

South East Dorset Strategy

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SED 02 The Strategy

Planning & Transport
Bournemouth Borough Council
Town Hall Annexe
Bournemouth
BH2 6EA

Environmental Services
Dorset County Council
County Hall
Dorchester
DT1 1XJ

Strategic Planning Services
Borough of Poole
Civic Centre
Poole
BH15 2RU

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1. INTRODUCTION

Background to the Strategy

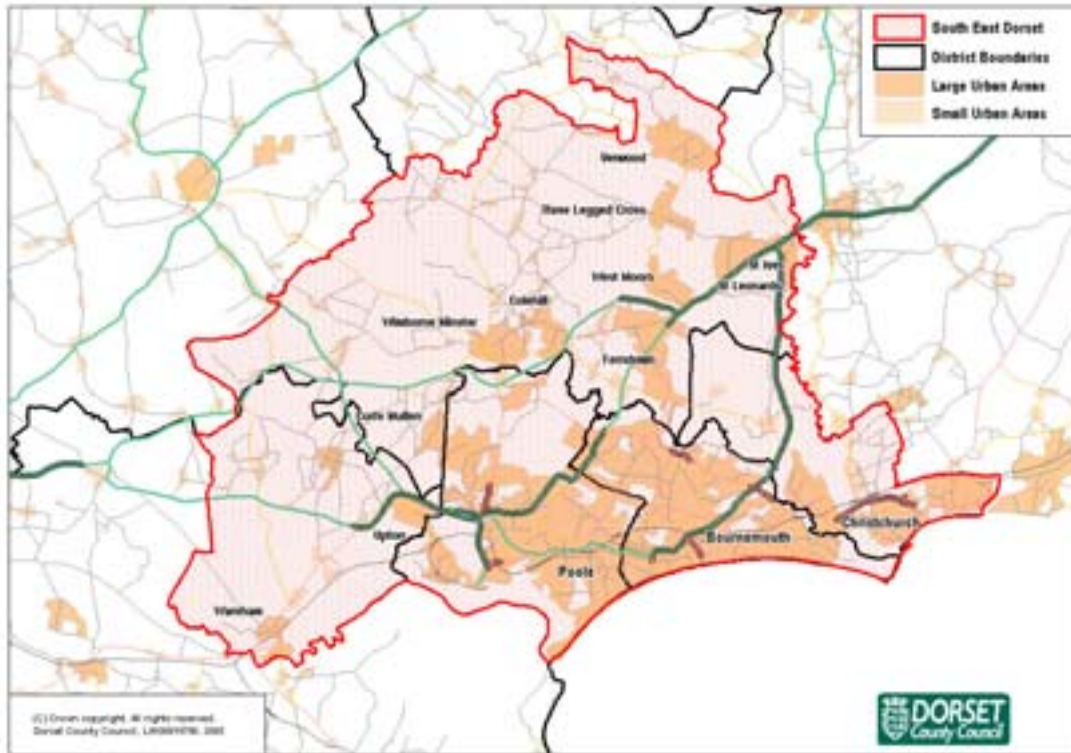
- 1.1. The strategic planning of the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole area is now the responsibility of the South West Regional Assembly. Under the new planning system introduced in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the strategic context for the local planning of areas will be the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS). Structure Plans, which used to provide this context, have been abolished. Local Plans are being replaced by Local Development Frameworks, which consist of a series of “local development documents”. Together with the RSS, these will form the development plan for an area.
- 1.2. The South West Regional Assembly is currently preparing an RSS for the South West. It is due to send a “deposit” version of the document to the Secretary of State in March 2006. There will then follow a period of public consultation and an examination in public. The Secretary of State is expected to approve the final RSS in 2007.
- 1.3. To assist in the preparation of the RSS, the South West Regional Assembly has commissioned the development of a series of sub-regional strategies. These strategies are for the Region’s main cities and towns (“Joint Study Areas”). One such area is South East Dorset, which is the second largest (after Bristol) conurbation in the South West.
- 1.4. The strategies have been developed by those authorities that formerly prepared structure plans. They are now referred to as “4(4)” authorities because they are defined in section 4(4) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act. The South East Dorset Strategy has therefore been prepared by Bournemouth Borough Council, Dorset County Council and the Borough of Poole. Those Councils have prepared “first detailed proposals” for the area, and this document sets out those proposals, together with the technical justification for them.
- 1.5. The work has not been done in isolation. It has involved close working with other stakeholders, including the district councils, the South West Regional Development Agency, the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Economic Partnership (BDPEP), English Nature, the Environment Agency, the Housing Corporation and representatives of the health sector. There was also a period of public consultation on the vision, growth options and broad spatial options during December 2004 and January 2005.

The area covered by the Strategy

- 1.6. The Strategy covers the South East Dorset conurbation, from Highcliffe in the east to Wareham in the west, and northwards to embrace Verwood. Within South East Dorset, this document sometimes makes separate reference to Bournemouth/Poole/Christchurch, and to the (South East Dorset) Joint Study Area. Bournemouth/Poole/Christchurch is the main built-up area stretching from Highcliffe in the east to Upton in the West. References to Bournemouth/Poole/Christchurch or the Joint Study Area are made either when the underlying analysis suggests differences between the main built-up area and the rest of South East Dorset or where a different

strategic approach is needed. Map 1 shows the boundary of South East Dorset and the main urban areas within it.

Map 1: South East Dorset



The status of the Strategy

- 1.7. The strategy set out in this document is that proposed by the 4(4) authorities. It does not necessarily reflect the views of the South West Regional Assembly nor of other partners who have helped in its development.

Overview of this document

- 1.8. Following this introduction, Chapters 2 and 3 describe the area and how it functions. The document then goes on to discuss the issues concerning growth and development (Chapter 4) and sets out the broad vision and overall spatial strategy in Chapter 5. There then follow a series of thematic chapters that set out in more detail how the strategy addresses the economy, the environment, community and culture, and transport. For ease of reference, Appendix 1 sets out in one place the full vision and strategy.

Background reports

- 1.9. A series of more detailed technical reports is also available to explain the strategy. These reports are:

- Economy
- Communities and culture
- Housing and demographics

Environment

Transportation

Commuting

Development options/Green Belt review

Testing growth options

Consultation

Strategic sustainability appraisal.

2. THE STUDY AREA AND KEY ISSUES

Introduction

- 2.1 This chapter provides a brief description of the historical development and settlement pattern of the Joint Study Area, together with the key planning issues it faces. All these matters are explored in more detail in later chapters.

The Area

- 2.2 The two main towns in the South East Dorset conurbation – Bournemouth and Poole - developed historically in very different ways. Poole's historic function as a port was reinforced in the eighteenth century by trade with Newfoundland. The town's growth was relatively slow until the latter part of the nineteenth century. Then greater mobility, industrial expansion and increased leisure time, coupled with the natural attractiveness of the area, resulted in substantial and sustained growth.
- 2.3 Bournemouth has a much shorter history, dating only from the latter part of the nineteenth century. Its development was linked exclusively to the growing demand for holidays. The town's resort image was carefully fostered and extensive areas, particularly near the coast, were laid out with wide boulevards and planted with pines, making an attractive environment for residents as well as visitors. The continued growth of tourism was accompanied by the development of the town as a retirement resort, and the growth of employment in the service and education sectors.
- 2.4 As personal mobility increased, low-density suburban development resulted in the physical merger of the two towns. Previously separate villages, such as Parkstone, Winton, Boscombe and Southbourne, were absorbed. This process also extended eastwards towards the town of Christchurch, itself expanded from its medieval core. Today the continuous built-up area extends unbroken from Highcliffe in the east to Upton in the west. In recent decades many of the smaller towns and villages, mostly to the north of the coastal part of the conurbation, have also grown significantly and act principally as dormitory settlements. They include the historic towns of Wareham and Wimborne and the expanding settlements of Lytchett Matravers, Colehill, Ferndown, West Parley, St. Leonards and St. Ives, West Moors and Verwood. In addition there are some smaller villages in East Dorset which largely retain their traditional form.
- 2.5 All these areas have become part of a functional city-region comprising a continuous built-up urban core focused on the major towns of Bournemouth and Poole, surrounded by a number of more or less dependent settlements, separated from the core and from each other by open land protected, for this purpose, by Green Belt designation. The population of this area has increased from about 117,000 in 1900 to about 475,000 in 2003.
- 2.6 Beyond Dorset, the area has close relationships with Hampshire and, to a lesser extent, Wiltshire. Hampshire towns to the west and south of the New Forest, such as Ringwood and New Milton, are very close to the conurbation and depend on it for services and employment. There are also functional links with South Hampshire, in particular Southampton; the commuting statistics show that there are employment and housing market linkages, while

Southampton's strength as a retail centre exercises a substantial influence over South East Dorset. The New Forest itself provides a recreational resource for the conurbation's residents.

- 2.7 The links with Wiltshire are less extensive. Salisbury acts as a service and employment centre for the northern parts of East Dorset District, and there are modest commuting flows between South Wiltshire and South East Dorset.
- 2.8 Today the conurbation is internationally important. Economic diversification has resulted in a number of firms, particularly in banking and finance and the high technology manufacturing sector, choosing to locate their international headquarters in the area. In addition, the traditional service industries have widened their horizons. Bournemouth's significance as one of the country's top resorts has been enhanced through the Bournemouth International Centre, a conference and exhibition facility capable of hosting world-class events. The internationally famous Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra is based in Poole. Educational developments such as the expansion of Bournemouth University and the Arts Institute have also increased the area's international standing. Finally improvements in communications, in particular the ferry link between Poole and Cherbourg and scheduled and charter flights from Bournemouth Airport, have brought the conurbation closer to other parts of Europe and beyond.

Key Strategic Planning Issues

- 2.9 The area faces a range of strategic planning issues arising from its environmental, social and economic character and from the changes and pressures for growth and development expected to occur over the next 20 years or so. These will need to be addressed through the regional and sub-regional spatial strategies if the vision is to be achieved.
- 2.10 The most substantial strategic planning issues are the following:
 - (a) How to reconcile the pressures for new development arising from the need to secure the long-term prosperity of the area and demand for housing with the need to conserve and enhance the internationally and nationally recognized environmental quality of the area;
 - (b) How to achieve a significant increase in the supply of affordable and appropriate housing, when most housing will be built on small urban sites, while planning mechanisms favour the use of large greenfield sites to achieve such an outcome;
 - (c) How to provide for an ageing population, taking account of the impact on the labour force, the need for support services and the need for specialist accommodation;
 - (d) How to improve accessibility both within the area and to and from other areas, to support economic, social and environmental wellbeing;
 - (e) How to ensure that focussing development within the main built-up areas leads to improvements in the quality of life, and does not lead to a worsening of environmental or social conditions, or to an unacceptable level of traffic congestion;

(f) How to achieve the investment needed to secure the infrastructure required to implement the strategy.

2.11 These issues, and the spatial strategy proposed to address them, are discussed and developed in more detail in the following chapters.

3. ROLES AND FUNCTIONS

Introduction

- 3.1 The purpose of this section is to describe and analyse the complex roles and functions of South East Dorset and its component settlements in the local, sub-regional and wider context, as the basis for developing a vision for its future well-being and an achievable strategy for its spatial development.

Functionality

- 3.2 A brief description of the South East Dorset Joint Study Area is set out in Chapter 2. It shows that the area comprises:
- an urban core focused on the major centres of Bournemouth and Poole and the smaller historic town of Christchurch, which, as a result of continuous outward spread over a long period, now forms a continuous built-up area along the coast from Upton in the west to Highcliffe in the east;
 - a number of outer settlements, separated from Bournemouth/Poole/Christchurch and from each other by open land protected, for this purpose, by Green Belt designation. These are of various types, including:
 - historic towns such as Wimborne and Wareham;
 - settlements which have expanded substantially from their small origins as a result of post-war development, including Lytchett Matravers, Colehill, Ferndown, West Parley, West Moors, Verwood and St Leonards and St Ives; and
 - smaller villages which largely retain their traditional form.
- 3.3 In Chapter 2, it was noted that the Study has also examined the relationships between South East Dorset and the adjoining parts of Hampshire and Wiltshire, working with the relevant planning authorities. Parts of New Forest and Salisbury Districts fall clearly within the conurbation's area of influence, although they lie outside Dorset and (in the case of New Forest District) the South West Region.
- 3.4 This section builds on the brief description in Chapter 2 to examine how the Joint Study Area works, both internally and in terms of its relationships with the wider world. An important source, particularly in relation to the regional significance of settlements in the South West, is the report in "Functional Analysis of Settlements" by Roger Tym and Partners (April 2005). This report notes that the identification of functional roles is not an easy task; it demands analysis that includes qualitative as well as quantitative information. The task is particularly complex in a conurbation such as South East Dorset, which lacks a single dominant central place and has evolved through the expansion and merger of numerous smaller settlements. The pace of social, economic and technological change and the effects of the high degree of mobility on communities and lifestyles add to the difficulty of achieving accurate analysis which has lasting validity.

Functionality within the Joint Study Area

- 3.5 Evidence on the way the South East Dorset Joint Study Area functions internally is drawn from a range of factors including:
- the location and distribution of services and facilities;
 - transport networks;
 - commuting patterns; and
 - community perceptions expressed in Community Strategies.

The location and distribution of services and facilities

- 3.6 This section outlines the location and distribution of key services and facilities across South East Dorset. More detail is provided in the Technical Paper on Community Facilities.
- 3.7 Retail - In terms of the traditional shopping hierarchy, Bournemouth is the main sub-regional centre. Poole has a strong centre with some potential for growth, and there are several important local centres within Bournemouth/Poole/Christchurch, including, Boscombe and Winton, as well as a number of local centres. These have been augmented by the recently-opened Castlepoint, which has replaced the former Hampshire Centre on an edge of town location based around a 3,000 space car park. This site contains a substantial proportion of the 231,000 m² of new floor space opened in the area since 1998.
- 3.8 Outside Bournemouth/Poole/Christchurch, Ringwood, Ferndown, Wimborne and Wareham have locally important centres which also, with the exception of Ferndown, have the historic character and some of the trading and service patterns of market towns. Outside the Joint Study Area, Salisbury and (to a lesser extent) Dorchester are major rural centres with wide catchments. Catchment patterns are further complicated by longer distance trips to other major sub-regional centres, including Bath and, in particular, Southampton.
- 3.9 Health – The area is generally well provided with primary and secondary NHS healthcare facilities, as well as extensive private sector provision. The two general hospitals are at Poole, in a central location, and on the edge of Bournemouth on Castle Lane. There are community hospitals in the towns of Christchurch, Wareham and Wimborne, and on the edge of the conurbation at St Leonards. There are health centres and/or GP practices at main and local centres across Bournemouth, Poole and Christchurch, as well as at the larger outer settlements such as Ferndown, West Moors, Verwood, Three Legged Cross, Wimborne, Wareham and Sandford. (For a full list, see Annex 1 of the Technical Paper on Community and Culture)
- 3.10 Thus local hospitals, health centres, GP services and dental services are generally accessible throughout the conurbation, although continued growth has resulted in some strains in capacity in recent years. However access to the main hospitals is less easy, particularly from the outer suburbs, because of the lack of sufficient public transport routes. Access to health services in the more rural areas is generally more difficult, particularly for residents without access to a private car.

- 3.11 Education – The area is well served by education facilities. There are different school systems in the areas covered by the three Local Education Authorities (Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole). In all cases, the location and distribution of schools reflects the hierarchy of settlements, with upper/secondary schools in the larger centres fed by first/primary/middle schools in more local centres.
- 3.12 Of the higher and further education establishments, Bournemouth University has two main campuses; the Talbot site is in an out-of-centre location at Wallisdown, while the Lansdowne site adjoins Bournemouth Town Centre. Further developments will take place at these locations. Bournemouth and Poole College is located at six sites around the two towns and intends to focus in future on the Lansdowne and North Road sites, which are relatively accessible to the town centres of Bournemouth and Poole respectively. The Arts Institute shares the Talbot campus with the University.
- 3.13 Libraries – Most parts of South East Dorset have reasonable access to libraries. There are major central libraries at Bournemouth and Poole town centres and smaller facilities in most of the suburban centres in the conurbation. In the outer areas, the larger settlements have branch libraries while the rural areas are served by mobile libraries. (For a full list, see Annex B of the Technical Paper on Culture)
- 3.14 Culture and Recreation - There is a wide range of cultural facilities throughout South East Dorset, ranging from major venues to small-scale local facilities. The former are generally located centrally in the main towns, for example Bournemouth International Centre, the Pavilion and the Russell-Cotes Museum in Bournemouth, and the Lighthouse in Poole – the sub-region’s principal arts centre. Elsewhere cultural facilities are more prevalent in the older towns – Christchurch, Wimborne and Wareham – than in the suburbs and new development areas. The out-of-town multiplex cinema at Tower Park is a rare exception. (For a full list, see Annex A of the Technical Paper on Culture)
- 3.15 Recreational facilities are similarly varied. Multi-use leisure centres and swimming pools are located centrally and in a number of suburban areas, while parks and informal play spaces are widely distributed across the area. The beaches along the conurbation’s coastline are an outstanding recreational resource, while Poole and Christchurch Harbours provide a perfect environment for many water sports, including sailing and sub aqua. Inland there are many opportunities for countryside recreation, using the rights of way system as well as a number of country parks. (For a full list of sport and leisure facilities, see Annex A of the Technical Paper on Culture)

Transport Networks

- 3.16 South East Dorset’s road system reflects the area’s historic development, and its usage is an indicator of the functional relationships between settlements. This section deals with transport serving activities other than employment, which is covered in the subsequent section on commuting.
- 3.17 At the heart of the transport network are a number of radial routes focused on the town centres of Bournemouth, Poole and Christchurch. These routes facilitate car and bus transport to these central locations of key facilities, and reflect the dependency of much of conurbation on these centres for many functions.

- 3.18 The consequence is serious and increasing pressure on these Prime Transport Corridors. This is exacerbated by the physical form of the conurbation, which differs from that of most cities – the main centres are near the coast, so all routes between the main residential areas and these centres are from a 180-degree arc instead of 360 degrees. There are acute pressures on east/west routes, especially between Bournemouth and Poole, and on north/south routes from the suburbs and outlying settlements.
- 3.19 There are also a number of smaller centres, which have important functions serving more limited catchment areas. Many are on the radial routes, so similar traffic issues arise including the pressure of through traffic from settlements further away. There are, however, opportunities for local communities to access the facilities that these smaller centres offer by bike or on foot, particularly in the higher density areas around the older centres such as Winton and Westbourne.
- 3.20 Further out, where housing areas are generally lower density and fewer facilities are available locally, residents must travel further for the services and facilities they need. The functional relationship is one of dependency, reflected in high flows and congestion on radial routes.
- 3.21 In the outer areas beyond the continuous built-up area, the historic centres of Wimborne and Wareham are the focus of their own radial road patterns, providing access for residents of the surrounding rural areas. Because they only offer lower order services and facilities, they cannot act as substitutes for the major centres and only divert a proportion of the journeys made by their own and their surrounding populations from travelling to Bournemouth or Poole. This dependency is shown in the high traffic flows on roads such as the A351 from Wareham and the A349 from Wimborne.
- 3.22 Of the more recently developed outer settlements, only Ferndown provides a significant level of facilities and services, drawing users largely from Ferndown itself. Again there are significant flows into the main centres, reflected in high flows on the A348.
- 3.23 Residents of other settlements in the outer areas, lacking local facilities within their own communities, are obliged to travel, further increasing traffic flows on the main radial routes as well as on minor rural roads.
- 3.24 The area is served by the Waterloo – Weymouth railway line, which runs east/west across the conurbation. While this offers the opportunity to relieve some of the pressure on the conurbation's road system, it only accounts for a small percentage of journeys. Its route does not match the area's functional needs, being more suitable for journeys across and through the conurbation rather than between the main centres and the residential areas. While it can provide for travel between Poole, Bournemouth and Christchurch and the communities to the east and west, it plays no direct role in facilitating the relationships between these centres and the majority of the area's population living further away from the coast. The location of Bournemouth Central station away from the town centre also reduces the utility of the railway. Studies have been carried out to investigate the potential for LRT using some former railway lines and this will be kept under review.

- 3.25 So far this section has dealt with functions other than employment. The following paragraphs examine the roles and relationships within the area through evidence from an analysis of commuting and self-containment.

Commuting Patterns

- 3.26 Details of this work are set out in the Commuting Analysis Technical Paper. This explores both the linkages between South East Dorset and other areas and the functional relationships between locations within the area as revealed by commuting patterns.
- 3.27 While there is extensive commuting between Bournemouth/Poole/Christchurch and other areas, the largest number of commuters, travel between origins and destinations within Bournemouth/Poole/Christchurch. Over 129,600 people live and work within the Bournemouth/Poole/Christchurch; this compares with around 28,000 who travel daily from elsewhere into this area to work, and 29,600 who live in but work outside it.
- 3.28 Looking at District level, the largest commuting flows are to and from Bournemouth and Poole, reflecting their functional importance in employment terms. For both Bournemouth and Poole, 78% of their commuters both live and work within the Borough. Both have net inflows of commuters from the rest of Bournemouth/Poole/Christchurch, and there are substantial flows between the two Boroughs.
- 3.29 For the parts of Christchurch, East Dorset and Purbeck Districts Councils which lie within the Bournemouth/Poole/Christchurch, the proportions of their commuters who both live and work in the District are lower. Their net outflows to Bournemouth and, particularly, Poole are greater.
- 3.30 In terms of distance travelled by commuters within Bournemouth/Poole/Christchurch, there are significant differences between Districts and at ward level, which again reflect the dominance of Bournemouth and Poole in employment terms. Over 45% of Christchurch and East Dorset commuters travel 10km or more to work, compared with around 30% for Bournemouth and Poole commuters. Over 50% of Bournemouth and Poole commuters travel less than 5km to work, while the figures for Christchurch and East Dorset are 37% and 26% respectively.
- 3.31 The commuting study analysed the pattern of journeys to the main employment areas across the conurbation, including the main town centres, industrial estates, commercial and office areas and the University. The town centres of Bournemouth (including Lansdowne) and Poole are the principal attractors by a considerable margin, drawing some 19,000 and 16,000 commuters a day respectively. Castle Lane East attracts around 8,400, while the major industrial areas in Poole draw between 4,000 and 5,500. Bournemouth Airport and the University attract just under 3,000 each.
- 3.32 While the town centres are, as noted earlier, focal points on the road network, this is less true of other major employment locations, which are spread widely across the conurbation. Such sites are less easily served by public transport, so the proportion of commuters travelling by car is high – approaching 80% for a number of sites, and over 90% for the Airport. Travel patterns across the conurbation are complex, including commuting across or against the main radial flows. There is congestion at peak hours around these sites, due to the

overloading of parts of the transport system which were not originally planned to accommodate such high levels of car-borne traffic.

- 3.33 The commuting analysis also examined flows from Bournemouth/Poole/Christchurch to adjoining wards and districts in the outer area covered by the Joint Study – in a sense “reverse commuting”. Total daily flows are almost 25,000. Two-thirds of these journeys are accounted for by three sites – Bournemouth Airport, Ferndown Industrial Estate and Wimborne. The proportion of these journeys made by car is even higher than for employment sites as a whole – over 90%.
- 3.34 To summarise, commuting patterns indicate complex functional links between different parts of Bournemouth/Poole/Christchurch and the adjoining area. The town centres of Bournemouth and Poole are dominant, and draw commuters from across the conurbation using the main radial routes. But there are other substantial employment nodes located across the area which, while primarily serving the district in which they are located, also attract workers from more distant locations. These sites draw large flows of car-using commuters onto parts of the transport network not originally planned for such use. In addition, “reverse commuting” to employment locations adjoining Bournemouth/Poole/Christchurch demonstrates that the functional relationship between the Bournemouth/Poole/Christchurch and the outer area is not a simple one-way dependency.

Community Perceptions

- 3.35 In the course of preparing this study, the community strategies for the County, Boroughs and Districts have been examined, with the intention of understanding residents’ and stakeholders’ perceptions of the role and functions of their communities, as well as their visions for the future.
- 3.36 This is not an easy task, given that community strategies are at different stages of development, have different formats and take a range of approaches. They are summarised in the Technical Papers, which also includes material concerning the role of settlements in South East Dorset, derived from stakeholders’ conferences.
- 3.37 A common feature of community strategies is their focus on the value of communities and the attributes which secure, either currently or in a desired future, their quality of life. Themes that run through the strategies include affordable local housing for local people; a range of jobs, opportunities for learning and skills development, leisure and community facilities, health and social services – all readily accessible; and a safe and attractive environment. There is an implicit message that, because some or all of these attributes are currently lacking, the community is not functioning as its members feel it should. The call for community development and improvement may be seen as a desire for a more self-contained community, more able to satisfy its own needs and less dependent on other settlements (and on access to them). In terms of functionality, it would appear that current roles of, and relationships between, settlements are not meeting the aspirations of the communities of South East Dorset.

The Joint Study Area and the Wider World

3.38 Evidence on South East Dorset's wider roles and relationships, sub-regionally, regionally, nationally and internationally, comes from the following factors, among others:

- transport networks (including Bournemouth Airport and the Port of Poole);
- commuting patterns and self-containment;
- the regional perspective provided by the Roger Tym study; and
- indicators of its varied functions as a national resource

Transport Networks

3.39 The transport networks within the conurbation were described in 3.16 to 3.25 above. This section outlines the South East Dorset Joint Study Area's transport links with the wider world as an indicator of its functions and relationships.

3.40 Inter- and intra-regional links are critical to the economic well being of the conurbation. The majority of long distance movement of passengers and freight travels via the A31 trunk road/M27/M3, to and from South East England. This is generally a high quality, high capacity route. However it suffers from congestion around Southampton as well as delays caused by seasonal traffic. Also, links to this route across the conurbation from Poole are poor.

3.41 The strong functional relationship between the conurbation and the South East, described in more detail in the section on Commuting below, is reinforced by the rail link to Waterloo. Although this currently carries only a relatively small proportion of total journeys, it is an important element in the connectivity of the sub-region (and of South Dorset as a whole) with the potential to expand so as to provide more sustainable connectivity than the private car. Development and improvement of these transport links is essential to retain the benefits of the economic links with London and the South East.

3.42 Transport links to the north and west are less well developed, which is both cause and effect of the area's strong orientation towards the South East. The key strategic routes include: the A31/A35 trunk road to the west, linking the conurbation with the Dorchester/Weymouth area, and with Devon and Cornwall beyond; the A350/C13 corridor northwards to Bristol/Bath and the M4; and the A31/M27/A34 link to the north. With regard to this last link, the issue of congestion around Southampton was noted above. There are also concerns about capacity and congestion on the A34. The railway running west from the conurbation is also an important link with Dorchester and Weymouth. None of these routes provide high capacity links, and the connections northwards are particularly poor. In order to enable South East Dorset to develop its potential as a driving force in the economic prosperity and well-being of Dorset and of the South West Region as a whole, these links need to be maintained and reinforced.

3.43 The area has both sea and air ports. The main seaport is at Poole, a TENS port, which accommodates principally coastal and cross-Channel ferry traffic. However Southampton, the main international south coast port, is close by and

easily accessible. In 2002/3 Poole handled approximately 440,000 tonnes of cargo (stevedoring) and 290,000 tonnes (private cargo), and 76,849 roll-on roll-off freight units. The increase in conventional cargo was 40% over the previous decade, but roll-on roll-off traffic declined by 25% over the same period.

- 3.44 Constraints on the Port of Poole include both the depth of water, an issue to be addressed (see paragraph 6.5.37(q)) and the relatively poor road links. A rail link is available to the port but is rarely used. The road links required for the development of the Port and associated industrial land include the provision of a second lifting bridge. However, the need for improved links to the A31 Trunk Road has also long been identified.
- 3.45 The need for improved road links also constrains Bournemouth Airport, at Hurn in Christchurch. This is considered to have considerable growth potential, although it is closely bordered by areas of nature conservation importance to the north, east and west. However such development would depend on improved surface access, particularly a link from the A338 Spur Road. In 2003 the airport handled 465,314 passengers, after a period of fluctuating fortunes, including a low of 276,156 passengers in 2001. New low-cost scheduled services which began operating early in 2005 have further increased passenger numbers. The development of the very large (80ha) potential employment land sites within the airport site is also dependent on the road links. These sites offer the most significant single concentration of employment land currently available in the conurbation.

Commuting Patterns and Self-Containment

- 3.46 In addition to the analysis of internal commuting movements summarised in 3.26 to 3.34 above, the Commuting Analysis looked at commuting links between South East Dorset and other areas and indications of self-containment. In particular it examined the flows between South East Dorset and its nearest neighbouring conurbation – South Hampshire.
- 3.47 To summarise the conclusions:
- While the numbers commuting in each direction between South East Dorset and South Hampshire are high (20,550 in total), this figure is small relative to the 173,600 people who commute within South East Dorset.
 - Overall, the number of commuters travelling from South East Dorset to South Hampshire is higher than those travelling in the opposite direction. The figures are 11,775 from, and 8,775 to, South East Dorset – a net outflow of 3,000.
 - 52% of out-commuters and 75% of in-commuters to and from South Hampshire are travelling to or from New Forest District, reflecting the close residential and employment ties which South East Dorset has with the areas immediately to the east.
 - A significant number of people travel beyond South Hampshire to the rest of the South East and to London. In addition to those with a destination in South Hampshire, 4,380 people travel across the New Forest area to places further afield (including 2,150 to London), of whom 66% travel by car. 1,394 travel in the opposite direction to South East Dorset.

- In addition to commuting to the east, substantial numbers – 13,114 people - travel to and from the rest of Dorset. This is the only flow where the numbers coming into South East Dorset outweigh those going out – a net inflow of 3,525.
- Flows between South East Dorset and Wiltshire amount to about 1,900 commuters, with Salisbury by far the most significant origin and destination. There is a small net outflow from South East Dorset of about 500 commuters.

3.48 The daily movement of workers is a key element of the economy of the area. Commuting enables the local workforce to access better-paid jobs, and allows employers to draw on a wider pool of labour including locally scarce skills, but it has considerable social and environmental costs. Bournemouth/Poole/Christchurch is one of the most self-contained areas in the South West region, with 81% of workers living and working within it. Only Bristol and Plymouth exceed this proportion, with 85% and 84% respectively.

