed in the exempt part of this agenda.



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# A G E N D A

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## 1 APOLOGIES

To receive any apologies for absence

## 2 CODE OF CONDUCT

Members are required to comply with the requirements of the Localism Act 2011 and the Council's Code of Conduct regarding disclosable pecuniary and other interests.

- Check if there is an item of business on this agenda in which the member or other relevant person has a disclosable pecuniary or other disclosable interest
- Check that the interest has been notified to the Monitoring Officer (in writing) and entered in the Register (if not this must be done within 28 days)
- Disclose the interest at the meeting (in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct) and in the absence of dispensation to speak and/or vote, withdraw from any consideration of the item where appropriate. If the interest is non-pecuniary you may be able to stay in the room, take part and vote.

**For further advice please contact Stuart Caundle, Monitoring Officer, in advance of the meeting.**

## 3 MINUTES

To confirm the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 27 September 2016, as previously circulated to members.

## 4 CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE

To receive an update from the Chairman of the committee.

## 5 SERVICE REVIEW PROGRAMME - WEST DORSET TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRES - DORCHESTER

5 - 38

To consider a report of the scrutiny working group in respect of the Service Review of Dorchester Tourist Information Centre.

- 6 WEST DORSET AND WEYMOUTH AND PORTLAND LOCAL PLAN REVIEW: CONSULTATION ON ISSUES AND OPTIONS** 39 - 174
- To consider a report of the Spatial Policy and Implementation Manager.
- BACKGROUND PAPER - WEST DORSET AND WEYMOUTH AND PORTLAND LOCAL PLAN REVIEW - SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL ISSUES AND OPTIONS**
- Please use the link below to view the document, 'West Dorset and Weymouth and Portland Local Plan Review – Sustainability Appraisal Issues and Options (referred to in background papers for this report):
- <https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/article/421631/West-Dorset-Weymouth--Portland-Adopted-Local-Plan>
- 7 BUDGET REPORT** 175 - 184
- To consider a report of the Strategic Director.
- 8 SCRUTINY OF UPDATE TO THE CONSTITUTION - CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MEMBERS AND OFFICERS DEALING WITH PLANNING MATTERS** 185 - 196
- To review the draft Code of Conduct for members and officers dealing with planning matters further to the resolution of Full Council on 3 November 2016.
- 9 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PLAN** 197 - 226
- To consider the Overview and Scrutiny Committee work plan.  
To consider the Executive Committee Forward Plan and decisions taken at recent meetings.
- 10 QUESTIONS**
- To receive questions submitted by members in writing to the Chief Executive and in respect of which appropriate notice has been given.
- 11 OUTSIDE BODIES**
- To receive any oral updates from members of the committee relating to their appointments to outside bodies.
- 12 URGENT ITEMS**
- To consider any other items that the Chairman decides are urgent.

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## **Overview and Scrutiny Committee 22 November 2016 Service Review Programme - West Dorset Tourist Information Centres - Dorchester**

### **For Decision**

**Portfolio Holder(s)/ Briefholder**  
Councillor Mary Penfold - Enabling

**Senior Leadership Team Contact:**  
M Hamilton, Strategic Director

**Report Author:**  
Lindsey Watson, Democratic Services Team

**Statutory Authority**  
Local Government Act 2000 and Localism Act 2011 sets out the requirement for local authorities to establish overview and scrutiny committees and their functions.

### **Purpose of Report**

- 1 To receive the report of the scrutiny working group following the scrutiny exercise in relation to the Service Review of West Dorset Tourist Information Centres – Dorchester Tourist Information Centre, and to agree the formal report of the committee for inclusion within the report to the Executive Committee on 15 December 2016.
- 2 To consider a petition regarding the Tourist Information Centre at Antelope Walk, Dorchester, as part of the scrutiny of the service review process in relation to the Dorchester Tourist Information Centre.

### **Officer Recommendations**

- 3
  - a) That the committee consider the petition regarding the Tourist Information Centre at Antelope Walk, Dorchester, referred from Full Council on 3 November 2016, as part of the scrutiny of the service review process;
  - b) That the report of the scrutiny working group attached at appendix 1 be considered as the formal response of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to the Dorchester Tourist Information Centre part of the West Dorset Tourist Information Centres Service Review, for inclusion within the report to the Executive Committee;

- c) That the committee determines whether the completed equality impact assessment for the Dorchester Tourist Information Centre part of the service review attached at appendix 3, ensures that equality issues have been fully considered and that any adverse impacts of the proposed changes on different groups have been considered and, where possible, mitigated.

## **Reason for Decision**

- 4 To respond to the request from Full Council to consider a petition received in respect of the Tourist Information Centre at Antelope Walk, Dorchester.
- 5 To agree the formal response of the committee in respect of the scrutiny of the Dorchester Tourist Information Centre part of the West Dorset Tourist Information Centres Service Review process and viability of the options presented.
- 6 To provide the committee with the opportunity to consider the completed equality impact assessment for this part of the service review.

## **Service Review of West Dorset Tourist Information Centres**

- 7 A scrutiny working group was established by the former Efficiency Scrutiny Committee in order to undertake a scrutiny exercise for the Service Review of West Dorset Tourist Information Centres.
- 8 The role of the scrutiny working group is to check the service review process undertaken by the Project Team and to assess the viability of the options for change to be presented. In order to do this, the scrutiny working group are asked to undertake an assessment of the agreed scrutiny principles as follows:
  - determine whether the review has considered all the stages of the service review process and that these have been effectively carried out
  - ensure the linkages and impacts on other services and partners have been properly explored and accounted for
  - test that the proposed options for change are deliverable, realistic in the timeframe and accurately costed
  - challenge the deliverability of savings proposed and whether these represent value for money
  - assess whether the customer has been placed at the centre of the review process and that all stakeholder requirements have been focussed on appropriately
  - ensure that equality issues have been fully considered and that any adverse impacts of the proposed changes on different groups have been clearly identified and where possible mitigated
  - identify issues in the review that will require further development or research
  - make further suggestions for change that may have been overlooked or discounted

- 9 The scrutiny working group is also invited to provide comment on the options proposed by the service review project team, make further suggestions for change that may have been overlooked or discounted and to report their preferred option to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

## **Dorchester Tourist Information Centre**

- 10 During the process of the Service Review, it has been agreed that solutions for each tourist information centre at Bridport, Dorchester, Lyme Regis and Sherborne should be progressed as stand alone projects rather than attempting to maintain the same reporting timescale for each solution.
- 11 The service review in respect of the Dorchester Tourist Information Centre has now been progressed and the report of the scrutiny working group is attached at appendix 1. The report indicates the view of the scrutiny working group as to whether they feel that each of the scrutiny principles has been adequately addressed and provides their comments specifically in respect of options for the Dorchester Tourist Information Centre.
- 12 The Business Case for the service review is attached at appendix 2 and provides the committee with the necessary background and information on work undertaken and options for change.
- 13 The completed equality impact assessment for the service review is attached at appendix 3. The committee is asked to determine whether the completed equality impact assessment ensures that equality issues have been fully considered and that any adverse impacts of the proposed changes on different groups have been considered and, where possible, mitigated.

## **Petition regarding the Tourist Information Centre at Antelope Walk, Dorchester**

- 14 On 3 November 2016, Full Council received and considered a petition in respect of the Tourist Information Centre at Antelope Walk in Dorchester. The wording of the petition states “Save the Tourist Information Centre in Antelope Walk or replace it in a near location and of the same standard which is excellent and provide the much needed tourist visit and local destination for our county town.”
- 15 As the petition had received over 1000 signatures it was debated at Full Council and it was subsequently agreed that the petition should be referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consideration.
- 16 Members of this committee are invited to consider the wording of the petition alongside the report of the scrutiny working group and as part of the consideration of the options for the Dorchester Tourist Information Centre.

## **Implications**

- 17 All implications are as set out in the attached business case and equalities impact assessment.

## Appendices

- 18 Appendix 1 – Report of the scrutiny working group in respect of the Dorchester Tourist Information Centre part of the service review.  
Appendix 2 – Business Case for the Dorchester Tourist Information Centre Service Review  
Appendix 3 – Equality Impact Assessment for the Dorchester Tourist Information Centre Service Review

## Background Papers

- 19 Year 2 Service Review Programme – Scrutiny, Report to Efficiency Scrutiny Committee 17 March 2015  
Year 2 Service Review Programme – Membership of scrutiny working groups, Report to Efficiency Scrutiny Committee 19 May 2015

## Footnote

- 20 Issues relating to financial, environmental, economic and equalities implications have been considered and any information relevant to the decision is included within the report.

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**SERVICE REVIEW: WEST DORSET TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRES –  
DORCHESTER TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRE (TIC)**

**REPORT OF SCRUTINY WORKING GROUP TO OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY  
COMMITTEE**

**DATE: 22 NOVEMBER 2016**

**Scrutiny of Dorchester Tourist Information Centre (TIC) element of the service review process complete with no additional work recommended.**

**Preferred option of scrutiny working group:**

The scrutiny working group support the recommendation in the business case to move the TIC service into the Dorchester Library at the current time in order to maintain the service. Members support a review of the location of the service at an appropriate time in the future.

A review of how the service is working within the library should be undertaken by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee after one year of operation.

**SCRUTINY OF SERVICE REVIEW: WEST DORSET TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRES – DORCHESTER TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRE**

**Membership of Scrutiny Working Group:**

Lead member: Councillor Daryl Turner

Councillors: Sandra Brown, Patrick Cooke, Dominic Elliott, Susie Hosford and Molly Rennie

**Lead officer:** Matt Ryan (Tourism and Events Manager) / Trevor Hedger (Senior Economic Regeneration Officer)

**Responsible Strategic Director:** Martin Hamilton (Strategic Director)

**Responsible Portfolio Holder:** Councillor Mary Penfold (Enabling)

**Brief description of service review subject to scrutiny:**

West Dorset District Council operates four Tourist information Centres (TICs) located in Bridport, Dorchester, Lyme Regis and Sherborne. In 2013/14 the TIC's had over 419,000 customer visits together with enquiries by letter, phone and email. At Dorchester and Bridport TICs 50% of customers are local residents; with 70% in Sherborne and 15% in Lyme Regis. Total service costs were £1,130,000 in 2013/14 offset by £840,000 of income giving net running costs of £291,000.

The way in which visitors access information has changed in recent years. Developments in new technology and in consumer behaviour require a step change in information delivery across the tourism sector. The TIC review has been reframed by the Partnership Board (the Programme Board for the Service Review Programme) on 26<sup>th</sup> February 2015 as a Fundamental Review of all aspects of the service, including functions, budgets, staffing and systems within the service. Possible outcomes include TICs remaining but being run by other partners (Town councils, volunteer organisations or trusts), reduced District Council services or closure of TICs and greater reliance on on-line information provision.

Risks associated with this review include reputation damage linked to changing the model of service delivery; potential impacts on tourism experience and local economy if alternative information channels are not provided.

**Please note that this report is with relation to the Dorchester tourist information centre only.**

<p><b>Role of scrutiny:</b> To ensure that the service review process undertaken is fit for purpose and that the options for change have been fully assessed using the agreed principles set out below.</p> <p>To check that equality issues have been fully considered and mitigated through the equality impact assessment.</p> <p>To comment on the options proposed by the service review project team, make further suggestions for change that may have been overlooked or discounted and to provide comment to the Executive Committee on their preferred way forward.</p>	
<b>Area examined</b>	<b>Key principle met?</b>
Has the review considered all the stages of the service review process and have these been effectively carried out?	<b>Yes</b>
<p><b>Comments:</b></p> <p>Members noted that as part of the review, officers have held discussions with the landlord of the property of the current location of the TIC with regard to opportunities to reduce the rent level and that this has been unsuccessful.</p>	
<b>Area examined</b>	<b>Key principle met?</b>
Have the linkages and impacts on other services and partners been properly explored and accounted for?	<b>Yes</b>
<p><b>Comments:</b></p>	
<b>Area examined</b>	<b>Key principle met?</b>
Are the proposed options for change deliverable, realistic in the timeframe and accurately costed?	<b>Yes</b>
<p><b>Comments:</b></p> <p>Members feel that the timescale for relocating the service into the library is achievable noting that the current lease on the Antelope Walk premises expires at the end of March 2017.</p>	

Area examined	Key principle met?
Are the savings proposed deliverable and represent value for money?	Yes
<p><b>Comments:</b></p> <p>The scrutiny working group note the need to continue with a valued service but within a limited budget. The council has a duty to reduce the revenue cost of running the service and note that this will be in the region of an £80,000 saving year on year from 1 April 2017.</p> <p>There are opportunities for the council to work together with partners including Dorset County Council to continue to provide a service for visitors and residents.</p>	
Area examined	Key principle met?
Has the customer been placed at the centre of the review process and has all stakeholder requirements been focussed on appropriately?	Yes
<p><b>Comments:</b></p> <p>Stakeholder and public consultation have been undertaken.</p> <p>Members accept that there is a body of opinion that would like to see the TIC retained in the current location but there is an acknowledgement that the service has to relocate in order to achieve necessary savings and to put the service in the best possible position for any potential review in the future linked to possible changes in local government.</p> <p>The service review has considered other options in addition to the library option, which have been ruled out and has also rejected the option of stopping the service.</p>	
Area examined	Key principle met?
Have equality issues been fully considered and where possible mitigated, including clear identification of the adverse impacts of the proposed changes on different groups?	Yes
Equality Impact Assessment complete?	Yes

<p><b>Comments:</b></p> <p>The scrutiny working group feel that the library option offers a number of benefits over the existing TIC location and note the following paragraph included within the equalities impact assessment:</p> <p>“Public consultation revealed that the positive aspects of the library included the availability of disabled car parking, the proximity of car parks/train stations, level access to the building and the availability of full disabled facilities, including on site accessible WC facilities, in a building already adapted to meet the needs of those with protected characteristics.”</p>
<p><b>Any other issues identified in the review that will require further development or research</b></p> <p>The relocation of the TIC service into the library is seen as phase one of this project with a recognition that a further move of the service being possible at an appropriate time in the future.</p>
<p><b>Comments on options set out in the business case</b></p> <p>Comments as set out in this report.</p>
<p><b>Further suggestions for change that may have been overlooked or discounted</b></p> <p>Members support a review of tourist information signage within Dorchester and support opportunities to work with partners including with the Dorchester Heritage Committee.</p>
<p><b>Preferred option of the scrutiny working group and reasoning</b></p> <p>The scrutiny working group support the recommendation in the business case to move the TIC service into the Dorchester Library at the current time in order to maintain the service. Members support a review of the location of the service at an appropriate time in the future.</p>

Report produced by the Scrutiny Working Group

Date: 7 November 2016

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# Business Case

<b>Project Name:</b>	Service Review – Dorchester Tourist Information Centre
<b>Project code/JN:</b>	Project Code
<b>Document Number:</b>	Version 2.6
<b>Release (draft/final):</b>	Draft
<b>Date:</b>	09/11/16
<b>Project Manager:</b>	Tourism & Events Manager (Matt Ryan)
<b>Project Sponsor:</b>	Head of Economy, Leisure & Tourism (Nick Thornley)
<b>Author:</b>	Matt Ryan / Judith Chauvet

## 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 West Dorset District Council operates four Tourist Information Centres (TICs) in Bridport, Dorchester, Lyme Regis and Sherborne at a total annual operating cost of approximately £353K, excluding central recharges of £221K.
- 1.2 The Council started a review of the Tourist Information Service in 2014. The review aims to identify sustainable methods to deliver tourist information for the future through options that deliver a modernised tourist information service, whilst achieving indicative savings of £300,000.
- 1.3 Since 1995 Dorchester TIC has operated from large commercial premises in Antelope Walk, with a current approximate annual throughput of 170,000 recorded by an electronic door counter. Approximately 25% of these seek staff assistance. For the past five years, throughput to the centre has declined by an average of approximately 6,000 each year. Staff currently deal with over 7000 telephone enquiries per annum. The total cost to the council for the service is £153K, excluding internal recharges of almost £71K.
- 1.4 During the service review, a variety of options for Dorchester TIC have been considered to meet the savings required by the service review process, including relocating or integrating the service into the new Shire Hall attraction, relocating to South Walks House (SWH) reception or the Dorchester Library & Learning Centre and taking a more commercial approach within the existing premises. Discussions were also held with an operator of a private attraction, the County Museum and Dorchester Town Council. More recently and following the launch of the public consultation on the options being presented, discussions with a retail operator, a leisure operator and a further discussion with the County Museum has taken place. Information has been provided to these operators.

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- 1.5 As part of the Service Review programme, extensive stakeholder engagement was undertaken in June 2015, in the form of a widely-available and extensively-promoted survey and drop-in sessions for the public, with the results informing options for future service delivery.
- 1.6 The service review identified two potentially viable options, relocation to Dorchester Library and Learning Centre and relocation to SWH reception, to continue to offer a TIC service, at a reduced level and cost to the council, whilst meeting the main elements identified as the most important from the survey results.
- 1.7 The current lease on the Antelope Walk premises expires at the end of March 2017 and we are required to vacate the premises by this date, unless we are able to negotiate a lease extension.
- 1.8 Whilst a move to the Library can be achieved in this financial year, an extension to the existing lease is likely to be necessary to progress a move to SWH reception and will therefore incur further premises costs in the next financial year.
- 1.9 In order to achieve savings and conclude the review of Dorchester TIC within this financial year, officers' preferred option was to pursue a move to Dorchester Library.
- 1.10 The recommendation reached through the service review process, to the August 2016 Executive Committee was that relocation to Dorchester Library should be presented for public consultation, with the replacement of the existing service with an unstaffed Tourist Information Point (TIP) as the alternative option for the future. The Executive Committee endorsed this approach and public consultation on these options commenced on Tuesday 16 August for an eight week period, concluding on Tuesday 11 October 2016.
- 1.11 The results of the public consultation are summarised at paragraph 2.
- 1.12 The results of the consultation will further inform the deliberations of the Scrutiny working group and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the report to the Executive Committee for consideration in December 2016.
- 1.13 Based on the results of the public consultation and recognising the value of the service to the local community and economy, officers' recommendation is that relocation to Dorchester Library offers the most viable and sustainable option for future service delivery and protects both the staff and service as far as possible for the future.

## 2. Reasons

- 2.1 During the service review, a variety of options have been considered to meet the savings required by the service review process, including integrating the service into the new Shire Hall attraction, taking a more commercial approach within existing premises, relocating to SWH reception and relocation to Dorchester Library.



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Discussions were also held with an operator of a private attraction, the County Museum, Dorchester Town Council, a local retail operator and a leisure operator. Details of each option, together with a summary of the recent Public Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement Survey, are outlined below.

### Shire Hall

- 2.2 Shire Hall, incorporating the Old Crown Court and cells, is to be transformed into a permanent visitor attraction. The Shire Hall Development Trust (SH(D)T) has received £1.5M of Heritage Lottery Funding (HLF) for the project and WDDC, which owns the freehold of the building, is investing £1.1M towards the project. The Trust will take on full responsibility for running the attraction, which aims to open in 2018.
- 2.3 The Trust's Business Plan and HLF submission has always included the stated aim of relocating Dorchester TIC into the building, in order to benefit from its footfall. The Trust has previously stated that the loss of the TIC to the project would have a significant impact on the attraction's profitability and ability to operate successfully.
- 2.4 In 2015, the Trust commissioned a financial and operational plan for the operation of a TIC within Shire Hall and in summary, it suggests that WDDC relocates the TIC to the 'Pillar Room' in the Shire Hall and continues to operate and fund the service for the foreseeable future, independent from the attraction, with potential integration to be discussed at a later date when the attraction is operating successfully and financially viable. The attraction aims to open in April 2018.
- 2.5 This is not feasible for the following reasons:
- The 'Pillar Room' is not fit for purpose. It has 6 central pillars and no windows at street level, preventing any view into the TIC from passers-by and not providing any usable window display or promotional space.
  - The terms of the lease would not permit a retail operation, as operating a gift shop forms part of the attraction's business plan and will be undertaken by the SH(D)T in the adjacent attraction reception area. As a result income generated from retail sales would be lost. This would equate to circa £15,000 per annum.
  - There is no certainty that the Council will make a saving in the long term. Premises costs are likely to be in the region of £16-20K, including service charges and rates, for a proposed 3-year lease of the 'Pillar Room'.
- 2.6 The Trustees of the Shire Hall Development Trust (SHDT) considered the housing of the Dorchester Tourist Information Centre (TIC) at Shire Hall on 14<sup>th</sup> June 2016 and below is the decision of the Trustees:

In August 2015 a heritage consultant was commissioned to conduct research into the potential for the operation of the Dorchester TIC within Shire Hall. The report analysed the current state of the Dorchester TIC, compared it with other TICs in the

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region and conducted a cost-benefit analysis of housing the TIC in Shire Hall. It was clear from the report that no analysis had been conducted to show what percentage of TIC visitors would become Shire Hall visitors if the TIC were in Shire Hall as opposed to in another location.

Taking all of the available documentation and cost/benefit analysis into account, and having consulted with a variety of stakeholders, the view of the Shire Hall Dorchester Trust (SHDT) is that, although not a clear-cut issue, on balance the costs of housing the TIC in Shire Hall outweigh the benefits to SHDT. The consultants report showed that in financial terms, there would be a net cost to SHDT of around £50,000 per year. This did not include issues such as, for example, TUPE agreements.

Furthermore, the uncertainty about the current and future WDDC funding of the TIC means that housing it at Shire Hall would represent a significant financial and reputational risk to the Trust.

The SHDT Board of Trustees has therefore decided that the TIC should not be located at Shire Hall.

- 2.7 In summary, the decision by the SHDT Board of Trustees is partly because of the financial insecurity of funding of a TIC, but there are other factors that informed the decision, including no clear benefit from TIC footfall and financial and reputational risk.

### **Increased commercial activity**

- 2.8 The 2016-17 budget for Dorchester TIC is approximately £153K excluding internal recharges of almost £71K, the main costs being budgeted employee costs (£141K) and premises costs (£48K).

Costs are offset by trading profit of approximately £40K per annum.

- 2.9 Given the ideal town centre location the TIC currently occupies, adopting a more commercial approach has been the TIC's focus since the last Scrutiny review in 2009. Efforts have been made to increase ticket sales and take on more agencies, generate more income from retail sales, rental of window and other display space and the sale of some printed material. Such initiatives have increased the net trading income from in the region of £28K to £40K. Some further initiatives, such as rental of the upstairs offices, could potentially increase this profit further but would have to be implemented alongside a significant reduction in staff costs and would still only make a small contribution to lowering overall costs, while resulting in less focus on the core element of the service – information provision.
- 2.10 The current lease agreement was negotiated in 2011 for a six year period and included a break clause in 2013. Officers have discussed the likelihood of a rent reduction with the managing agents for the property. The agents feel that the market is good at the moment that prices haven't fallen and they are confident of achieving

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the same level of rent if we vacate our premises. Even if we were to enter into a new three year term the best we could hope for is a 3 month rent free period.

During the review period a smaller unit became available within Antelope Walk at a rent of £22,000 per annum which would represent a small saving but not at the level achievable at the library or SWH reception.

2.11 The stakeholder engagement survey results highlighted that retail sales were the least important element of the service and investing more resources into that in the hope of offsetting costs may not be successful, given the general downward trend in traditional retail sales. Adopting a more commercial approach is therefore not seen as a sustainable business model for the future.

### **Relocation to SWH reception**

2.12 Relocating Dorchester TIC into SWH reception has been considered and evaluated. It would be possible to deliver a TIC service from the reception area at SWH, however a number of challenges were identified including:

- The channel shift programme seeks to reduce face to face contact and encourage customers to access services online. This is in direct contrast to the TIC service where services are not solely transactional and for where interaction with customers is key.
- To offset costs TIC service generates income from retail sales and commissions, while the Council's Customer Service team discourages over-the-counter cash payments as far as possible.
- The customer profile for each service is quite different and, due to the nature of the services that customers are accessing, the Customer Services team deal with a considerably greater number of customers who may be distressed, difficult or whose general behaviour falls short of normal standards.
- In contrast to the TIC, SWH reception area is not open on Saturdays, which is a busy day for the TIC service.
- Reconfiguration of the reception area to accommodate the TIC service would be required.

2.13 Due to the implications, challenges and limitations of this option, and the close proximity of the library that has significantly improved opportunities, SWH House reception area is not considered a suitable location.

### **Private attraction operator, Dorchester Town Council and Dorset County Museum**

2.14 Discussions were held with operators of a private attraction in Dorchester. Whilst interested in taking on the service at a cost to the Council, staff costs were prohibitive to the potential operator.

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- 2.15 The outcome of discussions with Dorchester Town Council, following the public consultation, is that it supports the proposal to relocate the TIC to the Library, however it is keen to explore with other parties, alternative long-term future delivery options in light of the potential local government reorganisation and the planned development of two major heritage facilities, Dorset County Museum and Shire Hall Dorset.
- 2.16 Discussions have been held with the Dorset County Museum to explore the feasibility of integrating the TIC service into the museum reception when refurbishment is complete in 2020. A proposal has been received from the Museum, outlining the proposed delivery of the TIC service through its planned staffing structure in the refurbished museum, in return for a guaranteed capital contribution from WDDC, however the proposal indicates that no provision will be made for the transfer of existing TIC employees. This may not meet TUPE (Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) regulations and therefore further discussions will be undertaken to consider the feasibility of this long term proposal.

### **Stakeholder Engagement Survey - June 2015**

- 2.17 A stakeholder engagement survey was carried out in June 2015. It was distributed by email to stakeholders, including tourism businesses, event organisers, tourism associations and town and parish councils.
- 2.18 Paper copies were available at the four West Dorset Tourist information Centres, South Walks House and Town Council offices. The survey was available online through the Consultation Tracker on dorsetforyou.com. The survey was widely promoted via press releases, planned social media messages and on the visit-dorset.com website.
- 2.19 A commitment was made to full public consultation, both on the engagement survey and in press releases, once options had been evaluated.
- 2.20 The survey included an opportunity for respondents and businesses to come forward with offers and proposals of support towards the TIC; none were received.
- 2.21 A total of 2114 responses were received. The majority (96%) of individual respondents were TIC customers and 72% were local residents. 81% of respondents were aged 45 and over. The overwhelmingly majority of respondents (97.5%) believed that the TICs should continue to be funded by WDDC.

Key findings were as follows:

- Most respondents (71%) visit a TIC for information on things to do, followed by theatre or event ticket purchasing (56%), transport information (45%) and to browse (40%)
- The vast majority (94%) of customers seek information from a member of staff during their visit and 98% feel it is 'very or fairly important' to be able to speak to

## BUSINESS CASE

a member of staff. The high percentage of 'browsers' and the high rate of interaction suggest that the TIC staff can have significant influence on what people do and where they go.

- The two most important elements of a TIC were identified by respondents as Staff, providing personal attention, local knowledge and customer service and a town centre location.

2.22 All respondents were asked, via an open ended question, about their views on the possible outcomes of the service review (including the TICs remaining but being run by other partners, reduced district council services, or the closure of TICs and a greater reliance on online information provision).

1615 respondents answered this question. The vast majority do not want the TICs to close (only 3 commented that TICs were outdated).

The main recurring themes throughout the comments were:

- The value of face to face interaction, the knowledge/professionalism of employed staff
- The importance of tourism to the local economy and the detrimental impact closure would have on the town
- Issues around online materials (related to age, lack of connectivity, outdated information and the need to know what you're looking for)

2.23 The results of the Stakeholder Engagement survey informed the options presented for public consultation.

### **Public Consultation Summary – August 2016**

2.24 In August 2016 the Executive Committee resolved to undertake public consultation to gain views on two options for future service delivery and the associated impact of the options:

- Option 1 – relocating the tourist information centre service into the Dorchester Library & Learning Centre, South Walks Rd, Dorchester
- Option 2 – replacing the existing service with an unstaffed Tourist Information Point

The consultation material stated that option 2 would not be the preferred option.

The consultation was open for 8 weeks from the 16 August to 11 October 2016. It was available as an online questionnaire, with paper copies being available at the main district council offices in Dorchester, as well as the TIC in Dorchester.

2.25 Responses to the consultation were as follows:

1312 responses were received in total.

## BUSINESS CASE

Two petitions were also received;

'Save the Tourist Information Centre in Antelope Walk or replace it in a near location and of the same standard which is excellent and provide the much needed tourist visit and local destination for our county town.' 1353 signatories. This petition was organised and promoted by Cllrs David Taylor and Nigel Bundy.

'SAVE OUR TIC! Proposals have been made to close Dorchester Tourist Information Centre and either relocate it to the Library or downsize it to a PIP. We have a wonderful TIC which is welcoming and friendly and well used, supporting local businesses and tourism, in an ideal position at the top of Antelope Walk. It would be a tragedy to see it diminished in this way. Please sign our petition to help save it where and as it is!' 45 signatories. This was organised by a supplier of goods to the TIC, based in Piddletrenthide.

In addition, correspondence by letter or email was received from 6 individuals expressing concern at the future plans or support for the existing service.

2.26 The profile of respondents was as follows (of those respondents answering the associated question):

- 92% (1204) were responding as individuals, 7% were responding on behalf of a business or organisation
- 90% (1173) were TIC customers
- 85% (988) had visited the TIC multiple times in the past 12 months
- 93% (1102) were local residents and 77% (883) were from the DT1 and DT2 postcode areas
- 70% (883) were over 55 years of age.
- 9% (114) considered themselves disabled as set out in the Equality Act 2010

2.27 Analysis of the results indicated the following:

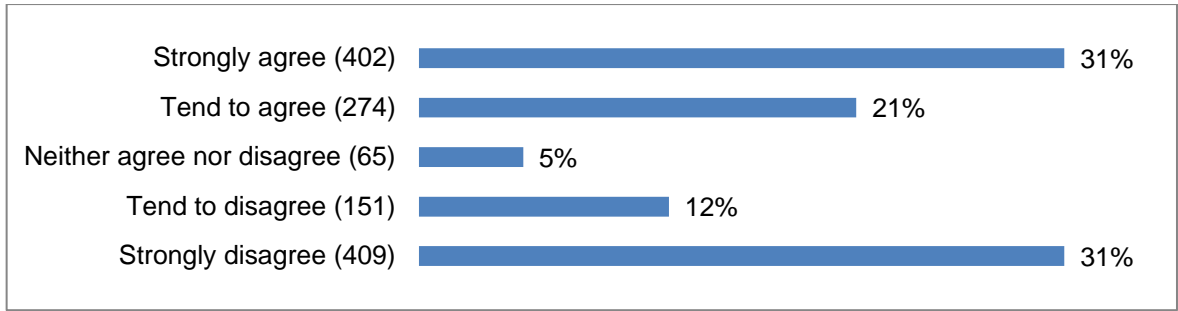
For both options, the consultation questionnaire asked a) to what extent the respondent agreed with the option and b) to what extent the option would affect their household or organisation/business.

