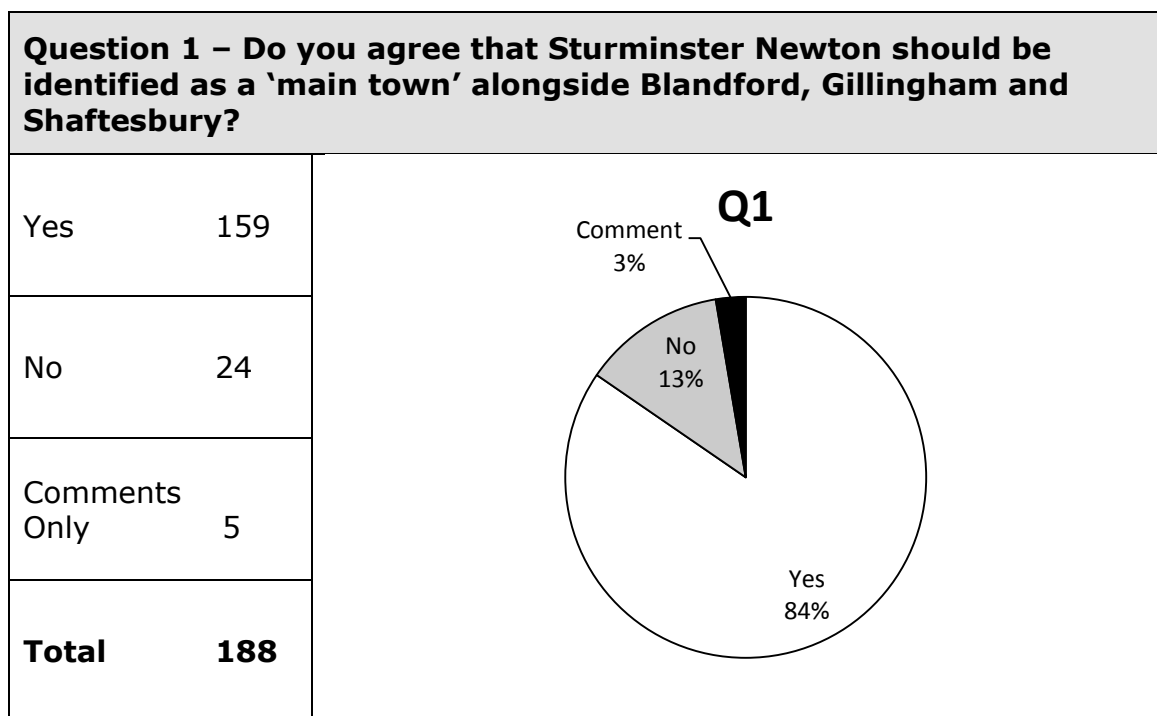


## **Appendix A**

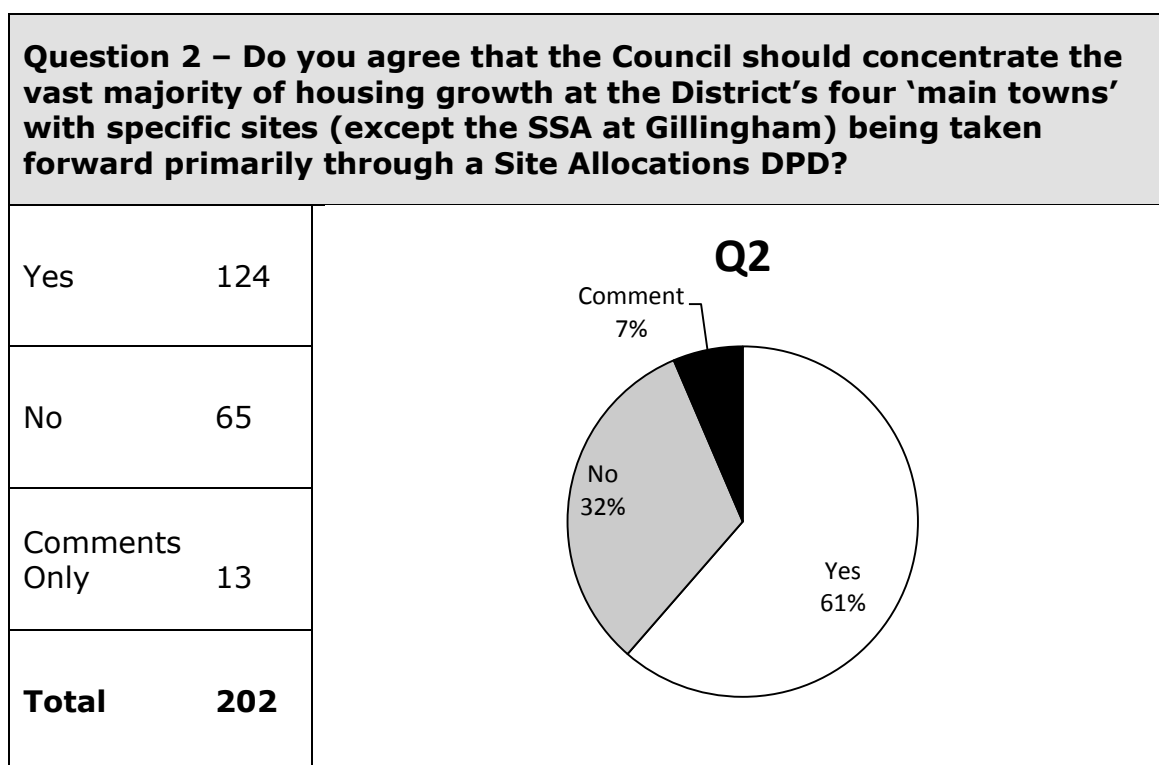
## Spatial Approach to Growth



1. Charlton Marshall, Child Okeford, Durweston, Iwerne Minster, Iwerne Courtney and Steepleton, Lydlinch, Marnhull, Okeford Fitzpaine, Pimperne, Shillingstone, South Tarrant Valley, Stourpaine and Winterborne Stickland Parish Councils, Shaftesbury, Blandford Forum and Stalbridge Town Councils and Fifehead Neville Parish Meeting all agreed that Sturminster Newton should be identified as a 'main town' alongside Blandford, Gillingham and Shaftesbury in the spatial approach to growth. Melbury Abbas and Cann Parish Council was the only parish not to agree, but they didn't give a reason why.
2. The Highways Agency, the only other specific consultee commenting on this question, also agreed with the proposed spatial approach to growth.
3. 141 local business, residents and voluntary bodies, including one of the key landowners in the town, also agreed that Sturminster Newton should be identified as a 'main town' alongside Blandford, Gillingham and Shaftesbury. One agent although in agreement with the proposed approach suggested that growth in the town should not be at the detriment of the number of dwellings planned for the other three main towns in the District.
4. Many of those supporting Sturminster Newton as a main town felt that its inclusion was in accordance with its role and function whilst others were a little more cautious suggesting that development in the town should not be at the expense of the surrounding villages. A number of individuals

were of the opinion that growth was acceptable if it delivered an improvement in local infrastructure most notably the local transport network and the capacity at the primary school.

5. In addition to Melbury Abbas and Cann Parish Council 23 other general bodies disagreed with the approach proposed. Reasons stated for objection ranged from development should be directed to the existing towns as they benefit from sustainable characteristics already to the shop capacity in Sturminster Newton is too small and the roads surrounding the town are of a rural nature.
6. Of those individuals making a general comment in relation to this question the focus was on who had a right to comment. A number of people felt that this was a decision for local people and that it was for the residents of Sturminster to decide.



7. Charlton Marshall, Child Okeford, Durweston, Iwerne Minster, Lydlinch, Marnhull, Shillingstone, Pimperne, Stourpaine, South Tarrant Valley, Tarrant Gunville and Winterborne Stickland Parish Councils, Blandford Forum and Stalbridge Town Councils and Fifehead Neville Parish Meeting all agreed that the Council should concentrate the vast majority of housing growth at the District’s four ‘main towns’ with specific sites (except the SSA at Gillingham) being taken forward primarily through a Site Allocations DPD. The Highway Agency also agreed but suggested that the DPD be brought forward quickly to avoid the NPPF being used to determine planning applications.

8. Fifehead Neville Parish Meeting were of the opinion that additional housing in Sturminster Newton would ensure the centre remains vibrant and in turn this would relieve the pressure for housing in the surrounding rural areas and that CIL was essential for the town to enable it to maintain its 'hub' qualities.
9. Although supporting this approach Durweston Parish Council had some concern about the growth in Blandford as to do Blandford Town Council who considered the town to have reached capacity and that it now needed to breach the by-pass for the Site Allocations DPD.
10. Shaftesbury Town Council, Okeford Fitzpaine and Melbury Abbas and Cann Parish Councils did not agree with the approach proposed. Shaftesbury considered it to be too heavily weighted in the towns and that the Site Allocations DPD should be more market led. Okeford Fitzpaine Parish Council considered the policy to be detrimental to Stalbridge and the villages and that it would stifle growth and put sustainability of villages at risk. The concerns of Melbury Abbas and Cann focused on infrastructure and the pressures of growth.
11. In addition to the individual town and parishes responses to this question there was also a joint response from Blandford Town Council, Blandford St Mary and Bryanston Parish Councils and DT11 Partnership. The main concern of this group, although supporting this approach, was in relation to the Site Allocations DPD as in their opinion the growth proposed could not be contained within the constraints of the bypass.
12. Commenting in general Natural England noted the constrained nature of Blandford with the AONB and suggested that Paragraphs 110 and 115 of the NPPF needed to be considered.
13. Paragraph 110 states that 'in preparing plans to meet development needs, the aim should be to minimise pollution and other adverse effects on the local and natural environment. Plans should allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework.' This point was reinforced by the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB in their comments on the spatial approach.
14. Paragraph 115 states that 'great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty' in AONB and that the conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage are important considerations.
15. The Environment Agency also made a general comment on the proposed approach and referred to the NPPF and the Sequential Test which seeks to steer new development to areas with the lowest probability of flooding. Paragraph 101 states that 'development should not be allocated or

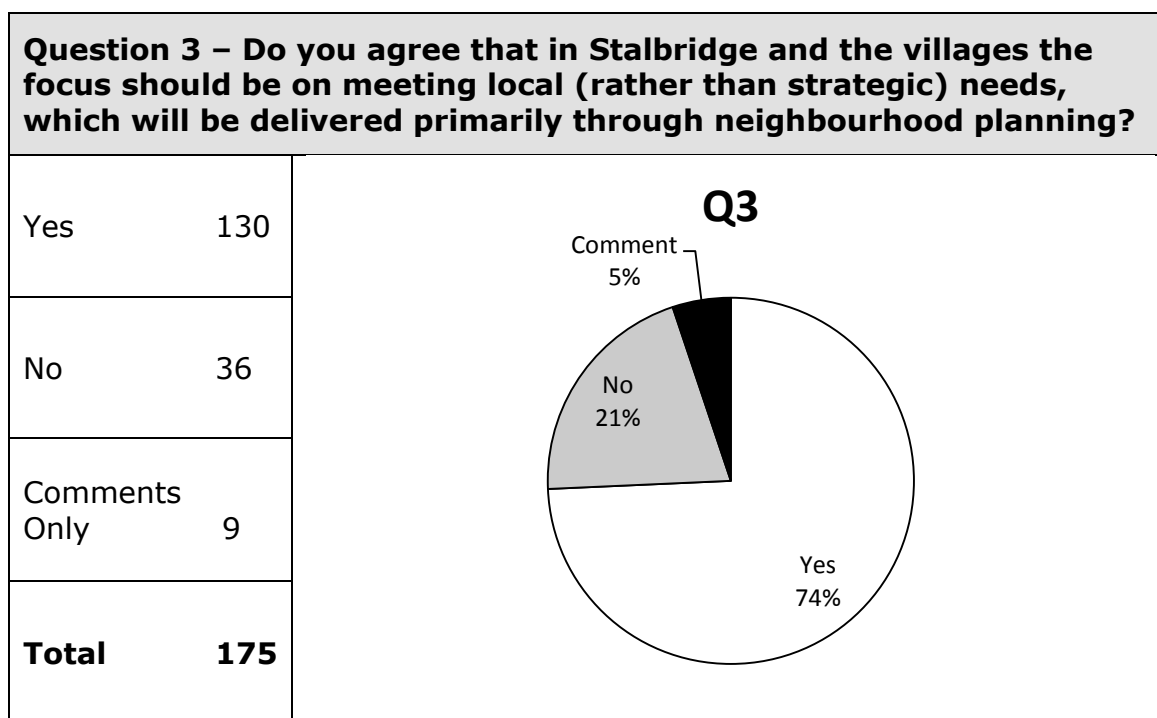
permitted if there are reasonably available sites appropriate for the proposed development in areas with a lower probability of flood.'

- 16.108 general bodies supported the proposed approach to concentrate the vast majority of housing growth at the District's four 'main towns' with specific sites (except the SSA at Gillingham) being taken forward primarily through a Site Allocations DPD. Agents representing the key landowners and developers in the four main towns agreed that the towns are the most sustainable location for growth and that they should be the focus for housing development. However, there was some concern that it should be the majority and not necessarily the vast majority of growth and that it should not be at the exclusion of additional housing growth in the villages.
17. One agent in Gillingham representing a local landowner felt that the spatial approach needed to be based on the capacity of the town, the location of growth, the regenerative benefits to area and viability and deliverability. As such they suggested that their land at Wavering Lane should also be included in Gillingham Site Allocations to ensure a balanced growth for the town.
18. Others supporting the approach suggested a number of caveats such as providing the housing numbers are not increased, that infrastructure is provided to support the levels of growth proposed and that housing is linked to employment. Two individuals in supporting the concentration of sustainable growth raised concern that the Site Allocations DPD may be too prescriptive and that boundaries should not be artificially set or maintained.
19. 62 local residents, landowners, businesses and voluntary organisations in addition to the three parish and town councils also objected to the proposed spatial approach. Agents referred to Paragraphs 47, 54 and 55 of the NPPF that focus on delivering a wide choice of high quality homes. National policy suggests that to boost significantly the supply of housing local planning authorities should use their evidence base to ensure that their Local Plans meet the full, objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing in the housing market area.
20. In rural areas such as North Dorset the NPPF also requires local planning authorities to be responsive to local circumstances and to plan housing development that reflects local needs. To promote sustainable development in rural areas the NPPF suggests that housing should be located where it will 'enhance or maintain' the vitality of rural communities.
21. Some agents were concerned that the spatial approach proposed was over reliant on the SSA in Gillingham and that this was at the expense of the future vitality and viability of many rural villages. They suggested that the

policy be amended and housing allocated in the larger more sustainable villages, as identified in Draft Core Policy 3. One agent suggested the proposed approach to be unsound as it did not meet local needs as insufficient housing numbers were proposed for the rural areas and neighbourhood plans would therefore not be in conformity.

22. Individuals objecting to the proposed spatial approach raised similar concerns. Many felt that growth in the villages was required to support local services (schools and shops in particular) whilst others were of the opinion that a more dispersed pattern of growth would reduce travel impact, that some development was essential to allow local families to remain in their home villages and that growth in the villages was required to provide a local workforce.

23. The main fear of those objecting was that the policy approach proposed would result in villages becoming overpriced where local families could not afford homes and where local shops and pubs would fail. A small number of individuals suggested that small scale development in the villages was preferential to the large allocations proposed as these would have a less significant impact on the landscape character of the District.

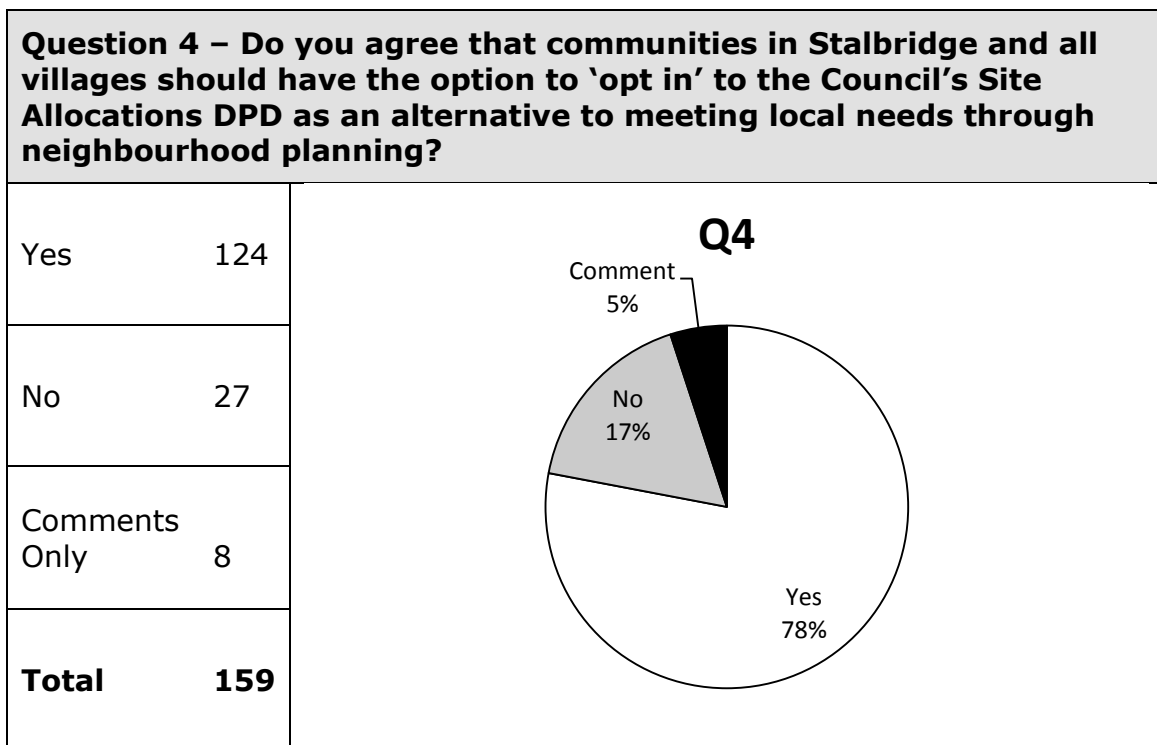


24. 74% of those responding to the above question agreed with the approach that in Stalbridge and the villages the focus should be on meeting local (rather than strategic) needs, which will be delivered primarily through neighbourhood planning.

25. Blandford, Shaftesbury and Stalbridge Town Councils, Charlton Marshall, Child Okeford, Durweston, Iwerne Minster and Iwerne Courtney and Steepleton, Lydlinch, Marnhull, Okeford Fitzpaine, Pimperne, Shillingstone, South Tarrant Valley, Stourpaine and Winterborne Stickland Parish Councils and Fifehead Neville Parish Meeting agreed with the approach proposed. Okeford Fitzpaine and Tarrant Gunville Parish Councils were the only two parishes who did not agree. Okeford Fitzpaine was of the opinion that in order to maintain a sustainable village that growth over and above local needs was required.
26. Whilst agreeing with the proposed approach in general the County Council and the Highway Agency both raised some areas of concern. Dorset County Council agreed that local communities should have more choice, but noted that neighbourhood plans need to be in general conformity with the development plan and were concerned that the policy as proposed gives little strategic guidance for local communities. They suggested that a generic policy was required that would set a criteria or list principles for villages considering neighbourhood planning. This approach was reinforced by the Highway Agency who suggested that the policy needed to define 'local need' and explain what would constitute the 'upper level' of development over which it would be considered strategic.
27. Although neither agreeing nor disagreeing with the proposed approach Natural England suggested that particular attention needs to be given to demonstrate that any growth in the villages that are highly constrained is deliverable and consistent with the NPPF.
28. In addition to the specific bodies above who support the proposed spatial approach 112 agents, residents, community groups, landowners and businesses also agreed that in Stalbridge and the villages the focus should be on meeting local (rather than strategic) needs, which should be delivered primarily through neighbourhood planning.
29. Many considered neighbourhood plans to be an important tool for local communities as they would enable towns and villages to plan for themselves. One landowner agreed in principle but was concerned that some communities who are adverse to growth may use the policy to block development to retain 'reclusiveness' of their village. This would result in housing prices remaining high and not meeting local needs. They suggest that a timetable for neighbourhood plans should be included in the policy.
30. However, 11 agents representing a range of land owners did not agree that in Stalbridge and the villages the focus should be on meeting local (rather than strategic) needs, which will be delivered primarily through neighbourhood planning. Some were concerned about delivery and the time and resources needed for neighbourhood plans whilst others were concerned that communities may start but not finish a neighbourhood

plan and that neighbourhood plans were inflexible and unable to adapt to rapid change. In general it was felt that the policy approach proposed was over reliant on an untested delivery method that was dependent on local communities taking up the challenge of neighbourhood planning which in itself could be unpredictable.

31. Others felt that the more sustainable villages, as identified in Draft Core Policy 3, have significant potential and that they should support growth that is more than 'local need'. One person referred to Paragraph 184 of the NPPF in which 'the ambition of the neighbourhood should be aligned with the strategic needs and priorities of the wider local area' and that neighbourhood plans must be 'in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan.'
32. One agent suggested that Stalbridge should be considered to meet strategic needs as its local infrastructure is sufficient to accommodate a higher level of growth than locally derived allocations may generate. Also by identifying Stalbridge as a strategic town the pressure for housing growth on the other four towns could be reduced.
33. A number of residents agreed with the agents and that it is necessary to plan strategically for the villages to ensure they develop as vibrant and inclusive communities or they risked becoming up market dormitories.
34. Those commenting on the question in general without expressing a preference one way or the other felt that this was a decision for residents of Stalbridge and the villages and not for the District as a whole.





35. Charlton Marshall, Child Okeford, Durweston, Iwerne Minster, Iwerne Courtney and Steepleton, Lydlinch, Marnhull, Okeford Fitzpaine, Pimperne, Shillingstone, South Tarrant Valley, Stourpaine and Winterborne Stickland Parish Councils, Blandford Forum and Stalbridge Town Councils and Fifehead Neville Parish Meeting all agreed that communities in Stalbridge and all villages should have the option to 'opt in' to the Council's Site Allocations DPD as an alternative to meeting local needs through neighbourhood planning. It was felt that approach provided a very helpful safety net for the parishes and the Council.
36. Tarrant Gunville Parish Council and Shaftesbury Town Council disagreed. Shaftesbury in particular consider this proposed policy to be in direct contradiction of Government policy as it creates a position where the default position is to opt out of any development whatsoever by simple inertia.
37. With the exception of one agent, representing a rural land owner, the 'opt in' to a Site Allocations DPD was considered an essential tool especially in relation to housing land supply. Agents also considered this approach to be an effective way of involving communities in planning the location of new development in their area without them having to commit resources to the production of a neighbourhood plan.
38. In general local residents also supported this approach, but a few raised concern about how an elected few could make this decision and considered a local referendum may be needed if the 'opt in' was going to happen.
39. A small number of local residents, in addition to the single agent mentioned above, did not agree with this approach. Some raised concern that local needs could be overridden whilst others felt that local communities should decide for themselves.
40. Eight people commented on the policy without expressing an opinion one way or the other and once again it was suggested that this was for the residents of Stalbridge and the villages to decide.

## **Conclusion**

41. From the four questions posed in relation to the proposed spatial approach for growth in the District there appears to be a general consensus to:
- Identify Sturminster Newton as a 'main town' (Q1)
  - Allocate the vast majority of housing growth in the District in the four main towns with specific sites being taken forward primarily through a Site Allocations DPD (with the exception of the SSA at Gillingham) (Q2)

- Meet local (rather than strategic) need in Stalbridge and the villages primarily through neighbourhood planning (Q3)
- Include an option for Stalbridge and the villages to 'opt in' to the Council's Site Allocations DPD as an alternative to meeting local needs (Q4)

42. In fact in relation to Sturminster Newton becoming one of the four main towns an overwhelming 84% of those responding to the consultation agreed with this approach. There appears to be little dispute that Sturminster Newton is a sustainable location and in fact proposals for the future development of the town (including housing) have already been set out in some detail in Draft Core Policy 18, the proposed change of status seeks to purely address the policy vacuum resulting from the loss of the RSS and its settlement hierarchy.

43. Question 2 proposed a far more fundamental change in spatial policy for the District. Reduced housing numbers and the introduction of neighbourhood plans enabled the Council to propose a spatial approach to growth that sought to meet the vast majority of the strategic growth needed in the District at the four main towns without identifying any additional sites.

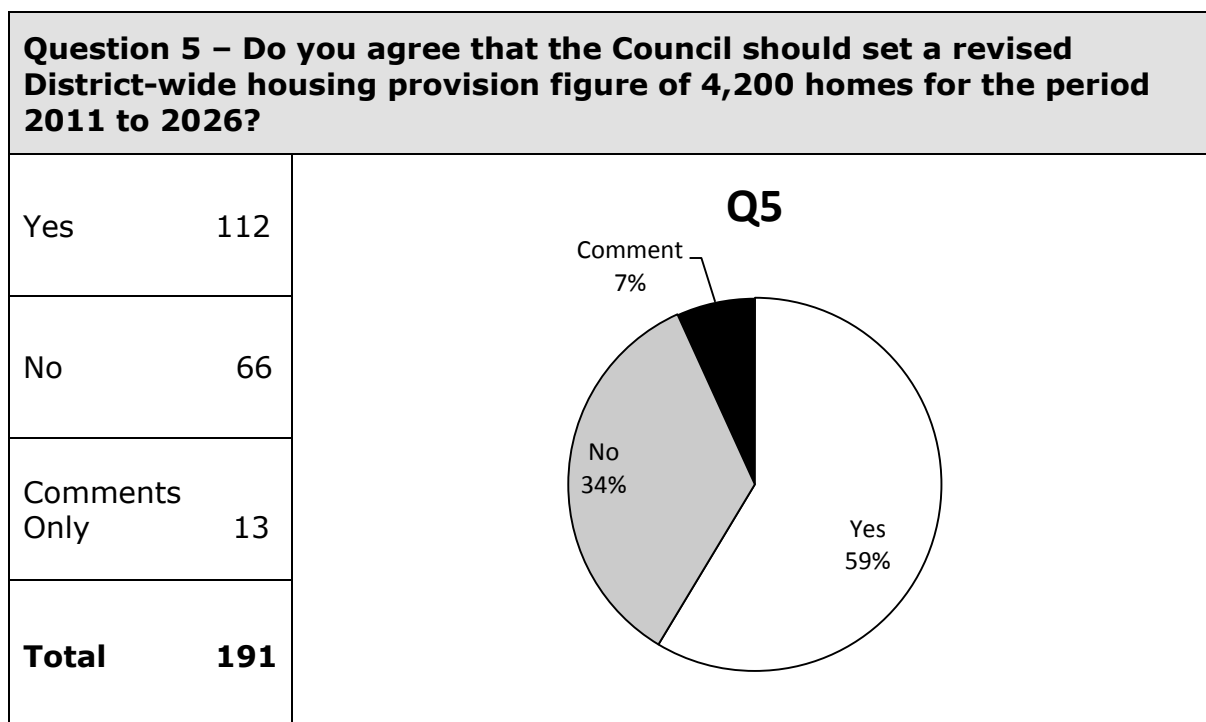
44. Although 61% of those responding to the consultation agreed with this approach over a third did not or just made a general comment. Town and parish councils appeared to be satisfied as top down targets for many had been removed whilst local agents representing landowners and some residents voiced their concern. Many referred to the NPPF and the duty for local planning authorities to use their evidence base to ensure that their Local Plans meet the full, objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing in the housing market area. They also referred to the requirement that housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities, a concern raised by a number of residents. In the opinion of the agents and residents this policy approach fails to address either of these issues and in turn the revised Core Strategy could be found to be unsound later on at examination.

45. In response to Question 3 the 'light touch' strategic approach in Stalbridge and the villages that gives local communities greater choice in deciding how to meet their future development needs has been embraced. Concerns raised by the Dorset County Council and the Highway Agency about criteria and guidance as to 'local need' and what constitutes the upper level of development over which it would be considered strategic are valid and to an extent have been addressed in the Spatial Strategy for North Dorset Topic Paper (<http://www.dorsetforyou.com/media.jsp?mediaid=179502&filetype=pdf>).

Any revised spatial policy would need to ensure the guidance is clear and simple to follow.

46. Finally, Question 4 and the option to 'opt in' to the Councils Site Allocation DPD was considered by many as an essential tool and helpful safety net for the parishes and the Council. In particular it was seen as an effective way of involving communities and giving them choice, although a small number were concerned that the decision to 'opt in' was not via a referendum, but the decision of an elected minority.

## Provision of Housing



1. Charlton Marshall, Child Okeford, Iwerne Minster, Lydlinch, Marnhull, Pimperne, Shillingstone, South Tarrant Valley, Stourpaine and Winterborne Stickland Parish Councils, Stalbridge Town Council and Fifehead Neville Parish Meeting all agreed that the Council should set a revised District-wide housing provision figure of 4,200 homes for the period 2011 to 2026.
2. Iwerne Courtney and Stepleton Parish Council supported the figure provided that suitable development was not stifled by an insufficient allocation to Stalbridge and the villages. Durweston Parish Council supported the figure but was concerned that the Core Strategy may propose houses where there seems little demand in the private sector. The Parish Council also felt that the 'local link' for affordable housing should be stronger.
3. Melbury Abbas and Cann Parish Council didn't agree with the proposed housing provision figure, because they felt that the level of development being put forward was not supported by sufficient infrastructure, particularly roads and schools. In contrast Okeford Fitzpaine Parish Council felt that the proposed housing provision figure was insufficient to meet the needs of North Dorset. Shaftesbury Town Council was not in favour of any prescriptive figure, but felt that it should not be reduced from the previous figure in view of the housing need in the District.

