



INFRASTRUCTURE REPORT

**LAND AT LITTLEMOOR ROAD,
WEYMOUTH**

On behalf of Littlemore Development Consortium

4 June 2010

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1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

a) Purpose of Report

- 1.1 RPS is instructed by the Littlemoor Development Consortium (LDC) to promote land to the north of Littlemoor Road for inclusion within the West Dorset District Council (WDDC) Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy, as the preferred site for an urban extension to Weymouth, as required by the draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West (RSS) (July 2008). The consortium consists of the principle landowners within the Littlemoor Area of Search (AoS) identified by WDDC.
- 1.2 LDC had previously submitted representations on the WDDC's options paper, 'Options for Growth' promoting their land as the preferred location for the Weymouth Urban Extension (WUE). This included the submission of an Illustrative Masterplan (drawing no. 601-03 rev D)(an updated version of this plan is attached at appendix 1). At a meeting with officers from WDDC and Dorset County Council (DCC) on 12th May 2010, LDC were requested to provide some additional information on the impact of the proposed development on existing infrastructure, and to identify where mitigation might be required.
- 1.3 A feasibility study on the deliverability of all of the proposed urban extensions in West Dorset (including those identified at Dorchester) outlined in the RSS was commissioned by WDDC, and published by Halcrow in September 2008 ('the Halcrow report'). In the case of the Littlemoor AoS, the report concluded that "no significant infrastructure constraints have been identified", and that overall it "has presented limited development constraints, with no critical or significant issues identified." The request by WDDC for additional information was primarily made in relation to the service provided by WDDC and DCC. However, RPS has taken the opportunity to consult directly with other service providers and this report updates, where necessary, the information in the Halcrow report.
- 1.4 RPS are given to understand that WDDC will be consulting on their preferred option for the WUE late summer/early autumn 2010.
- 1.5 The rest of this chapter sets where the site is and the broad scope of the development proposed by LDC. Section 2 sets out the level of likely demand for existing services, and Section 3 sets out the likely impact on these services and identifies potential mitigation measures which can be taken forward. Services considered in this report are education, libraries, social service, healthcare, utilities waste management and recycling and public open space.

b) Site Location

- 1.6 Littlemoor is a small community 6km to the north east of Weymouth town centre. The Littlemoor AoS originally identified by WDDC is to the north of Littlemoor Road and to the east of the Weymouth-Dorchester railway line, and comprises agricultural land at the southern edge of the Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The land being promoted by LDC occupies the southern and eastern parts of the AoS (appendix 2).

c) Development proposals

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- 1.7 As noted above, the Consortium prepared an Illustrative Masterplan as a first attempt to demonstrate how the site could be developed in a manner which accords with the principles of sustainable development. The plan shows how the 700 dwellings required by the RSS could be accommodated within the site, within high, medium and low density zones. New facilities including sports pitches and other public open space and a sports pavilion/community building are identified. The plan shows approximately 2.64ha of employment land, and illustrates how development could connect to the existing commercial centre of Littlemoor, and how this could be expanded to meet the needs of the existing and new residents. It also shows where existing services and facilities are, and identifies other points where links can be made between the new development and the existing community.

2 DEMAND FOR EXISTING SERVICES

a) Baseline Conditions

- 2.1 The site being promoted by LDC straddles the boundary between the areas administered by WDDC and Weymouth and Portland Borough Council (WPBC). The Office of National Statistics mid-year (2008) estimate of the population of West Dorset was 97,200, and 65,000 in Weymouth and Portland. The ward of Littlemoor which includes the built up area directly to the south of Littlemoor Road was 3,629 at the 2001 Census. The ward directly to the north, which includes the remainder of the Littlemoor AoS and thus the site being promoted by LDC, is Winterbourne St. Martin. At the 2001 census the population of the ward was 2,026. LDC's land is within the parish of Bincombe, which had a population of 514 at the 2001 census.

b) Proposed development

- 2.2 The Illustrative Masterplan is based on an overall density of 30 dwellings per hectare, although the precise mix of dwelling types has yet to be determined, which makes a population projection very difficult. A greenfield site like this generally yields about 70 people per hectare, or an average household size of 2.3 persons per dwelling ('Shaping Neighbourhoods: A Guide for Health, Sustainability and Vitality' - Hugh Barton, Marcus Grant and Richard Guise 2003). On this basis, the population of the new development when fully occupied is likely to be approximately 1,610.
- 2.3 It is recognised that a proportion of the new population will relocate from other areas within the built up area of Weymouth or indeed from other parts of West Dorset, and are existing users of the services outlined in this report. Where existing services are localised and they will be impacted by the additional population, this is highlighted in the following section.

