

Development at Beaminster

At the exhibition in Beaminster on the 7th September 2018, there were 76 attendees in total. We then received a total of 170 responses in relation to the Preferred Options Document specifically relating to Beaminster. The individual comments were broken down as follows:

Number of comments made: 170

Object: 135
 Support: 29
 Neutral: 6

Specific and general consultation bodies	Key landowners / developers
<i>Beaminster Town Council</i>	<i>AAV Plastics</i>
<i>Dorset AONB</i>	<i>Gladman</i>
<i>Dorset County Council (Children's Services)</i>	<i>Persimmon Homes SouthWest</i>
<i>Dorset County Council (Flood Risk)</i>	<i>Mr Sibley</i>
<i>Dorset County Council (Minerals & Waste)</i>	<i>Turner Associates</i>
<i>Dorset County Council (Transport)</i>	<i>Wessanen UK (Clipper Teas)</i>
<i>Dorset Wildlife Trust</i>	
<i>Highways England</i>	
<i>Natural England</i>	

Comments on the Development Strategy / General Comments

General Comment

- Object to the proposed housing at Beaminster.

Level of Housing Development

- Beaminster's housing stock should grow gradually, in order to sustain the town's vitality and population balance, not in order to take a large share of people migrating into the district.
- The argument to increase the local housing land allocation in Beaminster in the context of a declining population and weak transport infrastructure is tenuous.
- The aim should be to have an average growth in the housing stock between 10 and 15 units per year, including a roughly one-third quota of affordable housing.
- New housing allocations add 30 more dwellings on land north of Broadwindsor Road and 120 dwellings on land west of Tunnel Road (150 dwellings) more than doubling the adopted local plan allocation of 120 dwellings.
- The pro-rata housing target, based on population (Beaminster 3,000), indicates a proportionate share of 2.5% of the main settlements' total. This equates to 14.5 new dwellings per annum or 290 dwellings over the 20 years of the plan.
- Beaminster represents 1.88% of the population translating into 14.9 houses per year.
- Beaminster's share should be 10 dwellings x 20 years = 200 homes.

- Existing commitments at Broadwindsor Road and Clipper Teas plus anticipated infill housing account for between 249-265 new dwellings in Beaminster, which is a fair share of housing.
- There has not been a proper analysis of the housing need for Beaminster.
- The quality of life implied and inherent in such an environment, which makes the town so attractive to those who retire here, must be balanced with the need to create a more equal demographic profile consistent with the aspirations of a self-sufficient unit. (Beaminster Town Council)

Housing Distribution

- The proposed 794 homes a year should be more equally distributed throughout the plan area.
- Development should be concentrated in Tier 1 urban areas. Beaminster is a tier 2 settlement.
- The proposed development appears to be concentrated on one side of the town. A more balanced and integrated scheme would be preferred.

Employment Land Provision

- The provision of viable workspace is vital in order to enable existing enterprises to grow, to accommodate new locally-grown enterprises, and to attract companies from elsewhere and inward investment.
- There will probably be a lack of local employment for the increase in population.
- For years there have been vacant business / employment opportunities on the Horn Park Quarry site, so the suggestion that employment will arrive is erroneous.

Community Infrastructure

- Local schools will have difficulty in providing the necessary additional educational provision.
- Our already stretched medical services will be unable to cope adequately.

Transport

- The increase in population will generate more traffic on our already crowded roads.
- Further housing would add to the need to travel for shopping and commuting for employment.
- A recent local study identified the major problem to expansion in Beaminster is the five antique roads feeding into the town.
- The review talks about promoting cycling. However, Beaminster has steep hills and few people cycle. Also the roads have no footpaths.
- No analysis of the impact on the roads has been completed. The plan should clearly state that this analysis has not been done.

Comments on the Town Centre Strategy

Retail Provision

- Shopping provision will probably have to be developed and this might lead to an out-of-town superstore which would be detrimental to the character of the town.

Town Centre Boundary

- It seems odd that the town centre boundary goes between the Council offices, leaves out the shop next door and omits some businesses in other streets around the Square. (Beaminster Town Council)

The Square

- There should be environmental improvements to The Square and a pedestrian crossing point (central refuge) should be provided on the A3066 to make the town centre a safe and attractive place to shop.

Parking

- A key issue which has not been addressed is the lack of vehicle parking space in or near the centre. If the retail centre is to continue to thrive and satisfy the needs of residents and visitors alike, additional parking options must be accommodated. (Beaminster Town Council)

Responses on Question 14-i: Land north of Broadwindsor Road is now proposed just for housing, although new employment development is proposed to the south of the road under new Policy BEAM4. Do you have any comments on the changes to Policy BEAM1?