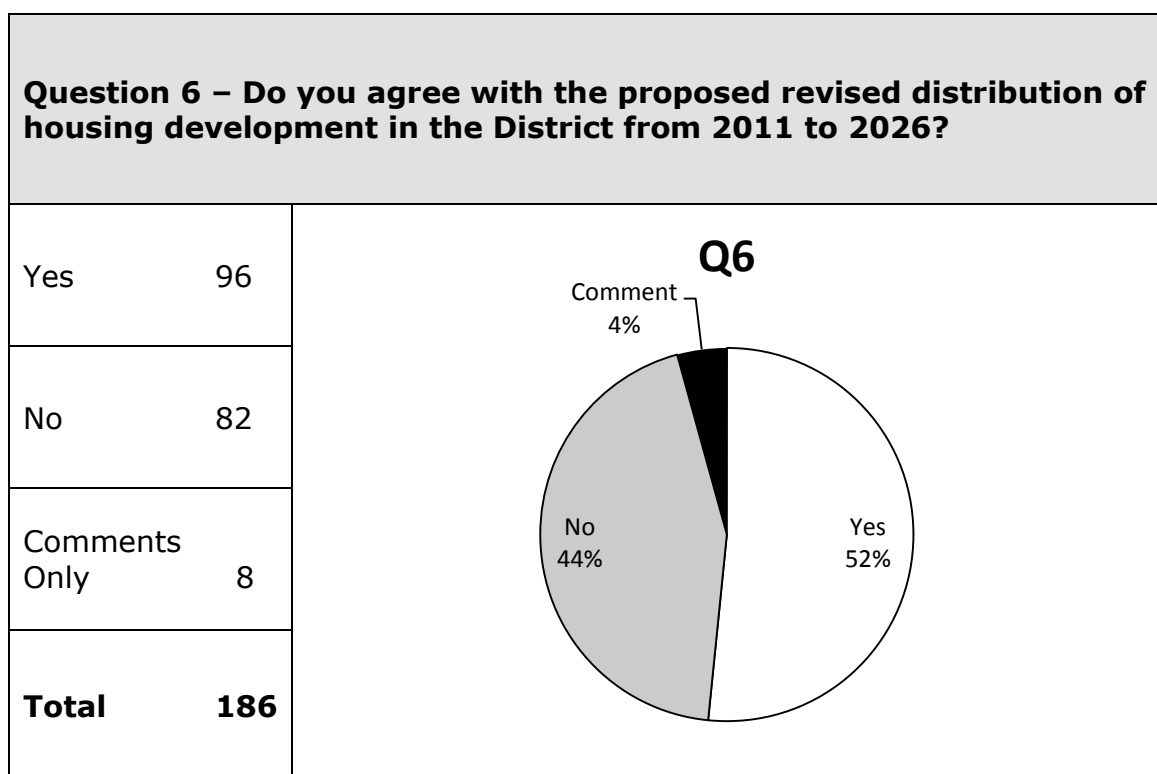
4. Blandford Forum Town Council, Blandford St. Mary and Bryanston Parish Councils and the DT 11 Partnership submitted a joint response which agreed that the proposed figure was appropriate, but raised concerns about future pressures. The joint responses advocated a phased approach if a need for further growth were to arise before the end of the plan period.
5. The Highways Agency, the only other specific consultee commenting on this question, agreed with the revised District-wide housing provision figure.
6. 97 responses from agents, local businesses, community groups, residents and voluntary bodies supported the proposed housing provision figure. 3 agents supported the figure, although one was concerned that depressed market data may have been used to predict future need. Blandford & District Civic Society felt that the lower figure was an improvement, but felt that the level of growth proposed for Blandford could not be accommodated within environmental constraints. Bourton Village Plan Steering Group agreed with the figure subject to a proportion of residential development being allocated to the larger, more sustainable villages.
7. One resident felt that the original housing provision figure was too high and another thought that 4,200 should be a maximum. Two residents supported the figure, but would have preferred it to have been less. One resident supported the figure, but would have preferred it to have been zero.
8. Four residents supported the figure, provided that the housing development was supported by infrastructure. One resident thought that rates of housing development should not outstrip employment opportunities. One resident was concerned that the figure exceeded current private sector demand and another felt that the development rate should match need, not be ahead of it. One resident that supported the figure thought that development should not all be in one place (i.e. Gillingham) and another that also supported the figure argued that the Core Strategy should make provision for self-build homes.
9. Two agents only made comments, but were concerned that the revised housing provision figure is too low. Two residents that only made comments felt that the revised housing provision figure is too high. Other residents raised concerns about infrastructure provision and commuting. One resident objected to central Government attempting to set high building figures to stimulate building industry growth and another felt that housing should only be provided to meet the needs of local people. Four respondents felt that more information was needed to enable them to express a view on the revised level of provision being put forward.

10. In total 66 respondents did not support the proposed revised housing figure. All 21 agents that did not support the figure argued that it should be higher, for a variety of reasons. 30 members of the public that did not support the proposed revised housing figure also made a comment. In those comments 16 thought that the figure should be lower, 1 thought that the figure should be higher and 13 questioned the validity of the figure and / or suggested that it should be derived in a different way.
11. Several agents felt that the reduction was not properly justified noting that the proposed revised figure is well below past planned and actual rates of development. Some thought that the evidence on which the revised figure is based (i.e. the revised Strategic Housing Market Assessment: SHMA) is flawed, whereas others felt that the reduction did not reflect current national policy, which seeks to significantly increase the supply of housing. Some agents thought that the lower figure would not enable the needs of local people (for market and / or affordable housing) to be met, especially in the light of the high levels of affordable housing need identified in the updated SHMA. Others felt that it did not take account of the ageing population (which could lead to a labour shortage) or forecast immigration.
12. A range of views were expressed by agents on how the housing provision figure should be changed. One agent felt that the figure of 4,200 homes should be a minimum, with flexibility to rise if necessary and another thought that a range, rather than a set figure, should be provided. Others thought that the plan period should be extended from 2026 to 2028 with additional provision made in the Core Strategy for these additional two years (to give a 15-year plan period on adoption). Alternatives to the overall housing provision figure put forward were 5,000, 5,250 and 7,000. One agent suggested that there had been a shortfall in provision during the period from 2006 to 2011 of about 600 homes and that this shortfall should be taken into account in setting the figure for future provision.
13. 2 landowners thought that the housing numbers should be higher. They argued that there was a backlog of demand that needed to be met and that the Core Strategy should take a long term view of housing need, linked to jobs, and should not focus on short term changes in the global economy.
14. Shaftesbury Civic Society disagreed with the proposed figure and suggested that too many homes had been allocated to Shaftesbury.
15. Those members of the public that did not support the figure and felt the housing provision figure was too high cited a variety of reasons. Some felt that there was no need or demand for the new homes and that better use should be made of empty properties. Others were concerned about the loss of green fields and / or the countryside. Some felt that housing

should be linked to job provision whereas others were concerned about the lack of infrastructure. One respondent didn't think that house building would boost the economy. The issue of congestion in Blandford was also raised in response to this question.

16. The one member of the public that did not support the figure, but argued for a higher housing provision figure, expressed the view that the country needs more housing. This respondent also questioned the Council's approach of reducing the house building target in the light of national policy that sought the provision of more homes.

17. Those members of the public that did not support the figure and questioned its validity, made a number of different points. Some felt that it was impossible to predict future housing needs, whereas others felt that the methodology (i.e. the SHMA) was flawed. Some felt that the Council should respond to 'natural demand' and should not seek to predetermine a level of housing provision. Some felt that the figure should be set in a different way, for example by the community or on the basis of local need.



18. Charlton Marshall, Durweston, Iwerne Courtney and Stepleton, Iwerne Minster, Lydlinch, Marnhull, Pimperne, Shillingstone, South Tarrant Valley, Stourpaine and Winterborne Stickland Parish Councils, Stalbridge Town Council and Fifehead Neville Parish Meeting all agreed with the proposed revised distribution of housing development. Child Okeford Parish Council also agreed with the question and commented that local delivery would be driven by local need.

19. Blandford Forum Town Council, Blandford St. Mary and Bryanston Parish Councils and the DT 11 Partnership submitted a joint response which agreed that the proposed distribution was appropriate, but raised concerns about future pressures. The joint response advocated a phased approach if a need for further growth were to arise before the end of the plan period.
20. The proposed revised distribution of housing development was supported by the Highways Agency and a local medical practice. Natural England commented that the Council would need to demonstrate that the proposed revised distribution was deliverable.
21. Okeford Fitzpaine Parish Council did not support the proposed revised distribution of housing arguing that more growth was needed in the villages. Shaftesbury Town Council argued for a more balanced approach which reflects the realities of a changing economy and changing demography. Melbury Abbas and Cann Parish Council didn't agree with the proposed distribution, but made no further comment.
22. 96 responses from agents, the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB, community groups and residents supported the proposed revised distribution of housing development.
23. 11 agents supported the proposed revised distribution of housing development. 4 of those specifically supported growth at Gillingham, with one arguing that the overall housing figure for the town should be increased to 2,300. One agent commented that the revised Core Strategy should reflect the potential of the proposed Strategic Site Allocation to accommodate 1,500 dwellings. 2 others put forward other locations for growth, namely land south of Chantry Fields and Le Neubourg Way and land to the north of the town. The agent representing the Post Office indicated that a new delivery office may be required to meet the scale of growth proposed. One agent supported the proposed revised distribution and another supported the proposed revised housing figure for Shaftesbury. One commented that the figure for Sturminster Newton should be seen as a minimum. Another commented that the Crown Meadows site is well placed to support Blandford's housing needs, but considered that the housing figures needed to be taken up to 2028.
24. The community groups supporting the proposed revised distribution of housing were: CPRE North Dorset, Newton Residents Association, Gillingham Chamber of Commerce and SturQuest. In response to this question, SturQuest specifically supported the approach to development in Stalbridge and the villages, noting that communities must use their local knowledge to inform the siting and numbers of new homes. Whilst Blandford & District Civic Society gave general support to the proposed distribution of housing, it also expressed the view that the level of growth



proposed for Blandford could not be accommodated within environmental constraints.

25.2 members of the public supported the proposed revised distribution of housing because they felt that the main towns were more sustainable and had the facilities and infrastructure to cope with growth. Another supported the proposed revised distribution, but thought that overall housing numbers should be reduced. 1 member of the public supported the proposed revised distribution, but strongly opposed development at Crown Meadows, Blandford. 2 members of the public supported the proposed distribution, but raised issues in relation to growth at Gillingham. One was concerned about flooding and another thought that the release of housing development should be phased. 57 members of the public supported the proposed revised distribution without making any further comment.

26.4 members of the public made only comments. One highlighted the need for infrastructure; one commented that the housing figure for Shaftesbury had not changed much and 2 thought that the question was poorly worded.

27.16 agents objected to the proposed revised distribution of housing development. 1 thought that the overall numbers were too low, whereas others commented on different aspects of the proposed distribution. 2 felt that the growth was too heavily focused on Gillingham, whereas another thought that the figure for the Strategic Site Allocation at Gillingham should be increased to 1,800. One agent sought higher numbers at both Gillingham and Shaftesbury and another thought that the figure for Shaftesbury should be 'at least 1,200'. Other agents objected to the proposed revised distribution of housing and promoted other sites at Gillingham, namely land at Wavering Lane (Peacemarsh) and land at Windyridge Farm. Two agents sought an increase in the numbers for Blandford, because of its size, its accessible location and the need for affordable housing in the town. One suggested 1,125 homes and another suggested up to 2,000 dwellings.

28.9 agents thought that the proposed distribution would not meet local needs in rural areas. There was concern that the proposed distribution would not support sustainable development in villages. There was concern that the proposed revised approach would not help to maintain local services and the role of neighbourhood plans in delivery was questioned. One agent sought a more open approach to development in rural areas and another 2 thought that the revised Core Strategy should promote growth in the District's larger villages.

29. Shaftesbury Civic Society objected to the proposed revised distribution of housing, as did one local business and two landowners. The landowners

agreed with Sturminster Newton being identified as a main town, but were concerned that reduced housing numbers elsewhere would result in additional pressure for development.

30.26 members of the public objected to the proposed revised distribution of housing and also made comments. Some felt that there was no need for additional housing or that the number of homes proposed was too high. Others objected to the concentration of development and large housing estates, which were seen as being out of character with the local area. There was concern over the loss of greenfield sites and the view was expressed that brownfield land should be developed first. Some respondents felt that additional housing would not yield economic benefits and others were concerned about the provision of supporting infrastructure. Others objected to the 'mechanistic' approach suggesting that the approach to growth should be more 'organic' or community driven.

31.2 members of the public felt that the level of housing proposed for Gillingham should be reduced and one also sought a reduction for Shaftesbury. One member of the public objected to the level of housing proposed at Blandford and in response to this question one person also stated their objection to development at Crown Meadows. One respondent felt that Sturminster Newton should take a greater share of development in order to reduce proposed levels of housing elsewhere. One respondent felt that the approach discriminated against villages, which denied them the chance of possible funding to improve infrastructure and sustainability.

32.32 members of the public objected to the proposed revised distribution of housing without making any further comment.

## Conclusion

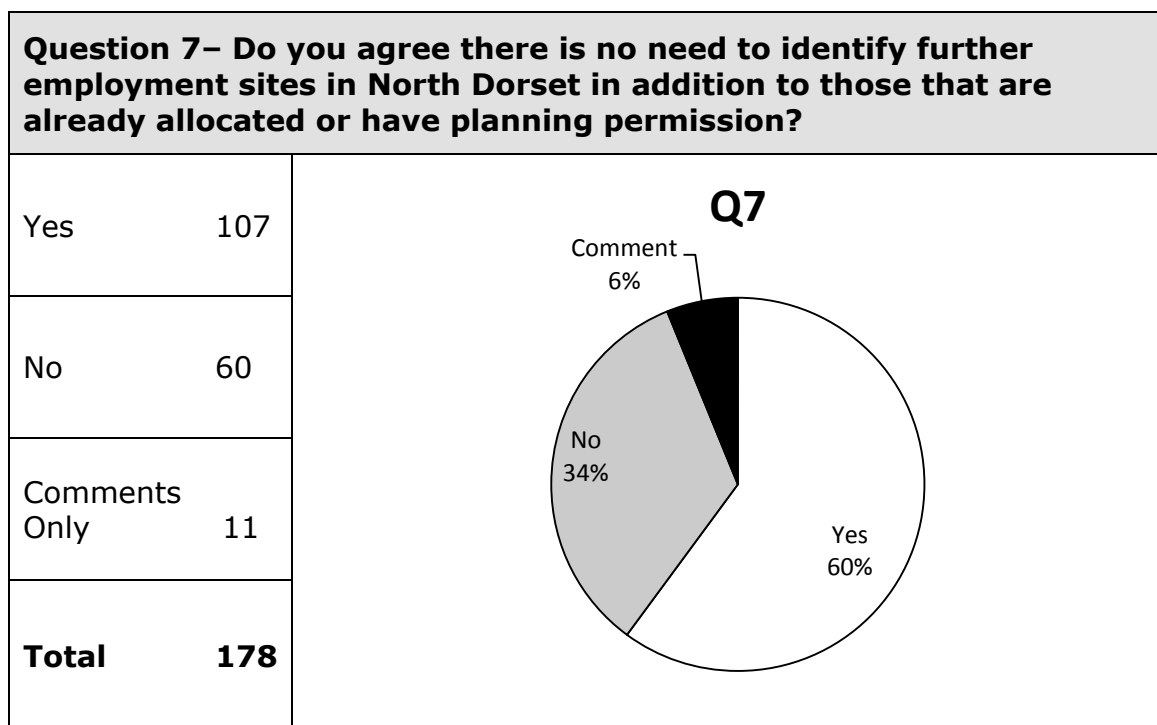
33. From the two questions posed in relation to the provision of housing in the District, there is a majority that support:

- A revised housing provision figure of 4,200 being set for the period from 2011 to 2026 (Q5: 59%); and
- A revised distribution, as set out in the table below (Q6: 52%).

<b>Location</b>	<b>Homes proposed 2011 to 2026</b>	<b>% of total</b>
Blandford	about 960	23%
Gillingham	about 1,490	35%
Shaftesbury	about 1,140	27%
Sturminster Newton	about 380	9%
Stalbridge, villages and countryside	at least 230	6%
<b>Total</b>	about 4,200	100%

34. Although 34% of respondents (66) did not support the proposed lower housing figure, their reasons for objecting were varied. 16 members of the public thought it should be lower, 1 thought it should be higher and 13 questioned the validity of the figure and / or suggested that it should be derived in a different way. In contrast all 21 agents that did not support the figure argued that it should be higher.
35. 44% of respondents (82) did not support the proposed revised distribution of housing. Many of the comments made by members of the public reflected their concerns about growth overall, although a few comments were made on particular aspects of the proposed revised distribution. 16 agents did not support the proposed revised distribution of housing and whilst a few sought to promote growth in a particular town (or on a site at a town), 9 were concerned that the proposed revised approach would not enable local needs in rural areas to be met.

## Provision of Employment Land

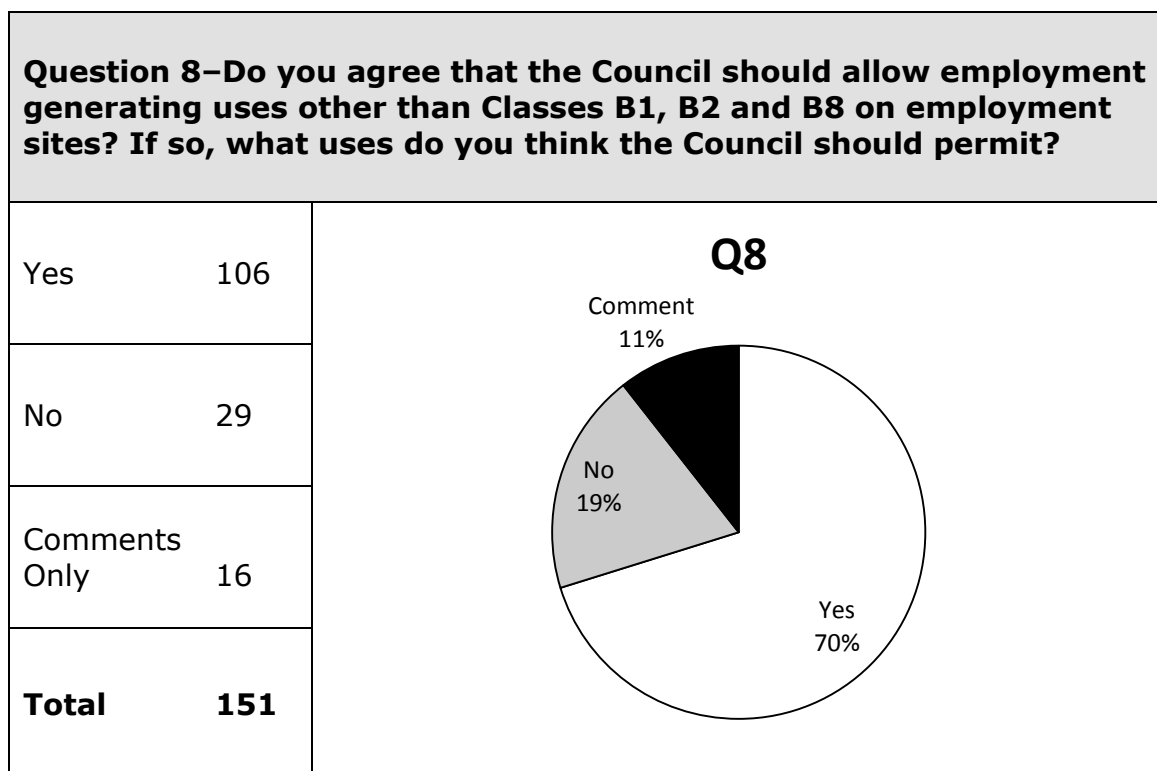


1. The parishes of Charlton Marshall, Child Okeford, Lydlinch, Marnhull, Melbury Abbas and Cann, Pimperne, Shillingstone, South Tarrant Valley, Stourpaine, Tarrant Gunville and Winterborne Stickland, and the Highways Agency were all in agreement that no further employment sites in North Dorset, in addition to those that are already allocated or have planning permission, needed to be identified.
2. However, Stalbridge Town Council, Durweston, Iwerne Courtney and Steepleton, Iwerne Minster and Okeford Fitzpaine Parish Council and Fifehead Neville Parish Meeting did not share this point of view. In their opinion the policy proposed needed to be more flexible and allow for small scale employment sites in the rural areas.
3. Blandford Town Council and a joint response from Blandford Town Council, Blandford St Mary and Bryanston Parish Councils and the DT11 Partnership commented on the question only and suggested that additional employment sites needed to be identified and that the whole issues of employment land was something that needed to be under constant review and not just reviewed every plan period.
4. Shaftesbury Town Council also commented on the proposed approach that they described as 'a risky change of policy' and that in their opinion it could threaten the economic development of the District.

5. In addition to the specific bodies 95 agents, businesses, community groups and partnerships and general residents agreed that there is no need to identify further employment sites in North Dorset in addition to those that are already allocated or have planning permission.
6. One agent representing Neals Yard Remedies in Gillingham was in agreement with the proposed approach but noted that the market was in a state of decline and that there were a significant number of vacant sites for employment use in the District. They suggested that the Council adopt a more flexible policy that would allow for the growth of employment sites if and when the market dictated.
7. In particular they referred to Paragraph 22 of the NPPF that states:

*'Planning policies should avoid the long term protection of sites allocated for employment use where there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for that purpose. Land allocations should be regularly reviewed. Where there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for the allocated employment use, applications for alternative uses of land or buildings should be treated on their merits having regard to market signals and the relative need for different land uses to support sustainable local communities.'*
8. They pointed out that the allocated site at had failed over the plan period to attract any interest and in their opinion there were other vacant and more suitable sites in the town and as such the Neals Yard Remedies site should be removed from the employment allocation. Due to the sites location and size they suggested that housing or a mix use development of the site may be more appropriate.
9. A second agent, also supporting the proposed approach, representing a landowner to the north of the town believes that if overall growth in Gillingham is being re-assessed then employment sites also need to be re-evaluated.
10. Amongst the local residents supporting the proposed approach there was a general consensus that there was an adequate provision of employment land and there was no need to identify additional sites at this time. Some suggested that the policy could be made more flexible to respond to an economic upturn whilst others felt that the policy needed to cover sites in the villages too.
11. Agents and residents making general comments on the proposed approach rather than supporting or opposing the policy raised similar concerns about the rural communities and lack of allocated sites. Some general comments were town and site related.

12. In addition to the towns and parishes listed above objecting to the proposed policy 54 agents, community groups, residents and voluntary bodies shared their concerns.
13. Agents focused on the need for employment sites in the villages to ensure a balanced community and to reduce the amount of car based commuting. A number of agents representing owners and developers of allocated sites suggested that all existing allocations needed to be re-evaluated. The agent representing Hall & Woodhouse questioned whether the sites were still the most appropriate in terms of location whereas the agent representing the owners of Sunrise Business Park requested that provision should be made to enable existing industrial estates to expand and enable local businesses to expand without the need to relocate. The agent representing Persimmon Homes suggested that new sites were required to encourage economic development and for the policy to be consistent with the NPPF.
14. Residents opposed to the proposed policy felt that the policy was too restrictive and that it lacked flexibility. They were of the opinion that to stimulate growth and avoid out commuting more sites needed to be identified. Some recognised the potential of neighbourhood plans and local choice to promote small scale sites, but felt that the employment policy itself should deal with this issue as it was in the interests of sustainability of the District as a whole. A number of individuals felt that the policy was a snapshot of the current time and that it did not look forward. Some agreed with the agents above that current allocations needed to be reviewed as they had been allocated for a long period of time and had not been developed. They questioned whether they were the right size or in the right location.
15. Finally Dorset Agenda 21 felt that the demarcation of employment and housing was unhelpful and that some economic activity could be incorporated in residential schemes. They highlighted that employees in remote locations could help support local services and enable communities to become more sustainable.



16. With the exception of Charlton Marshall Parish Council all other town and parish councils, including the joint response from a number of Blandford parishes and the community partnership, in responding to the question as to whether the Council should allow employment generating uses other than Classes B1, B2 and B8 on employment sites agreed with the approach proposed or made a positive comment.

17. Those individual councils were Blandford, Shaftesbury and Stalbridge Town Council, Child Okeford, Durweston, Iwerne Courtney and Steepleton, Marnhull, Okeford Fitzpaine, Pimperne, Shillingstone, South Tarrant Valley, Stourpaine and Winterborne Stickland Parish Council and Fifehead Neville Parish Meeting.

18. In their response to what uses do you think the Council should permit many made the comment that they should be decided on a case by case basis and compatible with existing uses. A number of parishes were more specific and suggested catering and food preparation and training as suitable uses whilst others were more relaxed and suggested that all uses except Class A may be appropriate. The Highways Agency also supported greater flexibility in permitting non-B class but suggested that no significant housing or retail development should be allowed as part of any new scheme.

19. 93 general agents, businesses, community partnerships, residents and voluntary bodies also agreed. The agents, all 13 of them, made a number of suggestions in relation to suitable uses on employment sites including

retail, D1/D2, hotels and care homes. Residential enabling development was also suggested but many agreed that any use should be appropriate to demand and the economic and environmental well-being of the local community. Two agents with allocated sites in the adopted Local Plan were keen to discuss this option further.

20. Community partnerships and local residents agreed that a more flexible approach was required but they gave a rather different list of other uses that should be permitted. SturQuest and others would like to see training related uses, but were conscious of the need to restrict retail on out of town sites. In Blandford the Civic Society would like to see tourism and leisure uses on employment sites. Other suggested uses included recycling facilities, gyms, creative industries, offices, medical and health care facilities, community facilities and retail, in particular large out of town retail warehouses. However, nearly everyone agreed that all applications should be considered on a case by case basis and that the impact they could have on local amenity, existing uses and local infrastructure needed to be carefully considered.
21. In addition to the specific bodies above 13 people made a general comment on the question of which some were in support. The agent representing Persimmon supported the approach in principle whilst the AONB voiced concern about uses within the AONB. Many of these general comments were critical of the question not the policy as without an understanding of the classification system many were unable to agree or disagree to the approach proposed.
22. Interestingly no agents, landowners or businesses disagreed with the more flexible approach proposed. In fact only 6 people explained why they objected and some of those comments did not relate to the question. One person did not want other uses on employment sites as they were concerned about the impact on the high street. Another person suggested that different uses should be allocated on new sites well away from houses.



## **Conclusion**

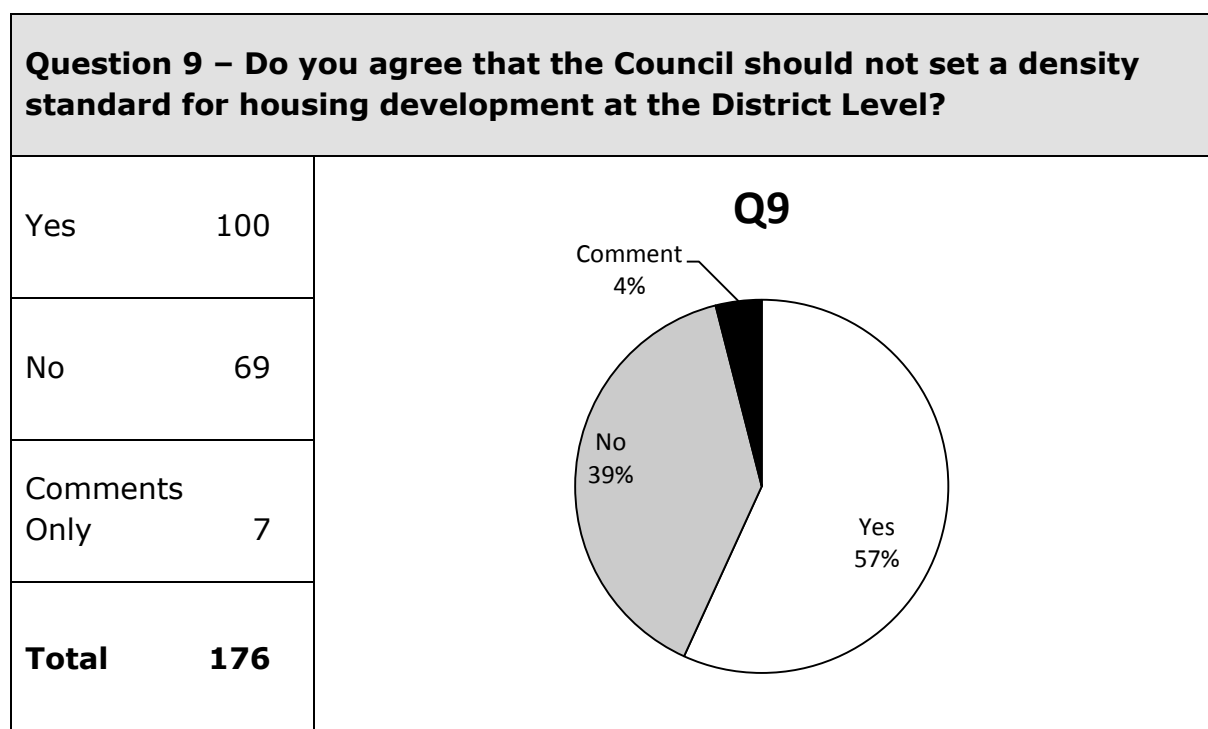
23. In response to the two questions posed in relation to the provision of employment land in the District there appears to be a general consensus to:

- Not identify any further employment sites in North Dorset in addition to those already allocated or have planning permission? (Q7)
- Allow employment generating uses other than Classes B1, B2 and B8 on employment sites? (Q8)

24. However, although 60% of those responding to Question 7 agreed with the approach proposed concerns were raised about the flexibility of the policy especially in relation to the rural areas and the suitability of existing sites. A review of existing sites may be required to ensure conformity with national policy.

25. The question of flexibility was also considered in Question 8 in which views were sought on allowing uses other than Classes B1, B2 and B8 on allocated employment sites. 70% supported greater flexibility and many suggested specific uses, but nearly everyone agreed that all applications would need to be considered on a case by case basis.

