

## Development at Bridport

At the exhibition in Bridport on the 13<sup>th</sup> September 2018, there were 76 attendees in total. We then received a total of 215 responses in relation to the Preferred Options Document specifically relating to Bridport. The individual comments were broken down as follows:

*Number of comments made:* 215

*Object:* 190

*Support:* 13

*Neutral:* 12

<b>Specific and general consultation bodies</b>	<b>Key landowners / developers</b>
<i>Bridport and Area Neighbourhood Plan Group</i>	<i>AG Jessops Ltd</i>
<i>Bridport Town Council</i>	<i>Amsafe Bridport</i>
<i>Burton Bradstock Parish Council</i>	<i>Gladman</i>
<i>Chideock Parish Council</i>	<i>Hallam Land</i>
<i>Dorset AONB</i>	<i>Persimmon Homes South West</i>
<i>Dorset County Council (Children's Services)</i>	<i>Redwood Partnership and Bridport LVA LLP</i>
<i>Dorset County Council (Environment and Economy)</i>	<i>Symondsbury Estate and the Watton Hill Trust</i>
<i>Dorset County Council (Transport)</i>	
<i>Natural England</i>	
<i>Symondsbury Parish Council</i>	
<i>Wessex Water</i>	

### Responses to the Introduction / Vision

#### Objections to Para 13.1.1

- The affordable housing need and the pressure to preserve the relative self-containment will fundamentally change the nature of the town and its relationship to non-contiguous parishes such as Chideock. (Chideock Parish Council)
- The numbers of jobs being created in the Bridport area does not balance with the amount of housing proposed. (Chideock Parish Council)
- Bridport has only very basic links to the rest of the world, both in terms of roads and public transport.

#### Objections to the Vision for Bridport

- The vision for Bridport appears to be a piecemeal approach.
- We disagree that Vearse Farm (BRID2) should be part of the vision for Bridport.
- A joint approach is essential to produce a viable credible plan for the following sites: the former Mountjoy School; the run-down Flood Lane facility; and the abandoned Fisherman's Arms site). (Chideock Parish Council)

**Responses on Question 13-i: Former Policy BRID<sub>4</sub> (now BRID<sub>1</sub>) has been amended to cover a wider range of issues in relation to sites for possible future expansion of Bridport town centre. Do you have any comments on new Policy BRID<sub>1</sub>?**

**Support**

- Support the amended policy (Dorset County Council: Environment and Economy)

**BRID<sub>1</sub> Criterion i): Rope Walks**

- The Rope Walks car park is ideally situated for the provision of some genuine low-cost housing and a multi-storey car park.
- The Rope Walks car park should be redeveloped for low cost housing.

**BRID<sub>1</sub> Criterion i): Tannery Road Bus Station and Car Park**

- Please leave the bus station as it is and expand public transport provision.
- The bus station (and depot) should remain where it is now, and the local plan should protect this site for that purpose. (Chideock Parish Council)
- The bus station should remain in its current location close to the town. Unless there is a fully operational transport hub that serves residents and visitors, there is not potential for the development of the local economy.
- Support for the retention of the bus station, for a transport hub and for the bus station to be offered as an opportunity to incorporate facilities that complement the town's retail provision, such as leisure facilities. (Bridport Town Council)
- We are concerned about the loss of parking at the Tannery Road site. The car park and its location are vital aspects of the support needed for the retail area. (Bridport Town Council)
- The riverside walk should link with the Bus Station site and Plottingham playing field for better connectivity. (Bridport Town Council)
- The Tannery Road bus station car park is ideally situated for the provision of some genuine low-cost housing and a multi-storey car park.
- The Tannery Road car park should be redeveloped for low cost housing.

**BRID<sub>1</sub> Criterion ii): Public Car Parking**

- Parking facilities should not be reduced.
- This criterion needs to be amended to ensure that future town centre expansion retains and improves the level of car parking at charges that encourage the use of the town centre by residents and visitors. (Symondsby Estate)
- An additional car park at Mangerton Lane has been suggested along with other highway improvements linking the transport network across the town.
- A park and ride site on the A35 would be supported.