Regional Perspective

- 3.49 “Functional Analysis of Settlements” is a study commissioned by the South West Regional Assembly from Roger Tym and Partners to identify both the functions and functional relationships of settlements. The following paragraphs, which are inevitably selective, outline some of the key findings relevant to South East Dorset, to set against the local research and analysis described above.
- 3.50 The Study includes a brief section on settlements neighbouring the South West region. It notes that “Southampton and Portsmouth are major centres of employment” which “exert a powerful influence within the local and regional economy and offer important social and cultural services to a wide hinterland, including parts of the South West”. “Additionally strategic transport routes (motorways, trunk roads, mainline railway) as well as trans-shipment points at ports and airports link the South West region to its neighbours and beyond, and also generate a strong influence in that they enable the movement of people, goods and services over relatively long distances. As a result, the pull of employment and of the retail offer in these settlements beyond the South West presents a significant challenge to those “edge” settlements in the South West in terms of choice and competition”.
- 3.51 By way of example, the Study quotes figures for the market share of retail business lost from centres in the South West to competing centres outside the region. The highest percentage losses from South East Dorset are from Highcliffe (43.6%) and Verwood (35.6%). The loss of 25.6% market share from Bournemouth centre, 20.8% from Christchurch and 15.4% from the new retail park at Castlepoint in Bournemouth gives cause for concern, given the important role of these centres within the sub-region. The market share lost from Poole centre is significantly lower at 7.7%.
- 3.52 Centres serving more local catchment areas also lose market share to centres outside South East Dorset, including Ringwood as well as Southampton. Ferndown and Wimborne lose 14.5% and 8.7% respectively. Suburban centres in Bournemouth lose between 5.0% and 10.6%.

- 3.53 The Study includes a self-containment index (the percentage of employed residents who live and work in the same settlement) for settlements outside Bournemouth/Poole/Christchurch. It includes four settlements in the wider South East Dorset area, none of which has an index over 50% - Wareham (46%), Ferndown (45%), Wimborne (38%) and Verwood (37%).
- 3.54 However a further table analyses self-containment by looking at flows of commuters in and out of settlements. On this basis, Ferndown/Three Legged Cross is a significant “net in-commuting settlement”, while Wareham, Wimborne and particularly Verwood are “net out-commuting settlements”.
- 3.55 The Study concludes that the regions principal urban areas “need to be acknowledged in the Regional Spatial Strategy for their combination of roles and functions as larger urban centres which provide a combination of larger concentrations of business and employment; labour force and skills; retail centres, universities and further education; larger hospitals and specialist healthcare; cultural/leisure/sports facilities; public administration; other service industries and facilities”.
- 3.56 In relation to settlements in South East Dorset outside Bournemouth/Poole/Christchurch, it concludes: “Functionally we identified that a number of settlements also serve larger neighbouring centres... We consider that these settlements need to be considered together with their larger neighbouring settlements in future planning strategies”. The list of such settlements includes Wimborne, Ferndown/Three Legged Cross and Verwood. The Study advised that the ‘Joint Study Area’ studies across the region should focus on the complementary or dormitory roles of these settlements and provide a rationale for their future growth in relation to their larger neighbours. This has been pursued in the analysis of the development options and the development of the spatial strategy for the South East Dorset Joint Study Area.
- 3.57 Local research and analysis reported elsewhere in this chapter supports and confirms the conclusions of the Roger Tym Study.

The Joint Study Area’s National and International Functions

- 3.58 Previous sections have described the area’s historical development, its physical structure and the way it works internally and in relation to adjoining areas. This section looks briefly at South East Dorset’s role and functions in the national and international context.
- 3.59 The area’s many and varied assets have given the conurbation a national and international importance which is an important factor in determining the vision and strategy for its future. It has been for many years, and continues to be, a major destination for people moving from other parts of the country, for reasons which include its outstanding environment and quality of life and its location on the south coast within easy reach of London. It is thus a national resource for satisfying the aspirations of people seeking a place to live, learn, work, relax and retire.
- 3.60 Businesses are also attracted by these and other assets, and the area’s economic diversification has resulted in a number of firms choosing to locate their national or international headquarters here. In addition, the traditional service industries have widened their horizons. As a result, the conurbation is a significant economic resource, contributing to the national and international

economy particularly in sectors such as banking and finance, high technology manufacturing (including aerospace and marine) and knowledge-based sectors.

- 3.61 The area is one of the UK's prime resources for tourism and leisure. Bournemouth's significance as one of the country's top resorts has been enhanced through the Bournemouth International Centre, a conference and exhibition facility capable of hosting world-class events. Its traditional tourism image has evolved with the development of a new role as centre for nightlife and entertainment. Poole also has a major role in tourism and leisure, with its Harbour offering outstanding opportunities for water-based activities. The area's proximity to the World Heritage Coast and the New Forest National Park reinforces its function as a national and international visitor destination. In the cultural field, the internationally famous Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra is based in Poole.
- 3.62 Educational developments, including the expansion of Bournemouth University and the Arts Institute, have also raised the area's national and international standing. The area is also one of the country's prime locations for language schools, which provide both direct economic benefits and extensive international links.
- 3.63 The area also has a role in international transport and travel. Improvements in communications have brought the conurbation closer to other parts of Europe and beyond. These improvements include the ferry link from Poole to Cherbourg and scheduled and charter flights from Bournemouth Airport, supplemented by the recent instigation of low-cost routes to a range of British and European destinations.
- 3.64 Finally the area is a unique environmental resource of national and international importance, particularly in terms of nature conservation. This is recognised by the significant number and diversity of natural habitats protected by national and international designations. These include a complex of sites, representing a substantial proportion of the UK's remaining lowland heath, which lie around Poole Harbour and adjoining the main urban area. In addition there are important river valley and wetland habitats as well as the coastline itself. These are resources which are difficult or impossible to recreate, making their protection in the national and international interest a key element of spatial strategy and the selection of development options.

Conclusions

- 3.65 South East Dorset is a city-region with complex internal workings, resulting largely from its development history, and a significant range of regional, national and international functions and linkages.
- 3.66 The development of a long-term strategy for the sub-region, in the context of the Regional Spatial Strategy, offers the opportunity to build on the Joint Study Area's structure, roles, functions and relationships so as to develop a truly sustainable conurbation, provided the key strategic planning issues are addressed.

4. GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

- 4.1 The development of a spatial strategy for South East Dorset requires an assessment of the area's capacity for growth and the options available for development. This assessment has followed the guidance in RPG10 and the emerging Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) on the distribution of development. This requires a sequential approach focusing on the capacity for development within Bournemouth/Poole/Christchurch before considering planned urban extensions or other options. The assessment has also responded to the Regional Assembly's request to test scenarios for three different levels of growth for South East Dorset.
- 4.2 The foundation of this work on growth and development is a series of technical studies of urban capacity, possible urban extensions and a review of the South East Dorset Green Belt. From these, a set of alternative spatial strategies was generated which were then tested, together with the Regional Assembly's growth scenarios. This led to the identification of the elements that constitute the proposed Sub-Regional Spatial Strategy.
- 4.3 The following sections outline these stages, which are described more fully in technical reports.

Development Capacity

- 4.4 Following the approach required in RPG10 and the emerging RSS, the strategic and local planning authorities have undertaken a series of technical studies to examine growth potential and explore future options. These comprise:
 - Urban Potential - a detailed examination of the potential for development on previously developed land within the main urban areas of the Joint Study Area;
 - Urban Extensions - identification of sustainable planned extensions to Bournemouth/Poole/Christchurch and other main settlements;
 - Green Belt – a review of its character, operation and critical features.
- 4.5 These studies are summarised below – for the full details, see “Development Options – Technical Report”.

Urban Potential

- 4.6 Urban Potential Studies are a key element in the sequential approach to identifying land for new housing, which is a central tenet of Government planning policy. In the South West, the Regional Planning Body has devised a methodology to move such studies forward in a consistent way.
- 4.7 The authorities in Dorset have followed this regional methodology, initially this took place for the review of the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Structure Plan for the period to 2016. The studies were thorough and comprehensive, and involved the following features:

- Areas for research, prescribed regionally, comprising:
 - The regions principal urban areas and closely related settlements where significant housing development is envisaged (i.e. Bournemouth/Poole/Christchurch);
 - Sub-regional centres;
 - Other towns with an opportunity for sustainable development.
 - Twelve different sources of potential for redevelopment and infill were identified and analysed separately.
 - Different densities were assumed for sites in the heart of town centres; inner urban areas; and suburban areas.
 - Potential yields were estimated separately on two bases: a theoretical “unconstrained” basis and a “constrained” basis reflecting factors such as availability, marketability and environmental impacts.
- 4.8 The studies were validated through a workshop with planning and surveying professionals. In addition, the Regional Assembly assessed the methodology and concluded that the studies were undertaken in accordance with the regional approach.
- 4.9 It became necessary subsequently to roll the studies forward to cover the longer time-frame of the Joint Study, which has a horizon date of 2026. Because of the degree of uncertainty affecting assumptions for a period some twenty years ahead, an approach was adopted of trending forward 2001-2016 figures for some elements of supply but holding others at the 2016 level.
- 4.10 In summary, the urban potential studies indicated potential for the development of 20,400 dwellings in Bournemouth/Poole/Christchurch, and a further 2,300 elsewhere in the wider South East Dorset area – a total of 22,700 in the Joint Study Area as a whole.
- 4.11 It should be noted that the urban potential study methodology has been validated by consultants on behalf of the Regional Assembly and that its outcomes are supported by the evidence of the pattern and level of development since 2001.
- 4.12 Concerns over the impacts of excessive intensification have been expressed both by the planning authorities and by the wider public. These are discussed in paragraphs 4.46-4.51 below.

Urban Extensions

- 4.13 As with the urban potential studies, the identification of development potential in the form of planned extensions to the urban area of South East Dorset was initiated in response to RPG10 and the requirement that structure plans follow a sequential search of development options. The Review of the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Structure Plan took this work forward. RPG10 required priority consideration to be given to use of previously developed land at Bournemouth/Poole/Christchurch before release of green-field sites. At that time, technical work supporting the Structure Plan Review showed that

sufficient land could be identified within the urban areas to meet the Plan's objectives and the RPG requirement without release of additional land in the form of green-field extension sites.

- 4.14 The preparation of RSS and the brief for the South East Dorset Joint Study Area has required a reassessment of this situation. In particular, the Regional Assembly has, as already noted, asked the strategic authorities to test three scenarios of potential additional growth. The identification of extension sites was re-examined in this new strategic context.
- 4.15 It is essential to note that this work was geared towards identifying and gaining an understanding of the overall potential for development outside the main urban areas. This was a strategic exercise, for the most part undertaken at a macro scale. The aim was one of gaining an overall picture or assessment of potential; not one of identifying individual sites, per se.
- 4.16 To obtain this wider picture it was felt necessary to 'drill down' to a fairly refined level of site identification, but this was always on the basis that any sites identified would be strategic in scale. Small plots of land and fragmented areas were not up for consideration.
- 4.17 The methodology for identifying and assessing the suitability of sustainable urban extensions for the Structure Plan Review involved several stages which progressively focused the search through the application of increasingly rigorous criteria. Initial baseline information and land use analysis pointed to broad areas of search. Absolute and discretionary constraints were then identified and used to narrow down the areas of search. A rigorous testing of sites followed, using 80 criteria, to produce a refined list of potential sites.
- 4.18 When work on the Sub-Regional Strategy overtook the Structure Plan Review, a further search was carried out for potential sites that had initially been overlooked. In addition, the refined list of sites was reviewed and updated in the light of more focused and updated studies. This stage resulted in some revisions, including the addition of some sites and the deletion of others including, most notably, a possible major extension in the Western sector of the area.
- 4.19 The final assessment indicated that some 2,900 dwellings could be accommodated on extension sites within the South East Dorset Joint Study Area, with provision for the development of up to 20 hectares of additional land for employment at Ferndown. It must be stressed that this assessment could be changed by the more site-specific analyses required if and when detailed development proposals come forward in Local Development Frameworks and/or planning applications.

South East Dorset Green Belt

- 4.20 In the process of identifying development capacity and options, a review of the South East Dorset Green Belt was carried out to assess its character, operation and critical features. The Green Belt was originally established in the South East Dorset Structure Plan (1980) and its detailed boundaries defined in subsequent local plans.

- 4.21 The Structure Plan and its successors established the main purposes of the Green Belt as:
- to protect the separate physical identity of individual settlements in the area by maintaining wedges and corridors of open land between them; and
 - to maintain an area of open land around the conurbation.
- 4.22 National policy guidance on Green Belts (PPG2) is also relevant. It includes, among the purposes of Green Belts, helping to safeguard the countryside from encroachment, preserving the setting and special character of historic towns. The guidance also includes objectives relating to access to the countryside for recreation and securing nature conservation interests.
- 4.23 The review assessed the South East Dorset Green Belt in relation to all these purposes and objectives, and its conclusions are summarised in the following paragraphs.
- 4.24 The general conclusion is that the Green Belt is playing a significant part in achieving these purposes and objectives, and that its retention must be a central part of any development option for the future. The review noted that, in many places, the open corridors and wedges between urban areas are narrow - one kilometre or less - and their ability to perform their function is potentially vulnerable to even minor development. There are only a few areas where the gaps remain extensive enough to retain the character of sufficient areas of countryside free from the immediate presence of the urban fringe.
- 4.25 In relation to the purpose of safeguarding the countryside from encroachment, evidence from the mapping of tranquil areas and light pollution shows that it is the northern and western areas of the Green Belt that most fulfil this aim. As for preserving the setting of historic towns, the areas around Christchurch, Wareham and Wimborne remain critical, particularly the low-lying open areas in river valleys. The Green Belt also helps to protect the setting of smaller historic villages and a number of major historic buildings, particularly along the Stour Valley.
- 4.26 The configuration of the South East Dorset Green Belt gives it a particular value in terms of access to the countryside and recreation. Green Belt countryside is within half a kilometre of substantial parts of the urban area, including the outer fringes of Bournemouth/Poole/Christchurch and almost all areas of the outlying towns (apart from the inner areas of Ferndown, Verwood and St Leonards and St Ives). The importance of access to the countryside will increase as urban infill continues, housing densities increase and pressure grows on the remaining open spaces in the built-up areas. But peripheral growth of Bournemouth/Poole/Christchurch or large towns would increase the distance between urban areas and Green Belt countryside.
- 4.27 In South East Dorset, nature conservation interest is of the highest importance. Substantial parts of the Green Belt are designated as Special Areas of Conservation (Habitats Directive); Special Protection Areas (Birds Directive); and/or Ramsar sites. These, together with buffer zones, are protected from development. Green Belt policy helps to secure nature conservation in a broader way, by preserving the rural matrix within which sites are set, and providing support for sites and for protected species. It protects green corridors linking sites, ameliorating the effects of their fragmentation by development. It

limits the drift to urbanisation of the urban fringe countryside, which adds to the pressure on nature conservation sites.

- 4.28 In summary, the South East Dorset Green Belt complements the urban areas, providing physical identity for many communities; separating individual settlements from one another; forming the setting for some of the areas historic towns and villages; safeguarding open countryside in close proximity to the urban area; supporting and protecting important nature conservation sites; and providing countryside access and recreation for the urban areas. There are few, if any, Green Belt areas which are redundant in fulfilling the purposes of the Green Belt or the objectives for the use of Green Belt land.

Conclusions

- 4.29 The studies outlined above established how much growth might be realistically accommodated within Bournemouth/Poole/Christchurch and in South East Dorset in general. Potential future growth will come from two sources – firstly, the realisation of urban potential in the form of re-use of previously developed land and buildings, infilling and intensification, conversions, redevelopment, changes of use etc; and, secondly, planned urban extensions to the edge of the built-up areas. The tight definition of the South East Dorset Green Belt dictates that any extension would inevitably be onto green belt land.
- 4.30 The studies indicated that, if all the urban potential identified within Bournemouth/Poole/Christchurch is realised and if the urban extensions are developed, some **34,400** new dwellings may be built at Bournemouth/Poole/Christchurch between 2001 and 2026. Development elsewhere in the Joint Study Area, both as growth within the outer urban areas and as extensions to the towns, might add a further **6,000** dwellings during the period 2001 to 2026, giving a total of **40,400** for South East Dorset.

Assessing the Development Options and Growth Scenarios

- 4.31 On the basis of the studies described above, a set of alternative spatial strategies was generated which were then tested in a number of ways.
- 4.32 As noted earlier, the Regional Assembly requested that scenarios for three different levels of growth for South East Dorset between 2001 and 2026 should be tested, and this was done alongside the examination of alternative spatial strategies. The first scenario anticipates a continuation of the strategy of RPG10 and is based on the assumption that 60% of housing development in Dorset will be located at Bournemouth/Poole/Christchurch. The second and third scenarios take this initial scenario but anticipate a 25% increase and 50% increase in growth, respectively, for the period after 2011.
- 4.33 In this context, there was some debate about the definition of the Joint Study Area, in the light of the historical development and geography of the area as described in Chapters 2 and 3. Early guidance from the Regional Assembly was that the study should be on the basis of Bournemouth/Poole/Christchurch ie the continuous built-up area from Upton to Highcliffe, but not outlying towns such as Wimborne Minster, Ferndown and Verwood. As the Joint Study progressed, the planning authorities have concluded that, for the purposes of strategic planning, it is more helpful to consider the wider functional area of South East Dorset as a whole. However, for the purposes of testing the growth

figures, the Assembly's original definition was used, to distinguish growth impacts on the urban area from those on the surrounding towns.

- 4.34 The authorities have concerns about the amount of growth implied by these scenarios. In particular, the underlying assumption that 60% of growth can be accommodated at Bournemouth/Poole/Christchurch is overly ambitious and unrealistic. This assumption is embedded in all the scenarios. The studies described above have shown that realistically about 52% of growth could be accommodated at the Bournemouth/Poole/Christchurch. The assumption of this lower proportion of growth at Bournemouth/Poole/Christchurch would result in a different set of growth figures.
- 4.35 The three scenarios imply the following additional levels of new housing growth at Bournemouth/Poole/Christchurch for the period 2001 to 2026:

Growth Scenario Targets, 2001-2026

	SWRA assumption of 60% at B/P/C	Authorities' assumption of 52% at B/P/C
RPG10	39,600 dwellings	34,200 dwellings
RPG10 + 25%	45,600 dwellings	39,300 dwellings
RPG10 + 50%	51,600 dwellings	44,500 dwellings

- 4.36 However, notwithstanding the concerns of the strategic planning authorities, the testing has been based on the higher levels of growth, as requested by the Regional Assembly. The figures given in paragraph 4.30 comprise the benchmark against which the accelerated growth figures indicated above may be measured. The implications of the three scenarios in terms of additional dwellings to the benchmark are set out below:

Growth Implications at Bournemouth/Poole/Christchurch, 2001-2026

	Scenarios of Growth at B/P/C	Increased Intensification required at B/P/C
SPA benchmark	34,400 dwellings	-
RPG10	39,600 dwellings	+5,200 dwellings
RPG10 + 25%	45,600 dwellings	+11,200 dwellings
RPG10 + 50%	51,600 dwellings	+17,200 dwellings

- 4.37 The table shows that, in all three Assembly scenarios, anticipated growth exceeds the assessment of the strategic authorities. Continuing RPG10 would require an additional 5,200 dwellings to be built at Bournemouth/Poole/Christchurch. This would need to be met by an increased intensification from urban potential sources. This could take the form of higher density assumptions or, possibly, review of already identified source categories, such as redevelopment, and inclusion of sites previously not considered.
- 4.38 The higher growth scenarios of RPG10 +25% and RPG10 +50% would require ever increasing urban concentration at Bournemouth/Poole/Christchurch. The

+25% scenario would require a further 11,200 dwellings to be built, over and above the 37,200 forecast by the strategic authorities, and the 50%+ scenario would require 17,200 more dwellings.

- 4.39 Growth for South East Dorset as a whole would range from 40,400 dwellings, based on the strategic authorities' assessment, to 57,600 dwellings using the Regional Assembly top growth assumption of +50% at Bournemouth/Poole/Christchurch.

Growth in South East Dorset Joint Study Area, 2001-2026

	Authorities' Benchmark Level	Regional Assembly Growth Scenarios		
		RPG10	+25%	+50%
Growth at B/P/C				
Urban potential studies	20,400	20,400	20,400	20,400
Increased intensification	-	5,200	11,200	17,200
Extensions	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200
Other sources (1)	12,800	12,800	12,800	12,800
Total at B/P/C	34,400	39,600	45,600	51,600
Growth elsewhere in JSA				
Urban potential studies	2,300	2,300	2,300	2,300
Extensions	1,700	1,700	1,700	1,700
Other sources (1)	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
Total elsewhere in JSA	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000
South East Dorset JSA				
Urban potential studies	22,700	22,700	22,700	22,700
Increased intensification	-	5,200	11,200	17,200
Extensions	2,900	2,900	2,900	2,900
Other sources (1)	14,800	14,800	14,800	14,800
Total South East Dorset JSA	40,400	45,600	51,600	57,600

(1) Completions 2001-04; and completions arising from commitment at 2004

Consultation on Growth and Spatial Strategy

- 4.40 In January 2005 a consultation was undertaken to assess public and stakeholder views of how South East Dorset should develop over the next 20 or so years. The consultation focused initially on the vision for the area and on options for growth, such as urban containment or planned extensions, which could form the eventual spatial strategy. The public was asked to identify positive and negative aspects of spatial strategies, rather than expressing support for one or other strategy as a 'package'.

- The majority of respondents supported the Vision, albeit many with suggestions for amendment and improvement. Many felt a good balance had been struck between environmental protection and the need for development;
- The concept of urban containment was generally supported. Many saw advantages in efficient use of land and resources. Others drew attention to problems of increased traffic congestion, town 'cramming' and reduced opportunities to provide affordable housing;
- Increasing the potential sources of housing supply, including urban extensions and growth at settlements other than Bournemouth/Poole/Christchurch, were seen to provide the opportunity for wider economic benefits and greater scope for providing affordable housing. However, many respondents objected to the prospect of loss of open land, greenbelt and natural habitats;
- The strategy of concentrating a large amount of development at a single significant expansion was seen by some to offer the opportunity to comprehensively plan a sustainable community, with a substantial contribution of affordable housing and employment opportunities. Others pointed to the dangers of urban 'sprawl', the weakening of the role of town centres and loss of greenbelt, countryside and natural habitat.

4.41 The public was also asked to give a view on what they would see as the advantages or disadvantages of accelerated growth in South East Dorset, up to a rate of development 50% greater than at present.

- The main benefits of greater growth mentioned included improved provision of housing in general and of affordable housing in particular; better prospects for economic growth; and improved opportunities for investment in the environment and cultural activities. There was a general proviso that benefits could only be realised if necessary, accompanying infrastructure was provided.
- Objectors to accelerated growth envisaged deterioration of the environment, including: loss of quality of life and quality of urban environment; loss of greenbelt; infrastructural overload, especially of the transport system; urban sprawl; and unnecessary in-migration.

4.42 Many of the above aspects were further explored through a stakeholder consultation event. Overall conclusions from the public and stakeholder consultations were as follows:

- The vision should be revisited and revised in a number of respects;
- A consistently held view was that urban containment should form the focus for future spatial strategy but that there was less clarity concerning what spatial strategy should be adopted to accommodate longer term growth;
- There was widespread concern about how to generate more affordable housing;
- Existing and future transport infrastructure was also identified as a major issue;

- Accelerated growth was viewed with some suspicion; present growth rates were thought to be more likely to deliver a balanced environment.

Testing against the Vision

4.43 In addition to the consultation exercises, the implications of future growth and possible spatial strategies were tested against the overall Vision for South East Dorset. A separate exercise was undertaken to assess the degree to which a range of spatial strategy options contributed to meeting identified outcomes from the Vision. Outcomes related to the natural environment, the economy, communities and culture, the urban environment and transport. This assessment is contained in an appendix to the separate 'Testing of Growth Options Technical Report'. The exercise also tested the degree to which the accelerated growth scenarios posed by the Regional Assembly contributed, or otherwise, to meeting the Vision. The strategic authorities considered a range of alternative spatial strategies. These comprised:

- Strategy 1 - Urban containment at Bournemouth/Poole/Christchurch;
- Strategy 2(a) - Urban containment and extensions to Bournemouth/Poole/Christchurch;
- Strategy 2(b) - Urban containment and extensions to Bournemouth/Poole/Christchurch, and urban containment and extensions to other settlements;
- Strategy (3) - Urban containment and extensions to Bournemouth/Poole/Christchurch; urban containment and extensions to other settlements; and large scale development close to Bournemouth/Poole/Christchurch in the form of a possible new settlement or significant expansion of an existing settlement.

4.44 The general conclusions were:

- a spatial strategy that focused on urban containment would most closely support the Vision;
- the greater the degree of development beyond the present spatial pattern of urban development, the less supportive the strategy to the outcomes of the Vision;
- the greater the overall level of growth in South East Dorset, the greater the degree of conflict with the outcomes of the Vision.

The Impacts of Intensification

4.45 The consultation reported above indicated some preference for a strategy of urban containment, but also concerns about possible effects of intensifying development in the urban areas. The strategic authorities are also very concerned that the social impacts in particular should be properly examined; because intensification will be an element of the development strategies for all the regions principal urban areas, it is strongly recommended that the Regional Assembly should commission research as a priority.

4.46 Although time and resource limitations have ruled out detailed research as part of this Joint Study, the range of likely impacts of higher growth have been scoped ¹, with a particular focus on the scenarios examined at the request of the Regional Assembly, which would require urban concentration beyond the level identified by the urban capacity studies.

4.47 The paper notes some potential advantages of urban intensification:

- making beneficial use of vacant and derelict land, without necessarily increasing densities across residential areas;
- supporting urban renaissance, if linked to policies to protect urban character and open space and to develop safe high quality environments.

4.48 But it also identifies a range of concerns which are likely to become more acute as intensification increases:

- physical impacts – loss of employment and retail sites, open space and natural habitats, with increasing pressure on sites and higher land prices; changing urban character through increasing scale and height of buildings
- social impacts – unattractive environments deter rather than attract residents; saturation of the market with flats at the expense of family housing, compounding the problem of the aging population and failing to provide for retaining or attracting families and essential workers
- infrastructure impacts – scattered developments putting pressure on transport, water and sewerage systems and community facilities.

4.49 In addition, there are barriers to increasing intensification beyond the level identified in the urban capacity studies. These include: issues of market capacity; the development industry's capacity to deal with brownfield sites; the level of contributions demanded from developers; and public concerns over "town cramming" which have emerged in the consultations on this study and will recur as Local Development Frameworks are prepared.

4.50 These factors raise serious doubts as to whether further intensification beyond the level indicated by the Urban Capacity studies would be either desirable or deliverable.

Labour Market Implications

4.51 An important consideration in planning for future population, housing and other growth is to assess the demands of the economy for additional labour. Findings from the labour market accounts show that, between 2001 and 2016, there will be an excess of labour over jobs. After 2016, the situation will reverse, with a significant shortfall of economically active people. This pattern emerges in all the growth scenarios.

4.52 This potential mismatch between people and jobs raises significant economic and spatial planning issues. In particular, it stresses the importance of developing employment opportunities in the early years of the period covered by the strategy. It should also be noted that these balances are based on the

¹ South East Dorset Sub Regional Study, Testing Growth Options Technical Report

assumption that current commuting patterns will continue; these show a significant outflow of commuters from South East Dorset (see 3.46-3.48). Some of the shortfall in labour supply in the later period could be made up if out-commuting flows could be reduced.

Transport Implications

- 4.53 The transport implications of the development options and growth scenarios have been fully assessed, and the outcomes are explained and mapped in the Transport Technical Paper.
- 4.54 The intensification of development within Bournemouth/Poole/Christchurch through exploiting urban capacity has significant implications. The growth scenarios were tested using the South East Dorset Traffic Model, making traffic forecasts for the morning peak hour in 2026. The results demonstrate that, even at the lowest development levels, the majority of the key road junctions within the Bournemouth/Poole/Christchurch are grossly over capacity (>150% demand to capacity ratios). The higher growth scenarios both increase congestion within the urban area, and widen congestion problems to the major junctions on the edge of the conurbation.
- 4.55 In addition to the network analysis undertaken to examine the impacts of development within the urban area, there have been further transportation studies to consider the viability and impact of the identified urban extensions, including a major development in the Western Sector. The latter indicated that such development in the Western Sector would be unsustainable, as environmental constraints would limit the ability to provide sufficient local facilities and employment leading to high levels of commuting. This in turn would require major transportation infrastructure improvements.
- 4.56 Thus conclusions from the transport studies are, in summary, that:
- to support any of the spatial strategies considered for South East Dorset, there will be a need for major investment in the transport infrastructure (as detailed in the supporting Local Transport Plan 2);
 - failure to resource these initiatives adequately would lead to unacceptable congestion, air quality and impact on the environment. The strategy recognises that a contributions policy from small infill residential developments is a key component of providing resource;
 - development intensification in excess of that identified through the Urban Capacity studies would be wholly unsustainable, with major gridlock of the network and severe impact on the local economy and environment.

Other Infrastructure Implications

- 4.57 To assess the possible effect of future development scenarios for South East Dorset on other infrastructural provision, consultation has been undertaken with the Environment Agency, and with companies responsible for water supply and infrastructure, wastewater and sewage treatment. Advice was sought on the implications for service provision of overall levels of future growth and, if possible, on the implications of individual extension schemes.

- 4.58 Regarding the latter, an earlier round of consultation with the Environment Agency had already been undertaken looking at all the individual extensions. In the light of advice from the Agency, revisions had already been made to the list of potential extension sites and their boundaries prior to this further round of consultation.
- 4.59 In summary, none of the growth levels imply major difficulties with regard to water supply, sewerage or sewage treatment, although substantial investment will be required. Development at the higher growth scenario levels might cause problems with security of water supply towards the end of the plan period, particularly in the Bournemouth area. The higher levels would also require review of the sewage treatment works serving Bournemouth, North Bournemouth and Poole, where expansion of facilities would be expensive. For sewerage, the majority of development will not require substantial improvement to the existing network, but developers will need to bear the costs of additional sewers to serve new development sites.