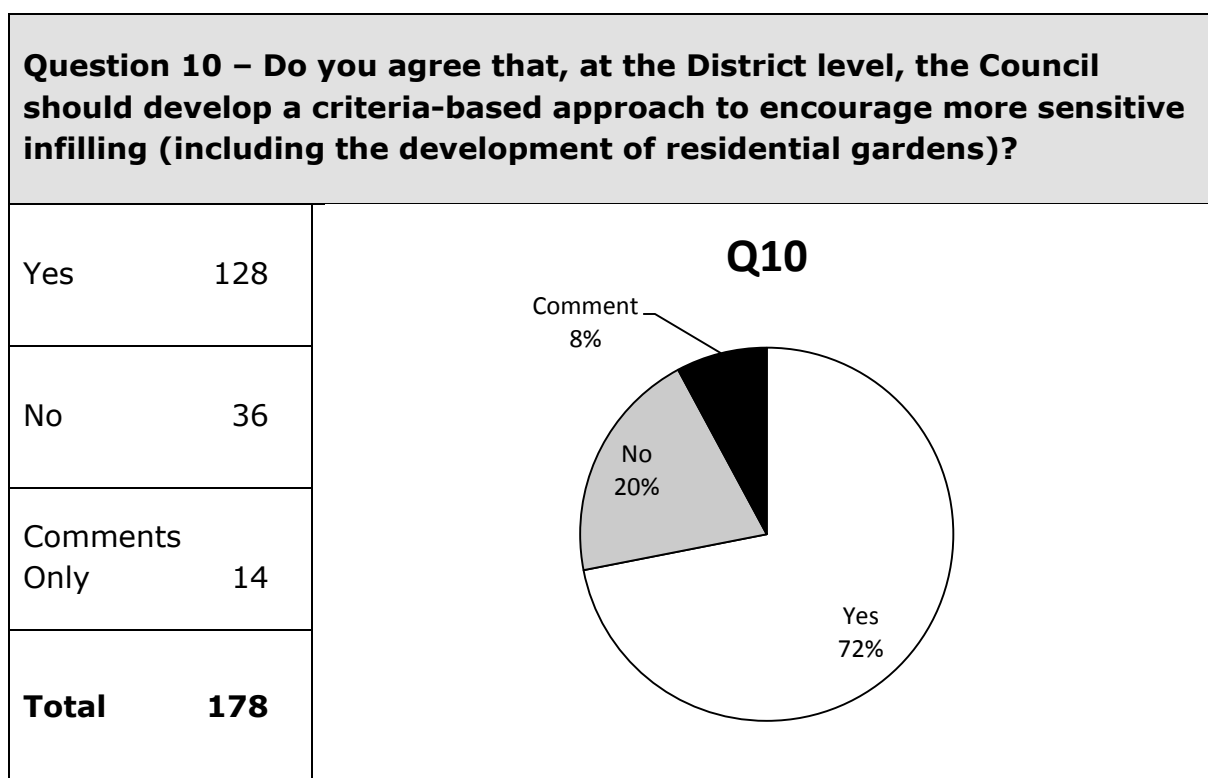
## Housing Density, Infilling and Residential Gardens



1. Charlton Marshall, Child Okeford, Durweston, Iwerne Minster, Marnhull, Okeford Fitzpaine, Pimperne, Shillingstone, South Tarrant Valley, Stourpaine, and Winterborne Stickland Parish Councils all agreed with the approach of not setting a District level housing density standard. The suggestion was that any standards should be established at a local level however there was also support for the fall back position of establishing a District-wide standard until local standards can be determined. Blandford Forum Town Council, Blandford St. Mary and Bryanston Parish Councils and the DT 11 Partnership's joint response supported this approach.
2. Blandford Forum Town Council highlighted the need for local standards to take into account elements such as off street parking, transport and home business space to establish an overall quality development.
3. The Highways Agency, the only other specific consultee to comment on this question, supported the approach of taking into account local circumstance but also highlighted the benefits of higher density in encouraging alternatives to the car.
4. Shaftesbury and Stalbridge Town Councils, Melbury Abbas and Cann and Tarrant Gunville Parish Councils, Iwerne Courtney and Steepleton Group Parish Council and Fifehead Neville Parish Meeting all disagreed with the suggestion of not setting a District level housing density standard. The reasons for this were that it may harm the delivery of housing across the District and that there was a need to set an upper limit to give a clear

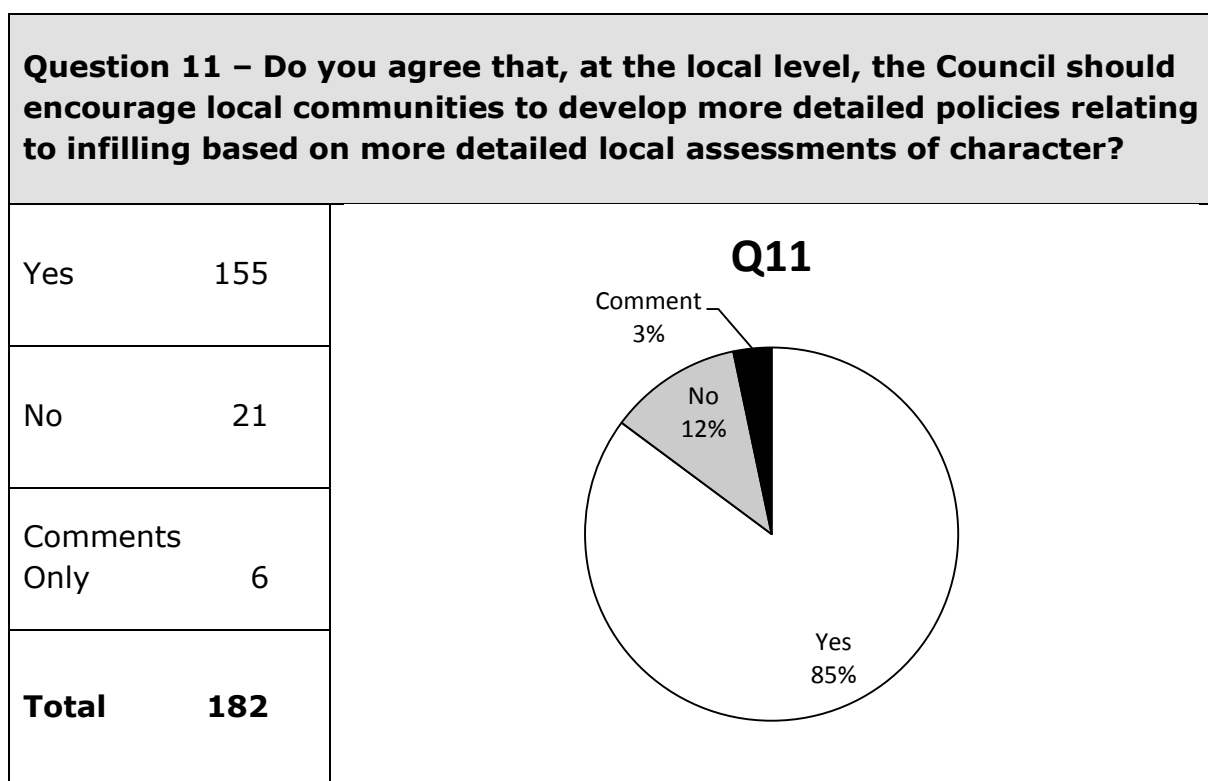
message to developers. It was suggested that the setting of density standards was inappropriate for small sites, particularly for infilling plots within villages.

5. Of the 156 responses received from non-specific consultees, 56% supported and 40% did not support the approach of not setting a District level housing density target. There was generally resistance against high density development and support for establishing a maximum density standard to prevent such developments.
6. Generally support was given to a flexible approach, enabling development to reflect local character. Neighbourhood Plans were seen as a mechanism for establishing local density standards. It was highlighted that density standards do not secure good design; developments need to offer adequate space for living including through the provision of green space, parking and bike storage.
7. The majority of the agents and landowners supported a flexible approach but also the retention of the 30 to 50 dwellings per hectare standard to encourage efficient use of land. They also suggested that encouragement should be given to higher density development in more sustainable locations.
8. The small number of comments received which supported the establishment of a density standard at the District level suggested that the use of a density standard would reduce the need for greenfield development and that a standard should be set for the main towns and larger developments of greater than five dwellings.



9. Child Okeford, Durweston, Iwerne Minster, Marnhull, Okeford Fitzpaine, Stourpaine, Tarrant Gunville, Winterborne Stickland Parish Councils, Iwerne Courtney and Steepleton Group Parish Council and Blandford Forum and Stalbridge Town Councils all supported the approach of developing a criteria-based approach in relation to infilling.
10. The main reason given for this approach was to preserve the character of settlements but that a blanket ban should not be put in place. Views expressed by parish councils did not want to encourage infilling but to have a flexible and sensitive approach.
11. Charlton Marshall, Melbury Abbas and Cann and Pimperne Parish Councils and Fifehead Neville Parish Meeting did not support the approach of encouraging more sensitive infilling. The only comment by these Councils was that they did not favour infilling even within the towns.
12. The other specific consultees that responded were the Environment Agency who highlighted the importance of avoiding flood risk and the application of the sequential approach to development; and Natural England who highlighted the need to take into account the environment and amenity value of potential infill plots and the loss of this value.
13. Of the 158 responses received from non-specific consultees, 74% supported and 21% did not support the approach of establishing a criteria-based policy to encourage more sensitive infilling.

14. Comments received highlighted the importance of green space within settlements for its contribution to biodiversity and to the health and wellbeing of the population. Infilling puts pressure on green infrastructure elements and therefore on biodiversity. Loss of green space also puts more demand on healthcare providers and social services.
15. There were many comments received suggesting that local people should have an input into the criteria to say what is viewed as sensitive and acceptable in the local area. Suggestions of which factors should be taken into account included amenity space, access, effect on neighbouring properties, character of the area and the brownfield/greenfield designation. Neighbourhood plans were suggested as a vehicle for establishing local criteria.
16. The Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB strongly supported the retention of a brownfield first policy
17. One comment supported infilling as it results in fewer green fields being developed.



18. Charlton Marshall, Child Okeford, Durweston, Marnhull, Okeford Fitzpaine, Pimperne, Shillingstone, South Tarrant Valley, Stourpaine, Tarrant Gunville and Winterborne Stickland Parish Councils, Iwerne Courtney and Steepleton Group Parish Council and Blandford Forum, Stalbridge and Shaftesbury Town Councils all supported the approach of encouraging local communities to establish policies on infilling based on local

assessments of character. Neighbourhood Planning was seen as a mechanism for achieving this.

19. Melbury Abbas and Cann Parish Council and Fifehead Neville Parish Meeting did not agree with the approach of encouraging local communities to develop more detailed policies based on local character however they did not give any explanation for this.
20. Natural England supported an approach which allows local landscape character to be maintained and enhanced whilst the Environment Agency reiterated the importance of avoiding flood risk and the application of the sequential approach to development.
21. Of the 163 responses received from non-specific consultees, 85% supported and 12% did not support the approach of encouraging local communities to develop more detailed policies based on local character.
22. The comments received highlighted the importance of local knowledge in developing local policies and that local communities know what local needs are. There was concern however that the approach was open to exploitation by individuals who may pursue their own interests rather than the interests of the whole community. Appropriate checks and balances need to be put into place to prevent this. It was suggested that North Dorset District Council have a role in facilitating the establishment of local policies but should not dictate that local communities should prepare them. The Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB offered expert advice and support to communities in the preparation of local policies.
23. One agent although supportive of the approach, pointed out that good design can often overcome character constraints. The establishment of local community derived policy must not be seen as an opportunity to hinder sympathetic development.
24. One other response suggested that as the Council is proposing to remove settlement boundaries from all but the four main towns restricting infill development, there is no need to establish local policies unless a neighbourhood plan is bringing forward growth. This therefore removes the need for this approach as the neighbourhood plan can establish local policies at that stage.
25. Reasons for disagreement with the approach being suggested highlighted the need for a unified and transparent approach to avoid misinterpretation of any local policies. There was also concern that the needs of small numbers of people may be overlooked if excessively restrictive policies are put in place, restricting the delivery of housing.

26. One response took the opportunity to object to the proposed development at Bay in Gillingham. The consideration was that the Southern Extension to Gillingham would deliver sufficient houses to meet the need within the town and therefore the “gap” between the hamlet of Bay and the town of Gillingham should be protected for its character and wildlife value.

## **Conclusion**

27. In conclusion, support was given for a flexible approach to density, reflecting local character but with a maximum density standard being retained to prevent inappropriate development. There was also support for making efficient use of land to prevent high levels of development on greenfield land.
28. Support was given to developing locally derived criteria to encourage more sensitive infilling however it was suggested that local communities should have an input into establishing the criteria.
29. The majority of responses supported the approach of encouraging local communities to develop more detailed policies based on local character as local knowledge is essential to understanding the local area. There were however concerns raised over the potential for this approach to be abused and not take into account the needs and wishes of the whole community.
30. Concern was also raised that the approach may result in the delivery of housing being constrained by overly restrictive policies. The Council was seen as having an important role in guiding the development of policies and in providing the checks and balances needed to ensure the approach was appropriate and not overly restrictive.
31. It was suggested that neighbourhood plans should be the mechanism for establishing these criteria but that the interim policy position needs to be established whilst neighbourhood plans are being prepared.

## Affordable Housing

**Question 12 – What tenure split should be the starting point for negotiations for the provision of affordable housing on individual sites, having regard to the introduction of the new Affordable Rent product?**

1. In total 103 people responded to the question. A number of respondents interpreted this question as seeking a view on the overall percentage of affordable housing that should be sought, rather than seeking a view on what the split of tenures should be in the affordable element. These views, together with the views on tenure split, are summarised below. Of those that expressed a view on the percentage of affordable housing that should be sought, the results are as set out in the table below.

<b>% of affordable that should be sought</b>	<b>Number of respondents</b>
50%	2
40% (or 40%+)	6
33% (of floor area)	1
30%	4
25%	2
20%	1
15%	1
10%	2
5%	1
0%	3

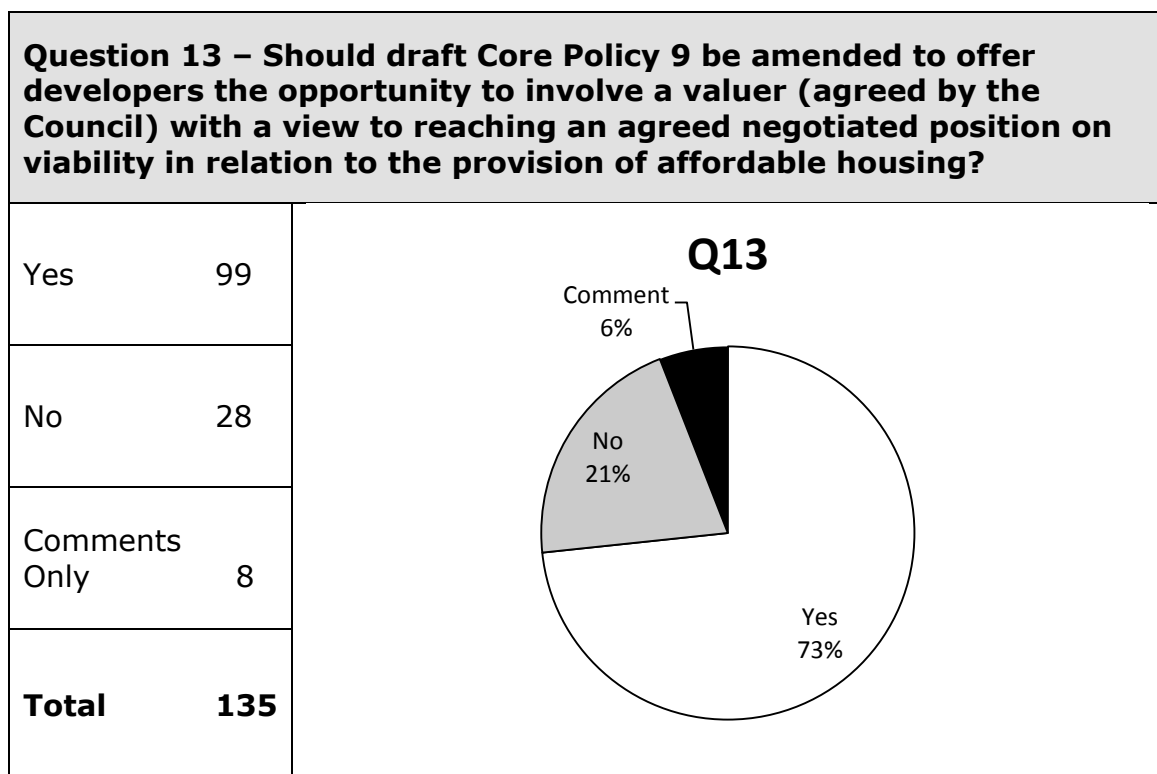
2. Four people thought that the provision of affordable housing should be maximised. Five people thought that the level of provision should be determined on a site-by-site basis or to reflect the needs of the community. One respondent thought that the level of affordable provision should reflect the current market / affordable split across the District.
3. Of those that expressed a view on the tenure split which should be the starting point for negotiations, the results are as set out in the table below.

<b>Proposed tenure split</b>			<b>Number of respondents</b>
<b>Social rent</b>	<b>Affordable rent</b>	<b>Intermediate</b>	
	80%	20%	6
	75%	25%	1
	70%	30%	11
	60%	40%	3
60%	26%	14%	2
	55%	45%	1
	50%	50%	6
40%	40%	20%	1



4. Two respondents thought that the provision of social rented affordable housing should be maximised and two felt that a single figure for social and / or affordable rent should be sought, rather than introducing separate percentages. 16 respondents thought that a figure should not be set and that the tenure split should be determined on a site-by-site basis or on the basis of what is viable.
5. A number of more general comments were made. Two people offered general support for the provision of affordable housing and three people were concerned about the reduced security of tenure associated with the affordable rent product. One person was concerned about affordable housing being occupied by people that were not from North Dorset and one person thought that a lower percentage of affordable housing should be sought in order to increase the funding for infrastructure. One person sought the provision of cheaper 'low cost' market housing, whilst another expressed the view that affordable housing reduced the saleability of nearly market housing. Two landowners questioned whether the private sector should be required to contribute towards the funding of affordable housing in the light of the selling off of council houses and one respondent thought that separate market housing and council housing estates should be built.
6. Durweston and Okeford Fitzpaine Parish Councils thought that 40% affordable housing should be sought and Stalbridge Town Council thought that 30% should be sought. Shaftesbury Town Council was concerned about viability issues and CIL and suggested a starting point of 33% of the total floor area of a development. Blandford Forum Town Council agreed that a starting point should be set at the District level, but thought that levels of provision should be determined on a site specific basis, having regard to the need to collect contributions towards infrastructure from CIL. Dorset County Council expressed the view that where developments are required to provide 10 or more affordable homes, 10% should be planned for households requiring specialised affordable housing.
7. Iwerne Courtney and Stepleton Parish Council thought that the proportion of rental properties should be maximised. Milborne St. Andrew Parish Council sought 80% social rent / 20% intermediate housing. Marnhull and Charlton Marshall Parish Councils supported a 70% / 30% split. Winterborne Stickland Parish Council thought that the tenure split should be dictated by local need. Pimperne Parish Council thought that levels of provision should be determined on a site-by-site basis, subject to open book negotiations and Shillingstone Parish Council thought that levels of provision would be determined by wider economic factors.
8. Of the 14 agents that responded, 10 sought a flexible approach to tenure split for a variety of reasons, including viability and local needs. One agent

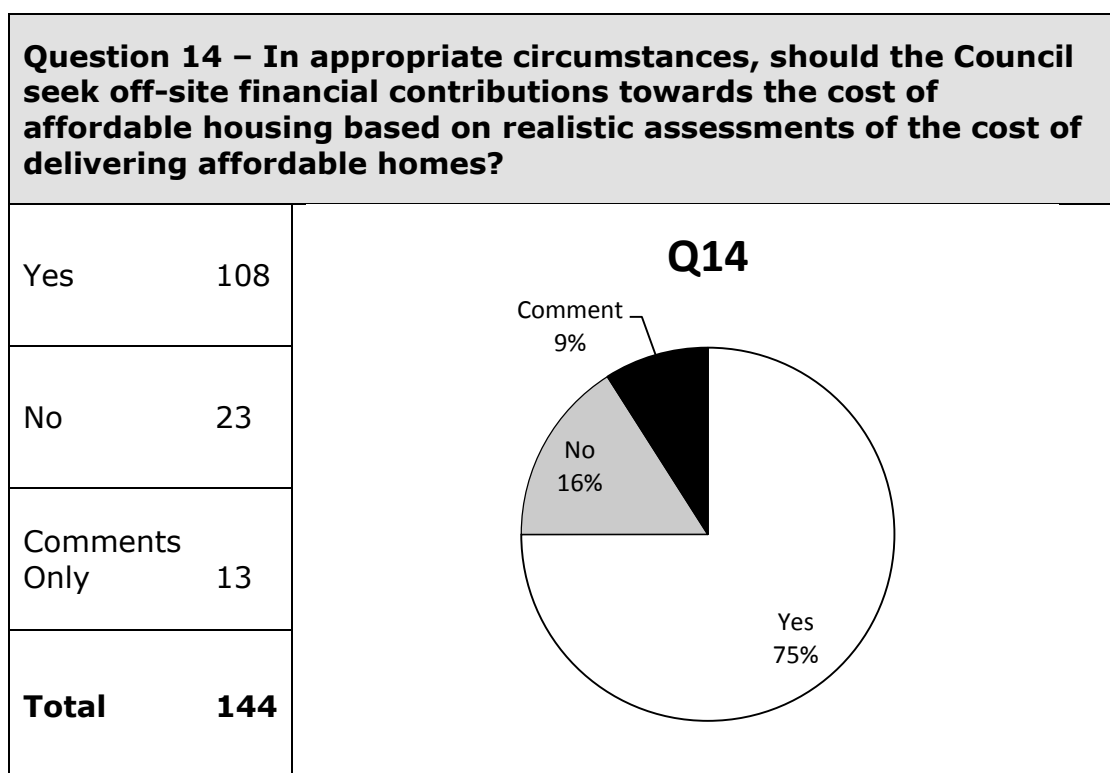
supported a 70% / 30% split as a starting point, provided that there was flexibility to negotiate on a site-by-site basis. Two agents sought a tenure split that reflected the findings of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA), which was 60% social rent; 26% affordable rent and 14% intermediate housing. One agent sought a 40% social rent; 40% affordable rent; 20% shared equity split.



9. Charlton Marshall, Child Okeford, Durweston, Iwerne Courtney and Stepleton, Iwerne Minster, Marnhull, Milborne St Andrew, Okeford Fitzpaine, Pimperne, Shillingstone, South Tarrant Valley, Stourpaine and Winterborne Stickland Parish Councils and Blandford Forum, Shaftesbury and Stalbridge Town Councils all agreed that developers should be offered the opportunity to involve a valuer. Milborne St Andrew Parish Council commented that the valuer should be independent. Shaftesbury Town Council noted that the use of a valuer is already standard practice in many areas and that in some cases this approach can help to bring development forward.
10. Melbury Abbas and Cann Parish Council didn't agree that developers should be offered the opportunity to involve a valuer, but made no further comment.
11. 14 agents agreed with the question and made a variety of additional comments. Many thought that the approach was necessary in order to enable viability to be tested, which was essential for delivery. Others noted that the need to examine viability was set out in the NPPF and felt

that the proposed 'open book' approach would be transparent. It was noted that viability testing could have an impact on both the level and the type of affordable housing provided. Two agents supported the approach provided that the framework was based on RICS guidance and the Harman Report. One agent stated that the cost of the valuer should be borne by the Council, rather than developers.

12. A local business, five community groups and two landowners agreed with the question, although the landowners also felt that requiring the provision of affordable housing and contributions towards infrastructure made housing less affordable. 64 members of the public agreed that developers should be offered the opportunity to involve a valuer. A few expressed concerns about developers' profits and the need to take a long term and broader view of affordable housing provision. 56 members of the public agreed with the question but made no further comment.
13. Two agents made only comments, expressing the view that the level of affordable housing provision should be a target with flexibility to enable viability considerations to be taken into account. They noted that the involvement of a valuer could be helpful, but felt that it should not be a prerequisite for negotiations.
14. One agent did not support the proposed approach indicating that developers would take their own advice on viability. Three members of the public and a voluntary body were concerned that negotiations on viability would reduce the level of provision of affordable housing and one felt that it opened the door for developers to renege on their obligations. One member of the public didn't think that market housing should be burdened with having to pay for the provision of affordable housing. 17 members of the public disagreed with the question but made no further comment.



15. Charlton Marshall, Child Okeford, Durweston, Iwerne Courtney and Stepleton, Iwerne Minster, Marnhull, Okeford Fitzpaine, Pimperne, Shillingstone, South Tarrant Valley, Stourpaine and Winterborne Stickland Parish Councils and Blandford Forum, Shaftesbury and Stalbridge Town Councils all agreed with the question.

16. Whilst agreeing with the questions, Blandford Forum Town Council's preference was for affordable housing to be provided on site, mixed with market housing. Shaftesbury Town Council noted that off-site contributions may be an acceptable way forward, especially where the community has access to low-cost land. The Town Council also wished to ensure that off-site provision meets the needs of the local community where the development is situated. Shillingstone Parish Council wished to see any off-site contributions translated into affordable housing within a set timeframe. Child Okeford Parish Council wished to see off-site contributions spent on infrastructure in the rural area.

17. Melbury Abbas and Cann Parish Council didn't agree with the question, but made no further comment. Milborne St Andrew Parish Council felt unable to answer the question.

18. 14 agents agreed with the question with a variety of additional points being made. Several agents recognised that allowing off-site contributions to be made added flexibility, which was important as not all sites were suitable or appropriate locations for affordable housing. One agent commented that allowing off-site provision was consistent with the

viability-led approach advocated in the NPPF. Another agent felt that all schemes, large and small, should contribute to affordable housing provision and infrastructure. One agent noted that off-site contributions could make a valuable contribution to wider development and regeneration opportunities elsewhere. Another agent commented that any contributions should be spent within 5 years or paid back to the developer.

19. A local business, five community groups and two landowners agreed with the question, although the landowners also felt that requiring the provision of affordable housing and contributions towards infrastructure made housing less affordable. Blandford and District Civic Society felt that all development should contribute to the provision of affordable housing, but noted that it may not be possible for it to be provided on small sites. SturQuest noted that off-site contributions may be appropriate in some cases, but felt that it should not be used by developers to solve their problems and leave the District with the burden of finding alternative sites. Bourton Village Plan Steering Group felt that this approach should apply to sites with five or less dwellings.

20. 11 members of the public supported the approach and made additional comments. One thought that the affordability problem could be eased if smaller market homes were built. Some welcomed the option of allowing a financial contribution to off-site provision to be made as it would give more flexibility, whereas others thought that the approach should only be used as a last resort. The view was expressed that more detail should be provided when off-site contributions would be appropriate and one respondent supported the approach with the proviso that it would deliver an equivalent amount of affordable housing offsite. One respondent was concerned about the cost to developers and two others highlighted the role that housing associations needed to play to ensure that affordable housing was delivered offsite. 60 members of the public agreed with the question but made no further comment.

21. One agent commented that off-site affordable housing should only be permitted in exceptional circumstances and suggested that the 'support deficit approach' should be used to calculate the level of contributions. Another agent was concerned that the level of contributions being sought may stifle development. Other comments were of a general nature. One respondent expressed support for the provision of affordable housing, another felt that off-site contributions represented a tax on market housing and another felt that there should be greater focus on funding for other forms of infrastructure, including roads. Six members of the public stated that they didn't understand the question and / or felt that they didn't have enough information to comment.

22.5 members of the public and a voluntary body did not support the approach and made additional comments. Two respondents didn't agree with affordable housing in principle and one was concerned with affordable housing being given to people from other areas. One respondent was concerned that off-site provision would lead to social exclusion and another was concerned that the approach could reduce the overall level of provision of affordable housing. The voluntary body felt that developers should provide affordable housing on-site and that it was not appropriate to make provision off-site to suit developers' interests. 16 members of the public disagreed with the question but made no further comment.

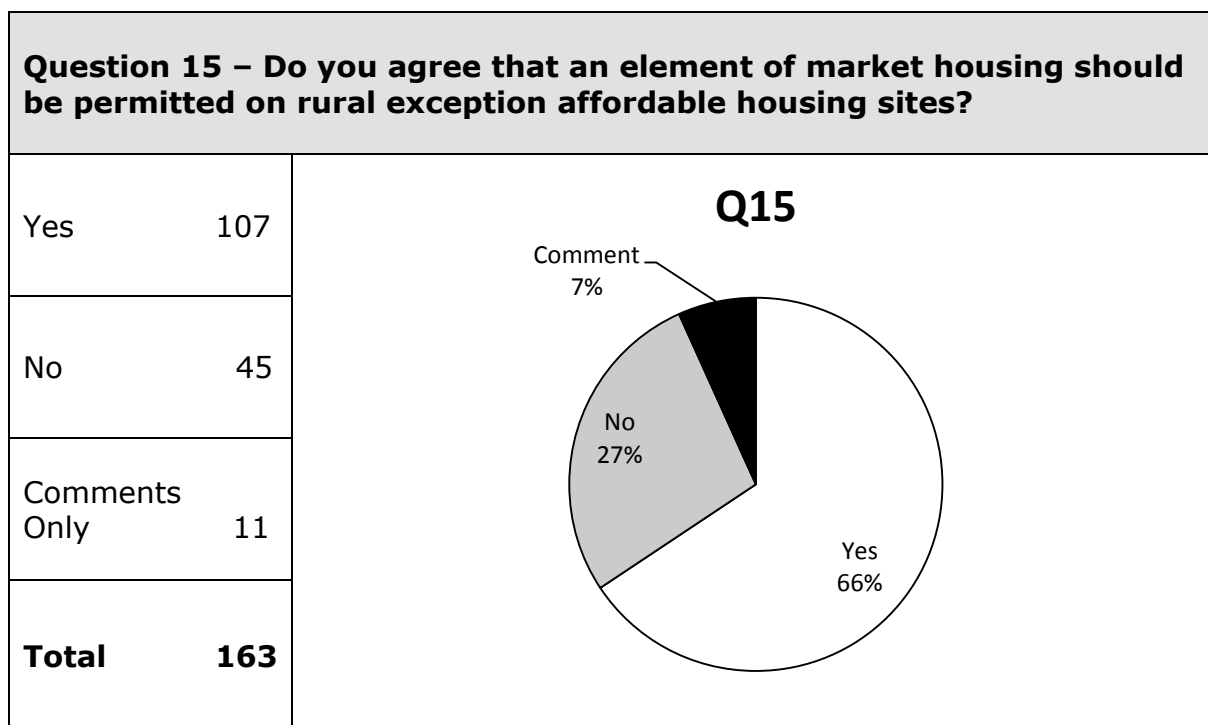
## **Conclusion**

23. The responses to Question 12 shows that there is a wide variety of views on both the overall level of affordable housing that should be sought and the tenure split that should form the starting point for negotiation on the affordable element. Of those that quoted a percentage split, the largest number (11) supported a 70% social and / or affordable rent / 30% intermediate housing split. However, 16 respondents (10 of which were agents) felt that a starting point figure for tenure split should not be set.