Support

- Support the site allocation. (Gladman)
- Support the site allocation due to good access.
- Support the reallocation of employment land for residential development.

Paragraph 14.5.1: Live-work Units

- Support the inclusion of a cluster of live-work units providing space for small business to be run from home.

Objections to the Deletion of Employment Land from the Site

- Object to the proposed removal of any employment allocation within BEAM1 except for an undefined number of live-work units. (Beaminster Town Council)
- There should be no industrial development either side of the Wessex Ridgeway.
- Moving employment land south of Broadwindsor Road is detrimental to the quality of life of the residents in Culverhayes and Stoke Abbot Road.
- The loss of employment land currently owned and occupied by Clipper Teas (north of Broadwindsor Road) should justify the expansion of employment land on this site, not its loss. (Beaminster Town Council)
- Some employment land should be retained as the site lends itself to 'courtyard' development and small business 'hubs'. (Beaminster Town Council)

BEAM1 Criterion i): Allocation for Housing

- Future building should all be affordable housing for young local families.
- No second home ownership should be allowed.

BEAM1 Criterion ii): Masterplanning / Design

- Residential development should express progressive, modern, eco-sensitive designs. (Beaminster Town Council)

BEAM1 Criterion iii): Woodland Protection / Planting

- The impact on the Dorset AONB needs careful consideration.
- The proposed 10m buffer to the River Brit is insufficient protection for an important habitat.
- The requirement for green screening has made employment allocation unviable. (Beaminster Town Council)

Community Infrastructure

- Town services and infrastructure (doctors and schools) are unable to support additional population.

Education

- There needs to be explicit mention of primary and secondary education contributions to secure the quantum and suitability of provision at local schools. 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)

Transport

- We are concerned about the increased traffic volume through a narrow main street.
- Beaminster infrastructure is not suited to land north of Broadwindsor Road because of the terrain from Broadwindsor and the tiny roundabout. The roundabout is a key pedestrian crossing point from town up to the primary school and for the elderly and those with pushchairs trying to avoid the extremely narrow sections of footpath on the south side of Hogshill Street.
- The site can be linked to land west of Tunnel Road.
- Development should contribute to road safety improvements in Clay Lane Close to St Mary's School. (Dorset County Council: Transport)
- There is no reliable bus service in the town for access to jobs.
- Town services (bus service) are unable to support additional population.

Comments on BEAM2: Land at Lane End Farm

BEAM2 Criterion i): Allocation for Employment Use - Support

- Support the continued allocation for employment uses. (Beaminster Town Council)
- The site's employment use is considered reasonable. (Dorset AONB)
- The site is appropriate because of good access, no conflicting uses and limited landscape impact.

BEAM2 Criterion i): Allocation for Employment Use - Objections

- Object to the continued allocation of BEAM2 solely for employment uses. The site should be allocated for a mix of employment and residential uses. A local company has purchased the site and requires housing for their employees. (AAV Plastics)
- 0.7 of the 2.9 hectare site should be allocated as employment land. This should be the northern field, which could be delivered as a first phase. The remainder should be allocated for residential use, excluding land on the eastern edge, which is in the flood zone and would be retained as a riverside wildlife corridor as required by Criterion ii). (AAV Plastics)
- 'Pump priming' or 'cross subsidisation' is required to ensure the delivery of the employment land on the site. Allowing a return value use such as residential development would enable capital to be released for necessary infrastructure. The policy wording needs to be more flexible to permit this. (AAV Plastics)
- There are no constraints that would preclude residential development on the southern part of the site. Also it is in easy walking distance of town centre services and a footpath link can be provided. (AAV Plastics)
- The site should include small business units for start-up companies.
- In order to attract an appropriate mix of in-migration by younger, working families, the employment units must be serviced and built before domestic housing is introduced. (Beaminster Town Council)

Transport

- Site size is unlikely to bring a requirement for mitigation on the Strategic Road Network (SRN). (Highways England)
- Industrial development is inappropriate because Tunnel Road is extremely busy and any additional vehicle movements in and out of that site would add to the danger.

Landscape

- To mitigate the visual impact of development, it will be necessary to restrict development upon the more elevated southern portion of the site, create and enhance boundary features, and introduce new planting to contain the southern elevations of the development. (Dorset AONB)

Responses on Question 14-ii: Do you agree with the proposed allocation of land for housing development to the west of Tunnel Road, as set out in new Policy BEAM3?