Strategic Sustainability Assessment

- 4.60 The South East Dorset Strategy has been the subject of a Strategic Sustainability Assessment (SSA). This has formed an integral part of the work and incorporates the requirements of both sustainability appraisal and strategic environmental assessment. The SSA process involved the four statutory environmental consultees (English Nature, Environment Agency, Countryside Agency and English Heritage), which need to be involved to meet the provisions of the SEA Directive, as well as a variety of key stakeholders, including Dorset local authorities and social and economic representatives.
- 4.61 The SSA was applied to the vision, spatial strategy options and First Detailed Proposal and is presented in a separate Technical Paper, "South East Dorset Sub-Regional Spatial Strategy – Strategic Sustainability Appraisal Report". This has been presented to the Regional Assembly to inform a wider strategic sustainability assessment of RSS. In summary, the sub-regional SSA tested options 1, 2(a), 2(b) and 3 (described in paragraph 4.44) and found that the most appropriate option would be a combination of strategies 2(a) and 2(b).

Conclusion

- 4.62 It is important to note that growth levels for South East Dorset up to 2026 are likely to be among the highest for any major urban area in the South West, even though the opportunities for the outward expansion of the conurbation are severely limited. To achieve the vision for South East Dorset, it will be essential that a commensurate level of regional investment in transport and other infrastructure is made to accompany the estimated growth. Without this investment, there is a very real danger that the economic prosperity of the area will be jeopardized, and the quality of the area will deteriorate.

5. VISION AND SPATIAL STRATEGY

- 5.1 The preceding chapters provide the context and basis for the Spatial Strategy which is set out in this chapter. Chapter 2 gives some contextual background to the study area and identifies key planning issues. Chapter 3 describes the role and functions of the area and its constituent parts, linking themes and drawing from local and external research. Chapter 4 reports in detail on the assessment of the area's capacity for growth, the options available for development, and the ways in which growth scenarios and development options have been tested.

Vision

- 5.2 At an early stage in the Joint Study process, a draft vision for the area was developed. Following public consultation, the broad vision set out below was agreed as the basis for developing the spatial strategy for the area's future up to 2026.
- 5.3 "In the future South East Dorset will strengthen and develop its regional, national and international role within its outstanding environment and be recognized internationally as a prime example of a sustainable conurbation. This will be achieved by:
- (a) sustaining, safeguarding, promoting and celebrating the unique quality of its natural environment and coastal setting,
 - (b) growing a dynamic economy that makes minimal demands on natural resources,
 - (c) fulfilling its economic potential through investing in people, transport and other infrastructure,
 - (d) promoting job growth that reduces out-commuting and increases local wage rates,
 - (e) connecting business, educational establishments and communities,
 - (f) providing quality housing for all sections of the population,
 - (g) enriching the quality and breadth of its culture,
 - (h) creating and strengthening vibrant communities,
 - (i) improving the quality of its urban environment, and
 - (j) reducing the need to travel within the conurbation, improving accessibility and investing in sustainable transport."
- 5.4 This broad vision is developed in more detail in the thematic chapters which follow. The full vision is set out in Appendix 1.

Spatial Strategy

- 5.5 The spatial strategy aims to secure the vision by focusing development on the existing built up area in a manner that reinforces those elements of the

conurbation's structure which can contribute towards the development of a genuinely sustainable urban form of unique character, within an internationally valued environment.

5.6 The **Spatial Strategy** is thus:

- (a) to concentrate the majority of development in urban areas, particularly at town and local centres which are on prime transport corridors;
- (b) to focus the most intensive activities in the centres of Bournemouth and Poole in order to continue an 'urban renaissance' of attractive, vibrant and culturally stimulating town centres;
- (c) to bring forward the development of Bournemouth Airport as a regionally significant employment site, once the related transport infrastructure has been provided (identified in Transportation element 5.2 (q) of the full vision, see Appendix 1);
- (d) to continue the Poole Bridge Regeneration Initiative as a regionally significant mixed residential and employment scheme;
- (e) to protect and enhance the sub-region's key natural and built environmental assets, including internationally valued habitats and unique coastal and landscape characteristics;
- (f) to make provision for the following urban extensions:

For housing:

Roeshot Hill, Christchurch	Up to 600 dwellings
Pardy's Hill, Corfe Mullen*	Up to 700 dwellings
Wimborne North*	Up to 600 dwellings
Cuthbury, Wimborne	Up to 200 dwellings
Parley Cross, West Parley	Up to 900 dwellings
TOTAL	Up to 3,000 dwellings

For employment:

Blunt's Farm, Ferndown	Up to 20ha
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*The development of these sites will be subject to a satisfactory hydrological survey.

Local Development Frameworks will define detailed site boundaries and set out the phased release of land, taking account of the implementation of infrastructure pre-requisites, local need and the availability of suitable brownfield sites;

- (g) apart from the limited urban extensions identified in (f) above, to contain the outward spread of the urban areas and other settlements within or bounded by the existing boundaries of the South East Dorset Green Belt;

- (h) to improve the connectivity of South East Dorset by air, sea, rail and road to other parts of Britain and Europe, making best use of the principal gateways of Bournemouth Airport and the Port of Poole; and
 - (i) to manage use of the transport network and locate development so as to minimise the need to travel within the conurbation and reduce the proportion of journeys made by single occupancy cars.
- 5.7 Chapters 6-10 below focus on specific themes; they provide a more detailed description and vision, identify the main strategic issues and propose elements to be included in the spatial strategy. This material provides the evidence and reasoned justification for the spatial strategy for the South East Dorset Joint Study Area, which is submitted for inclusion in the Regional Spatial Strategy.

6. ECONOMY

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 Creating and maintaining a thriving economy is a basic necessity if South East Dorset is to function as a sustainable conurbation, improving the quality of life for local people and contributing to regional and national prosperity. This chapter focuses on the economy of South East Dorset, the opportunities and challenges it faces, the vision for its future and the essential elements of a spatial strategy to secure that vision.

6.1.2 The chapter is structured as follows:

- Section 6.2 outlines the strengths and weaknesses of South East Dorset's economy and its role in the wider regional context;
- Section 6.3 sets out the broad vision for South East Dorset and the more detailed vision for its economy, with desired outcomes and indicators;
- Section 6.4 focuses on South East Dorset's economic strategy and on the strategic economic issues that must be tackled through the spatial strategy;
- Section 6.5 sets out the elements of the spatial strategy which are proposed to address the economic issues and secure a thriving economy in the period up to 2026.

6.2 The Economy of South East Dorset

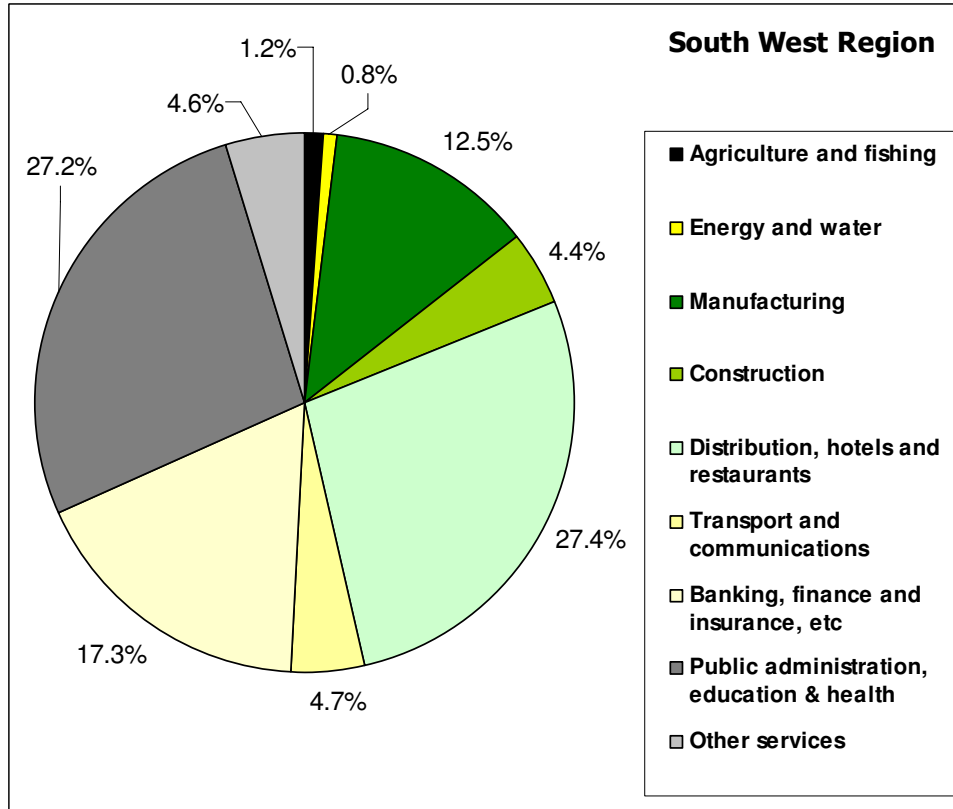
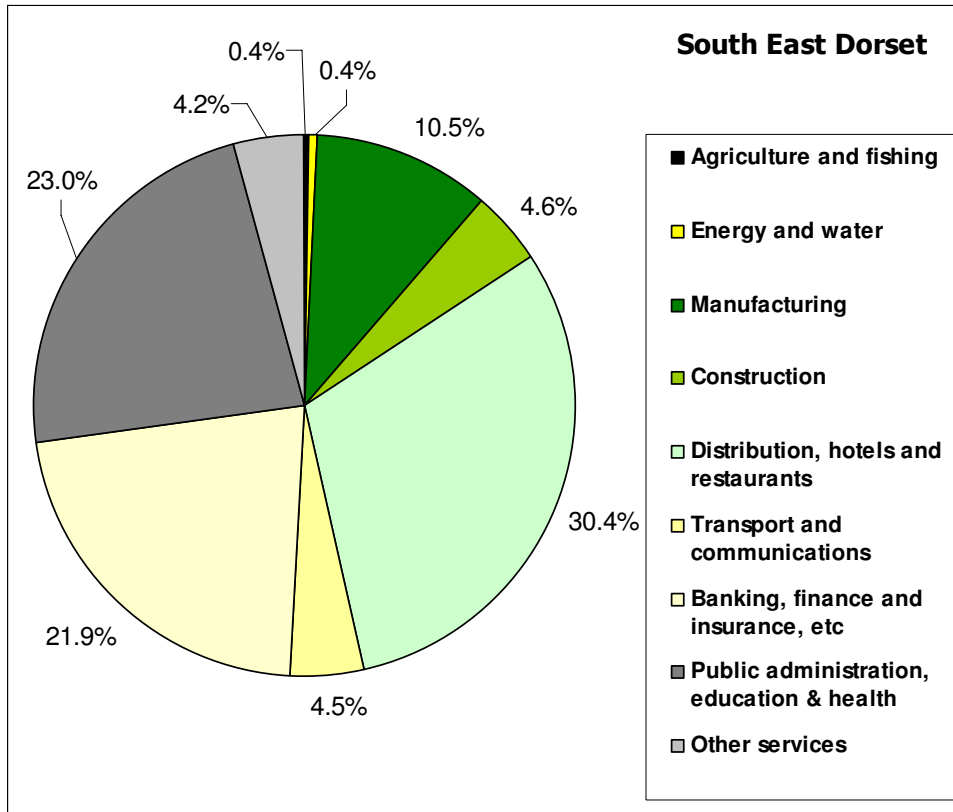
6.2.1 This section outlines the strengths and weaknesses of South East Dorset's economy and its role in the wider regional context. More detail is provided in background and technical papers.

Economic and Employment Structure

6.2.2 The South East Dorset Joint Study Area has a diverse economy which, like all economies, is subject to constant restructuring. Over the last 25 years, traditional sectors, such as those associated with tourism, have declined while employment has grown substantially in new sectors.

6.2.3 The sectoral structure broadly matches that of the South West region as a whole. There are, however, some differences between the South East Dorset and regional pictures in terms of the proportion of employment in manufacturing (this sector is less well represented in regional terms) and distribution, hotels and restaurants, tourism-related and financial, IT and other business activities (these sectors are well represented in regional terms).

Figure 6.2: Comparison of Industrial structure of South East Dorset with the South West Region



- 6.2.4 The following paragraphs identify some of South East Dorset's main sectors and look briefly at their future prospects, focusing first on sectors that are dependent on high levels of knowledge.
- 6.2.5 There has been substantial research locally, regionally and nationally into the characteristics, requirements and growth prospects of the **knowledge-based economy**. This has been driven by the tenet that knowledge and information are at the heart of economic activity and wealth creation in advanced economies. As an indication of the potential significance of the knowledge-based economy to South East Dorset, a recent assessment of its economic impact shows that an increase of 1,000 jobs in the knowledge economy locally would generate increases of over £200m in output, £100 m in GVA and 700 additional jobs.
- 6.2.6 The following points summarise local analysis of the strength of the knowledge-based economy in South East Dorset:
- In 2002 there were 38,525 people employed in the knowledge-based economy within South East Dorset. This represented 21.7% of the jobs.
 - Over four-fifths of these jobs were in the knowledge-based services. Only 18.7% of the jobs were in the knowledge-based production industries.
 - The predominance of service sector jobs is reflected in the geographical distribution of the knowledge-based jobs across the sub-region. Nearly a third of the jobs are located in two wards: the town centres of Bournemouth and Poole. Most of the employment floorspace in these two town-centre locations is office accommodation.
 - The majority of knowledge-based production is located on industrial estates around the periphery of Bournemouth/Poole/Christchurch, most notably at Bournemouth Airport.
 - The proportion of people employed in the knowledge-based industries is relatively low, compared to some of the potential competitor areas. In Brighton & Hove and Milton Keynes, around 28% of employees work in knowledge-based industries.
- 6.2.7 The following paragraphs look at the sub-region's sectors that fall within the definition of the knowledge economy, reflecting the relevant outcomes of recent research, including the study by DTZ Pinda and Arthur D Little on "The Spatial Dynamics of Change in the Region's Key Sectors", commissioned by South West of England Regional Development Agency (SWRDA).
- 6.2.8 Whilst the national trend is for the manufacturing sector to continue to decline as a proportion of all employment, owing to competition from low cost economies worldwide, the concentrations of **high technology manufacturing** in South East Dorset are still regionally significant. Among the key drivers of such manufacturing are numerous companies in the **advanced engineering** sector and a cluster of **aerospace-related businesses** at Bournemouth Airport. There is also strength in the **marine sector** focused on key companies in Poole.
- 6.2.9 While regional research suggests that employment in advanced engineering may decline, there are grounds for optimism in relation to the sub-region's

prospects. The expansion of Bournemouth Airport and the development of the adjoining land at Aviation Park will underpin the commercial success of air-related companies such as Cobham plc and help to stimulate further growth. In the marine sector, increasing leisure demand and the establishment of the UK's first Marine Skills Centre in Poole will enable the sector to build on current success.

- 6.2.10 Among the sectors that have experienced significant growth in South East Dorset in recent years is the **financial, IT and other business activities** sector. It is potentially significant in the context of developing a more competitive economy, as it is a relatively high value-added sector. A number of major financial companies have their headquarters in South East Dorset. However, this is a sector where technological and other developments can produce rapid and radical change. The recent trend towards transferring back-office jobs in the financial sector (as well as call centre jobs) to the Indian sub-continent and elsewhere gives cause for concern about its local employment prospects.
- 6.2.11 As far as **information and communications technology (ICT)** is concerned, the DTZ/Arthur D Little research suggests that there will be continued growth regionally, although not as rapid as in the past. ICT servicing local markets and digital content activity associated with creative industries will focus on key city regions; Bournemouth/Poole is one of those identified in the report.
- 6.2.12 **Creative industries** are one of South East Dorset's emerging high value sectors that have the potential to add to the prosperity and diversity of the economy. South East Dorset's higher and further education facilities, have leading edge capabilities of national stature in creative fields such as animation, are a unique asset in this respect. Their future development is dependent on the adequate provision of incubation and 'grow-on' space, as well as appropriate business advice and mentoring and the availability of start-up and venture capital.
- 6.2.13 Looking at sectors outside the definition of "knowledge-based", South East Dorset has a well-established **tourism and leisure** sector. South East Dorset is a major destination with a regional, national and international role as a leisure resource. Tourism continues to be a major sector for South East Dorset in employment terms and is projected to grow. It has traditionally been largely a low skill, low wage sector, with problems of seasonality as well as quality. But the regional research suggests that tourism is shifting towards the development of higher quality, higher value activities, attractions and accommodation, and this is supported by tourism policy and by recent experience at both regional and sub-regional levels.
- 6.2.14 South East Dorset has the potential to benefit from this shift, building on the conference facilities, the cluster of language schools and the proposed Hotel School in Bournemouth, the quality of watersports facilities in Poole, and South East Dorset's location between a National Park and a World Heritage Site. The development of Bournemouth Airport will further enhance the quality tourism offer of South East Dorset and generate significant additional tourism employment and spend; a recent economic impact analysis indicates that an increase in passenger numbers to the level envisaged in the national air transport strategy could increase visitor spend in the area by almost £70m per annum and generate around 1,300 additional tourism-related jobs. The development of the National Sailing Academy and the build-up to the 2012

Olympic sailing events at Portland will also have spin-offs for South East Dorset in both the tourism and marine technology sectors.

6.2.15 All of these sectors, with the exception of financial and business services, are already regarded as 'priority sectors' in the SWRDA's Regional Economic Strategy (RES) in terms of where intervention and business support activity will be concentrated. In view of the value added by Financial and Business Services and the regional growth prospects recently highlighted by Cambridge Econometrics, there is a case for reviewing the level of support to this sector in the RES.

6.2.16 The **public sector** is an important generator of economic activity across South East Dorset. Direct benefits include employment opportunities for professional/ graduate workers. Indirectly, good public services (e.g. education and health) are increasingly seen as factors in attracting and retaining professional and managerial workers in an area. In view of the size of the public sector within South East Dorset, safeguarding such employment is an important priority.

6.2.17 At the same time, it should be acknowledged that many support services such as **healthcare, retail and leisure**, whilst not high value in themselves, play an essential role in supporting the high value-added sectors. Economic forecasts indicate there will be a continuing need for such work and for workers who are both willing and able to do these types of jobs.

6.2.18 **In summary**, South East Dorset has a diverse economic structure. It has strengths, both relative to the regional economy and in absolute terms, in a number of sectors. Some of these are in knowledge based activities – advanced engineering, air-related industries, financial and business services, creative industries. Others include tourism and leisure, public services, health and retail. The overall structure, with a preponderance of low value-added activities, is reflected in a per capita Gross Value Added (GVA) rate below that of other principal urban areas in the South West, and below the national rate.

6.2.19 Although, in a fast-changing global economy, the prospects for some of these sectors are far from certain, the overall prospects are good. The economic forecasts for the regions Joint Study Areas prepared by Cambridge Econometrics for SWRDA indicate that South East Dorset is expected to experience above average employment growth over the period 2004 to 2021 – 13%. This compares with 11% for the South West region and 10% for the UK. The same research shows that a number of the broad industry groups that are well-represented in South East Dorset's economic structure – distribution, hotels and catering; financial and business services; government and other services – are forecast to grow over that period.

6.2.20 The knowledge-based sectors described in earlier paragraphs have the potential to flourish, provided the conditions can be created to enable South East Dorset to compete with other city-regions. This is a very significant challenge for the regional and sub-regional spatial strategies to meet.

Workforce and Labour Market

6.2.21 Securing an appropriate balance between labour supply and demand, in terms of both numbers and skills, is an important consideration in planning for future population, housing and other growth. For South East Dorset, findings

from an analysis of labour demand and supply show that, between 2001 and 2016, there will be an excess of labour over jobs. After 2016, the situation will reverse, with a significant shortfall of economically active people. These findings need to be treated with some caution for three reasons. First they are based on estimates of the rate at which housing development will take place. These estimates assume relatively more housing will be built annually in the period to 2016. Secondly, the estimates of job growth are taken from long-term economic forecasts. The value and degree of certainty that can be attributed to such forecasts diminishes rapidly the further the forecasts extend into the future. Thirdly, the labour market adjusts in a variety of ways as demand and supply change, and the analysis largely reflects the continuation of current patterns relating to issues such as sectoral growth, participation rates and commuting patterns. It is desirable to reduce the amount of net out-commuting, and if the strategy is successful, this will add to the overall labour supply.

- 6.2.22 The **age structure** of the sub-region affects its economy. South East Dorset has a relatively elderly population with disproportionately more people of retirement age than nationally. The working-age population (16-60/64) is similarly imbalanced, with a greater proportion of people aged over 45 and conversely fewer in the younger age groups.
- 6.2.23 Population forecasts for the period to 2026 show an increased ageing of South East Dorset's working-age population. This is due to two factors. Firstly, those born during the baby-boom of the 1950s and 1960s are reaching middle age (and beyond). Secondly, migration to South East Dorset shows a relatively elderly age profile. Statistics suggest that the area attracts in-migrants who are in their late forties and fifties and at the same time loses out-migrants in their twenties and thirties.
- 6.2.24 The implications for the economy include possible labour and skills shortages, particularly after 2016, as experienced workers leave the labour force; and a high demand for workers in the social care, health and other services required by the large elderly population. It will be important to ensure that the area provides for the labour and skills that it will need.
- 6.2.25 In terms of **participation**, both the proportion of those of working-age population who are economically active and the percentage in employment are above the national average. In part this reflects the relative prosperity of the local economy in terms of the availability of jobs if not the levels of wages. There has been a significant increase in the number of people in employment within South East Dorset since the early 1990s. This demand for labour will have been met by a combination of people moving to the area for work, unemployed people finding work and those who were formerly economically inactive being drawn into the labour market.
- 6.2.26 Bournemouth/Poole/Christchurch is highly self-contained, with 81% of workers living and working within it. Nevertheless **commuting** is important to the economy of South East Dorset and enables residents to gain access to jobs. Though it also introduces considerable social and environmental costs.
- 6.2.27 As far as the labour market is concerned, the extent of commuting between the sub-region and South Hampshire in particular suggests a degree of imbalance or mismatch between labour supply and demand. Approaching 12,000 people commute out, while something under 9,000 commuting in.

Commuting patterns are of course the result of individual decisions based on a number of factors, including the willingness to spend time travelling, the cost of travel and the availability and relative cost of housing, as well as the location of appropriate jobs. However there would be benefits in reducing the level of commuting, both as a means of retaining labour and skills to meet local needs and for reasons of sustainability. The aim should be for the local economy to meet the employment needs of all its residents.

- 6.2.28 Commuting patterns are described and analysed in detail in the Commuting Analysis Technical Paper, and the issues are addressed more fully in Chapter 3 (Roles and Functions).
- 6.2.29 The overall picture of South East Dorset as a prosperous area masks serious issues in terms of **earnings**. Gross weekly full-time earnings are, overall, below the national and regional levels, although a mixed picture emerges at local authority level. Average earnings of residents in Christchurch and East Dorset exceed the national and regional levels, reflecting the socio-economic structure of communities in these Districts. By contrast, residence-based statistics for Bournemouth show average earnings at only 78.5% of the national level.
- 6.2.30 On a workplace basis, the picture is slightly different, with earnings above the regional level (though still below the national level) in Christchurch and Poole. Again the figure for Bournemouth is very low (79.4% of the national average). In part, wage levels reflect industrial structure. Christchurch and Poole have strengths in sectors such as advanced engineering and ICT, whereas in Bournemouth there are concentrations of workers in relatively poorly paid occupations such as hotels and catering.
- 6.2.31 The implications of low earnings, include, labour market problems in terms of recruitment and retention, low productivity and low spending, as well as the broader issues of deprivation and exclusion (see paragraphs 6.2.54-6.2.60).
- 6.2.32 There are also close relationships between the issues of low pay and **skills**. In terms of basic levels of literacy and numeracy, South East Dorset performs at around or marginally better than national averages. But South East Dorset fares less well when higher skill levels are examined. The percentage of the working age population with qualifications equivalent to NVQ level 3 or above is lower than the average rate in both the South West and South East Regions. The same is true for NVQ level 4 or above (i.e. degree level or above), with Poole faring particularly poorly.
- 6.2.33 This may be linked to the out-migration of young people from the area. There is some evidence that school-leavers go away to university and then, rather than returning to employment within this area, are finding employment elsewhere. This may be because of a lack of suitable employment opportunities locally. Whatever the reason, it results in a loss of South East Dorset's potential skill-base, which in turn will make the area less attractive for inward investors.
- 6.2.34 There is evidence, both from consultation with the business sector and from the recent Strategic Area Review carried out by the Learning and Skills Council, that employers within South East Dorset experience problems recruiting skilled workers. A lack of an adequately trained workforce will have repercussions in terms of business performance and competitiveness, and in

the long term may affect rates of innovation and the introduction of new technology.

- 6.2.35 Tackling current and future skill shortages is an important issue for the sub-regional strategy. While recruiting staff from outside South East Dorset may help, it is increasingly difficult due to the high ratio of wages to house prices across South East Dorset and the fact that other areas may also be competing for the same limited supply of skills. In addition, such an approach would bring additional development pressures.
- 6.2.36 Other approaches are to provide the opportunities that will enable young people to stay in the area to learn and work and to focus on up-skilling through education, vocational training, workforce development and other actions. South East Dorset has some of the necessary infrastructure in place, including a strong schools sector and major assets in higher/further education - Bournemouth University, Bournemouth & Poole College, and the Arts Institute. The challenge will be to use these and other opportunities to develop skill levels that rival those of other city-regions and enable South East Dorset to compete successfully with them.

Land and Premises

- 6.2.37 South East Dorset appears to be well provided with land and premises to enable the economy to develop. In 2004, approximately 170 hectares of land had planning permission or was allocated for employment development. There is a strategic employment site at Bournemouth Airport and the Poole Bridge Regeneration Scheme provides for major employment development. In addition there are major locations for office development in the town centres of Bournemouth and Poole, the Lansdowne and Castle Lane East, and the town centres have potential for retail development.
- 6.2.38 However the view expressed by business and by economic development officers is that the true availability of employment land is anything but healthy. In reality there is a shortage, and in particular there is very little land available in the locations which have been popular with businesses in the past.
- 6.2.39 Employment land availability studies (at 2004) indicate that almost half of the identified hectareage is only likely to be made available in the long term. This includes the very significant area at Bournemouth Airport, the development of which is dependent upon considerable investment in new infrastructure. A further 40 hectares are only available in the medium term; 15 hectares are available in the short term. There is very little land in the “immediate” category, i.e. land which can be developed without any delay, particularly in Bournemouth/Poole/Christchurch.
- 6.2.40 The causes of the availability problems are varied. Lack of adequate access, also applies to the land whose redevelopment depends on the Twin Sails Bridge, as well as to some of the smaller sites. Other issues include land assembly problems, and the retention of land by owners hoping to gain permission for a higher value use.
- 6.2.41 A separate assessment undertaken for SWRDA supports the local findings on land availability. It found that there were only a handful of sites available in Bournemouth/Poole/Christchurch in the medium to long term. The consultants concluded that there is “a very limited supply of employment land and a

shortage of light industrial/ warehouse units on the market". The problem is particularly acute in Bournemouth, where they found that capacity had nearly been achieved on existing industrial estates and there were only limited opportunities for new industrial/commercial developments elsewhere.

6.2.42 Recent local studies of the employment property market have concluded that: economy and its role in the wider regional context;

- there is strong demand from occupiers, developers and investors for freehold industrial property across Bournemouth/Poole/Christchurch, reflected in the many recent industrial land deals;
- the speculative office market is weak;
- there is some evidence of occupier demand for office space but it is not as strong as for the industrial market; and
- inward investment interest is focussed primarily on existing space as opposed to development land, owing to tight client timescales.

6.2.43 A significant problem in terms of employment land supply is the rate of losses to other uses. Employment land in South East Dorset is vulnerable because it is subject to intense pressure for housing development, exacerbated by demand from people moving into the area. It is often hard to resist redevelopment for housing in a national policy context where re-use of brownfield sites is encouraged, and a local context of a shortage of housing available for local people.

6.2.44 In addition the provision of land for employment is affected by the area's geography and its environmental constraints. There are few opportunities to develop employment land that is well located in relation to housing and to transport networks and that does not impinge on land with a high environmental value. These limitations, together with the infrastructure constraints that are holding up the development of major strategic sites, pose a significant challenge for the spatial strategy.

Connectivity

6.2.45 Good connectivity is critical to the success of a modern economy. The transport networks to and from South East Dorset are described in some detail in Chapter 3 (see paragraphs 3.39 to 3.4) The area's advantages include reasonable accessibility to London and the South East by road and rail, and a port and airport providing access to overseas destinations. However, there are also serious deficiencies, including constraints affecting the capacity and potential of these links; inadequate links with the rest of the Region; and problems with the conurbation's internal connectivity. In particular:

- the A31 trunk road/M27/M3, to and from London and South East England suffers from congestion around Southampton as well as delays caused by seasonal traffic;
- most seriously, links to this route across the conurbation from Poole are poor, resulting in congestion, delays and impacts on communities;

- the potential of the port of Poole is constrained both by the depth of water in Poole Harbour, being addressed (see paragraph 6.5.37(q)) and relatively poor road links. A rail link is available to the port, which currently has a limited role (although there is some scope for increased levels of use). The road links required for the development of the Port and Poole Bridge regeneration sites include the provision of a second lifting bridge. The need for improved links from Poole to the A31 Trunk Road has already been noted;
- the realisation of the potential of Bournemouth Airport for flights, as well as the development of the strategic employment site on adjoining land, depends on improved surface access, particularly a link from the A338 Spur Road;
- none of the road and rail routes to the west and north provide high capacity links, and the connections northwards are particularly poor. In economic terms, this reinforces South East Dorset's orientation towards the South East Region and inhibits the development of its potential as a driving force in the economic prosperity of the South West Region;
- internal and external commuting constitute a significant proportion of journeys, particularly at peak hours, and contribute to general congestion. This impacts on business both directly, in terms of delays and increased costs, and indirectly, as a disincentive to relocation and inward investment into the area.

6.2.46 There are thus a significant number of connectivity problems which impact on South East Dorset and its economy. Evidence gathered through consultation shows that the business community regards improvements to transport infrastructure as the highest priority in securing the prosperity of South East Dorset's economy.

6.2.47 Connectivity issues are discussed more fully in the Transport chapter.

Disadvantage and Exclusion

6.2.48 South East Dorset has the outward appearance of a prosperous area, and some of the evidence from economic statistics, such as low rates of unemployment, bears this perception out. However there is also clear evidence of disadvantage and exclusion affecting individuals and communities.

6.2.49 The issue of housing affordability is covered more fully in the Housing chapter. Here it should be noted that, in the analysis carried out by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation in 2003, all of the districts in South East Dorset were among the 7% least affordable local authority areas in England in terms of the ratio of average house prices to working household incomes. Two – Purbeck and East Dorset - were the only areas outside London that were among the 10 least affordable local authorities in the country. These high ratios between house prices and average earnings effectively exclude a significant element of the local population from the prosperity and quality of life that employment elsewhere in the country brings. The Regional Housing Strategy targets the districts of Bournemouth, East Dorset, Poole and Purbeck as major hotspots for problems of housing affordability for key workers.

