

Dorset County Council, Weymouth & Portland Borough Council, West Dorset District Council, South West RDA



## ECONOMIC VISION FOR WEYMOUTH & DORCHESTER

Strategy and Action Plan  
February 2008

**ROGER TYM & PARTNERS**  
Planners and Development Economists

ROGER TYM & PARTNERS

11-15 Dix's Field  
Exeter, EX1 1QA

t (020) 7831 2711  
f (020) 7831 7653  
e london@tymconsult.com  
w [www.tymconsult.com](http://www.tymconsult.com)

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## INTRODUCTION TO THE STRATEGY

The “Vision” document attached to this Strategy and Action Plan emphasises the potential that over the next 20 years, Weymouth and Dorchester could together become one of the most special and significant economic growth poles in southern coastal England:

“An extraordinary combination of unique environmental assets, niche sector growth and quality town centres provide the foundation for growth in modern businesses. New sites for growth would be planned to create compact, vibrant towns based on the most modern approach to sustainable design and technology. The existing historical character of the towns and the wonderful quality of environment in surrounding countryside and coast would be conserved, enhanced and integrated with new development to provide a uniquely high quality of life.”

This Strategy has been prepared to provide the link between the information and analysis provided in the “Evidence Base” for the Vision and the “Vision” itself. It provides conclusions from the Evidence Base and highlights the strategic choices which lead to the “Vision”. It also provides the fuller statement of issues and priorities which inform the “Action Plan”.

### The Study Area



The focus of the “Vision”, “Strategy”, “Evidence Base” and “Action Plan” is on the two towns themselves, but because they act as important centres serving a wider hinterland and supporting a local economy, a range of statistics and research, including research into Housing Market Areas, Spatial Dynamics, Schools Catchments, Health Catchments and Retail Catchments has been reviewed. This range of studies confirms the zone of influence of the two towns, and we focus analysis on the area defined by the Weymouth & Dorchester Travel to Work Area, for which a range of useful data is available. However, the two towns themselves form the focus of the proposals in the “Vision”, and they have been defined for statistical purposes from ward-level data, for the areas shown. For further detail of the information contained in this “Strategy”, please refer to the “Evidence Base” report.

Population and employment data indicate the relative sizes of the towns, and the balance of jobs to population<sup>1</sup>:

**Current Numbers**

	<b>Population</b>	<b>Households</b>	<b>Jobs</b>
<b>Weymouth</b> (including Portland and Chickerell)	58,923	29,437	27,108
<b>Dorchester</b>	16,164	7,091	17,890

Proposals from the South West EiP (Examination in Public) Panel Report on the draft Regional Spatial Strategy, published in December 2007, seek to increase the number of dwellings in the towns and jobs in the joint Housing Market Area (HMA) for Weymouth and Dorchester by 2026 as follows:

**South West EiP (Examination in Public) Panel Report: Proposed Change to 2026**

	<b>Dwellings (towns)</b>	<b>Jobs (HMA)</b>	<b>Jobs (towns - see below)</b>
<b>Weymouth</b> (including Portland and Chickerell)	+5,700	}	+4,500
<b>Dorchester</b>	+7,000	} +11,900	+3,000

The EiP Panel Report indicates that the target of 11,900 jobs in the HMA corresponds to a target of 9,500 jobs in the Travel to Work Area. Our analysis, based on the existing distribution of employment within the Travel to Work Area, suggests that a minimum target of employment growth of 7,500 jobs in Weymouth and Dorchester themselves would follow from this approach and should be adopted as the base target for the Vision.

In fact the Vision seeks to pursue a “Step Change” in the economic fortunes of Weymouth and Dorchester, with an aspiration of up to 12,000 additional jobs by 2026. Weymouth should aim to add up to 7,400 jobs to its existing total of 27,000 jobs; and Dorchester should aim to add up to 4,600 jobs if the “Step Change” envisaged in the Vision is to be achieved.

This approach indicates the potential that by 2026, the combined urban areas of Weymouth and Dorchester would have grown from a population of over 75,000 people and over 36,500 households with 45,000 jobs to an area with a population over 100,000 and around 57,000 jobs - truly significant urban areas capable of exerting important influence in key local, regional and international markets.

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<sup>1</sup> based on 2005 employment data from ABI; and 2001 population data from Census

## Background

This study was commissioned by Dorset County Council, Weymouth & Portland Borough Council, West Dorset District Council and South West of England RDA, to prepare an Economic Vision and Evidence-based strategy for the towns of Weymouth and Dorchester.

The Vision is needed to respond to the challenges and issues raised by many factors effecting the area, but also in response to the draft Regional Spatial Strategy - in particular the RSS designation of the towns within the 21 “Strategically Significant Cities and Towns” of the South West region. Draft RSS points out that development pressure in the area is considerable - and the most pressing strategic planning issue is to achieve a better balance of jobs and housing between the two towns.

## Study Process

The study has been completed through four main linked processes:

- Review, analysis and synthesis of existing research from partner organisations (DCC, W&PBC, WDDC, SW RDA, LSC, etc.)
- Stakeholder consultations (including workshops in Weymouth & Dorchester)
- Business interviews
- Preparation of Working Papers and discussion with Project Group

The “Vision” is complemented by an “Evidence Base” report which provides technical research and analysis; and is complemented by an “Action Plan” as a basis for continuing work between the partners and stakeholders to implement the “Vision”. The “Action Plan” is necessarily “work in progress”, as detail will be developed and actions completed over time, so should be subject to further consultation and discussions. The “Action Plan” is particularly focussed on the next 10 years, as a suitable planning horizon, but all parts of this “Vision” should be reviewed in the light of experience, around 2015. It is hoped that the partners and stakeholders will adopt the “Vision” as part of their formal strategic thinking, and will jointly work towards it using the various powers and resources available to them.

## Strategy Options (from the “Vision” Document)

The visionary approach to development set out in the “Vision” document which complements this “Strategy and Action Plan” focusses on the opportunity to achieve a better balance and more sustainable future for Weymouth and Dorchester, using economic growth to meet community, environmental and business aspirations.

Three scenarios have been considered which reflect the identified opportunities and risks:

**“Consolidation”** : In this scenario, current plans and commitments are satisfied, but development continues according to recent trends and new opportunities to stimulate specific forms or locations of economic growth are limited. At best, this approach will maintain the current roles of the towns, but there is a genuine risk that the two town centres will loose out to other adjacent towns, key sectors will decline, there will be a lack of good quality jobs in the towns, and a growing population will have to commute further to work.

**“Enhancement”** : In this scenario, the current plans and commitments are extended to include further work to plan for growth in housing and employment sites, and to pursue opportunities evident in the two towns. In Weymouth this would include further development of tourism accommodation and facilities; investment in standard business parks and industrial estates to meet demand, and improvement in skills levels - and in Dorchester this would be likely to include work with the Duchy of Cornwall and other developers to take forward further stages of integrated housing and employment site development. Further action in the town centres, including environmental enhancements and new development schemes could follow.

This approach would be likely to achieve better planned development and better quality of development, and may stimulate some improvements in the quality of jobs and prosperity - but would be unlikely to achieve a significantly better balance of growth between the two towns; would fail to attract key growth businesses and would fail to maximise and integrate the benefits from growth.

**“Step Change”** : The focus of this scenario is on creating new places which contain the best qualities of the existing Weymouth and Dorchester but re-engineer them to achieve high quality sustainable development and secure economic growth. “Step Change” will only be achieved by adding special initiatives, significant effort and targetted investment to maximise potential.

In Weymouth, this means creating a vibrant town centre, waterfront areas and new business areas to work in growth sectors serving national and international markets. Business clusters in niche markets of target sectors of marine, leisure and creative industries should be linked physically and economically to the existing assets of the town; and growth should also be targetted in education, business services and public administration to seek a better balance of employment and skills. A more balanced and thriving local economy will support a town with a new, lively profile to attract and retain younger residents, entrepreneurs and visitors.

In Dorchester, the development of a high quality town centre based on historic buildings but now including modern buildings of high quality will provide an “up-market” destination for shopping and tourism, and an appropriate location for new service-based businesses for whom quality of place is significant. Dorchester should be stimulated to act as a cultural centre for the sub-region and catalyst for growth in cultural and creative industries. New sites and premises, linked to business innovation initiatives, will secure good quality growth in creative and knowledge-based sectors, and change the profile of Dorchester towards business growth in a modern sustainable town.

This scenario would be very challenging to deliver, but ultimately does not necessarily envisage increasing the number of homes or jobs planned in the town through the emerging Regional Spatial Strategy - it looks to achieve a “step change” in the quality and the profile of the towns significantly, for the benefit of those residents, businesses and employees.



## The Vision for Weymouth and Dorchester (from the “Vision” Document)

Key issues for the future of Weymouth and Dorchester are their ability to respond effectively to pressures for growth in population and employment; pressures for change in the nature and scale of businesses in different sectors; and a fundamental problem of relatively low productivity and low incomes in some sectors and particularly in Weymouth.

The aspiration is to plan for these pressures and changes, taking opportunities to create a balanced, competitive business economy and particularly to implement actions to bridge the productivity gap and thus raise incomes

**“The Vision for Weymouth and Dorchester is of a special and significant economic growth pole, based on the unique assets and competitive strengths of two distinct but complementary towns, creating an integrated living and business environment to support a thriving, sustainable, modern local economy.”**

While the two towns work well together, and residents, businesses and visitors gain benefits from their proximity, Weymouth and Dorchester play different roles in serving South Dorset, and their future development should build on and enhance their distinctiveness while also strengthening their synergy.

For this reason, we propose complementary Visions for the towns:

### *The Vision for Weymouth*

As an attractive compact waterfront resort town, surrounding by attractive coastline, a history in maritime and specialist industries and major employment potential at Portland, Weymouth is naturally an appropriate centre for town centre functions, leisure and tourism, and growth in other specialist sectors including creative industries. However, productivity, skills and wages are low, and out-commuting to Dorchester is a problem. Weymouth has a particular opportunity, presented by hosting the sailing events for the 2012 London Olympic and Paralympic Games, to raise the profile of the area and invest in business development and skills to provide a long-term economic legacy.

**“The Vision for Weymouth is of a lively, forward-looking town with a strong, diversified economy building on its advantages in the marine sector, advanced engineering, tourism and leisure, and regenerating its town centre, waterfront and key sites to improve its quality, develop its cultural and leisure offer, support business growth and provide good quality, better paid jobs for all its residents.”**

### *The Vision for Dorchester*

Dorchester is a very attractive historic County town, and now a model of forms of sustainable growth. It is attracting further pressures for expansion, though it is - despite its role as a major centre of employment - still a relatively small town. It has particular strengths in the attractive town centre and the size of the service sector, providing employment in local government and other public administration, health and education but these also point to a vulnerability to future change and a failure to grow in other sectors of a modern economy. Dorchester draws a significant proportion of its labourforce from the surrounding rural areas and from Weymouth, creating significant traffic flows every day. A key priority is to deliver housing growth, balanced by appropriate forms of employment growth and town centre functions, to achieve a more balanced, sustainable settlement.

