

WESTERN AREA (BRIDPORT, BEAMINSTER, LYME REGIS & SURROUNDS)

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This background paper focuses on the site specific proposals and allocations for the Western area. The Western area covers the market town of Bridport, Beaminster and the coastal resort of Lyme Regis together with the surrounding villages within West Dorset.
- 1.2 The overall strategy for development is contained within the background paper on the Sustainable Pattern of Development. The conclusions from the overall strategy were that the distribution of development should take account of:
- the needs, size, and roles of the area’s settlements, taking into account any current imbalances
 - the benefits of concentrating most development in locations where homes, jobs and facilities will be easily accessible to each other and there is a choice of transport modes;
 - the availability of land, and whether it has been previously developed (brownfield);
 - the environmental constraints of the plan area (including landscape and nature conservation designations and areas of flood risk and coastal erosion).

2 LOCAL STRATEGIES

CORPORATE PLAN

- 2.1 The Corporate Plan for West Dorset District Council was adopted in June 2013. Preparation of the new Local Plan is one of the corporate priorities under the Environment aim. The plan also includes policies and proposals meeting priorities under the Economy and Communities aims, as well as others under the Environment aim. These priorities include providing development land for employment; supporting town centres; delivering affordable housing and providing transport, communications and community infrastructure. With regard to the Western Area, the plan has the following specific aims: Complete Lyme Regis Phase 4 coast protection scheme by March 2015; and construct a deep water berth at West Bay by March 2015.

COMMUNITY PLANNING – BRIDPORT AREA

- 2.2 The West Dorset Partnership is a partnership of voluntary and community, public and private sector organisations working together to improve the quality of life in the district.

It includes partners from the various Local Area Partnerships, so that they can feed in priorities that need to be considered at a district-wide level. The West Dorset Partnership Community Plan 2010 – 2026 established the following vision for Bridport:

2.3 Bridport will:

- Continue as a working town with a good balance between housing and jobs and a vibrant town centre providing shopping, cultural and other facilities to the rural hinterland
- Protect the built heritage of the town, the surrounding nationally-designated landscape and the floodplain, along with the countryside views and green spaces that contribute significantly to the town's character
- Prioritise the use of previously-developed land for development, including the regeneration of the town's southwest quadrant
- Focus development on meeting local needs for jobs and housing, providing opportunities for young people to stay in the area and exploring innovative and sustainable ways of meeting these needs
- Aim to become a low impact sustainable town, building on its reputation for local food and produce, developing sustainable tourism, and encouraging alternatives to the private car

2.4 The Bridport Local Area Partnership (BLAP) was set up in 2004 to give local communities more say about what happens in the town and neighbouring parishes. Bridport Local Area Partnership (BLAP) covers an area which includes Bridport and West Bay and covers 23 of the surrounding parishes, as far as Charmouth in the west and Puncknowle in the east. The first BLAP Plan was published in 2006 and formed the basis of Annual Action Plans for each of the years 2007 to 2010. In 2009 it was decided to update the original 2006 Plan and to carry out a major review of activities, plans and priorities for the Bridport area. The BLAP Community Plan for 2011-2014 is the outcome of this review and accompanying consultations, and it is intended will form the basis for Annual Action Plans for the each of the years 2011 to 2014.

2.5 The main aims from the 2012 plan that were outstanding at its last review were:

- Increase the supply of affordable housing
- Promote energy conservation measures in new and existing housing stock
- Improved public / community transport
- Improved road safety and provide/ improve the network of cycle routes and linkages
- Improved access for people with reduced mobility
- Improve skills training and access to adult learning
- Improve open spaces, sports and leisure facilities, including water-based sports, the provision of new allotments and facilities for younger and older children
- Improved library and museum facilities
- Improvements to St Catherine's Primary School

2.6 The main aims from the 2012 plan that are relevant to the Local Plan are:

Major projects cross-cutting BLAP themes

- Bridport South West Quadrant – monitor progress, and support development of partnerships to take forward regeneration in line with community priorities established in SWQ Regeneration Framework and subsequent public consultations, particularly, protection of existing employment, preservation and enhancement of Conservation Area, retention and improvement of public transport interchange, provision of affordable housing.

Accessibility/disability

- Lobby for improved access, e.g. to shops, post offices, footpaths etc.

Climate Change/sustainability

- Review and respond to consultations on community and land use plans for incorporation of sustainability principles and appropriate actions.
- Support initiatives aimed at improving energy efficiency in homes, workplaces etc.

Community facilities, capacity building and empowerment

- Support initiatives to improve and enhance local community facilities and to provide new facilities for the benefit of the community.
- Continue to monitor requirement and opportunities for provision of a community resource centre.
- Lobby for retention of local services (libraries, mobile library, shops, post offices etc).
- Continue to seek implementation of recommendations of 2008 Space Needs Survey.

Community safety

- Support efforts of councils & parish plan groups for appropriate speed restrictions, road safety measures and driver awareness.

Culture

- Support initiatives and projects which enhance cultural life of area, and those which promote and celebrate the cultural, social and industrial heritage of the Bridport area.
- Support and promote initiatives to develop and strengthen Bridport's image as a vibrant Arts location, including promotion of Bridport as a festival town.
- Support and promote initiatives that seek to widen participation in arts and culture, including for children and young people.
- Provide support for arts and heritage organisations with specific needs, e.g. to find premises.

Employment and Training

- Seek to ensure that Employment issues and needs are treated as a high priority in development of community and land use plans, and that relevant consultations engage with employment interests.

Environment

- Support local food initiatives, including Local Food Group, Farmers' Markets, Bridport Food Festival, Bridport Centre for Local Food, Allotments Society etc.
- Support initiatives from Allotments Society, parish/town councils and landowners to provide more allotments.

Housing

- (Through Affordable Housing Working Group) investigate mechanisms for improving delivery of affordable housing in the Bridport area.
- Support local (parish) initiatives to set up registers of housing need, identification of suitable land, community consultation and efforts at consensus building.
- Work with Local Planning Authority to develop policies and structures favourable to the delivery of affordable housing.

Infrastructure

- Support initiatives to reduce traffic congestion, e.g. Park and Ride, improved car park signage.
- Support extension of cycle networks.

Leisure and recreation

- Support partnerships and initiatives to improve sporting facilities in Bridport area.
- Support initiatives to improve environmentally appropriate water-based sporting facilities at West Bay.
- Support initiatives to provide new play areas/facilities for younger and older children

Tourism

- Seek to influence local tourism strategies, particularly on sustainability and benefits to the local community.
- Support tourism initiatives (e.g. Jurassic Coast, 2012) where these seek to bring longterm benefits to local environment and resident community.

2.7 There are parish plans that have been, or are being, prepared for many of the parishes in the BLAP area. The completed plans are ‘ticked’ in the table below, and those in preparation are marked with an asterisk. The completed plans are available on line via the following link: <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/communityplan/west> .

Allington	✓	North Poorton	
Askerswell		Pilsdon	✓
Bettiscombe (part Upper Marshwood Vale)	✓	Powerstock	
Bothenhampton	✓	Puncknowle	✓
Bradpole	✓	Shipton Gorge	✓
Burton Bradstock	✓	Stanton St Gabriel (part Char Valley)	
Catherston Leweston		Stoke Abbott (part Upper Marshwood Vale)	✓
Chideock	✓	Swyre	✓
Chilcombe		Symondsburry	✓
Loders	✓	Whitchurch Canonicorum (part Char Valley)	✓
Marshwood (part Upper Marshwood Vale)	✓	Wootton Fitzpaine (part Char Valley)	✓
Netherbury			

2.8 The aim of Parish Plans is to identify the qualities of a local area/community that are valued together with those that could benefit from change. The community can outline how they wish their area to develop and influence the service provision of local authorities and other organisations. Those immediately adjoining Bridport and forming part of the built-up area of the town are summarised below.

2.9 Allington Parish forms part of wider Bridport and published its Parish Plan in 2006. Actions identified in the Action Plan cover a wide range of topics. Those related to planning include:

- Introduce or improve parking controls in problem areas highlighted by residents, and improve road safety at danger spots and reduce speeding
- More footpaths, cycle paths and pavements and improved local bus services
- Improve and increase countryside footpaths and improve accessibility for those with disabilities

- Co-ordinate with Bridport Town Council to meet unmet demand for allotments
- Support increased job numbers in the Parish and the development of small businesses
- Investigate developing more activities for young people
- Investigate the potential for and viability of providing a parish hall community facility

There was little support for new large scale housing developments, increased tourism development and industrial units in Allington. The importance of maintaining the rural character of the Parish was stressed.