3 IMPACT ON EXISITING SERVICES

a) Primary Education

- 3.1 As noted on the Illustrative Masterplan, there are two existing primary schools close to the site: Bincombe Valley and St Andrews Church of England. A third, St. Nicholas and St. Laurence Church of England, is situated to the south west beyond the railway line at Court Road.
- 3.2 The Halcrow report concluded that in general terms, the scale of expansion necessary for the urban extension appears likely to be accommodated through extensions to existing schools (volume 2, para. 2.10.15). Of pupils of primary school age, there appeared to be a shortfall of 25 spaces in the existing capacity of the three local schools against the projected pupil numbers.
- 3.3 As of January 2009 current numbers on roll and capacity at these schools was as follows:

Table 1 Numbers of roll and capacity at schools adjacent to Littlemoor Area of Search

School	Numbers on Roll 2009-2011	Capacity 2007- 2008	Surplus Spaces
Bincombe Valley	224	321	97
St. Andrew's	383	370	-13
St. Nicholas & St. Laurence	231	262	31

Source: DCC Surplus Spaces January 2009 Primary Schools

- 3.4 DCC have a methodology used in calculating pupil number projections for mainstream schools in the County. As part of this methodology, DCC applies a housing factor for each District/Borough which was calculated using data from the 2001 population census. Housing factors when multiplied by 1000 give the number of children per age group within the age band which might be expected to be generated when 1000 new house are built in the area. The housing factors for West Dorset give a projected number of pupils in the 4-10 age group of 123. This gives a shortfall of 8 spaces.
- 3.5 RPS has spoken with the Senior Education Planner at DCC, Jo Gleeve, and is given to understand that there is scope for expansion at Bincombe Valley Primary School, which is the most accessible school to the proposed development. There are no site specific issues relating to any of the three primary schools that future developers would need to take into account. RPS conclude therefore that any shortfall in capacity would be addressed through planning obligations secured through the usual means.
- 3.6 Westfield Technology College is a large maintained special school for 3-16 year olds and is situated approximately 200m to the east of development site, and it is not considered that the development would have a material impact on this facility.

b) Secondary Education

3.7 There are three secondary schools in Weymouth and Portland; All Saints, Budmouth Technology College and Wey Valley, the latter being the closest to LDC's site. The Halcrow report indicated that there would be a surplus of 191 spaces at Wey Valley School against projected pupil numbers.

3.8 As of January 2009, there was a surplus of 364 spaces at Wey Valley School. Applying the DDC housing factor to the development gives a projected number of children in the 11-17 age group as 122, leaving surplus of spaces of 242 (Source: DCC Surplus Spaces January 2009 Primary Schools). As with primary school education, RPS are given to understand that there are no site specific constraints at Wey Valley School that developers would need to take into consideration, and that funding for the provision of additional spaces as a result of development would be secured through a planning obligation.

c) Further Education

3.9 At the 2001 Census, 0.4% and 0.5% of the resident populations of Winterborne St. Martin and Littlemoor respectively, were 16-18 year olds entered for Level 3 qualifications (GCE/VCE A/VS or equivalent qualifications). Assuming a figure of 0.45%, this would represent 7.2 students out of the estimated population of the proposed development. The projected number of children includes the 16-17 year age group, some of whom will wish to continue studying at the sixth forms of the town's secondary schools, rather than at Weymouth College in the town centre.

d) Libraries

3.10 The County Council, as library authority, is obliged by law to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for those who live, work and study in its authority area. Dorchester and Weymouth have central lending facilities, and there is a small branch library on the southern side of Littlemoor Road opposite the Littlemoor Shopping Centre. Whilst floorspace standards according to the size of catchment population has not been proscribed by central government, the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLAC) standard of 30 sq. m of floorspace per 1,000 of the population is commonly used, and has been adopted by WDDC. The Weymouth Central library has a floorspace of 1049 sq. m. and the library at Littlemoor has a floorspace of 100 sq. m. As of September 2008, there was a shortfall of 1162 sq. m for the Weymouth catchment area, and 119 sq. m in the Littlemoor catchment area. With a projected population of 1,610, the shortfalls would increase for both libraries by 48 sq. m. using the MLAC standards.