**“The Vision for Dorchester is of a quality town with a much-strengthened role as a County hub of shops, services, culture and leisure, with an attractive, vibrant town centre, new housing and new employment areas, and a range of new offices, shops, cultural and leisure facilities providing a more diverse local economy and good employment opportunities to residents and businesses.”**

## Strategic Growth Issues

### *Draft Regional Spatial Strategy*

The draft Regional Spatial Strategy highlights the importance of Weymouth and Dorchester as a primary focus for development within their Districts, as they offer the greatest opportunities for employment and accessibility to cultural, transport, health, education and other services.

Draft RSS emphasises the need to maintain and enhance their strategic functions, while also enhancing skills, providing a range of premises and meeting the changing needs of economic sectors. A key issue throughout draft RSS is the need to provide significant quantities of new housing in order to meet pressures of increasing household numbers and increasing cost of housing compared to incomes. The preference of RSS is to see the majority of this housing growth focused on the larger cities and towns - within existing urban areas as far as possible - with continued restraint on growth in rural areas.

### *Housing and Population Growth*

As drafted, RSS sets housing growth targets to 2026 which will see growth in Weymouth (including Chickerell) of 5,000 dwellings and in Dorchester of 4,000 dwellings to 2026. This equates approximately to 17% growth in the size of Weymouth, and nearly 55% in Dorchester. The recently published Panel Report of findings from the Examination in Public, raise these housing targets further to 5,700 for Weymouth (including Chickerell) and 7,000 for Dorchester.

This clearly implies not only significant extension of the built areas of the towns, but also a substantial increase in the demand for town centre functions and all population-led services such as education, health, social services and retail. It should be noted that draft RSS also provides for a further 4,200 dwelling in the rest of West Dorset (the Panel Report proposes 4,800) and, though only some of this growth will fall within the Dorchester catchment, it will add to the pressures on Dorchester in particular to provide more town centre functions and services, and to provide employment opportunities.

A key result of housing growth on this scale will be the substantial expansion of the local labourforce, which should ensure a range of new skills and types of employees to support business growth. Provision of appropriate and affordable housing will help to ensure that key workers are available to support public and private sector growth.

### *Economic Potential*

The significant changes in population levels which will result from this level of housing development can be seen alongside (and to some extent link to) the projections of employment change prepared for SW RDA by Cambridge Econometrics and used in draft RSS and the Regional Economic Strategy. The projections for the Dorchester & Weymouth Travel to Work Area show potential growth of between 7,300 and 9,500 jobs. This projection has then been adapted by RTP, for this study to provide base estimates that suggest that employment in Weymouth may increase by 4,500 jobs by up to 2026; and in Dorchester by up to 3,000 jobs.

In fact, given the aspirations expressed in the Vision, and the potential for growth which is reinforced by the EiP Panel Report (adding both labour to the labourforce and additional domestic demand for goods and services) it is considered appropriate to seek higher levels of growth. The "Step Change" option, which would target the highest levels of growth, would provide options to secure as many as 12,000 jobs in the Weymouth and Dorchester economy, with employment in Weymouth to increase by up to 7,000 jobs and Dorchester to increase by up to 5,000 jobs.

Dorset County Council has reviewed the District-level projections in detail and commented fully on them at the Examination in Public for the draft RSS, and in current work in assessing the Population, Household and Employment Characteristics of the Dorchester/Weymouth Housing Market Area. We agree with their comment that “All projections should be treated with extreme caution, not least because we really don’t know what the future will bring.” Shocks to the economy can change people’s behaviour and expectations and economic changes which are relatively small on a national scale - such as the closure or relocation of a single firm - may have very significant consequences locally. However, we also agree with the approach taken by SW RDA that the assumptions underpinning the growth projections are realistic and generally cautious - and that planning and policy needs to reflect the projections if sustainable development of the SW economic is to be accommodated. “It is more appropriate and manageable to adjust from planning for high growth to delivery of a lower reality than the other way round.”

This Vision is therefore based on the assumption that the overall figures for jobs and housing growth need to be planned for - and the purpose of this approach is to maximise the benefits obtained.

### *Labourforce Balance*

The DCC analysis shows that, assuming the levels of housing growth planned in draft RSS, if the higher levels of projected growth are achieved, there could be a deficit of labour supply, particularly in West Dorset (and thus Dorchester), with the possibility of some surplus of labour supply in Weymouth. On the other hand, if somewhat lower levels of employment growth occur, there could be a surplus of labour in both towns.

The EiP Panel took the view that a balance between employment growth and housing provision should be supported at the level of Housing Market Areas - however an “overly rigid interpretation of self-containment is rejected”. The Panel is apparently content to see planning for higher rates of economic growth than housing change - “this apparent discrepancy allows an element of flexibility for economic growth, while at the same time reduces the risk of overprovision of housing”. Given the increases in housing numbers recommended by the Panel (and particularly the proposed increase for Dorchester), the DCC concerns about the possibility of labour force scarcity are much less likely to be an issue.

From an economic perspective, the DCC and EiP Panel approach provides the reassurance that the size of the total labourforce is not likely to be a constraint on growth; indeed there is capacity to aim for growth at higher levels even than the aspirations indicated in the draft Regional Spatial Strategy and Regional Economic Strategy.

Within this positive picture of potential labour market balance, it will of course be important to ensure that entrants to the local labour market have the skills and experience appropriate to target growth sectors.

### *Balanced Growth - Weymouth & Dorchester*

There is a problem of lack of balance between the two towns, which can crudely be described as showing Dorchester with an oversupply of jobs compared to the number of working residents (and generally better paid jobs) drawing labour in from surrounding areas including Weymouth, where this is an undersupply of jobs compared to number of working residents (and jobs in some sectors are poorer paid).

Analysis of the growth targets and projections suggests that the scale of housing growth proposed for Dorchester and the level of employment growth in Weymouth will not be sufficient, in themselves, to solve this problem -even at the higher levels of housing growth recommended by the EiP Panel. Housing growth in Dorchester will help to match employment growth, but would actually need to be even higher if it is to completely avoid

the need for in-commuting. In Weymouth, there will need to be a focus to achieve strong economic growth to provide more job opportunities for the growing local labourforce.

### *Sectoral Shifts*

A critical issue exposed in the employment projections is the major sectoral shift which is expected largely as a result of “macro”-level trends, with pressures leading - in general - to significant decline in manufacturing employment and significant increases in distribution (e.g. warehousing, storage and “logistics”), retail, and service sector jobs. This service sector growth may include growth in the creative industries and knowledge-based industries. Though these trends will affect the towns in different ways, the projections highlight the threats and opportunities which exist, and any strategy needs to be realistic in its response.

This Vision reflects a response to these trends through support for businesses in key sectors, skills development, provision of sites and premises, and enhancing the roles of the town centres - the natural location for many growth sectors - to maximise economic potential. A critical issue of both towns is the delivery of good quality employment sites in appropriate locations to meet business needs - at present there is a lack of sites available with the right characteristics to attract and retain growth in the key sectors of the modern economy. As with other issues in this study, the Evidence Base Report provides more detail.

### *High-Level Trends*

In addition to the global trends of sectoral change affecting the UK, particularly in manufacturing, there are three significant forces which are clearly set to alter the ways in which people work and the structure of our economy within the next 20 years:

- Energy Costs, Carbon Emissions and Climate Change
- New technologies for information and communications
- Demographic change - ageing populations, inter-regional migration and household formation rates

In relation to Weymouth and Dorchester, these factors may interact to influence the potential for growth. It is clearly possible that continued migration into the South West along with increased use of broadband technology and a desire to reduce travel costs will support strong business growth in knowledge-based industries. At the same time pressure to reduce energy costs in transport, housing and business support more sustainable patterns of development and distribution and may encourage people and businesses to locate in compact towns such as Weymouth and Dorchester.

Weymouth and Dorchester have natural advantages in adapting to the impact of these high level trends. A continued pattern of compact, balanced growth is important. Quality of life - within which quality of environment is one important element - becomes a significant factor in sustaining and attracting labourforce and business growth due to lifestyle benefits. At the same time vibrant town centres, offering a range of shops, services, leisure and cultural facilities, are an important part of this quality of life and also important locations for business growth.

### *Employment Sites and Premises*

The issue of employment sites and premises is reviewed in detail in the Evidence Base. While on paper there is potentially a good supply of employment land, in reality supply is now limited (particularly when compared to growth aspirations for the economy) and the type and quality of sites is poorly related to requirements.

If good quality modern growth businesses are to be retained and attracted to Weymouth & Portland and Dorchester, it is critically important that good quality industrial and warehousing/distribution premises and sites are available, with a pipeline of supply. For the marine sector, waterfront location and access to the water is often critical. For distribution, clearly good road access, accessibility within the towns, and access to the strategic road network is important. There is a need to identify more good quality industrial and warehouse sites for both Weymouth & Portland and Dorchester, and it is important (given the good progress being made on Portland) that sites are identified for Weymouth itself. For office development, which will include important sectors of creative industries, business services, professionals and may include a range of sizes of business from micro- to larger corporate enterprises, it is critical that there is a range of sizes of units available, in quality settings.

This should particularly include good quality office space to modern standards (of space, sustainability, communications, energy infrastructure, etc..) in the town centres; and also in business park or employment "clusters" within new development areas. The latter should be properly integrated with new housing, local public transport and local centres; but should also establish a local business profile and visibility. Specialist clusters, for instance in creative industries, professional services, education, and health, may require specific sites and types of premises, and if there is the opportunity to implement specific cluster developments this should be encouraged.

There is an urgent need to identify sites which are suitable for development and to promote the opportunities through LDF and other planning and development mechanisms.

### *Quality of Jobs*

It is noted that jobs in Weymouth often tend to be low-skill, low-pay and low productivity. The RES/RSS employment projections highlight the possibility that much jobs growth in future could be more of the same, and it is also possible on current trends that a significant number of new jobs would be part-time. To some extent this is not a problem, as there is an increasing trend towards people taking two or more part-time jobs (and this is acknowledged in the analysis of jobs to housing growth) - but it does highlight the need to support quality new businesses and business growth employing higher level skills and better wages, in all sectors, if we are to avoid continued problems in Weymouth particularly.

There is potential for the two towns to play to their strengths in specific sectors which may achieve growth and provide better quality jobs: in Weymouth, building on existing strengths in marine sector, advanced engineering, tourism and leisure; and supporting new growth in business and professional services, creative industries and - if strategic decisions supported them - in public administration and public services including education and health. In Dorchester the potential for good quality jobs growth lies particularly in existing strengths in education, health and retail; and in a wide range of cultural, creative and knowledge-based industries which could locate in an attractive County town if the appropriate labourforce, infrastructure and facilities were available. Though growth in education and health might be taken to imply a continued reliance on the public sector, the strengths of the town also indicate the possibilities to generate significant levels of private sector investment and growth in these sectors, and targeted initiatives should be sought to maximise this potential.