- 2.10 The Bothenhampton Village Design Statement and Parish Plan (2003) included the additional objectives of applying for a mobile library service for the village; a continued aspiration for a village shop, pub and post office; and encouraging a better awareness of planning matters.
- 2.11 The Bradpole Parish Plan (December 2011) included an Action Plan. This says that opportunities for the creation of more allotments will be investigated as will the protection of important community open spaces. The improvement and more varied use of existing community open spaces will also be encouraged. It also aims to encourage more cycling in the Parish and improved bus services. It seeks to retain the existing mobile library service; and support and retain the local village post offices, shops and pubs.
- 2.12 The parish of Walditch immediately abuts the built area of Bridport to the east. The Village Design Statement and Parish Plan (2003) highlights a need for affordable housing for local people but recognises that there is local resistance to more development. It seeks improved services for the village, the expansion of local tourism based enterprises e.g. B&B on farms, the reduction of traffic speeds through the village, better facilities for walkers, horse riders and cyclists including a circular walk/cycle route around the village, and the provision of a fully equipped children's playground. It also wanted a larger area to be designated as Land of Local Landscape Importance.
- 2.13 The parish of Symondsburry abuts Bridport to the west and potential development sites associated with the town fall within the parish boundary. The Symondsburry Parish Plan was published in 2008 and updated the previous 2003 plan. There was majority support from the respondents to the Parish Plan survey for the provision of affordable housing for local people; quite strong support for the introduction of alternative energy supplies, locally generated biogas, solar energy and the growing of wood for fuel. The feeling for wind turbines and growing bio-fuel crops was less strong, but still had majority support. There was support for appropriate businesses establishing in the parish. A lack of public transport was highlighted as a problem, however the majority of respondents were car owners and existing public transport services appeared to be underused. Other actions include: supporting better broadband provision; establishing a community business hub; providing support for a scheme to bring the Tithe Barn and courtyard back into good repair and convert to a community use; encouraging planning policy to support the redevelopment of old buildings to provide jobs and houses in the parish; supporting reduced speed limits; campaigning for improved highway maintenance; supporting and encouraging the undergrounding of power and telecom cables.
- 2.14 The Char Valley Village Communities Action Plans (2003) cover the parishes of Whitchurch Canonicorum, Wootton Fitzpaine and Stanton St Gabriel. The Upper Marshwood Vale Parish Plan has been published and includes the villages of Bettiscombe, Stoke Abbott, Pilsdon, and Marshwood. The main priority actions include:
- Increase the number of affordable homes
 - Improved road safety and reduced parking-related problems on the village streets

COMMUNITY PLANNING – BEAMINSTER AREA

- 2.15 The West Dorset Community Plan 2010 – 2026 established the following vision for Beaminster:
- To meet the local needs housing, employment and community facilities on a small scale while retaining its attractive historic character and the beauty of the surrounding countryside
 - To improve accessibility to facilities and develop its role as a local service centre to surrounding villages
- 2.16 Work on the Beaminster & Villages Action Plan has shown that there is a desire for:
- Increased supply of affordable housing
 - Better public transport to various facilities both within the town and from the surrounding villages
 - Better access for people with reduced mobility
 - Improved parking
 - A greater range of local employment opportunities
 - Increased road safety
 - More NHS dentists
- 2.17 There are parish plans that have been or are being prepared for many of the parishes in the Beaminster Area. The completed plans are ‘ticked’ in the table below whereas those currently under preparation are marked with an asterisk:

Broadwindsor	✓
Burstock	
Chedington (Parret and Axe group Parish)	✓
Corscombe	✓
East Chelborough	
Evershot	✓
Halstock	✓
Hooke	
Mapperton	

Melbury Sampford	
Mosterton	*
Rampisham	
Seaborough	
South Perrott (Parret and Axe group Parish)	✓
Thorncombe	*
West Chelborough	
Wraxall	

- 2.18 These parish plans include various local priority actions. None highlighted the need for significant development, although many highlighted the need for more affordable housing, better public transport, improved recreation and other community facilities, improved broadband and small-scale employment units.

COMMUNITY PLANNING - LYME REGIS AREA

- 2.19 The West Dorset Community Plan 2010 – 2026 established the following vision for Lyme Regis:
- To preserve its unique character, including its dramatic coastal setting, historic buildings and visual charm
 - to provide opportunities to meet local needs for housing, employment and leisure facilities, helping to achieve and retain the mix of ages and skills required for a viable community
 - to manage the impacts of development, for example on traffic, house prices and the environment, including adapting to and mitigating against the impact of climate change, and respecting the vulnerable geology

- 2.20 Work on the Lyme Forward Community Plan and audit of local community facilities has shown that there is a need or desire to:
- Increase the supply of affordable housing
 - Develop and implement a transport plan for the town, looking at all forms of transport including pedestrians, cyclists, mobility scooters, public transport and the need to reduce congestion and the use of private vehicles
 - Develop a Jurassic Coast Field Study Centre
 - Provide new B1 light industrial, serviced and standalone office space
 - Ensure relevant business training is available
 - Identify a permanent place for a farmer's market
 - Regenerate the marine parade shelters
 - Make improvements to the museum and library
 - Increase capacity at the Woodroffe School
 - Increase the amount of community orchard space, increase the number of outdoor sports pitches, provide more play provision and allotments
- 2.21 The Charmouth Parish Plan was published in 2010. The main priority actions included:
- Increase the number of affordable homes
 - Improved road safety and reduced parking-related problems on the village streets
 - Increase police presence and reduce fear of crime
 - Better access to leisure facilities for young people
 - More employment / land for light industry

ADJOINING LOCAL PLANS

- 2.22 The Western Area of West Dorset is bordered to the north by South Somerset District. The towns of Crewkerne and Chard in South Somerset are closest to the district border and Yeovil is easily accessible from the more northern parishes. To the west is East Devon District, adjoining the area around Lyme Regis.
- 2.23 The introduction to the local plan includes a section on the duty to cooperate. It highlights that the joint plan shows how the cross-boundary issues are being addressed. In relation to the Western area, it identified the need for cooperation in respect to Lyme Regis / Uplyme (working with East Devon District Council). The sections below outline the local policies: more detail on joint working is given separately in the Duty to Cooperate Statement.

SOUTH SOMERSET

- 2.24 The South Somerset District Draft Core Strategy set out the long term planning framework for the district up to the year 2028. The Draft Core Strategy (incorporating Preferred Options) was published for consultation in late 2010. Comments received as part of the consultation process were considered by South Somerset District Council in April 2012, and some changes agreed.
- 2.25 Yeovil was identified in the draft core strategy as a strategically significant town and the main focus for growth and development in South Somerset. The preferred location for an urban extension to Yeovil was to the south and west of the town, which would bring the edge of Yeovil closer to the county border and the Western Area of West Dorset. The scale of the urban extension would be 2,500 dwellings (with 1,565 dwellings to be developed within the Plan period and 935 dwellings to be developed beyond the plan period).

- 2.26 Chard is South Somerset's 2nd largest town with a population of nearly 13,000. It is identified in the draft core strategy as a Market Town, which is a traditional centre of employment and manufacturing. The town is well connected on the A30 and A358 with the A303 nearby and train connections are available at nearby Axminster. The wide range of shopping and services on offer serve the surrounding villages and many people come into the town to work from the surrounding areas. As such, Chard is identified as a location for growth. There is likely to be some 1,860 new homes built in Chard in the plan period, with land identified for a further 1,380 homes in future years.
- 2.27 The town of Crewkerne lies about four miles north west of Beaminster. The town has a population of over 7,500. The draft Core Strategy identified Crewkerne as a Market Town to reflect its importance as a service centre for the surrounding area. It is an important employment centre, providing some 2,500 jobs, with nearly half of those in employment working locally. The town also benefits from a connection to the London Waterloo to Penzance railway line and has been a main location for market trade going back centuries, as it is located on the intersection of the A30 & A356. There has been a committee resolution to grant planning permission for the strategic housing allocation to the east of Crewkerne, which will provide some 525 new homes, and it is not intended to allocate additional land for housing development as about 400 homes are also committed on smaller sites. It is intended that job opportunities in the town will be increased by the development of new employment land of up to 10.5 hectares.
- 2.28 The South Somerset Local Plan Core Strategy was examined in May 2013.

EAST DEVON

- 2.29 East Devon District Council is currently working on production of a new Local Plan for East Devon. In August 2012 East Devon District Council consulted on the potential scope of a new planning policy document for East Devon villages. In December 2012, East Devon District Council consulted on their pre-submission draft local plan. They anticipate submitting their plan in July 2013.
- 2.30 The West Dorset town of Lyme Regis is located immediately adjacent to the county boundary with Devon. The built-up area of the town is contiguous with the village of Uplyme which is actually within the administrative area of East Devon. Uplyme is classified as one of a number of smaller towns and larger villages in East Devon that provide a range of facilities and services, and many have regular public transport services. A 5% growth rate is proposed, aimed at meeting the needs of local residents, with a strong emphasis on the achievement of affordable and sheltered housing and providing employment close to residents' homes. An increased level of development to help deliver facilities or provide housing to meet a specific need may be acceptable provided it is supported by a Neighbourhood Plan.
- 2.31 The East Devon market town of Axminster is the closest town to Lyme Regis, and offers a large supermarket for convenience goods shopping plus a mainline station on the Exeter-Waterloo line. Axminster is intended to accommodate a mixed use development to the east of the town, which will include 620 residential units and provision for around 8 hectares of land for job generating uses. A North-South relief road for the town will be delivered in association with this development. A further 2.3 hectares of employment land is also identified at MillWey Rise and the Old Coal Yard.
- 2.32 West Dorset District Council's response to the consultation has highlighted the need to work with the adjoining local planning authority and communities to identify potential cross-boundary issues and how these can be addressed through a joined-up approach to planning policy at a local level. The council has asked that the local plan makes reference

to the relationship with Lyme Regis or flexibility to allow future options for the long-term growth of Lyme Regis to be explored in the plan. This was particularly important as some of the policy wording could preclude the ability for this matter to be addressed through neighbourhood plans. Further discussion of this matter is taking place in relation to neighbourhood plans, as covered below.

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING

- 2.33 The Localism Act introduced new powers for local communities to produce neighbourhood development plans, which when adopted will become part of the statutory development plan for the area. It also provided powers for local communities to produce a neighbourhood development order, effectively giving permitted development rights for certain types of development in a specified area. The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations set out some of the more detailed procedural requirements for these neighbourhood planning tools.
- 2.34 The district council has approved an application from Loders Parish Council asking for their neighbourhood plan area to be agreed and work on a joint Parish Plan and Neighbourhood Plan is progressing.
- 2.35 Most recently Uplyme Parish Council has requested a neighbourhood area to be designated, based on the extent of Uplyme Parish. This council's response to this consultation highlighted that the decision on the area designation should take into account how the district and parish councils can work together effectively to plan for the necessary growth to meet the needs of both Lyme Regis and Uplyme communities, and asked that a meeting of representatives from the two district councils, Uplyme Parish Council and Lyme Regis Town Council be held to discuss how this could be achieved. This is particularly appropriate as Lyme Regis Town Council is in the process of instigating a Neighbourhood Plan.
- 2.36 It is likely that over the coming years, other applications elsewhere in the western portion of the plan area will follow, as interest has already been expressed by Bridport Town Council and other parishes.