**BRID<sub>1</sub> Criterion iii): Heritage**

- Bridport's unique town centre character must be retained.
- We are concerned that the text as drafted may allow a multi-storey car park. This would be strongly opposed as it would impact on the Conservation Area and listed buildings. (Bridport Town Council)

- A clause should be added that future permission for high street renovation / redevelopment should include (re)instatement of more historically appropriate frontages, removal of modern parapets etc.

#### **BRID1 Criterion iv): Integration with the Town Centre / Shopping Streets**

- Will these proposals not encourage people to shop at 'edge of town' supermarkets and avoid the town centre for shopping?
- A town centre masterplan, driven by the local community via the Bridport Area Neighbourhood Plan and a supporting retail assessment, are required. (Bridport Town Council)
- The town centre should be pedestrianised to make it people friendly and to make shopping and socialising enjoyable.

#### **The Need for Additional Retail Floorspace**

- The need for additional retail space is unproven.
- Extra retail space is not required. There are existing empty shops. In the age of internet shopping and struggling high streets, this is not appropriate.

#### **Town Centre Uses**

- Flexibility is required to allow for cultural and leisure facilities to make a contribution to the town centre offer. (Bridport Town Council).
- We have emphasised the importance of independent retailers in encouraging visitors to the area. (Bridport Town Council)

#### **Primary and Secondary Shopping Frontages**

- The definitions of the primary and secondary shopping frontages should be amended. (Bridport Town Council)

#### **Alignment with the Emerging Neighbourhood Plan**

- The Bridport Area Neighbourhood Plan (BANP) Group suggest that Policy BRID1 should be aligned with BANP Policy BTC7 to ensure that any proposed developments for Bridport Town Centre cannot be brought forward without support from the town and Bridport Town Council.

#### **Housing**

- The numbers of jobs being created in the Bridport area does not balance with the amount of housing proposed. (Chideock Parish Council)
- Empty houses should be developed.
- Second and holiday homes should be strongly discouraged.
- Build a care home instead as local people will be unable to afford to live there.

#### **St Michael's Trading Estate**

- The eclectic mix of businesses on the St Michael's Trading Estate has been compromised by owners reviewing rents and terminating leases.

### **Vearse Farm**

- There is concern that the capacity of Vearse Farm will increase which could affect the town centre further.

### **Dorset County Council Owned Sites**

- The relocation of Dorset County Council's social services and highway depot would result in these sites being able to be redeveloped. This would be an ideal place to build low cost social housing.

## **Responses to the Development Strategy**

### **Para 13.4.2**

- This paragraph should include Mountjoy School within the text. (Dorset County Council: Environment & Economy)

### **Consideration of Alternative Sites**

- There is a lack of evidence to show that there has been any consideration of: brownfield sites; alternative sites; or housing models to avoid the destruction of the AONB or to attempt to solve the 'substantial affordable housing need'.
- Bridport has the ability to accommodate additional development to help ensure a sufficient supply of housing land and to deliver the plan's housing requirement. The 2018 SHLAA identifies a number of parcels of land in and around Bridport but discounts the majority. (Persimmon Homes)

### **Support for Omission Sites**

- It would make far more sense to allocate additional sites from the Issues and Options document. This would increase the deliverability and robustness of the plan and provide an element of insurance if problems with existing allocations come forward. (A G Jessopp Ltd)
- The land off Happy Island Way could make a valuable contribution to meeting housing needs without impacting on the AONB. (A G Jessopp Ltd)
- The site at Watton Hill should be included in the plan. (Symondsburry Estates)

### **Housing**

- The area has low wages and local people cannot afford house prices.

### **Infrastructure**

- The current infrastructure is already at capacity.
- The existing infrastructure (schools and doctors) is already at breaking point.
- A holistic approach to the development of all facilities in Bridport requires a plan and the community should be closely involved. Precise and deliverable proposals are essential. (Chideock Parish Council)

### **Transport**

- Parking facilities should not be reduced. The elimination of existing car parks would be catastrophic and could affect visitor numbers.

- Parking is critical to the whole plan and cannot be left to be covered separately.