## Current Priorities & Initiatives

There are many projects and strategies in place already, or moving towards implementation. These commitments will have a significant and positive impact on the economic future of Weymouth and Dorchester, including:

In Weymouth :

- Proposals for the Pavilion & Ferry Terminal include a new hotel, new ferry terminal, remodeled theatre, World Heritage Site visitor centre, 300-berth marina, shops, restaurants, new homes and public spaces
- The “Resort Regeneration” package of measures, to support change in the Borough's tourism sector. Key items include development of the potential of the World Heritage Site designation, the delivery of infrastructure improvements and other developments and the development of quality and training initiatives to bring forward the Melcombe Regis and Esplanade Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) Project, will support conservation and enhancement of key historic buildings and street features in the Weymouth Town Centre Conservation Area.
- Osprey Quay - the 33 hectare waterfront site will provide up to 50,000 sq. metres (535,000 sq. feet) of employment space and a focal point for marine businesses, with a year-round tourism destination with a range of amenities including a hotel, nursery/crèche, shops, cafes/restaurants apartments, self-catering units and a network of public and private transport links in landscape public realm.
- A new 600-berth marina is to be constructed alongside Osprey Quay will have a range of modern facilities including a fuel berth and travel hoist and space for a chandlery as well as brokerage and marine engineers.
- Weymouth & Portland National Sailing Academy, also at Osprey Quay, provides facilities and equipment to support training and events, and is to be extended in preparation for the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.
- Portland Port has developed since the departure of the Royal Navy in 1996, and is proceeding with a major re-development plan involving reclamation of 35 acres from the seabed to provide deep water berths capable of handling even larger ships.
- Southwell Business Park on Portland has plans for continued investment at the former Admiralty Underwater Weapons Establishment, now accommodating well over a hundred companies in various sectors plus a conference centre, a health suite and proposals for a hotel.
- The siting of the sailing events for the 2012 London Olympic and Paralympic Games at Weymouth and Portland provide a major opportunity to raise the profile of the town and generate significant legacy benefits through business development, tourism development, sporting opportunity, cultural celebration and community engagement.
- The proposed Weymouth Relief Road is recognized as being key to sustaining the local economy - draft RSS highlights it as a Regionally Significant Road (RSR), and Dorset County Council has applied for the necessary consents. The route now has planning permission and an Inquiry into the CPO and Side Roads Orders has been held, with a view to the Orders being confirmed by March/April 2008 and the planned improvements to the A354 corridor being completed in time for the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.
- Mount Pleasant Business Park - planning permission has recently been granted for a new headquarters for New Look, non food retail units, offices, an enterprise centre, new Fire Station, health centre and hotel on this site, which is planned to be implemented in the next 2 - 3 years.

In Dorchester :

- Charles Street is a key town centre site where a preferred developer is now preparing proposals for a retail-led mixed use development, which is expected to include arts, culture, leisure, retail, housing, and a new town square
- Development of the former Eldridge Pope brewery site with a cinema, hotel, shops, restaurants, arts centre, nursing home, new railway station and new homes will create a major addition to the facilities and attractiveness of the town, and may create more than 600 jobs
- Poundbury - the pioneering example of urban expansion on the western edge of the town - is being built in a number of different phases. The first phase, covering 7.5 hectares, was completed in 2002 and Phase 2, covering 13.5 hectares, is due for completion soon. The next phases of development of Poundbury (approx. 40 hectares), planned for completion over the next 15 to 20 years, will add approximately 5,000 to the population of Dorchester with 2,000 jobs in the factories, offices and general facilities across the site.
- the Dorchester Transport & Environment Plan, which sets out proposals to improve the quality of environment, reduce the impact of traffic and conserve the historic core of the town.

These current initiatives are also set in the context of many actions in relation to skills development, economic strategy, transport improvements and planning decisions, as set out in a range of strategy and programme documents for Dorset, Weymouth & Portland and West Dorset. The full range of relevant public agencies is working to deliver co-ordinated action to support development of the local economy.

These initiatives and programmes are essential to the economic future of Weymouth and Dorchester and together will help to secure significant benefits in the short to medium term. However, in themselves they are not sufficient to meet the challenges of fundamental pressures and strategic priorities. There are serious risks which need to be addressed in this Vision:

- The Weymouth economy is vulnerable to economic pressures, and in particular could potentially lose jobs in manufacturing/engineering sectors
- Dorchester is particularly vulnerable to public sector change if the overall projections of growth, the level of forecast public sector funding and/or mechanisms of delivery result in significant reductions in the level of employment
- Without effective planning and delivery, it is possible that 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games do not deliver the local impact and lasting legacy which is envisaged
- Dorchester faces the possibility of a declining role as a County Town in sectors including retail, culture, leisure - but possibly even in health, education and public administration - if it fails to respond to competition in these sectors from larger urban centres and other market towns
- There is a general problem of difficulty in finding and delivering new development sites which could result in constraint of housing and employment premises - this is particularly problematic in relation to employment sites when a range of suitable opportunities needs to be available to the market
- Without effective planning and investment there is a danger of increasing road congestion between and within the towns; there is a particular need for long-term planning to ensure that development of the urban areas and the delivery of public transport, cycle and pedestrian routes is adequate for the levels of growth and change

- Within the general transport issues, there is a danger that continued poor strategic access to key areas will inhibit the economic potential of the towns, both in Weymouth where access to Portland is very constrained and in Dorchester where the historic town centre and surrounding environmental designations pose the need for intelligent solutions
- There is a danger that insufficient numbers and types of affordable housing will be delivered - partly as a result of structural issues within housing development processes - but particularly unless there is targeted action through planning and housing investment processes to ensure that adequate numbers are prioritised
- There is a danger the quality of life in Weymouth and Dorchester - which is fundamental to the economic success of the towns - will be compromised if the above risks are not addressed

## Findings from Consultations

Consultations for this study were conducted through business workshops (one each in Weymouth and Dorchester), interviews with a range of businesses and other stakeholders, and interviews with key agencies. The study also referred to previous work, including "The Future of South Dorset" Conference (Jan 2005).

From these consultations a number of key issues emerge:

- **Strengths** : the area and the two towns themselves offer a very attractive environment and a good quality of life. This can help to attract and retain good quality staff, but only provides a limited business advantage. There are established skills in some specialist sectors.  
  
Recent initiatives, including Osprey Quay, were noted by some as important in providing for growth and new enterprises.
- **Weaknesses** : from a business perspective, the location of Weymouth & Dorchester is a weaknesses, placing the towns in a very peripheral location away from larger urban centres and markets. This is compounded by perceived poor transport links, particularly by road but also by rail. The Weymouth Relief Road was generally considered to be a critical requirement, but other improvements are needed. "Transport is a make or break issue".  
  
The other major weakness identified is in skills - businesses generally commented on the generally low level of skills in the labourforce and businesses with specific skills requirements find it difficult to recruit - in some cases recruiting from elsewhere can be also be difficult as staff may not wish to move to the area. Though Weymouth town centre is acknowledged by some to be improving and, in some areas, attractive, it is felt there is a need for more improvement. Competition from other areas - both from more accessible parts of the UK, and overseas markets - is seen to be a problem for businesses in the area, particularly in manufacturing and distribution sectors, so identifying niche markets may be necessary and some operations in these sectors are very unlikely to grow.
- **Opportunities** are identified in marine and advanced engineering sectors, tourism and leisure. There is a general view that Weymouth should continue to focus on tourism and leisure as a major opportunity, but needs to raise quality and move into more modern markets including business tourism to move out of low skills, low pay seasonal employment.  
  
Other sectors - particularly marine and advanced engineering - are seen as opportunities, particularly as there is some presence in the area, though those in these sectors consulted noted the problems of skills and transport, and in general only saw relatively limited opportunity for niche or specialist growth



The sailing events of the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games and Legacy are seen as a major opportunity, both to raise profile and to stimulate growth in marine/leisure/hospitality sectors. Estimates of impact vary quite broadly, but are expected to need some intervention to make sure that the maximum benefit is obtained.

The growth of Dorchester town centre was noted as an opportunity to change the image of the town somewhat and to attract more trade.

- Threats the main threat identified through consultation was inertia or resistance to change. There is an acceptance that some things, such as location, cannot change and businesses have to work within such constraints, however there is a sense that change is needed in the town centres, and in strategic transport links, and failure to make progress will affect growth.

In general, consultations confirmed a view of the longer-term future which sees Weymouth and Dorchester build on their identified strengths, respond to current problems, and ultimately grow and improve without any radical change in their character. The vision which emerges is not of dramatically different places, but of towns which have consolidated and used their strengths and opportunities to secure stable, good quality employment and business growth.

## Sector Development Issues

Estimates of employment change within business sectors within the two towns have been developed from the Cambridge Econometrics work which was originally commissioned to inform the preparation of the Regional Economic Strategy and draft Regional Spatial Strategy. These strategies preferred the higher level of growth forecast by Cambridge Econometrics ("Scenario 2"), based on growth in GVA (Gross Value Added) at a rate of 3.2% per annum to 2026.

RTP has interpreted the CE forecasts in relation to the two towns to provide a base estimate of the potential for jobs change in the towns. This approach does not provide firm employment forecasts, being based on the use of regional and national trends to show the general trajectory of change, and a working assumption that employment change in the Travel to Work Area will be distributed across the area, and in the two towns, according to the current distribution of employment. This analysis shows that if the "Scenario 2" GVA growth of 3.2% applied to Weymouth & Dorchester, a total growth of 7,500 jobs might be achieved by 2026.

Comparing the current scale of employment with the projections to 2026: shows the following change in the two towns

	<b>2005 employment</b>	<b>2026 projected employment</b>
Weymouth & Portland	27,108	31,650
Dorchester	17,890	20,888

The detail of the analysis is shown in the table below. The table highlights the potential of significant falls in employment in manufacturing industries, and high numbers of new jobs potentially in distribution, hotels and catering, other business services, education, health and miscellaneous services.

These estimates are not to be taken as authoritative forecasts but as broad estimates which indicate the likely direction and scale of change which might take place. Specific local factors and local initiatives will influence these trends, and an essential purpose of this Strategy and Vision is to help avoid undesirable changes and maximise the potential for positive growth. Thus the estimates help to highlight key issues which need to be considered in establishing the priorities for the towns.

The critical issue is to identify targets for the base 7,500 additional jobs and to seek opportunities to enhance this growth, in sectors which will provide good quality employment and raise productivity, and to identify the key opportunities and actions necessary to achieve a "Step Change" over and above these trends.

For "Step Change" a total of up to 12,000 jobs may be sought, by combining the forecast positive sectors of growth on regional and national trends with targetted actions in Weymouth and Dorset to maximise the potential of existing businesses and further growth in modern sectors, as discussed below.

## Employment Change Scenario based on RES forecasts, and “targets” for “Step Change”

As a basis for planning and implementation, it is useful to establish core growth targets and key project milestones, particularly in relation to those sectors where growth should be targeted.

As noted above, interpretation of the “Scenario 2” forecasts prepared for the draft Regional Spatial Strategy and now restated in the Panel Report set a target of employment growth of 7,500 jobs by 2026. This figure would include continued decline in manufacturing employment, with growth primarily found in distribution, business services, education and health sectors. This Vision seeks to secure stronger growth in the key service sectors but also to stabilise and foster growth in manufacturing, as discussed below.

The ambitious approach of the “Step Change” scenario sets the maximum level of employment growth which might be envisaged at 12,000 jobs in the two towns, well above the level projected by the “Scenario 2” (3.2% GVA p.a.) for draft Regional Spatial Strategy - but an aspiration to focus co-ordinated action and investment in key sectors and locations; and a challenging target to help secure benefits for the area.