3.11 RPS are given to understand that a review of the county's library service in 2007 highlighted the need for the refurbishment of all library buildings in order to sustain heavy public use and to continue to present an attractive environment. All areas including Weymouth, have programmes in place to refurbish or otherwise improve existing provision. No additional facilities are proposed in the Weymouth area. Future developers would therefore expect to make appropriate contributions to improvements to the areas library facilities through a planning obligation.

e) Social Services

3.12 No specific Social Services infrastructure was identified in the Halcrow report. Social Services in Dorset are provided by the County Council. Chapter 9 of WDDCs 'Planning Obligations Guidelines' sets out the case for the need for contributions for Health Care and Social Services facilities, and Doctors surgeries are the only form of infrastructure where on site or off-site

provision will be required, although the chapter does go on to state that other forms of healthcare provision may be included in future reviews of the guidelines. Contributions in the guidelines, which is a Supplementary Planning Document, relate solely to the provision of GPs surgeries (see below).

- 3.13 RPS are advised that the provision of Social Services in Dorset is based on a strategy of provision which is essentially non-property based. Where property based provision is required, this is usually in the form of affordable housing/sheltered accommodation. LDC and any future development partners will continue to work with DCC, and if appropriate, local registered social landlords, to identify and provide any specific infrastructure requirements.

f) Health Services

- 3.14 The 2008 Halcrow report stated that many of Weymouth's suburbs have GP surgeries, which include the surgery at Louviers Road shown on the Illustrative Masterplan. There is another GPs surgery on Preston Road and there are dental practises in and around Littlemoor. Dorchester is home to Dorset County Hospital; a district general hospital providing acute hospital services to 210,000 people including those in West Dorset and Weymouth and Portland. In addition, Weymouth has a Community Hospital (Melcombe Avenue) catering for minor and day surgery, respite care, rehabilitation services, outpatient clinics and inpatient beds.

- 3.15 The Halcrow report stated that the urban extension of Weymouth will require an additional 2.39 GPs and 1.64 dentists, and the report assumed that this requirement can be met by the extension of existing facilities. The Halcow report did not identify any specific issues as far as the impact of the WUE on the general or community hospitals.

- 3.16 RPS are continuing to discuss with Dorset NHS PCT how the development at Littlemoor will impact on the existing facilities at Louviers Road. These discussions will focus on whether it will be appropriate to provide additional on site facilities or whether future developers would expect to make appropriate contributions for the provision of healthcare in the area secured through a planning obligation.

g) Utility Supply

Water

- 3.17 Halcrow consulted with Wessex Water in the preparation of their report. This stated that there is existing network infrastructure at Upwey and Littlemoor, and that some reinforcement will be required, which could potentially be in the form of a new service reservoir or on site booster facility. RPS has discussed this aspect of the report with Wessex Water and at the of writing, it is understood their position is unlikely to fundamentally alter in respect of development at Littlemoor. Both LDC and any future developers will continue to work with Wessex Water in carrying out the necessary engineering appraisals and network modelling in the first instance, and to assist where appropriate in the provision of any necessary mitigation measures.

Wastewater

- 3.18 The Halcrow report states that connection to and upgrading of existing sewers at Littlemoor will be required. The existing Sewerage Treatment Works at Weymouth has spare capacity that would serve the urban extension. As with the provision of clean water, RPS are given to

understand that Wessex Water's position on this matter has not fundamentally changed since the report was written, and LDC and any future development partner will work with the statutory undertaker to ensure waste water from the site is adequately drained.

National Grid

- 3.19 The Halcrow report stated that it is unlikely that the extra growth [at Littlemoor] would create capacity issues for National Grid, given the scale of both existing gas and electricity transmission networks.

Electricity

- 3.20 Scottish and Southern Energy (SSE) are the statutory electricity undertaker for the area. The Halcrow report stated that there will be no significant infrastructure requirements given improvements already planned, and the proximity of the 400kV substation at Chickerell. SSE has advised RPS that their position has not fundamentally altered since the Halcrow report was written. The next step will be for LDC and/or their development partners to work with SSE and carry out network modelling.

