



**North Dorset Business Park
Design and Development Brief**

for

SturQuest

Prepared by

Matrix Partnership Ltd

April 2012

Foreword

SturQuest are grateful for the opportunity to work with Matrix Partnership and our partners in the County and District Councils on this important project. The planned development of the North Dorset Business Park will be of crucial importance to the economic viability of our communities in this area. We believe that the development, as planned and illustrated in this document, will also bring opportunities to develop a significantly sustainable approach to the design and functioning of the various elements.

Jackie Upton King, Chairman, SturQuest

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The maps within the design brief are diagrammatic only and therefore do not reflect exactly the position on the ground. The design brief sets out the framework and principles for the development of the site and the maps included are a pictorial representation of this.

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01 Introduction



Figure 1: Site context

1.1 Background

This development and design brief (the brief) was commissioned by Sturquest, as part of its work on the Sturminster Newton Regeneration Strategy.

North Dorset District Council endorses the content of the brief and will use it as part of the 'evidence base', which will feed into the Council's emerging Planning Policy. The brief will also be used in the decision making process for applications for development on the site. The brief is intended to demonstrate an appropriate range of employment uses for the site, provide a basis for the community to work with landowners and developers and to deliver high quality development that respects the character of Newton and Sturminster Newton.

It is recognised that relatively little development has taken place at NDBP over the years and the vast majority of the site remains unused. A few sites have been developed but on a somewhat ad hoc basis. There are now a number of new development prospects that could take land at the business park and the design and development brief is a means of providing a more proactive and positive approach to planning and future development of the NDBP site.

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1.2 Purpose - What is a design and development brief?

A Design and development brief is a document that provides a framework for the development of a site, having regard to its context, constraints and appropriate new uses. It includes design guidelines which seek to ensure that new development respects both the site and its surroundings and ensure that the final outcome is of high quality.

The purpose of this brief is to help achieve the regeneration of the site by:

- Working with stakeholders to establish a shared vision for the area;
- Form a foundation for the comprehensive redevelopment of the site area covered by the brief;
- Set out detailed planning and urban design guidelines by which the site should be developed. These will serve to inform the determination of planning applications and highway agreements;

1.3 Report Structure

The development brief comprises the following chapters:

Chapter 1 – Introduction

Summarises the purpose of the brief the process followed and the planning policy context against which the brief has been prepared.

Chapter 2 – Site context

Establishes the physical and historical context within which the detailed proposals have been formulated.

Chapter 3 – Site analysis

Identifies the main issues and opportunities to be addressed from an analysis of the site and its surroundings as it currently exists.

Chapter 4 – Planning and design principles

Presents the main body of the proposals, setting out the principles and parameters for design and development.

Chapter 5 - Phasing and implementation

Summarises the proposed approach to implementation and the information requirements requested of applicants for outline and detailed planning permission.

1.4 Site Area

The design and development brief area is immediately west of the village of Newton and southwest of Sturminster Newton town centre, separated by the River Stour valley and floodplain. The River Divelish, a tributary of the River Stour, forms much of the western boundary of the site.

The area occupies an important strategic location on the A357 and is roughly central within the North Dorset district. The edge-of-town location and the direct access to the strategic road network, frees the site from the access constraints associated with the nearby town centre.

A network of public footpaths link the NDBP site to the town centre and beyond.

To the south, the site is occupied by and adjacent to a number of established businesses and a small number of residential properties close to the A357 but is otherwise surrounded by open countryside to the north, east and west.

The **site covers an area of approximately 9.0 hectares** with 6.3 hectares being available for development.

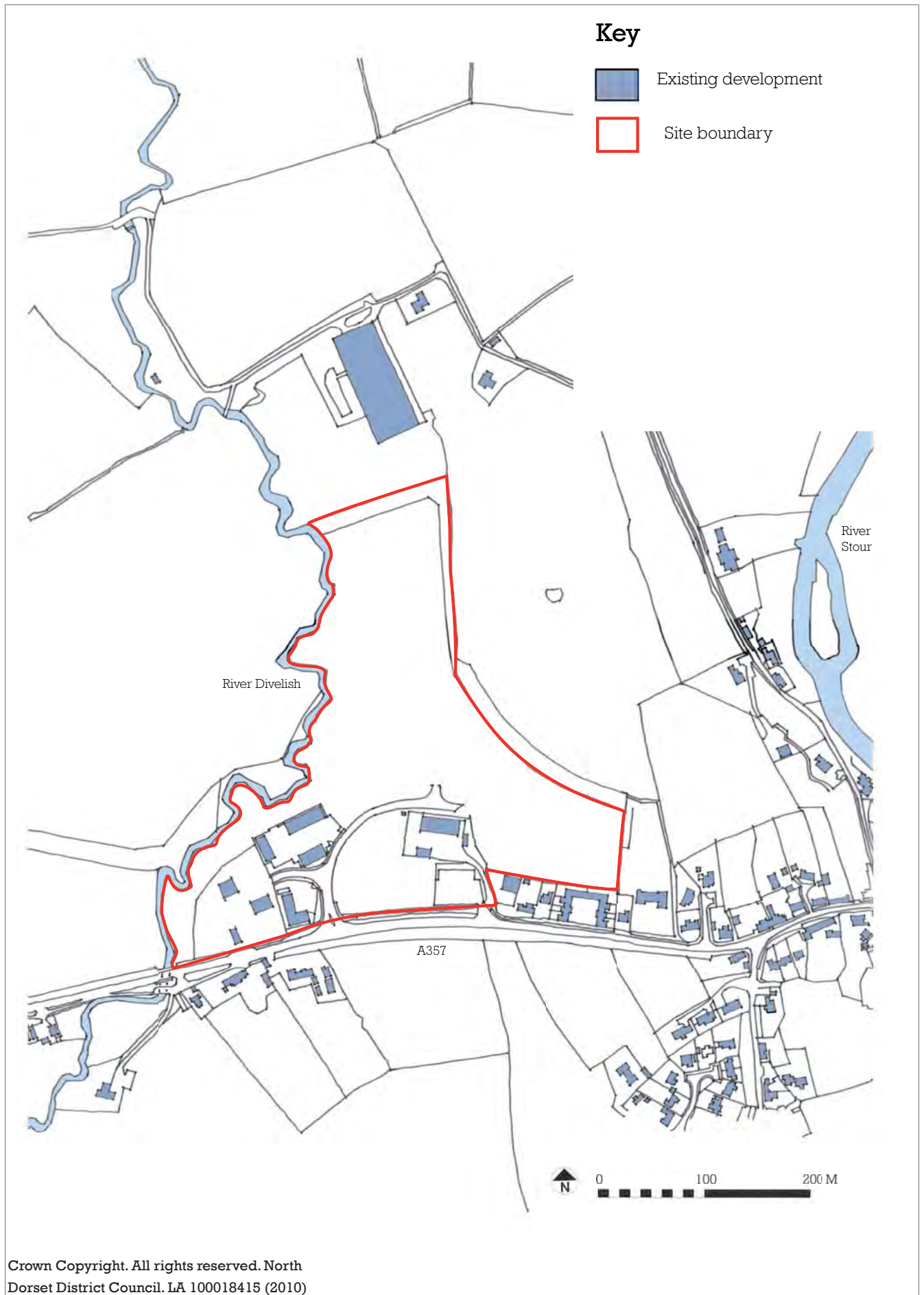


Figure 2: Design and Development Brief Boundary

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1.5 Planning Policy Context

This Design and development brief has been prepared during a time of change within the current planning system. Existing planning policies are contained within the North Dorset District Wide Local Plan (1st Revision adopted January 2003) against which applications for development are assessed.

However, at the same time North Dorset District Council, was in the process of preparing its Local Development Framework (LDF) which will eventually replace the existing District Wide Local Plan. As such it is important that the guidance within this brief has regard to both the existing planning policy framework but is also considered against the background of emerging Planning Policy.

In North Dorset the Development Plan comprises:

- Regional Planning Guidance for the South West (RPG 10) – the current Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS);
- The Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Structure Plan (the Structure Plan); and,
- The North Dorset District Wide Local Plan.

In due course RPG 10 and the Structure Plan were to be replaced by the emerging Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West and the Local Plan was to be replaced by the LDF. However, the new Coalition Government have put in place the legislative framework to enable them to abolish regional strategies and put in place a new system at the more local level. The North Dorset Business Park Design and Development Brief will be used to inform future planning policies for North Dorset. Although the development brief area is outside the geographical range to which the Sturminster Newton Town Design Statement (TDS) policies strictly apply, it has been prepared with regard to the TDS and reflects the design principles and guidelines therein.

This brief provides an overview of the main policies in the Local Plan that relate to this site and sets out how stakeholders would like to see policy amended to achieve regeneration. It also refers to emerging strategic planning policy for North Dorset in relation to North Dorset Business Park. Developers are advised

that the brief does not refer to all the relevant policies. They should refer to the documents mentioned above in order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the existing planning policy framework.

The North Dorset Business Park site in the Local Plan

The site is shown on Map 47 of the Local Plan (Sturminster Newton) The site is a defined "Employment Area" under Policy 3.2 (E/47/2) and Policy SN6. These policies seek to protect the site from non-employment uses and maintain a wide range of employment opportunities including development for business (B1), general industry (B2) and storage and distribution (B8).

A strip of land marked "Area A" on the Local Plan Proposals Map to the rear of and including Newton Gate residential development is limited to B1 development due to its close proximity to residential development. The Newton Gate site was developed for residential use as a deviation from this policy.

In April 2007 the Council produced its Employment Land Review: Review of Existing Sites (ELR). The purpose of this document was to assess the suitability of existing employment sites against a range of market attractiveness, sustainable development and strategic planning factors. The North Dorset Business Park is identified as a site for retention as an employment site.

There is a discrepancy in the boundaries of the site between what is identified in the Local Plan (and the ELR) and the site's natural boundaries. The basis of the Local Plan boundary is unclear and so for the purposes of this brief, we have used the site's natural boundaries. This results in a slight increase in the developable area but maintains the site within its current boundaries.