The key sector growth aspirations in “Step Change”, compared to current employment levels in the two towns are as follows (note that some sectors, where growth is not anticipated - primary industries, public sector:

Sector Growth (jobs)	Weymouth (inc Portland and Chickerell)		Dorchester		Weymouth & Dorchester	Weymouth & Dorchester Total Growth
	2005	Growth by 2026	2005	Growth by 2026	2005	2005 - 2026
Manufacturing	1800	750	500	250	2300	1000
Tourism & Leisure	3800	1200	700	300	4500	1500
Construction	1900	400	700	400	2600	800
Distribution	4800	1000	3200	500	8000	1500
Business Services.	3300	2000	2600	1500	5900	3500
Education/Health	5000	1250	5000	1250	10000	2500
Miscellaneous Services	1100	800	1000	400	2100	1200
<b>Total</b>	<b>21700</b>	<b>7400</b>	<b>13700</b>	<b>4600</b>	<b>35400</b>	<b>12000</b>

## Sector Growth Requirements, Targets and Actions

### *Manufacturing Sectors including Marine, Engineering and Electronics*

Projections indicate the potential for significant decline in almost every manufacturing sector, based on international and national trends and pressures - for instance the possibility of significant losses in the engineering, electronics and boatbuilding and repair sectors, which are important to the Weymouth economy. However, there are existing strengths, for instance in circuit board design and manufacture, which may be able to compete in international niche or local specialist markets. Also there is potential to create new jobs in sectors linked to creative industries which will build on the local environmental quality; and may attract entrepreneurs and specialists seeking a high quality of life.

There is no doubt that the competitive pressures will be strong, and any strategy will have to help businesses to respond, however, the projections may be proved wrong as recent events, such as the decision of Sunseeker to locate at Portland may demonstrate, now employing 100 people with an ultimate target of 500 jobs. If local strengths and competitive advantages - such as specialist skills or niche products - can be used to the maximum, it may be possible for locally-based manufacturing businesses to compete in specific markets.

The marine sector is particularly important within the manufacturing industry, particularly because of the unique opportunities presented at Weymouth and Portland, and it should be the focus of particular effort. The existing and new infrastructure provide significant opportunities for business development at Portland Port, Weymouth Harbour, and Osprey Quay including the Weymouth & Portland National Sailing Academy, and plans for further development including a new Ferry Terminal and 300 berth marina at Weymouth, together with a further 600 berth marina at Osprey Quay linked to the extension of the WPNSA, both of which are required for the 2012 sailing events.

The marine sector should benefit substantially from the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, so long as appropriate initiatives are in place to prepare local businesses, ensure that appropriate skills and facilities are in place, and market the capabilities of Weymouth to competitor and visitor markets. For the long-term development of this sector, the availability of good industrial sites and premises at key locations including some with access to the waterfront will be critical.

Opportunities in the renewable energies sector may also build on the environmental assets of the area

***Current Employment Total : Weymouth - 2000; Dorchester - 450***

***Sector Target:***

- ***to support and facilitate growth in marine, engineering and electronics sectors by targeted initiatives for business premises, business development, skill training and infrastructure initiatives - initial target to safeguard approximately 2,450 jobs and support growth of a further 1000 jobs***

***Priority Actions:***

- ***Sites and Premises suitable for key sectors***
- ***Strategic Transport***
- ***Skills Development***
- ***Business Support and Networks***
- ***2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games and Legacy initiatives***

***"Step Change" Priority Action:***

- ***Marine Centre of Excellence***
- ***Iconic sustainable office premises demonstration projects, Weymouth & Dorchester***

## *Tourism and Leisure*

Tourism plays an important part in the local economy of the area, particularly in Weymouth, with nearly 4,000 jobs in hotels and catering alone. The sector needs to be strengthened to improve its product, increase its value, broaden its offer to growing leisure markets, and extend its reach to support functions in Dorchester.

There is established strategy for Weymouth and the Jurassic Coast, which will enhance the tourism offer and attract spend into the town. West Dorset & Dorchester perhaps need to develop strategy to take advantage of growing leisure and tourism markets, and particularly to draw visitors into the town centre.

It is important to build links with developments in the marine sector of the economy, and of course to maximise the benefits from the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games and Legacy through initiatives in the accommodation, attractions and hospitality sectors from now until 2012 and beyond. At the same time a Cultural Olympiad is being developed as one of five themes that are being progressed by Team South West, the team responsible for delivery of the Olympic and Paralympic Games in the region, via the South West England Legacy Strategy - and this links with the growing culture and arts marketing and development of Destination Dorset, the Dorset Destination Partnership.

A key focus for the Vision is a pro-active approach to development of the "active leisure" sector, which includes watersports and countryside pursuits, with training; formal, organised and informal sports and leisure activities; events, festivals and major displays. This sector is capable of significant growth while still seeking low impact and sustainable development principles.

Specific facilities and locations will need to be developed and linked to broader tourism and leisure development strategies - this should be pursued through Destination Dorset.

***Current Employment Total : Weymouth - 4,400; Dorchester - 700 (Hotels & Catering)***

***Sector Target:***

- ***to support and facilitate improvements in quality and extend the tourism "offer" and attract growing leisure markets, in Weymouth and Dorchester, by targeted initiatives for accommodation, attractions, events and hospitality sectors - initial target to safeguard and improve the quality of over 5,000 jobs in hotels & catering and support growth of a further 1,500 jobs, particularly in active leisure and related facilities***

***Priority Actions:***

- ***Resort Regeneration***
- ***Tourism Sector Development initiatives***
- ***Leisure and Cultural Facilities Opportunities***
- ***Jurassic Coast and Town Marketing***
- ***Establishment of Destination Dorset (the Dorset Destination Partnership)***

***"Step Change" Priority Action:***

- ***active leisure - development of business clusters and linkages, development of specialist facilities***

## *Construction*

The construction sector largely works within local markets, employing nearly 2,500 employees, mostly in Weymouth. Employment projections suggest that growth will be relatively modest at around 10% to 2026, but this may be an underestimate given the scale of development which is likely to take place, and there may be peaks in demand for labour which are significantly higher or demand specialist skills. Consultations indicate that skills are an issue, and there will be a need for continued programmes of training to ensure that local labour and local construction firms benefit from the planned investment, as in East London.

The increased rate of development implied by dRSS/EiP Panel housing allocations and the aspirations of this economic strategy suggest that more builders, engineers and specialist construction trades will be required (the capacity of the existing industry needs to be scoped to check the impact) - and it may be valid to pursue a target of a further 800 jobs in the sector.

**Current Employment Total : Weymouth - 1800; Dorchester - 620**

**Sector Target:**

- *to support growth in skills in the sector and ensure that local business is able to compete for building and construction projects, to safeguard over 2,400 employee jobs, self-employed and other contractors and growth of 800 jobs*

**Priority Actions:**

- *Skills development*
- *Business network development*

**"Step Change" Priority Action:**

- *Scope growth in construction investment and work with sector to prepare*

### ***Distribution - Wholesale & Retail***

This sector comprises both wholesale and retail distribution, and represents about 17% of total employment. In both towns, retail is by far the larger part of the sector - over 80% of distribution employment - but it is noticeable that in Weymouth, where wholesale distribution is more restricted to serving a local area, retail is almost 90%, i.e. 15% of all jobs in the town. On trend-based projections, this sector is set to grow significantly and will provide 40% of total employment growth in the towns. If this growth replicates existing patterns, it will place strong demands for sites and premises in town centres and peripheral areas of the towns - though a significant proportion of this growth is likely to be in part-time employment.

There are several important issues if this sector is to contribute positively to the local economy. A key issue will be ensuring availability of suitable sites (in addition to the current proposals for Charles Street and the Brewery site in Dorchester) which can accommodate retailer requirements particularly for quality high street retailers and for quality specialist retailers. These issues should be considered and appropriate sites of sufficient capacity identified through the current Town Centre and Retail study. Skills and business development issues will also be important, particularly if good quality employment is to be achieved.

**Current Employment Total: Weymouth - 4,750; Dorchester - 3,150**

**Sector Target:**

- *to accommodate projected growth in distribution in both towns, providing growth of up to 1,500 FTE jobs, but with effort to attempt to create better quality, full-time jobs. Particular attention will be needed to identifying sites for retail development within town centres.*

**Priority Actions:**

- *Town Centre development plans*
- *Skills Development initiatives*
- *Create opportunities for leisure and retail focus in Weymouth*

**"Step Change" Priority Actions:**

- *identification of sites for improved "high street" retail in Weymouth and growth of "quality retail" in Dorchester*

### ***Knowledge Based Industries***

Knowledge-Based Industries do not form a discrete sector in the analysis and projections, but are relevant for comment as they are considered to be the key to the success of the

economy in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, adding value, raising productivity and supporting higher incomes through applications of particular knowledge and skills. Weymouth has strengths, for instance in education, electronics, advanced engineering and the marine sector; Dorchester in health, public services and creative industries. KBI represent approximately 20% of employment overall, but over 30% in Dorchester and 16% in Weymouth (particularly influenced by the location of the hospital in Dorchester).

Projections indicate the potential for growth in business services, education, health to create over 1300 new jobs in KBI, but the majority of this (over 70%) is likely to be within Dorchester.

Both towns need to build on their existing strengths and to foster the growth of new enterprises. Initiatives should seek ways to “spin out” business opportunities from existing hubs - e.g. from hospitals and colleges. Critical issues will be skills development, diversification of the local economies, and availability of sites and premises to house modern employment sectors - this is a particular challenge for Weymouth.

***Current Employment Total: Weymouth - 3,650; Dorchester - 4,550***

***Sector Target:***

- ***to stimulate significant levels of growth in KBIs in both towns, but with particular attention to Weymouth. In Dorchester there needs to be work to capture the potential growth of at least 1,000 jobs; in Weymouth, a key issue is to provide quality business premises in appropriate locations to increase growth above trend to a target of at least 1,000 jobs.***

***Priority Actions:***

- ***Sites and Premises***
- ***Skills Development***
- ***Communications Infrastructure***
- ***Sector development initiatives, particularly creative industries***

***“Step Change” Priority Actions:***

- ***(see below re key sectors)***
- ***creative industries cluster development***

## ***Business Services***

This sector currently provides about 10% of jobs in Weymouth and 13% in Dorchester. It comprises a range of largely office-based occupations including banks, estate agents, professional services (architects, lawyers, accountants, etc.), computer hardware and software, design and so on - so includes many important elements of the creative and knowledge-based industries. Much of the existing employment relates to local markets of local residents and businesses, with only a limited amount working for clients further afield; however, trends of electronic communications are increasingly opening up remote markets, and Weymouth and Dorchester could provide attractive locations for growth if suitable premises are available, particularly in town centres; if suitable support skills are available; and if strategic transport links are improved. Good growth is forecast, but should be targeted for higher rates of growth through targeted initiatives.

***Current Employment Total: Weymouth - 3,100; Dorchester - 2,500***

***Sector Target:***

- ***to support the projected levels of growth in business services sectors by attention to sites and premises particularly in town centre locations, and to skills and transport issues. A target for planning for an additional 3,500 jobs in the two towns should be adopted.***

***Priority Actions:***

- ***Sites and Premises***
- ***Town Centre development***
- ***Skills development***
- ***Strategic transport and communications infrastructure***

***“Step Change” Priority Actions:***

- *iconic sustainable premises demonstration projects, Weymouth & Dorchester*
- *(priority) identification of sites for development*

***Public Administration (includes Defence)***

Public Administration is a major employment sector in both towns, but particularly in Dorchester where it makes up over 20% of employment. In Weymouth it is about 14% of the town, a distribution that does not reflect the size of populations or the total employment in the towns. This has implications for the nature and level of skills within the towns, and for incomes.