- 6.2.50 Low earnings are also linked to economic exclusion through the high cost of access to jobs and training. In addition, the lack of higher level skills leads to exclusion from a range of job opportunities, and this could become a more serious problem if the development of a knowledge-based economy is not linked to initiatives to upskill the workforce. It should also be noted that low overall levels of unemployment mask relatively high rates of long-term unemployment.
- 6.2.51 Economic exclusion bears on individuals, but tends to be concentrated in particular areas and communities. The 2004 Index of Multiple Deprivation shows that 20 of the Super Output Areas in Bournemouth and Poole fall within the most deprived 20% of such areas nationally. Four of these are in the most deprived 10% of areas nationally. Three of the latter are in Boscombe, where a Single Regeneration Budget programme and other initiatives have been focused to tackle the problems; the fourth is in Wallisdown. Elsewhere multiple deprivation is concentrated in the West Howe and Kinson areas of Bournemouth, the Turlin Moor and Alderney areas of Poole, and the two town centres.
- 6.2.52 In terms of individual aspects of economic deprivation, the most serious issue is in the “education, skills and training deprivation” element, where 12 Super Output Areas are in the most deprived 10% nationally, including (in addition to the areas noted already) parts of Somerford in Christchurch, Townsend in Bournemouth, and Newtown in Poole. In terms of employment deprivation, 8 areas are in the most deprived 10% nationally, while the figure for income deprivation is 6.
- 6.2.53 Such deprivation affects not only individuals and communities but the economy as well. The exclusion of potential workers depresses levels of economic activity and productivity, and reduces the pool of local labour available to businesses. Low income levels reduce spending across the local economy.
- 6.2.54 There is a danger that deprivation, and the areas where it is concentrated, may not receive the attention it needs because of the prevailing view that the sub-region is prosperous. Regional and sub-regional spatial strategies need to ensure that multiple deprivation and economic exclusion are actively targeted.

South East Dorset’s Role in the South West Regional Economy

- 6.2.55 This section outlines South East Dorset’s role in and contributions to the economy of the South West region, drawing on the description of areas economy set out above and on regional research and policy statements about South East Dorset’s economic role.
- 6.2.56 South East Dorset is one of the South West Region’s **major economic drivers**. It is the second largest population centre in the Region, with a commensurate level of economic activity. It performs the roles that are characteristic of Principal Urban Areas, identified in the “Functional Analysis of South West Settlements” (Roger Tym & Partners, April 2005) as “providing a combination of larger concentrations of business and employment; labour force and skills; retail centres, universities and further education; larger hospitals and specialist healthcare; cultural/leisure/sports facilities; public administration; other service industries and facilities”.

6.2.57 South East Dorset has significant **sectoral strengths and potential**. It has a broadly-based economy, with significant specialisms in a number of sectors that are important to the South West Region as a whole. It has strengths in most of the key and emerging sectors identified as priorities in the Regional Economic Strategy, including three of the four such sectors that fall clearly within the definition of the knowledge economy – advanced engineering (including aerospace); information and communications technology; and creative industries – as well as tourism and the marine sector. It is also important as a centre for banking and financial services, retailing, culture and entertainment. Thus South East Dorset is an important economic resource, contributing to the regional economy and the achievement of its priorities, as well as to the wider national and international economy.

6.2.58 South East Dorset is a **national and international resource and destination** which benefits the South West Region by drawing in investment and spending from elsewhere. Businesses are attracted by its economic advantages as well as by other assets such as its outstanding environment and quality of life; a number of firms have chosen to locate their national or international headquarters here. The area is one of the South West's, and the UK's, prime resources for tourism and leisure, based on its assets as a coastal resort, conference venue, cultural and entertainment centre and focus for water-based activities, as well as on its location between a National Park and a World Heritage Site. Its language schools are also a major source of income from overseas.

6.2.59 South East Dorset offers two **strategic employment sites**, the scale and nature of which will benefit the wider regional economy. Aviation Park, adjoining Bournemouth Airport, will act as a flagship site for knowledge-based industries, based on the flourishing knowledge-based and air-related companies already established there. Poole Bridge Regeneration Initiative will open up a significant area of employment land through the redevelopment of centrally located brownfield land. Both sites are close to strategic transport facilities, but require significant access improvements.

6.2.60 South East Dorset has **strategic transport facilities** which provide national and international links from which the South West's economy can benefit. The role of the Port of Poole in providing freight and passenger services is stressed in the Regional Gateways Strategy, while the potential for expanding passenger services at Bournemouth Airport is recognised in both the national and regional air transport strategies. However their ability to serve the region and nation as principal gateways depends on significant investment in improvements to land-side access.

6.2.61 South East Dorset has **links with London and the South East Region** which enable the South West to benefit from their economic strengths. The area is connected towards the east via the high capacity A31/M27/M3 roads. This corridor is reinforced by the rail link to Waterloo. South East Dorset acts to a degree as a western extension to the flourishing economy based around this corridor, which is particularly strong in knowledge-based and other growth sectors. There are also important economic links through business connections, sectoral and academic networking and cross-commuting.

Regional Policy Context

6.2.62 As the final element of the background to the economy of South East Dorset, the following paragraphs set out the regional policy context for its future as stated in “The Way Ahead”, the region’s contribution to the delivery of the UK Sustainable Communities Plan, and in Regional Planning Guidance (RPG10). References to other strategies, including the regional economic, housing and transport strategies, are covered in appropriate places elsewhere in this chapter.

6.2.63 “The Way Ahead” provides a summary of the roles of South East Dorset in the wider regional economy, (see also paragraphs 6.2.55 – 6.2.61 above), and elements of a regional policy context for South East Dorset’s economy.

“Bournemouth and Poole (population 400,000) is the second-largest population centre in the region and, under current strategy, will see a significant increase in population and economic activity. The area is well connected to London and the South East with the A31/M27/M3 road/rail corridor particularly important. The conurbation has grown rapidly in recent decades, being a popular destination for people from the South East, and the housing market is under long-term price pressure. The economy has also grown significantly, with high activity rates and specialisms in marine, manufacturing, financial services and tourism. The area also benefits from: a strengthening higher education sector including Bournemouth University and Arts Institute; and facilities such as Bournemouth Airport and the Port of Poole. Improvements are required to the access to Bournemouth Airport and the associated strategic employment site. Despite the constraints on development imposed by environmental designations that surround the built-up area, the conurbation is planned to accommodate over 20,000 new homes in the period to 2016. Future growth and the urban renaissance it promotes should strengthen the conurbation’s economic, social and cultural base and address Bournemouth’s pockets of deprivation. A policy of regeneration and recycling urban land has been effective in recent years and needs to be pursued with equal vigour in the future. A good example is the Poole Bridge Regeneration Initiative, which will provide 4,000 homes and up to 6,000 jobs. Investment in key infrastructure is needed to ensure continued delivery of homes, as well as the recycling of employment land for future economic activity and improved connectivity to the South East and the rest of the South West region.”

6.2.64 “The Way Ahead” also includes the following statement, which provides a basis for aspects of the South East Dorset economic strategy described later in this chapter: “We believe that focused economic development of the knowledge-based and higher value-added sectors in Exeter, Swindon and Plymouth and at other centres such as **Bournemouth, Poole** and Taunton, will assist in improving regional productivity. Continued development in the knowledge base of our PUA’s, aligned with proposed levels of housing provision, and the provision of cultural and social facilities, will cement their future roles as large, vibrant sustainable communities.”

6.2.65 RPG 10 includes a spatial strategy policy for Bournemouth/Poole (SS13) which contains the following elements relating to the economy:

“Local authorities, developers, infrastructure and transport providers and other agencies should work together to achieve the following for Bournemouth/Poole:

- further economic expansion of the area, in particular by attracting and fostering high skill employment and by investing to improve educational and training levels, given the constraints on physical expansion;
- more efficient use of land and buildings within the existing urban areas through conversion, appropriate redevelopment and significantly increased residential and building densities;
- continued development of Bournemouth Airport as an important airport for the region and as a site for airport-related development;
- continued development of the port of Poole, including the improvement of regional and local transport links.”

6.2.66 These statements of regional policy provide a central part of the context on which the development of the economic aspects of the sub-regional economic and spatial strategies for South East Dorset are based.

Conclusions

6.2.67 This overview, based on a range of data and analysis, demonstrates that the economy of South East Dorset is relatively prosperous, especially when compared to the overall performance of the South West Region. However, it underperforms in comparison to many of its competitor regions and sub-regions elsewhere in the country (and beyond). The economy is in a state of transition, as some sectors grow and expand while others decline.

6.2.68 The Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Economic Partnership (BDPEP), which comprises partners in the public, voluntary and business sectors, is preparing an economic development strategy for the next 10 years, entitled Raising The Game. Based on the available data and analysis outlined in the previous paragraphs, BDPEP concludes that “the economy has grown significantly in recent decades especially in the conurbation, unemployment is low and economic activity rates are high and all this has been achieved within the environmental constraints that exist. There are, however, some important socio-economic issues to be addressed as the following sections of this strategy demonstrate. We are:

- not sufficiently recognised by regional agencies as a driver for economic growth in the region;
- not as productive as we should be;
- a relatively low wage economy;
- experiencing significant skills gaps and shortages that may be made worse by a rapidly ageing population and out migration of young people;
- one of the least affordable sub-regions in England in terms of the ratio of house prices to incomes;
- coming under increasing pressure from the business community to enhance the sub-region’s infrastructure, facilities and services so that it remains an attractive location for investment;

- struggling to tackle the causes of multiple deprivation in both urban and rural areas.”

6.2.69 BDPEP concludes that there is “a compelling case for ‘raising the game’ in a way that builds greater business confidence, strengthens the economy and creates an economy that delivers greater value for local people in terms of the quality of jobs available. What is required is a ‘quest for quality’ in terms of the business environment and local employment that will deliver better economic performance and a better quality of life”. Doing nothing is not an option, because it would lead to the erosion of South East Dorset’s competitiveness and comparative advantages.

6.2.70 The evolving South East Dorset economic development strategy “Raising the Game” is described more fully in Section 6.4 below.

6.2.71 The challenge facing South East Dorset is how to secure a thriving economy in a sustainable way – meeting the needs of businesses, communities and individuals while respecting the imperatives imposed by the area’s unique environmental quality. This challenge is recognised in broad terms in the overall Vision, and in more detail in the specific objectives for the economy, with associated outcomes and indicators, set out below.

6.3 Economic Vision

6.3.1 The South East Dorset sub-regional spatial strategy is founded on a vision for the area, developed by the Joint Study Area partners and tested through public and stakeholder consultation. This section sets out the parts of that vision that establish the direction for the economic elements of the strategy.

6.3.2 As noted, BDPEP – the sub-regional economic partnership – is developing an economic strategy, “Raising the Game”. It is clearly important that the economic and spatial strategies for the sub-region should be well integrated.

6.3.3 “Raising the Game” includes a vision, which is: “To develop a thriving, competitive business environment that delivers better quality employment opportunities and a better quality of life for local people in Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole”. Although this is essentially an economic vision, it chimes well with the broader vision developed for the South East Dorset sub-regional spatial strategy.

6.3.4 The overall vision for South East Dorset in 2026 is that it “will strengthen and develop its regional, national and international role within its outstanding environment and be recognised internationally as a prime example of a sustainable conurbation”. The elements of this overall vision that relate particularly to the economy are:

- **growing a dynamic economy that makes minimal demands on natural resources;**
- **fulfilling its economic potential through investing in people, transport and other infrastructure;**
- **promoting job growth that reduces out-commuting and increases local wage rates;**

- **connecting business, educational establishments and communities.**

6.3.5 The detailed vision for the economy (with the desired outcomes and the indicators of success) is as follows:

- **The area will aim for excellence in innovation, based on learning and research in our world-class vocational university, colleges and diverse range of businesses**

Outcome – high quality education and training opportunities available to everyone who desires them.

Indicator – number of students obtaining vocational qualifications.

- **The area will undergo further economic expansion, in particular by attracting and fostering high skill employment in high growth and innovative industries and by investing to improve educational and training levels to give people the right skills**

Outcomes - a growing economy based on a highly skilled workforce, with minimal dependence on in-migration; schools, colleges and University giving people the right skills for the local economy.

Indicators – net change in number of VAT registered businesses, number of businesses surviving into a third year of operation; a significant increase in the number of high skilled jobs; wage levels to reach at least average levels for the South East of England; a significant increase in GVA per head; significant expansion of educational, training and learning facilities and opportunities; in-migration rates reduced from 2006 levels; number of newly qualified young people obtaining local jobs.

- **The economy will continue to build on its diversity and strengths in its growing and key sectors:**

- a) **advanced engineering and aerospace**
- b) **creative and media industries**
- c) **financial and professional services**
- d) **information and communications technology**
- e) **marine industries**
- f) **food and drink**
- g) **health care**
- h) **public and government agencies**
- i) **tourism, including culture, heritage and conferencing**
- j) **retailing**

Outcome -sustainable economic growth that is not land hungry.

Indicators - increased output and productivity in all the above sectors; growth achieved through minimal land-take.

- **Bournemouth Airport will be the key strategic employment site in the area and the expansion of the airport itself will be a major commercial driver**

Outcome – large scale employment site attractive to knowledge-based industry at the airport.

Indicator – number of knowledge-based companies locating at the airport site.

- **Poole will contribute to the economy of the South West through its role as a major sea port and its regeneration opportunities, including the Twin Sails Bridge.**

Outcome – economically buoyant Poole using its newly regenerated areas to present an image that is dynamic and attractive to investors.

Indicators- amount of freight and the number of passengers using the Port of Poole; scale of economic growth.

- **the area will recognise and encourage the efforts of the voluntary and social economy**

Outcome - buoyant civic culture not just in the urban area but throughout South East Dorset.

Indicator - increased activity in the voluntary and social sectors

6.3.6 The following element of the vision for the natural environment is also relevant:

- **The natural environment will continue to be recognised as providing the area with a competitive edge in the development of an economy which is sensitive to the area’s environmental assets, by providing an attractive and desirable place in which to operate businesses and where employees can live and enjoy good health.**

Outcome: a thriving economy closely dependent on the quality of the environment.

Indicators: increase in the number of businesses attracted to or retained in the area because of its environment; increase in number of businesses dependent on the quality of the environment; total number of employees, number of pollution incidents in water courses.

6.4 Strategic Issues

6.4.1 This section focuses on the South East Dorset economic strategy and on the strategic economic issues that need to be resolved if South East Dorset is to fulfil its economic potential and grow a dynamic economy that makes minimal demands on natural resources. This leads into the final section which sets out how these issues will be tackled through the spatial strategy.

South East Dorset Economic Strategy – “Raising the Game”

6.4.2 As noted at the conclusion of Section 6.2, doing nothing is not an option. There are serious risks if the sub-region does not “raise its game”. For example:

- the attractiveness of the area as a place to live, combined with the high level of new residential developments coming forward, often in the form of high cost accommodation, will promote the continued growth of communities as second home and retirement locations;
- the problem of housing affordability will not be addressed;
- there will be continuing difficulties in recruiting and retaining young people in the workforce;
- the area's reliance on low level employment will continue, whilst 'knowledge based', or high level, employment could fall as a proportion of total employment;
- the wide disparity between those on higher and lower incomes will continue or worsen;
- South East Dorset could become even less competitive as a business location when compared to others in the UK and Europe.

6.4.3 Economic partners are convinced that the South East Dorset economy has the potential to perform better, for the reasons set out in paragraphs 6.2.55-6.2.61 above. Overall, many of the key ingredients are in place to build one of the most successful knowledge-based economies in Europe.

6.4.4 The economic development strategy "Raising the Game" identifies six strategic factors which will determine whether South East Dorset's economy will realise its potential:

- Diversity - a diverse employment structure which is not over-reliant on a small number of sectors or businesses, with a strong representation of high value-added and growth sectors and with clusters of excellence;
- Skilled workforce – a pool of labour with the higher level skills required by all sectors, and in particular the knowledge-based sectors;
- Physical infrastructure and connectivity – available employment land and premises that meet the range of business requirements, and transport systems that facilitate business operations, providing good access to markets and easy journeys to work;
- Knowledge base and innovation – resources and mechanisms to develop and exploit knowledge in and between high value-added businesses and higher/ further education, including technology transfer, innovation and science parks;
- Quality of life and sustainable communities – assets that meet the needs of local people, attract visitors and support the recruitment and retention of higher skilled workers;
- Strategic decision-making capacity – factors such as institutional arrangements, relationships between public and private sectors, political leadership and sustained motivation, highlighted in recent work by ODPM on Core Cities.

- 6.4.5 The Economic Strategy, “Raising the Game”, proposes initiatives to address all of these strategic factors, in order to achieve its vision of a thriving competitive economy. These will be pursued by BDPEP and the local strategic partnerships.
- 6.4.6 With the exception of partnership-building, all these issues are directly relevant to spatial planning and transport. In tackling them, the economic partners are looking to the regional and sub-regional spatial strategies to focus on the land use and transport needs of the economy and to provide appropriate long-term strategies. The following section identifies the strategic spatial solutions which are proposed to achieve this.

6.5 Spatial Strategy Elements

The Central Challenge

- 6.5.1 The most challenging strategic issue facing South East Dorset is the relationship between the economy and the environment – how to reconcile the pressures for new development arising from the need to secure the long-term prosperity of the area with the need to conserve and enhance the internationally and nationally recognized environmental quality of the area.
- 6.5.2 The necessity of “raising the game”, and the commitment to doing so, have been stressed above. The outstanding quality of the environment and the obligations – statutory, moral, cultural and scientific – to protect and enhance it are described in the Environment chapter. In order to reconcile these imperatives, the spatial strategy must guide future development in two ways.
- 6.5.3 Firstly the strategy must guide built development to locations that are least damaging in environmental terms. It must concentrate the majority of development in urban areas and take advantage of major strategic sites with economic potential (Aviation Park and Poole Bridge Regeneration Initiative), but allow limited provision for urban extensions where they provide for necessary employment appropriate to the site.
- 6.5.4 Secondly the strategy must provide the conditions that will enable the area’s economy to become more sustainable – an economy that produces jobs and wealth without consuming large areas of land or generating traffic and pollution, and which builds on the area’s business strengths and environmental assets. The spatial strategy must therefore provide for the development of sectors such as knowledge-based production and services, advanced engineering, marine and aviation, financial and other office services and tourism. It must provide for suitable land and premises on a variety of site types and locations, including focused locations for major office and retail developments; ensure that all the conditions are in place for developing and retaining the necessary workforce; meet the needs of the providers of training and skills development; and improve the area’s connectivity.
- 6.5.5 The following paragraphs focus on the key elements of the spatial strategy in more detail, dealing in turn with the factors identified in the economic strategy.

Improving Quality of Life and Sustainable Communities

- 6.5.6 The economy depends on the availability of a local workforce which, in both numbers and skills, meets the current and future needs of business. In order to

retain and develop such a workforce, the area must be able to satisfy people's basic needs and provide a suitable quality of life. The quality and availability of jobs, services, facilities, opportunities and environmental assets – all the necessities of sustainable communities - are therefore critical.

- 6.5.7 A key requirement for a sustainable conurbation is a range of job opportunities that are local and easily accessible to the workforce. This is best achieved by a spatial strategy that concentrates development in town and local centres, so that residential and employment uses are close to each other, together with the provision of land for employment on a variety of site types and locations that will satisfy the needs of a diverse range of business sectors. By encouraging urban renaissance and regeneration, the spatial strategy will help to meet the economic and other needs of disadvantaged communities and individuals, as well as improving the living environment.
- 6.5.8 Improving accessibility to jobs, skills and training opportunities is also essential. A transport strategy aimed at managing demand and promoting alternatives to single occupancy car use should help to minimise the growth of traffic congestion and encourage the use of more sustainable alternatives. The spatial strategy also supports the increase of opportunities for training and skills development by providing for the expansion of Bournemouth University, the Arts Institute and further education institutions.
- 6.5.9 South East Dorset's housing market is characterised by high demand, much of which is generated externally by in-migration and second home ownership. In this context, it is important for the economy that a range of appropriate housing is available to satisfy the needs of business and employees. The spatial strategy aims to provide an adequate supply of housing and secure a mix of dwelling types that meets the needs of all sections of the population.
- 6.5.10 In response to South East Dorset's very high house price to earnings ratio, there must be an emphasis on providing housing that is accessible to the less well-off (including workers needed to meet the social care and health needs of the area's aging population). The highest possible amount of affordable housing for sale or rent, taking account of the viability of individual sites and other demands on developer contributions, should be secured. The strategy makes limited provision for urban extensions where they facilitate the significant provision of affordable housing.
- 6.5.11 Finally an economically successful conurbation must comprise sustainable local communities that provide a high quality of life for their residents. An important element in creating and strengthening vibrant local communities is increasing their self-containment. The spatial strategy therefore supports the provision and retention of local services and facilities appropriate to the size and function of each community, including those related to education, faith, health, sport, recreation and culture. It also encourages high quality in the local environment, including the provision of recreational and informal open space and good access to the countryside.

Diversifying and Developing the Employment Structure

- 6.5.12 The foregoing analysis demonstrates the need not only to build on the diversity of the local economy and its existing sectoral strengths, but also to drive a dynamic shift towards higher value-added sectors, particularly in the knowledge-based sectors. The vision is of further economic expansion,

particularly by attracting and fostering high skill employment in high growth and innovative industries.

- 6.5.13 This shift is required for a range of reasons. Firstly, continuing to depend on the current employment structure will lead to decline, because of the preponderance of relatively low value sectors with limited growth prospects. Secondly, the ability to compete effectively with other conurbations and local economies depends on achieving strength in high value growth sectors. Thirdly, the environmental and geographical constraints that restrict the conurbation's ability to expand outwards demand a focus on sectors with limited needs for land and transport. Fourthly, a shift towards higher value-added sectors should help to tackle the issue of the area's relatively low average earnings. Finally, it is important to improve South East Dorset's contribution to the regional and national economy by raising productivity to, if not above, regional levels.
- 6.5.14 The spatial strategy therefore provides for the needs of a diverse local economy, with a specific focus on the requirements of those key sectors in which South East Dorset has particular strengths or which it needs to develop in order to achieve its vision.
- 6.5.15 For all sectors, the availability of sufficient and suitable land and premises are key requirements, as is improved connectivity; these matters are dealt with in paragraphs 6.5.24 – 6.5.35 below. Similarly, all sectors require a workforce that satisfies business needs in terms of numbers and skills. The spatial strategy therefore provides for housing development that meets the needs of all sectors of the population. In particular provision must be made for housing that is accessible to key workers in both private and public sectors.
- 6.5.16 The spatial strategy also needs to recognise the specific needs of particular sectors. These are outlined in the following paragraphs, while the requirements of knowledge-based industries are discussed in paragraphs 6.5.20 – 6.5.23 below.
- 6.5.17 Provision needs to be made for major developments in the office and retail sectors. In order to support the functions of the town centres of Poole and Bournemouth, to continue their urban renaissance and to take advantage of their nodal position in the transport systems, the spatial strategy directs major office developments to these centres. Similarly, Bournemouth and Poole should be the focus for shopping developments that will support their roles as major sub-regional shopping centres. Major office developments should also be directed to the existing concentrations of offices at the Lansdowne and Castle Lane East. Conversely offices should not be encouraged at locations where they would rely on high levels of car-based commuting. This would include the employment land at Bournemouth Airport unless provision is made to provide for the movement of the majority of employees to and from the site by sustainable modes of transport.
- 6.5.18 In any case, the latter is an appropriate site for air-related industries, building on the cluster of companies already located there, and for knowledge-based industries.
- 6.5.19 The spatial strategy provides support for the tourism sector, in order to retain the area's role as a prime visitor destination. Building on its established strengths, including its location, environment and reputation, the sector needs

to diversify its offer and raise standards, so as to remain competitive, tackle the issue of low pay and generate additional income. The spatial strategy promotes the growth of sustainable tourism by encouraging development that will improve the quality and range of attractions and accommodation, contribute to regeneration and help extend the season. In addition, recognising the benefits to the tourism sector of increasing passenger numbers at Bournemouth Airport, the strategy should support the provision of a new terminal and improved access.

Building Knowledge, Skills and Innovation

6.5.20 Many of the essential elements in building knowledge, skills and innovation lie outside the direct influence of spatial planning, in areas such as research and development, education, technology transfer, funding, business/academic links and sectoral networks. However there are a number of pre-requisites that the spatial strategy must provide if the desired shift in the focus of South East Dorset's economy is to be achieved.

6.5.21 Firstly, the area must offer land and premises that meet the requirements of knowledge-based business, including existing local companies wishing to expand, potential inward investors and start-up enterprises. The spatial strategy supports the provision of a range of site types and locations with good access and high quality environments. Aviation Park should act as a flagship site for knowledge-based industries, based on the flourishing knowledge-based and air-related companies already established there, underpinned by a new access to the A338 and benefiting from the expansion of Bournemouth Airport.

6.5.22 Secondly, the spatial strategy recognises the interdependence between business and academia which makes the presence of a flourishing higher and further education sector a key element in the locational decisions, as well as the success, of knowledge-based businesses. The strategy seeks to ensure that the academic institutions in the conurbation have the infrastructure that enables them to maintain and extend the learning and research that stimulate innovation and technological developments. This involves providing opportunities for the expansion of Bournemouth University, the Arts Institute and further education institutions.

6.5.23 Thirdly, the importance to the economy, of a high quality of life and of sustainable communities particularly applies to an economy aiming to improve its performance in the areas of knowledge, skills and innovation. The strategy provides for a living environment, including suitable housing, education and health facilities, recreational and cultural amenities, that will be attractive to the graduates and highly skilled employees and managers on whom the success of a knowledge-based economy rests.

Providing Land and Premises

6.5.24 Providing land and premises of the necessary quantity and quality for employment and business uses, in appropriate locations, is a key responsibility of spatial planning. In South East Dorset, the strategy for employment land and premises must be based on two imperatives. It must guide built development to locations that are least damaging in environmental terms. It must also ensure that sufficient and appropriate land and premises are available to enable the area's economy to prosper while becoming more sustainable and to drive the shift towards higher value-added sectors.

- 6.5.25 Decisions on the quantity of employment land to be provided are led by the labour market and workforce issues, discussed in paragraphs 6.2.21 to 6.2.36 above. These issues include the need to reduce the level of out-commuting from the area, in the interests of sustainability. The conclusion is that the spatial strategy needs to provide for the development of 110 hectares of employment land in the period up to 2026.
- 6.5.26 In locational terms, the strategy of concentrating development in the urban areas is likely to be least environmentally damaging. However other factors must also be addressed. Land and premises will only promote economic development if they effectively meet the needs of business in terms of location and quality. Different sectors and companies have different requirements. The spatial strategy therefore provides for employment development on a variety of site types and locations. As noted, these must include focused locations for major office developments at Bournemouth and Poole town centres and at the established office areas at the Lansdowne and Castle Lane East, and for major retail developments at Bournemouth and Poole town centres.
- 6.5.27 Another important aspect of the provision of employment land and premises is their location in relation to residential areas. Journeys to work constitute a significant proportion of trips within the conurbation; the large majority are private car trips and the majority of these are single occupancy. This commuting contributes to congestion which, from the business perspective, increases costs and acts as a disincentive to inward investment, and from a wider perspective creates atmospheric pollution. The cost of commuting bears heavily on the less well-off and is a factor in exclusion and deprivation. The strategy of concentrating development in the urban areas and of providing employment land in a variety of locations offers the potential for homes and jobs to exist in close proximity, hence limiting the need for car-based commuting as well as increasing the self-containment of local communities.
- 6.5.28 For the larger employment sites, which draw labour from a wide catchment area, access is a significant issue. As already noted, concentrating office, retail and other uses in town centres offers the best opportunity to provide effective public transport access. However the transport networks serving the main strategic sites require strengthening, and the spatial strategy needs to address this by delivering the Poole Bridge Regeneration Network; improvements to the corridor between Poole and the A31; and a link between Bournemouth Airport/Aviation Park and the A338.

Improving Connectivity

- 6.5.29 Good connectivity is a basic necessity of a successful modern economy. South East Dorset has some advantages in this respect, including reasonable accessibility to London and the South East by road and rail and a port and airport providing access to overseas destinations.
- 6.5.30 Nevertheless there are inadequacies, which include poor links to the rest of the South West region and to the north, increasing pressure on road links to London and the South East, and inadequate land-side transport links to Bournemouth Airport and the Port of Poole, as well as the problems (already noted) of general congestion within the conurbation. Evidence gathered through consultation shows that the business community regards improvements to transport infrastructure as the highest priority in securing the prosperity of the sub-region's economy.

- 6.5.31 However, while the spatial strategy must undoubtedly provide for improvements to connectivity, the commitment to major infrastructure development must be tempered by a number of factors. One is the prevailing national policy context, which looks to achieve accessibility improvements by means other than road-building. A related factor is the financial aspect; in the context of this policy framework, it would be unrealistic to expect the Government to provide finance for any but the most essential and clearly targeted transport infrastructure schemes where no other solution is available. A third factor is the quality of the environment. In many areas, both urban and rural, major transport development is likely to be unachievable as a result of statutory environmental protection, while in others local environmental quality and residential amenity are significant constraints.
- 6.5.32 The spatial strategy seeks to improve the connectivity of the sub-region by road, rail, air and sea to other areas in Britain and Europe, including making the best use of the principal gateways of Bournemouth Airport and the Port of Poole. In the context of national transport policy, financial realism and environmental considerations, the spatial strategy should do this, and minimise the increase in traffic congestion, by means of demand management, providing alternatives to single-occupant car journeys and locating development so as to minimise the need to travel.
- 6.5.33 The spatial strategy also focuses on delivering a small number of strategically significant transport improvements, all of which are important for providing a thriving, competitive business environment:
- Improvements to the A31 - Poole corridor: a survey undertaken by Dorset Business in 2004 identified this link as the top priority from the business perspective. Its effect will be to link the Port of Poole, the conurbation, Bournemouth Airport and the A31 (connecting with London and the South East);
 - The Poole Bridge Regeneration Network and improvements to the infrastructure at the Port of Poole (including a deeper access channel and berth improvements): these are in effect parts of the strategically critical package of improvements to the A31 – Poole corridor, connecting with a major residential and employment development area and improving access to and from the port;
 - Bournemouth Airport – new terminal and link road to A338: these improvements are needed to maximise the Airport's potential as one of the fastest growing regional airports in the UK, with services which open up opportunities for businesses operating in the global market and new tourism markets. The new terminal will offer better passenger facilities, while improved access to the A338 will also make the Airport more competitive, as well as bringing forward development at the regionally significant employment site Aviation Park.
- 6.5.34 The issue of commuting within South East Dorset is referred to in paragraph 6.5.27 above. Commuting to and from the area is also a significant issue in relation to the economy and connectivity. South East Dorset is a net exporter of labour, mainly to the South East region. While this reflects the realities of labour supply and demand, the overwhelming use of the private cars for these journeys makes it undesirable from an environmental viewpoint. There are also economic disadvantages; a high proportion of out-commuters have high-level

managerial, professional and technical skills which could be used to increase the prosperity, productivity and dynamism of sub-region's economy.