CONCLUSIONS

- 2.37 The Community Plans provide evidence of local concerns, particularly the availability of affordable housing for local people, local employment opportunities, public transport and access to services and facilities.
- 2.38 The scale of the planned expansion of Yeovil, together with growth at Chard and Crewkerne, is purely to meet the strategic development needs of South Somerset. It will, however, provide homes and employment opportunities within easy reach of the more rural parishes in this area. The same applies to the planned growth on the eastern flank of Axminster in East Devon. West Dorset District Council has highlighted the need to work together with East Devon to enable the most sustainable option for Lyme Regis's growth to be identified.

3 RESEARCH AND EVIDENCE

THE NEEDS, SIZE, AND ROLES OF THE AREA'S SETTLEMENTS

BRIDPORT

- 3.1 Located within the Dorset AONB, Bridport is the largest town in the west of the district. The busy market town is, located on the A35 south coast trunk road about 20km west of Dorchester, and extends south to include the harbour at West Bay.
- 3.2 The 2011 census data shows that Bridport has a population of about 13,570 people within the built-up area, which includes parts of the adjoining parishes of Allington, Bradpole and Bothenhampton. It has a popular weekly market, a good range of local and national shops, healthcare centre, schools, community buildings, and several industrial estates. Because of all these factors it is the most suitable, sustainable location for further development in this part of the district.
- 3.3 Bridport serves a wide rural area of surrounding communities. It is the centre for many services and activities in the locality, including shopping, education, healthcare, leisure, entertainment and library services. The shopping catchment for Bridport (major food shopping) extends around four to five miles in a north, east and west direction. The population within the catchment is around 19,200 (mid 2001).
- 3.4 The Bridport pyramid area has eight primary schools, one secondary school, and one special school. The secondary school for the area is Sir John Colfox School (847pupils - 2011) and is located on the northern outskirts of the town.
- 3.5 The number of people working in the town is slightly higher than the total number of economically active residents, by about 900. A high proportion (52%) of people in employment in Bridport work within the town, travelling less than 2kms to work. This is significantly higher than the average for all of the towns in Dorset. The major employers in Bridport are: Amsafe, Bridport Community Hospital, Denhay Farms, Dorset Community NHS Trust, Dorset County Council, Edwards Sports Products, Gundry Bridport Ltd, Morrisons, and Waitrose. So the area is relatively well-balanced in terms of meeting the job needs of its population, although inevitably there are those that commute into and out of the area.
- 3.6 The closest railway stations to Bridport are at Dorchester (Weymouth to Waterloo line and the Weymouth to Bristol line), Maiden Newton (the Weymouth to Bristol line) and Axminster (Exeter to Waterloo line). There is a regular 31 bus service (hourly) to and from Axminster to Weymouth via Dorchester. The X53 is a seasonal service that follows the coastal route from Weymouth to Bridport and on to Exeter. Services from Bridport to the villages vary; some villages receive an intermittent service and some have no buses at all.
- 3.7 In terms of deprivation, 12 of the 57 Super Output Areas (SOAs) in West Dorset fall in the top 20% of most deprived SOAs in the county. Of these, the SOAs of Bridport Skilling and Bridport Court Orchard fall in the 10% most deprived in the shire county of Dorset (ie not including the Bournemouth and Poole conurbation).

BEAMINSTER

- 3.8 Beaminster is a small rural market town, located wholly within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It has a population of just over 3,000 and provides services and facilities to the surrounding rural area. It has a secondary school, a range of local shops and community facilities in its town centre, and some significant local businesses.

- 3.9 The town lies about 8km north of Bridport, on the A3066, at the source of the River Brit. Crewkerne lies about 10km north-west of the town, with its rail links to London Waterloo, Sherborne and Exeter. Beaminster has an impressive landscape setting, set within a bowl of hills that provide a dramatic backdrop to the north of the town.
- 3.10 As a market town with a reasonable range of community facilities, Beaminster is the most sustainable location in the north-west of the district to accommodate future growth. Development in and around the town will need to meet local housing and employment needs, at an appropriate scale while respecting the character of the settlement and the surrounding countryside.
- 3.11 There is a net out-flow of workers (by about 400), as there are more economically active residents than people working in the town. The major employers in the town are Clipper Teas, Danisco and Dorset County Council.

LYME REGIS

- 3.12 Lyme Regis is a coastal town situated on the westernmost edge of the district on the border with East Devon. It is located on the A3052 off the A35 south coast trunk road about 15km west from Bridport. It is a historic coastal town with a resident population of around 3,670 but is also one of Dorset's principal tourist resorts. Lyme Regis became well known in the early nineteenth century for the discovery of fossils, and today is an important centre for visitors to the World Heritage Coast. The town lies entirely within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and is also constrained by land instability. The emerging Shoreline Management Plan identifies the town as a location that will continue to be defended, and additional coastal defence works are currently being planned.
- 3.13 Challenges for the local plan include taking advantage of the economic benefits of tourism and the World Heritage Site location, while meeting the local needs for affordable housing and jobs, and protecting the town's unique character and environment. Lyme Regis, being a popular seaside resort, has the additional problem of having a significant number of second and holiday homes. Figures from 2011¹ show that out of the total dwellings on the Council Tax Register, 20.39% are second homes.
- 3.14 The town is relatively well self-contained in terms of employment, as there are about 1,500 economically active residents and 1,300 people working in the town. The type of employment offered is predominantly in accommodation and food service activities (25%), distribution including motor (20%) and public administration, education and health (28%). The major employers in the town are Dorset County Council and Lyme Regis Community Care Ltd.

THE VILLAGES

- 3.15 The main service villages in the Western Area are Burton Bradstock, Broadwindsor, Mosterton, Chideock and Charmouth. Details of the facilities available are set out in the table below. The smaller settlements in the area are Morecombelake, Netherbury, Whitchurch Canonorum, Symondsburry, Drimpton, South Perrot, Thorncombe, Marshwood and Stoke Abbott.

¹ Source: Council Tax Register 2011 (parish figure, rounded)

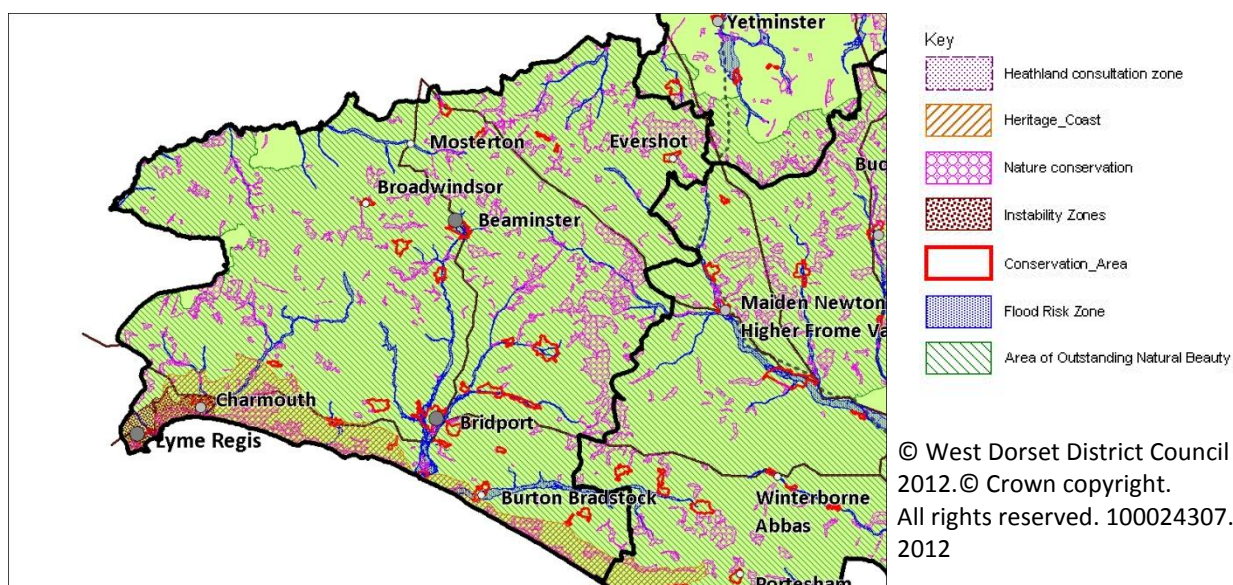
Village	Population	School	General Shop	Village Hall	Frequent Public Transport	Railway Station	A/B Road	Doctors	Major Employment	Leisure facilities
Charmouth	1390	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓
Burton Bradstock	930	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓
Broadwindsor,	590	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓
Chideock	580		✓	✓	✓		✓			✓
Mosterton	570	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓

3.16 Key conclusions from the 2007 Rural Functionality Study (<http://www.dorsetforyou.com/evidencebase/west>) was that:

- Supporting development in villages with facilities is more sustainable, although it does not necessarily mean that facilities will be retained, as a substantial amount of development is often required to support new and existing facilities.
- Remoter villages have a higher proportion of home working, but those who do commute to work travel longer distances.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS

3.17 In common with the rest of West Dorset, the Western area contains a rich and wide variety of landscape, natural and built heritage features. The Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) covers much of the countryside (although there is a small portion in the north west of the area on the Dorset/Somerset border which is excluded). The whole of the coast from Portland Bill into East Devon is an internationally important Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and was also designated in 2001 as a World Heritage Site due to its geological and geomorphological interest. There is also a high concentration of Scheduled Monuments such as Eggardon Hill, Lamberts Castle, Pilsdon Pen and other archaeological remains.