It is difficult to predict the overall scale and distribution of public administration employment, as there is much current interest in comparing alternative models of service delivery. Projections assume that there will be virtually no change in the number employed, so this sector is not considered as part of a growth strategy. As part of an overall strategy to diversify the local economies of the two towns it may be worth considering the potential to redress the balance of employment in this sector by concentrating more public administration functions in Weymouth, closer to consumers - using the vehicle of an innovative delivery project to create modern approaches to the delivery of public services.

***Current Employment Total: Weymouth - 3,800; Dorchester - 3,750***

***Sector Target:***

- *to make provision for maintaining the existing levels of employment in the public administration sector but consider the potential to focus more functions and employment in Weymouth*

***Priority Actions:***

- *Integrate service delivery plans with Economic Vision*

***“Step Change” Priority Actions:***

- *public administration delivery project, Weymouth*

***Education and Health***

Education and Health are important elements of the local economy - not just for their contribution to the range of services supporting the local community and contributing to the quality of life in the area - but also as major local employment sectors. At present they are well-represented with nearly 10,000 jobs divided equally between the towns, and they are projected to grow significantly, contributing nearly 45% of net growth of the economy. Dorchester is particularly strong in the health sector; Weymouth includes Weymouth College providing FE and some HE and vocational courses.

There is a need to broaden range of FE courses & link to business, especially to key sectors; and to prepare for business opportunities provided by 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

In the health sector, there is a need for workforce development linked to initiatives to enhance service delivery; and there are social inclusion issues which could affect priorities and the location of service delivery. There may be potential to develop business growth initiatives linked to this focus of the health sector.

Both sectors will need space in which to develop new facilities, and it is particularly important that this is planned and delivered because the two sectors are such important contributors to the knowledge-based economy.



***Current Employment Total: Weymouth - 4,950; Dorchester - 4,950***

***Sector Target:***

- *to support the projected levels of growth in education and health sectors in both towns particularly by attention to sites and premises, and to skills, issues. In Dorchester there needs to be work to capture the potential growth of at least a 1,200 jobs and to consider further related initiatives; in Weymouth, the target should be at least 1,300 jobs.*

***Priority Actions:***

- *Skills Development*
- *Sites and Premises*
- *Business Development initiatives*

***“Step Change” Priority Actions:***

- *health sector business innovation project, Dorchester*
- *further/higher education development project, Weymouth*

### ***Miscellaneous Services***

This sector includes a diverse range of activities, including cultural activities and media, such as radio, TV, theatres, museums, recreational leisure and sports, as well as domestic services such as hairdressers and other services. These services are generally “population driven” and therefore likely to grow in line with increased population numbers. The sector may therefore grow significantly in both Weymouth and Dorchester - though in % terms the growth in Dorchester may be particularly high.

The sector presents a range of skills and premises requirements. For the purposes of this Vision, it will be particularly important to focus on the cultural aspects, and to consider the particular premises needs and priorities to use cultural development to drive the growth of the towns.

***Current Employment Total: Weymouth - 1,050; Dorchester - 900***

***Sector Target:***

- *to support the projected levels of growth in the miscellaneous sector - particularly cultural industries - in both towns particularly by attention to sites and premises issues. In Dorchester there needs to be work to capture the potential growth of at least 400 jobs and to consider further related initiatives; in Weymouth, the target should be at least 800 jobs.*

***Priority Actions:***

- *Skills Development*
- *Sites and Premises*
- *Business Development initiatives*

***“Step Change” Priority Actions:***

- *cultural facilities and cultural industries development, Weymouth & Dorchester*

## Strategy

The Strategy for Weymouth and Dorchester focusses on achieving high-level aspirations for sustainable economic growth of the two complementary towns.

It aims to achieve the Visions set out for the towns, through a co-ordinated series of projects targetted at the key sectors and key issues identified earlier.

It will depend on effective partnership working between the key partners to this study and the wider stakeholder groups.

In order to help organise and prioritise actions, the Vision and Strategy are developed through a series of Strategic Objectives, which then structure a proposed Project Action Plan, as follows:

### *Strategic Objectives*

From this analysis of Vision, Strategic Priorities and Consultations, and an appreciation of the potential for growth in key sectors, it is evident that there are a number of fundamental issues which set the context for economic change.

Some of these fundamental issues need a response through development initiatives and relate very strongly to Regional Spatial Strategy and Local Development Framework issues. The response to these issues may be termed *Strategic Development Objectives*.

Alongside these Strategic Development Options are a number of *Strategic Economic Growth Objectives*, which establish responses to the other factors affecting the economic growth of Weymouth and Dorchester.

The Strategic Objectives acknowledge the importance of several “cross-cutting themes”, which should be borne in mind in all proposals and initiatives. These themes feed into the priorities which have been identified, and should also inform individual actions:

- Sustainable Development - all development proposals, transport infrastructure and buildings should seek to achieve high standards of sustainability in design, use of materials and construction. Tourism development should respect principles of sustainable tourism and reflect sensitive environments in towns, coast and countryside. The Vision could be extended to include an aspiration of raising standards to seek zero-carbon development and the principles of “eco-towns”
- Social Inclusion - the priority given to affordable housing, raising skills and raising incomes is important in supporting social inclusion, providing economic opportunity to all residents and supporting households throughout the towns and surrounding areas. It will be important to integrate these priorities with other initiatives to support social inclusion
- Effective Partnership - there are already well-established partnership networks at local authority, inter-authority and sub-regional levels, and recent work through the LSP, DSP and LAA systems should provide effective linkages. It will be important to use these networks to agree, prioritise and target issues within this Vision

## **Strategic Development Objectives**

### **1. The nature and location of economic growth**

Both towns have somewhat skewed local economies, which are vulnerable to change in key sectors, and undermine their ability to develop as sustainable towns providing employment opportunities and the full range of services and facilities to all residents.

While Weymouth needs to retain and strengthen its current base in manufacturing, town centre functions, and tourism, it also needs to diversify into growing sectors of leisure (e.g. watersports, allied to tourism); culture; businesses services; and public services including growth in public administration, education and health.

Dorchester needs to diversify away from its public services focus in education, health and public administration into growing sectors of the private sector business economy, including creative industries, business services, and town centre functions including retail, leisure, and cultural industries.

**The Strategic Development Objective is to :**

- **plan to accommodate a step change in economic growth to 2026 comprising 7,000 additional jobs in Weymouth and 5,000 additional jobs in Dorchester and to stimulate this growth through development in attractive new locations within and around the towns, including key projects to create high value, good quality jobs in key sectors**

### **2. The scale and location of housing growth**

Housing development supports the local economy by providing a range of types of housing and new affordable housing to accommodate the local labourforce, so helping to ensure the right range of age groups and skills - and accommodating households whose spending plays an important part in the local economy. Appropriate housing development helps to support social inclusion and provide economic opportunity for residents. Draft RSS housing figures have been accepted by Weymouth & Portland BC and West Dorset DC - however the recent Panel Report from the EiP of dRSS now needs to be considered.

It appears likely that housing allocations at the level proposed in dRSS and the Panel Report will support a reasonable balance of labour supply and demand within the local labour market. It is essential that this housing growth is delivered within the appropriate plan periods - and in particular that sites are identified in and around Dorchester.

**The Strategic Development Objective is to :**

- **plan to accommodate RSS housing targets to 2026 (currently proposed at Weymouth - 5,000 dwellings; Dorchester - 4,000 dwellings, but note the Panel Report proposals of 5,700 and 7,000 respectively) in appropriate locations, to provide high quality housing in sustainable patterns of living and movement, and with appropriate levels of affordable housing as a priority**

### **3. Town Centres**

Both Weymouth and Dorchester town centres will need to adapt to changing economic circumstances, particularly growth in resident populations and the general shift towards knowledge-based, service sector employment. Both town centres also need to improve their range of cultural and leisure facilities to serve residents and visitors, and to improve their profile with businesses. There is an opportunity to plan for investment in terms of new shops, offices and other facilities, with an enhanced quality of environment - if appropriate sites can be found. In Weymouth the challenge will be to identify and/or assemble deliverable sites for investment; in Dorchester the main challenge will be to find appropriate sites (beyond those already identified at Charles Street and the Brewery) within an attractive historic environment. The current Town Centres study will need to address these issues.

**The Strategic Development Objective is to :**

- **plan to expand and enhance the town centres' facilities and premises to accommodate growth in retail, leisure, cultural facilities, offices, housing and**

*other facilities to meet the needs of the growing population and economic change and creating vibrant, dynamic new centres of business and employment*

#### **4. Strategic Transport and Communications**

The Weymouth Relief Road is a critical piece of infrastructure in terms of the future of the Weymouth & Portland economy and it is to be hoped that it will proceed quickly. However, it can only contribute a part of the response to the problems of accessibility for Weymouth and Dorchester. There is a need for other improvements including rail services to both towns, park and ride and other sustainable transport measures within the towns; and attention to the problems of access through Weymouth Town Centre and to Portland. Portland Port provides important opportunities to develop passenger and freight transport but will need attention to land-side facilities and access.

***The Strategic Development Objective is to :***

- ***plan to maximise opportunities for sustainable travel and transport through preparation of sustainable travel plans; encouraging use of public transport; improving strategic road, rail and sea and public transport infrastructure; implementing high quality cycle and pedestrian routes; and developing more sustainable patterns of living and movement.***

### *Strategic Economic Growth Objectives*

Strategic Economic Growth Objectives are grouped under four headings, to provide a rational framework for programming and also to provide linkages to other strategies, notably "Raising the Game", the Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Economic Development Strategy 2005 - 2016

More detailed proposals are provided in the "Action Plan".

### *Physical Infrastructure*

The priorities for Physical Infrastructure fall under three main headings:

- Transport Infrastructure
- Sites and Premises
- Communications

Each is essential to provide the infrastructure to support economic growth, and it is essential that there is planning and investment activity throughout the plan periods. The 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games are an important target date, as strategic and local transport improvements must be in place for the sailing events and spectators. Improvements to strategic transport by road, rail and sea are all important to Weymouth & Portland, and must be a high priority; while it is also important to consider ways to improve local travel, particularly by public transport, cycling and walking. The Strategic Development Objective refers to these issues; they need to be carried through into specific actions around and within the towns to ensure sustainable growth and business accessibility. The priority for Sites and Premises is to ensure adequate supply of sites suitable to target growth sectors. This will include the need for good, deliverable town centre sites to accommodate KBI/service sector jobs, retail growth and public services. It will be important to continue to protect and make available sites for marine and engineering sectors; and specific initiatives should look at the needs of the education and health sectors, particularly the potential to develop commercial business growth alongside hospitals and colleges. Communications infrastructure is essential to viable public sector and commercial development. Normally it is successfully delivered within and around towns on a commercial basis by network and service providers. Given the scale and specific requirements of public sector procurement in health, police, etc., and the potential for the towns to stimulate growth in creative industries and KBIs in general it may be worth promoting initiatives to ensure the highest possible broadband speeds and capacity - creating "wired" towns.