**Responses on Question 13-ii: The supporting text to former Policy BRID1 (now BRID2) has been amended to clarify that the Vearse Farm site has the capacity to deliver about 930 new homes (rather than 760 as originally envisaged). Do you have any comments on the changes to new Policy BRID2?**

#### **Support**

- We are supportive of the Vearse Farm development proposal. (Amsafe)
- Without a balanced development, Bridport will lose its vibrancy and any hope for younger people to be able to make a life for themselves here.
- Support for the changes to the original allocation and that this area is now included within the defined development boundary. (Hallam Land)
- There is some support for the extension of Vearse Farm to accommodate c.930 homes. It makes sense that the critical mass of numbers will be here to support the infrastructure and to ensure that other AONB land around Bridport is not damaged.

#### **Paragraph 13.4.6**

- Mention of a possible replacement facility for Sydney Gale House residential care home at Vearse Farm should be removed as this is only an aspiration. (Chideock Parish Council)

#### **BRID2 Criterion i): Allocation of the Site for Mixed Use Development**

- The development is opposed by the Town and Parish Councils and the vast majority of the local population. The inclusion of this allocation should be reconsidered.
- There is no justification for artificially increasing the population of Bridport in order to fill 930 new homes (with approximately 3,000 people) at Vearse Farm alone.
- Bridport does not need strategic growth. Growth is being imposed on Bridport.
- Open market housing is not required. Open market housing will simply exacerbate the already sharp demographic imbalance and consequently is not supported.
- There is a likelihood that the new builds will become rentals units or holiday homes.
- The Vearse Farm proposal is an extension to Bridport town rather than a separate self contained development. Vearse Farm needs to be integrated into the town. A holistic approach needs to be put in place and fully funded. (Chideock Parish Council)
- It is not felt that the further three allocations are integral to the delivery of the Vearse Farm scheme. (Bridport Town Council)
- The development will impact considerably on the residents of Symondsburry Parish and increase the strain on the facilities in Bridport. The Bridport Area Neighbourhood Plan emphasises the importance of green gaps, defining the different communities. (Symondsburry Parish Council)

#### **BRID2 Criterion i): Allocation of Land at Vearse Farmhouse**

- The development of Vearse Farmhouse is not supported due to the potential impact on the listed building, heritage impacts and possible archaeological interests. (Chideock Parish Council)

- The Conservation Officer was highly critical of the proposed plans as the listed farmhouse was being encroached upon from all sides.

**BRID2 Criterion i): Allocation of Land West of Coronation Road**

- Specific reference to land west of Coronation Road is supported and about 80 homes and important linkages can readily come forward here. Unrestricted links are essential across and going beyond the whole BRID1 (now BRID2) site. (Redwood Partnership and Bridport LVA LLP)
- Land west of Coronation Road should be treated as a rural exceptions site for 100% affordable housing to make up the current shortfall. (Chideock Parish Council)
- Land west of Coronation Road should be retained as greenspace. (Bridport Town Council)

**BRID2 Criterion i): Allocation of Land West of Pine View**

- Land west of Pine View should be treated as a rural exceptions site for 100% affordable housing to make up the current shortfall. (Chideock Parish Council)
- Land west of Pine View should be retained as greenspace. (Bridport Town Council)
- Increasing the development to abut right onto Pine View is in total contradiction to the landscaping and environmental aspirations described in the Vearse Farm submission. (Symondsburry Parish Council)

**BRID2 Criterion ii): Phasing**

- It is essential that affordable housing is included in each phase so that affordable homes are sprinkled amongst those purchased. (Chideock Parish Council)
- A programme of housing provision suggests a maximum of 75 houses per year will be delivered in Bridport which will include a maximum of 25 affordable units. This will make only a very limited contribution to the current affordable housing need in the town which runs to several hundred households. (Symondsburry Estates)

**BRID2 Criterion iii): Allocation of Employment Area / Key Employment Site**

- Who is going to work on the employment area?
- There is no existing employment for the many new inhabitants.
- There is no local demand for workers to fill job vacancies. The area has low income and low wages. The proposed 4 hectares of employment land would only provide approximately 170 work places. This would still mean that 600 extra people would need to travel in and out of Vearse Farm for daily work.
- We consider that the plan should include the specific number of employment units, amount of employment floor space, and number of residential units that are to be incorporated into the site. (Bridport Town Council)
- The site should be re-designated from 'key employment site' status to a broader designation that offers more flexibility and would be more appealing to potential future investment at the site. (Amsafe)

**BRID2 Criterion iv): Highway Improvements**

- The current road and footpath network is not safe enough to accommodate the extra housing proposed in the current plan.