**Option 1** – relocate the TIC service into the Dorchester Library & Learning Centre

The majority (52%) of respondents agreed to some extent with a move to the Library, while 43% disagreed to some extent.

Net support = plus 9%

## BUSINESS CASE

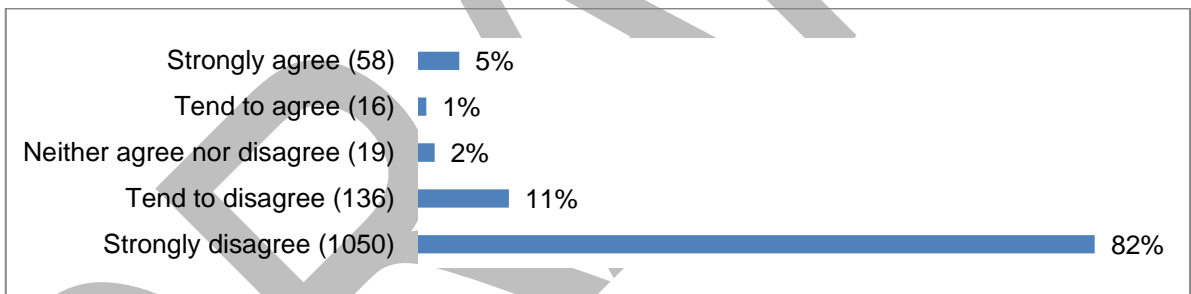


23% of respondents felt that this proposal would affect them ‘a great deal’, with the greatest impact on their household/organisation being reported by those who ‘strongly disagreed’ with the proposal. However, the majority of comments from this group related to the perceived adverse impact that relocation to the library would have on the town, trade and tourists, rather than an impact on the individual respondent.

### Option 2 – replace the service with an unstaffed information point (TIP)

The majority of respondents (93%) disagreed to some extent with replacing the service with a TIP.

Net support = minus 87%



49% of respondents felt that this proposal would affect them ‘a great deal’, with a further 35% indicating that it would affect them to some extent.

2.28 All respondents were given the opportunity to make comments on the options or offer other suggestions. 938 comments were received.

The main recurring themes throughout the comments were:

- The importance of staff or face to face service (mentioned by 47% of respondents)
- The importance of tourism for the area and the TICs contribution to the local economy (mentioned by 26% of respondents)
- The importance of a town centre location and/or positivity about the current location (mentioned by 26% of respondents)
- Positive comments about current TIC staff (mentioned by 21% of respondents)

## BUSINESS CASE

- Comments expressing a desire for there to be no change, or for the TIC not to be closed (mentioned by 17% of respondents)
- Comments stating there is merit in moving to the library or that the library is a good compromise/alternative (mentioned by 11% of respondents)

A small number of respondents made alternative suggestions including using volunteers, combining the TIC with a commercial operator, working with other parties (Town Council, BID, CoT) and reconsidering the Shire Hall option.

2.29 Respondents were given the opportunity to identify any positive or negative impact the council should take into account in the decision making process in relation to protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 (eg disability, age etc).

440 comments were received. Many respondents used this space to comment on positive and negative impacts in general; just under one third related to protected characteristics. Age and disability were most frequently mentioned.

Of the comments that related to protected characteristics, 30% indicated that an unstaffed option would have a significant negative impact, particularly on the disabled and elderly. 29% reflected concerns about the library location or commented on the positive aspects of the current location; 22% considered the library location would have a positive impact.

Those favouring the Antelope Walk premises noted the town centre location, the close proximity of bus stops and availability of disabled parking on Trinity Street as advantages. The main concern relating to the library location was the distance from the town centre/shopping area.

Those that considered the library to be advantageous cited the disabled car parking adjacent, the proximity of car parks/train station, level access and the availability of full disabled facilities, including on site accessible WC facilities, in a building already adapted to meet the needs of those with protected characteristics.

2.30 The full results of the public consultation are available on [dorsetforyou.com](http://dorsetforyou.com).

### 3. Business Options

#### Preferred Option – Relocation to Dorchester Library & Learning Centre

- 3.1 Relocating the TIC into the ground floor of Dorchester Library offers an opportunity to generate significant financial savings, to relocate within the current financial year and to operate from a customer-friendly environment as part of the County Council's Community Offer for Living and Learning' initiative.
- 3.2 This initiative aims to bring together services that can only be delivered from buildings, as opposed to online, into 'Living and Learning Centres', located in the



## BUSINESS CASE

most accessible buildings, thereby making services cost effective and remaining accessible to the community.

- 3.3 Dorchester is not one of the assigned pilot areas to develop this project, however Dorchester Library & Learning Centre is seen as a key building for the future and has already successfully incorporated a Dorset Police Contact Point and Skills & Learning BDP (Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole) into the building.
- 3.4 A combination of face to face service, leaflet racking and digital information/online access will be offered initially, but there is the potential to develop and adapt services as the Library & Learning Centre evolves.

Estimated rental costs for TIC space in the library are based on approximately 34 sqm of floor space on the ground floor, which offers sufficient space to offer a comprehensive information service. This compares to 60 sqm of ground floor space in the current premises in Antelope Walk, at least half of which is given over to retail display.

The TIC area would have its own separate counter alongside the existing two counters for the Library information service and Skills and Learning and would be fitted out in a similar style to the existing library furniture and fittings. It would retain its own WDDC identity by using corporate colours on floorstanding display units. Customer seating and facilities are already in place.

The TIC would also benefit from a dedicated office space upstairs, storage space and full use of the staff facilities in the building.

Internal and external signage will be updated to ensure the TIC is highly visible.

The feasibility of offering visitors 'out of hours' access to tourist information using touch screens, either at the library or at an alternative appropriate location in the town, will be investigated.

- 3.5 In addition, the intention is to work with the library to maximise the use of the use of the glass-enclosed foyer area of the library. Currently it houses tourist attraction leaflets (managed by an external distribution company), events posters and community information and in conjunction with library staff there is an opportunity to improve this area and enhance the community and event information provision, so that the interior space can focus on tourist information.
- 3.6 The emphasis would continue to be on information provision and the promotion of Dorchester. Services for local residents, such as travel and ticketing services, and support for local businesses would continue. There would be reduced opportunities for retail sales (souvenirs, locally produced goods, books etc) initially.

## BUSINESS CASE

In line with the Council's channel shift programme, the library's three existing self service terminals on the ground floor, including one adapted for visually impaired users, will be available to TIC customers. Access to relevant websites, including tourism sites, will be provided enabling customers to find information themselves or with assistance from TIC staff. This is a new service for TIC customers made possible in the library setting.

- 3.7 Opening hours would mirror those of the library; the TIC service would therefore be offered as follows: Monday 1000-1730, Tuesday 0930-1900, Wednesday 0930-1300, Thursday 0930-1730, Friday 0930-1900, Saturday 0900-1600. This represents the same total weekly opening hours as the current service, but in a slightly different pattern of opening.
- 3.8 How visitor numbers and demand for the service will be affected by a move to the library is unknown. It is expected that there could be a reduction in visitor numbers due to the general year on year downward trend of TIC usage, loss of retail sales and a reduced number of 'browsers' and passers-by. However, the expectation is that demand for the ticketing, information and other services will at least remain static.
- 3.9 The proposed staffing structure to deliver a tourist information service in Dorchester Library is based on a supervisor and up to 5 part time TIC assistants - a total of approximately 3 fte. This will provide an initial frontline staffing level of 2 at all times, with a third member of staff at peak times (includes the supervisor).
- 3.10 In the longer term, once the demand is established, further savings could be achieved by not refilling vacant posts or renegotiating contracts to reflect demand. There may be an opportunity to combine staffing with other services located in the Library building in the long term, which would further reduce costs.
- 3.11 Total staffing costs are likely to be in the region of £80.5k per annum, based on existing pay grades. Posts in a revised, streamlined staffing structure would need to be re-evaluated through a Job Evaluation exercise. A selection process will apply to determine appointment to posts.
- 3.12 Whilst there will be some premises costs, there are opportunities to generate income and further reduce net costs in the future. Revised financial modelling anticipates that the overall costs will be significantly lower than existing operating costs and are likely to represent a saving of about £80k per annum (excluding recharges).

### Summary of Service and Financial implications

	Service implications	Financial implications
Relocating to Dorchester Library &	Opening hours in line with Library, Saturdays included,	Relocation costs

## BUSINESS CASE

Learning Centre	<p>early closure Weds.</p> <p>Staff reduction/restructure</p> <p>Focus on information provision and ticket sales, but the opportunity to develop and adapt the service according to business need</p> <p>Good public access, fully accessible building</p> <p>Premises shared with similar, customer-friendly services</p>	<p>Move can be achieved within the current financial year</p> <p>Savings realised in 2017/18</p>
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### 4. Expected Benefits

- 4.1 Presenting the above viable option for public consultation has fulfilled the commitment made at the time of the engagement survey and offered the general public an opportunity to comment on proposals and future service delivery.
- 4.2 The relocation to Dorchester Library will achieve significant savings on current operating costs (but will still incur internal recharges).
- 4.3 A move to Dorchester Library offers a customer-friendly environment and an opportunity to be co-located with similar services.
- 4.4 In addition, the library offers significant improvements in accessibility of the service compared to the current premises, both to customers/visitors and employees. The library building is fully accessible, with allocated disabled parking directly outside, an accessible lift and fully accessible WCs, including 'changing place' facilities. The play area and on-site WCs offer a family friendly environment.
- 4.5 It is estimated that currently approximately 50% of customers to Dorchester TIC are local residents and the response to the engagement survey indicates there is strong support in the town for the TIC service. The option of relocating the TIC to the library retains the service in the town centre in a very accessible location, while at the same time reducing costs by sharing premises with similar public services. It is likely to receive a generally positive response, which is confirmed by the results of the public consultation. 52% of respondents to the public consultation agreed to some extent with a move to the library.

## BUSINESS CASE

- 4.6 Taking a proactive approach and relocating the service into a shared environment is seen as offering the best long term security for staff and the service in light of potential future local government reorganisation.

### 5. Expected Dis-benefits

- 5.1 A reduction in visitor numbers is expected if the TIC is relocated to the library, potentially up to 30%. The location is likely to result in fewer ad-hoc visits by passers-by, however new information panels sited in car parks and signage in the town will assist with directing people to the new location.
- 5.2 WDDC's investment in the development of visit-dorset.com, the tourist website for Dorset, which is operated in partnership with other Dorset councils and receives over 2 million visits per annum, is seen as a more efficient and modern way to ensure that visitor information is provided to the widest possible audience and that visitor spend is generated by securing bookings and through the extensive marketing of the area.

### 6. Milestone Plan

- 6.1 Decision on Dorchester TIC at the December Executive Committee.
- 6.2 Discussions between officers from WDDC and Dorset County Council (DCC) indicate that both parties envisage a move being achievable before the end of the current leasing period of the Antelope Walk premises (March 2017).

### 7. Financial

- 7.1 The estimated costs and savings (excluding service recharges) based on the current Dorchester TIC net budget of £153,000 per annum for each option are detailed below:

Location	Estimated Cost £	Estimated Approx. Saving £	Notes
Dorchester Library	68,644	84,362	Can be implemented by expiry of current lease and efficiencies realised by 2017/18.

- 7.2 It is also anticipated that there will be one off costs associated with the library relocation of up to £50-£60k. This relates to such items as information technology, equipment, signage, re-decoration and dilapidations works at the current premises, stock write off and removal/ relocation costs.

## BUSINESS CASE

7.3 In order to implement the above recommendations, the following internal resources will be required:

- Property/legal advice (for leases)
- Human Resources
- IT
- Communications

## 8. Major Risks

8.1 The major risks associated with relocation are identified as follows:

- Staff retention in any relocation
- Negative public perception of the Council, as the public consultation indicated that 43% of respondents disagreed to some extent with relocation to the library.

8.2 There is limited support for relocation in general from some stakeholders.

## 9. Document History

<b>Revision History</b>	Date of next revision:
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Version Number	Revision date	Previous revision date	Summary of Changes	Changes marked
			What changes have been made since the previous version	Yes/No
V2	12/07/2016	June 16	General update	No
V2.1	15/07/2016	12/07/16	General update including financials	No
V2.2	18/07/2016	15/07/16	General refinement	No
V2.3	22/07/2016	18/07/16	General refinement	No
V2.4	18/10/2016	22/07/16	General refinement	No
V2.5	31/10/2016	18.10.16	General refinement / update	No
V2.6	09/11/2016	31/10/16	General refinement	No

<b>Distribution</b>	This document has been distributed to:
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Name	Title	Date of Issue	Version

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# EQIA - Full Equality Impact Assessment

## Policy or Service to be assessed: Dorchester Tourist Information Centre – Relocation of Service to Dorchester Library

Service and lead officer:

Economy, Leisure & Tourism  
Matt Ryan (Tourism & Events Manager)

Officers involved in the EqIA:

Matt Ryan (Tourism & Events Manager)  
Trevor Hedger (Senior Economic Regeneration Officer)  
Judith Chauvet (Visitor Services Manager)  
Heather Williamson, HR Project Manager

What are you impact assessing?

Existing:

New/proposed:



Changing/Update/ revision

Other, please list

**What is the title of your service / strategy / policy / project?**

*WDDC Tourist Information Centre Service Review:*

Proposed relocation of Dorchester Tourist Information service to Dorchester Library and a staff re-structure.

**Q2. What is the aim of your service / strategy / policy / project?**

To relocate Dorchester Tourist Information Centre and implement a revised staffing structure as part of the review of the West Dorset Tourist Information Service in order to make financial savings.

To consider and evaluate the impact on staff and customers if the service is relocated to Dorchester Library.

To provide a future sustainable method and option for delivering a modernised tourist information service whilst achieving financial savings.

**Q3. Who does/will it have an impact on? e.g. public, visitors, staff, members, partners?**

Staff:

- Reduced staffing structure would be implemented which is likely to change working hours
- Annualised hours contracts likely to be implemented to cater for high demand during main summer months and reduced demand out of season

The general public through relocation and some reduction in services.

**Q4. Are there any potential barriers to implementing changes to your service/strategy/policy/project? eg. capacity or financial issues**

There are no perceived barriers identified at this time.

**Q5. Who else will be involved in implementing this project?**

Dorset County Council, Trade Unions (consultees), internal Council services (HR, legal and property services)

**Q6. What data do you already have about your service users, or the people your policy or strategy will have an impact on, that is broken down by equality strand?**

a) Workforce (Dorset Councils Partnership as a whole)

Based on known equality data for the entire workforce as per advice from Partnership's equality adviser. Based on information from the September 2016 workforce report and where not covered within report, any recorded data:

Protected Characteristic	Data														
<b>Sex</b>	WD/WP – 38.4% of employees are male and 61.6% are female														
<b>Disability</b>	WD/WP – 4% of employees have identified themselves as having a disability														
<b>Age</b>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Age</th> <th>%</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Over 65</td> <td><b>2.4%</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>60-64</td> <td><b>7.3%</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>50-59</td> <td><b>33.9%</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>40-49</td> <td><b>28.5%</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>26-39</td> <td><b>24.0%</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Under 25</td> <td><b>3.9%</b></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Age	%	Over 65	<b>2.4%</b>	60-64	<b>7.3%</b>	50-59	<b>33.9%</b>	40-49	<b>28.5%</b>	26-39	<b>24.0%</b>	Under 25	<b>3.9%</b>
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26-39	<b>24.0%</b>														
Under 25	<b>3.9%</b>														



<b>Marriage and Civil Partnership</b>	No data																
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b> (including Parental and Adoption)	5 employees are currently on maternity leave. There are 4 employees who are currently pregnant awaiting commencement of maternity leave																
<b>Race</b>	The current workforce composition is as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 94.9% white UK</li> <li>• 2.2% BME (of which 1.1% is white non UK)</li> <li>• 2.9% have not declared</li> </ul>																
<b>Religion &amp; Belief</b>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Religion</th> <th>%</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Buddhist</td> <td>&lt;1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Christian</td> <td>37.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Jewish</td> <td>&lt;1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>No religion</td> <td>12.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Not declared</td> <td>38</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Preferred not to say</td> <td>3.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other</td> <td>1.5</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Religion	%	Buddhist	<1	Christian	37.5	Jewish	<1	No religion	12.5	Not declared	38	Preferred not to say	3.5	Other	1.5
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Prefer not to say	2.5																
<b>Gender Reassignment</b>	No data																

#### b) Stakeholder engagement

Throughput to Dorchester TIC, counted by an electronic door counter, is approximately 170,000 per annum, of which approximately 25% seek staff assistance. A stakeholder engagement survey undertaken in July 2015 indicated that 61% of respondents were female, 31% were male and that 80% of respondents were aged 45 and over. 8% of respondents considered themselves to have a disability.

#### c) Public consultation

Public consultation, undertaken for 8 weeks (August to October 2016), indicated that 9% (114) of respondents considered themselves disabled as set out in the Equality Act 2010.

Respondents were given the opportunity to identify any positive or negative impact the council should take into account in the decision making process in relation to protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 (eg disability, age etc).

440 comments were received, however just under one third of these related to protected characteristics. Age and disability were most frequently mentioned.

Of the comments that related to protected characteristics, 29% reflected concerns about the library location or commented on the positive aspects of the current location; 22% considered the library location would have a positive impact.

The main concern relating to the library location was the distance from the town centre/shopping area.

Those that considered the library to be advantageous cited the disabled car parking adjacent, the proximity of car parks/train station, level access and the availability of full disabled facilities, including on site accessible WC facilities, in a building already adapted to meet the needs of those with protected characteristics.

**Q7. Do you need any further information broken down by equality strand to inform this EqIA?**

No

#### 4. Making a judgement about impacts

Age

Restructure of staff

All staff will be treated equally regardless of age. Selection for new roles is to be on knowledge, skills, and competencies for the job. Length of service criteria (potentially linked to age) will not be a factor.

Relocation of Service

There is no current evidence to suggest that a change of venue will disproportionately affect customers or the community of any age, but is likely to have a positive impact on older people and families, due to the additional facilities available including parking, on site toilets and play facilities in the library.

Disability

Restructure of staff

Across the entire DCP workforce, the number of employees who have declared themselves to be disabled is 4%. Any affected employees will be invited to make HR aware of any factor that may affect the process, which could include a disability, and consultation will check the specific requirements for reasonable adjustments for individuals at any stage of the process.

The nature of the process and proposed changes may have a negative impact on members of staff with depression or other mental health issues provisions. All staff will have access to support through discussions with management and HR as well as through other services

such as life coaching, counselling and occupational health. This will be publicised through briefings etc.

#### Relocation of Service

Relocation of the service should have a positive impact on persons with a disability, both customers and employees, as the building is fully accessible. There is level access to the building, full internal access, disabled toilets (including a 'changing places' facility for persons with restricted mobility), an accessible lift and allocated disabled parking provision.

#### Transgender

##### Restructure of staff

All employees will be treated equally regardless of transgender or gender reassignment.

Affected employees will be invited to make HR aware of any factor that may affect the process which could include a gender reassignment and consultation will check the specific requirements for reasonable adjustments for individuals at any stage of the process.

##### Relocation of Service

There is no current evidence to suggest that the relocation of the service will have a disproportionate effect or have an impact.

#### Race

##### Restructure of staff

All employees will be treated equally regardless of race.

##### Relocation of Service

There is no current evidence to suggest that the relocation of the service will have a disproportionate effect or have an impact.

#### Religion or belief

##### Restructure of staff

All employees will be treated equally regardless of their faith, religion or beliefs.

Affected employees, staff and trade unions will be asked to come forward with any suggestions on adjustments that may need to be applied to ensure protected groups are not put at a disadvantage at any stage in the process.

##### Relocation of Service

There is no current evidence to suggest that the relocation of the service will disproportionately affect persons of a specific religion or belief.

## Sex

Restructure of staff

38.4% of the overall workforce is male whilst 61.6% is female.

Staff and trade unions will be asked to come forward with any suggestions on adjustments that may need to be applied to ensure protected groups are not put at a disadvantage at any stage in the process.

DWP will be passed any information relating to issues of location etc. to allow them to consider this when assigning staff to new bases.

Relocation of Service

There is no current evidence to suggest that a relocation of this service will disproportionately affect either men or women.

## Sexual orientation

Restructure of staff

All employees will be treated equally regardless of sexual orientation.

Affected employees will be invited to make HR aware of any factor that may affect the process which could include a gender reassignment and consultation will check the specific requirements for reasonable adjustments for individuals at any stage of the process.

Relocation of Service

There is no current evidence to suggest that a relocation of this service will disproportionately affect persons.

## Pregnancy and Maternity

Restructure of staff

To be kept under review

Any employees becoming pregnant during the process will undertake the statutory risk assessment which will take into account the impact of restructure process.

The partnership will comply with its statutory duty to offer any individual on maternity/adoption leave suitable alternative employment in line with the Maternity and Parental Leave Regulations 1999.

Home visits, correspondence sent home etc. would be offered if required to ensure staff engage with process.

Relocation of Service

There is no current evidence to suggest that a relocation of the service will have a disproportionate effect or have an impact.

## Marriage and Civil Partnerships

### Restructure of staff

Staff and trade unions will be asked to come forward with any suggestions on adjustments that may need to be applied to ensure protected groups are not put at a disadvantage at any stage in the process.

### Relocation of Service

There is no evidence to suggest that a relocation of the service will disproportionately affect married people or those in civil partnerships.

## **Conclusion:**

### Restructure of staff

The Partnership recognises that some employees may find the relocation difficult and that it is important to continue to support them and to identify/monitor any equality issues throughout the process.

### Relocation of Service

There is currently no evidence to suggest that customers or the community will be disproportionately affected as a result of a change of service location.

The emphasis would be on information provision and the promotion of Dorchester. Services for local residents, such as travel and ticketing services, and support for local businesses would continue. Additional facilities in the form of self-service terminals would be available and the feasibility of offering 'out of hours' information using touch screens will be investigated. The only envisaged change would be no, or very limited, retail sales (souvenirs, locally produced goods, books etc.) initially. There is the potential to develop and adapt services as the Library & Learning Centre evolves.

A summary evaluation of benefits and dis-benefits is included within the Dorchester TIC Business case.

Public consultation revealed that the positive aspects of the library included the availability of disabled car parking, the proximity of car parks/train stations, level access to the building and the availability of full disabled facilities, including on site accessible WC facilities, in a building already adapted to meet the needs of those with protected characteristics.

## **5. Action planning**

None required at this stage

## **Q8. Is there any potential for direct or indirect discrimination?**

**Yes**

**No**

**Don't Know**

**If yes, please explain how you are going to change this?**

**Version 3: 31/10/2016**

## **Overview & Scrutiny Committee**

**22 November 2016**

## **West Dorset and Weymouth & Portland Local Plan Review: Consultation on Issues and Options**

### **For Recommendation**

#### **Portfolio Holder**

Cllr I Gardner, Planning

#### **Senior Leadership Team Contact:**

S Hill, Strategic Director

#### **Report Author:**

T Warrick, Spatial Policy and Implementation Manager

### **Statutory Authority**

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 provide the statutory basis for the preparation and review of local plans.

The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 provide the statutory basis for undertaking the sustainability appraisal of plans.

### **Purpose of Report**

- 1 To seek the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the West Dorset and Weymouth & Portland Local Plan Review: Issues and Options document prior to it being agreed, for the purposes of public consultation, by the Executive Committee and Council.

### **Officer Recommendations**

- 2 That this Committee recommends to the Executive Committee and Council that the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan Review: Issues and Options document, set out in Appendix 1, be agreed for the purposes of public consultation.

### **Reason for Decision**

- 3 To enable the West Dorset and Weymouth & Portland Local Plan Review: Issues and Options document to be approved for the purposes of public consultation, in order to make progress on the review of the Local Plan.

## Background and Reason Decision Needed

- 4 The inspector for the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan produced his report on 14 August 2015. The report concluded *“that the West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Joint Local Plan provides an appropriate basis for the planning of the District and Borough Councils providing a number of modifications are made to the Plan.”*
- 5 In his report, the inspector stated *“it is imperative that an early review is undertaken to identify additional land capable of meeting housing needs to the end of the current plan period (2031) as well as the broad location for development in the five year period thereafter”* (i.e. to 2036). The council adopted the local plan on 22 October 2015, including a modification in paragraph 1.5.1 to reflect the inspector’s conclusion. It states that *“it is likely that a review of the plan will be in place by 2021”*.
- 6 On 09 February 2016, the Executive agreed to begin the local plan review process, with stakeholder consultation on a sustainability appraisal scoping report. At that meeting the Executive also approved the 2016 Local Development Scheme (LDS), which included a timetable for the production of the local plan review.
- 7 Since then officers have been working on the preparation of a document to be the subject of public consultation, which would set out the key issues and main options for the local plan review (see Appendix 1). Sustainability appraisal work has taken place alongside the work on the issues and options consultation document and an accompanying sustainability appraisal report has also been produced (see background documents).
- 8 The documents will go forward for consideration by the Executive Committee and Council to seek approval for the purposes of public consultation. Similar reports will also be taken through the committee cycles of Weymouth and Portland Borough Council. At this stage the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee are being sought so that they can be taken into account by the Executive Committee and Council prior to the Issues and Options document being agreed for the purposes of public consultation.

## Implications

- 9 The issues and options document discusses the future level of growth needed (both in terms of housing and employment land) to 2036. It mainly focuses on identifying potential site options for meeting the identified need for additional growth, but also seeks views on a number of different policy areas.
- 10 The current local plan identifies a need for 775 additional new homes to be provided each year over the 20-year plan period from 2011 to 2031. This equates to a total need for 15,500 new homes, although the current local plan only makes provision for 14,855 dwellings (i.e. there is a shortfall of 645 units).



- 11 Extending the plan period to 2036 (as recommended by the local plan inspector) would require provision to be made for a further 3,875 new homes. When the shortfall in provision to 2031 is added to this figure, it gives an overall requirement for the local plan review to make provision for at least 4,520 new homes in addition to those already provided for in the current local plan.
- 12 Views will be sought on whether the figure of 775 additional new homes per annum remains an appropriate figure for the 'full objectively assessed need' for housing in the local plan area. Views will also be sought on whether the level of additional housing provision to 2036 should be at least 4,250 additional new homes.
- 13 Policy SUS2 of the current local plan establishes a 'settlement hierarchy' and seeks to distribute a greater proportion of development at the larger and more sustainable settlements. The 'main towns' of Dorchester and Weymouth are identified as the 'highest priority locations' for new development. Elsewhere in the plan area, the focus for future development is the 'market and coastal towns' of Beaminster, Bridport, Lyme Regis, Portland, Sherborne and the village of Crossways. In rural areas, the policy seeks to direct development to settlements with defined development boundaries (DDBs), which are generally the larger villages.
- 14 For each of the 'main towns' and 'market and coastal towns' and Crossways, the issues and options document identifies 'broad areas of search' around the periphery of each settlement. This initial 360 degree search has then been refined, on the basis of sustainability appraisal work, to identify a number of potential options for growth in these different locations. Views are also sought on potential options for the expansion of Yeovil into parts of West Dorset in the issues and options document.
- 15 The issues and options document sets out the indicative capacity for each of these more refined options and highlights key development issues with taking these sites forward. Views are sought on:
  - what would be appropriate levels of growth for each settlement;
  - issues associated with the development of the identified site options; and
  - the infrastructure that would be required to take the sites forward, either individually or in combination.
- 16 The issues and options document makes it clear that there is no commitment by the councils to the development of any of these sites at this stage: the purpose of the consultation being to begin a dialogue with local communities on how best to meet future development needs. The responses to the consultation will then be fed into the next stage of preparation of the review, which will be to identify 'preferred options' for meeting the need for growth.
- 17 The current local plan was prepared with extensive engagement with members, key stakeholders and the public. It has also been found sound by a planning inspector and adopted by both councils very recently (in October 2015). On that basis, it is only intended to review the policies in the local plan where issues have arisen.

- 18 With additional housing growth being proposed in the review, it will be important to look again at the need for employment land, shops and other town centre uses to provide jobs and the need for infrastructure to support housing and economic development. The issues and options document seeks views on these matters.
- 19 The housing policies in the current local plan will need to be reviewed to reflect recent (and anticipated future) changes to Government policy. The Government is seeking to diversify the housing market by encouraging custom and self-build and the issues and options document seeks views on how best to do that. Whilst there remains a lack of clarity on what local authorities will need to do to promote starter homes, views are sought on what the focus should be for other forms of affordable housing provision which may also be sought (i.e. rental or shared equity) alongside starter homes.
- 20 The local plan inspector indicated that the councils should look again at their approach to green infrastructure and coastal change management and there is a commitment to do so in the adopted local plan. These are matters on which views are sought in the issues and options document. Views are also sought on the issues of design and wind energy.
- 21 Following consideration by Overview and Scrutiny, the issues and options document will then be considered by Executive in December 2016 and Full Council in January 2017. Once agreed the issues and options document will be subject to a six week public consultation period in February and March 2017.
- 22 Consultation will include:
- Publishing the issues and options document;
  - Providing more detail in accompanying sustainability appraisal and background papers;
  - Writing to all people on the consultation database;
  - Public exhibitions in the main towns;
  - Ongoing engagement with key stakeholders, including town and parish councils; and
  - Making all material available on the website.
- 23 The responses to the consultation will feed into the next stage (preferred options), which will be subject to a further round of public consultation later in 2017. The local plan review document would then be prepared (and subject to a further round of public consultation) before being submitted to the Secretary of State for examination.
- 24 The rounds of 'issues and options' and 'preferred options' consultation will enable a dialogue to take place with the residents and key stakeholders in the local area. Hopefully this approach will:
- engage the local community in the plan review process;
  - encourage discussion of the key issues and main options; and
  - help to ensure that the most appropriate overall strategy is developed for the local area, prior to the local plan review being submitted for examination.