THE AVAILABILITY OF LAND, AND WHETHER IT HAS BEEN PREVIOUSLY DEVELOPED

EXISTING ALLOCATIONS

- 3.18 Land in the South West Quadrant was allocated in the 2006 Local Plan (Policies WA3, WA4 and WA6) for mixed use including housing and employment, with an estimated capacity of 200 homes. All these sites are within the defined development boundary. An outline application for the regeneration of the area was refused in 2009 on the grounds of impact on character and pedestrian safety. A reduced scheme for just St Michaels Trading Estate is currently subject to an outline planning application. Details of these are set out below.

South West Quadrant / St Michaels Trading Estate, Bridport	1/D/09/001051 Outline	Develop land by the erection of 173 dwellings, 1,904 square metres of new commercial floor space (including use classes A1 (Shops), A3 (Restaurants and cafes), B1 (Business), and a new transport interchange with improved bus, coach and taxi facilities including 24 hour public conveniences). Refurbish all remaining buildings and create new vehicular and pedestrian accesses
St Michaels Trading Estate, Bridport	1/D/11/002012 Outline	Develop land by the erection of 105 dwellings (66 houses, 4 maisonettes, & 35 flats), new commercial floor space, provision for 'the Trick Factory', associated car parking, & vehicular & pedestrian access

- 3.19 Land at St Swithin's Road Bridport was allocated in both the 1998 and the 2006 Local Plans for residential development. It was estimated that the site could deliver 25 houses, however, the land is in a number of different ownerships and so far only 5 units have come forward. Details of the previous planning approval and current application, are set out in the table below. The whole of the site lies within the Defined Development Boundary.

Land At Rear Of 7 North Allington Bridport	1/W/07/000689 Approved	Demolish garages and erect 5No dwellings (Full)
5-7 North Allington Bridport DT6 5DX	1/D/11/002032 Awaiting Decision	Erection of 5 No dwellings (Full)

- 3.20 The existing employment allocation in the 2006 Local Plan at St Andrew's Well remains unimplemented due to access problems and ground instability, which have affected the financial viability of the development. Also, the allocation of land at North Mills remains unimplemented. Both sites lie within the Defined Development Boundary.
- 3.21 There are no significant development sites for housing in Beaminster and the existing allocation in the 2006 Local Plan for 3.7ha of employment to the west of the town (policy WA1) has proved to be uneconomic. A Development Feasibility Study, carried out in 2006 by White Young Green on behalf of the South West Regional Development Agency, identified a potential difficulty of providing a new access to the site from the east across a watercourse, and also concluded that the required landscaping should be provided outside the allocated site (which would otherwise severely limit the development potential)
- 3.22 The allocation in the 2006 Local Plan for about 30 homes and 1ha of employment land at Woodberry Down in Lyme Regis (policy WA24), still remains undelivered, although an application is expected to be submitted in June 2013.

- 3.23 The main site options for delivering additional growth have been assessed through the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (<http://www.dorsetforyou.com/evidencebase/west>), as last updated in 2010. This technical study identifies the theoretical potential of sites in the district for future housing development. The assessment included an analysis of the sites' current planning status (and any relevant planning history) and ownership. Potential constraints were also assessed (such as topography/ground condition, flood risk, access, contamination, infrastructure and landscape/townscape character) together with the availability of the site. Deliverability was also assessed in terms of suitability and achievability. An estimate was also made of potential capacity and delivery/phasing.
- 3.24 Appendix C of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment lists all the "included sites" that were submitted to the council and considered to be deliverable in terms of their suitability, availability and achievability. Appendix D lists all the "excluded sites", and the reason why they were considered not to be an appropriate option for delivering housing.
- 3.25 The availability of previously developed (brownfield) sites outside current development boundaries in the Western area is very limited. These are reported in Appendix E of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment.
- 1/016/0174: Proton Garage and Works, West Allington, Bridport (0.29ha)
 - 1/09/069/0006: Part of Holmbush car park, Pound Street, Lyme Regis (0.38ha)
- 3.26 Based on the above studies, the following potential strategic sites were highlighted for more detailed consideration:

Settlement	Site	Capacity (approximate)
Bridport	Land at Vearse Farm	800 homes and 4ha of employment
	Land north of Happy Island Way	40 homes
	Land east of Bredy Vet Centre	40 homes
	Land at Wych Hill	25 homes
Beaminster	Land north of Broadwindsor Road	120 homes and 0.5ha of employment
	Land off Hollymoor Lane	70 homes
	Land at Lane End Farm	0.7ha of employment land
Lyme Regis	Land north of Woodberry Down	50 additional homes

- 3.27 Indicative plans of all the sites put forward for consideration are set out in Appendix 1. The initial individual site assessments are set out in Appendix 2.
- 3.28 Development options at the villages were not taken forward for further consideration. This was on the basis that development in these locations would not be as sustainable as growth in the towns where services and employment opportunities are more accessible. Additional development in the villages would be better suited to local community input via Neighbourhood Planning.

CONCLUSIONS

- One of the challenges is to try to improve the availability of affordable housing in the town of Bridport and the adjoining parishes of Allington, Bradpole & Bothenhampton.
- However significant growth in Bridport is constrained by environmental and landscape factors.
- There are very limited opportunities to focus development on previously developed (brownfield) land that are not already within the defined development boundaries

- Growth in the villages is likely to be limited to meeting local needs for affordable housing, local employment and community facilities. There is already early interest in developing neighbourhood plans.

4 PRE-DRAFT CONSULTATION - AUTUMN 2011

4.1 After the decision was taken to prepare a joint Local Plan, additional consultation took place in Autumn 2011, to provide people with a further chance to influence the new local plan. The details of this consultation are contained in the Autumn 2011 Consultation Summary. As part of this process, the Western Area working group highlighted some key issues that they felt were important in determining the right location and scale of growth. These were:

- Where should development be located in the Western area?
- What factors should influence where growth areas should be
- How can we develop a community-led enterprise zone in Bridport?

4.2 The issues and potential solutions considered by the working group are set out in the table below. Some members of the group felt that the solutions for specific sites were based on individual comments and did not represent consensus from the group. The working group did not discuss options for Beaminster or Lyme Regis, as they felt they did not represent that area, but instead agreed to display the sites at the consensus event, and invite feedback on whether any of those sites might be a suitable location for housing and employment development if needed. The group also wished to see more 'bottom-up' engagement with the community in decisions about the location of development, as they considered local community input to be very important in influencing decisions on changes to development boundaries.

Issue/Problem Explored	Proposed Planning Solution:
What is the right scale of development in the Western area?	WG1 - The level of development included in the Local Plan should not exceed the level of need in that location. The level of development should also be proportionate to the size of the settlement, and how large the settlement is compared to others in the district.
How can you ensure development delivers the affordable housing and other infrastructure the local area needs?	WG2 - Make sure that allocation policy clearly sets out what affordable housing and infrastructure (open spaces, shops, roads etc) should be provided both within and outside the site. Use legal agreements to ensure that affordable housing and other infrastructure provision is prioritised above open market housing in the phasing of development, and no less than in tandem with the open market provision
How can we develop a community-led enterprise zone in Bridport?	WG3 - Include within development allocations land for 'affordable' community-led business development such as small start up units (on a similar basis to affordable housing as a percentage of open market employment provision). There is the potential for a community farm on the land at Vearse Farm.
Whether land East Of Wychside Close, Off The Burton Road would be a suitable location for development if needed.	WG4 – This site is not appropriate for housing or employment development due to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Distance from town centre ▪ Elevated position ▪ Low density (not efficient).

Issue/Problem Explored	Proposed Planning Solution:
Whether land off Jessops Avenue (East of Bredy Vet Centre) would be a suitable location for development if needed	WG5 - If housing development is needed, this may be a suitable site. However the green corridor/amenity use is important, and the cycle route should continue along the old railway line. The site is not appropriate for employment – this should not become an employment corridor.
Whether Land off Happy Island Way would be a suitable location for development if needed	WG6 - If housing development is needed in Bridport, this is a well-located site with good road access that is within walking distance of the town centre. The site is not appropriate for employment because of its access through housing areas.
Whether Vearse Farm would be a suitable location for development if needed	WG7 - If a significant level of development is needed in Bridport, this site has the potential to deliver development opportunities for housing and employment over the long term. It is a well-located site within walking distance of the town centre, and has the potential to deliver the necessary community infrastructure to ensure that it is sustainable. Road access and traffic along West Allington may be a problem. <i>The group also raised the issue whether changes would be needed to the administrative boundary around Vearse Farm (on the outskirts of Bridport in Symondsburry Parish) as residents will benefit from Bridport's facilities and services. This will affect the parish precepts etc and local electoral representation.</i>

4.3 Additional issues / problems highlighted, but not explored by the groups (due to lack of representatives from Beaminster and Lyme Regis) were:

- Whether land west of Beaminster, north of Broadwindsor Road would be a suitable location for development if needed
- Whether land to the north along Tunnel Road (at Lane End Farm) in Beaminster would be a suitable location for development if needed
- Whether land to the north-east off Hollymoor Lane in Beaminster would be a suitable location for development if needed
- Whether land at Woodberry Down, Lyme Regis would be a suitable location for development if needed

4.4 A number of additional potential development sites in and around Bridport were put forward as part of the consultation. These were as follows:

Site	Type of Development	Comment
Land to Rear / West Of 169 To 179 Victoria Grove, Bridport	Residential	Small incremental site. Poor access. Backland development. Interruption in river valley which are strong characteristic of Bridport
Allington and Ryeberry Hill	Residential	Sites are not well located in terms of accessibility to Bridport Town Centre and landscape impact. Smaller sites are not strategic in character. Could be addressed as part of a Neighbourhood Planning process.