6.5.35 While the proposed improvements to connectivity may be seen as facilitating out-commuting, the spatial strategy should aim to counter this by providing for job growth within South East Dorset, supported by the initiatives planned in the economic development strategy.

Spatial Strategy Elements

6.5.36 The above paragraphs have identified the elements which, from the point of view of creating and maintaining a thriving economy, should be included in the spatial strategy. These are:

- (a) to concentrate the majority of development in urban areas, particularly at town and local centres which are on prime transport corridors;
- (b) to focus the most intensive activities in the centres of Bournemouth and Poole in order to continue an 'urban renaissance' of attractive, vibrant and culturally stimulating town centres;
- (c) to bring forward the development of Bournemouth Airport as a regionally significant employment site, once the related transport infrastructure identified in paragraph 5.2q has been provided;
- (d) to continue the Poole Bridge Regeneration Initiative as a regionally significant mixed residential and employment scheme;
- (f) to make provision for the following urban extension for employment: Blunt's Farm, Ferndown - up to 20ha. LDFs will define detailed site boundaries and set out the phased release of land, taking account of the implementation of infrastructure pre-requisites, local need and the availability of suitable brownfield sites;
- (h) to improve the connectivity of South East Dorset by air, sea, rail and road to other parts of Britain and Europe, making best use of the principal gateways of Bournemouth Airport and the Port of Poole; and
- (i) To manage use of the transport network and locate development so as to minimise the need to travel within the conurbation and reduce the proportion of journeys made by single occupancy cars.

6.5.37 In more detail, the sustainable growth of South East Dorset will be managed by:

Economy

- (a) providing for the development of 110ha of employment land, on a variety of site types and locations;
- (b) using the employment land at Bournemouth Airport primarily for air-related and knowledge-based industries. The use of a significant proportion of the site for office development that relies on high levels of car-based commuting will not be allowed;

- (c) directing major office development (> 2,000 sq m) to Bournemouth and Poole town centres, Lansdowne and Castle Lane East;
- (d) protecting established and committed employment sites that meet sustainability criteria and are significant in accommodating employment, other than where such sites are needed to accommodate waste management/treatment facilities;
- (e) providing opportunities for the expansion of Bournemouth University, the Arts Institute and further education institutions;
- (f) maintaining Bournemouth and Poole Town Centres' roles as major sub-regional shopping centres;
- (g) promoting the growth of sustainable tourism by encouraging development that will improve the quality and range of attractions and accommodation, contribute to regeneration, and help to extend the tourist season.

Housing

- (j) securing a mix of dwelling types that meets the needs of all sections of the population;

Transportation

- (h) delivering strategically significant transport improvements:
 - prime transport corridor improvements;
 - Poole Bridge Regeneration network;
 - A31 to Poole corridor improvements;
 - making provision for a new passenger terminal at Bournemouth Airport and a package of measures to improve access, including link road to the A338;
 - Port of Poole deeper access channel and berth improvements.

All of these transport improvements will be located and designed to minimize their environmental effects.

7. ENVIRONMENT

7.1 Introduction

7.1.1 South East Dorset, and its wider context of Dorset and South West Hampshire, has impressive environmental assets, including a significant number and diversity of habitats and species. Many of these are protected under national and international legislation. However, they are also fragile and, in many instances, under pressure from human activity.

7.1.2 The principle of sustainable development requires the maintenance of the character and quality of the wider environment in all its great richness and diversity: urban and rural, natural and man-made. There may be changes in the components of the landscape or environment as a consequence of accommodating necessary development, but its overall character and quality must at least be maintained and preferably enhanced.

7.1.3 The chapter is structured as follows:

- Section 7.2 describes the main environmental elements and the relevant issues. The elements are covered here in sections for ease, but in reality, they are all interlinked and should be viewed as a whole. Figure 7.1 indicates the different levels of environmental designations for South East Dorset and its wider context;
- Section 7.3 sets out the broad vision for South East Dorset and the more detailed vision for its environment, with desired outcomes and indicators;
- Section 7.4 sets out the elements of the spatial strategy which are proposed to address the environmental issues and ensure that the quality of South East Dorset's environment remains outstanding in the period up to 2026.

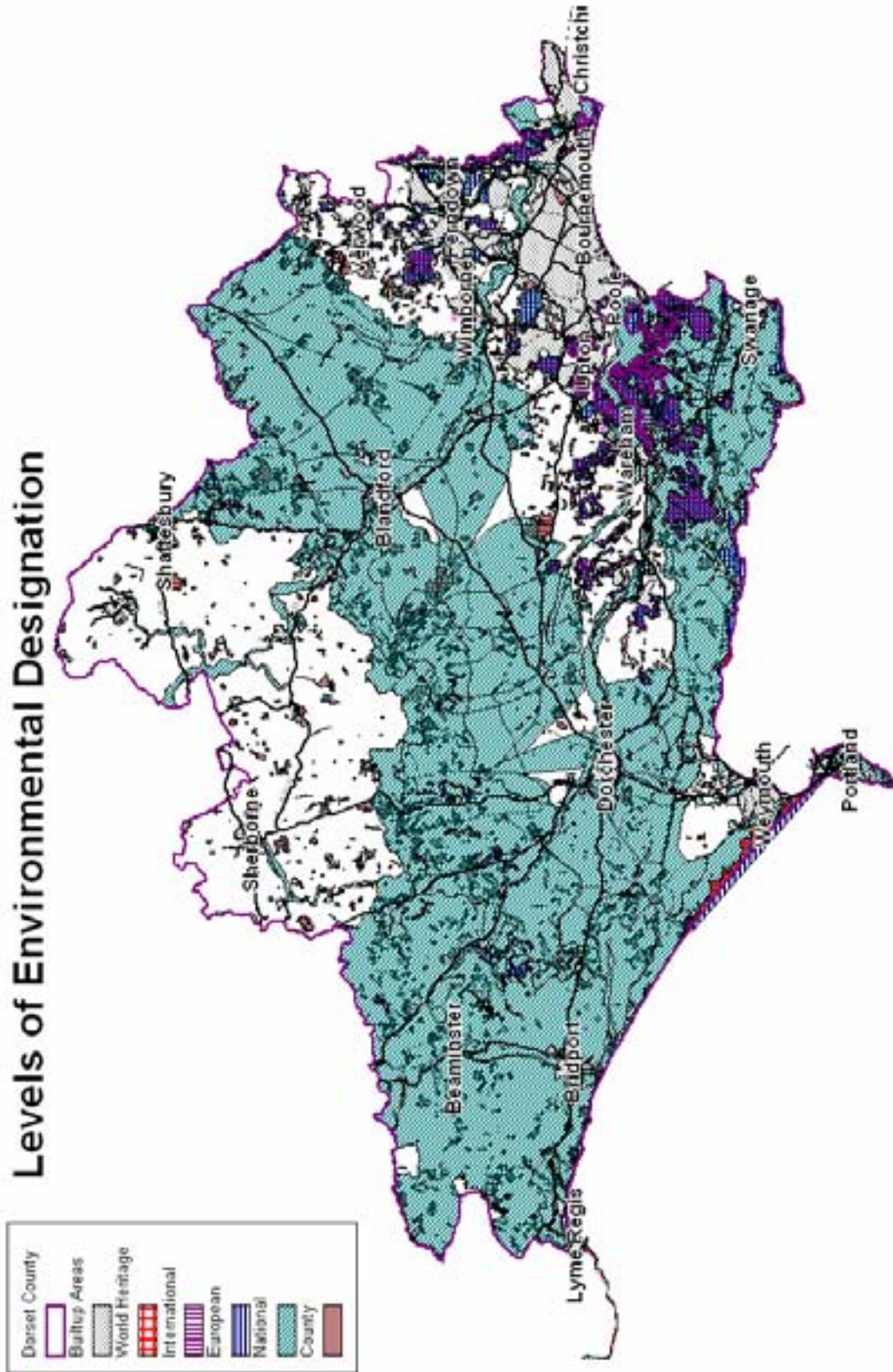
7.2 Environmental Characteristics and Issues

Nature Conservation

7.2.1 South East Dorset is set within the wider context of Dorset, one of the most important counties in England for nature conservation value. The rich and diverse habitats are attributed to a combination of factors which include geology, a maritime influence and geographical location.

7.2.2 The most important habitats in South East Dorset have been given statutory or other protection through designations ranging from national and international significance to those made by local authorities and nature conservation trusts. These sites have been notified in order to maintain selected communities of plants and animals within a broad range of habitats. Outstanding geological features and land forms are also covered, including the recently designated Dorset & East Devon World Heritage Site.

Levels of Environmental Designation



Key Diagram. The provision of strategic green space in other areas of the conurbation is also critical. The Stour Valley and the area around Henbury are seen as important in this respect.

Table 7.1: Nature Conservation Designations

Importance	Designation	UK Designation
<i>International Significance:</i>	Ramsar Sites (Convention on Wetlands of International Importance)	SSSI, Ramsar
	Special Protection Areas (SPAs) EC Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds	SSSI, SPA
	Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) EC Directive on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (the Habitats Directive)	SSSI, SAC
<i>National Significance:</i>	National Nature Reserves (NNRs) Section 19 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949/Section 35 of Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981	SSSI, NNR
	Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) Section 28 of Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981	SSSI
<i>Local Significance:</i>	Local Nature Reserves (LNRs)* Section 21 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949	LNR
	Non-Statutory Nature Reserves established and managed by a variety of bodies e.g. RSPB	-
	County Wildlife and Geological Sites identified by Dorset Wildlife Trust in partnership with Local Authorities	RIGS SNCI

* LNRs may be declared on SSSIs and in these cases they may have more than local significance

7.2.6 Outside sites identified for their nature conservation importance, many features of the landscape such as hedgerows, ponds, rivers, streams and small woodlands are of major importance for flora and fauna due to their function as wildlife corridors or stepping stones, to aid migration, dispersal and genetic exchange.

7.2.7 The UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) identifies a series of priority habitats and species and sets down national action plans and targets for them. The Dorset Biodiversity Strategy was published in 2003 in order to deliver the national strategies at a local level.

7.2.8 Table 7.2 below sets out draft targets for UK BAP priority habitats that occur in Dorset. Targets are included for re-creation of habitats that seek to reverse, to some extent, the past effects of habitat loss and fragmentation. However, areas that are suitable for habitat re-creation are themselves restricted. The best opportunities occur where habitat loss has been recent and where the re-created habitat would link or extend and enhance existing high quality habitats and sites. Planning policy has a role in ensuring that development does not close off these opportunities. Local planning authorities should consider how development can contribute to delivering the biodiversity targets set out in Table 7.2 and ensure that development proposals that would permanently

prevent key recreation and priority habitat enhancement opportunities being realised are resisted.

7.2.9 It is important to recognise the potential conflict between the aims for nature conservation and those of the spatial strategy which makes provision for the majority of its development within the urban area. Although some development will be on previously developed land e.g. regeneration within Poole, some development will be accommodated on land within the urban area that is currently not developed and which provides areas for flora and fauna e.g. private gardens. The cumulative impact of such changes should be taken into account.

Table 7.2: Biodiversity Targets by Natural Area for Dorset – October 2003

Ensure no loss in the extent or quality and seek enhancement of the following habitats:	Re-establish / Expand / Create habitat of SNCI quality
Lowland heathland	1005ha by 2010
Lowland calcareous grassland	135ha by 2010
Lowland dry acid grassland	47ha by 2010
Lowland meadows	15ha by 2010
Coastal & floodplain grazing marsh, reedbeds and fens	100ha by 2010
Purple moorgrass & rush pastures	15ha by 2010
Wet woodland	10ha by 2015
Lowland beech & yew	No target set
Lowland wood pasture & parkland	25ha by 2010
Lowland mixed deciduous woodland	min 1000ha by 2015
Ancient and/or species rich hedgerows	No target set
Cereal field margins	No target set
Maritime cliff and slope	100% of World Heritage Site by 2010 (min 10m buffer)
Coastal vegetated shingle	1 new demonstration site by 2015
Coastal sand dunes	5ha by 2015
Coastal saltmarsh & mudflats	20ha by 2015
Saline lagoons	1 new demonstration site by 2010
Seagrass beds	Target to be set

7.2.10 Pressure on natural areas and habitats is likely to increase over the next 20 years, as the sub region aims to secure economic prosperity, manage housing demand by identifying appropriate urban extensions and intensifying development within the existing urban area. This identified key strategic issue will require careful monitoring and mitigation of the impacts of increased activity.

Landscape

7.2.11 Dorset contains some of the finest unspoilt countryside and coast in Britain. The diverse geological structure of the County and the combined influences of natural processes and the changing patterns of human activity on the land have produced a particularly varied range of landscapes, each with distinctive

characteristic features. The character of the landscape can change as all landscapes are living, lived in, and dynamic. It is critical, however, to have regard to the sensitivity of landscape character to new development, which can have an almost instantaneous and long lasting impact.

- 7.2.12 Part of the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) extends into the north-west part of South East Dorset, and the Dorset AONB extends into the Purbecks in the south-west corner of the study area. AONBs have the same status as National Parks and are designated to conserve and enhance the special qualities of a landscape of great physical, ecological and historical diversity.
- 7.2.13 The impact of human activity on the land will continue to affect the landscape. A balance needs to be struck between the landscape's conservation, particularly in the AONB, and the needs of those who live and work in rural areas. Pressures for change must be utilised as opportunities for the conservation and enhancement of South East Dorset's landscape and to enable its continuing evolution.

New Forest

- 7.2.14 The New Forest National Park came into being in March 2005, with the National Park Authority being established in April 2005. The New Forest is already under severe pressures which threaten its future. It is the smallest of the national parks, but with one of the largest populations and is located close to the large population centres of Bournemouth/Poole and Southampton. Due to its proximity to South East Dorset, it is likely to be affected by future development in this area. Careful consideration should continue to be given to the impacts of the proposals contained within this spatial strategy on the New Forest National Park.

Isle of Purbeck

- 7.2.15 On the opposite side of Poole and Bournemouth, the Isle of Purbeck too, has an outstanding environmental quality, one that is equal to or greater than many national parks. It is botanically the most diverse area in the UK due to its range of habitats and there is a huge concentration of nationally and internationally designated special sites. As in the New Forest, there are pressures from the large number of visitors, and careful consideration of the environmental effects of the proposals in the spatial strategy is essential.

Built Environment

- 7.2.16 Two key strategic issues identified by the South East Dorset Joint Study are relevant to the built environment. First is a concern over ensuring that focusing development within the built-up areas leads to improvements in the quality of life, and not to a worsening of environmental or social conditions, or to unacceptable levels of traffic congestion. Another key strategic issue is how to improve accessibility within the area and to and from other areas to support economic, social and environmental wellbeing. In accord with the principle of sustainable development, the spatial strategy provides for the majority of future growth to take place in the urban areas. How this is implemented in detail on the ground will be vital to addressing these two issues.

- 7.2.17 Quality in the built environment is therefore essential to the future of South East Dorset. Quality is sustainable, and quality pays. Good architecture and urban design contribute to the enhancement of character and regeneration of towns, and through imagination, creativity and sensitivity, quality can be provided at reasonable cost and create minimal energy demands.
- 7.2.18 It is vital that, in accommodating this development, opportunities are seized to enhance the urban environment, including the transport system and green and open spaces. This must be achieved at the same time as providing for the needs of all sectors of the community, with the right balance of uses, so that urban living becomes increasingly attractive and quality of life and health are maintained or improved. Local authorities will require support at both regional and national level to ensure delivery of a positive urban environment.

Historic Environment

- 7.2.19 South East Dorset and the rest of Dorset and the South West of England are rich in areas, sites and structures of historic importance which contribute to the distinctive character of the Region. These include settlements and individual buildings of considerable historic or architectural quality, as well as ancient monuments and historic landscapes.
- 7.2.20 Development can have serious implications for the historic built environment. However conservation of our heritage can bring economic benefits: it maintains varied and attractive places to live and work, provides historic places to visit and enjoy, and encourages investment and re-use of old buildings.
- 7.2.21 Dorset is an exceptionally rich archaeological area. Archaeological remains should be seen as a finite and non-renewable resource, to be preserved as an educational, cultural, recreational and tourism resource. Local planning authorities should also promote, where practicable, appropriate management and enhancement of important sites and monuments.

Coast and Climate Change

- 7.2.22 Dorset's coast has long been recognised as one of its principal assets. A wide variety of ports, harbours and holiday resorts help to sustain a local economy which is heavily dependent on tourism and recreation.
- 7.2.23 The Dorset and East Devon coast was granted World Heritage status in 2001. It owes its unique character to the underlying geology and the erosional processes acting upon it. Its features are displayed within an unspoilt and accessible stretch of coastline of great beauty which is both protected and managed for conservation, public enjoyment and education.
- 7.2.24 Government policy states that public access to the coast should be a basic principle, unless it can be demonstrated that this would be either damaging to nature conservation or impractical. With regard to recreational activities which require a coastal location, the aim should be to balance and reconcile these interests and contain the impact of activities through appropriate management measures. These management measures will include local plans/LDFs, a strategy for the coastal zone, and AONB, World Heritage Site and Heritage Coast Management Plans. Poole Harbour (an SPA and Ramsar site) is subject to a statutory management scheme under the Habitat Regulations.

- 7.2.25 Coastal communities have always had to contend with the physical processes of erosion and flooding. Many urban and some rural areas along the Dorset coastline depend on coastal defences to protect them. The failure of defences can have potentially disastrous effects.
- 7.2.26 Consequences of climate change will be of major significance to the South West, particularly its potential impacts on coastal and marine resources. Rising sea levels and increased storminess are likely to increase rates of coastal erosion. Natural assets in the coastal zone may be lost and areas of saline intrusion will increase, particularly in low lying coastal areas.
- 7.2.27 Scientific consensus suggests that, by 2080, mean sea level in this area may rise by up to 76cm and extreme sea levels may be up to 90cm higher than extreme levels now for a 1 in 5 year event. Rainfall is also expected to increase in winter, creating river flows that are on average between 6% and 25% greater than today, but may decrease in summer.
- 7.2.28 It should be remembered that areas away from the coast will also be affected by climate change. This will include flooding and water resource issues from increased storminess and hotter, drier summers. This, in turn, may have a knock on effect on the ecology of the area.
- 7.2.29 Coastal protection and sea defence development protect low lying areas from flooding and prevent erosion of the land and encroachment by the sea. The authorities responsible for these developments have in recent years taken the view that defences may be more cost effective and enduring if they harness and enhance natural coastal processes. Establishing a natural regime has the added advantage of retaining the wildlife of the area and enhancing the quality of the landscape. Also, due to the scale of operation of the natural coastal processes, which pay little regard to administrative boundaries, successful man-made defences in one area may have damaging effects on neighbouring stretches of coastline if they interfere with the natural movement of sediments. This must be taken into account when considering additional coastal defence development.
- 7.2.30 Development should avoid areas at risk of coastal inundation. Developments which have necessarily to be in areas of potential risk, such as quays and harbour buildings, slipways and marina facilities, should be treated as exceptions.
- 7.2.31 At the same time there is a need for a proactive approach to coastal and floodplain management to secure managed re-alignment of the coast and management of flood plains, for example through re-establishment of wetlands and restoration of natural river channels.

Water and Air

- 7.2.32 The most significant piece of EC water legislation to affect South East Dorset to date came into force in December 2000. It requires all inland and coastal waters to reach "good status" by 2015. River Basin Districts (RBD) have been established, with South East Dorset falling within the South West RBD and a characterisation, human impacts and economics analysis for each RBD was submitted as required by the Directive in March 2005. This is an early stage of meeting the Directive's requirements and highlights areas that are at risk.

- 7.2.33 Overall emissions of carbon dioxide (CO₂) in Dorset are just below the national average because of Dorset's rural nature and the fact that there is no significant heavy industrial consumption of energy. However, there is a relatively large number of commercial companies with high electricity consumption. The conurbation accounts for the most significant urban contributions of CO₂ emissions, and with more development planned for the next 20 years, monitoring air quality will become increasingly important. The county's ozone levels show seasonal disparity – periods of settled warm weather, primarily during summer months, has led to ozone levels exceeding the national standards.
- 7.2.34 Air quality is also an issue that affects nature conservation. Many of the heathlands are subject to high levels of nitrogen deposition and acidification, which may have fundamental effects on their ecology.

Renewable Energy and Waste

- 7.2.35 Government, regional and sub-regional targets for renewable forms of electricity generation for 2010 (64-84MW for Dorset) and emerging targets for the year 2020 are challenging, particularly for local planning authorities who will be instrumental in their implementation and delivery. Figure 7.3 (?) indicates how the County target arising from the Revision 2010 work could be derived from different technologies. However, further detailed work will be required to find the most appropriate way of meeting the targets, particularly as the technologies develop.
- 7.2.36 Waste management is a highly important issue for South East Dorset, due to the significant increase in the number of households in the area over many years, a pattern which is set to continue. European and national legislation which seeks to reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill requires a dramatic change in how waste is dealt with in the future. Detailed expression of how this will be managed can be found in the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Waste Local Plan, which was the subject of an inquiry during summer 2005. It is envisaged that the Plan will be formally adopted, following receipt of the Inspector's report in Winter 2005/Spring 2006. The Plan will provide a framework for waste planning for the area until 2016. The Waste Disposal Authorities (Bournemouth Borough Council, Dorset County Council and the Borough of Poole) also prepare Municipal Waste Management Strategies, which address how waste is to be dealt with in each area and the methods to be employed in the collection, handling, treatment and final disposal of waste.

Agriculture

- 7.2.37 The landscape we see in Dorset today, and the habitats contained therein, have been brought about largely by agricultural practices. Despite recent policy shifts relating to the protection of agricultural land, farming will remain the single most significant force shaping the rural environment. When allocating land for development local planning authorities should seek to avoid the best and most versatile land unless there are no suitable alternative sites of lower quality. Where other options have been evaluated and it is necessary to allocate the best and most versatile land for development, land of the lowest grade should be used first.

Vision

7.2.38 The spatial strategy is founded on a vision for South East Dorset, developed by the Joint Study Area partners and tested through public and stakeholder consultation. This section sets out the parts of that vision that establish the direction for the environmental elements of the strategy.

7.2.39 The overall vision for South East Dorset in 2026 is that it “will strengthen its role within its outstanding environment and be recognised as a prime example of a sustainable conurbation”. The elements of this overall vision that relate particularly to the environment are:

- **sustaining, safeguarding, promoting and celebrating the unique quality of its natural environment and coastal setting;**
- **growing a dynamic economy that makes minimal demands on natural resources;**
- **improving the quality of its urban environment; and**
- **reducing the need to travel within the conurbation, improving accessibility and investing in sustainable transport.**

7.2.40 The detailed vision for the environment (with the desired outcomes and the indicators of success) is as follows:

- **The natural environment that surrounds and runs through the conurbation, some of which is recognised as having international and national importance, will be protected and improved**

Outcome – no net loss of designated sites to development; extent and quality of natural environment increased and enhanced; management in place to combat urban pressures on heathland sites.

Indicator – no development on locations that would adversely affect such sites or protected species; extent of lowland heathland increased; proportion of urban fringe heathlands enhanced through appropriate management of adjacent land and a reduced number of fires or other incidents causing damage to heathland.

- **The natural environment will continue to be recognised as providing the area with a competitive edge in the development of an economy which is sensitive to the area’s environmental assets, by providing an attractive and desirable place in which to operate businesses and where employees can live and enjoy good health.**

Outcomes – a thriving economy closely dependent on the quality of the environment.

Indicators – increase in the number of businesses attracted to or retained in the area because of its environment; increase in number of businesses dependent on the quality of the environment; total number of employees; number of pollution incidents in water courses.

- **A network of strategic open spaces, natural and maintained green spaces/corridors in urban and urban fringe areas will provide better access and recreational facilities for people and enhance existing biodiversity through establishing new habitats in key areas.**

Outcome – more opportunity for public recreation and enjoyment and a reduction of recreational pressure on existing heathland.

Indicator – increased provision of alternative recreational areas away from sensitive locations and accessible by sustainable travel means and the amount of habitat creation including woodland and heathland.

- **South East Dorset will remain an area of diverse and distinctive historic and architectural value, and will harness the positive contribution new development can make to the quality of our urban areas by creating attractive, well-designed lively, healthy places which support art, culture and innovation.**

Outcome – greater urban intensity contributing to buoyant, safe and exciting community life while conserving historical and quality buildings and streetscape.

Indicators – significantly increased residential densities; reduced number of complaints about urban intensification; improved air quality in urban areas; greater number of cultural venues; number of people who feel safe and comfortable using the streets at all times of day; levels of noise pollution.

- **The best use will be made of land and buildings within the urban areas avoiding increasing residential densities where this will harm the urban environment and designated heathland sites.**

Outcome – good use of land and the existing stock of buildings through high density living, while maintaining high quality of urban life and natural environment.

Indicator – increased residential densities.

7.2.41 The consultation carried out in late December 2004 and throughout January 2005, brought forward a wide range of issues relating to the environment. It was considered that there were some minor changes to the Vision that were appropriate, and these are reflected in the wording in the section above. The most relevant to the environment is the addition of the word “safeguarding” in the phrase “sustaining, safeguarding, promoting and celebrating the unique quality of its natural environment and coastal setting”.

7.2.42 Parts of the detailed Vision were also adjusted in the light of the consultation (and Strategic Sustainability Assessment) including to the second bullet point under natural environment, where the words “strategic open spaces...and maintained.../corridors” were added. The first bullet point under urban environment the words “well-designed” were also added. No other issues required changes to the Vision or Outcomes, but it was considered that monitoring some additional areas would be useful. Some additional indicators have therefore been included in the section above (e.g. number of polluted watercourses and levels of noise pollution).

- Although clearly a number of other points and issues relating to the Vision and the environment were raised as part of the consultation (including stakeholders), many of these are included within this chapter or are covered within the accompanying technical paper.

7.3 Spatial Strategy Elements

5.8 For the reasons set out and highlighted in this chapter, the spatial strategy elements that are proposed to address the environmental issues of South East Dorset, so as to achieve the vision in the period up to 2026, are:

- (a) to concentrate the majority of development in urban areas, particularly at town and local centres which are on prime transport corridors;
- (b) to focus the most intensive activities in the centres of Bournemouth and Poole in order to continue an 'urban renaissance' of attractive, vibrant and culturally stimulating town centres;
- (e) to protect and enhance the sub-region's key natural and built environmental assets, including internationally valued habitats and unique coastal and landscape characteristics;
- (g) apart from the limited urban extensions identified [in part (f) of the Spatial Strategy], to contain the outward spread of the urban areas and other settlements within or bounded by the existing boundaries of the South East Dorset Green Belt;

In more detail, the sustainable growth of South East Dorset will be managed by:

- (k) achieving higher densities than those achieved in the past, except where this would harm the quality of the urban environment and/or would be adjacent to heathland SSSIs.
- (l) safeguarding and improving public open space and streetscapes within urban areas;
- (m) providing recreational/informal open space, community forests and/or country parks close to the urban areas, but away from environmentally sensitive areas, and accessible by public transport, cycling or walking;
- (n) from the conurbation, improving the accessibility by public transport, cycling and walking of significant areas of countryside recreation, including the Dorset and East Devon Coast World Heritage Site, Cranborne Chase and the New Forest.

8. HOUSING

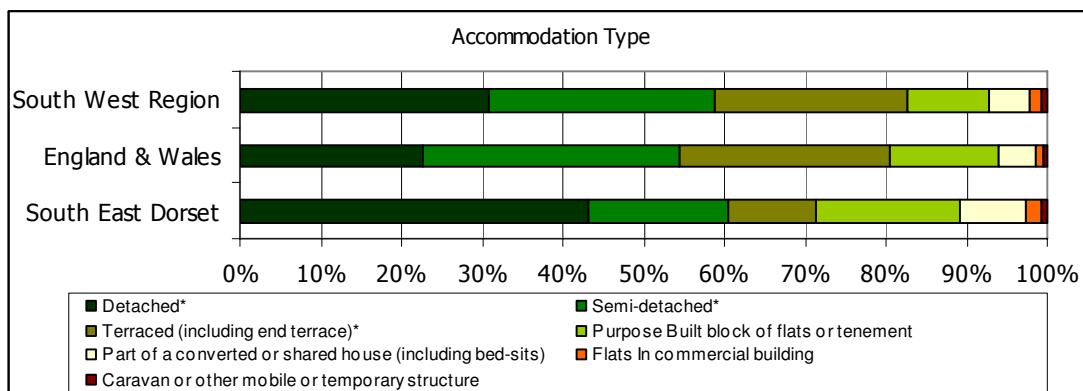
8.1 Introduction and background

Growth of the Conurbation

- 8.1.1 The South East Dorset Conurbation is the second largest urban area in the South West Region. The area started to grow substantially in the latter part of the 19th century with the popularity of Bournemouth as a holiday resort. In the 20th century, as well as continuing to cater for the growing demand for sea-side holidays, this part of Dorset became popular as a retirement area.
- 8.1.2 In recent years, expansion of the built-up area has been facilitated by an increase in personal mobility and car ownership, resulting in an urban pattern characterised by low-density detached and semi-detached urban and suburban residential areas. The early years of outward expansion onto the surrounding heaths and other unused tracts of land has been replaced in more recent years with development and redevelopment within the urban area itself.
- 8.1.3 South East Dorset has expanded from about 117,000 in 1900 to about 475,000 people in 2003, a growth of nearly 360,000. The area has experienced a high rate of house building for many years. Most recently, a peak annual rate of over 3,700 new dwellings in 1971 has been followed by relatively constant building activity of about 3,000 dwellings per year during the '70s and '80s. A short period of recession during the 1990's has been followed by recovery.