Support

- As the access to this site is good and will not have a detrimental effect on traffic within Beaminster, I would broadly support this development.
- The site is situated in a sustainable location in relation to Beaminster's services and facilities. (Gladman)

BEAM3 Criterion i): Allocation of the Site for Housing / Open Space

- Land at Tunnel Road is in the control of willing landowners, who wish to see the site brought forward for residential development. The site is deliverable, available now, offers a suitable location for development, and is achievable. (Gladman)

- The need for 120 housing units in addition to the homes identified for BEAM₄ is arguable, given the evidence that the town's population is static or decreasing.
- The present housing needs assessment for Beaminster shows that there are requests for 105 dwellings, mostly for one-bedroom units. It seems that the town's needs appear to be satisfied and there is no evidence of need for BEAM₃ which will intrude further into the AONB. (Beaminster Town Council)
- Beaminster's housing needs can be met up to 2036 without the use of any further sites outside the defined development boundary. Part of BEAM₃ could, however, prove suitable for housing in the period beyond 2036.
- Beaminster doesn't need more houses for retirees mainly from the South East.
- A high proportion of these houses should be for the rented sector as many local people cannot afford to buy outright.
- Development must be eco-sustainable and would seem ideally suited to smaller developers / builders allowing for a new approach to affordable housing, such as off-site construction.

BEAM₃ Criterion ii): Transport General

- It is unlikely that mitigation on the strategic road network (SRN) would be required for this level of development in the town. (Highways England)

BEAM₃ Criterion ii): Access to Tunnel Road

- The land can be safely accessed from Tunnel Road. An access feasibility study has shown that a vehicular access can be achieved from Tunnel Road without compromising traffic movements at Beaminster School. (Gladman)
- Consideration must be given to the traffic created by the number of houses accessing Tunnel Road. The tunnel itself requires traffic lights to make it much safer as there has been a large increase in articulated lorries in the last couple of years, not to mention deaths.
- The access must have a proper roundabout with a central island in this area. This could be opposite the school entrance road which would do two major things for road safety: firstly, it would slow the traffic coming into Beaminster; and secondly, it would protect the school and future development entrances.

BEAM₃ Criterion ii): Bus Stop Provision

- Public transport facilities can be enhanced, including the provision of a new bus stop. (Gladman)

BEAM₃ Criterion ii): Pedestrian / Cycle Link to the Town

- There is potential to deliver a new footway along Tunnel Road. (Gladman)
- The link to the town should not just be pedestrian but should also facilitate traffic relief on the Broadwindsor Road for traffic to and from the A3066, bypassing the schools. (Dorset County Council: Transport)

BEAM₃ Criterion ii): Access to Horn Hill View

- There should be no connection into Horn Hill View at all.

- Access via the Beeches and Horn Hill View is already congested and can only get worse. The roads are narrow and where the Beeches becomes Horn Hill View it is already difficult to drive as parked cars cause an obstruction. Suitable for pedestrians only. There should be no car access.

BEAM₃ Criterion ii): Road / Pedestrian Link to BEAM₁ Site

- The north of Broadwindsor Road site (BEAM₁) can be linked to the land west of Tunnel Road site (BEAM₃). An access feasibility study has shown that a secondary access can be delivered to serve BEAM₁ via Cockroad Lane (if required). (Gladman)
- Pedestrian and cycling links to serve the sites could be provided via Horn Hill View and Cockroad Lane. (Gladman)
- The long-term possibility of such a link road should be borne in mind in the layout and specification for the main access road within BEAM₁.
- We would be opposed to a link being created between BEAM₃ and BEAM₁ because of the potential creation of a 'rat run'. (Beaminster Town Council)
- The volume of traffic and its impact on Broadwindsor Road and Tunnel Road are not great enough to justify public expenditure on a link road, unless it is also servicing significant development on the BEAM₃ site.