## **Corporate Plan**

- 25 The review of the local plan will contribute to achieving the corporate aims relating to economy and quality of life, including: helping to stimulate economic growth so that the district offers better jobs and prospects for local people; increasing the number of new homes built within the district; enhancing the quality of life of people living and working in the district; and safeguarding and providing opportunities to enjoy the natural and built environment now and in the future.

## **Financial**

- 28 The preparation of the local plan review will be undertaken from within existing budgets. Additional sums have been included in the budget for 2016/17 primarily to fund updates to the evidence base and to facilitate community engagement on key issues such as the consideration of options for growth.

## **Equalities**

- 29 When draft policies are produced for the local plan review, they will be subject to an equalities impact assessment.

## **Environmental**

- 30 The issues and options document for the local plan review has been subject to sustainability appraisal, which has considered the economic, social and environmental implications of the issues and options identified. The sustainability appraisal document is listed as a background document. Work on the sustainability appraisal will be updated in tandem with work on the subsequent stages of preparing the local plan review.
- 31 The local plan review will also require a habitats regulations assessment, which will consider the potential impact of proposals on internationally important wildlife sites.
- 32 Evidence to support development site options and new or revised policies will be updated to ensure that environmental considerations are taken into account. For example, new / updated studies will be produced to assess the impact of proposed development on the landscape and the historic environment.

## **Economic Development**

- 33 Part of the economic vision for the area set out in the current local plan is to facilitate inward investment to create better jobs. It is proposed that this vision will be carried forward into the local plan review. The need for employment land will also be reassessed and further employment land will be identified if required. This is likely to lead to a growth in local employment and the number of businesses in the area.

## **Risk Management (including Health & Safety)**

- 34 The local plan inspector recommended an ‘early review’ of the current local plan, in view of the overall shortfall in housing provision to 2031. It is important that the councils continue to take forward the review in a timely manner to ensure that it is in place by 2021, as suggested by the Inspector.
- 35 By taking forward the local plan review in a timely manner, developers will be encouraged to work with the councils through the plan-making process, reducing the risk of speculative planning applications being submitted on larger sites. This approach will also ensure that a long term supply of housing sites is secured and that there is sufficient time to engage with local communities in reviewing policies and considering alternative options, whilst still managing to have the review in place by the 2021 deadline set by the inspector.

## **Human Resources**

- 36 Work on the local plan review and the sustainability appraisal will be undertaken primarily by the spatial policy and implementation team. Advice will also be taken from economic regeneration, legal and other officers as work on the review progresses. Consultants may also be employed to produce updated evidence base studies. They will be funded from within existing budgets.

## **Consultation and Engagement**

- 37 The local plan review will be subject to public consultation at a number of different stages. All consultation will be undertaken in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 and the Councils’ Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – West Dorset and Weymouth & Portland Local Plan Review: Issues and Options Document

## **Background Papers**

Report on the examination into the West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Joint Local Plan – The Planning Inspectorate (August 2015) – link - <https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/article/421782/West-Dorset-Weymouth--Portland-Adopted-Local-Plan-Inspectors-Report>

West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan 2015 – West Dorset District Council and Weymouth & Portland Borough Council (October 2015) – link - <https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/article/421631/West-Dorset-Weymouth--Portland-Adopted-Local-Plan>

Programme for the Local Plan Review and Related Policy Documents: The Local Development Scheme for West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland - West Dorset

District Council and Weymouth & Portland Borough Council (March 2016) - <https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/article/423273/Local-Development-Scheme>

West Dorset and Weymouth & Portland Local Plan Review: Sustainability Appraisal of the Issues and Options Document - West Dorset District Council and Weymouth & Portland Borough Council (to be published February 2017)

## **Footnote**

38 Issues relating to financial, environmental, economic and equalities implications have been considered and any information relevant to the decision is included within the report.

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**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

Email address: [s.policy@westdorset-weymouth.gov.uk](mailto:s.policy@westdorset-weymouth.gov.uk)

Telephone: 01305 252386

South Walks House, South Walks Road,  
Dorchester, Dorset DT1 1UZ



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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.

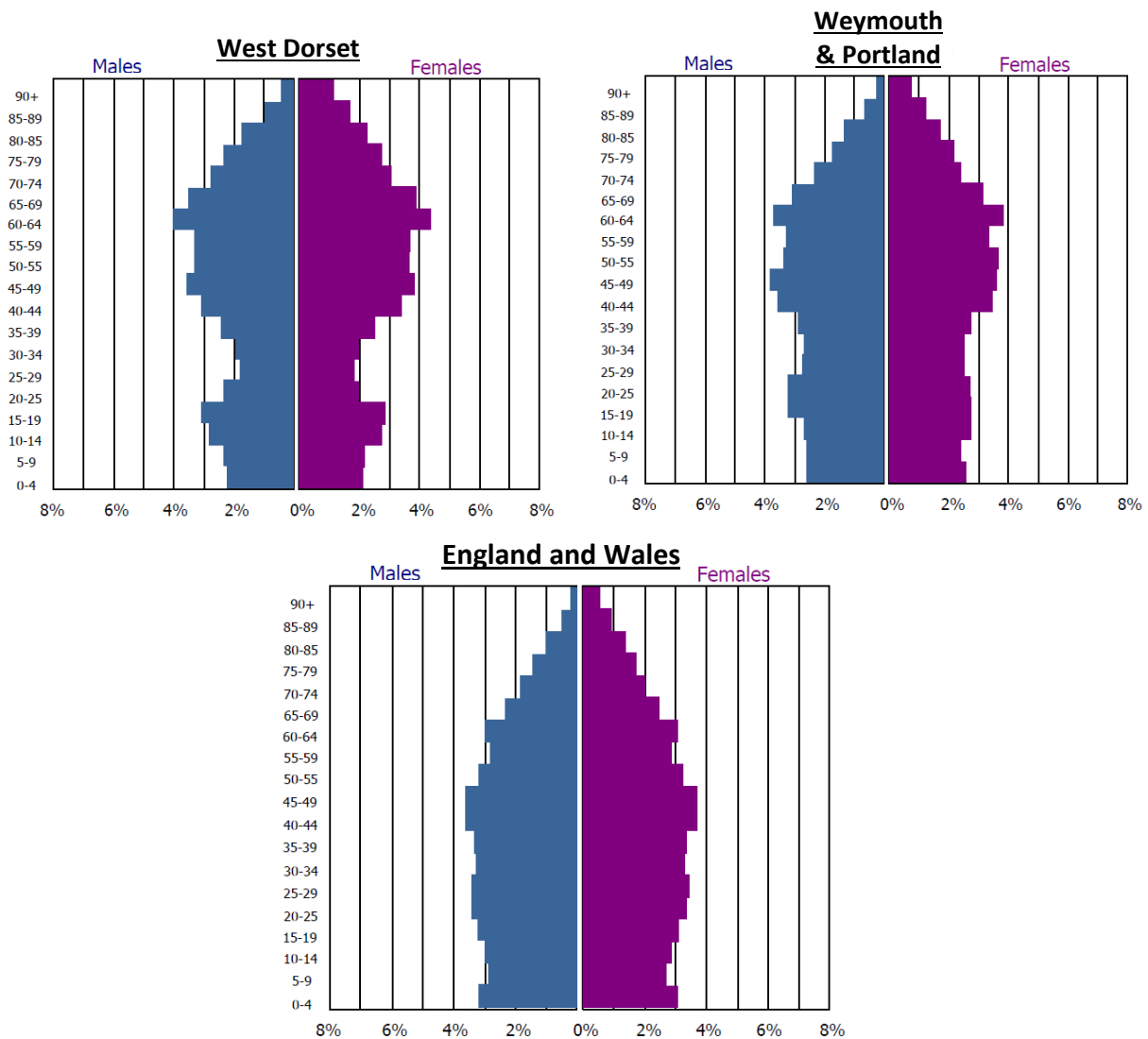
### SOCIAL ISSUES

- 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**

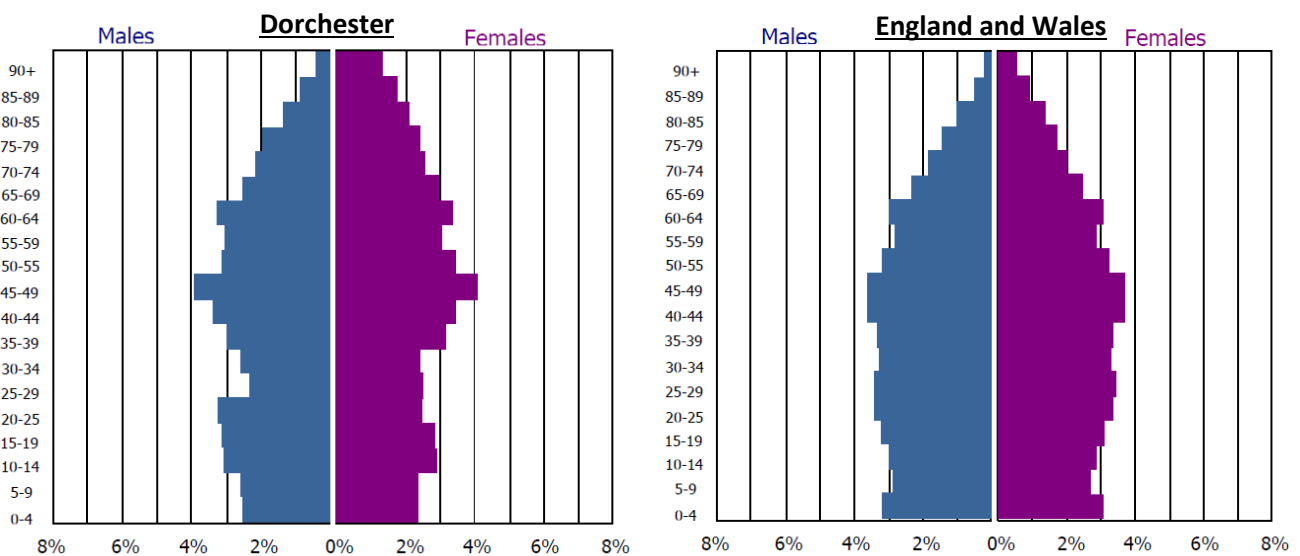
**Southwell?**

## 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



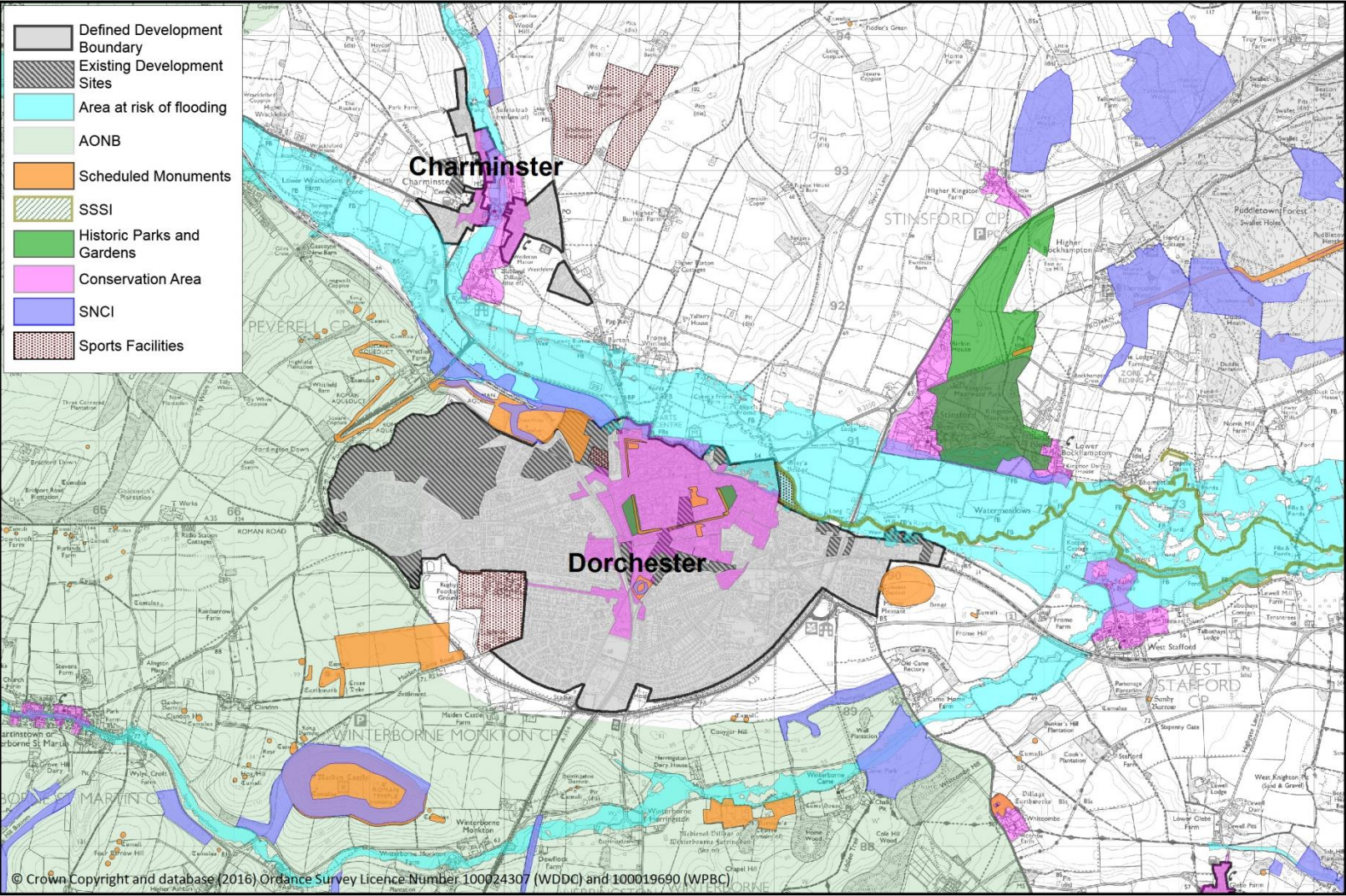
## INSPECTOR'S COMMENTS ON GROWTH AT DORCHESTER

- 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;

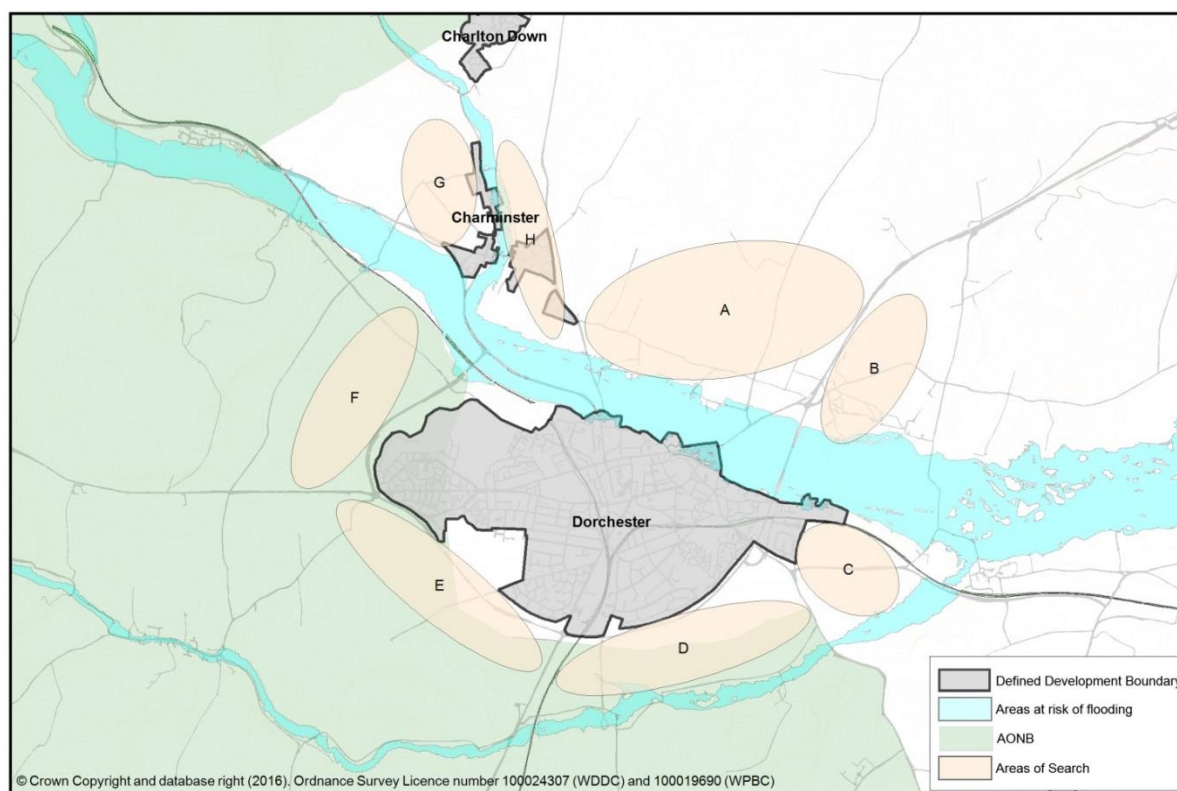
### Environmental

- 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

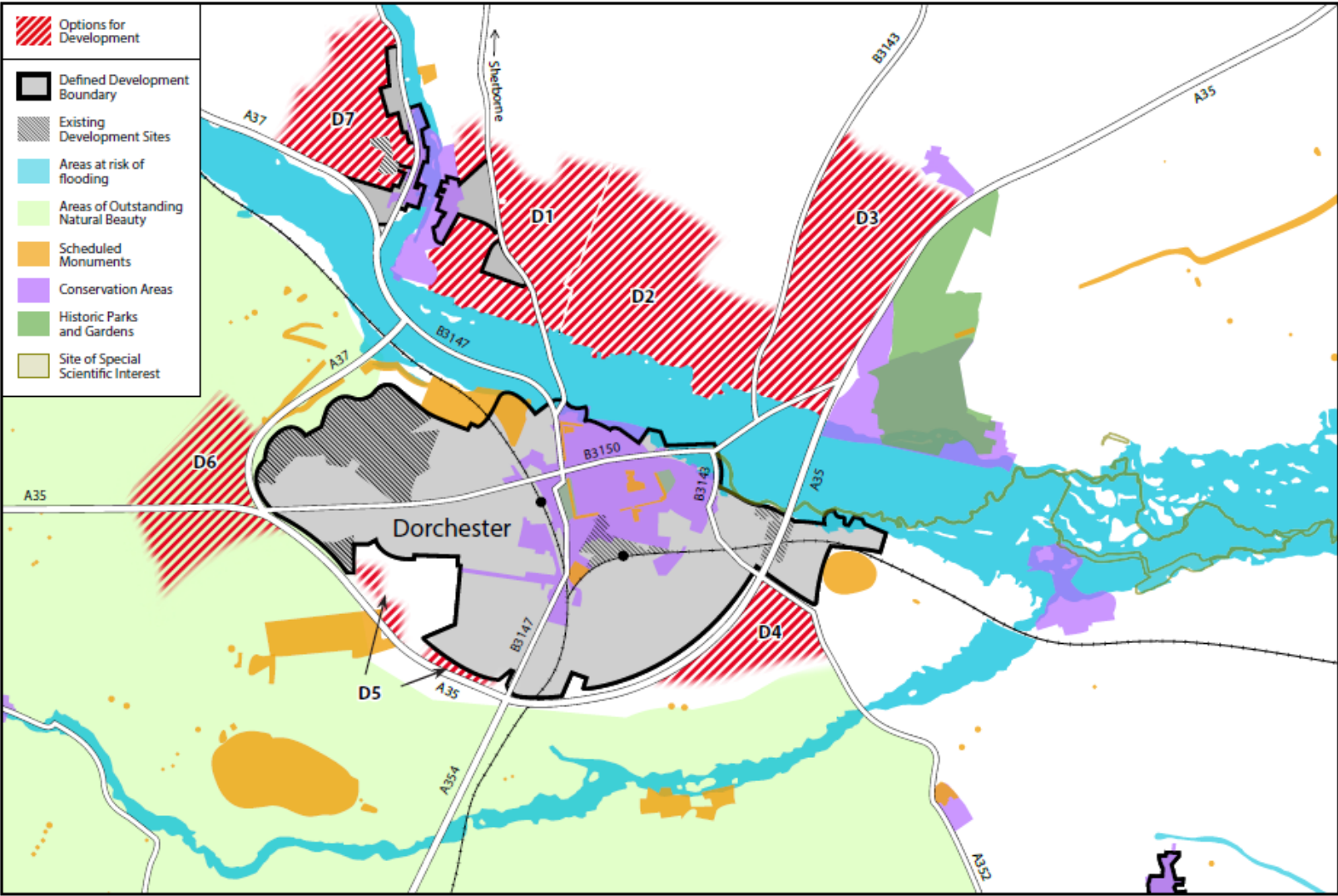


AREA	NAME	POTENTIAL IMPLICATIONS	CONCLUSION
A	North of Dorchester	Impacts on landscape, heritage assets and water quality will need to be addressed if this area is taken forward.	✓
B	Stinsford	Development is likely to result in unacceptable impacts on heritage assets, including Scheduled Monuments, Historic 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?**

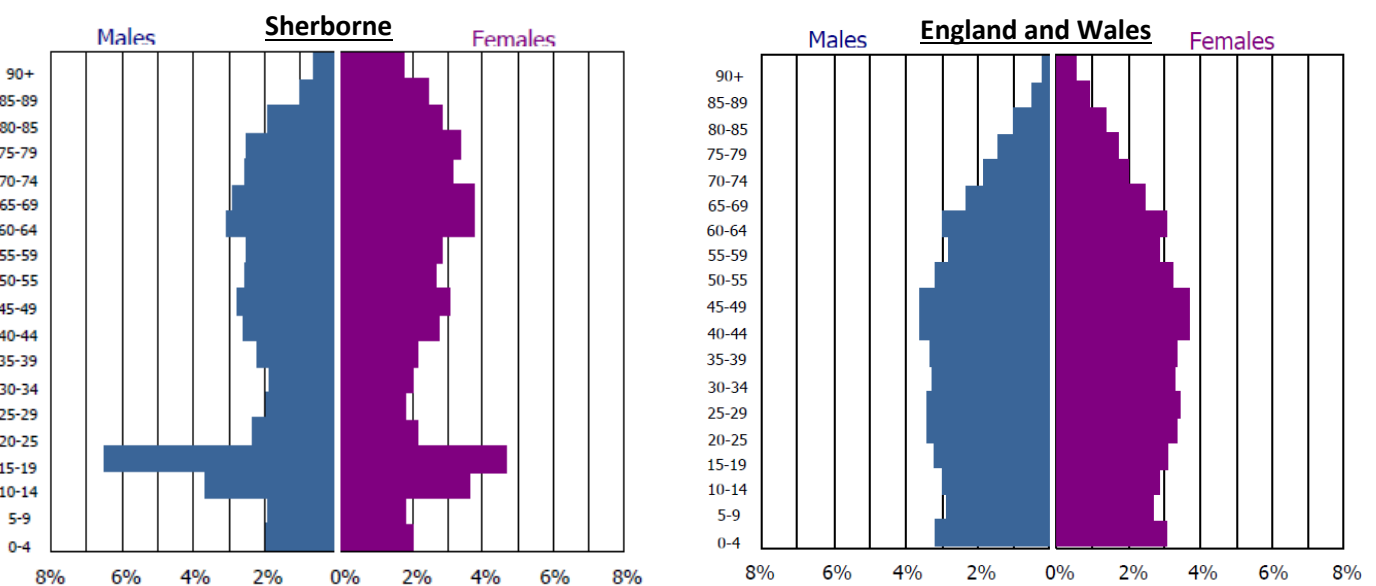


## 7. Development at Sherborne

### 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

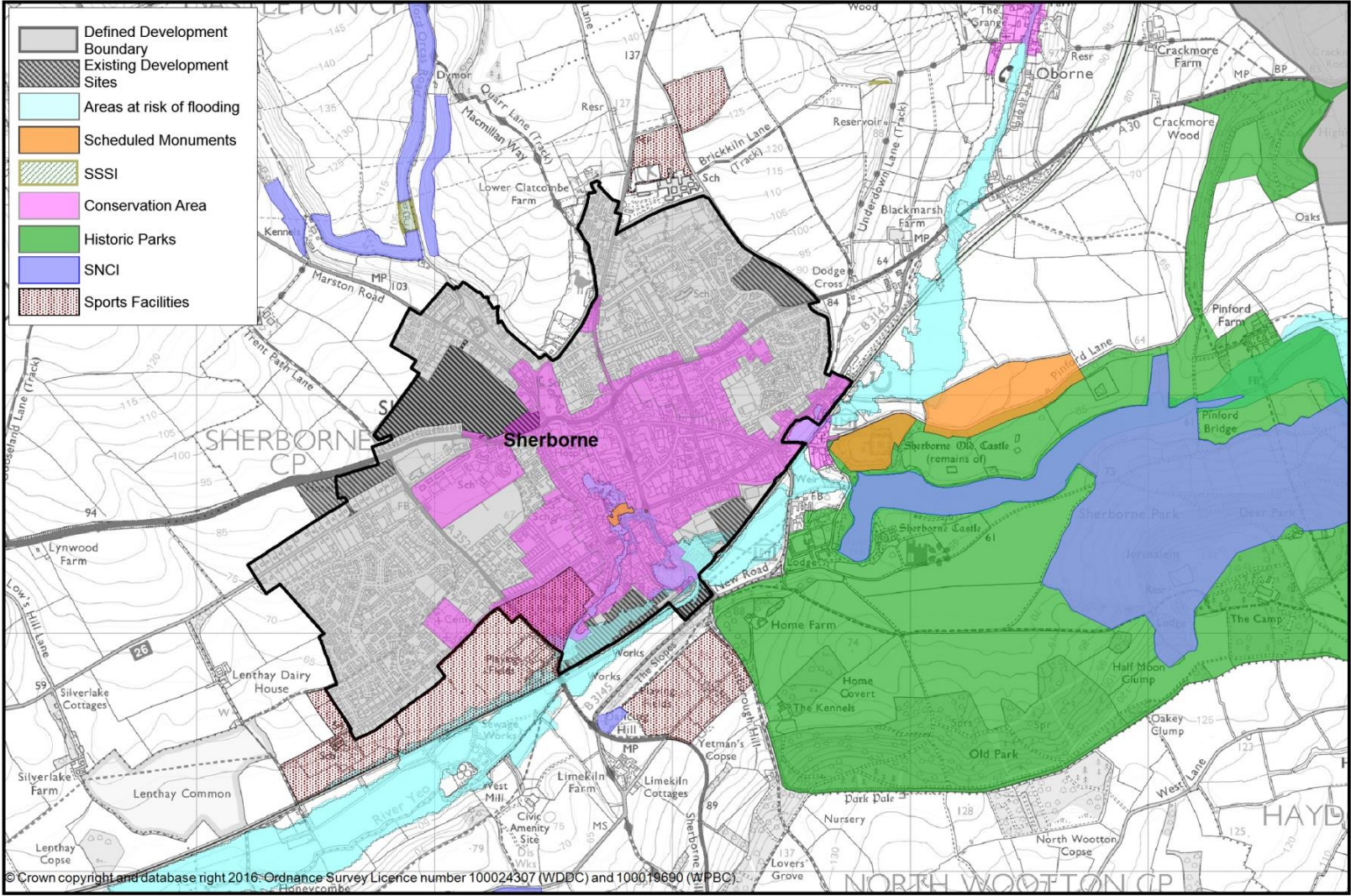
*limited because the topography restricts views from other locations including those close to the town". He also highlighted that further extension of Barton Farm "would assist in meeting future housing needs and provide an opportunity to secure a new link road from the A30 and improve access to the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