Gas

- 3.21 Halcrow stated in its report that the gas supply network is quite extensive in the wider area, and that a high pressure distribution main crosses the eastern edge of the area of search and that a medium pressure main runs along Littlemoor Road. The report states that subject to an economic appraisal by Southern Gas Networks (SGN), no specific infrastructure requirements had been identified at that stage, subject to relevant economic appraisals being carried out. At the time of writing, SGN were reviewing their original advice. As with the other utilities, LDC and their future development partners would look to work with SGN to ensure that any necessary infrastructure is provided.

h) Open space provision

- 3.22 Development Policy D of the emerging RSS requires that the planning and delivery of development should ensure efficient and effective use of existing infrastructure and should provide for the delivery of, among other things, sport and recreation and green infrastructure in step with development. The Illustrative Masterplan shows an extensive area of green open space to the north east of the proposed development. This includes the provision of several sports pitches, a Neighbourhood Equipped Play Area, and a new sports pavilion. In addition to a locally equipped pay area, pocket parks and other informal open space, this amounts to 17.04 ha of open space.
- 3.23 Current National Playing Field Association (NPFA) standards require 2.4 hectares of outdoor playing space per 1,000 of the population (1.6 ha for outdoor sport, and 0.8 ha for childrens playing space)(the 'six acre standard'). Using this standard, for a population of 1, 610, this would require 3.9ha of outdoor playing space provision (2.8 for outdoor sport, and 1.3 ha for children's playing space. The current version of the Illustrative Masterplan therefore shows an over provision of open space.

3.24 There is clearly scope within the development to provide for a range of facilities to meet future needs, and LDC and their development partners will continue to work with WDDC to develop an appropriate open space strategy for the site.

i) Waste Mangementr and Recycling Facilities

3.25 All of the new dwellings on the site will have adequate facilities for the storage of waste and recyclable materials, in accordance with design policy J of the Design and Sustainable Development Planning guidelines, adopted by WDDC on February 2009. As a direct consequence of the WUE and other planned housing developments in West Dorset, WDDC and DCC will have to deal with an increasing amount of waste, which will require changes and additions to waste handling facilities. LDC and any future developers would expect to contribute towards the additional costs involved in handling and disposing of this waste, with funds secured by means of a planning obligation.

4 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 LDC are promoting land to the north of Littlemoor Road for inclusion within the WDDC LDF Core Strategy as the location of a 700 dwelling urban extension to Weymouth, identified in the draft RSS for the South West. In addition, the proposed development includes 2.64 ha of employment land, and a range of other services and facilities which complement the existing local centre at Littlemoor.
- 4.2 At a meeting with officers from WDDC and DCC on 12th May 2010, LDC were asked to supply some additional information on how the proposed development at Littlemoor would impact on existing services and facilities provided by WDDC and DCC. The feasibility report on the WUE prepared by Halcrow in September 2010 concluded that in respect of the Littlemoor AoS (which includes land within LDCs control), “no significant infrastructure constraints have been identified”, and that overall it “has presented limited development constraints, with no critical or significant issues identified.”
- 4.3 Based on average density of 30 dwellings per hectare, it is envisaged that the population of the proposed development at Littlemoor will be 1,610.
- 4.4 RPS has considered the impact of a development with a population of this size on services provided by WDDC and DCC, but also other infrastructure considered by the Halcrow report.
- 4.5 In terms of the provision of education, RPS are advised that there is capacity and/or room for expansion at the primary and secondary schools closest to the development to accommodate new development, without the need for on-site provision. There would be no specific on-site provision required for libraries, and LDC and their development partners would expect to make appropriate financial contributions once planning consent has been granted to the improvement and refurbishment of existing facilities.
- 4.6 In terms of healthcare, RPS are continuing to discuss with Dorset NHS PCT how the development will impact on the existing facilities in Littlemoor. No specific requirements for social service infrastructure has been identified at this stage of the development process, and LDC and their development partners will continue to work with DCC to identify and provide a suitable mitigation strategy should this be required.
- 4.7 RPS has contacted and discussed with the main utilities, the impacts of the proposed development on the services they provide. RPS conclude that there are no major obstacles to ensuring that the development can be serviced, and LDC and their development partners will continue to work with the main utilities through the development process firstly during the network modelling stage, and then in the provision of any necessary network improvements.
- 4.8 The Illustrative Masterplan submitted with LDC representations on WDDC’s ‘Options for Growth’ shows a provision of Open Space above the NPFA ‘six-acre standard’. There is scope within the land under LDCs control to provide a suitable amount of public open space. In terms of waste management and recycling, LDC and any future developers would expect to contribute towards the additional costs involved in handling and disposing of this waste.

APPENDIX 1

ILLUSTRATIVE MASTERPLAN

APPENDIX 2

SITE LOCATION PLAN