North Dorset Business Park - Strategic Planning Context

The emerging Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West established a hierarchy of settlements. This hierarchy signified the level of growth that would be attributed to each type of settlement. The regions "Strategically Significant Cities and Towns" were to receive the majority of growth with the "Market and Coastal Towns" receiving a level of development to

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enhance their roles as local service centres. “Smaller Towns and Villages” were then to receive a level of growth to promote self containment and achieve stronger local communities.

Background work to support the emerging North Dorset Core Strategy applied this hierarchy to the settlements within the district. This found that Sturminster Newton does not fit neatly within the settlement hierarchy outlined in the emerging RSS. Responses to consultation at the emerging Core Strategy Issues and Options stage also highlighted this. Whilst some respondents welcomed the lower overall level of development in Sturminster Newton that would result from “Small Towns and Villages” status, others were concerned that this status might be too restrictive and not enable the town to meet its future needs.

Emerging policy therefore recognises the role of Sturminster Newton as an important service centre in the west of the district but due to the proximity of other settlements (Stalbridge and Marnhull) that also act as minor service centres, the town does not warrant the level of growth associated with a “Market or Coastal” town. It does however highlight that there is some scope for employment development on the NDBP site to support the town in this role.

The abolition of the regional level of spatial planning effectively removes the settlement hierarchy giving more flexibility to plan for the specific circumstances of the Sturminster Newton area. The removal of this hierarchy does not however change the fact that Sturminster Newton will continue to function as the main service centre in the west of the district. It will therefore be the main focus for growth in the district outside of the larger towns of Blandford, Gillingham and Shaftesbury.

Conclusions

Policies in the adopted Local Plan identify NDBP as an employment site for B1, B2 and B8 uses. The Employment Land Review (2007) confirmed the appropriateness of the site for retention as a strategic employment site within the west of the district. The policies in the emerging LDF include NDPB as a

strategic employment site in the west of the district. These emerging policies therefore continue with the Local Plan allocation to meet the longer term employment needs of the Sturminster Newton area. NDBP site represents an opportunity to make the town more self contained and enhance its profile as the main service centre in the west of the district. Development of the site will support economic activity and extend the range of services available to local people. The site should deliver a range of employment uses that both supports the role and function of Sturminster Newton and helps the town to meet its future employment needs.

1.6 Sturminster Newton Town Design Statement – Design Guidelines

The Sturminster Newton Town Design Statement (TDS) has been prepared in conjunction with Sturquest and North Dorset District Council and was adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) in July 2008 following public consultation. The NDBP is strictly outside the area to which the TDS applies, but the document is highly relevant and includes a number of design principles that apply to the NDBP.

The guidance notes that apply to the NDBP include the following:

- D1 Scale of development**
- D2 Building lines**
- D3 Building frontage**
- D6 Views of countryside**
- D7 Architectural treatment**
- D8 Front areas/entrances**
- L1 Development adjoining countryside**
- L2 Trees**
- L3 Landscape design**
- T1 Traffic effects of development**
- T2 Footpath connections**

02 Site context

The following section is a summary analysis of the site and its immediate context, raising issues that will influence the form of new development within the brief boundary.

2.1 Historical context

Newton

Newton to the south of Sturminster Newton consists of a mix of cottages and houses from the 17th century to the present day. The majority of historic buildings including the 17th century Bull Inn and Sturminster Newton Mill occupy the frontage onto the A357 with more recent development occupying the higher ground to the south of the A357. The post-war housing areas are undistinguished. The Sturminster Newton Mill is largely 17th and 18th century but the site has been occupied since at least 1085 when it is recorded in the Domesday Record.

Rolls Mill

Rolls Mill is a small hamlet to the west of Newton and consists largely of residential development to the south of the A357 with North Dorset Business Park to the north.

The NDBP site has not previously been developed other than for the small-scale depot and light industrial uses that occupy part of the A357 frontage.

The major part of the site was bought by Morrish Builders who acquired planning consent for the site in 1989 but this consent has now lapsed and the interests of Morrish has been bought recently by Dorset County Council

Hammond Builders built Newton Gate, a group of houses on the A357 frontage as a deviation from the adopted Local Plan policy on land previously allocated for employment uses.

2.2 Heritage

Conservation area

Conservation Areas are designated under Section 69 of the Planning (Historic Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and requires local authorities to consider designating Conservation Areas, "Areas of Special Architectural or Historic Interest". Development within Conservation Areas is subject to additional controls, in terms of demolition, advertising, design details and trees. The Sturminster Newton Conservation Area encompasses much of Sturminster Newton town centre, much of Newton Village

and the Stour Valley between. The site does not directly abut the Conservation Area but is within the visual setting of the Conservation area. As such development of the NDBP must be designed to avoid harming the setting of the Conservation Area.

Scheduled Ancient Monument

The 'Castle' is the ruin of a medieval fortified manor house acquired, it is believed, by Glastonbury Abbey in Saxon times, one-thousand years ago. It occupies high ground on the site of an Iron Age hill fort to the south of the Town Bridge.

2.3 Existing uses

The development that has taken place on the NDBP site is limited to a small office/food processing complex and a development of small business units, close to the site entrance. There is also a longer established depot owned by Dorset County Council with its own discrete access off the A357. The site is largely surrounded by farmland and immediate neighbours are limited to adjoining sites along the A357. These include a mix of employment and residential uses in common with much of the A357 frontage through Newton. The principal residential areas within the village are located south east and at some distance from the NDBP site.

2.4 Contaminated land

The majority of the NDBP site was previously agricultural land and has not been previously developed and the prospects of significant contamination are remote. It is possible that the existing employment uses adjacent to the A357 could possibly have given rise to contamination.

The developer must undertake investigations and assessments to determine whether the site is contaminated and carry out necessary remediation. This assessment should be submitted to North Dorset District Council for comment and provided as part of a planning application for the development of any part of the development brief site.

A desktop study should be carried out which should include the identification of previous site uses, potential contaminants that might reasonably be expected given those uses and other relevant information. Using this information a diagrammatic representation (Conceptual Model) for the site of all potential contaminant sources,

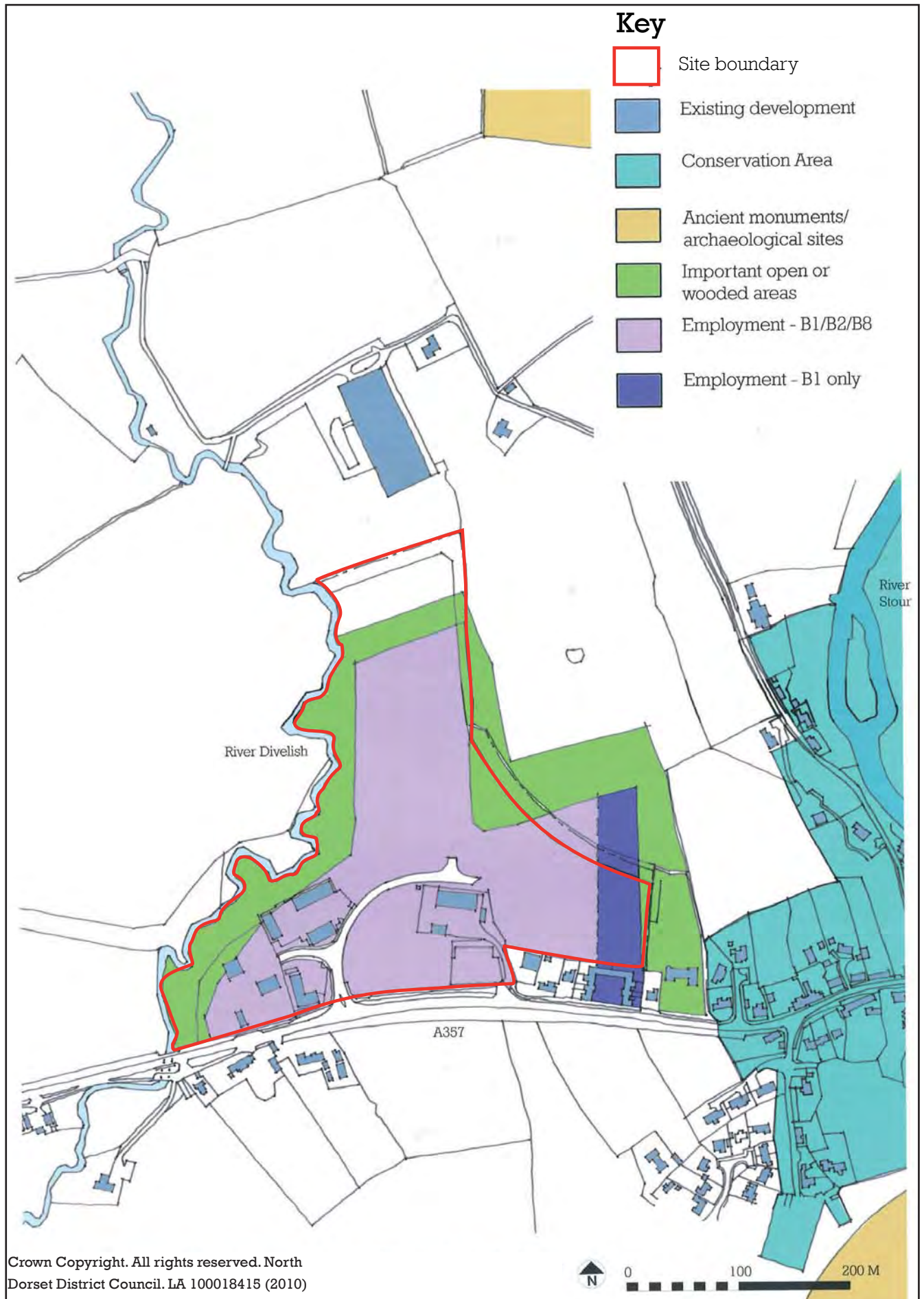


Figure 3: Planning Policy Context

03 Site analysis



Figure 4: Colber Bridge over the River Stour



Figure 5: Thomas Hardy's house overlooking the River Stour

pathways and receptors should be produced.

A site investigation should be designed for the site using the information obtained from the desktop study and any diagrammatic representations (Conceptual Model). The investigation must be comprehensive enough to enable: a risk assessment to be undertaken relating to groundwater and surface waters associated on and off the site that may be affected, refinement of the Conceptual Model and the development of a method statement detailing the remediation requirements.