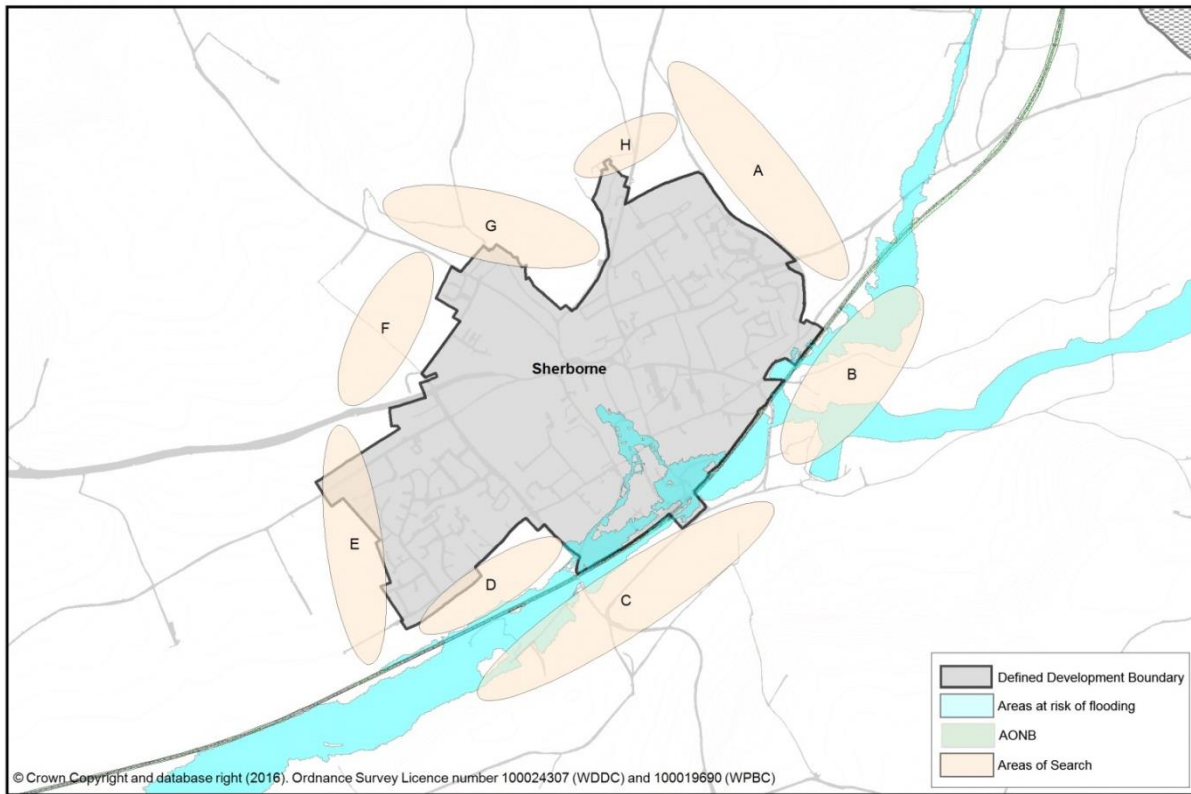
### Environmental

- 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

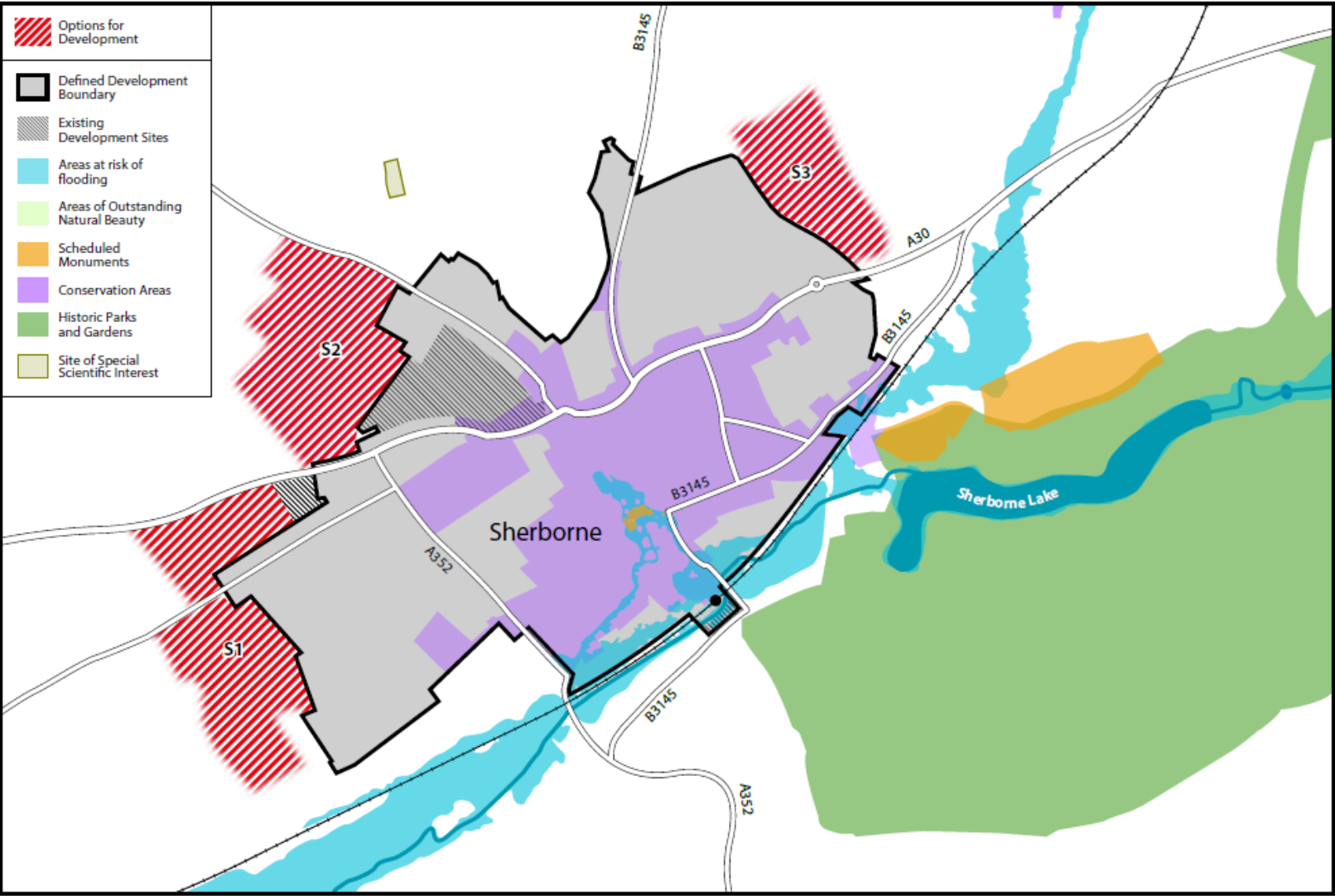


AREA	NAME	POTENTIAL IMPLICATIONS	CONCLUSION
A	East of Castle Town Way	Impacts on the landscape due to the land rising to the north, the setting of heritage assets to the south, and issues with water quality and flooding with respect to the river to the south. An area which avoids the river to the south 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?**

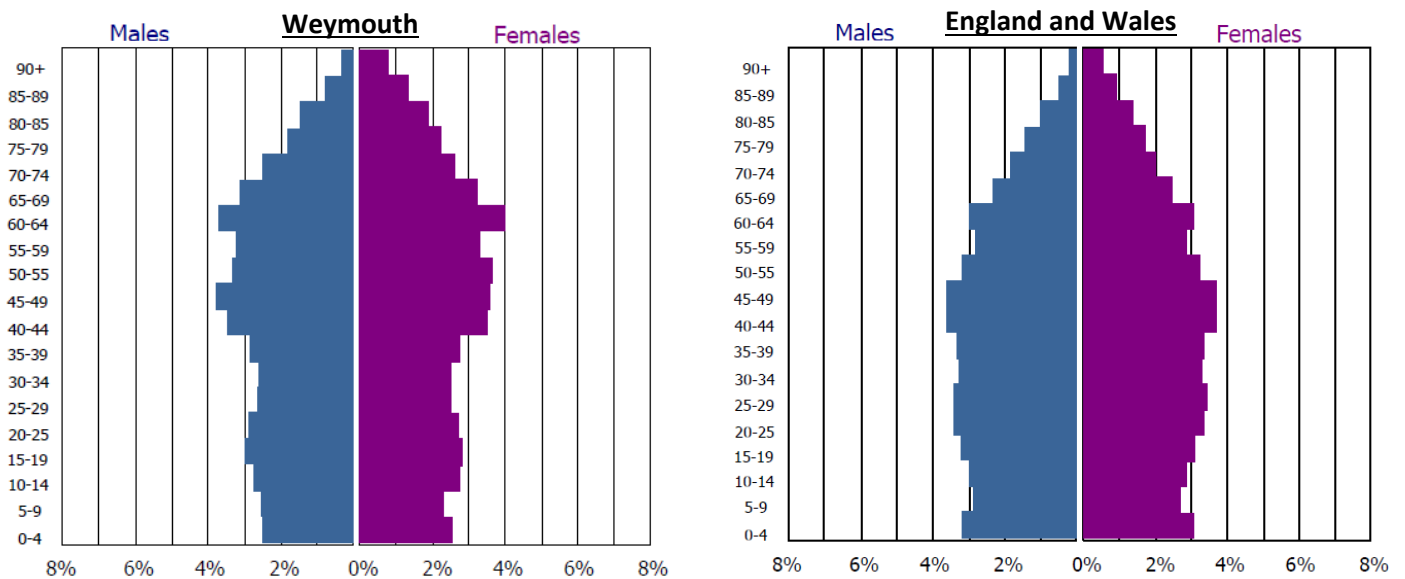


## 8. Development at Weymouth ( and Chickerell)

### 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.

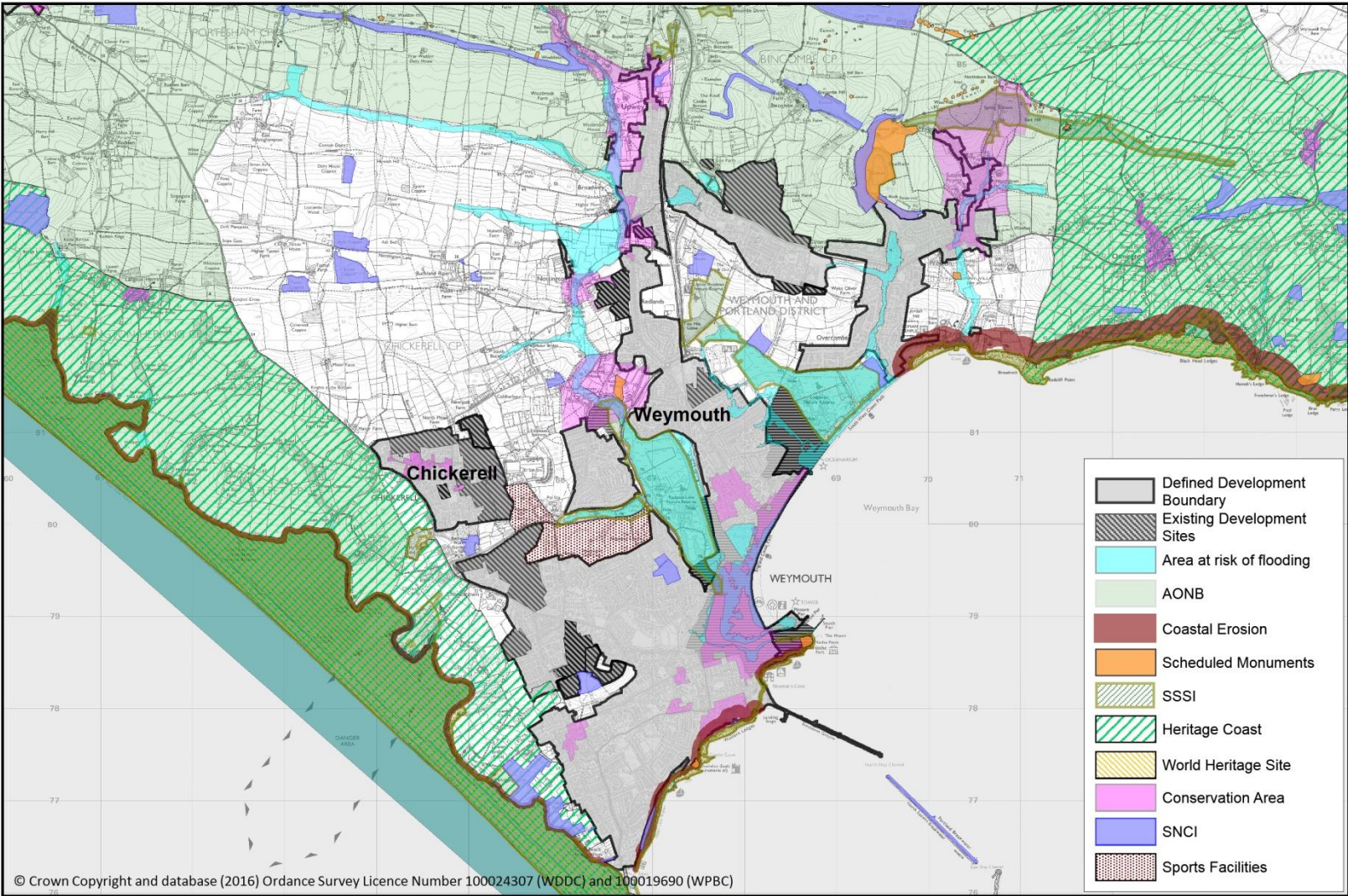
## INSPECTOR'S COMMENTS ON GROWTH AT CHICKERELL

- 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 Chickerehell



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## 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;

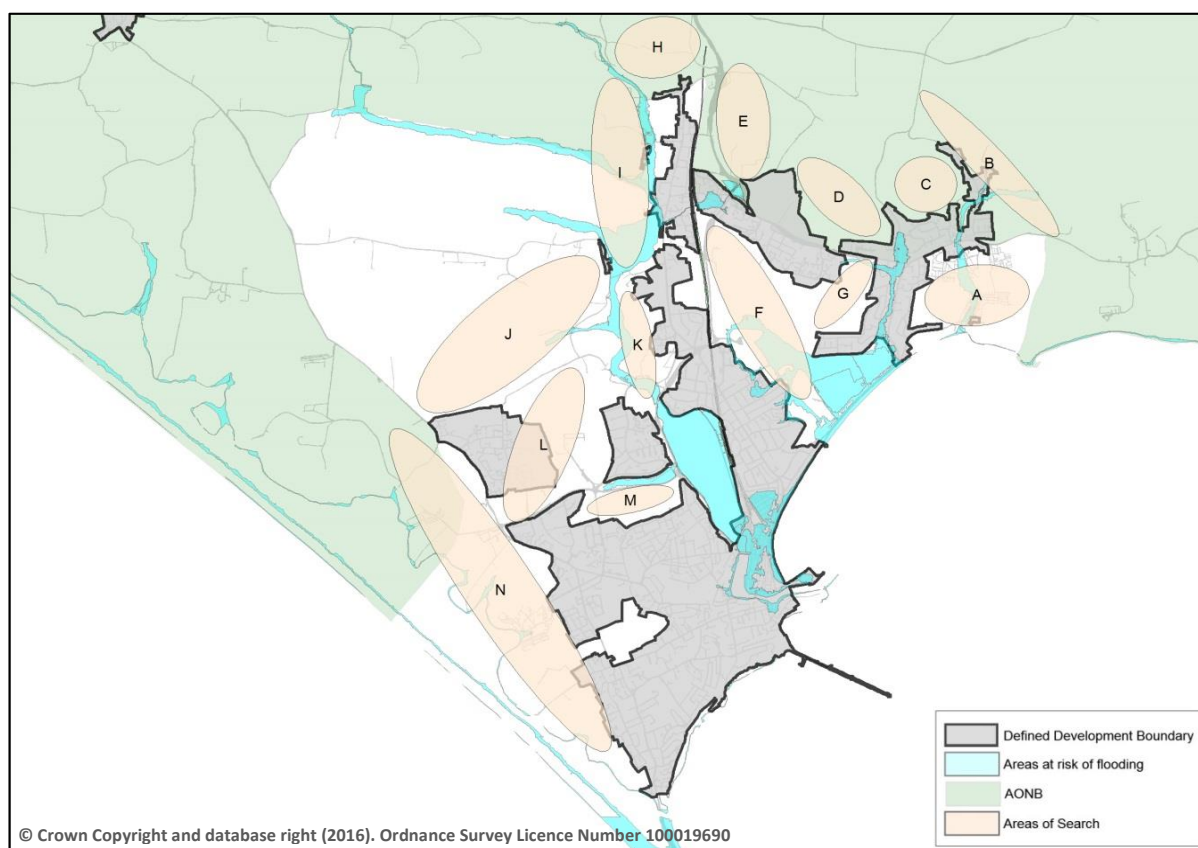
### Environmental

- 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

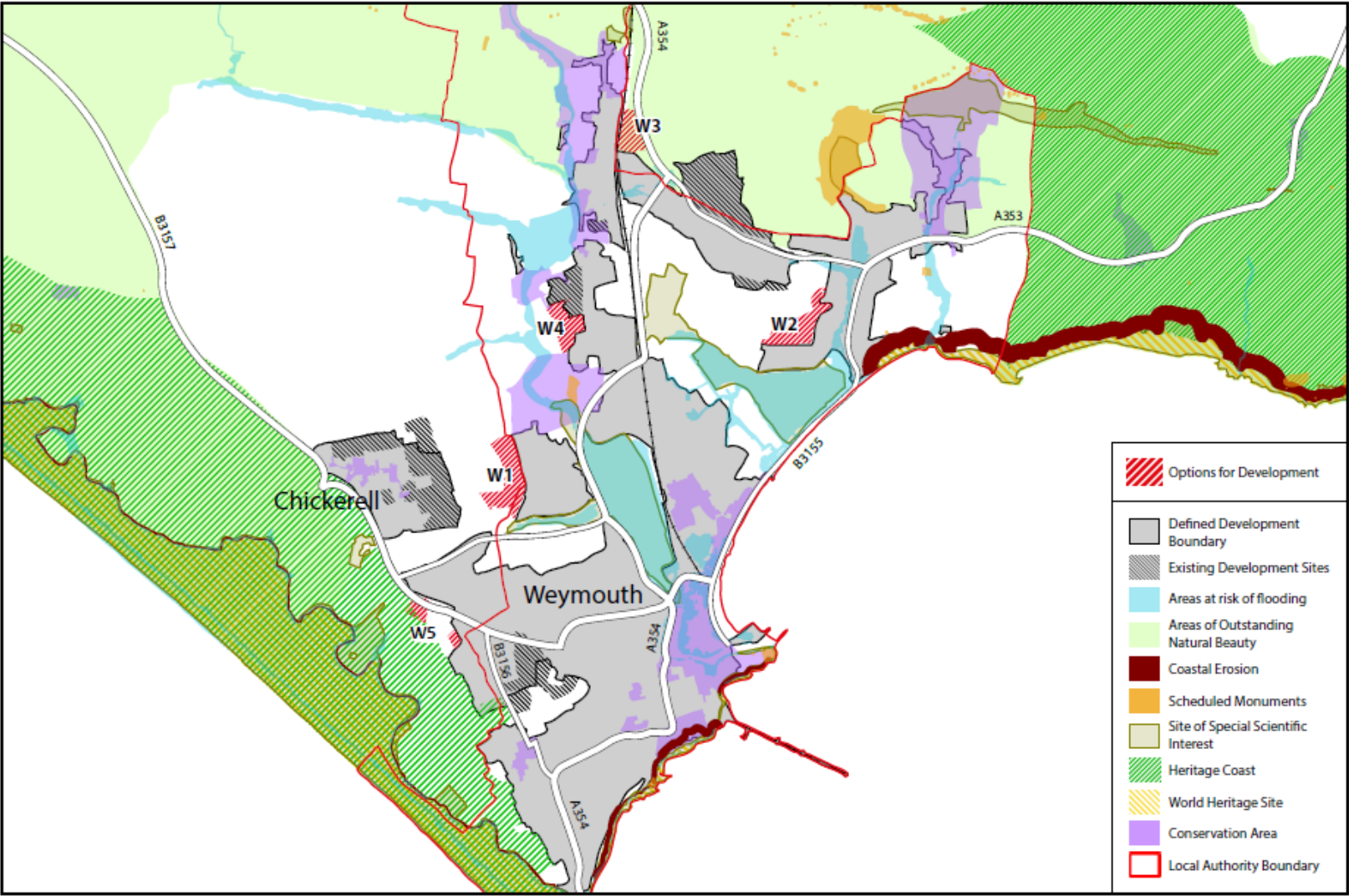


AREA	NAME	POTENTIAL IMPLICATIONS	CONCLUSION
A	Land north of Bowleaze Cove way	Impacts on European wildlife sites, World Heritage Site, scheduled monument and AONB. Vulnerable to coastal erosion and at risk of flooding.	×
B	Land north and east of Sutton Poyntz	Impacts on national wildlife designations, 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?**

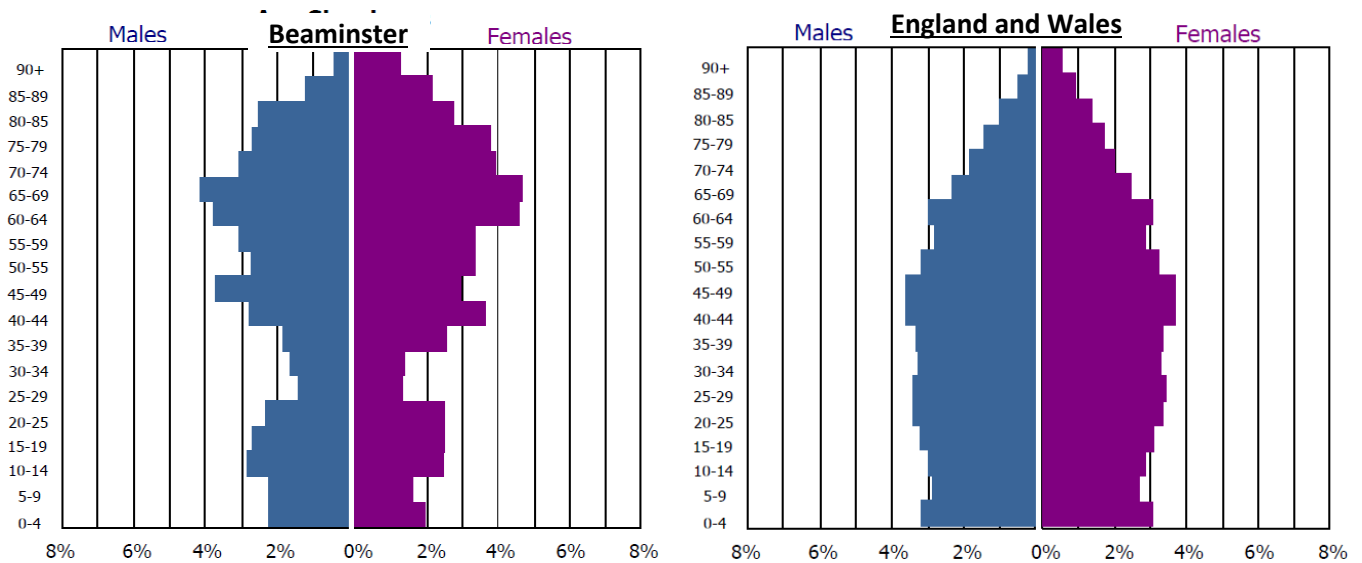


## 9. Development at Beaminster

### 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

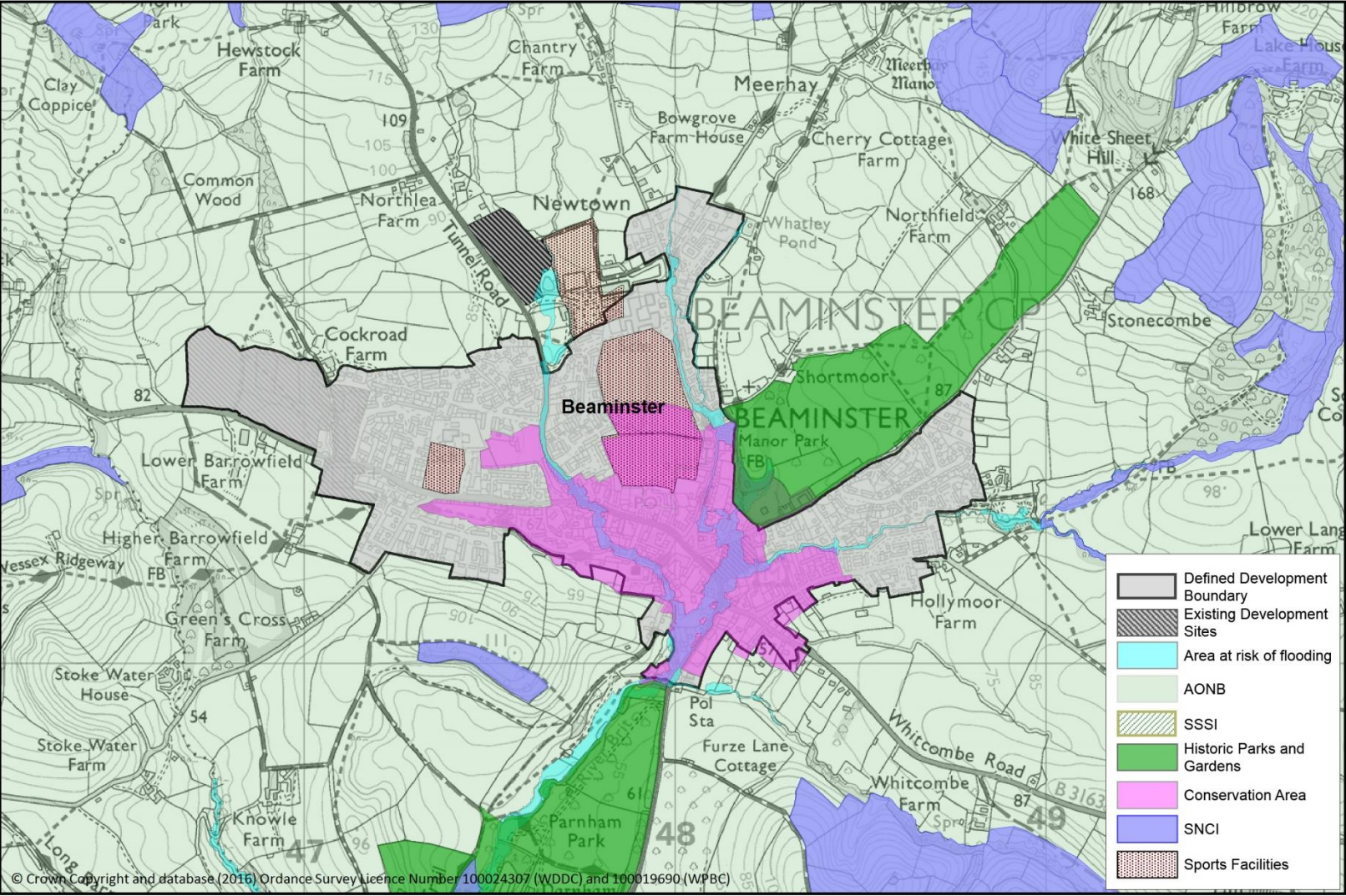
- 9.4 The planning inspector’s report into the West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan noted that *“three sites were identified in the Pre-Submission Plan as suitable locations for housing provision in Beaminster but were later reduced to one following public consultation on the draft proposals”*. 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.



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## 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;

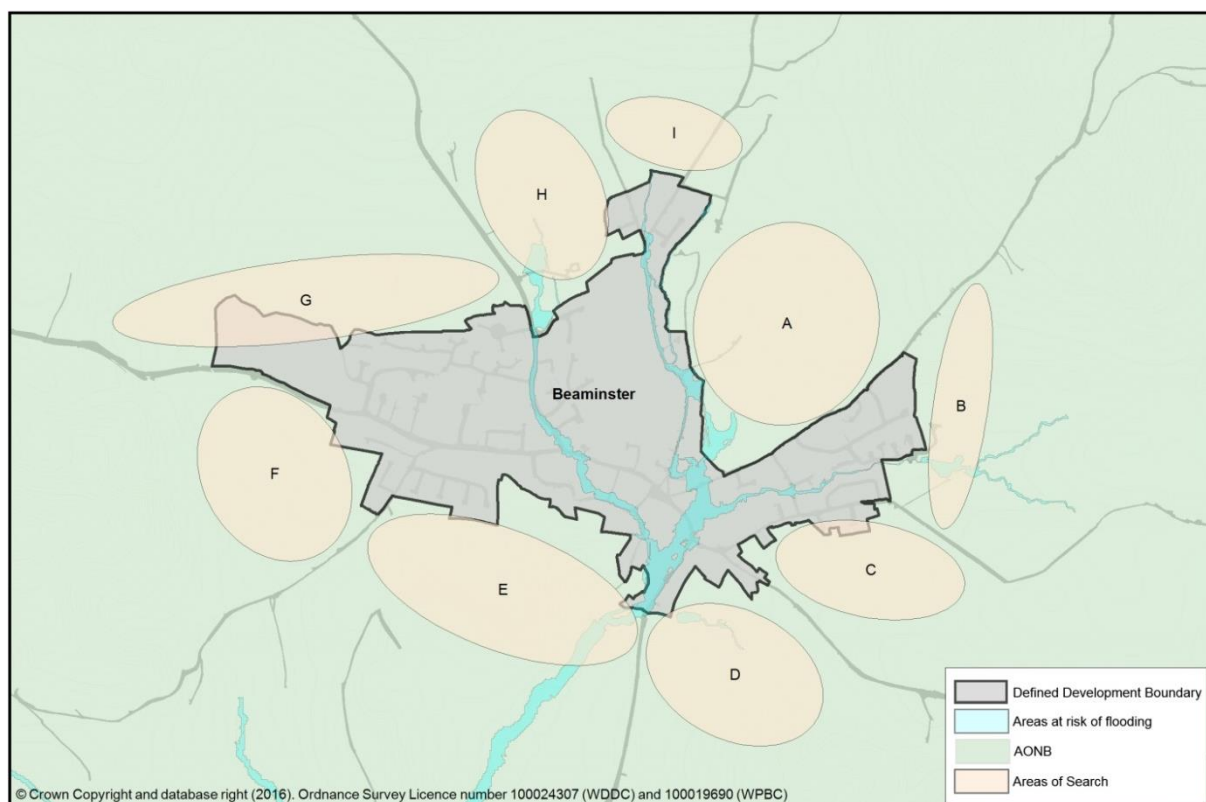
### Environmental

- 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.