Property Types

- 8.1.4 South East Dorset is characterised by a very high proportion of detached properties. At over 43% of all dwellings, this is almost double the national average. Nearly two-thirds of properties are detached or semi-detached. Bungalows are common, reflecting the high demand for retirement properties over many years.
- 8.1.5 Purpose-built flats are also an important feature of the dwelling stock, particularly in Bournemouth. Similarly, converted properties and bed-sits are prominent. Properties that combine a flat with a non-residential use, such as flats over shops, are also important. About 88% of such within South East Dorset are in Bournemouth.



8.1.6 South East Dorset has some 5,800 vacant properties (2.9% of the dwelling stock). This is slightly lower than the national average of 3.2%.

Second and Holiday Homes

8.1.7 Second and holiday homes are an important feature of the housing stock and housing market. In the 2001 Census, some 3,600 dwellings were counted as second homes/holiday accommodation. This represented 1.8% of dwellings in South East Dorset and is almost three times the national average.

Housing Tenure

8.1.8 The majority of households in South East Dorset are owner occupied (76.6%), a much higher proportion than the national average (68.9%). Many households own their property outright. In South East Dorset, 37.5% of houses are owned outright compared with 29.6% nationally. This is linked to the high proportion of elderly people in the area. The proportion owner-occupied but with a mortgage or loan is broadly in line with the regional and national norm.

8.1.9 Renting from the council is well below average. The percentage of properties rented from the local authority is less than half the national average (5.3% compared with 13.2% nationally).

8.1.10 However, a high proportion of properties is rented privately. Some 10.3% of households in South East Dorset are privately rented (national average 8.7%). The very high proportion of privately rented properties in Bournemouth, alone, has a significant influence on the South East Dorset figure. In Bournemouth over 17% of households are privately rented, due in part to the presence of the University.

Age of the Dwelling Stock

8.1.11 Compared to many large urban areas, South East Dorset has a relatively 'modern' stock of housing. Over 62% of dwellings are post-War, with more than 42% built in the last 40 years.

8.1.12 Both Christchurch and East Dorset have seen sizeable expansion of their dwelling stock in the post-War period, with over 76% of housing having been built since 1945. East Dorset has the highest proportion of dwellings built in more recent years (since 1964) with nearly 62%, compared to just over 53% in Christchurch. Bournemouth has, in relative terms, a more elderly dwelling stock. Nearly half its housing (48%) is pre-1945, with just over 27% predating the First World War.

Housing Condition

8.1.13 With most housing being built in the post-War period, South East Dorset's dwelling stock is generally in good condition. The number and proportion of dwellings judged to be unfit is quite small. The highest proportion of unfit dwellings is in the private rented sector although the number of properties is relatively small compared to unfitness in other sectors. The exception is in Bournemouth where both the number and proportion of unfit privately rented property are more significant than elsewhere.

8.1.14 District wide figures do mask the fact that poor housing conditions tend to be localised. Pockets of poor quality housing are to be found in Boscombe East, Boscombe West and Springbourne. However, these are also areas where substantial numbers of properties are being actively converted by owners to flats, so the renewal and modernisation process is already underway.

8.2 Housing Vision

Vision

- **In future South East Dorset will strengthen and develop its regional, national and international role within its outstanding environment and be recognised internationally as a prime example of a sustainable conurbation. This will be achieved by:**
 - providing quality housing for all sections of the population.
- **Residents will benefit from a balanced and healthy lifestyle through:**
 - fostering strong, local communities
 - living in an excellent and safe environment
 - increasing the quality and quantity of affordable housing
- **The best use will be made of land and buildings within the urban areas avoiding increasing residential densities where this will harm the urban environment and designated heathland sites.**

Outcomes

- A strong sense of local identity, social cohesion and maintaining and enhancing standards of living in South East Dorset
- Good use of land and the existing stock of buildings through high density living, while maintaining high quality of urban life and natural environment

Indicators

- Increased satisfaction with feeling of community
- Significantly reduced gap between house prices and wages
- Increased residential densities

Consultation

The consultation exercise brought forward a number of issues relating to housing, which will be addressed through revision. There were no issues that would require a fundamental change to the Vision.

- It was felt that there should be greater clarification of the relationship between jobs and housing.
- Specific reference should be made to affordable housing and local/groups in need.
- In addition to provision of quality housing, the Vision should promote energy efficient housing for all sections of the population.

- There was a strong belief that the greater the overall level of growth in South East Dorset, the greater the degree of conflict with the outcomes of the Vision.

8.3 Addressing Housing Need

- 8.3.1 Access to housing is largely a function of affordability. The problem in most parts of Dorset, including South East Dorset, is one not just of high house prices but also of low earnings. The result is an affordability gap between house prices and earnings. In some local authority areas prices are more than eleven times annual earnings.
- 8.3.2 Table 8.1 shows average house prices in South East Dorset districts and average earnings for the period 1999 to 2004. While average house prices have increased dramatically, earnings have lagged behind. For example, in Bournemouth house prices have increased by 138% between 1999 and 2004 but earnings have only risen by 14% during the same period. The affordability index illustrates this widening gap.
- 8.3.3 Access to housing is also a function of supply. Restricted supply will keep prices up and will restrict access to the market by families or individuals on low incomes, even to the most affordable dwellings. Purchasing of further property by existing homeowners, as holiday and second homes, exacerbates the problem. The result is an ever-growing sector of society unable to compete in the open housing market. This places more emphasis on the need for affordable housing, involving an element of subsidy.
- 8.3.4 Unfortunately, the number of affordable new homes constructed each year is small compared to what is required. A key source of affordable housing is private house-building activity where a requirement can be made through planning obligations (Section 106 agreements) for provision of houses for social rent, shared equity or low-cost market, alongside open market provision. The best prospect for such provision is on larger sites on green field land. To some extent, the introduction of green belt policy in 1980 has restricted growth in South East Dorset to a limited number of strategic sites previously identified. Those sites are now built out. The large majority of development now and in the future will be on previously used, inevitably smaller, brownfield sites. In Bournemouth, Poole and Christchurch, South East Dorset, 98.8% of new dwellings built between 1994 and 2005 were on brownfield sites.
- 8.3.5 The inability of some low-income households to break into the housing market, coupled to a shortage of alternative affordable subsidised housing, may have wide social and economic consequences. Concealed households, typically of young single adults or younger generation family groups having to live with parents or other older relatives can bring problems of overcrowding and family tension. A shortage of good quality affordable housing may mean some households continuing to live in unsuitable, poor quality cheap private rented accommodation, with consequent problems of health and social welfare.
- 8.3.6 High property prices and a shortage of affordable housing can also constrain economic growth, with an inability of the area to attract or retain young skilled workers, an inability to recruit in certain sectors, and potentially high levels of long-distance daily in-commuting from areas with lower housing costs. The problem of recruiting and retaining 'essential' workers, particularly in sectors such as health and social care, police and some other public services, is often

linked to prohibitive housing costs; but other sectors of the South East Dorset economy are also vulnerable, particularly tourism, leisure and catering where traditionally earnings are low.

- 8.3.7 Affordable housing need has been measured through local housing needs surveys. These indicate a need in South East Dorset for nearly 3,700 affordable dwellings each year (Table 8.2). This compares unfavourably with recent affordable housing provision. In 2004/05, only 110 affordable dwellings were completed in South East Dorset.

Table 8.1: House Prices, Earnings and Housing Affordability

Year	House Prices (1)				Earnings (2)				Affordability Index (3)			
	Bournemouth	Christchurch	East Dorset	Poole	Bournemouth	Christchurch	East Dorset	Poole	Bournemouth	Christchurch	East Dorset	Poole
1999	82,907	114,687	124,180	110,809	290.70	334.70	342.30	329.50	5.5	6.6	7.0	6.5
2000	108,700	134,595	151,963	133,238	317.40	338.30	338.40	346.20	6.6	7.7	8.6	7.4
2001	120,376	152,652	176,336	143,055	300.40	349.00	362.00	371.90	7.7	8.4	9.4	7.4
2002	142,150	172,358	196,093	172,064	321.60	340.80	370.20	387.00	8.5	9.7	10.2	8.6
2003	171,160	205,245	224,848	200,083	361.70	408.90	398.20	391.10	9.1	9.7	10.9	9.8
2004	197,363	237,447	247,412	234,366	330.9	441.8	456.5	398.9	11.5	10.3	10.4	11.3

House prices for April – June Quarter (Source: HM Land Registry)

Workplace based earnings (median) by sample survey: ASHE (April), gross weekly earnings of full time employees (Source: ONS)

Index of House Prices compared to Annual Earnings

Table 8.2: Housing Need Measured by Local Housing Need Surveys

Authority	Year of LHNS	Annual Need	Distribution (%)
Bournemouth	2004	1,570	43
Christchurch	2002	260	7
East Dorset	2002	590	16
Poole	2004	1,270	34
South East Dorset	-	3,690	100

8.3.8 Local housing need surveys provide a snap-shot picture of need, but the surveys become quickly out of date. A more current, constantly updated measure of housing need is the number of households on the housing register, or waiting list. Table 8.3 shows that at April 2004 there were some 8,500 households registered in South East Dorset. The general pattern, certainly in the more urbanised authorities of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole, has been one of increase in registrations, indicating a growing requirement for affordable housing. Overall, for South East Dorset, the number on the housing register has risen by 30% since 2001.

Table 8.3: Housing Need Measured by Numbers on Housing Register / Statutory Homeless

	Households on Housing Register (1st April)				Statutory Homeless Household Acceptances (during year)			
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04
Bournemouth	1,624	1,753	1,953	2,336	512	656	776	254
Christchurch	523	542	679	1,261	179	116	126	91
East Dorset	1,869	1,581	1,805	1,790	67	54	61	72
Poole	2,474	2,632	2,624	3,087	170	150	159	101
South East Dorset	6,490	6,508	7,061	8,474	928	976	1,122	518

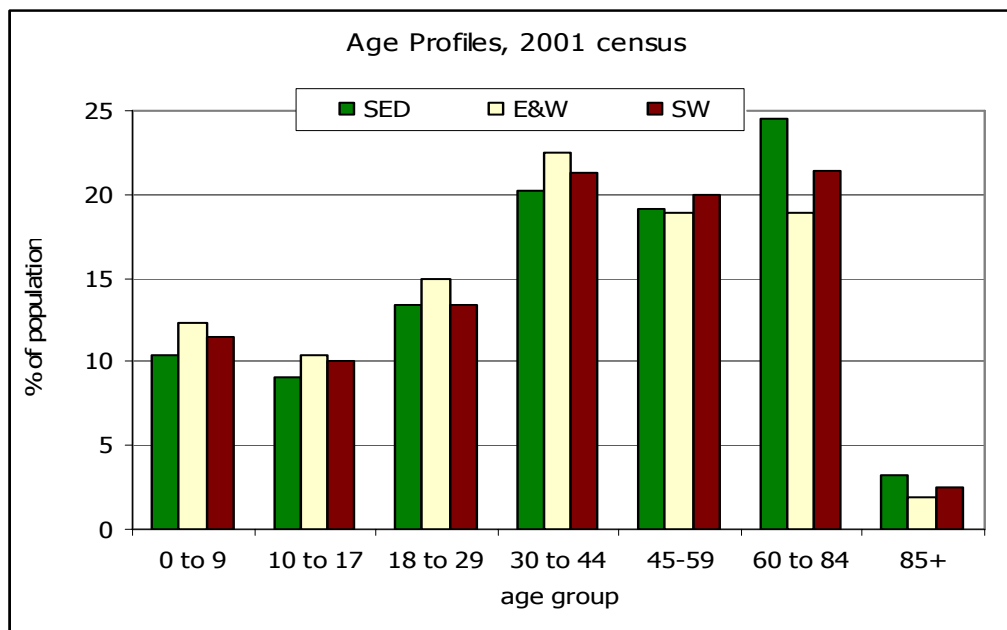
8.3.9 Statutory homeless households represent the most extreme expression of housing need. For South East Dorset the numbers dealt-with each year have hovered around the 1,000 mark since 2000/01, but have dipped more recently.

8.4 Demography

Population Structure

- 8.4.1 South East Dorset has a total population of almost 444,000 (2001 Census). The area has seen rapid growth in recent years. Between the last two censuses the population has increased by about 6.3%, considerably faster than the national average (4.3%).
- 8.4.2 One of the defining characteristics of the area is its high proportion of elderly people. In total almost 28% of the population are aged 60 years or above, significantly higher than the national average of 21%. Correspondingly, the number of young adults is lower than average. Nationally, some 15% of the population are aged 18-29 years, compared to 13.4% in South East Dorset. Bournemouth has the highest percentage of young adults in the area (18%).
- 8.4.3 The general picture, therefore, is that South East Dorset has a lower than average percentage of people in the younger age groups and a higher than average percentage of those aged over 60 years. Figure 8.1 illustrates.

Figure 8.1: South East Dorset - Age Profile



Household Composition

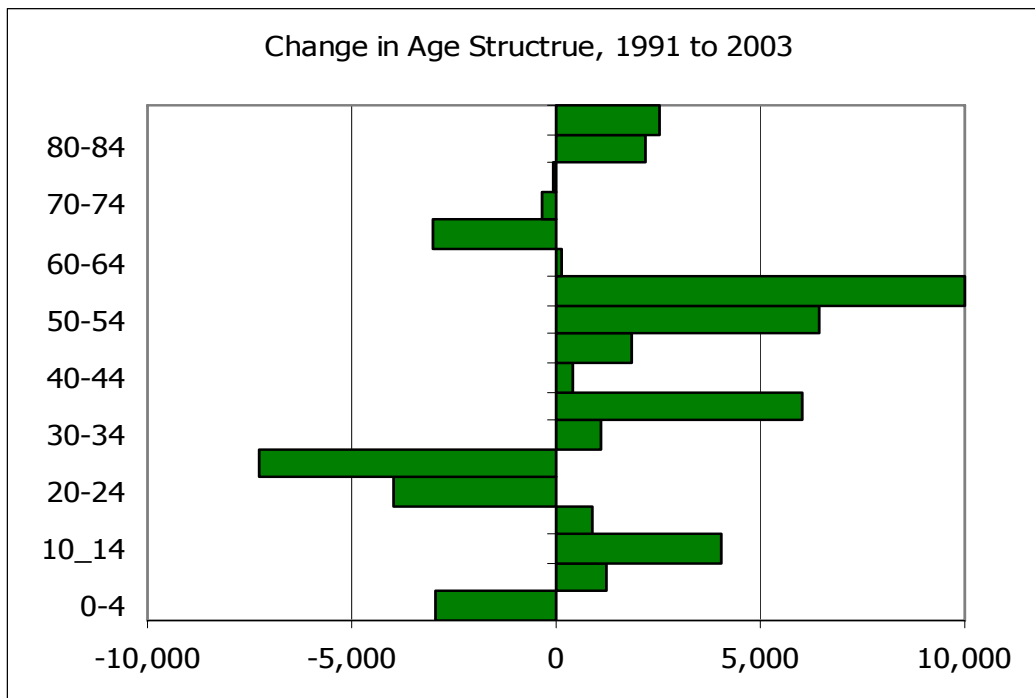
- 8.4.4 South East Dorset has just over 193,300 households, with a relatively low average household size of 2.25 people per household (England and Wales, 2.36pph).
- 8.4.5 Household composition is closely linked to age profile. As noted, South East Dorset has a characteristically high percentage of pensioner households. Almost a third of households comprise only pensioners, and over half of these are lone pensioner households.
- 8.4.6 About 2% of South East Dorset's population live in a communal establishment which is similar to, if not slightly above, the national average. However, almost

two thirds of communal establishment residents in South East Dorset are in a medical or care establishment, much higher than the national or regional figures, where the proportion is about a half. The higher figure in South East Dorset is clearly linked to the high proportion of elderly people in the area.

Population Trends in South East Dorset (SED)¹

8.4.7 Between 1991 and 2003 the population of South East Dorset has increased by 4.2%, an average annual growth of 1,600 people. The total population now stands at 476,500 (mid-2003). Growth in population has not been evenly distributed through the age groups, there has been an increase of up to 42% amongst some age groups and losses of up to 23% amongst others (Figure 8.2).

Figure 8.2 South East Dorset - Change in Age Structure



8.4.8 The result of this change is an overall ageing of the population. In 1991, almost 14% of South East Dorset's population were aged 20-29 years; by 2003 this had fallen to 10.7%. In contrast the percentage of people in their 50's has increased from 10.4% of the population in 1991 to 13.4% by 2003.

8.4.9 Of equal significance has been the increase in very elderly people. In South East Dorset the number aged over 85 years has increased dramatically. Some 3.2% of the population are aged 85 or over, almost 70% higher than the national average of 1.9%.

8.4.10 These changes in age structure relate to the same factors that have contributed to population growth in the area. South East Dorset has a higher death rate than birth rate which results in a natural decline in the population. In recent years both the birth rates and death rates have fallen but the gap

¹ Data refers to the local authorities of Bournemouth, Poole, Christchurch, East Dorset, and Purbeck.

between them has increased thereby accelerating the natural decrease in population.

8.3.10 With a natural decrease in the population, the growth of South East Dorset's population is due entirely to net inward migration. However, it is the difference in age between those groups who move into South East Dorset and those who move out that has caused the overall change in the area's age structure. The largest net gains are for those aged 50 to 54 years. housing need. For South East Dorset the numbers dealt-with each year have hovered around the 1,000 mark since 2000/01, but have dipped more recently.

8.5 Level of Future Growth

8.5.1 A substantial amount of work has been undertaken to date looking at the final level of housing growth and its distribution within South East Dorset from both the demand and supply sides. The Regional Assembly has requested that the strategic planning authorities examine and test a series of scenarios for the growth of South East Dorset to 2026 but, as detailed in proposals to the Assembly, the strategic authorities first established how much growth might be realistically accommodated. This was seen as the benchmark against which accelerated growth may be measured.

8.5.2 The strategic authorities have identified that if all the urban potential identified within Bournemouth/Poole/Christchurch is realised and if the urban extensions to the area are developed, some 34,400 new dwellings may be built at Bournemouth/Poole/Christchurch between 2001 and 2026. Development elsewhere in the JSA, both as growth within the urban areas and as extensions to towns, might add a further 6,000 dwellings during the period 2001 to 2026, giving a total of 40,400 for South East Dorset (Table 8.4).

8.5.3 In order to meet most elements of the vision and to comply with the absolute constraints on development in certain areas, levels of growth higher than the benchmark level could be met only by significant intensification within the existing urban areas. The consultation exercise held early in 2005 showed that accelerated growth was viewed by the public and some stakeholder groups with some suspicion, while present growth rates were thought to be more likely to deliver a balanced environment. Nevertheless there was widespread concern about how to generate more affordable housing.

8.5.4 Growth levels for South East Dorset are likely to be among the highest for any major urban area in the South West, even though the opportunities for the outward expansion of the conurbation are severely limited. To achieve the vision for South East Dorset, it will be essential that a commensurate level of regional investment in transport and other infrastructure is made to accompany the estimated growth. Without this investment, there is a very real danger that the economic prosperity of the area will be jeopardised, and the quality of the area will deteriorate.

8.5.5 Table 8.4: Growth in South East Dorset JSA, 2001-2026

	4/4 Authorities First Detailed Proposals	Regional Assembly Growth Scenarios		
		RPG10	+25%	+50%
GROWTH AT B/P/C				
Urban potential studies	20,400	20,400	20,400	20,400
Increased intensification	-	5,200	11,200	17,200
Extensions	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200
Other sources (1)	12,800	12,800	12,800	12,800
All at B/P/C	34,400	39,600	45,600	51,600
GROWTH ELSEWHERE				
Urban potential studies	2,300	2,300	2,300	2,300
Extensions	1,700	1,700	1,700	1,700
Other sources (1)	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
All elsewhere	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000
SOUTH EAST DORSET				
Urban potential studies	22,700	22,700	22,700	22,700
Increased intensification	-	5,200	11,200	17,200
Extensions	2,900	2,900	2,900	2,900
Other sources (1)	14,800	14,800	14,800	14,800
South East Dorset JSA	40,400	45,600	51,600	57,600

(1) Completions 2001-04; and completions arising from commitment at 2004

Table 8.5: Growth in Local Authority Areas, 2001-2026

	4/4 Authorities First Detailed Proposals	Regional Assembly Growth Scenarios		
		RPG10	+25%	+50%
Bournemouth	18,300	21,700	25,600	29,500
Christchurch	3,900	4,500	5,200	5,900
East Dorset (in JSA)	6,300	6,300	6,300	6,400
Poole	11,300	12,500	13,800	15,100
Purbeck (in JSA)	300	600	700	700
South East Dorset JSA	40,400	45,600	51,600	57,600

8.6 Proposed Strategy Elements

8.6.1 The spatial strategy for South East Dorset proposes that sustainable housing growth will be managed by: chapter is structured as follows:

- providing for the development of up to 40,400 dwellings between 2001 and 2026, over 90% of which will be within existing urban areas;
- securing the highest possible amount of good quality, affordable housing for sale or rent, taking account of the viability of individual sites and other demands on developer contributions;
- securing a mix of dwelling types that meets the needs of all sections of the population;
- achieving higher densities than those achieved in the past, except where this would harm the quality of the urban environment and/or would be adjacent to heathland SSSIs.

9. COMMUNITY AND CULTURE

9.1 Introduction

9.1.1 The provision of community and cultural facilities is essential if South East Dorset is to function as a sustainable conurbation which provides a high quality of life for local communities and a range of cultural opportunities for both residents and visitors.

9.1.2 This chapter provides an account of community and cultural provision in the Joint Study Area. It considers what provision exists, current and future issues and what will be needed in order to meet the requirements of the strategy. In dealing with community provision, the focus is on facilities that are vital to the functioning of sustainable neighbourhoods. Related issues affecting the quality of life of local communities and their residents, such as affordable housing, accessibility and high quality inclusive design, are covered elsewhere in this document. In terms of culture, the focus is on facilities and other amenities with local, sub-regional or wider functions, where spatial planning can influence the scale, location and quality of provision.

9.1.3 The chapter is structured as follows:

- Section 9.2 outlines the characteristics of community and cultural provision in South East Dorset;
- Section 9.3 sets out the broad vision for South East Dorset and the more detailed vision relating to community and culture, with desired outcomes and indicators;
- Section 9.4 focuses on the key community and cultural issues at the strategic level and sets out the elements of the spatial strategy which are proposed to address them, and to achieve the vision in the period up to 2026.

9.2 Community and Cultural Provision

9.2.1 The community structure of South East Dorset is diverse within the core urban areas, where the existing community is much enhanced by large numbers of visitors, university and language school students. Outside the core areas, the picture is rather different. Here the population is in the main white, affluent and settled. At the same time the population is aging in some areas, notably in the Highcliffe area of Christchurch. The centres of Bournemouth and Poole act as a focal point for cultural activities for the rest of South East Dorset and much of Dorset and South West Hampshire, although there are also facilities in the smaller towns surrounding the urban area.

9.2.2 The following paragraphs describe the characteristics of community and cultural provision, including relevant aspects of the current community and spatial planning policy context. More details of these facilities are given in the Culture Technical Paper.

9.3 Community

Community Planning Context

- 9.3.1 PPS 1 outlines the need to plan for sustainable communities. This followed the publication of the Sustainable Communities Plan by the ODPM. In the South West, “The Way Ahead: Delivering Sustainable Communities” provides a regional context for a series of community plans produced by Bournemouth, Poole and the Dorset Districts and the Community Strategy published by Dorset County Council (see Technical Paper).
- 9.3.2 At the heart of all the community plans and strategies is the vision of enhancing the quality of life of communities, and the commitment to achieving this through a range of actions to promote social, environmental and economic well-being. Common elements in the concept of “quality of life” include access to all essential services and facilities, inclusiveness, a safe and healthy environment and opportunities for cultural and recreational activities. These aspirations have fed into the vision for this spatial strategy, which aims to provide the spatial and development policies which will underpin the achievement of community visions.

County Structure Plan and Draft Replacement Structure Plan

- 9.3.3 The issues of community facilities, shopping, sport and recreation are included in the County Structure Plan (CSP28) and in the Draft Replacement Structure Plan (CSPR3). The strategy in both plans is for major facilities and services to be located in Bournemouth and Poole and the main towns, where they can most easily serve a wide catchment area. Local services and facilities should include education, health, sport, recreation and culture. Countryside recreation is seen as particularly important.

Local Services and Facilities

- 9.3.4 A wide range of community facilities exists throughout the area; these are outlined below, and described in more detail in the Culture Technical Paper. A number of general issues arise, which are covered in Section 9.4 below. These include the issues of accessibility; community capacity and dependence on voluntary commitment; inclusion of all sectors of the community; the loss of facilities, exacerbated in rural areas by remoteness; updating and replacement of existing facilities; and the need for community and neighbourhood services and facilities in new residential developments.

Health

- 9.3.5 There are two main considerations in looking at health and planning: firstly, the provision of health facilities, and secondly, the effects on health of the broad physical and socio-economic environment, including housing, urban development and design, transportation, industry and agriculture.
- 9.3.6 Generally health is good across South East Dorset. There are good facilities in most areas, although access to hospitals can be a problem for residents in some parts of the area. With government policies focused on care in the community, it is not anticipated that growth in facilities will be necessary in most instances.

- 9.3.7 It will however be necessary to consider carefully the needs arising from population growth and change and from major residential developments. In particular, the area's increasingly elderly age structure presents significant challenges for health care provision.
- 9.3.8 The Primary Care Trusts consider that the majority of present and future need across South East Dorset will be addressed through an expansion of healthy living programmes and care in the community. Although there are some plans for the development of facilities, spending is likely to focus largely on programmes of this sort rather than on built facilities. The need for staffing based on extra resourcing will have an impact on demand for housing provision and other infrastructure.

Education

- 9.3.9 The area is well served by education facilities. There are different school systems in the areas covered by the three Local Education Authorities (Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole). But in all cases the location and distribution of schools reflects the hierarchy of settlements, with upper/secondary schools in the larger centres fed by first/primary/middle schools in more local centres.
- 9.3.10 The area has a number of excellent higher and further education establishments, providing well-regarded teaching and research in a range of fields, including tourism, environmental studies, media studies and computer-based animation. Bournemouth University has two main campuses - at Wallisdown and the Lansdowne – where further developments are planned. Bournemouth and Poole College, which currently occupies six sites around the two towns, plans to focus in future on the Lansdowne and North Road sites. The Arts Institute shares the Wallisdown site with the University.

Libraries

- 9.3.11 Most parts of South East Dorset are served by reasonable access to library services. However this is not the case in the more rural areas. These areas are covered by mobile service provision. St Leonards and St Ives do not have a library and the libraries at Colehill and Corfe Mullen are very small. All of the major libraries have available resources in a range of languages other than English, audio, IT and other resources. Many libraries also have meeting rooms available for community and other functions and offer an essential community service.

Shopping

- 9.3.12 Although shopping may not fall within the normal definition of a community service, it is nevertheless an essential facility for local communities. In terms of the traditional shopping hierarchy, Bournemouth is the main sub-regional centre. Poole also has a strong centre, and there are several important local centres within the main urban area, including Christchurch, Boscombe, Winton and Castlepoint, as well as a number of smaller local centres. Most urban neighbourhoods have some shopping facilities, though in some cases these are limited to a single corner-shop. Provision in new residential areas is particularly limited.
- 9.3.13 Outside Bournemouth/Poole/Christchurch, Ringwood, Ferndown, Wimborne and Wareham have locally important centres which also, with the exception of

Ferndown, have the historic character and some of the trading and service patterns of market towns. In the more rural areas, shopping facilities are very limited as a result of progressive closures over a long period, due to a range of factors including increased mobility and competition from supermarkets.

Recreation and Open Space

9.3.14 South East Dorset provides a wide range of sporting and recreational facilities of local, regional and, in some cases, national significance. Multi-use leisure centres and swimming pools are located centrally and in a number of suburban areas. The beaches along the conurbation's coastline are an outstanding recreational resource. Poole and Christchurch Harbours provide a perfect environment for many water sports, including sailing and sub aqua; the siting of the Olympic Games sailing events at nearby Portland in 2012 may bring spin-off benefits for these activities.

9.3.15 Parks, informal play spaces and public open space are widely distributed across the area. Inland the South East Dorset Green Belt plays a significant role in providing accessible open space. There are many opportunities for countryside recreation, using the rights of way system as well as a number of country parks. Strategic recreational areas exist at Moors Valley, Avon Heath and Upton Park. There are numerous important sites of lesser scale such as Hengistbury Head. Many nature reserves and protected areas are also able to accommodate sympathetic public access, although this is not the case with some heathland areas on the west and north west fringes of the built up area. (For a full list of sport and leisure facilities, see Annex A of the Technical Paper on Culture.)

Other Facilities

9.3.16 The majority of neighbourhoods have access to community centres, community halls or, in the case of outlying settlements, village halls. These are key facilities as venues for community and cultural activities and as formal and informal meeting places.

9.4 Culture

Cultural Policy

9.4.1 In the Government's work on sustainable communities (ODPM, 2003), it is clear that a vibrant and creative local culture is to be considered as an important part of community. This is reinforced locally in both community strategies and the various arts strategies and cultural plans for the local authority areas, which recognise the importance of culture in developing a sense of identity and pride of place.

9.4.2 From this perspective, access to good quality cultural sector provision and infrastructure is an essential element of community cohesion, promoting participation and social inclusion. In addition, culture also has a broad range of roles in economic development, regeneration, innovation, health promotion, urban design and environment.