It is recommended that where site investigations are to be carried out that due regard should be taken of relevant guidance and publications. Prospective developers are referred to the Government Contaminated Land Reports series, the BURA guide "Breaking old ground", BS 10175 "Site investigations on Contaminated Land" and the series of reports produced by CIRIA including Report no 78 "Building on Derelict Land". The BURA guide produces useful checklists for the various phases of the required investigation and cross-references other useful guidance.

A Method Statement detailing the remediation requirements, including measures to minimise the impact on ground and surface waters, using the information obtained from the Site Investigations is produced. This should be approved in writing prior to that remediation being carried out on the site.

3.1 Constraints

Sensitive boundaries

The Design and development brief site shares a number of its boundaries with existing residential development. These sensitive boundaries must be addressed with care to avoid overlooking and any loss of sunlight and daylight.

Landform

The NDBP site is immediately adjacent to the River Divilish to the west and approximately 200 metres at its nearest point from the River Stour to the east. One might therefore reasonably expect the site to be relatively flat, however there is a locally significant ridge of high ground between the Divilish and Stour rivers, rising to approximately 20 metres above the Stour and 15 metres above the Divilish. The site occupies rising ground to the west of the ridge and generally falls some 10 metres from east to west. The gradient is more significant to the north where the site narrows.

Visual Impact on the landscape setting of proposed development

Proposed development must be designed to minimise negative visual impacts on the surrounding landscape and to achieve the 'best fit' possible of development into the landscape. To this end development proposals will need to be supported by a landscape and visual impact analysis, carried out in accordance with the methodology and techniques described in "Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment" by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management.

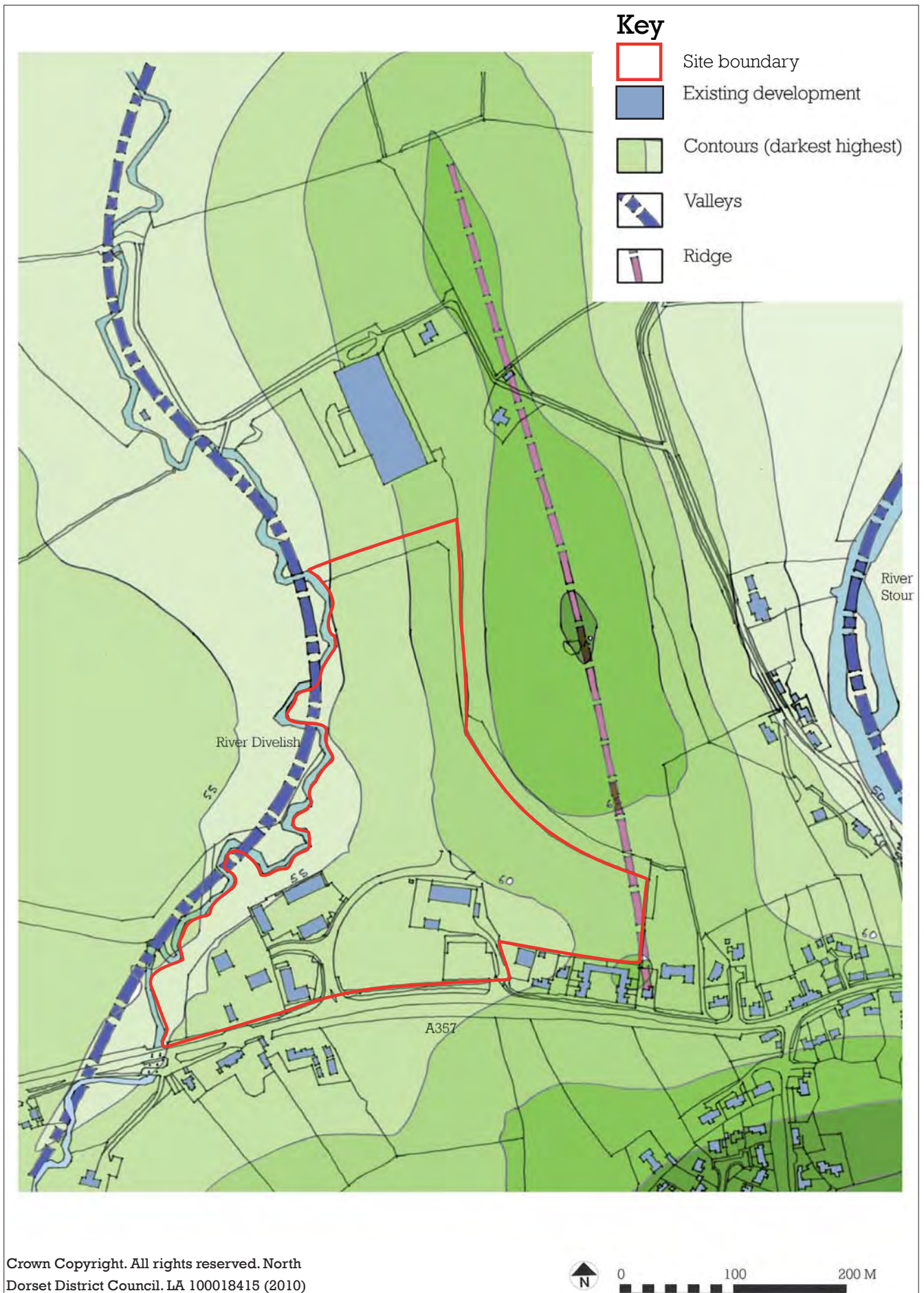


Figure 6: Topography

03 Site analysis

Initial visual assessment

An initial analysis has been undertaken to inform this Design and development brief. For this initial assessment, publically accessible locations were identified from which views of the site might be possible. These range from long strategic views from up to 2.5 kilometres to close-range local views.

Views assessed include the prospect from:

- Close to Thomas Hardy's former house on the edge of Sturminster Newton across the Stour Valley from (viewpoint 1)
- Colber Bridge (viewpoint 2)
- The Stour Valley Way (viewpoints 3 & 4)
- Oaks Farm (viewpoint 5)
- Plear House Farm (viewpoint 6)
- Woodlands Farm (viewpoint 7)
- Rolls Mill (viewpoint 8)
- A357 Rolls Mill Bridge (viewpoint 9)
- A357 Newton (viewpoint 10)
- Glue Hill (viewpoint 11)
- Spiders Farm (viewpoint 12)
- Fifehead Common (viewpoint 13)
- Plumber Farm (viewpoint 14)

In summary, the NDBP site is well hidden within the wider landscape due principally to the surrounding topography, existing development and tree cover. From the north and east by the local ridge between the Stour and the Divilish that shield the site from view. From higher ground to the south, the site is not visible due to its low lying position and higher intervening topography.

The conclusion of this initial assessment is that there are limited views of the site from viewpoint 8 and 9 through trees and from Glue Hill (viewpoint 11) through gaps in hedgerows. There are clearly also views into the site from the A357, adjacent to the site.

The mitigation of these impacts will need to be carefully considered and will influence the scale, location and orientation of buildings and new planting within the site. For example, tree belts might be orientated at 90 degrees to the sensitive view to hide or break up the profile of buildings. Subject to feasibility, green roofs and recessing buildings into the sloping site will further help to mitigate the impact of new development.

It should be noted that this initial assessment has been undertaken in summer only when trees are in full leaf and without the benefit of a topographical survey. The Ordnance Survey mapping does not reflect the more complex site levels in the northern part of the site in particular.

Existing buildings

The existing Olives Et Al building on the A357 frontage and the and the modern employment units are modest, well designed, good quality and relatively recent buildings that will remain. The few other existing buildings are utilitarian, of poor quality and not worthy of retention for conversion to other uses and will in time be replaced by new structures.

Access

The NDBP is located on the A357 on the edge of the settlement, limiting most additional traffic impacts to the A357 frontages through Newton. The NDBP has a single principal purpose-built access to the site, including a right-hand turning lane of the A357. The site access road is currently accessible as far as the existing employment units but has been built to base course only as a spine extending to the northern extreme of the site. In addition there is a low-grade second access off the A357, serving the County Council Depot. Currently there is no public transport to the site.

There is an extensive network of public footpaths connecting the NDBP site to Sturminster Newton, Newton and surrounding hamlets and farms. It is hoped that significant numbers of local people will be employed at NDBP in the future and that they will use the safe and pleasant footpath network to access the NDBP by foot and bicycle, reducing reliance on the car.

The emerging Core Strategy for North Dorset highlights the need for links between Sturminster town centre and NDBP and their existing network of footpaths are likely to form the basis for this. There is also the potential to extend the North Dorset Trailway over the River Stour with a view to making a connection with Stalbridge Lane and therefore NDBP.

It should perhaps be noted that at the time of our visit to undertake the Initial visual Impact assessment, the footpaths to the west of the site and from which the viewpoints were taken, were extremely overgrown and substantially impassable, indicating that they are not maintained and attract little public use. Other footpaths were poorly marked and clearly little used currently.