24. The responses to questions 13 and 14 show that there is strong support for:

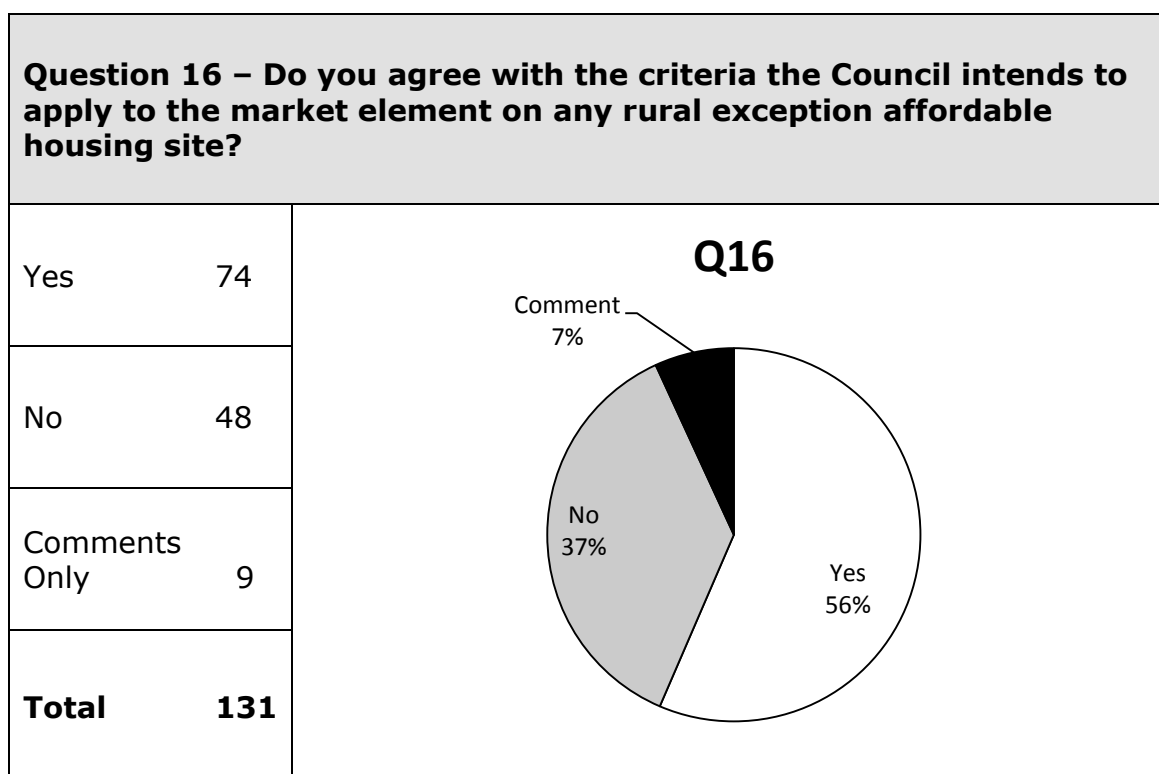
- Offering developers the opportunity to involve a valuer to negotiate on the issue of viability; and
- Seeking off-site contributions towards the cost of affordable housing based on realistic assessments of cost.

## Affordable Rural Exception Schemes



1. Blandford Forum Town Council, Charlton Marshall, Child Okeford, Iwerne Courtney and Steepleton, Marnhull, Melbury Abbas and Cann, Milborne St Andrew, Okeford Fitzpaine, and Pimperne Parish Councils, Shaftesbury Town Council, Shillingstone, South Tarrant Valley Parish Council, Stalbridge Town Council, Stourpaine and Winterborne Stickland Parish Councils all agreed that an element of market housing should be permitted on rural exception affordable housing sites. It was cited that it is a practical policy approach but that criteria would be necessary to enable an element of control.
2. Iwerne Minster Parish Council was the only specific consultee that did not answer yes or no directly but who commented that this should be determined by the local Parish Council.
3. Durweston and Tarrant Gunville Parish Council both disagreed that an element of market housing should be permitted on rural exception affordable housing sites. Durweston Parish Council suggested that it does not have a need for market housing as it does not meet the needs of the village.
4. The Highways Agency, the only other specific consultee commenting on this question, objected due to unsustainable travel patterns which would be encouraged.

5. 92 responses from agents, local businesses, community groups, residents and voluntary bodies supported the proposal that market housing should be permitted on rural exception sites. Some commented that this cross-funding approach is essential to delivery and it would help to create integrated communities. Some responded with wider concerns that the location for housing should be sustainable and that it should be available to local people.
6. 10 responses did not answer yes or no directly and of those 6 indicated they did not understand the question. One agent suggested the proposed approach could assist in the viability of a scheme in conformity with the NPPF. However, the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB is concerned that rural exception schemes are too small to realistically include market housing and are often located on the edge of settlements away from facilities.
7. 42 responses from agents, local businesses, community groups, residents and voluntary bodies disagreed with the proposal that an element of market housing should be permitted on rural exception affordable housing sites. Most responses did not offer comment. However from the few that did, concerns ranged from suitability of market housing to meet local needs to ensuring sustainable locations.

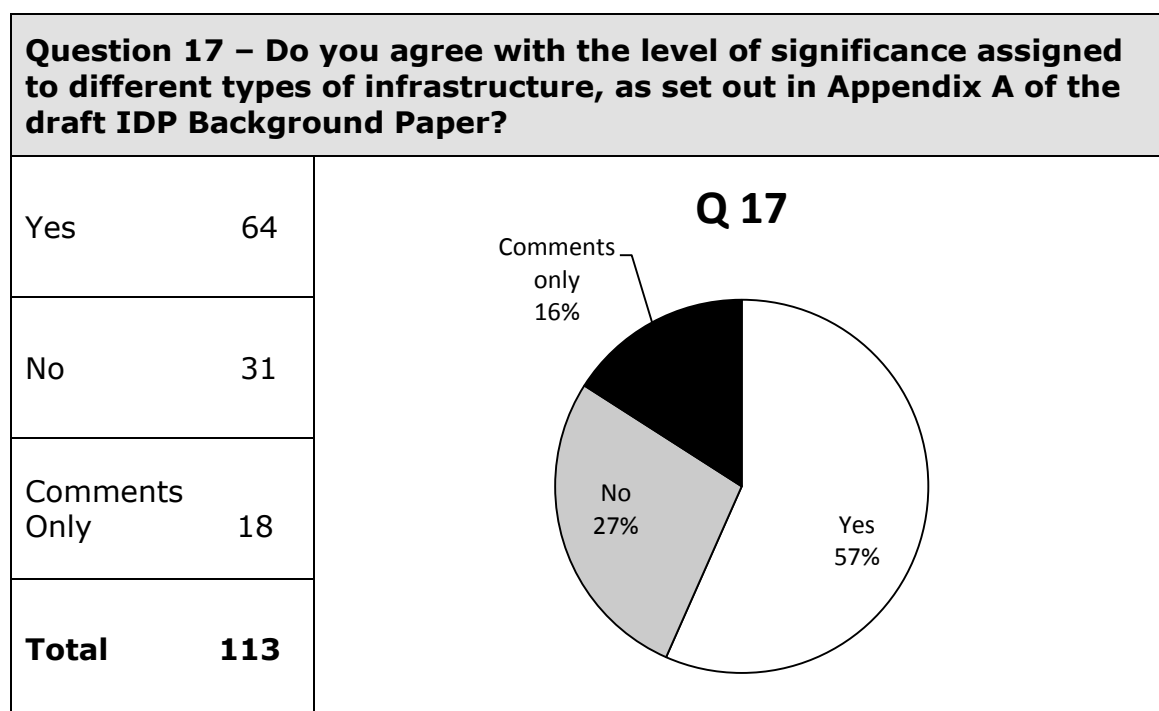




8. Blandford Forum Town Council, Child Okeford, Charlton Marshall, Iwerne Courtney and Steepleton, Iwerne Minster, Marnhull, Okeford Fitzpaine, and Pimperne Parish Councils, Shaftesbury Town Council, South Tarrant Valley Parish Council, Stalbridge Town Council, Stourpaine and Winterborne Stickland Parish Councils supported the proposed criteria the Council intends to apply to the market element on any rural exception affordable housing site.
9. Milborne St Andrew Parish Council was the only specific consultee that did not answer yes or no directly but who commented that the ratio must be seen to be fair.
10. Shillingstone Parish Council, Durweston Parish Council and The Highways Agency specific consultees disagreed with the proposed criteria the Council intends to apply to the market element on any rural exception affordable housing site. Shillingstone Parish Council specifically commented on the criteria and that the emphasis should be changed to a 'no more than the minimum' of market homes necessary to deliver the affordable element, that the criteria should include reference to local character, and that the Council should consider how they would deal with contributions in place of direct provision. The Highways Agency re-iterates its objection to Q15 that it is concerned about unsustainable travel patterns which would be encouraged.
11. 61 responses from agents, local businesses, community groups, residents and voluntary bodies supported the proposed criteria the Council intends to apply to the market element on any rural exception affordable housing site mostly without additional comment. However the Bourton Village Plan Steering Group would prefer a flexible approach to permit off site provision where appropriate.
12. 8 responses did not answer yes or no directly and of those 6 indicated they did not understand the question. The South West Registered Housing Landlord Planning Consortium expressed the need for a degree of flexibility to provide positive support for cross subsidy schemes. One agent re-iterated their response to Q15 that the proposed approach could assist in the viability of a scheme in conformity with the NPPF.
13. 45 responses from agents, local businesses, community groups, residents and voluntary bodies disagreed with the proposed criteria the Council intends to apply to the market element on any rural exception affordable housing site mostly without additional comment. Reasons that were stated included that each case should be judged on its merits and that separating out the affordable and market provision to separate sites would reduce landscape impact.

14. The consultation drew clear support for both policy proposals relating to affordable housing rural exception schemes. However, viability of delivery and sustainability of location seemed to be of most concern. A suggestion was made on the criteria to support Q16 that the emphasis should be changed to a 'no more than the minimum' of market homes necessary to deliver the affordable element, that the criteria should include reference to local character, and that the Council should consider how they would deal with contributions in place of direct provision.

## Grey, Social and Green Infrastructure



1. Dorset County Council, Blandford Forum and Shaftesbury Town Councils together with the Parish Councils of Charlton Marshall, Child Okeford, Iwerne Minster, Marnhull, Melbury Abbas and Cann, Milborne St Andrew, Okeford Fitzpaine, Pimperne, Shillingstone, South Tarrant Valley, Stourpaine, and Winterborne Stickland as well as Fifehead Neville Parish Meeting all submitted answers to the question on the levels of significance assigned by the District Council to the various elements of infrastructure listed in the draft Infrastructure Development Plan.
2. Dorset County Council together with Pimperne and Shillingstone Parish Councils, Fifehead Neville Parish Meeting and Shaftesbury Town Council did not agree with the assigned levels of significance. Various suggestions as to infrastructure categorisation were made - Dorset County Council suggested that cycling and walking are Essential not Desirable; Pimperne Parish Council regarded pre-schools and special needs education, road safety, parking, tourism centre, cemeteries, village greens/parks/nature reserves as Essential with pharmacies being Critical and arts centres and places of worship as Necessary; Shillingstone Parish Council saw road safety, cycling facilities and networks together with a village shop as Essential; Fifehead Neville Parish Meeting regarded broadband as Essential infrastructure. Shaftesbury Town Council indicated that it did not understand the difference between the categories.
3. Blandford Town Council and the Parish Councils of Charlton Marshall, Child Okeford, Iwerne Minster, Milborne St Andrew, South Tarrant Valley and

Okeford Fitzpaine agreed with the assigned significance levels but submitted no comments.

4. Of those councils which did not provide a direct response to Question 17, Stourpaine Parish Council stated that it was not qualified to answer and Winterborne Stickland Parish Council stated that it had insufficient knowledge to respond. Melbury Abbas and Cann Parish Council's response was to the effect that there is currently insufficient infrastructure for current levels of housing.
5. Some 7 representations were received from agents acting for clients with various interests in the district. Of these, all but two answered 'Yes' to the question, one embodying no comment, the other putting forward the view that medical facilities are Critical infrastructure but delivery may result in problems of implementation especially when the issues raised are the responsibility of a PCT to resolve. The remainder stressed that medical facilities and roads were Essential and one offered the view that it is a scheme's ability to address infrastructure rather than respond to existing provision that should be considered and weighted in the decision making process.
6. Only one of the five Community Groups which offered an answer to Question 17 specifically indicated 'No': the Dorset Wildlife Trust suggested that nature reserves should be Critical not Necessary and village greens, parks and gardens should move from Necessary to Essential. Shaftesbury Civic Society did not answer the question directly but indicated that there should be better allocation for culture, a Tourist Information Centre and street art in Shaftesbury.
7. Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB suggested that only three categories were necessary, not four.
8. Blandford and District Civic Society supported the Council's view of infrastructure significance.
9. Natural England did not give a specific answer to the question but commented that mobile phone coverage should not be more important than green infrastructure.
10. The Highways Agency did not respond directly to the question but would like to see a term other than 'grey' infrastructure used and, while supporting the principle of categorisation, would like to see greater clarity/differential in the terms used. The Agency would also like to see clarification of the county-wide status of A303 and A30.
11. The Environment Agency similarly offered comments without a direct answer to the question. The Agency considers that water environment and nature reserves are Essential given their contribution to the natural

environment and they often contain nationally protected species. The Agency agreed that waste/drainage is Critical as innovative design can be used to provide environmental benefits.

12. Only one business responded to this question, supporting the Council's categorisation with no further comment.

13. There were 77 responses to Question 17 from members of the public<sup>1</sup>. Of these, 7 responded 'No' with no additional comment while 16 answered 'No' but added comments. These comments included the views that:

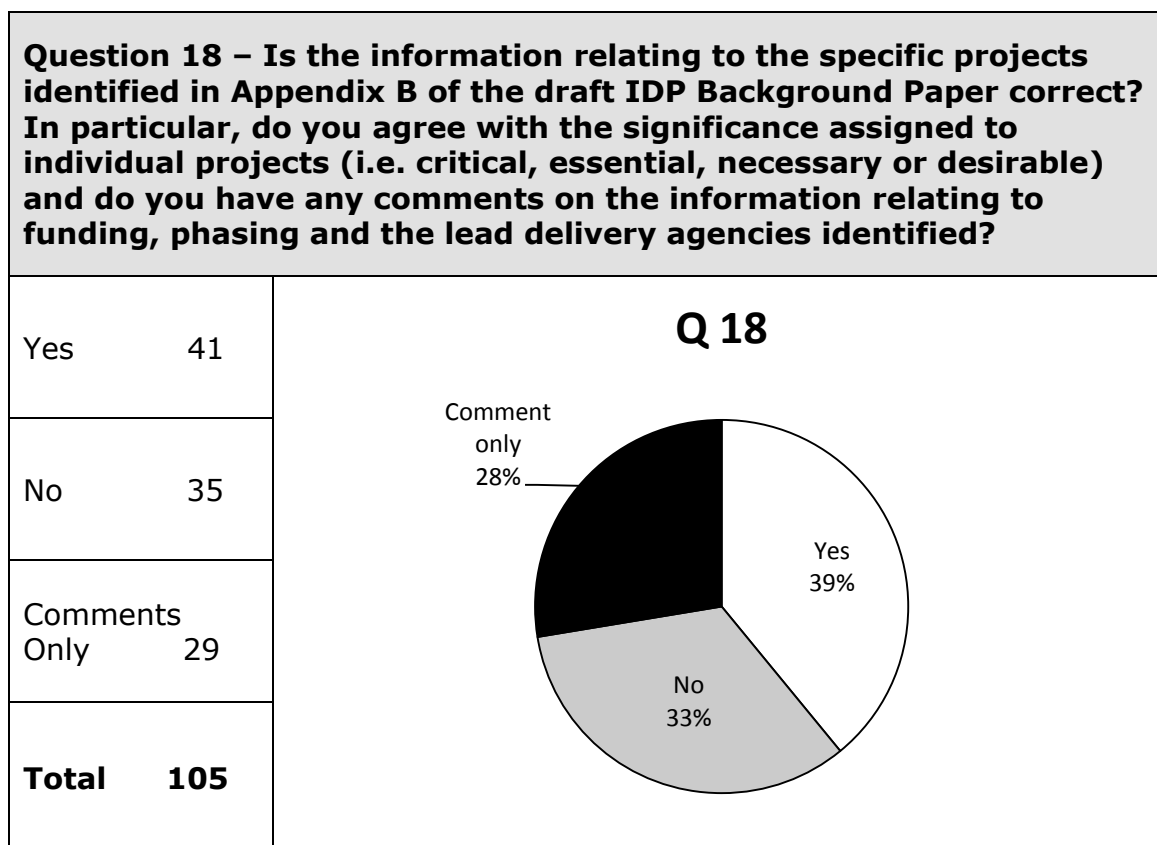
- the categories put forward are meaningless or are unclear;
- cultural activities should have higher significance;
- environment and amenity are equally important;
- tourism is essential as a key economy element;
- walking and cycling should be emphasised more;
- social elements of infrastructure such as cemeteries are Essential not Necessary;
- education and health facilities in Blandford are Essential.

14. A total of 44 responses were 'Yes', ten with accompanying comment and 34 with no comment. Comments ranged over a number of points, including the view that all Desirable elements of infrastructure should be treated as Necessary; support for high speed broadband being Critical for development; and higher status being given to allotments than Desirable.

15. Only ten responses were on the basis of comment only. These suggested that highways and transportation are basically priority matters given the possibility of development at Crown Meadows; that pre-school facilities should be Essential not Desirable and that all leisure facilities should be Critical rather than Essential.

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<sup>1</sup> From their comments, some respondents to Question 17 appeared to confuse this question and part of Question 18 with regard to categorisation. However, related comments are included here as respondents made them in association with this Question.



16. A number of parish and town councils responded to Question 18. As well as Dorset County Council, Blandford and Shaftesbury Town Councils together with Charlton Marshall, Child Okeford, Iwerne Minster, Marnhull, Milborne St Andrew, Okeford Fitzpaine, Pimperne, Stourpaine and Winterborne Stickland Parish Councils gave some response to this question.
17. The response from Dorset County Council, as a major infrastructure delivery agent, was detailed in respect of many aspects of the draft IDP. Key items of response included the need to recognise the costs of future maintenance, the importance of prioritisation of projects as funds will not be available for all to be completed and a need to more fully recognise the importance of cultural infrastructure, as well as numerous corrections and amendments to the draft IDP itself.
18. The responses from Blandford Forum and Shaftesbury Town Councils did not offer a direct answer to the question posed but were in the form of detailed comments, setting out infrastructure elements which they felt should be included and changes in categorisation. Education, highways and medical facilities were particularly emphasised as important infrastructure. Other councils which did not offer a 'Yes' or 'No' response were Stourpaine and Winterborne Stickland Parish Councils, both of which stated that they did not have sufficient knowledge to respond.

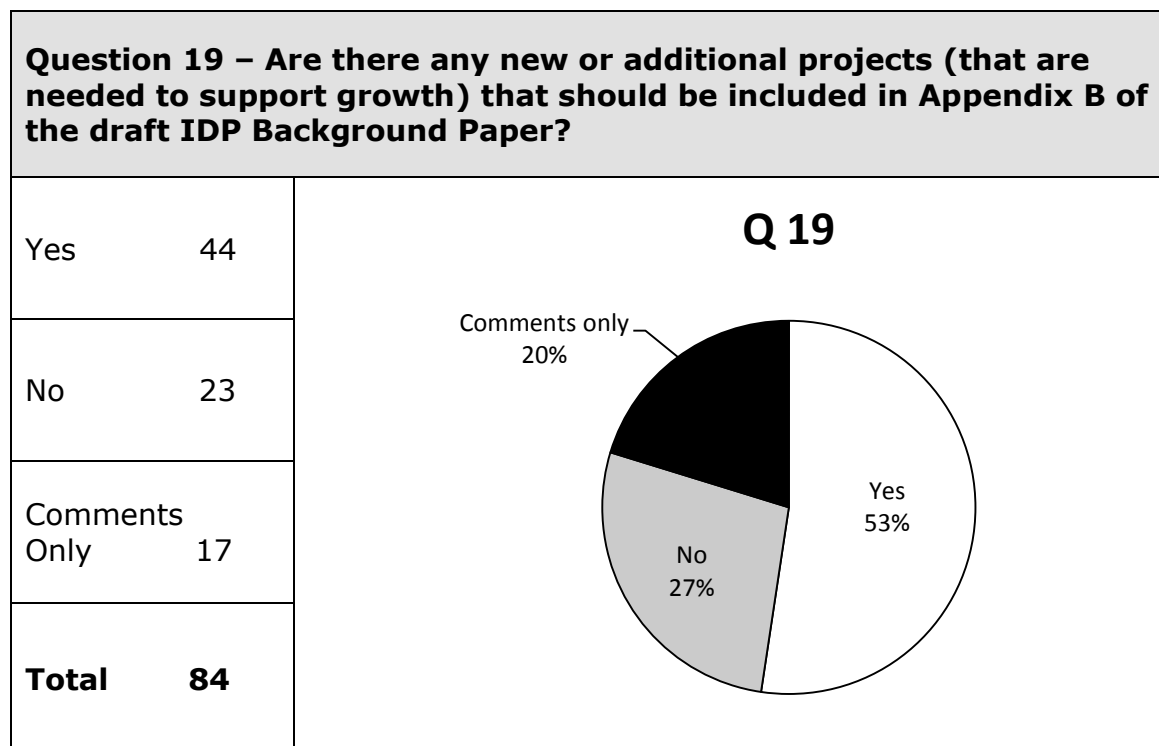
19. Councils answering 'No' were Charlton Marshall Parish Council, as it felt that items of infrastructure were missing from the draft IDP, Marnhull Parish Council, which queried the categorisation of some items, and Pimperne Parish Council, highlighting pedestrian crossings in the parish and doctors' surgeries as missing items of infrastructure.
20. While answering 'Yes', Child Okeford Parish Council was disappointed that public transport was not more fully recognised, Iwerne Minster Parish Council did not offer further comment, Milborne St Andrew Parish Council asked how the various categories were derived while Okeford Fitzpaine Parish Council offered no comments.
21. Of the seven responding agents, four specifically opposed the suggestion, two raising questions concerning the impact of development at Gillingham and the way in which the categories were derived, while the two others submitted no comments to support their response. Two agents supported the information presented by the Council without comment while one simply commented about identification of infrastructure relating to development at Gillingham.
22. Two business respondents answered 'Yes' to Question 18. Comments were attached to one of these to the effect that NHS Dorset is identified as developing critical GP services but this does not reflect reality as NHS Dorset will cease to exist from March 2013. Also, no capital funding is available from the NHS for new premises. A further business response was simply 'Yes'.
23. The Highways Agency did not make a response to this question but the Environment Agency considered that that the 'environmental costs' are significantly under estimated. They suggest other funding streams are available but give no details. The Agency also noted that the draft IDP made no reference to funds for flood defences which is correct as no flood defences are planned. Natural England noted that it is very unlikely to be the lead delivery agency with respect to local nature reserves. Strategic infrastructure projects may be required to ensure allocations are deliverable through off site measures to protect species/landscapes.
24. In its response, the RSPB simply commented that while the Council is not a signatory to the Dorset Heathlands SPD, contributions are collected and need to be included in the IDP.
25. The Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB found the use of different categories useful but queried the amount of differentiation between the categories. In its submitted comments it made a number of suggested changes and additions to the draft IDP. The AONB also stressed the importance of early engagement between the Council and the AONB

and pointed out that grey as well as green infrastructure is important in the AONB.

26. Wessex Water commented that an anaerobic digestion plant will require significant investment at Gillingham Sewage Treatment Works.
27. Only two of the five Community Groups which offered an answer to Question 18 specifically indicated 'No': the Dorset Wildlife Trust suggested that the level of significance of some green infrastructure elements needed to be revised while it encouraged the Council to produce a green infrastructure strategy. Shaftesbury Civic Society took issue with the fact that indicative phasing was missing for many of the items in the draft IDP.
28. Two of the three Community Groups responding 'Yes' added comment to their answer, Blandford and District Civic Society taking the view that a new medical facility is needed in the town rather than extending existing surgeries, that town centre enhancement is Essential and that additional cycleways are only Desirable in terms of the Trailway. SturQuest Open Space suggested that the Trailway should be a Necessary rather than Desirable infrastructure project.
29. Of the remaining two Community Groups, offering only comments, Bourton Village Plan Steering Group felt that financial provision for Community Halls in rural communities is insufficient and the Gillingham Neighbourhood Plan Group pointed out that a Critical issue in the town is traffic congestion.
30. Two landowners submitted comments, essentially arguing that requiring developers to contribute towards infrastructure costs raised the general price of houses.
31. Of the 68 responses received from the general public relating to this question, 25 submitted a 'No' response to the question. The great majority attached comments to their response, only 4 not doing so. A variety of issues was raised. For example, a number of respondents would have liked all the gaps in the draft IDP to have been filled. Some also felt that the categorisation was not helpful or clear. Various suggestions for changing categories and extending the list of projects were made. The need for infrastructure to be in place before development commenced was also raised.
32. Some 30 residents supported the draft IDP, 20 without comment. The comments which were received included a request for more information on funding infrastructure, the need for additional medical facilities in Blandford Forum and again having infrastructure in place before development takes place.



33. These topics were also touched on by respondents who submitted only comments without indicating 'Yes' or 'No'. Additionally, a household waste disposal site in Shaftesbury was raised as an issue, as was a perceived need for an ambulance station at Gillingham, and the need to retain green corridors in development was stressed.



34. Blandford Town Council, with Charlton Marshall, Pimperne and Okeford Fitzpaine Parish Councils said that were additional infrastructure schemes to be added to the draft IDP. Blandford Town Council listed a number of these, as did Pimperne Parish Council.

35. Melbury Abbas and Cann Group Parish Council and Milborne St Andrew Parish Council submitted only comments in which they listed various schemes for inclusion in the IDP. Stourpaine and Winterborne Stickland Parish Councils took the view that they had insufficient knowledge to answer the question. Shaftesbury Town Council stated that a number of longstanding necessary schemes had been omitted.

36. Out of 8 agents responding to Question 19, one simply pointed out that development at Gillingham will require careful consideration being given to infrastructure needs and provision. Three simply answered 'No' while 4 answered 'Yes', one offering the view that an ad hoc approach to infrastructure was being taken in the rural areas.

37. The Highways Agency was not aware of any schemes which it would wish to see added to the draft IDP while Wessex Water asked that the Council

continues to engage with the company as work progresses. The company also noted Appendix B and requested certain changes of words.

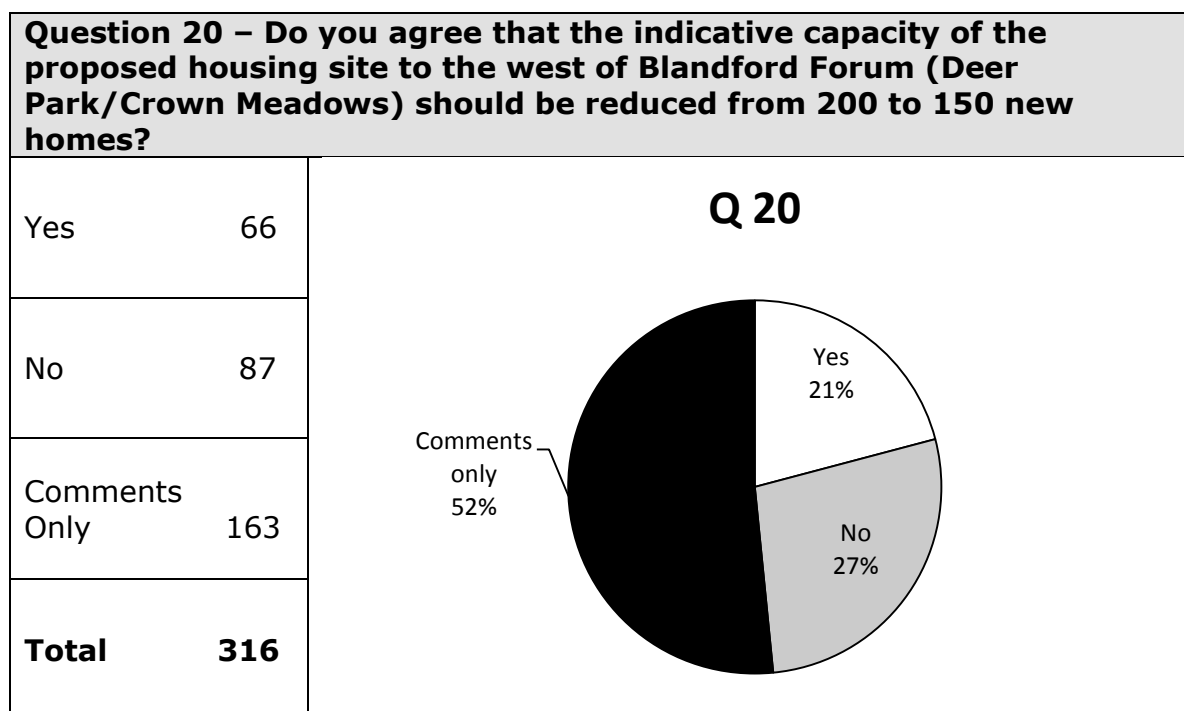
38. Community Group responses embraced Bourton Village Plan Steering Group which suggested schemes in Bourton and SturQuest Open Space, which highlighted the importance of Sturminster Newton town centre enhancements. Blandford and District Civic Society made suggestions for additions to the draft IDP.
39. Of the 68 responses received from members of the public, 17 answered 'No' with no associated comments, 3 answered 'No' but added comments. Three responses were 'Yes' with no comment, 31 'Yes' with comments attached. Lastly, 14 responses were comments only. Comments in the main did not relate particularly closely to the 'Yes'/'No' answer given. Respondents took the opportunity to raise infrastructure issues, such as a greater emphasis on walking and cycling facilities and a need for better highways infrastructure to deal with perceived traffic issues in Gillingham, Shaftesbury and Blandford. Community infrastructure suggestions were also made and deficiencies in the provision of health/medical facilities were highlighted.
40. Specific infrastructure suggestions were also made by members of the public and were wide-ranging in nature. For example, pedestrian bridges over the bypass at Blandford were put forward, as was a pedestrian bridge over the River Stour from Bryanston. A new hospital at Gillingham was proposed and the development of community 'hubs' for local services and social interaction was advocated as necessary to support growth.
41. Additional comments were attached to a number of the responses received from specific consultees. Some were very explicit: Natural England considered the draft IDP to be unsound in its present form as the strategic approach to enhancing the natural environment (NPPF Para 114) is unclear. Also, the Agency felt that there has been no needs analysis relating to green infrastructure and accessible natural green space so once again the plan could be considered unsound. Some additional comments were relatively general: the RSPB recommended that opportunities to provide for birds, as well as bats, are maximised in building design and construction. Some comments focussed on individual topics, for example, public rights of way and renewable energy. Wessex Water took the opportunity to point out that development proposed west of Blandford St Mary would require further engineering appraisal to determine the nature and scope of capacity improvements to water and sewerage networks. Foul water disposal and water supply may need sewer/mains improvements.
42. Finally, some respondents took the opportunity to reiterate their opposition to development at Crown Meadows, Blandford.

## Conclusion

43. The nature of the questions asked and the topic itself led to some uncertainty for respondents such that answers were sometimes made to one question which should strictly have been made to different question. Nevertheless, from the many responses submitted to the infrastructure questions, some basic issues and themes can be drawn out:

- the provision of additional medical facilities was seen as particularly important to many people, perhaps more so than improvements in roads and education;
- walking and cycling facilities are significant infrastructure elements;
- there are different views as to the relative importance of infrastructure elements in the towns and the rural areas;
- the draft Infrastructure Development Plan provides a fairly comprehensive list of infrastructure project requirements over the plan period.