- The local transport network is barely fit for purpose and already overstretched.
- The town centre cannot take any more traffic.
- Additional development must consider the impact and arrangements at both the A35 junction and on the B3162.
- West Allington is totally unsuitable for the proposed traffic increase. There will be air pollution from the increase in cars.
- The developer's own figures show that the junctions at North Allington and the Town Hall will be at the limit of their capacity.
- Development should contribute to a town-wide transport strategy. (DCC Highways)
- The highway improvements described in Policy BRID2 (iv) must be delivered prior to the commencement of any on-site construction works. (Bridport Town Council)
- We underline the need for safety improvements at Miles Cross junction and consider that this could be achieved by installing traffic light controls or a roundabout or both. It is recognised that a roundabout would not solve all the problems, but it would improve safety issues. (Burton Bradstock Parish Council)
- A possible solution includes a one-way system with wide pedestrian and cycle lanes.

#### **BRID2 Criterion iv): Public Transport**

- There is no existing public transport and cycling will not be realistic for the majority of proposed residents.
- Public transport is very sparse, and the local bus companies would need to confirm in advance that existing and additional services will run all year around, not just in the summer season.

#### **BRID2 Criterion iv): Construction Traffic**

- The policy should include a statement that construction traffic cannot be allowed to use the town centre.

#### **BRID2 Criterion v): Footway / Cycleway Links**

- Vague theoretical support for public transport, walking, cycling etc. does not translate into any effective proposals.
- One of the junctions which does not have sufficient capacity (with 760 houses) would be modified according to a scheme that would widen the road by reducing the footpath width to 1 metre around a long blind bend.
- Would a foot bridge across the River Symene be allowed for access to Bridport?

#### **BRID2 Criterion vi): Flood Risk**

- With 930 houses, paved drives and roads covering the land, which would have absorbed water during periods of heavy rain, the water will all be channelled directly into storm drains and ultimately the river. This will overload the river.
- There is concern that the development may result in the flooding of adjacent residential properties and Bridport town centre, especially given the increase in paved drives and roads.
- There is a need for further consideration of the potential flood risk impact of an additional 170 homes. The text as drafted considers only the very localised impact,

and there should be an assessment that takes account of potential impacts on any part of the wider Bridport area. (Bridport Town Council)

**BRID2 Criterion vi): Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)**

- We support the use of sustainable drainage systems and will advise on the requirements for adopting surface water sewers. Separate systems of drainage will be required with surface water disposal to land drainage systems. A surface water drainage strategy including restricted discharges and flood risk measures must be agreed and approved by the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) and the Environment Agency. (Wessex Water)
- Flood risk calculations suggest that three of the proposed SuDS features would be inadequate. This site is simply not suitable for such a large development.
- The fields act as a massive soakaway and the proposed ponds will not replace this sufficiently.

**BRID2 Criterion vi): Foul Water Drainage**

- We have undertaken a capacity appraisal to review how flows can be transported from the development to the Sewage Treatment Works and considered the three offsite options and point of connection. Where possible the first approach will avoid connections and works around the town centre, preferring a scheme of works connecting downstream. The preferred option will avoid the town centre system with an offsite connecting sewer to the south of Bridport connecting into the Sewage Treatment Works. This will avoid discharges through the existing sewer network in the town. (Wessex Water)

**BRID2 Criterion viii): Masterplanning – General Comments**

- There should be a more precise masterplan. (Chideock Parish council)

**BRID2 Criterion viii): Masterplanning – Design / Layout / Landscape Impact**

- The site has been previously declined for development not least, because of the unacceptable detrimental effect on the landscape.
- The proposed housing density is too high and would be out of keeping with the character of the town.
- Solar panels on the rooves of the new dwellings, would make the development look like a solar farm to all those passing.