BEAM₃ Criterion iii): Impact on the AONB

- The site could be developed without giving rise to significant landscape and visual effects, or harming the scenic quality of the Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). (Gladman)
- A key consideration will be the landscape impact on the AONB. Any long-term development will have to be carefully handled. (Natural England)
- The allocation would represent an additional encroachment into greenfield land within the Dorset AONB. The council should have a clear justification as to whether the proposals represent a 'major' development in the context of paragraph 172 of the NPPF (2018) and if necessary how the exceptional circumstance tests have been met. (Natural England)
- Of the growth options considered for the town, the land to the west of Tunnel Road is not considered to present significant disadvantages that would be avoided through the use of other options. (Dorset AONB)
- Support the provision of open space within the western portion of the site and the inclusion of significant planting along the northern boundary to form a landscape buffer (Dorset AONB)

BEAM₃ Criterion iii): Impact on the Landscape

- Any development would be set within a high quality framework of landscape planting and green infrastructure, helping to assimilate new housing into its setting, and providing new areas of informal and formal open space. (Gladman)
- This is open countryside on the approaches to Beaminster and this will adversely affect the special landscape setting of the town with its confined townscape nestled in the landscape.
- The topography of the town's surroundings is such that almost all growth options would result in some degree of intensification of the visual impact of development.

- BEAM₃ is outside the DDB and in full view of the ridgeway.
- The western three-quarters of the land is already quite well screened. Housing on that land could sit down well in the landscape. That is not true of the eastern quarter, adjoining Tunnel Road, which is much more open to views from the ridge to the north and which should be permanently protected from built development.
- Welcome the significantly reduced extent of the developable area within the proposed allocation. (Natural England)
- We recommend that the indicative layout is amended to retain the original field pattern in the locality. This would also provide space for the creation of a new broadleaved woodland copse which would be in keeping with the locality and provide opportunities for providing benefits for wildlife. (Natural England)

BEAM₃ Criterion iii): Impact on Heritage Assets

- The sites could be sensitively developed to respect the setting and significance of nearby heritage assets, including Waddon Hill (Scheduled Monument), Horn Park (Registered Park and Garden), and Beaminster's Conservation Area (including associated listed buildings). (Gladman)

BEAM₃ Criterion iv): Hedgerows

- This option site covers parts of several grassland fields and some mature hedgerows which are of considerable value to wildlife. Mitigation will be required to compensate for the loss of grassland, and we support the requirement in the policy for the retention and enhancement of these existing hedgerows. (Dorset Wildlife Trust)

BEAM₃ Criterion v): Flood Risk

- The sites are situated in Flood Zone 1 and are therefore at the lowest risk of fluvial flooding. Surface water run-off will be attenuated. (Gladman)
- We are concerned about surface water run-off.
- Measures to mitigate surface water flooding are required. Opportunities to open the existing culverted channel at Tunnel Road should be explored. (Dorset County Council: Flood Risk)
- The tributary stream that runs parallel to Cockroad Lane should be protected from development and from any 'mitigation' to surface water flooding.
- The plan should refer to surface run-off from metalled areas, road and access drainage etc.

Infrastructure

- Community infrastructure is unable to support such a large influx of new residents.

Education

- There needs to be explicit mention of primary and secondary education contributions to secure the quantum and suitability of provision at local schools. 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)

Ecology

- The policy should include a clause requiring the proposals to demonstrate a clear net gain for biodiversity. (Natural England)
- A full suite of ecological surveys will be undertaken. Any important ecological features will be retained and enhanced wherever possible, to achieve net biodiversity gains. (Gladman)

Amenity

- We are concerned about the overlooking of neighbouring properties.

Responses on Question 14-iii: Do you agree with the proposed allocation of land for employment development south of Broadwindsor Road, as set out in new Policy BEAM₄?

Support

- We are supportive of the proposed Beaminster development, in particular BEAM₄. (Wessanen UK: Clipper Teas)
- As the access to this site is good and will not have a detrimental effect on traffic within Beaminster, I would broadly support this development.

BEAM₄ Criterion i): Allocation for Employment

- We are projecting further growth in the coming 1-5 years and a potential need to expand the footprint of the existing building and / or find or build additional premises, which could be warehousing or production. (Wessanen UK: Clipper Teas)
- The proposed allocation would be advantageous; enabling us to expand on the site in a controlled manner; bringing increased employment to the town and continuing our active community engagement. (Wessanen UK: Clipper Teas)
- Employment zoning would keep the industrial activity and traffic away from housing, and would allow for the southward expansion of Clipper Teas, if necessary.
- There is already sufficient employment land available in the area and there are empty units at Horn Park, Gore Cross and the old Clipper Teas building.
- We are opposed to the new allocation BEAM₄. (The Beaminster Society)
- If Clipper Teas seeks to expand its estate, it should be required to prove the necessity of doing so in any part of this area, as against alternatives elsewhere.