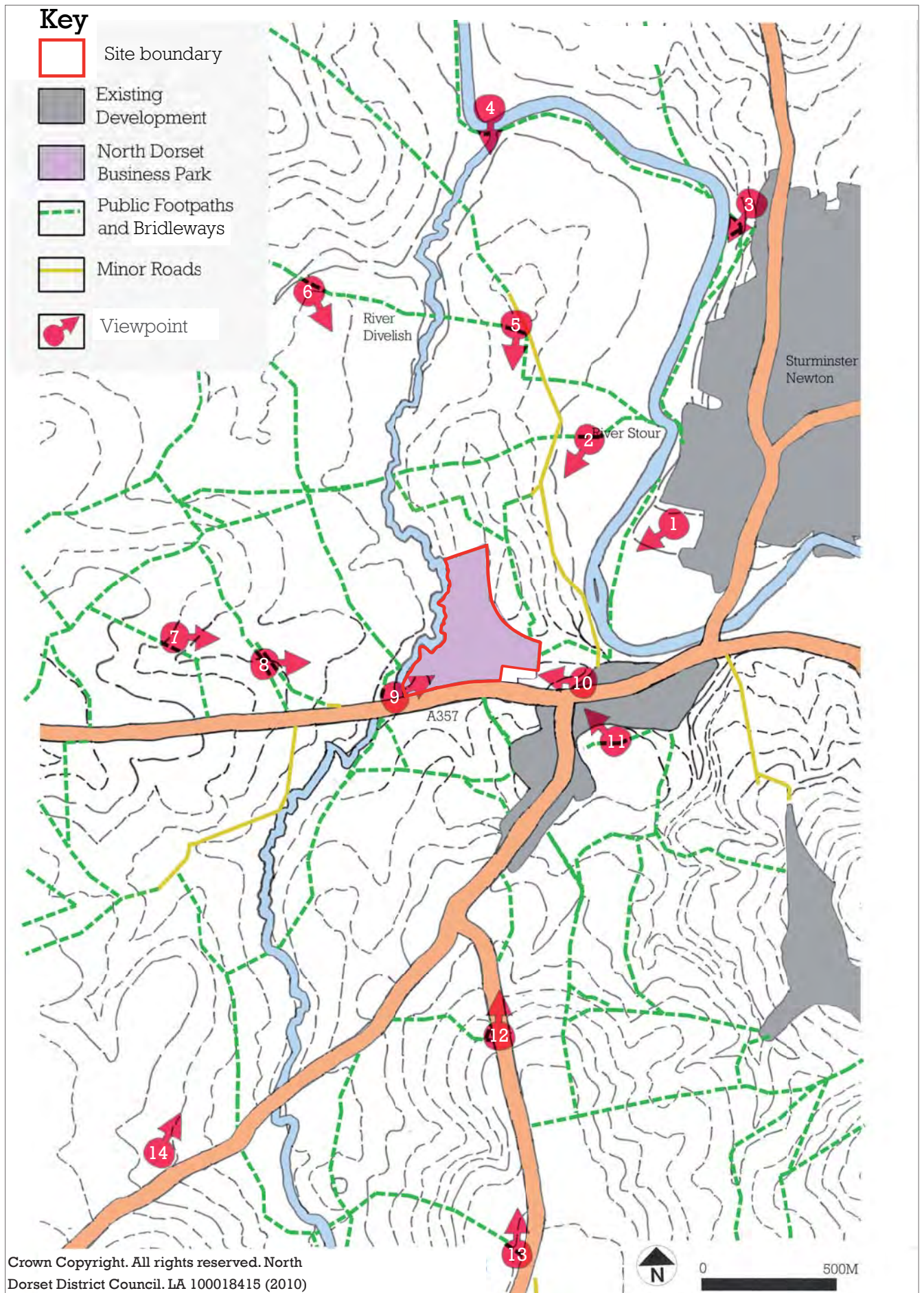


Figure 7: Initial Visual Impact Assessment - Viewpoints

03 Site analysis



Figure 8: Viewpoint 1 (no part of the site is visible)



Figure 9: Viewpoint 4 (no part of the site is visible)



Figure 10: Viewpoint 8 (glimpses of the site through the trees)

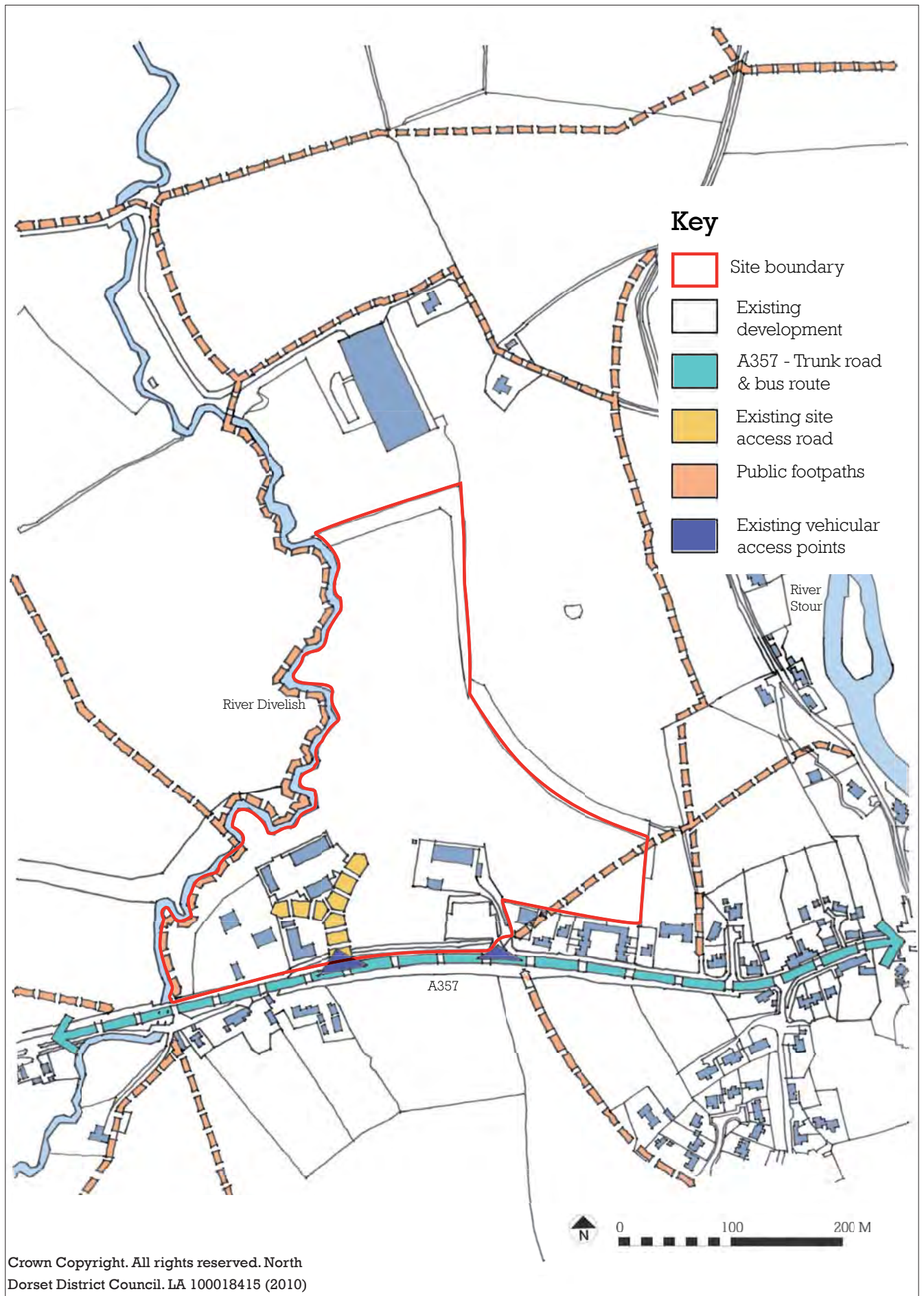


Figure 11: Existing Site access

03 Site analysis



Figure 12: Viewpoint 11 (limited view into the site)

Upgrading of the footpaths and creating safe cycling and walking links between Sturminster town centre and NDBP should therefore be seen as an essential part of the development of the site.

Existing vegetation

Tree cover on the NDBP site is limited to immature screen planting to the north and eastern boundaries. Beyond the boundaries of the site, tree cover and hedgerows are mature but are generally limited to field boundaries, garden boundaries and roadsides. The most extensive tree cover is concentrated along the river valleys of the Stour and more significantly for the site, the Divilish which is particularly heavily treed. Future development at the NDBP is unlikely to have significant impact on important trees and hedgerows.

Development proposals should nevertheless include an assessment of any existing trees affected by development and consider the amenity value of trees and their contribution to their immediate and wider setting. Any likely impacts on existing trees should be considered at the start of the development process in accordance with Local Plan policies 1.7, 1.8, (ii), (iii), 1.23, 1.24, 1.39, 1.40).

Flooding

Both the Stour and the Divilish have extensive flood plains and the latter encroaches into the western part of the NDBP site and is likely to constrain development. In these areas, perhaps limiting development to hard-standing, car parking or landscape. Developers will need to work with the Environment Agency to ensure that the flood plain is not compromised and future development at risk of flooding. A Flood Risk Assessment will be required by the Environment Agency to accompany most planning applications in this location.

Existing land ownership

The site is primarily in public ownership including land owned by the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA), North Dorset District Council (NDDC) and Dorset County Council (DCC). It is important that landowners work together and collaborate to achieve a single vision for the site, avoiding ad-hoc, piecemeal development and where possible share facilities and sustainable systems.

Sub-station

There is a small, modern sub-station on site, close to the end of the access road as it currently exists and to the north of the Dorset County Council depot. This appears to have been built as part of the new site infrastructure installed by Morrish Builders. Developers must liaise with the responsible electricity company to determine capacity. The sub-station is utilitarian in appearance and should be screened by landscape or incorporated into a building (subject to approval).

Pumping Station

There is a small pumping station adjacent to the River Divilish that pumps water from drainage ditches adjacent to the river via a culvert that runs in a south easterly direction across the southern part of the site. The extent to which the pumping station and culvert represent a constraint to development should be discussed with Wessex Water and the Environment Agency.

Technical surveys and analysis

Dorset County Council has commissioned a site investigation report to inform the detailed development of the site. This updates work commissioned by Morrish Builders in 2000.