Cultural Facilities

- 9.4.3 South East Dorset offers a wide range of cultural and arts facilities covering most aspects of the arts. These are provided by a range of both public and private bodies as well as non-governmental organisations such as the National Trust. They range from major venues to small-scale local facilities. As with sporting and recreational facilities, some of South East Dorset's cultural assets are of regional and, in some cases, national rather than simply local significance. They therefore provide important economic and employment benefits by attracting spending by tourists and other visitors to the area, as well as by local people.
- 9.4.4 The major cultural facilities are generally located centrally in the main towns, for example Bournemouth International Centre, (host to national events such as party political conferences and exhibitions, theatre performances and concerts), the Pavilion (theatre, ballroom and concerts) and the Russell-Cotes Museum in Bournemouth, and the Lighthouse in Poole (South East Dorset's principal arts centre). Elsewhere cultural facilities are more prevalent in the older towns – Christchurch, Wimborne and Wareham – than in the suburbs and new development areas. The out-of-town multiplex cinema at Tower Park is a rare exception.
- 9.4.5 There are theatres and concert halls at Christchurch, Ferndown and Wimborne and several venues in both Bournemouth and Poole. There are cinemas at Bournemouth, Poole, Wareham and Wimborne. There are art galleries and collections in Bournemouth, Poole and Wimborne, a substantial art collection at the National Trust managed house of Kingston Lacey and several smaller venues for touring exhibitions. Museums and other heritage attractions are located in Christchurch, Poole, Wimborne and elsewhere. There are also several other sites of historical interest, including Christchurch Priory and Castle, Highcliffe Castle, Wimborne Minster, Brownsea Island, Stapehill Abbey Gardens amongst other sites. In addition, the area has a wealth of art and architecture in its parish churches, as well as several major ancient monuments and archaeological sites such as Badbury Rings. (For a full list, see Annex A of the Technical Paper on Culture.)
- 9.4.6 As noted above, culture can generate a wide range of benefits in addition to its role in community development. As well as encouraging tourism and visitor spending, it can support regeneration through the development of new facilities, particularly if there is close community involvement. It can promote innovation (linked with higher education) through the development of the creative industries, which are part of the knowledge economy and fit well within the direction of wider economic policy for South East Dorset described in the Economy chapter. Cultural activity can help to promote health as part of healthy living programmes and therapy. Finally culture is an important element in the design and management of the local environment, particularly in the urban context, contributing to quality and local distinctiveness.

9.5 **Vision**

- 9.5.1 The spatial strategy is founded on a vision for South East Dorset, developed by the Joint Study Area partners and tested through public and stakeholder consultation. This section sets out the parts of that vision that establish the direction for the community and culture elements of the strategy. These take account of the vision statements in the relevant community strategies.

- The overall vision for South East Dorset in 2026 is that it “will strengthen and develop its regional, national and international role within its outstanding environment and be recognised internationally as a prime example of a sustainable conurbation”. The elements of this overall vision that relate particularly to community and culture are as follows:
 - g) **Enriching the quality and breadth of its culture,**
 - h) **Creating and strengthening vibrant communities.**

9.5.3 The detailed vision for community and culture (with the desired outcomes and the indicators of success) is as follows:

- **The area will develop world class recreational and cultural facilities**

Outcome – a stimulating and enjoyable range of cultural and recreational facilities.

Indicator – number of cultural venues and the number of local, national and international visitors to events in the area.

- **the area will be characterised by a stimulating, vibrant, culturally diverse and inclusive society**

Outcomes – a locality that is attractive to all, retaining young people and making provision for the increasing number of elderly; a society where everyone is encouraged to participate to the full and no one is excluded.

Indicators – reduced out-migration of young people; a pattern of land uses and design that respects the needs of the elderly; social exclusion is minimised; facilities for art and other cultural activities are improved, expanded and made accessible to all and the proportion of the population having easy access to natural green areas.

- **Residents will benefit from a balanced and healthy lifestyle through –**
 - i) **fostering of strong, local communities**
 - j) **living in an excellent and safe environment**
 - k) **increasing the quantity and quality of affordable housing**
 - l) **having easy access to attractive and varied forms of transport, and**
 - m) **having easy access to recreation facilities, open and green areas**

Outcome -strong sense of local identity, social cohesion and maintaining and enhancing standards of living in South East Dorset

Indicators – reduced levels of crime; increased satisfaction with feeling of community; number of affordable houses provided; significantly reduced gap between house prices and wages; much improved transport provision for non car-based travel

- **The area will offer first class health provision that is easily accessible to all who require it**

Outcome – quality health provision that is accessible to all.

Indicators – improvements on measures of health; new and accessible health facilities constructed.

9.5.4 The following element of the vision for the economy is also relevant to community and culture:

- **The economy will continue to build on its diversity and strengths in its key sectors:**
 - b) **Creative and media industries**
- **Residents will benefit from a balanced and healthy lifestyle through:**
 - c) **Increasing the quantity and quality of affordable housing**

Outcome -sustainable economic growth that is not land hungry.

Indicators - increased output and productivity in all the above sectors; growth achieved through minimal land-take.

9.5.5 The following element of the vision for the urban environment is also relevant to community and culture:

- **South East Dorset will remain an area of diverse and distinctive historic and architectural value, and will harness the positive contribution new development can make to the quality of our urban areas by creating attractive, well-designed, lively, healthy places which support art, culture and innovation.**

Outcome - greater urban intensity contributing to buoyant, safe and exciting community life while conserving historical and quality buildings and streetscape.

Indicators - significantly increased residential densities; reduced number of complaints about urban intensification; improved air quality in urban areas; greater number of cultural venues; number of people who feel safe and comfortable using the streets at all times of day; levels of noise pollution.

9.6 Key Community and Cultural Issues and Strategy Proposals

9.6.1 This section identifies the key issues that need to be resolved through the spatial strategy if the above vision is to be achieved, and explores ways of tackling these issues. It focuses first on South East Dorset's role in providing cultural and related resources and opportunities for the wider world, as well as for its own residents. Secondly it identifies the essential elements required to underpin the creation and maintenance of strong and inclusive local communities across South East Dorset.

The Wider Role of the South East Dorset

9.6.2 As already noted, South East Dorset has cultural, recreational and related resources that provide benefits and opportunities not only to local people but also to wider regional, national and international markets, as a result of their exceptional quality. The vision involves building on these world-class facilities in order to sustain and promote this wider role and to reap the community and economic benefits.

- 9.6.3 The area currently offers a range of exceptional resources. Firstly there is its outstanding environment which provides, within close range, access to the East Devon and Dorset World Heritage Site, the New Forest National Park and two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (which include the Isle of Purbeck and Cranborne Chase), as well as the conurbation's own coastline embracing Poole and Christchurch Harbours and miles of sandy beaches. These areas offer world-class recreational and sporting opportunities, linked in many cases to other benefits such as the educational value of the Jurassic Coast's geology. There is also the potential to take advantage of the opportunities arising from the siting of the Olympic games sailing events at Portland in 2012, with the world-wide interest this will generate.
- 9.6.4 In addition the area offers high quality cultural resources, particularly in the main town centres. Outstanding among these are Bournemouth International Centre, the Pavilion and the Russell-Cotes Museum in Bournemouth, and the Lighthouse in Poole which is the home of the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra.
- 9.6.5 These assets are linked with a strong tourism industry focusing increasingly on quality products and services. The strategy of the Dorset and New Forest Tourism Partnership stresses this focus, which is underpinned by initiatives such as Bournemouth's promotion as a world-class resort in a world-class environment, and the development of the Bournemouth hotel school.
- 9.6.6 Further support for the area's cultural, recreational and related resources is provided by their links with the growing creative industries sector and by the higher and further education institutions which have particular strengths in related specialisms such as tourism and arts.
- 9.6.7 The vision entails building on these assets by providing facilities that are equal to the best anywhere in the world and that sustain the area's attractiveness as an international venue. In order to achieve this, the spatial strategy needs to promote urban renaissance in Bournemouth and Poole which, as substantial towns with major urban functions, offer the best locations for significant cultural and recreational developments. Such developments should aim to promote their roles as attractive, vibrant and culturally stimulating town centres.
- 9.6.8 To support this strategy of urban renaissance, it is suggested that South East Dorset needs to make a clear statement about the arts. It needs an iconic development of European, if not international, importance, taking advantage of existing brownfield sites in the town centres. Such a large-scale development should act as a stimulus for the arts locally and relate well to existing major local venues, as well as providing an additional international focus and aiming to become a centre of excellence throughout Europe and beyond.
- 9.6.9 The spatial strategy should also underpin the connections to the creative and media industries, the higher and further education sector and to tourism. It should ensure that the development needs of these linked activities are appropriately met.

9.6.10 Thus to achieve the vision of providing world-class cultural and recreational facilities for the benefit of local people and the wider world, the following spatial strategy elements are proposed:

Main Strategy:

- (b) to focus the most intensive activities in the centres of Bournemouth and Poole in order to continue an 'urban renaissance' of attractive, vibrant and culturally stimulating town centres;

Economy

- (e) providing opportunities for the expansion of Bournemouth University, the Arts Institute and further education institutions;
- (g) promoting the growth of sustainable tourism by encouraging development that will improve the quality and range of attractions and accommodation, contribute to regeneration, and help to extend the tourist season.

9.7 Strong and Inclusive Local Communities

9.7.1 If South East Dorset is to function as a sustainable conurbation, it must provide the prerequisites that will enable strong and inclusive communities to be created and maintained. The following paragraphs identify the issues that the spatial strategy must address under two general headings: access to essential services and facilities (including education, faith, health, sport and recreation, and culture); and a balanced and healthy lifestyle.

9.7.2 Access to essential services and facilities involves both the issue of physical accessibility – how people get to the services they need (or the services get to them) – and the broader concept of inclusion – ensuring that services are available to all individuals and sectors of the community, whatever their age, ethnic background, economic circumstances etc.

9.7.3 At an early stage, the Joint Study identified the question of how to improve accessibility, both within the area and to and from other areas, to support economic, social and environmental wellbeing, as one of the key strategic planning issues that the spatial strategy must tackle. The issue, and the spatial and transport strategies to address it, are largely covered in the Transport chapter. However there are aspects relating specifically to community facilities that need to be mentioned here.

9.7.4 Firstly there is the issue of providing community facilities locally. Large-scale and specialist facilities cannot of course be provided in every community, and the spatial strategy should aim to ensure that such facilities are located in places that are most easily accessible to the majority of people – normally town centres on prime transport corridors. Nevertheless a strong and inclusive community requires basic facilities (including cultural and recreational facilities) to be provided within the community itself as far as possible, so as to build a sense of community as well as to ensure that people who have no private transport and cannot afford public transport are not excluded. A degree of self-containment is therefore an important objective in the planning of both existing and new communities.

- 9.7.5 This issue has a particular relevance to small rural communities. The continuing loss of facilities in rural areas means that many villages lack post offices, shops, pubs, schools, frequent bus services and doctors surgeries in many villages. This is a matter of concern because of their distance from such basic services.
- 9.7.6 The lack of such services within a community deprives it of potential focal points. Furthermore the loss or absence of a service has different impacts on different sections of the community. Often the elderly, the less mobile and the less well-off are worst affected. But young people also suffer if there are no recreation facilities or transport services to meet their needs, and this can be a factor that discourages them from staying in the area, leading to further imbalance in the age structure.
- 9.7.7 It should also be noted that community services and activities are often dependent on the voluntary commitment of a small number of active members of the community and of user groups. Although this is not an issue that can be directly addressed through spatial strategy, the need to develop and encourage community capacity as a key element of strong and inclusive communities is a matter that should be tackled through community planning.
- 9.7.8 In terms of spatial strategy, the approach must be to continue to support and encourage the retention of existing community facilities, and the development of new ones, throughout rural and urban areas. Community services and facilities must also be provided in new residential developments. As noted earlier, these essential services and facilities include education, faith, health, sport and recreation, and culture. It will be necessary to continue to monitor any decline of local services and the impact of this on local residents.
- 9.7.9 The proposed spatial strategy of concentrating most new development in the main urban areas, with a limited number of planned extensions, is likely to support the provision of community facilities by allowing for development, and hence additional population, in most communities. However the challenge of ensuring that this focusing of development within the main built-up areas leads to improvements in the quality of life, and does not lead to a worsening of environmental or social conditions, or to an unacceptable level of traffic congestion, was identified as one of the key strategic planning issues for South East Dorset.
- 9.7.10 For these reasons, the spatial strategy needs to include policies to encourage balanced and healthy lifestyles across South East Dorset. The key elements of this approach are an excellent and safe local environment; first-class health provision that is easily accessible to all who require it; and accessible open space, recreation facilities and countryside. (Other key elements, such as social housing provision and general accessibility, are dealt with elsewhere.)
- 9.7.11 An excellent and safe local environment involves a range of issues of which the most important from the viewpoint of spatial strategy is the local environment. High quality urban design and streetscape, together with adequate and accessible public open space, are essential to the character and social well-being of the locality. The spatial strategy should provide for the safeguarding and improvement of these facilities in urban areas. It will be important for local development frameworks to tackle these issues in detail,

including related aspects of a safe environment such as discouraging crime through urban design.

- 9.7.12 The issue of first-class health provision that is easily accessible to all who require it has already been noted. This aspiration needs to be considered alongside demographic data on the aging population of South East Dorset and the out-migration of young people. One of the key strategic planning issues for the area is how to provide for its aging population, taking account of the impact on the labour force, the need for support services and the need for specialist accommodation.
- 9.7.13 The intentions of the Primary Care Trusts for future health provision were noted in paragraph 9.2.10 above. To support such provision, the spatial strategy needs to provide for the concentration of major development and facilities at places that are most easily accessible to the majority of people – normally town centres on prime transport corridors. It must also allow for local provision within communities, accessible to all sectors of the community. Finally it must address the issue of housing for support workers in the health and social care sectors by making provision for affordable housing for key workers.
- 9.7.14 Balanced and healthy communities require easy access to open space, recreation facilities and the countryside. There is an important role for local open space that is available and accessible to all communities within the urban area. Beyond that, there is a need to take advantage of the recreational opportunities available in the open countryside, including the green belt. The South East Dorset conurbation is fortunate in that its shape ensures that a relatively high proportion of its residents live within reasonable range of open countryside. This provides a wide range of opportunities, including strategic recreational sites such as Moors Valley Country Park, Avon Heath and Upton Park; smaller-scale sites such as Hengistbury Head; the rights of way network; and some nature reserves which can accommodate sympathetic public access.
- 9.7.15 This last point flags up an important constraint on the provision of recreational access to the open countryside. Much of the countryside adjoining the conurbation comprises heathland and other designated areas of very high nature conservation value, as described in the Environment chapter. In order to reduce the impacts of over-use on heathland and other protected areas, there is a clear case to discourage access by making more public open space available elsewhere to attract people away from the sensitive areas.
- 9.7.16 The recreational facilities described above are an essential asset for residents throughout the locality and beyond, particularly as a counter-balance to the potential effects of a strategy of urban intensification. The spatial strategy should ensure the continued provision of such facilities, together with improved access by sustainable means such as walking, cycling and public transport.
- 9.7.17 Thus to achieve the vision of creating and maintaining strong and inclusive local communities across South East Dorset, the following spatial strategy elements are proposed

Main Strategy:

- (a) to concentrate the majority of development in urban areas, particularly at town and local centres which are on prime transport corridors.

Community and Related Infrastructure:

- (l) safeguarding and improving public open space and streetscapes within urban areas;
- (m) providing recreational/informal open space, community forests and/or country parks close to the urban areas, but away from environmentally sensitive areas, and accessible by public transport, cycling or walking;
- (n) from the conurbation, improving the accessibility by public transport, cycling and walking of significant areas of countryside recreation, including the Dorset and East Devon Coast World Heritage Site, Cranborne Chase and the New Forest;
- (o) within the urban areas, providing for local services and facilities for all of the community, including education, faith, health, sport and recreation, and culture. Such facilities should be retained where there is a continuing need and there are no accessible local alternatives.

10. TRANSPORT

10.1 Introduction

10.1.1 Providing the means for effective, efficient and environmentally friendly movement within South East Dorset, and links to other areas, is essential if the area is to function as a sustainable conurbation which satisfies the accessibility needs of the community and fulfils its economic potential. This chapter focuses on South East Dorset's transport networks, the opportunities and challenges they face, the vision for their future and the essential elements of spatial and transport strategies to secure that vision.

10.1.2 The chapter is structured as follows:

- Section 10.2 outlines the characteristics of transport in South-East Dorset and in the wider regional context;
- Section 10.3 sets out the broad vision for South East Dorset and the more detailed vision relating to transport, with desired outcomes and indicators;
- Section 10.4 focuses on the key strategic transport issues and sets out the elements of the spatial strategy which are proposed to address them, and to achieve the vision in the period up to 2026;
- Section 10.5 sets out the Transport Strategy, which was developed in tandem with the Joint Study as a common basis for both the spatial strategy and the Local Transport Plan for South East Dorset.

10.2 Transport Characteristics of South East Dorset

10.2.1 The South East Dorset conurbation has developed significantly over the last hundred years, and has tripled in population. The Victorian development of Bournemouth between the two, much older, towns of Poole and Christchurch has produced an unusual road network, unlike the radial system of a single city centre.

10.2.2 Since 1970, some of the primary routes have been improved to dual carriageway standard, but most of the east-west movements across the conurbation are dependent on all-purpose, single carriageway roads with frontage development, on- street parking, and numerous junctions. The last significant capacity increases in the road network were in 1992, with the completion of Holes Bay Road. Since then, transport strategy has concentrated on making the best use of the existing network, with more investment in non-car modes. Whilst traffic flows have not grown as much as they did in previous decades, congestion has become more widespread, and average speeds have declined more markedly than any other comparable area.

10.2.3 Car ownership is relatively high for a conurbation; hence bus use is relatively low. This means that increased bus use alone is unlikely to deliver a significant reduction in car use. There is only one railway line, running east-west along the coast, and this accounts for only 1% of trips. Whilst there is potential to run additional trains, and make better use of existing services, rail's contribution to overall movement needs can only be marginal.

- 10.2.4 The attraction of sandy beaches, and the quality of the surrounding area, including the New Forest, results in millions of visitors being attracted to the area. This causes a major increase in traffic volumes in the summer, and it is estimated that the peak population is nearly 600,000. As premier resorts, Bournemouth and Poole rely heavily on tourism and the conference trade and have developed a cosmopolitan feel with the expansion of the local University and Language Schools. The development of both the Port of Poole and Bournemouth Airport therefore form essential gateways to the region for both tourism and trade and thus have a vital role to support the economy of South East Dorset.
- 10.2.5 Outside the principal urban area, the road network has not been improved as proposed in the 1980 Structure Plan, due to the increased weight given to the protection of heathland. This means that some links have not been implemented as planned, resulting in unacceptable conditions for residents in some areas, and other links which require more capacity to cope with a function not originally envisaged.
- 10.2.6 Consultations with key stakeholders identify a good transport system as an essential element of creating a vibrant South East Dorset. Whilst acknowledging that there will be certain environmental and financial constraints, they prioritise essential infrastructure improvements to the Port and Airport as fundamental to meeting future objectives. The key stakeholders also identify poor direct road and rail links to the west and north as restricting trade with other major conurbations within the region and the rest of the UK. Concerns have also been expressed about the lack of past investment in transportation infrastructure within the urban area, which has led to increasing congestion on the major routes and rat-running in other less suitable streets, with the resultant detrimental affect on the local economy and environment.
- 10.2.7 The highest priority identified by businesses is for an improved route between the western part of the conurbation and the A31 trunk road. The conurbation has generally good quality high capacity roads approaching from the north-east and west (e.g. the A338 and A35/A3049) but no direct link between them, relying on lower standard urbanised roads to cope with the high east-west movements. Much of the urban network between Poole and Bournemouth is therefore at or above capacity and suffers significant congestion at peak times with major incidents often leading to severe gridlock.
- 10.2.8 The expansion of the suburban shopping centre on Castle Lane to create Castlepoint, a sub-regional shopping complex, has greatly increased traffic flows and congestion in the northern part of Bournemouth. Indeed, one traffic peculiarity of the conurbation is that congestion on the approaches to Poole and Bournemouth town centres is relatively low compared to intersections of radial and cross-conurbation routes. More detail concerning congestion is given in the Local Transport Plan.
- 10.2.9 It is instructive to compare South East Dorset's present transport problems with those of other parts of the country, using national data where available. The issues in Table 10.1 below include the Government's four shared priorities for transport – congestion, safety, accessibility and air quality. (The commentary forecast for 2026 assumes the Transport Strategy set out in Section 10.5 below is implemented successfully.)

Table 10.1 – Comparison of South East Dorset and National Transport Issues

Issue	Comparative	Indicator	2026 Forecast
Congestion	Included in congested areas studied by Government, but not in priority category. Reduction in average speeds, 1993-2004, greatest in study.	Average speeds.	Continued decline in average speeds, but strategy aims to secure reliable journey times.
Safety	Among the safest in UK.	Killed and seriously injured per head of population.	Expected to retain low KSI rates.
Accessibility	Significantly better than rural areas, but not as good as most conurbations.	(Data in preparation for accessibility index).	Spatial and accessibility strategy should secure improvements.
Sustainable commuting	Single occupancy car use high for a major urban area. Level of containment is high.	70% of commuting by car drivers. 94% of employed residents working within area.	Containment will improve if national scheme of inter-urban road pricing is implemented.
Air Quality	Fewer air quality problems than comparable urban areas.	Air Quality management Areas – currently nil.	High risk of a significant worsening in air quality.
Connectivity	Adequate to rest of England but poor to rest of South West.	Population within 1 and 2 hour travel time (road or rail).	Strategy promotes improvements not reliant on capital expenditure.

10.3 Vision

10.3.1 The spatial strategy is founded on a vision for South East Dorset, developed by the Joint Study Area partners and tested through public and stakeholder consultation. This section sets out the parts of that vision that establish the direction for the economic elements of the strategy.

- The overall vision for South East Dorset in 2026 is that it “will strengthen and develop its regional, national and international role within its outstanding environment and be recognised internationally as a prime example of a sustainable conurbation”. The elements of this overall vision that relate particularly to transport are:
 - c) **Fulfilling its economic potential through investing in people, transport and other infrastructure;**
 - j) **Reducing the need to travel within the conurbation, improving accessibility and investing in sustainable transport.**

10.3.3 The detailed vision for transport (with the desired outcomes and the indicators of success) is as follows:

- **Transport and land uses will be integrated to encourage a reduction in the number of journeys requiring a private car**

Outcome – easy access to public transport with minimum distances between employment, shopping leisure and health facilities and home.

Indicators – traffic flows; accessibility index.

- **higher density development will be focused close to existing main transport routes, bus and train stations *in locations* which promote the development of public transport**

Outcome – frequent, cost effective and well used public transport in easy reach of homes and work places.

Indicators – bus passenger numbers; rail passenger numbers.

- **traffic congestion will be managed to provide safe, easy and reliable journeys**

Outcome – well regulated traffic flows and safer road for both drivers, pedestrians and cyclists.

Indicators – average speeds; injury accident rates; journey time reliability (methodology being developed).

- **Bournemouth Airport and the Port of Poole will be further developed and supported by improved transport infrastructure**

Outcome – the global reach and connectivity of South East Dorset is expanded making it a more attractive place for both business and residents.

Indicators – landside journey times to port/airport from selected points; airport passengers per annum; port freight tonnes.

- **rail and road links will be improved to the West and North to enhance routes to other regions**

Outcome – greater accessibility to and from South East Dorset.

Indicators – rail service frequencies/journey times to London, Bristol, Birmingham and Exeter; road journey times to M25, Bristol, Birmingham and Exeter.

10.3.4 The following elements of the vision for the economy are also relevant to transport:

- **Bournemouth Airport will be the key strategic employment site in the area and the expansion of the airport itself will be a major commercial driver**

Outcome – large scale employment site attractive to knowledge-based industry at the airport.

Indicator – number of knowledge-based companies locating at the airport site

- **Poole will contribute to the economy of the South West through its role as a major sea port and its regeneration opportunities, including the Twin Sails Bridge.**

Outcome – economically buoyant Poole using its newly regenerated areas to present an image that is dynamic and attractive to investors.

Indicators- amount of freight and the number of passengers using the Port of Poole; scale of economic growth.

10.3.5 The following element of the vision for communities and culture is also relevant to transport:

- **Residents will benefit from a balanced and healthy lifestyle through –**
 - a) **Fostering strong, local communities;**
 - c) **having easy access to attractive and varied forms of transport;**
and
 - d) **having easy access to recreation facilities, open and green areas.**

Outcome -strong sense of local identity, social cohesion and maintaining and enhancing standards of living in South East Dorset

Indicators – increased satisfaction with feeling of community; much improved transport provision for non car-based travel. cal Transport Plan for South East Dorset.

10.4 Key Transport Issues and Strategy Proposals

10.4.1 This section identifies the key issues that need to be resolved through transport and spatial strategies if the above vision is to be achieved, and explores ways of tackling these issues.

10.4.2 If South East Dorset is to function as a sustainable conurbation, it must satisfy the accessibility needs of the community and have the capacity to fulfil its economic potential.

10.4.3 Accessibility is a central element in securing a high quality of life for individuals and communities. The vision of a sub-region of strong communities requires that its residents have good access to jobs, services, leisure and recreation. There should be provision to overcome problems of geographical remoteness and to ensure that poor access is neither a cause nor an effect of social or economic exclusion.

10.4.4 A prosperous economy requires that businesses have good access to markets and supplies both within and beyond South East Dorset. It is also essential that employees are able to get to work easily and reliably.

- 10.4.5 However, these accessibility needs must be balanced against other requirements of a sustainable conurbation. Improved accessibility must not be bought at the cost of irreparable damage to the area's outstanding environmental quality. Nor must it harm the local environment which determines the quality of life of people and communities, in terms of air quality, safety, loss of green space and general amenity issues. It must also be recognised that actions intended to improve accessibility can, if they facilitate increased car usage, have the opposite effect by generating increased congestion.
- 10.4.6 It is for these reasons that the vision for South East Dorset focuses not only on fulfilling its economic potential through investing in people, transport and other infrastructure, but also on reducing the need to travel within the conurbation, improving accessibility and investing in sustainable transport.
- 10.4.7 The last point – the need to invest in order to secure sustainable transport outcomes – is critical. Without substantial investment to overcome existing deficiencies and to introduce new approaches, it will be impossible to achieve the vision of a sustainable conurbation, or the economic, social and environmental objectives that underpin it. It will also be impossible to provide the transport infrastructure necessary to serve the developments proposed to meet the area's needs and to enable it to play an appropriate regional role as one of the South West's principal population centres and economic drivers.
- 10.4.8 The key transport issues that the regional and the South East Dorset spatial strategies must address are therefore:
- how to improve accessibility both within the area and to and from other areas, to support economic, social and environmental wellbeing;
 - how to ensure that focusing development within the main built-up areas leads to improvements in the quality of life, and does not lead to a worsening of environmental or social conditions, or to an unacceptable level of traffic congestion; and
 - how to achieve the investment needed to secure the infrastructure required to implement the strategy.
- 10.4.9 These issues are of course inter-related and must be addressed through a range of integrated land use and transport policies and actions. The following paragraphs, which for convenience are structured under the headings Congestion and Accessibility, explore the potential solutions to these issues, and identify the elements of the spatial strategy that are proposed to address them. Section 10.5 sets out the Transport Strategy, which was developed in tandem with the Joint Study as a common basis for both the spatial strategy and the Local Transport Plan for South East Dorset.

Congestion

- 10.4.10 Clearly, growing congestion is the major transport-related problem for South East Dorset, and if not tackled, will have serious effects on the quality of life, health and the economy. The characteristics of the area directly affect the choice of solution. For example, as a multi-centred conurbation with relatively high car ownership, levels of bus use are comparatively low. Hence switching from car to bus use will be more difficult in South East Dorset than in say,

Southampton or Portsmouth. For other geographic and demographic reasons, use of rail, walking, cycling and powered two wheelers are only capable of modest expansion. Hence the greatest contribution to tackling congestion in South East Dorset will be a change to more sensible car use.

10.4.11 Three strategic approaches are proposed to achieve this:

- reducing the need to travel through appropriate policies for future development and land use;
- managing demand; and
- providing attractive alternatives to the private car.

Reducing the need to travel

10.4.12 The choice of spatial strategy has a significant role in determining future levels of traffic growth. The transport implications of the level and distribution of development are explained fully in the Transport Technical Paper. As noted in earlier chapters, a strategy of concentrating the majority of development in urban areas is appropriate for South East Dorset for a range of reasons, including sustainability, environmental protection and public opinion. It also has transport benefits in terms of locating development so as to reduce the need to travel. In particular, the strategy should focus development at town and local centres which are on prime transport corridors. This should ensure that most new residential development is in locations that are either within walking or cycling distance of jobs, services and facilities, or are near corridors where effective public transport can be provided.

10.4.13 Not all the new development proposed for the area will be within the existing built-up area. In developing the spatial strategy, a large number of potential urban extension sites was assessed. In general, whilst transport considerations were important to all the development site assessments, the dominant issue was the effects on internationally recognised natural sites. However, there are some sites where transport was key to the decision to reject their development, and these are listed in the Transport Technical Paper. Sites proposed as urban extensions have transport infrastructure requirements, which are noted in paragraph 10.4.30 below, and discussed in more detail in the Technical Paper.

10.4.14 Even with a spatial strategy concentrating new development at centres on prime transport corridors, the additional 40,000 dwellings proposed will inevitably cause an overall growth in traffic flows and put more pressure on the stretched road network. These additional dwellings could result in between 120,000 and 320,000 car trips per day, and traffic forecasts show that the number of overloaded key junctions, and the degree of overload, will rise. The additional congestion due to development is identified in the Transport Technical Paper. While the design and location of new housing can help restrict the level of traffic growth, it is only part of the solution. If such growth, and the congestion and other problems it brings, are to be minimised, the Transport Strategy needs to adopt a more radical approach, promoting a modal shift away from car usage and introducing more demand restraint.

Managing demand

- 10.4.15 Whilst voluntary action through public education is important, direct restraint of inappropriate car use is the most effective method, though politically challenging. In South East Dorset, traffic restraint has concentrated on management and pricing of car parking, with a limited number of bus priority features on the road network. To reduce traffic growth over the next twenty years, management of road network use must be intensified. Giving priority to the movement of people and goods, rather than vehicles, is the core of the spatial strategy. There is scope for some improvements in network capacity, and in particular in managing the capacity of the prime transport corridors, but priority use of these expensive works must be for people and goods, not vehicles.
- 10.4.16 It is also relevant to consider a do-minimum approach to congestion. This would reduce authorities' capital expenditure on transport, so could allow increased expenditure on other areas. It might be argued that traffic congestion is, to an extent, self-regulating and the more extreme outcomes will not occur. However, worsening congestion would destroy bus reliability and reduce the number of bus services which could be run commercially. Hence avoiding capital improvements on transport would lead to increased revenue pressures. More importantly, the risks from deteriorating air quality are potentially severe, with adverse impacts on the local economy and the environment.
- 10.4.17 Thus the strategy to tackle congestion needs to maximise the potential for modal shift, but recognise the realistic limitations of what can be achieved. Much more active management of the road network is essential, and priorities and pricing for use of roadspace and parking space need to become more sophisticated. The single occupancy car is a very inefficient use of space, and the strategy on congestion should focus on minimising its use whenever and wherever the network is near capacity.