**BRID2 Criterion viii): Masterplanning – Schools**

- There needs to be explicit mention of primary and secondary contributions. Any future S106 will be based on the prevailing rates at the time which may include contributions towards nursery and special education needs provision. (Dorset County Council: Children's Services)
- More development means more pressure on existing schools.
- A new school would be built on the flood plain. As it is only two entry forms per year, what would be the impact on secondary school provision?
- Replacing the existing St. Mary's with a larger school would be worse than two smaller ones causing more congestion from people dropping off children.



- It seems unlikely that the developer will build one tenth of a school in parallel with home provision.

**BRID2 Criterion viii): Masterplanning – Community Infrastructure**

- The allocation is controversial because of the load it would place on services and the difficulty in integrating so many new residents at once.
- Facilities are essential for the creation of a vibrant integrated community.
- Infrastructure benefits are not required if the new houses are not built.
- Existing infrastructure is insufficient to cope and cannot be upgraded.
- It seems unlikely that the developer will build one tenth of a community centre, care home or other facilities in parallel with home provision.
- More development means more pressure on existing facilities (doctors etc.). The existing medical centre is chronically short of doctors.
- You cannot get an appointment at the doctor’s surgery for at least two weeks.
- All development at Vearse Farm must incorporate the latest broadband connectivity.

**BRID2 Criterion viii): Masterplanning – Recreational Use / Open Space**

- Additional play areas for children should be provided.

**BRID2 Criterion viii): Masterplanning – Biodiversity**

- Concerns have been raised about the loss of the rich wildlife in the area.
- We have no objection to the additional residual allocations but have suggested that the supporting text is amended to include the requirement for the delivery of a net gain for biodiversity. (Natural England)
- The addition of extra housing contradicts the initial proposal and destroys valuable wildlife corridors.
- The wording of the policy should be strengthened in relation to biodiversity.
- The same conditions relating to biodiversity that applied to the original site should be applied to the extensions proposed.

**BRID2 Criterion viii): Masterplanning – Access Points and Bus Access**

- The road layout needs to be established in the first phase so that bus services can be introduced from the outset. (Chideock Parish Council)
- The only access for the main employment area at Vearse Farm is the western one to the new school, thus endangering all the children who will use that road.

**BRID2 Criterion viii): Masterplanning – Strategic Landscape Planting**

- Landscaping will not be able to hide such a large scheme.

**BRID2 Criterion viii): Masterplanning – Requirement for a BREEAM Assessment**

- We question the reason for the removal of a commitment to a BREEAM assessment from Policy BRID2 (viii). Has this already been completed? (Bridport Town Council)

**Affordable Housing Provision**

- The actual housing needs of the area are not being adequately addressed.

- Average low incomes mean that local people cannot afford houses in Bridport and Vearse Farm will not provide genuinely low cost housing.
- The prospect of 290 affordable homes on one site is contrary to current thinking.
- The policy should include a statement that the development will deliver an overall 35% of affordable housing.
- If these houses were built by a community land trust or were 50 to 70% affordable people would be more amenable.
- It is crucial that the minimum affordable housing quotas are not only delivered over phased periods but exceeded. (Chideock Parish Council)
- Sites like Vearse Farm must deliver at least the minimum quota of affordable housing, if not more.
- Since delivery of affordable housing is likely to fall short of the registered need, any development would only be acceptable if dedicated for local affordable housing.
- The lack of clearly designated local affordable, reserved occupation or reserved local housing also raises concerns that it will not deliver for local housing needs, but rather investment and second home owners.
- Provision should be made in policies for this site for homes that younger local people can afford. (Bridport Town Council)
- There should be a more positive commitment to affordable housing for local people. (Chideock Parish Council)
- The only reason to build anything new is to provide for local need only.
- As many dwellings as possible should be social rent, rather than affordable rent.