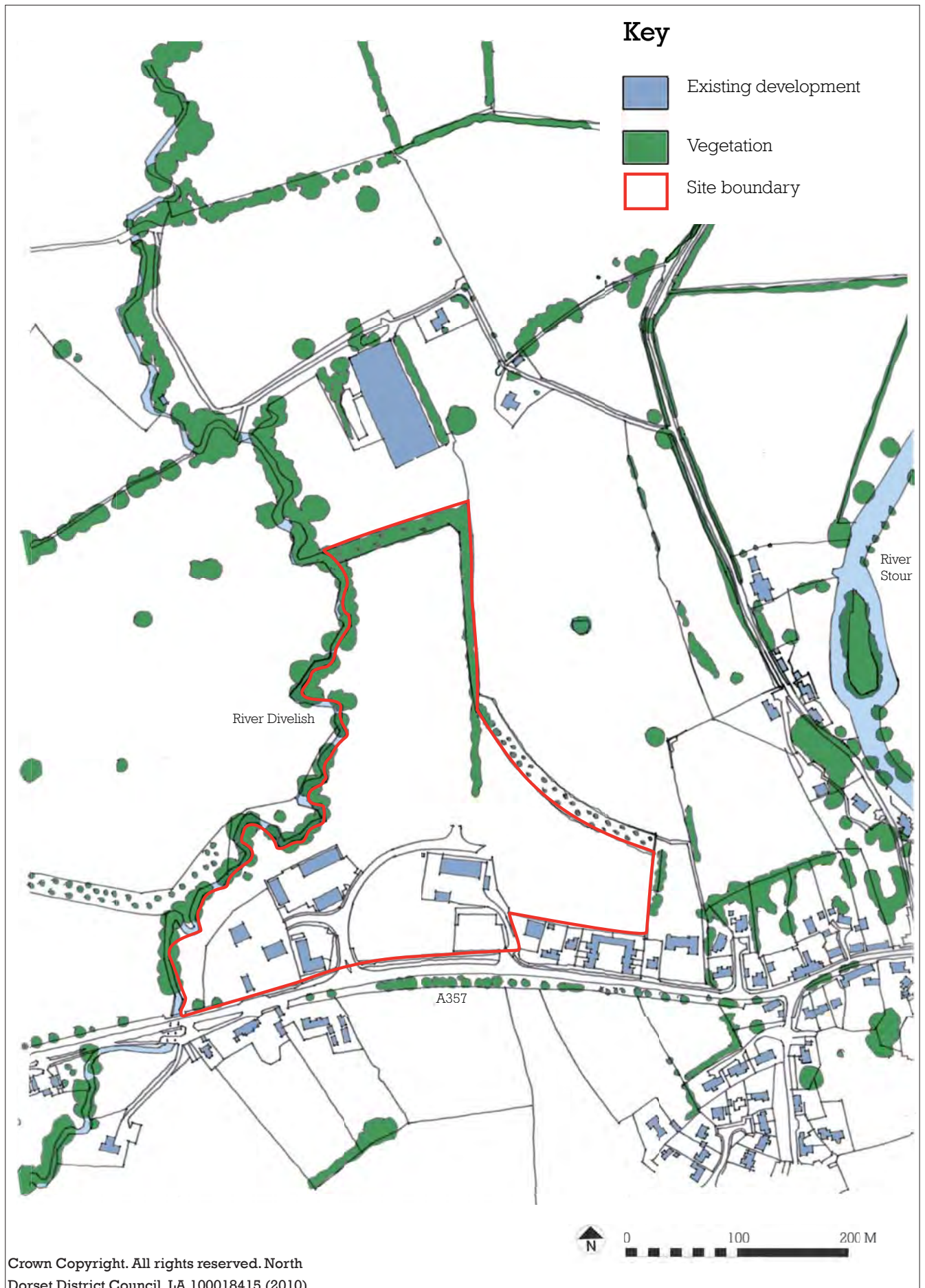


Figure 13: Existing Vegetation

03

Site analysis

3.2 Opportunities

The Design and development brief is a strategic opportunity to realise the potential of this important site, creating a major employment focus for the town, its hinterland and indeed the district as a whole. The NDBP site represents a major opportunity to make the town and the district more self-contained, in terms of employment to support economic activity and extend the range of services available to local people. The development of this site should deliver a range of employment uses that both support the role and function of Sturminster Newton as local service hub and help, the town, meet its future employment needs and the needs of its hinterland. In addition, the improvements of footpath and cycle links between Sturminster town centre and NDBP is seen as an important opportunity that should not be overlooked.

Potential development

The amount of employment space and potential jobs generated is dependent upon a number of interrelated factors including:

- The type of employment uses. Office use usually generates the most intensive development because buildings tend to be more than 1-storey whereas industrial units tend to be single-storey structures.
- The amount of car parking provided. Car parking is land hungry and the more there is, the less space there is for buildings.
- The size of employment uses. The larger the employment unit, the more efficient it is likely to be.
- The amount of landscape context for the buildings within the site.

Employment development density is usually expressed as a percentage of gross development area (buildings) as a percentage of the site area. Typical values are between

35 and 60% site cover for business parks with a high proportion of office space and 40-50% for light industrial development or warehouses. It is anticipated that the NDBP, will attract a range of employment uses including B1 (office), B2 (light industrial) and B8 (warehousing) and that the landscape component of the development will be relatively high to maintain an impression of openness, and to screen development from sensitive views and nearby residents. Furthermore, development will be predominantly 1 and 2-storey and to a maximum of 3-storeys. The site cover figure is therefore likely to be at the lower end of the above values.

Employment densities or the number of people employed will similarly depend upon the scale and intensity of development and the mix of employment types. Again B1 (office) development typically generates the highest number of employees per hectare and (B8) warehousing the least.

The table below provides an indication of the potential for new development and employment opportunities at NDBP according to the intensity of development, expressed as percentage site cover. The NDBP site represents a major opportunity to make the town more self-contained, in terms of employment, to support economic activity and extend the range of services and employment opportunities available to local people. The regeneration of this site should deliver a range of employment uses that both supports the role and function of Sturminster Newton and helps the town to meet its future employment needs. Depending upon the types of employment uses attracted to the site and the intensity of development, the site could provide in the region of 432 to 1,786 jobs. With a mix of land uses and employment densities the likely number of potential jobs will be somewhere in the range between these extremes.

Site Area (Hectares)	Site Cover (%)	Employment use: B1 office development (M ²)	M ² per job	Jobs	B2 light industrial development (M ²)	M ² per job	Jobs	B8 warehouse development (M ²)	M ² per job	Jobs
6.17	35	21,595	19	1137	21,595	34	635	21,595	50	432
6.17	45	27,765	19	1461	27,765	34	817	27,765	50	555
6.17	55	33,935	19	1786	33,935	34	998	33,935	50	679

Source - Employment Densities: A Full Guide 2001, produced by Arup for the Regional Development Agencies

Figure 14: Table: Potential Development Outputs

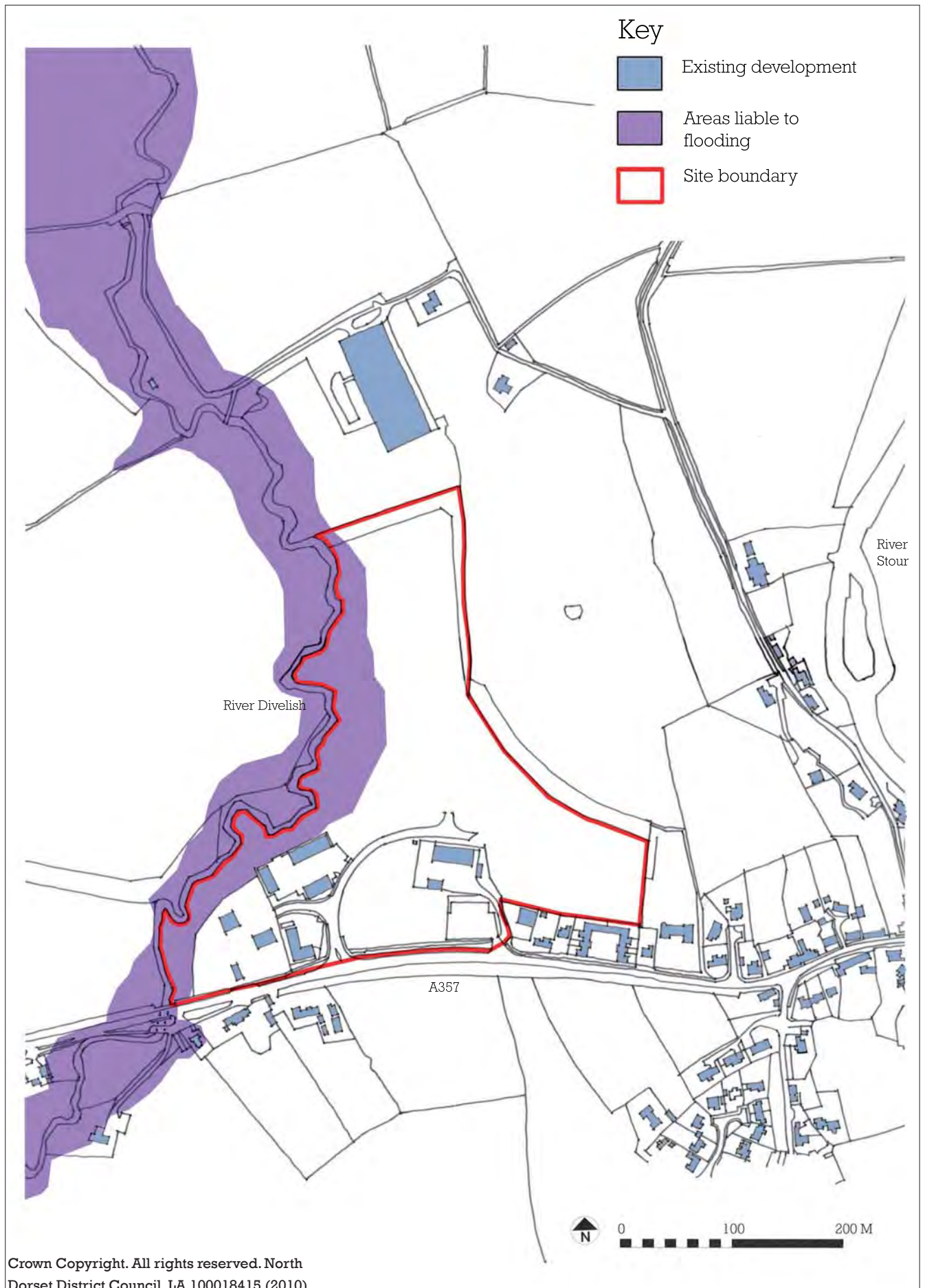


Figure 15: Flood Risk Areas

04 Planning and design principles

4.1 Sustainable development

Our vision is for the creation of a high quality, new working environment based on sustainable principles and incorporating a fully integrated range of sustainable technologies. The technologies available are wide and various and their specific application dependent on site conditions and user requirements. This Development Brief deals in principles and not the specifics of development and at this stage, the appropriateness of particular technologies has not been determined. The following is a brief review of the principle technologies that could possibly be applied at NDBP.