## Blandford



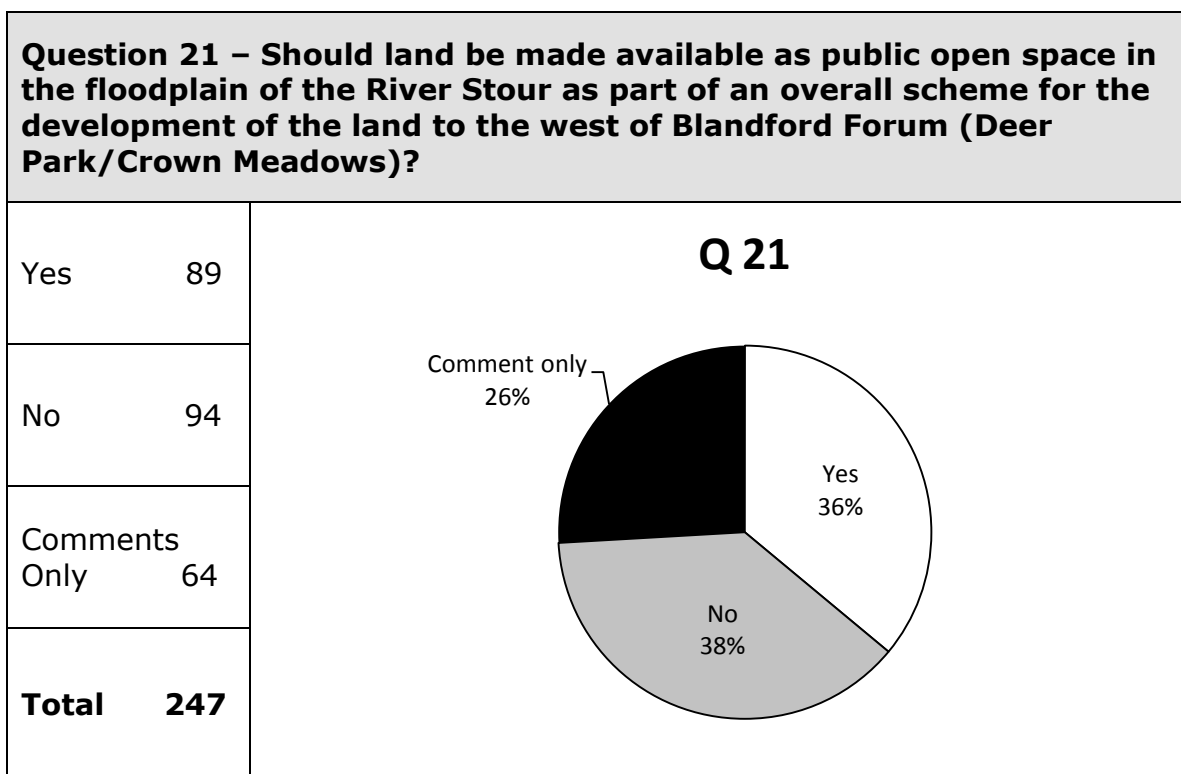
1. Views varied as to the desirability of reducing the capacity of the proposed housing areas on Crown Meadows. Dorset County Council, Melbury Abbas and Cann Parish Council, Stourpaine Parish Council, Okeford Fitzpaine Parish Council, South Tarrant Valley Parish Council and Winterborne Stickland Parish Council did not indicate 'Yes' or 'No' but made comments relating to

the issue involved. Four parish councils - Okeford Fitzpaine Parish Council, Pimperne Parish Council, Shillingstone Parish Council and Tarrant Gunville Parish Council - did not agree that the indicative capacity should be reduced but three councils agreed - Child Okeford Parish Council and Shaftesbury and Stalbridge Town Councils.

2. Some 18 representations were received from agents acting for clients with various interests in the town. Of these, nine did not respond directly to Question 20. Out of the remainder, just three submitted that the capacity of the site should be reduced and, of the rest, only three firmly responded against a reduction, the others offering comments on a range of matters ranging from the need to properly consider water flows in the River Stour and the need for the Core Strategy to be supported by a Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment to criticism of the Sustainability Analysis of the site and the need to develop 'brownfield' sites as a preference.
3. The Crown Estate opposed the reduction to 150 homes, but indicated that it would support a revised indicative capacity of about 175 new homes for the site on the basis of the detailed technical work undertaken. This would result in a density of about 32 dwellings per hectare.
4. Two of the 13 Community Groups which offered a response to Question 20 specifically indicated 'No' to the prospect of a reduction of the site capacity and reiterated basic opposition to development in their comments. Another four Groups made comment on the same basis. The remaining seven Groups did not comment at all.
5. Three local businesses responded to the consultation and two of these supported a reduction in the numbers suggested for the Crown Meadows site. The other simply commented that there should be no development at all on the land.
6. The great majority of comment (86%) came from members of the public. Of the 276 members of public who made some type of response to Question 20, 143 did not specify a 'Yes' or 'No' answer but submitted comments. Most of these essentially were objections to any development at all on Crown Meadows.
7. Numerous respondents who ticked 'Yes' also then submitted comments objecting to any development at all and many who ticked 'No' also put forward comments whose basis was opposition to any development. In both cases, objections were based on views previously well aired - development on the River Stour floodplain, visual intrusion, impact on wildlife and highway problems in particular. Over 40 respondents put forward land adjoining A354/A350 as a better site for development but this was not supported by

the Highways Agency in its comments: "Inclusion of this site for residential development, severed from the town centre by heavily trafficked roads, and the closest part of Blandford to the A31(T), would be opposed by the Agency unless such development is accompanied by new transport infrastructure which is shown to leave the A31 no worse off than if the development had not taken place." One respondent took the view that reduction in numbers should be accompanied by a requirement that they be 100% affordable dwellings.

8. However, a few respondents did suggest lower numbers for the site, in the range of 50 -70 dwellings.
9. Question 20 was interpreted in different ways by members of the general public so that a 'Yes' or 'No' response was not a particularly useful indication of public opinion. While 21% of respondents supported a reduction in the indicative capacity of Crown Meadows, almost half of them commented that they wished to see no development at all on that land. Of those who responded 'No' (27% of respondents), well over half also commented that they were opposed to any development at all on the land. A better indication is therefore perhaps provided by analysis of all the comments received, which shows that the main thrust of responses on the matter of a reduction in the number of dwellings proposed for the Crown Meadows site was of opposition to any development at all.



10. Only Shaftesbury and Stalbridge Town Councils along with Charlton Marshall, Child Okeford, and Durweston Parish Councils answered 'Yes' to Question 21. Durweston Parish Council in its comments suggested that the land is already amenity land and good for nothing else while Charlton Marshall Parish Council felt that there should be no built development on the rest of the site.
11. Okeford Fitzpaine Parish Council responded 'No' with no further comment but Pimperne Parish Council, in responding 'No', felt that all the land at Crown Meadows should be designated as public open space, together with a footbridge over the River Stour, with no development at all. Blandford Town Council did not specify 'Yes' or 'No' in response to Question 20 but shared this view.
12. A number of other Parish Councils did not respond to the Question specifically but offered comments. Melbury Abbas and Cann, Shillingstone and South Tarrant Valley Parish Councils stated that there should be no development on the Crown Meadows site. Tarrant Gunville Parish Council took the view that the land is all amenity land and should be maintained as such by the Crown Estate and Winterborne Stickland Parish Council felt that the matter should be determined by Blandford Town Council.
13. Four agents specifically supported the proposition, one noting the ecological as well as recreational benefits of the suggestion. One agent specifically opposed the suggestion while two others made only comments. It was suggested by one of these that all the site should be open to the public while the other took the opportunity to suggest that land elsewhere should be developed rather than Crown Meadows.
14. The Crown Estate responded 'Yes' to the question, pointing out that improving public access to this area has been a long standing aspiration of the Council. This also arose as an issue at the Crown Estate's consultation events in January 2012. The Crown Estate welcomed the community's views on how this open space would be best used to maximise community benefits as part of a wider development scheme.
15. Two business respondents favoured use of the land in the floodplain as public open space.
16. The Bryanston Park Preservation Group responded 'No' to this Question, stating that there should be no development at all at Crown Meadows and contending that the Sustainability Appraisal underlying the Crown Meadows proposal is flawed.

17. Dorset Wildlife Trust favoured use of the land as public open space in that it would provide opportunities for wildlife while the Campaign to Protect Rural England stated that the aim was desirable but not as part of residential development at Crown Meadows.
18. Natural England supported the provision of accessible natural greenspace in general. It had no views on the merits of this particular location over others. The Highways Agency commented that the allocation of public open space would allow for recreational space within walking distance of the town.
19. Of the 214 responses relating to this question which were received from the general public, 88 submitted a 'No' response to the question. Almost half these respondents attached comments to their response, ranging over a variety of matters. Some felt that public use would disturb flora and fauna and that it would erode its current rural 'feel', possibly being left as agricultural land being a better option. Many restated their view that no development at all should take place on Crown Meadows. Others referred again to the matter of flooding and the potential usability of the land.
20. Similar comments were submitted by members of the public who did not give a 'Yes' or 'No' response to the question.
21. Some 80 residents supported the notion of public open space, 59 without comment. The comments which were received also embraced opposition to residential development on the other part of the Crown Meadows site but also included particular support for riverside access.
22. Some general comments were received which can be taken to refer to the issue of public open space, broadly on the basis that environmental and recreational benefits would be conferred and that the views would be left open. One or two mentioned the need to properly plan public footpaths as part of a network.

## **Conclusion**

23. From the responses to the two questions which related to Blandford it may be seen that:
  - many members of the public reiterated their general and previous objections to any development on Crown Meadows, often reiterating flooding issues, increased traffic congestion, adverse visual impact, impact on wildlife and the availability of an alternative site ;
  - there was some support for the provision of public open space on the floodplain but, for many respondents, having residential

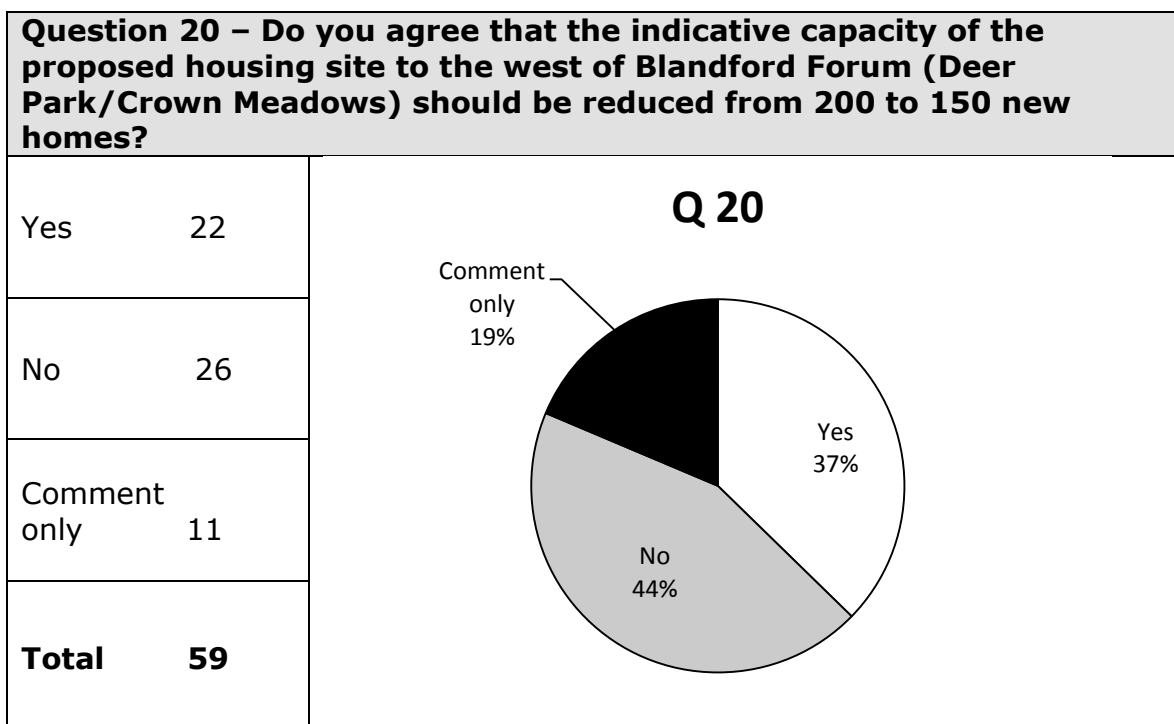
development on the remaining land was perceived as too high a price to pay; and

- respondents felt that other land should be investigated as an alternative to Crown Meadows, especially land adjoining the A350/A354 but also other sites beyond the bypass, although development of the A350/A354 site attracted opposition from the Highways Agency which had concerns about the potential impact of additional traffic going onto A31.

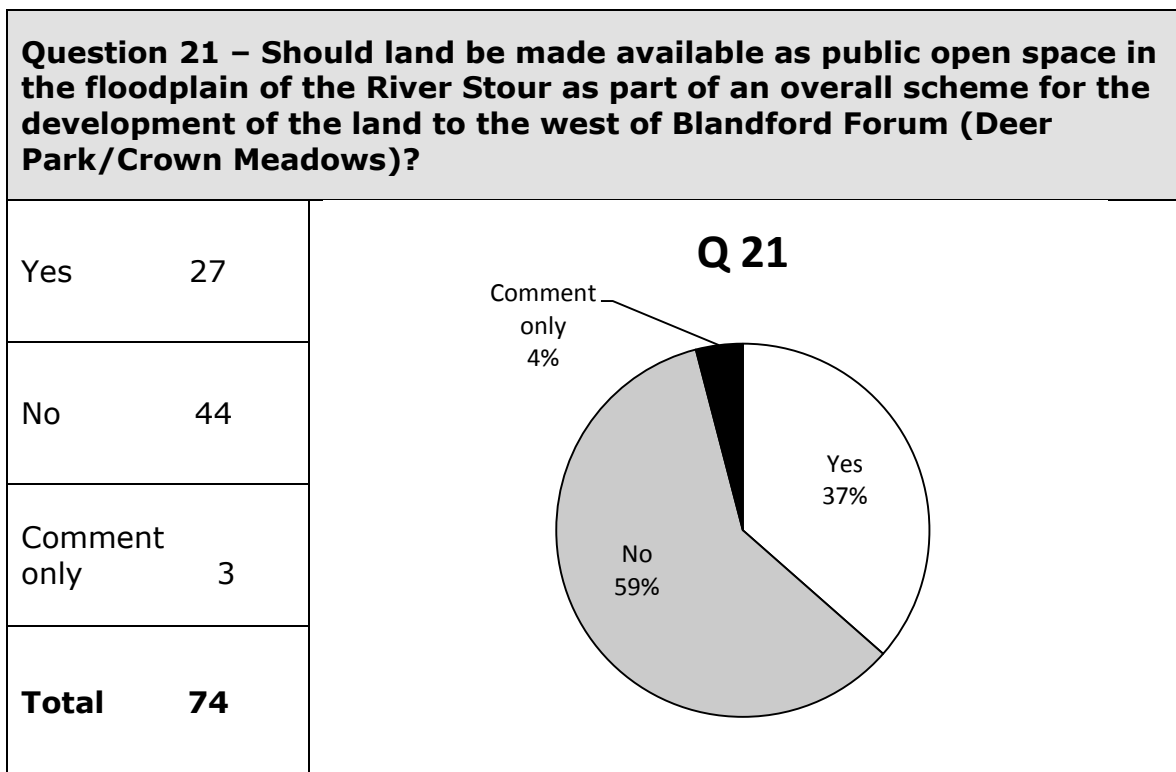


## **Blandford - 'alternative' questionnaire (Responses to Questions 20 and 21)**

1. A separate questionnaire was circulated by the Bryanston Park Preservation Group (BPPG) relating only to the Crown Meadows site (sometimes referred to as the Deer Park site). Although the questionnaire was circulated by the BPPG, it gave no indication that it was produced by that group. It bore the District Council's logo and asked respondents to return the forms either to the District Council or to drop it off at a number of collection points in Blandford. Indeed, from correspondence attached to the form it was clear that some people thought it had been circulated by the Council.
2. The questionnaire repeated Questions 20 and 21 from the Council's response form and gave respondents the opportunity to answer 'Yes' or 'No' to the questions.
3. The form included a space for respondents to make additional comments either in relation to the Council's Questions 20 and 21 or to the three additional questions posed by the BPPG.
4. Question 20 sought views on a reduction in the indicative capacity of the proposed housing site at Crown Meadows from 200 (as set out in the draft Core Strategy) to 150.
5. Question 21 sought views on making some of the floodplain on Crown Meadows available as public open space as part of an overall development scheme for the land.
6. In total, 215 people responded to the 'alternative' questionnaire, 85 of which responded to Questions 20 and 21, although it should be noted that not all people answered both questions. These 85 responses have been analysed here. The responses to the additional questions posed by the BPPG have been analysed separately.



7. In respect of Question 20, a slight majority (26 out of 48 who provided a 'Yes / No' answer to this question on the 'alternative' questionnaire) expressed opposition to a reduction in the number of houses proposed on the Crown Meadows site. A number of those respondents also added comments, of which the general effect was that there should be no development at all on the land. Some 19 respondents answered 'Yes' to the question, with 3 adding comments. One of these suggested that if there were to be residential development it should all be affordable housing.
  
8. The reasons for respondents' opposition, whether they answered 'Yes' or 'No', were that development would be visually intrusive, the land is floodable, traffic problems would be created/exacerbated and there are alternative sites available at the junction of the A350/A354 and at Letton Park. A few respondents suggested that no more housing was needed in Blandford.



9. Question 21 asked about use of some of the site as public open space alongside residential development.

10. A majority of respondents to this question on the 'alternative' questionnaire did not support this proposition. Very few additional comments were made by those who answered 'No' - one simply commented on the state of the land, one was concerned about disturbance to wildlife if people had access to the land and one expressed total objection to any development of the Crown Meadows site.

11. This pattern of comments was similar to those who did not provide a 'Yes / No' answer to the question but simply made comment.

12. Again, a very few comments were submitted by those respondents who answered 'Yes'. One comment was to the effect that there is 'informal' access to the land already; two argued that it should be made available to the public without any development; and a fourth stated that the land should be open to the public whatever was permitted on the remainder of the site.

## **Conclusion**

14. The responses to Questions 20 and 21 on the 'alternative' questionnaire largely show opposition to any development on the Crown Meadows site. Relatively few comments were made in addition to the 'Yes/No' answers to the two questions. The comments generally voiced issues similar to those highlighted by respondents to the Council's consultation and:

- pointed to the issue of flooding;
- expressed concerns about traffic impact from development;
- suggested that a lack of employment opportunities would create problems;
- identified adverse visual impact as an outcome of development; and
- stressed perceived infrastructure deficiencies in Blandford, especially highways.

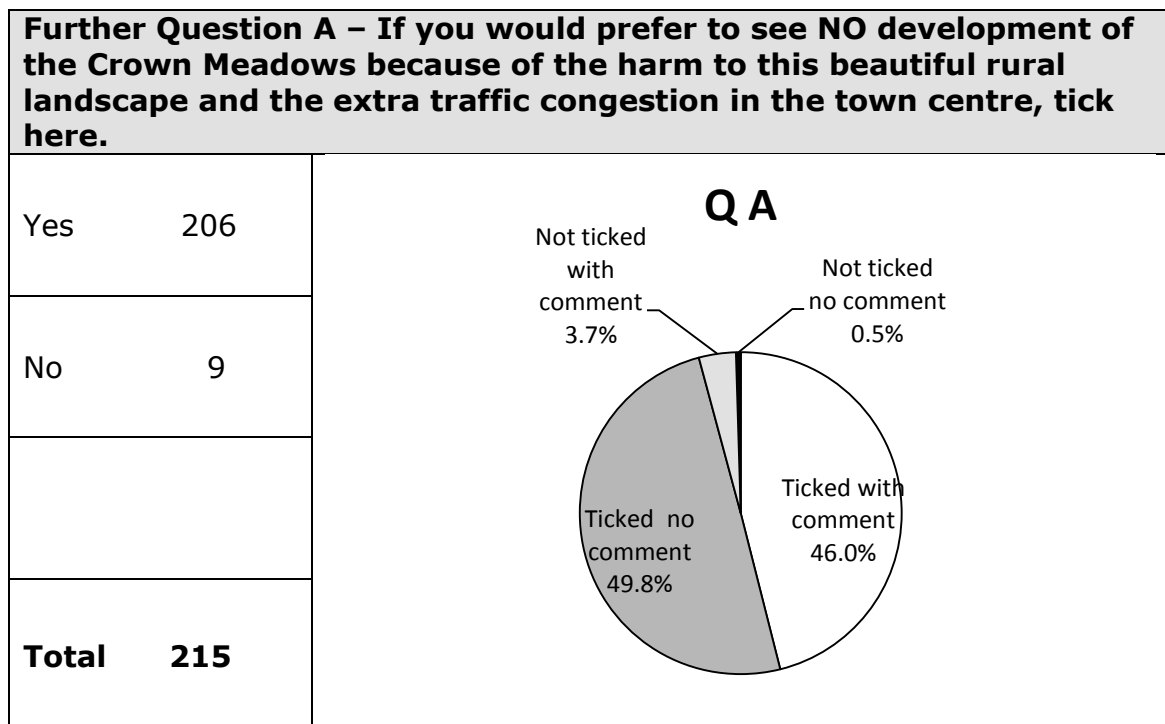
15. Overall, the 'alternative' questionnaire's results in relation to Questions 20 and 21 largely mirrored concerns expressed in the Council's consultation, both with regard to housing development at Crown Meadows and to an area of land being made available for public open space.

## **Blandford - 'alternative' questionnaire (Responses to the Additional Questions Asked by the Bryanston Park Preservation Group)**

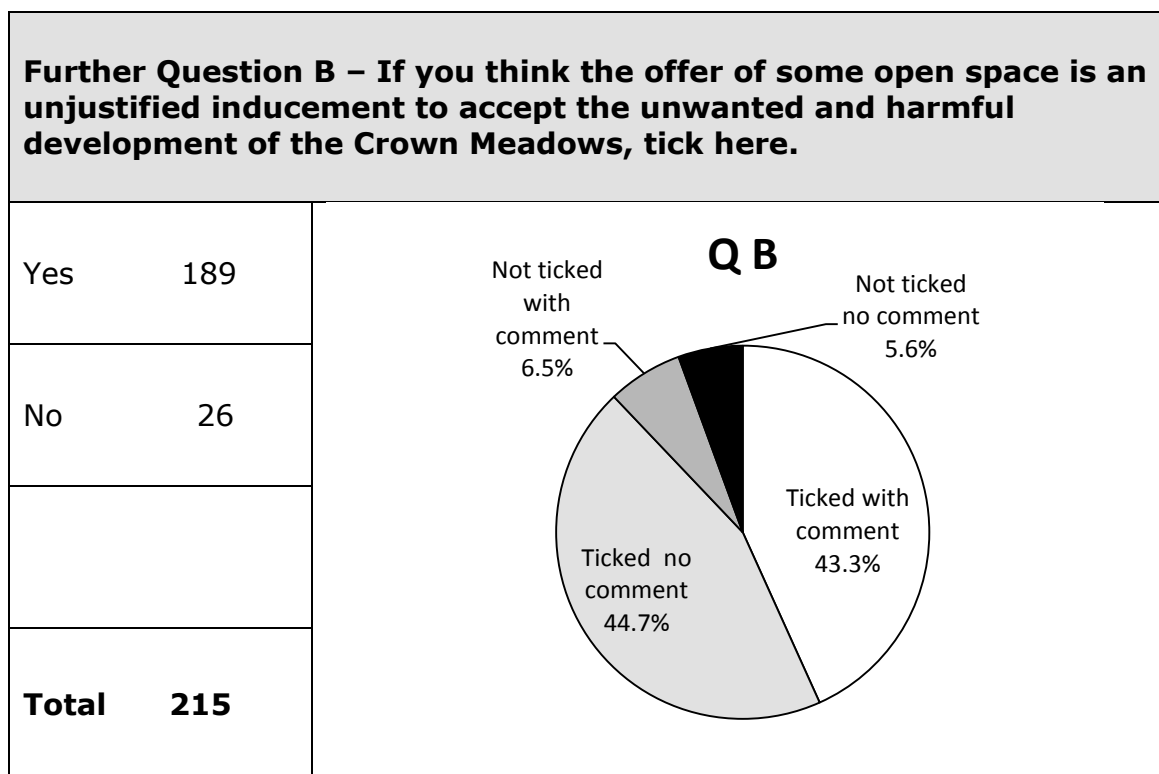
1. A separate questionnaire was circulated by the Bryanston Park Preservation Group (BPPG) relating only to the Crown Meadows site (sometimes referred to as the Deer Park site). Although the questionnaire was circulated by the BPPG, it gave no indication that it was produced by that group. It bore the District Council's logo and asked respondents to return the forms either to the District Council or to drop it off at a number of collection points in Blandford. Indeed, from correspondence attached to the form it was clear that some people thought it had been circulated by the Council.
2. The questionnaire repeated Questions 20 and 21 from the Council's response form and gave respondents the opportunity to answer 'Yes' or 'No' to the questions. Three additional questions were asked by the BPPG and respondents were invited to tick a box if they agreed with each question<sup>2</sup>.
3. The form included a space for respondents to make additional comments either in relation to the Council's Questions 20 and 21 or to the three additional questions asked by the BPPG.
4. Question 20 sought views on the merits of reducing the indicative capacity of the proposed housing site from 200 (assumed in the draft Core Strategy) to 150. The first additional question by the BPPG sought views on no development at all on the site (specifically due to landscape impact and traffic congestion in the town centre).
5. Question 21 sought views on making some of the floodplain on the site available as public open space. The second additional question sought views on the offer of open space being made by the Crown Estate as 'an unjustified inducement' to accept development.
6. The third additional question sought views on whether people preferred development on land between A350 and A354 near the Tesco store.
7. In total, 215 responses were analysed. Responses to the Council's Questions 20 and 21 have been analysed separately; the results for the BPPG additional questions are set out below.

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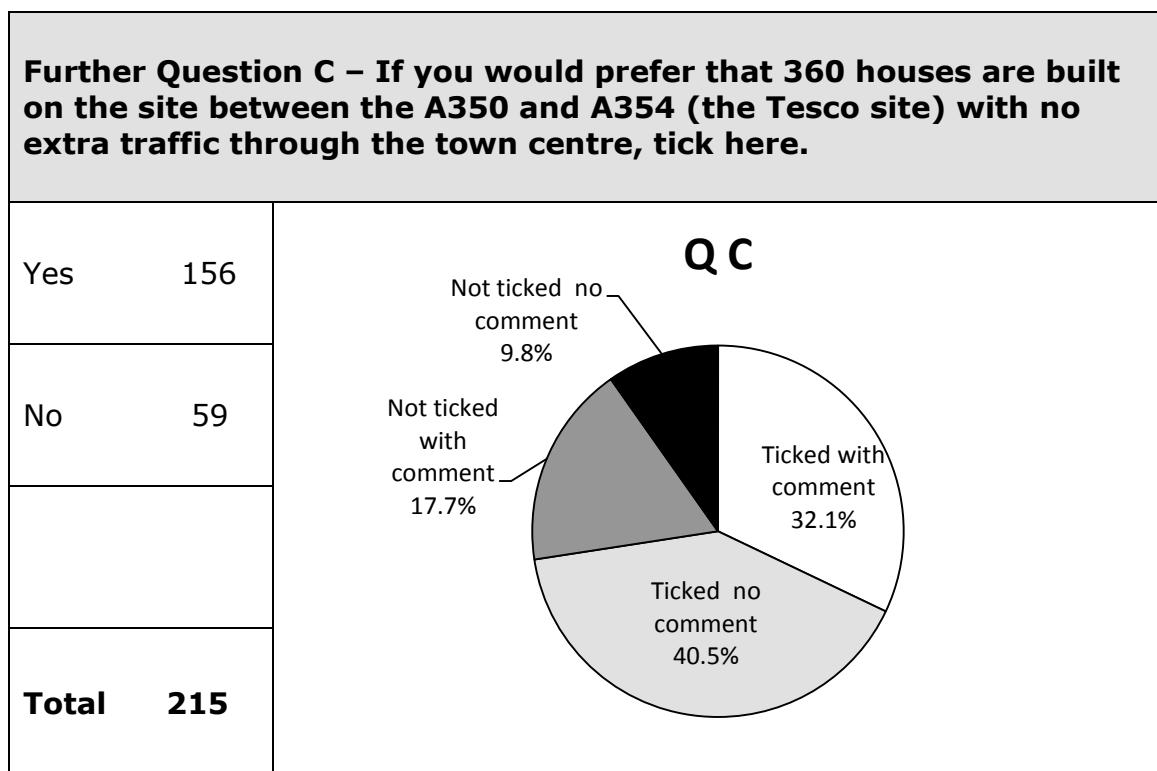
<sup>2</sup> Where a respondent has not ticked the box relating to a particular additional question, it has been assumed that they did not agree with it. Not all respondents ticked each question or made a comment, hence the chart category 'Not ticked no comment'.



8. In respect of the first BPPG question, an overwhelming majority (206 out of 215 who responded to this question) expressed opposition to development of the Crown Meadows site on the ground of visual intrusion and traffic impact. Almost half those respondents expressing a preference for no development on the Crown Meadows site also made comment. These comments ranged over a number of issues - flooding potential, negative impact on visual amenity, likely traffic problems, strained infrastructure and a perception that more housing was not needed at Blandford. Some comments were of a more general nature, such as stating that there should be no development within the bypass and that brownfield sites should be developed first. The alternative site near Tesco on the A350/A354 junction (embraced in the third additional question) was specifically mentioned by 6 respondents in their comments, one respondent stating that this was a second choice site after Crown Meadows.



9. The second question referred to use of some of the site as public open space alongside residential development being an unjustified inducement to accept development. The additional question did not invite views on the acceptability or otherwise of the general principle of use of the land as public open space.
10. A large majority of respondents supported this proposition. Very few additional comments were made relating to this additional question and they took the line that open space was a preferable use to housing.



11. The third question asked for views on land off the A350/A354 junction being a preferable site to Crown Meadows. Two assumptions underpinned the question, namely, that:

- a) it would support 360 houses; and
- b) it would generate no extra traffic through the town centre.

12. It is not clear from the BPPG form how b) would be achieved, whether through design or preventing access to the town centre from this site or whether it is an assumption that no traffic would wish to visit or pass through the town centre should such a development take place.

13. The majority of responses were in support of the alternative offered at the A350/A354 junction. However, it should be noted that a significant number of respondents (59 or 27.5%) did not answer 'Yes' to this question.



## **Conclusion**

14. From the responses to the three alternative questions posed in relation to the Crown Meadows site, there emerges a general consensus of opposition to the development of the Crown Meadows site. A number of comments accompanied responses and these comments generally:

- emphasised the matter of flooding;
- expressed concerns about traffic impact from development;
- identified adverse visual impact as an outcome of development;
- stressed perceived infrastructure deficiencies in Blandford.