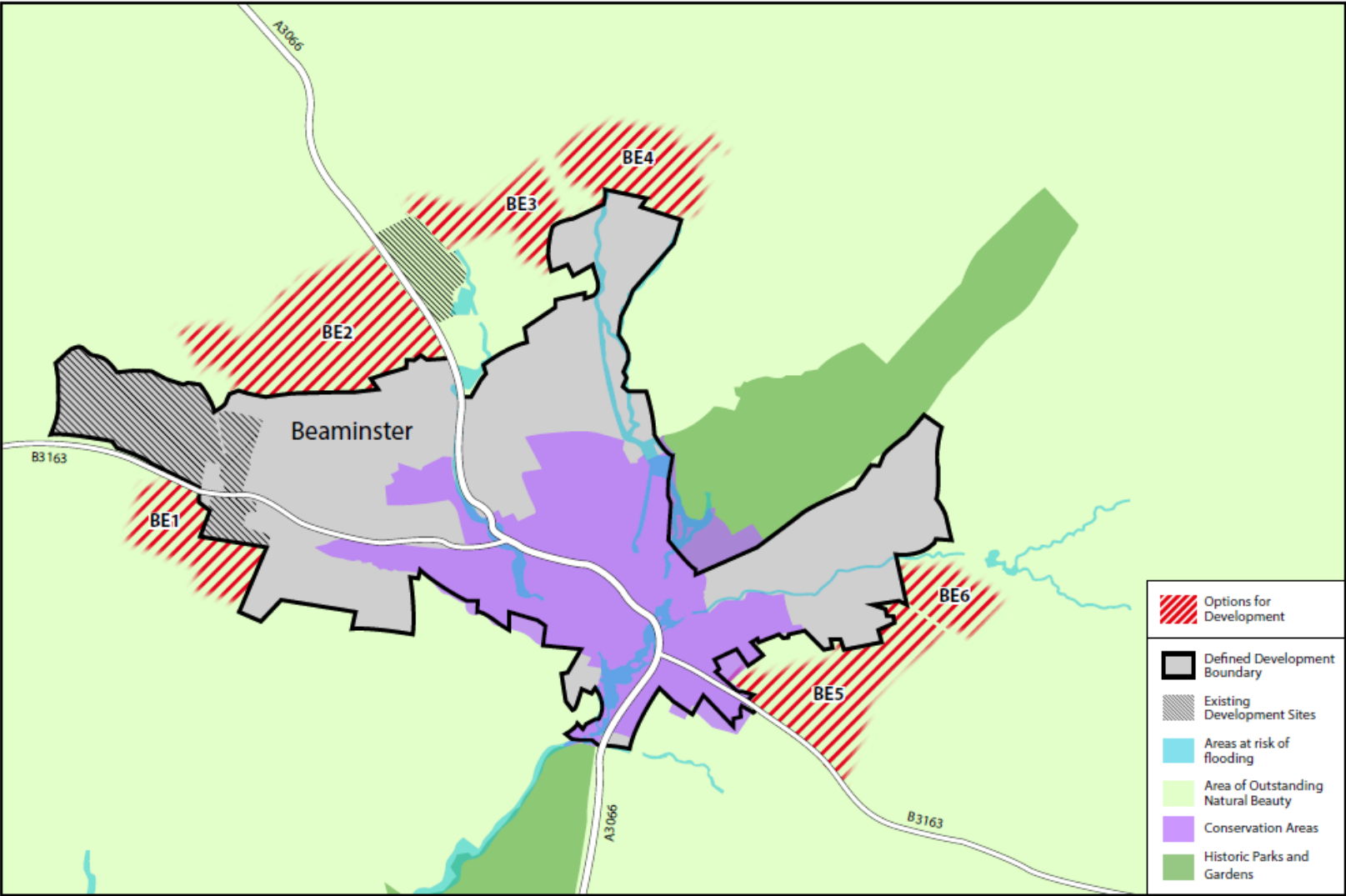
Figure 9.3: Broad areas of search – Beaminster



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?**

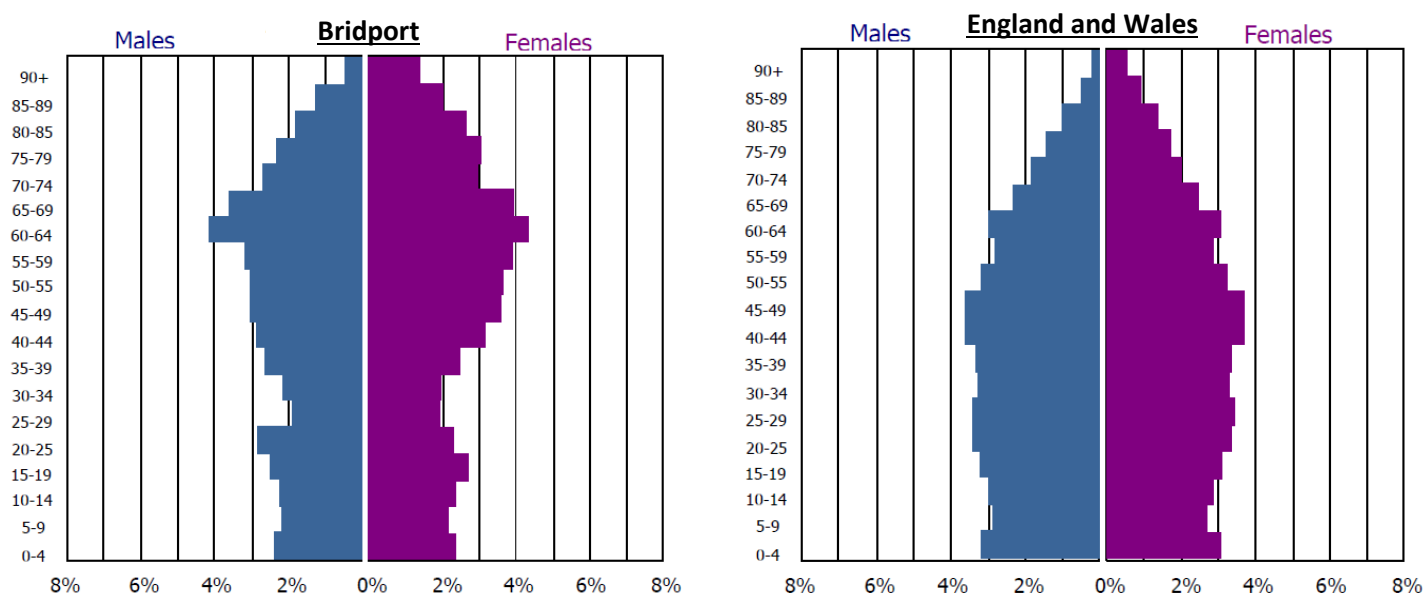
**9-iii. What are the infrastructure requirements for the development of the site options, individually or in combination with others?**

## 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



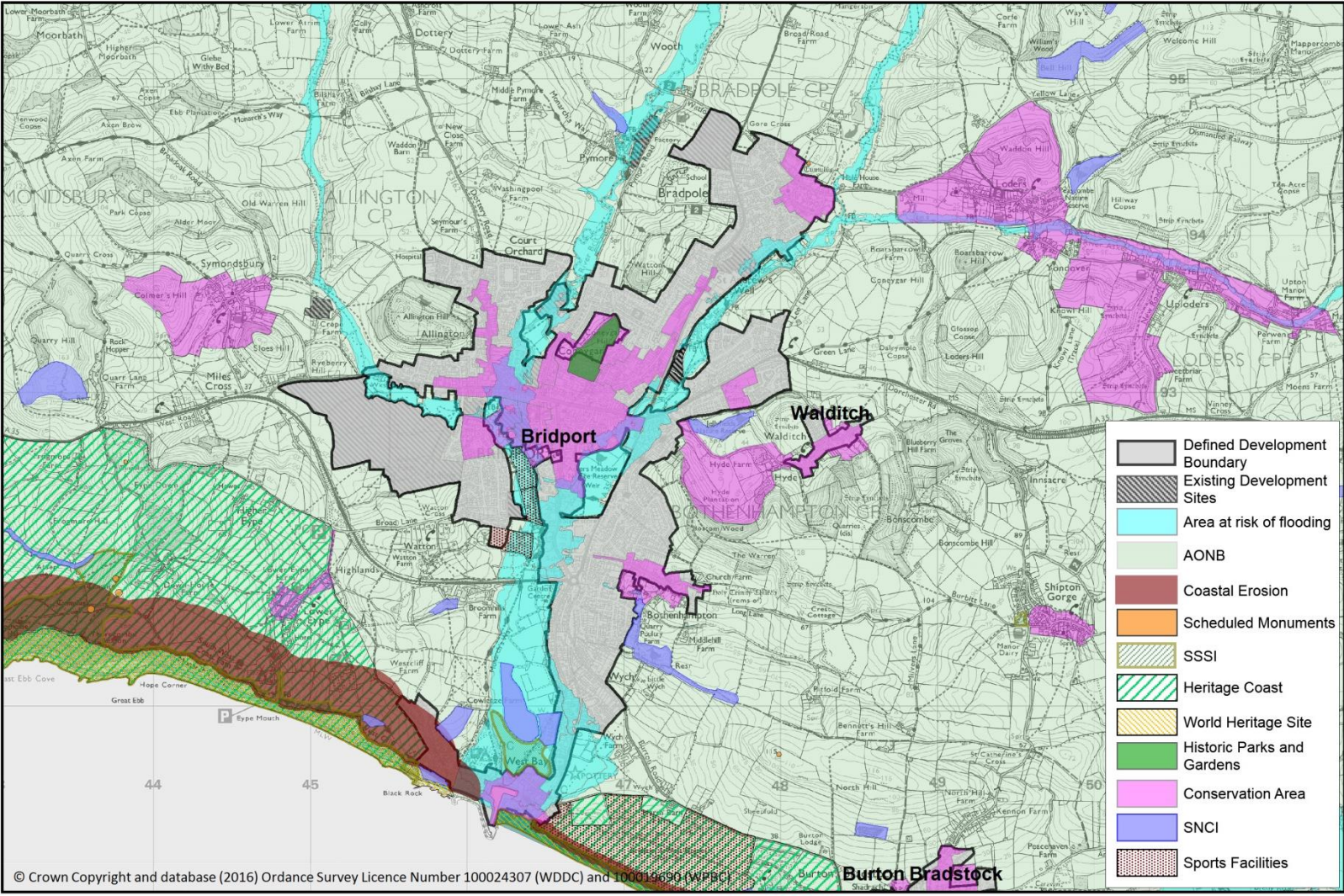
## INSPECTOR'S COMMENTS ON GROWTH AT BRIDPORT

- 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



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- 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;

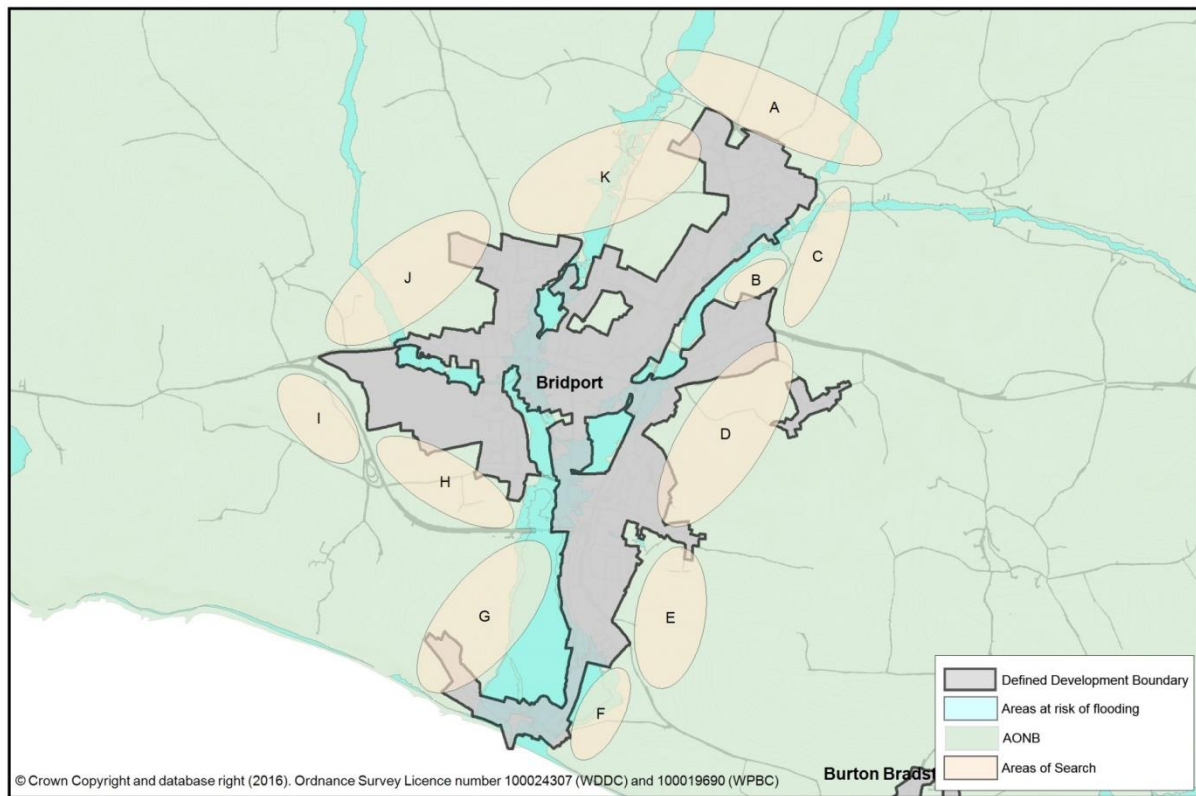
### Environmental

- 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

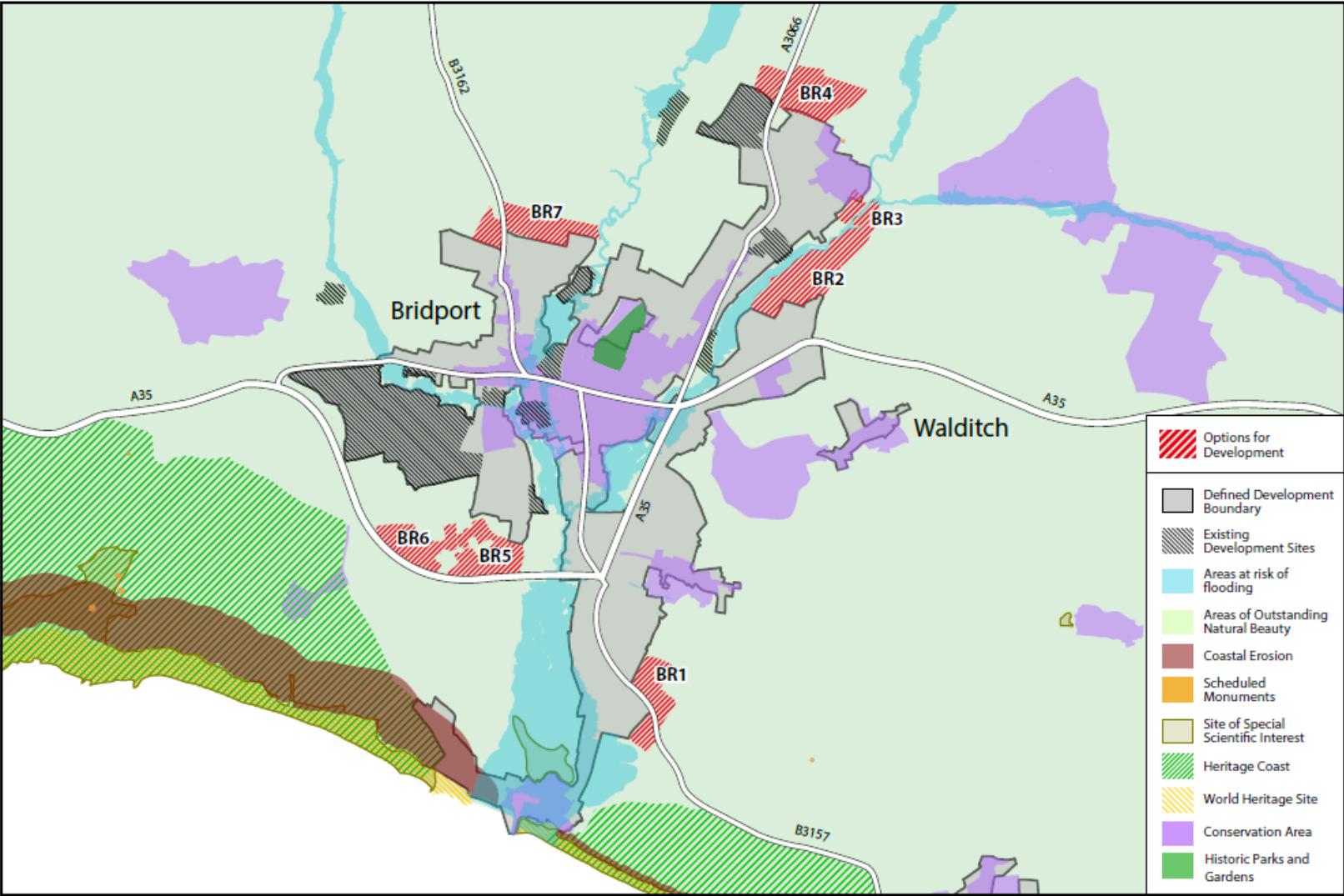


AREA	NAME	POTENTIAL IMPLICATIONS	CONCLUSION
A	North of Bradpole	Potential for some development in this area avoiding impacts on Dorset AONB, landscape and the parts of area at risk of flooding.	✓
B	Happy Island Way	Potential for development within this area avoiding impacts on the Dorset AONB and areas 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?**

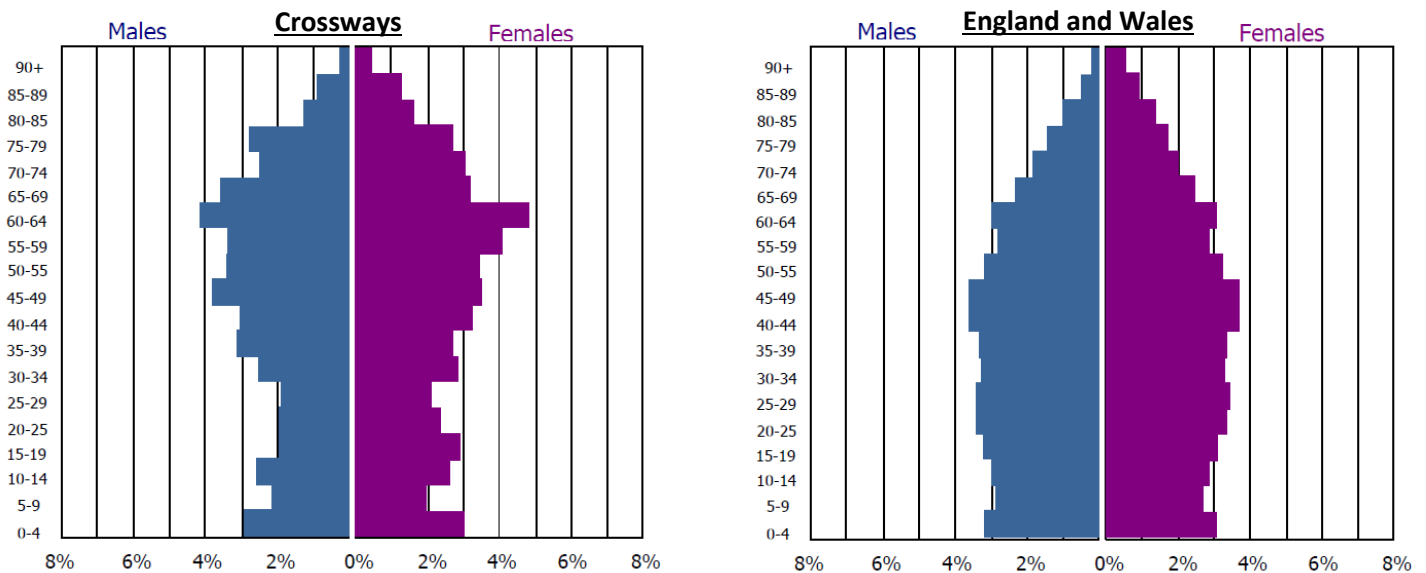


## 11. Development at Crossways

### 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;

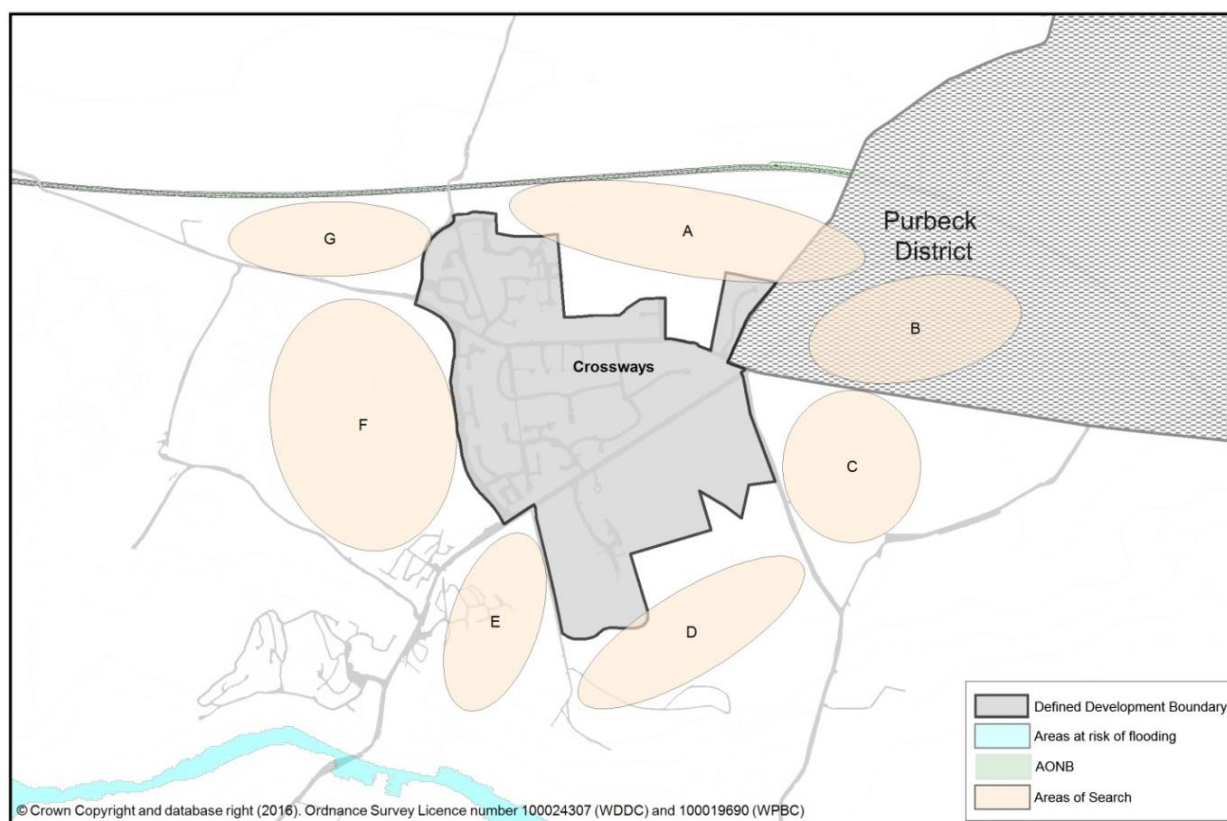
### Environmental

- 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

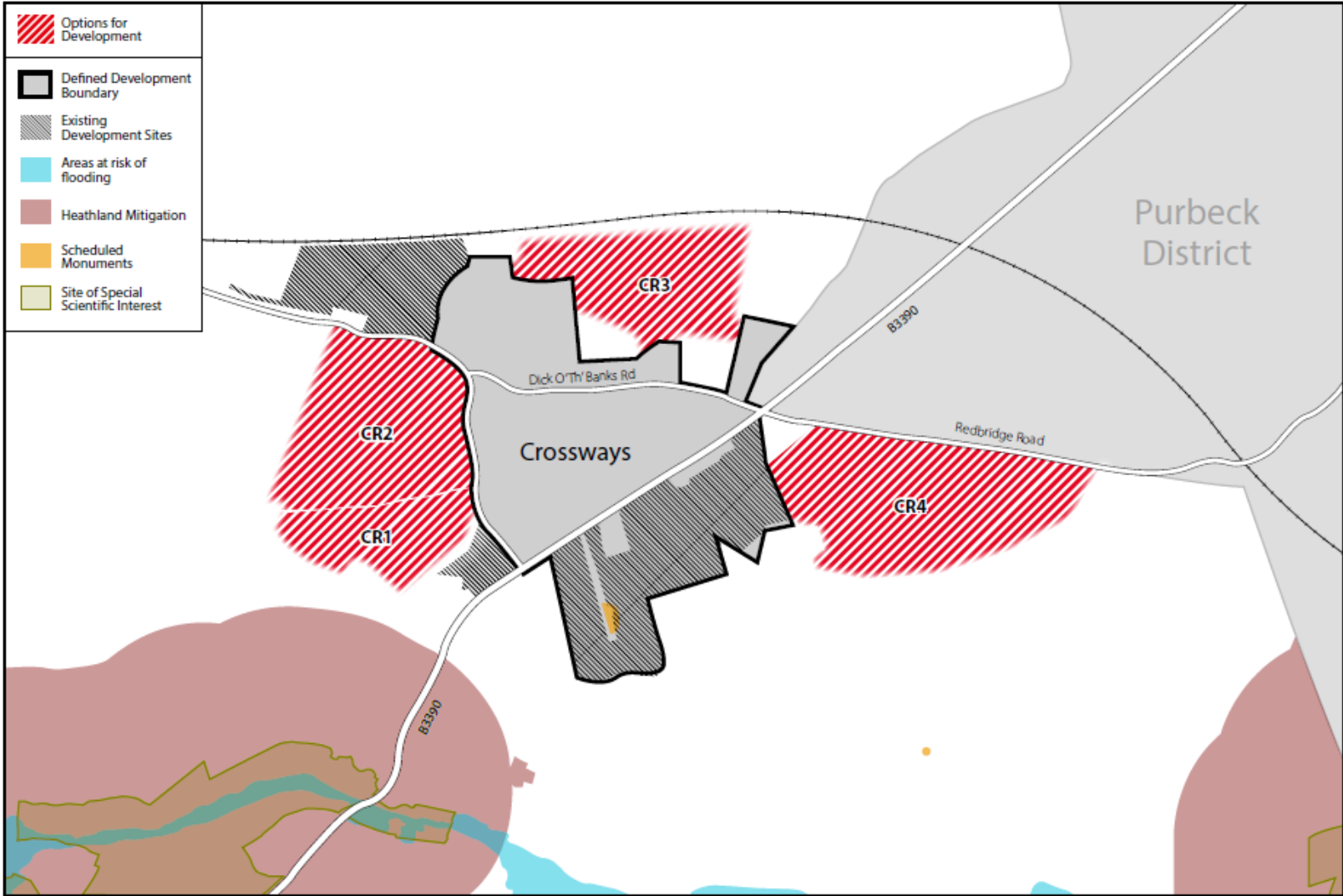


AREA	NAME	POTENTIAL IMPLICATIONS	CONCLUSION
A	Land at Woodsford Fields	Considered by Inspector to be a realistic option for development, SANG required as part of any scheme.	✓
B	Land within Purbeck District	Within Purbeck District (Currently being promoted by Purbeck District Council in the partial review 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?**



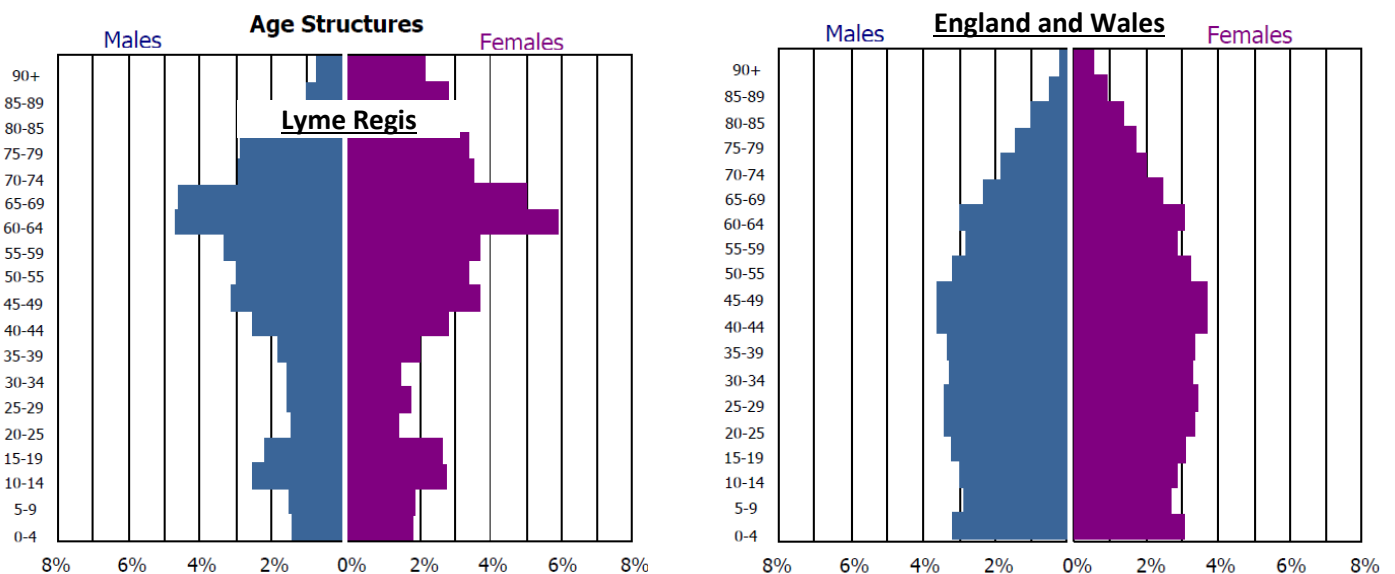
## 12. Development at Lyme Regis

### 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.

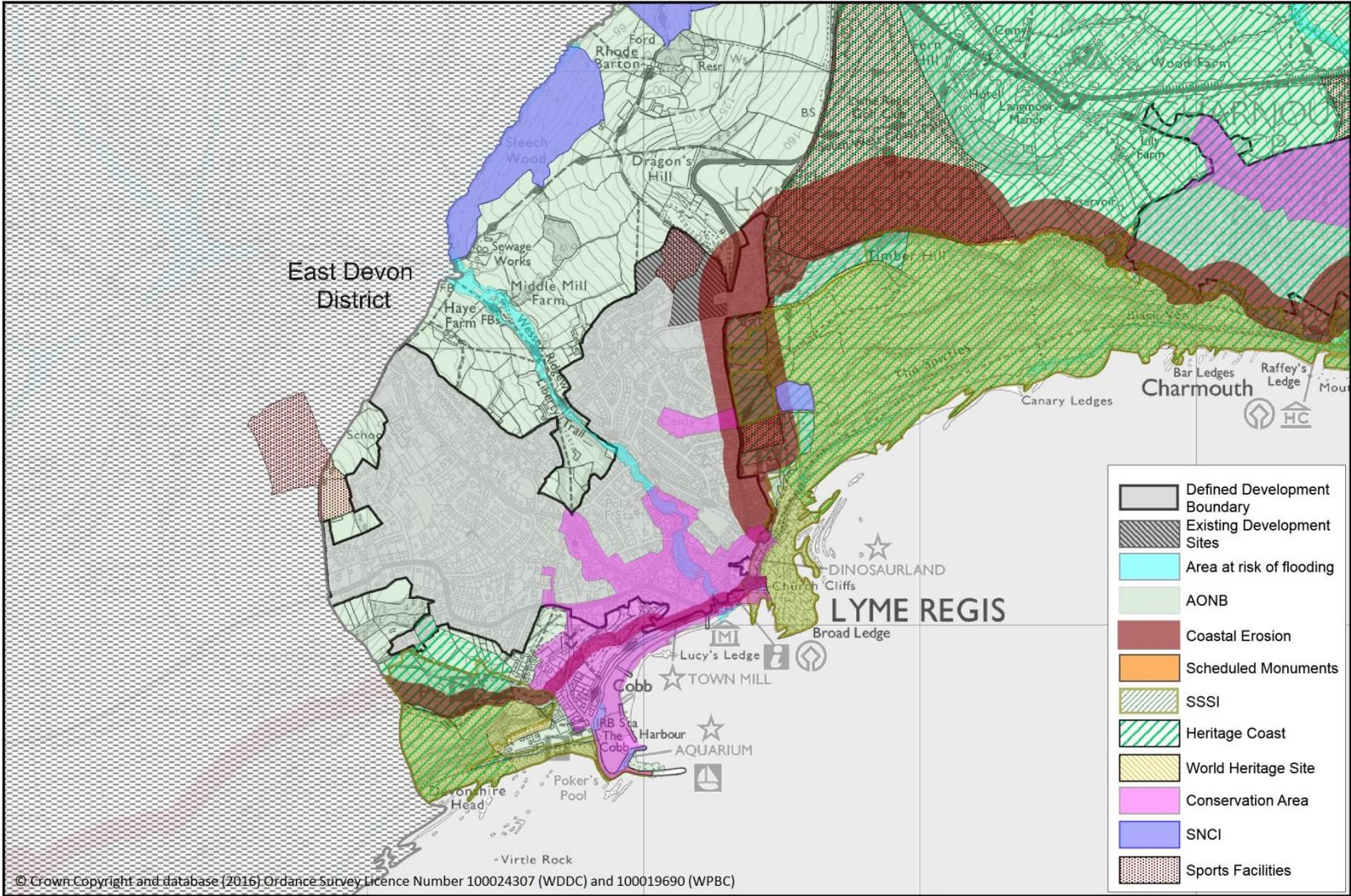
## INSPECTOR'S COMMENTS ON GROWTH AT LYME REGIS

- 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.