Providing attractive alternatives to the private car

- 10.4.18 Managing demand effectively without reducing accessibility requires not only restraint on car use but also the provision of attractive alternative modes of transport. As already noted, this is a significant challenge in South East Dorset, which is a multi-centred conurbation with relatively high car ownership.
- 10.4.19 Nevertheless a number of policies are proposed to provide an attractive alternative to the car, as well as to enhance accessibility for those without a car. The spatial strategy proposes to enhance walking and cycling provision. In terms of public transport, a step-change improvement in bus service quality is envisaged. Both cycling and bus usage will be reinforced by managing roadspace so as to give priority to these non-car uses. In addition, it is intended that the role of rail will be expanded for local passenger accessibility, as well as to improve links beyond South East Dorset for passengers and freight. These initiatives form part of a package of smarter travel choices, which is described more fully in the Transport Strategy (Section 10.5 below).
- 10.4.20 Thus the spatial strategy elements proposed to address congestion and related issues are: and Related Infrastructure:
- (a) to concentrate the majority of development in urban areas, particularly at town and local centres which are on prime transport corridors;

- (b) to focus the most intensive activities in the centres of Bournemouth and Poole in order to continue an 'urban renaissance' of attractive, vibrant and culturally stimulating town centres;
- (i) to manage use of the transport network and locate development so as to minimise the need to travel within the conurbation and reduce the proportion of journeys made by single occupancy cars;
- (p) enhancing public transport, walking and cycling provision, increasing demand management by transferring more road space to priority vehicles and managing the supply and use of parking;
- (q) expanding significantly the role of rail, for passengers and freight, by: series of technical studies to examine growth potential and explore future options. These comprise:
 - providing new local passenger services and stations, including a Swanage connection, and using rail for local park and ride;
 - introducing new links to Bristol and other major centres in the South West;
 - further expanding rail freight use at the Port of Poole. an for South East Dorset.

Accessibility

10.4.21 The second area of strategic concern is accessibility, including connectivity (accessibility between South East Dorset and other areas).

10.4.22 Tackling congestion in the ways proposed in the preceding paragraphs should make a significant contribution to improving accessibility, particularly within the conurbation. Nevertheless policies are required to ensure the provision of appropriate access for areas of new housing and employment development and to overcome constraints on the area's links with the wider world.

10.4.23 Good connectivity is a basic necessity of a successful modern economy. South East Dorset faces substantial disadvantages in this respect, which include poor links to the rest of the South West region and to the north, increasing pressure on road links to London and the South East, and inadequate land-side transport links to Bournemouth Airport and the Port of Poole, as well as the problems (already noted) of general congestion within the conurbation. Evidence gathered through consultation shows that the business community regards improvements to transport infrastructure as the highest priority in securing the prosperity South East Dorset's economy.

10.4.24 However, while the spatial strategy must undoubtedly provide for improvements to connectivity, the commitment to major infrastructure development must be tempered by a number of factors. One is the prevailing national policy context, which generally favours the achievement of accessibility improvements by means other than road-building.

10.4.25 A related factor is the financial aspect; in the context of this policy framework, it would be unrealistic to expect the Government to provide finance

for any but the most essential and clearly targeted transport infrastructure schemes where no other solution is available. There is also the question of cost-effectiveness. Major investment in transport is not necessarily a cost-effective method of assisting a local economy, because overall distribution costs account for only 4% of product cost. Indeed, significant changes in connectivity to a relatively isolated area may reduce local employment and substitute it with more commuting.

10.4.26 The costs of providing a significant reduction in journey time by road or rail are extremely high. For example, to provide a one third reduction in road journey time to Bristol or Exeter would cost about £400m, the total 20-year transport expenditure for South East Dorset. This does not mean that more modest improvements to these routes (the A35 and A350) would not be worthwhile. National policy for inter-urban primary routes promotes safe and reliable journeys, not increased speed. Improvements to the A350 corridor proposed by Dorset County Council, to the north west of the study area, are in accordance with this policy, and are beneficial to the area, and the Port of Poole in particular.

10.4.27 A further factor is the quality of the environment. In many areas, both urban and rural, major transport development is likely to be unachievable as a result of statutory environmental protection, while in others local environmental quality and residential amenity are significant constraints.

10.4.28 The spatial strategy should seek to improve the connectivity of the sub-region by road, rail, air and sea to other areas in Britain and Europe, including making the best use of the principal gateways of Bournemouth Airport and the Port of Poole. In the context of national transport policy, financial realism and environmental considerations, the policies set out above to minimise the increase in traffic congestion will be an important means of improving accessibility.

10.4.29 But the spatial strategy should also focus on delivering a small number of strategically significant transport improvements, all of which are important for improving accessibility within and to South East Dorset: comprise:

- Improvements to the A31 - Poole corridor: this will link the Port of Poole, the conurbation, Bournemouth Airport and the A31 (connecting with London and the South East), and provide access to a number of the proposed urban extension development sites;
- The Poole Bridge Regeneration Network and improvements to the infrastructure at the Port of Poole (including a deeper access channel and berth improvements): these are in effect parts of the strategically critical package of improvements to the A31 – Poole corridor, connecting with a major residential and employment development area and improving access to and from the port;
- Bournemouth Airport – new terminal and link road to A338: these improvements are needed to maximise the Airport's potential as one of the fastest growing regional airports in the UK, with services which open up opportunities for businesses operating in the global market and new tourism markets. The new terminal will offer better passenger facilities, while improved access to the A338 will also make the Airport more

competitive, as well as bringing forward development at the regionally significant employment site of Aviation Park.

10.4.30 These improvements should be reinforced by a number of supporting actions. Cost-effective improvements in connectivity can be provided by widening the range of service destinations offered by Bournemouth Airport and the Port of Poole. Clearly such services would need to be profitable to be sustainable, but would not require capital expenditure. Similarly, a through rail service to Bristol could be introduced without expensive capacity improvements. Despite the closure of the direct rail route in the Beeching era, a more frequent and slightly quicker service is relatively easy to deliver.

10.4.31 South East Dorset's links to London and the South East are critically dependent on the A31/M27/M3 route. Congestion in South Hampshire is leading to unreliable journey times. It is crucial to the economic health of South East Dorset that this problem is resolved, and the Government's proposed inter-urban road pricing may provide one long-term solution.

10.4.32 Thus the spatial strategy elements proposed to address accessibility and related issues are:

- (c) to bring forward the development of Bournemouth Airport as a regionally significant employment site, once the related transport infrastructure identified in paragraph q [see below, and also paragraph 10.4.30 above] has been provided;
- (d) to continue the Poole Bridge Regeneration Initiative as a regionally significant mixed residential and employment scheme;
- (f) To make provision for the following urban extensions:

For housing:

Roeshot Hill, Christchurch	Up to 600 dwellings
Pardy's Hill, Corfe Mullen	Up to 700 dwellings
Wimborne North	Up to 600 dwellings
Cuthbury, Wimborne	Up to 200 dwellings
Parley Cross, West Parley	Up to 900 dwellings
TOTAL	Up to 3,000 dwellings

For employment:

Blunt's Farm, Ferndown	Up to 20ha
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LDFs will define detailed site boundaries and set out the phased release of land, taking account of the implementation of infrastructure pre-requisites, local need and the availability of suitable brownfield sites;

- (h) to improve the connectivity of South East Dorset by air, sea, rail and road to other parts of Britain and Europe, making best use of the principal gateways of Bournemouth Airport and the Port of Poole;

- (q) delivering strategically significant transport improvements: within and to South East Dorset: comprise:
- prime transport corridor improvements;
 - Poole Bridge Regeneration network;
 - A31 to Poole corridor improvements;
 - making provision for a new passenger terminal at Bournemouth Airport and a package of measures to improve access, including link road to the A338;
 - Port of Poole deeper access channel and berth improvements.

All of these transport improvements will be located and designed to minimize their environmental effects;

- (r) expanding significantly the role of rail, for passengers and freight, by:
- providing new local passenger services and stations, including a Swanage connection, and using rail for local park and ride;
 - Introducing new links to Bristol and other major centres in the South West;
 - further expanding rail freight use at the Port of Poole.

Investment

10.4.33 As noted earlier, a key strategic issue is how to achieve the investment needed to secure the infrastructure required to implement the strategy. It is unquestionably the case that, without adequate investment in transport, the spatial strategy for South East Dorset will fail. This applies to the major capital infrastructure schemes listed in paragraph 10.4.30 above; to the improvement of prime transport corridors; and to the smaller-scale capital and revenue expenditure required to manage demand and to provide alternatives to car usage.

10.4.34 Major Capital Scheme bids will be made for the major named schemes. In addition, a comprehensive funding and phasing package has been developed which is outlined in the Transport Strategy (Section 10.5 below) with more detail in the Implementation Plan.

- Section 10.5 sets out the Transport Strategy, which was developed in tandem with the Joint Study as a common basis for both the spatial strategy and the Local Transport Plan for South East Dorset.

10.5 Transport Strategy

10.5.1 This transport strategy has been prepared by the South East Dorset Transport Advisory Group, (SED TAG) comprising elected Members of Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole and the South East Dorset District Councils, plus Hampshire County Council, New Forest District Council and North Dorset District Council, with expert transport advisors from six strategic transport providers: Highways Agency, Strategic Rail Authority, Bournemouth Airport, Port of Poole and the two major bus companies in the sub-region.

- 10.5.2 The Transport Strategy was developed in tandem with the Joint Study as a common basis for both the spatial strategy and the Local Transport Plan for South East Dorset. It takes account of the vision developed for the Joint Study and of the evolving spatial strategy, with its emphasis on tackling congestion and improving accessibility.
- 10.5.3 SEDTAG have considered the transport implications of the level and distribution of development. They have also considered the priorities for major transport schemes and the development contributions scheme at length. The relevant reports and minutes are included in the Transport Technical Paper.
- 10.5.4 To deliver the spatial strategy for South East Dorset, and a high quality of life for the increased population, a carefully balanced transport strategy is required, consisting of five elements:
- 10.5.5 **Demand Management and Prime Transport Corridors**, where priority will be given to moving people and goods rather than vehicles, and where development, including local community facilities, will be focused. In South East Dorset, demand management has previously concentrated on car parking pricing and management, with only limited on-street priorities for buses. The revised strategy, explained in more detail in the Local Transport Plan (LTP2), does extend controls on car parking, but will substantially increase the allocation of roadspace, away from single occupancy cars, to priority vehicles, buses in particular. Achieving the objective of a significant modal shift away from single occupancy cars is expected to make a major contribution to keeping congestion at tolerable levels.
- 10.5.6 The changes on prime transport corridors will be aimed at reducing congestion and improving accessibility, and will act as a focus for denser development. There are four types of prime transport corridor, defined in detail in LTP2:
- Type 1: Main railway line;
 - Type 2: Limited access major roads;
 - Type 3: All purpose roads, limited demand management; and
 - Type 4: All purpose roads, significant demand management. Intensive development will be encouraged in local centres on types 1, 3 and 4, where this is in accordance with the Local Development Framework.
- 10.5.7 Prime Transport Corridors will be the focus for investment both in the short term and longer term, with total expenditure expected to be in excess of £60 million over 20 years. In the short term this will be the focus for spending of the Local Transport Plan block allocation for Integrated Transport, supplemented where possible by developer contributions. In the longer term (2011 onwards), it is proposed to bid for major scheme funding or funding from the Transport Innovation Fund. The authorities will discuss these opportunities with the Government Office for the South West.
- 10.5.8 **A step change improvement in bus service quality** to enhance accessibility for those without a car, and provide an attractive alternative to the car. This process has already begun, with recent improvements in bus quality, frequencies and provision of real time information. This has been concentrated

on the western part of the conurbation, but will be extended throughout South East Dorset. A key aim of the bus service improvements is to deliver a minimum daytime frequency of six buses per hour on all type 3 and 4 Prime Transport Corridors. Priority features for buses will be focused on these areas, and intensified development will be focused where services allow, further supporting future growth of public transport.

10.5.9 Major Capital Scheme bids will be made for improvements to the airport, the port and connections to the national road network, including improvements in the Poole/A31/Ringwood corridor and a link to the airport from the A338. This will improve access to the conurbation and facilitate some of the housing and employment growth sites required by the Spatial Strategy. Whilst all the major growth sites will require local transport mitigation measures, some will have strategic transport prerequisites. The relationship between the strategic transport schemes and proposed development sites is shown in Table 10.2 below. There were other sites studied which have been rejected, due in part to the cost or difficulty of providing transport mitigation, and these are summarised in the Transport Technical Paper.

Table 10.2 Strategic Transport Prerequisites for Development

Strategic Transport Scheme	Site Enabled
Poole Bridge Regeneration Network	Lower Hamworthy and West Quay Road (mixed use sites)
Bournemouth Airport – A338 link	Airport (employment)
Poole/A31/Ringwood corridor	Pardy’s Hill, Corfe Mullen (residential) Wimborne North (residential) Cuthbury, Wimborne (residential) Parley Cross, West Parley (residential) Blunts Farm, Ferndown (employment)

10.5.10 A package of smarter choices, will comprise about 15% of transport expenditure. This includes marketing and promotion of sustainable transport behaviour, as well as capital expenditure on schemes for pedestrians, cyclists, motorcyclists, and rail passengers. Further Travel Plans will be introduced for employers, schools and major residential developments, all targeted at reducing the number of car trips generated by the development. Most of the capital expenditure on alternative modes will be in the form of a large number of small schemes, but larger schemes identified include the Swanage Branch reconnection, and Park & Ride sites at Riverside and Mannings Heath. Other park & ride sites are proposed as part of the Poole/A31/Ringwood strategic scheme package. Major rail expenditure was considered by SEDTAG, but was not considered a cost-effective way of improving the connectivity of S. E. Dorset. It is considered that modifications to some SW rail services can provide an effective means of aiding this objective without the need for significant infrastructure expenditure.

10.5.11 A comprehensive funding and phasing package is essential to deliver the spatial strategy. Details of phasing are given in the Implementation Paper, but the nature of the residential development proposed requires a new

contributions policy to be introduced, to ensure that sufficient transport mitigation is provided by the estimated 25,000 dwellings expected on small sites of less than 30 dwellings. It is proposed that a discounted contribution should apply to development in town centres and local centres on Prime Transport corridors (types 1, 3 & 4) because they would be expected to generate less vehicle trips. Further details of this proposal are given in the Transport Technical Paper.

10.5.12 **Monitoring** will be essential. The objective of targeting transport expenditure to achieve a modal shift away from single occupancy cars can be monitored, in part, by annual town centre cordon surveys for Bournemouth and Poole which have been done since 1997. However, the effectiveness of the transport strategy overall is likely to be judged by three indicators: the level of congestion (a standard Department for Transport survey method is pending); air quality (no air quality management areas (AQMAs) have been declared in South East Dorset, and it is suggested that more than 5 AQMAs would require urgent revision of the transport strategy; and vitality of Bournemouth and Poole town centres (standard turnover/rental ratios and national league table can be used as indicators).

10.5.13 The connectivity of South East Dorset has previously been measured on journey time only, but more emphasis is now given to air/sea/rail/coach public transport frequencies and reliability of road journey times rather than speed. A standard method agreed with other principal urban areas in the South West is suggested as the main indicator. It should be recognised that SEDTAG considered a number of expensive transport schemes aimed at improving connectivity with other parts of the SW Region, but considered they were less important for the sub-region than internal transport schemes. These schemes were considered by SEDTAG and their report is also included in the Transport Technical Paper.

APPENDIX 1 – DETAILED VISION AND SPATIAL STRATEGY

This appendix draws together the full vision and spatial strategy for the South East Dorset Joint Study Area, comprising the broad vision and strategy (set out in Chapter 5) and the more detailed elements of each which are presented in each of the thematic chapters (Chapters 6 – 10).

VISION

As noted in Chapter 2, a draft vision for the area was developed at an early stage in the Joint Study process. Following public consultation, the vision set out below was agreed as the basis for developing the spatial strategy for the area's future up to 2026. It comprises a broad vision, together with more detailed thematic elements for which outcomes and indicators have been identified.

A VISION FOR SOUTH EAST DORSET IN 2026

South East Dorset, focused on Bournemouth, Poole and Christchurch, is one of the South Coast's major economic, educational and recreational centres. It is a key driver in the South West region with a vital role in the Sustainable Communities agenda. With a population of over 400,000 it is the second largest urban area in the South West. The internationally recognised quality countryside and coastal environment makes it unique for a conurbation of its size. It is a place that attracts people to live, learn, work, relax and retire. Today it is:

- a major tourist area with international conference facilities and in close proximity to the World Heritage Coast and New Forest National Park
- a focus for learning, based on Bournemouth University, the Arts Institute, Bournemouth and Poole College, other colleges and many international language schools
- a centre for financial services, high tech and marine industry
- an area that offers major shopping facilities
- a major location for entertainment and night life and home to the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra
- served by Bournemouth Airport and the Port of Poole with road and rail accessibility to London

Vision

In future South East Dorset will strengthen and develop its regional, national and international role within its outstanding environment and be recognised internationally as a prime example of a sustainable conurbation. This will be achieved by:

- a) sustaining, safeguarding, promoting and celebrating the unique quality of its natural environment and coastal setting,
- b) growing a dynamic economy that makes minimal demands on natural resources,

- c) fulfilling its economic potential through investing in people, transport and other infrastructure,
- d) promoting job growth that reduces out-commuting and increases local wage rates,
- e) connecting business, educational establishments and communities,
- f) providing quality housing for all sections of the population,
- g) enriching the quality and breadth of its culture,
- h) creating and strengthening vibrant communities,
- i) improving the quality of its urban environment, and
- j) reducing the need to travel within the conurbation, improving accessibility and investing sustainable transport.

In particular:

1. NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

- **The natural environment that surrounds and runs through the conurbation, some of which is recognised as having international and national importance, will be protected and improved.**

Outcomes – no net loss of designated sites to development, extent and quality of natural environment increased and enhanced, management in place to combat urban pressures on heathland sites.

Indicators - no development on locations that would adversely affect such sites or protected species; extent of lowland heathland increased; proportion of urban fringe heathlands enhanced through appropriate management of adjacent land and a reduced number of fires or other incidents causing damage to heathland.
- **The natural environment will continue to be recognised as providing the area with a competitive edge in the development of an economy which is sensitive to the area’s environmental assets, by providing an attractive and desirable place in which to operate businesses and where employees live and can enjoy good health.**

Outcome - a thriving economy closely dependent on the quality of the environment.

Indicators - increase in the number of businesses attracted to or retained in the area because of its environment; increase in number of businesses dependent on the quality of the environment, total number of employees, number of pollution incidents in water courses.
- **A network of strategic open spaces, natural and maintained green spaces/corridors in urban and urban fringe areas will provide better access and recreational facilities for people and enhance existing biodiversity through establishing new habitats in key areas.**

Outcome – more opportunity for public recreation and enjoyment and a reduction of recreational pressure on existing heathland.

Indicators – increased provision of alternative recreational areas away from sensitive locations and accessible by sustainable travel means and the amount of habitat creation including woodland and heathland.

2. ECONOMY

- **The area will aim for excellence in innovation, based on learning and research in our world-class vocational university, colleges and diverse range of businesses.**

Outcomes – high quality education and training opportunities available to everyone who desires them.

Indicators – number of students obtaining vocational qualifications.

- **The area will undergo further economic expansion, in particularly by attracting and fostering high skill employment in high growth and innovative industries and by investing to improve educational and training levels to give people the right skills.**

Outcomes - a growing economy based on a highly skilled workforce, with minimal dependence on in-migration; schools, colleges and University giving people the right skills for the local economy.

Indicators – net change in number of VAT registered businesses, number of businesses surviving into a third year of operation, a significant increase in the number of high skilled jobs; wage levels to reach at least average levels for the South East of England; a significant increase in GVA per head; significant expansion of educational, training and learning facilities and opportunities; in-migration rates reduced from 2006 levels; number of newly qualified young people obtaining local job.

- **The economy will continue to build on its diversity and strengths in its growing and key sectors:**
 - a) **advanced engineering and aerospace**
 - b) **creative and media industries**
 - c) **financial and professional service**
 - d) **information and communications technology**
 - e) **marine industries**
 - f) **food and drink**
 - g) **health care**
 - h) **public and government agencies**
 - i) **tourism, including culture, heritage and conferencing**
 - j) **retailing**

[Note: financial and professional service and information and communications technology have been put higher up the list, because they will contribute more to the development of a high skill, high wage economy than those lower in the list.]

Outcome -sustainable economic growth that is not land hungry.

Indicators - increased output and productivity in all the above sectors; growth achieved through minimal land-take

- **Bournemouth Airport will be the key strategic employment site in the area and the expansion of the airport itself will be a major commercial driver.**

Outcome – large scale employment site attractive to knowledge-based industry at the airport.

Indicator – number of knowledge-based companies locating at the airport site

- **Poole will contribute to the economy of the South West through its role as a major sea port and its regeneration opportunities, including the Twin Sails Bridge.**

Outcome – economically buoyant Poole using its newly regenerated areas to present an image that is dynamic and attractive to investors.

Indicators- amount of freight and the number of passengers using the Port of Poole; scale of economic growth

- **The area will recognise and encourage the efforts of the voluntary and social economy.**

Outcome - buoyant civic culture not just in the urban area but throughout South East Dorset.

Indicator - increased activity in the voluntary and social sectors.

2. COMMUNITIES AND CULTURE

- **The area will develop world class recreational and cultural facilities**

Outcome – a stimulating and enjoyable range of cultural and recreational facilities.

Indicator – Number of cultural venues and the number of local, national and international visitors to events in the area.

- **The area will be characterised by a stimulating, vibrant, culturally diverse and inclusive society.**

Outcomes – a locality that is attractive to all, retaining young people and making provision for the increasing number of elderly; a society where everyone is encouraged to participate to the full and no one is excluded.

Indicators – reduced out-migration of young people; a pattern of land uses and design that respects the needs of the elderly; social exclusion is

minimised; facilities for art and other cultural activities are improved, expanded and made accessible to all and the proportion of the population having easy access to natural green areas. facilities and opportunities; in-migration rates reduced from 2006 levels; number of newly qualified young people obtaining local job.

- **Residents will benefit from a balanced and healthy lifestyle through –**
 - a) **fostering of strong, local communities**
 - b) **living in an excellent and safe environment**
 - c) **increasing the quantity and quality of affordable housing**
 - d) **having easy access to attractive and varied forms of transport, and**
 - e) **having easy access to recreation facilities, open and green areas**

Outcome -strong sense of local identity, social cohesion and maintaining and enhancing standards of living in South East Dorset.

Indicators – reduced levels of crime; increased satisfaction with feeling of community; number of affordable houses provided significantly reduced gap between house prices and wages; much improved transport provision for non car-based travel.

- **The area will offer first class health provision, that is easily accessible, to all who require it.**

Outcome – quality health provision that is accessible to all.

Indicators – improvements on measures of health; new and accessible health facilities constructed.

4. URBAN ENVIRONMENT

- **South East Dorset will remain an area of diverse and distinctive historic and architectural value, and will harness the positive contribution new development can make to the quality of our urban areas by creating attractive, well-designed, lively, healthy places which support art, culture and innovation**

Outcome – greater urban intensity contributing to buoyant, safe and exciting community life while conserving historical and quality buildings and streetscape.

Indicators – significantly increased residential densities, reduced number of complaints about urban intensification; improved air quality in urban areas, greater number of cultural venues, number of people who feel safe and comfortable using the streets at all times of day; levels of noise pollution

- **The best use will be made of land and buildings within the urban areas avoiding increasing residential densities where this will harm the urban environment and designated heathland sites.**

Outcome – good use of land and the existing stock of buildings through high density living, while maintaining high quality of urban life and natural environment.

Indicator – increased residential densities.

5. TRANSPORT

- **Transport and land uses will be integrated to encourage a reduction in the number of journeys requiring a private car.**

Outcome – easy access to public transport with minimum distances between employment, shopping, leisure and health facilities and home.

Indicator – traffic flows; accessibility index.

- **Higher density development will be focused close to existing main transport routes, bus and train stations in locations which promote the development of public transport.**

Outcome – frequent, cost effective and well used public transport in easy reach of homes and work places.

Indicators – bus passenger numbers; rail passenger numbers.

- **Traffic congestion will be managed to provide safe and reliable journeys.**

Outcome: well regulated traffic flows and safer road for drivers, pedestrians and cyclists.

Indicator: average speeds; injury accident rates; journey time reliability (methodology being developed).

- **Bournemouth Airport and the Port of Poole will be further developed and supported by improved transport infrastructure**

Outcome – the global reach and connectivity of South East Dorset is expanded making it a more attractive place for both business and residents.

Indicators – landside journey times to port/airport from selected points; airport passengers per annum; port freight tonnes.

- **Rail and road links will be improved to the West and North to enhance routes to other regions.**

Outcome: greater accessibility to and from South East Dorset.

Indicators: rail service frequencies/journey times to London, Bristol, Birmingham and Exeter; road journey times to M25, Bristol, Birmingham and Exeter

SPATIAL STRATEGY

The options for accommodating growth were assessed against the visions desired outcomes. Details of this exercise are described in the Technical Paper 'Testing of Growth Options'. The spatial strategy is based on this assessment.

The spatial strategy aims to secure the vision by focusing development on the existing built up area in a manner which reinforces those elements of the conurbation's structure which can contribute towards the development of a genuinely sustainable urban form of unique character, within an internationally valued environment. The spatial strategy is thus:

- a) to concentrate the majority of development in urban areas, particularly at town and local centres which are on prime transport corridors;
- b) to focus the most intensive activities in the centres of Bournemouth and Poole in order to continue an 'urban renaissance' of attractive, vibrant and culturally stimulating town centres;
- c) to bring forward the development of Bournemouth Airport as a regionally significant employment site, once the related transport infrastructure identified in paragraph 5.2(q) has been provided;
- d) to continue Poole Bridge Regeneration Initiative as a regionally significant mixed residential and employment scheme;
- e) to protect and enhance the sub-region's key natural and built environmental assets, including internationally valued habitats and unique coastal and landscape characteristics;
- f) to make provision for the following urban extensions:

For housing

Roeshot Hill, Christchurch	Up to 600 dwellings
Pardy's Hill, Corfe Mullen*	Up to 700 dwellings
Wimborne North*	Up to 600 dwellings
Cuthbury, Wimborne	Up to 200 dwellings
Parley Cross, West Parley	Up to 900 dwellings
TOTAL	Up to 3,000 dwellings

For employment:

Blunt's Farm, Ferndown	Up to 20ha
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*The development of these sites will be subject to a satisfactory hydrological survey.

LDFs will define detailed site boundaries and set out the phased release of land, taking account of the implementation of infrastructure pre-requisites, local need and the availability of suitable brownfield sites;

- g) apart from the limited urban extensions identified in (f) above, to contain the outward spread of the urban areas and other settlements within or bounded by the existing boundaries of the South East Dorset Green Belt;
- h) to improve the connectivity of the South East Dorset by air, sea, rail and road to other parts of Britain and Europe, making best use of the principal gateways of Bournemouth Airport and the Port of Poole; and
- i) to manage use of the transport network and locate development so as to minimise the need to travel within the conurbation and reduce the proportion of journeys made by single occupancy cars.

In more detail, the sustainable growth of South East Dorset will be managed by:

Economy

- a) providing for the development of a net increase of 110ha of employment land, on a variety of site types and locations;
- b) using the employment land at Bournemouth Airport primarily for air-related and knowledge-based industries. The use of a significant proportion of the site for office development that relies on high levels of car-based commuting will not be allowed;
- c) directing major office development (> 2,000 sq m) to Bournemouth and Poole town centres, Lansdowne and Castle Lane East;
- d) protecting established and committed employment sites that meet sustainability criteria and are significant in accommodating employment, other than where such sites are needed to accommodate waste management/treatment facilities;
- e) providing opportunities for the expansion of Bournemouth University, the Arts Institute and further education institutions;
- f) maintaining Bournemouth and Poole Town Centres' roles as major sub-regional shopping centres;
- g) promoting the growth of sustainable tourism by encouraging development that will improve the quality and range of attractions and accommodation, contribute to regeneration, and help to extend the tourist season.

Housing

- h) providing for the development of up to 40,400 dwellings (subject to confirmation) between 2001 and 2026, over 90% of which will be within existing urban areas. The distribution by local authority area is:

Bournemouth	up to 18,300
Christchurch	up to 3,900
East Dorset (part in study area)	up to 6,300
Poole	up to 11,300
Purbeck (part in study area)	up to 600

- i) securing the highest possible amount of good quality, affordable housing for sale or rent, taking account of the viability of individual sites and other demands on developer contributions;
- j) securing a mix of dwelling types that meets the needs of all sections of the population;
- k) achieving higher densities than those achieved in the past, except where this would harm the quality of the urban environment and/or would be adjacent to heathland SSSIs.

Community and related infrastructure

- l) safeguarding and improving public open space and streetscapes within urban areas;
- m) providing recreational/informal open space, community forests and/or country parks close to the urban areas, but away from environmentally sensitive areas, and accessible by public transport, cycling or walking;
- n) from the conurbation, improving the accessibility by public transport, cycling and walking of significant areas of countryside recreation, including the Dorset and East Devon Coast World Heritage Site, Cranborne Chase and the New Forest;
- o) within the urban areas, providing for local services and facilities for all of the community, including education, faith, health, sport and recreation, and culture. Such facilities should be retained where there is a continuing need and there are no accessible local alternatives.

Transportation

- p) enhancing public transport, walking and cycling provision, increasing demand management by transferring more road space to priority vehicles and managing the supply and use of parking;
- q) delivering strategically significant transport improvements:
 - Prime transport corridor improvements;
 - Poole Bridge Regeneration network;
 - A31 to Poole corridor improvements;
 - making provision for a new passenger terminal at Bournemouth Airport and a package of measures to improve access, including link road to the A338;
 - Port of Poole deeper access channel and berth improvements.

All of these transport improvements will be located and designed to minimize their environmental effects.

- r) Expanding significantly the role of rail, for passengers and freight, by:

- Providing new local passenger services and stations, including a Swanage connection, and using rail for local park and ride;
- introducing new links to Bristol and other major centres in the South West;
- further expanding rail freight use at the Port of Poole.

Key transportation infrastructure and other investment priorities

These issues are now addressed in the implementation plan. It should be noted that there are key infrastructure investment requirements that will be needed if the strategy is to be implemented.