15. Overall, these results mirrored concerns expressed in the District Council's consultation.

## **Blandford – ‘alternative’ questionnaire (Responses to the Bryanston Parish Council questionnaire)**

1. Bryanston Parish Council circulated two questionnaires of their own to residents of Bryanston and Bryanston School<sup>3</sup>. In the first, they posed 25 questions based on those which the District Council had used in its own consultation. Responses from some 32 individuals were analysed by the District Council, the results of which are summarised below. No space was allowed on the form for comment and so responses were simply Yes/No with the option of not answering either for individual questions. However, a few residents did add comments to the form or attached them on a separate piece of paper.
2. It may be seen from the summary below that the majority of respondents to the general Bryanston questionnaire supported the principle of a Neighbourhood Plan but still felt that the District Council's Core Strategy should be considered as an alternative means of dealing with development in the parish. Affordable housing was seen by the majority as an important issue but with a more even division of opinion as to how this should be delivered (rent only or half rent/half buy), determined on a site by site basis. There was a strong support for developer contributions being gathered towards the provision of affordable housing<sup>4</sup>.
3. Within Bryanston, a density standard for new development was strongly backed, together with a more sensitive approach to infilling, including the development of garden areas.
4. There was a clear feeling that social infrastructure is currently insufficient and that adequate provision should be a pre-requisite for granting planning permission for new development, with contributions collected to provide this infrastructure.
5. Some support was evident for additional employment generating uses not being allowed in Bryanston and those that might be allowed being non-industrial in nature (such as cafes and shops).
6. Although some were not in support, a majority of respondents favoured provision of public open space on the Stour floodplain as part of a development of 150 dwellings on the Crown Meadows site.
7. The additional comments submitted with this questionnaire were brief and tended to modify answers given, such as agreeing that a contribution per

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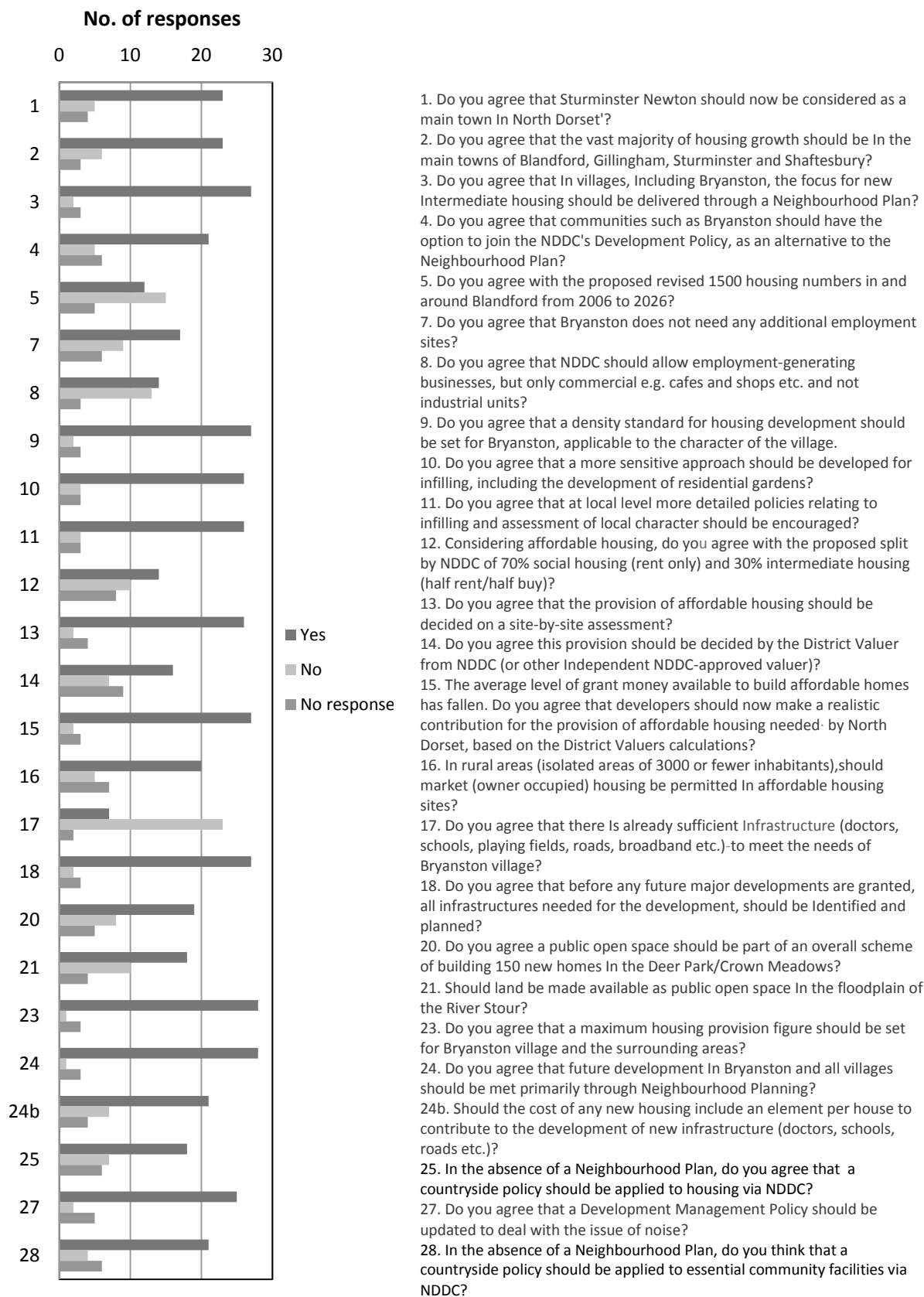
<sup>3</sup> The Parish Council has stated that 195 and 53 forms respectively were delivered and that the overall response rate was just below 20%.

<sup>4</sup> Since this survey was carried out, the government has clarified that the Community Infrastructure Levy, charged on new development once the Council has adopted the Levy, cannot be used for the provision of affordable housing.

dwelling should be made toward infrastructure but only for larger developments.

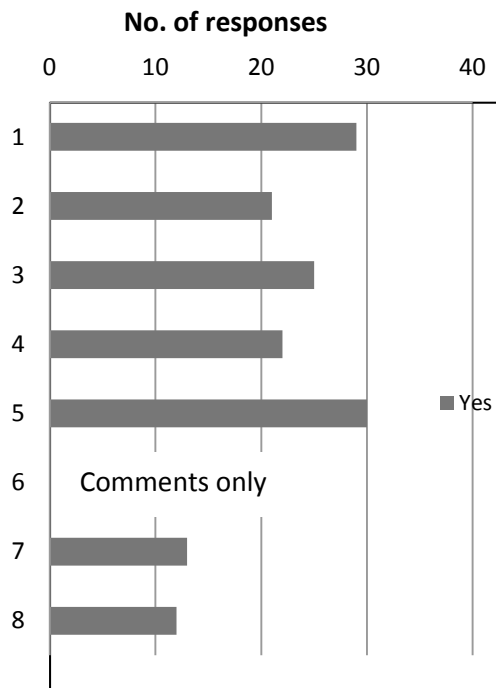
8. The second questionnaire circulated by the Parish Council specifically related to Bryanston village. Unlike the first questionnaire, it embraced 8 questions inviting Response/Comments rather than Yes/No. While most respondents replied simply Yes/No rather than making a comment, some made only a comment and some answered Yes/No with a comment. The Council analysed 34 responses from residents.
9. In terms of the key issues, it may be seen from the summarised results below that there was a general feeling that new development in Blandford should take place beyond the bypass. However, there was hardly any response in respect of infrastructure associated with any development in Blandford. Comments relating to such development cited traffic issues and flooding as the main reasons for looking at sites outside the bypass.
10. In terms of infrastructure if development were to be approved within Blandford, almost all those who responded to this question put either medical facilities or roads as their top priority.
11. While the majority of respondents in the village looked for more facilities, a significant proportion thought that there was no need for further facilities. One respondent commented that the existing playing field is underused and others felt that the Bryanston Club could be better utilised, notably as a village hall.

## General questions.



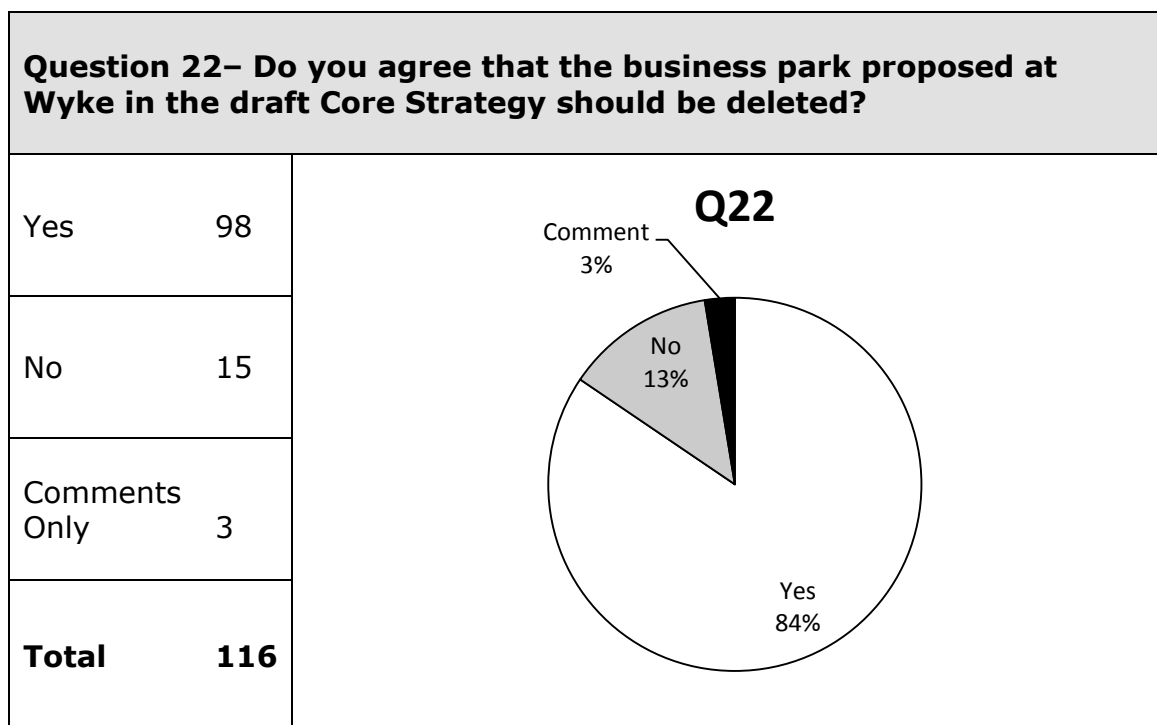
1. Do you agree that Sturminster Newton should now be considered as a main town in North Dorset?
2. Do you agree that the vast majority of housing growth should be in the main towns of Blandford, Gillingham, Sturminster and Shaftesbury?
3. Do you agree that in villages, including Bryanston, the focus for new intermediate housing should be delivered through a Neighbourhood Plan?
4. Do you agree that communities such as Bryanston should have the option to join the NDDC's Development Policy, as an alternative to the Neighbourhood Plan?
5. Do you agree with the proposed revised 1500 housing numbers in and around Blandford from 2006 to 2026?
7. Do you agree that Bryanston does not need any additional employment sites?
8. Do you agree that NDDC should allow employment-generating businesses, but only commercial e.g. cafes and shops etc. and not industrial units?
9. Do you agree that a density standard for housing development should be set for Bryanston, applicable to the character of the village.
10. Do you agree that a more sensitive approach should be developed for infilling, including the development of residential gardens?
11. Do you agree that at local level more detailed policies relating to infilling and assessment of local character should be encouraged?
12. Considering affordable housing, do you agree with the proposed split by NDDC of 70% social housing (rent only) and 30% intermediate housing (half rent/half buy)?
13. Do you agree that the provision of affordable housing should be decided on a site-by-site assessment?
14. Do you agree this provision should be decided by the District Valuer from NDDC (or other Independent NDDC-approved valuer)?
15. The average level of grant money available to build affordable homes has fallen. Do you agree that developers should now make a realistic contribution for the provision of affordable housing needed by North Dorset, based on the District Valuers calculations?
16. In rural areas (isolated areas of 3000 or fewer inhabitants), should market (owner occupied) housing be permitted in affordable housing sites?
17. Do you agree that there is already sufficient infrastructure (doctors, schools, playing fields, roads, broadband etc.) to meet the needs of Bryanston village?
18. Do you agree that before any future major developments are granted, all infrastructures needed for the development, should be identified and planned?
20. Do you agree a public open space should be part of an overall scheme of building 150 new homes in the Deer Park/Crown Meadows?
21. Should land be made available as public open space in the floodplain of the River Stour?
23. Do you agree that a maximum housing provision figure should be set for Bryanston village and the surrounding areas?
24. Do you agree that future development in Bryanston and all villages should be met primarily through Neighbourhood Planning?
- 24b. Should the cost of any new housing include an element per house to contribute to the development of new infrastructure (doctors, schools, roads etc.)?
25. In the absence of a Neighbourhood Plan, do you agree that a countryside policy should be applied to housing via NDDC?
27. Do you agree that a Development Management Policy should be updated to deal with the issue of noise?
28. In the absence of a Neighbourhood Plan, do you think that a countryside policy should be applied to essential community facilities via NDDC?

**Specific questions.**



1. Bryanston Parish Council would prefer to see major housing development take place outside the Blandford bypass at Letton Park and Lower Blandford St Mary. Do you agree?
2. If the Lower Bryanston Farm site (220 houses) is subsequently developed against the wishes of the local majority should it be only approved if a new road system takes traffic from this development to the A 354 and away from Dorchester Hill opposite the Stour Inn?
3. Do you think Bryanston should have its own recreational facilities such as a community playing field or child's play park?
4. Do you think a footbridge should be built over the Stour to permit residents to reach Blandford without using roads and bring facilities such as Blandford School, Leisure Centre, Hospital and shops within walking distance and reduce car dependency?
5. Do you think the proposed high-speed broadband project on the Trailway should definitely be expanded to include Bryanston?
6. If a major housing development is approved in or near Blandford what should be the top priority for supporting infrastructure e.g. surgeries, school, roads etc.?
7. Should Bryanston have a preschool nursery?
8. Should Bryanston have a Village Hall?

## Gillingham



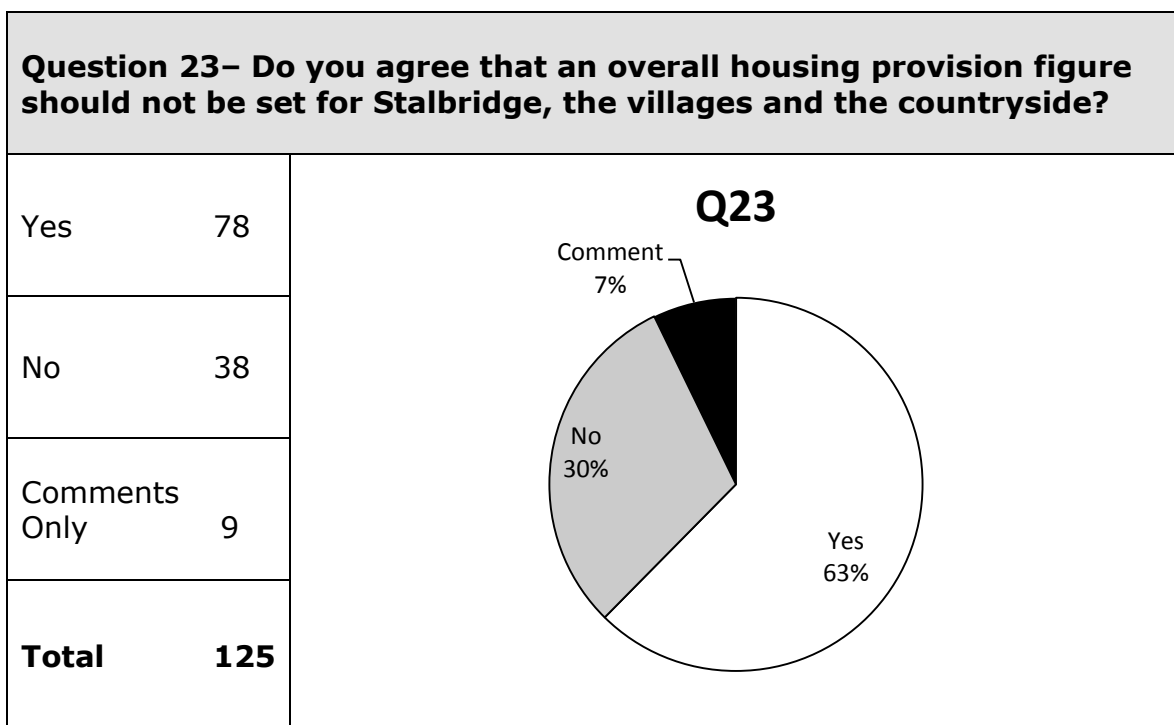
1. No specific body objected to the deletion of the proposed business park at Wyke from the draft Core Strategy. In fact the Highways Agency welcomed the deletion as to did Child Okeford, Melbury Abbas and Cann, Shillingstone and Stourpaine Parish Councils and Stalbridge Town Council. Shaftesbury Town Council agreed that the site should be deleted, but suggested that another site needed to be considered whilst Winterborne Stickland Parish Council did not express a preference one way or the other but felt that this decision was a matter for Gillingham Town Council.
2. 91 agents, community groups and residents agreed that the business park proposed at Wyke in the draft Core Strategy should be deleted. Many said that it should not have been considered in the first place due to the landscape sensitivity of the site and the poor road infrastructure.
3. Other general comments, in addition to Winterborne Stickland Parish Council above were limited to 2 individuals one of which asked the question 'Where is Wyke?' and the second suggested that the site may be more suitable for a cinema or somewhere that had a dance floor.
4. 15 agents and residents did not agree that the proposed business park at Wyke should be deleted from the draft Core Strategy. One agent representing landowners to the north of the town were of the opinion that the whole development strategy for Gillingham needed to be reviewed and that further consideration needed to be given to the provision of employment to the northwest and west of the town. Others felt that all

opportunities to develop economic activity should be embraced and that in fact more business and industrial sites were required.

## **Conclusion**

5. The key question in relation to Gillingham was whether the proposed business park at Wyke should be deleted from the draft Core Strategy (Question 22). The response was an overwhelming 'yes' from local residents and businesses alike a view also shared with the specific bodies who responded to this question. Objections were limited to those who considered that an overall review of employment provision in the town was required.

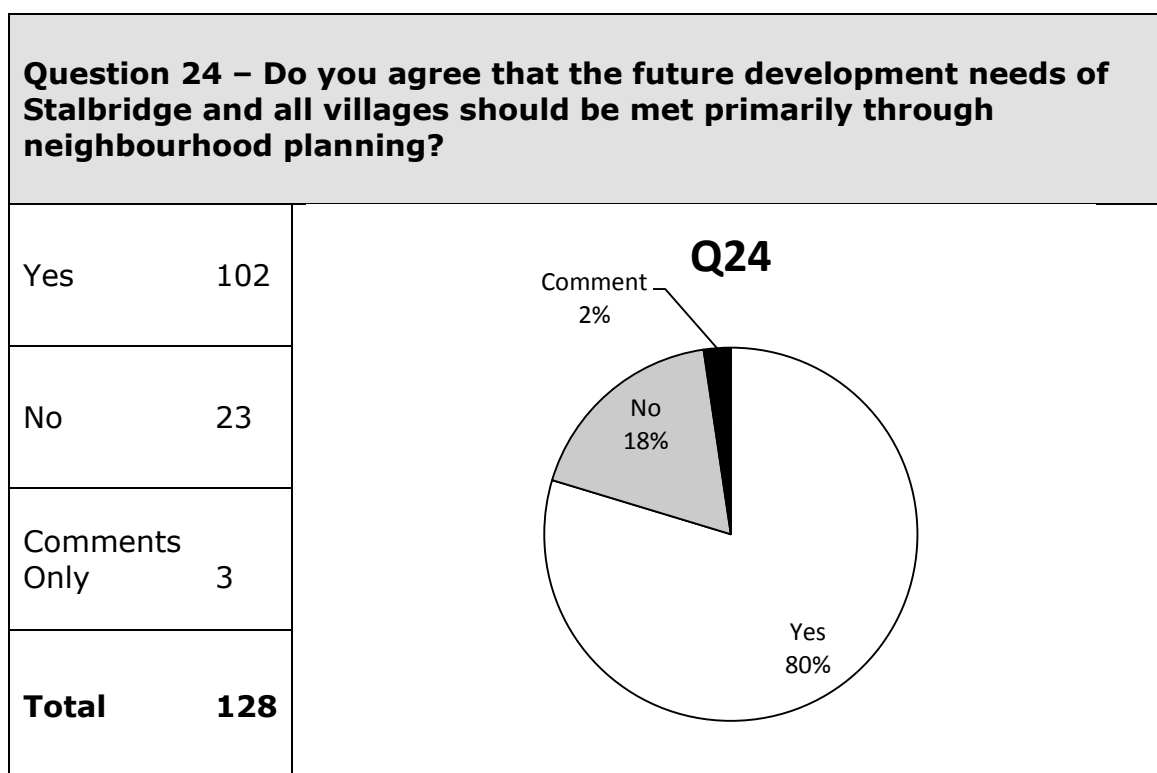
## Stalbridge, the Villages and the Countryside



1. Stalbridge Town Council, Charlton Marshall, Child Okeford, Durweston, Iwerne Minster, Iwerne Courtney and Steepleton Group, Lydlinch, Marnhull, Milborne St Andrew, Pimperne, Shillingstone, South Tarrant Valley, Stourpaine and Winterborne Stickland Parish Councils and Fifehead Neville Parish Meeting all agreed that an overall housing provision figure should not be set for Stalbridge, the villages and the countryside, but to protect against over piecemeal development South Tarrant Valley Parish Council suggested that an upper limit may be necessary.
2. Interestingly Okeford Fitzpaine although in agreement with this policy approach was of the opinion that villages needed to have an allocation of development in order to develop a sensible neighbourhood plan, but local communities should have the freedom to decide where development should take place.
3. The Highways Agency supported this approach and considered neighbourhood planning would enable smaller settlements to become more sustainable.
4. Melbury Abbas and Cann Parish Council and Shaftesbury Town Council disagreed with the approach proposed. Shaftesbury Town Council felt that a minimum figure should be set and suggested that a figure of 800 new homes or 20% of the District's housing may be appropriate.



5. Blandford Town Council and a joint response from Blandford Town Council, Blandford St Mary and Bryanston Parish Councils and the DT11 Partnership didn't give a clear yes/no response to this question but in a general comment suggested that a minimum number of houses should be identified at the District level and that local communities through a neighbourhood plan should decide where the houses should be allocated.
6. 64 agents, businesses, community groups, members of the public and voluntary bodies agreed that an overall housing provision figure should not be set for Stalbridge, the villages and the countryside. In support one agent felt that the approach proposed would allow for the needs of individual settlements to be assessed over time. Members of the public felt that if a figure was set that this would severely restrict the ability of areas to grow and that it was up to local people to decide if a village should expand, therefore reflecting local need. One person felt that by setting a minimum or maximum figure it would negate the importance being attributed to neighbourhood planning.
7. However, nine agents representing house builders and key landowners disagreed with the approach proposed and felt that an overall housing provision figure should be set for the rural areas to ensure that housing delivery was balanced across the District and that rural areas were adequately provided for. Their concerns focused on the vitality and viability of the villages and the need under Paragraph 28 of the NPPF to support a prosperous rural economy. In one agents opinion the Council were relying too heavily on the SSA in Gillingham to deliver growth and that the policy proposed was contrary to the 'golden thread' running through the NPPF and the need for 'positive preparation' of plans.
8. The view of the AONB is that leaving the housing provision figure for the countryside open ended was unwise. A view shared by a concerned local resident who felt that by not setting a figure would open the door to too much provision. Others felt that the Council should be providing guidance to Stalbridge and the villages and that a housing figure was required.
9. A small number of people commented on this question without making a direct yes/no response. Comments ranged from criticism of the wording of the question to that this was a decision for local residents in Stalbridge and the villages.



10. Blandford, Shaftesbury and Stalbridge Town Councils, Child Okeford, Durweston, Iwerne Minster, Iwerne Courtney and Steepleton Group, Marnhull, Milborne St Andrew, Okeford Fitzpaine, Pimperne, South Tarrant Valley, Shillingstone, Stourpaine and Winterborne Stickland Parish Councils and Fifehead Neville Parish Meeting all agreed that the future development needs of Stalbridge and all villages should be met primarily through neighbourhood planning. As too did the Highways Agency.

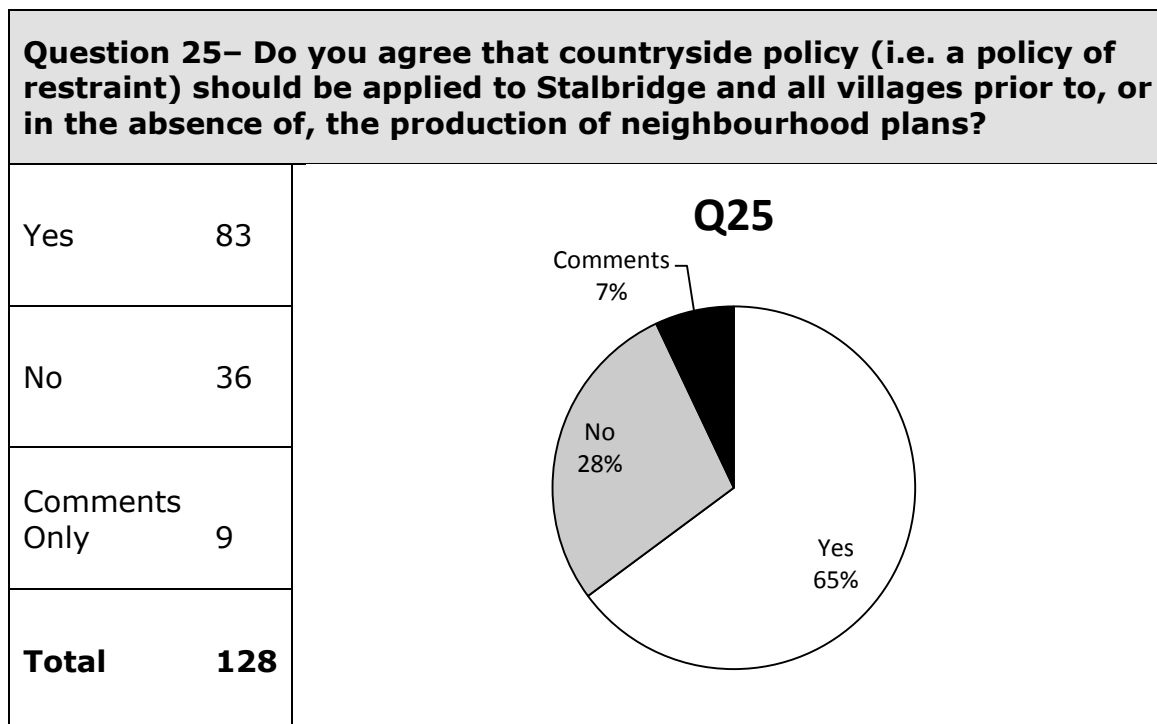
11. Okeford Fitzpaine and Child Okeford Parish Councils felt that neighbourhood plans could build on the strong base of village plans and design statements in the District. Milborne St Andrew and Shillingstone Parish Councils supported neighbourhood plans, but were concerned about the time and costs of a neighbourhood plan and they felt that the Council had a key role to play in supporting local communities in the plan making process. Durweston Parish Council confirmed that they are prepared to submit a neighbourhood plan.

12. Both Blandford and Shaftesbury Town Councils support the policy that proposes future development need in Stalbridge and all the villages being primarily met through neighbourhood planning but all would like to see a similar approach to growth in the towns too. This comment was also made in the joint response from Blandford Town Council, Blandford St Mary and Bryanston Parish Councils and the DT11 Partnership.

13. Charlton Marshall was the only parish council to object to this approach but their main area of concern was not related to the spatial policy itself but rather the cost of neighbourhood plans and the burden this would put on local communities.
14. 85 agents, businesses, community and voluntary groups and local residents supported the approach that the future development needs of Stalbridge and all the villages should primarily be met through neighbourhood plans. One agent thought that local communities needed to be reminded that neighbourhood plans were about development and that they should not be used to stifle growth.
15. The Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB were sympathetic to the approach proposed where neighbourhood plans would play a key role in Stalbridge and the villages and expressed an interest to being involved in those plans that are being prepared within the AONB and its setting.
16. SturQuest agreed that the opportunity to establish need and agree numbers, location and type of development locally was likely to drive more communities to neighbourhood plans. They welcomed the approach proposed and were now actively investigating how they together with the Council could support local communities.
17. Some residents although in agreement raised concerns about the type of people who were likely to get involved in the neighbourhood plan whilst others saw it as an opportunity to shape the place in which they lived or worked. A few people felt that neighbourhood plans needed to be co-ordinated District wide to take into account infrastructure provision.
18. 22 agents and residents did not agree with the approach proposed. Agents in general were concerned that this approach would adversely affect the vitality and viability of Stalbridge and the villages through over-reliance upon an untested and ill understood process with an unreliable take-up and varied standards of implementation. They were of the opinion that the policy proposed was not flexible enough for development in the larger villages to be compliant as according to Paragraph 157 of the NPPF local planning authorities are required to 'plan positively for development and infrastructure'. This was reinforced by another agent who felt strongly that neighbourhood planning should not be the primary medium for meeting local development needs. Neighbourhood plans needed to be led by Local Plans whose strategic requirements were not constrained by local issues.

19. A few residents had similar concerns to Blandford and Shaftesbury Town Councils and questioned why all towns and villages should not be covered by the same policy.

20. The only general comments were from two landowners who felt that it may be prudent to do a pilot scheme in order to assess whether neighbourhood planning would be effective before adopting this approach.