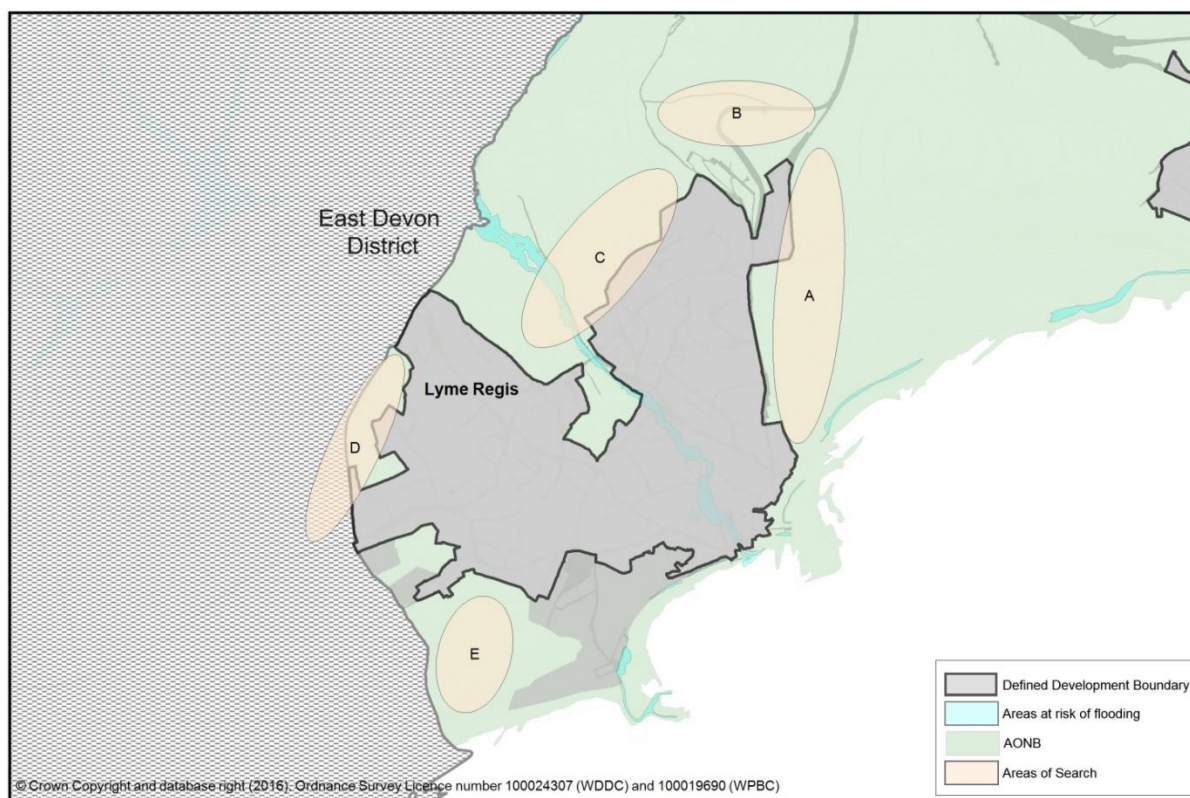
## POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENT OPTIONS

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.

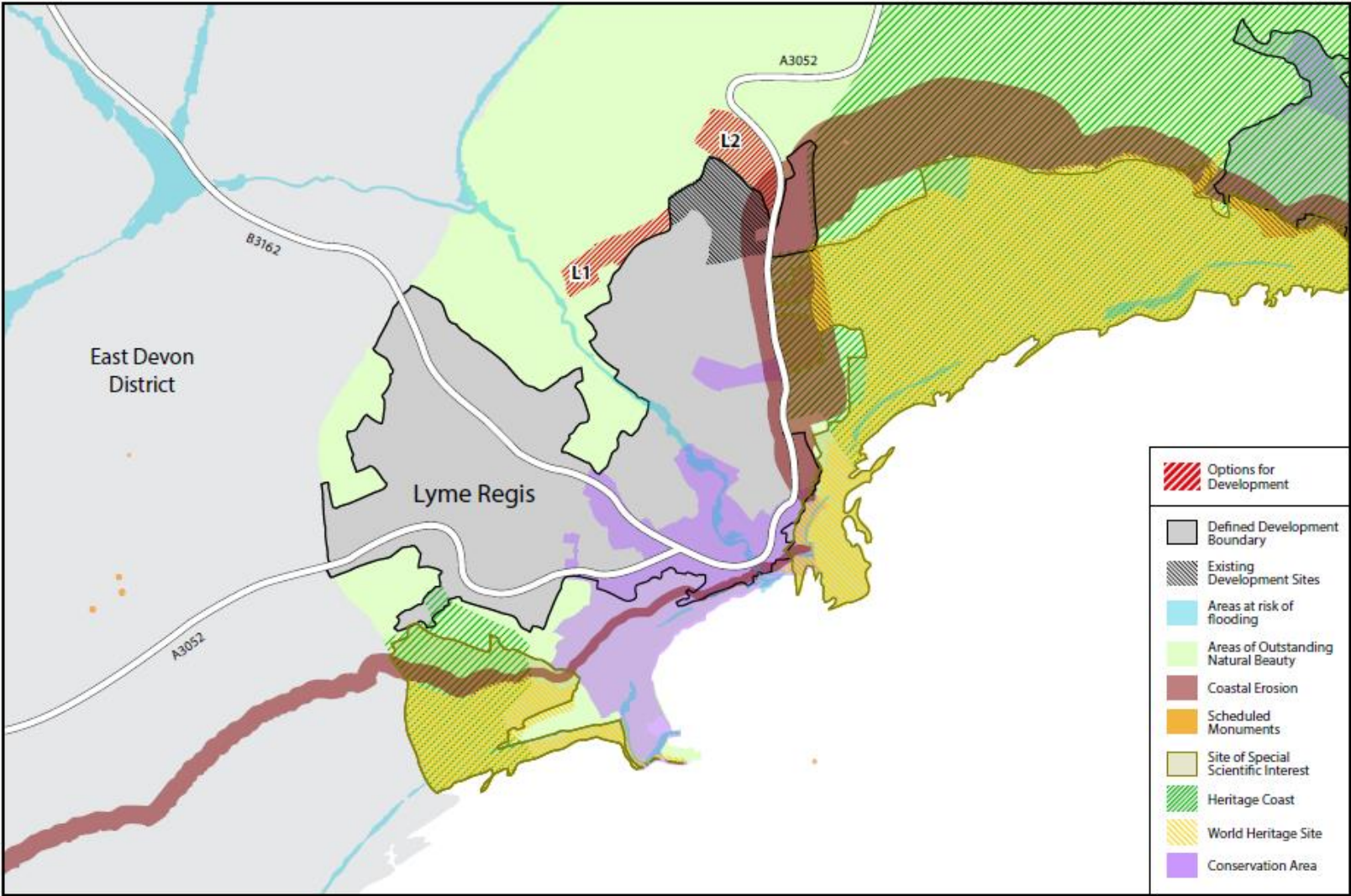
Figure 12.3: Broad areas of search – Lyme Regis



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?**

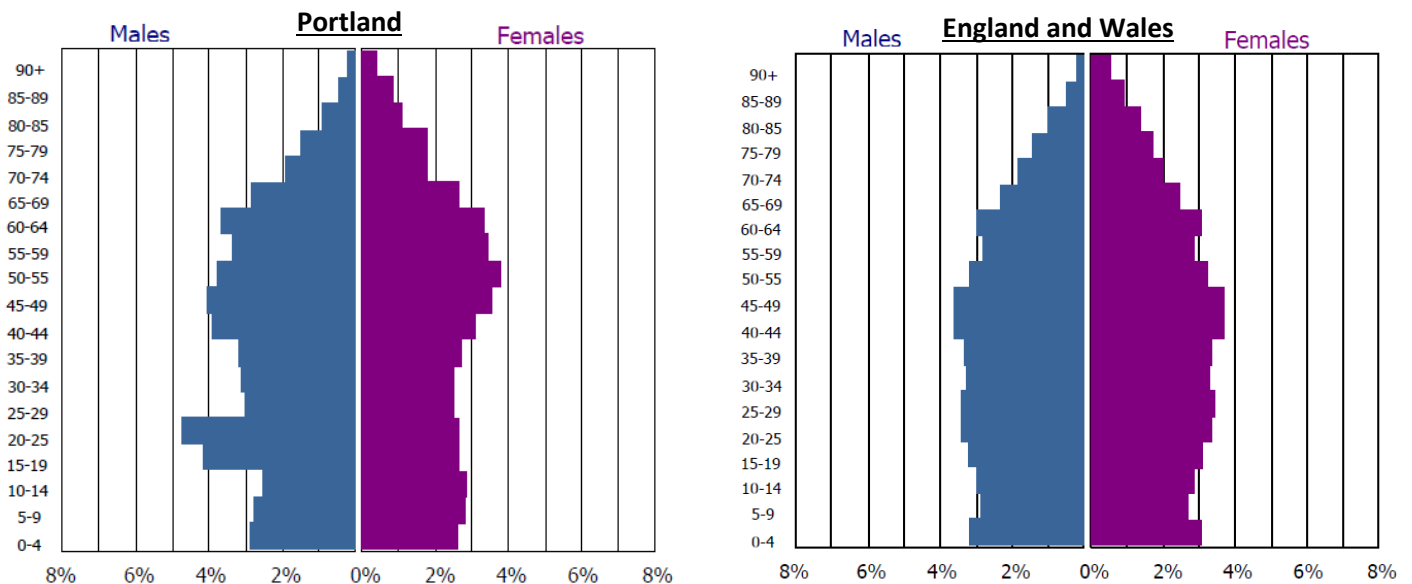
**12-iii. What are the infrastructure requirements for the development of the site options, individually or in combination with others?**

## 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.



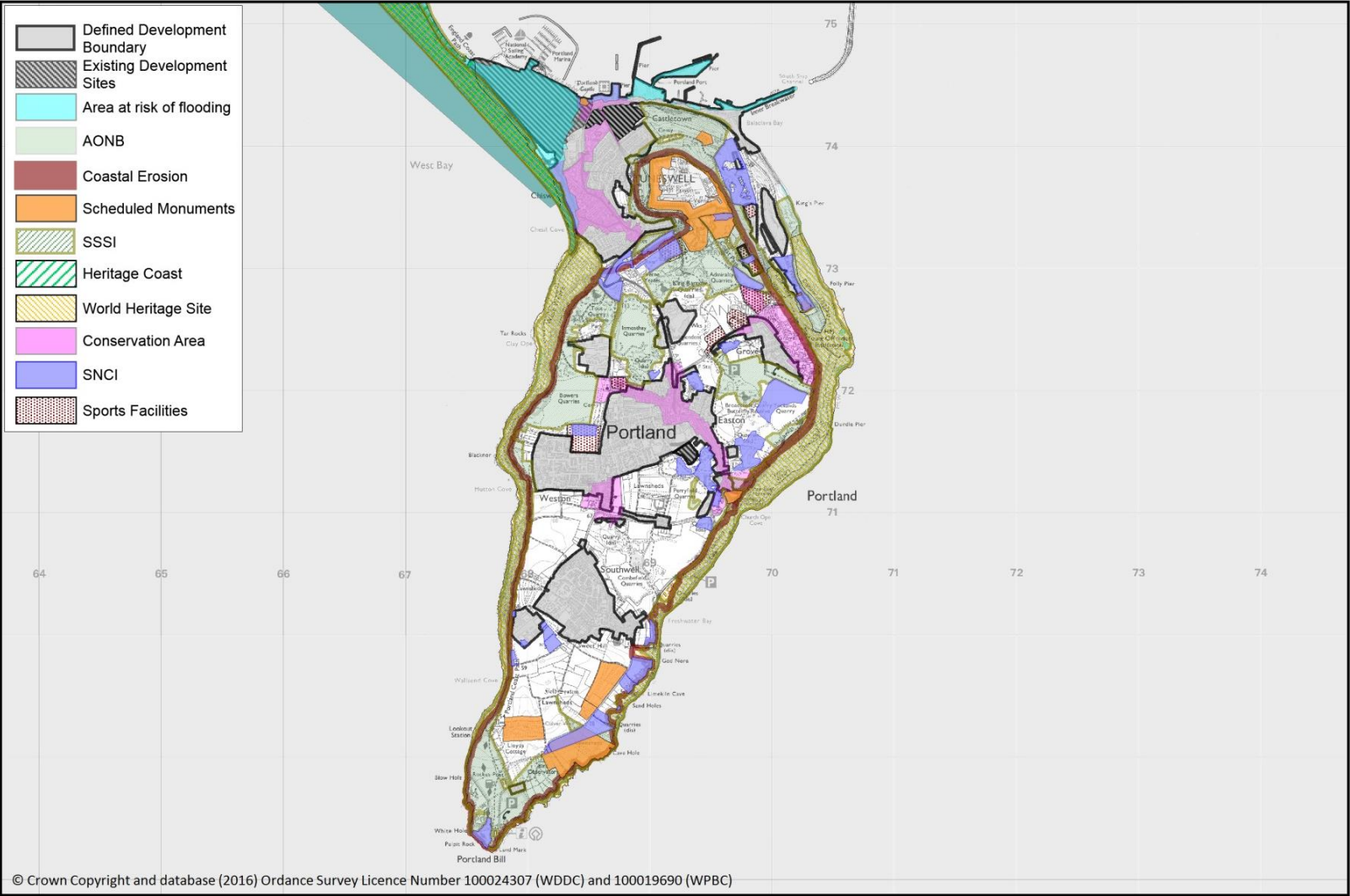
## INSPECTOR'S COMMENTS ON PORTLAND

- 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;

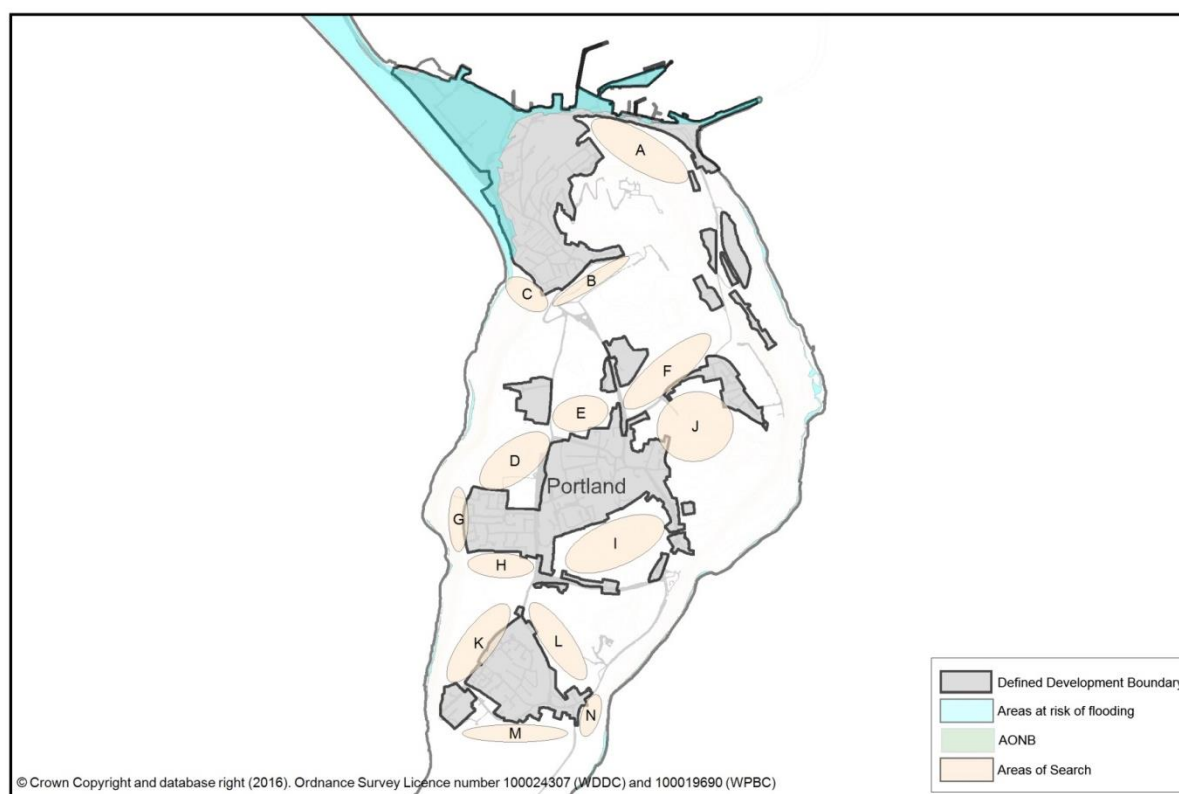
### Environmental

- 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

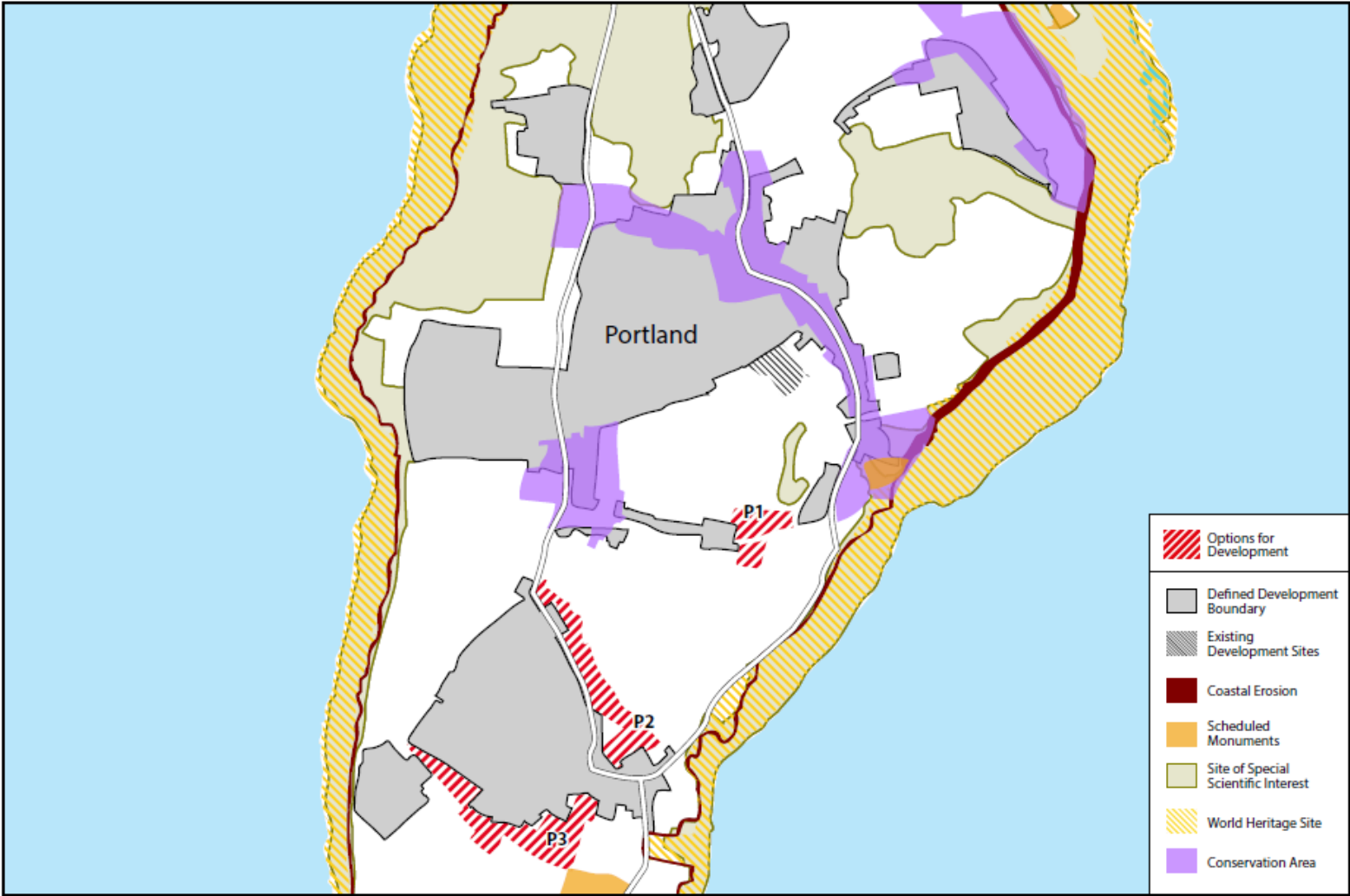


AREA	NAME	POTENTIAL IMPLICATIONS	CONCLUSION
A	South of Castletown	Impacts on Isle of Portland to Studland Cliffs SAC, Isle of Portland SSSI, and scheduled monuments. Steep topography.	×
B	New Ground	Impacts on Isle of Portland to Studland Cliffs SAC, Isle of Portland SSSI and nearby SNCI	×
C	West Weare	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.

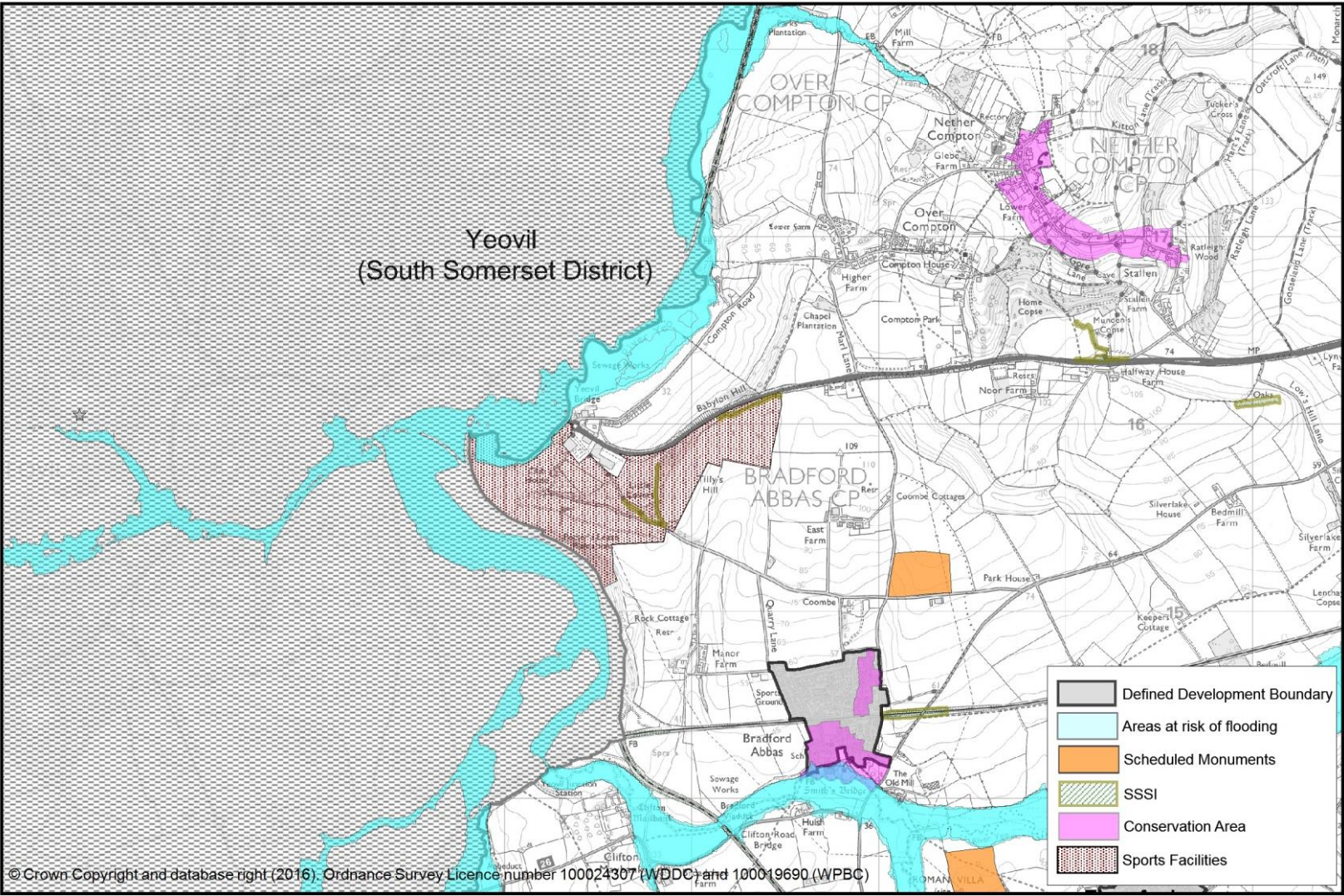
### ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS AROUND THE TOWN

- 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.

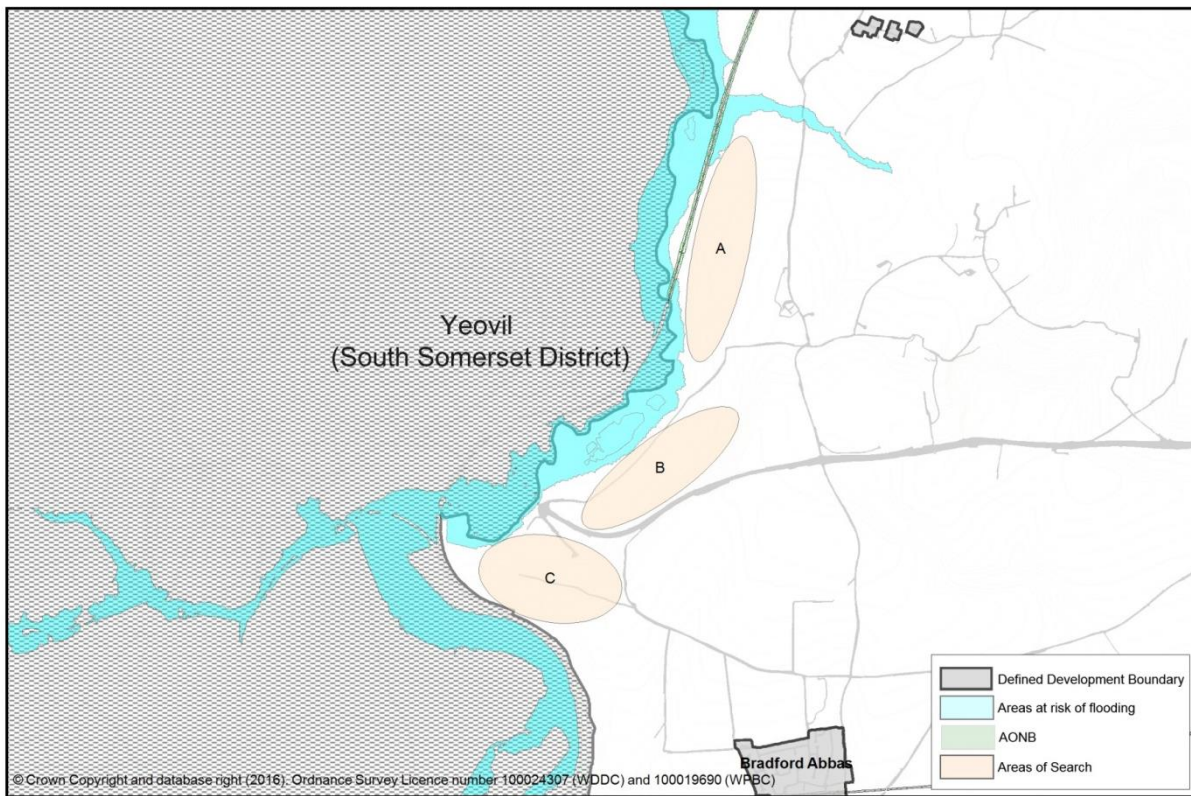
## POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENT SITES

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.