Land at Watton Hill	Mixed Use, residential and employment 350 - 400 houses.	This site is not well located in terms of accessibility to Bridport Town Centre and will have a significant landscape impact upon the setting and appearance of the town.
Land North of Bradpole, to East of Mangerton Lane	Residential	Sites are not well located in terms of accessibility to Bridport Town Centre and landscape impact. Smaller sites are not strategic in character. Could be addressed as part of a Neighbourhood Planning process.

- 4.5 At the consensus event, there was general support for the approach suggested by the Working Group. However, one recurring comment was the importance of involving local communities in the development process to ensure that the planned growth in the Western Area will actually meet local needs. There was strong opposition to development on land off Happy Island Way.

CONCLUSIONS

- 4.6 Identifying suitable land for development and growth at the Western Area, even in the towns, is challenging due to a variety of environmental and landscape constraints. There is however community support for development to meet strategic and local needs.
- 4.7 The main opportunity for longer-term strategic growth in the area is likely to be at Bridport (Vearse Farm) with smaller sites on the edge of Beaminster and Lyme Regis to serve more local needs. Smaller, non-strategic sites in and around Bridport and smaller villages, would best be considered as part of a more detailed Neighbourhood Planning exercise.

5 POLICY OPTIONS AND ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES CONSIDERED

WESTERN AREA - DELIVERING GROWTH

- 5.1 Based on the above studies and consultation feedback, the potential strategic sites identified through the consultation were taken forward as the main options for consideration, together with additional small sites on the edge of Beaminster.
- 5.2 The combined options in the Western Area would deliver around 1225 new homes and about 6.2ha of employment land, well in excess of the forecast demand for the area. Development options at Happy Island Way and East of Wych Side Close in Bridport, have not been included in the final draft plan: the former was considered to have local amenity value and the latter was not considered to be able to deliver a strategically significant level of sustainable growth.

	Housing to 2031	Employment to 2031
Vearse Farm ²	up to 800 homes	about 4ha
St Michael's Trading Estate	about 40 homes	retained
Land N of Happy Island Way	about 40 homes	none
Land E of Bredy Vet Centre	about 40 homes	none
Land at Wych Hill	about 25 homes	none

² including potential development off Skilling Hill Road on release of school site

Land N of Broadwindsor Road	120 homes	about 0.5ha
Land off Hollymoor Lane	about 70 homes	none
Land at Lane End Farm	none	about 0.7ha
Woodberry Down (extended)	about 90 homes	about 1ha

STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL APPRAISAL

5.3 The following options were all subject to the Strategic Environmental Appraisal.

Site	Initial SEA appraisal
Southwest Quadrant (St Michael's Trading Estate)	This allocation could include the provision of housing, employment and potentially recreational facilities. This allocation enables access to facilities and services by sustainable methods of transport, reducing fuel usage and reliance on less sustainable transport methods. This site contains historic buildings from the rope making industry that once dominated this area, and are considered by English Nature to be important industrial archaeology. The site is located next to a river, potentially impacting upon water quality, and habitats and species (protected species, such as the otter, have been recorded at this site), in addition to increasing the risk of flooding. Development at this site may impact positively upon the townscape, as there are currently buildings in a poor state of repair.
Land at Vearse Farm	This site would provide housing, employment land and community facilities. Whilst the development would be located within the AONB, this site is likely to be well contained. The site has potentially good pedestrian and cycle connections, promoting sustainable transport modes and reducing fuel usage and reliance on less sustainable transport modes. However, the existing road network is unlikely to be able to cope with the additional traffic, potentially causing congestion. The development would result in the loss of productive farmland, habitats and biodiversity.
Land North of Happy Island Way	This housing site is located close to the town, enabling access via sustainable transport methods, reducing fuel usage and reliance on less sustainable transport means. Development could result in the loss of habitats and biodiversity, as the greenfield site contains mature trees and hedgerows. A river is situated in relatively close proximity to the site. The site is situated within the Dorset AONB.
Land to East of Bredy Vet Centre, off Jessops Avenue	The provision of land for both employment and housing. Development at this site would potentially involve the loss of a wildlife corridor, and is relatively close to a river and a low to medium risk flood zone. The site is situated within the AONB and in close proximity to a conservation area.
Land East of Wychside Close	This housing allocation option is situated to the south of Wanderwell Quarry, which is designated as a Site of Nature Conservation Interest. This site is also located within the AONB. This allocation would enable access to facilities and

Site	Initial SEA appraisal
	services by sustainable methods of transport, reducing fuel usage and reliance on less sustainable transport methods.
ADDITIONAL SITES PUT FORWARD AS PART OF CONSULTATION	
Land to Rear/West Of 169 To 179 Victoria Grove, Bridport	This small area would provide housing. This site is close to the river which is the habitat of a water vole population (a protected species) and adjacent to an area of low to medium flood risk.
Allington and Ryeberry Hill	This housing option is likely to have significant landscape issues, and is located within the AONB. Furthermore, this development may impact upon the setting of the conservations areas which are situated relatively closely to both sites. The site appears remote from services and amenities, and therefore access to services and facilities is poor, and the use of less sustainable transport methods is encouraged. Development at these sites will result in the loss of green space habitat.
Land at Watton Hill	This housing allocation is in an elevated position within the AONB, and therefore landscape impacts are likely. This site enables access to services and facilities by sustainable transport modes, reducing fuel usage and reliance on less sustainable transport modes. However, the development of this site would result in the loss of habitats and productive agricultural land.
Land North of Bradpole, to East of Mangerton Lane	This site is an option for housing provision, and would involve the development of a greenfield site and potentially productive agricultural land. The site is located within the AONB, and is likely to impact significantly upon the landscape. The site appears to be remote from services and facilities, and is unlikely to provide access to services and facilities by sustainable transport methods, encouraging the use of less sustainable transport modes.

- 5.4 The allocation of land at Vearse Farm, which will deliver in the region of 800 new homes and 4ha of employment, will provide a major contribution to meeting the long term needs of Bridport and the wider western area in a comprehensive manner. A development of this size will be capable of delivering the necessary community services and facilities together with the necessary infrastructure improvements. The site is well linked to the existing built form of Bridport and is within easy walking distance of the town centre.
- 5.5 Although within the Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the developable area of the site occupies the lower more gentle slopes of the hills to the south and west of Bridport. In wider views, the development will be well screened by existing topography and the woodland planting around the A35 to the south. The higher portions of the land (in the south of the site) are intended to be kept free of built development, which will allow opportunities for additional tree planting, nature conservation, and public access. There is also the potential retain some of this area for continued agriculture, allotments or even a community farm (as raised during the initial working group consultation). The floodplain of the River Symene will also have to be kept free of built development, which will also reflect a strong characteristic of the existing town where the Brit and Askers valleys cut green swathes through the built form of Bridport. This area also allows for

- public open space. Other areas within the site are prone to surface water flooding and will also need to be kept clear of built development, unless appropriate mitigation can be provided.
- 5.6 The initial consultation process also highlighted concerns over the increase in traffic using West Road and the Highways Agency has confirmed that a detailed Traffic Assessment will be required to assess the impacts upon the A35 Trunk Road which forms part of the Strategic Road Network (SRN). The Miles Cross Junction and possibly the East Street Roundabout will require improvement, but the initial view from the Highways Agency is that such necessary improvements should be possible.
- 5.7 Due to the landscape impacts, the allocation of land at Wychside Close, Bridport has not been included in the plan. The site at Happy Island Way was also not included due to the objections received through the consultation event and the local importance of this green space.
- 5.8 Because of the desirability of delivering growth around Beaminster and Lyme Regis, the plan includes allocations at these towns to serve local needs. In Beaminster, land to the north of the Broadwindsor Road (on the western edge of the town) was allocated in the 2006 local plan for employment uses. A larger, more viable site has been included in the new local plan which is intended to accommodate space for strategic landscape planting. The allocation is for predominantly housing but with a small amount of B1 employment on the eastern side of the site adjacent to the existing commercial uses.
- 5.9 Land at Hollymoor Lane in Beaminster was previously considered by the local plan inspector as part on the 2006 local plan examination. She concluded that the area that lies within a flood risk zone would be unsuitable, and that a hard settlement edge should be avoided, but that overall the site should be considered further to meet the development needs of the town. The need for traffic management was subsequently raised as an issue by the county council, through their involvement in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment.
- 5.10 Although not considered suitable for housing, land at Lane End Farm has the potential to deliver further employment in this location.
- 5.11 Of the additional sites put forward for consideration as part of the consultation, none were considered to be suitable for allocation.

TOWN CENTRE EXPANSION, BRIDPORT, BEAMINSTER & LYME REGIS

BRIDPORT

- 5.12 Key conclusions from the 2008/2010 Joint Town Centre Retail and Leisure Study (<http://www.dorsetforyou.com/evidencebase/west>) show that Bridport currently provides about 3,502 sqm net of convenience floor space and a further 15,106 sqm net of comparison floor space. The study stated that: *“Bridport town centre is considered to function effectively. There is a fairly good mix and diversity of uses and relatively few vacant units. Together this indicates that there is a good vitality to the town. The built form is attractive and well maintained and this adds further to the quality of the centre. Were Bridport to maintain and enhance its shopping role, then this would probably require the provision of new, suitably sized retail units to be attractive to national occupiers. Bridport offers several key development opportunities to achieve this. The cultural aspects to Bridport might also be fostered to maintain a sense of individuality to the centre.”*

- 5.13 As such, there is some potential for Bridport to extend its retail offer, subject to sufficient demand and the ability to create a viable scheme. Capacity exists in the town in the region of 690 sqm net of additional convenience floor space and 14,329 sqm net of additional comparison floor space, by 2026.
- 5.14 The report identified the main opportunities for town centre expansion in Bridport as:
- Rope Walks – a surface car park, together with a number of adjacent land ownerships, forming a significant regeneration opportunity.
 - The Bus Station and Depot - a site at the western edge of the town centre, currently characterised by low intensity uses.