***The Strategic Economic Growth Objective for Physical Infrastructure is to :***

- ***Implement strategic and local transport infrastructure improvements to improve transport connectivity and sustainable movement***
- ***Ensure an adequate supply of suitable sites and premises to meet sector growth needs and opportunities***
- ***Promote initiatives to enhance and extend digital connectivity***

### *Skills and Workforce Development*

It is clear that Weymouth and Dorchester need to keep a strong focus on skills and workforce development. Weymouth particularly to support skills in key sectors - marine, engineering, tourism - and generally throughout the workforce to increase productivity and wages. In Dorchester there are skills issues related to existing key sectors, particularly health, which need to be addressed to maximise the potential value of growth. There are very well established processes for planning and delivering skills development programmes which in recent years have increasingly been able to build partnerships between businesses and skills training providers, and to use a raft of initiatives including apprenticeships and other training programmes. Work with Weymouth College, training providers and the Learning and Skills Council should be the focus of skills development initiatives.

It is essential that these initiatives are maintained and developed. Priorities highlighted in the Economic Vision are:

***The Strategic Economic Growth Objective for Skills and Workforce Development is to support:***

- *Skills initiatives for key growth sectors, to be continued throughout the plan period*
- *Skills initiatives, linked to business competitiveness initiatives and other planning for the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games and Legacy*
- *Skills initiatives for important sectors of tourism and retail, to safeguard jobs, improve quality and increase productivity and earnings*

### ***Business Competitiveness, Enterprise & Innovation***

A key feature of the Vision is to set the right business environment in which individual firms can thrive, innovate and grow, competing effectively in local and wider markets, building on the assets and opportunities available within the towns.

This strategy will depend on the following, in addition to the skills development initiatives addressed above:

- Targetted business support initiatives relating to the specific markets, business models and technologies of businesses in identified key growth sectors - marine, advanced engineering, KBIs
- Business support specifically designed for tourism and retail development
- Provision of sites and premises suitable for the particular business needs of indigenous industries and inward investors, particularly in these key growth sectors
- Initiatives to identify special projects which may be developed with partners or stakeholders in key growth sectors - for instance medi-park business development alongside hospital or Marine Sector Centre of Excellence combining facilities and services to support enterprise development, innovation, business support and training.

***The Strategic Economic Growth Objective for Business Competitiveness, Innovation and Enterprise is to support:***

- *Cluster development in key industries - particularly marine, advanced engineering, tourism/leisure, creative, cultural, and health sectors*
- *Business Innovation and Networking*
- *Entrepreneurship*

### ***Partnership Working***

A key factor in achieving successful sustainable economic growth in the towns will be co-ordinated planning, investment and action. This needs to take place both within the public sector - particularly through those agencies which are planning and investing, such as local authorities, South West RDA and colleges - and between the public sector and the private sector.

There are now various networks and linkages. It may be worthwhile considered establishing a special Weymouth & Dorchester Economic Group to oversee promotion of the Vision and monitor progress against the Action Plan.

***The Strategic Economic Growth Objective for Partnership Working is to encourage:***

- *Co-ordination of plans and programmes for development, regeneration and infrastructure in the towns*
- *Prioritising and targeting spend within the towns to maximise sustainable economic benefits*
- *Dialogue and liaison between public and private sectors to implement the Vision*

## PROJECT ACTION PLAN

- 1.1 The Project Action Plan reflects the Strategic Objectives set out in the Vision for Weymouth & Dorchester.
- 1.2 The Plan focusses on the next 5 - 10 year period during which time actions can be planned, programmed and implemented towards achieving the Vision. Around 2015 the Vision and Action Plan should be reviewed and further actions identified. The Action Plan should be extended and applied through discussion by partners to achieve a management and monitoring tool
- 1.3 The Vision sets out a total of eight objectives. The first four are high-level strategic development objectives, which will be achieved partly through planning and investment decisions outside the scope of this study; but partly through actions which are then related to the four Economic Growth Objectives:

### **STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES**

*The Strategic Development Objective for Employment Growth is to :*

- *plan to accommodate growth projections to 2026 (Weymouth - 4,500 jobs; Dorchester - 3,000 jobs) and to stimulate and accommodate this growth in attractive new locations within and around the towns, including key projects to create high value, good quality jobs in key sectors*

*The Strategic Development Objective for Housing Growth is to:*

- *plan to accommodate RSS allocated housing targets to 2026 (currently proposed at Weymouth - 5,000 dwellings; Dorchester - 4,000 dwellings, but note the Panel Report proposals of 5,700 and 7,000 respectively) in appropriate locations within and around the towns, to provide high quality housing in sustainable patterns of living and movement, and with appropriate levels of affordable housing as a priority*

*The Strategic Development Objective for Town Centres is to :*

- *plan to expand and enhance the town centres' facilities and premises to accommodate growth in retail, leisure, cultural facilities, offices, housing and other facilities to meet the needs of the growing population and economic change and creating vibrant, dynamic new centres of business and employment*

*The Strategic Development Objective for Strategic Transport and Communications is to :*

- *plan to improve strategic road, rail and sea infrastructure and public transport, cycle and pedestrian routes and services to support business needs and develop more sustainable patterns of living and movement.*

## ***STRATEGIC ECONOMIC GROWTH OBJECTIVES***

***The Strategic Economic Growth Objective for Physical Infrastructure is to :***

- ***Implement strategic and local transport infrastructure improvements to improve transport connectivity and sustainable movement***
- ***Ensure an adequate supply of suitable sites and premises to meet sector growth needs and opportunities***
- ***Promote initiatives to enhance and extend digital connectivity***

***The Strategic Economic Growth Objective for Skills and Workforce Development is to support:***

- ***Skills initiatives for key growth sectors, to be continued throughout the plan period***
- ***Skills initiatives, linked to business competitiveness initiatives and other planning for the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games and Legacy***
- ***Skills initiatives for important sectors of tourism and retail, to safeguard jobs, improve quality and increase productivity and earnings***

***The Strategic Economic Growth Objective for Business Competitiveness, Innovation and Enterprise is to support:***

- ***Cluster development in key industries - particularly marine, advanced engineering, tourism/leisure, creative, cultural, and health sectors***
- ***Business Innovation and Networking***
- ***Entrepreneurship***

***The Strategic Economic Growth Objective for Partnership Working is to encourage:***

- ***Co-ordination of plans and programmes for development, regeneration and infrastructure in the towns***
- ***Prioritising and targetting spend within the towns to maximise sustainable economic benefits***
- ***Dialogue and liaison between public and private sectors to implement the Vision***



Strategic Objective	Project / Initiative	Lead Partner/ Key Delivery Organisation	Implementation
<b>Employment Growth</b>	<i>Adopt growth targets and plan for growth</i>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partners to agree overall targets and sector targets and proposals in the "Vision" and "Strategy"</li> </ul>	DCC/W&PBC/WDDC/SW RDA	2008
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Town Centre, employment land and workspace strategies to reflect targets and proposals in the "Vision" and "Strategy"</li> </ul>	DCC/W&PBC/WDDC/SW RDA	2008
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sector studies to confirm specific premises needs/ opportunities based on the analysis in the "Vision", "Strategy" and "Evidence Base", especially re key growth sectors - marine, advanced engineering, environmental technologies/renewable energy; knowledge-based industries (including health and education)</li> </ul>	DCC/W&PBC/WDDC/SW RDA	2008
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitor change and review targets</li> </ul>	DCC/W&PBC/WDDC/SW RDA	2011, 2016, 2021
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Other initiatives - below</li> </ul>		
<b>Housing Growth</b>	<i>Adopt growth targets and plan for growth</i>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partners to agree overall targets, priority needs and locations through the LDF process</li> </ul>	DCC/W&PBC/WDDC	2008
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete joint Weymouth/Dorchester SHLAA, site studies and investigations to identify sites for all housing growth to 2026</li> </ul>	DCC/W&PBC/WDDC/SW RDA	2008 - 2012
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete all planning processes necessary to confirm sites</li> </ul>	DCC/W&PBC/WDDC/SW	2008 - 2010

	for growth at appropriate locations	RDA	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Monitor change and review priorities &amp; targets</li> </ul>	DCC/W&PBC/WDDC/SW RDA	2011, 2016, 2021
<b>Town Centres</b>	<i>Plan to enhance and expand town centres facilities and premises</i>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Complete Town Centres study and review to ensure provision for Economic Vision</li> </ul>	DCC/W&PBC/WDDC/SW RDA	2008
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Encourage plans for Brewery and Charles Street sites and ensure they conform to Vision</li> </ul>	WDDC	2008
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Town Centre retail</li> </ul> <p>Improve the offer of Dorchester town centre, including quality retail. Continue support for the Charles Street and Brewery developments.</p> <p>Consider and develop recommendations regarding retail requirements to come from the Retail &amp; Town Centre Study and develop and implement through planning and development processes, including Weymouth Town Centre Area Action Plan, identifying key sites for improvement to Weymouth retail offer.</p> <p>Target development of the leisure industry and key facilities.</p> <p>Support the Harbour Traders Association in order to improve Weymouth Old Harbour (Vision 2020)</p>	Local Authorities, County Council, Weymouth Harbour Traders Association, Private sector	2008 - 2014
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Town Centre environment</li> </ul> <p>Continue to upgrade the quality of the town centres. In particular support and extend work on:</p> <p>Weymouth - Townscape Heritage Initiative including Weymouth</p>	Local Authorities, County Council, Private sector	2008 - 2014

	Esplanade and the Pavilions scheme		
	Dorchester - Dorchester Transport & Environment Plan		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Cultural &amp; leisure facilities</li> </ul> <p>Continue support for provision of additional facilities to support Dorchester's County town status. Projects include improved leisure/recreational/conference/arts venues.</p> <p>Identify opportunities (and implement) for facilities in Weymouth Town Centre</p>	Local Authorities, County Council, Dorset County Hospital Foundation Trust, Private sector.	2008 - 2016
<b>Strategic Transport &amp; Communications</b>	<i>Plan to improve strategic road, rail and sea infrastructure and public transport, cycle and pedestrian routes and services</i>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Work with relevant departments and agencies (?is there a need to establish a Weymouth &amp; West Dorset transport working group)</li> </ul>	DCC/W&PBC/WDDC/SW RDA	2008 - 2010, onwards
<b>Physical Infrastructure</b>	<i>Implement strategic and local transport infrastructure improvements to improve transport connectivity and sustainable movement</i>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Weymouth Relief Road</li> </ul>	Local Authorities, County Council, RDA	2008 - 2012
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Improvements on the Bristol - Weymouth line</li> </ul>	Local Authorities, County Council, Rail Partnerships,	2008-2010, onwards
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Keep under review the need for improved frequency, quality &amp; speed of rail services from Weymouth to London (Waterloo) and negotiate improvements</li> </ul>	Local Authorities, County Council, Rail Partnerships,	2010 - 2020
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Public transport improvements - cycle paths between Weymouth &amp; Dorchester, park &amp; ride, bus priority measures</li> </ul>	Local Authorities, County Council	2008-2012, onwards
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Weymouth Ferry Terminal Improvements</li> </ul>	Local Authorities, Private sector	2008-2010