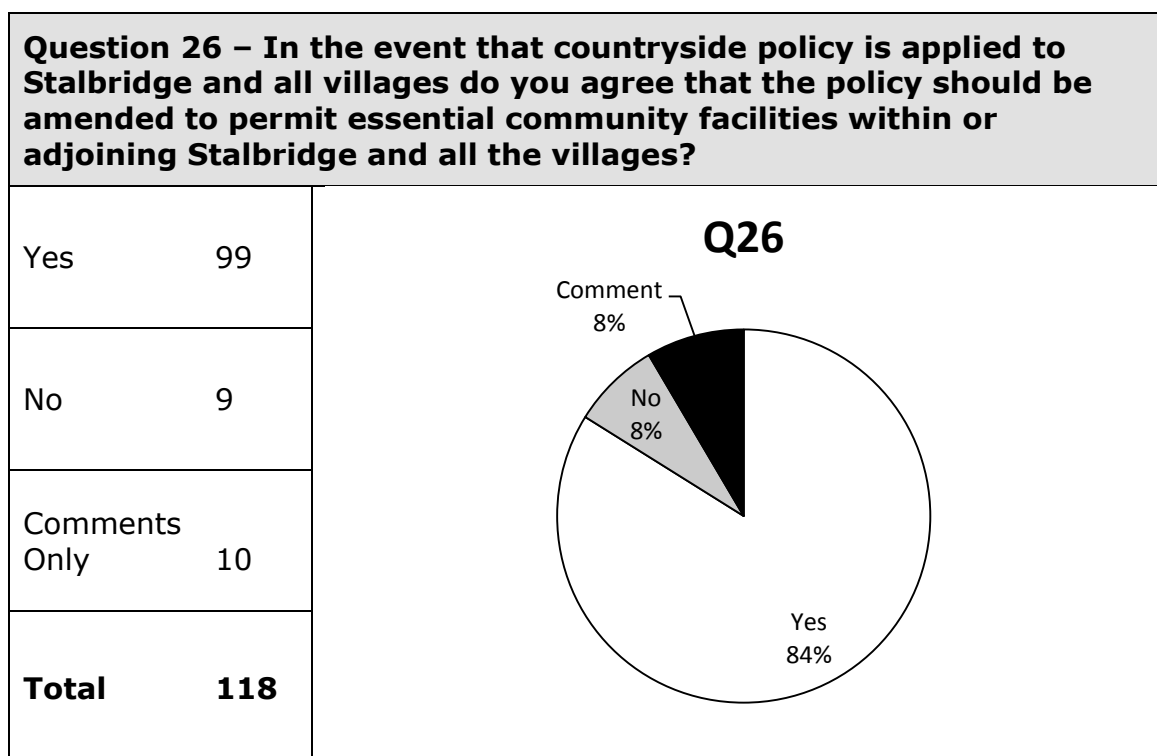
21. Blandford Forum and Stalbridge Town Councils, Charlton Marshall Child Okeford, Durweston, Iwerne Minster, Iwerne Courtney and Steepleton, Lydlinch, Marnhull Pimperne, Shillingstone South Tarrant Valley, Winterborne Stickland Parish Councils and Fifehead Neville Parish Meeting all agreed that that countryside policy (i.e. a policy of restraint) should be applied to Stalbridge and all villages prior to, or in the absence of, the production of neighbourhood plans. Child Okeford Parish Council was of the opinion that this was essential to protect communities from unwanted development and Durweston Parish Council felt it was critical to their settlement.

22. However, Blandford Town Council and the joint response from Blandford Town Council, Blandford St Mary and Bryanston Parish Councils and the DT11 Partnership felt that the same principle should be applied to the main towns to.

23. The Highways Agency opinion was that the proposed plan-led system (either Local Plan or neighbourhood plan) gives certainty.

24. Only Okeford Fitzpaine did not agree that countryside policy should be applied to Stalbridge and all villages prior to, or in the absence of, the production of neighbourhood plans.
25. A number of parishes and specific bodies didn't give a yes/no answer to this question but they did raise a number of concerns. Milborne St Andrew Parish Council was concerned that by default this approach would result in no housing provision or other development that would not take into consideration the wishes of the local community. Tarrant Gunville Parish Council wanted more information on the policy of restraint. Shaftesbury Town Council does not want to see a 'free for all' of unrestricted development, but felt that any restraint should be proportionate and not absolute.
26. The Environment Agency and Natural England reiterated their comments from previous sections of the key issues consultation. The Environment Agency referred to the NPPF Sequential Test/Approach and that this should be applied to steer new development to areas with the lowest probability of flooding. Development should not be allocated if there are reasonable alternatives with lower flooding risk. Natural England repeated their advice that any policy needs to be consistent with the NPPF, especially in respect to impact on protected landscapes (Paragraph 115) and the countryside in general (Paragraph 17).
27. In addition to the towns and parishes listed above 68 agents, businesses, community groups and residents agreed with the approach proposed. A small number felt that greater protection should be given to the AONB and indeed this point was identified by the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB who sought clarification on this point. One resident in Bourton thought it would be sensible if the settlement boundary in the village was retained pending the production of the neighbourhood plan.
28. However, 35 agents, landowners, community and voluntary bodies and residents did not agree. Their concerns were focused on the delay in development coming forward in the villages and the impact this will have on vital village amenities. Hall and Woodhouse strongly objected to this approach as in their opinion timescales for neighbourhood plan production are unclear and it is unsound to stymie appropriate development in the villages until such time as one is produced, especially in some of the larger villages. They suggest a more criteria based approach.
29. Other agents cited the need for conformity with the NPPF in particular Paragraph 28 that planning policies should support economic growth in rural areas to create jobs and prosperity by taking a positive approach to sustainable new development and Paragraph 55 where to promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities.

30. Local residents had similar concerns about the delay in producing neighbourhood plans and the need to keep the villages alive. A number suggested that settlement boundaries should be retained to allow for infilling. Retention of settlement boundaries was also a concern of three residents in Tarrant Gunville who did not respond to this question directly but wrote to the Council as part of the consultation to make their views on this issue known.



31. 84% of those responding to this question agreed that the countryside policy should be amended to permit essential community facilities within or adjoining Stalbridge and all the villages. There was an overwhelming yes from the towns and parishes who responded and an agreement that this was a sensible and essential amendment to the policy. Okeford Fitzpaine Parish Council and the joint response from Blandford Town Council, Blandford St Mary and Bryanston Parish Councils and the DT11 Partnership did not specifically disagree but made comments on policy approach proposed. Okeford Fitzpaine does not agree in principle with the villages being washed over with countryside policy whilst the joint Blandford group questioned why the towns could not be washed over with the same policy.

32. The Highways Agency agreed with the policy proposed but suggested that 'essential community facilities' needed to be clarified. The Environment Agency reiterated their comment that the NPPF Sequential Test/Approach should be applied to steer new development to areas with the lowest

probability of flooding and that development should not be allocated if there are reasonably alternatives with lower flooding risk.

33. In support a number of residents also made comments ranging from 'it is sensible to provide local facilities for villages' to 'provided such facilities are sustainable and have necessary infrastructure.'
34. In addition to the 3 specific bodies listed above, who just made a comment on the proposed policy, 7 agents, community groups and residents, together with the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB also made some general comments. The AONB suggested that 'essential community facilities' are identified as there may be different views as to whether a community shop, post office, micro-brewery, or farm based renewable energy were all essential community facilities. Other residents suggested that the policy should include a clause that new community facilities should only be allowed where the provision does not already exist or that the policy should only apply to the larger more sustainable settlements.
35. No specific body objected to the policy approach proposed and of the 9 residents who did only 2 gave a reason for their objection. One person was of the opinion that neighbourhood plans should identify community facilities whilst the second objector felt that each community facility considered to be essential should be reviewed independently as it is important to consider how cost effective these facilities and services are.
36. One agent commenting on the countryside policy in general, not in response to the question on essential community facilities, suggested that the countryside policy should be amended to allow residential re-use of redundant farm buildings. They highlighted Policy 'CO: Countryside' in the adopted Purbeck Local Plan Part 1 (Adopted November 2012) as a good example and in their opinion cross border working means a consistent approach over District boundaries.

## **Conclusion**

37. From the four questions posed in relation to the proposed approach for growth in Stalbridge, the villages and the countryside there appears to be a general consensus to:
- Not set an overall housing provision figure for Stalbridge, the villages and the countryside (Q23)
  - Meet the future development needs in Stalbridge and all villages primarily through neighbourhood planning (Q24)
  - Apply the countryside policy (i.e. a policy of restraint) to Stalbridge and all villages prior to, or in the absence of, the production of neighbourhood plans (Q25)

- Amend the countryside policy to permit essential community facilities within or adjoining Stalbridge and all the villages (Q26)

38. For Questions 24 and 26 over 80% of those responding were in support of neighbourhood plans and a more flexible countryside policy to allow essential community facilities within or adjoining Stalbridge and all the villages.

39. For neighbourhood plans concerns were limited to the cost of production (but the Government will shortly be making available grants of up to £7,000 per parished area to help with the costs of preparing a neighbourhood plan) to compliance with the NPPF and the requirement for local planning authorities to plan positively for development. Meeting the future development needs in Stalbridge and all villages primarily through neighbourhood planning has been discussed with DCLG neighbourhood plans team and they are not opposed to the approach being suggested. Indeed a similar approach is being suggested in West Dorset where local communities can make local choices through the neighbourhood planning process.

40. In relation to the countryside policy (Question 26) concerns of both those supporting and objecting to the policy centred on what was an 'essential community facility' and how this needed to be clarified in the policy.

41. Question 23 sought views on not setting an overall housing provision figure for Stalbridge, the villages and the countryside. Many parishes including Stalbridge Town Council were in favour of this approach and one parish even suggested setting an upper limit to protect against over development. However, the towns did not share the view of the rural area. Shaftesbury Town Council in particular suggested that 20% of the Districts housing needs should be allocated to the Stalbridge and the villages.

42. Agents opposed to the lack of housing numbers in the countryside were concerned about the vitality and viability of the villages and quoted Paragraph 28 of the NPPF that requires the local planning authority to support a prosperous rural economy. In their opinion by not setting a housing figure the Council were not planning positively for the District and therefore the proposed approach could be considered to be contrary to national policy. In contrast local residents and the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB were concerned that by not setting a target the result could be over provision in the rural areas.

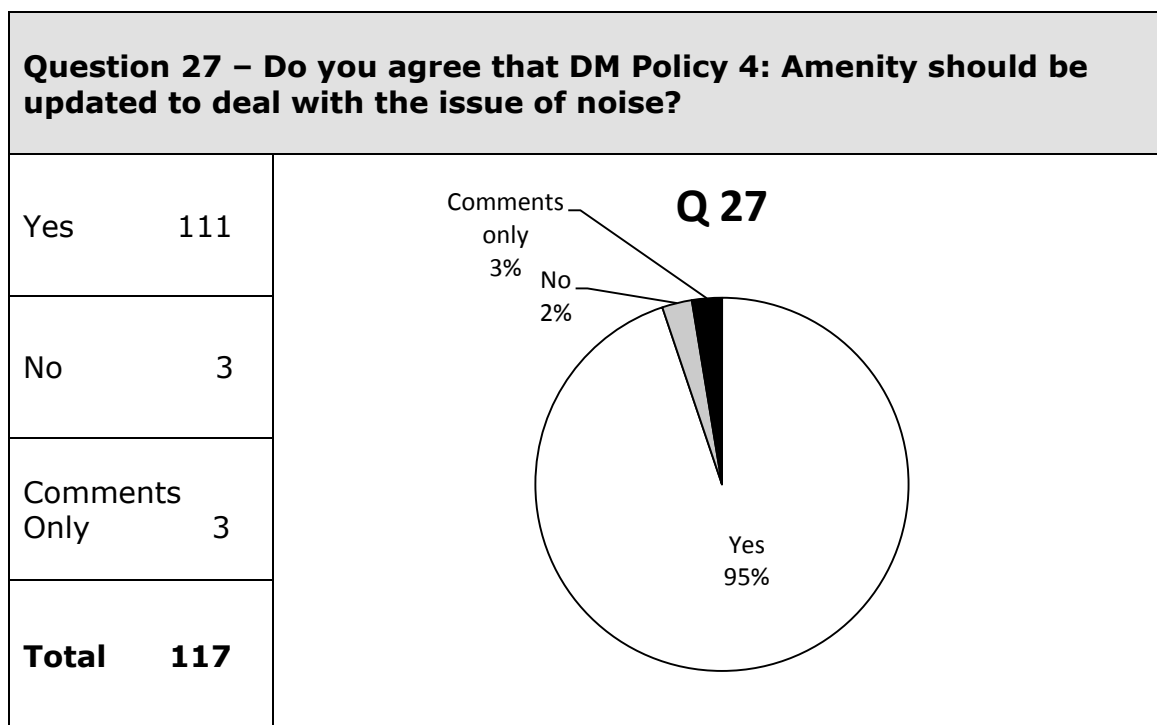
43. Question 25 sought opinions on applying the countryside policy (i.e. a policy of restraint) to Stalbridge and all villages prior to, or in the absence of, the production of neighbourhood plans. Although 65% of those responding supported this approach a number of parishes raised concerns



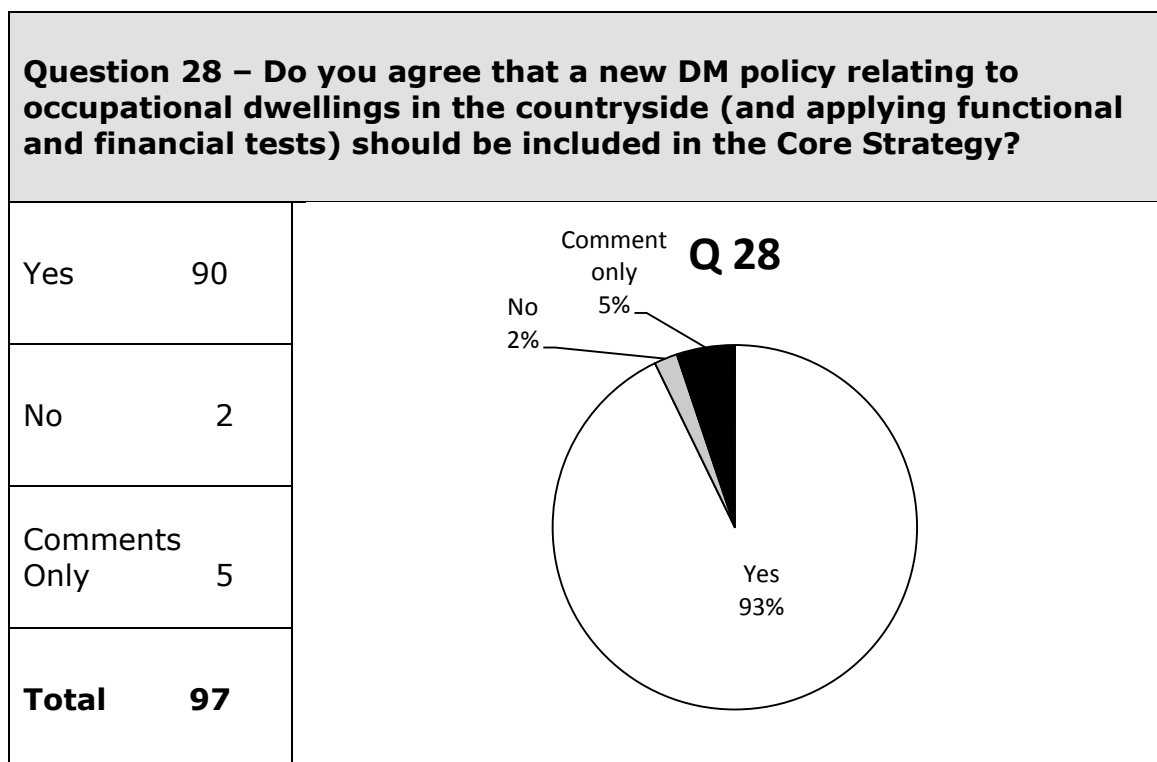
but stopped short of objecting to the policy. Many of those disagreeing were concerned that development would be delayed in coming forward and that this in turn would impact on the vitality and viability of the villages. A number even suggested that settlement boundaries should be retained to allow for infilling.

44. Finally, Blandford Town Council and the joint group representing the Town Council, Blandford St Mary and Bryanston Parish Councils together with the DT11 Partnership raised the same issues in response to Questions 23, 24 and 25 and that was why the same principles of local choice could not be applied to the towns too.

## Development Management (DM) Policies



1. Virtually all respondents to Question 27 supported the inclusion of policy control over noise within the Development Management policies. Charlton Marshall, Child Okeford, Durweston, Iwerne Courtney and Steepleton Group Parish Council, Iwerne Minster , Lydlinch, Marnhull, Melbury Abbas and Cann, Okeford Fitzpaine, Pimperne, Shillingstone, South Tarrant Valley, Stourpaine and Winterborne Stickland Parish Councils, Fifehead Neville Parish Meeting, Blandford Forum and Shaftesbury Town Councils were all in favour.
2. Comments made by those respondents supporting the possible policy change included one to the effect that noise considerations should not be used as a means of preventing the construction of wind turbines. One comment stated that noise should not be ignored by the Council while another put forward the view that smell should be included as an issue.
3. Three respondent were against the proposal but gave no explanation for this.



4. With few exceptions, respondents to Question 28 supported the inclusion of a new DM policy relating to occupational dwellings in the countryside within the Development Management policies. Charlton Marshall, Child Okeford, Durweston, Iwerne Courtney and Stepleton Group Parish Council, Iwerne Minster, Lydlinch, Marnhull, Okeford Fitzpaine, Pimperne, Shillingstone, South Tarrant Valley, Stourpaine and Winterborne Stickland Parish Councils, Fifehead Neville Parish Meeting and Shaftesbury Town Council were all in favour.
5. The very few comments made in respect of the support offered included identifying a need for clear policies for the reuse of land as well as buildings and the need to make reference to the NPPF regarding isolated homes in the countryside.
6. A single agent was against, suggesting that local discretion should be used when dealing with the matter.
7. One member of the public did not support the inclusion of a new policy, similarly suggesting that the matter be dealt with on an ad hoc basis.

### Conclusion

8. Almost unanimous support for the changes proposed was given in the responses to the questions posed in relation to Development Management policy amendments.

## **Shaftesbury**

1. As part of the key issues consultation comments were welcomed on the proposed revisions to the draft Core Strategy in relation to Shaftesbury. No specific questions were asked but a general overview of the town was provided along with an outline of the draft core strategy housing policies and an update on housing development in the town since 2006.
2. In view of the housing numbers that had been delivered in the town and the new opportunities for additional development on land to the east of the town the key issues consultation proposed that about 1,140 new dwellings should be built in Shaftesbury between 2011 and 2026.
3. It was proposed that infilling and redevelopment would continue within the existing settlement boundaries and the main greenfield sites identified for housing growth were:
  - Land to the east of the town (including the 'Hopkins land');
  - Land to the south of Wincombe Business Park; and
  - Land to the west of the A350 opposite Wincombe Business Park
4. In total 17 people commented on the revised policy for Shaftesbury. The only parish to comment was Melbury Abbas and Cann Parish Council who felt that there should be no more building in Shaftesbury until infrastructure is in place to accommodate the growth and that this should include a by-pass for the town. They were also opposed to the allocations of employment land in the town and land for travellers.
5. Wessex Water, the only other specific consultee, noted the development on land to the east of Shaftesbury, at Hopkins Land and south and west of Wincombe Business Park. They confirmed that there were major water mains in the vicinity and that flow rate capacity was available to serve this development, however for the site to the west of the A350 an on-site water booster may be required.
6. Four agents representing key developers and landowners in the town wrote in support of the allocated greenfield sites. In particular Persimmon acknowledged the extra capacity on land east of Shaftesbury where as for the land to the south of Wincombe Business Park the agent confirmed that a suitable access strategy could be provided to serve the development and that they anticipated there was potential to deliver a package of measures that would improve sustainable transport modes in the town.
7. The Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB repeated their concerns that any development in Shaftesbury should consider the potential impacts on the nearby AONB and in particular the views to and from the AONB.

8. Comments from businesses and concerned local residents focused on infrastructure, in particular the need for a by-pass and a new doctor's surgery, and the landscape impact of the growth proposed. A number of people were concerned about the number of houses proposed.

## **Sturminster Newton**

1. As part of the key issues consultation comments were welcomed on the proposed revisions to the draft Core Strategy in relation to Sturminster Newton. No specific questions were asked but a general overview of the town was provided along with an outline of the draft core strategy housing policies and an update on housing development in the town since 2006.
2. In view of the housing numbers that had been delivered in the town and new greenfield developments on the edge of the town, the key issues consultation proposed that about 385 new dwelling should be built in Sturminster Newton between 2011 and 2026.
3. It was proposed that infilling and redevelopment would continue within the existing settlement boundaries and the main greenfield sites identified for housing growth were:
  - land north of the former livestock market;
  - land adjacent to Honeymead, to the north of the town; and
  - land to the east of the Creamery development.
4. In total 17 people commented on the proposed revisions to the policy for Sturminster Newton with no parish councils making a response.
5. The Environment Agency highlighted that the areas proposed for development were prone to surface water flooding. To accompany development in these locations, there would be a need for a flood risk assessment for each site and for appropriate mitigation measures to be in place.
6. Wessex Water highlighted the need for further engineering appraisals to be undertaken for sites to the north of the town and for the site to the east of the Creamery development. It also highlighted the need for odour modelling work to be undertaken in relation to development within the sewerage treatment works odour consultation zone.
7. Several comments highlighted the traffic issues that exist in the town particularly in relation to the town centre bottleneck. A bypass was suggested as a potential remedy. It was suggested that Sturminster Newton does not lend itself to significant levels of new development although support was given to the elevated status of the town from the draft policy produced in 2010.
8. Concerns were raised over the following issues:
  - The potential access to the development site adjacent to Honeymead to the north of the town
  - The lack of retail offer in the town

- The need to extend the Jubilee Path through the land north of the former livestock market site
  - The potential impact of development at Honeymead on Green Lane
  - The proposed expansion of William Barnes school when capacity exists at smaller schools in neighbouring villages
  - The need for the land between Station Road and Old Market Hill to be tidied up
9. In general there were no major objections received in relation to the policy approach being proposed for Sturminster Newton.

## Gillingham Southern Extension

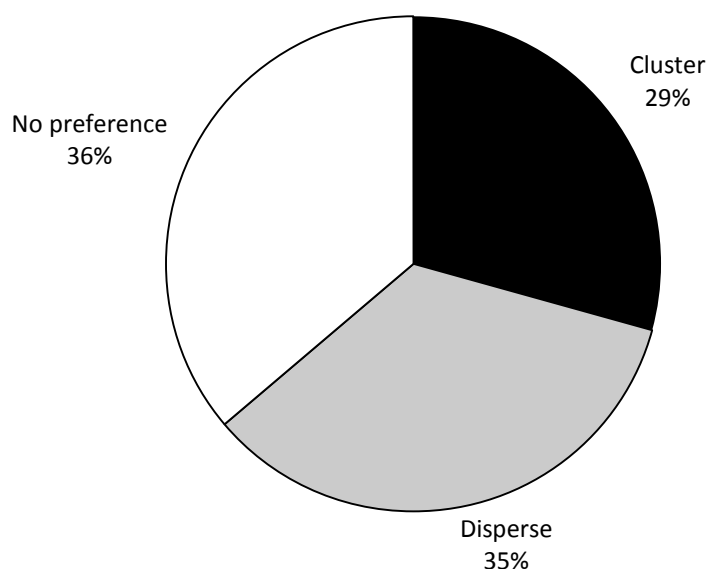
1. The following are the results of the Stage 1 consultation on the key elements of the Gillingham Southern Extension. The analysis of these results is structured to give the question asked, the numerical results received and the key messages taken from these results. This analysis is then followed by a brief suggestion as to how the responses could be taken forward to the Stage 2 Concept Plan workshop and input into the SSA policy.

### Green Infrastructure

2. Questions G1, G2 and G3 related to the provision of green infrastructure.

<b>Question G1 - Would you prefer sports pitches to be provided together in one cluster or dispersed across the site? Please explain your reasons.</b>	
Disperse sports pitches across the site	20
Cluster sports pitches together	17
No preference indicated	21
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>

### Question G1 - Sports pitch provision



3. Of those that expressed a preference, the results are evenly balanced although dispersal of sports pitches numerically wins out.

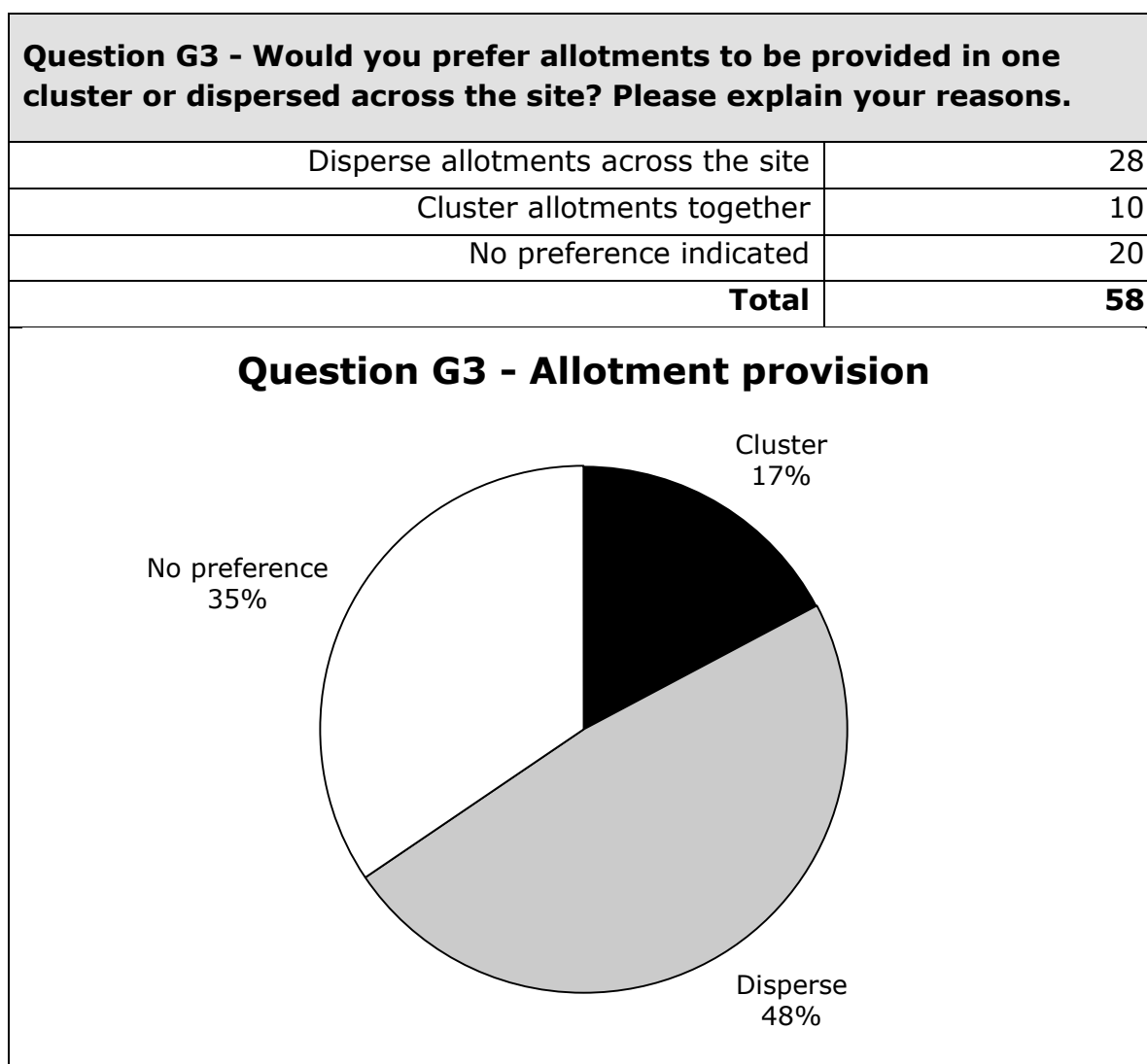


4. The majority of the reasons given for dispersal related to access to sports pitches once provided with the suggestion being that greater use may result if access was easier. It was suggested that a dispersed approach would also enable a dispersed impact in terms of traffic congestion, parking and general volumes of people rather than clustering the impact in one location.
5. There was a suggestion that it was safer and more convenient for children to be closer to home and for space to be provided within easy access of schools. Dispersal was also seen as better to give all people reasonably good access rather than better access in one location and poor access in others. This would also enable easier access for walking and cycling rather than increased reliance on cars.
6. There was a suggestion that there was a shortage of green space within Gillingham and that the provision of a more open feel to the development may result from a dispersed approach.
7. Provision of one set either side of the B3081 with safer and improved pedestrian routes across the main road, was seen as a potential solution.
8. There were several suggestions that certain sports are not compatible on one site. Cricket and Football with recent experiences at Hardings Lane Recreation Ground was one example cited.
9. Provision of sports pitches in one location was supported as it would give benefits to the community as a whole through the provision of more comprehensive, secure and cost effective facilities that are easier to manage. It was suggested that sports and community groups would be able to share and manage facilities jointly such as changing rooms and club houses making high quality facilities more viable in the long run; a better use of resources.
10. The provision of a single cluster of sports pitches would create a meeting point, fostering community spirit and creating a space where families can get together. The focus for activities makes things easier for parents with more than one child to drop them at different clubs.
11. A dispersed approach may result in duplication of facilities and the need for large areas to be reserved for parking and for additional changing facilities to be provided. The impact of the provision of a cluster of sports pitches may be easier to manage through integration of the design of facilities into the development e.g. provision of appropriate parking, access off primary routes and cycle/public transport routes. Provision of lighting would also be easier to manage if there was a single focus for sports pitch provision, becoming less visually intrusive.

12. General comments made about the provision of sports pitches highlighted the need for the integration of all elements of green infrastructure and the provision of cycle and foot path connections between facilities. There was also mention of the need for space to be made available for dog walking and other types of recreation away from formal sports provision and for as much natural space to be incorporated into the development as possible.
13. The issue of noise and light nuisance was raised as a concern.
14. Dorset County Council highlighted the need for additional sports pitch provision at Gillingham School to meet the needs of housing in the later stages of the plan period.
15. The developers and landowners involved in the southern extension site would prefer to cluster the provision of sports pitches in two locations; one at Ham Farm and one at Park Farm. However they did point out the need for flexibility within the policy to enable green infrastructure to be successfully integrated with the other elements of the development.

<b>Question G2 - What type of sports pitch provision (for example football, rugby, cricket, tennis or others) do you consider is needed within the town?</b>	
Tennis	20
Football	13
Cricket	11
Rugby	7
Basketball	3
Netball	2
Boating lake	1
Bowls	1
Golf	1
Hockey	1
Rock climbing wall	1
Mountain bike track	1
Five-a-side football	1

16. The four most popular choices for the type of sports provision were tennis, football including five-a-side football, cricket and rugby.



17. The majority of responses indicated that a dispersal of allotments around the whole residential part of the site was preferred. The overwhelming reasons given for this related to the ease of access, ease of use and the community feel that will go with the provision of local allotments.

18. The concept of having small groups of allotment plots in accessible, walkable locations seemed to be popular not only for the local community spirit that is generated but also as it breaks up the site with green space. This approach would be more convenient, minimise traffic and encourage greater usage as residents “would not want to travel too far to their allotment”.

19. The option of providing allotments in one cluster received some support. Reasons for this included for security, to facilitate interaction between allotment owners and other groups and ease of management.