Site	Initial SEA appraisal
Future Town Centre Expansion at Bridport	Whilst this option would encourage the growth of retail industries in a central location, that are accessible to the residents of Bridport by sustainable transport methods, parts of the site are within an area which is at a medium to low risk of flooding, with implications for the river environment and inhabiting species. Impact on the historic character of the conservation area was also identified.

BEAMINSTER

- 5.15 The report described Beaminster as a compact and small town centre clustered around a central square - split in half by the A3066. The retail offer is a mix of more traditional convenience foodstores such as butchers and delicatessens, along with a few bars and cafes and some comparison outlets. The primary role of the centre is to serve the shorter term convenience needs of local residents and passing trade.
- 5.16 In summary, the health of Beaminster is described as reasonable; with a good mix of uses, and a fairly healthy range of convenience providers. Additionally, the report noted that there are few vacant units, and that the character of the area is attractive and well maintained. The report also observed that the centre does not offer particularly good access, and the pedestrian environment is challenging due to narrow or non-existent footways and the A3066 dissecting the central square.
- 5.17 The report identifies the potential for convenience goods capacity in the town to increase 121sqm net by 2026. However, it is expected that this capacity would be taken up by extension to existing stores reuse of vacant units or the provision of further small units. For comparison goods, there is the potential for capacity to increase to 939 sqm net by 2026.
- 5.18 In terms of opportunities for the expansion of the town centre, the historic nature of Beaminster and its very tightly configured centre, results in no suitable major sites identified in the report to accommodate new retail development. Given the scale of the centre however, large retail development may not be appropriate (nor is there likely to be demand to support it). A more realistic strategy would be to promote the use of currently vacant or less active premises.

LYME REGIS

- 5.19 The report describes Lyme Regis as having a fairly healthy centre, although much of its success rests on tourism. A number of factors are seen as contributing to its health such as the reasonable diversity of uses, a good representation of comparison retailers and a fairly

accessible location. Convenience retailers are also well represented. The key attraction is the seaside setting and built form.

- 5.20 Lyme Regis only has limited capacity for both comparison and convenience goods. For comparison goods 1,172 sqm is needed by 2012, rising to 5,808sqm by 2026. Convenience goods capacity ranges from 80 sqm at 2012 to 136 sqm by 2026.
- 5.21 With regard to the potential for future growth, it is noted that the scope to extend Lyme Regis’s retail offer is very limited, and only likely to be incremental and small scale in nature. This low level of capacity suggests that specific site allocations are probably unnecessary.

BROOMHILLS WASTE MANAGEMENT FACILITY

- 5.22 The need for a site for a Waste Management Facility for Bridport first arose in the mid 1990s when there was a requirement to replace the facility available for use by the local community at the Bothenhampton landfill site and to provide a replacement disposal point when the landfill closed in 2000. As a result of no suitable new site for the facility being identified, Dorset County Council opened a temporary facility in South Street, Bridport in 1998. This facility has been subject to a series of temporary planning permissions since that time.
- 5.23 In May 2008 planning consultants were appointed by the county council to review potential sites for a replacement facility. The Stage 1A report, published in March 2010, assessed the additional sites suggested during the public exhibition undertaken at the end of January 2009. It also reported on the results of further consultations with the Highways Agency regarding those sites with access onto the A35T and considered the availability of the short-listed sites. The Stage 2 assessments identified the three sites at Miles Cross; Broomhills; and Gore Cross (north of Watford Lane) as having the most potential for development. Of the three possible locations, it was recognised that each site has different constraints associated with it, and that there is no clear preference. The judgment was finely balanced; however overall Broomhills was considered to be the preferred site and to have the greatest potential to deliver a successful outcome.
- 5.24 Representatives from the county council requested that the site be included in the local plan.

6 CONSULTATION ON THE PRE-SUBMISSION DRAFT – JUNE/JULY 2012

- 6.1 Representations were received in relation to the policies and text contained in the chapters on Bridport, Beaminster and Lyme Regis. The majority of those representations were objections and the main reasons are set out in the table below. The policy number used in the table reflects the original numbering in the pre-submission draft.

Policy	Issue Raised
BRID 1	The proposed development within Symondsburry parish highlights infrastructure issues such as transport, medical services etc which may need to be provided in Bridport. Such a development needs to be accompanied by the necessary infrastructure improvements and agreed governance arrangements.
	There needs to be flexibility within the policy eg over phasing, the provision of ‘affordable’ employment units, school provision and finding the most appropriate sustainable energy solution, so as to not hold back delivery.
	The scale of development is out of proportion to the town and not consistent with the 'Strategic Approach' in the Plan.
	The site is in the AONB and will also result in the loss of attractive agricultural land, and

Policy	Issue Raised
	associated impacts on habitats, tranquility, air pollution, flooding etc.
	Concerns that the existing road infrastructure is not suited to additional development and the site is prone to surface water flooding.
BRID 2	Further justification is needed for the requirement to relocate St Mary's School to the Vearse Farm site. The site may be needed for future indoor and other sporting facilities or as part of the green river corridor. It could also provide overspill car parking for the town centre.
BRID 3	Concerns about the impact on protected species, with the development creating a pinchpoint on the river corridor. Also linked to this are concerns that it will limit the recreational use of the river corridor, including a potential long distance cycle route, and increase flood risk.
BRID 4	Concerns that the potential competition and loss of parking could be detrimental to the vitality of the town and the delivery of a public transport interchange.
BRID 5	No significant issues raised that might affect the soundness of the plan.
BRID 6	The site is not allocated in the adopted Minerals and Waste Local Plan, and it is considered premature for the Draft Local Plan to define the site.
	The allocation lies in the Dorset AONB on a site of county importance for wildlife. It is also close to a water course and could support legally protected species.
	Concerns over traffic and highway safety – in terms of the access and at the Crown Roundabout.
BEAM 1	Support - the enhanced area provides an ideal opportunity to extend the current industrial and business area and provide affordable, modern, family homes.
	Concerns about the impact on the AONB, the landscape setting and character of town.
	Concerns over the capacity of the town to take more development in terms of infrastructure (flooding, drainage, sewerage, highways) and community facilities (schools, shops, medical services, etc).
BEAM 2	Concerns over the capacity of the town to take more development in terms of its infrastructure (flooding, drainage, sewerage, highways) and community facilities (schools, shops, medical services, etc). The Local Plan does not indicate the location of any additional infrastructure.
	The development would also overlook existing residential properties and result in a loss of privacy.
	Concerns about the impact on the AONB and landscape setting and character of town, Listed Buildings (particularly during construction phase). The proposed development will also result in the loss of agricultural land and hedgerows, which will impact on wildlife.
	Concerns that the site is directly adjacent to the river and to a flood control / alleviation area, and could increase flood risk. There are also septic tanks under the field.
	Concerns about the increased use of East Street as a means of access. Potential adverse impact on existing users, businesses on Langdon Lane (farm). The road is very narrow in parts with no pavement. It is not possible to improve the road to meet the demands of increases in traffic volume proposed. Alternative access via Woodswater Lane and North Street is unsuitable due to the ford and narrowness of the road / pavements. Further development would clearly exacerbate an already difficult problem.
BEAM 3	The allocation lies on a greenfield on the outskirts of Beaminster within the Dorset AONB, slightly remote from the town. It will have an adverse impact on the AONB and the setting of the Conservation Area and the town. It also involves the loss of farmland needed for food production.
	The site would result in increased volume of traffic and surface water flooding elsewhere in the town. Tunnel Road is not adequate to cope with the additional heavy commercial traffic. The tunnel is currently closed. Could be detrimental to the safety of the main

Policy	Issue Raised
	access to Mountjoy and Beaminster schools. The disregard of speed limits is well established and, in the town, it is not unknown for lorries to shed their loads, and to regularly mount the pavements to enable vehicles to pass one another.
LYME 1	Concerns about development of the site due to the landscape impact, drainage problems, ground instability, impact on neighbouring properties, and poor access. This site was rejected at the last local plan inquiry.
	If developed, the balance of employment / the role of the residential field studies centre / affordable and open market housing needs further consideration.
	No significant issues raised that might affect the soundness of the plan
LYME 2	Concerns that this policy will not deliver the amount of affordable housing needed. It may be possible to identify further sites in West Dorset eg: the park and ride site off Charmouth Road, employment land at the top of Charmouth Road on the brow of the hill between Corkscrew Lane and Fern Hill

7 ALTERNATIVE SITES CONSULTATION – OCTOBER 2012

- 7.1 A small proportion of respondents to the formal consultation on the pre-submission draft of the Local Plan suggested new 'Alternative' development sites either in addition to or in place of land identified in the draft Plan. Further consultation on these alternative sites was carried out in order to allow the public the opportunity to express their opinions. The full report on the outcomes of this consultation is available online via the following link: <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/newlocalplan/west/weymouth>.
- 7.2 Of the sites put forward in the Western area, none were considered suitable for inclusion as a change to the pre-submission draft. The sites were either not strategic in scale or were better suited for consideration as part of a neighbourhood plan. Others were located within a defined Development Boundary and could, in principle, be developed without the need for a specific allocation.