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Increase flexible, accessible &amp; affordable transport solutions e.g. demand responsive services,</li> </ul>	Local Authorities, County Council, SWRDA	2008-2012, onwards
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Refurbished Weymouth bus interchange</li> </ul>	Local Authorities, County Council	2008-2012
<b><i>Ensure an adequate supply of suitable sites and premises to meet sector growth needs and opportunities</i></b>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Industrial, warehousing, office sites - review growth requirements, current opportunities and supply; identify new sites especially in Weymouth and Dorchester</li> </ul>	Local Authorities, County Council, Private sector	2008 onwards
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Specialist sites - identify sites particularly for marine, creative industries, health sector business development</li> </ul>	Local Authorities, Chesil Marine Network, SHA/Health Trust, SWRDA, Private sector.	2008 onwards
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Sector Premises Demonstration Projects/Business Incubators/Innovation Centres - particularly iconic sustainable business premises demonstrators, creative industries clusters, health sector business park</li> </ul>	Local Authorities, County Council, SWRDA, Marine South West, Private sector	2010 - 2014
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Osprey Quay/Portland Marina</li> </ul> <p>Ensure continuing development support to these key employment/development sites. Maintain the high quality of these sites &amp; showcase the developments e.g. Sailing Academy, marina &amp; new housing in order to increase the profile of the area.</p> <p>Support development of the "Castle Court" eight-acre scheme including hotel, apartments, business units, etc.</p> <p>Develop Marine Centre of Excellence, linking Osprey Quay, Castle Court and other businesses to marine sector business support, 2012 initiatives, skills training, active leisure, sports training and marketing.</p>	Local Authorities, SWRDA, Private sector, WPNSA	2008 - 2012, onwards

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 2012 Infrastructure</li> </ul> <p>There are a number of key projects required in order to implement the 2012 sailing events - Relief Road, Park &amp; Ride, Osprey Quay, Sailing Academy expansion &amp; Portland Marina. Continued support and pressure to deliver these projects is clearly key to the success and ability to maximize the potential of the event.</p> <p>There is further potential to capitalise on the potential of this event - projects meeting accommodation, marine sector, tourism &amp; marketing opportunities should be explored and supported where possible.</p>	Local Authorities, County Council, SWRDA, South West Tourism, Marine South West, Private sector	2008-2012
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Tourism Infrastructure</li> </ul> <p>Ensure development of a high quality 4/5 star hotel. Support development of the Weymouth Pavilions scheme which includes a 4 star hotel.</p> <p>Explore opportunities to upgrade the quality of the tourism offer whilst maintaining the high quality of the natural environment.</p> <p>Active leisure facilities and business networks developments</p>	Local Authorities, County Council, SWRDA, SWT, Private sector	2008 - 2012, onwards
	<b><i>Promote initiatives to enhance and extend digital connectivity</i></b>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Prepare an ICT infrastructure strategy for Weymouth &amp; Dorchester, including review of potential for public sector demand aggregation and network development and the need/potential for wireless technologies</li> </ul>	Local Authorities, County Council, health, police, education, etc. & Private sector	2008 - 2009
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Seek to implement highest standards network in all new developments</li> </ul>	Local Authorities, County Council, Private sector	2008 onwards
	<b><i>Prepare SPD for Planning Obligations to support premises/infrastructure development</i></b>		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Prepare Planning Obligations strategies for Weymouth &amp; Portland and Dorchester/West Dorset, including review of existing approach to obligations to support new requirements focussed on securing necessary premises and infrastructure</li> </ul>	Local Authorities	2008 - 2010
<b>Skills &amp; Workforce Development</b>	<p><b><i>Skills initiatives for key growth sectors, to be continued throughout the plan period</i></b></p> <p><b><i>Skills initiatives, linked to business competitiveness initiatives and other planning for the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games and Legacy</i></b></p> <p><b><i>Skills initiatives for important sectors of tourism and retail, to safeguard jobs, improve quality and increase productivity and earnings</i></b></p>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Basic skills</li> </ul> <p>Raise the standard of basic skills across all age groups. More skills and qualifications at levels 2 &amp; 3 should be sought. Particular efforts should also be made to raise customer service skills. Projects such as 'Get Set Go! (Weymouth College) should be further promoted.</p>	LSC, Connexions, Weymouth College, HE establishments, Local Authorities, Jobcentre Plus, training providers	2008 onwards
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 14-19 Strategy</li> </ul> <p>Continue to support and develop the 14-19 strategy which improves collaboration between education &amp; business, improves awareness of local business, increases participation in vocational education and encourages enterprise as a viable career choice.</p>	LSC, Connexions, Weymouth College, HE establishments, Local Authorities, Jobcentre Plus, training providers	2007 onwards
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Encourage retention / attraction of graduates</li> </ul> <p>Ensure opportunities are made available for skilled employment by assisting the development of high growth, value added businesses (see sites and premises)</p>		2008 onwards
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Improve skills &amp; learning in the workplace through employer led training.</li> </ul>	LSC, Connexions, Weymouth College, HE establishments, Local	2008 onwards

	<p>Consultations have highlighted that significant numbers of companies provide their own in-house training. Further encouragement &amp; support of initiatives such as Train to Gain is required to ensure that employer needs are met. Efforts will be made to ensure training organisations themselves can recruit suitably skilled trainers.</p>	<p>Authorities, Jobcentre Plus, Paragon Training, other training providers</p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 2012</li> </ul> <p>Ensure that the workforce is equipped with the necessary skills and qualifications to meet the skills requirements of the 2012 Games. This will include raising skills levels in the relevant sectors (tourism, marine, service) and enhancing skills in languages &amp; customers service.</p>	<p>LSC, Connexions, Weymouth College, HE establishments, Local Authorities, Jobcentre Plus, Paragon Training</p>	<p>2008 - 2014</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Marine Centre of Vocational Excellence</li> </ul> <p>Develop a new Centre of Excellence and provide links (virtual &amp; site based) with the Marine Skills Centre in Poole. Assist with marine training and development issues. Explore opportunities to develop a business incubator for marine businesses</p>	<p>SW RDA, Local Authorities, County Council, Marine South West, Chesil Marine Network.</p>	<p>2010 onwards</p>
<p><b>Business Competitiveness, Enterprise &amp; Innovation</b></p>	<p><i>Skills initiatives for key growth sectors, to be continued throughout the plan period</i></p>		
	<p><i>Skills initiatives, linked to business competitiveness initiatives and other planning for the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games and Legacy</i></p>		
	<p><i>Skills initiatives for important sectors of tourism and retail, to safeguard jobs, improve quality and increase productivity and earnings</i></p>		
	<p><i>Promote development of the Marine Sector</i></p>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Implement Osprey Quay &amp; marina proposals</li> </ul>	<p>SWRDA, Local Authorities, Council Council, Chesil Marine Network, Marine South West</p>	<p>2008 - 2012</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Explore opportunities to develop a marine sector innovation</li> </ul>	<p>SWRDA, Local Authorities, Council</p>	<p>2008 - 2012</p>

	& incubation centre (with Centre of Excellence)	Council, Chesil Marine Network, Marine South West	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with Sunseeker and other key marine businesses to ensure employer site and workforce requirements are supported</li> </ul>	SWRDA, Local Authorities, Private sector	2008 - 2012, onwards
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with Portland Port to improve facilities and seek to increase the availability of employment land/premises.</li> </ul>	Portland Port, Local Authorities, SWRDA	2008 - 2012
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement Ferry Terminal proposals</li> </ul>	Local Authorities, County Council, Private sector	2008 -2010
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with employers and trainers in preparation for 2012 to ensure businesses maximise the opportunities presented by the Games.</li> </ul>	LSC, Local Authorities, County Council, Private sector, Paragon Training	2008 - 2012
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Market Weymouth marine sector opportunities and site availability pre 2012.</li> </ul> <p>Build on the current marine sector audit (WPC) to market the existing marine sector strengths. Highlight opportunities - Osprey Quay, Portland Port, Bingleaves etc for marine sector use.</p>	SWRDA, Local Authorities, Council Council, Chesil Marine Network, Marine South West	2008 -2012
	<i>Promote the development of the advanced engineering sector</i>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop facilities for advanced manufacturing techniques e.g. prototyping and lean manufacturing</li> </ul>	SWRDA, Local Authorities, Council Council, Granby & Lynch Lane Business Forum	2008 -2012
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Form a local employers advanced engineering group to share business support &amp; skills training</li> </ul>	Business Link, Granby & Lynch Lane Business Forum, Local Authorities, LSC	2008 -2010



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote joint initiatives aimed at the advanced engineering sector.</li> </ul>	LSC, Local Authorities, County Council, Private sector, Paragon Training, Business Link, Granby & Lynch Lane Business Forum,	2008 -2010
	<i>Support development of year round, high value tourism</i>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote the World Heritage Site designation and identify additional opportunities attached to this.</li> </ul>	Local Authorities, County Council, SWT	2008 onwards
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop Weymouth &amp; Portland as a Centre of Excellence for marine businesses in leisure/watersports</li> </ul>	Local Authorities, County Council, SWT, RDA	2008 - 2012, onwards
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support developments identified through the Strategic Marketing Plan in order to improve the effectiveness of partnership work in the tourism industry and private organisations.</li> </ul>	Local Authorities, County Council, SWT, RDA	2008 -2012
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maximise opportunities for businesses during the 2012 Games.</li> </ul>	Local Authorities, County Council, SWT, RDA, LSC	2008 -2012
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dorset DMO</li> </ul> <p>Support the aims &amp; recommendations of the Destination Management Partnership. These seek to make the most of the unique tourism and natural assets the area has to offer, reduce duplication and enable local associations and tourism partnerships to work better, , improve seasonality aimed at creating a year-round tourist destination and maximise the potential of hosting the sailing events for the London 2012 Games and the World Heritage Status.</p> <p>Include focus on development of active leisure, and related facilities and business development</p>	Local Authorities, County Council, SWT, RDA, Dorset DMP, LSC	2008 onwards
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support physical redevelopment/regeneration programmes to upgrade the built environment e.g. Pavilion Ferry</li> </ul>	Local Authorities, County Council, RDA, Portland	2007 onwards

	Terminal, Townscape Heritage Initiative, Resort Regeneration	Port, Private sector	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Improve tourism marketing for Dorchester</li> </ul> <p>Dorchester has limited tourism facilities but forthcoming developments (Brewery, &amp; Charles St) and a larger market (2012 publicity) provide an opportunity to attract higher levels of visitors.</p>	Local Authorities, County Council, SWT, Private sector	2008 onwards
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Tourism &amp; place marketing for Weymouth in 2012.</li> </ul> <p>Ensure that the Strategic Marketing Plan promotes Weymouth &amp; Portland to a range of markets but particularly supports businesses targeting higher value, higher quality tourism. Ensure that the diverse range of opportunities within the town are promoted - WHS, marine activities, traditional family etc</p>	Local Authorities, County Council, SWT, Private sector	2008 onwards
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Dorset place marketing</li> </ul> <p>Ensure that Dorset marketing initiatives highlight the tourism offer in both Weymouth &amp; Dorchester.</p>	Local Authorities, County Council, SWT, Private sector	2008 onwards
	<i>Entrepreneurship</i>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Encourage higher levels of start-ups</li> </ul> <p>Provide training &amp; support for business start-ups. Ensure higher levels of survival through appropriate training, mentoring and availability/signposting of start-up /venture capital and other support mechanisms e.g. assistance in locating/developing premises.</p>	Local Authorities, County Council, SWRDA, Marine South West, Business Link	2008-2010, onwards