Energy conservation

The most effective way of reducing energy consumption is achieved by energy conservation; there is no need to generate energy that has not been used. Energy conservation has to be the first priority of any low energy development. This is achieved by ensuring high standards of construction to minimise air leakage. Typical energy saving techniques will include:

- High levels of insulation
- Double and triple glazing
- Draught lobbies
- High thermal mass (to store heat and reduce thermal gradients)
- High-quality 'airtight' construction

The use of conservation techniques to achieve construction standards in excess of Building Regulations Part F (2006) will minimise energy use and reduce the need to generate energy on and off site and will reduce Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

Opportunities should be sought to reduce energy usage. This should be achieved through the application of the Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM).

The BREEAM is a sustainability assessment for all types of non-domestic buildings. Although not compulsory to date, these assessments should be taken into account to guarantee a certified level of sustainability for all buildings on the site.

All new buildings on the NDBP site should, subject to viability, be designed to achieve a BREEAM rating of 'very good'. The existing employment units on the site, completed in 2003 achieved BREEAM 'very good' standard.

Whereas the BREEAM assesses the environmental performance of individual buildings, the South West Sustainability Checklist for Developments assesses the performance of the development as a whole, and the extent to which the proposals address regional and locally significant concerns. The South West Sustainability Checklist should be completed and submitted with planning applications as a compliment to BREEAM.

Energy generation

Once passive design strategies and energy efficiency measures have been integrated into the master plan modelling of typical units and the development as a whole should be carried out to determine the energy demand. At the individual building level, micro renewables such as photovoltaic panels, biomass boilers and micro wind turbines, should be explored.

At the whole site level there may be an opportunity to install a decentralised energy system to provide heat to the buildings on and adjacent to the site and also to provide power at the local level. Such a system could be fuelled by biomass sourced from the local rural area which could potentially provide an alternative source of income for local farmers. Potential fuels could include short-rotation willow or poplar.

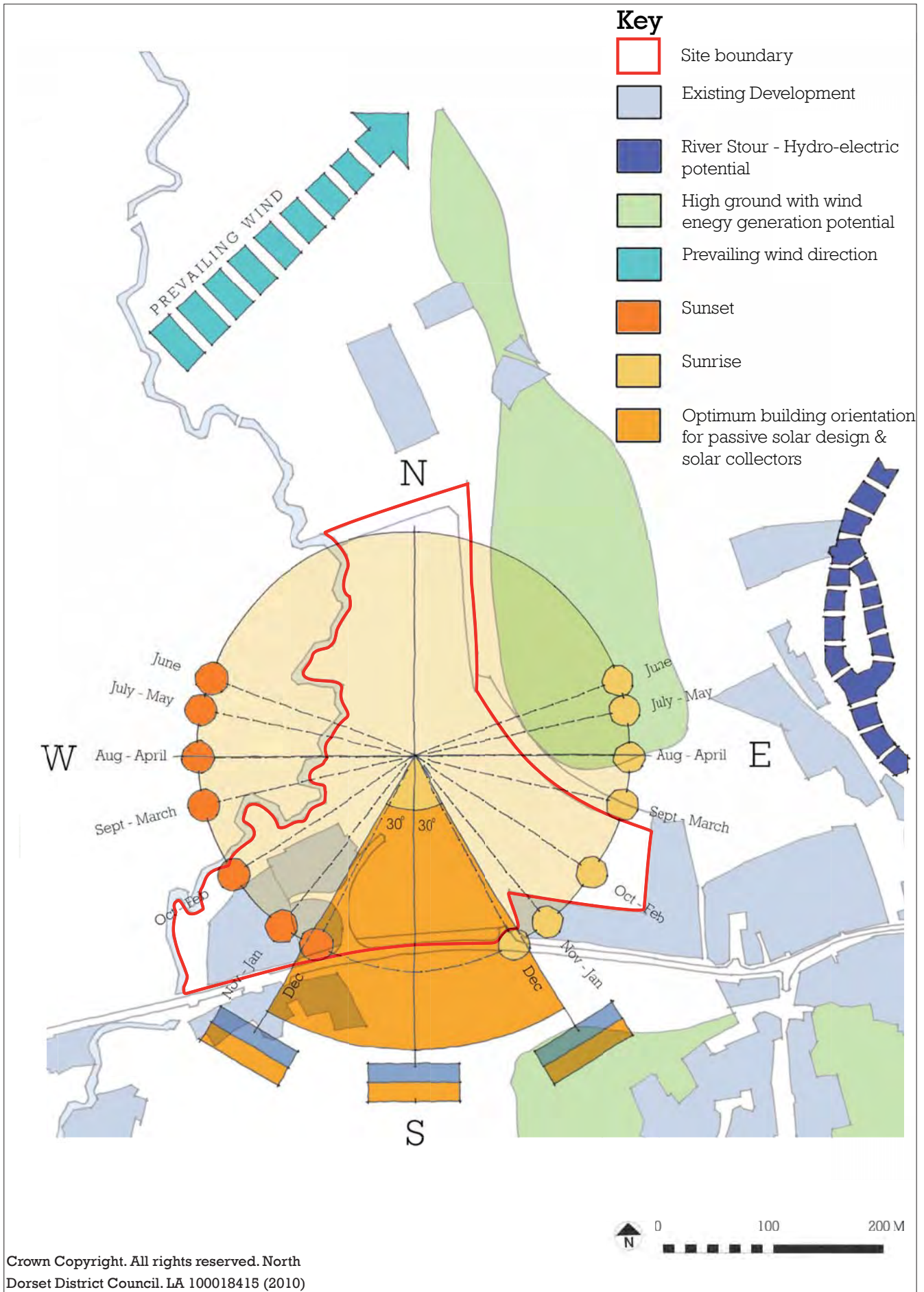
This type of combined heat and power systems (CHP) are cheaper to install in comprehensive new build schemes such as this hence contact should be made as early as possible with energy providers to explore feasibility and to ensure the optimal level of integration across the site.

Wind

Due to their visual impact, large wind turbines are not considered appropriate but smaller, (up to 6kw) wind turbines may be considered, subject to visual impact, noise, and light-flicker effects. Roof mounted turbines are very dependent on building siting and geometry but could, in the right conditions, potentially further offset electricity demand and emissions of carbon.

Solar

Due to their size, buildings on business parks often have large roofs. These large roofs offer the opportunity to deploy technologies such as solar thermal and solar photovoltaic panels to contribute to the heat and electricity needs of the building. The roof of buildings should be designed to facilitate the deployment of such technologies.



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Figure 16: Energy and Environment

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Hydropower

Encouraged by the success of the South Somerset Hydropower Group which has 6 completed hydropower installations with more on the way, the installation of a turbine at Sturminster Newton Mill has been raised as a possibility. The mill is one of the best potential locations on the River Stour to develop hydropower and could generate approximately 184,000 kWh of electricity per year or enough to supply the equivalent of 34 houses. The dam at the mill is in need of repair and the installation of a turbine could sensibly coincide with the repairs. The feasibility of incorporating hydropower into the development of NDBP has not, at this stage been assessed.

Drainage systems

Traditional drainage systems are designed to move surface water as quickly as possible to a watercourse or soakaways, and can cause sudden increases in flow rates and water levels in watercourses, potentially causing flooding downstream. Piped systems also prevent water from soaking back into the ground, depleting ground water and reducing flow rates in water courses in dry weather. The run-off from paved surfaces and roofs are more likely to contain pollutants and can result in poor water quality in watercourses and ground water.

The SUDS approach is to control rainwater on-site, using a range of techniques according to site conditions. Typically a SUDS system might include swales, ponds, wetland, porous paving and green roofs. A sustainable drainage system (SUDS) will be required throughout the site and a funded adoption plan will be agreed with the Council.

Water Conservation

All buildings will be designed, including their internal systems with appropriate water conservation in mind. This may include rainwater harvesting, water recycling and grey water systems. Rainwater harvesting involves the collection and storage of rainwater as a substitute for potable mains water for flushing toilets and watering landscaped areas. Similarly, greywater systems collect and treat wastewater from showers, baths and wash basins, treat and reuse it for purposes that do not require drinking water quality, such as toilet flushing and irrigation. Grey water is more likely to be appropriate in domestic rather than commercial applications but each proposed site use should be assessed to identify grey water potential.

Green Roofs

Innovative green roofs may be considered, mitigating against loss of habitat and reducing surface water run-off.

Green roofs can reduce peak flows of surface water and total volume discharged. At NDBP they may additionally have a role in mitigating the visual impact of new development from sensitive local viewpoints.

Reducing Waste

Opportunities should be taken to minimise development related waste at all stages of the design and construction process. Lorry movements to and from the site should be minimised by recycling waste on site where appropriate. Consideration to reducing and recycling operational waste from the development should also be demonstrated."

4.2 Initial Options

A range of initial options was produced to explore the potential of the site with the objective of creating a business park capable of accommodating a mix of employment types. The market for commercial development in North Dorset is small and the NDBP will need to accommodate a range of employment development types, rather than concentrating on a single employment type. This Design and Development Brief needs to encourage quality development while maintaining sufficient flexibility to allow for a range of development possibilities.

Currently, there a number of parties interested in developing land at NDBP. They represent a cross-section of different employment types. These include, office (B1), light industry (B2), warehousing (B8), ancillary retail, and a range of sui-generis uses. The likelihood of these potential occupiers implementing schemes at NDBP and their extent is unclear at this stage and we cannot therefore plan the business park around their specific requirements and activities. What is clear is the diversity of uses and a clear split between distribution based operations and more usual business park activities of office, light industrial and research and development.

The distribution based uses will tend to have fewer, larger, simpler buildings with extensive areas of hardstanding to accommodate the movements of lorries, parking for lorries, their maintenance and servicing. By contrast, the office and light industrial uses will have a finer grain of smaller buildings in more intimate arrangements. The direct mixing of these 2 distinct development typologies is of course possible and indeed is not uncommon but can produce a disjointed, incoherent environment where individual developments 'do their own thing' within their own curtilage.