20. General comments received highlighted the need for the allotment space to be accessible by pedestrian and cycle routes and for adequate parking to be provided.
21. Two comments suggested that there was no need for allotments if houses have large enough gardens. If flats are to be built then there should be communal gardens provided to encourage pride of ownership and responsibility rather than putting the onus for maintenance on the town council.
22. The developers and landowners involved in the southern extension site suggested that infrastructure provision, delivery and future management points towards a clustered approach to allotment provision. They also suggested that a community orchard could be provided as part of the Southern Extension.

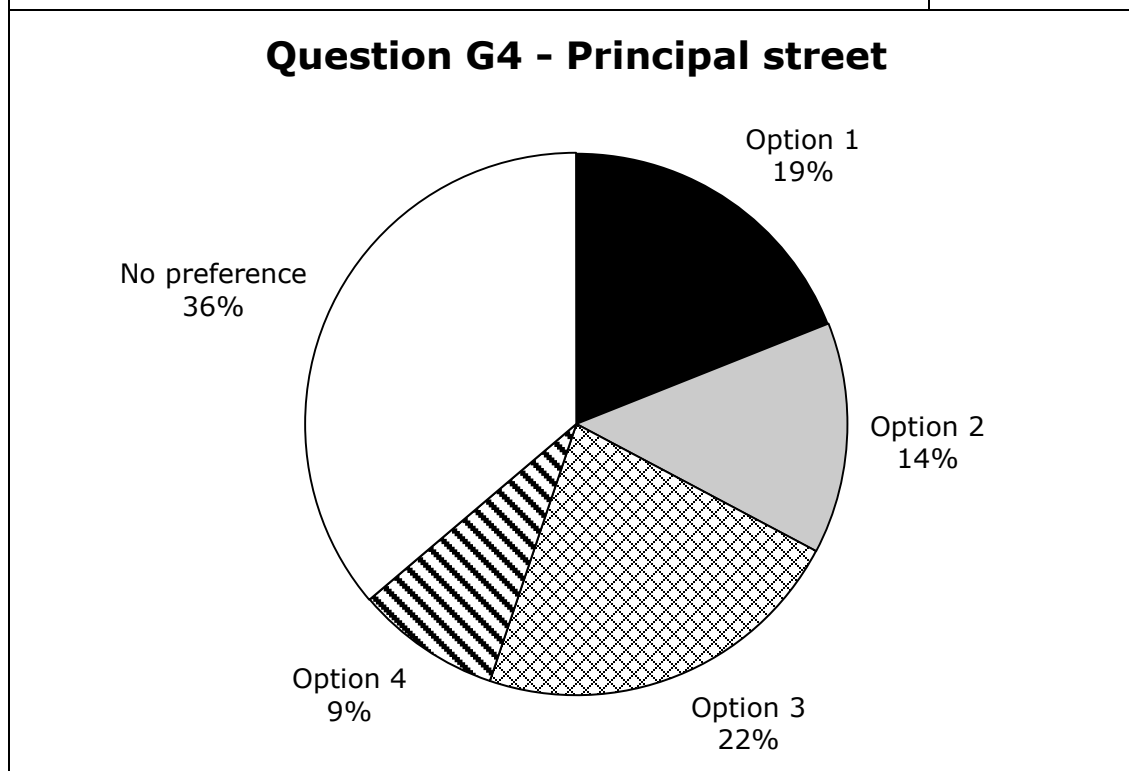
### **Conclusions: Green Infrastructure**

23. The community preference for formal open space is for allotments to be dispersed about the site in locations accessible to local people. This is expected to engender more of a community feel.
24. Although the preference for dispersal and clustering of sports pitches is evenly balanced, sports pitches serve a wide catchment and users often travel a reasonable distance to use such facilities. Taking into account this, it seems reasonable to consider the reasons given in support of each option. Through careful design and through choice of location, it is possible to address many of the concerns related to the dispersed approach. The more compelling arguments suggest that a clustered approach offers opportunities for economies of scale in the management and sharing of facilities. The preference for the configuration of sports pitches is therefore for a cluster to be provided in an accessible location.
25. The top three sports were football including five-a-side all weather pitches, tennis and cricket. It may be that some of this more formal provision such as five-a-side pitches or tennis courts which would require more management, could be provided at the leisure centre rather than within the Southern Extension site, although facilities to serve the provision within the Southern Extension site such as club houses, would still be required.
26. Pedestrian or cycle access to open space was seen as important as were linkages between the Green Infrastructure assets on site.

## Transport and Access

27. Questions G4 and G5 related to the route of the principal street and potential access points that could be established to link the Southern Extension site to the existing built up area of Gillingham.

<b>Question G4 - Which option for the route of the principal street do you prefer? Please explain your reasons.</b>	
Option 1 – Northern route	11
Option 2 – Southern route A	8
Option 3 – Southern route B	13
Option 4 – Upgrade of Cole Street Lane	5
no answer	21
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>



28. The majority of comments received on the principal street highlighted the need to minimise the impact on the local environment through the least invasive approach possible. Key areas that were highlighted as important to protect included the flood plain of the river and Cole Street Lane.

29. Avoiding crossing the flood plain of the River Lodden was seen as positive with landscape impact and severance of the river corridor open space being the rationale behind this. Two responses, including one from Natural England, specifically highlighted the importance of the river corridor in

biodiversity terms with the need for wildlife corridors to be established through the development. The Environment Agency indicating that development in the flood plain would only be acceptable if it could be demonstrated that the road was needed as essential infrastructure and that there were no alternatives. One suggestion however was that the bridge could be an iconic landscape feature.

30. Responses highlighted the downside to Options 2, 3 and 4 of the impact on the character of Cole Street Lane. Cole Street Lane is a country lane typical of the Blackmore Vale. Options 2, 3 and 4 would upgrade part or the entirety of this route, to serve as the principal street. It was highlighted that Cole Street Lane floods and that there would be the need for footpaths to be provided if the route was to utilise the lane. Several comments supporting Option 1 were received from individuals living on Cole Street Lane.
31. Utilisation of the existing roundabout was seen as a positive however concerns were raised over the impact on pedestrians of a busy roundabout. Solutions suggested included installation of traffic lights at the junction or the provision of a footbridge.
32. Conversely, the utilisation of this roundabout was seen as negative by a few respondents. It was thought that the roundabout was already congested and that connecting the new development to it would make the situation much worse. The incorporation of an additional roundabout in preference to a signalised junction under option 3 was seen as a possible solution to relieving congestion at the existing Orchard Park roundabout.
33. Several comments referred to the creation of alternative routes around the town akin to a bypass, effectively the first step to creating a circular route. This was seen as a positive thing by most however there were a few concerns also raised primarily about the connection made with other less suitable narrow country lanes to create this "rat-run" especially in the Madjeston area where the increase in traffic combined with narrow roads was highlighted as being potentially dangerous.
34. Option 4 was seen as positive in the creation of a circular route particularly as it was on the edge of the development, avoiding the proposed residential areas. Conversely the fact that Options 1, 2 and 3 would go through the development itself rather than being a bypass was highlighted as positive in a number of responses. It was pointed out that if the principal street was to be used as a bus route, then consideration needs to be given to maximising catchment for passengers and that the route should not be used to demarcate the edge of the settlement.
35. Several responses pointed out that Option 1 would facilitate easier and more direct access to Brickfields Business Park. In general improving

access into Brickfields was seen as positive however improved access will be delivered through all of the proposed routes.

36. Several responses highlighted the importance of creating a more attractive entrance to the town along the Shaftesbury Road corridor. Option 3 was seen as offering this opportunity.
37. Option 3 was highlighted as being the most direct route between the B3081 and the B3092 and therefore was favoured by a number of respondents. However many comments in support of Option 2 suggested that Option 3 was equally supported.
38. General comments were received highlighting a number of separate issues. These included:
  - the need for delivery of the principal street to not hold up development and thereby threaten the five-year supply of housing
  - the importance of the route in delivering balanced development in the town, including further development beyond the plan period
  - the need for traffic flow to be maintained and congestion minimised at the junction of the principal street with the B3092 at Madjeston
  - the need to avoid bottlenecks in the principal street to facilitate traffic movements into and out of town
  - the need to give careful consideration to pedestrian and cycle routes in and around the town and the development before deciding on the route of the principal street.
39. Linkages with the A303 were raised as an area of uncertainty in the proposals.
40. Dorset County Council highlighted the need for safe routes to school to be provided around the existing and proposed road network and the need for the principal street to be a key structuring element of the design layout.
41. The developers and landowners involved in the southern extension site supported Option 3 as it created the opportunity to improve the attractiveness of the entrance to the town at Shaftesbury Road. They also pointed out that this was the most deliverable option as the entire route was then in their control.
42. Damory Coaches, a local public transport operator supported the approach being taken as the most sustainable way to accommodate the additional housing requirement for the area. The response suggested that the new development should be connected with Gillingham Railway Station and Shaftesbury Town Centre to ensure the greatest connectivity for local users. In order to provide this link the new service will need to penetrate the site from two accesses in order to ensure that customers do not feel

that they are going round in circles and negate the need for vehicles to turn around.

**Question G5 - Do you have any comments on establishing any of the potential access points into the site? (Please indicate which ones you are commenting on)**

43. In relation to the Park Farm area to the east of Shaftesbury Road, obtaining access via the Orchard Park roundabout (point c) was favoured in preference to the existing residential streets (points a and b).
44. It was suggested that residential streets were used by children for playing, that it is difficult to manoeuvre around the area with the number of parked cars and that increased traffic would impact on the amenity of the existing residents.
45. Access from Cerne Avenue was considered to be completely unsuitable and the corner from Fern Brook Lane into Cerne Avenue was considered too sharp for increased volumes of traffic especially with the levels of parking in the vicinity.
46. It was suggested that the access through the industrial area could easily be visually improved.
47. In relation to the Ham Farm area to the west of Shaftesbury Road, access via the Orchard Park roundabout (point d) and the principal street was preferred over the existing estate roads (points e and f). The main reasons for this view related to congestion on existing streets due to parking, safety as children play on the streets and the impact on existing residents due to higher volumes of traffic. Access via the Orchard Park roundabout would therefore have less of an impact on the existing established residential areas.
48. Access along Pheasant Way (point f), past St Mary the Virgin School was not considered to be appropriate due to the impact on the school and the safety of children accessing the school. It was suggested that access from the existing residential area should be avoided at all costs.
49. In relation to the Lodden Lakes area, it was suggested that access via a new junction from the B3092 (point g) was favoured over access via Addison Close (point h). Support was also given to the creation of a seasonally usable ford across the River Lodden (point k) to link the Lodden area to the Ham Farm area.
50. One agent suggested that access should be via The Meadows (point i) and Meadow Croft (both in his clients ownership) as these had been designed to take additional traffic.



51. Comments suggested that more cycle routes need to be provided especially connecting the new development with the remainder of the town. It was suggested in several responses that the design of the Southern Extension site should aim to encourage non-car based travel, making walking and cycling the easier and preferred alternative.
52. Dorset County Council highlighted the need for good pedestrian and cycle access to the site from the Orchard Park area with good crossing points over B3081. They also emphasised the need for safe pedestrian and cycle routes out of Orchard Park away from industrial traffic.
53. General comments were also received in relation to flood risk with the Environment Agency highlighting the impact of flooding on certain proposed connections and hence their usability at certain times of the year.
54. Some general comments were received about traffic issues around the town. These highlighted the existing problems along the north south corridor especially along Shaftesbury Road and at the Shaftesbury Road / New Road junction. Concern was expressed that the problem would get significantly worse if the development was to go ahead.
55. Concern was expressed about the routes becoming “rat runs” and as a result having significant impact on existing residential areas. One suggestion also received was that whichever access points are utilised, these should not prejudice further development of the town beyond the end of the plan period.
56. The developers and landowners involved in the southern extension site pointed out how they were aiming to gain access to the development site. They suggested that the main access points would be via the existing B3081 and B3092 and via the principal street. Access would also be sought via Cerne Avenue (primary) and Cale Way (secondary) to serve development on the eastern side of Shaftesbury Road, via Woodpecker Meadow and Kingfisher Avenue (secondary) to serve the western side of Shaftesbury Road and via B3092 and Addison Close to serve the Lodden area of the development site.

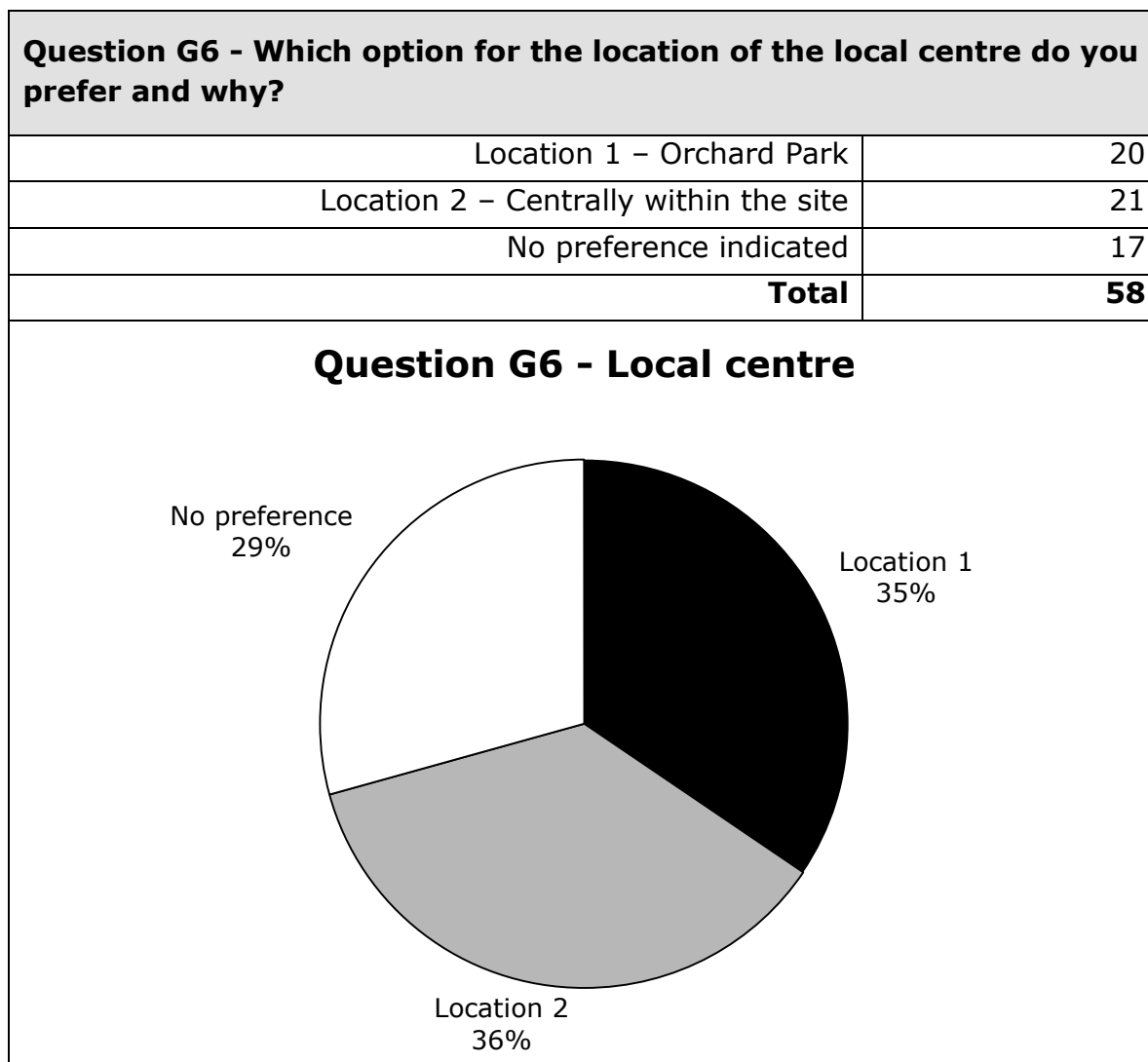
### **Conclusions: Transport and Access**

57. In relation to the principal street, there was a desire for the impact of the route to be minimised. The impact on Cole Street Lane was raised as a concern as was the impact on road safety at both the B3092 and the B3081. The potential to create a more attractive entrance to the town at Shaftesbury Road was also supported. The through route that would be created was also supported from a public transport perspective.

58. The main concern with access points was the impact on the existing residential areas. The preference was for new accesses to be established rather than for loading existing residential streets. The principal street was seen as offering an opportunity for gaining access to the majority of the site. There was again a desire for non-vehicular connections to be established to the existing built-up area.

## Local Centre

59. Questions G6 and G7 related to the location of the Local Centre and the potential uses that could be provided at this new centre.



60. Generally support was given to a local centre as it was seen as providing much needed facilities in the southern part of the town, reducing congestion at the Shaftesbury Road / New Road junction. Both locations attracted comments about provision of walking and cycling routes to gain access to the facilities as an alternative to the car and the provision of bus access.

61. Support for the local centre being located at Orchard Park highlighted the commercial activity that already takes place in this location seeing the proposed centre as not only reinforcing this activity but also benefiting from it including through passing trade using the Shaftesbury Road corridor. The Orchard Park area would also benefit from being on an existing bus route.

62. Other benefits included the separation of traffic movements from residential areas, good access from the rest of the town and from the residential parts of the development site and the fact that it would make good use of the existing infrastructure. Responses did however point out the need for parking to be provided to serve the facilities.
63. Locating the local centre more centrally received support primarily because it would be more accessible to people who work at Brickfields or who live in East Stour and hence have a larger catchment. It was suggested that the more central location was far enough away from the existing town centre not to have too much impact on town centre trade. The more central location was seen as offering better opportunities for cycling and walking however the barrier of Shaftesbury Road was also raised as a concern.
64. Establishing a new purpose built local centre was also seen as a positive rather than "piggy-backing" on the Orchard Park site.
65. One suggestion was that the roads in the Orchard Park area were already busy and too dangerous. Increasing traffic at this location would cause further disruption and therefore a local centre at each location (i.e. two centres) was preferred. Several comments highlighted the potential for a local centre to have a negative impact on the existing town centre and that this should be the focus of commercial activity in preference to any other site.

**Question G7 - What facilities do you think should be provided at the local centre; for example should a convenience store be provided?**

66. The following uses were suggested for the local centre.

Convenience store	31
Restaurants / coffee shops / pub	13
Doctors	13
Post office / post box	13
Community hall	8
Pharmacy	5
Youth centre	4
Hair dressers / beauty salon	3
Large scale retail (non-convenience)	3
Dentist	3
Large scale retail (convenience)	2
Nursery	2
Cinema / bowling alley	2
Petrol station	2
Small business office units	1
Day centre for elderly	1
Recreation facilities	1
Public toilets	1

**Conclusions: Local Centre**

67. In purely numerical terms, it was not possible to establish a clear preference for either the Orchard Park or Central location. However when analysing the comments, the most compelling arguments suggested the preference was for a local centre to be established at Orchard Park, building on the commercial activity that exists in that location.

68. There is the potential for a negative impact on the existing town centre and the efforts being made to enhance it as a result of establishing a local centre within the Southern Extension site. For this reason any uses at the local centre would need to be kept to a small scale to serve the local area.

69. Clearly some of the uses suggested for the local centre such as a youth centre and a nursery could be combined into one unit. The refined list of potential uses for the local centre would therefore include:

A1 – Shops

Including a convenience store, a pharmacy and a hair dressers all of a small scale

A3, A4 - Restaurants and cafes, Drinking establishments

A pub, café or restaurant

B1a – Business

Including offices and possibly some small scale starter units

D1 - Non-residential institutions

Including a doctor's surgery, a dentist and a multi-use community building incorporating space for a youth centre, a day centre for the elderly, meeting space and potentially a day nursery either integrated into the community building or as a separate unit.

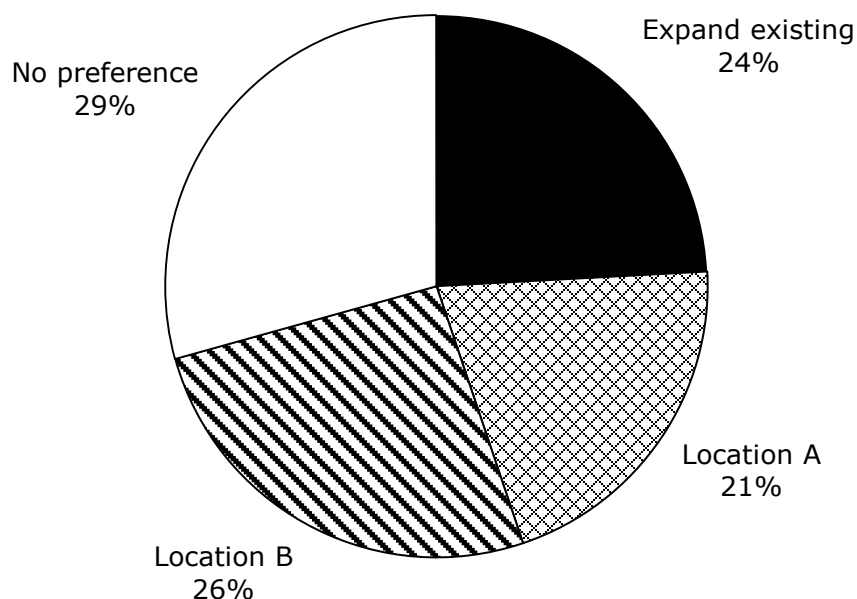
Other uses could include the provision of a post box, public toilets and some public open space

## Education

70. Question G8 related to the location of primary school provision to accommodate the increased numbers of primary school children arising from the development of the site.

<b>Question G8 - Which option for increasing primary school capacity do you prefer and why?</b>	
Expand existing St Mary the Virgin and Milton on Stour schools	14
Expand existing plus provide a new school at Location A – centrally within the site	12
Expand existing plus provide a new school at Location B – at Orchard Park	15
No preference indicated	17
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>

### Question G8 - Primary school



71. Arguments in favour of the expansion of St Mary the Virgin school and the expansion of Milton-on-Stour School centred on the cost effectiveness of the improvements. Building on the existing schools was seen as a positive way of promoting community spirit.

72. Expansion of Milton-on-Stour school was seen to add benefit to the northern (Peacemarsh) area of the town, spreading the benefit of the

Southern Extension to this area. However due to the remote location responses expected that expansion of Milton-on-Stour school would result in severe congestion through the town.

73. Many responses suggested that the provision of a new school was favoured over the expansion of the existing. Several responses indicated that either of the potential locations for the new school were supported; it was more important to establish a new school than to consider the location. The provision of a new school as opposed to the expansion of the existing therefore received support from 27 out of the 58 responses (46%).
74. Arguments in favour of the provision of a new school focused on the need for schools to be "local" enabling children to walk and the need to keep primary schools "more nurturing" through the provision of smaller schools. Larger schools were seen as being impersonal and "city-like".
75. For many responders, the provision of a new school within the Southern Extension would be expected to reduce congestion. However the provision of good pedestrian and cycle links to the new school, no matter which location should be seen as a priority.
76. The main reason for the support for a new school to be located centrally within the site was that the majority of the new development was in this area. It was suggested that the new school in this central location would reduce traffic congestion.
77. The provision of a new school at Orchard Park was supported for similar reasons with traffic congestion and road safety the primary concerns. It was suggested that St Mary the Virgin school could serve the area to the west of the B3081 with a new school at Orchard Park serving the area to the east. This configuration would maximise the accessibility across the whole site resulting in minimising traffic on the main roads and reducing the need for children to cross the busy B3081.
78. One response suggested that St Mary the Virgin should not be expanded but that a new school should be provided at Orchard Park. One other response suggested that additional secondary school provision was more important.
79. The developers and landowners involved in the southern extension site's preferred approach was to expand St Mary the Virgin school and to build a new school on the east of the B3081 as it maximises the accessibility across the whole site and makes the best use of existing resources.
80. Dorset County Council's preferred approach is to reserve land to the east of the B3081 for a new school whilst also securing the expansion of St Mary the Virgin school.

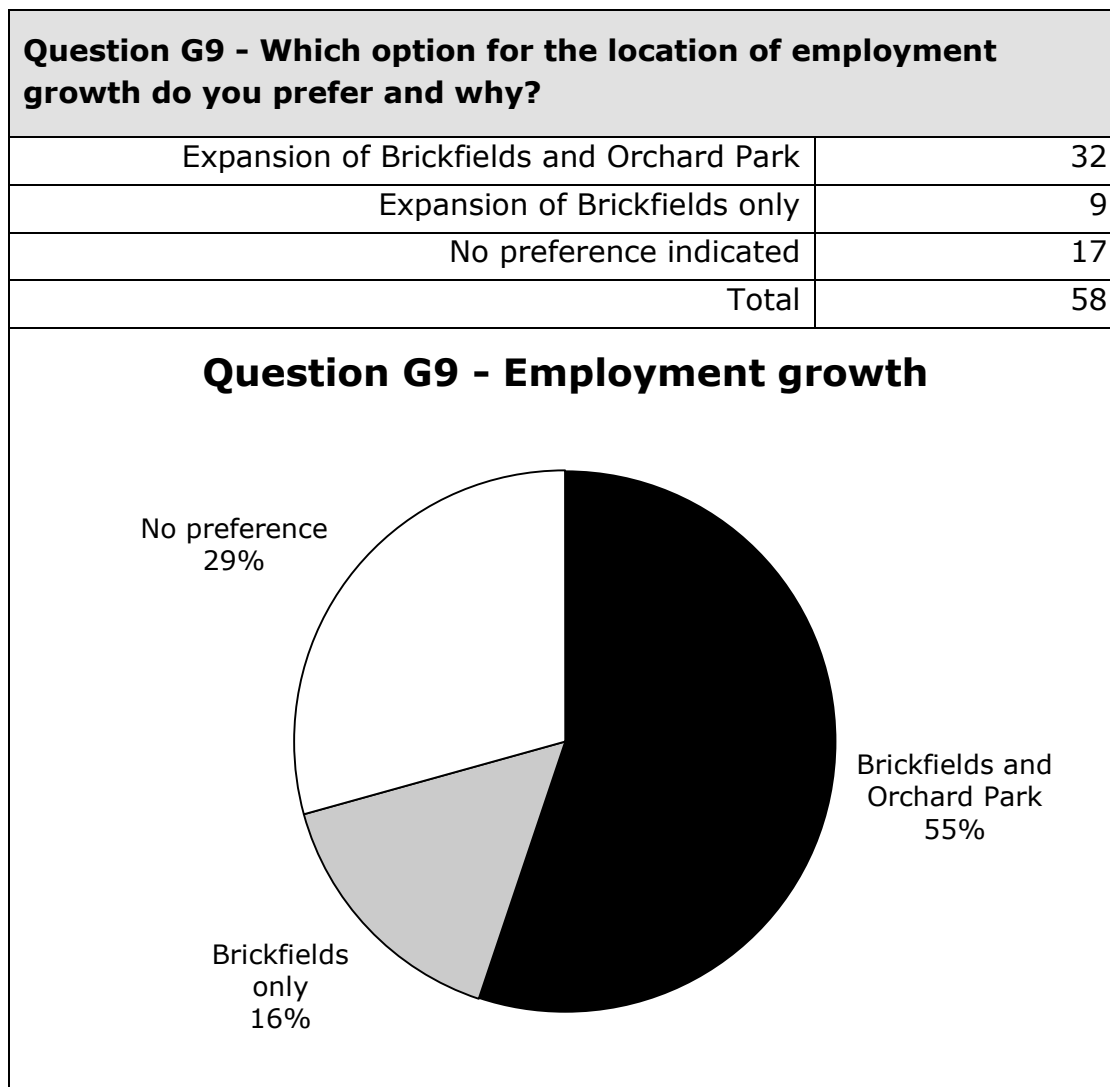


**Conclusions: Education**

81. There was a clear preference expressed for the provision of a new primary school within the Southern Extension site with a site on the eastern side of the B3081 being the preferred option when the comments were analysed in detail. The expansion of St Mary the Virgin was also supported to provide for residents on the western side of the B3081.
82. Comments also highlighted to the need for the impact on the Secondary School to be considered.

## Employment Growth

84. Question G9 related to the location of additional employment generating land uses (B1 business, B2 general industrial and B8 warehousing or distribution) to meet the needs of the business community in the town.



85. The suggestion from a number of respondents was that keeping employment growth in one location (i.e. Brickfields) would reduce the negative impact on neighbouring areas. This suggestion primarily centred around the impact of traffic on residential areas. It was suggested that Orchard Park should remain a small industrial area with local amenities thereby offering an opportunity to enhance the entrance to the town at Shaftesbury Road.

86. The Orchard Park site along with Brickfields improved accessibility to employment areas not only for the residents of Gillingham but also for people travelling from Shaftesbury. The need for good cycle route and

footpath provision was however highlighted to create alternatives to car use.

87. The majority of responses in favour of the two site option suggested that greater employment opportunities would be provided as a result. It was also suggested that the more dispersed approach would make the principal street less of a rat run as employment opportunities would be located at each end.
88. Several responses supported the proposal of keeping Orchard Park for light industrial uses to complement the local centre idea however many suggested that further development in this location would require planting to screen the development and create a more attractive entrance to the town. The landowner of the Orchard Park site suggested that the site could easily accommodate B8 uses (warehousing and distribution) in addition to B1 (light industry).
89. Further employment sites in the town would help to achieve balanced growth of the town however there is a need to ensure that training opportunities are provided and that the jobs are of a high quality.
90. There were concerns that employment growth would encourage long distance commuting and that new areas should not be designated until the existing areas were full.
91. Wessex Water highlighted the amenity issues related to the proximity of Brickfields and the proposed informal open space to the town's sewerage treatment works. Modelling would be required to determine the impact of the odour and fly nuisance.
92. The developers and landowners involved in the southern extension site suggested that sufficient land was available to meet the town's needs and therefore there was no need to expand the Orchard Park site. If employment growth was focused on Brickfields, the remainder of the Southern Extension site could be used to deliver high quality residential development and associated physical and social infrastructure.

### **Conclusions: Employment Growth**

93. Expansion of Brickfields and Orchard Park was seen as the better approach as it provides for the maximum amount of employment and business opportunities to serve the town. Again the need for good pedestrian and cycle links to the employment sites was highlighted as important.

## **General Comments**

94. Several general comments were received about development in Gillingham and development generally. The key points raised were as follows.

- The current roads were dangerous for cyclists and pedestrians, congested and not suitable for heavy traffic; safer routes need to be provided;
- The existing town centre, employment opportunities and green infrastructure in the town were considered inadequate;
- There was a need for a cemetery and a religious building;
- The scale of the development will cause the town to lose its identity;
- Flooding in the Lodden Lakes area is a problem and impermeable surfaces will cause massive longer term problems;

95. Several smaller sites were suggested by agents and landowners as opportunities to support the growth of the town, offering alternatives to support housing land supply.

96. English Heritage, Natural England, The Environment Agency and the Highways Agency and Wessex Water all asked to be kept informed of and involved in the Southern Extension as the policy develops. Their main concerns related to the delivery of green infrastructure networks to enhance not only biodiversity but also amenity.