8 ALTERNATIVE STRATEGY CONSULTATION - SPRING 2013

- 8.1 The feedback from the June 2012 consultation identified strong local concerns about proposals in Sherborne, Beaminster and Crossways. These were considered at the West Dorset District Council Executive Committee on 15 January 2013. The committee report is available on line via the following link: <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/media.jsp?mediaid=179764&filetype=pdf>. In response, the council agreed to consult on an alternative strategy that was considered to be possibly a more sustainable approach to meeting West Dorset's development needs. The alternative strategy proposed the following:
- A new urban extension on land to the south-east of Dorchester. An initial assessment indicated that the site could include around 1,000 new homes, plus new community facilities, offices and industrial units.
 - The reduction of the site allocation at Barton Farm, Sherborne to leave just the site with planning permission.
 - The reduction or removal of the Hollymoor Lane, Beaminster allocation; and
 - The reduction of the allocation at Crossways to about 700 homes.
- 8.2 There were approximately 2,100 responses to the consultation. Details of the consultation and the summary of responses are given in the consultation summary report. In terms of the responses submitted in relation to the Hollymoor Lane allocation, the majority of comments supported the removal of the allocation completely, citing the traffic and access concerns as the main reason for this.

9 FURTHER MODIFICATIONS TO THE PLAN

ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

- 9.1 In light of the continued strong local objections to development at Hollymoor Lane in Beaminster, the potential developers of the site engaged consultant highway engineers to prepare a scheme that addressed the concerns expressed by respondents with regard to highways safety issues in East Street. Site surveys and traffic counts were carried out and the results informed the design of a 'natural' traffic calming scheme that used sympathetic surfacing materials as a means of re-allocating the carriageway. The proposed arrangement provided better delineation of the space to improve the safety of pedestrians. It also allowed for the installation of bollards as a means of creating refuge areas and protecting property thresholds.
- 9.2 The principles used in the traffic management proposals were similar to those used in a scheme implemented on the A356 at South Perrott. The developers drew up the scheme in consultation with Dorset County Council and submitted the proposals as part of their response to the consultation. See Appendix 3.

FURTHER MODIFICATIONS

- 9.3 To respond to the issues raised with regard to BRID 1 the Vearse Farm allocation, a more flexible approach to masterplanning has been proposed, so that it is prepared in conjunction with Bridport Town Council, Symondsburry Parish Council, and the local community, and agreed by West Dorset District Council (rather than actually being prepared by the district council). This will allow more flexibility for the local community to work directly with the landowners/developers to secure community benefits, but guided by a nationally recognised masterplanning standard. The text has also been amended to make clear that the floodplain of the River Symene and other areas prone to surface water flooding, will be kept clear of development and the development will be subject to a Flood Risk Assessment.
- 9.4 Further discussions with the Local Education Authority, following the consultation, have confirmed that the Vearse Farm urban extension will generate the need for a one-form entry primary school. However, the discussions also highlighted the possibility that a different primary school (other than St Mary's C of E Primary School) within the Bridport catchment could relocate on to the Vearse Farm site. For this reason the supporting text and policy wording of BRID 1 and BRID 2 have been amended to allow for this possibility.
- 9.5 Changes have been made to policy BRID 3 (Land to the east of Bredy Veterinary Centre) to make reference to the need to maintain a wildlife corridor next to the river. A similar approach was taken with Policy BRID 5, St Michaels's Trading Estate.
- 9.6 A minor change has been made to the town centre expansion policy, BRID 4. The amended text and policy wording aims to clarify that an appropriate amount of public car parking will need to be retained; and that any proposals should not compromise the community aspiration to deliver a transport interchange on the site of the coach station.
- 9.7 The provision of a Waste Management Facility is a county matter and in their response, the county council argued that it was inappropriate to include an allocation at Broomhills in the local plan. In response, policy BRID 6 has been deleted from the plan. An application for the facility was submitted in June 2013 and will be determined by Dorset County Council as the Local Minerals and Waste Authority.

- 9.8 With regard to Beaminster and the representations received with in relation to the infrastructure capacity of the town to take additional development, no changes to the plan are proposed. None of the relevant statutory consultees and service providers (such as the Local Highway Authority, the Local Education Authority, Wessex Water, or the Environment Agency) considered that there would be an adverse impact. More specific concerns with regard to the landscape impact of the allocation to the north of the Broadwindsor Road, have already been addressed by the requirement for strategic planting within the enlarged allocation.
- 9.9 With regard to the allocation of land at Hollymoor Lane, despite the submission of further information on a potential traffic management scheme, the policy has been deleted due to the strength of the local objections.
- 9.10 Highway and landscape concerns were also expressed with regard to the employment development proposals at Lane End Farm on Tunnel Road. However, these objections were not substantiated by the Local Highways Authority. And although the land is within the AONB, the site is visually self-contained, particularly from local public viewpoints. As a result, it is considered that development could be sensitively accommodated at this site without significant landscape and visual impacts, subject to appropriate mitigation measures. On this basis, no significant change is proposed to the policy but wording will be added to refer to the provision of a wildlife corridor.
- 9.11 The representations received regarding the allocation for housing adjacent to the existing Woodberry Down site (LYME 1) were not considered to challenge the soundness of the plan. Development proposals for the existing allocation are at an advanced stage and a planning application is expected to be submitted in June/July 2013. It is anticipated that the development will retain the existing residential field studies centre on the site and deliver in the region of 40 residential units including 35% affordable houses. A full ground stability investigation has been carried out by the prospective developers as part of their site investigation works. On the basis that development on this site is deliverable, the allocation of the adjoining land is a sensible and logical approach to delivering much needed housing for Lyme Regis. For this reason, it is not intended to change policy LYME 1.





APPENDIX 2: – DEVELOPMENT OPTIONS APPRAISAL 2011

BRIDPORT

BACKGROUND

Bridport is West Dorset's second largest town and the centre for a large surrounding rural area in the west of the district. Located on the A35 south coast trunk road about 20km west of Dorchester, and extending south to the harbour at West Bay, the town is entirely within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, restricting the opportunities for development. Bridport is relatively self-contained with a good balance between jobs and housing. It has a current population of about 13,350 people within the built-up area, which includes parts of the adjoining parishes of Allington, Bradpole and Bothenhampton. It has a popular weekly market, a good range of local and national shops, a secondary school, healthcare centre, community buildings, and several industrial estates. Because of all these factors it is the most suitable, sustainable location for further development in this part of the district. Challenges for the Core Strategy include maintaining the balance between jobs and housing, providing for development to meet the town's needs (including a substantial need for affordable housing) and at the same time protecting the countryside views, river valleys and green spaces that form an essential part of the town's character.

BRIDPORT - DEVELOPMENT OPTIONS APPRAISAL



There is only one major potential development site identified, which is land at Vearse Farm, west of Bridport [A]. Three smaller options identified are land east of Bredy Vet Centre, off Sea Road North [B], land north of Happy Island Way [C], and land east of Wychside Close, off the Burton Road [D]. These have all been put forward for development through this council's call for potential sites. Land adjoining St Andrews Industrial Estate [E] and Land at North Mills Industrial Estate [F] was allocated by the 2006 Adopted Local Plan for employment uses but has not been developed. These sites have the potential to continue to form part of Bridport's future employment land supply and should be considered alongside the other development options. The initial assessment of the development options at Bridport follows.

[A] Land at Vearse Farm, west of Bridport

This area could deliver in the region of 800 homes and approximately 6ha of employment land. The land could be developed in phases, with the north-eastern section potentially more suited to employment uses as it is closer to the existing industrial units.

Positive Attributes	Possible Concerns
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Within walking distance of the medical centre, primary school and services / facilities in the town centre. ✦ Lower slopes are visually well contained in the wider landscape ✦ Attractive rural landscape within the AONB which has a good network of existing hedgerows and attractive river corridor ✦ Development here could provide a more positive edge to the western side of the town and better access to natural and semi-natural green spaces ✦ Vearse Farm complex which includes the Grade II listed Vearse Farm House with a traditional walled garden and a landscaped gardens setting to the south 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possible noise impacts from A35 trunk road • Skilling Hill Road is unsuited for additional traffic and there are no pavements for pedestrians • Impact of additional traffic at Miles Cross and elsewhere on the strategic road network. • There are areas at risk of flooding from the main river and more localised. The flood risk zone to the north also limits opportunities to create a positive frontage onto West Allington • Impact upon the setting of the listed building at Vearse Farm

[B] Bredy Vet Centre, off Sea Road North

This 1.33 hectare site would be suitable for employment provision, as commercial / industrial uses are already present along Sea Road North, the site has good access to the strategic highway network, and noise from the adjoining main road is of less concern. The land could be developed in two phases, the first being the northern section and the second the land to the south.

Positive Attributes	Possible Concerns
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ This is an area of unmanaged waste ground that could be more productively used. ✦ The site is not immediately adjacent to any housing, but is within walking distance of residential areas ✦ There is an attractive row of mature beech trees and public right of way along the southern boundary. ✦ The site overlooks the popular riverside area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Impact on the attractiveness of the riverside corridor — Impact of traffic on Sea Road North and the East Street roundabout

[C] Land North of Happy Island Way

This area could deliver up to 50 homes. The site is not suitable for employment.

Positive Attributes	Possible Concerns
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Attractive riverside location with pedestrian links to existing public footpath ✦ Existing boundary hedgerows and mature trees, particularly along the northern boundary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Development could encroach beyond the line of the existing development to the east and be more widely visible in views (eg from Watton Hill). — Potential impact on the amenities of existing homes

[D] Land east of Wychside Close, off the Burton Road

This area could deliver up to 24 homes. The site is not considered suitable for employment.