### **Impact on the AONB**

- The site will create a coherent expansion to Bridport and have a relatively low impact on the AONB and landscape.
- As the three additional areas identified are either located between the existing allocation and built urban area, or across an area where the existing farm buildings are located, it is not considered that these would necessarily result in significant additional effects on the character and appearance of the AONB, subject to suitable density and design. (Dorset AONB Team)
- The development will be destroying the very thing that makes Bridport and West Dorset special.
- Concerns have been raised about the wider impacts on the AONB.
- The original plan was only accepted by the Inspector due to exceptional circumstances. The further incursion would have an adverse impact on the AONB.
- There is a conflict between national house building targets and the protection of the AONB. With regards to public interest, this site should be refused.
- The development of 100 houses is incompatible with AONB designation and will not protect the AONB.
- There are concerns about the site being within the AONB rather than a brownfield site, but it is now appreciated that the number of houses being built will fulfil a need.
- The addition of extra housing contradicts the initial proposal and destroys AONB attributes.

### **Loss of Agricultural Land**

- Under Brexit we will require more agricultural land to grow food. Agricultural land should not be built on.
- The loss of agricultural land is not significant in terms of West Dorset overall.

### **Alternative Sites (to Vearse Farm)**

- There are other brownfield sites that could be developed.
- Other sites should be considered including land to the west of Dottery Road, which would be available in 12 months and deliverable. This site has the ability to address affordable housing needs. (Gladman)

## **Responses to BRID3: Land to the East of Bredy Veterinary Centre, off Jessops Avenue**

### **Paragraph 13.4.9: Flood Risk**

- It is stated that the building area will not encroach on to the floodplain but the infrastructure and aspect of the land will be altered by coming right up to the flood plain cut off. The resulting run-off will be detrimental.

### **Paragraph 13.4.11: Highway Improvements**

- The A3066 is already busy and Jessopp Avenue is used as a rat-run when the traffic is at its height on the A35. Building more houses will only add to traffic congestion.

### **BRID3: General Comments**

- BRID3 includes use of the word 'should' where we feel 'must' is appropriate. This is because we are concerned that landscape protection or the provision of infrastructure may be lost through the application of flexibility.

### **BRID3 Criterion i): Allocation for Housing**

- Density comparable to Jessopp Avenue should be maintained, and the character should be in keeping with the single-storey built environment of the avenue and the Bredy Veterinary Centre. (Chideock Parish Council)
- There are other brownfield areas in and around Bridport that can be developed.

### **BRID3 Criterion ii): Wildlife Corridor**

- The site should only be developed when a plan to enlarge the existing buffer zone and provide high quality green infrastructure has been agreed. (Chideock Parish Council)
- The area concerned provides a wildlife corridor and sanctuary. At present it provides a green space within the town and a buffer between traffic and houses. It acts as a lung for the town.

### **BRID3 Criterion iii): Beech Trees and Rights of Way**

- There should be a very specific pre-condition for any development, for a viable plan for the maintenance of the row of Beech trees and the Public Right of Way along the southern boundary. (Chideock Parish Council)

## Responses to BRID<sub>4</sub>: St Michael's Trading Estate

### Support

- In general, people are supportive of the development and want to protect the artistic and craft community.

### General Points

- There is a need to restore the buildings damaged by fire at the site in July 2018 and this should be reflected in amendments to the wording of the supporting text. (Bridport Town Council)

### BRID<sub>4</sub> Criterion i): On-site Buildings of Historic Interest

- The text is misleading, as a small minority of the listed buildings of St Michael's are Grade II listed, but the estate as whole is of historical interest as it represents a rare example of an intact industrial rope and twine works.

### BRID<sub>4</sub> Criterion iv): Riverside Walk

- The riverside walk should link with the Bus Station site and Plottingham playing field for connectivity. (Bridport Town Council)

### BRID<sub>4</sub> Criterion iv): Wildlife Corridor

- Public access to St Michael's Island is not desirable due to the sensitive wildlife habitats. As made clear in the Sustainability Appraisal Summary, the river provides 'a habitat for species including the European protected Otter and Water Vole'. (Bridport Town Council)

## Omission Sites

- Watton Hill. (Symondsburry Estate and The Watton Hill Trust)
- Land off Happy Island Way (BR2 at the Issues and Options stage). (A G Jessopp Ltd)
- Land to the West of Dottery Road. (Gladman)