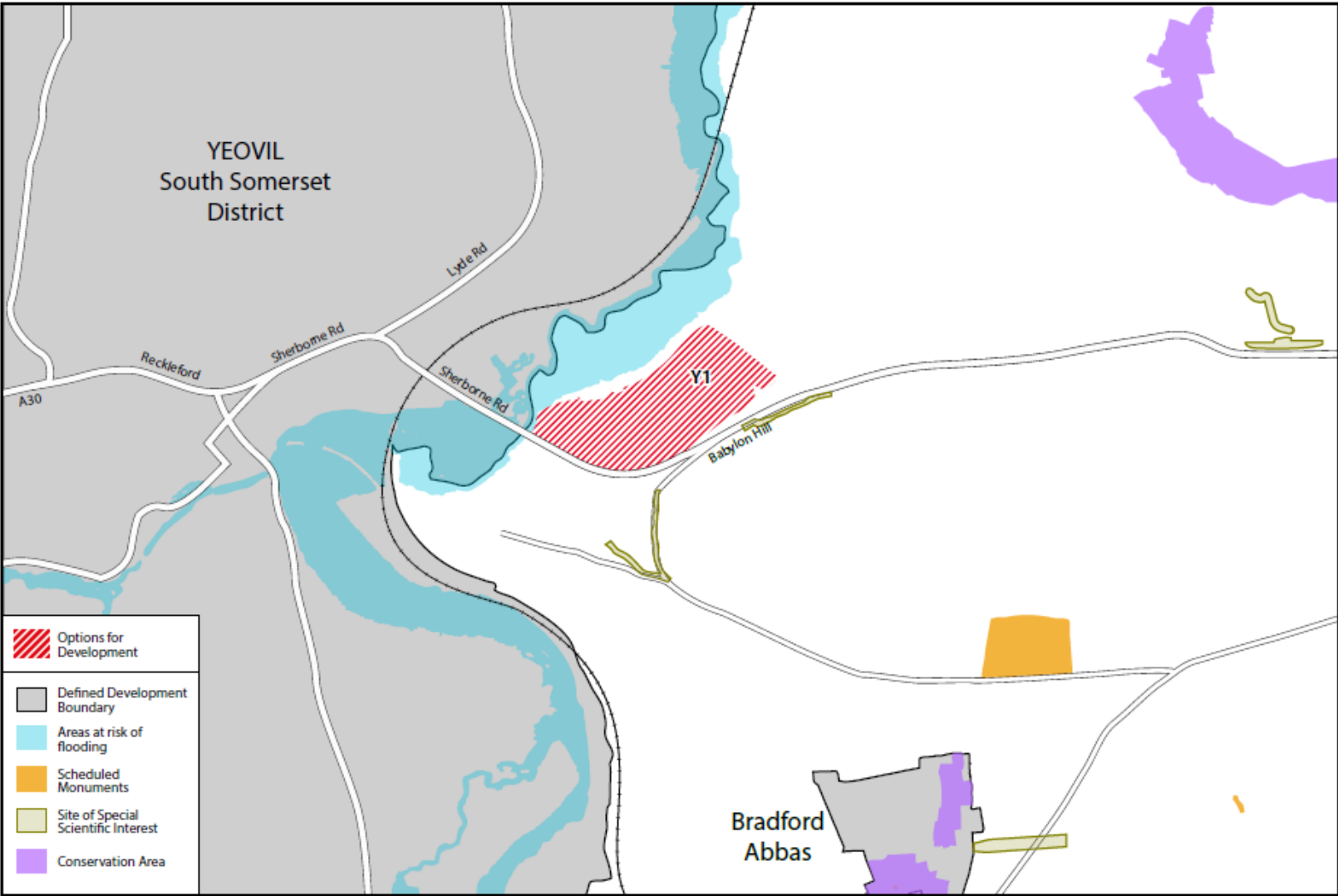
Figure 14.2: Broad areas of search – Yeovil



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.

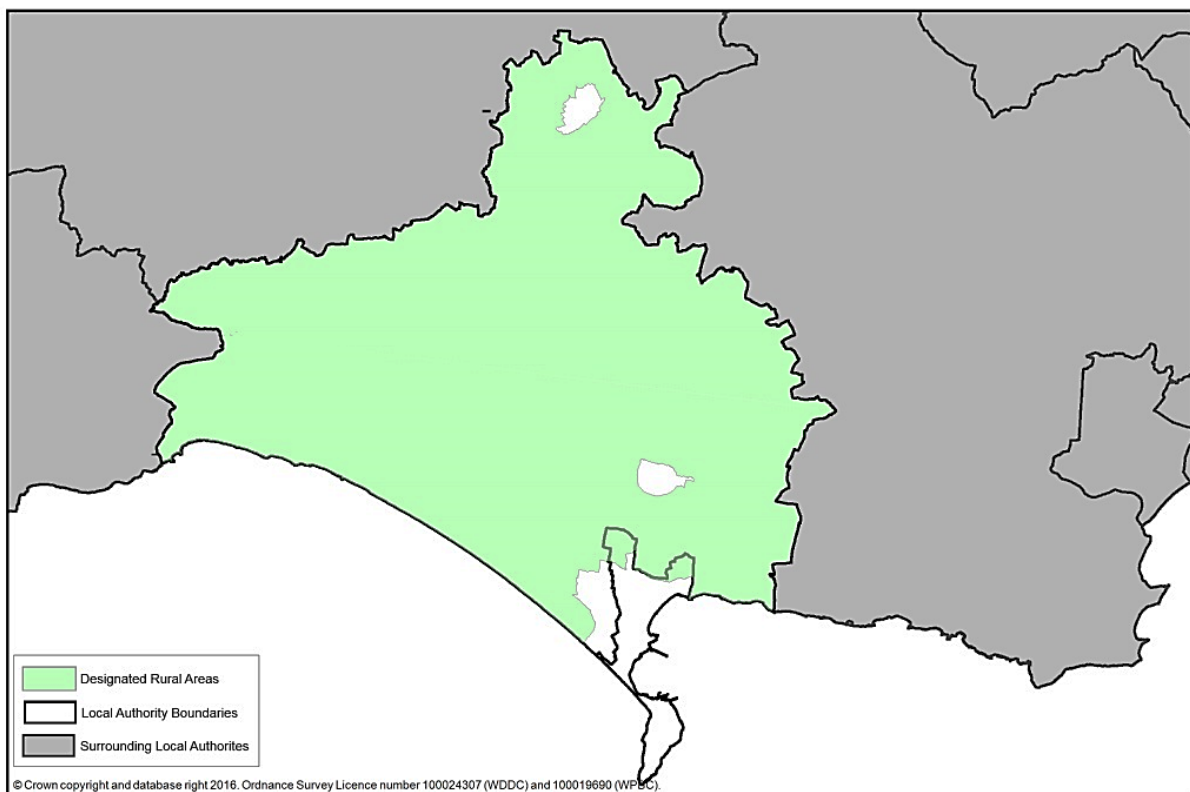
## PROPOSED APPROACH

- 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.

## **Overview & Scrutiny Committee 22 November 2016 Budget Report**

### **For Information**

#### **Portfolio Holder(s)**

Cllr P Barrowcliff - Corporate

#### **Senior Leadership Team Contact:**

J Vaughan, Strategic Director

**Report Author: J Vaughan, Strategic Director**

#### **Statutory Authority**

Local Government Acts 1972, 1988, 1992 and 2003

#### **Purpose of Report**

- 1 To provide Overview and Scrutiny Committee with the opportunity to comment upon the process for the development of the budget and 2017/18 proposals.

#### **Officer Recommendations**

- 2 To provide the Executive Committee with any observations and comments on the 2017/18 budget process and proposals.

#### **Reason for Decision**

- 3 To scrutinise the 2017/18 budget.

#### **Background and Reason Decision Needed**

- 4 The financial strategy has traditionally been to focus upon the medium term rather than looking at one financial year in isolation. This approach has served the Council well and enabled it to successfully plan for the reduction in resources from central government through austerity and also adapt to the changes to the Council's funding streams.
- 5 Strategically the Council has identified 3 options going forward to address the continued difficult financial environments. They are:-
  - Plan A – Unitary Council
  - Plan B – 'Super District'
  - Plan C – Continue as a stand alone Council

- 6 The main focus of the recent work has been directed at Plan A and following the public consultation will be considered by each Council across Dorset at the end of January / early February 2017. If agreed and approved by the Secretary of State this would see the creation of new unitary councils across Dorset that would come into existence from April 2019 and would mean that this Council would no longer exist after this date.
- 7 The fall back to the creation of Unitary Councils is the formal merger of the 3 Councils that are already in partnership into one 'super' District Council. A business case for this has been drafted and this option could be implemented from April 2019.
- 8 The third option is to continue with the current arrangements and continue as a stand alone Council. Officers have developed budget options to address the predicted financial gaps if this option is taken forward.
- 9 Given this uncertainty about the future of the Council, the focus has therefore been on balancing the 2017/18 budget and treating it as a single year rather than the usual process of focusing upon the medium term. The options being put forward for 2017/18 are therefore based upon building savings already achieved from the 'Stronger Together' transformation programme, income generation, efficiencies and options requiring member decisions. Appendix 1 sets out budget options that require member decisions. There are also a number of budget options that do not impact upon service delivery and these are set out in Appendix 2. Appendix 3 provides details of options that have previously been approved and can now be included within the 2017/18 budget proposals.
- 10 There are still a number of key areas where the budget estimates for 2017/18 are still to be finalised and they include:-
  - Review of inflation factors
  - Pensions – updated for the latest revaluation
  - Dorset Waste Partnership - Budget for 2017/18 to be approved by the Joint Committee
  - Business Rates – Assessment of impact upon the council of 2017 Business Rates Revaluation
  - New Homes Bonus - Still waiting for the Governments response to consultation
- 11 The 2017/18 budget proposals were considered by Executive in September as the basis for consultation and scrutiny with the feedback from this and the updated financial forecast being reported to the Executive in December prior to the final budget being agreed by Council in February 2017.

## **Implications**

### **Corporate Plan**

- 12 The budget allocates the financial resources of the councils and therefore directly impacts upon the delivery of the corporate plan.



## **Financial**

13 As set out in the report.

## **Equalities**

14 As part of the budget setting process, the potential equalities implications of each budget option are being considered. Where appropriate, this will include consulting with key stakeholders and others to determine any potential equalities impacts and how these may be mitigated. Where there are any potential implications for staff, these will be considered through the application of the Partnership's Change Management Policy and Procedure.

## **Environmental**

15 None directly from this report.

## **Economic Development**

16 None directly from this report.

## **Risk Management (including Health & Safety)**

17 The budget process should ensure that the 2017/18 budget estimates are robust. The council has general reserves to cover any unforeseen circumstances and the level of the reserves is assessed using a risk based methodology.

## **Human Resources**

18 None directly from this report.

## **Consultation and Engagement**

19 There has been a member briefing on the budget in September 2016 and further ones have been set up for December 2016 and February 2017. There has been various staff briefings on the budget and further ones are set up.

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Budget options requiring member approval

Appendix 2 – Budget options requiring management approval

Appendix 3 – Budget options already approved

## **Background Papers**

Budget Report February 2016

Budget Update September 2016

## **Footnote**

Issues relating to financial, environmental, economic and equalities implications have been considered and any information relevant to the decision is included within the report.

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## Budget Options for Member Approval

These options relate to decisions which require Member approval

<b>Option</b>	<b>£'000s</b>
Increase council tax by £5 for a Band D property, as included within the Government Finance Settlement	203
Build in Investment Income into base budget instead of contributing to the Corporate Projects reserve	900
Use CIL admin charges to fund staff costs operating CIL	68
Use of DCLG Neighbourhood planning funding for costs of supporting the work of neighbourhood plans	15
Savings from Dorset Waste Partnership – WDDC share of over £1m savings	100
Staffing redesign and the creation of Dorset Coastal Partnership	35
Income generation from West Dorset Harbours so that they breakeven	40
Charge Dorchester BID for Levy Collection	2
<b>Total Budget Options for Members Approval</b>	<b>1,363</b>

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### Budget Options for Management Approval

Budget options which do not affect service delivery or service levels therefore are decisions for Management.

<b>Option</b>	<b>£'000s</b>
IT Convergence and Rationalisation – continued work on the harmonisation of IT systems and equipment following the creation of Dorset Councils Partnership	63
Electoral Services Structural Change – review of vacant post	8
Process review of Revenues and Benefits service to achieve efficiencies	54
Legal Law Library – Review and reduce the size of the library held onsite	4
Implementation of Intelligent Scanning of suppliers invoices to speed up payments and streamline the approval process	7
Redesign of Financial Services, incorporating process review, efficiencies and restructure	42
Introduction of an in-house bailiff service for Revenues and Benefits	48
Improved income collection process for Penalty Charge Notices	12
Additional income to be collected following the Development Services Process Review	15
Reduction in Member Training budget as a result of holding more joint events	5
Redesign of HR and Organisation Development Service	10
Management Review of Environmental Health within Community Protection Service following the convergence of the service	28
Savings following flexible retirement within the Housing Service	11
Removal of a vacant post from Housing Enabling Service	5
<b>Total Budget Options for Management Approval</b>	<b>312</b>

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### Budget Options Already Approved

Following the setting of the 2016/17 budget, the Council has continued with its service review programme and the identification of efficiency savings. This has resulted in a number of savings being achieved and able to be built into the 2017/18 budget. These are listed below.

<b>Option</b>	<b>£'000s</b>
Housing Service Review	43
Economic Regeneration Service Review	17
Produce Committee Papers electronically	9
Align the Finance System across the Partnership	6
Stopping the Dorchester Park and Ride Service	80
Communications Service Review	60
Introduction of the Civil Penalties Regime	61
Development Management Service Review	33
Transfer of Bridport TIC to Bridport Town Council	41
<b>Total Budget Options Already Approved</b>	<b>350</b>

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## **Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

**22 November 2016**

## **Scrutiny of Update to Constitution – Code of Conduct for members and officers dealing with planning matters**

### **For Recommendation**

#### **Portfolio Holder(s)/ Briefholder**

Councillor Peter Barrowcliff, Corporate  
Councillor Ian Gardner, Planning

#### **Senior Leadership Team Contact:**

S Caundle, Assistant Chief Executive

#### **Report Author:**

Lindsey Watson, Democratic Services Team

#### **Statutory Authority**

Local Government Act 2000 and Localism Act 2011 sets out the requirement for local authorities to establish overview and scrutiny committees and their functions.

#### **Purpose of Report**

- 1 To review the Code of Conduct for members and officers dealing with planning matters further to the resolution of Full Council on 3 November 2016.

#### **Officer Recommendations**

- 2 That the committee review the Code of Conduct for members and officers dealing with planning matters and make a recommendation to the Executive Committee for consideration.

#### **Reason for Decision**

- 3 To respond to the resolution of Full Council on 3 November 2016 for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to undertake a review of the Code of Conduct for members and officers dealing with planning matters for recommendation to the Executive Committee.

## **Scrutiny of update to Constitution – Code of Conduct for members and officers dealing with planning matters**

- 5 Between April and June 2016, members considered and approved various changes to the Constitutions of the councils to seek to deliver an improved convergence of democratic issues across the Dorset Councils Partnership. At that time members were informed that further changes to the Constitutions would be necessary to gradually begin to seek to facilitate the better alignment of provisions within.
- 6 At Council on 3 November 2016, members considered a number of changes to the Constitution, many of which would help to deliver a standardised position across all three partner councils. These changes were agreed by Council with the exception of an update to align the existing Code of Conduct for members and officers dealing with planning matters. At the meeting a number of concerns were raised with regard to this document and it was agreed that the draft document should be referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for re-examination and to provide comments and make a recommendation to the Executive Committee.
- 7 The draft Code of Conduct for members and officers dealing with planning matters is attached at Appendix 1 to this report.

### **Implications**

- 12 As set out in the report to Full Council 3 November 2016 – Update to Constitution

### **Appendices**

- 13 Appendix 1 – Draft Code of Conduct for members and officers dealing with planning matters

### **Background Papers**

- 14 Report to Full Council 3 November 2016 – Update to Constitution:  
<http://moderngovdcp.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=157&Mid=490&Ver=4>  
Constitution of West Dorset District Council

### **Footnote**

- 15 Issues relating to financial, environmental, economic and equalities implications have been considered and any information relevant to the decision is included within the report.

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**CODE OF CONDUCT FOR  
MEMBERS &  
OFFICERS DEALING  
WITH  
PLANNING MATTERS**

## **Code of Conduct for Members and Officers dealing with Planning Matters**

### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 This code applies to all Members irrespective of whether or not they are a Member of a Committee responsible for determining planning applications and to all Officers.
- 1.2 This Code of Conduct is supplemental to the Members' Code of Conduct. Consideration must therefore be had to the relevant provisions of that Code, including in particular, the obligation on a Member not to use their position as a Member improperly to confer on or secure for themselves or any other person an advantage or disadvantage or put themselves in a position where they appear to do so. In the event of a complaint being made against a Member under the Member Code of Conduct, as part of any investigation regard is likely to be had to whether there was compliance with the provisions of this code in circumstances where it is relevant.
- 1.3 Although this code principally deals with the processing of planning applications and similar matters, its provisions also apply to the determination of land use allocations in the Local plan.

### **2. Pre-Application and Post-Application Discussions**

- 2.1 Pre and post-application discussion can be of significant benefit to both the potential applicant and the Council. However, it is easy for such discussions to become, or seen to become part of the lobbying process on the part of the applicant.
- 2.2 The Localism Act 2011 has sought to recognize that Members can have a useful role to play in certain pre-determination discussions, particularly having regard to their likely greater knowledge of local community interests. This guidance does not therefore seek to prevent any Member involvement prior to a determination of a planning application taking place. However, it does seek to reduce the likelihood of allegations of pre-determination and generally encourages a "no-shocks" approach; this form of approach is supported by the Planning Advisory Service. For Members of a committee that determines a planning application, it is recognised that it can be difficult to try and strike the right balance between being an active local representative and fulfilling the duty to approach all arguments in an open-minded way. This guidance seeks to give assistance in this respect, but striking this balance is ultimately the responsibility of each Member.
- 2.3 In order to avoid any perceptions of pre-determination, it should be made clear at the outset of any pre-application discussions (or indeed any discussions about a planning application), that nothing said will bind the Council to make a particular decision, and that any views expressed are purely personal and provisional. By their very nature such discussions will take place in the absence of all the relevant information.
- 2.2 So far as reasonably practicable, as a general rule of good practice, a written note should be made of all potentially contentious meetings and other discussions including telephone discussions, and should be followed up by a letter if there is any likelihood of substantive disagreement over the issue in the

future. The object of such records is to ensure that someone not involved with the application will understand what the decision was and how it was reached.

- 2.3 If any Member or Officer is approached to provide advice, in most instances the best course of action will be to refer the person seeking such advice to a relevant planning Officer. Members of a committee that determine planning applications should be particularly careful when engaging in conversations of this nature as it could easily be misinterpreted as suggesting a pre-determined opinion and Members will not have all relevant information available to them at the time of such discussions. Such Members should therefore usually aim to confine any discussions to giving procedural advice only. Where Officers seek to provide planning advice, it should be made clear that such advice is informal and not binding on the Council, it should be consistent and should be based upon the development plan and material considerations.

### 3. **Lobbying**

#### 3.1 **Of Members**

- (a) Lobbying, whether by applicants or objectors, is accepted as being a normal and proper part of the political processes. Lobbying can take the form of meetings, both private and public, formal presentations or correspondence. However, clearly it is important that it does not take effect to such an extent that it calls into question the impartiality and integrity of the planning process.
- (b) Members of a committee that determine planning applications (which might include ward members), should remain impartial if they intend to participate in a decision involving that application. Members can of course test the validity of any concerns in reaching their own conclusion about the merits of the application when all the information is before them at the committee meeting.
- (c) Invitations to Members appointed to a committee responsible for determining planning applications to attend a presentation or meeting give rise to a particular concern since, if accepted, they may encourage allegations that a Member is no longer impartial and appears to favour a particular person. As a general rule therefore, the safest approach would usually be to decline any invitation to a presentation or meeting relating to a planning application that has been registered with the Council.

In certain circumstances a public consultation may be held in relation to an actual or proposed application. Whilst it is understandable that Members involved in committees that determine planning applications may wish to attend such consultations to observe what is happening, great care is needed as there is a high likelihood that the Member will be approached by applicants and/or objectors to express their views and either could give rise to allegations of bias. If a consultation is being held, Members should therefore think very carefully whether it is really necessary for them to attend such an exercise or if some alternative might be available e.g. seeing whether a planning Officer might be able to visit. If a Member does attend such a consultation it is likely to be sensible for them to keep a note of any discussions they have at such a meeting and they should in any event consider identifying their attendance at the time when the application is considered.

- (d) As a general principle, where a Member of a committee responsible for determining planning applications is approached in person by an applicant or by

a third party (including other Members), they should always have in mind the principles relating to Pre-Application and Post-Application Discussions and Lobbying set out above. If such a Member thinks that their involvement in a pre-application discussion would be beneficial to the planning application process, then the most appropriate course of action would be to seek to discuss with a relevant planning Officer the possibility of whether a meeting which includes that Officer might be arranged. To ensure a consistent approach, Members should not seek to get involved in negotiations relating to a planning application. Officers should ensure a note is taken of any such discussion and placed on the public file.

- (e) If under whatever circumstance a person does try to orally lobby a Member with responsibility for determining a planning application, then the most appropriate course of action to avoid allegations of bias or a breach of natural justice will usually be to suggest that person write to the relevant planning officer to express their views and politely decline to engage in any discussion on the merits of the matter.
- (f) Members may often receive correspondence or other documentation from an applicant to a planning application or a third party. If the Member is the primary named recipient of such communications it will normally be desirable for that Member to seek to make arrangements to notify receipt to the Head of Service for Planning or such other Officer as s/he may nominate from time to time. Inevitably there will be many circumstances when a Member is not the primary recipient. There is no absolute rule to cover every eventuality that might arise in relation to correspondence of this nature and in many cases it may well be reasonable to assume that the communication has been received by the relevant planning Officer (indeed the Officer may have been copied in on the correspondence as well). However, the general overarching principle is to seek to ensure that all relevant representations are considered as part of an application and that is something Members ought to have mind when considering how to approach such communications.

### 3.2 **By Members**

- (a) Members, particularly Ward Members, may often be approached to secure their support for a particular planning decision outcome.
- (b) Ward Members have an important role to play as representatives of their communities and to bring local information to the decision making process. Ward members may therefore become involved in discussions with Officers about individual applications. However, they should remember that it is very easy to create the impression that they are using their position to influence the progress of the application. Any discussions with Officers should be seen to be open and above board. So far as reasonably practicable, Officers should seek to make a written note on the file of any such discussion.
- (c) Members of the Council should not seek to approach Members of a committee that determines a planning application with a view to orally lobbying them towards a particular favoured outcome.
- (d) If any Member, whether or not a Member of committee that determines an application speaks on behalf of a lobby group at the decision-making committee, they would be well advised to withdraw once any public or ward member speaking opportunities had been completed in order to counter any suggestion that Members of the committee may have been influenced by their

continuing presence. Members should always have regard to the Member Code of Conduct in this respect.

- (e) Any representations or any address by a Member should relate to the planning merits of a planning application.

### **3.3 Political group meetings**

- (a) Given that the point at which the determination of a decision on a planning application is made cannot occur before its consideration by the committee responsible for the determination of that planning application when all available information will be to hand and has been duly assessed, any political group meeting prior to the meeting of the Committee should not be used to decide how members should vote.
- (b) Furthermore, the Ombudsman takes the view that the use of political whips at group meetings in the way described above may be maladministration.

## **4. Scheme of Delegation**

### **4.1 Outline of Scheme**

The detail of the Officer Scheme of Delegation is set out in the Constitution, but in general terms most significant planning applications are likely to be determined by a committee with power to determine such matters. The Officer Scheme of Delegation will be subject to review from time to time.

### **4.2 Applications by the Council or in respect of Council owned land**

Applications submitted by the Council or made by any person in respect of Council owned land are to be considered and determined in the same way as any other application for planning permission.

### **4.3 Applications by Members and Officers**

- (a) Whilst it is perfectly legitimate for any Member or Officer to submit a planning application, it can easily give rise to suspicions of impropriety unless handled properly. Accordingly, all such applications will be reported to and determined by a committee with responsibility for determining planning applications.
- (b) Any application from a Member or Officer should usually be identified as part of the registration process. However, Members and Officers are encouraged to draw the fact that such an application has been submitted to the attention of the Head of Service of Planning or any other Officers nominated by him/her for such a purpose in case it is not identified.
- (c) No Member or Officer who submits a planning application should participate in the decision making process relating to that application.
- (d) No Member or Officer who acts as an agent for people pursuing a planning matter with the Council should take part in the decision making process for that proposal, nor seek in any way to influence it.

## **5. Reports to and minutes of a Committee responsible for determining Planning Applications**

- 5.1 All planning applications falling to be determined by a Committee responsible for determining planning applications shall be the subject of a written report from the Head of Service for Planning or any other Officer nominated by him/her for such purposes. The report should aim to be as accurate as possible and include a summary of the substance of objections and representations received, the relevant policies, identify any other material considerations including site or related history, contain an appraisal of the application and give a recommendation. Where the recommendation is contrary to policy or is a departure from the development plan the report should identify this and provide reasoned justification.
- 5.2 Verbal reporting (except to update a report) should be avoided so far as reasonably practicable and carefully minuted when it does occur.
- 5.3 Committee minutes should summarise key discussion points in respect of contentious applications.

## **6. Committee Site Visits**

- 6.1 It is the responsibility of each Member to familiarize himself/herself with the location of any proposed development. This might well include seeking to view the site from areas that are accessible to the public. In no circumstance should a Member enter onto private land without the permission of the owner and occupier. If the owner or occupier is present the Member should bear in mind the advice in paragraphs 2 and paragraph 3 above.
- 6.2 Due to the delay caused to the determination of planning applications, site visits by a whole committee responsible for determining planning applications should only be considered where there is a clear and substantial benefit to the decision making process. This will usually arise only where the impact of the proposed development is difficult to visualize from both the submitted plans and other supporting material including photographs taken by Officers or an Officer's presentation. With this in mind, committee site visits should only therefore generally occur as an exception rather than a rule and a Member proposing a site visit at committee should be able to identify at committee the reason(s) why s/he considers a site visit is necessary when called upon to do so.
- 6.3 To avoid being unduly intrusive and an inefficient use of the committee's time Officers will ensure that formal site visits are carefully organised with a clear purpose and format understood by all those who are present. Procedure notes to deal with such visits may be produced from time to time. Any extant procedure note produced for such purposes should normally be followed unless the Chairman or person presiding at the meeting determines otherwise.
- 6.4 Committee site visits should aim to be conducted along the lines of those carried out by Planning Inspectors. The purpose of the committee site visit is to give all parties the opportunity to point out relevant features of the site or adjoining sites, or other physical aspects relevant to the consideration of the application. No attending party should therefore address Members either individually or collectively other than to address factual matters at the request of Members or Officers. Members should channel any questions they have through the Member presiding at the formal site visit or in accordance with such



other arrangements that may otherwise have been agreed by the person presiding with the most senior Officer present.

- 6.5 A record will be kept of the reasons for the committee site visit and of what happened during that site visit. This will normally be by a Democratic Services Officer (if present).
- 6.6 No discussion about the merits of the application will take place before, during or after the committee site visit until the committee has formally reconvened for the specific purpose of determining the application.

## **7. Decision Making**

### **7.1 General Principles**

The principles referred to in the Articles of this Constitution concerning "Decision Taking" apply to the determination of planning applications.

### **7.2 The legal framework**

- (a) Legislation requires the Council to have regard to the provisions of the development plan, so far as material to the application and to any other material consideration. Furthermore, the application is to be determined in accordance with the provisions of the development plan unless material considerations suggest otherwise.
- (b) The courts are the final arbiters of what is a material consideration, but any consideration which relates to the use and development of land is capable of being a planning consideration. Whether a particular consideration is material in any given case will depend upon the circumstances of the particular application.

### **7.3 No pre-determination / bias**

- (a) The determination of a planning application is an administrative act, and the courts will strike down a decision where it is shown that the Council or Members sitting on a committee that determines a planning application were or gave the appearance of being biased or of having pre-judged the application. However, this does not mean that such a Member may not hold strong views on a particular application or issue, or indeed, express those views. However, in doing so a Member should make it clear that they are keeping an open mind until they have heard all the relevant considerations. A Member who sits on a committee that determines planning applications should never indicate how they intend to vote in advance of a meeting.
- (b) When making representation on behalf of their constituents Members should make it clear that it is their constituents' views and not the member's own that are being expressed. Furthermore, the aim of Members should be to seek to express representations on behalf of constituents in such a way that no individual or group feels that they have been unfairly represented.

### **7.4 Determination of applications contrary to Officer's advice**

- (a) Decisions should be based on any written report prepared by officers. Members are not obliged however to accept and follow the professional advice given by officers. Nevertheless, when members are minded to determine an

application contrary to the officer recommendation they should ensure that they have sound planning-based reasons for doing so and clearly set them out in advance of voting. Such reasons must be capable of being justified objectively, including where relevant by reference to Development Plan policy. Where the reasons (i.e. the reason for departing from the Officer recommendation), being advanced are complex or need to be the subject of careful drafting/minuting, then consideration may be deferred to a later meeting. For the avoidance of doubt, this applies both to those applications recommended for approval and subsequently refused; and to those recommended for refusal and subsequently approved.

- (b) Before a vote is taken, the person presiding at the meeting of the committee determining the planning application should ensure that the Officer is given the opportunity to explain the likely implications of any subsequent decision.
- (c) When members decide to determine an application contrary to the officer's recommendation a detailed minute will be taken, stating the reasons and if those reasons are based on development plan policies, identifying the relevant policies and stating in what way the application supports or infringes those policies.

## **8. Interests**

### **8.1 Fundamental principle**

It is a fundamental principle that those who have a significant interest in the outcome of a particular planning application or enforcement matter should not make decisions in relation to that application or matter. This applies to members and officers alike.

### **8.2 Declaration**

- (a) The Member Code of Conduct forms part of the Constitution. Declarations and attendance at an item considering a planning application should be made in accordance with the Member Code of Conduct having regard to any relevant dispensations that may have been granted.
- (b) Notwithstanding the existence or otherwise of a dispensation, Members should still have regard to all relevant facts concerning their relationship to, or conduct in respect of, an application (or parties associated with it). Issues that could be relevant to such a consideration could include:
  - (i) a strong association with the application or applicant (e.g. the applicant is a close relative, or the Member has had previous acrimonious personal dealings with the applicant); and/ or
  - (ii) a Member's conduct specifically relating to a possible outcome of the application.

Where a Member of a committee that determines an application considers that having regard to all such facts a reasonable and fair minded observer could conclude that they were bias / had a closed mind to the application then the Member should not take part.

- (c) Officers who discover that they have an interest in a planning matter should cease to act and report the interest to their immediate manager

who will reallocate the matter to an officer without an interest in it. The Officer having an interest will not take part in any part of the decision making process in respect of that matter.