At best, incompatible uses are insulated from adjacent developments by over-large landscape margins to reduce conflicts between disparate activities. This is an inherently inefficient way to masterplan any site and is at odds with Planning Policy Statement 1, Delivering Sustainable Development paragraph 27(viii) that seeks to promote the more efficient use of land.

High-quality occupiers are less likely to be attracted to the site if the environment is compromised.

The NDBP is in a small market and needs to appeal to all employment sectors including the distribution sector. The following options explore ways in which these potential conflicts of image and use might be addressed as well as assessing the general potential of the site.

4.3 Technical Stakeholder feedback

Although this draft brief will not be adopted by NDDC as a Supplementary Planning Document, it has been subject to public consultation. However rather than present an untested set of proposals on matters such as highways, planning etc, the initial options were subject to consultation with key technical stakeholders, including officers of DCC and NDDC. The feedback from technical stakeholders has informed the draft preferred option which was presented for public consultation.

4.4 Development Concept and Design Principles

The key stakeholder feedback confirmed the generally preferred configuration of uses on the site and are summarised in the concept plan (figure 17). The main design principles identified are:

- Locating the business park on A357 frontage to give it prominence and to present the best face of the site to wider public view.
- Segregate access between the distribution park and the business park.
- Distribution park to be located to the north away from sensitive boundaries and views into the site.
- Existing access to serve the distribution uses.
- New access to serve business park only, roughly to correspond with the existing County Council Depot site access.
- Incorporate a small park & ride facility in association with a public transport (bus) depot and interchange.
- Use the existing road and service runs rather than

- providing new infrastructure.
- Set buildings into the sloping ground to the east to diminish their scale and reduce their visual impact.
- Provide positive frontage to the A357. Create an open space focus to the business park, perhaps incorporating a related SUDS water feature(s).
- Sustainable, quality development throughout.

4.5 Illustrative layout

There are many different ways of interpreting the design principles identified above and the following layout drawing is illustrative of one such interpretation.

Movement

The existing site access is retained as the main access to the site on its current, crescent shaped alignment with a long cul-de-sac spur off to the north as built to base course. The alignment of the existing northern spur is retained but is expressed running through a series of spaces where the kerb lines are either less evident or do not exist at all.

Whereas, the existing site access serves the distribution park sites, the new western access from the A357, serves the business park area. Both access roads could be linked via a narrow link primarily for emergency use.

The distribution park will incorporate the public transport (bus) interchange with a small park and ride facility.

With the possible inclusion of the NORDCAT community bus service depot and park-and-ride facility on the site, the site will effectively become a public transport hub, allowing people to access the site by bus.

Proposed Land Uses

The high-quality business park development occupies the southern part of the site, presenting the site's best face to the A357 and providing a mix of land uses including:

A Food Mill. This consists of a bakery, creamery and micro-brewery possibly incorporating ancillary retail space to provide an outlet for the products produced by companies on site.

B1, B2 and B8 development will be provided in a range of unit sizes to provide a 'ladder of development' allowing businesses to grow from small incubator units, through a series of increments to larger premises, without the need to relocate elsewhere. The proportion of each use will depend

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upon the needs of users.

There will need to be an area of B1 exclusively adjacent to the site's eastern boundary to comply with planning policy.

Within the southern part of the site, the buildings area arranged around a focal, public open space, perhaps incorporating a pond or other SUDS related feature. Buildings on the rising ground to the north and east will need to be cut into the slope with retaining walls to the rear.

The northern part of the site is occupied by the high-quality distribution park and accommodates a number of employment including sui-generis (or unique) uses that do not fall readily into the usual statutory planning Use Classes Order as defined by the Use Classes Order (Amendment) 1995. Uses illustrated include:

- Community bus depot including a workshop, small office and staff facilities.
- Park-and-ride car park associated with the bus depot.
- A distribution depot including vehicle parking, an office, staff facilities, a fuel store and a small number of storage buildings.

4.6 Car and cycle parking

The Local Plan policy on car parking is to ensure that parking requirements are kept to an operational minimum in line with the government's policy to reducing reliance on the private car and encouraging other, more sustainable modes of transport. Policy 5.17 provides a table of maximum parking standards and also refers to the standards set out in the Government's Planning Policy Guidance Note 13 (PPG13) as a maximum. Neither PPG 13 nor the Local Plan makes any distinction between the different classifications of employment but typically B1 has the highest parking standard and B8 the lowest in line with the lower employment densities.

Car parking for new development within the brief area will be in at or below the National Maximum Standards as follows:

Employment	1 space per 30m ² (gross floor area maximum)
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To encourage cycling Local Plan Policy 5.7 requires that cycle parking facilities be provided at major employment centres at a ratio of 1 space per 5 car parking spaces. In addition to this, shower and changing facilities should be provided to further encourage cycling.

4.7 Highway considerations

Any proposals for development would be required to provide a Transport Assessment to support a planning application. This is necessary in order to determine the level and impact of additional vehicle movements and the suitability of proposed access points. Applicants are advised to discuss their proposals with Dorset County Council's Transport Development Management Team in advance to identify their requirements.

Any proposals for development would be required to provide a Travel Plan which should outline the way in which transport implications of the development are going to be managed in order to ensure the minimum environmental, social and economic impacts. Dorset County Council has produced guidance 'Travel Plans in Dorset'.



Figure 17: Concept Plan

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5.1 Comprehensive development

Given the strategic importance of this large (6.75 Hectare) site, and its importance to the district as a whole and Sturminster Newton in particular, a single, vision, masterplan and comprehensive development is required for the entire site in order to achieve the key development and design objectives.

The co-operation of the various landowners is essential to achieve a comprehensive approach. This could take the form of a land swap deal or the pooling of land and sharing of profits.

This approach would ensure that the site can be developed in accordance with the overall vision for this area and provide efficiencies in terms land use.

5.2 Suggested Phasing

A key consideration is to avoid disturbance and disruption to existing site occupiers at all stages of the development. Although it will not always be possible, construction traffic should where possible, avoid using the existing site access. Measures to minimise disruption to existing site users must be agreed with North Dorset District Council prior to work commencing.

Phase 1

To minimise disruption to existing site occupiers the construction access should be from the proposed new, eastern access with existing and completed development using the existing site access. The development should start at the northern end of the site with the construction of the distribution park.

Phase 2

Moving south, the business park development will be completed along with the eastern site access road.

Phase 3

Adjacent to the small riverside plot at the western extreme of the site, the road level is somewhat higher than the site as it rises to cross the Divilish but a direct temporary construction access here should though be possible, indeed an access exists, thus avoiding the need for construction traffic to use the main access road.

5.3 Developer Contributions

Pre-application discussions with planning officers will help to identify potential Heads of Terms for developer contributions or that may be appropriate.

5.4 Planning Application requirements

Outline and detailed planning applications must accord with each of the relevant policies contained in the Development Plan.

Detailed applications for planning permission will need to be accompanied by:

Drawings

In making an application for planning permission, it is vital to present a clear and accurate picture of what exists and what is proposed. Drawings must be to scale, with sufficient detail to show the proposals in context. This should include:

A location plan:

- preferably to 1:1250 (no smaller than 1:2500)
- outline the application property
- show in relation to surrounding area
- vehicular access

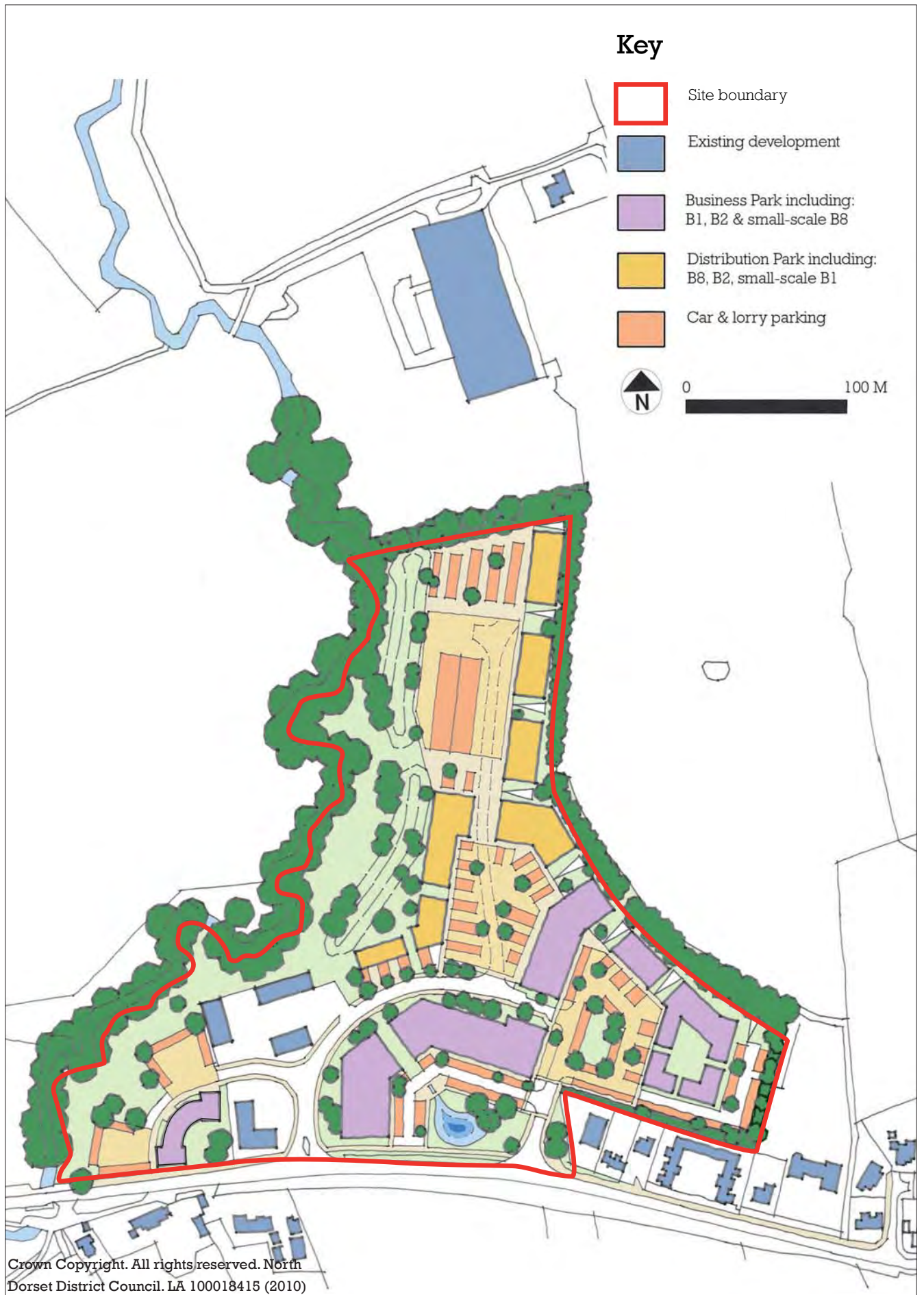


Figure 18: Illustrative Layout

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Details of existing site layout:

- typically 1:200
- the whole property, including all buildings, open space and parking
- tree surveys

Details of proposed layout:

- typically 1:200
- the siting of all new buildings and landscape in context
- special detailed analysis of all impacts and benefits to buildings of historic importance

Floor plans:

- scale 1:50 or 1:100
- including the relationship to adjacent buildings

Elevations:

- scale 1:50 or 1:100
- show every elevation-include details of materials and external appearance
- show elevations in the context of adjacent buildings, where appropriate

Photographs, perspectives and models will be strongly encouraged to help communicate the proposals in three dimensions.

Contaminated Land and Remediation Report

A site investigation and report to be undertaken by suitably qualified and experienced consultants detailing site investigations and assessments to determine whether the site is contaminated and what mitigating measures are required to remediate the land.

Transport Assessment

A Transport Assessment (TA) is required to support any planning application within the brief area. This is necessary in order to determine the level and impact of additional vehicle movements and the suitability of proposed access points.

Travel Plan

Any proposals for development will be required to provide a Travel Plan which should outline the way in which transport implications of the development are going to be managed in order to ensure the minimum environmental, social and economic impacts. Dorset County Council has produced guidance 'Travel Plans in Dorset'.

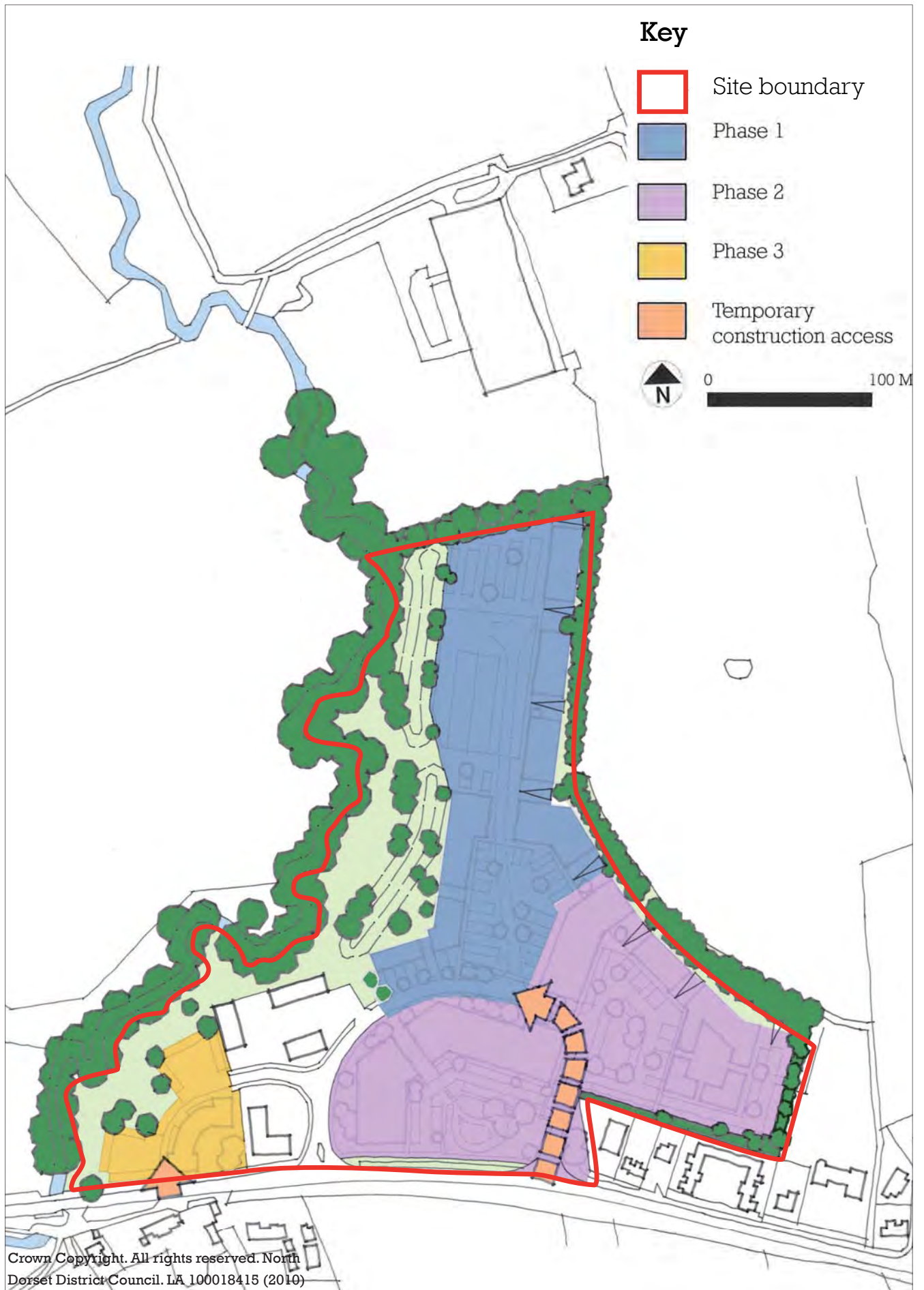
Sustainability Checklist

A South West Sustainability Checklist for Developments should be completed in the early planning and design stages to assess how a development meets these sustainable performance measures. Where appropriate designs should be amended to improve their rating. The completed checklist should be submitted as part of any planning application.

5.5 Design Statement

As set out in PPS1, applications should provide a written statement setting out:

- the design principles and design concept adopted in relation to the site and its wider context;
- outline how these are reflected in the development's layout, density, scale, visual appearance and landscape;
- explain the purpose of the proposed development and how the site relates to its wider area;
- providing a full site and area appraisal where necessary;
- explain how the development will meet the brief's design objectives;
- include an executive summary where this would be useful for public consultation;
- explain how the phasing will meet the requirements of timely comprehensive development of this site;
- undertake further studies as necessary objectives;
- include an executive summary where this would be useful for public consultation;
- explain how the phasing will meet the requirements of timely comprehensive development of this site;
- undertake further studies as necessary.



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Figure 19: Suggested Phasing Strategy

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5.6 Process and Status

Public Consultation

Since publication of the draft brief, a consultation event took place on 9th June 2011. An estimated 100 people attended this event and made a range of comments with regards to the development brief. Officers from DCC and NDDC were on hand throughout. In addition to the consultation event, an open meeting was held on the evening of June 9th which was structured around a discussion of the contents of the brief. The comments raised have been taken on board and the brief amended to reflect those comments where appropriate..

Status

Although not adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document, the brief has been endorsed by the North Dorset District Council and will be used to inform future planning policies for the site. The content of this brief will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications for proposals for the site.

Appendix A

Summary of relevant Local Plan policies

North Dorset District Wide Local Plan (First Revision) Adopted January 2003:

Strategy/Environment

Policy 1.1 Sustainable development strategy;
Policy 1.3 Town for moderate growth – Sturminster Newton;
Policy 1.7 Development within settlement boundaries;
Policy 1.8 Standard assessment criteria;
Policy 1.9 Important open/wooded areas;
Policy 1.12 River Valleys;
Policy 1.15 Foul drainage requirements;
Policy 1.20 Contaminated land;
Policy 1.24 Character of Conservation areas;
Policy 1.33 Landscape character areas;
Policy 1.38 Protected species and their habitats;
Policy 1.40 Landscaping of new development;
Policy 1.41 Amenity tree planting.

The Economy

Policy 3.2 Development on defined employment areas;
Policy 3.3 Retention of employment areas and uses;
Policy 3.7 Restrictions on employment development;
Policy 3.15 Promotion of shopping centres.

Community facilities and recreation

Policy 4.1 Provision of specialised services;
Policy 4.4 Percent for Arts;
Policy 4.10 Long distance footpaths and cyclepaths (“Trailways”);
Policy 4.11 Use of redundant railway lines.

Transportation

Policy 5.1 Non-Strategic Road Network;
Policy 5.3 Existing District Distributor Roads;
Policy 5.7 Provision for cyclists;
Policy 5.8 Provision for pedestrians;
Policy 5.9 People with a mobility impediment;
Policy 5.10 Traffic management and pedestrian priority;
Policy 5.11 General traffic management;
Policy 5.13 Restrictions on heavy goods vehicles;
Policy 5.15 Bus services;
Policy 5.17 Parking standards;
Policy 5.18 Parking for the disabled;
Policy 5.19 Servicing;
Policy 5.20 Development obligations;

Local Area Policies - Sturminster Newton

Policy SN1 Development within Sturminster Newton;
Policy SN6 Employment development site E/47/2
Policy SN11 Environmental and traffic management measures;

Additional relevant documents:

Sturminster Newton Town Design Statement
(Adopted as a supplementary Planning Document)

Employment Land Review: Review of Existing sites (April 2007) (Report for the emerging NDDC LDF)

Design in Buildings and Places: Assessing Proposals for Development in North Dorset (NDDC Guidance Note)

Travel Plans In Dorset (DCC Guidance Note)

South West Sustainability Checklist for Developments