BEAM₄ Criterion ii): Access / Transport

- It is unlikely that development of this land for employment use would give rise to significant issues on the strategic road network (SRN), but further information on the nature of the employment and its likely trip making potential will be required. We would wish to be consulted on specific proposals for the site. (Highways England)
- Employment use may help to internalise trips within Beaminster, thereby reducing the potential for an impact on the strategic road network (SRN). (Highways England)
- This allocation will create an industrial park where the road is narrow and generate a great deal of vehicle movements from the junction with Tunnel Road past the primary school where there is no safe crossing currently.

- There is concern about more large lorries using Broadwindsor Road and the narrow main street and pavements in town.
- Contributions are needed for road safety improvements in Clay Lane Close to St Mary's School. (Dorset County Council: Transport)
- Is there width to provide planting and a pedestrian / cycle route?

BEAM₄ Criterion ii): Impact on the AONB / Landscape

- A key consideration will be the impact on the Dorset AONB landscape. (Natural England)
- The allocation represents an additional encroachment into greenfield land within the Dorset AONB. The council should have a clear justification as to whether the proposals represent a 'major' development in the context of paragraph 172 of the NPPF (2018) and, if necessary, how the exceptional circumstance tests have been met. (Natural England)
- There is a danger that large industrial buildings would be damaging in the landscape.
- The lie of the land makes the eastern part of the site visible from the north and the western part visible both from the north and from Gerrards Hill to the south-west.
- We do not understand why housing should be screened from the Wessex Ridgeway but industrial units can now be in full view. The Wessex Ridgeway runs through this site and if units were to be the size of the new Clipper Teas building, the impact on the west end of the town would be considerable, with the open countryside and the view to and from Gerrard's Hill obstructed. (Beaminster Town Council)
- There should be no industrial development either side of the Ridgeway, but rather planting to enhance the attractiveness of the walk for ramblers and visitors.
- Employment development here would be particularly intrusive and adversely affect the setting of the farm buildings at Upper and Lower Barrowfield Farm and would affect the views towards Gerrard's Hill.
- All the structural planting for landscape screening should be of native broad-leaved species, to enhance their value for wildlife. (Dorset Wildlife Trust)
- Green spaces are important for all of us.
- The prospect from the houses in Greens Cross Drive would be adversely affected.

Infrastructure

- Consideration would need to be given in terms of the levels of the land to: access for trucks: correct infrastructure (fibre optic cabling: drainage, parking etc.); and maybe a new access road from the Tunnel Road to the site via BEAM₃ could be considered. (Wessanen UK: Clipper Teas)
- The ability to expand local provision of services such as schools and surgeries to accommodate in-migration must be considered. (Beaminster Town Council)
- Children's play areas must be incorporated into any new plans and not allowed to be deferred or avoided by the offer by developers of additional S106 or CIL contributions. (Beaminster Town Council)
- There is concern that Wessex Water's sewage service exceeds existing capacity at times of consistent rainfall because of the combined outflow of rainwater and sewage from older properties. (Beaminster Town Council)
- A huge new sewage / drainage plant would be required.

Live-Work Units

- We would support live-work units on the lower part of the site along Broadwindsor Road. (Beaminster Town Council)
- We favour live-work housing as more people work from home in rural areas than in towns and the town has superfast broadband. It makes sense to provide housing units that can include a small business or artisan type work at home with zero commuting. The development can be of a domestic scale in the farm idiom and would be less intrusive to the AONB landscape.
- I do not agree with the proposal that part of BEAM4 might be used for live-work units, because further housing sites are not needed in the Plan period and industrial activity and traffic make poor neighbours to such housing.

Minerals

- Part of the BEAM4 land is located within the Minerals Safeguarding Area for building stone. (Dorset County Council: Minerals & Waste)

Biodiversity

- The policy should include a clause requiring the proposals to demonstrate a clear net gain for biodiversity. (Natural England)
- It is recommended that the indicative layout is amended so that it retains the original field pattern within the locality, allowing the creation of new blocks of broadleaved woodland with ecological links to Puckett's Wood and Workhouse Wood to the south. (Natural England)

Amenity

- We are concerned about the impact on the residents of Greens Cross Drive.
- We are concerned about the loss of amenity to local residents for walking.
- There will be a potential for disturbance during construction and loss of visual amenity to residents of this road.

Alternative Sites

Land to the South of East Street

- The site is surrounded on three sides by residential development. The Highways Department has confirmed that any potential highways issues could be overcome.

Parnham House

- Is a further opportunity.