Positive Attributes	Possible Concerns
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Existing tree belt along the eastern and southern boundary – Public footpath runs along eastern boundary connecting to wider rights of way network 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Prominent sloping site in the AONB and visible from the heritage coast (although adjoining built development within Bothenhampton) – Adjacent development (a private estate) is very low density - higher density would be out of character. It would also be difficult to link into this development. – There is a significant change in level between the Burton Road and the site

[E] Land Adjoining St Andrews Industrial Estate

This 2ha site is allocated by the 2006 Local Plan for employment uses. Adjacent to the existing St Andrews Industrial Estate provides some potential for future development as an extension. Land could be developed in two phases.

Positive Attributes	Possible Concerns
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Provides an opportunity to extend an existing industrial estate. + Footpath link to St Andrews Road and river corridor. + Overlooks river corridor. Partly treed and remnant hedgerows. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Build costs are likely to be higher than standard due to adverse ground conditions and highways issues. This could make development economically unviable. – There is currently no suitable site access, although there is potential to provide access from the existing industrial estate. – Impact on existing homes – Adjoins floodplain – Overhead electricity cables

[F] Land at North Mills

This 0.5ha site is allocated by the 2006 Local Plan for employment uses. North Mills is a complex of former mill buildings that have been converted into smaller industrial units. The site comprises an area of vacant/underused land to the periphery that currently provides parking/access for some of the existing buildings. This land has the potential to accommodate additional employment uses and has been assessed as economically viable.

Positive Attributes	Possible Concerns
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Provides an opportunity to extend an existing industrial estate. + Listed building and rope walks to the south + Pedestrian link across the Brit being provided as part of the Pibon View development + Treed river corridor provides good screening to the east. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Poor vehicular access – Electricity substation – Flooding – Impact on the amenity of nearby homes

BEAMINSTER

BACKGROUND

Beaminster is a small rural market town, located wholly within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It has a population of around 3,010³ and provides services and facilities to the surrounding rural area. It has a secondary school, a range of local shops and community facilities in its town centre, and some significant local businesses. and is the most sustainable location in the north-west of the district, where there are no larger towns or large service villages.

The town lies about 8km north of Bridport, on the A3066, at the source of the River Brit. Crewkerne lies about 10km north west of the town, with its rail links to London Waterloo, Sherborne and Exeter. Beaminster has an impressive landscape setting, set within a bowl of hills that provide a dramatic backdrop to the town.

Because it is a market town with a secondary school, shops and a reasonable range of community facilities, it is a better place for development than the smaller villages in this area.

Development at Beaminster is intended to meet local housing and employment needs, at an appropriate scale and respecting the character of the settlement and surrounding countryside.

DEVELOPMENT OPTIONS APPRAISAL



Some land west of Beaminster, north of Broadwindsor Road [**A**] and some of the fields to the north-east off Hollymoor Lane [**C**], have been suggested for development through this council's call for potential sites. Land to the north along Tunnel Road [**B**] has also been identified by the council as a possible alternative employment site.

³ Mid 2005 estimate

[A] Land to the West of Beaminster, North of Broadwindsor Road

This area could deliver up to 120 homes and approximately 0.7ha employment land. The land could be developed in phases, with the north-eastern section potentially more suited to employment uses as it is closer to the existing industrial units.

Positive Attributes	Possible Concerns
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ The site is close to the primary school ✦ The treed river channel provides an element of screening for the existing industrial units ✦ There are two public footpaths that cross the site, linking to the wider rights of way network. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — There are views into the site from the Wessex Ridgeway which runs to the south — The site is some distance (approximately 1.1km) from the main centre of the town and its facilities — There is no pavement along Broadwindsor Road at this point, which would require third party land — Potential noise from grain drying store to south

[B] Land to the North along Tunnel Road

The degree of physical and visual separation from the town rules this site out for housing. However employment uses may be appropriate if carefully managed, and this area has the potential to deliver up to 0.7ha of employment land.

Positive Attributes	Possible Concerns
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ The area retains its rural character. The site boundaries and bridleway track are defined by mature hedgerows. Development is generally set back behind the hedges at a lower level. ✦ There are a couple of mature hedgerow oak trees. ✦ The farmhouse building is substantial and forms a distinctive feature in the wider landscape. ✦ The secondary school complex nearby may provide opportunities for carbon savings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — The surrounding land rises up and overlooks the site. The northern section is slightly more elevated and exposed. — There is a minor watercourse along the eastern boundary, and high floodrisk zone to the south-east. — Development could impact on the viability of the remaining farmholding. — The geology indicates that the land may be prone to instability and further investigation is required — There is no pavement along this section of Tunnel Road, although there is sufficient highway verge

[C] Land to the North East off Hollymoor Lane

This area could deliver up to 70 homes. The site is not suitable for employment.

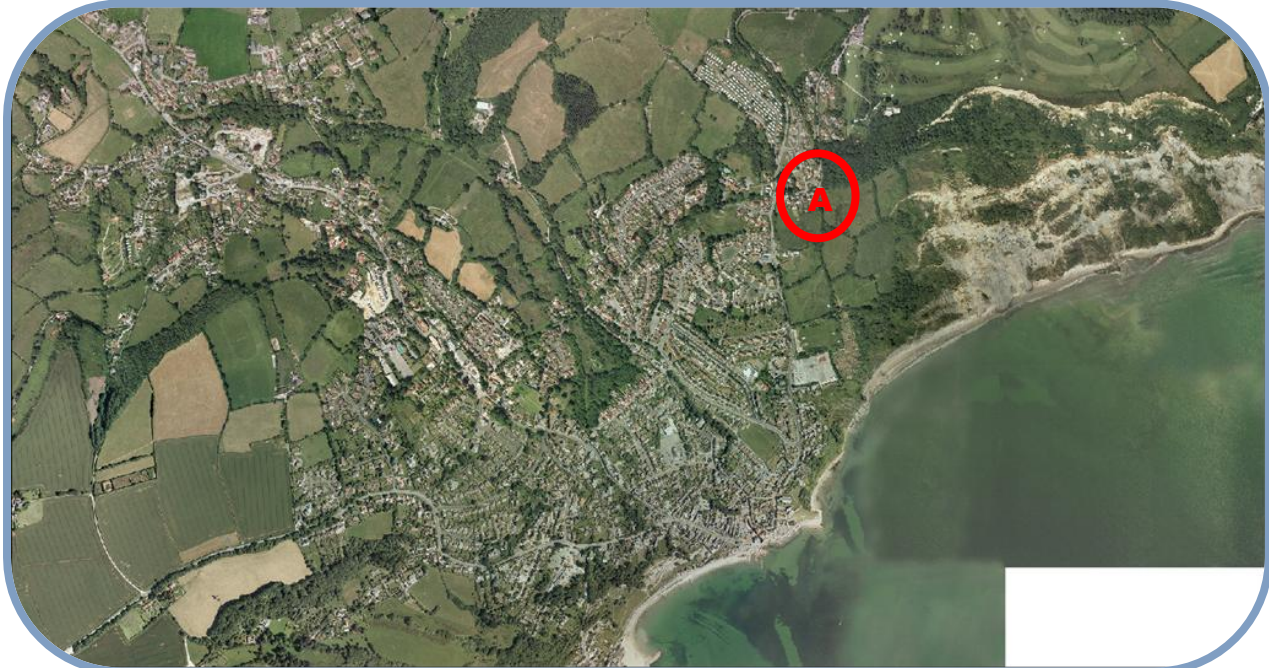
Positive Attributes	Possible Concerns
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ The northern site has hedgerows on hedgebanks characteristic of the rural area, and is bordered on the northern side by a partly wooded stream ✦ There is a footpath running through the northern site to cross the stream at a weir. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — The minor watercourse to the north floods (and is excluded from development) — The land slopes down steeply to the river — The route down East Street includes a section between the Old Church School and the junction with Hollymoor Lane where buildings open directly onto the street, and without traffic management would be unsuitable for any growth in traffic

LYME REGIS

BACKGROUND

Lyme Regis is a coastal town on the western edge of the district on the border with East Devon. It is located on the A3052 off the A35 south coast trunk road about 15km west from Bridport. It is a historic coastal town and one of Dorset's principal tourist resorts. It became well known in the early nineteenth century for the discovery of fossils, and today is an important centre for visitors to the World Heritage Coast. It has a resident population of around 3,710.⁴ The town lies entirely within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and is also constrained by land instability. The emerging Shoreline Management Plan identifies the town as a location that will continue to be defended, and additional coastal defence works are currently being planned. Challenges for the Core Strategy include taking advantage of the economic benefits of tourism and the World Heritage Site location, while meeting the local needs for affordable housing and jobs, and protecting the town's unique character and environment.

DEVELOPMENT OPTIONS APPRAISAL



There is only one potential development site identified within West Dorset, which is to extend the existing allocation at Woodberry Down in the north-east [A]. No other deliverable sites have been identified for Lyme Regis within the district boundary, mainly due to the constraints of land instability and highway access.

We need to work with East Devon District Council to ensure that alternative options to the west are properly considered.

⁴ Mid 2005 estimate

[A] Land at Woodberry Down

This area could deliver up to 90 homes. The existing employment allocation on the site will remain unchanged.

Positive Attributes	Possible Concerns
<ul style="list-style-type: none">✦ Existing mature woodland and hedgerows.✦ Existing rights of way link the site to Lyme town centre and the wider countryside.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">— The site is within the Dorset AONB, although it is visually contained to the north, east and south and set against a backdrop of static caravans.— The land is steeply sloping in places and in an unstable area, potentially exacerbated by the springs on the site. SUDS cannot be used due to the land instability problems.— Talbot Road and Colway Lane are unsuited for additional traffic.— The future of the existing buildings / use on the site and loss of private playing fields.

APPENDIX 3

Proposed Traffic Management Scheme, East Street, Beaminster