### **8.3 Monitoring Officer to advise**

Members who are unsure whether to declare an interest should seek advice from the Monitoring Officer, although the final decision whether to make a declaration and or to withdraw from the meeting will always be one for the member.

## **9. Post determination Reviews**

9.1 The Head of Service for Planning or such other Officer as s/he may nominate may, from time to time select a sample of implemented planning permissions to be reviewed by a committee with a scrutiny role to assess the quality of the decisions made by both the Planning Committee and Officers under delegated powers. The review will focus upon whether policies or practices are being applied consistently and whether there is a need for policies and practices to be reviewed.

## **10. Member Training**

10.1 Town and Country Planning is a specialized field and both the Local Government Association and the Royal Town Planning Institute place particular emphasis on the need for members to have an adequate knowledge of the planning process. Whilst the council will seek to provide some training, Members have a responsibility to ensure that they understand the fundamental principles and keep up-to-date with developments.

10.2 Seminars will usually be arranged for Members at such times as there is a change in the composition of the committee with primary responsibility for determining planning applications and at such other times as the Head of Service for Planning considers appropriate

10.3 The Head of Service for Planning will arrange when s/he considers it relevant for briefing papers to be prepared for Members so that Members are kept fully up-to-date on developments in the planning process.

## **11. Officers**

### **11.1 Generally**

Much of the planning officer's work is done behind the scenes before an application reaches committee. Officers engaged in dealing with planning applications carry a very heavy caseload that involves dealing on a day to day basis with applicants, objectors, members and professional agents. It is the sole responsibility of the Officers to deal with such operation matters.

### **11.2 Officers' professional obligations**

Many planning officers are Chartered Town Planners and are bound by the Code of Professional Conduct of the Royal Town Planning Institute that imposes certain professional obligations including conflicts of interest and

continuing training. Breaches of that code may be subject to disciplinary action by the RTPI.

### 11.3 **Employees Code of Conduct**

The Constitution contains an Officer Code of Conduct to which Officers should have regard whilst conducting business of the Council.

## Overview and Scrutiny Committee

22 November 2016

## Overview and Scrutiny Committee work plan

### For Decision

#### Portfolio Holder

Corporate

#### Senior Leadership Team Contact:

S Caundle, Assistant Chief Executive

#### Report Author:

L Watson, Democratic Services Team

#### Statutory Authority

Local Government Act 2000 and Localism Act 2011 sets out the requirement for local authorities to establish overview and scrutiny committees and their functions.

#### Purpose of Report

- 1 To consider the Overview and Scrutiny Committee work plan.
- 2 To receive the Executive Committee Forward Plan and decisions of the Executive Committee from the meeting held on 1 November 2016 and consider any areas for potential scrutiny. Members have also requested to receive the decisions of the Executive Committee from the corresponding month/s one year previously.

#### Officer Recommendations

- 3 (a) That members review the Overview and Scrutiny Committee work plan as attached at appendix 1 of the report;
- (b) That members review the Executive Committee Forward Plan and decisions of the Executive Committee as attached and consider any items as appropriate for inclusion within the committee's work plan, taking into account member and officer capacity for undertaking additional items, how information can best be gained and where items are appropriate for referral to the Joint Advisory Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

#### Reason for Decision

- 4 To ensure that the committee maintains a work plan in accordance with the council's Constitution.

- 5 To provide the committee with the opportunity to review the Executive Committee Forward Plan and decisions taken at recent and past meetings.

## **Background and Report**

### **Overview and Scrutiny Committee work plan**

- 6 The committee maintains a work plan which is reviewed at every formal meeting. The work plan sets out the items to be considered at each meeting and includes a number of standard items and those items that have been identified for scrutiny. The committee work plan is attached at appendix 1. Members are asked to review the items included on the work plan.

### **Executive Committee Forward Plan and decisions**

- 7 Attached at appendix 2 is the Executive Committee Forward Plan which lists the items to be considered by the Executive Committee over the forthcoming months. Members can use the Forward Plan to:
- select items for pre-decision scrutiny
  - undertake post decision scrutiny by scheduling items into the work programme to review after a period of implementation
  - invite a portfolio holder to come and discuss a particular item with the committee
- 8 Attached at appendix 3 are the decisions from the meetings of the Executive Committee held on 1 November 2016 and 13 October and 17 November 2015.
- 9 Any additional areas for scrutiny must be considered in the context of the overall work plan for the committee. Member and officer capacity must be taken into account when considering additional items for the committee's work plan including where information can be gained in alternative ways (for example by meeting informally with a portfolio holder or officer or receiving information in an alternative format such as Connect or by email) and where items are appropriate for referral to the Joint Advisory Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

## **Implications**

- 10 Consideration of any item for scrutiny must be made within the context of the work plan as a whole and taking into account member and officer capacity for undertaking the work required. Topic selection criteria should be taken into account when adding items to the work plan. Members should also consider the most appropriate way to seek information or assurance.
- 11 Items selected for scrutiny review should be fully scoped before the review is commenced.

## Consultation and Engagement

- 12 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee reviews its work plan at every meeting of the committee. Any member of Council and members of the public can submit a request for scrutiny which will be considered by the committee.

## Appendices

- 13 Appendix 1 – Work plan for Overview and Scrutiny Committee  
Appendix 2 – Executive Committee Forward Plan  
Appendix 3 – Executive Committee decisions – 1 November 2016 and 13 October and 17 November 2015

## Background Papers

- 14 Executive Committee agenda papers and minutes.

## Footnote

- 15 Issues relating to financial, environmental, economic and equalities implications have been considered and any information relevant to the decision is included within the report.

**Report Author:** Lindsey Watson (Democratic Services Team)

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**Email:** [lwatson@dorset.gov.uk](mailto:lwatson@dorset.gov.uk)

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## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 2016/2017 WORK PLAN

Date of meeting	Item	Corporate Plan priority	Scrutiny Indicator	Requested by	Purpose of Review	Expected Outcome	Relevant Portfolio Holder
<b>10 January 2017 – Special Meeting</b>							
	Local Government Reorganisation Proposal	All priorities		Senior Leadership Team	To consider the Local Government Reorganisation Proposal prior to consideration by Executive Committee and Full Council	To provide comments to the Management Committee and Full Council	Councillor Peter Barrowcliff – Corporate
<b>24 January 2017</b>							
	Work plan Including Executive Committee Forward Plan and decisions	-	All	Committee standing item	To consider and prioritise items for inclusion in the work plan	Maintaining a focused work plan for the committee	Councillor Peter Barrowcliff – Corporate
	Feedback from joint scrutiny arrangements	Empower thriving and inclusive communities	5	Committee request for feedback	To receive feedback from council representatives on the Dorset Health Scrutiny Committee and Dorset's Police & Crime Panel	To provide a feedback mechanism	N/A

**Scrutiny indicator Key\***

1.Holding to account	2.Performance management	3.Policy Review	4. Policy Development	5. External scrutiny
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Date of meeting	Item	Corporate Plan priority	Scrutiny Indicator	Requested by	Purpose of Review	Expected Outcome	Relevant Portfolio Holder
<b>24 January 2017 cont.</b>							
	Report on the findings of a consultation on the West Dorset Draft Parking Policy	Contribute to a stronger local economy	4	Policy Scrutiny Committee (former)	To consider the findings of the consultation and review proposals to be submitted to the Executive Committee on 9 February 2017	To provide comment on the new parking policy for West Dorset prior to consideration by Executive Committee	Councillor John Russell – Environmental Protection & Assets
<b>28 March 2017</b>							
	Work plan Inc. Executive Committee Forward Plan and decisions	-	All	Committee standing item	To consider and prioritise items for inclusion in the work plan	Maintaining a focused work plan for the committee	Councillor Peter Barrowcliff - Corporate
	Public Space Protection Orders and Dog Control (West Dorset)	Improve quality of life Empower thriving and inclusive communities	4	Officer request	To consider the findings of the consultation and review proposals to be submitted to the Executive Committee	To provide comment on the PSPO prior to consideration by Executive Committee	Councillor Alan Thacker – Community Safety & Access

**Scrutiny indicator Key\***

1.Holding to account	2.Performance management	3.Policy Review	4. Policy Development	5. External scrutiny
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**Agreed items to be scheduled in the work plan:**

Item	Corporate Plan priority	Scrutiny Indicator	Requested by	Purpose of Review	Expected Outcome	Relevant Portfolio Holder
Poole Harbour Nitrates Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)  <i>Awaiting information as to the timeframe for this item</i>	Improve quality of life	4	Policy Scrutiny Committee (former)	To support the recommendation to the Executive Committee to adopt the SPD	To raise any issues for consideration by the Executive Committee on 15 December 2016 and to support the recommendation	Councillor Ian Gardner - Planning
Post scrutiny monitoring – S106 planning agreements	Contribute to a stronger local economy / Empower thriving & inclusive communities	3	Scrutiny review by former Efficiency Scrutiny Committee	To undertake a review the recommendations made during the scrutiny review	To decide if further action is required in respect of any implemented recommendations	Councillor Ian Gardner - Planning

**Items requiring further assessment as to whether they are included in the work plan:**

- Changes in planning consultation with town and parish councils

**Scrutiny indicator Key\***

1. Holding to account	2. Performance management	3. Policy Review	4. Policy Development	5. External scrutiny
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**Items passed to Joint Advisory Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consideration:**

- Post decision scrutiny – Appointment of Contractors to deliver the Dorset Accessible Homes Service – also requested by Weymouth & Portland Scrutiny and Performance Committee
- Dog Warden service
- Digital by Default
- Review of Domestic Abuse Policy (DCC review)
- Property Services recruitment
- Dorset and East Devon National Park proposal (if possible in conjunction with Dorset County Council Economic Growth Overview and Scrutiny Committee)
- Licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation
- Health and Wellbeing Strategy – progressing local work
- Coastal Change Management Areas

**Scrutiny indicator Key\***

1. Holding to account	2. Performance management	3. Policy Review	4. Policy Development	5. External scrutiny
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**CURRENT SCRUTINY WORKING GROUPS**

<b>Scrutiny Working Group</b>	<b>Councillors (L) Lead Councillor</b>	<b>Date of meetings</b>	<b>Progress to date</b>	<b>Committee report back date</b>
West Dorset tourist information centres (Service Review)	Sandra Brown Patrick Cooke Dominic Elliott Susie Hosford Molly Rennie Daryl Turner (L)	10 November 2014 3 February 2015 8 June 2015 29 July 2015 25 January 2016 11 March 2016 27 June 2016 7 November 2016	Report in respect of Bridport TIC considered by O/S Committee on 12 July 2016 and Executive Committee on 9 August 2016.  Report on options for Dorchester to be considered by O/S Committee on 22 November 2016 and Executive Committee on 15 December 2016.  Work on other TICs continuing.	12 July 2016 – Bridport options  22 November 2016 – Dorchester options

**Scrutiny indicator Key\***

1. Holding to account	2. Performance management	3. Policy Review	4. Policy Development	5. External scrutiny
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## **Executive Committee Four Month Forward plan 1 November 2016 to 28 February 2017**

This Plan contains the decisions that the Council intends to make over the next 4 months, but will be subject to review at each committee meeting. The Plan does not allow for items that are unanticipated, which may be considered at short notice. It is available for public inspection along with all reports (unless any report is considered to be exempt or confidential). Copies of committee reports, appendices and background documents are available from the council's offices at Council Offices, Commercial Road, Weymouth, DT4 8NG 01305 251010 and will be published on the council's website Dorsetforyou.com 3 working days before the meeting.

**Notice of Intention to hold a meeting in private** - Reports to be considered in private are indicated on the Plan as Exempt. Each item in the plan marked exempt will refer to a paragraph of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 and these are detailed at the end of this document.

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- **Portfolio Holders**
- Corporate – Cllr P Barrowcliff
- Environment Protection & Assets – Cllr J Russell
- Planning – Cllr I Gardner
- Housing – Cllr T Yarker
- Enabling – Cllr M Penfold
- Community Safety & Access – Cllr A Thacker

KEY DECISIONS

Title of Report	Purpose of Report	Documents	Exempt	Portfolio Holder & Report Author	Decision Date
Economic Growth Strategy	To adopt economic growth strategy and 5 year action plan.			NDDC Portfolio Holder for Community and Regeneration, Councillor David Walsh WPBC Briefholder for Economic Development WDDC Portfolio Holder for Enabling Martin Hamilton, Strategic Director, Trevor Hedger, Senior Economic Regeneration Officer	North Dorset Cabinet 12 Dec 2016  West Dorset Executive 13 Dec 2016  Weymouth & Portland Management 15 Dec 2016
West Dorset Tourist Information Centres Service Review	1. To consider the public consultation results on the options of relocation to Dorchester Library or replacement of the existing service with an unstaffed Tourist Information Point for Dorchester Tourist Information Centre; 2. To consider the future delivery of the Dorchester Tourist Information Centre; 3. To provide an update on the Sherborne and Lyme Regis Tourist Information Centre reviews.	Report of 9 August 2016		WDDC Portfolio Holder for Enabling Nick Thornley, Head of Economy, Leisure & Tourism	15 Dec 2016
Proposals for Local Government Reorganisation	To advise members of the outcome of the public consultation on local government reorganisation (LGR), to present the case for change and financial appraisal of options: and the invite members to make a decision on whether to recommend LGR to government and, if so, which is their preferred option.			WDDC Leader of Council  WPBC Leader of Council  NDDC Leader of Council  Matt Prosser, Chief Executive	16 Jan 2017  Full Council 26 Jan 2017



**NON KEY DECISIONS**

<b>Title of Report</b>	<b>Purpose of Report</b>	<b>Documents</b>	<b>Exempt</b>	<b>Portfolio Holder &amp; Report Author</b>	<b>Decision Date</b>
2017/18 Budget	To consider an update on the 2017/18 budget			WDDC Portfolio Holder for Corporate Jason Vaughan, Strategic Director	15 Dec 2016
Change to West Dorset District Council Constitution	To identify proposals for the West Dorset District Council Constitution.			WDDC Portfolio Holder for Corporate Robert Firth, Corporate Manager Legal Services	15 Dec 2016
Nitrogen Reduction in Poole Harbour Supplementary Planning Document	To adopt the Nitrogen Reduction in Poole Harbour Supplementary Planning Document.			WDDC Portfolio Holder for Planning Trevor Warrick, Head of Spatial Policy	15 Dec 2016
Report on the findings of a consultation on the West Dorset's Draft parking policy	To consider adopting the new parking policy for West Dorset.	Report to O&S 12 July 2016		WDDC Portfolio Holder for Environmental Protection and Assets Jack Creeber, Parking & Transport Manager	15 Dec 2016
Report on the findings of a consultation on the Proposed parking charges	To consider the findings of a consultation into the proposed parking charges.	report of 9 August 2016		WDDC Portfolio Holder for Environmental Protection and Assets Jack Creeber, Parking & Transport Manager	15 Dec 2016
Dorset Waste Partnership Draft Budget	To consider the waste partnerships draft budget			WDDC Portfolio Holder for Environmental Protection and Assets Graham Duggan, Head of Community Protection	15 Dec 2016

NON KEY DECISIONS

Title of Report	Purpose of Report	Documents	Exempt	Portfolio Holder & Report Author	Decision Date
Harbour Annual Report	To consider the Annual Harbour Report.			WPBC Briefholder for Environment and Sustainability Nick Thornley, Head of Economy, Leisure & Tourism	15 Dec 2016
West Dorset and Weymouth & Portland local Plan review: Consultation on Issues and Options	To seek member agreement to consult the public on the issues and options for the review of the West Dorset and Weymouth & Portland local plan.			WPBC Briefholder for Environment and Sustainability  WDDC Portfolio Holder for Planning  Trevor Warrick, Head of Spatial Policy	WPBC 13 Dec 2016  WDDC 15 Dec 2016  Full Councils  12 Jan 2017  19 Jan 2017
Recommendations for the allocation of developer contributions for the enhancement of recreational and community facilities in Dorchester	To present to the committee the recommendations of a member panel convened to assess applications for funding derived from developer contributions in Dorchester and to provide a summary of officer's assessment of each application.			WDDC Portfolio Holder for Enabling Tony Hurley, Leisure Commissioning Manager	9 Feb 2017
Budget and Financial Strategy 2017-18	To set out proposal for balancing the 2017-18 budget and Council Tax			WDDC Portfolio Holder for Corporate  Jason Vaughan, Strategic Director	9 Feb 2017  28 Feb 2017

NON KEY DECISIONS

Title of Report	Purpose of Report	Documents	Exempt	Portfolio Holder & Report Author	Decision Date
Quarter 3 Business Review	To receive the Quarter 3 Report			WDDC Portfolio Holder for Corporate Julie Strange, Head of Financial Services	9 Feb 2017
2017-18 Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy	To consider the Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS) and Annual Investment Strategy for the coming year. To set prudential indicators and to review the policy on Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP)			WDDC Portfolio Holder for Corporate  Julie Strange, Head of Financial Services	9 Feb 2017  28 Feb 2017

## Private meetings

The following paragraphs define the reason why the public may be excluded from meetings whenever it is likely in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings that exempt information would be disclosed and the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the public interest in disclosing it to the public. Each item in the plan above marked Exempt will refer to one of the following paragraphs.

1. Information relating to any individual
2. Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual
3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)
4. Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority.
5. Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings
6. Information which reveal that the authority proposes:-
  - a. To give under any enactment a notice under or by virtue of which requirements are imposed on a person; or
  - b. To make an order or direction under any enactment
7. Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime.



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Date of committee: 1 November 2016  
Date published (by email) 2 November 2016  
Date of implementation: 10 November 2016

**DECISIONS OF THE WEST DORSET DISTRICT COUNCIL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
1 NOVEMBER 2016**

The following decisions were made by the Executive Committee on 1 November 2016 and will come into force and may be implemented on 10 November 2016 unless the decision is called in for scrutiny.

In accordance with the Council's Constitution, the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee or a group of not less than four non-executive members (consisting of members from more than a single political group) may request the Chief Executive to 'call-in' a decision for scrutiny. The Chief Executive will be provided with a statement outlining the reasons for call-in when the request is made. The Leader of Council will also be notified of the call-in and the Chief Executive will determine a date for the meeting within 10 working days of the decision to call-in. The deadline for this request is **5 pm on Wednesday 9 November 2016.**

The full call-in procedure is set out on pages 128 - 129 of the Constitution or for further information and advice please telephone Susan Carne on 01305 252216.

The recommendations to Council, will be submitted to the Council meeting on 4 November 2016.

#### **4 QUARTER 2 BUSINESS REVIEW**

(a) That the latest position and the projected outturn for the year in respect of the 2016/17 revenue and capital budgets be noted.

(b) That the use of up to £60,000 from the current predicted corporate under spend to fund additional resources within Land Charges as detailed in paragraph 5.2 be approved.

#### **5 COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY - REVISED REGULATION 123 LIST AND CIL APPORTIONMENT**

(a) That the revised regulation 123 list as set out in appendix A be approved.

(b) That the proposed apportionment of CIL income as set out in appendix B be approved.

#### **6 ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT FOR DORCHESTER SPORTS CENTRE**

(a) That the performance of 1610 Ltd in the operation of the Dorchester Sports Centre in 2015-16 (Appendix A) be noted;

(b) That the progress with resolution of outstanding building defects at the Dorchester Sports Centre be noted.

(c) That the proposed changes to the fees and charges at the Dorchester Sports Centre (Appendix B) as submitted by 1610 Ltd for implementation from 1 January 2017 be approved;

(d) That the terms of reference for the Dorchester Sports Centre Stakeholder Group (Appendix C) be approved and Cllrs Molly Rennie and Cllr Stella Jones be nominated to attend the Group as the council's representatives.

(e) That a further report on the air handling system issue and how other snagging issues will be resolved to be submitted to a future meeting of the Executive Committee.

#### **7 PSP WEST DORSET LLP**

(a) That the Council establishes a Limited Liability Partnership (LLP) with PSP Facilitating Ltd on terms to be agreed by the Strategic Directors (Martin Hamilton and Jason Vaughan).

(b) That the Executive Committee appoints 3 Portfolio Holders to the LLP Members' Board.

(c) That the Council commissions the HFI (at £7,000 +VAT) to support Council ambitions for an increase in volume and pace of housing delivery, to explore creative ways to employ the Council's position as housing and planning



authority to show leadership in the housing market.

## **8 PROPERTY ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN UPDATE REPORT**

(a) That the list of assets currently held by the Council as shown in confidential Appendix 2 be noted and that this revised summary (Appendix 1) is then appended to the Asset Management Plan 2016-2020.

(b) That the work program for the period until March 2018 be agreed with reports being made to the committee seeking instructions on the concluded reviews. The two areas of work are primarily as follows:-

- (i) Potential development sites for either residential or employment use.

*(Included within this will be the Appendix 1 asset types of :- Let land, vacant land, car parks, garages and stores)*

- (ii) Improving Commercial Returns to the council, and to allocate assets within this class to the PSP West Dorset LLP project if its establishment is approved.

*(Included within this will be the Appendix 1 asset types of :- Catering & retail, commercial, residential, plus leased in or managed properties, and vacant land or buildings.)*

(c) To agree that officers will seek to achieve a target to commit to deliver 35-50 new homes, and that there will be a target to achieve a 5-10% increase to property income over the period; and to utilise the advice of HFI in this respect, subject to contract approval.

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Date of committee: 13 October 2015  
Date published (by email) 14 October 2015  
Date of implementation: 22 October 2015

**DECISIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
13 OCTOBER 2015**

The following decisions were made by the Executive Committee on Tuesday 13 October 2015 and will come into force and may be implemented on Thursday 22 October 2015 unless the decision is called in for scrutiny.

In accordance with the Council's Constitution (Overview & Scrutiny Procedure Rule 14) any non-executive member of Council (supported by 8 other members) may request the Chief Executive to 'call-in' a decision for scrutiny by the Ad Hoc Call-in Committee. The Chief Executive will be provided with a statement outlining the reasons for call-in when the request is made. The Leader of Council will also be notified of the call-in and the Chief Executive will determine a date for the meeting within 10 working days of the decision to call-in. The deadline for this request is **5 pm on Wednesday 21 October 2015.**

The full call-in procedure is set out on pages 128 - 129 of the Constitution or for further information and advice please telephone Susan Carne on 01305 252216.

The full minutes of the Executive Committee held on 13 October 2015, including any recommendations to Council, will be submitted to the Council meeting on 22 October 2015.

The decisions set out within this document are divided into the following sections:

- A Recommendations from scrutiny committees**
- B Executive Committee reports**

## **SECTION A RECOMMENDATIONS FROM SCRUTINY COMMITTEES**

No scrutiny recommendations

## **SECTION B EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **1. STATEMENT ISSUED BY THE AUTHORITIES OF BOURNEMOUTH, CHRISTCHURCH, EAST DORSET AND POOLE**

#### **DECISION**

That the first item of substantive business at the meeting of Full Council on 22 October shall be a discussion on this topic. It is to enable all members to contribute to a constructive dialogue and no resolution is sought or required.

### **2. TOLPUDDLE AFFORDABLE HOUSING SCHEME**

#### **DECISION**

That a grant of £120,000 be paid to Hastoe Housing Association to develop 8 affordable rented homes in Tolpuddle, to be funded from S106 agreement contributions held from developments at Tolpuddle and Dorchester.

*To enable the development of 8 affordable rented homes for local people.*

### **3. SHIRE HALL, DORCHESTER – UPDATE REPORT**

#### **DECISION**

- (a) That the remaining funds of £0.9m previously set aside in the corporate projects reserve is released to match fund the HLF grant of £1.5m to enable the repair, renovation and fitting out works required to transform the grade 1 listed building into a fully operational visitor attraction;
- (b) That a further £100,000 is committed from the corporate projects reserve to match fund the HLF grant;
- (c) That WDDC enter into legal agreements incorporating a 25 year lease, a development agreement and a MoU with the London Dorchester Committee Trust (LDCT) for Shire Hall, upon completion of the capital works, to enable the LDCT to operate the visitor attraction;
- (d) That WDDC allow the Shire Hall Manager, once appointed, to use South Walks House as a base until Shire Hall is ready for occupation.

*It has been a long held aspiration of the council to achieve a heritage visitor centre at Shire Hall which includes the Old Crown Court and cells and is a Grade 1 listed building of national importance.*

#### 4. ARTS FACILITIES IN SHERBORNE

##### DECISION

- (a) That the committee notes the request from Sherborne Town Council for the council to contribute £500,000 to the proposed refurbishment of the Digby Hall, Sherborne, in order to deliver the district council's aspiration for arts facilities in the area.
- (b) That the committee agrees to award a grant of up to £3,000 from the Leisure Development Fund to assist Sherborne Town Council in the development of a detailed business case for the refurbishment of the Digby Hall to serve both as an information centre for visitors and as a community arts venue for Sherborne and surrounding area.

*To provide a response to the approach from Sherborne Town Council for capital funding and ensure committee approval for an allocation from the Leisure Development Fund.*

#### 5. FUNDING REQUESTS FROM CULTURAL ORGANISATIONS

##### DECISION

- (a) That the council awards a grant of £20,000 from the Corporate Projects Reserve to Bridport Museum Trust Ltd to assist with its capital project to improve its education and exhibition areas;
- (b) That the council awards a grant of £25,000 from the Corporate Projects Reserve to the Lyme Regis Philpot Museum Trust Ltd as a contribution to its project to build the Mary Anning Wing and other improvements;
- (c) That the council agrees to the request from the Lyme Regis Philpot Museum Trust Ltd to the option of a loan of up to £50,000 from the Corporate Projects Reserve to assist with cashflow during implementation of the development project;
- (d) That the council awards a grant of £25,000 from the Corporate Projects Reserve to Bridport Arts Centre to support its project to undertake works to its premises to improve the catering, box office and theatre areas and the energy efficiency of the building;
- (e) That the council agrees to an extension until April 2019 to the repayment period for Bridport Arts Centre's loan from the council and for the repayment instalments to be deducted from any annual revenue grant paid by the council to Bridport Arts Centre;
- (f) That the Strategic Director be given delegated authority to the terms of any grant agreements between the council and the Bridport Museum Trust Ltd, the Lyme Regis Philpot Museum Trust Ltd and Bridport Arts Centre.

*In order that the charitable trusts that operate the three facilities can secure significant grants from other bodies, including the Heritage Lottery Fund and Arts Council England, and thereby improve both their buildings and operations.*

**6. MINUTES OF THE DORSET WASTE PARTNERSHIP**

**DECISION**

That the minutes of the Dorset Waste Partnership held on 14 September 2015 be received and noted.

**7. MINUTES OF THE GRYPHON SPORTS CENTRE**

**DECISION**

That the minutes of the Gryphon Sports Centre Management Committee held on 23 September 2015 be received and noted.

Date of committee: 17 November 2015  
Date published (by email) 18 November 2015  
Date of implementation: 26 November 2015

**DECISIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
17 November 2015**

The following decisions were made by the Executive Committee on Tuesday 17 November 2015 and will come into force and may be implemented on Thursday 26 November 2015 unless the decision is called in for scrutiny.

In accordance with the Council's Constitution (Overview & Scrutiny Procedure Rule 14) any non-executive member of Council (supported by 8 other members) may request the Chief Executive to 'call-in' a decision for scrutiny by the Ad Hoc Call-in Committee. The Chief Executive will be provided with a statement outlining the reasons for call-in when the request is made. The Leader of Council will also be notified of the call-in and the Chief Executive will determine a date for the meeting within 10 working days of the decision to call-in. The deadline for this request is **5 pm on Wednesday 25 November 2015.**

The full call-in procedure is set out on pages 128 - 129 of the Constitution or for further information and advice please telephone Susan Carne on 01305 252216.

The full minutes of the Executive Committee held on 17 November 2015, including any recommendations to Council, will be submitted to the Council meeting on 7 January 2016.

The decisions set out within this document are divided into the following sections:

- A Recommendations from scrutiny committees**
- B Executive Committee reports**

## **SECTION A RECOMMENDATIONS FROM SCRUTINY COMMITTEES**

No scrutiny recommendations

## **SECTION B EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **1. BUSINESS REVIEW – QUARTER 2 2015/16**

#### **DECISION**

- (a) That the latest position and the projected outturn for the year in respect of the 2015/16 revenue and capital budgets be noted;
- (b) That the new format for appendix 2 of the report be noted.

*The report contains the strategic position of the council's finances combined with Corporate Performance statistics. Members have a responsibility under the Local Government Act to regularly review the council's financial position and this report fulfils this requirement.*

### **2. HARBOUR OPERATIONS – ANNUAL REPORT 2015**

#### **DECISION**

- (a) That the annual report on the harbours be endorsed;
- (b) That the harbour fees and charges for the 2016/17 season be approved (appendix A to the report);
- (c) That the reports of the council's Health, Safety and Welfare Officer, in his role as Designated Person for the harbours, be endorsed (appendix B to the report).

*To inform members about the performance of the harbours, to plan for next year and to ensure compliance with the Port Marine Safety Code.*

### **3. PRIORITIES FOR GROWTH PROGRESS REPORT**

#### **DECISION**

That the half year progress report be noted.

*To monitor progress against the council's agreed programme, Priorities for Economic Growth, for delivering economic regeneration in the district.*

### **4. NEW DISCRETIONARY RATE RELIEF GUIDELINES**



**DECISION**

That the following be agreed:

- (a) To adopt the new guidelines listed at appendix 1 of the report;
- (b) For officers to determine applications for Discretionary Rate Relief having regard to the new guidelines;
- (c) For any appeals against officer decisions to be considered by the Licensing and Appeals Committee.

*To ensure that Discretionary Rate Relief applications are determined having regard to the merits of each case and the contribution they make towards the local community.*

**5. DORSET WASTE PARTNERSHIP DRAFT REVENUE ESTIMATES FOR 2016-17 AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN**

**DECISION**

- (a) To approve in principle the Dorset Waste Partnership draft revenue estimates for 2016-17 including the council's contribution;
- (b) To note the revised Dorset Waste Partnership Medium Term Financial Plan.

**6. MINUTES OF THE DORSET WASTE PARTNERSHIP JOINT COMMITTEE**

**DECISION**

That the minutes of the Dorset Waste Partnership held on 27 October 2015 be received and noted.

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