Partnership Working	<i>Co-ordination of plans and programmes for development, regeneration and infrastructure in the towns</i>		
	<i>Prioritising and targetting spend within the towns to maximise sustainable economic benefit</i>		
	<i>Dialogue and liaison between public and private sectors to implement the Vision</i>		
	○ Confirm strategies for agreed key sectors (marine, advanced engineering, creative industries, cultural industries, health, education and tourism) and prepare 10 year plans	Local Authorities, County Council, SWRDA, Marine South West, Granby & Lynch Land Business Forum	2008 - 2009
	○ Develop image of Weymouth as a special location for marine sector/port/advanced engineering; and as a year round tourism & leisure destination.	Local Authorities, County Council, SWRDA, Marine South West, SWT, 2012 Team	2008 -2010
	○ Develop image of Dorchester as a high quality business environment, public service and cultural centre for residents and employees.	Local Authorities, County Council, SWRDA, Duchy of Cornwall	2008 onwards
	○ Work with partners to implement town centre & other physical infrastructure plans	Local Authorities, County Council, SWRDA, Duchy of Cornwall, Private sector	2007 - 2016
	○ Work with housing associations, Housing Corporation & developers to achieve affordable housing	Local Authorities, County Council, Duchy of Cornwall, Private sector	On-going
○ Resolve key strategic development priorities re: RSS and LDF's	Local Authorities, County Council, SWRDA.	2008 - 2012	



## STRATEGY : KEY DATA FROM THE EVIDENCE BASE

### Productivity - 2004 GVA /head

Area	GVA £ per head	Index UK=100
United Kingdom	£ 17,451	100
South West	£ 16,141	94
Wiltshire CC	£ 15,425	90
Dorset CC	£ 12,250	72
Devon CC	£ 13,240	77

Source: ONS, NUTS3 GVA.

### Earnings - 2006 Earnings

Area	Total Median Score (FT & PT)	Full Time Workers Score	Part Time Workers Score	Resident Earnings Score	Workplace Earnings Score
England and Wales	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
South West	94.0%	94.2%	99.4%	94.0%	92.7%
Dorset	96.8%	96.9%	100.6%	96.8%	95.1%
West Dorset	103.9%	106.1%	102.5%	103.9%	96.1%
Weymouth and Portland	91.0%	87.0%	No Data	91.0%	No Data

Source: ASHE, 2006 (NOMIS)

### Employment Rates - 2006

Area	Emp. Rate (%)
England and Wales	74.1
South West	77.9
Dorset	78.2
West Dorset District	78.9
Weymouth and Portland District	75.1

Source: Labour Force Survey Jan 2006 - Dec 2006  
Rate is percentage of working age population

### Skills - % of working age population with NVQ3+ and NVQ4+ qualifications

Area	NVQ4+ (%)	NVQ3+ (%)
England and Wales	27.0	44.8
South West	27.3	47.2
Dorset	29.0	47.6
West Dorset District	34.3	52.9
Weymouth and Portland District	17.8	38.1

Source: Labour Force Survey Jan 2006 - Dec 2006

### Housing Affordability - House price to income ratios (2005 prices)

Area	Houseprice to income ratio
England	4.43
South West	4.88
West Dorset	4.75
Weymouth & Portland	4.98

Source: Joseph Rowntree Foundation 2006

### Deprivation - Most and Least Deprived Wards - 2004 Index of Multiple Deprivation for Weymouth and Dorchester study area

SOA	Equivalent Ward	Overall IMD SCORE	RANK OF IMD*
Dorset		13.01	130
West Dorset		13.33	235
Weymouth and Portland		21.15	125
E01020514	Chickerell	5.24	29790
E01020552	Littlemoor	41.30	4218
E01020553	Melcombe Regis	38.56	5047
E01020554	Melcombe Regis	50.42	2208
E01020555	Melcombe Regis	39.59	4728
E01020556	Melcombe Regis	34.28	6472
E01020558	Preston	6.21	28677
E01020559	Preston	5.84	29134
E01020560	Radipole	7.68	26839
E01020573	Westham East	35.14	6185
E01020575	Westham North	38.76	4998
E01020523	Dorchester South	3.99	31039
E01020525	Dorchester South	2.15	32203

	Amongst 20% most deprived wards / l.a.s in England
	Amongst 20% least deprived wards / l.a.s in England

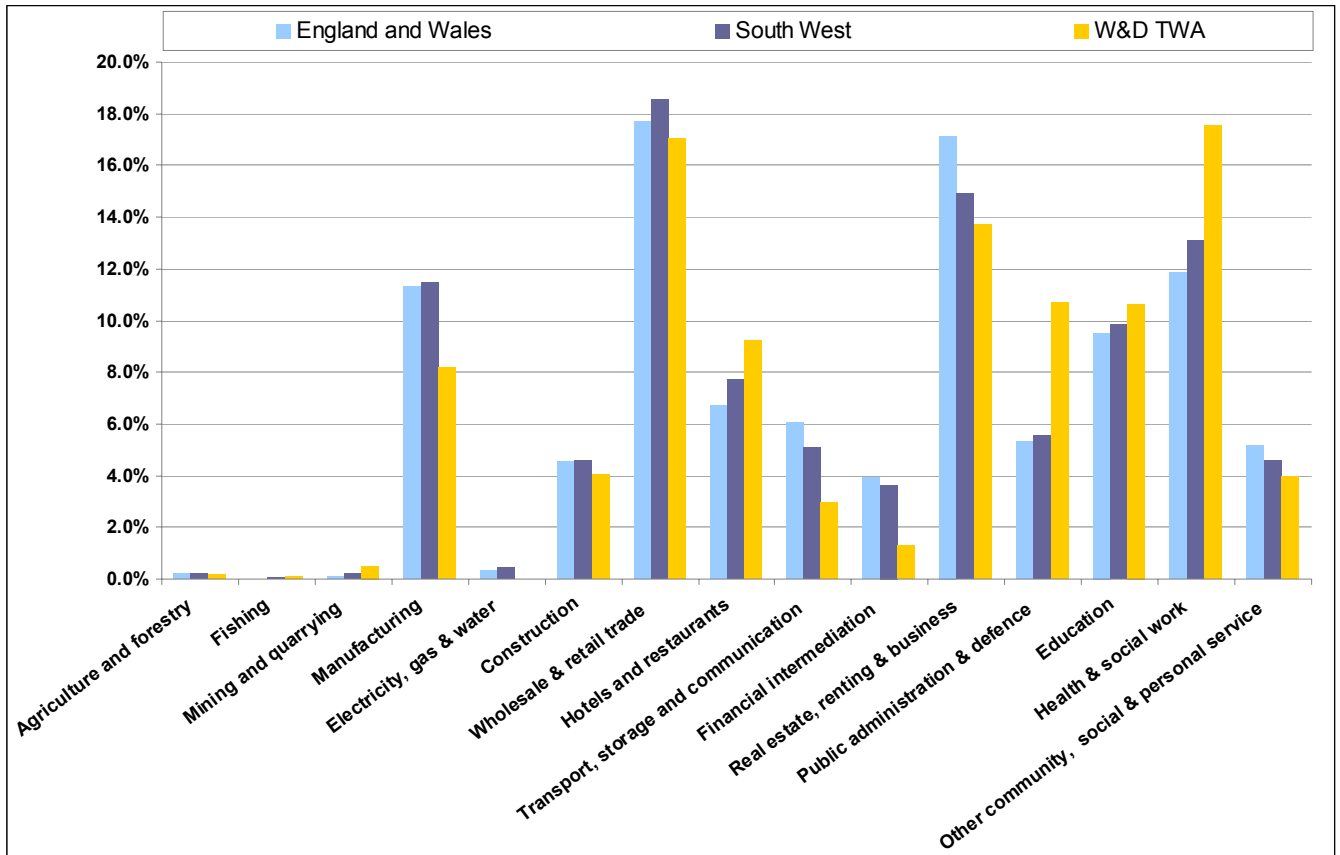
Source: IMD 2004.

\* for wards, 1 is the most deprived and 32,482 the least deprived

\* for Districts 1 is the most deprived and 349 is the least deprived

\* for Counties, 1 is the most deprived and 149 the least deprived

### Employment by sectors



Source: ABI, 2005 (NOMIS)

### Knowledge-based economy - Business Units

Area	1998	2002	2005	1998-2005 % Change	% of total businesses	Total Business Units
England & Wales	374,600	435,362	462,726	23.5	21.6%	2,140,659
SW	30,881	37,200	40,705	31.8	19.2%	212,120
Weymouth & Dorchester TTWA	492	598	694	41.1	14.9%	4,659
Weymouth inc Portland	203	245	293	44.3	12.6%	2,332
Dorchester	132	145	152	15.2	15.9%	954

Source: ABI, 2005 (NOMIS)

### Knowledge-based economy - Employees

Area	1998	2002	2005	1998-2005 % Change	% of total emp	Total Employment
England & Wales	4,565,718	4,965,416	5,193,683	13.8	21.7%	23,969,617
SW	387,212	431,070	455,537	17.6	20.8%	2,185,577
Weymouth & Dorchester TTWA	6,727	8,630	9,748	44.9	20.4%	47,724
Weymouth inc Portland	2,946	2,641	3,665	24.4	16.2%	22,609
Dorchester	2,682	4,579	4,529	68.9	30.1%	15,061

Source: ABI, 2005 (NOMIS)

## Employment Change Scenario based on RES forecasts

**INDICATIVE ONLY** : Based on Cambridge Econometrics TTWA forecasts; sector/trend based and built on existing representation of the sector

Forecast Employment for Weymouth and Dorchester study areas	Weymouth & Portland		Dorchester			
	Employment 2005	Employment 2026	Employment change 2005- 2026	Employment 2005	Employment 2026	Employment change 2005- 2026
1 Agriculture etc	478	331	-147	31	22	-10
2 Mining & Quarrying	91	45	-45	0	0	0
3 Food, Textiles & Wood	94	63	-31	103	69	-34
4 Printing & Publishing	176	220	44	164	204	41
5 Chemicals & Minerals	133	133	0	28	28	0
6 Metals & Engineering	497	373	-124	27	20	-7
7 Electronics	840	336	-504	115	46	-69
8 Transport Equipment	432	259	-173	0	0	0
9 Manufacturing nes	79	79	0	18	18	0
10 Electricity, Gas & Water	0	0	0	0	0	0
11 Construction	1804	2041	237	619	701	81
12 Distribution	4741	6553	1811	3169	4380	1211
13 Hotels & Catering	3736	4403	667	687	809	123
14 Transport & Comms.	850	910	61	425	456	30
15 Banking & Insurance	325	279	-46	287	246	-41
16 Other Business Serv.	2899	3727	828	2222	2856	635
17 Public Admin. & Defence.	3817	3736	-81	3753	3673	-80
18 Education & Health	4940	6277	1336	4930	6264	1334
19 Miscellaneous Services	1028	1257	228	902	1103	201
<b>Total</b>	<b>27108</b>	<b>31650</b>	<b>4542</b>	<b>17890</b>	<b>20888</b>	<b>2997</b>

Note: RES Scenario 2 represents strong Regional Economic growth of GVA between 2006-26 at 3.2% pa  
 Note: TTWA Cam Ec employment forecasts all employees (i.e. includes self employed, etc.)